

## **President Museveni launches Senior Citizens Grants for Nebbi**

On the occasion to mark the International Women's Day, President Yoweri Museveni launched the Senior Citizens Grants for the district while underscoring the need for Uganda as a country to look after her old people. The President said there was need to extend the grants beyond the 14 pilot districts.

Nebbi becomes the fifth district to start disbursing Direct Income Support to older persons under the Senior Citizens Grants. Nebbi is part of the cohort of Apac, Moroto, Katakwi and Nakapiripirit that will start disbursing the grants under the Expanding Social Protection Programme by end of June 2012.

Kaberaido, Kiboga and Kyenjojo districts started implementing the Senior Citizens grants and Vulnerable Family Grants in September 2011. By the end of June 30,000 beneficiaries will be receiving grants.

In her speech, the Hon. Rukia Nakadama Isanga, Minister of State, Gender & Culture said "The majority of the beneficiaries of the Senior Citizens Grants are older women without any other form of income security. Ugandan women play a key role in caring for their families particularly grandchildren especially those that have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS. The Senior Citizens Grants go a long way to complement Government's efforts to empower women and address their unique vulnerability and needs.

The Minister was happy to note that in particular, the grants support older women to empower their granddaughters to access good quality health, education and sanitation services. These services, she said, are vital to the girl's reproductive health and rights, human capital development, economic wellbeing and dignity. This way, she said, girls effectively participate in and benefit from Uganda's socio-economic transformation.

On the choice of Women's Day to launch the grants in Nebbi-also the venue for national celebrations-Stephen Kasaija, Head of the Social Protection Secretariat said, "the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development has chosen to launch the second phase roll out of the grants in Nebbi on International Women's Day due to the strong benefits that the Senior Citizens Grants are expected to bring to Uganda's women. The majority of the beneficiaries of these grants are older women. At national coverage, these grants would directly reach over 562,000 women- 59 per cent of all beneficiaries."

The Social Assistance Grants are being implemented under the Expanding Social Protection Programme supported by DFID, Irish Aid, UNICEF and the Government of Uganda.

Under the SAGE scheme senior citizens in 14 pilot districts receive monthly grants of Ugx 23,000 per month through mobile money. The districts are: Apac, Kole, Kaberaido, Katakwi, Moroto, Amudat, Napak, Nakapiripirit, Kiboga, Kyankwanzi, Kyegegwa, Kyenjojo, Nebbi and Zombo.