

Women living with HIV want sh151b for ARVs

By Vision Reporter

Women living with HIV have asked the Government to more than double the sh100b funds earmarked for buying anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) this financial year.

The sh151b, which the activists want added to the ARVs budget, will go a long way in averting drug stock-outs experienced last year, they said.

The women, under their umbrella organisation, International Community of Women Living with HIV, Eastern Africa (ICWEA), want

BETWEEN THE LINES:

■ According to the Uganda AIDS Commission, at least 65% of the 1.6 million people living with HIV in Uganda are women.

a supplementary budget passed for the cause.

"We expected that the Government would allocate more funds for the procurement of drugs so that the third-line drugs are covered by the increments, but this has not been reflected in the 2016/17

budget.

This means that clients on third-line treatment will be expected to use other means to access treatment, which is against the right to health because it is the Government's responsibility to ensure that its citizens access quality health services," said Dorothy Namutamba, ICWEA programme manager.

She was addressing journalists in Kampala on Friday.

"The shortage of drugs is real and what actually happened towards the end of last year is bound to happen in three

months' time and this will, especially affect the women, who are the most affected because they are the carers of those with HIV."

Diana Tibesigwa, an official of the German Foundation for World Population, said she encountered many HIV-positive women in rural areas spending up to sh200,000 on ARVs after the free drugs in public health centre III facilities were out of stock.

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