



## African Water Facility Facilité africaine de l'eau

Mobilising Resources for Water in Africa  
Mobiliser des ressources pour l'eau en Afrique

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Press Release

For immediate release

### **African Water Facility Supports the Construction of Multi-Purpose Dams in Zambia to Build Resilience to Climate Change, Increase Food Security**

**Tunis, 24 September 2012** – The African Development Bank approved on August 29, an African Water Facility (AWF) grant of €950,000 to support a project to help the Government of Zambia develop, test and adopt updated guidelines, which will be used as framework for programming as well as designing the financing, construction and operations of multi-purpose small dams. The dams are expected to directly improve the lives and livelihoods of an estimated 90,000 people, and indirectly benefit about a million people living in rural areas, thus enhancing water security in more vulnerable parts of the country.

Specifically, the AWF funding will be used to modernize and update the guidelines that govern and promote investments in multi-purpose small dams, with the aim to give greater relevance to the selection of potential dams using criteria based on community interest and environmental protection, as well as to build confidence of potential development partners. This project should ultimately result in attracting the massive investments required to proceed.

The urgent need for building additional small-purpose dams in the country comes as increasing hydro-climatic variability due to climate change has intensified water stress, particularly in the drought-prone areas of the Eastern, Central and Southern provinces.

The small dams would help sustain the lives and livelihoods of local communities through multiple uses, by securing access to water:

- ✓ for domestic use;
- ✓ for agriculture, with the aim of increasing the agriculture yields of smallholder farming;
- ✓ for fish farming;
- ✓ for livestock; and
- ✓ for various water-dependent activities such as mini hydropower systems, brick-making, tree growing, and food processing .

The small dams will also be beneficial instruments for climate change adaptation by attenuating the impact of flooding.

“The AWF is fully committed to supporting projects such as this one that propose water solutions poised to build resilience to climate change, increase food security and support socio-economic development,” said Dr. Akissa Bahri, Coordinator of the African Water Facility. “Heavily hit by climate change, Zambia will greatly benefit from improving its water storage capacity as a way to adapt to increasingly unpredictable rainfalls – one of the main sources of water for people living in the regions targeted by this project.”

In addition to the delivery and testing of the guidelines, another important attribute of the project is its contribution to design planning and mobilisation of funds to serve as a springboard to scale up water development program, such as the national Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Efficiency Implementation Plan (2007-30).

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The project will be implemented over a period of 36 months from the date of grant signature. The Zambia Ministry of Lands, Energy and Water Development and the Department of Water Affairs will be the Executing Agency.

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### About the African Water Facility (AWF)

The AWF is an initiative of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) hosted by the African Development Bank (AfDB), established in 2004 as a Special Water Fund to help African countries achieve the objectives of the Africa Water Vision 2025. The AWF offers grants from €50,000 to €5 million to support projects aligned with its mission and strategy to a wide range of institutions and organizations operating in Africa. Its three strategic priority activities are: (1) **preparing investment projects** to mobilise investment funds for projects supported by AWF; (2) **enhancing water governance** to create an environment conducive for effective and sustainable investments; (3) **promoting water knowledge** for the preparation of viable projects and informed governance leading to effective and sustainable investments. Since 2006, AWF has funded 73 national and regional projects in 50 countries, including in Africa's most vulnerable states. It has mobilised more than €420 million as a result of its project preparation activities, which constitute 70 per cent of its portfolio. On average, **each €1 contributed by the AWF has attracted €20** in additional follow-up investment. The AWF is entirely funded by Algeria, Australia, Austria, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Burkina Faso, Canada, Denmark, the European Commission, France, Norway, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the African Development Bank. For more information, [www.africanwaterfacility.org](http://www.africanwaterfacility.org)



*PHOTO: Small dam, Chongwe, Zambia. Copyright © 2011 Franz Hollhuber*

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