



**LIFE-AR**

LDC Initiative for Effective  
Adaptation and Resilience



# UGANDA

**A focus on participatory  
approaches and strengthening  
local systems for improved  
resilience**

# Introducing LIFE-AR

*The Least Developed Countries' (LDCs) Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR) aims to achieve the LDCs' 2050 vision for a climate-resilient future. Led by the LDCs, LIFE-AR encourages a change in the prioritisation, financing, coordination and evaluation of climate responses. LIFE-AR seeks to develop long-term interventions and investments in climate adaptation and works with governments to sustainably strengthen national and local institutions, systems and capabilities. By demonstrating the effectiveness of this approach, the aim is to influence the architecture of climate finance to enable direct access to LDCs. LIFE-AR is in line with the principles of locally-led adaptation and is developing mechanisms for including the specific needs of local communities, which will help enrich national and regional adaptation plans and nationally determined contributions (NDCs).*

## LIFE-AR in Uganda

Uganda joined LIFE-AR in 2019. Uganda has committed to ensuring that 70% of climate finance under LIFE-AR is invested behind community priorities. Uganda is piloting the Devolved Climate Finance (DCF) mechanism, aligned with its decentralised governance structure and building on national policies and legal frameworks. The DCF mechanism is implemented through a phased 10-year approach, with the aim of achieving nationwide coverage from year 11 onwards.

It is built around four core components:

- **Climate Resilience Fund:** DCF strengthens financial and fiduciary frameworks by embedding climate finance within local government systems and aligning national public finance standards. Advance budget notifications support planning and community oversight.
- **Participatory Planning Institutions:** DCF aims to uphold subsidiarity, ensuring decisions are made by and with communities. It strengthens Parish, Sub-County and District Climate Committees to lead inclusive, harmonised and transparent planning, drawing on inclusive representation of women and other vulnerable groups and special interest groups.
- **Climate information & Resilience Planning:** DCF emphasizes the use of climate information and integrates resilience planning tools into local government plans and budgets.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning:** National and local M&E systems are strengthened to assess the effectiveness of institutional arrangements for managing climate risks. It promotes learning and accountability, ensuring improvement in adaptation planning and implementation.

### Alignment with Uganda's National Priorities for Adaptation and Resilience

Vision 2040 sets the ambition for a resilient and sustainable economy, while NDP IV (2025-2030) translates this Vision into actionable priorities including climate change adaptation, sustainable natural resource management and strengthened institutional frameworks. LIFE-AR's DCF mechanism advances these strategic goals by promoting inclusive, locally driven climate action.

The National Climate Change Policy (2015) guides the country toward climate-resilient and low-carbon development by integrating climate change into national and local planning processes. By financing locally identified adaptation priorities and enhancing institutional capacity, LIFE-AR contributes to policy objectives while strengthening Uganda's climate governance framework.

The Climate Change Act (2021) establishes Uganda's climate governance architecture, emphasizing decentralization, access to climate finance and the role of local governments in adaptation. Under this Act, lower local government climate governance structures have been operationalized by LIFE-AR through the Parish Climate Change Committees (PCCCs).

Uganda's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC, 2022) sets an ambitious target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 24.7% by 2030 relative to the baseline scenario, focusing on sectors such as agriculture, water, forestry, infrastructure and health with a strong emphasis on gender equity and inclusivity.

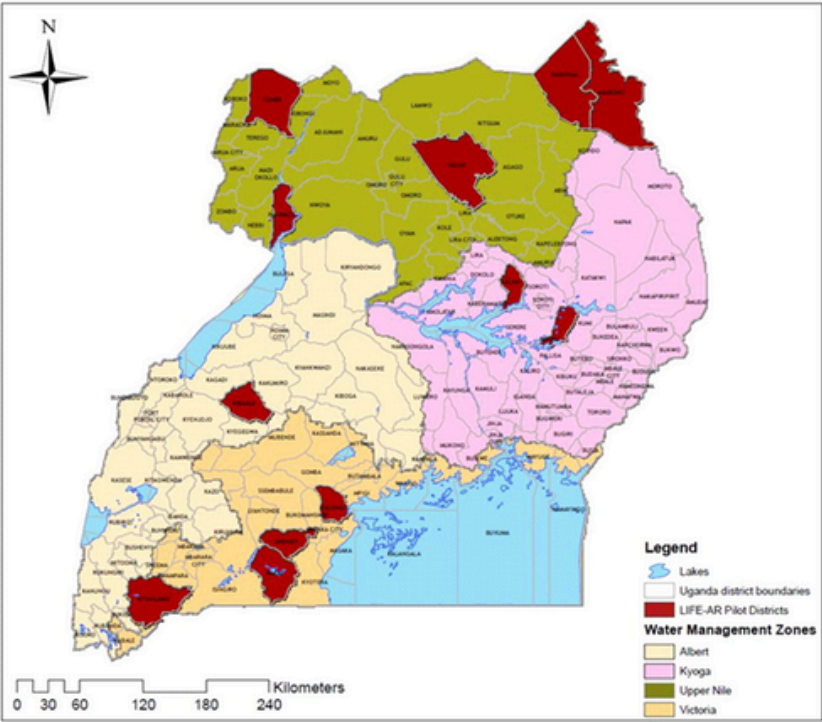


Uganda has selected 12 pilot districts for the initial phase, with each district identifying one sub-county and three parishes to test the delivery mechanism. The selection was guided by a comprehensive set of criteria with an emphasis on representation across the country’s four water management zones (WMZ).

Selection of districts	Selection of Sub counties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occurrence of Climate Hazard</li> <li>• Climate Vulnerability</li> <li>• Gender and Equity</li> <li>• Equitable representation of the Water and Management Zones in the country</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occurrence of Climate Hazard in the District</li> <li>• Climate Vulnerability</li> <li>• Existing Population</li> <li>• Existing Climate Change-related interventions</li> <li>• Gender Based Violence</li> </ul>

Based on the above criteria, the 12 districts selected include Kibaale and Pakwach in the Albert WMZ; Kaabong, Karenga, Kalaki and Ng’ora in the Kyoga WMZ; Pader and Yumbe in the Upper Nile WMZ; and Kalungu, Rakai, Ntungamo and Lwengo in the Victoria WMZ.

Uganda adopted a phased approach to rolling out the delivery mechanism, starting with 4 districts - 1 per WMZ - in the first year, with the remaining districts initiating implementation in subsequent years subject to funding availability. Each district receives an allocation of UGX 568 million, for investments and institutional strengthening.



Map of Uganda showing location of the 12 pilot districts

### Inclusive and participatory approach to identifying and prioritising investments

Uganda’s approach to identifying climate resilience investments builds on:

- **District-wide Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (CRVAs)**, identifying climate risks, hazards and existing community assets, to generate vulnerability indices to prioritise the most at-risk sub-counties.
- **Community consultations** led by the PCCCs and supported by district authorities. Using the GESI-sensitive Pamoja Voices toolkit, the consultations ensure participation of women, youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups
- Prior **sensitization of communities** on available funding enables informed dialogue, accountability and transparency.
- Community-suggested adaptation and resilience investments, evaluated and **prioritised by the PCCC using criteria** outlined in the DCF implementation guidelines.



Investment prioritisation by PCCC members in Kibaale district



Community consultations on investments in Kilim parish- Pader district

# Kaabong

**Climate Risks:** low, erratic rainfalls, rising temperatures, heat stress, droughts.

**Sectors:** infrastructure, water, agro-forestry, capacity building

Kaabong is a pastoral and agro-pastoral district in a semi-arid region of northeastern Uganda, home to about 216,000 people (51.8% female). The majority belong to the Dodoth community, with livelihoods centred on livestock and subsistence farming. The district faces low and erratic rainfall and rising temperatures that intensify heat stress and drought. Water scarcity is acute - around 30% of valley tanks are non-functional – driving seasonal migration, cross-border competition and reliance on unsafe contaminated sources. Pastoral and agro-pastoral households face growing threats from pasture loss, livestock disease and income insecurity. Women and children bear a disproportionate burden, with increased exposure to health risks, reduced school attendance and gender-based violence. Drought exacerbates heat stress while heightened competition over scarce resources fuels cattle raids and broader regional insecurity.

UGX 568,000,000

- Construction and rehabilitation of **32km of access roads** to improve connectivity across 19 villages and access to services during the rainy season. Trainings in routine maintenance, damage reporting, coordination with authorities.
- **17 boreholes across 3 parishes** for access to water for domestic and productive use. Trainings of gender-balanced local water committees to oversee daily operations, monitor water quality and manage maintenance.
- **Woodlots on 19 hectares across three parishes** to provide a sustainable source of wood fuel and wood products and restore degraded land and ecosystems. Trainings on woodlot management, governance and climate-smart practices, with support for women and other marginalized groups.

2,367 parish inhabitants from access roads with 1,847 people employed in road construction and rehabilitation.  
**16,950 (55% female, 45% male)** from 17 boreholes.  
**18,453 (55% female, 45% male)** from the woodlots.



*Inspection of borehole site*

- Year-round access to services (markets, schools, health facilities).
- Enhanced access to safe and reliable water for domestic and productive use.
- Restoration of degraded land, increased forest cover and reduced pressure on natural forests.
- Improvement of livelihoods and incomes through employment in tree nurseries, woodlot management, road construction and water infrastructure maintenance
- Strengthened local capacity and governance through inclusive trainings.





# Kalungu

**Climate Risks:** rising temperatures, droughts  
erratic rainfall, strong winds.

**Sectors:** water, agroforestry, capacity building

Kalungu District, in Central Uganda, is home to 221,569 people (54% women). The district boasts fertile land and strong agricultural potential, but overreliance on small-scale farming is threatened by climate change. Rising temperatures, prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall and strong winds reduce crop and livestock productivity, worsening food insecurity. Climate-related challenges lead to poor water, sanitation and hygiene conditions resulting in outbreaks of waterborne diseases. Women, girls and pastoralists are particularly affected, as they must travel longer distances in search of water and pasture during dry periods. Kalungu faces growing environmental pressures, including deforestation, land degradation and biodiversity loss, driven by agricultural expansion, wood fuel extraction and urbanisation.

UGX 568,000,000

- Construction of a **community valley tank** to address water scarcity during dry spells for domestic and productive use. Establishment of an **irrigation scheme** with equitable use and distribution of benefits.
- Construction of **8 boreholes across 3 parishes in 3 sub-counties** to improve access to safe and reliable water. Establishment and trainings of **water user committees** to improve maintenance and governance.
- **Agroforestry** to expand tree cover and provide alternative food and income sources. **Trainings** of community members on selection of climate smart species, planting, maintenance and ongoing monitoring.

**10 neighboring villages** of Kalumaga, Kityaba, Kagongero, Serinya, Buwanda, Bukiri, Kigajju, Nanseko, Bugomola A and Bugomola B from water tanks  
**2,410 households** across **8 villages** from the boreholes

- Improved water availability for domestic use
- Improved agricultural productivity with reduced dependence on rainfed agriculture
- Time and labour savings for women and girls and reduced risk of defilement, early pregnancy and school absenteeism
- Reduced need for nomadic pastoralism and resulting land conflicts



*Aerial view of Kitti parish, Kalungu*



*Election of the PCCC*

# Kibaale

**Climate Risks:** dry spells, heavier rainfall, droughts, rising temperatures

**Sectors:** infrastructure, energy, water, natural resources/ environment

Kibaale District, located in Mid-Western Uganda, has a population of 237,649 people (52.3% female) heavily reliant on subsistence agriculture (bananas, tobacco, coffee, maize, beans and tea). Erratic weather marked by heavier rainfall, dry spells and frequent pest outbreaks is disrupting crop and livestock production, threatening food security across the district. Droughts and rising temperatures have severely depleted water sources, with over 60% of the district's water resources exposed to climate change impacts. Women and children are forced to walk long distances in search of water, often relying on unsafe sources with increased exposure to health risks. Environmental degradation driven by deforestation, wetland encroachment and forest loss is accelerating soil erosion, biodiversity loss and fuelwood scarcity.

UGX 568,000,000

- Construction of a **28km access road** to enhance year-round access to markets, schools, healthcare cut off during heavy rains.
- Construction of **15 boreholes across 3 parishes** to ensure access to safe and clean water for domestic and productive use.
- Establishment of **micro-irrigation systems** on 1-acre plots for 10 households providing water for agricultural production.
- **Wetland restoration** through replanting of papyrus and indigenous trees and demarcation of the buffer zone to promote conservation and enhance ecosystem services.
- Construction of **energy-saving cookstoves** to reduce deforestation, improve household health for women and girls and lower GHG emissions.

**12,490 people** from boreholes

**10 households** near the borehole sites benefit from micro-irrigation systems

**400 households** from energy saving cookstoves

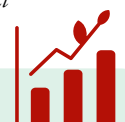
**1,666 people** from wetlands restoration activities

**10,824 individuals** from construction of access road



*Borehole drilling in Kibaale district*

- Year-round access to safe and clean water
- Increased agricultural productivity and household incomes
- Reduced time burden on women and children for water and firewood collection
- Year-round road connectivity to essential services, reducing accidents and stimulating local trade and economic opportunities
- Local job opportunities and improved skills on road maintenance, climate smart agriculture, biodiversity conservation and clean energy



# Pader

**Climate Risks:** droughts, heatwaves, storms, floods.

**Sectors:** agriculture, infrastructures, water, aquaculture, energy, waste, capacity building, governance

Pader District, in northeastern Uganda, has about 240,000 people- over 90% -reliant on crop and livestock farming. Agriculture faces challenges due to climate extremes such as droughts, heatwaves, strong winds, heavy storms and flooding of low lying areas of the district. These conditions have caused drying of streams, frequent crop failures, livestock distress and repeated pest outbreaks. Rapid population growth and urbanization have overwhelmed waste management systems. Frequent flooding disrupts transportation and limits access to essential social and economic amenities. Access to clean water remains limited. Environmental degradation - deforestation, wetland encroachment, poor farming practices and charcoal burning – is worsening the situation by accelerating soil erosion, biodiversity loss and water scarcity.

UGX 568,000,000

- **Awareness creation** and capacity building
- Supply and distribution of **drought-tolerant fruit trees and timber species**
- Support for household **apiary enterprises**
- Construction of **flood control structures**
- Construction of **valley tank** to supply water for domestic and productive use
- Construction of **fishponds and stocking** for environmental, nutritional and economic benefits
- Rehabilitation of a **7.5km community access road**
- Installation of **solar-powered irrigation system** for horticultural demonstration, tree nursery management, livestock water supply and other uses
- **6 fixed and 18 mobile waste collection points** for waste sorting, reduction, reuse, recycling and composting.
- **Governance structures and regulatory frameworks** for investments including bylaws for functionality, effectiveness and efficiency
- **Cooperative strengthening** for better community engagement, access to markets and sustainability.

**1367 households** across **3 parishes** from agro-forestry and ecosystem restoration

**310 households** across **7 villages** from improved transportation and access road

**20 -50 households** from solar powered water facilities

- Year-round water supply for irrigation, livestock and domestic use
- Increase fruit production, crop yields and income
- Improved soil fertility, forest cover, biodiversity and climate resilience
- Increased incomes, food security, sustainable livelihoods and skills on climate smart practices
- Better waste management for public health and local job creation
- Improved access to markets, schools and healthcare, supporting local economies
- Better resource management, stakeholder collaboration and equitable distribution of benefits
- Stronger cooperation and governance promoting social cohesion
- Increased access to financial services and collective bargaining for communities



Community access road in Kilim parish- Pader- during the rainy season



# Uganda's scalable model for locally-led climate-resilient development

One of LIFE-AR's core priorities is ensuring that at least 70% of funding directly supports community-identified priorities. Uganda is advancing this ambition through the Devolved Climate Finance (DCF) mechanism, building on the country's decentralised planning systems. With inclusive and participatory governance, the DCF approach empowers communities to identify and prioritise their adaptation solutions, integrated into local development plans.

By operationalizing structures such as Parish Climate Change Committees (PCCCs), mainstreaming climate risk and gender equity into planning and delivering tangible investments for communities, Uganda is translating high-level climate commitments into meaningful action at the grassroots.

The phased roll-out across pilot districts representative of the country's Water Management Zones demonstrates a commitment to equity, transparency and learning. Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (CRVAs) in the first four pilot districts of Kaabong, Kalungu, Kibaale and Pader highlight a complex interplay of challenges across multiple sectors, all compounded by climate change. In response, communities have prioritised investments in water infrastructure, climate-smart agriculture, rehabilitation of access roads, agroforestry, ecosystem restoration and waste management - largely public goods - with benefits across sectors and social groups.

LIFE-AR is strengthening institutional capacities and local governance, setting the foundation for long-term resilience building and sustainability of investments. The learning from the first four pilot districts is shaping the scale-up to the remaining 8 pilot districts, allowing the mechanism to evolve and respond to diverse local contexts. This adaptive, learning-driven approach strengthens Uganda's readiness to manage current and future climate risks while building a strong track record to attract additional financing for nation-wide scale out.



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The Least Developed Countries Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR) is a long-term LDC-led, LDC-owned initiative aiming to enhance climate resilience.

LIFE-AR is hosted by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and supported by the UK International Development from the UK Government, Irish Aid, and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Canada.