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Washington, June 29, 2020 - The World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved today a \$43 million grant from the International Development Association (IDA)* for The Gambia's Electricity Restoration and Modernisation Project (GERMP). The additional financing was made available through reallocation of IDA18 balance, thus augmenting the Bank's initial funding envelope for The Gambia by 20 percent.

"This support will build on the ongoing efforts of the government to strengthen the electricity and water sectors, and further boost the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic through communications and targeted investments including hand washing facilities in the Greater Banjul Area," said Elene Imnadze, World Bank Resident Representative.

The additional financing will further strengthen NAWEC's transmission and distribution network, provide additional support to transform NAWEC into an efficient and credit-worthy utility, and expand the scope of the project to the water sector. Specifically, more than 1.6 million people will have gained or improved access to electricity; 17 km of transmission lines will be constructed or rehabilitated; 20 grid-connected photovoltaic systems with storage will be installed; 20,000 water meters will be installed or replaced; and three water storage tanks will be repaired.

"This additional grant comes at an important moment in the reform process underway. We have already seen significant improvements in NAWEC's performance. Additional resources will help to solidify these gains," said Chris Trimble, Task Team Leader and Senior Energy Specialist, World Bank.

His Excellency Ma Jianchun, Chinese Ambassador to The Gambia has expressed delight and appreciation for the commencement of the Greater Banjul Electricity Transmission and Distribution Modernization Project, asserting that the project is a model of fruitful international cooperation.

Ambassador Ma Jianchun made this disclosure at the laying of the foundation stone of the Greater Banjul Area (GBA) Transmission and Distribution Modernization Project held at Sukuta Salagi over the weekend.

"We are delighted to witness that the EPC project of Transmission Infrastructures in the Greater Banjul Area commenced today (it) is a model of International cooperation. The project is planned by the Gambian government, co-funded by the World Bank, European Investment Bank and European Union, designed and constructed by Chinese Companies, furthermore French and Spanish Companies are also involved," Chinese Ambassador substantiated.

He added: "This demonstrates the strong cooperation of the international community to support the development of The Gambia. I believe that, with the joint efforts and close cooperation of all partners, the implementation of this project will be successful with fruitful results."

According to him, TBEA, Chinese Company contracted for the project is a large scale international energy company and service provider, adding the company is committed to sharing its knowledge of international power technology, manufacturing and construction experiences with the world.

“In Africa, TBEA also has extensive experiences in power transmission and distribution projects. It has successfully completed a lot of high-quality power transmission and distribution projects in Angola, Guinea, Ghana, Togo, Ethiopia, Kenya and so on,” said Ambassador Ma Jianchun.

He added: “I believe, with high-end manufacturing capability, advanced technology and abundant experiences, TBEA will complete the project successfully and hand over to The Gambia a high-quality demonstration project.”

Honorable Fafa Sanyang, Minister of Petroleum and Energy said the laying of the foundation stone for the GBA Transmission and Distribution Project is a milestone towards the implementation of the country’s electricity Road-Map 2017-2025. He noted that that the 225kv transmission line commencing from Brikama to Sukuta will be connected to the OMVG lines in a bit to make electricity accessible and affordable to Gambians.

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