

THE LAUNCH OF A DOCUMENTARY FILM ABOUT CANCER-CAUSING AGROCHEMICALS IN UGANDA: “THE CANCER WE EAT”.

A CONCEPT NOTE

Background

The Center for Food and Adequate Living Rights (CEFROHT) hosts a Bertha challenge fellow- Mr. Kabanda David under the Bertha Foundation. Under this fellowship, Mr. Kabanda delivered a documentary film as a product. The film highlights the inaction and illegal actions in the food system and specifically unpacks unregulated agrochemical use in agro-input shops, gardens, markets and restaurants. The film reflects agroecology and organic agriculture as a sustainable solution to a healthy food system.

The investigative film relies on research indicating the toxicity of active ingredient in agrochemicals for instance mancozeb, which the European Union found it appropriate not to renew its approval.¹ Despite mancozeb being banned on the E.U market, companies are still issued with export licenses to trade the products in other countries including Uganda. This is a clear indicator of the E.U double standards and its failure to prevail over the illegalities. When these agrochemicals meet the weak legal and unregulated system, it leaves no one safe including schools where children are facing food poisoning. Important to note is the ignorance among farmers that apply the chemicals on the dangers and the use of personal protective gear.

As a result, CEFROHT, the Bertha fellow, and the renowned journalist conducted an investigation into the illegalities and irregularities in the food chain and combined their findings in a documentary film.

Justification.

While Africa contributes 2% to 4% of the global pesticide consumption, their use has increased by 261% in recent years.² Approximately, Africa uses 1.8 million tons of pesticides, of which 153,901.4 tons are used annually in East Africa, where Uganda is located. Uganda is largely an agricultural-based economy, with this sector contributing more than 24.5% of the GDP and 75% of export earnings. Uganda uses 18,928.16 tons of pesticide every year; however, this is almost 200 times more than the amount of

¹ See Clause 15 of the Commission Implementing regulation (EU) 2020/2087.

² Charles Ssemugabo et. al (2022) Pesticide Residues in Fresh Fruit and Vegetables from Farm to Fork in the Kampala Metropolitan Area, Uganda. (Accessed from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/11786302221111866>)

pesticides used for food production in the 1960s.³ Common pesticides used in Uganda include; fungicides (e.g. mancozeb, tebuconazole and propineb); insecticides (e.g. cypermethrin, dimethoate, dichlorvos and malathion); and herbicides (e.g. glyphosate and 2,4-D-Amine). In fact, these pesticides are ranked as hazardous to human health and the environment based on the FAO/WHO Joint Meeting on Pesticide Management Guidelines on Highly Hazardous Pesticides.⁴ The improper use of these chemicals potentiates negative effects on human health and physiological conditions and immaturity may increase the vulnerability of young children and adolescents to the deleterious health effects of exposure to pesticides. The highly energetic young men and women who are involved in farming activities like spraying pesticide, weeding, pruning, and harvesting are likely to be at more risk from the prolonged durations of exposure to pesticides, explaining the increasing rate of cancers in children in Uganda today.

It is alarming that up to 94% of the food sold in Uganda's main markets is contaminated with high doses of dangerous agrochemicals. Most of these cancerous agrochemicals like Mancozeb are banned on other markets including the E.U market yet these are still traded on the Ugandan market. Due to unregulated agrochemicals' use in the entire food system, no food environment is safe including schools. European companies like Bayer, Syngenta and BASF export pesticides, which contain active ingredients that are banned in the European Union because of their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.⁵ It is thus not a coincidence that the largest share of the 385 million people who experience pesticide poisoning every year, live in the global South.

It is based on this background that creates awareness on the dangers of agrochemicals to human health and the environment. The investigative film also unveils the double standards of E.U in promoting an unsafe food system in Uganda. The film will also act as a tool to advocate for the development of a comprehensive legal framework.

³ Charles Ssemugabo et. al (2022) Pesticide Residues in Fresh Fruit and Vegetables from Farm to Fork in the Kampala Metropolitan Area, Uganda. (Accessed from

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/11786302221111866>)

⁴ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/11786302221111866>

⁵ See Clause 15 of the Commission Implementing regulation (EU) 2020/2087.

Main objective

The main objective is to launch a documentary film dubbed, **“THE CANCER WE EAT”**

Specific objectives

1. To create awareness among stakeholders on the dangers of agrochemicals to human health and the environment.
2. To engage stakeholders on legal and policy reforms to promote a safe food system in Uganda.

Expected Output

A documentary film launched and disseminated to stakeholders including duty bearers, rights holders and the media.

“THE CANCER WE EAT”

LAUNCH OF THE DOCUMENTARY ON THE CANCER- CAUSING AGROCHEMICALS IN UGANDA.

AGENDA

DATE: 20TH OCTOBER 2023

TIME: 12:30 – 4:00PM

TIME “PM	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
12:30 – 1:00	ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION	CEFROHT
1:00- 1:50	LUNCH BREAK	HOTEL
1:50- 2:00	WELCOMING REMARKS	MR. LUBEGA JONATHAN
2:00- 2:10	INTRODUCTORY REMARKS	MR. KABANDA DAVID
2:10- 2:25	PRESENTATION ON “The Cancer We Eat: Threat of Agrochemicals in our Food System.”	DR. NOREB MUGISHA-UGANDA CANCER INSTITUTE
2:25 – 2:55	WATCHING THE DOCUMENTARY	CEFROHT/HOTEL
2:55 – 3:30	REACTIONS	REFLECTIONS

	WHAT ARE THE FAILED PROMISES ON CONTROLLING AGROCHEMICALS IN UGANDA'S FOOD SYSTEM.	FOOD RIGHTS ALLIANCE
	REFLECTIONS ON AGROCHEMICALS, PUBLIC HEALTH AND NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES	MINISTRY OF HEALTH
	BALANCING TRADE AND SOCIAL GOOD: ARE THE RULES	MINISTRY OF TRADE
	UPDATE ON THE CURRENT STRATEGIES ON AGROCHEMICAL CONTROL	WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION
	THE IMPACT OF AGROCHEMICALS ON FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE	FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
	REFLECTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND REGULATIONS ON THE USE OF AGROCHEMICALS.	UGANDA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
	UGANDA'S STRATEGY FOR A GREEN ECONOMY: ANY THREATS FROM THE AGROCHEMICAL INDUSTRY TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS,	OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
3:30- 3: 35	DEMISTIFYING THE THREAT OF AGROCHEMICALS TO UGANDA'S SCHOOL FOOD ENVIRONMENTS.	MR. MUKIIBI EDWARD-PRESIDENT SLOW FOOD INTERNATIONAL
3:35- 3:40	REFLECTING ON THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD IN UGANDA.	MS. NAMAGANDA REHEMA- E.D FIAN-UGANDA
3:40- 4:00	SPEECH FROM THE GUEST OF HONOUR AND LAUNCH OF THE DOCUMENTARY	COM. ALEX BAMBONA
4:00	DEPARTURE	PARTICIPANTS