



UGANDA WATER AND ENVIRONMENT WEEK 2018

Summary Report

1.0 BACKGROUND TO UGANDA WATER AND ENVIRONMENT WEEK 2018

The Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) in collaboration with key Partners successfully held the inaugural Uganda Water and Environment Week (UWEWK) 2018 at the Water Resources Institute (WRI) in Entebbe from 17th – 23rd March 2018. The event coincided with the annual commemoration of three major International Sector Events (World Forestry Day 21st March, World Water Day 22 March, and World Meteorology Day 23rd March 2018). The event, dubbed the “Uganda Water and Environment Week 2018” was organised under the theme: *“Water and Environment, a catalyst for Achieving Middle Income Status 2020”*. It had eight sub-themes namely;

- 1) Integrated water resources management;
- 2) Water and sanitation development;
- 3) Wastewater and pollution management;
- 4) Environment and natural resources;
- 5) Sustainable forest management
- 6) Weather and Climate Change
- 7) Water – Energy – Food – ecosystem nexus; and
- 8) Stakeholder engagement and water & environment sector financing.

1.1 WHY THE WATER WEEK

The first-ever UWEWK was to demonstrate the pivotal role played by the Water and environment sector in attainment of Uganda’s vision 2040 and the National Development Plan II (NDP II). It was premised on the fact that water is a unique resource on surface and underground, yet finite and scarce. It affects all aspects of the economy, life, and the environment. A study by Industrial Economics (2016) on economic value of water resources and environment in Uganda indicates that 48 percent of agricultural sector and 34 percent of manufacturing sector respectively depend on water resources. The study further observed that without proper investment in water management and distribution, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) could suffer significantly; and insufficient investment in water management will have much more dramatic effects on specific water dependent activities in the agricultural, manufacturing and service sector.

Based on the projected population growth, the total renewable water resource of the country per capita is expected to drop to 1,072m² per year by 2030 on the brink of the regime of water scarcity – especially in arid and semi-arid regions. Coping with these challenges, calls for advanced technological development and innovation, not least for wastewater treatment, cleaner production and reuse and resource recovery



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technologies, as well as changes in production and consumption patterns set in a proper policy and governance framework

1.2 OVERALL GOAL OF UWEWK2018

The overall goal of the Uganda Water Week 2018 was to contribute to the national development goals through effective management of water resources and distribution for sustainable socio-economic development of Uganda.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the event were;

- I. To increase public awareness on water and environment resources for growth and development;
- II. To celebrate twenty-five (25) years of adoption of Integrated Water Resources Management in Uganda;
- III. To launch the Water Resources Institute in Entebbe;
- IV. To showcase recent innovations, technologies and developments in the Water and Environment sector for efficient Water and Environment services delivery;
 - i. To explore business opportunities and trends in the Water and Environment sector;
- V. To provide a forum for exchange of ideas for long term business partnerships in the water and environment sector; and
- VI. To identify potential partners to increase Water and Environment sector financing.

2.0 MAIN EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES OF UWEWK 2018

UWEWK 2018 brought together key stakeholders in the Water and Environment sector, including policy makers, government technocrats, development partners, academia both staff and students, public and private sector institutions and civil society organisations. It was attended by primary schools in Entebbe and the surrounding districts, the public and consumers to discuss strategic issues regarding the contribution of Water and Environment resources to the development of Uganda. It attracted high-level government officials ranging from the Right Honourable Prime Minister, Honourable Vice President, Cabinet Ministers, and Members of Parliament who officiated and participated in the various segments of the event.

It involved a number of activities.

2.1 Kampala Clean Up

Kampala clean-up was organised by Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), partners, and different stakeholders (including Ministry of Water and Environment, Kampala Capital City Authority, WaterAid, Local leaders, National Forestry Authority, civil



society Organisations, Community members) who worked in solidarity to clean up Kagugube zone in Makerere–Kivulu Parish on Saturday 17th March 2018. Through this they emphasised the importance of collaborating with communities and other actors to demonstrate the importance of proper sanitation and waste disposal as a way of reducing contamination of water and reduce water related diseases due to poor sanitation and hygiene practice.

2.2 CONFERENCE (PLENARY, PARALLEL SESSIONS, DIALOGUES AND APPLIED TRAINING SESSIONS)

A national conference was held from 19th to 21st March 2018. It provided an opportunity to both non and- professionals in water and environment academics, researchers, practitioners, businesses, politicians, the army and innovators to share knowledge through, key note addresses, dialogues and presentation of papers. The conference was officially opened by the Vice President of the Republic of Uganda Hon Edward Kiwanuka Ssekandi on Monday March 19th 2018. In his opening remarks, he noted that access to water remains a challenge in the rural areas despite Uganda having a lot of rivers, lakes and wetlands. *“Uganda has a lot of rivers, lakes and wetlands that cover 18% of Uganda’s land surface, but only 2% of the water is used for production, with only 1% of potential irrigable area,” he noted.* He further urged that addressing the water challenges requires a holistic approach that considers economics, the environment and all-inclusive elements.

The Minister of State for Water Hon Ronald Kibuule gave an address and noted that people who build in wetlands have destroyed wetlands, water bodies, the environment and water resources. He encouraged participants to consider the vital role of water and environmental resources in sustaining life, promoting development and maintaining the environment.

Key Note Address and dialogues

The conference kicked off with a keynote address delivered by Dr Fred Muhumuza, in which he emphasized the need to invest in water resources management as it affects all aspects of the economy. He noted that while there is a seeming increase in public funding towards the water and environment sector, there has not been a corresponding increment in service delivery due to increasing multiple demands for water.



The discussions were expounded for one and a half days in the various parallel sessions where there was a lot of sharing on the current issues, progress, recent innovations and gaps in water resources and environment issues. Presentations were made in line with four themes of *Water supply and sanitation; Integrated water resources management; Stakeholder engagement and water & environment sector financing; Water - Energy - Food - ecosystem nexus; Weather and Climate Change; Wastewater and pollution management; and two side events*. Overall, 60 presentations were made on various topics.

Key highlights on the economic value of water and environment to national development:

- ✓ Quadrupling budgetary allocation to water and environment will spur growth in manufacturing, transport, tourism, agriculture sectors.
- ✓ Uganda's renewable water resources have continued to dwindle and the quality of water has declined largely due to human activities.
- ✓ Sustainable management of water resources and environment vital for achieving national and global development targets.
- ✓ The need to preserve and protect the environment and natural resources in the wake of rapid population growth.
- ✓ Investing in water and environment can increase GDP per capita by 9%.
- ✓ Ensuring optimal regional resource allocation and putting people at the centre
- ✓ Government resources are getting more constrained and so the need for people to pay for services.
- ✓ Lack of integrated planning and budgeting affecting resource allocation and expertise across sectors

Dialogues

Benefits of transboundary co-operation

Prof Emmanuel Kasimbazi, emphasised that countries can benefit greatly from shared water resources only if they cooperate.

Lack of cooperation could have dire consequences, which manifests in unending tension arising from difference in socio-cultural backgrounds among riparian states; lack of trust and mutual interests; conflicting state objectives; different realities between countries in relation to their history, sovereignty and territorial rights; limited financial and human capacity. Therefore, countries need to commit requisite financial and human resources for cooperation to thrive. Among the panellists arguing, the case for transboundary cooperation based on varied ideas included Col Kulayigye (UPDF), Dr Tom Okurut (NEMA), Mr Innocent Ntabana (NBI), Ms Florence Adongo (DWRM), and Ambassador Etuket.

The benefits of cooperation included:

- ✓ Increased political stability and strengthened diplomatic relations, reduced risks and avoidance of the cost of conflict.
- ✓ More opportunities in form of joint ventures and investments; development of regional markets for goods; reduced costs of carrying out economic activities; improved value of jointly owned property; and transnational infrastructure network.
- ✓ Strengthening of international law. *"You cannot apply international law if you don't cooperate as states,"*



Paper presentations

Papers were presented under the following sub-themes:

- i. Integrated water resources management; co-ordinate development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems.
- ii. Water and sanitation development; addressing water, sanitation and hygiene needs in Urban, semi-urban and rural areas of Uganda.
- iii. Wastewater and pollution management; Managing wastewater and pollution through treatment, reuse, purification, reduction and restoration.
- iv. Environment and natural resources; Efficient and effective utilization of natural resources innovations, technologies, approaches and strategies leading to sustainable management
- v. Water – energy – food – ecosystem nexus recognizing that water, food and energy sectors are inextricably linked, actions in one area commonly have impacts on the others, as well as on ecosystems.
- vi. Stakeholder engagement and water sector financing. The economic case for water and environment, and effective communication of water and environment centrality to economic development
- vii. Weather and Climate Change implications on natural resources, productivity and current measures to address/cope with these impacts
- viii. Sustainable forest management conversation of forests in light of development and industrialization

2.3 APPLIED TRAINING

Eight (8) training sessions were undertaken in line with the sub-themes for event. The training sessions targeted a minimum of 20 participants per training running concurrently for an average two hours. The different departments of the Ministry of Water and Environment, Appropriate Technology centre, Water for people and International Institute for Rural Reconstruction offered the trainings using a number of interactive methodologies including role plays, case studies, demonstrations, and question and answers. The training covered the following topics

- a) Water safety and security planning- (by DWRM and WfP).
- b) Water assets management (by MWE Urban Department and WfP)
- c) Weather and Climate (by UNMA)
- d) Catchment-based Integrated Water Resources Management (by IIRR and DWRM)
- e) Wetland Restoration (by DEA)
- f) Forest Landscape Restoration (by DEA)
- g) Micro Irrigation Technologies
- h) Faecal Sludge Management (by WfP)



The trainings were appreciated as expressed by participants: *“The training has given me confidence”*; *“My knowledge gap has been bridged.”*; and *“We need to create more awareness on the issues and how people can participate in reversing deforestation.”*

2.4 LAUNCH OF THE WRI

Official Launch of the Water Resources Institute (WRI) was held on March 21st 2018. Officiating the launch was, Uganda’s Prime Minister Dr Ruhakana Rugunda who applauded the Ministry of Water and Environment for establishing an institute that will help bridge the gap between theory and practice and also generate practical solutions to address the challenges in the water and environment sector. He observed that discussion of water and environment issues need to get out of cocoons of water and environment sectors and involve other stakeholders such as politicians, students, the private sector, development partners, academicians, the media and the public. *“This is because water affects us all, there is a need to increase sharing of experience, new concepts, innovations and practices in water and environment related issues. The Institute will truly revolutionise the water sector,”* PM Rugunda said.

Prof Edward Kirumira reiterated that achieving middle-income status 2020 will depend on well-coordinated strategic and policy interventions while taking into consideration water and environment as critical enablers and drivers. He emphasised the fact that water and environment are especially important because they are equalizing resources, shared by every Ugandan. *“if you invest in water and environment every Ugandan will benefit because everyone is affected by those resources,”* he argued. He further noted that the WRI would contribute to national development goals by being the vehicle for the implementation of water sector reforms and a centre of excellence for water resources management and development.

2.5 EXHIBITIONS AND SIDE EVENTS

Exhibitions mainly by the private sector, MWE departments and civil society organisations were showcased. Overall, the event attracted over 30 exhibitors displaying recent innovations in water supply technologies, sanitation technologies and approaches, weather and climate change smart technologies. Two side events were organised by SNV Uganda on Behaviour Change and sanitation and Water for People in partnership with Financial Institutions and Water.Org on WASH financing focusing on WASH credit services.

2.6 COMMEMORATION OF THE WORLD FOREST DAY, WORLD WATER DAY AND METEOROLOGICAL DAY,

During the water week international sector days including the: World Water Day *“Nature for Water”*, World Forest Day *“Forest and Sustainable Cities. Let us give priority to greening our cities in order to enjoy the many benefits of urban forests.”*; and World



Meteorological Day “*Weather-ready, climate-smart*”, were held. The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Water and Environment, Mr. Alfred Okot Okidi, closed the event on behalf of the Minister Hon. Sam Cheptoris. He enumerated the benefits of planting trees around urban areas and cities, highlighting that forests and trees store carbon, mitigate impacts of climate change and help save energy used for heating by 20 to 50 percent. He urged Ugandans to use nature-based solutions to rebalance the water cycle, mitigate the effects of climate change and improve human health and livelihoods. He called the public to seize opportunities related to weather, climate and water.

The Director of Water Resources Management, Florence Adongo urged all participants to reflect on how water, weather and climate interlink to improve citizens’ livelihoods and to utilize the knowledge acquired during the water and environment week to move the sector forward.

2.7 FIELD VISITS

Field visits were organized and hosted by MWE departments, agencies and partners focusing on faecal sludge management by KCCA and Water for People, Sustainable Forest Management by NFA, Water Quality and Pollution Control by DWRM, and O&M of Urban Water Supply by Urban DWD/Urban Department. The field visits provided exposure to participants on sector related issues, interventions and innovations.

4.0 KEY OUTCOMES

As seen from the results of this evaluation report, the Uganda Water Week provided an open and dynamic platform for key stakeholders and participants to enhance their capacity; form smart, viable and sustainable partnerships; and review water sector implementation; thereby advancing the cause for water resources, environment, livelihood improvement and poverty reduction agenda.

It also provided an opportunity for participants to exchange views and experiences; dialogue and network; foster new thinking; and benchmark on the best practices in the water sector and develop solutions to the most pressing water related challenges facing Uganda today.

The successful launch and profiling of the Water Resources Institute (WRI) highlighting the contribution of the WRI in addressing water resources issues

Strengthening Sector integration and harmonization: The establishment and organizing of the Uganda Water and Environment Week enabled the various facets of the sector (directorates, agencies and CSOs); to engage with the private sector, politicians and the general public to talk about the centrality of water in achieving Uganda’s economic transformation and its Middle-income status aspiration by 2020

3.0 ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS

A number of achievements were registered and stakeholders were satisfied with the organisation and achievement of overall objectives of the week. These include:



- **Systematic pre- event organisation and preparation:** great effort was made to ensure adequate preparation leading to a successful week. The National Organising Committee (NOC), voluntary sub-committees worked with minimal resources to conceptualise and deliver a successful event.
- **Documentation and sharing of good experiences:** a write shop was organised as a useful tool for capacity building and confidence building. The partnership with Makerere University WaSo Project was key in this. However, the write shop could have added more value to the process if it had been organised earlier in the process.
- **Mobilisation and Communication:** this was successful mainly due to use of various communication channels/approaches. The UWEWK 2018 was highly publicised and attracted a lot of media attention in both print, radio and social media using hashtag #UWEWK. To maintain momentum and ensure sustained interest among different stakeholders, continuous communication using various channels as well as allocation of sufficient resources to disseminate information is needed.
- **Started late the communication process:** Due to lack of resources but going forward communication should be done pre-during and post the event to ensure that profiling and attraction of the various stakeholders is achieved
- **Limited community involvement:** Involvement of communities in the exhibitions and clean up exercise was limited, this needs to be improved in the subsequent events. One way is to incorporate an open day, which allows the wider public to participate in various segments of the event.
- **Participation and attendance:** the event attracted and sustained high-level participation (400 participants) including politicians, development partners, technocrats, academicians, private sector, civil society organisations, media, and students. Registration should be improved by undertaking early online registration.
- **Conference organisation and management:** plenary sessions dialogues, and parallel sessions were part of the conference. This broke monotony and should be upheld for future events. However, relevant financial resources should be allocated to ensure all logistics are adequately covered for this kind of event.
- **Launch of the WRI:** the choice of keynote speaker, panellists and moderator was fit for purpose. The launch attracted high-level political participation and recognition that needs to be built upon to further the interests and mandate of the WRI.
- **Applied training:** sessions were successful organised and facilitated by key partners in collaboration with the ministry departments. The model used was very cost effective and should be adopted for future events.
- **Field Visits:** Four field visits were successfully organised in partnership with different actors. They provided greater exposure to the participants on a number of practical water resources and environmental issues affecting the sector. To make field visits effective write-ups on field visits should be available at registration and included in the participants' information pack.
- **Wrap up session:** following the commemoration of the WWD, WFD and WMD, the field visits on the final day did not allow the participants to congregate again. In order for the field visits to feed into the events discussions and action planning,



there is need to consider organising them earlier in the week. Include a closing session with a statement or a closing declaration.

- Taking stock of the event: Coordinators / chairs and rapporteurs were designated with a role to ensure that the sessions were adequately moderated and well captured. However, for this to happen effectively, there is need to designate committed teams and put resources aside for this process.
- The Waterfront (Daily Newsletter): it was very useful and appreciated. It provided regular overview of the daily activities. However, this needs engaging more journalists to adequately cover all the parallel sessions and ensure that the newsletter is widely shared online and in hard copies.
- Evaluation: to gauge the level of satisfaction was a useful element of the week. The tool should be refined and adopted early in the process to ensure that feedback is used to improve subsequent events.
- Taking forward the outcomes: some time was spent to take stock and reflect on the outcome by NOC and its sub committees this was useful. However, little effort was put in publishing outcomes and sustaining the key messages from the week. Therefore, it is important to plan, budget and implement post event activities especially the documentation, publishing and disseminating outcomes of the week.

5.0 FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Organising a successful water and environment week requires sufficient time and resources. Below are specific recommendations for consideration

- ✓ Start planning early on in the process to allow sufficient time to communicate the purpose of the week, call for papers and abstracts and have them reviewed in time as well as assembling the necessary logistics.
- ✓ Right level of participation and involvement – the UWEWK is a sector event calling for integrated participation, ownership and commitment at the right level. This requires high-level leadership to ensure that all the Ministry Directorates and Agencies actively take part and commit relevant time, human and financial resources.
- ✓ Committing appropriate financial resources: MWE working with partners needs to allocate resources. Potential sponsors need to be identified and engaged on time to finance various aspects of the event. More sustainable measures should be explored such as co-hosting and financing of particular events.
- ✓ Building collaborations and strategic partnerships – there is need to map out and build long-term relations with key partnerships interested in supporting the WRI and UWEWK activities.
- ✓ Communication about UWEWK–develop and communicate relevant information about the UWEWK using different channels and target audiences.
- ✓ Facilities – there is need for modifications and furnishing such as adapting and furnishing training rooms, improving power supply, sanitation, communication and internet connectivity; preparing / levelling ground for plenary sessions by acquiring own tents to minimise future costs of hiring among others.
- ✓ Calls: participants' registration, papers, exhibitors, convenors and sponsors– introduce early registration to be able to plan better for the event in terms of logistics and other materials needed.