

## Increase capitation grant for USE, UPE schools, CSOs ask government



CSOs meeting with Members of Parliament to present the Education sector position paper for the FY2017/18, today, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at Parliament. First right is CSBAG's Lydia Kobusinge and next to her is David Walakira, a Budget Policy Specialist at CSBAG, |@CSBAG2017

**“The government has allocated Shs2.848 trillion as the budget for the Education sector in the FY 2017/2018.”**

Civil society organizations (CSOs), have asked government to consider increasing the capitation grant for Schools providing Universal Secondary Education (USE) and Universal Primary Education (UPE).

Under their umbrella group, the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), the CSOs presented their position paper on the education ministerial Policy statement, to the Education

committee of Parliament, the CSOs proposed that the capitation grant for both USE and UPE be increased from the current Sh47, 000 and 8,000 to Sh100, 000 and Sh15000 respectively.

“The unit cost per child in UPE, should be revised to accommodate the inflationary rates and match it to the current/prevaling market values,” said Lydia Kobusinge, a Programme executive at CSBAG.

At the inception of UPE in 1997, the overall unit cost was Sh13, 000 as disaggregated by class levels, where pupils in lower classes of Primary one, to Primary three, were given Sh5, 000 and Sh8, 000 for pupils in upper classes of Primary four to Primary seven. The figure was however later revised and consolidated to a uniform per unit cost of Sh7, 000 per pupil, from Primary one to Primary seven. During the Financial Year 2016/2017, the nominal value was raised to Sh10, 000, but the real value remaining at Sh8, 753.

“There has not been any consideration to accommodate inflation and change in the market values, neither has the sector adopted the recommended differentiated formulae for allocating capitation grants proposed by the National Development Plan II (NDP II),” Kobusinge said.

On USE, the CSOs observed that the programme had given mileage to the secondary education in Uganda; however the programme has been challenged by the inadequate funds allocated to the students. They noted that for the past ten years, the capitation unit cost has remained constant at what they called meager figure of Sh41,000 for grant aided schools, and Sh47,000 for public schools.

“The unit cost has not been revised to factor in inflationary trends but also reflect the market values over the last decade,” Kobusinge stated.

The CSOs noted that both figures (Sh41, 000 and 47,000) have depreciated, adding that in real terms, they are Sh26, 972 and Sh30, 919 respectively.

### Food policy

In their proposals, for the education sector, the CSOs, also recommended that the government establishes a school feeding policy to ensure availability of food for students while at School. The CSOs proposed that the government through the Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) also distributes planting materials such as seedlings to schools, for food production.

“Government should have a stand on feeding in schools, we are seeing students especially in the East studying on empty stomachs and we think this affects their performance and concentration in class,” Juliet Akello, a Policy Officer Uganda Debt network, another member of CSBAG told the legislators.

In its Policy statement, the ministry of education alluded to the need for a school feeding programme, in the light of the food crisis in the country.

### Female teachers

The CSOs also want the ministry to consider recruitment of more teachers especially women teachers, to cover the student, teacher ratio. According to the CSOs, some schools where there are limited female teachers, school head girls are appointed as senior women teachers, to handle issues affecting the girl's community.

In their interaction with the MPs, the CSOs, urged the ministries of Education and Finance, to co-fund the Menstrual hygiene management in schools. They also want senior women teachers, to help in equipping girls, with knowledge on how to make reusable sanitary pads, out of readily available material, in their respective communities.

In response to their proposals, the committee chaired by Mbale district woman MP, Connie Galiwango, commended the CSOs, saying the committee was in agreement with the proposals. “Your concerns are genuine and this looks like a coincidence, we seem to be having the same concerns, we shall pass them on to the Education minister during our meeting with the ministry,” Galiwango said.

The committee is set to meet the Ministry next week, as parliament continues with the budget process.