

France injects sh1.8 trillion into projects

By Umaru Kashaka

The French Development Agency (Agence française de développement or AFD) has injected over sh1.8 trillion into Ugandan development projects during the past 20 years, with more than sh988b over the past three years.

The French ambassador to Uganda, Stephanie Rivoal, told *New Vision* on Tuesday that the move reflects the agency's willingness to support sustainable and inclusive development in consistency with the main priorities raised by the Government and private actors.

"When I say sustainable and inclusive, this means it should benefit all Ugandans, with the objective of promoting growth, creating jobs and reducing poverty, in addition to building resilience to climate change outbreaks and preserving natural resources for the benefit of the next generations," she says.

Rivoal says over the past years, AFD funding has been focusing on four main pillars.

"First, supporting the energy sector through generation of renewable energy, extension of the national grid and regional

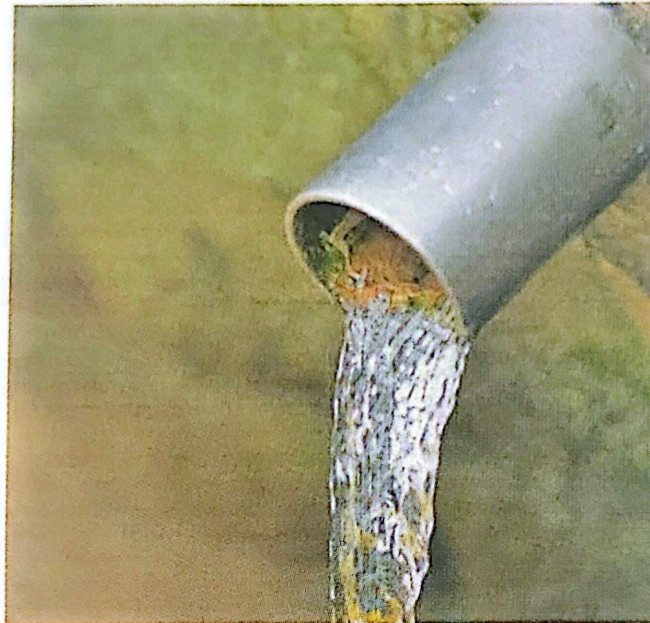
interconnection and improved access in rural areas," she says.

Rivoal notes that Bujagali (committed in 2009) and Muzizi (works to start) hydropower plants; Hoima-Nkenda transmission line substations (works ongoing); rural electrification in 25 districts in western Uganda (works ongoing), are among the projects funded or under implementation.

The envoy says the second pillar is improving water supply and sanitation systems in urban areas, such as water treatment plants, network rehabilitation and extension, and public water points.

She says that among the projects funded or under implementation are National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC), Ggaba water treatment plant extension and rehabilitation (committed in January this year) and the Katosi water treatment plant and transmission main reservoirs (works to start).

"Two agreements are under discussion and are waiting for approval from the Cabinet and the Parliament of Uganda, for the works to start on NWSC network rehabilitation and extension Kampala-East, on Masaka and Mbarara water and sanitation facilities, as well as for Kagera water intake in



AFD considers provision of safe water as key in their support to Uganda

Isingiro district," the envoy says. She adds: "Then, we will address the challenges of climate change with low carbon and climate resilient development strategies, sustainable management of national parks by preserving biodiversity and promoting tourism." Among the projects funded or under implementation in the above category are Uganda national contribution to Paris

agreement on climate change (committed), Kampala Climate Action Plan (committed), sustainable funding for Mt. Rwenzori National Park (on-going) and water quality monitoring on Lake Victoria, together with Makerere University and National Fisheries Research Institute (ongoing). "And, finally, promoting private sector through public-private partnerships, credit

lines to commercial banks, credit facilities and equity sharing for companies," she explains.

Among the projects funded or under implementation in the above category, the ambassador said, are promoting low cost mortgage through Housing Finance Bank (committed in 2012); providing concessional financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects through the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Energy Finance programme (SUNREF) (on-going).

Uganda's request

Meanwhile, the envoy says for the coming years, the Government has requested the AFD to provide low cost funding for key projects, such as the Kampala-Jinja Expressway and the Kampala Southern By-pass, mini hydro electricity plants in West Nile, Kampala street lighting, water and sanitation supply in Isingiro district and water for production in Kiruhura district.

Rivoal says AFD will also go on with the SUNREF programme support through local banks, investors and private companies that are eager to invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

She said AFD is supporting Uganda Electricity Generation Company Limited in preparing

detailed feasibility studies for two new mini hydroelectricity plants in West Nile regions of Agbinika and Okulacere, as well as, the rehabilitation of Maziba in south-west region.

What NWSC says

NWSC public relations manager Samuel Apedel says the Government with co-funding from the French government has been instrumental in supporting them improve infrastructure and extend services to more people.

"For example, the expansion and rehabilitation of Ggaba Water Works helped expand daily water supply capacity from 190 million litres to 240 million litres per day. We are in advanced stages of starting construction of a new water treatment plant and associated water transmission pipelines to the east of Kampala in Katosi," he says.

Apedel says the new plant add 160 million litres of water per day to the greater Kampala water supply area to serve Kampala, Wakiso and Mukono.

"This is being done with funding from the French government, Government of Uganda and other development partners. This will help meet the water supply demands of Kampala up to 2040," he says.