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SH11.83 TRILLION HEALTH, EDUCATION ALLOCATION INADEQUATE – EXPERTS

The Government says it has earmarked sh11.83 trillion for the education and health sectors in the next financial year (FY2026/2027FY). From the above figure, education takes the lion's share with sh6.66 trillion, expected to drive economic transformation and social mobility.

This education budget builds on major milestones from the previous year, including support for over 10.5 million learners and sports infrastructure development for AFCON 2027. These revelations were made yesterday by finance minister Henry Musasizi while reading the national budget for the next financial year.

On the other hand, sh5.23 trillion has been allocated to the health sector, reflecting about 6.3% of the total budget of sh84.3 trillion.

While the figure looks significant, it is below 15% of the total budget allocation towards health that it committed to doing in 2001. Uganda was among the countries that assented to the 2001 Abuja Declaration, where African Union member states pledged to allocate at least 15% of their annual budgets to improve and strengthen their health sectors.

While the Government

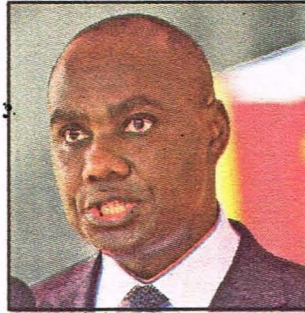
has allocated sh5.23 trillion to the health sector for the FY2026/2027, the figure represents a decline from the sh5.87 trillion recorded in the FY2025/2026. The sh5.87 trillion was a more than double jump from the 2024/2025 allocation of sh2.9 trillion. It is for this reason that health experts are urging the Government to adhere to the Abuja Declaration.

The Government expects the funding to go to increased investment in medicines, specialised healthcare services and emergency response systems.

Musasizi said the Government will continue increasing domestic financing for medicines and health supplies to reduce dependence on donor funding and ensure uninterrupted access to life-saving commodities.

Under the latest allocation, funding to the National Medical Stores has increased by sh145.33b to sh862.93b, a move the Government says will strengthen the availability of antiretroviral drugs, anti-malarial medicines, vaccines, laboratory supplies and tuberculosis treatment.

"Government will continue to increase domestic financing for essential health commodities to



Musasizi

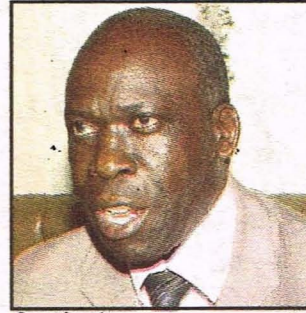
substantially reduce reliance on donor support," Musasizi said.

He added that the investment is intended to guarantee a steady supply of medicines amid growing concerns over declining global health aid and uncertainty surrounding donor-funded programmes.

HEALTHCARE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Government also highlighted progress in modernising healthcare infrastructure, including the installation of neonatal intensive care units in 17 regional referral hospitals and 25 general hospitals, as well as CT scan machines in 14 regional referral hospitals.

Construction and upgrading of 31 health facilities in Karamoja are ongoing, while rehabilitation works at Busolwe, Gombe and Kawolo hospitals



Semivule

have been completed. Musasizi said Uganda continues to register gains in specialised healthcare, reducing the need for patients to seek expensive treatment abroad.

According to Musasizi, due to heavy funding, the Uganda Heart Institute conducted 634 specialised cardiac procedures during the year, including open-heart surgeries, vascular surgeries and catheterisation procedures, while the Uganda Cancer Institute successfully carried out the country's first bone marrow transplant in April this year.

Further investments are planned through the ongoing construction of a 250-bed Cardiac Hospital in Naguru, currently at 44% completion and the International Specialised Hospital of Uganda in Lubowa, which is now 75% complete.

The Government also reported progress on the Nuclear Medicine Centre for cancer treatment, whose first phase is 95% complete. Regional cancer centres in Mbarara, Arua and Mbale are under construction, while the Gulu centre is already operational.

EXPERTS WANT MORE FUNDING

Reacting to Musasizi's speech, various stakeholders argue that the health sector should have been given a bigger allocation, considering that donor support has waned.

Education Service Commission chairperson Prof. Samuël Luboga, also the former dean of Makerere University's School of Medicine, said the Government should honour its Abuja Declaration commitment and increase health financing.

Ruth Akullo, a youth health advocate and HopeStone Insight Uganda executive director, called for increased domestic funding for HIV prevention and treatment programmes, warning that

WHY TEACHERS' PAY RISE

The Government's decision to enhance teachers' salaries improves motivation, retention and the overall quality of education delivery in Uganda, according to Dr George William Semivule, an educationist and retired secondary school teacher. Semivule said sustained investment will be necessary to address long-standing disparities in the sector.

"If we don't make teaching attractive, people will leave for other professions or other countries and that creates a big gap in national development," he said.

On the broader implications of the salary enhancement, he said the Government's gesture alone is likely to boost morale among teachers, even as structural pay disparities remain.

Semivule argued that Uganda must align its education priorities with labour market needs, warning that some subject combinations may have limited economic relevance unless linked more directly to national development goals.

donor funding cuts have exposed vulnerabilities in Uganda's health financing system.

Amref Health Africa in Uganda country director Dr Patrick Kagurusi urged the Government to prioritise health workforce recruitment, retention and payment of medical interns.

Primary Health Care state minister Dr Charles Ayume said: "I am confident even with the sh5.23 trillion, we can deliver health services efficiently."

Health ministry commissioner in-charge of reproductive, maternal, infant and child health Dr Richard Mugahi said funding reduction for the health sector is not good given

the glaring financial challenges to support critical components of the health system, such as critical human resources for health.

Action Against Hunger programme manager advocacy Peter Eceru said: "We are excited that the budget makes explicit reference to nutrition."

Uganda Healthcare Federation executive director Grace Kiwanuka Ssali noted that while some advocate higher allocations, progress will also depend on efficiency, reduced waste and stronger system integrity.

AHF Uganda Cares regional policy and advocacy manager Diana Tibesigwa said Uganda will need stronger domestic commitment to health financing if it is to progress toward universal health coverage.

In the coming financial year, the Government said it will prioritise maternal and child health, nutrition improvement, immunisation, prevention and treatment of non-communicable diseases, provision of essential medicines, specialised healthcare services and strengthening emergency response systems as it pursues universal health coverage.

EDUCATION SECTOR

Musasizi said education remains the most powerful instrument for social mobility and long-term economic transformation.

According to the finance minister, during FY2025/26, the Government achieved several milestones in the education and sports sector by continuing to finance Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE) to expand access. About 9.52 million learners benefited from UPE, while about 995,116 learners benefited from USE and Universal Post O-Level education and training.

For the next financial year, the sh6.66 trillion allocation is expected to further improve education, with priorities including expanding access to quality UPE and USE, and strengthening science, technology, engineering and mathematics and vocational education.

Government will also focus on curriculum reform, strengthening public universities and research institutions and completing critical sports infrastructure for AFCON 27.

The Government has also allocated an additional sh568.65b to enhance salaries for primary school teachers, arts teachers in secondary schools and those in Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training institutions.