

Luuka gets Shs2b to fight maternal and infant deaths



Launch. A participant addresses a gathering during the launch of Community in Which Mothers and Newborns Thrive programme in Luuka District on May 24. PHOTO BY DENIS EDEMA

Purpose. The money will be spent on procurement of medical equipment for Kiyunga Health Centre IV and training health workers.

BY DENIS EDEMA
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

LUUKA. Makerere University's School of Public Health has launched a Shs2 billion project to fight infant and maternal deaths in Luuka District.

The Community in Which Mothers and Newborns Thrive (COMONETH) programme, which is expected to run until the middle of 2020, aims to prevent still births and death of newly-born children and the death of mothers due to complications associated with child birth.

Speaking recently at Luuka District headquarters where the project was launched, Dr Peter Muwerezza, who is in charge of implementation of the project, said Luuka was selected to benefit from the project after a baseline study carried out in the district in 2017 revealed that 161 babies and 12 mothers die between first day and a month after childbirth.

The figures, he said, are too high compared to other districts of Uganda, which necessitated intervention.

"We want to save the lives of these newborn babies and mothers who are not attended to by the health workers at the time of delivery due to lack of usable items and equipment, which has been forcing them to resort to traditional birth attendants resulting in unnecessary deaths," he said.

In Uganda, it is estimated that about 85,000 deaths occur annually in the short period around birth, including 6,000

maternal deaths, 39,000 death of newborns, and 40,000 stillbirths. Most of these deaths occur in rural areas.

Matters in Luuka are complicated by the fact that women in this district are very poor and live on average 30km from the nearest hospital in Iganga.

At the same time, while the district has 29 health centres, only Kiyunga Health Centre IV has running water. Most of those that access power are often cut off from supply because of unpaid bills.

According to Dr Muwerezza, the money will be spent on procurement of medical equipment for Kiyunga Health Centre IV. Most of the equipment at the health centre, which serves as the district hospital, are obsolete and non-functional.

SITUATION IN LUUKA

After a baseline study carried out in the district in 2017 revealed that 161 babies and 12 mothers die between first day and a month after childbirth.

Some of the money will also be spent on training health workers in the use of new modern medical equipment and new trends in maternal and care for newborns.

The officer-in-charge of Kiyunga Health Centre IV, Mr Frank Bikaba, said the facility is overwhelmed due to a shortage of staff.

He also said there is a shortage of houses to accommodate health workers.

"We have some workers who commute from as far as Kampala, Jinja and Iganga due to lack of accommodation. This is affecting service delivery at the facility," Mr Bikaba said.

RDC proposes b

BY DENIS OPOKA
& JULIUS OCUNGI
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

KITGUM. The Kitgum Resident District Commissioner, Mr William Komakech, has proposed a ban on smart phone use by teachers during class hours, arguing that the devices distract them from their duties.

Mr Komakech said applica-

tions on as Facebook tend to c teachers of time topics of ing their While radio sta last Thu said tea social m academ

Plot 37/45 Kampala Road
General Lines: (+1) 256 312 256 312
Web: www.nationmedia.com

Money

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) continued to subside. Annual Headline Inflation declined to 1.1 percent from 2.1 percent in May 2018 from minus 2.1 to 10.3 percent.

Economic activity continues to strengthen that the economy will grow by 5.8 percent to have improved across all sectors. Growth in both food and cash crops grew by 10.3 percent respectively. GDP growth

In the medium-term, economic activity continues to strengthen through investments, improving agricultural production, strengthening of the global economy and acceleration in import-intensive

Downside risks to the macro-economy have over the last three months moved to account position due to increasing account deficit as a ratio of GDP

Inflation is projected to return to the level experienced during the period of a gradual increase in global commodity prices that food prices will recover and should cause inflation to rise

In contrast with the assessment (BoU) now assesses the risk of monetary policy is appropriate to maintain the Central Bank margin on the rediscount rate set at 13.0 percent and 14