



DELEGATES FROM HAITI VISIT JAMAICA TO LEARN HOW TO CREATE AN ELECTRICITY REGULATORY AUTHORITY

EXECUTIVE EXCHANGE ON ELECTRICITY REGULATORY AUTHORITY

KINGSTON, JAMAICA - Executives from the Électricité d'Haiti (EDH) and the Ministry of Public Works, Transportation, and Communication (MTPTC) participated in a USAID-funded executive exchange in Kingston, Jamaica where they discussed creating a new electricity regulatory authority and reforming Haiti's power sector. The USAID Haiti office played an active role in bringing together participants to identify key issues. During the week, participants met with their Jamaican counterparts from the Jamaican Public Service Company Ltd. (JPS), the Jamaican Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR), and the Jamaican Ministry of Science, Energy, and Technology (MSET) to provide advice on the development of an electricity regulator and reforming the utility, EDH. Participants discussed the role that the regulator would have in the electricity sector as well as best regulation practices to implement based on previous experiences had by Jamaica and other island nations in the Caribbean.

THE ROLE OF THE UTILITY

The Haitian delegation met with Jamaica's electric utility, Jamaica Public Service Company (JPS), to discuss the overview of the utility, system loss reductions, and improving customer service. JPS is a vertically integrated utility that is in charge of generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity. Norman Titus of JPS presented on how they reduced technical and non-technical system losses. He explained how system energy losses are one of the biggest problems JPS faces and how they've created five year plans to reduce losses over time and to meet targets. A key aspect of this is the improvement of metering. "If the utility cannot measure where the losses are happening, then we do not know where to put our efforts and resources," said Titus. Jamaica has begun to install smart meters for industrial clients and over the next five years will begin installing for residential consumers. JPS is also addressing



The Delegation of Haiti met with the Jamaican Office of Utilities Regulation in Kingston, Jamaica

electricity thief through meter tampering. Titus explained that the best way to secure the meters is by changing the perception of the people to support the utility's efforts. This can be done by improving customer service. Cecile McCormack, Manager of JPS' Customer Service Team, presented on JPS's efforts to improve customer service through automatic/online meter reading and pre-paid metering. JPS has found that customers prefer pre-paid metering because of its similarity to how they pay their pre-paid phone bills. JPS has had an overall reduction in billing losses since switching to this easy payment method.

While at JPS, the delegation had the opportunity to meet with the System Operator at the Dispatch Control Centre. The delegates viewed a fully operational dispatch center for the transmission and distribution of electricity across the entire island of Jamaica. A primary interest of the delegation was the process of merit order when choosing the most economical and efficient power generators to dispatch. The staff at the dispatch center explained that the merit order is based on the heat rate of the generators and the cost of electricity.



The Haitian Delegation visited JPS's System Operator at the Dispatch Control Centre

THE ROLE OF THE REGULATOR

Jamaica's regulator, the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR), hosted the delegation for two days to discuss the development of Jamaica's regulatory framework and the responsibilities of OUR. Mr. Hopeton Heron, Deputy Director General of OUR, stated that "the goal of all regulators is to promote competitiveness, flexibility, diversification, and social satisfaction." He explained that utilities need to consider changing their mindset from selling electricity to selling "energy solutions," especially since customers can now be their own producer through distributed energy resources. Heron said Haiti has an unprecedented opportunity to reform EDH and institute a regulatory agency that reflects this change in development towards more distributed resources. The key elements of creating a regulatory authority are determining the needs of the utility, the policy goals of the government, and the laws that must be formed to meet the needs of the people. If regulation is based off these three things, then investors will feel confident in investing in the sector.

During the executive exchange, the delegation also met with U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Caribbean Clean Energy Program (CARCEP). Elizabeth Butler of CARCEP explained the process and the importance of creating a regulatory agency for the management of the power sector and the importance of a sound regulatory framework for private investment. Butler provided the following recommendations:

- A country must provide certainty to the investors; if a country's ministry interferes regularly to
 favor an investor then it undoes the certainty for other investors and reduces the amount of
 foreign investment in the country. It is important to have a strong regulations the weaker the
 regulator, the weaker the investors.
- It is best to have the regulator as independent it builds trust. Communication between all stakeholders is important there needs to be clear communication between the ministry, the utility, and the regulator.
- It is important to develop an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) to determine future demand and other inputs the IRP can be planned for a 20 year timespan broken down by 5 year actions plans. It is important that all stakeholders participate, including the ministry, utility, and regulator. This demonstrates to the Public-Private Partnership that there is communication between the stakeholders.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

The Haitian Delegation also met with their counterparts in the Ministry of Science, Energy, and Technology (MSET). This branch of the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) is charged with licensing of generators and creating the long-term energy policy that OUR and JPS must follow. The delegation met Mr. Fitzroy Vidal, Senior Energy Advisor, and Ms. Michelle Forbes, Chief Technical Director. MSET works closely with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the GOJ believes that affordable and accessible energy is critical for the nation. In 2009, they created a long term National Energy Policy through 2030. This new policy was an important step in removing the energy policy of the country away from the politics of changing administrations.



The Haitian Delegation visits Wigton Wind Farm in Jamaica

PROMOTING CLEAN ENERGY POLICIES

The executive exchange concluded with a visit to Jamaica's first utility-scale solar farm with a capacity of 20MW as well as Wigton Wind Farm, the largest wind farm in the Caribbean. At Content Solar, the delegation was given a tour by Edgar Wiggins, General Manager of Content Solar. The tour provided an up-close inspection of the panels, an explanation on the use of SCADA, and a tour of the inverter that changes the electrical current from DC to AC so it can be added to Jamaica's transmission grid. After the tour of the solar farm, the delegation visited Wigton Wind Farm where they learned the facility is also used for training on all renewable technologies, such as fuel cell, PV rooftop solar, pumped hydro storage, biogas engine, solar cookers and water heaters. A brief demonstration was given on all of these technologies as well as an in-depth discussion on wind turbines, wind forecasting, and the development of renewable energy and how these could be utilized in Haiti.

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