

For immediate release

BUMERU 'C' VILLAGE COMMUNITY MEMBERS FILE COMPLAINT BEFORE THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION OVER ESCALATING WATER CRISIS

Kampala, 4 April 2024

Today, residents of Bumeru 'C' Village, located in Mutumba sub-county, Namayingo district with support from the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER), have filed a complaint before the Equal Opportunities Commission. They are calling for urgent action from government and district authorities to address the escalating water crisis in their community.

Atori Elizabeth, Legal Officer at ISER noted that residents face intersecting challenges in accessing safe and clean water. *"The water from the Lake Victoria shore, which serves as their only source, is unfit for human consumption, leading to widespread health-related diseases such as bilharzia and typhoid"* she added.

"The human right to safe and clean water entitles everyone, without discrimination, to have access to sufficient, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use" stressed Jackson Wandera, Legal Volunteer at ISER.

Majidu Mabuno, a Bumeru 'C' resident shared a tragic incident involving the loss of his *15-year-old daughter to a crocodile attack while fetching water from the lake shore in 2020.*

Another resident, Mangi Salimati, described the dangerous journey down a steep slope of approximately 300ft to access water from the Lake shore. She recounted a harrowing experience where she suffered a miscarriage and her one-year old baby was injured during a fall.

"The lack of access to affordable health and education services worsens their predicament, leaving vulnerable groups like the elderly and persons with disabilities

at risk. Some residents have suffered permanent injuries due to falls and slides downhill”, observed Labila Sumayah Musoke, Program Officer at ISER.

‘The nearest health centre IV lies 32 kilometres from Bumeru ‘C’ village, yet the nearby private health clinics charge exorbitant fees which the community cannot afford.’ highlighted Musenangu Biral, LC III- Bumeru ‘C’ village.

Commissioner Joel Cox Ojuko, Vice-president of the Equal Opportunities Commission upon receiving the compliant pledged to investigate the matter thoroughly. He committed to engage with the Attorney General and the Ministry of Water and Environment to ensure that justice is served.

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