

Situation Analysis for Bugesera trans-boundary catchment kicks off

By Iwacu, the Global Water Eastern Africa Partnership

The situation analysis for Bugesera transboundary catchment under the Water, Climate and Development Program (WACDEP) kicked off Wednesday, 21st November 2012 in Bugesera, borderline between the two countries.

The situation analysis will be carried out for the whole Lake Cohoha catchment covering socio-economic, gender, natural resources/environmental, agricultural potential and water resources assessments.

A multidisciplinary Team of Experts drawn from different partner organizations in the two countries will conduct a six-day intensive field work.

Field work and data collection will be focused on the preliminarily identified potential sites for project intervention. On the Burundian side, the data collection and analysis will be conducted in Rubuga, Kigina, and Gaturanda in Bugabira Commune of the Kirundo Province, whereas in Rwanda, it will mainly be in Kamabuye Sector of the Bugesera District in the Eastern Province.

Having a team with such multi-disciplinary and technical expertise, Global Water Partnership Eastern Africa (GWPEA) not only expects a comprehensive report, but findings reflective of the multi-dimensional contexts and dynamics of the Bugesera catchment.

Briefing the team, the GWPEA Project Regional Program Manager Mr. Kidane Mariam Jembere urged the technical team to harmonize their methodology, enhance team work and reflect on the project's guiding Terms of Reference (ToRs) specifically the selection criteria for the site where the study will be focusing.

The selection criteria include: having a trans-boundary waters, evident need for intervention (hot spot) and non-duplication. Kidane emphasize that "the chosen project intervention site should "enable the citizens of the two countries to jointly collaborate while managing the shared trans-boundary water and other natural resources."



The joint planning session for the team of experts resolved to use Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Field Observations, Guided interviews, Document Reviews, GIS tools, Soil sampling and laboratory analysis to generate required data and information.

According to the ToRs, the technical team will assess hydrological, environmental, climatic, socio-economic, legal and institutional analysis. The team will assess risk factors such as the likelihood of extreme events: floods, drought, unfriendly human practices and thereafter propose workable recommendations."

The technical team physically explored the potential study areas, discussed the boundaries of the catchment area, consulted local leadership and citizens (see team analyzing the site map).

The study follows a consultative process that brought together local government officials from Rwanda and Burundi to garner their ownership and buy-in

Historically, Bugabira (Burundi's commune) and Bugesera District (Rwanda's) face persistent drought caused by changing climate and unfriendly human practices such as over-cultivation, deforestation and unregulated livestock farming methods.

The Vice Mayor for Economic Affairs of Bugesera District, Julius Rukondo reflected about Bugesera's past gradual path to desertification and how collaborative efforts saved it. He said: "through joint cooperation between the Government and development partners, the area has regained its naturalness. GWPEA comes in to drive the process towards sustainability."

In Eastern Africa, WACDEP will be implemented at Kagera basin, Rwanda-Burundi national level and Bugesera Trans-boundary water catchment. In the long term, WACDEP seeks to achieve "a higher level of water security and climate resilience in the countries of Burundi and Rwanda" the envisioned project impact reads in part, whereas its expected outcomes are:

- Water security and climate resilience integrated in development planning and decision-making processes Burundi and Rwanda;
- Capacities of partnerships,

institutions and stakeholders in Burundi and Rwanda enhanced for climate change adaptation and sustainable water resources management in a trans-boundary setting in Bugesera catchment, and at higher level in Kagera basin.

- "No regrets" investment and financing strategies for water security, climate resilience and development formulated and governments of Burundi and Rwanda begin to implement them;
- Community-based climate adaptation and water security actions defined and implemented for demonstration or piloting purposes in Bugesera catchment;
- Useful knowledge and information on climate resilience and water security generated and disseminated among stakeholders in Eastern Africa; ■

Uganda: New EAC Head Office in Arusha Opened

By Iwacu, The East Africa

The Presidents of the EAC member states have officially inaugurated the new multi-billion headquarters in Arusha.

The building came at a hefty cost of 14.8 million Euros (about Ugsh52 billion).

Germany, which financed the construction of the new elegant building in the centre of Arusha, was represented by a high-ranking delegation.

EAC Summit chairman President Mwai Kibaki said that the headquarters demonstrated the Partner States' unity and commitment to the integration process.

"Our presence here symbolizes our unity," he said at the colourful ceremony attended by Presidents Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi, Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania and Rwanda's Prime Minister Damien Habumuremyi.

However, more has to be done to deepen the integration, President Kibaki said, especially in the areas of regional infrastructure, roads, railways and energy sectors.

The Kenyan President also called for elimination of Non-Tariff Barriers through legally binding enforcement mechanisms.

The new building, he said, would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the EAC secretariat and its organs.

The chairman of the EAC Council of Ministers, Kenya's Minister for EAC Affairs Musa Sirma, said that the region bore testimony of a long experience in integration issues.

The EAC Partner States are committed to ensuring prosperity for their people, Mr Sirma said.

The EAC Secretary General, Dr Richard Sezibera, said that the construction of the building would help in meeting the needs of the deepening co-operation among the Partner States.

He said the building offers the flexibility of expansion once new members are admitted to the current five-nation bloc.

Egon Kochanke, Director for Africa of Germany's Federal Foreign Office, and Dr

Ulla Mikota, Director for Africa of Germany's Federal Ministry for Development Cooperation, said that Germany shares the vision of the East African Community to build a prosperous, competitive, secure and politically united East Africa.

Kochanke underlined Germany's motives for the support: "Germany by its own experience is persuaded of the merits of integration and therefore considers regional integration key for peace and security as well as economic development in the region. The challenges for East Africa are growing, therefore we highly welcome the ambitious political commitments of the Presidents of the five EAC member states." ■