



Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group

# CSO BUDGET COALITION POSITION PAPER FOR FY 2017/18

## RWENZORI SUB-REGION

MAY 2017



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# 1.0 Background

Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) is a coalition formed in 2004 to bring together civil society actors at national and district Levels to influence Government decisions on resources mobilization and utilization for equitable, gender responsive and sustainable development. Since 2004, CSOs under the umbrella of CSBAG have engaged Government in influencing the budget process to ensure that both the local and national budgets address the needs and aspirations of the poor and marginalised groups of people in Uganda.

## 1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE POSITION PAPER

The National Budget is the key instrument through which Government implements its budget related policies. The FY 2017/18 National Budget Framework Paper (BFP) outlines Government interventions for social and economic development in the FY and the Government's medium term macroeconomic plan and fiscal strategy towards attainment of the objectives of the National Development Plan. Thus to influence Government (local and national) on budget issues so as to ensure preparation of a people centred budget, Rwenzori Sub-region Civil Society Organisations with coordination of CSBAG on 31st March, 2017 met and agreed on a number of positions on the FY 2017/2018 Budget for the Sub-region.

This was one the activities of the coalition's FY 2017/18 work plan

# 2.0 Rwenzori Region Budget Coalition

Rwenzori Sub-region Budget Coalition covers all the seven districts of Rwenzori Sub-region including; Kabalore, Kasese, Bundibugyo, Kyenjojo, kyegerwa, Kamwenge and Ntoroko with a population of 2.8 million. The Coalition aims at:

- a) Synergising skills and abilities for the common good of the community;
- b) Efficiently and effectively utilising available spaces at subnational and national levels to influence the budget;
- c) Creating periodic capacity building opportunities for local CSOs to monitor budget processes in their districts;
- d) Sharing best practices on how to resolve operating environment challenges as far as budget advocacy and monitoring are concerned; and
- e) Creating a common force for dialogue with Government and Development Partners on issues of the budget.

## 3.0 RWENZORI CSOs BUDGET CONCERNS

**A number of issues were raised during the CSBAG Consultative meeting on the Rwenzori CSOs budget concerns. The issues have been categorised into the service delivery sectors under the mandate of Local Government according to the Local Governments (1997) Act.**

### 3.1 EDUCATION SECTOR

According to the Second Schedule of the Local Government (1997) Act, the education and sports functions and services that are under the jurisdiction of district and municipal councils include but are not limited to provision of education services, which cover pre-primary (nursery), primary, secondary, teacher education, science, technology and innovation, special needs, and technical and vocational education. Despite the clearly articulated as Local Government mandate in provision of education services, the sector is performing poorly most especially in Government aided schools. Key issues raised by the Rwenzori Sub-Regional Budget Coalition in the education sector include:

#### 3.1.1 High rate of school drop in UPE schools

Despite the Government UPE initiative introduced in 1997 to ensure universal access to education, there is still a high school drop rate in the Sub-region especially for girls. Most affected areas in the Sun-region include the sub counties of Hakibaale, Busiro, Kabende, Rutete and kiko Town council. This has been among other factor been exacerbated by the tea industry which employs children as causal laborers. Besides, early marriages have also worsened the rate of school drop outs. This is common in Sub-counties of karangura and kicwamba. Kyaitamba Primary School is one of the most critically affected schools among others.

#### Recommendations:

- Government to enforce the existing laws and enactment of bylaws and ordinances to reduce on the rate of school drop outs, early marriages and absenteeism.
- Police to should intervene and aid in enforcement of these laws, ordinances and bylaws.

#### 3.1.2 Inadequate Supervision of Government aided and Private Schools

We as CSOs not with much concern that district and Ministry of Education and Sports officials rarely supervise both Government aided and private schools contrary to the requisite minimum of once a term. This has negatively affected academic standards in the Sub-region. Limited supervision is attributed to limited non-wage recurrent expenditure budget specifically for school supervision allocated to the sector both at national and local levels. As a matter of fact, Government should have provided funding under conditional transfer for school inspection in FY 2017/18 budget targeting districts with the lowest academic performance. However, to the contrary there is no such funding in the budget. It is important to note that limited supervision has exacerbated teacher absenteeism which has further worsened performance.

#### Recommendations:

- The Government should Increase the budget for supervision possibly through conditional transfer for school inspection window specifically targeting districts with low academic achievements.
- Government should also adequately fund and facilitate Centre Coordinating Tutor system under the umbrella of Core Primary Teachers' Colleges to conduct school supervision.
- Lower Local Governments Political leaders and technocrats like the LC III, LC II and LCI, and Sub-County Chiefs and Parish Chiefs should be empowered and trained to monitor and supervise schools in addition to School Management Committees.

#### 3.1.3 Inadequate Funding to the Education Sector

Both at the national and local levels, there is limited funding to the education sector especially on the

non-wage recurrent and development expenditures. Contrary to the policy recommended UPE capitation grant of UGX. 10,000 to each pupil per year, the Government only provides, UGX. 7,000 per year. Besides, due to political propaganda, parents and guardians especially in rural areas have been discouraged from making any contribution towards education of their children to supplement the little Government transfers. This has constrained provision of education services especially in rural and urban poor areas.

### Recommendations:

- The Government should adhere to the set policies and provide the necessary amount of grants (UPE, USE and UPOLET) to finance provision of educational services.
- Parents and guardians through PTAs and local political leaders should be encouraged to contribute an affordable amount of money towards the education of their children. If possible Districts and Municipal Councils should enact Ordinances to effect this policy.

### 3.1.4 Limited Oversight Capacity of Management Committees

There is currently limited capacity of Health Centres and School Management Committees to effectively oversee service delivery. There has been limited orientation of these committees about their required duties, and thus has rendered them ineffective. Furthermore, the absence of clearly defined qualifications of Committee members affects their efficiency and effectiveness.

### Recommendations:

- Adequate financing should be provided to enhance capacity of these oversight committees.
- Government should clearly define the qualifications of these oversight committee members to ensure and promote efficiency and effectiveness in their work.

## 3.2 AGRICULTURE SECTOR

It is important to note that purpose of Central Government transfers to Local Governments for agriculture services is to support services that increase the level of agricultural production and productivity of priority agricultural commodities and promote bulk marketing and trade. Issues raised under the agriculture sector in Rwenzori Sub-region include:

### 3.2.1 Late supplies of agricultural inputs across the region

This has affected the farmers and led to low production which in turn increased the levels of famine in the region. Besides, Farm input supplied under OWC are inadequate and of substandard quality. For instance a household is supplied with 5kg of maize and beans without consideration of transport costs to the collection centres which in most cases outweigh the monetary value of inputs collected. Furthermore, the programme is marred with corruption and distribution of low quality products given the fact that award of supply contracts in most cases is politically motivated. The programme is also implemented by the UPDF with little or no technical knowledge on agricultural extension services. This has left the farmers as the net losers in the entire programme.

### Recommendations:

- The Government should increase the input allocations to each farmer under OWC programme to at least 50kg of inputs per household if the programme is to increase production and productivity.
- Qualified extension workers should be hired and facilitated to do the work instead of the Army.
- There is need for audits of the funds and equipment's supplied to districts.

### 3.2.2 Political interference

This is common in the supply of agriculture inputs, for example, the distribution of cattle where NRM Cadres supplied 12 heifers of poor quality in October 2016 and 8 cows died by December 2016.

### Recommendations:

- Agricultural inputs should be contracted through a transparent and open bidding process with emphasis on quality of the said inputs other than individual suppliers.
- Government should pre-qualify supplies of OWC inputs to avoid supply of sub-standard inputs.

### 3.2.3 Pest Prevalence in the Sub-Region

Fall worm infestation in the region has destroyed numerous hectares of maize which is a staple food crop in the Sub-region. The worm has affected among others, districts of Kabarole, Kamwege and Kasese. This as such threatening food security in the region.

## Recommendation:

- Government should fast track the process of having the fall worm infestation addressed to avert food insecurity both in the short and long run.

## 3.3 HEALTH SECTOR

It is important to note that Local Governments are charged with operational planning, management and delivery of health services. These are executed by carrying out: health service delivery, supervision, monitoring, resource mobilisation, and allocation and enforcement of the health related laws and regulations. Districts and Municipal councils are responsible for Health Centre IV's, III's and II's facilities, and Village Health Teams (VHTs). Issue raised under the health sector included:

### 3.3.1 Non-functioning health structures and referral system

The health structures are non-functional in most districts of Rwenzori Sub-region. This among other cases was evident during the recent distribution of mosquito nets without involvement of Village Health Teams (VHTs) who in most cases are familiar with households in their localities and as such can be instrumental in providing sensitisation on the use of the nets. Besides, the healthcare referral system is also not operational. As such hospitals are congested with patients with minor cases which could easily be handled by lower health centres. Furthermore, the ambulance system is non-existent and as a consequence, the gap has been exploited by politicians who donate ambulances to their electorates. However, it is of concern to note that such ambulances (donated by politicians) are neither of minimum health standards nor affordable by the locals.

## Recommendations:

- The Government both local and national should utilise existing structures in provision of health care service to reduce the cost of public administration and improve efficiency in healthcare system. This should be accompanied with capacity building of existing structures instead of creation of parallel structures like the State House Drug Monitoring Unit.
- Government should revive the Public Ambulance System and referral system to save life as well as reduce congestion in higher health facilities like district hospitals

### 3.3.2 Low staffing levels in health facilities

Most health facilities in Rwenzori Sub-region are faced with a challenge of inadequate health workers especially medical officers. This is a common scenario at health centre IV's which as per the healthcare policy are supposed to have a resident doctor. Most affected facilities are district hospitals in the Sub-region. Besides, most medical doctors are biased towards working with local government due to labour immobility (cannot easily be transferred to other districts or health facilities in the country).

## Recommendations:

- The Government should invest in capacity building of health workers; recruit more health workers; and introduce centralised recruitment of medical officers to attract medical doctors to districts without medical doctors.
- Government should ensure that all Health Centre IV's are staffed with a resident doctor to handle critical health cases and operationalise the healthcare referral system.
- Government can also employ retired health workers on contract basis to supplement the available healthcare workforce.

### 3.3.3 Shortage and delayed delivery of medicines by National Medical Stores (NMS)

Drugs and other medical supplies like gloves and syringes are not sufficient to treat overwhelming patients especially in health centre IV's. Similarly, delayed delivery of medicines coupled with theft has worsened the health status in the districts. In most cases patients are referred to private clinics to purchase medicines. It is of concern to note that most of these clinics are owned by public sector health workers. Besides, it is surprising to note that despite the drug shortages, NMS destroys expired medicines annually and leaves us puzzled whether the healthcare system in Uganda is operational and efficient.

## Recommendations:

- The Government should strengthen and sufficiently facilitate the health monitoring and inspection unit(s) of the Ministry of Health and district health departments instead of creating parallel monitoring units.
- NMS and health officials should be tasked to account for the delayed delivery of medicines on a prescribed timely basis.
- Government should consider allocating a budget line for AIDS/HIV counseling and testing at district level.

### 3.3.4 Limited accommodation for health staff

This is common at Health Centre IV's, III's and II's which has constrained handling of in-patient cases at these health facilities. The situation has been worsened with the dilapidated state of the existing staff quarters.

#### Recommendation:

- The Government should construct more staff houses at each health facility and also ensure that the existing houses are renovated and maintained in good conditions for human inhabitation. At least each staff member should be allocated a residential house at a health facility in the long run.

## 4.0 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Due to lack of access to clean water, Government should allocate more funds to extend the gravity scheme and construct more protected water sources to reduce the overload of gravity flow scheme in the Sub-region. This will enhance the accessibility of clean and safe water.
- Poor Road community network has affected many small holder farmers who always carry their commodities from the farm land to town markets. We appreciate the Government for starting on the highway road works and we suggest the local government to consider community road networks that are usually used the most marginalized women and men.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

We as CSOs in Rwenzori Sub-region strongly believe that the above recommendations if considered and implemented by Government and respective Local Government will go a long way in improving service delivery in the region. We acknowledge the fact that it could be impossible or extremely difficult to implement the entire package in a single financial year, however, we shall be grateful if Central Government and Local Governments show commitment towards implementation of these policy options with a defined time frame as we strive to achieve a people centred budget that dignifies humanity.

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