

Issue. The residents say they receive little planting materials which neither improve food security of peasants nor increase their income.

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KIBAALE. A section of residents of Kibaale District have faulted the government's Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) programme over delays in delivering planting materials and a handful of seeds distributed.

The government programme aimed at empowering Ugandans was launched in July 2013 by the President to create a system that facilitates effective national socio-economic transformation with a focus on raising household incomes, poverty eradication and sustainable wealth creation.

Speaking during a public *baraza* (dialogue) organised by the Office of the Prime Minister at Busesa Trading Centre on Tuesday, the residents said they are dissatisfied with the way the programme is being implemented.

Mr Francis Kamaina, a resident of Kasaraba village, said they receive little planting materials which neither improve food security of peasants nor increase their income.

"Basically OWC does not do procurement. It is done by National Agricultural Advisory Services. True we have challenges in the procurement which is not our role, but going forward, we shall introduce an e-voucher system which will iron out all this mess,"
KICONCO TABARO, OWC PROGRAMME SPOKESPERSON

"Why should you give us three cups of maize after wasting our time? We want the government to stop this," Mr Kamaina said.

Mr James Kyalimpa, also a resident said the implementers of the programme are oblivious of the planting season.

"Most times, we are given seedlings that donot match the planting seasons," Mr Kyalimpa said.

Under OWC programme, the government procures planting

Residents fault wealth creation programme



In puts. Residents and local leaders in Kakumiro District wait to receive heifers distributed under the Operation Wealth Creation programme recently. PHOTO BY ALEX TUMUHIMBISE

materials, animals and birds which are distributed by military coordinators and local government authorities to willing farmers at different intervals.

The farmers are registered before they are given the items.

During the dialogue, the farmers cited poor ground mobilisation, lack of sensitisation and ignorance from the beneficiaries as some of the issues failing the programme.

Ms Juliet Kyalikampa revealed that recently some residents said they were given banana suckers but due to lack of sensitisation on planting or preserving them, the suckers dried up.

Ms Kyalimpa asked government to always first educate farmers before giving them the items. "We are requesting the implementers to always educate us before distributing these items. Many residents just pick the inputs without knowledge on how to handle them," she said.

The district production officer, Mr Peter Sentayi, said the

authorities have received reports about delays in delivery which he blamed on the bureaucracy of the OWC secretariat in Kampala.

The Resident District Commissioner, Mr Samuel Kiseambo Araali, advised the local leaders and agriculture extension workers to use the local media in sensitising farmers on the benefits and operations of the government programmes.

In October, Kibaale District authorities rejected cassava stems

that had been distributed over failure to meet the agricultural demands of the residents.

According to the district officials, the planting materials are distributed without consulting the residents on their priority needs.

During the district budget conference last week, Mr Sentayi confirmed loopholes in the distribution chain.

The district chairperson, Mr Peter Amara, asked implementers to survey the land before distributing the materials. "We don't want people to be forced to grow coffee yet they want to grow other crops," he said.

When contacted, the OWC programme spokesperson, Mr Kiconco Tabaro, said: "Basically OWC does not do procurement. It is done by National Agricultural Advisory Services. True we have challenges in the procurement which is not our role, but going forward, we shall introduce an e-voucher system which will iron out all this mess."

ABOUT OWC

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