

Kaabong residents cry out over bed bugs in hospital

KAABONG

By Paul Watala

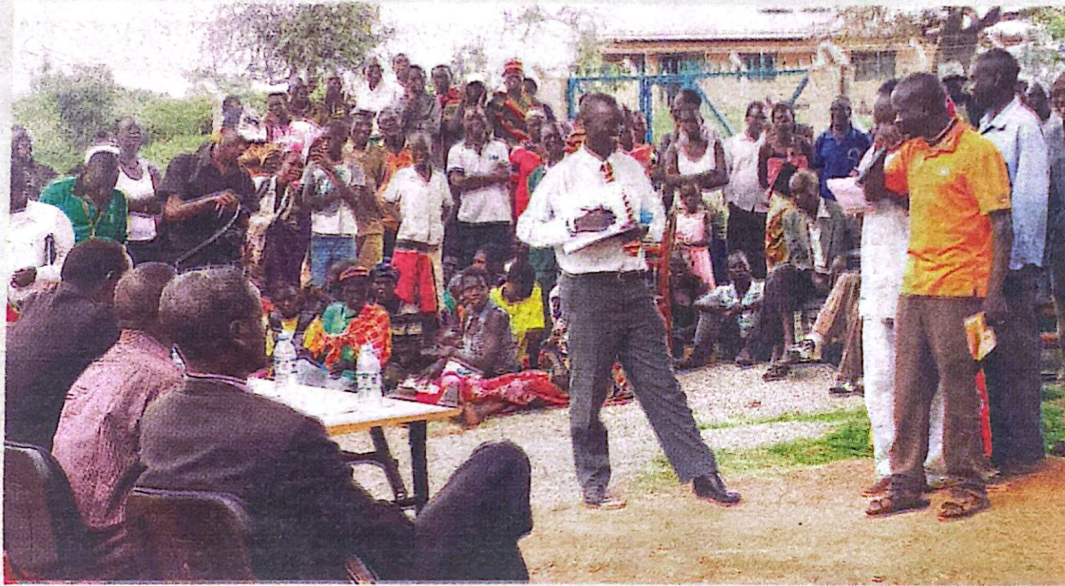
Residents of Kaabong district have said bed bugs are making them shun Kaabong Hospital.

The residents said this during a *baraza* organised by ADRA in Kaabong town council on Thursday.

Kaabong resident district commissioner Simon Lolim chaired the *baraza* attended by the hospital medical superintendent, Danson Otim.

Residents booed Otim as he tried to deny the issue and asked Lolim to go to the hospital with them if they wanted proof.

Monica Chila, a resident, said she was forced to leave the hospital before being discharged because of the bed bugs.



Residents of Kaabong speaking during the meeting. Photo by Paul Watala

“Some people do not want to be admitted to the facility for fear of bed bugs. Our health

worsens when we are at the hospital,” she added.

Chila added that those who

are admitted are always asked to go with bed sheets.

“This is not what I had

expected from a government hospital that serves the whole of Karamoja, part of South Sudan and Kenya,” she said.

Raphael Itae, another resident, also accused nurses at the facility of beating up women who go there to deliver.

“Nurses at this facility have become terrorists. They have no love for the patients,” Itae said. Lolim later acknowledged that there were bed bugs in the hospital.

“The truth is that Kaabong Hospital has been attacked by bed bugs. In 2016, one of senior colleagues fell sick and was taken there. When I went there, I saw bed bugs moving freely on the mattresses,” he said. Lolim asked hospital administrators to apologise to the residents.

“We are very sorry that a government hospital that

serves the entire Karamoja sub-region and neighboring countries like Kenya and South Sudan is being shunned by residents because of bed bugs. It is a very big shame to the country and leaders,” he said.

“I am very sorry that our patients have suffered because of bed bugs but these bed bugs are not brought by nurses, they are brought by you patients who do not observe hygiene in your homes,” Otim said as he apologised.

“Recently we received sh6m and we are going to secure pesticides. We have sprayed several times, but when patients come for services they bring them back,” Otim said.

Lolim also hailed ADRA for empowering the residents to demand their rights, accountability and service delivery from their leaders.