



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF
MINISTRY OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 2017

OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL
UGANDA

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF MINISTRY OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2017

THE RT. HON. SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying Financial Statements of Ministry of East African Community Affairs, which comprise the Statement of Financial Position as at 30th June 2017, the Statement of Financial Performance, Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes, as set out on pages 8 to 36.

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Ministry of East African Community Affairs for the year ended 30th June 2017 are prepared, in all material respects in accordance with section 51 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015 and the Financial Reporting Guide, 2008.

Basis of Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAIs). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of my report. I am independent of the Ministry in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995) as amended, the National Audit Act, 2008, the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (Parts A and B) (IESBA Code), the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) Code of Ethics and other independence requirements applicable to performing audits of Financial Statements in Uganda. I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the IESBA Code, and in accordance with other ethical requirements applicable to performing audits in Uganda. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Key Audit Matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in my professional judgment, were of most significance in my audit of the financial statements of the current period. These matters were addressed in

the context of my audit of the financial statements as a whole, and in forming my opinion thereon, and I do not provide a separate opinion on these matters. I have determined the matter described below as a key audit matter to be communicated in my report;

- **Inadequate Controls Surrounding Management of Domestic Arrears**

Domestic arrears refer to the total value of unpaid bills for goods and services rendered to a government entity, including wages and pension that remain outstanding at the closure of a financial year. There has been persistent accumulation of domestic arrears to unmanageable levels which has led to settlement of arrears that are not authorized, unbudgeted for, inadequately supported and in some instances there has been inadequate recognition and disclosure of the domestic arrears. The variances between the reported figures in the financial statements and the amounts verified by Internal Auditor General formed a basis of my qualification of consolidated GOU financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2016.

Consequently, domestic arrears were considered a key audit matter which needed to be examined to assess: the appropriateness of recording, recognition and disclosure of domestic arrears; the trend and the underlying factors; and the adequacy of the internal controls surrounding management of domestic arrears.

During audit planning, I focused on examination of domestic arrears in regard to goods and services, salaries and wages, and pension and gratuity. I undertook the following procedures in relation to domestic arrears: a trend analysis over a period of three years to ascertain the underlying causes of accumulation; reviewed budget and commitment control procedures to assess their effectiveness; ascertained the authenticity of the supporting documentation and assessed the appropriateness of the accounting treatment. I also engaged the Accounting Officer to enable me arrive at the audit conclusions.

Based on the procedures performed, I observed that the Ministry had accumulated obligation to the East African Community (EAC) amounting to UGX. 15,598,808,229 at the closure of the financial year under review (2016/2017).

These comprised obligations for the year under review of UGX. 2,980,722,203(USD 828,922) while the balance, UGX. 10,975,960,846 relates to accumulated amounts for prior years. I further observed that there has been an increase in domestic arrears over the period of three years from UGX. 870, 498,557 in 2014/15, to UGX. 11, 845,762,252 in 2015/16, and 13,956,683,049 in 2016/17. I also observed that during the financial year

under review, Uganda Government approved a budget of UGX. 19,757,708,000 (\$5,404,778.42) which was lower than the contribution budget of UGX 24,460,743,707 (US\$ 6,691,307.50) in the EAC approved budget resulting in a shortfall of UGX. 4,703,035,707. Similarly, I noted a difference between the payables figure of UGX.13,956,683,049 reflected under the draft financial statements and the verified amount of UGX.15, 598,808,229 and as a result, management was requested to adjust the financial statements.

The accumulation of outstanding obligations could result in reputational risks as well as penalties. It also stifles the community operations.

In response, management stated that MEACA communicated to MoFPED about the shortfall however no response was received. It was further stated that during the Budgeting for FY 2017/18, the Ministry communicated to MoFPED all arrears. MoFPED took note of this in the first budget call circular for FY17/18 and the ministry was expecting resources to clear the arrears.

Management is advised to follow up the matter with MoFPED to have sufficient budget provision for the outstanding obligation.

Other Matter

In addition to the matter raised above, I consider it necessary to communicate the following matter other than those presented or disclosed in the financial statements;

- **Mischarge of expenditure**

A sum of UGX.61, 788,200 was charged on codes other than those for which funds were appropriated leading to mischarge of expenditure. The Mischarge was attributed to inadequate budgeting and funding of the ministry.

The practice undermines the intentions of the budgeting process. It also undermines service delivery.

Management is advised to always comply with budgetary provisions and where inevitable, seek timely and relevant authority before reallocation of funds.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the Financial Statements

Under Article 164 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 (as amended) and Section 45 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015, the Accounting Officer is accountable to Parliament for the funds and resources of the Ministry.

The Accounting Officer is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Public Finance Management Act, 2015 and the Financial Reporting Guide, 2008, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatements, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Accounting Officer is responsible for assessing the Ministry's ability to continue delivering its mandate, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to delivery of services, unless Government either intends to discontinue the Ministry's operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISSAIs will always detect a material misstatement, when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users, taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISSAIs, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:-

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Ministry's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Ministry's ability to deliver its mandate. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Ministry to fail to deliver its mandate.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the management regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

I also provide the management with a statement that I have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on my independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.

From the matters communicated with management, I determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current period and are therefore the key audit matters. I describe these matters in my auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, I determine that a matter should not be communicated in my report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John F.S. Muwanga', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

John F.S. Muwanga

AUDITOR GENERAL

11th December 2017