



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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Mobilising investment for water projects in Africa

The African Water Facility (AWF) is an initiative of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) managed 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 is a financial instrument designed to support actions and initiatives that will result in enhanced equitable and sustainable development and management of African water resources for poverty alleviation, socio-economic development, regional cooperation, the environment and resilience to water-related disasters and climate change.

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 organisations operating in Africa.

Its three strategic priority activities are (1) the preparation of bankable investment projects to mobilise investment funds for projects supported by AWF; (2) the enhancement of water governance to create an environment conducive for effective and sustainable investments; (3) the promotion of water knowledge for the preparation of viable projects and informed governance leading to effective and sustainable investments.

Investment scope

The AWF utilises about two-thirds of its resources to assist its clients to mobilise project and programme financing likely to deliver more benefits to citizens, such as access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, better agricultural water management for farmers, and access to electricity from hydropower. Projects with a focus on flood protection, fisheries, transport, industry, tourism and environmental management are also considered.

A wide range of grant recipients

The AWF awards project grants to a wide variety of institutions and organisations, including: central governments / ministries or agencies; local governments / municipalities; non-governmental organisations / civil society organisations; community based organisations; regional, sub-regional and sectoral organisations (i.e. regional economic communities); water basin organisations; and small and medium enterprises.

Committed to addressing climate change, environmental and social sustainability

The AWF is committed to promoting the sustainable development of the water sector. To that effect, the AWF ensures that cross-cutting issues, such as climate change, environment protection, gender and social equity are properly addressed at every stage of the project cycle.



Climate change means water change

Water resources are extremely vulnerable to global warming, which is bringing drastic changes to water quality, quantity and availability across the African continent. These changes are often felt through extreme events in the form of droughts, floods and coastal erosion caused by sea level rise.

The AWF is supporting projects that aim at building resilience to climate change and promoting the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Many projects use cutting-edge and innovative solutions that can help countries overcome the new water-related challenges presented by climate change, and reduce pollution causing global warming.



As part of its climate change strategy, the AWF prioritises projects that feature water harvesting, conservation, storage, recycling and re-use, and the use of renewable energy to power water stations and infrastructure.

Protecting people and the environment

The AWF is committed to promoting projects that strike an acceptable balance between project benefits and environmental/social impacts. The AWF also supports projects with environmental benefits, such as projects promoting the prevention of land degradation and air pollution.

The AWF ensures that all its projects are properly screened for environmental and social risks. The AWF helps grantees to properly address any risks detected and implement measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate adverse environmental and social impacts.

Working with project designers, the AWF ensures that the environmental and social impacts of each project are fully considered.



Empowering women, youth and disadvantaged communities

Closing the gender economic gap and empowering women, youth and disadvantaged communities is essential to sustain economic growth.

Committed to promoting social equity and economic integration, the African Water Facility (AWF) supports projects with components designed to deliver special benefits to women, youth and disadvantaged or marginalised communities.

Water infrastructure projects can be the catalyst for significant social change in the areas where they are implemented. The AWF works with project planners to ensure that gender equity and social equity are being addressed in the implementation and eventual outcome of each programme.

AWF in numbers

Since 2006, AWF has funded 98 national and regional projects in 52 countries, including in Africa's most vulnerable states. The AWF occasionally pilots small projects in Fragile States and paves the way for larger funding from agencies. To date, on average, for every euro invested, the AWF has attracted 35 more, amounting to €1.4 billion in follow-up investments as at February 2015.

€1.4 billion mobilised

1:35 leverage ratio

98 projects

52 African countries

Governance and funding

The AWF is governed by a Governing Council representing its 15 donors, UN-Water Africa, the AU via NEPAD, AMCOW and the AfDB.

The AWF is entirely funded by Algeria, Australia, Austria, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Burkina Faso, Canada, Denmark, the European Commission, France, The Nordic Development Fund, Norway, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the African Development Bank.

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