

JANUARY - MARCH 2026

# NileNews

A NEWSLETTER OF THE NILE BASIN INITIATIVE SECRETARIAT



NILE BASIN INITIATIVE  
INITIATIVE DU BASSIN DU NIL



Seated L-R: South Sudan's Minister of Cabinet Affairs, Hon. Martin Elia Lomuro, the Minister for Water Resources and Irrigation and NELCOM Chair Hon. James Mawich Makuach, the Guest of Honour, Ms. Josephine Lagu Yanga, the then Vice President, the Nile Council of Ministers' Chair/Minister of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock, in Burundi, H.E. Ms Calinie Mbarushimana and NBI Executive Director, Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima with senior government officials of South Sudan and NBI and NBD staff

## New Momentum as South Sudan Hosts 20th Nile Day Commemoration

More than 600 participants gathered in Juba to mark the 20th regional commemoration of Nile Day on 22 February 2026, highlighting concrete achievements and growing momentum in Nile cooperation under the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI).

Hosted for the first time by South Sudan, the celebration featured a vibrant programme aligned with the theme “Voices of the Nile: Community, Youth

and Women engagement for Water Governance.” Youth and women led a colourful march through Juba and ushered guests into the main event at the Bank of South Sudan, visibly bringing the theme to life.

Pre-events helped build momentum. A Nile Run attracted approximately 200 participants, including senior government officials, while a series of webinars and a youth hackathon

spotlighted innovation, inclusion and the growing role of young professionals in transboundary water governance.

Speaking at the event, NBI Executive Director, Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima said: “Since 1999, NBI has brought ten countries together around a shared river, turning dialogue into action and delivering real benefits in energy, water management and capacity building.”

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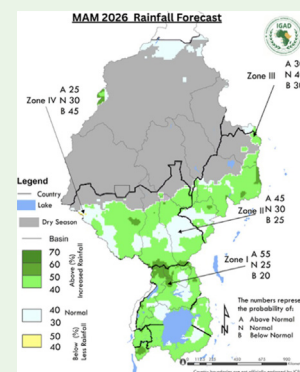
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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Dear Reader,**

I am pleased to present the Quarter 3 edition of Nile News for the 2025/2026 financial year, covering the period January to March 2026.

I congratulate the Republic and the people of South Sudan for successfully hosting an exceptional commemoration of Nile Day – on 22 February. Powered by the Government's full participation, the event was enriched by vibrant voices of women and youth alongside the expressive choreography of community participants. These festive elements set the tone for the commemoration as we entered the Bank of South Sudan for the main event where messages of the day reaffirmed the importance of placing women, youth, and communities at the centre of water governance.

In the days leading to Nile Day, South Sudan also hosted a series of governance meetings in a strategic effort to advance key processes and strengthen NBI as a platform for inclusive dialogue and cooperation. The meetings culminated in an Extra-ordinary session of the Nile Council of Ministers, attended by all 10 NBI Member States. The Council advanced the functional analysis process and agreed on action points to enhance the consistency and predictability of member-state contributions.

Over the past three months, I had the privilege of representing the Nile Basin Initiative at high-level panels around World Water Day, held in Bishoftu, Ethiopia, and Kampala, Uganda.



These discussions focused on NBI's regional relevance and on how best to position the institution for a sustainable transition towards the Nile River Basin Commission. During the same period, I engaged development and strategic partners, including the new Board Chairperson of the Nile Basin Discourse, as well as heads of mission representing Nile Basin countries in Uganda. I updated them on progress in cooperation and discussed outstanding matters requiring follow-up with their respective governments, and we look forward to continued engagement on these priorities.

This edition of Nile News reflects what we continue to achieve collectively, even with limited resources. I am encouraged by the progress made in the quarter – from the landmark agreement signed to support the sustainability of the Regional Rusumo Falls Hydroelectric Project, to the peer learning mission

with the Zambezi Watercourse Commission, to continued advances under the Groundwater Project aligned with SDG 6.

Moving ahead, we look forward to your participation in the 8th Nile Basin Development Forum, to be hosted by the United Republic of Tanzania in October 2026, and to your continued support to our broader basin-wide programmes, including the Nile River Basin Investment Programme (NR-BIP). NBI will continue to rely on the guidance and support of its Governance, led by the Nile Council of Ministers, as we work to resolve outstanding issues and advance resource mobilisation for this flagship programme.

Thank you for your continued interest and support.

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**Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima**

# From Zambezi to the Nile: NBI Hosts Exchange Mission

The NBI hosted 24 officials from the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) from 9–13 March 2026 to promote learning and exchange of experiences for purposes of strengthening transboundary water cooperation and institutional knowledge across Africa’s major river basins.

The delegation comprised senior officials from the ZAMCOM Secretariat and representatives of Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe serving on the ZAMCOM Technical Committee, alongside representatives from the Zambezi River Authority and

Hidroeléctrica de Cahora Bassa. The mission combined strategic dialogue with field-based learning, offering a comprehensive view of how regional water cooperation translates into practical systems, investments and livelihoods.



## Field Day 1: Jinja Pier on Lake Victoria

In Jinja, the mission observed NBI’s high-tech water monitoring systems, including regional hydrological stations and real-time data collection tools. The experience highlighted how shared data and technology underpin improved water management and generate benefits for decision-making across the basin.



## Field Day 2: At Fort Portal, western Uganda

At Fort Portal, discussions focused on catchment management and nature-based solutions, where participants explored how ecosystem-based approaches can enhance resilience while delivering benefits such as improved water regulation, reduced environmental degradation, and enhanced livelihoods.



## Field Day 3: Lake George

At Lake George, where the delegation observed fisheries management and integrated water resource management practices, which NBI supported under LEAF II. These approaches demonstrated how cooperation can deliver direct benefits to communities, including improved livelihoods and sustainable resource use.



Before departing for the field mission, NBI arranged a session in Entebbe where it shared its strategic plan and technical tools, including Integrated Knowledge Portal and the Nile Basin Decision Support System. At the same event, the Nile Basin Discourse presented its Programme of Work,

which includes the application of citizen science to address basin challenges. The institutions shared experiences in resource mobilisation.

### Key Takeaways

Across all engagements, a consistent message emerged: cooperation is not an abstract principle, but a practical pathway to delivering benefits. From real-time hydrological data systems to nature-based solutions and community-driven fisheries management, the Nile Basin experience demonstrates how shared resources can be developed sustainably for mutual gain. For both NBI and the visiting institutions, the exchange reinforced a shared reality

that river basins across Africa face similar challenges, from climate change and competing water demands to the need for inclusive growth. By learning from each other, these institutions are strengthening their ability to respond.

**Joint News Release** <https://nilebasin.org/sites/default/files/2026-03/Joint%20news%20release%20NBI%20ZAMCOM.pdf>

**ZAMCOM visit:** What they saw, what they said, what they took away <https://nilebasin.org/content/zamcom-exchange-visit-what-they-saw-and-took-away-nile-basin>

## In South Sudan, Nile Council of Ministers Discuss CFA, Investments Programme, Country Contributions



Prior to Nile Day 2026, the South Sudan hosted various Governance meetings between 16 and 21 February, including the 68th Nile Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting, the 28th Nile Equatorial Lakes Council of Ministers (NELCOM) meeting and an Extraordinary Nile Council of Ministers' meeting. It is at such meetings that NBI's Governance provides strategic direction for the institution of NBI.

South Sudan's Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Hon. Ambassador Semaya Kumba opened the NELCOM/Extra-ordinary meeting. He called water an issue "of great concern" for South Sudan, adding that it is encouraging that the African Union summit in Addis Ababa in 2026, placed it at the centre of its discussions, focusing on water safety,

sanitation, water availability, and water cooperation.

The Ambassador congratulated South Sudan's Minister for Water Resources

and Irrigation Hon. James Mawich Makuach for winning the trust of the NBI countries to assume the leadership role at the NELCOM.



The Extra-ordinary Council of Ministers' meeting approved action points developed by a special committee of the TAC to encourage country contributions. The COM discussed reports of special committees on engagements with non-ratifying countries on the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) and the Nile River Basin Investment Programme (NR BIP).

## Nile COM chair: We need to reposition NBI



H.E. Calinie Mbarushimana, who is a Minister of the Environment, Agriculture and Livestock in Burundi, appreciated the Government and people of South Sudan for hosting the Governance meetings and Nile Day.

She noted that since the last Council meeting in Bujumbura, progress has been made in advancing cooperation, including strengthened engagement with international partners such as the World Bank and the European

Commission, and the work of special committees under Nile-COM and Nile-TAC, which generated recommendations to guide institutional and operational reforms. She highlighted that these efforts demonstrate continued political and technical commitment to advancing basin-wide cooperation despite a complex and evolving institutional context.

The Minister underscored the need to resolve outstanding issues around the second Heads of State summit, the CFA and country contributions. She mentioned on-going preparations for the 8th Nile Basin Development Forum and a sustainability strategy for long-term financing, while calling for stronger collective action to elevate the Nile Basin as a strategic regional and continental asset capable of attracting greater support and delivering tangible benefits to citizens.



**Nile Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) chairperson, Mr. Augustin Ngenzirabona chairs the TAC. The newest member of the TAC, Dr Modathir Zaroug, greets ENTRO's Acting Executive Director, Mr. Teshome Atnafie, at the Juba governance meetings**

## The Executive Director: Progress made despite institutional impasses

Dr. Niyonzima emphasized that NBI has made tangible progress in implementing its workplan and delivering transformative transboundary projects in energy, groundwater management, and climate resilience, including

Rusumo and the Uganda-South Sudan power interconnection project. However, he warned that major strategic and institutional impasses are threatening the organisation's effectiveness, particularly stalled approval of some

projects under the NR BIP, inconsistent and declining country contributions, unresolved matters around the CFA, and delays in national commitments needed to unlock NELSAP projects.

# First 90 Days: ED signs MoU, tours Embassies, Speaks on Panels

## MOU SIGNED AS STAKEHOLDERS MEET AGAIN ON RUSUMO



**Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima (right) and MSc Eng. Eric Mpayimana, Managing Director of the Rusumo Power Company Ltd. sign the MoU in Kampala on 6 February 2026**

In his first nearly 90 days, from 3–5 February 2026 in Kampala, Uganda, the Executive Director, Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima presided over the second stakeholders' workshop that the Nile Basin Initiative convened to strengthen hydrological services supporting the Rusumo Hydropower Station.

Bringing together members of the Nile Technical Advisory Committee from Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, managers from the Rusumo Power Company and NBI experts and managers, the workshop built on the 2025 engagement and addressed persistent challenges affecting operations, including limited hydrological data, heavy sediment loads and invasive water hyacinth. Participants reviewed progress on the operation and maintenance of six regional monitoring stations and discussed mechanisms for real-time data collection, forecasting and information sharing across the Kagera Basin.

The workshop wound up with a milestone: the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Rusumo Power Company Ltd



**High sediment at the Rusumo power plant** and NBI on behalf of national water institutions of Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania. The agreement is aimed at strengthening collaboration on hydrological monitoring, data sharing and sustainable financing, while formalising the operation and maintenance of the regional monitoring system.

NBI hopes the initiative will serve as a model for other river basins, demonstrating the value of cooperative operations, shared information systems, and sustainable financing for transboundary infrastructure. By delivering reliable, real-time and forecast hydrological data, the

initiative will enhance planning and risk management, optimise power generation, and safeguard Rusumo as a flagship transboundary investment supplying clean energy to nearly one million people across Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania.

### News Release

<https://nilebasin.org/content/nbi-rusumo-power-company-sign-mou-sustainable-operations-through-enhanced-river-flow>

## ONE WEEK, FIVE DIPLOMATIC STOPS

During the week of 15 March, Dr Eng. Nestor Niyonzima, engaged envoys of Nile Basin member states in Kampala to reinforce cooperation, share progress, and highlight benefits accrued from cooperation.

### Ethiopia

In Kampala, the Executive Director met H.E. Ambassador Etsegenet Bezabih Yimenu of Ethiopia to Uganda, where discussions underscored Ethiopia's critical contribution to Nile flows and its central role in basin cooperation. They reviewed ongoing diplomatic engagement on the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) and progress on the Nile River Basin Investment Programme, which includes 59 transformative projects. Twenty two

of the 59 are from NBI's Eastern Nile office in Addis Ababa.

The Executive Director highlighted NBI's transboundary work in the Eastern Nile, delivering shared benefits in energy generation, watershed restoration, irrigation, decision-support systems, and capacity building for young professionals. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of sustained country contributions to strengthen NBI's ability to deliver these basin-wide benefits.



### Rwanda

In discussions with H.E. High Commissioner Col. Joseph Rutabana, the Executive Director emphasised progress toward an inclusive Nile River Basin Commission and the finalisation of the Nile River Basin Investment Programme.

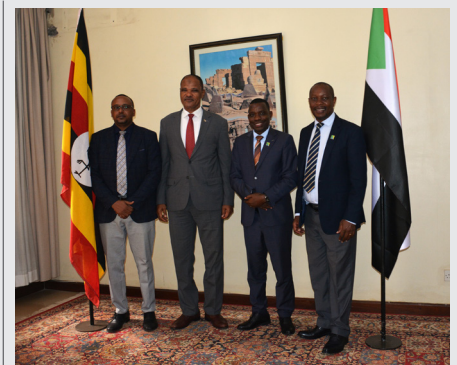
Rwanda's benefits from NBI include the Regional Rusumo Falls Hydroelectric

Project and the Uganda-Rwanda Shango/Mbarara project, which generate clean energy. Additional gains include high-tech hydrological monitoring stations with enhanced water quality sensors, strengthening data-driven water management. The meeting reinforced the need for all member states to demonstrate ownership through sustained contributions.

### Sudan

At the Embassy of Sudan in Kampala, the Executive Director met H.E. Ambassador Ahmed Ibrahim Ahmed to discuss inclusive progress on the Cooperative Framework Agreement and the importance of maintaining dialogue with non-ratifying countries. Despite the current instability, Sudan has continued to benefit from NBI interventions, including a basin-wide

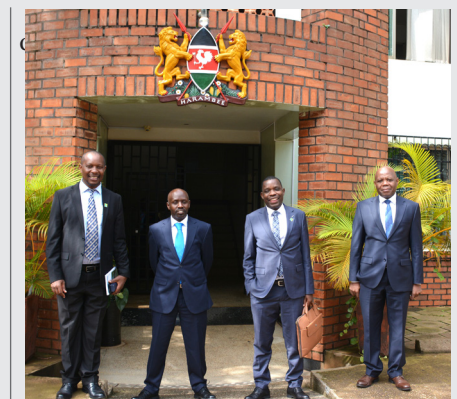
dam safety framework, the water-smart irrigation project supporting food security, and flood and drought forecasting systems that strengthen early warning capacity. Additional recent support includes water quality monitoring equipment and technical training for lab technicians. Sudan reaffirmed its commitment to NBI, including country contributions.

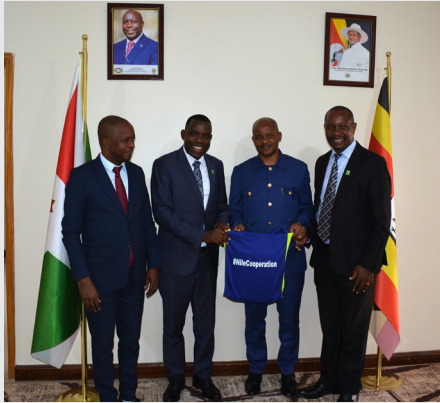


### Kenya

During a meeting with Deputy Head of Mission Ambassador Kipkosgei Toroitich at the Kenya High Commission in Kampala, the Executive Director expressed appreciation for Kenya's timely financial contribution and called for continued support to sustain NBI. Recent benefits to Kenya include the installation of water quality monitoring

equipment and online sensors in Kisumu, enhancing collaborative responses to declining water quality. NBI is implementing a groundwater pilot in Kitale to improve access to safe water and sanitation, contributing to SDG 6 outcomes. Progress on resolving outstanding issues around the Cooperative Framework Agreement was also discussed. Kenya is one of four





### **Burundi**

Meeting H.E. Ambassador Brig. Gen. Jules Ndiwokubwayo, the Executive Director acknowledged Burundi's leadership as Chair of the Nile Council of Ministers and its role in advancing dialogue on the Nile River Basin Investment Programme. Discussions addressed ongoing efforts to resolve basin-wide challenges through high-level cooperation mechanisms. Burundi continues to derive significant

benefits from NBI, including 27 MW of power from the Rusumo Falls Hydropower Project, alongside local development gains. The country has also received advanced hydrological monitoring stations, water quality sensors, and data systems to enhance climate resilience and water security. A groundwater pilot project is further improving access to drinking water, sanitation, and overall wellbeing.

### **Germany, a partnership as “as good as possible”**

Earlier in the week, Ms Alicia Van Den Boom, Head of Cooperation at the German Embassy, visited the Nile Basin Office in Entebbe alongside GIZ Country Director James Macbeth Forbes, where she met the Executive Director. She described the NBI–Germany partnership as “as good as possible”, one that Germany would like to remain very close.

Germany recognised tangible progress achieved through its support to transboundary water cooperation, including strengthened hydromet systems, advancement of the Nile River Basin Investment Programme, and sustained diplomatic engagement on the CFA.



## NBD BOARD CHAIRPERSON VISITS



On 3 March, 2026, Dr. Niyonzima welcomed a delegation from the Nile Basin Discourse, headed by the new Board Chairperson, Ms. Aynalem Ashebir (extreme right). The ED emphasized the important role of the civil society in Nile cooperation.

### SPEAKING AT SUHULTA WATER CONFERENCE

The Executive Director participated in the Suhulta Water and Hydro-Diplomacy Regional Conference, held on 23–24 March 2026 in Bishoftu, Ethiopia as part of celebrations to mark World Water Day. The conference brought together leaders, policymakers,

researchers and water experts from across Ethiopia and the Nile Basin. Organised by the Ministry of Water and Energy, the conference focused on strengthening cooperation in managing shared water resources.

Discussions centred on hydro-diplomacy, regional collaboration, and the use of data and evidence to guide decisions on water and energy development. Participants highlighted the importance of working together across borders to ensure equitable access to water, while promoting gender equality and inclusive development. Dr. Niyonzima spoke on a high-level

panel, discussing transboundary water governance and financial sustainability. He said the NRBC must be built on strong ownership from the outset with the aim to mobilise predictable, enforceable national contributions, and domestic financing of core functions. It also is important to adopt an institutional design that countries can realistically sustain, diversify revenue streams and strengthen accountability so that Member States see clear value in what they fund and remain committed over time, he added.



ETHIOPIA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97vCbLkYeEc>

## AT UGANDA WATER AND ENVIRONMENT WEEK, ED DISCUSSES NBI'S ROLE REGIONALLY

The Executive Director participated in the Uganda Water and Environment Week, held under the theme “*Water and Environment for an Inclusive and Prosperous Uganda.*” The event underscored the importance of safeguarding and equitably managing water and environmental resources to drive socio-economic transformation, ensuring all Ugandans benefit from safe water, healthy ecosystems, and sustainable livelihoods.

On 26 March, speaking on the sub-theme of environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities, the Executive Director joined a panel of national and international experts, contributing a regional perspective rooted in Nile Basin cooperation.

**On the role of the Nile Basin Initiative in advancing environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies,** the Executive Director emphasised that

the organisation provides a unique basin-wide platform for coordination, technical leadership, and joint planning beyond national borders. He highlighted how NBI supports countries with hydrometeorological data, climate risk information, and early warning systems that enable timely and life-saving decisions.

He further noted that, as the only inclusive intergovernmental platform across the basin, NBI fosters trust and enables cooperative, evidence-based transboundary water management. Through programmes and projects such as Hydromet, dam safety, and the Nile River Basin Investment Programme, the Initiative strengthens national capacity for environmental safeguards and coordinated water infrastructure operations. He also pointed to efforts to build a new generation of climate-aware water professionals through training, internships, and regional expert networks, alongside integrating climate risk assessments and safeguards into

project preparation to support more resilient investments.

**On how data and technology can be better utilised to identify and mitigate risks from extreme weather events,** the Executive Director stressed the need for a strategic, basin-wide approach. He underscored the importance of harnessing advanced hydrological and climate modelling tools, modernising hydrometeorological systems, and deploying cloud-based data platforms to improve analysis and access. He further highlighted the role of technology in enabling coordinated dam operations across countries, as well as the need to develop localised early warning products tailored to community needs. Crucially, he emphasised that these efforts must be underpinned by strengthened cross-border data sharing and institutionalised mechanisms for joint decision-making across the Nile Basin.

**Elsewhere during the Week, Tom Waako (Program Officer) and Lydia Wamala (Regional Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist) co-presented a technical paper:** From Basin Cooperation to Peace and Prosperity: Policy Lessons from the Nile Basin for Uganda’s Sustainable Development.

### Abstract

Transboundary cooperation is a cornerstone for sustainable water resources management and national development in the Nile Basin, where shared water resources are under increasing pressure from population growth, economic development, competing sectoral demands, and climate change. In line with the Nile Basin Initiative’s 10-year Strategy and Agenda 2030, this paper underscores the importance of knowledge-based decision making as a foundation for optimal planning, management, and development of the Nile’s water resources. Evidence-driven joint planning, supported by reliable data, shared knowledge systems, and technical analysis, enables riparian countries to enhance water use efficiency, manage trade-offs, and design resilient development interventions. Adherence to international water management principles and legal frameworks promotes equitable and reasonable utilization, supports benefit sharing, and strengthens cooperation, thereby contributing to peace and regional stability. The study highlights the need to integrate basin-wide priorities with national development strategies, while addressing water scarcity through conjunctive use of surface water and groundwater, technological innovation, and capacity development.

### Complete Book of Abstracts:

<https://www.mwe.go.ug/publications/publications/book-of-abstracts-uwewk-2026>

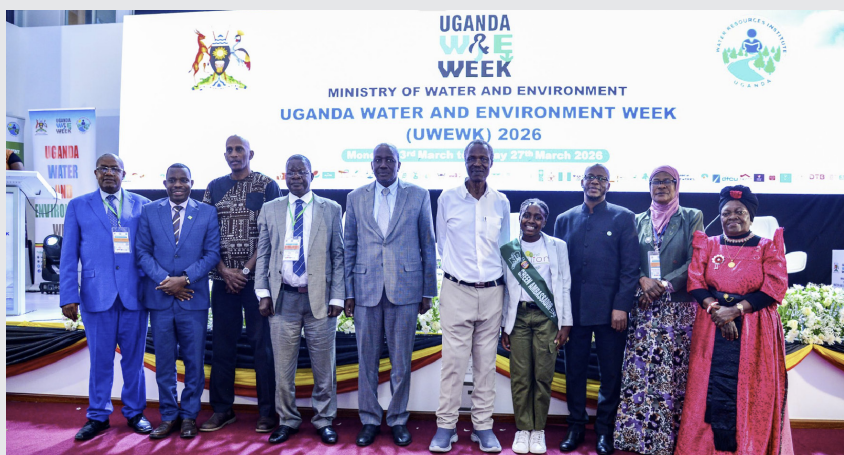


## ON THE SIDELINES, A MEET UP WITH UNDP

Off the back of the panel meeting, the ED met with the Dr Zeynu Ummer the Director, Resilience Hub for Africa to discuss a mutual interest in an expanded partnership.

UNDP has been a partner of Nile cooperation since the 1960s when discussions began for technical collaboration, triggered by a flooding disaster that affected Sudan and Egypt at the time. Currently, NBI maintains a partnership with UNDP/ Global Environment Facility for its groundwater project. The two organisations will prepare joint proposals for mobilising resources to finance groundwater interventions.

During the closing ceremony, the Executive Director also met with Uganda's Nile-COM member, Sam Cheptoris (white shirt, centre right).



## AT ENTRO, ED COMMENDS OFFICE ON INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO

Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima, reaffirmed the institution's commitment to strengthening its investment pipeline during his first official visit to the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office in Addis Ababa.

Welcomed by ENTRO's Acting Executive Director, Mr. Teshome Atnafie, and staff, Dr. Niyonzima toured the premises and received briefings on the centre's ongoing work, particularly its investment programme portfolio. The visit marked his first engagement with the office since assuming leadership of NBI on 6 January 2026.

Speaking during the visit, the Executive

Director commended ENTRO's performance and dedication in sustaining the institution's role across the Eastern Nile sub-basin.

"We value your centre greatly and recognize the work you are doing to sustain and strengthen the institution," he said. "We are pleased to see progress particularly in the investment programme portfolio, which includes (22) important investment preparation projects."

Dr. Niyonzima acknowledged ongoing institutional challenges, particularly around resource mobilisation and country contributions, noting that

these constraints are shared and being addressed across NBI's centres.

### See details

<https://nilebasin.org/content/entro-welcomes-nbi-leadership-highlights-one-nbi-three-centers-philosophy>

## AUDA-NEPAD training strengthens NR-BIP data systems



An AUDA-NEPAD African Infrastructure Database (AID) task team training and working session on the Nile River Basin Investment Program (NRBIP) concluded on 27 February 2026, following four days of technical work to strengthen regional infrastructure data systems and investment coordination

platform and consolidating the NRBIP project portfolio.

The NRBIP, a flagship regional initiative jointly developed by IGAD, the Eastern African Power Pool, the East African Community/Lake Victoria Basin Commission (EAC/LVBC), and the Nile Basin Initiative (including

the Secretariat, NELSAP-CU and ENTRO), is now in its implementation phase. During the session, participants validated the migration of project data into the upgraded AID system, developed and uploaded standardised project profiles, and integrated partner project pipelines into the platform. Institutions also linked their websites to the AID and NRBIP portals, improving interoperability, visibility and access to investment information, while updating programme documentation in line with NBI governance guidance.

**NBI's Deputy Executive Director Dr Abraha Aduugna said,**

**“This exercise has been critical in strengthening the AID system and ensuring that our project data is accurate, visible and well-coordinated—an essential step for mobilising resources and delivering benefits to the people of the Nile Basin.”**

**African Union Development Agency-NEPAD** 54,789 followers 1mo • [+ Follow](#)

Experts from six regional institutions gathered to advance a critical digital public good. AUDA-NEPAD and the Nile River Basin Investment Program (NRBIP) equipped teams with the African Infrastructure Database (AID) Tool and created a seamless digital ecosystem where climate-resilient projects become visible and fundable and actionable for communities across the Nile Basin.

At the heart of this effort is the Nile River Basin Investment Program (NRBIP), a flagship initiative reversing environmental degradation and unlocking socio-economic transformation for millions who depend on the Nile. Updated project profiles now flow into integrated dashboards and connect institutional websites directly to resource mobilisation portals that serve the public interest.

This wasn't just capacity building. It created a public infrastructure for ensuring every community along the Nile has access to resilient energy and clean water and economic opportunity. With Germany's BMZ support, we are transforming climate challenges into shared prosperity for all through digital public goods.

#ClimateResilience #NileBasin

**IGAD Secretariat** @IGADsecretariat · Feb 27 [Strengthening Regional Infrastructure Planning in the Nile Basin.](#)

#IGAD has successfully concluded its participation in the AUDA-NEPAD African Infrastructure Database (AID) Task Team Training on the Nile River Basin Investment Program (NRBIP).

The engagement strengthened regional collaboration, enhanced infrastructure data management, and improved visibility of transformative investment projects aimed at advancing climate-resilient socio-economic development across the Nile Basin.

By strengthening digital integration and project coordination, IGAD continues to promote evidence-based planning and sustainable infrastructure development in the region.

[Read more: igad.int/igad-strengthe...](#)

Follow IGAD's work and stay updated on regional initiatives driving integration, resilience, and sustainable development across our region.

#RisingWithIGAD  
#OneRegionOneIGAD

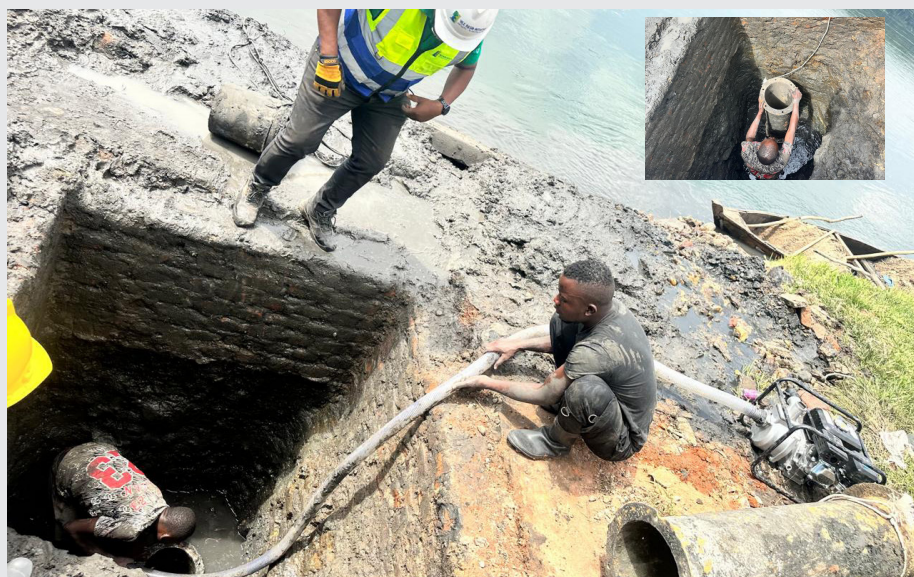
@NEPAD\_Agency  
@EAC\_LVBC  
@nbiweb  
@NelsapCu

# Hydromet

## NBI LEADS AS UGANDA REPAIRS SEVEN STATIONS

From 3 to 26 January 2026, working closely with the Ministry of Water and Environment and the local communities, NBI undertook a comprehensive rehabilitation of key transboundary hydrometeorological monitoring stations across the country. Technical teams bringing together national hydrologists, water quality specialists and an NBI regional expert inspected, repaired and recalibrated telemetric stations at strategic locations along major river systems that feed into the Nile. The works included replacing sensors, recalibrating equipment to World Meteorological Organization (WMO) standards, restoring data transmission links, and installing solar-powered backup systems to ensure continuous operations.

By the end of the mission, seven out of nine priority stations – at Jinja (Lake Victoria), Mbulamuti and Masindi Port (Victoria Nile), Luhalali (River Sio), Butiaba (Lake Albert), Bugondo (Lake Kyoga), and Laropi (Albert Nile) – were successfully restored and transmitting real-time data. These stations now feed directly into both Uganda’s National Data Centre and NBI’s regional



hydrology centre, significantly strengthening the flow of reliable, shared information across the Basin. This intervention responded to a pressing challenge. Over time, parts of Uganda’s monitoring network had been affected by ageing equipment, constrained maintenance resources, vandalism and the harsh conditions typical of tropical river environments. As a result, some stations had stopped functioning, creating gaps in data needed for effective water management.

By restoring these stations, Uganda has reinforced its national capacity to monitor rainfall, river levels and flows, information that underpins water resource planning, flood and drought preparedness, and infrastructure development. At the same time, the rehabilitation enhances the integrity of the Nile Basin-wide Hydrological Monitoring System, ensuring that regional analyses and forecasts are based on accurate, up-to-date data from across the Basin.

## Through training, NBI Enhances Capacity of Country Experts in DSS

Use of the Nile Basin Decision Support System (NB DSS) is expanding across member states, following a series of targeted trainings delivered by the Nile Basin Initiative between January and March 2026. Two in-person and two virtual sessions have equipped water professionals with practical skills to apply the system, resulting in 41 new users able to support data-driven planning and cooperation on.

The NB DSS is a powerful analytical tool designed to improve the quality, efficiency and sustainability of water resources management. By enabling countries to assess scenarios across

sectors such as agriculture, energy and the environment, it helps decision-makers weigh trade-offs, understand basin-wide impacts and identify cooperative solutions. This is particularly critical in a basin where water stress is rising, populations are growing rapidly, and economies depend heavily on climate-sensitive sectors. Participants in the training are already applying the system to inform national and regional planning processes.

The growing pool of skilled users strengthens countries’ ability to jointly analyse development options, from infrastructure investments to water

allocation strategies, while safeguarding shared resources. In doing so, the DSS is enhancing transparency, building trust and supporting more coordinated responses to increasing water scarcity and climate variability.

“The increased use of the DSS demonstrates our shared commitment to cooperation grounded in science and data,” said the Deputy Executive Director. “By strengthening national capacities and promoting a common analytical framework, we are enabling member states to make decisions for sustainable management of the Nile Basin.”

## FROM RAINS TO RISING RIVER FLOWS: THE MARCH TO MAY (MAM) SEASONAL OUTLOOK

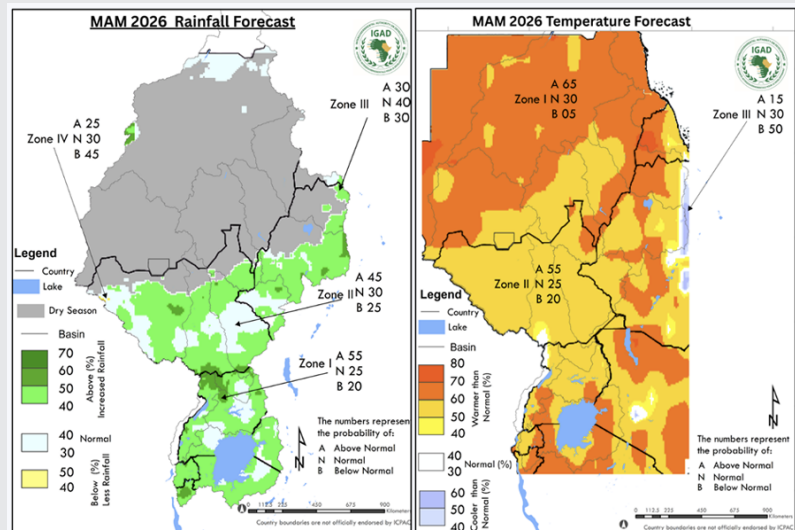
### Key Climate Regional Outlook Highlights:

- Increased likelihood of above-normal rainfall over most parts of the Nile Equatorial Lakes (NEL) region and few parts of the Eastern Nile Basin.
- Near-normal conditions expected in several central regions of the basin.
- Increased probability of below-normal rainfall in selected downstream and western areas.

NBI issued the Regional Seasonal Hydrological Outlook and Advisory for the March–May 2026 season, providing Nile Basin Member States with a timely, evidence-based assessment of anticipated hydrological conditions across the Basin.

The Outlook and Advisory was developed by NBI's technical Regional Working Group on Hydrology (REWG), which synthesised observed hydrological data with the seasonal climate outlook issued by the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre during the 72nd

Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum. Additional inputs included forecasts from regional climate and hydrological modelling centres, as well as assessments of current reservoir and lake levels, river flows, and observed trends across the Basin.



The resulting advisory was shared with national sector agencies, water resources ministries, and key infrastructure operators across all Member States, offering an authoritative Basin-wide perspective on the season ahead. It indicates that above-normal rainfall, river flows, and lake levels are anticipated in most parts of the Nile

Equatorial Lakes region and in parts of the Eastern Nile, particularly the Gambella region of Ethiopia.

<https://nilebasin.org/content/nile-basin-seasonal-hydrological-outlook-and-advisory-march-april-may-2026-season>

## NBI convenes Desk/Communication Officers to Promote Water Governance

On 29 January NBI convened Desk and Communication Officers from its Member States for a virtual engagement aimed at strengthening how transboundary water governance is reflected in national communication and development processes. The session focused on improving coordination between regional programmes and national communication structures to ensure more coherent messaging on Nile cooperation.

NBI provided updates on Basin-wide Programme II and the Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2025–2029, highlighting how both frameworks guide efforts to strengthen

cooperation, enhance visibility of results, and support informed decision-making at national level. The discussion also underscored NBI's long-standing role over the past 27 years in demonstrating the tangible benefits of cooperation across the Nile Basin.

A key focus of the engagement was how Desk and Communication Officers can work more productively with NBI to integrate transboundary water governance perspectives into national development plans. Participants explored practical ways of communicating the value of shared water resources management, including improved understanding of joint investments, early

warning systems, and other regional tools that support national priorities. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to strengthen collaboration between NBI and national communication structures. This includes improving information flow, aligning communication efforts with Basin-wide Programme II priorities, and better demonstrating the benefits of Nile cooperation to national stakeholders and the wider public.

Burundi, Ethiopia, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda were represented at the meeting, which was also attended by Communication Officers at NELSAP and ENTRO.

## World Water Day 2026: A Groundwater Project for Gender and SDG 6

Across five Nile Basin countries, NBI's groundwater pilots are demonstrating scalable solutions that can bring clean water closer to communities, unlocking opportunities for women while strengthening cooperation on shared aquifers. Regional Project Lead, Dr Maha Abdelraheem Ismail, explains.

**Q: World Water Day 2026 focuses on “Water and Gender”. How does this relate to your work?**

Groundwater is fundamentally a gender issue. Across Africa, from Uganda to Chad, Mali and Niger, it is women who fetch water, often spending up to a quarter of their day on this task. This reflects inadequate services. The time lost limits women's ability to earn income, improve livelihoods and acquire new skills, placing them at a disadvantage compared to men. In most households, Men use water after it comes to the house. They don't go out looking for it. Where water infrastructures are weak, women's economic status is typically lower. Improving access is therefore not just a water issue: it is an equality issue.

**Q: What progress has been made so far?**

Under its groundwater project, the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) is implementing pilot interventions in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, focusing on the Kagera and Mt Elgon shared aquifers. The project has installed water storage tanks with a capacity of up to 60 cubic metres (60,000 litres), located within 500 metres of targeted communities. This significantly reduces collection time, with a jerrycan of water now filled in under three minutes. Planned expansion to Ethiopia and Sudan in the Gedaref–Adigrat aquifer, has been constrained by insecurity.



**Q: What benefits has this work delivered for Nile cooperation?**

From the outset, the project brought together scientists from across the basin through Shared Aquifer Diagnostic Analysis (SADA). This created a strong network for peer learning, knowledge exchange and collaboration. In the Kagera aquifer (Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda), this cooperation led to a practical regional action plan built on three pillars:

- knowledge and data sharing
- institutional frameworks for transboundary water governance
- capacity building

But you cannot build capacity without providing the necessary tools for people to carry out their work. So, we set up a regional monitoring system on the Kagera, where we drilled 20 boreholes fitted with data loggers. The information from the loggers will be processed in a data system we set up in addition, and reports will be generated on a regular basis to enable evidence-based decision making in the four countries.



**Q: How are you advancing SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and what is NBI's comparative advantage in your work?**

A: NBI contributes directly to SDG indicators 6.5.1 and 6.5.2 on transboundary water cooperation. When we create a platform for exchanging knowledge and data and experiences, we are facilitating cooperation for best practices and success stories. This improves the situation of drinking water and sanitation for the well-being of citizens of the Nile Basin. Through NBI's managed aquifer recharge (MAR) pilots, benefits are materialising right in front of communities.

On the comparative advantage, many regional agencies provide data, in addition to NASA and open sources. What NBI does uniquely is bringing people and countries together. This dialogue builds trust improves mutual understanding and supports joint solutions.



**Q: NBI is essentially a knowledge agency. As is the Groundwater project. What new information, lessons, data are emerging from your pilot so far?**

We have seen a need to manage water holistically and in an integrated manner. For example, we can, for example, combine surface and groundwater or sea water with surface water – that is, of course, after desalination (a process of removing salt and other minerals from

seawater or salty groundwater to make it safe for drinking, irrigation, or industrial use). Integrated approaches will enable countries meet the rising demand for water as populations move to urban areas. Historically, reliance on surface water alone has pushed resources such as rivers and lakes towards over-exploitation. The MAR technology being piloted demonstrates holistic and integrated use of water.

**Q: What technical challenges are you facing in the on-going pilots?**

A major challenge is the lack of reliable, quality-assured data. Much of the available information is generic, with limited regular monitoring. We often need to work backwards – examining the data, then validating it, then quality assuring it. Site selection was also difficult due to the absence of inventories identifying areas suitable for conjunctive use of surface and groundwater or MAR application. As a result, the team relied on satellite imagery and secondary



data, which slowed implementation. Additional challenges included land ownership issues and the need to build understanding among local authorities.

That said, we got capable contractors and resident engineers, which has supported implementation.

**Q: So, what in NBI's work has helped move the stone, considering all the institutional faults?**

The project has highlighted important regulatory gaps. For example, while Uganda has relatively strong surface water regulation, groundwater governance remains underdeveloped. The pilots revealed the absence of guidelines for drilling, equipment standards and geophysical investigations. Bringing these gaps to light is an important step towards strengthening national frameworks.

**Q: How does your pilot/project relate with others at NBI?**

All NBI programmes are designed to support transboundary water development through cooperation. The groundwater pilots complement this by strengthening understanding of shared aquifers as critical resources for water security and climate resilience.

**Q: What are the next steps after this pilot and for the project?**



NBI is working to scale up the project, with plans to extend activities to the Rift Valley and the Sudd Basin. Existing data from initiatives such as the Horn of Africa and DYNObA projects provides a strong foundation for this expansion. For current pilots, the priority is to establish robust operation and maintenance systems to ensure long-term sustainability.

**Q: Do you have any closing reflections?**

Groundwater often receives less attention than surface water (from lakes or rivers), partly because it is less visible and less politically prominent than large infrastructure such as dams. Yet its importance is clear. In Kampala, for example, approximately 43% of water use comes from groundwater. In Entebbe, only one treatment plant exists (for surface water); much of the remaining supply relies on groundwater.

<https://nilebasin.org/content/underground-nbi-delivers-water-works-women-and-builds-cooperation>

## Dr Florence Supports Transition, Reflects on her Term, Wins Award

Dr. Florence Grace Adongo served as Senior Advisor to the Executive Director between January and March 2026, enabling a smooth transition from Uganda's to Burundi's tenure at the helm of the Nile Basin Initiative. In her three months of service, the former Executive Director submitted a handover report, introduced Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima to development and strategic partners and undertook other activities to establish the new management.

"Dr Florence was generous," Dr

Niyonzima said, adding that her service was particularly important during his first engagement as ED with the African Network of Basin Organisations – where NBI completed its presidency – the Governance meetings and Nile Day in South Sudan and deliberations around

the Nile River Basin Investment Programme (NR-BIP).

Below: Dr. Florence Award

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1k1W8-Q7BL9vrmkcXIYQ\\_3Yi3-NJYG4iR/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1k1W8-Q7BL9vrmkcXIYQ_3Yi3-NJYG4iR/view)



## NBDF 8 to Focus on People, Climate, Investments

The eighth Nile Basin Development Forum (NBDF 8), scheduled for October 2026 in Tanzania, will bring together leaders, experts and stakeholders to advance cooperation on the region’s shared water resources.

Organised by the Nile Basin Initiative’s Member States and partners, the Forum has, since 2006, provided a trusted platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange and partnership-building. It continues to support joint responses to the Basin’s growing water, climate and development challenges.

The Executive Director, Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima, said this is not just another NBDF:

“The eighth edition comes at a time when the pressures on the Nile are visible in people’s daily lives – from floods and droughts to pollution and declining water quality. NBDF 8 also coincides with high momentum for joint investments in power generation, interconnections and other water related projects designed to improve socio-economic conditions for citizens of the Nile Basin.

“The Forum will focus on solutions: investing in people and technology, unlocking financing, ramping up socio-economic investments and turning cooperation into benefits that communities can see and feel.”

**Theme:** NBDF 8 will convene under the theme:

**“Building a resilient and inclusive Nile future: investing in people, innovation and cooperation for shared prosperity.”**

The theme reflects the urgency of addressing rising climate risks, population growth, environmental pressures, declining water quality linked to pollution and urbanisation, and increasing demand for water, food and energy—while ensuring that development benefits are shared equitably across the Basin.

### The four Sub-themes

#### 1. Investing in People

**The Forum will highlight the central role of people – particularly women and youth – in water management and development.** Discussions will focus on strengthening inclusion in decision-making, addressing skills and capacity gaps in transboundary water management, leveraging digital technologies to improve water planning and efficiency, and strengthening engagement between policy, research institutions and civil society

#### 2. Investment Financing

**Attention will focus on how to mobilise the significant investment required for water infrastructure and development across the Basin.**

Priorities include expanding access to climate and blended finance, strengthening enabling conditions for private sector participation, and addressing the shortage of well-prepared, bankable projects that can attract investment at scale.

#### 3. Climate Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction

**With climate change intensifying floods, droughts and extreme weather events, the Forum will prioritise strengthening resilience across the Basin.** This includes climate-proofing infrastructure, restoring and protecting ecosystems such as wetlands and forests, improving early warning systems, and integrating infrastructure, nature-based solutions and technology. It also highlights the growing challenge of environmental pollution and declining water quality.

#### 4. Shared Prosperity through Cooperation

**The Forum will underscore the central role of cooperation in achieving equitable and sustainable development across the Basin.** Key issues include balancing competing water demands, addressing food and energy insecurity, ensuring fair and inclusive sharing of benefits, and scaling up joint solutions such as hydropower development, irrigation systems, watershed management and regional early warning systems.

See more <https://nilebasin.org/8th-nile-basin-development-forum>

# OUTLOOK (Quarter 4, April – June 2026)

## WATER SECURITY

### Information Support Systems

- Finalise creation of Intranet to enhance internal communication and information management
- Launch new session of online courses [www.nilebasin.org](http://www.nilebasin.org)
- Begin development of NBI “digital twin”

### Conjunctive use of Surface and Groundwater

- Online training on Groundwater monitoring and installation of equipment for Kagera shared aquifer (for Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Rwanda)
- Participate in back-to-back UNECE/Water Convention workshop on the Use of new technologies and Innovations for Monitoring, Assessment and Data-sharing in Transboundary Basins, and 21st meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes
- Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) pilot field supervision
- SADC exchange and Twinning visit.

### Regional Hydrological Monitoring System

- Third technical workshop for Regional Expert Working Group on Hydrology, 73rd Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook (GHACOF) meeting, and preparation of June-September Nile Basin Seasonal Outlook and Advisory
- Field work to complete rehabilitation of vital regional hydrological monitoring stations in Uganda Coordination meeting between Uganda and South Sudan senior officials
- Installation of Hydromet and water quality monitoring station at Kasenyi, L. Albert in Democratic Republic of Congo
- Handover of Water Quality Equipment (Tanzania)

### Nile River Basin Investment Programme (NR-BIP)

- Task team meeting on resource mobilization action plan
- NR-BIP development partners engagement meeting (AfDB, AUDA NEPAD and Africa Water Facility)

## CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

- Training for modellers basin-wide – on climate change application for investment projects

## TRANSBOUNDARY WATER GOVERNANCE

- Governance meetings
- Facilitate Nile COM Special Committees on country engagements and NR BIP
- Preparation for 8th Nile Basin Development Forum and Media Awards
- Participation on INBO World Basin Summit panel and in Water Convention meetings (Geneva)
- Policy Brief and draft cooperation agreement on integrating transboundary water governance in Uganda secondary school
- Finalise funding proposal for with UNEP and collaborative plan with DHI curriculum
- Stakeholder engagement at national level (desk officers and decision-makers)
- Diplomatic engagements and strategic engagements with multilateral organizations
- Finalise journalists’ Sourcebook

## IN OTHER NEWS (& OPINIONS)

### AU oped

“Sustainable water management is therefore not only a development priority; it is a resilience imperative. Water also reminds us that cooperation is not optional. Nearly 60 percent of Africa’s freshwater resources are shared across national borders. Rivers such as the Nile, the Niger, Congo, the Zambezi and the Volta link countries and communities in complex hydrological systems that transcend political boundaries. These shared waters can become either sources of cooperation or sources of tension.”

### From Resolution to Reality: Delivering Water and Sanitation for “The Africa We Want”

March 21, 2026



From Resolution to Reality: Delivering Water and Sanitation for “The Africa We Want”

Share:



### The South Sudan–Uganda power link: Timeline, cost, and impact

Author: Kwang Pa Chang | Published: February 23, 2026

Show with friends:



## Country efforts for environmental sustainability



Bamboo trees planted along the shores of the Nyabarongo river, a major tributary of the Nile river in Rwanda. Photo by Sam Njindana/maana.



# IN OTHER NEWS (& OPINIONS)

**Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat** • You  
Intergovernmental Partnership at Nile Basin Member States  
3mo • 🌐



New Executive Director Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima gave his first media interview. Yesterday. In Juba, South Sudan. At a press conference on advanced preparations for the regional commemoration of #NileDay2026.

Read why we celebrate Nile Day every 22 February  
👉 [#NileCooperation](https://lnkd.in/dbrt4BRj)



**Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program (NELSAP-CU)** • 2nd + Follow ...  
Intergovernmental Institution at Nile Equatorial Lak...  
2d • 🌐

**Transboundary Flood Management Plan Sensitization and FFEWS Awareness Campaign in Elegu and Nimule**  
The NELSAP-CU team, together with officials from Uganda's ...more





**Isaac Alukwe** • 2nd  
REGIONAL COORDINATOR (NB/NELSAP-CU)  
2mo • 🌐

Proud to see the strength of regional technical leadership on display over the past two days in Juba. The 44th NELTAC Meeting reinforced our collective commitment to turning cooperation into measurable infrastructure and resilience outcomes.

**Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program (NELSAP-CU)** • 2nd + Follow  
Intergovernmental Institution at Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiar...  
2mo • 🌐

Highlights from the 44th Nile Equatorial Lakes Technical Advisory Committee meeting in Juba as member states strengthened coordination, and reinforced regional cooperation across the Nile Basin. #NILEDAY2026



**Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program (NELSAP-CU)** • 1st ...  
Intergovernmental Institution at Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Progr...  
1w • 🌐

👉 **Strengthening Community Ownership | SUPIP Stakeholder Engagement Update.**

This month, our team conducted stakeholder engagement sessions in Nimule and Magwi County as part of the ongoing South Sudan Uganda Power Interconnection Project (SUPIP), a continuous process to build project ownership, acceptance, and visibility within local communities.

The engagements brought together key leaders and partners, including:

- ✓ Hon. Francis Gabriel – Commissioner, Magwi County
- ✓ Hon. Caesar Longa – Mayor, Nimule Municipality
- ✓ Dr. Alukwe Isaac – NELSAP-CU Regional Coordinator
- ✓ Eng. Jacob Manyoun Deng – Power Program Manager, NELSAP
- ✓ NELSAP staff and community representatives

These consultations are a critical part of our commitment to inclusive and participatory project development ensuring that the communities most affected are informed, engaged, and invested in outcomes from the very start.

We believe lasting infrastructure and development impact begins with trust,





NEWS  
HOUR

REGIONAL WATER MINISTERS ARRIVE IN JUBA FOR SUNDAY'S NILE BASIN EVENT

08:22

.....RUMBEK UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY WILL COND

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From Page 1

## BENEFITS REALISED

These gains include a US\$6.5 billion pipeline of joint investments, clean energy from the Regional Rusumo Falls Hydroelectric Project, and expanded regional power interconnections such as the South Sudan–Uganda line. NBI has established a real-time flood and drought forecasting system supported by a transboundary monitoring network of 44 stations complemented by earth observation systems. A basin-wide, high-tech water quality monitoring system has also been established, strengthening environmental protection and informing water-related investments (full speech on page 26).

Nile Day 2026 reaffirmed a shared commitment to cooperation as the foundation for climate resilience, regional integration and shared prosperity. Here are speech highlights:

### **The then Vice President and Chairperson of the Service Cluster, Ms. Josephine Lagu Yanga**

Water represents livelihoods, resources, heritage, identity. The theme for Nile Day is therefore overdue. Women and youth must be placed at the centre of water resource decision making. There is need to collectively safeguard the

river's long-term ecological health, unlock regional development and strengthen climate resilience through robust institutional frameworks. South Sudan is committed to the principle and spirit of the Nile Basin Initiative and supports the establishment of the Nile River Basin Commission. South Sudan also encourages the continuation of the on-going engagement with non-ratifying countries and is committed to the development of long-term solutions to challenges of the Nile Basin.

### **Nile Council of Ministers' Chair/ Minister of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock, Republic of Burundi, H.E. Ms Calinie Mbarushimana**

NBI's shared vision objective remains clear: to achieve sustainable socio-economic development through equitable utilisation of, and benefit from, the shared Nile Basin water resources. Since its establishment in 1999, NBI has prepared a portfolio of US\$6.5 billion in transboundary water projects including in hydropower and irrigation. There is growing alignment around common basin planning frameworks and jointly prepared investments basin-

wide, reflecting increasing trust and collaboration among member states. The 2026 theme underscores the importance of inclusive participation the stewardship of the Nile Basin's share resources. Water governance must extend beyond institutions and technical processes to embrace communities, empower women and engage the youth. Addressing challenges of the Nile Basin calls for sustained political will and practical collaboration.

### **Minister of Cabinet Affairs of South Sudan, Hon. Martin Elia Lomuro:**

Youth, women and communities are different across the Nile Basin, but their need for water is the same. Working against water development in any country of the Basin means you are directly negatively impacting the lives of youth, women and communities. Therefore, I appeal to you Ministers of water affairs to think morally, not politically, recognising that you are responsible for the lives of all youth women and communities across the Basin. I would like this Nile Day to focus on inclusivity, leaving no voice behind.

### **Host Minister for Water Resources and Irrigation and NELCOM Chair Hon. James Mawich Makuach:**

The Republic of South Sudan remains peaceful and ready to lead as Chair of NELCOM. Congratulations to the people of South Sudan on this new responsibility. I commend Rwanda for its stewardship of the NELCOM. South Sudan has benefited from the Regional Hydrological Monitoring System, NBI's capacity-building programmes — including fully funded master's degrees — active participation in ENTRO's internship and young professionals programme, and the Sudd Wetlands Management Strategy. The country also stands to gain from the transformative South Sudan–Uganda Power Interconnection Project. South Sudan is committed to paying its subscription fees to NBI. Non-ratifying member states urged to accede to the Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA).

### **Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of Egypt, H.E. Prof. Hani Sewilam**

Women play a central role in managing household water use and in supporting rural livelihoods. Empowering them in water governance is therefore essential for effective outcomes. Youth represent a large share of the Nile Basin population. Investing in their future means investing in the Basin's prosperity and stability. Egypt remains committed to working through NBI as it is the only inclusive framework capable of bring the 10 Nile Basin countries together. The consultative process launched by the Nile Council of Ministers is the only viable pathway for moving forward together to a new phase of cooperation on the CFA. Non-ratifying countries to the treaty represent more than half of the population of the Nile Basin: any future arrangement must reflect basin-wide ownership and consensus. Egypt advocates for building on the positive momentum of the Special Committee's report to speedily conclude the consultative

process process around the CFA.

### **Host Minister for Water and Energy of Ethiopia, H. E. Eng. Dr. Habtamu Itefa:**

The 2026 theme is a fitting reminder that the Nile belongs to all Basin citizens. Africa is a young continent. Meeting youth aspirations for jobs and security requires equitable development of shared water resources. The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam as a beacon of hope that empowers communities in Ethiopia and neighbouring countries, creating jobs, uplifting women. Alongside the Green Legacy Initiative, the Dam has expanded access to water and clean energy. Cooperation is not an option, but it must be genuine and anchored in equitable and reasonable utilisation of the Nile and the obligation not to cause significant harm. Such cooperation must advance through the CFA. Ratifying states urged to fast-track operationalisation of the Nile River Basin Commission.

### **Political Officer, Embassy of the Republic of Kenya in South Sudan, Mr. Johnstone P. Loyatam**

The 2026 theme is both timely and transformative, reflecting a growing recognition that the governance of shared water resources must be inclusive and participatory, amplifying voices of those who depend on the river daily. Today is also a celebration of 27 years of structured regional cooperation under NBI. NBI has provided a platform for dialogue, data sharing, capacity building, and confidence building, which has strengthened trust, improved technical understanding and created opportunities for joint investment and development. But the Basin faces rapid population growth, urbanization, food insecurity, increasing demand for water and energy, environmental decline, and impacts of climate change. Water governance must therefore evolve and be socially grounded. Climate change is a key threat. It calls for coordinated adaptation strategies.

### **On behalf of Sudan's Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation, TAC member Eng. Elharith Mustafa**

The 2026 theme resonates strongly with Sudan. We must empower communities, youth and women, given that their voices are essential for building trust, shaping a future that benefits all and delivering tangible outcomes from Nile cooperation. NBI is indispensable for addressing the shared challenges of its member states. Sudan is committed to making the institution even more effective for a sustainable, inclusive cooperative framework. Sudan values the ongoing consultative process on the CFA. Inclusivity must guide NBI. Regarding the Nile River Basin Investment Programme, Sudan is committed to supporting coordinated socio-economic investments guided by the principle of equitable and reasonable utilisation of the Nile. Cooperation remains the only sustainable path for managing the Nile's shared resources.

### **The Deputy Minister for Water in Tanzania, Hon. Eng. Matthew Kundo**

Since 1999, NBI has embodied cooperation, solidarity, lasting peace, equity, and mutual benefit among member states. Tanzania is committed to NBI's principles of equitable and sustainable use of the Nile's resources, including for socio-economic transformation. Women were pillars of society. Not only should they be heard; they must guide actions concerning the Nile. We must empower every voice that sustains the Nile. Member states are urged to strengthen cooperation in alignment with "a golden opportunity" presented by the Africa Water Vision 2063 and Policy. Politely, Tanzania urges all member states to honour their obligations regarding country contributions to NBI.

On behalf of Uganda's Minister for Water and Environment, Permanent Secretary

### Dr. Alfred Okot Okidi

The 2026 theme is timely and reminds us leaders of the importance of involving women and youth in sustainable management of Nile resources given that they are often worst affected by poor resource management and the impacts of

climate change. Uganda is committed to principles of cooperation and equitable and reasonable utilization of the shared River and strengthening of regional institutions that support collective management of the Nile. We believe that a financially sustainable and politically

supportive institution is indispensable for the future of the Nile Basin. Uganda is confident that through sustained dialogue and mutual understanding, a common ground will be reached, leading to operationalization of the NRBC.

## WEBINAR SERIES UNDERLINE ROLE OF YOUTH AND WOMEN IN WATER GOVERNANCE

Among the events leading to Nile Day, NBI arranged a series of webinars on 10, 11 and 16 February, 2026 on the following discussion areas:

- i. Empowering Voices for the Nile: Youth, Women and Community Perspectives (10th)
- ii. Inclusive Water Governance as a Pathway to Peace and Stability in the Nile Basin (11th)

The Nile Day host minister Hon. James Mawich Makuach attended Day 1 and gave opening remarks.

- iii. The series concluded with a youth hackathon on 16th designed to assess the impact of NBI's young professionals programme. Kevin Iyaka



Butine, a hydraulic engineer working in Kinshasa, DR Congo with the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and New Climate Economics won the

hackathon. Kevin (left) is a former young professional at NBI Secretariat. Full recording of the webinars is here: <https://tinyurl.com/NBI-02>

## Nile Day News Coverage

- <https://nilebasin.org/content/south-sudan-host-historic-20th-regional-nile-day-celebration-marking-benefits-cooperation>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmfJDyousxc>
- <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/fqcthVTqhFY>
- <https://www.eyeradio.org/government-vows-stronger-nile-basin-cooperation-ahead-of-nile-day-celebration/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/radiomiraya/photos/south-sudan-has-taken-over-the-rotating-chair-of-the-nile-council-of-ministers-n/1543284011132980/>
- <https://x.com/SouthSudanGov/status/2024385966224658734>
- <https://x.com/SouthSudanGov/status/2024172474611425715>
- <https://www.sudanspost.com/juba-to-host-regional-nile-day-celebrations-in-february/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=122171582432683092&set=a.122096733866683092&type=3>
- <https://www.radiotamazuj.org/en/news/article/south-sudan-hosts-marathon-to-promote-peace-and-unity>
- <https://www.facebook.com/ssbcnews/videos/the-minister-of-water-resources-and-irrigation-james-mawich-makuach-says-south-s/1408403334351776/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/ssbcnews/videos/regional-water-ministers-have-arrived-in-juba-for-sundays-nile-basin-day/3024504397758826/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/ssbcnews/videos/water-resources-and-irrigation-ministrys-undersecretary-lam-tungwar-in-an-interv/953332417264823/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYbtRBbVwRg>
- <https://www.facebook.com/densonjuniors1407/videos/live-ssbc-news/1203028858663355/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1TLDi4cLmo/?mibextid=wwXIf>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TnE9OlpeFWY> 4.40"
- [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/isaac-alukwe-02651666\\_proud-to-see-the-strength-of-regional-technical-activity-7430354331477942272-Umb9/](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/isaac-alukwe-02651666_proud-to-see-the-strength-of-regional-technical-activity-7430354331477942272-Umb9/)
- <https://www.eyeradio.org/the-south-sudan-uganda-power-link-timeline-cost-and-impact/>
- <https://www.onecitizendaily.com/index.php/2026/01/09/juba-announced-as-host-for-the-20th-regional-nile-conference/>

## PRE-NILE DAY RUN



Students and women and community groups and - the "product of the Nile", Mr. Michael Malith Dak - joined representatives of the Government of South Sudan, the Nile Council of Ministers, development partners, NBI and Nile Basin Discourse in a week of meetings and a run, culminating in the main regional Nile Day commemoration at the Bank of South Sudan in Juba City on 22 February 2026

# NILE DAY



I am humbled to represent an institution that, for over two decades, has brought ten sovereign countries together around a single, life-giving river. Today, as we celebrate Nile Day 2026, my message travels far beyond this hall, reaching communities, youth, and women across every corner of the Nile Basin whether by community radio or 5G internet. My message goes to:

**To the women dipping their jerricans this mid-morning in the Ruvubu River** in Burundi, turning their daily chores into dignity and voice.

**To the fishermen mending their nets along Lake Albert** in the Democratic Republic of Congo, observing declining fish stocks and wondering what tomorrow will bring.

**To the siblings that walked home after prayers in Cairo, Egypt last night**, conversing about the river that runs through their city, sustaining lives

**To the farmers in the highlands above Lake Tana**, learning that understanding the rain is the first step in governing water wisely.

**To the fisherfolk launching their boats at dawn on Lake Victoria** in Kenya, reading the wind before casting off.

**To farming neighbours in Rwanda, tending the hills that feed the Nyabarongo**, aware that they are part of the wider Nile Basin

**To the youths chatting along Independence Street** in Juba, South Sudan, about floods and dry spells around the Sudd, and the resilience strategies their parents are investing in.

**To the shopkeeper that will soon close his door today along Nile Avenue in Khartoum**, reflecting on a day lived beside a river shared by many.

**To the women climbing a boat on the Kagera River** in Tanzania, noticing that water levels are lower than last year and thinking of solutions.

**To the students sitting by the Nile near Jinja City** in Uganda, phones in hand, discussing leadership, innovation, and the river that begins its long journey north.

Each of these voices tells a story. They remind us that the Nile is not just a river flowing through countries: it is a river that flows through people's lives. Every day, women, youth, and communities interact with its waters, observe changes, make decisions, and innovate solutions. Their knowledge, experience, and resilience are essential to shaping cooperative, climate-resilient, and sustainable governance of the Nile Basin.

The Nile sustains more than 300 million people, powers

cities, shapes histories, and nourishes ecosystems – from the Nile lechwe and hippos, to the Nile crocodile, mountain gorillas, and millions of migratory birds. But our shared river faces pressing challenges: water scarcity, climate variability, floods, droughts, pollution, underdeveloped irrigation, rising energy demands, and ecosystem degradation. In the face of these challenges, there is only one way forward: cooperation. Since 1999, NBI has been a pillar of endurance, trust, and innovation, the only impartial platform bringing all ten riparian states together to foster dialogue and action.

#### **Our achievements are transformative.**

- The 80-megawatt Regional Rusumo Falls Hydroelectric Project supplies clean electricity to Burundi, Rwanda, and Tanzania, benefiting over one million people and reducing carbon emissions.
- The Olwiyo–Juba South Sudan–Uganda Power Interconnection Project will be transformative. South Sudan currently has only 7 percent electricity coverage. The bidirectional line will raise coverage to about 10 percent, while lowering the very high tariff currently. Uganda will generate significant trade revenue, while connecting South Sudan to the north–south regional electricity highway. This is transformational for development, affordability, regional integration, and, most of all, sharing benefits from the Nile.
- Real-time water monitoring and early warning systems now operate across 44 stations, delivering flood and drought forecasts, seasonal hydrological outlooks, and hotspot alerts, helping communities act before disaster strikes. These systems were recently enhanced with high-tech monitoring equipment at 39 locations basin-wide to build Member States capacity in monitoring water quality.

Madam Vice President, ladies and gentlemen,  
Our pre-Nile Day webinars and a youth hackathon focused on the theme this year: Voices of the Nile: Community, Youth and Women Engagement in Water Governance.

We learnt that women have critical roles in climate-resilient water management and peacebuilding. That community voices – youth, women, and local leaders – are not optional, but essential for trust, cooperation, and sustainable water governance. Nile Day is a celebration of this vision: that sustainable development, climate resilience, and shared prosperity are possible when every voice is heard and empowered.

**Delivered by Dr. Eng. Nestor Niyonzima**

# NileNews

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