



Position Paper:

Youth Priorities on Climate Change Adaptation Investments

Introduction

As climate change continues to impact communities globally, it is imperative to invest in adaptation strategies that are both effective and reflective of the priorities of those who will inherit the future (youth). This position paper outlines the findings from a survey of 1,985 participants, focusing on the youth's priorities for climate change adaptation investments. The data collected offers valuable insights into the areas where young people believe investments should be concentrated to effectively address the challenges posed by climate change in Uganda and to guide policymakers and stakeholders in aligning their efforts with these priorities.

Key Priorities Identified by Youth

1. Hands-on Skilling in Innovative Agricultural Practices (33.1%)

- **Rationale:** The top priority for youth is investing in practical training for innovative agricultural practices. This preference underscores the importance of equipping young farmers with the knowledge and skills to adopt sustainable farming methods that can withstand climate variability.
- **Recommendation:** Develop comprehensive training programs that focus on sustainable agriculture techniques, soil health management, crop diversification, and the use of technology in farming.

2. Tree Planting Including Along Water Bodies (28.2%)

- **Rationale:** Tree planting is highly valued due to its dual role in carbon sequestration and ecosystem restoration. Planting trees along water bodies also aids in protecting watersheds and improving water quality.
- **Recommendation:** Implement large-scale reforestation and afforestation projects, particularly in riparian zones, to enhance biodiversity, prevent soil erosion, and contribute to carbon sequestration efforts.

3. Adaptive Technologies (22%)

- **Rationale:** The adoption of adaptive technologies such as drought-resistant crops, efficient water use systems, and weather prediction tools is critical for mitigating the adverse effects of climate change on agriculture.
- **Recommendation:** Invest in research and development of adaptive technologies and facilitate their widespread adoption through subsidies, training, and demonstration projects.

4. **Water Well Excavation and Rehabilitation (20.6%)**

- **Rationale:** Access to reliable water sources is fundamental for both agriculture and daily living. The focus on water well excavation and rehabilitation reflects the need to secure water availability in the face of changing precipitation patterns.
- **Recommendation:** Prioritize the excavation of new wells and the rehabilitation of existing ones to ensure sustainable water access for rural and urban communities, alongside measures to protect groundwater resources.

5. **Green Entrepreneurship and Job Creation (19.9%)**

- **Rationale:** Green entrepreneurship presents an opportunity to create jobs while addressing environmental issues. Youth prioritize investments that can stimulate the green economy and provide sustainable livelihoods.
- **Recommendation:** Support the development of green businesses through funding, mentorship, and capacity-building programs aimed at young entrepreneurs.

6. **Construction and Rehabilitation of Water Harvesting Structures (19.2%)**

- **Rationale:** Effective water harvesting structures can significantly mitigate the impacts of droughts and irregular rainfall patterns. This priority indicates a need for resilient infrastructure to manage water resources efficiently.
- **Recommendation:** Invest in the construction and rehabilitation of water harvesting structures such as dams, ponds, and tanks to enhance water storage capacity and resilience against climate shocks.

7. **Skilling in Climate-Smart Aquaculture (16%)**

- **Rationale:** Climate-smart aquaculture is seen as a viable adaptation strategy to enhance food security and livelihoods in the face of climate change. This preference highlights the potential of aquaculture to contribute to sustainable food systems.
- **Recommendation:** Develop training programs focused on sustainable aquaculture practices, integrated with ecosystem-based management approaches to ensure the health of aquatic environments.

8. **Irrigation Systems to Improve Water Use Efficiency (14.8%)**

- **Rationale:** Efficient irrigation systems are crucial for optimizing water use in agriculture, especially in regions prone to water scarcity. This priority reflects the need for modern irrigation technologies to maximize productivity.
- **Recommendation:** Promote the adoption of advanced irrigation systems such as drip and sprinkler irrigation through financial incentives, technical support, and training for farmers.

Conclusion

The data collected from the youth indicates a clear preference for investments in practical training, sustainable practices, and adaptive technologies to address the multifaceted challenges posed by climate change. Policymakers and stakeholders must pay attention to these priorities to develop and implement effective climate adaptation strategies that resonate with the aspirations and needs of the younger generation. By aligning investment efforts with these priorities, we can build a resilient and sustainable future that empowers youth and safeguards our planet.

Proposed Action Plan

1. **Collaborate with Educational Institutions:** Integrate climate-smart agricultural practices into curricula and offer hands-on training programs.
2. **Launch National Reforestation Campaigns:** Engage communities, particularly youth, in large-scale tree planting initiatives.
3. **Promote Adaptive Technology:** Provide grants and technical support for the development and dissemination of adaptive agricultural technologies.
4. **Enhance Water Resource Management:** Invest in the construction and rehabilitation of water infrastructure, focusing on sustainable and efficient water use.
5. **Support Green Entrepreneurship:** Establish incubators and funding mechanisms to foster innovation and job creation in the green economy.

By taking these steps, we can ensure that the voices of the youth are not only heard but also acted upon, leading to a more resilient and sustainable future for all.