

REASWA Newsletter

March 2005

Editorial

It has been an extremely busy start to 2005 for REASWA staff and members. A number of successful renewable energy projects and installations have already been completed through the work of our Association, including the provision of sustainable water supplies to several schools in Swaziland and the installation of solar water heating systems at a hospice in Manzini. We very much hope to continue the year as we have begun and look forward to seeing many more successful sustainable energy projects in Swaziland.

We would welcome news, ideas and stories from our members for future newsletters. And for those of you who are interested in a sustainable future for Swaziland, but are not yet members, please feel free to contact the office for further information. Membership of REASWA is open to all and completely free!

Gender and Energy New EU project for 2005

As part of a large consortium that includes partners across Africa and Europe, REASWA will be coordinating the involvement of Swaziland in the EU funded TIE-ENERGIA project.

The projects objectives are to mainstream gender issues into energy policy, planning and programmes, with an aim to ensure gender is integrated into energy issues in Africa by strengthening human and institutional capacity. The programme will run over 2 years.

Free Hot Water for Hope House

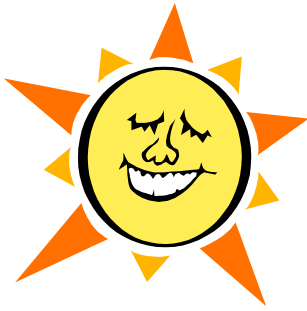
In December 2004, REASWA was approached by Hope House, a residential care facility based in Manzini. Staff at Hope House were keen to investigate the potential for renewable energy and energy efficiency to try and reduce their monthly energy and water costs.

A simple energy survey of Hope House revealed that, as with many domestic and residential facilities, the majority of Hope House's electricity consumption (over 70%) was being used to heat water via electric geysers. With the abundance of sunshine in Swaziland, the use of solar energy to heat water at Hope House was identified as an ideal solution to bring down their electricity costs.



With a grant kindly provided by the British High Commission, REASWA was able to facilitate the installation of solar water heating systems at Hope House at the beginning of March 2005. The systems were supplied and installed by Solar Heat Exchangers Ltd.

The free energy from the sun will provide the majority of the resident's hot water requirements, with an electrical back-up available for periods of prolonged overcast days. REASWA will be monitoring the systems over the coming year to report on the cost savings and benefits of the systems to Hope House.



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Play Pumps for Schools

REASWA has recently coordinated the successful installation of much needed water supply systems in five primary schools in the Shiselweni and Lubombo Districts of Swaziland, with funding support from both the Canada Fund and UNICEF.



Each school has been provided with an innovative 'play-pump', a children's roundabout that pumps water as the children play. As the pumps require no electricity, there are no running costs for the schools.

The play-pumps are manufactured and installed by the South African company Roundabout Outdoor, who have completed over 500 such installations in South Africa. The company is also able to provide an ongoing, free maintenance service for the pumps through revenue generated by selling advertising space on the accompanying tank stands.

Prior to the play-pump installations, most of the schools had to pay for water to be delivered via tankers, or simply relied on rain water collection. The shortage of water therefore made it impossible for schools to maintain vegetable gardens and provide agricultural lessons. Since the installations (March 2005), many of the schools have already begun to establish their own gardens.

Wood Fuel Crisis Impacts on Child Care

Towards the end of 2004, REASWA staff completed a study funded by the British High Commission looking at the energy requirements of the various structures within Swaziland caring for orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs).

Extensive interviews were carried out at institutions caring for OVCs such as households, Neighbourhood Care Points (NCPs) and schools in the Herefords and Maphatsindvuku areas. A common problem raised by all those caring for OVCs was the time needed by volunteers to collect enough firewood to cook for large numbers of children on open fires. Trees, and therefore fuel wood, are a precious and rapidly diminishing resource in Swaziland. REASWA is hoping to seek support to help try and address the critical issue of energy supply for cooking within the larger scale feeding schemes across Swaziland.

Member's News

One of the founding members of REASWA; New Dawn Engineering, has won a prestigious award for their innovative VESTO stove. The VESTO is a low cost energy efficient biomass stove that uses one third of the wood of a conventional stove. As



well as significantly reducing fuel use, the stove also has extremely low emissions, therefore reducing the incidence of smoke related illnesses.

The VESTO stove was the overall winner of the Chairperson's Award for Excellence, within the DISA South African Design Excellence Awards 2004.

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