

HOLDING MANUFACTURING COMPANIES ACCOUNTABLE FOR POLLUTION IN KAMPALA

Proceedings Report by Pan African Club (PAC)

REFLECTION MEETING BY MEMBERS OF VARIOUS AFFECTED
COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL LEADERS IN KAMPALA



Venue: Kampala Kolping Hotel

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List of Acronyms

CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CEAPs	Civic Engagement Action Plans
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
KCCA	Kampala Capital City Authority
LC	Local Council
PAC	Pan African Club
KAPA	Kampala Anti-Pollution Association
VHT	Village Heath Team

1.0 Opening Remarks by Mr. Oscar Kasya, the Chairman of Pan African Club



Mr. Oscar Kasya, Chairman PAC (above) addressing the meeting

Mr. Oscar Kasya began with welcoming and appreciating the various community representatives present for accepting PAC invitation and sacrificing their precious working time. He said that these being city dwellers, accepting to take off some time from their day to day income generating activities is a strong indicator of their commitment to the fight against pollution in Kampala.

Oscar talked a little bit about Pan African Club as a None Government Organization which empowers communities and young people to think creatively and get involved in Pan-African activities including environmental conservation and sustainable development. The Club organizes interactive intellectual discussions on topical issues to analyze Africa's challenges and opportunities as a way to generate homemade solutions.

He mentioned that regarding pollution which is the theme of today, the Pan African Club has been organizing interactive public discussions providing a platform to grass-root communities, leaders and intellectuals to deliberate on pollution in Kampala and by extension, environmental degradation in Uganda in partnership with various Civil Society Organizations and academic institutions especially universities and secondary schools.

He further stated that in grass-root community sensitization meetings organized by PAC, both the facilitators, communities and the youths have always pointed out the companies responsible for polluting their environment and the gaps in law enforcement, which have resulted into a waste management crisis, and skyrocketing pollution effects especially in Kampala.

Oscar said that the aim of PAC always is to make a contribution to building a resilient community base knowledgeable on pollution-induced diseases which are reportedly common nowadays in polluted environments globally, Uganda inclusive. These include; respiratory and cardiovascular diseases such as bronchitis, emphysema, stroke, lung cancer, ischemic heart disease to mention but a few.

In conclusion, Oscar noted that the meeting should aim at coming up with advocacy capacity strategies of stakeholders including grass-root communities against pollution by companies in Kampala. “The Pan African Club wishes to work with all the participants to make Kampala a safer environment free of pollution for the healthy and sustainable living of everyone,” Oscar emphasized and then declared the meeting officially open and wished all the participants successful deliberations.

2.0 Presentation of an over-view of the Research findings on pollution in Kawempe Division by Dr. James Kimera Ssekiwanuka, PAC Consultant



Dr. James Kimera Ssekiwanuka (above) addressing the meeting

Dr James Kimera said that according to the research carried out in 2022 by PAC with his technical assistance, Kawempe Division has practically become an industrial area with high pollution levels. He stated that the Leaders and community members of Kawempe Division identified four types of pollution, which are common in the area. These are; - water pollution; land pollution, air pollution; and noise pollution. He said that the situation appears to be similar in various ways across the entire Kampala Capital City.

He mentioned that during the research in Kawempe Division, many people reported that they have been seriously affected by toxic smoke emitted from various factories that are established in their densely populated residential areas. These concerns were mostly reported in Kirokole zone, Corner zone, Komamboga, Kanyanya and Bwaise.

The research discovered that most factories use open trenches to move their waste from their premises through densely populated residential areas hence causing air pollution.

Dr. Kimera further said that community members told the researchers that the dirty wastewater in the trenches appears in different colours at different times. Hence, many children drink the wastewater in the trenches thinking it is soda. The children have consequently contracted various diseases such as diarrhea, typhoid, and other infections. Some children have reportedly been falling in the open trenches and sustained serious injuries.

According to Dr Kimera, many community members reported that when it rains, people do not fetch water because some factories release chemicals, which flow downwards the water springs hence water contamination. This claim by community members was validated in PAC interview with KCCA experts such as Dr. Daniel Okello, the KCCA Director of Public Health and Environment, who said that 100% of water springs in Kampala are contaminated. This has led to high cost of water treatment.

Dr Kimera said that the communities reported fears that they are feeding on foods grown on polluted wetlands such as cabbages, yams and sugarcane which have absorbed heavy metals such as manganese (mn), zinc (zn), cadmium (cd) and lead (pb) beyond the World Health Organization permissible limits.

The Consultant said that the local leaders revealed that community members have been terribly affected by the pollution and given the ensuing anger; they are likely to mobilize and attack the factories, which would be unfortunate because this implies taking the law into their hands.

Recommendations

Dr James Kimera Ssekiwanuka mentioned a wide range of recommendations including Pollution victims' compensation; Relocation of factories; Better waste and sewage Management interventions; Capacity building; Participation of NEMA in the ESIA community consultation meetings; Provision of alternative safe water for communities and tree planting; and Compulsory adherence to the law.

2.1 Remarks by invited local leaders and Participants

Ms Proscovia Namakula Bbale, the Women's Leader (Nabakyala) of Corner Zone, Kawempe Division said that pollution is not limited to one place but rather it spreads with its disastrous effects. She gave her own testimony of itchy eyes whenever a Biplous factory which is established in the veranda of her residential house puts on a noisy generator that emits a lot of gas into her house.



Ms Proscovia Namakula addressing the meeting while a section of participants (R) take note

Ms Namakula added that people of all ages are developing breathing problems in Corner zone where she lives and she believes that this is one of the effects of the many factories crowded in the area.

She reiterated that no one is fighting factories because they create jobs and services but they should be regulated in order to stop making people fall sick. She asked the participants to come up with clear way forward to address the endemic problem of pollution by factories in Kampala.

Ms Zainab Kagoro from the Uganda Slum Dwellers Association and chairperson L.C II of Kisenyi Parish said that the research findings by PAC are correct and reflect the true situation on the ground. She gave example that in Kenya, there is more emphasis on tree planting which is not the case in Uganda.



Ms Zainab Kagoro (standing above) making her presentation

Ms Zainab Kagoro appreciated to have learnt from the research that the smoke from factories causes sickness. She implored the government to take factories to gazetted places and ensure adherence to the laws on pollution.

Mr. Habib Rwamagana Nasuru underscored the importance of fighting pollution especially in regard to water conservation. He said that Lake Victoria is turning green due to pollution and there is a risk that in the near future, we shall be lining up at water stations to buy water. He said modernization must put into consideration environmental conservation and tree planting. He noted that development is good but we can only enjoy it when we are alive.

Mr. Rwamagana further said he agrees with the recommendation of devolution of power in accordance with the KCCA Act. He recalled in the past when communication was from the ground to the top unlike to day when it is the reverse. He wondered for example why the law and the practice cannot empower the area local leaders because they are vast with what is happening in their areas to the detail. For example, they know the polluters.



Mr. Rwamagana (L) Speaking while a section of participants (R) take note

Mr. Richard Mackay Ssekimpi, the chairperson of Kiyanja zone and parish councilor to Kawempe Division said that pollution has become a time bomb. He said that Children who live in factory surroundings are no longer performing well in class because they do not rest due to noise pollution by factories. He said that the same reason is suspected to be the cause of raising levels of mental disorders among children.



Mr. Ssekimpi (L) addressing the meeting while a section of participants (R) take note

Mr. Ssekimpi supported the proposal of devolution of power and called upon community members to stop littering in open trenches. He also appreciated the presence of many women in this meeting.

Ms Prossy Kyolaba Nassimbwa called for a sense of responsibility on the part of community members against pollution. She underscored the importance of community meetings and community sensitization. She said that in the area where she is a counselor, she will be inviting Pan African Club to come and sensitize the community on pollution and encouraged other local leaders to do the same.



Ms Prossy Nassimbwa (L) addressing the meeting while a section of participants (R) take note

Prossy also mentioned that community members in her area in Kanyanya once mobilized themselves against pollution by a noisy bar known as New Turns and wrote a petition signed by so many residents. The Bar which had all long refused to listen due to powers from above then submitted to the power of the people and acquired sound proof facilities. Prossy said that noise pollution by factories is bad because some people are sick and cannot rest or sleep for enough medically recommended hours.

Ms Teddy Lutaaya, the chairperson of Kazo-Angola Women Development Group said that her area of residence called Corner zone in Kawempe Division is an industrial area with many factories in place such as Biplous factory, Riham, Aya to mention but a few. She said that before the coming of Pan African Club project on pollution in the area, the local people tried their local leaders but unfortunately, they are divided by politics. She pointed out that many local leaders are filled by poverty mentality, they are easily influenced due to their vulnerability to corruption. She called for teamwork as an approach to fight pollution in Kampala.



Ms Teddy Lutaaya (L) addressing the meeting to attentive participants (R)

3.0 Introduction to CEAPs Concept as a Practical tool of Citizens Engagement by Mr. John Ngabirano the Projects Coordinator of PAC



Mr. John Ngabirano, the projects coordinator of PAC introducing the CEAPs

Mr. John Ngabirano said that CEAPs in full stands for Civic Engagement Action Plans. He mentioned that the key actors in CEAPs are Citizens, the Local Government Councils and CSOs. He explained that the Citizens identify local service delivery plans, the Local Government Councils respond to the citizens' demands while the CSOs act as intermediaries between the citizens and the Local Government.

He explained that CEAPs are citizen-generated plans for action and use tools of civic engagement. These tools include Petitions, Letters and Community meetings.

John said that the core role of CEAPs concept is to inculcate a culture of responsibility on the part of the citizens. On the other hand, CEAPs are meant to achieve accountability on the side of the local leaders characterized by answerability and enforcement.

He reiterated that CEAPs help us to challenge citizens to be responsible such as cleaning trenches, avoiding littering, stopping the habit of releasing sewage into wetlands, minding and stopping the silence about pollution by factories because it is a slow killing poison for all, stop cooking using polythene paper commonly known as kavera etc...

He also emphasized that under the CEAPs concept, it is believed that the people know their issues hence CSOs cannot come and impose their ideas and solutions. They rather provide a platform because the people know what they want, their problems and solutions. CSOs only come in to provide technical guidance, help to amplify citizen voices as well as monitoring government response.

He also explained that CEAPs are evidence-based. For example if you claim that a factory is polluting the water, there should be a physical evident connection. He said that another form of evidence is testimonies from victims who are able to articulate the connection between their experience and the existence of the party deemed responsible such as a factory.

He pointed out that CEAPs aim at achieving mutual understanding between the people and their leaders for workable and sustainable solutions to the issue at hand. He said that the engagements are civic in nature and involve all cohorts of society such as women, youths, elders, the disabled persons etc....

3.1 Participants' Views: Moderator; Mr. Elimu Geoffrey, the ICT Officer of Pan African Club



Mr. Elimu Geoffrey standing Left (above) leading the session of participants' views

Mr. Wasswa Ssemanda Ibra

Mr. Wasswa Ssemanda Ibra appreciated the CEAPs and gave a testimony from Lubaga Division in Kawaala where they worked against a soap-making factory. He said that the factory was causing air pollution especially in regard to bad smell. The leaders approached the factory three times but it was none responsive. Finally, all residents woke up one day, held a community meeting and from that day, the factory cooperated and stopped the bad smell.

The councilor believes that the challenge many community members face is lack of awareness. He suggested that CBOs should fill this information gap. He said that pollution is dangerous; it is making all of us sick but the people need further sensitization.



Mr. Wasswa Ssemand (L) speaking while a section of participants (R) take note

Mr. Rwamagana Nasuru Habib said that some people have misused the word above. He gave example of a person who was claiming to be from state house but one day, the president openly denounced him. He had been an imposter.



Mr. Rwamagana Nasuru (L) speaking while a section of participants (R) take note

He called for neither fear nor favour as long as what we are representing is the fact. He said “We will write to you as concerned citizens under the CEAPs concept, and if you refuse, we shall petition the higher authorities that be. If the council passes a resolution in our favour and the person concerned does not implement it, we shall hold a community meeting and resolve to petition court because a court pronouncement is as good as an Act of Parliament”.

Mr. Ssekimpi Richard Mackay said that CEAPs are good but sometimes, the language our leaders understand is a language of riots. Therefore, to him, CEAPs cannot work in all situations. He gave example that wetland degradation was happening and ongoing despite the fact that local leaders have always tried to stop it. However, a patrol car came from City hall with security officers and enforced the wetland degradation. This indicates that the above truly exists.



Standing above is Mr. Ssekimpi standing (above) addressing the meeting

He agreed with Hon Rwamagana that some years ago, there was bottom up communication in governance structures. He recalled that every 1st Sunday of the month would be a village meeting, and then a parish meeting would happen on 2nd Sundays. A Division community meeting on the 3rd Sunday would follow this. He mentioned that this grass-root bottom up system collapsed. He reasoned that a community resolution is powerful and can influence the decisions of factories against pollution.

Dr James Kimera Ssekiwanuka said that CEAPs are about tapping dialogue and he believes they work. He cited example from Kanyanya where a letter signed by residents helped the community to prevail over a noise polluting bar enterprise.

Hon Kimuli Thomas, councilor from Nakawa Division hailed the research as a usable tool. He reiterated that the PAC research on pollution reflects reality. He also said that CEAPs will work and should be applied against pollution by factories in Kampala. He also mentioned that in his area in Nakawa, they had a problem of noise pollution from Isabella Bar but when they held a community meeting, the bar submitted and stopped the noise pollution.

Regarding devolution of power, he said that it is true; the power structures of governance starting from Divisions do not have powers. All the powers in KCCA are concentrated at City hall.



Hon Kimuli Thomas standing (above) addressing the meeting

Ms Charity Kasibante said that pollution is a very big issue in Kampala and everyone is affected. She reasoned however, that awareness levels are still low and they vary from person to person. She proposed an awareness drive on pollution by factories using the media. She gave example of some radio and TV talkshows such as the frontline and Gasimbagane Nabanamawulire. She said that many people watch and listen in those programs and participate through phone calls.



Ms Charity Kasibante Akankwasa (above) addressing the meeting

Ms Charity Kasibante also pointed out Bukedde newspaper as the most read newspaper in Kampala by ordinary people. These are the majority in Kampala and comprise the most affected persons by pollution from factories because companies have a tendency to establish their factories in residential areas of ordinary people otherwise known as the poor communities.



A cross section of the participants (above) during the meeting

Responses to participants' views

In his responses, Mr. John Ngabirano appreciated all the participants' comments. He clarified that the suggestion by some participants that sometimes demonstrations should be used where the CEAPs, he said that under the CEAPs concept, demonstrations are not allowed.

He explained that CEAPs envisage constructive engagement in a manner that enables consensus building whereby the parties come together to discuss so that there is agreement on the solutions.

He drew a distinction between advocacy and activism and said that CEAPs embrace advocacy where peaceful constructive engagement is the only applicable approach. He revealed that as an organization, Pan African Club espouses the CEAPs methodology of constructive peaceful engagement because it is sustainable and yields desired results.



Mr. John Ngabirano standing (above) giving his responses to the participants' views

4.0 Way Forward; Lead person: Dr. James Kimera Ssekiwanuka, the Consultant



Dr. James Kimera Ssekiwanuka standing (above) leading the session

The participants resolved to do the following:

1. To carry out community sensitization against pollution by factories in Kampala;
2. To bring on Board Buganda Kingdom in the fight against pollution and special interest groups such as the religious institutions, schools, KACITA, Taxi Industry, hospitals for a more robust struggle against pollution in Kampala;
3. To be principled and stand by the facts as researched by experts in the fight against pollution
4. Engage in media mobilization
5. Be creative in approach such as use of drama competitions to promote awareness about the dangers of pollution in all the Divisions of Kampala
6. Mobilize schools to plant trees every rain season.
7. Formed a campaign network against pollution called **Kampala Anti-Pollution Association (KAPA)**.

The community representatives present selected an interim working committee for the Kampala Anti-Pollution Association as follows:

N o.	Name	Responsibility	Contact	Division
1	Mr. Kimuli Tomasi	Chairman	0772 754532	Nakawa
2	Mr. Wasswa Ibra Ssemanda	Vice Chairman	0752 273404	Lubaga
3	Ms. Kagoro Zainabu	Secretary	0752 077555	Kampala Central
4	Ms. Mirembe Deborah	Treasurer	0705 453939	Makindye
5	Mr. Sekimpi Richard Mackay	Public Relations Officer	0751 854063 / 0776854063	Kawempe
6	Ms. Tukakira Jodah	Member	0774 690227	Kampala Central
7	Ms. Nankya Phionah	Member	0704 548288	Lubaga
8	Mr. Mukisa Nicholas	Member	0705 874504	Makindye
9	Ms. Akankwasa Kasibante Charity	Member	0784 931064 / 0702977231	Nakawa
10	Mr. Kakooza Peter Wasswa	Member	0700 252198	Kawempe
11	Mr. Habib Nasuru Rwamagana	Advisor	0782 657049	Kampala Central



The interim committee of Kampala Anti-Pollution Association, Seated in the middle is Mr. Kimuli Thomas, the Chairman

5.0 Closing Remarks by Mr. Oscar Kasya, Chairman of Pan African Club

Mr. Oscar Kasya thanked the participants for embracing the fight against pollution by manufacturing companies in Kampala. He assured them that the pollution issue is an issue whose time has come and hence it is unstoppable struggle and no one should feel intimidated. He said that the people present have joined a team that understands the war against pollution whose fighters are everywhere and hence cannot be defeated.

Oscar explained that the fight against pollution is a matter of life and death. “If we mismanage our environment, we will be affected as already indicated in the research with various pollution related illnesses. The future generation will suffer even more if they find a destroyed environment by pollution. This will shorten their life span much more than the present and previous generations”, he said.



On the Left (above) is Mr. Oscar Kasya speaking while on the Right is a section of the attentive participants during his closing remarks

He pointed out that many mothers today are giving birth to children who are naturally weak with compromised immunity because of pollution. This makes them more susceptible to various illnesses. He made emphasis that the contaminated water by factories used for drinking by mothers implies that they are taking in poison every day and this affects their children especially the unborn babies.

Oscar gave example that years ago, diseases such as kidney failure were known to be for old people but today, many people as young as 25 years are getting kidney failures. He explained that the health system in Uganda is under-facilitated and is thus unable to cope with the raising challenge of pollution related diseases.

Oscar also questioned the application of chemicals to vegetables such as cabbages, which are consumed fresh in restaurants and other eating-places including our homes. He analyzed that eating fresh vegetables is believed to be eating healthy yet in the actual sense; we are sipping chemicals directly into our bodies. He said that gone are the years when HIV/AIDS was the cause of explosion of death. Today's explosion of death is kidney failures and cancers. These are largely attributed to what goes into our bodies contaminated with various forms of pollution.

In his conclusion, Oscar called upon participants to count on Pan African Club as reliable partners in the sustainable fight against pollution in Kampala.

Annex 1: The Program

Venue: Kampala Kolping Hotel in Makerere Kavule on Bombo Road

8:30am-9:00am; Arrival and Registration

9:00am-9:10am; Opening prayer and introductions: **Ms. Prossy Kyolaba Nassimbwa**, the Program Officer of Pan African Club in charge of Environmental Protection, Children's Rights and Gender Issues.

9:10am – 9:20am; Opening Remarks by **Mr. Oscar Kasya**, the Chairman of Pan African Club.

9:20am – 9:50am; Presentation of an over-view of the Research findings on pollution in Kawempe Division/Kampala Capital City by **Dr. James Kimera Ssekiwanuka**, the Consultant of Pan African Club

9:50am – 10:05am; Remarks by invited local leaders present

10:05am – 10:30am **Participants' Views**. Moderator; **Ms Proscovia Namakula Bbale**, the Women's Leader (Nabakyala) of Corner Zone, Kawempe Division

10:30pm – 10:50am; Tea Break

10:50pm – 11:10am; Introduction to CEAPs Concept as a Practical tool of Citizens Engagement by **Mr. John Ngabirano** the Projects Coordinator of Pan African Club

11:10am – 11:30am; **Participants' Views**. Moderator; **Mr. Elimu Geofrey**, the ICT Officer of Pan African Club

11:30am – 12:00Noon; **Way Forward**; **Dr. James Kimera Ssekiwanuka**, the Consultant

12:00Noon – 12:10pm; Closing Remarks by **Mr. Oscar Kasya**, the Chairman of Pan African Club

12:10pm; Announcements and Departure

Annex 2: List of participants

No	Name	F/M	Organization / Address	Contact
1	Rwamagana Nasuru Habib	M	KCCA Kampala Central Division	0782657049
2	Kagoro Zainabu	F	Uganda Slum Dwellers Association / Chairperson LC II Kisenyi Parish	0752077555
3	Ivan Tsebeni	M	New Vision	0789362597
4	Mirembe Deborah	F	Kataka Development Group	0789453939
5	Mukisa Nicholas	M	Kataka Development Group	0705874504
6	Kakooza Peter Wasswa	M	Kuntiko Development Group in Kanyanya Parish, Kikuubo zone	0700252198
7	Mercy Jolly Nabacwa	F	CALM Africa	0789895324
8	Elimu Geofrey	M	Pan African Club	0772078842
9	Ssekimpi Richard Mackay	M	Chairperson Kiyanja Zone	0751854063 / 0776854063
10	Charity Akankwasa Kasibante	F	Pan African Club, Ntinda	0784931064
11	Teddy Lutaaya	F	Kazo-Angola Women Development Group	0754318206
12	Jodah Tukakira	F	KCCA / Kololo IV	0774690227
13	Nassimbwa Prossy Kyolaba	F	PAC / Councilor Kanyanya, Kawempe Division	0759238511
14	Kimuli Tomasi	M	KCCA Nakawa Division	0772754532
15	Nkankya Phiona	F	Kawaala Zone II Youth Group	0704548288
16	Nakintu Mariat	F	Kawaala Women Group	0756517192
17	Kyamuganda Ruth	F	Mirembe Women Development Association	0742787730
18	Wasswa Ssemanda Ibra	M	KCCA, Lubaga Division	0752273404
19	Nakayize Sophia	F	Tukolere Wamu (TK)	0751458547

			Group, Makindye Division	
20	Benedict Ronald Anguyo	M	PAC / CALM Africa	0759833466
21	Procovia Namakula Bbale	F	Nabakyala Corner zone	0772474797
22	Simon Peter Tumwine	M	New Vision	0784821301
23	John Ngabirano	M	PAC	0779670981
24	Oscar Kasya	M	PAC	0772686844
25	Dr James Kimera Ssekiwanuka	M	PAC Consultant	0772784497



A group photo of representatives of various pollution-affected communities in the five divisions of Kampala who attended the strategic reflection meeting