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TUSIIME CHRISTOPHER

Chief Editor

Dear Reader. 

Welcome to this week's edition of the Rwenzori Times. Our mission remains simple yet vital to tell the stories that matter most to the people of the Rwenzori region and beyond.

In this issue, we shine a spotlight on the heartbeat of our communities: resilience in the face of floods, bold steps toward environmental conservation, renewed

investments in health and education, the quiet revolutions in farming and local enterprise that are redefining livelihoods.

From Kasese's bamboo planting to shield villages from floods, to Bunyangabu's ambitious forest plan, to Kyenjojo's drive to revive coffee farming, the region is writing its own story of transformation rooted in sustainability, innovation, and community

ownership.

As always, the Rwenzori Times is committed to bringing you in-depth, balanced, and people-centered reporting. These are not just development stories, they are accounts of how ordinary citizens, local leaders, and partners are shaping a better future for the Rwenzori.

We invite you to read, reflect, and most importantly, join the conversation.

KABUGHO SHARON

Editor



AINGANIZA STEPHEN

Editor



BUNDIBUGYO LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN



Bundibugyo Deputy RDC Ariyo Merycent at the function on Friday last week (Photo by Ibrahim Sahula)

By Ibrahim Sahula, Communications Officer, Ntoroko

Bundibugyo District has launched a campaign to curb sexual violence against children, with support from OURGANDA Health Outreach.

The campaign was unveiled last Friday at the organization's offices in Nyahuka Town Council under the theme "Every Child Must Be Safe and Protected from Sexual Violence."

Speaking at the launch held last Friday held at their offices in Nyahuka Town council, Deputy Resident District Commissioner (RDC) Ariyo Merycent Abine said lack of proper enforcement often impedes child protection

initiatives.

"It is regrettable that parents sometimes connive with perpetrators, making it hard for police to investigate and prosecute. Even if the abuser is a neighbor or relative, it must be reported," Ms. Abine said. She pledged to coordinate security agencies to expedite arrests and prosecutions.

Bundibugyo Police Gender Desk officer Otim Ronald noted that some offenders cross into neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo to evade justice. He added that police statistics remain low compared to cases reported at health



Staff Ourganda Outreach Bundibugyo during the Launch of the stop violence against children campaign last week

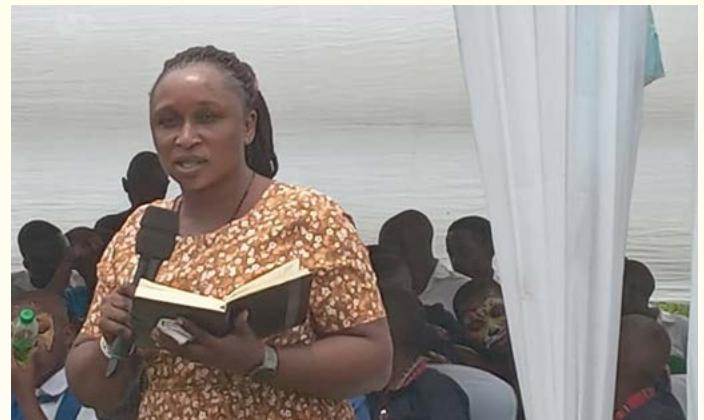
facilities, where many victims seek treatment.

Tibesigwa Isimbwa Vincent, OUREGANDA Outreach Country Coordinator, urged religious and cultural leaders to integrate child protection messages into their activities, stressing that collective community action is needed to end child abuse.

As part of the initiative, OUREGANDA has set up special care teams to identify and support abused children, while also carrying out advocacy against domestic violence and community sensitization.

Children who attended the event used poetry and art to call upon parents, government, and community leaders to protect their rights and ensure they grow up free from abuse.

District leaders expressed concern that sexual violence against children is undermining social and economic transformation, but pledged to work with partners to end the vice.



Ms Tusiime Hilder, District Probation Officer Bundibugyo



Mr. Tibesigwa Vincent, Country Coordinator Ourganda Outreach

BUNYANGABU'S DISTRICT FOREST PLAN TO DELIVER LONG-TERM ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

By Christopher Tusiime, Bunyangabu District Communications Officer



The Bunyangabu District Forest Officer, Mr David Mujuni, during a tree seedlings distribution exercise recently

Bunyangabu District, nestled in Uganda's Rwenzori region, has unveiled its most ambitious environmental agenda, the famous five-year District Forest Development Plan (DFDP).

The plan, supported by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), aims to restore degraded landscapes, increase tree cover, and shield communities from the growing impact of climate change.

Set to run until 2030, the DFDP

envisions rehabilitated riverbanks, expanded agroforestry, and community-driven forest management. Yet, beneath the fanfare of its launch lies a more pressing question: can a rural district with limited resources turn this vision into reality, or will the plan gather dust like so many before it?

Bunyangabu is no stranger to ecological strain and nearly 95 per cent of households depend on firewood, while deforestation, wetland encroachment,

and poorly managed eucalyptus plantations continue to erode its natural defenses.

The consequences are visible ranging from frequent floods, mudslides, to soil erosion that devastate farmland and livelihoods, particularly for communities living along crater lakes and steep slopes.

“Every rainy season we are counting losses from mudslides and floods.

Forests are not just about trees, they are about protecting lives and livelihoods,” one official remarked at the launch.

District officials describe it as a blueprint for survival and what makes the plan stand out is its deliberate effort to connect environmental conservation with economic opportunity. Beyond timber and firewood, it proposes new avenues such as fruit tree farming, furniture-making enterprises, and eco-tourism.

“People will only protect forests if they see tangible benefits. By integrating green business opportunities, the plan avoids the old trap of conservation versus survival,” said Environmental economist Dr. James Tumwine who described it as vital.

Bunyangabu estimates it will need UGX 1.237 billion to deliver the plan over five years. The budget will cover community

sensitization, nursery establishment, restoration activities, and capacity building for forestry staff and farmer groups.

Unlike earlier top-down interventions, the DFDP emphasizes collective ownership and it proposes a multi-stakeholder forum bringing together government, NGOs, private investors, and communities to steer implementation.

By rooting the plan in local participation, Bunyangabu hopes to avoid the pitfalls of externally driven projects that fizzle out once donor support ends.

The plan aligns with Uganda’s Vision 2040, the National Development Plan IV, and the Bonn Challenge, where Uganda committed to restore 2.5 million hectares of degraded land by 2030. Locally, Bunyangabu aims to boost tree cover by 15 percent, restore riverbanks and crater lakeshores, and promote agroforestry on farms.

The launch of Bunyangabu’s DFDP is a symbolic milestone, but the real test lies in consistent implementation. Challenges around land ownership, community resistance to short-term crop loss, and the temptation of fast-growing eucalyptus remain. Political will is equally critical environmental projects often lose momentum once the launch-day photos fade.

RWENZURURU KINGDOM TURNS OMUSINGA BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION INTO DEV'T DRIVE

Sharon Kabugho, Kasese District Communications Officer and Mumbere Jonan

The Obusinga Bwa Rwenzururu has unveiled the Omusinga Birthday Run, an initiative that blends cultural celebration with practical community development.

Scheduled for 14th Nov 2025, the run is designed to raise funds for two major projects including the establishment of a kingdom radio station and the One-Stop Center Cultural Tourism Village with a more strengthened pose to promote unity among the kingdom's subjects.



The Prime Minister Hon. Baritazare Benson Kule launching the Kit

The launch, held on 5th September 2025 in Kasese District, was officiated by the Kingdom's Prime Minister, Baritazale Benson Kule. He described the initiative as a turning point in how cultural institutions can serve their people.

“This is more than just a run. It is an opportunity for every Rwenzururu subject to invest in our shared future. By participating, you are contributing to projects that will improve livelihoods, promote culture, and give a voice to our kingdom,” Baritazale said.



NRM women MP flag bearer Hon. Sarah Ithungu Baleke receives her Kit at the launch

For decades, the Rwenzururu Kingdom has served as a custodian of culture and identity for the Bakonzo people.

Analysts argue that by tying a royal birthday celebration to fitness, wellness, and fundraising, the kingdom is reframing culture as a driver of development.

A dedicated radio station is expected to improve communication and community mobilization, while the tourism village will showcase Rwenzururu heritage to attract visitors and boost local income. Both initiatives reflect a growing recognition that cultural pride must translate into social and economic opportunity.

Affordability has been placed at the heart of the campaign. Run kits are priced at UGX 25,000 for the Ordinary Kit and UGX 50,000 for the Corporate Kit, while smaller contributions UGX 15,000 for a Cap or Bottle, and UGX 2,000 as a general donation to ensure even low-income households can take part.

Support has also come from political and security leaders including the Kasese district Woman MP flag-bearer Sarah Ithungu Baleke who pledged to join the run and proposed that the 5km route begin at Mukirinia Street, a site of cultural importance.

The Rwenzori East Regional Police pledged both security and financial support, including the purchase of 10 kits, reassuring the public of a safe event.

Observers note that such initiatives also serve as soft power for the kingdom,

strengthening its cultural identity while building trust with state institutions and

The Omusinga birthday Run represents more than exercise or fundraising, it is a symbol of collective resilience in a region historically affected by political tensions and socio-economic challenges. By running together, subjects express solidarity, pride, and a shared vision for the future.

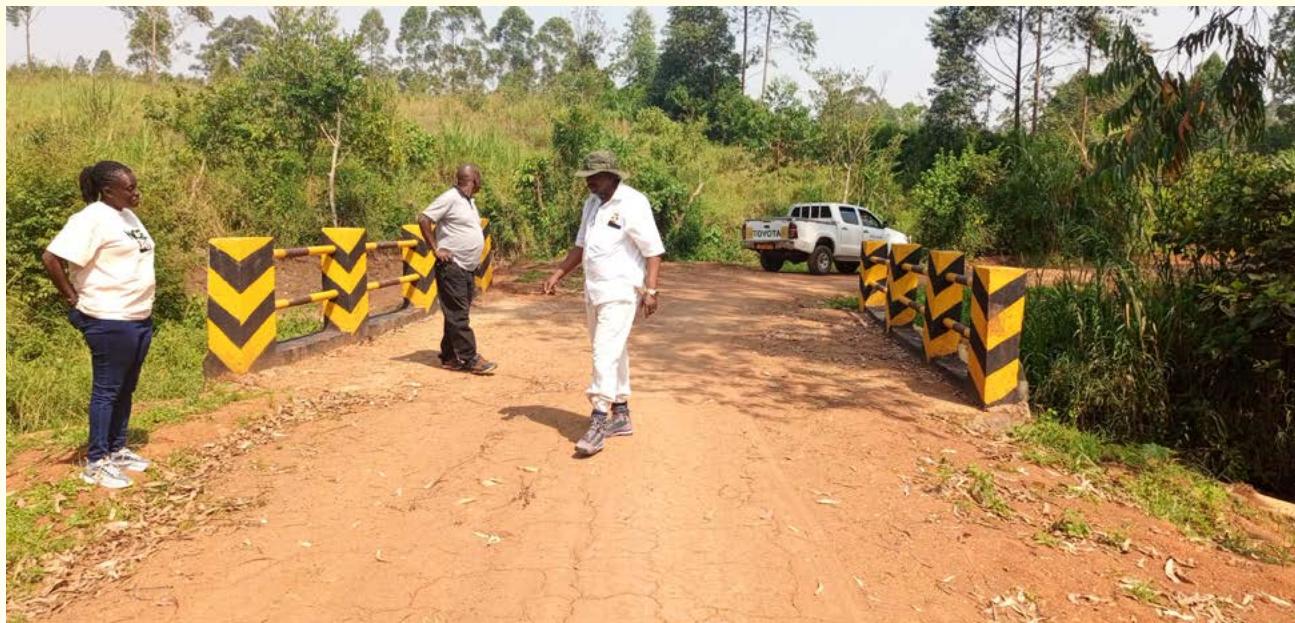
development partners.

As the 14th November 2025 draws nearer, anticipation is rising across Kasese and neighboring districts and organizers hope the event will become an annual fixture, gradually expanding into a cultural and tourism attraction that benefits the entire region.

Several subjects believe that lacing up their running shoes will mean more than celebrating the Omusinga's birthday but it is about running for unity, for development, and for the future of the Rwenzururu Kingdom.

MUSEVENI'S 1BN ROAD FUND TRANSFORMS TRANSPORT, TRADE IN KABAROLE

By Ainganiza Stephen – Communication Officer, Kabarole District



CAO Mr.Rubaihayo Stephen and Eng.Naome monitoring Kisakyabairu Bridge

President Yoweri Museveni's decision to channel one billion shillings annually to every district for road maintenance is reshaping the economic and political landscape in rural Uganda.

In Kabarole district, where feeder roads once crippled trade and isolated farmers, the fund now formalized as a Road Maintenance Grant by Parliament has become a vital tool for unlocking markets and boosting household incomes.

Initially conceived as a rehabilitation initiative, the fund was restructured to focus on routine and periodic maintenance of feeder roads, a shift experts say ensures sustainability.

For Kabarole, the impact has been visible with once-impassable swamps are now bridged, villages connected, and agricultural produce flows more efficiently to markets in Fort Portal, Kyenjojo, and beyond.

Projects such as the Kisakyabairu Bridge, Munobwa Bridge, and the reopening of key feeder roads have done more than improve accessibility and revitalized rural trade networks.

Farmers who once sold at giveaway prices for lack of transport alternatives now reach larger markets at lower costs, creating a ripple effect on household incomes and local business growth.

Launched two years ago, the fund was originally intended to support road rehabilitation. However, under



Isunga-Rwankenzi-Kasenda Road (18.2 km)

Parliament's new framework, it now prioritizes periodic and mechanized routine maintenance of feeder roads, ensuring year-round accessibility.

On Tuesday, 9th September, 2025, Kabarole District Chief Administrative Officer Rubaihayo Stephen, Acting District Engineer Naome Basona, and the District Communication Officer inspected several completed projects.

The monitoring mission aimed at assessing both the physical condition of the roads and their social-economic impact.

Residents described the transformation as life-changing and thanked district leaders for prioritizing previously impassable routes.

Gumisiriza Andrew, a resident of Muhumbu, Hakibale Sub-county, recalled how the Nyamigongo swamp once made transport nearly impossible.

“Before the construction of Kisakyabairu Bridge, people couldn't cross. Now, maize, beans, and mairungi reach markets with ease,” he said.

Local businessman Mugenyi Zodias,



Now motorable Isunga-Rwankenzi-Kasenda Road (18.2 km) km



Muhumbu-Kisongi road now motorable

popularly known as Makarina, said before the Munobwa Bridge and Kisongi–Munobwa Road were constructed, traders endured costly detours through Kyenjojo to reach Fort Portal.

“Now transport is cheaper and faster. It has boosted my cereals business,” he noted.

Karamagi George, LCI Chairperson of Kidukuru, Kyabarango, Bugaki Sub-county, praised the projects for connecting Kabarole and Kyenjojo.

“Crossing was impossible in the past. Today, agriculture and marketing are supported directly by these new bridges,” he said.

During the 2023/2024 financial year, Kabarole District rehabilitated and opened several strategic roads, including:

- Kihondo–Hamabale–Kazingo Road (8

km): Once impassable, now vital for agricultural produce.

- Samusenge and Nyamuhirwa Bridges: Improved safety and accessibility; Nyamuhirwa was prioritized after two children drowned while crossing.
- Irihura–Nyabinyonyi–Kanyante Road (11 km): Connected isolated farming communities.
- Kicwamba–Kiburara Road (25 km): Rehabilitated to enhance inter-subcounty trade.
- Munobwa Bridge (Phase I): Constructed to connect Kabarole and Kyenjojo districts.
- In 2024/2025, the district delivered more projects using the same fund:
- Munobwa Bridge (Phase II): Completed with beams, deck casing, and guard rails, improving inter-district trade.
- Kisakyabairu Bridge (Nyamugongo–Kaswa Road): Linked Kijura–Fort Portal and Kampala–Fort Portal



A boda boda rider using Munobwa Bridge while the CAO Mr. Rubaihayo Stephen and Eng. Naome were on monitoring mission

highways.

- Kitojo Bridge (Phase I) on River Nsongya: A long-awaited project in the district plan for 10 years, now benefiting schools and cross-district trade with Bunyangabu.
- Periodic Maintenance: Upgraded Muhumbu–Kisongi–Munobwa Road (11.6 km) and Isunga–Rwankenzi Road (18.2 km) to support tea farmers.
- Mechanized Routine Maintenance: Over 50 km of feeder roads covered, including Ruteete–Mituli–Rwaihamba, Kyakaigo–Kikonge–Harugongo, and Kida–Lyantonde.

Despite the successes, the district faces challenges, particularly land disputes. On the Muhumbu–Kisongi stretch, one

community member sued the district, alleging encroachment, which delayed culvert installations and left materials idle. Officials say resolving such disputes requires community sensitization and mediation to avoid stalling government projects.

Overall, the projects have reduced transport costs, improved market access, and opened up opportunities for rural communities.

As Kabarole farmers move produce more easily, traders cut costs, and communities feel more connected, the initiative demonstrates that small, well-targeted interventions can catalyze broader socio-economic change.



Eng. Naome Basona and Kabarole Chief Administrative Officer Mr. Rubaihayo Stephen on a monitoring mission

KITAGWENDA LAUNCHES AGRO-ECOLOGY MODEL VILLAGE TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE FARMING

By *Ainomuhangi Justus, IT Officer, Kitagwenda District*



COSIL E.D Byamaka Allan addressing the farmers

An Agro-Ecology Model Village (AMV) has been launched in Rugarama Village, Ntara Sub-county, Kitagwenda District, as part of efforts to promote sustainable farming and reduce reliance on toxic pesticides.

The launch, held on Tuesday, 09th September, 2025, was spearheaded by Community Sustainable Initiatives Link (COSIL) Uganda and Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Uganda, in collaboration with Mountains of the Moon University and other regional and national agro-ecology stakeholders. It also marked the start of a national campaign against toxic pesticides in Uganda.

The Agro-Ecology Model Village approach seeks to help rural communities build self-reliant, integrated food and energy systems, while boosting agricultural productivity, household income, and environmental conservation.

Speaking at the launch, Allan Byamaka, Executive Director of COSIL, said the campaign is part of a broader push to protect Uganda from harmful agricultural imports.

“Agro-ecology will fight the importation of harmful chemicals into Uganda, making our environment safer from dangerous hazards,” Byamaka said.

Local leaders welcomed the initiative,

noting its potential to transform farming in the sub-county.

Mikidad Byamukama, the LCIII Chairperson of Ntara Sub-county, said the project would help farmers improve both yields and quality of produce.

“This initiative will greatly improve farming and development in our area,” he noted.

Musinguzi Fred, the District Commercial Officer, commended COSIL and stressed that the district is keen on promoting environmentally friendly agricultural products.

Officiating at the launch, George Bob Sunday, Commissioner in charge of Agro-Ecology at the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and

Fisheries, praised the initiative, revealing that government is currently drafting national agro-ecology policies to promote healthier, more nutritious local foods.

Farmers under the program shared testimonies of its early benefits.

Gahaburana, one of the beneficiaries, said agro-ecology had enabled him to achieve sustainable food security and income for his household.

The launch of the Agro-Ecology Model Village signals a shift toward greener and more resilient farming practices in Kitagwenda, aligning with Uganda’s broader efforts to promote food security, reduce environmental degradation, and safeguard public health.

OVER 16,000 RESIDENTS BENEFIT FROM PARISH DEVELOPMENT MODEL IN KITAGWENDA

By Ainomuhangi Justus, IT Officer, Kitagwenda District

A total of 16,875 residents in Kitagwenda District have benefited from the Parish Development Model (PDM) program since its launch, district officials have revealed.

Speaking during a quarterly joint staff review meeting, Fred Musinguzi, PDM focal person for Kitagwenda, reported that the district



Staff members in the joint quarterly meeting

received Shs16.89 billion and successfully disbursed Shs16.875 billion to beneficiaries, representing 99.9% coverage.

Musinguzi highlighted that the program has significantly boosted agricultural production, with farmers adopting modern farming

techniques, diversifying crops, and increasing yields and household incomes.

“The establishment of parish revolving funds has improved access to credit for smallholder farmers, enabling them to invest in quality inputs and equipment, thereby enhancing productivity,” Musinguzi said.

He added that training programs have equipped farmers with essential skills, resulting in better management and utilization of resources.

Recovery plans for the first beneficiaries whose grace period elapsed in July 2025 are now underway. Sub-county chiefs, town clerks, parish chiefs, and ward agents have been directed to coordinate fund recovery.

Dalili R.K Moses, the district's Chief Administrative Officer, emphasized accountability and community-centered service delivery.

“We are the custodians of this district’s development. Today, we reflect not just on what we have done but on what we must do better,” he said.

Despite these successes, the district continues to face challenges, including delayed fund releases, staffing gaps, poor rural road conditions, limited parish-level data management capacity, and community mistrust in some government programs.

Kitagwenda leadership reaffirmed its commitment to building an inclusive, responsive, and results-oriented local government, ensuring the Parish Development Model continues to benefit residents across the district.



Musinguzi Fred giving his report on PDM progress

ADVANCE TECHNOLOGY BOOSTS MUSHROOM VALUE ADDITION, ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN KYEGEGWA

By Samuel Baingana, Kyegegwa District Communications Officer



A transformative value addition initiative aimed at boosting the livelihoods and food security of smallholder mushroom farmers at Kyaka II refugee settlement in Kyegegwa district has been launched.

The 12-month project being implanted by the Hodari Foundation, a refugee-founded and led organization is being funded by Ashden Climate Solutions.

It focuses on the deployment of solar-powered mushroom drying technology to drive economic empowerment and nutritional outcomes.

The technology can process up to 500kg of oyster mushrooms per day, helping farmers reduce post-harvest losses and extend the shelf life of their products.

Speaking at the launch, Mukundane

Florence, a representative of Hodari Foundation, said the initiative launched on 04th September, 2025, will enable farmers to move from subsistence cultivation to value-added processing.

“We will co-design workflows with smallholder farmers and producer cooperatives to ensure safety, quality, and product diversification,” she said.

The program will support the development of market-ready mushroom products, including mushroom coffee powder, mushroom porridge flour, and mushroom juice, aiming to improve nutrition for women, children, and vulnerable groups in the settlement.

Javier Hafasha, Executive Director of Hodari Foundation, emphasized that the initiative is designed to not only increase income but also strengthen local food

systems.

“By equipping farmers with tools, knowledge, and ownership, we’re building a sustainable model for inclusive agribusiness,” he said.

Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) will also play a key role in managing the processing units and coordinating marketing, ensuring that communities benefit collectively from the project.

The initiative is expected to empower smallholder farmers, enhance food security, and create income opportunities for residents of Kyaka II Refugee Settlement, while promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

The project marks a significant step toward economic empowerment and nutrition improvement for communities in Kyaka II, combining technology, training, and local participation

Over the next year, Hodari Foundation will continue to monitor the project’s implementation, focusing on training,

product development, and market linkages. With strong community involvement, the initiative aims to create a sustainable, replicable model for agro-processing that could be scaled to other settlements and rural communities across Uganda.

Beyond drying technology, the initiative integrates hands-on training and product development, supporting farmers to move from basic cultivation to value-added processing.

Planned products include mushroom coffee powder, mushroom porridge flour, and mushroom juice, designed to enhance local nutrition, particularly for children under 16, pregnant women, and nursing mothers.

Experts note that value addition is crucial in breaking the cycle of low income and food insecurity among smallholder farmers. By creating market-ready products, the initiative offers a path to economic resilience and improved dietary diversity.



The Coffee plantations
in the outskirts o
Kyarusozi Sub County

KYENJOJO'S SHS720 MILLION PROJECT BOLSTERS COFFEE PRODUCTION, LIVELIHOODS

By Johnson Atuhaire, Kyenjojo District Communications Officer

Kyenjojo District has launched a one-year Agro-Ecology Project aimed at reviving coffee production, boosting household incomes, and promoting environmental sustainability.

With a budget of UGX 720.6 million, the initiative is funded through the Local Economic Growth Support (LEGS) Project under the Ministry of Local Government, with technical support

from the Islamic Development Bank. Targeting 3,000 smallholder farmers and nine secondary schools, the project is designed to address multiple, interconnected challenges: the resurgence of coffee as a viable cash crop, youth unemployment, and environmental degradation caused by deforestation and unsustainable energy use.

Coffee in Kyenjojo, once devastated by



District team inspect the nursery beds under the project

coffee wilt disease in the 1990s, has recently re-emerged as the district's primary cash crop after the collapse of tea production.

However, high seedling costs remain a barrier for many farmers. A single Coffee

Wilt Disease Resistant (CWDR) seedling costs UGX 1,500, limiting smallholder participation.

The project plans to provide 600,000 subsidized CWDR seedlings at UGX 700 each through cooperatives, expanding coffee cultivation by at least 300 acres.

This effort is expected to increase production, enhance household incomes, and strengthen the district's standing in the national coffee economy.

The initiative emphasizes skills development and employment for youth and a total of 500 young people will be trained in nursery operations, offering practical skills and work opportunities in seedling production, marketing, and value addition.

Meanwhile, 12 coffee cooperatives will be strengthened to manage production, coordinate marketing, and facilitate farmer access to premium markets.

"This project will ensure farmers access affordable seedlings, boost coffee production, create jobs for youth, and reduce pressure on our forests," said LCV Chairperson Gilbert Rubaihayo.

He says the project integrates environmental safeguards through energy-efficient interventions and energy-saving stoves will be

installed in nine secondary schools, including Kyarusozi, Maddox, Bufunjo, Kyembogo, Nyarukoma, Kisojo, Rugorra, Nyankwanzi Secondary School, and Katooke.

These stoves will reduce firewood consumption, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and protect the health of cooks and learners.

By combining agricultural revitalization with climate-conscious practices, the project demonstrates a holistic approach to rural development. Strengthening cooperatives and empowering communities is expected to promote sustainable coffee farming, reduce deforestation, and protect local ecosystems.

Experts suggest that the Kyenjojo project could serve as a model for integrating agriculture, youth empowerment, and environmental management in other coffee-growing districts.

The project underscores the potential for rural districts to leverage cash crops as engines for socio-economic and environmental resilience, creating a blueprint for sustainable development in Uganda's coffee belt.



GOV'T BUILDS SHS600M FACILITY AT IRUHURA HCIII, PATIENT NUMBERS TRIPLE

By Ainganiza Stephen, Kabarole District Communications Officer.



Iruhuura Health Centre III General Ward

Health service delivery in Kasenda Sub County, Kabarole District, has received a major boost following the construction of a Shs600 million facility at Iruhuura Health Centre III, which has led to a sharp rise in patient numbers.

The new facility, funded through the Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers (UGIFT) programme with support from the World Bank, includes general, pediatric and maternity wards, a laboratory, staff quarters worth Shs180m, oxygen concentrators and Uterine Balloon Tamponade (UBT) devices.

Mothers who once trekked long distances or relied on Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) now walk into a Shs600 million government-built facility with fully equipped wards, maternity

services, and laboratory support.

Dr. Dickson Tinkamanyire, the officer-in-charge, said the outpatient visits have surged from just 10 per month to more than 1,000. Deliveries increased from one to 28, and HIV clients from 98 to 380. Family planning services jumped from 40 to 140 clients monthly.

“This is a complete turnaround. People now trust the facility because of better infrastructure and availability of drugs,”
Dr. Tinkamanyire said.

Local leaders described the development as a “miracle” for the hard-to-reach sub county. Mr. Mahande Godfrey, chairperson of the Health Unit Management Committee, said many mothers previously delivered in the



Kabarole District Chairperson Dr. Richard Rwabuhinga commissioning the facility

hands of Traditional Birth Attendants, with some losing their lives.

“Now our women have a safe place to deliver. We thank the government and district leadership for this project,” he said, while calling for an ambulance to handle emergency referrals.

Kasenda Sub County chairperson, Milton Katwesigye, and district councillor, Ms. Annet Nasasira, commended President Museveni and the district chairperson, Dr. Richard Rwabuhinga, for lobbying funds for the project.

Without an ambulance, mothers facing complicated deliveries remain at risk, with only 12 health workers, the center is overstretched.

Leaders are calling for at least 40 staff and a perimeter fence for security. However, they appealed for more staff, saying the current 12 are too few to meet demand, and asked the district to erect a fence for security.

During the commissioning ceremony, Dr. Rwabuhinga urged expectant mothers

to attend antenatal clinics and deliver in health facilities instead of relying on TBAs.

He also announced that the district will construct a Shs120m solar-powered borehole and install a solar lighting system at the facility.

Assistant District Health Officer, Anna Tukahirwa, warned mothers against abandoning family planning, noting that Kasenda still struggles with high levels of child stunting.

“Family planning is about producing children by choice, not by chance,” she said.

The Assistant RDC, Frank Asaba, encouraged residents to improve their diets, saying malnutrition remains a challenge despite Kabarole being a food basket.

The facility, which started years ago in the house of the late Rev. Canon Mate, a parish reverend, has now grown into a symbol of transformation under government support.

Assistant District Health Officer, Anna Tukahirwa, warned mothers against abandoning family planning

KASESE RESIDENTS, WFP PLANT 8,000 BAMBOO TREES TO COMBAT FLOOD DISASTERS

By *Sharon Kabugho, Kasese District Communications Officer*



DDMC meeting with the delegation from ECHO mission

Kasese district has taken a bold step in disaster preparedness, with residents of Kyarumba Sub County and Central Division in Kasese Municipality planting over 8,000 bamboo trees along major rivers to mitigate recurring flood disasters.

The initiative, funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and implemented in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP), targets the banks of rivers Nyamugasani, Dhunguluha, and the Kyaminyoku-Kihalima channel, areas notorious for flooding.

Local Village Disaster Management Committees have been tasked with leading the project, from planting to long-term maintenance of the trees.

So far, 8,180 bamboo trees have been established and officials say bamboo was

chosen for its fast growth and strong root systems that reduce erosion and stabilize riverbanks.

In Kyarumba, community members raised funds for fuel and hired an excavator operator to desilt River Nyamugasani before the planting exercise.

“We mobilized resources among ourselves. After clearing the river, we planted and continue to care for the trees,” said Mugisa Ezakiel of the local Disaster Committee.

On 9th–10th September, 2025, a delegation from ECHO led by Technical Assistant Morten Rughtved Petersen toured the sites alongside WFP and Uganda Red Cross Society officials to assess the implementation.

Petersen praised both the district and the residents for their ownership of the project.

“This is true sustainability. Communities are going beyond the support given to mobilize their own resources,” he said.

Kasese Chairperson Disaster Management Committee, Kikusa Mustafa, commended the initiative for marrying environmental protection with disaster preparedness.

“These interventions have not only improved community readiness but also strengthened the capacity of local committees to implement sustainable solutions,” he noted.

Kasese is among Uganda’s most flood-prone districts, repeatedly battered by overflowing rivers that destroy homes, schools, and farms.

Analysts note that by combining natural barriers such as bamboo with stronger early-warning systems, the district is pioneering a model of anticipatory action that could be replicated

The tree-planting initiative has also been complemented with strengthened early warning systems. Megaphones and whistles have been procured to alert communities during disaster outbreaks.

This integration of ecological and communication measures reflects a shift from reactive relief to proactive risk reduction.

elsewhere.

For communities long defined by vulnerability, the bamboo trees are more than seedlings, they are symbols of resilience, unity, and a proactive approach to disasters. As they take root along the riverbanks, they also anchor a new culture of preparedness, one where local initiative works hand-in-hand with international support to safeguard lives and livelihoods.



ECHO team and the DDMC field visit to Kyarumba to see implementation progress

KITAGWENDA PARTNERS WITH WATER FOR PEOPLE TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER

By Ainomuhangi Justus, IT Officer, Kitagwenda District

Kitagwenda District has joined forces with the local NGO, Water for People, to improve access to clean and safe water for residents in Ntara and Nyabbani sub-counties.

The partnership was officially launched at the Kitagwenda District Headquarters on Monday, 8th September 2025.

Under this partnership, a consultant has been engaged to carry out a 40-day water resource assessment study in the two sub-counties.

The study will examine water availability, quality, and sustainability of both ground and surface water sources, and evaluate suitable technologies for water supply.

The findings will also include estimated development costs and recommendations for sustainable

water infrastructure and resource management.

Speaking at the launch, District Water Officer Sseremba Peter highlighted the low water coverage in Ntara and Nyabbani compared to other areas in Kitagwenda.

“The consultancy report will help us make informed decisions that will positively impact community members in the long run,” he said.

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Moses Akankwasa, reaffirmed the district’s commitment to supporting the project, emphasizing collaboration with Water for People to achieve the initiative’s objectives.

Resident District Commissioner Isiah Kanyamahane described the partnership as a major boost to government



RDC Mr. Isiah giving his speech



Participants

programs.

“This initiative will contribute to the government’s drive to ensure that communities have access to clean and safe water for domestic use. Accessibility to water has a multiplier effect on social and economic transformation,” he said.

The assessment will inform the selection of reliable and sustainable water technologies to be deployed in Ntara

and Nyabbani, ensuring that residents gain improved access to water for domestic, agricultural, and commercial purposes.

The project reflects a growing recognition that water security is central to community development, public health, and economic growth, particularly in underserved sub-counties within Kitagwenda District.

KITAGWENDA LEADERS WARN AGAINST ENCROACHMENT AS RIVER MPANGA FACES THREAT

By Ainomuhangi Justus, IT Officer, Kitagwenda District

Local authorities in Kitagwenda District have issued stern warnings to residents against encroaching on natural resources, urging the adoption of sustainable environmental practices to protect vital water bodies.

The warning follows a monitoring exercise conducted on Wednesday, 10th September 2025, along River Mpanga, led by Assistant Resident District Commissioner (ARDC) Philip Nabaasa in collaboration with the environmental group Joint Efforts to Save the Environment (JESE).

The assessment focused on the riverbanks in Kanara Sub-county, where cultivation and other human activities continue to pose serious threats.

ARDC Nabaasa expressed concern over the growing encroachment by local farmers, emphasizing that such practices

undermine ongoing restoration efforts and violate national environmental policies.

“We have observed serious encroachment by some community members, especially in Kanara Sub-county. This goes against the presidential directive on wetland protection. People must stop cultivating near the riverbanks and respect the law,” Nabaasa said.

He added that defiant individuals would face enforcement action, stressing that environmental protection is a shared responsibility.

District Secretary for Production, Natural Resources, and Commercial Services, Doreen Nankunda Kaita, also condemned the continued illegal



River Mpanga

cultivation along the river.

“Protecting the river is not only for us today, but for future generations as well,” she said.

She cited Kiburara as a success story, noting that community compliance there has led to visible regeneration of riverbanks and improved water flow.

JESE, a long-term partner in the conservation of River Mpanga, has supported local governments through training and community engagement to promote sustainable practices.

Originating from the Rwenzori Mountains and flowing into Lake

George, River Mpanga is a lifeline for communities across western Uganda. However, it faces increasing pressure from cultivation, settlements, and reduced water levels due to human activities.

District authorities and JESE have reaffirmed their commitment to enforcing regulations, raising awareness, and involving communities in conservation efforts to ensure River Mpanga is preserved for future generations.

OVER 5,000 NTOROKO RESIDENTS GAIN ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER

By Ibrahim Sahula, Communication Officer Ntoroko District



Stat Min. For Local Government Hon Businge Victoria Rusoke commissioning the Nyakaotake GWFS yesterday [photo by Sahula]

More than 5,000 residents of Ntoroko District will now have access to clean and safe water following the commissioning of the Nyakatoke Gravity Flow Water System worth Shs1.2 billion.

The project, supported by the Islamic Development Bank and constructed under the Local Economic Growth Services (LEGS) Project of the Ministry of Local Government, was officially commissioned on Thursday, 11th September, 2025, by State Minister for Local Government, Hon. Victoria Rusoke Businge.

Minister Rusoke urged the community to safeguard government projects against vandalism, warning that destroying public facilities such as road signs reflected "a lack of patriotism." She

emphasized that sustainability would depend on residents' ownership and commitment to maintaining the system.

"The water is free, but there is an operational and maintenance component that the water user committee must manage," said Ntoroko District Chairperson, Mr. William Kasoro.

The gravity flow scheme, executed by Gets Technical Services, has installed 15 public tap stands with the capacity to serve households across the area. "The system has more than enough water, and we encourage residents to extend pipes to their homes," said Eng. Wilber Asiimwe, Operations Manager at Gets Technical Services.



Mr. Steven Koma, Assistant Commissioner in the Ministry of Local Government, who represented the Permanent Secretary, called for better coordination to avoid duplication of projects. He urged residents to preserve the facility, noting its importance in the district's socio-economic transformation.

Minister Rusoke also cautioned government auditors and engineers against compromising on quality, stressing that contractors must only be cleared once works are completed to standard. She further encouraged parents to guide the youth towards skills

development to enhance employment opportunities.

Ntoroko District is also set to benefit from LEGS Phase II, which will address unfinished works such as the Kisembo Muleju-FP road, whose construction has been hindered by the area's challenging terrain.

The commissioning aligns with Uganda's efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6), which calls for universal access to clean water and sanitation.



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14TH NOV 2025



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