

Preface

The Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Facility

At the request of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) the Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Facility (CRIDF) programme was introduced by the United Kingdom to support the implementation of water infrastructure in the SADC region as outlined in the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP) and related SADC documents.

CRIDF promotes the delivery of small- to medium-scale infrastructure across SADC through technical assistance aimed at developing sustainable pro-poor infrastructure projects, and facilitating access to finance to deliver the infrastructure. The Facility, through this infrastructure, aims to build climate resilience for poor communities across the SADC region, to enhance cooperation in shared river basins, and to build an evidence base for the national and regional benefits of cooperation.

However, CRIDF recognises that small- to medium-scale infrastructure has limited impact on transboundary water management and the building of climate resilience. It was with this in mind that the most strategic theme was introduced to clearly articulated arguments for changing the way infrastructure is planned, designed, delivered and operated to build climate resilience that will address poverty and build regional cooperation.

This strategic theme seeks to address the above challenges with the following mechanisms:

- Improved information/evidence will lead to “better” decisions even in the absence of effective and inclusive decision-making processes;
- Developing networks around climate resilience will stimulate engagement by interest groups in society (climate change NGOs, citizen groups, local governments and the media which enable them to advocate for pro-poor, climate resilience) within their own national policies;

- Brokering relationships between local as well as regional decision-makers, local governments' community representatives, NGOs and the media. This should lead to transformational change with regard to these relationships and how knowledge/information about the planning, implementation and operation of water infrastructure is disseminated;
- Empowering stakeholders through a better understanding of climate resilience issues which will result in improved decision-making both for local needs and regional priorities;
- Creating momentum in the public and in the civil society while increasing transparency will contribute to transformational change within SADC.

It is within the context of this strategic theme that the contributions covered in the book were prepared; these aim at assessing the extent to which Virtual Water, water footprint, and the water–food–energy nexus concepts could contribute to SADCs overarching integration, poverty reduction, peace dividends and economic growth objectives.

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