

**MAIN STREAMING ENVIRONMENT AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES IN
UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC AND NON ACADEMIC
PROGRAMMES THROUGH RCES:
*THE CASE OF GREATER EASTERN UGANDA-RCE***

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Presentation outline

- ❑ About Greater Eastern Uganda RCE
- ❑ RCE activities main streamed in University programmes
- ❑ Non academic programmes
- ❑ Key community engagement activities
- ❑ Key achievements
- ❑ Success factors
- ❑ Recommendations
- ❑ Conclusion

Our approach :whole Institution

Whole Institution approach that promote RCE-ESD are:

- Ensuring that sustainable development Issues are main streamed in University activities, plans and policies.
- Student involvement to the lead of activities- as champions.
- Continuing professional development in ESD through research and capacity development .

Issues main-streamed in University academic programmes and mandate:

- University has three functions- teaching, research and Community outreach- All are relevant to RCE activities
- SD is incorporated in the Busitema university **MISSION**
- *“To provide high standard training, engage in quality research and outreach for Socio-economic Transformation and Sustainable Development”*
- Cross-cutting course on ESD was developed for all programmes Diploma, bachelors, Masters.
- A student group formed to spearhead campus sustainability activities and community engagement;
- Collaboration /Outreach activities -Linkages established with the neighbouring communities and institutions -town council, local governments and surrounding schools and started joint ESD activities within communities.
- Sensitization

Expansion and extension of RCE /ESD activities

- ❖ Collaborations and linkages established for promoting ESD activities e.g. with stakeholders such as Nature Uganda, Grassroots Innovations Uganda, and local government.
- ❖ The public talks and sensitization sessions with staff, student and other stakeholders became regular and part of the University/faculty calendar.
- ❖ Enabling environment for students- Two student based ESD groups / associations formed to spearhead campus sustainability activities and community engagement.
- ❖ Strong linkage established between ESD and Greater Eastern Uganda Regional Center of expertise (RCE) in undertaking ESD activities.

1. School outreach -*Sensitization and awareness raising*

- **benefits of education**
- **sanitation and hygiene,**
- **HIV/AIDS.**
- **promoting science education**
- **girl child education.**
- **career guidance,**
- **guidance and counseling.**

5. Other activities so far done

- A total of 5 schools visited and follow ups made at least once a semester to each school.
- Girls are skilled on how to make sanitary towels using local materials
- School administration has been fully engaged for sustainability of the programs.
- On environmental campaigns, students in visited schools now save their pocket money to buy tree seedlings to go and plant in their homes every holiday.
- Charcoal briquettes made from charcoal ash, agricultural residues, mud stoves to reduce deforestation

Future plans for student community activities

- Every course offered at the University/faculty to contribute to ESD help attain the mission.
- Example chemistry; micro experiments, extraction of chemicals from ash, purification of water- **sand filter**, provide alternative to glass ware.
- Other subjects are to be engaged.
- Extending ESD to other campuses and communities across eastern Uganda.

Challenges

- Low funding to increase on the number of activities
- Low membership enrollment
- Few equipments

Support to ESD

- Faculty of science and Education
- More support request from:
 - ▣ The university
 - ▣ Nature Uganda
 - ▣ The district
 - ▣ Local government
 - ▣ All well wishers of the association

Some key achievements so far:

Economic outcomes

- Savings from reduced water consumption (by having gardens rather than lawns and through using stored water for garden use).
- Savings from reduced amount of waste sent to landfill (using fewer commercial skips).
- Savings from reduced power consumption (through a “lights off” competition).
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- The sell of the vegetables produced in the vegetable garden and trees planted

Educational outcomes

- Students are actively involved in learning about the environment and sustainable development .
- Students learning has been enhanced through an action based cross curricula project.
- There is a richer curriculum/programme with hands on activities across all Key Learning Areas.
- Students have been involved in data collection, mapping and tabulation, as well as refining of scientific analysis, evaluation and testing techniques.
- Students have opportunities to become aware, passionate and enthusiastic about the environment. And sustainable development
- Improved student presentation skills.
- Improved student leadership skill

Educational outcomes



- The students are excited and motivated by the program.
- The students and communities have positive attitudes towards analyzing development challenges and issues.
- Education for Sustainable Development has been incorporated across the university curriculum and programmes
- Students have learned the skills to plant plants properly and have engaged in community plantings.
- The local nature reserves are being created into school programs.

Environmental outcomes



- The students and communities have positive towards analyzing development challenges and issues.
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Social outcomes

- Students, staff, community and experts have been involved in the program and have ownership of it.
- Partnerships have been developed with the community, such as links with local Governments , schools NU, UWA etc.
- Increased student leadership and social responsibility, self esteem, a sense of belonging and ownership.
- Students are more confident and enjoy group work in the garden (building social capital).
- Students have positions of responsibility and have become community environmental watchdogs (e.g. monitoring household garden watering against restrictions)
- Mentoring of young students.
- The whole schools, campus, the community have gained pride in the way activities are being implemented.

Success factors

- Broad ownership of and engagement with Sustainable Schools across the school.
- Support of the university and partners institution leadership team.
- Enthusiastic and committed staff.
- The university outreach functions and responsibilities made it easy to implement activities.
- Integrating sustainability into institutional operations and across the curriculum.
- The availability of funds to enable the development of visible

Recommendations for promoting RCE initiatives

- ❖ Developing a university wide policy on ESD/RCE as part of the outreach.
- ❖ There is need to build a robust research to provide information and guide ESDRCE activity implementation.
- ❖ There is also need to create professional development programs on ESD for teacher educators at national and regional levels as a strategy for capacity development..
- ❖ Using RCE plat-form to dialogue with national university programme accreditation body i.e. National Council For Higher Education (NCHE), to include ESD as criterion for accreditation of new and reviewed academic program.
- ❖ The higher institutions of learning need to dedicate leadership positions, offices and centres to coordinate and ensure a strong focus on the university community partnerships through RCE platform.

Conclusion



- ❖ RCEs can play significant role in the development agenda of their communities by becoming a dynamic nucleus and a hub for lifelong learning and practice for sustainable development.