

WEEKLY ISSUE 02

# Teso Post

19<sup>TH</sup> JUNE TO 26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2024

*From the Heart of Teso*



*Some of the Leaders from Kapelebyong that defected to NRM from other opposition parties posing for a photo with the Party leadership*

## “Opposition is Very Disorganised” New NRM Converts

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*This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Weekly Teso Post edition.*

## *Editor's Note*

Dear Readers,

As we delve into our second edition, we're thrilled to keep connecting with the lively Teso community through the Teso Post. It's been amazing to see the support and involvement from our readers since our first issue.



Emmanuel Opio  
Editor-In-Chief  
+256784129412  
[tesopost1@gmail.com](mailto:tesopost1@gmail.com)

This edition features a blend of exciting news stories from the region, PDM success stories from beneficiaries, and a showcase of finished and ongoing projects in Teso. Teso Post goes beyond just reporting news – it's a platform for your voices to be heard.

I urge you, our valued readers, to get actively involved in this joint effort. Do you have a story to share? An event coming up that deserves attention? Or any other story ideas? We eagerly await your contribution through letters to the editor.

At the core of Teso Post is a strong belief in community power. Let's work together to create a platform that reflects the vibrancy and diversity of the great Teso Sub region.

Once again, thank you for joining us on this journey. Your ongoing support drives us forward, shaping Teso Post into a source of unity and information for our community.

Looking forward with gratitude.

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# President Museveni Delivers on Promise to Tarmac Katine-Ochero Road



*The Secretary for Works in Kalaki District Mr Robin Hood Ekwau inspects the construction of the 500 metre road that connects to district HQTRs from the main road. Photo Julius Odeke*

The promise of tarmacking the 69.3-km Katine-Ochero road, which stretches from Katine in Soroti district via Kalaki district headquarters to Ochero sub-county in Kaberamaido district, is set to become a reality.

The Kalaki District Chairperson, Mr. Samuel Okello, expressed his gratitude with the recent budget announcement by the Central Government outlining plans for this crucial infrastructure development.

Mr. Okello however, cautioned the public to remain vigilant against individuals with self-serving agendas who might seek improper credit for the road's impending upgrade.

“The tarmacking of this road is a presidential pledge made by President Yoweri Museveni to the people of Kalaki and Kaberamaido during his campaign. Therefore no local leader within Kalaki or Kaberamaido should claim that it's because of them that is why the road is now being earmarked for tarmacking” said Okello.

In response to the budget announcement made by the Minister of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development, the decision to tarmac the Katine-Ochero road was met with enthusiasm by local leaders.

Mr. Robin Hood Ekwau, the secretary for works in the District, emphasized the importance of this development, noting that it would simplify

communication with the local community.

Mr. Ekwau also highlighted ongoing efforts within the district to improve smaller roads that link sub-counties and neighboring districts like Alebtong and Amuria. These initiatives aim to facilitate smoother business transactions for local communities, particularly those engaged in trade.

**Julius Odeke,**  
**Communication Officer**  
**Kalaki District**

# Pictorial: Road Maintenance Works

Under the UGX 1Bn allocation for FY 2023/24 to the road sector in the district, 855m has been allocated to three roads which are currently being worked on and the works include heavy grading, full gravelling, swamp raising which will involve drainage improvement, and culvert installation.

## Ocorimongin road – Abule road



In Ocorimongin – Abule road engineers are doing full gravelling covering a distance of 8kms. Murrum was dumped and so far 7 kms are covered with gravel and actual spreading and compacting done.

## Koritok – Aparia road



On Koritok-Aparia road the works being undertaken are full gravel, culvert installation and construction of head walls for the culverts. This covers 7.5Kms and 6Kms of full gravel, with 19 culverts installed out 24 with headwalls.

## Abwokodia road



## Abwokodia currents works

Four culverts installed, murrum already excavated and dumping to be done immediately. The entire road distance to be covered is 7km. the road in question connects to H.E the VP from the eastern side.

A section of Usuk – Adacar road that also connects to ongongoja sub couty to the north and curves to orungo under Ngariam sub couty t the east.



# Kalaki District Receives Over 600 Iron Sheets from OPM to Improve Housing Infrastructure



The Office of the Prime Minister has given out 658 iron sheets to five beneficiaries in Kalaki district to help them construct and live in modern housing units as opposed to mud and wattle ones.

The recipients included Lwala Roman Catholic Church with 408 sheets, Ochelakur Seed Secondary School with 150, and various individuals benefitting from 30 to 40 sheets each.

During the handover, State Minister for Teso Affairs Dr. Kenneth Clement Ongalo Obote emphasized to the beneficiaries that the iron sheets should not be sold, as they were intended for their relief and not for monetary gain.

“Never be tempted to sell out the relief since that is not the intended purpose of giving them the iron sheets,” said the Minister.

Dr. Ongalo highlighted the historical challenges faced by the region, especially the turmoil caused by past conflicts that left many struggling financially. He stressed the government’s

commitment to supporting the people of Teso through programs like this, facilitated by the District Disaster Management Committee.

“It is therefore against this background that the Government set up a ministry that is here to help the people of Teso establish themselves like any other region in the country,” said Minister Ongalo.

Reiterating the significance of community reporting on natural disasters, Dr. Ongalo emphasized the need for prompt communication to facilitate targeted relief efforts.

The initiative also recognized the hardships endured by individuals like Mzee Olobo and Oliva Nagulwala, who suffered huge losses during past conflicts, receiving additional support due to their circumstances.

The distribution of the iron sheets, amounting to a total cost of Shs 46 M, indicates the government’s ongoing efforts to improve living conditions and provide assistance where needed. The Resident District Commissioner (RDC)

for Kalaki District, Mr. Sadiq Bakale, echoed sentiments of gratitude towards President Yoweri Museveni for his enduring support and urged continued solidarity with the government’s initiatives.

“As the people of Teso, we need to thank His Excellency President Yoweri Museveni for having stood with us,” he said.

Bakale urged the people of Teso to vote in big numbers for President Museveni whenever any election that requires them to vote him comes.

The State Minister for Teso Affairs calls for unity in the region to enable him to serve them more so at this critical time where many people on social media have emerged telling lies to the public. “Ignore them,” he summed up.

**Julius Odeke**  
Communication Officer  
Kalaki District

# Kaberamaido District Acquires Fiber Glass Boat to Combat Illegal Fishing

The Fisheries Department, under the leadership of the District Fisheries Officer Mr. Agaja Joseph, has acquired a plastic Fiberglass Boat valued at UGX 39,000,000. This acquisition from the Fisheries Institute in Entebbe aims to enhance surveillance capabilities against illegal fishing activities plaguing the various landing sites within the district.

During the boat's official commissioning, LCV Chairperson Victor Rex Ekesu expressed gratitude towards the Fisheries Department for prioritizing the procurement of the vessel in their strategic plan. Ekesu emphasized that with proper awareness campaigns and adherence to sustainable fishing practices, Okile landing site, formerly known as Kele Port, can reclaim its former prosperity.

Encouraging the community to shift focus from the absence of industrial facilities within the district, Ekesu highlighted the abundant natural resources bestowed upon them. He highlighted

the potential for generating substantial local revenue through effective utilization of these resources, stressing that fish constitute the country's third-largest foreign exchange earner. Ekesu emphasized the importance of catching mature fish as a key strategy for maximizing returns.

Ekesu also urged the Fisheries Department to intensify educational initiatives targeting fishing communities to combat illegal fishing practices. He also called upon Beach Management Units to convene regular meetings to safeguard the lakes from unlawful activities.

During the handover ceremony of the boat to the fishing community at Okile landing site, RDC Lotem Linos Tumkori cautioned against resorting to witchcraft and fostering envy. Tumkori urged the community to seek divine intervention for successful fishing ventures, attributing underdevelopment and conflicts in many landing sites to malpractices like witchcraft and jealousy.

Further detailing the specifications of the boat, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Kaberamaido, Mr. Drama Henry, highlighted its capacity to carry up to 2 tonnes, measuring 9m in length, 0.8m in depth, and 1.6m in width, with an impressive lifespan exceeding 50 years.

Mr. Drama disclosed plans to engage a skilled boat handler to oversee the vessel, citing government staffing constraints. This strategic move aims to enhance mobility across various landing sites within the district, facilitating activities including enforcement of fishing regulations and community mobilization in the fisheries sector.

**Miriam Ikelai**  
*Communication Officer*  
 Kaberamaido District



*Commissioning of the Plastic Fiber Glass boat at Okile landing Site*



# WETLANDS: A Common Good for the People, Can't be Sold



In light of the recent wetland evictions by NEMA, a number of affected persons have claimed that they legitimately bought and owned the land. This article details the legal aspects of environmental law, the management and ownership of wetlands.

The environment is anything and everything around us. The word environment is adopted from the French word "environa" which simply means "that which surrounds us".

The Ugandan Constitution reserves the ownership of environmentally sensitive areas like wetlands, lakes, rivers, forests and others for all of us "the people". The constitution is clear that wetlands must be protected and cannot be sold by anyone. The government of Uganda holds and manages wetlands in trust (on behalf of the people).

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) Act mandates the "Authority" i.e. The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) as the official managers of wetlands.

The NEMA Act above lists activities that are prohibited in wetlands. In short, any activity that destroys or changes the nature of the wetland is not allowed unless a license is granted after an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) is conducted and accepted. A license or permit issued by NEMA is not absolute and can be challenged in court by the people.

When posed with the question of whether a wetland can legally be sold, the simple answer is NO. Section 54 of the NEMA Act prohibits the alienation of wetlands. Neither a

Central government nor a Local government) can legally sell a wetland. It is because the government only manages these wetlands on behalf of the common person. Government holds in Trust i.e. holds for the common good of everyone.

**Ogeuna Anis, Lawyer.**  
**Senior Lands Management Officer and Legal Advisor to The Ngora District Land Board.**



# Kaberamaido District: Rehabilitation Works Commence with Acamidako-Apai Rd , 19 Other Roads to Follow

Kaberamaido District officials, led by RDC Lotem Linos Tumkori, have kicked off the rehabilitation of the Acamidako-Apai Road in Swagere Parish, Ocheru Sub-county.

The 8 km road is set to undergo improvements at a cost of UGX 52,634,600. This project is part of the district's plan to revamp a total of 19 roads using the UGX 1 billion road grant allocated by the government to each district for the fiscal year 2023/2024.

During the launch, RDC Tumkori emphasized the importance of community oversight to ensure the project's success and accountability. To encourage vigilance, he announced a reward of UGX 200,000 for reporting any illicit activities related to the project like fuel syphoning or selling of murram. He however cautioned the community against false accusations.

Addressing the community, LCV Chairperson Victor Rex Ekesu expressed gratitude for prioritizing the Acamidako-Apai Road, emphasizing its significance to local farmers who have struggled due to the road's poor condition since its last maintenance in 2008.

CAO Ddamba Henry highlighted transparency and accountability as central goals of the project, underlining that the community has a right to understand the project scope to ensure that resources are used effectively.

Senior Engineer Ewayu Francis outlined the rehabilitation plan, including bush clearing, culvert covers, reshaping, culvert installations, and the placement of informational billboards. He advised against using Ox-Ploughs on the road to prevent erosion, recommending transportation by bicycle to safeguard the road's integrity.

The rehabilitation of the Acamidako-Apai Road symbolizes a concerted effort by Kaberamaido District to improve infrastructure, boost agricultural productivity, and enhance the livelihoods of local residents.

*Miriam Ikelai*  
Communication Officer  
Kaberamaido District



*Launching of rehabilitation works on Acamidako-Apai road 2*

# “Opposition is Very Disorganised”

## New NRM Converts

**Y**outh leaders from Uganda Peoples Congress Party (UPC) in Kapelebyong district who recently crossed to National Resistance Movement have defended their decision to join the ruling party.

John Okitoi Erisat, the former District Chairperson of Amuria who deserted to NRM on September 22, 2023, said he crossed after experiencing great disorganization among opposition parties.

Okitoi, who lost a bid for Kapelebyong County Member of Parliament seat in the 2021 general election under the UPC ticket, said that his decision was timely and well thought out.

While speaking at a burial in Obedo Village, Obalanga Sub County in Kapelebyong district on June 13, 2024, Okitoi expressed optimism that he can serve the people better by belonging to the ruling party.

The other opposition leaders who joined NRM were Richard Enyagu and Domenic Aojan, the District Councillors representing Kapelebyong Town Council and Akore Town Council respectively. They were received by Richard Todwong, the NRM Secretary-General at the NRM headquarters at Plot 10 on Kyadondo Road in Nakasero on June 6, 2024.

Others are former Democratic Party’s Jorem Peter Okotum, the District Councillor representing Acowa Sub County, and Florence Adupe, the FDC’s former Woman Member of Parliament contestant.

The flamboyant Aojan echoed that they joined NRM to serve people but not for personal gain.

“Our colleagues who are still in the opposition are freely welcome to join us in NRM,” Enyagu said.

This multitude of defections has left the locals questioning the strength and capability of the opposition in Kapelebyong district in the upcoming general elections of 2026.

**Emmanuel Opio**  
District Communication Officer  
Kapelebyong



*Some of the Leaders from Kapelebyong that defected to NRM from other opposition parties posing for a photo with the Party leadership*



*NRM SG Richard Todwong addressing the new converts*

# Presidential Awards Committee Urges Teso Residents to Nominate Outstanding Individuals for Medals

The Presidential Awards Committee has called upon the residents of Teso to nominate exceptional individuals who have showcased remarkable dedication and service to the nation for national honours and awards.

During his regional tour in Kalaki district as part of an outreach initiative covering Northern and Eastern Uganda, Mr. Tonny Mulambe, the National Coordinator of the Presidential Awards Committee, emphasized the significance of recognizing those who have made outstanding contributions to society.

“It is crucial that we identify and honor individuals who have distinguished themselves through their exceptional service to our nation,” stated Mulambe, pointing out the pivotal role of the Presidential Awards Committee in evaluating and selecting deserving candidates for recognition.

The primary objective of these regional engagements is to raise awareness among the public regarding the significance of bestowing medals upon individuals who have excelled in their respective fields and made significant contributions to the nation.

Mulambe highlighted that these awards serve as a form of social recognition, emphasizing that they transcend monetary value and symbolize appreciation for the exemplary work carried out by individuals.

“We do not give these awards for monetary value but for recognition of outstanding work done by individuals in our societies and for social recognition, such as medical care, when people may need such assistance,” Mulambe said.

Mr. Bakale, the Resident District Commissioner for Kalaki District, emphasized the importance of encouraging medal recipients to proudly wear their accolades as a means of acknowledging and celebrating their valuable contributions to the national fabric.

Dr. Beatrice Mukaye Wabudeya, Chairperson of the Presidential Awards Committee, outlined the diverse categories where proposals for national honours and awards can be submitted, encompassing fields such as civil service, military service, academia, culture, media, religion, industry, and sports, among others.

The spectrum of military decorations and

medals available for recognition consists of accolades like the Order of Katongoa, Kabalega Star, Rwenzori Star, Masaba Star, and Damu Medal, alongside the Luwero Triangle Medal, Kagera Medal, Order of Lukaya, and Kyoga Medal.

On the civilian front, awards include the Nalubale Medal, National Independence Medal, and the prestigious Most Excellent Order of the Pearl of Africa, among others.

Mulambe urged leaders with a patriotic mindset to actively engage in disseminating information about these awards during official gatherings and technical meetings to ensure broader awareness among the public.

The National Honours and Awards Regulations, established under section 18 of the National Honours and Awards Act, 2001, provide the framework for the selection and recognition of individuals who have demonstrated exceptional service and dedication to the nation.

*Julius Odeke,  
Communication Officer,  
Kalaki District*



# AMURIA: Gov't Launches Construction of Two Seed Secondary Schools

## Expanding Access to Affordable Education in Local Communities

**A**muria district has taken a significant step forward in enhancing education accessibility for its residents with the launch of construction of two seed secondary schools.

These seed secondary schools aim to provide more affordable secondary education to the people of Amuria, aligning with the government's commitment to establish a secondary school in every sub-county.

The newly initiated projects are the Amolo Seed Secondary School and the Apeduru Seed Secondary School, which will be developed in phases to accommodate the educational needs of the region.

The initial phase of constructing Amolo Seed Secondary School has been assigned to CAB Uganda Limited at a cost of UGX 664,860,600, while the contract for Apeduru Seed Secondary School has been granted to BP Enterprises and Construction Company Limited for UGX 684,200,000.

These additions bring the total number of seed secondary schools in Amuria to five others which include Wera Seed Secondary School, Asamuk Seed Secondary School, and Morungatuny Seed Secondary School.

During the launch of Amolo Seed Secondary School, Minister of State for Works, Musa Ecweru (Amuria County MP), emphasized the government's unwavering commitment to ensuring that every sub-county across the nation has a Seed Secondary School.

"Our party the National Resistance Movement Party that you always vote for is the one that is bringing education closer to you so that your children do not trek long distances in search of education," said Minister Ecweru.

Acting Sub-county Chief of Amolo, Job Okiring also noted that these schools will significantly reduce the burden on learners who previously had to travel long distances for education. He pointed out that nearby schools were approximately seven kilometers away, which is a challenging journey for students.

Moses Emabu the Amuria District LCV chairperson thanked the government for granting Amuria two seed secondary schools. "I sincerely want to thank the government of Uganda for allocating two seed secondary schools in Amuria. My people will be able to access secondary education easily," said Emabu.

The RDC of Amuria, Ms. Lillian Eyal, emphasized the favorable learning environment facilitated by the school's strategic location away from the busy Soroti-Moroto Highway.

**Christopher Okiring,**  
Communication Officer  
Amuria District



*Minister Ecweru breaking the ground for the construction of Amolo Seed SS*



*Minister Ecweru flagging off the construction of Amolo Seed SS*

# Serere Fish Farmers Boosted with Fish Feeds and Fingerlings Distribution

The Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries, in conjunction with the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), recently provided essential support to fish farmers in Serere. The initiative involved the distribution of African Catfish (*Clarias Gariepinus*) fingerlings, a sought-after delicacy locally referred to as “ekolia,” alongside starter fish feeds.

The distribution ceremony, attended by District Leadership representatives, saw 32 fish farmers in Serere receiving a substantial boost. A total of 60,000 fingerlings and 2,890 kilograms of starter fish feeds were allocated to the farmers, marking a significant investment in the region’s aquaculture sector.

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Omwony

Stephen commended the farmers for embracing fish farming as a sustainable means to improve their livelihoods. Emphasizing the importance of diversifying fish sources, Stephen highlighted the potential for increased fish production within the Serere community.

Head of Department Production and Marketing in Serere DLG, Ogiro Vincent, described fish farming as the new economic frontier for the region, especially with continued government support. Ogiro urged local farmers to seize the opportunity and capitalize on the resources provided to them.

District Fisheries Officer, Achibu Peter, advised farmers to leverage the expertise of extension workers for guidance and support. Achibu emphasized the importance of ongoing

monitoring and supervision to ensure the success of fish farming ventures in Serere, encouraging farmers to seek assistance whenever necessary.

The distribution of fish fingerlings and starter feeds not only signifies a step towards economic empowerment for local farmers but also indicates the government’s commitment to promoting sustainable agriculture and food security in the region.

**Adongot Brenda**  
Communication Officer  
Serere District



*Fingerlings being delivered to the District headquarters*



*Deputy CAO handing over fish feeds to one of the fish farmers*



# Soroti: Modern Science Laboratory and ICT Library Construction Launched at Dakabela Comprehensive SS

The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, has earmarked UGX 760 million for the construction of essential infrastructure at Dakabela Comprehensive Secondary School in Soroti District under the Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers Program (UgIFT).

This funding, as explained by District Education Officer Mr. James Oede, will facilitate the development of a state-of-the-art Science Laboratory catering to Chemistry, Biology, and Physics, alongside an ICT library. Additionally, provisions include a 5-stance drainable pit latrine for learners, a 2-stance counterpart for staff, and a sports field.

The site was handed over to Ms Arcadian Construction and Alps Group as the constructor.

Dakabela Comprehensive Secondary School, established by the community, is progressively transitioning into full government oversight, marking a significant educational development in the region.

Head teacher Mr. David Erangu expressed gratitude for the government's commitment to enhancing the school's infrastructure, citing a newfound capacity to compete with prominent institutions like Teso College Aloet - TCA within the area.

Soroti District Chairperson Mr. Simon Peter Etoru Ekuu lauded the government's take over of the school from the community, addressing historical challenges associated with administration.

Reflecting on the national emphasis on a science-oriented economy, Mr. Etoru highlighted the alignment of the newly announced facilities – the Science Laboratory and ICT library – with the governmental vision to promote science education.

“I am happy that the government has committed to taking over the school as we are aware that the President of Uganda is now emphasizing the need to have a science lead economy, now with the construction of the Science Laboratory, ICT library, this therefore gives as sense that we are in the right direction to support the President's idea of promoting

the teaching of science subjects in our school,” said Etoru.

Soroti District Resident Commissioner (RDC) Mr. Salim Kumaketch encouraged the residents of Arapai sub-county, the school's location, to actively engage in supporting the government's educational initiatives and ensure the successful completion of the school's infrastructure development.

Mr. Kumaketch reiterated the government's dedication to improving education accessibility nationwide.

“Government is implementing its policy of ensuring that in every sub county there is a government aided Secondary school,” said the Soroti RDC.

With a current enrollment of 502 students, Dakabela Comprehensive Secondary School anticipates a surge in student numbers following the introduction of the modern science laboratory.

**Abraham Ekwaru,**  
**Communication Officer**  
**Soroti**



**RDC Soroti Mr Salim Kumaketch launching the construction in Dakabela SS (2)**



**RDC SOROTI Mr Salim Kumaketch addressing the community**

# Uganda Partners with FAO and China to Introduce Innovative Rice-Fish Production Initiative in Soroti District

Uganda has joined forces with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and China to introduce a revolutionary high-yielding and climate-smart rice-fish production initiative in Soroti district.

The collaboration, known as China-Uganda South to South Cooperation, facilitated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), in conjunction with the Chinese firm Shanghai Agro-Biological Gene Centre (SAGC), aims to enhance farmers' productivity in the region.

Dr. Charles Owach, Assistant Country Representative for FAO, highlighted that Phase III of this initiative, running from 2022 to 2025, is a flagship project jointly financed by FAO and China. The Government of Uganda,

working through local governments across 39 districts including Soroti, will spearhead the implementation.

Under this cooperative venture, various enterprises such as fish, rice, poultry, goats, and value addition will be pursued to ensure food security, increased agricultural output, and boosted incomes within participating communities.

The introduction of the Rice-fish culture technology from China in Soroti marks a significant milestone. Selected as one of the ten districts for Phase III, Soroti will benefit from the cultivation of rice varieties WDR73 and PR107, yielding 1kg and 0.8kg per square meter respectively. These yields are expected to surpass current production rates by two to three times.

To ensure sustainability, active involvement of the private sector is encouraged in nurturing these seeds.

Joseph Opus, Senior Fisheries Officer, emphasized the importance of marketing within the livestock and crop enterprises being implemented. He urged the Soroti community to embrace fish farming as a profitable business venture offering financial rewards, food security, and improved nutrition.

**Abraham Ekwaru,**  
*Communication Officer*  
**Soroti District**



*Group photos of farmers of Awaliwal sub county and Kamuda sub counties in Soroti (2)*



*Demonstrating the Rice Fish cultured pond*



*Mr Orone Moses of Awaliwal sub county demonstrating the Rice Fish cultured pond*



# PILLARS OF PARISH DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Parish Based Management Information System (PDMIS).  
The PDMIS was developed by local innovators under the  
innovation Initiative of boosting the adoption of locally  
developed ICT solutions.

ISO developed the Zaidi App to  
enhance transparency and data  
collection, capture PDM beneficiary  
information (businesses and  
physical addresses), and create a  
reliable database for government  
planning and monitoring.



ICT House

Plot 10/12 Parliamentary Avenue

P. O. Box 7817 Kampala

256-414-236262

ictinfo@ict.go.ug

Policy and Technical Service



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# Deputy IGG Commends Soroti District for Effective Implementation of Parish Development Model

In a recent stakeholder feedback meeting held at the Soroti district headquarters, the Deputy Inspector General of Government (IGG), Ms. Achan Patrica Okira, praised Soroti district for its commendable progress in implementing the Parish Development Model (PDM).

Ms. Achan expressed satisfaction with the district's performance, stating that the Inspectorate of Government had closely monitored the PDM implementation to ensure adherence to policy guidelines and assess progress.

"I have moved to across the communities in the district and am happy to report that the district has done a recommendable job. As government we are pleased to report that handling the PDM implementation is very well. We have not encountered much complaints despite the ever-changing policy guidelines of PDM," said

Deputy IGG.

During the feedback session, attended by key individuals including the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), District Internal Security Officer (DISO), Members of the Council, Heads of Department, and selected PDM beneficiaries, Ms. Achan emphasized the importance of enhancing education and training initiatives. She highlighted the need for increased provision of extension staff, particularly in agriculture and veterinary services, to support the community and ensure successful project implementation.

The Chief Administrative Officer of Soroti, Mr. Ocen James Andrew, acknowledged the challenges posed by shifting guidelines from various ministries, which initially affected the PDM implementation process. Despite these hurdles, Mr. Ocen commended the district for its adaptability and adherence to guidelines, leading to a positive assessment in the Inspectorate of Government report.

Soroti district boasts 54 Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCO) gazette groups and 1,045 registered enterprise groups, all of which have fully benefited from PDM initiatives.

The district's commitment to structured, community-focused development initiatives aligns with the goal of transforming a significant portion of the subsistence population into active participants in the money economy.

A team from the IGG's office has been in Teso to inspect and monitor government projects and provide feedback on the field findings so as to develop a comprehensive action plan.

**Abraham Ekwaru,**  
**Communication Officer**  
**Soroti District**



Group Photo of Deputy IGG together with Stakeholders (1)

# Seven Arrested for Extortion from PDM Applicants in Kapelebyong, Ordered to Refund

The seven board members of Amootom Parish SACCO in Okungur Sub County, Kapelebyong District who had been arrested for extortion of money from applicants of Parish Revolving Funds under Parish Development Model, have begun making refund.

The individuals involved in this scandalous act are as follows: Ogwang Silver - Board Chairperson, Akulo Maragaret - Board Secretary, Acham Sarah - Treasurer, Opiding Moses - Chairperson loans, Emitu Charles - Secretary loans, Akiyai Beatrice - Treasurer loans, and Ekanya Simon - Chairperson supervisory committee.

Reports indicate that approximately shs1.8m was unlawfully obtained from 55 applicants, leading to their arrest on May 20, 2024. Following their confession of soliciting money under the guise of operational fees, the perpetrators initiated the refund process. A total sum of Sh1,297,000 was returned to applicants in an installment on June

13, 2024.

According to James Collins Epiu, the Senior Commercial Officer in Kapelebyong District, 47 applicants received a refund of Sh25,000 each, five applicants received Sh20,000 each, and one applicant was reimbursed with Sh21,000. Two board members who are reportedly encountering difficulties in the refund process have been given until mid-July to fulfill their obligations.

Tom Otukol, the Resident District Commissioner(RDC) for Kapelebyong, issued a stern warning to the board members, cautioning them against future breaches of established guidelines and loan policies.

“I have observed that these boards have capacity building gaps. They need additional training to avoid falling into problems,” Otukol said.

In response to these alarming events, the Police at Kapelebyong Central Police station have launched a comprehensive inquiry, officially

documented under file reference GEF-003/2024 implicating the suspects.

These illicit activities directly violate Section 3, subsection 3.6 of the PDM User Handbook from October 2022, as well as section 2.2c of the loans policy. The loans policy explicitly states that the board is only permitted to collect a maximum of shs5,000 from beneficiaries as a loan application fee.

The saga serves as a stark reminder of the importance of transparency, accountability, and adherence to set guidelines within the framework of developmental initiatives.

**Emmanuel Opio**  
**Communication Officer**  
**Kapelebyong District**



# Katakwi District Gears Up for Phase Two of Parish Development Model Implementation



*Ms Abwate Mary of Aliakamer Parish, Katakwi Sub County a beneficiary in a goat rearing enterprise.*



*Mr Oburo Julius a PDM funds beneficiary from Akwaradada Sheep rearing enterprise group in Odoot*

**K**atakwi district's local government is poised to initiate the second phase of the Parish Development Model (PDM). The PDM, a government-backed initiative aimed at empowering local communities, has made significant strides in its initial phase, setting the stage for further progress and impact.

Since the commencement of the Establishment phase on June 22, 2023, a total of UGX 11,674,100,000 from the Parish Revolving Funds (PRF) has been disbursed to 11,683 eligible households across 109 PDM SACCOs in all 20 Sub Counties and Town Councils. This represents a remarkable disbursement rate of 99.5%, signaling a strong commitment to the program's objectives.

The recent allocation of UGX 5,450,000,000 - constituting 50% of the PRF for the fiscal year 2023/24 - earmarked for 109 PDM SACCOs under the forthcoming Establishment phase 2, underscores the government's continued support for grassroots development initiatives. An additional UGX 27,250,000 has been provided to cover administrative costs associated with processing PRF disbursements, further optimizing the program's efficiency.

Preparatory activities are already in motion, with the 109 PDM SACCOs actively engaged in vetting eligible beneficiaries through community meetings. Beneficiaries will receive more training on various essential topics including agronomic practices, animal husbandry, business planning, and group dynamics, facilitated by Community Development Officers (CDOs) and Sub County Production Extension staff.

Despite the program's successes, challenges persist, notably regarding the expectations of non-subsistence beneficiaries and issues surrounding data processing within the PDM Information System (PDMIS) - Financial Inclusion System (FIS). Concerns have also been raised regarding the misuse of PRF funds, with instances of diversion towards non-productive ventures outside the program's recommended enterprises.

Mr. Todi Patrick, the District Commercial Officer, commended the dedicated team for their accomplishments and highlighted the need for a holistic approach to activate all six PDM Pillars urgently.

He also urged the government to fully activate all the other 6 PDM Pillars to urgently compliment Pillar 3 which is taking center stage as the main focus yet being misunderstood by anxious community members.

# “We Shall Be Able To Pay Our Loans” - Amuria PDM beneficiaries



**B**eneficiaries of the parish development model funds in Amuria Town Council, Amuria district are hopeful they can repay their loans by the end of this year.

A quick survey by our reporter suggests that the businesses the beneficiaries invested in are doing well, which should help them repay the loans.

Gabriel Ewalu, a beneficiary, narrates why he's confident he can clear his loan by year's end. Ewalu chose poultry farming as he has a small 4-acre piece of land.

He notes that he began with a loan of UGX 1,000,000 in September last year, using it to buy twelve hens and a cock. His poultry business has expanded since then and in February Ewalu sold twenty hens at UGX 20,000 each.

“In February this year, I earned UGX 400,000 from selling my poultry. This helped me pay school fees,

improve my family's diet, and buy feed for my poultry,” Ewalu proudly shared.

With over a hundred hens now, Ewalu aims to clear his debt before the year concludes.

Ewalu is not the only one seeing success in loan repayment. Albert Ochan, who opted for pig farming, is also on track to pay off his loan.

After receiving his UGX 1000,000 loan, Ochan bought three pigs, although unfortunately, one passed away. However, his remaining pigs have multiplied.

Ochan currently tends to twenty-six pigs. “At the moment, I have 24 piglets. By selling just ten at one hundred thousand shillings each, I can repay the loan,” he explained.

Aisha Asio, another beneficiary of Alira Cell, Alira Ward, Amuria Town Council, is also confident

about clearing her debt by year-end.

Asio invested in cassava farming and planted two acres which she expects to harvest this November. “With a good market price, I anticipate earning about UGX 3,000,000 from selling cassava chips.

This will help me settle the loan and cover my household expenses,” Aisha revealed.

Steven Alomu, the chairperson of Alira Ward PDM SACCO Limited, expressed confidence that all beneficiaries under their SACCO will successfully repay their loans.

**Christopher Okiring,**  
**Communication Officer,**  
**Amuria District**

# Katakwi District Commissions Six Boreholes to Improve Water Access

Katakwi District recently marked the commissioning of six newly constructed boreholes. The initiative, which was part of the water sector's activities for Financial Year 2023/2024, aimed to address the crucial need for reliable water sources in various communities within the district.

The contract for drilling, casting, and installing the boreholes was awarded to MAMA Borehole Wells Ltd., a company recognized for its expertise in constructing water infrastructure projects.

These boreholes were strategically located in Ogangai and Omasai in Okulonyo Sub County, Ogugut in Okore Sub County, Aperit Isiru in Magoro Sub County, and Aloet in Angodingod Sub County. The total project cost was covered under the District Water and Sanitation Conditional Grant, amounting to approximately 141 million shillings.

The official commissioning ceremony took place on the 18th of June 2024 at Apolin village in Katakwi Sub County. The event was attended by key figures including the District Water Officer, district leadership, Deputy Resident District Commissioner, District Chairperson, Ag. PAS, technical staff, and representatives from various sub-countries.

Katakwi District boasts a network of water infrastructure, including 34 valley tanks, 10 valley dams, 600 boreholes, and 3 motorized boreholes in key locations. Additionally, the district features 4 mini piped water systems in primary schools and 7 complete piped water supply systems, with one currently under construction in Orungo corner. Despite these efforts, there remains a

persistent need for improved water access in certain areas of the district.

District Water Officer, Apio Eseza Lydia, emphasized the importance of community involvement in safeguarding newly established water facilities. She acknowledged the limitations of government funding but highlighted the collective impact of incremental improvements in water infrastructure across the district.

During commissioning, the assembled team conducted tests on the boreholes, revealing a high water yield with efficient pumping capabilities, drawing water at just half a pump.

The Deputy RDC, Vincent Xavier Okwi, expressed gratitude towards the district's water office for their diligence in overseeing the project and commended the Government for prioritizing clean water provision for its citizens.

In their speeches, district officials urged the local community to cherish and protect these vital resources and to actively participate in government initiatives aimed at improving their well-being.

"Guard this facility jealously as if it's the last" LC Geoffrey Omolo told the community.

As Katakwi District continues its efforts to enhance water accessibility and sanitation services, the commissioning of these boreholes marks a significant step towards fulfilling the water needs of its residents.

**John Baptist Emukoki,  
Katakwi District Local  
Government**



*Inset from left to right SAS Katakwi Sub County LC5 D RDC and the District water Officer*



*Handover of the Apolin borehole*



# Ministry of Agriculture Gives Kumi District 50, 000 FMD Vaccines

The Kumi district veterinary team has embarked on the vaccination of cattle against Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD).

The vaccination kicked off after the district received 50,000 doses from the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries in response to an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the district.

The vaccination exercise was launched by the Kumi Resident District Commissioner (RDC), Ahamad Washaki, on June 6, 2024, and is expected to be completed by June 28, 2024.

Dr. Harriet Nakanwagi, District Veterinary Officer, says that the exercise will first target the lower administrative units of Ongino, Mukongoro, Kadami, Tisai, and Nyero Town Council, where cases of FMD were first reported and later rolled out to other places.

Dr. Nakanwagi appreciated the government for the vaccines and noted that they would help save the local farmers from the cost of treatment. She added that the vaccination exercise is the first step towards lifting the quarantine in Kumi district.

“Once the vaccination exercise is done, testing will be done to ensure that the disease has been defeated, and if results are good, quarantine will be lifted,” she said.

Additionally, the district received 20,000 doses of Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) vaccines, 10,000 doses of vaccines for goats and sheep, and 4,000 doses of the rabies vaccine.

Dr. Nakanwagi added that this was part of national activities funded by the government of Uganda and appealed to the public to avail their animals for the exercise, requesting that they present their National IDs for identification and

accountability.

In November 2023, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries placed quarantine in Kumi district after over 120 animals got sick with foot and mouth disease. This was to help curb the spread of the diseases.

This, however, affected the district in terms of reduced local revenue, access to animal products, and the high treatment costs faced by the farmers.

With the vaccines, residents of Kumi are hopeful that revenues will increase and the standard of living will be raised.

**Omoding Emmanuel Ichariat**  
**Communication Officer,**  
**Kumi District.**



*The District leadership launching the vaccination exercise at Aakum, Ongino subcounty.*

# Kumi District: Delving into the Authors of Nyero Rock Paintings



*A rock boulder with painted symbols at Nyero 2. Clearly seen are a boat, fertility symbols, concentric cycles and other enigmatic symbols.*

The Nyero Rock paintings, located approximately 8 kilometers west of Kumi town along the Kumi-Ngora road within Nyero Town Council, are the oldest rock paintings and the first to be discovered in Uganda. They hold a significant place in Uganda's historical heritage and are the most popular historical sites in the country.

The rocks are considered sacred ancestral places, where generations past would journey from far and wide to make offerings of food, animals, and money during periods of drought and misfortune, seeking blessings for childbirth from the gods. The sites also served as locations for rain-making ceremonies. Remarkably, some of the caves still bear traces of smoke from ancient sacrifices. Oral histories recount strong emotional connections to the site, and even today, visitors are drawn to its spiritual significance.

Within the area, six small rock shelters stand within a cave complex, each with its own unique features, as a testament to the artistic expressions and customs of the ancient

inhabitants.

Although it is widely agreed that the paintings were created during the late Stone Age era, the original authors of the paintings have been the subject of much debate among researchers and archeologists. However, archeological excavations at the sites found typical Late Stone Age artifacts alongside pottery, suggesting possible interactions with Neolithic communities (Lawrance 1953; Harwich 1961; Posnansky & Nelson 1968).

Neolithic communities were organized into clans or extended families, residing in neighboring houses that formed households sharing common fireplaces. They practiced mixed farming and cattle-rearing, and social roles were defined based on gender, age, kinship, and participation in communal productive activities.

They mainly lived in rock shelters, open-air sites, and along lakeshores, which provided suitable areas for residential, hunting, gathering, fishing, and ritual activities. They made them

develop specialized tools like bone harpoons for fishing. Symbolism was significant in their culture, evident through body ornaments, the use of ochre, and the presence of rock art.

While the exact genetic and linguistic origins of the authors of the paintings are challenging to ascertain, a section of archaeologists believe that the paintings were likely the work of the Twa hunter-gatherer communities, believed to have inhabited the area during the late Stone Age period. The reason they give is that the paintings here match the distribution of the Late Stone Age hunter-gatherer culture, whose works are equivalently found spread across the east and central parts of Africa. The Twa pygmies can currently be found in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and western Uganda, along the Congo-Rwanda border.

Nevertheless, there is also a possibility that the occupation and painting at Nyero Rocks could have occurred over an extended period, as indicated by the superimpositions and depth of occupation debris at the sites. This has led some to argue that the Iteso, the current inhabitants

of the area, may have also contributed to some of the paintings, given that many of the known rock art sites in Uganda are located in north-eastern Uganda, where the Iteso and the wider Ateker ethnic group reside.

This differing opinion is also grounded in oral traditions and the works of researchers like Posnansky and Nelson (1968: 157), who argued that there was no known occupation of the Nyero rock shelters until the arrival of the Iteso. The Iteso Welfare Association also highlights that Iteso migrated to Teso over a period of six generations. The first generation (Ojurata's tadpoles) were short people who were mainly gatherers and hunters.

Interestingly, some of the depictions at Nyero Rock, such as those of rain-making ceremonies, resonate with the ethos and culture of the Iteso people. These ceremonies were performed to invoke the intervention of a higher power for rain during periods of drought. A.C.A. Wright, for example, documented a rain-

making ceremony (elelekeja) that was held in 1940 in Kyere Rock, not so far away from Nyero Rock paintings. A recent rain-making ceremony by Iteso from Amuria was even recorded in the drought of 2016 (The Daily Monitor, Friday, July 29, 2016).

Similarly, depictions of the sun, a ladder, a boat, drought, and plagues at these sites have been interpreted by oral traditions to signify the practices, challenges, and hurdles overcome by Iteso while migrating to the present-day Teso sub-region. It is important to note that Iteso trace their origins back to Egypt, a country where the worship of the sun god was prevalent in ancient times. It is there that they also witnessed drought and different plagues, including the infestation of flies during the deliverance of the Israelites from the pharaoh. This may partly explain the symbolism of the rock art at Nyero and other sites across northeastern Uganda.

Regardless of the exact creators of the

paintings, the rock art at Nyero remains a captivating and unique attraction. It offers a glimpse into the ancient beliefs, cultural practices, and artistic expressions of the past.

A visit to Nyero Rock paintings is not just an exploration of ancient artwork but also a profound encounter with the spiritual and cultural heritage of the Iteso people. As visitors explore the rock art, they are transported to a time of ancient rituals, beliefs, and traditions, experiencing a connection to the land's mystical past that is both fascinating and inspiring.

***Enock Amodoi,  
Tourism Officer  
Kumi District***



*A flagship painting at Nyero 3. It appears on the 1000 shilling note and also a symbol of Uganda department of museums and monuments*



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