

48 irrigation schemes constructed, 30 in pipeline

By Gerald Tenywa
and Betty Amamukirori

The Ministry of Water and Environment is constructing 48 new small and big irrigation schemes in order to increase food security and resilience against climate change impacts.

Construction of another 30 will be undertaken in different parts of the country after completion of feasibility studies currently going on.

"We want to solve the water crisis across the country," Sam Cheptoris, the Minister of Water and Environment, said.

Cheptoris was presenting the achievements and challenges regarding the implementation of the NRM Manifesto (2016-2021) in relation to the water and environment sector at the Media Centre in Kampala.

The minister pointed out that they had also developed a national irrigation policy which will guide planning and implementation of irrigation programmes in the country. He said currently, they were constructing mega irrigation schemes, covering a total irrigation area of 4,638 hectares.

List of irrigation schemes

New Irrigation schemes to be worked on in 2018/19		Schemes under implementation
Amagoro irrigation scheme around Mt. Elgon in Tororo district	Bukwo	Olweny in Lira district
Nabigaga in Kamuli district	Soroti	Mubuku II in Kasese
Rwimi around Mt. Rwenzori, Kasese and Kabarole districts	Abim	Doho II in Butaleja
Nyimur around Agoro hills in Lamwo	Moroto	Ngeenge in Kween
Purongo in Amuru	Serere	Tochi in Oyam
Palyec in Nwoya	Bukedea	Wadelai in Nebbi/ Pakwach
Kanungu and Kibimba in Kanungu and Gomba districts	Kumi	
SIPI	Kapchorwa	Solar-powered schemes completed
Unyama	Tororo	Isingiro
Namalu	Kaberaido	Mbarara
Rwengaju in Kabarole district	Nakapiripirit	Rukiga
Planned small scale irrigation schemes	Amudat	Lwengo
Manafwa	Kotido	Mukono
	Amuria	Mityana
	Luuka	Masaka
	Sironko	Oyam
	Adjumani	Bugiri
	Lira	Soroti
	Gulu	
	Zombo	

June 2016 to 80% as of June last year, Cheptoris said.

Shea butter trees

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) has taken enforcement measures with support from the Environment Protection Force (EPF) to protect the integrity of the shea butter tree in Serere, Soroti, Amuria, Katakwi, Kaabong, Abim, Otuoke, Lira, Alebtong, Pader, Agago and Gulu districts.

This followed a presidential directive on the protection of shea butter trees as a crop. A total 227,489 hectares of shea butter trees in Agago, Abim and Kaabong have been protected, Cheptoris said.

In addition, NEMA is supporting local communities to add value to shea products. So far, over 600 women groups have been supported Otuoke and Agago districts, leading to improved bargaining power of the women groups for better prices and increased incomes.

RESTORING WETLANDS

Sam Cheptoris, the Minister of Water and Environment, pointed out that the ministry recovered parts of degraded wetlands and cited 35km area of Limoto in the districts of Kibuku and Pallisa. He said sustainable activities, such as fishing and keeping of livestock, are being carried out in Limoto wetland.

In addition, 80% of Abelet, Odukurun and Alere in Soroti district were recovered. In western Uganda, recovery and restoration of River Rwizi and its catchment are ongoing in both the lower catchment area (Lake Kakyera) and the upper catchment (Kanyabukanja-Katara-Nyakambu wetlands system in Buhweju district).

Sand mining activities on the shoreline wetlands of Lwera, Bugiri, Mukono and Namayingo that have supported infrastructure development in the country were regulated through permit process, where four companies complied, Cheptoris said.

In addition, sand mining guidelines have been developed to support legal processes of extraction of sand.