

Readiness Study for advancing and scaling-up Sexual Reproductive Health Rights/Family Planning for climate adaptation and resilience in Uganda.

Conducted by: Regenerate Africa in collaboration with Expanding Health Quality and Access (ExpandNet) and the Preston Werner Ventures (PWV)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Regenerate Africa in collaboration with Expanding Health Quality and Access (ExpandNet) and the Preston Werner Ventures (PWV) are conducting a readiness study for advancing and scaling up Sexual Reproductive Health Rights/Family Planning (SRHR/FP) for climate change adaptation and resilience in Uganda. The study will establish the status of institutionalization of SRHR/FP in climate action at the national level. Furthermore, to document the local case studies depicting the linkage between climate change and SRHR/FP. Particularly, the study will help in understanding the underlying policy and institutional structure gaps that limit effective institutionalization and scale up of SRHR/FP in climate action. Thus, specifically in respect to adaptation plans, climate policies, strategies and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Gender Action Plan, for the benefit of the entire population especially women and girls' access to contraceptives.



Figure 1. Health Worker, providing information about Family Planning to a Male Village Health Team from Musomoko village in Ssi Bukunja Sub County, Buikwe District. **Photo credit:** Regenerate Africa.

2.0 BACKGROUND

There is strong evidence depicting the intrinsic link between Gender, SRHR and climate change issues. Reports by Masson-Delmotte et. al., 2018; National Adaptation Plan (NAP), Global Network and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 2019; and Hashim, J., and Z. Hashim, (2016), Climate Change risks increasing social, including gender inequalities. Thus, as global temperatures rise, extreme weather events like floods, droughts, and heatwaves particularly threaten the health and rights of women and girls. Hurlbert, et. al., (2019) reported that gender, sexuality, age, wealth, indigeneity, and race are all determining factors in the vulnerability to climate change.

According to the WHO, (2021), climate change is expected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year, from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress, between 2030 and 2050. The same report underscores that direct damage costs to health (i.e. excluding costs in health-determining sectors such as agriculture and water and sanitation), is estimated to be between USD 2-4 billion/year by 2030.

In Uganda, climate change is visible and is impacting all sectors including the health sector. Studies by Government of Uganda (GoU), (2014) and WHO, (2015), indicate that climate change is aggravating the occurrences of water-related diseases, such as dysentery, cholera, hepatitis E and malaria, including other diseases like respiratory infections and malnutrition-related illnesses. Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene is about 16%, malaria incidence per 100,000 population is 340 and hepatitis B incidence per 100,000 population is 0.8 (MoH-HMIS, 2020). This has negative impacts on health and productivity of the population and overall economic growth and development.

In addition to climate change impacts, women, adolescents, and young people in Uganda are among the most vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion because of deeply entrenched socio-cultural and religious beliefs. This has negatively influence their access to sexual and reproductive health services. For instance, unmet need for family planning has declined, but remains high at 32%, with adolescents 15-19 years at 30%. Modern contraceptive prevalence rate is 35%, and 9.4% among married young women 15-24 years with wide geographical disparities (UDHS, 2016). The adolescent pregnancy rate stagnated at 25% among girls 15-19, with 12% of adolescent girls being married thereby contributing to 23% of school dropouts

(UDHS, 2016). Maternal mortality ratio has decreased slowly to 336 per 100,000 live births in 2016, with 28% of maternal deaths occurring among young women, 15-24 years, despite improvements in skilled birth attendance and health facility deliveries (UDHS, 2016). The above situation has been compounded by the already existing climate-related occurrences in some parts of the country.

Furthermore, climate change issues have negative impacts on maternal health and create condition that result in increases in gender-based violence (GBV) including harmful practices such as child marriage. Climate-related disasters or occurrences such as floods, mudslides and landslides may strain the capacity of health systems and hinder or disrupts access to SRHR/FP services, thus rendering these services inaccessible. Hence, expecting women often deliver unsupervised and without the much-needed medical support. In addition, women's and girl's ability to manage, their menstruation with dignity is impaired when there is a lack of clean water and menstrual products. Climate change impacts exacerbate the already existing challenges, vulnerabilities and disabilities for marginalized and vulnerable groups of people (WHO, 2021).

The GoU responded by developing the an overarching policy framework with commitment to advance adaptation and mitigation of climate change impacts in the Health sector, which makes frequent reference to the value of, and need for cross-sectoral collaboration between SRHR/FP, environment and climate resilience. These are enshrined in the Nationally Determined Contributions, the National Climate Change Policy 2015; National Adaptation Programme of Action 2007, The 3rd National Development Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25; and the Ministry of Health Strategic Plan 2020/21-2024/25 among others, which create an enabling environment for SRHR/FP integration and institutionalization into the national climate policies, plans, strategies and action. In addition, Government has recommitted to the NDP III and Family Planning 2020 pledge to continue promoting universal access to all methods of family planning and to reduce the unmet need for family planning to 10% and increase contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) to 50% by 2025 (NPA, 2020). Despite increased Government funding for reproductive health commodities from USD 2.1 million to 4.3 million dollars for FY2019/2020, a gap of USD 9.8 million dollars is required to ensure equitable and universal access to family planning (DP/FPA/CPD/JGA/9).

Much as there is still progress made in this respect, there are underlying policy and institutional structure barriers that limit effective integration, scale-up and institutionalization of SRHR into Uganda's Climate change agenda and actions at community, local and national scales. For example, SRHR/FP has been largely left out of climate change adaptation strategies, proposals and projects despite the growing evidence base that links women's met needs for family planning with reduced human vulnerability to climate change and enhanced resilience. Some of the key barriers in this respect include:

- a) There is also still low exposure of the FP/SRHR practitioners, advocates, policy makers, actors and stakeholders at country level to understand the intrinsic linkage between climate change and SRHR, climate processes, protocols, and key decision makers within the climate adaptation and resilience community.
- b) Inadequate technical capacity, knowledge and skills to actively participate in national adaptation and climate action engagement processes for integration, institutionalization and scaling up of SRHR/FP into responsive climate actions at the national, local and community levels;
- c) Inadequate capacities of SRHR/FP practitioners, advocates, policy makers, actors and stakeholders at country level to support sustainable scale up of high impact practices in SRHR/FP within the climate adaptation and resilience agenda;
- d) There are gaps in the policy and institutional framework to address SRHR and climate change issues, e.g. lack of the National Adaptation Plan for the Health sector;
- e) Inadequate documentation and exchange of knowledge and experiences based on practical actions to address climate change impacts and SRHR in Uganda and East African Community..

Therefore, the Readiness study for “*advancing and scaling up SRHR/FP for climate change adaptation and resilience in Uganda*” is one of the interventions which will establish the status of institutionalization of SRHR/FP in climate action at the national and local levels. It will also underpin the underlying policy and institutional structure gaps and barriers that limit effective institutionalization and scale up of SRHR/FP in climate action. Overall, the study will generate recommendations and actions for influencing policy and practice for institutionalization and scale up of SRHR/FP into climate actions in Uganda at various scales i.e. national, sub national, local and community.

3.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE READINESS STUDY

- a) To establish the status of institutionalization of SRHR/FP in climate action at the national, local and community levels;
- b) To document local case studies depicting the linkage between climate change and SRHR/FP;
- c) To identify the underlying policy and institutional structure gaps, which limit effective institutionalization and scale up of SRHR/FP in climate action;
- a) To generate recommendations and actions for influencing policy and practice for institutionalization and scale up of SRHR/FP into climate actions in Uganda at various scales i.e. national, sub national, local and community.

4.0 KEY PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND TIMELINES

The planned activities under the study will be implemented during the period November 2022 to March 2023 and they include the following:

- A. Development of the tools for data collection. These will include:
 - i) Literature review and gap analyses guide;
 - ii) Key informant check list;
 - iii) Focus Group Discussions check list
- B. Conducting literature review and gap analyses with a focus on relevant policies, institutional and legal framework on climate action and SRHR/FP at the global and national levels.



Figure 2. Ms. Maria Nakalanda, Programme Officer – Gender, Health and Environment at Regenerate Africa, providing information about Family Planning options to male community members from Musomoko village in Ssi Bukunja Sub County, Buikwe District. **Photo credit:** Regenerate Africa.

- C. Data collection through structured engagements with key stakeholders and actors actively involved in climate action and SRHR/FP interventions.
- D. Data analyses and synthesis to generate the results, interpretation, draw conclusions and recommendations for policy and practice change.
- E. Packaging of the results into draft study report, policy briefs and fact sheets
- F. Organize a multi-stakeholder’s national workshop to validate the draft study report, policy briefs and fact sheets.

- G. Document and publish a documentary on climate change and SRHR/FP linkages depicting the community voices and appropriate strategic responsive actions that should be pursued.
- H. Dissemination of the study report, policy briefs and fact sheets through a national, sub-regional dissemination workshop and media (i.e. radio, print and social media platforms)

5.0 KEY STAKEHOLDERS FOR COLLABORATION

The key stakeholders and actors who will be engaged in the study for purposes of generating the required information are those actively involved in the sectors of Health, Water and Environment. They will include the relevant Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs); and Non-State Actors like Development Partners and the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Thus, some of the key stakeholders and actors based on these categories include:

State:

a) Ministry of Health (MoH); b) Ministry of Water and Environment (MoWE); c) Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFPED); d) Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) and e) Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MoAAIF); f) National Population Council (NPC); g) Designated Authority (DA); h) the accredited National Implementing Entities (NIEs) and i) Local governments (i.e. political leaders and technical officers).

Non-State:

a) Development Partners; b) National and International CSOs working on SRHR/FP and Climate Change, PHE Integration, Livelihood, Gender and Environment i.e. Climate Action Network, Environment and Natural Resources CSO Network, National Population, Health and Environment Network (NAPHENET); c) Media and d) the Local community - targeting women, men and young people (girls and boys), opinion leaders).

6.0 EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

The expected outputs from the readiness study include:

- a) A better understanding of Uganda's readiness for advancing and scaling up SRHR/FP for climate change adaptation and resilience at national, local and community levels;
- b) Appreciation of the underlying policy and institutional structure gaps that limit effective institutionalization and scale up of SRHR/FP in climate action.
- c) Recommendations and actions for influencing policy and practice for institutionalization and scale up of SRHR/FP into climate actions in Uganda at various scales i.e. national, sub-national and community.

The key deliverables from the study will include:

- a) Readiness study report;
- b) Policy briefs;
- c) Fact sheets;
- d) Issue based articles published in print media;
- e) Video documentary.

Box 1. About Regenerate Africa

Regenerate Africa is a non-profit organisation that aims to contribute to, and accelerate Africa's transition to a regenerative economy for the purpose of restoring climate stability, ending hunger, rebuilding deteriorated social, ecological, health and economic systems that benefit people, nature and the climate across Africa.

Regenerate Africa is officially registered with the NGO Board as a Ugandan non-governmental organization, incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. RA is governed by an Independent Board that is responsible for providing strategic oversight of the organization including ensuring its integrity as a voluntary service organization.

Vision- *'An Africa where human choices ensure a regenerative economy for the benefit of people and nature, and for a sustainable future.'*

Mission – *'Support increased adoption of regenerative human development approaches across Africa by building strategic partnerships, cultivating initiatives and innovations in production landscapes and supply chains, leading to healthier people, environment, climate, communities and sustainable livelihoods.'*

Our Core competencies

- a) Responsive and targeted training and capacity building for community
- b) Partnerships and relationships building
- c) Gender responsive programming
- d) Evidence based Advocacy

The work is aligned to deliver the desired change along the following thematic areas:

- a) Regenerative food, agriculture and land management;
- b) Climate and green energy solutions;
- c) Forests and water resources;
- d) Gender, health and environment; and
- e) Business and nature.

Scale of Implementation:

Regenerate Africa's scale of engagements currently involves stakeholders in 16 districts across the country. These include: Mukono, Buikwe, Kayunga, Bukwo, Kapchorwa, Kween, Luweero, Kyotera, Rakai, Kiboga, Kyankwanzi, Kiboga, Buyende, Kamuli, Mityana, Mubende. Going forward, interventions are underway to scale out engagements at the sub-regional (east Africa) and Africa wide levels.

Further information about Regenerate Africa is available at:

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