



Okujumbika: An African Energy Preservation Concept in Uganda

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Why the concept *Okujumbika*?



“too many well-intended development programs have failed because they did not take cultural settings into account... development has not always focused enough on people. To mobilize people, we need to understand and embrace their culture... and ensuring that culture and human rights inform the new course of sustainable development.”
(Ban Ki-moon, 2013)



Overview

- The Concept of *okujumbika*
- *okujumbika* as an indigenous environmental practice
- *okujumbika* as a design process
- Relegation of *okujumbika*
- Some recommendations

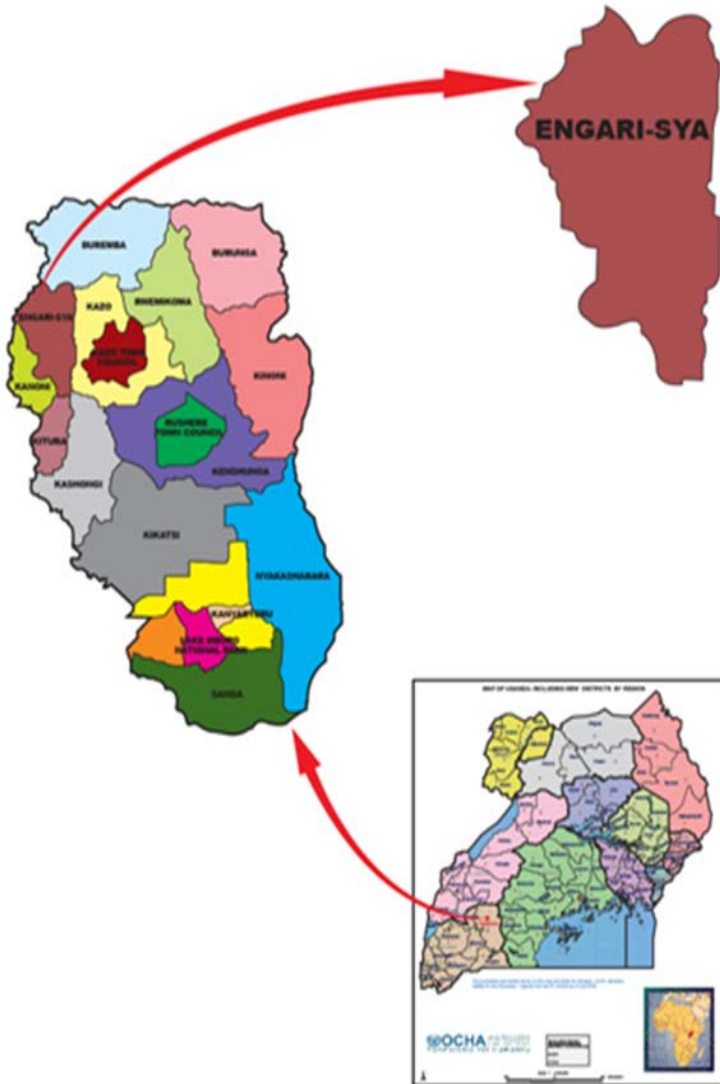


The Concept of *okujumbika*

- A local paradigm of energy preservation
- A system of preserving the fireplace for the next use
- A design process for development and sustainability of the environment
- A paradigm for family privacy and respect

Methodology

- Ethnographic
- Study area: Kiruhura district S.W. Uganda
- Five participants of over 70 years of age
- Pro-vocal in-depth interviews



***Okujumbika*: an indigenous environmental practice**



- Gave harvest a longer shelf life
- Less firewood used
- Kept the house stronger and warm
- Kept away insects such as mosquitoes
- Good for roasting food

Okuhembera



- Cooked food slowly and nicely
- Kept food warm and reduced the burden of re-warming
- Kept away insects that would destroy food

Okujumbika as a design process



Photo credit, Gateway Africa (2016)

Selected species, scientific approach,
environmental conscious



Photo Credit, Charles Akena/IRIN

- Less firewood used
- Time saving
- Promoted privacy
- Promoted morals
- Reduced risk of uncontrolled fires

Burning charcoal in Nwoya district in northern Uganda
– a borrowed okujumbika concept

Relegation of *okujumbika*



- Western ideologies made indigenous communities secondary citizens
- The current sustainable energy interventions are anchored within the Western-oriented educational approach
- The Already made syndrome
- Creativity put to sleep



Ekyooto – Kasubi tombs

Recommendations

- Involvement of communities in sustainable energy design processes
- Higher Education Institutions redirect their research efforts to indigenous energy saving practices
- Indigenous peoples' views, practices and beliefs should be accommodated and respected at every stage of planning.
- Promote synergies and harmonize differences among different country policies

Conclusion



Barkcloth making

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/RL/00082>

- African societies need to concentrate on concepts where they have expertise.
- We need to flip our perception of indigenous technologies

As the African proverb goes that the fire which does not have a care taker goes out faster, Africa must consider the preservation, development and promotion of her indigenous technologies, if it is to make a contribution to global sustainable energy interventions

As Ben Ki-moon said that there is no plan B
because there is no planet B,



*"If you talk to a man in a
language he understands,
that goes to his head. If
you talk to him in his
language, that goes to
his heart."*
~ Nelson Mandela

Appreciation



Funded by the EU

Thank you