



# **CSO SECTOR POSITION PAPER ON THE EDUCATION MINISTERIAL POLICY STATEMENT FY 2017/18**

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Developed by the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group and presented to the Parliament Committee on Education and Sports by CSOs under the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group

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## Background:

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This paper presents CSBAG's views and concerns as well as gender concerns that should be considered for incorporation into the national budget priorities for FY 2017/18.

### About CSBAG

Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) is a coalition formed in 2004 to bring together civil society actors at national and district Levels to influence Government decisions on resources mobilization and utilization for equitable, gender responsive and sustainable development.

Since 2004, CSOs under the umbrella of CSBAG have engaged Government in influencing the budget process to ensure that both the local and national budgets address the needs and aspirations of the poor and marginalized groups of people in Uganda.

### Acknowledgement

CSBAG is grateful to the CSOs under the Education Thematic Working Group Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER), Transformative Leaders Network- Africa (TRANSNET AFRICA), UWEZO, and Uganda Debt Network (UDN)) for their input into the development of this position paper. Furthermore, we wish to commend them for their continued support towards advocating for the prioritization of Education financing in the national budget to ensure sustainable quality education in schools. In the same vein, CSBAG extends its appreciation to the Parliamentary Committee on Education and Sports for continued collaboration and creation of space to share the CSO perspective on Education.

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## 1.0 Introduction

The Education and Sports sector has the country's mandate to offer education as a basic human right. The core goal is to equip learners/students/trainees with relevant knowledge and skills necessary for socio-economic transformation and development. This is in line with the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) which emphasizes inclusive and quality education for all as well as the promotion of lifelong learning.

The Education and Sports sector is responsible for the delivery of equitable, relevant and quality education, training and sports services for all. The sector comprises of six sub-sectors namely: (i) Pre-Primary and Primary Education (ii) Secondary Education (iii) Business, Technical, Vocational Education and Training (BTNET) (iv) Teacher Instructor Education and Training (v) Higher Education and (vii) Physical Education and Sports.

The sector prioritizes providing pre-primary and primary children with literacy, numeracy and basic life skills; producing secondary education graduates with the skills and knowledge required to enter the workforce or pursue tertiary and higher education; and providing equal opportunities to eligible students including those from disadvantaged backgrounds to access quality higher or tertiary Education.

Through various programs, the government has made progress in ensuring the delivery of inclusive and quality education for all. The most outstanding programs are Universal Secondary and Primary Education.

### 1.1 Sector Performance

In 2014, Uganda reiterated in the Muscat agreement to commit 6% of its GDP on the education sector. On average, only 2.4% of the GDP has been spent on the sector in the last 5 financial years (World Bank, 2015).

The NDP II projected that Uganda would commit 4.4% of its GDP on this sector in FY 2017/2018. However, the Ministerial Policy Statement (MPS) only reflects that only 2.5% shall be committed in the same period.

Over the years, the sector has generally experienced an increasing trend in allocation in nominal terms.

According to the Annual Budget Performance Report FY 2015/16, the Approved budget for Ministry of Education and Sports and Universities excluding of Local Governments amounted to UGX 992.92 billion of which UGX. 904.171 billion was released by the

end of FY 2015/16, contributing 91.06% budget released. Of the released funds, US\$ 899.624 bn

were spent contributing to 90.60% budget spent and 99.50% absorption. In terms of physical performance, under primary education, out of 22 primary schools that were planned to be constructed, only 1 was constructed (4.5%) and 2 out of 200 classrooms were constructed (5.0%). Under secondary education, 6 classrooms were constructed as planned (100%), 1004 out of 1,295 secondary schools were monitored (78%).

## 2.0 SUB-SECTOR SPECIFIC ISSUES

### PRE-PRIMARY AND PRIMARY SUB SECTOR

#### **a. Lack of government support for Early Childhood Development Centres (ECDs)**

The NDP II emphasizes the importance of establishing ECDs. Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development<sup>1</sup> respectively developed and launched an ECD policy in 2016. Several reports have reiterated the importance of establishing ECDs. UWEZO 2016<sup>2</sup> stated that the children that have gone through ECDs are more likely to perform better but also their survival rates in school are higher.

<sup>1</sup> National Integrated ECD Policy

<sup>2</sup> Are Our Children Learning?

However, the sector has not pronounced itself on the implementation plan of this policy in FY 2017/18. This casts doubt on whether this shall be embraced and supported by the relevant government agencies. We also observe that the MPS is silent on ECD.

Whereas the NBFP FY 2017/18 highlights the positive patterns in the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) at primary education level (stood at 109% in 2015/16), it is silent on the GER at the ECD level. This is due to the fact that ECD service provision is majorly private sector led and that there is no baseline status on ECD in Uganda. However, the Education and Sports Sector Fact Sheet 2002 – 2015 captured data at this level, reporting a very low GER of 10.2% in 2013/14 and 9.74% in 2014/15

### Recommendation

- MoES should conduct a national baseline on ECD to establish the status quo.
- Government/MoES should avail the implementation plan for the ECD policy to the relevant players and public.
- MoES should explore a Public Private Sector arrangement for the establishment of ECD centers so that these fees are subsidized.
- The Ministry of Education and Sports should accredit certificates of the already ECD trained personnel to align their certificates with the current ECD curriculum.

**b. Deficient UPE Capitation Grant.** At the inception of UPE in 1997, the overall unit cost was UGX 13,000/- as disaggregated by class levels: (UGX 5,000 for lower classes; P1 - P3 and UGX 8,000 for upper classes; P4 - P7). It was later revised and consolidated to a uniform per unit cost of UGX 7,000 per pupil from P1 - P7 per annum.

This implies that capitation would eventually be lower than the UGX 7,000 as it included administration and inspection expenses at both District and school level. Whereas the nominal unit cost was valued at UGX 7,000/-, allocations from FY 2011/12, 2012/13 & 2013/14 fluctuated in real value between UGX 6,541/-, UGX 6,680/- and UGX 6,323/-<sup>3</sup>.

Fast forward to financial years 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 the nominal value was raised to UGX 10,000/- but the real value is UGX 8,753/-.

The MPS reiterates the inadequacy of the capitation acknowledging that with the increasing numbers of the pupils in schools, the unit per child stands at UGX 7000/-. Factor in inflation and market value trends this figure will continue to fall. However, the MPS maintains the UPE budget provisions as the previous years despite more enrolments in lower primary level every year that outstrip the completion numbers and dropouts combined. There has not been any consideration to accommodate inflation and change in market values, neither has the sector adopted the recommended differentiated formulae for allocating capitation grants proposed by the NDP II.

### **Recommendation**

The unit cost per child in UPE should be revised to accommodate the inflationary rates and match it to the current/prevaling market values. The unit cost should at least be revised to UGX15.000/-. Note: This is not the cost of education but in view of progressive realization there should be a plan to both increase the figure and to accommodate the ever-increasing numbers of pupils on an annual basis.

### **c. Dilapidated Infrastructure**

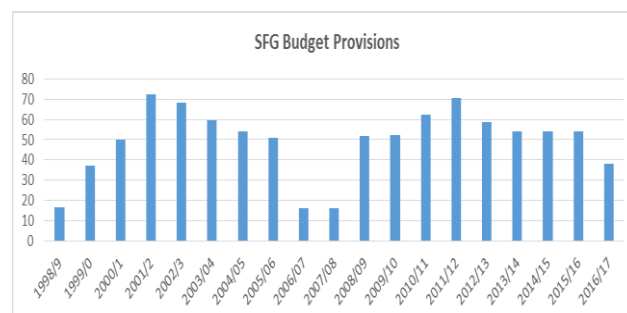
Much as UPE is appreciated, a number of schools still conduct lessons under trees

<sup>3</sup> 2016 Uganda UPR Factsheet; Right to Education

and in dilapidated buildings; yet a good learning environment is vital to achieving better learning outcomes and quality education. In relation to SFG funds, the MPS maintains last financial year's provisions. There will, however, be funds for emergency construction of schools amounting to UGX 3.49bn in FY 2017/18.

According to MoES, there is a classroom deficit of 45,371 classrooms countrywide within parishes without primary schools. Many schools that are yet to benefit from SFG may have to stay longer in the queue if resources are not allocated for the same. In addition, there is still a lot to do with addressing the scarcity of teacher's accommodation, which has greatly affected school performance in all aspects.

**Figure 1: showing the SFG budget provisions**



### **Recommendation**

- We recommend that the lump sum allocated to should be disaggregated to reflect SFG and other beneficiary programs. There should be guidelines for the allocation of the beneficiary programs for easy tracking and report on outcomes.
- Furthermore, additional funding should be considered for development projects at local government for construction of school infrastructures and operations and maintenance.

### **d. Limited financing for inclusive education**

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2007, provides for the

elimination of barriers that prevent PWDs from the attainment of their full potential. Despite Uganda's constitution in Chapter Four providing for affirmative actions for people discriminated upon based on their history, race, culture, and other factors; PWDs continue to face barriers in attaining high levels of education. This is due to the limited and stagnated financing for Special Needs Education where the SNE and Career Guidance Program's funding has reduced from UGX 1.49bn in FY 2016/17 to UGX 1.43bn in FY 2017/18. Additionally, the Development and Improvement of SNE project's budget has stagnated at UGX 2.06bn between FY 2016/17 and FY 2017/18. This minimal financing translates into a perpetuation of the discriminatory physical environments such as lack of ramps for PWDs with physical impairments. Lack of teachers with training in special needs education and lack of personal assistants. Coupled to that, the academic curriculum at all levels fails to cater for subjects such as sign language and or braille which may be necessary to ease communication and break the social barriers between the PWDs and non-disabled pupils and students. Through affirmative action, 64 Government slots are reserved for PWDs at the university. The reality is that, with UPE & USE, many PWDs have managed to access education.

#### **Recommendation**

- There is a need for a coordinated effort between the Ministry and Uganda Bureau of Statistics to effectively plan with PWDs at all education levels.
- There is need to increase funding towards creation of inclusive environments for public institutions and ensure that the relevant policies that support creation of inclusive education environments are implemented in private institutions and their implementation monitored to ensure compliance
- The policy needs to be revised to match the number of the applications that are received. The ministry should be able to accommodate at least the 300 students that submit their applications if they qualify.

#### **e. Inadequate financing for Monitoring and Supervision**

Despite the FY 2016/2017 allocation for monitoring and supervision being insufficient, the NBFPP has further indicated a further reduction of this budget line by UGX 500M from 4.6BN to 4.1BN. Sufficient resource allocation to the monitoring and supervision sector would ensure better learning outcomes by curbing teacher absenteeism and other related issues. Therefore, this budget cut shall not only frustrate the proper and much-required monitoring and supervision but also affect the learning outcomes for the pupils.

#### **Recommendation**

We recommend that the MoES and MoFPED should protector ring fence funds for monitoring and inspection as this is a vital component in achieving quality and meaningful education.

#### **f. Poor Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) in Schools**

Program based budgeting focuses on outcomes rather than outputs. Hence, the focus on education has to shift from girl enrollment to retention, survival, and better learning outcomes. The issue of menstrual absenteeism and hygiene has caught the attention of government, under the pre-primary and primary education vote, under gender as a cross-cutting issue, funds have been allocated to disseminate manuals and readers on menstrual hygiene management. This follows the issue of high dropout rates for girls as a result of poor menstrual hygiene management.

Currently, the program is only funded by Irish Aid through UNICEF but the resources are not adequate to roll it out into all the districts. This measure is much more sustainable than government purchasing pads for each adolescent primary school going girl.

#### **Recommendation**

Moes and MoFPED to co-fund for the MHM project in MoES' gender unit which is equipping senior women teachers to train adolescent girls in making reusable pads out of readily available material in their respective communities.

### **g. Lack of a School Feeding Program**

The National Food Security Assessment in Uganda Report of 2017 observed that there are eight regions<sup>4</sup> in a food crisis. The MPS alludes to the need for a school feeding program too. In times of scarcity, children are bound to suffer more. Children are a vulnerable group thus they need more protection in difficult circumstances. In regard to the MPS, the ministry plans to distribute seedlings to 7 districts in Karamoja sub-region under the world food program. This should be extended to other regions that are facing a food crisis. With the implementation of PBB, better learning outcomes are a function of school feeding. There is a direct relationship between feeding and school performance.

#### **Recommendation:**

- We recommend that Government pronounces itself on the school feeding policy.
- We recommend that through OWC seedlings be distributed to facilitate the establishment of school gardens.
- As an alternative, parents should be sensitized and encouraged to make in-kind food contributions or cash contributions to schools to enable school feeding

### **h. Co-curricular activities and talent development**

Through the revised national youth policy 2011, the government of Uganda recognizes the need to nurture talent and enhance MDD and sporting activities as a means to solving the increasing youth unemployment. Whereas this is a welcome move by CSOs, the worry is that these aspirations don't seem to be aligned with the education system and the curricular. In primary and secondary levels of education, co-curricular activities such as music dance and drama, sports, and games are not clearly embedded into the school's programs. These collide with time for lessons and the pupils who participate in them miss the lessons and are likely to be

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<sup>4</sup> Eastern, Central, Western, Teso, Lango, Acholi, Bukedi, West Nile regions

poor performers in class yet the UNEB, the examining body does not recognise these as some of their examinable subjects and hence the participants are never issued with certificates of participation, hence a blow to their future.

Whereas performing arts, sports and games have become some of the major income earners to countries like the USA, Nigeria, and others, the enhancement of such talents is hampered by a poor education system that doesn't not a lot it time during the school time. It is also hampered by the fact that there are no professional theater arts and MDD teachers.

#### **Recommendation**

- There is need to have a review of the primary and secondary school curricula and the system to cater for the promotion and early childhood identification of talents.
- There is also need to increase funding to cater for the staffing of professional theater arts, MDD, and sports teachers to enhance the promotion of talent tailored towards the creation of jobs.

## **SECONDARY SUB SECTOR**

### **a. Lack of secondary schools in several Sub Counties**

While CSOs appreciate USE as a government program, we are concerned that equitable access has been hindered by a lack of secondary schools in many sub counties in Uganda. As per the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2015, every sub-county should have at least one secondary school. The FY 2015/2016 Ministerial Policy Statement acknowledged that 615 sub counties are without a government supported the secondary school. Worse still, 312 sub counties out of the 615 are without any form of secondary education whether community or private. CSOs appreciate the allocation of funds to begin establishing a school per Sub County as is the education policy; however, we think that the resources that have been allocated to establish 12 schools in the 312 sub counties without schools are on a low side. What should be noted is that some districts have more than 65% of their sub counties without a secondary school, for

example, Kapchorwa District out of 15 sub counties, 9 lack any form of a secondary school. Kween District out of 12 sub counties, 7 lack any form of secondary education. Kapchorwa and Kween are a representation of other districts that are in much need of establishment of secondary schools. While Sustainable Development Goal No.4 entrenches the principles of inclusive, quality education for all, the outlook in Uganda is concerning as many students in the numerous sub counties may be left behind after all. The 12 schools that the MPS FY 2017/18 talks about are a mere 3% of the overall needed schools to cover all the sub counties in need.

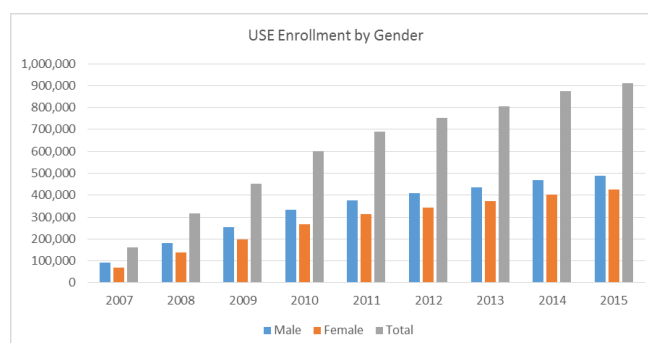
**Recommendation:**

- The government should prioritize allocating funds to establish secondary schools. In the alternative, funds should be reallocated from renovating nonUSE schools into establishing schools in at least more 18 schools in addition to the 12 that have been planned for.

**b. Inadequate USE Capitation Grants**

The government of Uganda in 2007 launched the USE program. This program has given mileage to the secondary education sector in Uganda; students have been enabled to attain at least lower secondary education while others cross to BTJET for skilling programs.

**Table 2: Summary of USE enrolment by gender**



**Source: Education Management Information System (EMIS) 2002-2015**

However, the challenge has been on the resources allocated for the execution of the program in terms of capitation grant, recurrent costs, and development. We are concerned that for the past ten years that the program has been in existence the capitation unit cost has remained constant at a meagre figure of UGX 41,000/ for grant-aided schools and UGX 47,000/- for public schools and PPP School. The per unit cost has not been revised to at least factor in inflationary trends but also reflect the market values over the last decade. Currently, both figures (41,000 and 47,000) have depreciated and in real terms they are UGX 26,972 and UGX 30,919 respectively.

**Recommendation**

- The USE per unit cost should be revised to accommodate the inflationary rates and match it to the current/prevaling market values. Ministry should recognize the increasing cost of education and allocate resources that match the prevailing economic circumstances. At least UGX 100,000/- should be allocated and revised every year.

**c. Shortage of science teachers**

The government has been promoting science subjects in schools. This, however, has not been matched with the recruitment of teachers for the same. Many rural schools, as well as PPP schools implementing USE, do not have science teachers. Worse still, some of the government programs selectively benefit a section of the population. For example, it is a requirement that to benefit from the student loan scheme, one must be a science student. This automatically eliminates many of the students that are enrolled in much rural and some urban USE schools. The MPS acknowledges the gap in the recruitment of teachers, however, the MoFPED under the final budget call circular for finalization of MPS, stated that wage ceilings have been maintained for FY2017/18. There shall not be recruitments especially for the 2000 science teachers needed.

**Recommendation**

- There should be reallocation or allocation of 18bn to cater for the recruitment of the

needed 2000 science teachers. Commitment to the promotion of sciences should be shown by ensuring that the human resources are recruited.

#### **d. Subjective Categorization of consumptive items**

The NBFP also indicates various budget cuts by MoFPED on “consumptive” items. However, such cuts shall negatively affect the performance of the sector. On the outlook, the concept of “consumptive” may vary by sector; if applied across the board, it will greatly hinder operations of the Social Service Sectors like Education. That said, a number of reforms and interventions within the education sector are by nature of soft component unlike in other sectors where they may be physical. For example, issues of curriculum, poor management, and governance of schools can only be addressed through workshops, travel inland, fuel, and allowances, which are categories as “consumptive” items.

#### **Recommendation:**

- MoFPED should reconsider the definition of “consumptive” items while protecting the same house in the Social Service Sectors like education in order not to hinder the smooth operation of the program activities.

### **AUDITOR GENERAL’S REPORT FY 2015/16 AND RECOMMENDATIONS NOT REFLECTED IN THE NBFP.**

#### **a. Delayed implementation of project activities under Uganda Teacher and School Effectiveness Project (UTSEP):**

The sector management was to ensure that in future project activities are implemented on a timely basis so as to ensure objectives are met within the agreed time frame

#### **b. The underperformance of the Communication Strategy and Awareness activity:**

It was recommended that the Project Management should follow up with the

concerned officers and ensure that the activity is completed and a final report produced.

### **CONCLUSION**

We note with concern that while Uganda is mandated to progressively realize education as a human right, some of the government programs that have been in place have suffered severe stagnancy in terms of funding, staffing constraints, and coordination challenges among others. This hinders the smooth operation of the programs.

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