

Busoga leaders urged to fight teenage pregnancies

IGANGA

By Moses Bikala and Charles Kakamwa

Leaders in Busoga have been advised to address the high rate of teenage pregnancies, if the region is to achieve development.

Dr Peter Ibembe, the programme director of Reproductive Health Uganda, warned that unless something is done to stop the trend, Busoga could continue lagging behind in development while the people wallow in poverty.

"The rate of underage pregnancies is high in this part of the country as indicated in the 2016 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey report. This partly explains the high poverty levels and resultant underdevelopment," Ibembe observed.

He noted that after conceiving, girls drop out of school, further complicating

the poverty situation in their families and communities.

Ibembe made the remarks during celebrations to mark the Alliance Week at Iganga district offices recently.

"In most cases, these girls are abandoned by the men responsible for the pregnancies. They lead difficult lives with their children," he said. Some acquire sexually transmitted infections in the process, he said.

Ibembe urged the local councils to devote a significant part of their budgets towards reproductive health programmes as well as advocacy and empowerment of young people to make informed choices.

The celebrations under the theme, "Youth Building Peace," were attended by students, local council leaders, peer educators, cultural leaders, religious leaders and child rights activists.