

Sh40b water project launched for Ibanda, Kiruhura districts

IBANDA

By Michael Odeng

The Government, through the water ministry, with funding from the African Development Bank (ADB), has commenced works for the long awaited multi-billion piped water project to supply the districts of Ibanda and Kiruhura.

The memorandum of understanding was reached between the water ministry and Ibanda district in the presence of the constructors during the project inception workshop held at Ibanda Resort Hotel on Friday.

The workshop was attended by district councillors, sub-county chiefs,

environment officers, mayors and community districts officers of the said districts.

The sh40b Nyabuhikye-Kikyenyke gravity flow scheme will serve the sub-counties of Kikyenyke, Nyabuhikye, Keihangara, Nsasi and Igorora. The project is expected to be complete within 15 months.

According to the principal engineer, Stanley Watenga, the Government received a credit of sh12b from ADB towards the implementation of the water management and development.

He revealed that they have sh20b for the first phase and will embark on the second phase after getting another sh20b.

Watenga said the project aims at

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improving the health of the community and their productivity, adding that it is estimated to benefit over 135,000 locals in the two districts, who have been facing water shortage.

The Ibanda deputy resident district commissioner, Mary Kamaduuka

Bashongoka, thanked the Government for the project and cautioned the contractor against importing labour to undertake works for the project.

She asked the locals to be paying little money to the water ministry in order to be assured of good service delivery. "People think water is for free, but we must change that attitude".

Two years ago, the World Bank project was suspended in the same area because the contractors were reportedly defiling girls.

In response, Hannington Katumba, the resident engineer of M&E Associates Ltd, said they will provide condoms in order to protect the residents from contracting sexually

transmitted diseases.

According to Kato Mugeiga from the rural water department, the locals will gain experience which they could use to seek employment in future.

He said the proposed project would result in bringing improved water and sanitation services closer to the people.

Mugeiga also said the project would result in prevention of vector-borne diseases related to water sources such as onchocerciasis, cholera, typhoid, and diarrhea.

The Ibanda LC5 chairperson, Mericidias Kazwengye, advised that the project should take off after issues of land have been resolved to avoid conflict.