

BY ROBERT ELEMA

YUMBE. A section of head teachers in Yumbe District have criticised the Ministry of Education and Sports over what they describe as the unclear manner in which teachers are transferred within the district.

Head teachers say it has become routine that when transfers are effected by the Education Department, some of the affected staff are not replaced, while others are moved before completing five years at a station.

Speaking to the *Daily Monitor* on Monday, Mr Yassin Sudi Salim, the head teacher of Kulinga Primary School in Odravu Sub-county, said: "For us to ensure in the future that there is steady performance in our schools, I am suggesting that we allow a head teacher to continue at the same school for at least four or five years."

He added: "It would be meaningless if a teacher or head teacher starts to identify good pupils from P3 and these are interrupted by transfers."

He said often when an issue affects a head teacher at a school, the school management committee and the community rush to the education office with

Head teachers question transfer criteria in Yumbe

the matter without first addressing it at the school level.

"If a head teacher is left with a few months to retire, why shouldn't such a head teacher be allowed to retire at that school?" he asked, adding that transfers should not be the only option for resolving issues. Instead, he said, the education department should embrace mediation and dialogue to address challenges.

The head teacher of Urungu Primary School, Mr Razak Angua, said the idea of swapping staff, especially head teachers, has been adopted in about 95 percent of transfer cases in Yumbe.

"Fairness should be maintained during transfers. I served at Urungu Primary School and was later transferred to Iyete Primary School, but in this year's transfers, I was taken back to Urungu Primary School. Is Urungu Primary School only meant for me in this district?" he asked.

Mr Angua suggested that transfers for head teachers should be handled in a more varied manner, as was previously the case.

The District Inspector of Schools, Mr Amin Swali Olega, said the education office is a planning centre similar to that of the army.

"In the army, there is what we call tactical withdrawal, and it is a win when you withdraw the force; nobody dies. But if you allow the force to face an enemy, they may not manage; everybody can be cleared, including the commander. So our headquarters is doing that," he said.

"If the community doesn't want you in office, we tactfully withdraw you and preserve your image. That's what we do, and even if you have stayed at a school for one month or two, we can withdraw you," he added.

Mr Rasul Luriga, the District Education Officer, said transfers are a sensitive matter and that gaps inevitably arise when they are carried out.

"We want to commit ourselves to addressing the gaps in the transfers with the support of the office of the Chief Administrative Officer, including the political leadership. Most of our issues are

coming as a result of the scarcity of staff," he said.

He appealed to head teachers and school management committees to seek

BACKGROUND

The Yumbe District Education Department this year transferred about 200 teachers, including deputy head teachers and head teachers, to various schools. Many of the transfers have been rejected by the affected individuals.

In the 2024 and 2025 transfers, some teachers also rejected their postings and accused the education department of unfairness in the exercise in Yumbe District. Reasons advanced ranged from illness to short notice, among others.

local solutions by recruiting teachers to fill staffing gaps, with support from local PTA fund collections.

The Chief Administrative Officer, Mr Thomson Obong, accused some teachers of non-compliance when transferred to new schools. "There are several teachers and head teachers who have been transferred, but wherever they have been posted, they are rejected. I am getting tired of it, but ideally, a teacher is supposed to serve in any part of the district as stipulated in the appointment letters."

He added that there is a recurring problem in the district where communities and management committees reject teachers and head teachers posted to their schools on what he termed unfounded allegations.

"There was a letter written by the School Management Committee of a certain school to reject a head teacher because he had been rejected in many schools. It has now become hard for us to address this matter," he said.