

Association des Jeunes Leaders Unis pour le Développement Durable, AJLUDD

Association of Young Leaders United for Sustainable development

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Water is a key natural resource we have in Burundi and African great lakes region to overcome the challenge we are facing across different sectors including Agriculture and food security, energy, health, cooperation and regional integration in East African community for sustainable development of Burundi.

Burundi is essentially an agricultural country. The agricultural sector is the engine of growth of the national economy and remains the predominant activity. It employs more or less 95% of the active population, provides 95% of the food supply and more than 90% of foreign exchange earnings (EGAE, 2014). The National Development Plan PND 2018-2027 reveals that agriculture contributes 39.6% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and offers 84% of jobs. Despite this reality, the country faces a food deficit (or severity of hunger), which has increased in recent years (FAO, 2011). Unfortunately, the agricultural sector of Burundi is still a subsistence agriculture that mostly depends on rainfall while we can increase the Burundi agricultural production by a modern agricultural using the water potentiality we have for irrigation and drainage, etc.

On the other side, in two decades, the Burundi national electrification has increased from 3.9% in 1998 to 11.7% in 2020 according to the World Bank data with a high proportion in urban areas. That proportion of electricity is still very low for Burundi sustainable development as the electricity is the key element that can boost the development of other sectors including industrial, ICT, education, transport, etc.

The Burundi urbanisation is increasing. The project of Bujumbura Master Plan 2045 has been elaborated by the government of Burundi to improve Bujumbura city and international architects were called to do so. After noticing that Bujumbura city can't receive all Burundians willing to live in Bujumbura, Burundi has recently created a political capital at Gitega and in his priority, the government promotes the development of cities at each province. However, in the last decade, Bujumbura city has been affected by the problems of erosion, flooding and landslides and people lost their lives and goods. 45,000 people victims of May 2020 flooding are in the four camps at Gatumba according to the IOM articles. We can't forget the erosion damage of 10 February 2014, etc. etc. because of poor wastewater and rainwater management systems.

The Association of Young Leaders United for Sustainable Development, AJLUDD believes that every positive change starts with quality education and recommends that the youth can be engaged as really actors of sustainable development as recommended by normative documents at national, regional, continental and international level to be involved in decision-making processes, water action agenda implementation and evaluation.

Valuing water is possible with a quality education. By important investments in education, graduates from water engineering for example will work at senior level in our country for a

positive change as they got the skills and experience that will allow them to take action, to plan, to develop civil engineering projects in the fields of water distribution, treatment and management, wastewater treatment, collection and management, hydrology, flood management, monitoring of water bodies, integrated water resources management and other areas in order to ensure that our water resource is positively benefitable to our community. It is applicable to energy, agriculture and urban development, etc.

As all the World is turned to New York, UNHQ for the UN 2023 Water Conference, in order to use water resource for Sustainable Development, in Water-Energy-Food Nexus and Sustainable Economic and Urban Development, the Association of Young Leaders United for Sustainable development urge the member states, the UN entities and others stakeholders to invest in quality education to value water mostly in the least developing countries to leave no one behind; to develop and support mega projects in the field of water, energy irrigation and drainage and urban development; engage the youth in Water Action Agenda implementation; raise the funds for appropriate resource water management at national, regional and international level to achieve the SDG6 and its targets.