



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA  
Ministry of Gender, Labour  
& Social Development



better life chances for all

EXPANDING  
**SOCIAL  
PROTECTION**

# The Senior Citizens Grant helped Akol to open up her gardens again



Mary Nakoru Akol lives in Sakale parish, Pian county in Nakapiripirit district, eastern Uganda. A 67-year-old widow, Akol was enrolled on the Senior Citizens Grant in 2013.

The Grant is implemented by the Government of Uganda with support from UKaid and Irish Aid. Under the scheme, older persons of 65 years and above, who have no formal pension- and therefore no income at all- receive Ushs 25,000 (about £6) per month to enhance their incomes and enable them to start small investments where they can.

Akol's first grant was made in April 2013, 10 months after the rest of the beneficiaries in her cohort had got their money. When eventually she received her payments in arrears, it was Ushs 286,000 (£60) at once.

With this money, Akol hired labour, paying each individual labourer Ushs 2,000 (£0.5) to open up her land where she planted sorghum and maize.

The harvest ensured that she had enough food for her household, and a bit of surplus to sell to further enhance her income.

Without the grant, she could not have been able to open her land, and food insecurity and additional income would not have been possible.

She used part of what remained from her grant to buy two goats. Now she hopes to rear the goats until they reproduce so that she is able to sell them and buy a cow. Coming from an area previously troubled with cattle rustling, now that the raiding menace is ended, she has hopes again of keeping some livestock since her last stock was rustled away, after her husband died. With her livestock re-stocked, she will be assured of income to keep her 8-year-old granddaughter at school and improve her own living conditions, a change in her circumstances, from her previous hopeless situation. For this, Akol is grateful to UKaid and Irish Aid for making it possible

## About the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE)/Senior Citizens Grants

UKaid and Irish Aid have been working with the Government of Uganda since 2009 to establish a national social protection system that would support the poorest and most vulnerable. The UK and Republic of Ireland are currently reaching 154,000 Ugandan Senior Citizens with social grants, many of whom rely on the cash transfer to change their poverty status and provide opportunities for a better future for children in their care. Senior Citizens use the cash transfer to increase their food and health expenditure, provide scholastic materials children in their care, and to start small investments that further enhance their incomes. It is expected that a total of 226,000 older persons will be reached by 2020. In Uganda, about 3 million children are under the care of older persons.

With the UK and Republic of Ireland's help, Uganda will have a national social protection system that will be able to support all of those living in poverty.

*The second phase of the Expanding Social Protection Programme (ESP II) is implemented by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Funded by the UK Department for International Development and Irish Aid, and managed by Maxwell Stamp in association with Development Pathways.*



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