

Kasese school excels in PLE despite challenges

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KASESE. Pupils of Mubuku Irrigation Primary School have since 2023 been studying in makeshift structures under harsh conditions after the school was forced to relocate to where it currently operates from following a drastic drop in the number of learners.

The enrolment of learners at the government-aided school in Nyamwamba Division, Kasese Municipality, dropped because of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) insurgency in the area where it was located.

Ms Josephine Kunihira, the current head teacher, explained that the school relocated after the number of learners dropped from 270 to a measly three.

The school was relocated to St Balikudembe Catholic Church, where temporary learning structures erected.

Since the relocation, enrolment has significantly improved in the last two years, and by the end of the third term of 2025, the number of learners had doubled to more than 500.

Kasese Municipality has constructed a two-classroom block and a three-stance pit-latrine at the new site.

Despite the progress, Ms Kunihira de-



Pupils in makeshift class at St Balikudembe Catholic Church in Kasese District on Tuesday. PHOTO/YOWERI KAGUTA

cried the harsh learning conditions at the new site.

"I sympathise with both the learners and teachers because only Primary One and Primary Two pupils occupy the newly constructed two-classroom

block. The other classes study in wooden structures, unfinished shelters, or under trees on a piece of land donated by the church. Some classes are disturbed by rain. In such instance, we are forced to shelter pupils under the

church veranda," Kunihira said.

That said, Kunihira said the school recently performed well in Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) where out of 48 candidates, one pupil got Division One while the rest were in Division Two.

Mr Charles Byabato, a resident of Phase I A, said during the ADF insurgency in the Rwenzori Sub-region between 1996 and 2000, many families sought refuge in safer areas such as Kogere, Kigorwe, and Rukooki, leaving the area where school is located sparsely populated and affecting school attendance.

"Some children dropped out entirely because the relocated school is about five kilometres away, forcing others to transfer to Sebwe Primary School," he said.

The Kasese Municipality Mayor, Mr Chance Kahindo, said: "This was a well-thought-out decision. The council inspected both sites, consulted the Ministry of Education, and all agreed the school should be relocated."

The buildings that previously housed the Mubuku Irrigation Primary School, located about three kilometres off the Kasese-Fort Portal highway, in Kibati, Phase I A cell, now lie abandoned, with paint peeling off cracked walls, doors

and widows broken, and the compound is bushy.

Some wooden parts of the abandoned buildings have been damaged by termites.

Locals who spoke to *Daily Monitor* complained that thugs have turned the abandoned school buildings into hideouts.

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Residents near the abandoned school said that the government should repurpose the abandoned buildings to prevent them from harbouring criminals.

Mr Kahindo revealed that Kasese Technical Institute has requested to use the abandoned school premises to host an agricultural department.