



NILE BASIN INITIATIVE (NBI)

STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS UNDER THE PROPOSED NBI INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING PROJECT¹

WORLD BANK PROJECT #110616

A. Background

1. Through corporation and partnership, nine current member countries under the auspices of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI)², are pursuing a common vision “to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through equitable utilization of, and benefits from, the common Nile Basin water resources”. Under this arrangement, (1) a Shared Vision Program (SVP), meant to build confidence and trust, as well as institutional capacity, so as to create a strong foundation for regional cooperation, and; (2) two sub-basin Subsidiary Action Programs (SAPs)³ to bring about tangible benefits on the ground through identification and implementation of investment projects are under implementation as complementary elements of the NBI’s Strategic Action Program.

2. To enable NBI begin to function as an international river basin organisation and to achieve its vision, the three main NBI institutions, namely the NBI Secretariat (Nile-SEC) in Entebbe, Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program Coordination Unit (NELSAP-CU) in Kigali, and the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) in Addis Ababa, will receive support for institutional strengthening through the 3-year Institutional Strengthening Project (ISP). The ISP’s development objective is to “*strengthen and consolidate a harmonised institutional architecture to effectively coordinate and implement NBI programs and projects supporting the one NBI Vision.*” The ISP is designed to: (a) enhance the capability of NBI in corporate management; (b) build professional capabilities; and (c) clarify institutional options for a future permanent River basin organization. The thrust of the ISP is to strengthen NBI in its execution of its present mandate and to have it well-placed to adapt and meet new challenges as and when required by member countries in the future.

3. The ISP will not have direct social or environmental impacts as it is designed to provide technical assistance for institutional strengthening. Nonetheless, ISP is classified under environmental screening category B as there may be social and environmental impacts associated with projects prepared by ENTRO and NELSAP-CU, when ISP strengthens capacity of these institutions to identify and prepare investment projects. NBI has prepared

¹ This document was updated to reflect current contact information in May 2009.

² The current NBI member countries are Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Eritrea is also a Nile Riparian and currently participates in the NBI as an observer.

³ The two SAPs are namely the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program (NELSAP) and the Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program (ENSAP).

this document to outline NBI policy on environmental and social issues and how they will be addressed during project identification, preparation, and implementation. This is in line with the World Bank's environmental and social safeguard policies to prevent and mitigate undue harm to people and their environment in the development process, build ownership among local populations and to substantially improve the effectiveness and development impact of projects and programs.

B. Measures to Address Social and Environmental Impacts

4. The NBI has taken steps to put in place systems and mechanisms to ensure environmental and social safeguards in all its interventions at the following three key levels:

- Basin-wide level
- Sub-basin (SAP) levels
- Project level.

(B1) Basin-wide level

5. The SVP Nile Trans-boundary Environment Action Project (NTEAP) is enhancing and working towards harmonisation of the environment policies of the riparian countries to include transboundary dimensions. A basin-wide Environmental Framework which has been initiated will be continued and finalized during the implementation of ISP.

6. The SVP projects have built significant capacity in the countries and at sub-basin institutions for sustainable resource management. The skills and attitudinal change created through environment education and awareness at governance and community levels basin-wide will further enhance this capacity. ISP will work with NBI member governments to ensure that capacities built by SVP in Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Strategic Social and Environmental Assessment (SSEA) will be applied when setting national policy and best practice.

7. Strategic EIA guidelines are to be developed by NTEAP, to provide clear internationally acceptable criteria for environmental screening of trans-boundary investment projects. Sector-specific guidelines such as the trans-boundary environment guidelines for power investment projects are being developed by Regional Power Trade (RPT) as one of the instruments which NBI will apply to projects prepared under the SAPs to ensure safeguards are properly applied for power sector projects. NBI currently performs due diligence and follows international good practice for each investment project under preparation. All countries have agreed and mandated NBI Secretariat the role of prior-notification of any planned NBI investment in the basin likely to have trans-boundary effects, when requested by Nile countries and/or financiers.

8. One of the activities under the NBI-ISP is the creation of a database of stakeholders for the Nile Basin region. This aims to build an active database of a range of stakeholders concerned with NBI activities, including watch dog groups, NGOs, academics, private sector, community groups, and commercial entities. The goal of this exercise is to help projects target activities to appropriate groups to ensure participation and informed decision making.

9. **Other Sources of Funding.** In the event that an identified / facilitated project is not accepted for financing under the NBI, but is funded through other sources, the NBI will submit a written record to the government and financier of concerns related to environmental and/or social impacts.

(B2) Sub-basin (SAP) level

10. The NBI develops investment projects through the two Subsidiary Action Programs; the Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program (ENSAP) and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program (NELSAP). Environmental and social safeguard measures such as Strategic / Sectoral Environment Assessment (SEA), Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), Environmental Screening (ES), Social Assessment (SA), Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), and Resettlement Framework will therefore be applied and enforced at the SAP levels.

11. To facilitate this process, the SVP assigned Social Development Officers and Communication Officers to each of the two SAPs through Confidence Building and Stakeholder Involvement (CBSI) project. Through NTEAP, an Environment Specialist is soon to be assigned to each of the two SAPs. These three officers are involved to ensure best practice, stakeholder participation and consideration of all social and environmental issues at all stages in the development cycle of investment projects. ENTRO and NELSAP-CU environment and social staff will apply the environmental guidelines, and framework developed at NBI level to screen all proposed projects to ensure pre-feasibility and feasibility studies undertaken by the NBI include all necessary studies to identify and plan to mitigate environmental and social safeguard issues.

12. Together with and guided at NBI corporate level, the SAPs promote and undertake regional studies and activities, such as the Strategic Social and Environmental Assessment for Power Options (SSEA) prepared under the NELSAP, which provides a framework for action on social and environmental concerns (**synthesis report attached**). Environment standards have been agreed upon by the SAPs. These provide the minimum acceptable level of environment safeguard measures, and the role at NBI level is to monitor and ensure that these standards are adhered to. At ENSAP, the three member countries have agreed and financed environmental professionals in all the power utilities. Project Specific EIAs and related studies will be reviewed at SAP level. See also paragraph 8 above on stakeholder database.

13. The presence of these technical specialist at the SAPs, together with available World Bank guidelines on Environmental and Social Management Frameworks (ESMFs) will ensure (1) the mainstreaming of environmental issues into the NBI-ISP, including the building of capacity of riparian staff in implementation of SEA, and (2) the promotion of environmental issues in project preparation and to ensure compliance with the country specific EIA Regulations, technical capacity of the countries for ensuring an effective implementation of the environmental management process have been developed through the NTEAP.

14. **Public Consultation and Disclosure.** Public consultation is a cornerstone of the NBI; therefore, all environmental and social studies prepared by ENTRO or NELSAP-CU will be subject to consultation among affected stakeholders (including communities). Furthermore, all such documents will be available to the public through the NBI regional, sub-regional, and national offices. To facilitate this process, Public Consultation Frameworks for the two SAPs, have been developed through the SVP – CBSI project. SAPs will operationalise these frameworks.

(B3) Project level social, environmental, and safeguard measures

15. Numerous positive social and environmental impacts have been identified within the scope of this project. From a socio-economic perspective, the project's activities will result in the improvement of governance of water resources management and development programs in the NBI and promotion of a cooperative spirit which will enhance the sustainable cooperative and consultative management of water resources development (WRD) projects. Specific interventions in the WRD component aim at facilitation of the identification, preparation and implementation of joint transboundary projects by the Subsidiary Action Programs of ENSAP and NELSAP. The projects prepared will result in reduction of

vulnerability to floods and droughts, increased energy and food security and result in a measurable reduction of rural poverty through improved socio-economic conditions of the basin population. These will also contribute towards the attainment of the millennium development goals of the riparian countries. From an environmental perspective, the project will promote the integration of environmental and social issues throughout the project cycles of the investment sub programs. Indeed identification and preparation of energy projects in the NELSAP follows projects ranked through the Strategic, Social and Environmental Assessment (SSEA) of Power Options.

16. The **potential negative social and environmental impacts** associated with preparation of WRD investment projects will be sector specific and mitigated and/or minimized through the mainstreaming of mitigation measures in the project cycle by the beneficiary countries, assisted by the NBI Secretariat. Indeed 1) effective environmental and social management plans (ESMPs) will be put into place to mitigate the adverse impacts of each subproject and 2) appropriate support will be drawn, as needed, from national plans and institutions in relevant areas e.g. HIV/AIDS. No potential long-term and/or cumulative impacts are anticipated if the ESMPs are properly implemented.

17. As a rule, any project funded through development partner funding will be subject to internationally accepted environment screening, following World Bank guidelines and / or development partner requirements. The NBI Strategic EIA guidelines will be developed in conformity with these internationally accepted guidelines. Nationally funded projects (both trans-boundary and of national character) have to comply with national legislation on environment. NBI through NTEAP has augmented capacities of National Environment agencies and communities to apply environmental legislation.

18. Some of the key issues considered in a standard project EIA / Social and Environmental Screening, and for which mitigation measures were found necessary will be in-built in the project design include the following:

Environment: Wetlands, Biodiversity, Water quality, Air quality, Waste disposal (solid / oily / hazardous), Noise and congestion, Landscape intrusion, physical cultural heritage etc.

Socio-economic issues and public participation: social analysis, Impact on livelihoods, land acquisition and resettlement, indigenous peoples, Consult public and private sector stakeholders, Consulting neighbouring community(ies), etc.

19. The recently prepared Flood Preparedness and Early Warning Project in the Eastern Nile carried out upstream social analysis with flood affected communities in Ethiopia and Sudan to understand the needs and concerns of affected communities and ensure that project procedures and priorities were grounded in local concerns and tuned to local capacity. The social analysis significantly influenced project design and changes in priority activities and budget allocations. The social analysis was operationalized into the operations manual to ensure that project procedures such as selection criteria, composition of community committees, targeting of vulnerable groups etc. build on the realities on the ground. The NBI will carry out this kind of upstream social analysis, which is crucial to designing activities that address this issue effectively and that are sustainable since they are built keeping in mind priorities and capacity on the ground.

C Summary of role of ISP

20. While NBI ISP will not finance project preparation and/or implementation, it will contribute to the NBI's project development capacity through institutional development and strengthening of NBI project offices (ENTRO and NELSAP-CU) and related capacities. One of the ISP outputs is to capture critical SVP results to ensure sustainability within the NBI institutions. The social and environment function of the future NBI institution will be clearly

defined and operationalised during ISP implementation. The ISP will directly finance capacity building activities to improve NBI’s project management skills, such as targeted training for both ENTRO and NELSAP-CU staff. This training will include courses targeted at enhancing environmental and social awareness, social analysis and its operationalization, preparation and review of environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs), approaching indigenous people, and basic coverage of the World Bank’s safeguard policies.

21. **Advisory Assistance.** ISP will support the initiation and development of an Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) function at the NBI secretariat, by employing an IWRM Specialist under the guidance of the Head of Strategic Planning and Management proposed in the ISP. A major role of this unit will be to provide advisory assistance for review and advice on the social and environmental aspects and impacts of the infrastructure development projects under consideration as set out in the associated EIAs and RAPs. In this regard, assistance will aim to improve the level of social and environmental impact mitigation associated with such underlying projects. Assistance will also be provided in the development of upstream strategic EAs (SSEAs), including broad consideration of options and alternatives.

22. ISP will expand and continue financing environmental and social functions of ENTRO and NELSAP-CU (currently financed through SVP NTEAP and CBSI projects, respectively), when the two projects close. Finally, NBI ISP will contribute towards harmonization of existing and development of new policies, in consultation with the national environmental authorities in the Nile riparian countries. For example, through completion of the Strategic Environmental Framework (initiated by SVP NTEAP).

D. Additional Information

23. For information, please contact:

| Nile Basin Initiative | World Bank |
|--|---|
| <p>Ms. Henriette Ndombe NBI Secretariat Executive Director Email: nbisec@nilebasin.org Tel: 256-414-321424</p> | <p>Ms. Barbara Miller E-mail: Bmiller@worldbank.org Tel: 202-473-2451</p> |
| <p>Mr. Ahmed Khalid Eldaw ENTRO Executive Director Email: akhalid@nilebasin.org Tel: 251 (0) 116 46 11 30</p> | <p>Mr. John Bryant Collier E-mail: jcollier@worldbank.org Tel: 202-473-8551</p> |
| <p>Mr. Antoine Sendama NELSAP-CU Regional Coordinator Email: asendama@nilebasin.org Tel : 250 788 307 334</p> | |

