

The image shows a field of wind turbines silhouetted against a sunset sky. The sky transitions from a pale blue at the top to a warm orange and yellow near the horizon. The turbines are scattered across the landscape, with some in the foreground and others in the distance. The overall mood is serene and hopeful, representing renewable energy.

**Working with a different kind of power:
community, responsive practice and renewables**

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WINDAC Africa, 31 October 2016

REIPPPP community benefit requirements

An unprecedented development opportunity

Unleashing 'local power'

But, the HOW of people-engagement not addressed in an informed or systematic way

While the case for renewables is established –

- Technologically
- Economically
- Financially
- Scientifically
- Politically

It is not so well established socially and politically at local levels, at least in not SA

The South African community context

- **Structural inequality** and continued social exclusion, echoing Apartheid's patterns.
- Widespread, growing **contestation around governance** in all forms, at all levels.
- Civic institutions with strong expressive abilities but **poor absorption and administrative capacity**.

**This creates potential problems, that
might be avoidable**

**“Doing more
harm than good”**

Weaker impact (*inadequate*)

Seepage, loss of resources, poor administration
(*unfortunate*)

Exacerbation of existing social and political
difficulties (*damaging*)

Igniting of volatile responses (*calamitous*)

How might local power,
as it emerges through the vehicle of
'community',
be best understood and engaged,
towards maximising
the potential of the REIPPPP requirements?

Experience suggests ...

... intentional development of
institutional practice characterised
by **skilled responsiveness**

Skilled Responsivity #1

A conceptual approach to 'community' and community development –

a reading, a vision, a strategy, a practice, methods and feedback loops ... and appropriate resourcing to accomplish this.

... this might include -

PRACTICE as a rich and layered resource –

- Approach
- Methods
- Skills

STRATEGY as being informed by

- A reading
- Vision
- Objectives (reached mutually)

... with ...

Iterative mechanisms
for learning and change

Skilled Responsivity #2

working with power

working in relationship

... this might include ...
The Development Cycle:

- Relationship
- Understanding
- Intervention
- Implementation
- Review *(those iterative mechanisms again)*

(Community Development Resource Association)

Skilled Responsivity #3

Engaging seriously with
institutions
as mechanisms for resource
distribution.

... this might include ...

Protecting institutional assets,
building social capital and
contributing to long term legacy
through working with local and other institutions.

Implications for how the work looks from the outside

Organic and unique solutions ...

... that develop over time ...

... and might change, depending on ...

... context and outcomes of relational
work with others.

Implications for how the work looks from the inside

Feedback at the centre, rather than
simple compliance

Centrality of voice of those in the
field

Organisational capacity to change
direction.

**Less control, less linear ‘roll-out’
(a bit like working with renewable
sources of energy?) – more
working responsively with the
power as it is, and as it flows.**

**Without which, the risk of
contributing to outcomes
that might be -**

Inadequate,

unfortunate ,

damaging or

calamitous.