

## **Environmental emergence in Kenya**

Justus Wanzala

Kenya despite being a water stressed country is experiencing a rapid growth in population leading to increased demand for water.

Existing fresh water sources are over-exploited resulting into frenzied drilling of boreholes in order to exploit underground water to fill the burgeoning gap. In fact, since the country devolved its governance system by creating of county governments with budgetary autonomy, counties spend a huge chunk of their budgets on borehole drilling to meet water needs of their residents. Nairobi alone has over 150 public boreholes and numerous private water ones - all aimed at meeting the water needs of its four million plus residents.

Much as it may appear a solution, widespread drilling of boreholes, a large number of them powered by solar energy in particularly in remote off grid areas of the country has seen experts ring alarm bells. They the country faces imminent exhaustion of underground water resources due to over exploitation of aquifers against a low recharge level caused by deforestation and soil degradation. Indeed, boreholes many areas are drying up at an alarming rate putting communities in distress.

The scenario spells doom to the issue of access to clean and potable water to millions in urban slums and poor rural communities and pastoralist communities in arid and semi-arid regions.