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Mini Grids Summit in Nairobi this June to Focus on Scaling Mini Grids for Last Mile Electrification in Sub-Saharan Africa

Nairobi, Kenya - 8 May 2019 - The 5th Africa Mini Grids Summit 2019 will convene on June 27-29 in Nairobi, Kenya. Electrification is core to development and mini grids are expected to play a critical role in meeting the UN Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) goal of universal access by 2030. It is the strategic plan of Governments in the region to develop and promote renewable energy generation through mini grids while also promoting public-private partnerships for implementation.

This Summit brings together all stakeholders to discuss key policy issues and best practices to accelerate mini grids deployment.

Prof AbuBakr Bahaj, *Conference Chair and Head of the Energy & Climate Change at the University of Southampton, UK* noted: *"The International Energy Agency, has indicated that to achieve 100% electrification by 2030, we need to rely on solutions that do not depend on a centralised electrical grid. This Mini Grid Summit is one of the most interesting meetings addressing electricity access for productive use. It brings together policy makers, relevant government organizations, developers and academics under one roof to thresh out pertinent issues related to access and to discuss pathways to deliver on the UN Sustainable Development Goals especially SDG7. The meeting is intimate with a lot of time devoted to discussions and debate, with an added bonus of visiting one of the pioneering mini grid projects in Africa."*

Fred Ishugah, *Sustainable Energy Expert with the East African Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (EACREEE)*, added: *"Although not often talked about, the costs associated with lack and inefficiency of energy are huge, spanning from low economic growth, low quality of education, and poor livelihood among many issues. The Mini-Grid Summit plays an important role in creating a platform for strategic partnerships to facilitate sharing of a broader range of resources and expertise that can bring about agility in socio-economic transformation."*

Private sector stakeholders who will share their expertise and practical applications at the 2019 Summit include: Nicole Poindexter, *CEO & Founder of Black Star Energy*; Richard Mori, *CEO of Mesh Power Rwanda*; Steve Wasira, *Vice President of Business Development at Virunga Power*, and John Kidenda, *Director of PowerGen Renewable Energy*; among others.

Scaling finance for Mini Grids has been a major challenge. Leading the discussions in this include international financiers Clifford J Aron, *President & Founding Principal, GreenMax Capital Group, USA*; Humphrey Wireko, *Senior Associate, CrossBoundary Energy Access*; and Gerard Hendriksen, *Team Leader, GMG, IED*, amongst others.

The CEO of the conference-organizing company, **Magenta Global Pte Ltd**, Singapore, Maggie Tan, added: *"Improving electrification to the 600 million Africans currently living without access to modern energy services is of paramount priority. Proactive changes to the regulatory environment, financing facilities and PPP structures are needed. The time is right to unlock resources and the technology is available to create economically and financially sustainable mini grids to power communities and businesses."* Ms Tan encouraged all companies and organizations to contribute to the development of this renewable energy sector by being part of this key event.

The 5th Africa Mini Grids Summit 2019 is held in collaboration with Knowledge Partner **Energy for Development (e4D) Network / University of Southampton** and Supporting Partner **Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF)**, and is supported by: the **Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE)**, the **Africa Minigrid Developers Association (AMDA)**; the **East Africa Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (EACREEE)**; the **South African Alternative Energy Association (SAAEA)**, and the **Uganda National Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Alliance (UNREEEA)**.

The two-day event will be held at the Hotel InterContinental in Nairobi, Kenya.

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