

Minister explains origin of diseases

ENTEBBE

By Julius Luwemba

The agriculture minister, Vincent Sempijja, has said that over 75% of the emerging and re-emerging illnesses, which he termed as zoonotic diseases among humans, originate from animals.

"For many years, medical doctors have been treating patients well-knowing that 60% of the ailments are of animal origin. It is only until recently when over 75% of the re-emerging diseases were noted to also be of animal origin," Sempijja said.

He made the remarks during the handover of diagnostic equipment by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) at the ministry offices in Entebbe on Tuesday.

According to Sempijja, the equipment is aimed at building the country's capacity in handling zoonotic diseases.

"I wish to recount that the African continent has succumbed to an unprecedented scourge of zoonotic diseases such as Ebola, yellow fever and currently we are battling marburg in the districts of Kween and Kapchorwa," Sempijja added.

Aljaji M Jallow, the country representative of FAO, said the equipment worth sh252m was an early response of defeating zoonotic diseases.

"We have donated the equipment to the agriculture ministry because such diseases originate from animals to humans," he said.