Grundfos and Plan International want to create jobs in Ethiopia **15-Dec-2020**

**Green investments and new water technology is growing rapidly in Ethiopia. But there is an acute lack of qualified education for a large and young population and for education that matches the need on the job market. Children’s rights organisation Plan International Denmark is joining forces with Grundfos to create education and jobs to the young in Ethiopia. The work is being supported with DKK 8 million (USD 1.3 million) by a Danida-programme under the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is a part of the Danish government’s ambition of educating 10.000 skilled workers in Africa.**

Almost one third of Ethiopia’s 104 million population are between 15 and 29 years old and every year two million young people enter the job market. The East African country is taking radical steps to modernise the water and textile industries in a green and sustainable direction, but there is a gap between the demand for competencies and the skills that the young population today can acquire at the vocational educations.

A new collaboration between the global provider of pump and water solutions, Grundfos, and the children rights organisation Plan International Denmark together with local educations and industries will prepare the young Ethiopians to handle the job of tomorrow.

- It is about ensuring that young people get off to a good start of their adulthood. If you as a young person gets stuck in unemployment, you enter a spiral of poverty, which is very difficult to get out of. This especially applies to young women who, because of traditions and outdated gender norms, already have poor access to the labour market. In Plan International we work to change that every day. It is therefore important that we can join forces with a major, global company like Grundfos, that can really contribute with expertise and know-how, says Anne Smith Petersen, Chief Operating Officer at Plan International Denmark.

More than 50 million Ethiopians do not have access to clean drinking water. At the same time the country’s biggest export – agriculture – is dependent on old water systems and effluent solutions. The country acutely lacks sustainable use of its scarce water resources.

This is where Grundfos’ capacity and expertise plays a crucial role. With years of experience in pioneering solutions to improve the quality of life for people, the pump manufacturer brings the expert knowledge required for the vocational schools to educate more people in putting up and maintaining the solar powered water systems. The modern technologies will help reduce the water consumption in the industry.

- We are extremely proud to be able to give the young people in Ethiopia some opportunities in life while also helping to lower the high unemployment rate in the country. In addition to that, the initiative is also lifting the entire market we operate in. Many more skilful locals are needed to install and maintain both current and coming solutions that will help solve the world’s water and climate challenges, Pia Yasuko Rask, director of Grundfos SafeWater, says.

The project involves the establishment of a Grundfos training lab at the Water Resources Institute in the capital of Addis Ababa, along with the development of training modules.

The targeted effort focuses on the Gambela-region in Western Ethiopia, that borders South Sudan and Southern Nation, Nationalities and the People Region (SNNPR) which is one of the central regions when it comes to developing a strong textile industry of up to 350.000 jobs in 2022 – a primary focus for the Ethiopian government. Gambela is a particularly vulnerable region that houses around 400.000 refugees from the conflicts in South Sudan and other neighbouring countries. This puts the water supply systems under increased pressure.

There is also a focused effort on the textile industry, which is under rapid growth in Ethiopia. Here, there is also lack of a qualified work force in an industry, where several big clothing brands are producing their products. The project will run for two-and-a-half-years, whereupon it will be carried on by local companies and institutions. Two vocational schools in Gambela are active partners on the project.

**FACTS: Youth unemployment in Ethiopia**

· In 2019 11.000 young people left Ethiopia every month to find work. In total 30.000 were forced to return.

· The risk of young women ending up in unemployment is twice as big as that of young men.

· 50 million do not have access to clean water.

· One third of Ethiopia’s population of 104 million is between 15 and 29 years old.

· Through the Danida-programme the Danish government has allocated DKK 25 million to securing relevant special training for 10.000 young people in Africa. Out of those, Plan International Denmark receives DKK 8 million to create relevant technical educations in Ethiopia together with Grundfos.

**About Plan International Denmark:**

Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organisation that advances children's rights and equality for girls. We strive for a just world, working together with children, young people, our supporters and partners.

**About Grundfos:**

Grundfos is a global water technology company committed to pioneering solutions to the world’s water and climate challenges and improving the quality of life for people.

More information about Grundfos’s water and climate ambitions can be found at We are pioneers.

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