

## CSOs urge government to cut wasteful spending in 2025/26 budget



Mr. Pascal Muhangi, Economist at CSBAG, presents to the Office of the Leader of the Opposition at the Opposition Workshop on Alternative Budget Priorities for FY 2025/26, held on 10/03/2025. (Photo: CSBAG)

**In FY 2023/24, approximately Shs 2.9 trillion was lost to expenditures that did not contribute to economic growth. (OAG,2024) In the forthcoming FY2025/26, unproductive expenditure amounts to Shs.2 trillion for bedding and clothing, donations, special drinks and meals, welfare and entertainment (3.0-% %) of the proposed National Budget FY2024/25. Such allocation shrinks productive expenditure that would directly impact citizens' livelihood.**

The Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) has advised economists and planners in government not to budget for non-critical items that bite away the colossal sums of taxpayers' money in form of wasteful expenditure.

In the presentation made on behalf of the CSBAG Executive Director Mr. Julius Mukunda, economist Mr. Pascal Muhangi decried of the persistent tendency by budget architects that allocate Billions of monies to procure non-essential items like cars.

"This is budgeting for corruption because you put money knowing that it is not for services, but it is just for consuming," Mr. Muhangi said, adding that "This is wasteful expenditure because I think it can be foregone and the people of Uganda get better services."

He equally cautioned against formation of newer government administrative units and offices that further constraint the national budget, thereby sweeping away resources that would be committed to bettering service delivery in Uganda.

"The people of Uganda don't need new sub counties or districts, they need services. So instead of dividing up the country, just provide services," Mr. Muhangi told MPs.

He was speaking at the 2025/26 alternative budget workshop organized by the Leader of Opposition (LoP) Mr. Joel Ssenyonyi held at Parliament on Monday.

The workshop was convened under the theme Combating Corruption: The Sure Way to Effective Service Delivery with major discussions focusing on how tackle corruption since it is identified as the major threat to Uganda's economy.

Mr Muhangi's caution resonated with clarion made by the Mr. Ssenyonyi in which he pledged to marshal the shadow cabinet in committing majority of their efforts to tackle corruption in the Financial Year 2025/26.

"Colleagues, we must understand that those in power will frequently try to denigrate us. They will accuse us of being overly critical or disruptive. But let me tell you something: if standing up for fairness makes us disruptive, we should wear that label with pride. If demanding responsibility is interpreted as complaining, then let us complain louder and more strongly because if we do not speak up for the people of Uganda, then who will?" Mr Ssenyonyi said.

Mr Ssenyonyi therefore urged colleagues in opposition and members from the civil society in the fight against the vice to persistently press sanity to be realized in Uganda's Budget process. He recommended that all concerned stakeholders commit the required energies to moot remedies reverse the already worrying state that corruption has caused on the country.

"We must craft policies that redirect public funds towards effective service delivery and away from wasteful expenditure and corruption," Mr Ssenyonyi said.

The above caution comes at a time when government is expected to table the Ministerial Policy Statement (MPS) as mandated by law to kick-start second phase of formation of the 2025/26 National Budget.

On Friday March 7th, 2025, the State Minister for Finance in Charge of General Duties Mr Henry Musasizi revealed that government had planned to include Shs198.7 Billion in the 2025/26 Budget to specifically combat corruption.

He told journalists on Friday night that this was part of the 10 budget priority areas of government agreed upon during National Resistance Movement (NRM) Parliamentary caucus chaired by President Museveni at State House Entebbe on Friday.