

Uganda Water and Environment Week



Ministry of Water and Environment

The Water Front

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Joseph Shavel delivers his keynote address, at UWEWK2019

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

Reuse waste water to curb climate change disasters

ISRAEL is a desert country, but it is one of the leading producers of fresh fruits and vegetables in the world. Uganda is arguably one of the most endowed countries in the world, but some regions are water-stressed and citizens often experience protracted dry spells.

This stark reminder was once again brought to the fore when Joseph Shavel, President of Galilee Management Institute delivered a keynote address yesterday at the Uganda Water and Environment Week. His address was centred on UWEWK's theme of Blue Economy and SDGs.

Shavel said that if Uganda is to avoid the disasters related to climate change, there

is need to use water resources more efficiently, by first of all reusing waste water for agricultural and industrial production. He called for the introduction of technologies that can facilitate reuse of waste water. He said that Uganda is well endowed with many water resources like lakes, rivers and forests but if they are not managed well, the country is headed for difficult times.

Citing African countries currently embroiled in conflict, Shavel observed that climate change and related effects is responsible for some of the conflicts now afflicting the continent. "Because of climate change most countries like Nigeria, Somalia and Darfur in western Sudan have

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Reuse wastewater to curb climate change disasters

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security problems,” he said, adding that Uganda could easily end the same way. He said that Ugandans should not take nature for granted and cited the example of Lake Chad in Chad which disappeared due to effects of climate change. He warned that Lake Victoria could easily disappear too!

With further emphasis on recycling and reusing waste water, Shavel gave the example of Israel where 90% of wastewater is reused for agriculture. He also quoted the example of Egypt where sewerage effluent is also reused for agriculture. He further advised that government should adopt a policy where each house is required to install solar power to reduce the amount of water used in generating hydroelectricity. He recommended that most of these projects can be undertaken by private sector actors since they carry out a lot of research and development regularly.

Shavel called for the establishment of a Water Authority to plan, develop, supply preserve and regulate water resources. “If we want to preserve water we need a water authority.”



Joseph Shavel receives an a plaque from the PS Mr Okidi Okot, in appreciation of the keynote address

Small enterprises should adopt green production

SMALL and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) should adopt green production in order to give Uganda advantage over other countries, Solomon Kyeyune, a consultant at Water Resources Institute has said.

Kyeyune said that Uganda’s economic development and socioeconomic transformation is premised on green economy principles of: equity; environment sustainability; resource efficiency; inclusiveness; climate change adaptation; and mitigation. He was presenting key findings from a study on the

the adoption of green production among SMEs in Uganda.

The study was conducted among 384 SMEs in Kampala. The study identified the key factors that would influence SMEs to adopt green production which are: government support, organizational size, nature of business and age of the firm.

In his recommendation Kyeyune urged govern-



ment to put in place a policy to effectively regulate and train the SMEs and strengthen the role of regulatory and compliance bodies such as NEMA and USSIA. He further said that government should support SMEs’ to adopt green production through training and awareness creation throughout the country.



Baguma and Kayongo make their presentations

Alternative livelihoods programme empowers women, regenerates fish

WOMEN are directly exposed to the risk of livelihood shocks which result from mismanagement and over-exploitation of natural resources. This was the observation of Geoffrey Kayongo, a sociologist working with Multi National Lakes Edward and Albert Integrated Fisheries and Water Resources (LEAF II) under the Ministry of Water and Environment.

He was making a presentation on the influence of alternative livelihoods on fisheries and natural resources regeneration.

Kayongo said, to cushion women from such shocks, the LEAF II project trained women at Mahyoro landing site in alternative economic activities and enterprises in order to diversify their incomes and stop depending solely on fish.

“A total of 584 women were trained in environmentally friendly alternative options including making bar soap, school chalk, Vaseline, jazzy, liquid soap, cake and hair shampoo,” he said.

He explained that the activities diversified the women’s income sources and eased pressure on the fisheries resources and the natural resources environment at large.

“One of the objectives was to impact vocational skills among women. The alternative options not only look at providing money but also to impact skills in the women because most of them are illiterate,” he said.

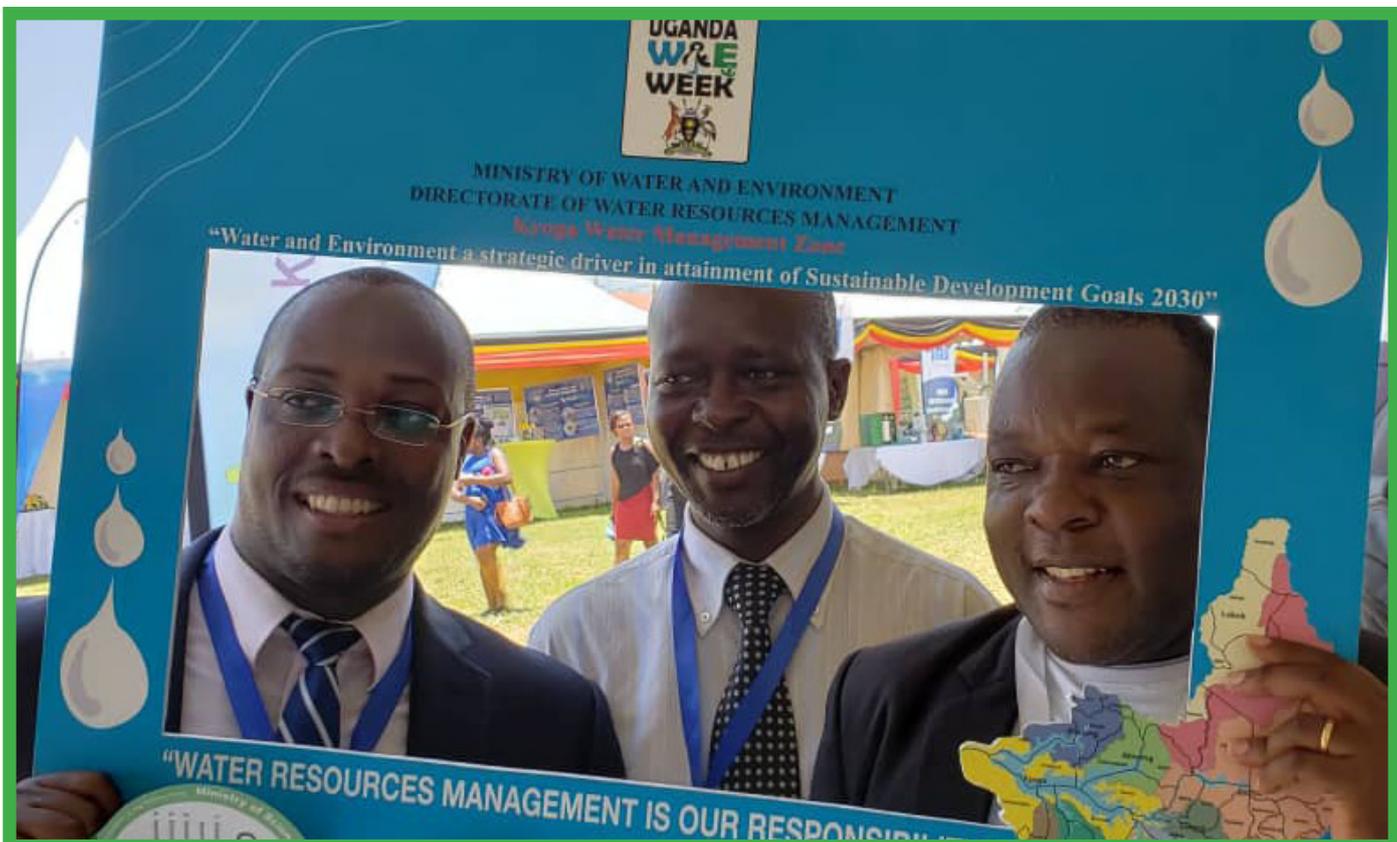
Kayongo added that an assessment of performance of the trained women was carried out and findings indicate that the women were producing and making sales of the items in which they were trained.

They were selling a jerry can of liquid soap at UGX 20,000, bar soap at UGX 2000 and box of chalk at UGX6000. “They are getting more income despite the shortage of fish in the lake,” Kayongo reported, adding that due to these alternative activities, fish had started regenerating in terms quantity and quality. “A fish which was sold at sh8000 is now sold at sh 20,000,” he said.

In the same session, David Baguma, one of the trainers and also a Lecturer at Uganda management institute and Makerere university discussed pointed issues concerning safe water, wood fuel and environmental protection in developing countries.

He said energy is an engine of economic growth supporting industrial development and improving the safety of drinkable water at household level. Over 85% of households use wood fuel as a source of energy to boil their drinking water.

He added that the use of wood fuel affects the environment because it is directly linked to rapid deforestation, green gas emissions and climate variability. He therefore, called upon policy makers and agencies in the energy and environment sector to disseminate more information on energy efficiency and usage at household level.



Outside the plenaries, parallel sessions and side events, UWEWK2019 has been full of light moments



CSOs agree to leave no one behind

THE Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Network (UWASNET), the national umbrella organisation for all Civil Society Organizations (CBOs) in the Water and Sanitation sub-sector organized a side event on Tuesday, March 19th, 2019 during the Uganda Water and Environment Week under the sub-theme, “Addressing inequities in society is a priority to attain SDG 6 commitments.”

The session gave an opportunity to two UWASNET member organizations namely PROTOS and Katosi Women Development Trust (KWDT) to present their case studies on addressing inequities when it comes to WASH service delivery, with a commitment of leaving no one behind in urban slums rural communities and in fisher communities and among women, children and people with disabilities (PWDs).

During the side event, two other UWASNET members namely WHAVE Solutions and Water Missions presented their case studies depicting innovative service delivery that taps on community financing to overcome the hiccups of serving these marginalized communities.

This session was chaired by Mr. Paul Luyima, the Executive Director of NETWAS Uganda, which is also the Chair of the UWASNET WASH Technologies Thematic Working Group. In his welcoming remarks, he thanked UWASNET for providing this platform to its member organizations to share their work and learn from others and also thanked the presenters for sharing their work with others.



A WHAVE member of staff participates in the exhibition at UWEWK2019

He recommended that the case studies be shared widely with other sector stakeholders for up-scaling.

The Executive Director –UWASNET Mrs. Yunia Yiga Musaaazi made the opening remarks and highlighted that it is important that inequalities are effectively addressed and this can be done through deliberate targeting of the marginalized, having policies that address inequity, and providing financing and information to ensure that the under-served are served.



A training session in progress

Media relations: How to put water and environment on the public agenda



Participants take an exercise to demonstrate effective communication

WATER and Environment professionals yesterday received tips on how to work with the mainstream media to put WASH on the public agenda. This was during an applied training session organised by UWASNET and IRC at the ongoing UWEWK2019. The session was facilitated by Gerald Businge, a renowned communication practitioner and trainer. Areas covered included: Why work the media; media relations; and tools or ways to engage with the media. Some of the tips shared were:

- Journalists see things differently from their sources of information. It is important to articulate your message clearly to avoid distortion.
- Know the different between public interest and interest of the public.
- Working with individual journalists is good, but always remember that editors have the final word and play the gate keeping role
- Editorial coverage is not always guaranteed. You have to make your information interesting to the journalists and the general audience
- Don't just focus on the news. There are other sections or programs where your message can

fit – sports, health, science, education etc.

- Journalists work with deadlines. You need to be fast with the information they ask for
- Payment is no guarantee for coverage. Sometimes you may pay but miss the slot because of your failure to show up e.g for scheduled programmes like talk shows. Missed schedules are not reversible
- Get to know the key message from your organization before you share it with the media. You can't communicate what you don't know.

With insights from the training, the participants resolved to improve media relations in their own organisations. They committed to: develop a database for Water and Environment journalists to work with and write one op-ed piece in the leading newspapers.

Participants also selected the media tools that they wished to apply after the training. They preferred to organise radio talk shows, produce their own articles and audio-visual productions; share tips with journalists; conduct media tours; document and share case studies; organize media dialogue; organize press conferences and issue press releases.

Water and Environment professionals share views

Tap into blue economy - NPA's Kaggwa



Uganda is yet to fully exploit the economic opportunities presented by its numerous lakes and rivers. This was the submission of Dr Ronald Kaggwa of National Planning Authority (NPA), during a panel discussion on the blue economy, at the Uganda

Water and Environment Week. "There is more to do if we are to tap in the benefits of a blue economy only that we lack the right skills as a country," Kaggwa said, making specific reference to transport sector. "There is no reason why someone going to Jinja or Entebbe should go through Kampala, yet water transport is available," Kaggwa said. He added that Ugandans lack important skills like boat building and repairing and building, which could enhance water transport. Apart from transport, Uganda's water resources also present business opportunities in tourism and fish farming.

Legislators need more awareness on environment

Former member of Parliament Winnie Matsiko, has called for more awareness on environmental issues among legislators. Speaking at the ongoing UWEWK, Matsiko observed that some parliamentarians don't know the environment terminologies yet they are the ones who allocate budgets. She said the messages should be simplified to make it easy for legislator to follow debate on the environment.



"Policies might be drafted but if the team that allocates resources does not understand the policies, then there's going to be a challenge."

There's need to learn from Israel on sanitation

"I would like to know how the sanitation systems in Israel can be developed in Uganda. There's need to put up regulations to ensure that all urban settlement be put on sewer system," Says IRC's Lydia Biira.



Involve citizens in blue economy

The programme director Green Economy Coalition, Stuart Worsely has said that if Uganda is to transit into a Green Economy, it is critical that societal demand and public policy come together. Worsely also said that there is need to involve the citizens and value nature in order to benefit from the Green growth and blue economy. He made the remarks during his presentation on the green growth and blue economy, where he said land degradation has a social cost as people cannot grow crops, where there is less rain. Worsely said that in order to have a better green economy there is need to encourage citizens by having open space involvement for everyone. The country should also be able tax highly what is affecting the environment and reduce and subsidize the green economy.

