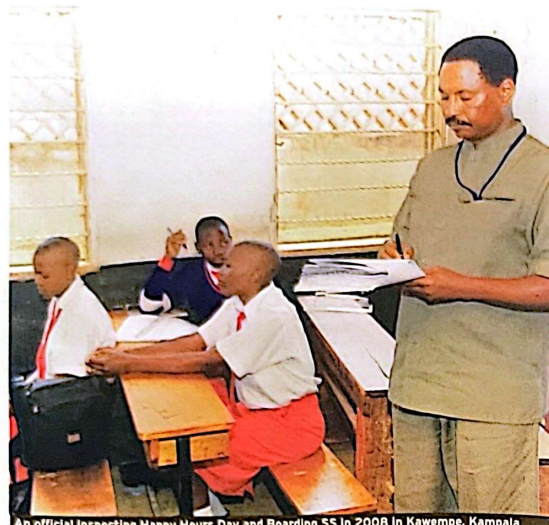


Budget: No funds allocated

A 2017 report showed that 63% of both Government and private schools had ignored recommendations by inspectors. That number could increase given that school inspection has not been given priority in the 2018/2019 education budget

By Gloria Nakajubi



An official inspecting Mappy Hours Day and Boarding SS in 2008 in Kawempe, Kampala

Though it is a core function in the education sector, the inspectorate arm will not receive a budget for the coming financial year.

Officials at the directorate in an earlier interview with *Mwalimu* indicated that they require at least sh5b.

The sector, according to the undersecretary in charge of finance and administration, Aggrey Kibenge, suffered a sh5b budget cut for the coming financial year.

The inspectorate department has literally been paralysed. Fuel and workshops are considered consumptive activities. Unfortunately, for a sector that deals in the provision of a social service, Kibenge says, this is likely to have a huge negative impact on the sector's performance. Activities such as school inspections, in-service trainings, workshops, consultancy and advertising are some of the most affected.

The inspectorate department is literally paralysed. Fuel and workshops are considered consumptive activities for a sector like education, it becomes tricky. This, therefore, means inspections to be done at the desk," Kibenge says. He adds that most activities and supervisory components in the

delivery of quality education.

A 2017 report from the ministry's Directorate of Education Standards (DES) showed that 63% of both Government and private schools had ignored recommendations by inspectors. With budget cuts towards this particular directorate, the situation will only get worse since there will be inadequate resources to carry out follow-up inspections.

MPs disagree

The report of the sectoral committee on education and sports on the ministerial policy statement also indicated dissatisfaction on the targeted activities for the finance ministry's budget cuts.

Citing the case of Mbarara University of Science and Technology, where it was observed that the ministry had cut by half the university's budget for travel abroad, travel in-kind and government of Uganda counterpart funding for staff training under the HEST programme regarding them as consumptive items. HEST is Higher Education Science and Technology programme.

"The committee would like to note that by nature of a university, travels (both inland

Sh2.6 trillion
The budget of the Ministry of Education and Sports in the coming financial year

Sh1.5b
The amount of money allocated to the Directorate of Education in the 2017/2018 budget

Sh1.5b
The amount of money allocated to the Directorate of Education in the 2018/2019 budget

and abroad) and especially on training could not be dispensed with as universities depend on outreach programmes, exchange programmes and partnerships with other universities around the world.

"The committee recommends that the Ministry of Finance should reconsider the decision of cutting universities' training budgets on the basis of being consumptive, otherwise, this could undermine the essence of training and continuous knowledge accumulation and sharing required of universities," reads the report.

The sector recently launched a costed sector strategic plan for the 2017/18-2019/20, but weighed against the current allocations for the year 2018/19, one can see glaring funding gaps. According to the strategic plan, the sector required sh6.5 trillion against the allocated sh2.6 trillion. It

should also be noted that the sector budget has stagnated at about 11% share of the national budget. Next financial year, it will take up 11.39%, gaining a few points from the current financial year's share of 11.37%.

"We have to go back to the drawing board and review our priorities to fit within the budget allocation. Prudent planning calls for that," says Kibenge.

2018/19 sector activities
The sector has a number of new interventions lined up for the next financial year. These have been aligned with the National Development Plan II and goal four of the global goals Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

100 grant-aided schools
Of the sh120b, extra allocation to the sector, sh22b will go towards operationalisation of the grant-

aided schools that were taken over by the ministry this current financial year. One hundred schools and 21 teaching staff each will be operationalised and sh22b go towards paying wages.

Completion of 83 schools
With funding from the World Bank, this financial year will see the completion and hand over of the 83 primary schools undergoing renovation and reconstruction.

According to the budget allocations, sh48b has been set aside for this activity. Most of these as officials at the ministry explained are already at the roofing stage.

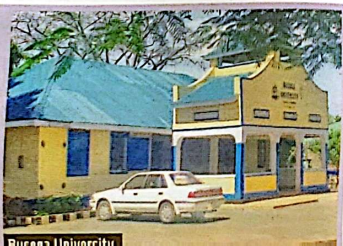
These constructions, according to Musa Mugoya, a programmes officer at Institute for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) will go a long way in improving the state of infrastructure in school, especially sanitation facilities



Mountains of the Moon University in Fort Portal

TAKEOVER OF INSTITUTIONS

A total of sh10b has been set aside for the takeover of the Mountains of the Moon University in Fort Portal, Busoga University and the newly created Karamoja Agricultural College, as a constituent college of Gulu University. Kibenge, however, explained that though the other two institutions will fully be taken over, this may not be the case for Busoga University as it still awaits clearance from the National Council for Higher Education. Its takeover will be phased.



Karamoja Agricultural College

for school inspections

More funds to sports

A total of 41 critical sports disciplines have been earmarked for the additional sh5b that has been allocated to this particular segment. These include athletics, netball and football. Physical education and sports registered a major leap from last year's sh11,920.59 approved budget to the current sh34,924.94b proposed budget.

High altitude training centre
The Kapechorwa-based facility has also received a more than double allocation from last year's sh6,030b approved budget to the current sh14,201b proposed allocation for 2018/19 financial year.

This will go towards the ongoing construction phase that includes a 3km jogging track, artificial turf field and 300m long site roads and parking. Other features include fencing, pump house, water reservoir, gatehouse and fencing external perimeter.

With the recent success in the international competition, especially the 2018 Commonwealth Games with Ugandans bringing home six medals (three gold, one silver and two bronze), this can be seen as one way of consolidating the trend.



The First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports Mrs Janet Museveni congratulates Commonwealth Games gold medalist Joshua Cheptegei last month

which have been one of the hindrances to girls' attendance in schools.

Public universities
A total of sh61b has been allocated towards the completion of construction works at the different public universities with funding from the African Development Bank.

The HEST project is running in six public universities and two degree awarding institutions with an overall objective of improving equitable access, quality and relevance of skills training. It will also lead to research in order to lead to employment creation and

self-employment through business creation.

The project, among other activities, includes the construction, expansion or rehabilitation of common facilities including laboratories, lecture spaces, technology workshops, centres, virtualised libraries, faculty offices and demonstration or production units at the selected institutions.

It also includes postgraduate training of the staff at the institutions. The finance ministry had rejected the proposal for the ministry to recruit 2,000

science teachers at a cost of sh18b in the coming financial year. The parliamentary committee in its report on the sector's ministerial policy statement highly recommended the move to fill the glaring human resource gap.

The committee, therefore, recommended that funds being proposed by the Government to enhance salaries of the science teachers should be used to recruit more teachers to cater for the schools without any science teachers.

According to the committee, "the absence of a strong science foundation in

secondary schools could undermine the Government's promotion of sciences in higher institutions of learning and at vocational training level."

Sub-county schools
Though still before cabinet, the sector anticipates the implementation of the one school per sub-county programme in those that do not have.

The first phase targets 110 schools implemented through the local governments in the coming financial year.

Currently, over 312 sub-counties do not have secondary schools.

What UNATU says

The budget, according to Filbert Baguma, the general secretary of Uganda National Teachers Union (UNATU), still has a number of gaps, especially in responding to some of the sector's priorities. He argues that there is currently a number of headteachers at the different levels of primary, secondary and BT/VT who are operating in caretaker status. "If we are going to expect a revolution in the education system, then we cannot have squatters heading the institutions and the recruitment of these has not been provided for in the budget," he says.

On the controversial salary enhancements for science teachers, Baguma says, UNATU's position is to have a harmonised system that does not make one field of study seemingly less important than the other. He argues that science teachers are already earning at least 30% over and above their arts counterparts. This, therefore, means the proposed move will only make the salary inequalities wider.

"We are not against the increase in the salaries of science teachers. This should, however, be in harmony with the pay for the teachers of the arts subjects," he says.

On the budget cuts, Baguma says there hasn't been a clear cut system on who benefits from the said workshops and trainings. There is, for instance, he says, no refresher training courses for teachers in schools and yet these are expected to teach children for the current times. "I think these become consumptive if the real targets and benefits cannot be tracked."



Filbert Baguma, UNATU's general secretary

Do you know of an exceptional teacher in a Ugandan school? Nominate them for recognition we search for Uganda's best teachers.



THE NOMINEE MUST

- Be a Ugandan teacher in a school in Uganda (primary, secondary, technical and vocational institution)
- Have mobilised comm their children to school
- Be creatively using limited resources for quality education
- Be promoting vocational and life skill
- Be an active participant in co-curricular activities
- Be of impeccable integrity.

Send your nomination and their contacts, by August 31, 2018 to mwalimu@newvision.co.ug OR sms to 8338 (Type TEACHER reason for nomination and their contact). Winners will be announced.

Teachers making A DIFFERENCE

New Vision Irish Aid Trócaire