

Trade order directive bites highway vendors

Enforcement began on Monday April 13, with law enforcers raiding Balikyewunya market.

BY DANIEL WANDERA

After evictions in Kampala, Mbarara, Mbale and Mukono, the trade order directive has extended to highway traders.

Vendors on the Kampala-Gulu Highway have their future in balance as directive demands their eviction.

It directs them to vacate the Bombo-Mile 20, Balikyewunya, Balikyejusa and Kafu roadside markets located in Luweero and Nakasongola districts.

Enforcement began on Monday April 13, with law enforcers led by the Luweero Town Council officials raiding the Balikyewunya roadside market in Luweero District. More than 300 vendors pleaded with officials to spare their source of livelihoods as roadside kiosks were destroyed.

Justifying why they should not be evicted, Ms Agnes Namande, a mother of seven, said food vending at the market has supported her family for the



Roadside vendors sell merchandise to travellers on the Kampala-Gulu Highway. PHOTO/DANIEL WANDE-RA

last 25-years. She said her customers are mainly Kampala-Gulu travellers and relocating to another place would mean losing her clientele.

"I have particular customers who book the pineapples among other items that cannot be relocated to markets outside the highway," she said in an

NOT IN ROAD RESERVE

At Bombo Town Council, Mile 20, roadside vendors expressed their reluctance to relocate. Traders such as Mr Kelly Abdallah claimed that they operate from outside the road reserve areas. Kafu River roadside market is also affected.

interview on April 13, 2026.

The Monday morning operation also evicted a roadside taxi park which the town council authorities said was ungazetted.

Mr Daniel Kakeeto, the chairperson of the vendors association at Balikyewunya, advised that the operation affecting about 700 vendors should be halted.

"Let the authorities schedule a meeting to plan on how we can operate. While we work to sustain our respective families, the travellers also need the re-

freshments," he said on April 13, 2026.

However, Luweero Town Council Town Clerk, Ms Lydia Nabasa, insisted that they under instruction to implement the government guidelines.

At Balikyeyusa roadside market in Kyevunze Parish, Luweero Sub-county on the Kampala-Gulu Highway, several roadside vendors vowed not to heed the eviction notice.

The market, according to the leaders, hosts about 900 vendors who target the Kampala-Gulu Highway travellers.

Mr Ali Ssemambo, one of the affected traders, claimed that while they have about two weeks to the eviction date, the cause for eviction remains highly suspicious and unreasonable.

"We have no kiosks constructed within the road reserve areas. We pay taxes and surprisingly, the President's office injected some money in our respective businesses in December 2025," he said.

At Balikyeyjusa, where the pineapple farmers dominate the roadside trade, the vendors claimed that the buses have a gazetted police traffic check where the passengers get out of their respective vehicles to buy refreshments.

"This is one area where the passengers get fresh and sweet pineapples at a lower cost," Ms Annet Nampiima, a vendor, said in an interview.

The Luweero District LC5 Chairperson, Mr Erasto Kibirango, said the trade order was implemented without proper sensitisation.

"There is also a likelihood that many of these traders may fail to sustain their families. Leaders need to brainstorm about the likely effects of the ongoing evictions, particularly in areas where the traders have no alternative space," he said.