

Primary, Secondary and Skilling Education: Failed Government Programmes

1. Government intervened in the crisis in primary education by borrowing heavily. \$200 million was borrowed for four projects. The failure of the projects to reach their goals shows yet again that it is incompetence of the current administration and not shortage of money that deprives Ugandans of the standards of service they deserve.
2. The high school drop-out rate driven by poverty and lack of menstrual hygiene support have not been addressed. Below are some of the current projects

Emergency Construction of Primary Schools Phase II, 7/1/2015 – 6/30/2020

3. This poorly performing project shows how little commitment government has to improving school infrastructure.
 - The official review by BMAU reported that it does not have clear targets, it failed to achieve any of its annual targets from 2016 to 2019. Funds are always sent late to beneficiary schools leading development to be postponed to the following year.

Universal Primary Education programme (UPE)

4. The following data and information are from the Budget Monitoring and Accountability Unit.
 - The programme succeeded only in increasing the number of children enrolled in school. The number leapt from 2.5 million in 1997 to 8.7 million in 2016. Today only sixty-six percent of children of primary school age are enrolled in primary school. The existence of public schools does not guarantee access to a good education. Access to a good education is affected by four main factors:
 - distance to nearby primary schools
 - access by vulnerable and Special Needs children
 - availability of school infrastructure
 - number of primary school teachers, and
 - classroom crowding.
 - There are not enough schools and crowding is the norm. Vulnerable and Special Needs children are not catered for. School buildings are often not fit for purpose. There are not enough qualified teachers.
 - Access varies from region to region and between urban and rural areas. Access has increased but it is not equal. The quality of education is unequal.

Table 4: Primary pupils with adequate sitting and writing space by region

Region	Pupils with Sitting Space	Total Enrolment	Percentage (%)
Acholi	317,156	482,690	67.5
Ankole	478,587	683,630	70
Buganda	1,480,130	1,890,377	77.2
Bukedi	380,160	592,169	64.2
Bunyoro	333,462	450,353	74
Busoga	624,605	934,522	66.8
Elgon	374,936	532,694	70.3
Karamoja	64,423	149,237	43.2
Kigezi	299,633	387,516	77.3
Lango	368,245	620,202	59.4
Teso	321,544	566,169	56.8
Toro	423,260	582,922	72.6
West Nile	449,601	783,443	57.4
Total	5,895,742	8,655,924	65.9

Source: MoES Statistical Abstract 2016

Table 1: Net Enrolment by Sex

Region	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Acholi	53	60	56
Ankole	80	86	83
Buganda	58	65	62
Bukedi	86	93	89
Bunyoro	45	51	41
Busoga	64	72	68
Elgon	76	80	78
Karamoja	42	34	38
Kigezi	99	105	102
Lango	46	53	50
Teso	74	80	77
Toro	58	63	60
West Nile	65	66	65
Total	64	69	66

Source: MoES Statistical Abstract 2016

Table 5: Pupil classroom ratios by region

Region	Government	Private	Total
Acholi	71	41	66
Ankole	44	27	38
Buganda	58	29	44
Bukedi	91	30	76
Bunyoro	67	26	47
Busoga	82	30	66
Elgon	80	31	66
Karamoja	75	85	76
Kigezi	47	26	42
Lango	86	31	78
Teso	84	25	68
Toro	65	28	51
West Nile	98	43	89
Total	69	29	56

Source: MoES Statistical Abstract 2016

Distance to schools

- The majority of Ugandan primary schoolchildren live more than one kilometre away from the nearest school. Only thirty percent live within one kilometre. In Karamoja where a quarter of all primary school age children live more has the lowest number of enrolled pupils.

Location	Below 1km	1-2km	2.1-3km	3.1-4km	4.1-5km	5km +
Peri-urban	1,642	985	254	117	80	54
Rural	2,980	4,571	2,711	1,833	1,236	1,176
Urban	1,413	478	100	44	25	19
Grand Total	6,035	6,034	3,065	1,994	1,341	1,249
% Total	30.61	30.60	15.54	10.11	6.80	6.33

Source: MoES Statistical Abstract 2016

Table 3: School attendance of Special Needs Children by Impairment Type

Impairment Type	Total	Percentage
Autism	6,673	3.7
Hearing Impaired	48,778	27.3
Mentally Impaired	41,393	23.5
Multiple handicaps (deaf, blind)	4,098	2.3
Physically impaired (such as accident)	32,513	18
Visually impaired	44,998	25.2
Total	178,450	100

Source: MoES Statistical Abstract 2016

Access by Special Needs Children

- Nineteen years after UPE was introduced, school attendance by Special Needs children was extremely low.

Fit for purpose school Infrastructure

5. Classroom congestion affects a child’s ability to learn. This was expected at the launch of Universal Primary Education. Although the World Bank facilitated UPE, its internal review of UPE was that the quality of education fell because of over-crowding and under-resourcing. It predicted and documented that as result, children were likely to abandon UPE.

- Other studies have shown classrooms are sometimes converted to necessary teacher accommodation, making the situation worse.
- Congestion varies by region and is higher in government schools than in private schools.

Table 6: Primary Pupil Teacher Ratio

Region	Government	Private	Total
Acholi	66	31	58
Ankole	42	23	35
Buganda	45	21	33
Bukedi	69	19	54
Bunyoro	55	20	37
Busoga	65	26	54
Elgon	58	21	47
Karamoja	53	60	54
Kigezi	41	21	35
Lango	65	22	58
Teso	67	19	54
Toro	51	22	40
West Nile	67	26	60
Total	54	21	43

Source: MoES Statistical Abstract 2016

Number of primary school teachers

- The pupil-to-teacher ratio shows that exclusion from quality education because of a lack of teachers is evident in Acholi, Bukedi, Busoga, Lango, Teso and West Nile. Bukedi which has high enrolment of eighty-nine percent, is short of teachers and has an average of sixty-nine pupils to a teacher.

Skilling Uganda

Uganda Teacher and School Effectiveness Project (UTSEP)

6. This was a three-year project (from March 2015) prioritising basic requirements and minimum standards (BRMS) for quality learning. This included enhancing teacher skills and school leadership supply instructional materials for learners and teachers and to ramp up supervision of teachers and inspection of schools. Under UTSEP school leadership was to be accountable to the community it served. The project was financed by a loan of \$100 million.
 - It is during the period of the UTSEP project that literacy and numeracy in primary schools dropped.
 - The loan expired with only 54 percent utilized. This poor performance was due to poor project planning and procurement. As a result, the target of 290 schools was reduced to 138 and over \$16 million was reallocated to other components. \$1.4 million was awarded in fraudulent procurement of solar power units for 89 schools.

The Higher Education Science and Technology project (HEST)

7. HEST was financed by the Global Partnership Fund to facilitate e-learning which is very much in need during the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - HEST too was under-utilised. Beneficiary institutions failed to account for over Shs.1 billion causing disbursements to stop.

The Uganda Skills Development Project - MOES (World Bank)

8. The USDP was launched in October 2016 to run for five years. It was financed by a World Bank loan of \$21,800,000 million. The aim of the project was to produce graduates with 'employable skills'. 45,000 trainees were to benefit from training at 4 colleges selected to become Centers of Excellence (CoEs) and 12 Public Vocational Training Institutions. There was provision for employers to train trainees after receiving a grant matched by them.
9. Project components were:

Component 1: Institutionalizing systemic reforms in skills development (Cost \$5.00 million)

Component 2: Improving Quality and Relevance of Skills Development (Cost \$62.20 million)

Component 3: Employer-led short-term training and recognition of prior learning (Cost \$18.00 million)

Component 4: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (Cost \$11.80 million)

- The project performed poorly, failing to use the funds after 3 years. Only 2 percent of the funds were used.

Development of Secondary Education (0897) 7/1/2005 – 6/30/2018

- The secondary school infrastructure development project failed to reach any targets for the same reason as the primary school project. Poor planning, late cash releases and expenditure on activities outside the budget.