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AFRICA BIODIVERSITY COLLABORATIVE GROUP

Freshwater Conservation and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (FW-WASH)

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE - ONLINE ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

Overview

The Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG) is supported by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to advance understanding of critical biodiversity conservation challenges and their solutions in sub-Saharan Africa. ABCG partners are focusing on four key issues that strongly influence the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation efforts: a) land and resource tenure rights, b) land use management, c) understanding the impacts on biodiversity of change processes operating at a global scale, and d) understanding the linkages between global health and biodiversity.

As a result of consultations with freshwater conservation and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (FW-WASH) practitioners in an inaugural workshop held in 2014, ABCG set out to explore the creation of a Community of Practice (CoP) with the overall aim of establishing integrated learning between FW-WASH practitioners. This CoP initiative falls under the Global Health and Biodiversity Linkages theme, relating to the integration of FW-WASH. The main goal of the FW-WASH component is to generate knowledge on the impacts of infrastructure developments on watersheds in Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the impacts of freshwater conservation in meeting WASH goals. By linking freshwater conservation and WASH, ABCG members and CoP participants expect reduced watershed degradation and reduced pollution, and improved health of freshwater ecosystems.

Objectives

The Community of Practice will:

- Provide a collaborative platform and space where global health, development and conservation professionals can share knowledge and expertise, learn, and solve issues together
- Share practical front line on-the-job experiences and the applicability of implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools
- Provide a platform for practitioners to share resources
- Enable FW-WASH practitioners to connect and organize around common issues

Activities

The CoP will be managed by ABCG's staff members based in Nairobi, Kenya and Washington, DC, in line with ABCG's engagement strategy which seeks to strengthen outreach and engagement with partners in sub-Saharan Africa. The CoP will be strengthened by the presence of five of the seven ABCG members which have offices in Nairobi.

The following activities will be carried out:

- Online discussion
- Online webinars
- Face to face thematic meetings
- Brown bags to showcase case studies

Resource persons and responsibilities

1. Facilitators: Conservation International / Colleen Sorto, Senior Manager, Peace and Development Partnerships and ABCG FW-WASH task lead (csorto@conservation.org); Janet Edmond, Senior Director, Peace and Development Partnerships (jedmond@conservation.org) and Lydia Cardona, Coordinator, Peace and Development Partnerships (lcardona@conservation.org)

Responsibilities

- Identify discussion topics and manage discussions
- Provide guidance on the quality of materials to be shared
- Identify online and face to face meeting opportunities

Over time and as the community grows, the facilitation of the CoP is intended to be shared amongst other subject matter experts.

2. Technical Advisor: African Wildlife Foundation / Jimmiel Mandima, Director Program Design (jmandima@awf.org)

Responsibilities

- Provide strategic oversight for goals and growth of CoP
- Lead the development and updating of strategies, approaches, and tools for community engagement and support their integration and use

3. Administrator: ABCG / Evelyn Namvua, Communications and Engagement Officer (enamvua@abcg.org)

Responsibilities

- Creates group
- Invite new members and provide orientation to group members as well as any technical support on use of the platform

- Monitors member participation and forum settings
- Support facilitator in managing discussion threads as and when required

4. Members

Responsibilities

- Actively engage in online discussions
- Share relevant resources
- Participate in community activities such as webinars and brown bags

Membership

The community membership will be open to practitioners working on freshwater conservation and WASH issues in Africa.

- ABCG FW-WASH task group members
- International Conservation and Development NGOs
- Government institutions
- Private sector actors
- Civil society organizations

The forum

During the October 2016 stakeholders meeting, participants identified the LinkedIn platform as the most appropriate platform to use. A LinkedIn group has been created for the CoP and is accessible here: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8586958>

How to join the community

There are two main ways to join the group:

1. When on LinkedIn hover your mouse on the 'More' grid button tab at the top of your homepage, click on groups and discover. Search for the community and click 'Ask to join'.
2. The group administrator can directly add you to the group where you will receive an email invitation. Once you accept the invitation you will become a member of the group.

Launch date: March 1, 2017