

# Motorised boreholes increase access to safe water in Busoga

By Agnes Nantambi

**W**hile hand pump boreholes have for long been seen as the solution to access safe water in many rural settings, the energy required to pump the water made them an unattractive option.

All that is, however, beginning to change in eastern Uganda, thanks to the African Development Bank (AfDB), which has allocated funds to support the motorisation of boreholes in Kasolwe sub-county in Kamuli district.

According to Jane Achom, the water and sanitation specialist in charge of Busoga sub-region, motorisation of boreholes is geared at easing access to safe and clean water, especially to the marginalised groups such as the women, children and the disabled.

Achom, who represented the director of the Directorate of Water Development in the Ministry of Water and Environment, reported that the sh400m AfDB-funded Kasolwe mini solar powered water system, is a pilot project in the



A motorised borehole in Kamuli district

transformation of hand pump boreholes into motorised in the Busoga sub-region.

She said Kasolwe was taken as a pilot in the region, given the number of people who were accessing water through struggle.

"We realised that this area was underserved, yet it has many women

suffering, they used to trek long distances to get access to the nearby water source, which is not clean. They shared the water with the animals," she said.

She observed that the ministry, under the Rural Water Department, was constructing boreholes, but realized that many were being

destroyed leaving the residents to suffer with no water which is against the ministry's mandate.

"We were implementing the boreholes project near homesteads, but many were destroyed. We had to look for funds to upgrade those with the potential to provide high yield of water and we decided to motorise them to help the vulnerable groups to access water," Achom said.

She applauded the leadership of Kamuli district, which she said made it easy to implement the project because of their co-operation.

She said the ministry has secured enough funding and Kasolwe is just one of the benefiting sub-counties in the region.

"Your work is to contribute to the operation and maintenance so that we help you improve the lives of residents," she said.

The Kamuli district LC5 chairperson, Thomas Kategere, warned the people of Busoga against having negative attitude towards development.

"We served you with coffee, but you left it to dry. We gave you animals for livestock production and you left them to die," Kategere said.

"The world is developing and

Africa is the most endowed continent. We need to stop the perception of changing our leadership without changing our attitude to development," he said.

The minister for Karamoja affairs, Moses Kisige, who officiated at the commissioning of the project, advised residents to take up all the available opportunities in farming, irrigation or education so that they can transform their families to reach the middle income status.

He, however, promised to lobby for improved services in the area, especially in the health, power, education and the road sectors.

He also advised the residents to take advantage of the new piped water project in the area in order to improve their levels of hygiene.

## What people say

Edith Nambogwe, a resident of Kamuli, says although the hand pump borehole was free of charge, it was not as efficient as the tap water system.

Asiya Nabirye, also a resident of Kamuli, says the new system has really saved them from the inconvenience of manually pumping boreholes which was the case in the past.