

Soroti, Ngora districts get irrigation schemes

NGORA

By Paul Watala

The Government is constructing two small-scale irrigation schemes in Soroti and Ngora districts to ensure constant water supply to small-scale farmers to enhance production and fight poverty in their households.

The construction is taking place in Gawa sub-county, Soroti district and Ojokai sub-county in Ngora district at sh750m.

The project is part of the presidential directive to the Ministry of Water and Environment to construct 500 small-scale irrigation schemes across the country.

According to the resident site engineer in the water ministry, Emmanuel Omutojo, 130 small-scale irrigation systems will be constructed in the first phase across the country.

Omutojo said the construction at Gawa site in Soroti is at the stage of laying pipes and drip lines, tanks and pump house. The facility is seated on 10 acres.

He said the ministry is in search of over 16 acres of land to start the construction of a similar facility in Ngora district, since the funds have already been allocated.

"We are appealing to local district leaders and community members in Ngora to avail land so that construction of the over sh400m irrigation scheme can start," Omutojo



Model farmers from Soroti and Ngora districts during the tour of Iwemba small-scale irrigation facility due for commissioning last week. Photo by Paul Watala

said.

He said this while addressing model small-scale farmers from Soroti and Ngora districts who had gone to witness the progress of Iwemba small-scale irrigation scheme and government demonstration farm in

Bugiri district.

The model farmers from Soroti district were led by their LC5 chairperson George Egonyu, while Ngora was led by the chief administrative officer.

Omutojo said once the Government

constructs the facilities, farmers will have constant supply of water and be able to cultivate fast-growing crops even during the dry spell.

"We have valley tanks constructed to store water for production and on the remaining land, we shall establish

government demonstration gardens that will act as study centres for the farmers who want to learn modern farming," Omutojo said.

He urged the youth, women and men to get interested in the facilities because they will be able to provide job opportunities.

"Teso sub-region should get interested because they always have undependable rainfall. During the dry season, no farm works can go on. But with irrigation schemes, small scale farmers will be able to cultivate fast-growing crops such as onions, cabbage and tomatoes," he said.

Omutojo said the water ministry will be responsible for employing an agronomist who will support farmers in developing sustainable agronomical practices.

"Effort shall be made to train other farmers' groups to cater for attrition and fall off issues. A board will be put in place to manage the facility and allocation and management of the farm land in consultation with the ministry," he said.

George Egonyu, the Soroti LC5 chairperson, hailed the Government for the initiative being made to see that farmers get constant water supply to irrigate their crops, adding that it will address the issues of poverty and food insecurity in households.

Egonyu also appealed to the youth to take advantage of the facilities to get involved in farming to fight unemployment.