



CSBAG BUDGET NEWS BRIEF



557TH EDITION | 26TH AUGUST – 1ST SEPTEMBER 2019

Advocating for a People Centered Budget that Dignifies Humanity



CSOs call for review of **Universal Primary Education**

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have asked Government to review Universal Primary Education (UPE) by identifying achievements, weakness and challenges so that appropriate measures are taken to improve the program.

CSOs made this call on 29th August 2019 during their preparatory meeting for the upcoming Regional Local Government budget consultative workshops that will take place across the country from 15th September to 4th October 2019. According to them, UPE should put more focus on skilling Ugandans in entrepreneurship and vocational.

"We have had UPE for the past twenty years but it has delivered more on enrolling huge numbers especially girl children, which is good. However, we have noticed that a lot of emphasis has been put on the numbers and not the quality of education that pupils receive. To this effect, we see so many young children going to school without adequate preparation," said Jeff Wadulo, CSBAG's Parliamentary Liaison Officer.

UPE challenges

According to him, there are several challenges facing the UPE program which among others include poor infrastructure, lack of scholastic materials, inadequate number of teachers, and noteworthy school drop outs.

In 2016, a Learning Assessment carried out by Uwezo Uganda revealed that there was a scanty number of children who could ably read or comprehend what they read. The report also revealed that only three out of ten pupils between Primary Three and Primary Seven could read English and do division.

"Between Primary Three and Primary Seven, 56 out of 100 pupils in urban areas could read and understand a Primary Two-level English story



Pupils attending a lesson in a Universal Primary Education School. UPE challenges include poor infrastructure, lack of scholastic materials, inadequate number of teachers, and noteworthy school drop outs.

whereas 35 out of 100 pupils living in rural areas could read and understand a Primary Two-level English story," reads part of the report.

Lois Twikirize, the Deputy Executive Secretary at Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) explained that lack of school feeding in UPE schools affects children's performance. She also said that some parents have ignored their roles in the education of their children, leaving everything to be done by the Government.

CSO views

The Executive Director for Gulu NGO Forum, Geoffrey Okello, said literacy is the biggest contributing factor to low performance. According to him, school management committees have not done much in ensuring that teachers do their work, and that's why cases of absenteeism are rampant in UPE schools.

"Performance of many schools in Northern Uganda has been poor. If school management committees are trained on proper governance, the pupils' performance can be boosted,"

said Okello, wondering why UPE schools perform poorer than private schools when the latter's teachers are less paid.

Simon Byamukama, the Executive Director Let Us Save Uganda (LUSU), noted that all Government schools used to perform very well until the introduction of UPE.

"Before the introduction of UPE, Government schools performed well but now the same schools perform poorly. Government seems reluctant to rethink the UPE program yet more emphasis should now be put on imparting skills to pupils," said Byamukama.

UPCOMING EVENTS

What: *LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET CONSULTATION MEETINGS*

When: 15th September to 4th October 2019

Where: Eastern, Central, Northern, and Western Uganda

OUR WORK IN PICTURES



CSOs attending a preparatory meeting for the upcoming Local Government Budget Consultative Workshops in Kampala on 27th August 2019. © CSBAG 2019



CSBAG at the Butambala District Local Government headquarters monitoring service delivery on 29th August 2019. © CSBAG 2019