HOLISTIC APPROACH NEEDED FOR CIVIL SOCIETY AND PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

Dear friends of the Alliance,

To rapidly enable access to energy and services in developing countries in the short term, there is not only a need to give more attention to the issue of climate change mitigation but also for partners willing to take responsibility and leadership in order to achieve non-minimum compromises.

The roll-out of decentralised renewable energies is the most promising path forward to allow local rural people to actively participate in and to grow their own businesses for energy access. Capacity development is not just a one-time only task but needs to be followed by a more holistic approach where civil society and the private sector are enabled to energise and expand their ability to manage their own sustainable development. To catalyse this economic and social development, it remains crucial to ensure support for rural electrification businesses through a hand-in-hand approach with governments, local authorities and community leaders with the support of development policy.

On behalf of the ARE Board, I would like to thank all partners and in particular all 44 new members who have joined the Alliance this year for their strong cooperation and for their extraordinary efforts to turn words into action. In November and December, we could warmly welcome again two more members: Fondazione ACRA-CCS (Italy) and Rural Area Development Programme (Nepal). I would also like to sincerely thank my colleagues David Lecoque, Ling Ng, Richa Goyal and Roberta Balduzzi.
for their strong commitment and passion during this intensive year to further advance the Alliance in its role as a global anchor point for off-grid energy access solutions.

The Alliance is not only a membership fee based organisation who welcomes more organisations to join us in our efforts to support SE4All objectives (ARE Benefits & Advantages Presentation; Membership Form), but we also offer opportunities to third parties who wish to showcase their profile and competences through various communications channels. With the new Sponsoring Package for 2015, now including also a new advertorial section in the ARE newsletter, we offer interesting options to promote the business of private and public actors.

Finally, for 2015, ARE will act again more closely in developing countries. Interested readers are invited to download all market briefs prepared by ARE free of costs - including market briefs from Bolivia and Peru.

The ARE Team wishes you a pleasant reading and we look forward to meet you all again at the beginning of 2015. Happy holidays!

Marcus Wiemann

---

**Guest Editorial**

Cissé Sabati, President (CLUB-ER)

**NEW WORKING PLAN FOR CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES SET FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS**

As newly elected President of the African Association for Rural Electrification / Association Africaine pour l’Electrification Rurale (CLUB-ER), I am very pleased to introduce this newsletter of the Alliance for Rural Electrification dedicated to the important subject of Training & Capacity Building.

CLUB-ER is now a legally incorporated international association covering 30 countries and counts 40 members, all of which are African institutions in charge of rural electrification.

Capacity strengthening is one of the three main pillars of the Club’s activities, “in order to be in a position to fully participate in the formulation of policies and the harmonisation of institutional frameworks with a view of elaborating and implementing investment programmes in rural electrification”.
Ever since the first meeting of CLUB-ER in 2002, capacity building has been an important focus, with a large number of activities: a total of 28 capacity building activities have been organised, 22 experience exchange workshops or thematic conferences and nine in depth training sessions. Each one of these sessions brought together participants from at least four different countries; they have been located in 15 African countries and resulted in over 480 technical staff trained on a broad panel of topics linked to rural electrification.

The topics of the capacity building activities are chosen through a bottom-up approach where the members formulate their needs and priorities which will of course depend on their individual contexts and particularities: advancement of rural electrification, geographical and resource potential, environmental and socio-economic conditions, status of technology advancement, political priorities, etc. The topics that receive the most of the votes are then selected and once the funding is mobilised the trainings or workshops are organised.

The most topical themes over the past 12 years have been: financing mechanisms, planning, multi-sectoral coordination, renewable energy for rural electrification (such as PV, hybrid systems, and mini-hydro), grid costs reduction, regulation and public-private partnership.

These activities are normally organised over five days and build on the sharing of experience in order to learn lessons from the other members. External expert(s) are invited to offer different views regarding the subject at hand – the goal is to endow participants with necessary skills for sustainable project design and implementation in their countries.

Players coming from the private sector, international donors, banks as well as specialised consultants are regularly invited to contribute with hands-on experience to the working sessions and thereby enrich the discussions.

During the last General Assembly in Paris in December 2014, a questionnaire on capacity building needs was circulated. The feedback was that the sharing of experience is still of the utmost
importance for CLUB-ER members. However members now want to evolve towards more detailed and technical capacity building activities.

The next few months will see the formulation of a new work plan for the coming four years, and we look forward to broadening our partnerships with regards to forthcoming capacity building and training activities.

On behalf of the CLUB-ER, I wish you all the best for the New Year.

NEWS FROM OUR SPONSOR

URBAN PLANNING FOR RURAL ELECTRIFICATION: THE GAME IS CHANGING

By Laura Pargade, Marketing & Communications Director, Sunna Design
World leader of the maintenance-free solar streetlights, Sunna Design strongly believes that training and capacity building allows decision makers to be empowered in their sustainable urban planning and rural electrification strategies. With breakthrough innovation and fast technology evolution, the field of solar lighting for public use has drastically changed the game and complexified the understanding of the different actors on the market. To enhance the ability of decision makers to evaluate and address the crucial questions related to the implementation of solar street lighting technology, several training sessions are available, with specialists of the field uncovering all the latest technologies.

Associated partners: CEA / INES, the reference public French lab in solar science, investigating tomorrow’s solution for sustainable, performant, smart and affordable lighting. A visit of the lab allowing to witness the work in progress is scheduled in the training sessions.

Sunna Design: French manufacturer and specialist of solar streetlights, the company has innovated and created 10 years maintenance-free solutions that resist the highest temperatures and the most extreme climates. Thanks to a strong R&D program and seven unique patents, these streetlights are compact and so affordable that they have the smallest cost of usage for the best light output.
A training session of the sort was specially organised with the World Bank in March 2014. The specialists of public lighting programs from the Ministry of Energy of Mali participated in a three day capacity building event, to be equipped with the understanding, skills, and access to information and knowledge that contribute to set up public lighting policies effectively.

The next available training session is in June 2015 within the CEA / INES lab and training department.

IN FOCUS: VOICES FROM THE GROUND

APPROACHES TO ESTABLISH RENEWABLE ENERGY CAPACITY BUILDING
Global Sustainable Energy Solutions Pty Ltd (GSES) is an Australian based multi-disciplinary organisation specialising in professional services and training across the Renewable Energies sector. Since 1998 GSES has been involved in many levels of capacity building ranging from developing quality training frameworks; developing curriculums and competency standards; developing and conducting training courses; developing training resources and training of trainers. Four projects undertaken this year reflect this diversity:

Kenya
GSES through funding by GiZ worked in collaboration with the Kenya Renewable Energy Association to deliver two projects; one relating to the Design and Installation of Grid Connect PV systems and PV based hybrid systems and the other for Solar Hot Water Systems. For both projects GSES worked with various stakeholders in Kenya to develop the curriculums. Once finalised, the lesson plans covering lectures, exercises and practical sessions were developed and GSES trainers then conducted the ‘train the trainer’ courses. 17 trainers attended the PV based course in January 2014, while 21 attended the solar hot water course in November 2014. For the PV based courses, GSES updated two existing training resource manuals to suit Kenya, these are the Design and Install Grid Connected PV Systems and Stand Alone Power Systems-Design and Install. For the Solar Hot Water course, GSES developed a resource manual specifically for Kenya.

Pacific Region
Over the past few years, GSES has worked with the Sustainable Energy Industry Association of Pacific Islands (SEIAPI) and the Pacific Power Association to develop a certification scheme for designers/installers of sustainable energy systems and an accreditation scheme for companies in the industry. In order to obtain certification under this scheme, a person must undertake a course covering the appropriate competency standards developed within the region. To assist this process, GSES offered the Grid Connect online course to association members and other stakeholders in the region with 54 people taking up this offer. Through IRENA sourced funding provided to the PPA, a total of six practical training courses were then conducted between November 2013 and September 2014 in the following countries: Fiji, Samoa, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands and Tonga. Assessment under this scheme includes an assignment, examination and activities during the practical sessions. At time of writing, 15 people have successfully completed their assessments and have obtained their provisional certification and two companies are accredited.
Sri Lanka

Like many other countries, the installation of grid connected PV systems has grown in recent years. GSES was contracted by the Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority to develop and conduct a 5-day course for engineers and a 3-day course for technicians. Each course was for 15 people and the technician’s course was conducted twice back to back. The courses were conducted concurrently at Hambantota, Sri Lanka, in October 2014. Utility engineers, representatives from Sri Lanka standards and lecturers from Universities attended the engineers’ course with the aim that some of these people will conduct courses within Sri Lanka in the future. The technicians’ course was attended by engineers/technicians from the various solar companies within Sri Lanka.

PHOCOS TRAINS SOLAR PIONEERS IN BOLIVIA

By Susanne Kircher, Marketing, Phocos

Project goal

Phocos technology and the Phocos Pico system are popular in Bolivia. Not only because the Bolivian President Evo Morales distributed Pico systems to people living in the Amazonas region, but also because the Bolivian Phocos team has been working on a huge solar education project with the goal of bringing clean energy to remote Bolivian areas with no access to the public power grid.
Description

Phocos Bolivia was authorised by Phocos AG and the Deutsche Entwicklungsgesellschaft (German Development Corporation or DEG) to realise this important project. In order to extend the reach of photovoltaic energy into rural regions without grid connections, local awareness of photovoltaic solutions had to increase first. That is why experts in solar energy must be trained and sent out to spread the word. This includes not only experts in the solar industry, but also people seeking to specialise in this new energy sector – entrepreneurs, dealers, professors, teachers, and students. This is how people in Bolivia can finally have electricity when and where they need it – in rural villages, along remote roads, or even in the highlands of the Andes or on remote Quinoa farms.

What did the project accomplish? It trained over 200 entrepreneurs, professors, teachers, and students. Stakeholders from municipalities and public authorities and other decision makers also received lessons in how people can profit from off-grid solar solutions. The Phocos staff instructed participants in the technical principles of off-grid photovoltaic solutions. Conceptual teaching methods, including role playing and the use of teaching aids such as small solar toys, sparked the interest of small children and helped teachers to easily convey information and experiences. In addition, participants profited from product training for the mobile and flexible Phocos Pico system. They not only learned how to install systems, but also got the chance to set up test systems. Beside technical lessons, Phocos Bolivia also focused on commercial aspects and instructed participants in marketing and sales-related issues.

Success

This challenging project ran for over two years now when it began to bear fruit: Graduates from over
50 universities established small enterprises and are now able to distribute and maintain off-grid solar systems. A further 95 teachers in rural regions were trained by teachers of over 60 schools, who were training by Phocos employees. Professors and teachers in the energy and engineering departments of various universities and schools say that the off-grid PV training now even can be put to use in the public school system.

**Forecast**
The project established a good and lasting basis for giving people a better understanding of solar energy and for increasing access to green energy in Bolivia. But it does not stop there: Future training courses will be held to reinforce, check, and round off knowledge and experiences. This is the only way access to green energy can be improved in the medium and long term. And one of the ways living and economical conditions can be improved – especially in rural Bolivia.

**FIRST RUN OF AEE-PROGRAMME WITH ETHIOPIAN SOLAR ENTERPRISES SUCCESSFULLY OPERATED**

By Geraldine Quelle, Head of Marketing, Phaesun GmbH

Together with the University of Arba Minch (Ethiopia) and the University of Applied Sciences of Neu-Ulm (Germany), the solar enterprise Phaesun which is located in Memmingen (Germany) has completed the first run-through of the AEE programme (Applied Education and Entrepreneurship Programme). In the framework of this programme, a new study course has been introduced at the Southern Ethiopian University where students develop solar systems and establish business models in the rural regions together with small local enterprises. Among others, the solar equipment for a hair salon, a mobile phone and lamp charging station and a mobile solar ice cream shop have been developed.

Students of the University of Arba Minch collected ideas for these systems during a field trip to the remote mountain village of Laka which has no power supply. Subsequently, they sized and constructed the systems directed by the German and Ethiopian lecturers. At the same time, they identified local solar entrepreneurs in cooperation with the local government of Laka and developed business plans.
Engidaw Abdel Haile, leader of the solar competence centre at the University of Arba Minch, reports: "It is a unique cooperation between international experts, small local enterprises and university students who developed systems perfectly tailored for the users’ requirements. E.g. The students assembled a solar hair salon on a robust carriage, so the hairdresser is able to push his equipment to the market in Laka and the surrounding villages without problems."

The solar enterprise Phaesun, supports this project as an industrial partner with solar components and training courses on the sizing and marketing of solar systems. One reason to participate in this project is the development of BOSS (Business Opportunities with Solar Systems) solutions together with the different stakeholders and test them in practice. Tobias Zwirner, Managing Director of Phaesun knows that the existing solar kits are prototypes with room for improvement, however, this is a perfect training ground for all participating parties. The project started in December 2013 with a preparation and training phase for the Ethiopian lecturers. The focus was laid on the physical basics of solar energy, technical training courses and the development of business plans.

During the summer semester holidays in 2014 almost 60 Ethiopian students were selected for the first run of the interdisciplinary study course.
In the second part of the course, the students engross what they have started already in the first part together with the small local businesses ‘scaling up’ the business models. The challenge now is ‘entrepreneurial activity on a larger scale’. Some ideas are already there: One group of students is planning a workshop for the manufacture of ‘solar carriages’. The necessary components can be bought from wholesalers in the capital. Based on the knowledge acquired, the students configure various complete systems such as mobile phone charging stations and offer these to entrepreneurs in regions without connection to the grid.

AEEP is a training programme supported by DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), co-financed with funds from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). It was initiated by the University of Neu-Ulm, the University of Arba Minch, Sahay Solarverein Afrika e.V., the company Phaesun and further industrial partners with a run time from 2013 until 2016.

**RISK ALIGNMENT IN RURAL ELECTRIFICATION**

*Clear Resource*

*Energy matters*

*By Balthasar Klimbie, Director, Clear Resource*

From being a charity issue, rural electrification has grown into one of the major topics in support of the poorer regions around the globe. Looking back we could probably say that we were having the pre and post-Ban Ki-Moon’s SE4All age.

When I joined the ARE board in 2007, the discussions that we were having were quite technology driven, whereas now, we are talking about (the lack of) finance and risk management. And although the majority of our members are still SMEs, it is also good to notice that the larger companies like Siemens are looking at rural electrification as an interesting field of play.
With all the international institutions like the European Commission, the World Bank and the UN involved, it is easier to access the governments of the countries involved, in order to assist them with the policy making process. These policies ensure that the rural electrification is done in a way that is sustainable and suits the country’s needs.

Apart from the discussion about risk management from the financial side, I would like to make a point in assisting the receiving countries, who can control a certain risk and who carry the consequences, to check on the risks involved in rural electrification – a process known as risk alignment.

In my advice to the Department of Energy (DoE) of South Africa last year, I found that one of the major bottlenecks in the effectiveness of their rural electrification strategy, in particular in what relates to off-grid solutions, was due to the misalignment of risks.

In short, the DoE works with concession areas in which one private operator is assigned to electrify the villages that will not be grid connected (in principal) with Solar Home Systems. The DoE pays for 90% of the system and installation costs (100 Wp system). The remaining 10% is invested by the operator. The client pays a small fee to be connected and a monthly fee for the service afterward to the operator, who is obliged by the DoE to keep the system running for 20 years. If the client cannot pay, the local government has to pay for them.

In principle this is a nice framework, but the downside is that the operator has only limited influence on the willingness to pay from the client. The large non-payment rate seemed due to, amongst others, local politicians promising that the grid would arrive and the local government being unwilling to pay the fees of the people that could not pay fully for themselves. This chokes the operator financially.

This is an example of a policy where the financial risk is placed upon the desk of the private operator without giving them the means to influence it. If, for example, the clients would have to pay the monthly fee to the DoE who then would pay a service fee to the operator, the above-mentioned problems could be avoided.

This article of course is too short to clarify the complete situation in South Africa, but the point is that risk alignment is needed if we want to achieve the SE4All goals.

BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY AND FRES’S ‘TRAIN THE TRAINERS’ PROGRAMME
By Chris Service, Business Developer, FRES

The rural electrification market in Africa has seen huge developments over the past decade. Ongoing innovation and rapidly falling prices of renewables now mean that technology no longer plays a limiting factor in scaling up electricity access to the 585 million in Sub-Saharan Africa who lack access to basic electricity services. Private investors too are now slowly starting to trickle into a market that was once the sole domain of grant financing.

So with market-ready technologies and investments (slowly) on the rise why are there so few successful long-term players rolling out off-grid energy solutions at scale in rural Africa? An often overlooked aspect of African rural electrification programmes is the capacity of the rural communities to install and maintain the technology you seek to promote – no matter how ‘plug & play’ the technology is there comes a time when components fail, maintenance is required and the sustainability of the system is threatened.

For Foundation Rural Energy Services (FRES), finding qualified local staff in rural areas represents one of the main challenges it faces in its operations across West, East and Southern Africa. That’s why since 2004, FRES has been regularly sending specialist trainers to each of its five local companies to train local technicians and ensure standardised installation and maintenance practices across all companies.

From January 2015, FRES will take this one step further, with the launch of its new technical training programme ‘Train the Trainers’. Selected members from FRES’s national teams (including Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Burkina Faso, Uganda and South Africa) have been invited to attend a 7-day technical training course held at FRES Uganda headquarters in Mbarara. The objective of the training is to "train future trainers" of each company. Attendees will become the future focal points for ongoing training within their respective national teams and in turn pass on their new knowledge to local
technicians. This will allow each company to have local trainers ready to train new technicians as they are recruited.

The details of the training course have been developed in collaboration with FRES partner Alliance Solaire and specifically tailored to FRES’s operations. The training seeks to strengthen capacity and embed ownership in the national FRES teams in all countries, while benefiting from the wealth of experience through the facilitation of mutual learning. Additionally, two local students from the Western Uganda region will be given the opportunity to take part in order to expand the impact of the training beyond FRES.

The new programme represents an extension of FRES’s strategy to facilitate more inter-company knowledge exchange. For several years, FRES has held the Annual Company Week in the Netherlands, an annual forum where management teams from all FRES companies come together to share best practices and lessons learned in their respective countries regarding operational, technical, financial and managerial aspects. Such knowledge exchanges are critical to scaling up and improving the impact and sustainability of rural electrification projects, by leveraging the knowledge and experience of the local teams in the field.

**BAREFOOT INSPIRATION: POWER TO THE PEOPLE, FROM THE PEOPLE**

*By Aarti Khosla, Advocacy and Communications Lead, WWF-India*

Based in the remote village of Tilonia, in India’s desert state of Rajasthan, the Barefoot College has spent the last four decades training thousands of illiterate and semi-literate people from all over the
world to become skilled engineers, carpenters, even lawyers and dentists. These are mainly older women with the talent, but who’ve never had the opportunity.

The Barefoot idea is based on the principle that local problems are best solved locally, and that we should make better use of the skills and knowledge of ordinary communities. We see obvious links with WWF’s approach to protecting the natural world. Conservation is often about social change also, and local knowledge plays a vital role.

Based on this thinking, WWF partnered with the Barefoot College. Some of their main success has come from training people, often grandmothers, to work as solar engineers. Bringing about an energy transformation through renewable energy is something that’s obviously close to our belief of a living planet.

Why grandmothers? It’s because Barefoot College founder Sanjit Roy has found that there are advantages to training the women in a community. Women are more likely to pass their knowledge on, while men, he argues, value the certificate so that they can leave and get a job elsewhere.

Barefoot solar
The Barefoot ethos is about demystifying technology – in this case solar power – and making it accessible to poor and uneducated communities. They select women from rural villages around the world, often places with little or no access to electricity. Energy in these areas comes from sources like oil lamps and wood stoves that may be bad for the local environment, or human health, or both.

So far, the college has brought together women from as far apart as Afghanistan, Colombia, Jordan, Panama, Belize, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Nepal and Sierra Leone. There, in the little Indian village of Tilonia, they stay for six months and learn to become solar engineers.

Last year, WWF also helped women from Madagascar take part in the Barefoot training programme. As Voahirana Randriambola from WWF Madagascar explains, “It’s not only a technology project, it’s a human project – it’s built on human relations.”
It can be a challenging six months. A lot of these women have never been away from their homes or families before. Most are illiterate, with little or no education. They don’t even share a common language. Yet, gradually, patiently, often using a mixture of sign language and images, they learn how to identify electrical components, solder circuit boards and build solar lamps.

When they go back home after six months, they can not only install solar lighting systems, but they train other villagers to do so. The equipment can either be sponsored, or bought on credit and paid back by the community, depending on their financial situation.

The solar lamps improve opportunities for education – children can study in the evenings – and even provide jobs and income for communities. In short, solar electrification brings a social, cultural and environmental transformation. It’s a real win-win.

NEW MEMBERS

FONDAZIONE ACRA-CCS

Country: Italy
www.acraccs.org

ACRA-CCS is a lay and independent non-governmental organisation working to remove poverty through sustainable, innovative and shared solutions. A particular attention is focused on the peripheries of the planet and the marginalised segments of the north and south of the world.

RURAL AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (RADP)
Country: Nepal

RADP is a national NGO that is actively contributing to the poor, disadvantaged and marginalised communities in the field of socioeconomic development to improve the living standard of rural people in Nepal. It has been working in Nepal since 1994 in the sector of WASH, environment, alternative energy, education, women empowerment, good governance and income generation through skills development.

Country: England

NEWS FROM THE ALLIANCE

SAVE-THE-DATE: ARE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (MADRID, 5-6 MAR 2015)

The Alliance and its board has the pleasure to invite all members to attend the next ARE General Assembly, in Madrid on 5-6 March 2015. With the better positioning in the fields of rural development and electrification you can directly contribute to the ARE strategy and activities.

In order to create synergies, the General Assembly will be linked with an event to advance
cooperation between public and finance sector as well as practitioners. More information to follow soon.

**ASTANA EXPO-2017 (ASTANA, 23-24 OCT 2014)**

A highlight of the Astana EXPO-2017 was the Annual International Forum on “Future Energy: Reduction of CO₂ emissions”, which took place in Astana, Kazakhstan on 23-24 October 2014. The forum was the anchor event of the Pre-EXPO programme of the International Specialised Exhibition EXPO-2017 and attracted representatives of governments, business entities, NGOs and public sector for discussion of issues in energy supply, climate change, ecological security, and investment in renewables and energy-efficiency areas.

As part of the Alliance’s strategy to expand increasingly into Asia, ARE President Ernesto Macias was invited as keynote speaker on the importance of public policy and the need to advance decentralised electricity in developing countries.

**ARE SHARES LESSONS LEARNT WITH OFID (VIENNA, 3-4 NOV 2014)**

Responding to a call from the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), a “Symposium on Petroleum Industry Support for Universal Energy Access” in partnership with the World Petroleum
Council (WPC), was held in OFID’s headquarters in Vienna, Austria on the 3 and 4 November 2014.

The Symposium gathered high level representatives from the petroleum industry, as well as the UN SE4All and other international organisations to discuss the role of the petroleum industry towards the billions of people in developing countries who lack access to modern energy services and identify ways and means to help them. UNF Executive Director Richenda van Leeuwen and ARE Secretary General Marcus Wiemann shared lessons learnt and progress made by already established High Impact Opportunities (HIO) on Clean Energy Mini-grids to support SE4All objectives. This initiative is an open platform and therefore welcomes interested parties to join. More information can be found on their website.

**SUSTAINABLE ENERGY IN CENTRAL ASIA: BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER (BRUSSELS, 6 NOV 2014)**

The European Commission organised a business-oriented conference entitled "Sustainable Energy in Central Asia: Business Opportunities and Technology Transfer" in Brussels on 6 November 2014. This conference aimed at raising awareness on the potential for EU - Central Asia business cooperation in renewable energy and energy efficiency, given the significant untapped potential in the region and the strong expertise and know-how developed by the EU industry.

ARE Policy and Development Officer David Lecoque spoke about “Energising Rural Areas: Off- and Mini-grid Solutions” by giving insight into case studies carried out by ARE members to key stakeholders from Central Asia, particularly from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, as well as from Europe.

**INTERSOLAR INDIA (MUMBAI, 18-20 NOV 2014)**
With a visitor increase of 9% and a total of 160 international exhibitors, Intersolar India is the largest exhibition and conference for the solar industry in the country. For the first time, the Intersolar India Conference was held at the Bombay Exhibition Centre (BEC), where 100 distinguished speakers and 500 conference attendees discussed the latest market developments, new technologies, and application solutions.

As part of the ARE-EBTC cooperation to assist with technology transfer from Europe to India, ARE Secretary General Marcus Wiemann held a keynote presentation entitled "Case for solar powered energy access - Role of international organisations and inter-governmental co-operation" to speak about ways on how to get successfully involved in rural electrification markets. The speech was followed by numerous B2B meetings (Intersolar India interview). The Alliance takes the opportunity to thank Country Manager India Richa Goyal, who left ARE to take the next career step at the end of November, for her keen efforts to raise visibility for the members’ and partners’ competences and products.

INYT ENERGY FOR TOMORROW (KUALA LUMPUR, 19-20 NOV 2014)

Energy’s centre of gravity is shifting decisively to Asia, with Southeast Asia’s energy demand expected to increase more than 80 percent by 2035. In this context, the pursuit of a low-carbon, efficient energy system to enhance energy security, affordability and sustainability is especially important.
As an industry supporter of INYT Energy for Tomorrow Conference, the Alliance is pleased that ARE member Massimo Bergadano from PHPower could join the discussion on “Thinking regional, powering local: The future of energy distribution” tackling questions on whether Asia can leapfrog the traditional distribution and generation hurdles hampering the widespread adoption of renewables in Europe and the U.S. and the potential for an Asian supergrid.

EXPLOITING OPPORTUNITIES IN RENEWABLE ENERGY & RURAL ELECTRIFICATION IN KENYA (NAIROBI, 28 NOV 2014)

Energy stakeholders met in Nairobi on 28 November 2014 to discuss the state of and opportunities in renewable energy and rural electrification in Kenya. This Dialogue Forum was convened by the EU Energy Initiative Partnership Dialogue Facility (EUEI PDF), Practical Action Eastern Africa and the Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE), and discussed issues and policies regarding off-grid electricity, mini-grids and clean cooking.

ARE Policy and Business Development Officer David Lecoque introduced the Mini-Grid Policy Toolkit, its objectives, its use and its potential to be a useful contribution in the Kenyan context.

Issues related to distribution and market for the technologies are vital in the process of ensuring equity and universal access to energy. It was clear from the meeting that there still were eminent gaps in awareness within the general public and a lack of related custom-made financial products to enable technology access placing huge obstacles in meeting the targets (press release).

ACCESSING AFRICA’S RENEWABLE ENERGY MARKETS (BRUSSELS, 4 DEC 2014)
In cooperation with the Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme (RECP), ARE supported the “Accessing Africa’s Renewable Energy Markets” event on 4 December 2014 in Brussels with about 45 participants mainly from renewable energy associations and industry. After presentations from the IEA and Energy Private Developers, ARE member Edwin Enwegbara from Eauxwell Nigeria Ltd gave insights into ways on how to engage in the Nigerian renewable energy market.

It targeted the “gatekeepers” of the European renewable energy private sector, such as industry associations, export initiatives and business networks. The event introduced African renewable energy markets, successful business models, and RECP’s private sector support services. It was also intended as an information event prior to the upcoming matchmaking and other dedicated private sector oriented activities.

RECENT TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING
PUBLICATIONS

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS DIAGNOSTICS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY – CADRE

By GIZ, IDEA, I.RENA & NREL
The Capacity Development Needs Diagnostics for Renewable Energy (CaDRE), introduced in this Handbook, helps policy makers, organisations and capacity development/renewable energy
practitioners shape an environment conducive to the development of renewable energy.

CaDRE is designed as a country-driven, comprehensive approach to analysing the capacity already in place, predicting future capacity needs, identifying capacity gaps and providing recommendations for creating capacity development strategies. It is based on the guiding principle that no successful capacity development strategy can be built without intensive stakeholder engagement.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY IN AFRICA

By RECP & EUEI PDF
The findings highlight the complexity of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for renewable energy, with two diverse, often immature sectors coming together.

Important in designing support interventions for renewable energy skills development on the vocational level, is the establishment of a broad consensus through dialogue between the various actors, incl. Ministries of Energy, Labour, Education, Industry and Trade, as well as training institutes, colleges, and schools, and the renewable energy private sector.

ENERGY LITERACY FOR ALL? CRACKING THE VERY HARD 'SOFT SIDE' OF ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

By iied

Increasing energy access and transitioning from dirty to clean energy will take capacity building – but current capacity building efforts need a makeover to be effective.
"We need to build capacity." That's one of three stock responses you get to the question of how to deliver energy access for all and leapfrog from dirty to clean energy in developing countries. The others being 'policy' and 'finance' – with 'more political will' as a universal basecoat.