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UGANDA
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WEEK



THE WATER FRONT

Newsletter



(L-R) Dr. Florence Adongo, the Director, Directorate of Water Resources Management at Ministry of Water and Environment speaks with Mr. Edwin Muhumuza, the Founder and CEO of Youth Go Green and Ms. Rosemirta Birungi, Program Manager at Agency for Inter-Regional Developments (AFID) after the morning session.

Climate Change and achievement of the 3rd National Development Plan targets

The 4th day of UWEWK was held under the sub-theme, Climate Change and achievement of National Development Plan III goals. The sub-theme aims at exploring the impacts of Climate Change on the social and economic sectors of Uganda.

It also aimed at exploring existing and potential innovative Climate Change mitigation and adaptation options that are key in supporting the achievements of various NDPIII goals i.e. employment and wealth creation.

The keynote address during the morning session was made by Dr. Willy Kakuru, a Climate Change Consultant with Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). The panel

discussants included; Hon. Lawrence Biyika Songa, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Climate Change, Dr. Florence Adongo, the Director, Directorate of Water Resources Management at Ministry of Water and Environment, Ms. Edith Kateme Kasajja, the former Deputy Executive Director of National Planning Authority (NPA) and member of the Climate Change Negotiating Team for Uganda, Mr. Edwin Muhumuza, the Founder and CEO of Youth Go Green and Ms. Marion Iceduna, the Consortium Manager ECO-DRR at CARE. The session moderator was Ms. Rosemirta Birungi, Program Manager at Agency for Inter-Regional Development (AFID).

Keynote address: Climate Change impacts on Uganda's social and economic sectors

Dr. Willy Kakuru, a Climate Change Consultant at the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) made the keynote address. He noted that National Development Plan (NDP) III acknowledges that Climate Change in Uganda has caused heavy loss and damage. This is manifested through impacts from rising temperatures, prolonged droughts, more erratic rainfall and floods.

He noted that Uganda ranks 14th among the most vulnerable countries and the 48th least ready countries to address Climate Change effects. He presented the risks, impacts and vulnerabilities in the agricultural and tourism sub-sectors. He gave examples of the impacts of Climate Change and showed linkages between Climate Change, natural resources degradation and livelihoods.

"Climate Change effects such as frequent and prolonged dry spells, erratic and poorly distributed rainfall amplify the level of vulnerability experienced by the majority of the population. To compensate for the reduced productivity and income, farmers are forced to encroach on forests and wetlands," Dr. Kakuru said.

He highlighted the national, regional and international Climate Change related commitments that Uganda is a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),



Dr. Willy Kakuru

the Nationally Determined Commitments (NDC) Partnership Plan for implementation of the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Union Vision 2063 etc. He noted that Uganda's NDPIII commitment to Climate Change is highlighted in two objectives namely 5 and 6 that call for promotion of inclusive climate resilient and low emissions development at all levels and reduction of human and economic loss from natural hazards and disasters. He noted that under NDPIII, there are opportunities for green jobs, reduced air pollution, increased labor productivity, increased ecosystem services and achievement of the SDGs.

In conclusion, he called for the re-casting of the budget tagging for climate action and institutionalization of mandatory climate smart screening for all.

Climate Change is a big issue and has impacted the economy of Uganda

Dr. Florence Adongo, Director, Directorate of Water Resources Management at Ministry of Water and Environment began her presentation by appreciating the participants for committing to the session in spite of the challenges related to Covid-19. In her presentation, she highlighted the contribution of the Water and Environment sector to Climate Change risk management, adaptation, mitigation and adoption of green

and blue technologies.

"Climate Change is a big issue in Uganda and has impacted on the economy in many ways. It affects power production, destroys infrastructure, and there has been a reduction of the ice cover on Margarita peak on Mountain Rwenzori," she said. She noted that it was predicted in 2001 that Climate Change will amplify water and environment related extremes through the



Dr. Florence Grace Adongo

hydrological cycle. This impacts on livelihoods thereby forcing people to migrate thus impacting on the economy in terms of investment.

“With Climate Change effects, we are not able to develop the natural resources,” she said.

Dr. Adongo stressed that the water and environment resources are the foundation of Uganda’s economy and there is need to restore the resources.

As part of the achievements made by Ministry of Water and Environment, Dr. Adongo shared that through the four Water Management Zones, a number of different stakeholders including private sector are being coordinated to jointly plan and restore degraded catchments through the water stewardship programme.

Through this collaboration, there is awareness creation on the need to restore the degraded catchments, sustainable use and management of the water resources.

Dr. Adongo mentioned that the Ministry of Water and Environment is contributing to water for production through installations of small and

large scale irrigation schemes, construction of storage facilities for livestock, and are piloting efficient ways of using water and reducing pollution.

Dr. Adongo said that the sector does not have adequate financial resources and are mobilizing resources to contribute to risk management, adaptation, mitigation and adoption of green and blue technologies.

She said that revenues from payment of environmental services is not channeled back to the Water and Environment sector, which is responsible for water and environment resources. “Water and environment is not looked at in totality, when water turns turbines, it is the energy sector, in terms of fisheries, credit goes to Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, same applies to tourism. There is no mechanism to benefit from our services,” she said.

“We hope that as the climate changes, people are changing so we can re-orient thinking and development to save our water and environment resources,” Dr. Adongo said.

We fall short on implementation of Climate Change policies and plans

Ms. Edith Kateme Kasaija, former Deputy Executive Director of National Planning Authority (NPA) and member of the Climate Change Negotiating Team for Uganda was part of the panel.

She responded to the question whether Climate Change was integrated in the second National Development Plan (NDPII).

Ms Kateme highlighted that the 1st and 2nd National Development Plans (NDPI & NDPII) integrated Climate Change. "On the planning side we have integrated and taken care of Climate Change in all our plans and frameworks. We however fall short on implementation of the policies and plans. We do not walk the talk partly because we have limited resources as a country," she said.



She stressed the need for Government to guide Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)' contribution to the frameworks and plans.

Ms. Kateme noted that there is an opportunity to review the National Climate plans and NDPIII.

"At the time of developing the Nationally Determined Commitments (NDCs), we were in a hurry but now we have time to see whether what we planned is achievable. I thus encourage everyone here to participate in these processes," she said.

Young people have no alternative source of livelihoods

Mr. Edwin Muhumuza, the Founder and CEO of Youth Go Green said Youth Go Green works with one million youths in Uganda. He appreciated the Ministry of Water and Environment for always giving the youth an opportunity to participate in such high level meetings. Mr. Muhumuza noted that there is need to involve youths in decision making. "Young people are degrading the environment because they do not have alternative livelihood sources," he said. Mr. Muhumuza called on the youth to embrace the opportunities and participate in processes in which they can contribute

innovative solutions to Climate Change. Mr. Muhumuza mentioned that Youth Go Green was planting 10 million trees annually. He called for investments in waste management to facilitate the youth to reduce, re-use and recycle. "We want to encourage CSOs to involve young people in their programmes, facilitate their capacity in strengthening and supporting creation of green and blue jobs," he said.



Climate Change is no longer a myth

Ms. Marion Iceduna, the Consortium Manager ECO-DRR at CARE said that Climate Change is no longer a myth, but a reality. "This is why there is need for concerted efforts from all stakeholders including CSOs to partner with government in its development efforts," she said.

She commended the Ministry of Water and Environment for opening avenues to engage in joint sector planning and the CSOs have used these opportunities to present the issues from the communities they represent.

She said that CSOs need to do more in terms of holding the Government accountable to the commitments they make. "We need to follow up to ensure that the plans and frameworks developed are implemented and sensitive to the most vulnerable," she said.

We need financing and transparency to implement Climate Change plans and policies

Hon. Lawrence Biyika Songa, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Climate Change said that there is need for the Climate Change bill to be passed. "We need involvement of everyone. We need financing and transparency in implementation," he said.

He shared the work being done by the Parliamentary Committee on Climate Change. "At committee level, our role is to see the responsiveness of government in addressing Climate Change in the country. The Committee has 45 days to report back to Parliament on the Climate Change bill. I want to encourage

everyone to review the bill and share their comments with us so that they are included in the Committee's recommendations to Parliament,"

He cited the need to coordinate all Climate Change related efforts being done by the different sectors and stakeholders for inclusion in the country report on Climate Change.



Sessions and trainings on Climate Change and achievements of NDP III goals

Career Talk for Young Professionals

Youth have been encouraged to balance career and family responsibilities in order to succeed in their endeavors. This was said during an online session on Career Talk for Young Professionals at the UWEWK2020.

"Career advancement struggle is challenging especially for the marrieds if it is done without the family support. Trying to have harmony at home will minimize the challenge," Mary Namukose from GIZ said.

When you start any career, expect hindrances to come your way but perseverance is key to building a career.

"There are those ready to fail you as you climb the ladder of success. Leave them aside and move forward. Just know that on this journey, you will meet so many mentors who will build your career," Ms. Mary Namukose observed.

Ms. Namukose challenged youth to make use of their energy and knowledge to their full potential as a way of marketing themselves.

Mr. Shafiq Kakeeto, from Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV-Uganda) presented his experience of finding a job and the challenges he encountered.

Mr. Kakeeto a trained biologist changed his

career path to marketing after completing university in a bid to diversify his future options. "After campus, I thought about how to make ends meet, especially for my young family. I started teaching Chemistry and Biology. I ventured into baking, then a tour company. I applied for volunteering opportunities in the in microbusinesses and private sector.

That is where my current employers found me," Kakeeto narrated. Kakeeto advised his fellow youth to develop both their writing and reading skills as it is paramount in initiating ideas in the water and environment sector.

Dr. Flower Msuya (Awards Alumni from Tanzania) who discussed career development from entry to retirement, told youth to network as they strategize in career development.

Dr. Msuya tasked youth to find gaps in different sectors and identify solutions to them as their career.

Mr. Allan Bukusi, a leadership coach from Nairobi Kenya, cautioned youth to prepare for their exit the day they get a job.

Dr. Sarah Mubiru, explored the role and benefits of mentorship emphasizing the qualities youth should look out for from mentors.

How to use natural resources to create wealth

The topic on enhancing natural resources-based entrepreneurship for wealth creation was presented by Dr. Patrick Musinguzi, from the School of Agricultural Sciences at Makerere University. In his address, Dr. Musinguzi shared the following issues and tips.

“To effectively plan for and manage our natural resources, it is important to first understand what they are. Often times, people mistake artificial resources with natural resources. The best way to understand what natural resources are, is to look at them in terms of their renewability – whether they can be restored or renewed. A good example is air and water. Soil is also renewable, but at a very slow rate.” “Our natural resources include air and water, fossils and fuel, soil, sunlight, water, animals and plants.” “The question to ask ourselves is how to make use of these natural resources to maximize productivity,” Dr. Musinguzi said.

The opportunity to use natural resources is big

in Uganda. With a growing population, however, it is important for an investor to plan for future generations in mind and make use of vital partnerships to address their needs.

“You need to ask yourself, as you plan to use the water for irrigation, or soils for farming or tree planting: Do you have the necessary technical support?” asked Dr. Musinguzi.

He advised that a good plan will put into consideration optimization and sustainability of the natural resources. He advised participants to know the status of the natural resources before implementing any activity. “It is also important to look at certain cultural issues when it comes to investing. One cannot for example, have a piggery in a largely Muslim community. If it is farming you want to do, think about the water resource in the area, is it easily accessed? Identify opportunities for change and evaluate the suitability of the enterprise,” he said.

A presentation on Climate Change Adaptation by Environmental Alert

Uganda’s forest cover has seen a drastic negative trend over the last 30 years, reducing from 24% to 9% of the total land area. This is largely attributed to deforestation and forest degradation.

There needs to be a prioritization of the adoption of farmer managed natural regeneration for forest landscape restoration; integrated pest management in forest plantations; and forest-based enterprises like apiary, butterfly farming, orchards and eco-tourism.

These should go hand in hand with prioritized technologies to provide a framework for investment to advance climate change adaptation in the forestry sector in Uganda.

Government advised to develop more water access points in Kasali sub-county

Mr. Joseph Mukasa carried out the drought assessment and adaptive capacity of households to water scarcity in Kasali sub-county, Kyotera district. He discovered that majority of households spend longer time while collecting water in dry years than in wet years.

Kasali sub-county, Kyotera district has experienced five drought years ranging from moderately dry to extremely dry in the 30-year period. He also observed that Kasali generally has a low adaptive capacity, it was therefore recommended that implementation of adaptation strategies should start with villages ranked low in adaptive capacity. According to statistics globally about 4 billion people are grappling with water scarcity. And this has been largely attributed to drought.

The horn of Africa and Southern Africa have been cited as regions most affected by drought in the last one and half decades (Olufemi, 2017).

Uganda being in the Horn of Africa has experienced increased frequency and intensity of droughts in the last 3 decades. Water bodies are some of the most delicate ecosystems severely affected by drought especially the rivers. Mr. Mukasa advised government to provide early warning systems to the residents.

Use of ecologically based crop practices for resilience to Climate Change disasters

This presentation was made by Ms. Atukwatse Macklean and Ms. Nakayemba Allen.

Taking a case study of Mbarara District, the group examined the use of agro-ecological crop practices through proper soil management, agroforestry, early planting and use of bio fertilizers, crop diversification and drip irrigation in increasing resilience to climate change disasters.

It was highlighted that 60% of the farmers do not use any agro ecological strategies and only 32% apply them to some extent, leaving them prone to the effects of climate change.

“These changes in the climatic conditions have had devastating impacts on the society, undermining Uganda’s social and economic growth. Food production has also been affected, compromising food security and farmers’ income.”

Floods, pests and diseases have severe impacts on small scale subsistence farmers such as crop destruction, food shortages and significant yield reductions, especially for farmers practicing poor farming techniques.

The situation is exacerbated by limited capacity of farmers, land ownership patterns and limited access to climatic information which hinders them from practicing some of the crop management practices.

We must encourage the adoption of bio-diversification, water harvesting and soil management in the design and management of agro-ecosystems, allowing farmers to adopt a strategy that both increases resilience and provides economic benefits, including mitigation of global warming.

This can be achieved through technological developments, information provision, government programs and insurance, farm production practices and effective farm financial management.

Rescuing traditional management systems combined with the use of agro-ecologically based management strategies may represent the robust path to increase the productivity, sustainability and resilience of peasant-based agricultural production under unpredicted climate scenarios. It is, therefore, recommended that timely and good information is made available to farmers. and financial support to improve crop production through organic agriculture.



Floods have severe impacts on small scale subsistence farmers such as crop destruction, food shortages and significant yield reductions



River Rwizi

Lake Albert, Edward and Victoria basins experience low flows in rivers due to inadequate rainfall

Ms. Sylvia Ndahura, a Senior Water Officer at Directorate of Water Resources Management, Ministry of Water and Environment presented results of the study on the causes of low river flow in Lake Albert, Edward and Victoria basins in western Uganda. The study applied hydrological data.

In the study findings, she explained that Rwizi, Muzizi, Chambura and Mpanga rivers have high probability of low flow occurrence at 67%. The basins are experiencing low flows in rivers due to inadequate rainfall, poor land use and climate change impacts. This information was corroborated with different studies using meteorological data. Ms. Ndahura explained that, the low flows in rivers has resulted into drying up of rivers and reducing water volume significantly which affects water supply for domestic use and water for production e.g livestock farming.

Ms. Ndahura recommended to consider more river stations and more datasets for a comprehensive analysis of the entire basin to give better conclusive results to represent western Uganda.

The effects of excessive deforestation in Northern Uganda

Members of the Northern Uganda Transparency and Accountability Forum namely Mr. Simon Peter Okello, Mr. John Paul Oryem and Ms. Harriet Achora presented in the session on Climate Change and National Development Plan III goals. It was shared that massive deforestation is one of the leading threats to environment and water resources in Northern Uganda.

Northern Uganda has many of the trees most in demand, including the shea and tamarind trees, the Camel's foot leaf tree, velvet-leaved combretum, lucky bean tree and large-leafed tree.

Northern Uganda has lost over 63% of its forest cover due to fuel and timber tree-cutting within 20 years. We must address the negative effects of deforestation on the environment and water resources and provide alternative policies to control the situation. One of the major reasons deforestation is very high is the heavy reliance on charcoal for fuel, which enhances job creation and economic development. Though nationally the charcoal sector earns over \$38m (UGX 144b), there should be integration of forestry in agriculture in form of agro-forestry as is done in Western Kenya, where farmers are planting trees purposely for charcoal.

We should also begin to look at organic waste, farm waste, charcoal dust and saw dust to make briquettes to reduce the demand for firewood. If deforestation continues at this rate, Uganda will lose all its forested land by 2050, causing loss of soil fertility and this will lead to famine, spread of diseases and drought.



Deforestation is one of the leading threats to environment and water resources in Northern Uganda

Aqua-nodding Syndrome illness infections in northern Uganda

Simon Peter Okello, John Paul Oryem and Harriet Achora (Northern Uganda Transparency and Accountability Forum) said the Nodding syndrome is a disease which commonly affects people around water bodies in all the affected areas.

It was first documented in Tanzania in the 1960s, in present-day South Sudan during the 1990s, and in northern Uganda in 2007. It is currently not known what causes this neurological condition, but it is believed to be connected to infestations of the parasitic worm *Onchocerca volvulus*, which is prevalent in all the outbreak areas.

Unfortunately, Nodding Syndrome has been politicized in northern Uganda, greatly affecting health interventions including research and dissemination of useful information, with some community members not participating in research or accepting mass drug administration for prevention and treatment.

It is important to understand why Nodding Syndrome occurs along water bodies.

This will be critical for treatment and dissemination of knowledge necessary for the prevention and control of Nodding Syndrome in northern Uganda.



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