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How Uganda's retirement benefits sector hit UGX 25.4 trillion, boosting GDP to 12.2%

| PAGE 12

ITC Urges graduates on Trustworthiness and Professionalism in the Insurance Sector

L- R: Mr. Protazio Sande, Member, representing the Insurance Regulatory Authority of Uganda, Dr. Abdul Hafiz Walusimbi, Chairman, ITC Board, ,Chief guest, Mr. Moses Muhwezi, Principal, Makerere Business School, Mr. Saul Sseremba, CEO / Principa, Insurance Training College and Francesca Kakooza, Secretary to the Insurance Regulatory Authority (IRA), during the 9th graduation ceremony at Hotel Africana. | PAGE 8

NEWS

Uganda's inflation for November 2024 remains at 2.9%

| PAGE 2

ECONOMY MATTERS

Money in vs money out? Rethinking Africa's climate financing solutions

| PAGE 13

INSURANCE

Insurance Sector Urged to Invest in Technology and Data

| PAGE 8

Uganda's inflation for November 2024 remains at 2.9%

Uganda's Annual Inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index for the 12 months to November 2024 was 2.9 percent, the same rate registered in October 2024, statistics indicate.

According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, Annual Core Inflation registered 3.8 percent in the year ending November 2024 compared to 3.9 percent that was recorded in the year ended October 2024. This was mainly due to Annual Services Inflation that recorded 5.9 percent in November 2024 compared to 6.2 percent registered in October 2024.

"The main driver of services inflation was Passenger Transport Services Inflation that registered 2.4 percent in the year ending November 2024 compared to 3.8 percent registered in the year ended October 2024. The other driver was inpatient care services inflation registered 6.6 percent in the year ending November 2024 compared to 17.9 percent registered in the year ended October 2024," UBOS Director of Economic Statistics Aliziki Lubega said in a statement.

She attributed the decline in transport inflation to falling fuel pump prices, including petrol and diesel. And for inpatient care, she said reduced childbirth costs were the main driver.

In addition, annual other goods inflation recorded 2.2 percent in the year ending November 2024 compared to 2.1 percent registered in the year ended October 2024.

This was mainly due to maize flour prices that registered minus 18.2 percent in November 2024 compared to minus 24.6 percent registered in October 2024 and Tilapia (fresh) prices that registered 17.2 percent in November 2024 compared to 10.6 percent registered in October 2024.

Annual Energy Fuel and Utilities (EFU) Inflation recorded 2.2 percent in the year ending November 2024 compared to 3.3 percent registered in October 2024.

This was mainly due to Liquid Energy Fuels Inflation that recorded minus 7.8 percent in the year ending November 2024 compared to minus 5.4 percent registered in the year ended October 2024, driven mainly by petrol and diesel prices that decreased in November 2024 by minus 9.4 percent compared to minus 5.9 percent in October 2024 and minus 8.3 percent compared to minus 7.5 percent in October 2024 respectively.

Kerosene prices decreased by minus 3.7 percent compared to minus 2.4 percent in October 2024.

In addition, Solid fuels inflation recorded 14.5 percent in November 2024 compared to 15.5 percent registered in October 2024 mainly due to Charcoal prices that increased by 13.9 percent in November 2024 compared to 17.0 percent recorded in October 2024 whereas firewood prices increased by 16.8 percent compared to 13.3 percent in October 2024.

Annual Food Crops and Related Items Inflation recorded minus 4.0 percent in the year ending November 2024 compared to minus 5.3 percent registered in the year ended October 2024. This was mainly attributed to a drop in the prices of Tomatoes (by minus 27.1 percent compared to minus 14.2 percent in October 2024), Carrots (by minus 11.2 percent compared to minus 4.7 percent in October 2024) and Fresh Leaf Vegetables – Nakati, Dodo, Bbugga prices increasing by 0.6 percent compared to 6.3 percent in October 2024, Bananas Standard (Bogoya) prices increasing by 1.1 percent compared to 5.7 percent in October 2024.

Innovation Key to Insurance Growth – Regulator

The Insurance Regulatory Authority (IRA) has emphasized the crucial role of innovation in driving the growth, resilience, and sustainability of Uganda's insurance industry.

The regulator said innovation has become central to the way the industry operates, delivers value, and responds to evolving customer needs, and should as such be embraced by all players in the sector.

Speaking during the launch of the fifth insurance innovation awards, at the Kampala Serena hotel, CEO Ibrahim Lubega Kaddunabbi said as consumers' preferences change constantly, because the market demands dynamic and responsive solutions.

Kaddunabbi, who was represented by Sande Protazio, Director Strategy and Market Development said by embracing digital tools, insurance companies can improve service delivery and customer engagement, making insurance more convenient and appealing.

He said this digital shift includes mobile platforms and automated claims processing, which streamline operations and enhance customer satisfaction.

Kaddunabbi noted that by leveraging such innovations, the industry can boost penetration rates, which currently remain low in Uganda, and improve overall market resilience.

The global insurance market is evolving rapidly, and Uganda must not be left behind. Innovation is not just about adopting new technologies but also about rethinking business models, improving customer engagement, and introducing new products that better meet the needs of our diverse population," he said.

Over the recent past, the insurance sector has seen the emergence of mobile-based insurance products, which have proven effective in reaching Uganda's large unbanked population. Additionally, technology-driven tools for underwriting, claims processing, and customer service are enhancing operational efficiency and improving user experiences.

Kaddunabbi said Insurance companies must be proactive in adopting digital solutions, using data analytics to personalize offerings, and ensuring that insurance products are easily accessible.

The Annual Insurance Innovation Awards (AIIA), which began in 2020, have grown into a cornerstone of the industry's efforts to promote

Mr. Sande Protazio, Director Strategy and Market Development Insurance Regulatory Authority (IRA)

creativity. Participation in the awards has steadily increased, from 9% of players in 2020 to a projected 20% this year. This rise reflects the growing recognition of innovation as a critical business driver.

He noted that products such as Kameeza, a policy designed for housewives, and Mono Mukabi, addressing local community needs, are prime examples of the innovative solutions emerging from the awards.

He said applications for the 2024 Innovation Awards are now open to all licensed insurance entities, including companies, brokers, health membership organizations, and agents.

For the 2024 edition, IRA has introduced two new categories: Media Personality of the Year and Insurtech Solution of the Year. These categories acknowledge the growing influence of the media in raising awareness and the vital role of Insurtech in enhancing service delivery.

"The 2024 awards span 10 categories, including Most Innovative Life Insurance Solution, Most Innovative Non-life Insurance Solution, and People's Choice Award, which allows the public to vote for the insurance service provider that best embodies trust, innovation, and inclusivity," he said.

The awards gala will take place on March 14, 2025, at Serena Hotel Kampala, with the theme "Redefining Insurance: Trust, Innovation, and Inclusivity." The event will honor those reshaping the insurance landscape with innovative solutions and transformative approaches.

Deborah Amia Poni, representing Adroit Consult International, the firm overseeing the awards' impartiality, also spoke at the event.

She emphasized the integrity of the selection process and highlighted five core themes guiding this year's evaluation: customer centricity, inclusivity, originality, technology utilization, and business growth.

"We are looking for innovations that address real customer needs and drive efficiency, all while adhering to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles," Poni said.

Saul Sseremba, Principal of the Insurance Training College, emphasized the pivotal role of innovation in driving the growth of Uganda's insurance industry, noting that the sector must evolve to meet the changing needs of clients.

"What stands out for me is the consistency, because many times such initiatives start and die out, but we have been consistent and that is important," Sseremba said.

Sseremba emphasized the role of the Innovation Awards in sparking creative solutions and encouraging industry players to think outside the box.

"We have been grappling with the issue of penetration, and it is high time for us to start thinking of products and processes that align with the lifestyles and trends of our clients," Sseremba explained.

He called for a deeper commitment to innovation at all levels of the industry, particularly in improving service delivery and creating products that meet the ever-evolving demands of consumers.

"The good thing is that Uganda is leading in the region as far as innovation is concerned, and that is partly due to the Innovation Awards," Sseremba said, praising the country's proactive approach to encouraging insurance innovation.

As Uganda continues to make strides in the regional insurance landscape, industry players are being urged to focus on understanding their clients better and driving forward with new solutions to ensure growth and accessibility in the sector.

The future of Uganda's insurance industry lies in its ability to adapt and innovate, offering fresh, relevant solutions to a dynamic market.

Is Uganda's Shs 97 trillion Debt Manageable?

According to the Auditor General, this figure represents an over 100 percent increase over the last five years

Uganda's debt has reached alarming levels, currently standing at Shs 97 trillion.

As of 30 June 2023, Uganda's public debt stood at Shs97.499 trillion, comprising Shs44.673 trillion in domestic and Shs52.826 trillion in external debt.

This reflects an annual increase of Shs9.329 trillion (10.74 percent) from Shs86.839 trillion in June 2022.

The report attributes the net debt increase to persistent budget deficits, bond switches, foreign exchange losses, and new loans for development projects.

This has sent shockwaves among members of the general public who are concerned about its sustainability and impact on the country's economic growth.

For instance, the national budget for the financial year 2024/25 amounts to an unprecedented Shs 72.1 trillion.

The government anticipated that the budget would boost economic growth from an average of 4.7% to 7%, driven by commercial agriculture and industrialization.

However, only 37.8 trillion shillings is available for actual spending, as the remaining 34.3 trillion shillings will be used for debt servicing and interest payments on loans.

Additionally, the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) is unable to collect sufficient revenue that can finance the nation's budget.

For instance, out of the Shs 72.1 trillion, URA was tasked to collect Shs 31.982 trillion, of which Shs 29.366 trillion will be tax revenue and Shs 2.616 trillion will be non-tax revenue. Oftentimes, the taxman has fallen short of hitting the target.

Government has also been criticized for not getting its priorities right, on which to spend its meager resources.

The International Monetary Fund recently advised that there is need for fiscal consolidation through stepped domestic revenue mobilization and better prioritization of spending.

With fiscal consolidation, Uganda will be less reliant on borrowing which has increased the country's debt to alarming levels.

With Uganda's debt now standing at Shs 97 trillion, the Executive Director Research and Policy at Bank of Uganda, Dr Adam Mugume said that the country's debt is still sustainable.

"The government debt as the numbers clearly show is still manageable, looking at where we are and the future. Number one, it is sustainable. Sustainability means that it can afford to repay the debts in outer years. So, there is no doubt about that," said Mugume.

"Now the other question is, but what about, are we likely to see in a short while like this year or next year? I think in the budget that was read; the government put how much money it is going to borrow from the domestic market. I think it was around 8.9 [trillion shillings]. So far, they have borrowed around half of that in the domestic money market. So yes, is it likely to increase domestic borrowing beyond that. It will also depend on tax revenue performance, but also alternative sources of revenue," he added.

"We know that the government is finalizing arrangements with the World Bank in terms of budget support and other loans, which could be a fallback, even compared to domestic borrowing……. Overall, I don't think we see any danger on the government side in terms of looking at the budget and what they are doing, but I think we shall see more clearly as time goes by in terms of whether they are able to mobilize the tax revenues as projected. But they also have what we call domestic resource mobilization strategy, and I think from what we have been reading and the numbers they have been getting from URA, the taxes have been slightly above target which is welcome at the moment, meaning that probably the tax revenues could be on track. So overall, I don't think we have a challenge with public debt," Mugume said.

Finance Minister, Matia Kasaija

Appetite

Government will borrow Shs 8.968 trillion domestically to finance the Shs 72.1 trillion budget.

Excessive domestic borrowing, however, presents its own challenges. It makes the government compete with the private sector for limited financial resources.

This can drive up interest rates, making it more expensive for businesses to borrow and invest, which hampers economic growth.

The government's growing appetite for borrowing has severely impacted the budget as monies that should be allocated to grow vital sectors of the economy are diverted to service the debt.

In November, 2024, MPs said the Government should restructure its debt portfolio to secure cheaper alternatives and reduce obligations and that steps must be taken to reverse the rising debt trend and ensure fiscal discipline by promptly servicing domestic obligations, including interest payments.

The Budget committee also highlighted growing concerns over the cost of debt servicing, including commitment fees for unused loans and administrative expenses.

The Auditor General reported that Shs 112 billion was spent, in excess of the approved budget, on commitment fees in 2023.

"The government's insatiable appetite for borrowing, coupled with escalating debt service costs, is deeply worrying," said the Budget Committee chairperson, Muwanga Kivumbi.

Government borrowing can also strain local banks and financial institutions.

If a significant portion of their assets is tied up in government debt, their ability to lend to businesses and consumers is reduced, potentially destabilizing the banking sector.

In September 2024, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) warned that while Uganda had a moderate risk of external and overall public debt distress, "stress tests highlight breaches of external debt burden thresholds and the public debt benchmark."

The IMF reported observed: "Specifically, given that a median shock could lead to a breach for the external and total debt service indicators, Uganda has limited space to absorb shocks. Key risks include slower growth, environmental shocks, continued prevalence of tight global financial conditions, delayed reform implementation, delays in oil exports, possible spillovers to trade stemming from the conflict in Gaza and Israel, and repercussions on donor financing, FDI, and tourism deriving from the parliamentary approval of the 'Anti-Homosexuality Act' (AHA)."

Outlook

The Bank of Uganda, Deputy Governor, Michael Atingi-Ego said that while public debt is a short-term challenge, the medium-term outlook is positive, driven by government policies and the upcoming oil and gas production, which will generate revenue to service debts and boost economic growth.

"In the very short term, it looks as if we are having a challenge, but let's look at the medium term. I think the medium term outlook is very positive. What we need to do between the Bank of Uganda and the Ministry of Finance is, we need to secure the near term so that it does not affect the positive outlook in the medium term," said Atingi-Ego.

"By that, I mean to say we should really try to live within our means in the near term, so that there's no adverse effect on the medium term. What do I mean by the medium term? Government has put in a significant amount of policy, and some reforms to increase growth going forward. If you look at the oil and the gas sector, we expect to begin commercial oil production around 2025, 2026, 2027, and the oil revenues through taxation, through increased exports of that should be able to secure and increase our capacity to, first of all, service the debts, and also leave some foreign exchange in the market for other players to use to support economic growth," he added.

"So the challenge that we have now is, let's try to work together with the Minister of Finance and Bank of Uganda to ensure that we keep these key economic variables like inflation, exchange rate and borrowing contained. If you look at the fiscal path, it is pointing towards fiscal consolidation. The deficit is expected to come down in the medium term.

And I think that is a policy response. So yes, there might be challenges now, but there's a commitment by the government to fiscal consolidation," he added.

Wealth creation initiatives have boosted Uganda's economic recovery, says Ggoobi

The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and Secretary to the Treasury, Mr Ramathan Ggoobi has said that Uganda's economy has fully recovered from the previous global, regional and domestic shocks and is now on the right growth path.

Addressing journalists in Kampala on Tuesday, Mr Ggoobi said that this strong recovery has been mainly on account of increased investments and exports, reflected in the growth of agriculture, industry and services sectors of the economy.

"Over the past two financial years, the size of the economy increased to Shs.202.7 trillion (US$ 53.6 billion) in FY 2023/24 from Shs.183 trillion (US$ 48.8 billion) in FY 2022/23. In real terms, Uganda's GDP grew by 6.1% from 5.3% the previous financial year," he said.

The government, he said, has over the last ten years cumulatively invested over Shs 8.03 trillion in key wealth creation initiatives like Parish Development Model, Emyooga, Youth Livelihood, Small Business Recovery Fund and Agricultural Credit Facility.

Mr Ggoobi said the economy is projected to grow by 6.4% at the end of FY 2024/25, 7.0% in FY 2025/26 and to double digits by FY 2029/30. He explained that the tenfold growth strategy which will be implemented effective FY 2025/2026 and the medium term is designed to shift Uganda's economic growth rate to a higher trajectory with an average real economic growth rate of about 8% per annum.

"Effective next financial year, the budget will be anchored on the strategic direction of the NDPIV and the ten-fold growth strategy of growing the size of Uganda's economy from the current GDP of USD 53 billion to USD 500 billion by the year 2040," said the PSST.

He said the ultimate goal of the Budget for FY 2025/2026, is to accelerate economic growth to at least 8% and to double digits in the medium term by building an independent, integrated, self-sustaining and competitive economy through full monetization and formalization of the economy.

"Go and tell all Ugandans that the future of this country is bright. We shall continue engaging you directly like we are doing now to ensure that Ugandans get the right information from the people in charge of the economy," he said. The Accountant General, Lawrence Semakula, also briefed them on the public finance management reforms, including Laws and Regulations, automation of processes and the Treasury Single Account.

Insurers Advised on Digital Transformation to Enhance Services

As digital transformation continues to reshape industries across the globe, Uganda's insurance sector has been urged to accelerate its adoption of technology in order to remain competitive, efficient, and customer-centric.

During the 5th ITC International Insurance Conference held in Fort Portal, experts discussed the critical role technology plays in revolutionizing the insurance industry.

Ibrahim Kaddunabbi Lubega, CEO of the Insurance Regulatory Authority (IRA), emphasized the urgency of adapting to a digital-first world, positioning it as not just a strategy for growth, but a matter of survival for insurers.

"The traditional insurance model, built on trust and long-term relationships, must evolve to meet the demands of the digital age," Kaddunabbi said, citing emerging technologies such as usage-based insurance and real-time data from wearable devices, which are revolutionizing everything from product development to claims processing.

Kaddunabbi stressed the importance of embracing automation, cybersecurity, and sustainability. He noted that these innovations offer immense opportunities to improve risk management, customer engagement, and operational efficiency. The IRA, he said, has already taken steps in this direction, with initiatives like the Insurance Sandbox—a platform designed to test new technologies and drive innovation within the sector.

"Digital transformation is reshaping every aspect of the insurance business. It's crucial we view technology as an opportunity to innovate, not a challenge," Kaddunabbi explained. He also highlighted the growing threat of cyberattacks, emphasizing the need for robust cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive customer data. The increasing demand for cyber insurance products, he added, represents a new avenue for growth within the sector.

Michael Opira, Chief Operations Officer at Housing Finance Bank, echoed the call for innovation. He pointed to the necessity of upskilling employees to meet the demands of an increasingly digital world.

"Our workforce must evolve alongside technology to meet shifting customer expectations," Opira noted, calling for the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning, and cloud computing into business models to boost operational efficiency and enhance customer experiences.

Opira also emphasized the potential for collaboration between banks and insurance companies. Through data sharing, he said, both sectors could improve risk assessments, cross-sell products, and provide more customer-centric services. He urged industry leaders to foster a culture of innovation within their organizations to ensure employees are empowered to leverage new technologies effectively.

"By creating customer-centric digital platforms, insurers can improve service delivery, foster greater collaboration between institutions, and position themselves for success in a technology-driven economy," Opira stressed.

Rt. Hon. William Kwemara Ngabu Ateenyi, Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Finance and Administration, reinforced the importance of technology in driving industry transformation. Representing the Prime Minister of Tooro Kingdom, he spoke about the long-standing benefits of embracing digital tools to improve efficiency and business continuity in the insurance sector.

Drawing from his personal experiences in teaching and banking, Kwemara recalled the significant shift from manual, paper-based financial systems to today's advanced digital solutions. "The transition from the old banking systems, where everything was done by hand, to the automated processes we use today is a testament to how technology can revolutionize industries. The same transformation is now happening in insurance," he said.

Moses Mukundi, a leading insurance expert, outlined practical steps for insurers to stay ahead in the market. He stressed the need for a unified data system to improve decision-making and enhance customer service. A centralized data hub, Mukundi argued, would allow for real-time updates, better collaboration, and more efficient responses to customer needs. Additionally, he highlighted the potential of advanced risk-scoring systems to optimize portfolios and reduce risk.

"Automation is the key to improving claims management. By implementing automated systems, insurers can process claims in real-time, reducing administrative costs and improving customer satisfaction," said Mukundi. He emphasized that insurers must leverage data and technology to offer personalized services, building stronger customer loyalty and trust.

Mukundi also highlighted the importance of using AI and machine learning to predict trends and better understand customer behaviors, enabling insurers to deliver more targeted solutions. He said integrating these technologies and strategies is essential for achieving greater efficiency, customer satisfaction, and long-term sustainability in the insurance sector.

As the industry moves toward a digital future, the call is clear- insurers must adapt quickly, embracing technology to not only stay competitive but to also create a more efficient, transparent, and customer-focused insurance ecosystem.

How Insurance Can Learn from Banking Sector to Grow Penetration

The Insurance Industry has been growing at about 10 percent per annum in terms of Gross Written Premium, a rate analysts call commendable, but penetration remains at a low 0.8 percent.

This is among the lowest rates in Africa, whose average penetration is between 2.1 and 2.6 percent, with Kenya's, for example, hovering around 2.3. The African penetration rate is also the lowest in the world.

Insurance penetration is a measure of the industry's importance to the economy, measured as the percentage of the Gross Written Premium (money paid by customers to buy insurance policies) to the gross domestic product of the country.

On the other hand, banking has grown much faster and penetration is about 60 percent, according to the Uganda Bankers Association, with commercial banks alone having deposits of about 50 trillion shillings, while lower-tier financial institutions boast even more.

The Insurance sector has in recent years stepped up efforts to ensure that more Ugandans take up insurance products to not only grow the industry but also increase the available sources of capital for investments.

The two industries now think that they can learn from each other as services and operations are getting more integrated, especially with the adoption of technology.

Fabian Kasi, the Managing Director of Centenary Bank and former chairman Uganda Bankers Association, says trust, simplicity and transparency are the main factors that bankers have focused on and can help insurance grow if adopted.

However, Kasi warned that as technology grows and is adopted by the financial sector, cyber fraud is becoming a major challenge and will not only be limited to the banking but also to the insurance industries.

He called for the industry to learn from the banking sector and put in place and constantly improve security measures, including having a dedicated cybersecurity expert.

While this is expensive, Kasi says, in the long run, it saves the company from unforeseen losses and also instills confidence among their customers.

The Insurance Regulatory Authority invited the Kasi to give the experience of the Centenary Bank which he heads, but also the whole banking industry of which he was chairman, to offer lessons to insurers.

Since banks started distributing insurance products to the public under the Bancassurance platform, the operations of the two industries are getting closer to each other, hence the need to collaborate.

IRA Chief Executive Officer, Ibrahim Kaddunabbi Lubega said they agree with the bankers that transparency and innovation will enable them to reach sections of the public that have not been targeted so far.

Both banking and insurance face complaints from customers touching on the unfair treatment of borrowers (for banking) and policyholders (for insurance) and this is the major source of mistrust between the service providers and the public.

It has also been considered the main reason why parts of the public have shunned the two industries, for fear of either losing out or not getting the expected benefits.

Fabian Kasi points out that people, especially borrowers do not take time to read what is now referred to as 'small print' where details, including rights and duties of the lender and the borrowers, are explained.

He says they have now developed a "Key Fact Document" which they encourage the clients to read or even read out to them before they sign the agreement so that it becomes a point of reference through the loan period.

IRA's Kaddunabbi Lubega welcomes this as a good lesson from the bankers to the insurance players because it further creates trust between the service provider and the consumer.

He stresses the importance of transparency as very vital to the success of the industry, adding that is vital to study the journey the bankers have walked to reach where the industry is currently.

Fabian Kasi, Managing Director, Centenary Bank

Liberty Life Assurance Uganda Wraps Up Inaugural Kuza School Challenge

Liberty Life Assurance Uganda has successfully concluded the inaugural Kuza School Challenge, an initiative designed to promote financial literacy and social entrepreneurship among secondary school students.

Launched in September 2024 at Kabojja International School, the program culminated in an inspiring event where students presented their innovative entrepreneurial projects and were awarded seed funding to turn their ideas into reality.

The Kuza School Challenge was designed to equip students with essential skills in financial management and entrepreneurship while also addressing critical community issues. Throughout the program, participants engaged in hands-on training, developed detailed business proposals, and received expert mentorship, particularly from the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), which helped refine their business ventures.

The campaign, launched in September 2024, aimed to foster financial literacy and social entrepreneurship among secondary school students

Joseph Almeida, Managing Director of Liberty Life Assurance Uganda, praised the students for their creativity and dedication to finding solutions to the challenges facing their communities.

"This initiative was about more than just starting businesses, but about empowering the next generation with the financial knowledge and skills needed to succeed in business while also encouraging them to create positive social impact. We are proud to support these young innovators as they embark on their entrepreneurial journeys," Almeida said.

The students showcased remarkable business acumen with projects that addressed a wide range of social issues, from environmental sustainability to improving access to education, healthcare, and technology. Their projects demonstrated an impressive blend of financial discipline, problem-solving, and social entrepreneurship.

The insurer awarded Shs 2 million in seed funding to each of the winning teams, providing them with the resources to bring their business plans to life. In addition to the financial support, the program continued to offer mentorship to help students turn their ideas into viable social enterprises with lasting impact.

The Kuza School Challenge comes at a critical time, as only 32% of Ugandans are financially literate, and many small business owners struggle with financial management. This initiative marks a significant step in preparing the next generation of financially-savvy and socially-conscious entrepreneurs.

Almeida said by fostering effective money management and entrepreneurial skills, Liberty Life Assurance Uganda is helping young people develop the tools they need to grow businesses and make meaningful contributions to their communities.

He said the insurer plans to expand the Kuza School Challenge to more schools across the country, with the aim of reaching thousands of students and further promoting financial literacy and innovation.

"The challenge has proven to be a powerful reminder of the immense potential within Uganda's youth and the importance of financial education in building a brighter, more prosperous future for all," he said.

Jerome Bayita, Head of Digital and Marketing Executive at Liberty, emphasized the students' awareness of global challenges, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). "It was inspiring to see these young minds tackling crucial issues such as poverty, waste management, and environmental sustainability. Their ability to engage with such important global conversations shows the power of youth-driven innovation," Baita said.

He added that the success of the Kuza School Challenge highlights the value of creating opportunities for young people to explore their potential and contribute to society.

"Through initiatives like this, Liberty Life Assurance Uganda is not only fostering the leaders of tomorrow but also aligning with broader goals of financial independence, innovation, and social responsibility," he said.

Uganda Launches Online Marine Insurance Portal to Revolutionize Trade and Insurance Sectors

Uganda has officially unveiled an innovative online platform designed to streamline the marine and goods-in-transit insurance process, signaling a significant advancement for the country's trade and insurance industries.

This new initiative, developed by the Insurance Regulatory Authority of Uganda (IRA) in collaboration with the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA), addresses long-standing challenges within the marine insurance sector, such as reliance on foreign insurers, delays in claims processing, and the proliferation of counterfeit certificates.

The newly launched platform enables Ugandan businesses to secure marine cargo insurance from local insurers, reducing the need for foreign currency transactions and ensuring faster, more efficient claims settlements. This shift is expected to bolster local businesses by improving their operational efficiency and insurance coverage.

During the launch, Ramathan Ggoobi, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance, representing the Finance Minister, highlighted the transformative impact of the system. He emphasized that the new platform would lower operational costs for businesses and enhance coverage.

Ggoobi pointed out the significant loss of Shs6.53 billion in revenue between 2009 and 2013 due to the use of foreign insurers. He noted that empowering local insurers would allow the government to reinvest these financial resources into Uganda's economy, fostering a more competitive domestic insurance market.

Ibrahim Lubega Kaddunabbi, Chief Executive officer, IRA

The platform is seamlessly integrated with the URA's e-tax system and the Electronic Single Window, providing a simplified, transparent process for importers. Ggoobi noted that the system eliminates the cumbersome use of paper documents, offering a digital, secure, and efficient solution for businesses to manage their insurance needs.

"Once payment is confirmed, the policy is automatically issued and sent directly to the user's email, minimizing the risk of misplaced certificates," he explained.

Ibrahim Kaddunabbi Lubega, CEO of IRA, emphasized that the system will provide better protection for goods in transit, simplify the claims process, and offer competitive rates in local currency. He added that the platform would help local businesses benefit from more affordable premiums and smoother insurance management, ultimately enhancing Uganda's trade competitiveness.

"The online portal also addresses challenges that have long hindered importers, such as high costs, delays, and uncertainty regarding the legitimacy of foreign insurance coverage. By mandating that all marine cargo insurance policies be issued by Uganda-based insurers, the system ensures compliance with the Insurance Act of 2017 and strengthens the domestic insurance market," Kaddunabbi stated.

Importers will have until January 1, 2025, to transition to the new system, after which only locally licensed insurers will be authorized to issue marine cargo insurance policies.

Kaddunabbi emphasized that the initiative would significantly improve the efficiency of Uganda's marine insurance sector, promote economic growth, and provide businesses with the peace of mind needed to succeed.

Jonana Kisaakye, CEO of the Uganda Insurance Association (UIA), reflected on the remarkable progress the sector has made in recent years.

"Several years ago, I could not have imagined that we would be where we are today," Kisaakye shared, acknowledging the IRA's crucial role in establishing a solid regulatory framework that has supported both local and international insurance companies in Uganda.

The online portal was developed in response to the growing demand for accessible and efficient insurance services. It aims to simplify the process of obtaining marine insurance for goods in transit, shipping, and cargo businesses. The platform allows users to obtain policies, make payments, and access documents conveniently from their devices.

"This digital solution will not only make marine insurance more accessible but also ensure transparency, security, and speed in processing transactions," Kisaakye explained.

The launch of the portal also underscores the strengthened collaboration between Uganda's insurance industry and the banking sector. Since 2012, banks have played a key role in expanding access to insurance services across the country, enabling more Ugandans from diverse backgrounds to obtain the protection they need.

With the introduction of the online marine insurance platform, the goal is to not only provide convenience but also resolve common issues associated with traditional insurance methods.

Policyholders can now store their insurance documents digitally, eliminating concerns over lost paperwork and ensuring the validity of policies can be immediately verified during cargo clearance or while managing insurance claims.

The new platform is set to transform how Ugandans engage with marine insurance, offering a faster, safer, and more user-friendly experience. It represents the ongoing growth of Uganda's insurance sector and its integration into the broader financial system, ensuring more people have access to the protection they need in an increasingly dynamic global environment.

All 20 non-life insurance companies in Uganda are now part of the initiative and are fully equipped to handle marine cargo risks.

Africa Re posts solid underwriting result with CoR of 88.74% in Q3'24

The African Reinsurance Corporation (Africa Re) reported a strong net underwriting result of $79.5 million at the end of the third quarter of 2024, marking an impressive year-over-year increase of 100.82% and resulting in an improved net combined ratio of 88.74%, down from 93.66% during the same period last year.

The company reported gross incurred claims of $436.8 million for Q3 2024, up from $404.4 million for the same period in 2023. This reflects a negative variance of 8.01%, attributed to an increase in claims reported and incurred across several of its business units and lines.

During the same period, the retrocession Aires' share of incurred claims rose from $27.6 million to $45.5 million in Q3 2024. As a result, net incurred claims reached $391.3 million this quarter, compared to $376.8 million recorded in the same period of 2023.

Additionally, gross written premium (GWP) income totaled $879 million at the end of Q3 2024, representing an 8.99% increase from the $806.6 million reported in the same period last year.

According to the firm, this increase was due to successful marketing efforts, positive pricing momentum, and moderate economic growth in most African countries, its core markets, despite ongoing challenges posed by geopolitical tensions, extreme weather conditions, fiscal policy tightening, currency depreciation against the US dollar, and inflationary pressures.

Africa Re's investment and other income for the quarter increased significantly by 59.40%, rising from $45 million in Q3 2023 to $71.7 million, driven by higher interest income from fixed-income instruments.

Due to strong underwriting and investment performances, the overall net profit reached $131.4 million, marking a 74.20% improvement compared to the same period last year.

Dr. Corneille Karekezi, The Group MD/CEO of Africa Re, commented, "Africa Re continues to demonstrate a strong and resilient business model which is able to capture the full benefits of a conducive environment characterised by a continuous positive adjustment or of global reinsurance market prices and the strengthening of returns in the global financial markets."

Karekezi continued, "Barring any sharp decline of the investment returns, possibly following the outcome of the November 2024 US Elections or from heightening of current geopolitical tensions, or any adverse development of already reported natural catastrophe claims, or significant additional depreciation of major African currencies, the financial year 2024 is heading to a second successive historical record performance both in top line and in bottom line."

Insurance Sector Urged to Invest in Technology and Data

L - R: Ronald Batanda, CEO,SKY Reinsurance Brokers, Francesca Kakooza, Director Legal and Company Secretary, IRA, Moses Turyomurugyendo, Board Vice Chairperson, ITC, Doreen Lukandwa, VP Global Enterprise, Onafriq and Dr. Donato Laboke, Head of Marketing and Channel Development E.A, Sanlam Goup during the 5th Annual ITC International Insurance Conference

The 5th International Insurance Conference highlighted the urgent need for the insurance sector to embrace digital transformation, focusing on technology, data, and customer satisfaction.

The 5th International Insurance Conference, organized by the Insurance Training College (ITC) and sponsored by Sanlam Uganda, took place recently at Nyaika Hotel in Fort Portal.

Under the theme **"The Digital Agenda: What's Next for the Insurance Industry?"**, industry leaders gathered to explore how digital transformation is reshaping the insurance landscape.

Moses Mukundi, CEO and Founder of Eden Care, highlighted the global shift in the insurance sector toward digitalization. He emphasized that companies must embrace technological advancements to stay competitive.

The conference explored the essential role of customer satisfaction in this transformation, stressing that delighting customers should be at the core of digital initiatives.

In his keynote address, Mukundi explained, "When you delight your customers, they become your ambassadors. They talk about your brand, drive demand, and generate more data that can be used to improve your products and services."

This customer-driven data cycle, he noted, offers insurers a valuable opportunity to understand and meet customer needs more effectively.

However, the experts say journey toward digitalization presents challenges, Mukundi outlined four critical areas that insurers must focus on to ensure a smooth transition. First, companies must assess their organizational structure.

"Do we have the right talent to integrate new technologies?" he asked. While collaborating with technology providers is essential, internal teams must also possess the skills necessary to manage these changes.

Experts urge that Technology alone cannot drive transformation; internal processes and culture must evolve in tandem. Effective management of both technology and people is crucial to avoid failure in implementing new systems.

Data, too, is central to digital transformation. "Data is at the core of digital transformation," Mukundi stated. "Ensuring that data flows seamlessly through an organization will empower innovation and help companies create products that are more relevant to their customers." For insurers, collaborating with technology partners to implement efficient data management systems is vital to success.

The cultural aspect of digital transformation was also emphasized. "Do we have the right culture to embrace change?" Mukundi asked. A culture that fosters innovation, supports new technologies, and encourages collaboration will be essential for successful digital adoption.

The discussion also covered the growing trend of partnerships between traditional insurers and insurtech firms.

These collaborations are seen as vital for bridging the gap between legacy systems and new technological solutions.

Traditional insurers bring valuable customer data and established trust, while insurtech firms offer agility and innovative capabilities. This combination can be a powerful strategy for improving operational efficiency and driving innovation.

As the digital transformation continues to accelerate, insurers face a decision: pursue digitalization independently or partner with insurtech firms to expedite the process. Mukundi warned that those who fail to adapt risk being left behind.

"Once one major player successfully implements a digital solution, others will have to follow suit or risk becoming obsolete," he stated.

Digital transformation also presents an opportunity to capture untapped market share. By embracing technology, insurers can reach underserved populations, enter new regions, and offer innovative products, thereby expanding their market beyond traditional customer bases.

A significant challenge for insurers will be deciding whether to develop digital solutions in-house or collaborate with insurtechs.

Mukundi raised the question, "Are you going to try to build it yourself, or partner with those who have the expertise?" As the industry moves quickly toward digitalization, insurers must act fast to secure their place in the evolving landscape.

Cybersecurity and Digital Transformation: A Key Focus

Saul Sseremba, CEO and Principal of the Insurance Training College, addressed the growing importance of cybersecurity in the context of digital transformation, Sseremba highlighted that while embracing digital technologies is crucial for staying competitive, insurers must also be vigilant in protecting sensitive data and business operations from cyber threats.

"As we embrace digital technologies, we must also recognize the associated risks," Sseremba said.

"Cyber threats are evolving at a rapid pace, and it is critical that we implement strong safeguards to protect our businesses and customers." He called for solid regulations, investment in effective firewalls, and ongoing vigilance in cybersecurity practices.

The conference highlighted the need for collaboration across the industry to address cybersecurity challenges. As more insurers move online, fraudsters are becoming more sophisticated, making robust cybersecurity measures essential for protecting both companies and their customers.

In the face of rising cyber threats, Sseremba stressed that insurers must not only implement secure systems but also foster a culture of cybersecurity awareness within their organizations. Employees, partners, and customers all play a role in safeguarding sensitive data, and a collective approach to security will be essential for long-term success.

Dr. Donato Laboke of Sanlam also emphasized the urgency of adopting digital tools to stay competitive in the insurance sector. He called for a gradual shift from traditional brick-and-mortar business models to digitized business models.

Laboke explained that businesses must adapt to the evolving customer journey, which has been significantly influenced by digital technologies.

"The key question I kept asking myself throughout this journey is how do we as an industry transition from a traditional sales setup to a fully digital one? It's a conversation that is critical for us today," Laboke stated.

Laboke illustrated how digital platforms have changed customer interactions, noting that today's consumers are more informed about brands than ever before.

"The consumer today knows more about your brand than you do, they discuss your brands among others in your absence, listening to peer reviews on their various social platforms," he said.

Laboke also discussed the evolving customer journey with emphasis of the importance of brand discovery through two sources of awareness: *open awareness touchpoints* and *related awareness touchpoints*. Open awareness touchpoints refer to how customers first encounter a brand through various online platforms, while related awareness touchpoints are shaped by brand activities offline through partnerships, promotions and sponsorships among others. He stressed the need to digitize each stages of your customer journey that are best managed digitally to improve efficiency, scaling and effectiveness throughout the entire customer journey i.e., from lead qualification to conversion.

The conference highlighted how important it is for companies to rethink their sales strategies in response to these shifts in consumer buying behavior. With real-time information accessible at their fingertips, consumers today are more likely to make decisions based on what they find online rather than through traditional sales interactions.

As part of the industry's ongoing efforts to integrate digital transformation into the sector, Laboke referenced his introduction of the 5As model by Dr. Philip Kotler, now adopted at the Insurance Training College in its courses; Professional Selling Skills Certificate and Marketing insurance services. The 5As stands for Awareness, Appeal, Ask, Action and Advocate, he affirmed that the 5As are more relevant today than the traditional outdate AIDA model (Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action).

Particularly, he highlighted the significance of consumer advocacy in the digital age. "When you provide an exceptional experience, your customers become your advocates," Laboke explained, emphasizing the shift from passive consumers to active participants in marketing, a reality that we should accept.

The role of customer advocacy is particularly important in a digital world where reviews, social media, and word-of-mouth can significantly influence a company's reputation and sales. Laboke stressed that businesses must create positive experiences that encourage customers to become vocal supporters of their brands.

Ibrahim Lubega Kaddunabbi, Chief Executive officer, IRA

Plethora of a Standard (IFRS 17 Insurance Contract)

IFRS 17 Insurance contracts has been adopted in the Insurance industry in Uganda and across the globe. But how has it impacted the business and other stakeholders who are the user of financial statements. Allow me to narrate it is as journey worthy walking. I first heard about IFRS 17 in 2020 when the industry had consumed IFRS 4 with high knowledge about it little did we know we shall meet "an elephant standard" in 2023 for those who started early saw their first set of financial statement as per IFRS 17 on the deadline of 2/04/2024 when submitting to the IRA while the rest were busy blowing the last figure for the regulator to extend the deadline, however the regulator kept on encouraging us to meet the deadline.

Above all that, I have come to realize that how the business (insurance contracts) is managed today is revealed by the standard like how a mirror reflects the person standing, insurers had an opportunity to demonstrate how they manage their contracts. This had to be demonstrated and evidenced by current day management information. For example, management reporting information was an indicator whether under PAA (Premium Allocation Approach), an insurer needs to perform onerous contract assessment at initial recognition of insurance contracts. Indicators of onerous contracts will most likely be contained in lines of business information such as:

• Management reporting information providing loss ratios (cash inflows less cash outflow) by line of business.

• Pricing and product development information.

• Risk-management information.

My friends in life assurance business were even seeing things in the sky because an insurer's risk appetite and product pricing approaches influenced both the risk adjustment determination to be used in the measurement of the BEL (best estimate liability) liability, and when an insurer is to apply the IFRS 17 General Measurement Model (GMM).

GMM became GMM, the critical information was as follows.

• Whether the insurer manages its insurance contracts as one— in portfolios, or in different, more granular, lines of business or business units.

• The performance metrics of the business, whether at an aggregated or more granular level of reporting to key stakeholders.

• The performance metrics used to determine incentive remuneration for management and leaders could influence the determination of which insurance contracts are managed together as one.

The GMM & PAA was the language of IFRS 17 consultants, we kept on looking at them but the inner me was saying you will debunk it, it was not more than 6months I cracked it down as follows.

1) General Measurement Model (GMM). Is the fundamental model of IFRS 17, the so-called General Measurement Model, the profit is recognized as part of the technical provisions when the contract is concluded in order to avoid immediate recognition in the income statement that would otherwise arise. This profit margin is referred to as the "Contractual Service Margin" (CSM). The General Measurement Model is generally applicable to all types of contracts however life insurance productions more than one year enjoyed this meal. In this model, the technical provisions consist of a) Liability for Remaining Coverage "(LRC), which corresponds to the actuarial reserve known today in life and health insurance, and the b). Liability for Incurred Claims "(LIC), which corresponds to the claims reserve.

2) Premium Allocation Approach (PAA) For contracts with a term of less than one year, the so-called Premium Allocation Approach was used for reasons of simplification. For contracts with a longer contract boundary, this only applies if the use of the Premium Allocation Approach leads to substantially the same result as the General Measurement Model. This simplified approach corresponds in its fundamental idea to the previous accounting. In this model, the technical provisions in turn consist of the 1. „Liability for Remaining Coverage "(LRC), which is derived from the unearned premium, and the 2. „Liability for Incurred Claims "(LIC), which corresponds to the claims reserve

The real impact of IFRS 17 on business is below.

Much had been expressed during the 20+ year development of the IFRS 17 accounting standard about its impact on an insurer's business, But the reality is as below.

CPA Joseph Osako, Finance Manager , GA Insurance

• Portfolios of contracts.

The aggregation of contracts into portfolios was different among insurers, some required enhanced data management and storage functionalities; some will also require system enhancements. Since data integrity in implementation of standard was key.

• No gross written premiums.

This was a headline metric in IFRS 17 financial statements. Previously the stakeholders were used to: • assess business volume (GWP) and size of Profits with insurers; • underwriting results; • determine acquisition costs; • Determine management incentive remuneration. IFRS 17 had a moderate impact on insurers Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). Under IFRS 17, insurance revenues were recorded only in the income statement when earned over the period of providing services under the insurance contract to the policyholder not like the way we used to GWP. The income statement had changed with its presentation and disclosure this made users of financial statements to borrow doubled lenses to cross examine and assess the performance of the business.

• Redesign management information.

Depending on how contracts are to be aggregated into portfolios, insurers had to redesign their management information and reporting lines. Some insurers saw IFRS 17 implementation as an opportunity to leverage new and more granular data to develop insights into their business which was a positive impact.

In conclusion.

IFRS 17 heralds a new era of accounting for insurance contracts because it sets out principles-based requirements that aim to improve the comparability of the measurement and presentation of insurance contracts across entities reporting in jurisdictions applying International Financial Reporting Standards. The impact of IFRS 17 will be felt by many stakeholders, including, but not limited to: preparers of financial statements, those charged with the governance of entities that issue insurance contracts, investors, regulators, analysts and auditors.

ITC Urges graduates on Trustworthiness and Professionalism in the Insurance Sector

The Insurance Training College (ITC) has urged its graduates to uphold the core values of trustworthiness and professionalism, highlighting the immense responsibility they carry in protecting individuals and businesses from uncertainty.

Speaking at the 9th graduation ceremony held on Friday at Hotel Africana, Saul Sseremba, Principal of ITC, emphasized the vital role that insurance professionals play in the lives of others.

He reminded the graduates that their work goes beyond selling policies and managing risks, stressing the power of insurance to provide security, alleviate worry, and empower people to shape their futures.

"You have the ability to make a tangible difference in people's lives, and so, remain trustworthy and

uphold the role of protecting people from uncertainty by building a resilient insurance sector," he said.

Sseremba also shared exciting news for the college's future growth, announcing plans to launch a regional journal focused on insurance and risk management. He further revealed that ITC would soon begin construction of a new campus to accommodate the increasing demand for insurance education.

The graduation, which marked the completion of the 9th cohort of ITC students, saw a total of 936 graduates receive their qualifications, including the Certificate of Proficiency, Certificate in Insurance, Diploma in Insurance, and the prestigious Associates Program.

Dr. Abdul Hafiz Walusimbi, Chairman of the ITC Board, congratulated the graduates on their hard work and dedication, encouraging them to continue their professional growth through the leadership programs offered by the ITC Mentorship Academy. He reminded them that learning should not stop with graduation, but should be an ongoing journey of development.

Francesca Kakooza, Secretary to the Insurance Regulatory Authority (IRA), urged the graduates to embody the highest standards of professionalism. "You have a responsibility to uphold integrity in your work. This industry is not just about policies and risks, but also about providing security and resilience in the face of uncertainty," Kakooza emphasized.

The chief guest, Moses Muhwezi, who is also the Principal of Makerere Business School, stressed the importance of continuous learning in the ever-evolving insurance industry.

"You are privileged to have acquired knowledge that many others do not possess. It is now your responsibility to stay relevant, reflect public expectations, and meet the needs of this dynamic sector," Muhwezi said.

He also praised the growth of ITC, noting the college's commitment to offering tailored certificate and diploma programs that meet the insurance industry's evolving demands.

He encouraged the graduates to make an impact in the sector by maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and staying engaged with the changing needs of the public.

CIVIL SOCIETY BUDGET ADVOCACY GROUP

Opportunities for Children in Uganda's FY2024/25 National Budget

Background

The 2024 census results indicate a sharp increase of 17% in the number of children (0-17 years); from 18.9 million in 2014 to 22.2 million in 2024 of which 14.9% are children between 0-5 years. The government of Uganda has a strong legal and policy framework that upholds children's rights and protect them from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence while promoting their overall welfare including ratifying different development agendas like the Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite this, children still face challenges hindering them from achieving their full potential. According to the 2024 census, 60% of 6-year-old children have not started their first year of primary while UNICEF data indicates that 1 in every 5 children in Uganda do not complete primary school. 22.3% of school dropouts among girls aged between 14 to 18 years are as a result of teenage pregnancies with only 8% of these girls given a second chance to re-enroll (MOES 2020). Further, the Uganda Demographic Health Survey (UDHS) 2022 indicates that more than a quarter of children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition, 24.4% are stunted, while 3.2% are wasted. Additionally, the Annual Crime Report of 2023 indicates that there over 10,741 cases of child abuse reported during that period, of which 8,925 cases were of defilement and 4,730 child neglect.

Economic case for investing in children.

Investment in children possesses several economic benefits including the potential to reduce child protection expenditures estimated at Shs711 billion by the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development. A study conducted in Uganda by the World Bank indicated that by just reducing early pregnancies among children, the country can generate over $2.4 billion in annual benefits by 2030 while an additional year of schooling for children can translate into 10% in returns in terms of GDP per capita.

15 Opportunities for children in the FY2024/25 budget

According to this analysis, for FY2024/25, the government allocated an estimated total of **UGX. 772,227,499,000** direct investments under education, health, social protection, and law and order for children.

EDUCATION

1. **UGX. 362,076,251,000** allocated for construction **of 60** secondary schools and the expansion of **61** existing secondary schools under the Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project in **12 districts of Ssembabule, Nwoya, Namayingo, Isingiro, Kyegwegwa, Kikube, Yumbe, Kiryandongo, Moroto, Kasese, Kaabong, and Kween.**

2. UGX. **7,998,282,000** allocated for recurrent expenditures under Universal Primary Education. Of this, **UGX. 290,547,000** is wage and **UGX. 7,707,735,000** is non-wage. This is however a **42%** reduction from UGX.**13,267,514,000** in FY2023/24.

3. **UGX. 285,709,000** allocated to non-wage under the Department of Pre-Primary and Primary Education to ensure the effective delivery of Early Childhood Care Education services a critical phase in children's physical, mental, and psycho-social development concentrating on children aged **0 to 8 years of age.**

4. **UGX. 6,055,721,000** allocated to Universal Secondary Education of which **UGX. 300,930,000** is wage and **UGX.5,754,791,000** is non-wage expenditures.

5. Funding for special needs and inclusive education increased from **UGX. 1,161,171,000 in FY2023/24 to UGX. 2,580,013,000** in FY2024/25 of which **6.5%** of the total budget is allocated to wages.

6. **UGX. 86,667,198,000** allocated to Uganda National Examination Board. Of this, **UGX. 18,653,681,000** is for certification of primary education while **UGX. 67,946,319,000** is for certification of secondary examinations.

7. **Talent Identification and Development** budget under the Ministry of Education and Sports,increased from **UGX.16.108,706,000** in FY2023/24 to **UGX. 25,007,966,000** in FY2024/25. Of this, **UGX.1,000,000,000** is for Scouts and Girl Guides.

8. Non-wage allocation to the National Curriculum Development Centre to support new curriculum and instructional development increased from **UGX. 7,152,563,000** in FY2023/24 to **UGX. 7,354,499,000** in FY2024/25 as shown in the table above.

Curriculum	Non-wage FY2023/24 UGX. 000	Non-wage FY2024/25 UGX 000	Variance UGX.000
Early Childhood Care and Education	503,000	185,000	-318,000
Primary Education Curriculum	1,845,000	4,274,479	2,429,479
Life Skills and Livelihood Curriculum	911,344	604,010	-307,334
Secondary Education Curriculum	2,914,205	1,371,830	-1,542,375
Special Needs Education	578,175	450,000	-128,175
Pedagogy and Innovations	250,000	163,530	-86,470

Source: Approved Budget Estimates for Central Government FY2024/25

HEALTH

9. **UGX.3,012,108,000** allocation to Reproductive and Child Health. Of this **UGX.2,623,964,000** is Non-wage allocation to Reproductive & Infant Service, **UGX.204,144,000** non-wage to Adolescent and School Health Services (Non-wage) and **UGX.184,000,000** non-wage to Child Health Services.

10. **UGX. 215,910,200,000** allocation for mass vaccination with support from Gavi Vaccines and Health Sector Dev't Plan Support project. Of this, UGX. **138,229,268,000** is immunization services.

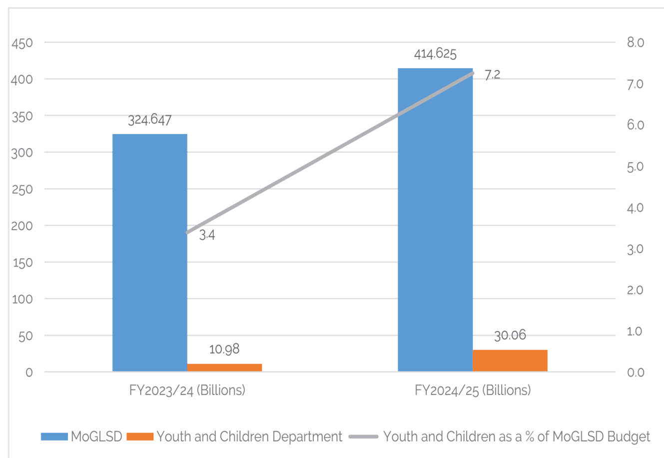
11. **UGX.6,536,999,000** and **UGX.1,066,981,000** recurrent expenditure allocation to addressing communicable and non-communicable diseases respectively.

12. **UGX. 17,133,049,000** non-wage allocation to Children Hospital Entebbe to cater for the provision of free pediatric services.

13. **UGX. 89,700,000** non-wage allocation to Nutrition health services.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

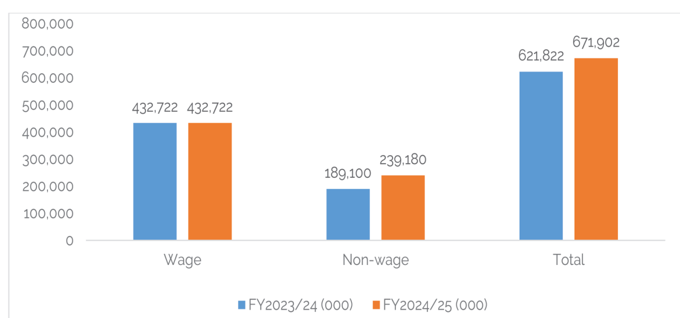
14. Allocation to the Youth and Children department under MoGLSD increased from **UGX.10,989,704,000** in FY2023/24 to **UGX.30,066,630,000** in FY2024/25. Of this, **UGX.24,000,000** is support for street children, **UGX.80,000,000** non-wage allocation to the National Children Authority of and **UGX.36,000,000** allocation to cater for scholarships for vulnerable children.



Source: Approved Budget Estimates for Central Government FY2024/25

JUSTICE, LAW AND ORDER

15. Allocation to the Public Trustee and Children Affairs department budget under the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs increased from **UGX.621,822,000** in FY2023/24 to **UGX.671,902,000** in FY2024/25



Source: Approved Budget Estimates for Central Government FY2024/25

CIVIL SOCIETY BUDGET ADVOCACY GROUP (CSBAG)

Opportunities for Children in Uganda's FY24/25 National Budget

Where more should government invest

Increase allocation for the UPE Capitation Grant: The National Planning Authority recommends Shs63,546 as capitation grants per child in urban schools and Shs59,503 in rural schools. With a slight increase from Shs14,500 in FY2022/23 to Shs20,000 FY2024/25 a year per child, translating into Shs6,666 a term (3 months), and subsequently Shs2,222 a month, the UPE capitation grant is still inadequate and below the recommended threshold to cater for the intended operational costs.

There is therefore an urgent need to increase the UPE capitation grant to the recommended threshold since inadequate funding continues to widen the gaps between private and public education undermining the country's aspiration of developing its human capital, as education outcomes are minimal and uncertain.

Regulation of School Feeding. A study by the World Bank indicated that school feeding has the potential to enhance school enrollment by up to **29%** in Uganda. Today, over **64%** of school-going children in Uganda are estimated to spend a day without food which compromises their ability to effectively participate in school programs. The delay in passing the National School Feeding Policy and failure to enforce feeding regulations has worsened the situation since parents are forced to pay uncoordinated huge amounts of money for feeding their children while at school. That undermines the government's perspective of providing free education to all Ugandan children.

Expediting the approval of the National School Feeding Policy, and operationalisation of actions committed to under the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan II like the funding of the establishment of gardens at school would give mileage to tackling hunger in schools.

Prioritise Investment in Early Childhood Development (ECD). Only a tenth of children between 3 and 5 years are enrolled in formal pre-primary education. However, this is subject to regional variances where the Buganda subregion has the highest ECE attendance (57%) whereas the Karamoja sub-region has the lowest (5%). Therefore, Uganda's prospect to advance ECD is lagging. The government's investment in primary, secondary, and post-secondary education while overlooking pre-primary forfeits its endeavors of transforming Uganda's education as early childhood education is the foundation for child development. There is a crucial need to prioritise funding for ECD, particularly to undertake training of ECD caregivers as planned by the Ministry of Education and Sports as well as expediting the dissemination of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy and Guidelines for proper program implementation.

Enhance Funding for Child Protection and the Prevention of Violence Against Children cases. There is need to ensure adequate funding of Local Government structures that support child protection (Community Development, Probation and Welfare, and the Gender office). That is coupled with strengthening the family protection unit under police to enforce the implementation of child protection laws and policies presents opportunities for handling of child abuse cases. The 2018 Violence Against Children Survey (VACS) indicated that 59% and 68% of girls and boys respectively in Uganda have experienced physical violence. Moreover, 35% of girls and 17% of boys have experienced sexual violence during their childhood impacting their mental health and emotional development. Financing inadequacies in key agencies is crucial to addressing child abuse in Uganda.

Funding for Teenage Health-Friendly Services. According to WHO guidance on adolescent health and well-being, an investment of $1 in adolescent well-being brings a return of $5-$10, and sometimes more. Additionally, putting resources into preventing non-communicable diseases during adolescence would yield $400 billion in economic benefits over 50 years globally. The 2024 census results indicate that the proportion of adolescents (10-19) to the total population in Uganda stands at 24.9 %. Teenagers in Uganda face many challenges, particularly those attributed to reproductive health. These include early/unwanted pregnancies with census results indicating that out of every 1000 women aged 10-19, 31 give birth annually, HIV/AIDS, and psychosocial problems such as drug abuse, and sexual abuse. Additionally, the current budget for FY2024/25 for adolescent and school health services under the Ministry of Health of Shs204,144,000 is still minimal to adequately cover all the health needs of adolescents.

The government therefore needs to address funding gaps hindering the provision of teenage and adolescent health-friendly services and also undertake the review of the 2012 Uganda-Adolescent-Health-Policy-and-Service-Standard.

Accelerate Funding for WASH Infrastructures in Learning And Health Institutions. Whereas Uganda has made significant progress towards addressing gaps in the Wash sector where currently 73% and 58% of secondary and primary schools, respectively, have access to water (UNICEF 2018), the functionality, reliability, adequacy, and quality remains a big concern. According to data from the Ministry of Education and Sports, the pupil stance ratio stands at 71:1 higher than the recommended 40:1, 48% of girls in schools have no access to Menstrual Management Services, while 44% of all children do not practice hand washing. Uganda is also estimated to lose approximately $177 million annually due to poor sanitation and hygiene, including healthcare costs, lost productivity, diminished quality of life, and other economic impacts, while approximately 23,000 Ugandans, including 19,700 children under 5, are estimated to die each year from diarrhea, 90% of which is directly attributed to poor water, sanitation, and hygiene.

The government needs to address budget cuts under the Wash sector, particularly under the line ministry of Water and Environment which witnessed a budget cut from Shs1,146 billion in 2023/24 to Shs1,030 billion in FY2024/25, fund the operation and maintenance of wash facilities, ensure proper implementation of the recently released service delivery standards, and leverage the willingness of the private sector to engage in development projects under the wash sector to address funding gaps.

Government budgets have the power to advance or undermine the realisation of children's rights. While financing for children is a multi-faceted intervention, there is an urgent need to adequately fund the critical social sectors such as education, and health that have a direct impact on the well-being of children.

Executive Director's Message

As we reflect on Uganda's commitment to its children, analysing the FY2024/25 National Budget to ensure a brighter future for all can't be underrated. With 22.2 million children under 18, our nation's future depends on ensuring their education, health, protection, and overall wellbeing is catered for.

The Government of Uganda has made significant strides in supporting children. For instance, the allocation of Shs362 billion for the construction and expansion of secondary schools across various districts will increase access to education for thousands of children.

Additionally, the allocation of Shs215 billion for mass vaccination programs, supported by Gavi Vaccines is ensuring that children are protected against preventable diseases. Furthermore, the increase in funding for special needs education and inclusive education, which

Julius Mukunda
Executive Director, Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG)

saw an increase from Shs1.16 billion in FY 2023/24 to Shs2.58 billion in FY 2024/25, shows a commitment to providing quality education for children with disabilities.

The economic case for investing in children is clear. For instance, reducing early pregnancies could generate up to $2.4 billion annually by 2030, while each additional year of schooling for children can increase GDP by 10%. Furthermore, targeted investments in early childhood development, education, health services, and child protection will ensure a more prosperous and equitable future for Uganda.

While we acknowledge the government's efforts to allocate Shs772.2 billion for children's services, we urge policymakers to address critical gaps. Specifically, it is essential that:

1. Increase the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Capitation Grant from the current
   - Shs20,000 per child annually in the FY 2024/25 to the recommended levels:
   - Shs63,546 per child annually for urban schools
   - Shs59,503 per child annually for rural schools as stipulated by the National Planning Authority (NPA).
2. Expedite the National School Feeding Policy and regulate school feeding.
3. Prioritise Early Childhood Development funding.
4. Enhance funding for child protection and prevention of violence.
5. Strengthen adolescent health services.

At CSBAG, we advocate for budgetary allocations that safeguard children's rights. It should be noted that Uganda's prosperity hinges on investing in its children. Let's work together to create a brighter future for all.

How Uganda's retirement benefits sector hit UGX 25.4 trillion, boosting GDP to 12.2%

The sector's growth was fueled by a net income of UGX 3.10 trillion and net member contributions amounting to UGX 989.94 billion.

Uganda's retirement benefits sector has achieved remarkable growth, with its total value rising to UGX 25.40 trillion in 2024 an 18.6% increase from UGX 21.4 trillion in 2023.

This expansion has elevated the sector's contribution to the national GDP to 12.2%, up from 10% in the previous year, according to the Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority (URBRA).

Key Drivers of Growth

The sector's growth was fueled by a net income of UGX 3.10 trillion and net member contributions amounting to UGX 989.94 billion. Income from fixed-income securities contributed over 90% of the total revenue, enabling retirement schemes to declare an impressive average interest rate of 10.99%.

"The growth of the retirement benefits sector reflects the increasing awareness among Ugandans about the importance of saving for retirement," noted Ritah Nansasi Wasswa, URBRA's Acting CEO.

Minister Kasaija with URBRA officials at the media center

Finance Minister Matia Kasaija attributed the positive performance to a combination of robust net income and growing member contributions.

Membership in retirement schemes increased by 7% to 3.37 million accounts in 2024, while contributions grew by 8.3% to UGX 2.39 trillion. The surge was driven by enhanced employer compliance, salary increments, and new registrations.

In a bid to widen retirement savings coverage, URBRA launched the National Long-Term Savings Scheme (NLTSS) targeting informal workers. Currently, only 15% of Uganda's workforce is covered by retirement savings, but the NLTSS aims to bridge this gap.

"The NLTSS is a transformative initiative that will empower informal workers to secure their financial futures," said Julius Junjura Bigirwa, URBRA's Board Chairman.

URBRA's risk-based supervision system recovered UGX 23.3 billion for members in 2024, reinforcing transparency and risk management within the sector.

"This achievement underscores our commitment to safeguarding members' interests and promoting a transparent retirement benefits system," said Wasswa.

Future Outlook

With increasing awareness and demand for retirement savings products, Uganda's retirement benefits sector is poised for continued growth. The combination of strategic initiatives like the NLTSS and robust regulatory oversight is expected to secure the financial well-being of millions of Ugandans.

NSSF launches 'Smartlife Flexi' to expand social security coverage

NSSF Managing Director Patrick Ayota unveils the new NSSF Smartlife Savings Plan at a media event in Kampala, highlighting the plan's flexibility and affordability for savers

KAMPALA – The National Social Security Fund (NSSF) Uganda has launched the NSSF Smartlife Savings Plan, a voluntary savings product aimed at expanding social security coverage. This initiative targets existing NSSF members, non-NSSF members in the formal sector, the informal sector, and Ugandans in the diaspora.

The launch follows the issuance of the National Social Security Fund (Voluntary Contributions and Benefits) Regulations, 2024, by Hon. Betty Amongi, the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, on November 8, 2024.

Speaking at the launch event in Kampala, NSSF Managing Director Patrick Ayota highlighted that the new product stems from amendments to the NSSF Act, allowing the Board to introduce innovative products based on member needs. "In 2021, we conducted the NSSF Members Needs Research. It revealed that 60% of our members wanted more voluntary savings options to address their retirement, education, health, and business capital needs," Ayota stated.

The NSSF Smartlife Savings Plan offers flexibility, enabling savers to set mid to long-term goals with affordable contributions starting from UGX 5,000. Contributions can be made at the saver's chosen frequency, with returns computed daily and credited monthly. While the minimum lock-in period is one year, early withdrawals are allowed with minimal costs.

Ayota emphasized that anyone can make voluntary contributions, including mandatory members looking to make top-ups. "We designed this plan to be flexible and affordable, catering to various saver needs," he added.

The Smartlife Flexi component is part of NSSF's strategy to increase social security coverage to at least 50% of Uganda's working population by 2025. Currently, the Fund serves approximately 2.3 million Ugandans, predominantly in the formal sector. The new plan aims to include the informal sector, which plays a significant role in the economy yet remains largely unprotected.

Eligible participants include all Ugandans aged 16 and above, as well as non-Ugandans living and working in Uganda with valid identification. The plan empowers savers to choose their saving amounts, timing, and duration, with goals starting from a minimum of one year.

NSSF Board Chairman David Ogong expressed gratitude to the government for supporting the Fund's efforts to introduce flexible saving options. He urged members to leverage the Smartlife Flexi plan, citing NSSF's strong track record in safeguarding and growing member savings.

Thadeus Musoke, Chairman of the Kampala City Traders Association, praised NSSF's innovation, noting that the Smartlife Flexi plan gives traders better control over their finances, promoting capital growth through consistent saving.

He said, "In Uganda, we have a bad culture of accumulating capital through savings and instead opt for loans whereby members' property is at most times auctioned until KACITA comes to mitigate."

Money in vs money out? Rethinking Africa's climate financing solutions

Msizi Khoza, Head: ESG, Absa Corporate & Investment Banking

Reflecting on the recent COP29 summit, Msizi Khoza, Head: ESG, Absa Corporate & Investment Banking, explores why the global race for capital to fund positive climate action means that African countries must rethink how they finance their climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Dubbed the 'finance COP', COP29 in Baku sparked much-needed conversations about climate finance targets, carbon markets, global water resilience, and more. However, the conference spotlighted a wide chasm for Africa between the money coming into the continent to address climate change and the funds flowing out.

The continent faces a 'disproportionate burden' from climate change and the associated adaption costs, with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) reporting that on average, African countries are losing 2-5 percent of their GDP in responding to climate extremes, despite being responsible for fewer than 10 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. These prolonged droughts, devastating floods, severe heatwaves, and cyclones displace millions, compound poverty, threaten food security, and destabilise economies. The need to invest in climate adaptation and mitigation is urgent – bringing an alarming need for African countries to reassess their financing models to bridge this gap.

The financing chasm

The global capital flow disparity remains one of the most significant hurdles to tackling climate change. Wealthy nations continue to dominate climate financing, leaving developing countries struggling to secure the resources needed to fund their transition.

The issue of "money in vs money out" was a central theme of COP29, resulting in a $300 billion deal tripling climate finance to developing countries by 2035. Yet the scale of investment required to drive Africa's climate transition feels almost boundless. Delivering a full-scale transformation will demand action from outside of the negotiation room at COP alone – it requires a fundamental rethinking of our existing financial systems.

Developing nations were right to call at COP29 for a big increase in the quantum of international climate finance. But the flow of funds, as well as being bigger, will also need to be much more smartly and strategically deployed, with a far bigger focus on catalytic capital.

One potential solution is tapping into domestic pools of capital to help generate the additional funding needed to fuel this transition. Mechanisms like climate-related levies can bridge this gap. Small levies on equity and bond transactions, for example, could generate revenue which can then be channeled towards renewable energy projects, climate resilience programmes, or carbon offset schemes. This approach mirrors mechanisms like the UK's Stamp Duty, which imposes a tax on share transactions to raise public revenue. Adopting this model for climate finance would create a steady stream of income dedicated to addressing Africa's climate priorities.

Further revenue could be generated through levies on shipping emissions, additional taxes on jet fuel, and "frequent flyer" charges targeting emissions from high-volume travel. These measures would not only provide funding, but also incentivise lower-carbon alternatives in transportation. What's more, the energy-intensive nature of cryptocurrency mining presents another opportunity for targeted taxation.

Cryptocurrency mining and data centres consume vast amounts of electricity and account for nearly 1 percent of all global emissions, with their environmental footprint becoming larger by the year. Levying small taxes on crypto activities could discourage excessive energy use in this industry and redirect these resources towards climate finance.

Crowding in private sector financing

These funding mechanisms could help raise vital resources, but on their own, they cannot carry the weight of the financing shortfall. With sovereign debt levels already constraining many governments, public capital alone cannot meet Africa's climate financing needs. Private capital is essential for scaling up investments.

For example, South Africa's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) is a public-private partnership with the goal of increasing the country's electricity capacity via private sector financing. Before the programme's establishment in 2011, South Africa had a very minimal private power sector. Today, the country has majorly expanded its installed energy capacity and is one of the largest financiers of renewable energy across the African continent. South Africa has seen the highest growth in renewable energy capacity on the continent, including the highest installed wind capacity, accounting for 41 percent of total installations.

This transformation was made possible by policies that encouraged private investment while aligning with public climate goals. These models demonstrate how governments across Africa can attract private sector participation to drive the energy transition by creating supportive policy frameworks.

The climate crisis needs collaborative efforts

The climate crisis is a defining challenge of our time, and many had hoped for a more ambitious outcome at COP29 – on both finance and mitigation – to tackle it. But this agreement provides a base on which to build. It's now essential that this framework is fully honoured, and without delay. Commitments must quickly become cash – and all countries must come together to ensure the top-end of this new goal is met.

As the global race for climate capital continues to accelerate, African countries must embrace innovative and inclusive financing models that truly move the needle. Leaning on public-private partnerships, exploring tax system reform, and harnessing domestic resources are key to addressing the continent's complex, and urgent, climate financing challenges.

As we look forward to COP30 in Belém, the hard work begins now. Translating ambition into action today will determine whether we meet the scale of tomorrow's challenge.

Stanbic Bank Uganda Officially Appoints Mumba Kalifungwa as New Chief Executive

Stanbic Bank Uganda has underlined its prowess as the leading commercial bank in the country by tapping Mr Mumba Kenneth Kalifungwa from Absa Bank to be its Chief Executive Officer.

Mr Mumba now replaces Anne Juuko who was appointed Stanbic Bank's Regional Head of Global Markets in the group's Eastern African region.

"We are excited to announce the appointment of Mr. Mumba Kenneth Kalifungwa as our new Chief Executive, effective March 1, 2025," Stanbic Bank announced on Monday.

"Mumba brings to our team nearly 30 years of post-qualification experience, 20 of which have been in the banking sector, mostly in senior leadership roles covering business development, risk management, strategy formulation and finance strategy in three African markets including Botswana, Zambia, and for the last five years—Uganda. We are confident that under Mumba's leadership the bank will continue to experience even more success as we stay committed to our purpose of driving Uganda's growth," they added.

Mumba previously served as Chief Financial Officer for Absa Bank Botswana Limited since 2015. Prior to that, he was the Chief Financial Officer for our operations in Zambia.

He is a Chartered Accountant and seasoned organisational leader having over 24 years post-qualifying experience across banking, public and private sectors.

He is currently a fellow of; the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA), the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), Botswana Institute of Chartered Accountants (BICA) Zambia Institute of Chartered Accountants (ZICA).

Mumba Kalifungwa has been appointed Managing Director of at Stanbic Bank Uganda.

He also holds an MBA from Herriot Watt University, Scotland and has attended various senior leadership development programs over the years.

Uganda's Paul Muhame appointed president of East Africa Insurance Brokers Association

Paul Muhame has been appointed as the president of the East Africa Insurance Brokers Association 2025. This role highlights Muhame's significant contributions to the insurance industry and his commitment to advancing best practices across East Africa.

With more than 20 years in the insurance sector, Muhame is a leader celebrated for his expertise in driving efficiency, fostering innovation, and delivering optimal return on investment. His distinguished career includes senior management roles at major firms such as AIG Insurance and UAP Old Mutual. Muhame holds a Master's degree in International Business Administration from ESLSCA Business School, Paris, and a BA in Insurance from the University of New Delhi. As a Chartered Insurance Broker in the UK, he exemplifies the professional standards essential to leading the regional insurance sector.

Muhame's journey in the industry is marked by a passion for strengthening the regulatory landscape and enhancing insurance offerings. He is the founding CEO of Ballpack Insurance Group Ltd, now OLEA Insurance Brokers Limited, and has held significant leadership roles, including as Board Director of the American Chamber of Commerce and Uganda Warehouse Receipt Systems Authority.

In his new role as president of the East Africa Brokers Association, Muhame is dedicated to strengthening collaboration among brokers across the region and advocating for policies that promote growth and stability. With a wealth of experience, including his former roles as technical board director and current chairman of the Insurance Brokers Association of Uganda, as well as past president of the Rotary Club of Kampala South, Muhame is well-positioned to elevate the influence of insurance brokers in East Africa and advance industry standards.

Paul Muhame, President of the East Africa Insurance Brokers Association 2025.

This appointment reflects Muhame's notable achievements and the high regard he holds within the insurance sector. His leadership is anticipated to bring impactful advancements to the East Africa Insurance Brokers Association, with great expectations for the positive contributions he will make in this role.

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FAQs: Monetary Policy Statement for December, 2024

1. Bank of Uganda (BoU) issued the Monetary Policy Statement (MPS) for December 2024. What is the purpose of the MPS?

- The MPS communicates BoU's monetary policy decisions, such as changes to the Central Bank Rate (CBR).
- The CBR is a policy interest rate set to influence pricing of loans, mortgages, treasury bills & bonds, foreign currency etc. Ultimately, changes in the CBR affect the cost of borrowing.
- By controlling the CBR, the BoU aims to ensure price stability by keeping core inflation *(change in the overall price level, excluding prices of items which change rapidly and are beyond the control of policy like food crops, oil prices and administered prices-e.g. water & electricity)* around the 5% target.

2. Why was the CBR maintained at 9.75% in December 2024?

- The BoU's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) maintained the CBR at 9.75% because this level supports price stability while fostering sustainable economic growth.
- While inflation is expected to stay below the 5% target in the next 12 months, geopolitical tensions and policy uncertainties could cause fluctuations in economic activity and inflation.

3. What factors are contributing to the recent trend of low inflation rates in Uganda?

- Inflation remains low, largely due to previous CBR increases that have supported the shilling exchange rate, declining food crop prices due to favourable weather, and declining global inflationary pressures.
- Over the past 12 months, overall and core inflation averaged 3.3% and 3.5%, respectively. In November 2024, overall inflation remained steady at 2.9%, while core inflation slightly decreased to 3.8% from 3.9% in October 2024. This decrease was mainly due to reduced costs in services, especially in passenger transport services.

4. What should we expect of inflation going forward?

- BOU expects core inflation to remain below 5% over the next year. This is largely on account of increased capital inflows into the mining and oil sectors, which are likely to sustain the strength of the shilling. Combined with favourable food and oil prices, as well as easing global inflationary pressures, these factors are expected to help maintain low inflation levels.
- Inflation should gradually stabilize around the 5% target in the next 2-3 years.

5. What risks could affect inflation in the coming months?

Inflation might be lower if:

- The shilling strengthens due to higher foreign investments related to oil development,
- global growth and inflation remain low.

On the other hand, inflation could rise if:

- Geopolitical tensions disrupt trade and raise shipping costs and commodity prices,
- global financial conditions tighten, leading to a weaker shilling,
- weather conditions deteriorate, pushing food prices higher than projected.

6. What is the current economic growth outlook for Uganda?

- Recent data shows sustained strengthening in economic activity, driven by strong domestic spending.
- Economic growth is projected in the range of 6.0% to 6.5% for FY2024/25 and 7.0% to7.5% in the coming years. This growth is supported by strategic government initiatives, rising foreign investments in mining and oil, and the start of oil production in FY2025/26.

7. What factors could impact growth?

Growth could slow down if:

- Geopolitical tensions or changes in trade policies disrupt supply chains and increase oil prices,
- ongoing tight domestic financial conditions persist and increase borrowing costs, and higher domestic borrowing by Government crowds out the private sector, constraining private sector credit growth even more; and
- the government's capacity to address emerging global shocks is constrained.

On the other hand, growth could improve if:

- Government interventions result in improvements in productivity growth,
- investment is stronger in the mining and oil sectors,
- the global economy picks up supporting exports, remittances, tourism, and foreign direct investment: and
- good weather conditions lead to better crop harvests.

8. What factors could determine monetary policy going forward?

Future adjustments to the policy rate will be guided by incoming data and a continuous evaluation of risks to inform the MPC's decisions.

Insurance Regulatory Authority of Uganda
Driving insurance growth

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PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

1. Under Section 33(1) and 34 (1) of the Insurance Act, Cap 191, all persons or entities operating as insurers should hold a valid licence issued by the Insurance Regulatory Authority of Uganda (IRA).

2. Section 147 of the Act, further requires the Authority to publish in an appropriate manner and form, the details of licensees and the scope of the licences granted.

3. The **PUBLIC IS HEREBY NOTIFIED** that as at November 13, 2024, the Authority granted a licence to a Life Insurance Company below to transact life insurance business in Uganda.

   Britam Life Assurance Company (Uganda) Limited
   P.O Box 36583 Kampala- Uganda
   Plot 24A Akii Bua Road – Nakasero, Britam House, Ground Floor
   Tel: +256 312 305 600
   Website: https://ug.britam.com/
   Email : britamug@britam.com

4. The public is reminded to deal with **ONLY** licensed players.

5. Members of the public are further reminded of the existence of an **Online Complaints Bureau system (www.iracomplaints.go.ug)** to which they may lodge insurance-related complaints.

6. For any inquiries, please contact the Insurance Regulatory Authority of Uganda on the above address.

The Authority is committed to being a model Regulator of a Developed and Secure Insurance Industry

#DrivingInsuranceGrowth

Alhaj Kaddunabbi Ibrahim Lubega
Chief Executive Officer

Africa insurance market has collaboration in clear focus as climate change rings disruption

Insurers, regulators and governments in Africa have the aim of collaboration in clear focus in order to navigate an era marked by climate change, technological advancement, evolving customer needs and complex global risks.

Delegates attending the inaugural CEOs Summit themed 'Leaders' perspective: Sustainable growth for the global insurance industry' that was convened in Nairobi, Kenya, by Kenya Reinsurance Corporation (Kenya Re), were told how collaborations can narrow the protection gap in the continent while ensuring sustainability.

The three-day summit drew over 340 CEOs from 83 countries in Africa, Middle East and Asia. Insurers, reinsurers, regulators and other stakeholders used the event to explore ways of collaborating in the face of new challenges, in particular weather-related risks such as floods, drought and earthquakes that have put insurers' underwriting models to the test.

Innovation in the face of disruption

Godfrey Kiptum, CEO at Kenya's Insurance Regulatory Authority, told delegates that for the insurance sector to grow sustainably, the regulatory environment must be conducive to both innovation and sustainable business practices. However, he observed that striking a balance between growth and sustainability is the root of the challenges facing insurance policymakers today.

"Let us first acknowledge the dynamic risk landscape that insurance companies are now facing. From climate risks, natural disasters, cyber threats and pandemics, the scope of risks is expanding beyond traditional models. This calls for a regulatory framework that is both adaptive and proactive," said Kiptum.

Giving an example of recent floods in Kenya which cost insurers over KES5-billion (US$38.8-million) in claims, Kiptum said extreme weather events are increasing in frequency and severity, directly impacting the insurance sector's ability to assess and underwrite risks.

"As insurers confront growing losses, regulators are tasked with ensuring that companies have sufficient capital reserves while also promoting risk reduction through ESG [Environmental, Social and Governance] criteria. In this regard, government and regulatory bodies must support disclosure requirements related to climate risks, encourage green investments and create sustainable business practices.

The integration of climate-related risks into insurance policies will ensure that the sector can remain viable even as it manages the financial impact of a warming world. While managing these risks, regulators must also promote innovation within the industry. The regulatory environment must ensure it remains accessible to all. Financial inclusion, particularly in developing economies, should be a priority, with policies aimed at making sure insurance products are affordable and widely available," said Kiptum.

Building resilience

Alhaj Kaddunabbi, CEO of Insurance Regulatory Authority of Uganda and chairman of East Africa Insurance Supervisors Association, said both the regulations and insurers must speak to resilience in the changing environment.

In his presentation titled 'Regulatory resilience: Preparing the industry for a changing world,' Kaddunabbi told delegates that regulators and insurers must at all times put customers at the heart of all they do if they are to build trust and convince more people into buying the innovative products they are coming up with.

"I have always told my audience that insurance sells papers. If that paper is meaningless, then it means they cannot part with their money. That is why we look at safeguarding the policyholders' interests, so that there is no financial loss," said Kaddunabbi.

Collaborating for cross-border risks

Delegates agreed that given the growing cross-border nature of risks today, be it climate change, cyber threats or pandemics, it is crucial that regulatory authorities collaborate at international level.

This means frameworks such as the International Association of Insurance Supervisors, Financial Stability Board and other associations of regional regulators must share best practices, harmonise standards and develop early-warning mechanisms to address early systemic risks before they escalate. Simply put, Kiptum said, regulators should co-operate in the formulation of global capital standards and work together.

"The path forward for the insurance sector hinges on the delicate balance between fostering innovation and ensuring stability, protecting consumers and promoting inclusive growth. A thoughtful and adaptive regulatory approach is essential to achieving this balance," added Kiptum.

"As playmakers, regulators and industry leaders, our responsibility is clear. We must create an environment where insurance companies can innovate responsibly, where consumers are protected and empowered and where growth is aligned with sustainability. This is of course no small talk. But with collaboration, commitment to clear and global consideration, we can build a future-ready insurance sector that serves the needs of today while safeguarding the opportunities for tomorrow."

Kaddunabbi told delegates that regulators such as those in East Africa were already collaborating and that points to the realisation that markets in Africa are not going to grow in isolation.

"Many other regulators know how many times we meet in order to compare notes of what is happening in our spaces. We have a forum as East African insurance supervisors. And we also have another one at Africa level, and the regional ones, the international ones, which are all intended to ensure that we are up to the game. And we get guidance from the International Association of Insurance supervisors when they issue insurance core principles," said Kaddunabbi.

Chris Kiptoo, principal secretary at Kenya's National Treasury, said the insurance sector is at the heart of building resilience as it provides a solution for risk management in the face of climate change shocks.

Fostering partnerships

He noted that governments have no choice but to partner with insurers in improving access to insurance services, especially among the underserved population.

With many economies in Africa still concentrated in climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, Kiptoo said insurers and governments have to collaborate to foster innovations if they are to secure sustainable economic growth.

"By working together, we can ensure that the policies align with both the industry's needs and the governments' objectives of economic growth, financial inclusion and promotion of social welfare," said Kiptoo.

"As we continue to implement policies aimed at improving the business environment and attracting investment, the role of the insurance sector remains central. The ongoing development of innovative insurance products, driven by technology, is a key enabler of economic resilience. I am happy to note that these products are reaching sectors that were traditionally not covered and coming up with ways to protect different industries from these risks."

Collaborating on awareness

Beyond collaborating on product innovation, Kiptoo asked insurers to join hands in enhancing education awareness of insurance so that people accept insurance as a crucial spend for themselves and their businesses.

"Growth of the insurance sector, expanding access to insurance services, especially to underserved populations, will play a critical role in reducing poverty and promoting equity in our country and Africa. I encourage all stakeholders here today to contribute to these national objectives by innovating around products that cater to the unique needs of our people," said Kiptoo.

Hillary Wachinga, managing director at Kenya Re, said the summit offered an opportunity for the sector players to reflect on what they have done and what more can be done for the betterment of the insurance industry in Africa and beyond.

According to Wachinga, through collaboration, insurance companies can expand their client base, policy holders gain access to robust risk management solutions and the economy benefits from a more financially secured population.

"We like to say that it takes a village to raise a child. For our industry, this is a village, and we all have a part to play to ensure that the insurance sector grows sustainably and responsibly. Our business is anchored on relationship management, and that is what has informed this Summit," said Wachinga.

"It is not always about competition, but also joining forces to address problems that mutually face our businesses. By fostering collaborative spirit, we can create a win-win situation for all stakeholders.

Wachinga's sentiments were echoed by Catherine Kimura, board chairperson at Kenya Re, who told delegates that the summit provided an opportunity for insurance players on the continent to draw a shared strategic vision to chart a path into the future.

She said the changing landscape in Africa presents risk managers with a unique opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue, share insights and to collectively explore the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for the insurance industry.

"This summit is not just about addressing the issues we face today, but also about crafting a long-term strategy that will guide us and guide our industry through the complexities of the future.

At Kenya Re, we believe in the power of collaboration. We understand the insurance industry plays a critical role in the stability and growth of our economies. As such, it is our shared responsibility to ensure that we are not only prepared to meet the demands of the present, but also strategically positioned to navigate the uncertainties of tomorrow," she said.

John Mbadi, cabinet secretary at Kenya's National Treasury, reminded delegates of the need to think beyond their own national borders as they innovate products given that risks are increasingly getting interconnected.

"Remember that the ultimate

CONTINUE TO PAGE 18

Microfinance and SACCOs urged to embrace digital technologies

The Uganda Institute of Banking and Financial Services (UIBFS) successfully hosted the second Annual Microfinance and SACCOs Governance Forum at Mt. Zion Hotel in Kampala. The event, which took place on December 5th, 2024, brought together stakeholders from the microfinance and SACCOs sectors to discuss the theme “Digital Transformation & Sustainability in Microfinance”.

The forum aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of how Microfinance institutions can adopt sustainable financial practices in their daily operations. The event featured a lineup of prominent speakers, including Mrs. Masadde Goretti, CEO of UIBFS, who emphasized the importance of Microfinance and SACCOs in fostering financial inclusion and community development.

“Microfinance and SACCOs play a critical role in fostering financial inclusion and uplifting communities. However, the demands of modern governance and sustainability require us to continually rethink and improve our approaches,” Mrs. Goretti stated. “Today’s discussions on digital transformation, ESG principles, and operational efficiency will provide valuable insights to help us align our strategies with global standards while addressing local realities.”

Other notable speakers at the event included Mr. James Onyuta, Managing Director of FINCA Uganda, who delivered an insightful session on “The role of Microfinance in achieving sustainable development goals.” He explained the ways in which Microfinance institutions can adopt practices that foster the SDGs in their day-to-day operations.

The keynote speaker, Ms. Jackie Kitiibwa, Digital Economy Lead of FSD Uganda, shared her remarks on the topic: “Leveraging digital tools for operational efficiency and environmental impact.” Her presentation highlighted the importance of digital transformation in the microfinance sector and provided practical examples of how institutions can leverage digital tools to improve their operations and reduce their environmental impact.

Other speakers at the event included Ms. Beatrice Lugalambi, General Manager Corporate Communication and Marketing at Centenary Bank, who spoke on the topic: “Definition and Pillars of Sustainability: Environment, Social and Governance.” Mr. John Peter Mujuni, Executive Director of the Microfinance Support Centre, also presented on the topic: “Emerging Trends and Regulatory pressure on Sustainability.”

The event was sponsored by Centenary Bank and Zimba Technologies, and attendance fees were UGX 300,000 for physical attendance and UGX 200,000 for online attendance.

The Uganda Institute of Banking and Financial Services (UIBFS) is a leading provider of training and certification programs for the banking and financial services industry in Uganda. The Institute offers a range of programs, including professional courses, specialized programs, short skills programs, and academic courses.

The UIBFS is affiliated with several institutions and bodies involved in the provision, promotion, and regulation of banking and finance education. These include the Alliance of African Institutes of Bankers (AAIOB), Global Banking Education Standards Board (GBESTB), and collaborations with several training institutions, including Makerere University, the London Institute of Banking & Finance, and Frankfurt School of Finance & Management, among others.

Govt urges investors to embrace technology for market growth

KAMPALA, Uganda’s government recently called on investors to leverage technology and develop sustainable financial instruments to boost market investment.

The appeal was made during the launch of the Uganda Securities Exchange’s (USE) e-purchase platform for Treasury bills and bonds at the Capital Round Table in Kampala.

Minister of State for Finance, Planning, and Economic Development, Henry Musasizi, emphasized the importance of integrating technology into business operations to enhance financial inclusion and market liquidity.

“Bank financing is increasingly becoming sufficient support for investment and savings. Capital markets remain untapped by many investors,” Musasizi said. “Technology has facilitated efficient, real-time access to markets. We must align investor demands with product offerings.”

Musasizi also urged players to automate their operations, commending those already using digital platforms. He noted that the fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV) stresses innovation in the financial sector, promoting digital payment systems and financial literacy programs.

Josephine Okui Ossiya, CEO of the Capital Markets Authority, highlighted technology’s potential for democratizing access, reducing costs, and promoting financial inclusion.

“Financial services is one of the sectors that quickly adopted the use of technology,” Ossiya said. “Digital platforms provide transparency, reduce transaction costs, and expand capital reach to underserved markets.”

Paul Bwiso, CEO of the Uganda Securities Exchange, said the exchange’s new easy-to-use portal simplifies transactions, allowing investors to buy and sell securities via their phones.

“Prior to the easy portal, you had to walk to a broker to place your order, fill in a form and the like. Today, you can use your phone to open an account, amend your details, place an order, view your holdings, and get notifications,” Bwiso said.

Bwiso noted that the Uganda Securities Exchange has 251,000 registered investors, with 46,000 actively holding shares in listed companies. Ugandan participation in Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) has grown steadily since 2020.

The launch is part of Uganda’s efforts to promote financial inclusion and achieve its target of raising savings to 40% of GDP.

Paul Bwiso, CEO, Uganda Securities Exchange

Insurers battle to rise above climate change

FROM PAGE 17

goal is to build a more inclusive and prosperous Africa and the world. An insurance sector that is responsive, innovative and accessible to all is the cornerstone of this vision. By working together we can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential free from the fear of financial ruin due to unexpected events because technology has opened up geographical borders. Let us also enhance provision of risk solutions that promote cross-border trade. This will be key to enhancing intra-Africa trade,” said Mbadi.

Collaborating to stay ahead of the curve

Nancy Muhoya, managing partner for Ernst & Young in East Africa, said given the rising pressure to build trust and transparency, the additional disclosures required in the era of sustainability reporting calls for insurers to collaborate within and beyond their borders. She encouraged delegates to put into action the lessons from the three-day summit.

“Increasingly, we see insurance companies coming up with innovative products. I want to applaud them. I also want to applaud those organisations that have started a journey to net zero, because it is the right thing to do in the context of sustainable solvency for the insurance industry,” she said.

“We must think of things that have never been thought of, right? We must be ahead of everybody else. But can we all work together? Whether it is in providing services. Can we ensure that these lessons for these three days do not end here? Rather, we take them into action and implement them.”

Kiptum said insurtechs driven by technology such as artificial intelligence, big data and blockchain should be encouraged as a way of revolutionising traditional models of risk management, customer engagement and claims processing.

“For this, regulators must first of all encourage simplified products that meet the needs of the underserved population and secondly, promote microinsurance and parametric insurance solutions to protect vulnerable communities against natural disaster. Thirdly, they should ensure transparency in terms and pricing of insurance policies so that consumers can make informed decisions.

Viewing regulations as tailwinds

Commenting on balancing business with complying with regulation, Benjamin Andeya, chief risk officer at Gulf African Bank, said the financial sector should view regulations as competitive advantage and not as impediments.

He added that while compliance was initially seen as a police officer or a short stopper, anybody maintaining this view now is actually doing the wrong job.

“He or she is doing a disservice to the organisation that they’re working in. So, compliance to laws and regulations should never be seen as an impediment to doing business.

If anything, it should be taken as a competitive advantage in that organisation doing the right thing and actually delivering both its business objectives and also delivering to the customer, but within an ethical manner, and doing things in the right manner,” said Andeya.

Data Commissioner Immaculate Kassait said her office of data protection has seen some resistance on data privacy issues with some players feeling that a lot is being asked of them. This is particularly difficult for insurers thinking of cross-border businesses.

“There is no harmonisation of the data protection regulatory framework. It is challenging because if you are an insurance company in Kenya, you have to comply with different sets of regulations in Uganda, Tanzania etc, and that can be challenging,” said Kassait.

Hartnell Ndungi, chief data officer at Absa Group, said more than 70% of innovations in the insurance sector are likely to come from analysing data and that means understanding customers better to know how to come up with new pricing models and segmenting customers.

“You have to ensure that you not only have a sandbox but you are actually able to use data to innovate. But you must have guard rails on how to use data in your organisations,” said Ndungi, who challenged insurers to have test budgets for experimenting new ideas.

Uganda Development Bank Rallies Partners for Climate Action at COP 29

Panel discussion. From left to right: Olympus Manthata, Head of Climate Finance of Development Bank of Southern Africa, Marco Serena, Group Chief Sustainable Impact Officer of The Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG), Juvenile Ntacyo Muhumuza, Ag. Commissioner Development Assistance & Regional Cooperation Department at Uganda Ministry of Finance, Patricia Ojangole, Managing Director of Uganda Development Bank, Joseph Nganga, Vice President for Africa of the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP), Lanre Shasore, Senior Advisor Energy Transition Planning of Sustainable Energy for All

The Uganda Development Bank (UDB) hosted a Climate Finance Breakfast Roundtable recently, on the sidelines of the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP 29). The meeting sought to foster partnerships to combat climate change and integrate climate considerations into development finance across Africa.

The event, led by UDB Managing Director Patricia Ojangole, brought together government officials, financial institutions, and international organisations from Africa and other developing regions. Discussions focused on mobilising financial resources for climate-friendly projects, with participants sharing strategies and opportunities for collaboration.

Ojangole highlighted the critical role Uganda and other developing nations play in addressing climate change. She described UDB's Climate Finance Facility as a tool to mobilise green investments and guide projects aimed at reducing emissions and enhancing resilience.

"The Bank established the Climate Finance Facility to coordinate green financing initiatives, provide technical support, and assess low-carbon and climate-resilient investments. The goal is to finance interventions that reduce emissions and build resilience among Ugandans," Ojangole explained.

She also underscored Uganda's supportive policy environment, which attracts climate-conscious investors. "We have developed a robust policy framework to support our engagements with governments, funders, partners, and other stakeholders," she said.

Ojangole stressed the importance of working with the private sector to create bankable projects, ensuring capital mobilisation becomes seamless. "When you build a pipeline of structured projects, it becomes easier to engage partners," she noted.

Global and regional perspectives on climate action

Keynote speaker Ibrahima Cheikh Diong, Executive Director of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, acknowledged that some climate impacts, such as extreme floods and wildfires, exceed what people can adapt to. He urged African governments to see climate challenges as opportunities to advance sustainable development.

"Governments must create the right incentives to attract private investors and ensure public-private partnerships are viable," Diong said.

Joseph Ng'ang'a, Vice President for Africa at the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP), advocated for a regional approach to attract international partners and achieve scale. "Private capital needs a suitable risk-return ratio to be attracted. Thinking from a systems and regional perspective is critical," he stated.

Ng'ang'a praised Uganda for its leadership in green investment, citing its high-grade funding system designed to expand electricity access to underserved areas.

Collaborations for sustainable development

Other speakers highlighted the importance of partnerships in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7, which ensures access to affordable and sustainable energy. Lanre Shasore of Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) emphasised collaborative efforts with the United Nations, governments, financial institutions, and philanthropies to accelerate progress.

She pointed to currency risks as a barrier for African economies and called on domestic banks and pension funds to play a role in mitigating these challenges.

Marco Serena of the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) stressed the need for climate-resilient infrastructure in Africa, further aligning with the event's theme of driving sustainable development through climate finance.

The roundtable showcased Uganda's proactive role in climate action, positioning the country as a leader in mobilising partnerships for green development.

Stanbic Bank increases its unsecured sacco loan offering to shs4bn

Stanbic Bank Uganda has announced an increase in its unsecured loan offering to Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs) from sh200 million to sh4 billion, attained at an interest rate of 10%.

This was unveiled during the bank's saccos forum hosted at Onomo Hotel in Kampala.

Francis Karuhanga, the Chief Executive of Stanbic Holdings Uganda Limited (SUHL) said the decision to elevate the SACCO preposition is a strategic response to the feedback gained from the previous engagements with Cooperative leaders across the country and the growing demand for affordable financial solutions, a move that perfectly aligns with the government's National Development Plan.

Karuhanga said the increased loan limit is expected to empower SACCO groups, especially those led by women and youth providing them with greater financial resources to invest in their enterprises, improve operations, and contribute positively to the social-economic transformation of the unbankable community.

"In line with our purpose, we believe that by doing this we are not only creating opportunities for our customers but also transforming the lives of people who we cannot reach as a bank. Statistics show that all banks in Uganda only serve 5 million people yet the Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations serve close to close to 20 million people. Therefore it is s paramount for us as the leading drivers of Uganda's economic development to provide access to inclusive and affordable financing solutions," Karuhanga said.

James Junguru the Stanbic Manager handling Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations said that the new sh4 billion ceiling allows for significant enhancements in loan distributions, facilitating larger projects and financial turnaround for these cooperative societies, which play a vital role in the livelihoods of many Ugandans.

For SACCOs to access this financing, it need to have been in operation for at least three years, with audited books of account and credible leadership.

"Stanbic bank has already disbursed over sh200 billion and is currently undertaking comprehensive support and resources to help SACCO members understand the new opportunities available to them. These offers include investment alternatives like treasury bills and unit trusts through our sister company SBG Securities, affordable insurance packages for their loans and assets, and an opportunity to integrate their systems into our Flexipay platform which simplifies collections, distribution, and managing records among others," Junguru said.

Augustine Tamale, a leader from one of the saccos thanked the bank for organizing the interactive event. He said developments like increasing the sacco unsecured loan ceiling is a great opportunity to help them remain liquid at all times.

"This move is very important because when our members save money, they expect to get helped in time of need up to three times their total savings. However, as SACCO leaders we are always looking for investment opportunities to help our groups make money and grow our assets and pay dividends," he said.

"However sometimes members may come looking for more money at a time when we have just invested for example in a real-estate site where money can't be realized immediately. Therefore, an intervention like increasing our credit ceiling will help us serve our customers better."

Tunde Thorpe, the Stanbic Bank Head of Transactional Banking, described the move as part of the love month celebrations under which the bank continues not only to give back to communities but also offer innovative solutions that best suit the needs of its customers.

"Stanbic as an institution remains committed to fostering an inclusive financial environment that empowers individuals and supports sustainable development across the country. We know that this initiative has come at a crucial time as the country continues to navigate economic recovery in the aftermath of the pandemic. Our increased loan limit aims to encourage investment, stimulate economic activity, and ultimately drive growth within local communities," Thorpe said.

UCC urges shift from AI fear to embrace of benefits

KAMPALA – The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) has launched an ambitious Artificial Intelligence (AI) initiative aimed at leveraging the transformative potential of the technology to advance the nation's development goals. The initiative was unveiled by UCC Executive Director Nyombi Thembo, who underscored the importance of shifting from a mindset of apprehension to one of appreciation for AI's capabilities. "We shouldn't fear AI, but rather seek to understand its benefits," Thembo asserted. "AI has the potential to revolutionize key sectors such as healthcare, agriculture, and education, driving sustainable growth and improving public services."

UAP Old Mutual Insurance Celebrates Consecutive Wins at the 2024 Financial Reporting Awards

UAP Old Mutual Insurance has once again set the bar for excellence in corporate reporting by securing top honours at the 2024 Financial Reporting Awards (FiRe Awards). This year's awards ceremony, held on November 6th, recognized companies dedicated to best practices in financial reporting, with a special focus on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) disclosures. This marks a back-to-back victory for UAP Old Mutual, highlighting its leadership in transparent and accountable business practices within Uganda's insurance sector.

Under the theme "Promoting Excellence in Corporate Reporting: Disclosing ESG Performance and Progress," the 2024 FiRe Awards emphasized the importance of clear, comprehensive ESG reporting. The event focused on how companies demonstrate progress in addressing feedback from previous evaluations and aligning their reporting with global sustainability standards. This year, UAP Old Mutual was distinguished through its commitment to improving corporate accountability and transparency in line with international best practices.

UAP Old Mutual's subsidiaries achieved outstanding results in two competitive categories. Old Mutual Life Assurance secured the 1st Runner-Up position in the Life Assurance category, while General Insurance achieved the top spot as the winner in the General Insurance category. These accolades underscore UAP Old Mutual's dedication to maintaining high standards of financial reporting and transparent communication of its ESG initiatives.

The awards ceremony highlighted the importance of corporate responsibility in today's business environment. General Katumba Wamala, the Chief Guest and Minister for Works and Transport, congratulated this year's winners and emphasized that organizations must be deliberate in their actions that impact the environment and community.

UAP Old Mutual Insurance celebrates consecutive wins at the 2024 financial reporting awards

Winnie Nassimba, UAP Old Mutual General Insurance Chief Accountant holding the General Insurance category Award, UAP Old Mutual Life Assurance Chief Accountant Jerry Okullo holding the Life Assurance category 1st runner up Award and the rest of the UAP Old Mutual team pose for a photo moment during the 2024 Finance Reporting (FiRe) Awards

"Financial reporting fuels trust and progress," he said, underscoring the essential role that transparent and accurate reporting plays in decision-making for shareholders, regulators, and the public.

FiRe Awards Committee Chairman CPA Stephen Ineget also noted the impressive growth in participation, with a record-breaking 108 entities competing in 2024 and 82% of last year's participants returning.

"This increase reflects a strong commitment to transparency and excellence in corporate reporting among Uganda's business community," Ineget remarked.

For UAP Old Mutual Insurance, this year's achievements at the FiRe Awards highlight its leadership within the industry and its commitment to high standards in ESG reporting. The success in both the Life and General Insurance categories demonstrate the businesses' excellence in ESG-focused reporting and fostering trust and accountability in the marketplace.

The Financial Reporting Awards (FiRe Awards) were introduced in 2011 by the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Uganda (ICPAU), in partnership with the Capital Markets Authority (CMA) and Uganda Securities Exchange (USE). The awards celebrate organizations that adopt best practices in financial reporting, encouraging them to achieve greater transparency and accountability. Each year, the FiRe Awards evaluate private, public, and non-profit entities on their adherence to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and their integration of emerging trends in corporate reporting.

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