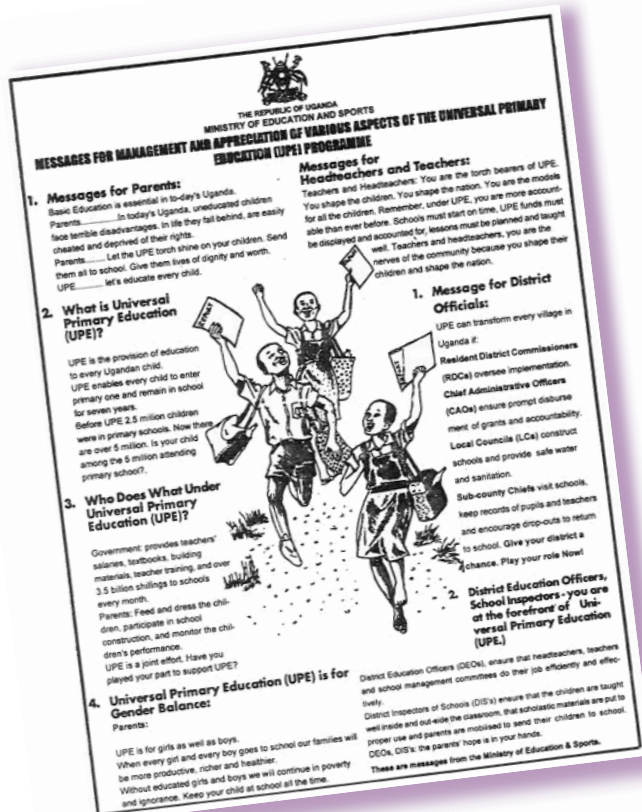**DFID** Department for International Development

Education Reform in Uganda – 1997 to 2004. Reflections on Policy, Partnership, Strategy and Implementation

by Michael Ward, Alan Penny and Tony Read

Education Reform in Uganda – 1997 to 2004.

Reflections on Policy, Partnership, Strategy and Implementation

by

Michael Ward, Alan Penny and Tony Read

2006

Educational Papers

Department for International Development: Educational Papers

This is one of a series of Education Papers issued by the Central Research Department of the Department For International Development. Each paper represents a study or piece of commissioned research on some aspect of education and training in developing countries. Most of the studies were undertaken in order to provide informed judgements from which policy decisions could be drawn, but in each case it has become apparent that the material produced would be of interest to a wider audience, particularly those whose work focuses on developing countries.

Each paper is numbered serially. Further copies can be obtained through DFID Publications - subject to availability. A full list of previous Education books and papers can be found on the following pages, along with information on how to order copies.

Although these papers are issued by DFID, the views expressed in them are entirely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent DFID's own policies or views. Any discussion of their content should therefore be addressed to the authors and not to DFID.

Addresses for Correspondence

Michael Ward
Department for International Development
1 Palace Street
London SW1E 5HE
United Kingdom
Email: mp-ward@dfid.org.uk

Alan Penny
112 Cosawes Park
Perranarworthal
Truro TR3 7QT
United Kingdom
Email: alanjpenny@hotmail.com

Tony Read
IE Partners Ltd
The Barley Mow Centre
10 Barley Mow Passage
London W4 4PH
United Kingdom
Email: enquiries@iepartners.co.uk

Front Cover Photograph: Reading Practice in a Primary Classroom in Masaka, Uganda
© Tony Read
Title Page Photograph: A Government Advertisement on UPE in Ugandan Newspaper

No. 1 **SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: A SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE.**
D. Pennycuick (1993) ISBN: 0 90250 061 9

No. 2 **EDUCATIONAL COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS.**
J. Hough (1993) ISBN: 0 90250 062 7

No. 3 **REDUCING THE COST OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.**
L. Gray, M. Fletcher, P. Foster, M. King, A. M. Warrender (1993) ISBN: 0 90250 063 5

No. 4 **REPORT ON READING IN ENGLISH IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MALAWI.**
E. Williams (1993) Out of Print – Available on CD-Rom and DFID website

No. 5 **REPORT ON READING IN ENGLISH IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ZAMBIA.**
E. Williams (1993) Out of Print – Available on CD-Rom and DFID website

See also No. 24, which updates and synthesises Nos 4 and 5.

No. 6 **EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: THE ISSUES AND THE EVIDENCE.**
K. Lewin (1993) ISBN: 0 90250 066 X

No. 7 **PLANNING AND FINANCING SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.**
P. Penrose (1993) ISBN: 0 90250 067 8

No. 8 Not allocated

No. 9 **FACTORS AFFECTING FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION IN SEVEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.**
C. Brock, N. Cammish (1991) (revised 1997) ISBN: 1 86192 065 2

No. 10 **USING LITERACY: A NEW APPROACH TO POST-LITERACY METHODS.**
A. Rogers (1994) Out of Print – Available on CD-ROM and DFID website.
Updated and reissued as No 29.

No. 11 **EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR THE INFORMAL SECTOR.**
K. King, S. McGrath, F. Leach, R. Carr-Hill (1995) ISBN: 1 86192 090 3

No. 12 **MULTI-GRADE TEACHING: A REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND PRACTICE.**
A. Little (1995) ISBN: 0 90250 058 9

No. 13 **DISTANCE EDUCATION IN ENGINEERING FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.**
T. Bilham, R. Gilmour (1995) Out of Print – Available on CD-ROM and DFID website.

No. 14 **HEALTH & HIV/AIDS EDUCATION IN PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AFRICA & ASIA.**
E. Barnett, K. de Koning, V. Francis (1995) ISBN: 0 90250 069 4

No. 15 **LABOUR MARKET SIGNALS & INDICATORS.**
L. Gray, A. M. Warrender, P. Davies, G. Hurley, C Manton (1996)
Out of Print – Available on CD-ROM and DFID website.

No. 16 **IN-SERVICE SUPPORT FOR A TECHNOLOGICAL APPROACH TO SCIENCE EDUCATION.**
F. Lubben, R. Campbell, B. Dlamini (1995) ISBN: 0 90250 071 6

No. 17 **ACTION RESEARCH REPORT ON "REFLECT".**
D. Archer, S. Cottingham (1996) ISBN: 0 90250 072 4

No. 18 **THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF ARTISANS FOR THE INFORMAL SECTOR IN TANZANIA.**
D. Kent, P. Mushi (1995) ISBN: 0 90250 074 0

No. 19 **GENDER, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT – A PARTIALLY ANNOTATED AND SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY.**
C. Brock, N. Cammish (1997)
Out of Print – Available on CD-ROM and DFID website.

No. 20 **CONTEXTUALISING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS: USING AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCE.**
P. Taylor, A. Mulhall (Vols 1 & 2) (1997)
Vol 1 ISBN: 1 861920 45 8 Vol 2 ISBN: 1 86192 050 4

No. 21 **GENDER AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN.**
P. Kutnick, V. Jules, A. Layne (1997) ISBN: 1 86192 080 6

No. 22 **SCHOOL-BASED UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN FOUR COUNTRIES: A COMMONWEALTH STUDY.**
R. Bourne, J. Gundara, A. Dev, N. Ratsoma, M. Rukanda, A. Smith, U. Birthistle (1997) ISBN: 1 86192 095 4

No. 23 **GIRLS AND BASIC EDUCATION: A CULTURAL ENQUIRY.**
D. Stephens (1998) ISBN: 1 86192 036 9

No. 24 **INVESTIGATING BILINGUAL LITERACY: EVIDENCE FROM MALAWI AND ZAMBIA.**
E. Williams (1998) ISBN: 1 86192 041 5

No. 25 **PROMOTING GIRLS' EDUCATION IN AFRICA.**
N. Swainson, S. Bendera, R. Gordon, E. Kadzamira (1998) ISBN: 1 86192 046 6

No. 26 **GETTING BOOKS TO SCHOOL PUPILS IN AFRICA.**
D. Rosenberg, W. Amaral, C. Odini, T. Radebe, A. Sidibé (1998) ISBN: 1 86192 051 2

No. 27 **COST SHARING IN EDUCATION.**
P. Penrose (1998) ISBN: 1 86192 056 3

No. 28 **VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN TANZANIA AND ZIMBABWE IN THE CONTEXT OF ECONOMIC REFORM.**
P. Bennell (1999) ISBN: 1 86192 061 X

No. 29 **RE-DEFINING POST-LITERACY IN A CHANGING WORLD.**
A. Rogers, B. Maddox, J. Millican, K. Newell Jones, U. Papen, A. Robinson-Pant (1999) ISBN: 1 86192 069 5

No. 30 **IN SERVICE FOR TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.**
M. Monk (1999) ISBN: 1 86192 074 1

No. 31 **LOCALLY GENERATED PRINTED MATERIALS IN AGRICULTURE: EXPERIENCE FROM UGANDA & GHANA.**
I. Carter (1999) ISBN: 1 86192 079 2

No. 32 **SECTOR WIDE APPROACHES TO EDUCATION.**
M. Ratcliffe, M. Macrae (1999) ISBN: 1 86192 131 4

No. 33 **DISTANCE EDUCATION PRACTICE: TRAINING & REWARDING AUTHORS.**
H. Perraton, C. Creed (1999) ISBN: 1 86192 136 5

No. 34 **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER RESOURCE CENTRE STRATEGY.**
Ed. G. Knamiller (1999) ISBN: 1 86192 141 1

No. 35 **EVALUATING IMPACT.**
Ed. V. McKay, C. Treffgarne (1999) ISBN: 1 86192 191 8

No. 36 **AFRICAN JOURNALS.**
A. Alemna, V. Chifwepa, D. Rosenberg (1999) ISBN: 1 86192 157 8

No. 37 **MONITORING THE PERFORMANCE OF EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMMES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.**
R. Carr-Hill, M. Hopkins, A. Riddell, J. Lintott (1999) ISBN: 1 86192 224 8

No. 38 **TOWARDS RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS – SUPPORTING BETTER
SCHOOLING FOR DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN.**
(case studies from Save the Children).
M. Molteno, K. Ogadhoh, E. Cain, B. Crumpton (2000)

No. 39 **PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION OF THE ABUSE OF GIRLS IN
ZIMBABWEAN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.**
F. Leach, P. Machankanja with J. Mandoga (2000) ISBN: 1 86192 279 5

No. 40 **THE IMPACT OF TRAINING ON WOMEN'S MICRO-ENTERPRISE
DEVELOPMENT.**
F. Leach, S. Abdulla, H. Appleton, J. el-Bushra, N. Cardenas, K. Kebede, V. Lewis,
S. Sitaram (2000) ISBN: 1 86192 284 1

No. 41 **THE QUALITY OF LEARNING AND TEACHING IN DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES: ASSESSING LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN MALAWI
AND SRI LANKA.**
D. Johnson, J. Hayter, P. Broadfoot (2000) ISBN: 1 86192 313 9

No. 42 **LEARNING TO COMPETE: EDUCATION, TRAINING & ENTERPRISE
IN GHANA, KENYA & SOUTH AFRICA.**
D. Afenyadu, K. King, S. McGrath, H. Oketch, C. Rogerson, K. Visser (2001)
ISBN: 1 86192 314 7

No. 43 **COMPUTERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES: COSTS AND OTHER ISSUES.**
A. Cawthera (2001) ISBN: 1 86192 418 6

No. 44 **THE IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS ON THE UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA:
DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC RESPONSE.**
B. Chilisa, P. Bennell, K. Hyde (2001) ISBN: 1 86192 467 4

No. 45 **THE IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS ON PRIMARY AND SECONDARY
EDUCATION IN BOTSWANA: DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE
STRATEGIC RESPONSE.**
P. Bennell, B. Chilisa, K. Hyde, A. Makgothi, E. Molobe, L. Mpotokwane (2001)
ISBN: 1 86192 468 2

No. 46 **EDUCATION FOR ALL: POLICY AND PLANNING – LESSONS FROM
SRI LANKA.**
A. Little (2003) ISBN: 1 86192 552 0

No. 47 **REACHING THE POOR – THE 'COSTS' OF SENDING CHILDREN TO
SCHOOL.**
S. Boyle, A. Brock, J. Mace, M. Sibbons (2003) ISBN: 1 86192 361 9

No. 57 **FINANCING PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR ALL: PUBLIC
EXPENDITURE AND EDUCATION OUTCOMES IN AFRICA.**
S. Al-Samarrai (2005) ISBN: 1 86192 6391

No. 58 **DEEP IMPACT: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE USE OF INFORMATION
AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FOR TEACHER EDUCATION
IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH.**
by J. Leach with A. Ahmed, S. Makalima and T. Power (2005) ISBN: 1 86192 7126

No. 59 **NON-GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLING IN SUB-SAHARAN
AFRICA. EXPLORING THE EVIDENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA AND MALAWI.**
by K. M. Lewin and Y. Sayed (2005) ISBN: 1 86192 7436

NOW AVAILABLE – CD-ROM containing full texts of Papers 1-42.

Other DFID Educational Studies Also Available:

REDRESSING GENDER INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION. N. Swainson (1995)

FACTORS AFFECTING GIRLS' ACCESS TO SCHOOLING IN NIGER. S. Wynd (1995)

EDUCATION FOR RECONSTRUCTION. D. Phillips, N. Arnhold, J. Bekker,
N. Kersh, E. McLeish (1996)

**AFRICAN JOURNAL DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMME: EVALUATION OF 1994 PILOT
PROJECT.** D. Rosenberg (1996)

TEACHER JOB SATISFACTION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. R. Garrett (1999)

A MODEL OF BEST PRACTICE AT LORETO DAY SCHOOL, SEALDAH, CALCUTTA.
T. Jessop (1998)

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL. DFID Policy Paper (1999)

THE CHALLENGE OF UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION.
DFID Target Strategy Paper (2001)

CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL. DFID Issues Paper (2001)

All publications are available free of charge from DFID Publications, and can be ordered by email to
dfidpubs@ecgroup.uk.com or by writing to EC Group, Europa Park, Magnet Road, Grays, Essex,
RN20 4DN. Most publications can also be downloaded or ordered from the R4D Research Portal
and Publications sections of the DFID website (www.dfid.gov.uk).

Acknowledgements

In this reflective study the contributors have used a range of data-gathering techniques from surveys, field observation and interviews to formal evaluation studies and reviews and an analysis of official government and funding agency documentation. All the contributors have been active participants in the reform process and have used their knowledge and experience of it to inform the tasks of analysis and writing. They have borrowed heavily from the extensive range of material produced in Uganda over the past seven years. The body of the material being considered is the programme experience of colleagues in the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), the Education Funding Agencies Group (EFAG) of Uganda, DFID's office in Uganda, the various consultants engaged to work on specific technical issues, the staff of the District Education Offices and officials from other GoU and non-GoU agencies. The contributors have tried to acknowledge wherever possible the contributions of those involved in the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP) and a determined effort has been made to give a voice to local perceptions of the challenges faced.

The editors wish to extend their thanks to all of the contributors to this book and to those who have contributed to the work of ESIP in Uganda and provided comments, insights, information and access to reports on a wide variety of issues relating to the education reform process. These include policy makers and others who work in the education sector and the staff of international development agencies, funding and technical assistance agencies, universities, community groups, NGOs and teachers and district education staff. It is hoped that district level staff will find the work of value, especially as it is based on their work and commitment to the ESIP.

The editors also gratefully acknowledge the contribution of DFID in supporting the preparation, development and production of this book. In particular, the contributions of the following DFID colleagues are warmly appreciated: Mike Hammond for his support for the book in the early stages of development and writing; Carew Treffgarne for her helpful guidance following the completion of the first draft; and Hazel Bines for her excellent copy editing of the final draft.

The accumulated knowledge, experience and viewpoints of many different departments, agencies and individuals have been consulted in the preparation of this book but we are particularly indebted for their assistance to Mr Francis Lubanga, Permanent Secretary, MoES, Ms Alice Ibale, previously Assistant Commissioner, Instructional Materials Unit, MoES, who acted as local researcher, and to Mr George Kalibbala, Education Officer at the Royal Netherlands Embassy and Ms Rosemary Rwanyanga, Irish Aid. They were particularly helpful in providing background information and copies of essential reports.

Officials of Ministries of Education in many African countries and the staff of international agencies frequently ask what ingredients are coming together in Uganda to produce a relatively coherent education reform programme. This book endeavours to provide some of the answers, although it should not be assumed that what has been developed in Uganda simply can be copied on the advice of "experts"[1].

This report is an output from a project funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) for the benefit of developing countries. The views expressed are those of the editors and do not necessarily represent those of DFID.

Michael Ward
Alan Penny
Tony Read

January, 2006

---

[1] Stiglitz, J. (2003) Don't trust technocrats, The Guardian, 15 July, 2003. See also Harley, K. (2005). Ward and Penny et al (2003) in a paper entitled 'Why do education policies in East Africa fail?' highlight the possible limitations of technical discourse and note the benefits of an increasingly open dialogue between partners.

Contributors

Michael Ward is DFID's Senior Education Adviser in India. He was DFID's Education Adviser in Uganda from 1999 to 2002 where he coordinated the Education Funding Agencies Group's engagement with the Government of Uganda.

Alan Penny is an independent education consultant. Between 1999 and 2002 he was DFID's East Africa Regional Senior Education Adviser.

Tony Read is an associate of IE Partners Ltd, London. Between 2000 and 2004 he led on advice to the Government of Uganda on improving the quality of basic education through the provision of teaching and learning materials and from 2004 until the present he was the technical assistance team leader for the Primary Curriculum Review Team.

Michael Ward, Alan Penny and Tony Read contributed to each section of the book.

Specific contributions were made by the following in relation to particular chapters or sections of the book:

Chapter 2: Francis Lubanga, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports, Government of Uganda.

Chapter 3 *(section on education standards)*: Martyn Roebuck, Honorary Professor of Education, University of Glasgow.

Chapter 4 *(section on School Facilities Grant)*: Ahita Pichvai and Henk Meijerink, Consultant Architects and Planners.

Chapter 5: Keith Lewin, Professor and Director, Centre for International Education, University of Sussex.

Other advice was provided by:

Chapter 2: Mick Foster, Director, Mick Foster Economics Ltd., UK.

Chapter 3 *(section on learning materials)*: Amanda Buchan, Director, International Education Partners, London.

Local research in Uganda was provided by:

Alice Bale, now PIASCY Program Manager, UPHOLD, Uganda.

Editorial support was provided by:

David Foster and Tania Bapuji, Directors, International Education Partners, London.

Contents

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AA	*Associate Assessor*
ABEK	*Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja*
AC	*Average cost*
ADB	*African Development Bank*
ADEA	*Association for the Development of Education in Africa*
AG	*Auditor General*
ASC	*Annual School Census*
BEUPA	*Basic Education for Urban Poor Areas*
BOU	*Bank of Uganda*
BTVET	*Business Technical Vocational Education and Training*
CAO	*Chief Administrative Officer*
CBE	*Community-Based Education*
CC	*Coordinating Centres*
CCG	*Classroom Completion Grant*
CCT	*Coordinating Centre Tutor*
CFO	*Chief Finance Officer*
CHANCE	*Child-Centred Alternatives for Non-formal Community- Based Education*
CIA	*Chief Internal Auditor*
CIDA	*Canadian International Development Agency*
CIS	*County Inspector of Schools*
COMESA	*Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa*
CP	*Community Polytechnic*
CPD	*Continuous Professional Development*
CRE	*Christian Religious Education*
CSO	*Civil Society Organisation*
DE	*District Engineer*
DEO	*District Education Officer*
DFID	*Department for International Development*
DIS	*District Inspector of Schools*
DLB	*District Language Board(s)*
DTB	*District Tender Board*
EFA	*Education for All*
EFAG	*Education Funding Agencies Group*
EMIS	*Education Management Information System*
EPD	*Education Planning Department*
EPRC	*Education Policy Review Commission*
ERC	*Education Review Commission*
ERTV	*Educational Radio and TV Unit*
ESA	*Education Standards Agency*
ESCC	*Education Sector Consultative Committee*
ESIP	*Education Strategic Investment Plan*
ESR	*Education Sector Review*
ESSP	*Education Sector Strategic Plan*
FAWE	*Forum for African Women Educationalists*
GBS	*General Budget Support*
GDP	*Gross Domestic Product*
GER	*Gross Enrolment Ratio*
GoU	*Government of Uganda*
GWP	*Government White Paper*
HIPC	*Heavily Indebted Poor Countries*

HDI	*Human Development Index*
ICB	*International Competitive Bidding*
ICT	*Information and Computer Technology*
IDA	*International Development Association*
IDP	*Internally Displaced Person*
IFMS	*Integrated Financial Management System*
IGG	*Inspector General of Government*
IM	*Instructional Materials*
IMF	*International Monetary Fund*
IMU	*Instructional Materials Unit*
INSETT	*In-Service Teacher Training*
IPS	*Integrated Production Skills*
IRE	*Islamic Religious Education*
ITEK	*Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo*
LC	*Local Council*
LOI	*Language of Instruction*
LOLE	*Languages of Limited Extent*
LPO	*Local Purchase Order*
MAL	*Main Area Language*
MDG	*Millennium Development Goals*
ME	*Municipality Engineer*
MEO	*Municipal Education Officer*
MIS	*Management Information System*
MoES	*Ministry of Education and Sports*
MOF	*Milton Obote Foundation*
MoFPED	*Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development*
MoLG	*Ministry of Local Government*
MoPS	*Ministry of Public Service*
MoU	*Memorandum of Understanding*
MTBF	*Medium Term Budget Framework*
MTEF	*Medium Term Expenditure Framework*
MUK	*Makerere University, Kampala*
NABL	*National Advisory Board on Languages*
NAPE	*National Assessment of Progress in Education*
NCDC	*National Curriculum Development Centre*
NER	*Net Enrolment Ratio*
NFE	*Non-Formal Education*
NGO	*Non-Governmental Organisation*
NIE	*National Institute of Education*
NIP	*National Inspections Programme*
NRM	*National Resistance Movement*
NSDS	*National Service Delivery Survey*
NTC	*National Teachers College*
OTS	*Official Textbook Supplier*
OTTC	*Outreach Tutor Training Certificate*
P1 etc	*Primary Class 1, etc.*
PA	*Performing Arts*
PAF	*Poverty Action Fund*
PAPE	*Performing Arts and Physical Education*
PBR	*Pupil:Book Ratio*

PCR	*Pupil:Classroom Ratio*
PE	*Physical Education*
PEAP	*Poverty Eradication Action Plan*
PERP	*Primary Education Reform Programme*
PETDP	*Primary Education and Teacher Development Programme (World Bank)*
PIU	*Project Implementation Unit*
PLE	*Primary school Leaving Exam*
PMU	*Poverty Monitoring Unit*
PPET	*Post-Primary Education and Training*
PRS	*Poverty Reduction Strategy*
PS	*Permanent Secretary*
PTA	*Parent Teacher Association*
PTC	*Primary Teachers College*
PTDMP	*Primary Teacher Development and Management Plan*
PTR	*Pupil:Teacher Ratio*
QI	*Quality Indicators*
RE	*Religious Education*
RNE	*Royal Netherlands Embassy*
SBS	*Sector Budget Support*
SED	*Secondary Education Department*
SFG	*School Facilities Grant*
SMC	*School Management Committee*
ST	*Secretary to the Treasury*
SUPER	*Support for Uganda Primary Education Reform*
SWAp	*Sector Wide Approach*
TC	*Town Clerk*
TDMS	*Teacher Development and Management System*
TE	*Total Enrolment*
TED	*Teacher Education Department*
TG	*Threshold Grant*
TI	*Technical Institute*
TMM	*Top Management Meeting [of the MoES]*
TDMS	*Teacher Development and Management System*
TS	*Technical School*
TWG	*Technical Working Groups*
UACE	*Uganda Advanced Certification of Education*
UBA	*Uganda Booksellers Association*
UCE	*Uganda Certificate of Education*
ULB	*Uganda Literature Bureau*
UNCITRAL	*United Nations Commission on International Trade Law*
UNEB	*Uganda National Examinations Board*
UNHS	*Uganda National Household Survey*
UPA	*Uganda Publishers Association*
UPE	*Universal Primary Education*
UPH	*Uganda Publishing House*
UPK	*Uganda Polytechnic, Kyambogo*
USAID	*United States Aid for International Development*
USS	*Uganda School Supplies*
VG	*Variable Grant*

Editorial Notes

Currency

Amounts have been quoted in Ugandan Shillings (abbreviated to Ush) throughout the book except when international comparisons are made and when budgeted amounts made available in foreign currencies are stated. The conversion rates (March 2005) for the Ush are as follows:

Ush 3250 to £1

Ush 1705 to $1

Executive Summary

In 1998 the Government of Uganda (GoU) began implementing an ambitious programme of educational reform, the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP) (1998–2003). It had been sparked off by President Museveni's election campaign promise in 1996 to provide free primary education for up to four children in every family. The technical analysis and consultation that underpinned the ESIP not only set a national framework for GoU education planning and budgeting but also constituted a breakthrough in relations between the GoU, civil society and its development partners. Since 1997 Uganda has had to address the challenge of accessing ever-increasing numbers of children into an already over-burdened education system.

This book offers a perspective on how political commitment, combined with a relatively clear and rational conception of reform, and the provision of generous external financial support, assisted the country in making significant progress towards meeting its Millennium Development Goal (MDG) obligations under the Dakar Education For All (EFA) Commitments (2000).

Financing Education Reform

A key challenge for GoU in implementing its education reforms was to mobilise sufficient resources to pay for them. In a highly aid-dependent context the role of external financing and the effective coordination of funding agencies was critical.

The government's response to the problem of education funding and aid management was to develop a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) within the framework of the Ministry of Education and Sport's (MoES) 1998 planning document, the ESIP. The SWAp incorporated alternative methods for aid delivery, including sector budget support, with a particular accent on methods designed to increase local leadership and achieve a greater integration of development partner and government effort.

The Education SWAp focused greater attention on performance, intra-sectoral linkages, outcomes and service quality by giving greater weight to improving the policy, budgetary and institutional context in which education services are delivered. It also provided improved mechanisms for effective government funding agency partnership, including enhanced national leadership and ownership of reform plans, and improved mechanisms for joint government-development partner dialogue and performance review.

At the end of the ESIP funding agreement in 2002 a common budget support funding modality was introduced. It had been in preparation since 2000 and funding agencies had been using their separate bilateral funding modalities to provide budget support up to this point. Funds would be channelled through the common modality directly into the national treasury to finance government expenditures. In Uganda's education sector, budget support is linked to a few critical outputs and outcomes related to financial commitment, fiduciary assurance, increased equitable access, and improved quality and service delivery. Under it, there are fewer pre-defined activities agreed between the development partners and the government and a greater focus on outcomes and the strategic frameworks necessary for achieving these. With the establishment of budget support modalities, many of the traditional problems of donor coordination have effectively disappeared as only one programme in education, the government's ESIP, is supported.

Two of the main elements that have contributed to the success of the Education SWAp in Uganda are that decision-making is devolved to the MoES and a more coherent and comprehensive approach to aid management has evolved. The institutional arrangements for the SWAp have provided a forum within which decision-making is constrained largely by resource availability over the medium term. Sector reviews and budget working groups are a fundamental part of the government's broader planning and budgeting processes within the framework of the country's poverty reduction strategy paper (the Poverty Eradication Action Plan – PEAP) and Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF). The MTBF is used as a planning and budgeting tool in all Ugandan ministries and agencies, projecting expenditures on key activities and revenues from the main sources for every sub-sector over a three-year period. By projecting priorities for the budget in the medium term, ministries are in a position to consider sector priorities within macro economic constraints. Indeed, MTBF papers are evolving discussions of how a sector considers its priorities in the light of strategic plans for the sub-sectors and so change from year to year as these strategic plans firm up and relative priorities are decided. Policy decisions reached within the Education SWAp determine the GoU's expenditures (see the example of the Education MTBF planning cycle included at Appendix 2).

Development partners' budget support, together with the benefits of debt relief, has contributed to an increased education budget and a policy dialogue on education that is different to that which existed under project support. Education outcomes have improved although, as will be found later in this book, perhaps not to the level anticipated. The relationship between the GoU and its development partners has changed as government has increasingly taken ownership of the policy and budget process through a strengthening of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), MoES, the Cabinet and Parliament as drivers of public resource allocations.

There are three key lessons that have been learned in the Uganda education SWAp to date. First, it is important for the participating agencies (the GoU and development partners) to agree and record the rules of the SWAp process early in the evolution of the approach, and to agree and record funding for the strategy and funding mechanisms at the start of the process. The MTBF is an indispensable tool in managing the latter and thus also for the development of a successful SWAp and general budget support. So is the development of an Education Management Information System (EMIS) and agreement of associated baselines. The reports generated by EMIS provide the context and basis for the policy dialogue and are an essential part of the means for sector monitoring and decision-making.

Second, it is important to manage expectations (on both sides of the partnership) and to reduce unrealistic demands for reform and implementation on the recipient government in line with available capacity. For example, the GoU agreed to 58 undertakings to be achieved within six months at the first Education Sector Review in April 1999. The Ugandan experience shows how successful education reform consists of well defined broad strategy with clear goals and targets that is implemented through relatively small technically oriented and achievable steps. Third, for development partners especially, it is a priority to get the institutional architecture right for development partner coordination, although it generally takes more time than is anticipated to do this. Crises in the relationship are inevitable but can be positive and hasten reform.

Five significant factors have come together over the past seven years to effect the changes that have been possible in Uganda:

- political commitment to universal primary education (UPE);
- the drive towards decentralisation;
- the availability of resources from both the GoU and the development partners;
- key changes in mindset, most notably moving away from a project-based development vision to a SWAp reform process and ultimately to a budget support funding modality on the part of the GoU and the development partners;
- the influence and role of the Ugandan Treasury, especially after having undertaken reforms of its own and introduced a Medium Term Budget Framework process which has required 'buy-in' by the various line ministries and changed perceptions of the reform process.

Nonetheless, irrespective of the funding modality, it is evident that in deeply politicised contexts, and especially in contexts where personal and vertical links between patrons and clients continue purposely and profitably to hold sway, rational and transparent decision-making cannot be guaranteed.

Improving the Quality of Basic Education

The GoU/MoES focused on five specific areas in its efforts to improve the quality of basic education. These were:

- primary curriculum reform;
- the Language of Instruction policy for the lower primary sub-sector;
- the provision of basic learning materials;
- primary teacher development;
- establishing and maintaining education standards.

Primary Curriculum Reform

It has not been easy to track either the history of the development, introduction, review and reform of the primary school curriculum over the past fourteen years or the process of curriculum reform over the past five years. It is unclear what forces have shaped the way in which the curriculum has developed, the structures and processes involved, or, indeed, how the curriculum has been negotiated and how this has changed over time. These issues raise a number of important questions that are explored in detail in the book and summarised below

First, although the 2000/2002 curriculum was eight years in the making (from 1992 to 2000), there was remarkably little ownership of the curriculum outside the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) on the part of the MoES and the major stakeholders. As a result, the primary curriculum introduced into schools between 2000 and 2002 was not wholeheartedly supported by many of the key stakeholders.

Second, the curriculum that was introduced had high cost implications that were a major issue of debate between the GoU/MoES and the development partners. Unfortunately the debate did not result in any clear resolution, so that the curriculum was launched in the worst of all scenarios with at least four subjects being introduced into schools without adequate learning and teaching materials support.

Third, although there was concern about the financial implications for the supply of learning materials, there was much less debate over the financial implications of, for example, teaching Agriculture and Integrated Production Skills as practical subjects.

Fourth, the curriculum was launched into schools with no overall plan, no budget and no department or individual with specific line management responsibility for its launch. As a result, the curriculum documents were delivered very late to schools: textbooks and teachers' guides arrived up to three years late. There was insufficient teacher orientation and training and there has been no coherent plan or supporting budget to revise Primary Teachers Colleges' (PTC) syllabuses to support the new curriculum. Local language policy remained vague and encouraged the use of languages without orthographies and supporting literature and there has been no effort to develop local language reading materials in support of local languages of instruction from P1 to P3. Finally, the introduction of continuous assessment, which was supposed to support key aspects of the curriculum, was delayed and has still not been introduced in 2005.

Fifth, the curriculum and syllabuses, particularly in the first three years of primary, paid insufficient attention to listening, speaking, reading and writing skills and teachers in local languages were provided with insufficient support and guidance in approaches to the rapid achievement of literacy.

On the positive side, the MoES and its main partners were quickly aware that there were fundamental problems with the implementation of the curriculum and with some of the basic design features and they were commendably quick to intervene when it became clear that student performance in basic literacy and numeracy skills was continuing to decline. The intervention, in the form of the Primary Curriculum Review, generated a great deal of debate on every aspect of the curriculum and syllabuses and reviewed a range of alternative remedial approaches. Both the 2000/2002 curriculum and revised curriculum proposals were placed within the context of Ugandan school system realities and the financial implications were reviewed in detail. In fact, all of the scrutiny, debate, constructive discussion and ownership that should have taken place in 1999/2000 finally took place in 2004 and 2005.

The Language of Instruction (LOI) Policy for the Lower Primary Area

Uganda has many possible Languages of Instruction (LOI). The challenge facing educational policy makers in Uganda was whether it was preferable to use an area/regional local language not favoured by a local community but which has trained teachers, a known orthography and reading books, textbooks and a supportive background literature, or to use a community-favoured minority local language, but without an accepted orthography, trained teachers, reading materials and a background literature.

The selection of a local language to use as the language of instruction in lower primary grades has a number of implications. These include:

- political implications: it is clear that the selection of a local language as the LOI is not just a pedagogic issue but also has significant cultural and political implications, particularly in Districts where there are a number of different, and sometimes rival, language possibilities;
- financial implications: the use of too many local languages could fractionalise print runs for essential learning materials, which in turn would increase the costs of educational provision;
- staffing and training implications: instruction in local languages also requires teachers trained to use the local language. Too many LOIs will increase the costs and the complexity of teacher training in local languages and could have obvious implications for the posting, selection and promotion of teaching staff between Districts and even within counties and sub-counties.

By 2004 no significant progress had been made in resolving the local language issue, which raises serious questions about the development of strategies to improve the quality of education, especially in those areas where one of the main area languages was not used.

It is generally recognised that children will perform better and learn faster if early education is conducted in a familiar language. However, if reading in the local language is badly taught by teachers with little formal training in either the local language itself or in the teaching of reading and literacy, or if it is not well supported by appropriate learning and teaching materials, the lack of reading progress could undermine progress towards basic literacy, the development of learning in other subjects and the later acquisition of literacy in English and thus effective access to education in upper primary grades and in secondary school.

The Provision of Basic Learning Materials

Developments in this area are regarded as having been one of the most significant aspects of the reform process.

For many years in Uganda, as in most African countries, textbook publishing, printing and distribution were poorly performing state monopolies. In Uganda, textbook authorship and publishing were controlled by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), which had been established in 1973 as an autonomous organisation reporting to the MoES under the auspices of Presidential Decree No. 7. NCDC saw itself not just as a curriculum development organisation but also as an originator of core textbook manuscripts and other teaching and learning materials.

Since the mid 1980s the major source of instructional materials (IM) funding for primary schools has come from funding agencies. Building on earlier interventions, IDA Education V and the United States Aid for International Development (USAID) funded the Support for Primary Education Reform (SUPER) Project, followed in the early 1990s by the World Bank. These two projects led to a new national textbook policy in 1993 based on the principles of competition from an MoES list of approved textbooks, school-based choice and selection using

annual school-based purchasing power allocations from the government, and the full involvement of private sector publishers as the source of textbooks. The current textbook system is based on these principles.

However, this did not occur without considerable opposition as vested interests were being attacked. Crucial in the changes was the eventual recognition that a thriving private sector publishing industry, a national network of private booksellers, and policies that give schools the authority and resources to choose for themselves between competing series or titles offered by publishers not only benefited education but also the economy.

The introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997 doubled primary enrolments. This caused a worsening ratio of textbooks to pupils, as available funding had not kept pace with the increase in demand. Following wide consultation, the MoES launched the Instructional Materials Reform Programme in December 2000. The new system had the following characteristics:

- a competitive evaluation and approval system was introduced with a limitation of three on the number of textbooks to be approved for each subject and grade. As a general rule, the more limited the number of approved textbooks, the fiercer the competition between publishers for approved status and thus the keener the submitted prices. The evaluation system is as objective as possible and applies only to the new curriculum textbooks;
- price was one of the main criteria in evaluation (40% of all evaluation marks) and there are minimum content thresholds for conformity to curriculum requirements and for content/presentation. Minimum physical production specifications are compulsory for all textbook titles approved for use in Ugandan schools in order to achieve the target textbook life in the classroom;
- finally, publishers of approved textbooks are required, as a condition of approval, to sign a legally binding contract that stipulates the mutually accepted terms and conditions of approval, including fixed discounts off submitted prices according to the quantity ordered by schools and agreed limitations on price increases during the period of approval.

A Technical Handbook and the MoES's Bid Evaluation Management Guidelines supported the agreed documents produced.

The reformed textbook evaluation and approval process was used for the first time in Uganda at the end of 2000 for both non-book materials and lower primary textbooks and teachers' guides. The introduction of a transparent competitive tendering process has resulted in a reduction in the unit costs of primary textbooks of approximately 60%. Thus, the unit cost of primary school textbooks procured for P1 to P4 in 1998 was US$3.67, whereas the unit cost of textbooks procured for the same grades and subjects in 2002 was only US$1.53. This represents an approximate 250% increase in school purchasing power.

The reduction in costs in procurement has enabled textbook:pupil ratios to improve at a faster rate than anticipated, leaving the GoU and its partners more confident that a pupil: textbook ratio of close to 1:1 can be achieved in all classrooms over the next three years within the existing resource envelope.

The instructional materials reforms in Uganda have squarely attacked the vested financial interests of publishers and others associated with the book industry, and, as a consequence, the reform has tested to the full the institutional structures of the government, in particular those concerned with justice, good governance and accountability. The MoES's success in putting its evaluation and approval system at the centre of the process and attempting to ensure that this system is watertight, well managed, open and transparent has brought enormous benefits. Moreover, the ability of the funding agencies to discuss openly with government unpleasant issues related to the procurement of textbooks and to agree a way forward has been instrumental in achieving success.

A critical issue to note for other countries considering following Uganda's lead in this area is the extent to which staffing continuity, both within government institutions and funding agencies' representatives, has contributed to a consistent approach.

Primary Teacher Development

The challenge has been, and still remains, to create affordable and effective mechanisms to ensure that primary school teachers in Uganda are committed, motivated and have the professional skills and ethics to provide quality teaching and learning for every student.

While the quantitative gains in the Ugandan education system have been impressive, they have not kept pace with the need to ensure the quality of learning outcomes. National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) test results show a deterioration in student performance. As a consequence of these poor results and, indeed, UPE itself, the role of primary teachers has come under intense scrutiny. Demands for a critical review of the impact of UPE on both student and teacher performance have been numerous.

The Teacher Development and Management System (TDMS) was originally launched in 1994 as a USAID funded project, but following UPE it became a central part of the ESIP. It was intended to increase access for students and teachers to quality learning opportunities and to improve school management and instructional quality.

TDMS created a delivery system based on 23 core Primary Teachers Colleges (PTCs), each of which was provided with an outreach department. Each core PTC was required to establish within its catchment area a network of Coordinating Centres (CCs) which were located at one school amongst a cluster of schools. Each CC had a permanent tutor called a Coordinating Centre Tutor (CCT), who was employed by the core PTC. At present there are 540 CCs for approximately 9,500 primary schools, so the average cluster size is approximately eighteen schools.

The Primary Teacher Development and Management Plan (PTDMP) is the successor to the TDMS. It is concerned with continuous professional development and the issue of quality in schools through increasing the entry qualification to PTCs and focusing on the teacher training programmes. The PTDMP is also concerned with developing accountability, efficient inspection and supervision, strengthening the roles and functions of PTAs and SMCs and developing the

role of the head teacher. A critical feature of it is focusing on the development of a career structure for primary teachers and the development of quality assurance within teacher education.

The PTDMP faces considerable challenges as the depressing fact is that much pre-service teacher training is poor, whilst much in-service training is still not delivering what is intended. Latest reports on teacher training and improving the quality of teaching and learning in Uganda appear to be saying that there has to be coherence and consistency within the system as a whole, between policy and administrative reform, and changes in teaching and learning. If one outstrips the other and the present dissonance persists, not only will the reforms be frustrated, it will make traditionally conducted training and research, and their parent institutions, increasingly irrelevant to the reform agenda and to teachers themselves.

Establishing and Maintaining Education Standards

The challenge in Uganda was how to address the need for an effective and sustainable inspection and support service to teachers and schools.

A school inspection service has been in place in Uganda since the beginning of the country's education system under British colonial rule. Until 1989, the inspection of primary schools was managed on a regional basis with District-based inspectors undertaking inspections in local schools. The majority of inspectors were resident in the Districts and in some cases were county based. The secondary schools inspectorate was headquarters (MoES) based. Its inspectors were specialists in particular secondary school curriculum areas. Teacher training inspection was also headquarters based in the MoES. The Technical and Business Inspectorate was responsible for technical schools, technical institutes and commercial colleges.

The final report on the post-constitutional reform restructuring of the MoES document of 1998 by the Ministry of Public Service recommended the establishment of an Education Standards Agency (ESA) to replace the inspectorate. It left the MoES to consider whether ESA should be a single body for inspection alone, or whether there should be one merged body or merged bodies incorporating some or all of the functions of inspection and monitoring of standards across education and training. The MOES opted for a single, semi-autonomous body.

Passing the ESA into law was considerably eased by a separate Executive Agencies Bill, which was being passed through Parliament at the same time by the Ministry of Public Service (MoPS). This allowed ESA personnel to benefit from terms and conditions of service and a remuneration package more attractive than that previously enjoyed by inspectors.

The ESA's work is set out in a five year medium term plan incorporating a three year rolling programme. National programmes for inspections, setting out numbers and types of inspections to be undertaken at each educational level, the types and frequencies of reports, together with the uses to be made of reports, are described on this three year basis and confirmed annually. They are confirmed in the Annual Performance Contract between the ESA and the government.

The ESA began its operations in July 2001, but its early work was constrained by delays in staffing and inadequate resourcing. Key components of the inspection approach include a predetermined structure of Quality Indicators (QIs), the focus on evidence, an emphasis on reporting both strengths and weaknesses, and encouraging self-evaluation on the part of the institution and its head teacher or principal. The intended approach represents a major shift in the inspection of schools away from the previous focus on the institution and educational inputs, such as teachers, books and facilities. However, these areas are not neglected as they are covered in specific indicators and in the profile.

Also intended is a shift to a more supportive emphasis on the exemplification and promotion of good practice. ESA's key tasks to date have included:

- the development, testing and refinement of quality indicators;
- organisation of a national inspections programme (NIP) (including the development of instruments, procedures, inspection models, selection of associate assessors and training, implementation and reporting);
- developing costing and workload models for inspections;
- development of partnerships with other education institutions and agencies;
- establishment of the Education Standards Agency (ESA) database systems with links to the EMIS;
- establishing a set of inspection procedures and inspection instruments.

The ESA was a new agency, yet within its first two years of operation it began to demonstrate that it is able to ensure that schools can be inspected in depth, and at the least, be visited once each year. There is reason to believe that the ESA will prove itself an effective means of improving inspection within sustainable budgets and as a potential means for improving the quality of each school visit. However, much will depend on adequate resourcing, especially as the challenge is to go beyond the present form of checking minimum standards and inspection alone, and to widen the ESA's mandate to hold professional development providers, and the government who resource these activities, to account. Improving quality of provision and education outcomes remains a major challenge.

Funding Access and Equity in Primary Education

The challenge that had to be addressed was how to fund the provision of fee-free primary education to all school age children in the population, improve school and community capacity to manage their own affairs and enhance the quality of primary education.

Two main modalities were developed and employed:

- UPE Capitation Grant;
- School Facilities Grant.

UPE Capitation Grant

The UPE capitation grant has two objectives:

- increasing equitable access to basic education by removing the burden of school fees from the parents;
- enhancing the quality of primary education by providing schools with the basic operational resources necessary to run the school and support teaching and learning.

Steps taken by the GoU to provide fee-free education to all primary school age children in the population began with the recognition of both the importance of primary education for social and economic development and the problems of access caused by cost sharing. The UPE policy does not make primary education free, however. There is still a financial requirement on families to provide their children with writing materials, uniforms and lunches. The GoU pays for the costs of tuition fees and basic school operational costs, at an annual rate of Ush 5,000 per pupil for classes P1 to P3 and Ush 8,100 per pupil for classes P4 to P7. These expenditures are in addition to the contribution that GoU was already making in terms of the payment of teachers' salaries, provision of instructional materials, construction of school facilities and, in some cases, the construction of teachers' houses. Tuition fees are paid to schools by the GoU in the form of a capitation grant in nine monthly payments each school year.

The UPE capitation funds are channelled by the central GoU to the local governments (76 Districts and 12 Municipalities) in the form of conditional grants. These have to be utilised by the District/Municipal local governments strictly in accordance with guidelines that have been drawn up by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) in coordination with the MoES. A planning and budgeting cycle is in operation and the planning and implementation of the UPE conditional grant is managed within this framework.

However, the supply chain for UPE funds is quite lengthy and involves a number of different actors. Analysis of the flow of funds, mainly through the tracking studies reveals that although over 90% of the released funds are reaching the primary schools, there are significant delays in some districts and there are frequently bottlenecks at one stage or another of the supply chain. These same tracking studies reveal that schools' expenditures were mostly in line with the UPE guidelines, with the exception of co-curricular activities, where spending was below the limit, and administration, where spending was above the limit. However, other field experiences and surveys suggest that expenditures on instructional materials are also below the limit. The reason given by most schools questioned by the tracking study teams for overspending on administration was the need to frequently visit the District headquarters to check on the whereabouts of the grant funds.

There has also been a problem in establishing reliable data on school enrolments and this has affected the efficiency of the grant. The MoES established an Education Management Information System (EMIS) in 2000 and has been carrying out an Annual School Census (ASC) since this date. However, the problem of the dual purpose of ASC statistics, monitoring and the derivation of budgets has not yet been solved, especially as head teachers have an incentive to inflate enrolments in their ASC returns.

The introduction of a capitation grant to all primary schools was a key element of the reform process. It was a device intended to make local ownership of schools a reality, and it has largely facilitated this. Initially the grant brought about significant developments and considerable activity at school level. Teachers and school communities responded very positively and for many it was the first opportunity they had to manage funding and to make decisions on its utilisation. Procuring textbooks was a significant part of this process and for many teachers, used to having a few teaching resources, and at best a single textbook for their own use, simply being asked to select books for classroom use was a new experience. The independent tracking studies of 2000 and 2001 demonstrated that over 90% of the funds released by the MOFPED and the UPE grants reached the end users, the primary schools, in the financial years between 1998–2001. The first objective of removing the burden of fees from households, namely the massive increase in enrolments since 1997, has clearly been achieved. However there has been no substantial evaluation to date of the extent to which the grant is achieving its secondary objective of enhancing the quality of primary education.

School Facilities Grant

The School Facilities Grant (SFG) for primary schools was designed to assist the most needy school communities to complete unfinished classrooms and/or to build new classrooms. It also included plans for the supply of furniture, the construction of latrines and the construction of teachers' houses. The SFG modality began as a pilot in eight districts in 1998 and, following an independent evaluation of the pilots in March 1999 and a review of the various other ongoing classroom construction programmes, it became the sole modality in the country for constructing school facilities using government funds.

Since July 1999 the GoU has spent approximately Ush45 billion (approximately US$26.4 million) at an average classroom unit cost of US$ 2,500 on constructing primary school facilities through the SFG. These expenditures have resulted in the construction or completion of approximately 29,000 classrooms, together with the provision of classroom furniture, latrines and instructional materials stores across the country. The SFG has transformed the school landscape of Uganda, with almost every parish in the country receiving at least two new classrooms.

As with the UPE Grant, the SFG funding is channelled to districts/municipalities as a conditional grant and is intended to be utilised strictly in accordance with the Poverty Action Fund (PAF) General Guidelines for Planning and Operation of Conditional Grants issued by the MoFPED and the MoES. These guidelines apply to all the District/Municipal local governments.

The MoES is responsible for setting policy and standards and for monitoring, supporting and assuring quality control of the whole process. On the basis of data gathered at District/Municipal and local/parish and community level the MoES establishes the overall budget allocations to districts, sets conditionalities and approves the releases of funds to districts. The MoES also assists and facilitates the districts in the preparation of standard technical designs and bills of quantity. These are outlined in the MoES's technical handbook.

School communities, represented by School Management Committees (SMCs), are responsible for preparing applications, contracting, and daily supervision of construction work, as well as making payments to the contractor under the guidance of the District Engineer.

Proponents of the SFG argue that evidence of its success can be seen in the number of school facilities constructed and that, together with the capitation grant and the abolition of school fees, it has led to a significant growth in the number of children accessing and staying on in education. The key point is that under SFG specifically, each stakeholder is included in an output-oriented process, which requires commitment and co-operation between all levels of public administration. A key feature of the SFG is that only core indispensable tasks and responsibilities are determined and fixed. A vital space is left for initiative and competition in a process where tangible outputs signify successful implementation. Clear eligibility/priority criteria, within a participatory framework, and the development of due processes through the implementation of straightforward procedures, clear standards and monitoring processes, have increased people's confidence in the system. Indeed, 'the system' is delivering 'the goods' whilst it has also made it difficult for districts to attempt to select any but the most needy and the poorest communities as beneficiaries. It has also made it more difficult for individuals to gain through corrupt practice. Information on SFG is available to all. At any point, anyone can know which school or district has received how much for which type of activity and how successful the district/school has been. Enhanced transparency, accurate information and accountability are all features of the SFG, whilst community participation is mainly based on taking responsibility rather than cash or kind contribution.

Although the SFG system can clearly work, is helping the GoU to achieve its targets for primary school facilities and is sensitive to poverty differences between districts, there are issues that are causing concern which need to be addressed.

First, very few of the 55 districts are fully compliant with the procedures and designs as per the guidelines and technical handbooks. Non-compliance is found mainly in the areas of school selection procedure and procurement.

Second, experience within the sector has been that it has proved difficult to deal with non-compliant districts, institutions and individuals without punishing the school children being served by those districts/institutions/individuals. Action has been slow, but there are currently ongoing discussions between the MoES, MoFPED, MoLG, Ministry of Justice and the local governments regarding these proposals. The aim was to have a set of agreed sanctions in place by the end of 2004.

Third, the MoES has yet to accept the idea that other authorities can manage funds allocated to education effectively, be it at central level or local level, and it has not effectively supported local or district management. There are therefore strong and various tensions between national policy and local autonomy and these have affected the implementation of the SFG. The origin of these tensions lies in the conflict between national policy and local autonomy (the sector or vertical approach versus the horizontal approach) and the centre's perceived need for national control over the system (the national monitoring and reporting system). Moreover, it would seem that two elements of decision-making are at the source of this tension: selection of beneficiaries

(political power) and procurement/payment of services (financial benefit). MoES has ceded significant ground to local governments in these two areas. One way to enhance compliance and reduce conflicts is to use the participatory approach, regularly inviting the local governments to review/amend the system and feel ownership over its mechanisms. The other is to use the existing legal framework to enforce sanctions against mismanagement. However, in both areas this will involve a change of culture and will take time. It will only be when the benefits of legitimate action outweigh the risks of illegitimate action that the practices embodied in the SFG guidelines will become accepted and 'normal'.

Fourth, there is a widely perceived need for supervision and monitoring of the processes of school and contractor, performance and payment, which is external to the Districts, in order to ensure compliance with procedural requirements and the maintenance of adequate construction standards. A recent Auditor General's report on the SFG has drawn attention to current problems in these areas.

These issues notwithstanding, the aims of the SFG have been met in the best situations. Nationally, all school communities have functioning SMCs, and the SFG has produced over 29,000 classrooms to date. However, as has been stated above, the quality and the effectiveness of the SFG process as a means of increasing local ownership and demand for quality facilities are variable.

Increasing Access, Equity and Efficiency at Post-primary Levels of Education and Training within Sustainable Budgets

It was recognised soon after 1996 that increasing numbers of pupils reaching P7 (the final year of primary schooling) would increase the demand for places in secondary education. The challenge that had to be addressed was how to plan effectively for increasing access, equity and efficiency at post-primary levels of education and training within sustainable budgets. For these reasons the GoU and its development partners began a process aimed at exploring how access to PPET in Uganda could be expanded in equitable and efficient ways. A five stage approach to the planning process was agreed.

In the first stage, a series of studies was commissioned and developed to look at various aspects of the problem. In the second stage, reports from the various studies were disseminated to a group of key stakeholders and, with the facilitation of an international PPET financing specialist, a set of options for expanding access, based on specially designed projections and financing models, was developed. These options were then discussed further with a wider set of stakeholders and gaps in knowledge were identified and filled. In the fourth stage, the fully developed and costed policy options were used as the basis for a national consultation and consensus-building exercise covering the length and breadth of the country. The consultation process culminated in a national policy forum during which policy and financing decisions were made. In the final stage of development, the agreed policy and financing decisions were translated into a strategic plan of action and included within the government's education Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF). The aim was for the policy decisions to be implemented from July 2003, the beginning of the financial year.

The approach to PPET planning was neither top down nor bottom up: instead, the task force comprising senior and middle managers had to mediate internal and external forces working on the problem. Four primary learning activities were applied in this process: shared, creative problem solving; implementing new approaches, methodologies and tools to address the problem; formal and informal experimentation using the projection model; and drawing upon expertise from the outside, not just consultants, but also participants from other line ministries, local government and education institutions, representatives of employers and other stakeholders.

In analysing the process, therefore, it is possible to identify the key institutional and political characteristics which enable this to happen. These include:

- a fairly coherent and cohesive political executive with a well-defined vision of where to take the country, at least in terms of poverty eradication;
- a political executive committed to legitimising decisions made through a consultative process;
- appropriate involvement of civil society, the private sector and the legislature in the decision-making forum;
- a forum available which used an established planning tool, the MTBF, as well as data from the Education Sector Review. This ensured that decision-making occurred with a clear understanding of the resources available and within sector expenditure ceilings over the medium term. Policies therefore had to compete with each other within projected funding realities;
- devolved responsibility to the MoES for budget formulation;
- capacity at the centre for assessing the appropriateness of decisions against the overall strategic policy objectives of the government and their financial implications over the life of the planned period, including estimating the cost of existing and planned policies over the medium term;
- a coherent and comprehensive approach to education aid management with the strategic policy priorities of the government being, for the most part, the drivers of decisions that involve aid financing.

To support these institutional arrangements, the government and its education development partners recognised and met the need for information on the cost of existing and proposed government PPET policies over the medium and longer term, the output and outcome information on each of these policies, and the cost, output and outcome information for new policy proposals as they were developed.

The main lesson that emerges from these issues is that conflict and diversity can be positively associated with creative breakthroughs under complex conditions. Attempts at major change in African education, such as that planned for in Uganda's PPET education sector, benefited from the application of a purpose-built model for projecting the future implications of various policies and strategies. The model also built awareness of the resource constraints involved and assisted in showing how to manage this. The projection model was also a vital tool in overcoming obstacles associated with deeply entrenched in-house knowledge and positions.

Conclusions

The analytical and development work outlined in this study show that the face of educational development in Uganda has changed significantly since 1997. The UPE policy and the accompanying education SWAp, and an education strategy supported through external budget support, represent a significant point of departure in terms of the government's responsibility for educating all the country's children. The reforms are also significant in terms of the modalities adopted for the transfer of resources to the sector from both the state and the development partners.

The shift in focus away from development projects to the sector as a whole within a national budget framework is presented as increasing ownership nationally, in spite of the high levels of aid dependency that continue to exist. However, the language and architecture of SWAps and budget support continue to allow external agencies a high level of policy leverage. Critics of the process argue that this can foster a degree of suspicion; suggesting that, as a new modality of partnership, SWAps and budget support can in practice be less equal than they may first appear. SWAps also function predominantly in the formal policy sphere and, as this study indicates, a gap exists between promulgation and implementation on the one hand, and actual performance and delivery in the sector itself on the other. This provides ample opportunity for critics to argue that the investment of considerable sums of money in the education sector has still to show the impact anticipated in terms of improved quality of input and output, especially at school level and in the area of the child's experience of schooling. The prime issue seems to be the bridging of what has been designed and what takes place, whilst recognising that change takes time. We also need to come to terms with the fact that school and current models of schooling are culturally specific. Their present form originated only a few generations ago in colonial times.

Nonetheless, the UPE policy and funding arrangements developed to facilitate the reforms do demonstrate to the education development partners, and to the wider community, that the GoU is able to translate additional resources into improving educational outcomes. This is one of the most important lessons learnt.

The study also argues that increased ownership has been manifested in the high level of political commitment to education and in the growing technical capacity of the MoES through its willingness to apply itself to addressing its priorities. In particular, the processes through which the Education Sector Consultative Committee (ESCC), the Technical Working Groups (TWG) and the Education Sector Reviews (ESRs) work through the technical detail of reform, establishing clear guidelines, monitoring arrangements, feedback loops and amending arrangements in the light of experience have been vital for the success of the reforms. These Committees, Groups and Reviews have helped the managers of reform to guide the strategy implementation process in two specific ways: (i) by helping them to maintain a clear focus on and make political and operational linkages with the bigger picture, while, at the same time, (ii) helping them to manage the relatively small (compared to the bigger picture) and technically oriented steps necessary for achieving the larger strategic goals. The positive enabling environment produced by the wider GoU, in particular the MoFPED, has also been especially significant.

The shift in aid modality, from projects to programme to sector and then to budget support raised the level of the policy dialogue between education funding and technical assistance agencies and the GoU. A key feature of this process has been the way in which development partner representatives and senior government officials have increasingly listened to the implementers of reforms and responded to issues raised by adjusting financial allocations and refining policies and programmes. Acting promptly to improve guidelines for implementation, tightening service delivery systems, providing capacity-building support, studying problems and exerting pressure on key agencies for performance improvement, are all features of a reforming sector. However, a key lesson is that change takes time and that it is as much about developing and implementing technical reforms as it is about changing the culture.

Finally, the processes described in this book have gone through a series of phases: from initial scepticism and indeed opposition to some of the changes that were introduced, to increased enthusiasm as visible improvements occurred, especially at school level. However, maintaining the momentum and providing good reasons for people at all levels of the sector to continue to engage proactively can become a major challenge as systems and processes mature. Plans at the macro-level are inevitably somewhat insensitive to local and individual motivations for change and proclamation at national level is only the first step to implementation. The language of SWAps and budget support is that of technical rationality, conducted in formal policy spheres. Connections need to be made to the experience of most teachers and pupils, and their communities, as it is to individuals, and the institutions they inhabit, that the tasks of realising reform ultimately fall. It is therefore not surprising that change can sometimes be slow or can generate suspicion or scepticism. There is therefore an ongoing need to continue to address professional incentives to change, particularly when there are signs that the processes of reform and development are at risk of becoming bureaucratic and less responsive to new demands. The content and pace of change can also be affected by differences on policy, technical, timescale or other issues between development partners, or between them and the government, especially when development partnerships do not take into sufficient account that governments, and the societies they represent, may be basing their education agenda on values, processes and priorities which differ from those understood or brought by external agencies.

Development partners working in Uganda have thus found it necessary to become particularly aware that development of the education sector is taking place in a highly complex political, social and physical environment. This, and the processes involved in policy dialogue and the development, management and evaluation of reform, places a premium on people's knowledge, judgement, planning, team-working, research, communication and other skills. The presence of such capacities in the partnership as a whole is critical. However, "learning by doing" is inevitably problematic at times, particularly where different perceptions continue to exist. Development partners can play an important role in maintaining and developing the integrity of the partnership between themselves and the host government. Reviewing critically the aid architecture, the commonality of the agenda, and the impact of reform at every level, should help to ensure that sector development remains a fresh and dynamic process.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   Aims and Rationale

In 1998 the Government of Uganda (GoU) began implementing an ambitious programme of educational reform, the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP). This book contains a number of studies of this process, mainly as seen through the eyes of the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and a group of development partners. In elaborating on the core ESIP activities developed and implemented over the period from 1997 to 2004, a record is provided of what was done and the lessons learned, as well as an assessment of progress on increasing access to, and improving the quality of, primary education. As such, it contributes to the institutional memory within the Ugandan education sector and the donor community. It also offers insights to policy makers and educational developers in other countries embarking on similar reforms.

Understanding what Uganda has achieved and the strengths and weaknesses of its education reform programme is important, as is the need to explore the challenges the country faces as it attempts to sustain its achievements. Whilst the authors acknowledge and praise Uganda for what it has achieved in developing primary education, they also identify some of the lessons learned and where increased attention by the GoU is advised.

Although this book focuses mainly on the technical aspects of educational change in Uganda, the editors know that change is not a technocratic process but one that involves political and value choices (Fullan, 1991:65). Moreover, education systems are not machines but arenas of conflict, consensus and compliance and what education systems do reflect how people construct their roles within them (Reimers and McGinn, 1997). Education policy-making reflects tradition, it is a political and cultural settlement based on various legacies and imperatives, opportunities, pressures and power, which ranges across all levels from commitment to compliance to resistance. The book will show that clear and rational conception and the provision of generous external financial support do not automatically lead to trouble free implementation. Policies, principles and practices are fragile instruments that require commitment and attention to detail for the intended outcomes to be achieved. The editors suggest that perhaps the greatest challenge faced by the GoU is maintaining commitment as the initial enthusiasm for reform fades, as attention is distracted and as the significant changes that have occurred become taken for granted.

Structural and technical reform embodies symbolic value, especially when tangible benefits are seen to arise out of the activities undertaken in the process of their development and implementation. Indeed, as Amartya Sen (1999: 246) has cogently pointed out, the core constituents of development are the intrinsic importance of reforms, the consequential importance of providing incentives for economic security and their constructive role in the genesis of values and priorities. Recognising this is important in any change process, especially as changes which occur through the various activities constituting the reform process can strongly influence perceptions and mindsets. As conscious policy trade-offs and decisions occur and specifically are increasingly driven by the ability to fund core activities within an overall policy framework, so over time such processes become taken-for-granted. Indeed, the logic behind the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP) implementation strategy was that in the process of becoming taken-for-granted, practice and mindset would change.

This study provides an example of how educational change can occur; how new ways of delivering education services can be developed, adopted, funded, implemented, monitored, amended and evaluated, and indeed improved. More especially, it endeavours to show how ideas and practices are institutionalised and recast by those directly involved – policy makers, politicians, administrators and teachers.

The editors wish to stress that the book is not a summative evaluation of the development of education in Uganda between 1997 and 2004. The story that is told is part of a long-term process. Judgements that arise primarily relate to the impact of investment in the education sector on the extent to which the system created is facilitating increased access and improved quality of teaching and learning, and is capable of continuing to develop and expand. With process goals at the heart of development itself the study deals with insight rather than 'law' as a basis for understanding.

The book is presented in line with the process of lesson-learning in African education initiated in 1988 by the World Bank's document, *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalisation and Expansion*. This milestone publication was updated in 1999 by the publication of *What Works and What's New in Education: Africa Speaks* by the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). Our book has a similar focus to the ADEA studies, including access, quality and capacity building, but the cases are presented in much greater detail than was attempted in the ADEA publication.

The focus of the book is on how Uganda is seeking to achieve within its borders the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to 'cut by half, from 1990 levels, the proportion of people in extreme poverty worldwide by 2015, provide education, improve health and preserve the environment' (World Bank, 2002). In education therefore to:

• achieve universal primary education – ensure that boys and girls alike complete primary schooling;
• promote gender equality and empower women – eliminate gender disparity at all levels of education.

The conscious intention of the World Education Forum that met in Dakar in April 2000 was to agree upon strategies to help countries to meet their commitments to Education for All and, in particular, to achieve the two education MDGs referred to above. However, the appearance of consensus arising from international agreements and conferences can conceal contests over the meaning and purpose of education itself. Indeed, as this study shows, educational policy-making reflects conflict and incoherence within the state and ideological disputes over, and struggles for control of, the meaning and definition of education.

1.2 Structure of the Book

Each of the contributions endeavours to address three questions:

(i)   *Was the ESIP model well conceived? What was put in place?*

Our basic response is that the model was well conceived, with caveats, and that the systems and structures that have been put in place are inherently realistic and sound. However, it is acknowledged that the Ugandan education agenda may be based on very different values, processes and priorities to those understood and taken for granted by the funding agency partners. The funding agency partners' agenda is based on western liberal ideas and upon a notion of political accountability which differs fundamentally from that found in patrimonial systems. This extends to ideas about citizenship, the separation of public and private spheres, the idea of individual rights protected by the rule of law, legitimacy established through competitive elections and a neutral and efficient bureaucracy.

(ii)   *To what extent have the ESIP implementation goals been achieved to date?*

The evidence available suggests that, while there have been successes, there have also been significant problems and disappointments, the most notable being that the demands on the educational system have grown faster than the finances available. Donor-government disagreements on the primary curriculum which were not resolved in 1999 have had a major impact on quality. The significance of local language policies and their impact on quality has only recently been appreciated.

(iii)   *Are some of the implementation problems identified inevitable or could they have been foreseen or even eliminated?*

With hindsight, some of the issues that have arisen could have been foreseen and at least ameliorated. For example, the MoES and the GoU have tended to take policy decisions without regard for the pedagogic or financial implications. The budget process has not always been jointly agreed, as the recent presidential directive to increase primary teacher salaries across the board attests. These increases are likely to lead to the education system being seriously under-funded and consequently to a return to salary dominated education budgets[1]. Donors, on the other hand, have increasingly failed to act corporately on major policy issues because most have their own individual areas of interest. For some observers, the care, rigour and professionalism on which the programme was designed and launched have not been sustained[2].

---

[1] Projections suggest that salary will account for 98% of recurrent primary education expenditure within two years.
[2] There is a difference of view between donors as to what the level of their engagement should be. Initially donors focused on both high level policy reform and building capacity at the implementation and delivery level. Since 2002, however, some donors (especially DFID) have argued that direct budget support primarily requires high-level policy engagement which focuses on the achievement of the poverty reduction strategy (PRS) and MDGs. Other donors continue to argue that donor engagement should also be at the level of implementation and delivery too. At issue is the nature of the partnership between government and donors and the transaction costs involved as well as the capacity of donors.

1.3   Background

Uganda is a small country, about the same size as the United Kingdom in geographical area, with a population of approximately 22 million. Almost 50% of the population are below the age of 15 and over 80% of Ugandans live in villages and small trading centres. There is only one significant city in the country: the capital, Kampala. The country's principal exports are coffee, fish (22% of Uganda's land space is covered by fresh water lakes and rivers), tobacco and cut flowers. Uganda's current Gross Domestic Product is US$6.6 billion, which produces an average annual per capita income of US$310.

Uganda gained its independence from Britain in 1962 but the first twenty five years of the country's life were scarred by tyranny and oppression, corruption, violence, economic collapse, tribalism, violation of human rights and civil war. The situation began to change in 1986 when the National Resistance Army, the armed wing of the National Resistance Movement (NRM), gained control of Kampala. A new government was installed, promising fundamental change. It is still in power in 2005, and in spite of concerns over rising levels of corruption, Uganda is seen as a model for development in Africa.

1.4   Uganda's Education System

Uganda's education system includes both academic and technical training at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Formal primary schooling in Uganda comprises seven years, typically referred to as P1 through to P7. The official age range for primary schooling is 6 to 12 years. At the end of primary school, a national examination, the Primary School Leaving Examination (PLE), is administered.

Unlike other newly independent countries in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1960s, Uganda did not experience educational expansion, and as Appleton (2001) has pointed out, the gross primary school enrolment ratio of around 50% in 1980 was effectively the same as that in 1960 (Appleton, 2001: 395).

By contrast, other sub-Saharan African countries for which data are available increased their gross primary school enrolment ratios from an average of 43.2% in 1960 to 79.5% by 1980 (World Bank, 2001:8). Following the overthrow of the Amin dictatorship in the mid 1970s, Uganda began to catch up with the rest of the continent and attained a gross primary enrolment rate of 73% by 1985 (Appleton, 2001: 395). These rates remained relatively constant until 1995, the period immediately prior to the launch of the GoU's Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy.

Secondary schooling consists of two levels: ordinary secondary (four classes) and advanced secondary (two classes), with the official secondary school age range covering 13 to 18 year olds. Successful completion of ordinary secondary education leads to the award of the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) or "O" level and successful completion of advanced secondary leads to the award of the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) or "A" level.

According to Appleton (2001), secondary enrolment rates rose slightly from 1960 to 1980, from 3% to 5%, and although rates doubled to 10% by 1985, they only stood at 12% by 1995. (Appleton, 2001: 395).

Tertiary education includes universities, colleges of commerce, technical colleges, and teachers' colleges. Both universities and colleges of commerce require the UACE as a basic entry qualification. Technical and vocational colleges train craftsmen, technicians and other skilled workers for industry. These colleges include an intermediate level for students who have completed primary schooling and an advanced level for students who have completed "O" level. Students studying to become primary school teachers enrol in teachers' colleges after "O" level, whereas students studying to become secondary school teachers must complete "A" level before starting their training. In addition to the formal system, a non-formal education system operates to serve disadvantaged children and young people. There are very low participation rates in tertiary education in the country, and as Nansozi et al. (2003) have pointed out:

> Although there has been a marked increase in participation in tertiary education since the 1970s, Uganda's gross tertiary enrolment ratio was 2 per cent compared to the sub-Saharan average of 3.9 per cent, 61.1 per cent for High Income countries and 17.4 per cent for world average in 1995.

1.5   Uganda's Education Reforms

The education sector of Uganda changed dramatically in 1996 when, during the presidential election campaign of that year, the incumbent, President Museveni, promised to provide free primary education to four children in every family. Although the GoU had for some time declared its commitment to educating all children, this promise was the first significant step towards achieving that goal. Following his re-election in December 1996, President Museveni announced that he would implement his election promise from January 1997. The public response to the initiative was immediate and hugely impressive.

> The registration of children was undertaken in the week leading up to 10 January 1997. Pupils already in schools were required to re-register as well as new pupils. In his report to members of parliament in June 1997 on the progress of UPE, the Minister of Education, The Honourable Amanya Mushega, stated that 5.7 million pupils had registered for primary education, an increase of 2.6 million, of which about 5.2 million reported for school in the proceeding school term. The largest enrolments were in P1 and P2 classes. He recommended that untrained teachers be replaced and that 40,000 more teachers would be needed to compensate for the increase of children in school.
>
> (Tudor, 1998: 15)

The antecedents of the education reforms of the late 1990s lay in a process of policy development that began with a major Education Review commissioned by the GoU in 1987. This review culminated in 1992 with the publication of a GoU white paper on education that set out a major education reform programme over the next 25 year period. The main emphasis in the white paper was on providing educational opportunities for all the country's children.

The planning for ESIP began in 1996 and took as its starting point the recommendations of the government white paper on education[3]. The ESIP covered all areas of the sector and focused on broad policy and strategic objectives. It adopted a medium-term strategy with well defined targets. In the long term, the ESIP sought to contribute to the eradication of poverty through progress in five main priority areas:

- access: expanding the capacity of the education sector to accommodate expanded enrolment;
- quality: enhancing the quality in all aspects of education at all levels;
- equity: eliminating educational disparities between gender, regions, and locations;
- partnership: the promoting of public/private sector partnership;
- capacity building: strengthening central government and district level policy-making and implementation capacity.

1.6 The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP)

The launching of the PEAP in 1997 represented a significant milestone in Uganda's reform process for it has subsequently framed and guided policy reform and the development of all sector investment programmes, including the 2004-2015 Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) and the ESIP that preceded this. It commits the GoU to prioritise poverty reduction and a successful implementation of the PEAP is expected to reduce absolute poverty to less than 10% of the population by the year 2017. The PEAP document was developed following wide-ranging consultations throughout the country and with development partners between 1995 and 1997. It is revised every three years and the latest version, published in June, 2004, identifies critical poverty areas and prescribes four broad goals for their eradication:

- creating an enabling environment for sustainable economic growth and transformation;
- promoting good governance and security;
- directly increasing the ability of the poor to raise their incomes;
- directly improving the quality of life of the poor.

It is widely acknowledged that the development of the PEAP, and the process of technical analysis and consultation that underpinned it, constituted a breakthrough in relations between the GoU, civil society and its development partners. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) played a leading role in developing the PEAP and working with the main development agencies. A Poverty Action Fund (PAF) was created to use debt-relief proceeds to supplement the GoU's education and health budgets and, as a result, Uganda has been able to increase its expenditures in these and other priority areas. The administration of PAF is overseen by Uganda's Parliament and information about it is shared openly with the country's development partners, including civil society organisations (CSOs). Any future increases to the PAF contribution to the national budget are dependent upon additional flows of debt-relief proceeds.

---

[3] It is interesting to note how the planning process has evolved since 1996 as the school population 'bulge' has moved through the system and new priorities have been addressed (see the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2004 - 2015).

The PEAP sets a national framework for GoU planning and budgeting. National goals and priorities in the PEAP are translated into plans for each sector and for local governments. For sectors, this is mostly done through Sector Wide Approaches (SWAps) which bring together the activities of GoU, funding agencies and other stakeholders into a single strategy. The GoU adopted SWAps as a more efficient means of development and argued that:

> SWAps clarify sector objectives, priorities and strategies, and link spending with the necessary policy, institutional and budgetary reforms. The process of developing and monitoring SWAps allows stakeholders to be more involved and their views to influence priorities and spending plans. This helps build local commitment and ownership of the strategy.

> (PEAP, A Summary Version, 2001: 31)

The responsibility for developing and implementing the detailed sector plans lies with line ministries and local governments. Individual local government departments initiate detailed plans for their areas within the guidelines of the PEAP and the national sector plans.

1.7   Key Education Reform Milestones

Key education reform milestones since 1987 are summarised in the following table:

Table 1: Summary of Key Education Milestones

Policy Development	Main Policy Outcomes
1989: Report of the Education Review Commission.	Recommendation for UPE Policy.
1992: Education White Paper.	Recommendation for UPE Policy within the framework of a three tiered reform programme.
1993: New Textbook Policy.	Liberalisation of textbook market, access to private sector, multiple textbook choice and school based purchasing power.
1993: Launch of SUPER and PETDP.	Financing of new textbook policy and teacher development management system, school libraries, Education Management Information System, classrooms.
1995 – 1999 Makerere University restructuring, including alternative financing strategies, installing new management structures and introducing demand-driven courses.	Revenue diversification at Makerere University has facilitated the re-allocation of GoU funding across other levels of the education sector, mainly to benefit primary education.
1996: Presidential endorsement of UPE.	GoU approval of the UPE policy and development of UPE programme and budget including the UPE Capitation Grant.

1997: Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP).	Poverty eradication policy framework for the whole of GoU, including UPE policy.
1997: Local Government Act.	Decentralisation of basic service delivery to Districts, including primary and secondary education.
1998: Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP).	Increased access to and improved quality of education at all levels.
1999: Commencement of Education Sector Wide Approach (SWAp).	Improved development partner coordination and uniform monitoring and evaluation based on GoU's own systems.
1998/99: Launching of Schools Facilities Grant (SFG).	Decentralised modality for constructing and completing primary classrooms.
1999: Launching of new Primary Education Curriculum.	Expansion of subjects from four to eleven and introduction of local languages for first four years of primary schooling.
2000: New Instructional Materials evaluation and approvals policy.	Launch of cycle 7 and cycle 8 bids using the new systems of evaluation, approval and procurement of IM.
2001: Introduction of new Instructional Materials and systems. Decentralisation piloted.	Reduced price and improved physical and presentational quality of IM and effective partnerships between central and rural booksellers, better service to schools.
2001: Creation of Education Standards Agency (ESA).	Improved and independent school inspections.
2003/4: Draft Education Bill.	Consolidation of UPE policy, strengthening of legislative framework for ESA and SMCs and complementarity with the Local Government Act.

Since 1997 Uganda has had to address the challenge of accessing ever-increasing numbers of children into an already overstrained school system. The sections which follow address the budgetary and funding reforms which were necessary to support UPE, and in particular (a) to increase access to education; (b) to improve the quality of education; and (c) to improve the management of the education sector. These are not watertight categories and the elements addressed overlap each other. For example, the School Facilities Grant required sustained central funding and modalities for decentralising school funding. Each reflects the priorities of the Education for All (EFA) Dakar Framework for Action adopted by the World Education Forum in Senegal in April 2000 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)[4].

---

[4] At the Millennium Summit in September 2000 the states of the United Nations reaffirmed their commitment to working toward a world in which sustaining development and eliminating poverty would have the highest priority. The Millennium Development Goals grew out of the agreements and resolutions of world conferences organised by the United Nations in the past decade. The goals have been commonly accepted as a framework for measuring development progress.

Chapter 2: Development Partnerships for Effectively Financing Education Reform

2.1   The Challenge

The challenge that had to be addressed was how to ensure sufficient and effective external funding and improve the financial management of the Education Sector.

2.1.1   The Background

It is widely acknowledged that until quite recently the majority of externally funded interventions in the education sector of Uganda failed to meet their objectives. In a country where foreign aid in general, and aid to education in particular, is significant (external finance accounts for over 50% of education expenditures), these disappointing development outcomes have been damaging to the fulfilment of the government's primary responsibility for ensuring that its citizens enjoy the right to a good basic education. Addressing this fundamental problem has required different levels of commitment to the development of international and local partnerships as well as considerable increases in financial support.

2.1.2   The Project Approach

By the beginning of the 1990s, external assistance to the education sector in Uganda was being provided under more than 100 different projects and sub-projects by twelve donor countries, four UN agencies, three major multilateral financing institutions (IDA, African Development Bank and the European Union) and a large number of local and international NGOs operating throughout the country. Most aid for education in Uganda up to 1997 came in the form of projects and achieving effective coordination of education development partners was a major challenge for the government. Projects are commonly defined as discrete, time-bound interventions with clearly specified objectives. Each project, whether it was for improved education services in one District, or for a national programme such as strengthening education management, or for teacher education, was separately developed and negotiated between the sponsoring development partner and the MoES. Almost all of these projects were outside the government's own budget and largely ignored the government's policy, planning and financial systems.

The project approach led to fragmentation and duplication of effort. Busy government officials found it difficult to concentrate on major strategic issues as their time was consumed by individual development partner missions, each coming to identify, plan, monitor, or evaluate their own particular activities. In 1997, for example, the MoES received over thirty separate development partner missions.

Although most development partners tried to increase local involvement in and ownership of their projects, in Uganda, where capacity is limited, this approach commonly led to competition for the time of a small group of senior education staff to take part in workshops, planning exercises, field visits and international tours. In addition, the most able government officials were frequently appointed by the development agencies as highly paid consultants or staff members of the donor-specific project implementation units (PIUs). The need for PIUs arose out of the requirement to accommodate the various monitoring and accounting requirements of different development agencies. In turn this resulted in the establishment of parallel systems

which further weakened the government's own systems and implementation capacity. The proliferation of project aid thus undermined the very institutional capacity it purported to build.

Many externally funded initiatives may have worked well in Uganda whilst consultants and PIUs were present to support them, but projects were often unsustainable, because they operated on a fixed timeframe and therefore were usually small scale. In addition, projects took a long time to prepare, and it was not unusual for two to three years to elapse between identification and implementation. Given the needs of Uganda, the time and effort invested in design and implementation was often disproportionate to the actual resources transferred, particularly when these were mostly in the form of technical assistance. Lastly, education projects tended to reflect the priorities of donors. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, for instance, external funding was available to Uganda only for teacher training and capital expenditures: the bulk of MoES spending was allocated to salaries and other running costs. Reliance on project aid consequently made it difficult for the GoU to prepare coherent education policies, plans and budgets which reflected its own national priorities. Project support also meant that the government avoided making difficult resource allocation decisions within the education sector.

The government's growing dissatisfaction with the education aid relationship was mirrored by a handful of like-minded development partners. From 1996 onwards, in response to the government's commitment to UPE, and within the framework provided by the government's Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) launched in 1997, this small group began working together to harmonise development partner interventions and remove overlaps, duplication of effort and uncoordinated activities and to promote unity of direction and purpose.

2.1.3   The Education SWAp and Funding Modality

The government's response to the problem of education aid management was to develop a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) and to formalise this with, initially, six development partners (DFID, the EU, Ireland Aid, the Netherlands, USAID[5] and the World Bank). This development took place within the framework of MoES's 1998 planning document, the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP) 1998-2003. The SWAp incorporated alternative methods for aid delivery, with a particular accent on methods designed to increase local leadership and achieve a greater integration of development partner and government effort. The main features of the Uganda Education SWAp are that:

- it is based on a clear sector strategy and policy/financing framework that is sector-wide in scope (ESIP);
- local stakeholders are in charge (the MoES's Top Management Meeting is the final decision-making authority in the sector);
- all main development partners participate in the funding and contribute only to areas identified as priorities within the sector strategy and policy/financing framework;
- there is only one system of implementation for the sector and all stakeholders share common institutional and management arrangements, including one single source of audit, monitoring and evaluation reports;
- there is a reliance on local capacity with limited technical assistance and a programmatic emphasis on capacity building at all levels of the sector.

[5] USAID provided bi-lateral project funding outside the main partnership system

The education SWAp focused greater attention on performance, intra-sectoral linkages, outcomes and service quality by giving greater weight to improving the policy, budgetary and institutional context in which education services are delivered. It also provided improved mechanisms for effective government-development partner partnership, including enhanced national leadership and ownership of reform plans, and improved mechanisms for joint government-development partner dialogue and performance review.

2.1.4 Budget Support[6]

At the end of the ESIP funding agreement a common budget support funding modality was introduced although it had been in preparation since 2000 and funding agencies had been using their separate bilateral funding modalities to provide budget support up to this point. Through it funds would be channelled directly into the national treasury to finance government expenditures. In Uganda's education sector, budget support is linked to a few critical outputs and outcomes related to financial commitment, fiduciary assurance, increased equitable access, and improved quality and service delivery. Under it there are fewer pre-defined activities agreed between the development partners and the government and a greater focus on outcomes and the strategic frameworks necessary for achieving these (see the logical framework analysis of Uganda education budget support presented in Appendix 1). With the establishment of budget support modalities, many of the traditional problems of donor coordination have effectively disappeared as only one programme in education, the government's ESIP, is supported.

2.1.5 Minimum Criteria

In order to adopt the budget support modality, the development partners required certain minimum criteria to be met. Chief amongst these criteria was macro-economic stability, followed closely by a credible budget framework and allocations. By credible, the stakeholders understood that:

- the budget was based on sound revenue and expenditure projections;
- there was a realistic expectation of GDP growth;
- expenditures were equitable, particularly in terms of grants to the Districts;
- coherent policies backed up both revenue and expenditure projections;
- sound analysis underpinned the policies and the numbers included in the budget;
- expenditures were prioritised in line with agreed policies and the prioritisation could be justified;
- a credible budget did not mean a fiscal surplus;
- there was adequate knowledge available regarding where expenditures are going, and that not all the budget is for salaries;
- development partners' contributions were taken fully into account in the budget process and had been fully explored.

---

[6] The underlying hypothesis behind budget support is that more predictable funding, together with more sustainable and coordinated policy dialogue in support of the PEAP and a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), together with targeted technical assistance, will facilitate more meaningful and objective planning processes. Budget allocations can in turn be more reliable, transparent and pro-poor. If budget allocations feed through into expenditure, and there are accompanying systems to track spending and to provide accessible information to the public and their political representatives, this in turn will start to change people's expectations. People might start to believe in government and government systems, and begin to see that government can deliver public services of reasonable quality.

There was also early recognition, at a sector and at a macro level, that the keys to improved public service provision are better accountability, reduced corruption, better pay and a focus on achieving effective procurement.

Key factors in moving to budget support were the trebling of children in primary school and the recognition by ESIP development partners that Uganda could translate growing resources into positive education outcomes. The PEAP provided a credible overarching framework whilst the dialogue on the ESIP had demonstrated a commitment on both sides (government and development partners) to transparency and openness. At the time of commencement of the SWAp, the development of institutions to ensure the continuation of dialogue was still in hand whilst the government was in the process of establishing an effective monitoring and evaluation framework based on an Education Management Information System (EMIS).

Another reason for moving to budget support was the need to reduce the transaction costs of time, human resources and money of the aid relationship in education for both sides of the partnership. In addition, as part of a move to promote a holistic and consultative approach to planning and budgeting in the education sector, the GoU, through the MoES, began implementing a common reporting, monitoring and evaluation framework. By the end of 2002 the main development partners formally agreed to use this as the sole means of monitoring and reporting in the sector.

With broad sector support from 1999 onwards, policy dialogue between the GoU and the development partners quickly became the centre of activity. This had been one of the aims of moving to budget support, but the speed with which the dialogue shifted from project level issues to broad sector issues surprised many stakeholders. Some agencies were able to adjust more quickly than others. Policy dialogue focused on macro-economic issues and their bearing on resource allocations to the education sector, budget content, education outcomes, improved public expenditure management, the role of government in service provision and the monitoring of critical development outcomes.

Priorities are reflected in a set of six undertakings, the achievement of which triggers the release of budget support for education. Achievements are measured during the Education Sector Reviews and budget support funds are released following these events.

Growing ownership linked to the quality of leadership that was being exhibited was evident throughout this process, especially when compared to similar developments taking place elsewhere in Africa. The MoFPED in particular seemed to be unusually adept at using development partners' resources effectively, whilst staff in Kampala especially possessed the drive to take forward the poverty reduction agenda. At the same time, the development partners were wary of interposing themselves between government and other Ugandan stakeholders in the education sector, but that was more an issue of development partner self-discipline than the level of aid being provided. It was anticipated that budget support, in so far as it would help build a culture of rights to education services from the government, was likely to be much healthier than the project approach, which was itself heavily tainted with difficult issues of patronage.

Critical in the decision to move to budget support was that the development partners were satisfied as early as 1999 that macro-economic stability was assured and that resources were

being allocated effectively within the government's planning and budgeting framework. By this time, Uganda had implemented three successful Economic Strategic Adjustment Facilities. Although macro-economic stability was by then largely assured, the government still wished to maintain a Poverty Reduction Growth Facility from the IMF. The development partners' assessment at the time was that mechanisms existed to develop and implement sector programmes. In particular, with ESIP in place, sufficient confidence existed that a successful SWAp in education could be facilitated. Once most of the major development partners operating within the education sector had signed up to the SWAp approach, others quickly followed.

The GoU recognised that other aid financing instruments were still relevant, specifically to assist it to deepen the structural reform programme. Consequently, some project grants and lending for teacher development and capacity building, for example, continued, as did project support to assist with institutional strengthening and for projects that supported fiduciary reform and fiscal decentralisation.

By 2003 both government and donors were confident that the move to the new modality was a logical step to take.

2.1.6 Fiduciary Issues

As early as 1997 Uganda had undertaken a Country Financial Accountability Assessment. This is a diagnostic tool designed to enhance the World Bank's, and other donors', knowledge of financial accountability arrangements in client countries. The key findings of the assessment were set out within the GoU's main PEAP policy matrix. In the medium term, donors and government were also committed to undertaking sector tracking studies to see whether expenditure, especially at a District level, was occurring in line with the budget. By 2003, time series data from the education sector studies indicated that 90% of budgeted expenditure was now reaching schools compared to some 25% four years earlier.

At the start of the process of moving towards budget support, the development agencies accepted that Uganda was breaking new ground both in terms of its poverty reduction strategy and in the modalities for aid delivery and a longer time frame than that which had generally prevailed within a project framework was needed. Both the GoU and the development partners were very much learning by doing. As the process matured, it became more evident that the finer points of the relationship between the government and its partners needed to be clarified. This led to the development of a Memorandum of Understanding setting out the principles of aid management and donor coordination in education in 2002.

The development partners also recognised that an overarching education monitoring and evaluation system would take time to be put in place. Although the foundations of the system had been laid with the establishment of the EMIS in 1999, and whilst the modalities for achieving a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system had been set out in the ESIP, it would be some time before the sector could benefit from a reliable single source of data and reporting. Moreover, data on education outcomes such as learning achievement was patchy and the systems for collecting and analysing this would take time to expand and strengthen.

2.1.7   Fiduciary Assurance

An important step on the road to the donors providing increased assistance to the education sector through budget support was their need to be sure that resources were being properly used by the GoU. In particular, development partner domestic stakeholders wish to be assured that opportunities for the diversion of resources within a recipient government's public expenditure management system are minimal and are broadly acceptable within a framework of their domestic rules and regulations. The small group of like-minded donors at the centre of the education SWAp development in Uganda were especially keen to ensure that the need to satisfy their domestic constituency was, as far as possible, supportive of the broad process of reform and development in Uganda. To this end the donors supported and used the GoU's own fiduciary assurance systems from 1999 onwards and were anxious not to create parallel and/or duplicative processes that would waste resources and add to the government's transactions costs. In view of this, the GoU and its development partners worked jointly towards establishing an effective fiduciary assurance framework within which development grants for sectoral support could be channelled.

The rationale for doing so was that in respect of:

(i)   *The greater use of government systems:* fiduciary assurance is in part based on an examination of the results flowing from the government's own financial management, accounting and auditing systems. This process will encourage efficiency gains in the use of these systems, promote greater transparency and thereby help to reduce corruption.

(ii)   *The inclusion of user needs into public expenditure management reform process:* the GoU will regularly review its government-wide accounting and financial management systems. This foregrounds the economic and financial management reform process as a critical element in the development of Uganda. It enhances the focus on financial management issues within the public sector and supports financial management reform through helping to clarify user needs better.

(iii) *Enhancing the profile for financial management reform:* through an enhanced focus on financial management issues, the key strengths and weaknesses in the underlying system and system performance will be highlighted, and will provide greater impetus for reform.

2.1.8   Fiduciary Assurance Framework

The fiduciary assurance framework that evolved for the education sector of Uganda, and now the government as a whole, is defined as:

those processes and procedures that donor, and other stakeholders, need to confirm are in place to adequately assure their governments and National Audit Offices that aid provided has been spent in accordance with agreed legal undertakings, priorities and procedures.

It consists of three separate assurance processes.

First, annual tracking studies in the education sector, and more recently other sectors also, which are commissioned by the government in consultation with the Auditor General and the donors. Such studies trace a series of financial releases from the Treasury through a particular sub-system to the user point for a certain period of the year. The 'tracing study'

results in a report which gives comment on the functioning of the sub-system; e.g. the payment of teachers' wages, the construction of classrooms or the functioning of a primary education grant.

Second, constructing annual reports on the performance of government budgets, the status of government accounts including all expenditures on government vote, the proportion of accounts that have been written and submitted for audit by the due date and a report on audited government accounts.

Third, agreeing and monitoring annual public expenditure management action plans that address weaknesses identified in the annual tracking studies and annual reports on government accounts.

The development and establishment of this fiduciary assurance framework took more than three years to accomplish and was supported through technical assistance and analysis, including reviews of the status and functionality of the financial management systems used in the education sector. These reviews identified strengths and weaknesses and made recommendations for improvements. The framework provides donors and the government with assurance that the funds allocated for education (donor and government funds) are being used for the purpose intended. Over the past five years, various studies, reports and reviews have contributed to refining the framework's operation, as well as to knowledge of the key institutions that are involved in public expenditure management in education. This knowledge is concentrated on three key areas:

- *a financial management systems description,* namely how the financial management and funds flow processes work in the various institutions;
- *systems weaknesses,* that is descriptions of where the system has major weaknesses. Such weaknesses are assessed and remedial actions for the short and medium term identified and acted upon;
- *identification and development of the type of data* (the statutory audited accounts) presented to government and donors on an annual basis to provide assurance of expenditure on education within the various institutions.

The involvement of the Uganda Auditor General and the GoU Treasury Office of Accounts at each stage in the development of this framework was an important element of institutionalising the process. More critically, it is contributing to public confidence.

Government and donors also recognised that key public sector programmes were severely resource constrained: the classroom building programme and other significant parts of the education sector budget, for example, would benefit immediately from significantly higher resourcing. An important broader point is that part of the rationale for moving towards budget support was to focus attention on the generic cross-cutting issues which needed to be addressed to improve public expenditure management in education, especially staff recruitment and management, civil service reform, pay reform, procurement, financial management and the general effectiveness of the system. These issues were at the heart of the dialogue between the government and development partners providing budget support, in particular DFID and the World Bank, especially between 1998 and 2004.

2.1.9   Modalities for External Financing of Education in Uganda

In order to achieve more effective external financing for education, it was necessary to establish streamlined modalities for channelling budget support funds to the education sector. Following extensive discussions with its partners it was finally agreed that the GoU would establish a holding account, the Education Budget Support Account, into which education budget support releases would be made. The aim was to achieve as quickly as possible a situation whereby all financial support to education in Uganda followed agreed mechanisms.

While these funding mechanisms were being put in place, the MoES and MoFPED responded to both GoU and development partners' concerns arising from the financial management reviews and subsequent tracing studies by strengthening various accountability mechanisms at all levels in government. In addition, the government also developed, with the support of its partners, a comprehensive medium term financing framework based on technical analysis, financing and projections modelling and agreed policy benchmarks so that financing gaps could be identified effectively. As increasing amounts of external funding were channelled through the government's budget, greater reliance had to be placed on the government's own budget reporting and monitoring processes. Moreover, as the development partners continued to commit resources to the education sector on the basis of sector strategy documents (such as ESIP, national plans, EFA plans and financing frameworks), careful scrutiny of not only financial performance but of physical outputs of, and outcomes from, expenditures became essential.

2.1.10   Modalities and Mechanisms for Channelling Education Sector Support Funds

The mechanism and procedures for channelling education sector support funds are outlined next and it is shown how these are related to the country's annual process of planning and budgeting.

First Actions

A crucial first action was the establishment of the Education Budget Support Account. This account is used for channelling funds from sector support donors and is therefore the cornerstone of the funding mechanism. Figure 1 illustrates how the flows of funds and frequency of releases for this account operate. It also indicates how donor project funding continued under this arrangement (F) and also how general budget support and the recipient government's own revenues were included (G).

The holding account is held by the National Bank of Uganda and is under the management of the Treasury. The purpose of this account is to provide a transit mechanism for the receipt of donor budget support to the education sector. As indicated in Figure 1 at points A to E, funds are disbursed by the development partners into the holding account. Upon direction, the Treasury transfers funds from the holding account to the GoU's Consolidated Fund Account, to be released to budget lines and/or projects through the normal monthly/quarterly budget releases, alongside other government funds. Figure 1 highlights the main education budget lines which were the subject of tracking studies within the fiduciary assurance framework and were also the focus of earmarked (tied or tagged) budget support. The EU, for example, provides education budget support which is earmarked for District Capacity Building. These earmarked

Fig 1: Education Budget Support Account
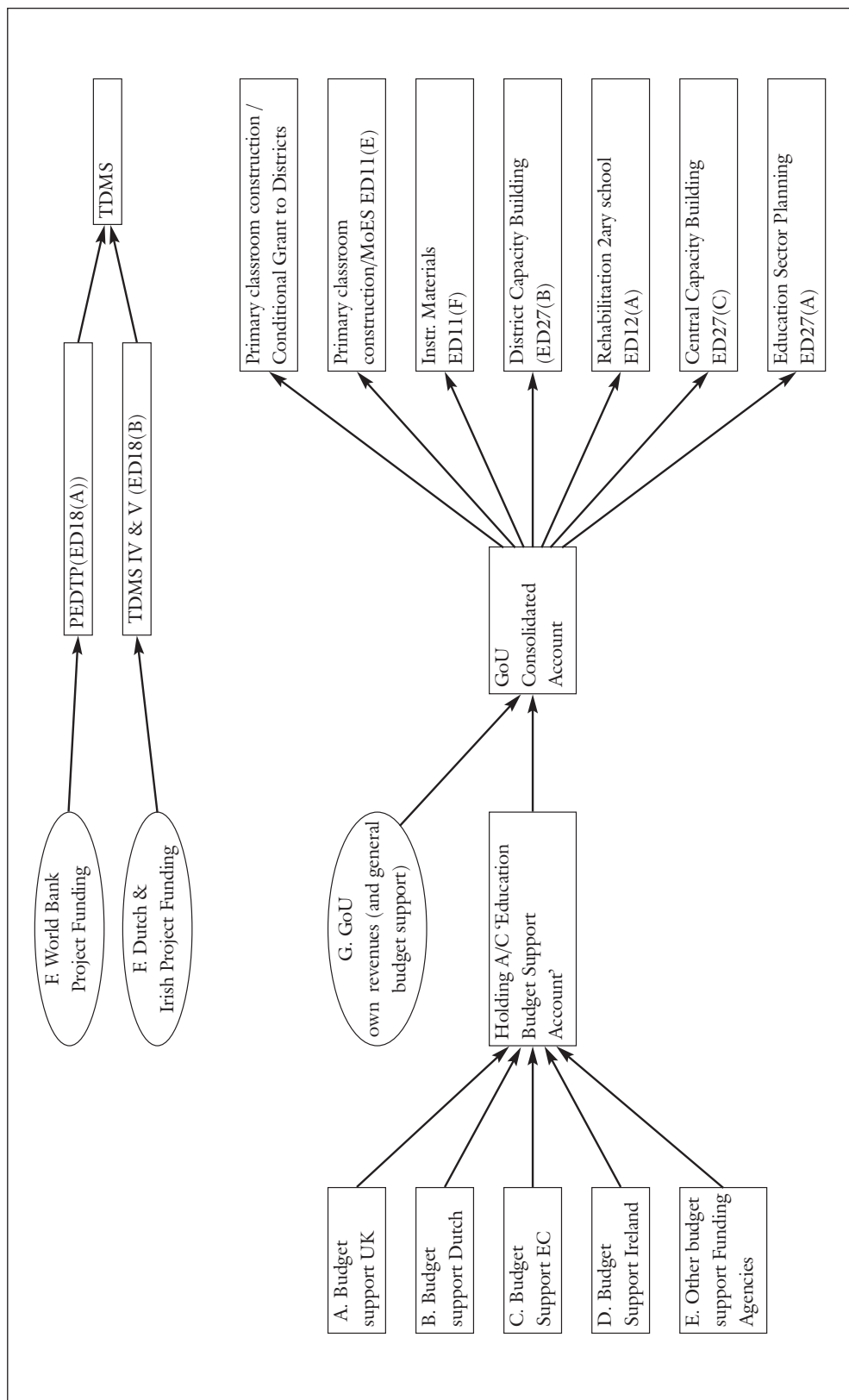
funds are subject to strict controls regarding the frequency and timing of transfers to the consolidated fund account and these are described in the following paragraphs.

Frequency and Timing of Releases to the Holding Account

The development partners involved in this modality (A-E in Figure 1) release funds every six months (July and December) to the holding account in line with previously agreed commitments. The releases are triggered by the achievement of a small set of agreed sector level undertakings. These undertakings include the following:

- financial commitment and releases to the education sector (a target percentage of total government expenditures) and, within this, financial commitment and releases to basic education;
- an agreed fiduciary assurance framework operating, including budget performance reports, reports on government accounts, an annual flow of funds study on the education sector and a public expenditure management action plan in place;
- progress towards the achievement of agreed policy benchmarks, such as pupil:teacher ratios; pupil:textbook ratios; pupil:classroom ratios; primary completion rates; learning achievement targets;
- process indicators, such as the completion of a specific piece of sector work or the making of a critical policy decision.

The releases by development partners take place in July and December each year, pending completion by the government of the agreed sector level undertakings. This completion is assessed during the Education Sector Reviews (ESR) in April and October each year (there has recently been a decision to reduce the frequency of ESRs to once per year - October - from 2006). In the early stages of moving to a SWAp it was important to have an interval of two months between reviews and releases during which the government and individual development partners could bilaterally appraise completion of any agreed particular undertakings related to previously agreed projects. The transition phase from the project modality to the budget support modality has taken five years and is still not fully complete. During this period prior project undertakings (and new project undertakings, for those agencies unwilling or unable to provide funds through the government's own system) have had to be taken account of – these channels are highlighted in Figure 1 at F and G.

Upon agreement between the government (MoES) and development partners that undertakings have been met, the MoES Accounting Officer requests the Permanent Secretary/Secretary to the Treasury, MoFPED to make the release request to development partners. Letters from the MoES to that effect state how much funding is to be requested from each donor for disbursement to the holding account. For programme earmarked budget support, the communication from the MoES also indicates which programmes are concerned.

The MoFPED sends one disbursement request to all donors, specifying the anticipated funds from the donor, and, where applicable, by earmarked programme. Having met all conditionalities, development partners make the necessary disbursements to the National Bank of Uganda, noting on their release documentation the name and account number of the holding

account. This is followed by a communication addressed to the Permanent Secretary/ Secretary to the Treasury, with copies to the Director of Accounts, Director Budget and to the Permanent Secretary, MoES.

A critical feature of the system is that the annual Education Sector Reviews provide the opportunity to appraise government undertakings or to fix further meetings where the appraisal may be finalised and contractual documents drafted, as required. In addition, the ESCC and TWGs provide opportunities for the government to inform development partners regularly about progress or difficulties in meeting the undertakings and maintaining the required level of absorption of funding. The meetings of the ESCC provide the opportunity for consultation on these issues and agreement on any actions necessary to bring affected programmes back on track. The objective is to avoid a situation where government and development partners have different understandings of what constitutes acceptable progress, and avoid possible pre-financing of programmes in anticipation of development partner releases by the GoU. This could occur if the development partners decide to withhold releases when progress, jointly appraised at the Review, is considered to be insufficient.

Frequency and Timing of Transfers to the Consolidated Fund Account

The mechanism for transfer of funds from the holding account to the consolidated fund takes place as follows. After disbursing the first tranche of funds to the holding account, funding required for the first quarter, as indicated by project work plans and quarterly budget requests, is transferred to the consolidated fund account. The balance is left in the holding account. At the end of the first quarter and in receipt of the necessary reporting formats and budgetary requests, the funds required for the second quarter are transferred from the holding account to the consolidated fund account and so on for the remaining two quarters of the year. The advantage of this system is that disbursements to the consolidated fund account are front loaded for each quarter. In addition, should there be low absorption of funds in the first quarter, the remaining sector support funds will remain untouched on the holding account until such time as the resources can be effectively utilised, thereby avoiding a situation where funds may be under utilised.

In order to perform this transfer the following steps are taken.

a) At the beginning of the year projects and budget holders devise their annual budget work plans. On the basis of these work plans the MoES communicates to the Director Accounts (Treasury) on the approximate schedule of transfers required from the holding account into the consolidated fund account over the year.

b) At the beginning of the quarter, the macro department, MoFPED, determines the quarterly expenditure ceilings. These ceilings are divided into sector expenditure and commitment ceilings by the budget directorate.

c) These expenditure and commitment ceilings are communicated to the MoES.

d) On the basis of internal negotiation and discussion with MoFPED, quarterly project and departmental work plans and budget requests are drafted and agreed.

e) Upon receipt of quarterly work plans and quarterly budget requests, MoFPED advises the Director Budget of the budgetary requirements for each project for the quarter.

f) The Director Budget, at the beginning of the quarter, requests the Director Accounts (Treasury) to authorise the release of the funds from the consolidated fund account to the Ministry or District accounts, (monthly or quarterly as appropriate).

g) At the same time, referring to the corresponding release request (as noted in f), the Director Budget requests the Director Accounts to transfer the value of funds required for the quarter (as the sector support component of the quarterly budget) from the holding account to the consolidated fund account. (The value of transferred funds is proportional to the release, depending on the percentage of the project budget constituted by sector support funds).

h) The Permanent Secretary, MoES, may at this point requisition for cheques to be printed from the Ministry account in the name of individual projects, in order to transfer funds to their separate commercial accounts.

Steps (a) to (f) were already required under GoU financial practices, in line with the commitment control system, and were already in operation in 1999. Step (g) constituted an addition to current practices. This ensured that releases from the consolidated fund account, and the transfer from the holding account, occur simultaneously, and both are determined by receipt of work plans.

A key principle of operation is that, if there are no work plans, there will be no releases and therefore no transfer will be made. Where work plans are received, the value of the release/transfer is directly determined by the quarterly budget request. It should be noted that the broad guidelines assume approximately one quarter of a project's annual budget to be released per quarter, unless there is justification for an alternative scheduling of funds.

As indicated above, this linking of transfers to work plans is applicable to externally provided programme earmarked funds only. Non-earmarked sector support is not linked to a work plan, as it supports the total sector budget, recurrent and development combined. Therefore, non-earmarked sector support funds are transferred in equal portions, being equal to a quarter of the tranche disbursement from the donor in quarters 1,2, 3 and 4.

Further Features of the Accounts

The Director Accounts (Treasury) operates the holding account. The Treasury is responsible for maintaining the accounting records, ledgers and preparing the financial statements pertaining to the account. The operation of the account is subjected to the annual sector financial audit, thereby ensuring transparency in frequency of releases from the accounts. The funds released to projects through the budget support mechanism are audited alongside other government funds in the annual audits of the Office of the Auditor General.

By channelling funds through a holding account, reconciliation of donor inflows and corresponding transfers has been possible. This constitutes a significant advantage for the government as well as for the development partners in terms of improved financial management and tracking. Quarterly financial statements are made available by the Director Accounts, which constitute a component of the financial/ budgetary reporting of the annual reviews.

Any funding left on the account at the end of the financial year remains on the account and is rolled into the next financial year. In determining planned disbursements of sector support funding and the budget ceilings for the following year, any balances on the holding accounts are taken into consideration. The April Education Sector Review provides an opportunity for this assessment. As a result, the provisional budget ceiling of the sector can be raised by the equivalent balance, or development partners may reduce their planned disbursements for the following year by the equivalent amount. This, however, is subject to approval by MoFPED in light of implications for macro economic targets and performance.

It is important to note, however, that once the funding is deposited in the holding account the resources of one development partner are not readily distinguishable from those of another. In light of this, any adjustments in the planned future disbursements are negotiated with the MoES, MoFPED and other donors in light of known disbursements, releases and expenditures during that financial year.

2.1.11   Communication of the Value of Sector Support

The Uganda education financing mechanism is centred on frequent and transparent communication between development partners and the government. This is especially significant with regards to the determination of the level of sector support funding. Given that sector support funds are built into the education sector ceiling, it is important that early indications are given of the magnitude of expected funds, in line with the inter-sectoral budget preparation process. The following schedule (based on a financial year from July to June) was established in order to enable more effective planning:

This schedule has enabled more effective planning of the sector budget ceiling with the full participation of the MoFPED budget directorate. Any new sector programmes must be announced by September in order to allow their inclusion into the indicative budget ceilings. Financing agreements for new programmes must be finalised and signed by April, in order for their inclusion in the final budget ceilings for the new year.

It is important to remember that education sector support funding constitutes part of the government expenditure ceiling, negotiated with the IMF, and therefore additional funding over and above that programmed into the budget ceiling in June cannot be accepted within a financial year. This is reflected in the schedule below, in which the magnitude of funding is indicated in the April Education Sector Review, ensuring inclusion in the budget ceilings for the new financial year.

The mechanism outlined below is effective as it takes into consideration the budgetary cycle of the GoU and incorporates the features which ensure development partner confidence in the system. The mechanism is also accessible to those development partners that are unable to use the general budget support modality but wish to use sector budget support funding. Its implementation has enabled increased transparency and more effective planning of education sector expenditures.

Table 2: Annual Financial Planning Schedule

September	Donors communicate to MoFPED the broad magnitude of anticipated education sector support for the following year. MoFPED develops broad sector ceilings. UPE policy.
October	Education Sector Review is held and priorities for the budget are agreed.
November	MoFPED conducts the first Budget Workshop, providing indicative sector ceilings.
January/February	The Budget Call Circular is released, providing firmer sector budget ceilings for the forthcoming year. Evaluation based on GoU's own systems.
April	Education Sector Review is held, in which progress against undertakings is assessed, determining: (i) whether development partners will disburse funds in the following year; (ii) the magnitude of anticipated donor funds to be disbursed in the following year.
April	The agreed levels of development partner funding are communicated to MoFPED by the PS MoES, and any necessary adjustments are made to the sector budget ceiling accordingly. MoFPED submits a release request to development partners for the agreed levels of funds.
May	Preparation of the detailed budget for the new financial year is concluded.
June	Annual project/programme work plans for the new financial year are submitted. A schedule is developed for the transfer of sector support funds from the holding account into the Consolidated Fund, in line with the annual project work plans.

2.1.12 Institutional Arrangements

The GoU led and managed the process of education sector policy development and implementation from the outset by setting up the following institutional arrangements:

- a decision-making body: the Ministry's Top Management Meeting (TMM), chaired by the Minister for Education and Sports;
- a consultative body: the Education Sector Consultative Committee (ESCC), chaired by the Permanent Secretary, MoES;
- Education Sector Review procedures: in April and October of each year the MoES leads an Education Sector Review which involves the participation of all major stakeholders in the education sector;

- Technical Working Groups (TWG): Finance Planning and Management; Monitoring and Evaluation; Sector Policy and Management; and Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF) Sector Working Group.

The ESCC meets every two months and includes representatives of the MoES, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), Ministry of Public Service (MoPS), Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), the main education institutions, development partners, civil society and the private sector. The purpose of the ESCC is to provide a consultative forum on education policy, strategy and financing and to advise the MoES on issues regarding these. The TMM receives the advice and recommendations of the ESCC and decides on education policy, strategy and financing. On occasions, the TMM takes issues to cabinet for approval, such as the target pupil: teacher ratio in 2000 and the new textbook reforms in 2001. The TWGs draw membership from the agencies represented in the ESCC and provide technical inputs that support the ESCC's work.

An important feature of the education sector development process was the creation of an Education Funding Agencies Group (EFAG). This was created in 1999 by local representatives of the education sector development partners to provide an effective forum for the partnership which developed between the GoU, chiefly the MoES, and the development partners and to reduce the transaction costs of the GoU. EFAG has functioned within an agreed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which outlines roles and responsibilities of the contracting parties.

The coordination of EFAG rotates around the membership on an annual basis. The group meets once per month to discuss education issues and to agree common positions to take with the GoU on matters of major policy, financing and strategy. EFAG communicates with the GoU solely through channels agreed with the MoES. These channels consist of verbal and written communications between the coordinator of EFAG and the Permanent Secretary, MoES. Technical advice is communicated to the MoES in the form of an EFAG Technical Note, whilst agreed EFAG positions on matters of policy or critical issues in the sector are conveyed under the EFAG letterhead.

Both government and development partners see the education SWAp as a way of providing development assistance that strengthens national leadership and helps build nationally managed systems whilst allowing for continuing engagement by donors and lenders. Representatives of the development partners contribute directly to the strengthening of the sector through their participation in policy analysis, monitoring, review and evaluation and decision-making processes. This contribution can be seen to be even more important than the financial contribution, especially in the policy development process, as they can frequently provide a wider picture of the national reform process. This, and the capacity of funding partner representatives to perform this role, created largely as a result of their no longer having to manage the detail of project implementation, has enabled them to contribute to the development and implementation of the reforms included in this book.

The six ESIP development partners were later joined by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the African Development Bank (ADB). These agencies committed themselves to providing financial and project support for the implementation of

ESIP over the period 1998 to 2003 through a series of bilateral agreements. The majority of the funds committed by the agencies were in the form of earmarked (sometimes known as tagged or tied) or unearmarked (untagged or untied) funds through the national budget, usually referred to as programme aid or budget support. Indeed, ESIP was the first attempt to use this modality in Uganda for sector support.

Medium Term Expenditure Framework

Experience gained over the last five years confirms that SWAps work best when governments and development partners can agree a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). An MTEF consists of a top-down resource envelope, a bottom-up estimation of the current and medium term costs of existing policy and, ultimately, the matching of these costs with available resources (World Bank, Public Expenditure Management Handbook, 1998: 46). There are three components to a MTEF:

(i)   a statement of fiscal policy objectives;
(ii)   a set of integrated medium term macroecononmic and fiscal projections; and
(iii)   medium term budget estimates for individual spending agencies based on sectoral objectives and priorities and elements of activity and output budgeting;

although many budgetary approaches that exclude the last element are still referred to as MTEFs (DFID, 2001).

The MTEF for Uganda is a whole GoU strategic policy and expenditure framework within which ministers and line ministries are provided with responsibility for decisions on resource allocation and resource use. The key to the success of the MTEF in Uganda has been the strengthening of institutional mechanisms to assist and require relevant decision makers to balance what is affordable in aggregate against the policy priorities of the country. These policy priorities are clearly set out in the PEAP.

Sector plans are drawn up within the guidelines set by the MTEF managed by the MoFPED. The matching of costs occurs in the context of the annual budget process which begins around October of each year and culminates in the reading of the budget to parliament by the Minister for Finance in June. The budget process focuses on the need for policy change to reflect changing macroeconomic conditions as well as changes in strategic priorities of the GoU.

The effectiveness of the budget process is illustrated in the following table. It shows the MTEF performance for the education sector for the financial year 2003/04, with forward estimates. This is the education sector Medium Term Budget Framework (MBTF), which is based on sectoral objectives and priorities (the ESIP) and elements of activity and output budgeting and is a component of the GOU's overall MTEF.

Table 3: The Medium Term Budget Framework

Sub-Sector		2003/04			2004/05 Estimated			2005/06 Estimated		
		Budget	Outturn	%	Budget			Budget		
Primary Education	R	277.001	279.182	100.8	285.718			303.498		
	D	85.379	71.981	84.3	82.389			85.631		
	T	362.380	351.163	96.9	368.107			389.129		
Secondary Education	R	75.309	81.667	108.4	91.787			92.004		
	D	3.844	1.767	46.0	0.83			6.441		
	T	79.153	83.434	105.4	92.617			98.445		
Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTVET)	R	16.825	15.134	90.0	18.483			17.474		
	D	3.072	1.422	46.3	1.838			5.320		
	T	19.897	16.556	83.2	20.321			22.494		
Tertiary Education	R	49.072	49.048	100.0	55.821			56.802		
	D	3.414	1.608	47.1	4.443			3.540		
	T	52.486	50.656	96.5	60.264			60.342		
Others	R	9.295	11.440	123.1	10.095			8.610		
	D	6.699	4.022	60.0	4.486			3.808		
	T	15.994	15.462	96.7	14.581			12.418		
Total GoU Budget	R	427.502	436.470	102.1	461.904			537.909		
	D	102.408	80.800	78.9	93.986			104.740		
	T	529.91	517.27	97.6	555.89			642.649		

R = Recurrent   D = Development   T = Total

Source: Education sector MTBF for the financial years 2005/06 and 2007/08

Note: All figures are in billions of Ugandan Shillings

From this it was possible for the GoU to conclude that:

(i)   The overall FY 2003/04 budget performance (budget outturn vs approved budget) was 97.6%, with recurrent expenditure registering 102.1% and the development budget 78.9%.

(ii)   This compares with 95.1% overall performance in the previous FY 2002/03. The higher than 100% budget performance for recurrent in the FY 2003/04 was mainly on account of significant supplementary expenditures in the primary, secondary and MoES HQ salary expenditure following the implementation of a single spine salary structure.

(iii) All individual recurrent budget performance with the exception of BTVET (90%) was at least 100%.

On the other hand, overall development expenditure performed at 78.9% which the GoU attributed to low levels of spending in secondary education, BTVET and tertiary education. The government also recognised that key public sector programmes were severely resource constrained: the classroom building programme and other significant parts of the education sector budget, for example, would benefit immediately from significantly higher resourcing. An

important broader point is that part of the rationale for moving towards budget support was to focus attention on the generic cross-cutting issues which needed to be addressed to improve public expenditure management in education, especially staff recruitment and management, civil service reform, pay reform, procurement, financial management and the general effectiveness of the system. These issues were at the heart of the dialogue between the government and development partners providing budget support, in particular DFID and the World Bank, especially between 1998 and 2003.

2.2   Discussion

2.2.1   Key Elements for Success

Two of the key elements that are contributing to the success of the education SWAp in Uganda are that decision-making is devolved to the MoES and a more coherent and comprehensive approach to aid management has evolved. The financial and institutional arrangements described earlier have provided a forum within which decision-making is constrained largely by resource availability over the medium term. Sector reviews and budget working groups are a fundamental part of the government's broader planning and budgeting processes within the framework of the country's poverty reduction strategy paper (the PEAP) and Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF). The MTBF is used as a planning and budgeting tool in all Ugandan ministries and agencies, projecting expenditures on key activities and revenues from the main sources for every sub-sector over a three-year period. By projecting priorities for the budget in the medium term, ministries are in a position to consider sector priorities within macro economic constraints. Indeed, MTBF papers are evolving discussions of how a sector considers its priorities in the light of strategic plans for the sub-sectors and so change from year to year as these strategic plans firm up and relative priorities are decided. Policy decisions reached within the SWAp determine the GoU's expenditures (see the example of the MTBF planning cycle included at Appendix 2).

Foster (2004) sums this up by stating that:

> The new aid 'architecture' of poverty reduction strategy papers and policy-based budget support creates strong incentives for countries to focus on achieving progress towards EFA/MDG goals, and a strong structure for agreeing on policy to achieve the goals and reviewing progress.

> (Foster, 2004: 9)

There is also no doubt that the development partners' budget support, together with debt relief, has contributed to an increased education budget and a policy dialogue on education different to that which existed under project support. Education outcomes have improved although, as will be found later in this book, perhaps not as to the level anticipated. The relationship between the GoU and its development partners has changed as government has increasingly taken ownership of the policy and budget process through a strengthening of the MoFPED and MoES, the cabinet and parliament as drivers of public resource allocations.

Budget support in Uganda has avoided many of the difficulties associated with external support for projects. Moreover, addressing and influencing inequitable patterns of education spending can be ascribed to budget support, especially as external support for education is being incorporated within the government's own budget.

In addition, all but two of the main development partners have harmonized their systems for appraisal, monitoring and fiduciary assurance. Since 1999 the main education development partners have refrained from insisting on separate arrangements for progress reports and statements on expenditure incurred by the government. The reports the development partners receive are products of the country's own systems, such as budget performance reports, MTBF, annual school census reports and sector review documents. This has brought to an end the existence of separate project structures, with the exception of two small bilateral project teams.

Since 1999 it has been the stated aim of the government and the education development partners to derive all new aid funded projects from the policy and programme priorities rather than from the priorities of the development partners. The commitment to this aim has been severely tested on two occasions; once in 2000/01 by the development of a bilateral donor funded primary school building project and, again in 2000/01, by the development of a large ADB funded education project. In both cases, the institutional arrangements developed to support the education policy dialogue helped to ensure that the projects were assessed against the policy and programme priorities. In the case of the ADB project, the proposal was amended to fit these priorities. In the case of the bilateral project, it was not possible to persuade the development partner to amend the proposal and the government's Development Committee duly rejected the project. The GoU effectively turned away $20million of grant funding because the proposed education project contradicted the policy and programme priorities of equity and efficiency.

The development partners and government have focused their dialogue increasingly on capacity building within the education sector and promoting ownership of the reform programme. This has meant a concentration of effort, attention and conditionality on strategic issues that support the achievement of critical outcomes, such as improved primary pupil:teacher ratios, improved primary pupil:textbook ratios and improved primary pupil:classroom ratios. However, there is a risk that an enhanced policy dialogue can increase accountability to external partners at the cost of undermining domestic accountability and ownership. Moreover, it is precisely in the area of accountability, and especially in areas associated with improving the quality of delivery and level of outcomes, that most criticism has arisen in Uganda over the past two years. The argument being made by some of the Ugandan development partners is that whilst the budget support modality has changed the nature of the dialogue between government and themselves, and indeed has raised the level of it and encouraged debate on issues of policy and strategic resource allocation (all good things), they have found it difficult to take effective action on poor performance in specific delivery areas, such as classroom construction, the procurement of textbooks, teaching and learning quality and the management of teachers, all quality related issues. Under project and SWAp modalities which earmarked funds more closely, funding agencies were able to exercise more direct control. Under a budget support modality the national government exercises that control, with the accountability demanded by development agencies focused mainly upon headline indicators and outcomes. If the national government is satisfied

with what are perceived by 'donors' to be poor levels of performance and poor outcomes, it is more difficult for donor agencies to put pressure on government to improve these areas.[7]

2.2.2   What Lessons have been Learned?

The shift to budget support has had two interesting consequences for the development partners and the GoU. The first was that some of the bilateral agencies required that 'their' aid should be identifiable and that outcomes should be attributable to 'their' agency's intervention. This is a difficult issue to resolve, but at a deeper level it involves the issue of 'control' on the one hand and 'trust' on the other, and what constitutes development in that agency's thinking. This difficulty notwithstanding, there is sufficient evidence emerging within Uganda to convince the main stakeholders that the advantages of SWAps and budget support outweigh the disadvantages. Moreover, it was acknowledged early on that UPE could not be achieved in Uganda unless aid was delivered within the framework of a locally led and locally owned education reform programme that maximised external support. This implies professional, institutional and personal changes of management, perspective, power and relationships.

The second concerned the limited focus of ESIP and the SWAp. The definition of the sector for ESIP and the SWAp is comprehensive. It covers all activities in the education sector. These range from individual and household decisions to formal service delivery, non-formal service delivery, advocacy, institutional arrangements, and policy addressing public and private providers at all levels of the education system and other stakeholders and beneficiaries of the education sector. The financing of the entire sector is taken into account within the accepted definition of a SWAp. Although the partners in the SWAP recognised the need to address the sector as a whole, in reality the partnership and dialogue started with one sub-sector (primary education) and only began to take full account of the other sub-sectors, pre-primary, post-primary, tertiary and non-formal programmes, after fully three years of dialogue and participation.

The emergence of a comprehensive sector policy within a budget support modality is taking time to embed and will continue to require considerable effort to develop because the policy, and indeed an MTBF process, involves more than pieces of paper conveying good intentions. So whilst the achievement of a sector wide policy framework in Uganda has required a high level of programme leadership on the part of the government, combined with commitment from the development partners, it further requires continued political commitment to improved governance to ensure the success of general budget support. The role of political leaders at national and local level in any situation can be both instrumental and obstructive in moving the sector forward at critical moments in the policy development process. The key question, therefore, is to what extent these processes are sustainable without the continued high-level

---

[7] It is beyond the purpose of this book to enter into a disquisition on the merits and demerits of budget support. The authors believe that the rationale behind budget support is the correct one. If system reform and improved governance are long-term aims of international support to developing countries so that countries themselves can address poverty reduction, then budget support offers the most rational way forward. The choice of aid instrument is a complex one, especially in high dependency situations such as Uganda. The prime weakness of aid instruments used to date, especially project support, is that they are/were premised on coercion and were short term (do it this way or else we will withdraw our funding). This kind of relationship does not work. So whilst it is easy to find much that may be criticised with budget support modalities developed to date, the real issue is the nature of the relationship between partners (governments and donors) and the effectiveness of monitoring. Governance and not the quantum of funding becomes the prime issue. Readers wishing to read further in this area are recommended two recent papers by Mick Foster entitled: *Linking Budget Support to Progress Towards Education MDGs and EFA Goals* (2004), report to DFID, and *Accounting for Donor Contributions to Education for All: How should finance be provided? How should it be monitored?* (2004), report to The World Bank .

technical support of the development partners. Funding is but one aspect of this support. Just how long is technical support going to be necessary, and who is to decide this?

Three main lessons that have been learned in the Uganda education SWAp to date may be summarised as follows.

First, it is important for the participating agencies (the GoU and development partners) to agree and record the rules of the SWAp process early in the development of the approach, and to agree and record funding for the strategy and funding mechanisms early on in the process. The MTBF is an indispensable tool in the latter and also for the development of a successful SWAp and general budget support. All planning and review activities need to be integrated within the MTBF cycle. It is also wise to focus dialogue on the performance of the education budgets with high priority being given to the establishment of an Education Management Information System (EMIS) and associated baselines. The reports generated by EMIS provide the context and basis for the policy dialogue and provide an essential part of the means for sector monitoring and decision-making.

Second, it is important to manage expectations (on both sides of the partnership) and to reduce the challenge for the recipient government to meet available capacity. (The GoU agreed to 58 undertakings to be achieved in six months at the first Education Sector Review in April 1999).

Third, for development partners especially, getting the institutional architecture right for development partner coordination is a priority, although it generally takes more time than is anticipated to do so. Crises in the relationship are inevitable but can be positive and hasten reform, but partners need to put time and effort into agreeing conflict management strategies and frameworks. Where policy gaps emerge, one generally has to live with them for as long as it takes. A willingness to sacrifice agency agendas for the good of the sector and the national poverty reduction processes and goals is essential.

Five significant factors have come together over the past seven years to effect the changes that have been possible in Uganda:

- political commitment to UPE;
- the drive towards decentralisation;
- the availability of resources from both the GoU and the development partners;
- key changes in mindset, most notably moving away from a project-based development vision to a SWAp reform process and ultimately to a budget support funding modality on the part of the GoU and the development partners;
- the influence and role of the Ugandan Treasury, especially in having undertaken reforms of its own and introduced a Medium Term Expenditure Framework process which has required 'buy-in' by the various line ministries and changed perceptions of the reform process.

Nonetheless, irrespective of the funding modality, it is evident that in deeply politicised contexts, and especially in contexts where personal and vertical links between patrons and clients continue purposely and profitably to hold sway, rational and transparent decision-making cannot be guaranteed.

Chapter 3: Improving the Quality of Basic Education

It has been an inevitable feature of the reforms implemented in Uganda that in striving to guarantee that all children have the right to basic education, the focus on access has to a large extent overshadowed the issue of quality. As we have already seen and will explore in more detail in the next chapter, in the years following the implementation of the UPE policy the Government of Uganda and its development partners have struggled to manage the effective supply of education services in response to overwhelming demand for fee-free primary education. The focus on access notwithstanding, the Government of Uganda and its development partners appreciate that quality stands at the heart of an effective education system and several important reforms and programmes that have a direct bearing on quality have been implemented in parallel with the reforms that have supported increases in access. This section of the book describes Uganda's recent experience in five major areas of quality improvement in education:

- curriculum reform
- language of instruction policy;
- basic learning materials, in particular textbook policy reform;
- development of teachers; and
- quality assurance mechanisms, in particular maintaining education standards.

3.1   Primary Curriculum Reform

3.1.1   The Challenge

At the most basic level, the challenge since the 1992 Government White Paper on Education has been to create a primary curriculum and syllabuses that will provide a realistic, practical and affordable framework for the rapid achievement of literacy, numeracy and basic life skills for all primary students in Uganda. Simultaneously the curriculum and syllabuses must provide a satisfactory platform for progress to secondary education.

The curriculum and syllabus design must conform to Ugandan realities. Therefore, it must take full account (among other factors) of rural, urban and remote school variations, geographical and cultural differences, teaching and learning conditions in schools, the education and training levels of teachers, the availability of specialist skills (e.g. Kiswahili and local languages), the availability of teaching and learning materials and aids (including reading materials in the local languages selected as the languages of instruction), realistic support and supervision structures, examination requirements, parental and community expectations and financial affordability.

The background to current curriculum reform issues extends back to 1987 and the establishment of the Ugandan Education Review Commission (ERC). A brief summary of the key issues arising from the ERC and the subsequent 1992 Government White Paper on Education is necessary to provide the context for the past fifteen years of curriculum development activity in primary education in Uganda.

3.1.2   The 1987 Education Review Commission (ERC) and the 1992 Government White Paper on Education (GWP)

In 1987 a government-appointed commission conducted the first major review of Uganda's education system since the Castle Commission of 1963. It submitted its report in January 1989. In 1990 the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) produced a new primary school curriculum based on the recommendations of the ERC report. However, a subsequent Government White Paper in 1992 (GWP) introduced significant changes to the review's original recommendations. Thus a second primary curriculum had to be developed by NCDC in response to the GWP proposals and this revised curriculum was eventually introduced into primary schools in two parts in 2000 and 2002. This is the curriculum in use in Ugandan primary schools in 2005.

3.1.3   Impact of the 1992 White Paper on Primary Curriculum Design

The 1992 GWP was the government's response to the ERC report. While the GWP was based on the review, in many cases it clearly diverged from, amended or strengthened recommendations within the review.

The most notable curriculum-related changes introduced by the GWP occurred in vocational subjects and language policy. The ERC had recommended that pre-vocational skills should be introduced into the curriculum. These included Agriculture and Production Skills from Primary Year 5 (P5). The GWP recommended that the vocational element should be greatly strengthened and that vocational skills and agriculture should be taught as separate subjects from P1, though it did emphasise that in lower primary grades the intended outcomes would be 'geared towards attitude formation' rather than the development of genuine vocational skills.

The second major change was the introduction of Kiswahili as a compulsory subject. The ERC had recommended 'strengthening' Kiswahili as a subject at secondary level. The GWP went much further and stated that Kiswahili should become a compulsory subject from P1. In the event, this recommendation was amended before the implementation of the 2000/2002 curriculum, largely because of a shortage of trained Kiswahili language teachers, so that Kiswahili became a compulsory subject in primary schools only from P4. There was also a significant shift in the policy of using a local language as the medium of instruction. The GWP stated that the medium of instruction in rural areas would be 'the relevant local language' and that English would be the medium of instruction in all urban areas. Thus, the use of English in urban areas was reinforced and the use of the term 'relevant local language' rather than 'mother tongue language' seemed to imply the use of regional languages in rural areas in an attempt to avoid the difficulties and cost implications of sectarianism and the fragmentation of languages that could occur if a narrower interpretation of mother tongue had been imposed. In practice, the local language policy announced to schools as part of the 2000/2002 primary curriculum was notably imprecise and allowed for considerable latitude of interpretation by individual District administrations. This in turn may have had an impact on the quality of education and on student performance in literacy and numeracy in many parts of the country.

A number of other curriculum issues raised by the ERC and the GWP have continued to be

problematic up to the present. Thus, the ERC recommended that Religious Education (RE) should be a part of Social Studies. However, the 1990 curriculum introduced separate Christian RE (CRE) and Islamic RE (IRE) syllabuses, which were then retained as part of the 2000/2002 curriculum. Both the ERC and the GWP also commented on the unnecessary overlapping between primary and secondary curricula and this is still a widely perceived problem in 2005. Both reports recommended that the primary cycle should be extended to eight years but this has not been implemented.

3.1.4   The Structure of the 2000/2002 Primary Curriculum

There were similarities between the 1990 curriculum and the 2000/2002 curriculum. For example, both recommended the use of a local language as the medium of instruction in lower primary grades and both recommended that selected local languages should be taught as school subjects. However, the 1990 curriculum appears not to have had time to fully integrate the first of these recommendations, as there was no syllabus for P1 or P2 in Mother Tongue and thus no programme to develop local language literacy. Both curricula had ten subjects, though the subject mix is very different, and both introduced the idea of teaching Agriculture (although the 1990 curriculum integrated Agriculture within the Science syllabus).

The current primary curriculum is divided into nine subjects in P1-3 (Local Language, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Agriculture, RE, Integrated Production Skills and Performing Arts and Physical Education). It then introduces Kiswahili in P4 and thus has ten subjects in P4-6. Because Local Language is dropped as a subject after P6 there are nine subjects in P7.

One of the common criticisms of the current curriculum made by teachers and other stakeholders is that there are too many subjects and too much content. It should be noted that the previous 1990 curriculum also had ten subjects, though divided differently. This is not an argument either for or against the number of subjects specified in the curriculum. The ten subjects in the current curriculum are divided between two curriculum volumes[8] and each volume is accompanied by a comprehensive teachers' guide, which attempts to give further guidance to the teachers on how to break down the topics and content of each subject.

Each teachers' curriculum guide provides a general introduction followed by a statement of the six national aims of education and the fourteen aims and objectives of primary education (see below). The introductory part of the curriculum also provides guidelines on when the different subjects are to be introduced and how many lessons per week should be allocated to each subject. There are some contradictions between Volume 1 and Volume 2 over lesson allocation and over which subjects are to be introduced and when. However, it is made clear that the guidelines in Volume 2 take precedence over anything stated in Volume 1.

The 2000/2002 curriculum provides clear guidelines for assessment schemes and states that each subject has been arranged with a complete curriculum specification including attainment targets, aims and objectives and specified learning outcomes. The subjects are all presented in the same format with an introduction, followed by the units laid out in a table with the general objectives at the top, specific objectives on one side of the table and content specifications on the other.

---

[8] English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science are in Volume 1 and all other subjects are in Volume 2.

Most subjects also provide a topic heading for each unit and some also provide a theme label. Thus there is a consistency in approach and in terminology that is useful and provides a good structure within which each subject can develop its own specifications. The level of detail provided is generally clear and helpful, but there are occasions where the understanding of the terminology varies from subject to subject and there are many cases where the curriculum structure leads to repetition, largely because the difference between a general objective, a specific objective and the recommended content often seems to be negligible. There is also a tendency for an over-concentration on content knowledge and insufficient emphasis on skills and the application of content knowledge.

Unfortunately not all subject syllabuses include skill and competency attainment targets. While the attainment targets for Science and Agriculture are excellent, English has no attainment targets and those for Local Languages and Kiswahili are too general to be of any value for setting an examination and omit all reference to reading skills. These were (and are) critical omissions for the rapid achievement of literacy in either English or local languages.

3.1.5 Aims and Objectives of the 2000/2002 Curriculum

There are six over-arching national aims for education and fourteen additional aims and objectives for primary education. The aims and objectives are not controversial and are widely accepted. Unfortunately, there are far too many of them and as a result they have lost focus and impact. This loss of focus becomes apparent as the individual subject syllabuses are analysed against the aims. It is difficult for any subject syllabus committee to focus on balancing and representing twenty different aims and objectives simultaneously and probably it would have been better if there had been some rationalisation and amalgamation of the aims and objectives in order to provide a stronger foundation for the development of the individual subject syllabuses. The 2004 Curriculum Review looked at each of the aims in turn and tried to comment on the extent to which individual subjects have contributed or could contribute towards them. It concluded that the individual subject aims and syllabus development did not consistently reflect the overall aims (for example, comparing the specific aims of Agriculture or English with the general aims for education). Where the general aims were reflected in the subject aims they were not always carried through into the content and activities within the syllabus specifications.

3.1.6 The Aims of Primary Education

Tables 4 and 5 provide a summary of the aims and objectives of the curriculum and their coverage in the current syllabuses.

The contents of the two tables are obviously an over-simplification of the aims and objectives of education (and primary education) and their coverage in the current curriculum and syllabuses. However, the analysis summarised above raises a number of basic questions:

• were there too many aims and objectives in the primary school curriculum?
• should they have been combined into shorter and more specific aims?
• are the wider national aims subsumed within the primary school aims? If so, should curriculum and syllabus design have focussed on the latter?

Table 4:   Issues Arising from the National Aims of Education

Broad National Aims of education	Contribution of new curriculum to fulfilling aims	Question or comment
a) to promote understanding and appreciation of the value of national unity, patriotism and cultural heritage, with due consideration to international relations and beneficial interdependence;	i. RE has a clear role in this, as it teaches value systems. ii. Social Studies provides for pride in the history and culture of Uganda. iii. English textbooks include references to different cultures within Uganda (though not written into syllabus aims at present). iv. Kiswahili and English provide students with a language for international relations. v. Performing Arts is relevant to the development of cultural heritage.	Does an RE syllabus that encourages pupils to be taught in different faiths create divisions rather than promoting national unity? There is a need for Social Studies to include tolerance and understanding of other religions, belief systems and cultural practices in Uganda. There may be a need to specify the national unity aim in the general objectives of relevant language units. Failure to implement much of the PA syllabus needs to be corrected.
b) to inculcate moral, ethical and spiritual values in the individual and to develop self-discipline, integrity, tolerance and human fellowship;	i. The RE syllabus can explicitly state the moral, ethical and spiritual basis for decision-making. ii. HIV/AIDS in the Science syllabus; child rights within the language curriculum, but insufficient emphasis on moral decision-making in aims. iii. PE has an important role to play in development of self-discipline, as has the whole school ethos.	Does the current syllabus address contemporary issues sufficiently? e.g. decision-making related to HIV, child rights, etc. Greater emphasis may be needed on social aspects of these issues in Social Studies and life skills and languages. The understanding of ethical issues should be built into the general aims of relevant units across several subjects e.g. language, Social Studies.
c) to inculcate in Ugandans a sense of service, duty and leadership for participation in civic, social and national affairs through group activities in educational institutions and the community;	i. Social Studies and language texts provide historical figures and figures in community as role models. ii. Project work and group work provide emphasis on group activities and participation, especially in IPS and Agriculture.	Leadership and duty are not reflected in any of the curriculum subjects. In reality very little project or group work is undertaken in most Ugandan schools. Revisions of the curriculum provide some emphasis for this in Agriculture/IPS.

d) to promote scientific, technical and cultural knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to enhance individual and national development;	i. Integrated Science provides the emphasis for this. ii. The curriculum provides the necessary knowledge. iii. Development of literacy and numeracy essential to this aim.	Is there sufficient development of these skills in the curriculum? 2004 Curriculum Review recommended curriculum and syllabus revisions to emphasise literacy and numeracy.
e) to eradicate illiteracy and equip the individual with basic skills and knowledge to utilise the environment for self-development, as well as national development, for better health, nutrition and family life and the capacity for continued learning;	i. There is a lack of emphasis on developing literacy skills. Neither local language nor English syllabuses provide an adequate programme to deliver initial literacy. ii. Knowledge related to health and nutrition is well covered in Science, Social Studies and other subjects.	This is a fundamental problem across the whole curriculum – without literacy skills pupils are disadvantaged in all areas and the primary curriculum is weak on basic literacy. The central recommendation of the 2004 Curriculum Review was the urgent need to strengthen literacy development in the curriculum Issues of health and family life are core themes of the Curriculum Review recommendations.
f) to equip learners with the ability to contribute to the building of an integrated, self-sustaining and independent national economy.	i. To achieve this in the primary cycle, the roles of Agriculture and IPS are central, provided they are delivered practically. Obviously Mathematics, Science and languages are also crucial.	There is a need to implement the practical side of Agriculture and IPS. Recommendations to modify these subjects and make them more practical with greater choice from a variety of themes should achieve more effective implementation.

(Source: Primary Curriculum Review, June 2004)

Table 5: Issues Arising from the Aims and Objectives of Primary Education

Aims and objectives of primary education	Contribution of new curriculum to fulfilling aims	Question or comment
a) to enable individuals to acquire functional, permanent and developmental literacy, numeracy and communication skills in English, Kiswahili and at least one Ugandan language;	i. As stated above, literacy has not been achieved for many children and this is in large part a failing related to the 2000/2004 curriculum design. ii. Oral communicative skills in English and a local language are attainable in the present curriculum but more work is needed on the selection of the local language.	The Curriculum Review recommendations propose that literacy and numeracy should be prime objectives in P1-3. Functional literacy cannot be achieved in Kiswahili for at least six years because there are insufficient teachers to teach it. Aims in Kiswahili are over-ambitious in the aims and objectives and are not currently attainable nationally, although they may be attainable in specific areas.
b) to develop and maintain sound mental and physical health among learners	i. PE has an important role in achieving this. Health issues are also well covered in Science and Social Studies.	HIV/AIDS issues are not touched until P 7 (see comments under aim k) below).
c) to instil the values of living and working cooperatively with other people and caring for others in the community;	i. Project work and group work provide emphasis on group activities and participation especially in IPS and Agriculture provided they are taught. ii. Caring in community focused in Social Studies.	This aim can only be achieved if the desired emphasis on project work and group work is achieved but this type of teaching and learning remains the exception rather than the rule in Ugandan schools.
d) to develop and cherish the cultural, moral and spiritual values of life and appreciate the richness that lies in our varied and diverse cultures and values;	i. An explicit and important link to RE. ii. Local language crucial in appreciation of cultural values. iii. In addition, many language texts could provide this input. iv. Complaints that curriculum is too focused on the culture of central Uganda.	What are the cultural and moral values that the curriculum is or should be promoting? They perhaps need to be stated explicitly. Important to re-emphasise diversity within Social Studies and ensure the curriculum meets experiences across all Uganda.

e) to promote understanding and appreciation of the protection and utilisation of the natural environment, using scientific and technological knowledge and skills;	i. Scientific and technological knowledge and skills in science. ii. Environmental issues are integrated into languages, Science, Agriculture and Social Studies.	Need to focus general aims on attitudes to the environment, not just knowledge about it This is a cross-cutting issue that needs to be explicitly tracked by the curriculum.
f) to develop an understanding of one's rights and civic responsibilities and duties for the purpose of positive and responsible participation in civic matters;	i. Primary focus exists in Social Studies curriculum. ii. Duties and responsibilities focused in RE.	Focus for this aim should also be integrated as an aim within the language curriculum.
g) to develop a sense of patriotism, nationalism and national unity in diversity;	i. Social Studies and RE have important potential roles in achieving this aim.	Does the existing split between IRE and CRE undermine this aim to any extent? Need for Social Studies to include 'national unity in diversity' as a primary aim.
h) to develop prerequisites for continuing education;	i. Literacy, numeracy and basic scientific knowledge with improving communication skills in English essential for this.	Strengthening the skills component within the curriculum is essential if this aim is to be achieved for all.
i) to acquire a variety of practical skills for enabling one to make a living in a multi-skilled manner;	i. IPS and Agriculture are the prime subject areas that, if taught practically, can achieve this aim.	Strengthening the practical projects and skills development essential for this (see recommendations on IPS/Agriculture).
j) to develop an appreciation for the dignity of work and for making a living by one's honest effort;	i. Again, a primary aim of introducing IPS and Agriculture in Primary 1.	Important to ensure that lower and upper primary are involved in practical agriculture and making things.
k) to equip the learner with the knowledge, skills and values of responsible parenthood;	i. This has been attempted both within Social Studies and within IPS and to some extent in RE. However, some of the topics have been misunderstood and are sometimes seen as encouraging early marriage. ii. There may be an overlap with 'health issues' in b) above.	This aim may be too narrow. It should relate to wider moral and ethical issues and values related to relationships before and in marriage including issues surrounding sex, HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancy and infections. This should be from early primary and not an aim for P6 and 7 only.

l) to develop skills in management of time and finance and respect for private and public property;	i. This is at present specific to IPS and has led only to a theoretical teaching of these elements where it has been implemented at all.	The Curriculum Review recommended that this should be integrated into other subjects as life skills. In addition, IPS and Agriculture should include elements of such planning as part of the syllabus requirement.
m) to develop the ability to use a problem-solving approach in various life situations;	i. Stated as an important aim within many subjects e.g. Mathematics, Social Studies. But, the overload of content has frequently undermined this aim in practice. ii. Lack of practical work in most classrooms makes it unlikely that this aim can be realistically delivered in the short to medium term.	There is a need to refocus this aim within skills development and make it a primary focus of curriculum and methodology.
n) to develop discipline and good manners.	i. Incidentally dealt with in language texts and topics. ii. To be looked at within the ethos of school discipline.	Is this an issue that can only be dealt with through the 'hidden' curriculum? What are the rules and practice for corporal punishment?

Source: Primary Curriculum Review, June 2004

3.1.7   The Implementation of the 2000/2002 Primary Curriculum

Many within the MoES, Districts, PTCs and schools feel now, in 2005, that the curriculum was introduced with inadequate planning and far too little support for teachers and schools and that this seriously undermined the effective delivery of the curriculum. Certainly there was no comprehensive curriculum implementation plan and no dedicated budget for curriculum implementation. The lack of detailed planning and the absence of a budget created a number of serious curriculum implementation problems. These included:

- curriculum and syllabus documents and teachers' guides were delivered late and many schools and teachers did not receive the essential documentation for 1 to 2 years after curriculum implementation;
- insufficient lead-time was provided for the development of textbooks and teachers' guides to support the new curriculum. As a result the first of the new curriculum textbooks and teachers' guides were not delivered into schools until 2003;
- lack of finance allocated to support free provision of textbooks for some of the new curriculum subjects has meant that textbooks and teachers' guides for local languages, Kiswahili, IPS, PAPE and certain grades for Religious Education have still not been provided to schools in mid-2005. This situation resulted from unresolved disagreements between MoES and EFAG members over the number of subjects and textbooks that should

be funded as part of the new curriculum. Because the issue has never been resolved, schools have been required to teach new subjects with no support materials. As a result some compulsory subjects (Kiswahili and IPS) are simply not offered in many schools;

• in-service training and teacher orientation in new curriculum requirements are widely considered by schools, teachers and Districts to have been inadequate and there has been a lack of monitoring and follow-up on curriculum outcomes and requirements;

• the PTC teacher training curriculum has still (2005) not been adjusted and harmonised to the needs of the 2000/2002 curriculum and, as a result, very few new teachers have been trained in new curriculum subjects such as Kiswahili, Local Languages, IPS, PAPE and Agriculture. This has resulted in serious shortages of teachers trained to deliver new curriculum subjects in schools;

• funding support for the equipment, tools, materials and consumables required to deliver the new curriculum, and in particular the new curriculum subjects with practical orientation, has been seriously inadequate, with the result that very few schools have the resource base to adequately provide for effective delivery of the new curriculum, particularly in practical subjects. It is for this reason that many schools are simply not offering some of the new curriculum subjects;

• there has been confusion and a lack of clarity over examination requirements and particularly over the timing and form of the introduction of continuous assessment. This is an important issue because, without continuous assessment, practical subjects will not be taught in a practical way. The continuation of pencil and paper examinations for subjects originally conceived to be practical and vocationally oriented has perpetuated the theoretical teaching of these subjects and has undermined the practical orientation of the 2000/2002 curriculum;

• the National Advisory Board for Languages and most of the proposed District Language Boards have not been established as required by the GWP and therefore there has been no organised infrastructure or consistent support for the development of local languages as languages of instruction. This has led to serious problems of local language literacy in many parts of the country where local languages have been introduced without adequate reading materials, teachers trained in the language or even established orthographies.

3.1.8   The Origin of the 2004 Primary Curriculum Review

As early as 1999 concerns had been expressed about a number of aspects of the proposed 2000/2002 curriculum. The main concerns were:

• the specification of a ten-subject curriculum, with a requirement for a textbook series to support each subject, was considered by many to be too expensive for the country to afford, bearing in mind the very poor textbook:pupil ratios (between 1-6 and 1-10), which had been achieved at that time in the four core subjects of Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science;

• the lack of specific attention to literacy issues and the particular omission of reading from the curriculum specification was thought to be a serious flaw;

• there were concerns over the high cost implications of teaching Agriculture and IPS as practical subjects;

- there was widespread concern over inadequate system preparation for the launch of a new curriculum in terms of national circulation of the curriculum documents, the lack of teacher orientation and training, the non-availability of relevant textbooks, teachers' guides and other teaching and learning materials;
- there were ongoing disputes over Language of Instruction policies;
- there were concerns over the viability of Kiswahili as a compulsory subject.

These concerns were strongly debated in the 1999 Education Sector Review but without any mutually agreed resolution. Donors were generally unwilling to fund the full textbook implications of the curriculum and the MoES was unwilling to amend the basic curriculum structure to reduce the number of subjects.

The on-going problems with curriculum implementation described above, combined with the fundamental concerns over the structure and form of the curriculum and growing evidence of poor student performance in literacy, particularly in rural areas and very particularly in the north of Uganda, kept the curriculum issue very much in the centre of the debate over quality. Accordingly, as early as 2003 the MoES Curriculum Task Force was asked to consider a review of the 2000/2002 primary curriculum. Members of the Task Force decided to undertake field visits to familiarise themselves with the realities of curriculum implementation and to 'observe the delivery process in situ'. The outcome of these visits and the subsequent discussions and deliberations was a decision by the Task Force in March 2003 to 'urgently engage appropriate assistance to review the implementation and delivery of the new curriculum'.

The Terms of Reference for the review specified eleven required outcomes, of which the following were the most significant:

(i)   To review the curriculum in terms of its consistency with the national vision and its ability to turn out citizens that matched this national vision, and the 'multiple development skills' required for the society.

(ii) To analyse the curriculum in terms of learning outcomes, objectives, vertical and horizontal consistency and structure, both between years and across subjects.

(iii) To consider the advantages and disadvantages of the structure of subjects and of integration between subjects.

(iv) To review the attitudes and viewpoints of all the key stakeholders to the curriculum.

(v)   In particular to make recommendations on and critically review the following areas of concern:
  - Religious Education;
  - Integrated Production Skills;
  - Kiswahili;
  - use of Mother Tongue;
  - the curriculum needs of disrupted areas;
  - the financial implications of the curriculum;
  - the minimum profile of teacher and student support materials needed to deliver the curriculum.

3.1.9   The 2004 Primary Curriculum Review

The Curriculum Review team was selected through international competitive bidding and started work in December 2003. The team consisted of five external specialists and five national experts plus a group of three national advisors to cover specialist areas of work such as the needs of the disrupted areas of the north and Islamic Religious Education.

The review process was divided into seven activities:
(i)   The detailed design of the review, including data required, methods of data collection and agreement on the review methodology;
(ii)   The collection of data, including very wide consultation with stakeholders
(iii)   Data analysis;
(iv)   Analysis of the existing syllabus documentation, including written reports, subject syllabuses, teachers' guides and student performance studies;
(v)   Drafting of findings and recommendations in the form of an interim report;
(vi)   Presentation of findings and recommendations to stakeholders at a national primary curriculum workshop;
(vii)   Production of the final report based on feedback from the workshop, discussions with constituency representatives and written submissions.

The whole process was completed in early June 2004 when the final report was submitted. This incorporated numerous issues raised at the national primary curriculum workshop and written comments from a wide range of stakeholders.

3.1.10   The Findings of the Primary Curriculum Review

The Primary Curriculum Review concluded that the overall performance levels of primary school students, as demonstrated by a range of research reports, had not significantly improved over the previous five years and that literacy levels were low in both English and in local languages, particularly outside Kampala and in rural areas. This was the area of greatest concern for parents. Because students failed to develop early literacy, they performed poorly in all curriculum subjects and failure to perform well led directly to loss of interest by both parents and students with consequent high drop out rates. Among the major contributing factors to the literacy problem were the lack of emphasis given to the practice of basic literacy skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in the 2000/2002 primary curriculum and a very widespread lack of knowledge and basic skills among primary school teachers in the techniques of teaching literacy. Many teachers in lower primary grades had no clear idea of the most basic approaches to the teaching of literacy and felt that they received little guidance from the curriculum, or from the textbooks (which are based on curriculum/syllabus specifications).

There was general support from teachers and parents for the use of local languages as languages of instruction in lower primary grades but it was noted that there were very few trained local language teachers, almost no instructional materials or reading books in local languages in schools (except for Luganda) and the number of different local languages in use was far greater than the six main area languages recommended by the 1992 GWP.

Large parts of the official curriculum were not being delivered to a majority of the schools in the country. In particular, 82% of schools surveyed were not teaching Kiswahili and 40% were not teaching IPS. A majority of teachers felt that the curriculum had too much factual content and most schools reported that they failed to complete many subject syllabus requirements during the school year. The vocational and practical components of the curriculum were widely supported by teachers in principle but there were criticisms of the lack of financial support for the facilities, equipment and consumables needed to deliver these subjects. As a result, the vocational and practical subjects were widely taught in schools only as theory. A majority of teachers had not been trained in practical work and did not feel comfortable with it. Also, practical work was not assessed for PLE and thus there was no incentive for teachers to offer practical lessons and to develop practical skills, as originally intended by the curriculum designers.

Actual contact hours in many schools were much lower than the contact hours assumed by the curriculum designers. Up to one third of official contact hours might be lost every year in many schools. Reduced contact hours have an obvious impact on the ability of schools to deliver curriculum objectives.

Classes were often very crowded with over 75 children in 40% of the classes observed. Teacher absenteeism and the doubling-up of classes to create additional free time for teachers were the most obvious causes of large class sizes in many schools. As a result of overcrowding and the highly didactic classroom styles of many teachers, student behaviour in class, particularly in lower primary classes, was often considered to be excessively passive. During 70 hours of classroom observation by the primary curriculum review team only three questions originated by students were recorded.

It was also clear that there had been insufficient orientation, training and support provided to teachers before the implementation of the 2000/2002 curriculum. School supervision by either the ESA or the District Inspectorate outside urban areas was almost everywhere insufficient to ensure good school management, the effective delivery of the curriculum and regular teacher attendance. Pre-service and in-service teacher training were not well directed in support of lower primary, particularly initial reading, writing and number skills. Pre-service teacher training courses provided inadequate training in the teaching of early reading and number work and in the principles and practices of early childhood education. In 2005 teacher education programmes have still not been fully adjusted to the requirements of the new curriculum, with the result that a majority of recently qualified teachers do not feel confident in teaching literacy, numeracy and some of the curriculum subjects (Kiswahili, IPS, Agriculture, PAPE etc).

Textbooks in the main subjects were widely available although not always used, but many of the 'new' subjects (such as Local Languages) had no textbooks at all and the lack of local language supplementary reading materials seriously affected the early acquisition of literacy.

3.1.11   Curriculum Review Recommendations

The Curriculum Review recommendations were intended to achieve three main objectives:

(i)   A concentration on the development of the key skills in early childhood education, which are particularly valued by the community and which are also fundamental to continuing effective educational performance, especially literacy and numeracy skills and basic life skills.

(ii)   A curriculum focused more on the development of key skills, values and attitudes than on the inculcation of excessive amounts of factual knowledge.

(iii)   A flexible curriculum with a realistic content load, which allows for a greater level of choice according to local needs, interests, resources and conditions. This is a particularly important issue for education in the war-affected areas of the north and north-east.

Within this broad framework the following proposals were offered to the MoES and the other major stakeholders:

• local language policy needs to be rigorous to ensure that all LOIs used in P1-P4 have approved orthographies, an established literature suitable for the development of early literacy and access to trained specialised local language teachers;

• the mechanism for the choice of a local language at District level should be formalised and tightened-up via the issuance of revised MoES guidelines in order to ensure the use of a language that will support literacy;

• English should be used as the medium of instruction from P1-4 only in those schools, both urban and rural, where a majority of enrolled pupils do not speak a common local language as a first or dominant language. It was considered to be important that a common policy on this issue should be applied to both urban and rural schools in order to prevent increasing disparities in the quality of education provided between rural and urban areas;

• the primary curriculum should be divided into two distinct phases – one for P1-3 and a second for P4-7 – with separate aims and objectives and separate structures for each;

• the curriculum for P1-3 should have a much greater emphasis on the development of literacy, numeracy and key life skills as the priority learning objectives for these grades. This should be achieved by re-structuring the current curriculum requirements around a thematic base and increasing (doubling) the number of timetable hours allocated to literacy and numeracy activities;

• P4 should be conceived as a language transition year. This will require a steady increase in the amount of English used during the year as the pupils prepare for full English medium education from P5 onwards. As a result, P4 should not have a heavy subject content burden so that teachers can concentrate on making a successful language transition for all pupils;

• the curriculum for P4-7 should be subject-based but with clearly identified skills, competencies and learning objectives for each subject;

• the main area languages should be taught as subjects in P5-7 and should be examined. If they are not examined they will be neglected as subjects. The implementation of this recommendation will depend upon the availability of trained local language teachers;

• Kiswahili should not yet be a compulsory subject but should be a curriculum option, which can be extended only when the basic human and materials resources are available in schools. This will ensure that the teaching of this subject is based on realistic conditions for successful delivery.

There were also a number of other more detailed recommendations directly related to individual subjects.

The Curriculum Review pointed out that although there were obvious problems in the 2000/2002 curriculum, which had been largely identified even before the curriculum was launched into schools, the problems of poor student performance and low levels of literacy were not the fault just of the curriculum and that any reform activities would have to be accompanied by parallel and well-integrated supporting activities in the following five sectors:

(i) The re-formulation of MoES policies and procedures for the use of a local language as the language of instruction.

(ii)   The provision of minimum supplies of learning and teaching materials in the languages in which literacy skills will be taught and acquired.

(iii)   The reform of primary teacher training – both pre-service and in-service – in preparation for amended approaches to the primary curriculum, with particular emphasis on the inculcation of genuine early learning/literacy/numeracy skills[9].

(iv)   The provision of adequate supervision and support services to schools and teachers to ensure at least widespread teacher attendance, the delivery of the required contact hours and effective teaching and learning in all schools.

(v)   The development of an assessment system targeted on the acquisition of literacy by all students by no later than the end of P3 so that progress in the achievement of key learning objectives can be measured and analysed.

3.1.12   Follow-Up

The presentation of the Curriculum Review report in June 2004 was followed shortly after by the preparation of a Curriculum Reform "Road Map", which provided a detailed schedule of key activities plus a timetable and costings with longer term financial implications. The Road Map covered not only curriculum reform issues but also the need for integrated action on the other key areas listed above.

The main findings and recommendations of the Curriculum Review plus the key components of the Road Map were allocated one day for presentation and discussion at the 11th Education Sector Review in November 2004. In January 2005 the recommendations on language of instruction policy, increased timetable allocations to literacy and numeracy and the need to develop more reading materials in local languages were all accepted by MoES and the other main stakeholders.

In April 2005 the decision was taken to proceed as fast as possible with a curriculum reform along the lines proposed by the Curriculum Review. This was confirmed by MoES and its partners and work on the reform process started in May 2005.

---

[9] It is curious that the teaching of reading has not been offered as a main part of the PTC syllabus for at least ten and perhaps fifteen years. Thus, for the past ten to fifteen years newly qualified primary teachers have entered service without training in the basic techniques of teaching reading and writing skills and the acquisition of literacy.

3.1.13   Issues

The process of curriculum reform in Uganda over the past five years has not been easy to track especially as it is unclear what forces have shaped the way in which the curriculum has developed, the structures and processes involved, or, indeed, how the curriculum has been negotiated and how this has changed over time. The funding partners acknowledged early on that curriculum reform is a sovereign issue, but this left them unclear about who was moving the process forward, or where the impetus for curriculum reform and the number of subjects to be included in the curriculum was coming from. It left funding partners unable to assess whether or how reform of the education sector, the SWAP and budget support processes and modalities, all of which introduced processes of review and public accountability, impacted on the processes of curriculum reform or indeed on the structures created for that process. At best it appeared that these were occurring largely outside the reforms taking place in the rest of the sector. The statutes governing the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), and which defined its mandate, were used by the institution to resist various attempts by MoES to draw it into the wider reform process. The potential conflict of interests between NCDC staff and their involvement in the design of the curriculum, NCDC's control over the writing of textbooks and the textbook approval process, underpinned donor criticisms as early as 1999/2000. Indeed, as minutes of the monthly MoES - stakeholder meetings confirm, the then director of NCDC robustly asserted the institution's independence and autonomy. Allegations of corruption surrounding textbook selection and procurement punctuated relations between MoES and the funding partners up to 2004 and, whilst enquiries were instituted, little satisfaction was gained. However, over time the systems put in place by the wider reform process began to work and reforms have been instituted, not least with the establishment of a relatively transparent system of textbook selection and procurement (cf. Section 3.4.5). Nonetheless, how the curriculum development process itself actually works and what is driving it beyond broad education policy directives remains relatively unclear.

3.1.14   Summary

The history of the development, introduction, review and reform of the primary school curriculum over the past fourteen years raises a number of important issues. Firstly, although the 2000/2002 curriculum was eight years in the making (from 1992 to 2000), there was remarkably little ownership of the curriculum outside the NCDC on the part of the MoES and the major stakeholders. Thus, although there was concern over the number of subjects and the financial implications of the learning materials requirements there was much less concern over serious omissions in the detail of the curriculum, such as the lack of emphasis on reading and the development of literacy and the lack of clear attainment targets for English, Kiswahili and Local Languages. A new curriculum has major implications for the delivery of educational quality, for teacher training requirements, for inspection and supervision, examinations and assessment, financial requirements, learning materials profiles, etc. As such it is a document that requires detailed study and debate prior to launch. In 2000, the MoES's Curriculum Review Panel produced a report on their own review of the curriculum proposals which clearly identified many of the problems and issues raised above. Unfortunately, no action was taken on the findings of this report. With this exception, there is little evidence that the curriculum proposal generated the detailed scrutiny and extensive debate prior to launch that it deserved.

Secondly, the curriculum issue of debate at the 1999 ESR meeting was the cost implication of the curriculum. Although this issue was discussed at length there was no resolution, so that the curriculum was launched with the worst of all scenarios. All of the specified subjects were maintained but there were no textbooks, teachers' guides or other teacher and pupil support materials to accompany them. Teachers received very little help to cope with new subject requirements. Many are still hoping that learning and teaching materials will be provided to help them deliver the new subjects.

Thirdly, although there was concern about the financial implications for the supply of learning materials there was much less debate over the financial implications of teaching Agriculture and IPS as practical subjects. This was largely because no minimum profile of equipment and consumables requirements had been developed as part of the curriculum document. The actual cost implications were never calculated and it was assumed that the UPE grants would be sufficient to cover the operational costs of these subjects. In the event, the UPE grants were never going to be sufficient, with the result that the two subjects which had been introduced specifically to provide a practical and vocational component to the primary curriculum have been taught almost entirely as theoretical, book-based subjects. This situation was compounded by continuing delays in the introduction of continuous assessment. Without continuous assessment there is no way that practical skills can be assessed and thus there is little motivation to teach these subjects as practical subjects.

Fourthly, the curriculum was launched into schools with no overall plan, no budget and no department or individual with line management responsibility for its launch. As a result, the curriculum documents were delivered very late to schools: textbooks and teachers' guides arrived up to three years late. There was insufficient teacher orientation and training and there has been no coherent plan or supporting budget to revise PTC syllabuses to support the new curriculum. Local language policy remained vague and there has been no effort to develop local language reading materials in support of local languages of instruction from P1 to P3.

On the positive side, the MoES and its main partners were quickly aware that there were problems with the implementation of the curriculum and with some of the basic design features and they were commendably quick to intervene. The intervention, in the form of the Primary Curriculum Review, generated a great deal of debate on every aspect of the curriculum and syllabuses and reviewed a range of alternative remedial approaches. Both the 2000/2002 curriculum and revised curriculum proposals were placed within the context of Ugandan school system realities and the financial implications were reviewed in detail. In fact, all of the scrutiny, debate and constructive discussion that should have taken place in 1999/2000 finally took place in 2004 and 2005.

3.2 Language of Instruction Policy for the Lower Primary Area

3.2.1 Introduction

It is generally recognised that children will perform better and learn faster if early education is conducted in a familiar language, although the issue is not necessarily as straightforward as this

and considerable care is needed in developing an effective and practical policy for the selection, use and development of local languages within the primary curriculum. If reading in the local language is badly taught by teachers with little formal training in either the local language itself or in the teaching of reading and literacy, or if it is not well supported by appropriate learning and teaching materials, it could undermine progress towards basic literacy, the development of learning in other subjects and the later acquisition of literacy in English and thus effective access to education in upper grades and in secondary school.

Uganda has many potential Languages of Instruction (LOI) and thus the selection of a local language to use as the language of instruction in lower primary grades has a number of implications, which need to be taken into account in the development of a local language policy for education. These include:

- financial implications: the use of too many local languages could fractionalise print runs for essential learning materials, which in turn would increase the costs of educational provision. Too many languages operating in relatively small numbers could also be a disincentive to potential publishers of educational materials in local languages. There is a risk that smaller language groups (Languages of Limited Extent – LOLE) would be less well-served than larger language groups (Main Area Languages – MAL). The cost inflation factor would be far greater if other primary curriculum subjects such as Maths, Social Studies, Science and Agriculture also required textbooks in multiple local languages;
- staffing and training implications: instruction in local languages also requires teachers trained to use the local language. Too many LOIs will increase the costs and the complexity of teacher training in local languages and could have obvious implications for the posting, selection and promotion of teaching staff between districts and even between counties and sub-counties. This issue was particularly emphasised in the report of the Syllabus Task Force (2000), which reviewed the (then) new primary curriculum in considerable detail and expressed many of the concerns which emerged later in the 2004 Primary Curriculum Review;
- political implications: it is already clear that the selection of a local language as the LOI is not just a pedagogic issue but also has significant cultural and political implications, particularly in Districts where there are a number of different, and sometimes rival, language possibilities. The current pressure to break Tororo District into three smaller districts along local language lines is an example of this issue.

It is also self-evident that different local languages in Uganda operate at different levels of development. Some languages (e.g. Luganda), are widespread and highly developed with an established orthography, a flourishing supportive literature of newspapers, magazines, fiction, children's books, poetry and drama, radio and TV stations and a cadre of trained language speakers, readers and teachers. Other languages may be used by only a few villages, have no established orthography, little or no supportive literature (or even print of any kind) and no trained language teachers.

There is also an obvious difference in the early childhood exposure to written languages between urban and rural areas. Thus, in urban areas all children are constantly exposed to written language in the form of shop and street signs, product packaging, advertisements, newspapers, magazines, TV, cinema, bookshops and libraries, etc. In many rural areas none of the above exists and there is

little (or even no) cultural conditioning and exposure to written language as the foundation for the basic de-coding of letters and words into sounds and meaning. Many rural children arrive at school for the first time from home environments that are almost entirely oral and thus with little or no print awareness. In this situation the absence of any supporting literature for a language selected as an LOI will have a very damaging impact on the acquisition of literacy.

In the circumstances described above, is it preferable to use an area/regional local language not favoured by a local community but which has trained teachers, a known orthography and reading books, textbooks and a supportive background literature? Or is it preferable to use a community favoured minority local language, but without an accepted orthography, trained teachers, reading materials and a background literature, etc? When this question was posed to policy makers, teachers and community leaders in four Districts[10] in an informal and unscientific straw poll there was a small majority (55% to 45%) in favour of using a language with trained teachers and supporting literature even if it was opposed by local communities. Recent anecdotal evidence suggests that if schools were required to choose between the main area languages (or English where there is no dominant local language) there would be fewer disputes on the selection of the local language as the LOI.

3.2.2   Situational Analysis

Local Languages in Uganda

In 1989 the Education Policy Review Commission identified 25 main Ugandan languages[11]. The 1999 National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) circular entitled *Teaching of Mother Tongue in Primary*[12] identified 63 main Ugandan languages and this number is currently confirmed by the Institute of Languages at Makerere University, Kampala (MUK). It is clear that Uganda has not developed an additional 38 local languages over a period of ten years. Instead, it seems that larger language groups have begun to break down into smaller and more distinct local variants and dialects. However, within this diverse linguistic environment there are a number of larger generalised language groups that could serve as regional LOIs (in the form of MALs) for an estimated 80-90% of the population. These are:

- Luganda;
- Ateso (including Ngakaramajong and its variants);
- Luo (including Acholi, Alur, Langi and Dopedhola[13]);
- Lugbara;
- Runyakitara.[14]

---

[10] The 4 Districts were Kasese, Kapchorwa, Tororo and Iganga. The question was posed to 30 individuals.
[11] Page 28, paragraph 3.6.1
[12] Circular Reference CD/P/MT/14 of 30 September, 1999.
[13] Breakthrough To Literacy was forced to develop different readers for Alur Luo (used in Nebbi) and Dopedhola Luo (used in Tororo) because of significant reported differences in the two Luo variants, which prevented a common book being used by both language groups. There are those who argue that Luo is now effectively three variant languages as follows – Acholi/Langi (reported to be mutually comprehensible), Alur and Dophedhola and that it is no longer possible to conceive of Luo as a single Main Area Language.
[14] An artificial regional language invented by MUK, incorporating Runyoro, Rutoro, Runyankore and Rukiga and also a number of other minor local variants such as Banyabindi and Busangora. Many in the south-west perceive the attempt to install Runyakitara as a regional language as an attempt to re-establish the historic Banyoro influence in the region, and thus are deeply resistant. There seems to be much greater support for the establishment of two language groupings – Runyankore/Rukiga and Runyoro/Rutoro.

On the basis of the above and assuming that Ateso and Ngakarimajong are two languages, Luo is three languages and Runyakitara is two languages, then the number of MALs is now probably around nine rather than the five listed above and traditionally identified as Uganda's MALs.

All of the above languages have access to some forms of established orthographies, which were generally formalised and approved in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, although variant orthographies may now be needed for MALs such as Luo, Ateso and Runyakitara, which may now be in the process of linguistic fragmentation. Other regional language possibilities are:

- Lukhonzo[15];
- Lusoga;
- Lunyole;
- Kupsubiny (in Kapchorwa District).

Most of the other languages currently in use as LOIs are clearly LOLEs with no orthographies, no trained teachers and an almost complete absence of a supportive children's literature.

Approving Local Language Orthographies

There is an issue on the approval of local language orthographies. The main area language groups were all formalised with approved orthographies in the colonial era (the Luganda orthography was approved in 1947). Since then there has been no institution with a national mandate to research, develop and approve local language orthographies, although religious bodies have continued to be active in the development of local languages. The 1992 GWP recommended the formation of a National Advisory Board on Languages (NABL) and District Language Boards (DLBs). The NABL has not yet been established and few DLBs have been funded and formed. Discussions in the Districts have revealed that there are different understandings concerning the authority to approve a local language orthography. Some Districts believe that it is the local DLB that should be responsible for developing and approving the orthography. Others believe that the responsibility lies with the Institute of Languages at MUK or with NCDC or with the (not yet established) NABL. Local language specialists believe that the review and approval of orthographies require specialist knowledge and skills and should not be left to Districts acting alone.

This is an issue that needs to be resolved as soon as possible through the provision of clear guidelines to Districts by the MOES.

The Evolution of MoES/GoU Local Language Policy

As far back as 1947 the Directors of Education of the four anglophone East African countries recognised the significance in primary education of the issue of the use of minor local

---

[15] Also known as Kikonzo, which some local language specialists regard as part of the Runyakitara language group, but which the District authorities in Kasese have recently established as the local language for Kasese District primary schools. The recently formed Kikonzo Language Board has approved a recently developed orthography in 2003 and has contracted a Kampala-based publisher to produce course materials in Uganda using deductions from school UPE grants to finance the procurement costs.

community languages/dialects versus area/regional languages as LOIs in primary education[16] and recommended accordingly that:

- the main vernacular in each area should be the sole medium of instruction throughout … P1-4 if it was sufficiently developed and widespread to justify the provision of the necessary textbooks;
- local vernaculars, spoken in smaller areas only, should be used as the medium of instruction in the first class in their areas, after which children should be taught in one of the main vernaculars.

The 1989 Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC) commented as follows on primary language policy:

> *"One major issue in determining language policy is the feasibility of implementation. The languages that are chosen to be the media of instruction for all subjects in the lower primary classes, or used in adult education, must have an adequate and available literature, or one that can be easily and quickly produced in order to enable the new literates to continue to apply literacy skills……*
>
> *The Commission recommends that the mother tongue should be used as a medium of instruction in all education programmes up to P4…..*
>
> *The area language (a language of wider communication) should be taught as a subject in primary schools. The area languages are the five Ugandan languages … . The area language will be an examinable subject in the Primary Leaving Examinations"*

The 1992 Education GWP amended the recommendations of the Education Review Commission as follows:

- the LOI in rural areas was specified as the relevant local language for P1-4 and English for P5-7;
- English was specified as the LOI in all urban areas for P1-7;
- English and Kiswahili were specified as compulsory languages in all schools from P1-7 with the intention of gradually switching to Kiswahili as the LOI;
- relevant area languages were recommended to be taught as subjects in both urban and rural areas but examination as part of the PLE was optional, although UNEB was required to provide exams in five specified main area languages for those who wished to take them;
- it is notable that the recommendation in the Education Review Commission report relating to the need for the LOI to have a supportive literature was omitted from the GWP.

As far as Districts and schools are concerned, the 1999 NCDC circular referred to above provides the current local language policy for primary education. In summary, this circular provides the following policy guidance:

- mother tongue or the most commonly used area language should be the LOI for P1-P4;
- all schools should select as a LOI only languages with a developed orthography;

---

[16] Proposed Language Policy in Education – a proposal submitted to the Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC) by MUK Department of Languages – 10 June 1988.

- special attention will be given to the minority of learners who may not understand the LOI being used in their class;
- in urban areas where mother tongue might be difficult to use as an LOI, English may be used;
- local languages could (*sic*) be taught as a subject;
- all instruction for P5-7 will be in English;
- the LOI will be the language of evaluation. Thus if the LOI is Runyoro/Rutoro examinations must be set in the same language[17];
- the decision on the use of a local language as the LOI will be taken by the school administration and the DLB;
- the GOU will produce instructional materials in the six languages of Luo, Lugbara, Luganda, Runyankore/Rukiga, Runyoro/Rutoro and Ateso/Ngakaramajong[18];
- all Districts must form District Language Boards, although several Districts using a common local language can combine to form a DLB;
- all Districts should inform NCDC of the local languages selected as LOIs in their Districts.

The policy guidelines produced above make no reference to the availability of suitable learning and teaching materials, the importance of a supportive literature in the LOI and the availability of teachers with specialist skills in the relevant local language(s) as conditions for the selection of a local language as an LOI. The guidelines do not squarely address the pros and cons of the use of local minority languages and dialects of limited extent versus developed area/regional languages of wider communication and leave this critical issue to the determination of each District. They refer to "…a developed orthography…" rather than to "…an approved orthography…" Similarly, District LOIs should be informed to NCDC rather than approved by NCDC or MOES. Finally there are no clearly defined procedures and minimum criteria for the selection of a local language as an LOI. The very general nature of the guidelines leaves wide latitude for District level interpretations.

It is also interesting to note the small but significant shifts in policy direction, and their implications, that have taken place over the years. These can be summarised as follows:

- the significance of a local vernacular used in limited areas only, which was noted in 1947, has not been noted since, although it is clearly still an issue of concern to many minority language groups and a cause of considerable friction in some places;
- there has been a shift from the use of a main vernacular language (main area language) as the LOI to the use of a local language (GWP) and then to the use of mother tongue or the most commonly used area language (NCDC);
- the issue of language feasibility raised by the EPRC was omitted by the GWP but has partially re-emerged in the NCDC guidelines issued in 1999 through the requirement for a language to have a developed orthography as a condition of use as an LOI. Unfortunately, this requirement seems to have been widely ignored in the field;
- the EPRC concluded that the five main area languages should be taught as subjects and should be examined as part of the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE). The GWP supported the teaching of relevant area languages (but omitted "five" and "main") and recommended that inclusion as an examination subject should be optional, although UNEB

---

[17] The NCDC circular notes that the large number of possible local languages will put great demands on the school system.
[18] In November 2004 instructional materials in these languages had not yet been made available to schools.

should provide examinations in the five main area languages for those who wanted to take them. NCDC specified that a local language (not a main area language) could be taught as a subject, but the new curriculum omitted it as an examinable subject;

- the policy of introducing Kiswahili as a parallel compulsory language to English from P1 to P7 emerged for the first time in the GWP, was slightly amended by the introduction of the new curriculum but has been widely ignored in practice because of the lack of teachers, textbooks and funding to support the use of the language;
- English was specified for the first time as an LOI in all urban areas for P1 to P7 by the GWP. NCDC amended this position slightly to make English a default option as an LOI if no convenient local language could be agreed - but only in urban areas. There now appears to be growing pressure to establish English as a default option in both urban and rural areas if there is difficulty in agreeing on a local language as the LOI.

The overall trend of the shifts in local language policy over the years seems to be *de facto* away from the development of major area languages towards the encouragement of local languages of more limited extent, although this trend was paralleled by the introduction of Kiswahili as a compulsory language for all primary grades, which was originally intended to replace English as a national language.

3.2.3 The Current Local Language Situation in Districts and Schools

Table 7 provides an approximate summary of the current LOI situation in the 56 Districts of Uganda. The accuracy of the data collected needs to be checked but there are already indications that the number of LOIs in use is already far outstripping the initial intended limitation to five or six main area languages only.

On the basis of the information provided in Table 7 the following twenty local languages may already be established as LOIs within Uganda:

Table 6:   Local Languages possibly established as Local Languages of Instruction

Ateso	Luganda	Lunyole	Lusoga
Kifumbira	Lugbara	Luo (Alur)	Madi
Kumam	Lugwere	Luo (Acholi/Langi)	Nkaramajong (with a number of local variants including one strongly influenced by Samburu)
Kubsabiny	Lukiga	Luo (Dophedola)	Runyakitara (incorporating, or perhaps in addition to, Runyankore, Runyoro, Rutoro and Rukiga)
Lukhonzo	Lumasaba	Luruli	Samia

Table 7: Local Languages of Instruction Currently in Use

District and Region	Main Language(s) of Instruction	Subsidiary LOIs
Northern Region		
Adjumani	Madi	
Apac	Luo (Langi)	
Arua	Lugbara	Madi, Kakwa (?)
Gulu	Luo (Acholi)	
Kitgum	Luo (Acholi)	
Kotido	Ngakaramajong	Luo (Acholi and Langi)
Lira	Luo (Langi)	Ateso
Moroto	Ngakaramajong	
Moyo	Madi	
Nakapiripiri	Ngakaramajong	
Nebbi	Luo (Alur)	
Pader	Luo (Acholi)	
Yumbe	Lugbara	
Eastern Region		
Bugiri	Lusoga	
Busia	Samai	
Iganga	Lusoga	Lulamoji
Jinja	Lusoga	
Kaberemaido	Kumam	
Kumali	Lusoga	
Kapchorwa	Kupsabiny	Lumasaba, Lubukusii
Katakwi	Ateso	
Kumi	Ateso	
Mayoge	Lusoga	
Mbale	Lumasaba	
Pallisa	Lugwere, Ateso	
Sironka	Lumasaba	
Soroti	Ateso	
Tororo	Lunyole, Ateso, Luo (Dopedhola)	Kiswahili
Central Region		
Kalangala	Luganda	
Kampala	Luganda	
Kayunga	Luganda	Lusoga (?)
Kiboga	Luganda	
Luweero	Luganda	Lunyole (?)
Masaka	Luganda	
Mpigi	Luganda	
Mubende	Luganda	
Mukono	Luganda	
Nakasongola	Luganda	Luruli (?)
Rakai	Luganda	
Sembabule	Luganda	
Wakiso	Luganda	
Western Region		
Bundibugyo	Lukhonzo	Rwamba, Rubwisi
Bushenyi	Runyankore	
Hoima	Runyoro	
Kabale	Lukiga	
Kabarole	Rutoro	Lukiga
Kasese	Lukhonzo	Runyakitara, Swahili
Kibaale	Rutoro	Lukiga
Kisoro	Kifumbira	Runyankore/Rukiga (?)
Masindi	Runyoro	
Mbarara	Runyankore	
Ntungama	Runyankore	
Rukungiri	Lukiga	

If the Runyakitara group is perceived as two languages rather than one (Runyankore/Rukiga and Runyoro/Rutoro), the number of languages currently in use as LOIs is 21 rather than 20. Lulamoji, Lubukusii, Lulamoji, Rwamba, Rubwisi, Kakwa and Kiswahili also seem to be operating as additional minority LOIs in some Districts and there are probably a number of other local languages/dialects of limited extent, which are being used as the effective LOI. It is likely that the final picture will be even more diverse. There are obviously organisational and cost implications in attempting to provide trained language teachers, learning materials, reading books and reading/writing learning methodologies to such a wide range of local languages, particularly when there are already significant resource constraints in the system. In the schools visited as part of the curriculum review it was apparent that many, perhaps a majority outside Luganda-speaking areas, are attempting to teach literacy in local languages without:

- established local language orthographies;
- suitable course materials and teaching/learning aids to support the acquisition of reading;
- reading books;
- teachers trained in the LOI in use (or sometimes even fluent or familiar with the LOI in use);
- well-developed reading and writing strategies.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the achievement of early literacy has become such a problem.

Even where course materials and reading books may be available in the market place they are not present in a majority of schools in the quantities required, even if they are available at all, because (a) they cannot be purchased as part of IMU supplies because they have not been competitively approved; and (b) they are not purchased in sufficient quantities with UPE funds.

These issues relate to causes of illiteracy which have been defined by Chatry-Komarek (2003: 1) as:

- poor language policies;
- deficient teacher training;
- a lack of educational materials (in the language of reading acquisition);
- the absence of a literate environment;
- dramatically reduced teacher/pupil contact hours;
- over-crowded classrooms.

3.2.4　　Impact on Teaching and Learning:　Findings from the Field

Primary teachers have reported consistently that local language classes in lower primary grades, and specifically the teaching of reading and writing, were the most difficult teaching assignments in primary schools because of the lack of trained reading specialists, the absence of suitable instructional materials/reading books and the scarcity of trained teachers with specific local language knowledge. Also, in many schools, teachers allocated to lower primary classes are often the least qualified and least experienced and may not even be very fluent in the local language of

instruction[19]. In the past, education policies have tended to stress the importance of upper primary over lower primary.

Teachers also believe that the number of periods per week allocated to local language learning in lower primary should be greatly increased in order to develop genuine student capability in literacy and numeracy in the local languages in lower grade levels.

Parent/community focus groups are generally very aware of the skills they expect their children to learn at school. Overall, parents and community groups support the use of local languages but a substantial minority still consider that the use of a local language as the LOI in P1-P4 might delay and therefore hinder their children in learning English. Literacy in English, even with parents who support the use of local languages, was more valued than literacy in local languages. Community groups also wanted to be consulted about the choice of language to be used in their school and there are plenty of examples of local communities refusing to accept District local language policies. There is widespread concern among minority language groups that a rival language might be imposed, which would separate their children from their own background and culture and imbue them with the attributes of a historic rival language and culture. In this situation, most communities would rather use a MAL or English as the LOI than a rival/alternative local language. For all of these reasons, clear guidelines from the MoES on local language selection in the Districts are urgently needed.

3.2.5   Discussion

It seems clear from the above that local language policies are in the process of slipping out of control and that local political and cultural factors are often at work in the formation of local language policies as LOIs, which are sometimes at odds with educational considerations. In order to re-emphasise the need for minimum local language criteria in order to achieve literacy, the current local language guidelines need to be tightened by the MOES to ensure that all local languages used as LOI meet minimum standards for the successful achievement of basic literacy and numeracy. Taking this forward, it is suggested that:

• MoES National Local Language Committee should be established to review, vet, comment on and approve orthographies for local languages submitted as potential LOIs. This committee would probably meet on an occasional basis as required;
• all Districts should be required to submit their proposed local language policy to the MoES for approval (and not just for information);
• the minimum criteria for a local language to be approved by the MoES as an LOI should be:
  - an established and approved orthography;
  - an established literature suitable for young learners in P1-4;
  - evidence that there is the capacity to provide good quality language;

---

[19] There is no guarantee that lower primary teachers will be proficient in the local language used as the LOI. For example, in one school where Kiswahili was being used as the LOI, the two teachers who were most fluent in Kiswahili (with Grade V diplomas and formal language qualifications) were teaching in P6 and P7 where the LOI was English. One of the P1 teachers, with a basic Grade III qualification, was not even a fluent Kiswahili speaker and was obviously struggling with the problems of teaching reading, writing, listening and speaking in a language with which she was not very familiar. The deputy head teacher thought that her language problems were not significant because she was only teaching P1 students.

- training to primary teachers in the proposed LOI(s) i.e. via local language modules in a local PTC;
- undertakings that the District will provide schools with the necessary reading support materials to underpin the early achievement of literacy.

- local community languages/dialects, spoken only in limited areas, may be used but only as the oral medium of instruction and support in P1. Literacy should always be taught in a language that meets the minimum criteria specified above;

- local Languages should be used as the LOI from P1-P4 except where there is no obvious dominant language and/or where pupil intakes provide for a mixed language situation among enrolled students where there is no obvious dominant local language. In this situation, the default LOI normally should be English in both urban and rural areas;

- main area languages can be learned from P5-7 and should be examinable as part of UPE.

3.3   Basic Learning Materials

3.3.1   The Challenge

The on-going challenge faced by the GoU is how to increase access to and achieve more effective and efficient use of teaching and learning materials.

3.3.2   The Background

Instructional materials are critical ingredients in learning and the intended curriculum cannot be easily implemented without them (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991: 47). Over the past thirty years the importance of adequate book provision (including textbooks, teachers' guides and supplementary materials) to support educational development and quality upgrading has been recognised by governments throughout the developing world and by most funding agencies (Da Cruz et al., 2000: 7). There is substantial research evidence which shows that textbooks have a significant impact on student learning; also that the impact of textbooks is greatest in the poorest countries where teacher quality may be low and where facilities and resources are scarce and generally of poor quality (Lewin and Stuart, 2003). Their impact is even greater when there are supplementary reading materials available and when teachers have guidebooks for the texts that describe what to teach, how to teach it, and how to assess student learning. However, eventual textbook use comes at the end of a long chain of events that is meant to put good textbooks in students' and teachers' hands (Heneveld and Craig, 1996: 34). Books, once delivered to schools, may not be well used or may not be used at all (Da Cruz et al., 2000: 7), thus wasting the investment.

Despite the importance of textbooks for effective learning and considerable donor support for this element of primary education, few countries in Africa have yet established financially and institutionally sustainable systems for book provision (World Bank, A Chance to Learn, 2001: 36). In Uganda, like most African countries, for many years textbook publishing, printing and distribution was a poorly performing state monopoly. This situation has recently changed dramatically in Uganda because the government recognised the importance of a thriving publishing industry, a national network of private booksellers, and policies that give schools the authority and resources to choose between competing series or titles offered by publishers.

3.3.3   The Origins of the Reforms

Up to independence, most textbooks used in Uganda were British. Shortly after independence the Milton Obote Foundation (MOF) was established. This consisted of a number of subsidiary parastatal organisations including the Uganda Publishing House (UPH) and Uganda School Supplies (USS – a textbook distributor) amongst others. These parastatal enterprises had such significant operational advantages in terms of easy and almost unrestricted access to low cost investment finance and active government support that they soon dominated the market (Buchan et al., 2002:116). By 1970, the MoES, UPH or the National Institute of Education (NIE) were the publishers of all of the core English and mathematics primary textbooks. USS, with strong state support, had achieved a dominant position in textbook supply and distribution which amounted to an effective monopoly (Buchan et al., 2002:117).

Under the Amin government the MOF and UPH were closed down and the USS declined. The UPH titles were taken over by the MoES. During this period, the government funded only small quantities of textbooks for free supply. The basic supply methodology remained direct sales to parents. In 1973 the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) was formed as an autonomous organisation reporting to the MoES under the auspices of Presidential Decree No. 7. This decree, never repealed, is still the legal basis under which NCDC operates. NCDC saw itself not just as a curriculum development organisation but also as an originator of core textbook manuscripts and other teaching and learning materials. In a short space of time NCDC had written and developed both a primary mathematics course and primary English course. In the absence of UPH, Longman signed contracts with NCDC for the publication rights of both these courses. The contract provided for royalties for both the authors and for NCDC. Before the NCDC-developed courses could be published by Longman, the Idi Amin administration was overthrown and the second Milton Obote government returned to power. The MOF was re-established along with the UPH and USS. The NCDC courses were ultimately published by Longman in 1983, but on the condition that an additional royalty was paid by Longman to UPH. All distribution and school supply once again became the monopoly of USS, so provision was virtually monopolistic, with very little choice for schools.

Since the mid 1980s the major source of instructional materials (IM) funding for primary schools has come from external funding agencies. The World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) Education III project in the mid 1980s provided one–off emergency supplies of textbooks, bought in from international multinational publishers. The IDA Education IV project in the late 1980s provided additional core textbooks procured off-the-shelf from the same multinational group of publishers and included an experimental Textbook Pilot Project with a rental scheme and revolving fund based on 50/50 government and parental cost sharing.

IDA Education V and the United States Aid for International Development (USAID) funded the Support for Primary Education Reform (SUPER) Project, which followed in the early 1990s. These two projects established a new national textbook policy in 1993 based on the principles of competition from an MoES list of approved textbooks, school-based choice and selection using annual school-based purchasing power allocations from the government, and the full involvement of private sector publishers as the source of textbooks. The current textbook system is based on these principles. This policy resulted in the development of a wide variety of approved textbooks

written and published specifically for Uganda and the rapid development of a strong local publishing industry comprising local, regional and multinational textbook publishers.

In 1997 Universal Primary Education (UPE) was introduced with a resultant rapid doubling in primary enrolments. This caused a worsening ratio of textbooks to pupils, as available funding had not kept pace with the increase in demand. It was clear that the speed of instructional materials reform had to quicken in order to support the massively increased demand for textbooks and teachers' guides in the schools and the consequent dramatic increase in recurrent budget requirements. In particular, the price of textbooks had to be reduced to match the resources available in the MoES's budgets, without simultaneously reducing the content and presentational quality of the materials or their durability and thus their classroom book life and the recurrent costs of textbook provision.

3.3.4   The Approach

In mid 1999 a report based on research by the MoES with the support of international consultants identified the following outcomes (among others) resulting from the prevailing government textbook policy.

Textbook prices in Uganda continued to be high in comparison with neighbouring countries. Moreover, there was too much choice offered by the MoES approved textbook list and this resulted in lower print runs per title, thereby contributing to higher unit costs. The MoES also believed that too much choice when coupled with a perceived inability of a majority of schools to select textbooks in class sets, led to much wastage. There was also persistent evidence of poor/non-usage of textbooks in the schools. Textbook life in the classroom was lower than expected because of variable physical production specifications, a lack of quality control over textbook manufacturing standards, poor standards of storage (or no storage at all) in many schools and the lack of a simple system of stock management.

Proposals were developed to address all of these issues during 2000 as part of the Instructional Materials Reform programme within the framework of the education SWAp. These proposals were approved by the MoES in December 2000 and implementation quickly followed.

The key components of the Instructional Materials Reform Programme were:

- the reform of the existing textbook evaluation, approval and procurement procedures;
- improved distribution of school textbooks and teachers' guides;
- experimentation with de-centralised instructional materials procurement and supply and the re-creation of a national network of bookshops serving all parts of the country;
- improvements in the use of instructional materials in the classroom;
- improvements and upgrading of school storage and improved stock management and conservation systems;
- support for the rapid development and qualitative improvement of the private sector book trade within Uganda. This includes not just publishers, but also booksellers and eventually, it is hoped, the printing and book manufacturing sector.

3.3.5   Reforming the Textbook Evaluation Approval and Procurement Process

The reforms of the textbook evaluation and approval procedures were designed to achieve greater control for the MoES over procurement costs and physical and content/presentational quality and to introduce a 'competitive' evaluation to replace the prevailing 'threshold' evaluation approach.

Designing the New System

The development of a revised primary textbook evaluation, approval and procurement system was undertaken via a series of technical inputs and practical consultative workshops with specialists nominated by the MoES. The attendance at the workshops was comprehensive and included representatives from the National Curriculum Development Centre, Teacher Education, the Inspectorate, the Pre-Primary and Primary Department of the MoES, the Instructional Materials Unit of the MoES, Makerere University Faculty of Education, Teacher Training Colleges, District Education Officers, educational publishers, local and international procurement specialists, the MoES Contracts Committee and the Ministry of Justice. The wide consultation process ensured that the new systems had genuine ownership and support within Uganda and that the objectives were widely understood and appreciated.

Threshold Versus Competitive Evaluation

As a first step in the design process, the two basic approaches to textbook evaluation – the 'threshold' evaluation and the 'competitive' evaluation - were assessed. In a threshold evaluation minimum standards are established and any title that achieves these minimum standards is approved. The second basic methodology is a competitive evaluation in which textbook titles also have to reach rigorous minimum standards but only a pre-determined and limited number of titles (i.e. the best) are accepted for approval. In the context of Uganda, the use in the past of the threshold evaluation methodology had been responsible for the approval of an open-ended number of textbooks. This, in turn, was widely believed within the MoES to have had an adverse impact on unit costs. Too many approved titles reduced print runs and thus increased unit costs. It was also claimed within the MoES that too many approved textbooks confused teachers and made effective choice more difficult. The problems of school-based selection were compounded because few schools, especially in rural areas, had an opportunity to see and inspect most of the approved textbooks prior to making their selection decisions. As a result, there was a tendency for schools to order a few copies of every title just to be on the safe side. This in turn reduced print runs and prevented the development of genuine class sets, which would have made classroom usage easier. In the new system every publisher with titles on the approved list has to supply free copies to every District and to every Official Textbook Supplier (OTS) as the basis for District-based textbook sample copy collections. As a result of these basic requirements Uganda shifted from a situation where there was one textbook sample copy collection in Kampala in 2001 to a situation where every District (56) and every OTS (19) had full sample copy collections in 2002. This represents a dramatic increase in school access to the approved textbook list.

Comparisons with textbook prices in Kenya also seemed to confirm opinions that Uganda, with an approximately similar primary school population and comparable print runs, had been paying significantly more than its neighbour for very similar textbooks.

The MoES and its advisers recognised the need to create an evaluation system that was open, transparent and objective and was controlled by strong management systems to guarantee fair dealing and objectivity. There was considerable discussion and widespread agreement amongst stakeholders of the need to identify and avoid conflicts of interest between the evaluators and those MoES and other government staff members who might be involved in writing, editing or publishing learning materials submitted for evaluation and approval by private sector publishers. There was also general agreement of the need to make evaluation marks publicly available to the bidders as a means of demonstrating the fairness of the system and creating long-term trust in its operation. It was strongly stressed by the MoES that Uganda should not just adopt a system from another country. The system to be developed for Uganda had to spring directly out of the specific educational requirements defined by the Ugandan specialists.

The main problem with the previous evaluation and approval system was that it did not require prices to be submitted for competitive evaluation and therefore did not provide the MoES with any price control or negotiating position to achieve the best prices during procurement negotiations. The previous system also did not contain minimum production specifications in sufficient detail to guarantee high quality production standards and thus acceptable book life. There were also no required contractual obligations between publishers and MoES that ensured compliance with the minimum obligations that the MoES required as a condition for approving a textbook for use in Ugandan schools. Such a contract was needed also to protect publishers of approved textbooks by specifying the obligations of the MoES in respect of approved textbooks. Finally, there was no term or limit on the period of approval. As a result, there was no obvious way of removing textbooks from the approved list. Thus, over a period of time, the number of approved textbooks tended to increase and this had an adverse impact on the sales of individual titles and on the unit costs of procurement. In the light of all of the weaknesses in the previous system identified above, the MoES and its partners unanimously agreed on the need to introduce a competitive evaluation and a limited list of approved textbook titles. The new system also included price as a main factor in evaluation, the specification of minimum physical production standards and the creation of a contractual pro forma between publishers and the MoES as the legal condition for approval and the basis for annual textbook pricing.

It was also agreed that all publishers needed to know in advance the methodology and the detailed criteria and scoring system for the evaluation and approval process so that they could respond appropriately to the MoES's requirements in their textbook submissions. It was also agreed that the new systems for evaluation and approval could only be applied to new curricula titles.

Characteristics of the New System

The output arising from the workshops, technical inputs and stakeholder discussions was a draft set of detailed evaluation and approval documents for a revised textbook evaluation, approval and procurement system. The new system has the following characteristics.

The evaluation and approval system is competitive with a limitation of three on the number of textbooks to be approved for each subject and grade. As a general rule, the more limited the number of approved textbooks, the fiercer the competition between publishers for approved status and thus the keener the submitted prices. The evaluation system is as objective as possible and applies only to the new curriculum textbooks. Full details of the evaluation criteria and marking scheme are made available to publishers in advance so that their textbook submissions can fully reflect the evaluation requirements.

Every effort is made to identify and avoid potential conflicts of interest and significant penalties are specified for any individual or company who fails to declare potential conflicts of interest. Hence, all submissions for evaluation and approval are anonymous so that no evaluator can identify the source of the submission. The selection of evaluators is secret until after the completion of the evaluation so that no commercial pressure can be placed on evaluators by submitting publishers. Neutral, non-scoring, professional moderators sit on each evaluation panel to ensure fair and consistent marking of each submission.

In the interests of transparency and fair dealing, evaluation marks are made available to bidders. Price is one of the main criteria in evaluation (40% of all evaluation marks). Approved status requires that the price submitted for evaluation by the publisher becomes the mandatory base price for publisher procurement contracts with the MoES for the next five years or until the title is removed from the approved list.

To ensure high quality textbooks at the best prices, there are minimum content thresholds for conformity to curriculum requirements (a minimum score of 80% on this criterion is required to achieve approval) and for content/presentation (a minimum score of 60% of total available marks is required to achieve approval). Sensible minimum physical production specifications are compulsory for all textbook titles approved for use in Ugandan schools and failure to comply with minimum physical specifications is a cause for disqualification. Checks on physical production standards are now made during the process of submission for evaluation, when advanced copies are submitted to the MoES for approval and when bulk stock is supplied to schools. Experience in other countries (for example, Tanzania) suggests that there are some unscrupulous publishers who might submit copies up to specifications to the MoES but supply sub-standard copies to schools.

Finally, publishers of approved textbooks are required, as a condition of approval, to sign a legally binding contract that stipulates the mutually accepted terms and conditions of approval, including fixed discounts off submitted prices according to the quantity ordered by schools. The previous process of unsatisfactory price/discount negotiations, which left the MoES without a viable negotiating position and thus at the mercy of publisher proposed prices, has now been replaced by automatic discounts off fixed prices.

Handbooks and Guidelines

During August 2000 copies of the draft documentation were widely circulated to stakeholders and written comments were received from them. There were no major objections to the overall proposals for a new evaluation, approval and procurement system for primary textbooks and

teachers' guides amongst stakeholders, but, as a result of comments received, the evaluation and approval documentation was amended.

Minor changes were made in the production specification for cover card to enable local and regional card suppliers and printers to participate without jeopardizing the basic requirement for improved durability standards. In addition, the introduction of bid bonding in the textbook submission requirements was approved together with the introduction of performance bonding in the revised procurement contracts. A revised price inflation clause was inserted into the evaluation and approval documentation, and minor changes were made in the detailed content evaluation criteria and marking scheme and the correction of minor editorial errors.

The agreed documents were supported by a Technical Handbook and the MoES's Bid Evaluation Management Guidelines, which included:

- a description of key responsibilities (including Bid Manager, the Evaluation Moderators, the Bid Administrator and the General Evaluation Committee);
- how to manage the bid announcement;
- how to respond to supplier requests for documentation;
- how to respond to bidders' requests for clarification;
- guidance on the appointment and training of evaluators;
- criteria for accepting bids from suppliers;
- guidance on the formal opening of bids;
- detailed description of evaluation procedures and scoring systems;
- how to announce evaluation results.

Implementation

The reformed textbook evaluation and approval process was used for the first time in Uganda at the end of 2000 for both non-book materials and lower primary textbooks and teachers' guides. A third bid (textbooks and teachers' guides for upper primary) was launched in September 2001 to enable all senior primary textbooks to be available for the beginning of the 2003 school year. Thus the annual bidding, evaluation, approval, procurement and supply cycle for instructional materials was shifted to a minimum 15 month lead time so that all materials would be available in time for the beginning of the school year.

It is planned that future procurements will introduce an 18 month lead time which should then become the norm. The documents and procedures have been thoroughly revised in the light of experience to date with each bid. The MoES's Instructional Materials Unit (IMU), working in association with the government's technical advisers, procurement adviser and other departments of the MoES, successfully managed the whole process and developed genuine, high-level, institutional capacity in bid and evaluation management, contracting and procurement according to the new rules and procedures. In addition, two cadres of evaluators (one for non-books and the other for textbooks) have been successfully trained and completely new sets of bid documents and procedures for the local consolidation and distribution of non-book materials and textbooks have been prepared. Consolidation and distribution bids were launched in September 2001 and awarded in November/December 2001 to private sector contractors.

Procurement Process

The reforms of the previous textbook and instructional materials procurement systems and documentation were designed to support the new approaches to textbook evaluation and the introduction of a pilot project on decentralised textbook procurement. The main task was to develop revised procurement contracts in line with new Ministry of Justice requirements that were also acceptable to the government's procurement advisors. The new contracts were developed at the same time as the reforms of the evaluation and approval process and consisted of the terms and conditions that apply to both MoES and the publishers regarding the textbooks and teachers' guides produced by the publishers, which have been awarded approved status by the MoES for use in Ugandan primary schools.

Within the framework of the binding agreements to the terms and conditions of the procurement contract, the MoES undertakes to maintain the approved list of titles and to issue instructions and guidance to schools regarding the exclusive purchase of these titles with government funds. The MoES also commits itself to consultations with the Uganda Publishers Association (UPA) and the Uganda Booksellers Association (UBA) regarding the approved list, providing early warning of any future changes in curriculum policy or curriculum and syllabus content and objectives. The MoES also provides the publishers with a guarantee that no significant changes requiring new editions or corrected reprints of the approved titles will take place in the curriculum or syllabus for the duration of the period of approval specified in the contract. In addition, the MoES guarantees that future curriculum review, revision and change will not take place prior to the date of termination of approved status specified in the contract. The compliance of publishers to the contract is monitored through the auspices of an MoES nominated compliance officer, responsible for conducting random checks in schools to make certain that the quality and specifications of the textbooks and teachers' guides listed in the contract are equivalent to, or exceed, the standards required by the Terms and Conditions of Evaluation and Approval. The compliance officer is responsible for checking that the publishers' titles supplied to schools meet in all respects the quality of the samples and dummies submitted as part of the publishers' submission for evaluation and approval.

Upon signing a procurement contract with the MoES, the publisher undertakes to make available for the duration of the contract sufficient quantities of the titles listed for purchase by the MoES, or purchase by individual schools, or purchase by booksellers officially appointed by the MoES or by responsible District Education Offices. The publisher accepts that failure to supply at the agreed price if provided with sufficient time to deliver may result in the substitution of the titles concerned by other titles on the approved list or, in cases of repeated failure to supply, by removal of the defaulting titles from the approved list. The publisher also undertakes to supply the titles listed in the contract up to the minimum standards of production quality specified in the terms and conditions and in all respects similar to the standards and specifications of the samples, dummies and guarantees submitted by the publisher for evaluation and approval. Failure to maintain the specifications of the titles in conformity with these requirements could lead to the titles concerned being removed from the list of approved textbooks and/or to the publisher concerned being prohibited from participating in one future submission for evaluation and approval.

The publisher also acknowledges the right of the MoES to disqualify any approved title listed in the contract where the format, extent, page layout, typefaces, type sizes, number of colours and basic physical production specifications differ materially from those evaluated and approved. The MoES accepts that the publisher may not always be able to use exactly the same text paper and cover card for every printing but requires that substitute raw materials must meet the basic production specifications set down in the contract. The publisher must seek the prior approval in writing of the MoES before making any significant changes to the content or presentation or production standards of any approved titles listed in the contract. The publisher also guarantees that the maximum retail prices relevant for each order for all titles listed in the contract shall not be exceeded for the duration of the contract except in the specific circumstances listed in the contract.

Failure by the publisher to disclose potential conflicts of interest with the evaluation process will also render a title or titles liable to disqualification. Persistent failure to disclose conflicts of interest could lead to suspension of the publisher from future submissions for evaluation and approval. The contract includes arrangements for settling disputes in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) arbitration rules.

The problem of schools not ordering class sets of textbooks was solved by the simple expedient of creating an order form with only one line for each subject and grade level so that schools could only order one title.

Decentralising Procurement and Supply of Instructional Materials

It is the GoU's policy to move steadily towards the decentralised operation of the education system. It is believed that this will make the system more efficient and more responsive to local needs. It should also speed up decision-making and improve school management capacity. A related aim of decentralisation policy is to encourage booksellers to open outlets in all Districts and counties of the country, thereby promoting reading amongst the wider public and reinforcing the increasing levels of literacy in society resulting from UPE.

Until 2001, textbooks and instructional materials procurement for all primary schools in Uganda had been partially centralised and partially decentralised. Every primary school was provided with an annual textbook purchasing budget based on roll numbers, and an IMU list of evaluated and approved textbooks which were all included on the order form. Each school was sent a textbook order form with current prices together with instructions to select the books it required from the approved list of titles up to the limit of its budget. The form was then returned to the IMU of MoES for procurement.

When the school orders were received by the IMU, it added all the school orders together and calculated the total quantity ordered of each title on the order form. It also negotiated the prices of each order with the publishers, and signed contracts and placed orders with the publishers. Finally, it organised a competitive tender for the consolidation and delivery of all the ordered books to each District. District offices arranged for the distribution of the books.

The Pilot Project

In July 2001, the MoES launched a pilot project in textbook procurement for primary schools in four districts, where every process in textbook procurement (except for the evaluation and approval of the textbooks to be included on the order form) was handled at the District level. As part of the project, the IMU funded textbook procurement to each of the four pilot Districts from its annual textbook procurement budget and provided training in the decentralised procurement to districts, schools and local booksellers. Findings from monitoring and evaluation were fed into the design of a national decentralised procurement process. To support the pilot, the MoES produced a management handbook written specially for primary schools, local booksellers and district level officers.

In the pilot, IMU funds were given to each individual school in the form of a local purchase order (LPO), which had to be spent on the textbooks and teachers' guides listed in the official MoES list of Approved Textbooks and Teachers' Guides. The use of LPOs was a critical step in establishing decentralised procurement as the LPO guarantees that school textbook funding will actually be spent on the approved textbooks and teachers' guides. It guaranteed a known market value in each of the pilot districts, which in turn provided an incentive for local entrepreneurs to engage in district level bookselling. The LPO was exchanged for textbooks and teachers' guides, up to the limit of the LPO, at one of a number of local booksellers (Official Textbook Suppliers or OTSs) selected and approved by the DEO on the basis of detailed criteria provided by the IMU. The criteria included strict requirements in respect of the credit-worthiness and status of booksellers who have to have membership of the Uganda Booksellers Association. As a result of this, established booksellers in Kampala sought access to the new textbook markets by setting up partnership agreements with local booksellers first in the pilot districts and later nationally in order to provide finance, professional expertise and the required credit status. Indeed, within the first few months of the project, 19 new booksellers, all with effective credit status, many in partnership with Kampala booksellers, were appointed in the four pilot districts. Other benefits of decentralised procurement soon became apparent, most notably that schools were able to negotiate discounts and other services from booksellers which included free deliveries and the rapid correction of errors and damages.

The pilot project received a successful review and was implemented nationally in 2003. Difficulties do exist in more remote areas where publishers and booksellers find the returns less attractive. Various proposals to stimulate local bookselling are being tried, including getting groups of schools to agree to procure books from a single supplier thereby reducing bookseller transaction costs. However, in the troubled north-east central procurement remains.

Flow of Funds

The system is for textbook procurement funds to be transferred to each District prior to the textbook ordering season. The value of the transfers is based on the number of primary students in each District multiplied by the national per capita fund allocation for textbooks for the year. Upon receipt of the funds in the districts, district officials issue an LPO to every school in the district. The LPO must be signed by the DEO and countersigned by the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). The value of the school LPO is based on the

number of enrolled students in each school. Schools are free to select the books they want from the approved lists. One difficulty with this has been that local authorities exercise insufficient control which has resulted in schools not accumulating classroom sets of one or more textbooks.

Reimbursement and Audit

A bookseller can only claim reimbursement of an LPO from the District Treasury once the LPO has been countersigned by the head teacher, the chair of the SMC and the Sub-County Chief as 'fully and accurately delivered'. The documentation provided by the bookseller to achieve reimbursement of the LPO by the Treasury represents all the information required by the Internal Audit Departments. Thus internal auditing is significantly improved as a result of the LPO system. The use of standard documentation in all schools (cash book, stock register, stock issue register) and the design of simple school resource management systems ensure improved inspection and supervision.

Improving the Use of Instructional Materials in Classrooms

The way in which teachers or pupils use books in schools, and the effect of poor or ineffective book usage, can severely influence teaching and learning outcomes. Poor or non-use of books negates investment in instructional materils and if there is evidence that they are not being used such investment should be questioned. On the other hand, an intelligent and creative use of books and other materials can greatly enhance the learning process and give a greater sense of achievement to both pupils and teachers.

In recent years several studies and surveys carried out in Uganda's schools have confirmed that there are problems related to the usage of instructional materials in primary classrooms in the country[20]. The problems identified are:

- even when books and other learning materials are efficiently delivered to schools, they may not actually be used by the pupils. Stock may be hoarded in store cupboards, or in other locations, and not issued to the intended users. In some cases, teachers may want to use textbooks but may not be able to get access to them (e.g. when books are in very short supply or when they are locked in store with no available key because the key holder has travelled);
- there is no significant evidence of the existence and widespread use of effective class sets of individual textbooks in any of the schools surveyed, although the results of the new ordering provisions introduced for the first time in 2002 suggest that this problem will be resolved;
- there is evidence of poor textbook usage with continuing emphasis on learning by rote even where books are available;
- there is often an observable non-use of the available texts with teachers using only a single author as a resource book and lesson planner, whilst seldom using even a teachers' guide. Indeed, few teachers believe that teachers' guides are a priority;
- where small multiple textbook sets are issued to classes by the teacher the effective book: pupil ratios are often so poor that the perceived benefits of textbook use are rarely achieved;

---

[20] See 2003 and 2004 MoES ESR reports and *Primary Basic Learning Materials in Uganda, Final Report* (November, 1999) by Tony Read, Frances Atima, Kenneth Cowan, Alice Ibale and Jim McCall: 47 to 49.

- good classroom management of textbook use is severely impaired by the lack of an adequate number of copies and adequate storage facilities. There is little evidence of effective use of teaching aids, even where they are readily available;
- there are relatively few supplementary reading materials in schools (but there are some) and few teachers appear to know how to use them effectively.

Reasons for Poor Usage of Instructional Materials

There are a number of basic reasons for shortcomings in the use of instructional materials in Uganda's primary education sub-sector. From the information gathered from surveys and studies and the opinions obtained from teachers and inspectors of schools, it is possible to reach the following conclusions.

Where teachers are unfamiliar with the various textbooks on offer under the principles of choice and diversity, many opt for a selection from all the approved textbooks rather than concentrating on achieving a set of one basic textbook per subject for each grade, because they lack the professional confidence to make a genuine choice. This tendency has the effect of limiting even further the number of similar texts available for each grade. This often provides a real book:pupil ratio which is far worse than the general average and frequently discourages any effective textbook use because of the difficulty of teaching from a very low stock of similar textbooks. In these circumstances teachers often choose not to use the books at all and leave them in the store cupboards. It is difficult to understand how this situation has arisen. Some school inspectors believe that teachers are frightened of choosing a 'wrong' book and hedge their bets by buying a little of everything. One head teacher commented to a survey carried out in 1999 that schools often feel a sense of obligation if they attend a publisher's workshop or a publisher visits the school. In these circumstances they feel obliged to order something, even if they don't really want it. Other teachers commented to the same survey that they would rather have several small class sets than one big one, although it is difficult to determine the rationale behind this approach.

Therefore, the following strategy was developed and implemented by the MoES from 2001:

- to achieve satisfactory standards of textbook usage, the evaluation, approval and procurement reforms (described above) were designed to achieve an effective pupil:textbook ratio of no more than 3:1 in all primary classrooms by 2003;
- the reforms forced teachers to focus their purchasing on single textbook class sets, rather than on purchasing individual examples of different textbooks from a number of different publishers;
- a nation-wide programme of training for all primary school teachers in stock management and the establishment of very basic libraries and conservation practice was implemented in 2002, combined with investments in instructional materials storage capacity in all schools;
- a nation-wide programme of training for all primary school teachers in the use of non-book materials and textbooks (including the selection of these) was implemented in 2002. This training was supported by intensive orientation in the requirements of the new primary curriculum;

- four training modules were researched and authored and made available to every school in the country. CCTs were provided with intensive training in the use of the modules so that support and back-up could be provided in every teachers' resource centre. The first wave of training (completed in early 2002) will be followed by a second and third wave of training in November 2002 and March 2003.

Translating this training into classroom practice, however, has not occurred to the levels hoped for with many teachers continuing to lack the confidence to handle teaching/learning resources or to see for themselves the benefits to be derived.

3.3.6 Results from the Instructional Materials Reform

The introduction of a transparent competitive tendering process has resulted in a reduction in the unit costs of primary textbooks of approximately 60%. Thus, the unit cost of primary school textbooks procured for P1 to P4 in 1998 was US$3.67, whereas the unit cost of textbooks procured for the same grades and subjects in 2002 was only US$1.53. This represents an approximate 250% increase in school purchasing power. In other words, with the same budget schools were able to procure more than twice the number of textbooks in 2002 than they procured in 1998. This dramatic reduction in costs and increase in purchasing power has been achieved without any compromises in content or physical quality. In 1998, the use of four colour printing was occasional in P1 to P4 textbooks. In 2002 it became the norm. In 1998 there were no fixed, minimum production standards. In 2002, the quality of text paper and cover card was improved and standardised, durable binding processes are standard for all textbooks (they weren't in 1998) and all covers are now either UV varnished or laminated. It is probable that the increased production standards have added perhaps 25% to expected classroom book life, which will have an obvious beneficial impact on recurrent costs. Overall, there has been no significant adverse change in page formats and extents. Because the content and presentation has been subjected to detailed examination against objective criteria, there are many within the MoES who feel that there have also been significant improvements in the pedagogic quality of the textbooks.

From the reduction in unit costs achieved by competitive tendering there has also been a resulting substantial budget saving on the procurement of 'non–book' materials, such as slates, work cards, flash cards, wall charts and educational games.

The reduction in costs in procurement has enabled textbook:pupil ratios to improve at a faster rate than anticipated leaving the GoU and its partners more confident that a pupil:textbook ratio of close to 1:1 can be achieved in all classrooms within the next three years within the existing resource envelope.

The improved systems for the evaluation of bids has gone a long way to ensure the anonymity of evaluators and to reduce the opportunities for external interference with the evaluators in making their decisions. Nonetheless, the system is not totally corruption-free, with publishers especially complaining about practices of their competitors[21]. All bids are evaluated anonymously

---

[21] Various 'incidents' were reported to the writers, and it is known that donor partners have received reports to this effect. On the other hand, the MoES believe its textbook approval, selection and procurement systems are effective, and that instances of misconduct are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action taken.

so that the publishers' submissions cannot be identified by any of the evaluators. The selection and training of bid evaluators requires a majority of practising primary teachers on the bid evaluation panels and there is a deliberate balance between Kampala representatives and representatives from rural and up-country Districts and schools.

Finally the process requires the government's procurement advisers, a private procurement company, as bid managers, to confirm that bidding and evaluation procedures for the textbook procurements for each year are correctly followed. On the basis of documentation presented to him, the Inspector General of Government (IGG) either confirms or declines to confirm that no corruption in the implementation of the procurement procedures has occurred.

3.3.7   Resistance to the Reforms

Inevitably, there has been some opposition to the instructional materials reforms, particularly from private sector publishers. The publishers' objections to the reforms can be summarised as follows.

First, they object to the limitation in the number of titles approved for each subject and grade. They feel that the maximum of three titles restricts publisher access to the primary textbook market and thus undermines growth and development in the Ugandan publishing industry. However, with three textbook titles approved for four subjects in grades 1 to 3 and with three titles approved for six subjects in grades 4 to 7, the current system, even with a restriction of three approved titles per subject per grade, permits the approval of 108 different textbooks and teachers' guides combinations over the seven grades of the primary system. This is an average of almost eight textbook titles for each of the 14 publishers who submitted bids in cycle 8. This hardly represents a system which is designed to exclude publishers and thus to prevent the development of the industry. When the 60% reduction in unit costs resulting from the increased competitiveness of the system is taken into account it is clear that the restrictions on the number of approved titles are more than compensated by the enormous financial benefits to the government and the education system.

Second, publishers are concerned that the increase in competitiveness and particularly the inclusion of price as a critical factor in the evaluation process has created increased emphasis on keen price submissions and thus reduced publishers' profit margins. There is little doubt that this has in fact occurred. The significant reduction in unit costs referred to above is a clear demonstration that the competitive process has brought prices down. However, because of the restriction in the number of approved titles and because of the lower unit costs, average print runs have increased dramatically so that those publishers who were successful in the evaluation and approval process have been compensated for lower gross margins by much higher volume. To this extent the educational system benefits from lower prices and successful publishers benefit from greater volume and higher turnover.

Third, publishers claim that the emphasis on price in the evaluation system has undermined quality. Those publishers in particular who fail to achieve approved title status have complained that the titles that were approved are inferior to the titles that were not approved. In reality, the new evaluation system, which was developed as a result of intensive consultation across the entire educational constituency in Uganda, including publishers, presents a far more comprehensive and

objective system of evaluation than any previous system. Minimum thresholds have been established to ensure that all selected books meet minimum standards. These minimum standards did not exist in the previous evaluation system. Thus, every title selected for evaluation must achieve a minimum 80% score on conformity to curriculum. They must achieve a minimum score of 60% of all available content and presentation marks. Finally, they must meet the minimum physical production standards that guarantee durability, long book life and maximum cost amortisation. The evaluation panels themselves include a high proportion of practising teachers from rural Districts. As a result, the evaluation probably puts a greater emphasis on simpler titles than on more sophisticated titles written by high quality practitioners in good urban schools in Kampala. A neutral, external professional author/inspector/subject specialist moderated each evaluation panel. These specialists may not have agreed with the marks awarded to the particular books (the moderators were not allowed to mark) but they certified the marks of each evaluation panel as being consistent, fair and the result of diligent professional consideration. To this extent, the books selected accurately meet genuine minimum standards and reflect the priorities of practising primary school teachers both in rural areas and Kampala. Many in the MoES feel that the textbooks selected in cycle 8 provide a more realistic approach to learning in Uganda than many of the titles from the previous list.

Fourth, a number of publishers, largely those publishers who failed to get titles approved, have complained that the evaluation was corrupt. It should be noted in this context that no other textbook evaluation has gone to such lengths to avoid undue commercial influence and corruption. The final selection of evaluators was delayed to the last moment to prevent publishers identifying the evaluators and influencing them. All material submitted for content and presentation evaluation was submitted anonymously so that no evaluator knew the authors or the publishers of any of the samples submitted for scrutiny. The evaluators were locked into a secure and secret location for the whole period of the evaluation and were guarded by police and members of the Special Branch. Each evaluation panel had an independent, neutral, non-Ugandan moderator whose job was to ensure the fairness, consistency and professionalism of the marking. Moderators checked all marks and the addition and extension of marks and signed off each individual mark sheet and each panel summary mark sheet. Reports on the content evaluation, on eligibility and responsiveness and on the assessment of technical specifications were made publicly available in a comprehensive evaluation report. As a result of complaints from publishers the Inspector General of Government (IGG) carried out an exhaustive investigation. The IGG noted a number of procedural errors but failed to discover any evidence of bias or corruption in the allocation of evaluation marks. The members of EFAG took a particular interest in the evaluation process and jointly signed a public declaration to the effect that they were perfectly satisfied with the conduct and impartiality of the evaluation. Despite all of the above, rumours and innuendo are still circulating in an attempt to undermine the validity of the process.

Finally, some publishers also claim that the process is rigged against local and regional publishers in favour of multinationals. In reality, the new evaluation and approval system resulted in a significant swing to the selection of locally published textbooks. Of the 14 textbook series approved under cycle 8, six were published by 100% owned Ugandan companies and 3 were published by 100% owned Kenyan companies. Multinational publishers published only five out of 14 titles. It is, perhaps, the blow to the 'amour propre' of the multinational publishers that has led to the protests, complaints and obstructiveness against the introduction of the new system.

3.3.8 Impact on the Local Book Trade

Reform has provided the opportunity for rapid Ugandan book trade development through the involvement of Ugandan companies in:

- publishing for other instructional materials tenders;
- the participation of booksellers in the Decentralised Instructional Materials Procurement Pilot Project;
- consolidation and distribution of centrally procured instructional materials for delivery to Districts.

In 1993 there were only two established educational publishing companies operating in Uganda and both were multinationals. The educational reform policies in Uganda represent a compelling case study in the rapid development of local publishing capacity. Thus, by 2002, there were 14 established educational publishing companies operating and active in Uganda, six of them 100% Ugandan owned. The highly competitive nature of the Ugandan bid process in Cycle 8 has enabled some of the Ugandan publishers to spread their wings and bid for textbook contracts in other COMESA countries and beyond. Some Ugandan publishers are now preparing bids for the new primary curriculum in Kenya and are also becoming active in Tanzania and Rwanda. In 1993, Uganda attracted bidders from other African countries. Eleven years later, Ugandan publishers are actively seeking export opportunities.

Bookselling has lagged behind publishing, but the introduction of local bids for consolidation and distribution services has provided turnover and opportunities for local booksellers to develop expertise and new skills. The decentralised procurement experiment has already created 19 new bookseller partnerships in rural areas and has assisted Kampala and District-level booksellers to combine forces and work together. There is clear evidence that a genuinely national network of professional, profitable retail booksellers covering all of Uganda is developing.

The new and definitive minimum production specifications provide Ugandan printers with clear and unequivocal standards that have to be met to participate in the supply of textbooks to schools. This provides a clear template for important decisions, which is the foundation of a local printing industry, equipped to suit the educational needs of the country. The GOU has resisted pressure to change educational standards to fit local printing capacity. Instead, it requires local printing to meet the needs of Uganda schools.

These developments have underpinned the growth of local authorship and illustration skills and created a flow of funds through local book trade companies that has provided the incentives to develop genuine skills and local capacity. The skills and the profits now accruing to local companies will help to support new publishing, which will in turn promote reading in society, building on and reinforcing the new levels of literacy produced through UPE.

The instructional material reform programme has also provided extensive training of teachers in the use of textbooks and non-book materials, as well as stock management of instructional materials. Modules for this training were designed and used for training all primary school teachers within one year.

The new specially designed order forms for use by schools have restricted them to the purchase of one title only for each subject and each grade. This ensures that schools buy in class sets, thereby giving wider textbook usage in class.

3.3.9   Conclusion

The instructional materials reforms in Uganda have squarely attacked the vested financial interests of publishers and others associated with the book industry. In addition, other forms of opposition to the reforms have been encountered, including political pressures, and the process has tested to the full the institutional structures of the government, in particular those concerned with justice, good governance and accountability. The challenges have also tested to the full the government's commitment to the reforms and the funding agencies' willingness and ability to make a concerted stand on critical issues.

The partnership between the funding agencies supporting education in the country and the government has also been tested to the extreme during the process of developing and implementing the IM reforms. The ability of the funding agencies to discuss openly with the government unpleasant issues related to the procurement of textbooks and to agree a way forward has been instrumental in achieving a successful reform. A major feature of this partnership has been the ability of the representatives of the funding agencies in Kampala to strike an appropriate balance between praise and criticism of the government. In particular, the capacity of the representatives of the funding agencies to master the detail of the IM reforms and to support the key stages of their introduction has assisted the government's efforts greatly.

A critical issue to note for other countries considering following Uganda's lead in this area is the extent to which staffing continuity, both within government institutions and funding agencies' representatives, has contributed to a consistent approach. Without such continuity it is difficult to see how knowledge of, familiarity with and commitment to the reforms could have been achieved. Bearing in mind the high level of powerful interests at work in this area, it is certain that a rapid turnover of staff during the implementation of the reforms would have proved an insurmountable barrier to success.

A further critical issue to note is that even with the benefits of the Uganda situation, the reforms proved incredibly difficult to develop and operationalise owing to (a) the opposition from certain powerful vested interests; (b) the lack of commitment from some underpaid and preoccupied civil servants; and (c) lack of sufficient resources to support key stages of implementation, such as training.

The instructional materials reforms implemented in Uganda since 1994 and particularly since 1999 have systematically and dramatically improved the efficiency of government expenditures in this area. However, the implementation of the reforms has been constrained at key times by various actors involved in the textbook industry.

It is clear that certain publishers have benefited enormously in Uganda for several years from a less than watertight procurement system and from a lack of government control over prices prior to the introduction of the competitive evaluation procedures in 2001. The introduction of

competitive evaluation combined with a limited number of approved titles raised the stakes in procurement to a very high level and created strong downward pressure on prices, with the result that certain unsuccessful publishers have taken complaints to the Inspector General of Government (IGG), thus causing a wasteful and time-consuming investigation of the process, despite the fact that the EFAG were unanimous in their support for the reforms, their outcomes and the transparency of the implementation process. The IGG investigation delayed the supply of new books for the new curriculum by one full school year.

The MoES's evaluation criteria have demonstrated that the three overwhelmingly important factors to be considered in this process are content evaluation (conformity to curriculum requirements, presentation, content), price and durability.

The MoES's success in putting these criteria at the centre of its evaluation and approval system and in ensuring that this system is watertight, well managed, open and transparent has brought enormous benefits to the children of Uganda. The government's expenditure on instructional materials is approximately 15% of the total annual primary education budget and achieving efficiency savings of 60% in this area, whilst at the same time improving quality and durability, is a remarkable feat.

The challenge of achieving more effective distribution and usage of instructional materials is still before the MoES. However, the decentralisation pilot seems to offer a promising solution to the problem of distributing instructional materials and the recent training of teachers in the management and use of instructional materials, combined with vastly improved pupil:textbook ratios, should contribute to improved utilisation.

3.4   Primary Teacher Development

3.4.1   The Challenge

The challenge has been, and still remains, to create affordable and effective mechanisms to ensure that primary school teachers in Uganda are committed, motivated and have the professional skills and ethics to provide quality teaching and learning for every student.

3.4.2   Background

Between 1997 and 2000 the GoU/MoES introduced three new policies which created great pressure on primary school teachers in Uganda. These were:

(i)   the introduction of UPE;
(ii)   decentralisation;
(iii)   the introduction of the 2000/2002 primary school curriculum.

In 1996 there were 81,500 primary school teachers on the payroll and 2.9 million students enrolled. Seven years later in 2003 there were 122,000 teachers on the payroll and 6.439 million students enrolled. During this period primary teacher numbers increased by 50% and

student enrolments by 120%. Many uncertified, untrained teachers were employed. Pupil:teacher ratios (PTR) increased dramatically, particularly in Primary Year 1 (P1) and Primary Year 2 (P2). Although there has been great progress in school and classroom construction it was inevitable that teachers, and particularly untrained and inexperienced teachers, had very severe difficulties coping with the flood of new enrolments in often less than conducive environments. Since 1997 average class sizes have decreased statistically from around 1:60 to a national average of 1:52 in 2004 compared to 1:37 in 1996 prior to UPE. High levels of teacher absenteeism significantly increase the statistical average class size. Thus, in the field work undertaken for the Primary Curriculum Review in 2004, the average class size according to school enrolment data was only 1:45, but in more than 40% of the classes observed there were more than 75 students present.

While the quantitative gains in the Ugandan education system have been impressive they have not kept pace with the need to ensure the quality of the learning outcomes. National (NAPE) test results show a deterioration in student performance since 1996. As a consequence of these poor results and, indeed, UPE itself, the role of primary teachers has come under intense scrutiny Demands for a critical review of the impact of UPE on both student and teacher performance have been numerous. Teachers are clearly essential to the success of the UPE programme and ways and means to increase their professionalism and motivation were considered to be a high priority in the years immediately before and after the introduction of UPE.

3.4.3   The Teacher Development and Management System (TDMS)

The first response to the stresses created by UPE was the priority given to the TDMS. TDMS had been launched originally in 1994 as a USAID funded project, but following UPE it became a central part of the Primary Education Reform Programme (PERP). It was intended to provide close professional support to every primary school in the country and particularly to the many untrained teachers recruited after UPE. It focussed specifically on the provision of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for untrained teachers, poorly trained teachers and initially well trained but now 'degenerated' teachers. TDMS was intended to be a permanent CPD delivery system. The twin objectives of the programme were:

(i)   to increase access for students and teachers to quality learning opportunities; and
(ii)   to improve school management and instructional quality.

TDMS created a delivery system based on 23 core Primary Teachers Colleges (PTCs), each of which was provided with an outreach department. Each core PTC was required to establish within its catchment area a network of Coordinating Centres (CCs) which were located at one school amongst a cluster of schools. Each of these had to have reasonable and convenient access to the CC. A permanent tutor called a Coordinating Centre Tutor (CCT), who was employed by the core PTC, was allocated to each CC. At present there are 540 CCs for approximately 9,500 primary schools, so the average cluster size is approximately eighteen schools. Clusters can be larger in urban areas where schools tend to be relatively close together and smaller in rural and/or remote areas where schools are more distant from each other and thus accessibility is more of a problem.

The TDMS originally designed four basic programmes to offer through the CC network. These were:

(i)   a three-year In-service Primary Teachers training Certificate aimed at providing a Grade 3 qualification to untrained teachers working within the system. The In-service Primary Teacher's Certificate is equivalent to the two year Primary Teacher's Certificate offered via PTCs as a residential course. Teachers study at home and at the CC attend face-to-face training during school vacations at the local PTC for 90 days during the three years;

(ii)   a certificate in Basic Management Skills in Primary Education for head teachers;

(iii) in-service refresher courses on a variety of subjects for primary teachers

(iv)   school-based volunteer community mobilisation in support of schools, teachers and pupils.

The launch of the programme required the expansion and rehabilitation of the core PTCs, including the construction of buildings to accommodate Outreach Departments, and the construction of CCs. The TDMS system was funded from 1998 by the GoU with support from the European Union, Ireland Aid, USAID and the Government of the Netherlands.

3.4.4   Implementation and Outputs

In May 2004 Ernst and Young were commissioned by the Auditor General to undertake a value for money audit at the completion of Phase 5 of the TDMS programme. The audit reported favourably on the outcomes of the In-service Primary Teacher's Certificate, which was considered to have drastically reduced the level of untrained teachers. It also reported favourably on the head teacher course in Basic Management Skills, which was reported to have not only improved school management and financial control but also improved the financial management skills of the CCTs. The Volunteer Community Mobilisation Programme was assessed as having reduced pupil absenteeism, increased community and parent participation in school activities and increased parents' provision for children's welfare and scholastic materials. The CPD courses were also considered to have been successful in terms of increasing teacher professionalism.

On the other hand some implementation problems were identified. These included:

• under-budgeting for operational costs in the CCs;
• poor accounting and financial management by both CCTs and the PTCs;
• delays in the release of CCT funding which seriously affected the delivery of programmes because training courses could not be delivered without funding;
• lack of budgets to cover equipment maintenance and replacement costs;
• non-use of some supplied equipment (few of the bicycles supplied were used because the CCTs wanted motorcycles and almost none of the human body model kits supplied to CCs had ever been used);
• poor security in many of the CCs, which had led to the theft of equipment;
• failure to insure equipment which meant that equipment that was stolen could not be replaced;
• few of the CCTs sat the examination for the award of the Outreach Tutor Training Certificate (OTTC), despite receiving intensive residential training in outreach work.

Most of the implementation problems are relatively minor but reflect common problems in educational management throughout the country and the failure to mainstream the programme effectively. It is difficult to see how CCTs can have an impact on improved school financial management when the audit report singles out poor financial management as a common feature in many CCs. Nevertheless, the auditors' report is generally positive about the professional activities of the CCTs and their achievements.

However, there are a number of caveats. The Review of Ireland Aid's Primary Education Reform Programme in the Rwenzori area (Burke, 2002) comments specifically on the almost universal prevalence of teacher-directed, chalk and talk, rote learning approaches in all the classes observed. The 2004 Curriculum Review Report also commented on the heavily teacher-directed methodologies common in all the 160 schools visited in more than twenty Districts where class observations took place. Among issues confirmed by the Curriculum Review Report were the following:

- teaching and learning in Ugandan classrooms continues to be dominated by teacher-directed delivery;
- most head teachers do not appear to have the skills and the professional knowledge to develop the skills of their teachers or to supervise their classroom practice;
- effective record-keeping by teachers of student marks and performance is rare;
- there are widespread variations in the assignment and marking of homework. Recent reports (GoU, 2003) indicate that 58% of pupils surveyed were not given homework and, of the 42% that did homework, only 54% confirmed that it was always or mostly marked. 24% said it was sometimes marked and 14% that it was either never given or never marked;
- head teacher and teacher attendance is still an issue of concern which has an adverse impact on educational quality. Staff absenteeism leaves students unsupervised and significantly reduces student:teacher contact time.

The perpetuation of the problems listed above in many schools suggests that, despite the good reports of TDMS, the actual impact of the Coordinating Centres and the work of the CCTs may be less than expected. Part of this problem may lie in the actual concept of the CCT. As a report for Irish Aid (Burke, 2002) stated:

A large number of the CCTs fulfil a critically important but well nigh impossible role within the TDMS service network. They are, in effect, one person teacher education "operations" or "road shows" with enormous demands on their time and requiring a spread of professional knowledge and expertise which no one individual could reasonably be expected to satisfactorily master. Most CCTs work six days a week and many also meet students or parent groups on Sundays. Since the PTC INSETT students attend PTCs during school holiday time the CCTs are also frequently on duty during these periods.

It has been obvious for some time that CCTs are called upon by different donors, NGOs and MoES departments to undertake a considerable volume of additional work simply because they are close to the schools and regularly in contact with head teachers, teachers, parents and the wider communities. They are constantly in demand to be involved in a wide range of additional activities which could detract from their core purpose.

There are also tensions between the role of the CCTs and the role of District Inspectors. CCTs are close to their schools and are often the first to be aware of problems. Their reporting line is through the core PTC to the Teacher Education Department in the MoES in Kampala and not through District Administration and then the DIS. Some District Education Officers have managed to establish good and cordial working relationships with the CCTs and find it useful to have eyes and ears on the ground in close contact with primary school realities. Equally, there are some Districts where working relationships are poor and where the District Inspectorate perceives the CCTs (and vice versa) to be competitive with their own role. One DIS recently commented that there used to be one inspectorate for primary schools in Uganda but that the advent of CCTs created a second level of "inspection" and the recent establishment of the ESA (discussed in the next section) has created a third level of inspection. This may be an issue in need of clarification and resolution.

The comments above should not be seen to suggest that the TDMS has failed. It is, perhaps, more accurate to suggest that the problems of teacher upgrading and the achievement of quality teaching and learning in the classroom are simply more complex than the provision of CPD through school clusters can be expected to resolve. Thus, while continuous professional development activities delivered via CCTs are an important contributory mechanism in teacher development, there are other issues that also need to be addressed if quality in the classroom is to be the norm rather than the exception.

3.4.5   Primary Teacher Development and Management Plan (PTDMP)

The PTDMP is the successor to the TDMS. However, while TDMS concentrated almost entirely on the development of in-service training (including the in-service Primary Teacher's Certificate) delivered via the CCTs, the PTDMP is concerned with wider issues. The plan has seven sections:

- Section 1 is concerned with continuous professional development and the issue of quality in schools;
- Section 2 is concerned with increasing the entry qualificiation to PTCs. Over the past few years the minimum PTC entry requirement has been increased from two 'O' Level passes to six 'O' Level passes, of which at least two must be in Mathematics or English. Unfortunately the failure rate of 40% is very high but the Teacher Education Department at Kyambogo University insists that this is necessary to ensure quality. One of the issues under review in this part of the plan is the possibility of inserting intensive pre-entry training in Mathemathics, English and Science as a possible way of increasing entry quality;
- Section 3 focuses on the teacher training programmes and in particular on the curriculum of the two year Primary Teacher's Certificate and the three year in-service Primary Teacher's Certificate. It is also concerned with the Diploma of Primary Education, which provides a Grade 5 qualification, and the Diploma in Teacher Education. The curricula for all of these courses are in urgent need of review and reform. Moreover, the current PTC curriculum has not yet been harmonised with the requirements of the 2000/2002 primary curriculum, although many of the topics of the individual PTC curriculum have been amended to some extent to align them with aspects of the new curriculum. However, there is widespread agreement that the current PTC curriculum provides insufficient support for the key skills of

lower primary teaching. Teachers receive inadequate instruction in the basic techniques and approaches to the teaching of reading, writing, listening, comprehension, speaking and basic mathematical skills. The recent ESA report on monitoring achievement at lower primary (October 2003) particularly notes widespread poor pedagogic practice in lower primary classes and the non-participatory nature of most of the classroom work. Within the current PTC curriculum the teaching of reading is not included in the Foundations of Education coursework which comprises 180 hours of a two year course. Specific pre-service instruction in the teaching of reading and writing in lower primary grades is covered in only four topics out of seventeen in the Language Education course. There is no coverage of the issues related to the simultaneous learning of English and local language in lower primary. Early childhood education is taught in depth at only two out of 47 PTCs in Uganda. Finally, the Grade 5 Diploma seems to be regarded almost entirely as a qualification intended for upper primary teachers. Thus, the inclusion of early childhood education as a course credit for a Grade 5 Diploma is currently specifically prohibited. The impact of this, of course, is to divert teachers with higher level qualifications away from lower primary teaching. Despite the recognition for some years (at least since 2000) that there is an urgent need to review and upgrade pre-service teacher training curricula, this is still an issue awaiting action in 2005;

- Section 4 is concerned with developing accountability, efficient inspection and supervision, strengthening the roles and functions of PTAs and SMCs and developing the role of the head teacher;
- Section 5 focuses on gender;
- Section 6 is concerned with the development of a career structure for primary teachers and the need to develop quality assurance within teacher education;
- Section 7 is concerned with a range of specialist teacher training issues in respect of special needs, non-formal education, ICT and the development of a teacher education research capacity within the MoES.

3.4.6   Discussion

Coordinating Centre Tutors are now an established part of the primary education landscape in Uganda. There is no doubt that schools value them and they are perceived to do good work. However, it is also true that significant improvement in approaches to classroom work and improvements in student performance remain elusive.

The emergence of the ESA to provide effective monitoring of the primary education system is an important development but it may have created a degree of confusion in the minds of the District-based inspectorate and the CCTs. While everyone is clear that the ESA has taken on the role of formal school inspection, there has been no clear definition of the relative role of the District Inspectorate and the CCTs in short inspections focussed on very specific issues which are often of considerable importance. Thus, the need to inspect regularly and frequently to ensure a higher level of head teacher and teacher attendance and avoid the doubling up of classes to create additional free time for teachers, plus the shortening of the school day, are important issues which are in danger of falling through the current policy net. The development of the concept and definition of short inspection is an important issue.

For whatever reasons, the failure to include the teaching of basic skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking has created serious problems in schools where it is now becoming clear that the majority of teachers operating in lower primary classes have little idea how to go about the task of teaching reading. In the past, Grade 1 and Grade 2 qualifications were always associated with lower primary teachers and it was in these courses that literacy and numeracy teaching skills were taught. It appears that, when Grade 1 and 2 qualifications were abandoned, the development of specific literacy and numeracy teaching skills disappeared as well. There is an urgent need to re-establish the teaching of these basic skills. This will require not just urgent changes to the PTC and diploma curricula but also the re-training of PTC lecturers and CCTs. Because many of the primary school teachers who qualified in the past ten years received no basic skills training in these critical areas, this will need to be an important focus for in-service work if the achievement of basic literacy is to be achieved. Closely associated with this is the need to introduce PTC course units in the main local languages currently used as languages of instruction in lower primary grades. Although there are PTCs which offer Luganda, Luo, Ateso and other main area languages as course units, there are many other languages currently used as LOIs where there is no language support at all. As the second section of this chapter made clear, the issue of literacy in local languages is an important on and there needs to be a planned and considered teacher training response to cope with it.

Since 1994 there has been a great deal of investment in teacher training and quality upgrading but in many ways it seems that there has been a failure to integrate properly both pre-service and in-service teacher training with other critical issues related to quality in the classroom. It is, perhaps, this failure to achieve integration which has meant that the considerable effort and investment in time and resources in TDMS have not achieved more obvious payback in terms of changes in classroom behaviour and improved student performance. It is difficult to understand, for example, why the PTC curricula have not been adjusted to the requirements of the 2000/2002 curriculum for a period of over five years. It is also difficult to understand how the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills could have been downgraded and "lost" in the Grade 3 curriculum.

3.4.7 Conclusion

It is possible to conclude that much has been achieved in recent years, although in spite of a considerable investment in teacher training, much remains to be done.

First, there are no policies for the recruitment and career development of teacher educators, and there is no clear career and professional route to becoming a teacher educator. Few teacher educators have recent and relevant primary school teaching experience. Many secondary school teacher trainers are in a similar situation.

Second, the teacher training curriculum needs further revision, if only to lessen a 'banking' view of education along with the perception that subject knowledge is more important than how to teach. Moreover, the teacher training curriculum is overloaded and too theoretical, and, whilst it may have some vertical coherence, horizontal coherence is lacking, so providing few opportunities for trainers and trainees to reinforce pedagogic ideas and concepts across subjects.

Third, there is evidence of low morale among teachers connected with perceived poor conditions of service, poor salaries, poor working conditions and poor prospects.

Fourth, it is a depressing fact that the impact of much pre-service teacher training (both in the developing and the developed world) is poor, and that it is perhaps unreasonable to expect too much too soon in Uganda (or anywhere else, for that matter). It has been argued that working habits acquired in the early stages of schooling by persons who become teachers and teacher trainers - namely, over- dependence on memorisation, a failure to identify symbols and to link them with their concrete manifestations, intellectual passivity and the uncritical acceptance of statements as facts - tend to stay with learners to some degree throughout their learning and teaching careers. Fullan (1999) argues that the hardest nut to crack is the learning core – changes in instructional practices and in the culture of teaching towards greater collaborative relationships among student teachers, teachers and other partners. Whilst teachers can and do acquire new ideas, techniques and knowledge, there is plenty of evidence to show that this happens only when information is not only relevant, but also seen to be relevant, and when the transfer of information occurs on an inter-personal and intra-personal basis. We also know that new ideas, changed practice and enriched knowledge can take root if the organisational framework in which it is being acquired is supportive. Alexander (2000) points out that imitative novice practice and transmission and rule-bound training which characterises much pre-service teacher training are associated with hierarchical models of management. Expert practice, and this is what inspectors, administrators, politicians and indeed development partners want, will not thrive except in the context of genuine collegiality. This means shifting the relationship between trainee and trainer, inspectors and the inspected. This is not going to be easy.

Finally, what reports on teacher training and improving the quality of teaching and learning in Uganda appear to be saying is that there has to be coherence and consistency within the system as a whole, between policy and administrative reform, and changes in teaching and learning. If one outstrips the other and the present dissonance persists, not only will the reforms be frustrated, it will make traditionally conducted training and research, and their parent institutions, increasingly irrelevant to the reform agenda and to teachers themselves. Stated differently, to restructure is not to re-culture.

3.5   Maintaining Education Standards

3.5.1   Background

Developing and maintaining education standards is a challenge across education systems throughout the world, whilst school inspection in one form or another is a common feature. Although the role and character of school inspection varies from country to country[22], the purpose is normally to identify strengths and weaknesses at school and wider institutional level so that schools may maintain effective school management systems, improve the quality of education they provide and raise the educational standards achieved by their pupils. In spite of the pivotal role school inspections can play in improving the quality of management, provision and output, in

---

[22] See in particular Alexander's (2000) five country study of primary education.

most developing countries the role of school inspections tends to be weak and ineffective and often subject to severe resource constraints. To inspect schools effectively requires regular school visits by trained and well resourced specialists, but in most developing countries only a relatively small share of education resources is allocated to support for schools (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991: 121).

The challenge in Uganda was how to address the need for an effective and institutionally and financially sustainable inspection and support service to teachers and schools.

3.5.2   Inspection in Uganda

A school inspection service has been in place in Uganda since the beginning of the country's education system under British colonial rule. At the time of the 1989 Education Commission, the Ugandan inspectorate comprised a primary and secondary schools inspectorate, an inspectorate for teacher education and training, and an inspectorate for technical and business education. Two other central non-inspection units came under the aegis of the Inspectorate, the Educational Radio and TV Unit (ERTV) and the Uganda Literature Bureau (ULB).

Until 1989, the inspection of primary schools was managed on a regional basis with District-based inspectors undertaking inspections in local schools. The majority of inspectors were resident in the Districts and in some cases were county-based. The secondary schools inspectorate was headquarters-based (MoES) and its inspectors were specialists in particular secondary school curriculum areas. Teacher training inspection was also headquarters-based in the MoES whilst these inspectors also had some responsibility for graduate (secondary) teacher training at the then Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo (ITEK)[23] - the apex teacher education institution in the country - although this was shared with the Department of Higher Education.

The Technical and Business inspectorate was responsible for technical schools, technical institutes and commercial colleges. It shared some of this responsibility with the Uganda Polytechnic, Kyambogo (UPK) and the National College of Business Studies, Nakawa.

Following the Education Commission of 1989, the government Education White Paper of 1992 and the implementation of the Local Government Act (1997), primary school inspectors became part of local education authority staff reporting via the District Education Officer (DEO) to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the District. It no longer had any direct link with the headquarters inspectorate in the MoES.

The 1989 Education Commission had identified a range of issues which affected the status, working practices and effectiveness of the inspectorate, chief of which was the marginalisation of the inspectorate at both headquarters level and within the Districts. As District administrators controlled and managed local resources, a conflict of interests arose which made it difficult for inspectors to monitor the outcomes of the work of the administrators impartially. The independence of the inspectorate was compromised.

The 1989 Education Commission also identified a number of other problems related to inspection. The Commissioner for Inspection had an extremely wide personnel - reporting

---

[23] ITEK was combined with Kyambogo Polytechnic (UPK) and became Kyambogo University in 2001.

responsibility and a span of control which made management at a national level difficult. Decentralisation was likely to compound further this management problem because responsibility for inspection of primary schools within Districts would no longer be a direct responsibility of the centre. In addition, the inspectorate (both at headquarters and at District level) was understaffed, with more than half the senior posts unfilled or occupied by junior officers acting in post. They lacked logistic support and a sufficient recurrent budget to cover operating costs. At an operational level, the inspectorate largely restricted itself to the inspection of schools and did not cover tertiary institutions effectively, nor did inspections cover the management and administration of education by MoES. A prime issue concerned resourcing: the inspectorate's available resources, and thereby its capability to play its proper role, compared unfavourably with those of the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB). Whilst the inspectorate was seen as providing the key link between the development and delivery of the curriculum and overall educational quality, it did not have the resources to fulfil this role. Moreover, inspectors were underpaid: salaries compared unfavourably with those of most teachers. Good teachers and lecturers were unlikely to be attracted into the inspectorate as long as there were inadequate career and salary prospects.

Most of these problems were exacerbated throughout the 1990s as the government delayed decisions on the future of the inspectorate. First, the inspectorate lost all direct links with locally-based primary inspectors and their programmes. Second, there were no mechanisms for providing a national picture of the state of primary education whilst the central inspectorate became even more severely understaffed with only 16 inspectors across all levels of education (this includes the two members of the senior administration, the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner). At local government level there was no earmarking of funds for District inspections or for staffing to undertake this work. By the end of the 1990s Uganda's inspection service was making very little contribution to the development of the education system at a time when the sector was undergoing the most dramatic reforms in the country's history.

3.5.3   The Approach

The Government White Paper (GWP) of 1992 which followed the Education Commission's Report of April 1989, proposed the establishment of an autonomous inspectorate that would:

- control the quality of education and provide guidance and supervision;
- ensure that schools maintain certain standards;
- act as a setter and monitor of such standards;
- ensure that education is relevant to the national goals of education and appropriate to the needs of Uganda;
- monitor the implementation of curricular-related decisions;
- identify and disseminate good practice;
- advise the MoES on educational theory and practice;
- provide professional development; and
- conduct research and evaluation.

The GWP envisaged a regional sub-structure of six to eight regions with a subject inspectorate in each. It also envisaged the inspectorate having a wider range of responsibility for monitoring

educational institutions. At one stage the government considered combining the Ugandan National Examinations Board (UNEB), the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), and the inspectorate, in a single Education Standards Agency (ESA) (Cabinet minute Min 39 CT, 1996). However, the final report on the post-constitutional reform restructuring of the MoES (document of 1998 by the Ministry of Public Service) recommended the establishment of an ESA to replace the inspectorate and proposed that District Inspectors should become part of the staff of the new Education Standards Agency when it was formed.

The creation of the ESA was finally approved by the Cabinet in 1998 (Cabinet Minutes: Min 112,118, 1998) where it was stated that the

"Inspectorate of Schools be divested into an Educational Standards Agency, to inspect, and recover costs for inspecting private schools and tertiary establishments."

The Cabinet further declared that:

- "autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies under the various Ministries must be cash-limited and self-accounting;
- autonomous bodies should account directly to the Auditor General and Parliament with copies to the line Ministries; and,
- all autonomous or semi-autonomous bodies should:
  - develop a medium term performance plan preferably on a five-year basis;
  - sign annual performance contracts with government against which the body's budget would be approved; and
  - be guided by government policies."

Notwithstanding these decisions, it was necessary for MoES to consider whether ESA should be a single body for inspection alone, or whether there should be one merged body or merged bodies incorporating some or all of the functions of inspection and monitoring of standards across education and training; the provision of an external examination system (currently UNEB); and the provision of curriculum advice and development (currently NCDC).

In examining these options, the MoES and its partners clarified the particular functions of the inspectorate and the need for its independence. These included the provision of independent evidence-based evaluations of the quality of education and training provided in institutions at all levels, and the provision of evaluation reports to provide informed policy advice aimed at improving the overall performance of the education system. In practical terms stakeholders agreed that Uganda needed a national body that could provide regular and independent inspection, which could evaluate and report inter alia on:

- the quality of education provided by institutions;
- the educational standards achieved in institutions;
- the institutional ethos and spiritual, moral, social and cultural leadership; and
- the effectiveness of the management of resources by the institutions and their management bodies.

The GoU added to this the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and the mechanisms for assessing and examining learning achievement.

Regarding the status of the ESA, the GoU considered the advantages and disadvantages of three options:

- *Option 1*. An independent autonomous agency;
- *Option 2*. A semi-autonomous agency /an executive agency;
- *Option 3*. An inspectorate as a section of the MoES.

Option 1 was ruled out because it would require a fully independent ESA to generate its own income which could lead to a divergence from the original core objectives of the ESA. The GoU was also concerned that an independent agency might not control and monitor its own operations and performance as effectively as the option adopted, a semi-autonomous executive agency. The government rejected Option 3 on the grounds that being part of the MoES would compromise the agency's independence.

As a semi-autonomous agency, the ESA would be responsible for its own plans, programme and priority setting. Critically, it would be able to inspect independent of direct Ministry or departmental influence and it would report directly to the Minister of Education and Sports. Its attractiveness lay in the fact that the Minister would be able to rely on the impartiality and accuracy of the reports received, and that the information it would provide would be independent and could provide a firm and informed basis for decision-making. The ESA's self-accounting status would also give it the flexibility to fund its own priorities and operations in accordance with agreed priorities. The semi-autonomous status had the potential of giving the ESA enhanced bargaining power with government, and, although funded by government, it could also charge user fees and attract other sources of funding.

An important issue in determining the structure of the ESA was the means by which a full range of expertise could be made available to the new Agency in addition to a core of permanent staff. Allied to this was how to incorporate the existing primary school inspectorate, which, after the 1997 Local Government Act, had been devolved to the Districts and reported via the DEO to the CAO. Among members of Parliament there were also competing demands. Some wanted direct reporting and a clear decoupling of local inspection from the District line management. Others saw value in maintaining an inspectorate presence in Districts and at county level. The final structure adopted for the ESA addressed both of these concerns.

Passing the ESA into law was considerably eased by a separate Executive Agencies Bill, which was being passed through parliament at the same time by the Ministry of Public Service (MoPS). This allowed ESA personnel to benefit from terms and conditions of service and a remuneration package more attractive than that previously enjoyed by inspectors. The ESA's staff establishment was finalised in 2001 and development and recurrent budgets were allocated to ESA from the beginning of financial year 2001-02. Uganda's education development partners supported the new agency with grants to assist with its establishment.

The ESA's work is set out in a five-year medium term plan incorporating a three-year rolling programme. National programmes for inspections, setting out numbers and types of inspections to be undertaken at each educational level, the types and frequencies of reports, together with the uses to be made of reports, are described on this three-year basis and confirmed annually. They are confirmed principally in the Annual Performance Contract between the ESA and the government.

The ESA began its operations from July 2001 by Cabinet decision although, as will be discussed, its early work to date was constrained by delays in staffing and inadequate resourcing.

3.5.4   The ESA Structure

Following detailed discussions with stakeholders, the government finally agreed on a structure for the ESA, which comprised a headquarters and four regional offices. It was clearly unfeasible to support a large inspection agency, incorporating all previous centrally and locally-based posts, within the existing resource envelope. Therefore it was decided that the ESA should have a core staff of professional inspectors who were permanent employees and that the National Inspection Programmes (NIP), especially primary school inspections, should be carried out using assessors recruited to the ESA on a temporary basis as needed. These assessors were to be called Associate Assessors (AAs) and would be recruited and trained by the ESA prior to each NIP. For the inspection of primary schools these AAs would be recruited from the inspection service in the Districts.

In promoting the use of AAs it was argued that the major advantages of using existing and future District staff as AAs, rather than building into the ESA a lower tier of staff solely concerned with primary school inspections, would be that it could significantly strengthen capacity building at District level by involving key members of staff from each District in centrally coordinated work. However, as will be discussed later, it is unclear whether primary schools have been any better or more comprehensively inspected as a result of the ESA. The institution of the ESA removed the need for sub-regional offices to employ additional staff beyond the sixteen that were required by regional offices to coordinate links with Districts and thereby reduced the overall potential salary bill for the ESA. Permanent ESA staff are funded almost wholly from the existing salary and running costs budget of the previous inspectorate department of the MoES.

The ESA structure is set out in Table 8:

Table 8:   The Education Standards Agency (ESA) Structure

Permanent Staff	Responsibilities	Posts	No.
Headquarters (Kampala)	• National Direction • National coordination and management of inspection • Coordination of advice to Ministers, MoES, • Capacity Building	Director of ESA Deputy Director Assistant Chief Inspectors Senior Inspectors	1 1 5 6
Regional Offices (Mpigi, Mbarara, Mbale and Gulu)	• Primary and pre-primary specialist inspection staff • Secondary specialist inspection staff • BTVET specialist inspection staff • Special Needs Education specialist inspection staff • Coordination of links with District monitoring and Inspection	Principal Inspector Senior Inspectors Inspectors per office	1 7 4

Attached Staff
  Associate
  Assessors
	• Primary school inspections
	• Secondary school inspections
	• BTVET inspections
	• Teacher Education inspections
		District Inspectors
		Experienced head teachers
		DIS
		NTC staff
		University staff
		Experienced PTC, NTC staff
		Experienced DIS, HTs
		Experienced experts in vocational education and training	

Recruitment to the ESA is carried out by the government's Education Service Commission through an open and competitive recruitment exercise. All appointees are required to have a track record of delivery at a high level and of managing effective organisations and projects, including their finances. The appointees also have to demonstrate knowledge of the operation of local and national government and an awareness of the important national role of education, especially as regards promoting national unity and promoting social and economic well being.

Objectives of the National Inspection Programme

The main objectives of the National Inspection Programme (NIP) over the first three years of ESA's life are:

• to institutionalise the NIP as a frequent and consistent programme of inspection for Uganda;
• to institutionalise the education quality and standards indicators system that has been developed for monitoring schools and institutions; and
• to institutionalise the use of Associate Assessors in major national inspection undertakings in monitoring the quality and standards of educational provision in the country.

The ESA planned to facilitate the inspection of at least a quarter of the country's schools and education institutions each year, on average, from August 2002. In this way all schools and education institutions would be inspected every three to four years. Allowing for the feedback and evaluation process between each major inspection programme, it is expected that each NIP will be completed in four-year cycles.

How the ESA has been Operationalised

The first step in making the ESA operational was to divest it of all functions, responsibilities and tasks that overlapped with other agencies or conflicted with its role of giving independent policy advice to the government. In the process, the roles of personnel such as the CCTs in primary schools were clarified, with CCTs being required to concentrate on providing staff development and professional support to teachers and schools. The CCT role then became complementary and supplementary to the role of the inspectors.

Having divested itself of everything except for monitoring and evaluating standards, the ESA initiated a number of operations which included:

- development, testing and refinement of quality indicators;
- organisation of NIP (including the development of instruments, procedures, inspection models, selection of AAs and training, implementation and reporting);
- developing costing and workload models for inspections;
- development of partnerships with other education institutions and agencies;
- establishment of the ESA database systems with links to the EMIS.

It also set about establishing a set of inspection procedures and inspection instruments. For each division of the ESA (Primary and Pre-primary; Secondary; BTVET; and Teacher Education) quality indicators (QIs) and inspection instruments were developed. While there were differences in approaches at each level, the basic model was intrinsically the same. All QIs were individually discussed, developed, modified and extensively reviewed by the ESA in consultation with key stakeholders. The indicators were grouped into three broad areas:

- the teaching and learning process – based on class/lecture room observations focusing on the teachers/tutors and students;
- management of schools and tutors – focusing on the performance of the head teacher/principal, and of the Board of Governors/School Management Committee/Governing Council;
- self-assessment and evaluation of school performance by the schools themselves in advance of the inspection activity;

Indicators

Examples of the QIs drawn from primary and secondary school instruments are set out in Table 9 below. There are equivalent ones for technical and vocational establishments and for teacher education institutions.

Table 9:   Examples of Education Standards Agency Quality Indicators

Category	Indicators
Primary Head Teachers' Management	i) Organisation of teaching and learning and the curriculum ii) Leadership and management iii) Monitoring and evaluation of teachers iv) Management of physical facilities and utilities v) Management of programmes for Guidance, Counselling and HIV/AIDS vi) Management of Special Needs and Disadvantaged Groups programmes.
Teaching and Learning Process (Primary/Secondary)	i) Quality of the teacher's planning process ii) Classroom learning environment iii) Teaching/learning process iv) Level of pupils' learning, understanding and attainment v) Quality of assessment of pupils' work vi) Meeting pupils' needs including gender differences vii) Teacher's personality and qualities (Secondary only).
Boards of Governors (Secondary)	i) Quality of management of Board of Governors' matters ii) Management and control of school finance iii) Management of discipline in the school iv) Management of school assets v) Management of school welfare and supervision.

Each Quality Indicator (QI) is rated on a four-point scale:

4 Very Good - major strengths;   3 Good - more strengths than weaknesses;

2 Poor - more weaknesses than strengths;   1 Unsatisfactory - major weaknesses.

The inspector/assessor is required to justify the rating by referring to evidence observed. Within each QI, critical themes provide prompts for inspectors and these have been stated in such a way that the inspection instruments containing the QIs cannot be readily used as checklists.
For example, QI "Quality of assessment of pupils' work" incorporates the following
basic themes:

• quality of assignments given during and after teaching;
• quality of assessment as part of the teaching process;
• pupils' progress in learning;
• pupils' knowledge and understanding;
• pupils' responsibility for their own learning.

The Inspection Approach

Key components of the inspection approach include a predetermined structure of QIs, the focus on evidence, an emphasis on reporting both strengths and weaknesses, and encouraging self-evaluation on the part of the institution and its head teacher or principal.

The components of an inspection visit include:

- inspectors operating at least in pairs, cross-checking findings;
- a set procedure with specific roles for each inspector;
- a 'profile' document completed in advance which encourages self-evaluation but also enables this to be cross-checked;
- a one-page checklist for selective cross-checking of 'claims' in the profile;
- inspection instruments for classroom observation and management, the core of each comprising the QIs and the identification of summary strengths, weaknesses and recommendations;
- a brief summary statement which is left with the head teacher or principal;
- a full report sent later, to a standard format.

The ESA inspectors are required to take the individual quality indicator ratings and develop a final evaluation for each school, based on the overall observed strengths or weaknesses. These will be discussed with the persons being observed and inspected. The main focus of the assessment will be on how the general school or institutional management, teaching and learning and the learning environment impact on the learner.

As stated earlier, the intended approach represents a major shift in the inspection of schools away from the previous focus on the institution and educational inputs, such as teachers, books and facilities. However, these areas are not neglected as they are covered in specific indicators and in the profile.

Also intended is a shift from the 'punitive' approach expected by teachers to a more supportive emphasis on the exemplification and promotion of good practice[24]. To facilitate this all QIs, instruments and procedures will be progressively refined and developed on an ongoing basis as each NIP is itself evaluated and as experience and expertise grows and is shared among ESA staff and AAs. Developing these approaches is not seen as a one-off exercise but as a progressive process of review and refinement, and of capacity building. As expertise develops there are specific refinements which will be introduced.

Associate Assessors

Prior to the establishment of the ESA, the vast majority of official visits to and inspections of primary schools concentrated on checking the basic physical and staffing provision elements of the government's "minimum standards" specification. Many were also "flying visits" aimed at dealing with an emergency. Under the old regime several schools would be "inspected" in one day. The government recognised that continuing with the prevailing programme of relatively superficial visits was unsatisfactory, both for the inspectors and the school system. Moreover, the pattern of inspections, if implemented effectively, would require over 300 inspectors working full time on nothing other than school visits. This could not be afforded within the existing resource envelope. AA personnel are drawn from the body of experienced inspectors, head teachers, teachers, lecturers, teacher educators, principals of institutions and other suitably

---

[24] There is a view which suggests that few teachers have ever seen inspection as "punitive" because they realise how little capacity the system has to follow-up. The claims for "supportive" inspections suffer from the same problem. There is insufficient staff in the ESA to follow-up and insufficient resourcing and expertise at the District level.

qualified and experienced professionals. They were co-opted and employed for specific agreed duties or inspection functions in support of and coordinated by the ESA inspectors.

It was decided to adopt the title Associate Assessor, rather than Associate Inspector, as this would distinguish them from inspectors and help to change teacher and school perceptions of them and their role. Most AAs are local government inspectors but they are used to inspect schools and institutions outside their own Districts, mainly to avoid a conflict of interest and to allow them to see what schools in other Districts are achieving. In particular, it was hoped that the use of Associate Assessors in inspections would bring a six-fold benefit to the system:

- first, it would extend the range of expertise in the inspection team without having to employ, within the ESA, personnel to cover every inspection eventuality;
- second, it would give the Associate Assessor and his or her host institution an insight into expected standards and thus provide both personal and institutional development benefits;
- third, in the early stages of increasing the size of the inspectorate, it would provide the means for employing probationary staff;
- fourth, by sharing the personnel costs with the participating institutions (AA's salary costs are borne by their employers for the period they are loaned to the ESA) the direct costs of inspection to the education budget would be reduced;
- fifth, the participation of a wider range of professionals in the NIP, would strengthen ownership of the education reform programme;
- finally, it would provide a means whereby inspections of institutions and authorities could be carried out where hitherto local resources and facilities had prevented such monitoring of standards for several years.

3.5.5 Discussion

The NIP (National Inspection Programme) task force conducted its first programme during July/August 2002. It covered over 1300 primary schools, 160 secondary schools and 100 vocational, technical and business establishments. About 240 Associate Assessors and related staff were used. Within weeks of completing the NIP July 2002 fieldwork, it was reported that there had been a significantly positive reaction to the "new ESA" and that the use of AAs had been positively received.[25]

The ESA pays the AAs' transport and subsistence allowances for the duration of their work on the NIP, but the AAs' salary costs are borne by their employers. There is hearsay evidence that there is significant competition to be selected as an AA, since there is a degree of financial as well as professional benefit, and this alone had raised the status of this work. From a management point of view, the use of AAs has allowed the ESA to plan its timetables flexibly around the pool of registered AAs.

---

[25] The "Associate Assessor model" implicit in the ESA's structure and mode of working was seen as key to allowing the ESA to operate a relatively lean staffing structure and to provide the capacity building in monitoring quality and provision of education across all sectors. While an exact equivalent had not been tried previously, there were close similarities to the system developed by HM Inspectors of Education in Scotland. The QI model also drew from work based upon the Scottish approach but employed elsewhere in Asia, Australasia, Africa and Europe.

At the ESR conference in September 2002, representatives of participants from institutions at all levels, members of MoES staff, DEOs, District Inspectors, head teachers, heads of agencies and principals of teacher education colleges were effusive in their praise for the approach. They commented in particular on the evidence-based decision-making; the partnership which was already evident between institutions, local authorities and ESA; and the powerful capacity building effect and future potential of the model.

Since 2002 the coverage of inspections has allowed for increasing attention to be given to aspects of learning and teaching and a greater emphasis on pupils' achievements. The ESA has identified the crisis in student performance and problems in teaching and learning. However, the problem remains in getting the system to address them. There is a sense that the ESA has improved the general overview of the system, but it has still to bring practical change to it and to encourage the MoES to build on the best of existing practice and to develop and improve the capacity of teachers and schools. Evidence to date suggests that to all practical purposes the old District inspection regime as described above has carried on pretty much unchanged by the ESA with visits still relatively short (half or full day), using two assessors/inspectors. So whilst the ESA has added another level of national standards evaluation, it has not solved the day-by-day problems of making certain that teachers turn up and teach a full day and, moreover, to focus on teaching quality and pupil learning and performance. The issue of follow-up to ensure improvements still has to be addressed and resolved.

It is too early to judge whether the ESA processes are having any significant impact on teaching quality and pupil learning. The 2003 and 2004 ESR reports seem to suggest that the ESA system is taking time to bed down. It has been bedevilled by delays in making appointments and under-resourcing. Nonetheless, AAs have been a normal part of the inspections carried out by ESA and in many cases have constituted the majority of team members. They are being engaged by the ESA for set periods of time each year agreed with the AAs' employers, and they are being used both in the fieldwork and in the writing up of reports, all of which is adding to a growth in capacity.

It is also probably too early to assess how working relationships between the ESA national inspection programmes using AAs, and the daily/weekly inspections of primary schools undertaken by the District inspectorate staff are working out. Bukenya (MoES, 2005)[26] suggests that the impact of inspection, whether local or national, has been slow to raise educational standards. In a paper presented at a national workshop to discuss educational standards he points clearly to declines in pupil achievement in English literacy and numeracy over the past five years, and by implication to the lack of adequate support to teachers and schools. Moreover, at the same workshop, doubts were expressed over the use and effectiveness of the use of the inspection indicators.

---

[26] This is a significant paper by the Secretary of the Ugandan National Examinations Board which assessed pupils' achievement in English Literacy and Numeracy and compared results of tests in 2003 with those undertaken in 1999. A sample of 201 schools was randomly selected from all Districts in Uganda with the exception of some in the north-east where there is insecurity. Apart from declines at P6 level in performance, of additional interest were the differences in performance between children at school in Kampala and those in other areas, that textbooks are available in most schools but are not being maximally used, that girls at P6 are performing far poorer than boys in numeracy and that there is a range of other gender issues which needs to be addressed to improve the performance of girls overall.

Concerns had also been expressed in this regard at the November, 2004 ESR. It was pointed out that difficulties had arisen because of a lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities and because necessary local funding for school level support was not being made available. When the USAID funded primary school Teacher Development and Management System (TDMS) began implementation in 1992, 675 CCTs were appointed, each with responsibility for between fifteen and twenty schools. In turn they reported to designated core Primary Teacher Colleges (PTC). When a teacher reported a problem to a CCT it was transmitted to the core PTC who in turn reported it to the Teacher Education Department (TED) of the MOES. An alternative system had been created, one that bypassed the AA and the county and District inspectors of schools (CIS and DIS) and was effectively compromising the work of the ESA instead of complementing it. Relations between CISs, DISs and PTCs frequently became strained. The current director of the ESA argued for a clear definition of different roles and responsibilities and in her report to the 2004 review she proposed that the ESA should concern itself with national level retrospective inspections of performance, leaving the DIS, CIS responsible for monitoring and supervision of school management and operations. This would leave CCTs to provide specific pedagogic support for teachers and to report on issues to CISs and DISs. Resolving the resourcing issues remains a challenge, however.

The ESA is also potentially vulnerable to political pressure and may be unwilling/unable to report independently on the state of the education system, although there is no evidence of this to date, mainly because its reporting system has yet to be tested. Whilst there have been some signs of reaction from relevant departments within the MoES to issues highlighted by the ESA, it is still too early to judge the extent to which the ESA will be able to meet its mandate. Its success will be judged ultimately not on the number of schools inspected or visited, but on the quality and effect of its reports on improving the standard of educational provision across Uganda.

Institutionally, the ESA has a heavy dependence on government for funding and this has limited its autonomy to take key decisions and actions. For example, the director of the ESA is unable to hire and fire staff and the Education Services Commission makes all the ESA's appointments, including that of the director. This has already caused significant delays in staffing the agency. Nonetheless, external assessment[27] suggests that the ESA has made a good start but that it has some way to go.

3.5.6   Quality Measurement and Assurance

Throughout much of the ESA documentation, the Education Sector Strategic Plan (2004-2015) and various MoES reports (MoES, 2005), the issue of quality is never far below the surface. Concern about quality quite rightly stresses the need to ensure value for money is achieved and to optimise the social and private returns of education.

MoES's reports on improving the quality of primary education stress that the concept of quality is problematic, both in trying to arrive at an agreed definition, as well as in trying to agree upon what might best facilitate it. For example, the ESA believes that teacher performance is the critical issue whereas there is strong support for a major re-assessment of current curricula,

---

[27] Annual Joint ESRs, 2003 and 2004.

syllabuses and learning objectives as the starting point for improved performance. MoES uses the following as its core indicators of quality:

- enrolment figures;
- the number of classrooms constructed;
- examination performance;
- the number of capacity training inputs provided;
- the disbursement of capitation and the SFG.

Whilst these are important from a policy and management perspective, they are insufficient to address the more fundamental qualitative dimensions of quality improvement which affect the attitudinal and relational areas of quality. These are critical to a change of culture and mindset.

More specifically, the marked increase in enrolment figures owes more to changes in policy on school charges than it does to any systemic reforms. Classroom construction is visible and provides tangible evidence of the GoU's commitment to UPE whilst the provision of higher quality classrooms has been a key variable in engendering higher morale amongst teachers and community pride in the reform process and commitment to it.

The successful disbursement of capitation and development funding to Districts confirms the effectiveness of disbursement processes and modalities from Treasury to Districts. Moreover, the implementation of the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) has played a significant role in this, as has the MoFPED's adoption of the MTEF budgeting process. Disbursement from District level to schools is problematic, however, and the ESA's regional reports contain within them a number of cases where District officials have failed to disburse objectively in an open, transparent manner, ignoring the wishes of school communities. Examination performance shows little improvement as yet.

Quality is also about process and the nature of the transactions involved, whether these are at central Ministry level, District and community level or classroom level. What seems to be absent in much of the documentation is any analysis of the extent to which definitions of quality have been culturally accommodated across the sector. As Alexander (2000), Senge (2000), Fullan (1991), Lewin (2003) and many others have shown, developing a culture which sees quality as an integral part of all activity takes time, especially as definitions of quality change as expectations change. Achieving an optimum balance between input, process and output measures is a complex equation, therefore.

Assessing systemic quality remains difficult as it is evident that the capacity to monitor inputs designed to improve quality within ESIP is weak at all levels but especially at local government level. Regional/District reports point to a particular concern over:

- monitoring the quality of construction – there were too many allegations of improper conduct in respect to building procurement and the failure to meet national building specifications to ignore them;
- instituting action against persons involved;
- ensuring due process is observed in establishing priorities;

- effecting appropriate synergies to achieve greater value for money;
- ensuring cohesion between planning and implementation to achieve the effective utilisation of resources.

Improving the quality of a child's educational experience has received most critical comment from a range of stakeholders, including NGOs and the donor community, who have been quick to remind MoES that improved levels of retention are contingent upon improved quality in teaching and learning, and the introduction of a more relevant curriculum. It would seem that present modalities for capacity building for quality enhancement may be appropriate for the dissemination of technical information, but 'batch processing' and large lecture type presentations are not necessarily the most efficient way of disseminating information. For quality improvement, however, such mass workshop methods of delivery are inappropriate and will continue to reinforce a directive culture. Moreover, 'top down' planning and delivery seldom provide the anticipated quality outputs and transfer of training.

The National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) report (Bukenya, MoES, 2005) and the MoES's proposed targets for English literacy and numeracy in primary schools (Byamugisha, MoES, 2005) paint disappointing statistics, and leave critics of the MoES asking why the substantial investments in primary education over the past five years have not had greater impact on teaching quality and pupil performance. Of particular concern is that numeracy levels at P6 level have declined from 46% and 36% respectively for boys and girls in 1999 to 26% and 15% respectively in 2003. English literacy levels have shown a small increase of between four and ten percentage points over the same period, but remain low with just over 20% of pupils at P6 regarded as proficient. MoES hopes to achieve a target 75% reaching desired proficiency levels in literacy and numeracy by 2007, and 90% by 2011. At this stage, and without directly addressing teacher performance as is recommended by the 2004 Auditor General's report, these targets seem overly optimistic.

The creation of a supportive in-service school-based environment remains critical, and the gains from the TDMS programme still have to be effectively institutionalised. Nonetheless, the MoES hope that actions designed to address the quality of teaching and learning will receive greater attention from parents in future, especially once schools have met minimum standards of textbook provision. This will inevitably shift the focus to other related issues, most notably progress on curriculum reform and examination reform.

The ESA is a new agency, yet within its first two years of operation it has begun to demonstrate that it is able to ensure that schools can be inspected in depth and visited at least once each year. There is no reason to believe that the ESA will not prove itself an effective means of improving inspection within sustainable budgets and as a potential means for improving the quality of each school visit. This, however, will depend on adequate resourcing especially as the challenge is to go beyond the present form of checking minimum standards, indeed inspection alone, and to widen the ESA's mandate to hold professional development providers - and government who resource it - to account.

It is evident that simply to achieve the present aims of the ESA requires sufficient numbers of inspectors who are appropriately qualified and experienced and able to inspect and report effectively on organisation and management, basic provision, the quality of learning and teaching and the level of pupils' achievements. This in turn requires a coherent and on-going programme of continuing professional development for inspectors and teachers.

Chapter 4: Funding Access and Equity in Primary Education

4.1 The Challenge

The challenge that had to be addressed was how to fund the provision of fee-free primary education to all school age children in the population, upgrade school facilities, improve school and community capacity to manage their own affairs and enhance the quality of primary education.

Two main modalities were developed and employed:

• UPE Capitation Grant;
• School Facilities Grant (SFG).

4.2 Funding Primary Education

4.2.1 The Background

From the time that the Amin regime was overthrown, the GoU recognised the importance of primary education as a pre-requisite for developing the human resource base required to meet the challenges of economic and social development. A major constraint to achieving UPE prior to 1997 was that primary education was neither free nor compulsory. In 1996, for example, household expenditure on education was nearly twice the amount provided through the public budget (Ablo and Reinikka, 1998: 3). The impact of user fees on enrolments and primary school attendance was significantly adverse. Those groups needing the education most, the poor, were unable to access it owing to their inability to share costs with the GoU. However, as the importance of primary education for development became more and more obvious in the country, it became clear that an alternative to cost sharing had to be found in order to ensure the achievement of UPE.

Following the presidential endorsement of the UPE policy in 1996, the GoU increased the education budget, and primary education's share of this, in order to realise the goal of universal primary education. The education budget had been increasing steadily since 1990/91, fuelled mostly by the fast rate of economic growth that the country was experiencing. By financial year 1997/98, education's share of GoU's total expenditures had risen to 26.2% and the proportion of the education budget spent on primary education had risen to over 60%. These levels have been maintained for the past seven years in spite of a slight slow down in economic growth rates recently.

The GoU was able to increase resources to primary education within the education budget largely because of its successful reform of higher education financing. In the early to mid 1990s the GoU introduced alternative higher education financing strategies, new higher education management structures and demand-driven approaches to tertiary education. The essence of the reforms was to transfer the main burden of higher education costs from the GoU to the users. The impact of these reforms was dramatic and brought about a reduction in per capita costs of tertiary education to the GoU. The high rates of return to higher education were sufficient to secure the support of most stakeholders for the restructuring of tertiary education financing. The GoU continued to support 4,000 students in higher education (approximately 20% of the total) through scholarships targeted on the students who performed best in school examinations: that

is, merit-based criteria. These criteria are currently being reviewed by the GoU with a view to targeting the scholarships on the poorest students.

As Table 10 illustrates, expenditures on primary education have averaged around 66% of the total education budget over the past six years. The average is actually closer to 75% when account is taken of primary education's proportionate share of MoES HQ general overhead expenditure over this period. Moreover, the composition of GoU expenditures on primary education have prioritised quality-improving inputs, such as capitation grants, basic learning materials, teacher training and school facilities, to the extent that non-wage expenditure on primary education has averaged nearly 40% of total education expenditures over the same period.

Table 10: Percentage of Education Sector Expenditure Spent/Budgeted for Primary Sub-sector[28]

Year	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07
%age	65.6%	68.5%	71.5%	69.4%	66.5%	68.4%	66.2%	66.3%	66.2%

The present principal cost components of the primary education budget are:

• teacher salaries, which are paid by Districts through transfers to individual teacher accounts;
• instructional materials, expenditure for which is through tightly controlled systems of local selection, central procurement and local distribution;
• school level operational costs, which are taken out of conditional grants to schools through direct transfer to them from Districts;
• continued teacher professional development, which is managed by MoES and can be subject to a high level of reallocation to other priorities;
• pre-service teacher education development, which is managed by MoES;
• costs associated with assessment and curriculum review. Most funds are controlled by independent institutions such as the UNEB and the ESA. District and sub-county supervision costs are covered by local authority budgets;
• management costs, largely at headquarter level.

4.2.2   Decentralised Context

Political and administrative decentralisation has been a major objective of the NRM and GoU since it came to power in 1986[29], and in 1997 led to the establishment of a political and administrative structure called the Local Council (LC) system. It has a five-tier structure.[30] According to the Local Government Act of 1997, the five levels of councils are entrusted with

---

[28] Study on Financial Tracking and Costs undertaken by Ian Smith for the Royal Netherlands Embassy, November, 2004.
[29] Uganda's decentralisation process involves a complex mix of deconcentration and devolution. The essential point to note is that under a deconcentrated model of decentralisation, power and political practice are deconcentrated to regions and Districts. Political structures and practices, including horizontal and vertical relationships at the centre, are replicated at the periphery. Under devolution, however, power is devolved to the people, to communities themselves to decide upon their own priorities, spending and development patterns. Explicit and overt central planning ends and a "demand" as distinct to a "supply" culture is developed, responsive to local needs and priorities or some combination thereof. The policy function is usually the only function retained centrally.
[30] LC1 at the village level, LC2 at parish level, LC3 at sub-county level, LC4 at municipal level and LC5 at the district level.

decision-making power and authority over wide-ranging local matters including budgeting and raising local revenues (Suzuki, 2002: 244). Decentralisation is seen as a crucial element for achieving effective educational change through the delegation of budgetary and management responsibility. It is argued that devolved power and responsibility with locally accountable systems of governance can maximise quality and allow for a locally relevant poverty focus to be achieved through local community participation. The transfer of decision-making authority to plan, operate/implement, monitor and allocate/use resources is seen as a key element of this process. In practice, it has taken a number of different forms.

Decentralisation is also seen as a means of enhancing service delivery, providing greater accountability and increasing community participation in decision-making and political stability. The strong belief in the GoU is that decentralisation promotes government which is closer and therefore more responsive to local needs and interests, and, in turn, produces systems of governance that are more effective.

4.3   UPE Capitation Grant

4.3.1   The Approach[31]

Steps taken by the GoU to provide fee-free education to all primary school age children in the population began with the recognition of both the importance of primary education for social and economic development and the problems of access caused by cost sharing. This led in 1996 to the technical and political endorsement of a policy aimed at providing fee-free primary education to four children of school age per family. With UPE, the requirement of parents to pay a 50% contribution to the school fees of their children was removed and parental Parent Teacher Association (PTA) contributions to the running costs of primary schools were abolished.

The UPE policy does not make primary education free, however. There is still a financial requirement on families to provide their children with writing materials, uniforms and lunches. The GoU has taken upon itself the costs of tuition fees and basic school operational costs, at an annual rate of Ush 5,000 per pupil for classes P1 to P3 and Ush 8,100 per pupil for classes P4 to P7. These expenditures are in addition to the contribution that GoU was already making in terms of the payment of teachers' salaries, provision of instructional materials, construction of school facilities and, in some cases, the construction of teachers' houses.

Tuition fees are paid to schools by the GoU in the form of a capitation grant in nine monthly payments each school year. To calculate the monthly capitation grant for a school, the following formula is used:

(No. of UPE children in P1-P3xUsh 555.50) + (No. of UPE children in P4-P7xUsh 900), where Ush 555.50 and Ush 900 are the capitation grants per child per month for P1 to P3 and P4 to P7 respectively.

---

[31] The approach described is drawn from the MoES UPE Capitation Grant: Planning and Implementation General Guidelines for Districts and Urban Councils, July 2001.

The UPE capitation grant has two objectives:

- increasing equitable access to basic education by removing the burden of school fees from the parents; and
- enhancing the quality of primary education by providing schools with the basic operational resources necessary to run the school and support teaching and learning.

The UPE capitation funds are channelled by the central GoU to the local governments (76 Districts and 12 Municipalities) in the form of a conditional grant. It has to be utilised by the District/Municipal local governments strictly in accordance with guidelines that have been drawn up by the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) in coordination with the MoES. A planning and budgeting cycle is in operation and the planning and implementation of the UPE conditional grant is managed within this framework.

4.3.2   Planning and Budgeting

The planning and budgeting phase of the UPE capitation grant implementation runs from November to June and includes the following steps.

(i)   The MoES communicates the UPE District/Municipality budget ceilings in November, based on analysis of the latest Annual School Census (ASC).

(ii)   Between January and April, Districts/Municipalities prepare a UPE annual Work Plan and Budget (in accordance with a standard format) showing amounts to be sent to each sub-county within the budget ceilings provided.

(iii)   The District/Municipality Annual UPE Work Plan and Budget is based on the consolidated sub-county/divisional annual UPE Work Plan and Budget prepared by schools and submitted through the Local Council.

(iv)   The District/Municipality Annual UPE Work Plan and Budget together with a signed Letter of Understanding are required by MoES/MoFPED before the District/Municipality can access the first release of UPE funding in July each year (the beginning of the financial year in Uganda).

(v)   The District/Municipal Annual UPE Work Plans and Budgets have to be consistent with the UPE planning and implementation guidelines and must be realistic and achievable. Districts are able to adjust their work plans according to the budget ceilings communicated by the MoES.

(vi)   The annual UPE Work Plans and Budgets are then submitted to MoES by the Districts/Municipalities for analysis and approval by the end of April. UPE releases are linked directly to the District Annual Work Plan and Budget approved by the MoES.

(vii)   Sub-county/divisional local government levels are directly involved in the process of verifying pupil enrolments in primary schools.

(Source: UPE Capitation Grant: Planning and Implementation Guidelines for District and Urban Councils, July 2001. MoES: 3.)

4.3.3   Eligible School Expenditures

School expenditures that are eligible for UPE grant financing under the GoU's guidelines include:

- extra instructional/ scholastic materials (additional textbooks and teachers' guides, supplementary books or readers, teacher reference books, syllabi, lesson preparation books, ball pens, markers, teaching aids, slates, chalks, blackboards, teachers' tables and chairs, maps, wall charts, globes, paper, duplicating paper);
- co-curricular activities (e.g. games, sports, music, dance, drama, art and crafts and clubs);
- management of the school (registers, record books, wall clocks, staplers, file covers/folders, manila cards, cumulative cards, paper and ink, ledger books, vote books, banking books, stationery, work tools, brooms, consumable items such as chalk, stationery, replacement of school furniture, etc.);
- administration (imprest, hire of transport, allowances on official travel, electricity, water, telephones, posters, head teachers' official travel, emergencies; e.g. sicknesses, etc.).

Schools may prioritise the utilisation of the UPE grant within the above expenditure categories and within the following limitations[32]:

(a)   Extra Instructional/Scholastic Materials will be at least **50%**.
(b)   Co-curricular activities will be at least **30%**.
(c)   School management will be at least **15%**.
(d)   Administration will not exceed **5%** of the total UPE capitation grant releases.

(Source: UPE Capitation Grant: Planning and Implementation Guidelines for District and Urban Councils, July 2001. MoES: 4.)

4.3.4   Conditions of Releases

The release of UPE grants to the Districts and Municipalities is conditional on the submission to MoES of:

- annual Work Plan/Budget;
- a signed Letter of Understanding between the District and the Ministry;
- quarterly Progress Report;
- quarterly Reports on Site Monitoring Visits;
- cumulative Progress Report;
- quarterly Work Plan/Budget Request.

Districts prepare annual UPE Work Plans and Budgets and submit them to the MoES for approval prior to the commencement of each new financial year. These consolidated plans are based on consolidated sub-county/divisional Annual Work Plans and Budgets which are prepared by District/Municipal local governments. District/Municipal Annual UPE Work Plans and Budgets are consolidated School Work Plans and Budgets which have been formulated by the School Finance Committee working jointly with the head teacher. School plans have to be

---

[32] The proportions for each category were amended by MoES in 2001 as follows (a) at least **35%**; (b) at least **20%**; (c) at least **15%**; and (d) not more than **10%**.

approved by the School Management Committee. Schools are also required to submit copies of the minutes of relevant meetings to the District/Municipal Education Officer through sub-county/divisional local governments.

The MoES, Districts/Municipalities and schools are required to comply with various conditions governing transparency and accountability in the utilisation of UPE grants. The MoES and the Districts/Municipalities are also required to sign a Letter of Understanding prior to the commencement of the financial year expressing the commitment of both parties to implementing the UPE work plan.

4.3.5   Reporting

Reporting on the utilisation of UPE grants is as follows:

(i)   School to District Education Officer (DEO)/Municipal Education Officer (MEO) - within one week of the close of a school quarter.
(ii)   DEO/MEO to Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)/Town Clerk (TC) - within three weeks of the close of the quarter.
(iii)   CAO/TC to Permanent Secretary (PS), MoES – on or before the last working day of the first month after the close of the quarter.

4.3.6   Management of Releases

Central GoU UPE releases are managed as follows:

a)   The PS/MoES advises PS/Secretary to the Treasury (ST)/MoFPED on releases for the UPE grants to the Districts/Municipalities depending on the:
   (i)   receipt of a satisfactory District/Municipal Annual UPE Work Plan;
   (ii)   signing of a Letter of Understanding between the District/Municipal Local governments and the MoES;
   (iii)   submission of quarterly and cumulative progress reports as well as quarterly Work Plans and Budget requests.

b)   Releases are made twice in every quarter[33]:
   (i)   One ninth (1/9th) of the annual budget of UPE grant is released in the first month of the quarter to cover implementation during the first month when the District is compiling the required reports for submission to MoES.
   (ii)   The balance for the quarter is released in the second month of the quarter.

c)   Where the release is less than that requested by the District, the MoES provides reasons for this.

Local governments' financial management responsibilities are as follows:
   (i)   District local governments are responsible for controlling the District UPE Bank Account, receiving the UPE conditional grant transfers from central GoU and making and accounting for all UPE grant payments to schools.

---

[33] In the first quarter, due to Vote on Account period, no more than a quarter of the annual budget can be requested or released.

(ii)   The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)/TC is accountable for the safe keeping and proper expenditure of all UPE grants to the District/ Municipality.

4.3.7   Local Governments: UPE Accounting and Reporting

Standard accounting and reporting procedures for all other conditional grants from the central GoU to Districts/Municipalities are applied in respect of the UPE grant. These procedures include:

- the District/Municipality opens a dedicated non-interest bearing UPE Bank account into which the UPE conditional grant releases are credited and from which payments to schools are debited;
- UPE conditional grant transfers from central GoU to the Districts/Municipalities are first paid into one account, "the GoU Grants Collection Account", and then transferred by direct bank transfer or cheque, to the UPE Bank Account;
- the District/Municipality local governments release the UPE grant to schools within the first week of receipt of the funds from the centre;
- no balances are retained on any UPE release without express written authority from the MoES.

These financial and accounting procedures for UPE comply with regulations laid down by the relevant authorities for GoU financial transactions.[34] The District/Municipality operates a UPE Bank Account whose books of account must be closed at the end of the financial year. Any balances on this account that remain unspent after the close of the financial year must be remitted back to the central Treasury.

In addition to the normal quarterly submissions following the close of the financial year (the fourth quarter progress report, the fourth quarter cumulative progress report); the District/Municipality is required to submit to the MoES by the last working day of July the following final progress reports:

- a copy of the final UPE Bank Statement. (This must be reconciled with the cash book and must be consistent with the PAF cumulative progress report);
- a cheque returning any unspent balances left on account to the Treasury, addressed to the PS/ST/MoFPED.

Failure by the Districts/Municipalities to comply with the above requirements automatically results in the withholding of further UPE releases to the non-compliant Districts/Municipalities by central GoU.

Districts/Municipalities therefore have to ensure that the UPE Bank Account in the District/ Municipality is reconciled every month, and that monthly accountability statements are submitted to the District/Municipality Executive Committee and MoFPED and copied to MoES.

---

[34] The Public Finance Act 1964, Treasury Accounting Instructions, the Local Government Financial and Accounting Regulations.

4.3.8   Local Government Requests for Release of Funds

In order to receive releases of UPE Grant funds the Districts/Municipalities have to submit to MoES, with copies to MoFPED, the following three reports on or before the last working day of the month after the close of each quarter:

1. Quarterly Progress Report: This covers:

    *   the budget planned for the previous quarter for each sub-county;
    *   the actual budget releases for the previous quarter for each sub-county;
    *   the variation between the planned budget and actual budget releases for the previous quarter for each sub-county;
    *   the funds spent/committed for the previous quarter according to the eligible expenditure categories for each sub-county;
    *   field monitoring and supervision visits by the District Inspector of Schools for each sub-county.

2. Cumulative Progress Report: This covers cumulative progress in activities over the financial year in respect of the planned annual budget for each sub-county as follows:

    *   the total budget releases to-date for each sub-county;
    *   total releases to date as a percentage of the planned annual budget for each sub-county;
    *   the funds spent/committed to date according to the eligible expenditure categories for each sub-county;
    *   the variation between the actual expenditures to date and actual releases to date for each sub-county.

3. Quarterly Work Plan and Budget Request: This covers the planned budget taking into account unspent UPE funds on account.

Prior to the submission to the MoES, the above three District/Municipality submissions to the centre are then approved by:

    *   the District Chairperson/ Mayor;
    *   the District/Municipality Secretary for Education;
    *   the Chairperson of the District Public Accounts Committee;
    *   the Chief Internal Auditor;
    *   the Resident District Commissioner.

4.3.9   Financial Management at Schools

A school UPE bank account is opened and administered by the School Management Committee (SMC) with the chairperson and head teacher and one other person being the required signatories. Payments received from the District/Municipality are made through this account.

The essential accounting record that is required is the UPE cash book which supports transactions on the school bank account. The bank account statement is reconciled to the cash

book on a regular basis. Sub-accountants from the sub-county administration are required to assist SMCs in setting up and operating cash books as well as when they are preparing reconciliation statements.

4.3.10 Mandatory Public Notices

By law, MoES is required to publish in the public media on a quarterly basis the UPE grant transferred to each District /Municipality as well as the formula applied. In addition, Districts/Municipalities must publicly display amounts received from the centre in respect of:

- the UPE capitation grant, full list of schools receiving the grant as well as the formula applied;
- the total teachers' salaries as well as the number of teachers for each school;
- a financial summary, updated enrolment and budgetary requests: i.e. copy of reports from the District to MoES.

This information has to be displayed on the notice board of the District/Municipality Administration Headquarters, District Council Halls, Sub-county Headquarters and schools.

In addition, schools must publicly display:

- pupil enrolment and daily attendance by class;
- school budgets and expenditures, UPE Capitation grant received from the District against school enrolment;
- total teachers' salaries received from the District as well as the names of teachers in the school;
- amounts received from non-UPE pupils as well as extra charges in case of Municipality schools which collect fees;
- a copy of the school quarterly report to the DEO.

4.3.11 Supervision, Monitoring and Evaluation

MoES's monitoring and evaluation systems are intended to provide information on the progress of the programme and allow problems to be identified at an early stage, so enabling prompt remedial actions to be taken.

Central ministries (MoES, MoFPED and Ministry of Local Government) are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of UPE implementation at the national level. Various levels of monitoring and evaluation exist. The Treasury inspectorate (MoFPED) and the inspectorate Department of the MoLG are required to carry out periodic monitoring visits, whilst the Auditor General's office is required to carry out half-yearly financial audits. Officials from MoES are required to visit Districts/Municipalities to verify compliance of activities to the UPE implementation guidelines and appraise the progress in UPE implementation. It is expected that officials will also provide or arrange support to the Districts/Municipalities where this is necessary to overcome problems.

It is mandatory for Districts and Municipalities to carry out supervision[35] and monitoring visits to the schools. On these visits they are required to assess:

- value for money (evidence of expenditures);
- compliance with expenditure and other guidelines (analysis of the proportions of expenditures, maintenance of attendance register, etc);
- financial accountability. The school must maintain an updated cash book specifically for UPE. The sub-accountant should ensure that all schools in the sub-county maintain the cash books and vote books which must be audited regularly.

Districts and municipalities report on these visits on a quarterly basis as part of the conditions for further releases. Moreover, districts and municipalities are required to develop and implement annual monitoring visit work plans in advance of the start of the financial year, indicating resources required for this as part of their annual budget submission. The work plans provide for each school to be visited at least once in each term of the school year (three times a year) by the District/Municipal Inspectors/Education Officers.

District/municipality monitoring and other expenses related to UPE implementation, such as stationery and photocopying, are met from a conditional grant to districts/municipalities for enhancing monitoring and accountability of all the programmes funded through the Poverty Action Fund (PAF) of the GoU. The release of these monitoring funds is conditional on the submission of District Work Plans and Budgets for PAF monitoring activities to MoFPED.

Bank charges for the UPE grant are met from within the budgetary provision of the grant.

4.3.12   Compliance

Districts/municipalities and schools are required to comply with the procedures laid down in the GoU's guidelines on the utilisation of the UPE grant whilst district/municipality Education Officers/Inspectors are expected to advise schools on these during their monitoring visits.

Schools performing well in terms of compliance with the accountability and transparency guidelines are rewarded. One prize per sub-county is allocated per school year by the sub-county/Division/LCIII authorities, in consultation with the DEO/MEO and District/Municipal inspectors, to those schools registering the greatest improvements.

The winning school in each sub-county is selected on the basis of:

- regular and good maintenance of cash books for UPE capitation grant funds
- use of funds for improving teaching and learning environment (including demonstration of value for money - based on reports from inspectors);
- evidence of compliance with expenditure guidelines;
- evidence of school displaying regularly all information in line with transparency guidelines;
- maintenance of school store registers;
- maintenance of registers for attendance of pupils and teachers;

---

[35] The supervision is carried out by the DEO/MEO, District Inspector of Schools (DIS)/Municipal Inspector of Schools (MIS) and the Chief Internal Auditor (CIA).

- evidence of constructive SMC meetings (minutes of meetings);
- timeliness in report submission to DEO/MEO; reports complete and accurate.

The prize for each winning school is worth Ush 400,000 and these funds have to be used for similar types of expenditures as the UPE conditional grant funds. In a separate attachment to the quarterly work plan, schools indicate what they intend to use the prize for. The award is accounted for in the progress report for the third quarter.

4.3.13   Penalties for Non-Compliance with the Guidelines

Schools

In cases of non-compliance, the district/municipality is expected to follow up on the offending school and provide support as deemed necessary. Contingency funding for this is supposed to be built into district/municipality annual work plans. If this support fails to resolve the problem, the district can submit its report to the MoES, noting non-compliant schools so as to avoid other schools in the district suffering from the default of one or a few. As part of this process, the appointing authority can also take disciplinary action against the defaulting SMCs and head teachers. An example of disciplinary action against schools occurred when 47 head teachers were interdicted in the District of Pallisa for misappropriation of UPE funds and salaries in 2000.

Districts/Municipalities

The MoES will advise MoFPED to withhold any further releases to non-compliant Districts/Municipalities and all the key stakeholders will be informed accordingly. The Ministry will also ensure that the general public is directly informed of the situation through the media. A telephone "hot line" exists which provides the general public with access to the Ministry, through which people can inform the Ministry when they think there is a problem in any particular District. The Ministry is required to follow up the non-compliant district/municipality and to provide support as deemed necessary. As part of this process, the appointing authority is required to take disciplinary action against the defaulting district/municipality officials. A typical example of disciplinary action against a district/municipality is the interdiction of the CAO or DEO/MEO, the withholding of releases by the centre or the publication of league tables of district performance by the MoES in national newspapers. This latter action has proven to be reasonably effective in terms of increasing commitment by defaulting districts, although, as the Auditor General's 2003 report indicates, too many districts (for his liking) are defaulting.

MoES

If the MoES fails to provide the necessary support to Districts/Municipalities or fails to process budget requests in a timely manner, without due reason, the MoFPED can withhold the release of PAF funds for monitoring and accountability to the MoES headquarters. If the MoES continues to fail in its responsibilities, the Poverty Action Committee can consider reducing or withholding release of funds to the non-wage recurrent budget of the MoES until such a time as

it honours its responsibilities. As part of this process, the appointing authority is required to take disciplinary action against the defaulting Ministry officials.

Tracking Studies

In addition to monitoring and evaluation programmes, the GoU, with the support of EFAG, undertakes an independent tracking study annually in order to increase the level of fiduciary assurance in the education sector. The purpose of these tracking studies is to build up over time a series of reports that show how the sector is performing in terms of the flow of funds to users; progress in removing bottlenecks; compliance with regulations and guidelines; status and quality of book keeping, records management and general accountability; utilisation and impact. There have been four tracking studies of the UPE grant, in 1996 (covering the period 1991 to 1995); in 2000 (covering financial years 1998/99 and 1999/2000); in 2001 (covering financial years 1999/2000 and 2000/2001) and in 2004 (covering financial years 2002/2003). The main findings of these studies are discussed below.

4.3.14   Discussion

A key element of the reform process was the introduction of a capitation grant to all primary schools. It was a device intended to make local ownership of schools a reality, and it has largely facilitated this. The grant is paid into school accounts by District headquarters. Initially the grant brought about significant developments and considerable activity at school level. Teachers and school communities responded positively and with vigour and for many it was the first opportunity they had had to manage funding and to make decisions on its utilisation. Procuring textbooks was a significant part of this process and for many teachers, used to having few teaching resources, and at best a single textbook for their own use, simply being asked to select books for classroom use was a new experience.

Evidence from the annual reviews suggests that the approach set out above has proved to be reasonably effective especially at central government level. However, implementation of the UPE capitation grant has not been without problems, with school communities in particular questioning and challenging the efficiency and at times the probity of the system. Moreover, there has been no substantial evaluation to date of the extent to which the grant is achieving its secondary objective of enhancing the quality of primary education. The massive increase in enrolments since 1997, the first objective of removing the burden of fees from households, has clearly been achieved. To this extent the system works and the independent tracking studies of 2000 and 2001 have demonstrated that over 90% of the funds released by MoFPED for the UPE grants reached the end users, the primary schools, in the financial years 1998/99, 1999/2000 and 2000/2001[36].

The main concerns with regards to the UPE Capitation Grant have been:

• the flow of funds: i.e., the extent to which budgeted public funds actually reach the intended users, in this case primary schools;

---

[36] Report on Tracking the Flow of and Accountability for UPE Funds by International Development Consultants (February 2000) and Report of a Study to Track Use of and Accountability for UPE Capitation Grants.

- the use of funds: i.e., what the users, primary schools, do with the funds once they have received them;
- the accountability for funds: i.e., the extent to which the various actors in the process meet performance expectations, fulfil their roles and duties, and meet their reporting requirements (e.g. on finance and activities);
- the appropriateness of the formula for calculating grants to schools;
- the costs of grant management in terms of both time and money.

4.3.15   The Flow of Funds

The supply chain for UPE funds is quite lengthy and involves a number of different actors. As we have seen, the supply chain begins with a request to the Treasury for release of UPE funds by the MoES and ends with receipt of funds by the recipient primary schools.

Analysis of the flow of funds, mainly through the tracking studies referred to previously, reveals that although over 90% of the released funds are reaching the primary schools, there are significant delays in some Districts and there are frequently bottlenecks at one stage or another of the supply chain. On average, it takes about two weeks for the funds released by the Treasury to reach the Chief Accounting Officer's (CAO) accounts in the Districts. Thereafter, there are occasional delays in transmitting the funds to the schools and, in a small number of cases, diversions of the funds to other District accounts. Intermingling of funds to meet District priorities can cause delays of up to 90 days between funds being received in a District and being received by the recipient school. This unpredictability in the receipt of funds makes it difficult for schools to manage both their planning and the management and use of the grant. In some cases, the delays in funding have led to schools running out of money and being unable to pay essential bills (electricity, water, telephone etc). This in turn means that most suppliers will operate only on a cash basis to schools so that unpredictable fund delivery leads automatically to less effective usage of the funding. On the positive side, however, it has led some school communities to question District level efficiency and probity.

There has also been a problem in establishing reliable data on school enrolments and this has affected the efficiency of the grant. The MoES established an Education Management Information System (EMIS) in 2000 and has been carrying out an Annual School Census (ASC) since this date. However, the problem of the dual purpose of ASC statistics, monitoring and the derivation of budgets, has not yet been solved, especially as head teachers have an incentive to inflate enrolments in their ASC returns.

4.3.16   The Use of Funds

The tracking studies reveal that the schools' expenditures were mostly in line with the UPE guidelines with the exception of co-curricular activities, where spending was below the limit, and administration, where spending was above the limit. However, other field experiences and surveys suggest that expenditures on instructional materials are also below the limit. The reason given by most schools questioned by the tracking study teams for overspending on administration was the need to frequently visit the District headquarters to check on the whereabouts of the grant funds.

There appears to be very little consultation between the head teachers and their staffs and SMCs regarding the annual school budget. The tracking studies report that 65% of schools have SMC approval for their annual budgets and only 40% have DEO approval[37]. Although most schools seek the approval of their SMCs prior to spending the UPE grants, evidence is emerging that SMCs are often reluctant to meet or may refuse to approve expenditure unless they are paid attendance allowances. This is hindering effective school management and diverting scarce funds away from their correct use.

4.3.17   Accountability for Funds

The accountability and audit chain starts with expenditure of the funds by the relevant primary schools and loops back through the DEO, MoES, MoFPED and the Auditor General. The accountability and audit chain is constrained by several factors:

- lack of District funds for proper accounting, auditing and supervision at school level;
- lack of trained auditors, accountants at District, county and sub-county levels to perform adequate supervision;
- lack of basic transportation available to inspectors/auditors to effectively supervise and monitor a majority of schools, particularly in rural areas;
- lack of institutional memory in all schools and lack of head teacher handovers, so that new head teachers rarely know what they have to do or how (or even what) they have to manage;
- lack of adequate management training at school level, particularly in financial management and basic record keeping;
- an over-complex management system at both District and school level which guarantees only minimal compliance;
- the lack of any kind of national primary school auditing system;
- negative political interference in the process, leading to funds being released to schools even when they can't account for fund usage.

The tracking studies found that only 30% of schools fully complied with UPE funds accounting requirements, including use of vouchers, availability of a cash book, utilisation of effective methods for book-keeping and regular accountability to the DEO for the use of UPE funds. Other field experiences and surveys suggest that few rural schools in Uganda operate a viable cash book. In fact, few head teachers have the knowledge and skills to maintain a cash book. Where cash books are being used in schools, they are frequently poorly maintained and hardly ever reconciled against the UPE bank account. There is also no doubt that school level corruption is high and many schools are routinely diverting or misappropriating UPE Funds.

One major aspect of accountability is the mandatory public notice. For example, the tracking study of 2001 found that publication of releases was being done consistently only by the MoES. The study found that both Districts and schools had relaxed on this requirement and hardly ever complied with it. In addition, the requirement under UPE that schools make use of notice boards for making information publicly available is rarely complied with. This issue remains to be fully addressed three years on.

---

[37] This discrepancy is explained by the fact that for most schools it is a lot easier and cheaper to maintain regular contact with their SMC than with the DEO.

There is a consistent problem of mixed recording of receipt of UPE capitation grants at the District/Municipality and school level and there is an absence of standardisation across Districts when it comes to management of the UPE funds and to the school level accounting requirements of the Districts. This issue too remains to be fully addressed three years on from identification of the problem.

4.3.18   The Allocation Formula

The following analysis is based on A New Formula for Poverty Eradication? Part 1: Sector Conditional Grants (2nd Consultative Draft) Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit, MoFPED, Planning and Economic Development, November 2001.

The existing allocation formula for the UPE grant is divided into two components: the Threshold (fixed) Grant (TG) and the Variable Grant (VG).

The Threshold Grant provides for an average cost (AC) (fixed) per pupil per month of Ush 600, a 5% Cost of Living (CoL) Index, a 13% location parameter (R) for Rural Schools and a 10% location parameter (U) for Urban Schools.

With a given Total Enrolment (TE), the computation for the Threshold Grant is thus:

TG (Rural Schools) = TE x AC x CoL x R = TE x 600 x 1.05 x 1.13
TG (Urban Schools) = TE x AC x CoL x U = TE x 600 x 1.05 x 1.10

The Variable Grant (VG) provides a 25% mark up for girls, a 33% mark up for the disabled and a 5% cost of living index.

With a given number of boys (b), number of girls (g) and number of pupils with disabilities (d) the computation for the Variable Grant (VG) is thus:

VG = AC (b + 1.25g + 1.33 d) x CoL = 600 x (b + 1.25g + 1.33d) x 1.05

Generally, the UPE capitation grant has a poverty focus, but it is not sensitive to more extreme areas of inequality, and it takes no account of variations between schools in the number of orphans and their particular needs. Whilst it is a valid principle to base allocations on the number of enrolled students, treating non-equals equally fails to address inequality. Evidence from the various tracking studies shows, however, that the attempt in the VG to reward the enrolment of girls and disabled has been well appreciated and is relatively effective, although it is not being fully implemented nationally.

The TG attempts to compensate rural schools vis-à-vis urban schools. However, the actual difference in allocation between rural and urban schools is negligible and without any practical importance. The difference of 3 percentage points amounts to only Ush 18 ($0.01) extra for each rural student per month. This is very unfortunate because the principle of compensating rural schools is valid. Poverty in the rural areas is four times higher than in the urban areas, and some 39% of the rural population continue to live below the poverty line, compared to 10% for the

urban dwellers. Since the purpose of the UPE capitation grant is to improve equitable access to basic education, it is imperative that the grant makes a serious attempt to do so by compensating rural schools even more than is currently the case. The calculation of the poverty focus is as follows:

Table 11: Poverty Focus of the UPE Capitation Grant

"Better-off" Districts (average annual per capita grant)	Ush 1,675
"Poor" Districts (average annual per capita grant)	Ush 2,150
Relative difference between "poor" and "better-off" Districts	+22%
Is the formula poverty focused?	Could improve

(Source: PMU Calculations based on 2003/2004 Budget Estimates.)

Although the group of "poor" Districts has an annual per capita grant which is 22% higher than the "better-off" Districts, this difference is not substantial enough to make it poverty focused. The GoU has accepted recommendations that the allocation formula should be revised to make it truly poverty focused. To increase the poverty focus, the GoU is currently considering a recommendation to remove the 10% mark-up for urban schools and increase the rural school mark-up by 13%. However, with the continued rural-urban population drift it is questionable that reallocating funds in this way will really have much of an impact.

4.3.19 Grant Management

The UPE conditional grant has promoted the decentralised delivery of services, but evidence from the tracking studies and annual reviews suggests that the continuation of conditional grants is undermining the local ownership and hence the sustainability of investments. An inherent contradiction exists between the sector-driven approach of allocating funds nationally towards the achievement of sector targets, and that of decentralisation, which promotes local autonomy in decision-making and local governments' responsibility for the services they deliver. Within the education sector especially, the extent to which Districts have achieved sufficient management and administrative capacity to manage their own funds and make their own fund allocations effectively and without central government support and guidelines is questionable.

The UPE conditional grant system of reporting and release of funds has also resulted in a large administrative burden on local and central GoU which does not adequately focus on the systems within local governments for financial management and accountability and the institutional arrangements for programme management. In particular, large quantities of paper and reports are required (work plans, school budgets, quarterly reports, etc), but these are very seldom scrutinised. Similarly at school level, head teachers complain of the additional work the system has created. It would be far more practical to design a simple system of fund accounting, to be rigorously enforced, than try to maintain the current complex system which is seldom checked.

At the macro level a major concern is that the level of the non-salary component of the education budget is reducing relative to the salary component. The size of the non-salary component of education expenditure is a key indicator of quality, and there was an expectation from the outset that it would gradually increase as Uganda's economic position improved. It was argued that increases in real spending should lead to more inputs which would continue to

improve quality and outcomes. However, two disturbing trends are emerging in the data on resource provision. First, salaries as a proportion of the overall spend are increasing - from 61% of total recurrent costs (1998/99) to a projected 77% (2006/07). This is likely to increase further quite dramatically if the latest presidential decree on teacher salaries is implemented and no additional resources are provided within the education envelope. Second, there is a decline in the level of all other non-wage funding, including that for instructional materials and teacher in-service training, both key elements in any drive to improve quality. These trends are evident in the following tables (Table 12 and Table 13):

Table 12: Average Shares of Education Expenditure by Major Components
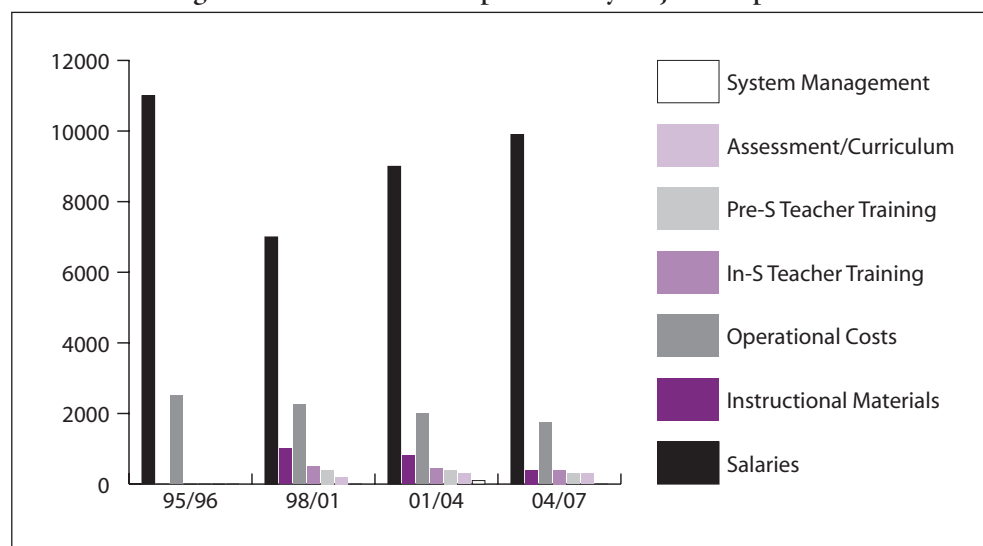
(Source: GoU MTBF, Dec 2004)

Table 13: Annual Percentage Share of Primary Education Expenditure by Major Components

Year	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07
Salaries	61.5%	58.5%	61.4%	67.3%	67.8%	72.7%	76.9%	77.2%	76.8%
Instructional Materials	9.1%	8.1%	9.8%	6.2%	6.2%	5.7%	4.4%	2.3%	2.9%
Operational Costs	20.2%	21.8%	18.9%	16.7%	15.1%	13.2%	11.2%	13.4%	13.5%
In-Service TE/CPD	6.0%	6.1%	3.8%	5.0%	5.0%	3.7%	3.3%	3.2%	3.1%
Pre-Service TE	2.0%	3.4%	4.1%	3.5%	3.6%	2.6%	2.2%	1.9%	1.8%
Assessment Curriculum	1.0%	1.9%	1.7%	0.8%	1.8%	1.8%	2.0%	1.9%	1.8%
Systems Management	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%

(Source: GoU MTBF, 2004)

Reasons for this are unclear. Spending on instructional materials was likely to fall from the initial level of spending as schools built up stocks of books. However, pupil: textbook ratios remain high and the target of 3:1 has still to be attained. Furthermore, textbooks are assumed to have a shelf life of three years only, and replacement of them has to be factored into expenditure planning. Salary increases are a major political device used by governments to ensure continued support.

What has especially worried observers is that salary increases are not being matched by quality improvements in the classroom, with teacher attendance and pupil performance remaining low. More discouraging is a UNESCO study on teacher attendance (2003) covering a period between 2000 and 2003. It has shown that 30% of Ugandan primary school teachers are absent at any one time, leaving Uganda heading the international league table of absenteeism (UNESCO Institute for Statistics). The 2003 Uganda National Examinations Board study of pupils' achievement in English Literacy and Numeracy, which compared findings with those of the 1999 study, reveal a disturbing decline at the P6 level.

4.4   School Facilities Grant

4.4.1   Introduction

When UPE was introduced in 1997, primary school enrolment surged from 3.1 million in 1996 to 5.2 million in 1997. By 2000 this had reached 6.5 million and 6.9 million in 2004[38]. Numbers are projected to fall to around 6.6 million by 2007. The latest National Household Survey Report (2003) suggests that UPE has largely eliminated the wealth and gender biases that were a feature of primary education in Uganda prior to 1997. Significantly, the report stated that the child of a family in the poorest quintile of the population is as likely to go to primary school as a child in the wealthiest quintile.

As has occurred in most of sub-Saharan Africa, the rapid expansion of access to primary education led to a deterioration in the quality of education provided. Large class sizes, high pupil:teacher ratios, an inadequate supply of suitably qualified teachers and an insufficient number of classrooms characterised the system. In the medium term, GoU expenditures on education have not risen sufficiently to meet the needs of the expanded pupil numbers and the education system has struggled to cope. In the years following the introduction of UPE, pupil:teacher ratios increased to an average of over 70:1 and it was not uncommon to find ratios exceeding 120:1 in junior classes. School facilities in particular were also swamped by the massive increase in enrolments which led to many classes taking place under trees or in temporary and often unsafe accommodation. Instructional materials were also in short supply with pupil: textbook ratios on average about 6:1. Although there is conflicting evidence available regarding the impact of UPE on learning achievement, the GoU's National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) reports suggest that this has declined steeply since1996.

---

[38] MoES Education Statistical Abstracts for 2003 and 2004.

4.4.2   The Challenge

The introduction of UPE in 1997 highlighted the urgent need to provide adequate numbers of classrooms and desks. Estimates of the need varied but the Annual School Census (ASC) of 2000 revealed that the classroom deficit in the country was about 60,000, based on a target pupil: teacher/ pupil: classroom ratio of 55:1. The challenge also entailed furnishing classrooms and providing water supplies and pit latrines. More broadly, the challenge was how to meet the demand for good quality primary school facilities so as to encourage greater uptake of and retention in primary education.

4.4.3   Background

There is much research evidence that links the availability of classrooms, textbooks, desks, libraries, and running water with the take-up of primary education (Heneveld and Craig, 1996: 37, Verspoor, 2003). In 1996 when UPE was proclaimed Uganda lacked all of these elements in most of the country's primary schools. In 1996/7 the number of children entering primary school nearly doubled. In the lower classes, P1 and P2 especially, classrooms were chronically over- crowded. The MoES estimated in the Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP) (1998), and in the Education Medium Term Budget framework (February 1999) that to accommodate the country's then 5.7 million primary school pupils, over 28,000 new classrooms would be needed, whilst almost 12,000 classrooms required completion. The Annual School Census (ASC) (2000) later revealed that the classroom deficit was actually 60,000, based on a target pupil: teacher/pupil: classroom ratio of 55:1. In the longer term, the government aims to achieve a primary school pupil: teacher ratio of 40:1 with every teacher teaching in a safe, well-lit and comfortable classroom. To achieve this target will require the recruitment of a further 37,425 teachers and the construction of a further 86,125 classrooms, as well as a more efficient use of existing resources and facilities through double-shifting or sequential teaching.

4.4.4   The Approach[39]

The School Facilities Grant (SFG) for primary schools was designed to assist the most needy school communities to complete unfinished classrooms and/or to build new classrooms. It also included plans for the supply of furniture, the construction of latrines and the construction of teachers' houses[40]. The SFG modality began as a pilot in eight Districts in 1998 and, following an independent evaluation of the pilots in March 1999 and a review of the various other ongoing classroom construction programmes, it became the sole modality for constructing school facilities in the country using government funds.

Prior to the introduction of SFG, construction had been mainly undertaken through a centralised system managed through a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) based in the MoES. An independent evaluation in 1999 found that the World Bank-funded PIU had created a system which involved too many intermediaries and the mechanisms that had been created were open to corruption. The net result was that the organisation of the work was slow, the supply of materials was inefficient and the quality of construction was unsatisfactory. Whilst

---

[39] The approach described is drawn from the MoES SFG for Primary Schools: Planning and Implementation General Guidelines for Districts and Urban Councils, July 2001. The administrative processes of the SFG funding are very similar to those of the UPE grant so there is some apparent repetition of procedures, The differences are in the detail, however.
[40] The classroom completion elements of the SFG were phased out in FY2001/02 and also in this year the provision for instructional materials storage was added to the technical design of school facilities.

communication with the Districts had improved (compared to the past), there was still dissatisfaction at District level in the way the programmes were organised.

Since July 1999 the GoU has spent approximately Ush45 billion (approximately US$26 million) annually at an average unit cost of US$ 2500 per classroom on constructing primary school facilities through the SFG. These expenditures have resulted in the construction or completion of approximately 29,000 classrooms, together with the provision of classroom furniture, latrines and instructional materials stores across the country. The SFG has transformed the landscape of Uganda with almost every parish in the country receiving at least two new classrooms.

The following table (Table 14) shows both the pattern of releases over the last six years with an average of around Ush45 billion being spent each year and the proposed amounts budgeted for the next three years which average out at about Ush56 billion per year.

Table 14:   School Facilities Grant (SFG) Funding
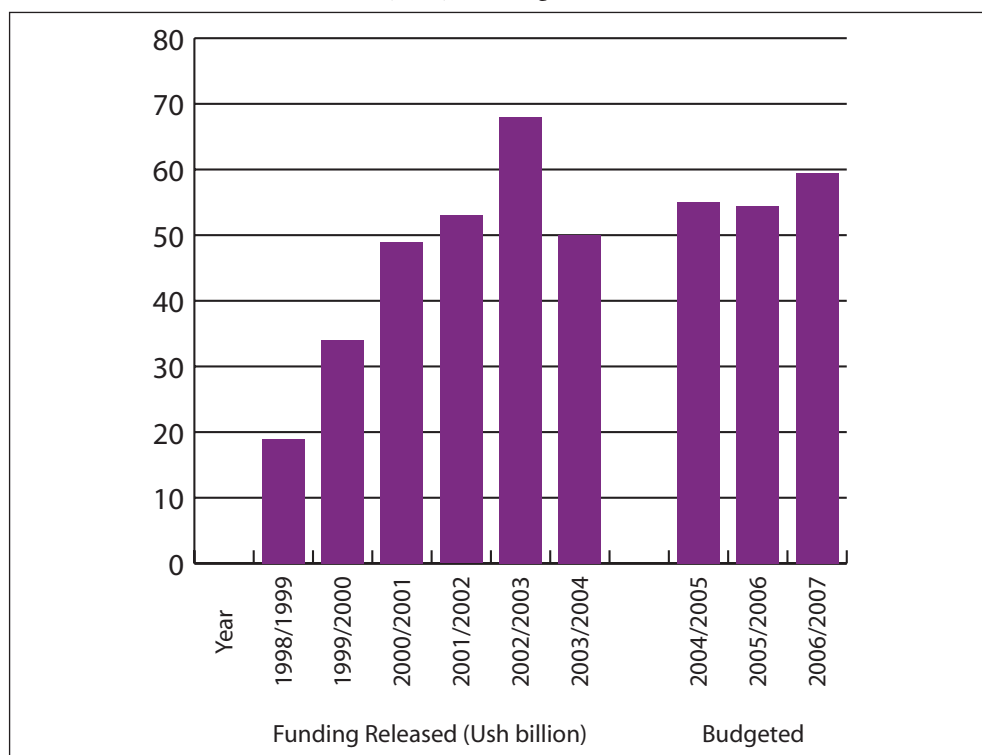
4.4.5   Players and their Roles

As with the UPE Grant, the SFG funding is channelled to Districts/Municipalities as a conditional grant and is intended to be utilised strictly in accordance with the Poverty Action Fund (PAF) General Guidelines for Planning and Operation of Conditional Grants issued by the MoFPED Planning and Economic Development Department and the MoES. These guidelines apply to all the District/Municipal local governments.

The MoES is responsible for setting policy and standards and for monitoring, supporting and assuring quality control of the whole process. On the basis of data gathered at District/Municipal and local/parish and community level the MoES establishes the overall budget allocations to Districts, sets conditionalities and approves the releases of funds to Districts. The MoES also assists and facilitates the Districts in the preparation of standard technical designs and bills of quantity. These are outlined in the MoES's technical handbook.

Initially in 1998/1999 the Classroom Completion Grant (CCG) and the 1998/1999 SFG-government programme, funds were channelled by Treasury through the MoES which then made releases to Districts. Since 1999/2000, however, as part of a programme of strengthening decentralisation, the MoFPED, upon confirmation of the demand by MoES, has made releases directly to the Districts. The MoFPED is responsible for administering the accounts of the SFG programme and ensuring that proper financial management and controls are in place. The Auditor General's office is responsible for the regular audits. The MoLG has responsibility for overseeing the relationship between government line ministries and local governments. Districts/Municipalities are responsible for the implementation of the programme in accordance with the set conditionalities, and in compliance with the technical handbook and guidelines.

In Financial Year 2000/2001 new guidelines and handbooks were introduced whereby the planning and prioritisation started at LCIII level and below in accordance with the Local Government Act. Upon completion of the buildings, classrooms are handed over to the SMCs and the LCIIIs and the LCIIs are given a role in supervision.

School communities, represented by School Management Committees (SMC), are responsible for preparing applications, contracting, and daily supervision of construction work, as well as making payments to the contractor under the guidance of the District Engineer.

4.4.6 Planning and Budgeting

The Planning and Budgeting phase for the SFG programme runs from November to June each year and includes the following activities:

- communication of SFG District/Municipality resource ceilings by central government;
- SFG promotional activities;
- field appraisal;
- preparation, review and approval of SFG annual work plans/budgets.

The PAF General Guidelines for Planning and Operation for conditional grants and the SFG Guidelines require that between November and June Districts/Municipalities follow a structured process of planning to enable them to access SFG funds. This process involves two steps: the MoES communicates the SFG District/Municipality budget ceilings in November and then, between January and April, Districts/Municipalities prepare an activity- based SFG annual work plan within the budget ceilings provided by the MoES.

The various activities, timeframes and responsibilities involved in the planning and budgeting process are set out in Table 15 below.

Table 15: SFG Planning and Budgeting Process

Activity	Timeframe	Responsibility
Communication of indicative SFG District / Municipality ceilings	November	MoES (EPD)
SFG promotional activities	January - February	District/Municipality (DEO/MEO)
Communication of the Final SFG District / Municipality ceilings	February	MoES (EPD)
Field Appraisal	March	District/Municipality (DEO/MEO & DE/ME)
Preparation, review, approval and submission of the Draft District / Municipality Annual SFG work plan/budget	April	District / Municipality (District / Municipality SFG Committee & District / Municipal Council)
Approval of the District Annual SFG work plan/budget.	May - June	MoES (EPD)
Signing a letter of understanding between the District and the MoES	June	MoES & District (PS/MoES & CAO / Town Clerk)

(Source: MoES SFG for Primary Schools: Planning and Implementation General Guidelines for District and Urban Councils, July 2001)

The SFG budget allocations to District/Municipal local governments are calculated by MoES on the basis of:

(i) an assessment of the District/Municipality classroom needs, estimated using the ASC data on the pupil:classroom ratio and assessing each District/Municipality's classroom deficit. This is assigned a maximum weight of 80%.

(ii) an assessment of the District/Municipality's previous performance in implementing the SFG programme. This is assigned a maximum weight of 20%.

In calculating the allocations, the MoES takes care to ensure that only eligible activities for SFG are identified, quantified, costed and related to the timeframe specified in the District/Municipality annual work plan and budget. The completion of this process is required before the District/Municipality can access the first release of SFG in July each year.

4.4.7   The School Facilities Grant Process

A simple process was established. Central government set up broad policies, standards, eligibility criteria and implementation guidelines. It channels the SFG funds to Districts from a central account. The Districts receive and account for the funds, select the beneficiary schools on poverty criteria, assist the schools to implement the programme, control quality and channel the funds to the schools. The schools apply to the fund, receive and account for the funds, select a suitable contractor, supervise and pay the contractor and assure equitable access to all.

Table 16 outlines the process followed from the promotion of the grant through to completion.

Table 16: The School Facilities Grant (SFG) Cycle

1. Promotion
District and Sub-county teams, led by the DEO, inform target schools and communities about the existence, conditions and application procedures of the SFG, distributing promotional leaflets and application forms.

2. Application
Schools and communities, led by the school management committee, meet to discuss their building needs and possible counter contributions. They then submit completed application form to the DEO.

3. Registration and Ranking
The DEO receipts and registers all eligible applications, and ranks them according to agreed criteria which ensure prioritisation of the neediest schools.

4. Field Appraisal
A team from the District, led by the DEO and District Engineer, visit priority schools to verify application information, gather baseline data, suggest possible contractors, photograph the site and estimate costs.

5. Approval
Feasible priority projects are approved by the DEO and District Council, and the applicants informed and sent a handbook to assist them.

9. Completion, Monitoring and Evaluation
The new buildings are used to enhance children's learning and help ensure the equal participation of girls and boys. The community completes any counter contributions and reports to the District on the effects of the new buildings, to assist in overall monitoring and evaluation led by the MoES SFG task force.

8. Payments
The CAO authorises prompt releases of funds to the school, which then promptly pays the contractor. Both Districts and schools record and receipt all transactions according to set procedures. Financial transactions will be audited on a continuous basis.

7. Building and supervision
The school and community supervise the daily attendance and work of the contractor, inviting visits from the District Engineer/Assistant to inspect each stage of building and sign certificates of completion which are forwarded to the CAO.

6. Contracting
The schools, with assistance during a further visit from the District team, open an SFG bank account, procure a contractor (with whom they further discuss the standard building designs and conditions, and finalise costs) and then sign a contract plus a letter of agreement with the District.

4.4.8   Promotional Activities

Local governments ensure that there is awareness of the grant throughout the District/Municipality through a variety of press and electronic media announcements, meetings and workshops and the distribution of promotional leaflets. During January and February each year, as part of the annual planning process, the District/Municipality informs all government-aided primary schools, lower local councils, NGOs and the wider local public about the availability of SFG and how to access it. The SFG school application forms are then distributed to schools together with the MoES guidelines.

4.4.9   Plans and Budgets

Local governments are also responsible for ensuring that every sub-county/Division or LCIII fulfils its responsibility for:

• preparing a three year sub-county/division primary school construction plan;
• preparing a sub-county/division annual primary school construction work plan / budget extracted from the three-year plan if selected to benefit from SFG;
• identifying priority school communities to benefit first from SFG which will then be required to complete the SFG school application;
• preparing a sub-county/division SFG quarterly work plans/budgets and progress reports;
• assisting the SMCs with on-site supervision of the contractor;
• receiving facilities on completion of contract;
• maintaining facilities after completion of contract;
• ensuring equitable access to all facilities for boys, girls and disabled children.

It is intended that DEOs/MEOs should receive the sub-county/division three-year primary school construction plans, the sub-county/division annual SFG work plan/budgets and the prioritised SFG School Applications Forms from the sub-county/ division/LCIII by not later than 1 March each year. The District/Municipality SFG committee[41] then reviews the sub-county/division three year primary school construction plans, the sub-county/division annual SFG work plan/budgets and the prioritised sub-county/division SFG school application Forms and assesses these against the latest available schools data and the budget ceilings provided by MoES.

The SFG committee then:

• verifies that the sub-county/division three-year primary school construction plan and the sub-county/division annual SFG work plan/budget is consistent with the budget ceilings over the plan period;
• verifies that the prioritised sub-county SFG school application forms have been correctly completed and all the required documents attached;
• checks if an application has been submitted for the same school for inclusion in another development fund;
• assesses the prioritised sub-county SFG school applications and determines whether they conform with the SFG eligibility criteria;

---

[41] The District/Municipality SFG committee is composed of the CAO/Town Clerk, DEO/MEO, DIS/MIS, District / Municipal Engineer, CFO, District Planner, Chief Internal Auditor, LCV Secretary for Education/Municipal Secretary for Education, District Environmental Officer, District Community Development Officer and District Public Health Officer.

- checks the identification code of the sub-county SFG school applicant against the MoES official school serial code transmitted to the DEO by the MoES.

Resource constraints often mean that it is impossible for every sub-county/division in a District/Municipality to benefit from the SFG in any given financial year. Consequently Districts/Municipalities prioritise sub-counties/divisions according to need. Sub-counties/Divisions not considered in one financial year can be considered in future financial years if they meet the eligibility criteria.

Whilst there is a need to address the issue of water supply in disadvantaged areas in Uganda especially, at present there is no budgetary provision for this component. Districts/ Municipalities are therefore being encouraged by the MoES to explore other alternative sources of funding to provide water tanks or boreholes for the schools.

4.4.10   Eligible Beneficiaries and Activities

Only government-aided primary schools are eligible for SFGs. Grants have to be spent on classroom completion (this component was phased out at the end of the financial year 2001/02), new classroom construction and the construction of an instructional materials store and head teacher's office per school. SFG funds also cover the construction of latrines and teacher houses and the procurement of classroom furniture. The construction of teachers' housing units is especially critical in remote areas and Districts/Municipalities are allowed to utilise up to 15% of the SFG budget allocation for these facilities.

4.4.11   Community Contributions to New Classroom Construction under SFG

Whilst communities are encouraged to make contributions, these are not compulsory under the SFG and are determined by the socio-economic status within the Districts as well as the community's ability and willingness to contribute. The logic behind this is that any additional financial burden should not result in children failing to attend school, or, if poor communities feel constrained to contribute, that the quality of construction up to ring-beam level should suffer. Once funds are released, school committees assume control of the planning and construction management process and, at a later stage, responsibility for the running and maintaining of the school and premises.

Areas where communities have contributed have included providing school land and items not financed under SFG, such as planting trees and school fences, constructing a playground, providing day to day supervision of the contractor, maintaining existing and new school facilities after completion and ensuring equitable access to all facilities for both boys and girls and also for disabled children.

Where the local community contributes locally available building materials and services (e.g. sand, stones, bricks, unskilled labour etc), the local contractor is required to reimburse these items from his/her contract in accordance with the bills of quantity included in the Technical Handbook. It is expected that the proceeds realised by the local community will be invested in other school projects not financed under SFG.

4.4.12   Assistance with Preparing Project Proposals

The Districts/Municipalities provide support and encouragement to partner organisations, such as NGOs, to assist sub-counties/divisions/LCIIIs which have problems in preparing project proposals due to lack of capacity or resources. The engineering assistants employed by the MoES in each District since 2001 liaise with the District/Municipal Engineer in giving such support.

4.4.13   Field Appraisal

The District/Municipal field appraisal team, comprising the DEO/MEO, the District/Municipal Engineer, the District Community Development Officer, the District Environmental Officer and the District Public Health Officer, are expected to visit the schools selected by the District/Municipal SFG committee in March each year in order to confirm that the schools meet the eligibility criteria. They are also required to appraise sites for construction and, in particular, to check the site, soil and building conditions.

The District Community Development Officer has a vital role to play in community mobilisation whilst the District Environmental Officer has responsibility for undertaking an environmental assessment. The Public Health Officer is required to ensure that the SFG programme addresses public health issues, especially sanitation, waste disposal practices and hygiene.

The field appraisal team, with the SMC, is also required to determine the scope of the project and the costs. The District/Municipal Engineer estimates the project costs on site, using the drawings and information contained in the SFG Technical Handbook. All costs are based on the standard SFG schedule of rates and the technical specifications of the SFG Technical Handbook. The District/Municipal Engineer is also required to assess the availability of building materials, skilled and unskilled labour, transportation and contractors for each site. The MoES Engineering Assistant assigned to each District liaises with the District/Municipal Engineer regarding technical specifications.

Members of the field appraisal team then prepare a draft District/Municipality annual SFG work plan and budget using the standard format included in MoES's SFG Guidelines. The District/Municipality SFG committee then reviews and recommends this draft to the District/Municipality executive committee, which in turn approves and recommends it to the District/Municipal Council or its delegated committee for approval. The District/Municipal Council or its delegated committee will at the same time approve the conditions related to the use of the SFG, which include the implementation guidelines.

A letter of understanding is then signed between the MoES and the District/Municipal local government, prior to accessing the first SFG release which is designed to occur in July. Two copies of the draft District/Municipal SFG work plan/budget, together with a signed letter of understanding, are forwarded to the MoES for final approval by the end of April. The District/Municipality submission is copied to MoFPED.

Upon receipt, the MoES checks the draft District/Municipality annual SFG work plan and budget and assesses whether SFG procedures have been properly followed in each case and also checks that the budget is within the approved ceiling for the District/Municipality. In the event

that the MoES is dissatisfied with the submission, it will be referred back to the District/Municipality for revision along with advice on how to improve the work plan and budget. The District/ Municipality is then requested to revise and resubmit the annual SFG work plan/budget together with a signed letter of understanding within two to three weeks of receipt of feedback from the MoES.

If the work plan is satisfactory, the MoES signs the letter of understanding and returns one copy of this and the submission to the District/Municipality. The MoES then processes the first SFG release to the Districts in July of each year.

4.4.14 Implementation
The implementation phase of SFG includes the following activities:

- procurement of a suitably qualified local contractor/supplier of furniture to perform the work at each selected school site;
- building works/supply of furniture, supervision and payments;
- release of funds, accounting and reporting;
- monitoring and evaluation.

4.4.15 Procurement of a Suitably Qualified Local Contractor/Supplier of Furniture to Perform the Work
Once a school is notified that it is eligible for an SFG, the SMC, supported by the District/ Municipal Engineer, identifies and appraises local contractors and suppliers of school furniture. The SMC then recommends at least three local contractors to the District Tender Board (DTB) which selects the most suitably qualified contractor[42]. The selection is based on the contractor's capacity to undertake the work and on the unit costs given in the schedule of works. As there is no competitive bidding process, maximum fixed prices are set beforehand. Unit rates per District are updated once a year, although transport costs are allowed to vary within Districts.

Following the DTB's selection of a qualified local contractor/supplier of furniture, the District/Municipal Engineer assists the SMC with the preparation of the contract documents, technical specification and schedule of works based on SFG standard documents and costs. The format for the various contract agreements, including the letter of agreement between the District/ Municipality and the school community, the standard schedule of rates and the contract between the school and the contractor, are all provided in the MoES's SFG Guidelines and SFG Technical Handbook, copies of which are supplied to all Districts/Municipalities and participating schools.

To stimulate the local economy and strengthen the capacity/capability of local contractors/ suppliers, contractors/suppliers of furniture commissioned under SFG have to be community/ village-based, or District-based where there are no village-based contractors/suppliers.

---

[42] The following bidders/contractors are ineligible: non District-based firms, a firm/individual that is associated, or has been associated in the past, directly or indirectly, with the District officials and councillors, a firm/individual that in the opinion of the District Engineer lacks the necessary technical competence to complete the works to a satisfactory standard. District councillors, District officials and those associated with the SFG programme directly or indirectly at all levels are also ineligible.

The SFG contribution to each type of work never exceeds the maximum standard cost indicated by MoES for the District/Municipality. The rates and prices given in the schedule of rates cannot be adjusted during the performance of the contract. In the event that a District/Municipality is able to construct/complete classrooms at costs below the standard rates indicated by the MoES in the Technical Handbook, the savings realised are used for additional civil works at the school, thus stimulating good management and cost-saving practices.

The following percentages are paid to contractors for each stage of work under the terms of SFG contracts:

- mobilisation(advance payment):   10%
- foundation/sub-structure: 20%
- walling including beams and gables: 15%
- roofing including roof sheets: 25%
- finishing (plastering, flooring, carpentry):   25%
- retention for defects (period of six months):   5%

A similar method is used for other programme components, such as the construction of latrines and furniture.

The local contractor/supplier of furniture is paid through a distinct SFG school bank account managed by the SMC which is subject to the same accountability and signatory procedures as for the UPE grant. If a school finds it difficult to open a distinct SFG bank account, the District can be requested to pay the contractor directly after all signatories on the certificates are satisfied.

It is the responsibility of the contractor/supplier to meet all his/her tax obligations, including payment of the government's 4% withholding tax.

The contract is signed between the school and local contractor/supplier of furniture, witnessed by the chairperson of the LCII. At the same time, the letter of commitment is signed between the school and District/Municipality. The LCIII chairperson, SMC chairperson and head teacher are signatories on behalf of the school community; the CAO/Town Clerk and the DEO/MEO are signatories on behalf of the District/Municipality. The Chief Internal Auditor of the District is required to review the contract documentation and to certify that procurement procedures have been properly followed.

The MoES Engineering Assistant in each District is expected to assist with the interpretation of the contract documents, technical specifications, schedule of works based on SFG standard documents and costs.

4.4.16   Building Works, Supervision and Payments

The School Management Committee (SMC), or the Building Committee of the school assigned by the SMC, is responsible for the day to day supervision of works on behalf of sub-county/division local government. In particular, the SMC is expected to ensure that no material is stolen, the contractor attends the site regularly and the work is done satisfactorily.

The District/Municipal Engineer is responsible for visiting the site regularly and is ultimately responsible for the quality and progress of work, giving the necessary instructions to the contractor and also issuing the certificate of works at each stage. The SMC and the LCIII chairperson sign the certificate that is issued by the engineer.

The District fixes SFG monitoring and supervision expenses at Ush 400,000 per site. This covers District expenses for technical monitoring and supervision of SFG implementation. Other expenses related to SFG implementation, such as monitoring by the District/Municipality political leadership[43], stationery, and photocopying are met from the multi - sectoral PAF monitoring and accountability grant to the CAOs'/Town Clerk's office. The release of these funds is conditional on submission of District/Municipality progress reports and work plans/budgets for monitoring activities to MoFPED. Bank charges for the SFG are met from within the budgetary provision of the grant.

4.4.17   Release of Funds, Accounting and Reporting

Releases are made by MoFPED twice in every quarter[44]. One twelfth (1/12th) of the annual budget is released in the first month of the quarter to cover implementation during the first month when the District/Municipality is compiling the required reports for submission to MoES, copied to MoFPED. The amount requested in the District/Municipal budget request, less the amount released in the first month of the quarter, is released in the second month of the quarter or later, following the quarterly submission of the required reports by the District/Municipality. Where the release is less than that requested by the District/Municipality, the MoES provides reasons for the discrepancy.

District/Municipal local governments are responsible for controlling the District/ Municipal SFG bank account, receiving conditional grant transfers from central government and making and accounting for all payments to schools. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)/ Town Clerk is accountable for the safekeeping and proper expenditure of all SFG grants to the District /Municipality.

An important feature of the SFG is that normal accounting and reporting procedures for all other conditional grants from the central government to Districts/Municipalities are applied to the SFG grant. The District/Municipality opens a dedicated non-interest bearing SFG bank account into which SFG conditional grant payments are credited and from which payments to schools are debited. The signatories to the SFG bank account are the CAO/TC, Chief Finance Officer (CFO) and the DEO/MEO. As with all District/ Municipality bank accounts, there is a dedicated cashbook for the SFG bank account, and a general ledger control account.
SFG conditional grant transfers from central government to the Districts/Municipalities are first paid into the "government Grants Collection Account" and are then transferred by the District/Municipality, by direct bank transfer or cheque, to the SFG bank account. The SFG bank account books of account must be closed at the end of the financial year and any balances on this account that remain unspent after the close of the financial year have to be remitted back to the central Treasury.

---

[43] District political leadership includes the chairperson LCV and the Secretary for Education LCV, Resident District Commissioner.
[44] In the first quarter, due to the vote on account period, no more than a quarter of the annual SFG budget should be requested and will be released.

In order to receive the quarterly release of funds, the Districts/Municipalities must submit to MoES, with copies to MoFPED, the following three reports on or before the last working day of the first month after the close of the quarter:

i)   A quarterly progress report covering the activities and budget planned for the previous quarter, a list of the actual activities carried out, and the funds spent/committed for the previous quarter and unspent balance.

ii)   A cumulative progress report covering the annual work plan and budget activity schedule, an assessment of the actual achievement and funds spent for each activity as well as a statement of the unspent balance to date.

iii)   A quarterly work plan/budget request covering the activities to be implemented during the forthcoming quarter, including those activities in the previous quarter's work plan but not yet completed, the corresponding budget required to implement these activities, and the budget request which takes into account the balance of unspent SFG funds at the District/Municipality.

The three District/Municipality reports are presented to the District chairperson, the Mayor, the District/ Municipality Secretary for Education, the chairperson of the District Public Accounts Committee, the Chief Internal Auditor and the Resident District Commissioner.

4.4.18   Financial Management at Schools

The school SFG bank account is opened and administered by the SMC (chairperson and head teacher). Payments received from the Districts/Municipalities and payments to the contractors are made through this bank account. The essential accounting record required for SFG is an SFG cash book to support and record transactions on the school bank account. The layout of the payments section of the cash book follows the model provided in the SFG guidelines. The bank account statement is reconciled with the cash book on a regular basis and the school submits these documents to the District/Municipality (DEO/MEO) each quarter, where they are subject to audit and certification by the Chief Internal Auditor before being filed in the school's SFG file held by the DEO.

The sub-accountants from the sub-county administration have a key role in assisting SMCs in setting and operating cash books and preparing reconciliation statements and submissions to the District /Municipality. The SMCs are also required to report to the community and parents.

4.4.19   Mandatory Public Notices

The MoES is required to publish through appropriate media the quarterly SFG grant transfers to each District/Municipality. In turn, Districts/Municipalities are required to display in public a full list of schools receiving the SFG releases and amounts of the releases allocated, the list of selected local contractors/suppliers of furniture against each beneficiary school and the total amount of SFG funds disbursed to each beneficiary school.

To encourage transparency and public interest in the process, schools receiving SFG are required to publicly display the SFG amount allocated to the school and received from the District / Municipality, as well as up to date information on the amounts paid out to the local contractor/ supplier for furniture and other supplies. Schools are also required to display the amount of any local community contribution made towards school construction, where this applies.

4.4.20 Monitoring and Evaluation

The SFG monitoring and evaluation systems are designed to provide information on the progress of the SFG programme and to identify problems at an early stage to enable prompt remedial actions to be taken. The central ministries (MoES, MoFPED and MoLG) are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of SFG implementation at national level. An MoES official is required to visit each District at least once every two months to verify the compliance of activities with the SFG implementation guidelines and the Technical Handbook and to appraise the District/Municipality's progress in SFG implementation. They are also required to provide or arrange support to the Districts/Municipalities where this is necessary to overcome problems. The MoES endeavours to enhance its decentralised monitoring capacity through engineering assistants based in each of the Districts and by sub-contracting monitoring tasks to private firms.

The Treasury Inspectorate (MoFPED) and the Inspectorate Department (MoLG) also carry out periodic monitoring visits to the districts/municipalities, whilst the Auditor General is responsible for carrying out statutory annual audits.

District/Municipal local governments in turn are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the performance of schools and contractors in implementing SFG at District/Municipality level. LCIIIs with the support of LCII, LCI, and the local communities are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of SFG in their areas of jurisdiction. Finally, SMCs are responsible for the daily management and supervision of works and payments.

4.4.21 Penalties for Non-Compliance with SFG Guidelines

If the contractor fails to produce satisfactory work or has inadequately followed instructions by the District/Municipal Engineer, then the DEO/MEO has to inform the SFG committee and request action to be taken. The penalty for delay of the practical completion date is Ush 5,000 per day. The SMC has the right to terminate the contract without further payment if work is unsatisfactory, below standard, irregularly attended, delayed, or in any way not compliant with the terms of the contract.

Districts/Municipalities are required to follow up non-compliant schools and provide support as deemed necessary. If this is insufficient to address the problem, the District/Municipality is required to report the matter to the MoES and explain what measures are being taken to correct the situation and what measures it wishes the MoES to take in terms of its mandate.

The strongest sanction that can be applied is for MoFPED to withhold releases to non-compliant Districts/Municipalities on advice from the MoES. Key stakeholders and the general

public are then informed through the newspapers and other media. An interesting feature of this process is the telephone "hotline". The general public can access it if they have reason to, in the expectation that MoES action will follow. The appointing authority then generally takes disciplinary action against the defaulting District/Municipality officials where this is necessary. Finally, if the MoES fails to provide the necessary support to Districts/ Municipalities or fails to process budget requests in a timely manner, without due reason, the MoFPED can withhold the release of PAF funds for monitoring to the MoES. If the MoES continues to fail in its aforementioned responsibilities, the Poverty Action Committee can consider reducing or withholding release of funds to the non-wage recurrent budget of the MoES until such a time as it honours its responsibilities. The appointing authority is required to take disciplinary action against the defaulting ministry officials where this is necessary.

4.4.22 Discussion

Why the SFG can Work

One important reason why the modality works is that stakeholders, especially villagers who have had little in the past, can see the benefits of the SFG. Indeed, schools with facilities have risen before their eyes, local contractors and those they employ have found work, and money has begun to circulate where hitherto it had not. More important, people are being asked their views on matters of concern to them and they have been empowered and given a mandate to effect the changes they want. Every stakeholder is included in an output-orientated process, core responsibilities are clearly defined and determined and the eligibility criteria are set up in a participatory manner which avoids impossible choices.

An independent evaluation of SFG was carried out in March 2001. It was based on a review of documentation, interviews both at central level and in nine Districts and visits to 32 schools. It concluded that the achievements of SFG were considerable, and indeed, that the output of 7,700 classrooms in one and a half years was unique in Africa[45]. This evaluation and the annual ESIP reviews have confirmed that the SFG is contributing to increased levels of enrolment and retention and that it is having a positive impact on enrolment of girls in particular. The reviews ascribe this to the community-based approach which underpins the SFG and to the fact that local economies are benefiting from the infusion of money into them. It is argued that the use of local contractors and labour and the development of construction and furniture making skills are also helping to reduce poverty. More widely, it is evident that it is also providing relevant and practical training in financial management, decision-making and planning.

Proponents of the SFG argue that evidence of its success can be seen in the number of school facilities constructed and that, together with the capitation grant and the abolition of school fees, it has led to a significant growth in the number of children accessing and staying on in education. The key point is that under SFG specifically, each stakeholder is included in an output-oriented process which requires commitment and co-operation between all levels of public administration. A key feature of the SFG is that only core indispensable tasks and responsibilities are determined and fixed. A vital space is left for initiative and competition in a

---

[45] MoES SFG Evaluation, Final Report, June 2001.

process where tangible outputs signify successful implementation. Clear eligibility/priority criteria, within a participatory framework, and the development of due processes through the implementation of straightforward procedures, clear standards and monitoring processes, have increased people's confidence in the system. Indeed, "the system" is delivering "the goods" whilst it has also made it difficult for Districts to attempt to select any but the most needy and the poorest communities as beneficiaries. It has also made it more difficult for individuals to gain through corrupt practice. Information on SFG is available to all. At any point, anyone can know which school or District has received how much for which type of activity and how successful the District/school has been. Enhanced transparency, accurate information and accountability are all features of the SFG, whilst community participation is mainly based on taking responsibility rather than cash or kind contribution.

The construction process itself is being used to reduce poverty. Local contractors are employing paid workers within the community, whilst evidence from annual reviews indicates that they are being paid fully, on time and correctly for work. By integrating them into a formal system, local contractors are learning to be organised as members of a tax-paying private sector. By contracting the whole work, including procurement of materials, to local contractors, responsibilities are clear and construction time has been found to be much shorter than alternative centralised construction modalities.

Districts or Municipalities with a high need are automatically benefiting from a poverty focus formula whereby three levels of District have been identified, with the poorest receiving an added amount. In an analysis undertaken by the government's Poverty Monitoring Unit (PMU), the PMU rates the bias towards poorer Districts in terms of the allocation of funds at 64% (see Table 17 below). This difference is quite substantial and PMU considers the existing formula serves as a role model for other sectors and grants. This high praise notwithstanding, the District allocation system is not yet compliant with the government's broad objectives of equity and access. For example, Rakai District with a pupil: classroom ratio (PCR) of 50:1 gets the same SFG allocation as Palissa District with a PCR of 140:1. There needs to be further work on the formula to make it more focused on the most disadvantaged Districts and, within Districts, the most disadvantaged areas.

Table 17: Poverty Focus of the School Facilities Grant

"Better-off" Districts (average annual per capita grant)	Ush 1,698
"Poor" Districts (average annual per capita grant)	Ush 2,577
Relative difference between "poor" and "better-off" Districts	+64%
Is the formula poverty focused?	Yes

(PMU calculations based on 2000/2001 Budget Estimates.)

Finally, it should be noted that the SFG modality has been translated into a series of implementation instruments for the management of the grant. These include:

• the implementation guidelines which explain roles and responsibilities, procedures and criteria for school selection, procurement, financial and monitoring procedures;

- standard documentation that can be referred to and/or used daily, together with reporting formats which facilitate monitoring and evaluation;
- the Technical Handbook which contains information on the materials and construction techniques to be used, quality control measures, detailed drawings for each building or furniture component and detailed standard costs;
- the monitoring guidelines which contain quality control measures and compliance control criteria;
- the SFG MIS (Management Information System) is an effective governance tool consisting of a computerised database containing data retrieved from Districts and providing progress and compliance indicators as well as financial reports. The SFG MIS interfaces with the Ministry's general data and education statistics derived from the ASC.

Threats to the SFG

Although the SFG system can clearly work, is helping the GoU to achieve its targets for primary school facilities and is sensitive to poverty differences between Districts, there are issues that are causing concern which need to be addressed.

First, very few of the 55 districts are fully compliant with the procedures and designs as per the guidelines and technical handbooks. Non-compliance is found mainly in the areas of school selection procedure and procurement.

Second, experience within the sector has been that it has proved difficult to deal with non-compliant Districts, institutions and individuals without punishing the school children being served by those Districts/institutions/individuals. In order to improve compliance, the MoES has proposed a set of sanctions aimed at punishing the individual offending officials rather than the District or schools[46]. The proposed sanctions are reproduced in Table 18.

Action has been slow, but there are currently ongoing discussions between the MoES, MoFPED, MoLG, Ministry of Justice and the local governments regarding these proposals. The aim was to have a set of agreed sanctions in place by the end of 2004.

Third, the MoES has yet to accept the idea that other authorities can manage funds allocated to education effectively, be it at central level or local level, and it has not effectively supported local or District management. There are therefore strong and various tensions between national policy and local autonomy and these have affected the implementation of the SFG. The origin of these tensions lies in the conflict between national policy and local autonomy (the sector or vertical approach versus the horizontal approach) and the centre's perceived need for national control over the system (the national monitoring and reporting system). Moreover, it would seem that two elements of decision-making are at the source of this tension: selection of beneficiaries (political power) and procurement/payment of services (financial benefit). MoES has ceded significant ground to local governments in these two areas. No system can completely suppress negative political interference and financial mismanagement, although the practice of good governance can be enhanced through setting standards/regulations, by monitoring/auditing the effective implementation of those standards and by taking sanctions against those who seriously

---

[46] Final Aide Memoire of the October 2001 Education Sector Review: 17.

Table 18: **Conditional Grants: Sanctions**

Acts Which Attract Sanctions	Proposed Sanctions
Holding money on account meant for disbursement.	1. Written warning on first occasion 2. Suspension on second occasion 3. Dismissal on third occasion
Failure to account for funds at any level.	1. Written warning/reminder 2. Request to refund 3. Interdict pending investigation 4. Dismiss 5. Arrest and prosecute
Failure to hand over public office on transfer, study leave, official duty away from station.	1. Interdict 2. Demote 3. Terminate services
Disbursing funds to ghost (non-existent) schools or faulty contractors.	1. Terminate services 2. Arrest and prosecute
Inflating enrolment figures or giving wrong information, such as under-reporting classroom stock.	1. Terminate services 2. Arrest and prosecute
Diversion of funds	1. Written warning 2. Interdict
Causing delay in release and flow of education funds	1. Withhold salary 2. Interdict 3. Arrest and prosecute 4. Obtain refund of any funds lost

deviate from the system. A critical issue is the extent to which this national process of regulation enters into conflict with local autonomy. In principle, the SFG guidelines are not "decrees or regulations", voted democratically by the country's parliament, so they cannot be enforced. Neither is it desirable to change guidelines into laws, as this could block the system with over-regulation. One way to enhance compliance and reduce conflicts is to use the participatory approach, regularly inviting the local governments to review/amend the system and feel ownership over its mechanisms. The other is to use the existing legal framework to enforce sanctions against mismanagement. However, in both areas this will involve a change of culture and the way things are done and will take time. It will only be when the benefits of legitimate action outweigh the risks of illegitimate action that the practices embodied in the SFG guidelines will become accepted and 'normal'.

A disturbing feature which has received considerable publicity concerns corruption within the sector and in particular within the SFG process. Some of it is relatively petty, other more serious, especially with regards to procurement of goods and services. The PEAP states that the key to reducing corruption is political will. Writing in the *New Vision* newspaper
(7 November, 2004) the outgoing Inspector General of Government (IGG) points out that while evidence against office-holders is often inadequate to sustain a criminal case, political leadership could achieve greater impact by insisting on the resignation of offenders. The report went on to state that political pluralism can encourage competing political groupings to force

their own members to resign in order to preserve the reputation of the group. What is evident is that in deeply politicised contexts, and especially in contexts where personal and vertical links between patrons and clients continue purposely and profitably to hold sway, rational and transparent decision-making and management cannot be guaranteed.

Finally, whilst the SFG has effectively promoted a largely decentralised government delivery of services and the delegation of responsibilities from the centre to local governments is intended to strengthen local ownership of the SFG and hence sustainability of investments, there remains conflict between the sector-driven approach of allocating funds nationally towards the achievement of sector targets and that of decentralisation, which promotes local autonomy in decision-making and local governments' responsibility for the services they deliver. In block-delegated budget transfers from central government to local governments, funding is intermingled and allows for the discretionary use of funds by local governments. Indeed, Smith (2004) reports on several instances of SFG funding having been diverted to pay salaries. In such a situation, ring-fencing of funds for the SFG becomes difficult politically, as does accounting specifically for it. Evidence is that DEOs can be effectively overruled by the District or local government structure to which they are accountable.

Overall Assessment of SFG to date

Developing a demand-led financing mechanism forms a basic principle of SFGs, and the procedures developed met this principle as well as encouraging transparency. When the SFG was launched in 1999, decentralisation of government functions had already commenced. A prime objective of the grant was to enable increased participation of parents in affordable non-fee cost-sharing arrangements, whilst also ensuring that the mechanisms and modalities for providing all necessary resources were open and transparent. Improving the teaching and learning environment of primary schools was intended to improve participation and retention rates. Maintaining school buildings, especially in impoverished communities, had been a perennial problem. Consequently the thinking was that, if a sense of investment were generated, maintenance and the care of community "owned" facilities would be enhanced.

Have these aims been achieved? In the best situations, they have; nationally, all school communities have functioning SMCs, and the SFG has produced over 29,000 classrooms to date. However, as has been stated above, the quality[47] and the effectiveness of the SFG process as a means of increasing local ownership and demand for quality facilities are variable. The SFG process especially is being threatened. Significantly, it is generally acknowledged that the quality of supervision and monitoring of the SFG has been poor, largely because of limited capacity at the local level to carry out this function effectively.

In a hard-hitting report the Auditor General (2003) cites delayed completion of classrooms, poor quality of construction, ineffective supervision and monitoring thereof, irregular procurement and payments practices, failures by Councils to take effective action against officials and contractors, lack of provision of resources for the maintenance of school infrastructure and a general abuse of the system as bringing the SFG process into disrepute.

---

[47] The quality of the classrooms constructed to date is regarded as fair to good in terms of their structural element, although evaluations have noted that the mixes of the wall plaster and screed are often poor and the quality of the classroom doors suspect, owing to the use of unseasoned timber. (Report in November, 2004 Review).

The report concludes:

> *With the current classroom-pupil ratio of 1:94 against the targeted ratio of 1:55 the MOES is far from achieving its targets in this regard. If the above inefficiencies and inadequacies are not addressed, the MOES objective of providing permanent classrooms with a minimum life of 30 years to as many primary schools as possible will still be unattainable. Furthermore if corrective action is not taken, a lot of money will continue to be wasted under this programme.*

Auditor General's report (2004)

The fact that such a report was commissioned and has been published is positive for it suggests that the GoU is serious about accounting for the considerable money that is being spent in the education sector. However, whether the AG's report will prompt effective action at District and school level remains to be seen.

Why, therefore, is a well-conceived plan not having the impact that it should have? In analysing reports and reviews of the SFG[48] it is possible to suggest various reasons.

First, the political and administrative levels below district/municipal level have been given little responsibility for the SFG programme. Although the Local Government Act stipulates these responsibilities, the capacity to implement tasks effectively at these levels is still poor. In particular, schools do not yet have sufficient information and tools to fulfil their assigned roles.

Second, relationships between levels of national and local government remain largely hierarchical, and moving from a directive culture to a participatory one clearly will involve more than building up confidence and trust within the system. For example, the role of the District Engineer in the construction process is quite dominant, since the engineer checks the work before sanctioning payment to the contractor. This makes the SMC dependent on the engineer and places the engineer in a powerful position.

Management of the SFG by SMCs has proved to be something of a monopoly of the head teacher and SMC chairperson. It is noticeable that women are hardly represented in the SMC or PTA, yet they are the main carers of children. Clearly these issues can be addressed through increased capacity building, especially if the District Community Development Officer comes to play a more dominant role, but her/his position in the District hierarchy does not always allow this. It seems fairly obvious that it is going to take time and effort before officers across all levels begin to change their role from "supervisors in charge" to "facilitators", there to assist those lower down the authority chain.

Finally, and probably the most important reason of all for what the AG's report has identified, is the lack of effective monitoring and commitment to achieving this, and the failure by the GoU and the MoES in particular to take action in situations where there is non-compliance or corruption. Whilst it appears that the MoES cannot monitor quality and compliance properly, since the means to impose corrective action and to enforce compliance are not in place, the AG

---

[48] Primarily the half-yearly review reports and the consolidated reports to be found in the annual ESR reports (e.g. ESR, 2004: 54 on improving pupil:classroom ratios).

appears to be expressing a view widely held although less openly articulated. Nonetheless, this failure has serious consequences for the SFG budget allocations to district/municipal local governments, and indeed all allocations. The SFG allocations are based on two elements: there is the District/Municipality classroom needs assessment estimated on the basis of the pupil: permanent classroom ratio, which is assigned a maximum weight of 80%; and then there is the rating of District/Municipality performance in implementing the SFG programme based over the previous financial year. This is assigned a maximum weight of 20%. Both of these factors are based on effective monitoring, supervision and the collection of accurate data. In turn, the latter is based on effective school and District level data gathering and reporting. But the SFG process is known to have increased the level of paperwork required and there is some evidence of poor quality data hastily provided by schools being accumulated at District/Municipality level before being acted upon at national level. Clearly, incentives to report accurately and efficiently are insufficient, whilst effective actions for non-compliance or poor performance are either not being implemented or are not sufficiently strong.

The authors of the World Development Report (2004) argue that an important determinant of the commitment of local school managers concerns the proportion and level of resources given to them to control, whilst one of the key elements of quality service delivery is the extent of customer involvement in management and accountability for performance of the service delivery points. It is worrying, therefore, that a decline in the percentage of school level expenditure to total expenditure has occurred in Uganda (Smith, 2004). This has fallen from 27.7% (1988) to a budgeted 11.7% in 2007, so, whilst in terms of resource accountability Smith (2004) and others can report that there has been progress in strengthening various aspects of the local government accountability systems, levels of funding to facilitate and promote local accountability are declining. Nonetheless, faith in the system is partially based on the belief that things, though far from perfect, are moving in the right direction.

Chapter 5: Increasing Access, Equity and Efficiency at Post-Primary Levels of Education and Training within Sustainable Budgets

5.1   The Challenge

It was recognised immediately after 1996 that increasing numbers of pupils reaching P7 (the final year of primary schooling) would increase the demand for places in secondary education. The challenge that had to be addressed was how to plan effectively for increasing access, equity and efficiency at post-primary levels of education and training within sustainable budgets. This chapter outlines the process followed between 2000 and 2004 to provide knowledge, information and options for the GoU to develop and implement a new policy for Post-primary Education and Training (PPET) in Uganda.

5.2   Background

A new policy for PPET in Uganda was needed for the following reasons.

First, at a macro level, the GoU had committed itself to a social development policy designed to alleviate poverty through the PEAP (1997). Higher rates of participation and achievement at post-primary level were seen as likely to contribute to this goal if they were pursued in an equitable way within a realistic financial framework. The GoU also committed itself to achieving gender equity at primary and secondary levels by 2005 (MDGs), and had already, in 1999, announced its intention to universalise secondary education over time. Whilst this gender goal has largely been achieved at primary level, many more boys than girls continue to be enrolled in secondary education.

Second, the success of the UPE programme was rapidly increasing the numbers of pupils reaching P7 and many were seeking opportunities to continue their education. It was realised that the sustainability of UPE depended on improved access to post-primary institutions as, when transition rates to secondary education are low, retention in primary education decreases as it becomes clear that for most there will be no progression to higher educational levels.

Third, participation at secondary level is increasingly a major determinant of life chances and a major source of inequity later on in life (Appleton, 2001; Lewin and Caillods, 2001). Presently, more than 65% of those enrolled in secondary education in Uganda are drawn from families with household incomes in the top 20%. High direct costs prevent most Ugandans from accessing secondary education, whilst the shortage of secondary schools, especially in non-urban areas, effectively disadvantages the majority of the secondary school age population.

Furthermore, graduates from post-primary institutions are likely to continue to have higher average earnings than those completing primary school. Appleton's analysis based on household survey data is definitive. It notes that:

> ... each average year of primary schooling of household workers raises earnings from both farming and wage employment by 4 per cent; for secondary schooling the corresponding increases are about 6%. Secondary education has powerful effects on the probability of obtaining income from non-farm self- employment ... secondary schooling is substantially associated with female wage employment and income.
> (Appleton, 2001)

Appleton further notes that the proportion of those from and remaining in rural and disadvantaged areas with post-basic schooling will rise with increased participation, which should be both more equitable and have an impact on livelihoods and employment. The externalities associated with more schooling (improved family health, nutrition, lower fertility, etc.) are also very significant, especially for girls. If higher educational participation at post-primary level is seen as part of the definition of poverty, as well as a vector for its reduction, increased access is itself poverty alleviating.

Fourth, it is known that national competitiveness, especially in high value-added modern sector economic activity, depends on knowledge, skills and competencies associated with abstract reasoning, analysis, language and communication skills, and the applications of science and technology. Without this competitiveness, economic growth will stall, government revenues will stagnate, and universal participation at primary level will not be sustainable (Lewin, 2004).

Finally, the general case for investing in PPET is clear, with evidence suggesting that those with secondary schooling increase their chances of formal sector employment (Appleton, 2001). Informal sector work also benefits from skills and competencies acquired from secondary level schooling (Keating, 2001), whilst export-led growth is associated more with investments at post-primary than at primary level (Wood and Mayer, 1999; Wood and Ridao-Cano, 1996). As elsewhere, many employers give preference to those certificated from successful general secondary schooling (Keating, 2001). Moreover, it is generally agreed that secure post-primary education enhances trainability, provides more access at less cost and is more likely to show positive rates of return on investment than pre-career technical and vocational training (World Bank Policy Paper on Vocational and Technical Training, 1991).

Various studies (Appleton, 2001, Keating, 2001 and Wood et al., 1999) have shown that post-primary educational services in Uganda are in demand and are valued[49]. However, the key policy question, especially by 2001, was what form they should take. There are legitimate arguments about the relevance and utility of Uganda's post-primary school system. It has an outdated and overloaded curriculum: there is the dominance of examinations whilst certification shapes learning and teaching to narrowly defined outcomes. It also promotes the prevalence of didactic teacher-centred pedagogy. These indicate the need for curriculum reform, creative innovations in learning and teaching and assessment systems that capture valued learning outcomes: they do not necessarily lead to a case for a radically different system of PPET which could feasibly replace the existing school system for which there is much effective demand. Arguments that investment at post-primary level does not directly contribute to reducing poverty are fragile, nor are they generally believed by the poor, who sacrifice disproportionate amounts of their income to participate in post-primary education. Neither do elites share this view, as evidenced by their willingness to finance private schooling (Lewin and Sayed, 2005).

5.3   The Approach

For the reasons set out above the GoU and its development partners began a process aimed at exploring how access to PPET in Uganda could be expanded in equitable and efficient ways. A five-stage approach to the planning process was agreed.

---

[49] Enrolling nearly 800,000 pupils.

In the first stage, a series of studies was commissioned and developed to look at various aspects of the problem. In the second stage, reports from the various studies were disseminated to a group of key stakeholders and, with the facilitation of an international PPET financing specialist, a set of options for expanding access, based on specially-designed projections and financing models, was developed. These options were then discussed further with a wider set of stakeholders and gaps in knowledge were identified and filled. In the fourth stage, the fully developed and costed policy options were used as the basis for a national consultation and consensus building exercise covering the length and breadth of the country. The consultation process culminated in a national policy forum during which policy and financing decisions were made. In the final stage of development, the agreed policy and financing decisions were translated into a strategic plan of action and included within the government's education Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF). The aim was for the policy decisions to be implemented from July 2003, the beginning of the financial year.

5.3.1 Stage One: Studying the Problem

During 2000/2001 the MoES commissioned a number of major inter-related studies by national and international consultants with the support of its development partners as part of the preparatory work for the development of a comprehensive strategy for post-primary education and training (PPET) in Uganda. The studies included (i) an analysis of management and internal efficiency; (ii) a study of the demand by urban-based firms for post-primary school graduates; (iii) an analysis of the unit costs of post-primary education and training institutions; (iv) an analysis of the quality of education in post-primary education and training institutions; (v) a review and analysis of teacher utilisation; (vi) an analysis of access to and use of instructional materials; and (vii) the development of financing options for PPET. The findings of the studies were brought together in a comprehensive summary document prepared by the World Bank on behalf of the MoES.

The studies were designed to fill important knowledge gaps regarding the post-primary education and training sub-sector in Uganda. Together they provided the main basis for a consultative process that ultimately led to a Ugandan post-primary education policy framework and strategy for a ten year period. In particular, the studies examined the financial, sustainability, and equity implications of the various policy proposals and promises made by the government. One of these included the establishment of community polytechnics across the country and the vocationalisation of the secondary curriculum.

The studies and their findings and recommendations are briefly described below. The summaries of each study are drawn from the reports themselves and full acknowledgement is given to the respective authors as indicated.

(i) The study to assess key aspects of the management and internal efficiency of the PPET system (Bennell and Sayed, 2002) focused on the following issues:

- organisation and management of the PPET system (including decentralisation);
- teacher management (hiring, firing, deployment, promotions and remuneration);
- student admissions;

- enrolment, transition, repetition and dropout rates;
- curriculum models and compliance;
- teacher development and utilisation (including student-teacher ratios);
- tuition and fees and fee waivers;
- inspection;
- management information system;
- distance education.

The report showed that considerable scope existed for improving the efficiency and management of the post-primary education system in Uganda. In particular, the study demonstrated how a number of changes could be made to the overall structure and coverage of PPET in order to improve efficiency and expand enrolments. These changes included achieving greater systems coherence through the establishment of an organisation and management structure that brought together the two main departments, the Department of Business Technical Vocational Education and Training (BTVET) and the Secondary Education Department (SED) as well as the other key MoES departments and organisations (Uganda National Examinations Board, the universities, National Teachers Colleges) involved in post-primary education and training.

The study found that there were potentially sizeable economies of scale to be achieved in the provision of secondary education and made recommendations regarding improved management and the expansion of existing government-aided schools and in the use of distance learning. It found that most school managers, boards of governors and teachers were opposed to double shifting. It also argued that the private sector should play an increasingly significant role in the expanded provision of post-primary education. Private schools are already price-competitive in Uganda because they are able to employ trained teachers at less than half the level of public sector teacher salaries and because they do not adhere to MoES teaching load norms. However, poor quality remains a major issue that has to be addressed. The report encouraged the MoES to engage positively with non-government providers of education services and to develop strong partnerships with private sector providers at both national and District levels.

A key strategic objective of the MoES is to more than double secondary numbers and to increase the pupil:teacher ratio from the current level of around 22:1 to 40:1 by 2008. At the same time, it wants to limit class size to 45 pupils. The study showed that these objectives would be impossible to attain given the current constraints on teacher utilisation and the number of classrooms available. With the current number of classrooms and teachers in post, even a national average class size of 60 would only enable enrolments to increase by around 30 to 40%. In addition, all teachers would need to teach at least the prescribed number of periods per week. To achieve this, one solution proposed by the reports is for many more teachers to teach more than one subject.

More generally, the study recommended that the whole issue of teaching loads should be re-examined. Given low pay and generally poor working conditions, it is not surprising that teachers are opposed to proposals to increase the number of periods they have to teach per week. The fact remains, however, that the ratio of teaching time to other professional activities is very low as are teaching loads, certainly by North European standards.[50]

---

[50] A secondary school teacher in the United Kingdom teaches between 22 and 30 hours a week. In Uganda a relatively well-trained and paid graduate teacher who takes only A level classes has an average teaching load of 2.5 hours per day. The 26 periods per week proposed by the MoES's report on workloads appear reasonable, therefore.

The study found that improved teacher management and development could result in very sizeable improvements in secondary school efficiency and overall performance. To achieve these results, however, teacher training institutions (both NTCs and universities) would need to develop training plans that respond directly to the SED's strategic objectives. In particular, teacher training would need to become more demand-driven with respect to both student numbers and curriculum objectives and content. The pre-service teacher training curriculum would also need to be adapted to ensure that all teachers are well prepared to teach at least two subjects. As the report observes, there is no point in training teachers who are unable to find suitable employment. NTCs and universities should therefore meet specified teacher requirements, especially for those subjects where there are serious shortages.

Finally, the report made recommendations regarding teacher recruitment, ghost teachers, teacher absenteeism, annual appraisal of teachers' performance, inspection of schools, career progression and remuneration and professional development and dismissal procedures, including the strengthening of the Education Services Commission.

The report concluded that, unless accompanied by very significant improvements in physical resources and teacher remuneration and an increase in resource utilisation, expansion would almost certainly lead to deterioration in education quality.

(ii) The study of the demand by urban-based companies for post-primary school graduates (Keating, 2001) concentrated upon O (Ordinary) level Certificate, A (Advanced) level certificate, and vocational training certificate graduates. The study examined employers' methods of recruitment, criteria used in making recruitment decisions, the skills and attributes that they value in employees and attitudes towards post-primary graduates. It also provided information on the training programmes of firms, the attitude of employers to the employment of women, the government's proposed community polytechnics and reforms to secondary education. Finally, it attempted to identify patterns of employment across different sizes of firms and different industry sectors.

The study utilised data from the 1999 Ugandan Household Survey and consultations with key industry organisations and a sample of post-primary education providers. The main source of data was an interview-based survey of 407 companies in Kampala and three other major towns. The findings were cross-referenced and included an analysis and description of the labour force.

A key finding was that a very small percentage (less than 20%) of the Ugandan workforce has post-primary qualifications. Given the small size of the formal industry sector in the country, it is not surprising to find that post-primary graduates are strongly over-represented in this sector. The formal industry sector in Uganda has a relatively small public component, largely following the recent programme of privatisation. Most public sector employees are in education and health, and these workers are mainly located in non-urban areas. The public sector, therefore, formed a relatively small component of the study.

Most post-primary graduates in the formal labour market hold either pre-A level certificates or technical and vocational education certificates or diplomas. There are few workers (less than 5%) who hold the A-level certificate as their highest qualification, which confirms the A level's

role as preparation for tertiary studies. The small number of degree holders indicates the elite nature of this level of education. Patterns across gender indicate a bias in favour of males. There is a high frequency of holders of post-primary qualifications whose fathers held post-primary qualifications, as is typical of most countries.

The study showed a clear pattern of higher salaries for men in most categories, and higher salaries for management level positions. The study also showed a clear pattern of high level salaries for A level compared to O level graduates. It is of interest that salaries for secondary technical graduates were nearly as high or as high as those for A level graduates. While salaries for women were not as high as those for men across the categories, women were generally younger than men and tended to have been employed in the company concerned for a shorter period of time.

A high percentage of companies indicated that entry qualifications had risen over the past two years and, whilst there was some suggestion of vocational specificity in recruitment patterns, the overall evenness of the patterns suggested that post-primary qualifications had a threshold effect in the labour market, especially for larger companies. In this sense, employers clearly valued general attributes in graduates, especially behavioural attributes, rather than specific vocational or technical skills.

Respondents were asked to indicate from which qualification category they would prefer to recruit: O level, secondary vocational certificate, A level and degree. Technical certificates were preferred in occupationally specific roles, with A and O levels preferred mainly for the general and behavioural qualities holders possess. A high level of importance of industrial work experience was signalled.

Overall it was found that employment demand is located in three broad domains: a residual demand for occupationally specific skills, which are delivered by some qualifications; general skills and aptitudes, which are delivered to some degree by all qualifications; and work readiness, which generally requires workplace experience. In general, smaller firms are looking more towards the first and third sets of attributes. Larger companies and the more dynamic sectors are more willing to invest in general skills and attributes.

Employers stressed the importance of oral communication skills, initiative and problem-solving skills. Personal qualities such as honesty, punctuality and reliability are valued as are a range of other attributes, qualities and skills, including written communication, numeracy, friendliness, enthusiasm and politeness. The study confirmed the value placed in workers being able to "get the job done", rather than the potential to do so. This confirmed a trend throughout the study which suggested that employers are generally satisfied with the educational qualities of graduates, although they would prefer them to be more "work-ready".

About two-thirds of respondents stated that the possibility of young women becoming mothers would not prevent them from being hired, although the possibility of applicants becoming mothers would influence the recruitment decision.

Respondents were asked to describe any training programmes supported by their companies. Patterns of responses indicated that larger firms are more likely to support training than smaller

ones. The use of external training providers was limited, whilst most programmes do not lead to a recognised qualification or certificate.

When asked for proposals to reform post-primary education and training, a large percentage of respondents indicated their support for some form of vocationalisation. Suggestions took a number of forms, but matched the broad trend of the need to make graduates more work-ready, or more work-aware.

The study recorded a strong demand for post-primary graduates from the formal industry sector in Uganda, which is consistent with other studies which indicate higher rates of return for post-primary education. This demand is differentiated by two tendencies: that of the demand for generic skills, which tends to emphasise behavioural attributes, and a residual demand for occupational skills, which concentrates to an extent upon technical graduates at the school and post-school levels. Within these patterns there is strong support for all qualifications, notably technical and higher education. There is also some support within industry for a greater vocational emphasis within the curriculum. In this regard the study highlighted some outstanding issues concerning the government's plans for community polytechnics (which have not been designed for the formal labour market), the nature of vocationalisation, the structure of secondary education and its qualifications, and the role of private education.

Several recommendations were made relating to expanding access to post-primary education and training and improving the quality of education and training at this level. Significant was the recommendation that the secondary school curriculum should concentrate upon general rather than vocationally specific or occupational skills studies, and that students should be able to maintain options for the work and study pathways as long as possible. Other recommendations included the introduction of measures to strengthen the work orientation of students in the form of general work skills, rather than occupational skills. To achieve this, the study proposed that industry and employer organisations should be invited to make an active contribution towards curriculum and course development. It recommended that the O and A levels should be designed as certificates that could lead to both further study and employment. As such, the curriculum would need to contain general skills that are valued by employers. In this regard the study argued that consideration should be given to achieving more diversity and flexibility in the structure of the A levels so as to allow for alternative pathways into tertiary education and employment. Finally, it was proposed that consideration should be given to more flexible arrangements for the secondary technical certificate, including partial integration with the O and A level certificates. To this end it was suggested that the MoES should assist schools and students to make contact with the formal industry sector and gain experience in the workplace. Finally, the study urged caution in the development and expansion of community polytechnics as the findings indicated that, because the quality of their graduates was generally perceived as poor, they were unlikely to be in high demand from industry.

(iii) The analysis of unit costs (Tulya-Muhika, 2002) involved the study of a nationally representative sample of 120 post-primary institutions sampled from the four regions of Uganda. The recurrent unit costs of each institution were calculated and variations were assessed, including private, government, urban, rural, mixed schools, boys' schools, girls' schools, general secondary schools, technical schools, farm schools, O level schools and A

level schools. A national average recurrent expenditure per capita per annum was calculated and explained. The study included an analysis of capital assets and capitalisation trends and variations were assessed. Expenditures on school supplies, by far the most significant influence on the overall recurrent expenditure of post-primary institutions in Uganda, were calculated, assessed and compared. Expenditures on teaching and administrative staff were also examined.

The major findings of the study were that:

- on average, the Eastern Region of the country displays the lowest recurrent unit cost at Ush 365,106 per capita per annum while the highest recurrent unit cost is for institutions in the Central Region (at Ush 653,454). The national average recurrent expenditure per capita per annum is about Ush 550,000;
- with respect to capital assets, institutions in the Northern Region are, marginally, the least capitalised (at Ush 1,500,000 assets worth per capita) while institutions in the Central Region are the most capitalised (at about Ush 3 million per capita). However, institutions in the Northern Region are capitalising faster and acquiring assets more rapidly than those in the Western Region (Ush 610,024 per capita) and the Eastern Region (at about Ush 400,000 per capita). A level schools are the most capitalised institutions (at over Ush 2 million per capita) compared with O level schools (at just over Ush 0.5 million per capita). The national average capitalisation level is about Ush 2 million per capita, largely influenced by the relatively high figure of Ush 3 million per capita in the Central Region;
- generally, private schools are better capitalised than public schools;
- school supplies have the greatest influence on the overall recurrent expenditure of post-primary institutions in Uganda;
- administrative staff are generally poorly paid and exert the least influence on recurrent expenditures;
- boarding schools are uniformly more expensive in all expenditure categories, followed by technical/farm schools. Girls-only schools tend to be more expensive than boys-only or mixed schools;
- rural schools tend on average to spend more on school supplies than urban schools (lowest) and peri-urban schools (in-between), which can be partly attributed to the cost of management and the distance between rural schools and their sources of supplies (usually urban centres).

(iv) The quality study undertaken by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) in 2002 was designed to look at the relationship between unit costs and learning outcomes. Although the Ugandan Certificate of Education (UCE) and the Ugandan Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE) reflect the extent to which students master the curriculum materials, the syllabi are heavily driven by higher education selection purposes and are not useful indicators of learning achievement. To understand how students master basic core competencies of reading and numeracy, the ministry commissioned UNEB, with support from an international test expert, to design and administer competency based mathematics and English tests to selected samples of Form 1 and Form 3 students in the 120 schools selected by the unit cost study consultants.

UNEB analysed the results of the tests and compared the levels of learning achievement across the various institutions. They also analysed the relationships between unit cost, students' socio-economic backgrounds and learning achievement.

The results of the analysis revealed that 36% of Form 1 students failed mathematics, obtaining less than 40 out of 100 marks, and that 28.6% failed English. On the assumption that the tests are comparable in terms of difficulty-to-grade, mathematics achievement seemed to worsen as students proceeded to Form 3: 48.3% failed at this level. A different trend was observed with English in that a slightly smaller proportion of students (22.5%) failed the Form 3 English test compared to Form 1. The tests clearly showed that students in secondary schools do better than students in technical schools in all subjects, whilst students from boarding schools do better than students from other schools in all subjects. Students from single-sex schools do better than students from mixed schools in all subjects; boys-only schools do better than girls-only schools in mathematics whilst girls-only schools do better than boys-only in English.

There were only two counter-intuitive findings. The first was that rural students did better than urban students in mathematics, whilst the second was that O level schools did better than A-level schools in all but mathematics. The study was unable to explain these findings except that the quality of teaching was probably poorer at A level.

(v) The teacher utilisation study (IMPACT Associates and Monarch Consulting, 2001) looked at efficiency and effectiveness, and assessed utilisation levels on a national basis, using ASC and payroll data against benchmarks of optimal utilisation. International and regional comparisons were also made. Key findings were related to overall pupil: teacher ratios in secondary schools and comparable institutions by average teaching loads and contact time with students. The study focused on the variation in teacher utilisation by subject and location, and made recommendations for efficiency improvements.

The main findings of the study were that secondary teachers in Uganda are under-utilised. The overall pupil:teacher ratio in secondary schools is 17:1, well below the African average ratio of 25:1. The average teaching load is about 22.5 periods per week, less than half of the 50 periods provided to students weekly. There is much variation in teacher utilisation by subject and location, and there is thus considerable room for efficiency improvements.

Compared to the GDP per capita income of US$320 for all Ugandans, secondary teachers in Uganda can be considered to be fairly well paid with average salaries equivalent to US$1,787, not to mention the shorter hours of work and long summer vacation which teachers enjoy. Teachers in private schools, who are mostly paid out of PTA funds, generally receive less than those paid by the government. Further, the pay disparity between graduate and lower grades may be too large to be justified.

On the other hand, the study made clear that teacher working conditions are generally poor. Schools lack basic teaching and learning materials, libraries and laboratories. There is also a lack of a coherent incentive and career structure for teachers. Apart from the qualification upgrading of the Grade V teachers, teachers generally receive little in-service training. The teacher utilisation study found that, on average, teachers had attended only 1.8 refresher courses since 1993.

(vi) The study of instructional materials in PPET (Buchan et al., 2002) looked at the levels of textbook provision, use and PPET students' access to basic textbooks. The analysis included a calculation of textbook: pupil ratios, particularly in core subjects (mathematics and English). The study also looked at major sources of subject information for students, including the blackboard or dictated notes and the use of informal pamphlets and "crammers". The study assessed the availability of school libraries and their collections of textbooks, fiction and basic supplementary and reference books. In addition, the study looked at government financial support for secondary education in the form of salaries, maintenance grants and development grants and compared this with the annual operational budgets of assisted schools and secondary education operational and development costs. The costs of sets of textbooks were compared to full year school fees and school budgets for textbooks and libraries. Finally, the study reviewed the current MoES system of centralised textbook procurement and distribution and made recommendations for improved, demand-led procurement and distribution systems.

The study found that the overwhelming majority of secondary schools in Uganda consider making available suitable textbooks as a very high priority and a key factor in improving student performance. Few secondary schools in Uganda, if any, have satisfactory levels of textbook provision; most have very few textbooks and there are many schools with none. The study reported that textbook: pupil ratios, even in the core subjects of mathematics and English, are rarely better than 1:5, and are frequently 1:10. Instances of 1:20 or worse were found.

The major sources of subject information available to students are in the form of blackboard or dictated notes or the use of informal, often plagiarised, pamphlets used as "crammers". These notes are often sold to students. The major source of subject information for teachers is often their own student notes from their period as secondary school students. School libraries are not only short of basic textbooks but also lack rudimentary collections of appropriate fiction, supplementary and reference books. Consequently reading skills and the capacity to research and access information remain undeveloped in much of Ugandan secondary education. The study concluded that the basic problem is affordability. Basic secondary textbook prices are very high when compared with the local purchasing power of Ugandan students. Government financial support for secondary education in the form of salaries, maintenance grants and development grants rarely exceeds 30% of the annual operational budgets of assisted schools, whilst a high proportion of secondary education operational and development costs, even in government-assisted schools, is parentally funded. Indeed, fee levels in private schools and in government-assisted schools of the same category tend to be very similar.

In the majority of secondary schools, particularly in rural areas, parental contributions are very limited, fee defaults are common and most schools operate on a minimum cost basis in which tuition costs and boarding/subsistence costs are absolute priorities. In this situation, where a set of textbooks can cost more than a full year of school fees, it is not surprising to find that many schools operate with no allocated budgets for textbooks and libraries. They rely instead on student purchase of the required texts, and student purchases, except for a minority of students in a few elite secondary schools in Kampala, are the exception rather than the rule.

Private schools are already providing secondary education for a majority of secondary students in the country and the private sector is projected to become even more dominant over the next

eight to ten years. But private schools generally represent the poorest and most deprived sector of secondary education and need the most assistance. They also need effective regulation and quality control.

Only one out of 35 schools visited in this study had an annual operational textbook budget calculated to achieve and maintain minimum acceptable levels of textbook provision and availability. Government financial support for secondary textbook provision is small in comparison to need. It is also poorly targeted, over-centralised, lacking in impact and not cost effective. The current MoES system of centralised textbook procurement and distribution cannot, by its nature, be responsive to school needs and priorities and should be replaced by a switch to consumer-based funding in which schools are provided with funds to purchase their priority needs. Moreover, there is no established objective and transparent procedure for evaluating and selecting textbooks for centralised bulk purchase, nor is there a clear-cut MoES policy on how to utilise the available funding to the best effect.

The study further showed that schools are provided with no guidance on the best available textbooks and the best value for money. Apart from literature set books there is no MoES recommended or approved list for secondary school textbooks. Few schools have access to good comparative information on secondary school textbooks and there is a tendency to perpetuate the textbooks used by the teachers when they were at school. This tendency to perpetuate old textbooks in use is strongly reinforced by the lack of funding, which only allows the replacement of a few copies of a textbook set each year, but is rarely enough to fund the introduction of a completely new set of textbooks. The study noted that the demise of literature as an examination subject is widely attributed to rapid changes in the list of literature set books and the consequent inability of many schools and students to afford completely new sets of books. As a result, very few students now opt for literature as an examination subject.

The study warned that the introduction of the new secondary curriculum, with its requirement for new subjects and new textbooks, could create a serious worsening of the already dire textbook situation by requiring large investments in new textbooks, which will be unaffordable for a majority of schools and students. The study argued that the new curriculum could easily make a bad textbook availability situation much worse unless specific textbook strategies are in place to support it.

The study noted that there is no conscious, downward price pressure applied to secondary school textbooks. Retail prices in the bookshops are not unreasonable in comparison to prices in the UK and Kenya, but they are unreasonable in comparison to local purchasing power. There is no attempt by the MoES to prioritise titles which are more affordable within the Ugandan context, nor to create an environment which offers sales incentives to good textbooks made available at good prices. There is no specific policy to encourage the development of textbooks specifically for the Ugandan secondary curriculum which would simultaneously reward good and realistic pricing policies.

Finally, the study found that textbook availability for purchase is good in Kampala and reasonably good in a few provincial centres, but poor to non-existent in the rest of the country. Many school libraries are too small and lack adequate shelving and study spaces. There is a lack

of trained school librarians and a widespread failure to appreciate the performance benefits that could accrue from a well-developed school library at the heart of school teaching and learning activities.

It is clear that the introduction of the new curriculum provides an opportunity for a complete rethink of the current approach to textbook and other instructional materials provision in Uganda and thus an opportunity to create a new system which will be better adjusted to current Ugandan realities and more affordable to parents, students, schools and the GoU.

Recommendations pointing to a new approach which could lead to a largely self-sustaining system of basic textbook and library provision included the following:

- an approved secondary school textbook list/list of literature set books;
- supplier versus consumer oriented textbook funding;
- textbook procurement reforms similar to those introduced in primary education;
- a national textbook rental scheme, including matching funds from government to finance the initial stock whilst rental fees are built up;
- managing the introduction of the new curriculum to allow sufficient time for the development of suitable instructional materials at affordable prices.

(vii) The financing options for PPET and the issues associated with these were analysed in a piece of work completed by a team of two consultants (Byaruhanga and Levine, 2002). This study was designed to assist the MoES with the processes of integrating issues with the data arising from the various studies that had been commissioned. In particular the study looked at the extent to which public funds cover the total direct costs of secondary education. The study also used poverty measures and "educational deficit" analysis to assess the equity of current government expenditures on PPET. In addition, issues of private finance, including direct costs (payments to schools for fees, levies and other expenses plus other direct costs such as uniforms, books, and supplies) and the "opportunity cost" of children's time (the value of what children would have been doing, if they were not in school) were also reviewed.

A rough first approximation of the "shortfall" between current funding and the objective of "universal, compulsory and free" PPET was calculated. In addition, issues related to the long-term financial sustainability of the sub-sector, with special reference to recurrent costs, were explored. The study raised issues related to the "broader policy context" in which the PPET strategy was planned to evolve. The study highlighted recurrent costs as the key constraint to growth, identified issues related to mobilisation of additional resources and provided some suggestions on the way forward. Based on year 2000 school census data, the study showed that public funds cover less than one-third (31%) of the total direct costs of secondary education. Public funds appear to reach about half of PPET students and, on the basis of District averages, appear to be unequally allocated, with the government share of total expenditure varying by a factor of 6:1 over the 45 Districts reported. Districts differ substantially in gross enrolment ratios and when the age-eligible population is taken into account, the differential between best and least-supported Districts increases to a factor of 37:1. In terms of poverty measures and "educational deficit", public finance appears to be regressive, with more public funds, on average, going to Districts that are more affluent and relatively better off in terms of educational indicators.

In summary, the study showed that public funding is grossly inadequate in terms of stated national policy objectives and appears to be badly targeted in terms of equity and poverty alleviation. Additional analysis using school-level data will be needed to fully examine the issues of adequacy, equity and targeting. As a first approximation of the "shortfall" between current funding and the objective of "universal, compulsory and free" PPET, the study estimated that the PPET budget would need to be about 18 times the Year 2000 allocation. The situation has marginally improved over the last four years since then.

The study also examined public financing of PPET. While substantial public resources have been directed to the education sector over the last five years, these have been mainly for the UPE initiative. The PPET sub-sector has not been central in this shift, thus not benefiting from the enhanced budgetary management associated with government's priority Poverty Action Fund (PAF). This has meant that public resources for PPET are unpredictable both in the medium term planning horizon and operationally. Shortfalls in disbursements, fund diversion and ineffective monitoring and accountability arrangements are therefore common. The study also reviewed public funding mechanisms and trends in the recent past. Analysis of school level financing using data from the 2000 annual school census revealed the limited extent to which public financing supports school level financing, the bulk of resources being raised from private sources. This lends credence to the need to lever public resources more to achieve policy objectives of government effectively.

In this regard the study considered issues of private finance: the analyses were based primarily on data from the Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS) of 1999/2000. Private costs to families are composed of two major components – direct costs (payments to schools for fees, levies and other expenses plus other direct costs such as uniforms, books, and supplies) and the opportunity cost of children's time. Based on multiple regression analysis of household expenditure in relation to children's enrolment at different levels of the system, the study estimated the average direct costs to families at about Ush 240,000 per year for secondary school. Almost 70% of this cost is in the form of fees and PTA levies. Of course, national averages are confounded by the mix of children attending government assisted schools and those bearing full costs, the small proportion of families paying boarding and catering fees, and the large differences in fees and levies between different areas of the country and types of schools.

The study found opportunity costs more difficult to estimate because of limitations in available data. For those P7 completers in the UNHS for whom earned income was reported, average annual earnings were Ush 690,000. When data were adjusted for the shape of the age-earnings profile, the study estimated the income of younger P7 completers (those more like students attending PPET) to be in the order of Ush 500,000 per year. Of course, most (85%) Ugandan P7 leavers do not find formal paid employment. Based on an analysis of household enterprise income, the study found that the presence of one additional young (age 15 to 25) P7 leaver adds about Ush 225,000 to total household enterprise output, controlling for household assets and region. This is about half the level observed in formal sector employment. A weighted average of employment income and household production yields an average opportunity cost of Ush 265,000 per annum, slightly more than the average direct costs of schooling for families.

The opportunity cost analysis also indicated that education is strongly related to household productivity in patterns that appear to be very similar to that of the well-established human capital earnings function model. The study showed that the estimated marginal productivity of secondary graduates appeared to be two or three times that of P7 completers, especially as individuals grow older. This suggests that there is a very high rate of return to PPET in household production (as well as in formal employment). Additional analysis is needed to understand better the mechanisms by which education affects household production (e.g., improved allocative decisions in response to market prices, better use of technology, improved use of extension services) and the implications of this finding for decisions on curricula, the need for comprehensive secondary education, and the justification for increased investment in PPET.

In terms of current financing patterns, the study estimated that the average total cost of secondary (direct plus indirect) was Ush 614,000 per annum in the year 2000. Of this, government funding covers less than 18%. Additional analysis, using school-level data (combined with the unit cost and quality studies), was used to develop a more complete picture of how funding levels and shares differ between different socio-economic segments of the society and the implications for growth of the private sector.

The study also examined issues related to the long-term financial sustainability of the sub-sector, with special reference to recurrent costs. Assuming average real growth of GDP of 6.1% per annum, 32% of the recurrent budget allocated to education, and a 17% allocation to PPET, the study projected a shortfall (difference between government recurrent funding and age-eligible population) of about 5.5 million PPET places by 2010. In terms of the more modest targets of a 58% GER by 2010, the study showed that the shortfall is still in the order of 3 million places. MoES projection models incorporate the assumption that private provision will increase over this period to accommodate the shortfall in public funds The analysis in the study of private costs and current patterns of access (in which the highest income quintile occupies 65% of places) suggests that this is unlikely to happen and that GER targets will not be met.

In summary, the report of the study concluded that demand-led finance appeared to be one of the most promising options for Uganda as private schools have lower average unit costs than government schools.

5.3.2   Stage Two: Developing Options

Concurrent with the completion of the inter-related studies, the MoES and its development partners began a process of developing options for increasing access to PPET based on the findings of the various studies. This work was facilitated by an international specialist in financing secondary education and managed by a PPET task force formed by the MoES with participation from other line ministries and education development partner representatives. PPET provision was projected over ten years using a purpose-built model. This consisted of eight interlinked matrices of data reflecting different elements of the system. These use a variety of algorithms to generate flows of pupils and associate these with a range of key parameters such as pupil:teacher ratios, teacher demand, teachers' salaries, non-teaching staff and non-salary costs. These were used to generate transition rates, gross enrolment rates, and recurrent and development costs which were then aggregated. The model was developed with the best input

data then available from a range of sources, including the reports of the inter-related studies. As better baseline data becomes available the model can be updated (MoES, 2002).

In the first stage of developing policy options, the model was configured for a baseline stage. This took known and realistic policy intentions into account and introduced a variety of activities designed to increase access, equity and efficiency. The model was iterated with an MTBF envelope which assumed a growth rate of 6.5%. Conversely, if growth was 5% or less and the share of the education budget allocated to PPET fell, then less would be achieved.

The task force spent several weeks working through the options and refining the model with the support of the facilitator and finally presented the draft options in the form of a draft policy options paper. Three basic options were developed. The two tables below (Tables 19 and 20) illustrate the consolidated reforms and activities included in the baseline model.

A set of spreadsheets was used to consolidate key aspects of the baseline model and generate the ten year projection (Lewin, 2002). The baseline model was then re-run to explore the effects of some changes in key parameters. They represented what would happen if PTRs at secondary remained unchanged and the number of teachers was allowed to grow accordingly. In this model the growth of S1 enrolments was kept the same as in the baseline model, community polytechnics were constructed according to the latest full-cost proposal which would result in 240 existing by 2006, and the secondary school building/conversion programme was continued, giving 480 institutions by 2011/12. By 2006, 21,000 students would be enrolled, and 124,000 by 2011. The other activities were retained as in the baseline model. Tables 21 and 22 below illustrate the key indicators and activities of the status quo model.

The status quo model was unsustainable, however, as it would require over 40% of the education budget and would create recurrent deficits for secondary education of Ush 28 billion and Ush 60 billion in 2006 and 2011 respectively, and Ush 16 billion and Ush 78 billion for BTVET. It would not deliver a substantial gain in transition rates, nor would secondary GER in government schools change, whilst the increased BTVET enrolment would add at most about 8% to the GER after ten years if places were taken up. Over 25,000 additional teachers would be needed in the secondary sector, working at the same levels of efficiency as today. Some 5,300 teachers would be required in community polytechnics.

A third version of the model, radical reform, sought to proceed more rapidly towards expanding access by ensuring that all sub-counties have access to secondary schooling by 2006. This required a faster increase in PTRs and reduced enrolments in NTCs to reflect actual demand for teachers, but no community polytechnic programme, since each sub-county would have a secondary school. Additional institutions could not be supported within the envelope.
The model provides for enhanced capitation to be directed to schools serving disadvantaged groups. It also freezes publicly-funded growth in post school BTVET on the assumption that colleges would continue to receive the current number of Window 1 students, and any growth would be in Window 2 self-financing students.

With this configuration it was possible to achieve higher transition rates and GERs much closer to previously announced targets, and, indeed, 518 schools could be built and fully staffed by

Table 19: **Consolidated Reforms and Activities in the Baseline Model with Incremental Reforms**

Key Indicators	2002	2006	2011
Total Primary Enrolment	371107	461600	598038
Total P7 Enrolment	601987	828452	949803
Transition rate P7–S1 (Government)	23	15	17
Transition rate P7–S1 (Total)	54	36	39
Gross Enrolment Rate (Government)	16	18	20
Gross Enrolment Rate (Total)	35	40	45
S1 Entry Enrolment (Government)	103940	135702	169191
S1 Entry Enrolment (Total)	140540	183432	228701
Rate of Growth of S1 Entry (Government)	1.075	1.05	1.025
Rate of Growth of S1 Entry (Private)	1.075	1.05	1.025
Total Enrolment Secondary (Government)	371107	461600	598038
Total Enrolment Secondary	808832	1007660	1302320
T1 Enrolment	5500	6685	8532
TS Enrolment	6000	7293	9308
Secondary Teachers (Government)	14396	15444	16873
New Secondary Teachers Needed (Government)	966	1343	1102
New Secondary Teachers Needed (Private)	1012	1550	1250
CP Teachers Needed	0	125	175
College Enrolments (W1)	13116	15924	20347
NTC Enrolments (W1)	8400	8400	8400
PTRs Secondary	23	27	32
PTRs BTVET TI	9	9	9
PTRs BTVET TS	11	11	11
PTRs CPS	24	24	24
Total Recurrent Secondary	68.4	91.5	125.6
MTBF Recurrent Secondary	68.2	87.7	120.1
Balance Recurrent Secondary	-0.3	-3.8	-5.5
Total Development Secondary	5.9	15.5	17.1
MTBF Development Secondary	7.1	9.2	12.6
Balance Development Secondary	1.3	-6.4	-4.6
Total Recurrent BTVET	14.7	20.3	29.3
MTBF Recurrent BTVET	15.4	22.5	36.3
Balance Recurrent BTVET	0.7	2.3	7.0
Total Development BTVET	3.0	4.8	2.8
MTBF Development BTVET	4.6	5.9	8.1
Balance Development BTVET	1.5	1.0	5.3
GoU Budget	1228.0	1606.1	2200.4
MTBF Growth Rate	0.065	0.065	0.065
Recurrent			
% to Education	30.7	31.0	31.0
% to Secondary	18.1	18.1	18.1
% to BTVET	4.0	4.0	4.2

Table 20: Activities for Baseline Model

Activities	Initial Year	2002-06	2007-11	Total 2002-11
Secondary				
Build new schools in disadvantaged sub counties	15	196	273	469
New classrooms added to schools	77	982	1364	2346
Rehabilitated classrooms	100	640	560	1200
New Labs/Workshops	12	157	218	375
Textbook stocking, grants, rental (Ush billions)	2	11	14	25
Equipment restocking (Ush billions)	1.0	5.4	7.1	12.4
Bursaries (cost in Ush billions)	0	2	3	
Capitation (cost in Ush billions)	6	9	14	
BTVET				
New CPs	0.0.	14.0	0.0	14.0
Converted CPs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rehabilitated TS	6.0	30.0	0.0	30.0
Rehabilitated IS	6.0	30.0	0.0	30.0
Rehabilitated Colleges (cost in Ush billions)	1.5	8.4	12.0	20.4

Year 2006 using this model. Over 1000 classrooms and 700 laboratories or workshops could also be built over the same period, whilst textbook spending could also be enhanced. The most critical assumption in this model was that PTR would rise rapidly to target levels with numbers enrolled increasing considerably to 1.8 million by 2011, giving higher transition rates rising to 55% and a GER of over 60%. Teachers employed would rise initially (2006) to 16,700, and then (2011) to 19,800.

The recurrent budget in Year 2006 would have a deficit of around Ush 9 billion, whilst BTVET would be in surplus by Ush 12 billion. On the development budget, the figures for each would be a Ush 23 billion deficit and Ush 3 billion surplus.

The implication of this model is that an enhanced development budget would be needed to achieve higher rates of growth. Most of the development costs would be for new school buildings. On the other hand, if the average price could be reduced through cost sharing and economies of scale in purchasing costs, the deficit could fall by Ush 6 billion to about Ush 17 billion.

On this projection PPET would absorb about 22% of government recurrent expenditure on education. BTVET's share would drop significantly.

Tables 23 and 24 illustrate the key indicators and activities of the Radical Reform Model.

A variant of the model was considered but found to be unsustainable. It increased the level of activity and speeded the rate of progress towards enrolment targets.

Table 21:   Key Indicators: Status Quo Model

Key Indicators	2002	2006	2011
Total Primary Enrolment	371107	461600	598038
Total P7 Enrolment	601987	828452	949803
Transition rate P7–S1 (Government)	23	15	17
Transition rate P7–S1 (Total)	55	39	45
Gross Enrolment Rate (Government)	16	18	20
Gross Enrolment Rate (Total)	36	42	50
S1 Entry Enrolment (Government)	103940	135702	169191
S1 Entry Enrolment (Total)	143716	205748	288705
Rate of Growth of S1 Entry (Government)	1.075	1.05	1.025
Rate of Growth of S1 Entry (Private)	1.075	1.05	1.25
Total Enrolment Secondary (Government)	371107	461600	598038
Total Enrolment Secondary	812009	1054298	1456580
T1 Enrolment	5500	6685	8532
TS Enrolment	6000	7293	9308
Secondary Teachers (Government)	14522	18063	23402
New Secondary Teachers Needed (Government)	1119	2413	2432
New Secondary Teachers Needed (Private)	1179	3565	4240
CP Teachers Needed	0	887	4562
College Enrolments (W1)	13116	15924	20347
NTC Enrolments (W1)	8820	10721	13683
PTRs Secondary	23	23	23
PTRs BTVET TI	9	9	9
PTRs BTVET TS	11	11	11
PTRs CPS	15	15	15
Total Recurrent Secondary	78.4	115.4	179.8
MTBF Recurrent Secondary	68.2	87.7	120.1
Balance Recurrent Secondary	-10.2	-27.8	-59.7
Total Development Secondary	5.9	15.5	17.1
MTBF Development Secondary	7.1	9.2	12.6
Balance Development Secondary	1.3	-6.4	-4.6
Total Recurrent BTVET	15.2	39.0	115.2
MTBF Recurrent BTVET	15.4	22.5	36.3
Balance Recurrent BTVET	0.2	-16.4	78.9
Total Development BTVET	3.1	20.4	24.4
MTBF Development BTVET	4.6	5.9	8.1
Balance Development BTVET	1.5	-14.5	-16.4
GoU Budget	1228.0	1606.1	2200.4
MTBF Growth Rate	0.065	0.065	0.065
Recurrent			
% to Education	30.7	31.0	31.0
% to Secondary	20.8	23.2	26.4
% to BTVET	4.0	6.2	15.2

Table 22:   Activities: Status Quo Model

Activities	Initial Year	2002-06	2007-11	Total 2002-11
Secondary				
Build new schools in disadvantaged sub counties	15	196	273	469
New classrooms added to schools	77	982	1364	2346
Rehabilitated classrooms	100	640	560	1200
New Labs/Workshops	12	157	218	375
Textbook stocking, grants, rental (Ush billions)	2	11	14	25
Equipment restocking (Ush billions)	1.0	5.4	7.1	12.4
Bursaries (cost in Ush billions)	3	3	3	
Capitation (cost in Ush billions)	6	9	14	
BTVET				
New CPs	0.0.	24.0	25.0	49.0
Converted CPs	0.0	156.0	275.0	431.0
Rehabilitated TS	6.0	30.0	0.0	30.0
Rehabilitated IS	6.0	30.0	0.0	30.0
Rehabilitated Colleges (cost in Ush billions)	1.5	9.3	15.2	24.5

5.3.3   Stage Three: Finalising Options

The draft options paper including the three reform models was presented to a wider group of stakeholders. This group included officials from the MoES (including the political leadership of the Ministry), other concerned line ministries, education institutions, local governments, NGOs, teachers and education funding agencies. Following discussions and upon receipt of written comments, the policy options were refined and a final policy options paper was prepared as the basis for national consultation aimed at building consensus for a PPET policy. The final options paper developed by the task force, refined and improved in the light of comments received, included elements of the three policy options. A ten-year projection model, which included potential student flows and budgetary implications, was developed. It went through a number of iterations with the political and budgetary variables being most influential in what was finally agreed. A universal secondary education approach of merely expanding the current system with its existing cost structure and staffing was not feasible or sustainable. The management and internal efficiency study in particular highlighted the problem of inefficient teacher deployment and workloads, but the government was reluctant to call a halt to teacher recruitment, still less to attempt the wholesale redeployment of teachers.

Table 23: Key Indicators: Radical Reform

Key Indicators	2002	2006	2011
Total Primary Enrolment	378158	571891	813769
Total P7 Enrolment	601987	828452	949803
Transition rate P7–S1 (Government)	25	20	23
Transition rate P7–S1 (Total)	58	48	54
Gross Enrolment Rate (Government)	16	23	28
Gross Enrolment Rate (Total)	36	51	61
S1 Entry Enrolment (Government)	110991	179357	232334
S1 Entry Enrolment (Total)	150070	242443	314054
Rate of Growth of S1 Entry (Government)	1.15	1.06	1.025
Rate of Growth of S1 Entry (Private)	1.15	1.06	1.025
Total Enrolment Secondary (Government)	378158	571891	813769
Total Enrolment Secondary	825414	1253953	1773192
T1 Enrolment	5500	5500	5500
TS Enrolment	6000	6000	6000
Secondary Teachers (Government)	14670	16657	19848
New Secondary Teachers Needed (Government)	1301	1621	2179
New Secondary Teachers Needed (Private)	1512	1750	2392
CP Teachers Needed	0	0	0
College Enrolments (W1)	12870	12870	12870
NTC Enrolments (W1)	8400	2400	2400
PTRs Secondary	23	31	37
PTRs BTVET TI	9	9	9
PTRs BTVET TS	11	11	11
PTRs CPS	24	24	24
Total Recurrent Secondary	70.1	97.0	139.0
MTBF Recurrent Secondary	68.2	87.7	120.1
Balance Recurrent Secondary	-2.0	-9.3	-18.8
Total Development Secondary	10.4	32.2	28.0
MTBF Development Secondary	7.1	9.2	12.6
Balance Development Secondary	-3.2	-23.0	-15.4
Total Recurrent BTVET	14.0	10.2	10.2
MTBF Recurrent BTVET	15.4	22.5	36.3
Balance Recurrent BTVET	1.4	12.3	26.1
Total Development BTVET	3.0	2.9	1.0
MTBF Development BTVET	4.6	5.9	8.1
Balance Development BTVET	1.6	3.0	7.0
GoU Budget	1228.0	1606.1	2200.4
MTBF Growth Rate	0.065	0.065	0.065
Recurrent			
% to Education	30.7	31.0	31.0
% to Secondary	18.6	19.5	20.4
% to BTVET	4.0	2.2	1.6

Table 24: Activities: Radical Reform Model

Activities	Initial Year	2002-06	2007-11	Total 2002-11
Secondary				
Build new schools in disadvantaged sub counties	44	518	532	1050
New classrooms added to schools	74	1578	2177	3755
Rehabilitated classrooms	100	640	560	1200
New Labs/Workshops	24	334	387	721
Textbook stocking, grants, rental (Ush billions)	2	12	19	31
Equipment restocking (Ush billions)	1.0	6.0	9.4	15.5
Bursaries (cost in Ush billions)	0	2	3	
Capitation (cost in Ush billions)	7	11	18	
BTVET				
New CPs	0.0.	0.0	0.0	0.0
Converted CPs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rehabilitated TS	6.0	30.0	0.0	30.0
Rehabilitated IS	6.0	30.0	0.0	30.0
Rehabilitated Colleges (cost in Ush billions)	1.4	5.9	5.1	11.0

5.3.4   Stage Four: National Consultation and Consensus Building

The aim at this stage was to achieve a national debate on the future direction of PPET and the three financing options that had been developed. The MoES and its development partners were concerned to ensure as wide a consultation as possible, and in particular to promote decision-making underpinned by resource availability. In taking this forward, MoES's PPET task force agreed a programme and budget for building national consensus which included the following activities:

- media events, such as national and local TV and radio talk shows and discussion programmes;
- a series of articles in national and local newspapers;
- regular press briefings on the development of the policy framework for PPET;
- school-based and workplace meetings between members of the ministry's task force and key stakeholders such as teachers, parents, students, employers and employees;
- regional focus group discussions;
- regional workshops;
- a national workshop;
- a national policy forum chaired by the President.

The task force was also given responsibility for refining the options in the light of the consultations. The process of consensus building culminated in a national forum aimed at making recommendations on the policy to be adopted. The general consensus reached at the national level was that the consolidated reforms and activities included in the Baseline Model with incremental reform (see Table 19 above) was the preferred option.

5.3.5   Stage Five: Translating Policy and Financial Decisions into Strategic Planning and Budgeting Frameworks

Following the closure of the national forum, the MoES's secondary education BTVET and tertiary sub-sector staff, together with staff from the EPD of the MoES, developed the next MTBF and summary paper. It incorporated the agreed options and strategic plans for PPET. For the first time the future financial estimates in these areas were based on clear policies and strategic choices and the previous internal inconsistencies in the figures were removed.

As pointed out in Chapter Two, the Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF) is used as a primary planning and budgeting tool in Ugandan ministries and agencies, projecting expenditures on key activities and revenues from the main sources for every sub-sector over a three-year period and rolled over annually. By projecting priorities for the budget in the medium term, the ministry is in a position to consider sector priorities within the macro economic constraints. MTBF papers are evolving discussions of how the sector considers its priorities in the light of strategic plans for the sub-sectors and so should change from year to year as these strategic plans firm and relative priorities are decided.

PPET had been an area of budgetary concern for some time, especially in the light of the stated policy intention to universalise secondary education in the medium term. Associated with this was the intention to develop a wide-ranging system of community polytechnics for post-primary students. Without clear policy options, decisions had hitherto been impossible. The authors of the rolling medium term expenditure framework (MTEF) and summary paper ensured that they covered all development spending (GoU and donor) in secondary education, and that it reflected the priorities agreed in the national forum. It effectively linked policies, plans and budgets.

Nonetheless, achieving resource allocations based on strategic priorities has proved very difficult to achieve in Uganda's education sector, mainly because it is dependent upon the political process. The PPET planning process aimed at helping political actors to reach agreement on policy based on quality information and analysis, while also taking into account the values and beliefs of both the political and technical constituencies in the country. The process also aimed at supporting and sustaining institutional arrangements that facilitate and require choices to be made in the public interest.

5.4   Discussion

Uganda's experience of planning for increased access to PPET has involved many people from various organisations, mostly with different backgrounds, collaborating over the creation, development and application of knowledge for the purpose of PPET system improvement. This has been a highly complex process and, inevitably, there have been tensions and conflict. Knowledge creation is not the acquisition of best practices as products. It is the ability to generate and learn new ideas. It is, in other words, a very difficult change proposition (Fullan, 1999: 15). The process of PPET policy development especially required the building of capacity for incorporating new ideas within the education sector. Although the formal PPET planning process was logical and analytical, introducing explicit knowledge to the participants, it also exploited deeper, tacit, knowledge (skills and beliefs which are below the level of awareness).

Tacit knowledge is highly personal and hard to formalise and consists of insights, intuitions and hunches based on individuals' experiences, actions, ideals, values and emotions (Polanyi, 1973).

One of the main challenges of the PPET planning process was to identify and convert the tacit knowledge of participants to explicit knowledge that could be applied to the problem of increasing access to PPET: in other words, marrying the logical analysis and projection modelling to the day to day knowledge and skills of the MoES staff and other stakeholders and making these available for system problem solving.

The approach to PPET planning was neither top down nor bottom up: instead, the task force comprising senior and middle managers had to mediate internal and external forces working on the problem. Four primary learning activities were applied in this process: shared, creative problem solving; implementing new approaches, methodologies and tools to address the problem; formal and informal experimentation using the projection model; and drawing upon expertise from the outside, not just consultants, but also participants from other line ministries, local government and education institutions, representatives of employers and other stakeholders.

Leonard (1995: 21) makes a distinction between three types of organisational skills and knowledge: (a) public or scientific; (b) industry-specific; and (c) firm-specific. In our case, the general science knowledge of PPET is public: it is available in numerous and various international publications, reports and other documents; country-specific knowledge is available about PPET in Uganda among MoES staff, academics, consultants and funding agencies; and "in-house" (MoES/education institutions-specific). Knowledge is also in the heads and experiences of employees of the MoES and education institutions. The latter may be described as tacit knowledge and can only be developed by growing it within an organisation. One of the main reasons that the PPET planning process in Uganda was successful was because it was able to make effective use of all three of Leonard's types of skills and knowledge. This is not to say, however, that the process was problem-free. In particular, the third type of knowledge, "in house", was difficult to manage, especially in the discussion of BTVET and, in particular, amongst supporters of the Community Polytechnics programme which carried with it political support at the highest level.

In the case of BTVET, proponents of vocational training argued strongly for the development of the proposed Community Polytechnic system, a parallel system to general secondary schooling. The MoES is strongly committed to the development of a national network of Community Polytechnics as a distinct alternative to academic secondary education. However, the track record of similar post-primary vocational training centres elsewhere in sub-saharan Africa and other low-income countries is disappointing. There are two main sets of reasons for this: first, the lack of effective demand for long-term (two to three year) training in the traditional manual trades, upon which most of these centres concentrate, and second, the enormous difficulties that governments and communities face in ensuring that these training centres are properly equipped, staffed, and resourced. Trying to provide relatively costly vocational training on the cheap rarely works. This highlights the need for more innovative approaches which focus on providing a range of services (and not just long-term training) to young people as well as adults who are seeking to improve their livelihoods, principally through self-employment.

The logical analysis completed by the consultants and the task force demonstrated that a parallel system of institution-based secondary level schooling was unaffordable and that there was likely to be little demand for this type of training. The supporters of Community Polytechnics refused to accept these arguments and instead pressed for additional funds, beyond those available in the MTBF, to implement the programme. As a first step in managing this difficulty, the managers of the planning process encouraged the sharing of tacit knowledge among the various individuals that made up the PPET task force, recognising that they all had different backgrounds, perceptions and motivations. The aim was to incorporate differences early in the process of change (when there is a chance to address problems) rather than avoid conflict only to have to face it later when it is irresolvable. Unfortunately, the differences regarding BTVET remained throughout the process of development and only became manageable within the consultation and consensus building stage of the process when both sides of the argument agreed to let the consensus evolve regardless of their personal motivations.

Concerning potential efficiency savings within the sector, these were probably greatest within the immediate post-primary sub-sectors. Developing strategies for maximising these within the framework of the MTBF and summary paper depended very largely on the decisions of MoES with regard to the strategic directions of the secondary and Community Polytechnic developments. Although stated MoES policy for some years has been to increase the PTR at the secondary level, no steps had been taken thus far to effect this. This may have been because of the lack of development of a strategic plan at this level, in particular for lower secondary, or an unwillingness of government to provoke secondary schools and secondary school teachers by increasing workloads. The options paper pointed out clearly that a universal secondary education approach of merely expanding the current system with its existing cost structure and staffing was not feasible or sustainable. The management and internal efficiency study in particular highlighted the problem of inefficient teacher deployment and workloads, but the government was reluctant to call a halt to teacher recruitment, still less to attempt the wholesale redeployment of teachers. As with the BTVET discussion, a truce was negotiated between the different sides of the arguments whilst the national consultation and consensus building process went forward.

In analysing the process, therefore, it is possible to identify the key institutional and political characteristics which enable this to happen. These include:

• a fairly coherent and cohesive political executive with a well defined vision of where to take the country, at least in terms of poverty eradication;
• a political executive committed to legitimising decisions made through a consultative process;
• appropriate involvement of civil society, the private sector and the legislature in the decision making forum;
• a forum available which used an established planning tool , the MTBF, as well as data from the Education Sector Review. This ensured that decision making occurred with a clear understanding of the resources available and within sector expenditure ceilings over the medium term. Policies therefore had to compete with each other within projected funding realities;

- devolved responsibility to the MoES for budget formulation;
- capacity at the centre for assessing the appropriateness of decisions against the overall strategic policy objectives of the government and their financial implications over the life of the planned period, including estimating the cost of existing and planned policies over the medium term;
- a cohesive and comprehensive approach to education aid management with the strategic policy priorities of the government being, for the most part, the drivers of decisions that involve aid financing.

To support these institutional arrangements, the government and its education development partners recognised and met the need for information on the cost of existing and proposed government PPET policies over the medium and longer term, the output and outcome information on each of these policies, and the cost, output and outcome information for new policy proposals as they were developed.

5.5   Conclusion

Work in this area was based on the view that the sustainability of UPE depended on improved access to post-primary institutions. If transition rates to secondary fall dramatically, retention in primary will decrease as it becomes clear that for most there will be no progression to higher educational levels.

The approach adopted provided knowledge of the sector on the basis of seven key studies that were undertaken, and the development of a set of options and proposals for translating policy and financial decisions into strategic planning and budgeting frameworks.

Evidence from the studies shows that those with secondary schooling increase their chances of formal sector employment in Uganda; informal sector work often benefits from skills and competencies acquired from secondary level schooling, and export led growth is associated more with investments at post-primary than at primary level. Public funding of secondary education is grossly inadequate in terms of stated national policy objectives and appears to be badly targeted in terms of equity and poverty alleviation. The "shortfall" between current funding and the objective of "universal, compulsory and free" PPET, was estimated to be about eighteen times less than it would need to be.

The main lesson that emerges from these issues is that conflict and diversity can be positively associated with creative breakthroughs under complex conditions. Attempts at major change in African education, such as that planned for in Uganda's PPET education sector, benefited from the application of a purpose-built model for projecting the future implications of various policies and strategies. The model also built awareness of the resource constraints involved and assisted in showing how to manage this. The projection model was also a vital tool in overcoming obstacles associated with deeply entrenched in-house knowledge and positions. Nonetheless, in deeply politicised contexts, and especially in contexts where personal and vertical links between patrons and clients continue purposely and profitably to hold sway, rational decision-making cannot be guaranteed.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1   Evaluating the Reforms and Reform Process

The analytical and development work outlined in this book show that the face of educational development in Uganda has changed significantly since 1997. The UPE policy and the accompanying education SWAp, and an education strategy (ESIP) supported through external budget support, represent a significant point of departure in terms of the government's responsibility for educating all the country's children. The reforms are also significant in terms of the modalities adopted for the transfer of resources to the sector from both the state and the development partners.

The shift in focus away from development projects to the sector as a whole within a national budget framework is presented as increasing ownership nationally, in spite of the high levels of aid dependency that continue to exist. However, the language and architecture of SWAps and budget support continue to allow external agencies a high level of policy leverage. Critics of the process argue that this can foster a degree of suspicion, suggesting that, as a new modality of partnership, SWAps and budget support can in practice be less equal than they may first appear. SWAps also function predominantly in the formal sphere and, as this study indicates, a gap exists between promulgation and implementation on the one hand, and actual performance and delivery in the sector itself on the other. This provides ample opportunity for critics to argue that the investment of considerable sums of money in the education sector has still to show the impact anticipated in terms of improved quality of input and output, especially at school level and in the area of the child's experience of schooling. The prime issue seems to be the bridging of what has been designed and what takes place, whilst recognising that change takes time. We also need to come to terms with the fact that school and current models of schooling are culturally specific. Its present form originated only a few generations ago in colonial times.

Nonetheless, the UPE policy and funding arrangements developed to facilitate the reforms do demonstrate to the education development partners, and to the wider community, that the GoU is able to translate additional resources into improving educational outcomes. This is one of the most important lessons that have been learnt.

This study also shows that increased ownership has been manifested in the high level of political commitment to education and in the growing technical capacity of the MoES through its willingness to apply itself to addressing its priorities. In particular, the processes through which the ESCC, the Technical Working Groups (TWG) and the ESRs work through the technical detail of reform, establishing clear guidelines, monitoring arrangements, feedback loops and amending arrangements in the light of experience, have been vital for the success of the reform effort. The positive enabling environment produced by the wider GoU, in particular the MoFPED, has been especially significant.

So too has the shift in aid modality from projects to sector and then to budget support which, it is argued, raised (by adjusting financial allocations and refining policies and programmes) the level of the policy dialogue between education funding agencies and technical assistance agencies and the GoU. A key feature of this process has been the way in which development partner representatives and senior government officials have increasingly listened to the implementers of reforms and responded to issues raised. Acting promptly to improve guidelines for

implementation, tightening service delivery systems, providing capacity building support, studying problems and exerting pressure on key agencies for performance improvement, are all features of a reforming sector.

Learning by development partners has also been important. It has been necessary to become particularly aware that development of the education sector of Uganda is taking place in a highly complex social and physical environment. This has placed a premium on the use of people's knowledge and judgement, particularly in assessing new approaches, innovations, new technologies and policy changes. The education sector policy dialogue and the development and management of reform is not only drawing upon people's technical and system knowledge, their practical expertise in managing education and so on; it is also drawing on hitherto largely un-tapped skills of team-working, project planning, monitoring and evaluation, research and analysis, report reading and writing, social mapping and cross-cultural and cross-sectoral technical and social discourse. The presence of these abilities in a significant number of participants, and, where they did not exist, the willingness to engage and acquire the necessary capacity, was a major asset to the process and led to the generation of information of a rather special kind. As Mosse (1994: 499) has pointed out:

> information does not just exist "out there" waiting to be "collected" or "gathered", but is constructed, or created, in specific social contexts for particular purposes.

In particular, positive interactions over policy development between the political leadership, the senior management of the MoES, key education stakeholders and the representatives of the education development partners have been crucial for the success of the Uganda education reforms. These interactions have been greatly assisted by the strong leadership provided by the MoES and have been made possible by the commitment of time and resources to the process of policy dialogue. The importance of policy dialogue for progress in education cannot be stated strongly enough.

However, the quality of this dialogue is also important. This has been well facilitated by the availability of information and good quality research which has underpinned developments. In addition to this data, and perhaps more importantly, the dialogue has incorporated the contributions of the implementers of the reforms within the MoES, in local government offices and in the education institutions themselves. This would not have been possible without the switch in aid modalities from projects to sector support as this created the space within which a genuine dialogue regarding the highest priorities in the sector could take place.

This leaves unaddressed the balance of policy, human and financial investment in and between different aspects of the reforms described in this book and direct funding. At a technical level the indicators are all positive in that more children are in school, there are schools to which children can go and there are teachers and resources available. Management of the sector is considerably more efficient and effective, especially with regards to planning and funding. But whether the balance has been right is impossible to know. It is difficult knowing whether different funding modalities to those that were used previously could have facilitated greater efficiencies and produced greater quality and equity gains. What was known at the start of the reform process was that project modalities had failed. We also knew that many donor governments whilst

subscribing to the principles behind budget support did not practice it. The concept itself was too new. The UK government, and DFID in particular, was breaking new ground. Some of the risks were known, others not, but the principles and logic behind what it was proposing were sound. Given the relative success of developments in Uganda, and with hindsight, we can conclude that technically some things might have been done differently and perhaps to greater effect. The imponderable is time, and the processes of reflection necessary for institutions and people within them to visit afresh what they are doing. Inevitably, the writers of this book, who were all involved in the Ugandan education sector reform process, acquired many insights, and whilst we cannot say this is necessarily true for the populace of Uganda as a whole, we know that many parents are pleased their children are in school and that they at least have the prospect of a different future.

6.2   Insights for the Future

Samoff (2001) has pointed out that simplifying findings ("lessons learned") in order to generalise may lead to stating the obvious rather than developing useful guides to action (Samoff, 2001:16). Consequently the focus in this final section of the book is to suggest five insights drawn from the work; insights that might guide policy makers, decision makers, practitioners, country governments, development partners and NGOs. In particular, what should practitioners engaged in education policy dialogue be aware of?

First, we wish to suggest that a new model of reform is evolving in Uganda's education sector, one that incorporates a restructured framework for managing interaction between the government and funding and technical assistance agencies and the government and key stakeholders within the country. The model has focused development support on changes that both central and local governments have generally agreed needed to occur. In other words, as a rule, structures, systems and approaches generally should reflect national preferences for reform. This has meant that over the past seven years funding and technical assistance agencies have been encouraged to avoid promoting agency preferences in the interests of nurturing country-led policies and programmes. The broader implication of this is that what has been achieved is what the GoU itself wanted, and funding partners should increasingly "withdraw" detailed technical advice and support in favour of higher level policy dialogue. Whether they have or not is a moot point.

Second, the Ugandan development model has been dependent on "good governance", by which is understood transparent, accountable democratic government processes. The GoU is responsible for creating a supportive environment for community and individual initiatives and partnerships to plan and manage their own affairs more effectively, thereby reducing dependence and increasing capability. However, the appearance of consensus arising from international agreements and conferences can conceal contests over the meaning and purpose of education itself. Educational policy-making inevitably reflects conflict and incoherence within a state as well as ideological disputes over and struggles for control of the meaning and definition of education. These need to be recognised and understood, especially by development partners.

Third, although the quality of research upon which ESIP was constructed has generally been good, a strong case can be made for more qualitative research on the intrinsic experience of the

SWAp and the budget support funding modality, both within the education sector and across other sectors. For example, it is generally acknowledged that the impact of reforms which have taken place in the MoFPED were significant and shaped much that has been set in place within the MoES, but what wider impact have reforms and development in the education sector had on other sectors? What horizontal lessons have been learnt?

Therefore, there might be value in undertaking research on the dynamics between the various stakeholders involved in SWAp and budget support processes. Moreover, it is suggested that comparative studies of developments in, for example, Tanzania, Ghana and Zambia, to name three current examples where SWAps and budget support modalities are being developed and implemented, would add to the institutional knowledge of the governments concerned and of their development partners (Crossley et al, 2005). Whether these could lead towards a grander generalisation regarding the complexity of the changing relationships between development partners and recipients of educational aid in these contexts is uncertain: it could even be unwise.

Fourth, over the course of the seven years in which the contributors to this book have been involved in developments in education in Uganda, a certain degree of caution has been learned. There is a sense of frustration in some quarters that the anticipated outcomes from the investments made so far in the education sector are not as great as had been expected, especially with regards to improved teaching and learning. The Ugandan experience is revealing that "grand plans" like the ESIP are generally insensitive to personal and individual reasons for change and reform. Yet it is to individuals and the institutions they inhabit that the task of realising reform falls, whether these be globally negotiated education policies or national level ones. All have to be mediated in practice at the national and local level. Moreover, if one acknowledges that the language of SWAps and budget support etc. is that of technical rationality and that these funding modalities tend to function primarily in the formal sphere and not at the level of the experience of most teachers and pupils, let alone directly in their families, then it should not be surprising that change is slow and that the reforms may generate a high degree of suspicion, if not scepticism. Indeed, some critics argue that it is possible to suggest that, as a new modality of partnership, SWAps and budget support can in practice be less equal than they may first appear. It also seems certain that the existence of both overt and covert political agendas lessen the impact of the technical development discourse in which funding agencies frequently engage[51]. Added to this, for many ministry officials (and politicians too) there is an inordinate faith in proclamation, especially when this is in written form. There is a strange assumption that once a directive or plan or strategy is on paper, and has been affirmed by an authority, action will "automatically" follow. It doesn't. "Programmes work through their subjects' liabilities" (Pawson and Tilley, 1997: 36), by people co-operating and choosing to make them work. As Reimers and McGinn (1997: 190) remind us, it is essential to recognise that the key guides are democratic dialogue, empowerment, time, persistence and patience, as:

> education systems are not machines but arenas for conflict, and that what education systems do reflects how people construct their roles regarding these systems, and that it is people who can facilitate the development of knowledge and sustained organisational learning.

---

[51] For example, logframes assume an objective reality. In many senses they are "seductive", inferring causality, prediction and hence control of a social dynamic. Experience tells us that things don't quite work like that.

Finally, the processes described in this book have gone through a series of phases: from initial scepticism and indeed opTaosition to some of the changes that were introduced, to increased enthusiasm as visible improvements occurred, especially at school level. However, maintaining the momentum and providing good reasons for people at all levels of the sector to continue to engage proactively can become a major challenge as systems and processes mature. Plans at the macro-level are inevitably somewhat insensitive to local and individual motivations for change and proclamation at national level is only the first step to implementation. The language of SWAps and budget support is that of technical rationality, conducted in formal policy spheres. Connections need to be made to the experience of most teachers and pupils, and their communities, as it is to individuals, and the institutions they inhabit, that the tasks of realising reform ultimately fall. It is therefore not surprising that change can sometimes be slow or can generate suspicion or scepticism. There is therefore an ongoing need to continue to address professional incentives to change, particularly when there are signs that the processes of reform and development are at risk of becoming bureaucratic and less responsive to new demands. The content and pace of change can also be affected by differences on policy, technical, timescale or other issues between development partners, or between them and the government, especially when development partnerships do not take into sufficient account that governments, and the societies they represent, may be basing their education agenda on values, processes and priorities which differ from those understood or brought by external agencies.[52]

Development partners working in Uganda have thus found it necessary to become particularly aware that development of the education sector is taking place in a highly complex political, social and physical environment. This, and the processes involved in policy dialogue and the development, management and evaluation of reform, places a premium on people's knowledge, judgement, and planning, team-working, research, communication and other skills. The presence of such capacities in the partnership as a whole is critical. However, "learning by doing" is inevitably problematic at times, particularly where different perceptions continue to exist. Development partners can play an important role in maintaining and developing the integrity of the partnership between themselves and the host government. Reviewing critically the aid architecture, the commonality of the agenda, and the impact of reform at every level, should help to ensure that sector development remains a fresh and dynamic process.

---

[52] Whilst the editors are not entirely persuaded by the thesis presented by Chabal and Daloz (1999), their analysis is compelling and deserves serious consideration. They especially caution against historically unrealistic expectations of the development potential in Africa within the timescales development agencies normally operate. In a wide-ranging study entitled Africa Works, they argue that in much of sub-Saharan Africa individual rationality is essentially based on communal logic and that the logic of any action lies in what it induces by way of expectations of reciprocity between the parties involved. Their thesis is that Africa is on a fundamentally different development path to that assumed by Western development partners, and argues that this derives from a different logic from that of classical economic development. The authors argue that exploiting disorder or "instrumentalising disorder" is in fact a different kind of order which is perfectly rational within its own terms. If the thesis is accepted, such cultural differences will have significant implications for the negotiation and implementation of development initiatives. Furthermore, such differences may help explain the aversion to institutionalising reform practices, and, indeed, may be an obstacle to development as currently conceived by the majority of funding partners.

References

Ablo, E. and Reinikka, R. (1998) *Do Budgets Really Matter? Evidence from Public Spending on Education and Health in Uganda*, Policy Research Working Paper 1926, Washington: World Bank.

ADEA (1999) *What Works and What's New in Education: Africa Speaks*, London: Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).

Alexander, R. (2000) *Culture and Pedagogy: International Comparisons in Primary Education*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Appleton, S. (2001) 'What Can We Expect from Universal Primary Education' in R. Reinikka and P. Collier (Eds.) *Uganda's Recovery: The Role of Farms, Firms and Government*, Washington: The World Bank.

Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) (1999) *What Works and What's New in Education: Report from a Perspective*, Stocktaking Review of Education in Africa, Paris: ADEA.

Bennell, P. and Sayed, Y. (2002) *Improving the Management and Internal Efficiency of Post Primary Education and Training in Uganda*, unpublished report, Kampala: DFID.

Buchan, A., Foster, D., Ibale, A., Read, T. (2002) *The Provision of Instructional Materials to Secondary Institutions in Uganda*, draft inception report, Kampala: MoES.

Bukenya, M. (2005) 'Findings and Recommendations of the NAPE Report', Paper presented at a National Workshop to discuss levels of competency in Literacy and Numeracy of Primary School Pupils in Uganda, Ntawo-Mukono: Uganda.

Burke, J. (2002) *Consultancy report on School Facilities Grant*, Kampala: Irish Aid.

Byaruhanga, C. and Levine, V. (2002) *Issues and Options for the Expansion of PPET in Uganda*, unpublished report, Kampala: DFID.

Chabal, P. and Daloz, J.P. (1999) *Africa Works, the use of disorder as political instrument*, Oxford and Indiana: James Currey and Indiana University Press.

Chatry-Komarek, M. (2003) *Literacy at Stake*, Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan.

Crossley, M., Herriot, A., Waudo, J., Mwirotsi, M., Holmes, K. and Juma, M. (2005) *Research and Evaluation for Educational Development: Learning from the PRISM Experience in Kenya*, Oxford: Symposium Books.

Da Cruz, A. J., George, T. A., Gnahore, F. Z., Kouakou, F. K., Mendonca, P., Read, A., Sehlabi, C., Simao, M. (2000) *Financing Textbooks and Teacher Training Materials*, Paris: ADEA.

Day, C. and Sachs, J. (2004) *International Handbook on Continuing Professional Development of Teachers*, London: Open University.

Department for International Development (DFID) (2001) *Understanding and Reforming Public Expenditure Management*, Guideines for DFID, Version 1, London: DFID.

Foster, M. (2004) *Accounting for Donor Contributions to Education for All: How Should Finance be Provided? How Should it be Monitored?*, Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

Foster, M (2004) *Linking Budget Support to Progress Towards Education MDGs and EEA Goals*, London: DFID.

Fozzard, A. (2001) *The Basic Budgeting Problem: Approaches to Resource Allocation in the Public Sector and their Implications for Pro-Poor Budgeting*, Working Paper 147, London: Overseas Development Institute.

Fullan, M. (1991) *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, London: Cassell Educational Limited.

Fullan, M. (1999) *Change Forces, the Sequel*, London: Falmer Press.

GoU/MoFPED Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit (2001) *A New Formula for Poverty Eradication? Part 1: Sector Conditional Grants* (2nd consultative draft), Kampala: MoFPED.

GoU (2002) *Poverty Eradication Action Plan: a Popular Version*, Kampala: GoU.

GoU (2002) *Poverty Eradication Action Plan: a Summary Version*, Kampala: GoU.

Harley, K. (2005) 'Learning from logframes: reflections on three development projects in East and Southern Africa', *Compare*, Vol 35, London: Taylor and Francis.

Heneveld, W. and Craig, H. (1996) 'Schools Count. World Bank Project Designs and the Quality of Primary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa', *World Bank Technical Paper No. 303, Africa Technical Department Series*, Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

IMPACT Associates and Monarch Consulting (2001) *Teacher Utilisation Studies* Vol 2: Final Report on Secondary Schools, Kampala: MoES.

International Development Consultants (2000) *Tracking the Flow of and Accountability for UPE Funds*, Final Report, Kampala: MoES,

International Development Consultants (2001) *Report of a Study to Track Use of and Accountability for UPE Capitation Grants*, Kampala: MoES.

Keating, J. (2001) *Firm Demand for Post Primary Qualifications*, Report to the Secondary Education Commission, Kampala: MoES.

Kisamba-Mugerwa, C., Moyini, Y., Ochieng, E., and Meijerink, H. (2001) *Schools Facilities Grant Evaluation*. Final Report, Kampala: MoES.

Leggett, I. (2001) *Uganda, an Oxfam Country Profile*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

Leonard, D. (1995) *Wellsprings of Knowledge*, Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Lewin, K. M. (2002) *The Ugandan Financial Projection Model for Secondary Education Development*, Planning Software for MoES, Uganda and DFID, London.

Lewin, K. M. (2004) *Beyond Primary Education for All: Planning and Financing Secondary Education in Africa*, World Bank/ Free University of Amsterdam, Centre for International Cooperation.

Lewin, K. M. and Caillods, F. (2001) *Financing Secondary Education in Developing Countries: Strategies for Sustainable Growth*, Paris: IIEP.

Lewin, K. M. and Sayed, Y. (2005) *Non-State Secondary Schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa: Exploring the Evidence in South Africa and Malawi*, London: DFID.

Lewin, K. and Stuart, J. (2003). *The Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER) Report*, London, DFID.

Lockheed, M. and Verspoor, A. (1991) *Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries*, New York: Oxford University Press for the World Bank.

McBey, H (2000) *A Model of Teacher Effectiveness*, Report for the UK Department for Education and Employment (DFEE), London: DFEE.

MoES (1998) *Guidelines on Policy, Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders in the Implementation of Universal Primary Education (UPE)*, Kampala: MoES.

MoES (2000) *School Facilities Grant (SFG) for Primary Schools. Planning and Implementation Guidelines for District and Urban Councils*, Kampala: MoES.

MoES (2000) *Teachers and the Payroll: a Survey of Government-Aided Primary Schools*, Kampala: MoES.

MoES (2000) *Universal Primary Education (UPE) Capitation Grant. Planning and Implementation Guidelines for District and Urban Councils*, Kampala: MoES.

MoES (2001) *Universal Primary Education (UPE) Capitation Grant. Planning and Implementation Guidelines for District and Urban Councils*, Kampala: MoES.

MoES (2001) *School Facilities Grant (SFG) for Primary Schools. Planning and Implementation Guidelines for District and Urban Councils*, Kampala: MoES.

MoES (2002) Options for Post Primary Education and Training in Uganda: Increasing Access, Equity and Efficiency, Kampala: MoES.

MoES (2004, June) *Education sector Strategic Plan 2004 – 2015*, Kampala: MoES.

MoES (2004, November) *11ᵗʰ Education Sector Review (ESR)*: Final Aide-Memoire, Kampala: MoES.

MoES (2004, December) *Education sector Medium Term Budget framework* Paper for the Financial Years 2005/6 and 2007/8, Kampala: MoES.

MoES (2005, January) *Papers from the National Workshop on Levels of Competency in Literacy and Numeracy for Primary Schools, Colline Hotel, Mukono, 4 – 7 January, 2005*, Kampala: MoES.

• Findings and Recommendations of the NAPE Report: M. Bukenya (UNEB)
• School Mapping Exercise: J. Muvawala (Education Planning)
• Roles and Responsibilities of Districts in the Implementation of Learning Achievement Targets in Primary Schools: R. Akankwasa (Director of Education)
• Proposed National and District Targets for Literacy and Numeracy in Primary Schools: A. Byamugisha (Asst. Commissioner, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation)
• Competences for Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills in Primary Schools: N. Lukwago (Director Education Standards Agency)
• New Roles of School Management Committees and Foundations Bodies: Bulonodo (Acting Commissioner, Pre-Primary Education)
• Guidelines for Performance Contracts for head teachers: J. B. Semakula (Assistant Commissioner Personnel)
• The Use of Instructional Materials in Enhancing Quality Outcomes in Education Contracts: Tukei Simon (Assistant Commissioner Instructional Materials Unit)
• HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector: Y. Nsubuga (Commissioner Secondary)
• Implementation of School Registers and Pupils Identification Numbers: O. Mumbe (Education Officer).

MoFPED (2001, November) *A New Formula for Poverty Eradication? Part 1: Sector Conditional Grants* (2nd Consultative Draft), Kampala: MoFPED.

MS Associates (1998) *Audit of the Primary Teachers' Salary Payments and Non-Salary Expenditure from the UPE Conditional Grant*, Kampala: MoES.

Nansozi, K. and Nakanyike B. (2003) *Makerere University in Transition, 1993-2000*, Oxford: James Currey.

Nyamugasira, W. and Rowden, R. (2002) *Poverty Reduction Strategies and Coherency of Loan Conditions – Do the new World Bank and IMF loans support countries' poverty-reduction goals?*, Kampala: Action Aid Uganda.

Office For Standards in Education (1995) *Framework for the Inspection of Schools*, London: OfSTED.

Office For Standards in Education (1995) *Guidance on the Inspection of Secondary Schools*, London: OfSTED.

Pawson, R. and Tilley, N. (1997) *Realistic Evaluation*, London: Sage Publications.

Polanyi, M. (1973) *Personal Knowledge*, London: Routledge.

PriceWaterhouse Coopers (2001) *Teacher Development and Management Systems – Tracking of and Accountability for Funds: Final Report*, unpublished report, Kampala: DFID.

Reinikka, R. and Collier, P. Eds. (2001) *Uganda's Recovery: The Role of Farms, Firms and Government*, Washington: World Bank.

Reimers, F. and McGinn, N. (1997) *Informed Dialogue: Using Research to Shape Education Policy around the World*, Westport: Praeger.

Samoff, J. (2001) *When Progress is Process: Evaluating Aid to Basic Education*, Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

Sen, Amartya (1999) *Development and Freedom*, New York: Random House.

Senge, P. et al. (2000) *Schools that Learn*, New York: Doubleday.

Smith, I. (2004) *Financial Tracking*, unpublished report, Kampala: Royal Netherlands Embassy.

Ssekamwa, J. C. (1997) *History and Development of Education in Uganda*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

Suzuki, I. (2002) 'Parental participation and accountability in primary schools in Uganda', *Compare*, 32 (2): 243 – 259.

Tudor, J. (1998) *A Report on the Educational Reform Process in Uganda with Particular Reference to the Primary sector and the Implementation of Universal Primary Education*, unpublished report, Kampala: MoES.

Tulya-Muhika, S. (2002) *Unit Cost Study of Post Primary Institutions in Uganda*, Unpublished report, Kampala: MoES.

Tumushabe, J., Barasa, C., Muhanguzi, F. K., and Otim-Nape, J. F.(1999) *Gender and Primary Schooling in Uganda*, Institute of Development Studies Research Report 42, Sussex: Institute of Development Studies.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2001) *Uganda Demographic Household Survey – Education Data*, Kampala: GoU.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2001) *Report of the National Household Survey – 1999/2000*, Kampala: GoU.

Uganda National Examinations Board (2002) *A Study of School Quality in Secondary Schools and Equivalent Grades in Technical/Vocational Schools in Uganda*, Kampala: GoU.

Verspoor, A. (2003) 'The challenge of learning: improving the quality of basic education', *ADEA Journal*, 5 (4), Paris: ADEA.

Ward, M. and Penny, A. (2003) 'Why do education policies in Africa fail? What's changing?' *Journal of Education*, Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal.

Wood, A and Ridao-Cano, C. (1996) *Skill, Trade and International Tranquillity,* Institute of Development Studies Working Paper 47, Sussex: Institute of Development Studies.

World Bank (1988) *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalisation and Expansion*, Washington, D.C.: World Bank.
World Education Forum (2000) *The Dakar Framework for Action*, Paris: UNESCO.

World Bank (2001) *A Chance to Learn*, Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

World Bank (1998) *Public Expenditure Management Handbook*, Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

Xiaoyan Liang (2002) *Secondary Education in Uganda: Coverage, Equity and Efficiency*, Washington D.C.: World Bank.

Appendix 1: Logical Framework Analysis of Education Sector Budget Support

Objectives	Indicators of Achievement
Inputs	Education Sector Budget Support: - increased % of funding to government through budget support; - policy dialogue on strategic and financing framework, macro management and service delivery; - technical assistance.
Activities	Empowerment of government in relations with donors: - increased government ownership of policy, planning and budget processes; - strengthening of Ministries of Finance and Education, Cabinet and Parliament as drivers of public resource allocation; - co-ordinated behaviours by donors around the SWAp/partnership agenda; - a more structured donor involvement in details of resource allocation and policy choices.
Short/Medium Term Outputs	Government programme of education policy, legal/institutional and spending actions, focused on PRSP and operating through established budgetary and administrative mechanisms. Positive transformative effect on governance: - reduced transaction costs of financing education spending through development assistance; - increased allocative and technical efficiency in public spending on education; - increased predictability and flexibility of education budget funding; - increased effectiveness of public education administration; - strengthening of democratic accountability.
Intermediate Term Outcomes	Enhancement of government capacity to ensure that all children have access to and complete basic education: - equal access to provision; - supportive learning environments; - students ready to learn; - relevant curriculum; - motivated staff; - effective teaching and learning process; - good governance; - adequate resources; - sound monitoring and evaluation.
Final Goal	Education For All by 2015

Appendix 2: MTBF Planning Cycle

Month	National Budget	MOES Budget	District Budgets
July - September	• Review and analyse outturn expenditure data from previous fiscal year • Fine tune national strategy and costing.	• Analyse outturn expenditure data from previous fiscal year • Analyse March 1999 headcount data • Review and fine tune unit costing.	• Analyse outturn expenditure and local revenue data from previous fiscal year • Fine tune district priorities and cost implications. [MOES can provide TA to Districts]
October	Call circular sent to ministries and Districts.	ESIP Review.	ESIP Review.
October - November	Workshops held with line ministries, districts and parliamentarians in preparation of national MTBF.	• Participate in workshops • In collaboration with all education budget votes, fine tune sector strategy for the next 3 years in preparation of the education MTBF, taking into account analysis based on previous year's outturn, studies and audit report and March 1999 headcount data.	• Participate in workshops • Fine tune district priorities over the next 3 years taking into account analysis from previous year's outturn and local revenue projections. [MOES can provide TA to districts]
November - December	Dissemination of sector expenditure ceilings for the 3-year MTBF.	Sector-wide discussion of budget options within the expenditure ceilings to meet sector priorities.	Discussion of budget options to meet priorities.
December - February		Working within the expenditure ceilings, prepare the education MTBF taking into account the sector strategy.	Prepare district MTBF taking into account district priorities. Work within expenditure ceilings and local revenue projections. [MOES can provide TA to Districts]
March - April	Integration of sector and District MTBFs into the national MTBF.		
April	Submission of MTBF to cabinet.	ESIP Review.	ESIP Review.

May	Workshop with donors to present MTBF and confirm donor pledges	Participate in donor workshop	Participate in donor workshop
May - June	• Preparation of national budget • Budget speech read in parliament (mid-June) • Printing of draft budget estimates (end-June) • Parliament votes on votes-on-account to be in effect until October.	Work with MoFPED to allocate funds across programmes and items within the expenditure ceiling.	
July - June	Monitor overall budget performance through the cash flow – revenue and expenditures.	Monitor expenditure throughout the fiscal year.	Monitor expenditure and local revenue collection throughout the fiscal year.
July - June	Monitor flow of funds to the districts. Work with line ministries, district authorities and BOU to trace funds.	Monitor flow of funds to the districts and teachers. Work with MoFPED, BOU and districts to trace funds.	Monitor receipt of funds from the centre. Report lags and discrepancies to MOES and MoFPED.
October	Budget approved by Parliament.		