

The government has earmarked Shs76b for a five-year restocking programme aimed at restoring livelihoods in communities affected by cattle rustling and the LRA insurgency in northern and north-eastern Uganda.

BY TOBIAS JOLLY OWINY & JAMES OWICH

The State Minister for Northern Uganda Rehabilitation, Dr Kenneth Omona, has announced that beneficiaries of the Shs76 billion cattle restocking programme will receive their money through mobile money platforms.

Speaking to former Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) fighters and war victims in Gulu City on January 2, at the Prime Minister's regional offices, Dr Omona said the government opted for mobile money payments to curb corruption and avoid high bank charges that have affected similar programmes in the past.

"We want beneficiaries to receive the full Shs5m in their mobile money accounts. We do not want complaints that someone has received less money because of bank deductions," he said.

Dr Omona cautioned beneficiaries against misusing the funds, urging households to invest in livestock or other income-generating activities.

"I asked men not to waste this money on alcohol or taking a second wife. This money should be used to buy cattle or support activities that improve family livelihoods," he said.

The government has earmarked Shs76b for a five-year restocking programme aimed at restoring livelihoods in communities affected by cattle rustling and the LRA insurgency in northern and north-eastern Uganda.

In a letter dated December 19, 2025, the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Mr Alex Kakooza, directed chief administrative officers and town clerks in the Acholi,

Govt to use mobile money for cattle restocking programme



War debt claimants from Acholi Sub-region after a press briefing at the OPM regional offices in Gulu City on January 2. PHOTO/JAMES OWICH.

Lango and Teso sub-regions to validate and submit final lists of beneficiaries for payment processing.

Mr Kakooza instructed local government heads to submit consolidated parish-level lists to OPM for onward processing and payment into beneficiaries' personal mobile money accounts.

"The purpose of this letter is to inform local governments of the second phase of the restocking programme for Acholi, Lango and Teso sub-regions and to request you to commence preliminary activities, mainly identifying eligible beneficiaries and submitting respective lists by January 5," the letter reads.

The *Daily Monitor* has learnt that President Museveni, in a directive issued on November 25, 2025, tasked OPM with mobilising and leading the restocking drive in the three sub-regions. This was followed by the forma-

REGIONAL ALLOCATION

According to figures from OPM, Lango Sub-region will receive the largest share of the funds at Shs28.486b, followed by Teso with Shs24.211b and Acholi with Shs23.3b.

tion of an inter-ministerial committee on the programme, chaired by Prime Minister Robinah Nabbanja, in mid-December.

In a separate letter dated December 31, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, Dr Aminah Zawedde, instructed local government leaders to urgently update beneficiary records and guard against data manipulation.

"You are aware that the President committed to a livestock restocking exercise targeting Teso, Lango and Acholi sub-regions, which suffered significant losses of cattle during past conflicts and raids," Dr Zawedde wrote.

"Please ensure that all information provided is accurate, complete and current, and that no beneficiary names are deleted or altered."

Under the programme, each eligible household will receive financial support equivalent to five cows.

Political context

While campaigning in Anaka Town Council, Nwoya District, in October 2025, President Museveni said he had tasked Prime Minister Nabbanja with expediting compensation for individuals in northern and eastern Uganda who lost their livestock.

However, records show that similar presidential directives on cattle compensation have often been issued during the election period, with funds either delayed or never released.

Last year, while meeting leaders from Acholi and Teso, the President expressed reservations about war compensation, describing it as an erroneous approach.

"In other parts of the world, you cannot compensate for war or an earthquake. War is war. The answer is to end the war, bring peace and rehabilitate," Mr Museveni told leaders at Gulu Core PTC playgrounds.

Claimants express frustration

Meanwhile, hundreds of war debt claimants in the Acholi Sub-region have expressed frustration over prolonged delays in compensating livestock losses incurred nearly four decades ago.

Mr James Oweka, a claimant, said the government should prioritise cattle compensation instead of launching a second phase of the restocking programme.

Through the Acholi War Debt Claimants' Association, which has more than 21,200 members, claimants are seeking compensation exceeding Shs1 trillion for lost livestock and property. They claim losses of 866,134 cattle, 187,097 goats, 140,578 sheep and 7,945 pigs.

Mr Alfred Olyana Lubel, 71, said the animals were taken between 1987 and 1988, yet no meaningful compensation has been paid.

Mr Julius Oleke, the association's chairperson, said more than 1,800 members have died over the last 20 years without receiving compensation.

He added that he personally received only Shs31.5m for 30 heads of cattle.

Earlier this year, while appearing before Parliament's Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Mr Norbert Mao, admitted that corruption had undermined the compensation process.