

# GOVT SETS TOUGH TARGETS FOR HEADTEACHERS

PHOTO BY MPALANYI SSENTONGO

## EDUCATION

The First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Mrs Janet Museveni, had earlier warned that headteachers would be required to explain poor performance by schools, writes Dallen Namugga.



Turyagyenda (second-left), being welcomed by Frances Atima, the chairperson of the placement committee, and other officials upon arrival for the opening ceremony of the Senior Five selection exercise at UMA Multi-purpose Hall in Kampala last Wednesday. Turyagyenda described the new performance targets as central to improving quality and accountability in schools

Headteachers across the country have been handed a new performance framework that will measure their leadership not only by exam results, but also by how well they manage schools, supervise teachers and implement the curriculum.

The education ministry permanent secretary, Dr Kedrace Turyagyenda, outlined fresh performance targets for headteachers, describing them as central to improving quality and accountability in schools.

Turyagyenda said the new appraisal framework for headteachers is divided into four broad areas: overall duty, general management outputs, administrative responsibilities and curriculum implementation.

Under general management, headteachers will be required to demonstrate clear planning and execution of school development plans, improvement plans, annual work plans and procurement plans.

Speaking during the closure of the 2026 Senior Five selection exercise at UMA Show Grounds in Kampala on Friday, Turyagyenda said headteachers are also expected to foster teamwork among staff, strengthen community involvement and ensure that schools provide a safe and environmentally friendly learning space.

"We expect all of you to plan and make your school green," she said, encouraging schools to utilise available land and plant trees to create conducive environments for learners.

The permanent secretary stressed that leadership goes beyond academics, calling on headteachers to build institutions that are

organised, inclusive and forward-looking.

## ADMINISTRATION

On administrative responsibilities, Turyagyenda said headteachers will now be assessed against 18 specific targets.

These include ensuring functional and properly constituted boards of governors, holding regular and well-documented meetings, and maintaining transparent school-based decision-making processes.

Headteachers are also required to closely monitor staff attendance using available data systems, keep updated records and submit reports to the ministry on time.

"Sometimes we send out a call and expect you to respond. We need that data to be able to push for staff requests," she said, noting that delayed or missing information affects planning at national level.

Turyagyenda added that effective supervision must become routine practice in schools, not an occasional exercise.

## CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

Perhaps the most detailed expectations were outlined under curriculum implementation.

Turyagyenda said headteachers must ensure that teachers prepare adequately for lessons through approved schemes of work and lesson plans. She cautioned against leaving instructional supervision entirely to classroom teachers, insisting

## HEADTEACHERS SPEAK OUT

Agnes Nabirye, the headmistress of Muterere Secondary School in Bugiri, said the new performance targets are sound and largely reflect what schools are already trying to implement. However, she highlighted structural challenges that make full enforcement difficult.

"Forcing teachers to come to school on time and then using monitoring tools to track attendance becomes a challenge when some have no transport or have not received pay," she said, adding that delays in capitation grants under Phase Two and inadequate staff accommodation make management harder.

Nabirye recalled that at her previous posting, only three houses were available for 31 staff. On her current station, Nabirye pointed out that salary disparities affect teacher morale.

"Some staff are disgruntled; they just want to teach and go, which affects overall school performance."

She concluded that while schools are making an effort to follow the ministry's guidance, they are finding a bit of resistance because they don't have enough support from the ministry.

Aaron Ahimbisibwe, the deputy headteacher of Kinoni Girls Secondary School, said the school supports the new government frameworks and is ready to implement them. He noted that students wake up at a reasonable time and are given adequate rest because it is essential for academic success.

He added that the school promotes a positive learning environment, with zero tolerance for bullying and a strong emphasis on unity.

"As a government school, we are in support of these frameworks," Ahimbisibwe said, adding that they will implement them "for the good of the learners we are serving".

While the permanent secretary's address centered on accountability and performance, other education leaders at the event highlighted complementary priorities.

that headteachers have a duty to regularly review teaching documents.

"We don't just leave the data to you; we need to have the manuals," she said.

Turyagyenda further directed headteachers to institute systems for monitoring teacher attendance and classroom engagement, warning against scenarios where teachers are present physically but not actively teaching.

The permanent secretary also emphasised proper recording of continuous assessment marks, especially for learners transitioning between key classes such as Senior Three to Senior Four and Senior Five to Senior Six.

"There is a big worry that some students just sit and don't have marks recorded," she said, cautioning that fabricated or hurriedly compiled marks undermine credibility.

Beyond paperwork and supervision, Turyagyenda raised concern about excessive academic pressure on learners.

Citing research indicating that children under 18 years require at least eight hours of sleep, she questioned school routines that require learners to wake up as early as 4:00am and remain in class until late evening.

"Please let children be children. Make sure that they sleep," she urged.

Turyagyenda also challenged schools to prioritise co-curricular activities, arguing that sports, music and other engagements are essential for holistic development rather than distractions from academic performance.

Recently, the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Mrs Janet Museveni, said the ministry would demand a written explanation from the responsible teachers, headteachers, district inspectors of schools (DIS) and district education officers (DEOs) for the ungraded candidates.

She made the announcement last month during the release of the 2025 Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) results at State House Nakasero.

When releasing the next sets of PLE results next year, Mrs Museveni noted that the ministry will demand answers from headteachers, DEOs and DISs, "as to why we have many ungradable candidates in a school or schools in each local government when such a school has a headteacher, teachers, DIS, DEO on the government payroll."

"So, we need to stop lamenting about the unsatisfactory academic performance of our learners but put to task those who are at the frontline to explain why the results are the way they are," Mrs Museveni said.

On Friday, Turyagyenda acknowledged that school leaders operate under difficult circumstances, often with rising enrolments and limited resources. However, she urged them to maximise what is available as government progressively works to ease their burden.

"Be faithful in little so that you are manifested in much," she said.

Wehn contacted yesterday, the district inspector of schools in Kikuube, Amon Zondera, warned that there will be consequences for non-compliance with the new performance targets.

Zondera said disciplinary measures already being

applied include warning letters, demotions and recommendations for early retirement for those nearing retirement age but consistently underperforming.

To ensure accurate implementation of the new targets, Zondera said headteachers will be required to submit appraisal reports, after which district officials will hold review meetings to assess progress.

"We sit with them, go through the tool and agree on implementation," Zondera said, noting that district inspectors will monitor whether schools are meeting agreed benchmarks.

He further attributed poor performance in many government schools to weak supervision by headteachers. Zondera said some school leaders are reluctant to conduct classroom observation and closely monitor teaching.

"I would urge headteachers to carry out classroom observation and follow through with these frameworks," Zondera said, explaining that school heads should sit in lessons, identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses, and provide guidance on how to improve.

He also stressed the need for stricter follow-up on curriculum implementation. Zondera said public holidays and co-curricular activities often disrupt the syllabus, but proactive headteachers should track missed lessons and organise recovery classes to ensure full coverage before learners reach candidate classes.

On time management, Zondera said headteachers must enforce adherence to timetables. He noted instances where teachers assigned specific subjects instead of teach others for convenience, undermining curriculum balance.

## MINISTER CALLS FOR GUIDANCE

State minister for sports Peter Ogwang commended the performance of Universal Secondary Education (USE) schools, attributing improvements to sustained government investment in infrastructure, financial reforms and ICT integration.

He called on schools to strengthen guidance and counselling, tackle bullying and uphold integrity in examinations.

"As teachers, we should be the ones who promote integrity among learners and not encourage them to cheat," Ogwang said.