

EU, GIZ inject sh22b for valley tanks in Karamoja

By Agnes Nantambi

The European Union (EU) has partnered with the German development agency, GIZ, to construct 15 valley tanks in Karamoja to promote access to water.

The two have injected Euros 5m (about sh22b) into the construction of the water for production valley tanks in Karamoja, with GIZ contributing Euros 1m, while EU contributed Euros 4m.

The funds were delivered under a project codenamed *Enhancing climate resilience through increased water for production capacities in Karamoja*, developed by the water resources department of the Ministry for Water and Environment.

The project was launched

at Protea Hotel in Kampala yesterday. The deputy head of co-operation of the German Embassy, Heiner Schnelle, said the project, which is intended to sustainably increase the climate resilience of communities in Karamoja, will benefit the districts of Amudat, Kotido, Ka. bong and Moroto.

The project is expected to benefit about 20,000 people in Karamoja, who are vulnerable to and particularly affected by poverty and extreme weather changes.

"Specific target groups include management and technical staff of the water ministry, Catchment Management Organisations (CMOs) of Lokok, Lokere and Awoja catchments, district local governments, civil society and the private sector," Schnelle

BETWEEN THE LINES:

■ The project is expected to benefit about 20,000 people in Karamoja who are vulnerable to and particularly affected by poverty and extreme weather changes.

said.

He said sustainable access to water for drinking and agricultural use is one of the main challenges for the development of Karamoja.

"The lack of water, especially water storage for pastoralism usage, will remain a source of potential conflict," Schnelle said.

He said the region not only saw the drying up of two out

of its three major dams, but also experienced once again the security challenges, which come with large-scale migration of cattle, including more than 100,000 livestock from Kenya, creating competition for water and pasture within Karamoja and the wider region, including Turkana.

Schnelle said the plans were developed by German Development Co-operation in collaboration with DFID. They include investments from piped water supply, flood management, agricultural water storage and reforestation.

Schnelle encouraged development partners to task their implementing partners with aligning their water-related activities to the catchment management plans in order to enhance effectiveness and

value for money.

The permanent secretary Ministry of Water and Environment, David Okot Okidi, said the implementation of catchment-based integrated water resources management is premised on the fact that shared water risks in a catchment need to be addressed through collective action of all stakeholders, as well as increasing access to water by all stakeholders in the catchment.

Okidi asked political leaders to closely follow up implementation of this project and ensure that there is value for money.

The commissioner for water resources, Calist Tindimugaya said the project is expected to address the critical water situation in Karamoja by

combining the construction of water reservoirs in two catchments with strong focus on technical assistance to ensure the sustainability of the infrastructure.

The country director of GIZ Uganda, Christian Schnurre, said Karamoja, being a semi-arid region, receives more than enough rainfall over the course of a year. However, this rainfall is distributed unevenly over the region and over the year, making it difficult to predict.

Climate change and climate phenomenon's such as El-Nino and La-Nina have contributed to an even more erratic rainfall pattern. In 2017, the region experienced crop failures and the drying up of dams and valley tanks due to drought, which contributed to severe food shortages.