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(ENTRO)

Nile-Flow

this issue

Editorial	P. 3
News and Events	P. 4 - 12
Concepts that Matter	P. 13
Conversations	P. 14 - 15
Staff News	P. 16



We Work for the Shared Benefits of Cooperation



What is in a name?

We have chosen "Nile -Flow" as the name of our Newsletter.

Nile – Our great river.

Flow – the flow of our great river, running through the three sisterly Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program (ENSAP) Countries of Egypt, Ethiopia, Republic of South Sudan and the Sudan; connecting the people, their cultures, their histories and shared destinies since time immemorial.

Flow – in the psychological sense also symbolizes a feeling of energized focus, of total engagement, and success in the activity being undertaken– i.e in the ENSAP cooperation process we are all engaged in.

Thus the twin message: a description of reality, on the one hand, and a statement of hope, vision and purpose on the other.



Contents

Editorial - A Call for Eastern Nile Cooperation – Again!!	3
Sudan EN Watershed Management Project staff on Knowledge - Exchange Study Tour of Ethiopia, Nov 1-10, 2013	4
Eighth Strategic Dialogue ends with renewed commitment, Kigali, Rwanda 28-29 October 2013	5
ENTRO Organizes International Study Tour and Training on Rainwater Harvesting in Gansu, Peoples Republic of China 15 June-04 July, 2013	9
Dam Safety training Workshop (7-9 October 2013)	11
Grant Agreement to support Baro-Akobo-Sobat Multipurpose Water Resources Development Study Project signed (May 2013)	12
Concepts that Matter: Strategic Social and Environmental Assessment (SSEA)	13
Conversation: In this Issue we feature Mr. Awoke Kassa, ENTRO Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.	14
Staff News	16



A Call for Eastern Nile Cooperation – Again!!

It is now becoming almost a cliché that without all-inclusive cooperation, the Nile Basin – along with its inhabitants – will be exposed to a multitude of risks. With foot dragging and little or no timely action, the risks will build up and reinforce each other. In the long run untangling the consequences of these risks will require Herculean task on the part of future generations who have had nothing to do with the making of the mess in the first place. Such a legacy looks grim, but not necessarily an implausible one!

The basic challenges of the Nile Basin are becoming self evident by the day.

The Nile Basin population will double in 20-30 years - implying huge water demand is building up. As of recent, Nile Basin countries are also witnessing unprecedented urbanization and economic growth rates – again implying growing water demand.

All these developments are taking place in the midst of anticipated Climate Change impacts in the basin – which, by and large, – are likely to be negative!!! If drought frequency increases, this will set in motion cross-border migration of particularly pastoralists, which characterizes nearly half of the basin farming system. A not dissimilar fate might await the rest: mixed-crop- and agro-pastoralist communities. It is the same if flood frequency increases. Either way the basin will have to face Climate Change induced water security risks which in turn will result in multiple derivative risks: food security risks, energy security risks, human security risks, environmental security risks spilling over to national security and regional security risks.

It is against the foregoing background, that riparian countries, spurred by growing demand, are planning and implementing their own individual water resources projects and structures across the length of the Nile. What is worth noting is that these water resources investments (multipurpose or single purpose storage, power generation, irrigation schemes, etc.) are happening without prior established inter-riparian regime (mechanisms and frameworks) to coordinate their operations and thus minimize, mitigate or avoid environmental risks and conflicts. Compared to many of the largest transboundary rivers of the world, the Nile, despite its being the longest, is also one of the most water scarce and is thus more fragile. The Nile is a river system interconnected to the land, flora and fauna that have resulted in its distinctive habitats and

biodiversity hotspots (e.g., the Sudd wetlands, the Machar Marshes, the Boma-Gambella wildlife migration route, etc.). Without a cooperative basin wide coordination mechanism and management regime the basic flow needed to support these habitats, ecosystems and biodiversity hotspots will not be ensured. We could lose them irreversibly – ultimately risking the Nile itself!!

Whether countries like it or not they are involuntarily tied together by the Nile. The Nile is one complex hydrological unit. The Nile, so to speak, cares least for political boundaries. It therefore responds to whatever happens upstream or downstream as one unit. Just as the feet cannot say “I do not care whatever happens to the head” or the “head says I do not care whatever happens to the feet” – and yet strive to live constituting parts of ONE whole person, so it is with upstream and downstream countries. Non-cooperation among riparian countries is as ridiculous a notion as disjointed body organs striving to lead “independent” lives of their own. But then what seems so obvious is what is oblivious to many in the basin. The Nile is a common resource of all riparian countries, a resource of not only the current but of future generations too. Thus – by definition- it requires a common, shared approach and a sense of shared custodianship and responsibility to avoid the “tragedy of the commons”. What may look rational from a purely short run and purely national perspective may turn out, from long-term and trans-boundary vantage, irrational and damaging. The challenge, therefore, is how to change mindsets to encourage looking at old problems in new and creative ways.

But then all is not lost. If we change our frame of reference for analyzing and eventually resolving the problem, the Nile, instead of being a reason for non-cooperation, could be an impetus for it. To do this we need to situate the Nile in the broader framework of regional integration, getting to it through water, but going beyond water to tie the countries together.

The Nile still offers opportunities for shared prosperity, if only we opt to envision the future in a more modern and rational, way – unfrozen from the burden of history and fear!! After all, the options are still there: to “sink together” - in the absence of cooperation, or to “swim and grow together” - through cooperation!! ■

Wubalem Fekade, Ph.D.

Head, Social Development and Communication Unit

November 2013

Sudan EN Watershed Management Project staff on Knowledge - Exchange Study Tour of Ethiopia, Nov 1-10, 2013

One of the focus areas of the Eastern Nile Watershed Management Project for the current year has been strengthening institutions and providing hands-on training to project staff in specific technical and/or management areas where a deficit has been observed. In addition to previous trainings on applied soil and water conservation, stakeholder participation, conflict management, environmental management, monitoring and evaluation and knowledge exchange and experience sharing study visits to India, Rwanda and China (see next item also), ENWSM Project organized yet another exchange study visit to Ethiopia for 16 Sudan Watershed Management Project staff and counterparts from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

The visit which lasted one week took the participants to the Amhara Region particularly to Southern Gondar, North and South Wollo zones. These areas were chosen for a number of reasons. For one, high sediment (set in motion by land degradation and soil erosion) from these areas contributes significantly to the total load carried by the Abbay/Blue Nile.

For another, these are the areas where serious, participatory, integrated and holistic intervention is being undertaken to arrest land degradation by addressing the root causes or drivers and demonstrable results have been achieved.

The Sudanese team was able to witness ongoing sets of watershed interventions including: area closure, plantations, grazing land management, soil and water conservation interventions like gully rehabilitation, farmland and hillside treatments, rain water harvesting, livelihood enhancements (bee keeping, fruit development, agro-forestry, vegetable gardening, zero-grazing or cut-and-carry feeding, nursery sites, youth association performance). The Sudanese Team was briefed and guided by their Ethiopian counterparts and local farmers on the ground. The Sudanese Watershed Management Team expressed that they were hugely impressed and that the lessons learnt were visible and the know-how and the show-how both strengthened their determination to replicate the success within their biophysical environment. ■



Community gully rehabilitation



Knowledge exchange participants visiting rehabilitated sites



Examining damages in unmanaged watershed



Rain water harvesting using geo membrane



Apple farming to augment farm income



Once degraded gullies... now productive zones (above)

Compiled by Dr. Solomon Abate, RPC, ENWSM; edited by Wubalem Fekade, Hd, SDCU

Eighth Strategic Dialogue ends with renewed commitment, Kigali, Rwanda, 28-29 October 2013

The eighth Annual Strategic Dialogue between the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) and development partners took place in Kigali, Rwanda 28-29 October 2013. The Dialogue was attended by the ten members of the NBI represented by Nile-TAC (Nile Technical Advisory Committee), representatives of NBI's development partners, the Nile Discourse, Global Water Partnership (East Africa) and management of NBI. The Objective of the Dialogue was to review and exchange views on NBI's recent achievements; emerging needs, opportunities, challenges and NBI's plans and sustainability, and Options for future support for NBI and its programs

The Dialogue was opened by speeches from the Chairperson of the Nile Council of Ministers South Sudan's Minister of Electricity, Water and Irrigation, Hon. Jemma Nunu Kumba; Host Minister, Minister of Water Resources and Environment of Rwanda, NBI Executive Director and the World Bank. This was followed by a presentation by Mrs. Dorothy Kakwega, NBI strategic planner, on the objectives of the meeting and expected outcomes and also the functions of Nile-Sec.



Participants of the 8th Strategic Dialogue



Dr. Mohammad of Nile-Sec WRM demonstrating features of the Nile DSS

An opening presentation by the Head of Water Resources Management of Nile-Sec, Dr. Abdulkarim, illustrated the entire Nile Basin by highlighting key features and water management issues specific to four critical sub-basins (Lake Victoria, Bahr el Jebel, Blue Nile and the Nile Delta). He finally emphasized that the Nile Basin is one complex

hydrologic unit and thus a whole-basin approach is a must; that the Nile as a shared resource requires concomitant shared custodianship and responsibility for its sustainability; that the Nile offers opportunities for all, but also that it is facing growing challenges viz. how to meet demands of growing population and of growing economies in the midst of Climate Change Impacts. Finally, he concluded with the call for sustaining Nile Cooperation in order to ensure that the Nile is managed in a sustainable manner, for "loss anywhere in the Nile system is loss everywhere; and efficiency gains anywhere is gains everywhere."

Prof. Seid Abdalla (Nile-TAC member – Sudan) in his presentation spoke of significant untapped water resources management and development potential in the basin (power, irrigated agriculture, storage, etc). He also said that to make use of these potentials countries need to learn cooperatively managing shared risks and challenges (e.g. Climate Change impacts, environmental sustainability, etc.). Developing regional capacity to respond to basin-wide challenges, adopting common principles, standards, codes of conduct, procedures, and regulation of use of basin resources among riparians, joint planning, pooling resources for investments; re-use of water– all these are tasks ahead of us, he said. He also said that the costs of non-cooperation will be immense including: uncoordinated water resources development leading to sub optimal use and/or foreclosing future development opportunities; inefficient resource utilization/resource degradation; loss of attractiveness to regional funding opportunities; inadequate information sharing - exposing countries and communities to vulnerability to natural disasters; high costs of doing business and unilateral developments – ultimately contributing to threats to regional peace and stability due to competition for water and missing opportunities for effective incorporation of concerns of others into basin development (e.g. downstream impacts).



Strategic dialogue in session

Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office Officer in Charge, Dr. Yousif Ibrahim, representing the two Subsidiary Action Programs, ENSAP and NELSAP also made presentation on achievements and challenges on the water resources development dimension.

He outlined the baseline where NBI began in terms of planning jointly water resources development, overall size of NBI portfolio and what the SAPs have delivered on the ground (in the sectors of agriculture, energy, environment, building resilience to Climate Change, flood management, watershed management, analytical work and knowledge products). He concluded by highlighting the need to move on to second round of water resources investment to prepare for the impending climate change impacts threatening the basin. He identified the following sectors as priority: power generation and transmission interconnection; watershed management, improving agricultural productivity, efficient water use and irrigation expansion, flood preparedness and early warning and water supply and sanitation. The Dialogue was accompanied by walk-in show poster and video exhibition of NBI products – including publications, wall charts, demonstration of modeling tools, video documentaries, etc. which was well attended. The event was well covered by Nile Basin Media.

The meeting was concluded with a call from participants for a renewed commitment to all-inclusive Nile cooperation and to sustain the gains made over a decade of NBI work. Member States re-affirmed their commitment to and ownership of the Nile cooperative process and the sustainability of the NBI institutions. They called on Development partners to continue their unwavering support towards achieving the Member States' development agenda. ■

Compiled and edited by Wubalem Fekade, Hd, SDCU

Nile Basin Permanent Secretaries (PMSC) of Water Resources Ministries visit ENSAP Projects on Experience Sharing Tour, 29 Nov-4 October, 2013

Facilitating cooperation and dialogue among member states constitutes one of two core functions of the Nile-Sec of the Nile Basin Initiative, the organizer of this visit. The impetus for organizing this Knowledge and experience sharing visit tailor-made for the PMSCs, the first of its kind, arose from the realization that despite the potential high stakes role they play in supporting Nile Basin cooperation, so far NBI has not engaged this important group of high-level policy making stakeholders with the required vigor and attention.



Presentation for the visitors at ENTRO

This experience sharing tour organised for Permanent Secretaries of Ministries in charge of Water Affairs of NBI Member States (Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, The Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda) took place in Ethiopia from 29th September to 4th October, 2013. The objective was to increase NBI's visibility by orienting the Permanent Secretaries about the NBI cooperative processes (including governance, basin-wide policies, strategies, data, information and analytic tools, investment projects) and get their renewed commitment and support. It is expected that at the end of the tour, the Permanent Secretaries will have been inspired to prioritize NBI activities in the planning and budgeting processes of their respective Ministries. This is in addition to developing a mechanism for future proactive engagement between the Permanent Secretaries and NBI Centers.

The experience sharing tour was designed in such a way that it not be limited to providing information and presenting reports, but also includes visiting tangible results on the ground. For the latter, Eastern Nile, particularly NBI's Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program, ENSAP, was chosen. ENSAP is managed by the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office, ENTRO, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Bahr Dar Region, near Lake Tana, the Source of the Abbay/Blue Nile, was chosen for the field visit because this region hosts a number of transboundary projects facilitated by NBI's ENSAP. These included: the recently inaugurated Transmission Interconnection between Sudan and Ethiopia; the Flood Protection and Early Warning Project, the Eastern Nile Watershed Management Project/the Tana-Beles Integrated Watershed Management Project.

A special NBI briefing paper was prepared for the PMS entitled "The Nile Basin Initiative in a Snapshot" which outlined the potentials and significant challenges of the basin; pre-NBI efforts to bring together all riparians; why NBI is unique in the history of the basin; NBI's governance, management and programs; NBI core functions, achievements and remaining challenges.

On the first day the Permanent Secretaries visited ENTRO headquarters in Addis Ababa, where extensive presentations about NBI were made. A contrast of the two main Sub-basins of the Nile, the Eastern Nile and Nile Equatorial Lakes was made Dr. Abdulkarim Hussein Seid, head of Water Resources Management at Nile-Sec.

He said that the Eastern Nile features highly variable river flow, (highest discharges last only 4 months) but contributes about 86% of the flows of the Nile; watershed degradation is a main threat to all four Eastern Nile countries. He also said that the sub-basin constitutes over 50% of the Nile Basin population with strong historical and cultural and geographical proximity among the four countries. Conflict over the Nile is more historical in Eastern Nile.

By contrast, the Equatorial Lakes sub-basin is transboundary system, consisting of many lakes and tributaries that form the southern part of the Nile Basin and that several regional cooperation and integration frameworks exist (EAC, COMESA, IGAD, etc.).

The NEL Subsidiary Action program thus aggregated already planned or ongoing bilateral or trilateral water resources related projects (by contrast in ENSAP all programs are designed jointly from the very outset by the three [now four] member countries). Dr. Salah Shazali (ENTRO) presented an overview of ENSAP; Dr. Wubalem Fekade's presentation (ENTRO) focused on Eastern Nile Power Trade and Flood Protection and Early Warning Project achievements and Dr. Solomon Abate (Regional Project Coordinator of Eastern Nile Watershed Management Project) presented extensively on the Eastern Nile Watershed Management Project, which would be the main focus of the field visit. A courtesy call on the Ministry of Water and Energy, Ethiopia, was made in the afternoon, in which H.E. Alemayehu Tegenu, the Minister, welcomed the visitors followed by an elaborate presentation by Mr. Feki Ahmed Negash, head of the Transboundary Directorate of the Ministry. Mr. Feki Ahmed explained how the ministry is set up and how NBI activities are mainstreamed in the ministry. The next day, after arrival in Bahr Dar, the Permanent Secretaries visited the Tis Issat Falls at the outlet of Lake Tana and the Tis Abbay II Power Station.



Tis Abbay II Power Station



Tis Issat Falls at the outlet of Lake Tana into Abbay/Blue Nile

The main event was a one-day field visit to the Tana-Beles Integrated Watershed Management Project field sites in and around Debretabor in the South Gondar Zone of Amhara Regional State. This is one of the most critical regions which contributes huge amount of sediment load to the Abbay/Blue Nile system and water infrastructure downstream in Sudan and Egypt. The visit took the participants

to various aspects of the project including: nursery sites; soil and water conservation, area closure, rain water harvesting, terracing, soil rehabilitation through nitrogen fixing shrubs, etc. The participants were able to engage with farmers and project implementers and field staff. The Finnish Technical Team that supports the project was also facilitating the visit by providing explanation on the project organization, particularly on monitoring results on sediment reduction, including one sediment load measurement station. The whole visit to the watershed demonstrated the integrated, multi-sectoral nature of the interventions; the effort to put in place vertical and horizontal coordination mechanism and the creation of synergy – and ultimately how the watershed, as the interface between land and water is the best unit for effective intervention to arrest land degradation and the siltation of rivers and structures.



Visiting a site in the Tana Beles Integrated Watershed Management Project

The last leg of the visit was to Gondar, the capital of Ethiopia in the 16th century. The participants visited the Swimming Pool of King Fasiledes (below), the main castle complex, Debreberhan Selassie and the famous wall paintings, and a panoramic view from the Goha Hotel, overlooking Gondar. Upon return to Bahr Dar the participants held a reflection session on the entire visit during which the PMS expressed views, as below.



Castles of Gondar: King Fasiledes' swimming pool



Partial view of the Fasiledes castle complex, Gondar



Entering one of the strings of Fasiledes Castles in Gondar

The Sudanese Permanent Secretary, Mr. Musa Omer Abuelgasim, on his part expressed his positive impression of what he saw, and thanked the Government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) for hosting the study visit and NBI/ENTRO for bringing people together, an achievement by itself. He said he had limited knowledge about NBI prior to this, but this visit has enabled him to understand and appreciate more the Subsidiary Action Programs, which are cornerstones of the NBI. He said that he learnt a lot about the organization of the programs and projects of NBI, the policies, plans and the monitoring arrangements to evaluate achievements. He said he realized that NBI/ENTRO has made significant achievements and results on the ground as demonstrated by what he saw during the field visit, but he felt that this was not adequately communicated and promoted to a broader set of stakeholders outside those operationally linked to NBI. He said a lot of work needs to be done in this regard in order to secure broad-based support for the Nile Basin Cooperation.

The Burundian PMS Mr. Murengerantwari Epimaque stated his high appreciation for the organization of the visit and that he was immensely impressed by how well the community was involved in the implementation of the project and this is a lesson he will take home. He also said that he was astounded by the visit to historic Gondar.

The Republic of South Sudan Permanent Secretary, Mr. Issac Liabwel, said that the problem of water in Ethiopia is

significant for reasons – it is the water tower. Ethiopia has long history of establishment from which we can learn. The successful Projects we saw in the Rib River catchment has significant regional dimension and we should report that the watershed project under ENSAP should be scaled up to cover the entire Blue Nile catchment. He said from this project he has learnt that a working government structure that reaches to the village level is critical if the gains of the watershed project are to be sustained beyond the project life span. He said he would like to emphasize that NBI is gaining momentum. NBI staff, from what he witnessed during their presentations, is regional meaning they are working in the interest of the entire Nile Basin and that this has impressed him. He said the field trip was time well spent and he thanks Ethiopian officials for facilitating and organizing the visit. He said the technical aspect of the visit such as the DSS role in planning for resilience, and the field visit to the watershed project which showed clearly how watershed management is key to combat the impact of drought, to increase crop yields all were very enlightening. Besides the technical aspect of the field visit, he said, the visit to the ancient city of Gondar and the ruins of the castles, enabled him complement his knowledge of modern Ethiopia.

The Democratic Republic of Congo Permanent Secretary Mr. Hubert Kapjamba LLunga in his turn also appreciated the organization of the tour and was impressed by how the Watershed approach is helping to reduce rural poverty through the participation of the communities themselves. He also thanked the Government of Finland for partnering and supporting the project to make it a success.

The Kenyan PMS Mr. James Teko Lopoyepum stated that he was appreciative of the organization of the entire schedule and trips, the presentations about the policies, the programs of the NBI and the clarity of the goals and objectives; and that he extends appreciation to NBI and its staff and to the Finnish team as well for their success. He said he was particularly appreciative of how the community was fully engaged and the observable results in the rehabilitation of the land and the productivity of the soil. He said that this is something important for Nile – to conserve the water thru watershed management. He expressed his sadness at the absence of Egyptian colleagues in this important visit. In concluding he expressed his appreciation to all, including support staff and drivers, who made the visit a success. He said the visit has convinced him of the relevance and importance of NBI; that more needs to be done to create awareness about the importance of watershed management and Nile Basin cooperation and that he will do his best to support mainstreaming NBI in the Kenyan Ministry of Water Resources and Environment. The Nile-TAC member from Kenya, stated that she was impressed by how readily Ethiopia is implementing projects identified through the NBI mechanism, and this has motivated her to work toward strengthening and mainstreaming NBI in Kenya.

The Rwandan delegate, Dr. Emmanuel Nkuruziza, thanked the Ethiopian government for supporting the organization of the visit and particularly the Minister of Water Resources of FDRE for sharing the country's experience, plans and projects. He said that he was refreshed to have interacted with NBI colleagues and fellow Permanent Secretaries and he was appreciative of having been given the opportunity to

experience watershed management at the grassroots, first hand by interacting with farmers. He congratulated the Ethiopian government, the government of Finland and also NBI who followed through a broad vision for Nile Basin. He said watershed management, as demonstrated during this trip, is critical for ensuring the viability of water infrastructure not only in Ethiopia but downstream as well. He said he was impressed by what he saw and the success against all odds is inspiring. He pointed out that the visit has helped him understand more clearly what NBI is about, more than what would be possible through participating in Nile-TAC meetings alone and thus he will champion Nile Basin cooperation with more commitment and vigor. This success we have witnessed, he said, is rejuvenating.

The Ugandan delegate Mr. Paul Mafabi, also thanked the organizers of the knowledge exchange visit. HE said this is his first time participating in NBI activities, though he had taken part in the development of the NBI wetland strategy. He said it is the first time for him to visit Ethiopia and he is impressed by what he witnessed and congratulates both NBI and Ethiopia on the success. He also said he has observed that at national level there is need for political commitment, as was clearly demonstrated by the presentation of the FDRE minister of water resources. He also said that he has noted that the biggest resources mobilization is mobilizing people, and that once you fully get communities participating, the project success is ensured. He pointed out that for the future there needs to be regular feedback between NBI and the Permanent Secretaries; that there needs to scale up the watershed project and recommended that the experience in Ethiopia be posted on the NBI website for experience sharing with other NBI countries and commu-

nities. People are reluctant to mobilize their resources when they are unsure about the results, but he has seen here that community mobilization works and delivers results. He also said that Uganda has established a mechanism and is in the process of setting up a centre for taking up wetland issues and integrate them in five countries of the East African Community. In conclusion he said he takes positive memory of this trip back home.

Mr. Feki Ahmed Negash, Ethiopia Nile-TAC Member, as the host of the event, thanked Nile-Sec and ENTRO for choosing Ethiopia for this exchange program. He said because of time constraints he was unable to visit other NBI project sites. All the same, he said he is gratified to notice the repletion that there is no alternative to Nile Basin cooperation. He said that our institutional mechanisms – Nile-Sec, ENTRO, NELSAP-CU (the NBI centers) are there to sustain Nile Basin cooperation. These centers will benefit from our participation, follow up, strengthening their capacity. He said we are witnessing fruits of cooperation on the ground despite lots of challenge. He said development partners have supported us in the preparation of projects and it is our responsibility to give priority to these and carry them forward to implementation. I like to quote my Kenyan colleague who emphasized that as owners of the NBI institutions we should not rely too much on development assistance, this is an area where we need to work hard to pay our commitments (country contributions) on time. He concluded by suggesting that we work hard to institutionalize NBI activities in each member country. ■

Compiled and edited by Wubalem Fekade, Hd, SDCU

ENTRO Organizes International Study Tour and Training on Rainwater Harvesting in Gansu, Peoples Republic of China 15 June-04 July, 2013

The Study Tour was jointly organized by ENTRO and the Gansu Research Institute for Water Conservancy (GRIWC), Peoples Republic of China. The tour was made possible due to generous funding from the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) of the People's Republic of China.



The objective of the Study tour-training was to document Rain Water Harvesting experiences in China and draw lessons for application in Eastern Nile to incorporate into the ongoing Integrated Watershed Management programs and projects. The study tour also provided opportunity to exchange experiences in how multi-disciplinary perspectives inform project implementation modalities to enhance project performance and ensure sustainability of results.

Eighteen participants from all Eastern Nile countries and ENTRO were drawn to take part in the study tour and training, which took place in Gansu province, Peoples Republic of China. The Study tour took participants to rainwater harvesting and water conservation project sites, where the project cycle associated with such projects, the components and multidisciplinary inputs were demonstrated on the ground. Participants have drawn valuable lessons and inspiration from the visit, including the following:

- Rainwater harvesting (RWH) is a strategic measure for integrated rural development,
- Rain water harvesting supports promotion of ecological and environmental conservation
- In areas of water scarcity RWH is an effective way for ensuring access to domestic water supply
- RWH irrigation is critical for enhancing the productivity of rain-fed agriculture
- Political commitment is critical to implement RWH strategies
- Integrated Water Resource Management principles are still applicable to RWH systems
- Research, demonstration, and extension is the basis for promoting effective RWH interventions
- The promotion of "circular economy" is critical for the RWH introduction i.e. unlimited circulation in the midst of limited or scarce resource endowment (i.e. water) ■

Compiled by Awoke Kassa, M&E Officer, edited by Wubalem Fekade, Hd, SDCU

Eastern Nile Flood Forum takes place in Khartoum, 29 Sept- Oct 2, 2013

Eastern Nile countries had early recognized the threats floods both to the safety and economy of the peoples of Ethiopia and Sudan. That is why the Flood Preparedness and Early Warning (FPEW) project constituted one of the first priority projects under the IDEN program (Integrated Development of Eastern Nile) the first jointly identified and agreed upon sets of water resources projects in the Eastern Nile.

Sixty seven participants drawn from the four EN countries (51), ENTRO (7), resource persons (4) and ENTRO Flood Team Interns (5) attended the flood forum. Of these 22% were female. The objective of the flood forum was to raise awareness and deliberate in-depth on options for sustainable solutions to avert or mitigate damaging flood impacts. Specifically the workshop availed a platform to:

- Disseminate the experience of ENTRO work on flood in the Eastern Nile and its relevance to the efforts of Sudan to address the current flood situation and to discuss the basic issues that hinder sustainable solutions in flood interventions;
- Draw lessons from other regional and international experiences; exchange experiences and support the transfer of results from research projects in flood management;
- Review of positive and negative community level experiences and lessons that have developed flood risk management plans;
- Provide recommendations to improve flood risk management;
- Examine the role of ENTRO in promoting sustainable solutions; deliberate on alternative approaches and modalities for coordinated activities.
- Consult key stakeholders and gather the required information to develop a Road Map for sustainable solution.

The forum has enabled augment capacity of key stakeholders in flood mitigation; enhanced awareness of key stakeholders about ENTRO's flood related activities and facilities, including flood bulletins; partnership and collaboration among partners enhanced; and a road map for the next steps prepared. ■

Khartoum Flood Forum Participants in session below and site visit flood affected areas below



Compiled by Awoke Kassa, M&E Officer, edited by Wubalem Fekade, Hd, SDCU

Dam Safety training Workshop (7-9 October 2013)

Large-scale water infrastructure development on trans-boundary Rivers requires careful coordination of dam safety-related planning and management. Proper operation and maintenance of large-scale water infrastructure coupled with recognition of impacts of climate change (intensive rainfall and flooding), is vital to minimize the risks of a catastrophic disaster affecting populations residing downstream of dams.

Dam construction and operational safety management has become an emerging issue for the EN region. To reduce the risk of dam failure and accidents caused by uncoordinated operations and divergent dam safety criteria and operational strategy across the EN sub basin, ENTRO has initiated studies to formulate dam safety guideline and a Road Map for the preparation of EN dam safety framework. ENTRO organized a three day workshop to take the first steps to address the above concerns. A total of 25 participants attended the training workshop which was held 07-09 October 2013 in Nazareth, Ethiopia. Of these, 13 participants were drawn from government offices of the four Eastern Nile countries, 3 from Academia/ Research Institutions, 6 from ENTRO, and 3 were private consultants. In terms of gender composition, 12% were female participants.



Consultant presentation and training



Workshop opening

The three-day training workshop had the following specific objectives:

- Review the Draft Dam safety Guideline Inception Report and EN Dam safety Practice Assessment Report submitted by consultant and provides stakeholder feedback.
- Develop required practical skill and knowledge to understand complex issues critical to dam safety management and
- Enhance competence of stakeholders to evaluate dam safety performance at different levels in the EN countries.

The training workshop has been a success. The Draft Dam safety Guideline Inception Report and EN Dam safety Practice Assessment Report has been presented by the world renowned dam safety expert who was the consultant for the study. Stakeholders took a review of the submissions and discussions were held. Participant's knowledge on Dam Safety and SSEA-ESIA has been enhanced; awareness about the need for undertaking regular, systematic monitoring and evaluation of dam safety has been created; international and EN countries' experience has been shared; networking among workshop participants – EN dam engineers and environmental experts- and the international experts has been established. ■

*Compiled by Awoke Kassa, M&E Officer,
edited by Wubalem Fekade, Hd, SDCU*

Did U know ?

The River Nile:

- The total length of the Nile is 6 825 kilometres (2 700 km is through Saharan desert),
- Nile is the longest river in the world,
- The drainage basin makes out one-tenth area of the African continent,
- The Nile is not just one river; it is a collection of rivers and basins,
- The Ethiopian highland is the source of three main tributaries to the Nile. The three rivers – the Atbara, Blue Nile and Sobat,

“We Work for the Shared Benefits of Cooperation”

Grant Agreement to support Baro-Akobo-Sobat Multipurpose Water Resources Development Study Project signed (May 2013)

The grant is extended to support the Baro-Akobo-Sobat (BAS) Multipurpose Water Resources Development Project, one of the projects under the Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Program, which ENTRO manages. The grant has been made in response to ENTRO's funding application to the African Water Facility Special Fund (AWF) and NEPAD-Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility Special Fund (NEPAD-IPPF) of the African Development Bank submitted on behalf of the Eastern Nile Countries of Egypt, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan.

The Baro-Akobo-Sobat area, traversing most undeveloped parts of Ethiopia an area emerging from prolonged civil war in South Sudan, is characterized by food and energy insecurity, massive poverty, environmental degradation, and lack of cooperative and coordinated development and management of land and water resources plans. At the same time the region also holds huge potential for cooperative development of water resources to meet socio-economic development needs and poverty reduction through trans-boundary regional cooperation.

The overall goal of the project is "to promote socio-economic development, regional cooperation and understanding through basin-wide cooperation in sustainable water resources development and management in the Eastern Nile region". Its more immediate objectives are "to set the basis for a sustainable water resources management" and "to increase investment in the water sector in the Sub-basin"

The project encompasses activities structured into four output areas, namely: (1) Development of an integrated water resources management and development plan for the BAS sub-basin based on strategic social and environmental assessment of water resources development options in the sub-basin; (2) Identification of investment packages and feasibility study of select short-term investment projects with win-win benefits and that build trust and confidence among the EN countries; (3) Project identification of priority medium and long-term multi-purpose development projects (water supply and sanitation, hydropower, irrigation, navigation, flood control); and (4) Stakeholder consultation and engagement including engagement of potential financing agencies as well as the private sector in resource mobilization for implementation of short-term projects and for project preparation of medium and long-term projects.

The Grant agreement was signed on May 2, 2013 between the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office and the African Development Bank (AfDB). ENTRO OIC and AfDB Vice

President Operation II signed the Agreement. The project period is three years.

The project will be financed from two sources, a) African Water Facility Special Fund (AWF) in an amount not exceeding Two Million Euros (€ 2,000,000) and b) NEPAD-Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility Special Fund (NEPAD-IPPF) in an amount not exceeding six hundred and sixty seven thousand United States Dollars (USD 667,000).



Grant signing

AfDB is acting as Trustee for the African Water Facility Special Fund and NEPAD-Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility Special Fund (NEPAD-IPPF) ■

*Compiled by Awoke Kassa, M&E Officer,
edited by Wubalem Fekade, Hd, SDCU*

Did U know . . . ?

Threatened species classified by ICUN (2010) as extinct, critically endangered or vulnerable (in Nile riparian countries),

Burundi	(2)
Egypt	(2)
Eritrea	(3)
Rwanda	(4)
Sudan	(18)
Ethiopia	(26)
Uganda	(41)
DRC	(83)
Kenya	(129)
Tanzania	(299)

“We Work for the Shared Benefits of Cooperation”

Strategic Social and Environmental Assessment (SSEA) by Wubalem Fekade, Ph.D., Hd., SDCU, ENTRO

Introduction

For years now, ENTRO has been striving to mainstream Strategic Social and Environmental Assessment (SSEA) into Eastern Nile by applying it in its ongoing projects. ENTRO has also organized training workshops on the subject. But then, what is SSEA? How does it differ from the familiar Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)? In this introductory piece, we will attempt to answer these questions, albeit briefly.

SSEA is an upstream process compared to EIA. SSEA systematically analyses and addresses the environmental effects of policies, plans and programs (PPP). Current experience indicates that SSEA is applied in most cases in large scale development related initiatives that are expected or known to have significant environmental and social effects (e.g. transport, energy, and mining). A policy is an overall guide to proposed action a government is to take. It may take the form of a legislation or law. Plans and programs implement policies.

To simplify the discussion, let us take an analogy. Suppose developing poor country X has a sparsely populated, pristine region – undisturbed and in natural state – inaccessible, undeveloped but with huge untapped water resources, mineral resources, forest resources, wild life, immense biodiversity, etc. As the population increases exponentially, the country is facing growing demand for food, energy, housing, social services, etc.. What should be the country's policy toward this region? Should the country open it for full and rapid development – with expedited road and railway construction, opening the region for large scale agriculture, giving concessions to mining companies, to lumber companies, promoting real estate development and encouraging people from its densely populated part to settle there in the next decade or two? Or, should the country focus on conserving the environmental resources and leverage it for eco-tourism, with prudent and gradual opening and development of the region's resources in the future? These are two strategic choices with consequences for the type of development options to be chosen.

It is good to stop and ask: What would happen to the environment and the people if the first choice is adopted? How about if we opt for the second? Such weighing of the social and environmental consequences of our policy actions and development goals, way ahead of time, before making any specific sectoral decision is a critical step to handle possible negative environmental and social impacts at their “upstream source”. This is what Strategic Social and Environmental Assessment (SSEA) strives to accomplish. SSEA compels high-level decision makers to take the long term and the large scale – the macro - into account, to assess whether their decisions are consistent or conflict with other policies and programs already adopted and underway. When done well, SSEA helps policy makers avoid making decisions of monumental adverse social and environmental consequences that affect future generations. It helps us think and rethink through our policy decisions. It makes decision makers very prudent and humble, for they will realize that they are making decisions under lots of uncertainties. SSEA provides a sort of early warning of large scale cumulative effects which would have been missed if we focus only on project by project level impacts.

SSEA and EIA compared

Once a policy decision has been made to go ahead with development, all what we can do is manage- for better or for worse- the consequences of that decision. We need to ensure whether we are following existing national environmental and social laws during project preparation and implementation and whether we have put in place adequate safeguard measures to manage adverse social and environmental impacts that arise during implementation. This is what Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) strives to accomplish.

While SSEA is concerned with the “then and there” i.e. with implication for future lower level decisions that will be “projectized”, EIA on the other hand is concerned with the “here and now” i.e. with implementation, with design and construction! SSEA is more high level, and thus more political. Its sole concern is long-term social and environmental sustainability. On the other hand, EIA is more technical and operational, concerned with meeting existing legal requirements and environmental laws and regulations, mitigating impacts. While SSEA processes are iterative and more deliberative, EIA processes are more straightforward and linear i.e. the procedural and legal steps are clear from feasibility study onto implementation.

SSEA deals with the large scale, the long term, the cumulative, while EIA deal with the local, the specific and the relatively short-term. SSEA relies more on deliberation and uses more qualitative and descriptive data (strategies, what-if scenarios, visions) for its analyses, and thus the analytic rigor is less certain and definitive. In contrast, EIA uses more quantitative data derived from field measurements and employs established scientific and analytic procedures and thus the results are more certain. SSEA, by and large, falls within the realm of governments; hence its cost is covered by government. EIA, on the other hand, is the business of businesses – so proponents of projects are responsible to cover the costs of doing the EIA. EIA studies need to be documents in standardized formats; the same cannot be said for SSEA. As regards stakeholder participation, stakeholder input during EIA is more direct and often draws more vocal stakeholder reaction because the social (e.g. resettlement) and environmental (e.g. effluents to rivers and creeks, air pollution) impacts are immediate. SSEA by definition is very long term and the impact is not immediate (maybe only the next generation will feel it more directly) and thus takes place with less intensity but with more input from representatives of key specialized interest groups (e.g. industry, farming, environmental groups, researchers, etc.).

Current status

The value added and the damage prevention SSEA brings forth is gaining wider acceptance and appreciation worldwide. For example, prior to 1990 SSEA legislation was implemented only in two countries - in the US and Australia. Between 1990-2000 Canada and eleven or so west European countries along with Ghana followed suit. By 2009 China, Pacific island states, East European countries got SSEA legislations. Currently Russia, South Africa are the new additions, in addition to Tanzania, Ethiopia, Madagascar and a few west African states are practicing some form of SSEA. As regards EIA, it is pretty much mainstreamed worldwide. ■

“Conversations” is a section dedicated to featuring ENTRO professionals – who they are, what they do and their thoughts on how their work contributes to Eastern Nile Cooperation!

In this Issue we feature

Mr. Awoke Kassa, ENTRO Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.

Q. Welcome to “Conversations.” If you could please introduce us yourself by providing us a profile of who you are?

A. I am married, now for 12 years. I am the father of three children, one girl and two boys. I attended my elementary and high school in Bahr Dar city, by the shores of Lake Tana. So, you see, after all, I am from Bahr Dar, where Abbay originates. I attended college in Alemmaya Agricultural University in Harrarghe, Oromia Region, and graduated in 1990 with a B.Sc. in Agricultural economics. I obtained my M.A. in Rural development in 2011.

Q. Thank you. Now by way of preparing us, can you tell me about your work experience?

A. My first employer was the Council of Ministers under the previous Dergue government under the Planning, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation department in Atsbe Teferi, western Harrarghe.

Q. So, essentially you started in this line of business (M&E) from day one?

A. Yes.

Q. What did your job consist of then?

A. We focused on monitoring and evaluating performance of the zonal sector offices which included the agriculture, coffee and tea, urban management, natural resources, etc.

Q. How long did you serve there?

A. For three years.

Q. Where did you move on the fourth year?

A. In 1993 I was assigned as Macro-planning Expert, Planning and Economic Development Bureau, in the then newly created Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State. Here I worked for two years, after which I moved to another program in the same state, called ESRDF, Ethiopian Social Rehabilitation and Development Fund, which was funded by the World Bank. I worked there as Project Officer. The fund focused on provision of basic social services like health, education, water supply, etc. It was in part based on community mobilization – the community had to cover some 10% of the costs. I appraised community applications for services, supervised and monitored implementation. I was then promoted in the same office to the rank of Regional Manager of the Fund. I worked for four years there.

Q. Very interesting career development, indeed. What was your next move?

A. Well eventually the fund was being phased out. Also, there was a policy to promote the employment of newly graduated Benishangul-Gumuz in the region. So,



I moved to Addis, to an NGO called Water Action that operated in Kombolcha, South Wello zone in the Amhara Region. I was employed as Project Manager for the Integrated Watershed Management Project. This was a project that espoused the IWRM approach. Eventually, I was transferred to the Water Action Headquarters in Addis to work as Acting Manager of the monitoring and evaluation Service. There I worked for two years, after which I moved back to Bahr Dar and was employed by a Sida-funded rural development Program for the Amhara Regional State. I was employed there also as Program/ M&E Officer and worked for five years there. The Program provided community based roads, schools, water supply, health etc. in 30 woredas. My last leg of career journey has landed me at ENTRO, as you see.

Q. What motivated you to join ENTRO?

A. A number of reasons – growing interest in the water sector, a desire to work in regional organization and to move to Addis.

Q. That you have been working in ENTRO, a regional organization, for over five years now, how have you changed as a person? How is the Awoke of now different?

A. I have changed a lot – both professionally and personally. Personally my view has expanded. Earlier all what I thought was the Nile; the Blue Nile originates in Ethiopia and flows further downstream to Sudan and Egypt. My understanding of complexity did not go beyond that. Now, I know it is not as simple as that. There are sub-basins, catchments, watersheds, all specific and unique in their own ways, which require tailor-made planning to address those peculiarities. That is why you have NELSAP and ENSAP, for example. I also now know that there are 11 stakeholder countries to the Nile, all making claims on the river system. I also know that the Nile is not infinite, that what happens upstream has downstream impacts, and vice versa. So, there is the link. So, cooperation among countries is a MUST to manage and develop the Nile resources. So, there is water resources development, water resources management, cooperation, joint institution and system building, there is politics the Nile is not as simple as when I thought it was when I was a young boy growing up by the shores of Lake Tana.

Q. Interesting, so you're coming to NBI/ENTRO availed a new vantage for you to look at your Abbay in a new way. Good. How about professionally?

A. Professionally too. Only from the M&E part I have gained deeper insights about Results Based Management System and M&E thereof, planning for results, setting up monitoring and evaluation plans on the basis of PMF (Performance Measurement Framework – baseline, indicators, measurements, etc.). I am now trained as Trainer of Trainers in South Africa, so I can facilitate training myself in Results based planning, M&E.

Q. Well, talking of M&E system and Results Based Management, what specific challenges (opportunities) did you encounter to do M&E that adds value?

A. The first challenge has been the lack of reliable baseline data. You know, ENTRO's responsibility or mandate does not cover the entire project cycle, meaning from concept development, planning, preparing and implementing to monitoring and impact evaluation. ENTRO prepares ENSAP projects and from there on the responsibility for the rest of the project cycle goes to the countries (e.g. implementation, monitoring, and impact on end users). For example, ENSAP, and for that matter NBI, has adopted the NBI Shared Vision ("to achieve sustainable socioeconomic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin resources") as their goal. How can ENTRO, for example, be held accountable for achieving this result (directly attributable impact i.e. by how much ENSAP/ENTRO has contributed to sustainable socioeconomic development), when it does not have the mandate to implement projects? This dilemma, to me, is still unresolved completely, even though we always try to get around it by focusing at output and outcome level results, which to a large extent focus on those types of service deliverables like training/capacity building and changes in working practices of national/regional NBI offices.

The other challenge is that planning, including reporting results, constantly focusing on planning milestones and targets, as an organizational culture, needs nurturing, needs to be institutionalized, something we need to encourage in the NBI family.

Q. You have pointed out what you think are challenges in the M&E system. So, let me be the devil's advocate and ask: why cannot we do without M&E system at all?

A. For one, we need to know whether ENSAP projects are going in the right track, so the M&E system as it stands is adequate to do this. Second, we need to report results to our owners and funders – so reporting on progress regarding inputs (financial and other) and outputs that are easily measurable and quantifiable is being done. Further we can monitor progress toward change in the way ENTRO/NBI offices practice which is another important dimension of

results. So, we still need the M&E system, but there is still space for improvement. For example, we can create our own project cycle to make it more amenable to measure higher level results like influence on transboundary policy changes. The Results based M&E system is critical for ENTRO's credibility by demonstrating results achieved.

Q. Thank you. This has been enlightening. I hope readers will take lessons from this discussion. Any further thoughts before we conclude?

A. Yes. ENTRO is keeping the countries engaged through the preparation of projects. But ENTRO could also work toward contributing to higher order results, such as making it clear, through studies and/or conferences, I mean the comparative disadvantage of unilateral development relative to the benefits to be derived from cooperation through expanding the cake, so to speak. ■

Thank you.
Interviewed by *Wubalem Fekade, Hd, SDCU*

Did U know ?

Development challenges of the Nile Basin:

1. Extreme Events (Drought and Flood),
2. Extreme poverty
3. Environmental degradation
4. Unmet energy demand
5. Rapid population and urban growth

Did U know ?

Principles of Transboundary Water Resources Management:

1. Equitable and reasonable utilization,
2. An obligation not to cause significant harm,
3. Cooperation, Information exchange, consultation,
4. Peaceful settlement of disputes.

Departing

The following staff members have left ENTRO after having contributed to the building of the institution in their respective specializations. They all have been great Team Players and will be missed. We wish them all success – and remind them that “once ENTRO Team Member . . . always ENTRO Team member”.



Getachew Teferra



Emebet Mekonnen



Dr. Mohammad El Muntasir



Dr. Mamdouh Antar



Million Gebreyes



Antenneh Tesfaye

The NBI Shared Vision:

“ To achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable utilization of, and benefit from, the common Nile Basin water resources”



ENTRO and WRPM
Headquarters
Addis Ababa –Ethiopia



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The Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO)

ENTRO's Core Values Are **RIGHT**:

Regional Orientation, Focus on People & Environment

We are committed to regional cooperation in all our activities and relationships among ourselves and with our partners. We are committed to work for the benefit of the people and the environment of the EN countries.

Initiative, Dynamism and Creativity

As a team and as individuals, we take initiative and embrace new ideas for the enhancement of both our performance and our working environment. We strive for creativity to set the example and pace for others.

Gender Balance, Equity and Respect Diversity

In all our work and interactions, we give equal opportunities for both genders and seek gender balance. We also do not discriminate any individuals because of their beliefs or physical appearance. We emphasize mutual respect for individuals, recognition of their contributions, and their rights to equity in benefit sharing.

Honesty, Excellence and Professionalism

We perform all our duties in a spirit of trust, transparency and honesty.
We are committed to excellence and professionalism in all our work.
We do not compromise on quality and accountability.

Teamwork, Participation and Partnership

We choose to work in teams with our colleagues at ENTRO and with ENTRO's owners and partners. We also seek to expand and intensify participation of nongovernmental stakeholders, particularly from EN civil society and private sector. We believe through participation and partnership we would achieve synergies otherwise lost. We hold ourselves individually and collectively accountable in achieving our commonly shared objectives.



Disclaimer: The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of NBI, its Member States, or Development Partners