



EDUWATCH NEW YEAR MESSAGE ON THE EDUCATION SECTOR

The year 2023 marks the beginning of a 3-year IMF programme occasioned by severe expenditure cuts that threaten to derail the attainment and sustenance of key equitable access, transition, and completion targets in the education sector, especially at the basic level.

The immediate manifestation of the IMF expenditure cuts is seen in a record (12.9%) lowest proportion of the national budget allocation to education, the first in about two decades, far below the 15% minimum international benchmark for education financing.

In addition, the already underfunded basic education budget for Goods & Services, from where Teaching and Learning Resources are financed has been further cut by 40%. This, coupled with a freeze on teacher recruitment will leave thousands of classrooms without trained teachers, especially in deprived communities.

In such difficult periods of resource deficits, spending efficiency and inclusive governance are strategies that must be accorded utmost priority by the Ministry of Education.

To optimize spending efficiency, the Ministry of Education must normalize competitive procurement, strengthen value for money, prioritize pro-poor spending through targeting of social interventions, and redistribute surplus teachers to schools with teacher deficits.

To improve inclusive resource governance and augment the resource gap, the Ministry of Education must adopt an equitable framework for formalizing already existing opportunities for parental contribution to financing basic and secondary education.

Both approaches cannot be effective without a demonstrable political will hinged on transparency, accountability, and inclusive governance.

Eduwatch and partners are committed to supporting the Ministry of Education in this new year to manage the harsh effects of the IMF programme on the achievement and sustenance of key Education Strategic Plan (2018-2030) and SDG 4 targets.

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