



CSBAG BUDGET NEWS BRIEF



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Advocating for a People Centered Budget that Dignifies Humanity



District leaders, CSOs critic FY 2018/19 national draft budget

"It is important that Government begins to see Local Governments as equal partners with shared interest. For Uganda to attain its middle-income status and Vision 2040, there must be collaboration."



Prime Minister, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda delivering his speech at the National Budget conference at the Kampala Serena Hotel last week.

The Uganda Local Government Association (ULGA) has criticized the FY 2018/2019 national draft budget strategy, saying it doesn't address adequate budgetary allocation for Local Government, which is responsible for service delivery.

In its Position paper on the National budget strategy for the FY 2018/19, ULGA implored the government to revisit its investment in Ugandans, by strengthening institutions like Local Governments which are closer to the local people.

"It is important that Government begins to see local Governments as equal partners with shared interest. For Uganda to attain its middle-income status and Vision 2040, there must be collaboration and collective action of all implementing agencies working together and being financed realistically," Godfrey Mutabazi, the chairperson ULGA said.

Local Government concerns

On Thursday September 07, the Government unveiled the draft budget strategy for FY 2018/19 to members of the Civil society, Members of Parliament and the Local Government among other stakeholders as it kicked-started on the budget process for the FY 2018/19. However according to Local Government, its budget has remained stagnant over the years despite proposals brought to the attention of Government during the budgetary consultative meetings. "For the last ten years, we have had no answer, yet we keep on presenting proposals to the Government. The reason we have poor service delivery in the country is because Local Governments have low levels of funding," Mutabazi said.

In their FY 2018/19 budget proposals, Local Governments noted that there is critical need to prioritize the discussion on improving funding for local service delivery and address the issue of national budget in Parliament to result in an increased allocation of a minimum of 38% budget, to Local Government.

Local Governments also proposed that Parliament enacts a separate law to establish a minimum share of the national budget for the Local Government as is the case with neighboring Kenya among other countries.

The Local Government also proposed that the Government establishes a special maintenance fund to help in maintenance works on roads and projects like dams. "We must have funds ready for maintenance works on Government projects, so that when projects like roads are destroyed, we don't borrow, to work on these roads," George William Egonyu, the LC5 chairperson Soroti district said. Members of the Local Government including Chief administrative officers (CAOs) Mayors and town clerks also reechoed the need to increase funding towards services like health, education and agriculture which they said are key for economic growth.

Budget Strategy

Presenting the FY 2018/19 Budget strategy, during the National budget conference on Thursday, at the Kampala Serena Hotel, David Bahati, the state minister for finance in charge of planning said the budget would focus on increasing production and productivity in agriculture. "In the health sector, there is need to emphasize disease prevention measures at household and community levels, improve maternal and newborn child health

and equip the referral system to enable early diagnosis and treatment. Key actions that are required include the recruitment and training of critical health staff," Bahati said.

Responding to the draft budget strategy paper, CSOs urged the government to support growth and access to private sector credit, which they said is essential to economic growth. "With the agriculture sector spending over 40% of its budget on provision of agricultural inputs, the supply of inputs should be informed by production zones elaborated in the 2016 agricultural sector strategic plan. Additional emphasis should be placed ensuring affordable and quality agro-chemicals are on the market," Richard Ssewakiryanga, the Executive Director NGO forum, a member of CSBAG said.

Revenue mobilization

The CSOs implored the Government to consider exploring ignored revenue sources in the transport sector such as motor cycles (Bodabodas) which they said have previously been politically sensitive and difficult to tax. During the budget consultative meeting, Local Governments cited political interference which they said has affected revenue collection by local governments, from taxis and boda boda operators.

UPCOMING CSO EVENTS

Event: Media Briefing on CSO Perspectives on the Budget Strategy
Venue: NGO Forum offices, Kabalagala
Date: Monday, 11th September
Time: 10:00am

Event: Northern Region Joint Agriculture Sector Review meeting
Venue: Margaritha Place Hotel, Lira
Date: 14th - 15th September
Time: 8:00am-5:00pm

OUR WORK IN PICTURES



Director Budget at the Ministry of Finance, Kenneth Mugambe (2nd right) speaks with development partners including World Bank representative to Uganda, Ms Malmberg Calvo (2nd left) at the National Budget conference last week. | @CSBAG2017



CSBAG Budget Policy Specialist, David Walakira and other members of the Civil Society attending the FY 2018/19 National Budget Conference at the Kampala Serena Hotel last week. | @CSBAG2017



Participants at the Enabling Environment for Agriculture (EEA) event where CSBAG was commended for its advocacy contributions towards increasing allocations to the agriculture sector last week. | @CSBAG2017