



Nile Basin Discourse (NBD) EN Sub-region Position on Nile Cooperation

“Shared Waters, Shared Opportunities”

The Nile Basin Discourse (NBD) is a regional network of civil society organizations established to facilitate and support civil society engagement in Nile Basin Cooperation and development processes in pursuing our shared vision.

Engagement is facilitated by the regional secretariat based in Uganda and through National Discourse Forums (NDFs) in each of the ten countries (Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda), which currently have a total of over 750 civil society member organizations across the region.

Civil Society Representatives and experts from EN sub-region met at Cairo’s Sub-regional Multi-Stakeholders’ Forum to enhance awareness of and discuss the benefits of Cooperation and the costs of non-cooperation to the EN sub-region on the 19th and 20th of March 2011.

The Sub-regional Forum observed that the EN sub-region’s position on the Nile is critically important because they are the drivers of the Nile Cooperation and Development process.

The NBD is CONCERNED of the following:

On Regional Integrated Watershed Management Programme

- Inadequacy of the project funding and the impact of this on the sustainability of the programme and community benefits.
- Lack of meaningful community participation in programme implementation.
- Inadequate compensation to local communities for their contribution to critical aspects of watershed management.

On the Ethiopia - Sudan Power Interconnection Project

- The inadequate reach of the rural electrification component of the power interconnection project significantly weakens the potential benefit of this project to local communities.
- Lack of an adequate package of information, communication and education for the Project Communities.
- Low participation of project host communities and civil society in the design and implementation.

On Regional Cooperation and the Institutional Strengthening Programme (ISP)

- There is still lack of consensus among some riparian countries in the process of advancing Nile Basin Cooperation.
- The role and place of civil society in the institutionalization of the Nile Basin Cooperation has not been mainstreamed.
- There is low awareness and uncertainty on the transition process after the lapse of the ISP.

The EN Sub-regional Multi Stakeholder Forum now calls upon the riparian states and NBI to undertake the following regarding the Cooperation, Institutional Strengthening Programme, Integrated Watershed Management Project and the Ethiopia-Sudan Power Interconnection Project:

- Facilitate dialogue among all riparian countries towards an inclusive transition into a basin commission,
- Urgently mobilize additional financial resources to finance the livelihood components of the Integrated Watershed Management Programme in order to maximize the benefits of the communities both up and downstream.
- Find modalities of raising additional resources to address the community benefit gaps in the Ethiopia-Sudan interconnection project.
- Prioritize as a key, pillar the inclusion and Participation of key stakeholders in the planning, implementation, monitoring in the EN sub-regional programmes and projects.
- Prioritize working closely with other regional bodies and economic communities.

On our part, to promote “Shared Waters, Shared Opportunities” in Nile Basin, the NBD is committed to:

- Communicate and Market the outcomes of trans-boundary projects & programmes and the benefits of cooperation.
- 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 NBD work 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,
- NBD shall work towards converting its position into a roadmap to mainstream its activities in Nile cooperation,
- Analyze, develop public friendly materials on EN development projects and programmes for stakeholders and local communities.
- Work progressively to formalize and strengthen our sub-regional cooperation and partnership with ENTRO/NBI.