



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND
SPORTS**

**THE NATIONAL REPORT ON THE
DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN UGANDA
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY**

**REPORT TO THE 47TH SESSION OF THE
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The National Movement Government came to power in 1986. Over the past 18 years a series of Minimum Recovery Policies and Programmes have been drafted and implemented to address the social, cultural and economic needs of the people to improve the quality of their lives.

- 1.1 Government is committed to providing her people with quality basic education and training to prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century. These include globalization, modernization, the information age and the knowledge-based economic competition in the global markets.
- 1.2 In this regard, deliberate macro development policies and national reforms have been introduced and launched to transform society in general, and to achieve sustainable development. Education sector reforms, geared at increasing equitable access to quality basic education for all, form a significant component of the overall national vision and strategic development plans.
- 1.3 Curricular reforms to make education relevant, democratic, responsive to local social, economic and cultural needs are implemented at all levels in the education system. At post primary, tertiary and university levels science education, technology and skills training constitute major areas of study to provide skills for employment and for increased economic production.

This Report summarises some of the on going reforms government has undertaken in the education sector to achieve Education For All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The Report also lists the achievements made and the challenges facing the country in achieving the education sector objectives and goals.

2.0 THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY: AN OVERVIEW

The National and Sectoral Strategic Investment Plans in Uganda in the Medium and Long term Planning Periods, and in the Expenditure Budget Frame work prioritise education as a key building block in the

National Development process. During the current financial year 2004/2005, the education sector budget share of the GDP is 24.1% while the education sector share is 31.2% of the national discretionary recurrent budget.

Table 1 below indicates budgetary allocations by sub-sectors in education. The main policy and investment thrust is on increasing equitable access to quality basic education through Universal Primary Education (UPE) programmes.

Table I. Education Sector Shares By Sub-Sectors By % Fy 2003/2004 – 2004/2005

<u>Sub-sector</u>	<u>FY 2003/04</u>	<u>FY 2004/05</u>
Primary Education	68.4%	66.2%
Secondary Education	14.9%	16,7%
* BTVET	3.9%	3.7%
Tertiary Education	9.9%	10.8%
Others (including Universities)		

Source: Ministry of Education and Sports, Planning Department.

- 2.2 Following the promulgation of the new Republic Constitution, 1995, all laws governing education are under review to match them with the current national aspirations and policies at macro and micro levels. The organization, structure and management of the education sector are in the process of being reoriented to the national and international goals of education.
- 2.3 The shift from exclusive elitist education to mass and inclusive basic Education For All is one significant and successful education reform in line with the global EFA and MDG targets. Furthermore, participation by both government and the private sector as partners in the provision of education is one strategy that has improved on the level of resource investment and funding of education especially at Post Primary levels.

* *Business, Technical, Vocational, Education and Tertiary*

- 2.4 The private sector including NGOs (Non Government Organisations) have provided relatively well equipped schools with a variety of market oriented programmes. On the other hand NGOs are giving a variety of non-formal programmes targeting school dropouts and adults at grassroots community levels.
- 2.5 The shift to mass education has over the past 8 year been characterized by the Universal Primary Education Programmes (UPE). The reform recognizes education as a right for all citizens. It also underscores the importance Government attaches to education as a tool for achieving fundamental social change and integration of society.
- 2.6 Between 1997 and 2003 the enrolment at primary school levels rose from 2.7 millions to 7.3 millions respectively. The percentages of girls enrolled in primary schools is now 47% in rural schools and 49-50% in urban schools. An estimated 85% of the school going age children (6 years +) are enrolled in primary schools. Programmes are already in place to cover the remaining 15% including children in the disadvantaged communities and those living in areas of insurgency.
- 2.7 As a measure to enhance quality in the delivery of basic education services including UPE, Government adopted a holistic approach and a decentralized model of governance and management at that level. The UPE policy and programme package includes:
- Enrolment of all children of school going age of 6 years +.
 - Waiving of tuition fees and development charges.
 - Training, recruitment and paying of teachers' salaries.
 - Construction of school buildings and provision of required infrastructure.
 - Supply of core textbooks and other required instructional material.
 - Cash/resource allocations to UPE schools to meet daily school running costs.
 - Sponsorship of examination candidates at Primary Leaving Examinations level.

- Capacity building and mobilization of all stakeholders in support of the UPE programme to ensure accountability and efficiency in school management and resource utilisation.
- Targeted partnership with funding agencies, NGO's and the private sector to facilitate resource mobilization, technical assistance and capacity building required to improve service delivery at basic education levels.

The holistic approach to the provision of basic education in Uganda accounts for the success the country has achieved over the past years in the education sector reforms. This approach gives hope that the target EFA goals will be achieved within the given time frame.

3.0 EXPANSION AND DIVERSIFICATION OF THE POST PRIMARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING (PPET)

There is increasing social demand for post primary educating and training in Uganda. This is a direct result of the increasing numbers of young children now graduating from the UPE programme. But it is also an indication of the growing need by the people to acquire knowledge and skills to enable them face the challenges of the 21st Century and to improve the quality of their lives.

3.1 Government has in response to the increasing demand designed and launched a Post Primary Education and Training Policy, (PPET) including the following components:

- Renovation and expansion of the existing traditional secondary schools so that more students can be admitted.
- Construction of libraries and laboratories to enhance the teaching and learning process in schools and to improve on the school curriculum.
- Construction of “Seed” schools where there are none (These are Ordinary Level Secondary Schools located in remote rural areas to give primary school leavers access to secondary education)
- Grant aiding community schools by availing them with capitation and development grants to improve on school/programme management and school infrastructure.

- Construction of Community Polytechnics in rural areas to provide opportunities for skills training to the young school leavers and dropouts to make them economically productive.
- Rehabilitation and expansion of existing farm schools which offer market oriented skills for rural development in response to current employment demands.
- Promotion of apprenticeship schemes by the private sector for hands on training.
- Review of the skills training curricular to make it employment demand driven and flexible in content and structure.
- Support to private BTVET institutions by development partners, for example, GTZ/KFW.

3.2 The PPET policy and programme has given an integrated and holistic approach to the Post Primary sub-sector in the education system. This has improved on the transition rates of children from primary levels of education to the post primary levels. The PPET policy and programme has also highlighted the strategic intersectoral linkages between the education sector and other social services and productive sectors. Through Government restructuring all training Departments were recently transferred to the Ministry of Education and Sports as a measure of streamlining education and training processes in the country. This is already producing positive results.

3.3 Table II below indicates the percentage share by the Post Primary Education and Training Sub-sector out of the education sector budget. The table however, illustrates two critical challenges to government regarding reforms in the education sector:

- The transition rates from one level of education to the next level is still low. For instance, out of over 400,000 pupils who graduated from primary schools last school year, 2003, only 50% joined post primary educating institutions. The scenario applies to levels beyond post primary. Only 10% of the children who enroll in primary schools transit to university levels. The transition rate by girls is even lower than 10%.
- Budget shares at the post primary levels are low due to scarcity of resources. This explains the need for private sector investment in education at this level and flexible funding mechanisms to sustain the

tertiary and university sub-sectors and institutions have been put in place. For example, the private sponsorship policy at tertiary and university levels has given access to more youth at those levels.

Table II. Education Sector Shares By Post Primary Sub-sectors.

<u>Sub-sector</u>	<u>FY 2003/04</u>	<u>FY 2004/05</u>
Secondary education	14.9%	16.7%
*BTVET	3.8%	3.7%

Source: Ministry of Education and Sports, Planning Department.

4.0 HIGHER AND UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Government is now running 4 (four) Public Universities and sponsoring over 4,000 students each year taking various courses. This is a very significant improvement realizing that the demand for trained professionals at that level rises as the socio economic sectors grow.

4.1 Following the Liberalisation Macro Policy of Government, the private sector including NGO's have significantly invested in Higher Education. There are now 14 (fourteen) Licensed Private Universities offering courses in a wide range of disciplines to a large number of students. This is another policy reform which has significantly improved access to tertiary and university education and training.

4.2 A Draft Strategic Investment Plan for Higher Education has been finalized. The major thrusts of which are:

- To reform Higher Education curricular to address national and intervention needs.
- To maintain and sustain the quality of education at that level.
- To improve management of higher education in the country.

* *BTVET includes Farm Schools and Community Polytechnics. It also includes training institutions in other public sectors like Health, Agriculture, Business etc.*

- 4.3 The Government enacted the University and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, 2001, to give a legal framework for management and administration of Higher Education Institutions in the country and to give legal back up to the expansion and quality of Higher Education.

A National Council for Higher Education has also been established as provided for in the Act. The Council is responsible for Licensing Private Universities and it sets Academic and Management Standards for all Universities in the country. The composition of the National Council for Higher Education reflects a wide range of national interests covering various areas of development.

5.0 SPORTS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The broad policy objective of developing Physical Education and Sports is to create a health united democratic and productive nation through physical activities and sporting.

- 5.1 A Draft Physical Education and Sports Policy is now in place, and the major thrusts are:

- To improve planning, management and coordination of sports in the country.
- To improve and sustain physical education through formal and non-formal programmes.
- To identify talents in games and sports among children and youth both at school and those out of school for further training and specialization.
- To promote and sustain Ugandan's participation in Regional and International games and Sporting events as a measure to cement international relations and cooperation.

- 5.2 Government allocates resources for Physical Education and Sports activities at all levels in the education system. This is to meet the above objectives (listed in 5.1), but most important to address issues related to health, culture, social cohesion and harmony among the communities and societies.

Some achievements have been made in Sports at Regional and International competitions at Olympic and Common wealth Games.

6.0 QUALITY CONTROL AND EDUCATION ASSESSMENT IN EDUCATION

Uganda is a success story regarding implementation of policies and programmes to give equitable access to quality basic education to her people. The enrolment at primary level has more than doubled over the past 8 years since the launch of the UPE programmes. Access to post primary education and up to university is gradually improving with the transition rates from one level to the next improve.

- 6.1 Quality Control measures have been instituted involving a wide range of institutional restructuring where various stakeholders play major roles and carry out strategic responsibilities. The emphasis has of late shifted from the inputs column to the outcome column. The emphasis on basic minimum performance and outcomes and learning competencies is following the earlier empathized on mere enrolment numbers of children who access school.
- 6.2 There is now renewed commitment by Government to improve the quality of the education system through revised curricular, efficient and effective management, increased resource allocation and better monitoring and assessment systems.
- 6.3 The traditional school Inspectorate has been reformed and restructured to form a new Agency whose function is to inspect schools to assess levels of the teaching and learning processes and activities, as these relate to the education curricular goals and objectives. The Education Standards Agency ESA is currently a fully-fledged Directorate in the Ministry of Education and Sports. Steps are being taken to legalise the status of the Agency so that it assumes more responsibility in education quality control.
- 6.4 Assessment of academic achievements is currently done by the statutory Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB). This is an autonomous body with professionals and specialists in areas of examination and academic assessment. The Board sets standards of academic performance in public examinations and determines graded achievements which guide placement of students and their final qualifications.

- 6.5 Uganda is working together with Regional and International Organisations and Institutions for example ADEA, to define acceptable levels of learning acquisitions at each level in the system. This is done against set national goals and objectives within the broad development framework and vision. For instance, the education system should promote principles, values like unity, justice, human rights, peace, social equality and harmony. The knowledge and skills acquired should be applicable in every day life settings relating to health, economic activities and social integration.

7.0 MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

Expansion of equitable access to basic and to other levels of education is an outstanding achievement within the framework of the national development goals. This is a result of the increased and strategic Government investment to the education sector. Access to primary education through the UPE programmes will not only promote literacy but it will facilitate democracy and human rights development. A literate society has the potential to participate actively in decision making within the National democratic structures.

7.1 Increased Girls Access to Basic Education

UPE programme doubled the enrolment of girls in primary education. Today in primary one to primary five the enrolment of girl pupils equals that of boy pupils. Only primary six and seven are girls fewer than boys. The higher enrolment is because the cost of education has become more affordable. In addition, the public is becoming more enlightened about the benefits of educating of girls.

However, the lower enrolment in upper classes is often attributed to early marriages and poor sanitation facilities. Government is addressing these issues through mass sensitization programmes and by providing adequate sanitation for girls at school.

7.2 More and Better Trained Teachers

The numbers of training and qualifications of teachers has steadily grown and improved at all levels the number of trained teachers at primary level in 1996 was 81,564, today there are 126,000 trained teachers at primary level. This follows reforms in the Teacher Education sub-sector involving restructuring of institutional curricular and management, followed by increased budget allocations in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework. A project known as Teacher Development and Management Systems, TDMS, has provided a network at grassroots levels where classroom teacher receive professional support on regular basis.

7.3 More Classrooms, Schools and Furniture

The shift from exclusive education to mass education has brought about an urgent need for more classrooms. In 1997, the existing stock permanent classrooms for primary schools was 45, 000 but by the end of 2003, that figure had risen to 70,000. Expansion at the Post Primary and at tertiary levels include grant aiding of community secondary schools and construction of new ones in areas where there are none. Community Polytechnics are constructed to promote technical education and vocational training for the youth focusing on those out of school.

7.4 More Learning Materials

Learning materials are essential for teaching and learning, teacher morale and maintaining pupils interest. Through UPE more learning materials have been made available to schools. In 1993, there were 37 pupils for every book. In 2003, the ratio was 3:1 for P.3 and P.4 in the core subjects. The recent sector policy reform is that where textbooks are issued to pupils for reference in school and while at home. New school buildings include book stores and libraries to improve book management in schools.

7.5 Higher Enrolment of Children with Special Needs

Before UPE was introduced, the few schools for children with disabilities were over stretched to meet the needs of children with

disabilities. Thus most children with disability were kept out of school. Today, the situation changed. Special need schools benefits from UPE funds. Even more significantly, children with disabilities are being integrated into normal schools through an “inclusion” sector policy. In post primary schools there is steady but slower increase in enrolment and quality of instruction to students with special needs. However, under the macro policy on social integration and on human rights children with disabilities are encouraged to access education and special measures are in place to address their learning needs.

7.6 Expansion of Non-Formal Education

Despite the success of UPE, some children still do not access education for various social, economic and environmental reasons. These include, over age children, children in pastoral areas and fishing villages and those in labour who are too old to return to school and children who are engaged in work like pastoralists. It also includes children living in fishing communities. These are provided for in a non-formal setting. Non-formal programmes like COPE, BEUPA ABEK, CHANCE, cater for about 200,000 children in non-formal education. About 67,500 receive UPE capitation grants*. At post primary school levels modular courses are being prepared which are more flexible and relevant. In the case of those who can't access non-formal education, especially the youth and young adults, the Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) programme addresses their learning needs, covering literacy, numeracy and life skills. The FAL programme now covers the whole country and it is implemented by the Gender and Community Development Sector.

7.7 Strong and Active Advocacy against HIV/AIDS

The President and Government of Uganda have taken a lead globally on issues relating to HIV/AIDS prevention and management. In that regard, Uganda education sector was among the first in the world to address the need for students and pupils to learn about

* Complementary Opportunities for Primary Education, COPE.

* Basic Education for the Urban Poor Areas, BEUPA.

* Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja, ABEK.

* Child Centred Alternative Non-formal Community Based Education, CHANCE

HIV/AIDS as part of the school curriculum. The advocacy programmes include school health programmes and sensitization of children and youth on HIV/AIDS. An Education Sector Policy on HIV and AIDS is being prepared to formally integrate HIV and AIDS in education curricular and school systems at all levels. School authorities and teachers are being retrained/retooled to handle the subject.

7.8 Guidance, Counseling and Psycho-Social Training

Guidance and counseling have a long history in Uganda and have been intensified since the advent of provision of UPE. Guidance and counseling on choice of subjects and careers remain important, however, the emphasis has now shifted to meeting the emotional needs of pupils, particularly those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. A guide for training senior women and men teachers has been developed. Information materials have also been developed for children and youth for reference.

7.9 Expansion of Post-Primary Education and Training

In the past five years post primary education enrolment and the number of schools have expanded by over 40%. This follows expansion at the primary levels through UPE and the increasing demand for secondary education and technical training to meet market employment demands.

8.0 EDUCATION MANAGEMENT POLICY REFORMS

There has also been increase in policy dialogue, partnership building and participation by civil society. As a result there has been improved ownership, supervision and monitoring of education sector programmes. An annual Sector Review with donors and other stakeholders is a good example of the policy dialogue/consultation mechanisms in place. The Annual sector review have resulted in more cooperation and sharing of ideas at international levels through education funding agencies.

- 8.1 Uganda has adopted a sector wide approach to resource allocation and this has improved bilateral and multi lateral cooperation in sector funding and resource allocation to education. The policy reform has enhanced accountability and sector policy formulation and implementation.
- 8.2 Liberalisation policies have also enhanced and promoted increased investment in education by the private sector at all levels of education. Private sector investment at Post Primary and Higher Education levels is very significant as a measure to improve access to and quality of education.
- 8.3 Increased quality inclusive education has enhanced the provision of education to all target communities. Alternative basic education programmes have been designed to meet learning needs of disadvantaged children.
- 8.4 Improving health among learners has supported the strategy to increase access, retention and completion of education cycles. The recent intersectoral programmes on immunization, nutrition and Early Childhood Education are good practices to promote basic education.
- 8.5 Provision of social and economic infrastructure strengthened the capacity of individuals and communities to afford social services including education. Eradication of poverty is one of the goals of basic education and of the National Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). Uganda is a beneficiary of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) programme focusing on poverty eradication through provision of social services.
- 8.6 Establishment of institutions for promoting democratic values and good governance as a pillar for unity, respect and living in harmony. Schools are today managed by democratically elected committees composed of students and of local leaders. Dialogue and consultations are encouraged between students, teachers and local authorities to ensure harmony.

9.0 THE MAIN CHALLENGES

- 9.1 Imbalance in gender and inadequate opportunity for the poor and persons with disabilities. This is particularly so at secondary level. The main concerns are to build awareness of gender and its impact on the education process and outcomes, and provide teachers with the knowledge and skills required to adopt and promote gender sensitive approaches in all school activities. This has a direct impact on retention of girls in school.
- 9.2 The need to cope with large numbers at both primary and secondary school levels. The high enrolment has created need for additional physical facilities, teachers and instructional materials. Large numbers are a challenge to the teachers and has a bearing on the quality of education.
- 9.3 The need to provide education for disadvantaged communities including children affected by conflict. This category is more difficult to teach. In most cases the education system has to follow them and adopt to their conditions by providing education facilities wherever they have settled. The Government working with NGOs have provided temporary learning centres for displaced school children in areas of insurgency in North/East Uganda.
- 9.4 HIV/AIDS effects/impact; The HIV/AIDS pandemic has caused death of pupils, teachers and parents. The trauma and stigma associated with HIV and AIDS also drastically affected learning programmes. There are strategic mechanisms in place to address this in education institutions.

10.0 OTHER AREAS AND ISSUES IN EDUCATION

The following measures have been taken to promote gender equality in accessing quality education and training:

- Advocacy for gender parity;
- A gender policy in education and training is being developed;
- Training teachers in ensuring gender equity in classrooms;
- Affirmative action;

- Bursaries for girls who are gifted but poor;
- Encouraging female role models;
- Education regardless of gender;
- The curriculum development process is being increasingly guided by gender concerns especially in its objectives and instructional materials.

10.1 Education and Social Inclusion

The main challenges in this regard are reaching children/learners who fall under the following categories:

- Orphans.
- Poor children.
- Children affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Children affected by conflict.
- Children with other special learning needs.

10.2 Expansion of Post-Primary Education and Provision of Alternative Basic Education.

The main challenges in ensuring social inclusion include:

- Prohibitive cultural beliefs and attitudes.
- Opportunity costs of sending girls to school.
- Stereotypes about roles and status of boys and girls.
- Inability to afford cost of education because of poverty.
- Lack of democracy.
- Ignorance of the value of education
- Religious discrimination.
- Policies which discriminate or are not supportive.
- Conflicts.
- Inadequate facilities and resources.
- Greed resulting into some member of the public dominating the education sector.
- Geographical barriers.

10.3 People Formerly Excluded from Educational Services are Being Handled Through.

- Providing free education for the poor.
- Sensitisation of local communities.
- Free secondary education for children under conflict.
- Providing Alternative Basic Education for working children.
- Initiating income generating activities.
- More flexible educational programmes.
- Strengthening science and technology and provision of vocational education as qualification framework programmes.
- Resource allocation to social facilities and amenities.

10.4 Education and Competencies for Life

Government has embarked on reviewing both primary and secondary education curricula to make them more relevant in the following ways:

- More adapted to science and technology;
- Responsive to the environment;
- Enriched with vocational skills;
- Preparing learners to solve problems in global and national settings. This involves inculcation of tolerance, understanding of both local and international values;
- Poverty eradication;
- Incorporating respect and values for self, nation and other;

11.0 QUALITY EDUCATION AND THE KEY ROLE OF TEACHERS

It is believed that no education system is better than the quality of its teachers. In Uganda the following interventions have been put in place to improve the quality of teachers.

- Involving teachers in the planning process;
- Preparing teachers who are polyvalent to handle both normal children and those with disabilities;
- Further the academic training;

- Reviewing of teacher training curriculum;
- Providing psycho social skills;
- Encouraging appreciation of values;
- Providing teacher training and curriculum guidelines.

11.1 Education for Sustainable Development

One of the aims of education is to contribute to the building of an integrated self-sustaining national economy. Education for sustainable development ensures self-reliance and the ability on the part of learners to develop and to sustain resources that are required for it. In this respect the education sector is focusing on both human and natural resource development through expanded and revised education curricular at all levels.

The curriculum at all levels is being reviewed to focus on:-

- Scientific and technological orientation in education. This is being reflected in the curriculum at all levels.
- Access to and use of information since it is information age. Ugandans are now encouraged to use the information for decision-making and development, data collecting and data processing through mass media.
- Reducing trauma in areas affected by conflict.
- Improving on food production and food security.

11.2 Concern for Environment

It is important that education inculcates awareness and skills for improving on quality of the environment. This is because the quality of human resource is also affected by the quality of the environment. Environmental education has therefore been included in the curriculum for the youth at primary level. At University, Environmental Studies are integrated in degree courses leading to professional qualifications in the area.

11.3 Human Resource Development

This is a broad policy which is being implemented over a long period. It recognizes the critical need for Development of human capital through education for economic productivity and development. The policy recognizes the value and need for addressing the effect/impact of globalisation on individuals, communities and nations. The education sector is challenged to design policies and programmes to prepare people for the global era during the 21st Century. Reforms in this area include intersectoral and integrated programmes addressing multiple human needs in education, in health, but most important relating to means of survival.

12.0 CONCLUSION

Uganda in the twenty-first century is faced with major challenges of providing relevant, quality education for its peoples, an education that will equip them to live harmoniously among themselves and with the rest of society. Education while addressing local concerns must also be regional and international in outlook. The education reforms described above aim at addressing these and the critical issues of quality and access, especially in respect of gender. Government is also concerned with issues of human rights so that both young and old, men and women, benefit from quality education geared at increased production, sustainable development and improvement of the general quality of life of the people.