

**END PLASTIC POLLUTION MOVEMENT UGANDA**  
**ANNUAL UGANDA PLASTIC POLLUTERS REPORT 2020**



**An exclusive exposure of companies contributing to the increasing plastic pollution in Uganda from data collected throughout the year as we carried out our activities in selected places. This report is released to help inform the need for greater corporate action and responsibility from companies that produce generate plastics and make recommendations on what must be done**

**#EndPlasticPollution in Uganda.**

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## **FOREWORD:**

There is plastic pollution in Uganda, just like the world over and despite the pandemic, this year has seen an increase. From Kampala, Kiboga to Fort Portal plastics can be seen littered everywhere in our communities. It is time we double the effort to combat the plastic pollution crisis by ensuring effective corporate intervention from companies that produce plastics.

In Uganda, plastic pollution is not being addressed with to make serious progress on solving it. Many companies have no sustainability programs but are busy designing and launching new products. It will take too long to adapt their entire brand chains to the programs, when put in place. Others like multinationals with this capacity and already have sustainability programs are not willing to do this across their entire business operations. Let this report help inform you about what is happening and what can we do? Individual action and “weak” government controls are not enough but change in perspective within the perspective on taking responsibility towards the environmental impact is important.

Therefore through this report, Uganda joins the conversation to share knowledge and information to increase attention to the plastic pollution problem and what can be done.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all participants in our activities, organizers and volunteers and fellow Fridays For Future Uganda climate and environmental activists.

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## **OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT:**

Specifically the Uganda Plastic Polluters Report seeks to achieve the following;

- I) To inform the need for greater corporate action responsibility from companies that generate plastics.
- II) To map and expose the extent of reach by plastic waste in Uganda.
- III) To identify limitations of effective collaborative localized involvement to end plastic pollution.
- IV) Recommend what companies must do to end plastic pollution, individual best practices and controls that are needed to govern operations within the entire plastics industry in Uganda.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION:**

### **1.1 Background of the End Plastic Pollution Movement;**

The End Plastic Pollution Movement Uganda was founded in 2019 with a major aim of demanding greater corporate action and responsibility from companies that generate plastics. There is increasing plastic pollution in Uganda, it headed to exceed our capability to manage. Individuals, communities and government action is not enough to tackle plastic pollution in Uganda without greater role by companies within the plastics industry. From the beginning the movement has embarked on staying locally informed and focused on running informed campaigns exposing the extent of reach by plastics in Uganda. What started as an individual effort is now a force of 152 youth volunteers in 4 districts of Kiboga, Kyankwanzi, Wakiso and Kampala raising awareness to the plastic pollution in Uganda. We have also attracted participation of individuals and organizations from other countries including Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Netherlands and the East African Community. Our work / activities are modeled to approach the plastic problem in a more informed position with evidence we gather ourselves in our own communities. From campaigns to projects, the End Plastic Pollution Movement is now growing into an impactful open initiative to solve the plastic pollution problem.

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### **1.1 Background of the Uganda Plastic Polluters Report;**

Through our #PlasticPollutersExposed Campaign we carryout brand checks in selected places, plastics collection points and whenever we carry out a cleanup. It is in this report that we feature all this information and expose the extent of reach by plastics in Uganda. The report was launched in 2019 through an initiative we called the Christmas #PlasticPollutersList. The aim of the list was to find out which company sold more plastic than others for consuming during the Christmas period. We sampled shops within Kampala City, Plastics littered on streets and held interviews with shop keepers, supermarket attendants and randomly selected people to comment on what products they wanted to buy for Christmas given a category. The results were a mixture of multinationals, local producers, and importers. This year despite the pandemic we did more than just waiting for the Christmas season, we decided to make it part our actions, we visited selected places this year including our own neighborhoods, communities, Lakes, Rivers and drainage channels. We marked World Environment Day by cleanup used face masks and gloves dumped on the road sides and streets so as to highlight the pandemic induced single use plastic issue.

We are carrying out these brand checks according to the movement's mapping of Uganda's important areas, features and others considered points of no reach to plastics and need urgent protection. This report is not only to inform the companies and remind them of their role but also to inform the general public, industry policy makers, academia, researchers, and organizations.

Also its this information should reach everyone in the global north and other developed countries like China and South Korea and India since most of their products are finding way to trash our country Uganda.

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## **2.0. CHAPTER ONE**

### **2.1 PLASTIC POLLUTION IN UGANDA:**

Throughout 2020, despite the pandemic we managed to keep raising attention towards the increasing plastic pollution problem in Uganda. We tracked goods packaged in plastics and others made with plastic components as part of the product. With evidence gathered through our work, plastics can now be found dumped everywhere in our environment and now individual, community and municipal action is not enough. We agree that people need to be sensitized, communities need collective garbage centers, our municipal government needs to strengthen collection capacity. In Uganda, only a quarter of what is consumed daily can be collected and taken to landfill. Places like Kitezi landfill in Kampala can no longer create more expansion space for the city garbage, plastics have blocked Nakivubo channel a major waste outlet, we have collected plastic out of Lake Victoria and other selected places. We can conclude the situation in Uganda is getting out of control and it is time we demand companies that contribute to generating this plastic exercise more responsibility for the problem they create than always blaming people and undermining controls.

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## **EFFECTS OF PLASTIC POLLUTION IN UGANDA:**

Uganda is unique in the fight against plastic pollution, despite the effects of plastic pollution globally, Uganda shares them in a different context. In this report we've managed to highlight a few important ones that the country has to focus on.

### **1. Soil Intoxication;**

Uganda is largely an agro-based economy and we boast of fertile soils capable of growing any crop, agricultural production is the backbone of survival for the many people, the economy at large and those we supply these products. Today plastics have found way to our farmlands, as they breakdown plastic are adding unwanted chemicals to our soils, those are but are also a problem to soil life.

### **2. A danger to our water bodies;**

Uganda is the pearl of Africa, blessed with and lakes and rivers. However the rate at which plastic waste is entering the lakes and damaging our rivers is alarming. Our activities on in Fort Portal are a beginning of our effort to expose how far the plastic problem is to our future survival. At the river tributary in Fort Portal town plastics where flowing instead of water hence, on the other river tributary plastics had blocked it from accessing the main river channel that flows into other neighboring districts to pour its waters and "plastics" in Lake George. Plastics polluting lake victoria is worse that last year. This year we still found more fist killed by plastic bottled and abandoned fishing gear. Plastics can be found floating on the lake near several landing sites of Ggaba, Luzira, Jinja as well as beach areas of Entebbe, Kampala and Mukona.

### **3. Effects to water quality:**

As plastic continues to find way into our water bodies including rivers and lakes it is worsening the already existing water shortages / scarcity problem as a result of the climate crisis. Plastics in Lake Victoria is degrading to form microplastics that have already been confirmed in fish like the Nile Perch (Empuuta) and the Tilapia fish (Engege) by a research done in 2015, it is 5 years past and the waters are becoming more as a green plastic soup more near the shores. Water bodies in Uganda are some of the world's remaining fresh waters, there over 200 million people in 3 countries of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania that directly survive on water in Lake Victoria commercial and domestic benefits like cooking food and drinking. Over 250 million people in 7 countries of Egypt, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia as it draws its waters from Lake Victoria in Uganda.

### **4. The dumping effect.**

With the increase production of plastics has come along a certain degree of laxity to particularly manage the manufacturing, the use and disposal of plastics globally. For a long time our controls are weak to address this issue. Many countries in developed countries including UK and US the world's leaders in generating plastics still list plastic waste / scrap as a commodity, now China the biggest importer of . Companies including We have discovered the current model of doing business in Uganda is "produce – sell – consume" and dispose. According to Statista (Plastics Industry Statistics and Facts), by 2018 the



global production had increases to 360 million metric tons, this is expected to triple by 2050. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation 4 Companies are responsible for 6 million metric tons per year with 1 company producing 3 metric, that is 200,000 plastic bottles per minute. It will longer for many large coporations to adopt their entire brand family into their sustainability strategies. For companies like Uniliver out of their 400 products brands only 25 have are under their sustainability program . The dumping effect has is the biggest challenge ever local government has to battle with as the amount of plastic produced is much more that any recycling program can handle.

#### **5. Effect to our climate.**

The production of plastics is fossil fuel intensive, almost 90% of all plastics are made from oil. This is why the entire plastics industry is backing moves to increase the production of virgin plastics. This year we started monitoring the issue in Uganda and it is the same case. Government is wants to make it easier for plastics manufacturers to access petroleum products made of Ugandan Oil. This was confirmed by the President during his 14<sup>th</sup> Covid19 Lockdown speech. Also over 60% of plastics waste generated is dumped and burned contributing to global carbon emissions.

As the End Plastic Pollution movement we adopted our campaign messaging with information from CIEL to create attention about how plastics are contributing to exacerbating the climate crisis. This is important to us because in Uganda we are in climate crisis, we live with it. Therefore it is time for companies within the industry to consider ending plastic pollution as a climate goal. We are tired of floods, droughts, many are going hungry, our water of intoxicated, people are dying all this because our climate system is breaking down.

#### **6. Effect to human health.**

The level of Plastic fibres found in bottled water brands could be twice as high as those found in tap water. Either way this shows the extent at which our lives are at risk. Analysis done on 259 bottles from 9 countries across 11 brands found an average of 325 plastic particles for every litre of water sold. This is the same case with the food we eat as microplastics are ingested by the fish and animals we depend on for food. This also the case with burning of plastics that releases toxics causing respiratory infections.

## CHAPTER TWO:

### RANKING OF THE COMPANIES THAT ARE GENERATING PLASTICS.

This ranking is based on data collected and submitted by our volunteers from different activities in across Uganda. As the End Plastic Pollution Movement these are the areas we have carried out our brand checks and we can confirm that no company has a program effective enough to recycle all what it produces and much needs to be done. The ranking is based on which company is appearing most given a collection of plastics.

## Plastic Pollution on River Mpanga.



River Mpanga is found in the Tooro Kingdom, the river gets its water from the Rwenzori mountains and flows through over 7 districts pouring its waters in Lake George.

# Plastics are blocking the Nakivubo Channel



# Plastics are choking Nababirye Wetland



Plastic scrap collected in Kampala is Increasing with no buyers.



# Plastics are Polluting Lake Victoria



UGANDA'S TOP PLASTIC POLLUTERS 2020.

## Uganda's Top Plastic Polluters 2020



1.	Coca-Cola.
2.	Pepsi
3.	Mukwano Industries
4.	Unilever
5.	Fanta
6.	Mirinda
7.	Yaket
8.	Bidco
9.	Riham
10	Romi's Wine

#### 4.0 CHAPTER THREE:

##### 4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Companies should stop blaming people / consumers. If it requires the company to change it's product design or model, then it should consider to do so.*
2. *To #EndPlasticPollution can also be a strategic goal for the company to venture into new products, new markets because it inspires innovation work in sectors that operate with less environmental impact.*
3. *This is the right time for companies that promised us a world without waste to lead the promotion of REUSE and REPURPOSE initiative with interested to power the transition to effective circular design of the plastics life cycle.*
4. *Companies should work with in limitations and controls of the law. In Uganda, rules and regulations on the use and manufacture of virgin please must be put in place, implemented and enforced for effectiveness. As African countries we also have to find a way of curbing the tendencies of multinationals and large local producers undermining our controls.*
5. *As the #EndPlasticPollution movement we condemn the US backed plastics trade deal to weaken Kenya's ban on plastics so as to use the country as an entry point to flood am with plastics.*
6. *We need to develop a no-plastic attitude within businesses and a change in perspective on corporate social responsibility. A no-plastic attitude will inspire innovations and changes in product designs. For many business this will mean changes in the nature of business and markets to serve. With this companies will be able to develop new approaches to CSR and turn responsibility into opportunity.*
7. *Awareness is still, people need to understand that they have the a right and power to demand for corporate action to End Plastic Pollution. Individual action against plastic pollution must reach a level of taking control of one's consumer decisions daily. It is important that consumers remind their favorite brands of how best their products should be presented to them. This awareness must transcend to digital platforms for a reach to many consumers, companies should tell the truth.*
8. *Product labeling should be beyond small icons directing people how to dispose. The pandemic has shown that a problem can be effectively communicated and action mobilized. The way*



*companies like Coca-Cola have footed bills in millions creating awareness on Covid19, the same should be done for their environmental impact. This will inspire a conversation on the matter.*

#### **4.2 A MESSAGE FOR EVERYONE:**

Stand Up and Fight Plastic Pollution, lets hold companies accountable. Winnie Lau said “Todays plastic problem affects everyone, it isn't a your problem and not my problem. It is not one country's problem. It is everyone's problem”. Therefore let us embrace action against plastic pollution, ensure effective collaborations with polluters, authorities, communities and individuals.

Together we can achieve a plastic free world.

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Plastic and Climate Change: The Hidden Cost of A plastic Planet (May 2019) by Center of International Environmental Law.

<https://www.ciel.org/reports/plastic-health-the-hidden-costs-of-a-plastic-planet-may-2019/>

**OTHER IMPORTANT LINKS:**

<https://endplasticpollutionow.blogpost.com>

<https://facebook.com/EndPlasticPollutionow>

<https://instagram.com/endplasticpollutionow>

<https://fridaysforfuture.org>

<https://fridaysforfuture.org/uganda>

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Join the movement, Together we can achieve a plastic waste free world.