



**THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

**STATEMENT**

**BY MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELDERLY AFFAIRS, MINISTRY OF  
GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**HON. DOMINIC MAFWABI GIDUDU (MP)**

**ON**

**THE OCCASION TO COMMEMORATE THE UN WORLD ELDER  
ABUSE AWARENESS DAY**

**14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2023**

**UGANDA MEDIA CENTRE, KAMPALA**

- **Members of the Press**

It's my pleasure to be speaking to you today on the very crucial issue of elder abuse.

Each year on 15<sup>th</sup> June, the World Commemorates the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day as a platform to highlight abuses and suffering inflicted on Older Persons.

Abuse of Older Persons is a global social issue but also a Ugandan problem which affects the Health and Human Rights of thousands of older persons.

It's an issue that deserves the attention of all Ugandans and support from all stakeholders on the human rights arena

As such, the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was officially recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2011 and allocated 15<sup>th</sup> June to be observed.

Uganda joins the rest of the world on this day to highlight and create awareness on the rights of older persons, commemorate and acknowledge their contribution towards the development of the country.

Elder abuse is any form of mistreatment that results in harm or loss of an older person. An Older Person in this case is any person who has attained 60 years of age and above.

Observance of this day further brings to the lime light, the benefits society derives from protecting the rights of Older Persons, and involving them in national development.

Historically, we all know very well that Older Persons have often been left out of national development due to negative cultures that have led to abuse of Older Persons.

In Uganda, age-related discrimination is also one of the most frequent challenges faced by older persons in the exercise of their human rights.

The Population of Uganda is growing rapidly, now estimated at 45.2 million. Out of these, Older Persons are projected at 4 million, according to UBOS 2020 Statistical Abstract.

Situational analysis reports indicate that about 2 to 3% of Older Persons in Uganda, face some form of abuse. The most common perpetrators of Elder abuse are relatives and young people. And the most common forms are related to Land conflicts, Sexual and Gender based violence, and neglect.

The most common contributor to Elder abuse is intergenerational disconnect. This is due to limited coping mechanisms with modernization by a few Youth, as a result of eroded cultural norms and values of respect to our Elders.

This year the theme of commemoration is ***“Seniors Deserve our Respect and Attention”***. This requires every actor in the country to respect the Senior Citizens because they are not only the custodians of knowledge but are also still contributing to the development of our country.

Raising awareness about Elder Abuse and its consequences like we are doing today will prevent issues of ageism. The Older Persons are living longer today and this reality has seen an increase in their population globally.

This theme has been derived from the UN declaration of 2020, which stipulates that the years between 2021-2030 are dedicated to building a global strategy.

And calls for 10years of global collaboration across Governments, Civil Society, International Agencies, Professionals, Academia, Media and the private sector to improve the lives of Older Persons, their families and communities in which they live.

### **Government’s efforts towards improving older person’s lives**

1. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides a firm basis for social protection interventions. The relevant provisions in the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, related to social protection, mandate the state to make reasonable provision for the welfare and maintenance of the aged.
2. Uganda's Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan (NDP) recognizes diversification and provision of comprehensive social protection measures for the different categories of the population as a measure to reduce vulnerability and enhance productivity of the human resource.
3. National Equal Opportunities Commission recognizes the inherent rights of all the people of Uganda, including Older Persons, to participate in social, economic and political affairs of the country and promotes equal opportunities for all.
4. National Policy for Older Persons as a framework to guide interventions towards Older Persons. Key of the priority areas of focus of the Policy is elimination of elder abuse.
5. National Social Protection Policy; promotes social assistance and condemns neglect of Older Persons.
6. The National Council for Older Persons Act, 2013. Highlights the rights of Older Persons that must be respected.
7. Lower Councils for Older Persons up to Parliament Level. These are to raise a voice in the promotion of Older Persons rights

To further actualize protection and welfare of older persons,

I am happy to inform you about the Five Billion Government's new program that has been designed for weak older persons between the ages of 60-79. This Social Enterprise Grant for Older Persons (SEGOP) is an alternative Government programme that seeks to cater for older persons who are not covered under the Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE), and weak Older Persons that may not fit well under Parish Development model. These are supported through enterprise groups of 5 to 10 Older Persons. Each group gets a maximum of Five Million.

So far over 540 groups with a total of 5,400 Older Persons have been successfully verified, and cleared for funding before end of June 2023.

Furthermore, I am happy to inform you that Makerere University Medical School is working on a curriculum to initiate a post graduate course in geriatrics. This is to address the limited availability of doctors specialized in older Persons diseases. This will in turn improve treatment outcomes for Older Persons including a guided decentralization of drugs of Older Person's diseases to lower health facilities.

### **A call to action**

My country men and women, There is need to sensitize older persons about their rights as provided for in the various legal and policy frameworks in order to reduce elder abuse.

To the duty bearers such as NGOs, Banks, Medical insurance companies, transport agencies, community workers, policy makers, and the media fraternity, among others; I am here to remind you that Older Persons deserve better in terms of respect and attention. They sacrificed a lot in their early days, so they matter a lot to our motherland.

Working with all stakeholders, the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social is committed to promoting healthy and dignified ageing, where all older persons in the country live dignified lives through a comprehensive social protection system.

I take this opportunity to inform you that the National celebrations will be held at Imperial Royale Hotel in Kampala on **Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> - 06 - 2023**

Different Local Governments are encouraged to commemorate the day locally in their respective areas, as we strive to accelerate awareness against Elder Abuse, across the country.

Finally, Government through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social development, calls upon all Ugandans to respect older persons and attend to their needs to maintain their dignity

I thank all ministries and organizations that have contributed to the success of this event, and encourage the strengthening of Public-Private partnership, for meaningful inclusion of Older Persons.

I say this, For God and My Country.

Dominic Mafwabi Gidudu (MP)

**MINISTER FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN  
CHARGE ELDERLY AFFAIRS**