FINANCE RELEASES SALARY STRUCTURE FOR EXTERNALLY FUNDED PROJECT STAFF

By Mary Karugaba

The finance ministry has unveiled the 2026 salary and grading structure for all externally funded projects in Uganda, providing clear remuneration and hiring guidelines for all staff across all levels.

Unveiling the job description directory yesterday, finance ministry permanent secretary Ramathan Ggoobi said the structure, aims at enhancing transparency and standardising pay across externally funded programmes.

Ggoobi said the directory contains key positions in project implementation units, including job purpose, reporting line, qualifications, years of experience, key skills and competencies.

According to Ggoobi, the directory covers four main grades, ranging from leadership roles to support staff, and also stipulates provisions for medical insurance for each category of staff.

He said the salary and grading structure has been guided by a combination of international best practices, local remuneration benchmarks, existing public service frameworks, fiscal considerations and the need to ensure fairness in compensation and recruitment across comparable positions and cadres.

BETWEEN THE LINES

The structure is aligned with financing agreements for externally funded projects and aims at promoting fairness, retaining talent and ensuring efficient project implementation.

REASONS FOR THE UNVEILING

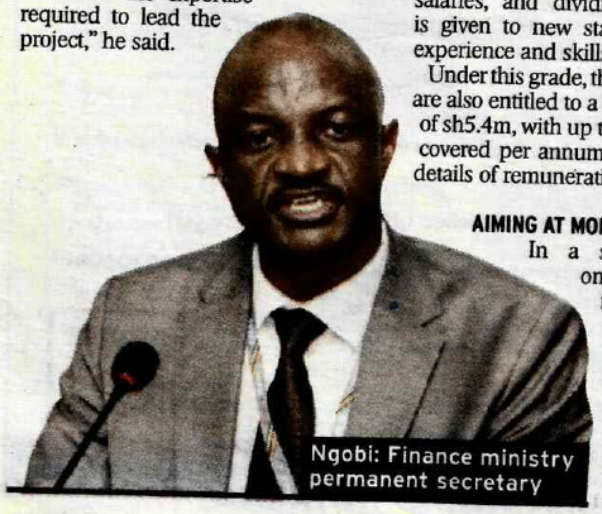
Ggoobi said the directory seeks to address existing disparities, increase productivity and engagement across all ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), improve project implementation and effectiveness, and uphold the principles of good governance.

"I encourage all MDAs to actively engage in this implementation to achieve an accountable public service, ultimately strengthening national economic performance and advancing the attainment of the tenfold growth strategy as well as the national development plan," Ggoobi said.

The ministry, Ggoobi stated, pledges its continued support through policy oversight, resource allocation and co-ordination to ensure that the objectives of streamlining pay and remuneration across all projects are achieved in a sustainable manner.

He said project co-ordinators will be commissioners or their equivalent if a ministry does not have a commissioner to take on the role.

"All commissioners appointed by the accounting officers should meet the minimum requirements for the role and have the expertise required to lead the project," he said.



Ngobi: Finance ministry permanent secretary

EXTERNALLY FUNDED PROJECTS

Externally funded projects in Uganda are development initiatives financed by foreign governments, international organisations, or multilateral lenders such as the World Bank, African Development Bank and various European nations to support projects such as infrastructure, health, education and agriculture.

Key 2026 projects include the $250m (sh906.2b) Northern Uganda Social Action Fund IV and the $180.5m (sh654.3b) Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project.

Others include construction of oil roads, the Kampala-Jinja Expressway, Entebbe Airport rehabilitation project, the Uganda Learning Acceleration Programme and the Agriculture Cluster Development Project.

These projects are managed through various MDAs and are crucial for boosting economic development, although they often face implementation delays.

GRADING, REMUNERATION

According to the directory, remuneration depends on the role one plays starting from grade 1 up to grade 4. For instance, grade 1 covers leadership and technical roles; where top management positions, including project managers fall.

These will earn sh24m as minimum starting salary and sh28m as the maximum salary. There is also the mid-point salary, which is sh26m for grade 1 staff. A mid-point salary is the middle value of a defined pay range for a specific role. It is calculated by adding the minimum and maximum salaries, and dividing it by two. It is given to new staff with moderate experience and skills.

Under this grade, the position holders are also entitled to a medical insurance of sh5.4m, with up to four dependants covered per annum. (See graphic for details of remuneration by grade).

AIMING AT MORE EFFICIENCY

In a statement issued on Friday, the finance ministry emphasised that the structure is aligned with financing agreements for externally funded projects and aims at promoting fairness, retaining talent and ensuring efficient project implementation.

Ggoobi said the release of the 2026 salary guidelines comes as part of ongoing efforts by the Government to strengthen public financial management and provide clarity for employees working on donor-funded initiatives.

A source in the finance ministry noted that personnel in project implementation units and similar project structures had no uniform pay for staff hired to handle externally funded projects.

The source explained that major donors, including the World Bank, African Development Bank, European Union and others, often influenced or approved salary levels to attract skilled professionals while aligning with their institutional guidelines.

According to the source, remuneration was largely determined within individual project financing agreements, project operation manuals, or specific terms of reference negotiated with development partners.

"Projects backed by larger donors or with bigger budgets offered substantially higher compensation packages, creating competition for talent within government institutions and raising concerns about fairness," the source added.

Salary structure for externally funded project staff

Grade 1 – Leadership/technical roles (Project managers)				
Position	**Minimum (Sh)**	**Mid-Point (Sh)**	**Maximum (Sh)**	**Medical Insurance (Sh)**
Project Manager	24,000,000	26,000,000	28,000,000	5,400,000
Grade 2 – Specialist/senior/middle management				
Specialist Level positions usually indicated in the financing agreement				
Position	**Minimum (Sh)**	**Mid-Point (Sh)**	**Maximum (Sh)**	**Medical Insurance (Sh)**
Financial Management Specialist / Senior Accountant	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Procurement Specialist / Senior Procurement Officer	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
M&E Specialist	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Technical Subject Expert	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Environmental Specialist	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Social Development Specialist	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Communications Specialist	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Senior Program Officer	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Field Operations Coordinator	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Gender Specialist	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Refugee Specialist	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Senior Legal Officer	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
GIS Specialist	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Electricity/Power/Grid Specialist / Senior	12,000,000	14,400,000	17,900,000	5,400,000
Grade 3 – Officer level				
Project implementation staff / officer level				
Position	**Minimum (Sh)**	**Mid-Point (Sh)**	**Maximum (Sh)**	**Medical Insurance (Sh)**
Procurement Officer	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Accountant	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
IT Officer	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Communications Officer	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Legal Officer	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Grant Officer	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Livelihood Officer	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Environmental Officer	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Social Safeguards Officer	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Data Analyst	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Gender Officer	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
M&E Officer	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Internal Auditor	4,500,000	5,400,000	6,480,000	5,400,000
Grade 4 – Assistant level (Support roles)				
Position	**Minimum (Sh)**	**Mid-Point (Sh)**	**Maximum (Sh)**	**Medical Insurance (Sh)**
Procurement Assistant	2,800,000	3,360,000	4,200,000	5,400,000
Accounts Assistant	2,800,000	3,360,000	4,200,000	5,400,000
Administrative Assistant	2,800,000	3,360,000	4,200,000	5,400,000
Fleet Assistant / Driver	1,800,000	2,100,000	2,500,000	5,400,000
IT Assistant	2,800,000	3,360,000	4,200,000	5,400,000