



FEATURE STORY | PG. 29

Kitagwenda dedicates Shs 88M to the Rehabilitation of Kamira-Rwamasinde Road



I want to remind the contractor to strictly follow the bills of quantities and the technical standards agreed upon. Government is investing heavily in infrastructure, and we must get value for money,”

Nicholas Nuwagira (RDC)

Dear Reader.

Building on the excitement of our first edition last week, the second issue of Rwenzori Times takes you deeper into the heartbeat of the Rwenzori sub-region. Last week, we celebrated Uganda crane's comeback Victory against Guinea, this week they did it again against Niger, a display of commitment and collaboration. In this edition, we showcase bold leadership, innovation, and community resilience shaping our future.

As you read this publication, Step inside Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospital to witness Dr. Bahizi's transformative leadership turning a once-struggling facility into a beacon of hope and efficiency. Travel to Kamwenge, where two new seed schools are set to expand educational opportunities and empower the next generation. See Kasese communities take proactive steps against floods and landslides, protecting lives and livelihoods through smart planning. And explore how regional forces are partnering with local leaders to improve the lives of refugees and host communities alike.



Tusiime Christopher
Chief Editor

From Ntoroko where LEGS project has transformed lives, to Kasese where disaster preparedness is handled with urgency, these stories reveal the courage, vision, and determination driving real change across Rwenzori. Turn the page, progress is happening, and you won't want to miss it.



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Bunyangabu District Climbs 50 Places in National Performance Rankings

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) has hailed Bunyangabu District for a dramatic rise in the 2024 National Assessment of Local Governments, moving from 142nd to 92nd position out of 176 Local Governments nationwide.

The results were unveiled Tuesday at the Bunyangabu District Council Hall by Florence Mbambazi, a senior official in OPM's Directorate of Monitoring. She said the improved ranking would translate into greater budget allocations, directly benefiting residents.

District Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Haji Nsubuga Isa Hood credited the turnaround to filling critical

vacancies, including an Agricultural Engineer, a substantive Head of Production, and additional extension workers, which had hampered past performance. He outlined a new strategy involving weekly monitoring of key outputs and strict departmental accountability.

Vice Chairperson LC5 Alex Twinomuhwezi praised the teamwork between political and technical staff, saying the district now aimed to compete at a national level.

The meeting resolved to strengthen political and technical engagement, disseminate results to all stakeholders, review the Lower Local Government Assessment Manual, and introduce Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) for all sub-counties.

The annual National Assessment, run by the OPM, measures local governments on service delivery, financial management, and administrative efficiency.



Rwagimba Hot Springs: Bunyangabu's Untapped Treasure of Healing and Heritage

In the quiet hills of Bukara Sub-County, 15 kilometres from Nyakigumba Town Council, lies Rwagimba Hot Springs — locally called Embugha — a natural site long cherished by locals but largely absent from Uganda's mainstream tourism maps.

Situated about 40 minutes' drive from the Fort Portal–Kasese Highway, or a four-hour trek for the adventurous, Rwagimba's warm mineral-rich waters have, for generations, been a destination for healing, spiritual renewal, and cultural gathering. Unlike the hotter springs elsewhere in the Rwenzori region, its moderate temperatures make for longer, more comfortable soaks — a tradition locals say restores vitality, eases aches, and “lightens” the spirit.

“When you step into Rwagimba, it's as though nature itself is embracing you,” a local elder told this publication. “You do not just bathe here; you are renewed.”

Encircled by green hills, farmland, and the distant peaks of the Rwenzoris, the hot springs offer visitors sweeping

views, bird calls, and a misty, dreamlike atmosphere at dawn. The journey itself is scenic, passing through villages where residents greet travellers with waves and smiles.

Beyond its therapeutic reputation, Rwagimba has academic appeal. Educators and researchers say it is a natural classroom for geography, environmental science, and cultural studies, providing a rare intersection of geothermal activity, rural livelihoods, and traditional healing practices.

Despite its allure, Rwagimba remains underdeveloped and little known outside Bunyangabu. Local leaders and tourism promoters see potential for it to join the ranks of western Uganda's must-visit attractions — if supported by better access, marketing, and preservation measures.

For now, those who venture off the highway to Embugha will find not just a destination, but an experience that blends nature, culture, and wellness in one setting. As one visitor put it: “You leave with more than you came for.”

Bunyangabu Showcases Talent at Makondere Regional Music and Dance Festival

From 6th to 8th August, Bunyangabu District hosted the 2024 Makondere Regional Music, Dance, and Drama Festivals, drawing schools from Kasese District, Kasese Municipality, and Bunyangabu for a celebration of cultural heritage and creative talent.

Held at Kibiito Primary and Kibiito Secondary schools, the three-day event featured competitions in original compositions, traditional dances, drama, storytelling, and visual arts. The primary schools contest saw Railway Primary School (Kasese) take first place, followed

by Kamaiba Primary (Kasese District) and Rubona Primary (Bunyangabu). All eight choirs received certificates, with winners earning additional merit awards.

Organising committee chairperson and Bunyangabu Senior Inspector of Schools Grace Kajumba expressed gratitude for the smooth event but noted fewer districts and choirs participated than expected, impacting finances.

Committee member Elizabeth Nsungwa emphasised the educational value of the festivals, saying they build creativity, critical thinking, and cultural appreciation. Participation is mandated by the Ministry of Education and Sports for all local governments.

The Makondere Festivals rotate annually among districts in the Rwenzori region. Kasese District will host the 2025 edition. Last year's event in Kamwenge crowned Kamwenge Primary School as the overall winner.



Kabarole Farmers Turn to Value Addition to Revive Tea Earnings

By Stephen Ainganiza & Doreen Nasiima

Communication Officer Kabarole
District

In the rolling green hills of Kabarole District, a quiet transformation is reshaping the tea trade as local farmers embrace value addition to counter low prices and stagnant returns.

For years, much of Kabarole's tea, like most of Uganda's, was sold in bulk as unbranded black tea, bringing minimal profit to smallholder growers who dominate the district's production. But a new wave of agri-entrepreneurs is proving that herbal infusions and specialty blends can fetch better prices and open new markets.

One of them is Willy Businge, a small-scale farmer with the Tooro Organic Producers Association. After attending a district cooperative training on agro-processing, Businge began blending green tea with locally grown herbs such as spearmint, lemongrass, rosemary, and ginger. The response was swift customers were willing to pay up to three times the price of ordinary tea.

"A kilo of black tea sells for about 14,000 shillings here, but my spiced tea goes for 20,000," Businge said. "It's not just the flavour people see it as healthier, and they're willing to pay more."



Dr. Benard Bwambala a Nutritionist

What started as a few kilos at a regional farmers' market has grown into a small brand sold in local shops and exported in small volumes to Ugandans living abroad. Similar ventures are emerging in other parts of the district, creating a growing network of value-added tea producers.

District Push for Skills and Innovation

Local authorities and cooperatives in Kabarole, with support from agencies like the Uganda Industrial Research Institute (UIRI) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), are offering training in herbal processing, packaging, and branding.

Dr. Rabooni Tumuhimbise, a researcher at the National Agricultural Research Organisation's Rwebitaba Zonal Agricultural Research and Development



Spiced Tea Products



Rwebitaba Green Tea products

Institute in Kabarole, said value addition is the clearest path to better incomes. Rwebitaba has already developed black tea bags from clone 303/577 and a protein-rich green tea beverage with health benefits, which are being tested and marketed locally.

Health Appeal Boosts Demand

Nutrition experts say Kabarole's spiced teas tap into a growing health-conscious market. Spices like cloves, cinnamon, and ginger are high in antioxidants with anti-inflammatory properties, said Bernard Bwambale of the local nutrition NGO CONSENT. Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospital nutritionist Nadith Ahumuza added that such teas aid digestion, reduce nausea, and boost mental wellness.

Challenges Remain

Despite the promise, farmers in Kabarole face hurdles including high costs for certification, limited processing facilities, and difficulty reaching export markets. Still, stakeholders believe the district's combination of fertile land, skilled growers, and innovative processing is positioning it as a leader in Uganda's shift toward value-added tea.

With over 80,000 people in Kabarole relying directly or indirectly on tea for their livelihoods, the sector's future may well depend on these homegrown innovations, one herbal infusion at a time.



The District Leadership in a meeting with Hello World during the Transition meeting

Hello World Hands Over Digital Hubs to Kabarole: Connectivity Legacy Powers Communities

In a landmark move to sustain internet access and digital skills in rural areas, international non-profit Hello World has handed over eight solar-powered digital hubs to Kabarole District leadership, marking a new era of community-led connectivity.

The facilities, located at Harugongo Primary School, Karangura Community at Bulhalho Foundation, Rwengaju Sub County, Busoro Sub County, and Nyabukara Youth Center — will now be maintained by the district, ensuring free public internet continues to serve schools and communities long after the organisation's project phase concludes.

At the handover meeting in the district chairman's boardroom, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Arthur Hakiza Nzeimaana praised Hello World's contribution, particularly in empowering youth to use the internet to market produce and connect with global opportunities. "The impact on our district's development is undeniable," he said.

From Global Mission to Local Impact
Founded in 2012, Hello World delivers cost-effective, community-led internet solutions through its signature Hello Hubs, outdoor, solar-powered, internet-connected structures with public touchscreens and educational software. Operating in Uganda, Nepal, Nigeria, and Burundi, the organisation has deployed over 116 hubs worldwide via local partners.

In Kabarole, the hubs have done more than just connect devices — they have transformed lives.

Lead engineer Hillary Basemeza, a product of the Hello World programme, shared his journey from school dropout



Hope Primary School children get certificates in computer skills

and driver to a certified software engineer and community advocate. “I am living proof of what resilience, learning, and self-empowerment can achieve,” he said, crediting Hello World with shaping his skills and career.

Stories of Change

For Kabugho Eva, 19, from Kizungu community, life skills sessions at her local hub helped her gain self-awareness and make better life choices. “I now think outside the box, reflect on my actions, and make better decisions,” she said.

Kemigisa Rosette, a Tooro High School student preparing for her UNEB exams, said the hubs provided Wi-Fi, guidance, and opportunities such as the Young Journalist Club, where she earned a certificate. “I am truly grateful and pray that God continues to use you to impact more lives,” she said.

Retired head teacher Christopher Mwesige, who chairs the Busoro Sub County hub committee, noted that pupils at Hope Primary School have been trained and graduated in digital skills. “The community uses the internet

for research and learning, it’s now on us to contribute to maintaining these facilities,” he said.

A Sustainable Future

Under the new arrangement, a committee chaired by the Principal Assistant Secretary — including the District Information Technology Officer, Communications Officer, District Education Officer, sub-county chiefs, and community managers, will oversee hub operations.

Eng. Basemeza commended LC5 Chairperson Richard Rwabuhinga for supporting the initiative, saying his endorsement helped Hello World expand to other districts in Uganda and even to Nigeria and Burundi.

With communities now contributing to the upkeep of the hubs, leaders believe the transition secures a future where digital access fuels education, economic growth, and global connection.

“This is not just the end of a project,” Eng. Basemeza said. “It’s the beginning of a self-sustaining model for bridging the digital divide in Kabarole.”

Uganda Cranes' Historic Win Inspires Rwenzori Communities Beyond the Pitch

By the editorial team

The Uganda Cranes' 2-0 victory over Niger in the ongoing CHAN 2024 tournament is more than a football triumph, it is a unifying moment for communities across Rwenzori, highlighting the role of sports in fostering social cohesion, youth engagement, and regional development.

The Cranes' win at Nelson Mandela National Stadium on August 12, 2025, marks Uganda's first-ever back-to-back victories in CHAN history. Allan Okello and Joel Sserunjogi's goals energized not only fans in the stadium but also viewers across Rwenzori, sparking conversations about teamwork, discipline, and national pride.

District Communication Officers in Rwenzori report that local youth groups and schools are already using the match as a platform to promote positive messaging. In forums and radio programs, youth leaders highlight lessons from the Cranes' teamwork to encourage education, community volunteerism, and peaceful coexistence, linking sports performance to broader development goals.

The Cranes' resilient defense, led by goalkeeper Joel Mutakubwa, serves as a metaphor for the communities' own resilience in Rwenzori, where districts like Kamwenge, Kasese, and Bundibugyo continue to navigate challenges from refugee settlements, climate-induced disasters, and infrastructure development. By framing sports as a tool for behavior change and community engagement, local governments are promoting values such as perseverance, cooperation, and civic responsibility.

With Uganda set to face South Africa in the final group match, the region watches with anticipation, not just for the result on the pitch, but for the continued momentum in leveraging sports as a channel for community empowerment and positive social change. The Cranes' victories are a reminder that national achievements, whether in education, disaster resilience, or sports, are deeply intertwined with the development aspirations of Rwenzori communities.



Kasese District Embraces Monthly Ecumenical Prayers to Foster Unity and Divine Purpose

By Kabugho Sharon, Communications Officer, Kasese District Local Government

In a landmark move to promote unity, spiritual growth, and a healthier work environment, Kasese District Local Government has officially embraced monthly ecumenical prayers for staff across all departments. This initiative, a resolution of the District Technical Planning Committee (DTPC) held on 24th January 2025, was spearheaded by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Mr. Walakira Paul, who emphasized the importance of collective spiritual engagement regardless of religious affiliation.

Mr. Walakira encouraged staff to not only pray together but also involve local religious leaders in leading the sessions. He noted that this would not only build unity among staff but also serve as a way of giving back to the community and strengthening ties with local churches. “Despite our different beliefs, coming together in prayer is a unifying force. It fosters understanding, harmony, and a stronger sense of purpose,” he said.

Since the resolution, the monthly prayers have been rotationally led by different religious denominations—starting with the Catholics, followed by the Anglicans, Muslims, Adventists, and most recently, the Pentecostals.

On 13th August 2025, the Pentecostal denomination led the district staff in a powerful prayer session held in the District Main Hall from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. The event was graced by Bishop Moses Okumu, the spiritual leader of Kasese Pentecostal Church and founder of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God (PAG) NGO. His organization partners closely with the district in



District Staff during the ecumnnical fellowship

sectors such as education, health, and disaster preparedness—particularly in Karusandara Subcounty.

Bishop Okumu delivered a deeply moving sermon based on the theme: “You Are Not Forgotten, You Are Favoured”, drawing inspiration from Jeremiah 29:11. He reminded the staff that while education and employment are important, true greatness and fulfillment come only from seeking God. “Where God wants to take you, only He can take you there—not your education, not your title,” he preached.

He urged the district staff to invite God into their daily work, assuring them that divine guidance would unlock their full potential and help them fulfill the plans God has for them. “If you seek Him with all your heart, He will answer you,” the Bishop emphasized.

Representing the Chief Administrative Officer, Mr. Kikusa Mustafa conveyed appreciation to Bishop Okumu for his encouraging message and spiritual

leadership. He reiterated the district’s commitment to the monthly prayer initiative, acknowledging the positive impact of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God NGO in community development, especially in education, disaster management, and health.

The District Chairperson, represented by his Vice, Mr. Monday Girivazio, also commended the DTPC for the resolution and the CAO for initiating such a powerful and unifying idea. He assured staff of the Executive Committee’s full support for the monthly prayers and encouraged continuous participation.

With staff participation growing and messages of hope resounding through the District Main Hall each month, the ecumenical prayers are quickly becoming a pillar of unity and spiritual reflection for Kasese District Local Government. As each denomination brings its own voice and values, the district moves forward—grounded not just in policy and planning, but in purpose and prayer.

Government Injects Over UGX 300 Million into Kasese’s Elderly Care, Benefiting thousands

*By Kabugho Sharon, Communications
Officer, Kasese*

In a major boost to elderly welfare, the government has disbursed over UGX 300 million through the Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment

(SAGE) program to more than 3,000 beneficiaries across Kasese District. The funds, distributed via Centenary Bank, target individuals aged 80 and above, providing a safety net to reduce vulnerability and improve quality of life.

Each beneficiary received UGX 100,000 for the quarter of the FY 2025-26, enabling them to meet basic needs, access healthcare services, and invest in small-scale income-generating projects. The program is active in all 44 sub-counties of the district.

During the fund distribution ceremony at Nyamwamba Division headquarters in Kasese Municipality, Resident District

Commissioner Lt. Joe Walusimbi emphasized the government's commitment to the elderly. "The government cares for its elderly citizens and is committed to their well-being. We urge the beneficiaries to utilize the funds wisely and not be misled by politicians who may promise more than they can deliver," he said.

The SAGE program has already transformed lives. Kabugho Yosephina, a 91-year-old grandmother from Acholi Quarter, used her funds to start a goat-rearing project, which now provides her with a sustainable source of income. "When I received my funds, I bought one goat, and now it has multiplied. I can sell and buy whatever I need," she said.

Similarly, Kabugho Regina, an 85-year-old widow from Umoja, cleared outstanding hospital bills and reclaimed personal belongings thanks to the SAGE support. "I was struggling to pay my hospital bills, but the funds helped me settle them and recover my possessions," she recounted. District officials cautioned that while the program is beneficial, some community

members and relatives exploit elderly vulnerability.

Senior Community Development Officer Asiimwe Queen Gonda urged families and community leaders to support the elderly in using the funds responsibly. "We urge family members and community leaders to ensure our elderly citizens are not exploited and that they invest their funds wisely in small projects," she said.

Launched nationally, the SAGE program is a lifeline for Uganda's elderly, reducing poverty and providing security. In Kasese, it is fostering dignity, hope, and improved livelihoods for the district's senior citizens. Officials reaffirmed their commitment to effective implementation, ensuring that the program continues to empower the elderly.

As beneficiaries celebrate newfound independence and stability, the SAGE program exemplifies the government's dedication to the welfare of its most vulnerable citizens, promising continued social impact across Kasese and beyond.

Asiimwe Queen the Senior Community Development Officer helping the sage beneficiary to recount her money





Kitagwenda District Wins NEMA Award for Outstanding Environmental protection

By Ainomuhangi Justus, Communications Officer, Kitagwenda

Kitagwenda District has been recognized as the best local government in Uganda for its exemplary performance in environmental reporting, restoration, and conservation. The award was presented by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) during

the National Biodiversity Conference at Hotel Triangle, Mbarara, organized in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Francis Sabino Ogwal, Senior Manager for District Support at NEMA, commended Kitagwenda for its consistent efforts in monitoring and reporting wetland restoration, community sensitization, and enforcement activities. "If all districts were as compliant, compiling the National State of Environment Report would be much easier," Ogwal noted.

According to Anthony Karyegira, Kitagwenda Senior Environment Officer, the district has restored approximately 21% of its degraded wetlands. "We are seeing positive results: the weather is cooler and wetter, and



communities increasingly view restoration as a moral responsibility,” he said. Karyegira also highlighted ongoing challenges, including individuals claiming ownership of wetlands and limited resources to fully implement the District Environment Action Plan and expand wetland demarcation beyond 68 kilometers.

Kitagwenda’s journey demonstrates significant impact despite limited budgets. “In 2019, our quarterly budget was only Shs 969,400. By 2025, it has grown to Shs 8.2 million. Although still insufficient, we maximize it through community engagement and timely reporting to NEMA,” Karyegira explained. NEMA pledged

support to help Kitagwenda develop a comprehensive District Environment Action Plan to attract additional funding and align with national conservation objectives.

This award marks the district’s third major national recognition: in 2023, it won the Environmental Sustainability Award from NEMA, and earlier this year, it was named the best district in wetland management during World Wetlands Day celebrations in Rubirizi.

Moses Turyamureba Bujara, District Natural Resources Officer, said, “We are humbled by this recognition. It motivates us to keep pushing forward. Conservation is no longer a luxury—it’s a necessity for our communities and future generations.”

With national recognition boosting its visibility, Kitagwenda aims to scale up its conservation initiatives and inspire other districts to adopt sustainable environmental practices.



Kyenjojo District: A Beacon of Hope and Progress in Tooro Region

Nestled in the heart of Western Uganda, Kyenjojo District is redefining its narrative—from rural obscurity to a model of transformation. Guided by visionary leadership, strategic investment, and grassroots innovation, the district is emerging as a hub of inclusive development and national pride.

Aligned with Uganda's National Development Plan IV (2025–2030), Kyenjojo has leveraged strategic programs to catalyze local progress. The district's Five-Year Development Plan focuses on sustainable industrialization, agro-processing, infrastructure upgrades, including roads and water systems, community health, and education access. Recent achievements include the training and commissioning of 332 Community Health Extension Workers (CHEWs), and the completion of Kyarusenzi Seed School and Kigaraale

Seed School, with Kihuura Seed School set to begin construction this financial year. Altogether, these initiatives complement the district's network of over 200 primary and secondary schools.

Programs like the Parish Development Model (PDM) are helping farmers access capital, expand production, and improve livelihoods, translating policy into tangible improvements in standards of living.

Kyenjojo is also rich in natural beauty and biodiversity, positioning it as a potential eco-tourism and investment hub. The Model Tourism Village in Matiri showcases local cultural heritage, while agro-tourism and handicraft industries are creating jobs and preserving traditions. Investors are encouraged to explore ICT, mining, and sustainable agriculture, with the district's forests and wildlife—elephants in Kibaale National Forest and chimpanzees in the canopy—offering unique attractions for tourism and research.

Youth empowerment is another highlight of the district's development agenda. The Tooro Zonal Presidential Industrial Hub in Kijwiiga, Katoke Sub-county, is equipping young people with vocational skills in hairdressing,

carpentry, tailoring, and agro-processing. Graduates have launched salons, farms, and artisan workshops, fostering self-reliance. During the hub's commissioning, President Yoweri Museveni and First Lady Janet Museveni pledged continued support for free education and SACCO funding, reinforcing a shift from dependency to dignity.

Leadership at all levels has been critical to Kyenjojo's transformation. LC V Chairperson Mr. Gilbert Rubaihayo, RDC Mrs. Julian Sarah Ayesiga Muhiira, and Chief Administrative Officer Mr. Amis Asuman Masereka, alongside dedicated district staff and local government teams, have turned government programs into tangible community realities through hands-on management, accountability, and trust-building.

Parliamentarians such as Hon. Faith

Philo Kunihira (Woman MP), Hon. Donald Katalihwa (Mwenge South), Major (Rtd) Tom Butime (Mwenge Central), and Hon. David Muhumuza (Mwenge North) have played instrumental roles in connecting communities to national resources, reflecting the power of collective action and resilience.

Kyenjojo is more than a district, it is a living example of Uganda's potential. Through government commitment, community courage, and visionary leadership, it is setting a standard for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

As Uganda advances toward Vision 2030, Kyenjojo District stands tall—a testament that meaningful transformation begins at home.

Kyenjojo Communities Gain Access to Clean Water as Government Hands Over Boreholes

*By Johnson Atuhaire, Communications
Officer Kyenjojo District*

In a major boost for public health and community development, local leaders in Kyenjojo District handed over nine recently constructed community boreholes and wells to residents

across Butunduzi, Kigaraale, Butiiti, Nyankwanzi, Bugaaki, and Kyembogo sub-counties. The project, funded by the Government of Uganda, aims to improve access to clean water, promote hygiene, and empower communities to manage essential resources sustainably.

The handover ceremony was attended by RDC Kyenjojo Mrs. Julian Sarah Ayesiga, District Chairperson Mr. Gilbert Rubaihayo, sub-county chiefs, the District Water Officer, and other key stakeholders. The event marked the official transfer of ownership and responsibility for the water facilities to the communities, signaling a commitment to long-term sustainability.

“This initiative will have a lasting positive

impact on health, education, and economic activities in the district,” said RDC Ayesiga. She called on households to contribute a small fee of 1,000 Shillings to support minor repairs and security for the water points, ensuring continued functionality.

in upcoming elections, choosing leaders who will add value to their areas.

The initiative aligns with Uganda’s National Development Plan (NDP IV 2025/26 – 2029/30), which emphasizes increasing access to safe water, promoting sustainable water resources



The District Water Officer, Mr. Anthony Ainomugisha, emphasized the importance of proper management. “Residents should protect these water sources, maintain cleanliness, map all water points for monitoring, and assist with major repairs if needed,” he advised.

LC5 Chairperson, Mr. Rubaihayo, praised the government, implementers, and community members for their dedication in making the project a reality. He encouraged residents to use the water to expand income-generating activities such as coffee, cocoa, and Hass avocado cultivation, linking improved water access to economic development. He also urged the community to participate actively

The RDC, Ms Julian Sarah Ayesiga, and Chairperson LC V, Mr Gilbert Rubaihayo, at the commissioning and hand over of one of the water projects in Bugaaki

management, investing in water infrastructure, and improving sanitation and hygiene. By providing reliable water sources, the project supports integrated community development, enhances livelihoods, and strengthens resilience against water scarcity.

“Clean water is foundational to community well-being. By working together to maintain these facilities, Kyenjojo residents are taking an important step toward better health, education, and economic prosperity,” RDC Ayesiga concluded.



Mr. Anthony Ainomugisha, the District Water Officer, addresses the residents at the handover ceremony of the Kyabaranga Water Supply system.



Chairperson LC V, Mr. Gilbert Rubaihayo, commissions the water borehole at Kalangala, in Kyembogo Sub County



Decentralization Brings Education Home: Ntoroko District Hits a Milestone

By Baluku Ibrahim, Communications Officer, Ntoroko District.

Decentralization has transformed education in Ntoroko District, turning what was once a distant dream into a reality for local students. For over 30 years, young people in the district had to travel long distances to Fort Portal or Bundibugyo for secondary schooling, facing challenges such as poverty and cultural resistance to educating girls. Through the decentralization policy, local government now directly plans, funds, and delivers education services, bringing schools and learning closer to the communities.

Today, Ntoroko boasts six secondary schools, including four fully equipped Seed Schools; Nombe, Butungama, Kanara, and Kibuku, built through the

Ministry of Education and Sports' Seed School program. This World Bank-supported initiative ensures that every sub-county without a secondary school receives one, eliminating the need for long treks and expanding educational access.

"Before 2013, we only had Rwebisengo and Karugutu Secondary Schools. Through decentralization and programs like the Seed Schools initiative, we now have more options, including Bweramule Community Secondary School and Ijoto Secondary School, the latter being developed under the Uganda Secondary Schools Expansion Programme (USSEP)," said Ms. Kusemererwa Moureen, district Senior Education Officer.

Decentralization has also enabled vocational skills training through the Rwenzori Zonal Presidential Industrial Hub-Ntoroko, which recruits youth from Ntoroko, Bundibugyo, and Fort Portal City. The hub offers free training in carpentry, metal fabrication, construction, leatherwork, baking,



Construction of Kibuku Seed Secondary School still going on, photo by Sahula, Communication Officer Ntoroko

tailoring, and hairdressing, equipping young people with marketable skills and increasing their employability. To date, 702 youth have graduated from four training sessions.

Admission to the hub is fully managed by a district-led committee comprising Resident District Commissioners, district chairpersons, and Chief Administrative Officers. “Learners are selected, trained, and supported entirely by the State. They pay nothing, and receive meals and full facilitation throughout their courses,” a source involved in hub management explained.

Ntoroko’s education success demonstrates the power of decentralization to deliver services effectively. By placing decision-making and resources closer to the people, the district has expanded access to secondary education and vocational training, empowered youth, and fostered inclusive growth. “We owe gratitude to the government for bringing education and skills training closer to our communities. Decentralization has made learning accessible and equitable for our youth,” Moureen concluded.

LEGS Project Transforms Ntoroko District: Factories, Infrastructure, and Water Schemes Boost Local Economy



Butungama livestock market office block for veterinary officers and Butungama cooperative

By Baluku Ibrahim, Communications Officer, Ntoroko District

The Local Economic Growth Support (LEGS) project has significantly transformed livelihoods in Ntoroko District, delivering major infrastructure, agricultural, and water projects that are improving household incomes, food security, and access to clean water.

Funded by the Islamic Development Bank and implemented under the Ministry of Local Government, LEGS is a five-year initiative designed to accelerate socio-economic growth among poor households. The project aims to enhance productivity, support value chain development, provide access to microfinance for women and youth, and promote sustainable livelihoods.

Since its inception, LEGS has financed the construction of key economic infrastructure. The Nombe Coffee Factory, valued at UGX 740 million, now supports coffee farmers in Karugutu and neighboring Kabarole districts by providing a ready market and processing facilities. Similarly, a maize and rice processing and storage facility in Itojo, Karugutu Sub-County, costing UGX 970 million, is helping farmers store and sell their produce efficiently.

The project has also contributed to agricultural productivity through the distribution of over 300,000 vanilla vines across Karugutu, Nombe, and Rwebisengo sub-counties, empowering households to increase income and reduce poverty. In addition, LEGS promotes environmentally friendly practices by supporting the production



of energy-saving stoves, contributing to Uganda's commitment to SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy.

Access to clean water has been a major focus. The Nyakatooke gravity flow scheme, a UGX 1.2 billion investment, provides public tap stands in Nombe Sub-County, improving water availability and hygiene for thousands of residents. "Clean water is essential for community health and productivity. This scheme directly addresses SDG 6 and is a game-changer for our district," said Ms. Patience Kyompaire, LEGS regional supervisor.

Infrastructure development extends to roads, connecting communities and boosting trade. The 8.7km Kitembo-Muleju community access road links Ntoroko to Kabarole via Nombe, while the 7km Rwebisengo-Kiranga road, built at a cost of UGX 1.6 billion,

improves access for farmers and traders. Additionally, LEGS has constructed the Butungama livestock market and the Kimara Valley water tank (UGX 1.7 billion), enhancing rural livelihoods and water security.

District Chairperson Mr. Kasoro William urged residents to maximize the benefits of these investments. “Our people must fully utilize these roads, factories, and

water systems to improve household incomes and livelihoods,” he said during the commissioning of the Rwebisengo-Kiranga road last year.

With LEGS, Ntoroko District demonstrates how strategic investments in agriculture, infrastructure, and clean water can create sustainable local economic growth, empowering communities and transforming lives.



Beneficiaries of the Maize and Rice milling factory pose for a picture during one of the LEGS assessment tour



A farmer and his son who are beneficiaries of the Livestock market and artificial insemination pose for a picture with their herd in Ntoroko.



Itojo Maize and Rice storage and Processing factory in Karugutu.



Nyakatooke GFS (1.2bn Project)

Why Change Matters in the Health Sector: Fort Portal Hospital a Model Referral – Dr. Bahizi

*By Stephen Ainganiza Waddell-
Communication Officer Kabarole*

Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospital, commonly known as Buhinga, previously struggling with systemic challenges, is now emerging as a model referral facility in the Rwenzori region, Western Uganda. This transformation has been driven by Dr. Bahizi Archbald Newton Sebahire, the Senior Executive Consultant appointed six months ago to lead

the hospital through much-needed reforms.

Dr. Bahizi took over from Dr. Alex Adaku following concerns from the public regarding the alleged poor service delivery and mismanagement at the facility. Formerly the Director of Kiboga Hospital, Dr. Bahizi brought to Fort Portal a bold, strategic approach focused on performance, accountability, and innovation.

When Dr. Bahizi assumed office, the hospital was experiencing several challenges, including staff absenteeism, mismanagement, overcrowding of the facility, extortion complaints from several poor patients, poor sanitation and hygiene, and lack of staff supervision. These issues significantly affected the hospital's efficiency and public trust.

One of Dr. Bahizi's first actions was to develop a strategic performance management plan aimed at improving service delivery. Health workers are now assessed regularly, with clear expectations and



accountability for their roles.

A modern CCTV system was installed to monitor daily operations and ensure staff are present and performing their duties. The cameras in different corners of the facility enable Dr. Bahizi to follow activities at the hospital in real-time—even when he is off-site he can monitor on his mobile phone. Dr. Bahizi reports for work at 6:00 am and is the last personnel to leave the facility at midnight.

The plan also includes routine ward rounds, increased surgical coverage, and active supervision. Within three months, three health workers, including a senior consultant and a senior pharmacist, were relieved of their duties for underperformance.

Another key improvement is the significant reduction in unnecessary referrals from Health Center IIIs and IVs. “We used to receive up to 442 referrals monthly, but now only 94 are genuine,” noted Dr. Bahizi.

He emphasized that many cases previously referred could have been managed at lower-level facilities. The new system ensures doctors remain on duty—especially on weekends—when most referrals used to be made due to absenteeism of doctors.

In a landmark initiative, Dr. Bahizi organized the first-ever Annual Joint Review Mission and Integrated Regional Performance Review Conference. Held at Fort Breeze Hotel, this event brought together District Health Officers (DHOs), Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), Resident District Commissioners (RDCs), District Chairpersons, the clergy, media, and development partners.

The goal was to review regional health indicators, promote accountability, and improve planning and coordination across the Rwenzori region.



To tackle complaints of extortion, the hospital has implemented strict monitoring measures. The CCTV system plays a central role in identifying culprits. So far, three staff members have been removed following investigations.

“We must serve with integrity. As leaders in the health sector, we are here to help—not exploit,” emphasized Dr. Bahizi.

Dr. Bahizi is also laying the groundwork for long-term impact. He has lobbied partners for the construction of a six-storey building to expand hospital services. Discussions were made with Tooro Kingdom to establish the King Oyo Medical Center for specialized treatment.

Efforts are being made to boost blood collection in collaboration with the regional blood bank, ensuring an adequate supply for the Rwenzori region and beyond.

Dr. Bahizi is leading a campaign to improve community health through education and outreach on HIV prevention, hand washing, nutrition, preventing non-communicable diseases, drinking boiled water, and mosquito net usage.

“If we design a campaign and share it widely as leaders, we can all drive change. Be agents of change,” he said.

Kyenjojo District Chairperson, Mr. Gilbert Rubaihayo, applauded Dr. Bahizi’s passion and commitment, calling his leadership a turning point for health services in the region.

Dr. Patrick Ajuna from the Ministry of Health highlighted the ministry’s move towards integrated service delivery and praised the regional model being developed in Fort Portal.

Key takeaways from the reforms include shifting focus from curative to preventive care, ensuring facility heads are present and responsive, implementing performance-based systems, dismissing consistently underperforming staff, promoting regional collaboration and joint reviews, conducting public health outreach and education, developing mandatory screening policies for cancers, and expanding campaigns on nutrition and non-communicable diseases.

Dr. Bahizi’s reforms demonstrate that leadership, vision, and accountability can revive public institutions and restore public confidence. His message is clear: with systems in place, support from partners, and a focus on community wellness, regional referral hospitals can meet and exceed national health goals.

“Transformative leadership inspires people to commit deeply to a shared vision and empowers them to act.”

Under his guidance, Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospital is no longer struggling—it is now an inspiration of hope and a model for health sector transformation.



Courtesy images of the Tooro Kingdom Palace



Kitagwenda dedicates Shs 88M to the Rehabilitation of Kamira-Rwamasinde Road

*By Ainomuhangi Justus Communications
Officer Kitagwenda DLG*

Authorities in Kitagwenda District have officially launched the rehabilitation of the 12-kilometre Kamira-Rwamasinde road in a major effort to improve rural connectivity and ease the transportation of agricultural produce between Kabujogera Town Council and Buhanda Sub-county.

The road works, worth Shs 88 million, are being undertaken by Mwijuka HR Services and are expected to enhance access for farmers and traders in the area who have long struggled with poor road conditions.

Speaking during the launch ceremony on Thursday, Assistant District Engineer Mary Ahebwa outlined the scope of work to be undertaken.

“The rehabilitation works will include bush clearing, road shaping, installation of culverts, and other essential improvements. Our goal is to ensure a durable road that can serve the community effectively,” said Ahebwa.

She noted that the project is fully funded and monitored under district supervision to ensure timely and quality completion.

Doreen Nankunda, the Female District Councilor for Kabujogera Town Council, urged the local community to take an active role in monitoring the project.

“This road belongs to all of us. I call upon residents to keep a watchful eye and ensure the contractor does a thorough and quality job. If we all cooperate, this road will serve us for years,” Nankunda said.

The Kitagwenda Resident District Commissioner (RDC), Nicholas Nuwagira, also emphasized the importance of quality service delivery from the contractor.

“I want to remind the contractor to

strictly follow the bills of quantities and the technical standards agreed upon. Government is investing heavily in infrastructure, and we must get value for money,” RDC Nuwagira said.

Local farmers and transporters welcomed the project, expressing hope that it will reduce travel time, lower transportation costs, and minimize losses of perishable goods.

The Kamira-Rwamasinde road is part of Kitagwenda’s broader infrastructure development strategy aimed at opening up rural areas, boosting economic activity, and improving livelihoods across the district.



Authorities in Kitagwenda District have officially launched the rehabilitation of the 12-kilometre Kamira-Rwamasinde road in a major effort to improve rural connectivity and ease the transportation of agricultural produce between Kabujogera Town Council and Buhanda Sub-county.

WFP Rolls Out Disaster Plan in Kasese to Protect Lives and Livelihoods

By Kabugho Sharon – Communications Officer, Kasese District Local Government

Kasese District Local Government has joined forces with the World Food Programme (WFP), with funding from ECHO, to implement an Anticipatory Action Plan designed to reduce the impact of floods, landslides, and other climate-driven hazards.

The initiative followed a joint field assessment by the District Disaster Management Committee and Kasese Municipal Council leaders along the Kyalima–Kyaminyoku Channel in Nyakabingo II, Central Division. The team examined the vulnerability of households in buffer zones and evaluated the condition of drainage and erosion control structures.

The assessment revealed that damaged crossing points were restricting movement and endangering residents. It also found that the absence of vegetation cover had accelerated erosion and siltation, leaving channel banks weak and unstable. Nearly three kilometres of the channel were identified as critically damaged, posing a threat to lives, property, livelihoods, and public infrastructure.

Officials warned that failure to act quickly could result in loss of life, restricted access to essential services, community displacement, infrastructure damage, and increased public health risks. They agreed to immediately reinforce crossing points and stabilise channel banks through engineered works and vegetation planting. Plans include the use of 3,000 bamboo trees to restore vegetation cover and protect the banks from further erosion.

Community engagement remains central to the plan. Residents took part in both the assessment and the planning process, ensuring that interventions reflect local needs and encourage ownership. Local leaders are also mobilising communities to participate in flood risk management and adopt climate adaptation practices.

Kasese's district officials have noted that the Anticipatory Action Plan is move from reactive to proactive disaster management distinguishing that they are planning ahead and not waiting for disasters to strike but protecting people and their livelihoods before tragedy happens.

WFP officials reaffirmed their commitment to supporting local government in delivering timely and practical solutions that strengthen resilience in disaster-prone areas. With coordinated action, adequate resources, and sustained community participation, leaders believe Kasese can shift from disaster response to prevention, safeguarding lives and promoting sustainable development.



EASF Team Visits Kamwenge District to Address Refugee-Host Community Challenges

Eastern Africa Standby Force Team Probes Refugee Host Community Challenges in Kamwenge

By Bigabwenkya Vincent, Senior Communication Officer, Kamwenge

Kamwenge District hosted a delegation from the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF) on August 7, 2025, in a fact-finding mission aimed at assessing the coexistence of

refugees and host communities, and charting practical solutions to shared challenges.

Led by Lt. Col. Nour Osman, the EASF team met with key district leaders, including Resident District Commissioner Aharikundira Africano, Chief Administrative Officer Kansiime Harriet, District Chairperson Hon. Karungi Joseph, and the District Police Commander.

Call for increased funding

In his address, RDC Aharikundira called for increased funding to Kamwenge District, stressing that the refugee influx has placed immense pressure on public services. He noted that the health sector is overstretched, with limited health facilities, and the education sector lacks

adequate schools to serve both refugees and the host population.

Road infrastructure concerns

District Chairperson Karungi echoed these concerns, urging for interventions that raise the living standards of refugees to match international benchmarks. He also flagged road infrastructure as a critical challenge, revealing that the district relies on only one road unit to maintain roads in both refugee-hosting subcounties and the wider district, significantly hampering transport and service delivery.

Purpose and outcomes

According to the delegation head, the EASF visit was designed to gather first-hand insights that will inform their recommendations and support strategies for Kamwenge. The mission aligns with EASF's broader mandate to promote peace, stability, and sustainable development across Eastern Africa.

Commitment to collaboration

District leaders welcomed the engagement, expressing readiness to work closely with EASF and other partners to address both immediate and long-term needs. They underscored that improving services for refugees also benefits host communities, reducing tensions and fostering peaceful coexistence.

With the findings from this mission, EASF is expected to compile a report detailing the current situation, priority needs, and possible intervention areas, laying the groundwork for resource mobilization and coordinated action in Kamwenge District.

Kamwenge hosts a significant refugee population, making it a strategic focus for regional humanitarian and development efforts. The district's leaders remain optimistic that this visit will translate into tangible improvements in infrastructure, social services, and community relations.

Accounts Staff in Kamwenge District Urged to Guide, Not Mislead

By Joy Kiiza, SITO, Kamwenge Kamwenge District

Accounts staff in Kamwenge District have been urged to leverage their expertise to guide supervisors constructively, rather than mislead them, during a two-day refresher training organized by the

Kamwenge District Local Government.

The training, held at the District Chambers on 11th August 2025, brought together account assistants and treasurers from town councils and sub-counties. It aimed to strengthen financial management skills, reinforce ethical practices, and improve service delivery across the district's finance departments.

In her opening remarks, Chief Finance Officer Madam Bagaya Grace highlighted the importance of equipping accounts staff with up-to-date knowledge in financial laws, the PPDA Act, and reporting procedures.

She encouraged participants to embrace commitment, teamwork, and a culture of consultation, noting that professional excellence goes hand in hand with integrity and dedication.

During the closing session, Chief Administrative Officer delivered message on professional responsibility. She emphasized that accounts staff should use their skills to support supervisors in making informed decisions, rather than leading them astray.

"Your knowledge and skills are valuable use them to support your bosses in making informed decisions, not to mislead them," she stated, emphasizing the advisory role of finance officers in enhancing leadership quality and service delivery.

The training also stressed the need for ethical conduct, financial accountability, and collaborative work, reminding staff that their input directly influences both governance and community service outcomes.

Lead facilitators included Mr. Tulinawe Christopher (SAA), Mr. Albert Tumwesigye (SFO), Mr. Arinaitwe Milton (FO), Mr. Mugabe Moses (Revenue Officer), Mr. Muhame Chrispus Wenger (Senior Procurement), alongside the district internal audit team.

The refresher course is part of Kamwenge District's ongoing efforts to enhance public financial management, ensuring that technical expertise translates into sound leadership decisions and transparent service delivery.



Two New Seed Schools Break Ground in Kamwenge, Boosting Access to Secondary Education

By Joy Kiiza – SITO, Kamwenge District

Kamwenge District's education sector received a major boost on August 13, 2025, with the official handover of construction sites for Busiriba and Kabambiro Seed Secondary Schools to ISB Construction Limited. The milestone, held at Busiriba Primary School grounds and in Kabambiro, marks the start of two large-scale projects under the Uganda Secondary

Education Expansion Project (USEEP), jointly funded by the World Bank and the Government of Uganda.

The handover was presided over by the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), who served as chief guest, alongside Members of Parliament, Ministry of Education officials, district leaders, community representatives, and the contractor. The ceremony formalized the transfer of building plans, coordinates, permits, and other documents to the contractor, paving the way for physical works.

Expanding access to education

Under the USEEP Subcomponent 1.1, the schools will each feature eight classrooms in three blocks, an administration block, science laboratories, ICT/library facilities, teachers' houses, kitchens, latrines, a sports field, a multipurpose hall, and utility connections. Laboratory



equipment, science kits, chemicals, and furniture will also be provided. Busiriba's project is valued at UGX 3.42 billion, while Kabambiro's will cost UGX 3.48 billion (VAT exclusive). Both projects are expected to be completed in 10 months.

Project Engineer Aggrey Atukwasa from the Ministry of Education emphasized that the new schools are designed as double-stream facilities, significantly increasing secondary school capacity in the district.

Commitment to quality and integrity

The RDC urged the contractor to deliver work that meets technical specifications, warning against political interference and theft of materials. "We will ensure security on site and deal firmly with anyone caught diverting

project resources," he said.

Representing the Chief Administrative Officer, Senior Assistant Secretary to the Land Board, Mr. Kashaija John, expressed gratitude to Bishop George K. Turyasingura and Bishop Robert Muhirwa for donating land for the two schools, 5 acres in Busiriba and 6 acres in Kabambiro respectively. He also acknowledged MP Eng. Abigaba Cuthbert Mirembe for facilitating the board meetings that secured land titles.

Kashaija urged the contractor to cooperate with district technical teams during monitoring and supervision. He also appealed to families to maintain peace and unity during the construction phase to avoid disruptions.

Local benefits and ownership

MP Abigaba praised the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries Frank Tumwebaze, district



engineers, and technical officers for their work in securing project approvals. He stressed the importance of using local labor and materials to stimulate the district's economy and encouraged residents to take part in monitoring the project to ensure quality and transparency.

Beyond the physical infrastructure, the two seed schools are part of Uganda's broader goal of reducing secondary school congestion and increasing rural access to quality education. By involving

community leaders, local government, and residents in planning and oversight, the project fosters local ownership, accountability, and sustainability, key principles for long-term educational transformation.

With construction now underway, Busiriba and Kabambiro seed schools represent more than buildings—they are symbols of opportunity, community partnership, and commitment to closing the education gap in Kamwenge District.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NDPIV)

THE GROWTH AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION PERIOD (2010 TO DATE)

- ▶ The size of Uganda's economy increased more than **3-fold**.
- ▶ Nominal GDP increased to **UGX 202.7 trillion** in FY2023/24 from **UGX 64.8 trillion** in FY2010/11.
- ▶ GDP per capita increased to **USD 1,154** from **USD 894**.
- ▶ Domestic revenue increased **4-fold**.
- ▶ The revenue increased to **UGX 27,726 billion** from **UGX 6,402 billion** over this period.
- ▶ The headcount poverty rate decreased to **16.9%** in FY2023/24 from **24.5%** in FY2010/11.
- ▶ The subsistence economy decreased to **33.1%** in FY2023/24 from **69%** in FY2010/11.
- ▶ Poverty declined in the Elgon, West Nile, and Bunyoro sub-regions as of FY2019/20.





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