

Uganda National Seminar Brief



The Uganda national seminar was held in Kampala, Uganda on 6th April 2004. The seminar aimed at disseminating findings from the Uganda studies, which are part of the Renewable Energy Technologies in Eastern and Horn of Africa: Status and Prospects study. The seminar brought together 17 participants from the government energy ministry, NGOs, small micro enterprises, sugar industry, local authority, private companies, training institutes and parliament in Uganda. One participant from Ethiopia provided cross-country comparison.

The objectives of the seminar were to:

- Disseminate Uganda studies research findings.
- Garner the energy policy research priorities of key stakeholders in the Uganda energy sector.
- Propose and discuss priorities on renewable energy for Uganda.
- Garner inputs from stakeholders and policy makers.

Mr. Godfrey Ndwula, Assistant Commissioner, New and Renewable Energy, Ministry of Energy, Uganda opened the seminar. In his opening speech, he reiterated that in Uganda, renewable energy technologies (RETs) are conceptualised within the framework of alleviating the high levels of poverty. He affirmed that, for renewable energy resources to be optimally exploited and utilized, their resource characteristics and precise potential must be first ascertained. He mentioned that lack of reliable information and data about renewable energy resources among other constraints had greatly hampered development of the Ugandan renewable energy sub-sector. He gave details of projects the Ugandan Government was undertaking in the promotion of RETs, among these were a study on alternative energy resources assessment and utilization, testing and improving the existing RETs, curriculum development in technical institutions and the setting up of a renewable energy resource centre. He welcomed the seminar initiative, citing it as a promotion tool for RETs in Uganda.

Four presentations were made during the seminar. The first presentation provided the background to the RETs study being conducted in East and Horn of Africa. The presentation highlighted the key drivers of RETs in the region, challenges being faced in the promotion of RETs, the status of RETs in Eastern and Horn of Africa. The presentation also covered objectives of the study, the study content, major outputs expected from the study, planned impact and dissemination, and the rationale behind the Uganda national seminar.

The second presentation focused on the potential of cogeneration in Uganda. This presentation was based on preliminary findings, which show that achieving 5% electrification from cogeneration is possible. Cogeneration technology was explained in detail in the presentation, together with its merits and demerits. The presentation concluded by giving recommendations to policy makers on the promotion of cogeneration.

The Ethiopian experience with RETs was presented in the third presentation. The presentation showed Ethiopia's indigenous energy resources, total energy consumption, primary energy uses in Ethiopia against the world, energy consumption by sector, fuels used for lighting and cooking in rural Ethiopia. The presentation included data on electricity generation by source, electricity growth, growth of customers and consumption levels, comparison of electricity generation in watts/capita, household electrification in selected countries, estimated number of RETS disseminated in Ethiopia. The presentation concluded by giving findings from the RETs study and recommendations on how RETs dissemination can be enhanced.

The fourth presentation focussed on geothermal energy. The presentation provided an overview of Uganda's energy sector and showed locations of geothermal resources. Previous geothermal exploration efforts were presented, with details on GEEP I and II studies. Other geothermal programs

being carried out in Uganda were also cited in the presentation giving reasons why geothermal should be pursued. Geothermal benefits were given both at a national level and at local level and the presentation concluded by giving obstacles to geothermal development in Uganda.

During the discussion sessions the following issues were raised:

- Poor policies on RETs are the cause of the poor development of cogeneration and geothermal
- Funding for geothermal and cogeneration is not sufficient
- Need to ensure that geothermal and cogeneration projects are connected to IGAs (Income Generating Activities) to ensure power is affordable

The following were identified as priorities for Uganda:

- Government regulation to enable cogeneration and geothermal producers to sell to the grid
- Need for sensitisation and awareness building among policy makers on the importance of geothermal and cogeneration
- Need to involve local governments in projects such as geothermal for community ownership participation
- Develop mini-grids for cogeneration and geothermal plants rather than have long distant connections (redesigning the transmission programme)
- It was recommended that the Uganda Sugarcane Technologists Association should encourage exchange of information among sugar companies.

For further information about this seminar, kindly contact the AFREPREN/FWD secretariat in Nairobi, Kenya.