



BRIEFING PAPER - EU Development Policy

Decentralised Renewable Energy to Meet Energy Needs of Rural Communities and Farmers: Simple, Accessible, Affordable and Sustainable

Hivos
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Hivos is a development organisation guided by humanist values. Together with civil society organisations in developing countries, Hivos contributes to a free, fair and sustainable world. A world in which women, men and children have equal access to opportunities and resources for development. Our projects are aimed at enabling people to participate actively and equally in the decision-making processes that determine their lives and their society. In this way, Hivos gives people a voice.

Hivos trusts in the creativity and capacity of people. Quality, cooperation and innovation are core values in Hivos' business philosophy. Hivos is committed to poor and marginalised people in Africa, Asia and Latin America. A structural and lasting improvement in these people's lives is the ultimate measure for the work and efforts of Hivos. One of the guiding principles of our philosophy is strengthening the social position of women.

Decentralised Renewable Energy to Meet Energy Needs of Rural Communities and Farmers: Simple, Accessible, Affordable and Sustainable

ENERGY NEEDS IN RURAL AREAS

One fifth of the world's population, 1.3 billion people, has no access to electricity. Some 2.6 billion rely on inefficient traditional cooking stoves that emit dangerous fumes. The majority of these people live in poverty, often in remote rural communities. The reduction of inequalities is central to the international development goals; energy access for all must be achieved.

Addressing the needs of rural communities and smallholder farmers is central to this effort, and ensuring access to efficient, clean energy is at the core of the development needs of these communities and farmers, so as to increase rural productivity, provide light for education and to stop indoor air pollution. Decentralised renewable schemes are best suited to generating the energy needs for such communities.

The European Union's development policy is unambiguously focused on poverty eradication (art 208, TFEU) and Renewable Energy is increasingly recognised as an important element of the development actions. The European Parliament noted with concern that 84% of those without access to modern energy live in rural areas in the poorest areas of the world, such as sub-Saharan Africa and developing Asia:

"[...] a situation that creates indoor smoke which is responsible for over 1,4 million premature deaths per year, making it, after HIV/Aids, the second most frequent reason for premature deaths worldwide; whereas the current lack of access to modern energy services in many poor countries has led to gender inequality and particularly disadvantages women and children."¹

Providing smallholder farmers and the rural communities in which they live with access to modern energy facilities would help create new economic opportunities related to agricultural products, and enable new businesses to be developed. This would help to reduce migration from these rural areas and reduce pressure on urban areas.²

Energy needs of people living in poverty can be met. It requires a decentralised approach to renewable energy that is simple, accessible, affordable and sustainable.

Simple: low technical maintenance

Accessible: to reach the needs in rural and remote areas

Affordable: to low-income households and smallholder farms

Sustainable: to provide a long-term solution and protect natural resources

This briefing paper sets out how EU development cooperation can respond to the energy needs of rural communities through Decentralised Renewable schemes.

COSTS OF CONTINUED ENERGY POVERTY

The International Energy Agency (IEA) defines energy poverty as:

a lack of access to modern energy services. These services are defined as household access to electricity and clean cooking facilities (e.g. fuels and stoves that do not cause air pollution in houses).³

According to the IEA, over 1.3 billion people live without access to electricity (over 20% of the global population) and about 2.6 billion people live without clean cooking facilities (roughly 40% of the global population). More than 95% of these people are either in sub-Saharan Africa or developing Asia and 84% are in rural areas.⁴

The study *Access to Energy in Developing Countries* commissioned by the European Parliament, points out that energy poverty has manifold implications. First of all, due to the extensive use of biomass, it entails numerous economic costs, direct and indirect, such as:

- » the cost of using fuel wood and other sources of energy instead of modern fuels;
- » an excessive use of wood in inefficient stoves;
- » reduced agricultural productivity due to the diversion of potential fertilizers toward household use; and

- » the opportunity cost involved in collecting biomass rather than going to school or generating income.⁵

The indoor use of solid fuels poses severe health risks and results in more deaths per year than from malaria. In Asia and Africa it is already one of the leading causes of death. The smoke from wood and petroleum fires causes diseases such as cancer and pneumonia, particularly among women and children. Almost half of the victims are younger than 5 years old and among adults 60% of those affected are women. The disproportionate, negative impact on women and girls can furthermore be perceived as they spend hours gathering traditional biomass for use as fuel, and cook in close proximity to the fires that emit the fumes. These indoor fumes are dangerous for the health of infants. Moreover, over 400 million people worldwide use coal in their cooking ovens, particularly in China, and this practice also pollutes and is unhealthy⁶. A March 2014 report by the World Health Organisation (WHO) shows that the impact of indoor smoke is even bigger than assumed before: indoor air pollution is linked to 4.3 million deaths in 2012 in households cooking over coal, wood and biomass stoves.⁷

The impact on the environment is considerable as the collection of wood for fuel and charcoal production cause deforestation and reduce soil productivity. These outcomes contribute to climate change. Insufficient access to modern energy sources in rural areas also exacerbates urbanisation, as people migrate in search of work increasing the number of urban poor, which puts additional pressure on cities to provide adequate services to its growing number of citizens.⁸

It is clear that addressing the energy needs of people living in poor rural and remote farming communities is vital in the fight against poverty. It should be a top priority for development cooperation.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

The use of cleaner and renewable sources of energy can enable communities to use natural resources sustainably and protect the local and global environment by reducing emissions. This is important as it is predicted that the highest future growth in global greenhouse emissions will take place in developing countries.⁹ Moreover, the use of renewable energy in rural areas benefits the health of people living in the community as access to more modern stoves reduces indoor smoke, thus diminishing the prevalence of respiratory diseases as well as the time required to collect fuel. There are many different ways in which this can and is being addressed. Investments in more efficient cooking stoves reduce fuel use as well as pollution. Hivos is working with civil society organisations and social entrepreneurs such as SCODE in reaching a wide range and number of people to gain access to modern Improved Cook Stoves and Domestic Biogas energy technologies in East Africa.

Access to modern energy enables increased productivity by extending the hours available for work as well as opportunities for new business, and facilitates higher levels of education by enabling students to continue studying after sunset.¹⁰ The majority of people in developing countries live in rural communities. Connecting a large proportion of these more remote rural communities to the grid is not feasible because of the costs involved in extending grid infrastructure, and according to the *World Energy Outlook* published by the IEA providing such services to remote communities is best achieved through decentralised solutions powered by renewable energy.¹¹ In addition experience has shown that even in communities that have been connected to the grid, connection charges for individual households are prohibitive for many. The beneficiaries are those that can afford to pay the charge.

The reduction of energy poverty is a key step in achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.¹² These goals, which include reducing poverty and hunger, reducing maternal health and child mortality, reducing gender disparities in education and ensuring environmental sustainability, necessitate improved access to modern energy.¹³ While agreement still needs to be reached on the next set of development goals set in place for the period beyond 2015, it has already been acknowledged that renewable energy must be central.

BIOGAS ENERGY SUCCESS IN AFRICA

Since 2009 over 38,000 biogas digesters have been constructed under the Africa Biogas Partnership Programme (ABPP) managed by Hivos and SNV. Some 200,000 people have gained access to clean and renewable energy, and 38,000 families benefited with organic manure for agriculture. The biogas sector is currently producing around 1,500 units every month in 5 countries. Biogas has a greater market in urban or *peri*-urban areas where most people can afford the costs and where there is a high scarcity of firewood. This initiative responds to a growing need for a sustainable source of fuel, especially given the expense of paraffin and negative impact on the environmental. Producing biogas is an opportunity as a source of income.¹⁴

Biogas has also offered direct income for many people: local masons who construct the biogas plants, and farmers from the sale of surplus energy and increased agricultural productivity from the use of bio-slurry. These households benefit from the reduced time spent in collecting firewood for cooking using. They are also able to use this energy for lighting. The environmental benefits include reduced use of charcoal and firewood leading to a reduction in deforestation (Kenya had an estimated deforestation rate of 5,000 hectares per year by 2010), and a healthier environment with reductions in respiratory diseases associated with excessive smoke from the use of firewood and charcoal.¹⁵

“Biogas is cheap to produce, clean to use and has helped my family utilize the waste from our dairy herd. It has also boosted our crop production through the production of fertilizer in form of slurry”, said Alex Karuhia, a farmer at Kiambu County. Alex Karuhia is one of the 10,000 farmers that have benefited from the Kenya National Biogas Programme since 2009.

“Each farmer is required to raise 75 per cent of the total cost of installing the biogas unit. They must also have at least two dairy cows under a zero-grazing system to boost collection of animal waste”, asserted Collins, the Biogas technician for Kiambu region.

“We supervise to ensure that the fitting is done well and the whole unit is functional and readily usable by farmers. We also train farmers on operations and maintenance of the biogas unit once installation is over”, said Tanui, Biogas Technician for Eldoret.

Biogas has great potential to reach people of all social and economic backgrounds in East Africa. Different technologies can be explored and promoted not only for more well off households who can afford the investment and the assumed risks, but also the poorest of the poor who do not own cattle or land. Other appropriate biogas technologies that do not necessarily need dung feedstock as a prerequisite for biogas are already in the market, thus opening the space for more people to benefit directly from domestic biogas programmes.¹⁶

EU REGULATIONS

The sustainability of rural communities and the stimulation of agricultural productivity are key drivers of the European Union, both in its internal and external policies. The importance of ensuring a sustainable environment, fostering economically viable livelihoods, the fight against hunger and poverty, and the promotion of education and health meet as shared concerns around rural development. Decentralised Renewable Energy is a key factor in all of these.

The Lisbon Treaty stipulates that the EU's internal and external policies must be coherent. Decentralised rural and renewable energy policy has strong support in European policy as for instance in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and legislation as well as amongst the European public.

The Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) governs EU development policy and is one of the main sources

of finance for its implementation. For countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) regions the ACP-EU Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) defines the terms of the cooperation between the EU and these countries financed from the European Development Fund (EDF).

The DCI underlines the need to increasingly align internal and external policies:

In a globalised world, different internal EU policies such as environment, climate change, promotion of renewable energies, employment (including decent work for all), gender equality, energy, water, transport, health, education, justice and security, culture, research and innovation, information society, migration, agriculture and fisheries, are increasingly becoming part of the EU's external action.¹⁷

The CPA sets out the importance of decentralised policies:

cooperation shall support sustainable policy and institutional reforms and the investments necessary for equitable access to economic activities and productive resources, particularly: [...] (c) development of rural strategies aimed at establishing a framework for participatory decentralised planning, resource allocation and management.¹⁸

The CPA further provides that:

cooperation shall also assist to restore and/or enhance critical public sector capacity and to support institutions needed to underpin a market economy, especially support for: [...] (d) building the capacity at the local and municipal levels which is required to implement decentralization policy and to increase the participation of the population in the development process.¹⁹

It also specifically incorporates the need for decentralization of development cooperation:

in order to respond to the needs of local communities with regard to development, and to encourage all agents of decentralised cooperation which are in a position to contribute to the autonomous development of the ACP States to put forward and implement initiatives.²⁰

The CPA emphasizes the importance of renewable energy for developing countries, pointing out that:

cooperation on environmental protection and sustainable utilisation and management of natural resources shall aim at: [...] (iii) renewable energy sources.²¹

The DCI expressly recognises that EU development cooperation must address these energy needs through decentralised renewable options:

fostering greater use of renewable energy technologies, in particular decentralised approaches, as well as energy efficiency and promoting sustainable low emission development strategies.²²

The promotion of renewable energies is considered in the DCI as an increasing challenge of the EU's external action in order to improve:

access to modern, affordable, sustainable, efficient, clean and renewable energy services; promoting local and regional sustainable energy solutions and decentralised energy production.²³

Enhancing the capacities of smallholder farmers and rural communities through the provision of access to Decentralised Renewable Energy will positively impact on the revival of rural communities and small scale farming as well as on climate change and environmental policies.

EU POLICY

The EU Agenda for Change (2011) states that with regard to agriculture:

the EU should support sustainable practices, including the safeguarding of ecosystem services, giving priority to locally-developed practices and focusing on smallholder agriculture and rural livelihoods [...].²⁴

In addition, it argues that “access to secure, affordable, clean and sustainable energy services”²⁵ is one of the three main challenges to be addressed in the field of energy.

The EU has been consistently leading on the importance of access to energy in reducing poverty on the international level, and as early as 2002 launched the policy initiative “EU Energy Initiative for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development” at the World Summit on Sustainable Development.²⁶

Under the European Consensus for Development (2005), environmental sustainability is considered one of the four crosscutting issues, meaning that it should be integrated into all EU development activities as a key pillar of sustainable development.²⁷ The European Commission sees the provision of energy as crucial for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Smallholder farmers should be considered an important target group for European development aid as they provide a substantial part of the food necessary in developing countries. Increased access to efficient, clean energy enables sustained access to food sources, creates jobs in agriculture and can improve access to water, both for human consumption and for the irrigation of gardens and fields.²⁸

In recent times, policies have been put in place at the EU level to make the EU's aid and development response more crosscutting, effective and consistent. The concept of Policy Coherence for Development was introduced

to help ensure that all policy areas of the EU would not impact negatively on the EU's development objectives and actions. It became a legal obligation when it was included in the Lisbon Treaty. In 2009 this was further developed with the inception of the Whole-of-the-Union Approach to build more effective synergies between EU development cooperation policies and policies that are not directly related to developing countries but that shall have an impact on developing countries.²⁹

Support for renewable energy in favour of rural communities is seen in conjunction with the EU strategy on climate change and development. This has been defined in a number of statements and conclusions including the 2009 Council Conclusions on access to sustainable energy sources at local level in developing countries.³⁰ The conclusions explicitly call for the promotion of decentralised solutions based on renewable energies. It is emphasized that:

the EU will enhance its support to renewable energy systems in developing countries through appropriate demand-driven, local, sustainable energy solutions. [...] The objectives are to supply sustainable energy services to meet the local needs and to stimulate enterprise and job creation.³¹

It is pointed out that renewable sources of energy are amongst the necessary conditions for enhancing economic activities and reduction of poverty. The priority of the EU's efforts should therefore be to support accessible sources of energy at the local level.

The EU's Environment Action Programme 2014 - 2020, adopted by the European Parliament and Council sets out the overall approach of the EU for fulfilling its commitments to achieve sustainable development both within the EU and at a global level. It recognises that ensuring the sustainable use of resources is central to ending poverty and securing a sustainable future for the world. It therefore commits the Union to engaging proactively in international efforts to develop the solutions needed to ensure sustainable development globally.³²

RESOURCES FOR DECENTRALISED ENERGY

The European Union has a significant number of programmes that deal with natural resource challenges in developing countries. Under the European Development Fund (EDF) this includes the EU Energy Initiative for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development (EUEI) and the EU-Africa Energy Partnership. One of the instruments of the EU-Africa Energy Partnership is the

EU-Africa Energy Facility, which was developed in 2005 specifically to support projects that increase access to sustainable development and affordable energy services for people living in poverty in rural and semi-urban areas in ACP countries.

The 11th EDF for the period 2014-2020 has a budget of around €29 billion, as agreed by the EU and the Member States in the framework of the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement.³³ It is divided between the national and regional indicative programmes (around €24 billion), intra-ACP and intra-regional cooperation (around €4 billion), and investment Facilities (around €1 billion).

Despite the overall cuts to the global EU 2014-2020 budget the agreement on the DCI provides around €19 billion for the DCI compared to €17 billion for the previous seven year period. The regulatory framework of the DCI includes provision for geographic programmes and thematic programmes, which could have a significant impact on the needs of rural communities. Around €12 billion are allocated to these geographic programmes. Geographic programmes are supporting cooperation with 47 developing countries and provide for at least 45 % of its financial allocations for inclusive and sustainable growth for human development, which could include an implementation of projects relating to Decentralised Renewable Energy in favour of small farmers.

The actions to be undertaken within thematic programmes will focus on poverty eradication, social cohesion and sustainable development. The amount available for the thematic programmes is €7 billion (2014-2020). These thematic actions target Global Public Goods and Challenges (such as sustainable energy, human development and food security) with an allocation of €5 billion, and Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities, with an allocation of €2 billion. In the latter area support for decentralised opportunities for developing countries is an explicit priority. With regards to the programme for Global Public Goods and Challenges no less than 50% will be used for climate change and environmental objectives and at least 20% on social inclusion and human development.³⁴ Next to these geographic and thematic programmes, the DCI contains the Pan-African Programme, which represents €845 million and is being set up to implement the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), complemented with other financial instruments, especially the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) and the EDF.

CO-CREATING ENERGY ECOSYSTEMS

The challenge to provide sustainable energy for all has triggered multiple parties to develop various renewable energy solutions. However, studies show that results are too isolated. Most projects focus on *one* technical solution and are financed through *one* funding channel, and do not cover the full range of energy needs of households, businesses and the public sector³⁵.

On the island of Sumba, Hivos has developed a new approach to overcome these weaknesses: an area-based, multi-stakeholder initiative that integrates all financial and technical solutions into one energy ecosystem.³⁶ The approach involves and connects all parties, solving problems such as lack of ownership and hampered cooperation between energy actors.

With 'Iconic Island Sumba' Hivos has set the benchmark: 100% renewable energy to empower people, spur economic development and support public services. At the start of the initiative three years ago, only 25% of the 700,000 inhabitants had access to electricity; now 44% of the island's inhabitants enjoy energy generated by solar panels, windmills and micro-hydro installations. The approach not only benefits consumers, but producers as well: over 50 farming families saw their income increase because of a new solar application for irrigation, and another 150 now use their own biogas and fertile bioslurry. These results show the potential of economic development thanks to renewable energy.

On Sumba Hivos is showing that a multi-stakeholder approach can improve *and* green the whole energy system. Hivos successfully invited private sector players, the Indonesian government and civil society actors to participate.³⁷ One of the biggest infrastructure companies in Indonesia is preparing its investments in wind power. The Indonesian Ministry of Energy has taken responsibility for the realisation of the objectives, and the initiative is financially supported by the Asian Development Bank as well as the Dutch and Norwegian governments.

Open-minded co-creation and cooperation between all stakeholders has turned out to be key to the successes on Sumba. Hivos laid the foundations and facilitated the process by investing in research, feasibility studies, pilots and sharing this with all stakeholders. This made it possible for all to join in and to take responsibility. Hivos firmly believes that this multi-stakeholder model can be replicated to other locations inside and outside Asia. 'Iconic Island Sumba' shows governments and multilateral institutions the way forward in renewable energy solutions – perhaps better than any advocacy campaign could do.

MULTI-ANNUAL PROGRAMMING

This is a crucial moment in the EU's history for addressing the importance of smallholder farmers and their energy needs as the EU is starting its next seven-year financial cycle. During negotiations on the EU's new DCI that will govern the EU development funding for the period 2014-2020 there was a growing concern that the European Commission might be tempted to focus principally on 'on-grid' renewable technologies for cities and large industries instead of energy solutions for the 84% of those smallholder farmers and rural communities with no access to energy. These concerns were addressed by the European Parliament and the Council and addressed in amendments incorporated in the DCI.

EU policy clearly encourages opportunities to support decentralised energy needs of smallholder farmers and rural communities for the coming years. The challenge is now to ensure that sufficient priority is given to financing smallholder farmers' energy needs from the EU's funding covered by the DCI. The European Parliament and the European Council play a key role in ensuring that this will happen. As stated by European Parliament DCI rapporteur Thijs Berman (Social and Democratic Group, Netherlands):

For the next seven years EU cooperation policy will focus on human and sustainable development. All our policies will be taking a human rights-based approach and will be aimed at the poorest countries. Under this new regulation, the European Parliament will have more opportunity to check how policies are put into practice.³⁸

This can be achieved using both the global thematic instruments of the DCI, and the geographical resources of both the DCI and the EDF. The basis for this is clearly set out in both of these instruments, and the EU's stated commitment to support smallholder farmers and rural communities now needs to be reflected in the planning and implementation of the EU's development budget for the next 7 years. All the relevant actors need to be involved, official and non-state, in Europe and in the developing world, including representatives of the smallholder farmers and the rural communities from which they come.

In Europe the EU's institutions have their respective roles to play as set out in the DCI, CPA and the Regulation establishing common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for external

action.³⁹ In formal terms, the geographical programmes adopted will be the result of dialogue between the EU and the official representatives of countries concerned. The EU and national governments are expected to involve relevant non-state actors in processes of consultation on the programming strategies that should be adopted, which provides opportunities for civil society to press for the inclusion and prioritisation of support for Decentralised Renewable Energy schemes that benefit smallholder farmers and rural communities. It is clearly identified as a priority in the DCI, which emphasises that:

Programming documents for geographic programmes, including joint programming documents, shall be based, to the extent possible, on a dialogue between the Union, Member States and the partner country or region, including national and regional parliaments, and involve civil society and local authorities and other parties so as to enhance ownership of the process and to encourage support for national development strategies, particularly those for reducing poverty.⁴⁰

Civil society and other non-state actors should anticipate being involved in the process establishing national strategies and programmes that the EU will support, and prepare beforehand. In any case it is not necessary to wait to be invited to engage in order to present their perspectives on including Decentralised Renewable Energy within the EU's programme of support. Highlighting the importance of such schemes and initiating contact with national authorities, as well as with EU representatives, can have more impact particularly where there is involvement of smallholders and rural community stakeholders.

BUILDING ON SUCCESS AND UPSCALING

In a 2006 report on the environmental aspects of the Commission's development cooperation the European Court of Auditors advised the European Commission to

give greater attention to helping local communities find sustainable ways of using natural resources.⁴⁵

The European Commission highlights successes in implementing the introduction of decentralised energy. They cite sector programmes for Decentralised Renewable Energy that are already providing employment in rural economies and contributing to improved living conditions for smallholder farmers. The project Providing Access to Modern Energy in Northern Uganda (PAMENU), for example, provides basic energy services to rural households, social institutions, and small- and medium-sized businesses. So far, it has extended energy services to more than 190,000 households.⁴⁶ In addition, the Connecting Households in Central Africa programme supports households in semi-urban areas across Chad, Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, the Central African Republic and Republic of Congo.⁴⁷ These examples of EU development support providing off-the-grid renewable energy show that it is a feasible option. Investing in similar schemes elsewhere is important so as to bring access to energy to significantly more rural agricultural communities. It is important that the EU increases its investment in such schemes over the period 2014 to 2020.

In up-scaling these programmes, the EU can help foster new Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) - involving the private and public sector - to reach volumes that will make a significant contribution to agricultural output, livelihood generation and poverty eradication. This would

GRID ELECTRICITY ALONE NOT ENOUGH IN AFRICA

More than 95% of electricity generation in Tunisia comes from fossil-fuelled power stations. Tunisia also generates a small amount of power from renewable sources, such as wind and hydro. Electricity for Tunisians is quite expensive. For this reason, many Tunisians will abstain from using non-essential electrical appliances. Using them anyway might result in a blackout, since not only the house lines, but also the backups are in most cases inappropriately dimensioned and the simultaneous operation of several pieces of major equipment (eg. washing machine and electric oven), and sometimes even the sole operation of a single large unit (air conditioning) is not possible or only briefly for a short period of time. Dr. Dhamir MANNAI (MP) of the republic of Tunisia alluded to this in his presentation during the International parliamentary forum in Tanzania (2013) co-organized by the Climate Parliament and UNDP.⁴¹

The rural electrification programme (REP) in Kenya aims to connect rural households to the grid. This has not provided a level solution for energy access to the diverse rural communities' populations. The beneficiaries of this programme are those who can afford the 35,000 KES connection fee (about €300). Of the 22,000 public primary schools, only 10,000 schools have access to electricity in Kenya. Most schools in very remote places do not expect to get connected to the grid in the near future. The government of Kenya has also acknowledged the critical role to be played by alternative energy options for basic services to communities in Kenya. Solar options are considered as promising.⁴²

Whereas grid connection has been highly favoured by most governments in East Africa as the primary option for energy provision, it is evident that there is a desperate need for other off grid options to fill the visible gap that exists.⁴³ Such options are highlighted by the International Renewable Energy Agency in its global scenarios.⁴⁴

also impact favourably on levels of CO₂ emissions, health indicators and gender equality. An example is the African Biogas Partnership Programme, which is set to develop a market-based programme for biogas in six African countries, managed by Hivos and SNV.⁴⁸

The European Commission is preparing a communication on private sector engagement.⁴⁹ It will be important that this communication sets a framework for increased

cooperation between public, private and non-profit sector on energy, ensuring that decentralised energy remains an important component of overall strategies to provide increased access to energy. This will provide an important opportunity to up-scale the programmes that have rendered good results, and blend financing from different sources in an attempt to create greater synergies between public policies, private sector activities and civil society programmes.

IMPROVED COOK STOVES GROWING DEMAND IN EAST AFRICA

Cooking for millions of households in East Africa region is associated with long hours spent collecting wood and other fuels, which become increasingly scarce and costly. In addition, smoky kitchens and the use of high intensity carbon fuels such as charcoal give off dangerous emissions affecting both human health and the environment. It is estimated that indoor air pollution caused 4.3 million deaths in 2012 in households cooking over coal, wood and biomass stoves⁵⁰ – more than those from malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. Hivos is working with SCODE in the development of sustainable markets for fuel-efficient, affordable cook stoves. SCODE has been very instrumental in reaching a wider range and number of people to gain access to modern Improved Cook Stoves (ICS) energy technologies. Within the last two years the target of disseminating 20,000 ICS was surpassed. A great number of rural and peri-urban households and institutions have acquired, use and maintain the ICS. Users are happy with the ICS as they are durable and require few repairs.⁵¹

Structures to sustain the use of ICS's are being put in place. A local fuel wood supply to produce the fuel is being developed. By the end of 2013 fifteen tree producing entrepreneurs had received technical and business development support training, and signed agreements with SCODE to ensure their active engagement in the production of 50,000 seedlings per year. Thirty per cent (30%) of fuel wood producers and marketers are women, who also constitute half (50%) of ICS entrepreneurs. This demonstrates how many women are actively participating as both beneficiaries and entrepreneurs in the ICS value chain.⁵²

With this intervention a great number of women and men from rural and peri-urban households, as well as institutions, can acquire, use and maintain energy efficient wood-fuel cook stoves. One interesting story in Kenya is of a school cook who has been able to start studying during her free time, due to the reduction of cooking time linked to the use of ICS.

The main challenge faced by this technological intervention is the lack of agreed standards, which hinders its ability to penetrate the mainstream market as a competitive product in the country.⁵³

THE EU'S ROLE

Recognising the importance of addressing the decentralised energy needs, EU Commissioner of Development Cooperation, Andris Piebalgs, has identified that:

Small-scale initiatives will be addressed under the Global Public Goods programme of the DCI.⁵⁴

But is this enough to reach the priority that must be given to decentralised access to renewable energy? Whereas the Global Public Goods programme can play a key role in enabling policies for decentralised energy access, the geographic programmes and sectoral support programmes for energy should equally address the Decentralised Renewable Energy needs of rural communities.

Commissioner Andris Piebalgs recognized the need to balance the portfolios relating to renewable energy

to make sure that these are not skewed against poor communities with no energy access:

With regard to our energy related development policy, let me reassure you that creating a balanced portfolio of instruments that can answer to the basic needs for energy of poor people is at the very heart of our policy. Only through such a balanced portfolio approach can we address the cross-sectorial issues linked to energy poverty, be it in rural, peri-urban or urban areas.⁵⁵

In the up scaling of Decentralised Renewable Energy, it is important that different actors - government and public sector, private sector and civil society organisations - find new modus operandi to realise the challenge of responding to the urgent energy needs of people living in rural areas in the poorest countries. The European Commission has an important role in showcasing how such needs can be supported and addressed in response to the needs identified by partner countries in the developing regions.

Recommendations to ensure EU Support for Decentralised Renewable Energy for Small Holder Farmers

Within the new generation of policies and programmes for the EU's cooperation with developing countries there are increased commitments to provide support for renewable energy as part of the EU's overall strategy to reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses. To be consistent with the EU's commitment to rural development and its Treaty obligation to address poverty, Decentralised Renewable Energy schemes are up-scaled so as to benefit smallholder farmers and rural communities.

The European Commission should support future efforts put in place for an effective implementation of Decentralised Renewable Energy in favour of small farmers.

The European Commission should:

1. Continue to provide leadership in the area of Renewable Energy and lead innovations whilst prioritising the programming for Renewable Energy in National Indicative Programmes that are inclusive of Decentralised Renewable Energy;
2. Ensure the inclusion of Decentralised Energy for rural communities and small farmers in thematic energy programmes and sector programmes, in recognition of the legal framework provided for this in the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), in the programme on Global Public Goods and elsewhere;
3. Enhance the capabilities of smallholder farmers to contribute to food provision in developing countries and to economic prosperity through the facilitation of access to Decentralised Renewable schemes;
4. Include smallholder farmers' associations and associations representing rural communities in programming exercises and in implementation and ensure provisions of energy programmes are earmarked for this objective;
5. Ensure that the Communication on Private Sector Engagement respects the provision in the Lisbon Treaty that development cooperation should benefit people living in poverty;
6. Ensure that the Communication on Private Sector Engagement is cognisant of the Framework for

Policy Coherence with Development and includes an appropriate framework for cooperation with non profit organisations, associations and local community service providers as an integral part of joint efforts to reach out to local communities, remote areas and smallholder farmers, and to ensure that subsidies are in line with the Treaty and regulations, and are targeted to support this objective;

7. Learn from Member States' experiences to support cooperation between different aid channels of non profit, private sector and bilateral programmes to maximize synergy through blending, whilst optimising the potential to effectively target energy poverty in remote areas, poor communities and small farmers' households;
8. Build on successful European initiatives to promote energy access using decentralised schemes, such as the EU-ACP Energy Facility, and integrate the successes in the exercise of up-scaling the programmes for Decentralised Renewable Energy;
9. Ensure that low cost, low carbon Decentralised Renewable Energy schemes (such as biogas) are prioritised where possible over high carbon schemes (such as coal, oil and natural gas) in line with the EU's Environment Action Plan.

The European Parliament should:

10. Ensure that National Indicative Programmes address Renewable Energy with a view to providing access to energy to people living in poverty, remote areas and small farmers using decentralised generating schemes;
11. Ask the Court of Auditors to carry out research regarding the adequate implementation of Energy Policy in developing countries being in line with the Lisbon Treaty and the regulatory framework set out in the DCI and the EDF, as part of the discharge procedure;
12. Ensure that the European Commission Communication on Private Sector Engagement respects the provision in the Lisbon Treaty that development cooperation should benefit people living in poverty;
13. Ensure that the Communication on Private Sector Engagement is cognisant of the Framework for

Policy Coherence with Development and includes an appropriate framework for cooperation with non profit organisations, associations and local community service providers as an integral part of joint efforts to reach out to local communities, remote areas and small farmers, and to ensure that subsidies are in line with the Treaty and regulations and are targeted to support this objective;

14. Support the EC thematic programme on Energy in Developing Countries, that builds on successful European initiatives, such as the EU-ACP Energy Facility, in the programmes intended to upscale programmes for Renewable Energy;
15. Ensure that low cost, low carbon decentralised Renewable Energy schemes (such as biogas) are prioritised where possible over high carbon schemes (such as solar) in line with the EU's Environment Action Plan.

The Member States should:

16. Support the implementation of policies on the decentralisation of Renewable Energy by providing technical assistance and supervision;
17. Strengthen the dialogue with the EU on Decentralised Renewable Energy implementation plans in favour of rural communities and smallholder farmers in developing countries;
18. Coordinate with other national and multilateral stakeholders through a better exchange of information on programmes and an increased number of co-operative activities;
19. Support partner countries' effort to strengthen local democratic governance in the context of access to sustainable energy services for smallholder farmers.

Governments of EU partner developing countries should:

20. Work in concert with the EU and Local Civil Society in order to make the decentralisation of Renewable Energy possible;
21. Ensure the implementation of EU Projects on energy by involving Civil Society in the process and by giving a voice to the representative Groups for smallholder farmers;
22. Focus on the need to promote renewable energy schemes that enable the development of sustainable smallholder agriculture and livestock-keeping;
23. Strengthen cooperation, exchange of knowledge and experience on these issues with a view to contributing to poverty eradication, social cohesion and sustainable development.

The Civil Society Actors should:

24. Raise awareness on the importance and need for Decentralised Renewable Energy for enabling sustainable development in rural communities;
25. Engage with governments and relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, to help ensure that the importance to rural communities of having access to modern, affordable and reliable energy services is taken into account;
26. Draw on the Regulation establishing common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for external action, which stresses "stakeholders of beneficiary countries, including civil society organisations and local authorities have a prominent role regarding the external policy of the Union. During the implementation process, notably the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of measures taken under this Regulation, it is important to duly consult them to ensure they play a meaningful role in this process and duly consider their specificities"⁵⁶;
27. Consistently monitor the planning and implementation of development programmes of the EU, Members States and developing countries;
28. Collaborate with other stakeholders from the Civil Society in order to better represent the requests from the rural communities.

The Private Sector should:

29. Take account of the pressing energy needs of rural communities in poor countries and seek ways of collaborating with governments and civil society organisations to address these needs as part of development programmes in energy services;
30. Promote inclusive decentralised low carbon approaches to Renewable Energy;
31. Consult Government and Decentralised government and Civil Society Organisations to better understand the priorities of rural communities and their decentralised energy needs;
32. Build on the successes in servicing Decentralised Renewable Energy and seek partnership honouring the experiences built by organisations in these areas.

List of abbreviations

ABPP	Africa Biogas Partnership Programme
ACP	Africa Caribbean and Pacific
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CPA	Cotonou Partnership Agreement
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
EC	European Commission
EDF	European Development Fund
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
EU	European Union
ICS	Improved Cooking Stoves
IEA	International Energy Agency
JAES	Joint Africa-EU Strategy
KES	Kenya Shillings
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MP	Member of Parliament
PAMENU	Providing Access to Modern Energy in Northern Uganda
PPP	Public Private Partnership
SCODE	Sustainable Community Development Services
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation

COLOPHON

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ANNEX 1

Articles supporting Decentralised Energy for Rural Communities and Small Farmers

DCI:

The following articles in the DCI provisional text- adopted by the European Parliament on the 11 December⁶² - support the promotion of decentralised energy for rural communities and small farmers:

- » The promotion of renewable energy, flanking policies on the environment, climate change and agriculture as increasing part of the EU's external action (Recital 14): *"In a globalised world, different internal EU policies such as environment, climate change, promotion of renewable energies, employment (including decent work for all), gender equality, energy, water, transport, health, education, justice and security, culture, research and innovation, information society, migration, agriculture and fisheries, are increasingly becoming part of the EU's external action"*.⁶⁶
- » The principle of Policy Coherence for Development as enshrined in the TFEU (Article 3 – paragraph 5): *"In implementing this Regulation, policy coherence for development and consistency with other areas of Union external action and with other relevant Union policies shall be ensured, in accordance with article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU"*.⁶⁴
- » The enhancement of local ownership of development strategies by involving civil society actors, as well as regional and local authorities, in defining geographic programmes (Article 11 – paragraph -1 a): *"[...] Programming documents for geographic programmes, including joint programming documents, shall be based, to the extent possible, on a dialogue between the Union, Member States and the partner country or region, including national and regional parliaments, and involve civil society and local authorities and other parties so as to enhance ownership of the process and to encourage support for national development strategies, particularly those for reducing poverty"*.⁶⁵
- » The improvement of access to Decentralised Renewable Energy services to enhance the human development in the sustainable growth issue (Annex IV – Chapter A – Inclusive and sustainable growth for human development – point d):
"Improving access to modern, affordable, sustainable, efficient, clean and renewable energy services; promoting local and regional sustainable energy solutions and decentralised energy production".⁶⁶
- » The areas of activity under thematic programmes, global public goods and challenges are guided by policies which contribute to poverty eradication, social cohesion and sustainable development and strive to maximum synergy in light of their strong interconnection (Annex V – Chapter A – introductory part):
"In compliance with the conditions laid down in Article 6, the Global public goods and challenges programme aims at strengthening cooperation, exchange of knowledge and experience and partner countries' capacities with a view to contribute to poverty eradication, social cohesion and sustainable development. The programme shall be drawn from the following areas of cooperation, ensuring a maximum synergy amongst them in light of their strong interconnection".⁶⁷
- » The promotion of access to reliable, secure affordable, climate-friendly and sustainable energy services are a key driver for poverty eradication and inclusive growth and development as long as they have a special emphasis on the use of local and regional renewable energy sources and on ensuring access for poor people in remote areas (Annex V – Chapter A – Sustainable Energy – point a):
"Promoting access to reliable, secure, affordable, climate-friendly and sustainable energy services as a key driver for poverty eradication and inclusive growth and development with a special emphasis on the use of local and regional renewable energy sources and on ensuring access for poor people in remote regions".⁶⁸
- » The focus on fostering greater use of renewable energy technologies, in particular decentralised approaches in the thematic programmes (Annex V – Chapter A – Sustainable Energy – point b):
"Fostering greater use of renewable energy technologies, in particular decentralised approaches,

as well as energy efficiency and promoting sustainable low emission development strategies".⁶⁹

- » The focus on promoting the development of sustainable smallholder agriculture and livestock-keeping (Annex V – Chapter A – Food security and sustainable agriculture – point a):
"Promoting the development of sustainable smallholder agriculture and livestock-keeping through ecosystem-based, low carbon and climate-resilient secure access to technology (including information and communication technologies), through the recognition, promotion and reinforcement of local and autonomous adaptation strategies with regard to climate change, and through extension and technical services, rural development schemes, productive and responsible investment measures, in accordance with international guidelines, sustainable land and natural resource management, protection of land rights of the population in its various form and access to land for local populations, protection of genetic diversity, in an enabling economic environment".⁷⁰

In this framework, it is worth noting the interest of the European Union towards the promotion of renewable energy and for a decentralised approach that would be beneficial for small farmers.

COTONOU AGREEMENT

The promotion of decentralised energy for rural communities and small farmers is also included in the Cotonou agreement, as the following articles highlight:

- » Article 1: "the partnership shall be centred on the objective of reducing and eventually eradicating poverty consistent with the objectives of sustainable development".⁷¹
- » Article 23: "Cooperation shall support sustainable policy and institutional reforms and the investments necessary for equitable access to economic activities and productive resources, particularly: [...] (c) development of rural strategies aimed at establishing a framework for participatory decentralised planning, resource allocation and management".⁷²

- » Article 32: "cooperation on environmental protection and sustainable utilisation and management of natural resources shall aim at: [...] (iii) renewable energy sources notably solar energy and energy efficiency".⁷³
- » Article 33.4: "cooperation shall also assist to restore and/or enhance critical public sector capacity and to support institutions needed to underpin a market economy, especially support for: [...] (d) building the capacity at the local and municipal levels which is required to implement decentralization policy and to increase the participation of the population in the development process".⁷⁴
- » Article 43.4: "the parties will therefore take measures that will enable inhabitants of ACP countries easy access to information and communication technologies, through, amongst other, the following measures: the development and encouragement of the use of affordable renewable energy resources".⁷⁵
- » Article 70: "in order to respond to the needs of local communities with regard to development, and to encourage all agents of decentralised cooperation which are in a position to contribute to the autonomous development of the ACP States to put forward and implement initiatives, cooperation shall support [...]: (a) micro-projects at local level which have an economic and social impact on the life of the people, meet a demonstrated and observed priority need, and shall be undertaken at the initiative and with the active participation of the local community which shall benefit therefrom".⁷⁶
- » Article 71: "micro-projects and decentralised cooperation operations may be supported from the financial resources of the Agreement".⁷⁷

ANNEX 2

Letter from Andris Piebalgs to Hivos

ANDRIS PIEBALGS
MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

111102
DFP

Brussels,
Cab Piebalgs/IR/an (2013) sv 3557315

30.10.2013

Dear Mr Witjes,

I would like to thank you for your letter in which you share your concerns with regard to EU's development policy and the support of small farmers.

With regard to our energy related development policy, let me reassure you that creating a balanced portfolio of instruments that can answer to the basic needs for energy of poor people is at the very heart of our policy. Only through such a balanced portfolio approach can we address the cross-sectorial issues linked to energy poverty, be it in rural, peri-urban or urban areas.

Actually in the next financial period (2014-2020), small scale initiatives will be addressed under the Global Public Goods programme of the Development Cooperation Instrument, where the Commission plans to dedicate an important part of its resources to activities which further the objectives of SE4ALL, Environment and Climate Change. Flagship initiatives like the Global Climate Change Alliance and a programme in support of switching to sustainable consumption and production are equally foreseen. In addition, energy access – particularly in rural areas – already plays an important role in many programs implemented by our delegations.

Besides, the range of activities we are already implementing in support of access to sustainable energy services and rural electrification is significant. I would like to recall that in the context of the energy facility – created through the EU Energy Initiative – the Commission has recently (3.6.2013) launched a call for proposals which focuses on rural electrification with decentralised renewable energy solutions. 55 Million euros are available to support projects from this call and energy access for productive use is an important criterion for project selection. We are currently also in the process of implementing the decision to allocate 65 Million euros for the SE4All Technical Assistance Facility (Call for Tenders for West & Central Africa and East and Southern Africa published 20.2.2013). This Technical Assistance Facility will allow us to help developing countries to set the appropriate framework for small-scale initiatives to flourish.

Mr Ben Witjes
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In order to monitor progress in this field, DG DEVCO is currently developing a tracking mechanism which will allow us to track the effort in rural and urban areas, and how much progress is made towards the different targets.

I hope that this can convince you of our sincere commitment to our common goals of sustainable energy in the framework of poverty alleviation. Please be assured that making the best use of available funds is our daily concern.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Piebalgs', written in a cursive style.

Andris PIEBALGS

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