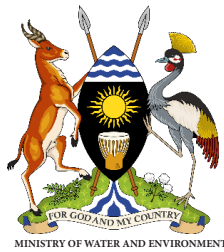


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UGANDA
W&E
WEEK

THE WATER FRONT

Newsletter



Hon. Flavia Munaaba, Former State Minister for Environment in discussion with Mr. Joseph Eritu, Commissioner, Water and Environment Sector Liaison (centre) and Dr. Callist Tindimugaya, the Commissioner, Water Resources Planning and Regulation Department

Water & Environment in a Creative Economy

A number of people were drawn to participating in this dialogue session because of the curiosity to know what is entailed in the creative economy and how the water and environment sector fits in. This particular session attracted a total of 100+ online participants and about 20 participants physically attending the session in Nile boardroom at Ministry of Water and Environment.

Ms. Jane Nabunnya Mulumba, the Country Director, IRC Uganda was the session moderator. She enthusiastically welcomed participants to



Participants during the virtual dialogue session

the meeting and promised a very lively and productive discussion. She thereafter read the brief profiles of the keynote speaker and five panelists. Mr.

Nagaraja Rao Harshadeep, the Global Lead (Disruptive Technology), Environment, Natural Resources and Blue

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Mr. Nagaraja Rao Harshadeep



Mr. David Duli



Dr. Stuart Worsley

Water & Environment in a Creative Economy

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Economy Global Practice at the World Bank was the keynote speaker. He noted that 2021 was declared by the United Nations as the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development. He described the creative economy as one that leverages on individuals and small-group startups, micro-enterprises for creativity, skill, diversity, entrepreneurship, and talent. In a creative economy, jobs and business models are driven by ideas and knowledge. He noted that a creative economy is characterized by the notion that everyone is part of the solution as opposed to being a problem. “Elements that make up a creative economy are unleashing creativity of individuals and groups, so that they can develop new ideas, knowledge and services especially by integrating aspects of technology,” he said. He cited a number of disruptive innovations including the Flipflop, a dhow made from recycled plastics and how drones are used to deliver

medication and in India where water ATMs are used to stop single use plastic water bottles. Dr. Nagaraja noted that floating gardens in Bangladesh would be great for Uganda, where one can grow a garden of vegetables on the water and floating constructed wetlands. Dr. Harshadeep shared that everyone has a role to play in a creative economy but principally, Government has to create an enabling environment through institutional policies and legal frameworks that facilitate open data, financing, collaboration and creating opportunities for innovation. He noted that private sector role includes providing services while academia’s role is purely research to inform new creative jobs and capacities. In a creative economy, development partners share knowledge, and financing. He noted that CSOs’ role includes interfacing with communities, raising awareness and catalyzing action while communities’ role is to use services and provide feedback. Dr. Harshadeep noted that a creative economy is critical

for rethinking sustainable development challenges and opportunities, inspiring mindset changes and investments in information, institutions and infrastructure.

“There is need for Uganda to re-think how water and environment resources are planned and managed,” he noted. Dr. Stuart Worsley, the Country Programme Director, Green Economy Coalition called for the need to tap into creative energy through use of technology to inspire people into innovation and job creation. “Green enterprises create fabulous opportunities for job creation. Green small and medium enterprises have potential to disrupt,” “The water sector is used as capital for the nation’s interests. Extracting resources without replacing them is like milking a cow without feeding it. Imagine a world where small businesses are paid to sustain nature. Business is not just about price but valuing things as well,” he noted. Dr. Daisy Owomugasho, the Country Director, Hunger



Eng. Geoffrey Ssebugwawo

Project noted that Uganda is indeed far in terms of disruptive technologies and a lot needs to be done to catch up with the rest of the world.

She noted that with a creative economy there is space for all including women and youth to contribute. She called for the sensitization and creating awareness for everyone to know that they have an impact on the environment. She called for the promotion of water for production and use of indigenous technologies and knowledge to solve some of the challenges faced.

Eng. Geoffrey Ssebugwawo, represented the Executive Director, Private Sector Foundation Uganda. He noted that even though disruptive technology is good, Uganda's economy is at existential level with 90% of its private sector being micro, small and medium enterprises with only 10% being large enterprises. He said that this presents a challenge because most of them are in survival mode. "When you have such an enterprise, even if you have good technologies, the business owner may not be receptive because they are struggling to survive," he said. He noted that there is need to facilitate SMEs with finance, ensure that there are markets



Dr. Daisy Owomugasho

for their products and once their minds are settled, then the SMEs will focus on disruptive technologies. He recommended all relevant Ministries to explore the available disruptive technologies, find out how SMEs can be incentivized to adopt them and then make a proposal to Government which will then create an enabling environment for adoption of these technologies.

Mr. Peter Kuria, the Director, Innovations and Business Incubation, AAAIN noted that water and environment resources is cultural and spiritual. "Water is a culture. It is not a product. , It is a culture that brings everybody in the world together. It controls our lives, businesses, and offers fundamental tools for sustenance." He pointed out that there is need to reflect on resourcing water and ensuring that infrastructure innovations address needs at village level. He also recommended Government to invest in incubation spaces that will teach people critical thinking. He also decried the limited access to financing David Duli, the Country Director of WWF Uganda office noted that CSOs have a critical role to play in ensuring that innovations and creativity are adopted as part of water and



Mr. Peter Kuria

environment resources use and management through generation of research, dissemination of information, advocacy and influencing institutional and legislative frameworks. He noted that citizen participation is important to ensure that the world adopts to the disruptive technologies.

Dr. Stuart recommended for change in policies in favor of those that value nature at the expense of those that do not. "Power is critical in terms of changing the terms of references that businesses operate in. Policies can be changed to incentivize small business to do green business and heavy taxes can be levied on businesses that degrade the environment," he said. Mr. Kuria noted that Government needs to invest in building human capacities and fostering innovation as drivers of change and financing start-ups. Mr. Duli noted that non-prioritization of the water and environment sector in national planning and budgets is a reflective of the people making decisions. He said that this shows their lack of knowledge on the importance of water and environment to development. he also called for the implementation of policies that protect and conserve the water and environment resources.



Richard Musota, Principal Water Officer and Team Leader for Upper Nile Water Management Zone Lira.

Prior to this week, we had regional events where we originally had fears that it would be hard to pull off, but all in all, I think majority of the regional events stood out, stakeholders were supportive, we were able to do quite a number of things with a multitude of stakeholders. So it beat our expectations which I think give success to the pre-events 2021. This is quite a unique event in that it's a hybrid of physical and virtual, it's challenging, but I think we are getting used to the new normal. The level of success we have got under the new normal has been immense, right from the launch to the events that we had yesterday. We have been able to put up a good show. Many participants, quality presentations; it has been really wonderful. Of course what misses out are the exhibitions, physical exhibitions would have added quite a lot of value to this and virtual exhibitions have been a challenge. When you look at the nature of the presentations that were made yesterday, there are some that really touch life, they were living things that one would desire to actually go and physically see but also a message that the sector is doing quite a lot in the various areas which is encouraging.

Participants' experiences at UWEWK 2021

Gwendolyn Kyoburungi, Coordinator Water Resources Institute, Head Secretariat that organizes Uganda water and environment week since its inception in 2018.

We are still hosting the UWEWK as a hybrid both physical and on-line because we have to observe the COVID-19 SOPs, so far since the start on 21st March 2021, we have managed to successfully host the opening ceremony which was graced by the UN FAO and UN coordinator and we felt this one was really great, since the inception this was the greatest so far to have the UN representatives attending physically the water and environment week and even the speeches they gave us were of great importance in looking at water and environment resources security for transforming Uganda's socio economic. Not only do we have this one but this one also for the first time we had the Flipflopi Expedition which look at stopping the single use plastic, it's the first time that it became part of the Uganda water and environment week and we attended a pre event which started from Kisumu, landed in Uganda. Another pre event which was for the first time, we had a Mini exhibition at Bulange organized by Buganda Kingdom and we participated. The other one was walking for water, climate change, envi-



ronment and public health that took the walkers from Kampala to Kasese – River Nyamwamba Catchment which covers 371kms which is the third time we are walking. And for participation so far there is high level of participation both online and physical. This time we have 26 sessions and many have showed interest in participating in this year and we have gone beyond Uganda and East Africa, we have really gone international. There are so many international participants online, the key note speakers were all international as it was in 2019 but this time also because of COVID we could get them online. We are yet to get a final conclusion at what happens this year, its just the 3rd day but so far so good. Otherwise, we thank everyone, the stakeholders, the sponsors and people who have volunteered to help us.



Cate Nimanya, Country Director Water For People Uganda

One of the highlights of this year's Uganda Water and Environment Week is the inclusion of academicians, PhD holders and access to papers and presentations from different professors from Makerere University especially on Water

Resource Management. This gives us research view and clear perspective of the sector's resource management. I have also been part of the dialogue on Water and Environment in a creative economy - Disruptive on technology and I feel we have not utilized this opportunity. We need to support the young innovators so that they can effectively and efficiently use these opportunities.

Jacinta Olweny – Sales and Marketing Manager Innovation Africa Limited

We provide the technologies that should be relevant and appropriate. If we are to achieve water and environment security for socio-economic transformation, we as private sector would encourage the government and all stakeholders to ensure that the technologies are relevant to today's economy, towards addressing issues of climate change and their negative effects on our economy and are relevant socio-economic growth of our society. Other than that, the Water and Environment week is very important. It's a good reminder, even to us as service providers, that we still have a role to play. If we need to remind



ourselves of challenges, to bring in new opportunities that we have not shared in different platforms, then the sector will grow and environment will survive.



Grace Alupo - Country Director Water Trust

Being online it has been able to accommodate many participants. I like the focus on sharing innovative approaches. And so as The Water Trust we have gotten the opportunity to share innovation around financial deepening for water and environment sustainability. As this has improved water source sustainability as well as improved livelihoods for vulnerable communities including Refugees.

Jane Nabunnya Mulumba – Country Director IRC

For me, the key message is to demystify technology but also then to be able to use it so that we do not fear it. Use it, explore it, take risks because I do not think we are taking risks and also dig into our own capacities to develop our own technologies, I think Mr. Kuria said we should stop importing technologies. Let us sit properly and develop our own technologies and use those technologies to do more and effective monitoring, data analysis and turn all that



data into proper advocacy tools, tools that can change mindsets, tools that can appeal to Government, Ministry of Finance to not just put more money into the sector but to connect the sector with economic growth.

SIDE EVENTS



Group photo of participants physically present

The value of WASH services in health facilities for sustainable transformation

The side event profiled the silent issues on the socio-economic value of safe water supply, sanitation and hygiene in healthcare facilities. The event which was jointly convened by IRC Uganda and WaterAid Uganda, covered WASH in Health Care Facilities lessons from practice, research and recommendations for policy action. Key outputs from the side event

include, increased appreciation of the value of WASH services in Health Care Facilities as key contributing factor for Sustainable Social Economic Transformation, dialogue to generate quick wins for WASH improvement and strategic policy guidance from both Ministry of Health and Ministry of Water and Environment. Three presentations during the event included:

1. Preliminary assessment report of the status of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in health-care facilities in the selected border districts- COVID-19 national response by MoH
2. IRC Uganda's support to Kabarole district towards improvement of WASH in HCFs
3. Transforming health systems: the vital role of water, sanitation and hygiene

Solutions to increase affordability of piped water services among low income households: A case study of umbrella authorities

Uganda Sanitation For Health Activity (USHA) presented a case study titled *Solutions to increase affordability of piped water services among low income households: A case study of umbrella authorities* during a parallel session at the UWEWK. USHA is a USAID 5-year- funded program aiming at increasing the number of people with access to improved & sustainable WASH services.

The case study documented USHA's impact in their areas of implementation. The paper presentation was authored by D. Keesiga, A.Jonathan, S.Mutono, R.Seidelmann.

They shared the following recommendations aimed at increasing access of low income households to piped water services.

- Promote individual household connections, not public stand points to ensure that the poor

ultimately benefit from subsidies instituted by the Utility

- Socially market water connections to attract a large number of households connect to the network
- Avoid a “first come, first serve” model when marketing subsidized connections.
- Implement Inverted Tariff Blocks (IBTs) or Volume Differentiated Tariff (VDTs) with lower rates for lower volumes of consumption.

Rain water harvesting from rock outcrops and Bamboo utilization to improve livelihoods

RAIN (a brand of Aidenvironment), is implementing the “rock catchment” initiative to improve the availability of drinking water for communities in Agago District in northern Uganda. One of the pioneer project is the Akwang rock catchment in Paimor Subcounty. “The rocky soils in the district make it difficult for the communities to access groundwater where boreholes can be sunk,” James W Kisseka, the Team Leader East Africa office said. Under the initiative, run-off water from the surface of a rock outcrop is channeled through gutters to a ferrocement tank (100,000 liters). Before it reaches the tank, the water is passed through a filtration chamber filled with sand and stones of varying sizes. From the tank, the water is piped to tap stands where it is made available to the community. Speaking about bamboo utilization during the same session, Mr. Simon Peter Kintu, an administrator at the International Bamboo and Rattan Organisation noted that there is a growing need for bamboo in the country. “There is market for bamboo products with over 10000 uses utilized locally. Let’s grow more bamboo,” Kisseka reechoed.

Policy, practice and scientific papers presentations

Policy, practice and scientific paper presentations were made by different sector stakeholders during the parallel session held on March 23rd, 2021 from 2pm – 5pm under the title, *Water and environment in a creative economy*.

The session started with a presentation by Diana Keesiga, who shared recommendations to increase affordability of piped water services among low-income households hinging on a case of umbrella authorities. The recommendations were “The main objective was to increase connections and consumption among the low income homes. The methodologies used were focused group discussions, socio economic surveys and tariff analysis,” she said.

The findings indicated that over 90% of all homes were willing to pay for piped water.

To increase access of low income households to piped water services, four recommendations were made.

- Promote individual household connections not public stand pipes to ensure that the poor benefit from subsidies instituted by the utility.
- Conduct socially market water connections to attract a large number of households connections to the network
- Avoid a “first come, first serve” model when marketing subsidized connections.
- Implement Inverted Tariff Blocks (IBTs) or Volume Differentiated Tariff (VDTs) with lower rates for lower

volumes of consumption.

Other presentations included;

- “Promoting inclusive water resources management practices for sustainable development in Uganda. It stated that dependence on environment dominates socio-economic lives and developments in Uganda the effects of environmental anomalies and shocks are evident in Mityana district,” by Matovu Baker, natural resources officer assistant in Mityana.

- Poultry management: lessons for engaging creative minds to catalyse private sector investment in water and environment sector by John paul Owiny program manager The Water Trust.

- Financial deepening of SACCOs for water and environment sustainability: A creative solution to COVID-19 financial effects among rural communities in Uganda presented by Grace Alupo from The Water Trust

- Water supply KPI monitoring using internet of things (IoT) by Eng. Julius Bakeline Musiimenta which recommended MWE to adopt use of this technology to improve efficiency.

- A Presentation by Moses Egaru on scaling up of inclusive finance for catchment restoration.

- Implications of vegetation change on catchment hydrology in Awoja, Lake Kyoga basin by Ingrid Martha kintu.

- Water security threats and investment opportunities in Kampala by Ngozi Lydia.

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