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National Resilience THINK-TANK

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

“Bridging the gap between knowledge and policy for disaster risk management”

CONTEXT

Uganda’s National Emergency Coordination and Operation Center (NECOC), together with UNDP Uganda, and with financial support from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is enhancing the management and resilience capacity of the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda (OPM) through the Project on ‘Strengthening Emergency Response and Recovery to COVID-19’.

GOAL

The project has established a National Resilience Think Tank that is dedicated to efforts towards Boosting National Resilience to Multi-Hazard Induced Disaster Risks, COVID-19 and other Pandemics through extensive in-depth research, and tailor made capacity building.

THE THINK-TANK IS:

-  Composed of critical experts to further provide technical support to NECOC/OPM/UNDP.
-  Supported by an auxiliary team of researchers from Makerere University and a technical team from Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI).
-  Supported by a Senior Gender Advisor who will ensure gender analysis is integrated into all policy and programmatic work produced by the Think-Tank and NECOC.
-  Situated in the Office of the Prime Minister - to foster heightened knowledge management, policy advocacy and engagement making for a stronger national disaster risk management system as a resilience strategy.

AREAS OF FOCUS

-  Leadership for coordinated multi-sector planning
-  Forecasting response needs
-  Effective management and utilization of stimulus packages from Government and development partners
-  Enhancing local capabilities to respond to current and future emergencies

RESEARCH AGENDA

The Research Agenda will go a long way to bridge the knowledge and information gap towards effective Disaster Risk Management beyond COVID 19. The ongoing research currently includes the following thematic topics:

-  Socio-economic determinants of health in Uganda
-  Health seeking behaviour and experiences with health service delivery during peak and non-peak periods of the COVID-19 pandemic in Uganda.
-  COVID-19 vaccination in Uganda: Community perceptions, vaccination management, coverage demographics and experiences with the service provision.
-  Data and Information management: Systems and tools for effective disaster risk communication.
-  Transmission dynamics of COVID-19 in space and time over Uganda: Hotspots and Bright spots controls
-  Disaster risk governance under COVID-19 at multiple scales in Uganda.

COMPOSITION OF THE THINK TANK

-  Resilience Specialists
-  Communications Specialist
-  Knowledge Management Specialist
-  Auxiliary Team of Researchers (X8)
-  MSB Resilience Advisors

UNDP SUPPORTED PROJECTS NEWS AND STORIES

1. Workshop on harmonization and multi-stakeholder adoption of the rapid needs assessment tools conducted 23-24 March 2022.

The workshop on harmonization and multi-stakeholder adoption of the rapid needs assessment tools was conducted from 23-24 March 2022 in Entebbe.

During the workshop, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) presented to the key stakeholders SERRU supported rapid assessment tools. The workshop further consolidates stakeholder input and finalizes the tools as Standard Needs Assessment tools for Government and Partners. The National DRR Platform also validated the tools on 24th Feb.2022 and various workshops across the country.



National Workshop to Review Rapid Disaster Management Tool Conducted in Entebbe

The tools will help conduct comprehensive periodic rapid risk assessments and local level surveillance. It will be guided by a set of identified gaps and recommended interventions documented in the Rapid Assessment Report with a menu of in-kind and technical support areas to strengthen conducting of periodic rapid risk assessment and local level surveillance was finalized.

2. National Disaster Knowledge Management Strategy implementation starts.

Several knowledge management products have been produced and disseminated: Communication Strategy for SERRU project, Knowledge Product Framework, Pre-assessment tools, Rapid Trigger Sheets, Rapid Needs Assessment tools, Knowledge Management Templates, Project brief, and Fact-sheet on Research Agenda.



The SERRU Project team with the Kasese Disaster Committee after the Knowledge Management Needs Assessment Consultations

3. Research Agenda on six topics takes off at Makerere University

Dr. Yazidhi Bamutaze- Team-leader of the Research Team in Makerere University Chair, emphasized the significance of partnering with academic institutions, especially Makerere University, and noted that this project has an enormous potential of being scaled up for more impact during the Agenda Meeting held on February 18th, 2022 Makerere University. The Chair of the auxiliary team for the entire research team from Makerere University confirmed receipt of funds from UNDP. The research team would immediately start on the research to deliver the project outputs.

Dr. Serwajja led the discussion of the 3-months work plan. The respective thematic leaders highlighted the Research topics. The Research plan is confined to implementing the six issues, which were agreed upon and prioritized for this period to generate knowledge to inform decision making and influence policy towards Uganda's resilience strengthening. The target areas are hotspot areas of either COVID-19 or natural hazards. The team proposed that it would require about (6) months to deliver all the outputs as needed.



Makerere University Research Team Organizes Monthly Meetings (Link Research Team)

The senior researchers will work with a select team of junior/young researchers to create a pool of skilled researchers that can generate knowledge that informs informed policy decisions. The auxiliary unit appreciated UNDP, OPM, and BGMF for recognizing the potential of Makerere as a lead research institution in Uganda and that this pilot has potential for scalability. The meeting also agreed that the input from the research project team from Makerere University should be recognized by presenting the members with certificates indicating that they were part of the research team that engaged in the research.



SERRU_NECOC Monthly Meetings (Link on SERRU_NECOC Team)

4. Uganda Virus Institute (UVI) intensifies training in COVID-19 Testing and Surveillance training.

Training of Health workers completed for Northern, West Nile, and Western regions, focusing on; Sample Collection, sample handling, Biosafety issues related to COVID-19 testing, Sample storage before and during shipment, and the importance of filling in all the information in the case investigation forms.

Training health workers in new porous border sites and surveillance sentinels completed for Logiri HCIII in Arua, Bibia HCIII in Amuru, Mutukula HCIII in Rakai Karambi HCIII in Kasese. One of the training outcomes is for all sites to increase the number of samples collected weekly, especially for COVID-19.

5. UNDP Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency Project

Training of Disaster Risk Analysis, DRM Planning, and Activation of Sub County Disaster Management Committees in the Country

Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), with the support of officers from the Office of the Prime Minister, Department of Relief, Disaster Preparedness, and Management, organizes and facilitates town council training and sub-county disaster management committees in Adjumani District Local Government. The three-day training for each administrative level took place from 21st - 23rd & 24th - 26th March 2022 at Dzaipi & Ukusijoni Subcounty Headquarters, respectively, and 28th - 30th March 2022, Adjumani Town Council Headquarters. The training was organized according to one of the Courses of Action developed in Gulu's previous capacity training workshop in November 2021. Mr. Gemechis Gudina, Kumakech Charles & Stanley Osaba Department of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Management Office of the Prime Minister.



Training of Ukusijoni Parish Development Committee in Adjumani District Local Government.

The outcome of training included, among others; 118 (from 3 sub-counties and nine parishes) personnel are trained on methodological steps of risk analysis and planning. In addition, 3 Sub County Technical Planning Committees, 9 Parish Development Committees, and 3 Refugee Welfare committees' capacities in resilience programming improved. Besides, three sub counties' disaster management committees were trained on their roles and duties vested to them by policy and activated to function. The training got publicity in the bi-monthly Uganda National Integrated Early Warning System (UNIEWS).

About UNDP Uganda

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustices of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet. In Uganda, UNDP supports the Government to achieve sustainable development, create opportunities for empowerment, protect the environment, minimize natural and man-made disasters, build strategic partnerships, and improve the quality of life for all citizens.

About Makerere University

Established in 1922 as a humble technical school, Makerere University is one of the oldest and most prestigious English Universities in Africa. Makerere University offers not only day but also evening and external study programmes to a student body of about 35,000 undergraduates and 3,000 postgraduates (both Ugandan and foreign). It is also a very active centre for research and innovations. The University transitioned from the Faculty-based to the collegiate system in 2011 with 10 Constituent Colleges including the School of Law, all operating as semi-autonomous units of the University.

About NECOC Uganda

The NECOC is an institutional structure hosted by the Office of the Prime Minister with a mission to ensure rapid, effective, and efficient response to disaster and emergency situations through issuance of timely warnings and mobilizing adequate capabilities for response. To enable NECOC achieve its mission, Government and partners continue to work to improve and enhance coordination structures at national, regional and district levels and building capacity and expertise for disaster and emergency preparedness to mitigate the adverse impact of disasters to people, infrastructure, and livelihoods of Ugandans, and build resilience of communities.

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