

Water sources contaminated as Malaba battles cholera outbreak

MALABA

By Faustine Odeke

Following an outbreak of cholera in Malaba town, most traditional water sources have been confirmed to be contaminated with faecal matter and unsafe for consumption.

The tests conducted by the Mbale regional water quality laboratory under the water ministry, confirmed that apart from the samples that were collected from the National Water and Sewerage Corporation tap stands, the rest of the water sources were grossly contaminated.

Louis Mugisha, the head of the laboratory, advised communities drawing water from traditional water sources to consistently boil the water or use disinfectants such as chlorine.

The results were released during a cleaning exercise organised by the Tororo County South Member of Parliament, Frederick Angura, on Friday.

Seven children have so far died of cholera in the eastern border town.

The cleaning exercise was undertaken by the UPDF, the

Police, prisons officers and various development partners operating in Tororo district and the local community.

During the exercise, it was discovered that many of the landlords release their properties' waste matter into drainage channels while most of the pit-latrines had caved in as a result of heavy rains.

BETWEEN THE LINES

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Angura tasked the local authorities with taking charge of the sanitation situation to ensure every landlord provides good sanitary facilities for their tenants. He also told the people to improve personal hygiene at household level.

He urged residents to desist from using 'flying toilets'. He said the practice was common in the town and that it was partly responsible for the cholera outbreak. He also

appealed to the residents to develop the habit of washing their hands every time they visit the toilets.

The acting district chairperson, Stella Imukutet, asked leaders of Malaba to lead in promoting sanitation.

The district councillors representing Malaba appealed to the Government and other development partners to avail a cesspool emptier for residents to dispose their faecal matter.

Closing facilities

The LC3 chairperson, Asa Orimodi Kalami, said premises without sanitary facilities would be closed.

He added that the town council was looking for money to secure land for funds to construct sewer lagoons.

He acknowledged that over 90% of the landlords have designed a mechanism where the sewage is released into the drainage channels whenever it rains.

The assistant chief administrative officer, Jackson Osudo, said it was shameful for the town to suffer a cholera outbreak, saying that it depicted that the people of Malaba were not mindful of their personal hygiene.