



### Press Release N.132/2014

## AUC and Icelandic International Development Agency (ICEIDA) organize third Donors Collaboration Meeting for Regional Geothermal Programme and Risk Mitigation Facility



**Reykjavík, Iceland 26-28 May, 2014-** The African Union Commission Department of Infrastructure and Energy in collaboration with the Icelandic International Development Agency (ICEIDA) organised the third Donors Collaboration Meeting for the Regional Geothermal Programme (RGP) as well as Geothermal Risk Mitigation Facility (GRMF) which is managed by AUC through the department of Infrastructure and Energy. The meeting was hosted by ICEIDA in Reykjavik, Iceland on 26 May, 2014. The collaboration

meeting which was followed by a two days' workshop on geothermal development for decision makers in Africa was attended by experts from eight Eastern African Rift System(EARS) countries: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda ,,and representatives of geothermal support programmes in eastern Africa: EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund (EU-AITF), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Federal Institute of Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR), African Development Bank (AfDB), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nordic Development Fund (NDF), World Bank (WB), Energy and Management Assistance Program (ESMAP), International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) , Icelandic Geological Survey(ISOR), United Nations University Geothermal Training Program (UNU-GTP) and KfW.

The specific objectives of the donors collaboration meeting was to increase level of coordination among the donors working on geothermal development in Eastern Africa, increase level of coordination between donors and beneficiary countries and address issues facing donors and decision makers working on geothermal projects in Africa.

In his opening remarks, the Icelandic Minister for Foreign Affairs H. E. Mr. Gunnar Bragi Sveinsson warmly welcomed the participants to Iceland and expressed his pleasure that Iceland through its cooperation with the AUC was cohosting this event with the ICEIDA. He underscored the fact that while the international community was busy discussing the post 2015 Development Agenda in the face of severe consequences of global warming for many African countries he was proud to be a part of a gathering that can say to the world: we are doing something about it.

The AUC Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy Dr. Elham M. A. Ibrahim in her remarks stated that participants were there today to take stock of the implementation process of the Regional Geothermal programme and to discuss ways for moving ahead and also for further collaboration amongst donors, developers and decision-makers. This opportunity would be used to stress that one of the major challenges in geothermal development in African countries is the lack of or low levels of technical capacity in many of the key areas including exploration, drilling, field development, etc. For the development of geothermal energy, it is important to have an integrated and multi-disciplinary team of experts and highly skilled professionals. We believe that the geothermal industry in Eastern Africa will benefit greatly from the establishment of a training facility or programme”.

The Donor's Coordination Meeting was followed by a two days' Workshop on Geothermal Development for Decision Makers in Eastern Africa and active donors in the region and it specifically addressed issues facing donors and decision makers working on geothermal projects. Lectures were given by leading experts in various geothermal fields and lecturers from the United Nations University in Iceland.

The workshop also included site visits to showcase the uses of geothermal energy in Iceland. This included a visit to the main geothermal power plant in Iceland, Geothermal Drying Facility and the Blue Lagoon all of which utilise geothermal energy.