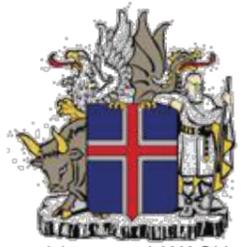


# Iceland Embassy improves quality of education and health in Buikwe District



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The Embassy of Iceland in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government have handed over newly built classrooms equipped with furniture to Buikwe District Local Government (BDLG).

The beneficiary schools have also been provided with well trained teachers to help improve the quality of education in Buikwe District and Uganda at large.

This is part of the development partnership programme between the Government of Iceland and Government of Uganda through BDLG under the Buikwe District Fishing Community Development Programme

(BDFCDP) aimed at improving the livelihood for the fishing communities in the district. The Government of Iceland provided the funding for the development. Currently, 46 schools have benefited from the programme, including 42 focal primary and four secondary schools in Buikwe District.

Among the primary schools that have so far benefited from this programme include Kiwanyi, Ngogwe Baskerville, Gulama, Namaseke, Kinoga, Namulesa, Lubongo, Makindu, Sanganzira, Bulere, Magulu, Kikajja, Najja, Kikusa and Tongolo.

Minister Counsellor, Embassy of Iceland, Mr Finnboji Rutor Arnarson, said the main objective of the Education project is to improve the quality of basic education in the fishing communities.

The interventions focus on construction of school infrastructures, capacity building of key actors, including teachers, management and community, provision of adequate teaching and learning materials, promotion of health and nutrition of learners, and promotion of human rights, gender equality and environment issues affecting learners at school and in communities.

Mr Arnarson said the implementation of the education projects in Buikwe District is done in two phases. Phase one which started in 2016 and was finished in 2019, saw 21 primary and four secondary schools benefiting. Phase two which started in 2019 and ending 2022, also has 21 primary schools and continued support to four secondary schools.



One of the water reservoirs in Ngogwe



Hon. Raphael Magyezi, Minister of Local Government, Minister of Iceland Embassy Arnarson and district officials inspecting some of the schools [photo by Jessica Sabano].

"We have constructed and renovated classroom blocks, toilets, kitchen, teachers' staff quarters, clean and safe water sources, training teachers, as well as supporting them with some Covid-19 relief," he added.

The same programme will also be extended to Namayingo where a funding of eight (8) million US\$ has been approved for three years (2021-2023) focusing on basic education, water, sanitation and hygiene in Namayingo. In Pakwach, 550,000 US\$ has been spent in 2020 to provide a modern fish market to 3,000 fish traders and a safe water system for 7,000 residents in Singila and Dei parishes of Panyimur Subcounty, respectively.

This is on top of the already completed projects in Kalangala District from 2006 to 2019.

Mr Maurice Ssebisubi, the Senior Programme Officer, said Iceland is a great country in utilizing fisheries for development and that is why they decided to support fishing communities around Lake Victoria who have a bigger population.

## Solar powered safe water

In order to fight waterborne diseases in Buikwe District, there has been installation of 25 solar powered safe water supply systems.

The WASH project is also the result of co-operation between the government of Iceland and Buikwe district. Iceland is funding this project to a tune of more than \$6m with the main objective of providing safe water and improving education standards in the fishing communities.

This project is being implemented in the sub-counties of Najja, Ngogwe, Nyenga and Ssi targeting 39 fishing villages with a population of more than 45,000 people. The residents use a re-chargeable smart card to draw water from the 107 aqua taps in the area at a fee of Shs100 per 20-litre jerrycan.

During the inspection of the projects recently, Buikwe District water officer, Mr Arthur Kayaga, said they opted to drill water from underground using solar power, in preference to the lake water owing to

lower costs in comparison to treatment of the lake water.

Mr Kayaga said the project emanated from the district's efforts to get assistance of boreholes from Iceland friends, but switched to modern AQ taps after sensitization from the donors.

He said the money that is charged per jerrycan is saved for servicing and repairing the water systems in case of breakdown.

The purpose of project is to increase access



New classroom blocks built by Iceland government at Ngogwe Baskerville Primary school in Buikwe [Photo by Jessica Sabano].



Modern Solar powered water AQ tap in Najja providing safe water. [Photo by Jessica Sabano]

and utilisation of safe and improved WASH services for improved public health of the fishing communities.

So far, 25 piped water facilities have been completed with 123 public stand taps (including 107 AQ Taps) developed and have adequate installed capacity to serve 62,000 people.

The ongoing works involve promotion of private connections to the piped water supply targeting 500 households

## Improved Sanitation Facilities

About 168 improved lined pit latrines and water-borne toilets were constructed and the project has led to wide practice of safe excreta disposal with 38 target villages and 32 schools certified open defecation free.

The Minister for Local Government Mr Raphael Magyezi, said the Iceland projects in Buikwe District have cost about Shs80b and advised the users of these projects to maintain them.

"We appreciate the Iceland Embassy for the support and please make good use of these facilities," Mr Magyezi said.

He has advised government to emulate what has been done by the Iceland government noting that the schools are now standard with very good kitchens and other structures plus safe water.