

UNDP-UNEP Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI)

Overall goal: *To contribute to poverty reduction and improved well-being of poor and vulnerable groups through mainstreaming of environment into national development processes.*

Objectives at country level:

- *Inclusion of environmental sustainability as a central objective in national development strategies, such as poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), MDG implementation plans or equivalents;*
- *Increasing national budget allocations towards the environment;*
- *Building the long-term capacity of the government to integrate environmental concerns into the design and implementation of development plans.*

Basic facts of the PEI in Uganda

- Phase I started in March 2005, first work plan was completed early 2007.
- Phase II commenced in May 2007 and was scheduled to end December 2008, however the programme was extended for one year and some activities are still running..
- The Government of Uganda (GoU), through the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), is responsible for the implementation and coordination of the project.
- The main national partners are: NEMA, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) and Local Government in the focus districts.
- Donors: Belgium and Norway (through UNEP). Funds are distributed through NEMA. UNDP Uganda is increasingly involved in the PEI in Uganda;
- Total budget for Phase I (2005-2006) was USD 220,401. The budget for Phase II (2007-2008) is USD 369,086. In addition, a P-E Officer was recruited via UNDP to support PEI implementation at NEMA and supported the programme for 1 ½ year.

The context of mainstreaming of environment in Uganda

- The policy and legal framework for addressing environmental issues in Uganda has been evolving particularly after its National Environment Action Plan (NEAP) process in 1990-1995.
- The first Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) was developed in 1997. It was reviewed in 2000 and again in 2004.
- The 2004-08 PEAP includes environment related priority actions in all five pillars. However, the PEAP has failed to attract public and private sector resources to implement programmes for sustainable development, and hence has not been able to reduce the rampant environment and natural resource degradation in the country.
- In 2007 the GoU embarked on a major PEAP revision process which will lead to the adoption of a new 5-year National Development Plan (NDP) for Uganda.
- Focus of phase II of the PEI in Uganda has been on mainstreaming environment into the PEAP revision process with the aim of including poverty-environment linkages into the new NDP, which was endorsed by the Cabinet in December 2009. PEI has also supported environmental mainstreaming in the budgeting process and in the PEAP implementation at sectoral and district levels.

Main activities of the PEI

Phase I:

- Review of the existing poverty reduction policies, plans and programmes and projects for their adequacy in addressing environmental concerns, identifying gaps and suggesting recommendations for improved environmental mainstreaming (available at: http://www.unep.org/dpdl/poverty_environment/PDF_docs/UG_final_rpt_prsp.pdf);
- Country report on ecosystems, their services and linkages to human well-being (available at: http://www.unep.org/dpdl/poverty_environment/PDF_docs/UG_ecosystems_rpt.pdf);
- An integrated ecosystem assessment (using the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment methodology) in Lake Kyogo catchment;
- Training of civil society organizations on poverty and environment linkages;
- Micro projects at the local level demonstrating the importance of the poverty-environment linkages for poverty reduction and human wellbeing.

Phase II:

- Engagement in the PEAP revision process with a view to integrating environment into the new 5-year NDP for Uganda, endorsed December 2009.
- Engagement in the national budgeting process to achieve increased budgets for environmental interventions for various sectors and supporting health, agriculture, tourism, trade and industry sectors to integrate poverty-environmental concerns into sectoral policies and plans.
- Facilitation of formulation of district environment policies and integration of poverty-environmental concerns into district development plans and related budgets in pilot districts;
- Support to local level innovative activities demonstrating poverty-environment linkages and communication of best practices to influence policy and decision making;
- Evaluation and identification of best practices and lessons learned from local level activities;
- Public-awareness raising activities, e.g. TV and radio programmes;
- Edit and publish the various reports and studies;
- Integrated ecosystem assessment follow-up through the Sub-Global Assessment (SGA) approach start-up mid 2009.

What has been achieved to date?

- Reviews done under the PEI helped to highlight the gap between mainstreaming of environment in policies and the lack of implementation, especially at the sub-national level;
- General awareness on poverty and environment linkages has been increased;
- Partnerships with CSOs and CBOs at local and national levels to raise awareness on poverty environment linkages and the implementation of micro level activities;
- Thirteen districts through their LCV Chairmen, Councilors and Technical planning committees made commitments to address environmental issues by developing and implementing district environmental ordinances and by-laws;
- Members of the Parliamentary committee on Natural Resources have committed themselves to advocate for increase in budget allocation to the environment;
- MFPED has included a clause/paragraph and manual on mainstreaming environmental issues into budget framework papers in the budget call circular;
- Environment and sustainable use of natural resources has been identified as one of the six main objectives and Pillars/thematic areas of the new National Development Plan (NDP), and NEMA through PEI's support is leading the environment sector's engagement in the NDP formulation process. This has resulted in two main publications, "ENR and Climate Change, NDP Working Paper 7" and "Support to Mainstreaming Environmental Issues in the PEAP Revision Process." Four sub-sector working papers have also been produced in Climate Change, Wetlands, Forests, and Wildlife including policy briefs;
- A key study on "Economic instruments for promoting sustainable natural resource use, environmental sustainability and response to Climate Change" has generated important findings and key lessons to inform the formulation of the 5-year NDP with a view to using economic instruments for environmental management and promoting pro-poor growth;
- A brief based on the Economic Instruments study, "Making a difference for the poor using economic instruments to promote sustainable natural resources use, environmental sustainability and response to Climate Change" has been developed and has been used to engage stakeholders in the Energy, Transport, Water and Sanitation, and Banking and Finance Sectors;
- Environmental concerns have been integrated into the DDP, Budget Framework Papers and Policy Statements and District Environmental Policies have been formulated for the three focus districts and is ready for implementation.
- Evaluation and identification of lessons learned of best practices of micro projects;
- PE linkages and best practices used for production of radio and TV programmes;
- The various reports and studies carried out by PEI Uganda have been edited and will be published in 2010.

Lessons learned

- There exists a large body of evidence on environmental issues in Uganda, including numerous guidelines on integration of environmental and there could be a risk of duplication of studies and activities (“consultant culture”), however, implementation still lags behind;
- Active support of several partners, including MFPED, Sector ministries, CSOs, UNDP Uganda and development partners in-country is critical;
- Uganda has a reasonably good policy, legal and institutional framework for environmental mainstreaming however, there are limited budget allocations for environment at sector and local level;
- Links to on-going national, sector and local policy making processes such as the PEAP revision, NDP development, District Plans and the MDA budget process have provided useful early entry points;
- The need for stronger coordination and harmonisation of activities by the GoU in the environment and natural resources sector which is poorly represented in the Joint Water and Environment Sector working group;
- The activities of the programme should be well integrated in the strategies and day-to-day activities of the implementing institutions to foster national ownership, enhance implementation and effectiveness.

Way forward

- Finalise the on-going activities that are still being implemented by PEI Uganda;
- PEI will continue in Uganda through the implementation of the SGA 2009-2011. First phase is the exploratory and design phase, which the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) and Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources (MUIENR) both from Makerere University will lead in collaboration with key stakeholders;
- The SGA will build on programmatic involvement and active staff support from EPRC, MUIENR, NEMA, MFPED, the National Planning Authority, local government and relevant sectors.