

UGANDA COMMEMORATES THE WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DAY 2019

A. 2nd Environmental Health Professional's dinner at Rider Hotel, Mukono district

The Environmental Health Workers' Association (EHWAU) of Uganda joined the rest of the world to celebrate World Environmental Health Day (WEHD) 2019 under the theme, ***"Climate change challenge, time for Global Environmental Health to act in unison"***. The association hosted an annual professionals' dinner at Rider Hotel, Mukono in commemoration of this day and the guest of honour was Dr. David Musoke, the Secretary for IFEH Africa group. In his remarks, Dr. Musoke urged EHWAU to always keep the



Dr. David Musoke delivering his remarks at the dinner.

2020 in South Africa.

International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH) informed of the projects that they undertake. He also emphasized the need for the executive of the association to mobilise all Environmental Health professionals to join. He also encouraged members of EHWAU and other delegates to attend the forthcoming IFEH world congress in

Malaysia in 2020, and the 4th All Africa Environmental Health Congress in April

The event brought together environmental health professionals in the country working both in the local government and non-governmental agencies, students, tutors and lecturers from institutions training environmental health such as Makerere University School of Public Health, Uganda Allied Institute for Health and Management Studies - Mulago (UIAHAMS), School of Hygiene – Mbale, and Ministry of health officials. Among the deliberations was presentation of the draft scheme of service for Environmental Health staff in the country, due to the need to identify and consult more stakeholders such as academia (training institutions), as well as district officials.



Environmental Health Practitioners at the WEHD 2019 dinner at Ridar Hotel, Mukono district.

The President of the association Mr. Emmerly Mbaha acknowledged that the theme of the day was significant and that environmental health practitioners play a key role in tackling climate change. Mr. Mbaha noted that contribution to climate change is made through day-to-day activities in communities such as proper solid waste management, control of waste water pollution, and regulation of operations of industries in that no effluent gets into the environment which would have overwhelming environmental impacts. He also encouraged training institutions to begin projects like biogas manufacture and marketing such that the environment gets conserved to minimise climate issues. In his remarks, Mr. Mbaha called upon academia to introduce short courses which equip graduates with more skills while in the field. He also emphasized training institutions to make Environmental Health training more practical to enable graduates compete in the changing job demands.



EHWAU President, Mr Emmerly Mbaha addressing the professionals at the dinner.

EHWAU in a special way appreciated the contribution of the Ministry of Health through the Uganda Sanitation Fund programme for the support rendered in celebrating the World Environmental Health day 2019.

B. Makerere University Environmental Health Students' Association (MUEHSA) at St. Martin Primary School – Mulago, Kampala, Uganda

Makerere University Environmental Health Students' Association (MUEHSA) as a students' body joined the rest of the world in commemorating this day with a focus on *Environmental Protection*.

On Thursday 26th September, 2019, MUEHSA members commemorated this day through an outreach to St. Martin Primary School, Mulago among pupils and staff. Several activities were carried out which included sensitization, tree planting and a clean-up exercise in the school. The outreach was aimed at promoting environmental protection through tree planting, general cleaning, creating awareness among pupils and staff, and making pupils ambassadors for climate change.

MUEHSA engaged 320 pupils from primary five and six classes in all the activities. The President of MUEHSA, Ms. Racheal Ikol opened up the tree planting session by planting the first tree, followed by the school Head teacher, staff members, the head prefect and other pupils. Five trees of different species were planted in the school compound, and pupils who formed teams were assigned the responsibility to take care of them.



Pupils planting one of the trees at St. Martins Primary School.

Health education was carried out for all the pupils at the school assembly. The emphasis was on the importance and various ways of protecting the environment, effects of not protecting the environment and pupils' role in protecting the environment as a strategy of reducing the rising global warming. It was also found out that the pupils had some knowledge about environmental protection during the question and answer session.

During the cleanup exercise within the school, refuse was properly collected in the skip



Some of the MUEHSA members; Arafat Sempijja and Racheal Ikol sensitizing pupils on environmental protection at St. Martin Primary School.

provided by Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) within the school premises. MUEHSA recommends the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Water and Environment of Uganda to make the World Environmental Health Day more known in the county.



President of MUEHSA, Racheal Ikol (centre) and Jemba Pius (1st right) with the teaching staff of St. Martin Primary School.

In conclusion, MUEHSA is concerned with giving back to the community and involving various stakeholders in preventing diseases and promoting health. Among other activities, MUEHSA is organizing its 17th annual scientific conference under the theme “*The role of Multisectoral Collaboration in Achieving Environmental Health*” from 8th - 9th of April 2020 in Kampala Uganda.

For Health, Prevention is Our Priority.