

Climate and Development Outlook

Stories of change from CDKN

Uganda Special Edition

UGANDA IS TACKLING TODAY'S CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

By **Revocatus Twinomuhangi**, CDKN country engagement lead, Uganda

Uganda is a low-income country whose economy has recently enjoyed a growth spurt. Uganda's leaders have set their sights on achieving upper middle income status in a generation's time.

However, climate change could have a deep influence on Uganda's development progress. Highly dependent on the climate-sensitive sectors of agriculture, tourism, water and energy, Uganda has suffered more frequent droughts, floods and other extreme climate events in recent decades. The economy and population are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

The reality of climate change for Ugandans

Droughts are becoming more frequent, floods are lasting longer, and temperatures are higher than normal. Ugandan farmers are experiencing crop failure, which can affect food availability. This in turn results in a rise in food prices, or instances where subsistence farmers are simply left without food.

Flooding has been equally damaging: cut-off roads and bridges, destroyed homesteads

and farms mean price increases for all Ugandans. The whole spectrum of society is affected.

Ugandans know that their lives are being affected by climate variability, but they don't always attribute it to climate change. Superstition can play a role and some communities believe that extreme weather events are a form of punishment. Education is necessary.

Ugandans are coping in various ways. Thousands have migrated from areas that are prone to flooding, while others have established drainage channels to redirect the flood waters away from their livelihood activities. In certain communities, locals have used soil to fill low-lying areas in order to stop water from reaching their homes. In some cases, this has meant building soil banks that reach halfway up their doorways. The entrances look like windows because so much soil has been added there.

In other communities, people have formed social groups to assist each other when the extreme weather has a devastating effect.

But these options are not for everyone.

continued on page 3 >>



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Helping developing countries to design and deliver climate compatible development

Uganda's climate change and development plan

Uganda's development agenda is articulated in Uganda Vision 2040, the country's long-term development blueprint. Vision 2040 aims to achieve a green economy and a clean environment in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. However, climate change is a key challenge, which could prevent the attainment of the Vision 2040 development goals.

Key areas for CDKN support in Uganda are:

- an economic assessment of the impacts of climate change
- Uganda's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
- safe water in sub-Saharan Africa
- decision-making, implementation and the social and economic impacts of climate risk-induced resettlement in urban areas: Kampala case study
- Africa clean cooking energy solutions
- support for the African Climate Change Resilience Alliance.

INSIDE »

- overview of Uganda's progress on climate compatible development
- National Climate Change Policy
- making the economic case for adaptation
- interview with Chebet Maikut, Commissioner of Uganda's Climate Change Department

THE COST OF INACTION WOULD BE 20 TIMES THE COST OF TAKING ACTION NOW

During the next 50 years, it is expected that average temperatures in Uganda will rise by around 2°C. Rainfall will be more erratic, unpredictable and intense, with shorter rainy seasons, and distribution patterns will change. There is also likely to be an increase in extreme weather events such as floods, heat and droughts. Significant reductions in rainfall are particularly expected over Lake Victoria, whose northern shore includes Uganda's largest city, Kampala. The capital city is home to more than 1.5 million people and the majority of the country's infrastructure. Uganda's economic and social prosperity will greatly depend on how it responds to the changing climate.

Until recently, there was little evidence of the current and future costs of climate variability and predicted climate change, or of the necessary adaptation measures for different sectors at both national and local levels. The Government of Uganda commissioned an economic assessment of the impacts of climate change to provide this evidence. The aim of the study was to help policy-makers mainstream climate change and resilience into national and sectoral policies and to develop the case for investing in adaptation.

Supported by CDKN and the UK Department for International Development (DFID)'s Uganda office, the study concluded that investing in climate change adaptation now will be substantially cheaper than responding to the expected impacts, and can go hand in hand with achieving Uganda's development objectives. It also reinforced the need for urgent action on many measures, which are already listed in Uganda's National Climate Change Costed Implementation Strategy.

The study assessed the impacts of climate change under two scenarios – an ambitious, low-emissions scenario and a high-emissions scenario – using data from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It then analysed the economic impact of the expected climatic changes under the two scenarios on four sectors at the national level: water,

infrastructure, agriculture and energy. The study also illustrated the economic case for investing in climate adaptation, using five case studies:

- infrastructure in the Kampala urban area
- coffee production in the Bududa district of Mount Elgon
- agriculture in three villages across different agro-ecological zones of the Karamoja region
- water and hydropower in the Mpanga River catchment
- malaria prevalence in the Kabale and Tororo districts.

Over an 18-month period, the study team engaged with about 200 stakeholders from the Government of Uganda and 300 people from districts and civil society through face-to-face meetings, workshops, interviews and field missions. The final results were presented at a national outreach event, held in Kampala in November 2015.

Reacting to the study's findings in an interview with one of Uganda's largest daily newspapers, the Water and Environment Minister Ephraim Kamuntu commented, "This evidence is now clear; it should help policy-makers in mainstreaming climate change. We should now be able to convince anybody because in the Finance Ministry, you cannot talk without figures".¹

Key messages from the study

1. **Uganda's development goals will only be reached if action is taken to address the impacts of climate change on the country.**
2. **The impacts of climate change are expected to be felt across all sectors and local areas studied, to varying degrees.**
3. **The cost of adaptation is high, estimated at around US\$406 million over the next five years (2015–2020). On an annual basis, this amounts to about 5% of net official development assistance received and 3.2% of total government revenues (excluding grants).**
4. **The cost of inaction is 20 times greater than the cost of adaptation:**



inaction is estimated at between US\$3.1 billion and 5.9 billion per year by 2025, which is more than 20 times the proposed adaptation budget.

5. The economic case for adaptation is clear. **Many of the adaptation measures proposed in the study are 'no regrets' investments** in that they are valid for development purposes even without considering climate change impacts.
6. **Considering the co-benefits further strengthens the case for adaptation.** These include improved livelihoods, health and access to energy, representing strong investments in the development of Uganda's future.

Evidence from the study has already informed Uganda's national commitment to the Paris climate agreement – its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC). Going forward, it is hoped that Uganda will support the development of a climate change law in 2016, the implementation of the Second National Development Plan (2015–2020) and the integration of climate change into sectoral policy and development plans at the national and local levels. All of these actions will be essential to delivering on Uganda's international climate change commitments and achieving Vision 2040.

Further information, including a short film about the economic assessment and all the study reports, can be found at: <http://cdkn.org/resource/report-study-shows-that-inaction-on-climate-change-will-cost-uganda-20-times-more-than-adaptation/>.

¹ *Daily Monitor*, Monday, 14 December 2015.

>> continued from page 1

New development policies to tackle climate change

“The impacts of climate change pose a great challenge to Uganda’s development and are likely to undermine the achievement of Uganda’s development goals in particular the Vision 2040 – attaining an upper middle income status by 2040”, said the Honourable Ephraim Kamuntu, Minister of Water and Environment, in a recent statement (December 2015).

To tackle the challenge, Uganda’s government has committed to embracing development that is resilient to climate impacts and curbs the greenhouse gas emissions that would drive further warming, an approach known as ‘climate compatible development’. Uganda’s development framework – the Uganda Vision 2040 – together with the five-year National Development Plans (NDP), explicitly seek to pursue climate-resilient and low-carbon development paths.

A National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) – approved by the Ugandan Cabinet in April 2015 – aims to harmonise climate change action across all sectors and levels of governance.

At the subnational level, climate change actions are starting to take root. Both the Mbale region and the City of Kampala have developed their own climate change strategies.

Importantly, the government has addressed climate change at the national level, creating a new Climate Change Department to improve the coordination of climate action across economic sectors. This development – in 2014 – gave climate action a stronger legal basis as well as greater human and financial resources.

Uganda has also adopted a ‘green growth’ framing, which recognises that economic growth need not be at the expense of climate and the environment, but that climate mitigation, adaptation and economic growth can progress in tandem. Both Vision 2040 and the NCCP prioritise green growth and a green economy. Uganda is currently preparing a Green Growth Development Strategy.

So, what will Uganda’s climate action cost? The government has worked out a costed implementation strategy for the climate change policy and it estimates

that 30% of the costs of climate action over the next 15 years can be met from national sources. The 70% gap means that substantial international finance will be needed to meet Uganda’s policy ambitions.

Like almost 200 other countries, Uganda submitted a national climate commitment – known as an Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the United Nations climate talks in Paris in late 2015. Uganda’s INDC states that the full implementation of the country’s priority adaptation and mitigation strategies is conditional on accessing significant external support. The Government of Uganda is already hard at work on this task, mobilising resources locally and internationally, and recently applying for accreditation to the Green Climate Fund (GCF). If successful, the application could unlock a vital new source of financing for Uganda’s climate action.



CDKN’s work with vulnerable communities

- CDKN has been supporting a Uganda-based non-profit service, called Whave, to develop and pilot a model for safe and secure water in Uganda. The model has demonstrated how the functionality and reliability of water sources can be massively improved for rural communities that adopt a contracted cost-sharing approach to preventative maintenance. Monitoring water quality in the home as well as at source, together with training and advice, has also helped to increase hygiene levels, which has had a positive impact on rural sanitation and health. A short film showing the benefits of the model has been created, and is available at www.youtube.com/cdknetwork.
- Through its Business Partnerships Programme, CDKN funded a project to test a model of distributed renewable energy in rural Uganda. ‘Africa Power’ is deploying an off-grid, rural electrification model to demonstrate the commercial viability of deploying independent power systems tailored to the specific needs of customers. The systems include a renewable energy power system to power a village cell phone tower, a solar powered drip-irrigation system capable of irrigating smallholdings and solar household power systems that provide lighting and charge cell phones.



“Countrywide, Ugandans are feeling the effects of climate-related challenges, which are increasing in frequency and intensity. The impacts are affecting all levels of Ugandan society.”

REVOCATUS TWINOMUHANGI, CDKN
COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT LEAD, UGANDA



INTERVIEW WITH CHEBET MAIKUT, COMMISSIONER OF UGANDA'S CLIMATE CHANGE DEPARTMENT



"Uganda is very optimistic about the Paris Agreement as it provides a strong basis to catalyse resources to implement Uganda's National Climate Change Policy, its Nationally

Determined Contribution (NDC), the Green Growth Development Strategy (under development) and sectoral policies and plans", said Mr Maikut.

He listed elements of the Paris Agreement that he feels warrant optimism. The Parties agreed to limit temperature increase to below 2°C and to work towards limiting the increase to 1.5°C; the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities for combating climate change was recognised, and reinforced; issues of loss and damage were also recognised as was the requirement for countries to transform their 'Intended' NDCs into 'implemented' contributions. Mr Maikut was enthusiastic about the Agreement's recognition of the needs and challenges of least developed countries (LDCs) and the African Group of Negotiators,

in particular. In addition, it includes mechanisms for climate finance, capacity-building and technology transfer, which are very important for enabling LDCs to tackle climate change.

Nevertheless, Mr Maikut noted that there are a number of barriers that may present challenges to reaching the global 1.5°C goal. He argued that the Paris Agreement lacks a strong compliance mechanism to make the big emitters comply and reduce emissions, and that there is still non-commitment from some of the biggest greenhouse gas emitters. He added that the Agreement lacks strong mechanisms and commitments to help LDCs and other developing countries shift to low-carbon development pathways. Without a major investment in renewable energy technologies, he said, the use of fossil fuels will continue.

Despite these challenges, Uganda is committed to meeting the requirements of the Paris Agreement and ratified the Agreement on 17 April 2016. Uganda will be transforming its INDC into an NDC, which it will then submit to UNFCCC. The Uganda NDC can then be transformed into a Climate Action Plan that can be implemented by the government and others over a four-to five-year period. Mr Maikut also highlighted the fact that Uganda's new Climate Change Law (currently in development) will reflect the NDC.

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aims to help decision-makers in developing countries design and deliver climate-compatible development. We do this by providing demand-led research and technical assistance, and channelling the best available knowledge on climate change and development to support policy processes at the country and international levels. CDKN is managed by an alliance of five organisations that brings together a wide range of expertise and experience.

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