



**Teachers trained on Sustainable Energy and Awareness
Stakeholder Consultation
Progress and Follow-Up Visit
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
March 25-27, 2015**

Background

Four delegates from the Dominican Republic represented the Ministry of Education (MINERD), Environmental Education Section, The National Teacher Training Institute of the Ministry of Education (INAFOCAM), National Institute of Water Resources (INDHRI) and a Science Teacher attended a workshop held in Lima, Peru on November 16-18 to promote a scientific culture towards the responsible energy use in educational settings.

The event provided a forum to exchange knowledge about existing programs in education on renewable energy and energy efficiency in five Latin American countries and the United States. The delegates from the Dominican Republic were exposed to these materials on energy literacy, the teaching methods and theoretical frameworks that have proved effective for teaching and learning of energy sources and the problems associated with their production and use, so they can be adjusted to the Dominican Republic context.

The delegates reported that this workshop have enhanced their vision not only related to educational materials to be used by teachers but how these energy literacy materials and activities can be implemented in the context of bigger energy programs.

Follow-Up Visit Preparation

There were two preparatory phone meetings with representatives from the Ministry of Energy and Mines, Ministry of Education, Environmental Education Section, Ministry of Environment, INAFOCAM and National Institute of Hydraulic Resources (INDHRI) to develop a common agenda for the upcoming visit. The OAS Headquarters efforts were to monitor the strengthening of a solid team on the ground in Dominican Republic, the different agencies did not work this actively before and it was required for them to be a cohesive group in order to develop the best resources possible that could be used by all agencies through their different stakeholders.

The preparatory meetings were very successful and ensured concrete results during the actual visit. The working agenda was developed together and responded to the needs of the institutions as vehicles for a wider outreach to schools and teachers.

Purpose of the Visit

- To coordinate the translation and adaptation of educational materials (Learn and Save) with all relevant agencies in the Dominican Republic and articulate the use of these materials in the primary and secondary public schools.
- To introduce the Caribbean Energy Education and Awareness Program and its communication campaign Learn and Save to Dominican science teachers and obtain their feedback on the materials and their direct application in primary and secondary schools.

Main Visit Activities

On March 25, the last preparatory meeting took place to make final revisions to the agenda, discuss with all stakeholders represented to advance on the revision of the materials previously received at the workshop in Lima, Peru and the materials developed under the Caribbean Energy Education and Awareness Programme (CEEAP) and its communication campaign Learn and Save. In attendance for the two days were representatives from: The Ministry of Energy and Mining, Ministry of Education (MINERD), Environmental Education Section, Ministry of Environment, National Teacher Training Institute of the Ministry of Education (INAFOCAM) and the National Institute of Water Resources (INDHRI).

Energy Literacy Programs Descriptions

On March 26 each agency presented their energy related programs and initiatives targeted to education stakeholders. They all realized the abundance of efforts and identified where strategies could be complementary to each other and where there was duplication of efforts. These convening meeting of all agencies and the understanding of each actor's work was found very valuable and necessary by all agencies.



The same day all agencies were informed of the science curriculum approach of the Ministry of Education and in particular of the efforts of the Office of Environmental Education to reach these goals. It was very informative for other agencies, so that everybody can strive for similar educational goals.

Energy Literacy Materials Discussion

Most participants mentioned how the energy materials from Chile were relevant for Dominican Republic and seemed to be ones that could be highly utilized in public schools. The OAS Department of Sustainable Development immediately contacted the Chilean National Agency on Energy Efficiency who produced these materials and was able to obtain reproduction rights free of charge for Dominican Republic.

About the Learn and Save materials the group mentioned that they needed small adaptations to the Dominican context and overall they were very valuable resources for public schools in the country. They wanted to accelerate the process, so that teachers could be trained in the use of these materials in the summer and be able to use them in schools already in the fall of 2015.

Feedback from Teachers

The Caribbean Energy Education and Awareness Program and its communication campaign Learn and Save materials were presented to the Dominican teachers and feedback was received on how these materials can be used in the classroom.



The main teacher's suggestions were: to change slightly the appearance of the characters of Learn and Save, as they can be perceived as fearful characters compared to real superheroes; to include the Learn and Save materials as part of the collaborative group projects that are required by the Ministry of Education; to reproduce the materials in digital formats accessible to teachers; and to create teacher guides in digital formats as well. Overall they found the materials usable, encouraging of hand-on activities and active learning in the area of energy.

Next Steps Discussions

On March 27, the next steps discussion took place at the INDHRI and all the group was able to visit “La Sala del Agua”, a free educational center where the public raise awareness and understanding of water as a resource, water conservation and water management. Many of the agencies representatives had never been there



before and found this center and its programming as a “must see” place when planning teacher training and environmental school field trips.

During this meeting a copy of the first draft of the translated Learn and Save Teacher Guide and student booklet was distributed to the group, in order to be revised by them and make the necessary suggested changes. Initial discussions occurred regarding a follow-up teacher training, targeted teachers, dates, schools selection, content, duration, etc.

During the next steps discussions the group realized the need to maintain closer coordination between agencies. They were willing to commit to the following strategies: share schedules, plan together teacher trainings, inform each other on what schools and geographical areas to work with, share content and find common messages to reinforce.



The mission included a visit to the Municipality of Bajos de Haina at which the OAS Staff was a Jury for the Scientific Fair for primary and secondary schools, which was organized as part of the activities of the Water World Day. The students presented their projects, most of which addressed the energy-water nexus, such as hydroelectric dam projects. The science teacher who attended the Workshop in Lima, Peru was one of the main organizers of this fair.

The visit concluded with a meeting with Pelegrín Castillo, Minister of Energy and Mines, at which he confirmed his government’s intent on pursuing educational opportunities in renewable energy and energy efficiency through the “Aula del saber energético y minero” and in coordination with the OAS/SECBI through the Caribbean Energy Education and Awareness Program and its communication campaign Learn and Save.



The coordination of this initiative with the SECBI pilot program has considerable potential to boost sustainable energy education in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Results and Next Steps

- All agencies attending the workshop expressed their willingness and commitment to work closer in their programming and outreach efforts.
- All agencies representatives committed to sign an inter-institutional MOU in order to strengthen the institutional common efforts as government agencies.

- The agencies agreed to propose the hiring of a local consultant to adapt the Learn and Save materials to the local context of Dominican Republic.
- The agencies agreed that due to the amount of programs and resources already available in Dominican Republic, they will add a resource annex describing all programs and resources available for Dominican teachers related to energy and environmental education.
- They all showed interest and saw the need to include a chapter on how to teach science using 21st century methods.
- For the teacher training on how to use these materials it was schedule to conduct it in August 2015, targeting 2 teachers per school, working in five areas of Dominican Republic. The target would be 90 teachers.
- The OAS/DSD was able to obtain from Chile reproduction rights free of charge for Dominican Republic in their effort to reproduce educational materials made by Chile.
- As a requirement of the educational system, teachers have to develop group participatory projects. The Learn and Save and all environmental education projects could meet this requirement, making it easier for teachers to bring these issues to the classrooms.
- The Ministry of Energy and Mining was in the process of developing an educational game with the purpose of teaching children and youth about the energy sources and minerals available in Dominican Republic, while reinforcing sustainable and environmentally conscious behaviors. The OAS team was able to provide educational technical feedback to improve the game and start strategizing possible outreach vehicles.
- All agencies agreed to continue meeting regularly via the logistical coordination of our OAS local Office in Dominican Republic

