

CSBAG BUDGET NEWS



New Data shows 27% of Ugandans still trapped in poverty, Karamoja and West Nile worst hit



A map of Uganda poverty index per by region. (Source: UBOS)

While Uganda has celebrated a dramatic reduction in income poverty from **56%** in 1992/93 to just **16.1%** in the financial year 2023/24, a deeper and more complex crisis remains.

According to the newly released Multi Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Census Monograph 2024 Volume 5, presented by the Minister of State for Planning, Hon. Amos Lugoloobi, a full **27%** of Ugandans still face acute deprivations in health, education, living standards, and access to basic services.

Speaking at the dissemination event organized by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), Minister Lugoloobi noted that earning an income does not automatically guarantee access to quality schools, clean water, or proper sanitation.

He said the new indicators will help government to plan better and close the existing gaps and deprivations. He also thanked UBOS for producing a report that digs deeper into the complex nature of poverty and its dimensions.

The report shows a picture of geographic inequality. The Karamoja subregion recorded the highest multidimensional poverty at **56.9%**, meaning more than half the population there experiences overlapping deprivations. It is followed by West Nile at **39.0%** and Sebei at **33.5%**. In sharp contrast, Kampala has the lowest multidimensional poverty rate at just **8.8%**.

This disparity suggests that while national averages are improving, the "last mile" of poverty eradication remains elusive for remote and semi arid regions.

In addition, the data also confirms that multidimensional poverty is still largely a rural challenge. Rural areas registered an MPI of **31.5%**, significantly higher than the urban rate of **27%**. Even more striking are the findings related to household composition. Female headed households suffer higher rates of multidimensional poverty than their male counterparts, and child headed households face severe deprivations that could lock them

into intergenerational poverty.

For the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group, this report raises critical questions about how Uganda's budget is planned and spent.

With Karamoja at **56.9%** MPI, CSBAG urges the Ministry of Finance to move beyond blanket funding. The budget for the coming financial year must include specific, traceable allocations for sanitation, primary healthcare, and school feeding programs in the three worst affected regions.

The prevalence of poverty in female and child headed households also suggests that Uganda's social protection programs, such as SAGE and the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project, need to be expanded to reach these specific demographics more aggressively.

Furthermore, since **27%** of Ugandans have escaped income poverty but not service poverty, the government must invest more in public goods. A family can earn above the income poverty line yet remain poor if they lack a functional health centre or a clean water source.

CSBAG calls upon civil society and district local governments to use this data to demand accountability: is the national budget reaching the poorest households in Karamoja and West Nile?

"This Multi Dimensional Poverty Index shows that reducing income poverty is not enough. With Karamoja at nearly 57% and child headed households left behind, our national budget is still not reaching those who need it most. Government must allocate traceable resources to the poorest regions, otherwise we are simply counting the rich while the vulnerable suffer," CSBAG ED Julius Mukunda

The full MPI Census Monograph 2024 Volume 5 is available from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics website.

CSBAG IN THE MEDIA



#BUDGETINGFORADVOCACY

The Ambassador of Netherlands, CSBAG ED Julius Mukunda together with PACER program partners from the Netherlands Embassy and Staff from Arua district engaged with the different partners implementing the Programme on Accountability, Civic Engagement and Rights (PACER) in Uganda, a joint initiative funded by Denmark, Sweden, Ireland and the Netherlands

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