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PRESS RELEASE

Energy experts at AEEP conference: Mini-grid policy toolkit to inform and inspire policy frameworks for investment in mini-grids

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – Millions of Africans with no access to energy are particularly likely to benefit from mini-grids – a modern energy technology to be installed all over Africa, according to Michael Franz, project manager at the European Union Energy Initiative Partnership Dialogue Facility (EUEI PDF).

Heading a side event on the opening day of the AEEP conference, Franz spoke of a policy toolkit developed under the guidance of the EUEI PDF, the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21), and the Alliance for Rural Electrification, having the potential to shape the future of AEEP member states.

“It shall guide the market in the desired direction by defining clear ‘rules of the games’ and by providing incentives and or deterrents,” Franz stated. He added: “The toolkit shall balance the interest of market participants on the supply and demand side with each other and with wider public interest.”

Providing energy access to more than 100 million Africans by 2020 remains one of the AEEP’s main goals. The grids can provide electricity to entire villages, but high costs and different policy frameworks in the respective member states remain a challenge to their implementation.

Ms. Rana Adib, Research Coordinator at REN21, noted that “mini grids, and in particular renewable and hybrid mini grids, play a critical role in ensuring energy access and security. The IEA estimates that 45 percent of the additional power generation capacity necessary to reach universal energy access targets will be in the form of mini grids.” According to Ms. Adib the Minigrid Toolkit raises awareness of the critical role that mini grids play in ensuring energy access and energy security.

Participants attending the side event reiterated its large benefits to the private sector.

Figures show that there is a huge business potential for the market of mini-grids, which is of high importance for regional economic communities like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), having the will to fulfill renewable energy demands to all its citizens by 2030.

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About the AEEP

The AEEP is a long-term framework for structured political dialogue and cooperation between Africa and the EU on energy issues of strategic importance, reflecting African and European needs. Through the partnership, Africa and Europe will work together to develop a shared vision and common policy answers, and to stimulate specific actions to expand access to energy, to achieve greater energy security and to maximise the contribution of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

AEEP stands for Africa European Union Energy Partnership.

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