

The Auditor General calls for clarity in the roles of local governments and the Water ministry and clear maintenance plans for dams in Karamoja Sub-region.

BY SIMON PETER EMWAMU

The latest Auditor General's report has highlighted several gaps in maintenance of more than 106 valley tanks and five dams across the nine districts of the Karamoja Sub-region.

The anomaly cited by the Office of the Auditor General in its report released on December 31, 2025 comes at a time when the pastoralists across the region are facing water crisis as a fair share of valley tanks and dams have dried up, leaving animals emaciated as a result.

The report signed off by Mr Edward Akol, the Auditor General, confirms the Ministry of Water and Environment, and the Office of the Prime Minister, constructed over 106 valley tanks at Shs8.7b and five dams across the region at Shs45b for purposes of supporting livestock economy and irrigation in Karamoja but they have remained poorly managed.

Financing

During the 2024/2025 financial year, the Water ministry was allocated Shs1.1 billion for the maintenance of water sources in the region. The audit report, however, indicates that the funds were not utilised effectively.

An inspection conducted in November 2025 on 25 valley tanks and five dams found that 18 valley tanks (72 percent) were heavily silted, while seven (28 percent) faced maintenance challenges, including weed-invaded inlets, dilapidated cattle access ramps, and eroded embankments.

The Auditor General noted that heavy silting has significantly reduced water storage capacity, limiting water availability for livestock and agriculture in a sub-region already grappling with recurrent drought.

Report exposes gaps in maintaining water da



A woman of Turkana origin waters her herd at Kobebe water dam in Moroto District, Karamoja S. The dam, located on the Moroto, Kenya border, has since dried up. PHOTO/SIMON PETER EMWAMU

and limited community ownership as key weaknesses undermining sustainability.

"I have advised accounting officers to establish clear maintenance plans and budgets for all 106 valley tanks and five dams, and to clarify the roles of local governments and the Ministry of Water and Environment," Mr Akol stated in the report.

Affected facilities

Among the affected facilities is Kawomeri Dam, which remains non-functional due to a lack of water, partly attributed to encroachment on its

both Karamojong pastoralists and neighbouring Turkana communities. The dam, with a capacity of 2.6 billion cubic litres, supports an estimated 700,000 head of livestock.

Dr Francis Inangolet, the Moroto District production officer, said the dam has become heavily silted and is drying up, forcing pastoralists to migrate in search of water.

"If it does not rain in the next two weeks, nothing will be left. The dam needs to be desilted as soon as possible," Dr Inangolet said, adding that engineers must investigate whether or not ongoing road construction around

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