



## ***Address by the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development***

*On the Ceremony to Handover Cheques to Local Governments for beneficiaries of YLP and UWEP*

*19<sup>th</sup> January 2019*

### ***Office of the President Auditorium***

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- ‡ *Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Uganda,,*
- ‡ *Hon. Ministers Present,*
- ‡ *Permanent Secretaries*
- ‡ *District Chairpersons,*
- ‡ *Chief Administrative Officers ,*
- ‡ *Municipality Mayors,*
- ‡ *The Executive of the National Youth Council,*
- ‡ *The Executive of the National Women Council,*
- ‡ *District Youth and Women Council Chairpersons,*
- ‡ *All protocol observed.*

1. Your Excellency, allow me first and foremost to convey to you the apologies and warm greetings from the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Hon. Janat Mukwya who is away on leave and asked me to stand in for her.
2. In a very special way Your Excellency, allow me on behalf of the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social development and on my own behalf, to thank you for accepting to come and officiate at this function where we are handing over cheques to Local Governments for beneficiaries under the Youth Livelihood Programme [YLP] and the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme [UWEP].
3. Your Excellency, we also in a special way appreciate your efforts in tackling the unemployment challenge through Skilling the Youth Programme. This initiative has indeed registered a lot of good results and we shall continue to support you in this cause.
4. Your Excellency, as part of your commitment to the cause of youth and women of Uganda, you identified YLP and UWEP as priority flagship Programmes within your 24 Directives to Cabinet in 2016.
5. My Ministry took your directives very seriously and has progressed well with the implementation of the 2 Programmes. To-date, the Ministry under YLP, has supported a total of 216,366 youth which has enabled them to create self-employment opportunities and enhance their incomes. Similarly, under UWEP, 103,768 women across the country have accessed the UWEP funds and this has enabled them to create wealth at household level and improve their wellbeing.
6. Your Excellency, while majority of beneficiaries are largely engaged in agriculture (33%) for YLP and (35%) for UWEP, the Ministry has been rallying the youth and women following on your guidance to focus on value addition which contributes to building the economy through import substitution and export promotion.
7. I wish to report to you, Your Excellency, that we have a total of 2,121 youth projects and 745 women projects undertaking various activities under value addition. These as you have seen during your inspection of the stalls at the exhibition are using local materials for their projects. We are continuing to partner with other stakeholders such as the Uganda Industrial Research Institute and Uganda National Bureau of Standards to improve the quality of the products in readiness for export.

8. Your Excellency, the recovery of the revolving funds under the 2 programmes is commendable. Under YLP, recovery stands are 70% and 71% under UWEP.
9. Your Excellency, the media recently reported that the Ministry had failed to recover up to Ushs.28Billion under YLP. The fact that most of the projects financed were under agriculture which was affected by natural calamities such as drought, pests and diseases, in 2015/16, we were not able to recover some of the funds. Specifically, up to 3,647 projects were affected by the natural calamities. However, the Ministry has put in place mechanisms to mitigate this through re-financing of projects [on a case by case basis], strengthening involvement of sector experts such as Veterinary and Agricultural Officers to work closely with the youth and women engaged in agricultural related enterprises.
10. Your Excellency, I wish to inform you that the demand for support under the 2 Programmes is overwhelming and this has been demonstrated through the number of youth and women that have expressed desire to benefit from the Programmes. Whereas the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development has allocated Ushs.40Billion towards the Women Fund for the FY 2019/2020, this is small compared to the demand demonstrated.
11. Your Excellency, given our very young population where over 78% are below the age of 30 years and the youth alone constituting 21.6%, we still have a very big obligation to ensure that the young people are economically engaged and contribute positively to the political, social and economic development of Uganda and the Youth Livelihood Programme will continue to support this cause under the Revolving Fund Mechanism.
12. This notwithstanding Your Excellency, I note with deep concern the drastic reductions made by the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development of 93% in the budget allocated for Youth Livelihood Programme in FY 2019/2020 [from Ushs.66.61Billion to Ushs 4.62Billion].
13. While the Programme shall use its Revolving Fund to finance new projects, I appeal to the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development not to think that we have arrived. If anything, the Programme has just taken off and is now at a critical stage where it only requires a push to blossom, in view of the fact that recovery has increased. The drastic budget cut therefore will have serious implications for the implementation and sustainability of the Fund.

14. Youth Excellency, as you may have already seen, the sharp reduction in the funding for YLP has caused anxiety among the youth.
15. Your Excellency, as I conclude, I wish to note that YLP and UWEP have now gained pace and need to be fully supported to realize their full benefits for the youth and women of Uganda.
16. Your Excellency, I now take this opportunity to invite you to handover the cheques and thereafter address your people.
17. I THANK YOU AND **FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY.**