

## **Anna Rupe**

Eight kilometres off Lolachat Sub-county headquarter lies Moruangamion Village, in Natirae Parish, Pian County in Nakapiripirit district. We are in Moruangamion to visit Anna Rupe at her Manyatta (traditional Karimojong communal settlement). Grandma Anna doesn't know her exact age, but she estimates that she was born at the beginning of the Second World War (which makes her about 75).

At her age, Rupe finds herself with a burden of 9 dependents; 4 of whom orphaned by the death of both her younger co-wife and her husband, while the others orphaned grandchildren, following the death of her own children. The youngest among the dependants in her care is 1 year old Margret Nakuwam. Margret's mother died in April (2012). All the children are still young, the oldest being 14 years. All of them solely depend on ageing Rupe for food, medical care and all other needs, all from her meagre subsistence agricultural produce. Her biggest challenge has been providing food and medication to the 1- year old granddaughter. In the past, Margret survived purely on assistance from the nearby Health Center which provided plump nuts for her nutrition.

*“When I got my first pay (from SAGE) in May 2012, it was such a huge relief for me. With that money, now I am assured I have something to begin from every month, from it I buy some food for the children, I can take the young one (Margaret) to the Health Unit, I am able to buy for her some milk, rice, occasionally some meat and flour which I use to make porridge which I then mix with the plump nuts for Margret.”*

Rupe is among the hundreds of older persons receiving the grants in her Parish. To her, the biggest test of the usefulness of the money she gets through SAGE is how it helps her to ensure “Margaret survives to grow up.”

Rupe's future plan is to buy and stock some grains. In her own words, *“The rains washed away most of the crops from the gardens, my granaries over there are empty, the whole village has no food, you need to buy now for the future from those who bring from Sironko, or Mbale.”*

*“I thank the Government for this support, life is hard for me and the children, but without this support, it would definitely be unbearable. I pray for the continuity of the programme for many more years,”* she concludes.