

ANNEX XII: STAKEHOLDER'S CONSULTATION AND VALIDATION WORKSHOP RESULTS

1 INTRODUCTION

The Stakeholder's Consultation and Validation Workshop was promoted by RREA and occurred at the Passion Hotel, Gboveh Hill, in Gbarnga City, Bong County, on February 4, 2016. All major stakeholders were invited to attend and virtually all were present.

The Workshop itself consisted on the presentation of a preliminary version of the Rural Energy Master Plan, its major findings and implications and on the validation by the stakeholders on the way to proceed.

2 AGENDA

The agenda for the Workshop is presented in the next table:

Table 2.1 - Agenda for the workshop.

Duration	Topic
09:00 - 09:05	WELCOME REMARKS
09:05 - 09:15	OPENING STATEMENT
09:15 - 09:25	OVERVIEW OF THE WORKSHOP
09:25 - 09:40	INTRODUCTION
09:40 - 10:40	LONG TERM NETWORK EXPANSION AND ELECTRIFICATION
10:40 - 11:25	BELIEFS AUDIT AND TARGETS/PRIORITIES
11:25 - 11:40	COFFEE BREAK
11:40 - 12:20	RURAL ELECTRIFICATION SCENARIOS
12:20 - 12:50	ACTION: PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS
12:50 - 14:00	LUNCH BREAK
14:00 - 14:30	INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK
14:30 - 15:45	BREAK OUT SESSIONS AND DISCUSSION
15:45 - 16:35	GROUP PRESENTATIONS
16:35 - 17:00	WRAP-UP AND CONCLUSIONS
17:00 - 17:15	CLOSING REMARKS/APPRECIATION/ANNOUNCEMENT
18:00 - 20:00	DINNER

After the presentation of the preliminary version of the Rural Energy Master Plan the attendants were divided into five groups (of 8 to 10 participants) for the break-out sessions and discussion of several relevant topics. Afterwards, a spokesman of each group was invited to present the major comments and suggestions.

3 TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

The proposed topics for discussion were:

1. Do you agree with Scenario 1B recommendation and targets?
2. Do you agree with proposed Action Plan and Program Structure? Do you agree with Fast Start projects? Who should manage them?

3. Should Regional Distribution Companies be created? What should be the future role of LEC in rural electrification?
4. Do you agree with the proposed funding strategy? What should be the role of REFUND?
5. What do you anticipate could be the major constraints for achieving the proposed target/scenario? How to manage them?

4 FEEDBACK

Concerning question #1, all but one group of attendants agreed with the proposed scenario with an electrification target of 35% for the Rural Energy Master Plan, generally considering it more realistic, producing more equity and being more economic, producing higher cash flow. The outsider group wished the Rural Energy Master Plan to be more ambitious and achieve a 50% electrification target, although its participants understood the challenging implications in terms of funding and capacity.

Regarding question #2, all groups agreed with the proposed Action Plan and Program Structure. Emphasis was made on the need for strong capacity building and local stakeholders' and organizations involvement to allow for the program's sustainability and continuity. In terms of Fast Start Projects all groups agreed with the concept but one group suggested a higher electrification target resulting from these projects of 15% rural electrification in 2020 (instead of the proposed 10%). As for the question of who should manage the projects, the opinions were split between the private sector and LEC or RREA.

For question #3 the common answer was yes, regional distribution companies should be created. There was also the suggestion that they might be created through Public-Private Partnerships. Regarding LEC's role in rural electrification, the views were diverse, ranging from LEC just acting as one distributor among others, merely focusing on transmission or even generation or even having a coordinating and advisory role as custodian of the national grid.

About question #4, all groups agreed with the proposed funding mechanism, but some highlighted the need for long-term Government of Liberia commitment. As for REFUND, its role should be primarily to facilitate funding but also to promote capacity building, project and consumer finance and risk management.

Finally, in what regards question #5, the major constraints identified overall were: funding, capacity, and political will. On another level, some groups also identified accessibility, security, lack of awareness, gender sensitivity and lack of monitoring and overview. To address these issues, the attendants proposed the focus on capacity building and creation of awareness and a higher involvement from the Government of Liberia with the creation of a strategic long-term road map.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The feedback received during the workshop was assimilated by the Consultant and incorporated in the final version of the Rural Energy Master Plan. The most relevant topics on discussion were validated by the

attendants, including, most importantly, the selection of Scenario 1B for the electrification scenario of the Rural Energy Master Plan.