

Drainage channel works start in Ibanda after decade-long risk

BY JOVITA KYARISIIMA

IBANDA. Authorities in Ibanda Municipality have begun construction of the Kakorogoto Drainage Channel, which residents say has posed a danger to the community for more than a decade.

Construction of the drainage channel started last Tuesday in Kakorogoto Village, Bufunda Ward in Ibanda Municipality. It aims to reduce risks to residents, control water flow during heavy rains and improve the appearance of the area.

Mr Isa Serwada, an engineer at Ibanda Municipality overseeing the project, said the funds for the project will come from the Office of the President.

"We are currently using Shs1 billion provided by the President, together with revenue from local taxes. The works will be implemented in phases so that we utilise the available resources effectively," he said.

Mr Serwada said the drainage channel stretches about 1.5 kilometres, but the first phase will cover about 70 metres as authorities wait for additional funding.

"As we continue with construction, we are identifying sections that require more materials. That is why we are working in phases. The Shs1 billion is not enough to complete the entire project at once," he added.

Background

The works follow a visit last week by Senior Presidential Advisor Kibrai Ambako, who met district leaders and discussed key challenges affecting the area.

During the meeting, leaders raised concern about the Kakorogoto and Buzaabo drainage channels, which they said have contributed to insecurity in the municipality.



Justification.

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and are committed to completing the project. – **Fred Banywana, secretary for works at Ibanda Municipality.**

The two drainage channels have long been considered dangerous spots for residents and boda boda riders, with local leaders warning that the deep trenches have caused accidents and provided hiding places for criminals.

The Resident District Commissioner, Mr Godfrey Mbetegyeize, said the channels are about 30 metres deep and have been a threat to residents.

"We had raised concerns about the

safety of people living near these channels. As a district, we did not have the budget to fix them, so we asked the Office of the President for support before we lose more people. Last year during the rainy season, children died after falling into the channels," he said.

Hope

The secretary for works at Ibanda Municipality, Mr Fred Banywana, said the project will improve safety, accessibility and the general outlook of the area.

"This place has been risky for people living around it. Government wants towns to develop and look organised. Although the funds are limited and released in phases, we are committed to completing the project," he said.

However, Mr Banywana raised concern about residents who dump waste in the drainage channel.

"As construction begins, we have noticed some residents dumping plastic

bags containing human waste into the channel. We call upon the community to stop this behaviour," he said.

Mr Julius Nasasira, a boda boda rider in Bufunda Ward, welcomed the construction works, saying the area had previously been unsafe, especially at night.

"Passing here at night has been risky. Thugs would attack you and you could not even run because you feared falling into the deep trench. We thank the leaders for starting this work," he said.

Another resident, Mr James Kaziini, said the project will boost development in the area because some people had halted construction of houses due to fear that the trench could expand.

"I am happy that the drainage channel is being worked on. Many people had stopped building here because they feared losing their property if the trench widened. This project will encourage development," he said.