



UGANDA'S NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE LEARNING STRATEGY: A COORDINATED EFFORT TO BUILD CAPACITY AND KNOW- LEDGE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

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ACTION AREA: ————— Cross-cutting

FOCUS AREA: ————— Preparing

COUNTRY: ————— Uganda

SECTORS

INVOLVED: ————— Cross-sectoral

TIMEFRAME: ————— 2011-2022

CASE SUMMARY: ————— Many countries including Uganda lack the technical and human resource capacities to effectively integrate climate change considerations into strategy development and planning at the national level. Uganda, through its Ministry of Water and Environment with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and UN CC:Learn, developed the 'National Strategy and Action Plan to Strengthen Human Resources and Skills to Advance Green Low Emission and Climate Resilient Development 2013-2022' as a coordinated effort to bridge capacity gaps and proactively act on climate change. By formalising the commitment to addressing climate change and outlining key pathways to improve key stakeholder capacities, the strategy has been successful in catalysing the integration of climate change considerations across a wide spectrum of ministries and sectors including the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Works and Transport, and the Ministry of Tourism.

The strategy constitutes a good practice as it has been developed in a cross-sectoral and collaborative manner. Furthermore, it has enjoyed sustained political support and entailed the development of targeted trainings materials and capacity-building measures for key sectoral stakeholders.





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BACKGROUND: In Uganda, the global climate change models project an increase in average temperatures by up to 1.5 °C in the next 20 years and up to 4.30°C by the 2080s according to the Fourth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Assessment Report. Changes in rainfall patterns and total annual rainfall amounts are also expected. Based on the models, predictions indicate an increase in rainfall of 10–20% over most of the country with a decrease expected over the semi-arid cattle corridor. From the precipitation predictions, it is estimated that there will be 10 to 20% increase in runoff under future climate change scenarios for most of Uganda (MWE, 2007).

Uganda is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, particularly relating to agriculture, food security, water availability, and health. Among the many threats count soil erosion and crop damage from higher average rainfall and high intensity events, increased drought intensity, increased risk of flooding, malnutrition and food insecurity resulting from crop damage from floods and droughts, and increased incidence of water-related (i.e. malaria) and water-borne (i.e. cholera) diseases (MWE, 2007).

Uganda has made substantial strides towards developing a national policy for addressing climate change, inter alia through the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) in 2015. This policy provides direction to all sectors affected by climate change to facilitate adaptation and mitigation and to strengthen coordination of efforts amongst all sectors to build an overarching climate-resilient national development process (Uganda Ministry of Water and Environment Climate Change Unit, 2018). The National Climate Change Communications Strategy from 2018 aims to improve an effective dissemination of climate change adaptation and mitigation information across the country. These two policies coupled with the Second National Communication on Climate Change (2014) form the backbone of the climate policy framework for Uganda.

The policy framework builds upon the 'National Strategy and Action Plan to Strengthen Human Resources and Skills to Advance Green Low Emission and Climate Resilient Development 2013–2022' – in short Uganda's National Climate Change Learning Strategy – developed in June 2013. Early on, Uganda recognised climate change as a critical challenge that needs to be overcome in order to achieve its ambitious development objectives. However, the country also identified key gaps in technical, institutional, and human resource capacities as a significant limiting factor to effectively responding to the challenge. To address this shortfall, the country initiated a national UN CC:LEARN Pilot Project (2011–2013) to strengthen individual skills and institutional capacities to foster green and climate-resilient development. The cross-cutting impacts of climate change in Uganda have thus become issues of both national and individual interest and have attracted the attention of various institutions to engage in the production of climate change-related knowledge through various actions. The first major milestone of this effort was the development of the National Climate Change Learning Strategy.

While the successful 2013 strategy was focused on building individual and institutional capacities to address climate change, the NCCP was mainly focused on mainstreaming climate change considerations into the policies of the most affected sectors. The 2018 summary version of the NCCP, which highlights key aspects of the policy, provides direction on how the government aims to implement the NCCP. As its first policy priority, the NCCP seeks to 'Promote and support climate change education, awareness raising and capacity development for stakeholders from the local level to the national level' (Uganda Ministry of Water and Environment Climate Change Unit, 2018). This shows the continuing importance of the 2013 learning strategy for further policy action on climate change in the East African country.



Figure 1: The launch event of the Uganda National Climate Change Learning Strategy with over 60 participants, June 2013, Kampala (Uganda Ministry of Water and Environment Climate Change Unit, 2013)

ACTIVITIES:

Uganda's National Climate Change Learning Strategy from 2013 outlined several key activities for strengthening climate change learning and development in Uganda (Uganda Ministry of Water and Environment Climate Change Unit, 2013):

- Enhance the capacities of the UNFCCC National Focal Point for Uganda (i.e. the Climate Change Unit, Ministry of Water and the Environment).
- Strengthen human resource technical skills and reinforce technical equipment and station networks for climate monitoring, detection, and attribution within the Department of Meteorology.
- Consider developing climate change learning materials and modules on key sectors, particularly agriculture, water, and energy. Agriculture is vulnerable to climate change, but at the same time represents 22% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs 72% of the working population. Water is an important resource for Uganda, which is part of the Great Lakes region. However, this resource is highly dependent on rainfall. Finally, despite its energy potential of 4500 megawatt and an oil potential of 2.5 billion barrels, Uganda is a country where only 12% of the population has access to electricity (Cole et al., 2014). The following measures within these three sectors were included as potentially interesting for the development of learning material:
 - Agriculture: Promote the integration of climate-smart agriculture, an integrated range-land management, and community-based adaptation strategies into the national policy and on-the ground implementation;
 - Water: Promote water harvesting and efficiency in water utilisation, invest in decentralised water recycling facilities, and increase the coverage of water supply and treatment facilities;
 - Energy: Promote energy efficiency, develop the use of briquettes as an alternative to charcoal to limit deforestation, and develop incentives to reduce reliance on biomass and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in the commercial sector.



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- Support on-going efforts to integrate climate change learning in curricula from the primary to the tertiary level.
- Economically value climate change impacts in key sectors.
- Assess the impacts of climate change learning and lay the foundation for learning to be a more continuous process within ministry operations. This also includes a review of the effectiveness of the implementation of this strategy in 2022.
- Harmonise climate change learning among different institutions and levels.
- Promote education, research, and outreach programmes on the impacts of climate change.
- Design and deliver training programmes on climate change, particularly focusing on building the capacity of high and mid-level government officials, civil society, private sector actors, and the media to grasp and tackle the impacts of climate change.

INSTITUTIONS

INVOLVED:

- **MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT:** Coordinates the overall efforts with regards to the strategy.
- **NATIONAL COORDINATING MECHANISM:** Developed and manages the strategy and includes: The Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Energy, the National Planning Authority, the Ministry of Finance, the Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Water and Environment, the Department of Meteorology, the National Curriculum Development Centre, the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Works and Transport, and the Ministry of Tourism.
- **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** UNITAR and UN CC: Learn, the United Nations Development Programme, the Makerere University, the Danish International Development Agency, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) provided off-budget support to strengthen skills development and learning among the key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the strategy.

COOPERATION WITH:

— Researchers, local authorities, civil society, private sector, communication professionals

FINANCE:

— The Swiss Government through UN CC:Learn provided seed capital to support the initiatives highlighted in the strategy. The general goal was to kick start the actions (Uganda Ministry of Water and Environment Climate Change Unit, 2013).

The Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the European Union (EU), and the German International Development Agency (GIZ) have also pointed to their continuing commitment to the capacity-building efforts (ibid). The government of Uganda also provided budget for funds to implement the actions and activities laid out in the strategy.

IMPACT OF ACTIVITIES:

— Uganda has taken deliberate steps to mainstream and build capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change, particularly within the government ministries including:

• STRENGTHENING OF SCIENTIFIC SKILLS OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES TO ENSURE BETTER OWNERSHIP OF CLIMATE CHANGE ORIENTATIONS AND PRIORITIES:

The Ministry of Water and Environment hosted a two-day training event for desk officers to strengthen their basic change skills with regards to climate change and help them carry out their tasks. In total 40 individuals from more than 30 sectors and other organisations including front line ministries such as Education and Sports, Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Local Government, and the Office of the Prime Minister participated in the event. A three-day training session during the first week of September 2013 provided an overview of: (i) the tasks to be performed by climate change managers; (ii) the observed and projected impacts of climate change in Uganda; and (iii) relevant climate change adaptation and mitigation options for Uganda with practical examples from the sectors represented in the training (Uganda Ministry of Water and Environment Climate Change Unit, 2013). This training was also used to launch the UN CC:Learn Introductory e-Learning Course on Climate Change in Uganda.

• STRENGTHENING OF LEARNING MATERIALS THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING MANUALS TO SUPPORT UGANDA'S IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 6 OF THE UNFCCC CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

Building on the initial training, the Climate Change Department of the Ministry of Water and the Environment published the 'National Climate Change Training Manual for the Inter-Institutional Climate Change Desk Officers and Relevant Stakeholders for Uganda' in 2017 to strengthen knowledge and skills for the integration of climate change into different sectors of the economy. Specifically, the manual provides level-setting for basic awareness on climate change, detailed description of the relevance and impact on specific sectors and ministries in Uganda including key cross-sectoral impacts. Furthermore, it outlines possible mitigation and adaptation opportunities: For example, agricultural policies have defined adaptation measures such as water use control, soil and species conservation practices, etc.

• DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW APPROACH FOR MAINSTREAMING CLIMATE CHANGE INTO EDUCATION SYSTEMS:

In 2015, the Ministry of Education and Sports approved two readers on the impacts of climate change to be used by primary schools and the national curriculum. The readers are geared towards P4-P7 students and aim to provide an introduction to climate change through storytelling. They were deployed as supplementary materials to allow for more immediate integration rather than having to wait for the 5-7-year cycle of the National Curriculum Development. The readers are important evidence of the commitment from the Ministry of Education and Sports to integrate climate change awareness into the education sector.

WHY IS IT

GOOD PRACTICE:

————— A few key aspects of Uganda's Climate Change National Strategy led to effective outcomes for mainstreaming climate change into government planning in Uganda:

• MULTI-LEVEL AND CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATION FROM INCEPTION: With an overall coordination from the Ministry of Water and Environment, the strategy was developed and managed through a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder arrangement known as the National Coordination Mechanism at the national level and through Environment and Natural Resources Officers at the local level (Uganda Ministry of Water and Environment Climate Change Unit, 2013). The National Coordinating Mechanism is composed of high-ranking representatives from across the Government of Uganda. This mechanism allows for strong sustained coordination at multiple levels of government which ultimately contributes significantly to project success and longevity.



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- **POLITICAL BUY-IN AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT:** The implementation of the strategy has taken a focused approach to connecting climate change learning to specific gaps that need to be addressed in order to meet high profile national commitments for climate action. This created a clear vision for the necessity of the strategy and its activities and worked to build sustained political buy-in and even committed financial support for its ongoing development and implementation.
- **INNOVATION:** A key element of the strategy was its innovative approach to collaborate with specific sectoral actors to develop flexible training materials and planning approaches that could be adapted to a variety of different settings. Instead of working in isolation, the strategy sought to co-create the outcomes which contributed to effective operationalisation and sustained uptake of the strategy's target recommendations.
- **REPLICABILITY:** The strategy itself is also quite adaptable to different countries and regions as it essentially provides a blueprint for assessing capacity gaps related to specific planning commitments on climate change and for directly developing training and material to help address those gaps utilising a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach.

SUCCESS FACTORS: — Several factors helped drive successful development and implementation of the strategy:

- **CONTINUOUS STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND BUY-IN:** In addition to the coordination mechanism discussed above, the development process for the strategy included inception workshops and, importantly, a mid-term workshop in 2012 that identified concrete action to strengthen institutional capacities in the country to deliver learning on climate change. The workshop focused on several sectors, including: Education, agriculture, energy, water, forestry, environment, tourism, works and transport. It assembled more than 50 participants from various government sectors, Members of Parliament, education and training institutions, the private sector and civil society (UN:CC Learn, 2013a). These touch points helped to continuously align the strategy with the needs and priorities of the various government sectors, which improved the buy-in and support for the strategy.
- **A STRONG POLICY ENTREPRENEUR FOR DRIVING ACTION:** The leadership of H.E. Prof. Ephraim Kamuntu, the Minister of Water and Environment of Uganda, played a crucial role in driving forward the development of the strategy as this high-level actor had the capacity and influence to actually bring together key actors and gain commitment and support from the government of Uganda.
- **ANCHORING TO BROADER KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT EFFORTS:** By embedding itself within UN CC: Learn, the strategy was able to leverage a strong network of technical support and funding that helped to drive forward its development and operationalisation within different sectors.
- **DELIBERATE PLANNING FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION:** The project instituted a mechanism to monitor the collection and analysis of data, derivation of lessons learned, and absorption and utilisation of those lessons from the various ministries all the way down to district local governments. This not only helped ensure longevity, but also connected the strategy to the planning and budgeting processes for Uganda's Joint Assessment Framework. The Joint Assessment Framework is a government-led process that brings together different stakeholders to discuss the implementation status of the education sector plan and national sector implementation frameworks, including expenditures, progress and results.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS / CHALLENGES: —————

WHAT WERE THE MAIN BARRIERS / CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY?

FINANCIAL:

Uganda lacked the funding necessary to develop and implement the strategy. Also the late release of funds hampered the process.

POLITICAL:

At time, building and maintaining buy-in from key government stakeholders proved to be difficult.

HOW WERE THESE BARRIERS / CHALLENGES OVERCOME?

The government of Uganda was able to build strong partnerships with development partners and gain their commitment to support the strategy.

As part of the strategy, direct and tailored training and support was provided for various ministry actors to maintain their buy-in and support.

LESSONS LEARNED: ————— Key lessons learned and best practices from the development of the strategy include:

- **CONNECT THE LEARNING STRATEGY TO SUPPORTING KEY OBJECTIVES IN NATIONAL CLIMATE PLANNING AND COMMITMENTS:** Uganda's National Climate Change Learning Strategy has been connected to further policy developments in this area. This ensured that the framework elements were mutually supporting.
- **INTEGRATE THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT EFFORTS:** It has been considered beneficial to integrate the development of a learning strategy on climate change with other international knowledge management efforts in the case of Uganda. The UN CC:Learn proved to be a crucial partner for building the strategy and capacities of the actors involved throughout.

HOW TO REPLICATE THIS PRACTICE: —————

The key considerations for replication of the development and implementation of a national climate change learning strategy include:

- **DEVELOP AND LEVERAGE A NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISM:** Through the National Coordination Mechanism, Uganda's government was able to effectively ensure the participation and buy-in from key ministries.
- **PROVIDE ADAPTABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING:** In order to disseminate knowledge on climate change, focused training materials should be readily available that can be easily tailored and adapted to individual sectors.

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FURTHER KEY

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WEBSITES:

Not available.

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CASE STUDY

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