



## The Framework of Environmental Promotion and Protection for the Anglican Church of Uganda

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### **Abstract**

A framework that can be used for the Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental promotion and protection using different approaches has been presented. The framework has an integration of all stakeholders of the Anglican Church of Uganda for example, Christian youths, Christian men, and Christian women, working together with the non-Christians, Community leaders and Non-Government Organizations that respond to the environmental promotion and protection. It calls for responsible Church carrying out activities such as sensitization, policy adherence, planting of trees, fighting plastic materials. All these can be realized through youth involvement, men involvement, women inclusiveness, community leaders' engagement, and collaboration with NGOs.

**Keywords:** *The Framework; Environmental promotion and protection; Anglican Church*

### **Introduction**

This study presents the suggested approaches in developing a befitting framework that can be applied by the Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental promotion and protection from already existing information in the Anglican Church of Uganda. It comprises of responsible Christians, sensitization, policy adherence, planting of trees, youth involvement, all Christian involvement to fight plastic materials, women inclusiveness, community leaders' engagement, and collaboration with NGOs.

### **Method**

By focusing on the Dioceses that were selected in Buganda region, qualitative research methods were used to uncover, explore, identify and describe the framework that can be applied by the Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental promotion and protection. The why and how questions were used to solicit opinions and explanations from the respondents (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016. p.14). The Respondents' explanations of what they participated in, observed and felt was considered useful information for the study. The data was collected in textual form and depended on interactions with and observation of the participants in the study.

## ***Findings and Discussion***

### **Living a Responsible Lifestyle for Environmental Promotion and Protection**

It requires the Anglican Church of Uganda to be responsible for making sure that the environment is promoted and protected. With responsible lifestyles, the Anglican Church of Uganda is expected to respond ethically by integrating all that is required to promote and protect the environment. The Anglican Church of Uganda should be responsive to the call for good stewardship of the environment. In this sense, Bennett (2006) argues that by being responsible the Church can be able to respect nature and natural resources as gifts from God which require to be handled responsibly. With responsibility, the Anglican Church of Uganda is made to recall that it benefits when nature is handled with frugality and responsibility. Accordingly, leading a responsible lifestyle, implies that the Anglican Church of Uganda's traditions and belief systems regard nature and natural resources with deep responsibility and that the Church has a strong sense of belonging and ownership.

By living responsible lifestyles, Christians and all people are encouraged by the Anglican Church of Uganda to apply their reasoning wisely to promote and protect the environment as stewards and trustees and not as mere consumers and users of nature (Adeyemo, 2001). In this sense, as a responsible Church, the Anglican Church of Uganda enables its Christians to lead a responsible lifestyle which in turn gives birth to a positive impact on plants and animals leading to environmental promotion and protection. By enculturating a responsible lifestyle, the Anglican Church of Uganda responds to the Bible's plea according to the book of Psalms that "the Lord is awesome to every creature; so merciful to all He created. Every creature you created will give praise to you, O Lord; your chosen one will glorify you" (Psalm 145:9-10). The Anglican Church of Uganda tries to encourage its Christians to conserve trees by responsibly using other alternatives for cooking like bio-gas instead of firewood. Christians are also encouraged to conserve wetlands by avoiding activities like farming, brickmaking, housing, and other businesses. The Anglican church of Uganda tries to nurture Christians to be responsible, which enables them to avoid overgrazing, over cultivation and can responsively integrate rotational grazing and crop rotation. In agreement, Bergstrom (2003) opines that by being responsible, the Anglican Church of Uganda can be a role model to other denominations and work responsibly together for environmental promotion and protection. He continues to argue that when the Church teaches her Christians to live responsibly, mulching is practiced which promotes and protects the environment. The researcher observed that the Anglican Church of Uganda tries to shape its Christians into responsible citizens who should respond to environmental issues.

This is contrary to the common conception that God gave the Earth to humans to do with it as they please. The Anglican Church of Uganda holds to scripture with a positive attitude where it promotes verses like, "the Earth is the Lord's (Psalm 24:1)", therefore, we are to respond rationally as stewards for the Creator. The earth has ascribed value because its Creator said it is good (Genesis 1:9, 18, 21, 25, 31), thus its inhabitants should live on it responsibly. The Anglican Church of Uganda affirms the scriptures that say "All creations on the Earth are also in praise of the Lord (Psalm 19). "Heavens declare the glory" (Psalm 148), and "all the trees of the field will clap their hands" (Isaiah 55:12). Job stated, "Ask the animals...and they will teach you" (Job 12:7-9). Hebrews 1:3 also says "And, God upholds the creation to the present day and sustains them by His powerful Word", Job states in 12:10 that "in His hand is the life of every living thing". According to Job 40:41, God responded to him by answering that the hippo and the Nile crocodile are His works to be respected. Much as they are dangerous they should be protected and conserved because they are God's creation and pronounced as good. The study confirmed that all God's creations should be respected and treated responsibly. In this sense, the Anglican Church of Uganda should guide Christians to apply an approach of being responsible in caring for, promoting, and protecting the environment.

## **Proactive Sensitization of Christians on Environmental Promotion and Protection**

The Anglican Church of Uganda is required to proactively sensitize its Christians. If sensitized, these Christians can take the lead in creating awareness on how to take care of the creation by reaching out to other people in the community (Adeyemo, 2001). Together the community can advocate for environmental promotion and protection. The Church is capable of disseminating relevant messages to its Christians that can guide actions to specific environmental concerns. The Anglican Church of Uganda is challenged to teach and expect its Christians to recognize and appreciate the providence of God. Proactive sensitization of Christians on environmental promotion and protection leads to sustainable environmental knowledge and a way of life that in turn leads to environmental sustainability (Albino, Balice, Dangelico, 2009. p. 26).

In the same vein, the proactive sensitization strategy is applauded by leaders of the Anglican Church of Uganda. One of them confirmed that specifically, the Anglican Church of Uganda is capable of being the champion in contributing to the environmental promotion and protection through engaging in social-environmental transformation (IO). The church does not only promote the education and health of its people but also focuses a great deal on environmental promotion and protection (IO). Through responsive sensitization, it was noted, that the Anglican Church of Uganda is loaded with enough capacity to cause a change among Christians not only by evangelism but also by engaging in concerns of the environment. This is in agreement with the opinion of Keating (2015); and Roseland & Spiliotopoulou (2017), that when sustainable environmental knowledge is given to adherents, nature is conserved and natural resources are sustainably utilized.

Consideration through sensitization for environmental promotion and protection should specifically target the indigenous Christians. Much as, environmental promotion and protection have always been an important concern to investigate from different angles, such as environmental sustainability and environmental care (Bradshaw, 2007; Sutuwa, 2012), and there have been various approaches to environmental promotion and protection (Florin & Wandersman, 1990; Ledwith, 2011). However, the Responsive integration of proactive sensitization of Christians by the Anglican Church of Uganda is a suitable approach for environmental promotion and protection. This is because the goal is to ensure that all environmental dimensions are catered for (Szitar, 2014; Kapera, 2018).

The approach of proactive sensitization should be embraced by the Anglican Church of Uganda. In this approach, the Anglican Church of Uganda would regularly sensitize its Christians about the dangers of destroying the environment and the importance of environmental promotion and protection. This method could be implemented during worship as Christians congregate and this can be one of the sermons. However, other avenues like Christian retreats, workshops, conferences, and seminars ought to be utilized. In this sense, the Anglican Church of Uganda should freely share important information and resources on environmental promotion and protection (Northcott, 2005).

When thoroughly sensitized by their Church, Anglican Christians can be in a position to reach out to non-Christians and non-Anglicans and make them aware of the importance of taking care of our community. This is because Christians and non-Christians need to begin to work together to help make positive and meaningful changes to our world in the noble cause of environmental promotion and protection (Travis, Egger, Davies & Mechbal, 2002). The hope is that this trend continues so that national and global support continues to grow towards environmental ethics awareness.

From the observation, the Anglican Church of Uganda is capable of taking a lead in creating awareness of community problems, particularly in the issues of the environment. However, according to Berry (2006) for decades, the Church has ignored this issue. Spencer (2013) argues that “the Church has ignored community issues this has helped to create community problems.” But the Church must responsibly care for God’s creation. However, through a proactive sensitization approach, it was noted,

that the Anglican Church of Uganda is loaded with enough capacity to cause a change among Christians not only by evangelism but also by engaging in concerns of the environment.

### **Integration of Policies for Environmental Promotion and Protection**

The Anglican Church of Uganda through the responsive integration of environmental policies, can lead believers to adhere to environmental promotion and protection. By Policy implementation, the Anglican Church of Uganda can guide its Christians, on environmental promotion and protection. Therefore, the involvement of each Christian in the implementation of policies, singly and collectively by the Anglican Church of Uganda, is essential. This agrees with Bergstrom (2003), as he emphasizes that the Church's role in environmental promotion and protection is important and demanding, so it requires policies in place that involve Christians. He goes on to state that without a policy, the environment is likely to be destroyed. He argues that destroying the environment is sinning against the essential cosmic dimension of creation and redemption. Integration of environmental policies benefits both nature and human beings as a whole as they will enjoy and experience God's presence in a well-managed environment.

The Anglican Church of Uganda should adhere to the environmental policy and can lead believers to adhere to the same for environmental promotion and protection. According to Peterson and Liu (2008), for any tangible results to be realized in a healthy environment there is a need for individual and collective effort guided by policies.

Through policy adherence, aiming at environmental promotion and protection, the natural resources in the world like water sheds, air, and vegetation cover are not ignored. By using the policy, the Anglican Church of Uganda can guide its Christians, so that they too contribute immensely towards a healthy earth as well as a healthy society. Bergstrom (2003) opined that the Anglican Church's participation in social action, environmental promotion, and protection is a requirement for the planetary common good. The respondents agreed that it is an obligation for the Anglican Church of Uganda through its Christians to promote and protect the environment considering those who will come after us through the implemented policy. The use of policy in environmental promotion and protection ensures that humanity's contemporaries live with dignity. The researcher asserts that if environmental policies are applied by the Anglican Church of Uganda, and all her adherents abide, this contributes to environmental ethics. So, it was established that having a policy in place is one of the strategies forming the framework of the Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental promotion and protection.

### **Preservation and Planting of Trees by the Anglican Church of Uganda for Environmental Promotion and Protection**

It was established that in responding to environmental promotion and protection, the Anglican Church of Uganda should call upon Christians to preserve and plant trees. This should be made mandatory for the Anglican Church of Uganda for all the Christian festivals. The Anglican Church should agitate for a healthy co-existence between humanity and the natural environment through planting trees.

In responding to environmental promotion and protection, Alvarez, Diaz, & Alessandrini (2001), contend that the Anglican Church of Uganda should make it mandatory at all functions for Christians to begin by planting a tree. This approach agrees with Bergstrom's (2003) argument that Christian festivals are made more meaningful and colorful when a tree is planted as this gesture is an indication of environmental promotion and protection.

All the Anglican Bishops who were interviewed confirmed that this approach is very essential. This conforms with the Lambeth Conference (2008)'s argument that the Anglican Churches through the Christians in most cases accomplish simple assignments given to them like that one where they are given a tusk of at least each family planting a tree annually. Apart from giving assignments to only Christians,

Bishops can be role models through their actions, like whenever they are on pastoral visits to churches, not only a tree should be planted, but also their homilies should have redemption of the environment. Competitions should be organized by Bishops in their dioceses termed as “Green Award”, where churches compete to keep the environment green. Through this innovation, Christians are inspired and abandon the acts that may lead to damage to the environment and work toward renewing them. Odong (2008) opines that the culture of preserving and planting trees by the Anglican Church of Uganda is a great deal for environmental promotion and protection. The study established that the preservation and planting of trees is part of the framework of the Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental promotion and protection.

### **Integration of Youths Towards Environmental Promotion and Protection**

In formulating a framework for the Anglican Church of Uganda, it was found that the youths should be put at the forefront as Christians of today and tomorrow in all activities of environmental promotion and protection. It has been observed that the full participation of young men and women in efforts of the community towards environmental promotion and protection is something which is commendable and is of benefit not only to young people but also to the entire community (Sachs, 2012). This is in agreement with Short, (2010) s’ opinion that leaders in a community that involve youths in critical issues like environmental promotion and protection are visionary. In the same view, Lyon, Hunter-Jone & Warnaby (2017) state that the emancipation of young people makes them proactive in matters concerning environmental promotion and protection.

The involvement of young people in environmental promotion and protection opens up a platform for opportunities leading to general community sustainability (Failler, Keran, Seid, 2016). These opportunities transform people’s attitudes towards the environment leading to healthy living (Turner, 2008). On the contrary, ignoring young people in matters of environmental promotion and protection only leads to the destruction of the environment (Church & Young, 2001). This occurrence deters the young people’s responsibility concerning the environment and continual compromise with the environment (Turner, 2008). Through youth involvement, it is clear that communities are fostered in sustainable environmental promotion and protection. For example, when Christian youths are educated on environmental promotion and protection, they are equipped and empowered to become environment advocates, who can fight any abuse to the environment. They choose to use environmentally friendly means, wherever they are whether at school or home and they can influence their peers (Volk & Cheak, 2003).

When the Church involves the youths in environmental programs, it calls for their participation in these program formulation and execution. With effective leadership, opportunities are given to young people, and guidance is accorded to them as decisions are being made concerning the well-being of the environment. Generally, an opportunity is given to youths to plan for activities that can enhance environmental promotion and protection. As a matter of fact, productive results are expected when youths are engaged in sorting out environmental issues (Aluko et al., 2008).

The Church should consider young people in any program and it is better when their contributions are valued by the adults whom they interact with. Aluko et al., (2008) argue that letting the young people acknowledge yields commitment to all environmental programs. Environmental promotion and protection being a social concern, requires young people to be given an opportunity to participate in its realization. Youths participation in matters concerning the environment should always be an accelerated program. Those who develop youth programs should always be mindful of the environment and what youths can do towards environmental promotion and protection.

It has been observed that whenever the voice of the youths is added to other voices advocating for healthy living, then environmental promotion and protection is made a reality by the Anglican Church of

Uganda. Therefore, in formulating the framework of Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental promotion and protection, it was established that the young people should be part of the framework.

### **Integration of the Anglican Christians in Environmental Promotion and Protection**

In developing the framework for the Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental promotion and protection, it was found out that Christians should be considered in key environmental concerns which aim at promoting and protecting the environment, for example in removing and burning polythene and plastic materials within their reach. Environmental promotion and protection is a very serious concern for the Anglican Church of Uganda for which her Christians should handle as a team of believers with utmost seriousness (Sherkat & Ellison, 2008). The Anglican Church of Uganda should have Christians with pro-environmental attitude in order to yield sustainable environmental promotion and protection.

Additionally, Edwin (2006) contends that a Church with proactive Christians in matters concerning the environment, not only benefit itself, but also the entire community. So, the Anglican Church of Uganda should endeavor to mentor her Christians to be pro-environmental in order to avoid the consequences of the destroyed environment (Edwin, 2006). However, this should be a special interest of the Church where mentorship and skilling of Christians who can enthusiastically justify why environmental promotion and protection should be a practice for everybody. Committed evangelists should also evangelize to people on the theme “environmental promotion and protection, for example, through removing and burning polythene and plastic materials”.

One of the Bishops opines that in the Anglican Church of Uganda, the Anglican Christians have a responsibility towards conservation and care for creation, which can be achieved by keeping the environment stable. He reiterates that Christians ought to stop littering water bottles and plastic materials after utilizing them; instead they should be picking them whenever they are seen to sustain the sanity of the environment. (IO). This approach gives Anglican Christians practical ways concerning the environmental promotion and protection as an opportunity is given to remove and burn polythene and plastic materials. The study established that Christian involvement should be part of the framework of the Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental promotion and protection.

### **Integration of Community Leaders for Environmental Promotion and Protection**

It was established that the approach of engaging community leaders in the struggle for environmental promotion and protection should be one of the bricks of the framework of Anglican Church of Uganda. This concurs with Bulkeley et al., (2003), who argue that to maximize the Christians’ full potential in environmental promotion and protection, there should be a reconsideration of working with other leaders in the community. It was observed that it is important for the Church to work with organizations that are environment oriented that are ready to offer some support and guidance in matters concerning environmental promotion and protection. The support and guidance are needed because much as Christians are many, but they might be lacking the capacity of promoting and protecting the environment solely (Bulkeley et al., 2003).

It was observed that uttering a confession of the crisis about the environment should not only be a concern of Christians alone. This should be a role of the Christians together with people in other influential leadership authority who can speak and they are heard in matters of environmental promotion and protection. This means if the Anglican Church of Uganda is to be relevant in environmental promotion and protection, recognition should be given also to others who can aid in the same cause (Dasgupta, 2001). Therefore, the Anglican Church of Uganda should come out with enabling approaches, not dealing away with the biblical principles which can enable community leaders’ commitment to environmental promotion and protection (Bulkeley et al., 2003). It was established that integration of Community leaders is a critical component of the framework of the Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental promotion and protection.

## **Integration of Christian Women for Environmental Promotion and Protection**

It was established that for the Anglican Church of Uganda framework for environmental promotion and protection to be well balanced, Christian women should be involved. It was observed that the approach of engaging Christian women by the Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental framework is very essential. Women can be of influence to other categories of people like children, men and youths for environmental promotion and protection. In this sense, Bulkeley et al., (2003) opines that women's contribution towards the environment cannot be ignored if meaningful deliberations for environmental promotion and protection are to be realized.

Women are crucial in this noble cause, because, they are the majority and they have influence over other categories of people like children. So, in formulating a framework for environmental promotion and protection equity and equality should be considered. Bulkeley et al., (2003), further point out that environmental promotion and protection framework requires solidarity with the people who make the majority of the population in the community and those are women. As the Anglican Church of Uganda tries to come out with environmental, gender justice should be on the forefront, all spheres should be utilized to advocate for this cause including engagement of women in environmental promotion and protection (Blasi, 2010). Blewitt (2008) says that when women are a component of the environmental promotion and protection framework for the Anglican Church of Uganda, it would work to minimize any degradation that would be brought to environment by women and those under their influence.

According to Blewitt (2008), there should not be disparities between men and women in matters concerning environmental framework, if the Anglican Church of Uganda is to have a framework aiming at achieving environmental promotion and protection. If effective results of the framework are to be achieved, it means that the Anglican Church of Uganda should promote in this regard their well-being by advocating for their education both formal and informal. In the same view, Adeyemo (2004), elucidates that the Church should make sure that women are empowered and thus their status uplifted to bring out better results for the Anglican Church of Uganda framework as far as environmental promotion and protection is concerned.

It has been observed that social justice in all spheres should be promoted by the Anglican Church of Uganda in which advocacy for the world where all people are considered significant in matter pertaining environmental promotion and protection. The environmental framework should advocate for a world where women are not only empowered, but also valued as equals and are enabled to be active in environmental promotion and protection. In doing so, the Church's environmental framework would aim at eliminating all disparities brought in by cultural differences that hinder women's efforts in the society (Kumi., Arhin., & Yeboah, 2014).

It has been observed that through inclusive framework, barriers to gender justice that are global and internal to women are tackled in a transformative way that leaves no one behind. In agreement, Blasi (2010) suggests that if the Church is to contribute toward environmental ethics, it is not good to leave out any member. Women's gifts and charismas can result in a comprehensive framework useful and necessary for environmental promotion and protection. Thus, "women's gifts and abilities are essential for a sustainable framework of the Anglican Church of Uganda for environmental promotion and protection. The researcher observed that participation of women is in tandem with the environmental framework, advocating for protecting and creating awareness on environmental care hence fostering environmental promotion and protection. Thus the study established that for effective and comprehensive environmental framework to be realized, the Anglican Church of Uganda should include women as part and partial of it.

## **Integration of the Anglican Church of Uganda Community and NGOs Towards Environment Promotion and Protection**

The study found out that for a comprehensive and effective environmental framework to be realized, the Anglican Church of Uganda in promoting and conserving the environment needs partners to work with. The Anglican Church of Uganda should look for environmental focused Non-Government Organizations to work with. It has been observed that successful environmental frameworks consider all members of the community who cooperate with other bodies in matters concerning environmental promotion and protection (IO).

In incorporating NGOs towards environmental promotion and protection, the Anglican Church of Uganda fulfills the Lambeth Conference (1998) s' suggestion that the Anglican Churches are not in isolation but they are only pathways for the nature as created by God to be sustained. For the Anglican Church of Uganda to begin acting positively in matters of environmental promotion and protection, it needs to take the first step in form of leadership by mobilizing other concerned parties both local and international to give support in its endeavors. Therefore, in formulating an effective framework, the Anglican Church of Uganda ought to utilize the opportunity of the agencies in support of her endeavors towards environmental promotion and protection.

In support of the collaboration, IRCU (2015) opines that the Anglican Church of Uganda should have an effective and comprehensive environmental framework, that should be fronted in mobilizing other agencies that have interest in environmental promotion and protection. The Anglican Church of Uganda should collaborate with other organizations which can support in working together to ensure that there is environmental promotion and protection. Building such a framework where the Anglican Church of Uganda works with other stakeholders for environmental promotion and protection results into entire community participation (Meadows, 2008). An integrated community where the Church works with other stakeholders would lead to environmental promotion and protection. The Church is reminded never to be selfish in trying to build a framework for environmental promotion and protection, instead should work with all who have the interest, but also build interest into those who are not interested.

It has been observed that the Anglican Church of Uganda can work with Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU), in minimizing the destructions imposed on the environment. The two can collaborate well to overcome irresponsible behaviors that do not work towards realizing environmental promotion and protection. Together with other agencies the mess in the environment can be fixed, but also redeeming what God created. One of the leaders commented that, the reason to why the Anglican Church of Uganda collaborates more with IRCU, is because, it is easy to converge leaders of all religious backgrounds and form one voice towards environmental promotion and protection (IO).

The Anglican Church of Uganda to have an effective environmental framework can collaborate with the national agency (NEMA) in charge of the environment. NEMA can offer all the support to the Churches in this aspect of environmental promotion and protection (IO). The leader opined working with all these agencies, they can provide the needed structures which are relevant in influencing a very successful environmental framework. One of the Directors of NEMA Director in affirmation of the need for the Anglican Church of Uganda to collaborate with NEMA in support of environmental promotion and protection revealed that through these collaborations, so far 18 tons of polythene papers (kaveera) have been collected from the public. He noted that more tons are still to be collected from the public (IO). He urges that the Anglican Church of Uganda and IRCU should always integrate programs concerning environmental promotion and protection and invite NEMA to give a hand. He further reiterated that for believers to get rid of kaveera (polythene papers), their leader ought to use the privileged offices to contact other stakeholders in the wider community who can be of use and give support (IO). So, it was established that the Anglican Church of Uganda in building a framework for environmental promotion and protection, required to collaborate with the community and NGOs.



## Conclusion

The summary herein shows a framework for environmental promotion and protection for the Anglican Church of Uganda. The framework has an integration of all stakeholders of the Anglican Church of Uganda for example, Christian youths, Christian men, and Christian women, working together with the non-Christians, Community leaders and Non-Government Organizations that respond to the environmental promotion and protection. It is intended to be a frame work with different stakeholders, because the Anglican Church is not an island; but, it lives in a community which is comprised of other stakeholders. The researcher uses the concept integration to contend that many stakeholders and a lot of activities are involved as presented in the proceeding sections. This framework spells out clearly what the Anglican Church of Uganda should do in promoting and protecting the environment. It can be concluded from the findings that the Anglican Church of Uganda environmental framework can employ different approaches. For instance, responsibility, sensitization, policies adherence, planting of trees, youths' involvement, all Christian involvement to fight plastic materials, women inclusiveness, community leaders' engagement, and collaboration with NGOs.

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