



# NAPE Newsletter



Is chemical use in Uganda a blessing or  
a disaster?



**Frank Muramuzi**  
Executive Director, NAPE.

Welcome to 2025, we are excited to present the first edition of our monthly publication for this promising new year. In this January/February edition, our focus is on critical yet often neglected issues of escalating crisis of chemical use in Uganda. A chemical is defined as a substance in any form whether by itself or in a mixture or preparation whether manufactured or derived from nature and it includes industrial chemicals, pesticides, fertilizers and drugs among others. The National Association of Professional Environmentalist (NAPE) is compelled to signal danger about the concerns of reckless handling and disposal of toxic chemicals due to Uganda's rapid industrialization and agricultural modernization which pose a significant threat to human health, environment and the country's economy. The disposal and management of chemicals in Uganda remains unregulated and poorly supervised. Pesticides, fertilizers and industrial waste often find their way into rivers, lakes and soil contaminating natural ecosystems and endangering the health of local communities.

These pollutants not only threaten aquatic life but also jeopardize the livelihoods of millions of people who depend on the lake for fishing, farming and water for domestic use. Such degradation of natural resources undermines Uganda's resilience to climate change, further compounding the socio-economic challenges faced by the populations. Due to the lax enforcement of environmental laws, policies and regulations, Greenwatch sued National Environment Man-

agement Authority (NEMA), National Forestry Authority (NFA) and the Attorney General for environmental degradation. This case serves as a reminder of the consequences of unchecked environmental degradation activities. NAPE as an environmental organization applied to court to be Amicus Curiae (friend of the court) and was approved to be an expert witness on environmental issues. The case revealed systemic gaps in environmental governance with commercial interests taking precedence over ecological preservation and community well-being. The mishandling of chemicals represents a similarly pressing issue, just as the Greenwatch case challenged environmental degradation.

Uganda's participation in COP29 reaffirmed its commitment to addressing climate change and environmental degradation. However, the reality on the ground paints a different picture. While global forums like COP29 provide a platform for policy declarations and financial pledges, they must translate into tangible actions at the national and local levels. Failure to act will only deepen the environmental damage and make the country's climate goals harder to achieve. Uganda stands at crossroads because of the relaxed regulation of chemical handling which poses a grave threat to its people, environment and future development. This issue is not isolated but is linked to broader challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss and

*“ We must act now, irresponsible chemical use is poisoning our future ”*

public health.

NAPE cannot afford to ignore the chemical mishandling crisis any longer. Together we can build a future where environmental sustainability is not just a goal but a reality.

**THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW.**

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## EDITORIAL TEAM

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# Regulatory Frameworks for Chemical management



Compiled by; Ainomugisha Shiba (Legal Officer)

With the advancement of science and technology in the world, the risk of polluting the environment also becomes high. Many countries have had a challenge of pollution especially chemical pollution and Uganda is not an exception to this tragedy. In 2020, the World Health Organisation reported about 385 million cases of unintentional pesticide poisoning including 11,000 deaths mostly in low and middle-income countries, Uganda inclusive. Uganda being an agricultural practicing country, the risk of getting affected by chemical pollution like pesticides is high. Using chemicals in Uganda has caused pollution of the air, water and soil. These pollutants come from industrial waste, agricultural runoff and improper disposal of waste.

The government of Uganda devised means on how to manage chemical wastes through laws, regulations, international treaties and protocols to limit the depth of the effects of pollution. These include;

**The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995,**

serves as the supreme law of the land, laying the foundation for governance, the protection of human rights and the rule of law in Uganda. Article 39 recognizes the right of every person in Uganda to a clean and healthy environment.

**The Agricultural Chemicals (Control) Act, 2007.** This Act was enacted to control and regulate the manufacture, storage, distribution and trade in, use, importation and exportation of agricultural chemicals and for other related matters.

**Toxic Chemicals Prohibition Control Act, 2016.** This Act prohibits the development, production and acquisition of toxic chemicals without a license and the transfer of toxic chemicals and their precursors to countries that are not part of the Convention.

**PART VI, section 70 of The National Environment Act 2019** provides for prohibition or restriction on import, export, manufacture, formulation, distribution and use of hazardous chemicals.

**The National Environment Act, Cap. 181,** provides a comprehensive legal framework for the protection, conservation, and sustainable management of the environment in Uganda. Enacted in 1995, the Act establishes the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) as the central institution responsible for overseeing environmental affairs, implementing policies and ensuring compliance with environmental standards.

**Minamata Convention on Mercury.** This convention protects human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury. It includes a ban on new mercury mines.

**The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).** Article 12 provides for the right to proper hygiene and healthy environment. The ICESCR Committee monitors the convention and provides guidance on the right to health.

In 2018, Government of Uganda through Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development

implemented a Chemical Safety and Security Project (CHESASE). The Project goal was to strengthen institutional, technical and operational capabilities in chemical, biological radiological, nuclear and explosive emergency planning, response and management through strengthening effective detection, promotion of education and awareness on effective detection, and strengthening coordination mechanisms in effective detection.

With all the efforts made by the government to manage chemical use, there have been loopholes thus increasing the risk of pollution in the air, on land and in water. On January 5th 2025, activists in a consortium of civil society organisations

(CSOs) said that there were growing concerns about pesticide misuse, including improper application and storage, counterfeit products, insufficient training in use and use of poorly maintained or totally inadequate spraying equipment. They insist the agriculture ministry should deregister at least 55 agro-chemicals that it registered in 2023 well-knowing that the same pesticides, herbicides and insecticides are banned by the European Union, a major market of Uganda's agricultural produce. The biggest challenge is that some of the farmers that use these pesticides are not aware of the dangers of these chemicals, others use them without protective gears hence leading to unknown illness that might result into death.

In an interview, Betty Rose Aguti, the Policy and Advocacy Specialist at Caritas-Uganda who also doubles as the National Coordinator of Uganda Farmers Common Voice Platform says Uganda's small holder farmers need to be guided on the danger posed by some agro-chemicals.

Therefore, the people of Uganda should take caution on the use of these chemicals and the government should provide sensitization sessions to the people about the dangers of using these chemicals and how they would endanger their lives and engage the local government authorities at all levels on the dangers of chemical mishandling since they are a big threat to the environment and the people themselves.



# Chemical use in Agricultural Practices.



Compiled by; Franklin Mushabe (Science Teacher)



Pesticides residues in tomatoes. Photo by UNACOH

Various chemical products used in agriculture are called agro-chemicals. They are available in various concentrations and forms, including liquids, powders, granules and pellets and are used in agriculture to control, eliminate, combat, or repel pests, diseases, and parasites. These include; pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, vaccines, acaricides among others. Farmers in the past used to protect their field crops and crop harvest from diseases, pests and weeds through use of traditional methods which include breeding crop and animal varieties resistant to pests and diseases, removing crop debris after harvest, weed control through mulching among others. Current agricultural practices

heavily rely on a diverse range of agro-chemical use because they produce certain effects with less effort and farmers take it as the effective way for massive production. Many are poisonous or harmful to humans, livestock, wildlife and the environment. They can harm plants and animals ranging from beneficial soil microorganisms and insects, non-target plants, fish, birds and other wild life. The quantities of agrochemicals that do not reach the target organism are of concern because of their potential impact on human and environment health.

Most agrochemicals have an adverse effect if they enter the body through inhalation and the inges-

tion. Farmers mostly lack proper personal protective gears and ability to read labels which are typically the primary source of safety instructions. Health risks related to the handling and use of pesticides are more prevalent in Uganda,

A total of 1,599 deaths between 2017 and 2022 were linked to organophosphate (pesticide) poisoning, researchers from Uganda National Institute of Public Health (UNIPH) and the Health ministry found

Readmore: (<https://uniph.go.ug/organophosphate-poisoning-distribution-temporal-and-spatial-trends-uganda-2017%E2%94%802022/>)

Rural farmers largely rely on unauthorized supply channels to access pesticides and their access to technical support and protective measures is largely inadequate. No one is guiding them on what to do with the agro-chemicals, nobody is telling them which agro-chemicals to use, in which type of soils and what crops, what period of time they should take before they harvest and how they should handle these chemicals during time of spraying.

There are cases where some of these farmers apply these agro-chemicals bare-chested without wearing any protective gear, these farmers are using agro-chemicals as they are using ordinary water. Some spray their gardens as they converse with their colleagues, children and wives. In the course of doing this, they are inhaling the chemicals and after some time, they fall victim to the

toxicity of these agro-chemicals and end up getting serious health related issues.

The use of chemicals among farmers is far more wide spread than commonly assumed in Uganda and this also has implications for trade. In 2015, the government of Uganda imposed a self-ban on the export of agricultural produce to the European Union because agro-chemical residues had been found in Uganda's agricultural produce and at worst the products still remain with us and consumed by the people. There are numerous agro-chemical shops in Uganda especially in rural areas because of the maximum consumption and many people see this as a source of business instead. The person operating that agro-chemical shop presents themselves as an expert when they are not and end up giv-

ing wrong directives to farmers on the use and management of these chemicals.

So, the fact that dangerous agro-chemicals are having a detrimental effect on our lives, nation's trade, food security, human and environmental health, it's important that;

- Farmers should prioritize responsible agricultural practices and the protection of water resources so that a healthier future can be ensured for both people and the environment.
- The government should commit to retrain farmers and exporters on effective agrochemical use and find solutions to the increasing agro-chemical dealers on the market.
- Government should quickly profile the various agrochemicals and their various sources that are available on the market in Uganda and ban the highly hazardous ones and establish an independent body under the Ministry of Agriculture to manage and control chemical use in Uganda.
- Department of Crop Inspection and Certification at the Ministry of Agriculture should strengthen the regulation on agrochemical use and create awareness on management, use, handling, storage and trade of agrochemicals in the country.

In conclusion, if the above recommendations are not put into action with the rapid misuse of agrochemical among farmers, human and environmental health will be put at stake.



A farmer spraying crops without safety gears, photo by THE INDEPENDENT

# Will waste management in Kampala improve or worsen after kitezi landfill collapsed?



Compiled by; Kureeba David (Project Coordinator Forest and Biodiversity)



Limited capacity in waste collection likely to cause dangers to communities around St Balikudembe market (commonly known as Owino Market). Photo by David Kureeba.

According to Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA), the city is estimated to generate approximately 2,500 tonnes of garbage daily, yet only about 1,200 tonnes were being collected by garbage trucks to Kitezi Landfill before it collapsed. Nowadays the tonnage collected is smaller than the earlier quantity collected. The uncollected waste is currently too much which often ends up in inappropriate locations, such as drainage channels, roads and people's homes, exacerbating the city's sanitation issues. After the collapse of Kitezi

Landfill that left over 30 people dead, many injuries and property worth billions destroyed, KCCA subsequently closed it and secured 12 acres, temporary dump sites in Menvu Landfill in Nansana municipality Wakiso district and Katikolo in Mukono municipality as alternative dump sites. These sites were gotten after a failed attempt to dispose garbage at Nkumba Landfill in Entebbe municipality which was found ill equipped to handle the volume of the waste and also be a dumping site replacing kitezi. Roads

in the city and even the seemingly most areas along the road and in the market where traders used to display their products are filled with unsorted garbage. A step beyond temporary disposal, KCCA acquired 200 acres of land in Bujuuko along Mityana Road in Wakiso district, to establish a new dumpsite for Kampala's garbage to address the problems.

The mistake that has been consistent in waste sorting and disposal, is that while KCCA and other waste handlers encouraged waste

sorting source of production, the challenge has always been that eventually the wastes are collected with trucks that mix the sorted waste as the waste is being taken to the land fill. In some instances, the plastics are collected and burnt and yet they produce heavy metals and toxic chemicals, such as dioxin. Other chemicals released while burning plastic include benzo(a)pyrene (BAP) and polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which have both been shown to cause cancer. The effect of burning plastics also affects people who light charcoal stoves everyday with polythene bags. In some families the polythene bags are used to cover food while cooking. When polythene bags are exposed to heat they generate/ convert to hydrogen and graphene but also produces toxic and irritating fumes. At times even the electronic waste is burnt and others improperly disposed. As initial sorting isn't respected with waste trucks transportation separation

The continued mismanagement

of wastes in Kampala city given the current crisis with the closure of Kitezi landfill, presents the following challenges, aesthetic distortion as seen on Kampala streets while attracting disease-carrying pests such as rodents and flies which can transmit diseases like cholera, typhoid and dysentery among others. In addition to contamination of soil and groundwater, posing a risk to ecosystems and human health. Open burning of wastes causes respiratory problems such as asthma and other lung diseases because of inhaling toxic gases. Exposure to toxic chemicals from open dumping has been linked to an increased risk of cancer. Open dumping can lead to the displacement of business areas as it is in St. Balikudembe market (Owino). contributes to greenhouse gas emissions such as carbon dioxide, methane and Non-Methane Volatile Organic Compounds, which exacerbate climate change effects.

To mitigate these dangers of improper waste management, it is essential to adopt sustainable waste

management practices which include; leave waste at its source of production for instance in urban centres its beef that is needed but not the whole cow with hooves, horns and intestine dung/feaces.

Bringing only beef in the urban centers would decongest the city of extreme unnecessarily generated waste. Bananas are not needed with the bunches and peelings, if the peeling could be done at source of banana production and transport the peeled bananas then this process would lessen the generation of wastes in Kampala and other urban areas. For the wastes already generated in Kampala and Wakiso, decentralized waste collection would be key so that not all wastes are transported to one area hence running decentralized waste management landfills with average waste traffic. This is proper waste disposal, recycling and composting.

The good news about waste nuisance in Kampala is that, The Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) is advancing plans to develop a waste-to-energy facility on 135 acres of land in Ddundu Parish, Mukono District. The project which is aimed at addressing waste management challenges as mentioned above in Kampala, is currently in preparatory phase, with key pre-feasibility studies completed. Once this project is brought to a completion, the challenges of waste management will be on the right pathway to registering success.



Open waste dumping near New taxi park, Kampala City. Photo by David Kureeba.

# Impact of Mercury Use in artisanal Gold Mining on biodiversity.



Compiled by; Kemigisha Ruth (Gender Analyst)



Artisan miners at work without wearing any protective gears. Photo by David Kureeba

Artisanal gold mining is the practice of extracting gold using minimal or no machinery at all. This process involves crushing the excavated soils from the gold mines to form gold ore that is washed to create an amalgam subjected to mercury and is then heated to separate the gold. There are legal policies and guidelines managing the artisanal miners through the National Action Plan of Artisanal and Small Scale miners. It is a labor-intensive process that often takes place in the informal sector economy and is carried out in Buhweju, Amudat, Moroto, Busia, Namayingo, Kassanda, Kisoro districts among others.

In the areas where mining pits are lo-

cated, the men are in charge of the majority pits so they benefit more than the women, the young men can enter the cave when they reach the age of 18, If they find gold, they can earn a lot of money, the men who are the miners typically extract gold using basic tools like picks, shovels and pans often digging deep pits or shafts by hand to reach the ore. This exposes them to significant risks including cave-ins, injuries from falling rocks, respiratory issues from dust inhalation, and potential mercury poisoning if used in the gold extraction process.

**The women:** The women aren't allowed inside the digging pits to dig

gold but they primarily participate by performing tasks like sorting, grinding and panning ore, they often use rudimentary tools which involves physically breaking down rocks and washing them to extract gold particles, few women are in charge of pits compared to men so the men benefit more than them, there's limited financial access especially for women since they have no titles and land to mortgage to get credit. This poses significant risks to women including amount of vapor released by mining activities from mercury that has been proven to damage the kidneys, liver, heart, lungs, colon and the immune system, for pregnant women are exposed to mercury pollution

increasing the likelihood of physical deformities, mercury attacks the central nervous system, neurological damage and lower IQ affecting the brain functioning and in extreme cases exposure will lead to death and the women wash with bare hands and applying mercury without any protective gear causing wounds on their hands.

**The children:** The children undertake tasks such as digging in deep open pits, carrying stones to and operating grinding machines, washing the ground ore, they work in and around mines preparing and serving food and refreshments. In a report by Nakisanze Segawa Global Press Journal (GPJ) Uganda, the 30 percent of those who labor in that sector are children because some parents at the mines argue that children should be allowed to work with them as they lighten the burden and help to provide vital income but this is a form of indirect child labor. However it's illegal for children under the age of 12 to work in Uganda, according to the country's 2006 Employment Act. The Uganda's Children Act states that children should not take part in employment or activities that endanger their health, education or development. People who do not follow those guidelines are subject to a fine up to six months in prison. Moses Kiwanuka, a miner at the Luggingi I site said, "Children should never be again allowed to work in the mines because they are likely to face occupational and health hazards while in the mines characterized with several open pits which could cause accidents for the children." Often, the children use mercury to "wash" the gold found in the mine, when on-site buyers examine the amalgams produced in the "washing" process and they often burn the mercury away as children who don't wear any protective gear stand nearby, the

vulnerability of young women and girls to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). **Read more:** (<https://globalpressjournal.com/af-rica/uganda/mines-parents-profit-child-labor-uganda-laws-raids-little-effect/>).

**The youth:** The youth often engage in dangerous tasks like digging deep pits, carrying heavy loads of ore and operating grinding machines thus exposing them to significant health risks including physical injuries, exposure to toxic substances like mercury and potential long-term musculoskeletal damage. The youth are uneducated because they do not go to school and are being deprived of education due to the need to work in the mines to support their families. Consequently, the youth hardly earn enough money and their economic power remains lowest to lift themselves up and their families out of poverty due to the harsh working conditions.

**The disabled people:** The disabled individuals often participate in mining activities by taking on less physically demanding roles like sorting ore, washing gold or assisting other miners however they face significant challenges due to the hazardous conditions, limited access to protective equipment leading to increased health risks and potential exploitation particularly due to the widespread use of mercury in the extraction process. This exacerbates existing health issues and limits their earning potential compared to able-bodied miners.

However, the mercury use in artisanal gold mining also has negative effects on the biodiversity and these include; high levels of mercury accumulate in fish hence reducing the number of commercial fish stock

and other food supplies in the surrounding communities, it also causes contamination of the soil and water contributing to land degradation, it disrupts essential ecosystem functions such as air filtration and water purification, the used water from mines can contaminate rivers among others.

Uganda signed a treaty called the Minamata Convention on Mercury which is a global legally binding treaty to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury use in its role for Global Mercury Reduction Efforts. The objective of the convention is to protect human health and the environment from human induced emissions, release of mercury and mercury compounds. Therefore to combat this, the government should enact the objectives of the treaty through working together with the miners and realizing the need to find alternative ways of gold mining instead of mercury use to promote safer mining practices in gold extraction and these include; Using a retort which captures mercury vapors that are invisible, working in designated areas away from water sources to prevent water contamination, the miners should wear proper protective gears especially when handling mercury or working in the mining pits, creating awareness to the mining communities about the ecological consequences of mercury use, establishing designated areas for mercury use and disposal, using mercury-free technologies like gravity concentration, chemical leaching or alternative chemicals among others.

In conclusion, there's need to address these issues as they are crucial for the preservation of biodiversity in areas affected by artisanal gold mining since it poses a severe threat to biodiversity causing both indirect and direct harm through habitat destruction and toxic exposure to species.

# Industrial waste mismanagement and its impact on public health



Compiled by; Adrine Twongyeirwe (Asst. Information and Communication Officer)



River Rwizi dying from pollution at Buremba in Mbarara city. Photo-by-Anadolu Ajansi

Industrial waste refers to the waste generated by industrial activities such as manufacturing, construction, mining oil and gas operations. This type of waste can be hazardous or non-hazardous and can take many forms which may include chemical waste, heavy metals, sludge, ash, scrap materials, packaging waste and hazardous waste.

Industrial waste management is the process and the practice of proper handling of industrial waste that are generated during the industrial activities and such practices include collecting, sorting, transporting and disposing it off. In Uganda there are more

industrial waste mismanagement where the industries improperly handle, store, treat and dispose off their wastes generated during their industrial activities through mechanized methods of mass production which are very essential components of this transition. Waste mismanagement is a pressing concern, threatening the public health and the well-being of communities national wide. This is due to the rapid industrialization and growth of the manufacturing sectors which have led to a significant increase in industrial waste generation. However, this progress has come at the steep of environment and public health posing severe risks.

Industrial Waste Mismanagement is a Ticking Time Bomb for Public Health in a way that the Industrialization is now the way of transforming the economy of the nation or region. When we concentrate much on wastes that come from the industries they contain wide range of pollutants such as chemicals, heavy metals and toxic substances. Let's take the example of the paint industry to illustrate the concept of industrial waste and its impact on public health. The paint industries produce a wide range of paints, coatings and varnishes used in various applications, from construction to automotive.

However, the manufacturing process generates significant amounts of industrial waste and the improper disposal of the wastes contaminates soil, water and air leading to the devastating health consequences that may include the following;

According to Dr. Philip Landrigan who is expert pediatrician and epidemiologist, director of the program in Global Public Health and Common Good Boston College, the exposure to industrial waste has led to increase the risk of cancer and other health problems like respiratory diseases, neurological damage and behavioral problems, reproductive and developmental Issues leading to birth defects, miscarriages and infertility.

The contamination of water sources like lakes, streams, rivers, wells and many others has led to the wide spread of waterborne diseases like cholera, typhoid and diarrhea which have claimed the lives of many people. The polythene bags (kavera) also lead to

the water way blockages which stop the environment from accessing water that harm the biodiversity.

To mitigate the risks of industrial waste mismanagement, it is essential for industries to adopt effective waste management practices. Waste management is an art and science of handling wastes throughout its life time from reducing its production to the time of disposing it off. This process involves waste collecting, segregating, transporting, storing, treating and disposal.

The government should re-strategize and enforce stricter laws and regulations to prevent industrial waste mismanagement given that the earlier laws and regulations had failed to be put into action for example when the government had imposed a ban on kavera in 2009, which prohibited the use of polythene bags for transporting goods and liquids. In 2021, the government re-imposed the ban, and ordered schools to enforce it but all in vain. And the Nation-

al Environment Act of 2019 requires manufacturers, importers and distributors of plastic carrier bags to comply with the ban which did not work up to date.

The campaigns of public awareness should be done by the government and non-governmental organizations to educate people about the risks of industrial waste mismanagement, promote community involvement in waste management.

The government should also promote sustainable practices which should be adopted by all industries and these include; reducing waste generation, use of eco-friendly materials and also implementing recycling programs to the urban centers.

The government should work hand in hand with international organizations and private entities to out-source funding in order to build better industrial infrastructures make research and innovations of better waste management technologies.

In conclusion therefore, Industrial waste mismanagement is a critical and a pressing issue in Uganda, with far-reaching consequences for public health and the environment that requires immediate attention and collective action necessary to address this challenge. By working together, we can promote sustainable practices; reduce pollution and safeguard the well-being of Ugandan communities.



Waste flowing from the Modern Distillers Ltd dumping site. photo by URN

# NAPE as the Friends of the Court (Amicus Curiae) on environmental degradation.

**Compiled by; Ainomugisha Shiba (Legal officer)**

Public interest litigation (PIL) is defined as legal action undertaken to benefit the public or to address a collective grievance. NAPE being an environmental non profitable organization that lobbies and advocates for the sustainable management of natural resources for the benefit of all engages in public interest litigation. In 2021, Greenwatch instituted a suit against the Attorney General, National Forestry Authority and National Environmental Management Authority on grounds amongst others that the defendants had failed in their duty to uphold the citizen's right to a clean and healthy environment and neglected their duties as public trustees hence putting the right to a clean and healthy environment for both the present and the future generations at risk, that the defendants have failed to take measures to curb the rapid loss of forest cover in Uganda and thus triggering off climate change and its associated effects on the livelihoods of Ugandans and the future generations to come and that the defendants have failed to take measures to curb the rapid loss of forest cover in Uganda thus leading to increased pollution of ground and surface water sources resulting into increased incidences of water borne diseases. This case was filed in the high court in Kampala before Hon. Justice DR. Douglas K Singizi.

On 14th September, 2023, NAPE applied for leave of court to inter-

vene in this matter as Amicus Curie (friends of court) and on 25th June, 2024, court granted NAPE's application to intervene as Amicus Curiae and was told to file an index and addendum to the Brief. The judge sought recommendations on the factors that affect biodiversity loss and underlined the impact of deforestation to indigenous communities. Landmark's Alex Goodman KC and Yaaser Vanderman were instructed pro bono by King's College Legal Clinic to draft the amicus curiae in this case, and they acted on behalf of NAPE. The amicus included an expert opinion on deforestation in Uganda and made arguments regarding the Paris Agreement and the public trust doctrine. Here, NAPE relied on the public trust doctrine to argue that the Ugandan government holds the forest on trust for the benefit of Ugandan citizens. The amicus also addressed the Ugandan constitutional right to a healthy environment and international jurisprudence on the right to life in relation to environmental protection.

On 12th November 2024, NAPE filed an index and addendum to the Brief and matter was adjourned to 6th May 2025 for marking of documents and hearing of the case. This acceptance to be an amicus sets a precedent and it's the first of its kind regarding environment related matters. NAPE has been for many years advocating for preservation of these forests. In 2006, NAPE was involved

in the "Save Mabira Crusade" that aimed at halting the destruction of Mabira forest to establish sugarcane plantations by Sugar Corporation of Uganda Limited. In 2020, NAPE together with other organizations like WEMNET and AFIEGO sued NEMA for granting Hoima Sugar Ltd a certificate of approval of Environment and Social Impact Assessment for sugarcane growing and associated developments and that Hoima Sugar made inadequate assessment on the effects of this establishment to the community members.

As the legal officer of NAPE, I think this was a good that NAPE's application was accepted and if it may please court, the following could be put under consideration;

Deforestation has so many consequences that affect both the environment and the local communities. One of the most significant effects is the loss of biodiversity as forests are being cleared for agricultural land, charcoal production, and establishments. These effects all sum up to deny human beings the right to a clean and healthy environment and management of natural resources as stipulated under articles 39 and 237 of the 1995 Ugandan constitution, the National Environmental Act (2019) and the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act (2003).

# Pictorial



Women washing ore with bare hands and applying mercury without any protective gear in Kasanda District. photo by David Kureeba.



A wound on a woman's hand that had for long remained septic due to exposure to ore washing with mercury without protective gears in artisanal gold mining site. photo by Dvaid Kureeba.



At least 35 people lost their lives following a devastating landslide at the Kiteezi landfill, the sole waste disposal site for the Ugandan capital, Kampala. Photo by AP

## Stay Connected

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