

EAST AFRICA WATER SECURITY PROJECT STAKEHOLDER MEETING OF MAY 6, 2021

Meeting Report

Summary

The inaugural LASER-PULSE East Africa Water Security Stakeholder Meeting took place on Thursday, May 6, 2021 via Zoom. The meeting was well attended with 72 attendees recorded on the Zoom platform, including water resources managers, NGO personnel, private industry, policy makers, academics, and students in the water area. Participants comprised 32% female and 68% male, with a 45% representation from young adults (ages 18-34) based on registered participant demographics. Presentations included introductory overviews of the project and the status East African water resources from project personnel, as well as three talks covering data, policy, and stakeholder engagement from guest speakers. Participants provided valuable insights and suggestions on these key topics with a majority of comments falling under the category of data. Inputs and insights will be used to better meet stakeholder needs and as a basis for future work.

LASER-PULSE East Africa Water Security



Event Program

Thursday, May 6, 2021 ♦ 9:00-11:00 a.m. East Africa Time

9:00 to 9:15 a.m.

Meeting Opening & Introductory Presentation

Meeting Facilitator: Prof. Bancy Mati

Presenter: Prof. Margaret Gitau

9:15 to 9:45 a.m.

Participant Presentations

Facilitator: Prof. Bancy Mati

Presentation 1: Current Status of Water Data Collection: experiences, challenges, and lessons learnt

Presenter: Mr. John Gathagu, The Nature Conservancy, Sasumua

Presentation 2: Data and Policy: the use of data to inform policy and policy impacts on data availability and use

Presenter: Dr. Benon Zaake, Commissioner, and Mr. Tom Kanyike, Principal Hydrologist/Acting Assistant Commissioner, Department of Water Resources Monitoring and Assessment, DWRM, MWE, Uganda

Presentation 3: The value addition of stakeholder engagement in monitoring water resources – at basin, country and region level

Presenter: Dr. Charles Sokile, Oxford Policy Management, Ltd.

9:45 to 10:05 a.m.

Open Discussion on Presentations

Discussion Facilitator: Prof. Margaret Gitau

10:05 to 10:35 a.m.

Open Discussion Session for Further Exchange

Facilitators: Dr. Victor Kongo, Mr. James Kisekka

Recorders: Ms. Victoria Garibay, Prof. Margaret Gitau

Topics

- Experiences and Challenges with Data Usage
- Opinions and Perception of the Quality of Available Data
- Policy Impacts on Data Collection, Accessibility and Use
- Current State of Water Quantity and Allocation Data
- Water Quality Status and Future Plans for Data Collection

10:35 to 10:45 a.m.

Meeting Wrap-Up & Closing Remarks

Facilitator: Prof. Bancy Mati

Discussion Leader: Dr. Daniel Moriasi

Closing Remarks: Prof. Margaret Gitau

Overview

The inaugural LASER-PULSE East Africa Water Security (LPEAWS) Stakeholder Meeting took place as planned on Thursday, May 6th 2021, 0900 – 1100 EAT via the Zoom virtual meeting platform. A virtual meeting space, due primarily to the travel challenges posed by COVID-19, and the designated time, considering daily routines and time zone differences, were chosen to accommodate as many participants in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda as possible. Invitations to the meeting were distributed in the form of letters and digital flyers with attention to the meeting attendance goals of a 50/50 distribution between men and women, an even distribution among the three countries, and a minimum of 25% young adults (ages 18-34). The meeting was well attended with 72 attendees recorded on the Zoom platform, 47 of whom had registered formally for the meeting. As it was not always possible to discern sex and age from the Zoom-generated list of participants, statistics provided in this report reflect the 47 registered. All other components of the reports reflect all meeting participants. Numbers do not include project team members.

Attendees Registered: 47

Total Attendance: 72

Of the registered participants, 32% were female and 68% were male. Forty five percent were young adults (students and early career professionals in the water area), largely exceeding our target of 25%. Representation of females was better among the young adult participants (38%) than that among seasoned professionals (27%). Female/Male representation varied by country: Kenya (47%/53%); Tanzania (10%/90%); and, Uganda (32%/68%). Representation by young adults also varied by country: Kenya (60%); Tanzania (20%); and, Uganda (45%). Several sectors were represented including academia, NGOs, government, and the private sector. Distribution of females and males did not differ substantially across sectors; for example: 33% of female participants came from government agencies compared with 34% of male participants, and similarly for other sectors. A majority of the young adults came from academia (38%) and NGOs (29%), with substantial representation from government (24%), while a majority of adults age 35 years and over came from government (42%), with substantial representation from NGOs (23%).

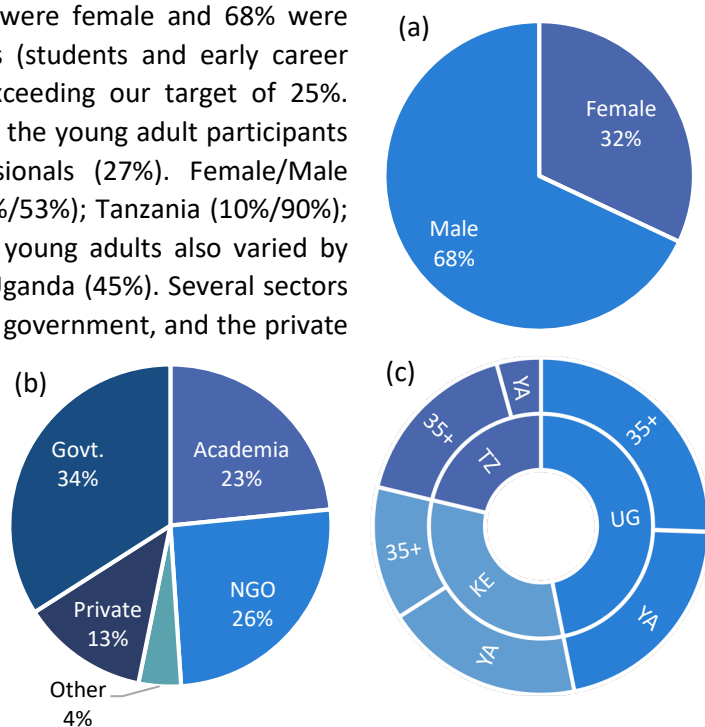


Figure 1. Registered participant demographics by (a) Male/Female (b) sector and (c) country, subdivided between young adults (YA) and the remaining participants

Presentations

The meeting started with Dr. Margaret Gitau presenting an overview of the LPEAWS project aims, products, and future work. This was followed by a presentation on the context surrounding the management of East African water resources by Prof. Bancy Mati. These introductory presentations were followed by presentations by the invited speakers from the three countries. The first invited speaker, Mr. John Gathagu of The Nature Conservancy in Kenya addressed the “Current Status of Water Data Collection: Experiences, Challenges, and Lessons Learnt” from his work in the Upper Tana Basin, Kenya.

Next, Dr. Benon Zaake and Mr. Tom Kanyike from Uganda presented “Data-Driven Approaches for Decision Making in Water Resources Management and Development in East Africa” from their experience in the Uganda Ministry of Water and Environment on the relationships between data and policy. The final guest speaker, Dr. Charles Sokile of the Oxford Policy Management (Tanzania), discussed “The Value Addition of Stakeholder Engagement in Monitoring Resources at Basin, Country and Regional Level[s]”. Participants expressed great interest in the presented material, so after being granted permission by the presenters, [copies of the slides](#) were shared via email to all meeting registrants.

Open Discussion Sessions for Q&A and Further Exchange

The three presentations were followed by a brief Question & Answer session. A more detailed discussion for further exchange was then held with all participants as one group. In this discussion, facilitated by Dr. Victor Kongo and Mr. James Kisekka, participants were asked to take part in answering the following discussion questions in the chat.

1. Quality of Available Data: a. What water resources-related data do you have access to, and what is your perception of its quality? b. What challenges do you encounter in data collection or data collection programs? c. What plans do you have for water resources data collection in the future?
2. Status quo of Data Use for Decision Making: a. How are data currently used in decision making, by whom, and what are you learning from it? b. What are the gaps, and how could they be addressed?
3. Policy and Data Collection: a. How does policy impact data collection, accessibility, and use? b. How does the use of data inform policy or policy review?
4. Water Quality Status in the Basins: a. What are your perceptions on the status of water quality in the basin(s)? b. What data are available to help assess the situation on the ground, e.g., level of water scarcity/availability? c. What is the monitoring scheme for water quality?

Summary of Group Discussion

Of the participants who contributed to the chat discussion, 12% were young adult female, 6% were female age 35 or older, 17% were young adult male, and 65% were male age 35 or older. The majority of comments fell under the category of data. Some of the key sentiments from the chat, particularly those expressed by multiple people, are recapitulated in the following list:

1. Quality of Available Data

- Quality of data ranges from high to low, has gaps in most cases.
- Funding for data collection is insufficient.
- There is an interest in modernizing, automating so that real-time data can be collected and applying remote sensing/satellite methods.
- Human resources are too few or unskilled.

2. Status quo of Data Use for Decision Making

- Data is being used for allocation, planning, drought/flood forecasting, GIS analyses across sectors.
- Data is bulky, could benefit from post-processing.
- Gaps caused by lack of equipment and equipment maintenance.

3. Policy and Data Collection

- Policies are useful in setting a data quality standard.

- Policies affect data sharing abilities.

4. Water Quality Status in the Basins

- Water quality perceptions range from positive to concerns about degradation due to agricultural practices.
- Sometimes sampling is not conducted systematically.
- Sampling is more targeted in areas where conservation efforts are being made or where economic activities drive interest.

ABOUT OUR INVITED SPEAKERS...



Mr. John Gathagu, The Nature Conservancy: John Gathagu works for The Nature Conservancy (TNC) as the Knowledge Management Coordinator and presently acting as the M&E Officer for the Upper Tana Nairobi Water Fund Trust. He has expertise and experience in integrated water resources management and hydrological modelling. In his career, John leverages technological innovations to transform conventional data collection, processing, and sharing with stakeholders at all levels. He draws his passion in working with institutions and communities to develop a win-win approach towards water resources protection, conservation, and mitigation of climate change.

Dr. Benon Zaake, Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda: Benon Zaake is the Commissioner of Water Resources Monitoring and Assessment, Directorate of Water Resources Management in the Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda. He holds a BSc in Civil Engineering and MSc in Water Resources Engineering from the University of Dar es Salaam, and a PhD in Agricultural Engineering from the University of KwaZulu Natal. He is also a consulting engineer specialized in water resources planning.



Dr. Charles Sokile, Oxford Policy Management, Ltd.: Charles Sokile is the co-director of Oxford Policy Management's Tanzania office. As a specialist in senior governance, he has more than 15 years of hands-on experience in the fields of accountability, anti-corruption and humanitarian work, strategic planning, organisational development, programme management, and business development strategies. He has worked on projects in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. Charles has a PhD in IWRM Development Studies from the University of Dar es Salaam, and he has published many papers and contributed to several book chapters throughout his career.

ABOUT OUR HOST...



Prof. Eng. Bancy Mati is a leading expert in water management and Professor at the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT). She is also a consultant with Resource Plan Ltd. Prof. Mati holds a PhD degree in Agricultural Engineering, Food Production and Rural Land Use, MSc. in Land and Water Management and BSc. in Agricultural Engineering. She is a registered Consulting Engineer. She has previously worked with ICRISAT, as Programme Manager of Improved Management of Agricultural Water in Eastern & Southern Africa (IMAWESA), and with International Institute (IWMI).

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- United States Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS)
- University of Dar es Salaam
- Resource Plan
- Global Water Partnership Tanzania
- Aidenvironment (RAIN)

PROJECT TEAM

RESEARCH TEAM	TRANSLATION TEAM
Dr. Margaret Gitau, Purdue University	Prof. Bancy M. Mati, JKUAT/Resource Plan, Kenya
Dr. Nicholas Kiggundu, Makerere University	Mr. James W. Kisekka, Aidenvironment (RAIN), Uganda
Dr. Subira E. Munishi, UDSM	Dr. Victor Kongo, GWPTZ, Tanzania
Dr. Daniel Moriasi, USDA-ARS	Mr. Lusekelo Kibanda, GWPTZ, Tanzania
Dr. Augustina Alexander, UDSM	
Ms. Victoria Garibay, Purdue University	