

CSOs urge sectors to adhere to Gender and Equity Compacts



UN Women representative Susan Oregede (left) speaks during the dialogue. On her right is Zaminah Malole from Equal Opportunities Commission during the Gender Responsive Budgeting strategic meeting at Golf Course Hotel in Kampala. ©CSBAG

“Despite the development of the Gender and Equity Compacts, some sectors assessed were not improving in the area of gender and equity budgeting” CSBAG 2019 assessment revealed

This revelation was made during a strategic meeting held today between Members of Parliament, CSOs, Development Partners and responsible MDAs held at Golf Course Hotel in Kampala on Wednesday Dec 4, 2019. This meeting was organized by CSBAG and supported by UN Women and Spotlight Initiative and Embassy of Sweden.

Presenting the findings of the assessment conducted by CSBAG, Siraji Magara, Budget Policy Specialist said the analysis indicate that the implementation by ministries, agencies and departments (MDAs) is below 50% on gender equity responsiveness.

According to Magara, Budget Policy Specialist, at CSBAG, the assessment which focused on sectors of Health, ICT, JLOS revealed challenges in adherence to the compacts. “Some of the challenges sectors confessed to included limited awareness about the existence of the Compacts. Others lacked implementation plans, which limits appropriate prioritization of gender and equity interventions. While in some areas, limited staff capacity in gender and equity budgeting was sighted.” Magara told the audience

Overall, Health and JLOS performed better than ICT and Public Service regarding planning and allocating funding to Gender and Equity. The Health Sector for example, has 55 proposed gender and equity interventions and in FY 2018/19 it planned for 6 (10%) of these interventions and this increased in FY 2019/20 where 33 (60%) were planned. Funding to gender and equity responsive interventions in the Health Sector increased more than seven-fold in FY 2019/20 (UGX 783.997 -65%) compared to FY 2018/19 (UGX 91.472 billion (8.08%).)

The Ministry of Public Service implemented only two interventions each year out of the 35 interventions proposed in the Compact while the Public Service Commission did not implement any of the 13 interventions proposed under it in the Compact.

According the CSBAG assessment, Public Services’ poor performance was highly attributed to limited awareness about the Compact as well as inadequate staff capacity in gender and equity budgeting.

Magara underscored the need for legislators to intervene and ensure that MDAs priorities gender equity responsive budgeting in most ignored yet critical areas of sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, HIV/AIDS among others

Civil Society was backed by Members of Parliament who argued that there is need to put pressure on MDAs to comply. The disability MP Sophia Nalule argued that without incorporating gender equity issues on the budget Uganda as a country was failing to meet the international standards. “We need to put pressure to ministries, agencies and departments to comply,” Nalule stated.

Rubanda South MP Denis Magara asked civil society actors to task the Ministry of Finance to give percentages alongside the IDFs to convince the population while coming out with figures of national budget sectors allocation.

Another legislator Hon. Jonam MP Emmanuel Ongiertho observed that there is lack of discipline on the side of Government pointing out especially supplementary budgets.

“There is a lot of indiscipline in the budget implementation. How can we talk about gender responsive budget if Government keeps on coming with supplementary budgets?” Ongiertho asked.

While speaking at this meeting, the UN Women representative Susan Oregede appealed to civil society to continue advocating for gender equity budget responsiveness and advised Equal Opportunities Commission not to stop on issuance of certificate of equity only but to do more than that. “Continue raising voices on gender equity issues and keep updating the compact where gender issues are designed,” Oregede told participants.

Hajat Zaminah Malole from Equal Opportunities Commission while talking about the contribution by the Equal Opportunities Commission towards improving gender responsive budgeting, mentioned that EOC has concentrated on building capacities of technical staff across Government agencies “EOC has trained over 100 MDAs and 173 Local Governments and Municipalities in gender and equity budgeting and even gone ahead to sanction those who have not complied” Hajat Malole stated

GENDER AND EQUITY COMPLIANCE SCORES			
INSTITUTION	NO. OF G&E INTERVENTIONS IN COMPACTS	NO. OF G&E INTERVENTIONS PLANNED BY YEAR	
		FY2018/19	FY2019/20
Ministry of Health	55	6	33
Justice Law & Order Sector	56	19	25
Ministry of ICT	31	5	7
Ministry of Public Service	48	2	2