

# LAKE VICTORIA ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT (LVEMP) PHASE II

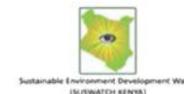
## CLIENT SERVICE CHARTER

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**LVEMP II aims to rehabilitate the lake ecosystem for the benefit of the people who live in the basin, the national economies of which they are part and the Global community.**



East African Sustainability Watch Network (EA SusWatch Network), a network of Civil Society Organizations from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania with its Regional Secretariat hosted at Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD) in Kampala, Uganda. The client charter was developed from a participatory process involving the community members in the target river basins of Nyando in Kenya, Simiyu in Tanzania and Katonga in Uganda as well as other stakeholders in the Lake Victoria Basin. The client charter was developed as part of EA SusWatch Network's LVEMP II Civil Society Watch Project that seeks to lobby and advocate for realization of results-based performance from the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project (LVEMP II) and implementation of the East African Community Climate Change Policy (EACCCP).

The Lake Victoria Environment Management Project Phase II (LVEMP II) is a transboundary initiative that covers the whole of Lake Victoria and its catchments with the main aim of ensuring sustainable use and management of the natural resources of the lake basin. It is a response by the Governments of partner states of the East African Community (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda) with support from Development Partners (Global Environment Facility; Government of Sweden; World Bank) to the concerns raised about the deteriorating conditions of Lake Victoria and its catchments.

The challenges LVEMP II project seeks to address include population pressure that has given rise to land use conflicts and degradation; forest degradation due to construction and farming activities; conversion of wetlands into agricultural land and farming on the shore lines; Pollution arising from poor farming method in the catchment; soil erosion; over-abstraction of water from the lake and the rivers in the basin; resurgence of aquatic weed like the water hyacinth; unplanned urbanization and industrialization that has led to poor solid waste management, pollution from agrochemicals, use of pesticides and poor discharge of untreated liquid wastes resulting in pollution; decline in the water levels that have caused serious economic and environmental impacts in the riparian and downstream countries.

LVEMP II therefore aims to rehabilitate the lake ecosystem for the benefit of the people who live in the basin, the national economies of which they are part and the global community. It is also important to note some of the funds for LVEMP II project is money that partner states have borrowed (loans) and so the citizens need to ensure rational utilization of the project funds in order to secure optimum benefits from this Project. Uganda has borrowed USD 27.5 million from IDA for this project, Kenya has borrowed USD 30 million and Tanzania USD 32.5 million, while Burundi and Rwanda borrowed USD 15 million for similar interventions.

#### **Why the LVEMP II Client Service Charter?**

A customer service charter or code of conduct formally defines what an organization and its clients can expect from each other. It is an important tool for organizations and their clients /beneficiaries/stakeholders and for regulators.

LVEMP II has many actors, interests, ways of work, geographical diversity and is being implemented in different political settings that have implications on power relations. The actors include Partner States and implementation hierarchy (from the Ministers and Permanent Secretaries in the respective line ministries to communities who are the primary target beneficiaries of the project and who are expected to cooperate so as to enable the project realize its objectives. The project aims to improve the livelihoods of the community members and empower them to contribute to the restoration of the degraded natural resources of the Lake Victoria Basin. Other actors in the project include: Development Partners, NGOs, CBOs and Community groups, private sector, media, and local authorities.

EA SusWatch has been able to follow implementation of LVEMP II since 2011 and has realized that there is an urgent need to have the implementers put forward a minimum set of what they are set to do and how and when they plan to do it. This has arisen from the community meetings held, media interactions and three deliberate community consultative meetings.

EA SusWatch Network believes that a LVEMP II Client Service Charter will close the gap between communities and the implementers as it provides a means for communities to provide feedback, suggest improvements, and lodge any complaints if they are dissatisfied with any aspect of their interaction with LVEMP II project implementation. Similarly, by facilitating communication with clients, the Client Service Charter will help implementers to maintain or improve their quality of service, enhances their reputation as it presents the implementation teams as being receptive to suggestions and even criticism. Above all, the Charter protects employees when dealing with difficult clients, while at the same time giving a standard against which to measure LVEMP II performance.

In order to realize the aforementioned, EA SusWatch Network envisages the proposed Client Service Charter to:

- Focus on the front-line actors i.e. the implementers at national and regional level; and communities through the Community groups / CBOs. Since communities are expected to gain more from Component 3 (use of Community-Driven Development approaches to improve water use efficiency in the Lake basin), this Client Service Charter would focus on component 3 as a way of ensuring the community reaps maximum benefit from the project.

- Provide a means for the community members to provide feedback and suggest improvements to the implementation teams at regional and national levels. It would also provide clear channels for community members to complain if they are dissatisfied with any aspect of their interaction with the LVEMP II implementation team both at national and regional levels.
- Be in line with the public service to drive attitude change towards a more client-focused approach in the LVEMP II implementation organs, given its regional magnitude and the diversity actors and beneficiaries.

#### **What are the Objectives of the proposed LVEMP II Client Service Charter?**

- To enable clients / beneficiaries in the 3 countries to get the most out of LVEMP II. A charter provides a means for them to provide regular feedback and suggest improvements.
- To facilitate communication between clients/beneficiaries in the 5 countries and the LVEMP II implementation teams (regional and national) so as to maintain or improve quality of service, generate suggestions and formally deal with criticisms.
- To provide a clear framework through which complaints on any aspect of their interaction with LVEMP II implementation can be channelled.

#### **What are key Guiding principles for the proposed LVEMP II Client Service Charter?**

- Ownership and genuine ways of working together (collaboration, cooperation based on mutual respect).
- Open and transparent transactions related to community driven projects (where communities have high interest).
- Respect for time (project period) in relation to realization of the LVEMP II set results (with respect to Community-Driven Development subprojects)
- Environmental sensitivity and consciousness when implementing Community-Driven Development subprojects
- Equal opportunities for men, women, youth and people with disabilities to benefit from LVEMP II.

#### **Key issues for inclusion in the Charter**

■ The suggested key issues for consideration in the Charter relate to both the LVEMP II frontline implementation teams on one hand; and the communities (as clients) on the other.

#### **LVEMP II Implementation teams (Regional / LVBC, National, district and lower levels)**

- Clear contact persons for the client / general public to know who to contact in case of any concern / issue.
- Regular and open, public access to information related to LVEMP II at all levels (print and electronic)
- Clear compliance mechanism in place - what clients (communities) can do if they feel that service

goals were not met.

- Facilitate sharing of knowledge and skills that can be replicated elsewhere.
- Explain to the community members their procedures and mode of operation.
- Set up a conflict resolution desk where communities can air their grievances regarding project implementation.
- LVEMP II to have in place a community representative and hold regular meetings with the implementing groups.
- Establish clear communication channels and undertake regular communication to the community members through a designated community contact person/ institution.
- Share experiences with community members regarding LVEMP II project implementation in other countries (especially CDD Projects).
- LVEMP II should conduct regular visits to communities to be in touch with realities on the ground.
- Respect for community ideas and aspirations should be made clear in the project.
- Integrate participatory approach in implementation of the project at all stages.
- Streamline the implementation process and limit the bureaucracies in decision making.
- LVEMP II should have an exchange programme that will facilitate networking of groups funded in various regions.

#### **Clients / beneficiaries (Community Groups)**

- Regular and open, public access to information related to progress in implementation of the CDD projects.
- Use of funds for the intended purposes and communities in line with signed contracts
- Regularly point out any emerging conditions that might impede the successful implementation of the CDD projects.
- Community members should act as agent of change by sensitizing other community members and practicing and propagating environmental conservation practices.

#### **A Client Service Charter: a new dawn to implementation of LVEMP II**

EA SusWatch Network strongly proposes that for a sustained improvement in delivering the set Project results throughout the Lake Victoria Basin, a Client Service Charter for LVEMP II as an additional tool is put in place. This will act as a reference point for both the target communities and the implementers to decisively play their respective roles.