



Udgoon
Sustainable
Development
Initiative

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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.



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Executive Director's Remarks

As we reflect on the progress made through our project, I am filled with a deep sense of pride and gratitude. The successful launch of the Garissa Township Ward Climate Action and Water Management Strategy is a clear milestone, made possible by the unwavering support of the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) and the High Commission of Canada in Kenya. Their partnership has been instrumental in empowering local structures like the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee (WCCPC) and the Ward Water Stakeholders Forum (WWSF).

This strategy is not just a product it's a commitment to long-term, community-driven solutions to climate and water challenges. From the outset, our approach has focused on strengthening local leadership by equipping community members with practical tools and knowledge in climate adaptation, inclusive planning, and sustainable water management. The enthusiastic participation of women and youth at every stage has been especially inspiring, underscoring the importance of inclusive engagement in building resilience.

Our work is far from over. This strategy lays the foundation for ongoing action, and we are excited about the journey ahead starting with the construction of two water conservation pans that will demonstrate how innovation and community knowledge can work hand in hand to address local needs.



 **Abdullahi Mohamed Hassan**
- Executive Director, USDI



Together, we are building more than strategies we are nurturing leadership, fostering ownership, and supporting a community vision for a resilient and sustainable future in Garissa.



Project Manager's Remarks



Vanessa Ngunjiri - Project Manager

The launch of the Garissa Township Ward Climate Action and Water Management Strategy marks a very significant step in this project. It is more than simply a document; it is a statement of our shared resolve to confront the urgent issues brought on by climate change and guarantee sustainable water management in the Garissa Township Ward.

Garissa County is especially susceptible to the effects of climate change, including as extreme weather events and altered precipitation patterns, as we are all know. In order to promote sustainable water resource management, which is essential for our livelihoods and general well-being, this strategy provides concrete methods to improve our resilience and adaptive capacity. We are taking proactive steps to protect our water supplies and provide fair access for everyone by making investments in precise climate data, creating early warning systems, and putting in place climate-proofed infrastructure.

The strategy, whose development has been a culmination of joint-stakeholder inputs, emphasizes the importance of community involvement and collaboration with local authorities and stakeholders. It reiterates that meaningful change will be successfully achieved through joint efforts.

ACTIVITY RECAP

The launch of the Garissa Township Ward Climate Action and Water Management Strategy was a vibrant and engaging half-day event that filled the air with excitement and anticipation. On January 23, 2025, stakeholders from various backgrounds gathered to celebrate this milestone, marking a significant step towards addressing climate change and enhancing water management in the region.

The event was filled with energy as attendees participated in interactive sessions, shared insights, and pledged their commitment to supporting the strategy. Keynote speaker, Mr. Kiptanui Kogei (Country Director- Udgoon Sustainable Development Initiative) the urgency of climate action and the importance of community-driven initiatives, while the presentation of the strategy itself outlined a clear path forward for sustainable development in climate action and water management in Garissa township.



The enthusiasm was palpable as residents, Ward Water Stakeholders Forum members (WWSFs), Ward Climate Change Planning Committees members (WCCPCs) and representatives from the office of the Garissa Township Ward Member of County Assembly came together, united in their quest for a resilient and sustainable future for Garissa Township. The launch not only raised awareness but also fostered a sense of ownership and collaboration among stakeholders, setting the stage for effective implementation and long-term impact.



A REVIEW OF THE STRATEGY



The Garissa Township Ward Climate Action and Water Management Strategy, spearheaded by the Udgoon Sustainable Development Initiative (USDI), embodies a transformative vision for the future. It advocates for a world where all individuals have equal access to resources, opportunities, and a dignified existence, a vision that resonates deeply with the communities within Garissa Town. Having participated in the data collection process, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative potential of this strategy and fully support its underlying principles.

The strategy's focus on raising awareness and educating the community is particularly commendable. In my interactions with Garissa residents, it became apparent that while there is a strong willingness to engage with climate action, there remains a significant gap in understanding how climate change, water management, and environmental sustainability directly affect their livelihoods.



Educating the community is not merely about disseminating information; it is about empowering individuals with the knowledge to make informed decisions that will safeguard their future. The initiative's emphasis on outreach programs and workshops aimed at enhancing awareness fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility toward environmental stewardship, making it not just an educational effort but a call to action for all residents.

The strategy's approach to fostering active participation and ownership in climate resilience initiatives is crucial. During my time on the ground, I observed that community members responded most enthusiastically to initiatives in which they felt their voices and contributions were valued. From a data collector's perspective, the residents of Garissa are eager to be active participants in shaping the solutions to their own environmental challenges.

The USDI's strategy acknowledges that sustainable solutions require local ownership, and this inclusive approach strengthens the likelihood of long-term success. By empowering the community to take part in decision-making processes, the initiative ensures that interventions are not only relevant but also rooted in local knowledge and traditions, which is indispensable for fostering lasting change.

The call to strengthen collaboration among stakeholders is another key tenet of the strategy that merits support. Climate action is a complex issue that transcends individual efforts; it requires the collective engagement of diverse stakeholders, including local government bodies, nongovernmental organizations, local businesses, and international development partners. The strategy's focus on creating platforms for dialogue and collaboration is essential to coordinate resources, share expertise, and drive a unified approach



From my experience in collecting data, I have seen how partnerships can amplify the effectiveness of interventions. The pooling of resources, knowledge, and technical skills from various sectors leads to the design of more robust solutions that can address the multifaceted challenges faced by Garissa's residents.

Equally important is the monitoring and evaluation of community engagement efforts. The strategy's commitment to closely tracking the effectiveness of community participation and ensuring that interventions are adaptable to changing circumstances is essential for long-term success. From the standpoint of data collection, this is a crucial component that ensures accountability and transparency in all stages of implementation. By continuously evaluating the progress of climate action and water management initiatives, the strategy provides a feedback loop that allows for timely adjustments.

This iterative process increases the chances of success and creates a dynamic system that evolves alongside the community's needs.



Muturi Allan Mutahi
Data Collector

IN CONCLUSION.....



The Garissa Township Ward Climate Action and Water Management Strategy by USDI is a forward-thinking framework that has the potential to significantly transform Garissa Town. By raising awareness, promoting active participation, fostering collaboration, encouraging sustainable innovations, and ensuring rigorous monitoring, the strategy aligns with the needs of the community while addressing global environmental challenges. As someone who has been directly involved in collecting data from Garissa's residents, I wholeheartedly support this initiative. Its holistic approach offers a pathway to a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient future, where the people of Garissa Town not only survive but thrive in a world of shared resources and opportunities.

How Minority Groups Like Women, Youth and Children Stand To Benefit From The Strategy

Introduction

In an era where inclusivity and equitable development are key to sustainable growth, strategic policies play a crucial role in uplifting minority groups. Women, youth, and children—often marginalized in economic, social, and political spheres—stand to benefit significantly from well-structured development strategies. By ensuring access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making platforms, these groups can actively contribute to and benefit from national development.

Creating Economic Opportunities for Women and Youth

One of the most significant advantages of an inclusive strategy is the economic empowerment of women and youth. Through initiatives such as financial literacy programs, microfinance schemes, and entrepreneurial training, women can establish and grow businesses, leading to financial independence and improved living standards. Similarly, youth can benefit from skill development programs and job creation initiatives, reducing unemployment and fostering innovation.

Moreover, integrating gender-sensitive policies ensures that women receive fair wages, equal employment opportunities, and protection from workplace discrimination. Strategies that promote female participation in traditionally male-dominated industries, such as technology and manufacturing, can bridge economic disparities and enhance productivity.

Enhancing Educational Access for Children and Youth

Education remains a powerful tool in breaking cycles of poverty and empowering future generations. A well-structured strategy prioritizes access to quality education for all children, especially those from marginalized communities.

By investing in infrastructure, providing scholarships, and introducing digital learning solutions, children in underprivileged areas can receive the education they deserve. Additionally, vocational training programs equip youth with practical skills relevant to the job market, ensuring long-term employability and economic stability.



■ Promoting Health and Well-being



Health is a fundamental human right, and minority groups often face disparities in accessing healthcare services. A comprehensive strategy must address these gaps by improving healthcare infrastructure, offering maternal and child healthcare services, and ensuring affordable medical care.

For women, access to reproductive health services is vital in promoting autonomy and well-being. For children, immunization programs, nutritional support, and early childhood interventions play a crucial role in their overall development. Youth-focused mental health programs can also address rising concerns about depression, anxiety, and substance abuse, creating a healthier and more resilient population.

■ Strengthening Political and Social Inclusion

Minority groups often lack representation in decision-making processes. A strategic approach must advocate for policies that encourage the participation of women and youth in governance and leadership roles. Quotas for women in political offices, youth advisory councils, and inclusive policymaking frameworks can ensure that their voices are heard and their concerns addressed.

Furthermore, promoting legal reforms that protect against gender-based violence, child labor, and exploitation strengthens the social fabric, creating a society that values and upholds the rights of all its members.

■ Conclusion

A well-structured strategy that prioritizes inclusivity has the potential to transform the lives of women, youth, and children. By focusing on economic empowerment, education, healthcare, and political representation, minority groups can achieve equality and actively contribute to national growth. As stakeholders in development, governments, private sectors, and communities must work together to implement these strategies, ensuring that no one is left behind in the journey toward progress.

■ By Adoy Abdullahi Omar



NEXT STEPS

As we conclude the successful launch of our Climate Action and Water Management Strategy, we are eager to translate our vision into tangible actions. Our next steps are crucial in demonstrating our commitment to this cause. We are excited to move forward with the construction of two demonstration water conservation pans. These pans will serve as models for effective water harvesting and conservation, showcasing how simple yet impactful innovations can enhance our community's ability to manage water resources sustainably. Additionally, they will empower residents with the knowledge and skills needed to replicate these water conservation practices. We are grateful to our partner, the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives for this continued partnership and embark on the next phase of this project with enthusiasm and dedication. Working together, we can all make a difference and create a brighter future for our community.





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