

THE SUSTAINABILITY SCHOOL BULLETIN

3rd Edition, May, 2014



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

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ROSA LUXEMBURG FOUNDATION



A map of South Sudan showing its administrative regions. The regions are labeled: KOBOKO, YUMBE, MOYO, LAMWO, KAABONG, MARACHA, ADJUMANI, KITGUM, PADER, AGAGO, KOTIDO, ARUA, AMURU, GULU, ABIM, MOROTO, ZOMBO, NEBBI, NWOYA, OYAM, KOLE, ALEBTONG, AMURIA, NAPAK, KIRYADONGO, APAC, DOKOLO, KATABKI, NAKAPIRIPIT, AMUDAT, BULIISA, MASINDI, AMOLATOR, SERERE, KUMI, BUTAMBULA, NGORA, SIROKO, BUKWO, HOIMA, NAKASONGOLA, KYANKWANZI, NAKASEKE, MAYUNGA, KAMULI, KALIRO, BUDAKA, MANAFWA, TORORO, KIBALE, KIBOGA, LUWEERO, KAMPALA, JINJA, BUIKWE, NAMAYINGO, NAKASEKE, KIBALE, KIBOGA, LUWEERO, KAMPALA, JINJA, BUIKWE, NAMAYINGO, KIBALE, KIBOGA, LUWEERO, KAMPALA, JINJA, BUIKWE, NAMAYINGO. The map also shows the Democratic Republic of Congo to the west, Kenya to the east, and Tanzania and Rwanda to the south. A north arrow is in the top left. Sampling locations are marked with letters A through G in red circles: A (near Buliisa), B (near Kampala), C (near Kibingo), D (near Kiryadongo), E (near Kaseke), F (near Hoima), and G (near Hoima).



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- E**

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EDITORIAL

We are glad to present to you the third edition of the Sustainability School bulletin. This bulletin has been published with financial support from the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung of Germany (RLS). The purpose of the bulletin is to bring you information regarding the implementation of the Sustainability School programme; its achievements and successes, lessons learnt, good practices and challenges encountered and how they are being overcome.

Since 1999, NAPE has been implementing the Sustainability School programme in Uganda under the overall objective of, “ To create a critical mass composed of communities, community leaders, growing Civil Society Organization (CSOs), able to hold the government, individuals and global institutions accountable for the impacts of their actions on people’s livelihoods and national development” NAPE initiated the sustainability School to create awareness among communities on mismanagement and abuse of natural resources and what they can do to reverse the situation. In addition to creating awareness on natural resources management, the School also aims at helping the communities to realize their own rights and entitlements and how they can defend them. It is envisaged that once the school gets fully entrenched, the communities would

be able to carry on the good work of advocating for proper utilization of natural resources and defending their rights even when NAPE is no longer working closely with them.

The bulletin also carries some other information on environment and sustainability issues that may be outside the scope of the Sustainability School programme but have a lot to do with the well being of all Ugandans and the world at large.

We thank those who gave their comments on the previous editions and those who have contributed articles for this edition. We like it so much when we get feedback from our readers

This bulletin is for the time being printed twice a year but it is within our plans to have it printed four times a year beginning with next year. This is because we believe that the best way of tackling the Sustainability challenges of today is by talking about them, writing about them and sharing experiences and information on probable and practical solutions to them.

Enjoy your reading. For any feedback, please send your comments to

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NAPE TO START A COMMUNITY RADIO

By Our reporter

The National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) is slated this year to start a community environmental Radio that will be broadcasting from Hoima in Western Uganda. The NAPE Executive Director Mr. Frank Muramuzi said that the radio that has been named the Uganda Community Green Radio will be broadcasting through affiliation with Liberty Radio on 89.0 FM

Muramuzi said that the radio will be established to fill the gap left by many other radio stations in Uganda in covering environmental issues.

"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," he said.

Muramuzi said that the radio will be aimed at amplifying the voices of the local communities in the eco-sensitive Bunyoro Region to effectively participate in natural resource management processes.

He said that in the past Bunyoro had huge forests, intact wetlands and rivers flowing to the brim with fresh water. He said that the environment in Bunyoro is now being degraded at a fast rate mostly because of unsustainable methods of agriculture that have seen farmers encroaching on wetlands. He said large commercial agriculture for example tobacco

growing has also contributed to environmental degradation in the Bunyoro area. He said that the primary role of the radio therefore would be to mobilise the local communities to know their roles and responsibilities in natural resources management and protection of the environment. Muramuzi added



The Radio aims at amplifying voices of such a community to participate in Sustainable livelihoods programmes (Photo is of Kakindo Sustainability village in Buliisa District)

that the radio would also be used to mobilize the communities in the Albertine region to seize up opportunities presented by the oil industry

Mr. Allan Kalangi the NAPE Programme Officer in charge of overseeing the implementation of the Community Green Radio said that the Radio is not for NAPE but for the communities in Bunyoro region. "NAPE has over four years worked with communities in Bunyoro under the Sustainability School Programme over issues to do with community rights and sustainable livelihoods and it's them who expressed their wish to have a radio to further amplify their voices," he said.

Rev. Fred Musimenta a farmer from Butimba village in Hoima District said that they were very excited about the coming of the environmental community radio in their region which he hoped would go a long way in mobilizing the local communities to improve their livelihoods especially through good agricultural practices that do not degrade the environment

The first voice is slated to come out of the radio on August 1st, 2014

NAPE STAGES EXHIBITIONS ON OIL AND GAS

By Vincent Nyegenya

National Association of Professional Environmentalists has since last year (2013) been staging exhibitions on oil and gas in different parts of Uganda. These include Kampala City, Wakiso District and Hoima District. The Exhibitions being done under the Sustainability School programme are aimed at encouraging all Ugandans right from the grassroots to participate in oil debates so that the oil industry here does not turn into a curse just like in some other countries, but a blessing. The materials being exhibited include books and roll up banners which tell stories of how people in Chad and Cameroon in West Africa have been impacted on by the oil and gas activities

Mr. Allan Kalangi, the Manager of the Sustainability School Programme said that the main objective of the exhibition is to show all members of the public that if the oil resource in Uganda is not well managed, it can cause problems/sufferings similar to those in oil producing countries like Chad and Cameroon in West Africa. The exhibitions depict those countries as facing a lot of problems like environmental degradation, poor health, poverty, corruption and lack of democracy in their countries to mention but a few. But they also show how communities have been coming up to respond to challenges posed by the oil industry

Some of the comments of the people coming to the exhibitions

- Sharing practical experiences is the best way to learn
- The 'oil curse' is already coming to Uganda as the environment was being

degraded because of oil and the affected host communities were not being well compensated

- There is more transparency in Uganda than in Cameroon and Chad
- NAPE also needs to capture voices of the people affected by oil and gas in Uganda, make banners and exhibit everywhere in the country and beyond
- The students wanted oil studies to be compulsory in all schools



The exhibition on oil at Makerere University recently



The Manager Sustainability School explains some facts about oil and gas to some participants, who came to the exhibition at Muganwa Centre in Hoima in February, 2014



NAPE Field Officer for the Oil Region Vincent Nyegenya talks to some of the people who came to the exhibition

CSOs CASE AGAINST NEMA OVER WETLAND DEGRADATION SET FOR OCTOBER 2014

The case in which NAPE and three other CSOs sued the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) over giving a big chunk of Lutembe wetland on the shores of Lake Victoria to Rosebud flower firm is set to be heard in October, 2014 in the High Court. NAPE working with the Advocates for Natural Resources Governance, Greenwatch and Nature Uganda sued NEMA and Rosebud Flower Firm owned by businessman Sudhir Ruparelia.

The lawyer of the for four organizations Mr. Frank Tumusiime says that the High Court has set October 1 and the date for the commencement of hearing of the case and that Justice Benjamin Kabiito will be the presiding Judge.



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

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOOL VILLAGES START PRACTICING ANALOG FORESTRY

By David Kureeba

Two Sustainability villages in Uganda have started practicing Analog Forestry (AF). Analog forestry is an ecological restoration tool that helps to restore the life support systems of the planet – represented by healthy, bio-diverse ecosystems. Analog forestry encourages the promotion of non-timber forest products in generating income for the user communities. The communities practicing AF so far are Rwabalega Sustainability village in Kalangala and Butimba Sustainability village in Hoima District. These communities got interested in AF after a training on Analog Forestry was conducted in Kalangala in April 2014 by NAPE in partnership with Both Ends of Netherlands. The training was attended by Community Educators from Different Sustainability villages as well as other NGOs which included, Uganda Wild Life Society (UWS), Green Watch, Land and Equity Movement in Uganda

(LEMU) and the Kalangala NGO Forum. The training on AF was facilitated by Mr. Perry Ndzefemmegho from the International Analog Forestry Network but who hails from Cameroon. Perry talked about the advantages of AF as, restoration of the forest to support biodiversity as opposed to planting monoculture crops. Because of diversity of plants that are planted, they nourish and replenish the soils hence increasing soil fertility, which supports flora and fauna. Analog forestry also supplements household incomes by generating non timber forest products, which can be put to market for sale. Some of these products include mushrooms, green vegetables, and honey among others.



Participants in the analog forestry training doing soil sampling in Kalangala recently



Rev. Fred Musimenta showing the nursery bed that is being developed for analog forestry at Butimba Sustainability village

It after that training that some community groups vowed to embark on analog forestry immediately. Rev Fred Musimenta of Butimba Sustainability village said, "I have really learnt a lot from this training. I have always had a passion for tree planting and the skills I have acquired will go a long way in boosting up my efforts"

By the time of writing this article, Rev. Musimenta and his group plus the Rwabalita team had already embarked on developing nursery beds for analog forestry

PROMOTING UNWRITTEN LAW IN ECO-SYSTEMS CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION

By Shillar Kyomugisha

Written laws are sets of rules, principles and or guidelines made by man and enforced through social institutions to govern behavior of a community or country. It is a formally recognized mechanism of social control that is reflected in national constitutions of all states. While unwritten, or Earth Law is not written, but a living law. It is a way of life, guided by moral responsibilities where the whole earth community has a duty to care for, and contribute to the integrity and well-being of all including future generations.

The difference between written and unwritten law is that written laws can be altered by way of amendment to the laws to suit the interests and needs of the framers. But this is not possible with unwritten or earth laws because there is no standard steps to alter unwritten laws.

Altering of laws is driven by human interests to accumulate wealth and attain absolute power over others. Meanwhile unwritten or earth laws aims to achieve sustainable livelihoods –living and working that honor the interactions between healthy human communities, intact ecosystems, and prosperous economies, and ability of future generations to meet their needs.

In recent times in Uganda, many pieces of laws in the national constitution have been amended, and even new laws introduced even when they are unpopular and not easy to implement. Often times these laws are formulated to serve the interests of a small section of society (the politically powerful and rich) and always do not protect the rights of communities

and the environment.

At a global scale, the many interrelated crises which the world is living through today –from massive deforestation, mass species extinction to climate change and social and economic inequalities are the results of an alarming breach in human principles of governance over the last fifty or so centuries where written law has been used to legitimize social and ecological destruction. Short-term human interests, fuelled by an insatiable drive to accumulate money and power, have been enshrined in national laws in total disregard for the well-being if the larger earth community.

Application of the unwritten or earth laws in the governance of natural ecosystems started since the creation of the earth. Communities on planet earth have been applying these laws since time immemorial in the governance of natural ecosystems and effectively and successfully protected natural food systems and seeds for reproduction and spread of plant varieties until the last few decades when the concept of globalization come into play.

Unwritten or earth laws work in accordance with the formational of the earth and respect the natural form without altering it, for example, rivers flowing in a certain direction , forests situated where they are and the existence of certain plants and animals species in a given location.

Community governance systems were determined and acceptable by particular communities for example performing rituals on particular spots (sacred natural site) located on rivers, forests, and or lakes to appease the creator and achieve a

particular purpose for example, increased fish catches, rains to fall, and bumper harvest among others. Through this, the lake, forests and river ecosystems would be preserved because all communities would see them as their source of livelihoods. Communities would also preserve certain sacred seeds because they would be used in the performance of rituals and through this, communities would remain food sovereign.

Unfortunately, this trend has sadly changed completely with the introduction of 'written laws' that have superseded the unwritten or the earth law and community governance systems. The crave of certain powerful individuals to control others and accumulate more money has resulted in the formation of bad laws, for example the Biosafety and Biotechnology Laws which promotes genetic engineering of animals and plant species, Plant Varieties Protection Law which promotes individual personas to have patent rights over certain seed varieties and the Wildlife Act, which permits replacing natural ecosystems with other developments among others. Important to note is that little is mentioned on the role of community governance system in the conservation of ecosystems.

Government of Uganda through its programs such as National Agricultural Advisory Services (NADDs) is promoting improved varieties of crops, plants and livestock in many rural areas of Uganda. This in some way has deprived people of their food sovereignty because some recent media reports indicate that already, these varieties of crops cannot be replanted while for the trees (pines in particular) and livestock, cannot regenerate and reproduce respectively.

The situation has been worsened by the extractive



Some of the representatives of civil society, oil affected communities, traditional kingdoms and lawyers in a training session -laying strategies on pushing for legal recognition of Unwritten Law in Nature conservation in Uganda. The training took place in March, 2014 at Forest Cottages in Bukoto, Kampala. The training was organised by NAPE together with the Gaia Foundation with Financial support from the European Union.



developments of high-value minerals such as oil and gas in fragile ecosystems and even in sacred natural sites, lakes, and wildlife reserves. This extractive model of development is greatly affecting the Lake Albert ecosystem. Already there are media reports of decreasing fish stocks and a risk of water pollution as some of the oil well such as Ngassa 1 and 2 are found in the lake.

There is urgent need to review and reclaim the earth law and community governance system because this will go a long way in reinstating mother earth as well as addressing the negative impacts of ecosystem degradation. Short of this, will lead to complete loss of life giving systems.

MINING AND ITS IMPACTS ON RURAL COMMUNITIES

By Shillar Kyomugisha

The mining sector in Uganda is increasingly expanding as more minerals are discovered, the commonest form of mining being artisanal. Currently mining is taking place mainly in Mubende, Karamoja, Kasese and Kisoro districts of Uganda among others and the common minerals being Gold, salt, limestone, and iron ore. Many other minerals continue to be discovered in other districts for example oil and gas in Buliisa, Hoima, Kanungu, Kasese and Amuru districts. Whereas the mining industry in Uganda is still at small scale, there is a likelihood that it will expand especially with the current discoveries of oil and gas in the Albertine region of Uganda.

To most Ugandans and the government, discovery and extraction of minerals is viewed as a source of wealth, in form of well paying jobs, businesses and increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) huge sums of money especially on the side of Government. According to Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD), mining is expected to play a large role in the future economic development of Uganda. MEMD says that mining especially of oil and gas will create jobs and is envisaged to be the biggest foreign exchange earner in the near future.

Unfortunately, the social and environmental cost of extracting and exploring minerals in Uganda is increasingly becoming unbearable especially when it comes to land issues and degradation of the natural environment. Extraction of minerals has come along with grabbing of community land and forced evictions by private individuals, government and mining companies. This contradicts article 237 (1) of the 1995 constitution of the republic of Uganda which states that "land belongs to the citizens of Uganda." What keeps ringing in people's minds is, Whom does land belong to, to the citizens or government?

This comes at a time when communities especially those around mining areas are being forced out of their land by government without being given a fair hearing to negotiate or state the value of their land and other properties.

In other mining districts of Uganda, the situation is not any different. Media reports already indicate land grabbing in the gold mining areas of Karamoja. According to the Weekly observer of 30th June 2014, communities' land around gold mining areas of Karamoja is being given to dubious investors. Local leaders in Karamoja say that the government is conniving with unknown people to fence off huge chunks of mineral rich land for their private business under the guise of conserving the environment.

Whereas Uganda's land law recognize customary land ownership, the government has never granted customary certificates anywhere in the country. In Karamoja, land is owned communally and it is the elders in charge of how it should be used. Land grabbers are taking advantage of the ignorance of the elders who cannot read or write by giving them posho and ajon (local brew) and are told to thumb-print on documents authorizing their land take-away. Also, the communal land form of ownership in the area gives mining companies and individual's leeway to exploit the communities because they lack a basis for claiming ownership benefits.

According to the 2003 Mining Act of Uganda, benefits from mining are shared as follows; 80% to government, 17% to the district and 3% to the land owners. This is contrary to the situation in Karamoja and other mining areas in the country. There are currently more than 20 mining companies licensed to carry out mining activities in Karamoja but the communities have nothing to show as wealth realized from mining!.

A report by Human rights Watch (Impact of mining on Human rights in Karamoja 2014), indicate that already people are being chased away from their land by mining companies and security agencies and are excluded from decision making about development on their own land. There are likelihoods of clashes and resultant loss of lives between the artisanal gold miners (who are mainly Karimajongo) and the large mining companies and this is likely to have far reaching impacts on communities especially near Gold mining areas.

Around the gold mining areas in Mubende district in western Ugandan, families are forcefully being evicted from their land to create way for gold mining. Reports by observer newspaper 2012 indicated that 250 families had already been evicted. The number continues to increase as the mining expands.

From the gender perspective, women continue to suffer impacts of mining and the resultant land grabbing more than the men. Hear the voices of some of the oil refinery affected women in Uganda.

Stella Keihangwe says, "Government has not done anything. It is now two years since we were told not to grow food crops that go beyond 3 months on our land. Issues concerning families and land have got worse. Men left homes after receiving land compensation money! Government accepted only men to sign over land. So as women, when we ask 'should we sign and give our account numbers' they ignore us!"

Another women also affected by the oil refinery area had this to say; when they came to demarcate the boundaries of the road to the refinery area, they did



An oil refinery affected woman narrating her ordeal during a media interview

gardens being demarcated without our permission. Neighbors of mine had their garden cut down.

The realization of the fact that most of the mining activities take place in highly fragile ecosystems is of paramount importance. Such ecosystems are Sacred Natural sites whose destruction means destruction of communities' places of highly ecological, spiritual and cultural significance.

Government should recognize the right of communities to take part in decision making over their land and should seek for their consent when it has vested interests. Government should take into account and address particularly in policies impacts of mining and other extractive activities on local communities especially the vulnerable groups like women and children. Civil society organizations should strengthen capacity of the communities around mining areas to resist extractive activities and the resultant land grabbing, lest they remain destitute in their own land.

WOMEN OF KAISO-TONYA SUSTAINABILITY VILLAGE START INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES

By Sostine Namanya

A women group under Kaiso-Tonya Sustainability village has started income generating activities which include knitting, weaving and making baskets. Ms. Immaculate Businge the Secretary of the Group but also a community Educator for Kaiso-Tonya Sustainability village says that doing economic activities together was aimed at bringing more unity among the women and also help them uplift their standards of living.

"As women, we have many responsibilities taking care of our families. We therefore need to learn together, work together and earn together where that can be possible" she said.

Businge said that in their group they teach the members knitting and making baskets and that what they make, they sell to the members of the public and then plan together on what to do with their money. He said that they have plans of acquiring sewing machines so that they provide better employment for their members. She said that under the Sustainability



The drama group at Kaiso-Tonya Sustainability village entertaining visitors recently. On the table are some of their crafts

School, they have been learning to look for alternative sources of income other than just fishing and that this was therefore one attempt at diversifying. She said that NAPE has supported their initiative with some little funds.

Mr. Allan Kalangi, the Manager of the Sustainability School Programme said that NAPE received some funds from OSIEA to sub-grant activities of small community groups and that Kaiso-Tonya is one of them. The Kaiso-Tonya community is also engaged in tree planting around their houses.

COMMUNITY EDUCATORS TURN INTO FACILITATORS

By Vincent Nyegenya

Some Community Educators have now reached a level of working as facilitators within the Sustainability School programme. The Manager of the School Mr. Allan Kalangi says that these are educators who started with the School in 2010 and have now gained experience in community facilitation methods and grasped the concept and application of the Sustainability School. He gave examples of these Educators as Ms. Alice Kazimura, the Community Educator for Kakindo Sustainability village in Buliisa District, Rev. Fred Musimenta, the Community Educator for Butimba Sustainability village in Hoima District, Pastor Francis Nyombi of Naminya Sustainability village in Buikwe District and Mr. Jim Jim Gyagenda, the Educator of Kulungulu Sustainability village in Kalangala District.



Ms Alice Kazimura (standing) facilitating during a Training workshop for Community Educators at Riviera Hotel in Hoima recently

Kalangi said that these Educators were now handy in establishing other sustainability villages in their districts and training other educators thus giving a big boost to the strength of the Sustainability School network



*A Publication of the National Association of
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