

## UGANDA

### IMPLEMENTING AGENDA 21 IN JINJA

*Effective and broad-based Local Agenda 21 initiatives can serve as a mechanism to carry out the Habitat Agenda.*



Jinja is the second largest urban centre in Uganda, and serves as the principle urban centre and market to a wide hinterland, which accommodates over 3 million people. Increasing urbanisation and development has resulted in a corresponding demand and pressure on the environment, which has led to deterioration in environmental conditions. The most pressing and challenging environmental problems in Jinja are associated with the management of solid waste, sewage, sanitation and natural resources.

In 1995, Jinja Municipal council adopted a resolution to bring together municipal authorities, residents, and local organisations to initiate a Local Agenda 21 process. The LA 21 initiative was established under the umbrella of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives' (ICLEI) Model Community Programme (MCP). The objective of the LA 21 planning process in Jinja has been to improve services for residents while protecting and improving the natural environments. The process engaged a broad range of community partners and resulted in the establishment of permanent stakeholder groups that have worked effectively with Jinja Municipal Council and its residents.

A multi-disciplinary project team was formed and functioned as both the technical and administrative team for the Local Agenda 21 process. It developed community consultation strategies to identify issues, oversaw an environmental assessment, and formulated an action plan.

Partnership building was one of the main objectives of the programme and it began with the municipal management identifying and inviting interested groups and institutions in the city. ICLEI Canada played a major role in the initiation and execution of the programme. ICLEI also provided technical guidance and feedback on the activities such as community consultation, issue identification and priority setting.

The community consultation process was designed at a meeting of the Project Team, with advice from the ICLEI Field Manager. To reach the different inter-



est groups in Jinja (such as NGOs, youth groups, businesses, and line departments) a representative sampling method was used. The purpose of the consultation was to ask residents to identify issues of concern regarding service delivery. It was decided that no working group should be set up specifically for community liaison but rather the entire Project team was given the responsibility. In order to work quickly, the team organised into smaller groups, each covering different sectors identified for consultation and issue identification. Capacity building exercises were undertaken with the Project Team, as initially they had limited experience with participatory processes.

At the workshop the ICLEI Field Manager trained the Team members in consultation practices and participatory techniques, as well as providing reference materials



in order to strengthen their understanding of undertaking consultation and its benefits. The actual experience with the consultation process further strengthened the team's capabilities.

Residents participated in all stages of the process. Thirty people attended the priority setting meeting, and over one hundred participated in the environmental assessment draft report review. Ninety-three participants attended the action-planning workshops. Multi-sector involvement enabled the programme to access different perspectives about the issues, to reach a variety of people and to bring together the different talents of Jinja's communities. The support of Jinja's residents was a key factor that enabled the accomplishments of the community consultation for issue specification and priority setting, issue assessment and analysis, and the action planning processes. The priorities identified by the community were rehabilitation of the natural environment, solid-waste management, sewage and sanitation. The community decided to focus its initial efforts on projects related to solid-waste management and sewage and sanitation.

Jinja has established a series of demonstration projects relating to these priorities, including a composting project that composts biodegradable waste into high quality manure for sale, a green house project to raise seedlings, using the compost manure from solid waste, a fish pond project that uses organic waste to feed the fish, and a biogas digester project which uses human waste to generate methane used as an energy source for lighting and cooking.

While many on the team began the process with few skills in participatory planning and such areas as environmental assessment, they gained experience throughout the planning process. The multi-sectoral process engaged a broad range of community partners, which enabled the programme to access different perspectives on the issues, to reach a broader range of people in the community, and to bring together the different talents of Jinja.



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ICLEI (1998) Local Agenda 21:  
Model Communities  
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