

Vocational school per district, says First Lady

By Apollo Mubiru

The Government will construct a vocational school for each district by the end of 2021, the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Janet Museveni, has said.

The ministry will prioritise the promotion and establishment of regional centres of excellence in business, technical, vocational education and training (BTVE) institutions to ensure production of critical mass of relevant technical skills.

BTVE training is delivered through a network of more than 110 government training centres, schools, institutes and polytechnics.

While addressing a news conference in Kampala yesterday on what her ministry has achieved, Mrs Museveni said Uganda Petroleum Institute Kigumba, Uganda Technical College Kichwamba, Uganda Technical College Bushenyi and Bukalasa Agricultural College, are to be transformed into centres of excellence in oil and gas, construction, manufacturing and agriculture.

"To ensure production of a critical mass of relevant technical skills, four international twinning institutions have been contracted for curriculum review, adaption and training of the faculties in the four colleges," the First Lady said.

She said the lower secondary school curriculum was reviewed under 20 subjects that were designed along competences acquired, as opposed to objectives, with learners expected to select eight to nine subjects. This is expected to start in 2019/20 financial year.

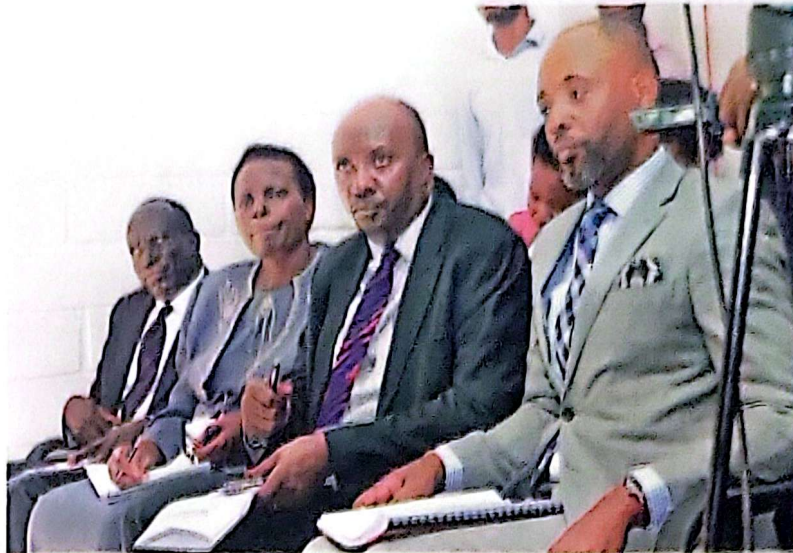
Among the achievements mentioned are construction of 356 schools in 54 selected districts, 53 administration blocks and 108 five-stance VIP latrines for boys and girls countrywide.

The ministry procured a total of 318,131 copies of both Primary Four integrated science and social studies pupil books, 39,000 copies of teacher's guides and monitored 230 schools in selected 19 districts.

The minister said 17 facilities were completed in nine public universities and business incubation centres were constructed in Gulu, Makerere University Business School, Mbarara University of Science and Technology and Kyambogo.

Ten primary teacher training colleges and three national teachers colleges were expanded. There has also been the construction of seed secondary schools in various places across the country.

In sports, the ministry said it will support the construction of sports facilities throughout the country and support all sports associations to identify and nurture talent at national level and increase Uganda's athletes' exposure to international events, to enable them gradually excel



(L-R) Director Higher and Technical Education and Training, Robert Oceng, Director Education Standards, Kedrace Turyagyenda, Director Manifesto Implementation Office of the President, Willis Bashasha and the ED National Planning Authority, Joseph Muvawala, during the presentation at the Uganda Media Centre, Kampala yesterday. Photo by Juliet Kasirye

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MINISTRY'S PROGRESS

and break international records.

"We shall work closely with different sports associations and develop a plan to facilitate national teams to participate in international tournaments when they qualify," the minister said.

The First Lady said the funding



First Lady and education minister, Janet Museveni

for National Council of Sports was increased to sh11.6b to cater for Federation of Uganda Football Associations, Commonwealth games, the Netball team and other sports associations.

The minister said the increasing number of sub-counties without secondary schools was caused by the creation of new districts, despite the construction of more secondary schools.

She appealed to parents, local governments and all stakeholders to provide lunch to school-going children.

"Government does not have money to feed children at

school. I am hoping that my campaign of calling upon parents to provide their children with lunch will yield results. If lunch is provided, it will reduce pupil absenteeism and the rate of school dropouts," the First Lady said.

Mrs Museveni said although the Government has not yet provided funds for the provision of sanitary towels to girls in schools, she was optimistic that the funds would be availed in future. She said her ministry has not given up on the promise, but when the funds are availed, it will be implemented.