

Initiative **MAMA-LIGHT®**  
for Sustainable Energy



**AbzeSolar.com**



Invitation to the Multi-Stakeholder Panel Discussion

### **Empowering the Informal Sector in Africa**

Tuesday, 14 July 2015 (08:15 – 09:45)

Radisson BLU Hotel, Warka 1+2

**Organiser:** **AbzeSolar S.A., the International Chamber of Commerce and UNDP**

**Partners:** **UNDP; UNOHRLLS; UNISDR;**

**Keynote speaker:** **H.R.H. Princess Abze Djigma, CEO AbzeSolar S.A., founder and leader of the Initiative MAMA-LIGHT® for Sustainable Energy**

**Chair:** **H.R.H. Princess Abze Djigma / Minister**

**Panellists:**

- H.E. Lilian Ploumen, Dutch Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation or a representative on behalf of her (TBC)
- H.E. Mr Akwasi Opong-Fosu, Minister of State at the Presidency. Republic of Ghana Office of the President Flagstaff House Ghana
- H.E. Margaret Mhango Mwanakatwe, Zambian Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry (TBC)
- H.E. Helen Clark Administrator of UNDP or Representative on her behalf
- H.E. Gyan Chandra Acharya, USG and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing or Representative on his behalf
- Margareta Wahlstrom, SRSG of the UNISDR
- Dr Roberto Ridolfi PhD, Director Sustainable Growth and Development. European Commission
- H.R.H. Princess Abze Djigma, founder and CEO AbzeSolar S.A.

## Background:

In African countries despite its economic growth over the past years, most of the population still rely on the informal economy to survive. “In fact, the informal sector contributes about 55 per cent of Sub-Saharan Africa’s GDP and 80 per cent of the labour force. Nine in 10 rural and urban workers have informal jobs in Africa and most employees are women and youth” (AfdB).

People who lack access to finance and decent jobs or to improved facilities for economy growth live in the developing regions of sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, and they live in poverty. But providing finance is not enough by itself to lift people from poverty: Equally important is going beyond basic financial needs to ensure the empowerment of the poor, particularly women and youth, and to use legal framework in ways that benefit them and their communities.

Modernizing the Informal Sector means providing access to adapted and flexible infrastructure like roads and energy to grow their micro-business, beyond meeting basic services, to empower the poor to generate equitable employment and additional income; to enable better access to education and health care; and to satisfy lifestyle needs and improve living standards.

Demand for market access, together with willingness and ability to get loan and pay for it, is a powerful driver in stimulating the expansion of structural economy growth for the poor and governments. Empowering the Informal Sector and income-generating activities spiral upwards together since Empowering the Informal Sector will increase productivity, will create a local competitive edge, will reduce poverty and will help collecting tax.

## Objective:

The development and inclusive growth of a strong local private sector, including the empowerment of Women and Youth are key enablers in the global fight against poverty and in creating a sustainable future for all.

One of the challenges Africa faces is that up to 70% of the GDP in some countries comes from the informal sector and that the informal sector often is not recognized and supported by the international donors and organizations.

This side event addresses the importance and challenges of the informal sector and provides ideas, examples and concrete best practices to scale up and be able to bring the informal sector to the formal sector in ways that benefit both local communities and government.

- To demonstrate the importance of the local private sector for a sustainable development
- To create (more) awareness about the role and importance of the Informal Sector in Africa
- To show the potential and the impact of the Informal Sector on sustainable development
- To discuss (and to explore) scenario’s how to develop tools, financial and non financial, to support and develop the growth of informal sector
- To discuss concrete steps forward how to bring the informal sector to the formal sector and why this is important

Initiative MAMA-LIGHT®  
for Sustainable Energy



AbzeSolar.com

This multi-stakeholder panel session will discuss how Empowering Informal Sector initiatives are best designed to combine finance services with interventions and activities helping to generate livelihoods, employment and bring key development benefits. Particularly, panellists will elaborate on challenges and the way forward to ensuring sustainability and expansion of Development programmes like the Initiative MAMA-LIGHT® for Sustainable Energy. Partners are also invited to highlight their own experiences of successes and lessons learnt and make announcements and/or commitments.

Its overarching goal is to empower the Bottom Of the Pyramid people through providing adequate means for generating employment, livelihoods and additional income, promoting entrepreneurship and microenterprises, enabling better access to education and health care, and satisfying lifestyle needs as well as improving living standards, especially for women and youth to be resilient. To achieve the future we want, The Initiative MAMA-LIGHT for Sustainable Energy approach Inclusive Green Growth business model that offers a great opportunity under the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals, which are set to push cross-sectorial energy-related goals even further for more inclusive and sustainable development for all.

#### Logistics:

This is a side-event part of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development which will be held in Addis Ababa from 13 – 16 July, 2015. Therefore, all participants of the Conference will have access and an open invitation to the panel session.

The event will be held in English.

For any questions related to this event, please send an email to H.R.H. Princess Abze Djigma, CEO AbzeSolar S.A. at [abze@abzesolar.com](mailto:abze@abzesolar.com) or M. Aliou DIA, Team Leader – Africa Region CC - DRR – Energy, UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa at [aliou.dia@undp.org](mailto:aliou.dia@undp.org)