

INCREASED PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE SPECIAL GRANT PROGRAMME

Background

Generally, Persons with disabilities are vulnerable by virtue of their impairment and negative societal attitudes arising from fear, ignorance, superstitions, neglect and lack of awareness. As a result, PWDs have inadequate access to services, information, resources as well as limited participation in the socio-economic development process. Consequently, the majority depend on their families and communities for survival. The major concerns of PWDs are poverty, education and skills, employment, conflicts and emergencies, social security, health, HIV/AIDs and accessibility.

For this reason, the Government of Uganda introduced the special grant for persons with disabilities programmes targeted at improving their socio-economic and employment opportunities through income generating activities in since 2007.

Persons with disabilities are expected to form gender balanced groups of not more than 15 people and present their income generating activity proposal to the grant committee who vet and approve or otherwise depending on the content. A group can get up to 2 million shillings for their project for example piggery, poultry, tents and chairs.

The programme has positively transformed the lives of persons with disabilities especially in Kaliro district. A good example is Bupyana Abalema Twegaitte Association group of PWDs who started a maize mill project, from which they earn a steady income, unlike before. As result of the project, they can now provide scholastic materials for their children to attend school out of the savings from the project and also provide for their basic needs.

However, a number of persons with disabilities have not embraced the programme because they do not know of its existence. Thus, there is need to create awareness countrywide about the programme and encourage all persons with disabilities to embrace it and encourage those who have benefitted from it to share the success stories and show how their lives have been transformed so as to encourage others to take part.

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