



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Helping farmers to cope with Climate Change

Uganda is highly vulnerable to the impact of climate change. Increased climate variability due to climate change, combined with high population growth and the degradation of land and forest cover, are increasing the vulnerability of rural populations and affecting their livelihoods.

Prolonged and frequent droughts in many parts of the country continue to negatively affect agricultural yields. Erratic onset and cessation of the rainy season have increased the risk of agricultural production failure and rendered traditional knowledge on climate, seasons and cropping calendar less effective. Increasing climate variability poses major challenges to food security and agriculture because of its effects on the basic elements of food production – soil, water and biodiversity. The cattle corridor, stretching from South Western to North Eastern regions of Uganda, dominated by livestock production with scarce water and pasture, is one of the most affected in the country.

Uganda's capacity to adapt to the impact of climate change is low and that has been attributed to limited options for livelihoods, inadequate policy and programme support to climate change adaptation actions, limited knowledge on climate change adaptation options, and poor planning.

Government strategy to deal with climate change

In response to the climate change challenges, the Government of Uganda has undertaken several proactive actions, including, development of the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), establishment of the Climate Change Unit within the Ministry of Water and Environment, and most recent development of a Na-

tional Climate Change Policy, a National Strategy and an action plan to strengthen human resources and skills to advance green, low emission and climate resilient development in Uganda.

What FAO is doing

Through climate change awareness, training and dissemination of good practices, FAO is building the capacity of policy makers and government officials in making national planning and development climate proof.

FAO contributes to carrying out vulnerability assessments and the development of early warning and risk management systems that facilitate adaptation to climate variability and change.

In order to enhance the resilience of rural communities and reduce their vulnerability to climate change and climate variability, FAO is implementing community-based adaptation options, using Farmer Field Schools (FFS) as a mechanism for learning and organization in developing, testing and applying adaptation options. The FFS is a capacity building and participatory extension methodology based on adult education principles. It uses a structured group learning process, based on communities' priorities, needs, knowledge and capacity to find solutions for local problems through experiential education. The FFS involves communities in planning, testing and implementing diverse but integrated range of

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► adaptation options, building on traditional (local) coping strategies for climate risk reduction.

FAO promotes low tillage and maintenance of permanent soil cover that can increase soil organic matter and reduce impacts of flooding, erosion, drought, heavy rain and winds. Among areas being advanced are conservation agriculture, organic agriculture and risk-coping production systems that incorporate crop rotations, agroforestry and crop-livestock integration.

The organization promotes use of indigenous and locally-adapted plants, as well as the selection and multiplication of crop varieties adapted or resistant to adverse conditions, such as cassava.

In an effort to minimize the effects of hydrological hazards, FAO promotes appropriate water management practices including micro-irrigation and construction of sub surface dams on dry river beds.

FAO adopted a community-based integrated watershed management approach, taking into account land and water linkages within a natural ecosystem. Tailored courses have been conducted for selected district local government staff and NGO personnel to enhance their knowledge and skills in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating community-based integrated watershed management programmes. Working at the watershed level makes it possible to organize spatially different land-uses and promote the implementation

of suitable practices to correct inadequate land-use planning and tenure, thereby decreasing the vulnerability of communities exposed to hazards. It facilitates upstream-downstream linkages, such as in landslides and, through an evolving “research and action” process, it combines adapted land-use systems and adequate natural resource management with people’s livelihood diversification in a cohesive way.

The organization is spearheading the mainstreaming of community managed disaster risk reduction in the Farmer Field Schools’ curriculum to ensure that hazard analysis and profiling become an integral component of the farmer groups’ action planning process. The aim is to ensure that the district contingency plans are dynamic and have direct involvement of the communities. The groups conduct participatory disaster risk assessments (PDRA), which form the basis for their interventions.

Because climate change is a crosscutting issue that cannot be addressed in isolation, FAO is engaged in various One UN initiatives related to climate change and cooperates with many partners, including sister agencies in the UN-REDD Programme, the World Meteorological Organization, under the Global Framework for Climate Services, and the Rome-based agencies, including IFAD and WFP. FAO is also further improving coherence of its various climate change interventions through the development of Umbrella Programmes for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management.



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