



Govt to review youth, women empowerment fund guidelines

Issue. According to minister Janat Mukwaya, many community officers have failed to monitor projects.

BY DAN WANDERA
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

NAKASEKE. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has announced reforms aimed at addressing gaps within the Youth Livelihood Project and the Women Entrepreneurial Fund.

According to the Gender minister, Ms Janat Mukwaya, the new reforms include redesigning of the application forms for accessing the funds which has been an area of concern for beneficiary groups and the ministry who have criticised the ambiguities involved in the processes.

In addition, the technical staff will also attend a refresher course to equip themselves with entrepreneurship and monitoring skills.

The minister made the revelation after a performance assessment tour of government projects in Nakasongola and Nakaseke districts, where she questioned some of the strategies deployed by the community development officers in identifying beneficiary groups.

"My assessment clearly faults many of the community development officers for failing to interpret some of the guidelines. At the same time, we have a bad trend where the technical staff at the district lack entrepreneurial skills and continue to frustrate efforts of some groups," Ms Mukwaya told stakeholders during a meeting in Nakasongola District last week.

Ms Mukwaya decried the lack of monitoring skills among the



Assessed. Nakasongola District officials and Gender Minister Janat Mukwaya (2nd right) visit a project for one of the women groups recently. PHOTO BY DAN WANDERA.

officials which she said has led to loss of tax payers' money. "We need a refresher programme for these officials," she said.

Substandard inputs

In Nakasongola District, the minister noted that several technical staff contracted suppliers who provided substandard inputs. At Migyeera Town Council, Ms Mukwaya ordered the technical team to refund Shs7m extended to Suubi Kyakoba Youth Piggery Group.

Instead of 50 piglets the group received only 28 piglets and the veterinary officer, Mr Simon Nsamba, reportedly supplied the substandard piglets which later died. "The technical staff at Migyeera Town Council including the town clerk should pay back this money because they failed in their role," Ms Mukwaya ordered.

She also revealed that many women groups that applied

for the project funds under the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme in Nakasongola received less than half of the funds.

Kalina Nabagereka Women Development Group in Kakooge Sub-county which applied for Shs4m was given Shs1.5m to purchase a tent and plastic chairs for their events project.

"The technical staff at Migyeera Town Council including the town clerk should pay back this money because they failed in their role,"

JANAT MUKWAYA, GENDER MINISTER

The group used the money to purchase a 50-seater tent and 12 plastic chairs.

The minister criticised the officials for disbursing less funds arguing that giving Shs1.5m to the group against their set budget of Shs4m is useless as 12 chairs cannot serve the purpose.

"It is also useless for the district technical staff to pressurise the women to pay back the money while knowing that the group cannot compete in the market since they almost have no chairs to hire out," she said.

The programme

In February 2016 government rolled out the Women Entrepreneurial Programme worth Shs53b which was supposed to be disbursed to women groups in the different local governments. About 20 districts embraced the project for the 2015/2016 Financial year.

Nakasongola District was allocated Shs97m and the funds were disbursed to different groups for economic empowerment; according to, Mr Simon Buyinza, the district community development officer.

The recovery rate for the funds stands at 60 per cent in the district.

assailants

ce in Mubende
unknown assailants
with a 45-year-old
nd made off with

Six people arrested

KALUNGU. Environment officers
in Kalungi District have arrested six
people for growing crops in wetlands.
The operation, that was carried out

Govt urged on health

MASAKA. Mr Ramadhan Mugal, the
secretary of Uganda Muslim Supreme
Council, has asked government to con-
sider elevating Muslim founded lower
health facilities, saying many have

Four arrested over theft

BUIKWE. Police in Buikwe Dis-
trict have arrested four suspects
for allegedly stealing comput-
ers used for the National Iden-
tification registration exercise.
The three men and a woman