

# Health workers get accused of misusing donated equipment

By Johnisani Ocakacon

Residents of Angagura sub-county in Pader district have accused health workers at Angagura Health Centre III (HCIII) of misusing and allegedly causing the disappearance of medical equipment donated by development partners for better healthcare services.

Community members say the missing equipment was donated after repeated appeals by local leaders and residents seeking better healthcare services for vulnerable households in one of the districts most affected by Nodding Syndrome and epilepsy.

## DONATED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Angagura sub-county, located along the Gulu-Kitgum highway, has long struggled with inadequate medical services, despite a growing population in need of specialised care.

The donated items, handed over on January 28, this year by ARPE Limited, included a complete blood count (CBC) machine, sterilisation equipment, refrigeration units, air-conditioning equipment and other pharmaceutical machinery.



**The old outpatient department block at Angagura Health Centre III in Pader district which was constructed by the Government**

Samson Ocaya, the in-charge of Angagura HCIII, acknowledged the challenges the facility faces, noting that drugs are often depleted within two weeks because of high demand.

He said the health centre serves more than 12,000 people and attends to over 80 patients daily, adding that the donated equipment had the

potential to transform the facility into a referral centre with a fully functional laboratory. Currently, such advanced machines are only available at Pajule HCIV in Pader district.

## RESIDENTS SPEAK OUT

Florence Amito, a resident and mother from Angagura sub-county,

said: “Angagura HCIII lacks a lot of essential medical equipment. Some items were allegedly stolen, while others were reportedly found in the possession of health workers, yet they had been donated on behalf of the community.” Francis Oryema, the LC1 chairperson of Angagura Central Ward, confirmed that some equipment donated by development partners had disappeared from the health centre.

“The disappearance of medical equipment has raised serious concern among local leaders and the community,” Oryema said.

He noted that patients with complications are frequently referred to Gulu city or St Joseph’s Hospital in Kitgum Municipality because of the lack of functional equipment at Angagura HCIII.

Simon Peter Okot, the Angagura sub-county chief, said authorities plan to engrave all government property and medical equipment at Angagura Health Centre IV to improve tracking and accountability.

“We need to protect this equipment because it was brought to improve

healthcare service delivery. Losing it will only set back development in the community,” he said.

## INTERVENTIONS

Fredrick Stephen Okello, the LC3 chairperson of Angagura sub-county, warned that no medical equipment should be removed from the facility without the knowledge of local leaders and the health centre management committee. “I have directed the health centre management committee to take full responsibility for all property and closely monitor anything that leaves the facility,” Okello said.

The Pader District Health Officer, Dr Benson Oyoo, directed the in-charge of Angagura HCIII to work with the sub-county chief to compile a comprehensive inventory of all medical equipment for district records and monitoring.

“In case of any fault, medical engineers at Gulu Regional Referral Hospital can repair the machines. The equipment must remain at the facility to reduce the burden on patients travelling long distances,” Oyoo said.