# Weekly Edition

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## INVEST IN PROVISION OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENT TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Technicians assemble one of the incubators donated to Iganga Hospital in 2018

As the global COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage nations, the out-break continues to draw attention to health care investment and related areas. The situation has also exposed the gaps in Uganda's health care system, with inadequate healthcare infrastructures and poor quality services provided at health facilities being the number one disgruntlement among the citizens. This is attributed to depilated health care structures and the limited or lack of medical equipment to provide screening and diagnostic services to patients. A clear manifestation of the lack of sufficient investment in procuring of medical equipment for public hospitals.

### 2. STATE OF HEALTH CARE INFRASTRUCTURE IN UGANDA

The Auditor General in his 2020 Consolidated Audit report to parliament, noted that 5 out of 14 Regional Referral Hospitals had only 74 out of the 390 required number of medical equipment; 23 out of 39 district hospital had only 326 equipment out of required 1,541 medical equipment; and 39 out of the 95 Health Centre IVs barely had 509 medical equipment of the required 1,628 equipment to effectively offer access to health services.

***For example, Obongi Health Centre IV in Obongi district has since its construction in 2018 faced several challenges including a non-functional mortuary due lack of equipment, poor maintenance of available equipment and idle equipment.***

***In addition, a total of 20 health facilities including 2 regional referral hospitals (Jinja RRH and Soroti RRH) and 6 district hospitals (Bugiri, Bundibugyo, Masindi, Mukono, Kyotera, Katakwi) have 121 medical equipment lying idle, with this attributed to the lack of qualified personnel to operate the machines, failure to install machines and train staff and the lack of adequate space to install the medical equipment. 37 health facilities also have 324 equipment that are non-functional.***

This points to a fundament problem, the absence of these vital medical equipment which constitute useful assets in the health care delivery system has a crippling effect on access to health care and therefore calls for renewed investment in the health care system.

### 3. UDN RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSION.

1) Government should revise its budgetary process and fulfill its pledge to allocate 15% of its total budget to the Health sector as agreed per the Abuja declaration.
2) Ministry of Health should Increase resource allocation to the Regional Medical Equipment Workshops to improve their capacity to adequately conduct supervision, maintenance and repair of medical equipment.
3) Routine and corrective maintenance of these medical equipment is key in achieving safe and cost effective management of equipment to avoid wastage of the already inadequate resources.
4) Government should renovate the depilated health facilities in addition to speeding up the upgrade of HCIIs to HCIIIs and equipping them fully to provide better health services to its citizens and to lessen the burden of referring patients to regional hospitals.


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