

African Water Facility Turns Waste into Commercial Fertilizer and Energy, While Improving Sanitation Services for the Urban Poor, in Ghana

Accra, Ghana, November 7, 2013 – The [African Water Facility \(AWF\)](#) signed a €1 million grant in favour of the Ghanaian NGO *Training, Research and Networking for Development (TREND)* to support an innovative sanitation scheme. The project, which is a tripartite collaboration among TREND, Safi Sana Ghana Limited and the Ashaiman Municipal Assembly, is designed to turn waste into bio-fertilizer and energy, whilst providing affordable and sustainable sanitation services for the unsewered urban poor communities of Ashaiman district of Accra.

Specifically, the AWF grant will finance the construction of a waste treatment plant that can produce about 500 tons of fertilizer per year, and can generate about 580,000 kWh per year of electricity from the biogas produced from the process. The project will also contribute to improving the hygiene, health and the quality of life of an estimated 125,000 underprivileged urban dwellers by providing them access to new, safe sanitation services through the expansion of the Ashaiman Municipality's sanitation coverage.

“The African Water Facility supports resource recovery projects because it has shown to solve so many problems at once, especially where resources are scarce and access to affordable fertilizers and energy is low,” said Akissa Bahri, Coordinator of the African Water Facility. “While resource recovery systems help minimize environmental pollution, waste converted and sold as fertilizer provides much-needed affordable soil nutrients for farmers and families; and used as biogas, is a safer, cleaner and more affordable source of energy for more economically disadvantaged communities; it's a clear win-win for the urban poor, the private sector and the environment.”

Marie-Laure Akin-Olugbade, Resident Representative of the African Development Bank in Ghana, underscored the Bank's commitment to promoting innovative interventions and renewable energy in Africa. She invited all stakeholders to support the project's tripartite arrangements to ensure the project's successful implementation, for the realization of project outcomes and potential replication in other municipalities in Ghana and beyond.

It is anticipated that the project will contribute to increasing private sector investments in the sanitation sub-sector, and to boosting business and economic development by promoting attractive, replicable business models for improved sanitation service delivery. With the ever-dwindling natural resources and the increasing oil and food prices, thinking innovatively is inevitable, and turning waste to bio-fertilizer and energy is poised to be very profitable business.

The project's innovative aspects include:

- The recovery of energy and nutrients from fecal and organic waste;
- The establishment of market opportunities for the sale of products derived from waste;
- The involvement of the private sector in the sanitation business and the generation of income for all operators and their staff part of the service supply chain, from waste collection, to transport, treatment and reuse;
- The opportunity to demonstrate how Ghana's new energy bill can be implemented through small strategic investment projects with the participation of the private sector and civil society;
- The promotion of improved sanitation services and hygiene behaviour change.

The project was officially launched following the grant-signing ceremony held in Accra, Ghana, on Thursday, October 31, 2013, which was attended by representatives from the Ashaiman Municipal Assembly, the AWF, the AfDB, the Energy Commission and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Safi Sana Ghana Limited, and TREND.

Contact:

Katia Theriault, T. +216 71 10 12 79, M. +216 53 22 57 77, k.theriault@afdb.org

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 mobilize 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 84 national and regional projects in 51 countries, including in Africa's most vulnerable states. It has mobilized more than €935 million as a result of its project preparation activities, which constitute 70 percent of its portfolio. On average, **each €1 contributed by the AWF has attracted €20** in additional follow-up investments. 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. The AWF is governed by a Governing Council representing its 15 donors, UN-Water Africa, the AU via NEPAD, AMCOW and the AfDB. For more information: www.africanwaterfacility.org