FEATURED ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE QUARTER

EXECUTIVE PEER EXCHANGE ON THE POLICIES AND STANDARDS FOR PROMOTING RENEWABLE ENERGY

The U.S. Energy Association organized a five-day executive exchange of the South Asia Regional Renewable Energy Partnership for 14 executives from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The delegates met in Madrid, Spain from 19-23 October 2009 to identify the strategies that Spain uses for connecting renewable energy, distributed generation, and independent power projects into the power system. During the exchange, the South Asian delegates visited with representatives from federal government agencies, utilities and manufacturers to discuss government policies, strategies and incentives for renewable energy deployment, as well as commercially proven renewable energy technologies.

Spain is one of the most advanced countries in the world for the development of renewable energy. Since it established a “Special Scheme” for renewables and a feed-in system, Spain has generated an extraordinary amount of grid-connected renewable energy. It is ranked second in wind and photovoltaic production and third in mini-hydro production in the European Union. By 2010, renewable energy is expected to account for 30% of Spain’s electricity production.

CLEAN ENERGY ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR BANGLADESH AND NEPAL

The US National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) developed the first version of its Geospatial Toolkit (GsT) under the United Nations Environment Programme’s Solar and Wind Resource Assessment (SWERA) Programme. The GsT combines GIS capabilities with resource and other spatial data sets in a free, stand-alone program that can be downloaded and installed on any PC. This allows the exploration of renewable resource potential for SWERA countries without requiring previous knowledge of renewable energy or complex software systems.

The USAID SARI/Energy Program supported enhancements to the GsT, including incorporation of the HOMER model for off-grid hybrid system analysis, and NREL produced enhanced GsTs for Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bhutan.
NREL is redesigning the GsT in a new software platform, which will modernize the interface while retaining all of the functionality from previous versions. With SARI/Energy support, NREL will develop new GsTs for Nepal and Bangladesh using the solar and wind resource data developed under SWERA by the German Aerospace Institute and Risø National Laboratory. NREL is working with stakeholders in both countries to obtain updated spatial data sets such as transmission lines and protected areas. NGOs and government organizations in Nepal and Bangladesh are sharing data on load profiles for off-grid communities, while local companies involved in the manufacture and distribution of renewable system components are sharing cost and performance data for incorporation into the HOMER files included in the GsTs.

The Nepal and Bangladesh GsTs will be completed in summer 2010 and NREL is working with USAID’s SARI/Energy Country Coordinators to plan roll-out and training events for August 2010.

**ADVANCED COAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

Under the USAID SARI/Energy Program, PA Government Services (PA) organized a four-day program on advanced coal management for ten senior and middle-level executives from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India. The delegates met in Kolkata, India, from 1-4 December 2009 to improve their managerial skills, learn to make better strategic business decisions, and to develop cross-functional skills for the managerial challenges related to the efficient and clean usage of coal in generating electricity. During the four-day course, the participants gained awareness of the challenges facing the coal industry globally and within South Asia.

**INDIA-SRILANKA WIND ENERGY KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

PA organized a four-day Knowledge Exchange Program on Wind Energy for an eight-member delegation of professionals from Sri Lanka who met in Chennai, India, from 3 - 6 November 2009. The program provided insights about many aspects of the wind energy sector, from conception through manufacturing, commissioning, transmission, and operation, to regulatory issues. The delegation visited various stakeholders in India’s wind energy sector, including regulators, policymakers, manufacturers, developers and also a research and development organization that supports wind power development in India.
The program covered:

- Understanding of the wind energy sector of India as a whole.
- Understanding regulatory frameworks, incentives, tariffs, power purchase agreements and Government policies.
- Observation of wind power generation and transmission facilities.
- Technical assistance with specifying the optimal voltage interconnection level (11 kV vs. 33 kV).
- Understanding the installation of wind turbines and construction of wind farms.
- Observing the manufacturing of wind turbines and component manufacturing units.

**AFGHANISTAN CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS**

PA organized a four-week training-of-trainers (ToT) program for sub-station equipment engineers at the campus of the National Power Training Institute in Faridabad, India from 23 November through 19 December 2009.

The course included the development of interpersonal skills in such areas as personality development, communications, report writing, presentation techniques, team building, time management, leadership skills, decision making, and motivation. It also covered such technical areas as an overview of the power sector and its structure; distribution planning, management and commercial features of the distribution business; quality of supply; metering, billing and collection; preventive maintenance; and customer relationship management. During the course, the participants visited utilities and manufacturing facilities for transformers and cables.

**POWER MARKETS IN INDIA**

Infraline Energy, along with Mercados Energy Markets India Private Limited, conducted a three-day workshop on Power Markets in India from 29-31 October 2009 at the JW Marriott Hotel in Mumbai, India.

The workshop focused on equipping industry professionals with an informed understanding and skills to manage the complexities and risks of the electricity trading market in India. The workshop aimed to cover the entire set of issues relating to the functioning of the power markets, including how participants operate in such markets and the avenues by which they can maximize the gains in such markets.
The primary course objective was to create a better understanding of:

- Development and major issues in power markets in India
- Indian electricity market platforms
- Drivers and dynamics of power prices
- Different financial instruments that are being traded
- Trading and hedging strategies for electricity derivatives and assets.

SARI/Energy sponsored twelve participants (four from Bangladesh, three from Nepal, one from Pakistan, and four from Sri Lanka) among the total class size of fifty. The program was well received, with the participants noting that the theme conceptualization and content were very informative and exhaustive, and that their diverse backgrounds led to fruitful discussions and much knowledge sharing during the workshop.

**SMALL GRANTS UPDATE**

The Small Grants Program (SGP) released the Second Round Request for Application in August-September 2009 to solicit applications for grants. Ninety applications were received and evaluated. These included a mix of private for-profit and not-for-profit organizations applying for grants; fourteen applications were submitted by organizations that are grantees under Round I of the SGP.

The SGP Evaluations Committee met on 23 November 2009 to shortlist awardees. The Committee selected eighteen applications. The awardees have been notified and the grant agreements have been prepared and signed.

The SGP continues to monitor the progress of grantees for the projects awarded under the Round I solicitations.

**ONGOING AND FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES**

**Cross-Border Trade**

In the Maldives, PA continued work on the *Island / Atoll Interconnection Pre-Feasibility Study* and issued the demand and supply forecast report. In Pakistan, PA continued to provide advisory services to the working group of Central Asia/South Asia (CASA 1000) transmission project. PA also completed a report on system reliability for the Central Electricity Board of Sri Lanka. In Bangladesh, PA is supporting the India/Bangladesh transmission interconnection in the areas of technical, commercial, financial and legal services. In addition, certain specialized activities such as updating the project pre-feasibility study and support for the full feasibility study may be undertaken.

**Energy Markets**

SARI/Energy is considering three new activities related to energy markets to be launched in early 2010: energy market workshops, energy security reports, and national energy market advancements.
Clean Energy Access

USAID’s SARI/Energy Program is in the process of finalizing the business plan for Regional Centre for Excellence in Micro Hydro (RCEMH) in Nepal, which is being developed in collaboration with the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC). The objective of the Centre will be to promote micro hydro development in the South Asia region. It will work on a self-sustaining basis and will showcase the know-how gained by AEPC in the field of micro hydropower.

SARI/Energy is also working on the business plan for the Regional Centre for Excellence in Rural Electrification (RCERE) in Bangladesh in partnership with the Rural Electrification Board of Bangladesh (REB). This Centre will promote rural electrification in the South Asia region by showcasing the know-how of REB. Its objective will be to promote rural electrification as done in Bangladesh through the ‘Palli Bidyut Samiti (PBS) model’.

Efforts continue under the Clean Energy component to support the establishment of another Regional Centre of Excellence focusing on Women in Sustainable Energy Research (WISER) in partnership with the Energy Management Centre (EMC) in Trivandrum, Kerala, India. It is being established to address the targeted needs of clean energy for women in South Asia in their daily lives, in enhancing livelihoods and in maintaining updated information on relevant energy technologies. The activities of the Centre and have been agreed upon through a series of dialogues between stakeholders including SARI/Energy international partner the US National Renewable Energy Laboratory. The Centre Director’s position has been advertised through a call for applications using national and regional channels, and will soon be filled.

Afghanistan Capacity Building Program

Under the Afghanistan Capacity Building Program a training of trainers for technicians is scheduled for February 2010.

ABOUT SARI/ENERGY

USAID’s SARI/Energy program promotes energy security in South Asia through three activity areas:

- Cross-border energy trade
- Energy markets
- Regional clean energy access.

Through these activities SARI/Energy facilitates more efficient regional energy resource utilization, works towards transparent and profitable energy practices, mitigates the environmental impacts of energy production, and increases regional access to energy.

SARI/Energy countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. SARI/Energy implementing partners include PA Government Services (PA), the United States Energy Association (USEA), and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). SARI/Energy provides support to partners and stakeholders on pre-feasibility studies, technical assistance, advisory services, training, peer exchanges, mapping and project development in each of the three core areas.
SARI/Energy Daily News Roundup
USEA distributes a daily bulletin of energy-related news from the SARI/Energy countries, along with notices of SARI/Energy activities and special events. The bulletin is distributed via email and includes web links to related articles. To receive the South Asia Energy Daily Online News Roundup contact: sarienews@usea.org.

SARI/Energy Web Page
For current information on our activities, please visit the SARI/Energy web page: www.sari-energy.org.

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