

Uganda Water and Environment Week



Ministry of Water and Environment

The Water Front

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THEME:

Water and Environment, catalyst for achieving Middle Income Status 2020

UWEWK LINKED TO NDP II

The Uganda Water and Environment Week is linked to the National Development Plan II (NDP II), which focuses on achieving structural transformation through increased industrial activity, with emphasis on manufacturing and value addition in agro-processing.

Articles and photographs by Lydia Mirembe, Juliet Waiswa and Noah Jaggwe



The future is in co-operation — Mukitale

Buliisa constituency Member of Parliament has questioned the rationale of different states in the Nile Basin, constructing different power dams, calling it lack of a shared vision.



Biraahwa Mukitale was responding to the keynote address on transboundary water cooperation, presented by Professor Emmanuel Kasimbazi, at the ongoing Uganda Water and Environment Week.

"We all benefit from the same shared water bodies so why don't we cooperate and harmonise our vision?" he asked. Power generated in Uganda can be shared with other countries in the Nile Basin, but we continue to have parallel visions, Mukitale said. Cooperation on such projects comes with the benefits of economies of scale.

"We are putting parallel investments. There is every solution in shared vision. Why are we so stuck and excited about sovereignty when there are no benefits?" Mukitale questioned. Referring to some conflicts like the one over Mbingo Island, the legislator noted that they are all caused by failure to cooperate.

Mukitale also observed that while Uganda is celebrating 25 years of implementing the IWRM approach, government agencies have not put it into practice. He said that government departments have not demonstrated integrated planning, with each presenting a separate budget for equipment that could be shared.

He gave the example of road construction equipment which can also be used to construct some water projects. "Why should Ministry of Water and Ministry of Works present different budgets for such equipment?" he questioned. "Water resources cannot be planned for by one



sector. The same water used to generate power can be used for production and for transport, so you need holistic integrated planning," he added.

Mukitale also advised that cooperation should be taken to community level because it directly impacts on people's livelihoods. "When we talk about transboundary water resources, we are talking about livelihoods of fishing communities and cattle-keeping communities," he said.

Mukitale emphasized that the future is in cooperation. "We are in the world of interconnectivity and we need to end this colonial mentality tied to boundaries that were artificially created. Let us invest our resources in transboundary shared vision and cooperation. We need to work jointly even on our regional security," the legislator said.

SNV hosts debate in session on rural sanitation

Behaviour change as we know is not a walk in the park, especially when it comes to issues of a private nature like defecation.

SNV Uganda in their rural sanitation session decided to open the floor to participants to debate on the topic: *Households are content with their unimproved toilets, so forget about achieving the SDG targets.*

Proponents for the topic argued that communities have many pressing demands like food, shelter to prioritise improvement of their latrines.

Besides they argued that as long as the faeces are contained somewhere, why would someone need to build a house for faeces when they could put that money to better use.

The opposers however were not buying the argument, saying that the SNV statistics alone clearly show a growing trend towards improved latrines from 11% at



baseline in 2014 to 26% at the end of 2017.

At the end of the debate, it was clear that for effective behaviour change to occur, we have to sell sanitation in a manner that can convince a rural person who has many competing demands to appreciate the need to improve on their latrines or abandon open defecation.

Outmoded facilities hinder proper waste management in Kampala City

Poor waste management and disposal is a key challenge in urban slum communities. It presents serious health and livelihood implications in the community especially when the waste is indiscriminately disposed of in drainage channels thereby blocking them and contributing to flooding during the rainy season. This eventually promotes infestation and proliferation of water borne diseases like cholera and diarrhea.

This was shared by Charles Kizito of Environmental Alert when he was presenting a paper at

the ongoing Uganda Water and Environment Week. Kizito's paper was titled: *Integration of market approaches to sanitation: A case of slum communities in Makindye and Lubaga Divisions.*

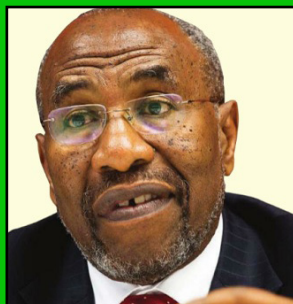
Kizito observed that operation and maintenance of public sanitation facilities remains a challenge. The disposal and management of sanitary towels and diapers among communities is also a challenge. Most of the sanitary facilities are outmoded and lack facilities for incineration. Communities have no access to appropriate technologies

and innovations for sanitation and hygiene.

Despite this, the slum communities in Makindye and Lubaga Division in Kampala City have undertaken various community based initiatives that aim at better utilization of the waste turning it into other useful products for income generation through enterprise development.

Kizito recommended that actors should recognize and support community initiatives on waste management through sanitation and hygiene based enterprises.

Today's chief guest, moderators, panelists



PM Ruhakana Rugunda



Robert Kabushenga



Prof Edward Kirumira



MP Alex Byarugaba

Benefits of transboundary co-operation

Professor Emmanuel Kasimbazi has appealed to actors in the water and environment sector to deeply assess the benefits of transboundary water cooperation to Uganda and neighboring countries. He was delivering a keynote address on the second day of the inaugural Uganda Water and Environment Week at the Directorate of Water Resources.

Kasimbazi also urged actors to undertake and publish research on transboundary resources so that people get to know the facts based on empirical data and evidence.

The recommendations followed his analysis of the rationale and benefits of transboundary water cooperation. He argued that countries can benefit greatly from shared water resources only if they cooperate. Kasimbazi outlined some of the benefits of transboundary water cooperation. Among the political benefits are: Increased political stability and strengthened diplomatic relations; reduced risks and avoidance of the cost of conflict.



The economic benefits include: 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. The key legal benefit is the strengthening of international law. "You cannot apply international law if you don't cooperate as states," Kasimbazi said.

On the other hand, the lack of cooperation can have dire consequences

which manifests in unending tension among. He cited the example of Ethiopia which decided to construct a large scale dam despite protests from Egypt.

Kasimbazi also explained some of the challenges that hinder effective transboundary water cooperation among states. Key among the challenges are: lack of willingness to cooperate among states and other actors; 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.

He observed that countries are not putting in the requisite financial and human resources for cooperation to thrive. "Why wait for a donor to support cooperation projects like Nile Basin Initiative? You cannot benefit when the funds are coming from somewhere else. You need to put in your financial muscle," Kasimbazi urged.

Water co-operation is a must - Kulayigye

"Management of the environment is a divine command. If you have been encroaching and damaging the environment, you need to kneel down and ask God to forgive you."

These were the words of the UPDF MP, Col. Felix Kulyayigye at the Uganda Water and Environment Week on Tuesday. He was responding to a keynote address on Transboundary Water Cooperation delivered by Professor Emmanuel Kasimbazi. He quoted Genesis Chapter 2.

Kulayigye said that Uganda must work with neighbors to manage resources adding that no country should own these water bodies because they are God-given. "No country in this region is responsible for the boundaries we have yet none has a right to change them. So whether you want it not you must cooperate with your neighbor for the good of the environment and for survival."

He blamed this generation for endangering the entire water system saying that Uganda is



blessed to have all these water bodies but we are not caring for them. He referred to the forefathers who had no education but had the foresight to manage water resources through community cooperation. He said that our forefathers applied bylaws for effective management of wells and other resources, yet this generation with PhDs and high education levels is

busy destroying the environment.

"Why would one construct in a wetland. Are you a frog or a crocodile?" Kulayigye asked, noting that people's activities in Wakiso and Kampala have destroyed the entire Lake Victoria system.

Colonel Kulayigye also said that Ugandans ought to take advantage of the prevailing security and the good environment to produce for themselves. "Why should I (a soldier) wear uniform to protect your interests yet you don't care about yourself and your environment," Kulayigye asked. "What have you done at individual level to improve economy using the environment resources available to us?" he challenged.

On transboundary issues, Kulayigye said that cooperation is a must for small countries like Uganda. "If you are a small country and you think that everyone is good natured, you are naïve. Cooperation is a must, especially for small countries like Uganda," he concluded.

Some key messages from the day's presentations



Director Florence Adongo on the need for transboundary water co-operation:

Uganda water resources are 100% transboundary. Uganda is both upstream and downstream. We are in a unique and pivotal position and therefore cooperation is a must. For that matter Uganda has been active in TBC in various water resources.

We are benefiting from various projects e.g LVEMP, LEAF between Uganda and DRC, we are also hosting the NBI and we are close to any form of HR opportunities in the basin.



Linda Lillian on Stakeholder Engagement in Water and environment Sector Financing:

Engaging stakeholders to buy into contributing to a WASH project requires a concerted effort.

All stakeholders should be mobilized and inspired to become both participants and team leaders in their respective capacity to ensure sustainability. It is important that the vote for WASH funds is clearly demarcated to avoid misappropriation of the funds or channelling them into non WASH activities.



Hajji Sulaiman Walugendo Kyesa on Stakeholder Engagement in Water and environment Sector Financing

A revolving Fund Approach is an alternative way of Financing Domestic and Institutional water supply in Uganda.

If the Revolving Fund Approach Strategy is recognised as a legitimate alternative source of financing, it can be used to sustainably scale up Rain Water Harvesting and other Self-Supply interventions especially in water stressed areas in Uganda and make a substantial contribution to meeting SDG 6

TECHNOLOGY: Ministry of Water and Environment establishes flood early warning systems



Over the last ten years, Uganda has continuously registered a high incidence of floods that resulted in loss of lives, animals and crops. The Ministry of Water and Environment has therefore developed a flood warning systems to enable early response to the natural disasters.

Tom Kanyike, an official from Ministry of water and Environment said that the ministry has acquired "state of the art technology" at the telemetry stations all over the country capable of transmitting data to the central data bases in Entebbe in real time, over satellite.

"We hope that by having real time data we will be able to implement

the flood early warning systems in time," Kanyike said.

The ministry is also modernizing to automatic monitoring networks, moving from the error-prone manual recording they have depended on since the 90s.

"For long, the ministry has been making the observations manually like relying on people going to the field which was delaying the timely provision of data," Kanyike said.

Ministry of Water and Environment has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Uganda National Meteorological Authority to share data and improve services.