

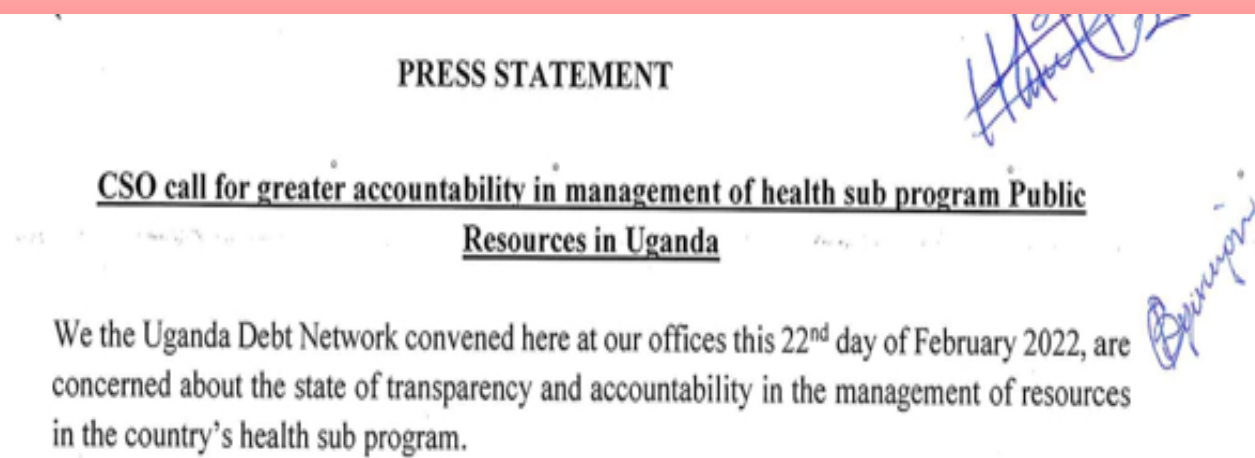
UDN IN THE NEWS RECENTLY

UDN released press [statements](#), calling for greater Accountability in management of Covid-19 resources and sub program public resources respectively in the Health Sector of Uganda.

Click on:

UDN Press Statement on health sub program resources:

<https://www.udn.or.ug/download/csos-call-for-greater-accountability-in-the-management-of-health-sub-program-public-resources-in-uganda/>



PRESS STATEMENT,
Sunday 20th February 2022 at UDN Offices.

Accountability for Public Resources: Lessons from Covid-19 Resources Management in the Health Sector in Uganda

Despite Covid-19 being an emergency, adherence to several financial management provisions, such as the Public Finance Management Act, the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act and the International Financial Reporting Standards were necessary to ensure proper utilisation of resources and value for money. The loopholes manifested in the process, therefore, constituted early warnings and lessons for Uganda's health system and other ministries to streamline, coordinate efforts and strengthen their institutional capacity to manage pandemics as well as other unprecedented natural disasters.

Click on:

UDN Press Statement on Covid-19 resources:

<https://www.udn.or.ug/download/accountability-for-public-resources-lessons-from-covid-19-resources-management-in-the-health-sector-in-uganda/>



Above: UDN ED, Patrick Tumwebaze makes a presentation during a regional workshop organized by Reality of Aid in Nairobi in Feb 2022.



L-R: UDN Team led by Christine Byiringiro, Gilbert Musinguzi, and Hilda Tumuhle media on Accountability in management of health sub program public resources in February 2020 and below is a picture of the journalists.



L-R: Mr Tawanda Chinembiri, (Social policy manager UNICEF) together with the UDN team led by ED, Patrick Tumwebaze in a joint Open budget Survey result launch planning meeting with Ministry of Finance Officials on 28th Feb 2022 at Ministry of Finance offices.

UDN IN THE MEDIA

English (TV);

- i) Misuse of Covid-19 funds; <https://youtu.be/AtUQXfEMGQ>
- ii) UDN tasks Government on Public Health Expenditure; <https://youtu.be/ETc8nZcVy9Q>

Print Media;

- iii) Enact a law on Pandemics government told; <https://www.independent.co.ug/enact-a-law-on-pandemics-government-told/>
- iv) Uganda's per capita health expenditure far below WHO's recommended standard; <https://www.independent.co.ug/ugandas-per-capita-health-expenditure-far-below-whos-recommended-standard/>

Luganda dialect TV;

- v) Aba UDN basabye gavumenti ereete eteka ergenderera okulungamya ensasanya mu biseera bya katyabaga; <https://youtu.be/Sd2aM8qyF5s>
- vi) Aba UDN balabudde Bannabyabufuzi; <https://youtu.be/ruezbCvMVLQ>
- vii) Bannakyeewa baagala mbalirira ku Ensambi za COVID19; https://youtu.be/Jn6InUV8Q_Y

UDN appreciates support by: UDN Membership; [DCA](#); [Save the Children in Uganda](#); [OSIEA](#), [Inspectorate of Government](#); [IBP](#), and [NDI](#).

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Government urged to tighten accountability in health sector

By Ali Twaha

Civil society has urged the Government to tighten accountability controls in the management of resources in the health sector to improve service delivery.

In his audit of Mulago Hospital, John Muwanga, the Auditor General, revealed that he could not trace a sh1.4b payment made by management as at end of June 2021.

"The hospital had liabilities of sh2.9b from the previous financial year (2019/20) in respect of payables of sh2.3b and deposits of sh648m.

However, payments totalling sh3.7b in respect of the liabilities were made. The hospital, therefore, made payments

for non-existent liabilities amounting to sh1.4b," Muwanga said in his audit report.

Muwanga also said Mulago spent sh474m for the refreshment of a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine that has "never been put to use". The machine was installed in 2018.

"Our major concern is that most of our project financing comes from debt. When money paid cannot be accounted for, we would want to know where did this money go. Was it paid to someone?" Christine Byiringiro, the programme officer at Uganda Debt Network, said.

She said the Government needs to find means of mobilising resources,



John Muwanga

particularly from domestic sources to bridge the funding gap in the health sector, especially for development expenditure.

About 93% of the Government contribution to health is allocated to recurrent expenditure and about 7% to development expenditure. This implies that the development component of the health budget is largely funded by health development partners.

"The Government should implement recommendations from the reports of the various oversight bodies, especially the Auditor General's reports. There is no value in spending money on oversight bodies when their recommendations cannot be implemented," Gilbert

Musinguzi, a policy analyst, said.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT NEEDED

The Auditor General also noted that many vital medical equipment in Mulago Hospital were in poor working condition, while others were not functional and required replacement.

Some of the equipment included beds in the intensive care unit, CT machine in the radiology department and blood coagulation machine in the clinical laboratory unit.

Efforts to get a comment from the health ministry and from Mulago Hospital were futile.

Civil society asks govt to account for Covid funds

BY ISMAIL MUSA LADU

KAMPALA. A section of civil society policy and governance analysts have called for government to account for Covid-19 resources.

In their analysis titled 'Accountability for Public Resources: Lessons from Covid-19 Resources Management in the Health Sector in Uganda', Ms Christine Byiringiro, a policy and governance expert, and Ms Hilda Tumuhle, researcher, said review of government reports on Covid-19 accountability indicates a "number of accountability issues".

"In May 2020, Ministry of Health bought 108,863 megaphones at a unit price of Shs230,000 and 43,450 pieces of dry cells at Shs10,000 each. The records showed that these were delivered to districts on June 22, 2020. However, Gomba, Butambala, Oyam, Omoro, Apac, Agago districts visited by the Budget Monitoring Committee in July, August and September 2020 had not received these items," Ms Christine Byiringiro, said at the Uganda Debt Network headquarters in Kampala yesterday.

She added: "A study conducted by Uganda Debt Network in October 2021

revealed that some of the transactions relating to Covid-19 resources were not adequately supported. There were cases where signatories were reportedly absent on duty. This led to delays in accountability."

Ms Byiringiro also cited inefficiency in the utilisation of Covid-19 funds by regional referral hospitals in terms of variations in the unit costs for food served to Covid-19 patients, mischarges, duplicated activity reports, doubtful burials of Covid-19 cases and domestic arrears for hospitals in Gulu and Arua districts.

"For example, by August 17, Arua Hospital had accumulated a Shs278m arrears on food, refreshments, allowances and accommodation for the health workers or staff.

"Given loopholes in the process, government must clarify by giving full accountability or else there will always be doubts "in our minds and that breeds mistrust," Ms Byiringiro said.

According to Ms Tumuhle, government should investigate and prosecute all people involved in the mismanagement of Covid-19 funds.

She recommended that all public in-

stitutions be streamlined and facilitated to build stronger internal control systems to manage emergencies with strict adherence to and compliance with financial management and procurement regulations.

The Uganda Debt Network researcher

AUDITOR GENERAL REPORT ON COVID

The Auditor General's special audit report on expenditure relating to Covid-19 for FY 2020/2021 showed that Shs253.5b was released and received by the Ministry of Health to procure medical supplies, 282 vehicles, pay allowances to health workers, buy masks, intensive care equipment and build modular houses at six border points.

However, there was diversion of funds totalling Shs7.9b and a delay in the installation of intensive care equipment in Gulu, Mbarara, Bombo, and Lacor hospitals.

recommends that Parliament enacts a law to guide the country on emergency accountability and reporting mechanisms during pandemics to prevent haphazard expenditure.

This should be comprehensive enough to prevent, detect and correct irregularities in raising, utilising and accountability for funds.

When contacted yesterday, the Deputy Secretary to the Treasury, Mr Patrick Ocailap, said the Ministry of Finance is not responsible for mismanagement of the Covid-19 resources.

"Our work is to disburse the funds and once we do that we hope that it will be used for the intended purpose," Mr Ocailap said.

"However, we will ensure that ministries, departments and agencies of government are held accountable, especially if it turned out that the funds were misused or squandered or diverted for anything outside the agreed plan. Once the Auditor General finishes this financial year's audit, we will step into action," he added.

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