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International Water
Management Institute



ICIMOD



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DAY 2 - High Level Plenary Session 3

Time: 15.30 – 16.45 | Venue: Himalaya Ball Room, Hotel Himalaya

Title: Opportunities South-South Learning and Cooperation

Description: Aggressive policy push and support combined with falling unit costs have allowed South Asia to lead the world's solar pump deployment. Latest data from IRENA shows that the region has crossed 1.13 GW of installed off-grid solar capacity deployed for use in agriculture; dominating the global deployment of 1.17 GW (IRENA 2023). Despite this commanding lead, South Asia is not alone in experimenting with rural solar applications. Africa's solar pump capacity has grown from 2.3 MW in 2015 to 25.9 MW in 2022 – with Ethiopia and Rwanda in the lead. Over the same period, deployment in the Middle East (0.6 MW to 5.9 MW) and South America (0.2 MW to 4.2 MW) has also witnessed significant growth. This session explores opportunities for south-south learning, knowledge exchange and cooperation, especially between South Asia, Central Asia, MENA and SSA.

Moderator: Dr. Henry Roman, Country Representative, Southern Africa

Panelists:

- **Ms. Divya Sharma**, Deputy Head of Cooperation, Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC)
- **Ms. Prerna Sharma**, Energy Advisor, GIZ India
- **Eng. Mohamed Ramadan El Sayed**, Director, Ministry of Electricity & Renewable Energy, Government of Egypt
- **Eng. Elizabeth Kaijuka Okwenje**, Principal Energy Officer in the Department of Renewable Energy, Uganda
- **Dr. Kebede Teshome**, Director Irrigation and Drainage ACC, Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI)
- **Mr. Tenzin Drugyel**, Principal Agriculture Office, Department of Agriculture, Royal Government of Bhutan

Questions to the Panelists:

Round 1 (5 mins)

Divya Sharma	Why is it crucial for countries, particularly in the Global South, to work together to identify key opportunities and barriers in the uptake of solar irrigation, and what role does SDC see for donor organisations in fostering this change.
Prerna Sharma	As part of the SE4RL (Solar Energy for Rural Livelihoods) project, GIZ Nepal and GIZ India are working with IWMI to promote south-south learning around solar irrigation. How has the experience been so far and what way forward do you see?
Dr. Kebede TesHOME	Following an ISA-led country mission, Ethiopia – one of ISA’s founding members – had set up a high-level task force to prepare the roadmap for solarization of agriculture in Ethiopia. What has been the progress so far and how can: [a] Ethiopia share lessons for other countries in Africa and beyond; [b] Ethiopia learn from solar experiences around the world.
Eng. Mohamed Ramadan El Sayed	IWMI’s study on drivers for and bottlenecks to solar pump adoption suggests that MENA region is primed for large-scale solar deployment in agriculture. What are Egypt’s plans for solarization of agriculture? What are some of the key government initiatives and policies?
Eng. Elizabeth Kaijuka Okwe nje	Another ISA-led country mission to Uganda provided IWMI a chance to interact with and learn from several key stakeholders in Uganda. One such meeting that stood out was the work of Nexus Green – which is deploying solar pumps for irrigation in rural communities across the country. How has been Uganda’s progress and what are the medium and long-term plans for solarization of agriculture?
Mr. Tenzin Drugyel	Bhutan has tremendous potential for solar pumps, especially for solarization of lift irrigation schemes that ICIMOD is currently studying. Given Bhutan’s unique context – mountain agriculture, 55% protected areas, high density of settlements – how much of what is happening in the rest of Asia and the world relevant for solarization plans in Bhutan?

Round 2 (2 mins each – total 14 mins):

What are some of the themes around which south-south learning and cooperation would be most beneficial?