



A PUBLICATION OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS (NAPE)  
DECEMBER, 2015



**WE ARE DEFENDING  
OUR LAND  
UNTIL WE ARE  
RELOCATED AND  
COMPENSATED**

**FIVE YEARS OF BUILDING COMMUNITY  
RESILIENCE IN UGANDA THROUGH THE  
SUSTAINABILITY SCHOOL:  
SUCCESSSES, CHALLENGES  
AND WAY FORWARD**

## **The National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE)**

### **Vision**

A Ugandan society that effectively participates in the sustainable management of natural resources

### **Mission**

A national environmental organization that lobbies and advocates for the sustainable management of natural resources for the benefit of all

### **Goal**

Improved management of natural resources in Uganda

### **Overall Objectives of the Sustainability School**

The overall objective of the Sustainability School is to create a critical mass composed of communities, community leaders, growing Civil Society Organization (CSOs), able to hold the government, global institutions as well as individuals accountable for the impacts of their actions to people's livelihoods and national development.

Supported by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung with funds from  
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

# FOREWORD



**“** It is with great pleasure now that I announce that the Sustainability School is no longer just a concept on paper but a real pro-people programme whose activities and achievements are visible in eight districts in Uganda and beyond...

**I** am glad to introduce this publication that takes us through the years of building community capacity, resilience and cohesion in Uganda through the Sustainability School approach. Developing the Sustainability School concept came up as a result of observing the alarming rate at which natural resources and human rights were being abused in Uganda all in the name of turning the country into a fast developing nation.

The formulation of the Sustainability School concept was greatly influenced by Paul Freire’s work and his book,

*The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. After years of fighting for environmental justice, NAPE quickly realized that much progress couldn’t be realized unless communities who suffer most when natural resources are being unsustainably exploited are involved. The environment and the communities are so much intertwined that whoever abuses one, abuses the other and whoever respects one also respects the other. It is against this background that the implementation of the Sustainability School programme started with the overall objective of creating a critical mass composed of communities, community leaders and growing CSOs able to hold the government, its development partners and individuals accountable for the impacts of their actions on people’s livelihoods and national development.

Translating the concept of the Sustainability School into practical activities was not an easy task. It faced a lot of challenges from some pessimists who believed that Ugandans had become so docile and complacent that any programme aimed at awakening them to be in charge of their own development agendas was bound to hit a snag. To implement the Sustainability School programme therefore required making strategies carefully and dedicated people willing to commit time to work for the sustainable development of Uganda.

It is with great pleasure now that I announce that the Sustainability School is no longer just a concept on paper but a real pro-people programme whose activities and achievements are visible in eight districts in Uganda and beyond. It is very rewarding to hear communities giving testimonies that they now know

## FOREWORD

their rights and are ready to defend them up to the end because of knowledge acquired through the Sustainability School programme. This is because from 2010 when the Sustainability School started, efforts were put on mobilizing communities under what are termed as Sustainability villages and sharing with them knowledge on their rights and entitlements and how to defend them.

Work of building community empowerment and resilience is never easy. There are many huddles along the way. Empowered communities can't avoid clashing with those who have been abusing their rights out of ignorance or intimidation for example land grabbers and corrupt public officials who always want their acts hidden. The staff implementing the Sustainability school programme and the beneficiaries themselves have therefore sometimes found themselves faced with serious hardships. Some of them have been arrested and released without trial, some have been beaten while others have received threats. All these challenges are however dwarfed by the huge successes that the Sustainability School has managed to register in the last five years some of which are highlighted in this publication. The survival of the Sustainability School has largely been dependent on the fact that all its work is guided by the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

I thank all those that have made it possible for the Sustainability School to grow from strength to strength. I want in a special way to thank the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation of German (RLS) for providing the financial support for the Sustainability School and especially funds for preparation and printing of this publication. Thanks also go to other strategic partners of NAPE that include the Open Society Initiative for East Africa (OSIEA), Swedish

Society of Nature Conservation, Fund for Global Human Rights, the American Jewish World Service (AJWS) among others for their interest and support to various aspects of the Sustainability School programme. In a special way, I would like to thank the communities in the different Sustainability School villages and Listeners Clubs of the Community Green Radio who have embraced the Sustainability School approach as their guide towards sustainable empowerment.

Our thanks also go to all those individuals and institutions that contributed ideas and information for the various chapters of this publication. Allow me to thank NAPE Board, Management, staff, Sustainability facilitators and educators for their different contributions towards the development of this book. In particular I would like to appreciate the role of the following people who specifically led the process of compiling information for this publication: Dr. Ephraim Lemmy Nuwagaba (consultant) Mr. Allan Kalangi (Manager- Sustainability School Programme) and Mr. Rajab Bwengye (NAPE Coordinator of projects). The contribution to this publication of the following volunteers is also highly appreciated and acknowledged: Mr. Tobias Kalt, Miss Katharina Neiß, Mr. Felix Schilling all from Germany and Miss Peruth Atukwatse from Uganda.

I appeal to all people of goodwill to join us and stay with us in the struggle to have the type of global development that is focused on the needs of the grassroots people in the communities who are the majority, development that does not compromise on the rights of present and future generations.

**Frank Muramuzi**  
**Executive Director, NAPE**



*Friends of The Earth Africa member groups after a Sustainability School training in Kampala , 2014.*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Sustainability School was started because Ugandans were largely inactive in key decision making processes in regard to environmental and other development issues. There were also widespread ecological destruction, violation of human rights by government and other development actors and noticeable impacts of climate change among others. Additionally, Ugandan projects initiated with support from development partners were quite often not sustainable and collapsed as soon as the support ended.

The Sustainability School has contributed to the promotion of good governance, gender parity, respect for human rights and the democratization processes in the management of Uganda's natural resources. It has also contributed to efforts aimed at mitigating the negative effects of climate change.

The efforts of the Sustainability School have been greatly enhanced by its Community Green Radio which has played a key advocacy role in its own right and has as well augmented

*Launch of the Community Green Radio in Kampala in July 2014 L-R Mr. Frank Muramuzi of NAPE, Mr. Frank Tumusiime of ANARDE and Justice James Ogoola who was the chief guest*

the work of the Sustainability School, especially in the Oil region. The Green Radio works through Listeners' clubs which are initiated by communities or Sustainability Villages transform themselves into Listeners' clubs. In this way, the Sustainability School and the Green Radio supplement each other.

**The Sustainability School has registered the following successes;**

- It has empowered communities to play a key role in decision making processes regarding environmental and other development issues
- Women have gained confidence and are actively participating in advocating for their rights

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Communities have successfully resisted the practices of government give away of their land without adequate compensation
- Communities have started to appreciate nature and to engage in agricultural practices that are environmentally friendly
- Communities have developed advocacy skills and can make their own petitions to government when things are going wrong
- Communities are increasingly tasking government and big business to be accountable for their actions.
- Land evictees has petitioned court which has declared that they were illegally evicted
- The Green Radio has provided an information and advocacy platform to community members to demand accountability from government and other development actors and enabled them propose alternative actions that are favourable to their communities and are sustainable.
- The Community Green Radio has created awareness about environmental issues and triggered community to practice environmental activities such as tree planting and environmental friendly farming practices among others.
- The Listeners' clubs that were formed and those that transformed from Sustainability Villages have served as a useful link between the radio and the community by making the programmes demand driven and community responsive. The Listeners' clubs and Sustainability Villages have also been used successfully by communities as springboards for community action.
- The Green radio has been used to amplify the voices of the marginalized such as land evictees, women, youth and other community members considered powerless.
- The actions of some successful listeners' clubs such as Kigaga are serving as good lessons from which others are learning and such best practice helps promote listenership and the Sustainability School.
- The continued collaboration between NAPE and its development partners who have provided support to nurture the Sustainability School and its other programmes. These include Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), Fund for Global Human Rights (FGHR), Open Society Initiatives for East Africa (OSIEA),

Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Both Ends, Gaia Foundation, European Union (EU) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

### **However, the Sustainability School is faced with a number of challenges such as;**

- State interference through polices that aim at controlling CSO and are constantly used to threaten NGOs that government deems critical of its programmes. These include the Public Order Management Act and the NGO Registration bill 2015.
- The Sustainability School cannot reach out to all the areas in need due to limited resources and yet even in the areas of its present coverage like in the oil region, new challenges keep coming as a result of new developments in the emerging oil industry.
- Limited coverage of the Green Radio and the use of studios belonging to another radio station (Broadcasting through affiliation)
- Inadequate resources and yet the Sustainability School processes take long because of their participatory nature.

### **Future plans**

- Capacity building for of NAPE and its community and national level partners so that they are able to deal with the current challenges and those expected to emerge in the near future especially in the emerging oil industry.
- Consolidating, widening and deepening the participatory approaches and methodologies that have proven successful.
- Constant review of the conceptualization of the Sustainability approach and its methodologies in order to improve clarity, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation to enhance the operations of the Sustainability School.
- Establishment of a fully-fledged Community Environmental radio to improve coverage in terms of time and geographical areas so that more key environmental, human rights and advocacy related messages are generated, discussed and disseminated in a timely and effective manner.

# ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ABN	African Biodiversity Network	IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
AFIEGO	African Institute for Energy Governance	KOC	Kakindo Orphans Care
AJWS	American Jewish World Service	NAPE	National Association of Professional Environmentalists
ARN	African Rivers Network	NESMCA	Network on Sound Management of Chemicals
ASDA	Awoo Sustainable Development Association	NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
BUSUCA	Butimba Sustainability Conservation Association	OSIEA	Open Society Initiatives for East Africa
CANI	Climate Action Network International	OWA	Oil Watch Africa
CBO	Community Based Organisation	OWI	Oil Watch International
CGR	Community Green Radio	OWN	Oil Watch Network
CSCO	Civil Society Coalition on Oil	REDD	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation Forest Degradation
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Corporation	RLS	Rosa Luxemburg Foundation
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations	SAICM	Strategic Approach for International Chemical Management
EU	European Union	SSP	Sustainability school Programme
FGHR	Fund for Global Human Rights (FGHR)	SSNC	Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
FOEI	Friends of the Earth International	UWS	Uganda Wild Life Society
GMOS	Genetically Modified Organisms	WOMIN	Women Unite against Destructive Extractives
GRA	Global Rights Alert	CRED	Civic Response on Environment and Development
IPEN	International Pesticide Elimination Network		
IR	International Rivers		



*NAPE Board Members, 2015*

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# 1. BACKGROUND

## Background about NAPE

National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) was formed in 1997 and is a registered indigenous Environmental Non-governmental organization (NGO) that works on a number of environmental issues with specific focus on undertaking lobbying and advocacy for sustainable use of natural resources in Uganda.

NAPE's vision is a Ugandan society that effectively participates in the sustainable management of natural resources and its mission is a national environmental organization that lobbies and advocates for the sustainable management of natural resources for the benefit of all.

NAPE membership stands at 120 individuals and 10 institutions. Currently, it operates in the districts of Wakiso, Buikwe, Mukono, Hoima, Luwero, Mbarara, Kasese, Mubende, Masindi and Kampala city. NAPE works under the direction of the General Assembly, the highest policy making body. The General Assembly meets once every year to provide policy direction in governance and programming issues.

Every three years, the General Assembly elects a nine – person Board of Directors. The board proposes policies to the General Assembly for approval and acts on behalf of the general membership to ensure that policies approved by the General Assembly are implemented by the secretariat. The board therefore guides and oversees the activities of the Secretariat.

The Secretariat which is responsible for the implementation of programmes is headed by the Executive Director and has 19 full time staff and one volunteer. Out of these, five are based in Hoima

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in Western Uganda where NAPE has a field office and has also established a Community Radio. One other field officer is based in Kasese.

NAPE's advocacy work aims at achieving the following strategic objectives:

- a) To enhance good governance, human rights and democracy in the use and management of natural resources in Uganda.
- b) Contribute towards mitigation of the effects of climate change through sound management of natural resources.
- c) To promote gender parity in the use and management of natural resources in Uganda.

## Activities being implemented by NAPE

As of 2015, NAPE is implementing the following activities among others;

- Implementing the Sustainability School project in selected districts and Community Green Radio in the Bunyoro Region to build community capacity to advocate for their rights and hold leaders accountable.
- Showcasing proper management technologies for animal-human conflicts with specific focus on

killer crocodiles in Lake Edward and Kazinga channel.

- Building the capacity of NGOs to implement the strategic approach for International Chemical Management (SAICM) and that of the community in sustainable land use planning and management for restoration of selected degraded ecosystems and other marginal lands in the Albertine rift with specific reference to Katwe salt lake - Kasese Sub region.
- Producing and publishing NAPE lobby Magazine and the Sustainability Bulletin.
- Campaigns against;
  - o usage and improper management of hazardous chemicals in Uganda
  - o agro fuels in Kalangala District and illegal limestone mining in protected areas (Queen Elizabeth National Park).
  - o destruction of Uganda's forest and wetland resources including Butamira, Bugala and Lutembe wetland (an internationally recognised Ramsar site) through litigation, media engagements including radio talk shows, meetings with political parties, members of civil society, meetings with the Executive, meetings with

## BACKGROUND

- members of parliament among others.
- o land grabbing in Uganda through research and documentation, engagements and litigation
- o underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation in Uganda by conducting consultations on REDD in the central region of Uganda
- Promoting good governance on oil through the Oil Watch Network.
- Promoting good community water and sanitation practices through construction/rehabilitation of community water wells, formation and training of Village Environmental Committees, and construction of Ecosan Toilets in water stressed communities of Mukono, Buikwe and Jinja.
- Promoting water users multi-stakeholder dialogues in Central region of Uganda with specific focus on Mukono district.
- Supporting community initiatives for rain water harvesting and energy saving in water stressed areas- Kashaari dry corridor
- Amplifying voices of rural women in the Albertine region with focus on rural women of Kaiso Tonya and Sebagoro fish landing sites through Drama.
- Conducting Research on Renewable Energy Options for Uganda

### **Background to NAPE's programmes**

NAPE's programmes arise out of the challenges and conditions pertaining in the country. Uganda is faced with serious and far reaching problems threatening people and the environment with dangerous ramifications for both. These include ecological destruction due to large-scale development projects, violation of human rights by government and other development actors including powerful companies, the noticeable impacts of climate change among others and a largely inactive citizenry.

As a result of lack of or inadequate active participation in decision making at national and local levels on the nature of governance, natural resources management and socio-economic development strategies, sustainable development has been undermined. Natural resources for example forests, wetlands, water sources and other protected

areas have been degraded or destroyed. Others such as Mabira forest are constantly under threat. Without constant, fast and effective mobilization of the masses, any time, they may be destroyed or given way to investors. Communities especially the poor have been displaced with no proper resettlement and compensation leaving many hunger-stricken and destitute. In addition, there are sustainability challenges as many initiatives collapse as soon as development support winds up. To improve sustainability, NAPE started one of its newest programmes - the Sustainability School Programme which focuses on building community capacity for social economic and political change and strengthens community resilience to withstand stress and shocks arising out of negative development impacts.

The Sustainability School seeks to add value to the to the support that NAPE has been giving to many marginalized communities in the districts of Hoima, Buliisa, Kiryandongo, Jinja, Kalangala Mbarara, Mukono and others to protect their natural resources and to demand for better service delivery and respect of their individual and communal rights from the government and other development actors.

*NAPE Executive Director Mr. Frank Muramuzi (left) meets the custodians of the Bujagali falls cultural site before the commencement of the Bujagali power project.*

*The falls were subsequently submerged by the dam after government and its partners refused to listen to pleas of environmentalist to preserve the important site on River Nile*



## 2. The Sustainability School Programme

### Brief history of the Sustainability School

In 2010, NAPE initiated the Sustainability School approach which advocates and seeks to give the communities capacity to effectively participate in social economic and political change processes. The Sustainability School is ideological, issue-based and emphasizes community empowerment. It is not a physical school with structured classrooms and learning sessions but is based on non-formal and informal learning. One basic principle of the Sustainability School is “think global, act local”. This principle recognises the global implications of local actions while at the same time emphasising working on specific local issues that are of importance to the community. The Sustainability School’s aim is the transfer of power from dominant groups (The state and its partner development agencies) to the poor, marginalized disadvantaged and disenfranchised who are the majority.

The Sustainability School employs learning methodologies that emphasise sharing, participation, dialogue and collective action. The learning methodologies are premised on Paulo Freire’s “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”. Learning follows andragogical rather than pedagogical approaches. Andragogy is a learning methodology in which learners have a role in determining what, when and how to learn. In addition, learners learn from each other and with each other. The Sustainability School uses volunteer trainers (Community Educators). Activists who attend these training courses use the knowledge acquired to assist communities in solving problems they encounter in their daily lives. It also helps them address the unsustainable practices



*A training session in Kakindo Sustainability village in Buliisa District.*

and challenges which arise out of environmental hazards and the unintended effects of developmental projects.

The Sustainability School works through the establishment of Sustainability Villages which are not bound to specific political districts or areas but are based on issues of concern to a particular community or communities. The Sustainability Villages at community level are focal points for facilitating sharing and learning as well as mobilizing and advocating for action on identified issues of concern to the community. In cases where issues could be affecting many communities in different geographical areas, there is close collaboration between such communities who are usually grouped under one main thematic area for example, “Oil Governance”. The School also works through collaborating institutions such as CBOs, NGOs,

schools and institutions of higher learning with focal point persons in each of the formally recognized collaborating institutions. In each Sustainability Village, selected people are trained as community educators by NAPE and where necessary by external facilitators, so that they can facilitate and guide trainings in their communities using the problem solving and action oriented approach. NAPE envisages that through this approach, the communities can continue to debate and get their own solutions to their own sustainability problems even when NAPE and other development partners have pulled out. NAPE also believes that challenges of the environment and climate change can better be handled if the communities at the grassroots are involved and made well aware of their roles. At times, the Sustainability School uses meetings for purposes of demonstration and experience-



*(Left) Training of Sustainability School educators at Trisek Hotel in Hoima Municipality in 2013*

sharing as a way of facilitating learning amongst the target beneficiaries.

Thus, the Sustainability School (through the trained facilitators and community educators who also double as activists), emphasizes participation of stakeholders, and more especially local community involvement in the development processes and fighting for social justice. The Sustainability School strives to create a critical mass composed of communities, community leaders and civil society organisations that are able to hold government, its development partners and individuals accountable for the impacts of their actions on people's livelihoods and national development.

Currently, the work of the Sustainability School focuses around the following thematic areas; land use and food security, oil governance, forests and large plantations, large dams, energy and climate change. This work is done mostly through 24 Sustainability Villages which have been established in the districts of Buikwe, Kalangala, Kiryandongo, Kamwenge, Kasese, Hoima and Buliisa. In these Sustainability Villages, over 70 activists have been trained as community educators who do sensitization and mobilization of people at grassroots. Some of these Sustainability Villages have founded Community Based Organizations (CBOs).

To enhance learning and action, the Sustainability School provides a kit to each of the educators. The kit contains a radio, a phone, educators guide, learners' handbook, notebook for recording minutes and other activities and a bag for carrying them. The Educators also get a bicycle to ease their movement. The learners handbook provides content on how to protect communal resources from degradation, issues on the oil industry and community sustainability, threats to food security, impacts of large dams, community action on water and sanitation, impacts of mining in protected areas and community sustainability and climate change.

The Educators Guide serves a working and reference material for the educator. It explains the Sustainability School concept and gives an overview of the Sustainability School in Uganda. It details how to establish and maintain sustainability villages and explains different facilitation methods from which the educators may choose. Gender analysis tools are also provided as the School considers gender issues to be critical to sustainability. Issues of the youth have been highlighted in the guide. The guide also covers issues of democracy, accountability and human rights with a view of enabling communities to work towards good governance. It tackles how to identify

and deal with vulnerability and provides guidance on how to build community resilience. Indigenous knowledge and how it can be used to address sustainability issues features in the guide. Some technical knowledge on each of the themes of the Sustainability School form an integral part of the guide.

The Sustainability School uses community eco-mapping in the process of analysis and planning long term interventions. For example, community leaders and elders in the Bunyoro region were brought together in a series of workshops and they drew three ecomaps. The first one was of Bunyoro Region 50 years ago and before. The second one was of present day Bunyoro and the third one was about the Bunyoro they desire in future after 50 years. In the process of drawing maps, discussions included the positive and negative contributions of different stakeholders in shaping the conditions drawn in the map. In this way, they were able to identify past, present and the desired condition in future and key stakeholders to target for advocacy, planning and implementation of appropriate interventions.

The Sustainability School publishes a bulletin that disseminates information about the activities of the Sustainability School. This publication and NAPE Lobby complement each other although the latter is for higher level advocacy and targets policy makers at national level, for example Members of Parliament.

The other difference is that the bulletin specifically covers issues of the Sustainability School while NAPE Lobby covers all the programme areas of NAPE.

# The Sustainability School Programme

## Structure

The Sustainability School is structured as shown in the illustration.

## Roles of different players in the Sustainability School Programme

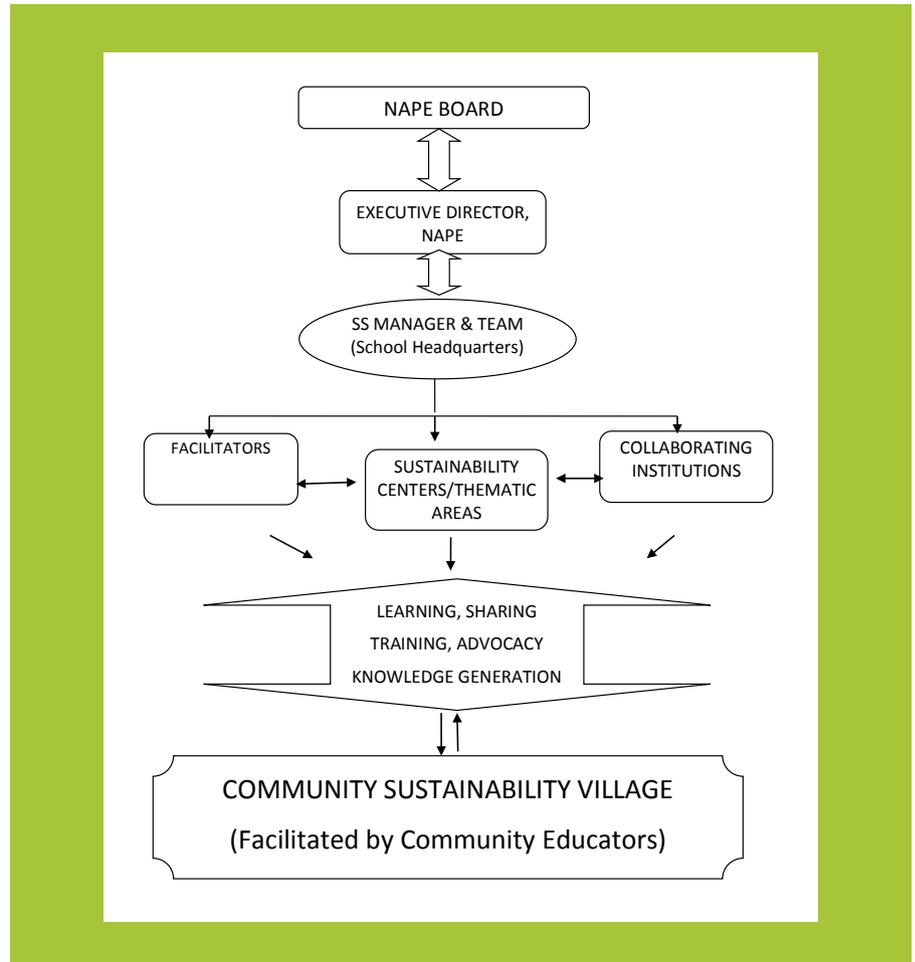
As much of the work is done by the facilitators, educators and volunteers, their roles are summarized below.

- The facilitators train trainers and prepare them to conduct trainings for larger groups; participate in the development of the training materials, tools and methods for the learning and sharing, advocacy and capacity building as well as learning and sharing lessons.
- The educators conduct trainings for larger groups on the key concepts and tools the facilitators and NAPE staff have developed.
- The volunteers are individuals in the community who freely and willingly offer themselves to work as “community sustainability champions” to promote various aspects of sustainability and community relations for this purpose.

Each sustainability village elects a governance committee which organises community members for learning and action. This committee plans community sustainability initiatives/activities. The Committee should reflect gender balance.

## Justification for the establishment of the Sustainability School

The Sustainability School was initiated in 2010 because the existing political structures and systems gave very limited opportunities for the public to express their views on governance,



development interventions, law and justice. In addition, there was environmental degradation including depleting or degrading natural resources such as forests, wetlands, water sources and other protected areas. There has also been increase in socio-political instability, abuse of human rights, the rising inequalities, injustices, poverty, ignorance, corruption, violent resolution of conflicts and lack of genuine democracy. Some poor individuals and even whole communities have been displaced from their land with no proper resettlement and

inadequate or no compensation. Others have been rendered landless, hunger stricken and destitute due to limited access to resources. There has been decline in enforcement of laws thereby contributing to increase in misuse of government resources and corruption. In addition, gender issues were not being adequately addressed in decision-making in development processes. Most importantly, many people have lost hope, are docile, complacent, fearful and reluctant to raise their voices to challenge the status quo and demand for accountability from their leaders.



*Above: Security officials confront NAPE staff and other activists that had gone to inspect the degradation of wetlands in Lutembe on the shores of Lake Victoria by a flower growing company*

*Below: The Lutembe wetland being degraded permanently by the flower firm*

Many programmes end up focusing on meeting current needs at the expense of the needs of future generations and often collapse as soon as development partners pull out.

### **Objectives of the Sustainability School**

The overall objective of the Sustainability School is to create a critical mass composed of communities, community leaders, growing Civil Society Organization (CSOs), able to hold the government, global institutions as well as individuals accountable for the impacts of their actions to people's livelihoods and national development.

#### **The specific objectives are;**

- To equip Ugandan communities with knowledge and skills in identifying, and challenging, government, and global actions that have negative impacts on people's livelihoods.
- To enable growing CSOs to contribute and influence decision making processes on social and economic development of the country.
- To contribute to community transformation from a docile / complacent to a dynamic and active society.

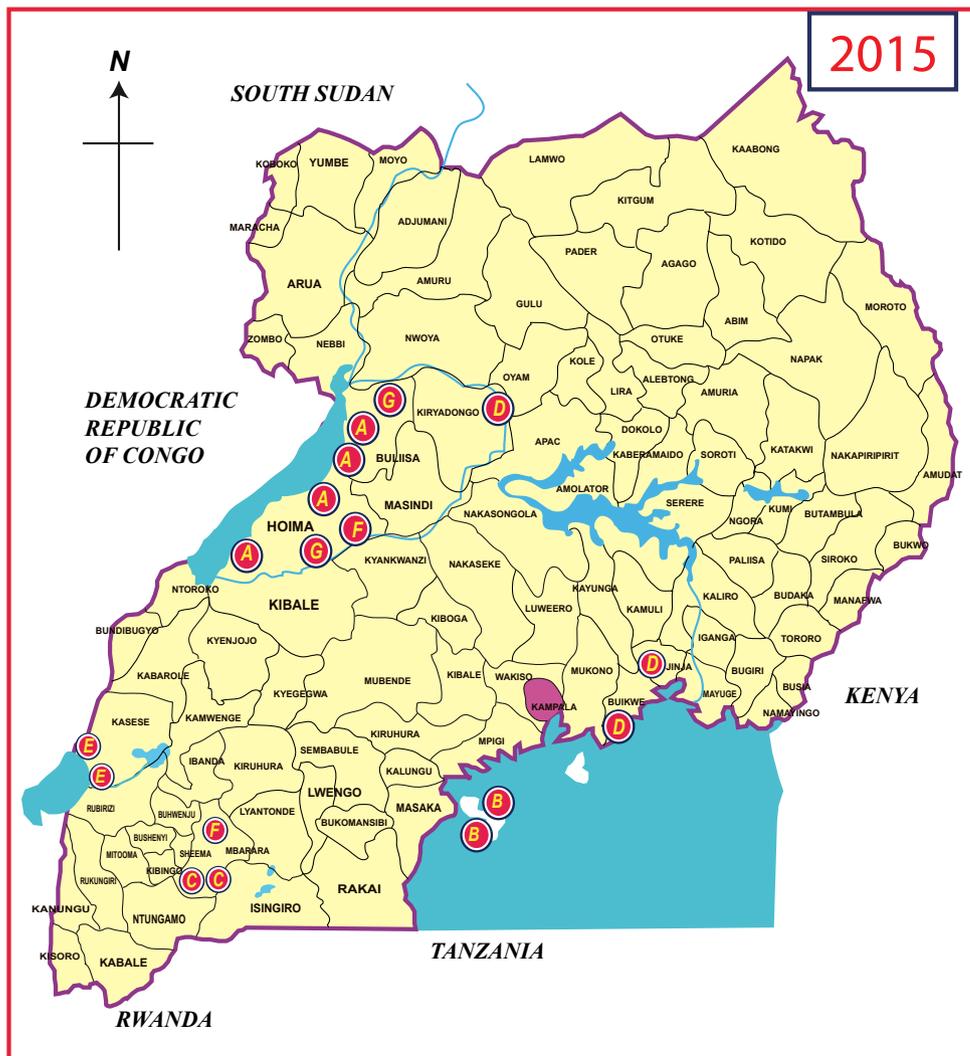


### Areas of operation of the Sustainability School

District	Thematic Areas	Main issues
Kalangala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forests and large plantations</li> <li>- Land use and food security</li> <li>- Community based climate change mitigation mechanisms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Effects of large plantations on host community livelihoods</li> <li>- Community resilience against deeds of large companies investing in their areas with government backing</li> <li>- Effects of globalisation and neoliberalism policies on local communities and how communities are being mobilised under the Sustainability School to respond to them</li> <li>- Communities efforts to reforest their Islands whose forests are being threatened by a palm oil company</li> </ul>
Hoima & Buliisa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Oil governance</li> <li>- Extractive industries</li> <li>- Land use and food security</li> <li>- Community based climate change mitigation mechanisms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Effects of oil activities on host communities' livelihoods.</li> <li>- Communities responses towards the effects of oil activities</li> <li>- Sustainability School and Community Green Radio efforts to mobilise communities to combat negative effects of the oil industry and to participate in natural resources management processes</li> <li>- Desecration of cultural sites in Bunyoro region and how cultural leaders are being mobilised under the School to combat that</li> <li>- Campaigns against GMOs and initiatives towards food sovereignty</li> <li>- Implementing sustainability clubs in schools</li> </ul>
Kiryandongo and Buikwe Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water and Sanitation</li> <li>- Dams and Energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mobilisation of dam affected people</li> <li>- Compensation for dam affected communities</li> <li>- Improvement of water and sanitation practices</li> <li>- Protection of water sources and provision of safe water</li> <li>- Training of water user Committees</li> </ul>
Mbarara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water and sanitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identification of solutions for water stressed areas</li> <li>- Implementing sustainability clubs in schools</li> </ul>
Kasese and Kamwenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mining in protected areas</li> <li>- Eco System restoration</li> <li>- Salt mining</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planting indigenous trees to prevent siltation of the lake Katwe</li> <li>- Mobilising artisanal salt miners to adopt sustainable salt mining practices</li> </ul>

## Map of current sustainability villages

## MAP OF UGANDA SHOWING SUSTAINABILITY VILLAGES

**KEY:**

 Sustainability Villages

**A** Sustainability Villages on Oil Governance such as Butimba, Kyapaloni, Sebagoro, Kaiso-Tonya in Hoima District, Kakindo and Nguedo in Buliisa District.

**B** Sustainability Villages on forests & large plantations such as Kulugulu, Bujumba and Kasenyi in Kalangala District

**C** Sustainability Villages on Water and sanitation such as Katamba in Biharwe, Mbarara District

**D** Sustainability Villages on Dams and Energy Such as Naminya, Malindi in Buikwe and Awoo in Karuma, Kiryandongo District

**F** Sustainability Clubs at Katojo Vocational School in Biharwe, Mbarara District, Dduhaga and St. Andrea Kahwa in Hoima District.

**G** Sustainability Villages with Communal Land Associations such as Butimba in Hoima District and Kakindo in Buliisa District

**E** Sustainability Villages on Eco Systems Restoration such as Katwe in Kasese District

### Key activities implemented by the Sustainability School

Here are some key activities that have been done or implemented since the Sustainability School was founded (2010-2015):

1. Holding consultative meetings between NAPE and its local and international partners, on the intention to establish a Sustainability School in Uganda
2. Holding Sustainability School start-up and orientation workshops targeting NAPE community, national and international partners
3. Recruitment and training of community educators
4. Compiling, designing and printing of Sustainability School guide books for learners and educators
5. Establishment of Sustainability Villages in at least eight districts in Uganda
6. Carrying out community based training on tackling sustainability challenges
7. Mobilising communities to write petitions to the government and its partners, protesting abuse of their rights as a result of certain developments in their communities
8. Organising stakeholder meetings to discuss different sustainability issues of concern, e.g. land issues, food sovereignty issues
9. Organizing public dialogues or political cafes on different issues affecting people at the grassroots, nationally and regionally.
10. Organising exchange and experience learning visits between different Sustainability School actors, locally and internationally.
11. Media engagement: Press conferences, Radio talk shows and other media engagements to highlight key sustainability issues.
12. Supporting drama group performances which also help in amplifying voices of the communities affected by big developmental projects
13. Establishment of Sustainability Clubs in schools to involve pupils to learn about and debate issues of environmental protection and development projects at an early age.
14. Organising trainings on sustainable agricultural practices that do not degrade the environment and promoting small community based projects such as agro ecological farming, apiary and planting of indigenous tree species.
15. Sub-granting little funding to selected community partner groups with little funding to enable them reach more people at the grassroots and expand their projects, e.g. drama, bee keeping, tree planting and community mobilisation for joint actions between Sustainability Villages.
16. Establishment of the Community Green Radio listeners clubs.
17. Printing of the Sustainability School bulletin
18. Monitoring and evaluation

*Sustainability school team encounters Uganda government soldiers who were guarding equipment of the company that was doing feasibility studies for the Karuma hydro power project in gardens of community members without their consent. This action was later protested by members of Awoo Sustainability village using the media and petitions to different government ministries. The soldiers were later withdrawn and some of the affected communities compensated*



### 3. The Sustainability School in the Oil Region

One of the key areas of operation of the Sustainability School has been the oil region of Bunyoro. The recent developments in the Albertine region have led to concern about the benefits of the oil extraction for people and nature. Since the oil activities are connected to severe violation of human rights and extensive destruction of the environment, NAPE has been alert and focused its actions promoting improved oil governance and empowering the affected communities.

The Sustainability School began operating in the Albertine region in 2010 with the first Sustainability Villages being established in Butimba, Hoima District and Kakindo, in Buliisa District. Since its inception, the Sustainability School has flourished in the oil region with a growing number of participating communities. Sustainability Villages have been established in Kaiso-Tonya, Kyapaloni and Sebagoro in Hoima District and Nguedo in Buliisa District.

NAPE sensitised affected communities about the potential negative impacts of oil production and provided support in finding ways to deal with the most pressing issues. It has also been promoting the self-organization of the communities. It does this through helping to set up Sustainability Villages, providing expertise through trainings, offering legal advice and organizing legal assistance, as well as giving limited material and financial support.

NAPE initiated the Hoima based Community Green Radio in the oil region in August 2014.

#### Discovery of oil in Bunyoro: Chronology of Events

Oil exploration in Africa and Uganda in particular is not a new phenomenon.

In the late 19th century, the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) reported oil seeps in Western Uganda and declared ownership over the suspected deposits. In 1925, geological survey confirmed the evidence of hydrocarbons, including oil and gas reserves in the Albertine Graben. This prompted the drilling of several wells in subsequent years. The first oil well "Waki B-1" was drilled by the African-European Investment Company in the Butiaba area in 1938. From this time until the very late 1980s, not much was going on. The situation changed in 1991 when the state aggressively promoted the Albertine Graben as a profitable investment opportunity. This led to the demarcation of exploration areas, more seismic surveys and discovery of commercially viable oil deposits.

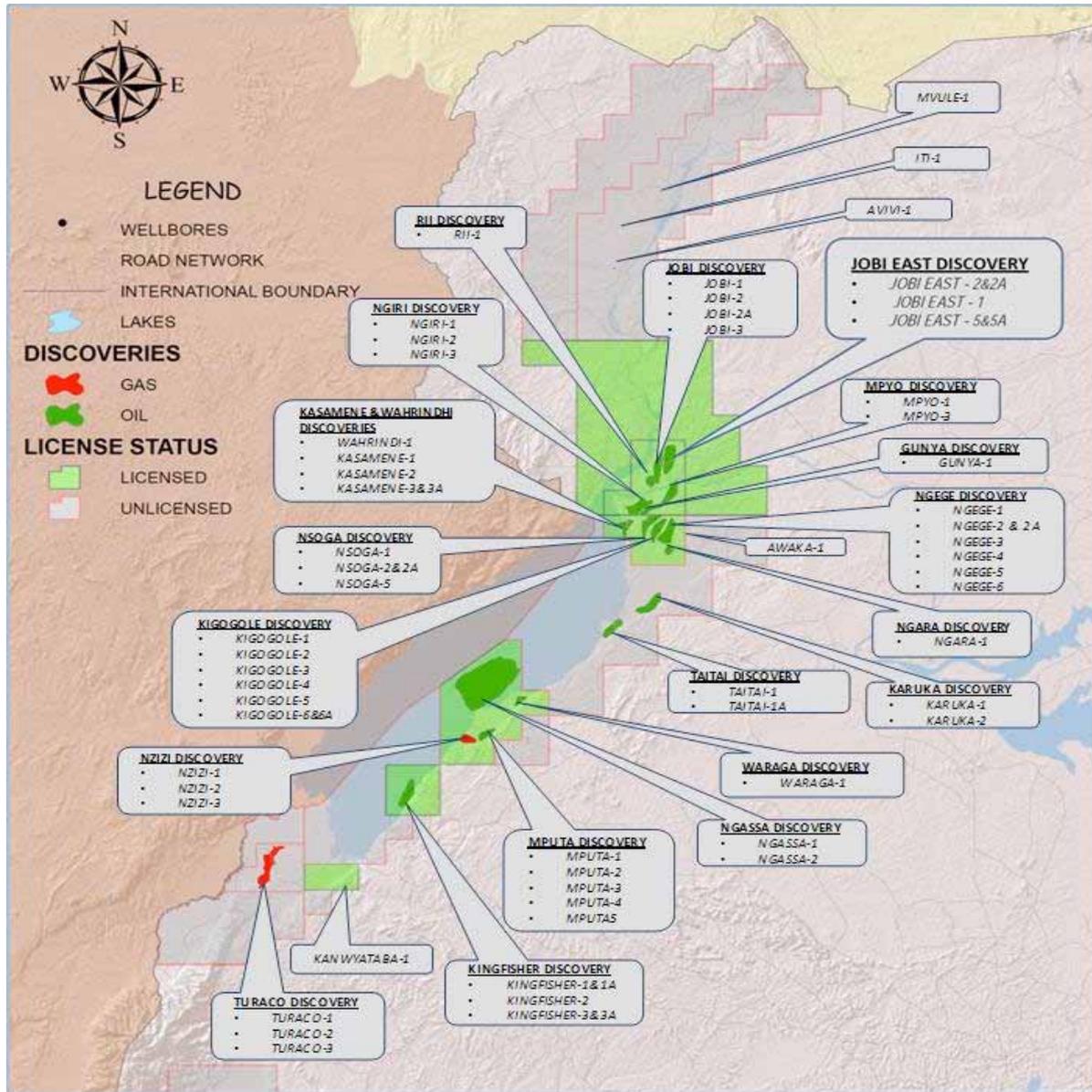
Heritage Gas and Oil drilled the first oil well in September, 2002. Heritage and its partner Energy Africa Uganda drilled two more test wells in Block 3 and announced that Uganda has commercially viable oil resources. The exploration activities of Heritage, Energy Africa Uganda and Hardman which first acquired an exploration license in 1997 attracted the attention of the global oil industry. Tullow Oil, a British based oil company entered the Ugandan oil field in a big way by purchasing Energy Africa Uganda. Since then, many other companies have entered the Ugandan Oil Sector. Some have remained while others have sold their shares and others have closed operations in Uganda. In 2012 the Chinese state-owned CNOOC and the French company Total entered the oil business. During the following year the government passed the Petroleum Bill into law. This law gave way to build Uganda's first oil refinery and related downstream infrastructure. By 2014, 102 out of 116 wells drilled had been successful. In early 2015,

the Government of Uganda signed an agreement with the Russia's RT Global Resources as the preferred tenderer for Uganda's refinery project, which would subsequently cause the eviction of 7.118 residents in the proposed area (Kabale Parish, Hoima District). Since then the number of oil developments and their related negative impacts have increased tremendously. In the present arrangement, the oil companies and the government get rich at the expense of the affected people in the oil region and there are hardly any mechanisms for holding the companies accountable for any actions with negative effects to the local community since all of them seem to work under the protection of the state.

#### The negative effects of oil production

The discovery of oil in Uganda and the start of exploration activities have been met with anticipation and widespread optimism. Financial investors, multinational oil corporations, land speculators, the Ugandan central government, the Bunyoro Kingdom, local governments, local communities – all hope to tap into the stream of wealth expected to start flowing from oil extraction. Most prominently, President Yoweri Museveni has been particularly outspoken in his support for oil production and the associated development benefits that he says will transform Uganda into a middle-income country. Also the Bunyoro kingdom on whose territory the oil reserves lay wants to benefit, laying claim to a 12.5% share of the oil revenues. Furthermore, in the local communities in the oil region there is hope for improved transport infrastructure, schools and hospitals and new opportunities for income-generation.

However, cautious voices from civil society in Uganda and around the



Map showing oil discovery in Western Uganda (Source: Ministry of Energy & Mineral Development)

world have voiced concerns over the social, environmental and political consequences of oil extraction in the Albertine Graben. When examining the effects of oil production in other African countries like Nigeria or Angola, it becomes clear that the discovery of oil often is not a blessing but a curse.

There is belief in some circles that the high export-earnings from the oil sector may lead to a decline of other economic sectors like agriculture and manufacturing. Furthermore, the

predicted dependence on oil revenue could expose the Ugandan economy to the high volatility of the world-market price for oil. The reliance on unsteady oil revenue is likely to lead to liquidity shortages and prevent the Ugandan government from servicing its debts. Already the drop in oil prices since 2014 has created doubts in some Ugandans that oil is the answer to Uganda's development needs. Since oil production is a very capital-intensive and not very labor-intensive undertaking, few job opportunities are likely to crystallize in the region.

Instead the focus on oil exports may cause a decline in competitiveness of the agricultural sector, leading to rural unemployment and increased migration and urbanization pressures.

Access to land is of special importance for the inhabitants in rural districts in Uganda, because it ensures the provision of food and secures livelihoods for many Ugandans. People use the land as cropland, as grazing ground for their livestock, as a place to collect firewood and medicinal plants or for any other activity to generate

// NAPE has been working on amplifying the voices of these affected communities and linking them to other NGOs especially those specializing in litigation...

income. Denial of access especially to women compromises food security and secure livelihoods because it is women's traditional role to provide the family with food. Since oil exploration started in the Lake Albert region in 2006, the living conditions of many Ugandans have been threatened due to extensive dispossessions and displacements by oil companies and land speculators.

Most of the land in the oil region is used under the customary land tenure system which means that the inhabiting communities have no official land titles. The 1998 (as amended 2004, 2010) Land Act enables the inhabitants to acquire official land titles from the appropriate authorities to obtain the full rights over the communal land but the process is quite burdensome and expensive. Only very few have done this so far, and the status quo of unclear tenure rights can lead to serious consequences for the oil affected communities.

Since the oil production started, the demand for land in the region has increased thus attracting investors and speculators. That is the reason why land ownership in the oil region is increasingly determined through financial and social influence. As foreign investors are not allowed to buy land in Uganda, they lease it from local land speculators. Some speculators buy land on which communities have lived for a long time and evict the communities often without compensation. Some communities have tried to resist these illegal evictions without success because in many cases the government is involved in these kinds of arrangements too as its officials misuse their positions to back up the evictions. Thus actors of the oil business are able to claim large-scale areas in Lake Albert region while the inhabitants lose access to their land with serious consequences for their livelihoods.

Through unclear distribution of land rights, it is easy for investors to claim the affected land as their own. They get land titles (official certificates over the land) from the authorities and can thereby decide to do anything with the land. Once the land is officially claimed, the new owner can force the inhabitants to leave their former land and homes. Quite often verbal threats and physical violence is used for this. Sometimes even the rumor about an oncoming eviction is enough to let the people abandon their places due to the fear of physical violence or lack of influence.

For example, there have been over 40 households in Waisoke village, Buliisa District evicted by an individual businessman with the support of the area chairman and the local security officer. The residents were pressurized through threats, blackmail and the use of physical force by police to sign forms that they surrendered their ownership of land. In some of the reported cases houses were burned down and livestock belonging to community members looted.

It is common that the victims of displacement are neither adequately paid for their land nor compensated at all for losses incurred, although this is required by the Ugandan law. Without knowing much about their rights, the communities often accept their unfair treatment without resistance and leave the land to the oil activities. After their eviction the affected people are confronted with serious problems. Without monetary payment or equivalent land, the people's livelihoods are threatened. The evicted people are forced to move to other places and at times they live in emergency shelters or makeshift camps, where the living conditions are often very miserable. Diseases and social conflicts are rampant in these makeshift camps.



*NAPE Executive Director Mr. Frank Muramuzi explains to the King of Bunyoro His Majesty Iguru Gafabusa about NAPE's advocacy work on oil using the Sustainability School approach*



*Precious Naturinda of the Community Green Radio interviews members of the provisional Kijayo camp for internally displaced people*

Without the land as a source of food supply and any other source of income, the victims depend on their relatives or good Samaritans for survival. This is very dehumanizing.

The most serious cases of forceful eviction in the oil region took place recently in Hoima District: There are two camps in the District currently holding over 2,000 people that have been displaced from their land by developers. The first camp in Rwamutonga in Bugambe sub-county has about 1,200 people where 700 of them are children below the age of 10. The people were evicted from their land by two developers who wanted to sell the land to an American Company, McAlester Energy Resources dealing in treatment of oil wastes. The people live in makeshift huts and they have nowhere to grow crops. The children all look sickly as a result of not having much to eat and they all seem to have skin diseases and cough.

In Kigyayo in Kizirafumbi sub-county about 1,000 community members are also living in a makeshift camp. These also say they were displaced from their

land by some businessmen who then sold it to a sugar growing company. Their conditions are no better than those of the people in the Rwamutonga camp. The evictions were carried out in a violent manner with reports of burning and looting of homes, tear gas and rubber bullets used by the police, and victims reporting incidents of rape.

NAPE has been working on amplifying the voices of these affected communities and linking them to other NGOs especially those specializing in litigation. The High Court has already ruled that the evictions were done in an unlawful manner. But the court rulings have not been respected and the people are still staying in the provisional makeshift camp under dire conditions without adequate shelter from the weather, without enough food and lacking medical supplies. Compensation has not been paid. The authorities in Hoima continue to pretend not to notice these suffering people. NAPE now believes that the issues of these communities can only be attended to if debate about their case is taken beyond the borders of Hoima to the national

level and beyond.

Another example is of Kabale Township in Buresuka Sub-county, Hoima District where over 7,000 people lost their land recently to pave way for the construction of an oil refinery. Partly due to the efforts of NAPE and other NGOs, most displaced people have received compensation payments and new sites for relocation. The construction of more oil wells, refineries, waste-treatment plants, pipelines and new roads will likely lead to new violent displacements. A further issue is the intensification of conflicts between local inhabitants and pastoralists from other parts of the country moving into the area in anticipation of benefiting from the oil money.

These social injustices are possible because of power differences between the cooperating oil industry and the government on the one side and the local communities on the other side. The wealthy elites make money unhampered out of the people's uncertainty and lack of knowledge. This is possible because the affected communities usually are not aware



*Community based Training on oil issues in Buliisa District*

about their rights regarding their land and compensation and are at times deliberately misled by some corrupt government officials. Additionally communities are scared to raise their voices against the officials and elites in fear of punishment and mistreatment. Also the local communities are left out of the negotiations on the land acquisitions and are not informed early enough to take action. Furthermore the victims of eviction often have no prospect of justice and fair compensation due to the exclusionary nature of the justice systems. The wealthy few have the resources to follow up their cases while the majority of the community members are poor and cannot afford the legal fees. There will not be any success to overcome these social imbalances without building awareness among the affected communities and empowering them.

Furthermore, with the advent of oil production, there is the real danger of oil spills and pollution of the highly ecologically-sensitive Albertine rift which is one of Africa's most biodiverse ecosystems, home to 52% of all African bird species and 39% of all African mammal species. The threat of oil spills is evident as the example of the ecosystem of the Niger Delta shows where the spills have completely destroyed the ecosystem. In Uganda, the drilling has already started in such sensitive areas as the Murchison Falls National Park and in wildlife reserves. Lake Albert which is used as a fishing ground by the local population is also

threatened to become polluted. Already some areas of the lake have been fenced off to deny access to local fishermen while drilling activities have chased away fish populations. Furthermore, land grabbing and the damaging of ecosystems and especially water bodies undermine local food production systems, leading to the erosion of food sovereignty. Additionally, sacred natural sites and territories of the communities are not respected and are encroached upon. Specifically, women are affected and are systematically excluded from participation.

With oil production expected to get into full swing in the coming years, the negative impacts that are already experienced by the communities as well as new threats of ecological degradation, pressures on land and destruction of livelihoods will likely increase. The Sustainability School has taken on these issues, working with affected communities to fight against the construction of new oil wells and production facilities without adequate compensation. It works with communities to protect them against the loss of land and ecological degradation, and to advocate for the involvement of local communities in decision-making regarding appropriate resettlement and compensation.

Furthermore, the low levels of accountability and transparency within the Ugandan government and a weak legal framework for oil governance is likely to worsen the

political situation in Uganda. As evidence from other oil-rich nations with weak democratic rule shows, the discovery of oil tends to strengthen authoritarian rule and to heighten corruption. Oil revenue allows the president to further centralize power and to solidify his rule. The weak legal mechanisms that do not emphasise transparency and accountability regarding oil revenue sharing allow for money to be diverted into the pockets of corrupt government officials. In addition, the likelihood of the rise and re-emergence of rebel groups and armed conflicts is particularly acute in the Albertine region, which has been the scene of many violent conflicts in the past. Moreover, border conflicts with neighboring Congo over the allocation of oil reserves are looming.

The effects on the local communities living in the Albertine region are potentially devastating. Oil-affected citizens lack access to information and are not involved in decision-making. In addition, numerous reports have been published highlighting the grave human rights abuses that are already taking place in the oil region.

To sum it all up, there seems to be a feeling that instead of bringing benefits, oil discovery has brought misery to some people. For example, Manyirehi, a person with physical disability and resident in Kyehoro landing village had his house destroyed to give way for road construction. He was forced to live with his relatives for some time and this led to his wife leaving him.



## REFLECTIVE NOTE

As we climb up the hill, I can see the makeshift structures... I can hear the voices of the children and adults singing a welcome song and the voices of the children are louder than those of the adults. But there is something strange about these voices - they are hollow! These are voices of the people of Rwamutonga who were evicted from the land they say they have been living on since 1965. The displaced people are about 1,200 people (700 of these are children) and they are from about 225 households.

I look around and tears are flowing freely ... The pain these evictees are witnessing is too much. I must act first. I am supposed to compose myself and collect information but my mind tells me I must also bring hope to these people, but not remind them of their misery through my tears! I quickly disembark from the vehicle and pretend to be going for a short call but in reality I want to cry out my shock and pain.

Shortly after, I join our team only to see hollow faces gazing at us. I can see the children are not in school but seated in the front row of the meeting. Behind these children are women and at the back are the

men – either seated or standing. They have been reduced to expecting handouts from those who come to visit them. I can guess their expectations are higher because our team has some whites.

They start telling their story and in between some sentences, they pose, lost for words. Meanwhile, I am wondering about how a human being can inflict such misery to fellow human beings. Then the thought that the government has not helped is more hurting!

They say they went to court and court said they were wrongly evicted and ordered that they be compensated and costs of the case be paid. Unfortunately, government had not implemented the court order. They are also worried as to why the court did not say they should return to the land. We hand over 560,000 which we have mobilized impromptu to the leader of the evictees and request that he buys some maize meal to share among all the evictees. I later hear that the news about the eviction was first broken by the Community Green Radio but later it attracted international coverage on Voice of America and other media

### **NAPE's work with oil refinery affected communities**

The Government of Uganda chose Kabale Parish, Buseruka Sub-county, Hoima district as the place to host the oil refinery. This meant displacing over 7,000 people who were staying on the about 29 Square kilometres required for the refinery. The Government was at first not giving the affected communities adequate information regarding how they were to be relocated and compensated. Even when the property valuation exercise started, there were many complaints from the communities on the rates attached to their properties and many others had their items missing out.

NAPE under the Sustainability School programme was one of the CSOs that moved to the area and worked on amplifying the voices of the people so that their rights could be respected. NAPE trained activists there and also held meetings with the communities to discuss their entitlements as enshrined in the Ugandan laws such as the Constitution and the Land Act. NAPE also exposed the affected communities to the media through press conferences and also covered their issues on the community Green Radio.

The communities empowered with adequate knowledge on their rights started engaging the government and the companies that was tasked with valuating their properties and handling the compensated process. **The people also made posters and signs like that one on Page 25** to show their determination that they were not ready to move until they were adequately compensated for their properties lost due to the refinery project.

Due to this agitation by the affected communities, majority have since been satisfactorily compensated and land has been acquired for those that opted for relocation.



*The NAPE Gender Officer Ms. Shillar Kyomugisha talks to the oil refinery affected communities at Kyapalooni Primary School before it was abandoned and the place taken over by the Oil refinery Project.*



*NAPE staff and partners visit the new place in Kyakaboga village, Nyakabingo Parish, Buseruka Sub-county, Hoima District where over 40 households affected by the refinery are to be relocated.*



*Representatives of oil refinery affected Communities during a press conference at Speke Hotel in Kampala*

**WE ARE DEFENDING  
OUR LAND  
UNTIL WE ARE  
RELOCATED AND  
COMPENSATED**



## 4. Successes and Challenges of the School

### Successes of the Sustainability School in general

One of the greatest achievements of the Sustainability School has undoubtedly been the empowerment of local communities to speak up against the injustices perpetrated against people and nature in the name of development while also attempting to hold leaders accountable. The Sustainability Villages have become more organized advocacy groups and many such as Butimba Sustainability Conservation Association (BUSUCA), Awoo Sustainable Development Association (ASDA) and Kakindo Orphans Care (KOC) have been empowered and have registered themselves as Community Based Organisations. The Oil Refinery affected Residents Association is currently undergoing the process of registration. These CBOs formed under the Sustainability School help in entrenching the network more at the grassroots and raising the pool of facilitators in different fields. The CBOs also help in establishing more Sustainability Villages by spreading the network and the approach.

At the height of the Save Mabira Crusade, NAPE had a meeting with the President of the Republic of Uganda. The NAPE delegation was led by Frank Muramuzi, the Executive Director and included NAPE staff working on the Sustainability School programme, members of Parliament serving on the Environmental Committee, media and other CSO representatives. NAPE, on behalf of CSOs, explained to the President the dangers of destroying Mabira forest and the benefits of preserving it. After that engagement, the President halted the give away. Unfortunately, there are signs that the Mabira forest give away is far from over. In addition to meeting the President,



*NAPE Executive Director Mr. Frank Muramuzi shakes President Museveni's hand after a meeting over Mabira Forest issues at the president's country home in Ntungamo in 2011*



*A drama performance on women and land rights staged by Sustainability School members in Buliisa District*

NAPE was invited by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to explain itself. After these engagements, things seem to have eased a lot as suspicions reduced.

The Sustainability School has registered great achievements in the gender area. Previously, results from a study conducted by NAPE in the Sustainability Villages had revealed a lack of participation of women in decision making and their ignorance about their

rights. They were found to be largely docile, complacent and fearful in regard to making contributions to issues of development at various key levels.

Against that background NAPE embarked on emphasizing women's participation in all Sustainability School's activities so that they are exposed to spaces and platforms where discussions and trainings on issues of human rights and national



*Members of the Save Mabira Crusade and representatives of The Metha Group meet President Museveni at his country home in Ntungamo in 2011*

development are discussed. Deliberate effort was made to recruit women representatives to constitute the team of educators and facilitators.

Now women have become active partners in development and organized themselves into groups to spearhead campaigns against the negative effects of development projects on their livelihoods through drama, radio talk shows and petitions. They have gained confidence in speaking out their minds during decision making processes. This has contributed to compelling the government to act upon issues that affect women.

Another good example of the success of the Sustainability School is the mobilization of communities in the Kalangala District to fight against injustices. The government gave away 10,000 hectares of land to BIDCO, a joint venture of foreign companies, to grow oil palm. The government said this project was aimed at offering employment opportunities to the local population, develop the local infrastructure, boost trade on the Islands and promote the manufacturing industry in Uganda. Instead people soon felt negative impacts as they lost



*Muyisa shows the land which he claims was grabbed from him and degraded for oil palm growing*

land, cattle, wetlands, forests and they struggled to survive. Furthermore, the project soon required more land for expansion that was then taken from local communities and government owned forest reserves.

One such example of fighting injustice is narrated by a resident of Kalangala thus;

*Instead of the promised benefits, the project brought misery and hardships. When they came to my land, they said that they only wanted to survey it for future planning. They didn't give me a choice to say yes or no. Instead they went ahead with their work.*

*Later they called me together with others who were also affected at the district headquarters for a meeting where they told us that our land had been bought and offered us some little money, which I refused. Within a few days, they brought bulldozers and cleared my cassava gardens and coffee plantation. It was a bad experience and I decided to report them to the authorities.*

*Others were intimidated and accepted peanuts in exchange for their land. For me I refused to take peanuts. I have opted to take them to Court and our case is currently at the High Court in Masaka" (John Muyisa)*

## Successes and Challenges of the School

The Sustainability School empowered the affected communities to participate in environmental conservation activities and to ensure that their rights to land and to safe water are not eroded by the company. The communities were empowered to write petitions to the government protesting the contamination of their water sources and their issues were finally addressed. After visits from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Environment the company was stopped using fertilizers around the community water sources and was obliged to keep the way to the water source free. Other members of the community went to court to fight for fair compensation payments.

The Sustainability School mobilised the people affected by the Bujagali hydropower project in Buikwe District. During and after the construction of the dam, the local communities were negatively affected in different ways. Some were displaced while others who got jobs in the project and were injured were not compensated. The project had promised many things, including resettlement, proper houses, electricity, water, and alternative sources of livelihoods, especially for



*Communities affected by the Karuma hydro power project pose for a photo with some community members that were displaced by the Bujagali hydro power project in Jinja and now resettled at Naminya Resettlement Camp in Buikwe District. This was during an experience/knowledge sharing visit that took place in Naminya in 2012*

those who previously depended on fishing on River Nile. The Sustainability School empowered the communities to write petitions to the financiers of the project - World Bank and the African Development Bank. As a result, inspectors were sent to the region who found that the communities were not adequately compensated

for land and property lost because of this power project. Their reports helped in pressuring the government to eventually compensate the people. Some were resettled, others got monetary compensations. In addition, facilities like a hospital and a school were built.

However, more advocacy work needs to be done as some issues remain unresolved. The following response from one of the community members highlights one of the issues thus;

All the plaster on my ceiling is falling off. My house has serious cracks and the floor is peeling off all because of the blasting done during the construction of the Bujagali Dam. I am not the only one facing this problem. We are many. We have talked and we have generally been ignored. We fear some of the houses are going to collapse. (Sarah Namatovu)



*Namatovu showing the damage to her house*

As a result of the work of the Sustainability School, communities have become more conscious of the need to participate in the conservation of environment and mitigating the adverse effects of Climate Change. In many Sustainability Villages, for example Butimba in Hoima District, communities are setting up nursery beds for indigenous tree species which they distribute among themselves and to other people and communities beyond their Sustainability villages. In partnership with the NGO Both Ends of Netherlands, some communities were trained on how to practice Analog Forestry (a complex and holistic form of silviculture which minimizes external inputs, such as agrochemicals and fossil fuels) and started implementing this approach in their communities. They benefit economically from Analog Forestry by harvesting and selling non-timber forest products like seeds, natural cosmetics and medicine.

The Sustainability School and its network is expanding rapidly and has attracted the interest of other actors, regionally, nationally and internationally. The Ugandan model of the Sustainability School is being recognized worldwide as an effective tool in mobilizing communities and raising awareness on sustainable livelihood issues in their communities. Communities outside of Uganda have expressed interests to participate in sustainable development processes beginning

from the grassroots level. To this effect, NAPE was invited and shared about the Sustainability School approach to civil society networks in Colombia, Ghana and Nairobi in 2013, 2014 and 2015. In 2014, NAPE hosted a team from Friends of the Earth International who learned about how the Sustainability School works. The team members were from the Netherlands, Nigeria, South Africa, Cameroon, Tunisia, DR. Congo and Tanzania. This means that the Sustainability School approach is not only used in Uganda but it is also spreading to many other parts of the world.

The Sustainability School has been implemented successfully into the NAPE portfolio and is now interacting with other NAPE projects. One example is Katwe, where NAPE planted trees and bushes to check water runoffs from bare hills in order to stop siltation of the salt lake that is used for artisanal salt-mining. After the project NAPE kept in touch with the community, subsequently establishing a Sustainability Village. The aim within the Sustainability School is to help facilitate connections between communities, organizations and people.

One other key success of the Sustainability school is the establishment of the Community Green Radio in the oil region. This radio amplifies the voices of the marginalized communities and provides a platform for spreading the ideology of the Sustainability School far and wide. The Community Green Radio has highlighted



*Analog forestry training in Mityana, August, 2015*



*The Manager of the Sustainability School Programme Allan Kalangi measuring how tall the euphorbia planted near Lake Katwe by communities has grown*



*The Manager of the Sustainability School Programme Allan Kalangi (middle) with Precious Naturinda and Peter Akugizibwe, both Assistant News Editors of the Community Green Radio in the production studio*

the plight of the evictees affected by the oil industry and large plantations in the Bunyoro region.



### **Successes of the Sustainability School in the oil region**

Specifically for the oil region, a number of successes have been recorded. Among the main achievements of the last five years is the significantly raised awareness among the affected population about oil production and its associated negative impacts in the region. The themes that have been central in the Sustainability School include land grabbing, land ownership and land rights. Communities have learned about their rights and entitlements and have become empowered to stand up and defend what is rightfully theirs. As a result of coming together to discuss and work together to challenge the oil development process, solidarity within and among oil-affected communities has increased. Furthermore, previously wide-spread docility and fearfulness that prevented people from engaging with state actors has been overcome in the Sustainability Villages with people now speaking up and openly challenging the government's path of action.

Many people that had been displaced and/or suffered property damages

fought for and have now been adequately compensated, while over 100 people are still in court fighting for fair compensation. With regard to land questions, some community members have been successful in securing customary land certificates through communal land associations. Furthermore, the Sustainable School with members from the Sustainability Villages has been involved in getting the issue of land rights to be recognized by the districts in the Albertine region, prompting the formulation of bylaws to protect community land from illegal acquisitions. A good example is Buliisa District where a community Educator of Kakindo Sustainability village, Ms. Alice Kazimura was chosen to be a member of the committee formulating the Land Ordinance for Buliisa District. This is a result of much agitation for respect and recognition of communities land rights that is done in the sustainability villages.

A central focus of the Sustainability School is on women empowerment. Women have organized themselves into groups to advocate for their rights and spearhead campaigns on the negative impacts of oil production. Their voices have become amplified and are heard on the radio, in consultative

meetings and by government officials. As their livelihoods are threatened by oil development women have also become involved in the establishment of alternative sustainable income-generating activities, such as bee-keeping and the planting of trees for environmental protection and revenue-generation.

In addition, Sustainability Clubs have been founded in schools in order to encourage young people to join from an early age the debate on the country's development agenda and the protection of the environment. An example is St. Andrea Kaahwa College in Hoima. Also drama groups have been set up that use indigenous methods and knowledge in conveying the dangers of oil production on the region. Exchange visits have been taking place between Sustainability Villages and also with members from other oil-affected communities in Africa.

In recent years, Sustainability Villages have become increasingly self-reliant and some have taken the next step and turned into CBOs. An example is Kakindo Orphans Care which was established as a CBO in 2013. It among others works on issues regarding land and livelihoods. Alice Kazimura

## Successes and Challenges of the School

is leading the efforts of the CBO with remarkable successes. In 2010, some community land in this area was earmarked for oil exploration purposes. After Kazimura had organized visible and vocal protests when authorities came to survey the land, the government backed away from taking the land. A female educator and activist revealed;

*Before, the communities were just agreeing. A government official would come and say we want this land, and then the people just keep quiet. But after our training, these officials came, they told people they wanted our land in this community, 3.5 square kilometers. They wanted to do other activities on that land. And community people agreed. But when we came back, we sensitized them, we said no, no, no: this is the land that the community uses for getting firewood for cooking, the land the community uses for grazing their cattle, the land the community is getting their herbal medicines from, the land the communities use to get materials for building, the land the community uses to get grass for thatching their houses. Now if this land is taken, where shall the community get those items ... So we said no. Once we started sensitizing the community they also saw the need and also came to our side. So we wrote petitions to the district. So they also came and sat with the community, they saw our issue, they said this was genuine. So they also agreed and left our land. So up until now they never came back to take the land.*

Since then, Kakindo has been involved in mobilizing and sensitizing communities in the area to bring them into the Sustainability School. Recently, the community successfully protested against the dumping of oil waste onto their sites for food production. In



*Mrs. Alice Kazimura facilitating at a Sustainability School workshop in Hoima, December, 2015*

addition, community members pressure local government officials to listen to their needs and demands.

Community educators have become facilitators who are now establishing other Sustainability Villages in the region and training educators. The latest development has been the establishment of the Community Green Radio and the formation of Listeners' Clubs who play an important part in shaping the radio's program. More about the Green Radio is explained in its section further on.

NAPE officially launched the Oil Watch Network in 2008 and continues to mobilize and strengthen capacity of oil host community groups operating in the oil region to demand for good governance of Uganda's oil and gas resources.

NAPE trains these Oil Watch Network member groups based in Bunyoro sub region on oil advocacy, builds their capacity on oil and gas impacts on ecosystems and livelihoods as well as Environmental Impact Assessments

(EIAs) for oil refineries and oil pipelines. It supports their national level advocacy through joint petitions to parliament and sub granting small funds to them so that they are able to build their young institutions /organizations and also practically organise advocacy events on good natural resources governance.

The levels of awareness about their rights had increased as shown;

*What shocks me is that refugees from Kenya, Congo, Sudan are welcome, fed very well ... catered for. But for us, nobody cares about us. We are worse than refugees. We have written many petitions to Government. ... it's as if we don't exist. We are poor and voice-less.*

The community seems aware of NAPE's track record in mobilizing against unpopular decisions as suggested by the response "The way NAPE mobilized citizens to rescue Mabira forest, they should help the community to rescue their land." (Community member)

// NAPE intends to give more capacity building to the sub-grantees especially in project implementation, reporting and fundraising so that they can continue to do community mobilization and sensitization on community sustainability issues of concern even when NAPE is no longer working directly in those particular areas

### **Challenges facing the Sustainability School in general**

One of the key challenges to the Sustainability School has been state interference and intimidation. In 2010, some Sustainability School staff while on a familiarization tour of Buliisa District were arrested by a joint force of police and the military. They were taken to the police station and later released without being formally charged.

They were informed that their only offence was trying to do advocacy work in the oil region which according to them (security) was out of bounds for NGOs. Again in the 2012 State of the Nation address, President Yoweri Museveni singled out NAPE as one of the NGOs delaying the refinery process and which needed to be warned.

This was a serious threat especially coming at the backdrop of the arrest of NAPE Executive Director and other members of Save Mabira Crusade and levelling terrorism charges against them. This was because of the role they played in resisting against state give away of Mabira Forest to a sugar growing company.

This problem has mainly been overcome through involving stakeholders including those from the government in implementation of Sustainability School activities. This involvement is done in a way that that doesn't compromise NAPE and maintains its independence as a CSO. This is because NAPE needs to still hold government accountable. This engagement work is within the framework of the law. NAPE also gets cushioned by its local and international networks which join it on joint campaigns. This makes it difficult for the state to single out NAPE only and harass it continuously.

In 2014, the Ugandan Parliament passed the Public Order Management Act (POMA), despite broad criticism by domestic and international civil society organizations. The definition given to "public meeting" by that law means the authorities must be notified of any gathering of three or more people where any political matters are discussed, making it clear that the intentions of the Act is to limit the space for dissent.

Furthermore, assemblies are prohibited between the hours of 6:00pm and 6:00am and no provision is made for allowing spontaneous demonstrations, nor simultaneous or counter demonstrations. Although this law has not affected the Sustainability Villages seriously yet, it is a threat due to the fact that once the government decides Sustainability Villages are disturbing the government they could use this law to more easily interfere.

Another challenge is the government's proposed new NGO Bill 2015 that would grant the Internal Affairs Minister and the National Board for Non-governmental Organisations broad powers to supervise, approve, inspect, and dissolve all Non-governmental Organizations and community based organizations. If this bill is passed in its current form, it will obstruct the ability of all Ugandans to work collectively through local and international organizations on any research or advocacy issues that may be deemed critical of government.

Even before the proposed NGO bill is passed into law, Government of Uganda sometimes threatens to close Civil Society Organizations that are critical of government. In others instances, the same organizations can be appreciated by government. So the relationship between CSOs and government is not

consistent and this often constrains CSO's work including that of NAPE. The government can appreciate the work of an NGO, only to threaten to close it after a few days.

Another challenge within the project is the inability of the School to reach everywhere in the country where its services are required. This challenge may be gradually solved as Sustainability Villages keep interacting with neighboring communities and replicating lessons and good practices continue to be shared. However, there is need for a mechanism to keep monitoring and guiding this spread to minimize the danger of spreading wrong messages.

Sub-granting of NAPE community partner groups was started particularly to counter the above problem because sub-grantees stay near the targeted communities and can therefore reach out to many of them more than NAPE can. NAPE intends to give more capacity building to the sub-grantees especially in project implementation, reporting and fundraising so that they can continue to do community mobilization and sensitization on community sustainability issues of concern even when NAPE is no longer working directly in those particular areas.

Despite the existing educators and learners guidebook, more learning materials are needed to explain the Sustainability School, help communities to found CBOs and to implement their own projects or to do budget planning. More materials would support the Sustainability Villages to move towards working independently. There is also need to periodically update these learning materials to suit new demands and needs.

## Successes and Challenges of the School

### Challenges faced by the Sustainability School in the oil region

In regard to the oil region, one of the biggest challenges has been resistance from the state as explained earlier. Intimidation from police and government officials has been reported with security officials being present at meetings in Sustainability Villages and the arrest of NAPE staff while travelling through the oil region.

However, the state has softened its stand as a result of NAPE's interaction with the President and the Community Green Radio providing opportunities to government officials to explain government programmes and answer queries raised by community members.

They are also invited to the Sustainability School meetings. This has had the positive effects of ending the harassments as well as boosting accountability as officials are now at times attending meetings in Sustainability Villages and have to give

However, the state has softened its stand as a result of NAPE's interaction with the President and the Community Green Radio providing opportunities to government officials to explain government programmes and answer queries raised by community members.

answers to questions from community members.

Another challenge is lack of financial and material resources as well as enough trained personnel to fully respond to the needs of Sustainability Villages. Moreover, the reach of the Sustainability School is still limited due to lack of resources for example field vehicles and other factors, and not all communities who request support and have an interest can be reached. In addition, while exchange visits among members of Sustainability Villages in the oil region, Uganda and other areas are highly valuable, their facilitation however is costly and often cannot be

carried out due to a lack of finances.

With the success of the Sustainability School, oil governance in the region is likely to improve and the worst impacts of oil production may be prevented.

The conflict potential of oil is likely to decrease, oil spills will be prevented or cleaned up efficiently, local residents will be involved in consultation and participation processes for EIAs, communities will learn how to live side-by-side with oil activities and after the oil boom is over will still be able to sustain their livelihoods and the ecosystems in the Albertine region.



The former Minister of Internal Affairs the late General Aronda Nyakairima (right) meets with CSO leaders and security officials (left) in Hoima District in 2014 to discuss their activities in relation to the oil industry

## 5. Community Green Radio

Since 2010, NAPE has been working with communities in Bunyoro under the Sustainability School Programme on issues of community rights and sustainable livelihoods and it is them who expressed their wish to have a community radio to further amplify their voices. This

Environmental radio was mooted to run on the model of a community radio focusing on environmental issues. The Community Green Radio falls under the Sustainability School and was established in 2014 to fill the gap left by many other radio stations in Uganda in covering environmental issues. As noted by Frank Muramuzi, the Executive Director of NAPE, "The environment is a very critical sector for all of us but the current media in Uganda have still not made covering environmental issues a top priority." Community radios usually serve geographical communities or communities of similar interests. They usually broadcast content that is popular and relevant to a local or specific audience but which is always

overlooked by commercial broadcasters. Community radios are usually non-profit making and are usually operated and influenced by the communities they serve. They provide a mechanism for enabling individuals, groups and communities to tell their own stories, to share experiences and in a media-rich world, to become creators of and contributors to media. This radio, aptly named Community Green Radio and is based in Hoima.

The purpose of the radio is to provide a platform for communities in the fragile ecosystem of the Albertine region to express their views freely especially on how they are being affected by the oil industry. The radio gives local communities, cultural leaders, CSOs, government, companies and other development partners opportunities to debate and share information on environment and sustainable development issues. The Community Green Radio was also established to promote mass awareness on the oil industry and its effects on host

communities. Furthermore, the radio seeks to enhance the participation of marginalized sections of the community such as rural women, fisher-folk, rural farmers and the youth in national decision making processes on natural resources management.

Since NAPE could not afford to begin with a fully-fledged radio with our own studio, the radio operates through affiliation with Liberty 89.0 FM which was already established in Hoima town and covers the whole of Bunyoro sub-region and beyond. NAPE pays Liberty FM for Airtime for two hours day from Thursday to Sunday every week. The Community Green Radio is therefore always on air from 1:00 PM-3:00 PM, Thursday to Sunday. Despite the limited time on air, the Community Green Radio (CGR) has been very well received by the people in Bunyoro. NAPE is therefore in the process of mobilizing resources to enable the Community Green Radio to have its own independent studios and to become a fully pledged radio station.

The Green Radio was started with the aim of providing the community with accurate information, promoting awareness about environmental issues, health issues, education issues and communities' rights, empowering communities especially women and to promote gender equality in decision making. It works largely through listeners clubs. The primary role of the radio has been to mobilise the local communities to know their roles and responsibilities in natural resources management and protection of the environment. The radio has helped speed up the process of amplifying the voices of communities including those of women in Bunyoro sub-region in Western Uganda who are grappling with the challenges posed by the mushrooming oil industry in the



*L-R: Mr. Geoffrey Kamese (NAPE senior Programmes Officer, Mr. Robert Katemburira (CGR News Editor) and Mr. Julius Kyamanywa (CGR Station Manager) in the studios on August 1, 2014 when the Community Green Radio first came on air*



*Ms. Precious Naturinda of CGR interviews communities of Kyapalooni in Hoima District who were forced to leave their homes and settle elsewhere to pave way for the oil refinery*

area. It has provided the community with accurate information in different languages and empowered women and promoted gender equality in decision making. It has also created a platform for debate on sustainable development and to promote awareness about environmental issues, health issues, education issues and communities' rights. The radio has become popular in the region because of its pro-people and community centered programming.

The radio has contributed towards the debate for the restoration of Bunyoro's huge forests, wetlands and rivers flowing with fresh water which were being degraded at an alarming rate. This was mostly because of unsustainable methods of agriculture that were being used by farmers, encroachments on wetlands and large commercial agriculture for example tobacco growing.

The radio has taken to higher levels the discussions aimed at halting the degradation and large-scale adverse social and environmental impacts

resulting from the discovery of oil and its exploitation.

The Community Green Radio set aside time every week for government officials to talk to communities and answer their questions on the government development programmes. This has enabled community members to ask their leaders questions on issues

that concern them. This is helping in breaking docility of communities and making them less fearful of the people they chose to lead them and in so doing the Sustainability School's objectives and mission are being met.



**Community Green Radio**  
Baza Green. Hurra Green

Currently the **Community Green Radio** broadcasts through affiliating with Liberty Radio on 89.0 FM. The radio is always on Air from Thursday to Sunday between 1:00 PM-3:30 PM

Office: Muganwa Centre, Hoima Municipality

Tel: +256 794 731214 Email: [greenradio@nape.or.ug](mailto:greenradio@nape.or.ug) Website: [greenradio.ug](http://greenradio.ug)

## Listeners clubs

A community radio rides on the will and wishes of the community it serves. When the radio was initiated, the Sustainability Villages formed listeners clubs and through them, the views and voices of the communities are addressed. Although some of the listeners clubs were formed out of the existing Sustainability School Villages, others were formed independently and then developed into Sustainability villages. This ensures that the Sustainability School approach remain applicable both in the main Sustainability School and in the Community Green Radio. The Sustainability villages and listeners clubs reinforce each other. So far, listeners' clubs are found in Butimba and Kigaga villages, Kyehoro, Kyakatamba, Kijangi, Kaiso Tonya and Sebagoro in Hoima and Nguedo and Buliisa Town council in Buliisa District. The strategy of working through listeners clubs has enabled the ideals of the Sustainability School to spread to areas where the school has not reached.

Listeners' clubs are a group of people who love and support the radio in form of giving news, announcements and contributing to the daily



*Rev. Fred Musimenta of Butimba Listeners Club hands over a container full of honey to CGR staff. Looking on is Ms. Elke Kuhne a radio broadcasting expert who spent a year training the radio staff and listeners clubs representatives in the Community Radio model of broadcasting. Listeners of CGR in Butimba are engaged in environmental friendly income generating activities such as bee keeping and tree planting*



*Representatives of Listeners Clubs pose for a photo after a capacity building workshop at Hotel Riviera in Hoima Municipality in 2014*

**// The listeners' clubs are a link between radio management and the community. They are in fact the wheels that move the Community Green Radio...**

programming of the radio, fundraising for the radio and giving feedback to radio management on relevance of programming and other issues. Club membership is voluntary and free. Clubs

are led by an executive committee elected amongst the community members.

The listeners' clubs are a link between radio management and the community. They are in fact the wheels that move the Community Green Radio. In addition to enhancing listenership of the radio, the clubs mobilise for collective action and work as spring boards to motivate entire communities to take appropriate action. In this way, the Sustainability School and Community Green radio benefit from the synergy built.

The process of creation of more listeners clubs is an ongoing process as the desire for community members is growing day-by-day content for the radio for seven days a week, the Green radio is on air for two hours a day from Thursday to Sunday. It cannot therefore effectively serve the interests and demands of its listeners. There is therefore an urgent need to have a fully-fledged radio station.

## Successes of the Community Green Radio

A number of achievements have been registered by the Community Green Radio. Some community members have now understood how a community radio operates and how listeners' clubs are formed. The radio has advocated for respect for human rights by those involved in the oil industry. The female voices of affected communities which had traditionally been silenced were becoming visible as explained by Mrs. Norah Bahongye a member of Kigaga listeners' club;

*We can also speak and our voices are heard clearly. As women, we didn't know we can contribute to the welfare of the family but with the Community Green Radio program on gender, we are empowered and contribute even more compared to our men.*

The radio has managed to bring leaders to the people they lead through dialogues on air every Friday where government officials and community members discuss topical community and national issues.

As a civil society led radio, Community Green Radio was able to cover a case of illegal eviction in Rwamutonga which authorities did not want publicized. This coverage further attracted attention of foreign media and was broadcasted on Voice of America after which journalists from the United States came to the area to make more investigations. On one of the field visits on 11th November 2015, one community member remarked "The Green Radio is the only hope to these people"... Alozyious Onzima, the LCI chairman for Rwamutonga. As a result of this publicity, the American company which wanted to buy the land where the people had been evicted from lost interest in it and pulled out.

The Green Radio has promoted tree planting and environmental conservation to people of Bunyoro. Byabasole Amos, a member of Kigaga listeners club noted that they did not have much knowledge on tree planting but were only cutting them down. He gave credit to the Green Radio for educating them and confessed that many of the listeners' club members were learners as well since they

regularly acquired new knowledge from Green Radio.

Moses Karuhanga (chairperson of Butimba listeners), said that by appearing on radio programs, members of the communities had changed their lifestyles and were now able to develop themselves. His testimony is proof that community members have participated in radio talk show programmes and this is changing their development agenda. The members of staff of Green Radio were appreciated for taking the lead in the campaign for alternative and environmentally friendly activities especially along Lake Albert shores. It was reported that the staff met community members and offered them platforms to share knowledge and recorded the proceedings. These recorded messages were thereafter relayed on air to encourage others to change their mindset. Some of the alternatives the fisher folk had discussed on radio included going into farming to supply food to the increasing number of people in the area and bee keeping which can fetch them a lot of money if they produce large quantities of honey.



Robert Katemburira of CGR recording voices of members of Kigaga Listeners' Club

**“Listeners clubs motivate us. We are part of the community. By liberating the communities, we are liberating ourselves”.**

The other voices from the listeners' club members portrayed the Community Green radio as a success as shown;

*We migrated from Kisoro. You know this place has many tribes who migrated to this area. I get to understand the customs of the Banyoro through the programmes of Mr. Vincent Nyegenya on the Kinyoro culture on Community Green Radio. It helps me appreciate diversity. We are all people who should work together. I also pick a pen and write the names of trees and their uses and values. This way I appreciate the environment. (VIOLET HAKIZA)*

*We people of this area have gained much from the Green Radio. We get news, they tell us about the importance of trees. Before the Green Radio, we used to cut trees anyhow. We took baboons and chimpanzees as enemies. The radio has taught us to plant trees and appreciate animals as part of nature. ... We listen from Thursday to Sunday only. It's our prayer ... if we could listen from Monday to Monday! We wish it was independent and not attached to Liberty Radio. (Rev Can Jack Ruhindi from Kiziranfumbi sub-county, Hoima District)*

*The challenge is that the radio is on air for a few hours. Also, the most touching women programmes are on Sundays while some of us are in church. We want to hear our voices on the radio. We feel good when we hear our voices on Radio Green. Elderly women are also allowed to have their voices heard. Green radio does not discriminate based on old age. We would like our own radio station ... we would like T shirts for listeners clubs for identification and advertising the radio... (Bulandina Tumwebaze)*

*I went to the radio as a voice of the community and talked about our needs, land rights, rights of women. The radio has helped sensitise people about the procedure for acquiring certificates of landownership. It has sensitized people on diet and dealing with malnutrition. It has provided us an opportunity to demand accountability from government officials and government officials have used the same radio to provide feedback to us. (Annah Basiima)*

*The radio has been talking about re-locations due to oil... People were being given little compensation. We have shown that we are free to go to the radio – that we have a say in land issues ... in relocation issues... In fact one of*

*our members who had acquired a land title used the Green Radio to mobilise other people to get land titles. You know, rich people who want land do not respect people with customary land ownership, they only respect those with land titles. (Amos Byabasole)*

*When I miss a programme because of other responsibilities, I later ask family members or members of the listeners club with whom we have similar interest in the programme for example sports or agro-forestry to update me. (Henry Tumukunde)*

*The Green Radio has helped us to share our challenges as women. As women we are supposed to be smart – see how we look ... even this leesu I got it as a donation. Bring the President to see these children not going to school so that he can tell us the future he expects us to have. (Medius Twinobusinge)*

The listeners clubs have taken on another role that was not envisaged at their inception as suggested by one radio staff who aptly said “Listeners clubs motivate us. We are part of the community. By liberating the communities, we are liberating ourselves”.

### **Challenges faced by the Community Green Radio**

As mentioned earlier, one challenge that is faced is state interference. NAPE has reacted to it by involving government officials in campaigns and allowing them to use the infrastructure of the Sustainability School, for example by proving air time on the Community Green Radio to government officials at no cost. The Internal evaluation of the Sustainability School Programme commissioned by NAPE in 2015 also lists the other Challenges of the Community Green Radio as:

1. Limited time on Air: The listeners would wish to access the community Green Radio at all times throughout the week yet it is only available for two hours per day for four days a week
2. Means of transport: The radio staff said they were getting difficulty in gathering information from the field because of having no transport means at the office. Hiring cars and motorcycles at all times is an expensive venture. Lack of transport is also hindering doing regular field promotions for the school. The community members also always express wish to appear live on the radio and having no means of transport for the station also in a way affects this.

## 6. Partners OF NAPE

One of the key strategies NAPE uses is networking with other relevant civil society groups at community, national and international levels.

The importance of networks is that they add value to the work processes of their members, foster capacity development, and help organizations to gain a wider audience, more political strength, knowledge and support. Some of the international organizations NAPE networks with include Friends of the Earth International (FOEI), Climate Action Network International (CANI), International Pesticide Elimination Network (IPEN), Oil Watch International (OWI), Oil Watch Africa (OWA), Women against Destructive Extractivism (WoMIN), International Rivers (IR), African Rivers Network (ARN), African Biodiversity Network (ABN) and Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA) among others.

At the local national level, NAPE is a member of the Ecosystems Alliance in Uganda, Oil Watch Network-Uganda, Civil Society Coalition on Oil (CSCO), Uganda Wild Life Society (UWS), and Network on Sound Management of Chemicals in Uganda (NESMAC) among others.

At community level, NAPE works through CBOs and other groups such as Butimba Sustainability Development Association, Awoo

**“ I love the programming of the Community Green Radio and the way the staff moderate our talkshows....Mr. Dickens Kamugisha, Executive Director AFIEGO**

Sustainable Development Association, Kakindo Orphans Care and Oil Refinery Affected Residents Association. These partnerships have enabled NAPE to improve the quality of its interventions and the effectiveness of its actions.

NAPE’s partner NGOs have particularly been supportive of the Community Green Radio. They have identified with it and have even sponsored some of its talkshows thus helping it to generate income to cater for some operational expenses. Many of these CSOs have expressed willingness to continue using the Community Radio for their advocacy work though they too regret the fact that it still operates for limited period of time per week. “I love the programming of the Community Green Radio and the way the staff moderate our talkshows. This is the kind of Radio that for us in the Civil Society have been waiting for. It serves and rhymes well with our advocacy strategies and we look forward to using it more and more. NAPE should work on ensuring that the radio is accessible and available

whenever we want to use it,” said Mr. Dickens Kamugisha, the Executive Director of the African Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO)

The evaluations conducted by some development partners have revealed that the SS approach is appropriate for addressing the voicelessness of communities and strengthened NAPE’s resolve to continue using the approach to empower communities. They have also clarified to NAPE that the confusion regarding the conceptualisation of SS that existed among staff, facilitators, collaborating agencies and communities at the beginning of the project had greatly reduced. The recommendations have helped to make the programme more focused on empowerment, strengthened monitoring and reporting systems among others.

The activities NAPE undertakes are supported by funds from the following strategic partners among others: Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), Fund for Global Human Rights (FGHR), Open Society Initiatives for East Africa (OSIEA), Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Both Ends, Gaia Foundation, European Union (EU) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Additional funding is raised by contributions from its membership.



## 7. Way forward

The discussions above point to a need to deepen and broaden the Sustainability School in Uganda. The Sustainability School interventions use multidimensional and holistic approaches because sustainability issues are complex and involve a wide range of interconnections. For example while dealing with issues of land rights, it may require different interventions at different stages. Displaced people may need emergency relief as an immediate intervention, mobilization as a midterm intervention and adequate compensation and resettlement as a long term solution. Advocacy and empowerment is needed at these different stages. Such an approach requires multiple skills, collaboration and networking with a variety of stakeholders and a system that is robust and dynamic. This necessitates constant capacity building.

The Sustainability concept and approach takes a lot of time to internalize and therefore requires financial and other resources on long

rather than short term basis. This is because the facilitators, educators and volunteers need constant retooling so as to address the existing and emerging challenges. The methodologies that enhance learning and action have to be very participatory and this also requires adequate resources to ensure those implementing the programmes are well grounded.

The learning from and with each other and the resultant action which are a hallmark of the Sustainability School blend well with social learning theories and need to be nurtured. They are also consistent with African philosophies that emphasise collective rather than individualistic tendencies. As the communities deal with issues of concern to all community members, collective learning and action rather than individual performance is more appropriate. However, there is need to build the capacity of the animators and actors at different levels of the Sustainability School in order to nurture these practices.

There is need for constant monitoring and evaluation to assess and measure the performance of people involved as well as processes. As the Sustainability School is a new concept, there is need to review the conceptualization to concretise, enrich or adjust the theoretical underpinnings.

Listeners of the Community Green Radio are not satisfied with the limited time the Green Radio is on air as it does not serve all their interests. At the moment, the radio operates through affiliation with the privately owned radio station- Liberty FM and is on air from Thursday to Sunday, from 1:00-3:30 PM. Community members are complaining that this is a very limited time and few days for all their concerns and issues to be covered and therefore request NAPE to give them their own radio station. Community members receive the programmes of the radio very favorably and would like to listen to it more often. Joram Basiima, the Chairperson of Kigaga listeners' club in Kiziranjumbi sub-county summed it thus; "This radio covers the issues that concern our daily lives and aspirations and we would like it to be on air all the time".

The Station Manager, Julius Kyamanywa confirmed this when he said that their greatest challenge is the inability to satisfy the desires of the community. He also added that there is a problem of insufficient funds to reach out to all communities. There is therefore need to fundraise in order meet these challenges.

Despite the limited time on air, the Community Green Radio has managed to attract some sponsorships of its programmes especially from some other CSOs and this is helping in generating income to cater for operational expenses such as rent. "We are sure that



*NAPE needs to do more multi-stakeholder dialogues on contentious issues of national importance*



*Activities aimed at community empowerment should not be relented*

if we had our own studios and we were broadcasting daily for at least 14 hours, we would be able to raise our own income to cater for all our operational expenses” the Station Manager said.

The Green radio should be used to make the voices of the disadvantaged community members and land evictees louder. It should not provide temporary solutions only such as mobilization for relief items but work towards providing a permanent solution. This requires a wide range of competences thus the need for continuous capacity building of the Radio staff.

The Sustainability School has improved participation levels of women in community initiative as a result of gender awareness and training provided. However, there are still gender stereotypes among some community members. This is probably because attitudes take long to change, but it could also be a result of limited coverage of the gender sensitizations and training. More widespread initiatives would enhance gender awareness in the communities.



*Community Green Radio listeners in Hoima district meet with members of the Friends Of the Earth International. The radio needs to be strengthened to serve the target communities more effectively.*

The Community Green Radio has proven to be a powerful advocacy and mobilization tool on its own and has in addition strengthened the performance of the Sustainability School and other NAPE programmes. However, there is need to work towards moving away from being hosted by Liberty Radio to having a fully fledged radio station. This

will increase its impact.

On the whole, the Sustainability School has achieved great success although it still faces a number of challenges. What is not in doubt is its great potential and promise not only for advocacy but also promotion of sustainable management of natural resources in a holistic way.



[1]



[2]



[3]



[4]

[1] NAPE community partners in Kikandwa village, Mityana District having a field training in Analog Forestry. Analog Forestry is being encouraged under the Sustainability School as one of the methods in which farmers can plan their plots to use them hand in hand for agriculture production and environmental conservation activities.

[2] German volunteers who were at NAPE from September to December, 2015 pose for a photo with members of Kakindo Sustainability village in Buliisa District after a field visit. Behind L-R is Felix Schilling, Katharina and Tobias Kalt

[3] Dr. Ephraim Nuwagaba one of the promoters of the Sustainability School tries out one of the bicycles that is used for mobilisation purposes by Community Educators in the Sustainability villages.

[4] The Manager of the Sustainability School Allan Kalangi checks the quality of the signal of the Community Green Radio in Kaiso-Tonya, Hoima District



Ms. Elke Kuhne, a community radio expert training Community Green Radio staff on effectively programming that focuses on listeners' demands and aspirations

Though the Sustainability School mostly works with rural communities, sometimes public dialogues/political cafes are organised to discuss issues that affect all people nationally. The three photos below are of a public dialogue organised by the Sustainability School at Grand Imperial Hotel in Kampala to discuss the economic and environmental Crisis prevailing in Uganda in 2011.

[1] Former Manager of the Sustainability School Prof. Afunaduula presenting at the Public dialogue  
 [2] Mr. Richard Mugisha of OSIEA giving his view.  
 [3] The Panelists; L-R: Prof. Augustus Nuwagaba of Makerere University, The late Prof. Dani Nabudere (Main presenter) Ms. Margaret Ssekagya, former Chairperson of the Uganda Human Rights Commission (Moderator), Prof. Elijah Mushemeza then of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) Secretariat (Main Discussant and Prof. Afunaduula



[1]



[2]



[3]



NAPE staff look at the type of nets used to catch fish on Lake Albert. There is a growing fear that due to the discovery of oil in the region, the government is no longer minding much about the fishing sector which is the main source of income for the oil host communities on Lake Albert Shoreline. This is likely to result in unsustainable methods of fishing, depletion of fish in the lake and hence loss of a main source of food and income for the communities



Mr. Geoffrey Kamese of NAPE examines material used to construct a School in Kaiso-Toonya in Hoima District by one of the oil companies as part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR). After the communities talking much about this poorly constructed Primary School, the oil company was forced to construct in the same place permanent structures for the school.



NAPE staff and partners from AJWS and SSNC plant trees at NAPE head-offices near Entebbe



*These children live in camps for internally displaced people in Hoima District. Their living conditions are extremely bad. They are too young to understand how they ended up living under such circumstances and their future hangs in balance unless something is done quickly about their situation.*



*Whether conditions for such children living in the Albertine region will improve because of revenue from oil remains a question of debate. The same question applies to people living in the fishing village on the right on the shores of Lake Albert*



*Ms. Diallo Carola (left) of RLS and Prof. Afunaduula (former Manager of the SSP) hold a discussion with some elders in Kalangala on issues pertaining to Oil Palm growing and how it was affecting the indigenous communities. This was in 2010*



*Sustainability School staff participate in the ground breaking ceremony for construction of cages to protect community members drawing water at Lake Edward in Kasese District from being attacked by crocodiles*



Sustainability School staff participate in an exhibition during celebrations to mark world Environment Day in 2013



Allan Kalangi of NAPE talks to members of the Sustainability Club at St. Andreas Kahwa Secondary School in Hoima District



Members of Katamba Sustainability village in Biharwe Mbarara District hold a meeting seeking for solutions to the water crisis in the area



Mr. Siegfried Schroeder of RLS interviews Mr. Francis Nyombi the Community Educator for Naminya Sustainability Village during an evaluation exercise of SSP conducted in 2010.



One of the exhibitions on oil and gas held by NAPE in Hoima in 2014



*Community Educators from Butimba Sustainability village (in white T-shirts) teach members of Sebagoro Sustainability village in Hoima District how to make beehives using local materials*

***Members of Kulugulu Sustainability village in Kalangala show Mr. Siefried Schroeder (centre) of RLS their community well which they were trying to protect from the harmful chemicals used in the nearby palm oil plantations. The communities finally won by petitioning Ministry of Water and Environment officials who ordered the Palm Oil Company not to use chemicals near the water source***



**Community Green Radio wins trophy in Hoima Corporate League**



*[ABOVE]* Staff share a light moment before the game in the Hoima Corporate League. NAPE's Community Green Radio emerged third in the 2015 Hoima Corporate League. The radio collected a total of 198.5 points from the five sporting disciplines of soccer, volley ball, draft, pool table and tug of war.

Green Radio came behind Spice FM and Flobbeto Primary school, who were first and second respectively in a competition that attracted thirteen organisations.

Despite being debutants, Community Green Radio staff put up a spirited fight that saw them emerging eighth in soccer, fourth in tug of war, ninth in valley ball, fifth in pool table and third in draft.

*[LEFT]* Peter Araali, the Assistant News editor posing with the trophy at Resort Hotel on 27th.November 2015

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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENTALISTS (NAPE)**



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