

Summary of the third meeting of the working groups

AFRICA-EUROPE HIGH LEVEL PLATFORM FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY INVESTMENTS (SEI Platform)

The third Working Groups' meeting of the SEI Platform took place in Brussels on the 11 and 12 July 2019. Energy sector stakeholders of both continents gathered for one and a half days to work towards the achievement of the SEI Platform's objectives, and to a broader extent, of the Africa-Europe Alliance goals, through the proposal of recommendations on how best to leverage public and private investments in sustainable energy in Africa. This meeting had a working session specific to the clean cooking sector.

Kandeh Yumkella, SEI Platform Coordinator, opened the meeting by reminding the 50 participants to strengthen their commitments and work more closely together in order to be able to present a meaningful report of recommendations in Johannesburg in November 2019 at the Africa Investment Forum.

Stefano Signore, Head of Unit at DG DEVCO, followed by emphasizing the strategic importance of Africa for the European Union. Accelerating the development of Africa will remain a high priority for the next European Commission. The EU will be a reliable partner to Africa to achieve the 2030 Agenda, including improving clean cooking capabilities.

As participants provided their feedback on the first chapters of the report of recommendations, Anne-Charlotte Bournoville, Head of Unit at DG Energy, requested the SEI Platform to draft a concise and political report containing concrete, actionable and measureable recommendations to catch the policy makers attention.

The second meeting day brought together stakeholders from the clean cooking sector to discuss the current state of play, market trends and means to increase private sector investment. An experts' panel comprised of representatives from international organisations and IFIs including the IEA, World Bank, WHO, AfDB, EBRD and Hivos presented their experiences and views on various aspects of the clean cooking sector, with emphasis on health, environment and socio-economic impacts, technological innovation, business models and financing mechanisms. Access to clean cooking was recognised as a key development challenge as an estimated 3.8 million people dying globally from air pollution each year as a result of inefficient usage of cooking stoves. The EBRD presented their activities in Egypt in support of renewable energy, energy efficiency and natural gas that together with successful reforms of the energy sector carried out by the Government can lead to industrialisation and growth.

During the afternoon session, Working Group participants and clean cooking stakeholders have continued elaboration on two key topics: 1) clean cooking, and 2) capacity building along the energy supply chain. Outcomes have been presented at the closing plenary:

- **Clean cooking** session addressed business solutions and technological innovation needs, as well as inter-linkages with health, climate, education, and gender, important to create a bigger impact and raising finance. Enhancing policy and regulatory frameworks as a basis for improving enabling environments for private sector investment has been cited as central to developing the sector.
- **Capacity building** session resulted in a common agreement on barriers and recommendations associated with capacity building and skills' strengthening needs at the institutional (policy makers, regulators, utilities and rural electrification agencies), at the corporate and educational level. Existing initiatives and potential partnerships have also been identified and proposed.

Conclusions and next steps

Results of Working Group and thematic discussions were presented at the closing plenary session.

The group agreed to reinforce the writing team, currently composed of the Florence School of Regulations, the AU-EU Energy Partnership Secretariat, the African Development Bank and AfricaGreenCo, with the participation of RES4Africa Foundation and the Alliance for Rural Electrification. A number of peer-reviewers have also been shortlisted to add to the SEI Platform's participants review.

The next meeting will be held on 16 and 17 September in Brussels, with a specific focus on energy efficiency as a job creating sector as well as a cross cutting issue. That meeting's objective will be to finalise and validate the draft recommendations, on time for the Africa Investment Forum scheduled on 11-13 November in Johannesburg.