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UP IN THE AIR: Understanding Vulnerability when toilets fly

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UP IN THE AIR: Understanding Vulnerability when toilets fly

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Abstract: Across sub-Saharan Africa, both natural and social factors contribute to household level vulnerability. This case study focuses specifically on Uganda, which has made progress towards meeting the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals, most notably halving the proportion of the population that is below the poverty line. Despite these impressive achievements, many households remain vulnerable to multiple social and environmental stressors. A better understanding of the drivers of household level vulnerability will assist stakeholders and policy-makers in determining what drives vulnerability at a household level, where vulnerable populations are, and suggest what type of aid to target specific locations to be of greatest benefit. The goal of this case study is to encourage students to develop an appreciation for systems thinking through the construction of a conceptual model of household vulnerability in Uganda. Students will work in small teams to review vulnerability literature and studies focused on Uganda. Students will then use that information to construct a concept map that highlights the linkages among multiple variables and identify points of intervention that are effective in reducing household vulnerability and improving coping capacity to various stressors.

Keywords: Vulnerability, East Africa, Case Study, Modelling