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EXPANDING
SOCIAL
PROTECTION

PRESS RELEASE

(For Immediate Release)

CENTENARY BANK NAMED PAYMENT SERVICE PROVIDER FOR SENIOR CITIZENS GRANTS

Kampala, June 17, 2020: Following a competitive bidding process and to take account of the increased number of beneficiaries under the national roll out - the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development has announced Centenary Bank as the additional payment service provider (PSP) for the Senior Citizens Grants under the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE). The PSPs provide channels to deliver the last mile of cash grants to older persons.

Coming on the cusp of the national roll out of the Senior Citizens Grant to cover all districts around the country, Centenary Bank will pay side by side with PostBank Uganda until March 2021 when the latter's current contract expires.

James Ebitu, the acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development, said: "I congratulate Centenary Bank for coming out as the winner of this bid. The Ministry together with our development partners, UKaid/DFID and Irish Aid, selected Centenary Bank through an elaborate, transparent and rigorous competitive bidding procurement process in which various prospective service providers proposed different payment mechanisms."

He said the evaluation team was particularly looking out for the feasibility and reliability of the proposed payment methods, bearing in mind the distance beneficiaries would have to travel to receive their payments. Focus is on accessibility, transparency, safety, efficiency and effectiveness of the payment mechanisms. Mr. Ebitu thanked the Government for increasing funding of the Programme to cover all the districts in the country.

Centenary Bank will deliver grants to older persons in districts allotted to them through their bank agents and branches spread across the country. This means that the distance older persons have to travel to access the grants will drastically reduce.

MD Centenary Bank, Fabian Kasi said, "We are glad to be named a Payment Service Provider (PSP) for the Senior Citizens Grants. Being a bank for the people, we take pride in such partnerships that improve livelihoods of the vulnerable in our communities. Our Bank currently has over 4000 Cente Agents and 74 Branches spread across the country that shall make the process smooth. We have a dedicated workforce that shall ensure commitment to standards of timeliness, convenience, anti-fraud & excellent customer service to the older persons".

The SAGE scheme implemented under the Expanding Social Protection Programme in the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development, Government provides monthly grants of UGX 25,000 to older persons who are 80 years and above in the new districts and 65 years and above, in the old districts with exception of Karamoja at 60 years. The grants are intended to enable older persons to meet their basic needs, access basic services, and to start income generating activities where they can. The Programme was piloted between 2010-15 in 15 districts. In November 2018, Government announced a national roll out to cover all districts.

Stephen Kasaija, Head, Social Protection Programme Management Unit, said, “Centenary Bank comes on board at a time the Programme is implementing a national roll out and at a time the country is fighting the Covid-19 Pandemic. Their countrywide presence through bank agents and their robust payment channels will go a long way to support us achieve our goal to pay older persons timely, reliably and safely.”

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Note to the Editor:

- The Expanding Social Protection Programme (ESP) is implemented by the Government of Uganda, with support from the UK’s Department for International Development (UKAID) and Irish Aid.
- The Senior Citizens Grant, implemented under the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE) was piloted (2010-2015) in 15 districts of Apac, Kole, Amudat, Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Napak, Kiboga, Kyankwanzi, Katakwi, Kyegegwa, Kaberamaido, Kyenjojo, Nebbi, Yumbe and Zombo
- The Programme went through a phased roll out (2015-2020) to 40 additional districts as follows:
 - FY 2015/16: Kaabong, Abim, Kotido, Koboko, Gulu, Pader, Agago, Lamwo, Amolatar, Pallisa, Amuria, Kween, Namayingo, Mayuge, Kamuli, Kayunga, Nakasongola, Kibaale, Kisoro and Bundibugyo.

- FY2016/17: Kitgum, Nakaseke, Kabale, Bugiri, and Amuru.
- FY 2017/18: Dokolo, Sembabule, Kasese, Sheema and Mubende.
- FY2018/19: Alebtong, Adjumani, Otuke, Moyo and Kumi.
- FY 2019/20: Nwoya, Arua, Mbale, Tororo and Kibuku.
- In November 2018, Government announced a national roll out under which the Programme reaches all districts in the country, targeting people who are 80 years and above, but with the idea to gradually bring the age down to 65 years within 3 years.
- In total the Programme will reach some **358,420** older persons when the national rollout is fully implemented in the country's 135 districts, by the end of FY 2020/21.