

Govt wants Shs700b to tackle climate change

BY JALIRA NAMYALO
& EPHRAIM KASOZI

editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

ENTEBBE. Government is looking for \$200 million (Shs713.7 billion) to implement a plan to avert the negative effects of climate change and hunger in the next three years, a new strategy has revealed.

The strategy dubbed, 'Uganda Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience' by the ministry of Water and Environment climate change department shows that the money will be used to develop climate resilience plans.

The plan will be used to address challenges that include agriculture production and food insecurity, improved catchment protection and enhanced water supply and storage, communities and infrastructure of the major urban centers and strengthening climate information systems.

Speaking at a consultative meeting in Entebbe last week, the chairperson Par-

liamentary Natural Resources Committee, Mr Alex Byarugaba, said that a number of communities have been affected by the impacts of climate change which require urgent intervention.

"Climate change is a reality; we need something tangible to start. Let us come up with implementable programme to fight the impacts of climate change by tasking government to release funds to address issues. We should put our emphasis on tree planting to cover the bare areas and also invest in quick harvesting crops to address the problem of hunger," he said.

Mr Byarugaba, also the MP for Isingiro South, said: "We have to mitigate the effects of climate change because those who used to have matooke for sale, currently cannot afford even what to eat just like those who had milk. We need this fund to work with government on the little available resources."

Kumi Municipality MP Silas Aogon argued that the impact of climate change has worsened the agricultural sector yet

employs more than 70 per cent of the country's population.

"Poor agricultural practices have also put us down but if resilience is achieved and we apply best agricultural practices, we shall increase food production which will settle a problem of food insecurity and increase exports to improve our income for development. Uganda loses over \$45 million a year in the agricultural sector which has affected its income," he said.

Mr Aogon added that government projects like operation wealth creation have lost government a lot of money due to climate change and it would continue losing until the problem is settled.

"Agriculture is the major sector to drive the country in the middle class world as our vision 2040, because the largest population depends on it.

"Government will be forced to divert other sectors funds to irrigation if climate change problems are not solved fast which will affect other sectors and projects," he added.

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