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Land dispute in Pakwach district delays the completion of Wadelai Irrigation Scheme

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August 10, 2021 -

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Pakwach | The Northern Link UG | A land conflict between the Paten clan and Pakwach district local government put the completion of Wadelai irrigation scheme completion and handover to the government under threat.

Pakwach district is seeking an extension of 365 hectares of land for the irrigation project after observing that the initial part of 1000 hectares that the project required is occupied by *Ragem government prison farm*. As an alternative, the district identified Adiri community land near the established scheme that the clan members are reluctant to offer on suspicion that the government intends to grab the community land.

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*Site Pictorials [The Northern link
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The clan and community members argue that the land in question is an identity of the entire Paten clan members from which they derive their livelihood by grazing animals, laying bricks, and excavating sand for building houses. In the several unfruitful dialogue meetings with the community in Wadelai, the majority of the clan members have distanced themselves from a list containing forty-seven members purporting to have consented to the giveaway to the government to fulfill the extension project.



*Site pictorials [The Northern Link
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Santonio Daudi Onen, the traditional chief of the Paten community, disowned the fake list and the authenticity of the clan stamp used. He said the community would be willing to offer land for the expansion of the irrigation but want a clear mode of compensation and the time period for the land usage clearly defined.

The rift has affected the time scheduled for completion of the work whose two-year contract expires in September 2021. Bernadette Awori, the Wadelai irrigation scheme focal person, regretted the action of the community. The work progress stands at 75 percent, the district intends to seek an extension period of the irrigation work construction from the ministry of water and environment.

*Site pictorials [The Northern Link
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The community has however threatened to sue the district on claims that they are being threatened and intimidated. They said some district officials have openly stated that the project will continue whether they consent or not on the disputed land. Wadelai irrigation scheme located 46km from Pakwach district headquarters is aimed at contributing to poverty eradication and economic growth in Uganda through enhanced productivity and commercialization of agriculture and is funded by the Africa development bank.

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