

"Newspapers in Education has unlocked reading skills and grammatical expressions are concealed... exposed to current events that happen outside their environment... knowledge. For instance, they have learn about important personalities in the country... which knowledge is important for passing examinations and also keeping informed."

**FROM THE EDITOR**



**Poor schools also deserve a chance**

That Ugandans have a poor reading culture is a common belief. While I have not seen statistics to this effect, one can probably base this on the low literacy rates the country faces. Rural areas in particular have suffered the misfortune of not having access to good education facilities. Through programmes such as UPE and USE, the government hopes to reach more learners, however, we are yet to see the fruits of this. The fortunate thing however, is that there are means to contribute to improving literacy rates among Uganda's youth. Enter the golden tool that NiE is. Newspapers in Education have been found to be an important instrument to help learners especially in rural and poor schools. Since 2007, Monitor Publications has been partnering with different non-governmental organisations to get newspapers to rural classrooms. As you will read, the beauty about NiE is that even an individual can contribute to improving education by being a sponsor. Do not let the enlightenment of your community be held back by the limitations of wanting government systems, read more about how to benefit from NiE.

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# NiE, a collective effort to educate

In order to change lives of pupils in rural and poor schools through reading, several non-governmental organisations have partnered to bring NiE to these pupils.

BY AMOS NGWOMOYA

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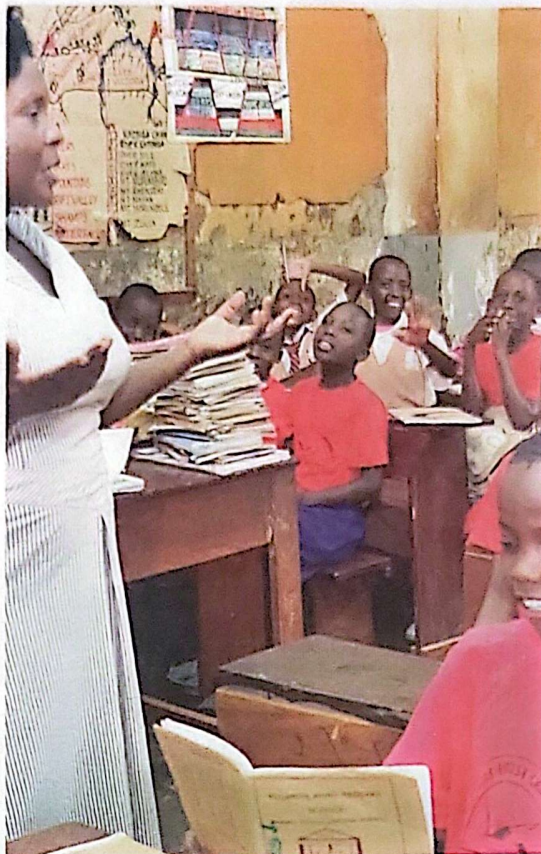
The government, through universal secondary and primary education, is making an effort to ensure that all children access education. However, more still needs to be done to produce students who can compete globally. Newspaper in Education (NiE), through its partners, are moving in to fill this gap. Following the launch of NiE in 2007, several partners have joined the project to propel its implementation forward.

Daniel Omaye, the programmes manager Promoting Equality in African Schools (PEAS), says ever since they joined the NiE project, the performance of the students in the 28 secondary schools, which they support, has improved.

"Our focus is on disadvantaged students, mostly in upcountry schools, who do not have access to good education. For instance, we take up students who join secondary schools after scoring Aggregate 32 at Primary Leaving Examinations but NiE content has shaped their literacy levels by improving their grammar, mathematics and providing other relevant information," he explains.

Oyama also reveals that by supporting the project, they wanted to improve the reading culture among students in poor schools to boost their confidence and enable them compete with pupils in 'good' schools.

"There is a lot of improvement in the reading and writing skills of pupils in our schools. We would like to maintain this performance by supplying with them many more copies of NiE to maintain the standard," he says.



Jane Akello, a teacher of English during a lesson at Buganda Road Primary School recently. Reading newspapers is said to ease pupils' English lessons. PHOTO BY DOMINIC BUKENYA

## Some of the benefitting schools

- St. James Bbiina, Kampala
- Murchison Bay Luzira P/S Kampala
- Kireka COU P/S Kampala
- Misindye Church of Uganda p/s
- Kireka Barracks P/S
- Kityerera-Ark PEAS High school
- Sarah Ntiro Secondary School
- Malongo Peas High School
- Amuda Primary School
- Agwata Primary School
- Ngoma P/S, Kamwenge
- Bisozi P/S, Kamwenge
- Rutsya Unit for the Deaf
- Budiba Primary School
- Bundibgyo
- Bulambagira P/S, Bundibgyo
- Budhabagula P/S Luuka -Eastern

- Bugabula P/S, Luuka -Eastern
- Angweibange Primary school
- Dokolo Primary school
- Koroto Primary school
- Akoromit PEAS High School
- Akore/Acowa P/s
- Toroma PEAS High School, Soroti
- Town @ the Agent Place
- Bwesumbu PEAS High school
- Rugendavara (God Trading H'se)
- Kaiti Primary School Mbale/Butaleje
- Nabiganda Primary Schools
- Akisin P/S Eastern- Ngora
- Ajeluk P/S Eastern- Ngora
- Aspire PEAS H/S Ibanda Town,
- Noble PEAS H/S Ibanda Town

**HOW NiE HAS HELPED ME**



"NiE educates us about our country and this is important, especially when it comes to examinations at school. It also emphasises personal hygiene, which is very important as far as health is concerned."

AMANICIA SPENCER, MBUYA C.O.U PRIMARY SCHOOL



"The magazine has helped me improve my personal hygiene because our health is important. The stories about hygiene make me informed about how to care for my body and also educate my friends on how they can also improve their health."

LIONGEOU ISHIMWE, MBUYA C.O.U PRIMARY SCHOOL



"NiE has stories relating to health, which teach us how to clean our bodies. The stories in this magazine also educate us on how we can relate with our friends, especially during group work. It has also taught me to know key figures in the country such as the Speaker of Parliament, Rebecca Kadaga."

SUSAN ABURU, KISWA PRIMARY SCHOOL

poor. By supporting the project, we want to see literacy levels improve among learners," she says.

Batte explains that as an organisation, they aim at transforming the lives of Ugandans through empowerment. With projects such as NiE, make their objectives are met.

More partners on board make NiE's major objective of improving literacy among pupils in poor and rural schools more likely to be realised.

**More boost**

In March, MTN foundation handed over Shs216 million to Monitor Publications Ltd to supply 100 schools in impoverished rural schools across the country with NiE. While handing over the cheque, Wim Vanhelleputte, the MTN chief executive officer said: "As a communications company, 70 per cent of our social corporate responsibility expenditure goes to education," he explained.

Joshua Businge, the NiE project supervisor, says they move to different companies trying to find partners for the project.

"We explain to them our major focus and those who pick interest join us. With many partners on board, we have been able to expand our circulation to all the districts in the country," he says, adding: "But there are more schools we are yet to reach and so we welcome more partners to support the project."

Sandra Batte, the Ernst and Young associate director business and market development, education, especially girl-child education and empowerment are some of the areas that drive their corporate social responsibility.

"Majority of the disadvantaged schools out there do not have access to better learning materials and that is why their performance is al..."