



# The WATERFRONT

Newsletter

March 14, 2023 / issue 3

## Climate Resilient Communities, Eco systems and Infrastructure



Panel discussion on climate resilient communities, eco systems and infrastructure

Moderated by Yunia Yiga Musaazi (Mrs); Executive Director for Uganda Water and Sanitation Network (UWASNET) and Mr. Solomon Kyeyune, Day three commenced with a keynote speech by Dr. James Dalton, the Director of Global Water Program, International Union for conservation of Nature. While kicking off the session, Mrs Musaazi one of the moderators, introduced the theme which she said was in line with the event's core agenda. She said this year's Uganda Water and Environment Week (UWEWK) **"Water and Environment for Climate -Resilient Development"** is aimed at ensuring that communities are resilient to adversities caused by climate change.

She further mentioned that the discussion would establish the

nexus between the communities, ecosystems and the infrastructure, stressing that it was timely and prudent that as a country, **"we start formulating answers to the eco system challenges we're facing from with in and around us"**.

While giving his keynote speech, Dr. James Dalton, the Director of Global Water Program, International Union for Conservation of Nature, said the

key challenge for people practicing irrigation world over is water; in terms of being too much, too little, accessibility, and availability. His presentation further dug deep into how countries could work with natural systems to promote resilience.

His keynote revolved so much around nature-based solutions in a broader framework of how countries can work within their infrastructure-built solutions and governance within their water system.

**"One of the things developments has led to is good practice and normal practice,"** Dr. James noted, stressing that this implies that the solutions do not address the underlying resilience for communities.



Mrs. Yunia Yiga Musaazi moderating Climate Resilient Communities, Eco systems and Infrastructure session

***“The challenge is the way we have learnt from the past, yet we are not sure of what the future will bring, and the past becomes less relevant to us as we face climate change,”*** he said.

Dr. James mentioned that it is critical to understand the boundaries and limits of ‘our approaches’ since climate change affects human system.

He said there is need to manage risk, and called for a more intentional planning for resilience.

Dr. James expounded that safeguarding the ecosystem is key in managing the system in which we operate, hence protecting society. This, he said calls for improvement on how systems work regarding what people need while safeguarding the ecosystem.

He noted that building sustainability in both interventions is key to enhancing resilience within climate change context.

While demystifying nature-based solutions, Dr. James presented a definition agreed upon at the United Nations Assembly, defined as solutions that are effective; activities and actions that conserve user management natural modified

eco systems.

He mentioned that using natural systems calls for a hybrid approach; Natural and Grey infrastructure, where governance really works to maintain the balance in the entire system.

He said that the local level adaptation approach that communities play is based on their heritage, cultural knowledge which elements are critical for the systems to work.

He stressed that building resilience is by far hinged on using topics that are of societal focus and governance and regulation to build a natural system.

He added that re-orientation of public sector thinking and financing would reduce the transaction costs often pushed down to communities, efficiencies, improve possible investment options...

From a water perspective, Dr. James explained what depicts of Nature based solutions including protection, sustainable management and restoration.

He stressed that the key elements tagged to nature based solutions must identify the exact challenges to be solved saying that they have significant potential to address

societal challenges.

He also noted that the lack of coordination among government institutions can lead to missed opportunities, unfit responses/ interventions towards societal challenges.

***“What works for one community may not work for another, and what works for 15 years for a community may have a negative impact down/upstream,”*** he noted.

Further, Dr. James shared the IUCN global standard on Nature Based Solutions with key indicators, which he said were flexible, and used to shape existing activities to enhance resilience.

Dr. James stressed that a coordination planning approach and infrastructure system allows communities to plan and act within the river systems that are aligned with in the governance systems.

He noted that the solution is not a technical but a social one that builds resilience and secures alignment between communities.

# Uganda Ready for UN Water Conference

Uganda is ready to take part in the global United Nations (UN) Water Conference 2023 slated to take place between March 22 and 24 2023.

The conference will take place at the UN headquarters in New York, co-hosted by the Republic of Tajikistan and the Kingdom of Netherlands.

The event will involve all UN members states to discuss the progress on and implementation of the Water Action Decade and the progress of the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs).

During the event, all member states will be accounting to the International Community on ***“how we have progressed”***.

This year’s conference will be held under the theme: “Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action. ***“Water for sustainable Development 2018-2028”***.”



Dr. Callist Tindimugaya  
Commissioner, Water Resource Planning and Regulation  
Ministry of Water and Environment.

In his presentation on the coming water conference on the third day of the Uganda Water and Environment Week 2023, the Commissioner Department Water Resources Planning and Regulations, at the Ministry of Water and Environment Dr. Callist Tindimugaya explained that the main objectives of the conference are to support the achievement of the internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

Dr. Tindimugaya stressed that the UN 2023 Water Conference is a call for Water Action. He urged all global leaders and all relevant sectors to boost ambition, mobilize partnerships, and increase investment in science driven and innovative approaches to advance the water agenda.

### Water Decade 2018-2028:

In December 2016, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution International Decade (2018-2028) for Action -Water for Sustainable Development, to help put a greater focus on water in the set 10 years after UN member states expressed concern over the lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene, and over water related disasters.

The event commenced on the World Water Day March 22nd, 2018 and will be climaxed on the World Water Day of in March 2028.

Dr. Tindimugaya noted that failing to respond effectively to the challenge will have devastating global effects. The conference is to help advance sustainable development, energizing the implementation of executive programs and projects, and mobilizing action for the 2030 agenda. This, he said the objectives of the Water Decade will be achieved through improving knowledge generation and dissemination; facilitating access to knowledge and

exchange of good practices; generating new information relevant to the water related SDGs; pursuing advocacy, networking and promoting partnerships and action by different actors; and strengthening communication actions at various levels for implementation of water related goals. ***“The conference will have six plenaries to announce commitments, plans, actions, and best practices. There will be five interactive dialogues to be held on parallel with the plenary meetings,”*** Dr. Tindimugaya noted.

Among the themes for dialogues include: Water for Health (access to safe drinking water, hygiene and sanitation this was in relation (SDG 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 1,3, 5, 17); and Water action Decade included in UN Secretary General Action Plan.

### Accreditation:

Dr. Tindimugaya noted that the accreditation for Nongovernment organisations, Civil society, Academic institutions, the scientific community the private sector philanthropic organisations and others closed on December 2, 2022 with 1000 applications which were available by early January 2023.

However, he noted that registration closed on March 13, 2023.

### Ugandan Delegates:

Dr. Tindimugaya said the Ministry of Water and Environment (MW&E), has been working closely with the Ministry of Internal Affairs on the list of the delegations from Uganda, saying the lists will soon be out.

***“A list with a link for accommodation has also been shared with the members to ensure that members can book for their own accommodation on time,”*** he added.

He noted that the Uganda side event was chosen but more details about it will soon be shared.

***“All interested parties were strongly encouraged to join and partner to organize a side event. These side events will equally be an opportunity for all participants to share knowledge and solutions to accelerate implementation of SDG 6 and showcase voluntary commitments for the Water Action Agenda,”*** he added.

He disclosed that at least Six partners were ready for partnerships among them including: the World Bank, UNICEF, United National High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Water for People, and Rights to Cross with a Dutch origin among others.

### What will the conference deliver?

The conference will set an agenda for 2030 and later deliver a summary of conference proceedings, present a set of voluntary commitments.

***“Here there will be decision making on what to discontinue and what to innovate also what to be funded and a roadmap towards the 2030 decade and 2030 SDGS,”*** he noted.



Panelists pause for a photo after the dialogue session on on Climate Resilient communities , ecosystems and infrastructure

## Financing Nature Based Solutions

Many countries have adopted developing the right pipe line of an ideal project that builds natural system as a funding mechanism of the Nature Based Solutions, other funding channels include Sub National Climate fund invested in renewable energy and nature-based solutions.

As he concluded his keynote, he highlighted the Cerrado Water Consortium, Brazil; a Multi Stakeholder group addressing ecosystem degradation at scale.

He identified the following challenges affecting Nature Based Systems being among others; low performance due to existing governance challenges, poor monitoring, lack of cross-sectional policy coherence, poor multisectoral coordination and alignment within technical, governance and financing.

### Panel discussion

Upon concluding his keynote speech; the moderator- Yunia Yiga Musaaazi E.D; UWASNET introduced a panel discussion was then introduced to respond to the speech. The following thus emerged;



Ms. Imelda Kanzomba the Principal Agricultural Officer MAAIF

Environment said ***“We must avoid the unmanageable and manage the avoidable”***, she noted.

Then then stated the following steps to build community resilience including among others, harnessing human capital in relation to skills, she also mentioned that the Ministry has integrated traditional practices through the different approaches, participatory approach, harnessing through soft infrastructure such as restoration, reforestation, land scape rehabilitation, bench marking community governance structures.

**M**s. Imelda Kanzomba; Principal Agricultural Officer from MAAIF said that educational and public awareness campaigns play a key role in advancing resilience.

Eng. Wilberforce Kimezere; Water and Sanitation specialist from UNICEF said that; the costs and benefits derived from WASH and climate change are categorized

in two prominent climate change hazards in Uganda, for example, he mentioned that drought reduces water supply hence affects accessibility hence improving resilience to climate change is directly proportional to improving accessibility to water. Enhanced mitigation and adaptation to climate change increases flow in the rivers hence increasing water provided to urban areas. Mr. Jackson Muhindo; Resilience and Climate Justice Coordinator at Oxfam Uganda mentioned that early warning information is key towards enhancing resilience; he also called for inclusiveness of communities regarding solving their problems.

Mr. Suresh Kumar Rohilla; Programme Lead, International Water Association said; multistakeholder platforms are key to promoting knowledge sharing, build partnerships in a WASH- Climate change context.

## **WASH Infrastructure And Services Need to Be Resilient to Climate Related Risks- Experts Parallel Sessions**

*Eng Wilberforce Kimezere the Water and Sanitation Specialist UNICEF*

**E**ngineer Wilberforce Kimezere, Water and Sanitation Specialist at UNICEF has urged Water and Environment stakeholders to ensure that WASH infrastructure and services are sustainable, safe and resilient to climate related risks.

He explained that if they are tailored towards the climate related risks, there would be a reduction in the vulnerability which would lead to building community resilience to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

On the other hand, Kimezere

explained that renewable energy supply, reforestation, waste minimization and compositing of organic waste as some of the the ways to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

In an effort for inclusive approaches for service delivery, Engineer Felix Twinomucunguzi from the Ministry of Water and Environment revealed that, they are implementing a newly Town Sanitation Planning approach (TSP) for accelerating access to safely managed sanitation in small towns in Northern Uganda. This is taking place in the districts of Oyam

and Apac.

TSP is a holistic and participatory approach aimed at building capacity of local governments to develop and implement town-wide.

***“A regional fecal sludge treatment plant was constructed in Apac. Institutional support was received, an improved financial allocation to sanitation activities by town councils done and improved sanitation service delivery, promotions, byelaws developed plus knowledge exchange implemented,”***Eng Twinomucunguzi noted.





Brenda Piloya an Agronomist with FAO during her presentation

While making an oral presentation on Building Adaptive Capacity for Climate Resilient Communities in Uganda, cattle corridor; Experiences of FAO mushroom value chain development Brenda Piloya an Agronomist with FAO urged stakeholders to conduct in depth studies to further understand the centrality of livestock in the agro pastoral livelihood in context of climate resilience development within the agrarian systems of the water management zones in the Uganda Cattle Corridor.

She noted that priority agricultural commodity or livelihood option has received limited attention on transformation.

But revealed that crop-based systems are significant in building community resilience for households that were traditionally livestock dependent.

Rajab Namakhola from the Department of Agricultural and Bio-Systems Engineering, Makerere University called for a need for further investment to improve land use, land cover, and infrastructure for access to available water for socio-economic and environmental wellbeing of Namatala River Catchment.

He made the remarks while presenting a paper on Assessment of Water Availability Using the Water Evaluation and Planning (WEAP) Model in Namatala River Catchment.

Mr. Grace Kyagaba the WASH Senior Manager and Mr. Ntale Emmanuel, the Manager Climate and Environment with the Uganda Red cross society expressed with concern the growing trend of more destructive climate induced disasters. However, they advised that measures to combat the disasters have to be implemented within a certain timeframe as there would come a point when it is simply too late.

# WASH infrastructure and services need to be resilient to climate related risks- Experts

Session 10: Approaches to scaling up inclusive and Climate resilient sanitation

Engineer Wilberforce Kimezere, Water and Sanitation Specialist at UNICEF has urged Water and Environment stakeholders to ensure that WASH infrastructure and services are sustainable, safe and resilient to climate related risks

He explained that if they are tailored towards the climate related risks, there would be a reduction in the vulnerability which would lead to building community resilience to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

On the other hand, Kimezere explained that renewable energy supply, reforestation, waste minimization and composting of organic waste as some of the components the ways to mitigating the impacts of climate change.



Participants during a session on Climate resilient communities

In an effort for inclusive approaches for service delivery, Engineer Felix Twinomucunguzi from the Ministry of Water and Environment revealed they are implementing a newly Town Sanitation Planning approach (TSP) for accelerate access to safely managed sanitation in small towns in Northern Uganda. This is taking place in the districts of Oyam and Apac.



Eng. Dr. Felix Twinomucunguzi, Ministry of Water and Environment presenting the town sanitation planning approach for accelerated access to safely managed sanitation in small towns in Northern Uganda

Eng. Dr. Felix Twinomucunguzi, Ministry of Water and Environment presenting the town sanitation planning approach for accelerated access to safely managed sanitation in small towns in Northern Uganda

TSP is a holistic and participatory approach aimed at building capacity of local governments to develop and implement town-wide.

“A regional fecal sludge treatment plant was constructed in Apac. Institutional support was received, an improved financial allocation to sanitation activities by town councils done and improved sanitation service delivery, promotions, byelaws developed plus knowledge exchange implemented,” Eng Twinomucunguzi noted.

While presenting, Brenda Piloya an Agronomist with FAO urged stakeholders to conduct in depth studies to further understand the centrality of livestock in the agro pastoral livelihood in context of climate resilience development within the agrarian systems of the water management zones in the Uganda Cattle Corridor.

She noted that priority agricultural commodity or livelihood option has received limited attention on transformation. But revealed that crop-based systems are significant in building community resilience for households that were traditionally livestock dependent.



Participants during a session on Climate resilient communities



Session 14. Participants during a session on Climate resilient communities

Rajab Namakhola from the Department of Agricultural and Bio-Systems Engineering, Makerere University called for a need for further investment to improve land use land cover, and infrastructure for access to available water for socio-economic and environmental wellbeing of Namatala River Catchment.

He made the remarks while presenting a paper on Assessment of Water Availability Using the Water Evaluation and Planning (WEAP) Model in Namatala River Catchment

Mr. Grace Kyagaba the WASH Senior Manager and Mr. Ntale Emmanuel, the Manager Climate and Environment with the Uganda Red cross society expressed with concern the growing trend of more destructive climate induced disasters. However, they advised that that measures to combat the disasters have to be implemented within a certain timeframe as there would come a point when it is simply too late.

Several interactive and educative sessions were centred on the following subthemes;

- Adoption of efficient energy technologies for communities' adjacent southern sector of Bwindi National Park by Eunice AKankwasa.

- Assessing erosion risk and heavy metal loading in sediment from the inner Murchison Bay (IMB) catchment by Gyavira Ssewankambo.



Mr. Gyavira Ssenkambo presenting on Assessing erosion risk and heavy metal loading in sediment from the inner Murchison bay

- Assessing the potential for climate resilience for vulnerable communities in Uganda by Ojera Alex Bright.
- Spatial distribution of water reservoirs in the sota catchment (Benin, West Africa) and implications for local development by Kevin S. Sambieni.
- Raising community awareness of climate change, landslides mitigation and adaptation while enhancing the livelihoods of communities in mount Elgon region of Uganda by Marunga Winnie.
- Mapping hotspots and severity of pollution in Kampala Industrial Business Park, Namanve Micro Catchment as a result of inadequate Industrial waste management by Stephen Emor.



Eunice Akankwasa delivering a presentation on Adoption of efficient energy technologies for communities' adjacent southern sector of Bwindi National Park

# Peero Giiri (Water Forever)

## *Payment for Water Services by Refugees in Uganda – Knowledge exchange side event*



Panelists pose for a photo after a session on *payment for water services by Refugees in Uganda*

As the largest refugee hosting country in Africa, Uganda currently hosts more than 1.5 million refugees. Water and sanitation services for these refugees were provided by humanitarian actors using emergency response approaches.

To improve the sustainability of the services and due to the prolonged stay of refugees, it is planned to fully transition the management of water services provision to national utilities, such as the Northern Umbrella of Water and Sanitation (NUWS), for more sustainable management. This is in line with the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), which advocates for linking humanitarian approaches with development interventions for

a more holistic refugee response. As part of the implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), the GIZ Uganda Programme Water Supply and Sanitation for Refugee Settlements and Host Communities in Northern Uganda (WatSSUP) is supporting the transition from humanitarian-led water supply to water supply by national service providers (utilities), coined the 'Utility Model'.

This transition focuses on preparing for the handover of water services to national utilities. As the water supply schemes in the refugee settlements within WatSSUP's area of implementation have been gazetted to NUWS, WatSSUP places much of its efforts on the upgrade of water supply schemes and the technical

support and capacity development of NUWS, to ensure that water supply continues to function well after the handover. One important aspect when it comes to this transition is that refugees and host communities are able to afford the tariffs while at the same time also willing to pay for the water services provided by NUWS.

WatSSUP has supported NUWS to develop their own Community Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy to improve awareness about the transition to NUWS and the willingness towards the payment of water supply services. One component of this strategy is the development of the comic booklet, Peero Giiri (which)



'Water Forever' in Kakwa). Peero Giiri aims to serve as a communication tool, sensitizing refugee and host communities on the introduction of water tariffs once NUWS has taken over the water supply systems in their communities.

Considering that refugees could access water for free under the humanitarian-led approach, it is necessary to appeal to their willingness to pay for water under the national utilities and communicate the benefits of the Utility Model to them. Peero Giiri will transform this message, by focusing on the challenges of the current water supply and by illustrating the benefits of a utility led water supply. It was a fruitful knowledge exchange

session between Noella Kabale Kalu, the refugee representative of the Refugee Engagement Forum, Nicholas Tugume, Senior Engineer of NUWS, Bonny Olwa, Senior Sociologist of NUWS, Jena Toma, deputy RDO of OPM Arua and a virtual participation by Simon Peter Odong, the UNCHR WASH Country Coordinator.

After a question-and-answer session with the audience, one of the key take-aways from the side event is that while a lot of refugees are willing to pay, there is a vulnerable group among the diverse group of refugees which is not able to pay for the water tariffs. Thus, more support by the government, as well as humanitarian and development

partners, is needed to support this vulnerable group. It was reiterated that no refugee shall be left behind during and after the transition.

The session was festively ended with the launch of the Peero Giiri Comic by Martin Wamalwa, NUWS Manager, Otilie Mooshofer, Head of Programme for GIZ WatSSUP, and Engineer Richard Matua, MWE.



## Abraham Arimo

Project coordinator at the Opportunity Bank Uganda.

I really want the public to better understand how the private public partnership can lead to improved water access and financing



## Christine Atuhaire Rachel

I hope to see discussions and resolutions done around increasing funding to the Water and Environment sector, provision of clean safe water to all communities and forest or wetland restoration.



## Jackson Rukara

I want to see more discussions that are centred at an appropriate approach to financial modelling towards access to safe water and finance. I too want to see more youth and women engagement in accessing safe water

# The WATERFRONT

Newsletter

March 14, 2023 / issue 3

## Sponsors



This newsletter has been produced with support from the Ministry of Water and Environment and Uganda Water and Sanitation Network (UWASNET)

The editorial team included

Saudha Nakandha, Martin Kityo, Janet Olumbe, Jeff Andrew Lule, and Christopher Bukenya