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SUSTAINABLE ENERGY NEWS

THEME: ECO-VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH ASIA

CONTENTS

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ENTRANCE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY - CLIMATE GENERATION AREA BESIDE THE UNFCCC COP21 CONFERENCE BUILBING. PHOTO: INFORSE

Well on the Way, but still very far to a Stable Climate

The Paris agreement was a landmark achievement for the climate negotiations, and it was welcomed across the world.

Since it was agreed last December, the development has gone the right way for the climate. **Coal companies are going bankrupt**, **oil explorations are given up,** and there are **new successes for renewable energy**. Increasingly, renewable energy is prevailing over fossil fuel, even when the fossil fuel is not paying for its climate and environmental costs as it should. And when environmental costs are included, fossil fuel is even less competitive. The increasing energy efficiency and the cheaper renewable energy also make energy access affordable to more and more poor people. For instance, a solar PV home system costs just 1/4 of its costs a decade ago. This is not only because of cheaper PV panels, but also because of the modern LED lamps used today. With them, the PV power needed for good light is considerably less than it was just a decade ago.

In spite of all the good news for sustainable energy and for the climate, the strong reductions needed in greenhouse gases to keep global warming well below 2°C or even 1.5°C are a tall order. The promised reductions of the countries for the climate COP21 lead to above 3°C warming, a level that will cause grave harm to the planet and to the people.

Thus, the real success of the Paris Agreement is its plan for increasing the ambitions of all countries, starting with the review in 2018.

From INFORSE, we want the countries to raise their standards for reductions of emissions, climate financing, climate adaptation, and sustainable energy access for all. We propose an increased focus on local sustainable solutions, combining renewable energy with other solutions to achieve sustainable lifestyles and to reduce poverty. In this issue, our theme is that integrated rural development, an "eco-village development" (EVD), can improve lives in South Asia. We also propose how national and international climate actions and funding can help.

Low-carbon developments are destined to be the preferred model worldwide. The focus should not be only on South Asia, but more on the high-emission countries. EU and USA are easily capable of reducing their emissions more than they currently have promised to do, and, as it seems, they can do it within good economies. They have absolutely no excuse for continuing their fossil-fuel use and their high emissions. Here again, **local solutions are important**, to involve people in local community power projects, to help them identify more strongly with the energy transition, and to promote energy-efficiency renovations of buildings.

This is why we work on such local solutions in some of the European INFORSE projects. *We invite all of you* to cooperate with us in this worldwide effort.

Gunnar Boye Olesen, INFORSE

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Photo on the front page:
Solar dryer in India.
See article on pages # 5-9.
Photo is made by WAFD, India.

This issue of Sustainable Energy News is financial supported by the Climate and Environment Fund of CISU - Civil Society in Development, Denmark.

DEMONSTARTION AT THE END OF THE UNFCCC COP21 IN PARIS ON 12 DECEMBER 2016. PHOTO: INFORSE.

From Paris *via* Bonn to the Villages

After the landmark agreement in Paris at COP21 last December, it is time to go from negotiating text to taking action. Climate actions, to succeed, need to reduce poverty, establish sustainable lifestyles, and lead to climate justice, gender equity, and food security. All of these causes are recognised in the Paris Agreement, which calls for actions that help the people out of poverty in the villages in South Asia, in Africa, etc. Of course there is also an urgent call for greenhouse-gas reductions in high-emission countries, but without a focus on low-carbon development to reduce poverty in villages, it will not be possible to achieve the climate goals of keeping global warming well below 2°C or to 1.5°C.

The implementation of the Paris Agreement starts now, with the climate negotiations restarting in Bonn in May, followed by COP22 and further negotiations. Equally crucial is the continued development, adoption, and implementation of the National Designated Commitments (NDCs) and the attainment of the Paris Agreement objectives via international institutions, regional cooperation, etc. It is crucial that the local solutions be recognised in all of these operations.

Climate Funding for Local Solutions

International climate funding must have an emphasis on local climate-mitigation solutions and must enhance national funding for local solutions. It must, e.g., contribute part of the up-front costs of local sustainable energy solutions and of other eco-village development (EVD) solutions (see EVD solutions, on pages 5-9). These local solutions have higher up-front costs than the less sustainable alternatives, even when total costs are lower.

The international climate funding to be addressed includes the Green Climate Fund (GCF) as well as funding from development banks, Global Environmental Facility (GEF), and bilateral climate funding.

Too often, these funding mechanisms are targeted central solutions that are less efficient than local measures at combining climate mitigation with poverty eradication and local needs.

Climate Technology Transfer and Development

With the Paris Agreement, the climate-related technology mechanism will be strengthened. It now supports innovation, research and development, as well as technology transfer. It is important that this strengthened technology mechanism supports technology transfer, adaptation, and development of technologies for solutions that can boost local, low-carbon development.

National Commitments Must Support Local Actions

One cornerstone of the Paris Agreement is the use of NDCs, in which each country sets out its climate strategies. It is crucial that the NDCs and the more detailed strategies, upon which they often build, give priority to local solutions that combine climate actions with poverty eradication and local development.

Side Event at UN SB44 Climate Negotiations Bonn, Germany

Friday, May 20, 2016
Time: 16.45 - 18.15

South Asian Eco-Village Solutions in NDCs and Climate Finance: Renewable Energy, Organic Farming

See back page and www.inforse.org

Launch of Publication:

▲ Installation of a solar panel at the New Life High School in Tororo, Uganda. Photo by JEEP.

Uganda - Denmark

by Luca Lena Jansen, volunteer at JEEP, Uganda

Solar-Powered Light and Efficient Cookstoves in Uganda

Two INFORSE organisations, the Nordic Folkcenter for Renewable Energy from Denmark and the Joint Energy Environment Projects (JEEP) from Uganda, have cooperated in a number of successful proactive environmental activities in the last few years.
Some of the highlights are:

- **More than 30 thousand solar-powered LED lamps have been distributed in rural areas all over Uganda.** As 80% of the population do not have access to electricity, these LED lamps mean that people are not forced to use the hazardous, unhealthy, and comparably expensive kerosene lamps to provide light to simple household works or to study for school.
  Using the LED lamps, people can avoid the smoke from the kerosene, which has a history of causing respiratory diseases. The carbon dioxide released to the atmosphere is reduced as well.
- **In 2014 and 2015, 30 solar PV systems and 30 institutional energy-saving stoves were installed in 30 schools.** These cookstoves reduce the use of fuel-wood, replacing the traditional 3-stone-fire-stove that was used previously for cooking.
  With the old stoves, a lot of heat is lost and, hence, a lot of wood is being wasted.

JEEP has been in contact with the Nordic Folkecenter since 1996, was a partner with the Danish NGO MS in 1999-2005, and became Uganda Folkecenter in 2005.

These activities were made possible with organizational and financial support from the Nordic Folkecenter, the Danish company Energi Nord, the Danish cooperative bank Merkur, and the Danish Civil Society Fund.

Read more:
www.jeepfolkecenter.org/
www.folkecenter.net/gb/news/fc/jeep_uganda/

▲ Villagers in Kitonyoni, a rural, off-grid market village in Makueni County, Kenya, chat over LED lanterns. Photo by Sustainable Energy Research Group & Energy for Development.

Poor People's Energy Outlook 2016
June & October 2016 - Practical Action Presents New Research Findings and Launch Publication

by Charlotte Taylor, Energy Access Advocacy Officer, Practical Action

The new upcoming release of the Poor People's Energy Outlook 2016 explores national energy access planning from the bottom up.

First published in 2010, the series seeks to challenge the energy sector's focus on unsustainable energy resources, supplies, and large-scale infrastructures. It emphasises the vital importance to poor people of their access to affordable, effective energy services.

The series covers a range of efficient, cost-effective solutions that can provide the poor with such services. Many of these solutions currently disregarded by planners and decision-makers.

The 2016 edition builds on this legacy by drawing on case-study evidence gathered from diverse communities in Bangladesh, Kenya, and Togo.

Practical Action will present the research findings at events in June, including at the "European Development Days" in Brussels on 16 June, 2016.

The international launch of the publication will take place in October 2016.

This new research is part of a three edition series, which is supported by UK Aid, the Mott Foundation and GIZ.

Read More and Contact:
charlotte.taylor@practicalaction.org.uk
www.practicalaction.org/ppeo2016

▲ Logos of the partners and the front page of the 8-page Briefing.

Briefing on Pro-Poor Low-Carbon Development - Launched in December 2015

by Gunnar Boye Olesen SustainableEnergy (VE) and INFORSE on behalf of the partners behind the briefing, and the project.

In this Policy Briefing for the UNFCCC COP21, we argue that

- low-carbon development and ending poverty have to go hand in hand,
- renewable energies bear huge development opportunities if the right framework conditions are fulfilled, and
- the provision of bold international support is decisive for poor and developing countries to become part of a just transition.

The policy brief includes the six key lessons learned from the Project *"Promoting Pro-Poor Low-Carbon Development strategies"* covering developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The Project partners were the Danish organisation SustainableEnergy (VE) (coordinator), INFORSE, CAN International, and members of INFORSE and CAN including INFORSE-West Africa/ENDA-Energy (Senegal), Mali Folkecenter, CANLA, Haiti Survie, FIDES (Bolivia), TaTEDO (Tanzania), CANSA, Development Alternatives (India), INFORSE-South Asia/INSEDA (India), AIWC (India), and IDEA (Sri Lanka).

The Project was in 2014-16, and was supported by the Danish Civil Society Fund of DANIDA.

Read more and download the Briefing from:
www.inforse.org/projects_pro.php3?id=94

▲ Village dialogue and planning in India. Photo by WAFD.

Eco-Village Development as Climate Solution

Eco-village development (EVD) of existing villages is a practical, flexible concept allowing poor rural communities to achieve gradual climate-resilient, low-carbon, socio-economic progress. Already, EVD projects are succeeding in South Asian villages under the care of INFORSE members in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

EVD is about finding and using the best of traditional and new solutions, but it is also about:

- Planning of the right solutions for each village,
- Integrating solutions with stepwise development,
- Training residents for permanent use and maintenance of solutions, and
- Providing a supporting framework such as funding that offers equal opportunities for local solutions compared to centralised solutions.

The project started in early 2015. Since then, project partners have demonstrated the concept in villages in the four countries and have drawn in experiences from many other villages. This has led them to formulate a number of recommendations as to how EVD can be used on a larger scale in existing villages as part of low-carbon development.

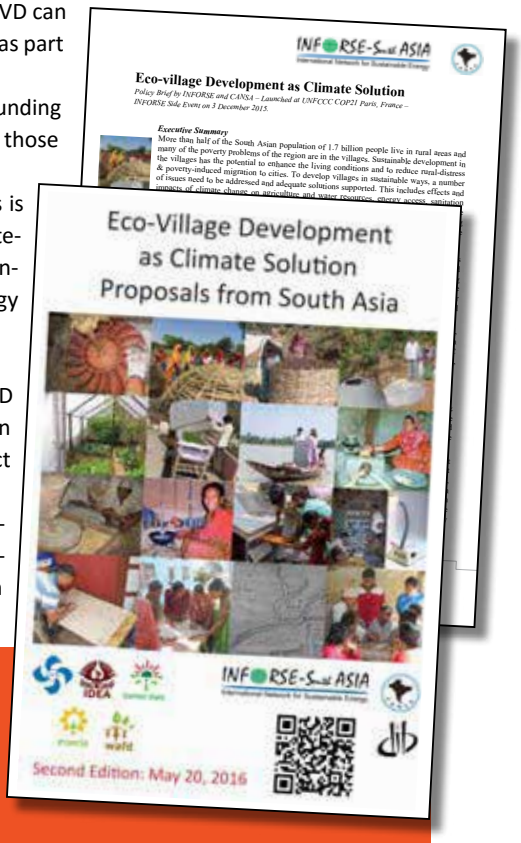
One such insight is the requirement that funding and subsidies for local solutions be equal to those for centralised solutions.

Another point in their recommendations is to make local solutions a focal point of climate-related support mechanisms such as the international climate funding and technology transfer.

You can read about the progress of the EVD villages in the four participating countries on the following pages, as well as on the project website and publication.

The eco-village development concept, practice, and recommendations for wider use are documented in a 60-page Publication and Policy Briefs.

▼ The 60-page publication, and the 4-page Policy Brief are available online. Both documents will be available in an updated version in May 2016, which reflects the outcome of the COP21.



Read more on the Project Eco Village Development (EVD) in South Asia in 2015-17 :
- INFORSE-South Asia: www.inforse.org/asia/EVD.htm.
- Publication Updated May 2016: www.inforse.org/asia/pdf/Pub_EVD-SouthAsia.pdf
- Policy brief for UNFCCC COP21:
www.inforse.org/asia/pdf/EVD_Policy_Brief_UNFCCC_COP21_Dec3_2015.pdf

The EVD Project is supported by the Climate and Environment Fund of CISU - Civil Society in Development, Denmark.

▲ Village dialogues and visit to renewable energy technology exhibition. solar PV, portable cookstoves, water mill, rainwater tanks. Photos by CRT Nepal.

Nepal

by Niraj Shrestha, project officer (left), and Ganesh Ram Shrestha, executive director (right) CRT-Nepal

CRT-Nepal has worked actively to implement Eco-Village Development (EVD) in three local villages in the earthquake-affected Kavrepalanchowk district. The organisation also has advocated for EVD from grassroots to the national level.

Introducing EVD Solutions after the Earthquake

It has been almost a year since a massive earthquake struck Nepal in 2015. People from the villages in areas in which EVD solutions are demonstrated are returning steadily to normal life. The EVD project has been a significant positive factor in their recovery.

The earthquake affected the initial planning of the EVD demonstrations. After the earthquake, immediate needs assessments were made through dialogues with the communities. New EVD solutions were identified in all three villages based on their needs and feasibility. These included **portable improved cookstoves, solar PV, plastic tunnel houses for vegetable cultivation, micro-irrigation systems,** and **rainwater harvesting**.

In addition to local demonstrations, building capacity was also a priority. The villagers learned to integrate water-lifting technologies with micro-irrigation systems and with their agricultural practices to accomplish more with less water. Training in repair, handling, and maintenance of PV components was also given to the communities, as well as training in climate-resilient agricultural practices that allow them to cultivate off-season vegetables.

Raising awareness and disseminating knowledge is an important part of sensitizing project communities and neighboring communities. The local governmental energy officer of the district also participated in knowledge dissemination on government programs relevant to EVD. Among results were development of used-water-collection ponds, cow-shed management, development of fish ponds, pit composting, and growing fruit trees in backyards.

Village Development Plans

The EVD project gives villagers the tools and guidance that they need to plan the development of their own village. Primary emphasis is placed on village development plans and on enabling communities to communicate their plans to the concerned stakeholders.

Through continuous dialogue with the communities, the project team is supporting village development plans from the grassroots level. For that purpose, the villagers have learned about climate change and about the impacts of climate change on their livelihoods.

Representatives from the villages were trained to do assessments of needs and resources, to identify the problems faced by their communities along with the potential solutions to the problems. They were also invited to participate in a national renewable-energy technology exhibition organized by the Alternative Energy Promotion Center to get first-hand experience and to learn about various potential solutions.

As of now, villagers are in the process of identifying the development indicators based on which the village development plans will be finalized and shared with the concerned stakeholders.

Large Potential

This initiative of piloting EVD concept, including establishing demonstrations in villages, has a *large potential* to contribute in targets and objectives of rural plans, policies, and programs of the government of Nepal.

Centre for Rural Technology
CRT-N, Nepal
www.crtnepal.org

▲ Village dialogues, bamboo constructions for compost baskets, solar dryers, organic gardening, green house, biogas inlet. Photos by WAFD and INSEDA.

India

In India, Women's Action for Development (WAFD) has been promoting Eco-Village Development (EVD) actively, demonstrating local solutions with villagers in the states of Uttarakhand and Rajesthan.

WAFD, together with INSEDA (Integrated Sustainable Energy Development Association, INFORSE – South Asia Coordinator), Climate Action Network - South Asia, and others, is advocating for EVD at local and national levels.

Demonstrating Solutions in Villages

WAFD has now completed demonstrations of solutions in four villages of our local NGO Partners in Alwar district of Rajasthan.

The technologies used are simple, low-carbon, and cost-effective. Neither the village people nor the Partners had seen or used these technologies before, but they showed great interest.

The technologies were **biogas plants, polyester greenhouses, roof-runoff rainwater-harvesting systems and storage tanks, solar dryers,** and **organic-compost-making baskets.** The solutions are working well, but even after training, the villagers still need support for maintenance as well as to run the technologies properly and efficiently.

In the Ranichauri village in the Tehri Garhval district, Uttarakhand, we already have established a base, with the women using EVD technologies and benefitting from them. Here, we have constructed *six improved cookstoves* that are now in field trials and testing to show how they consume less firewood and produce less smoke.

Promoting EVD Solutions from local levels to National Dialogue

We and our Partners are starting to promote EVD solutions from the grassroots level upward.

The first step was to create awareness among the communities and the Partners on the subject of climate change. The villagers already experience shifting and reduced monsoon rain, which is disrupting the farming cycle.

The second step was to introduce people to the EVD solutions, which mitigate the problems, and which they can adopt.

The third step is in progress now. It includes meeting with governmental officials at the district and block levels and telling them about the concept of EVD. These district officials have shown keen interest, and most of the Partners now are invited to participate in the monthly meetings of the District Magistrate. The Partners also are meeting with the elected local governance bodies to inform them of the EVD project and to tell them how they can help by having some funds for EVD solutions, such as water tanks.

The fourth step will be a National Dialogue Meeting, which is scheduled for June in Uttarakhand. It will bring together experts in climate change, university leaders, key NGOs, and autonomous governmental institutions such as the Forest Research Institute, Pollution Control Board, Soil and Water Conservation Board, and others. Our aim is to have recommendations for policy-makers by the end of the day. The recommendations also will be given to local media as well as shared with other stakeholders and decision-makers.

In preparation for events, we have compiled **21 case studies** of women using the EVD solutions.

By Kavita Shriya Myles
Program Director, INSEDA

Women Action for Development
WAFD, India
www.climateandgender.org

Integrated Sustainable Energy Development Association
INSEDA, India
INFORSE-South Asia
www.inseda.org
www.inforse.org/asia

▲ Organic gardening, village planning workshop, efficient biomass stoves for household sweet industry, workshop on climate awareness including results of the UN negotiations. Photos by IDEA.

Sri Lanka

By Dumindu Indika Herath
Project Coordinator
IDEA, Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, Integrated Development Association (IDEA) has worked actively on Eco-Village Development (EVD) in three local villages in the central province. IDEA also advocates for EVD at all levels, from grassroots to national.

Demonstrating Solutions in Villages

The village activities started with gathering stakeholders and villagers for an initial workshop to raise awareness of climate change adaptation and mitigation, and of the EVD concept. The feedback from the participating division-level stakeholders was positive and the project could be implemented at the village level with their support.

A local community based organisation (CBO), "Arunalu", is now carrying out activities at divisional and village levels under the supervision of IDEA.

Following the initial workshop, EVD plans were developed for the villages with active involvement of the villagers through several village dialogues and PRAs (Participatory Rural Appraisals also known as Participatory Learning for Action).

Three-year plans dealing with environment, agricultural livelihood, non-agricultural livelihood, social sector, and infrastructure sector were developed. Emphasis was placed on solving issues and satisfying needs of the villagers in a low-carbon, sustainable manner and with village community empowerment. Contributions from village-level governmental officials was another special feature of this planning exercise.

As recommended in the initial planning, IDEA held some demonstrations of technology and some awareness-raising/training workshops for residents.

The integrated approach of this project is supported by IDEA's vast experience as well as its successes with improved cookstoves and other local solutions.

The main solutions demonstrated in the villages are:

- **Two large-scale efficient biomass stoves** have been built and demonstrated in two household businesses that initially were using conventional inefficient stoves. Brick-making improvements have been introduced in one of the villages.
- **Organic home gardening** awareness and training workshops have ignited a lively interest in many families to demonstrate the home-garden improvements. The importance of home gardening, how to prepare nurseries, the different kinds of organic fertilizers, and various other home-gardening techniques/best practices have been propagated through these workshops. Local seeds have been distributed, along with training on the best ways to grow them and to gain the best yields.
- **Energy-conservation workshops** have been held in the villages with facilitation by local government. The involvement of the local government is one of the successes in the project.

Promoting EVD Concept

The EVD concept and project activities have been presented nationally in a national workshop jointly organized with promotion of low-carbon development strategies in Sri Lanka. In addition, IDEA have organised a network for EVD in Sri Lanka that have met and discussed the EVD concept and the implementation of the recent UN "Paris Agreement".

Integrated Development Association
IDEA, Sri Lanka
www.ideasrilanka.org

▲ Efficient cookstove, PV-powered lamp, biogas stove, biogas plant with cows, slurry from the biogas plant, PV on the roof, national consultation on INDC. Photos by Grameen Shakti.

Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, Grameen Shakti has been actively working on Eco-Village Development (EVD) in several villages. It is also advocating EVD solutions in discussions of national energy and climate strategies.

National Prosperous Development

Sustainable energy already is incorporated in Bangladesh's *"Vision 2021",* with a focus on dissemination of sustainable energy technologies all over the country and a target of 10% of electricity generation to come from renewable energy by 2020.

Sustainable energy also is included in the "One House, One Farm" strategy, with promotion of access to better cooking technologies; 85% of people depend on biomass today for cooking.

On the ground, sustainable energy is developing fast. Grameen Shakti, the pioneer organization promoting renewable energy in Bangladesh, has **installed 1.7 million solar home systems, constructed 32,000 biogas plants, and one million improved cookstoves** throughout Bangladesh.

Active Participation on INDC and TNC

Maintaining these efforts and combining solutions, e.g., in the EVD concept, lead to opportunities for strong, low-carbon development of the country.

For this purpose, Grameen Shakti has participated actively in the national consultation on *Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC)* of Bangladesh and in the national inception on the *Third National Communication (TNC)* to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Demonstrating Solutions on the Ground

Grameen Shakti is highlighting EVD solutions in villages in the Manikganj District, about 50 km from Dhaka. Each of the villages has unique features in relation to usage of renewable energy technologies, demonstrating access to environmentally friendly energy as well as attaining a better standard of living.

In off-grid villages like Khowamuri and Sudhkhira, the focus is on using **solar home systems** to provide electric power. People need longer operating times for their lights, TVs, fans, and mobile-phone chargers. Moreover, **solar-powered water pumps** are suggested, as most of the irrigation pumps are run by diesel. People are also considering biogas plants and if a community-based biogas plant can be adopted.

The village Ashulia is highly focused on **biogas-based energy.** There are several households in the village that raise cattle and poultry. Owners of the cattle farm sell milk in a nearby market, whereas owners of the poultry farm sell their chickens in large city. Cow-dung from the cattle farm and poultry litter from the poultry farm are used to produce biogas to be used for households as well as for cooking on the farms.

The next step is to popularize the usage of **bio-slurry as fertilizer**. Comprehensive approaches to slurry usage as well as electricity generation from excess gas have been suggested in village discussions. Grameen Shakti has brought agriculture and biogas experts to the village to inform residents about better usage of slurry in the agricultural field and about quality of the slurry as organic fertilizer. Experts are considering introducing **solar-based dryers to dehydrate slurry** in an effort to obtain a higher, standardized nutrient content.

By M. Mahmodul Hasan
project manager
Grameen Shakti

Grameen Shakti

Grameen Shakti
Bangladesh
www.gshakti.org

▲ Locally owned solar PV plant and wind power in Hjortmose near Ringkobing, Denmark. Photo by Henning Bo Madsen, NOAH Community Power.

▶ Demonstration in front of the Eiffel tower in Paris during COP21. Photo by Judit Szoleczky, INFORSE.

News from Members

Chernobyl+30 Conferences in Belarus & Spain

NO THANKS to Nuclear, YES to Renewables

April 26, 2016 - CherNObyl 30 Conferences FOR a Sustainable Energy Future Without Nuclear

INFORSE members were active in several forums marking the catastrophe that happened 30 years ago. The message was to urge for transitions **immediately!**

There is a radical change taking place in the energy sector towards renewable energy and energy efficiency all over the world. The myth about "high prices of green energy" is gone.

Rising numbers of countries are moving towards increasing the renewable shares of their energy supplies. Even France, the leading "nuclear" state, adopted the energy-transition law last year, which set to decrease the nuclear share in the electricity mix down to 50% (from 75% today) by 2025.

In Minsk, Belarus, experts reviewed the progress made by the European and global energy sectors during the past 30 years since the Chernobyl catastrophe, and the likely development trends in the next 3 decades. They discussed ways in which Belarus, one of the countries that were most affected by the Chernobyl disaster and that still continue to suffer from its consequences, can make use of the opportunities available today to move towards a sustainable energy model.

Read more: www.inforse.org/europe/nuclear.htm

Read about INFORSE's transition proposals at: www.inforse.org/europe/Vision2050.htm

▼ CherNObyl +30 Poster of the international conference in Minsk, Belarus on April 24. 2016.

Community Power in Denmark and EU

by Henning Bo Madsen, NOAH, Denmark

Danish INFORSE member NOAH Friends of the Earth Denmark has been part of the Community Power project – a project involving 12 partners in different EU countries.

Despite the delaying of a new Danish support scheme for PV by the EU Commission for two years, NOAH and the local coalition partner Vestjyllands Energy Group have succeeded in promoting locally owned solar energy in the Municipality of Ringkøbing-Skjern in western Denmark.

Public meetings, exhibits at local markets, open-house events, and radio programs have been used to engage citizens in establishing PV plants.

As a result, the number of new PV plants in the municipality has risen to more than twice those in neighbouring municipalities.

Read more: www.noah.dk

www.communitypower.eu

▲ Community Power for people's ownership of renewable energy

Event: EU Regulation on Renewables

by Gunnar Boye Olesen, INFORSE-Europe/VE, Denmark

NFORSE-Europe organised with SustainableEnergy (VE) and other Danish NGOs a public meeting with the EU Commissioner for Competition, Margrethe Vestager, to discuss the regulation of EU energy market competition. In particular, the meeting addressed EU regulations on support schemes for renewable energy.

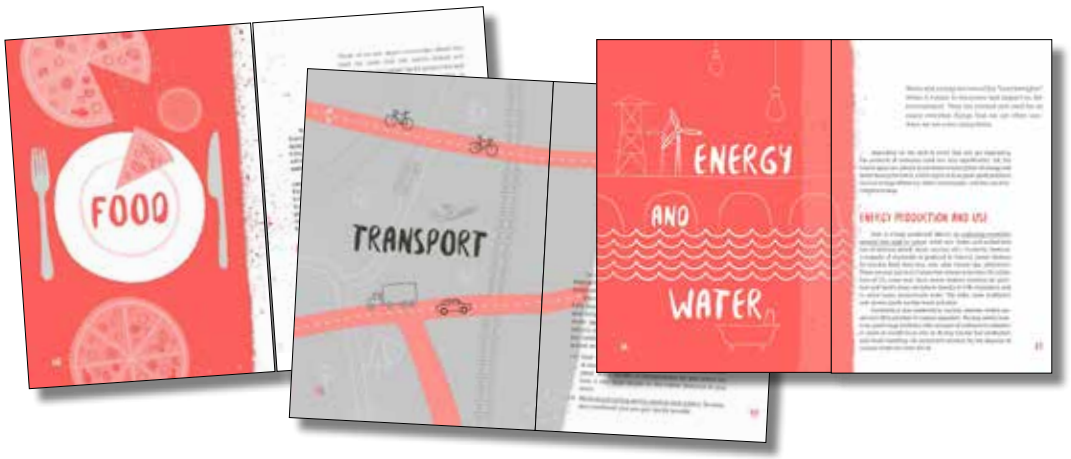
The EU's current guidelines for state aid mention only tender systems as a means of support. Several of the 150 participants attested to the disadvantages of tender systems for community power projects, e.g., that they limit local, community power projects and that they can drive up the costs of renewable energy for the consumers because of limited competition.

The EU Commissioner assured attendees that EU countries may use the more effective feed-in tariff system for windpower projects of as many as 6 windmills of up to 6 MW of capacity each. This limit fits the vast majority of EU community power projects. With this new assurance, responsibility falls to each country to establish schemes supporting popular participation in the transition to renewable energy, including support for community power projects.

The event on January 15, 2016 was part of a series of events organised by the Danish INFORSE-Europe members supported by Europa-Nævnet.

Read more: inforse.org/europe/europa-naevnet.htm.

▲ There was a big interest to hear about the EU regulations on renewables, where the EU Commissioner, Margrete Vestager was the main speaker in Aarhus, Denmark on January 15, 2016.



Latvia – Belarus – Denmark

Launching an NGO Guideline Booklet "Organising Climate-Friendly Events"

An NGO cooperation coordinated by the Homo Ecos from Latvia and including INFORSE-Europe, the Center for Environmental Solutions (CES) from Belarus, the Latvian Green Movement (LGM), and UngEnergi, the youth section of the Danish organisation Sustainable-Energy (VE), worked together to collect ideas for a set of guidelines to help young organisers to make their events environmentally friendly.

Moreover, to facilitate the writing process, a group of young activists calling themselves "*Team Decarbonize*" tested a draft and returned feedback during a youth camp in the summer of 2015.

The final Guideline includes good ideas about how to choose venues, means of transport, and food, as well as about how to handle waste. It also offers good ideas for awareness-raising activities during an event. Practical checklists, facts and graphs support methods and discussions.

In April, 2016, in all 3 involved countries, there were follow-up events testing and launching the publication. In Denmark, it was a Vegetarian/Vegan Waste-Food Cooking Contest, as it is much more climate-friendly not eating meat and milk products, and reducing food waste.

The Guidelines are available in English, Latvian, and Russian. The project, called *"Decarbonizing our Future",* was supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers. ***Read more: www.inforse.org/europe/Latvia_Green_Event_project.htm***

▲ Pictures from the events launching the Guidelines in Belarus (above) and at the cooking contest in Denmark (below).

Belarus - Latvia - Russia - Denmark - Norway

Baltic Sea NGO Cooperation Started in 2016

The cooperation started with participation in the impressive event "Bridge to the Future" on a transition of Norway. Next came planning of the project activities:

- Mobile exhibition with posters and small hands-on demonstration sets on energy efficiency and renewable energy for buildings. Six small exhibitions will be used in Russia and Belarus.
- Booklet for NGOs and energy managers, "Sustainable Energy in Buidlings" to be printed in Russia, and made available online from INFORSE-Europe.
- Training courses for school energy advisers/managers on practical energy improvements of school buildings in North West Russia and Belarus.
- On-line course for Russian and Belarus energy advisers/managers of schools, offices, residential buildings, and local communities.
- In June, partners will meet again, this time in Latvia, to see the new mobile exhibition and discuss with Latvian NGOs and stakeholders the promotion of sustainable energy.
- In October, there will be a final conference in St. Petersburg, in connection with the Russian Social Ecological Union.

Partners are INFORSE-Europe, Latvian Green Movement, Centre for Environmental Solutions in Belarus, Friends of Baltic in St. Petersburg, Kola Environmental Center, and the Norwegian Association for Nature Protection. The Russian organisations are not participating in the budget allocations. The Project's support comes from the Nordic Council of Ministers. ***Read more: www.inforse.org/europe/se_buildings_project.htm***

▼ Left: Partners' meeting in Norway. Center: passive-house renovation with coloured facade in Denmark. Right: Visiting exhibition vehicle of Energitjenesten/VE, Denmark.

#SB44

Side Event

UNFCCC SB44, Bonn

Friday, May 20, 2016

16.45-18.15

South Asian Eco-Village Solutions in NDCs and Climate Finance: Renewable Energy, Organic Farming

How local, village-level development solutions can be integrated with the climate actions following the COP21: in the NDC's, in climate financing and in the technology mechanism.

- Kavita Shriya Myles, INFORSE-South Asia & INSEDA, WAFD India;
- M. Mahmodul Hasan, Grameen Shakti, Bangladesh;
- Dumindu Herath, IDEA, Sri Lanka;
- Sanjay Vashist, CAN South Asia;
- Dir. John M. Christensen, UNEP-DTU Partnership;
- Gunnar Boye Olesen INFORSE; and Nordic Folkecenter for Renewable Energy

More: www.inforse.org/INFORSE-UN.php3

IDEA Grameen Shakti inseda wafd

dib CANSA

INFORSE-South ASIA
International Network for Sustainable Energy

Nordic Folkecenter for Renewable Energy

INFORSE is a world-wide network of 145 non-governmental organizations in 60 countries

INFORSE was established in 1992 at the UN "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro to promote a transition to efficient and sustainable use of renewable energy.

The organisations work with renewable energy and sustainable development to improve environment and to reduce poverty through advocacy as well as by raising awareness.

Lobby United Nations

INFORSE has NGO consultative status with the UN ECOSOC since 1998, and with the UNFCCC since 2002. It has sent delegations to many of the Climate COP-meetings as observers as well as organized official side events and exhibitions.

Lobby European Union

INFORSE-Europe is registered in the EU lobby register and has a permanent seat at the EU Ecodesign Directives' consultations.

Communication

The communication is facilitated by a newsletter, a database of more than 1000 relevant contacts, and NGO seminars.

Projects

INFORSE's member organizations often work together to achieve progress through influencing politics, to build capacity through exchanges of information and of services, and through cooperation projects. The last include, in the last 10 years:

- "Southern Voices on Climate Change", an NGO capacity-building program.
- Low-Carbon, Pro-Poor Development Strategies in Africa and South Asia.
- Eco-Village Developments as Climate Solutions in South Asia.
- Social participation in local energy planning in Poland.
- Local sustainable energy planning and advice center in Belarus.
- 100% renewable-energy scenarios for the EU, for Denmark, Baltic Countries, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary etc.
- Cool Products Campaign for the EU EcoDesign Directive.
- NGO cooperation projects in Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Russia, Ukraine and Denmark. Activities included development of sustainable energy plans, campaigns, exhibitions, and study tours.
- EU and sustainable energy information and debates in Denmark
- Creation of a network of NGOs and researchers on low carbon scenarios.
- Educational programs e.g., SPARE, DIERET, and a database of school materials.
- Compiling documentations of successful cases and of a renewable-technology manual for South Asia.

Supporters have included the EU, DANIDA, SIDA, the Nordic Council of Ministers, AirClim, ECOS, Swiss Fund, and the Danish Europa-Nævnet.

More: www.inforse.org

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International Network for Sustainable Energy

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