

BY STEPHEN OTAGE

KAMPALA. Chevening alumni have launched a pilot study in secondary schools across Kampala, aimed at developing a framework for an effective communication strategy to sensitise city residents about their role in managing solid waste.

Shamim Ibrahim, the project lead, said the campaign, code-named Schools for Sustainable Waste Management, is funded by 24 Chevening alumni from the 2023/2024 cohort.

The initiative is intended as a case study that will form the basis of a broader framework to guide the development of a communication strategy for raising awareness about a sustainable climate action plan for solid waste management in the city.

It is also designed to help prevent a recurrence of incidents similar to the Kitezi landfill disaster.

Ibrahim explained that the Kitezi landfill catastrophe occurred partly because KCCA had not adequately sensitised surrounding communities about the dangers and long-term impact of the landfill. As a result, residents continued to dig into the landfill despite the risks, contributing to the fatal accident.

When asked why the initiative focuses on solid waste management, Ibrahim noted that their studies in the United Kingdom exposed them to effective waste control approaches, particularly the integration of solid waste management programmes in schools.

These programmes promote recy-

Chevening alumni form waste management project



Tina Wamala (2nd right), Head of Communications at the British High Commission poses for a photo with KCCA officials and some of the Chevening alumni (2023/2024). PHOTO/STEPHEN OTAGE

cling, repurposing, and the creation of new products from waste. Reflecting on Kampala's challenges, the alumni observed that KCCA continues to struggle with waste management largely due to a prevailing public mindset that views the responsibility as solely belonging to the city authority, rather than a shared civic duty.

Tina Wamala, Head of Communications at the British High Commission, stated that the Chevening programme, which has been running in Uganda for the past 43 years, identifies Ugandans with ideas capable of positively impacting society.

Beneficiaries are awarded scholarships to study at universities in the UK

and are expected to return as emerging leaders who contribute meaningfully to national development. She also noted that the 2021/2022 cohort implemented a similar climate change project in Kampala schools.

James Kunobere, Deputy Director of KCCA Waste Management Services, commended the British High Commission and the alumni for the timely initiative, noting that it comes as KCCA reviews its waste management ordinances.

He explained that the review includes emerging issues such as climate change, plastic waste, green spaces, and littering, with the aim of strengthening interventions and enforcement.

Kunobere added that he was particularly pleased the project targets day scholars, as they have significant influence within their households and can educate their families about their responsibility in keeping the city's roads and environment clean and free from waste.

Highlighting broader public health concerns, he noted that Kampala continues to face serious challenges in sewerage disposal.

He attributed part of the problem to poor sanitation planning, where some residents construct latrines without proper drainage systems, leading to the illegal disposal of faecal sludge into open public drainage channels.

PROJECT SCOPE

The Chevening alumni are working with schools across the five divisions of Kampala City, developing a case study from which we can build a framework to sensitise residents about a sustainable climate action plan for solid waste management, in order to avoid a repeat of the Kitezi landfill incident.