

Narasha Community Concerns on the powering Africa summit to be held from 27th-29th Jan. 2016 at Washington DC.

Access to electricity means access to opportunities and chance for people and economies to flourish, quote from Andrew M. Herscowitz (USAID) in his letter in the USAID annual report 2015. In Kenya specifically Narasha and Kedong Communities in Naivasha sub-county, geothermal power is produce in huge amount. Geothermal power production in Kenya stands at 593MWs where all is produce at the Olkaria fields by public and private companies. Kenya is currently the largest producer of geothermal energy in Africa. The government of Kenya Vision 2030 relies on the development of electricity to speed up realization of their targets.

Participation of the local communities in the renewable energy technology projects such as small/micro energy projects like wellheads in geothermal, solar power and wind could increase energy securities and mitigate against projects impacts on the local community.

According to experts, Kenya has massive geothermal energy potential, where Geothermal Development Company plans to drill 1400 Mw to provide for up to 5000MWs of geothermal power by 2030. It is estimated that Kenya has a potential of 7000-10000 MW and only 2% of the total geothermal potential has been exploited in Kenya.

The 2016 Powering Africa summit, in which most participants are drawn from the financial investors and banking sector will play great role in realization of future development of these resources. These projects if not well monitored will impact negatively on local communities.

As Narasha Community, we call upon the World Bank, AFDB and BRIC New development Bank to make strong policies that protect the rights of the affected communities by the projects which they are funding. Leaving the activities to the national government, will not ensure protection and mitigation of the effects. We are sincere hope that the banks will take the leading role in the implementation of the projects by the implementing agencies. For instance, in 2009 during the expansion of electricity project at Olkaria IV project over 1000 people were directly affected with an estimated over 2000 people were indirectly affected by the projects. When we raise concerns, many local people receive threats from the government and KenGen Co. ltd which was implementing agency.

The community pressed on and contacted the WB Inspection panel and the EIB- Complain Mechanism to investigate the claims which include titling, lack of economic recovery plan, missing names of the PAPs and failure to apply an indigenous policy in the resettlement action plan.

Narasha people wish to express their concerns on the discussions in the summit. Due to unavoidable circumstance we were not able to attend the summit. However, we are certain that the issues we shall share will be discussed and way forward will be given. These concerns are;

- Environmental assessment policy must be strong in addressing the impacts of the projects to the local communities. This can be assured through active, democratic, and authentic community

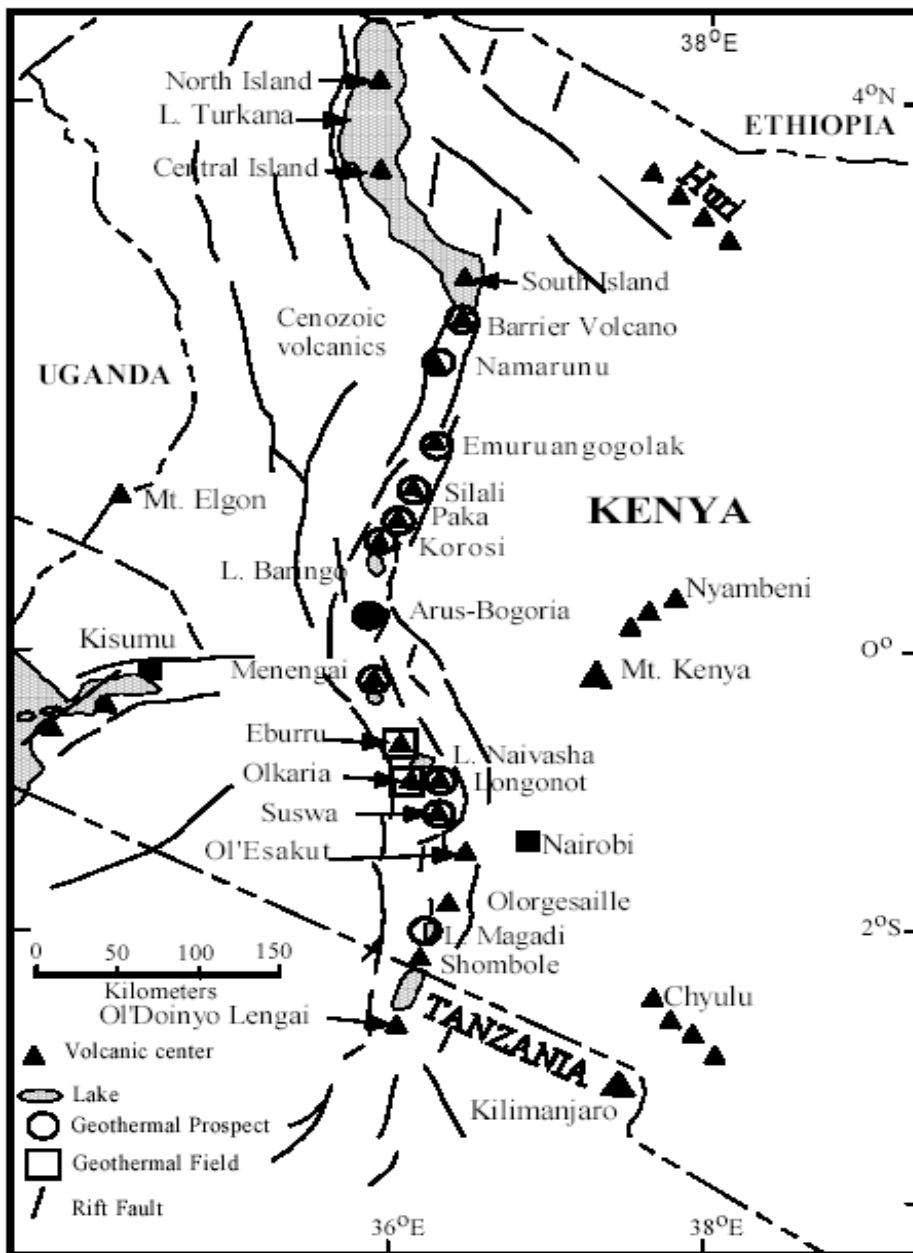
participation. This will prevent room for corruption and enhance information to reach all the affected persons.

- Assurance of gathering all important information is useful in addressing the impacts of the projects to the local communities.
- Call upon the banks including the BRIC New Development Bank to make good safeguard that can address the plight of the local communities which will be affected by projects funded by them.
- Mobilization of more investment for energy sector that promote local community ventures. This gives the local community to participate in the investment process. Most of these local communities are evicted, relocated or harassed in the process of acquiring land for these projects. To prevent this through discussions, the local community can give portions of their land as community share and as a result they can take part in benefit sharing directly.
- Promote energy solutions that are accessible and meet development needs of the poor and vulnerable people and respect all human rights.
- Promote research on geothermal energy and mobilize funding for local community geothermal projects so that they can initiate community driven projects.
- Ensuring involvement of civil society in the discussion of the development of the projects and include in the funding process through consultations.

The Kenya government has so far licensed the following companies to exploit geothermal power in the region; Kenya Electricity Generating Company (public), Orpower 4 Inc; (ppp) an affiliate of Ormat Technologies, Akiira one Ltd, Geothermal Drilling Company, Marine Powers Ltd and Africa Geothermal Ltd (AGIL). So far Kengen and Or Power 4Inc; have developed projects in the region. Throughout their operation in the region the community has experience of a variety of negative impact including eviction, pollution and health hazards, threatening of livelihood of the pastoralist community in the region and loss of historical and cultural sites among others.

According to the summit program, most senior Kenyans who are involve in the exploitation of energy resource will take the centre stage in discussing the financing and investment in these projects. Thy will be tabling the issues in absence of the local community representative and we are certain that they will not speak on the issues affecting the communities in Kenya.

So far the community has lost land at Narasha and Kendong. There are future plans by the government to grab the remaining part of Narasha and Kedong in addition to Suswa and Magadi which are targeted for future projects. This will complete displace the Maasai Community especially the Keekonyokie Clan.



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