

**GEARI**  
**GENDER ASSESSMENT OF THE**  
**NILE BASIN INITIATIVE (NBI)**

**Revised Report**

**Submitted to**

**Foundation for International Training &  
Centre d'étude et de coopération  
internationale**

**By Angela Nakafeero  
African Gender Specialist**

**March 2008**

## **Acknowledgements**

Acknowledgement is extended to all Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) staff members from the Head Office in Entebe, as well as staff from the three regional offices in Kigali, Addis Ababa and Khartoum for their active and effective participation during the gender assessment process. Their contributions and reflections sparked off a process of learning and exchange, which has been central in informing this gender assessment. Particular thanks are extended to Hamere Wodimu for guiding the process, John Ogwang for coordinating the process, Pamela Lakidi Achan for coordinating the interview process and initial data analysis and Beatrice Adomgakulu for providing the administrative support during the orientation workshop.

We would like to thank the members of the newly constituted Gender Working Group (GWG) for their continued support in accessing vital documents and insight for the audit. We hope that this commitment and interest portrayed during the gender assessment will be strengthened to impact on NBI policy and programme processes in future.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to the two consultants who carried out the gender assessment, Nancy Spence, Canadian Specialist and Angela Nakafeero, African Specialist. Special thanks go to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for the financial support extended to NBI and in particular to the gender assessment.

It is our sincere wish that this report forms the basis for gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in NBI future policy and programme interventions.

**Foundation for International Training (FIT) and Centre d'étude et de coopération internationale (CECI)**

## List of Abbreviations

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| ATP       | Applied Training Project                                  |
| CBSI      | Confidence Building and Stakeholders' Involvement         |
| CECI      | Centre d'étude et de coopération internationale           |
| CIDA      | Canadian International Development Agency                 |
| DRC       | Democratic Republic of Congo                              |
| ENSAP     | Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Programme                  |
| ENTRO     | Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office                    |
| EWUAP     | Efficient Water Use for Agricultural Production           |
| FIT       | Foundation for International Training                     |
| GEARI     | Gender Equality Project for African Regional Institutions |
| GWG       | Gender Working Group                                      |
| ICCON     | International Consortium for Cooperation on the Nile      |
| ISP       | Institutional Strengthening Project                       |
| M&E       | Monitoring and Evaluation                                 |
| NBI       | Nile Basin Initiative                                     |
| NILE- COM | Nile Basin Council of Ministers of Water Affairs          |
| NILE SEC  | Nile Secretariat  |
| NELSAP    | Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme         |
| NILE- TAC | Nile Basin Technical Advisory Committee                   |
| NGO       | Non-Governmental Organizations                            |
| NTEAP     | Nile Trans boundary Environment Action Project            |
| PID       | Project Identification Documents (PIDs)                   |
| PMU       | Project Management Unit                                   |
| PSC       | Project Steering Committee                                |
| RBS       | Result Based Systems                                      |
| RPT       | Regional Power Trade Project                              |
| RWG       | Regional Working Group                                    |
| SAP       | Subsidiary Action Plan                                    |
| SDO       | Social Development Office                                 |
| SDSP      | Socio- Economic Development and Benefit Sharing           |
| SVP       | Shared Vision Programme                                   |
| TAC       | Technical Advisory Committee                              |
| UN        | United Nations  |
| UNOPS     | United Nations Office for Project Services                |
| WRPM      | Water Resources Planning and Management                   |

## Table of Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Executive Summary .....</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>1. Background to the Nile Basin Initiative Gender Assessment.....</b>   | <b>2</b>  |
| 1.1 Overview of the Gender Equality for African Regional<br>Institutions (GEARI) Project.....                                | 2         |
| 1.2 Background to NBI and its Efforts to Promote Gender Equality<br>and Women's Empowerment.....                             | 3         |
| 1.3 NBI Gender Assessment Objectives.....  | 3         |
| 1.4 Methodology and Process .....  | 5         |
| 1.5 Limitations of the Gender Assessment .....   | 6         |
| <b>2. Major Findings and Recommendations: NBI Programmes and<br/>    Programming .....</b>                                   | <b>7</b>  |
| 2.1 Gender and NBI Ongoing Programmes and Projects .....   | 7         |
| 2.2 Programme Planning and Design .....  | 11        |
| 2.3 Programme Implementation .....   | 14        |
| 2.4 Technical Expertise .....  | 15        |
| 2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation .....  | 17        |
| 2.6 Partner Organizations/National Affiliates .....  | 18        |
| <b>3. Major Findings and Recommendations: NBI Organizational<br/>    Culture .....</b>                                       | <b>19</b> |
| 3.1 Gender Policy .....  | 19        |
| 3.2 Human Resources .....  | 20        |
| 3.3 Representation and Participation of Men and Women in<br>Institutional Framework and Decision Making in NBI.....          | 22        |
| 3.4 Advocacy, Public Relations and Communications .....  | 24        |
| 3.5 Financial Resources .....  | 25        |
| 3.6 Organizational Culture .....   | 26        |
| <b>4. Challenges to Gender Mainstreaming in NBI Programmes,<br/>    Projects, Policies and Organizational Processes.....</b> | <b>28</b> |
| <b>5. Overall Conclusions and Recommendations.....</b>   | <b>28</b> |
| 5.1 Conclusion.....  | 28        |
| 5.2 Recommendations.....   | 29        |

Annex 1: Members of the Gender Working Group

Annex 2: References

## Executive Summary

The CIDA-funded Gender Equality for African Regional Institutions (GEARI) project, managed by the Foundation for International Training (FIT) and the Centre d'étude et de coopération internationale (CECI), will provide technical assistance to support gender mainstreaming throughout the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI), including in within its policies and processes. This process will involve five complementary phases: a gender assessment; development of a gender equality action plan; training and capacity building; development of gender mainstreaming tools; and monitoring and evaluation. This report describes and analyzes the gender assessment that was undertaken as the first phase under the project. The overall aim of the gender assessment was to document baseline data regarding gender equality and women's empowerment within NBI. The assessment process was highly participatory and has been designed to ensure ownership by NBI stakeholders, particularly staff members, by facilitating participation in the development of the Gender Equality Action Plan for NBI.

NBI has initiated a process of promoting gender equality in some of its programmes and projects in particular under the Confidence Building and Stakeholder Involvement (CBSI) and under the Socio-economic Development and Benefit Sharing (SDBS) initiatives, but the majority of NBI programs do not include a gender component, which offers a great deal of possibility for GEARI activities. Gender and women's issues are addressed in the Subsidiary Action Plans (SAPs) by chance as opposed to by design, depending on the willingness of the Project Managers to include interventions aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. The proposed Institutional Strengthening Project (ISP) 2008-2010 is an entry point for gender mainstreaming and will need to be accompanied by the formulation of a gender policy for NBI.

NBI's current programme planning and design processes, although participatory and highly consultative, exhibit an absence of gender considerations, in large part due to the absence of a policy framework and lack of strong and visible political will. The Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of Nile Basin States (NILE-COM) needs to commit itself to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment.

NBI has no institutional mechanism that is responsible for spearheading the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in its policies, procedures, programmes and projects. This is an area that needs to be addressed under the ISP as well as planning for capacity development on gender mainstreaming.

Resource allocation is another area in which NBI could target gender mainstreaming activities. Programme and project budgets do not include budget lines items on gender. NBI will need to adopt some form of gender budgeting into its policies and processes. Although the majority of programming staff members have expressed the need for and importance of mainstreaming gender in their programmes, practice is often different due to inadequacies in gender mainstreaming skills, support and tools.

NBI has not addressed issues of gender and women's empowerment in its policies, programmes, projects and institutional procedures. As a way forward, NBI needs to create dedicated human resources such as a gender unit/division, and make gender a priority in the organization by instituting policies and allocating funds within their budget to support discrete gender activities.

# 1. Background to the Nile Basin Initiative Gender Assessment

## 1.1. Overview of the Gender Equality for African Regional Institutions Project

The Gender Equality and African Regional Institutions (GEARI) project's overall objective is to enhance the capacity of four selected regional institutions, including the NBI, to mainstream gender and promote women's empowerment through its policies and programmes. GEARI is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) Pan-Africa Program, and is intended to complement previous collaboration efforts between CIDA and NBI. GEARI's activities with NBI will consist of five phases: a gender assessment, development of gender equality action planning, training and capacity building, development of customized gender mainstreaming tools and monitoring and evaluation.

Commitment to the integration of gender equality into projects and organizations related to water and the environment has been enshrined in several international and regional conventions, treaties and protocols. Some of the most noteworthy to which the Nile Riparian nations are signatories are as follows:

- The International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990) called for increased women's participation and representation in decision-making and management of water resources.
- The Dublin Statement (1992) recognized that women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water resources and called upon governments and development partners incorporate this into institutional arrangements for the development and management of water resources.
- The Rio Declaration (1992) recognized the important role women play in environmental management and development and called upon their full participation in order to achieve sustainable development.
- The Beijing Platform of Action (1995) highlighted environment issues as one of the critical areas of concern regarding gender inequalities in the management and safeguarding of natural resources and the environment. It outlined three strategic objectives for addressing the gender inequalities.
- The Millennium Development Goals include targets for both gender equality and empowerment of women as well as on safe water and sanitation.
- The World Summit (2002) on Sustainable Development and the subsequent Johannesburg Plan of Implementation provide for the gender sensitive capacity building for water and sanitation infrastructure and services development.
- In 2003, the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) made the commitment to "ensure that gender concerns are taken into account, through a recognised process of consultation with AMCOW, in policy formulation in all sectors of water, sanitation, human settlements, agriculture and food security including harmonization of policies and laws and the domestication of international treaties to create equity and equality by 2005". This commitment was made in recognition of the fact that, although women and girls in Africa play a critical role in the management of water resources, especially at household levels, there are vast imbalances in women's access to, and control and management of the water resources and sanitation facilities at all levels.

- Articles 15 and 18 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa commit African governments to providing women with access to clean drinking water and to ensuring that women have the right to live in a healthy and sustainable environment. Article 18 further calls upon states to take all appropriate measures to ensure greater participation of women in the planning, management and preservation of the environment and sustainable use of natural resources at all levels.

## **1.2 Background to NBI and its Efforts to Promote Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

The Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) was launched in 1999 as a partnership of the Nile Basin Countries<sup>1</sup> to develop the Nile River Basin in a co-operative manner, share substantial socio-economic benefits and promote regional peace and security. The Nile riparian have moved to develop a shared vision aimed at achieving sustainable socio-economic development through equitable utilization of and benefits from the common Nile Basin water resources. In order to translate its shared vision into action NBI, under the support of several development partners, has been implementing two complementary programmes; the Shared Vision Programme (SVP)<sup>2</sup> and the Subsidiary Action Programme (SAP)<sup>3</sup>.

One of the central prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable and equitable socio-economic development is gender equality and women's empowerment, especially in the area of water management. To this effect, NBI has undertaken interventions to promote gender equality. One of these interventions is the establishment of the NBI Women's Forum, composed of female NBI employees and other women stakeholders. This included organizing several workshops at both the national and regional levels to discuss and forge a way forward on issues that pertain to gender equality and women's empowerment in the NBI. A second intervention has been the initiation of specific programmes under the Confidence Building and Stakeholders Involvement (CBSI) Project, aimed at addressing gender and women's empowerment. NBI's willingness to participate in the GEARI project, particularly undertaking a gender assessment as the baseline for future gender mainstreaming within the institution, is yet another positive step.

This report provides the findings and recommendations on the gender assessment in particular, highlighting areas where NBI has promoted gender equality and gaps that need to be addressed to strengthen its efforts towards achieving gender equality.

## **1.3 NBI Gender Assessment Objectives**

The Gender Assessment was undertaken as the first phase of the GEARI project. The overall aim of the assessment was to establish the extent to which NBI has addressed issues of gender equality and women's empowerment in its programming and organizational aspects.

---

<sup>1</sup> Burundi, D.R. Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda

<sup>2</sup> SVP is for laying basin wide strong foundation for joint investment in the management and development of the Nile through building confidence and capacity across the basin.

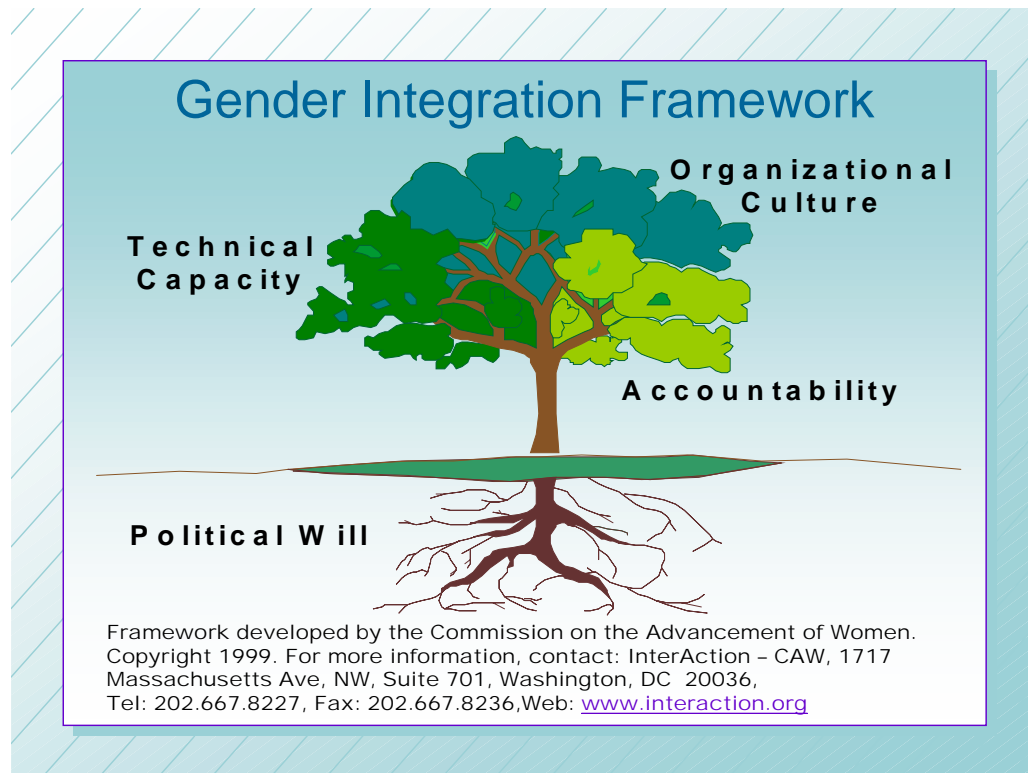
<sup>3</sup> SAP is for the realisation of trans-boundary development projects using the principle of subsidiarity through exploring subsidiary actions at the sub-basin level to initiate concrete investment and action on the ground.

Specific objectives of the assessment include:

- Collecting baseline data on gender equality and women's empowerment in NBI programming
- Showcasing areas of strength and achievements such as innovative policies or practices on gender equality
- Identifying challenges to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment within NBI
- Providing a basis for the development of gender responsive programmes and projects in NBI

The conceptual framework was informed by the understanding of gender mainstreaming as a process of making the concerns and experiences of women and men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres, so that women and men benefit equally and inequalities are addressed.

NBI's gender assessment focused on four main elements important for gender mainstreaming: political will, technical capacity, accountability and a positive organizational culture, as illustrated below.





To examine political will, efforts were taken to assess the ways in which NBI leaders use their position of power to communicate and demonstrate their support, leadership, enthusiasm for and commitment to working towards gender equality. To determine technical capacity, the assessment considered the level of ability, qualifications and skills of NBI members of staff to carry out the practical aspects of gender mainstreaming and the level of institutionalization of gender equality. To measure accountability, the assessment considered the mechanisms by which NBI is holding its stakeholders answerable on gender equality in their respective programmes and structures. The assessment of organizational culture considered the norms, customs, beliefs and codes of behaviour in NBI that support or undermine gender equality, how stakeholders relate, and what behaviours are rewarded.

#### **1.4 Methodology and Process**

Information for the gender audit was collected during an orientation workshop and meetings, face-to-face interviews, an online questionnaire, focus group discussions, and a document review. A participatory approach was adopted to solicit active involvement of a cross section of NBI stakeholders. By encouraging information sharing in a variety of methods from the beginning of the process, the consultants hope that all stakeholders will feel comfortable making their opinions and concerns known, leading towards the positive internalization of the organizational change process.

##### **Orientation Workshop**

The orientation workshop introduced the GEARI project to NBI stakeholders and provided them with information related to the gender assessment process. During the workshop a Gender Working Group (GWG) was established to guide and support the GEARI project, and to undertake pilot testing of the assessment tools. See Annex 1 for the list of GWG members. The workshop also helped the consultants to better understand the NBI as an entity and to identify appropriate methodology for the gender assessment.

##### **Interviews**

Face-to-face interviews were held with selected members of NBI's programming staff in order to supplement information gathered from the document review and online questionnaires. These interviews enabled the GEARI consultants to gain a deeper understanding of key gender issues in NBI programmes and policies, as well as NBI's programme-specific interventions to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

##### **Literature Review**

The team reviewed a variety of key legal, policy, and programme documents and progress reports in order to complement the information generated through other methods. See Annex 2 for a list of the documents reviewed.

##### **Focus Group Discussion**

One focus group discussion was held with selected participants from the Women's Forum of the NBI. This provided a unique opportunity for the women of the NBI to articulate their understanding of gender mainstreaming and to promote NBI's efforts in gender mainstreaming from within the organization. They were also able to reflect as a group on interventions for the way forward.

## **Electronic Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was sent out to all members of staff at NBI Headquarters, as well as to regional and national offices. This questionnaire, which involved a technical portion for programming staff and an organizational portion for all staff, provided an opportunity to all members of staff to participate in the gender assessment.

The following ethos inspired the participatory methodology used for the gender assessment:

- Achieving gender equality is transformative and multi-dimensional and focuses on a more equitable institutional culture, stakeholders' perceptions, attitudes and values
- Shaping and achieving a common future involves the participation and contribution of all stakeholders, men and women boys and girls
- There is need to build on existing and internal efforts in gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment within the NBI
- The need to harmonize gender mainstreaming within the overall processes to the attain the vision of the NBI

### **1.5 Limitations of the Gender Assessment**

The assessment process faced two main challenges, one related to NBI's upcoming organization restructuring and the other related to inability to access geographically dispersed staff members.

The NBI is in a period of transition between its current structure, in which it operates two complementary programmes, the SVP<sup>4</sup> and the SAPs<sup>5</sup>, and the proposed Institutional Strengthening Project (ISP), in which most existing projects will be phased out and replaced by new strategic areas defined by the member states' Long-term Cooperative Framework. For this reason, NBI's current programmes and projects can only provide grounds for drawing lessons learned instead, but cannot be used as entry points for gender mainstreaming. The Gender Assessment therefore, put emphasis on the proposed ISP as a way forward. The Cooperative Framework is still pending completion and could also not be used to identify entry points for gender mainstreaming.

With the limited time and resources available, the most feasible method of polling staff located in other offices and regions was to distribute an electronic questionnaire to be self-administered. Unfortunately, the rate of return of these questionnaires was lower than expected, those that were returned were delayed, and some questions were misinterpreted.

---

<sup>4</sup> These are seven (7) projects including the Nile Transboundary Environment Action Project, Applied Training Project (ATP), Confidence Building and Stakeholders Involvement Project, Water Resources Planning and Management Project, Regional Power Trade Project, Socio-Economic Development and Sharing Project (SDSP) and Efficient Water Use for Agricultural Production Projects (EWAP).

<sup>5</sup> There are two SAPs; the Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Programme and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme (NELSAP).

## **2. Major Findings and Recommendations: NBI Programmes and Programming**

This section provides a description of the key findings and recommendations on NBI programming aspects as they emerged from the data collection methods described previously. It covers findings related ongoing programmes and projects, issues related to programme planning, design and implementation, technical expertise on gender mainstreaming, monitoring and evaluation and NBI relationships with partner organizations and national affiliates.

### **2.1 Gender and NBI Ongoing Programmes and Projects**

Since its launch in 1999, NBI has been implementing a transitional programme with two complementary elements: the Shared Vision Programme (SVP)<sup>6</sup> and the Subsidiary Action Programmes (SAP)<sup>7</sup>. The following sections provide an overview of gender mainstreaming potential within each initiative.

#### **Shared Vision Programme (SVP)**

The overall aim of the SVP was to build confidence and trust, as well as institutional capacity, to create a strong foundation for regional cooperation within the NBI. The SVP provides an enabling environment that fosters sustainable trans-boundary cooperation in management and development of the Nile resources. Under the SVP, NBI has been implementing eight projects: the Nile Transboundary Environment Action Project (NTEAP), Applied Training Project (ATP), Confidence Building and Stakeholders Involvement (CBSI) Project, Water Resources Planning and Management (WRPM) Project, Regional Power Trade (RPT) Project, Socio-Economic Development and Benefit Sharing (SDBS) Project, Efficient Water Use for Agricultural Production Projects (EWUAP) and the Shared Vision Programme Coordination Project (SVP-C). While all the SVP projects are addressing areas of concern regarding women and gender issues, discussions with the NBI stakeholders, particularly project managers, indicated that only two projects, the CBSI and SDSP, have undertaken specific interventions to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

#### **The CBSI Projects**

Under the CBSI project, there have been real efforts aimed at sensitizing women stakeholders and NBI members of staff to gender issues as they pertain to natural resource management. Sensitization workshops on gender and natural resources have been undertaken at the national level and one has taken place at the regional level. This sensitization and awareness creation has contributed to the establishment of the NBI Women's Forum as a platform for further highlighting and addressing relevant gender-related institutional and programming issues in the NBI. The Women's Forum has embarked on the development of a Gender Strategy that is intended to provide a basis for gender mainstreaming once it is finalized. However, it is important to note that the development of the gender strategy is still in its nascent stages.

---

<sup>6</sup> SVP is for laying basin wide strong foundation for joint investment in the management and development of the Nile through building confidence and capacity across the basin.

<sup>7</sup> SAP is for the realisation of trans-boundary development projects using the principle of subsidiarity through exploring subsidiary actions at the sub-basin level to initiate concrete investment and action on the ground.

Given the absence of a clear policy framework on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, the Women's Forum has also started appealing to the different project managers to undertake activities for the benefit of both men and women. As a result of these interventions, the CBSI project has been assigned the task of spearheading gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in NBI. In order to achieve this, CBSI needs a policy framework to guide its interventions. Many of the suggestions of the NBI Women's Forum have guided the recommendations in this assessment.

### **The SDBS projects**

The SDBS is consciously working to ensure that gender issues are addressed. This project aims to explore options for collaboration of riparian states towards developing and managing Nile resources to achieve maximum mutual economic, social and environmental benefits, primarily through conducting research that will influence member states' policy-making processes. Gender is one of SDBS' target crosscutting issues when commissioning regional policy research, meaning that all future policy-related research undertaken<sup>8</sup> will highlight issues pertaining to gender. At the same time one of the nine priority research areas focuses upon gender mainstreaming in cross border trade issues in Uganda. The SDBS project will provide a good entry point for generating policy research and information that is gender sensitive, and can guide future NBI programmes and projects.

According to the stakeholders, most other SVP projects are not addressing issues of gender and this absence is attributed to a number of reasons. First and foremost is the absence of a proper policy framework on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in NBI to guide the process of programme and project identification, planning and implementation. Secondly, there is no designated human resources office or unit that is assigned with the explicit responsibility to ensure that issues of gender and women are considered by NBI project and programmes. Thirdly, most staff members lack technical gender mainstreaming awareness and skills.

### **Recommendations**

- NBI should develop a policy framework that will guide gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in all its programmes and projects in future
- NBI needs to create an institutional mechanism to necessitate gender-mainstreaming activities as well as be accountable for the achievement of gender equality results in NBI.
- NBI needs to plan and implement a capacity building programme for all its members of staff, especially those at programme level, so that they can undertake gender analysis of their respective programmes and address the issues identified.

### **Subsidiary Action Programmes (SAPs)**

The SAPs are intended to bring about tangible benefits on the ground through the identification and implementation of investment projects. There are two SAPs: the Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Programme (**ENSAP**), which is jointly implemented by Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan, and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme (**NELSAP**), which includes Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Egypt, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

---

<sup>8</sup> By the time of the gender audit, November 2007, SDBS was about to receive the first batch of research proposals from the participating institutions.

Neither of the SAPs have defined gender dimensions within their projects. Gender and women's issues are only addressed by default as opposed to by design, and it is highly dependent on the willingness of the Project Managers to include interventions aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. To this effect, there are efforts aimed at the development of gender strategies for the NELSAP, ENSAP and the overall NBI. However, it is important to note that these gender strategies are in their nascent stages and still do require a lot of more work in preparation for adoption by the relevant policy making bodies.

**ENSAP**, through the launch of the British Department for International Development (DFID)-supported Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) Social Development Office (SDO) in 2004, has undertaken capacity building in social development, including gender issues, among ENTRO regional staff and country teams of ENSAP investment projects.

The **NELSAP** Gender Mainstreaming Strategy provides a better framework by including a background to gender issues within the region, goal and objectives that need to be achieved as well as the expected outputs. However, it also lacks clear interventions for the achievement of the set objectives. It is therefore important that clear interventions with timelines and resources be defined for each of the set objectives. The objectives of the strategy also need to be implemented through the ongoing programmes and projects.

#### **NELSAP Gender Mainstreaming Strategy**

The strategy aims at strengthening and improving the effectiveness of gender balance especially women to influence public policy making process and decision making in NELSAP programs.

#### **Specific Objectives**

- Promote and disseminate the values and practices underlying gender equality
- Improve the understanding of issues related to gender equality, including direct and indirect gender discrimination and multiple discrimination against women, by evaluating the effectiveness of policies and practice through prior analysis, monitoring their implementation and assessing their effects.
- Develop the capacity of players to promote gender equality effectively, in particular through support for the exchange of information and good practice and networking at community level
- Enhance the technical skills of NELSAP staff and stakeholders, individuals and its allies in improving program gender relations.
- Increase the number and diversity of NGOs and women's community organizations with technical competence to engage in public policy advocacy and strengthen their effective participation in democratising and reforming national, regional as regards to gender issues.
- Develop strategies for increased interaction between Government, NGO workers, ordinary citizens, policy planners and implementers to recognize the importance of gender.
- Create a basis upon which governments, NGOs and communities within NELSAP region can be encouraged to build local, national and regional coalitions and alliances around various gender policy and implementation issues to promote social justice and sustainable development.

## **Other NELSAP Projects and their Gender Responsiveness**

NELSAP also has been undertaking several projects, such as the Kagera River Basin Project, Sio-Malaba-Malakisi Project, Mara River Basin Integrated Water Resources Management Project and Lakes Edward and Albert Fisheries Project.

### **Lakes Edward and Albert Fisheries (LEAF) Project Objective**

To avail the Governments of Uganda and the DRC with a sustainable investment and management plan for the joint use of the water and fisheries resources of Lakes Edward and Albert.

### **Kagera River Basin Project Objective**

To develop tools and permanent cooperation mechanisms for the joint, sustainable management of the water resources in the Kagera River Basin in order to prepare for sustainable development-oriented investments to improve the living conditions of the people and to protect the environment.

### **Sio-Malaba-Malakisi Project Objective**

The Project's overall objective is to reverse the environmental degradation trends in the catchment by supporting the rural communities in adopting appropriate technologies in catchment management that lead to sustainable economic development.

### **Mara River Basin Integrated Water Resources Management Project Objective**

Improved water resources management of the Mara River, taking into account the needs and desires of all stakeholders, in order to improve economic and social benefits for current and future generations, while maintaining the functions and services of the ecosystem.

In the above projects, with the exception of Mara River Basin Integrated Water Resources Management Project, there is recognition of gender as one of the crosscutting issues; however, it is only Kagera River Basin Project that provides for specific interventions that address gender issues. In particular, it promotes equal participation by women in decision-making processes and management of community-based small-scale investments, as well as promoting women's involvement in developing the long-term development strategy and selecting large-scale investments, focusing on women-headed households, supporting greater access by women to credit, forming a women's project advisory council, and cultivating an equal opportunities employment policy in the project itself. It is therefore important that other projects provide for specific interventions to address the identified gender concerns.

The NBI Gender Strategy outlines a broad framework of issues that have to be addressed including assigning the responsibility to CBSI, but it does not define the goal, objectives and clear interventions for gender equality. Currently the responsibility of gender mainstreaming is assigned to the CBSI project only. This situation, if not addressed, could lead to further isolating gender issues in NBI instead of mainstreaming it throughout the institution's programmes and policies.

## **NBI Proposed Institutional Strengthening Project (ISP) 2008-2010**

The implementation of the SVP has exposed challenges that NBI stakeholders would like to address through the proposed ISP. These include inadequate human resources and institutional capacity in water resources planning and management, inadequate coordination of NBI interventions, and inadequate addressing of key cross-cutting issues. The ISP identifies institutional strengthening needs of NBI, including identifying critical tasks that will be undertaken to upgrade NBI institutional capacity to appropriate levels. The ISP recognizes the urgent need to adopt policies, procedures and practices for gender mainstreaming in order to support the participation of women and men stakeholders and to promote gender equality in all its interventions. Although this

recognition is critical and offers a significant entry point for gender mainstreaming into overall NBI programmes, projects and institutional mechanisms, it is important to note that the ISP does not define critical gender and women's issues that will be focused upon or the strategies adopted. The ISP process and related interventions need to address several gender issues identified in other sections of this report. Some of these are highlighted in the text box below.

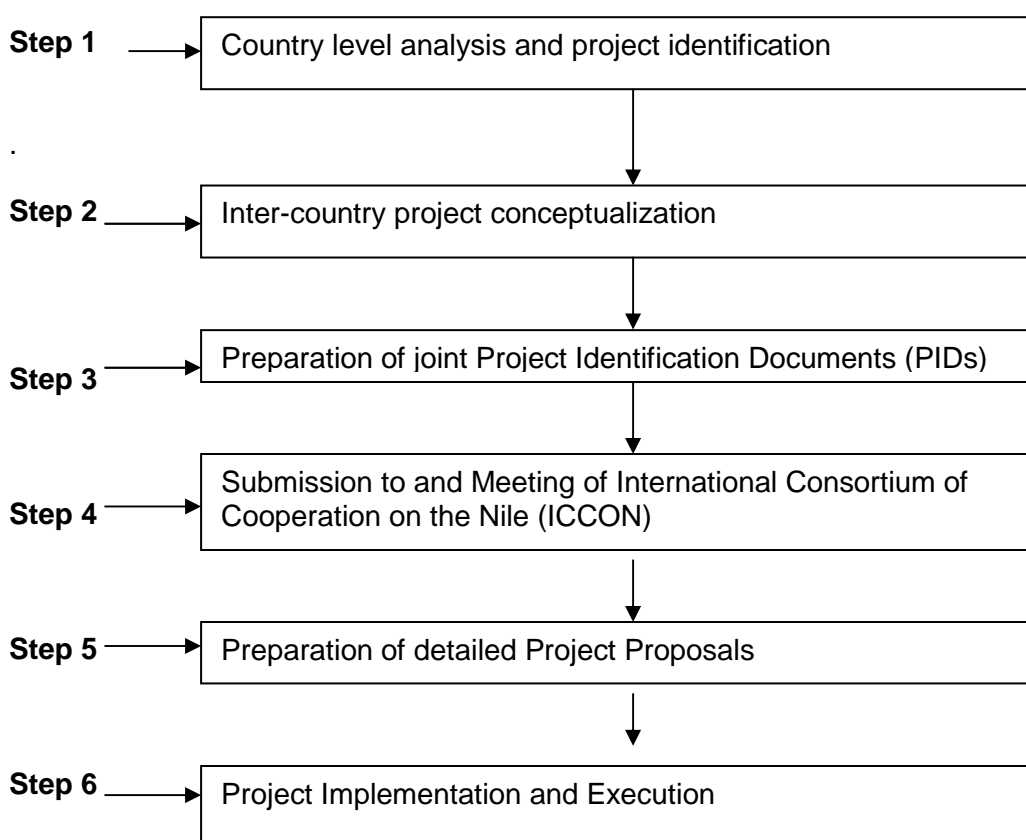
#### Emerging Gender Issues to be addressed by the ISP

- The under-representation and participation of women in all NBI decision-making bodies,
- Inadequacies in the capacity of the staff to undertake gender analysis of their projects and programmes,
- More institutional responsibility for gender mainstreaming,
- A policy framework for gender mainstreaming and implementation
- Male dominance in NBI decision-making
- Gender blind programmes and projects as a result

## 2.2 Programme Planning and Design- The NBI Cycle

NBI undertakes a participatory six-phase process when planning and designing programmes and projects, as illustrated below:

**Figure 2: NBI Programme Planning and Design Process**



### **Step One: Country-Level Analysis and Project Identification**

During country-level analysis and project identification, member states constitute multi-sectoral national working groups that undertake situation analysis and prepare situation reports in order to identify project options. Member states organize national workshops for purposes of building consensus and the proposed projects, including which riparian states will contribute which national inputs. Proposals are then submitted to respective NBI regional offices. The country-level analysis offers an opportunity for gender mainstreaming. It is therefore important that both men and women in the Nile basin actively participate during the analysis and identification, as well as ensuring the country teams and tools used are gender sensitive.

### **Step Two: Inter-Country Project Conceptualization**

During the Inter-country project conceptualization, country submissions are collated and opportunities for win-win projects are identified. At this stage, the regional NBI offices, the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme Coordination Unit (NELSAP-CU) constitute the Regional Working Groups (RWG) to synthesize and prioritize projects that bring about significant shared benefits. At this stage it is therefore important that the RWGs take into consideration issues of gender and women during the prioritization of the projects. Teams that undertake the prioritization of projects and programmes need to be gender aware, or have gender expertise on the team and any tools or checklists that are being used need to include gender considerations.

### **Step Three: Preparation of Joint Project Identification Documents (PIDs)**

Step three involves the preparation of joint PIDs that are submitted to the respective Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for review. This step again should provide an opportunity for monitoring for gender analysis and providing feedback where necessary. The TAC then submits this to the respective Nile Council of Ministers of Water Affairs (Nile-COM) for approval and submission to International Consortium for Cooperation on the Nile (ICCON) for funding. The ICCON will need to be gender sensitized in order to carry out their final assessment of projects to ensure that gender equality has been appropriately mainstreamed.

### **Step Four and Five: Preparation of Detailed Project Proposals and Project Implementation**

Following the approval of ICCON, detailed project proposals are prepared and implementation of the projects starts. The Project Management Units based in the relevant Government Ministry, or within an institution assigned by the government concerned, undertakes project implementation through the regional offices and is guided by the Project Steering Committees.

The findings from the electronic questionnaire (Figures 3, 4 and 5) indicate that NBI staff believe that the institution is mandated to consider issues of gender and women and that gender equality goals, results and indicators are to a certain extent considered during programme and project design. A review of selected PIDs shows that there is an almost total absence of issues related to gender and women's empowerment in most of NBI PIDs. This is an area of concern that needs to be rectified. Among the reasons advanced is the absence of a policy framework on gender to guide planning and design of programmes within NBI. The Council of Ministers of Water Affairs of Nile Basin States (NILE-COM) needs to commit itself to gender equality and women's empowerment through the formulation of an overall NBI gender policy.



*“ the need for a clear cut gender policy for NBI is crucial to any improvements. Such a policy needs to be developed in a participatory manner, and must include **all staff** and not just a selected few. Once a policy is in place, rigorous planning, implementation and monitoring has to be pursued with specific targets to be met within specified time frame for each project and programme”*

### Recommendations

- NILE-COM, through the Nile Secretariat, should embark upon the formulation of a Nile Basin Gender Policy that will provide a framework for the mainstreaming of gender and women’s issues and concerns in NBI policies, programmes and projects. In this policy, gender should be recognized as a cross-cutting issue, with responsibility and accountability clearly assigned for close follow-up in the organizational programmes and projects.
- Gender equality indicators should be integrated into the tools and checklists used during the project identification, prioritization and PID approval stage.
- The different teams that are participating during the programme and project processes discussed above need to be sensitized to gender analysis as a key development concern.

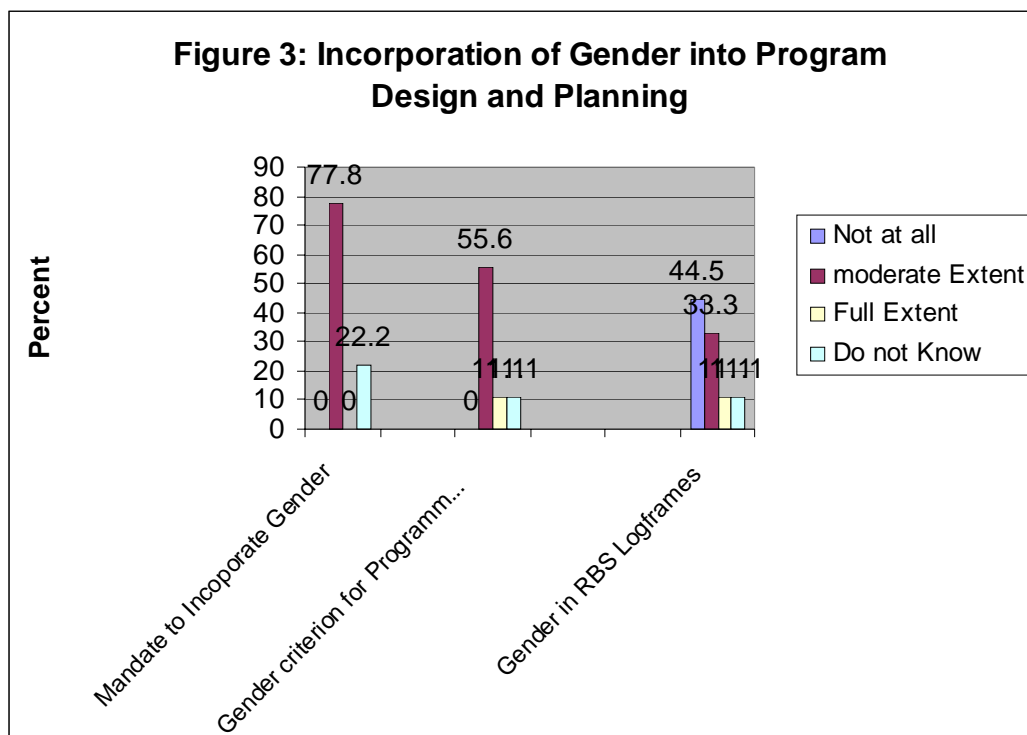
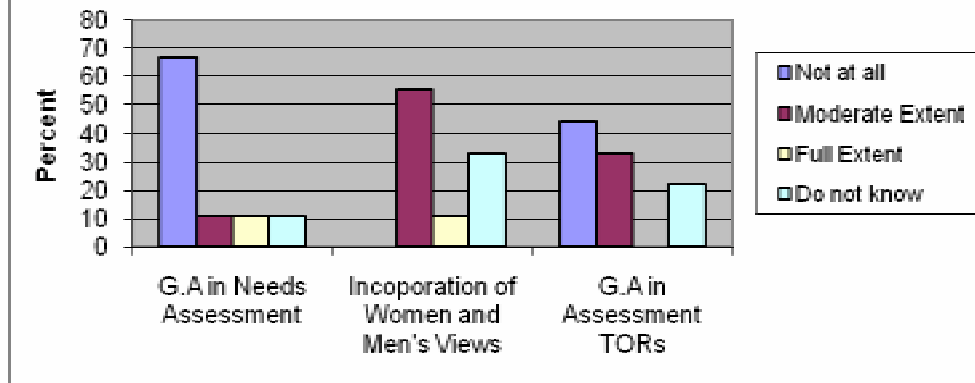


Figure 4: Program Planning & Design



### 2.3 Programme Implementation

Programme and project implementation in NBI is mainly undertaken by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The NILE-COM decided to employ the UNOPS to support the NBI in the project implementation and a management services contract was signed. Support services are related primarily to financial management and the procurement of goods and services, but also in building the capabilities of the NBI in programme and project implementation. UNOPS thus provides the support to the ENTRO, NELSAP-CU and country offices that are implementing specific programmes and projects. Because of the many programmes and projects that are being implemented at the Basin, regional and country levels, the NBI secretariat instituted a Coordination Unit to ensure effective oversight and coordination of SVP projects and with SAPs.

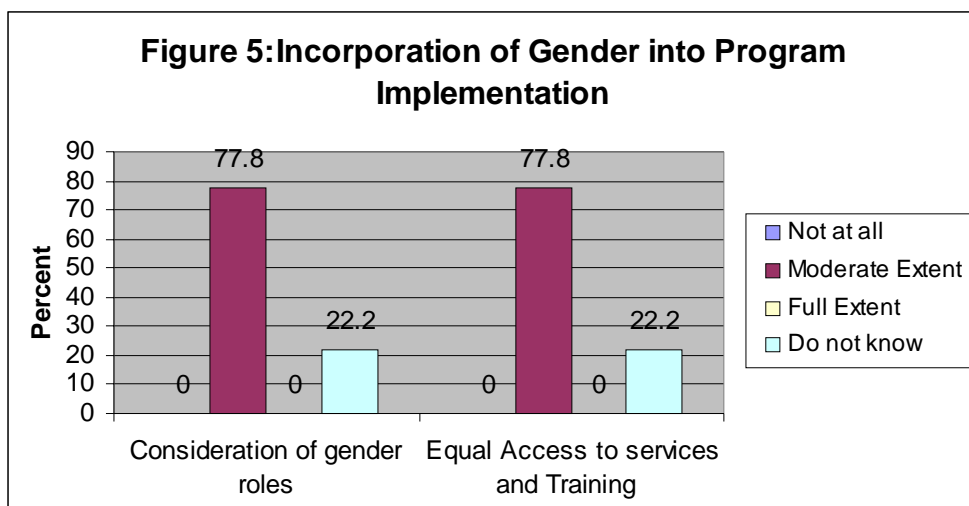
Results from of the questionnaire indicate that there have been efforts to incorporate gender and women’s issues into some of NBI programmes and projects, such as CBSI and SDBS, to a moderate extent during implementation (see details in Figure 5). Discussions with staff members and a subsequent review of programme and project progress reports show that the level of gender mainstreaming so far achieved is still very limited. It appears to entirely depend on the level of commitment by the individual programme or project managers and the level of gender commitment in respective countries. For instance in Uganda and Rwanda, the level of gender sensitivity is higher, compared to other member states. In such countries there is an attempt to reflect on some issues and gender analysis is evident during the implementation stage, even when it is not explicitly considered in the programmes design stage. In many cases, it is still limited to ensuring equal numbers of women and men participating during workshops and other forms of consultations.

*“...most selections of participants and interventions are done at national level, mostly through working groups. For instance during farmers’ training on environment, affirmative action for women was adopted and selected 50% for women.”*

*“Some kind of a guideline and/or directives that emphasize staff and management to be responsible and accountable for gender mainstreaming right*

*from the beginning of programme and project planning and design. If gender is left out during the planning and design stage, it is difficult to integrate it at other stages. Skills have to be built to this effect thus the need for continuous capacity building for all staff members.”*

While having different levels of gender sensitivity throughout the member states creates challenges of building consensus during programme identification and design, it offers opportunities and space for member states to learn from each other. What NBI needs to do is to provide mechanisms that will enable this sharing of experiential learning to happen. These could include documentation and dissemination of emerging good practices on gender mainstreaming among riparian states, involvement of gender experts during programme implementation, and undertaking capacity building of members of staff and other stakeholders on gender mainstreaming.



NBI also needs to adopt a comprehensive and/or corporate approach to gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment instead of leaving it to the discretion of individual programme managers, as is the current situation.

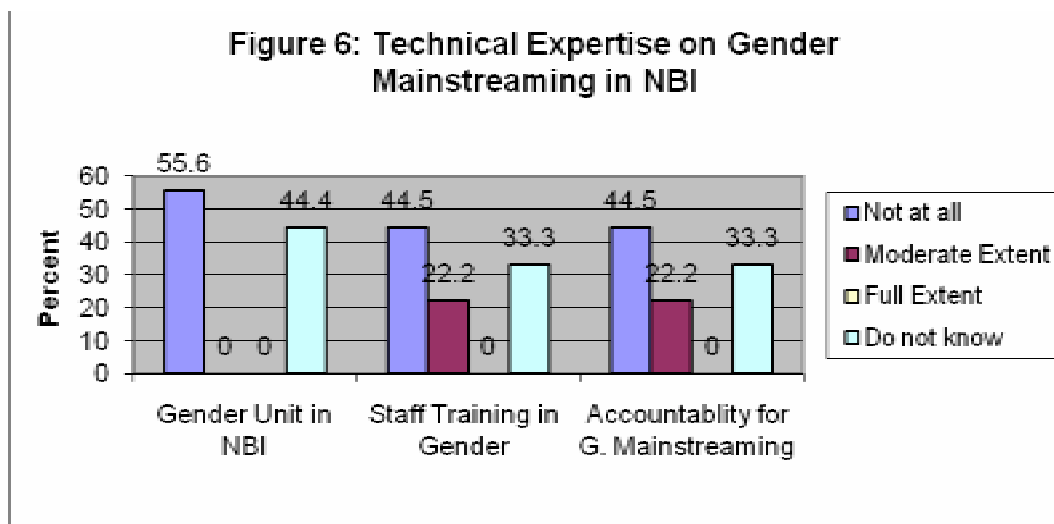
#### **2.4 Technical Expertise**

The assessment of NBI staff members’ technical capacity for gender mainstreaming, in particular focussing on whether NBI has an institutional arrangement for driving gender mainstreaming, or has a training programme of building capacity on gender mainstreaming with customized NBI tools for gender mainstreaming, is illustrated in Figure 6. These findings show that NBI has no institutional mechanism that is responsible for spearheading the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment in its policies, procedures, programmes and projects. There is, therefore, a need for NBI to create a management function such as dedicated resources that will be responsible for gender mainstreaming into all NBI policies, programmes and procedures.

*“A Gender unit should be established to help during the design, implementation of programmes and projects in NBI. And Special fund, time and space should be provided to promote gender mainstreaming in NBI.”*

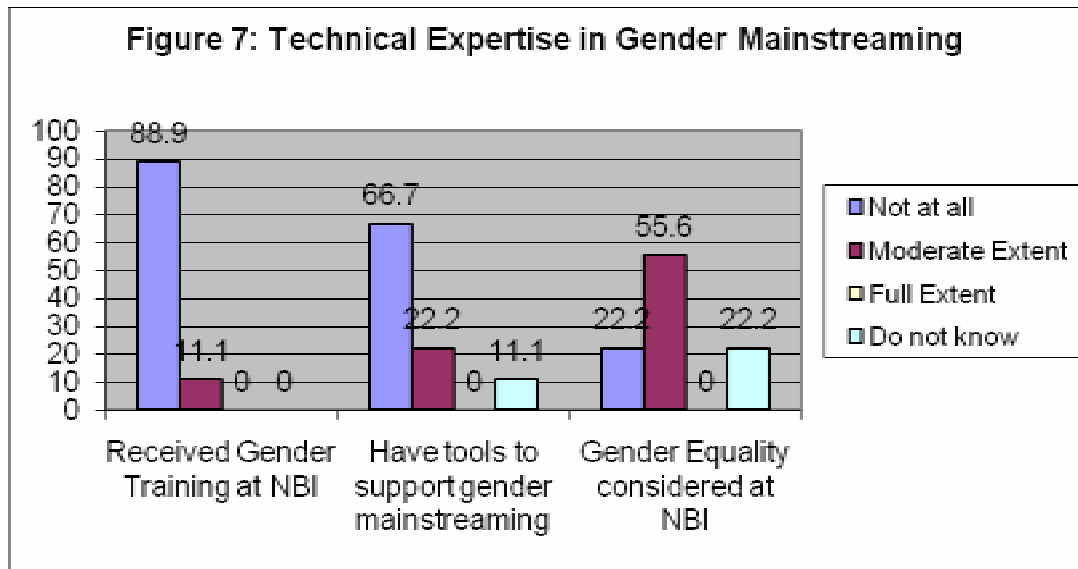
### Capacity Building in Gender Mainstreaming

NBI has no formal programme or intervention for building the capacity of stakeholders on gender analysis or gender mainstreaming. However, some members of staff have acquired skills and been sensitized to gender issues from their previous places of employment and through interactions with other stakeholders. Although gender is recognised as one of the cross-cutting issues in the proposed ISP, no interventions to date have been undertaken by NBI to build capacity of staff on gender mainstreaming. There are no customized tools and resources on gender to guide members of staff and other stakeholders who may be interested in mainstreaming gender in their day-to-day work. The Gender Assessment process has created a Gender Working Group (GWG), which should be institutionalized including strengthening their skills and knowledge on gender mainstreaming for assisting others.



### Recommendations

- Through the ISP, the NBI needs to plan for interventions that will strengthen the capacity of members of staff on gender mainstreaming.
- NBI should undertake gender data collection and analysis of programme and project interventions already implemented for purposes of learning and documenting good practices.
- NBI needs to train the Project Steering Committees (PSCs) and Project Management Unit (PMU) teams in gender analysis as a necessary element of programme implementation.



Capacity development in gender mainstreaming needs to be informed by the gender policy and the proposed cooperative framework, as per the quotation below.

*“... without a proper gender policy, it is difficult to start speaking about technical capacity. Capacity for what? Therefore we need to do first things first, define where NBI wants to go with respect to gender equality and other considerations, and then build commensurate capacity to achieve specified goals, objectives and targets. This is absolutely necessary to avoid the usual lip service given to this matter by most organizations.”*

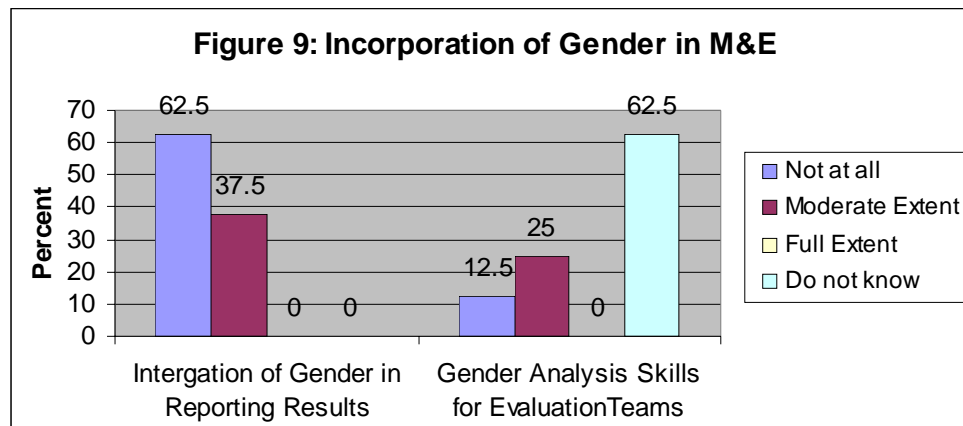
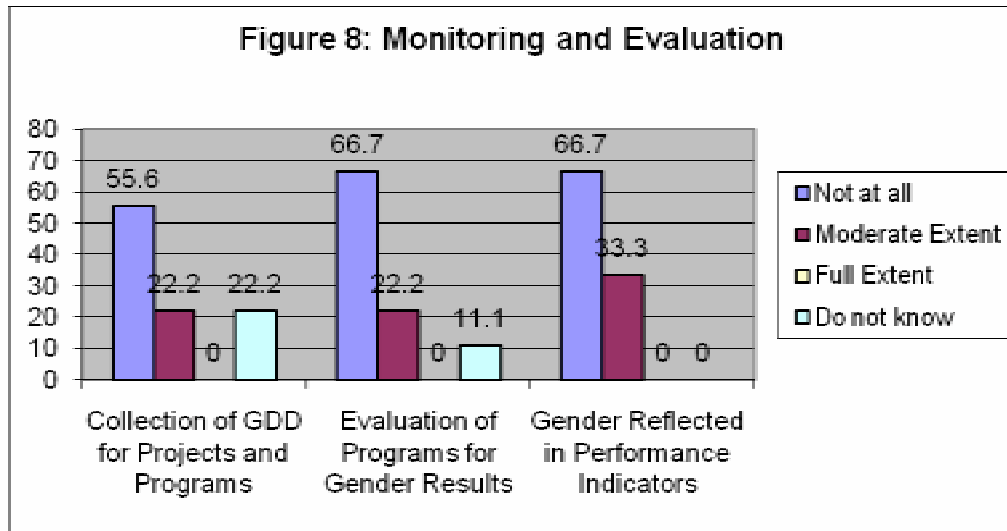
## 2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

NBI has developed a comprehensive **“Results Based System (RBS): Core Planning and M&E Tools”** for all the ongoing programmes and projects. The RBS defines the long-term, medium-term and short-term outcomes as well as specific project impacts. However, it is important to note that gender-related results and indicators are defined under CBSI projects only. The rest of NBI programmes and projects do not define gender-related results and indicators. Similarly, the results of the questionnaire and group discussions (Figures 8 and 9) show that gender disaggregated data, results, and indicators have not been considered during NBI evaluation processes or tools developed for this use. Figure 8 also shows that the majority of NBI evaluation teams lack gender analysis skills. In the absence of gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation tools and evaluation teams, it is not possible to have performance reports reflecting issues of women and gender. The absence of gender in monitoring and evaluation tools and processes is a reflection of a wider problem of currently gender blind programmes and projects. This is an area of concern exemplified in other sections of this report. This concern is confirmed by the quotation below:

*“...the weakness in [monitoring and evaluation] derives from the lack of policies and planning geared to gender and development. Without a foundation, there is hardly anything to seriously monitor and evaluate. It is thus a call for the basics to be laid down.”*

## Recommendations

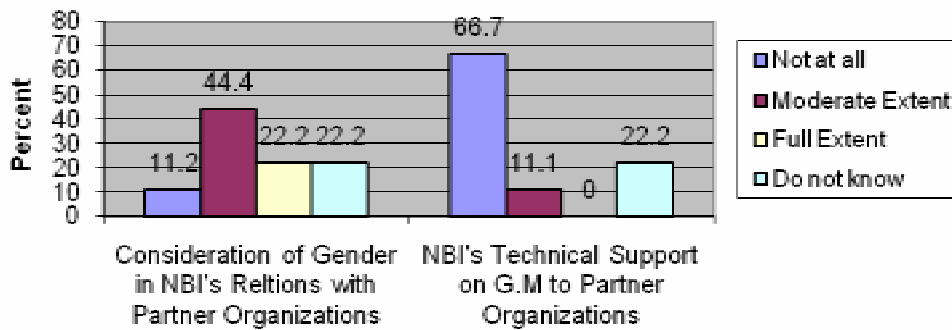
- NBI therefore needs to mainstream gender into its policies, programmes and processes upon which gender responsive monitoring and evaluation processes, tools and teams can be based.
- Project Managers need to define gender-related results and indicators that should be included in RBS.



## 2.6 Partner Organizations and National Affiliates

This section focuses on the level of gender integration in NBI's relations with partners and national affiliates. Figure 10 below indicates that gender is considered as NBI engages with other partner organizations. Figure 10 also shows that NBI has not provided technical support on gender to other partner organizations.

**Figure 10: Integration of Gender in NBI's Relations with Partner Organisations**



*“Gender equality has been hyped around for rather too long and many organizations claim adhering to the principles. In reality there is little to show, one wonders the seriousness of organizations? What is needed is ...doing the groundwork planning, establishing principles and approaches to be pursued within the NBI itself, and then strictly pursuing the implementation plan. There should also be rewards and sanctions for non-implementation or non-achievement of specified targets.”* **staff member**

## Recommendations and Conclusion

NBI needs to commit itself at a corporate level to the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment in all of its programmes and projects, programming processes, programme implementation and monitoring and evaluation processes, which is not yet the case presently. The formulation of an institutional gender policy to lay the foundation for other initiatives comes out as one of the urgent interventions that NBI needs to consider seriously. This should be followed with the development of a gender strategy as well as planning for capacity development on gender mainstreaming among members of staff and other stakeholders.

## 3. Major Findings and Recommendations: NBI Organizational Culture

This section provides a description of the key findings and recommendations on NBI organizational culture taking into consideration aspects such as the gender policy, human resources, advocacy, public relations and communications, financial resources and organizational culture.

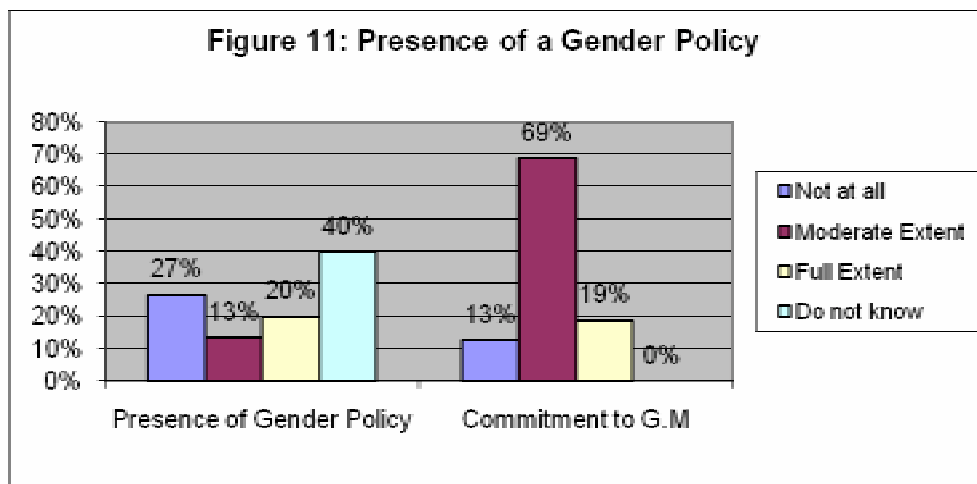
### 3.1 Gender Policy

While the outcomes of the questionnaire (Figure 11) indicate that NBI has the makings of a gender policy in place and is committed to the promotion of gender equality, this does not appear to be the reality on the ground. NBI has not yet developed a comprehensive gender policy to guide its efforts on gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment. However, initial discussion with senior management during the gender audit period showed a willingness of senior management to enact this. There are

contradictions emerging out of the audit questionnaire which reflects differences in the level of understanding of gender analysis and gender mainstreaming, particularly the concept that an institutionalized gender policy should show commitment to gender mainstreaming reflected more at an organizational level than at an individual one.

*“NBI needs to have a gender policy and the timing is just perfect because the process can be facilitated in such a way that it is highly participatory. The gender audit can be used to generate ideas. The policy should not be developed by consultants but NBI staff. The gender policy should recommend strategies to improve the representation and participation of women in decision-making. Once the policy is in place, a gender mainstreaming strategy should also be developed.”*

As indicated in previous sections of this report and further emphasized by the above observation, NBI needs to formulate a gender policy as one of its interventions for gender mainstreaming. The gender policy is one of the ways through which NBI will reflect its organizational commitment to the promotion gender equality and women’s empowerment. Documents such as policy briefs could be used to illustrate strong linkages to gender issues in specific NBI technical areas to enable staff to appreciate gender in their work on a continuous basis and see the merit of it being mainstreamed.



### 3.2 Human Resources

This section focuses on human resources policies and the extent to which these policies are gender responsive as well as the representation and participation of men and women at different levels of decision-making in the NBI.

NBI is in the process of developing a comprehensive human resources policy. Currently, NBI’s human resources are being guided by the NBI Terms and Conditions of Service, which was developed in 2000. A review of this document shows that its gender responsiveness is limited. These Terms and Conditions of Service provide for a two-month maternity leave with full pay for those female employees having worked for at least six months at NBI before birth. The current Terms and Conditions of Service do not provide for paternity leave for male employees, an equal opportunity principle, flexible work arrangements for employees with babies or minors (especially those still breast feeding) and/or childcare arrangements. The current terms and conditions of service do



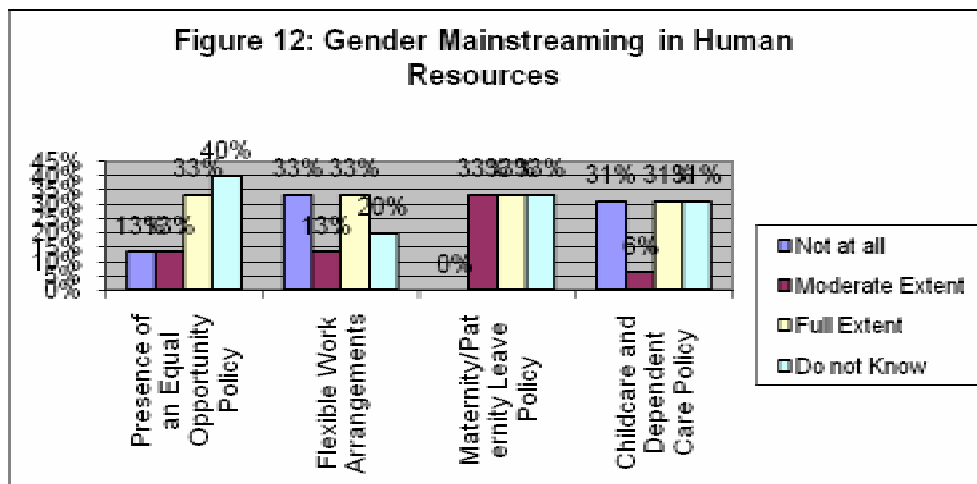
not provide a gender and family friendly work environment. NBI therefore could learn from other international organizations such as the UN and the African Union (AU) that have managed to implement human resources policies that are relatively gender responsive and provide a gender and family friendly work environment.

*“It is good to be honest. There is very little consideration or attention paid to issues of gender and so I think the audit has come at an appropriate time. In fact the whole organization needs to be trained and sensitized.”*

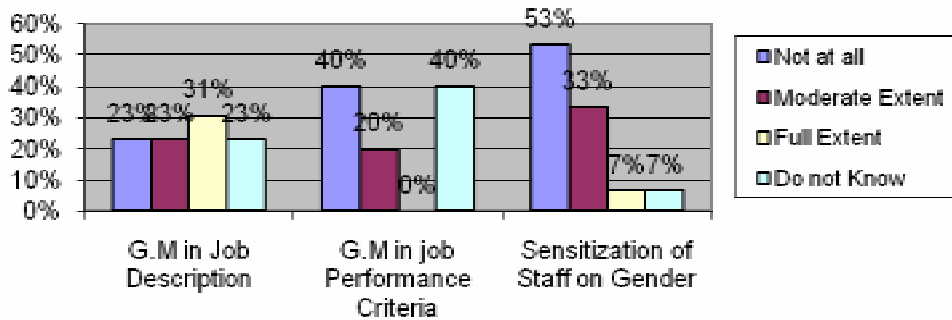
Contrary to the above observation, results of the online audit questionnaire (Figure 12) clearly indicate slightly higher levels of gender sensitivity for key aspects under human resources. This can be explained by the fact that most of NBI’s staff members are directly employed by UNOPS and are governed under the terms and conditions of United Nations (UN) rather than under the terms and conditions of NBI. Similarly, NBI has not consciously undertaken any form of gender training for its human resource members of staff and other stakeholders.

### Recommendations

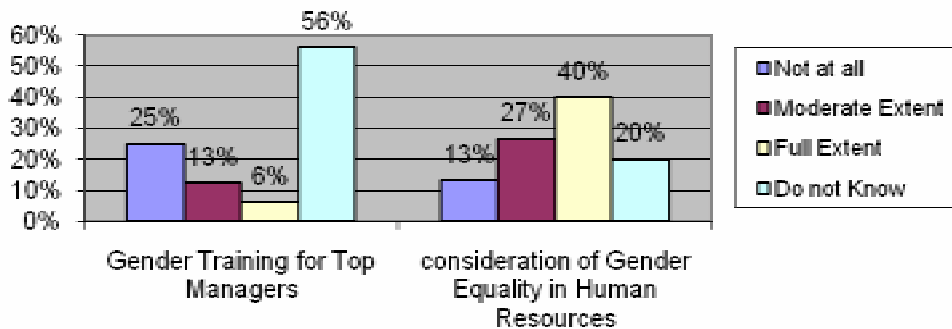
- NBI should ensure that the upcoming Human Resource Policy is gender sensitive so as to provide a good working environment for female and male employees. NBI therefore could engage a gender expert in human resources management on the team that will develop the Human Resource Policy.
- NBI should design and undertake a capacity development plan for its members of staff and other stakeholders, and should include training and other support services on gender mainstreaming.



**Figure 13: Gender Mainstreaming in Human Resources**



**Figure 14: Gender Mainstreaming in Human Resources**



### 3.3 Representation and Participation of Men and Women in Institutional Framework and Decision-making in NBI

NBI has a number of institutional arrangements at various levels through which decisions are made and which are important points of analysis as far as the representation and participation of women is concerned.

The Nile Council of Ministers (Nile-COM) is the overall policy-making body for NBI. It has oversight of the combined projects and provides policy advice and guidance. It is comprised of water ministers from the Nile Basin countries. Currently, out of the nine members, only the Ugandan Minister of Water is a woman.

The Nile Technical Advisory Committee (Nile-TAC) is tasked with the review of the project portfolios and provides technical advice and guidance to the Nile-COM. Each member country has two representatives on each of the projects. Currently there are 180 members of the Nile-TAC and out of these, 21 are women, representing 11% membership. The Nile-TAC is constituted by top decision makers in the respective Ministries of Water in riparian states. Therefore there is under-representation of women on the Nile-TAC, reflecting the overall absence of women at top management levels in the Ministries of Water within Member states. Although it can be argued that not all

women policy-makers are gender sensitive, their physical absence in decision-making can contribute to policy decisions that do not reflect any voice of women and are consequently more representative of men's interests and needs.

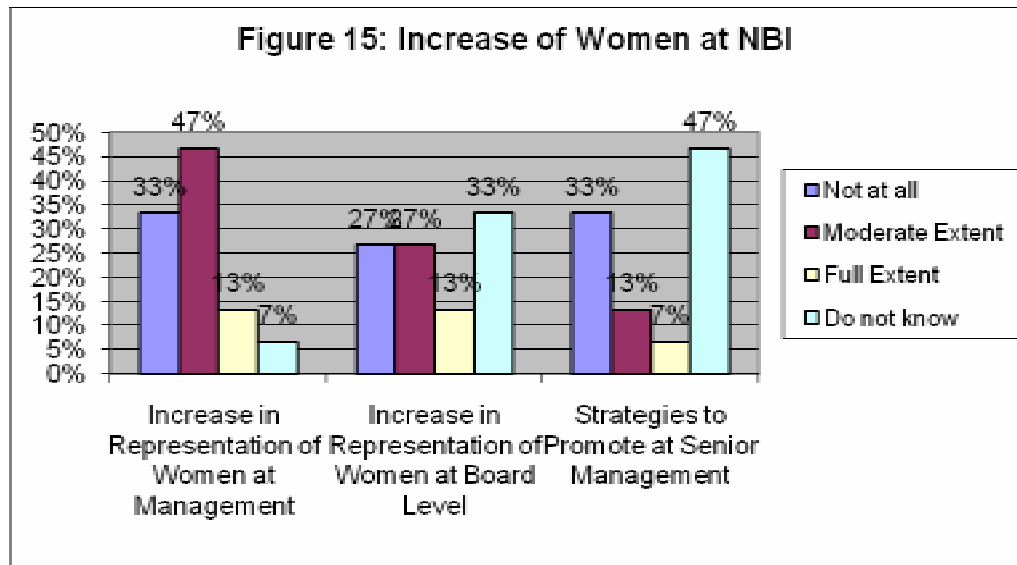
For instance, at the regional level in NELSAP, Nile-COM has only two women out of eight members. Nile-TAC has one woman compared to 15 men and in the Regional Steering Committees there are two women out of 18 members. At the Secretariat level there are two women in programming positions compared to 15 positions held by men.

*"...TAC is a male affair and the reasons advanced are that the governments are the ones that choose. I think NBI is in position to ask members states to choose both male and female members as TAC. Like Kenya all the four TAC members including alternates are men. This is a gross misrepresentation of women's presence and ability."*

The Nile Secretariat (Nile-Sec) is the implementing organ of NBI programmes and projects. It is headed by a male Executive Director. Out of the 15 members of the NBI secretariat, five are women with only one at the level of Senior Programme Officer. Women therefore form 33% of the staff at the NBI secretariat. According to discussions with members of staff, it was made clear that during recruitment, women are encouraged to apply and this has contributed to a slight increase in the number of women members of staff at NBI. However, NBI has not yet undertaken internal policy related interventions to promote women at senior management positions such as targets and benchmarks.

Considering the current membership of NBI organs, in particular the Nile-COM and Nile-TAC, it is clear that women are still underrepresented in key decision-making in NBI. NBI still reflects the wider issue of the marginalization of women in decision-making at regional, national and sub-national levels in the region.

In order to achieve its vision of sustainable socio-economic development in the Nile Basin, NBI has to undertake interventions that will bring about both qualitative and quantitative representation and participation of women at all its levels of decision-making. In the short-term, in order to improve the level of gender awareness, NBI needs to undertake gender sensitization for its decision-making organs, particularly the Nile-TAC, Project Steering Committees (PSCs), Project Management Units (PMUs) and the Secretariats. In the long-term, NBI needs to advocate for the equal appointment and promotion of women in policy-making positions within the member states. At the secretariat level, NBI needs to adopt and implement an equal opportunity principle into all its programmes and projects and to build the capacity of the different NBI organs in gender mainstreaming.



### 3.4 Advocacy, Public Relations and Communications

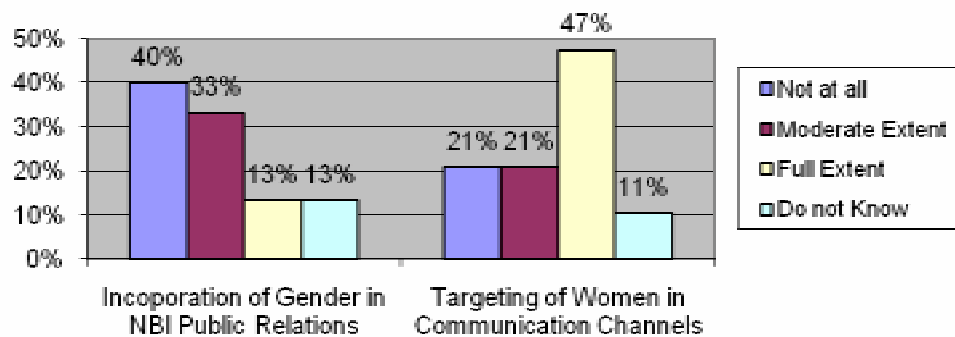
Advocacy, public relations and communications are among the ways that organizations communicate with client groups that they would like to attract and influence. For purposes of this assessment, this section focuses on the gender sensitivity of NBI's communication and advocacy campaigns. In particular it focuses upon whether gender equality was incorporated into NBI's communications, publications and media strategies and assessed the extent to which these reach women client groups.

Figure 16 indicates that there has been an attempt to incorporate gender in NBI's advocacy public relations and communications to the extent of 46% (combining percentages on moderate and full extents). However, this has largely been limited to reflecting NBI women's participation rates in the various events, not highlighting relevant gender issues and concerns that are part of ongoing programmes and projects. A review of selected advocacy and communications materials, such as Annual Reports, the Nile News series, NBI project briefs and NBI project documents, show that this is one of the areas where NBI is still weak with regards to gender sensitive content. NBI also lacks an overall communication and advocacy strategy that includes gender as a basic principle. Instead this role is left up to individual members of staff to decide what is important regarding gender for their respective projects.

*“Gender mainstreaming in advocacy and public relations is left to individual project coordinators and some are not well informed on gender issues, staff need serious training on gender in the respective areas.”*

In terms of outreach, Figure 16 indicates that women are indeed reached by the different communication channels. This therefore means that NBI can use the existing communication channels to share and disseminate vital information to women as well as to mobilize them to participate in ongoing programmes, projects and activities, but more attention should be taken to highlight gender issues and concerns.

**Figure 16: Gender Mainstreaming in NBI Advocacy, Public Relations and Communications**



In this regard, NBI needs to develop and implement a gender sensitive advocacy, information and communication strategy that will address the needs of all staff and other stakeholders as well as highlight pertinent gender issues and concerns.

### 3.5 Financial Resources

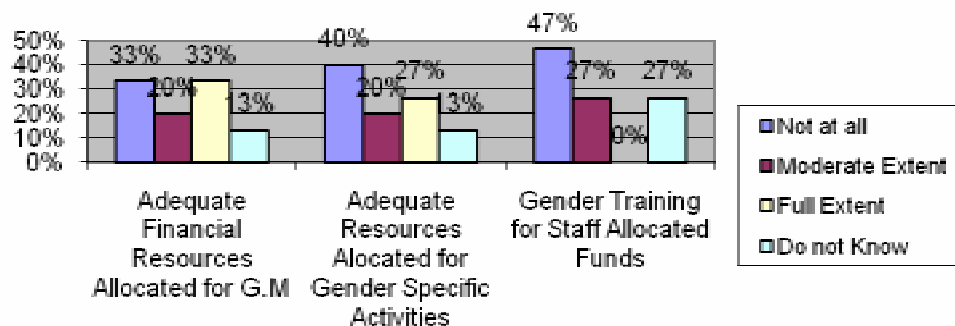
This section focuses on the level of programme and project resources budgeted for gender equality. Budget priorities reflect the values and policy priorities of any organization. Therefore allocating resources for gender equality is one of the ways in which an organization can show its commitment to gender equality.

Absence of gender perspectives and analysis in the formulation of NBI policies, programmes and projects does not make it mandatory for associated budgets to include specific lines of action for addressing gender issues. Even in CBSI projects that have initiated gender-related activities, these activities were not in the original work plan, but rather added later, such as a regional workshop for Women of the Nile, held in 2006. Most of the lines of action in the Programme Budget 2006 offer potential entry points for gender integration. These strategic openings notwithstanding, the shortage of financial resources is likely to hinder the integration of gender issues in the execution of the budget, as the programme and project managers have to choose between many competing priorities. Several members of staff shared this concern.

*“There is no specific budget for gender, apart from convincing the projects managers to put aside a budget for gender activities, which rests on the prioritization of the activities by the managers. Due to an absence of a gender policy, limited funds are allocated for few gender activities such as the orientation workshops at the national and once at regional level (case of CBSI). In spite of this there is no systematic staff training that has been undertaken on gender so that they are able to develop gender sensitive plans.”*

While the findings in Figure 17 below indicate that there are efforts to allocate resources for gender mainstreaming by 33%, for gender specific activities by 27% and for gender training for members of staff, this is not the case as programme and project budgets do not include budget lines on gender.

**Figure 17: Allocation of Financial Resources for Gender Mainstreaming**



It is therefore highly recommended that NBI:

- Consciously plans and budget for interventions that address gender analysis under each programme and project including planning for gender specific activities.
- Consciously develop and implement a capacity-building programme on gender mainstreaming for members of staff including gender sensitization for its key stakeholders such as the Nile-TAC.
- Formulate a gender policy as one of the key interventions that will form the basis for programming and allocation of resources on gender mainstreaming.

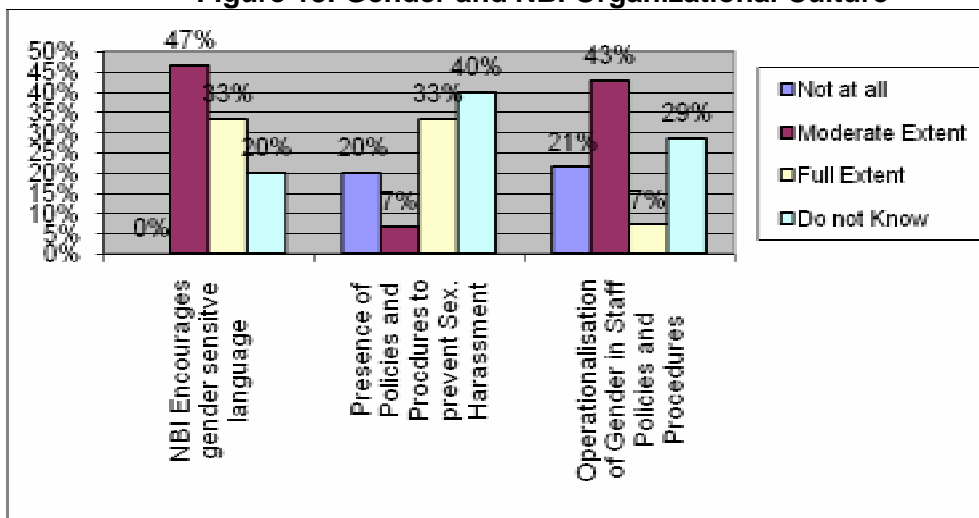
### 3.6 Organizational Culture

For this assessment, gender sensitivity in the culture of NBI was looked at from four main perspectives, namely: language and behaviour; policies and procedures on sexual harassment; male or female interrelationships; and interventions for promoting a numerical gender balance.

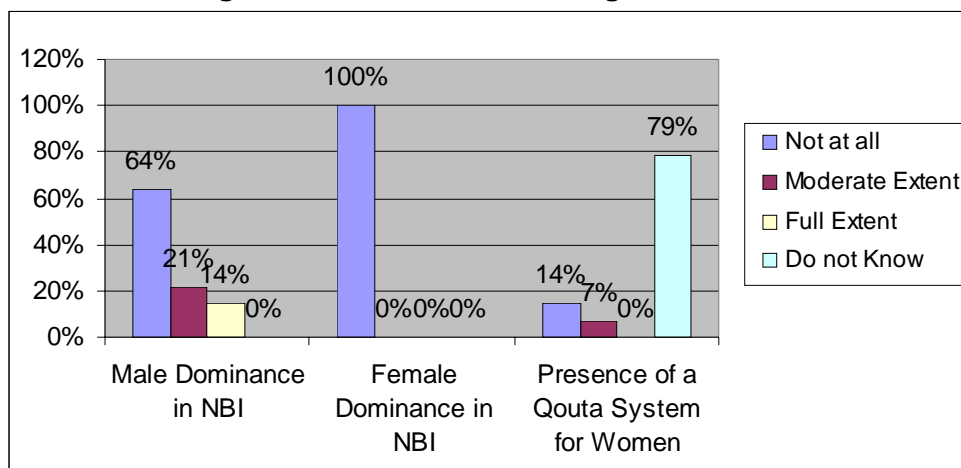
In terms of language and behaviour, results in Figure 18 indicate that NBI encourages gender sensitive language and behaviour. There were no cases of sexual harassment cited by female members of staff. However, the current Terms and Conditions of Service that are guiding the existing human resource policy do not address or define “sexual harassment” or suggest ways of addressing this, should it occur. Women in management positions indicated that they have not experienced overt discrimination however they are often confronted with internalized forms of resistance from some male staff members, mainly those in the service delivery category of staff. Differing cultural backgrounds of various staff members has also been cited as a determining factor in this behaviour.

There are some forms of male dominance cited in NBI arising mainly from the overall under-representation of women at all levels of decision-making. NBI has not yet adopted a quota system to address this gender imbalance. The upcoming process of engaging a participatory process that will lead to the development of a comprehensive Human Resource Policy for NBI offers an opportunity to address the above and other gender gaps.

**Figure 18: Gender and NBI Organizational Culture**



**Figure 19: Gender and NBI Organizational Culture**



**Attitudes and Perceptions of Staff towards Gender**

The gender assessment found that staff members have varying attitudes and perceptions towards gender and women’s empowerment. Most members of staff in programming areas are convinced of the importance to mainstream gender in their programmes. The real challenge is the inadequacy of gender mainstreaming skills. At staff administrative levels, it is a combination of lack of appreciation or a lack of understanding of gender issues and negative perceptions, or even overt resistance, towards gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women. This audit revealed that most of the staff feel that gender mainstreaming is not their own responsibility since it not included in their job description. While there were no cases of resistance to gender mainstreaming observed during the audit, there were cases of limited understanding of gender issues among members of staff observed by the audit team.

Limited understanding of gender and women’s issues was also reflected in the inconsistencies in responses to the self-administered audit questionnaires. Hence NBI needs to create more gender awareness and its relevancy to staff, as well as how to implement relevant, innovative and customized approaches to gender mainstreaming at

NBI and provide strong technical support and guidance to all members of staff and policy makers in a gender policy. This process will add value if these initiatives are tailored to specific sectoral areas of work for staff who can then appreciate more the relevancy and interlinkages of gender issues to their own development in both their interpersonal relations and work areas.

In this regard it is recommended that NBI:

- Provide for a gender and human resource expert as part of the team for the development of a Human Resource Policy
- Plan and undertake interventions to improve the representation and participation of women as members of staff to reduce the existing male dominance. A quota system can be adopted gradually to lead to this enactment

#### **4. Challenges to Gender Mainstreaming in NBI Programmes, Projects, Policies and Organizational Processes**

The audit identified the following challenges facing NBI in its efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment:

- The absence of any form of policy or legal instrument on gender equality and women's empowerment in NBI, which subsequently undermines its capability to engage in meaningful gender mainstreaming, let alone its ability to require accountability from staff members and other key stakeholders.
- The institutional arrangement characterised by autonomous regional institutions, in particular ENSAP and NELSAP and their respective hierarchical institutional mechanisms, coupled with weak linkages within programme or projects. This means that the key implementing institutions do not have strong obligations to take on the recommendations, interests and priorities of the NBI Secretariat. Unless the current secretariat can enforce this aspect with its participating institutions, the likelihood of implementing a gender mainstreaming policy once in place will depend on the political will of these individual institutions.
- Different level of gender sensitivity and diverse cultural norms among member states.

### **5. Overall Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

This assessment indicates that NBI has not yet internalized issues of gender and women's empowerment systematically in its policies, programmes, projects and institutional procedures. References were made to the emerging efforts and strong political will of senior management at the Secretariat, but this has not yet been applied across NBI's entire institutional structure. NBI therefore will have to undertake some of the suggested interventions highlighted in the assessment, in the recommended areas as a basis for achieving the shared vision of **sustainable socio-economic development through equitable utilization of and benefits from the common Nile Basin water resources**. The ISP offers an excellent opportunity for NBI to act upon these recommendations



## **5.2 STAFF Recommendations**

These are ranked according to the priorities of NBI as emerged from the questionnaires.

### **Improving Political Will**

- Dedicated resources such as a gender unit/division
- Encourage and recruit more women in leadership and decision-making positions
- Make gender a priority in the organization with a policy and a budget to support gender activities
- Provide staff education on gender policy and its benefits to all
- Provide adequate recognition for staff responsible for gender programmes

### **Improving Technical Capacity**

- Organize sector-specific workshops on gender issues more frequently
- Provide capacity development in gender mainstreaming for all members of staff
- Develop and utilize gender mainstreaming tools such as manuals and guidelines
- Promote and make mandatory for staff to attend seminars on gender
- Create awareness among staff of the importance of gender disaggregated data

### **Improving Organizational Culture**

- Staff education on gender policy and what it means to each individual
- Award gender sensitive staff
- Constantly talk about gender, constantly work on it, promote it but in a way that no one feels sidelined
- Men should be more involved in gender discussions
- Hold mandatory staff orientation workshop for all staff to get to know their views, with explicit explanations of gender equality to enable them to understand and lend support to gender mainstreaming

### **Improving Accountability**

- Ensure implementation of gender in all programmes through application of and effectively implementing gender analysis in planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation
- Ensure equal opportunities for men and women for training and promotions
- Strive for a gender balance at all levels of staffing with no sacrifice to quality
- Place high value on staff performance on gender mainstreaming through staff performance appraisals
- Make available to all staff gender-related policies in proactive and positive way

## **Annex 1: Members of the Gender Working Group**

Hamere Wondimu, Senior Program Officer  
SVP Coordinator  
Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat

John Kokas Ogwang, Regional Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist  
Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat

Pamella Lakidi Achan, Assistant Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist  
Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat

Canisius K. Kanangire, Regional Project Manager  
Applied Training Project (ATP)  
Nile Basin Initiative

Hellen Natu, Regional Lead Specialist  
Nile Basin Initiative  
Socio-economic Development and Benefit Sharing (SDBS) Project

Gordon Mumbo, Regional Project Manager  
Confidence Building and Stakeholder Involvement Project  
Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat

Salah Shazali, Regional Lead Specialist  
Confidence Building and Stakeholder Involvement Project  
Nile Basin Initiative Secretariat

Intisar Salih, Monitoring & Evaluation Lead Specialist  
Nile Transboundary Environment Action Project (NTEAP)

Emerita Mugorewicyeza, Social Development Officer  
Nile Basin Initiative  
CBSI/NELSAP

Jane Nabunnya, NPC – CBSI Uganda  
Transboundary Water Office  
Directorate of Water Resources

Peter Kanyi Maina, Senior Economist  
Nile Basin Initiative  
Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Program (NELSAP-CU)

Jane Kisakye, Micro-grant Coordinator  
National Transboundary Environment Action Program (NTEAP)

Stephen Kigolo  
NPC – NTEAP Uganda

Metselal Abraha, M & E Specialist  
Nile Basin Initiative  
Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO)

## **Annex 2: References**

Applied Training Project Document, December 2000.  
Confidence Building and Stakeholder Involvement Project Document, September 2000.  
Confidence Building and Stakeholder Involvement Project Document, September 2005.  
Eastern Nile Subsidiary Action Programme (ENSAP), Annual Report 2006.  
Efficient Water Use for Agricultural Production Project Document, October 2000,  
Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals, Millennium Project Report 2005,  
Nile Basin Initiative Project Briefs, June 2007,  
Nile Basin Initiative Strategic Action Project (NTEAP) Annual Report 2006,  
Nile News, Vol.4: Issue 9, July 2007,  
Nile Basin Initiative, Annual Report 2006,  
Nile Basin Initiative Annual Work plan 2007,  
Nile Basin Initiative Results Based System: Core Planning and M&E Tools  
Nile Basin Initiative Institutional Strengthening (2008-2010) Project Document.  
Nile Basin Initiative ,Mid-Year Progress Report, January –June 2007,  
Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, 1995.  
Socio-Economic Development and Benefits Sharing Project Document, December 2000.  
United Nations, the Beijing Platform of Action 1995.