



AfDB hosts the First RWSSI Trust Fund Steering Committee

Denmark, France and the Netherlands support AfDB to improve Water Supply and Sanitation access in rural Africa

Tunis, 6 February 2007 – On 29 January 2007 the African Development Bank (AfDB) hosted the First Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative Multi-donor Trust Fund (RWSSI Trust Fund) Steering Committee, gathering donors, respectively Denmark, France and the Netherlands, and AfDB representatives to discuss and validate the RWSSI Trust Fund Indicative Budget, strategy and operations in targeted African countries for the year 2007.

The first International Donors conference on the AfDB's Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (RWSSI), which was organized on 1 April 2005 in Paris, successfully mobilized the main international donors and the African Governments to adopt RWSSI as the common framework for resources mobilization and investment for rural water supply and sanitation services development in rural Africa. 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 13 countries and it is expected to extend its services very soon to 19 countries and thereafter to all the African countries that have defined a national water strategy"*, said Mr. Kordjé Bedoumra, the AfDB Water and Sanitation Department (OWAS) and African Water Facility (AWF) Director. In perspective of the MDGs, the main target is to extend coverage of safe drinking 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 as committed during the Paris Conference in 2005.

In order to help donors contribute to RWSSI, the AfDB established a multi-donor Trust Fund. The RWSSI Trust Fund agreement was signed by Denmark in February 2006, France and the Netherlands in September 2006. The three donor countries, sharing a common vision with the AfDB on the attainment of Water related MDGs and the importance of Water and Sanitation, have channeled a total amount equivalent to €90 million grant through this trust fund (respectively €40 million from France, DKK 230 million from Denmark and \$US 25.5 million from the Netherlands).

RWSSI countries

13 benefiting countries to date: Mali, Rwanda, Ghana, Benin, Senegal, Uganda, Madagascar, Ethiopia, Morocco, Chad, Tanzania, Mauritania, Zambia

Projected beneficiary countries in 2007: Niger, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali (Second Programme), Mozambique, Nigeria

For the first time since its establishment, the RWSSI Trust Fund Steering Committee was reunited, under the chairmanship of Mr. Kordjé Bedoumra, AfDB's OWAS and AWF Director, Mr. Erwin Van Den Eede from Denmark, Dirk Van Ginhoven for the Netherlands, Mr. Emmanuel Carrère, representative from France and Mrs. Orraca-Ndiaye from the AfDB cooperation department, to examine the 2007 work program to be supported by the Fund.

The outcomes of the meeting proposed financing aims at reaching a significant amount dedicated to RWSSI programmes in almost all countries benefiting from the AfDB's support (see box). The flow of RWSSI Programme's resources is not yet sufficient to meet the MDG targets, and the creation of the RWSSI Trust Fund is timely to increase the support to the water sector. The resource needs for the year 2007 is large enough to absorb the resources available to the RWSSI Trust Fund. As a result, countries that are ready for RWSSI programme implementation but facing limited resources for the water and sanitation sector would benefit from a larger financing as is the case for Niger (UA 11 million equivalents to €12.65 million*). Other RWSSI programmes to be considered for this year could be Burkina Faso, Mali II and Mozambique.

The members of the RWSSI Trust Fund Steering Committee reaffirmed the role of the Fund as a complement to the AfDB financing and an efficient support in assisting the First financial institution on the continent to have a bigger impact in rural water supply and sanitation provisioning in Africa.

* 1 UA = 1.15034 € as at 01/02/2007