



FEATURE STORY | PG.06

TOORO KINGDOM PREPARES FOR KING OYO'S 30TH CORONATION ANNIVERSARY

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TUSIIME CHRISTOPHER

Chief Editor

Dear Reader. //////////////////////////////////////

Welcome to the Fifth Edition of the Rwenzori Times

With every issue, our mission remains steadfast to tell the stories that matter most to the people of the Rwenzori region and beyond, stories of progress, resilience, opportunity, and transformation.

In this edition, we spotlight the heartbeat of local development. From the expansion of health services in Kasese District, where expectant mothers now access comprehensive maternal

health care closer to home, to the massive government-led service delivery initiatives in Kitagwenda District, the narrative is one of growth and renewed hope.

We also look ahead to a historic cultural milestone, the 30th Coronation Anniversary of Tooro Kingdom's cultural leader, His Majesty King Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV and explore the region's unique tourism treasures that continue to place the Rwenzori sub-region on Uganda's cultural and economic map.

The Rwenzori Times continues to be a platform for ideas, dialogue, and action. We celebrate the achievements made, spotlight the challenges that remain, and above all, invite you our readers, partners, and stakeholders to take part in shaping the future of our region.

Together, let us continue telling the story of a Rwenzori that is not only rich in culture and natural beauty, but also alive with possibilities for socio-economic growth.

KABUGHO SHARON

Editor



AINGANIZA STEPHEN

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ALBERTINE REGION'S NATURAL WEALTH ENDOWMENT SPURS TOURISM, ECONOMIC BOOM

By Ibrahim Sahula, Communications Officer, Ntoroko District and Musumba Harriet, journalist, Bundibugyo District

Local residents being guided by UWA staff at the Sempaya Hotsprings recently (photo by sahula Ibrahim)



The Albertine oil region is fast emerging as a paradox for Uganda, a land endowed with unmatched natural resources, yet grappling with the delicate balance between conservation, tourism, and the pursuit of oil-driven economic transformation.

Stretching across Bundibugyo, Ntoroko, Hoima, and Kabarole districts, the region is home to rare species such as the shoebill stork, grassland chimpanzees, and over 600 bird species. Iconic attractions such as the Sempaya Hot Springs

and Ngite waterfalls have made the Albertine an eco-tourism magnet, while oil discoveries in Kanywataba and Hoima promise to reshape its economic destiny.

The Tooro Semliki Wildlife Reserve (TSWR), Uganda's oldest, covers 542 square kilometres and serves as both a biodiversity hub and a new frontier for oil exploration.

Managed by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), the reserve hosts elephants, buffaloes, chimpanzees, and the world-famous shoebill.

Through a revenue-sharing scheme, UWA remits 20% of gate

collections to neighboring communities including Nombe, Karugutu, Rwebisengo, Kanara, Karugutu and Kanara Town Councils have all benefited from the fund.

This year, Ntoroko and Kabarole will share just Shs5.7 million, a figure that underscores the low uptake of tourism in the reserve.

"Our people have not fully embraced tourism. Until they do, revenue shares will remain small," noted Joshua Masereka, Senior Warden of TSWR.

The funds have supported projects such as beekeeping and tree planting, while UWA has also distributed water tanks for rainwater harvesting. However, with over 5,000 households bordering TSWR, the impact remains limited, fuelling calls for stronger tourism promotion.

Across the Semliki Valley in Bundibugyo, the story is similar. The Sempaya Hot Springs, located in Semliki National Park, attract both domestic and foreign tourists. The surrounding rainforest supports more than 600 bird species, some migrating from Central Africa.

But officials admit the district itself does not directly benefit from UWA's 20% revenue share; instead, the funds go to surrounding communities for water and sanitation projects.

"As a district, our hands are tied. Sites like Ngite waterfalls could transform Bundibugyo's economy, but we lack the resources to develop them," said Margret Karungi, the District Tourism Officer.

Complicating this picture is the presence of oil reserves. The Kanywataba block inside TSWR is already licensed for exploration, raising fears that industrial activities could undermine conservation. For communities, oil offers the promise of jobs and infrastructure but risks overshadowing the more sustainable benefits of tourism and biodiversity conservation.

Environmental activists warn that without proper safeguards, Uganda could lose irreplaceable ecosystems in pursuit of short-term oil revenues.

The Albertine region stands at a critical crossroads. Tourism, though underperforming, offers long-term and community-centred benefits.

For Ntoroko and Bundibugyo residents, the question remains whether government can strike a balance that allows both oil and eco-tourism to coexist, without sacrificing the region's unique natural heritage.



Mr. Masereka Joshua, Warden / sn- charge TSWR in Ntoroko District (courtesy photo)
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TOORO KINGDOM PREPARES FOR KING OYO'S 30TH CORONATION ANNIVERSARY

By Christopher Tusiime, Communications Officer, Bunyangabu District



There is excitement in Tooro Kingdom as preparations intensify for the 30th Empango, the coronation anniversary of His Majesty Dr. Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV, scheduled for September 12, 2025.

The Kingdom's Information Minister, Sylas Ruhweza, said the anniversary activities are being coordinated by a team led by Prime Minister Calvin Rwomire Armstrong.

"We call upon all Tooro subjects and well-wishers to support and participate in this milestone celebration," he said.

In the run-up to the main event, several activities have been lined up including the MTN Kabode Masaza Cup finals will take place on September 7, officiated by the King. Other events include the Baragira Kiki campaign on 6th September, 2025 in Fort



Portal, aimed at promoting cleanliness in the city, and a golf and basketball tournament on September 8 at Boma Grounds.

From 10th- 13th September, the Kingdom will host Ekyooto ha Mpango, a cultural and music festival, alongside the Presidential CEOs' Forum and a royal dinner at Karuzika Palace.

On 11th September, President Yoweri Museveni is expected to officially open the Tooro ICT Centre at Mucwa and launch a trade show before attending

traditional Empango rituals later that evening.

The celebrations will culminate on 12th September with the grand coronation anniversary, which is expected to

attract high-profile guests, including the President.

This year's Empango will be held under the theme, "Advocating for Visionary Leadership."

EXCITEMENT AS GOVERNMENT ELEVATES BUSORO SUB-COUNTY TO TOWN COUNCIL

By Ainganiza Stephen –Communication Officer ,Kabarole District

Government has elevated Busoro Sub-County in Kabarole District to Town Council status, a move officials say will enhance service delivery and accelerate development in the area.

The upgrade was announced by Mr. Rubaihayo Stephen, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Kabarole,

who revealed that Busoro Town Council will also host the district's new administrative headquarters.

The new Town Council is composed of three wards, Busoro Ward with eight cells, Kaswa Ward with 17 cells, and Kirere Ward with seven cells.

According to Rubaihayo, the elevation was made in line with Sections 7(4)

and 193(1) of the Local Government Act, after consultations with district leaders and subsequent Cabinet approval. The regulations officially took effect on 9th July, 2025.

Rubaihayo added that the district has already written to the Ministry of Local Government requesting additional wage support to facilitate the operationalization of



Local Leaders during the recently concluded District Leaders' conference held at Busoro district headquarters

the new Town Council. Welcoming the development, District Chairman Dr. Richard Rwabuhinga said Town Council status comes with an expanded budget and improved service delivery compared to sub-counties.

“Compared to a sub-county, a Town Council benefits from improved infrastructure, including better roads, water access, and a larger workforce to support service delivery,” he said.

The announcement has been received with

excitement among locals. Christopher Tuhaise, a businessman in Kaswa, said the new status will create jobs for young people and open up markets for local produce.

Asaba Ronald, the district councilor representing Busoro, said the upgrade presents opportunities for both economic and social development.

“This is a double challenge that requires our people to be prepared and increase production. The revenue from the Town Council and government allocations will improve service delivery, including

better roads, health facilities, and a seed school,” he noted.

Asaba added that improved education access would help reduce teenage pregnancies, since girls will no longer have to walk long distances to attend schools in town.

Both leaders and residents are optimistic that the transformation of Busoro into a Town Council will mark the beginning of a new era of growth, efficiency, and improved service delivery in Kabarole District.



Leaders Touring the Kabarole district headquarters under construction at Busoro

KIBALE FOREST NATIONAL PARK BOOSTS TOURISM, TRANSFORMS LIVELIHOODS IN KAMWENGE

By Joy Kiiza, Senior IT Officer, Kamwenge District



Kibale Forest National Park, one of Uganda's most famous conservation areas, is not only a top destination for chimpanzee tracking but is also changing the lives of communities living around it.

The park, gazetted in 1932 and upgraded to national park status in 1993, covers 766 square kilometres of tropical rainforest and is home to 71 mammal species, 13 primates, and more than 370 bird species.

It has earned global recognition as the Primate Capital of the World and the home of Chimps.

Located about 346 kilometres from Kampala, Kibale borders the districts of Kamwenge, Kyenjojo, Kabarole, and Kasese, with Fort Portal City only 23 kilometres away.

Its proximity and biodiversity have made it a leading tourist

destination for both international and domestic travelers.

According to the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), entry fees range between USD 30 and 40 for foreign residents, while East African citizens pay between Shs20, 000 and Shs30, 000.

Accommodation facilities around the park cater for a wide range of visitors, from budget travelers to those willing to spend up to USD 1,200 per night.

Officials say tourism in Kibale has been steadily growing, attracting visitors interested in chimpanzee tracking, bird watching, and cultural tours.

Beyond wildlife, the park is also impacting communities with over 1,000 residents in Kamwenge District engaged in farming activities around the park.

The residents often cultivate crops



like tea, bananas, and maize, with others engaged in beekeeping, livestock farming, and cultural tourism.

“Tourists don’t just come for the chimpanzees. They also want to experience our culture, food, and way of life. That gives us income and pride,” a community guide in Bigodi, a popular eco-tourism hub said.

The revenues, according to locals, have supported education, healthcare, and improved standards of living in the surrounding communities.

Kibale is among 10 national parks managed by UWA under the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities.

UWA also manages 12 wildlife reserves, five community wildlife management areas,

and 13 sanctuaries across the country.

Tourism experts say Kibale’s model of combining conservation and community involvement offers lessons for other protected areas in Uganda.

NYABIRONGO HEALTH CENTRE IV REVOLUTIONIZES MATERNAL CARE IN KASESE

By Kabugho Sharon, Communications Officer, Kasese District



Mother receives a free mama kit during her antenatal visit

Mothers in Bukonzo East can now access comprehensive maternal health services close to home, thanks to the recent upgrade of Nyabirongo Health Centre from a Health Centre III to a fully equipped Health Centre IV.

Previously, expectant mothers in the area had to travel long distances to private hospitals for essential services such

as antenatal check-ups, blood tests, and safe deliveries, often incurring high costs and risking delays in emergency care.

“The maternity ward was too small. We all squeezed together waiting mothers and those who had already delivered. But now, the new maternity ward has given us space and comfort,” said Biira Jenifer, a mother of four from Muyina.

Another resident, Biira Annet from Kyondo,

added; “Before, when you came for antenatal care, you had to go to Kagando Hospital or other private facilities for tests. That was expensive. Now all these services are free at Nyabirongo. We really thank the government.”

The facility, upgraded under the UGIFT project, now operates as a Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric Care (CEMOC) centre, offering surgeries, blood transfusions, and emergency interventions.



This reduces the need for costly referrals and ensures mothers receive prompt care.

“We used to refer between 16 to 20 mothers weekly who needed surgeries, but now our theatre is ready, and we can handle deliveries and surgical emergencies on site,” said Dr. Habert Nzeke, the facility In-Charge.

District Health Officer Dr. Amon Bwambale explained that Bukonzo East previously had no government HC IV. Government has allocated UGX 650 million to recruit staff, and two doctors are already stationed at Nyabirongo, with plans

to continue staffing and equipping the facility to full capacity.

New staff houses have encouraged medical personnel to reside on-site, enabling 24-hour care. Laboratory services, including blood and urine testing, are now available within the facility, while spacious maternity wards separate expectant mothers from new mothers, improving hygiene and comfort.

Nyabirongo HC IV also serves mothers from neighboring Bukonzo West, easing pressure on private hospitals and saving families significant medical expenses.

“Government policy mandates that each constituency should have at least one HC IV. Bukonzo East had none until now. This upgrade is a major policy win for our mothers,” Dr. Bwambale noted.

For residents, the upgrade represents more than infrastructure it is a pathway to safer deliveries, healthier babies, and reduced financial burdens, cementing Nyabirongo HC IV as a vital hub for maternal and child health care in Kasese.

KITAGWENDA VULNERABLE FAMILIES GET 600 SOLAR LIGHT KITS

Ainomuhangi Justus, IT Officer, Kitagwenda District



Beneficiaries receiving solar kits

At least 600 vulnerable households in Kitagwenda Town Council have received solar lighting kits in a government-supported initiative aimed at improving livelihoods and promoting clean energy.

The solar systems, distributed in partnership with ACTON-Uganda and MOUCO Company Ltd, were handed over to beneficiaries including

older persons, persons with disabilities (PWDs), widows, and families with special needs.

Patrick Turyamureeba Payi, the Mayor of Kitagwenda Town Council who lobbied for the support, said the intervention was a relief for vulnerable families struggling with lighting costs.

“I want to thank the implementing partners for thinking about my people,

especially the needy,” he said.

Kevin Kayambi from ACTON-Uganda, the programme is part of a broader government effort to support disadvantaged groups while also promoting environmental conservation.

He explained that government covers 50% of the total cost, while beneficiaries contribute the balance.

Arthur Kwizera

Aharimpisya of MOUCO Company Ltd noted that the distributed kits consist of solar panels with three bulbs each, targeting families living in small houses.

The project benefited residents from 40 villages across Kitagwenda Town Council, with each village selecting 15 households.

District leaders welcomed the initiative, with Kitagwenda District LCV NRM flag bearer, Ephrance Kenyonyozi, commending Mayor Payi for lobbying for his community. He urged locals to rally behind him in advancing development.



Kitagwenda Town Council Mayor Mr. Turyamureba Patrick

Presiding over the handover, Kitagwenda Assistant RDC Mr. Phillip Nabasa hailed the partnership, saying the initiative was a step forward in improving livelihoods in the district.

NEW KITAGWENDA CAO PLEDGES TEAMWORK, VOWS BETTER SERVICE DELIVERY

By Ainomuhangi Justus, IT Officer Kitagwenda DLG



New CAO Mr. Dalili R.K. Moses

The new Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Kitagwenda District, Dalili R.K. Moses Muhamud, has assumed office with a pledge to strengthen teamwork and improve service delivery.

Dalili, who previously served in Pakwach District, officially took over from Joanita Nakityo during a ceremony at the district headquarters on Tuesday, 2nd September 2025.

He said his focus will be

on consolidating past achievements while addressing the service delivery challenges that still face the young district.

“I am honored to serve in Kitagwenda. I will work closely with all

stakeholders to ensure the district continues to thrive,” Dalili said.

The new CAO urged senior officers to support junior staff in advancing their education, noting that improved skills will translate into better public service. He also commended his predecessor for her efforts in combating corruption.

Nakityo, who has been transferred to Mitooma District, thanked Kitagwenda leaders and

staff for their cooperation during her tenure. She cited achievements such as roofing the district administration block and promoting equality among technical staff.

“I am confident that my successor will take the district to even greater heights,” she said.

The handover included the transfer of office keys, official documents, vehicles, and other

administrative materials.

The event was attended by district leaders including the DISO, the Deputy RDC, Tumusiime Benjamin, District Vice Chairperson Ashaba Peter, District Speaker Baguma James, members of the District Executive Committee, councilors, and technical staff.

Staff, led by Mr. Tumwiine David, presented Nakityo with a gift in recognition of her service.



The Outgoing CAO Miss Nakityo Joanita hands over Office to New CAO Mr.Kalili R .K .Moses

STRATEGIES TO SPUR GROWTH OF PARISH DEVELOPMENT MODE-PDM & EMYOOGA IN UGANDA

By Allan Bamuha, Deputy RDC, Kyenjojo



Kyenjojo District Hosting a joint team from the Ministry of Local Government & PDM Secretariat plus the UBC crew who were on monitoring trail of the PDM Strategy performance indicators in the District

Cooperative societies play a key role in promoting savings and credit facilities world over. They act as an instrument to provide savings and credit services thereby raising the standards of living for the masses. Parish Development Model and Emyooga SACCO's in Uganda are such development engines aimed at uplifting the vast population into money economy

SACCOs bring more people into the financial arena. They have gained pace as a major component of the financial

system in Uganda. The grassroots have been energized as more and people are yawning to be part and partial of the super economic programs

PDM and Emyooga programs will contribute to the socio-economic development of men, women, youth-the skilled in both rural and urban areas of the country. The growth of these SACCO'S becomes center piece of development and important as they continue to empower the grass root communities.

For cooperatives identifying and applying growth strategies, it can help them gain competitive

The government of Uganda has taken the PDM and Emyooga financial strategy to the lowest grass root. The cardinal aim is to serve the people with lower incomes who would face challenges to access finance from banks.

advantage. The following strategies can impact on the performance of SACCOs enabling them to achieve their mission.

Cooperatives should embrace good operational policies, these are general directives to define strategies and guide decisions to achieve the set goals. They help smoothen the operations and address mistakes and hiccups in the process. It should be noted that developing good operational policies is essential for SACCOs as it can lead to a progressive environment, quality services, and consistent member support.

Product Innovation is key in strengthening cooperatives. Product innovation involves developing or improving products and services. SACCOs product innovation can include flexibility in applying and repaying loans, and processing loan applications but at an advanced stage insurance and different types of loans can be introduced.

Offering new products and services can be valuable for SACCOs as it can increase revenue. It

can also create additional value for the members and make the process more effective and efficient while accessing financial services.

SACCOs can adopt diversification in response to the changing environment to enhance competitiveness e.g. encouraging viable ventures to associations or enterprise groups at the grass root levels. SACCOs can adopt policies and procedures that can help them enhance efficiency and product diversification.

Expanding the target market through seeking new customers or markets willing to engage with the existing products and services or ventures proposed, for example PDM is looking at grass root agricultural engagements which to a large extent is much welcomed especially by the grass root communities. SACCOs may involve in moving to new markets or sectors to attract new members. This can be

done by offering new kinds of services or more affordable loans to non-members.

Cooperative societies in are operating in a highly competitive and dynamic environment. They face direct competition from banks and financial institutions in offering loans and credit facilities. In order to respond to the challenges, adopting these strategies can help SACCOs meet members' demands. And become more innovative in their ways of approaching the changing environment.

Never the less globally the following are the generally acceptable principles of a good SACCO as far as governance is concerned

Participation

Members' participation is essential for effective and efficient governance and management. All members shall have a voice in the decision-making process either directly, or through the organs that represent them. Such participation shall be free of intimidation, duress or undue influence.

Transparency and Easy Access to Information

All processes, decisions and relevant information shall be transparent, and accessible to all those concerned. Governance organs shall hold regular meetings to direct the SACCO's affairs. In this respect, the Board/ Committee and its Sub-Committees shall meet at least once a month, while the General Meeting shall be held at least once a year and in any case not later than 3 months following the close of the SACCO's financial year.

For issues that require special resolution, like changing bylaws, all members shall be invited. Similarly, the Supervisory/ Audit Committee shall meet regularly to provide effective supervision of the SACCO's operations and general business.

Accountability

All decision makers shall be accountable to immediate supervisors and higher organs and ultimately, to the members and communities.

Consensus Orientation

The different organs and officials shall endeavor to reach consensus on

all matters critical to the SACCO's operations. This will be achieved through a participatory approach, transparent systems and operations, and full accountability to the members. Leaders there in shall be open to differing viewpoints.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

The SACCO's governance organs shall have policies, processes and procedures that produce results that meet the needs of members. Hence, the SACCO's resources shall be used efficiently.

Equity

All members shall have equal opportunity to benefit from the SACCO's services. The members, without discrimination shall feel they are treated with utmost fairness at all times.

Respect for Rules, Policies and Regulations.

The legal framework and policies under which the SACCO is regulated and operates shall be respected strictly and impartially enforced. The SACCO's By-Laws and

operating policies and regulations shall always be complied with. They will be made known to all members at all times.

Strategic and Visionary Leadership

The SACCO shall have leaders and management with a vision for and commitment to the organization, and passion to improve their members and the communities in which they are based. Their character and past record shall be free of any unprofessional reputation.

Knowledge and Skill in Leadership and Management.

The members of the governance and management organs shall be knowledgeable and trainable in SACCO governance, management and operations.

Organizational Growth

Governance organs shall focus their efforts on SACCO growth, both in size and operations. Continued growth will result into the SACCO's survival and sustainability in the long term

NTOROKO ONE STOP BORDER POST BOOSTS REVENUE

By Sahula Ibrahim, Communication Officer, Ntoroko District



state Minister for trade, Gen. Mbadi Wilson (third left) with officials from URA, Immigrations, Security and Local leadership at The Ntoroko One stop Border on Wednesday

The Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) has reported a significant increase in collections following the establishment of a one stop border post (OSBP) at the Lake Albert shores in Ntoroko District.

Revenue rose from Shs178 million in 2021/2022 to Shs1 billion in the 2024/2025 financial year, according to URA officials who briefed a delegation led by the State Minister for Trade, Gen. Wilson Mbadi Mbasu.

The facility has streamlined trade between Uganda and the

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), but local traders say challenges remain. They cited high visa fees charged by Congolese authorities and restrictions that force them to sell produce through middlemen, who often exploit them.

“The DRC is not yet integrated in the East African Community (EAC) Customs Union, an arrangement that would formally address such challenges,” explained Mr. Richard Twahirwa, the Assistant RDC for Ntoroko.

Uganda mainly exports cement, wheat flour, sugar, and agricultural produce through Ntoroko, while timber and cocoa make up the bulk of imports from the DRC.

Gen. Mbadi pledged to engage relevant stakeholders to ease trade bottlenecks. He promised to push for the removal of unnecessary tariffs, improvement of infrastructure at the port, and the establishment of a Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) branch office at the border to enforce quality and safety of goods.

Local communities

also requested the construction of a border market in Uganda to attract Congolese buyers and reduce the burden of crossing into the DRC. According to Mr. Twahirwa, the Minister assured them that government is considering establishing a border

export zone in Ntoroko. Stakeholders from the Immigration Department, URA, security agencies, and local traders also raised concerns over the poor state of the 57-kilometre Karugutu–Ntoroko road, which they said is hampering trade and transport.

Gen. Mbadi, who is on a countrywide tour of border posts to assess trade barriers with Uganda's neighbours, said government is committed to ensuring smoother trade relations that will benefit both traders and the national economy

JOY AS GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONS PIPED WATER IN KITAGWENDA

*By Ainomuhangi Justus,
IT Officer Kitagwenda
DLG*

Residents of Kicwamba Ward in Kitagwenda Town Council broke into celebrations at the weekend as government commissioned a new piped water project expected to benefit more than 700 households.

For years, villagers had relied on a distant stream, spending hours each day fetching water. The new system, built through a partnership between government, local leaders and development partners, will supply clean water to five villages under the Mid-West Umbrella arrangement. Patrick Turyamureba



Payi, the LCIII chairperson of Kitagwenda Town Council, said the project involved laying pipes from Ntara Town and installing taps in Omurutete, Omukatindo, Kicwamba Trading Centre, and Kyabwanswa villages. Residents expressed relief, saying the piped

water would transform their daily lives.

“This is a dream come true. We no longer have to wake up at dawn to collect water from the stream. Our children will now have more time to focus on their studies,” said Mugisha, a resident of Kicwamba Trading Centre.

Health officials

welcomed the development, noting its potential to improve public health.

“We anticipate a significant reduction in waterborne diseases such as cholera and typhoid,” said Johnson Musinguzi, the Principal Health Inspector.

District leaders also highlighted the

economic impact of the project, saying access to clean water would free up time for farming and small businesses.

More than 5,300 people across the five villages are expected to benefit from the piped water system.



District officials and stakeholders

ISANGO RESIDENTS BENEFIT FROM GOV'T SERVICE DELIVERY INITIATIVES

By Sharon Kabugho, Communications Officer, Kasese District



RDC commissioning a staff house at Isango HC III

Residents of Isango Sub County in Kasese district are enjoying improved infrastructure and services following a series of government-led development projects aimed at enhancing service delivery.

On Wednesday 3rd September, 2025, the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) Lt. Joe Walunsimbi commissioned several key projects and emphasized government commitment to improving healthcare, administration, and

transport infrastructure.

Among the newly commissioned projects is a staff house at Isango Health Centre III, constructed at a cost of UGX 199 million. The facility provides health workers with secure accommodation, enabling them to offer full-time services to the community.

“Putting up staff houses ensures that health workers stay close to

the facility to offer uninterrupted services,” said Mr. Begumya Ntarwete Eliab, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

The government also inaugurated a new administration block at the sub county headquarters, built under the District Development Equalization Grant (DDEG) at a cost of UGX 225 million.

The modern facility is expected to enhance the efficiency of sub county officials and improve service delivery to residents.

Additionally, a 5-kilometer road was commissioned, constructed at a cost of UGX 100 million. The new road will facilitate access to markets, schools, and health facilities, boosting economic and social activities in the sub county.

Local leaders lauded the government's efforts. Mr. Tsutsu Moses, LC III Chairperson of Isango Sub County said: "Isango has benefited a lot from the NRM government. Whenever we make requests, we receive a

positive response. We now have water, good health services, roads, and schools, and we are grateful for the government's support."

The government's investment in healthcare also addresses the challenge of mothers delivering through traditional birth attendants (TBAs).

Dr. Amon Bwambale, District Health Officer, noted that community sensitization campaigns are ongoing to encourage deliveries at health

facilities.

"We have been engaging traditional birth attendants, and those not responding positively may face legal action," Dr. Bwambale warned.

The commissioning of these projects signals a broader commitment by the government to enhance service delivery in Isango Sub county. With improved infrastructure and resources, residents can expect better healthcare, increased accessibility, and higher standards of living.



RDC commissioning the road project in Isango

KAMWENGÉ DISTRICT RENEWS COMMITMENT TO ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

By Joy Kiiza, Senior IT Officer, Kamwenge District

Kamwenge District has renewed its commitment to protecting children and improving their wellbeing under the ECHO Rise Project.

The two-year initiative funded by the European Union is being implemented in partnership with Save the Children and Humanitarian Assistance and Development Services (HADs).

It aims to reduce child neglect and end violence against children across the

district.

Speaking at the first quarter Child Wellbeing Committee meeting held at Hilltop Hotel, John Kashaija, representing the Chief Administrative Officer, emphasized the importance of nutrition and family support.

“Children should be given food to grow well and fight malnutrition. Communities must also be mobilized against domestic violence,” he said.

The meeting brought together community development officers from the district’s eight sub-counties and town councils, district officials, and police representatives.

The committee meets quarterly to address issues of education, health, protection, and livelihoods affecting children.

It also tracks cases of child labor, trafficking, and abuse, while advocating for child-centered programs and budgets.

Joseph Tumwebaze, HADs Child Protection



Participants during the training

Officer, said 40 teachers in Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement have been trained in child protection and urged participants to champion children's rights within their communities.

Health reports presented by Denis Mbabazi, Assistant District Health Officer for Environmental Health, showed immunization coverage at 96 percent but revealed persistent challenges in nutrition.

A 2022 assessment indicated a 40 percent stunting rate, far above the national average of 26 percent.

To curb the problem, health facilities are providing iron and folic acid supplements to

expectant mothers, while children are receiving egg powder supplements through UNICEF support.

The Probation Office, represented by Mujunante Coloniuss, reported handling 408 cases of child neglect, land wrangles, and domestic violence.

He noted that with UNHCR support, the district has been able to transport juveniles in conflict with the law to Fort Portal Remand Home. However, limited community sensitization remains a challenge.

Closing the meeting, Assistant RDC Brian Karongo pledged continued government support.

"My office will continue supporting child protection programs. We are offering free airtime on local radio whenever the committee needs to pass important messages about children," he said.

Officials expressed optimism that with strengthened collaboration between government agencies, NGOs, and communities, Kamwenge District will make significant progress in reducing child neglect and ending violence against children.



Participants

KISINGA TOWN COUNCIL TURNS IDLE GOV'T LAND INTO REVENUE HUB

By Kabugho Sharon, Communications Officer, Kasese District.



Kisinga Town Council leaders in Kasese District have transformed idle government land into a thriving economic hub, in a move officials say is boosting local revenue and empowering the community.

At the heart of the initiative is Mr. Bosco Baluku, the Town Clerk, who upon assuming office in 2022 was struck by the dormant potential around the council. A 2.5-acre plot lay unused, while a fish hatchery established

years earlier had been abandoned.

“In a workshop organized by the Ministry of Local Government, we were challenged to start treating government entities as business units. That message stayed with me. When I came to Kisinga and saw the idle land and hatchery, I knew we had to act,” Mr. Baluku said.

With council approval, Baluku spearheaded the rehabilitation of the hatchery and the establishment of a banana

plantation. Two years on, the projects have turned an unproductive site into a UGX 20 million annual revenue stream.

The fish hatchery now produces more than 60,000 catfish fingerlings every two months, sold to farmers at UGX 150–200 each, far below the market price of UGX 300. The banana plantation not only generates income but also serves as a demonstration site, providing free suckers and training to local farmers.

Mr. Rodgers Bitwamba,



Fish Frying centre for value addition and preservation

a hatchery technician, noted that the process is highly technical and labour-intensive.

“It takes about two months to produce the fingerlings. We chose catfish because they grow faster and are easier to maintain, but it requires constant monitoring,” he said.

The impact on the community has been significant. Farmers now access affordable inputs to diversify their livelihoods, while the council has strengthened food security and created jobs.

The initiative has also drawn praise from

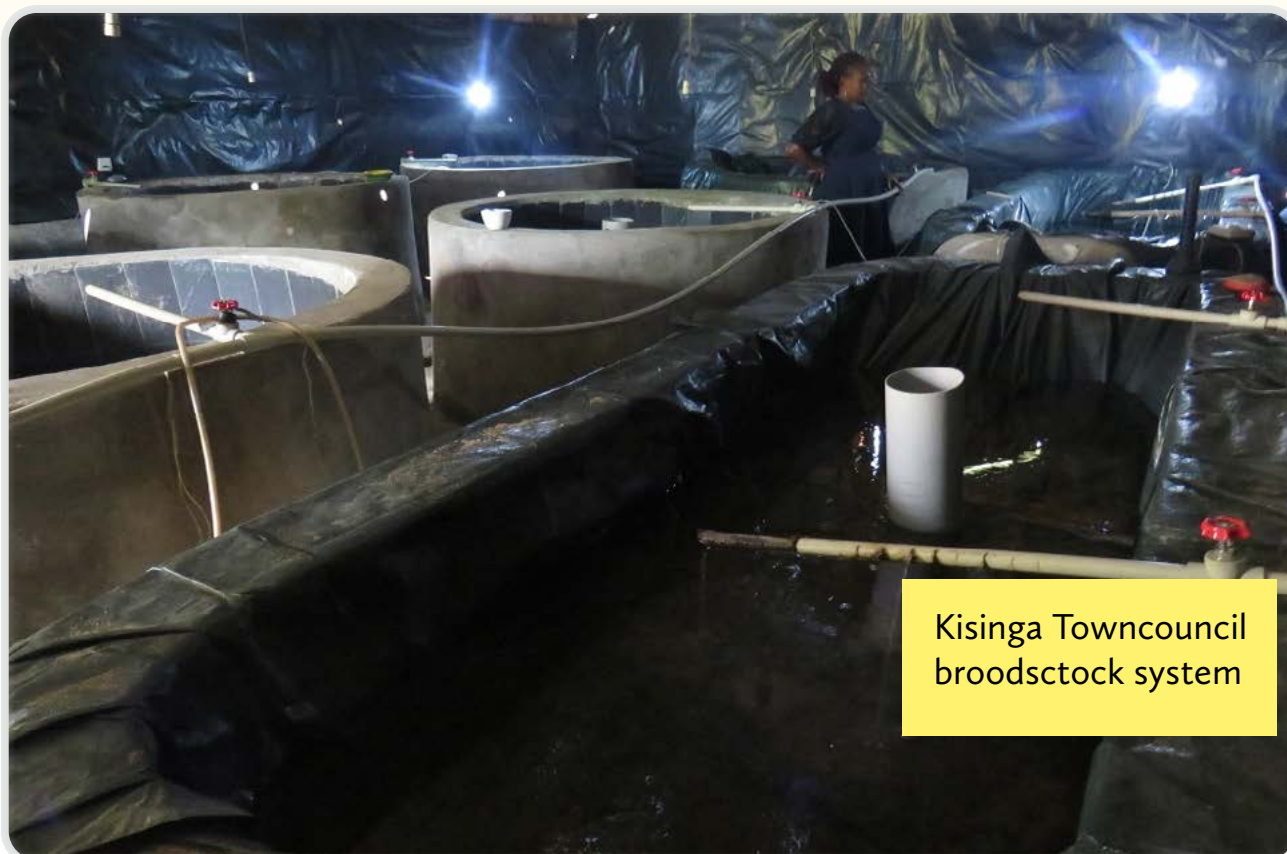
district officials. Mr. Julius Baluku, the Kasese District Production Officer, commended the move: “Kisinga has shown exceptional initiative by reviving a project that many had given up on. This is how we should be utilizing public resources—creatively and sustainably.”

He added that the model could be replicated in other local governments, with support from extension workers.

For Town Clerk Baluku, the message is clear: “Stop running government entities

traditionally. Start treating them like businesses. We have institutions that earn nothing in a financial year, yet they sit on valuable assets like land. It’s time to change that.”

The Kisinga experience has since become a case study in innovation and leadership, showing that with vision, even small local governments can generate sustainable revenue while uplifting the communities they serve.



Kisinga Town Council broodstock system

UGANDA TARGETS \$500B ECONOMY BY 2040 UNDER NEW DEVELOPMENT PLAN

By Ainganiza Stephen, Communication Officer – Kabarole



NPA staff handover NDPIV PIP and NDPIV HM to Kabarole District Chairman

The National Development Plan IV (NDPIV), covering 2025/26–2029/30, projects that Uganda’s economy will expand tenfold to \$500 billion by 2040, with per capita income rising from \$1,154 to \$2,942.

The ambitious plan is part of a series of six National Development Plans designed to achieve Vision 2040, a blueprint Cabinet approved in 2007 to transform Uganda from a peasant society into a modern, prosperous nation.

According to the National Planning Authority (NPA), NDPIV will aim to double the size of the economy every five years, reduce poverty from 16.9% to 12.9%, and create about 885,000 new jobs annually.

Speaking during a regional dissemination workshop for district planners from

Kigezi, Ankole, Rwenzori, and Bunyoro sub-regions in Fort Portal on Wednesday 3rd September 2025, Mr. Kwizera Godie, Senior Planner for Public Sector Management at NPA, said the plan will target “high-impact growth areas” to sustain double-digit growth.

“The government will aggressively invest in improving competitiveness by prioritizing development opportunities and ensuring rapid uptake of science, technology and innovation,” Kwizera said.

The identified priority sectors include full monetization of the economy, value addition and industrialization, agriculture, tourism, mineral-based industrial development, ICT, and finance. To support this transformation, Kwizera

noted that local governments will need to prioritize water for production through irrigation schemes, valley dams and water harvesting, expand rural electrification, develop feeder roads, promote agro-industrialization, and strengthen Parish Development Model (PDM) implementation.

Mr. Rashid Atugonza, Senior Planner for Human Resource Planning at NPA, said the 2040 growth target hinges on skills and productivity.

“Uganda wants to grow its economy tenfold by 2040, but this can only be possible if people in every district are skilled, productive and employable. The country aims to create 4.4 million decent jobs by 2030 and every district should contribute to this transformation,” he said.

He urged districts to promote Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and align courses with regional economic opportunities.

Despite the optimism, some district leaders voiced skepticism about NDPIV’s feasibility given current financing gaps.

Kabarole District Chairperson Dr. Richard Rwabuhinga said chronic

underfunding of local governments undermines service delivery and planning.

“Annually, universities produce thousands of graduates, but most lack practical skills. When offered jobs, the output is minimal. Unless NPA addresses curriculum reforms and human capacity enhancement, we are in a mess,” he cautioned.

He also noted disparities in staff remuneration and skills mismatch as persistent bottlenecks to implementation.

If achieved, Uganda’s economic expansion to \$500b would mark one of the fastest transformations in Sub-Saharan Africa, positioning the country as a middle-income economy. But analysts warn that weak institutional capacity, corruption, and inadequate funding for local governments could derail the ambitious targets.

For now, NDPIV signals government’s intention to scale up investment in productive sectors, while keeping pressure on districts to align local plans with the national vision.



NPA staff and Mid Western region District Planners Pose in a photo at Tooro Botanic Gardens in Fort Portal City

GOV'T GIVES 39 GROUPS SHS224M TO BOOST EMPOWERMENT IN KABAROLE

By Ainganiza Stephen – Communication Officer, Kabarole



District Chairperson Dr. Richard Rwabuhinga talking to the Youth and Women

Government has disbursed more than Shs224 million to 39 community groups in Kabarole District under the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP) and the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP), aimed at boosting youth and women empowerment.

According to district records, 12 youth groups received a total of Shs64.7 million, while 27 women

groups benefited from Shs159.3 million.

Officials say the funds are designed to support income-generating projects, improve household incomes, and reduce unemployment.

Maureen Kajumba, the district focal person for YLP and UWEP, said the funds are interest-free revolving loans meant to help community members start and sustain enterprises.

“The groups were

carefully vetted to ensure transparency and sustainability. This is part of government’s broader strategy to fight poverty and improve livelihoods,” she said.

Some of the beneficiaries include Nyantaboma Youth Boda Boda in Harugongo Sub-county (Shs6.7m), Buhikira Goat Rearing Project (Shs4m), and Mugusu Bar Soap Making Group (Shs4m).

Other groups supported include Hakibale Youth

Brick Making, Kigarama Youth Boda Boda, Kinyankende Women VSLA, and Kabende Women Nitusobora Group.

Local leaders cautioned the groups against diverting the funds to personal expenses.

Kenneth Muzora, the District Commercial Officer, urged discipline in managing the money, warning that misuse could jeopardize future support.

Assistant CAO Mugarra Marvin reassured beneficiaries that

successful loan recovery and proper project implementation would position them for further funding.

District Chairperson Dr. Richard Rwabuhinga urged beneficiaries to invest in ventures that uplift families and communities.

“This support is free. No one should demand money or favors in exchange for it. Use it to transform your lives and ensure transparency and accountability,” he said.

Dr. Rwabuhinga further

reminded recipients to value the government’s poverty alleviation programmes and called for continued support to President Museveni and the ruling party.

Officials said timely repayment and proper use of the funds will determine whether more groups benefit in future cycles. Community members were also encouraged to embrace hard work, adopt a savings culture, and invest in sustainable ventures to ensure long-term empowerment.



Women and Youth Beneficiaries of YLP,UWEP at Kitumba district council hall tipped on utilization of funds



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TOORO KINGDOM LEADER, KING OYO

By Christopher Tusiime, Communications Officer, Bunyangabu District

On September 12, 2025, His Majesty Dr. Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV will mark 30 years on the throne of Tooro Kingdom, a milestone that will be celebrated with the 30th Empango (coronation anniversary).

President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni is expected to grace the occasion as chief guest.

Born on April 16, 1992, King Oyo ascended the throne at just three and a

half years old, following the death of his father, King Patrick David Mathew Kaboyo Olimi III.

On September 12, 1995, after a week of traditional rituals, the young prince was crowned the 12th ruler of Tooro, making him the world's youngest monarch at the time.

His enthronement was marked by symbolic rites, including a mock palace battle, tests of royal legitimacy by the Omusuuga (head of the royal clan), and the

sounding of the sacred Chwezi drum, the Nyalebe.

At dawn, Oyo entered the Karuziika Palace, where he was served his first royal meal of millet dough.

Over the years, King Oyo has grown into a respected cultural leader and global voice.

In 2016, he was appointed a UNAIDS Cultural Goodwill Ambassador, advocating against HIV/AIDS among young people in Eastern and Southern

Africa.

He pledged to support the global fight to end AIDS by 2030, stressing the role of men in preventing mother-to-child transmission.

The monarch has also championed environmental conservation. In 2019, he launched a campaign to plant 10 million trees across Tooro, personally planting symbolic trees at the palace.

He has spearheaded campaigns such as Save River Mpanga Now, participating in cleanup

drives and desilting activities to protect the river from flooding.

King Oyo has also engaged with the Government of Uganda on the return of kingdom properties, a process formalized in a 2019 Memorandum of Understanding.

The Batooro people treasure rich traditions ranging from oral storytelling and clan systems to indigenous crafts and attire such as the Ekiteteeyi and Kanzu.

The use of Empaako (pet names of honor) remains

a cornerstone of identity and respect for ancestry.

The Empango ceremony, sacred drums, and the kingdom's natural environment hold deep cultural and spiritual significance for the Tooro people.

As preparations for the 30th Empango gather pace, Tooro leaders have urged subjects, well-wishers, and partners to rally behind the historic celebration of King Oyo's reign.



KATOOKE DAIRY CO-OPERATIVE RECORDS PROGRESS UNDER LEGS PROJECT

By Johnson Atuhaire, Communication Officer, Kyenjojo District



Heifers at Mr. Nkonge's demonstration farm

The Katooke Dairy and Livestock Co-operative Society Ltd in Kyenjojo District has registered key milestones in the implementation of the Local Economic Growth Support (LEGS) project, an initiative aimed at strengthening the dairy sector through value addition, restocking, and farmer empowerment.

At a review meeting held

in Katooke Town Council, the society's chairperson, Mr. William Mulengwa, highlighted achievements in five areas including establishment of a milk collection center, creation of a dairy demonstration farm, restocking of cattle, farmer trainings, and genetic improvement through artificial insemination (AI).

The milk collection center, launched in June this year by the State Minister for

Local Government, is not yet operational due to low volumes of milk supplied. To sustain operations, the co-operative resolved to engage a private partner while members gradually build capacity. Leadership and management training has also been undertaken to strengthen the society's governance.

A dairy demonstration unit has been established to showcase improved pasture varieties, livestock



Members visit the goat section of the demonstration farm



The Senior Veterinary Officer, Mr. Adolf Kabagambe gives his remarks

management, and milk production practices. Three heifers have so far been supplied, although compliance challenges with the host farmer have slowed progress. Once fully operational, the farm is expected to support training and job creation along the dairy value chain.

Through the project, 39 heifers were procured and distributed to farmers across the district. While one animal succumbed to tick-borne disease, the rest are thriving, with expectations to boost household incomes and milk production.

Farmers have also benefited from extensive training on cooperative governance, financial literacy, and animal husbandry. A farmer-to-farmer learning tour in Kyegegwa District offered practical exposure to cooperative management and smallholder practices.

In a bid to enhance breeds, 16 AI technicians have been trained and equipped, leading to

over 859 inseminations and the birth of at least 300 calves. To facilitate field operations, two motorcycles were handed over to the co-operative for AI outreach services.

Despite progress, challenges remain, including inadequate milk volumes for the collection center, livestock losses from tick-borne diseases, non-compliance with project terms by some members, and poor rural roads hampering extension services.

Mr. Kabagambe Adolf, the Senior Veterinary Officer, commended the initiative but urged stronger farmer mobilization and better disease control measures.

“With continuous training, cooperation, and improved infrastructure, this project has the potential to transform the dairy value chain in Kyenjojo,” he said.

The Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Mr.

Yiga Martin Paul, praised the cooperative’s efforts but called for more active membership and timely subscription payments to ensure sustainability.

District Chairperson Mr. Gilbert Rubaihayo lauded the cooperative’s cohesion, saying many similar projects across the country had collapsed. However, he discouraged the idea of hiring out the milk plant to private investors, warning it would undermine members’ efforts.

“Take good care of the heifers, feed them well, and ensure reproduction. With unity and commitment, this cooperative can grow stronger and deliver lasting benefits,” he advised.

The LEGS project is part of government’s broader drive to boost local economic growth and improve household incomes by supporting community-based enterprises.

RWENZORI RHYTHMS & TOORO ECHOES: TOURISM'S NEW BEAT IN UGANDA

*By Philbert Mwebembezi
Kagangure, Events and
Project Coordinator, Akili
Ya Afrika*

From the rhythmic strides on the slopes of the Rwenzori Mountains to the soul-stirring chants rising from the royal grounds of Tooro, western Uganda is finding a new beat—one that celebrates movement, meaning, and memory.

This is more than tourism; it is the rediscovery of the Pearl of Africa's soul.

It begins in the highlands of Kasese, where the Tusker Lite Rwenzori Marathon 2025 sets hearts racing and spirits soaring.

Renowned as one of Africa's most scenic high-altitude endurance events, the marathon attracts global runners, nature

lovers, and explorers eager to experience Uganda in motion. With every stride, participants are immersed in breathtaking beauty: crater lakes shimmering in the distance, misty Rwenzori peaks towering above, and villages alive with cheer and color.

Held on 23rd August 2025, the marathon enjoys overwhelming support from both the government and private sector. It has become a beacon of hope, showcasing how sports tourism can drive community engagement, stimulate economic growth, and promote Uganda's global appeal.

But the finish line is only the beginning. Just weeks later, the story shifts from adrenaline to ancestry as Fort Portal Tourism City hosts the Hats and Shorts: Empaako Edition, a three-day cultural festival scheduled for 12th to 14th September 2025 at the iconic Empaako Village.

This vibrant cultural hub, home to Africa's Biggest Pot and a museum chronicling Tooro Kingdom's history, will provide the stage for celebrations that coincide with the 30th Coronation

Anniversary of Omukama Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV, Tooro's youthful and visionary monarch.

At the heart of the festival is the Empaako naming tradition, a cultural practice unique to Tooro and neighboring communities, recognized by UNESCO for fostering peace and unity. Here, everyone local or visitor, young or old is welcomed with a name that conveys love and belonging.

Festival guests are invited not just to watch but to take part, to receive an Empaako name, and to feel the embrace of a kingdom where culture thrives through connection.

This transition from marathon to music, from race to ritual reflects Uganda's evolving tourism identity. Sports and cultural tourism are no longer separate experiences but two sides of the same coin, both uniting people, elevating heritage, and igniting national pride.

Driving this vision is Akili Ya Afrika, the team behind the Empaako Edition. More than event organizers, they are community changemakers using tourism as a tool for transformation.

Festival proceeds will support libraries in underserved schools

across Tooro, ensuring children grow up with access to knowledge and stories. A tree-planting initiative will also run alongside, safeguarding the natural treasures that define the region's beauty. Visitors are encouraged to contribute in simple ways by bringing a book or sponsoring a tree leaving

behind a lasting impact.

From the cool breath of the Rwenzoris to the cultural warmth of Tooro, Uganda offers a journey unlike any other. From the rhythms of the marathon to the echoes of Empaako, the Pearl of Africa is not just rising it is radiating.

AKILI YA AFRIKA PRESENTS

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We've launched an inspiring campaign called "**Greening Uganda Schools**," aimed at nurturing environmental stewardship among school children through tree planting. Our dream is bold yet achievable: To plant **one million trees in Ugandan schools** by 2030.

This rainy season, from September to October 2025, we plan to plant 20,000 indigenous and fruit trees across 40 schools in Fort Portal, Kabarole, and Bunyangabu districts in Western Uganda. So far, we've planted over 6,000 trees, and we're just getting started.

To make this vision a reality, we are raising UGX 10 million (approximately \$3,000). These funds will go toward purchasing specific tree seedlings, hiring and fueling transportation trucks, and facilitating the dedicated staff who will carry out the planting exercise.

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