LETTER OF THE DAY

Don't blame teachers for poor UPE schools grades

EDITOR: I want to react to the story that Nakaseke district teachers are to sit PLE in April as published in the *New Vision* of March 19.

Well, it's a good move to test their competence. In fact, if it were possible, it ought to apply to all primary teachers both in private and Government schools because sometimes you look through a child's work and wonder whether the teacher knows what he/she is doing.

Correct answers are marked wrong; wrong answers are marked correct, sometimes they even ask inappropriate questions. They do not follow the syllabus and so on….

But this is not the only cause of poor performance of pupils. There are other contributing factors, for example;

- Poor working conditions of teachers, stretching from accommodation to poor pay which is in most cases overdue. This disheartens them. You cannot expect the teachers to deliver effectually in such poor conditions. They are still human beings.
- The Jammed classes. Teachers are overwhelmed by the big numbers and are unable to monitor the pupils individually.
- Neglect of parents. Some parents do not encourage their children at home. They leave everything to the teachers and they expect their children to perform better. It will not happen by magic, there is need for paired effort.
- Limited up-to-date reading materials. This makes it hard for the pupils to have a healthy competition.
- Hunger and long distances, especially in village schools. By the time pupils reach school, they are already exhausted and some of them are on empty stomachs. They have to wait for break time at around 10:30AM to take porridge. To some of them it is their first meal. How can you expect concentration and good performance from such a pupil?

If all these are not addressed, the move will not yield a thing. Every entity should play its role. The Government, teachers and parents.

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