

EDITORIAL

Govt should prioritise investing in agriculture

Last Saturday, Monitor Publications Ltd held its seventh Seeds of Gold Farm Clinic. The location was Makerere University Agricultural Research Institute, Kabanyolo.

This particular clinic saw farmers and those interested in agriculture learn about piggery, dairy, passion fruit, coffee and banana farming. Seven hundred people attended. Those who attended were dignitaries, including Justices Esther Kisakyi and Remmy Kasule.

There were those who had come to learn how to invest in farming as a group of people so as to make more gains instead doing it alone. Town council chairman Richard Sse-noga said he had come to gain knowledge and share it with farmers' groups in Mpigi District.

This particular clinic also saw a good number of youths come to learn more about farming, which is a positive development.

The issue:

Agriculture

Our view:

Coming up with sustainable and continuous (not one-offs) ways to deal with these problems will go a long way in ensuring that one of the major activities in this country continues to put food on the table.

All this shows that agriculture is still an important employer in this country. Even people who already have full-time jobs are interested in seeing how they can make more money through farming.

Clinics like these should be an eye-opener to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries about the need citizens have for information of this kind. Having 700 people pay their hard-earned money to come and learn about farming is no small feat. The seventh clinic's theme was: 'Climate Smart Farming'. There is no doubt that the weather these days is rather unpredictable.

The world, including Uganda, is currently facing environmental challenges because of the changes in weather. Rain seasons are not as consistent as they were in the past. Dry seasons seem to last longer than before. The country in the last two years, has faced drought in various districts with families going for days without having a meal.

It is a pity that Uganda, known as the Pearl of Africa, in part because of its fertile soils, can have its residents unable to grow and cultivate food to sustain themselves. Farmers are now realising that they cannot rely on the weather solely to get a good harvest or any harvest at all.

Worse still, the armyworm has devastated many maize gardens and farms in the last few months. All these are signs that we need to do something as a country to counter the looming troubles that are coming with environmental changes.

The Ministry of Agriculture should prioritise works aimed at dealing with the challenges many farmers face. Coming up with sustainable and continuous (not one-offs) ways to deal with these problems will go a long way in ensuring that one of the major activities in this country continues to put food on the table.

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