



**Federation of Uganda
Employees**



**Embracing Smart Climate Utility vision:
Employers Have a Role to Play**

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Climate Change Challenge

- *Climate change is, increasingly, becoming a real challenge that needs serious multi-sectoral approach*
- *Effects of climate change are universal, requiring multi-stakeholder action.*
- *The corporate world (employers) can make a significant role in tackling greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adopting resource production technologies.*
- *Adapting climate resilient infrastructure and attendant leadership to rally relevant actors is key.*



An illustration with a light blue background. In the center is the Eiffel Tower. To the left, there are two wind turbines and a flock of birds flying. In the foreground, there are silhouettes of people protesting, some holding signs. One person in the center is holding a sign with a globe. The overall theme is climate change and environmental activism.

Paris Climate Change Agreement

- The 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change aimed to limit global warming to below 2, but preferably, 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial times.
- It is estimated that there is only 20 percent chance that global warming will reach 1.5 degrees already in the next five years.
- By the end of the century, warming may reach 4 degrees or even above.



Climate Change and utility sector

- The utility sector is one of the most important sectors that should play a role.
- Water services provision is one of the most affected — services by the impacts of climate change- threatens the capacity of the manufacturing sector where water supply is an important production factor to maximise output.
- Climate change affects the capacity of urban water utilities to deliver safe water, protect rivers and lakes/oceans, as well as protect people and assets from effects of flooding.
- water, sanitation and urban drainage utilities contribute upto 15%of the urban areas' GHG emissions.
- Other companies in the manufacturing sector are also serious GHG producers in form of diverse forms of pollutants they emit to the environment.
- Other activities relating to deforestation, wetland destruction and other forms of ecosystem destruction are other significant constraints to GHG reduction.

Climate Smart Utility Vision

- IWA Climate Smart Utility Vision – aims to build a community of leaders who inspire all utilities, their governance structures, their regulators and urban planners to become, increasingly, Climate Smart.
- Corporate companies should embrace this vision by providing inspiration and momentum for all utilities to achieve cultural shift needed on three interconnected pillars:
 - I. **GHG:** utility companies can reduce their GHG emissions by transitioning towards being resource producers and reducing pollution
 - II. **Adaptation:** to plan for resilient adaptive infrastructure that combines centralised and decentralised approaches, as well as natural and built infrastructure; and
 - III. **Leadership:** to engage citizens, industries, and planning stakeholders so that they embrace the change needed for resilient and low-carbon water and wastewater utilities; and to engage regulators and inspire other utilities at national and international level.





The Role of Employers (Utility Companies) .. Reduction of GHG Emissions

Corporate companies can plan ahead to reduce GHG emissions, both within the company's operational area and through their contribution to regional decarbonisation.

- i. Monitoring and reducing GHG emissions related to the company's activities
 - reduction of energy consumption (through energy saving gadgets), wastewater and biosolids management (controlling N₂O, CO₂ and CH₄ emissions, chemical usage etc),
 - building new ecosystem assets - greening activities by many companies is a good example in this case.
- ii. Investing in resource recovery to maximise offsets, through resource reuse in own operations and making heat, use of renewable energies, and products available to local stakeholders replacing their use of fossil fuel-based resources.
- iii. Increasing the efficiency of systems to reduce the energy demand for the mandated level of service, including investing in low-energy and low-carbon solutions for new assets. The Kiira Motors electric car model is a good example in this regard.

The Role of Employers (Utility Companies) .. *Adaptation*

- Increasing Resilience in the Face of Climate Change
Companies must plan head to anticipate future threats from climate change impacts.
- Investments to increase resilience contribute to reducing GHG emissions when possible.
 - i. Planning sets of measures, including nature-based solutions when appropriate, reducing water use in relation to local scarcity trends, and diversifying water sources, in order to achieve a positive water balance under the impacts of climate change;
 - ii. Adapting sanitation strategies, collection and treatment to respond to lower low flows and higher high flows, and to an increased sensitivity of aquatic ecosystems, which demand enhanced discharge requirements;
 - iii. Providing adequate urban rainwater management through a combination of built and natural infrastructure, in collaboration with urban planning, basin management and land development planning, to reduce flooding risks as well as protect water bodies and public health; and
 - iv. Promoting an asset management and maintenance programme that delivers robust and adaptive infrastructure, where redundancy, by-pass systems, the integrity of equipment and intelligent controls enable the agile responses needed to face the impacts of climate change.



The Role of Employers (Utility Companies) .. Leadership

- Climate Smart Companies Leaders at Local, National and International Level are champions making the transition happen through knowledge sharing and innovative solutions to GHG emissions reduction and climate adaptation.
- This translates into a strong learning and sharing culture at local, national and international scale:
 - i. Promoting water literacy of citizens and urban professionals, through outreach programmes and participation in local governance, with the goal to empower citizens as actors, and urban planners as partners of the climate smart utility;
 - ii. Developing a learning culture by taking part in research with the local and international scientific community, developing multi-disciplinary skills and knowledge in fields related to water conservation (for example, landscape and ecology, social and urban design, architecture, climate information), striving to be better partners to local stakeholders, and
 - iii. Sharing knowledge with other utilities at national and international level seeking to inspire and learn more on achieving and improving the climate smart water agenda.



Conclusion

- The effects of climate change to sustainable human life, no longer need much explanation.
- We have seen real-life challenges emanating from climate change effects.
- Global warming is real, rainfall patterns have changed, raw water sources have unprecedentedly dried, river and lake levels have fallen and risen uncontrollably and water treatment costs have gone up.
- The IWA-sponsored Climate Smart Utility Vision is a move in the right direction. The corporate world can play a significant role in promulgating climate smart approaches

**“TWENTY-FIVE YEARS
AGO PEOPLE COULD BE
EXCUSED FOR NOT
KNOWING MUCH, OR
DOING MUCH, ABOUT
CLIMATE CHANGE. TODAY
WE HAVE NO EXCUSE.”**

- DESMOND TUTU



**We have to fight climate
change like we actually want
to win.**

Jagmeet Singh

