



German Cooperation with Afghanistan +++ Press Release +++

Youth and Private Sector: Building Skills and Awareness in Afghanistan's Renewable Energy Sector

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 23rd July 2019 – From 19th to 21st July, the Afghan-German Cooperation's Energy Sector Improvement Programme (ESIP) and its partners conducted a Mid Term Review for 2019 in Dubai. Twenty-nine attendees, men and women, participated, including representatives of the Afghan Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW), the Afghanistan Renewable Energy Union (AREU) and other stakeholders from the private and public sector. Agreements for a second phase of Youth Entrepreneurship Support (YES) and for establishing a steering group for enhancing renewable energy in the domestic private sector were signed.

YES is a six-month internship programme for Afghan youth. It aims at encouraging young people to get involved in the energy sector and gain practical experience. It bridges the gap between academia and the energy industry and provides opportunities for young engineers from both urban and rural areas.

YES is designed to train and coach up to 100 engineering graduates. Within six months, they gain technical and entrepreneurial skills in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sector, preparing them for future employment opportunities. Thirty engineering graduates benefited from the first phase of the programme.

The AREU represents almost 70 companies and is the only active union in the renewable energy sector. The newly established steering group's objective is to strengthen awareness of the AREU. This includes building a greater understanding of AREU's business case, employee retention and advancement, improvement of membership benefits, and investment opportunities in the energy sector in Afghanistan. The committee includes members of ESIP, MEW, AREU, Afghan Chamber of Commerce (ACCI) and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG).

The Minister of Energy and Water, Eng. Mohammad Gul Kholmi, stated, 'The government needs a strong private sector to achieve self-sufficiency in the energy sector. We are committed to develop this platform for the private sector.'

The deputy of policy and technical affairs at ACCI, Mr Abdul Qadir Bahman, added, 'ACCI as the legitimate voice of the private sector appreciates this initiative and assure its willingness and commitment to fulfil its role in order to support and implement ESIP-related programmes in the private sector.'

Private sector involvement in renewable energy generation is vital in providing qualified workers and reliable energy, and will help stabilise Afghanistan's energy system, a system that the private sector relies heavily on.

On behalf of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the programme Institutional Development for Energy in Afghanistan (IDEA) is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. IDEA aims at enabling Afghan society to access energy from renewable sources to boost economic growth, reduce poverty and protect the environment. IDEA cooperates with the Afghan Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW) to implement various activities, creating general conditions for a reliable electricity supply. For example, IDEA has organised 21 conferences and workshops for private and public stakeholders on renewable energy, energy awareness and energy efficiency since 2015. At the same time, it has organised related job-specific training courses for almost 430 Afghans from the public and private energy sector.