

Education sector review

Promoting quality education

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Uganda's education sector progressing amid challenges

Uganda's education is steadily progressing in spite of challenges such as poor performance of rural-based schools, poor infrastructure and poor remuneration of teachers.

Mr Zadock Tumuhimbise, the chairman of Uganda National Teacher's Union, says government should think about the situation in which teachers operate because many go for months without getting salaries and living in poor conditions.

However, the 14th edition of the Education and Sports sector annual performance report for financial year 2016/17 since 2003, which was released recently, indicates that the education sector is making steady progress despite of some challenges.

According to the Education and Sports sector performance report, the sector had limited management and innovative capacity of schools and institutions and this is being addressed by designing a programme for the inductive school leadership in effective management practices which is yet to be developed.

The best management practices in the document handling have also been developed and circulated.

The report says limited community participation in school management and governance was solved by the sector sensitising properties and head teachers on proper management of educational institutions for quality service and to co-ordinate establishment of regional private schools' leadership.

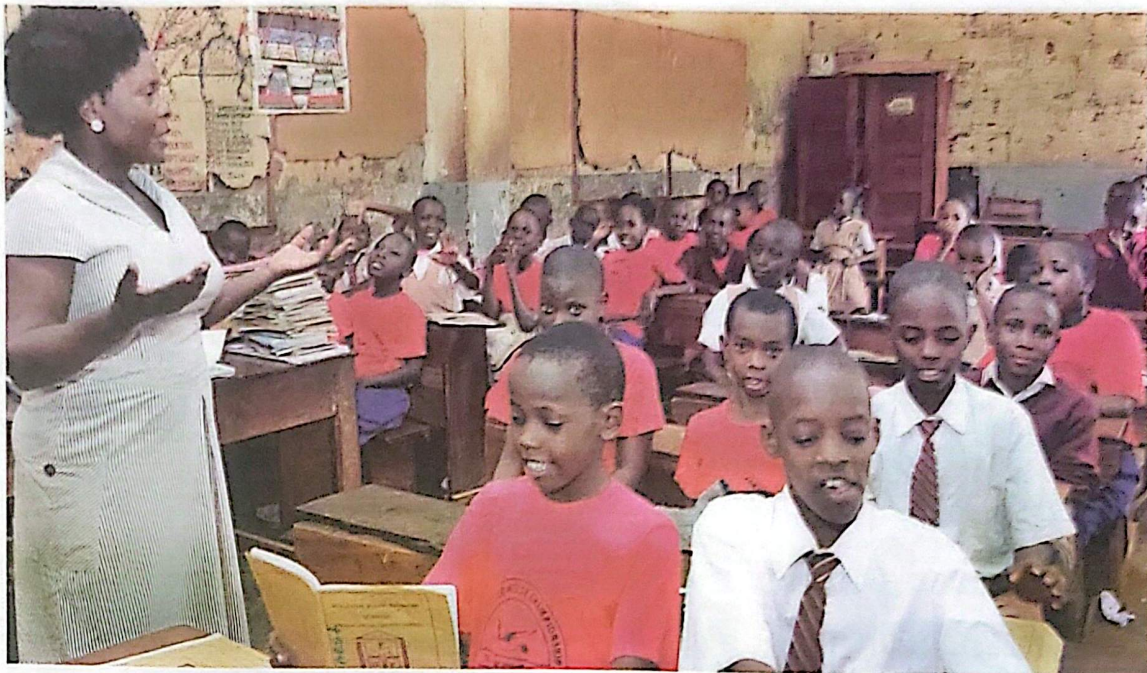
The persistent of low enrolment and absence of teachers, especially in rural schools is one of the reasons attributed to poor performance of students.

In order to save the situation, the government recently revealed that it is going to recruit 4,700 secondary school teachers and non-teaching staff for 100 new and old grant-aided secondary schools.

"Inadequate staffing in instructor training colleges, health tutors college, primary teachers' colleges and National Teachers' Colleges (NTCs) is being handled by continued recruitment on replacement basis:

The Education ministry has also formulated two projects to rehabilitate NTCs, to improve teachers education in the NTCs of Kabarole, Mubende Muni and Kaliro.

In 1997, free education was introduced in Uganda starting with



A teacher teaches pupils at Buganda Road Primary School recently. Government introduced free primary education in 1997 to enable more children attain education. FILE PHOTO

primary section.

This gave chance to children from poor families to access education both in the urban and rural areas. However, the free education programme has been hampered by lack of enough facilities.

"Lack of enough secondary schools in some sub-counties and universal primary schools in some parishes has been solved by engaging the Ministry of Finance to allocate additional funds to construct seed secondary schools in all sub counties and primary schools in all parishes.

However, additional funding is yet to be secured owing to the fact that government priorities in the short run are focused on infrastructural development," the report reads in part.

The report says the Education ministry is engaging African Development Bank (ADB) through a project proposal targeting construction of secondary and primary schools as well as technical institutes.

In order to solve the problem of continued poor performance in Science and Mathematics, mainly at O-Level, the ministry is in the process of developing a framework

for mainstreaming Information and Communications Technology in all areas of education delivery, management and other optional areas.

For lack of an efficient pensioner's verification mechanism, the process of the implementation of the pension verification system is being implemented in conjunction with the Ministry of Public Service and Education Service Commission.

In order to develop Early Childhood Development (ECD), the education sector performance reports indicates that so far, ECD teacher training has been undertaken in all PTCs based on the revised primary teacher education curriculum and a total of 45 master trainers and 400 trainers of trainers have been trained to train the caregivers.

There has also been construction of classroom blocks that were completed in six primary schools,

including Kongunga PS, Otuboi PS, Mashonogora PS, Ntoroko PS, Rwamabale PS and Umoja PS.

Instructional materials

There has also been provision of instructional materials where a total of 505,409 local language pupil books, 36,120 local language dictionaries; 12,200 English dictionaries; 24,400 P1 and P2 wallpapers, 12,200 wall charts; 20,890 bilingual dictionaries and 61,000 math work cards were given out.

Reduction of school drop outs has been curbed by training 3,134 learners (1226 males and 1908 females) on sexual education including menstrual hygiene management in 28 districts who help in mentoring learners in primary and secondary schools including support on club formation in schools.

The report says in line with government commitment, the education and sports sector continues ensuring that all children of school going age and individuals who are interested in acquiring education and skills have equal opportunity, regardless of their social class, ethnicity, background or physical disabilities.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

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