

STRENGTHENING COUNTRY CAPACITY

For the Global Environment Facility (GEF), capacity building is first and foremost about providing people, institutions, and developing countries with the tools and training to make choices about the environment that help reduce poverty and promote sustainable livelihoods. Nearly all of the 1,500 projects that the GEF supports include a capacity-building component. In the climate change focal area, GEF projects help provide enabling environments for the sustainable and economic use of renewable energies and energy-efficient technologies, build the necessary capacity to sustain them, and demonstrate the useful applications of these energy sources.

To these ends, GEF projects work with the host countries to raise awareness, increase local capacity, and train technicians. The GEF calls upon the host government to support sustainable energy systems on a political level by providing the necessary frameworks—everything from a country's general investment climate to the legal conditions for access to the central grid to the existence of technical standards, import tariffs, and zoning regulations. Based on its 13-year experience in the climate change area, the GEF focuses on a balanced combination of policy frameworks, technical knowledge, and business skills.

The following climate change projects illustrate how the GEF is helping countries build their capacity in the areas of technology, education, training, public awareness, and institutional and financial arrangements, among others, along with improving enabling environments.



Joerg Boethling/Agenda

Many of these projects include a number of aspects for building capacity and promoting enabling environments.

ENHANCING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

The Galapagos Islands are famous for rare species of fauna, including the giant tortoise for which they are named. As a result of the Galapagos' uniqueness, several donors have already provided substantial support for renewable energy installations on four islands. A GEF project is working on both the national and local levels to build the capacity to support these installations.

On the national level, the GEF project is helping to reform the regulatory framework. These reforms include provisions that allow the costs of the renewable energy systems to be adequately recovered so that replacements and operational costs can be funded from the system itself, rather than depending on renewed donor support. On the local level, the project is helping to

adapt ownership structures and arrangements to the context of each island to ensure that the renewable energy equipment is optimally used and maintained.

In Tunisia, a GEF-supported project is working with the government to provide an enabling policy environment and smart incentives for investments into 100 megawatts of wind generation capacity. The newly created policy framework will serve to attract other investments in wind generation.

PROMOTING TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

The Fuel Cells Financing Initiative, a global GEF program, is using structured learning and technology transfer to introduce stationary fuel cells. Fuel cells can produce electricity at higher conversion efficiencies than most other currently tested technologies. The initiative, through its structured capacity-building and technology transfer approach, is a unique attempt to bridge technological gaps between developed and developing countries.

IMPROVING LOCAL TECHNICAL CAPACITY AND EDUCATING CONSUMERS

Through a GEF project in Botswana, the Government of Botswana is testing a large-scale solar photovoltaic-based strategy to provide 88 villages with electricity. More than 5,000 households will be given access to clean lighting, and

more than 1,000 households will receive a more extensive supply of electric power from a solar home system. This project seeks to bolster the process of rural electrification with a combination of interventions that improve local technical capacities, political framework conditions, and access to financing, as well as educating consumers on renewable energy.

INTRODUCING INNOVATIVE FINANCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

A GEF project in Cuba will introduce innovative financial and institutional structures to enhance local manufacturing capacity, encourage private investments, and support sustainable markets for renewable energy technologies. The project will establish commercial business models for renewable technologies and provide modern energy services on the island.

BUILDING TRAINING CAPACITY

A GEF project in Eritrea aims to transform the market for wind energy. The project will help install and operate a wind park connected to the grid, as well as eight decentralized stand-alone and hybrid wind systems in rural villages. More importantly, the project will strengthen the country's capacity in terms of personnel, know-how, government institutions and authorities, and private companies with regard to the use of wind energy. Training is a key component of this effort.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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