

Case Study

Lancashire & Gulu, Uganda

Connections have existed between the communities of Lancashire & Gulu for fifteen years. They began as a co-operation between the two councils and in 1997, responsibility was devolved to two charities, representing a wide range of community interests. Both Councils have maintained their involvement via representation on their respective charity.

UK Local Authority: Lancashire County Council

Overseas Partner: Gulu Municipal Council, Uganda

Other Partners: 2 community based charities (Lancashire-Gulu LA21 Link, Gulu Link Association)

Project Focus: Climate Change Compensation & Resilience



Gulu-Lancashire Local Agenda 21
Link Association AGM August 08
(c James Ocaka)

Project Aims: the Gulu Carbon Compensation Scheme

The Climate Compensation Scheme (CCS) was set up in 2008 as a four-way partnership between the two Links and two Councils. At its core is the premise that Lancastrians can compensate for some of their carbon emissions by helping those most affected to deal better with the consequences. Lancashire does this by supporting practical, small-scale, locally-determined and managed projects in Gulu, Uganda that will make it easier for local residents to deal with climate change. Added value accrues from designing projects that bring wider social, economic and environmental benefits.

Funding:

To get the Scheme started, Lancashire County Council (LCC) has provided £47,000, spread over three years, as part of their Community Climate Change Programme (CCCP)¹. This is transferred to a dedicated Climate Compensation Scheme (CCS) account managed by Gulu Municipal Council (GMC). With low administrative costs, most of the budget is spent directly on projects.

¹ Lancashire's CCCP is a £multi-million action programme to reduce emissions in the County at source. The Council see the CCS as a small recognition of the wider implications of these emissions.

Other Support:

Other support comes in-kind from Scheme partners. Gulu Municipal council provides a dedicated Environment Officer to oversee the management of the Scheme. The council involves local groups and schools and applies lessons learned to other council services. Gulu Link members are responsible for choosing and carrying out the projects, as well as promoting to the wider community.

In Lancashire, the council also provides technical advice on climate change issues and, like Gulu, promotes the Scheme in schools. They are also looking at applying other council skills to develop the Scheme. Lancashire Link provides voluntary project and annual monitoring support to Gulu. The Lancashire partners jointly promote the Scheme around Lancashire and the UK and are currently exploring opportunities for raising extra money to place the CCS on a longer-term footing.

The Project

The CCS was launched in Preston in June 2008, when all four partners signed a Partnership Agreement. The delegation from Gulu then undertook a study programme, which included visits across Lancashire to recycling companies, charities, bee-keeping groups, a bio-diesel manufacturer, wetlands, youth groups, schools, forestry sites, agricultural colleges, cultural and community groups and the County Council.

There are six projects in the initial phase. All developed in discussion with local people to ensure that each project meets CCS criteria, as well as local needs and priorities. Each also fosters community participation and helps local groups to work together for mutual benefit.

1. Integrated Wetland Conservation and Management

Gulu's four major wetlands are important for regulating water supplies, biodiversity, and environmental goods, like fish, papyrus and brick-making clay. They are, however, largely unmanaged and unprotected.



Left: Pece wetlands well protected to act as a natural purifier for liquid waste from the proposed waste recycling plant at Pageya (c James Ocaka)

The introduction of a community wetland management system, aims to prevent floods; combat drought; conserve water supply; improve food security; prevent malnutrition; raise incomes; preserve habitats and endangered species; increase above-ground biomass and carbon storage capacity.

2. Bio-diesel Production

Jatropha curcas grows abundantly in the wild. Generally regarded as a weed, it is often uprooted and burnt, causing deforestation. This project explores the potential for small-scale enterprises to convert *Jatropha* seeds into bio-diesel for powering electricity generators and agro-processing machinery in an area where only 6% of households have access to electricity. In addition, the project helps to maintain vegetation cover to prevent soil erosion and landslides; prevent desertification by preserving the forest canopy; increase carbon absorption; protect biodiversity, because *Jatropha* will become a valued raw material; increases household incomes and employment & raise environmental awareness.

3. Smallholder Timber Plantations

Locally produced timber is a vital resource for building, fuel and other industry. Tree planting also brings benefits such as increased carbon storage; shelter from wind and shade for people, livestock and other crops; wildlife habitats and forage for bees; improvement of the traditional landscapes; control and prevention of wind erosion. A minimum of 100 hectares of small-holder timber plantations will be planted a year, growing high-value, indigenous, endangered species like mahogany, teak, umbrella and shea butter trees. Activities include: free tree seedlings for schools, farmers and community groups; technical support for those who wish to establish plantations; training in agro-forestry practices & plantation management; and raising awareness about the environment and climate change.

4. Integrated Bee Keeping

Honey is a locally valuable source of naturally occurring food and raw material. This project aims to improve the livelihoods of local communities by promoting modern beekeeping practices as a viable conservation business enterprise. This will generate income while ensuring the sustainable use of the natural forest ecosystem, which regenerated during the civil war. This project will help communities ensure food security, currently threatened by the extinction of pollinator species due to climate change.

5. Agro-Forestry and Organic Farming

Nearly all of the food and timber crops grown in Gulu are consumed or used locally. Climate change threatens traditional farming techniques, upon which people's livelihoods depend. Farmers are helped to boost timber and food production through affordable organic farming techniques, including the use of organic manure & natural pesticides to protect crops from new pests resulting from climate change.



*Left: Mango Seedlings for fruits and agro-forestry
(c James Ocaka)*

The project will improve crop vigour and pest resistance; raise soil carbon content; increase carbon storage; spread awareness of how organic farming helps to conserve soil and water; increase community involvement; improve nutrition and public health; improve food security; and enhance rural livelihoods.

6. Community Recycling and Reuse

Gulu has very basic waste management facilities. What little is collected is burned at a single site on the edge of town. There is considerable fly-tipping causing public health and pollution hazards. The project is part of a larger Council effort to introduce a waste management system, based on collecting and sorting domestic and business waste at source. This includes: sensitizing communities on waste sorting, maintaining hygiene and preventing pollution; training community groups to recycle plastic waste into saleable products like handcraft chairs & hand-made ceiling boards; recycling organic waste into compost manure; buying waste collection vehicles; introducing bye-laws to prosecute improper waste disposal.

The project will help to lower carbon & methane emissions created by garbage burning and landfill; prevent town-centre flooding with less waste blocking storm drains; improve soil water retention and plant growth, to offset increased water stress due to climate change; create cleaner public areas; improve public health & hygiene; raise community awareness about waste issues and composting; increase re-use & recycling; create income from recycled plastic goods; increase food production and security.

Right: Participants in a waste management training workshop (c James Ocaka)



Working together with Community Groups

"Involving community groups brought in valuable knowledge and reduced the workload of council officers...we also found that members of the public and businesses were more supportive of the project"

Derek Taylor, Lancashire-Gulu Link

The work in Lancashire was steered by a 100+ stakeholder forum of public, private and voluntary organisations. The link was endorsed by this forum, and Lancashire County Council took it on board as a result. In 1997, the Link changed from a Council-to-Council to a community-based, charitable operation which meant that clear ownership of the process lay with the community. However, the county council have retained their involvement ever since, by nominating a Councillor to the Link's board of trustees and by providing small-scale financial and in-kind support for projects.

Top tips:

- ensure that you have the support of a member, who can drive the process
- relate what you want to do to your council services and staff expertise - this adds value & motivation to what the council, and its staff, do
- involve local journalists in the project early, to ensure that they fully understand the benefits of the project prior to its launch
- involving a community group(s) can reduce the workload of council officers
- there will be people in your locality with the knowledge you need, & probably don't have enough of in-house, to make this kind of thing work
- members of the public & businesses will be more supportive if its not just another council thing
- money's getting tighter, but it's always been tight - if you really want to do it, you'll find a way!

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Websites: www.lancashire.gov.uk/climatechange

<http://gulucarbonscheme.blogspot.com/>