

## SEAF Offers Fast, Flexible and Targeted Support for Sustainable Energy Approaches

As concern grows about the consequences of today's global patterns of energy use, governments, NGOs, and the private sector are rethinking their energy strategies. Change, seldom easy, is frequently complicated by rapidly shifting financial, economic and political environments. These can make the required transformations even more difficult, particularly if they involve the introduction of new technologies or policies. Often, a small amount of targeted assistance at just the right time can mean the difference between success and failure.

UNEP's *Sustainable Energy Advisory Facility* – or SEAF – seeks to make that difference. SEAF provides swift, flexible, and timely assistance to facilitate the development and application of sustainable energy policies, strategies and technologies. The core idea is that small amounts of technical support, provided in a flexible and responsive manner to the right actors, can help countries move toward a sustainable energy path.

### **SEAF Informs, Strengthens, and Assists**

Funded by the Danish International Development Assistance (Danida) as a pilot effort, SEAF provides information and technical support for sustainable energy activities in several developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Drawing on a growing network of local and international experts, the facility helps institutions in developing countries formulate and implement sustainable energy approaches.

SEAF is demonstrating that the transition to sustainable energy systems does not require complex mechanisms or large bureaucracies. SEAF gives UNEP the ability to meet very specific country needs regarding a broad range of sustainable energy topics. It is doing so in a manner that draws on other work and catalyses other resources. Major *areas of SEAF support* include the following:

#### **Integrating energy sector programmes into overall sustainable development strategies...**

SEAF provides partners with targeted assistance to:

- identify critical factors hindering the adoption of energy strategies that contribute to sustainable development



*The solar systems on the left can often provide a more affordable and cleaner alternative to village power than a centralised coal-fired power station.*

- reinforce the policy links between different sectors such as energy and water, and
- promote actions that leverage greater sustainable energy development.

#### **Implementing sustainable development strategies...**

SEAF mobilises resources to help decision-makers establish the criteria and measurements they need to evaluate alternative choices and test how those choices affect critical social, economic and environmental issues. SEAF enables partners to assess their energy policies or plans as paths to sustainable energy development.

#### **Promoting synergies among sustainable energy projects and programmes...**

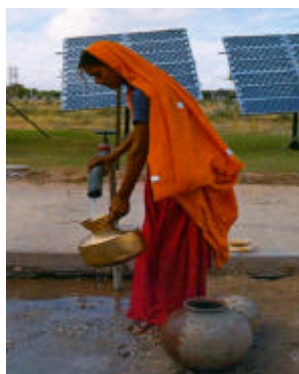
SEAF enables partners to develop and strengthen links between sustainable energy projects by harnessing timely opportunities to exchange information, gather and analyse feedback, and build consensus on policy frameworks.

#### **Assessing and selecting environmentally sound technologies...**

SEAF helps partners assess and choose the most environmentally sound and sustainable technologies for their projects or applications. Resources are made available through the facility to enable local institutions fill 'knowledge gaps' about environmentally sound technologies.

### *Supporting both the completion and continuity of sustainable energy projects...*

Even the best planned projects sometimes encounter unforeseen problems that require additional support. With quick and timely assistance, SEAF provides assistance to overcome inflexible institutional procedures that may delay or kill projects. The facility is also helping policy makers 'leverage' opportunities un-



Photos courtesy Topham, NREL.

anticipated when a specific project was formulated. SEAF helps ensure continuity of sustainable energy projects after they are officially completed or external support is finished. In this area, SEAF provides support for the transition of projects to local institutions and facilitates links to international development agencies.

### **SEAF Services**

*SEAF provides timely access to information and relevant data on sustainable energy. Services include expert technical, economic and financial support from UNEP/UCCEE staff or by regional or international consultants. Technical assistance is available for:*

- *sector and national planning studies*
- *climate change mitigation studies, such as GEF and CDM project development*
- *technology assessment and selection*
- *individual project assessment involving renewable energy technologies or conventional technologies with reduced environmental impacts*
- *the establishment of links to financing institutions such as the World Bank, Global Environmental Facility, regional and national development banks, and other sources of project finance.*

*SEAF also renders technical and financial support for national or regional workshops or related training.*

### **SEAF in Action**

#### **Africa**

**Botswana:** Botswana's National Photovoltaic Programme (NPVP) combines a credit facility to households or small business for the purchase of PV systems with a quality control and maintenance service. High financial costs of credit management and a passive role of the private sector are major difficulties detected in the execution of the NPVP. SEAF is providing management support to the NPVP by reorganising its structure to incorporate innovative financing mechanisms and leverage greater private sector investments in rural energy services.

**Ghana:** Experiences from several pilot projects in the country show that current rural electrification policies are rapidly eroding potential markets for solar PV services. Highly subsidised rates of grid electricity create competitive pressures against the solar PV option at the community level. SEAF is assisting Ghana's Ministry of Energy/Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURC) to develop a subsidy reform package and an energy-service concession structure to secure stable markets for renewable energy service providers.

**Mali:** A number of Jatropha oil powered multi-functional platforms have been installed in Mali. Low levels of organisation combined with poor management practices and limited local technical capabilities have resulted in a low performance of the platforms. SEAF is supporting efforts by the National Directorate of Energy to revamp, and expand coverage of community-based energy services based on Jatropha-Oil Multifunctional Platforms.

**Namibia:** The Government is committed to increasing access to electricity through leveling the playing field between grid and off-grid electrification. The Electricity Act however focuses on grid electrification. SEAF is providing technical support to the Ministry of Mines and Energy/Electricity Commission Board to develop a regulatory framework for integrating sustainable off-grid power sources into the electrification program.

#### **The Caribbean**

**Jamaica:** Within the context of the Caribbean Energy Action programme (CEAP), partially supported by the UCCEE and the Latin American Energy Organisation (OLADE) Jamaica seeks to formulate a long-term energy policy strategy. SEAF has responded to a direct request of the government to assist the Ministry of Energy and Mines to complete the task of formulating and implementing the strategy in a sustainable energy policy framework.

**For more information and to apply for SEAF support, please contact:**

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