

THE SUSTAINABILITY SCHOOL



BULLETIN

2nd edition December, 2013

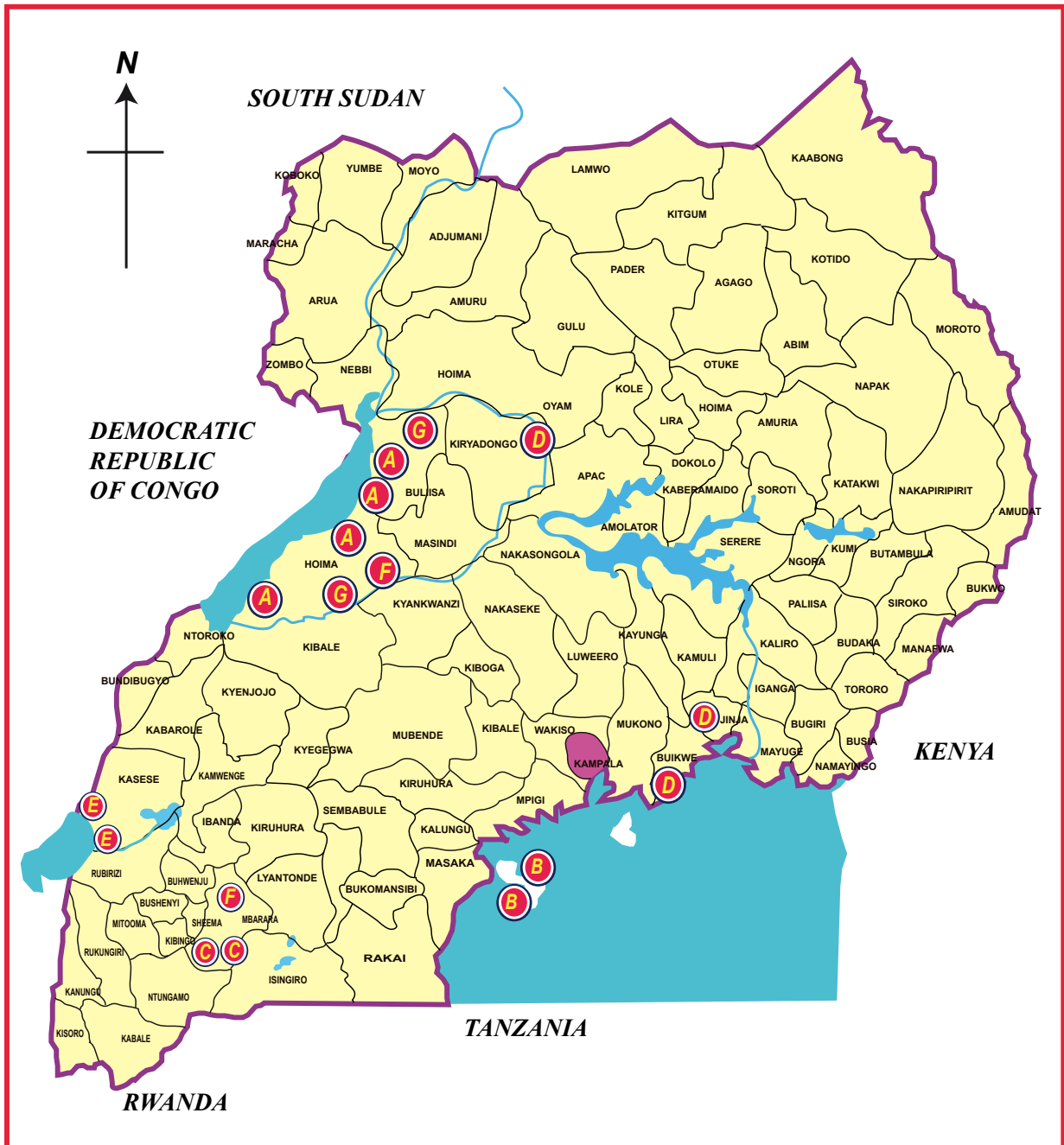
A publication of the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) with support from the ROSA Luxemburg Foundation of Germany

Email: nape@nape.or.ug, Website: www.nape.or.ug




ROSA LUXEMBURG FOUNDATION

MAP OF UGANDA SHOWING SUSTAINABILITY VILLAGES



KEY:

-  Sustainability Villages
- A** Sustainability Villages on Oil Governance
- B** Sustainability Villages on forests & Large plantations
- C** Sustainability Villages on Water and sanitation
- D** Sustainability Villages on Dams and Energy
- F** Sustainability Clubs
- G** Sustainability Villages with Communal Land Associations
- E** Sustainability Villages on Eco Systems Restoration

CONTENTS

Editorial.....	ii
Brief background on the Sustainability School Programme.....	1
The uniqueness of the Sustainability School.....	2
Gaps in the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA)	2
NAPE case against NEMA over wetland degradation to be heard early 2014	3
Pictorial.....	4
Drama helping communities in fighting for their rights.....	6
Nguedo residents demand for accountability from the LC1 Chairman.....	6
Sustainability Clubs start debates on important national issues.....	7
New approaches needed for environmental protection in Uganda.....	7
Ugandan farmers should approach GMOs with a lot of caution.....	8

EDITORIAL

With pleasure, we present to you the second edition of the Sustainability School bulletin. This bulletin just like the previous one has been published with financial support from the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung of Germany (RLS). The purpose of the bulletin is to bring you information regarding the implementation of the Sustainability School; its achievements and successes, lessons learnt, good practices and challenges encountered and how they are being overcome. The bulletin is also aimed at giving you an opportunity as a stakeholder and a person concerned with the wellbeing of all Ugandans right from the grassroots to give your views on how community sustainability and coherence can be achieved in our country. This bulletin puts more emphasis on the activities of the Sustainability School and for that reason, you will find many photographs all over the pages showing what has been going on in the programme's thematic areas of operation

Enjoy your reading. For any feedback, please send your comments to nape@nape.or.ug or at.kalangi@nape.or.ug

BRIEF BACKGROUND ON THE SUSTAINABILITY SCHOOL PROGRAMME



Mr. Geoffrey Kamese of NAPE facilitating a community educator's training workshop in Hoima recently

By Allan
Kalangi

Since 1999, NAPE has been implementing the Sustainability School programme in Uganda under the overall objective of, "To create a critical mass composed of communities, community leaders, growing Civil Society Organization (CSOs), able to hold the government, individuals and global institutions accountable for the impacts of their actions on people's livelihoods and national development". NAPE initiated the sustainability School to create awareness among communities on mismanagement and abuse of natural resources and what they can do to reverse the situation. In addition to creating awareness on natural resources management, the School also aims at helping the communities to realize their own rights and entitlements and how they can defend them. It is envisaged that once the school gets fully entrenched, the communities would be able to carry on the good work of advocating for proper utilization of natural resources and defending their rights even when NAPE is no longer working closely with them. The sustainability school does most of its work in what is termed as Sustainability villages. The Sustainability

The Sustainability villages are spread in the School's thematic areas of operation.

The thematic areas are among others; Oil governance, dams and energy, forests and large plantations, water and sanitation, land use and food security, good governance, accountability and human rights. By end of 2012, the Sustainability School was operating in the Districts of Kampala, Wakiso, Mukono, Buikwe, Kiryandongo, Buliisa, Hoima, Mbarara, Kasese and Kalangala. In each sustainability villages, there are at least two volunteer community educators (a man and a woman) who are trained by NAPE and its partners on how to mobilize and sensitize their community members on how to handle emerging sustainability issues. Members of these sustainability villages are mostly engaged in fighting for their rights; holding their leaders/government for the impacts of their actions and doing activities aimed at conserving the environment for example tree planting. At the beginning of 2012, the Sustainability School extended to Schools where Sustainability Clubs are being formed. So far three sustainability clubs have been formed in the Districts of Mbarara and Hoima. Some articles in this publication will help you to understand more what actually happens in the Sustainability villages.

Map of the Sustainability villages

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY SCHOOL



The Coordinator of Projects at NAPE Mr. Rajab Bwengye (left in a t-shirt) and the Executive Director (right) Mr. Frank Muramuzi training representatives of the CBOs who had received small grants from donors on good financial practices and how to do evidence based reporting

The sustainability school is unique from other NAPE programmes in that it emphasizes sustainability of interventions at the grassroots levels by encouraging formation of community groups and training them to continue advocacy work on their own with little or no support from NAPE. This is done through the formation of Sustainability villages and training of community educators from those villages. NAPE continues giving capacity to these educators on how to handle community training and sensitization until

such a time when they can start doing it on their own. Some of these sustainability villages have 'graduated' into Community Based Organizations (CBO) and NAPE has gone ahead to train them in organizational management and writing project proposals. Some of these groups have now reached a level of seeking for donor support and implanting projects on their own with minimal technical support from NAPE.

OIL REFINERY RESIDENTS WORRIED

about life after
resettlement

Women mostly affected

Over 7000 Residents in Kabale parish, Buseruka sub-county, Hoima District have been told by the government that they have to quickly look for land elsewhere to settle as where they are living now has been earmarked as an oil refinery . The government has also told the people that they will



be compensated for their properties and land which they would have lost in the process. They compensation will either be in terms of cash or the government

will look for land elsewhere where

The NAPE gender Officer Ms. Shillar Kyomugisha talks to oil refinery affected communities at Kyapalooni Primary School recently

those who want to be resettled can live. However, other than those two promises, the government has not gone ahead to counsel the people on how life after resettlement is likely to be. There have also been complaints especially from the women that if their husbands receive cash compensations, they are likely to take the money and abandon their families thus leaving the wives and children destitute.

“My husband had deserted me and our eight children for a long time but when he heard that there was to be compensation money for those affected by the refinery, he rushed back. My worry is that when he gets the money, he is likely to run away with it leaving and the children to suffer,” said one Stella Keihangwe, a resident of Kabale

When NAPE started working with the people affected by the refinery, only 27 people had opted for resettlement but by December 20013, the number had increased to 70. This was partly because NAPE explained to the people the dangers of getting

cash compensation and how money can be very tempting. Cash compensation also according to NAPE will increase conflict between family members and the money got may not be enough to buy another equivalent piece of land elsewhere.

“By the time NAPE came to our community, many people did not know the advantages of being resettled (government acquiring an alternative land for the people). We had heard rumours that those who refused cash compensation would be resettled in far away and remote place in Uganda”

“Many of us have now realized that getting cash may not be the best solution and that’s why the number of those who want to be physically resettled has increased. We thank NAPE for opening up our eyes” said Mr. Chris Opio also a resident of the Kabale area.

NAPE has advised the affected residents to try as much as possible to resettle in the same area so that they can continue working together and maintain their community cohesion

NAPE case against NEMA OVER WETLAND DEGRADATION TO BE HEARD early 2014



A section of Lutembe wetland being degraded permanent in 2012 to create room for flower growing

The case in which NAPE and three other CSOs sued the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) over giving a big chunk of Lutembe wetland on the shores of Lake Victoria to Rosebud flower firm is set to be heard at the beginning of 2014. NAPE is working with the Advocates for Natural Resources Governance, Greenwatch and Nature Uganda in Suing NEMA and Rosebud. The lawyer of the for four organizations Mr. Frank Tumusiime says that all the necessary papers have been filed in the High Court

and that what is remaining is the fixing of the date for the commencement of the hearing. He said that if all goes well, by March, 2014, the hearing of the case would have started.

The lawyer of the for four organizations Mr. Frank Tumusiime says that all the necessary papers have been filed in the High Court and that what is remaining is the fixing of the date for the commencement of the hearing. He said that if all goes well, by March, 2014, the hearing of the case would have started.

PHOTO



The NAPE Executive Director at the ground breaking ceremony for crocodile cages on the shores Lake Edward. The activity coincided with the launch of the Sustainability village there. The case is to help people collect water for domestic use without being preyed by crocodiles



NAPE Executive Director Mr. Frank Muramuzi explains to the King of Bunyoro His Majesty Iguru Gafabusa, NAPE's approach of linking environmental issues closely with cultural issues. This was at the King's Palace in Hoima in 2013



A community based training at Sebagoro Sustainability village on the shores of Lake Albert



NAPE has mooted the idea of introducing the sustainability School concept to the Batwa community in Bundibugyo District who have been marginalised for many years. Seated on the plastic chairs (L-R) are NAPE staff; Mr. David Kureeba and Mr. Geoffrey Kamese meeting some of the leaders of the Batwa in mid 2013

GALLERY



The Sustainability School Manager (2nd left) with members of Kyapaloni Sustainability village choosing a bicycle in Hoima town to help them in their community work. Sustainability villages have been helped with bicycles, small radios, books and mobile phones to help them in their work of mobilising and sensitising the communities



Rev. Fred Musimenta (left) a Community Educator for Butimba Sustainability village explains to other Sustainability Educators the importance of investing in tree planting. In the photo, they were at the tree nursery of Butimba community and it was during an experience sharing visit of educators from different sustainability villages



Ms. Diallo Carolla of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation and the former Manager of the School Prof. Oweyegha Afunaduula chatting with Sheikh Mayanja a community educator in Kalangala and an elder during a field visit in 2010



Members of Kulugulu Sustainability village meeting to discuss how to solve a water problem in their community

DRAMA HELPING COMMUNITIES in fighting for THEIR RIGHTS



Members of Kakindo Sustainability village performing a play on land rights recently

Sensitization and training of the communities in the Sustainability villages takes into consideration African indigenous ways of learning and passing on information. One of the tools now being used to train and amplifying voices of the communities where the Sustainability School is working is drama. The communities sit together, discuss their challenges or aspirations and put them in drama and songs

and present them at big gatherings for example Independence Day celebrations. Sustainability villages which already have drama are Bujumba in Kalangala, Kaisotonya and Sebagoro in Hoima District and Kakindo in Buliisa District. Some of the issues covered in the drama include the need to conserve the environment and cultural sites, protection of family land and food security

NGUEDO RESIDENTS DEMAND FOR ACCOUNTABILITY from the LC1 Chairman



A community sensitization meeting in Nguedo

Residents of Mvule 1 Sustainability village, Nguedo Sub-county in Buliisa District have been up in arms against their Local Council one Chairman whom they accuse of not showing how he uses the 25% of the revenue remitted by to their village by the sub-county. One of the community Educators for Mvule 1 Mr. Kennedy Mugenyi said that the chairman has not been holding meetings to tell the village how he uses this money which he receives every year and that there is nothing at all on the ground to

show how the chairman has been using the funds.

“We have now petitioned the Sub-county Chief and the Chief Administrative Officer to come in and help us to get accountability from the Chairman,” he said.

Mugenyi said that if people needed accountability at the national level, then they had to begin from the LC1 level upwards

SUSTAINABILITY CLUBS start debates on important NATIONAL ISSUES



The Manager of the Sustainability School Programme Allan Kalangi talking to the members of the Sustainability Club of St. Andrea College Kaahwa in Hoima recently

Members of the sustainability clubs in schools have started debating on important national issues of concern. One of the clubs that has taken the issues of debates seriously is the Sustainability Club at St. Andrea Kaahwa College in Hoima District. The patron of this club Mr. Ambrose Bahigana said that the beginning of the Sustainability club at the school has greatly helped in boosting the morale of the students to debate on contentious issues in the country and hoped that this will greatly help them in becoming better responsible citizens.

“The facilitators that NAPE has been bringing here have inspired the students so much about the need to participate in debates aimed at having better

solutions for our country. Many students now turn up whenever it is debate time”, he said.

Mr. Bahigana said that debates are usually on issue like good government, corruption, natural resources management and even on morals and cultural values.

The sustainability clubs are also engaged in tree planting as a way of contributing to a healthy environment. NAPE plans to hold debating competitions amongst the different sustainability clubs as a way of motivating the students to keep up the spirit of participating in national development processes.

NEW APPROACHES NEEDED FOR environmental protection in Uganda



By
Geoffrey
Kamese

The state of the environment in Uganda today is worrying. Conservationists,

environmentalists and lovers of nature now acknowledge that the country could be losing a grip on environment protection. The biggest

challenge is that of ensuring effecting monitoring and achieving compliance with environmental standards.

For over three decades Uganda has been implementing economic reforms geared at increasing economic growth and development. Unfortunately, the development path Uganda has chosen is not effectively overhauling the economy in a way that synergizes economic growth and environmental protection. To achieve a meaningful economic growth, there is need to build an economy in which investments in resource savings as well as sustainable management of natural capital are drivers of growth.

Uganda's natural capital is dwindling at an alarming rate. Natural forests are being replaced with alien species such as pines and oil palm in the name of development. These trees are high water-users and chemical pesticide dependant that are not good for our landscape. Their introduction on our landscape will only extend the Sahara desert south words.

Uganda's wetlands are also shrinking. Around Kampala alone, wetlands have been reclaimed and industries set up by most private investors. Although promoting private sector participation in the development process is a step in the right direction, there is need to regulate these investments as we strive to achieve economic growth. It is important to note that an economy which is in closer alignment with sustainable development objectives provides opportunities for using financial resources better to meet

development needs and reduce the vulnerability of socio-economic systems to environmental change and resource constraints.

Policies and regulatory frameworks that emphasize sustainable development are important. These policies are not a hindrance to industrialization. They instead promote trade. Trade is an important stimulus to economic growth and good trade policies should contribute to Uganda's poverty reduction efforts, promote employment and diversify exports.

Uganda needs to put in place a green growth plan. This plan is about doing things better -managing soils, building roads etc that are sustainable. It is also about thinking ahead of how to do things better to achieve sustainable development.

Policy makers pass the laws and oversee budgets that are used to implement national laws and Multinational Environment agreements (MEAs) and they are the ones who prepare legislations that implement MEAs and protect the environment. Policy makers can use the function of law making to ensure that government ratifies international conventions and make good policies on environment and consequently protect it in a more sustained way.

Environment degradation has continued unabated due to lack of proper enforcement. Policy-makers have the responsibility of monitoring government efforts to protect the environment in order to achieve sustainable development and poverty reduction and hold government accountable when it fails to do so.

Ugandan farmers SHOULD APPROACH GMOS WITH a lot of caution



Prof. Afunaduula (R) talking to Mr. Zie Gariyo a reknown researcher on the issue of GMOs and food rights during a public dialogue organized by NAPE in Kampala, 2011

By Oweyegha
Afunaduula

I wish to respond to the article “Uganda needs to adapt GMOs and biotechnology” by my long-time friend and veteran journalist, Michael Ssali, which appeared in the Daily Monitor of August 28, 2013.

I have given my views before at workshops and many fora about the dangers and threats of uncritical and unquestioning embrace of industrial GMOs and biotechnology in Uganda. However, this article by a GMO enthusiast, who has no background in biology, genetics or biotechnology and not known to write articles that are pro-environment, gives me opportunity to use analytical and critical skills to protect Ugandan farmers and consumers from the dictates of a deadly alliance of convenience between global politics, local politics, science, seed companies and the media to impose industrially manipulated GMOs and biotechnology on Ugandans.

Mr. Ssali starts his article by highlighting how some Ugandan groups and activists, whom he is shy to mention, are working hard to ensure that Parliament does not permit the use of biotechnology in agriculture or farmers adapting genetically modified crops. With a lot of trust he says the Bill that is being opposed by organized groups and informed individuals is actually about safe use and regulation of biotechnology.

Ugandans have in the past suffered the consequences of chemicals, foods and drugs reputed to be safe and well regulated. In 1989

parents were assured a drug from France, approved by World Health Organization and Uganda’s Ministry for immunization, was safe for their children. However, many children died, others became permanently maimed. Was it premeditated genocide? To-date affected families have not been compensated. Given that experience, why does Mr. Ssali think it is safe for us to just agree that what is judged safe by seed companies and institutional scientists is automatically safe for human consumption?

GMO and biotechnology enthusiast Ssali fails to mention that our time-tested biotechnologists, the rural women, who positioned themselves at the boundary between natural forests and savannas or wetlands, have for millennia domesticated and biologically carefully innovated crops, not for money but for survival. Ssali calls this “human interference” but it was indigenous science in concert with nature since they were intercropped with forest species, which helped fight diseases and pests.

So women brought their crops closer to their communities but did not separate them from Nature. They remained part and parcel of nature.

This was indigenous agroecological farming, which did not require industrial fertilizers or pesticides.

It is the Whiteman that brought monoculture

approach to farming in Uganda. This led to upsurge in pests, diseases and the use of industrial pesticides and fertilizers. As rural biotechnologists were marginalized in favour of the industrial and institutional ones, we diversified pests and diseases and made them more difficult to eliminate even with the most potent pesticides. We have now become so dependent on pesticides and mineral fertilizer firms to sustain agriculture at a very high cost, making the rich countries even richer as we grow poorer. Ssali is quiet about this.

Ssali reminds us that for years we have had the Uganda Biotechnology and Biosafety consortium comprising of “trusted scientists” whose mandate is to ensure that new biotechnology, and whatever research work done or its output, is safe. Who trusts them? He avoids saying that the so-called “trusted scientists” are part of a global consortium of scientists working closely with seed companies, such as Monsanto, to impose and popularize deadly GMOs. The safety of GMOs is assured in writing and talks but end up causing intolerable health effects on environment, humans and their animals, including obesity, either directly or indirectly.

That is why in Europe and USA, where massive crop production and impressive food security have been achieved, citizens are now resisting GMOs on their soil. In USA there is a campaign to cause removal of the law that protects firms behind the Monsanto GMO carnage. Why does Ssali not mention these facts so that the public can compare and contrast before they decide to embrace or reject GMOs?

Our traditional biotechnologists were careful. They never hurried with their biotechnology. They were patient and after propagating seeds for sovereignty and survival, not simply higher yields or food security, and their crops certainly tasted better.

The GMO crops may give higher yields, but certainly do not taste better than the indigenous ones. Food security based on GMOs may not be sustainable. Some GMO crops cannot be grown twice or in the next season (i.e the so-called terminator crops), and so the farmers have to perpetually depend on seed companies at enormous cost. That is agricultural or seed dependency.

Ssali emphasizes economic value. This is not entirely bad. The money value/culture is worshipped and aggressively promoted at the expense of other values/cultures. However, our women biotechnologist nurtured seeds that could be planted back in the forests; were environmentally friendly; and had a lot of ethical, moral, social, cultural, ecological, medicinal, spiritual and environmental value to the communities. They were not antagonists of their relatives in the forests. Unfortunately, there is a concerted effort to deform them and instead popularize the sterile seeds for money not survival.

Increasing agricultural yield seems to be an avenue to make our agriculture more foreign dependent than ever before, mediated by seed companies. Eventually, all our indigenous seeds will disappear and any little indigenous food sovereignty will be no more. When this happens, we shall be so food dependent that we shall no longer be politically independent. Food will be a political weapon to either gain or lose in the global socio-economic market. Therefore, it is dangerous to pursue the agenda of increasing food production at the expense of food sovereignty and political independence.

What other values are the seeds from seed firms? Will the Bill Ssali is frantically selling to the public ensure that the Ugandan farmer and consumer is really both safe and sovereign over seeds? Remember the views of farmers and consumers were never sought on that bill. Food security is good. Food sovereignty is better.

Therefore, nobody is saying plant breeding is bad. Nobody is saying massive crop production is bad. Nobody is saying other countries that want should not practice planting of GMOs. However, it is dangerous to be both waylaid and swayed by the assertion that GMO crop production for us hardly seems a matter of choice anymore; that it is the only alternative.

We need to be engaged in critical thinking and questioning of whatever is imposed on our country and embraced by our rulers. Cut and paste policies, laws and ideas do not harm those from whom we are copying them. They harm us and the future generations of our people and other beings.



*A Publication of the National Association of
Professional Environmentalists (NAPE)*

Tel: +256-414-530181

Email: nape@nape.or.ug,

Website: www.nape.or.ug