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**Report on
Mission to the African Development Bank (AfDB), Tunis**

23-25 April 2008

Prepared by:

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**For:
Biogas for Better Life: An African Initiative**

I. Mission Objectives

The Biogas for Better Life: An African Initiative mission consisting of Messrs. Suresh Hurry and Chudi Ukpabi was in Tunis, Tunisia from 21 through 23 April 2008 for meetings with the Agriculture & Agro-Industry Department of the African Development Bank.

The specific objectives of the mission were:

1. To follow-up consultation with AfDB on earlier Initiative mission by Paul Hassing and Chudi Ukpabi to discussion collaboration frameworks between AfDB and the Initiative
2. To make a presentation on the Biogas for Better Life – An African Initiative at the training workshop on “Energies Renouvelables et Efficacité Energétique” organised by FINESSE AfDB (21 April 2008).
3. To hold discussions with AfDB (FINESSE and AfDB’s Agriculture and Agro-Industry Department - OSAN) with a view to establishing collaborative arrangements with the Biogas for Better Life Initiative in implementing a market-driven approach to disseminate household biogas digesters and to develop a plan for concrete actions (22-23 April 2008).

II. AfDB FINESSE Workshop

AfDB FINESSE organised a training workshop entitled “Energies Renouvelables et Efficacité Energétique” from 21 to 25 April 2008 for some 30 participants from French-speaking African Countries. It wanted to take advantage of the mission’s presence in Tunis and invited it to make a presentation on “Biogas for Better Life – An African Initiative” at the 4-5.30 pm session on 21 April 2008. The presentation was well-received and generated lively discussions among the participants. The participants took note of the status of on-going activities and those that are being planned in the near future. Participants from those countries that are not targeted yet in the Initiative’s work programme expressed interest for inclusion and would forward their requests upon return to their respective countries.

III. Meeting with the Agriculture & Agro-Industry Department (OSAN)

The mission made a presentation on the Initiative to several staff members of OSAN. This was followed by discussions on the market-driven approach that has been adopted by the Initiative as opposed to demonstration/pilot household biogas programmes, the “down payment-subsidy-micro-credit” modality for individual households and the difficulties of securing “subsidised” interest rates on micro-credits to households without distorting the countries’ established structures with regard to credit. AfDB agreed to work with the Initiative methodology starting with desk study, feasibility study, national stakeholders meeting and national implementation based on partnerships between government, private sectors and other national stakeholders. AfDB agreed to use results of such Initiative studies in developing programmes in countries where the Initiative and AfDB collaborate in national biogas programmes.

There was consensus that the Bank and the Initiative should look for opportunities for synchronising the latter’s activities with the former’s programme dealing with rural development, irrigation and livestock in the common target countries.

Subsequently, a meeting was held with several Task Managers to determine the specific countries where collaborative arrangements could be initiated. The Bank pointed out that, in those countries where its activities were on-going, it would need to await for its mid-term reviews that could assist in determining whether the Initiative’s activities could be “plugged in”. However, in those countries where the Bank is in the process of formulating proposals, there are real opportunities to team together and coordinate efforts, especially as in all of them the Bank has planned to include household biogas activities. The Bank agreed to use Initiative consultants to support it programmes where required. These are:

1. **Burkina Faso:** The Bank is planning a Natural Resources Management project while the Initiative’s feasibility study implemented by SNV/UEMOA is being completed. Mr. Modibo Traoré, Environmental Resource Management Expert, is expected to be on mission in Burkina Faso shortly and would get in touch with UEMOA. In this connection, the Initiative will inform UEMOA of the discussions held with the Bank and submit to the latter the ToRs for the feasibility study and any other available report.

Action: Mr. Chudi Ukpabi, as soon as possible.

2. **Multinational (Rwanda/Burundi):** While the Initiative has not yet commenced any activity in Burundi, implementation has been on-going for over a year in Rwanda. Mr. Lam Hamadi, Consultant Agronomist, will soon lead a mission to

Rwanda in connection with its proposed “Appui au Développement Agricole Bugesera” project and will contact Mr. Naceur Hammami, Energy Adviser to the Ministry of Infrastructure and who is coordinating the household biogas programme in the country, to work out a collaborative modality between the activities of the two organisations. It was agreed that as the Initiative has already started national programme in Rwanda, that AfDB will plan to link its programme in the country with the Initiative programme

Note: Mr. Hammami (nacerhammami@gmail.com), + 250 08 82 28 54 (mobile) was briefed in Tunis on 23 April 2008 on the forthcoming Bank mission).

3. **Multinational, Lake Chad Basin project:** The countries to be covered under this project include Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Niger and Nigeria and the Task manager is again Mr. Modibo Traoré. While the Initiative has not yet planned any activities in the first 3 countries, a feasibility study is ongoing for Niger and a desk study is under preparation for Nigeria. The Initiative will transmit to the Bank the ToRs of the feasibility study for Niger (and the coordinates of the lead consultant, Mr. Demba Diop) and desk study for Nigeria. Contacts will be maintained with the Bank to share information on progress regarding the inclusion of Cameroon, Central African Republic and Chad in the Initiative’s portfolio.

Action: Mr. Chudi Ukpabi, as soon as possible

4. **Multinational, Sauvegarde des Ecosystèmes dans le Bassin du Fleuve Sénégal:** This project will deal with the control of “typha” (a tall-growing grass) and promote cattle breeding in the Senegal River Basin. For Senegal, the Initiative has completed its feasibility study and is preparing for national formulation and stakeholders meeting, and it is expected that a national promotion programme will start in Senegal in 2008/2009. Mr. Mamadou Abdoul Kane, the AfDB Task Manager, is travelling to Senegal on 23 April 2008 and would be provided soonest with a copy of the Initiative’s feasibility study for Senegal and the contact person(s) in Dakar.

Action: Mr. Chudi Ukpabi, as soon as possible.

5. **Niger, Programme Kandadji de Régénération des Ecosystèmes et de mise en valeur de la Vallée du Niger:** This project will deal with the construction of a dam and support to irrigation and water supply. It is also foreseen that 50 household digesters will be installed, each costing approx. \$ 1,000, with only 10% of the cost paid for by the households and the balance provided as an outright grant.

On the basis of the information provided by the Initiative, the Bank will probably not proceed with the 50 digesters and would like to link its biogas digester programme in Niger, for example, with our on-going programme in this country. The Initiative will transmit to Mr. Mamadou Abdoul Kane, the Task manager, the ToRs of the feasibility study for Niger and the coordinates of the lead consultant, Mr. Demba Diop.

Action: Mr. Chudi Ukpabi, as soon as possible

6. **Gambia, Livestock and Horticulture Project:** A preparation mission is planned for July 2008 and the Task manager is Dr. Harouna Dosso. In Gambia, the Bank had previously installed 10 pilot household digesters with, again, the households providing 10% of the costs and the balance provided as a grant.

The Initiative has made initial contacts with Gambia but has not yet decided how to proceed with Gambia. Contacts will be maintained with the Bank on opportunities in Gambia. The Initiative agreed with the Bank to include officials in Bank’s Gambia programme to visit Rwanda in Aug 2008.

7. **Ghana:** Ghana is not among the countries where new **Bank activities** are being planned. However, the Bank has an on-going “Afram Plains District Agricultural Development Project” in the country.

AfDB was informed about the results of Initiative Ghana FS supported by Shell Foundation. The findings of the FS indicate that market oriented household biogas was not a viable option in the country. It was agreed that the Biogas Initiative would share the feasibility study and the evaluation report with the Bank for its views, for possible future collaboration with the Initiative in Ghana.

IV. Meeting with Alternate Executive Director

The mission met with Ms. Lily Talapessy, Alternate Executive Director in the Office representing Germany, The Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom to brief her on the purpose of the mission and the on-going discussions with the Bank regarding collaboration with the Biogas for Better Life Initiative. The following issues were brought forward:

- The Biogas Initiative is planning a study tour to Rwanda in August 2008 for participants from selected countries participating in the Initiative, as capacity building and knowledge development in the Initiative. The Bank has been invited and agreed to participate with senior officials to the visit.

- The possibility of organizing a biogas donor meeting with AfDB support was discussed. On this issue, Ms. Talapessy indicated that Biogas Initiative should not be too optimistic as the Bank's Board might not want to be involved in events that were not related to its direct line of intervention.
- Ms. Talapessy was of the opinion that contacts should be established with both the Executive Directors for Nordic Countries and Seychelles, who represent several African countries. They are both very interested in environmental issues and would likely be champions of the Initiative vis-à-vis the Board. Also, the Bank's Field Offices should be made aware of the collaboration between the 2 organisations.
- The Biogas Initiative is planning a Conference in October 2008 to share information on the status of on-going activities, review lessons learned to date and sensitise the donor community.

V. Other Issues Discussed

The issue of Community based Biogas Programme came up in case of AfDB Gambia programme. It was decided to keep in contact with AfDB on the issue, as although the Initiative has not focused on the issue, it has come up in consultations with other partners e.g. Uganda national stakeholders meeting.

AfDB raised the issue of Initiative "ownership". It was explained that the Initiative is now registered as Foundation with a legal status, which enables the Initiative to receive and use donor funding and enter into partnerships with other organizations with stronger basis. It was also explained that discussion is on going with Dutch expert organization to reach a "Fund Management and Programme Management Agreement", and that this role will be transferred to an African institution as soon as arrangements are in place to do so in the near future.

VI. The Way Forward

The meetings that the Biogas Initiative had with the Bank over 1.5 days were very useful in that they culminated in the real desire of both organisations to work together in Africa to advance the cause of household biogas digesters, utilising a market-driven approach, for providing a clean fuel for cooking and lighting and the accompanying health and sanitation benefits, slurry for use as fertiliser, freeing of time spent on fuel wood collection by mainly women and children, and provision of opportunities for income-generating activities to masons/artisans trained in digester construction. The meetings also provided common understanding on the following issues:

1. Agreement between the Bank and Biogas Initiative to work together on household biogas in target countries.
2. Agreement, in principle, by the Bank to follow the Biogas Initiative delivery model for household biogas digesters.
3. Concurrence by the Bank that demonstration/pilots projects in household biogas need to be discontinued as there have been many demonstrations implemented over the years in almost every single country and that they do not lead to replication on a large scale.
4. AfDB showed interest to explore the possibility of providing a platform to Biogas Initiative for an "African biogas donors meeting", and possibly to link such a meeting to an expert conference on "biogas best practice experiences in Africa".
5. It was agreed that contact persons in collaboration between AfDB and Biogas for Better Life Initiative will be;
 - Mr. Andy Khumbanyiwa, AfDB Natural Resources Management Specialist (a.khumbanyiwa@afdb.org)
 - Mr. Chudi Ukpabi, Biogas for Better Life, Communications Contact (chudicommunication@yahoo.com).They will be responsible to share information with colleagues in their respective organizations.

VII. Agreed Initiative documents to be sent to AfDB (Mr. Andy G. Khumbanyiwa)

1. ToR for Niger Feasibility Study
2. Ghana Feasibility Study
3. ToR for Burkina Faso Feasibility Study
4. Initiative Business Plan 2006-2020
5. Initiative Frameworks for – Desk Study, Feasibility Study, National Programme Implementation
6. Contacts for Mr. Demba Diop, Consultant Niger FS

Annex 1: List of Persons Met (all from the Agriculture and Agro-Industry Department – OSAN)

Mr. Aly Abou-Sabaa	Director
Mr. Ken B. Johm	Manager, Natural Resources & Environmental Management Division
Dr. Harouna Dosso	Senior Agronomist
Mr. Lam Hamadi	Consultant Agronomist
Mr. Abdoul Mamadou Kane	Irrigation Engineer/Task Manager
Mr. Andy G. Khumbanyiwa	Natural Resource Management Specialist
Dr. Umar Lawal	Livestock Specialist
Mr. Olagoke Oladapo	Senior Agricultural Specialist
Dr. Hany R. Shalaby	Principal Environmentalist
Ms. Nana Traoré	OSAN
Mr. Modibo Traoré	Environmental Resource Management Expert

Ms. Elisabeth Muguti	Biomass Expert, FINESSE Programme, AfDB
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Ms. Lily Talapessy	Alternate Executive Director, Office representing Germany, The Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom at the AfDB
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