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Financing and Business Model Innovation Top Bioenergy Discussions at UN

Hastings-on-Hudson, NY – Financial solutions for the emerging bio-energy industry and development of green energy in the Dominican Republic were center stage in a June 17 meeting at United Nations Headquarters. Organized by the Public-Private Alliance Foundation (PPAF) and ResearchPAYS, Inc., the event was sponsored by the UN Office for Partnerships and focused on sugar-based ethanol, biodiesel and related energy sources.

Twenty-five high-level participants and observers from the Dominican Republic, the USA, Haiti and the UN engaged in a facilitated discussion on business models for financing bioenergy-related projects. Representatives from a major Dominican company – Grupo Vicini – took part, as did the Center for Export and Investment of the Dominican Republic (CEI -RD), international financial houses, bio-energy producers, the UN Foundation, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN offices and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

This meeting was a follow-up to a broader discussion on Business Model Innovation for the development and production of ethanol and biofuels, held at the UN in May.

“Bringing together local and international stakeholders to build collaboration and identify ways to do business that better address profitability, poverty reduction and environmental issues is the innovation we seek” said PPAF Executive Director Dr. David Stillman, as he welcomed the participants and summarized the consensus reached at the May meeting. “Our goal in this meeting is to highlight innovative ways to reduce investment risk in a difficult business environment. Of course, the ideas and their proposed financing have to make economic sense or they won’t fly,” he added.

ResearchPAYS Inc. President Tom Kadala facilitated the discussion. His questions and encouragement led group members to identify hurdles and stepping stones for bio-energy investments. The dialogue emphasized the need to apply portfolio diversity at all levels of an investment from the feedstock selection to the fuel output. “Bioenergy technologies continue to emerge rapidly, prompting investors to diversify their investments to limit their risk,” advised Kadala.

Group members emphasized the importance of stacking short-term financing to produce long term value, combining multiple revenue streams to create complementary hedging, and supporting financial flexibility for future and ongoing technological breakthroughs over the next twenty years. According to Kadala, “A flexible financial environment will help to foster bio-energy companies that utilize innovative business models to attract significant funding for scaling. This can be important in the D.R. and in other countries as well.”

Wrapping up the meeting, Stillman urged a two-track process going forward. Participants agreed to work toward refining one or more models and proposals in New York. A second track will be to meet with a broader range of stakeholders in Santo Domingo.

About PPAF

The Public-Private Alliance Foundation (PPAF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing poverty in the world by bringing together business, governmental, community, academic, United Nations and other interests. Through collaboration, PPAF helps stimulate entrepreneurship and commerce-related activities and encourage investment for sustainable development. Focusing initially on the Dominican Republic and Madagascar, our vision is to make a difference for human betterment. PPAF works closely with the United Nations for policies and actions to advance public-private alliances. Visit at <http://www.pfafoundation.org>

About ResearchPAYS, Inc.

ResearchPAYS, Inc. is a privately-held New York based firm that offers boutique primary consumer market research services to Fortune 1000 companies. Services include field data collection at special events, segmenting targeted consumer opinion panels for in-depth quantitative research, facilitating targeted focus groups for qualitative research, and coordinating one-on-one interviews. ResearchPAYS interprets client field data, provides recommendations, and offers hands-on guidance that turn ideas into action. Visit at <http://www.ResearchPAYS.net>.

