

# STRENGTHENING THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF THE KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN ADVANCING CLIMATE JUSTICE

## A civil society organisations' perspective

### Presented by Susan Nanduddu<sup>1</sup> during the Judicial Training on climate justice

The honorable judges and Magistrates attending today, my colleagues from civil society, and fellow panelists.

It is an absolute honor for me to share my passion about climate justice with you today. The first time I was invited by GreenWatch to address a similar training in 2019, I was very nervous. I had never been to such *hallowed* ground. To be honest, I previously held a view that judges know it all. I was surprised to learn that most of the knowledge you have about climate change is from the media. I realized then, that I have something to share with you because climate change is grossly underrepresented in Uganda's media. So thank you Green Watch for a second opportunity.

Today's subject is close to my heart. Having worked in civil society all my work life, I have learned that all of us are working towards the same thing. The only difference is the lens through which we are looking the goal. We are all working towards good lives for the people of Uganda. Vision 2040 summarizes it well; “*a transformed Ugandan society from a Peasant to a Modern and Prosperous Country*”. Unfortunately, our work is characterized by working in silos, competition and sometimes mistrust. In civil society we are quick to point out that government works in silos thus is ineffective. But so do we! In a changing climate, we have a duty to reverse this. We need better ways of collaborating to meet the greater good. There are already collaborations such as this one – between GreenWatch, the Judicial Training Institute and the donors. What lessons do we learn from such existing collaborations? Are we courageous enough to imagine bigger and better ways of collaboration? Are we ready to do what it takes to make it happen?

### Justification for greater collaboration

There is a lot of talk about climate change in Uganda. However the understanding of the subject and the capacity to address it, remains low. It is easy to observe that communities still indiscriminately cut trees even when they are supposed to know that deforestation is a large contributor to greenhouse gases. Large corporations such as Hoima sugar Ltd, are involved in cutting down forests which are good carbon stores and rich in biodiversity (a source of tourism revenue, medicine for neighboring communities etc). Collaborations for increased knowledge among key stakeholders including the media is needed to inform better action.

Resources to address climate change in Uganda are limited. To meet our Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) targets of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 22% by 2030, is conditional on the support of the international community such as through climate finance instruments. Meeting the cost of implementation of Uganda's NDC estimated at USD 5.5 billion, requires both domestic and international finance. Research

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at the global level reveals that Climate finance is not adequate, is very difficult to access, and is not balanced as agreed under the Paris Agreement (adaptation finance is at 20% instead of 50% of overall climate finance flows and of the flows to LDCs, over 50% is in the form of loans instead of grants)<sup>2</sup>. Most of the global climate finance accessed for Uganda is through Multilateral Entities which channels are not preferred because funds that could address action so on the ground are lost to their administration costs and large expenses towards external consultancies. The Ministry of Water and Environment was recently approved by the GCF and Adaptation Fund. Collaborations are needed to develop substantial bankable projects to attract global climate finance. Additionally collaboration is needed among stakeholders to mobilize domestic climate funding from both public and private sources.

Collaboration is required for the dissemination of learning generated climate smart projects. A 2020 study of global climate finance in Uganda conducted by civil society actors covering the period 2013-2017<sup>3</sup> revealed that a total of 701 climate-related projects were committed to Uganda, representing 1 billion USD. Imagine how much lessons are generated from 701 projects if they are all implemented! Are the lessons documented? How can they be accessed by ordinary Ugandans?

### **What needs to be done to foster collaboration among key stakeholders?**

This is a very important question which we need to ask ourselves often. I believe we shall get better answers if we continually reflect on it. Equally important is to define who the key stakeholders are. Not many practitioners in the climate change field are thinking about judicial officers as key stakeholders; but this is changing, thanks to spaces like these. Below I share some thoughts on what is needed.

#### **1. Learn from working examples around the world**

There are many civil society-led spaces around the world fostering collaboration that we can learn from. Here are a few examples I am familiar with related to knowledge exchange:

- Bangladesh, one of the most vulnerable countries to impacts of climate change, is positioning itself as a leader of resilience in the global South. The Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is actively involved in the global climate negotiations and collaborates well with the scientists in the country and beyond. Climate change scientists with the support of an IPCC author, Prof. Saleemul Huq, created the *Gobeshona*, a week-long space for sharing knowledge about climate change. It was started by universities in Bangladesh inviting researchers and practitioners to share lessons learned. It has since become a global platform hosted virtually for free.
- The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) created a knowledge sharing platform called the International conference on Community Based Adaptation (CBA). Now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year, this space brings together researchers, government officials (mostly technical), practitioners. The CBA community has made an effort to bring private sector into the conversation, but

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<sup>2</sup> See [Access to Climate Finance](#) workshop report by the International Institute for Environment and Development

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bwaisefacility.org/userfiles/bf/Final%20Uganda%20-%20Climate%20Adaptation%20Finance%20Tracking.pdf>

not judicial officers. This space perhaps needs to be challenged to include lessons from litigation cases around the world.

The UNFCCC leverages its convening power to foster collaborations too. A campaign on the Race to Zero by 2050 is a good example of high level collaborations around the world mobilizing initiatives representing 454 cities, 23 regions, 1,397 businesses, 74 of the biggest investors, and 569 universities. More information can be found at the [UNFCCC website](#).

## **2. Strengthen existing national efforts and invest in learning**

There are government-led collaborative efforts such as the annual climate change Forum organized by the Climate Change Department. This forum brings together stakeholders from civil society organisations, private sector, academia, media and government. The forum discusses Uganda's position to the annual Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It is a one day event. There is potential to re-define this space to foster learning about climate change beyond climate negotiations, by expanding the category of stakeholders, facilitating experience sharing in various formats, and perhaps increasing the number of days.

There are civil society led collaborative efforts such as the Climate Action Network Uganda (CAN-U). This is a CSO group that brings together several NGOs and supports knowledge sharing, capacity building and advocacy. There is potential for this space to play a key role in fostering collaborations amongst other key stakeholders. For instance, an annual event can be organized for the purpose of knowledge sharing, featuring research, innovations, lessons from project implementation, among others.

Several other efforts can be seen amongst two or more institutions for a specific purpose, such as delivering this training. Some are fundraising jointly executing on projects. These examples are many, but are scattered. Results of such partnerships could feed into larger, more inclusive forums for wider uptake of the lessons learned, and leveraging the power of new technologies such as social media to scale innovations.

## **Conclusion**

The projected impacts of climate change in the future are much worse than what we are experiencing today. Scientists predict that global temperature rise will average 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052. Today, the average is about 1.2°C. According to a [synthesis report](#) of the World Health Organisation "the impacts of 1.5°C could disproportionately affect disadvantaged and vulnerable populations through food and water insecurity, higher food prices, income losses, lost livelihood opportunities, adverse health impacts and population displacement". While all these impacts are already happening, the frequency and intensity will only get worse with the rising temperatures. The work towards building climate resilience therefore, is still enormous and action needs to be stepped up urgently.