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Ill-gotten wealth
Sins of the filthy
rich



Some of the iron sheets that were returned by some government officials at the OPM warehouse in Namanve in 2023. The iron sheets, which were meant for the vulnerable in Karamoja Sub-region, had instead been taken by the officials.

PHOTO/
ABUBAKER LUBOWA

How corrupt political officials rob you

Instead of money being channelled to critical societal needs like food, education, health care, and infrastructure, it is diverted to finance exorbitant lifestyles, kickbacks, and projects that do not add value to Ugandan citizens.

CORRUPTION
ISMAIL MUSA LADU

Francis Mugisha wiped the dust from his brow and reached for a chair in his compound, his overall had the hallmark of what the day had been at the factory in Namanve Industrial Area, near Kampala. He is 40, but his face shows a weather-beaten man, who looks decades older; cracked, calloused, and trembling from years of hard work.

Every shilling he earns does not build a future; it pays for one. With three children in school, each term is a wound in the wallet, a debt pushed ahead, each invoice a reminder that the government's promise of free primary and secondary education was just ink on paper. He has spent his prime time struggling to build a future for the children, not his.

Therefore, dreams of business, investing, and innovating are all dissolved into exorbitant school fees, uniforms, and exam charges. The family skips meals so the

children wouldn't skip class. The medical bills, housing, taxes, etc swallow all the income.

Like Mugisha, millions of Ugandans are trapped in this. They are not building enterprises; they are trapped in an endless cycle of fundraising disguised as fatherhood, privately financing a public promise that the government abandoned as officials took to luxury, sponsored by the sweat of poor Ugandans toiling every day. If public schools were free and offered quality education like it is in Western countries, young fathers and mothers would concentrate on building a future for themselves and their children. Then they would have money to pay for university education.

But the money that would have done that is siphoned by the political elites through corruption.

According to the Inspectorate of Government, corruption in Uganda severely undermines economic growth, erodes

the quality of essential public services, and distorts National Budget performance.

According to the Inspectorate of Government (IGG) report, Uganda loses an estimated Shs10 trillion to corruption annually. This figure, which includes both direct theft and indirect losses, is roughly equivalent to the combined budgets for education, roads, and infrastructure programmes in the 2025/26 financial year.

Most corrupt?

Uganda's anti-corruption efforts have suffered another setback with a lower score, further entrenching the country among the world's most corrupt nations on Transparency International's latest index.

According to Transparency International's 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Uganda scored 25 out of 100 points, dropping from 26 points the previous year.