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Men ask for more paternity leave days

BY DERRICK WANDERA

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KAMPALA. Men have asked government to increase their paternity leave days from four to at least 10 so that they can give their wives enough emotional support during this period.

With the current policy, women are entitled to 60 days exemption from work during their maternity leave.

The minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Ms Janet Mukwaya, said men cannot be added more days but rather should utilise the four days to take care of their wives.

"Men do not need to heal, they do not go through caesarean section, the four days are not only fair but also equitable," Ms Mukwaya said.

During the Joint Social Development Sector Review meeting in Kampala yesterday, the minister called upon human resource managers to find alternatives for their workers especially the women when they are off for leave.

"If you have four female workers who are all pregnant, you must be able to find alternatives ahead of time. The leave is entitled to them and you have to grant it," she said.

In the same meeting local leaders asked for more money to be injected in women projects to empower them more.

“Men do not need to heal, they do not go through caesarean section, the four days are not only fair but also equitable,”

MS JANAT MUKWAYA, GENDER MINISTER

Government in 2016 launched an entrepreneurship programme dubbed Uganda Women's Entrepreneurship Programme.

The Minister of Finance, Mr Matia Kasija, made said Shs53b had been set aside for the programme. However, only Shs43b was distributed to the various women groups across the country.

According to the current financial budget, the programme was allocated Shs40b.

Initially, government had estimated to secure funds for at least 2,200 groups but upon registration, 4,412 groups emerged.

This has reduced the allocation of funds per group to Shs5m as opposed to the initial plan of Shs12.5m.

Overwhelming numbers

Ms Brenda Kifuko Malinga, the national programmes coordinator, said the reduction of the funds was due to the overwhelming numbers.

"The groups of women have increased yet our budget is small, so we have to prioritise where the money goes," Ms Malinga said.

Currently, 70 groups are short of the money and the government is running under a deficit budget of Shs11b.