



# The WATERFRONT

Newsletter

March 15, 2023 / issue 4

## **Coordination and Governance of Water Resources Following Catchment Based Integrated Water Resources Management Approach**

The keynote session was made by Dr. Fred A. K. Muhumuza who kicked off with giving Uganda's water and sanitation crisis in a global context.

He mentioned that out of the 45 million people, 38 million (83% of the population) lack access to a reliable, safely managed source of water, 7 million people (17%) lack access to improved sanitation solutions. He noted that that the major causes of Water Scarcity include among others; increased human consumption, overuse and wastage of water, a global rise in freshwater demand.

*“It's not just about water. The scarcity of water is inseparable from the sanitation and hygiene crisis (WASH) and its big impact on health”,* he noted.

In relation to coordination, Dr. Muhumuza defined

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*Dr. Amani delivering the keynote*

### **Keynote:**

# **Cooperation Can Improve Water Security.**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Director of the Division of Water Scientists, says there is need for mobilization of international cooperation to improve knowledge and innovation to address the water security.

While delivering his keynote address, under the topic

**“Capacity and partnerships for climate resilient development”**

on the fourth day of the Uganda Water and Environment Week (UWEWK), at the Ministry of Water and Environment headquarters in Luzira, in Kampala-Uganda, Dr. Abou Amani noted that water plays a central role in social development.

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## Keynote:

# Cooperation Can Improve Water Security

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This year's UWEWK was marked under theme: "Water and Environment for Climate Resilient Development".

Dr. Amani enlightened that water is at the centre of the Social Development Goals and other related agendas citing an example of the Agenda 2023- the Africa we want.

He related his remarks to UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHD) which envisions a water secure world, where people and institutions have adequate capacity and scientifically based knowledge for informed decision making on water management and governance to attain sustainable development and to build resilient societies.

He cited the priorities of science for a water secure world in a changing environment among them including; scientific research and innovation, water education in the fourth Industrial revolution including sustainability, bridging the data knowledge gap, integrated water resources management under condition of global change and water governance based on science for mitigation adaptation and resilience.

The Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6), focuses on ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Amani noted that the management of water resources and access to safe water and sanitation are essential for unlocking economic growth and productivity, and provide significant leverage for existing investments in health and education.

The natural environment for example forests, soils and wetlands contribute to management and regulation of water availability and water quality, strengthening the 'resilience of watersheds' and complementing investments in physical infrastructure and institutional and regulatory arrangements for water access, use and disaster preparedness.

Water shortages undercut food security and the incomes of rural farmers, which according to many economists can

lead to insecurity; while improving water management makes national economies, the agriculture and food sectors more resilient to rainfall variability and able to fulfil the needs of growing population.

Environment experts note that protecting and restoring water-related ecosystems and their biodiversity can ensure water purification and water quality standards.

Mr. Querido Antonio Louis Ferreira, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Country Director, noted that partners are collectively trying to create strong institutions to deal with challenges in place when it comes to climate change.



Mr. Querido during the panel

Relating to the African proverb "If you want to go first, go alone but if you want to go far go together", stressed that climate resilience is centered around building strong institutions at national and sub national level to ensure climate resilient development.

*"We have to work together and the partnership is of paramount importance as it comes to building climate resilience. We need partnerships that understand the challenges and are impressed to deliver,"* Mr. Querido noted.

Dr. Steven Mugabi, Ag. Director, Directorate of Environmental Affairs, said there is need to have access to indigenous knowledge in building resilience in climate development.

# Cooperation Can Improve Water Security



Dr. Steven Mugabi during the panel discussion

**H**e proposed for setting up of information sharing centres in the different communities to facilitate the efforts.

Dr. Brian Kanahe, the Director Disaster Risk Management, Uganda Red cross Society, emphasized that need to partner with forecasting agencies and community radio stations in anticipation of disasters as a move towards creating partnerships for climate resilient development.



Dr. Brian Kanahe presenting during the panel

Dr. Sam Kayaga, a Senior Lecturer in the Water Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC), in the School of Architecture, Building and Civil Engineering, said climate change affects all sectors of the economy and efforts to

mitigate it are political at all levels.



Dr. Sam Kayaga, during the discussion

**M**elissa Montgomery, the Chief Programs Officer, Engineers without Borders United States of America (USA), revealed that the best strategy towards climate resilient development is community engagement.



Eng. Melissa Montgomery

She added that the Engineers without Borders facilitate engineering projects that empower communities to meet their basic human needs. "Such projects are being implemented in Uganda as well," Montgomery added.



Panelists during the discussion

# Coordination and Governance of Water Resources Following Catchment Based Integrated Water Resources Management Approach

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Governance capacity as the capacity to coordinate.

Additionally, he highlighted the key issues to build overall governance capacity; "Quite often we do not pay attention to internal dynamics and underlying political economy of our partners organizations" he said; the governance of each of the individual partners is critical for the overall governance capacity of the coordination mechanism" He added.

He stressed that the extended scope of governmental intervention in the water sector is usually accompanied by a short supply of governance capacity (GC). He further expounded on the definition of Governance

Capacity as the ability to coordinate the aggregation of diverging interests and thus promote policy that can be taken to represent the public interest.

**Capacity is essential to gain support and compliance of society to governmental decisions and to make policies sustainable over time",** Dr. Muhumuza noted.

He concluded that governance capacity is critical for effective coordination of water security in Uganda and the region lies among many sectors, and is therefore affected by many institutions and people.



Panel discussion

## Panel Discussion

Key among the issues that transpired during this panel included among others National Development Plan 3 alignment towards program-based planning that is equally synonymous to program working groups which bring together CSOs, private sector, government ...

Mr. Joseph Epitu, Commissioner Liaison department at MWE pointed out coordination structures with in

Ministry of Water and Environment being program working groups that meet quarterly, the annual program review that brings on board other MDAs in a multisectoral nature.

Relatedly, Mr. Abdu Nasser Olekwa from Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development pointed out the need to work together to protect land rights, land use planning in the water catchment areas. **"We need to coordinate at all levels including the village",** he noted.

Conclusively, CSOs play a significant role in coordinating CSO voices and works around coordination. Uganda Water and Sanitation Network (UWASNET) was identified as key umbrella organization coordination WASH/Environment CSO voices in Uganda.



# Applied Training in Supporting Climate Resilience in Water/ Environment / Civil infrastructure



This session had Dr. Philip Nyenje as the keynote speaker. Key focus was placed on climate change, its causes, effects and the possible solutions to climate change.

On the issue of the causes of climate change, various reasons have been identified among which include the variations in solar activity, changes in the earth's orbit and emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. However, emission of greenhouse gases has been identified as the biggest cause of

climate change.

This is so because greenhouse gases keep extra heat from human activities within the air which leads to global warming which in turn results into climate change.

This is a worrying phenomenon because climate change is leading to destructive occurrences such as extreme weather events among which include ice extinction in the arctic, extended drought, and flooding. Another effect of climate change is that its leading to hydrological cycle changes which is

the rates of water evaporation and precipitation.

However, a number of measures have been taken and are still being taken through different organizations such as the United Nations to try and tackle climate change and among these the most prominent include the United Nations SDGs, the Paris Agreement on climate Change, and the initiatives by the world economic forum.

## Career Talk for Young Water and Environment Professionals

Headed by the graduate training team for Ministry of Water and Environment, the keynote Speaker; Ms. Rosemirta Birungi kicked off the training with a warning to youth saying, that as much as they want to advance in the career world, there being held back by formal education system that is analog in a digital world.

She said that advancing the career world, one needs mentoring for purposes of skilling and attaining more knowledge. Relatedly, she advised participants to always have a career plan detailing where you want to be and how you would attain it.

She stressed that mentoring might not be the only solution to youth unemployment thus called upon the youth to change their minds to becoming more creative than job seekers.

In relation to the pursuing further studies, she noted that the world now needs more creative people than those with doctorates!

Further, Water Resources Institute together with Water Aid conducted an applied training on the Sustainable

Development Goals. The training kicked off by highlighting the learning objectives of the training and later presented the governance structure of SDG; he said, policy coordination Committee (PCC), the trainer said that this is the highest structure, and has the mandate to review implementation and provide policy guidance. It is chaired by the Prime Minister and it comprises of Members of Cabinet and Heads of Cooperation and Agencies.



Rosemirta talking to graduate mentees

# Experts Rally for Strong Partnerships, Innovations on Climate Resilience

Relatedly he said that Implementation Steering Committee (ISC) is responsible for reviewing progress and recommending policy proposals to the PCC. This committee is chaired by the Head of Public Service and Secretary to Cabinet and it comprises of Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Agencies.

**N**ational SDG Task force comprises of technical officers from lead agencies of the Technical Working Groups (TWGs) chaired by the Permanent Secretary of OPM. Technical Working Groups (TWGs) meet quarterly and report to National SDG task force.

Sector Working Groups (SWG) includes all the 17 sectors of Government. The SWGs are chaired by high level technical officers of the Sector Lead Agencies.

The presentation efforts taken by MWE to integrate SDGs in policy and practice include among others, updating and revision of the National Water Policy, revision of the Water and Environment Sector Performance Monitoring Framework, preparation of Annual Sector Performance Report, development of 2030 Strategic Sector Investment Plan...

The presentation also highlighted the challenges affecting the future prospects of SDG realization including among others; interpretation and reporting on some indicators is rather challenging and additional capacity building is needed, understanding of the meaning of the various indicators and targets by various stakeholders is still a challenge, capacity for collection and interpretation of some of the data is limited.

**C**onclusively, other training areas covered included, Universal and Equitable Access to Safe and Affordable Drinking Water For All in the framework of SDG 6.1; Target 6.2 (Achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all; An understanding of Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved by 2030.

**I**n a session conducted under the topic “Climate resilient communities, ecosystems and infrastructure” on the side-lines of the Uganda Water and Environment Week (UWEWK) at the Ministry of Water and Environment offices, several participants called for strengthening partnerships and find new innovations on climate resilience.

This meeting was aimed at sharing technical presentations, programmes, policy practice and scientific research paper presentation for the way forward. A pilot study carried out in Fort portal on the possible reuse of plastic waste, shows that waste can be turned into wealth.

While presenting the study during the session on capacity and partnerships for climate resilient

and development, Mrs. Rhitus Nabaasa and Mr. Mwesigwa Andrew from Albert Water Management Zone, raised a concern over the poor sanitation, which they say remains a major threat across the all cities in Uganda.

Despite the wide range of uses of waste generated from plastic, they say many people remain unaware of the its benefits, arguing that plastic waste can be recycled to produce building materials among other items.

**A**nother researcher, Jessica Nyangoma noted that water delivery for Kampala and the surrounding areas remains impossible even with the engagements of partners because of the existing challenge on how people cope up with climate change.



Denis Okello Welthungerhilfe and Margaret Oluka presenting a poster on strengthening resilience of dryland pastoralist eco systems in Karamoja region.

She emphasized the advantages of running water and a need to find innovative ways such as having water bags because running water can be helpful regardless of how dirty during agriculture and other related practices.

Mr. Stephen Sempungu, a student from Kyambogo University, during his presentation on Production of biogas from water hyacinth using simple digester, recommended that it was effective in producing bio gas as per a case study of Katosi Lake Victoria shore.

In another study by Mr. Ian Gyezaho Twesigye and his groupmates, highlighted the importance

of understanding impacts of environmental changes on community livelihoods and need for interventions to support community survival.

Other key presentations during this session included, improving water quality and service levels in Uganda through tasting and scaling up of new hand pump raiser pipe configuration by WaterAid, building adaptive capacity for climate resilient communities in Uganda is cattle corridor: experiences of FAO Mushroom Value Chain development, and strengthening resilience to climate change with water source protection on improved value tanks for livestock in the Karamoja region, Uganda.

In an effort to enable climate resilient development, Mr. Alfred Okidi, the permanent secretary; Ministry of Water and Environment called for information sharing and stakeholder partnerships.

While Ms. Sylvia Nanyunja, a Senior Water Officer at the Ministry of Water Environment, revealed that commercial flower farming is a water dependent and -intensive sector.

She assured stakeholders that the Water source protection planning and implementation which is supported by GIZ ensures that the flower farms are using their water sources sustainably.

## **Students Take WASH Innovations to the Next Level**

Background is drawn to student's hackathon an activity that was aimed at getting university students involved in developing innovative solutions to addressing WASH challenges. These innovations were tailored under the UWEWK2023 theme of "Water and Environment for Climate Resilient Socio-

economic Development."

It involved University students forming teams and collaboration, developed innovative solutions to help address the challenges under the four UWEWK sub-themes.

In a presentation of the Ultimate group made by Mr. Owen Muhoozi, deforestation and water pollution were the highlighted major environmental problems in Uganda. The country has lost an estimated 2.4million hectares of forest cover over the past 25 years.

The group highlighted that many forests and wetlands were destroyed during the second wave of COVID-19 through farming, grazing animals and looking for herbs in Uganda hence leading to forest loss.



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

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