

EDITORIAL

PDM reforms bring inclusive prosperity

The Government has unveiled new reforms to Parish Development Model (PDM), the country's flagship poverty alleviation programme. The PDM reform opens membership of parish level savings and credit co-operative organisations (SACCOS) to all residents in the respective areas. The development is an evolution in our poverty alleviation strategy. By opening parish-level SACCOS to all residents, the Government has wisely addressed long-standing concerns about exclusionary governance that undermined the programme's potential.

The dual membership structure, with category B allowing individual residents full voting rights at no cost, transforms PDM into a democratic enterprise. It should be noted that while membership is universal, access to the shroom annual parish fund remains tied to the seven priority agribusiness categories (piggery, poultry, fisheries, dairy, fruits/vegetables, food crops and coffee). This preserves the programme's productive focus.

These reforms come at the right time because despite disbursing sh3.15 trillion to 3.1 million households since 2022, PDM faced governance gaps that threatened its mission of transitioning households from subsistence to the money economy. Mandatory training before fund access is key to ensure that the money is put into only productive ventures.

Rigorous implementation will anchor PDM's success. Therefore, authorities must ensure strict adherence to repayment timelines, creating a genuine revolving fund where recovered capital benefits successive members. Training must focus on productive rather than consumptive uses, with community-based facilitators providing hands-on learning through demonstration plots.

The Auditor General has warned about structural weaknesses, which calls for vigilance through sustained oversight. Once this is done, PDM will fulfill its promise of becoming the engine of Uganda's economic transformation.

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THE PDM REFORM OPENS MEMBERSHIP OF PARISH LEVEL SAVINGS AND CREDIT CO-OPERATIVE ORGANISATIONS TO ALL RESIDENTS

WEEKEND
VISION

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