



One Nile, One Family

### **Kenya Nile Discourse (KNDF) Forum**

#### **“Bridging the gaps in community participation in Trans-boundary Projects in the Nile Basin”**

The Kenya Nile Basin Discourse Forum (KNDF) is an organization made up of civil society organizations (CSOs) dealing with environmental, agricultural, water and sanitation and energy issues among others in Kenya. KNDF is an off shoot of the Nile Basin Discourse (NBD), a civil society that brings together CSOs working in the Nile River Basin in the riparian countries.

**Members of the Kenya Nile Discourse Forum** at their 2<sup>nd</sup> National Forum met on the September 30 2011 at the Hilton Hotel, in Nairobi to raise awareness on Nile Co-operation Costs and Benefits and specifically to discuss the effectiveness and implementation of the regional Kenya-Uganda interconnection transmission line and how the project intervention has impacted on the livelihoods in the transmission corridor.

**The Forum observed** that whereas there exists huge and potential benefits to be derived from Nile Basin co-operation, there exist huge public participation gaps in key infrastructure projects especially the involvement of communities in key project processes.

#### **KNDF is CONCERNED of the following:**

##### **On Basin Cooperation,**

- The Nile Cooperation is good and all the riparian states should embrace it for the benefit of riparian communities. The CSOs and KNDF in particular need to sensitize the local community about it.
- The role of civil society in the process of integration and discourse has not been accorded enough space and this is a serious public participation gap that still exists in Nile Basin Cooperation issues.

##### **On the Regional Power Transmission and Interconnection Project**

- There is need to make a stronger case for better institutional coordination and harmonization of interventions between NELSAP, NBI, EAPP and EACPP project interventions to ensure public economic efficiency, avoid wastage and duplication.
- Current supply constraints are a bottleneck to cross border trade and priority power generation projects need to be implemented as a matter of urgency.

## **On the Lessos – Tororo Power Transmission Project**

- Public disclosure and information of key project milestones and processes has not been effective during this project phase.
- Displacement and resettlement from the transmission line will affect women and men differently. The breakdown of family, village and social units affects women much more severely and it is harder for them to seek waged work in towns than it is for men. Cash for land compensation mechanisms also significantly disinherit women of their properties and measures to address these shortcomings should be put in place.
- The compensation formula has not been adequately discussed and agreed upon between the project implementation team and local communities.

## **The National Stakeholder Forum now calls upon the Government of Kenya, NELSAP Coordination Unit, NBI and relevant national implementation agencies to;**

- Urgently mobilize additional financial resources to finance the livelihood components of the transmission project in order to maximize the benefits of the communities in the transmission corridor.
- Prioritize the strengthening of the capacity of local communities, leaders and representatives to effectively engage in discussing project implementation.

## **On our part as KNDF, we will remain committed to undertake the following;**

- Communicate and market the outcomes of the transmission project and the benefits of cooperation especially at community level.
- Encourage the process of building trust among countries by facilitating cross learning and information exchange initiatives.
- Ensure the expansion of space for civil society participation in all Nile issues in all Basin countries.
- Strengthen our National Nile Discourse Forums as platforms for broadening participation of civil society and reaching communities.
- Promote the application of innovative approaches of Basin dialogue such as public diplomacy tools.
- Continue to promote partnership and work with media in NELSAP and NBI issues
- Improve communication flow of information at all levels
- Provide a platform for providing timely feedback to NBI and governments on development projects in the basin; and finally,
- Analyze, develop public friendly materials on interconnection and other projects and programmes for stakeholders and local communities.