



FEATURE STORY | PG.13

KASESE EMBRACES NEW ECONOMIC INITIATIVE, ADOPT MUSEVENOMICS FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

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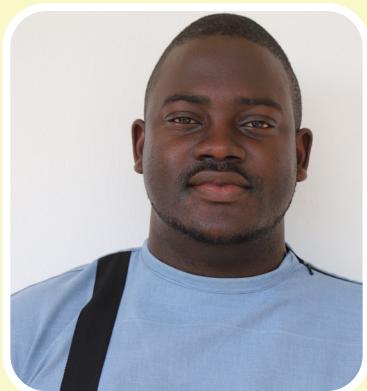
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2. Joy Kiiza, Senior IT Officer, Kamwenge District
3. Stephen Ainganiza, Communications Officer, Kabarole
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TUSIIME CHRISTOPHER

Chief Editor

Dear Reader.

Welcome to the 11th Edition of the Rwenzori Times.

This particular piece celebrates the region's progress in leadership, empowerment, and sustainability.

We honor Dr Doris Kaije, the first female Chairperson of the Bunyangabu District Service Commission — a milestone for gender equality. Kabarole's crackdown on wetland encroachment reaffirms our commitment to environmental protection, while Nile Breweries' support to over 400 barley

farmers strengthens local livelihoods.

Kamwenge's investment in vulnerable groups, Kasese's educational drive, and UCC's digital empowerment in Ntoroko all showcase the transformative energy shaping the Rwenzori region.

Our gratitude goes to all communication officers for their dedication and to our readers for your continued support. Together, we advance the Rwenzori region's journey toward inclusive and sustainable growth.

The Editor, Rwenzori Times

**KABUGHO
SHARON**

Editor



**AINGANIZA
STEPHEN**

Editor



EDUCATIONIST DR DORIS KAIJE BECOMES FIRST-EVER FEMALE CHAIRPERSON FOR BUNYANGABU DSC

By Christopher Tusiime, Communications Officer, Bunyangabu District

Bunyangabu District appointed Dr Doris Kaije as the new Chairperson of the District Service Commission (DSC) on Tuesday, 14 October, marking a historic moment as she becomes the first woman to hold the position since the district's creation.

Dr Kaije's appointment follows the death of Mr Kato Kachope, who previously served in the same capacity. The District Service Commission plays a key role in managing human resources for the local government, including the appointment, promotion, and discipline of district employees.

Her nomination was first presented by Hon James Ategeka Mugarama, the District LCV Chairperson, during a District Council sitting chaired by Speaker Hon. Hussein Kato. Council members, impressed by Dr. Kaije's credentials, unanimously approved her candidature and forwarded her name to the Ministry of Public Service for further scrutiny and confirmation.

In a letter received recently, the Ministry confirmed her appointment, paving the way for her to officially take oath and



Dr Doris Kaije addressing the council following her appointment as a District Service Commission Chairperson.



Congratulations

DR DORIS KAIJE AKIKI

Upon your appointment as the **Chairperson** of Bunyangabu District Service Commission.

Doris becomes the first female Chairperson of the DSC since the creation of Bunyangabu District.



@BunyangabuDLG

assume her duties in the coming days.

In her maiden remarks, Dr. Kaije expressed gratitude to the district leadership for the trust and opportunity extended to her. "I am deeply honored to serve the people of Bunyangabu. I pledge to execute my duties with diligence, integrity, and fairness," she said.

Dr. Kaije brings with her a wealth of experience as a former lecturer at Kyambogo University, and expertise in social ethics, gender, and education.

VULNERABLE GROUPS IN KAMWENGE BENEFIT OVER UGX 250M FOR INCOME-GENERATING PROJECTS

By Joy Kiiza, Senior IT Officer, Kamwenge District



Senior CDO Madam Prime Birungi with one of the participants in goat rearing.

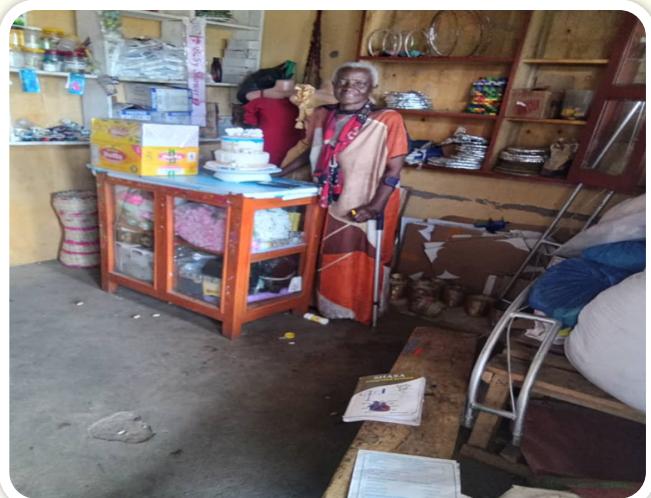
Kamwenge received UGX 5 million each, investing the funds in diverse projects such as coffee farming, piggery, goat rearing, catering, and confectionery businesses.

During a recent monitoring visit, the Ministry team evaluated six groups in Kahunge Town Council and Kamwenge Sub-county to assess the progress of these investments.

The monitoring exercise aimed at assessing whether the funds extended

Kamwenge District has witnessed significant progress in empowering vulnerable groups following the distribution of over UGX 250 million through the National Special Grant for Persons with Disabilities during the 2023/2024 financial year.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) facilitated this funding to support People with Disabilities (PWD) groups and Special Enterprise Grant for Older Persons (SEGOP) groups in engaging in sustainable income-generating activities. A total of 50 active PWD groups across



Madam Maclean displaying her cakes

to beneficiary groups were effectively utilized to improve livelihoods and promote self-reliance among vulnerable community members.

According to Mrs Birungi Prime, the Senior Community Development Officer for Kamwenge District, most of the monitored groups are implementing their projects in line with their approved work plans and demonstrating positive progress. However, she noted that some groups still require additional support to

strengthen their enterprises and ensure sustainability.

Mrs Birungi commended the Ministry for the continuous support extended to persons with disabilities, but appealed for increased funding to enable more groups to benefit from the program. She further called for enhanced facilitation of the district community development office to improve effective follow-up and

mentorship of beneficiary groups.

The Ministry's monitoring visit reaffirmed the government's commitment to empowering marginalized groups through inclusive development programs and promoting socio-economic transformation at the grassroots level.

NILE BREWERIES GIVES BACK TO OVER 100 RWENZORI BARLEY FARMERS IN RWENZORI



By Stephen Ainganiza, Communications Officer, Kabarole

Uganda Nile Breweries Limited has taken the opportunity to celebrate and honour the hardworking Barley farmers of the Rwenzori region.

The company awarded 10 outstanding barley farmers and extended gifts to an

additional 100 farmers, recognizing their vital role in increasing barley production under the theme, "Cheers to Farmers."

The awards ceremony, held at Boma Grounds in Fort Portal Tourism City, was a momentous occasion. Six farmers received special recognition for their exemplary practices, high yields, and contributions in categories such as Community Champion, Best Production

Parish, and Partnership.

Emmanuel Njuki, Legal and Corporate Affairs Lead at Nile Breweries Limited, emphasized the significance of celebrating Rwenzori farmers. He pointed out that these farmers supply approximately 30% of the barley used in beer production (about 5,000 tons annually) from districts including Bunyangabu, Kabarole, and Bundibugyo. "It's important to acknowledge and celebrate the farmers who contribute immensely to our operations and the local economy," Njuki stated.

According to Bob Mutegeki, Agriculture Team Leader for Nile Breweries in Rwenzori, barley cultivation in the region has grown steadily over the past eight years. He attributed this to favourable weather conditions and fertile soils.

"Around 2,000 farmers are mobilized each year to cultivate barley, underscoring the crop's importance in diversifying agricultural activities," Mutegeki remarked.

Kabarole District Chairman, Dr Richard Rwabuhinga, presided over the event as the chief guest. He expressed gratitude to Rwenzori farmers for embracing barley farming alongside other cash crops like coffee, tea, and cocoa. He says this diversification not only enhances household incomes but also contributes to the broader economic development of the region.

He, however, implored Nile Breweries to consider extending scholarships to the children of farmers as part of its corporate social responsibility. "I also urge your company to explore value addition initiatives that could benefit these farmers directly, such as providing processing materials," Dr. Rwabuhinga said.

Ingrid De Ryck, Global Chief Sustainability Officer at ABInBev, the parent company of Nile Breweries, said that their impact extends beyond input supply. "We have empowered women in agriculture, contributing to increased food production, improved household incomes, and supported education for children. We're proud of the women



The Awarded Barley Farmers Pose in a Photo with the Nile Breweries team

who're participating in the economic development," she noted.

Who Scooped the Awards?

Yoweri Mutyabe of Kibwa A scooped best farmer male in following the best farmer practices and delivering high yields of barley, Sophia Bambu of Kibwa B was best farmer female in the same category.

The others are Biira Naume from Mitandi for Community champion award for being able to mobilize over 200 farmers to grow barley in Mitandi Bunyangabu district and Mate Thomas

of Kibwa B scooped the award of Best Production Parish. His parish produced and delivered 1000 metric tones of high quality barley.

Maria Tusiime of Kibwa and Mate Robinson of Kamabale Karangura sub county Kabarole district for the award of quality excellence, Bonafance Maseka of Kamabale B scooped the Partnership award for producing 1000 tons of barley for the last six years while Joseph Mutanywana of Kamabale A was the best agent who mobilized over 300 farmers to grow over 100 tons of barley.



Ingrid De Ryck, Global Chief Sustainability Officer at ABInBev

REVIVING THE RWENZORI BREW: HOW KASESE IS LEADING UGANDA'S COFFEE REVIVAL

An exclusive interview with Mr Rukara Julius, Principal Agricultural Officer, Kasese District Local Government

By Kabugho Sharon, communications officer, Kasese DLG

Kasese District, nestled along the Rwenzori Mountain ranges, is one of Uganda's richest coffee-growing regions, home to some of the finest Arabica beans in East Africa. As global demand for high-quality coffee rises, the district is working to improve both production and quality, while helping farmers earn more from their harvests. In this insightful conversation, Mr Rukara Julius, the Principal Agricultural Officer for Kasese District Local Government, shares the story of Kasese's coffee heritage, current initiatives, the challenges faced, and the department's vision for taking Kasese coffee to the world stage.

“Coffee in Kasese is as old as colonialism.”

Q: How would you describe coffee farming in Kasese District?

Coffee farming in Kasese dates back to the colonial period. Coffee farming in Kasese is



as old as colonialism itself. When the colonialists came to Uganda, they introduced coffee,

In Kasese, we mainly grow Arabica coffee, which accounts for over 95% of all coffee cultivated in the district. Nearly every household – at least 95% – has at least one coffee tree. Coffee has become one of Kasese's two major cash crops, alongside cotton.

Currently, we are promoting two major Arabica varieties: SL 28, grown in the highlands, and SL 14, cultivated in the lower altitudes. Only a small portion about 1% of farmers grow Robusta coffee.

Q: What specific initiatives has the district implemented to improve

coffee quality and production?

Our focus is on expanding coffee acreage and enhancing quality. Through Operation Wealth Creation, farmers have received quality seedlings to increase production. We're also revitalizing old coffee fields through stumping; a rejuvenation practice initially promoted by UCDA, which we've continued to support. The Parish Development Model (PDM) has also prioritized coffee as one of its key enterprises. We're actively tackling pests and diseases, training farmers in Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Good Agronomic Practices. To ensure quality, we emphasize harvesting only red cherries, proper drying using tarpaulins, and maintaining a 14% moisture content before processing.

Q: What challenges have you faced in implementing these initiatives?

Several. Some farmers still harvest green coffee, which compromises quality. We also face issues with middlemen adulterating processed coffee with materials like stones and husks, while some factories process coffee that isn't fully dried. These challenges undermine our efforts to promote Kasese coffee as a premium brand.

Q: Beyond processing, what other challenges affect coffee production in Kasese?

There are quite a number: climate change has brought prolonged dry spells, hailstorms, and unpredictable rainfall, all affecting yields. Pests and diseases such as Coffee Berry Disease, Coffee Leaf Rust, Anthracnose, and pests like the Antestia bug. Declining soil

fertility, especially in our mountainous farming zones due to erosion. Land fragmentation as land is divided among family members, reducing acreage. Competition from other cash crops like cocoa and Hass avocado, leading some farmers to replace coffee trees. A low commercial mindset — many farmers still don't see coffee farming as a business, so they hesitate to invest in fertilizers or pruning. Old, unproductive coffee trees, some over 30 years old, are still in the fields and need rejuvenation.

Q: How is the agricultural sector addressing these challenges?

We are carrying out intensive sensitization and training programs for farmers. For example, today I was on a local radio program using government airtime to educate farmers on coffee quality and best practices. Our extension workers train farmers on pest management, sustainable land use, and coffee agronomy. We are also enforcing the National Coffee Act, 2021, particularly Section 53, which outlines penalties for poor handling and adulteration. In addition, we continue to promote stumping and train farmers on how to rejuvenate old coffee trees for higher productivity.

Q: Who would you like to appreciate for their contributions to improving coffee production in Kasese?

I'd like to recognize Agri Evolve Coffee Company Ltd and Kyagalanyi Coffee Company for their tremendous support. They have deployed extension workers who complement our efforts, supply quality seedlings, and provide ready markets for farmers. Thanks to them, Kasese coffee is now recognized

internationally. We also appreciate Bukonzo Organic Cooperative and Bukonzo Joint Cooperative Union for their value addition efforts, producing high-quality coffee products that showcase the Rwenzori brand.

Q: Looking ahead, where do you see Kasese in the next five years in terms of coffee production and value addition?

Our vision aligns with the national goal of producing 30 million 60-kg bags of coffee. Every step we take — from seedling distribution to training and processing — contributes to that target. Kasese is already Uganda's leading producer of Arabica coffee, and I see

the district shining even brighter on the global coffee market. With continued collaboration among government, farmers, and private partners, Kasese coffee will be a symbol of excellence worldwide.

About the Interviewee

Mr. Rukara Julius is the Principal Agricultural Officer for Kasese District Local Government. He has served in the agricultural sector for several years and is passionate about improving coffee quality, farmer incomes, and sustainable agricultural practices in the Rwenzori region.

KAMWENGE GETS DIGITAL TOOLS FROM UCC, TRANSFORMS DATA MANAGEMENT IN PDM IMPLEMENTATION

By Joy Kiiza, Senior IT Officer, Kamwenge District



PDM SACCO leaders collecting their tablets

Kamwenge District has received a major boost towards the implementation of the Parish Development Model (PDM) following the handover of 65 tablet devices from

the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) through the Uganda Communications Universal Service and Access Fund (UCUSAf).

The initiative, undertaken in partnership with the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, aims to enhance digital access and strengthen data-driven decision-making in the rollout of the PDM.

The tablets were distributed to PDM SACCO Chairpersons across the district to facilitate

the effective management and monitoring of PDM activities. The devices are expected to support digital operations such as data entry, loan management, and reporting, ultimately improving transparency and efficiency in the program's implementation.

Speaking during the handover, Mr Kiiza Dennis Mwiru, the District Commercial Officer, highlighted the significance of the digital tools in advancing PDM's objectives. He explained that key systems under the model including the Parish Development Management Information System (PDMIS), Wendi Mobile Wallet, and the Zaidi Monitoring Tool rely heavily on smart devices and internet connectivity.

"These tablets will greatly improve the efficiency of PDM implementation by enabling SACCOs to handle activities such as household profiling, registration, loan application, approval, monitoring,

and repayment digitally," Mr Kiiza said.

"This will help quicken the processes and ensure that funds reach the intended beneficiaries in a timely and accountable manner," he added.

The Parish Development Model (PDM) is the Government of Uganda's flagship strategy for achieving socio-economic transformation at the grassroots. It targets the 33% of households still engaged in subsistence farming, aiming to transition them into the money economy through access to affordable credit, financial inclusion, and improved livelihoods.

The distribution of tablets marks a significant step towards digitizing service delivery under PDM in Kamwenge, ensuring that data collection and reporting are accurate, real-time, and accessible to all stakeholders involved in the program's success.



KASESE EMBRACES NEW ECONOMIC INITIATIVE, ADOPT MUSEVENOMICS FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH



Deputy RDC Lt. Maate Magwara launching MUSEVENOMICS in Kasese

By Kabugho Sharon, Communications Officer, Kasese District

The people of Kasese district witnessed a key moment in Uganda's economic transformation as the Uganda Development Forum officially launched 'Musevenomics', a homegrown economic philosophy crafted by President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni.

The event, held at the Multipurpose Hall in Kasese District on 6th October, 2025, brought together political leaders, government technocrats, cultural and religious leaders, as well as private sector players and investors.

Musevenomics is more than just an economic theory; it is a practical, homegrown approach to national development.

At the heart of the philosophy is a blend of capitalism, liberalism, and socialism,

tailored to Uganda's unique realities. According to Dr Edward Katende, the Executive Director of Uganda Development Forum, and Dr Ngabo Herbert, the Parish Development Model (PDM) liaison officer, Musevenomics represents a pragmatic approach to economic management that blends capitalism, liberalism, and socialism.

They explained that Musevenomics is anchored on seven key pillars; Rationality, Reasonability, Realism, Adaptability, Creativity, Resilience, and Sovereignty, all aimed at promoting evidence-based policy, innovation, and self-determined development.

"Musevenomics is about using reason, evidence, and practical realities to guide development. It rejects rigid ideology and focuses on what works best for Uganda's unique context," Dr Katende said.

The philosophy also lists twelve core

principles including security and stability, privatization with a strategic state role, infrastructure development, digital transformation, industrialization, value addition, and the fight against corruption. Uganda, under this vision, seeks to grow its economy tenfold from USD 50 billion to USD 500 billion by 2040.

For a region known for its rich resources like tourism, agriculture, mining, and cross-border trade, Musevenomics is crucial for growth. Local leaders in Kasese were quick to recognize its significance as a timely call to reorganize Kasese's economic base.

Representing the District Chairperson, Hon Monday Girivazio, the Vice Chairperson of Kasese District, commended the Uganda Development Forum for bringing the discussion to the grassroots. "Rich countries thrive by organizing their economies. Musevenomics is a wake-up call for Kasese to organize our businesses, markets, and resources so that we can prosper together," he said.

He further called for collective ownership and dialogue around the

new philosophy, urging communities to identify and exploit local potential in tourism, agriculture, mining, and cross-border trade.

The Chief Administrative Officer, Mr Walakira Paul, echoed the same sentiments, appreciating stakeholders for their strong turnout and reaffirming the district's commitment to working with the private sector under its newly approved Investment Policy.

Representing the Prime Minister of Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu (OBR), Hon Muhesi Patrick, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development for OBR, pledged that the kingdom would use its cultural structures to spread the Musevenomics philosophy.

"OBR's rebranding pillars; peace, unity, reconciliation, transformation, and mindset change align perfectly with Musevenomics. We are ready to take this philosophy forward as part of our community empowerment agenda," he said.

The NRM District Chairperson, Mr Mbahimba James Bwambale, called for the localization of the philosophy, suggesting a district-specific version



Participants paying attention during the Musevenomics townhall meeting



Mr. Walakira Paul, CAO Kasese addressing the participants during the Musevenomics meeting.

dubbed 'Kasesenomics.' "We must tailor Musevenomics to address local realities. When we apply it to our unique challenges, we will see true transformation in Kasese," Mr Mbahimba noted.

In his keynote remarks, Deputy RDC Lt Maate Magwara praised the Uganda Development Forum for its efforts and noted visible progress in Kasese's socio-economic landscape. "You can no longer find grass-thatched houses in most parts of Kasese that's a sign of transformation," he said.

He lauded President Museveni's leadership in steering Uganda toward stability and prosperity, encouraging citizens to rally behind the government's ongoing development agenda.

As Musevenomics begins to be integrated into Uganda's National Development Plan and cascaded down to Parish Development Plans, the people of Kasese have positioned themselves as early adopters of this vision; one that promises inclusive growth, resilience, and national self-reliance.

UCC EQUIPS RURAL COMMUNITIES WITH 50 SOLAR TABLETS TO BOOST PDM SACCOS IN NTOROKO

By Sahula Ibrahim, Communication Officer, Ntoroko District



UCC officials hand over tablets to SACCO secretaries in Ntoroko to support PDM implementation.

Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) has successfully delivered 50 tablets to support the Parish Development Model (PDM) program in Ntoroko district.



SACCO representatives pay attention to demonstrations for the working process of the Solar-Powered tablets by the D/RDC.

In partnership with Uganda Communication Universal Services and Access Fund (UCUSAf) in the Ministry of Information Communication Technology (MoICT) and Ministry of

Finance Planning and Economic Development (MOFPED), UCC on Friday last week, delivered 50 tablets with a solar panel to help ease the need for electric powering that had hitherto been a challenge especially to the rural based SACCOs in the district.

Mr Musana Edward, a SACCO representative, expressed gratitude to the Government of Uganda for responding proactively. He highlighted that unreliable network connectivity and power shortages had often hindered operations, leading to delays in serving beneficiaries.

“The distribution of the second tablet to every SACCO is a good step in the right direction and we shall not expect more excuses for any delays during disbursement of funds to beneficiaries”, he remarked.

Currently, the district is in its final stages of disbursing millions of cash under the program with a possible completion by November. All beneficiaries will have been served for the third phase of the program.

The meeting that attracted all SACCO executives and the district PDM implementing team was presided over by Deputy Resident Commissioner Mr Ngarambe Muzeeyi Syrus, who appreciated the SACCOs for a “tremendous change as compared to the beginning of the program when members seemed not aware of what the program was intending to achieve.”

Mr Muzeeyi noted that money extortions from beneficiaries had greatly declined and applauded the team for the resilience and patriotism exhibited.

He asked members about the enterprises they take to ensure feasibility and within their abilities to avoid waste of funds. He, however,

decried the system challenges, where at times it indicates someone has been given money when actually not.

Ms Dorah Natumanya, an official from MOFPED under the Financial Inclusion Support Unit (FISU), advised the SACCOs to coordinate with the parish chiefs in ensuring financial recoveries as a revolving principle of the program so that other community members can benefit. “As a sustainability plan, the SACCO should ensure the distributions done in phase one are yielding recoveries now because the money belongs to your SACCOs and so treat it as your own capital that should never reduce,” Natumanya advised.

Mr. Rashid Saad, while representing the Chief Administrative Officer at the function held at the district in the council Hall, cautioned SACCO executives against mismanagement of the tools and asked them to always keep the equipment at the office to avoid damage and or theft, hence stalling the program. He said each member in custody of the equipment is held individually responsible for the safety of the equipment.

Each SACCO has now received the second tablet, which is solar-charged and therefore enabling easy use in the rural areas. The tablets come with 300 GB of data, sufficient to run the program activities every month.

DISTRICT OFFICIALS BEGIN CRACKDOWN ON ILLEGAL SETTLERS IN KABAROLE WETLANDS

By *Stephen Ainganiza, Communications Officer, Kabarole*

Kabarole District Natural Resources Department, in collaboration with police and the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), has embarked on the implementation of President Yoweri Museveni's directive



The Eucalyptus tree plantation razed to the ground degradation.

President Museveni instructed RDCs, police, and local leaders nationwide to ensure the immediate eviction of illegal settlers in forest reserves and wetlands.

In response, the Kabarole environment office, along with the RDC and police, has targeted the Wamikira wetland, which spans the sub-counties of Harugongo, Rwengaju and Hakibaale, extending to the banks of River Sogahi.

The enforcement team focused on the farms of known encroachers, including Fred Balinda, Kaya Francis, Justine Kabahyaga, and Dr. Asaaba in Kanyatete, Kakundwa, Harugongo sub county, as well as David Kamuhanda

to evict encroachers from wetlands and forest reserves.

This initiative follows the harsh weather conditions recently experienced across the country, which have heightened concerns about environmental



The enforcement team move to take action



The enforcement team surveying the encroached wetland

Kihika, Musaana Samson, and Ray Patrick in Muniisa zone, Bwabya parish, Rwengaju sub county. The team dismantled eucalyptus plantations, vegetable gardens, opium fields, and sugarcane crops, livestock farm fences, much to the relief of local residents.

Mr Muhanuzi Fred, the District Environment Officer for Kabarole, emphasized that the eviction process aims to restore the wetland's natural state, allowing water to flow freely. He warned that all encroachers must vacate their land before enforcement actions reach them. Despite previous warnings and eviction notices, many encroachers failed to comply.

LC1 chairperson Muniisa zone Mr Kagweri Erisa noted that his office, along with district officials and the District Police Commander, had issued multiple warnings to encroachers, but these went unheeded. He expressed concern that continued encroachment could lead to severe droughts, resulting in famine and loss of life.

The chairman revealed that the wetlands, which once provided local communities with papyrus, firewood, and water, have been severely impacted by these illegal activities.

Residents such as Mr Rugomoka Clovice, Baguma Boniface, and Tusiime Yostus from Muniisa and Rukongora in Bwabya parish expressed their support for the enforcement actions, stating that this was the first time they witnessed such

decisive measures.

They believe that these efforts will not only benefit Kabarole but also contribute to President Museveni's support in future elections by demonstrating a commitment to environmental restoration.

“We’re happy to see the district enforcement team descend on these encroachers. We used to fetch water from the river and collect firewood from the forest but these encroaches invaded the swamp, they fenced it blocking us from accessing it. This is our first time in history to see the district team take action on the environment degradation,” the residents said.

Assistant RDC Mr Asaba Frank urged all wetland encroachers to vacate the wetlands voluntarily before facing legal consequences, reinforcing the government's commitment to protecting Uganda's wetlands and forests for future generations.

“We are implementing the presidential directive of evicting all the encroachers. If you know you’re in a wetland, please vacate before the team reaches you,” Asaba said.



Some residents enjoying the sugarcanes cut from the degraded land

BUILDING FUTURES: BRAC INCORPORATES HOLISTIC APPROACH TO SUPPORT GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN IN KASESE

By Kabugho Sharon, communications officer. Kasese District



BRAC Beneficiaries gathered during one of their social empowerment session.

BRAC Uganda is launching a transformative initiative designed to accelerate the impact of young women through social empowerment, economic empowerment, and educational support, a project that will run through 2030 with support from the MasterCard Foundation.

The project, being implemented across two catchment areas, Kasese One and Kasese Two, targets adolescent girls and young women between the ages of 12 and 35.

Kasese One covers Hima Town Council, Kitswamba Town Council, Maliba Town Council, Ibanda-Kyanya Town Council, and Kitswamba Subcounty with 1,559 beneficiaries. Kasese Two covers Kidodo, Kirembe, Katooke, Mubuku Town Council, and Kigoro-Nyamwamba Division, reaching 1,676 beneficiaries.

According to Mr. Mwesigwa Fred, the Acting Regional Manager for BRAC Uganda, the project has three major

objectives: Social empowerment, Economic empowerment and Education support.

The journey begins with mindset change and social empowerment, focusing on savings culture and sexual and reproductive health (SRH). This phase lasts six months. Beneficiaries who complete at least 75% of the sessions qualify for support to start economic enterprises of their choice which acts as an important step toward self-reliance.

“We begin with the mind once that is transformed, everything else follows,” Mwesigwa explained.

For girls aged 12–14 and 15–17, BRAC provides education support to help them stay in school and build brighter futures. These beneficiaries attend sessions once a week, combining learning with mentorship and guidance from community leaders and volunteers.

The program works hand-in-hand with community leaders to mobilize participants and ensure the initiative is rooted in local realities. During a recent joint multisectoral monitoring visit by the Kasese District leadership, teams visited both Kasese One and Kasese Two to assess progress and interact with beneficiaries.

During the feedback meeting, Mr Kikusa Mustafa, the Principal Assistant Secretary (PAS) for Kasese, commended BRAC for reaching young women but raised concern over the high number of young mothers in Mubuku, calling for deliberate efforts to fight early pregnancies in the district. He also emphasized the need to engage men in the project interventions.

Meanwhile, Mr Sabuni Mwesige, the Senior Agricultural Officer, encouraged BRAC to localize training materials and deliver sessions in the local language to ensure all participants fully grasp the content and benefit from the sessions. The real impact of the program is already visible in the lives of beneficiaries.

Biira Loyce, a participant from Hima Town Council, shared how the social empowerment sessions have helped her build meaningful social connections: "Since I joined, I feel happier. I've built friendships, learned to save. It has changed how I see myself and my future."

Another beneficiary, Musoki Jovinet, revealed how the project helped her overcome emotional struggles: "Before joining the BRAC project, I had serious social problems. I was always stressed. Now, I have confidence and a sense of purpose."

Mr Muthahinga William, the District Community Development Officer, appreciated BRAC for implementing a project that directly addresses community needs and promotes transformation.

"This project will change lives. I encourage beneficiaries to stay committed, own the program, and use the knowledge to transform their families and communities," he said.

By 2030, BRAC aims to have empowered thousands of young women in Kasese to become self-reliant, economically active, and socially confident building a generation of change-makers capable of reshaping their communities.



District staff hold a post monitoring meeting with BRAC staff



District staff engagement with beneficiaries during the joint monitoring



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