AWNR
African Women for Natural Resources

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AWNR calls on the Congolese and U.S. governments as well as technical and financial partners to include civil society organizations and communities in the decision-making bodies of the Grand Inga project, in order to ensure inclusive governance and make energy a lever for sustainable development in the DRC.

Kinshasa, November 9, 2026, following its previous statement on the Lobito corridor extending its reflections on the agreement between the United States and the DRC, African Women for Natural Resources (AWNR) calls for the involvement of civil society organizations and the communities concerned in discussions on strategic projects, including the Grand Inga hydroelectric project, which according to the Congolese government could promote the local processing of resources, the development of industries and the strengthening of regional trade, including in the context of the Lobito corridor.

On September 25, 2026, bilateral discussions between the World Bank and the Congolese Government were held in New York on development projects, particularly in the energy sector. 41 days later, in Paris, representatives of the Congolese and American governments exchanged views again and also discussed the Grand Inga and Lobito Corridor projects on November 5, 2026 as part of the follow-up to their strategic partnership.

However, AWNR notes that these exchanges should take into account the demands of civil society organizations (CSOs) and the communities concerned. AWNR is one of the civil society organizations that documents the issues related to access to electricity in the DRC. In particular, it has published an analysis based on a survey conducted in the city of Kinshasa. This analysis shows that the need for access to energy is very high in the city of Kinshasa and in the DRC in general. According to Worldometer, the DRC has more than 117 million inhabitants, of which, according to the World Bank, only 21.5% have access to electricity.

The organization believes that this rate of access to electricity, which is still critical and insufficient, could be raised through the Grand Inga project, which is an opportunity to contribute to the achievement of the Congolese Government's commitment to increase it from 21.5% to 62% by 2030, in line with the projections of the Energy Compact.

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These investments can only contribute sustainably to the country's development if their benefits actually benefit the Congolese people. They must be accompanied by guarantees in terms of transparency, environmental protection, respect for the rights of the communities concerned and the participation of women and young people in decision-making processes and the benefits generated.

AWNR calls:

- The Government of the DRC to ensure transparency in decisions, funding and governance mechanisms related to the Grand Inga project; to organize effective consultation with the communities concerned; and to ensure that women and youth are fully involved in all stages of the project.
- The U.S. Government to support a partnership that promotes value creation in the DRC, access to affordable energy for the population, and consideration of human rights, gender equality, and environmental protection.
- Technical and financial partners, including the World Bank, to support the Congolese government in the preparation and implementation of the project, ensuring that studies, financing and monitoring mechanisms include social and environmental guarantees as well as measurable inclusion objectives.

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