



BWERA DECLARATION

7th December 2018

BY

**THE STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS OF LAKES EDWARD AND ALBERT INTEGRATED
FISHERIES AND WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (LEAF II) PROJECT
FROM UGANDA AND D. R. CONGO**

Upon invitation from the Nile Basin Discourse (NBD), representatives of local Communities from the Republic of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, District political leaders and Local government representatives from both countries, members of border security from Uganda, leaders and Technical Support Experts of the National Discourse Forums (NDFs) of the Nile Basin Discourse (NBD) from both countries, representatives of the NEL-SAP-CU of the NBI, and LEAF II Project coordinators from both countries participated in the Workshop on Trans-boundary Stakeholders' engagement in the Lakes Edward and Albert Integrated Fisheries and Water Resources Management (LEAF II) project held at Hotel Vienna, Mpondwe - Bwera, Republic of Uganda.

Following introduction about NBD and objectives of the workshop and presentations by NEL-SAP-CU and the National Project coordinator from Uganda on the LEAF II project in general and its benefits to local communities in Uganda in particular, respectively, **WE** the project

stakeholders/partners and local community representatives of Uganda and D. R. Congo deliberated on various issues relating to benefits of the project to local communities in both countries and also the challenges associated with it and, in agreement with the NBD adopted, the following **DECLARATION:**

RECOGNIZING that cooperation between Uganda and D R Congo under the umbrella of the NBI and local community involvement is feasible, possible and necessary to address pressing problems facing communities/populations, environments and economies of the two countries, WE commend the commitment of the Governments of the two countries to ensure full benefits of basin populations and stakeholders in the project area through sustainable and meaningful cooperation.

RECOGNIZING FURTHER THE NEED TO PROMOTE MORE EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT OF COMMUNITIES/ STAKEHOLDERS IN THE LEAF PROJECTS IN ORDER TO ENSURE THEIR BENEFITS, WE AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING COMMITMENTS:

1. ON IMPROVING & STRENGTHENING POLITICO-TECHNICAL AND PEOPLE TO PEOPLE COOPERATION BETWEEN UGANDA AND D. R. CONGO

- ❖ We strongly urge the relevant government bodies of the two countries to continue holding regular dialogue platforms at political and technical levels;
- ❖ We strongly encourage close cooperation at the local governments' level between the two countries as local governments know the real challenges/problems on the ground and can propose and implement plausible solutions for them;
- ❖ We encourage the NDFs of Uganda and D. R. Congo with the support from the NBD Secretariat to spearhead and continuously facilitate trans-boundary communities' capacity building and sensitization platforms in the Lakes Edward and Albert region;
- ❖ We encourage the participants of this very workshop to share the information with their respective members/colleagues back home for multiplier effect so as to create a critical mass that is well informed of the LEAF projects.

2. ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND CAPACITY TO FOLLOW-UP, MONITOR/REVIEW THE PROGRESS, AND TIMELY ADDRESS CHALLENGES



- ❖ We strongly request the project management body in both countries to include community representatives at the project steering committee;
- ❖ We urge NBD/NDFs to promote the necessity of inclusion of community representatives in the project steering committee and influence project decision makers to buy in this idea of inclusive project management at all levels;
- ❖ We urge the National Project coordination office in Uganda and D R Congo and the NEL-SAP-CU of the NBI to regularly share information on the project implementation status with NBD/NDFs so that they share the information with the wider communities and project beneficiaries at the grass roots.

3. ON TECHNOLOGY CHOICE FOR CATCHMENT RESTORATION/RIVER BANKS PROTECTION AND LIVELIHOODS IMPROVEMENT

- ❖ We urge Researchers/Consultants involved in LEAF projects studies to undertake comprehensive research and disseminate locally appropriate technology for policy-makers and communities;
- ❖ We strongly request decision-makers and project designers to regularly consult local communities and get their consent on technology choice before implementation.

4. ON INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF COOPERATION (LEGAL, INSTITUTIONAL, POLICY SET UP FOR SUSTAINABLE COOPERATION) BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES

- ❖ We commend the plan for the formation of basin organization/commission in the project, and strongly encourage the governments of the two countries with technical support from NEL-SAP/NBI to work towards its realization with the sense of urgency.
- ❖ We commend the actions of the Uganda-D. R Congo JOINT PERMANENT COMMISSION on promoting bilateral cooperation;
- ❖ We strongly encourage development partners to continue supporting the cooperation endeavors of the two countries with adequate financing and technical know-how.

*AGREED ON THE 7TH DATE OF DECEMBER 2018,
MPONDWE-BWERA, REPUBLIC OF UGANDA*

