



CSBAG BUDGET NEWS BRIEF



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Advocating for a People Centered Budget that Dignifies Humanity



Govt asked to reform economy for poverty reduction

"More Ugandans are slipping into poverty with the number of poor people increasing from 6.6 million in 2012/13 to 10 million in 2016/17, according to the UNHS report



Professor Augustus Nuwagaba speaking recently. He has called on Government to invest more in agricultural value addition and post-harvest marketing for improved agro-business and economic development that can bring about poverty eradication | @CSBAG2017

The Government has been asked to consider reform the economy, to deal with rising levels of poverty in the country.

According to Professor Augustus Nuwagaba, an international consultant on economic transformation and an African wealth creation expert, there is need by the government to invest more in productive sectors such as Agriculture and industrialization for improved income generation by Ugandans.

"Majority of the Ugandans are in the agricultural sector which is not well supported. The Agricultural sector is declining because of limited support, there is no way we can reduce poverty in Uganda when majority of the Ugandans in the agricultural sector are still using rudimentary methods," Nuwagaba said.

Nuwagaba also pointed out land grabbing, which he said is threatening the agricultural sector in Uganda and making it difficult for the country to fight poverty.

Agricultural financing

According to Nuwagaba, there is need by the government to also set up an agricultural bank for the farmers to address the high interest rates charged by commercial banks.

"As a country, we need to embrace agricultural financing, there is no way we are going to reduce poverty levels when farmers are still getting loans from commercial banks, whose interest rates are high," he said.

Nuwagaba cited out countries like Vietnam which he said have improved their economies through agriculture. He called upon the government to invest more in agricultural value addition, infrastructural development, post harvesting marketing for improved agro-business prospects and economic development. Earlier this month (Tuesday, October 17th), the United Nations (UN) for which Uganda is a member, marked the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, under the theme; "Answering the call of October 17,

to end poverty: A path toward peaceful and inclusive societies." More Ugandans are slipping into poverty with the number of poor people increasing from 6.6 million in 2012/13 to 10 million in 2016/17, according to the Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS) 2016/17 report released recently by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS).

Expand SAGE programme

The above development translates into income poverty levels rising from 19.7 per cent to 27 per cent. Income poverty means the proportion of Ugandans whose personal income lies below the poverty line, which is \$1.25 (about Shs4,500) a day. Just like Nuwagaba, Margaret Komuhangi, the chairperson Parliament's committee on social development urged the government to empower Ugandans through increased funding towards skills development and agriculture. She said there is need by the government to invest more in improved welfare for the elderly through the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE).

"This program needs to be scaled up in the Northern and Eastern parts of the Country so that these elderly people can be empowered economically," Komuhangi said. She also urged the government to invest more in agriculture, skills development especially among the youth. "Skills development is better than giving the

youth money, when youth are skilled and empowered, they are able to engage in income generating activities which in the end helps the country fight poverty," she said.

Komuhangi also attributed the poverty levels in the country to lack of transparency on the side of government, during implementation of programs which are aimed at poverty reduction.

Call to action

According to experts on poverty reduction, the critical role that the agricultural sector has played and most likely, will continue to play in poverty reduction deserves a re-examination of agricultural policies with a focus on extension services, input availability and quality, and access to credit. In its statement, the UN indicated that the theme for this year's commemoration reminds the world of the importance of the values of dignity, solidarity and voice underscored in the Call to Action to fight to end poverty everywhere. "These values are also evident in the United Nations' Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development which sets poverty eradication as the overarching objective and obligated all countries to end poverty in all forms, through strategies that guarantee the fulfillment of all human rights and ensure no one is left behind," the UN said in its statement.

UPCOMING CSO EVENTS

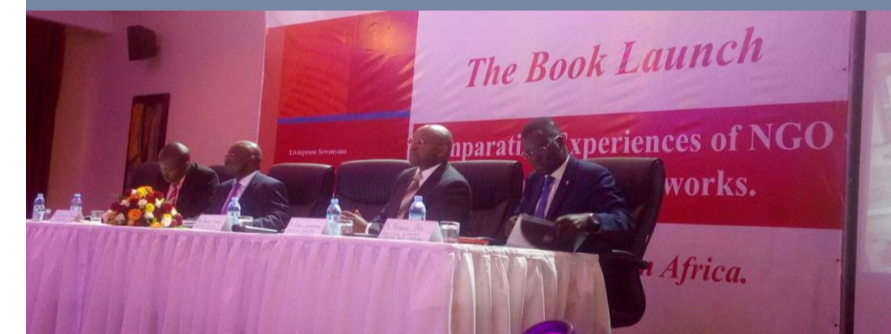
Event: Dissemination workshop on Widening Uganda's Tax Base
Convener: CSBAG **Venue:** Hotel Africana, Kampala
Date: 2nd November 2017 **Time:** 8:30am

Event: Review of Local Government Budget Consultations
Convener: CSBAG **Venue:** Eureka Hotel, Ntinda, Kampala
Date: 31st October 2017 **Time:** 8:00am -1:00pm

OUR WORK IN PICTURES



CSO members attending the launch of the Gender responsive budgeting project at Protea Hotel in Kampala last week. | @CSBAG2017



Foundation for Human Rights Initiative ED, Livingstone Sewanyana (2nd right) and NGO Forum ED, Richard Sewakiryanga (2nd right) with other officials during the launch of the Comparative Experiences of NGO Regulatory Frameworks in Eastern and Southern Africa. | @CSBAG2017



Members of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) at a meeting to deliberate on Civic space and the proposed Constitutional amendments. They called on Government to exercise restraint and respect their contribution towards the country's development. | @CSBAG2017