



SID

Society for International Development
Vienna Chapter

Local initiatives for energy management **SID VIENNA Workshop series 2012**

The access to energy is a key issue now and for the years to come. Energy is an indispensable factor of production as well as a necessary prerequisite for the use of many consumption goods and services, among these modern communication and learning services. Development hence critically depends on its availability, affordability and common access for all.

The prevalent system of energy supply, based mainly on fossil fuels, and in peripheral regions also on traditional bio fuels, faces serious challenges. It is widely acknowledged today that the present system is not sustainable. The threats being faced are the expected shrinking of finite, economically reasonably exploitable fossil resources ("peak-oil"), as well as the negative impacts of their use on the world climate. The transition to a new, sustainable energy future is already on its way and policies to promote change are being designed and increasingly implemented.

The situation in less developed, particularly peripheral regions in all countries of the world, but particularly in the South, is precarious. Access to energy, even of a very traditional brand, is very limited and the necessary change to a sustainable system with its new technologies even more so. In recognition of this challenge the access to energy has become a priority theme of the UN for the coming decade. To cope with these challenges, local/regional initiatives were created by concerned citizens. These are often based on the conviction that activities by central policy makers will take a long time to touch down in more rural or peripheral places, hence only local initiatives offer a chance to overcome the deficits in sustainable energy supply.

The new management systems called for have to deal with many critical aspects, such as:

- legal status and form of organization
- management system and logistics within the organization
- process of creation and sustainability of appropriate institutions
- scope of management activities (full/partial independence, relation to "grid", use of consumption standards, e.g. 2000W society)
- technologies used
- financing (investment, subsidies, pricing system, taxes,...)
- location of facilities
- the role of consultants, etc.

Education has an important role to play in preparing the new energy future.

The Vienna chapter of the Society for International Development(SID), is therefore organizing two workshops together with international organizations and five universities in Vienna on "Local initiatives for energy management".

The workshops constitute the core of a broader project extending over the whole of the summer semester 2012 .The goal of the workshops is to promote a dialogue between academia (scholars, researchers and students), representatives of local initiatives and policy-makers responsible for driving sustainable development objectives. The workshops complement a series of lectures that are being held at the participating universities as well occasional talks organized by the Vienna chapter of SID on issues related to sustainable development. Its direct beneficiaries are students and young academics from the participating universities, as well as leaders of local initiatives and policy-makers from developing countries. The two-day meeting will also offer opportunities for direct discussions and networking among the participants.