



CSBAG BUDGET NEWS BRIEF



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Advocating for a People Centered Budget that Dignifies Humanity



Operation wealth creation, youth programs **not transforming communities-MPs**

OUR WORK IN PICTURES

“...recovery of YLP funds remains low and that’s why a number of youth are on the run for failure to pay back funds. Government should think about skilling youth instead of giving them physical money.”



Hon. John Baptist Nambeshe (standing), Member of Parliament for Manjiya County in Bududa district speaking during a service delivery monitoring visit in Serere district by MPs and CSOs on 15th August 2019. © CSBAG 2019



Dr. Buyinza Godfrey (L), the District Health Officer in Kibuku explains health challenges in the district during a CSO monitoring visit on service delivery in Kibuku district on 14th August 2019. © CSBAG 2019



CSOs participating in a strategic meeting on the CSO National Budget advocacy roadmap for FY2020/21 in Kampala on 15th August 2019. © CSBAG 2019

Although Government initiatives such as Operation Wealth Creation (OWC) and Youth Livelihood Program (YLP) were established in a bid to alleviate poverty and transform Ugandans, Members of Parliament (MPs) have said such initiatives have not achieved their intended targets, adding that the impact of the programs is not felt in communities.

“I am sure that the motive for the initiatives has not been achieved. It seems like people who are benefiting are not targeted communities but rather suppliers,” said Hon. John Baptist Nambeshe, Member of Parliament for Manjiya County and a member of the Parliamentary Committee on National Economy.

According to him, OWC has also been dented by late delivery of inputs in form of seedlings, unclear beneficiaries’ identification mechanism, and lack of extension services for farmers. Hon. Nambeshe made these observations during a service delivery monitoring visit in Serere district by MPs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The visit, which was organized by the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), was aimed at providing MPs and CSOs information about progress in the implementation of OWC and YLP program.

Cross-cutting challenges

“The problem is not only in Serere but also in Bududa, OWC has not helped because funds remain in the hands of officials who are supposed

to procure goods and distribute them to citizens; I am told that even in YLP, a lot of money remains in the hands of district Community Development Officers,” said Hon. Nambeshe.

The Rubanda County West MP Eng. Dennis Sabiti said that the OWC projects visited included fruit seedlings that were distributed. In one scenario, out of over 100 orange seedlings distributed, only 60 survived which implies that the distribution, timing, and readiness of beneficiaries is not looked into by OWC officials. He also added that the death rate of animals distributed is very high and urged OWC officials to make sure that people are prepared before they benefit from the program in order to minimize losses.

About YLP, Hon. Sabiti, who is also a member of the Parliamentary Committee on the Budget, noted that many youths have diverted the program money into other activities and that’s why recovery rate remains low.

District reports

Reports from the Department of Community-Based Services in Serere district indicate that the district is in the fifth year of implementation of YLP from FY 2014/2015 to 2018/2019 and so far, 1,953 youths have benefited. Out of these, 1,053 are males and 900 are females. The report also indicates that some of the challenges facing the program include; low recovery rate from beneficiaries, disintegration of member groups, and natural calamities such as drought.

Hon. Hellen Adoa, the Serere district Woman MP said that recovery for YLP funds remains low and that’s why a number of youth are on the run for failure to pay back funds. She urged Government to think about skilling youth instead of giving them physical money.

“The YLP is a poor project with poor decisions which explains why it is hard to recover money keeping a number of youths on run while others are arrested and sent to prison,” she

said, urging Government to empower farmers to add value to their agricultural products.

CSO suggestions

Jeff Wadulo, the Parliamentary Liaison Officer at CSBAG said that there is need for a comprehensive study on the OWC and YLP programs to be done to ascertain whether there has been impact on communities and thereafter forge a way forward. According to him, there has been political interference in the two programs.

“It is not surprising that some politicians fear speaking about the wrong things citizens are doing out of fear to be voted out. We need to divorce politics from development,” said Wadulo.