

Teachers deserve to be among highest paid workers

THE Government has announced a plan to place teachers among the highest paid civil servants.

Teaching in Uganda is not a choice that many opt for as a profession. The teaching profession is seen as an option when everything else has failed. The scramble is for professions like medicine, engineering and law. Yet, the quality of teachers determines the quality of workforce.

By elevating teachers' salaries to sh8m-sh10m per month, the Government is taking a step that is critical in placing education at the centre of national development.

This move, if implemented, will put Uganda in the league of nations where teaching is not only respected, but also financially rewarding. In Luxembourg, teachers earn some of the highest salaries in the civil service, with top earners taking home over \$120,000 (sh453.7m) annually. In Germany, teachers are paid more than many other public servants. In Ireland, teaching is one of the most competitive and well-paying professions, attracting the best students into education programmes. These



EDITORIAL

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Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC);

Company listed on the Uganda Securities

Exchange

www.newvision.co.ug

examples show that when governments prioritise teachers, they attract talent, improve classroom outcomes and strengthen national competitiveness.

Uganda's plan will have far-reaching benefits despite

the projected huge bill increase. Higher pay will reduce absenteeism, ensuring teachers dedicate themselves fully to their classrooms. It will also inspire top-performing students to pursue education degrees, reversing the trend where teaching is seen as a fallback option.

The projected wage bill increase to sh10 trillion should not be seen as a burden, but an investment in human capital.

In the long run, the investment will pay dividends in the form of a skilled, innovative and productive workforce.

The idea is great, but it will take the commitment and effort of all stakeholders to make it work. By following the example of countries where teachers are among the highest paid civil servants, Uganda is setting the stage for a future where classrooms are led by the brightest minds, motivated by both passion and recognition.

This is a bold step by the Government and it must be supported to work. The quality of any workforce is as good as the quality of teachers.