

# The LVEMP II Civil Society Watch E-bulletin

A Monthly from the **East African Sustainability Watch Network** comprising: Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD), Tanzania Coalition for Sustainable Development (TCSD) and Sustainable Environmental Development Watch Network (SusWatch Kenya)

**October 2015**

## **'Poverty in a Rising Africa' Report Indicates More Work Needed**



**1. A woman holding immature fish at a landing site at the shores of Lake Victoria in Masaka - Uganda 2. A rural woman in Kisumu-Kenya herding cattle and carrying firewood 3. A soft drink factory in Mwanza- Tanzania (Photos: UCSD)**

A World Bank report “Poverty in a Rising Africa” indicates that more people in Africa are poor today than in 1990, two in five adults are illiterate and violence is increasing. World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim attended the launch of this report on 16 October 2015 in Accra Ghana. “Africa’s economy is on the rise, but to avoid bypassing vulnerable people – whether in rural areas or in fragile states – we must improve how we measure human progress. Better data will tell us whether we are delivering effective programs that will help end extreme poverty by 2030 and boost shared prosperity among the poorest,” said Jim Yong Kim. The report launch is part of the event pushing ahead of 17th October 2015 – the End Poverty Day observed by the United Nations, World Bank and other stakeholders striving to end poverty.

The ‘Poverty in a Rising Africa’ Report is the first of two upcoming reports on poverty in Africa which documents challenges facing the region and reviews the status of Africa’s poverty and inequality, both monetary and non-monetary. It reveals that progress in ending poverty in all its forms has varied greatly across countries and population groups, with the levels of achievement remaining challengingly low. Africa has the slowest rate of poverty reduction of all major developing regions, with the majority people living in extreme poverty (less than US\$1.90 a day) declining only slightly, from 56% in 1990 to 43% in 2012. But since 2012, extreme poverty reduced to 35% in 2015 in the region, based on the World Bank’s new poverty line of \$1.90 a day.

Despite progress, more than 100 million more Africans lived in extreme poverty in 2012 compared to 1990, with at least 20% of the population estimated to be chronically poor. Africa’s extreme poor live mainly in rural areas (home to 65 -70% of the population), while the highest levels of inequality are recorded in Southern Africa, where six of the world’s 10 most unequal countries are located. Disparities among Africans are accentuated by where they live (urban or rural areas); whether they live in a stable or conflict-affected or fragile country; and possibly their gender (limited evidence on household poverty shows women are at a disadvantage). While intergenerational mobility in education and occupation has improved, rates are still low. Lack of economic mobility perpetuates both poverty and inequality in the next generation.

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Some countries have had impressive gains in poverty reduction, such as Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda and Uganda. Since 2000, the number of children dying from malaria has been reduced by 40%, and under-five deaths from tetanus, pertussis and measles have declined by 75%. Findings show rapid increases in school enrolments, with total net enrolment of children in primary school expanding from just 55% in 1995 to 74% by 2012.

The Vice president of the World Bank for Africa region, Makhtar Diop noted that “The human toll of poverty in Africa remains unacceptably high. With the new target set by the Sustainable Development Goals to end extreme poverty by 2030, much more work is needed to accelerate poverty reduction”.  
Read full report from: <http://bit.ly/1L0rXeM>

## Environmental Assets Vital for Sustainable Urban Development in Uganda



**1. Aerial view of Kampala city 2. Cultivation along Kinawataka wetland in Kampala 3. A man making bricks in Namuwongo wetland in Kampala: (UCSD photos)**

A report launched by the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) and the World Bank at the KCCA Climate Change Stakeholders’ Dialogue provides valuable information and knowledge to assist decision-makers in Kampala. It notes that rapid, poorly managed growth has had negative environmental impacts on Kampala through the consumption and pollution of resources, such as water, and the depletion of ecosystems, such as wetlands which are key to sustaining the quality of these resources. Over time, the report indicates deterioration of water quality due to eradication of wetlands, which function as natural water-cleansing system, has on the cost of water treatment for Kampala.

The report, “Promoting Green Urban Development in African Cities: Kampala, Uganda Urban Environmental Profile”, summarizes the current quality and trends of the city’s environmental assets, identifies the key drivers of the city’s environmental challenges, and makes broad recommendations as to guide sustainable planning and management of the city. The Rapid population and economic growth in Kampala over the past 30 years has placed pressure on the city’s natural assets and ecosystems, such as water and wetlands, air, vegetation, and soil. The Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) is addressing these trends, but more needs to be done if these systems, on which people derive livelihoods, are saved from irreversible damage as Kampala expands.” Read the full report from: <http://bit.ly/1XTZ8dm>



**The East African Sustainability Watch Network seeks to catalyse and mobilize civil society in Eastern Africa to exert accountability from governments and international development institutions to achieve a socially and environmentally sustainable world. Learn more from: [www.easuswatch.org](http://www.easuswatch.org)**

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## UN Desertification Conference Routes for a 'Land-Degradation Neutral' World



From L to R: A session at the Ankara UNCCD Conference; A large scale sunflower farm; and a tree nursery (Photos by Sarah Kisolo - RUDMEC)

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) that hosted its Twelfth Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP12) in Ankara, Turkey October 12 – 13, 2015 adopted the 'Land degradation neutrality' as part of the agreement. The conference was responding to a key target for 2030, which is to combat desertification, and restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land-degradation neutral world. LDN concept was agreed upon and adopted at the UN Rio + 20 Conference in Brazil, 2012, as part of "The Future We Want". The UNCCD as the body in charge of desertification, land resource and drought is mandated to implement LDN.

Land is now the centre of international environmental agenda due to its importance in many ways but significantly in the climate change negotiations. Land is a major carbon sink and hence a centre of discussion regarding climate change. SDG 15 and its target 15:3 are built upon the LDN concept that emphasizes the need to address land degradation, through restoration, mitigation and sustainable land management.

The LDN has targets where all countries will formulate specific voluntary targets according to national circumstances and development priorities to achieve the overall target. The Parties also agreed on the indicators they will use not only to measure progress, but to also strengthen measures to make the land resilient to climate change and to halt the biodiversity loss that follows the destruction of ecosystems.

Ms Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary of the Desertification Convention noted that indicators will provide the basis for the monitoring and evaluation approach to assess implementation. The same indicators could guide the synergy Parties have always called for among the three Rio Conventions – desertification, climate change and biodiversity. It should be noted however, that this state can be achieved by the prevention or mitigation of land degradation, the adoption of sustainable land management policies and practices and the recovery of degraded land. She added that "land will fill a place as the Queen of both international development and climate change actions. Unlike other pieces on the board, the Queen provides cover and supports our ambitions on many fronts; food, energy, water, climate, biodiversity, jobs, migration and security." She added that "by adopting Land Degradation Neutrality as an organizing principle, you have given us a clear game-plan and vision and direction for the next 15 years'. [Read more about the LDN concept from: http://bit.ly/1RAup14](http://bit.ly/1RAup14)