

Information on new support within the Swedish Regional Development Cooperation in Africa

Sahel Renewable Energy

Introduction

This is a transformative renewable energy project in the area of Liptako-Gourma, i.e. the borderlands between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. This region is historically characterized by structural poverty and marginalization and has since 2012 also been the target of increased terrorist attacks and a rapidly deteriorating security situation, especially over the past couple of years. Sweden has committed 76,6 MSEK for this three year project that constitutes a first exploratory phase that is envisioned to be followed by a second larger phase.

The project will utilize a private sector approach, mobilizing investments and contributing to improving the security situation and reduce poverty by triggering socio-economic development; in particular for populations not served by the national electricity grid. Given the complex and risky nature of this program, an adaptive and flexible approach will be crucial during implementation.

Program content

The project will be implemented by UNOPS in collaboration with UNDP and coordinated by ALG (Integrated Development Authority of the Liptako-Gourma Region), an intergovernmental organization with the mission of promoting cross-border development in the energy, mining, water, agriculture and fisheries sectors of the Liptako Gourma region located in the border lands between Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso.

The project will be coordinated with the ongoing program “Cross-border cooperation in Liptako-Gourma”, the purpose of this program is development and stabilization in the region. Through geographical coordination and cooperation, Sida expects greater impact for both contributions.

The project will help increase the supply of renewable energy. It will also contribute to the socio-economic development of the targeted communities. Furthermore, the project will contribute to the development of the legislation and regulations that affect the provision of off-grid energy services by private actors in the three countries. Finally, the effort will support the ALG in its efforts to promote renewable energy and sustainable rural electrification.

The project has a transformative approach and is structured around five components.

1. Institutional support for the creation of national platforms for the coordination of renewable energy initiatives and the development of system support for the mapping and monitoring of energy resources.
2. Procurement, installation and commissioning of two mini-grids in each country.
3. Support for improving regulations and policies concerning the energy sector in the three countries
4. Support for local private actors in the renewable energy sector and the development of models for operating mini-grids in an economically sustainable way.
5. Local development of income-generating activities as a result of the increased supply of energy. Initially, an investment will be made in the Clean-Cooking sector.

The project constitutes an exploratory first phase in planned larger program, it extends over three years. In the subsequent program, other donors and financiers will be invited to help scale up the effects in the entire region

by building on the first phase financed by Sweden. The idea is that within the framework of the initiative described here, one should learn, for example, which business models work in order to then be able to apply these on a larger scale. Furthermore, improved regulations in the energy sector in the region will be a prerequisite for entering the subsequent phase. During the implementation of the initiative, UNOPS will also work to attract financiers to the subsequent phase.

Targeted geographical and thematical areas

The project will be implemented in the Liptako-Gourma region, i.e. the borderlands between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The main thematical area is energy but impacts are also expected within the areas of economic development, health, education and environment.

For further information

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Sida contribution no 13142