

# Support to Hydro-Diplomacy in the Nile Basin

Strengthening key actors to develop cooperative solutions for the disputes around the Nile waters

## The challenge

The Nile Basin covers approximately 10 percent of Africa’s surface area and is home to almost a quarter of its population. Demand for water in the region is constantly increasing due to economic development and population growth. Being a water-scarce basin with water resources already intensively utilized water availability is likely to further decrease with changes in land use and global climate change. The Nile region is therefore classed as highly prone to conflict, with no permanent intergovernmental water agreement in place for the basin.

There are currently two major strands of political level dialogues or negotiations (“political tracks”) among Nile riparian states on unresolved issues of cooperation: a basin-wide process on the establishment of a permanent institutional set-up for cooperation (Nile River Basin Commission and Cooperative Framework Agreement); and an Eastern Nile process around cooperation and dam development in particular the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).

## Our approach

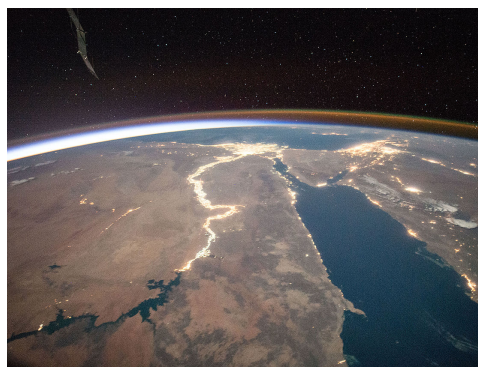
The project aims to support the ongoing political track and negotiation processes regarding Nile waters, with the overarching goal of riparian states to reach political agreement on suitable mechanisms for the cooperative and sustainable management of the basin’s scarce water resources.



<b>Project</b>	<b>Support to Hydro-Diplomacy in the Nile Basin</b>
<b>Commissioned by</b>	German Federal Foreign Office (AA)
<b>Partners</b>	Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), Media in Cooperation and Transition (MiCT) Eastern Nile Research University and Centers Network (ENRUC) and others
<b>Project region</b>	Nile Basin: Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda
<b>Duration</b>	2016 – 2025
<b>Financial volume</b>	€ 4.8 million

Specifically, the project seeks to:

- support political track and negotiation processes among riparian states (“track I Diplomacy”) and strengthen the capacities of key actors for effectively assuming their role in the ongoing processes;
- support non-state actors (“track II Diplomacy”) such as economists or dam operation experts to generate ideas for the political track;
- promote factual and constructive media reporting on Nile disputes (“Public Diplomacy”);
- support the Foreign Office on Nile affairs.





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## Results in figures ...

**2 dialogue and negotiation processes** have been supported: the extraordinary Nile Council of Ministers and the Nile Heads of State and Government (HoSG) Summit processes on basin cooperation. The project has also supported the EU's role as observer to the negotiations on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).

**3 regional and 15 national trainings on water negotiation skills and international water law** have enhanced the capacities of national negotiation teams in effectively assuming their role in the ongoing negotiation processes.

**3 sessions of the Eastern Nile Research Universities and Centers Network (ENRUC)** were held to facilitate dialogue among regional water experts working on management of the Eastern Nile cascade dams. **2 Nile Basin Economist Forums** enabled decision-makers and researchers to highlight potentials of regional economic integration in the basin.

A network of **50 journalists from 10 countries** have collaborated in **11 media workshops** and built *'The Niles'* collaboration platform, a capacity-building and publishing project which supports journalists in reporting on key issues of cooperation in the Nile Basin in a conflict sensitive and constructive manner. Selected articles are available in English, French and Arabic at [www.theniles.org](http://www.theniles.org).

**2 Nile Media Awards competitions** were supported by the project, honoring journalists from across the region for excellence in media reporting on Nile cooperation issues.

**2 hydro-diplomacy dialogues** with panelists from across the basin were organized within two editions of the Nile Basin Development Forum.

## ... in stories

**"Identifying interests from a range of positions – not just your own – is a key step in managing differences and conflicts."**

*Statement by a member of the Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) after participating in a regional hydro-diplomacy training*

Water and foreign affairs officials from all ten NBI member countries have participated in water negotiation skills and international water law training. Here, participants were able to explore some of the more contentious issues in the basin and dive into hypothetical negotiation scenarios in an informal setting. This has been augmented by experiential learning tours to learn from other basins' experiences in overcoming disputes on water resources management. GIZ has designed a targeted training series to support negotiation teams to effective design negotiation strategies and structured negotiation processes, which are offered for joint and country team groupings.

## ... in a nutshell

The project is part of wider and on-going efforts by the regional and international community to achieve **a cooperative and peaceful solution of the Nile disputes** with the overall aim of agreeing on mechanisms for the cooperative and sustainable management of the scarce water resources of the Nile Basin.

This is a direct contribution to achieving the SDG Target 6.5.2, to establish operational arrangements for water cooperation in all transboundary basins. In addition, the project contributes to SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.

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