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*Report on the Stakeholder's workshop on  
strengthening CSOs and Networks coordination  
mechanism for advancing structured  
engagements in Renewable energy sub sector.*

*21<sup>st</sup> September 2018 at Hotel Africana in  
Kampala.*

COMPILED BY ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT.



## Acknowledgment

Environmental Alert thus extends its appreciation to its implementing partner WWF and NORAD for the financial support towards this initiative.

We would like to thank all CSOs and Networks in Renewable energy at both national and sub national level for participating in this workshop.

Environmental Alert is also grateful to the Mr. Mwesigwa Rashid who in his capacity ably facilitated the workshop.

## 1.0 Introduction

This is a popular version of the report from a stakeholders' workshop for Strengthening Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Network's coordination mechanism for structured engagement in the Renewable Energy sub sector. The report shares and highlights key issues that transpired during the workshop and a way forward agreed for follow up and action in the near future.

This was one day workshop held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018 at Hotel Africana in Kampala. The workshop was attended by **34 participants (18 male and 16 females)** among which included: *representatives from CSOs and CSO Networks at national and sub-national levels, private sector involved in renewable energy, Development partners and government officials specifically from the Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development (MEMD).*

The stakeholders' workshop was conducted using participatory methods which allowed active participation and contribution to issues discussed by all participants.

## 1.1 Background

The National stakeholders' workshop on strengthening CSOs and Networks coordination and reporting mechanisms stemmed from the realisation of the underlying key challenges limiting sustainable access and utilisation of renewable energy at both national and sub-national levels. At national level for instance, available report indicated that only about 26.1% of the households in Uganda have access to electricity<sup>1</sup>. The limited access to renewable energy has resulted in over reliance on unsustainably biomass production and use of rudimentary lighting and cooking technologies especially among the poor people. Such practices have negative implications on the environment and health of the people.

As part of efforts to address the energy challenge in the country, Environmental Alert in partnership with WWF-UCO with financial support from NORAD are

implementing the second phase of the Clean Energy Project titled ***“Increasing access to sustainable and renewable energy alternatives in the Albertine Graben to conserve high value forest ecosystems to benefit people and nature in Uganda;*** with a goal of “Communities living in the Albertine Graben have adopted sustainable and renewable energy alternatives to reduce dependency on biomass for their energy needs”.

Whereas there a number of CSOs and Networks involved in promotion of sustainable renewable energy issues within the Albertine Graben and other parts of the country, these CSOs have weak capacity to meaningfully engage government and other actors in renewable energy over decisions and practices towards sustainable and renewable energy development. These CSOs also lack a strong voice and concerted efforts to meaningfully hold government and other actors accountable on decisions and practices towards sustainable and renewable energy development. This is further coupled with the limited skills and tools for effective advocacy on the development and adoption of policies, legislation and best practices by government and private sector.

In order to address these challenges, CSOs need to mobilize and organize themselves into a coalition or network with clear and shared goals, objectives and programs. Such arrangements will make CSOs' engagement and reporting to the Government much easier and helps Government to provide better guidance to the CSOs thereby avoiding unnecessary duplication of efforts.

In that context therefore, Environmental Alert organized a National level stakeholders' workshop to discuss and agree on organization and coordination mechanisms for a shared and structured engagements agenda with the MEMD and other relevant Ministerial departments and agencies (MDA) to influence access to clean and sustainable management of renewable energy resources.

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<sup>s1</sup> See a report on Sustainable Energy for All Action Agenda for Uganda, 2015.

### 1.1.1. Objectives of the workshop

The objectives of the workshop include:

- a) To agree on mechanisms for strengthening CSOs and Networks coordination and reporting in the Renewable Energy sub-sector through shared and structured engagements with duty bearers;
- b) To reflect on existing lobby and advocacy initiatives by CSOs and Networks targeted at increasing access to clean and sustainable management of renewable energy resources;
- c) To develop an action plan for operationalization of the identified CSOs and Networks coordination, reporting and advocacy mechanisms in respect to Renewable energy access moving forward.

### 1.1.2 Activity methods and approaches

The process involved a rapid collection of views and ideas on CSO coordination mechanism from a sample of 10 selected CSOs & Networks; and MEMD. This was done through face to face interviews using a simple check list. The collected views and ideas were synthesized into the different scenarios for coordination and presented during the workshop for further discussion and validation by the participants.

In addition, participants were engaged in sessions through participatory approaches to ensure that different views are generated and discussed to build consensus on practical mechanisms for strengthening coordination, reporting and advocacy for CSOs and Networks in Renewable energy at both National and sub regional level.

The workshop methodology further employed tools and approaches including Power point presentations, group work and plenary sessions for processing of content and building consensus on the possible scenario for CSOs and Network coordination and reporting.

### 2.0 Opening Remarks

Mr. Kimuli Godfrey from Department of Renewable Energy who represented the Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development (MEMD) officially opened the workshop. In his remarks, he emphasised that government is willing to work and collaborate with CSOs in the sector. However, this would only be easy if CSOs are better organised to have one voice, shared goals and objectives as they engage and report their contributions to government/ MEMD.

Mr. Kimuli further shared with participants the key challenges limiting government to increase access to clean and renewable energy resources.

He also informed participants of the MEMD's energy objectives, policy goals for renewable energy and the major priorities in the energy sector. The MEMD's priorities in energy sector include: a) to increase electricity generation capacity and transmission; b) to increase access to modern energy services through rural electrification and renewable energy development; and c) to promote efficient utilization of energy through adoption of improved energy technologies.

Mr. Kimuli further highlighted the key undertakings by the MEMD in the renewable sub-sector. These undertakings include:

- i) Biogas Technology Promotion and Dissemination;
- ii) Promotion of Efficient Biomass Energy technologies;
- iii) Biofuels Production and Promotion; and Promotion of Gasification technology;
- iv) Promotion of Improved Charcoal and Briquetting technology; and Promotion of Solar and Wind Energy.

*'CSOs need to better organise themselves into unified voice with the same goal for better engagement and reporting to government/ MEMD.'*

Other issues shared with participants included: other undertakings government is doing on renewable energy and emerging issues, challenges and opportunities in renewable energy sub-sector. He further highlighted to participants the major entry points that CSOs and Networks can explore to enhance their engagement with the MEMD on renewable energy issues. For example, through national dialogue events such as during Energy Week; through Joint Sector Review meetings as well as Joint or collaborative research initiatives and Reporting.



Fig. 1: Mr. Kimuli Godfrey from MEMD Making Opening Remarks during Stakeholders Workshop at Hotel Africana.

*The key entry points that CSOs and Networks can explore to enhance their engagement with the MEMD on renewable energy issues include; national dialogue events such as the Energy Week; through Joint Sector Review meetings as well as Joint or collaborative research initiatives and Reporting.*

## 2.1 Presentation on the proposed coordination and reporting mechanisms

Mr. Mwesigwa Rashid was contracted as a resource person make a presentation on the proposed coordination and reporting mechanisms for shared & structured engagements with the MEMD and other relevant MDAs towards contributing to harnessed access to clean and sustainable management of renewable energy resources. This presentation mainly focused on:

- I. The current CSO coordination and reporting mechanisms in renewable energy – highlighting

*areas for strengthening CSOs and networks coordination and reporting mechanisms in renewable energy; value addition for strengthening CSOs and Networks coordination mechanisms; and proposed arrangements for CSO coordination mechanisms and reporting.*

- II. Current CSOs and Network's lobby and advocacy initiatives, lessons learnt and good practices in renewable energy. Sharing and discussion on lobbying advocacy focused on *the on-going CSOs and Networks lobby and advocacy initiatives in renewable energy; what things are working well and not working in lobbying and advocacy in renewable energy; lessons learnt in lobbying and advocacy initiatives and good practices for lobbying and advocacy initiatives in renewable energy.*

This presentation further provided an opportunity for participants through group sessions to discuss and agree on the reporting mechanisms and how they would like to be coordinated.



Fig 2. Participants in a group discussion on coordination and reporting mechanism for CSOs and Network involved in renewable energy.

### 2.1.1 Key issues discussed during the workshop

- a) Need for an organized and well-coordinated coalition/ Network for joint lobby and advocacy;
- b) CSOs and Networks reporting and reporting format of their contribution in renewable energy to MEMD
- c) There are briquettes on the market which are of poor quality. This has implications on their uptake by consumers. However, the Ministry

has developed standards for briquettes which will guide stakeholders. These standards need to be operationalised by the Ministry.

- d) There are many districts which have passed ordinances to regulate charcoal activities. However, most of them have not been operationalised largely due to delays of their approval by the Ministry of Justice. Therefore MEMD needs to work with CSOs to strongly advocate for these ordinances to be approved.

### **2.1.2 Key achievements from the workshop**

The immediate achievements from the national stakeholders' workshop are indicated hereunder:

- A. Participants resolved that a loose semi-formal coalition hosted by one of the registered member organization is most suitable mechanism for coordination of CSOs and Networks involved in renewable energy. This form of CSOs and Network coordination mechanism was unanimously selected by workshop participants after thorough discussion on advantages and disadvantages of different options for coordination and reporting mechanisms for CSOs and Networks involved in renewable energy.
- B. The workshop further provided participants opportunities for direct interaction, feedback and engagements with the MEMD on various issues such as CSOs participation in Joint Sector Review for MEMD and governments' development programmes, regulations and funding issues concerning renewable energy issues.
- C. The workshop provided opportunity to CSOs and Networks involved in renewable energy to network, share information and experiences on renewable energy sub sector.
- D. The workshop also provided a platform for learning among CSOs and Network on lobbying and advocacy issues in renewable energy sub-sector. This was done through sharing of their experiences on what is working, not working and what needs improvement in the near future. It is envisaged that some participants will put

into practices some of the lesson learnt from the workshop.

### **3.0 Conclusion**

The workshop was conducted successfully and provided an avenue for CSOs to share learnings, experiences and lessons which in turn informed their decision and agreed to form a loose semi-formal coalition for the CSOs in Renewable energy. This coalition will be hosted by one of the registered member organization to be agreed on.

### **4.0 Way forward**

The following were the key action points from the workshop:

- i) Develop a Memorandum of Principles (regulations) for the Renewable Energy CSOs and Networks Coalition.
- ii) Select a leadership committee for the Renewable Energy Coalition by end of November 2018.
- iii) Select a Host Organisation for the Renewable Energy Coalition by end of November 2018.
- iv) Fast track formulation and signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by the CSOs and Networks on Renewable Energy Coalition with the Ministry of Energy and Minerals Development (MEMD).
- v) Formulate and sign a MoU or agreement by the Renewable Energy Coalition with host organisation for the Coalition.
- vi) Conduct mapping of CSOs actors in renewable energy sub-sector – on-going but need to be updated by end of November 2018.
- vii) Prepare and submit a performance report to MEMD on CSOs contribution in Renewable Energy sub sector starting with previous FY 2017/2018.

## 5.0 Closing Remarks

The workshop was closed by the Chairperson of the Environment and Natural Resources CSOs Network Mr. Kiyingi Gaster. In his closing remarks, Mr. Kiyingi thanked participants for attending the workshop and their contributions made during the workshop process. He also urged members to remain united and promote collective engagement with policy makers on renewable issues at different levels. He further urged participants to coalesce efforts in their fight against poor quality of renewable energy technologies at all levels.

## About Environmental Alert

Environmental Alert (EA) was founded in **1988** and has developed and transitioned into a National Non-Governmental organization contributing to an enabling policy environment for sustainable agriculture and sound environment and natural resources management at community, local, national and international levels. EA is officially registered with the NGO Board as a Ugandan non-governmental organization (NGO), incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. EA is governed by an Independent Board that is responsible for providing strategic oversight of the organization including ensuring its integrity as a voluntary service organization.

EA is a **1<sup>st</sup> prize winner of the Energy globe award for environmental sustainability-2005 under the category, earth.**

EA is a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and a Member of The IUCN National Committee for Uganda.

EA envisions, *'Resilient and dignified communities, managing their environment and natural resources sustainably.'*

**EA's mission is to,** *'Contribute to improved livelihoods of vulnerable communities by enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainable natural resources management'*

### Program and institutional Components:

- a. Environment and Natural resources management;
- b. Food security and Nutrition;
- c. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene;

- d. Finance and Administration;
- e. Resource mobilization and Investment.

### Scale of Implementation:

EA operates in selected districts for generation of evidence to inform policy engagements on agriculture, environment and natural resources at National and International levels. Currently EA's operations are in 20 districts across the country. EA undertakes area wide targeted awareness on selected issues in agriculture, environment and natural resources engagements

### EA is a Secretariat for following networks:

- a) *The Network for Civil Society Organisation in Environment & Natural Resources sector (ENR CSO Network);*
- b) Uganda Forestry Working Group;
- c) The Standards Development Group (-for promotion of Sustainable Forest Management in Uganda); and
- d) Promoting Local Innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resources management (PROLINNOVA-Uganda Network).

Further information about Environmental Alert is available at: <http://envalert.org/>

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