

Note on the World Bank Great Lakes Initiative

June 21, 2018

I. Background to the Great Lakes Initiative

The World Bank Great Lakes Initiative was launched following the joint mission of the UN Secretary General (Mr. Ban Ki-moon) and the World Bank Group President Dr. Jim Kim to the Great Lakes region in May 2013, just after the signing by 11 African nations of the “Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the region” (PSCF) to end the conflict in DRC, in February 2013. The joint mission created a strong momentum around - and support for - the implementation of the PSCF among the UN system, development partners, the regional economic communities and countries in the Great Lakes region. For the World Bank, the joint mission led to the preparation of the Great Lakes Initiative, which aims to promote peace, stability and economic development.

II. The Great Lakes Initiative: Content and Status of Implementation

The Initiative built on efforts to strengthen state effectiveness in Eastern Congo supported through the Bank’s DRC program. It has two inter-related-pillars: The first is recovery of livelihoods to reduce the vulnerability of people living in the Great Lakes whose communities suffered greatly during the conflict; and secondly, revitalizing and expanding cross-border economic activity and integration in the areas of agriculture, energy, transport and regional trade. It earmarked \$1.3 billion to scale up World Bank development assistance via the regional IDA window, to address socio-economic dimensions of the underlying sources of conflict

The World Bank has made significant progress in delivering on its commitment. Of that \$1.3bn, nearly \$1.1 billion has already been delivered. Projects are under implementation and have started generating results for the citizens of the region.

Pillar 1: Vulnerability and Resilience provides support to address gender-based violence (worth \$107.0 million), surveillance of communicable diseases (for \$50.0 million) and forced displacement (totaling \$97.0 million).

- ***Great Lakes Emergency Sexual and Gender Based Violence and Women’s Health Project.*** This project has been under implementation since October 2014 and has delivered strong results on the ground. In DRC, the project is providing holistic support to survivors of sexual violence as well as health services, including fistula repair, to vulnerable women. Among eligible reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence, 100% now receive emergency post-exposure anti-retroviral kits within 72 hours. Among reported cases of GBV, 82% also receive at least two other services, covering medical, legal and psychosocial support. In Rwanda, the project has made significant progress upgrading Integrated One Stop Centers (IOSCs) in the hospitals, with all 17 new IOSCs operational as of today. In Burundi, the "One Stop Centers" are operational and since their inception on February 20th, 2017 a total of 129 SGBV cases have been handled. Among the latter

95% benefited from medical treatment including PEP kit within 72 hours; 98% from psychological treatment and 80 from judicial support.

- ***The East Africa Public Health Laboratory Networking Project*** has helped enhance disease control in the five participating countries: Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. Since 2010 public health officials in East Africa successfully mounted joint efforts to control the spread of communicable diseases and expand access to quality diagnostic services for vulnerable groups in cross border areas, serving over 6.5 million beneficiaries (of which 60 percent are females) through a network of 41 upgraded laboratories in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. Main results to date include.
 - In 2013, the Uganda TB Reference Laboratory reached international accreditation, and qualified to serve as a WHO Supranational Reference Laboratory (SRL), becoming the second of its kind in Africa, and subsequently signing agreement with 20 countries to provide specialized services, limiting need to use facilities on other continents
 - The proportion of facilities reaching at least two stars (original project target) on the regionally recognized quality improvement scheme towards accreditation rose from 23 to 96 percent during 2011-2017. Introduction of a unique peer review mechanism by which countries assess each other's performance annually is promoting peer-to-peer learning, building regional capacity, and demonstrating the power of networking. Four laboratories in the network received the gold standard ISO15189 accreditation
 - Roll out of molecular technologies has improved access to TB diagnostic services, strengthened turnaround time, and picked up missing cases
 - Capacity to detect outbreaks and mount rapid effective responses has been boosted through: establishment of nine cross border committees across the five countries and between Kenya/Uganda and South Sudan;
- The DRC component of the Resilience and Cohesion of Forced Displaced Program has benefitted more than 500,000 people, of whom just over half are women. Access to community and social and economic infrastructure has increased by around a third. The Government of Zambia recently decided to cancel the Zambian component of this program

Pillar 2: Economic cooperation and integration focuses on three priority areas, which are (i) infrastructure and connectivity, (ii) trade and (iii) agriculture.

Bank support for connective infrastructure includes first the development of a network to improve broadband connectivity within DRC and between the country and its neighbors, for \$92 million. Second, the rehabilitation of the Guli-Kisangani road connecting DRC and Uganda, for \$125 million, and third, the Rusomo Falls hydropower plant. This will generate an additional 80MW for \$340 million. The AFDB funds associated transmission lines to connect Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda.

The infrastructure component of the ICT project in DRC has been delayed due to a lack of progress on policy reforms in the sector. The rehabilitation works of the 260 kms between Komanda (in the province of Tshopo) and Guli at the border between DRC and Uganda are advanced and set for completion by end of 2018. Civil works at the site of the Rusumo hydropower plant have started and are expected to be completed by January 2019. The preparation of the Ruzizi III power plant is at an advanced stage. All feasibility studies have been completed and a Preferred Bidder selected. Commercial discussions between the sponsors and EGL and its member

States are ongoing. WB and other donors will start preparing their support once they are completed.

- In the second area under Pillar 2, which is trade, a Great Lakes Region Trade Facilitation Program has been under implementation since early 2016. This project aims to facilitate cross-border trade by increasing capacity for commerce and reducing the costs faced by traders, especially small-scale and women traders, at selected border crossings and port locations in the region.
- The GLTFP is being implemented through two series of projects. The first focuses on the main crossings along the DRC's borders with Rwanda and Uganda. Significant progress has been made in a number of areas and especially in physical infrastructure works at project sites in DRC and Rwanda and soft interventions related to training, capacity building and policy reform. Highlights of the achievements so far are:
 - Remedial infrastructure has been installed at two major crossings along the DRC-Rwanda border, easing trade conditions for small-scale operators and especially women. Solar powered lighting has been installed at Goma-Petite Barrière and at Ruzizi I border crossings allowing for greater security and extended trading hours; border opening will move to 24 hours shortly.
 - Airport fence in Rwanda: the fencing of Kamembe Airport was completed. While it is important for aviation safety and security, the fence has also benefitted the local community who farm on airport land by providing security for their crops.
 - Regional policy dialogue has enhanced cross-border coordination on trade facilitation matters across project countries, including measures to streamline procedures for small-scale traders and to support the introduction of dedicated, simplified trade regimes.
 - Trade Information Desks have been established or enhanced at all project locations in collaboration with COMESA, with the aim of assisting traders with border clearance procedures, and also helping them solve disputes with border authorities.
 - Regional and national training for traders and officials is underway or in preparation, including on the gender aspects of cross-border trade, along with extensive awareness-raising and dissemination activities.
- In the agriculture sector, the third focus of Pillar Two, the Regional Great Lakes Integrated Agriculture Development Program, involving Burundi and DRC, was approved for \$225 million. Beginning of implementation has started in Burundi but delayed in DRC because of time taken for financing agreement to be approved by the parliament.