

National News

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A report of the Auditor General indicates the state of the infrastructure is compromising privacy, safety, and health of learners in USE schools.

BY ISAAC MUFUMBA

The shortage of infrastructure in Universal Secondary Education (USE) schools is inching towards crisis proportions, with some schools found to still be using condemned pit-latrines facilities.

At least 233 of the schools visited by the Auditor General's office during a physical inspection of USE schools, between September and December 2025, were found to be using condemned pit-latrines.

The sanitation ratio recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) is one latrine stance for every 25 girls and 1 for every 30–50 boys, including urinals. That ratio is aimed at ensuring privacy, safety, and health. However, the Auditor General's findings indicate that the situation in the USE schools is compromising all three considerations. Many of those schools lack libraries, laboratories, classrooms, desks and accommodation facilities for teachers, classrooms and desks.

Classrooms in at least 252 schools were found to have cracked walls, while the iron sheets on 237 schools were found to be very old and damaged, a sit-

USE school buildings reach breaking point

uation that posed a danger to the lives of students and teachers alike.

These are some of the findings contained in the Auditor General's report for the period ending June 2025. The report noted that the state of the infrastructure is negatively impacting education in USE schools.

"Inadequate support infrastructure affects the learning environment, which may lead to students' poor performance, thus impairing the intended purpose of the USE capitation grant by the government," the report stated.

Lack of labs

The same report revealed that 136 schools lacked science laboratories, while 270 schools had laboratories that were not adequately equipped.

Mr John Chrysostom Muyingo, the State minister for Higher Education, said the Ministry of Education and Sports is set to address the problem.

"We are aware that there are some [schools] that do not have laboratories. But when it comes to spending this time, we are putting much more into science and technology-related programmes in our educational institutions... And when you look at the budget that is going to be presented soon, a lot is put in the construction and equipping of science labs," he said.



Pledge.

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is going to inject a lot of money in infrastructure development in the coming budget. Procurement of the necessary materials is also going to be one of the things where we are going to spend a lot of government money on."

- John Chrysostom Muyingo, State minister for Higher Education

However, Mr Joseph Ssewungu, the Kalungu West Member of Parliament, who is also the shadow minister of Ed-

ucation, questioned the government's commitment to making interventions in this matter.

"There is nothing you can do in education with the sitting regime. We just sit and talk. Take your time and read about what previous regimes used to handle the sector," Mr Ssewungu said. "Compare how [former president] Obote was managing education and how these [officials] are managing it. It is a total mess."

The Auditor General also found that these schools lacked other facilities that are required to facilitate effective teaching and learning. The report, for example, revealed that 182 schools lack libraries, while the 233 schools that had libraries lacked essential books.

Accommodation facilities for teachers were lacking in 251 schools.

Classroom facilities in 280 schools were found to be inadequate, which led to congestion in the few available classrooms.

According to the report, officials in local governments nationwide blamed the state of affairs in USE schools on inadequate funding from the central government.

Mr Muyingo attributed the problem to a limited resource envelope.

"The [education] sector is big. We can never have enough resources, yet the demand is extremely high," he said.

Old problem

This is not the first time that the Auditor General has raised concerns about the state of infrastructure in the universal education institutions.

In their report for the period ending June 2023, which focused on the state of infrastructure in Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools, the Auditor General reported that the problem of lack of infrastructure, which had been on since about 2020, had escalated to a point where 67 pupils were forced to share a single latrine.

That report also revealed that classrooms were heavily congested, with up to 77 pupils sharing a classroom and four pupils sharing a desk.

"I noted inadequate infrastructure in the form of staff houses, classrooms, latrines, and desks. These amenities create a safe, secure learning environment and make pupils more attentive as well as encouraging school attendance, hence attainment of learning outcomes," the 2023 report read in part.

It added that the lack of infrastructure was affecting the "delivery of the programme objectives, including the quality of education, pupil performance, dropout rates, staffing and infrastructure in the UPE schools".

Mr Muyingo acknowledged the extent of the shortages, but hastened to add that the ministry's budget for the next financial year has been tailored to address those shortages.

"The ministry is going to inject a lot of money in infrastructure development in the coming budget. Procurement of the necessary materials is also going to be one of the things where we are going to spend a lot of government money on," the minister said.