

## **Energy for Sustainable Development – Issues for Public Action Bringing the Message Home Through Journalists & Opinion Leaders**

The course was presented by three instructors - Mr. James B. Sullivan, from the Energy Markets Group, Mr. Charles Mangwiro from Radio Mozambique, and Mr. Newton Sibanda from the Zambia Daily Mail.

In his presentation, Mr. Sullivan gave an introduction concerning the role of journalism and referred to various responsibilities of journalists stipulated by the Committee of Concerned Journalists. Concerning energy journalism, Mr. Sullivan shared his belief that it is in society's best interest to keep the public well-informed about what is happening in the energy sector in terms of energy shortages and surging costs. As the public becomes better informed, people can deal with contentious issues and see long-term benefits, provide useful feedback to government, understand the potential for a better standard of living and the opportunities to reduced spending on energy as well as understand gender roles to gain more productive input. Mr. Sullivan made reference to an Energy and Development Handbook for Journalists prepared by USAID, in cooperation with IIE, as an educational tool for journalists covering energy sector news.

Mr. Mangwiro and Mr. Sibanda described the role of the media in the energy sector development in Mozambique and Zambia, respectively. They gave an overview of their respective countries and elaborated on how the natural energy resources are exploited. They recognized the challenges ahead due in part to the problem of public illiteracy, low level of education and training of journalists and limited circulation of information due to the fact that most people live in poor remote areas. Mr. Sibanda mentioned the importance of "humanizing" news to attract popular audiences to serious news. Donors can help by providing support training for journalists, support and host networks of energy journalists, such as World Bank on Water Media, and provide reliable research and information links for energy journalists.