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THE ENERGY PROJECT NOW IN ITS HOME STRAIGHT



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EDITORIAL

On the way to progress!

More than four years after the start of the Energy Project, despite topographical conditions that are not always favorable, rainfall that is sometimes paralyzing, and the occurrence of a confusing pandemic, we are almost there!

By the first half of 2022, the loop will be closed. Most substations are ready. The lines are in the process of being completed in most countries, except for certain sections in Guinea Bissau, where there have been some delays in freeing up the right of way. In order to remove all obstacles, a mission has been dispatched to the country and work should accelerate in the second half of 2021, to be delivered no later than the first quarter of next year.

At the social level, supervised by our experts, the impacted people along the route have been able to benefit from Project funding to carry out income-generating activities, in addition to fair and equitable compensation. Other impacted people living near the lines that overhang their buildings have also received special attention. To rehouse them, OMVG has mobilized the necessary means to build them comfortable permanent houses in place of the makeshift dwellings in which they used to live. In addition, with the vast construction sites underway, involving significant human and financial flows, the Project has resolutely taken the lead in protecting women from gender-based violence.

Furthermore, while it is difficult, if not impossible, to implement a Project of this magnitude without impacting communities and the environment, OMVG has worked with its partners to considerably limit negative impacts. In addition to the human impact, the Project has mobilized significant resources to preserve both chimpanzees and avifauna. To protect the chimpanzees, the project has focused on reforestation, training of agents and the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. As for the birds, the project has mobilized a large number of resources. As for the avifauna, concrete actions have been deployed to minimize the risks of collision or electrocution of birds. Finally, the other good news announced in this issue is the progress of preparatory work for the construction of the Sambangalou dam. A work that will complete the transmission line and will constitute one of the main sources of energy of the community space.

Enjoy your reading!

Elhadji Lansana Fofana
OMVG High Commissioner



Mythical Baobab located on the axis of the dam which will be moved to the surface stay-time of the construction site a few kilometres downstream

Farewell Filomena!

It is with deep sadness that we learned of the accidental death of our dear colleague Filomena Aua Dabo, Executive Assistant at the NMC of Guinea-Bissau. Filomena was available, touchingly attentive and very generous with all the missionaries of the OMVG and the UGP, who were visiting Bissau. She was responsible for handling logistical requests with dexterity and was always available to help us with the organisation of our field activities.



Dear Filomena, we will really miss you, your sweet voice will be missed.

We offer our sincerest condolences to her son, her entire family, friends and colleagues. We pray to Allah to grant them the strength to overcome this difficult time of grief. We pray to Allah in His infinite mercy to forgive you and grant you eternal rest in Firdaws.



OUR LATEST NEWS



Emergency mission to Guinea-Bissau

In order to advance the work on the interconnection line in Guinea-Bissau, an OMVG mission, led by its Secretary General, Mr. Ababacar Ndao, was conducted to take stock of the situation and to examine with the authorities the ways to definitively remove the obstacles related to the release of the right-of-way.

In order to sensitize the Guinea-Bissau authorities on the difficulties that the Energy project is facing in the country, an important delegation of OMVG went there from June 11 to 13, 2021. Led by the Secretary General of OMVG, the mission met with the Minister of State, Minister of Natural Resources and President of the OMVG Council of Ministers, Mr. Orlando Mendes Viegas, to review the progress of the work and request his support to facilitate the final release of the last sections. Mr. Ababacar Ndao said that "overall, the progress of the work is satisfactory. We just noted some difficulties, especially at the level of the L5 interconnection line (Boké in Guinea - Salthino - Babamdinca - Mansoa - Tanaff in Senegal and Bissau), where the execution rate is 5%. This visit was part of a supervision mission and allowed us to examine, with the Minister of State, how to remove the factors of slowdown".

According to the Secretary General of OMVG, the main obstacle is related to the occupation of the rights-of-way, even though a good part of the PAPs have already been compensated, i.e. about 800 PAPs. There are still 95 PAPs whose files are being processed. They need to be reassured so that we can move forward with the work. For his part, the Minister of State, Orlando Mendes Viegas, was pleased with the efforts that have been made and promised to do everything to remove obstacles.

In the company of the Minister of State Orlando Mendes, the mission visited the Bissau substation in Antula to see the progress of the work. Subsequently, in order to exchange with all local and national officials involved in the project, the Secretary General chaired a workshop in Bissau in which the governors of the regions of Tombali, Bafatá and Oio, the presidents, the facilitators and the communication officers of the CLCS, as well as the ministerial departments, members of the CNS, took part.

During this workshop, the OMVG delegation and the members of the CNS and CLCS exchanged a great deal of information on the compensation issues that are hindering the complete liberation of the rights-of-way. The two parties agreed to strengthen their joint actions in order to finalize the work on the Interconnection in Guinea-Bissau under the best conditions and within the contractual deadlines. Finally, they wished to strengthen communication to promote better acceptance of the compensation conditions by the PAPs.

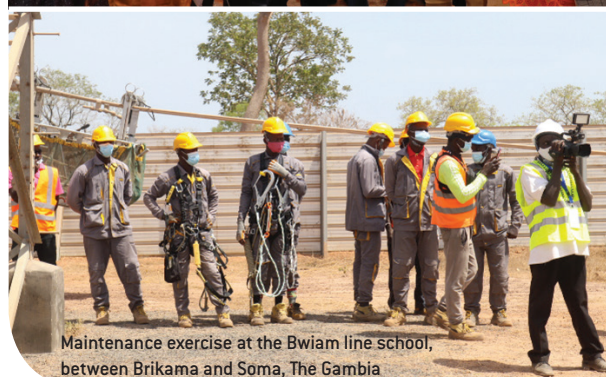
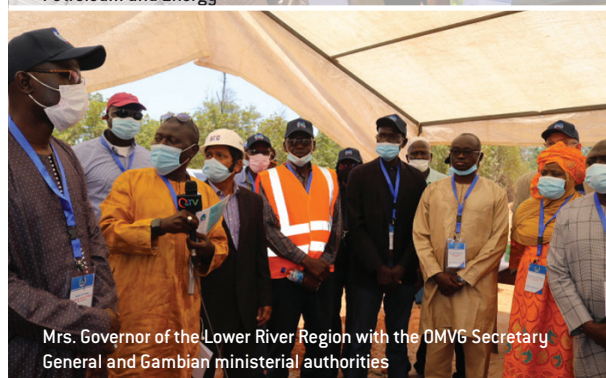


Emergency mission of the OMVG Secretary General, Mr. Ababacar Ndao, to Guinea-Bissau

Press visit to The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, the satisfaction of the national authorities strongly mobilized

On returning from two press visits to Gambia and Guinea-Bissau respectively, accompanied by the national press and important ministerial delegations, OMVG noted with satisfaction that most of the work had made major progress.

Entering the last phase of the Energy Project, OMVG is multiplying its visits to countries to follow step by step the final adjustments to be made on the interconnection line. In this context, a delegation led by the Secretary General, Mr. Ababacar Ndao, has travelled the 200 km of line linking the Brikama and Soma transformer substations, in the company of the Gambian ministers H. Lamin B. Dibba, Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources and H. Fafa Sayang Minister of Petroleum and Energy. On site, the members of the delegation were able to see the very satisfactory progress of the work. At the time of the press visit, the project manager estimated the level of execution of the work at 90%. The Gambian authorities are very pleased with this energy project and have high hopes for it. For them, Gambia could finally benefit from an uninterrupted supply of electricity. Minister of Petroleum and Energy, H. Fafa Sayang, praised the subregional body's dynamic solidarity. "Integration is the current trend in the world to achieve certain large-scale infrastructures, such as those needed for electricity. With this interconnection, energy trade becomes possible between our different member countries and even beyond," he said.



After the Gambia, the OMVG delegation went to Guinea Bissau last July to visit the construction sites. On the spot, a very strong mobilization of the Government was observed, testifying if it were still needed, of the unfailing commitment of the highest authorities of the country. Indeed, the governmental delegation of Guinea-Bissau was headed by H.E. Soares Sambu, Deputy Prime Minister, H.E. Orlando Mendes Viegas, Minister of State, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy, H.E. Joao Aladje Mamadou Fadia, Minister of Finance, H.E. Viariato Soares Cassin, Minister of Finance, and H.E. Joao Aladje Mamadou Fadia, Minister of Finance. E. Viariato Soares Cassama, Minister of Environment and Biodiversity, H.E. Bontche Candé, Minister of State, Minister of Interior and Public Order and finally H.E. Fernando Dias, Minister of Territorial Administration and Local Power. The entire delegation was pleased with the satisfactory level of progress of the work and the significant advances in the release of the rights-of-way.



OMVG High Commissioner and H.E. Soares Sambu, Deputy Prime Minister during the press visit to Guinea-Bissau



WHERE DO OUR PROJECTS SITES STAND?

In Senegal and The Gambia, the transformer substations will soon be delivered ...

Despite difficult topographical, meteorological and social conditions, the Energy Project is accelerating in Guinea and Guinea-Bissau. In The Gambia and Senegal, most of the work will be delivered by December 2021.

It's the home stretch! By the first quarter of 2022, the Organization for the Development of the Gambia River (OMVG) will be able to fully implement its electricity project for the benefit of the populations of its member countries. The Gambia will be the first country to inaugurate its infrastructure on October 23. In Guinea, where difficulties related to a complex topography have been recorded, the bulk of the work will be delivered in December. This is the case for the substations in Boké, Mali, Labé and Linsan. But how difficult it was! A real challenge. For the Mali substation, for example, the earthworks lasted 13 months instead of the 6 planned, due to the nature of the soil (bowal) which turned out to be extremely hard and difficult to develop. As for the Labé substation, freeing the right-of-way was an obstacle for a long time. It was only on March 4, 2020 that this release was effective. Just when we thought we had reached the end of the tunnel, the COVID-19 pandemic and the heavy rains during the 2020 winter season proved to be new difficulties to overcome. Despite all the delays, the work is now progressing at a fast pace and the sites will be delivered in December for the most part. The same applies to the Linsan substation, which houses the main dispatching center, the largest in the entire OMVG network.



In Guinea-Bissau, work is also progressing satisfactorily. Delivery of the Bissau, Mansoa, Bambadinca and Saltinho substations is scheduled for December 2021 at the latest.



Equipment of the Soma substation

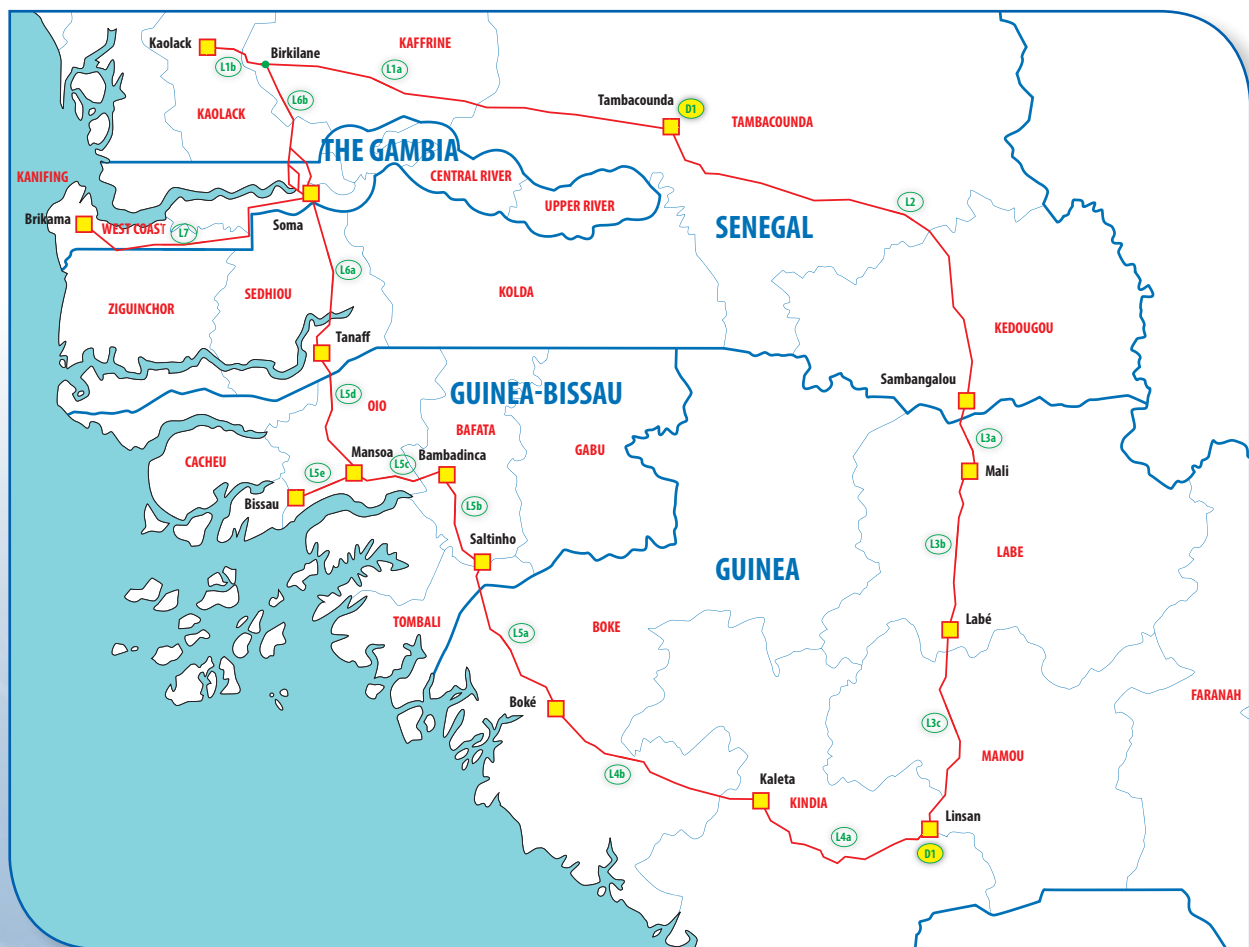


... and power line delivery at the end of October in The Gambia and in the first quarter 2022 in Senegal

The interconnection lines in Guinea and Guinea-Bissau will not be completed until the first quarter of 2022. The 315 km long line (L5) Boké-Salthino-Bambadinca-Mansoa-Tanaff-Bissau connects Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal in 5 sections. These are the Mansoa-Bissau section, 35 km long, Bambadinca-Mansoa (54 km), Salthino-Bambadinca (55 km), Mansoa-Tanaff [Senegal], 73 km long, and the 98 km section between Boké [Guinea] and Salthino [Guinea-Bissau].

On another axis, the delivery of the Kédougou (Senegal) - Linsan [Guinea] section, which will pass through Mali and Labé (Guinea), is scheduled for December 2021, and that of the Linsan - Kaleta - Boké batch is scheduled for December 2021. The 98 km Boké [Guinea] - Salthino [Guinea-Bissau] line is scheduled for delivery in March 2022.

Meanwhile, in Senegal and The Gambia, work on the line has already been completed and will be delivered by the end of the year.



WITH THE COMMUNITIES

Dream houses!

Yesterday living in makeshift dwellings at the mercy of climatic hazards, the populations whose dwellings have been impacted are seeing their lives change with the construction of permanent houses.

These are lives that are changing. Dreams that become reality. In addition to the hope of a brighter future with quality public lighting, the OMVG Energy Project has transformed the lives of dozens of affected households.

In Senegal, 13 houses have been rebuilt and delivered to the PAPs who have occupied them since June 2020. In Guinea, 26 houses are under construction. In the other two countries, the recruitment procedure for the specialized company is underway for the construction of 14 houses in Gambia and 5 in Guinea Bissau.

The overall budget for the reconstruction of buildings affected by the interconnection line in the four countries is 513 million FCFA.



Fight against Gender-based violence, OMVG takes the lead

Within the framework of the implementation of the Project, OMVG attaches great importance to the condition of the populations, and in particular of women. Indeed, large infrastructure development operations and the human and financial flows they generate are likely to encourage gender-based violence (exploitation, sexual abuse and harassment / EAHS, abduction of minors, etc.). The OMVG construction sites are no exception to this reality.

In this regard, the Energy Project has initiated, within the framework of its Mechanism for the Management of Sensitive Complaints, an important capacity building program for all Project actors, namely the High Commission, the Project Management Unit (PMU), the National Monitoring Committees (NMCs), the Local Coordination and Monitoring Committees (LCMCs), the Consulting Engineer and the contracting companies. These trainings aim to provide the project's stakeholders with the capacity to prevent GBV and, in the event that GBV is found, to ensure the optimal management of victims.

Supported by the World Bank, this capacity building program is implemented by RADi (African Network for Integrated Development), a pan-African NGO hired by the Energy Project, for a period of 5 months. The training sessions will focus on the mapping of GBV/EAHS services in each CLCS, the referral channels, the updated GBV/EAHS complaint management mechanism and will be certified by the World Bank. In addition, an information and awareness program related to GBV/EAHS prevention and mitigation activities will be designed and implemented by the NHA and CLCS.



Livestock vaccination campaigns

As part of the construction of the interconnection line for its Energy Project, OMVG took into account all types of impacts, including the forage losses noted along the line corridor due to the rights-of-way. These fodder losses, although marginal in quantity, were evaluated to be compensated for in veterinary vaccines.

Thus, the Project organized vaccination campaigns for cattle, small ruminants and horses in the regions of Kaolack, Kaffrine, Tambacounda, Kédougou and Sédhiou in Senegal. Thus, no less than 116,000 doses of Lysopast and 30,000 doses of Carbosympto were administered to cattle and sheep and 9,000 doses of Anabot to horses for a total amount of 18.4 million FCFA. In total, 155,000 cattle, sheep and horses were vaccinated thanks to this initiative. It should be noted that Lysopast is not subsidized by the Senegalese government, which means that it provides significant added value for farmers.

For the three other OMVG member countries, the procedure for acquiring the vaccines is underway.



Vaccination campaign in Senegal

Number of doses per country planned for livestock vaccination campaigns

Country	Number of doses	Budget mobilised by country (in FCFA)
The Gambia	30 900	1 740 000
Guinea	260 000	17 220 000
Guinea-Bissau	To be defined by the offer	14 305 000
Senegal	155 000	18 420 000



Agricultural income-generating activities



Income generating activities, more than 4000 beneficiaries

As for the PAPs whose homes have been impacted, the Energy Project supports and finances the PAP women as well as the PAPs' wives and daughters to carry out income-generating activities. Several activities are targeted such as market gardening, acquisition of fertilizers, groundnut and rice cultivation, small-scale trading, and goat, sheep and poultry breeding. More than 4,000 women are benefiting from such support along the interconnection line.

In total, nearly 8,000 people will benefit from IGAs under the Energy Project, for a total budget of 119 million CFA francs.

Biodiversity, the protection of chimpanzees assured



Awareness-raising of the population to the protection of chimpanzees

To save the chimpanzees, the OMVG has implemented a series of activities involving awareness, training and reforestation.

The safeguarding of chimpanzees is important to OMVG. Since the start of the interconnection line works, the Organization has not ceased to multiply the actions aiming at preserving these primates. In this context, Biotope, which carried out the chimpanzee preservation study, was asked to assist OMVG with several mitigation measures to be implemented by the builders.

Indeed, the study carried out by Biotope reveals a series of direct and indirect impacts likely to be caused by the work on the interconnection line, both during the construction phase and the operating phase. Among these potential impacts, the study noted noise pollution, movement of people and vehicles, felling of trees or key chimpanzee food resources, habitat destruction, and the potential risk of electrocution. Indirect impacts include hunting and disease, which could increase due to environmental disturbance and the arrival of foreign labor.

Also, Biotope has developed and implemented an action plan consisting mainly of 3 components. First, in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, particular attention was paid to the coronavirus and the measures necessary to avoid its transmission to chimpanzee populations. Secondly, a training program on measures to protect these primates and their habitats was defined. The third axis of the action plan concerns training on complementary surveys to be conducted in the OMVG work sites. All these actions have been implemented and are being continued for the well-being of the chimpanzees.

Avian fauna, a measure to avoid the risk of electrocution of birds

The interconnection line must not be a danger to birds.

As with chimpanzees, there is also the issue of bird protection in the OMVG Energy Project impact area. According to the conclusions of the avifauna study, carried out by the consulting engineer AECOM, power lines could be a source of collision with birds in certain areas. Indeed, a high voltage line involves towers and other electromechanical equipment that may serve as perches for certain species. Even if the risk of electrocution is considered low, it still exists and may increase in areas with a high concentration of vultures.

Following the inventory campaign, seven (7) sections of the line were deemed to pose a greater risk of electrocution due to the presence of the carrion vulture, a critically endangered species according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). In order to minimize these threats, several recommendations have been made to the builders, who will have to install bird flight deflectors during the installation of the guard cables. For sections where guard cables are already installed, the deflectors will have to be installed.

In addition, builders have been asked to install anti-perching devices during tower construction. For towers already constructed, the anti-drillers will be installed at the latest before the power line is energized.

FROM ONE WORK SITE TO ANOTHER

Sambangalou, finally the end of the tunnel

Work on the Sambangalou hydroelectric scheme could finally begin in early 2022, for a total duration of 48 months. According to the schedule, the delivery of the major works of the dam is expected to take 36 months from the start of construction. The same applies to the plant and the installation of the first turbine for electricity production. The acceptance of the civil works and the access road is scheduled 42 months after the start of construction and finally the delivery date of turbines 2 and 3, 48 months after the start of construction.

With a capacity of 128 MW, the Sambangalou dam will be one of the main sources of supply for the OMVG interconnection line. The total financing of the project is 398 million Euros and is mobilized by several banks through buyer's credits and financial credits for which Crédit Agricole Corporate & Investment Bank (CACIB) is the arranging bank. The Sambangalou dam will eventually allow the production of renewable energy, the development of irrigation of agricultural lands as well as the supply of drinking water to all surrounding localities.



Construction site of the Sambangalou dam (Kedougou region)



Information session to the population of Barra Village on the start conditions of the Sambangalou dam works



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DU FLEUVE GAMBIE

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