

Experts urge African governments to close the Climate Finance gap



Mr. Julius Mukunda, ED CSBAG (second from left) during a panel discussion at the 2nd Annual Climate Finance Conference on 01/04/2025. (Photo: CSBAG)

Uganda is facing a daunting task in its efforts to combat climate change, with an estimated USD 28.1 billion required to implement both unconditional and conditional adaptation and mitigation actions by 2030. The breakdown of this cost is approximately USD 17.7 billion for adaptation and USD 10.3 billion for mitigation, highlighting the significant investment needed to address the impacts of climate change.

The Second Annual Climate Finance Conference kicked off yesterday in Kampala, bringing together stakeholders for a two-day discussion on the critical issue of climate financing in Africa. The event is held under the theme: "Closing the Climate Financing Gap in Africa."

According to Collin Agabalinda, the conference chairperson, climate change poses significant economic risks to the global economy, in addition to its environmental concerns. "Climate change presents physical threats such as floods that cause agricultural losses and destroy infrastructure," Agabalinda noted.

Agabalinda emphasized that the implications of climate-related risks are severe, particularly in Africa. "The continent is disproportionately affected by climate-related vulnerabilities, including droughts, floods, and more," he said. "Currently, Africa contributes a smaller percentage, perhaps 4%, to global emissions, yet it bears the brunt of climate change impacts."

The conference chairperson highlighted the vulnerability of countries like Uganda, which rely heavily on agriculture. "Productivity related to agriculture, human health, and livelihoods is expected to decline significantly," Agabalinda warned. "Thus, countries like Uganda are highly vulnerable."

Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), Hon. Matia Kasaija, emphasized the devastating impact of climate change on Uganda's development gains during the 2nd Annual Climate Finance Conference. In a speech read on his behalf by Hon. Songa Lawrence Biyika, Kasaija pointed out that recent flash floods in Kampala, which claimed at least 10 lives on March 26, 2025, highlight the urgent need for climate-resilient development plans.

Hon. Songa Lawrence Biyika said that Uganda must first address its own climate finance problems before looking at the global issue. "Climate change is not a distant threat. It is a problem we face now, and we must work together to solve it," Biyika said. He added that "climate change is already affecting Uganda's progress, and more money is needed to adapt to and mitigate its effects."

The conference, now in its second year, brings together stakeholders to discuss climate finance issues and seek solutions to bridge the climate finance gap in Africa.

Climate finance plays an important role in reducing emissions in high greenhouse gas sectors, and Mr. Julius Mukunda, Executive Director of the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), emphasized the importance of community involvement in climate finance mechanisms. "Through our Participatory Budget Clubs model, we engage citizens through the budget process and make sure their concerns are communicated to the appropriate government stakeholders because we believe that communities have a voice," Mukunda said during his presentation at the 2nd Annual Climate Finance Conference.

The Participatory Budget Clubs (PBCs) model empowers citizens to identify issues affecting them, from the village to the national level, ensuring their voices are reflected in national budgets and policies related to climate finance.

Involving the private sector through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) is also seen as a funding source and opportunity. By combining public and private resources, PPPs can mobilize additional funding for climate adaptation projects while sharing risks. This model is particularly effective in addressing the needs of underserved local communities.

Civil society and community-based organizations have a role to play in advancing locally led adaptation (LLA) efforts. They advocate for policies supporting local adaptation initiatives, ensuring community voices are integrated into national climate strategies. These organizations also monitor government budgets, tracking climate change mainstreaming at the national and local government levels.

According to Mr. Denis Mugagga, Head of Climate Finance (MoFPED), there is an urgent need to strengthen climate finance frameworks to accelerate climate action. This can be achieved by aligning climate finance with national development goals, such as Vision 2040, NDP IV, and the 10-fold growth strategy.

To drive climate action, Mugagga emphasized the importance of scaling up investments in climate-smart and resilient infrastructure. Enhancing coordination between government, private sector, and development partners is also paramount. Furthermore, prioritizing innovative financial mechanisms can help unlock climate investments. Ensuring equitable distribution of climate finance to vulnerable communities is also essential.

Financing frameworks should support developing countries in transitioning to low-emission, climate-resilient growth paths. Uganda, for instance, requires an estimated USD 28.1 billion for NDC implementation by 2030. However, only 15% of this funding is expected to come from domestic sources, while 85% must be mobilized externally.

The breakdown of costs reveals that adaptation costs amount to USD 17.7 billion, with 14% domestic and 86% conditional on international support. Mitigation costs are estimated at USD 10.3 billion, with 15% domestic and 85% conditional on external funding. The NDC aligns with Vision 2040, National Development Plan IV (NDP IV), the National Climate Change Act (2021), and the Green Growth Development Strategy (2017-2030).