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## Public Acceptance and Local-Regional Benefits in Ethiopia

**Ethiopian-Danish partnership programme raises awareness on public acceptance and social benefits and signs one year programme extension.**

Denmark and Ethiopia have initiated a development partnership as there is mutual commitment to the global agenda on climate change and green growth. The “Accelerating Wind Power Generation in Ethiopia” (AWPGE) programme was signed by the Government of Ethiopia and the Danish Embassy in Ethiopia on December 3rd 2016. The workprogramme was on November 12<sup>th</sup> 2018 extended for one year with signing by the Danish

Deputy Director General of the Danish Energy Agency Janni Torp Kjærgaard and the Ethiopian Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy, Dr. Seleshi.



An important theme in the programme was raised the following day upon ensuring that social acceptance of large-scale energy projects is not just “nice to have, but need to have”, especially when engaging the private sector as developer and operator. This was the key message at the workshop “**Public Acceptance and Local-Regional Benefits**” that the Danish Energy Agency, as part of the Accelerating Wind Power Generation in Ethiopia Programme, helped organize in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 13th November 2018.

The event enabled a space to create awareness of the importance of social issues when designing and implementing energy projects. Main audience was official Ethiopian stakeholders involved in energy, land-use and permitting from the federal to regional and local level. In his welcome remarks, the Ethiopian State Minister of Energy Dr. Frehiwot Woldehanna highlighted that securing fair treatment of the local and regional communities must be fair; both in relation to the individual energy project and when comparing the terms given to affected people across projects with different generation technologies such as wind and hydro.

[Read more about Danish efforts to support an extensive Ethiopian wind](#)

[expansion.](#)

The Ambassador of Denmark in Addis Ababa, Karin Poulsen, emphasized the need for local change. Developers of energy projects must, in close collaboration with the local communities, identify ways to create tangible benefits. These should go beyond a cash payment to the directly affected. In particular, local communities should be considered in the transformational improvement associated with access to modern and reliable electricity: *“No one should have to watch the warning lights blinking at night on top of nearby wind turbines, while themselves living in darkness.”*

Deputy Director General of the Danish Energy Agency, Janni Torp Kjærgaard, sat the scene for the technical debate by explaining how Denmark had successfully developed schemes to support affected communities in the development of huge amounts of wind. The workshop also had contributions from academia and consultants on international best practices and requirements of the International Finance Institution (IFC), the World Bank Group, private sector branch. Supporting the discussion was also case studies of current interest from the Ethiopian Electric Power highlighting the challenging, relevant and urging local experiences with public acceptance in the Ethiopian context. Finally, the workshop included business perspectives on socially responsible wind energy development in Africa from two world-leading wind turbine manufacturers, Vestas and Siemes Gamesa.

The learnings from the workshop will be developed further into an Ethiopian context, and be included in the work towards creating a framework for the first Ethiopian IPP wind tender.

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The Danish Energy Agency is responsible for tasks linked to energy production, supply and consumption, as well as Danish efforts to reduce carbon emissions. The Agency is also responsible for supporting the economical optimisation of utilities that in addition to energy includes water, waste and telecommunication.

We are also responsible for user conditions, supply obligation and telecommunication statistics, as well as water supply and waste

management.

The Danish Energy Agency was established in 1976, and is an agency under the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities.

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