

# UGANDA WATER AND ENVIRONMENT WEEK (UWEWK) 2021

## CONCEPT NOTE FOR HYBRID (PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL) EVENT

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Uganda Water and Environment Week (UWEWK) is a weeklong event that is organized annually by Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) through the Water Resources Institute (WRI). Since its inception in 2018, the event seeks to contribute towards the attainment of Sustainable Socio-economic Transformation and achieving Ugandan National Development Plan and vision 2040. It provides an interface between sector actors and other stakeholders for knowledge exchange, dialoguing, learning for improvement of Uganda's water and environment resources. This year UWEWK2021 will explore the role water and environment resources will be play in:

- i. Increasing investment in value addition to environment and natural resources products and services,
- ii. Promoting natural resource accounting, to improve the national income measurement,
- iii. Promoting research, innovation and adoption of green appropriate technology to foster sustainable use and management of water and environment resources and
- iv. Reducing human and economic loss from natural hazards and disasters.

### 2.0 BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) in collaboration with key partners has so far held three annual UWEWKs: in March 2018; March 2019 and; September 2020. These events attracted high-level political participation including the Vice President and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda, and other stakeholders both nationally and internationally. In addition, the sector professionals, private sector and academic communities presented papers, exchanged knowledge and built relationships. MWE through the Water Resources Institute (WRI) will hold the fourth UWEWK at the Water Resource Institute in Entebbe from **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March to Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021**. The event will start with the annual commemoration of three important International Days: World Forest Day (March 21<sup>st</sup>), World Water Day (March 22<sup>nd</sup>) and World Meteorological Day (March 23<sup>rd</sup>) on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021.

The UWEWK 2021 is intrinsically linked to: NPDIII which focuses on enhancing value addition in key growth opportunities; reduce environmental degradation and the adverse effects of climate change as well as improve utilization of natural resources for sustainable economic growth and livelihood security.

#### Overall theme UWEWK 2021

The overall theme of UWEWK 2021 is “[Water and Environment security for socio-economic transformation of Uganda](#)”.

Under the major theme, the following sub-themes are proposed to elaborate on value of water and environment security in transforming Uganda's economy and improved livelihood for socio-economic development. a) [Valuing Water and Environment resources for socio-economic transformation of](#)

*Uganda; b) Water and Environment in a creative economy; c) Managing Water and Environment shocks and d) Water and Environment security for smart urban growth*

Details of the sub-themes are as follows:

**a) Valuing Water and Environment resources for socio-economic transformation of Uganda**

Uganda's economy will continue to depend on the available stock of water, environmental and natural resources to produce goods and deliver services. Industrialization highly relies on raw materials from the environment and natural resources. Increasing forest and wetland cover is vital for maintain water flows for hydropower generation, agriculture, fisheries, domestic water supply, industry, navigation, tourism, wildlife and ecosystems. Preserving water and environment resources is critical for human health and tourism. In addition, mitigating the climate change orchestrated impact of droughts, floods, heat waves and landslides on the livelihood of vulnerable populations is critical for reducing income inequality, improving livelihoods and ensuring energy, water, food and ecosystem security. Additionally, the immense socio-economic value of water is imbedded its chemical property as solvent to almost in all industrial and domestic uses and in the same volume for cultural, aesthetic, recreation and ecosystem services.

In Uganda water is being considered as a driving force in transforming of agriculture from subsistence to commercial farming through irrigation and other inputs. Similarly, the country relies almost entirely on hydropower generation to boost industrialization of the country to middle class economy by 2030.

Therefore, the sub-theme will focus on sustainable use and value addition to water resources, forests, wetlands rangelands and other natural resources for increased incomes and employment. It will highlight the importance of raising awareness on the value of water, environment and natural resources in transforming the socio-economic status of Ugandan population and improve livelihood. The sub-theme will also focus on increasing investment in "value addition" to environment and natural resources products and services, promoting natural resource accounting to improve the national income measurement and marketing of the products using creative economy approach.

**b) Water and Environment in a creative economy**

Creative economy also known as knowledge and innovation economy is an evolving concept which builds on the interplay between human creativity and ideas, intellectual property, knowledge and technology. Essentially it is the knowledge-based economic activities upon which the 'creative industries' are based. The creative economy cuts across the arts, business and connectivity, driving innovation and new business models. The creative economy is both fragmented and society-inclusive. It functions through interlocking and flexible networks of production and service systems spanning the entire value chain. Today it is strongly influenced by the growing role of social networks. These new tools, such as blogs, forums and wikis, facilitate connectivity and collaboration among creative people, products and places. Policies for the creative economy have to respond not only to economic needs but also to special demands from local communities related to education, cultural identity, social inequalities and environmental concerns.

The increasing demand on water, environment and natural resources due to the growth of both the population and economy has put a lot pressure on quality and quantity of water, environment and other natural resources. Water and environment are therefore increasingly being valued as economic

resources. The price of water depends on quantity and quality as well as on the behaviour of people and market. The value of water for society, peoples' health and the environment are important factors that should be considered in the valuation process. Considering that water and environment resources are at the core of sustainable development and are critical for socio-economic development, healthy ecosystems and for human survival these resources will be critical in a creative economy in the achievement of the NDPIII targets. Water and environment supports life and social economic activities such as hydropower generation, agriculture, fisheries, domestic water supply, industry, navigation, tourism, and ecosystems. Water and environment resources are also required as an indispensable input into agro-industrialization. It must, therefore, be available in adequate quantities and corresponding quality at the right time and right place in order to contribute to increased household incomes and improved quality of lives of the population.

This sub-theme will focus to innovative solutions for more efficient and productive development and management of water, environment and natural resources for sustainable socio-economic transformation of Ugandan population to the mid-class citizens. It will further look at the current position of creative industries in Uganda with a perspective to identify key issues to help the government to form a strategic plan of action aiming at building a strong premise for building its creative economy for employment, trade and development gains. Furthermore, it will look into ensuring coordinated and sustainable national infrastructure projects considering that Uganda's economy relies almost entirely on the stock of water, environmental and natural resources to produce goods and deliver services. It will also address the new approaches to achieving Water-Food-Energy nexus as well as approaches for addressing water scarcity through non-conventional water and environment resources management approaches. Promoting of forest cluster-based wood processing industries and promoting of payment for ecosystem services, biodiversity offsets and benefit sharing arising from use of biological resources

#### c) [Managing Water and Environmental shocks](#)

Water and environmental disasters/shocks include among others, floods, landslides, tsunamis, storms, heat waves, cold spells, droughts, lightening, waterborne disease outbreaks, pandemics etc. These are all becoming more frequent and more intense in past few decades. The impacts and costs of these events are exacerbated by such factors as unplanned urbanization, pollution, industrialisation, population growth, excessive release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and degradation of ecosystem services. Increased rainfall intensity and duration is causing more extensive flooding in both rural and urban areas. Flood protection measures that seemed adequate in the past, often no longer serve their purpose.

Severe weather including heavy rainfall and lighting has been affecting parts of Uganda, resulting in fatalities and people displacement in recent decade. In 2020 alone, number of areas have / are experiencing severe effects of floods that have displaced over 300,000 people, a number of key bridges and roads have been washed away across the country making transportation a nightmare for commuters, damaged over 20,000 houses (*Uganda Red Cross Report 2020*), water has been contaminated due to the collapse of latrines in rural areas. Furthermore, the May 2020 heavy rainfall resulted in the highest water level rise in Lake Victoria (13.45m) ever recorded since May 1964 in Uganda. This, eventually cascaded into the rise in water levels in the other major lakes (Kyoga, Albert)

within the Nile basin in Uganda which caused flooding and displacement of the communities within the shores of the lakes.

Safely managed water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services are an essential part of preventing and protecting human health during infectious disease outbreaks, including the current COVID-19 pandemic. One of the most cost-effective strategies for increasing pandemic preparedness, especially in resource-constrained settings, is investing in core public health infrastructure, including water and sanitation systems. Good WASH and waste management practices, that are consistently applied, serve as barriers to human-to-human transmission of the COVID-19 virus in homes, communities, health care facilities, schools, and other public spaces. Furthermore, safely managed WASH services are also critical during the recovery phase of a disease outbreak to mitigate secondary impacts on community livelihoods and wellbeing.

It is these water and environmental shocks that awaken us to focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation, integrated water resources management following catchment based approach, and effective environment management that are critical to the achievement of increased household incomes and improvement of quality of life of the population. Proper wetland management is critical for mitigating flood risks, marine ecosystem maintenance, maintaining water quality and quantity of water resources. Additionally, preserving water resources, environment and natural resources is critical for human health and tourism. Furthermore, mitigating the climate change orchestrated impact of droughts, floods, heat waves and landslides on the livelihood of vulnerable populations is critical for reducing income inequality, improving livelihoods and ensuring energy, water, food and ecosystem security. Sufficient precipitation occasioned by maintaining and/or increasing forest and wetland cover is vital for hydropower generation, agriculture, fisheries, domestic water supply, industry, navigation, tourism, wildlife and ecosystems.

This sub-theme will discuss how societies should manage and develop their water and environment resources to address risks associated with climate change at the same time improving people's livelihood. The sub-theme will also focus on the role of research, innovation and adoption of green appropriate technology to foster sustainable use and management of water and environment resources and reduce human and economic loss from natural hazards and disasters.

#### d) [Water and Environment security for smart urban growth](#)

The national vision to transform Uganda's economy through industrialization is dependent on the country's capacity to strengthen fundamentals that drive socio-economic development, which include among others, urban development, land management, water and environment resources management, and innovation. By 2050, two-thirds of the 6.5 billion people will be living in urban areas. Smart urban growth cannot be achieved without significantly transforming the way we build and manage our urban spaces. Making cities sustainable means creating career and business opportunities, safe and affordable housing, and building resilient societies and economies. It involves investment in public transport, creating green public spaces, and improving urban planning and management in participatory and inclusive ways.

Water and environment security has emerged as a primary sustainability challenge for urban areas at national and international level since it is a key determinant for security of other vital societal aspects including the economy, food, public health, and the environment and thus has a complex political spectrum that goes far beyond the traditional water and environment sector. To achieve water and

environment security, there is need for policy makers, the private sector, and civil society to create an environment which allows among other things, to enhance livelihoods of the urban poor who encroach on vital natural urban ecosystems, to mitigate and manage flood risk and damage, to efficiently use and manage water and environment resources, to reduce, treat and recycle waste and waste water, to protect and restore urban wetlands and forest ecosystems, and to make use of cross sector benefits arising from continued investment in water security.

This sub-theme will focus on innovation within the urban setting that will involve appropriate technologies in terms of: i) environmental concerns (air pollution, water and soil contamination); ii) poverty reduction and employment generation; iii) economic sustainability (cost benefit, short to long term) and iv) environmental sustainability (resource savings and reclamation, reduction in greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions) among others. Making urban excreta and wastewater management contribute to cities' economic development and research opportunities for linking sanitation infrastructure design and planning to business opportunities.

#### **PARTICIPANTS OF UWEWK2021**

A wide range of stakeholders are expected to attend the event, including policy makers, technical specialists, academics, public and private sector institutions, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and consumers. It is envisaged that public awareness on valuing water and environmental for transforming Ugandan's economy and improved livelihood through water security, public health, peace and sustainable urban growth will be increased. It is estimated that 1000 participants will attend the UWEWK2021 both online and physically.

## **2.0 OVERALL GOAL**

The overall goal of UWEWK 2021 is improved understanding of the centrality and value of water and environment resources for transforming Ugandan's economy and improved livelihood.

### **2.1 OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of UWEWK 2021 shall be to:

- a. Highlight value of water and environment resources for socio-economic transformation of Uganda.
- b. Deliberate on the role of water and environment resources in maintaining security, peace, public health and sustainable urban growth and improved livelihoods.

## **5.0 EXPECTED OUTPUT**

At the end of UWEWK 2021, it is expected that:

- a. Public knowledge on the of value water and environmental resources for transforming Ugandan's economy and improved livelihood will be increased
- b. Recent innovations, technologies and developments in the water and environment for sustainable economic growth and improved livelihood showcased;
- c. Institutional governance, business opportunities and trends in the water and environment programme explored;

- d. Platforms for exchange of ideas for long term partnerships and networks established;

## 6.0 FROM PHYSICAL TO HYBRID (PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL) UWEWK 2021

Considering that it might not be possible to hold a face to face UWEWK 2021 event due to still prevailing COVID 19 pandemic it is proposed that the UWEWK2021 week events be held as hybrid (virtual and physical) as follows:

**A three hour live televised event that includes a formal opening ceremony, key note address and dialogue:** The opening ceremony will be held in the Auditorium of the Ministry of Water and Environment and will involve a few speeches that will be delivered within 30 minutes by high level officials from MWE, other partners and a guest of honour. A few people are expected to attend the opening ceremony physically while observing Standard Operating Procedures issued by Ministry of Health. The opening ceremony will be followed by a key note presentation that will be punctuated with a video and a dialogue. It is proposed that this first event be held on the morning of **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 from 9:30 to 11:30pm** and be telecast on selected televisions. The key note presentation and a dialogue will focus on the overall theme for the UWEWK 2021 “**Water and Environment security for socio-economic transformation of Uganda**”. The key note address will highlight the role water and environment resources will be play in:

- i. Increasing investment in value addition to environment and natural resources products and services,
- ii. Promoting natural resource accounting, to improve the national income measurement,
- iii. Promoting research, innovation and adoption of green appropriate technology to foster sustainable use and management of water and environment resources and
- iv. Reducing human and economic loss from natural hazards and disasters.

**Four Thematic dialogues aligned to each of the sub-themes of UWEWK 2021** *a) Valuing Water and Environment resources for socio-economic transformation of Uganda; b) Water and Environment in a creative economy; c) Managing Water and Environment shocks and d) Water and Environment security for smart urban growth.* Depending on the availability, the location of key note speaker and the panellists these will be held either virtually or physically or as a hybrid from 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021. The dialogues will be preceded by a key note presentation on each of the sub-themes of UWEWK 2021.

**UWEWK wrap and Closing ceremony** - This session will be held on **Friday March 26, 2021 on selected television from 2 to 4pm**. The session will summarise key issues that came out of the 5 dialogues, the key messages as well as plans for implementing the recommended actions. The session will formally close UWEWK 2021 and launch preparations for UWEWK2022.

**Parallels sessions on each of the sub-themes of UWEWK 2021.** The parallel sessions where the different paper presenters will be given an opportunity to present online through zoom. These sessions will to run over a 3½-day period from Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Each zoom session will last 2 hours per day and will cover 6-10 paper presentations including discussions. It is planned to have 2 parallel sessions per day and this will result in 50 paper presentations delivered over the 3½-day period. Similarly, arrangements will be done for the short course trainings. The side events will be discussed with interested participants and session convenors. Parallel sessions, short course trainings

and the side events on the same subject areas will be scheduled to run in the morning and afternoon so as to provide participants an opportunity to attend both events if they so wish.

## 6.1 PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

The proposed activities for the UWEWK 2021 will be categorized into (a) pre-event, (b) main event, and (c) post-event activities. This sequencing is planned to help generate the publicity and visibility for the UWEWK 2021. The pre-event activities will last for two to five days and cascade into the actual event, which will last for four days. An overall publicity campaign about the Water and Environment Week will start three months prior to the event.

### PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES

The UWEWK 2021 pre-event activities will include:

- a. Planning and organising the UWEWK 2021
- b. Publicity campaigns, including use of both print and electronic media, social media platforms and promotional materials prior to the event;
- c. Decentralised UWEWK 2021 activities to be carried out in the 6 de-concentrated regional structures of MWE. These are considered a relevant approach to broaden the scope and impact of the UWEWK. These could include radio or TV talk shows on Water and Environment issues, awareness campaign and clean up exercises or restoration activities will be organized by regional de-concentrated structures of the MWE in various locations to deal with key pressing issues in those regions.
- d. Walking for water, environment, climate change and public health- *the walk will begin from Kampala to River Nyamwamba Catchment in Kasese District through various hotspots along the journey.*
- e. Recording of video clips of field visits to selected sites in line with the theme and sub themes showcasing the value of water and environment resources for transforming the social economic growth and improved of livelihood will be undertaken.
- f. Exhibition: Guided video clips showcasing company profiles, activities and in line with theme and sub-themes of UWEWK2021 from sponsors, partners and stakeholders (interested exhibitors) will be collected by organizers (Publicity and Exhibition subcommittees)

### EVENT ACTIVITIES

The UWEWK 2021 events will be hybrid (physical and virtual) and include the following:

- a. Commemoration of International days: World Forest Day, World Water Day and World Meteorological Day;
- b. The official opening of the UWEWK2021 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the week that will be televised live on selected National television stations with keynote address preceded by dialogue on the overall theme
- c. Four keynote addresses on theme and on each sub-theme delivered by leading professionals and policy makers and each will be followed by dialogue;

- d. Paper and posters presented by different scholars and practitioners in relation to overall theme and its sub-themes;
- e. Parallel sessions on thematic areas and topics held for different categories of participants;
- f. Applied training sessions on relevant key topics in line with the sub-themes;
- g. Daily water front about the event developed and circulated to update participants;
- h. A 5 – 10 minutes’ documentary production will be played during the opening and closing ceremonies of UWEWK2021, for the Ugandan public on water and environment resources, with broad use of images from on-site locations in the country as critical element, to serve as a national reference point for the UWEWK 2021. The production will highlight challenges and the big picture, environmental easy-wins; action people can take themselves, as well as, actions from other players including the private sector.

## POST EVENT ACTIVITIES

The post event activities will include preparation of UWEWK2021 report, book of abstracts, publication of the proceedings of UWEWK 2021 and summary of the outcomes of UWEWK 2021.

## 7.0 THE HYBRID PROCESS

The hybrid sessions will be linked to the overall theme and sub-themes of the Uganda Water Environment Week 202. Evidence from research, practice and anecdotal experiences will be used to scrutinise and present possible alternative solutions to the current water and environment resources challenges.

The dialogues and parallel sessions shall be moderated by seasoned professionals with extensive experience and knowledge in managing divergent discussions and creation of consensus. Various key note speakers and panellists will be identified and selected from the following categories of stakeholders:

- National Economic policy experts
- Water and Environment Experts
- Investment Experts
- Academia
- Politicians
- Media

Parallel sessions, short course trainings and the side events will be organized collaboratively with relevant stakeholders and partners working in those specific areas.

The hybrid session process shall include the following

- Each dialogue session will have a coordinator, note taker, moderator, key note speaker and 5 expert panellists
- Each dialogue will be preceded by a key note address delivered by an identified expert on the major theme and each of the sub-themes. The key note presentation will be punctuated by a short video to help viewers to appreciate the actions happening on the ground
- General remarks will be provided by the moderator to introduce the dialogue and panellists
- The moderator will introduce and present key questions to the panellist
- Each panellist will take a turn to provide their views on the general topic about (3-5 minutes)

- The moderator will ask clarifying questions to the panellists if necessary
- The moderator will open discussion to the plenary, and panellists will respond to plenary questions
- A conclusion and way forward will be drawn on the discussion theme
- Each parallel session and the side event will have 2 co-convenors, chair and rapporteur to guide the sessions.
- Each short course will have 1 or 2 facilitators, chair and rapporteur to guide the training
- Virtual field trips- 3- minute video clips of the 4 field trips in line with the theme and sub themes showcasing the value of water and environment resources for transforming the social economic growth and improved of livelihood will be run on zoom during breaks in parallel sessions of paper presentations.
- Recorded 2-minute video clips profiling the company/institution/organization activities and in line with theme and sub-themes of UWEWK2021 from sponsors, partners and stakeholders (exhibitors) will be run during breaks between sessions on zoom.

A water and environment week (UWEWK) daily water front to document what transpired during each day of the online event as a way of keeping the memory of the event alive will be published and shared widely with the participants.

## 8.0 TIME ALLOCATION

Each dialogue session will be preceded by a **7-minute** key note address that will be punctuated by a short video to help viewers to appreciate the actions happening on the ground. Each panellist will be allocated **4 minutes** to provide his or her perspectives on the theme and additional **2 minutes** to clarify and respond to any concerns from the viewers/listeners. The Moderator is expected to utilise not more than 3 minutes within which to give a preamble of the session and to introduce the key note speaker and panellists. Each Panellist will be allowed 1 minute to give final concluding remarks. Apart from the opening session which will last 2 hours the other dialogue sessions will also last maximum of 1 to 1½ hours each.

It is proposed that each parallel session, short course training and the side event will last 2 hours including discussions

## 10.0 TARGET GROUPS

The Uganda Water and Environment Week 2021 will be open to the public, sector line ministries and agencies, political leaders at different levels, donors, academia, civil society organisations, the media, public and private sector institutions.

High-level government officials; Cabinet Ministers, the Members of Parliament as well as members of the diplomatic corps and all agencies directly or indirectly dealing with water and environment resources will be specifically targeted.

Organizations will be invited to exhibit virtually some of the latest innovations, technologies, processes, products and initiatives in the water and environment sector.

## 11.0 COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Water and Environment through the Water Resources Institute will lead the organization of the Uganda Water and Environment Week 2021. For effective coordination and management, the WRI will work closely with partners, including Government ministries, departments

and agencies (MDAs), UN agencies, as well as private sector institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs, International Water and Sanitation Centre among others.

## **12.0 PROPOSED BUDGET**

The proposed sources of funding for the Uganda Water Week 2021 are the Government of Uganda (GoU), Strategic Partners, registration and exhibition fees. The estimated budget for the UWEWK 2021 is **UGX 400,000,000**. This will cover pre-event activities, conference, field trips, school engagements, commemoration of three international days: World Forest Day 21<sup>st</sup> March, World Water Day of 22<sup>nd</sup> March and World Meteorological Day 23<sup>rd</sup> March on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021, entertainment, printing and publications, publicity and communication, and overall conference preparation.

## **13.0 PARTNERS AND SPONSORS**

Partners will be sought and considered as co-conveners, key sponsors and sponsors, depending on their contribution to the event. As sponsors, partners will enjoy preferential treatment in terms of appearance on publicity materials, mentions in the media and during conferences, which will help to increase their visibility and contribution to the water and environment sector in Uganda.

## **14.0 EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

Potential individuals, institutions and partners that would like to participate in the Uganda Water and Environment Week 2021 will do so by Expression of Interest (EOI) through physical or online registration. Details of the various deadlines will be indicated in the call for abstracts, papers and invitation for registration.

Contact us;

Email: [uwewk@mwe.go.ug](mailto:uwewk@mwe.go.ug); [wri.uga@gmail.com](mailto:wri.uga@gmail.com)

Mobile: +256 772 468 772, +256 753 153 791, +256 772521413, +256 772670517

Follow us on social media;

Website: [www.mwe.go.ug](http://www.mwe.go.ug)

Twitter: @min\_waterUg #UWEWK

Facebook: [facebook.com/Ministry of Water and Environment](https://www.facebook.com/MinistryofWaterandEnvironment)