



EXPANDING
SOCIAL
PROTECTION

PRESS RELEASE

(For Immediate Release)

FIVE MORE DISTRICTS SIGN IN TO BENEFIT FROM THE ELDERLY & VULNERABLE FAMILIES' SUPPORT GRANTS

Kampala, August 9, 2011: Five more districts today signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Gender Labour & Social Development to implement the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE). The five are: Apac, Katakwi, Moroto, Nakapiripirit and Nebbi.

This brings to 8 the number of districts covered under the Ministry's cash transfer scheme, implemented by the Expanding Social Protection Programme. Kaberamaido, Kiboga and Kyenjojo earlier signed the Memoranda are on course to receive the first cash grants at the end of the month (August).

Under the agreement, the districts committed to mainstream SAGE to local government structures, provide staff to support it and ensure smooth implementation according to agreed guidelines. The districts also committed to manage and supervise the SAGE Programme at the district and lower levels under the Chief Administrative Officer's office.

Speaking at the signing ceremony today the Minister of Gender Labour & Social Development, Syda Bumba said "Since we launched this Programme late last year, people have been anxiously waiting to see when the grants will actually go out. I am happy that we are now on course to give the first cash grants to the first three districts in a few weeks' time. I am also happy that we have brought another five districts on board to receive the grants in the coming few months. This will have covered more than half of our target 14 pilot districts."

She challenged the local governments to ensure the success of the Programme. "District local governments are at the forefront of this pilot and your commitment, energy, creativity and professionalism are key to its success. The whole country will be watching these districts over the coming months and decisions on whether SAGE is scaled-up or not beyond the pilot phase in many ways will depend on how well you implement this programme."

SAGE is a component of the Ugshs 160 billion Expanding Social Protection Programme (ESP) supported by the Department for International Development (DFID), Irish Aid, and UNICEF. It is to be piloted in 14 districts (Apac, Kole, Amudat, Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Napak, Kiboga, Kyankwanzi, Katakwi, Kyegegwa, Kaberamaido, Kyenjojo, Nebbi and Zombo). It is expected that the roll out which starts in three districts this month will be completed in all 14 districts by early 2013.

As a pilot SAGE is aimed at generating evidence and testing mechanisms, principles to support the formulation of the social protection policy framework in Uganda so that social protection is expanded in the whole country.

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