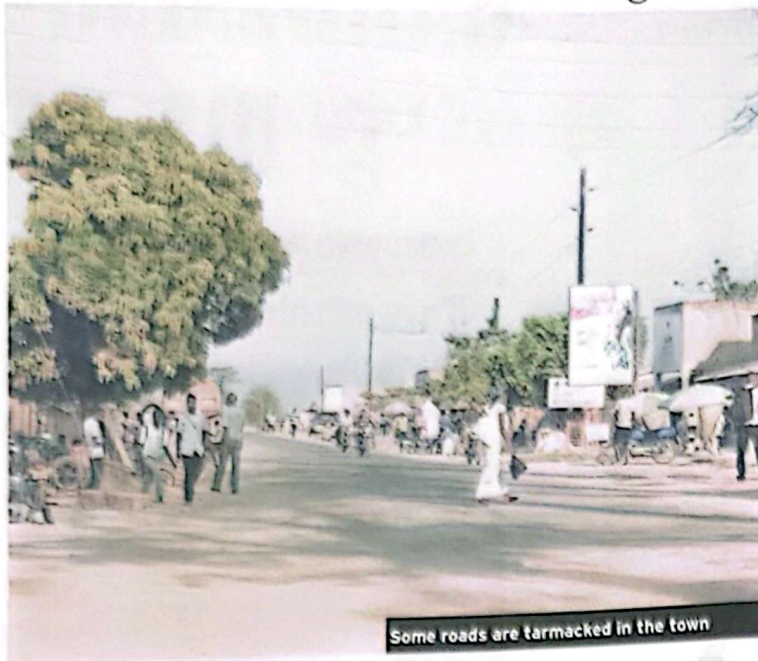


**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH** *Dust is generally common on the roads*



Some roads are tarmacked in the town



Adjumani is quickly growing

# Adjumani needs infrastructure

BY UMAR NSUBUGA

**A**djumani town in Adjumani district is slowly getting to the dawn of development. The upcountry town that is situated 458km from Kampala, is bordered by Moyo district to the north and South Sudan to the northeast. To the east, it is bordered by Amuru, Arua to the southwest and Yumbe district to the northwest.

Adjumani's main street is dusty and the dust is generally common on the roads. There are few tarmac roads and most structures are new commercial buildings.

**Signs of progress**

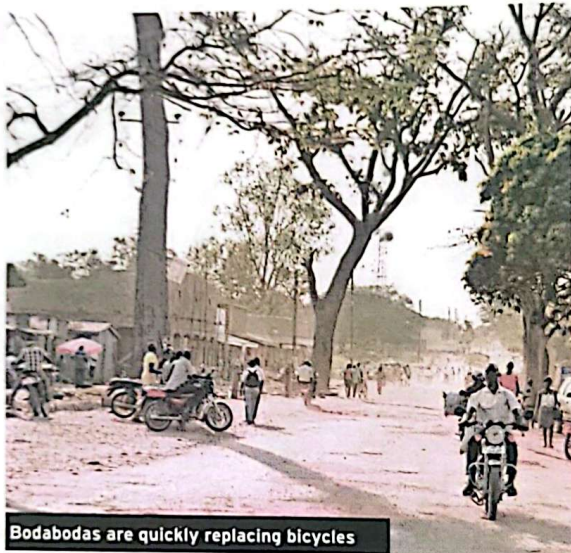
The standard of living is steadily improving as the town and motorbikes are quickly replacing bicycles as a means of transport.

"Previously, it was difficult to see people riding motorbikes as the level of poverty in the district was quite high," Alex Ireku, a resident, says.

The infrastructure is also improving, albeit slowly. The town has a number of hangouts today. However, Martin Tito, who runs a bar, says the area still lacks some basic services.

"We only have a few banks — not more than three. We need more hospitals and schools, although generally, the area is developing fast," he states.

"I believe our leaders have not done well in terms of hygiene. There is garbage everywhere. However, when it comes to business, people take the issue of cleanliness more seriously.



Bodabodas are quickly replacing bicycles

For example, restaurants were not as clean as they are today," adds Tito. James Leku, one of the leaders in Adjumani, says they have a challenge of few schools, yet the number of children is ever increasing due to the refugee influx.

**Day-to-day life**

Peter Owole, 25, a chapati seller, describes life in Adjumani as generally calm.

"I operate a snacks joint, which is a meeting point for the youth in the

town. Many youth come here and share jokes, play cards and board games," he says.

Owole adds that most of the residents are business people who get up early to start their work.

"The rest of the day passes quietly," Owole says, adding that some people relax by drinking in the evening after work.

**Unemployment**

Although life in Adjumani is peaceful, it has some biting issues,

**IN NUMBERS**

**483km**

The distance between Kampala city and Adjumani town

**Sh60m**

Currently, a 50x100 plot goes for between sh45m and sh60m in the town centre.

which include inadequate hospitals and a shortage of jobs for the youth.

Denis Drici, one of the local leaders in town, says the area lacks vocational schools that could easily absorb many school dropouts.

Some have taken to riding bodabodas though they end up getting involved in accidents because of reckless riding.

Drici says other unemployed youth sadly turn to crime.

**Land prices and accommodation**

Mahad Swali, who owns a wholesale shop, says rentals are quite affordable with houses going for between sh150,000 and 350,000 for a commercial room in the town.

"The standard of living has improved as some residents have

set up small scale businesses that is why renting houses has become expensive," he says.

According to Swali, 10 years ago, a 50x100ft plot was sold at between sh10m and sh20m.

However, due to the rapid growth, the prices of plots have also gone up.

Currently, a similar plot goes for between sh45m and sh60m in the town centre.

The increase in the price of land has been a blessing to the local people, who are now selling at reasonable amounts of money.

On the other hand, Robert Opira, a resident, says land wrangles are a common occurrence as unscrupulous people sell off family land without consulting the clan.

"After cash switching hands, other relatives return to find squatters on the property. The trick is to farm on the land if one is residing in town," Opira says.

**Entertainment**

If you are looking for entertainment in Adjumani, then you can visit Zawadi Hotel and Oasis Bar.

Jackie Mandura, a resident, says: "Most people enjoy going into the life to enjoy the ride to the top most floors at the hotel."

She says it is very popular with domestic tourists.

For fun, Oasis Bar is where huge speakers play loud music from 8:00pm to daybreak. "People drink lot of alcohol in Adjumani as if it was going out of fashion. They do this to relieve their stress levels and cope with post-war trauma," Mandura says.