

# Auditing Uganda's education system

**Kampala.** A world Bank discussion paper says by the time Uganda became independent in 1962, its education sector was more advanced than that of its neighbouring countries.

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**KAMPALA.** A World Bank discussion paper on implementing educational policies in Uganda indicates that formal education was first initiated by voluntary Missionary Organisations in Uganda.

This was during the colonial period around the 1880s.

This paper deliberates that by the time Uganda became independent in 1962, its education sector was more advanced than that of its neighbouring countries, Kenya, Tanzania, Zaire, Sudan, and Rwanda.

The only university college in Eastern Africa at that time, Makerere University was situated in Uganda.

However, the content and scope of primary and secondary education was similar to the education in other colonies of Britain.

It is therefore, not surprising that, like other former British colonies, Uganda found its educational system unsatisfactory at the time of independence.

"Before Uganda gained its independence in 1962, education and training for Ugandans was geared to the limited chances that existed for employment in Government administration and in social services," the paper reads in part.

After attaining independence, there were changes including the immediate availability of posts for Ugandans in employment and the expansion of educational opportunities.

Plans were made to prepare Ugandans to fill manpower gaps in commercial managerial and technical fields in order to foster national development.

The publication asserts that among the challenges included lack of qualified people.

The schools and Makerere University had by 1962 produced very few qualified personnel.

Therefore, government departments and companies lacked enough qualified people.

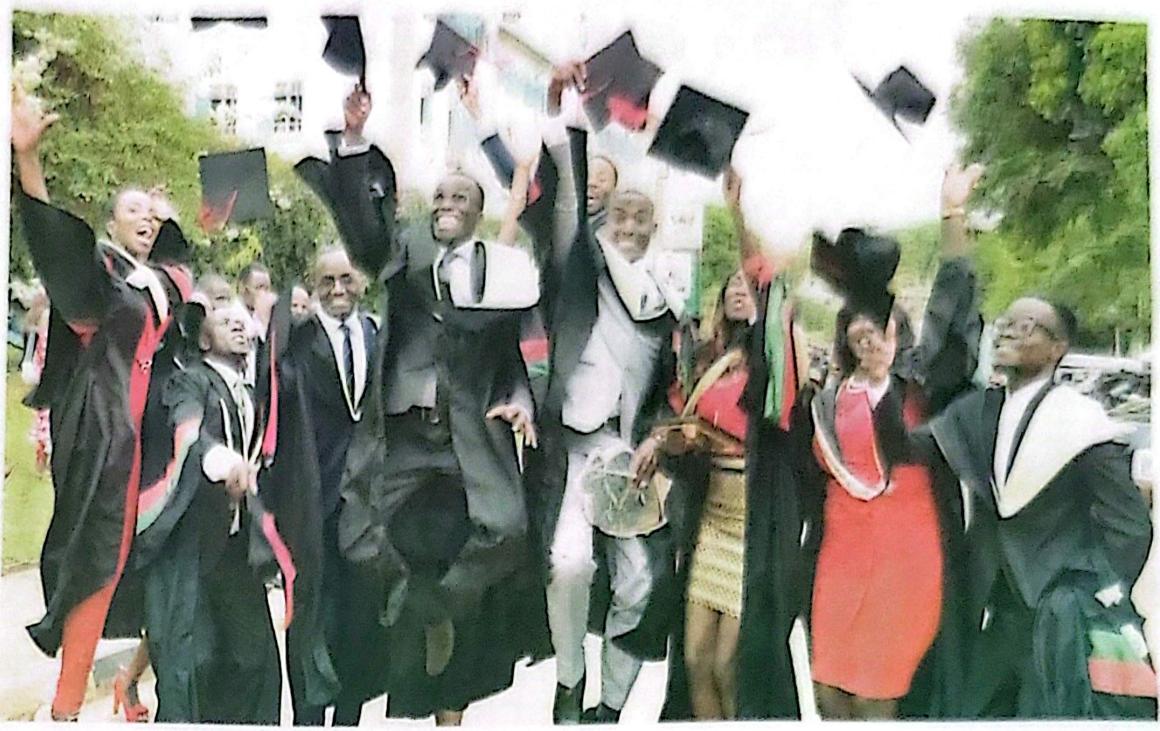
Further it adds that this was because numerous jobs were created around 1961 and 1962.

This was partly by the departure of European and Asian civil servants and teachers who did not want to be under the leadership of Africans.

The other kind of jobs, were created by the establishment of many ministries in the government, which had not been there before.

Mr Sam Kuloba, the commissioner of secondary education in the Ministry of Education and Sports, said since independence, the country has undergone many changes.

"Though challenges exist, when we got independent, we brought in the policy of privatisation and many institutions are now privately owned. They are doing a good job as far as delivery of our curriculum is concerned and this cuts across all sectors of edu-



Made it. Makerere University Business School graduates jubilate after completing studies recently. Uganda's education sector has attracted many players after being liberalised. PHOTO BY ALEX ESAGALA

cation right from early childhood development centres up to university," he said.

He added: "The curriculum we are handling now is that which we inherited from the British at the time of independence and of course its main objective was to produce clerks. But, now we are trying to review the current curriculum so that we can create our people for the job market. We give them generic skills that will help them to survive even after work that is our main focus."

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SAM KULOBA, COMMISSIONER SECONDARY EDUCATION - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS

Over the years, government has invested hugely in education and according to Mr Kuloba, if the economy is to change through industrialisation, the beginning point is to invest more in education.

He said: "In 1987 when I left university, we only had Makerere University. But now, we have more public universities. When you come to secondary schools, the government has done well in the infrastructural development of these schools."

He added: Government has built



labs and libraries we only need to recruit more teachers for these schools and we hope we shall have an impact."

Mr Kiloba further explains that after regaining liberty, the education system in Uganda had to remove the inferiority sentiments that had been created by the colonial masters from the minds of students.

**Developing African**  
In this effort two main slogans were initiated

Following unending strikes over low salaries, the education sector wage for primary teachers has gradually increased, with the lowest-paid teacher earning Shs 480,000, up from Shs 280,000.

This increment, according to Minister Muyingo, encourages teachers to stay at school rather than engage in other activities during school hours to supplement their salaries.

view the education system which was still operating along the recommendations of the committee set up by the colonialist," he clarified.

The State minister for Higher Education, Dr John Muyingo, while speaking at Uganda Media Centre recently, said the sector has embarked on at least 75 per cent of the 60 commitments in one year.

"This is just one year but a lot has been accomplished. Since we are left with four years, you should expect only the best from the sector," Dr Muyingo said.

According to Uganda's Employment Challenge report, 2014 by the Ministry of Finance, the educational attainment of the labour force is improving slowly since independence but remains low.

"The youth have completed significantly more years of education on average, and the gender gap in educational attainment has narrowed substantially. This is a sign of progress since the introduction of universal primary education," the report reads.

## INVESTMENTS

There Over the years, the Ugandan government has invested hugely in education and according to experts, if the economy is to change through industrialisation, the beginning point is to invest more in education.