

Ministry to train northern region in water protection

OTUKE

By Hudson Apunyo

A team of experts from the Ministry of Water and Environment have recommended that the community in northern Uganda be sensitised on the best operational practices around water facilities to ensure that the water sources are well protected.

The Government intends to rehabilitate multi-purpose reservoir dams for irrigation, livestock watering, fisheries and small-scale industries in different parts of the country.

The reservoir dams are expected to increase productivity and regulate dependency on rain-fed agriculture, which is heavily affected by droughts.

Brenda Akao, a communication official in the Ministry said Water for production is key to the successful implementation of the government's plan for poverty reduction.

"Its principal focus is the provision of dams and valley tanks for increased water storage, especially for use during dry seasons," she said.

Akao said a team of officials from the water ministry recently visited Akwera dam (Otuke), Aloji Ongom dam (Alebtong) and Andibo irrigation scheme (Pakwach) to collect information and assess the impact of water for production interventions.

The team found that Akwera dam in Adwari sub-county, Otuke district, whose construction was completed in January 2011, has remained redundant.

In Alebtong district, the team found out that Aloji Ongom dam, which was constructed in 1953 with a design capacity of three million cubic meters, is currently partially functional due to a breakdown of the water pump.

The team recommends that the dam be revitalised to restore its desired level of functionality. They also recommended that the community be sensitised on how to utilise and protect the water source.

At Andibo dam in Panyango sub-county, Pakwach district, the team found out that the facility holds a substantial amount of water which clearly indicates that the dam was well sited.

They recommended that there is need to conduct catchment protection activities such as training of the communities and tree planting to ensure sustainability of the facility.

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