

First Lady unveils 10 schools in Sebei

BY BUSINGE CONAN

THE First Lady and education minister, Mrs. Janet Museveni, has commissioned newly built primary school buildings at Chebalat Primary School. This is one of 10 primary schools constructed in Sebei region under the Global Partnership in Education (GPE I) grant.

The 10 schools in Sebei sub-region are part of other 138 schools constructed by the Government in 31 districts around the country. Of these, 54 have already been completed.

Unlike all other schools constructed in other regions, the First Lady explained that, "Most of the schools constructed in Sebei region were availed teachers' houses, on top of the classrooms, water tanks, administration blocks and latrines". Other schools did not have new teachers' houses constructed.

"We ensured that the schools in Bukwo all get staff houses because of the challenges of accessibility of these schools," she explained. "We are grateful to God that

despite the terrain challenges and accessibility we are here today to witness the handover of this school," she said.

She said all the 54 schools had quality classroom blocks built to high standards; school administration blocks, water and sanitation facilities.

"Furniture is also part of the package," Mrs. Museveni said. "Within the next few months, all these classrooms will be furnished with good quality and modern furniture, which will make the teaching and learning environment more conducive for our children in the 54 schools."

The First Lady was flanked by the British High Commissioner to Uganda, Peter West, who is also the Chairperson of the Education Development Partners.

Others were the Unicef resident representative, Doreen Mulenga, the state minister for primary education, Rosemary Seninde, the district Woman Member of Parliament Rukiya Chekamondo and several other district officials.

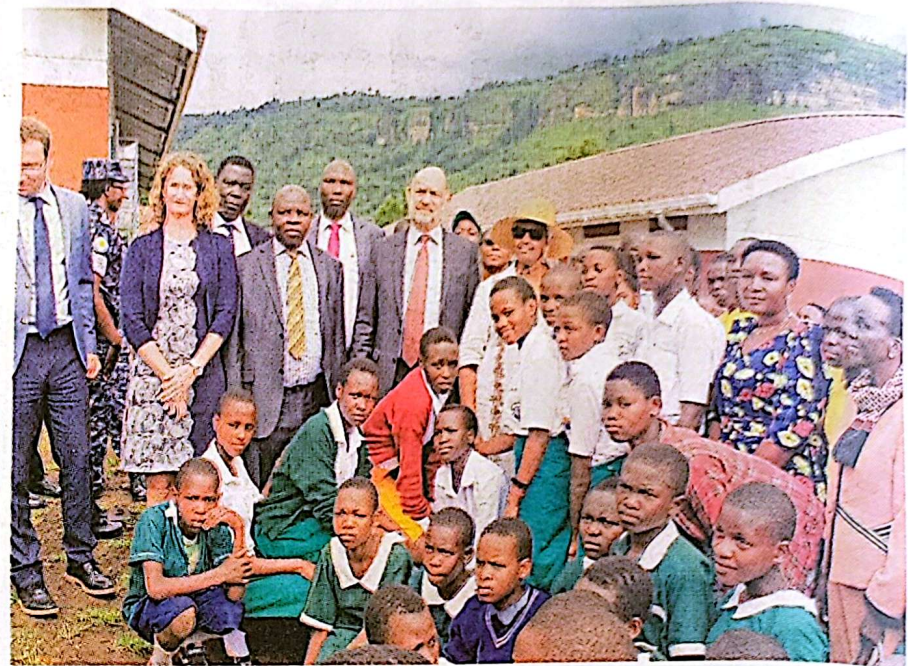
However, the First Lady



MRS JANET MUSEVENI, EDUCATION MINISTER

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noted that putting up buildings is not enough to improve the quality of education in the country. Various studies done by Government and Uwezo (a regional non-governmental



Mrs. Museveni (with hat) and officials from the British High Commission, Unicef and other officials in a group photo with pupils from Kapchorwa during the launch

organisation doing research in education) show that the country's education is wanting.

The First Lady noted that some parents were not paying adequate attention to the education of their children, and that this must change. "We need to work together: educationists, parents, communities and children. Now, as many of you know, I'm on a nationwide School Feeding Sensitisation Campaign."

Seninde had, earlier on,

noted that children in this school were not being offered lunch at school by their parents, which is against the ministry guidelines.

The local leaders, in their speeches, had also notified the First Lady that residents had an idea of starting a secondary school to be named 'Mama Janet Museveni Senior Secondary School'. But the twist to this commemorative school was that they wanted the First Lady, in her capacity as education minister, to build it.

In her response, she said she would ask the education ministry construct the school, but on one condition: 'She must be well-assured by the district leaders' reports that the parents are feeding their children at school.'

More so, she said the National High-Altitude Training Centre at Teryet, Kapchorwa; would be completed soon.

However, the rains and slippery hilly roads hindered her team's access of the centre's construction site.