

MAKERERE



UNIVERSITY



ENVIRONMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

REPORT



ON THE LAUNCH OF THE Efd-Mak CENTRE HELD ON 29TH AUGUST 2019, AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, MAIN BUILDING



Abbreviations

EfD	Environment for Development Initiative
Mak	Makerere University
Sida	Swedish International Cooperation Agency
NPA	National Planning Authority
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
CoBAMS	College of Business and Management Studies
CAES	College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
USD	United States Dollars
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
NDP	National Development Plan
CDM	Clean Development Mechanisms
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Executive Summary



Whereas a significant amount of research and policy engagement has been going on in other sectors of economy, a huge amount of work still needs to be done in the area of natural resources and environmental economics. At Makerere University, very few graduate students dare to write their theses in this area because of the unique methodological issues environmental and natural resource research requires. Whereas the environment holds the production processes of the economy, in doing so, it is exposed to a high degradation risk. For example, natural resources are essential inputs for production in many sectors; however, production and

consumption also lead to pollution and other pressures on the environment. Humans impact the environment in several ways; decreased water quality, increased pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, depletion of natural resources and contribution to global climate change.

The Efd-Mak Center will contribute practical solutions to environment and natural resource problems through high quality policy-relevant research, graduate training support, policy engagement and outreach. The Centre will work with relevant government departments, the private sector, development partners and civil society to drive research and policy action that are underpinned by issues regarding environmental management and sustainable development.

The launch of the Environment for Development Initiative Efd-Mak Centre on 29 August 2019 is an important milestone for Makerere University since it the first of its kind in the country. Makerere University now joins a global network of environmental economics research centers to contribute to effective management of the environment in the global South through applied research, institutional development, academic training and policy interaction.

Efd-Mak Center's activities will bridge the research-policy gap in Uganda and beyond in priority areas including climate change, energy, food, forests, water, fisheries, agriculture and sustainable development. Efd-Mak Center will establish local and international research and policy networks, organize international conferences, seminar series, and trainings in rigorous environmental policy analysis and frontier methodological approaches to environmental questions. The center will also engage in high-level policy dialogues with policy makers, private sector actors, non-government organizations, academia and civil society organizations. To enable relevant policy makers and government officials have a better appreciation of environmental economics and mainstream environmental policy in their daily work, Efd-Mak Centre will conduct short courses and develop policy briefs out of every technical research for sharing. The Centre will also organize policy tours, policy research workshops and fieldwork in the four regions of the country to bring on board environmental policy makers in government, environmental activists in the private sector and civil society organizations.

Assoc. Prof. Edward Bbaale
Director, Efd-Mak

1.2 Organization and objectives of the workshop

The workshop was organized by the EfD-Mak team funded under the project budget lines. The objectives of the workshop were: 1) To introduce the EfD-Mak Centre to the stakeholders; 2) To officially launch the Center operations and; 3) To initiate a collaboration with key stakeholders. The Centre launch is part of the four main programs of the Centre particularly, institutionalizing the Centre within the University for Recognition.



A section of the participants attending the workshop

1.3 Program

EfD-Mak Centre was launched on 29th August, 2019 at the Makerere University Senior Common Room, Main building. The Vice Chancellor, Makerere University presided over the ceremony as Chief Guest. Members of university top management including the Director, Directorate of Research and Graduate Training Prof. Mukadasi Buyinza also graced the occasion. The function attracted representatives from the Swedish Embassy, EfD Kenya, Uganda Government Ministries and agencies, development partners, civil society organization and the Private sector. The day's agenda was as shown in the table below.

Launching the Environment for Development (EfD) Center at Makerere University: Key Stakeholders' Network Meeting: 29 August 2019.

Start	End	Activity	Facilitator/ Participants	*
8:00am	8:30am	Arrival & Registration	Project Staff (Hilda and Jane)	
		Anthems and prayer	M.C	
8:30am	8:50am	Introductions	M.C	
8:50am	8:55am	Welcome Remarks	Principal CoBAMS	
8:55am	9:00am	Welcome Remarks	Principal CAES	
9:00am	9:20am	Presentation on EfD-MAK Centre	EfD Mak Director	
9:20am	9:25am	Reaction by NPA	NPA Official	
9:25am	9:30am	Reaction by NEMA	NEMA Official	
9:30am	9:35am	Reaction by Swedish Embassy	Embassy Official	
9:35am	9:40am	EfD Kenya Presentation	EfD Kenya Director	
9:40am	10:15am	Tea Break	Mak Guest House	
10:15am	11:00am	Plenary	MC	
11:00am	11:30am	Guest of Honor/Vice Chancellor Remarks and Launch	Guest of Honor/Vice Chancellor MaK	
11:30am	12:00pm	Introduction of EfD Mak Centre Team	Director	
12:00pm	1:00pm	Group photo, Lunch and Departure	All	

2.0 WELCOME REMARKS AND PRESENTATION ABOUT EfD

2.1 Principal College of Business and Management Studies (CoBAMS)



L: The Ag. Principal CoBAMS, Dr. Akileng Godfrey making his remarks

Outlining the School and College structure, the Principal College of Business and Management Studies (CoBAMS) represented by Dr. Akileng Godfrey also, Dean, School of Business Management (SoB), said the College has a number of Centers and is engaged in teaching, research and a number of flagship activities and collaboration with the communities.

Dr. Akileng described the EfD-Mak Centre initiative as a unique collaboration bringing together two university Colleges.

“We are proud because it is a unique one in this university and the multidisciplinary nature of the Colleges. We are proud that the two colleges will enhance research and development of the region”, the Ag. Principal said.

He reported that CAES and CoBAMS conduct joint-teaching of graduate programs in economics expressing appreciation to all the partners, Sida and the university of Gothenburg Sweden for the support and choosing Makerere for collaboration.

He also gave special gratitude to management of Makerere University for the support rendered to the CoBAMS in all aspects of her mandate, including the Efd- Mak Centre initiative.



Prof. Richard Mulwa Mbithi interacts with the Ag. Principal CoBAMS, Dr. Akileng Godfrey during the break session.

2.2 Principal College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES)



Prof. Johnny Mugisha (2nd) speaking on behalf of the Principal CAES.

The Principal College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) represented by Prof. Johnny Mugisha, also Dean, School of Agricultural Sciences (SAS) informed participants that the College has three schools and eight departments engaged in teaching research and outreach but mainly focused on agriculture and environment.

Prof. Mugisha said, in Sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture is blamed for the deteriorating environment.

“We have converted forest to farmlands which farm lands are not looked after well. We have cleared wetlands; our feeding habits are not friendly; Water bodies have been polluted with lots of food and industrial waste. So, we agree that agriculture contributes to pollution”, Prof. Mugisha observed.

Unfortunately, Prof. Mugisha noted that countries endowed with rich natural resources have worst index of those resources while those with scarce natural resources like Norway have high index because they govern their resources very well.

“Uganda’s governance of natural resources is not good. It is us to be at the forefront of the initiatives to conserve and protect the environment and that is the reason why we teamed up with the College of Business and Management Studies.

Prof. Mugisha also noted that although agriculture is to blame, there is increasing demand for food to feed the increasing population and cultivate the farmlands, that is why, there was need for economists and agriculturalists to form the Efd-Mak initiative.

He reported that there have been collaborations with CoBAMs in teaching, research, publications including sharing of human resources and protecting the environment between the two colleges.

“Time has come for us to clean the messes that we created and, this is the reason why we need your full support. We shall be doing research in environment policy and you are the first stakeholders. We need policy makers, graduate students as our raw materials in research and the administration of the university”, Prof. Mugisha said.

He expressed gratitude to the University management for the support and accepting to host the Centre. He also thanked Dr. Richard Mulwa Mbithi from the Efd-Kenya for the mentorship and for accepting the invitation to grace the occasion.

2.3: Presentation about the Efd-Mak Centre



Assoc. Prof. Edward Bbaale (standing) making a presentation about the Efd initiative

In his presentation, the Director Efd-Mak Assoc. Prof. Edward Bbaale started with the history of the Efd initiative from the Brundtland's Commission which introduced the concept of Sustainable Development in 1987 through which Environmental economics was singled out as a particularly promising discipline to support this vision. This he said, gave birth to a number of capacity-building networks, programmes and initiatives thus Efd.

Dr. Bbaale Informed participants that in 1991, SIDA came on board and offered capacity support to scholars from developing countries to study PhDs in Environmental Economics at University of Gothenburg with a view that, the graduates would go back to their countries to carry out policy relevant research, teach the next generation of academics and civil servants and provide advice to their governments.

The Director, however, reported that the vision was not that achieved as anticipated because, on returning home, scholars found themselves overburdened with teaching, administrative work, with no research funds and little policy involvement.

The expected straight road from capacity building to improved national policies, he said, turned out to be rather disappointing and to get back on track, four gaps that needed to be fixed namely the capacity, knowledge, communication and institutional gaps were identified.

Under the Capacity gap, Dr. Bbaale explained that advanced domestic capacity was needed to understand the complex interaction between ecological systems and economies that have been marred by market and institutional failures; and also to make use of the opportunities created such as the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) or Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) and understand that cost-efficient solutions are in most cases dependent on a thorough understanding of the functioning and limitation of local institutions. He added that, to close the capacity gap, a PhD Programme in Environmental Economics and Development was set up.

On the knowledge gap, the Director told participants that there was insufficient attention given to the best management of natural resources despite their relevance to the world's poorest majority noting that when PhDs returned to their countries, they found it hard to carry out the needed research because there were no research funds available.

To address the issue of research funds, Dr. Bbaale said, EfD was created to provide funds where researchers were required to interact with policy makers in developing their proposals. The proposals, he said, are peer reviewed and presented at an annual EfD conference before the research was funded, carried out and disseminated back to the stakeholders.

On the communication gap, he stated that one of the key challenges is to go beyond general awareness of the importance of environment to integrating it in domestic and international policies and practice. To address this, he said, EfD prioritizes long-term policy dialogue and interaction between researchers, policy makers, development partners and activists.

On the institutional gap, the Director explained that in the implementation of the capacity-building programme, it became clear that the problem was not only lack of capacity, but also an institutional gap. A platform, he said was needed to which resources could be attracted to support the much-needed policy-relevant research. The response to the institutional gap has been the establishment and support of the EfD Centers envisaged to be characterized by a conducive research environment, a good policy interface and strong administrative support that can manage international and domestic funding.

The goal of the aforementioned initiatives, Dr. Bbaale said, was to create sustainable and viable policy-research nodes that have lasting impacts on poverty alleviation and sustainable natural resource use.

The first Centre, he said was founded in 2004, and, the EfD initiative was created in 2007. The EfD initiative is a global network of environmental economics research centers, composed of over 160 accomplished environmental economists who are active in leading local academic research institutions.

The Director said, the initiative has 15 centers across the world including Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Sweden, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, USA

and Vietnam. The network is coordinated by the Efd Secretariat, a special Unit at the School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Dr. Bbaale explained that the Efd-Mak Centre is a new center at Makerere University established in Hanoi, Vietnam in 2018, under the Environment for Development Initiative (Efd). The Centre started its full operations in the financial year 2019/2020 and, is headed by Prof. Edward Bbaale, (School of Economics) and deputized by Prof. Johnny Mugisha, (School of Agricultural Sciences)

“The Efd-Mak Centre Vision is to become a hub for quality training, research and policy engagement in environmental economics and development in the Africa region and beyond”.

The Centre’s mission is to provide high quality policy-relevant research, graduate training support, policy engagement and outreach in the realm of environment and development economics in order to enhance sound environmental management and natural resource utilization for sustainable development,” Dr. Bbaale stated.

He explained that the key priority areas are Agriculture and sustainable development, Climate change, Fisheries, Parks and wildlife, Forestry and Energy, Policy design and Gender as a cross-cutting theme in all the six priority areas.

The Director also said the Centre will work with relevant government departments, private sector, development partners and civil society to drive research and policy action that are underpinned by issues regarding environmental management and sustainable development.

The Efd-Mak according the Director, will among other activities organize international conferences, workshops, seminar series and meetings where researchers interact with policy makers, development partners & environmental activists.

It will train researchers and stakeholders in rigorous environmental policy analysis/ frontier methodological approaches to environmental questions.

The Centre will hold high-level policy dialogues with policy makers, private sector actors, Civil Society Organizations and academia to exchange ideas and debate on the status, impact and direction of environmental policy in the country and;

Develop policy briefs out of every technical research done or policy dialogue in non-technical language, for sharing with relevant policy makers

” We are here today, first, to introduce to you the Efd-Mak Centre. Secondly, we are here to officially launch Efd-Mak Center operations and to initiate a collaboration with you as our key stakeholders with listen, talk, develop relationships, and patience as key principles”. Dr. Bbaale told participants as he concluded his presentation.



L: EfD-Mak Centre Director, Dr. Edward Bbaale also Dean school of Economics interacts with his Deputy ® Prof. Johnny Mugisha also Dean School of Agricultural Sciences after the opening ceremony.

2.4 Guest of Honor/Vice Chancellor Remarks and Launch



Ag. Vice Chancellor, Dr. Umar Kakumba, Dr. Edward Bbaale and Prof. Richard Mulwa Mbithi during the launch.

The launch was presided over by the Vice Chancellor Makerere University represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Academic Affairs (DVC (AA), Dr. Umar Kakumba.

Dr. Kakumba congratulated Dr. Bbaale and Prof. Johnny Mugisha and the rest of the team for the wonderful initiative and bringing the Efd Centre to Makerere University.

Aware that there are 15 Efd Centres across the world supported the Swedish government, Dr. Kakumba lauded the generous support provided by Sida and sister agencies to universities in trying to propel and addressing environmental concerns through research and capacity building.

“We must be very active and tackle environmental issues with appropriate sobriety. We must create mechanisms of living sustainably and as a country, there is a great role to be played by the university as Centre of research and innovations.

“Efd-Mak Centre is a great initiative and it falls within the strategic vision and mission of Makerere University. Makerere University in its strategic mission wants to earmark providing innovative teaching, learning and research that are responsive to our national and global needs.” The DVC(AA) said.

He said, the ranking of Makerere university speaks volumes and the relevance of the Efd-Mak Centre blends very well with the mission and vision of the university.



NPA’s Dr. Ronald Kaggwa, NEMA’s Dr. Daniel Babika, Dr. Umar Kakumba, Dr. Edward Bbaale and Prof. Richard Mbithi during the launch.

Through the Efd-Mak Centre the DVC (AA) was optimistic that it will open more frontiers for strategic partnerships towards enhancing the visibility and internationalization of the university which is a key pillar in Makerere University’s agenda.

“In our forthcoming strategic plan 2020-2030 which we shall be launching soon, it tries to mirror and affirm to the national development agenda. Makerere and Uganda are part of the global economy and therefore, this Centre gives us the opportunities to getting well-coordinated with international players capable of addressing issues affecting our economy and the region”, Dr. Kakumba stated.



A section of the participants during the launch

In his key message, the Vice Chancellor appreciated the partners and sponsors for the support and gave credence towards the initiative to bring Makerere to the wider global community.

Dr. Kakumba implored the Centre leaders to propel it to a “Centre of Excellence”, build capacity in environmental economics and inform government on the sense of direction based on evidence and, to connect students beyond the gates of Makerere.

“We expect the Centre to establish and nurture multidisciplinary networks in priority areas such as fisheries, Parks and Tourism and sustainable agriculture to earn support from government.

We should see you mentoring, conducting research and providing policy briefs because government is not interested in bulky dissertations but coming up with critical interventions that can address critical community issues.

Government wants quick yielding and transformative initiatives to improve household incomes to improve their welfare”, Dr. Kakumba advised.

The DVC (AA) reported that for the first time Makerere University has secured 30 billion shillings from Government of Uganda purposed for research despite the different pressing issues such as salary enhancement for public servants.

As a university, he said, they had to sell issues to government to give this money and would want to earmark it for critical research initiatives and innovations and come up with milestones that connect with nationals.

Dr. Kakumba assured the partners of the guaranteed support of management to the EfD-Mak Centre to effectively contribute to the country and global community.

Dr. Kakumba appreciated support extended to the university from government and her agencies as well as Sida for the last 15-20 years especially in building the capacity of staff now standing at 65% holding PhDs.

At 10:15 am Dr. Umar Kakumba declared the Efd-Mak Centre open. This was followed by a group photograph and tea break.



Participants pose for a group photo with the Ag. Vice chancellor after the launch



Journalists hold interviews with the Centre Director Dr. Edward Bbaale (top) and the DVC AA Dr. Umar Kakumba (bottom) after the photo session



3.0 REACTIONS FROM GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND INVITED GUESTS

3.1 The representative of the National Planning Authority (NPA)

Dr. Ronald Kaggwa from the National Planning Authority (NPA) congratulated Makerere University on being selected as one of the 15 centers for Environment (EFD) initiative in the world saying, this selection attests the quality and improving image of the university.

Dr. Kaggwa said NPA is happy to be associated with this key milestone and commended the two Colleges for coming up with the initiative noting that certainly, it will address national capacity and research gaps in the country's sustainable development agenda.

He underscored the importance of the EFD-Mak Centre in addressing some of the research gaps in environment and natural resources planning and sustainable development in general.

“For example as we roll out NDPIII whose strategic focus is on natural resource led industrialization, a few questions have to be answered:

Do we have enough stocks of resources to sustain the natural resource led industrialization? In other words, we need to count the resources we are counting on. We therefore need to undertake research and build capacity in Natural Capital Accounting”, he tasked the Centre.



L: Dr. Ronald Kaggwa speaking on behalf of the Director as NEMA's Dr. Daniel Babika and Chief Guest Dr. Umar Kakumba listen.

Dr. Kaggwa reported that in a mid-term review of the NDP II, the sustainability indicators were poor with the national forest cover declining from 14% in 2015/16 to 9.5% in 2018/2019 against the NDPII target of 18% and the national target of 24% by 2040. While, the wetland cover fell to 10% in the same period against NDP II target of 15%.

These, he said implies that the country's economic growth was obtained through unsustainable exploitation of natural resource base.

“How do we decouple economic growth from environment? This calls for research towards an appropriate balance of economic growth, environment sustainability and social dimension”, Dr. Kaggwa advised.

As Uganda transitions to a green economy as alluded to in its Green Growth Development Strategy, Dr. Kaggwa said, the role of applied research, science, technology and innovation in this transition cannot be overstated.

Dr. Kaggwa also noted that the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development is sound on environmental economics with SDG 11 on Sustainable Consumption and Production practices. Actualizing this SDG, he said, is highly reliant on the generation of appropriate policy responses that reconcile the environment and the economy.



A section of participants during the workshop

He observed that while several research institutions exist, their focus is specific and geared towards other facets of development such as mainstream economics or entirely environment and natural resources with minimal focus on environmental economics.

As a result, Kaggwa explained that there is limited appreciation of the role played by the environment and natural resources in the economy and the development process at large.

“The EfD-Mak Centre will generate policy relevant research that will inform our evidence based planning. I wish to emphasize NPA’s commitment to work with you to ensure the success of the Centre.

We are available and ready to share our experiences and look forward to establishing partnerships in undertaking research that responds to development needs”, Dr. Kaggwa pledged, adding that partnerships will support the identification of existing applied research and policy gaps, and generate solutions to the existing research questions.

In light of the NDP III, Dr. Kaggwa advised the Centre to consider undertaking research in different areas including; Addition of value to environmental goods and services; Dealing with plastic and electronic waste and economic opportunities thereof; Environment opportunities inherent in a relatively brown oil and gas sector; Capture methane from wetlands for productive uses such as energy production and; Models of sustainable industrialization for developing countries like Uganda.

3.2 The representative of the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA)



L-R: Prof. Johnny Mugisha, and Dr. Ronald Kaggwa listen as Dr. Daniel Babika speaks on behalf of the Director, NEMA

NEMA’s Director (in charge of Institutes, Projects and Public Education) Dr. Daniel Babika said NEMA plays a role of ensuring that development happens in a right way taking into consideration the aspect of sustainability and creating a balance between the environment, society and economy.

One of the challenges NEMA has faced according to Dr. Babika is the failure to balance the three aforementioned pillars. Most of the time, Dr. Babika said the economy and society has taken the bigger share of resources, interest and commitment.

“Environment much as is the sole house for all the resources on which development is based has been given the second or third position and this is a big challenge.

NEMA appreciates the new initiative by Makerere university on grounds that for a long time there has been a missing link between environmental economists, practitioners and managers”, Dr. Babika stated.

He re-emphasized that the expectations of politicians are economic growth for the wellbeing of people but rarely do they talk about where the growth and resources come from and, in the process natural resources are degraded and get the country into challenges.

Dr. Babika was hopeful that the intervention by the EfD-Mak is going to play a central role in helping the country to get back to the right foot in terms of development.

He said there is need for the center to assess the current contradictions about the concept of sustainable development and elevate the debate beyond job and wealth creation to consider the wellbeing of people, the resources themselves and the economy.

He noted that because of the development thinking the population has been holding for a long time, the attitude towards environment has led to serious consequences to the extent that even agencies like NEMA have to explain so much to qualify for funding.

“I see this intervention as an opportunity to correct the thinking of policy makers in this country. Our society is developing characteristics which are anti-environment and anti-sustainable development. There is a lot of selfishness which translates directly into the destruction of the environment and depletion of resources.” Dr. Babika added.

He observed that some of the resources being destroyed cannot be replaced yet the alternative resources are very expensive for most of the sections of society to afford.

Dr. Babika said, Economics and economists have a big role to play in determining the shape of development in the country and the direction. The problems being experienced in environment today according to Dr. Babika, were created long ago when the country never considered the other aspects of sustainability rather than economic growth.

He shared that economic growth can only take place when you have resources taking into consideration that if you abuse them, you can exhaust them and fail to replace them. He said unlike the developed world, Uganda lacks the required resources and systems to manage the restoration of the depleted environment.



A section of the participants attending the workshop

He advised the EfD-Mak Centre to devise means of creating knowledge that will have impact, consider issues of epistemology, that is, the ability of people to relay knowledge in the right way, usable by the right people for the benefit of the society.

“In this new approach, it would be very useful to encourage a situation where by the research you do is going to be useful, transformative and applicable in responding to the needs of the people”, Dr. Babika stated.

Currently, he said NEMA is trying to promote a key aspect of education called, ‘Education for Sustainable Development’, integrating different principles of sustainability in education management and practice including methods of teaching moving away from the classroom environment to the outer world to prepare students for the real world after school as problem solvers and not explainers of knowledge.

Commenting on the need to communicate research findings to the targeted beneficiaries, Dr. Babika said the issue of communication depends on the way knowledge is generated and the philosophy that informs the generation of knowledge. If the purpose is to transform society, he said, there is no way one cannot share the findings and make them workable but if the purpose is to make money, then one will get a promotion and keep the publication on shelf.

The approach, he said is to generate knowledge and practically engage different stakeholder not as subjects of data collected, but as equal partners in the process because they have enough knowledge of the context which at times is not recognized.

He outlined gaps that NEMA would like the EfD-Mak Centre to work on including creating a nuanced understanding between environment and economic development, dealing with irreducible uncertainties, ecological footprint of the academia and other professionals, the economic valuation of natural resources, ecosystems valuation and management, identifying alternative livelihoods and enhancing understanding of climate change and mitigation of its impacts.

3.3 The representative of the Swedish Embassy - Environment unit



Mr. Paul Asiimwe speaking on behalf of the Swedish Embassy

Representing the Swedish Embassy, Mr. Paul Asiimwe from the Department of Environment, highlighted five Swedish perspectives underpinning their support namely; pro-poor including the poorest, conflict perspective, human rights, gender, Environment and climate change.

Asiimwe said the Swedish perspective globally is to create opportunities for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression; and focus on environmental sustainability i.e. sustainable climate and oceans and sustainable use of natural resources.

The global strategy goals according to Asiimwe draw on the Sustainable Goals (SDGs) for example on clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), affordable and clean energy (SDG7), sustainable cities and

communities (SDG 11), responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), climate action (SDG 13) life below water (SDG 14) and life on land (SDG 15), and contribute towards attaining these within the remit of operations.

“On environmental perspective, we focus on stronger protection and restoration, and sustainable management and use of land based ecosystems, biodiversity and species, natural resources including agriculture and forestry and ecosystem service”, He explained.

Other global perspectives mentioned include increased access to sustainable renewable energy at affordable price for people living in poverty and environmentally sustainable cities and communities.

At the country’s (Uganda) perspective, Mr. Asiimwe outlined two bilateral strategies namely the Research Cooperation Strategy focused on building research capacity in public universities 2015-2020 with a contribution of about USD 90 million. He said the EFD-Mak Centre can tap into this initiative where they have 17 on-going projects.



Some of the participants attending the workshop

The other strategy according to Asiimwe is the Sweden–Uganda 2018-2023 Strategy for Development Cooperation focusing on three areas of bilateral cooperation namely, 1) Human rights, democracy, the rule of law and gender equality; 2) Environment, climate change and sustainable, inclusive economic development and; 3) Equitable health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights.

“Our Environment focuses on improved conditions for and access to productive employment with decent working conditions, corporate social responsibility and free and fair trade. The other is sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystems services, greater resilience to climate change and greater sustainable productivity and production in agriculture,” He said.

Other two areas of focus in environment as explained by Asiimwe are greater resilience among poor people, including in communities that receive refugees, and greater access to renewable energy and improved energy efficiency.

In his key message to the EfD-Mak Centre, Asiimwe implored the team to ensure effective coordination, synergy and avoid duplication, provide information necessary for decision making and implementation and integrate methods of collecting from practice.

“I see the Centre, at the center of solving national problems such as massive natural resource degradation, climate change and pollution. Integrate aspects of inclusive growth and employment and integrate conflict perspectives in future sciences”, Mr. Asiimwe advised.

3.4 The Director, EfD-Kenya Nairobi University



Dr. Edward Bbaale listens as Director EfD-Kenya Prof. Richard Mulwa Mbithi makes his remarks

The Director, EfD-Kenya Nairobi University Prof. Richard Mulwa Mbithi gave a brief on the structure and operation of the EfD Centre.

He said the best operational and working decision is that policy is a government research solution to the identified problem. The key point is that there has to be a problem first then you do research and identify the solution to tackle that problem.

When it comes to environment, Prof. Mbithi said the EfD exists to buffer research and give visions to environmental problems. This research he said, cannot be done without researchers, institutional frameworks and building capacity of young researchers and policy interaction.

Prof. Mbithi explained that the EfD started as a project in 2007 under the department of economics in the University of Gothenburg Sweden and over time, it has grown into a department and that is how it has come to be a mother of the 15 Centers worldwide.

“When two more centers were needed, we were advised to write to colleagues to interest them and this how I interested Prof. Johnny Mugisha of the School of Agricultural Sciences to write a proposal. At that time, I did not know Prof. Bbaale. I told Prof. Mugisha that there is nothing to lose to write an application and submit and this is what culminated in what we are celebrating today”, the professor said.

He said an EfD Center should have a Centre Director with wings for Senior and Junior research fellows, research fellows and administration like data manager to manage data and a policy and communication specialist.

And when doing research in environmental economics, the professor said, most times equations are communicated hence, the need to bring it down to the level of policy makers to make sure they understand what is said.

Prof. Mbithi emphasized the importance of having local and international associates as well as other stakeholders such as policy makers while planning to conduct research.

“For example if you want to do research, you can work with someone from Kenya or Canada or if you are doing research here in Uganda, you can incorporate someone from elsewhere as a research associate.

Each year in the EfD center, a cycle of proposals is presented and is very competitive, so you don't sit down in a small corner and write your proposal. The beauty of the EfD is that when you have an idea you first talk to the stakeholders for example consult the policy makers on what key areas they need interventions, develop the proposal in line with those ideas and we usually have research dates where we invite stakeholders, you present your proposal, critic it and they tell you whether that is what they want or not or make adjustments.

If it is funded and you are done with your research work, you will call them again to present the results of your study. So everything has to be linked to policy makers because we are doing research to inform policy not just publishing papers to become a professor and what you want to do, there is much more than that”, Prof. Richard Mbithi explained.

He said the environmental problems facing Uganda are similar in Kenya and cuts across the global South. One of them being the hurt ecosystems and ecosystems valuation.

He reminded participants that many of the people making decisions at government circles do not have the exposure to the environment, therefore researchers need to give critical and convincing data why the wetland needs to be conserved.

Besides the green economy, Prof. Mbithi identified the blue economy especially pollution from plastics into the ocean, oil and gas or extractive industry in general as key areas where research is required to inform policy.

He noted that the structure in Nairobi is abit different from the Makerere one because they could not gather enough environmental economists and were struggling. So they invited experts from other universities and research institutions to do work together and have become members of the EfD. He advised Makerere to try what works for them best.

“As a brother and neighbor I am in full support of the Makerere initiative. You can count on me. I am willing to support you. My aim is to see EfD growing, we have a Centre in Tanzania and Ethiopia and we are collaborating a lot. May God bless you and may you prosper in everything”, Prof. Mbithi concluded.

4.0 GENERAL DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Comments, observations and Questions

The participants applauded the EfD-Mak initiative and expressed willingness to partner with Centre. The following observations, comments and inquiries were made:

- The inauguration of the center at Makerere University was long overdue. The valuation of Natural resources has been lacking, an issue the Centre should consider seriously;
- Most of the information generated from research is always hidden and not accessible. Asked whether the Centre would make information accessible to everyone given the problem of negative attitude and poor reading culture;
- The blended initiative by economists and agriculturalist is a welcome move and it should endeavor to inform government on how much climate change matters, soil hydrology and carry out an assessment on the cost of giving away Namanve reserve swamp for the industrial park and help policy makers and Ugandans know the pollution levels when effluent was diverted from the water treatment plant;
- The debate on the nexus between environment, biodiversity and economics has been void. Very few people can do a total valuation of say, Mabira forest and impact caused by encroachment. There is need to build a critical mass of competent researchers across the nation and the region to do natural resource accounting.
- The debate on ecology versus economy should be at the Centre and to avoid this question, the EfD-Mak Centre should have the right people with the knowledge, skills and interest to help establish a database;
- Wanted to know whether NEMA besides regulation and enforcement has an innovative way of approaching government (or a national consultative forum) before decisions on natural resources are taken on grounds that the two seemed not speaking the same language yet most of the forest reserves like Bugoma are being depleted;

- The country is facing challenges with implementing policies. The Centre has a huge opportunity and should come up with innovative ways of how policy makers can be linked to conservationists and academia to help government change ways of doing things;
- The Centre needs to establish collaborations to get ideas on how to improve conservation and productivity, look at critical issues affecting society for example whether the proposed alternatives for wood fuels such as electricity and gas are viable for the communities;
- The youth form the biggest portion of the country's population and would like to know how they will be engaged with the Efd-Mak program;
- The nation needs innovative ways of turning resources into wealth. This is a critical issue for the Centre to identify entry points and information to take to policy makers;
- The Centre should have a document to inform the budgeting process and should think of what information to package;
- In all activities of environment, valuation of natural resources is still lacking. UBOS could make a good partner in this;
- Ecologists and economists have different interests and there is need to strike a balance. This is another important area the Efd-Mak Centre should look at;
- Inquired whether the project targets women and whether, it will look at curriculum in secondary schools;
- There is need to advise government on subsidies on electricity costs and ensuring that gas is made safer for use in the urban areas;
- Inquired whether organizations can track the impact of this program and whether the Centre can create opportunities for small organizations to apply and come up with policies stemming from its activities;
- Inquired from the Director Efd-Kenya how they have managed to ensure that the national park survives in the middle of the city; and to share some of the achievements recorded so far;
- Asked whether the Centre has plans to have mechanisms to bring up research solutions to manage boundary resources;
- UMA expressed happiness with the Efd-Mak initiative saying, they have a number of partners collaborating with them on different programs taking care of environment and would be grateful if the center becomes a collaborative associate;
- Much of the environmental degradation is related to poverty as people strive to obtain a living. So the Efd-Mak Centre should also consider other income generating projects outside the natural resources to enable people move away from wood fuel;
- Tanzania Efd representative was happy that the Efd-Mak was taking route expressing willingness to work closely with the Uganda chapter.

4.2 Responses from presenters

The presenters including the Centre Director Dr. Edward Bbaale, Director EfD-Kenya Prof. Richard Mulwa Mbithi, representative from NEMA, Daniel Babika, NPA representative Dr. Ronald gave responses in line with their positions.

- Part of the project component is to support and give a platform for students (youth) in environment and natural resources to undertake research and also qualify as junior research fellows;
- One of the gaps the EfD- Mak identified before its inception was communication. The heart of the EfD is to communicate in the simplest way, write policy briefs and constantly engage with policy makers;
- The Centre will send out precise information to the stakeholders to address the problem of negative attitude and poor reading culture;
- The center right from its inception adopted the multidisciplinary approach starting with two colleges-CAES and CoBAMS, and will look beyond the Centre boundary and bring on board different competencies;
- Besides implementation and enforcement, NEMA ensures projects have an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) done. Public hearings are also conducted and encourages all Ugandans to read about the mitigation measures put in place. NEMA is reviewing the Hoima -Tanga oil pipe line document (4000 pages) for distribution to all stakeholders. The agency conducts reviews and holds seminars before calling public hearings and ensures that all concerns are addressed before issuing a certificate;
- Gender is a cross cutting issue and, at the heart of the EfD-Mak Centre;
- The EfD-Mak Centre is in reach with university students both undergraduate and graduate where it can effectively review or incorporate aspects of environment and natural resources in the curriculum, it would consider the secondary school curriculum when stronger;
- Engaging parliamentary committees is one of the high priority and long term agenda of the EfD-Mak project;
- In Kenya, the EfD-Kenya has done a lot of work on climate change, water and wildlife and conducted extensive research and influenced policy because it is evidence based. The research has involved many stakeholders and were able to change policy on metered water since there were many problems affecting people, did research to improve policy on urban tree spaces. The contribution of EfD is to tell government what it is supposed to do by giving policy briefs based on evidence and publicizing the information widely.
- NEMA representative reported that environmental issues have been integrated in secondary and primary curriculum and at one time, efforts were being made with the then Makerere University institute for Environment and Natural Resources (MUIENR) but were not successful. Was happy that the EfD-Mak Centre would explore this opportunity.
- NPA representative noted that gender as a cross cutting issue is a bit challenging but government was looking at better ways of addressing it as vulnerabilities in NDP III. He implored the center to come up with innovative solutions to help factor in gender in environment and climate change.

The function ended at 1.30 pm with lunch.



Guests ushered in for lunch courtesy of the Makerere University Guest House

Appendix 1: Participants' Attendance list

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