



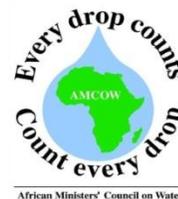
Partnership for Strengthening Water Security in Africa

Conference on the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative and the African Water Facility

Marseille, 14 March 2012



INFORMATION NOTE



1. Over the past decade, achievements in the continent in terms of access to water and sanitation and productive use of water for food and energy has been low. Provision of water infrastructure is not yet at the level of ensuring basic water security for social and economic development. Currently only about 5% of the available water resources is exploited for various purposes in Sub Saharan Africa compared to over 70% in North Africa. The 2010 UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme report puts the regional water and sanitation coverage at 65% and 41% respectively while for rural areas it is only 52% for water supply and 32% for sanitation. There is also an urgent need to deal with the challenge of steadily encroaching impacts of climate change.
2. African governments with the support of development partners have embarked on implementation of programmes designed to meet these challenges within the framework of the African Water Vision. AMCOW has been accorded the status of a Specialized Committee for Water and Sanitation in the African Union and is providing strategic leadership in the sector. The Heads of States and government met in Sharm El Sheikh in 2008 and made an historical commitment to put water and sanitation as a top priority, inviting governments and partners to take concrete action. It is recognized that the issue of sustainable financing is central to the ability of these governments to deliver on the MDGs for water and sanitation, as well as building the necessary infrastructure for economic development. The leadership taken by 32 African ministers who signed the eThekweni declaration to allocate at least 0.5% of GDP for sanitation is most significant. Some African countries have demonstrated significant commitment in increasing budgetary allocation to water supply and sanitation to match or in certain cases exceed ODA contribution.
3. The Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (RWSSI) launched by the Bank to address the rural challenges and the African Water Facility created by AMCOW to build the enabling environment for investment in water security are well established and making important contributions to the development of the sector. The 1st International Conference on rural water supply and sanitation in Africa held in 2005 in Paris France immediately galvanized African governments and donors to increase their focus on this hitherto neglected sub sector. Since 2004, the Bank has committed funding of US\$ 1.3 billion to 31 rural water supply and sanitation programmes in 23 countries while donors and African Governments contributed between US\$ 3.5 billion. The RWSSI Trust Fund established in the Bank in 2006 has also contributed about US\$ 140 million from donors in support of RWSSI programme activities.
4. The African Water Facility began operations in 2006 and focuses on mobilizing resources to finance water resources development, preparing investment projects, enhancing water sector governance and knowledge thus strengthening the investment environment. It has mobilized US\$ 160 million and committed US\$ 100 million to finance 69 national and multinational operations spread across 50 countries. This has succeeded in leveraging about US\$ 500 million in additional investments into the water sector.
5. The MDG target can be reached in many African countries with scaling up of the collective efforts of all concerned. For the 31 Bank supported RWSSI programme, it is estimated that 33 million and 21 million have gained access to water supply and sanitation respectively. An additional 155 million people need to be provided with water supply and 226 million with sanitation to meet the MDG target in rural areas. RWSSI is a key framework for achieving this.

6. AMCOW has estimated that an additional US\$ 30 billion per annum of investment is required to meet the water security objectives and called for increased funding by African Governments, donors and the private sector. The African Water Facility is a key instrument for facilitating the enabling environment for these larger investments to occur.
7. Climate change is causing wide ranging impact on Africa's water resources ecosystem. This will in turn result in population displacement due to drought or flooding; detrimental to agricultural and energy production and impair socio-economic development. Building the infrastructure platform for water security and provision of basic services are essential to enhance adaptive capacity and resilience. Both RWSSI and AWF are designed to address climate change impact as well as create the enabling environment for infrastructure development.
8. In the 2008 Sharm El Sheikh Commitments, the African Heads of State and Governments called upon African Ministers of water and finance, the Bank and development partners to come together and develop appropriate financing policies and increase support for these initiatives. In response to this, the Bank in partnership with the African Union Commission, African Ministers Council on Water, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Government of France, is organizing a high-level international conference to strengthen partnerships to mobilize the resources required for the two initiatives. The conference will be held on March 14, 2012 in Marseille, France as part of the 6th World Water Forum event.
9. The main purpose of the conference is to provide an opportunity for African governments and development partners to reconfirm their commitments to build the much needed water infrastructure for assuring the continent's water security and prioritize the provision of basic services targeting the poor particularly in rural areas where the need is greatest. The conference will highlight the achievements and challenges of RWSSI and AWF and the strategies for addressing them over the coming four years.
10. Investments of about US\$ 8.0 billion will be required between 2012 and 2015 to achieve the MDG targets in rural areas. The conference will serve as a platform for African governments, development partners and key stakeholders to commit to increased investments and accelerate the provision of rural water and sanitation services. This will be achieved through increased budgetary allocation by African governments and contributions by beneficiary communities, increased bilateral and multilateral financing by donors and international institutions and increased support through NGOs and the private sector. The conference will also provide an opportunity for governments and donors to pledge resources through the RWSSI Trust Fund which seeks to mobilize US\$400 million for implementing its action plan for 2012-2015.
11. The specific objectives for the African Water Facility at the Conference are to promote the AWF Strategic Plan covering the period of 2012-2016 and strengthen partnerships for its implementation. The AWF will seek pledges from governments, donors, foundations and other financiers to mobilize US\$ 200 million for the implementation of its action plan to 2016.
12. The conference will provide an exposé of the general state of water and sanitation development challenges in Africa and identify solutions through joint efforts. A short movie presentation will underscore the challenges, measures taken so far and future courses of action. This will be followed by presentations on RWSSI and AWF. Statements of support, commitments and pledges from governments, development partners and stakeholders will be made. The

conferences will be concluded by an adoption of policy statements which will be released at the end.

13. In keeping with the objectives of the Conference, participants will be high level representatives of African Governments, development partners, international and regional organizations, private sector and civil society organizations. African governments will be represented by Ministers of Finance and Ministers responsible for Water Affairs. Participants will include heads of regional organizations and UN and other international organizations, bilateral agencies and multilateral donors.
14. Key personalities expected at the conference include President John Kufuor of Ghana, Mr. Jean Ping, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank, Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, Executive Secretary of the ECA, Hon. Edna Molewa, Minister of Water and Environment of South Africa and President of AMCOW, HRH Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, Prince of Orange and Chairman of UNSGAB, Mr. Michel Camdessus, Honorary Governor of the Bank of France and Former Managing Director of the IMF.
15. The conference is taking place as part of the 6th World Water Forum event. Invited participants are encouraged to visit the Forum site at www.worldwaterforum6.org for registration and hotel bookings. All invited participants should confirm their participation and communicate their personal contact details (name, surname, nationality and country/organizations they represent) to the conference secretariat at the AfDB.
16. Contact for the Conference is as follows:

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17. Further information on the Conference may be obtained through the above contact or at the Bank website at www.afdb.org.