

BY RAJAB MUKOMBOZI

Medical camp restores hope in Kazo

KAZO. Hundreds of residents from Kanoni Village in Kazo District and the surrounding areas at the weekend thronged Bwagonga Community Hospital in Kanoni to access free diagnosis, treatment and care, and also witnessed the donation of assorted equipment to the facility.

The free medical camp and donation were facilitated by the Rotary Club of Upper Kololo under the Disease Prevention and Treatment Enhancement Programme project. The equipment donated included delivery beds, oxygen concentrators, blood pressure machines, mama kits, dental equipment and baby incubators.

The struggle resident's face in accessing medical services, according to local leaders and the organisers, is testimony that there is still a wide gap in health service

delivery in communities.

"The large number of people tells you that there is still a high demand for medical services in communities. This is the reason we are coming in as Rotary Club to supplement government efforts," Mr Geoffrey Martin Kitakule, the district governor of Rotary District 9213, said.

He added that addressing this gap requires more than medical camps alone, and called for better-equipped health facilities, health education and human resource capacity building.

"The reason we go beyond just holding medical camps is that, alone, these are not sustainable because the huge numbers that turn up may not be handled. Camps address immediate health challenges, but some of these need continu-

ous monitoring, and that is a reason we donate equipment, build the capacity of health workers, and carry out health education promotion," Mr Kitakule said.

The Kazo District Health Officer, Dr Edgar

Kansiime, said the large turnout was due to the comprehensive services that usually come with such medical camps.

"The camp comes with a wide range of services that are not available at our health facilities, like CT scan services; they have a good number of specialised doctors. This also confirms that the disease burden here is high, which calls for improved medical services," Dr Kansiime said.

He identified some of the diseases the area still faces, including malaria, respiratory tract infections, tuberculosis, HIV/Aids, hypertension, skin diseases, and conditions related to maternal and child health and malnutrition.

Mr Philbert Kinyanda, the president of the Rotary Club of Upper Kololo, said

the intervention to extend health services to the community was undertaken in partnership with the international Rotary Clubs of Ogunquit, Bath Sunrise, Westport and Davie-Copper City in the United States, as well as the Rotary Club of Ikeja South in Nigeria.

He said through this partnership, more than Shs200 million had been spent on the facility, which he noted would be key to delivering health services to underserved communities.

The director of Bwagonga Community Hospital, Mr Moses Sadoori, said they started the hospital to support the work of their mother, who used to be a traditional birth attendant.

"Our mother is a traditional birth attendant, but because of age and change in the dynamics of healthcare service delivery, we understood that she can no longer do this work because of advanced age, but we needed to support her cause," he said.

AREAS OF TREATMENT

Some of the health conditions handled at the camp included diabetes, hypertension, maternal and child health complications, respiratory tract infections, HIV/Aids testing and counselling, dental diseases, urinary tract infections and eye diseases.