



*Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
Centre Régional pour les Energies Renouvelables et l'Efficacité Energétique
Centro Regional para Energias Renováveis e Eficiência Energética*

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Regional ECREEE Workshop on the ECOWAS Scale-Up Programme for Small Hydro Power

Address

By

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**Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am delighted to be here today for the Regional ECREEE workshop on the ECOWAS Scale-Up Programme for Small Hydro Power. It is indeed a great honour and true pleasure for me to address so many distinguished guests on this important occasion.

I would like to start by expressing my appreciation and thanks to the Government of Liberia, the Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme (ESMAP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), for their kind collaboration in organising this workshop. I would like to welcome also the UNIDO Regional Centre for Small Hydro Power, based in Abuja, Nigeria.

I am very encouraged to see so many high level experts gathered together here to discuss the potential benefits that Small Hydropower can unleash in our quest to ensure energy access for the ECOWAS region. Hydropower can contribute significantly to meet the electricity needs of urban areas as well as isolated rural areas.

Hydropower is one of the most advanced and flexible sources of renewable energy. It is considered as tested, reliable, low cost and is independent of the energy price volatility associated with plants using fossil fuels. Hydropower plants have usually a life time more than fifty years without major replacements. Grid-connected large

hydropower can improve energy security through the reduction of fossil fuel import dependency, diversification of the energy mix and reduction of electricity shortages. It can help to meet the rapid growth of electricity demand in urban centers and industry.

Small-scale hydro (SHP) can be connected to a central grid, to a rural isolated grid or can be connected to a dedicated power load (e.g. cement factory, lodges, mines). It can range from pico (1KW – 10KW), micro (10KW – 100KW), mini (100KW – 1 MW) to small (1MW – 30MW): SHP can serve the priority needs of the rural poor and boost local development, productive uses (e.g. processing and conservation of agricultural products, water pumping and desalination) and basic social services (e.g. health care, education).

West Africa accounts for one quarter of Africa's total exploited hydropower potential. The hydroelectricity potential of the ECOWAS region is estimated at 25,000 MW, out of which up to now, only 16% are developed and utilized.

However, so far the ECOWAS countries do not take full advantage of their technical and economic feasible hydro potential. This is particularly true in the case of small-scale hydropower. The challenges that SHP developers are facing are many and most of them are part of the larger picture of general barriers for the uptake of renewable energy. In this context., the workshop aims at achieving the following results:

- to take stock of the progress of small scale hydro power (SHP) development and to assess the individual support needs of the participating ECOWAS countries
- to validate the proposal for the ECOWAS Up-Scale Programme for Small-Scale Hydropower and attract interest of possible financiers
- to gather country information on resources, institutional set-ups and policies in the SHP sector
- to compile an inventory of SHP investment projects to be presented to financiers and investors
- to initiate a regional information network of national SHP focal points and experts
- to provide training on key aspects of SHP project development for ECOWAS experts and facilitate cross-border exchange of experiences and lessons learned
- to create awareness among invited policy makers that SHP is a tool for poverty reduction and sustainable development in peri-urban and rural areas

During the first three days the event will feature a training seminar on small scale hydro project development. Experts from Austria, India

and Switzerland will share lessons learned and case studies. I encourage you to take advantage of the presence of the industry specialists participating in this workshop to share experiences and build knowledge so that together, we can implement a successful small hydropower programme.

The remaining two days we would like to invite you to validate the draft project proposal for the ECOWAS Up-Scale Programme for Small Scale Hydropower. The programme provides a comprehensive support framework to stimulate investments and business development in the sector during the next five years. After this workshop the final project document for the 3 million Euro programme will be submitted for approval to the ECOWAS Energy Ministers. The programme is considered as crucial step to achieve universal access to modern energy services to all in the ECOWAS region.

thank you for honouring our invitation to participate in this workshop and very much look forward to your valuable contributions.

Merci beaucoup!!! Muito obrigado!!!