

, including buses and programmes to sensitise the general public on the dangers of their actions.

Funding gap affects health centres

APAC

By Arnest Tumwesige

Health practitioners have decried low funding to the health ministry, a move which they say has contributed to low service delivery in the country.

According to recent findings by the Directorate of Economic Affairs and Research from the Office of the President, it was discovered that health centres are grappling with dilapidated structures, inadequate staffing, shortage of drugs and inadequate operation funds.

George Mugerwa, the commissioner for monitoring and evaluation in the Office of the President, said in Alebtong Health Centre IV, patients lack beds in the admission wards and equipment in the laboratory.

Mugerwa added that at Aduku Health Centre IV, Apac district, the out-patient department has falling ceilings. Similarly, at Dokolo Health Centre IV, the facility receives only sh7.6m on quarterly release, as operational and maintenance funds and yet it serves other districts of Apac and

Kaberamaido.

The monitoring was carried out in the six districts of Dokolo, Apac, Alebtong, Lira and Kaberamaido districts, where a total of seven health centres IV were reached.

Dr Joseph Okware, the commissioner, health services in charge of quality assurance and inspection at the Ministry of Health, acknowledged the challenges that were discovered by the team, which he attributed to low funding to the ministry.

Health budget

Okware said the ministry only receives sh1.8 trillion, representing 6% of the national budget, out of which the donors contribute the biggest funding. The Government contributes sh900m.

On limited drug supplies by the National Medical Stores (NMS), he said NMS only has a budget of sh264b for all health centres in Uganda.

"For NMS to effectively meet the demand of the health centres, it requires sh1.3 trillion per year," he added.

Annually, health centres II, III, IV and a district hospital receive sh7m, sh22m, sh52m and sh320m, respectively.