

The Minister of Local Government, Hon Tom Butime has informed Chief Administrative Officers and Municipal Town Clerks of Government's intention to take austerity measures such as cuts on travel budgets so as to enable implementation of such emerging priorities as the planned public pay enhancement policy.

*"You as accounting Officers should now be fore warned that approval of huge numbers of officials from Local Governments going for visits to benchmark, attend celebrations, workshops, short courses of one week, meeting imaginary mayors to twinning your towns – I will not approve",* he cautioned, while at the same time noting that LGs were struggling with resource inadequacies.

The Honourable Minister made these remarks at the quarterly meeting held on February 15, 2018 at Hotel Africana, for Chief Administrative Officers from the 121 Districts, Municipal Town Clerks 41 Municipalities Staff of the Ministry of Local Government and officials from line ministries.



*Minister of Local Government, Hon Tom Butime and Permanent secretary Mr. Ben Kumumanya pose with some CAOs, Municipal Town Clerk and MoLG staff during the third Quarterly meeting for FY 2017/18 on February 15, 2018 at Hotel Africana.*

The routine quarterly meeting had been convened to evaluate the performance of the local governments, and provide a platform for responding to emerging policy and operational issues that affect the effective functioning and delivery of services by Local Governments.

Major items on the day's agenda were the public finance management reforms, management of Private Schools in Local Governments, management of the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP) and the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP). The Local

Government Accounting Officers used the engagement to raise such critical issues as the encroachment of wetlands, congestion of some health centres and operationalisation of the new Administrative Units.

The Honourable Minister also told the accounting officers that there had been a breakthrough on the holding of Village and Parish Council elections, which had already been halted on account of two court orders. He informed the Participants that the Electoral Commission would communicate the new dates for the much needed elections, as they would enable the country plug the gaps in the grassroots governance and administrative set up.

With regard to the controversy surrounding the public transport sector, the Hon Minister noted that the meeting with the stakeholders, including H.E the president had as yet yielded no consensus. He nevertheless requested Urban Authorities to exercise their mandate as provided for under the Local Government Act to identify, design, designate and, developing and gazetting parking areas.

In his own keynote address, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government, Mr. Ben Kumumanya appreciated the commendable effort of the technical heads of Local Governments, in spite of such teething challenges as budget, human resource constraints, and logistical inadequacies. He also provided guidance on a number of issues affecting service delivery, including financial management, trade orderliness in Urban Local Governments, property valuation in Urban Councils, operationalization of the new Town Councils, management of the IFMS, etc.



*The Ps Ministry of Local Government Ben Kumumanya (R) chats with the Director of Inspection John Genda Walala at the CAOs and TCs Meeting on Thursday.*

Presentations were also made by representatives of line ministries on key issues on interest to local governments.

On Public Finance Management, the Director Budget at the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development urged LG Accounting Officers to appreciate the importance of such as the Programme Based Budgetary Reforms (PBB) as they were intended to keep pace with the international best practices, and enhance efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. The system was rolled out in August 2017.



On the Uganda Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP) AND Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Programme (UWEP), the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has asked the LG Accounting Officers to fully recover funds from beneficiaries. Whereas the two sister programmes had made tremendous achievements, the recovery rate of the funds had remained low, with districts

remitting on 65% of the Youth Livelihood Fund and 58% of the Uganda Women Entrepreneurship Fund.

On the management of private schools, the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Education and Sports reminded the LG Accounting Officers of their responsibilities with regard to the Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education service delivery.

He noted that Uganda's education is currently dominated by the private sector, which provides all pre- primary education, 30% of Primary Schools, 66% of Secondary Schools and 80% of Universities, majority of whom are operating for profits.

Under the Education Act 2008, the Local Governments have responsibilities of licensing of school emerges or operates without a license and regular monitoring, supervision of both government and private schools to ensure compliance to set procedures and policies.

The PS, MoES appealed to the CAOs and TCs to urgently develop and implement education development plans to prevent "haphazard establishment of Schools."



*Hon of State for Local Government engages participants during the Quarterly meeting of CAOs, Town clerks and Ministry staff at Hotel Africana on February 15. Left is the Head of District Administration, Commissioner Paul Okello Okot.*

In her closing remarks, the Hon Minister of State for Local Government underscored the importance of Quarterly meetings as a basis for sharing and discussion of pertinent issues that affect operations and delivery of services in LGs; the choice of issues for focus during the quarter had been carefully done.

She reiterated the decision by MoLG in concert with relevant MDAs to undertake joint supervision and monitoring exercise of these and other programs and projects. She urged responsible parties to timely and adequately provide reports on implementation.