



Support to the African Union Commission Water Directorate and the African Ministers' Council on Water

Project Partner:	African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW)
Project Region:	All member states of AMCOW and the African Union
Project Term:	overall: December 2009 – November 2015 current phase: December 2009 – November 2012
Project Budget:	total: EUR 9 million current phase: EUR 5.5 million

Context

Many parts of the African continent are lagging behind the quest to achieve the Millennium Development Goals related to water and sanitation, with millions remaining without access to clean drinking water and sanitation. Two thirds of the African population resides in the vicinity of 59 international water basins on the continent. For the sake of securing basic needs for this population, achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and preventing conflict, international coordination of water resource management and strategic direction at pan-African and regional levels are indispensable.

The African Heads of State demonstrated their interest in accelerating the achievement of the set goals in water and sanitation in Africa through a comprehensive list of commitments declared at the July 2008 African Union summit in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. The main aspects of the commitments include national action plans on water and sanitation, transboundary water management as well as capacity development and the strengthening of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW). The AU Commission mandated AMCOW to develop an implementation strategy for the Sharm El-Sheikh commitments.

Additional efforts are needed in order to carry forward these commitments. The aim of this GIZ programme is to enhance the capacities of the African Union Commission (AUC) Water Directorate and the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) to implement these crucial commitments. Programme support will also target regional organisations – such as the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) – and River/Lake Basin Organisations (R/LBOs). For this, the AU Commission requested German support in the development of this strategy and, furthermore, to accompany its implementation.

Project

In order to enable the African Union Commission (AUC) Water Directorate and the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) to steer the process of implementation of the Sharm El-Sheikh commitments, German support aims to enhance capacities and performance of AUC, AMCOW and regional institutions (RECs, R/LBOs).

The project focuses on three core areas:

- 1) Development of an implementation strategy and required processes
- 2) Improvement of the internal organisation and the communication between pan-African and regional levels, institutions and civil society. This includes the clarification of roles and responsibilities.
- 3) Providing advice and support for the AUC and AMCOW in the integration and implementation of IWRM principles on the regional and national levels

IWRM is a flexible, process-oriented and holistic approach aiming at the maximization of human and economic benefits while taking the ecosystem into consideration. The German government actively supports the AUC and AMCOW in donor coordination in this sub-sector.



The objective of the first phase (2009–2012) is to ensure that AUC and AMCOW are able to fulfill their mandate regarding the implementation of the Sharm El-Sheikh commitments. This includes guiding the process of adopting an implementation strategy and reporting the current state of implementation to the heads of state at the AU summit. The project contributes to fostering a more strategic direction of the African water agenda and to its stronger integration in the AU.

This pan-African project includes all African states and works closely with other German projects in the water sector on both the regional and national levels. Furthermore, the project enjoys the support of the European Union. Upon request by AMCOW, the World Bank's Water and Sanitation Program (WSP) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) have taken on responsibilities in the sub-sectors of drinking water supply and sanitation, likewise assisting in the fulfilment of the Sharm El-Sheikh commitments.

Impact

Expected results of this project are related to an enhancement of AUC and AMCOW capacity in the planning, coordination and implementation of the Sharm El-Sheikh

commitments. The roles and responsibilities of actors in African water governance on all levels (pan-African, regional and national) will be clarified, thereby enhancing political participation and transparency. As a result of these outcomes, the AUC and AMCOW will be able to reinforce their position as leading pan-African institutions and deepen cooperation with African institutions as well as with donors.

The project contributes directly to the fulfilment of the commitments made by Heads of State in regards to AMCOW and the institutional architecture of the African water sector. Implementation of the strategy and increased capacity development will allow harmonisation among the regional and national levels. Furthermore, the project will help to ensure that donor contributions within the framework of the joint African strategy are more effectively applied. By spreading the principles of IWRM and benefit sharing, long-term sustainability in water resource management and conflict prevention will be achieved. The urban and the rural poor of Africa alike will benefit from the support through the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals related to water and sanitation, resulting from improved coordination and implementation according to plan of the Sharm El-Sheikh commitments.

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