

Development Dialogue Forum Series 3A

Date: Monday, 14 May 2012

Time: 07h25-13h00

Venue: Protea Hotel Furstenhof

The event started with Welcoming remarks by the Rector of the Polytechnic of Namibia, Prof. Tjama Tjivikua. He mentioned that the DDF is in the interest of the country and that we must take cognizance of our country's ecological footprint in order to know the bio capacity it has. He also left the attendees thinking about whether the carbon credits help in a way towards the goal of sustainable energy for all.

Mr. Neil Boyer, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP also had some remarks on the Development Dialogue Forum Series. He said that the DDF is an important platform aimed at promoting and reinforcing national efforts in an inclusive and participatory development process and that it also serves as medium of exchange of ideas and sharing best practices in all areas of development endeavours. He also mentioned that the three areas in which energy should be looked at are in terms of- Accessibility, Affordability and Sustainability. This will then help the country to achieve vision 2030 by improving its comparative advantage. The DDF also gives a platform to take recommendations and update and implement these on a global level.

In his keynote address, the Deputy Minister of Mines and Energy, Honourable Willem Isaacks mentioned that Namibia is heavily reliant on imports for hydrocarbons and petroleum products. Namibia's electricity imports are currently 60% obtained from the South African Power Pool. He also said that one of the initiatives undertaken by government to ensure that the Namibian people have access to modern and clean energy services is the national rural electrification programme. He also spoke of the Off Grid Energisation Master Plan (OGEMP) and the Demand Side Management measures, which are also good initiatives. The Hon. Deputy Minister said that the groundwork has been commendable, but that there is still a lot to be done. He urged the gathering to encourage investment in energy efficiency especially. The Deputy Minister concluded his speech by mentioning that Namibia has joined the Global initiative on Sustainable Energy for All driven by the UN Secretary General to reach the following objectives by 2030, which are to:

1. Ensure universal access to modern energy services
2. Double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency
3. Double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

The Forum was then declared open and the first speaker, Mr. Joseph S. Iita, Permanent Secretary- MME was welcomed.

His presentation was on **Rural Electrification (Grid & Off-grid)**- status and experiences in improving modern energy access in rural areas in Namibia (see attached Annexure 1).

With results that the rural electrification programme has contributed to the socio economic development of rural communities significantly and that sustainable energy for all is the ultimate goal, Mr. Iita's presentation ended.

The floor was then opened for a short **discussion on the Challenges for Rural Electrification (Grid and Off-Grid)**.

The first question was on the Energy Shops established through the Off- Grid Electrification Mater Plan (OGEMP). The participant wanted to know how the Ministries can capture the expertise from the private sector. He wanted to know what incentives there are for foreign investors in order to motivate them for investing in the country. Mr. Iita responded that the government invites companies to tender for specific projects and that private investors are not actually sought. However, foreign investors can team up with Namibian companies to implement the projects on the government's behalf.

Some other comments and questions emerged from the discussion. One of these was about the five year plan of government to electrify all government schools and other governmental institutions, what is the current status? The P.S. responded by giving figure of the current access to electricity to government schools and other governmental institutions. He also went further and gave a trend on the ministerial budget as was allocated in the past few years until this year (2012). He is confident that this can be achieved. He also mentioned that there is a policy that states that all new government buildings should be fitted with Solar Water Heaters (SWHs) and any replacement of malfunctioning geysers in public buildings must be with SWH. A follow up question on the policy was later asked, whether the policy cannot be extended to parastatals. The response was that the policy applies to parastatals, an example of such was the Polytechnic of Namibia (PoN) that meets it water heating requirements at the student hostels with SWHs. The Katutura State Hospital also has SWHs.

A student who attended the workshop wanted to know if there are any potential research avenues for academics in the energy sector. An official from the Ministry said that interested students are welcome to contact the Ministry of Mines and Energy, 6th floor in order to be assisted. Mr. Ndhlukula also invited students to approach the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Institute (REEEI) since it is a national information resource base for renewable energy and sustainable energy use.

Another interesting question that emerged from the discussion was about mini-grids. The delegate wanted to know whether there are any other mini-grids similar to the

Tsumkwe project. The response was that there are no other mini-grids as such, but opportunities for such grids do exist. A participant wanted clarity on the 25% access to electricity that Mr. Iita mentioned in his presentation. Does this figure include off-grid electrification and how recent are the figures? The response to the question was that the 25% includes both grid and off-grid electrification and that the percentage is based on figures done recently, from a study that was conducted by Emcon Consulting Engineers that was completed at the end of March this year (2012).

A private consultant wanted to know about the progress of the Epupa project. The response to this question was that that project is now shifted to Baynes because Angola wasn't so keen on the Epupa project. Technical and Environmental studies are ongoing. An Academician from PoN wanted to know how far Namibia is with resource integration management. The Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) responded that it is work in progress, a meeting on National Integrated Resource Plan (NIRP) was held at the Electricity Control Board (ECB) on Thursday, 10 May 2012.

A participant also had an opinion in terms of whether it is not possible to use solar energy since it is cheaper and green as compared to coal. Mr. Iita responded that although green, solar systems are not cheap and that the country needs a mix of energy sources. It cannot be reliant on just one type of energy source. The NIRP also takes notice of this. Other uses of solar energy like for drying processes was also suggested by academics as an area that needs to be developed.

A participant wanted to know at what level educative and managerial skills on how to work with renewable energy technologies (RETs) are given and whether these include awareness rising. The response was that training people might be dangerous although it is needed at all levels. The fund from MME that is promoting RETs partake in expos, shows and trade fairs countrywide, where they raise awareness on RETs.

The last concern which arose from this discussion was regarding the budget of almost N\$1, 5 billion. The delegate wanted to know if this cannot be packaged for donor support. In response, the MME said that this amount is for electrifying the whole country and not only schools and homestead. Mr. Iita also added that Namibia is categorized as a middle income country and thus it is difficult to get donor funds for projects.

For the second half of the workshop, Mrs. Catherine Uunona from Consulting Services Africa (CSA) gave a presentation on **Access to Modern Clean Energy Services** as a vehicle to gender imbalance and poverty reduction in Namibia. This presentation looked at Biomass cooking technologies, gender imbalance and poverty reduction in Namibia and success lessons (see attached Annexure 2).

Nina Maritz, chairperson of the Green Building Council Namibia (GBCNA) Associated Working Group (AWG) also gave some information on the Green

Building Council Namibia- its role in sustainable energy for all goal and its establishment process (see attached Annexure 3).

The floor was then opened for the second discussion, which was in-depth. The two (2) main points for these discussions were:

- 1. Challenges for accessing and scaling up modern energy services for all**
- 2. Better strategies and technologies for improving access to all**

The participants wanted to know to what extent the GBCNA has been accepted by the business community in order for them to start acting. Nina said that the AWG has been busy with the setting up of a directory and that individuals have also been identified although these individuals have not been contacted directly yet. Most of the identified entities already belong to the Green Building Council of South Africa.

The forum was keen on knowing how the Lion stove, in Catherine's presentation work. Catherine explained the principle behind the stove and the different components it has. Another question was whether these three stoves that were mentioned in the presentation are the only ones available in Namibia. The response was that many stoves/efficient cooking technologies exist, example, Eezi stove, parabolic solar stove, e.t.c. but for the purpose of the presentation, the three were chosen. An academician from the School of Engineering, Mechanical Department at PoN also gave information on a stove that her department is working on, she was confident that the stove will be finished soon and promoted and that it will be very efficient.

A participant wanted to know if there is a policy or regulation on bio-fuels in Namibia, or anyone can produce their fuel for own use, example biodiesel. The response was that there is a policy on that, it can be accessed from MME. People may produce and use their bio-fuels as long as it complies with the directives and specifications in the policy. The P.S. however cautioned that such productions must not interfere with other national priorities such as that of food production. Giving an example of *Jatropha* that requires tracks of land to produce.

The assessment in terms of the efficiency of the renewable energy stoves was also discussed in depth. Participants wanted to know specifics in terms of percentage Energy Efficiency of different renewable energy stoves. Catherine said that the Tsotso stove was tested in early 2000 in South Africa, the Lion Stove was tested in Swaziland, the Eezi stove was tested in Kenya and Colorado State in the United States of America, she did not have the figures at the time but the tests indicated that the stoves are energy efficient and reduce emissions. The academician from the Mechanical Engineering Department of the School of Engineering at the Polytechnic of Namibia also mentioned that her department has testing equipments available and that these could also be of use.

The topic on gender imbalance was also confusing to some delegate. He wanted to know why the topic did not read: "...gender balance...". Kuda made this clear saying the topic is grammatically correct if one read the whole sentence (topic). Some individual also wanted to know why the DDF gave much attention to Biomass and not to other technologies. This was simply because the workshop was not able to secure many presenters.

With regard to Energy Efficiency, another individual had a question on the large portion of energy used within buildings. The delegate specifically wanted to know what currently is being done in terms of appliance labeling in Namibia.

The response was that the Namibia Standards Institution (NSI) has a committee that is currently busy with developing standards for appliance labeling.

The forum felt implementing green standards in Namibia is long overdue. A participant wanted to know the impact of green standards on the cost of buildings. The response was that the GBCNA will work through the accreditation standards, and advocates for voluntary standards. However, the regulatory environment is something that the Ministry (MME) must decide on. Quite often, this is market driven and the major players do not see the advantages. Energy efficient buildings are actually cost saving, especially when running costs are taken into account.

The development of the Energy Model for Namibia was also up for discussion. Here, the participants wanted to know what its purpose is and how researchers and academics can get on board. The response was that the Ministry is looking at various energy models and that it is working with a Finnish company VTT to develop the Energy Model. Essentially, the Energy Model will look at all energy aspects, current and future scenario and is expected to be ready by next year.

A participant suggested that the government should look at putting up legislative for net metering to encourage private companies to start producing electricity from solar. ECB has recently put out a study on net metering. The participant also suggested reduction on taxes and import duty on solar panels to boost the solar energy industry. In response to the suggestion, Mr. Iita said that the said incentives were already initiated by MME, however the Ministry of Finance (MoF) did not grant the zero rating on solar panels, import duty on Photo Voltaic (PV) is however free.

Nampower also gave a short note of the activities they are involved in as they strive to improve the national energy sector. Nampower has engaged a consultant to conduct a study on biomass, where encroachment bushes as a source of energy, this study is expected to be done in July. It has also tested green coal that is supplied by a company in Omaruru to substitute coal, the results are very good. It is also in talks with an Independent Power Producer (IPP) to put up a 44 MW plant that will produce electricity from wind. A study on Concentrated Solar Plant is also underway.

Comment on the analogy for the public transport system was also sought, since transport in Namibia is dominated by private owners. If more incentives are available for people and taxes are reduced, the private sector could be encouraged to make it more domestic.

Participants spoke against working in isolation, saying there is need to put efforts together in order to achieve more as a country, the DDF is a good platform to promote this. MME all assured the participants that it is open and welcomes innovative ideas from individuals on improving the energy situation in the country.

MME is planning to conduct a study on the progress and impact of the cabinet directive on SWHs, it is yet to source funds for this study.

The Demand Side Management (DSM) was resurrected, if interested one should contact REEEI or ECB.

Participants email addresses will be added to the SENSE network that send out regular update on energy issues.

Mr. Ndhlukula thanked everybody for coming and for the lively and constructive discussions.

The Director of Ceremonies then gave her closing remarks and ended the Development Dialogue Forum Series 3.