

## **Labour Intensive Public Works Guidelines launched**

The Government of Uganda, with support from the World Bank, WFP and UKAID, launched guidelines aimed at streamlining and standardising the practice of Labour Intensive Public Works (LIPW) in the country.

Public Works is generally accepted as any government financed activity, involving mass labour to work on projects that are done for the public good. Labour Intensive Public Works refers specifically to works that are undertaken by predominantly unskilled people, who have ability to work, and are seeking employment, for which in return they are paid cash as a form of Direct Income Support.

Janat Mukwaya, Minister for Gender, Labour & Social Development said, “A range of public works Programmes have been implemented in Uganda by different actors. However, assessments have revealed that implementation of labour intensive public works across the country has not been well guided or coordinated.”

She said, “For example, the scheduling of the Public Works has typically been influenced by the timing of their design and approval processes rather than the period when the transfers are most needed by the potential beneficiaries. And the duration of the works, has often been short, with no account taken of the actual seasonal variations in consumption that people face. The result is that Public Works Programmes in Uganda have tended to be costly, and have been of questionable value in terms of their contribution to social protection and livelihoods.”

The Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development on behalf of the Government of Uganda, together with key development partners; the World Bank, DFID/UKAID and World Food Programme, agreed to design the National Guidelines for Public Works. The LIPW guidelines have therefore been developed to govern, streamline and harmonise the different actors in the conduct and implementation of Labour Intensive Public Works interventions in the country, so as to make LIPW compliant to the country’s National Social Protection Policy.

The Uganda National Social Protection Policy defines social protection as comprising of two pillars; social security and social care services. Social security has two elements- Direct Income Support and social insurance. Direct Income Support (also called cash transfers)-provide regular and reliable transfers of money to vulnerable people. The Senior Citizens Grant and Public Works are two examples of Direct Income Support schemes.

Social insurance on the other hand is a contributory system to mitigate livelihood risks and shocks by those who are working such as on retirement, loss of employment, work-related disability and ill-health. Schemes such as NSSF fall under social insurance. On its part, Social care and support services is concerned with provision of care, support, empowerment and protection to vulnerable persons who are unable to fully care for themselves. Children reception centres are one example of social care.