

Makerere University Business School graduates celebrate after graduating recently. The government has introduced education reforms at all stages to ensure that learners get quality education. PHOTO BY ALEX ESAGALA

Govt committed to providing quality education at all levels

Early childhood development. Government recently adopted the integrated early childhood development policy to ensure that children below eight years are provided with a conducive environment to thrive.

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QUALITY

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In order to achieve quality education at all levels, the government through the Ministry of Education and Sports must invest heavily in the sector.

According to the Education and Sports sector review report for financial year 2016/17, quality education satisfies basic learning needs and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experience of living.

The report indicates that government agencies inspected 2,303 secondary schools, 300 Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training BTVET institutions, six national teachers colleges and 23 primary teachers colleges to ensure compliance with basic requirements and minimum standards.

In order to easy access and equity in pre-primary education, the government recognises the importance of early childhood development and registers it as the first level of

"Early childhood development has significant impact on the subsequent performance of children in basic education programmes. The sector continues to pursue quality initiatives as articulated in the learning framework," reads the report in apart.

Government recently adopted the integrated early childhood development policy and one of its key objectives is to ensure that all children below eight years are provided with a conducive environment to thrive and be able to achieve their full potential in life.

Primary education in Uganda is, in many ways the core of the schooling system.

Over the years, the greatest number of learners has been absorbed in primary school, compared to any other level of education. This is also reflected in the largest share of spending on education.

According to the education sector review report, under the World Food Programme, a total of 249 primary schools were monitored focusing on enrolment, attendance, food deliveries and utilization and food records respectively, which translates to 113 percent performance over the

early grade reading programmes being implemented with the goal of improving reading outcomes for children in primary schools," reads the report in apart.

The programmes include, Uganda School Health and Reading and Literacy Achievement and Retention Activity.

In a bid to prioritise and enhance the provision of quality education in secondary education sub sector, the Education ministry focused on the holistic package of quality enhancement inputs, which include training of the teachers and managers, support supervision, provision of instructional materials to the Universal Post O-Level Education and Training (UPOLET) schools and developing teacher resource books for science and mathematics among others.

Uganda was among the first countries to offer free secondary education as it is aimed at raising the number of students attending from a fifth of school age children, to universal attendance. To improve efficiency in schools, solar energy packages were introduced in a number of schools under the energy for rural transformation programme

The report also indicates that with the integration of the use of ICT as a pedagogical tool in secondary schools, routine maintenance of solar packages installed in 1,410 rural schools was undertaken in 467 schools.

As students join the university education, the Education ministry has prioritised the provision of quality education, which was consolidated through the introduction of the Higher Education Science and Technology project, which is intended to enhance quality in the public universities.

Interventions

The main quality interventions undertaken during the period under review include giving support to research activities, accreditation of university programmes, monitoring and support supervision, enhancement of outreach programme in public universities.

Others include provision of instructional materials, tools and equipment, institutionalising programmes for staff development, enhancement of quality assurance committee of senate and council and internship placement.

According to the report, BT-

institutions.

These are broken down into the non-formal BTVET, with four distinct components of the public formal training institutions, private formal training institutions, private training providers, private companies and the non-formal BTVET.

In 1998, all specialised institutions were transferred to the education ministry to allow full control, coordination and monitoring of all education related activities in the country. This led to the creation of new BTVET training programmes.

Enrolment in BTVET institutions (non tertiary) has doubled over the last 11 years.

The years after 2007, were characterised by gradual enrolment growth following the introduction of Uganda Post Primary Education and Training (UPPET). Total enrolment in UPPET/BTVET institutions has more than tripled in the last eight years.

In addition, the Education ministry has since embarked on a project of setting up technical institutes at constituency level. The policy, Skilling Uganda, was launched in October 2012, and aims at creating employable skills and competencies relevant to the labour market.

Special attention is paid to BTVET to address the technician level skills gaps in the economy and skilling school leavers, graduates and unemployed youths.

To date, 90 districts have at least a BTVET institution but the government policy is for all 112 districts to have a BT-

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