

UGANDA PRISONS SERVICE PRAISED FOR SETTING AFRICAN STANDARD IN PRISON REFORMS



Uganda Prisons Service (UPS) has received praise for its strong and humane correctional system after hosting a high-level benchmarking visit by a South Sudan delegation and other international partners at Uganda Government Prison – Luzira Women.

The delegation, drawn from the South Sudan armed forces visited Uganda to study gender parity and modern correctional practices in action. The team also included representatives from UN member states such as India, Kenya, and Ghana.

The visit focused on how Uganda manages female inmates under the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), which guide humane treatment, dignity and rehabilitation in correctional facilities.



The delegation was guided by senior officers including Mr. Jacob Kivumbi, Commissioner of Prisons in charge of Custodial Services, Mr. Francis Xavier Elubu, Assistant Commissioner of Prisons (Regional Prisons Commander for Kampala Extra Region), and Ms. Esther Lamunu, Superintendent of Prisons (Officer in Charge of Luzira Women)

Visitors were taken through key areas of prison management, including rehabilitation programmes such as vocational skills training, formal education, sports, religious activities, and performing arts. These programmes are designed to support inmate reform and reintegration into society.



They also observed maternal and reproductive health services for female inmates, care for children living with their mothers in prison, improved accommodation standards and structured health service delivery. The delegation further learned about inmate classification systems, admission procedures, reception processes, and dynamic security approaches used to maintain both safety and dignity.



The South Sudan delegation expressed strong appreciation for Uganda’s correctional model, noting that all observed practices are fully aligned with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. They commended Uganda Prisons Service for consistently applying these international standards in day-to-day prison management.

Uganda Prisons Service was further praised for its continued commitment to aligning its reforms with global best practices. Over the years, UPS has implemented human rights-based corrections, positioning itself as a leading example in Africa. This has influenced several African states, including South Sudan, to adopt similar approaches in prison reform and rehabilitation.

Uganda's model demonstrates that prisons are not only for custody and punishment but also for rehabilitation, skill development, and social transformation. This approach has strengthened efforts to reduce reoffending and improve reintegration of former inmates into society.



The visiting delegation said the knowledge gained will support ongoing reforms in South Sudan, particularly in improving inmate welfare, strengthening gender-responsive systems, and enhancing correctional professionalism.

Uganda Prisons Service was widely recognized as a centre of excellence in correctional management in Africa, with its consistent application of the Nelson Mandela Rules earning international respect and regional influence.

The visit concluded with appreciation for the professionalism of UPS officers and the warm reception extended to the delegation, further strengthening regional cooperation in correctional services.

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