

# MPs ask govt to support nodding centre

**Affected.** An estimated 3,000 children mainly in Kitgum, Pader and Omoro districts have been affected by the nodding syndrome.

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**GULU.** Legislators from Acholi Sub-region under their umbrella body, the Acholi Parliamentary Group (APG), have tasked government to facilitate the reopening of Odek Nodding Syndrome Centre in Odek Sub-county, Omoro District.

The call follows the closure of the centre, which was being supported by Hope for Humans, a non-governmental organisation in December last year.

A total of 29 children affected by nodding syndrome were sent home after the closure of the centre, which offered medical, personal care, special schooling and nutritious meals to the affected children. Two of them have since passed on between December and January.

The legislators, who made visits to some of the areas where nodding syndrome cases were registered in Pader, Omoro and Kitgum districts, last week, said the closure of the centre has greatly affected the lives of the children.

Mr Gilbert Olanya, APG secretary general and Kilak South MP, while meeting Pader District leaders and



**Concerned.** Kilak South MP Gilbert Olanya interacts with Balam Opiyo, 23, one of the victims of the nodding syndrome in Omoro District, at the weekend.

PHOTO BY JULIUS OCUNGI

parents of nodding syndrome affected children, said the delayed intervention by government to reopen the treatment centre will likely see many of the children dying.

"We are calling on government

through the Ministry of Health to intervene in this crisis by ensuring that the nodding syndrome centre is fully funded and children suffering from the syndrome

Aruu County MP Samuel Odonga Otto said the situation in Pader District is alarming.

"The government is not seeing that the conditions of the children are getting worse. Their only treatment centre, which gives them hope has been closed and they are left alone to die," he said.

**“We are working on the matter, it's a process ongoing, I can conclude on all the details.”**

GRACE KWIYUCWINY, NORTHERN UGANDA STATE MINISTER

The Omoro District chairperson, Mr Douglas Peter Okello, told the MPs during a meeting at the district headquarters in Lalogi Sub-County that the district last received facilitation for Odek Nodding Syndrome Centre in June last year.

He said they received only Shs12 million that the district fully used for outreach activities, referrals and vehicle maintenance.

The Northern Uganda State minister, Ms Grace Kwiyucwiny, said government is working towards addressing the concerns.

Nodding syndrome

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