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Abstract

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

**“Supporting Biogas Production as Supplementary Income
for Small Farmers”**

Introduction

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has been created in order to promote and accelerate the industrialization of developing countries by the resolution 2152 (XXI) as an autonomous body within the United Nations in November 1966. In January 1967, the Organization was formally established with Headquarters in Vienna, Austria. In 1979 a draft constitution preparing its conversion into a specialized agency was adopted but it was only in 1985 that UNIDO finally became the sixteenth specialized agency of the United Nations. Facing a tough crisis in the early 1990's and the withdrawal of three major countries (USA, Canada and Australia), the member states finally adopted a business plan for the future role and functions of UNIDO in 1997. The main purpose of the business plan was to enable UNIDO to better respond to the changing global economic environment while avoiding overlap and duplication with other multilateral institutions. From 2001 the United Nations Millennium Development Goals play a crucial role in the work of UNIDO; a new corporate strategy has been adopted in 2003.

Topics for Discussion

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization debates impacts and spillover effects of supporting bio gas production as supplementary income for small farmers. We will focus on the following topics:

- reliable energy supply, 'green growth' and sustainability
- visions for small farmers, prospects of development
- impact on the food product market
- possible mechanisms of support, support regime, prerequisites
- interoperability with the Millennium Development Goals

In the end of the discussion we want to compile a resolution containing reasonable suggestions for the international community.

Biogas

Biogas is a type of biofuel which originates from biogenic material. It is typically produced by the biological breakdown of organic matter in the absence of oxygen. Biogas is a renewable fuel, so it qualifies for renewable energy subsidies in some parts of the world. Domestic biogas plants convert livestock manure and night soil into biogas and slurry, the fermented manure. This technology is feasible for small holders with livestock producing 50 Kg manure per day, an equivalent of about 6 pigs or 3 cows. This makes the technology for small holders in developing countries often suitable.

The important role of renewable energy resources in ensuring environmental sustainability and in developing a common global partnership for development, as emphasized in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, is also to be discussed within the conference.

With regard to the efforts taken to combat climate change and stop global warming, appreciating the measures discussed within the United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2007, possible effects of biogas support might be taken into consideration.