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Nigeria: UNIDO-REEEP training to set up State level Energy Planning Cells



Hands-on session with EnPower and RESCO energy planning software

"this course is not about hanging a certificate on the wall, but about achieving the delivery of modern energy services to the rural households of Nigeria" UNIDO Representative in Nigeria and RIDC Director, David Tommy.

UNIDO's Regional Industrial Development Centre (RIDC) in Abuja, Nigeria, held a two-week training course from 25 July to 5 August under the UNIDO-REEEP (Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Partnership) -funded *Sustainable Energy Development of Ebonyi State* project. This project is building capacities in the [newly formed State of Ebonyi](#) to develop institutions and sustainable energy policies that support the utilization of locally renewable energy resources. The project provides technical assistance to the government, its agencies and the private sector in utilizing agricultural wastes such as rice husk and sawdust for energy generation. These agricultural wastes are currently unutilized and causing environmental pollution.

The training course was on building capacities for the establishment of a State-level Energy Planning Cell (EPC), and as the title of the project suggests, the initial focus was to be on Ebonyi State. Due to interest expressed by neighbouring States, however, the class ended up with twelve participants (including engineers, economists and planners) from five additional states ([Bauchi](#), [Edo](#), [Imo](#), [Rivers](#) and [Delta](#) - see [map](#)) as well as the Energy Commission of Nigeria.

Over the two weeks, the participants looked closely at the two critical questions challenging energy development practitioners: *what is the best combination of locally available, least cost and modern energies for household use; and, how best should they be supplied and delivered with the involvement of local enterprise, livelihoods and 'energy agents'.*

The trainers, Anthea Dickie of IMA International (UK) and Paul Harris of Integrated Energy Solutions (South Africa), said that the course has left a "deposit of knowledge and skill" with the delegates that involved a

significant paradigm shift. Assimilation of the knowledge gained and sharing of the lessons learnt will follow as the delegates now prepare state level plans and campaign for the implementation of sustainable energy projects. The plans will be used by UNIDO to develop technical assistance projects in the states.

The Energy Component of the course was built around two practical rural energy planning toolkits, EnPower and RESCO developed under projects funded by UK's Department for International Development (DFID). The tools can be downloaded from the *Energy Voices* webpage: (http://www.etsu.com/energy_voices/index.html).

[The RESCO design tool](#) supports the establishment of rural energy service companies (RESCOs). RESCOs are organizations specifically designed and set-up to meet household and working energy service needs of rural communities. The RESCO project was led by Future Energy Solutions (UK) with support from developing country partners located in India (Tata Energy Research Institute) and South Africa (Integrated Energy Solutions).

[The EnPower tool](#) facilitates the selection of appropriate combinations of modern energy services to provide sustainable solutions for poor communities. The EnPower tool provides a practical model that can capture energy developmental needs from a demand-side perspective (ie an approach that gives community needs a voice) and then convert these into appropriate, sustainable interventions. The EnPower project was led by Future Energy Solutions (UK) with support from developing country partners located in India (3EC) and South Africa (Integrated Energy Solutions).

Key topics studied by the representatives of the state energy ministries were: The role of energy in development; Understanding the relationship between modern energy services, appliances and the fuel source; Delivery of appliance fuel combination that will provide for essential electricity and thermal needs; Methods and approaches to ensure all stakeholders, especially the rural community and household have a say is what will be delivered; Development of market enabling policy frameworks that will ensure commercial interests and entrepreneurship is harnessed for the wide scale roll out of the selected "baskets" of fuels and appliances; and How to prepare business plans and start up local energy service enterprises.

The training in the establishment of a State level Energy Planning Cell also had a management component, covering: issues of gender and participatory poverty appraisal; project planning and design using the Logical Framework Approach; Monitoring and Evaluation; and effective management and leadership for both individual and organisational change. These concepts provided a foundation and framework for the more specifically targeted energy planning elements.

Throughout the course, theory took second place to practical application, from interviews in rural households, development of initial logical framework-based state energy plans to the formation of a business plan for a community "energy agent".

At the graduation ceremony, UNIDO Representative in Nigeria and RIDC Director, Mr David Tommy, concluded the course with the challenge "this course is not about hanging a certificate on the wall, but about achieving the delivery of modern Energy Services to the rural households of Nigeria".

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