

Bwindi hospital gets water filter

KANUNGU

By Agnes Nantambi

Bwindi Community Hospital in Kanungu district has received a water filtration plant to ensure that patients do not contract other diseases while at the facility.

The hospital has been using water from the community gravity flow scheme, which was not deemed safe.

The operations manager of Bwindi Community Hospital, Stuart Kwikyiriza, said: "We were advised to fetch water from an open spring, which we did. The water was being used without being filtered, but with this system, the water will be safe and ready for drinking," he said.

The 122-bed capacity hospital admits 150 patients daily and uses about 5,000 litres of water daily.

The Bishop of Kinkizi Diocese, Dan Zoreka, said the Church is ready to support anyone championing development and promised to maintain the facility.

"We are not only dealing with the spiritual aspect as people think, but our ministry is holistic in nature. We address all other things that are needed for every human being," he said.

Fred Owera Odom, who works with Care International, said the water the hospital has been using was contaminated.

"We did an analysis of the water quality and discovered that the water was contaminated. It had suspended solids yet it was being used in



Bishop Zoreka and other officials inspecting the newly commissioned water filtration system. Photo by Agnes Nantambi

BETWEEN THE LINES:

■ The hospital has been using water from the community gravity flow scheme, which was not deemed safe.

medical procedures like surgery, cleaning of wounds and the mixing of medicines," he added.

Speaking during the launch of the plant at the hospital in Kanungu district recently, Owera said recent studies globally have associated poor water quality with hospital-acquired infections.

"Some people come from their homes when sick, while others come when healthy but by the time they leave, they have contracted diseases because of the water and, sanitary

conditions in health facilities," he explained.

Owera said the system was donated by General Electric Foundation, an organisation based in the US.

This is part of a sh700m project to install filtration systems in the hospitals in western Uganda.

The others to benefit are Kilembe Mines, Kagando Mission, Ruharo mission, Kisizi and Bundibugyo General hospitals.

The project is being implemented in collaboration with the Makerere University School of Public Health, Assist International and Center for Global Safe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (Rollins and School of Public Health, Emory University). The others are Uganda Protestant Medical Bureau, Ministry of Health as well as the Ministry of Water and Environment.