

## **A just and equal world is possible only if we reclaim quality public services for all**

As the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights joins the rest of the world to commemorate the 75th anniversary since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December), it is crucial to recognize the pressing need for increased resources to address global challenges- ranging from climate change, high cost of living, to post-Covid 19 recovery and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

As noted in the [Global](#), [African](#) and [Uganda](#) Manifestos on reclaiming public services, quality public services are key in ensuring that everyone lives in a fair, inclusive, just, equitable, and sustainable community. Prioritizing quality public service delivery has a ripple effect; contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and breathing fresh air into the UN declaration on human rights for both the present and future generations.

Access to quality public services is not a luxury but a right as affirmed by the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights in its landmark instrument, [General Comment No.7](#). This instrument empathically obligates African states to publicly provide public services and effectively regulate any private sector involvement.

The above notwithstanding, many low-middle countries, including Uganda, grapple with underfinanced and poor-quality public health and education systems. Chronic underinvestment in inclusive social protection systems further threatens equitable and just realisation of human rights for all, particularly for the poor and vulnerable.

These challenges are a manifestation of International Financial Institutions' neoliberal capitalistic models such as public-private partnerships that have proven [insufficient](#), [unsustainable](#), and pose a threat to the full enjoyment of human rights for millions, especially the poor and vulnerable. As ISER has [documented](#), a model like this fails to reach the poor and vulnerable.

The rising debt and unfair repayment terms, as exemplified by Uganda's expenditure of [12.76 trillion](#) Ugx on interest repayment in FY 2020/2021, surpassing the combined budget allocated to critical sectors like health, education and social protection demand urgent redress. The message is clear- States can find resources to fund quality public services through curbing illicit financial flows, ensuring that the wealthy and multinational corporations pay their fair share of tax.

ISER [welcomes](#) the UN resolution to adopt a framework convention on Tax which will unlock more resources for developing countries by establishing fair and transparent taxation rules, and more equitable tax revenues to finance public services like health, education etc.

ISER urgently calls upon governments to; invest in public services financed by revenue from progressive taxation, curb illicit financial flows and ensure that the wealthy pay their fair share of tax; maintain stewardship in service delivery and effectively regulate private actors; and



**INITIATIVE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS**

ratify the African Protocol on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security.

