

A Monthly from the East African Sustainability Watch Network founded by Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD), Tanzania Coalition for Sustainable Development (TCSD) and SusWatch Kenya

Kenya CSOs Call for Inclusive Access to Clean Energy to Realize ‘The Big 4 Agenda’



Participants at the CSO coalition meeting (Photo: SusWatch Kenya)

SusWatch Kenya organised a civil society coalition meeting attended by representatives from eight organizations, academic institutions, government ministries and departments on February 12, 2020 in Nairobi. The main objective of the meeting was to discuss and agree on joint policy recommendations on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7) and the Sustainable Energy For All (SE4ALL) strategies. The meeting was organised as part of the East African Civil Society for Sustainable Energy & Climate Action (EASE-CA) Project that seeks to increase access to sustainable energy and other climate actions for local communities in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda

The meeting discussed and made comments on the proposed energy actions in Kenya’s NDC which will be actualized by the National Climate Change Action Plan (2018-2022); and the Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan (2016). It was observed that improved access to energy sources especially electricity improves human development conditions through provision of water; industrial and agricultural productivity; empowerment of disadvantaged groups; better health and education conditions and environmental sustainability.

In view of that, universal electricity access remains one of the drivers of social economic development in Kenya. Equally, access to affordable sustainable energy remains an integral part in the achievement of the “Big 4 Agenda” (an economic blueprint by the Kenya Government to foster economic development and provide a solution to the various socio-economic problems facing Kenyans - Food security and nutrition; Affordable universal health care; Affordable housing; and Enhancing manufacturing. As such, development of the energy sector is critical if Kenya is to achieve the Kenya Vision 2030 and become a newly industrializing, middle income country. Kenya possesses significant potential sources for clean and affordable power generation in geothermal, wind, hydro and biomass energy. Mr. Shadrack Kepkemoi from the Ministry of Energy noted that Kenya’s energy landscape has seen strides towards universal electricity access poised to be attained by 2022. He also informed the participants that currently, 75% of Kenyans have access to electricity with ambitious target of achieving 100% access to modern cooking services by 2030.

Participants at the meeting called for more investment in research, innovation, new technology and modern energy infrastructure to increase capacity and efficiency as well as encourage the adoption of renewable energy; Promotion of energy efficiency along the entire energy chain, from production of renewable energy to final energy use, including consumer awareness campaigns, financial incentives, standards and regulations; They also called for diversification of the energy mix incorporating renewables to reduce over-reliance on finite resources like petroleum sources; Involvement of local communities and county governments along the entire energy chain as well as transparent and accountable management of resources for the mutual benefit of all, so as to reduce tensions and enhance ownership of energy projects.

More about SusWatch Kenya’s work: <https://www.suswatchkenya.org/>

TaTEDO to Promote Use of Efficient Electric Cooking Appliances in Tanzania



Exhibition on eCooking
(photo: TaTEDO)

In Tanzania about 98 percent of population depends mostly on biomass (firewood and charcoal) to meet their daily cooking energy needs, where cooking is based on traditional low-efficient stoves. This high dependency on biomass contributes to negative health risks, environmental degradation, inefficient and high cost energy sources, particularly for the poor. The estimated forest cover loss in Tanzania amounts to 469,420 ha per year, but with a wood deficit of around 19.5 million m³ per year.

Therefore, scaling up access to clean cooking solutions is an increasing priority of the Tanzania Government and the international development community in fulfillment of the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG7) to ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services, and the Sustainable Energy For All (SE4ALL) Initiative.

Tanzania under SE4ALL initiative aims to increase percentage of population with access to modern cooking solutions to more than 75 percent by 2030. The five-year, UK Department for International Development (DfID) funded Modern Energy Cooking Services (MECS) programme led by Loughborough University and the World Bank's Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme (ESMAP). Tanzania is among the countries participating and benefiting from the MECS programme.

Recently, Loughborough University contracted the Tanzania Traditional Energy Development Organization (TaTEDO) as the national partner for MECS Programme. As part of the effort to promote and scale up use of efficient electric cooking appliances (eCook), TaTEDO in collaboration with Gamos, Loughborough and Surrey University have undertaken market assessment on potential of eCooking in Tanzania.

The study findings revealed that cooking with electricity is compatible with Tanzanian cuisines and that modern energy-efficient appliances are highly desirable to everyday Tanzanian cooks. In particular, the Electric Pressure Cooker (EPC) can significantly reduce the energy demand for the biggest energy consumers with 'time consuming' dishes. Another ongoing study aims to analyze and understand market systems of eCook appliances. Also, TaTEDO is undertaking a pilot to promote a thriving market for eCook appliances in Tanzania.

While the MECS programme predominantly contributes towards achieving affordable and sustainable energy access (SDG 7) and improving health (SDG 3), through addressing climate change at the local level. With 3 percent of global carbon emissions currently attributed to biomass-based cooking methods, accelerating the transition towards clean alternatives will contribute towards collective global efforts to achieving the Paris Agreement objective of keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees C; while halting deforestation (SDG 15). The MECS Programme is a five-year programme funded by UK Aid (DFID). By integrating modern energy cooking services into the planning for electricity access, quality, reliability and sustainability, MECS hopes to leverage investment in renewable energies (both grid and off-grid) to address the clean cooking challenge. MECS is implementing a strategy focused on including the cooking needs of households into the investment and action on 'access to affordable, reliable, sustainable modern energy for all'. [Read more about the MECS programme from here: https://www.meecs.org.uk/about/](https://www.meecs.org.uk/about/)

Community members in Nakaseke, Nakasongola and Nebbi pledge to support JEEP's Environmental work



Community awareness seminar in Nebbi district
(Photo: JEEP)

As part of the East African Civil Society for Sustainable Energy and Climate Action (EASE-CA) project, Joint Energy and Environment projects (JEEP) conducted community awareness seminars in Nakaseke, Nakasongola and Nebbi districts that brought together a total of 4,028 community members (1,909 females and 2,119 males).

In addition to helping to mobilize communities for the awareness seminars that were well-attended, local leaders in the three districts pledged to work hand in hand with JEEP to see that project objectives are realized. They also encouraged the community members to put into action whatever the project has brought for the good of their communities and the environment at large.

Leaders from the different parishes encouraged the community members to change their attitude towards conservation of the environment, plant trees and to adhere to laws. By doing that, the environment will be restored. 'Share the knowledge you have got from the seminar with others', stressed Mrs. Betty Sserunkuuma the district councilor, Nakaseke district.

In Nakaseke district, community members were sensitized on the existing environmental policies and laws and the obligations they have in implementing them. However, during the seminars, it was alleged that it is mainly government officials who encourage encroachment on natural resources such as wetlands. They therefore called upon the government to help in the restoration of the degraded natural resources through scaling up environmental law enforcement. They also thanked JEEP for introducing the 'Little Sun' (solar lamp) to the community, as this is going to help them save money for other things.

In all the districts, it was agreed that the inefficient three-stone-cooking stove that consumes a lot of biomass was an issue that needs to be handled through practical and policy interventions, including increased awareness on the alternative sources of energy. Nevertheless, in Nebbi district, environmental ordinances have been formulated and implementation has started. These include provisions like seeking permission before cutting any tree, planting two trees before cutting any among others.

As a way forward, community members made commitments that include encouraging people to adopt energy saving stoves and plant more trees; respecting environmental laws; sensitizing other community members about the importance of wetlands, to mobilize locally available materials which will be needed for the trainings and to continue buying solar lamps from the JEEP field staff. In addition, the local leaders pledged to work with JEEP to identify potential participants the planned Training of Trainers (TOTs); identify a place for establishment of the tree nurseries; and above all being exemplary to other community members as far as environmental conservation is concerned.

The main objective of the seminars was to ensure that communities are introduced to the thrust of the EASE-CA Project of increased access to sustainable energy and other climate solutions for local communities through practical interventions: clean cooking, access to water, introduction and access to solar energy, food security and income generating activities. JEEP implements local level activities in the 3 districts (Nebbi, Nakasongola and Nakaseke) in Uganda. The EASE-CA Project seeks to increase access to sustainable energy and other climate actions for local communities in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

More about JEEP's work on EASE CA Project: <https://www.facebook.com/jeepfolkecenter/>