

Sector needs more govt funding

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But the problem is that funding is often lacking to facilitate the sub-county authorities to undertake monitoring of the water resources.

"We need to increase public funding to the sector because it means there is greater ownership," she says, adding that Uganda should not depend on donors for the bulk of the money invested in the water and environment sector.

The operation of the water sources is currently estimated at 80% meaning that about 20% of the sources were not functioning. A division to be in charge of operations and maintenance has been set up at the Ministry of Water and Environment.

Shared water resources

In some circles, Uganda has been referred to as an upstream country in relation to the Nile. It gets water from Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Kenya.

Uganda is also downstream to South Sudan, Sudan and Egypt. Because of that, according to Tindimugaya, Uganda needs to cooperate with countries sharing the water in the catchment of the Nile.

He says Uganda shares about 69% of its water with neighbouring countries.

The shared water bodies include lakes Victoria, Edward and Albert and rivers, Kagera, Semliki and the Nile.

As Uganda's population grows, the demand for water is also increasing in order to produce food. This is also the case with the neighbouring countries.

In addition to population, climate change is taking a toll on water resources and the agricultural sector. Uganda and its neighbours have been relying on rain-fed agriculture

WE NEED TO INCREASE PUBLIC FUNDING TO THE SECTOR SO THAT THERE IS GREATER OWNERSHIP. UGANDA SHOULD NOT DEPEND ON DONORS FOR THE BULK OF MONEY INVESTED IN WATER AND ENVIRONMENT

but this is likely to change as investment in irrigation keeps growing.

Agriculture is currently the largest user of water at the global level, accounting for 70% of total withdrawal.

The use of water in Uganda for agriculture remains inefficient and only 1% of the water is used for irrigation.

This means that food security in Uganda comes from the work of millions of small holder farmers. They are the engines and drivers of development currently.

There is need for more investment in water and agriculture in order to improve the productivity of farmers and also to keep a healthy population.

