

04TH MAY, 2023

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REMARKS ON THE COMEMORATION OF THE AIR QUALITY AWARENESS WEEK 2023

This week is Air Quality Awareness Week. The theme for this year is, "Working Together for Clean Air". Air Quality Awareness Week highlights resources that increase air quality awareness and encourage people to take action and incorporate air quality knowledge into their daily living. As managers of a growing and bustling city, this Air Quality Awareness Week also provides an opportunity for our people to learn about the causes of poor air quality and how we can prepare for and respond to events and environments with poor air quality – not just during the month of May, but all year-round!

At KCCA, we are going about all our actions and interventions guided by what we have termed as the SMARTCITY agenda. This is a transformational initiative that will change the way in which the city functions to make Kampala more inclusive, safe, sustainable, efficient, resilient and ultimately a better place to live, work and play. The SmartCity agenda seeks to harness the interconnectivity between Technology and Infrastructure for People's well-being as its core pillars. From the start, we installed about 25 air quality monitors in the city to provide us evidence-based information on the scale of air pollution. Today, we commission this source attribution machine to enhance air quality monitoring technology to study pollution sources. This is what we mean when we talk of harnessing technology intertwined with infrastructure for People's well-being -as the core pillars of our Smart City agenda.

Here is a little background in this regard. In line with our vision of making Kampala a vibrant, attractive and sustainable city, we developed the first-ever Clean Air Action Plan for Kampala Capital City. The action plan provides practical guidance for addressing air pollution in the city. The Kampala Clean Air Action Plan was developed through a consultative and participatory approach and

provides clear actions for mainstreaming air pollution management in all our services. In addition to the previous efforts undertaken to champion Climate Change management in the city, this action plan outlines specific actions to be undertaken by different players to address air pollution challenges facing the city. It provides shared ambition and responsibility for taking action at all levels as well as giving us the opportunity to take the lead.

The objectives of the Clean Air Action Plan are conceptualized to align with other existing interventions stipulated in the KCCA Strategic Plan 2020/21-2024/25, including The Kampala Climate Change Action Strategy, Directorate of Public Health Services and Environment Strategic Plan, among others. These objects are

1. Develop and maintain comprehensive monitoring and reporting infrastructure for all ambient pollutants (PM2.5, PM10, Nitrogen dioxide, ozone, Carbon monoxide, and Sulphur dioxide); emissions inventory and source apportionment
2. Consolidate infrastructure and framework for public awareness on health and environmental impacts of air pollution, mitigation measures and benefits
3. Build and strengthen an effective implementation and enforcement program for air quality management through capacity building, and development and implementation of local ordinances on air quality
4. Design and implement strategies for reducing sectoral contributions to annual ambient pollution concentrations by at least 10% from background/baseline levels

Kampala has over 100 air quality monitors of which 25 belong to KCCA. Since Dec 2019, we have been studying the trends of air pollution. The COVID-19 induced lock downs provided an opportunity of a natural experiment to demonstrate where we can concentrate our resources and efforts for maximum benefit. Generally, the pollution level is about 5-7 times higher than the WHO recommended guidelines. This is a worrying but manageable situation. We have

heightened education for all our citizens on the dangers of poor air quality, made improvements in city traffic management through the signalization of many junctions to allow for better flow of traffic. This coupled with pedestrian and cycle lanes as well as more Non-Motorized Transport spaces in all our new road designs, we believe shall go a long way in reducing the carbon footprint of automobiles.

Have also increased our strategic partnerships with both local and international stakeholders, state and non-state actors with whom we are aligned in the quest for cleaner air. With these, we share best practices in technology and leverage on the combined strength of actions.

In launching this Hi-tech equipment, we are being deliberate at scientifically identifying sources of pollution in the city to inform our actions against air pollution.

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