

THE DISTRICT RECEIVED 200 BAGS OF MAIZE FLOUR, 100 BAGS OF BEANS AND 500 BAGS OF RICE

Nodding disease patients benefit from OPM aid

OMORO

By Arnest Tumwesige

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) has donated relief food and other items to support vulnerable people in Omoro district.

The items include 200 bags of maize flour, 100 bags of beans, 500 bags of rice and 360 blankets.

Douglas Peter Okello, the district chairperson, said the consignments will be distributed to Odek, Lalogi and Lakwana sub-counties.

"As a district, we decided that children suffering from nodding syndrome, malnourished ones and the disadvantaged elders should benefit," he said.

Okello, who presided over

the distribution launch at Hope for Humans, a nodding syndrome treatment centre in Odek sub-county, commended the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Jacob Oulanyah, for lobbying for the relief to help vulnerable people.

He expressed concern that since Omoro broke away from Gulu, the central government has never sent any support in terms of nutrition supplements for children suffering from nodding disease.

Collines Angwech, the country director of Hope for Humans, expressed frustration over parents' failure to take care of their children.

Angwech said most of those handed over to their parents have deteriorated.

He said while at home, parents do not provide food

and medication in time, adding that the wellbeing of the affected children is dependent on parental care.

"Some of the children we phased out of care had reached the level of starting primary school, while others vocational training," she added.

Hope for Humans nodding disease centre has discharged 50 patients since its inception in 2012. It has 30 admissions, the majority of whom come from Pader district.

The district handed over 25 bags of rice, 40 blankets, 10 bags of maize flour and five bags of beans to the centre.

Robert Okot Abenu, a field nurse, said the centre cannot admit more children due to lack of beds and space.

He said unlike last year



Okello (centre) handing over food items to patients. Photo by Arnest Tumwesige

when they had day scholars, all the enrolled children this year reside at the centre to ensure timely care.

According to the World Health Organisation, the

nodding syndrome is an unexplained neurological condition characterised by episodes of repetitive dropping forward of the head, often accompanied

by convulsions or staring spells. Patients with nodding syndrome in Uganda improve with symptomatic treatment. The exact cause of the disease remains unknown.