



Udgoon
Sustainable
Development
Initiative



NOVEMBER 2024

NEWSLETTER

Strengthening the capacity of the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee (WCCPC) and the Ward Water Stakeholders Forum (WWSF) in Garissa Township ward through capacity building workshops and demonstration projects.



www.usdi-i.org

Executive Director's Remarks

We were honored that our project was selected for support by the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives. Our heartfelt gratitude went to the High Commission of Canada in Kenya for their invaluable partnership.

This project was dedicated to strengthening the capacity of the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee (WCCPC) and the Ward Water Stakeholders Forum (WWSF) in Garissa Township Ward. By enhancing the knowledge and skills of these community-led structures, we aimed to enable them to collaborate effectively with local communities in identifying climate change vulnerabilities and developing comprehensive adaptation plans.

The journey began with a comprehensive baseline assessment, which not only identified specific climate change impacts and water management challenges but also highlighted critical gaps in the capacities of local committees. Armed with these insights, we then focused on delivering targeted training sessions designed to empower the WCCPC and WWSF. These sessions prioritized skills development in areas such as sustainable water management, community engagement, and climate adaptation planning.

Our approach ensured that these capacity-building efforts were grounded in data gathered from the community, making them highly relevant and impactful. Participants were equipped with practical tools to analyze vulnerabilities, design solutions, and lead inclusive planning processes that incorporated the perspectives of women, youth, and marginalized groups.



Abdullahi Mohamed Hassan
- Executive Director, USDI

Ultimately, the goal of this project was to foster stronger, more resilient community structures capable of addressing Garissa's most pressing climate and water challenges. By building their capacity, we not only supported sustainable water management and climate adaptation efforts but also empowered duty bearers and community members to work hand-in-hand for a brighter, more sustainable future.

Together, we created empowered committees that led transformative change in Garissa!

Project Manager's Remarks



Vanessa Ngunjiri
- Project Manager

In this phase of the project, we were keen to develop a training manual for the capacity-building exercise for the Ward Water Stakeholders Forum Members, and the members from the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee. This manual was informed by the gaps identified from the views garnered from the residents in the baseline assessment and summarized in the report. In this training, pertinent topics of training like climate change impacts and vulnerability assessment, understanding local climate and water laws, addressing water management challenges, integrating gender and marginalized perspectives and prioritizing actionable recommendations.

This activity also included a group session to identify priority issues for the Garissa Township Ward Water and Climate Strategy. We are grateful for our funding partner- Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives for walking this journey with us.

Delve into this newsletter to read firsthand accounts of this activity as we recap, get insights and success stories from the attendees and trainers even as we prepare for the next activity. Enjoy!

RECAP OF ACTIVITIES

Capacity-Building Workshop Highlights



The capacity-building workshop held in Garissa Township Ward marked a significant step in empowering local committees to address climate and water challenges. Over two intensive days, participants from the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee and the Ward Water Stakeholders Forum engaged in interactive sessions designed to enhance their understanding and capabilities.



Day 1: Setting the Foundation



The workshop began with a focus on foundational knowledge. Participants explored the impacts of climate change specific to Garissa Township Ward and delved into both global and local laws governing water management. Gender inclusivity and the perspectives of marginalized groups were emphasized as essential components of sustainable planning. Through participatory sessions, attendees were encouraged to identify and prioritize the key issues facing their communities.

Day 2: Practical Solutions and Strategy Development



The second day shifted to practical applications. Participants discussed actionable steps, such as creating community-led water use plans and implementing drought-resistant agricultural practices. The workshop also facilitated the drafting of the Ward Water and Climate Strategy Paper, a pivotal document that will guide future actions and policies. By the end of the workshop, participants had not only deepened their knowledge but also laid the groundwork for community-driven, sustainable solutions.

CAPACITY BUILDING

A Cornerstone of USDI's Sustainable Development Efforts

Capacity building is a key part of USDI efforts to achieve sustainable development and address a variety of local challenges. It is fundamental to achieving the organization's set objectives as it enables stakeholders' understanding, ownership and participation in our projects.

In the CFLI project, the need for capacity building was included in the design of the project having been identified from numerous prior engagements with the members of the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee and Ward Water Stakeholders Forum that exposed their capacity gaps to properly execute their mandates.

In the course of the capacity building workshop, lack of knowledge on basic concepts on climate change and water management was noted including a lack of awareness about the COP 29 which was ongoing at the time of the workshop and local laws governing the two SDGs.



The training manual developed strategically guided the training sessions, including critical topics such as global and local laws on climate and water, integrating gender and marginalized groups perspectives, the nexus between climate change peace and security, etc. The sessions were very participatory allowing the members to take the lead and define priority issues for the ward which will guide the development of the climate change and water strategy.

Despite the success of the workshop, there is still need for more work to be done to achieve the desired long term impact. Specifically, there is need for:

1. More capacity building for the stakeholders not only within township ward but also other wards of Garissa County for wholesome positive impact.
2. Support to enhance meaningful engagement of women in the committees' as they suffer the greatest impact of climate change and water
3. Facilitation of the committees to engage with local communities to ensure the real local voices in the climate change and water conversation.

 **Elvis Wambura**
- Trainer



Why Capacity Building is Important for Committees and Communities

For our case, Capacity Building is not just an activity; it is about giving people the tools, knowledge, and confidence to solve their own problems.

Capacity building is vital for the success of committees like the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee (WCCPC) in tackling climate and water issues effectively. The recent workshop underscored how enhancing the capacity of these committees can lead to significant improvements for the entire community in Garissa Township Ward.

The training focused on equipping participants with knowledge about climate adaptation strategies and water management practices. Attendees learned about the impacts of climate change specific to our region, such as recurrent droughts and flooding. They also discussed practical solutions, including creating water retention ponds and promoting drought-resistant crops. By providing this knowledge, we ensure our committees are better prepared to make informed decisions that directly benefit the community.

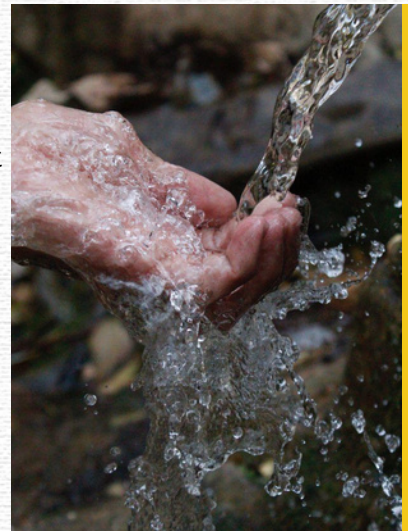
An essential aspect of the workshop was the collection of views to inform the Ward Water and Climate Strategy Paper. This paper is crucial for outlining the community's priorities and strategies for addressing the impacts of climate change and improving water management in Garissa Township Ward. Engaging committee members and community stakeholders in this process ensures that the strategies developed are relevant and reflect the needs of the people.

Despite the progress made, there is a pressing need for ongoing support for these committees. Civil society organizations and government bodies must provide further resources, training, and funding to help committees execute their strategies effectively. Without this support, the intentions formed in workshops may not lead to real, tangible changes within the community.

“Strengthening the capacity of our committees will enable them to engage the community more effectively and incorporate local views into critical documents like the Ward Water and Climate Strategy Paper.”

This inclusive approach is essential for developing sustainable strategies that address the unique challenges faced by Garissa Township Ward.

Furthermore, investing in the capacity of our committees empowers them to lead initiatives that engage all community members, particularly women and youth, ensuring that diverse perspectives are included in decision-making processes.



By building this foundation, we are not only addressing immediate challenges but also fostering a resilient future for Garissa Township Ward.



Kiptanui Kogei
- Trainer

CREATING CHANGE

How Capacity Building Has Changed My Perspective

Being part of the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee (WCCPC) has always been about serving my community. However, after attending the recent capacity-building workshop organized by the Udgoon Sustainable Development Initiative (USDI) with support from the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), I realized there is much more to the role than I had previously understood. The workshop opened my eyes to the importance of planning, collaboration, and sustainable action.

One thing that stood out was how much our actions—or lack of them—can affect the future of Garissa Township Ward. For example, while we've always focused on responding to droughts and water shortages as they happen, the workshop challenged us to think ahead. Simple steps like creating a community-led plan for water use or setting up water retention systems could help us prepare for future dry spells.

These proactive measures can be integrated into the upcoming Ward Water and Climate Strategy Paper, which aims to outline our priorities and strategies for effectively managing water resources and addressing climate change challenges.

Another key lesson was the importance of community trust. Many people in our ward feel left out when it comes to decision-making, especially women and youth. The workshop highlighted that when everyone is included, the solutions we create are more practical and long-lasting. As a committee member, I now see my role as not just solving problems but actively listening to the needs of different groups within the community.

“Ensuring that the voices of women and youth are heard in the formulation of the Ward Water and Climate Strategy Paper is crucial for creating equitable and effective solutions.”

The discussions also showed us where we are falling short. For example, our committee lacks resources and technical support to implement many of the ideas shared. This needs to change. Civil society organizations and government agencies must help strengthen our capacity with more training, funding, and tools. This support is essential for us to effectively contribute to the Ward Water and Climate Strategy Paper and ensure that our proposed actions are feasible and impactful.



For me, the workshop was not just about gaining new knowledge. It was a wake-up call to work harder, think smarter, and build better relationships within the community. Moving forward, I'm determined to use what I learned to help make Garissa Township Ward a place where everyone has a voice and a chance to thrive.

Mohammed Dimbil
- Member - WCCPC
Garissa Township Ward

INCLUSION OF WOMEN

A Necessary Step in Solving Climate and Water Challenges in Garissa

As a woman living in Garissa Township Ward, I deal with water and climate problems every day. I fetch water for my family, help with farming, and ensure the household runs smoothly. However, many women like me are often left out of decisions about how to manage water resources or adapt to climate change.

During the workshop, I realized how much we, as women, have to contribute. Women have unique knowledge and experiences that are crucial for effective water and climate management. For example, we understand how poor drainage systems affect our homes during floods or how challenging it is to find clean water during droughts. Including women in decision-making can lead to better and more practical solutions that address our specific needs.

The workshop also highlighted the importance of empowering women, which can improve the entire community.

This experience has given me hope. I now know that women must have a voice in solving these problems. By including us in the formulation of the Ward Water and Climate Strategy Paper and other initiatives, we can create fairer and more effective solutions for Garissa Township Ward. Empowering women not only benefits us individually but also strengthens our community as a whole, making it more resilient to the impacts of climate change and water scarcity.



When women are given leadership roles or are involved in water and climate projects, it leads to positive changes for everyone. For instance, women can take the lead in initiatives like water purification or planting drought-resistant trees, which can enhance community resilience against climate challenges.



An essential aspect of our discussions was the development of the Ward Water and Climate Strategy Paper. This document aims to outline the priorities and strategies for addressing climate change and water management issues in our ward. By ensuring that women's voices are included in the creation of this strategy, we can ensure that it reflects the diverse needs and experiences of our community.

 **Ismahan Abdi Ali**
- Attendee



KEY DEDUCTIONS FROM THE REPORT

The CFLI project survey conducted in Garissa Township Ward provided critical insights into climate change awareness and water scarcity challenges. Key findings highlighted widespread knowledge gaps, particularly among younger age groups, who primarily rely on digital sources for climate information. In contrast, older residents showed deeper understanding, shaped by direct experience and community forums.

Water scarcity emerged as a universal concern, with participants citing inconsistent supply and poor water quality as major issues. Notably, infrastructural inefficiencies and climate change impacts, such as prolonged droughts and rising temperatures, were seen as aggravating factors.

The survey revealed significant gender disparities in participation and decision-making on climate resilience and water management. While women represented a larger portion of survey respondents, their involvement in key climate committees and local initiatives remained limited.

Barriers to participation included lack of representation in decision-making platforms and limited access to resources. Despite these challenges, women demonstrated a strong interest in climate and water issues, underscoring the need to integrate their perspectives into community planning to ensure inclusive strategies.

The data also revealed low participation in climate and water management initiatives, suggesting the need for more inclusive and targeted community engagement strategies. These findings emphasize the importance of addressing both immediate infrastructure challenges and long-term resilience planning.

Our next steps will focus on enhancing public awareness, strengthening local leadership in climate adaptation, and advocating for sustainable water management solutions, with a special focus on empowering women to participate more actively in decision-making processes.

 **Mohamed Aden Hassan**
M&E officer



NEXT STEPS

This capacity-building exercise has been a fundamental step of this project and as it has involved us working with the actual change makers and jointly identifying priority issues that will be addressed in the Ward Water and Climate Strategy. Thus, the next stage will be the presentation of the draft strategy for review and validation. We remain encouraged to meet the goals of this project and ultimately enhance community resilience and improve collaboration between these committees and the community.

We thank our partner the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) for the support. We thank the members of the Garissa township Ward Water Stakeholders Forum and the Ward Climate Change Planning Committees for their cooperation and dedication during this activity, making a success.

 **-Vanessa Ngunjiri**
- Project Manager





Activity supported by the
Canada Fund for Local Initiatives

Activité réalisée avec l'appui du
Fonds canadien d'initiatives locales



Strengthening the capacity of the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee (WCCPC) and the Ward Water Stakeholders Forum (WWSF) in Garissa Township ward through capacity building workshops and demonstration projects.



**Udgoon
Sustainable
Development
Initiative**

www.usdi-i.org