GHANA IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 30th November 2023

**Ghana Irrigation Development Authority has no power to sell lands downstream of Dawhenya dam area.**

Accra, 30/11/2023- The Ghana Irrigation Development Authority (GIDA) is taking this opportunity to provide clarity on recent misconceptions surrounding the Dawhenya Irrigation Scheme Spillage and sale of lands downstream the dam area.

The Dawhenya Irrigation Scheme is a vital component of Ghana’s agricultural landscape, supporting sustainable farming practices and contributing significantly to food security in the region. GIDA remains committed to transparent communication and aims to address any misunderstandings to ensure accurate information reaches the public.

The Dawhenya Irrigation Scheme plays a crucial role in enhancing agricultural productivity, providing water to cultivated lands, and fostering economic development in the area. The spillage structure is a fundamental element of the irrigation system, designed to manage flow efficiently.

Contrary to recent reportage on the Dawhenya dam spillage, it is important to note that the spillage structure at Dawhenya dam is not gated. The absence of gates is a deliberate design choice, allowing for the controlled release of water during periods of excess flow. This design feature ensures the safety and stability of the irrigation system and surrounding areas hence causing flooding downstream the Tema-Aflao Road is not accurate, and the Scheme should not be blamed for any negligence of duty resulting into damages downstream.

Bigger watershed, stretching from the Shai Hill with so much discharge flows to the downstream of the dam into the main drainage path across the Tema- Aflao highway, which does not enter our reservoir to be discharged by the project spillway, but flows to join the spilled water downstream the dam.

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The perception that the flood is emanating only from the spilled water from the dam is not factual and can never be. The flow from the second basin is a major contributor to the flow in the downstream channel as was observed by GIDA team and the Member of Parliament Hon. Samuel Nartey George who visited the dam site on Tuesday 28th November 2023.

It is important to note that anytime it rains simultaneously in the two watersheds, when the two rivers have the same time of concentration (TC), the flow level rises in the outfall channel. It has been established that this phenomenon has three (3) year re-occurrence interval. The indigenes are aware but continue to build on the water course downstream.

The solution is that the natural water course should be free to allow any discharge freely into the sea. The MP for the constituency, Hon. Samuel Nartey George if quoted correctly alleged that there is development at the estuary where the flow is constricted into culverts which cannot accommodate the flow hence the backflow into the homes of people living along the water course.

On the issue of sale of lands, no staff of GIDA has the power to sell lands downstream of Dawhenya irrigation scheme. This can be confirmed from the chiefs and opinion leaders who live right in the town center and would have reported to management. People have put up structures in the waterway downstream.

The dam which is managed very well by GIDA since 1979 has been spilling with design discharges every year and no flooding is caused during those times. Lands being used for Dawhenya Irrigation was acquired by the state through executive instrument EI 132 of 1977 and remains government lands, which GIDA has been protecting despite threat from encroachment.

The Dawhenya Irrigation Scheme has two hundred smallholder rice farmers and private commercial farmers producing flowers for the international market and providing indirect jobs to over thousand people.

GIDA has a management team at site full time and has conducted monitoring of the dam operation. GIDA has a dam safety unit which has been conducting a dam safety evaluation every two years and finds the Dawhenya dam to be in a good state. We have also been doing routine and annual maintenance on the dam and irrigation infrastructure. Major rehabilitation works with funding from Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) have been undertaken.

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GIDA is committed to fostering open communication with the local community and encourage residents to reach out with any concerns or questions regarding the Dawhenya Irrigation Scheme.

The Ghana Irrigation Development Authority is dedicated to ensuring the sustainable and safe operation of irrigation schemes across the country. We appreciate the public’s understanding and support in disseminating accurate information about the Dawhenya Irrigation Scheme and its spillage structure.

Signed

PRO, GIDA on behalf of Management



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