The 6th Nile Basin Development Forum off to a successful start

The 6th Nile Basin Development Forum (NBDF) webinars are underway, having successfully started on March 9, 2021 with a stream on Transboundary Wetland Management. The webinars will run until April 29, 2021 and will end with a closing ceremony, which includes the celebration of the Nile Media Awards 2021 winners. Overall, the NBDF6 webinars are running smoothly, with many people registered and participating in the different sessions.

ELIZABETH AGIRO, NBI Secretariat Media Relations Expert, engaged the Webinar Technical Programming Lead, DR NICHOLAS AZZA, on his assessment of the progress of the virtual NBDF6 proceedings so far.

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Dear Reader:

I hope that you, your friends and loved ones are well and safe.

As the COVID 19 pandemic continues to be a challenge, we continue to devise ways and means to do our work, for the good of the Nile Basin citizens.

During the first quarter (January to March 2021), many of our activities have taken place virtually, starting with the annual Nile Day, held on February 22 in commemoration of the establishment of the Nile Basin Initiative in 1999. This year’s event, which was live streamed, attracted more than 600 participants from across the Nile Basin and beyond.

The event was organised as part of pre-event activities to start the conversation around and create interest in the theme for the 6th Nile Basin Development Forum (NBDF): Rethinking Regional Investments in the Nile Basin - Water | Food | Energy | Environment | Climate. The launch of the 6th NBDF was therefore one of the key activities held during Nile Day 2021. The ceremony was officiated by Ethiopia’s Minister of Water, Irrigation and Energy, HE Dr Eng Seleshi Bekele. “Ethiopia is pleased and honoured to host the 6th Nile Basin Development Forum...The theme ‘Rethinking Regional Investments in the Nile Basin - Water | Energy | Food | Environment | Climate, is very timely taking into account that the Nile riparians are moving towards a new approach to regional or Basin planning and investment agenda,” he noted.

The launch was followed by a series of webinars from March 9 to April 29, 2021, featuring experts from the Nile Basin and around the world, discussing topics in line with the six goals of NBI’s 10-year (2017 – 2027) Strategy.

Another key highlight during Nile Day 2021 was the Ministerial Round Table during which Ministers responsible for Water Affairs in the NBI Member States as well as Development Partners shared experiences, success and challenges in implementing the already prepared investment projects.

The State of the River Nile Basin 2020 report was officially launched by Hon Dr Jean d’Arc Mujawamireya, Nile-COM chair and Rwanda’s Minister of Environment. This report is a reference document and source of data and information for formulating or reviewing policies and also when making decisions on planning, design and implementation of water resources management and development projects. The report is also aimed at further cooperation among stakeholders as a key driver of sustainable and equitable utilisation of the common Nile Basin water resources.

Nile Day 2021 was preceded by the 56th Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) meeting on February 21 and followed by the Strategic Dialogue 2021, between NBI governance and development partners on February 23, 2021.

In our efforts to engage and recognise Nile Basin journalists for balanced reporting on Nile cooperation and Nile Basin issues, the selection process for nominees for the 3rd edition of the Nile Media Awards will be recognised during the closing ceremony of the 6th NBDF scheduled to take place May 6 - 7, 2021.

Find out more about the above and other activities, in the following pages.

We appreciate the confidence that our Member States, development partners and and you our readers have placed in us and in our work. We continue to rely on your support and dedication to take forward the NBI agenda as enshrined in the 10-year Strategy.

Please keep safe!

Sincerely,

Prof Seifeldin Hamad Abdalla
Getting out the message:

Initially we were worried that we would not attract enough participation. But launching the NBDF as part of the Nile Day celebrations, and using NBI’s various outlets for sending out information, including NBI’s emailing list and social media platforms, has helped to get out the word. This was complemented by NBI’s partners sharing the information amongst the networks, and has helped to get over 1,000 registrations for the NBDF.

Simplifying registration:

We noted earlier in the process that some participants did not want to be bothered to pre-register, but were interested to join Zoom sessions directly. We simplified the registration process by providing a Zoom link to join webinars with only basic information required (name, organisation) https://zoom.us/j/9882909742?pwd=bzFablVnMWY5RGdWSFB6d2ZOUoNBUTo9

When the participant clicks on the link, he/she is first prompted to provide personal details like name, affiliation, profession and country, and afterwards is taken straight to the webinar. This has helped more participants to join.

Multiple options to participate:

To further simplify the process of following the webinars, we have provided participants with the option to watch a live stream of the webinar on YouTube. Recordings of each webinar, and the presentations are also stored in the cloud, and a link provided to the participants so that they can still catch up with any webinar they may have missed.

Single link for all webinars:

We have a total of 38 webinars spread over a two-month period. We thought it would be messy to send a unique link for each webinar. So, we created a single link that works for all webinars. In this way we minimised bombarding participants’ inboxes with links and having them search in their emails for the right link. This has improved the experience of participants in taking part in the webinars. We also have a single link for all video recordings (6th NBDF Webinar series videos), and single link for all presentations (6th NBDF presentations).

Trial session for presenters:

We decided early in the process to run a trial session for all presenters 15 minutes before their real session starts. In this trial, we test that the microphone and camera of each speaker works, and that they are able to share their screen and run the presentation slides from their end. In addition, we compile all presentations at Nile-SEC to have the ability to run the slides from the control room in case a presenter experiences weak internet connectivity. This has helped to minimise technical challenges during the actual sessions.

Duration of webinars:

We wanted to allow enough time for presentations and discussions while at the same time conscious that participants have busy schedules and other important things to attend to. We therefore set the maximum duration of each webinar at two hours. With the webinars
that have already run, we have noted that participants have much appetite to ask questions and engage the panellists, more than is possible in the two hours. Finding the right balance between having enough time for discussions while not making the session too long will always be a challenge.

**Regional balance in papers:**

We wanted to have papers from every country in the Nile Basin to give a regional flavour to the NBDF, and have discussions that each participant can relate to. This has proved to be a challenge, given that the response to the call for abstracts was not balanced from a country as well as gender perspective. The language barrier for some Nile riparian countries has further complicated the problem. We tried to address the first two challenges by inviting eminent speakers from the under-represented countries to give keynote addresses and make presentations.

**Scope of discussions:**

One of the major advantages that the virtual event is presenting over the physical conference is that it is allowing for discourse over a broader range of topics thereby ensuring that the interests of a very wide range of stakeholders is captured. The first part of the webinars (the technical sessions) has five themes (water resources management, environment and wetlands, water-food-energy nexus, water and climate, and transboundary water governance) and 30 two-hour webinars. Such a wide scope of topics would not be possible in a three-day physical conference.

**A lot of work!**

While the virtual event is easier to organise than a physical conference, there is still a lot of work that has to be done by different teams working behind the scenes to ensure smooth delivery of the webinars. There are caretakers responsible for designing the detailed webinar programmes, communication with authors and keynote speakers, and checking presentations; there is a communication team that sends out messages before, during and after the webinars; and the IT team who manage the online registrations, online webinar programme, recording and upload of materials and running the Zoom app. These teams have done an excellent job and deserve our heartfelt thanks.
The theme for Nile Day 2021 held on February 22 was: Rethinking Regional Investments in the Nile Basin. Speaking during the virtual event hosted by Uganda, Hon Dr Ruhakana Rugunda, Uganda’s Prime Minister applauded the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI)’s regional investments saying they will go a long way in contributing to poverty alleviation and enhancing the region’s resilience to the impacts of climate change. In a speech read by the Permanent Secretary of Uganda’s Ministry of Water and Environment, Mr Alfred Okot Okidi, Dr Rugunda was pleased to note that a number of infrastructural projects from the basket of prepared investments are at various levels of implementation.

He noted that NBI Member States have worked together to prepare, negotiate, agree and in some cases, implemented joint projects worth more than USD6.5 billion spanning several sectors such as hydropower development, power transmission, interconnection and trade; irrigation and drainage, lake environment and catchment/watershed management. Others include fisheries, multi-sector investment opportunity studies and inland waterway transport, among others. Dr Rugunda added that the “theme challenges us to reflect on the journey that we embarked on 22 years ago, evaluate our performance and formulate more pragmatic measures to achieve our common goals”.

H E Matthias Schauer, German’s Ambassador to Uganda, said that “deepened cooperation around water is more needed than ever – in the world and in the Nile Basin. Water consumptive uses are increasing dramatically, pollution is rising almost everywhere and climate change is presenting us with more and more threats - river basins all over the world have been facing almost existential challenges. But nowhere are these challenges as pressing as in the Nile River Basin.”
The World Bank was represented by Ms Ragini Praful Dalal - Sector Leader in Nairobi. She said, “The World Bank believes that when we work together, we become stronger. It was on this premise that the World Bank began investing in the countries of this region to cooperatively and jointly develop their shared water resources. This was almost twenty years ago and backed by a committed group of development partners. Today, we are still supporting Nile countries by investing in information and infrastructure, supporting the technical track of the Nile Basin Initiative and supporting capacity building on joint management of shared water resources.”

The NBI Secretariat Executive Director, Prof Seifeldin Hamad Abdalla, explained that the day’s theme was motivated by the need to realise transformative investments that can address the Basin challenges and needs.

In his speech delivered on behalf of the Nile Basin Discourse (NBD), the Chairperson of the Board, Prof Hamid Muawia Shaddad noted that, “The Nile Basin Discourse has been playing and continues to play a vital role in bringing together grassroots communities across the Basin, to play their role and participate actively in regional and transboundary programmes and especially investment projects and policies that enhance cooperation on the shared waters of the Nile. The theme reminds us that investments ought to fit in and respond to communities’ needs and priorities in order to gain buy-in on programmes and projects.”

Key activities to commemorate the day included a virtual tour of the NBI Secretariat, launch of the 6th Nile Basin Development Forum, a Ministerial Roundtable, and launch of the State of the River Nile Basin report 2020 as well as virtual exhibition of the scientific knowledge generated by NBI and some partners. Participants also witnessed the signing of a 5-year Memorandum of Understanding between NBI and NBD.

Nile Day 2021 was attended by at least 600 participants who included members of the Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM); representatives from NBI Member States embassies, members of the Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC), officials from ministries whose activities touch on the management and development of the common Nile Basin water resources, namely; Environment, Energy, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, Transport and Finance. Others Members of Parliament, Development Partners, researchers, academia, civil society, youth, and journalists.

Nile Day is organised annually in commemoration of the establishment of NBI in 1999. The day provides an opportunity for Basin citizens and friends of the Nile to come together to celebrate the benefits of Nile cooperation and to exchange experiences, views and ideas on topical issues related to the cooperative management and development of the common Nile Basin water resources. The occasion is also used by Member States to re-affirm their commitment to Nile Cooperation, while providing an opportunity to celebrate the rich and varied cultures which co-exist within the Nile Basin.

Did you miss the event?

Watch the video recording of the event:
https://youtu.be/mLIMOFBWW4U

Visit the virtual exhibition:
Virtual Exhibition – Nile Day (nilebasin.org)

By Jane K. Baitwa
Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist
NBI Secretariat, Entebbe

<< Dr Rugunda added that the “theme challenges us to reflect on the journey that we embarked on 22 years ago, evaluate our performance and formulate more pragmatic measures to achieve our common goals”. >>
The challenges facing the Nile Basin are complex and continue evolving. They include population pressure, land use changes and rapid urbanisation. Other challenges are uneven distribution of resources, which are dwindling, pollution of water resources and disappearing ecosystem habitats as well as emerging pressures like climate change. Plans by NBI Member States for developing the common Nile Basin water resources are constrained by these challenges. This is notwithstanding limited data and knowledge on the abundance and variability of the resource itself. Member States therefore need well synthesised and factual information to enable them make evidence based decisions for better use and protection of the scarce water resources.

The second State of the River Nile Basin Report 2020 jointly prepared by NBI and Member States was launched during Nile Day on February 22, 2021 by the Chairperson of the Nile Council of Ministers who is also Rwanda’s Minister of Environment Hon Dr Jean d’Arc Mujawamariya. The NBI first published the State of River Nile Basin Report in 2012.

The regular State of the River Nile Basin Report is part of the suite of Basin monitoring tools (including, for example, the Nile Basin Water Resources Atlas) prepared by NBI. It is aimed at critically assessing facts, trends, patterns, synthesis and indicators for both the Basin health and multiple biophysical conditions and also establishes the foundation and structure for Basin reporting.

The report is meant to be used as a reference document and source of data and information for formulating or reviewing policies and also when making decisions on planning, design and implementation of water resources management and development projects. By targeting diverse audiences, including politicians, government officials, development workers, media experts, academicians, researchers and all citizenry of the Member States, the report is also aimed at further cooperation among stakeholders as a key driver of sustainable and equitable utilisation of the Basin’s resources.

The contents and structure of the report are guided by the six priority areas of NBI’s 10-year Strategy (2017–2027), which advocates key strategic directions that were agreed by Member States and sets the ambition for delivery of impact on the ground. The priorities include (i) water security, (ii) energy security, (iii) food security, (iv) environmental sustainability, (v) climate change as well as (vi) transboundary governance. For each of these themes, the current state, main trends, drivers of change and management responses have been identified.

This 2020 report was prepared with financial support from the European Union and the German Federal Government through GIZ. Numerous professionals within and from outside the Nile Basin contributed to its preparation and their role is acknowledged.
The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) in collaboration with the Government of Ethiopia with support from the German Federal Government through GIZ and with partners is organising the 3rd edition of the Nile Media Awards to take place in tandem with the 6th Nile Basin Development Forum (NBDF).

The award ceremony will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia during the closing ceremony of the 6th NBDF scheduled to take place from May 6 - 7, 2021.

The Awards will be given under five categories namely; Print, Digital, Radio, TV and Photography. Unlike before, this 3rd edition will feature an award for the best female entry and best collaborative story.

The Nile Basin journalists to be recognised for balanced reporting on Nile cooperation issues

NBI and partners will also award the best female entry and best collaborative story during the Award ceremony slated for May 6 -7, 2021 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The NBI Secretariat would like to take this opportunity to thank the more than 94 Journalists from the 10 NBI Member States namely; Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, The Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda for submitting original pieces of their work that promote cooperation in transboundary waters in the Nile Basin. This includes topics such as countries jointly addressing challenges like climate change; maximising socio-economic benefits; minimising risks and costs of development projects; and promoting regional peace and security through the cooperative management and use of the common Nile Basin water resources with a strong focus on the human impact of cooperation in the Nile Basin.
The Nile Media Awards is a competition for journalists based in the NBI Member States. It gives journalists an opportunity to showcase their best works that touch on cooperation in transboundary waters in the Nile Basin.

The goal of the Awards is to promote increased, factual and balanced reporting on Nile cooperation and Nile Basin issues.

Since 2017, and in order to enhance awareness and visibility of the media awards, as well as the winners, the event is held once every three years in tandem with the NBDF, a high level regional science–policy–dialogue. The objective of the Forum is to build a common understanding among stakeholders – policy-makers, scientists, practitioners, and the public at large – on the status of the common water and natural resources base, the shared complex challenges and ultimately, to exchange perspectives on the solutions for addressing the water security challenges facing the Nile Basin countries.

The inaugural Awards were held in Dodoma, Tanzania in 2015 during the 23rd annual Nile Council of Ministers meeting while the 2017 event took place in Kigali, Rwanda.

Find out more about the awards: https://nilebasin.org/mediaawards/

By Pamella Magino
Junior Media Relations/Social Media Consultant
NBI Secretariat, Entebbe
Groundwater in the Nile Basin has great potentials of renewable and non-renewable resources. It is a key element for human settlement and sustainable socio-economic activities. Reliance on groundwater is rapidly increasing among the Nile Basin countries, due to the increased demand for water over supply.

However, groundwater management in the Nile Basin is faced with many challenges. There is ample evidence that groundwater recharge in the region is under threat. This is partly attributed to climate change; high rainfall variability and land use/land cover changes leading to declining amount of surface/groundwater interaction in different areas.

In addition, the interaction between groundwater and surface water systems (rivers, wetlands, lakes) has not been adequately considered in most transboundary river basin management initiatives, including the Nile Basin.

The threats on transboundary aquifers are more severe because of lack of common groundwater governance and management mechanisms. It is therefore important to build and expand on the understanding of groundwater resources characteristics through detailed investigation, mapping and assessment of the Nile Basin aquifer systems. The growing understanding will also consider the implications of impacts of potential climate change scenarios on the overall Basin surface and groundwater resources.
The socio-economic context is also an important issue in groundwater management for sustainable use and protection that needs to be properly addressed through engaging stakeholders in a participatory approach.

**Ongoing efforts**

With the financial support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), NBI is implementing its first groundwater study project (2020-2025).

The aim of the project is to improve conjunctive management of surface and groundwater resources in selected transboundary aquifers as well as enhance knowledge and capacity for sustainable use and management of transboundary aquifers and aquifers of regional significance in the Nile Basin.

The three shared aquifers selected for the current intervention are the Kagera aquifer shared among Burundi, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda; Mt Elgon aquifer shared between Kenya and Uganda; and Gedaref-Adigrat aquifer shared between Ethiopia and Sudan. These aquifers are located in diverse ecological zones ranging from arid, semi-arid and tropical.

The project will foster current mutual understanding for the groundwater flow regime and mechanism of recharge, policies, management systems, community engagement and sustainable development plans for effective utilisation and protection from over abstraction, depletion and pollution.

The project’s five components are aimed at strengthening the overall groundwater resources management at national and basin-wide level.

**Component 1:** Furthering knowledge and understanding about availability of groundwater resources in the selected aquifers underlying watersheds in the sub-basins of the Eastern Nile and the Nile Equatorial Lakes.

**Component 2:** Development of action plans on groundwater resources governance, management, and protection for inclusion in national, sub-basin frameworks: – also including consideration of surface water/groundwater resources conjunctive use.

**Component 3:** Targeted pilot projects to explore conjunctive use of surface and ground waters, and links to biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation.

**Component 4:** Further strengthening capacity to address groundwater issues at the national and regional levels.

**Component 5:** Communications and awareness rising. Generally, groundwater can be abstracted from water yards for deep wells, hand dug wells, open hand dug wells or large diameter open shaft wells. Most of the groundwater in the Nile Basin is found either in alluvial aquifers, recent quaternary deposits or in the basement complex in the fissures and cracks. As a result groundwater quality is influenced by the mineral composition of host rock formation it retains through. Therefore groundwater quality varies widely depending upon lithological formation and time of retention and recharge frequency and source.

Maha Abdelgaffar Abdelrahim Ismail, PhD
Project Team Leader
Groundwater Project
NBI Secretariat, Entebbe

<< Reliance on groundwater is rapidly increasing among the Nile Basin countries, due to the increased demand for water, over supply. >>
The 56th Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) meeting was held on February 21, 2021 via the virtual platform, Zoom. The purpose of the meeting was to update governance on the NBI institutional health as well as progress in implementing the Basin-wide programme. In addition, members were updated on the state of preparations for the upcoming events namely commemoration of Nile Day 2021, launch of the 6th Nile Basin Development Forum as well as Strategic Dialogue between NBI governance and Development Partners.

Progress in implementation of the annual work plan was satisfactory despite challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. A number of studies had been concluded and the results expected to inform policy formulation and practice, disseminated to the relevant stakeholders.

A strategy was prepared to guide the mitigation of the impacts of Covid-19 on staff and operations of NBI.

Governance noted the low remittances of country contributions with the associated difficulties of meeting the institutional financial obligations. Governance reiterated the call for Member States to clear the outstanding of country contributions.

Tom Waako
Programme Officer
NBI Secretariat, Entebbe

Strategic Dialogue 2021 highlights new funding sources

The annual Strategic Dialogue between NBI governance and Development Partners is held on February 23. The Strategic dialogue has been established as an instrumental forum in generating ideas on institutional, technical as well as financial sustainability for the Nile cooperation. The forum is not a decision making body but a platform for analysing issues and informing decisions of NBI governance as well as Development Partners of NBI.

NBI was informed of new funding opportunities under consideration by Development Partners. Notable among these is the European Union (EU) new planning cycle that is prioritising transboundary water resources, German government funding of Euro 6 million, and USD 30 million from the World Bank/CIWA, for the Nile Cooperation for Climate Resilience (NCCR) project, to be share equally among the three NBI entities.

Concern was expressed on the delays in remittance of country contributions as well as the need to step up Basin monitoring and information sharing.

The Strategic Dialogue 2021 was attended by more than 55 participants.

Tom Waako
Programme Officer
NBI Secretariat, Entebbe
Nile Basin Initiative and Nile Basin Discourse renew MoU

On February 22, 2021, the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) and Nile Basin Discourse (NBD) took the opportunity to renew their partnership by signing a 5-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This was during the official launch of the 6th Nile Basin Development Forum.

Both NBI and NBD share a common agenda of promoting Nile Basin Cooperation through public participation, engagement and awareness of investment projects.

The signed MOU revised the previous one, which ran for three years from November 15, 2017 to November 2020 and extended the period of implementation to five (5) years from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2025.

By Jane K. Baitwa
Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist
NBI Secretariat, Entebbe

Virtual tour of the NBI Secretariat

For the first time ever, you can now take an up-close and personal view of the NBI Secretariat also referred to as the home of Nile Basin citizens. The Secretariat is located in Entebbe, Uganda on the shores of Lake Victoria.

Click here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mLIMOFBW4U to watch the video produced as part of Nile Day 2021 commemoration event.
Ms Eleanor Olumbe joined the Secretariat on October 1, 2020 as Procurement Assistant. She joined under the new NBI project on ‘Enhancing Conjunctive Management of Surface and Groundwater Resources in Selected Transboundary Aquifers Project’, funded by GEF UNDP.

She brings with her extensive experience in organisational functions including procurement, administration, accounting, tax filing, personnel management, assets, stores and inventory management. She has been instrumental in the successful implementation of development programmes and projects funded by The World Bank Group, UN, USAID, DFID and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, among others.

Eleanor holds a Bachelors degree in Business Administration from The Open University UK. She previously worked with different organisations including Feed the Future Youth Leadership for Agriculture Activity managed by Chemonics International, The World Bank Group Uganda Country Office, USAID Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) managed by Chemonics International and Africa Services Group.

Eleanor can be contacted at: eolumbe@nilebasin.org

Ms Magino Pamella joined the Secretariat on March 1, 2021 as a Junior Media Relations/Social Media Consultant under GIZ support.

She comes with over 8 years’ experience as a Communications and Marketing professional. During her two months’ assignment, Pamella is responsible for effective and efficient communication and media engagement leading to the success of the 6th Nile Basin Development Forum and the 3rd edition of the Nile Media Awards.

Pamella holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Mass Communication majoring in Public Relations and she is a Certified Member of the Public Relations Association of Uganda.

She previously worked with different organisations, including Victoria University Kampala-Uganda, Sterling College Ghana, MK Publishers Limited, Monitor Publications Limited.

Pamella can be contacted at: pmagino@nilebasin.org

Ms Mawemuko Samantha joined the Secretariat on September 15, 2020 as Finance and Administration Assistant under the Groundwater project funded by GEF UNDP.

She comes with six years’ experience in the finance and accounting field.

Samantha holds a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from Makerere University Business School and is currently pursuing her professional certificate from the Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Before joining the Secretariat, she worked for different organisations, namely: Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI), Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators and NGO Bureau under the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Samantha can be contacted at: smawemuko@nilebasin.org
Dr Maha Abdelgaffar
Abdelrahim Ismail joined the Secretariat in January 2021 as the Team Leader for the Groundwater Project supported by GEF/UNDP.

She holds BSc of Geology from Alexandria University, Egypt and MSc & PhD in Hydrogeology, University of Khartoum, Sudan. She is a senior researcher in the Water Research Centre University of Khartoum, Associate Professor Geology Department University of Khartoum and Head Department of Environmental Studies University of UMST Khartoum. Most of her research was concerned with water resources management with especial emphasis on groundwater pollution and over abstraction.

Earlier, she worked as senior consultant in capacity building in IWRM for UNESCO, ITT Cologne as part of the CNRD group as well as ENTRO in Ethiopia.

Maha can be contacted at: mabdelraheem@nilebasin.org

Dr Geoffrey Kijjambu joined the Secretariat on November 2, 2020 as Internal Auditor. He is a Veterinary Surgeon who was in public veterinary practice for 10 years prior to diversifying into the accounting field. To-date, Geoffrey has 10 years’ hands on experience in risk management advisory, auditing and internal control process improvement.

He previously worked for both the public and private sector including Bushenyi District Local Government, Mark-house Partners, Mukwano group of Companies, Parker Randall Eastern Africa and Grant Thornton-Uganda.

Geoffrey is a Chartered Certified Accountant (UK), Certified Public Accountant of Uganda, Certified Information Systems Auditor (US), and Member of the Institute of Internal Auditors. He also holds a Bachelors Degree in Veterinary Medicine from Makerere University, Uganda.

Geoffrey can be contacted at: gkijjambu@nilebasin.org

Mr Matthew Rumanyika joined the Secretariat on September 15, 2020 as an Accountant. He brings with him over 10 years’ experience in Financial Accounting, Management Reporting, Treasury, Payroll, Corporate Finance and Tax.

Matthew holds a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) degree from Edinburgh Business School-Heriot Watt University. He is a member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) and is a Level 3 Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA). He also holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree from Makerere University.

He previously worked with different organisations, including Research and Education Network for Uganda (RENU), Eskom, British American Tobacco, National Social Security Fund (NSSF) and National Housing and Construction Company (NHCC).

Matthew can be contacted at: mrumanyika@nilebasin.org
Farewell and best wishes to our former colleague, **Dr. Abdulkarim H. Seid**. He worked for the Nile Basin Initiative for almost 17 years in different capacities, the most recent being as the Deputy Executive Director and Head of the Basin wide Programme at the Secretariat.

We are indebted to his hard work and commitment towards providing critical services in building basin wide technical competencies and capabilities and supporting science/knowledge based decision making to monitoring, protecting and sustaining the Nile water resources, as well as facilitating Basin-wide dialogue.

Dr. Seid has joined the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) as Country Representative of the Ethiopia Office covering East Africa and the Nile Basin.

We extend good wishes to Dr. Seid and his family and wish him good luck in his new endeavours.

We will remember him with warm thoughts and memories.

**Jane K. Baitwa**
Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist
NBI Secretariat, Entebbe
NBI develops COVID-19 Business Continuity Strategy

The corona virus (COVID-19) pandemic outbreak is impacting businesses all over the world. Whether NBI operations are already greatly affected or the impacts are yet to be felt, a business continuity plan is essential to ensure that the Secretariat can be as resilient as possible in this global health crisis.

As per instruction of its governance, the Secretariat prepared a post COVID 19 Business Continuity Strategy to guide the Secretariat's working modalities and approaches so as to ensure timely delivery and outcomes.

NBI MEMBER STATES

Burundi  DR-Congo  Egypt  Ethiopia  Kenya  Rwanda  South Sudan  The Sudan  Tanzania  Uganda

NBI SHARED VISION OBJECTIVE

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

Want to know more about NBI?

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