

MAYORS MAKE MOVIES

An initiative by Let's Talk About Water

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PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL TO ADVANCE SOLUTIONS TO WIDESPREAD WATER CHALLENGES IN AFRICA

OVERVIEW

[Mayors Make Movies](#) is an initiative to promote wider engagement and participation in water policy and water science communication through short films produced by mayors of cities across the African continent in collaborations with local youth and filmmakers. This project aims to connect, support, and create partnerships among mayors, youth, and up-and-coming filmmakers to produce short films (2–3 minutes) that feature local water issues and solutions and highlight principles on water governance.

The project team is seeking a grant of US\$100,000 to advance this initiative. The amount will be matched by the Johnson Family Foundation.

BACKGROUND

Mayors Make Movies aims to use short films to expand the conversation on water challenges faced in cities across the African continent. As the world faces changes from rapid urbanization, climate change, and the COVID-19 pandemic, the urgency of protecting water resources has increased dramatically. It is a time to widen the conversation and to engage a variety of communities and voices, particularly the youth, who will inherit many of the problems we face today. This initiative provides leverage for mayors to tell their stories and initiate collaboration in order to promote water science literacy, knowledge mobilization, and create science-based solutions.

Mayors Make Movies was started by [Let's Talk About Water](#) (LTAW) in partnership with several key organizations: the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa), the African Film Festival, Inc. (AFF), and the Consortium of Universities for the Advancement of Hydrologic Science, Inc. (CUAHSI) in support of the [Roundtable of African Mayors for Water Security](#) at the [9th World Water Forum](#) in Dakar.

Through leveraging these partnerships with water policy analysts, scientists, and a network of mayors and filmmakers, the project aims to promote the production of short films to address local water problems—too much, too little, too polluted—and engage African voices in water security. The simple, plain, and effective stories that filmmakers can bring to water science have the potential to foster engagement in water management and provide an important means to prompt individuals and larger governing bodies to focus on this essential resource.

The project has been piloted with the production of five short films in three cities: Dakar, Senegal; Banjul, The Gambia; and Chefchaouen, Morocco. These cities—varying in size, population, and language—were selected to highlight the diverse approaches to water management.

PROJECT DETAILS

The requested funding would support Mayors Make Movies in completing 25 films in the next three years to i) build a network of active mayors; ii) create a film archive that serves to share common water challenges and good practices; and iii) further the ideas/capacity/tools to communicate about water needs and solutions.

Mayors Make Movies will showcase these films at high-profile international events, including the New York African Film Festival and World Water Week in Stockholm. The videos have already been screened at the 9th World Water Forum in Dakar in March 2022. The project also aims to sponsor public screenings in participating cities for educational purposes and to create a public space to talk about water.

WHY SHORT FILMS

Short films have the ability to reach a larger and more diverse audience, including youth, and initiate engagement and stimulate innovative thinking on issues such as water. Short films can also be both entertaining and educational.

Physical characteristics of each location, as well as history, agriculture, and industry, are key components in creating the short films. The goal of Mayors Make Movies is to capture these unique stories that embody the breadth and diversity of each place they represent and bring collective awareness to the water issues communities face.

WHY MAYORS, AND WHAT CAN THESE FILMS DO FOR THEM?

Mayors and local governments are currently at the forefront of handling local water problems and management—from water access to responding to water-related disasters. According to the [OECD report on Water Governance in African Cities](#), mayors are positioned to solve governance gaps by improving local decision-making and by creating and supporting local initiatives to ensure water security.

We intend these films to serve as a means to:

- Raise the profile of mayors and create a platform for intercity partnerships and mayor-to-mayor water governance networks.
- Produce content that can reach a wider audience, and to encourage greater participation in water-related issues and solutions.
- Promote good water science and policy communication that can reach a variety of audiences.

LTAW will send a formal letter to each mayor explaining this initiative and encouraging them to create and submit short films depicting their local water stories—not by lecturing on camera but rather filming on location and highlighting urban and rural issues. Those who respond will receive a grant of US\$5,000. *NOTE: the grant model is currently being finalized.*

THE SHORT FILMS

Pilot Program

The five pilot films have been presented at the 9th World Water Forum in Dakar, Senegal in March 2022; and are slated to be screened in Banjul, The Gambia and Chefchaouen, Morocco.

The films and interviews are available on our website: <https://mayorsmakemovies.org/>. See Annex I for filmography and film descriptions.

Showcasing Mayors Make Movies

9th World Water Forum, Dakar, Senegal, March 2022

Mayors Make Movies was showcased as part of the Roundtable of African Mayors for Water Security at the 9th World Water Forum. The Forum gathered participants from various sectors, including public sector and government, economic decision makers, multilateral institutions, academia, civil society, and the private sector. This year, it was the first time that the World Water Forum—the largest international water-related event—was held in sub-Saharan Africa. This presented a great opportunity to further highlight issues of water accessibility in Africa and to frame them in a forward, youth-driven manner.

New York African Film Festival 2022 at the Lincoln Center, May 2022

The films will gain another life at the African Film Festival, Inc. flagship—New York African Film Festival (NYAFF) in May 2022. Furthermore, they will be included in AFF's year-round program as well as educational community screenings.

World Water Week 2022 in Stockholm, Sweden, August 2022

The short films will also be screened at the World Water Week 2022 in Stockholm. The theme of this year's event is *Seeing the Unseen: The Value of Water*, which will take place both in-person and online, bringing together decision-makers, national institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and the youth.

BUDGET

Available Resources

The Johnson Family Foundation (JFF) supported this initiative with a grant for US\$100,000, starting in October 2021, in conjunction with NYAFF to make the films available for the 9th World Water Forum in Dakar. The JFF has also agreed to contribute an additional US\$100,000 as a match to be able to complete the planned 25 films through the three-year course of the Roundtable of African Mayors for Water Security for a total of \$US300,000. See Annex II for the proposed budget.

The goal is to raise a total of \$US450,000. From our experience to date—having completed five short films—we believe that US\$5,000 per film is an appropriate amount.

Timeline

April to August 2022

- Evaluation of current film products.
- Development of scientific, engineering, and policy discussion points for each film.
- Preparation for presentation at the Stockholm Water Week 2022.

August to December 2022

- Identification and preparation of three to five additional short films in collaboration with CUAHSI for presentation at the American Geophysical Union Conference in San Francisco in December 2022 in conjunction with the OECD/UCLG Africa Roundtable of African Mayors for Water Security meetings.

NOTE FROM LINDA LILIENFELD, DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER, LTAW

Dear Friends,

Of course, this is a challenging undertaking, but all of those involved in the project believe in the power of film to communicate water challenges effectively in an attempt to solve them. We are in an age of the image, so let's use it to our advantage. Mayors Make Movies will help thousands of people understand the importance of water and how to manage this priceless resource.

Thank you for your attention. All comments are welcome.

*Warmest regards,
Linda Lilienfeld*

Director and Founder, Let's Talk About Water and Mayors Make Movies

Email: linda.lilienfeld@gmail.com

Cell: +1 (202) 379-6218

Mayors Make Movies Website: MayorsMakeMovies.org

LTAW Website: letstalkaboutwater.com

Annex I. Filmography

Title: *Annual Flooding in Keur Massar*

Keur Massar, Senegal, 2022

Dir/Prod: Centre Yennenga

Length: 5:28 minutes

[Watch here](#)

Description: In Keur Massar, Senegal, following annual flooding, residents and community organizers show the effects on their lives and homes of poor infrastructure and increasing pressure of climate change. The short film shows how the residents live with/through the flooding and defines the causes and solutions to Keur Massar's flooding.

Title: *Water Fountain*

Dakar, Senegal, 2022

Dir/Prod: Centre Yennenga

Length: 4:57 minutes

[Watch here](#)

Description: Residents of Grand Dakar renting apartments in big, crowded buildings elect to use public water taps for everyday use rather than the city's system in their buildings. This short film explores the economic reasons behind the residents' choices and the challenges that the city's water pricing poses to residents of Grand Dakar.

Title: *Banjul*

Banjul, The Gambia, 2022

Dir: Sheikh Tijan Jallow (Mystic Productions)

Length: 4:06 minutes

[Watch here](#)

Description: In Banjul, a group of activists and members of the youth council speak on the need for decentralization of water management in the city and country at large. Mayor Roheyatou Lowe focuses on the importance of women as primary water users and invites partners interested in working on water in Banjul.

Title: *Chefchaouen*

Chefchaouen, Morocco, 2022

Dir: Rachid Kasmi

Length: 4:33 minutes

[Watch here](#)

Description: In Chefchaouen, a group of students learn about water resource management while walking in their city. Through an interview, Mayor Sefiani leads the viewers through Chefchaouen's conservation efforts for a drought-prone region and explains what could be done to improve water security in the city.

Interview with the Secretary General of UCLG Africa, Mr. Jean Pierre Mbassi

Dir: Rachid Kasmi

Length: 19:06 minutes

[Watch here](#)

Annex II. Mayors Make Movies Three-Year Budget

This is a cost estimation of the video activity, consulting services, advisory team salaries, and travel involved in the MMM and OECD partnership to produce short films with up to 25 African mayors for the duration of three years.

Table 1. Mayors Make Movies Budget

Item	Base	Unit	Quantity	Total	Annual Budget			
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Short Film Production								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Consultations with different constituents e.g., Mayors Office, CUAHSI, LTAW, etc. ➢ Concept Development, Production and Post-Production ➢ Technical Support, Translation and Transcription Services 	\$ 5,000.00	per mayor	25	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 125,000.00
Consultation Services								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ CUAHSI, IoW and WMO: Open-source water data access and management 	\$ 25,000.00	per year	1	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	-	-	\$ 25,000.00
Advisory Team								
Linda Lilienfeld	\$ 3,000.00	month	10	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 90,000.00
Mahen Bonetti	\$ 2,000.00	month	10	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
Fred Zucule	\$ 3,000.00	month	10	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 90,000.00
Travel	\$ 3,500.00	trip	10	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 35,000.00
Contingency Line	\$ 2,000.00	year	3	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
Program Total					\$ 171,000.00	\$ 142,500.00	\$ 117,500.00	\$ 431,000.00