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02-OCT-06 | The Netherlands Boosts AfDB Water Initiative



Tunis, 29 September 2006 – The Netherlands today granted the ADB a grant of US\$ 25 million to finance the Bank's operations in the water sector.

This contribution comes on the heels of the successful visit to the Bank and discussions held with President Donald Kaberuka by Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation Mrs A. van Ardenne van der Hoeven in February 2006.

The grant agreement was signed in Tunis by the AfDB Vice President in charge of Infrastructure, Private Sector and Regional Integration Mr. Mandla Gantsho and The Netherlands Ambassador in Tunisia, Mrs.

Rita Dolci Rahman.

The US\$ 25 million grant will support the AfDB Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (RWSSI). The prime objective of the RWSSI is to mobilise African governments and international donors to accelerate access to sustainable rural water supply and sanitation (RWSS) investments through the utilization of innovative approaches to services delivery.

"The Initiative already supports 11 countries, and it is expected to extend its services very soon to some 20 countries and thereafter to all the African countries that have defined a national water strategy", said Mr. Kordje Bedoumra, the AfDB Water and Sanitation Department and African Water Facility Director at a press briefing following the signing ceremony.

The main target is to extend coverage of safe water and basic sanitation to 80% of the rural populations by 2015 from the base level of about 47% coverage for water supply and 44% for sanitation in 2000. The total resource requirements for achieving 80% access to water and sanitation by 2015 is estimated to be US\$ 14.2 billion. "The ADB Group is committed to providing up to 30% while regional member countries will contribute 20%. The donor community is expected to contribute 50% of the estimated total requirements", explained VP Gantsho.

In order to help donors contribute to RWSSI, the AfDB established a multi-donor Trust Fund. The Netherlands, which shares a common vision with the AfDB on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the importance of Water and Sanitation, has channeled its US\$ 25 million grant through this trust fund. Through its contribution to the RWSSI Trust Fund, after France and Denmark, the Netherlands believes Africa can reach the MDGs. "Every year, the Netherlands allocates 0.8 % of its Gross National Product to poverty reduction and half of this money goes to Africa", said Mrs. Rahman.

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RWSSI countries

- 11 benefiting countries to date: Mali, Rwanda, Ghana, Benin, Senegal, Uganda, Madagascar, Ethiopia, Morocco, Chad and Tanzania;
- New benefiting countries up to the end of 2006: Mauritania, Niger and Zambia;
- Projected beneficiary countries in 2007: Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Nigeria and Cameroon.

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