



PRESS RELEASE

## **Nigerien social entrepreneur Abdou Maman wins the King Hassan II Great World Water Prize (US\$ 100,000)**

**7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, Daegu, 12 April 2015** – Today, at the Grand Opening Ceremony of the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, in presence of a range of Heads of State and delegations coming from 160 countries, the Kingdom of Morocco and the World Water Council have awarded the King Hassan II Great World Water Prize, one of the most prestigious awards in the water sector, to Mr Abdou Maman, Director Tech Innov Niger, for an integrated and innovative solution for remote operation of irrigation.

### **A winner rewarded for the excellence of his project**

The Tech Innov Niger solution for remote irrigation is a technology process that lets farmers manage their farm irrigation system remotely, using their mobile phone and solar panels. This solution enables farmers to save time and energy, expand the area under irrigation, increase their production and income, and streamline the management of irrigation water. This remote irrigation system is composed of a small solar station, a solar pump, a water distribution network, and a simple mobile telephone.

By providing a concrete solution for issues in the food, energy and water nexus, remote irrigation serves to reduce poverty in rural populations. Social entrepreneur Abdou Maman favours taking a holistic approach to these issues. He enables implementation of his solutions while also supporting communities in accessing technology and finance via crowdfunding, participatory online funding, micro-credit, etc.

The King Hassan II Great World Water Prize rewards excellence pertaining to “Cooperation and solidarity in the areas of management and development of water resources”. From a micro-economic perspective, the Kingdom of Morocco wishes to highlight Abdou Maman's efforts and commitment to a dynamic local economy.

*“This King Hassan II Great World Water Prize honors the work of Mr Maman, who is the perfect example of social entrepreneurship; he serves his community and is at the heart of a dynamic local economy. The Tech Innov Niger solution is innovative and combines sustainable development and technology in the fight against poverty. It corresponds perfectly to the values of the Kingdom of Morocco in terms of the protection and sustainable management of water resources”,* declares Charafat El Yedri Afailal, Deputy Minister for Water at the Moroccan Ministry of Energy, Mines, Water and the Environment.

*“The relationship between the World Water Council and the Kingdom of Morocco is particularly dear to us. Our first World Water Forum was held in Marrakech in 1997. And it is there, in the Declaration of Marrakech, that the World Water Council received its mandate to develop the World Water Vision for Life and Environment for the 21<sup>st</sup> century”,* recalls Benedito Braga, President of the World Water Council. *“I am proud of the commitment of the Kingdom of Morocco to each Forum and to this very Great Prize.”*

In accordance with the dual nomination process, Mr Abdou Maman was sponsored by Nicolas Biron, Water Initiative Programme Specialist, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie OIF/BRAO, Togo, and Adamou Mahaman Moustapha, Head of the Department of Rural, Water and Forest Engineering at Abdou Moumouni University, Niger.

This Prize honours the memory of His Majesty King Hassan II and his strategic and enlightened vision for secure access to water and sustainable management of water resources. Since its creation in 2003, at the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum, a permanent committee comprising representatives of the Kingdom of Morocco and members of the World Water Council has supervised the organization and promotion of the Prize.

## About...

**The World Water Council (WWC)** is an international multi-stakeholder platform organization, founder and co-organizer of the World Water Forum. The World Water Council's mission is to promote awareness, build political commitment and trigger action on critical water issues at all levels, including the highest decision-making level, to facilitate the efficient conservation, protection, development, planning, management and use of water in all its dimensions on an environmentally sustainable basis for the benefit of all life on earth. The World Water Council, headquartered in Marseille, France, was created in 1996. It brings together over 300 member organizations from more than 50 different countries. More: [www.worldwatercouncil.org](http://www.worldwatercouncil.org)

**The Kingdom of Morocco** decided to make the mobilization of its water resources a national priority well before the definition of the Millennium Development Goals and the rise of the sustainable development approach, in particular via a specific dam policy to secure the country's water supply and contribute to its food security and its economic and social development.

Today, under the guidance of its sovereign, His Majesty King Mohamed VI, the country applies a policy of integrated management of its water resources and implements new alternative and innovative technologies in this area. Morocco is thus on the verge of meeting the consecutive challenges of, among others, water scarcity, increasing demand and protection of the environment.

In promoting reflection and the development of suitable solutions, Morocco has fostered North-South and more recently South-South cooperation, offering its advice and experience to its partners and friends in the areas of mobilization of the resource, rationalization of its use (micro-irrigation) and development of alternative techniques (desalination of seawater, reuse of purified waste water, etc.).

Given its policy achievements and international influence, Morocco had the privilege of organising the first World Water Forum in 1997 in Marrakech, considered ever since to be the benchmark event and most important international meeting of global water players. It has participated in all Forums since.

**The 7th World Water Forum**, Daegu-Gyeongbuk, Republic of Korea, 12-17 April 2015, is the world's largest international event devoted to water issues. The 7th World Water Forum will give participants a platform to exchange positions, share their ideas and expertise, improve water security globally by influencing the global agenda, and mostly become actors for positive change in their communities.

Necessitating over two years of collaborative preparation with stakeholders from around the world, the 7th World Water Forum consists of 4 preparatory processes: Political, Regional, Thematic and Science and Technology, within a common framework, so as to catalyze collective action and positive change. It will also be composed of cultural events, prize ceremonies, side events, a water exhibition, and a Citizen's Forum, including a Youth and Children's Forum, to raise awareness around water issues. The 7th World Water Forum is jointly organized by the World Water Council and the Republic of Korea together with the city of Daegu and the Province of Gyeongbuk.

For more information, please go to: <http://eng.worldwaterforum7.org/main/>

**About the laureate of the King Hassan II World Water Grand Prize**, Abdou Maman - Tech Innov Niger

For details about the project and pictures please address your request to [worldwatercouncil@grayling.com](mailto:worldwatercouncil@grayling.com)

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