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# Prosecute those cited in Covid-19 cash abuse – CSOs

Friday, November 25, 2022



*Health workers attend to a Covid-19 patient in the Intensive Care Unit at Mulago Hospital on May 25, 2021. A new forensic audit shows government funds disbursed for response to the pandemic were wasted. PHOTO/FILE*

By ESTHER OLUKA

A section of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have condemned the actions of individuals and groups implicated in the Covid-19 Auditor Generals' report.

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Speaking to this publication yesterday, the CSOs urged the government to prosecute those implicated in the report. According to the classified report that was handed over to the Speaker of Parliament on Wednesday, a lot of money meant to fight the Covid-19 pandemic in the financial years 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 was either wasted or misappropriated by the Health ministry.

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Among the irregularities that were raised in the audit included flawed procurement processes, non-compliance with procurement laws, payments for “ghost” goods and services as well as double payments.

Mr Julius Mukunda, the executive director of the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), said: “What Covid-19 taught us is that people prepared themselves to just rip us off. If it had not been for the audit reports, we would not have known the extent to which people have ripped this country off.”

### Report

He added that the major challenge with such reports is that hardly any action is taken afterwards.

Mr Xavier Ejoyi, the country director of ActionAid Uganda, said

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actions to collectively disregard the way public funds are mismanaged,” Mr Ejoyi said.

He said those implicated in the crimes highlighted in the forensic audit should be relieved of their duties and prosecuted.



Mr Marlon Agaba, the executive director of Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda, said: “We need to see actions, the Audit General’s report should be a means through which the IGG (Inspector General of Government) should be following, investigating, and prosecuting some people, but this has not happened before and I don’t see it happening any time soon.”

Speaker Anita Among emphasised the need to do more to curb corruption in government ministries, departments and agencies.

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