

## WATER WEEK

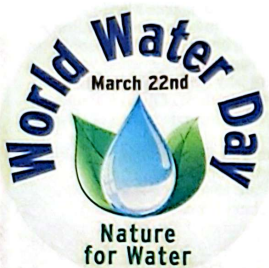
New Vision

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Population explosion is threatening the availability of water as a resource

# Water key for middle income



The first ever Uganda Water and Environment week kicks off today with a range of activities to commemorate the annual event. The commissioner in charge of water resources, Planning and Regulation at the water and environment ministry, Dr Callist Tindimugaya, highlights the rationale for the week, their plans and what they hope to achieve interview with New Vision

**Q** Give us an overview of what this maiden Uganda Water and Environment Week 2018 is all about.

We are holding the first ever Uganda Water and Environment Week at the Directorate of Water Resources Management

in Entebbe. We decided to bring all the stakeholders together to discuss issues related to water and the environment. Today, the Vice-President, Edward Sekandi, will open the water week. We plan to have a series of technical presentations and dialogues, an exhibition, clean up exercises, panel discussions and a marathon. Another key event is on Wednesday afternoon when the Prime Minister, Ruhakana Rugunda, launches the Water Institute. On Thursday we will combine the commemoration of the World Forest Day, World Water Day and World Meteorological Day which all fall this week. Although this is the first time we are holding this event in Uganda, other countries have been observing the water week. We were inspired by the international community and driven by the pressures of high population growth, climate change and the oil development in our country among other reasons to begin observing this week.

**What do you hope to achieve?**  
We hope to raise awareness about the importance of water and environment resources for Uganda's socio-economic development. Many people take water for granted. We hope to position water and the environment as a catalyst for Uganda's development processes. Right now we are talking about Uganda moving towards attainment of Middle Income Status by 2020. We want to reflect on whether we can

**WE RECEIVE ABOUT SH700B FOR THE SECTOR; ABOUT 2.8% OF THE BUDGET. ABOUT 66% OF UGANDANS HAVE ACCESS TO SAFE WATER.**

achieve that with the current challenges like climate change. We also hope to forge and strengthen partnerships with the private sector and the media in order to tackle the

challenges which confront us. In addition we hope to attract the attention of the government and donors to put more resources to support the sector.

**How much resources do you need to effectively roll out your plans?**

We have actually just completed a strategic sector investment plan. Right now, we receive about sh700b annually for the sector which is about 2.8% of the country's total budget. Maybe, for your information, only about 66% of Ugandans have access to safe water and water resources are not well managed considering the levels of pollution. We have a programme of managing water

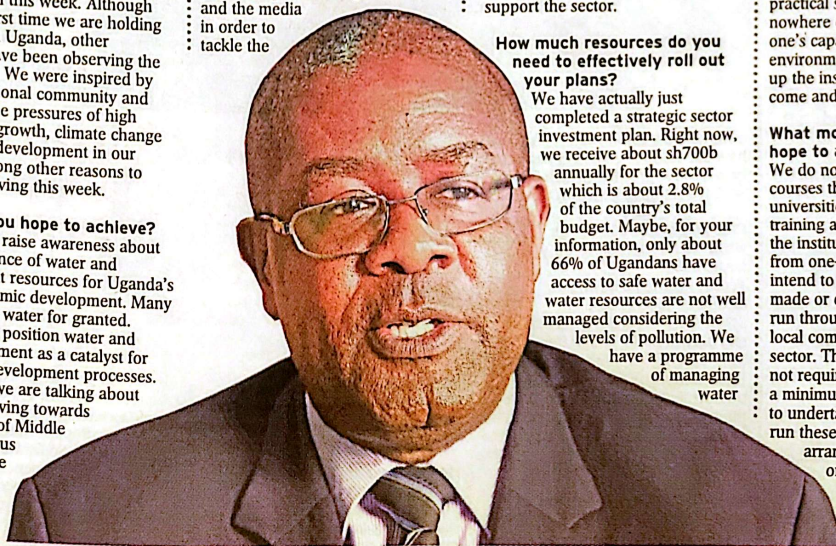
catchment areas and reversing their degradation. To fund all that we need about 10% of Uganda's annual budget. We know we are resource constrained, but can leverage resources from the private sector and other partners.

**Tell us more about the Water Resources Training Institute, which you plan to launch on Wednesday.**

It will be housed at the directorate of water resources in Entebbe. We shall have trainings targeting the community like micro-irrigation and water harvesting to equip them with practical skills. Right now there is nowhere one can go to enhance one's capacity to address water and environment issues. We are setting up the institute, where anybody can come and learn.

**What mode of training do you hope to adopt at the institute?**

We do not intend to duplicate courses that are being offered by universities. We will offer applied training and conduct research at the institute. The courses will range from one-day to three months. We intend to have scheduled and tailor-made or demand driven courses that run throughout the year targeting local communities and the private sector. Therefore, the institute will not require that one should have a minimum qualification in order to undertake a course. We want to run these courses on a partnership arrangement with interested organisations. There are six training rooms at the facility, each with a



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