



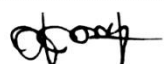
**REPORT ON THE PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON 28TH
NOVEMBER 2019 IN RESPECT OF AN APPLICATION BY
WINCH ENERGY LIMITED FOR A LICENCE EXEMPTION FOR
DEVELOPMENT OF 936 kWp SOLAR PV MINI-GRID SYSTEM
IN OGILI SUB-COUNTY IN LAMWO DISTRICT**



**PALABEK MARKET, PALABEK OGILI SUB-COUNTY
HEADQUARTERS, LAMWO DISTRICT**

Title:	Report on the Public Hearing held in respect of an Application by Winch Energy Limited for a Licence Exemption for Development of 936 kWp Solar pv Mini-Grid System in Ogili Sub-County in Lamwo District.
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Document Control

Reference No.	REP/147/020/009		
Document Title	Report on the Public Hearing held in respect of an Application by Winch Energy Limited for a Licence Exemption for Development of 936 kWp Solar pv Mini-Grid System in Ogili Sub-County in Lamwo District		
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Document Version	1.0	Document Status	APPROVED
Date Released	2020-06-22		
File Name	20200622_REP_ WinchEnergyLtdPublicHearingReportOgili.pdf		

Document Change History

Version	Date	Author	Edits
1	2020-06-22	Michael Mwendha	Final Draft

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2018, the Rural Electrification Agency with support from GIZ published a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Electrification of 25 villages in Lamwo District under the Promotion of Mini-Grids Project. Following the Technical and Financial Evaluation of the Bids, **Winch Energy Limited** emerged the Best-Evaluated Bidder for the development of the Mini-Grid System in Northern Uganda.

Subsequently, Winch Energy Limited Applied to the Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA) for a Licence Exemption to Develop, Finance, Build and Operate a Decentralized Mini-Grid System comprising of 25 villages in Lamwo District for 10 years. The Application received by the ERA indicated that Winch Energy Limited intends to deploy Solar PV Technology with battery storage for Electrifying the Villages with a combined capacity of 936kWp.

ERA published a Notice of the Application on 17th October 2019, to inform the public and invite directly affected parties and Public Agencies in the areas affected by the Project to submit in writing, any objection and comments on the Project within Thirty (30) days after publication of the Notice. The Authority did not receive any objection or comment from the public.

2. PUBLIC HEARING

Under the provisions of the Electricity (Applications for Permit, License and Tariff Review) Regulations 2007, a Notice of Public Hearing was published in the New Vision of Friday, 15th November 2019, the ERA website, the District Headquarters and announcements were aired on the local Radio Stations. Accordingly, the Public Hearing was held on 28th November 2019 at Palabek Ogili Sub-county headquarters in Lamwo District. The Public Hearing was held in respect of the following villages; Ogili Trading Center, Kapeta, Muddu Central, Otaa, Ayuu Alali, Apyetta Trading Center, Apyetta West, Opoki and

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Pawena, where Winch Energy Limited Applied to set up a Mini-Grid System according to the Application.

The ERA Team that attended the Public Hearing comprised of the following persons:

No.	Name	Title
1	Peter Kityo	Manager Environmental Monitoring and Compliance-Presiding Officer
2	Michael Mwendha	Economist – Competition and Monitoring
3	Stellah Nakibuuka	Communication Officer

2. REGISTRATION

Under the provisions of the Electricity Act, Section 11 (g), the persons who attended the Public Hearing were duly registered in the Public Hearing Record of Attendance and the record indicates that 122 members of the community attended. The attendance list was filed with the ERA Registry for safe custody.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

The Public Hearing intended to:

- (i) Increase community awareness about the Project and get the views of the community;
- (ii) Promote transparency and good decision making of the Authority;
- (iii) Provide an opportunity for stakeholders and the public to participate in the Socio-Economic, Political and the environmental Impact Assessment of the License Application;
- (iv) Provide for comments, questions and answers in respect of the Application for Licence Exemption by Winch Energy Limited before the Authority considers the Application, and;

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(v) Provide the Authority with all the relevant information required in the determination of the Application.

4. COMMENCEMENT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

The Public Hearing was presided over by Mr. Peter Kityo, the Manager Environmental Monitoring, and Compliance of ERA who represented the Electricity Regulatory Authority. He called the Hearing to order at 4.30 pm and requested a volunteer to lead an opening prayer. The prayer was led by Oyugi Seberino. The Public Hearing was notably attended by the Local Leaders:

- (i) The LC III, Chairperson, Palabek Ogili Sub-county, Lamwo District;
- (ii) The LC III, Vice-Chairperson, Palabek Ogili Sub-county, Lamwo District;
- (iii) The LC III, Secretary, Palabek Ogili Sub-county, Lamwo District;
- (iv) Representatives from REA;
- (v) Representatives from GIZ, and;
- (vi) Representatives from Winch Energy Limited.

5. RULES OF PROCEDURE GOVERNING THE PUBLIC HEARING

The Rules of Procedure were read to the Hearing by the Presiding Officer and clarified as follows:

- (i) The Hearing would be Chaired and moderated by the Presiding Officer;
- (ii) The Public Hearing was exclusively about the Application for a License Exemption by Winch Energy Limited;
- (iii) Participants who wished to make brief comments or raise questions would indicate their intention to speak by show of hands and the Presiding Officer would have the discretion to choose who to speak depending on the available time;
- (iv) ERA or Winch Energy Limited would be called upon to respond to any comments or questions directed to them;

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- (v) The Public Hearing would be conducted in English although there would be interpretation for effective communication;
- (vi) Those selected to speak would mention their name and the Village of residence;
- (vii) Speakers would be expected to be brief, focused and relevant to the subject matter;
- (viii) All questions would be directed to/through the Presiding Officer and the audience would be expected to observe discipline and order and remain silent and avoid interruption of the speaker.

7. REMARKS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The Presiding Officer called the Hearing to order at 4.30 pm and introduced the ERA Team. The Presiding Officer also introduced representatives from Rural Electrification Agency; Evelyn Ssali and Ritah Alupo, a representative from GIZ; Veit Goehringer and Olga Namatovu and the representatives of the Applicant; Alex Wanume and Susan Nabatte.

The Presiding Officer welcomed participants to the Hearing and encouraged them to communicate in a language understandable to them even if the rules dictate that Hearings are held in the English language.

He briefly mentioned to the participants that ERA is a Government Agency mandated to regulate the Generation, Transmission, and Distribution of Electricity in Uganda. He mentioned that Winch Energy Limited submitted an Application to ERA for a Licence Exemption for the development of a Mini-Grid System for the 25 villages in Lamwo District.

The Presiding Officer informed the Hearing that ERA conducts its work fairly and transparently hence the purpose for the Hearing. He noted that the comments and presentations from the participants would be presented to the ERA Board to decide on whether to grant or reject the Application.

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The Presiding Officer then invited a representative of the Applicant, Winch Energy Limited to present the Application to the Project Affected Persons (PAPS).

8. PRESENTATIONS

8.1. PRESENTATION BY THE DEVELOPER

The Developer was represented by Mr. Alex Wanume, who presented the Application to the PAPS. Mr. Wanume thanked ERA, GIZ, REA, the District Leadership and community members gathered for attending the Hearing.

He gave a brief about Winch Energy Limited, including its headquarters, its footprint on the African continent, and its specialty in Rural Electrification.

He informed the hearing that Winch Energy Limited emerged the Best-Evaluated bidder from a competitive bidding process for the development of a Mini-Grid System in 25 villages in Lamwo District. He informed the Hearing that Electricity Generation will be done using Remote Power Units (RPU), manufactured in Italy, packed in 40-foot containers. He added that the generating system will include battery storage that will ensure supply of power 24/7.

Mr. Wanume further informed the participants as follows:

- I. REA will construct the distribution network to ensure the supply of Electricity to customer premises;
- II. Customer connections will be done free of charge;
- III. Energy consumption will be prepaid;
- IV. Energy payments shall be effected through Airtel and MTN Mobile Money;
- V. Cash payments shall also be available as an alternative to mobile money.

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He informed the Hearing that benefits of the project will include; reduced cost of doing business improved welfare for the domestic users and overall economic growth and development in the affected areas.

He finally informed the Hearing that Electricity will cost approximately Ush 1,800 per kWh and prayed for acceptance of the Project from the community to work together and bring development to the area.

8.2. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- (i) Palma Ayero;** a resident of Ogili village sought clarification about the free connections and the price of Electricity.
- (ii) Fideli;** asked how faulty installations and land compensation for the Project would be dealt with.
- (iii) David Zakayo;** the LC I chairperson for Ogili Village asked when the power will be available.
- (iv) George William Oryem;** appreciated the Project, and asked whether there will be training and grading of roads where the distribution network shall traverse.
- (v) Fildah;** asked what will happen to a connection if the customer takes an extended long period without paying for Electricity.

8.3. RESPONSES TO THE COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

The Developer made the following clarifications and responses to the comments and questions raised;

- (i)** Whereas the customer connection including the energy meter is free of charge, a customer shall be required to make a payment for the energy consumed.
- (ii)** Winch Energy Limited shall conduct extensive training on the safety and usage of electricity in addition to signing Customer Service Agreements with customers to be connected.

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- (iii) REA is spearheading the identification of the land to be used by the project and no compensation is to be provided.
- (iv) The project will cover a radius of 1 km from the location of the Generation Plant and connections outside this coverage will be done using DC batteries that will be charged by Winch Energy Limited.
- (v) Distribution grid shall be constructed by REA based on a survey of customer identified and no grading of roads shall be done as part of the Project.
- (vi) Winch Energy Limited shall conduct training on productive use and in partnership with GIZ and Lutheran World Fund, there shall be 50% financing for electronic equipment through the funding of business proposals.
- (vii) Consumption in a month will depend on the equipment that a customer uses. There will be training by Winch Energy Limited to help customers calculate electricity usage.
- (viii) The Public Hearing was towards the finish line and Winch Energy Limited reiterated its commitment to seeing the project come to fruition, and;

9. REMARKS BY THE LC III CHAIRPERSON, PALABEK OGILI SUB-COUNTY

The LC III Chairperson thanked ERA and the Development Partners for the Project. He indicated that the project shall be a great enabler to the Sub-County towards attaining development.

10. CLOSING REMARKS BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The Presiding Officer asked participants by show of hands to indicate whether they welcome the project and the response indicated that residents overwhelmingly supported the project. He thanked members for the contributions and orderly session. He also emphasized that at the Public Hearing, no decision was made, that however, the events that transpired

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shall constitute a report that will be used as an input into the decision making by the Authority.

11. CONCLUSION

Overall, the Public Hearing was a success. Participants ably aired out their views and provided an opportunity for the Applicant to attend to the outstanding issues that were raised from members of the five Villages.



Project Affected Persons raising hands in support of the Project.