

# Walukuba gets free medical camp

JINJA

By Titus Kakembo

By 8:00am on Friday, long queues had already formed at Mayor's Garden in Walukuba, stretching beyond the fence marked with crime scene tape.

Mothers held restless children close to their chests. Elderly 'merr' leaned on walking sticks, while young people shielded themselves from the morning sun with folded files containing old prescriptions and medical records — documents they had carried for years without finding lasting medical help.

For one day, the usually quiet field on the outskirts of Jinja became a place of relief, anticipation and renewed hope.

Hundreds of residents turned up for a free medical camp organised to mark 62 years of dfcu Bank in partnership with Rotary District 9213. The outreach offered eye screening, dental care, pregnancy check-ups, general health consultations, diagnosis and treatment for various illnesses.

Beyond the medicine and consultations, the camp exposed a deeper reality in many communities — the silent suffering of people who postpone treatment because survival comes first.

Among those in the queue

PHOTO BY DONALD KIIRYA



**Ahmed (centre) handing over medication to 65-year-old Jalia Baseka (second-right) during the medical camp at Chairman's Gardens in Walukuba West, Jinja city recently. From left are Kitakule, Kiiza and Busoga Kingdom's minister Kyabazinga affairs Owk. Yudaya Babirye (right)**

was Jackson Aguma, who received treatment for an eye condition that had troubled him for more than five years.

"I had started losing hope," he admitted softly.

Aguma said he had repeatedly failed to seek specialised treatment because private clinics demanded consultation fees and medicine costs he simply could not afford.

For years, blurred vision affected his work and daily life. Reading became difficult, while bright sunlight irritated his eyes. Yet, like many residents in Walukuba, he kept postponing treatment

because rent, food and school fees always came first.

A few metres away, Agnes Acili sat patiently after undergoing a health check-up. The 39-year-old mother recalled visiting a government health facility months earlier, only to be prescribed medicine that was unavailable at the hospital pharmacy.

To buy the drugs from private pharmacies in town, she needed nearly sh50,000.

"That money may sound small to some people, but for me, it feeds my family for weeks," Acili said.

She explained that in many homes around Walukuba,

sickness is often weighed against hunger.

"Like me, many mothers ask themselves whether to buy medicine or buy maize flour, sugar and salt for the children," Acili shared. "Most times, food wins because children must eat."

That painful reality was visible throughout the camp.

Some elderly residents arrived carrying untreated conditions they had endured quietly for years. Mothers sought antenatal services they had missed because transport to health centres was expensive. Children lined up for dental examinations; many

## BUSOGA LEADERS SPEAK

Representing the Busoga Kingdom leadership, second deputy prime minister Osman Ahmed said the sub-region continues to grapple with deep social and economic challenges, which require collective action from government and private institutions.

"We appreciate organisations that continue standing with our people," Ahmed said. "Such support directly improves livelihoods."

Walukuba leaders also used the gathering to challenge residents and leaders alike on accountability and development.

Speaking on behalf of the area leadership, Vincent Mukisa urged citizens to embrace hard work while supporting the fight against corruption, arguing that improved accountability would strengthen public services, including healthcare, roads and education.

"Corruption denies ordinary Ugandans decent services," Mukisa said. "It must be fought decisively."

for the first time in their lives.

Volunteers moved swiftly between tents, directing patients, recording names and offering reassurance to nervous residents waiting for diagnosis.

For many, the greatest gift was not simply medicine, but the feeling of being seen, heard and cared for.

Speaking during the event held on May 14, Kate Kiiza from dfcu Bank said the institution believes healthcare is central to national development and economic progress.

"A healthy population means productive communities and stronger businesses," she said. "That is why we continue investing in initiatives that improve people's lives."

Kiiza noted that throughout its 62 years, the bank has remained committed not only to financial services, but also to supporting communities socially.

The Governor of Rotary District 9213, Martin Kitakule, said the partnership with dfcu Bank reflects a shared commitment to uplifting vulnerable communities.

He highlighted ongoing collaboration with Busoga Kingdom in areas such as clean water access, education support, household income projects, girl child protection and environmental conservation.

"These are the interventions that transform communities over time," he said.