



UGANDA WATER AND ENVIRONMENT WEEK-2022 (UWEWK-2022)

Call for Abstracts

This is a call for conference abstracts that address the theme: “*Water and environment for peace and socio-economic transformation of Uganda*.”

Abstracts may be drawn from research papers, case studies, topical reports, photos, videos and posters

Background

The Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) in collaboration with key partners has so far held four annual Uganda Water and Environment Weeks (UWEWKs) since March 2018. These events have attracted high-level political and technical participation from key stakeholders both nationally and internationally. Sector professionals, private sector and academic communities have used this opportunity to present papers, exchange knowledge and build relationships.

Based on the success of the previous UWEWKs, the MWE through the Water Resources Institute (WRI) will hold the fifth UWEWK from Sunday **20th March to Friday 25th March 2022**. During the event three annual International Days will be commemorated namely: International Forest Day (March 21st), World Water Day (March 22nd) and World Meteorological Day (March 23rd).

The UWEWK 2022 is intrinsically linked to the National Development Plan 3 (NPDIII) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which focus on enhancing value addition in key growth opportunities; ensuring availability of adequate and reliable quality fresh water resources for all uses, reducing human and economic loss from natural hazards and disasters, increasing incomes and employment through sustainable use and value addition to water, environment and other natural resources.

In line with the overall theme, UWEWK2022 will have four sub-themes as follows:

Sub-theme 1: Promoting peace and stability through Water and Environment resources management and development

Today's threats to human security and peace will be tomorrow's global security risks. In Already, there is increasing pressure on water and environment resources from rapidly growing populations, rising demand, expanding industries, and unsustainable land use. All these factors can trigger water scarcity, hunger, conflict and insecurity. At the same time, crises can also create opportunities for change, cooperation, and the inclusion of broader stakeholder groups. In an era of rapidly growing environmental and climatic hazards, there is a need for new approaches to livelihood security that integrates climate action, conflict prevention, dialogue, facilitation, and peacebuilding. The growing pressure on water and environment resources is a challenge that should be at the crux of the climate and security debate. However, the traditional approach to security often fails to assess and address threats linked to natural resources and human development. There is a strong

need for experts from different fields to work together to find solutions for sustainable peace building and stability. This sub-theme seeks to raise awareness of the complex inter-linkages between threats to both the natural world and human security. It will explore the relationship between water, environment and peace, especially in fragile contexts. The subtheme will further explore linkages between water, environment, climate change and foreign policy. It will also focus on benefits of cooperation over shared water and environment resources, the role of improved water and environment management in fragile contexts and how water diplomacy can be a powerful tool for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The role of security agencies, cultural and religious institutions, and media among others in promoting peace, risk reduction and conflict resolution will be explored.

Sub-theme 2: Building resilience to various risks and shocks

The provision of water and environment services has been affected by various risks and shocks such as COVID pandemic, climate change and environmental degradation. Ensuring that these services remain functional and deliver socio-economic benefits is a priority for Uganda. As the magnitude and complexity of the threats to water and environment resources posed by COVID -19, climate change and environmental degradation become increasingly well-understood and documented, there is increasing emphasis on more adaptive management. However, relatively little attention has been placed on building resilience to these threats so that they don't continue to impact on sustainable management and development of water and environment resources, considering their importance to human health and socio-economic development of the country. Climate change will, and already does, impact on people's rights to water and sanitation by causing floods and droughts, changes in precipitation and temperature extremes that result in water scarcity, contamination of drinking water and exacerbation of the spread of disease

The sub-theme will highlight the importance of water and environment resources development and management in addressing various risks and shocks such as COVID pandemic, climate change and environmental degradation. It will elaborate on how water and environment resources are essential to ecosystem-based adaptation, green infrastructure and nature-based solutions to building resilience. Policy options to deal with shocks and build resilience of the people, ecosystem and the economy will be discussed. Public-private partnership opportunities in building resilience of water and environment systems will be explored. The sub-theme will also explore overall current approaches for mitigation and adaptation to climate change through interventions for water and environment management and opportunities provided through COP 26 Commitments. The sub-theme will also build a case for visibility and awareness of neglected water and environment resources, towards sustainability amidst various risks and shocks including COVID-19.

Sub-theme 3: Financing Water, Environment and Climate Change

Uganda's economy is dependent on its stock of environment and natural resources, requiring significant investments in water development and natural resources management if the country is to achieve its goals focusing on attainment of a middle income status. Concerns about limited and dwindling financing for water, environment and climate change is increasingly receiving attention in the advent of heightened efforts to timely achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and Paris Agreement and Sendai Framework. Since the start of COVID pandemic, initial signals have indicated that the funding gap is widening. However, while innovative opportunities exist to enhance funding

for the sector and harness co-benefits for climate and disaster resilience alongside pandemic containment and recovery packages these opportunities have not yet been harnessed. To exploit the financing opportunities, decision-making especially on financing water, environment and climate change needs to be more risk-informed and incorporate risks from multiple threats. Hence a clear policy framework for sustainable and viable long-term financing of Water, Sanitation, Hygiene, Environment and Climate Change programs is needed. Aspects such as financing sources and payment modalities (e.g. the polluter pays principle, the user pays principle, cost-recovery or water pays for water) and specification of the different economic and financing instruments need to be elaborated and popularised.

This sub-theme will focus on financing opportunities for water, environment and climate change in Uganda and the role of water and environment business incubation for job, employment and wealth creation in Uganda. It will explore how financing water and environment responses and interventions can be done through among others developing bankable water and environment investments, and how to create green jobs and wealth especially for the youth and women, while ensuring sustainability of the resources. Furthermore, it will explore opportunities for innovative solutions to more efficient and productive development and management of water, environment and natural resources to enhance creation of employment opportunities.

Sub-theme 4: Partnerships and inter-sectoral collaboration in water and environment management and development

This sub-theme will focus on the role of partnership and inter-sectoral collaboration in management and development of water and environment resources for sustainable development. It will explore how collaborative partnerships can improve financial resource base for water and environment sector and culturally aligned as priority area in Ugandan budgeting system. The sub-theme will also present case studies on building equitable and sustainable partnerships, success stories of collaborative intersectional partnerships among others. It will also discuss and evaluate various forms of partnerships such as investment partnerships; planning, monitoring and implementation partnerships; policy and regulatory partnerships; evidence generation partnerships; coordination partnerships and assess how they can be

IMPORTANT DATES:

Deadline for Abstract Submission: 15th Feb 2022

Write-shop: 4th – 5th March 2022

Deadline for Full Papers: 15th March 2022

UWEWK: Sunday 20th – Friday 25th March 2022

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strengthened to create and sustain synergies and collective action

Full papers and poster presentations will be submitted upon successful review and acceptance of abstracts. Abstracts (**not exceeding 300 words**) that are in line with the theme and sub-themes of the conference should be sent to uwekw@mwe.go.ug and copied to wri.uga@gmail.com **not later than 14th February 2022**.