

By Faridah Kulabako

The days of accusations and counter accusations over hiccups in the supply of drugs to government health facilities across the country by the National Medical Stores (NMS) could soon come to an end.

This comes after the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) committed to give NMS \$3m (sh10.8b) to install a new computer software dubbed Enterprise Resource Planning, which will allow health facilities to order drugs and other supplies online.

The system will enable all stakeholders and interested parties to monitor orders and deliveries.

The NMS general manager, Moses Kamabare, said the agency is in the process of procuring the software which will be installed in all public health facilities across the country.

Public to monitor NMS drug supplies using new sh10.8b online system

He said NMS has always been accused of delayed deliveries, resulting in shortages in some public health facilities yet most times the delays originate from the management of respective facilities by not submitting orders on time.

NMS is charged with procuring, storage and distribution of essential medicines and other supplies to all public health facilities in the country. Kamabare said the new software "will help in co-ordinating all people who supervise service delivery, including Members of Parliament, district health officers, resident district commissioners and chief administrative officers".

"This will improve transparency in the delivery of medical supplies."

Kamabare

"If someone is claiming that NMS has delayed to deliver, check for yourself and see where the problem originates.

This will improve service delivery and transparency in the delivery of medical supplies across the country."

Kamabare was speaking during the breaking of the ground ceremony for the construction of a modern warehouse in Kajjansi, Wakiso district, yesterday.

The warehouse will have 30,000 pallet positions compared to the current 8,000, which Kamabare said will enable NMS to have at least two months buffer stock at all times.

Funding

The Global Fund committed \$7.6m (sh27.4b) towards the project and \$6.4m (sh23.1b)



PM Rugunda

has already been disbursed. The Global Alliance for Vaccines committed \$1.5m (sh5.4b). The Uganda government is expected to top up. The project is estimated

to cost sh69.9b and will be completed by June 2019.

However, NMS is required to have absorbed all the Global Fund monies by December, according to Abubakar Ibrahim, a finance specialist with the Global Fund.

Prime Minister Ruhakana Rugunda commended government partnership with the development partners, saying they have been reliable partners in supporting Uganda's health programmes.

"These partners have been there for us in thick and thin. They have helped us fight against Tuberculosis, malaria and immunisable diseases. The warehouse will now be a forever living monument for this kind of partnership," he said.

Health state minister Sarah Opendi said the warehouse will ensure that the country has adequate vaccines stock. She said the ministry will continue to focus on disease prevention other than cure.