Africa water investments scorecard launches

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There is high expectation for improved progress in water investments in Africa, including Malawi, following the launch of the Africa Water Investments (AIP-Pida) scorecard in Kenya’s capital, Nairobi, on March 2. The tool was launched during the Seventh Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (Pida) week which was held under the theme ‘Accelerating Transboundary Pida Water Investments Through the AIP Water Investment Scorecard.’ The tool will be used under the Continental Africa Water Investment Programme which seeks to leverage $30 billion/year by 2040 towards climate resilient water and sanitation investments.

The scorecard will help countries like Malawi track investments in water projects to ensure they match the growing urban population, which according to United Nations Habitat, is one of the fastest urbanising countries in the world.

Speaking during the launch of the scorecard, former Tanzania president Jakaya Kikwete, who is Global Water Partnership Southern Africa and Africa Coordination Unit chairperson said the initiative is as a huge milestone in the quest for water security in Africa. He said: “Today is a momentous occasion in the history of efforts to transform and develop the water and sanitation sector in Africa.”

The efforts are aimed at translating into the people of Africa getting enough safe and clean drinking water for social and economic needs.”

African Union Development Agency (Auda)-Nepad has been driving the process for the establishment of the scorecard in collaboration with the African Ministers Council on Water and other partners.

In his remarks, Auda-Nepad chief executive officer, Tshwane Mayaki, said the instrument will accelerate investment mobilisation for water projects.

The first activity on putting into effect the scorecard will be the launch of the $160 million Zanzibar Investment Programme at a high-level conference in Zanzibar, which starts today and ends tomorrow.

Chilima says govt will clear AIP mess

GEORGE SINGINI
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Vice-President Saulos Chilima has called for proper planning for 2022/23 Affordable Inputs Programme (AIP) to ensure that it does not face challenges faced this agriculture growing season.

The Veep said this on Tuesday in Kasungu during the launch of public sector reforms projects being undertaken by Kasungu District Council and Kasungu Municipal Council.

Chilima, who was responding to concerns by Kasungu South East legislator Khumbize Chiponda that some farmers have failed to access fertiliser in the 2021 AIP this year, said government will ensure that it rectifies some of the challenges before the start of the next growing season.

Chiponda, who is also Minister of Health and was representing Kasungu Central legislator Ken Kandodo during the Veep’s tour of Kasungu town, said proper planning in the AIP would ensure that farmers benefit from the programme.

She said: “A good number of people have failed to access fertiliser due to logistical challenges.

“I would like to urge you our Vice-President that when government is coming up with this year’s programme, we need good preparations so that most people access fertiliser.”

But Chilima assured that with the budget starting in April, there will be enough time to procure fertiliser in good time.

He said: “There will be about six months of sourcing fertiliser and we will do so at a cheaper cost. This should also give ample time to ensure that farmers have access to fertiliser on time.

“We do not want a situation where people panic to source fertiliser as we are running mice. Fertiliser should be sourced on time and farmers should be able to access fertiliser without challenges.”

The Veep went on to remind the people that the country is implementing a Public Sector Reforms Programme and that each government ministry signed for projects and initiatives that they work on to improve service delivery.

He said the Public Service Reforms Department, which he heads, will be tracking such projects.

Chilima, expressed satisfaction with four of the 10 reform areas that Kasungu District Council is working on.

The council is implementing health sector reforms where it has increased bed space for neonatal services at the district hospital.

The council has also procured a fire engine and rescue trucks.

Meanwhile, the council is also planning to construct a new bus terminal and new market to create jobs and generate revenue for the council.

Malawi sets pace for health economics

STEVEN PEMBAMOYO
STAFF REPORTER

The Health Economics and Policy Unit (Heup) has said Malawi’s policies on health economics are being replicated in other East, Central and Southern African countries and health community members.

Heup director Joseph Mtutsa-Bengo said this on Tuesday in Lilongwe during a two-day Thanzo La One project in 2018, the number of health economists has been significantly increasing from only two to 16.

“Currently, Malawi has 16 health economists but there is hope that by the end of this year, the number will jump to 30 which may become the highest in the member States,” he said.

Malawi sets pace for health economics

However, Mtutsa-Bengo said despite these positives, Malawi is resource-limited to achieve the best in health economics programmes.

In his remarks, Ministry of Health Principal Secretary Dr Charles Mwanso said the country is doing its best despite limited resources.

ECSA is a nine-member International organisation established in 1974 to coordinate health programmes through platforms where member States can share and learn ideas from each other.

Mtutsa-Bengo: We are increasing numbers

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The training brought together community members from Chikwawa, Nsanje, Mulanje, Phalombe and Zomba districts.

It was funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB).