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NAIROBI, 29 January, 2020 - The African Trade Insurance Agency (ATI), in partnership with Gigawatt Global, announced the launch of the first energy project under its Regional Liquidity Support Facility (RLSF). The project is the first private grid-connected solar field in Burundi and the country's first permanent power station in three decades.

ATI provided an innovative solution to cover the project's payment risk in support of partners that included the UK government-funded Renewable Energy Performance Platform (REPP), the United States International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) (formerly the Overseas Private Investment Corporation – OPIC) and the Inspired Evolution II Fund.

The 7.5MW solar project will add nearly 15% to Burundi's total energy-generation capacity and it will provide electricity to 87,000 people and businesses placing a significant dent in the country's energy deficit, where less than 5% of the population has access to power.

In addition to the positive impact on the climate, this project will also demonstrate that green energy can provide economic benefits as it is expected to create 300 temporary jobs during the solar-field construction phase and up to 50 permanent jobs during the facility's 25-year operational phase.

The Facility can be accessed by independent power producers (IPPs) located in countries that sign onto the RLSF Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). To date, seven countries have signed on - Benin, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia, with several others in the pipeline including Ethiopia and Ghana. ATI is actively encouraging other countries to sign on as a way of providing more cost-effective and clean energy solutions.

QUOTE from Michael Fichtenberg, Managing Director, Gigawatt Global Burundi SA and Vice President of Finance and Business Development of Gigawatt Global Cooperation

"We accomplished this pioneering project together with supporters from across the entire development spectrum, including innovative financial products being deployed for the first time with this project," he said, citing the support of the ATI's innovative RLSF. "We believe this demonstrates how solar power can be implemented in other developing markets, while decreasing dependency on costly and polluting diesel generators."

"The announcement that the Mubuga project has moved to full construction is a landmark moment for Burundi's energy sector and for the people of Burundi. REPP is very glad to have supported the project and its sponsors, Gigawatt Global and Evolution II Fund. We are especially pleased to be partnering with the ATI to deliver an innovative risk mitigation solution for IPPs in the region. We congratulate ATI on the first

application of the RLSF product and look forward to working together with them again in future."

Description: Burundi is a country facing considerable challenges in terms of energy. An insufficient electricity supply cannot keep up with the growing demand - a situation that has resulted in the use of diesel driven generators and importation of electricity. It is necessary to eliminate the deficit as soon as possible, but also to go beyond just solving the deficit and make long term investments in energy installations to ensure continuous economic growth.

"This project aims to supply 235 GWh/year of clean renewable energy of that will be injected into the national grid, representing almost half of the country's current power generation," says Rikard Liden, World Bank Lead Energy Specialist and project Task Team Leader. "The energy supplied from the hydropower facilities will replace more expensive fossil fuels in the country, therefore contributing to reducing CO2 emissions and to climate change mitigation."

The project is also supporting critical energy sector reforms. In a context where the Government of Burundi (GoB) has developed an ambitious program to reach universal access by 2030, the Bank is actively supporting that program along with other donors and this additional financing will provide more capacity to supply additional customers that will be connected through that program.

The PHJIMU is implemented by the Production and Distribution of Water and Electricity Company (REGIDESO), the public utility, on behalf of the Government of Burundi and co-financed by the International Development Association (IDA), the European Union (EU), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the GoB, and REGIDESO.

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