

In support of biogas production across Africa

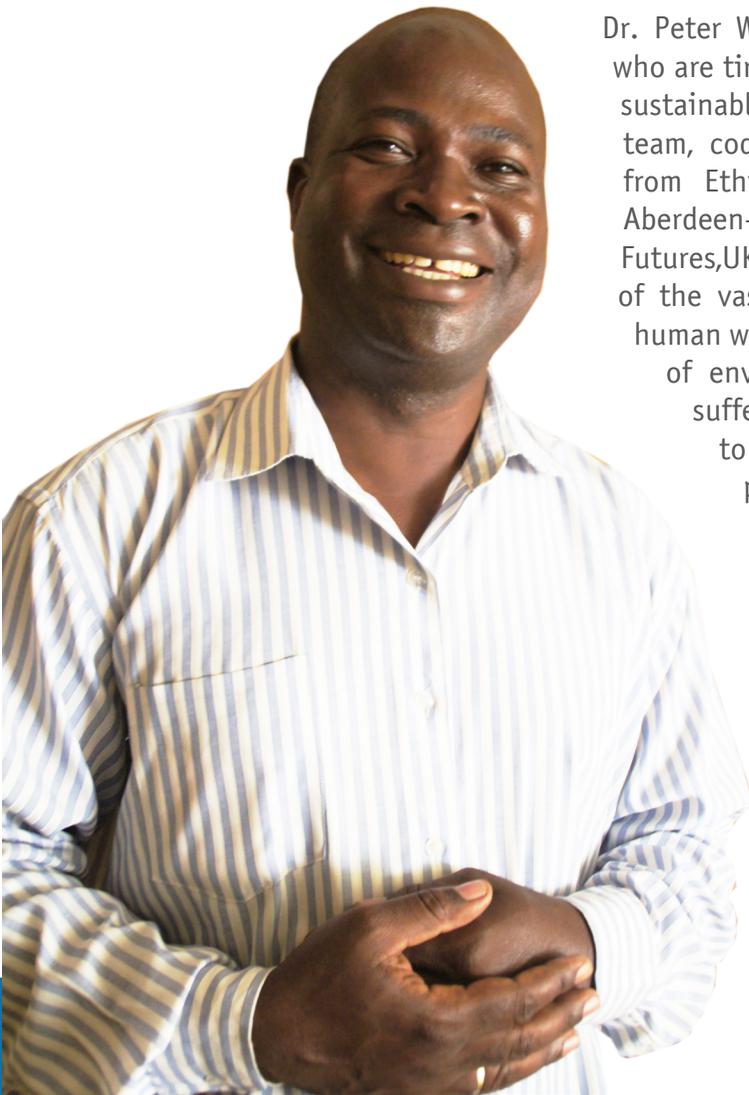
Dr. Peter Walekhwa

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Doctorate Studies: Makerere University and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences- Uppsala, 2006 -2010,

Doctorate Research Area: Agricultural Economics

Title of Doctorate research: 'The Socio-Economic Assessment of Bio-gas production and utilisation in Uganda'



Dr. Peter Walekhwa is part of a network of researchers, who are tirelessly working at breaking new ground on the sustainable use of biogas for the African Continent. The team, codenamed Afri-Flame, comprises of researchers from Ethiopia, Cameroon, Uganda and University of Aberdeen-Scotland, Green Heat (U) Ltd and Climate Futures,UK. They are convinced that maximum utilisation of the vast volumes of biogas from both animals and human waste is the way to go in combating the excesses of environmental degradation. Africa continues to suffer from large amounts of deforestation more so to get fuelwood. "In view of climate change and poverty alleviation, this technology is the way to go. The bye-product (slurry) from biogas generation is a huge source of fertilisers too, which in turn increases productivity on the farm and enhances household incomes," explains Dr. Walekhwa.

According to Dr. Walekhwa, research on the use of biogas in Africa started in the early 1950s but hit a lull phase for decades, although its vast benefits still hold. "We investigated why people are not using

bio-gas technology yet it is cheap and keeps the environment clean. My PhD research followed up issues of economic viability and adoption of this technology and I discovered that the main hindrance is the low levels of awareness in Uganda,” he explains. The biogas equipment comes in various affordable designs ranging from \$300 - \$2,000.

Walekhwa’s works saw him win a 3-year project from DFID on small scale bio-gas production in Uganda. This was implemented in Mpigi district, where small scale flexible bio-gas digesters were installed in Tiribogo village in 2010. Afri-flame is also working on establishing energy villages in Ethiopia, Cameroon and Uganda under funding from the African Union. In Uganda, a total of 9 biogas digesters will be installed for households in Kikati (Uganda’s energy Village), Buikwe District this year.

Supervision

- 3 PhD students researching on biogas, drought warning and loan associations.
- 5 MSc students researching on biogas production

Membership to Professional Organisations

- Uganda Agricultural Economics Association
- Uganda Agricultural Economics Association

