

**Africa-EU Renewable Energy  
Cooperation Programme**  
Creating opportunities for renewable energy



**Fact File**

**SUPPORT FOR THE PREPARATORY PHASE  
OF A HOUSEHOLD COOKING ENERGY PLAN** SIERRA LEONE

**Background**

Fuelwood and charcoal account for almost all of Sierra Leone's rural and urban household energy for cooking and heating. It comprises around 85% of all energy used in the country, including the commercial and service sectors as well as household enterprise activities. High urbanization rates have resulted in an increased role for charcoal; the use of inefficient technologies contributes to pressure on forest resources. Additionally, the indoor air pollution caused by inefficient use of charcoal or fuelwood contributes to respiratory diseases, mainly among women and children.

Tens of thousands of rural families earn their livelihoods from producing these fuels. Commercial wood fuels are now the largest cash crop in Sierra Leone. Producers have increasingly formed organised associations to produce, transport and sell commercial fuels (wood and charcoal). However, the solid biomass sector has not received the attention it deserves based on its major role in energy provision. Moreover, the amount and quality of information available on the solid biomass sector is poor. The sector has remained virtually unregulated for many years.

In 2011 the Sierra Leone Ministry of Energy requested the EUEI PDF, under the Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme (RECP), to support:

- » the Sierra Leone Ministry of Energy with the preparatory phase of a household cooking energy plan
- » the development of a vision for the policy framework, following a consultative approach involving key stakeholders and
- » the development of a roadmap setting out policies and potential interventions to improve sustainability in the sector, addressing both the supply and demand sides.



**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

<b>Country</b>	Sierra Leone
<b>Project partner</b>	Ministry of Energy
<b>Term</b>	January 2013 – December 2013

**Objectives**

The objective of the assignment was to support the initial stages in the development of a household cooking energy plan for Sierra Leone, including developing a vision agreed with the stakeholders. The project aimed at an in-depth assessment of the status of the household cooking energy sector to allow for policy recommendations, while also building awareness of the current situation and potential effective short-term interventions to improve sustainability in the sector. The outputs are expected to serve as a starting point in the formulation of a Household Cooking Energy Plan.

**Activities**

The project began with multi-stakeholder meetings in order to raise awareness on issues related to biomass energy with the purpose of stimulating policy dialogue and policy change in the household sector. Multiple stakeholders from various backgrounds were engaged at regional meetings to stimulate discussions and generate recommendations on improving the biomass energy business, taking into account livelihood issues, and environmental sustainability.





The project analysed the entire value chain for commercial biomass, interviewing hundreds of participants, local and central government officials, Parliamentarians, development partners, and NGOs/CBOs. A thorough profile of the value chain and stakeholders in each segment was developed and all relevant national policies were reviewed. A roadmap was developed that fits with those priorities, particularly local government, decentralization, forestry and environmental policies. The roadmap, endorsed by national stakeholders, addresses sustainability of fuel wood supplies, improved conversion and efficiency in end-use.

### Results and conclusions

The immediate result of this project has been to stimulate discussion on and raise awareness about the major role biomass plays in Sierra Leone's energy provision. Various regional and national multi-sectoral workshops have taken place where governmental stakeholders discussed together with stakeholders from the private and informal sector, and civil society the current challenges of the Sierra Leonean biomass sector.

Concretely, the project has resulted in the drafting of a roadmap, setting out ways to simultaneously promote improved efficiency in wood fuel production, including improved forest resource management, afforestation and reforestation, and biomass fuel utilization. The project outputs set out a framework for improving governance on the forest supply side, and improved governance along the entire supply chain.

### The way forward

The roadmap for the national biomass sector developed as part of this project, proposes a number of actions to be taken, among them are the following priority actions:

- » formation of a National Cooking Energy Stakeholder Group (CESG) – headed up by the Ministry of Energy, with participation from all key government, development partner, NGO/CBO and private sector groups
- » sustainable production – setting up four pilot sustainable wood fuel supply enterprises that involve local producers, local government, the Forest Division and landowners
- » supporting development of alternative energy sources, including LPG, biomass briquettes and other biomass fuel sources and
- » efficiency – the project recommends a major national household energy efficiency program that focuses on household cooking.

In the medium to long-term, the effects are likely to be that national policies for local government, forestry and environment will be modified to incorporate household biomass energy supply and demand.

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