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**The 27th Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP27)**

**Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt**

**6-18 November, 2022**

**Side Event Concept Note**

**Thematic Day:** Water, Gender

**Date:** Saturday 12 November - 18:30—20:00 - Thebes Room (150)

**Title: Minimizing Unintended Consequences (UIC) of Climate Change mitigation and adaptation policies: Case Study of Nile Basin**

**Lead Organization: RTI International**

**Co-organizers: RAED - Arab Network for Environment and Development, Sudanese Environment Conservation Society (SECS)**

**Overview**

Achieving the targets of the Paris Agreement require taking transformative actions to align with net zero pathways. As pathways change, the well-intentioned focus on mitigation and adaptation outcomes may have negative side effects on local circumstances. How best to apply global policies to local circumstances? What frameworks are available? What evidence is needed to prioritize sustainable solutions? Presenters consider the Nile Basin as a case study for how to minimize unintended consequences in climate change policies.

**Background**

The **Nile** is the longest river in the world, spans 35 degrees of latitude, drains three million square kilometres of land (one-tenth of the total surface area of Africa), and runs through **11 countries**: **Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, Sudan, South Sudan,** and the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** whose combined population totals about 330 million people. The Nile was the life spring of ancient Egypt, the world’s first great civilization, and looms just as large in 21st century geopolitics as it did 5,000 years ago. Many of the countries in the Nile’s drainage area are challenged by poverty, deteriorating natural resources, and heavy population. Egypt’s dependence on the Nile for irrigation and hydroelectric power (via the Aswan Dam) has historically led the government of Egypt to raise concerns about development projects further south, along the Upper Nile valley.

**The Nile River Basin Initiative (NBI)** is a regional intergovernmental partnership that seeks to develop the Nile in a cooperative manner and promote regional peace, water security, and sharing of socio-economic benefits. The NBI Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO), helps member countries (Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan, and South Sudan) with irrigation and drainage, flood control and early-warning systems, and various hydroelectric projects.

Furthermore, **Nile Basin Discourse (NBD)** is a network of Civil Society organization established in 2003 with the support of World Bank and other development partners to strengthen civil society participation in Nile Basin development processes, projects, programs and policies. The NBD has evolved into an independent network of over 600 member organizations throughout the Nile Basin. Member organizations are local and national CSOs/NGOs working on a range of issues relevant to Nile cooperation; including environmental conservation, agriculture, energy, gender equity, livelihoods, poverty reduction, and others. The CSOs/NGOs are members of chapters at national level referred to as Nile Discourse Forums (NDFs) established in each of the eleven riparian states.

The season availability of water along the Nile has an important impact on development activities. As the population of the countries along the Nile River continues to rise, and as these countries increase their level of data sharing and cooperation, we are confident that the systems developed for NBI can continue to improve the lives of millions of Africans. The management of the NB has the potential to mitigate the impacts of climate change, and enhance adaptation, but to do so requires systematic consideration of UICs. Taking a holistic view of the impacts on multiple outcomes (e.g., agriculture, energy, poverty, environment, etc.) across multiple countries and other stakeholders can provide a more complete picture of the potential impacts, and inform development of strategies to mitigate UICs.

**Objectives**

Using the example of the 11 constituent countries in the Nile River Basin, panelists will consider priorities (such as the energy-water-food-ecosystem nexus) and mechanisms to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. Panelists will also consider how identification of UICs can be used to model scenario planning for policy development. Panelists will also look at how CSOs can best work with national and regional Government departments to build resilience and capacities to adapt to increasing climate risks. It will aim to address how COP 27 can advance progress in this area.

**Expected Output**

This event will provide an opportunity to discuss key considerations as we identify ways in which COP27 can address them in its outcomes. One key output will be an event report summarizing key points discussed including:

* Negative and positive UICs identified and proposed activities to mitigate them
* Role of CSOs in strengthening resilience, adaptation and mitigation at community, subnational, national and river basin wide levels.
* The role of the CSOs in engaging women and girls in related capacity building actions.
* Build partnerships with institutions in NBI

**Draft Agenda**

Moderator: Dr. Emad Adly

Opening remarks (10 min)

* Paul Weisenfeld, Executive Vice President, RTI International
* Ms. Rawan Omer, Sudanese Environment Conservation Society (SECS)
* Ms. Verdiane Nyiramana, Chair of NBD Regional Board

Panel discussion (5-6 min each)

**Panelists:**

* Dr. Ahmed Hassan Alamine, Representative of Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources in Sudan
* Representative of Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources in Egypt (tbc)
* Dr. Robert Beach, RTI International
* Dr. Ismail A. Elgizouli, SECS
* Mr. Ayenew Tessera Fenta, Ag. Regional Manager, NBD
* Dr. Ismail Abdel Galil, Egyptian Sustainable Development Forum (ESDF) Senior Advisor
* Dr. Ahmed Zaki, National Discourse Forum - Egypt

**Q&A session** (20 min)

**Closing remarks** (5 min)