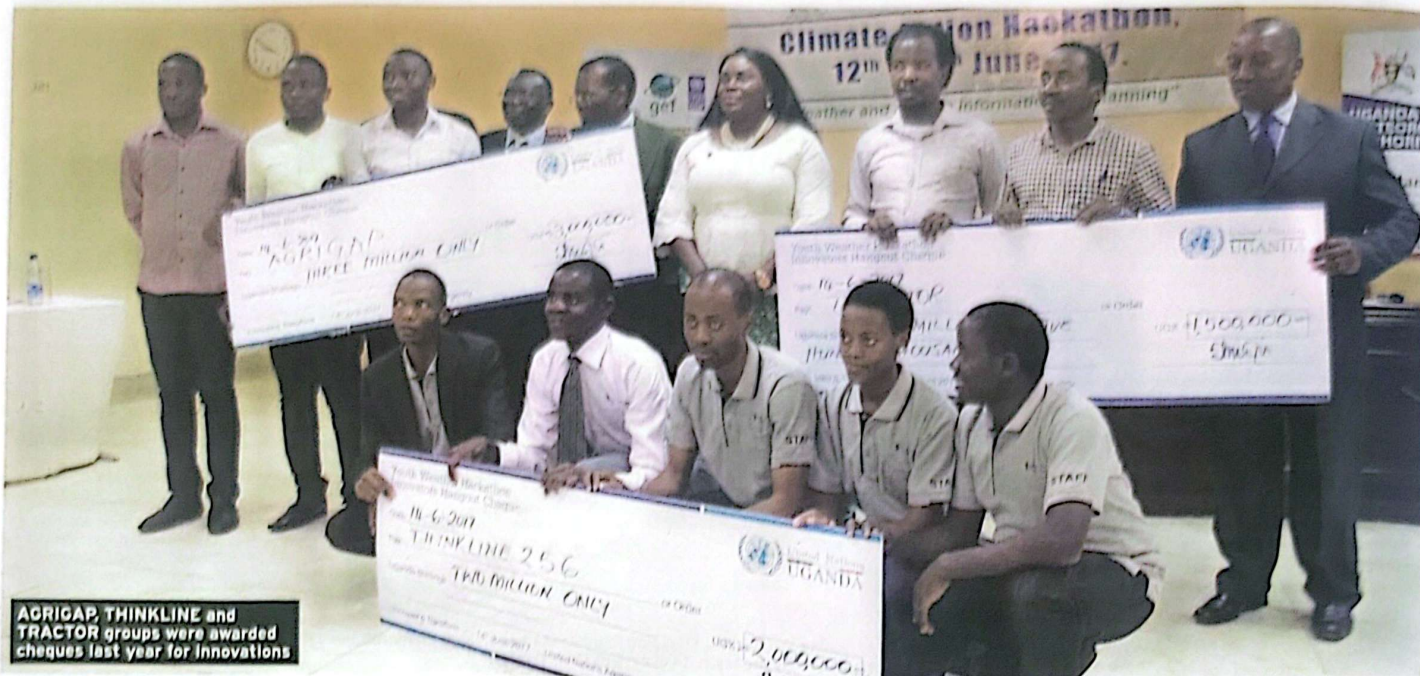


New Vision

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WATER AND WEATHER RESOURCES



AGRICAP, THINKLINE and TRACTOR groups were awarded cheques last year for innovations

Private sector involved in weather management

By Geoffrey Mutegeki

Accurate and timely weather and climate warning systems are vital for the safety and well-being of the nation's population according to Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA) Executive Director, Festus Luboyera. Luboyera says to have this vital system thriving requires a strong public private partnership with clear cut contributions.

Uganda has experienced a number of catastrophes like floods, landslides which have ravaged human life, infrastructure and the economy. These affect both the private and public sectors.

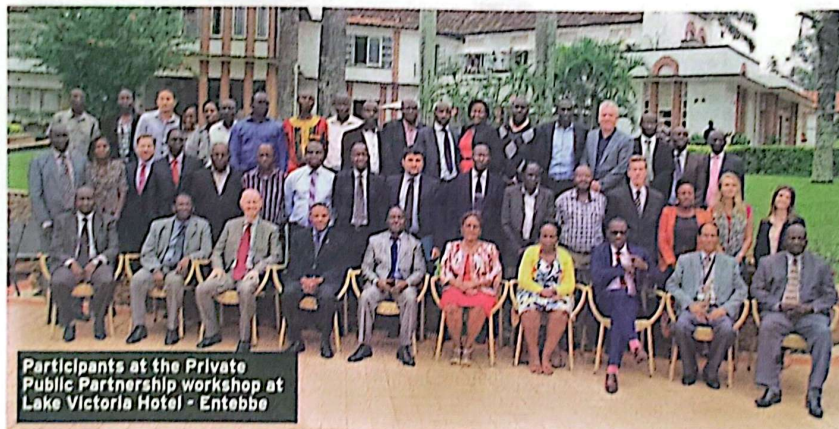
"Weather is not a UNMA or government affair. We need the private sector to have better services, we can't do it alone," Luboyera says.

The country is currently exposed to impacts of climate change as a large majority of its total population is dependent economically on rain-fed agriculture.

The involvement of the private sector in providing accurate weather forecasts is pivotal to cope with such natural disasters.

"Private companies are starting to venture into weather and climate subsector by manufacturing equipment," Luboyera says.

When calamities like floods occur, the most affected persons are in the private sector.



Participants at the Private Public Partnership workshop at Lake Victoria Hotel - Entebbe

Water Resources Management (DWRM), both under the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) are the authorised agencies that monitor the weather, climate and water resources in the country.

"When information is released by UNMA, the private sector can add value to it and disseminate to bigger audiences."

That is why we have plans of working with telecom and broadcast companies to deliver our services," Luboyera says.

In 2017 UNMA signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Association of Broadcasters of Uganda (NAB) in

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disseminated on radio and television stations across the country.

UNMA presents daily weather forecasts during the News Bulletins on UBC (Uganda Broadcasting Corporation) and Star TV in English and Luganda.

"Our biggest stakeholders are the farmers in this country and if are

it is a big milestone. We would like to do more, have more stakeholders on board," he says. The aviation authority also works closely with UNMA in forecasting the weather.

Innovations

Nebert Wobusobzi, the

private sector has come up with a lot of innovations in the hydrology subsector which need to be tapped into.

"Weather and climate have become extremely important to society that government alone cannot be the only player since its effects cut across board," Wobusobzi says.

Of recent UNMA has seen a boost in its forecasting infrastructure and is meeting the information needs of local populations.

Weather and water resources forecasting harness modern advances in information to increase the productivity of Ugandan industry, thereby contributing to economic growth.

A public-private partnership is needed to provide Ugandan industry with the most effective means to increase productivity.

Farmers need weather and climate information tailored to local crops and conditions, for example, at the start of the rainy season and extreme low temperature this message can be transmitted through private companies. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)'s Department of Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Management plays a key role in disseminating early warning information for emergency response.

Over the past four years, the Ministry of Water and Environment, with funding from UNDP-GEF has been implementing the "Strengthening Climate Information