

# Power projects on course

By Benon Ojiambo

Last week was unusual for non-technical senior members of the Electricity Regulatory Authority (ERA) management as they toured various electricity generation projects across the country.

From Tororo to Soroti, Gulu, Hoima, Kasese and Kabale districts, ERA management spent the week inspecting projects.

The projects inspected include Tororo Solar North (10MW), Siti1&2 (22.7MW), Soroti solar plant (10MW), Achwa 2 HPP (42MW) and Waki hydropower project.

According to Eng. Ziria Tibalwa Waako, ERA's chief executive officer, inclusion of the non-technical staff was aimed at giving them a feel of what transpires in the projects. This is expected to enable them make informed decisions.

John Saturday, the ERA procurement manager, described the inspection as timely and informative.

"Our inclusion on the inspection team was meant to enable us appreciate what the technical team goes through. They deserve to be accorded support," Saturday said.

He added that although their inclusion on the team may not directly yield benefits, it shall benefit the organisation through the support accorded to the technical teams.

"We have learnt some of the technical terms and how water generates power," he added.

## Tororo Solar North

The project construction, which kicked off in December last year was completed early, this month and is currently undergoing performance tests by the Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Ltd (UETCL) and Umeme.

Waako expressed optimism that the project will reduce on the losses that are normally incurred during transmission



Tororo Solar North power plant is undergoing performance tests by UETCL and Umeme

## Four out of the five small power projects are complete

due to short distances.

Technical losses are incurred during the transmission of power from the generation plant to the substation. The longer the distance, the higher the technical losses.

The plant is located less than 2km away from the substation.

"It is located near the UETCL load centres which reduces technical losses that may be incurred during transmission over long distances," Waako said.

### Siti 1 and 2

Siti 1 construction in Bukwo district has been completed and is ready to be commissioned. On the other hand, Siti 2, whose construction commenced in May, is 40% complete.

### Rwimi

According to Raviwama Katugampola, the 5.5MW capacity project engineer, Rwimi is almost complete, with 95% of the dam complete. Machine

## OVER 33MW BY FEBRUARY

About five small electricity generation plants, with a capacity of about 33.6MW are expected to be connected to the national grid by the end of February next year.

They are Tororo Solar North plant (10MW), Siti 1 (6.2MW), Rwimi HPP (5.5MW), Lubilia (5.4MW) and Muvumbe power plant.

The projects will bring Uganda's generation capacity to about 960MW.

Currently, Uganda's generation capacity stands at 924.9MW. Of this, large hydros account for 69%, while thermal co-generation and small hydro account for 15%, 9% and 7% of the installed capacity respectively.

installations at the power house is also complete and only about 50 metres of the 1.8km water pipeline left.

"We are ahead of the scheduled October 2017 deadline," Katugampola said.

Rwimi project is at the Kabarole and Kasese border.

### Muvumbe HPP

The project construction and technical tests have been completed and awaits commissioning. It is located in Kabale district.

### Lubilia hydro project

The project, located in Kasese, commenced in July and is moving on as scheduled ahead of its commissioning in December next year.

"We are optimistic that we shall deliver the project as planned," an official said.

The hydropower project in Kasese is Nyamwamba, a 9.2MW project.

### Benefits

Presence of these projects in the various communities has not just come and passed as the communities have benefitted through different corporate social responsibility activities, such as building a health facility and classrooms for schools by Nyamwamba project in Kasese district. Since most of the small hydro projects are in hard-to-reach areas, an increment in the amount of power they can access is expected to spur economic activity.