



# News Release

November 11, 2022

## Courts dispose of 68,000 cases in three months

The Courts have concluded a total of 68,075 cases between July and September 2022. This was detailed in the performance report of the Courts of Judicature for the first quarter of Financial Year 2022/2023 which was communicated by the Chief Registrar, HW Sarah Langa Siu.

“As of 14th October, 2022, a total of 68,075 cases had been completed across all Court levels from the Supreme Court to the Magistrates Courts while 167,594 cases remained pending,” she said. This on average means that the courts surpassed their quarterly case disposal target of 44,295 cases by 51 per cent.

The Chief Registrar emphasized that it was important to account to the people from whom judicial power is derived on the performance of the Courts. Overall, many of the Courts met and or surpassed their quarterly targets. For example, the High Court, both at Circuit and Division levels completed 11,804 cases against the set target of 7,295 cases. The completed cases account for 14.29% of the cases at the High Court which stood at 64,052 at the start of the quarter. In effect, the High Court surpassed its quarterly disposal target by 43%. The Family Division had the highest case disposal among the Divisions with a performance of 1,944 cases while Mukono High Court topped the circuits with 1,084 cases.

At the Magisterial level, the Chief Magistrates’ Courts had 65,610 cases brought forward from the last Financial Year with 39,864 cases newly registered. The Chief Magistrates’ courts disposed of 37,795 cases representing 33.94% of the disposal rate exceeding its quarterly disposal target of 25,000 cases. It therefore meant that the Chief Magistrates’ Court met its quarterly target and surpassed the same by 43%. The top performing Chief Magistrates Courts were Makindye Chief Magistrate’s Court with 1,654 cases followed by Mbarara Chief Magistrate’s Court with 1,416 cases and Fort Portal Chief Magistrate’s Court having concluded 1,398 cases.

In regard to Magistrate Grade One Courts, 17,706 cases were completed during the first quarter as against the set target of 11,250 representing 43.32% of the total cases disposed of. The Magistrates Grade One surpassed their quarterly disposal rate by 57%. 22,325 cases were brought forward from the last Financial year with 18,544 cases newly registered at this Court level. The top performing Courts in this category were Kampala City Hall Court with 1,424 cases, followed by Ngora Court with 615 cases and Law Development Centre with 528 cases.

The Magistrates Grade Two had 752 cases brought forward from the last Financial Year and 734 cases were registered during the quarter. They were able to dispose of 556 cases representing 37.19% of the cases completed during the quarter minimally falling short of their quarterly set target of 750 cases.

HW Langa noted that the Judiciary is undertaking all efforts to transform its operations with its emphasis being a shift from case backlog management to case load management. Consequently, a number of cases were disposed of during the quarter through the various innovations being undertaken by the Judiciary that include Plea Bargaining in Criminal Matters, Small Claims Procedure and Mediation in Civil Matters. As a result, during the quarter under review, 2,960 cases were completed through Small Claims Procedure while 184 cases were completed through Mediation. 17 cases were completed through Appellate Mediation.

Case backlog at the end of the quarter stood at 49,512 out of the 167,594 pending cases in the Courts accounting for 29.54% of all the cases. This shows there is a decline in backlog. “At the beginning of the quarter, backlog was at 30.11% and by the end of September, there was a 0.57 drop of the cases under this category,” the Chief Registrar said.

She is optimistic that the Judiciary will perform even better this quarter particularly in civil, family, commercial and land case categories because of the increased number of judicial officers and the expanded coverage of the Courts including the six new High Court Circuits and 16 new Magisterial areas. The challenge however will be in criminal matters especially in the Magistrates Courts due to the limited number of prosecutors that is lower than that of Magistrates and has affected adjudication of these cases.

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