

Iceland Geothermal Conference
Thursday 26 April 2018
UNU Geothermal Training Program
40th Anniversary Workshop

Address by

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests,

It is my honour to welcome you to the UNU Geothermal Training Programme's 40th Anniversary Workshop.

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The UNU Geothermal Training Programme has been a key strategic partner in Iceland's international development cooperation since its beginnings in 1979. The first years of the programme were modest, with the number of fellows averaging around eight for the first ten years.

Since then, the programme has grown and flourished, entering into partnerships with a range of institutions and private sector actors in the geothermal sector. It has expanded its portfolio to include Millennium and Sustainable Development Goals short courses, as well as numerous customized short courses in developing countries.

To date, 670 specialists from 60 countries have completed the six-month training in Iceland and more than 2,200 specialists have benefitted from the diverse short courses which the GTP has offered in Africa, Central America, Asia, and Europe. Additionally, two former fellows have completed their PhDs on a fellowship from the Programme and 55 have completed a Master's degree.

As part of Iceland's emphasis in development cooperation on mitigating climate change and promoting sustainable energy the UNU-GTP *remains* an important partner in Iceland's international development cooperation and contributes in meaningful ways to innovation and progress in the geothermal sector across the globe.

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We can indeed say with confidence that the UNU-GTP has produced meaningful development results in its partner countries. Last year, an independent evaluation of the four UNU Training Programmes in Iceland concluded that many former fellows engage with, and influence policy processes upon returning from the programme. The evaluation also found that several former fellows are playing a key role in developing and leading new projects in their organisations and beyond.

At the macro level the evaluation also indicates that the UNU-GTP training has also contributed to increased geothermal power generation, utilisation of carbon credits, and increased financing and relations with foreign investors.

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Of course, the UNU-GTP would not be what it is without its engaged Director, Lúðvík, the former Director Ingvar Birgir, and the competent staff of the Programme. Ingvar Birgir laid the foundations for the programme from the very start and Lúðvík has been with the UNU-GTP for more than half of the Programme's lifetime. The commitment of the directors and staff speaks for their dedication to the development of geothermal energy beyond Iceland.

Earlier this month the Programme welcomed its 40th cohort of fellows and I wish to congratulate you Lúðvík, your team, and the National Energy Authority on this remarkable occasion. All of you are a credit to your profession and you can take pride in your accomplishments.

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In line with the overarching emphasis in Iceland's Foreign Policy, as well as in our International Development Cooperation, I know that the UNU-GTP is making a strong effort to address gender equality. I am happy to see the UNU-GTP is for instance welcoming collaboration with the UNU Gender and Equality Studies and Training Programme in Iceland and striving for increased participation of women in its training. Since the turn of the century there has been a steady growth of the proportion of female fellows and I look forward to seeing the UNU-GTP reach parity in the near future and push the envelope further on gender aspects.

While reaching gender parity at the UNU-GTP is a significant step, other aspects are also important. Incorporating gender considerations into infrastructure development, including the energy sector, is still not a widespread practice. It is therefore of utmost importance that the UNU-GTP continues to strengthen its efforts in this regard. This includes continuing to encourage its fellows to incorporate gender considerations at all stages of a geothermal project. We want to see women and men fully and equally enjoying the positive results of a successful geothermal project.

At this point I would be remiss if I didn't mention that both of the two PhD graduates on a GTP fellowship were indeed women. In fact, they are the first two women from Africa to complete their PhD at the University of Iceland. In this context I would also like to draw your attention to the World Bank session at this conference, where the results of collaboration project between Iceland and the bank on gender in geothermal will be presented and discussed. This is a dialogue we have to keep open and constantly strive to do better.

Dear guests,

Looking ahead, we should not underestimate the role of the private sector in development. Beyond traditional development cooperation, infrastructure development and capacity building, we should also look to harness the power of the private sector for geothermal development. This includes creating domestically a policy environment which is conducive to the participation of the private

sector for energy development. It is important to engage fellows and geothermal practitioners on this topic.

Recent Icelandic private sector initiatives in geothermal projects in Ethiopia and China demonstrate the capability and readiness of Icelandic actors to engage on a global scale. The Icelandic Geothermal Cluster plays a key role in promoting Icelandic expertise in this field and I thank the Cluster for hosting this conference.

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Dear Lúðvík and the UNU-GTP team. Congratulations on 40 years of the Geothermal Training Programme.

Without cleaner and sustainable energy, we will not reach the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals or the targets of the Paris agreement. The UNU-GTP plays an important part in reaching these goals by reducing carbon emissions; energising markets, innovation, and industry; mitigating climate change and contributing to sustainable development.

With this in mind, I thank the UNU-GTP as well as all its current and former fellows for what has already been accomplished. In the years to come, I look forward seeing your fellows and graduates continue to achieve development results in their home countries and contribute to Agenda 2030.

Thank you.