

Uganda Water and Environment Week



Ministry of Water and Environment

The Water Front

ISSUE 02 Wednesday 20TH March, 2019



Religious and cultural leaders embrace environment programmes

Bishop Bagamuhunda speaks at UWEWK



THEME:

Water and Environment a strategic driver in attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030.

KEY THEMES OF UWEWK 2019

- Water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus
- Water, environment and Society
- Green growth
- Blue economy and SDGs
- Financing Sustainable Development

THE Bishop of Kigezi diocese George Bagamuhunda has said that the church and cultural leaders have a mandate to protect the environment, citing the Biblical scripture which says the environment existed before man.

This was at the ongoing second Uganda Water and Environment Week (UWEWK) in Entebbe.

Bagamuhunda said that man's actions have brought untold destruction to the environment, resulting into floods, soil erosion, air pollution among others. "It is the duty of the church to transform the communities so that the environment is protected," He said.

"As religious institutions we are citizens of this country. We should continuously engage at district level, and include water,

satiation and the environment in our programmes," he added.

Former Director of Environment and Natural Resources, Paul Mafabi said that religious and cultural institutions should be involved in environmental protection interventions, observing that some of them already had programs for the youth like tree planting.

"You can come together under the Uganda Joint Christian Council to implement several programmes of environment in your places of worship," Mafabi said.

Alfred Okot Okidi, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Water and Environment said that the ministry had been involving communities and churches through promoting the go-green programme.

Civil Society demands rise in national WASH budget



Panelists hold a discussion during the CSBAG policy dialogue at the UWEWK, Tuesday 19th March

CIVIL society organizations under their umbrella body Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) want the budgetary allocation to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) increased to at least 10% of the national budget.

The call was made by Mitchell Ayinebyona, a Program Assistant at CSBAG during a policy dialogue on financing WASH in Uganda. The dialogue was a side event of the ongoing UWEWK and was held under the theme: Financing for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Uganda, the challenge and opportunities.

Ainebyona said that government had been allocating funds to WASH, but they were far from adequate. He specifically observed that government funding focus had been on schools and health care facilities, but it was time to focus on households.

The Ministry of Water and Environment Sector Investment Plan (2018) indicates that an average of UGX 1,

**“There is a close link between sanitation and poverty. People who are considered poor are more likely to access poor WASH services compared to the rich.”
Collins Amanyanya.**

926.9 trillion per year is required to meet the sector's targets. Basing on the current funding levels however, there is a deficit of about 1.3 trillion per year. Financing for the water sector has stagnated at a rate of 3% of the national budget yet the population growth rate has increased at a rate of 3.2% and more local governments have been created. The current national budget therefore is insufficient to meet national WASH targets.

“We realize that that there is funding but how is it utilized?” Ainebyona

said. He explained that CSBAG was working to strengthen citizens' voice in advocating for WASH financing. “We have realised that the citizens are not aware of their role in promoting WASH,” he said.

Leonton Kanya the secretary of the Participatory Budget Club noted that government had not specifically set aside the funds for WASH. “We want the money meant for WASH to be ring fenced so that it is not diverted,” he said.

The principal economist in the Ministry of Water Collins Amanyanya admitted that with the current funding, the WASH sector could not meet its targets. He noted that 4.5 million Ugandans lacked access to safe water. He added that there is a close link between sanitation and poverty. “People who are considered poor are more likely to access poor WASH services compared to the rich,” said Amanyanya. “We need to finance wash activities in order to achieve our different targets,” Amanyanya said.

DWRM takes steps to restore River Rwizi

WATER resources around River Rwizi are declining at a fast rate due to competing demands for water, rampant pollution, and encroachment on buffer zones. This was reiterated by Richard Musota, the Principal Water Officer in the Directorate of Water Resources Management (DWRM) in the Ministry of Water and Environment.

He was making a presentation in the ongoing Uganda Water and Environment Week, under the theme: Water, Sanitation, Environment and Society.

According to Musota, the key drivers of these trends are; rapid urbanization which comes along with pollution from the construction industry; food industry pollution by an abattoir in the region and poor urban sanitation where houses are constructed hardly ten metres away from the river.

He said that toilet facilities are hardly two metres away from the river and it has been noticed by the municipality authorities that

when it rains, some households release fecal matter which is dumped into the river.

To try and mitigate the effects on the river, Musota said that the DWRM conducted an awareness campaign which involved focused group discussions and learning visits where people were taught more about the ecosystem around the river.

As a result, stakeholders' governance structures were formulated for purposes of accountability in management of the river.

"We have seen some results from our efforts so far," Musota said adding that there was improved water

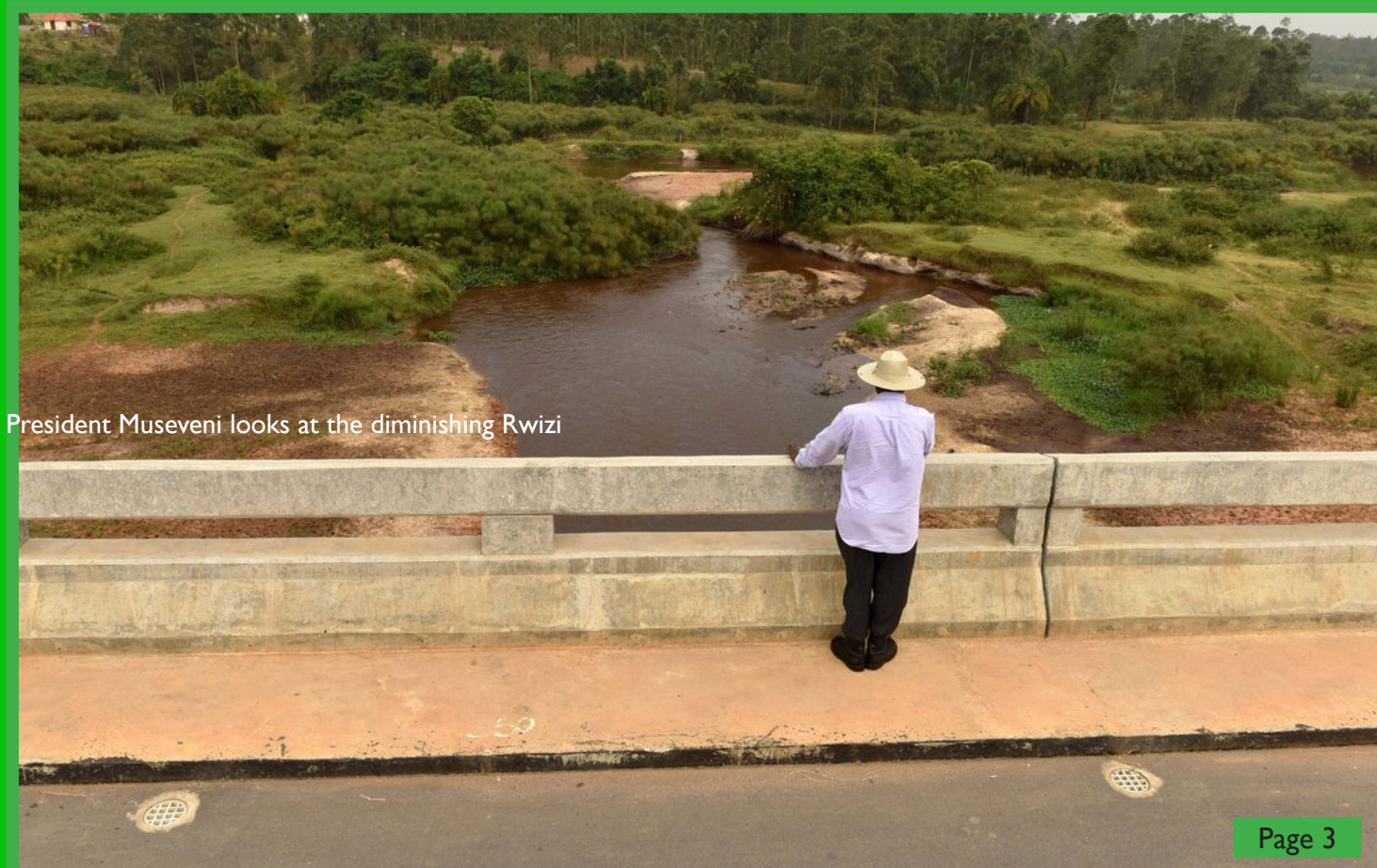
use efficiency by major companies such as Nile Breweries Limited and GBK dairy who have installed state of the art water treatment equipment which is now protecting the buffer zone.

He however noted that efforts to demarcate the mandatory 100-metre buffer zone had been met with resistance from some community members. A total of 238 pieces of land were claimed by different people encroaching on the buffer zone.

River Rwizi goes through Mbarara Municipality. The municipality covers an area of 51.5 km² while the river catchment area stretches out 8,200 square kilometers. 100 metres of the water protection zone is along the river.

Musota concluded that stakeholders are slowly getting to understand the buffer zone management. In the meantime, the DWRM continues to implement the catchment-based management approach along River Rwizi.

“There is improved water use efficiency by major companies such as Nile Breweries Limited and GBK dairy who have installed state of the art water treatment equipment.”



President Museveni looks at the diminishing Rwizi

UWEWK2019 PICTORIAL



“Access to sufficient finance for water and environment related activities is necessary if the SDGs are to be achieved”. Key note address by Ian Palmer Adjunct Professor, University of Cape Town.

Financing SDGs was one of the key topics of discussion in Tuesday's plenaries and parallel sessions





Key moments from plenaries and parallel sessions. The parallel sessions discussed a wide range of topics centering on how to improve water and environment management in the pursuit of SDG6

UWEWK2019 schools get involved



These are various scenes from the regional UWEWK events, where school children took part in awareness campaigns and tree-planting initiatives.



Ministry of Water and Environment PS and Dr Callist Tindimugaya participate in a plenary session



Conservation of environment key for life and livelihoods

THE Ministry of Water and Environment has established water and sanitation development facilities, to improve urban water supply to citizens.

According to Eng. Richard Matua, Commissioner Urban Water and Sewerage Services, the facilities are meant to construct piped water supply and sanitation throughout the country. This is in line with government efforts to attain universal access to safe water by 2030. The facilities are located in Eastern, Northern, and Central, Southwestern and Karamoja.

Speaking on the sidelines of the ongoing Uganda Water and Environment Week Eng. Matua, stressed the need to sensitize people on how best they can protect

water catchments that play the role of filtration

He observed that the water week is very important for the sector because actors get an opportunity to exchange information and knowledge regarding water and Environment. "We are using this week to raise awareness about Water and Environment issues and their importance to economic development, transformation and sustainability of livelihoods," Matua said.

He added, "People are welcome to ask questions and get information regarding Water and Environment and the different approaches and technologies being used to ensure people have access to sustainable services by the year 2030," He added.

Leaders and professionals share views

Simplify technical information - Badagawa



Gideon Badagawa, the Executive Director Private Sector Foundation has appealed to water and environment sector actors to provide information to ordinary citizens. He was making a submission during the the high level

panel discussion on Water, Sanitation, Environment and Society. Badagawa said that the information delivered is too technical to the ordinary person managing the environment and fetching water. "I think it is a job for the private sector, civil society, NGOs, to break down this information in to packages that are quickly understandable by people," he said. Badagawa explained that such information should be taken to different places of worship, schools and to the people that are degrading the environment.

Bwanika decries environmental degradation

The LCV Wakiso district Matia Lwanga Bwanika has scoffed at elite citizens who cut down forests for economic gain. He was speaking at the ongoing UWEWK, where he described such people as a shame to the country. "The nation is now facing a crisis as result of people's irresponsible actions affecting the environment," Bwanika said. "There is a lot of effluent, dumping in the lakes, rivers, dumping in wet-



lands and encroaching on wetlands. Sand mining is one of the activities which has come up of late, knowledgeable people are the ones doing it. Let us use this opportunity to collectively speak out against the crisis."

Okwii appeals for water use efficiency

Eric Okwii, a director in Go-Green has appealed to the youth in schools to use water more efficiently. Okwii explained that much as government has made efforts to provide clean water in most Primary and Secondary schools there is a huge challenge of wastage of water. "We still have a very bad culture in most of the schools, you find that the culture of saving water it is still lacking," he said.



Kamwenge Chairman, Natuhamyia calls for more education on wetlands

The Kamwenge district chairman, Aggrey Natuhamyia has said protection and restoration of wetlands is key to provision of water for all. He reported that his district had restored three wetlands after sensitizing communities on the dangers of degradation. "We need to educate the people about the importance of wetlands," Natuhamyia said, urging Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) to support in this matter. He said that there is a lot the NGOs can address since they have the capacity to do so.

