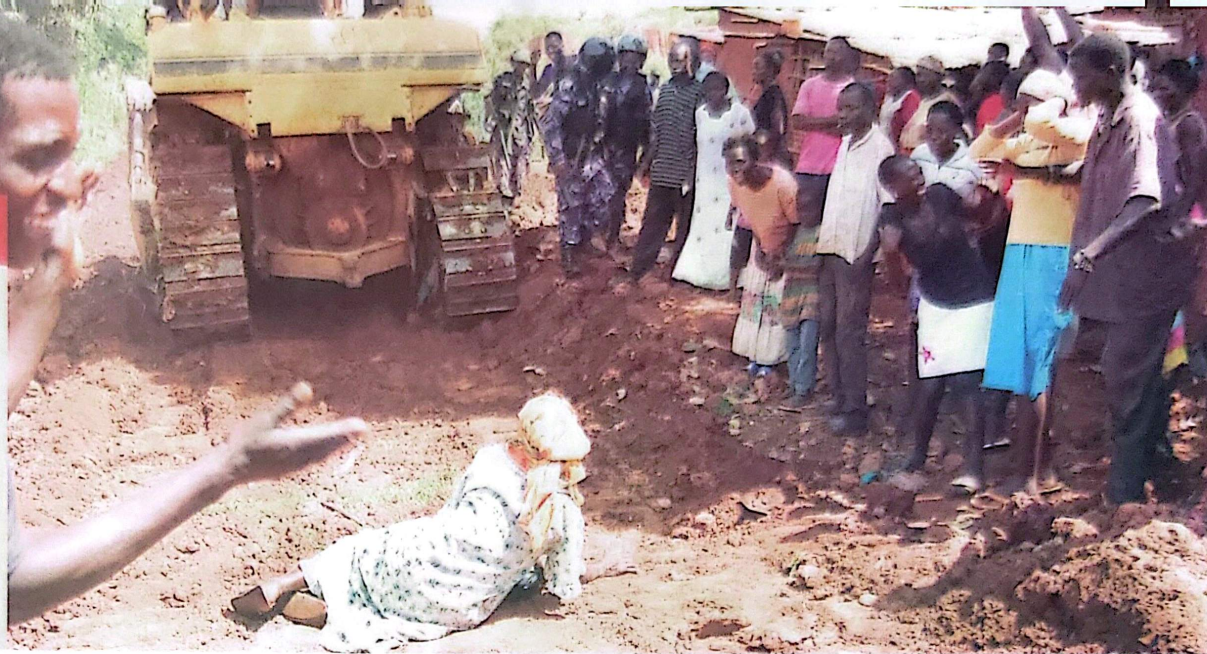


ROADWORKS

Residents reject road

An elderly woman lies in the middle of the road in protest as a grader digs through her plantation during the opening of access roads at Kikaramoja Village in Jinja District last Friday. Residents turned rowdy and stoned deployed police officers as they protested the excavation saying they had not been informed of the development.

PHOTO BY DENIS EDEMA



Kibuku women cry out as men shun antenatal visits

Concern. They shun their responsibility of providing comfort to expectant mothers which in the end strains health workers.

BY MUDANGHA KOLYANGHA
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

KIBUKU. Much as it is a policy by the Ministry of Health for men to accompany their pregnant wives for antenatal care, many expectant mothers continue to visit health facilities alone as a result of their husbands' lack of commitment.

In many health facilities, pregnant women who turn up alone have been pushed behind the queues, giving priority to couples as a way of encouraging them to convince their husbands to join them in the next visit.

For Ms Annet Namakoye, the husband has never appeared at the health facility throughout the four

pregnancies the 21-year-old has carried.

Ms Namakoye says it is always by luck to be examined without a husband.

The eight-months expectant mother says it is always painful not to appear at the facility without the husband.

"The health workers abuse us when we come without our husbands. They shout at us yet we also try our level best to come with them but they refuse," she says.

Worrying situation

The officer-in-charge of Kibuku Health Centre IV, Mr William Sango Mpulumba, says the number of men accompanying their wives to the facility is worrying since the couple misses the chance of being counselled and guided on pregnancy care.

"It is a precondition that a woman

REPORT

A community scorecard report released by Makerere University school of Public Health from the Future Health System study indicates that the nonparticipation of men in antenatal care has contributed to low performance in provision of health services in Kibuku District. The report is a participatory tool used by researchers to assess, monitor, evaluate and plan the delivery of services in health facilities.

reports for antenatal care with her husband. However, it is very disappointing that out of 10 women who turn up here, only two are accompanied by their men," he says.

Mr Mpulumba explains that the reason men must accompany their wives for antenatal care is to have joint screening for HIV/Aids, Hepatitis B and other sexually transmitted infections so as to guide them on how to have a baby free of these infections.

"The biggest challenge is that men continue to shun their responsibility of providing comfort to their pregnant wives," he adds.

According to Ms Elizabeth Ekirapa Kiracho, a senior lecturer at Makerere University, it is important to carry out thorough sensitisation of the couples to visit health facilities together to have healthy

briefly

Locals protest over road

NAMUTUMBA: Residents of Kisiro Village in Bulange Sub-county last Friday demonstrated against the poor state of Kisiro-Bulange road. Mr Waiwisa Kalange, who led the demonstration, said the road had become impassable and that residents had earlier requested their MP and district authorities to rehabilitate it in vain. However, the district chairperson, Mr Saleh Kumbuga, distanced himself, saying it is Uganda National Roads Authority's responsibility to rehabilitate the road and not the district.

[Ronald Seebe]

Boda knocks child dead

BUYENDE: A boda boda cyclist in Buyende District reportedly knocked dead a six-year-old child. Bukungu police investigations head Francis Opio said Rihana Wanyama was fatally knocked on Sunday as she rushed home from a party in the neighbourhood. "We have authorised burial as we hunt for the rider," Mr Opio said, blaming parents for not monitoring their children, saying the deceased had spent more time at the party alone. [Sam Opio Caleb]

CONTINUES TO PAGE 10

Men leave their expectant wives to struggle alone

FROM PAGE 9

Voices

"The health workers abuse us when we come without our husbands. They shout at us yet we also try our level best to come with them but they refuse,"

EXPECTANT MOTHER

"The community members, service providers and local government should work together to generate solutions to this challenge. The lack of participation by men is affecting our efforts for maternal new born health management because men are supposed to play a key role,"

ELIZABETH EKIRAPA
KIRACHO, SENIOR
LECTURER AT
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

babies.

"The community members, service providers and local government should work together to generate solutions to this challenge. The lack of participation by men is affecting our efforts for maternal new born health management because men are supposed to play a key role," she says.

Ms Kiracho says men have a big role to play in the management of pregnancy right from conception to child birth because mothers go through a lot of challenges that they sometimes cannot handle alone.

Strained midwives

The health facilities are lacking enough midwives to work on the number of mothers that flock the health facilities in rural areas.

Mr Mpulumba says sometimes the few midwives deployed are strained by the numbers as they are needed in the labour room at the same time when they are supposed to handle those on antenatal care.

He also says the rural health facilities lack enough labour rooms, bathrooms and immunisation rooms.

He adds that in most cases, the patients are mixed with delivered mothers, which is not healthy to the newly born babies.

Health workers also point out that sometimes mothers appear at the facilities without the basic requirements for child birth which makes it difficult to handle.

In total, 40 per cent of mothers complete four visits and between 55 to 65 per cent of them deliver at the health facilities.

Mr Bumba says despite increasing the number of midwives across the district, most facilities are grappling with dilapidated delivery beds which need immediate replacement.

Life k
stater
Busog
the cor
the cur
for life.

JINJA
Wambu
bazinga
Wilberf
Gabula

briefly