

**Support to Uganda Primary  
Education Reform**

**Final Report**

**The Basic Education and Policy Support  
(BEPS) Activity**

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**Prepared by:**

**Jeanne Moulton  
GroundWork**

*Prepared for:*

**The Global Bureau  
Human Capacity Development Center  
US Agency for International Development**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID/Uganda has supported Uganda's basic education reform since its conception in 1991. In the context of support to that reform, the Mission asked me to attend the Education Sector Investment Program Review held in October 2000, to review the government's evidence of meeting the conditionality for Tranche 8, and to help formulate a strategy for its new direction in support of basic education.

### ESIP Review

Overall, the Ministry has met the undertakings set forth for this review. The most critical issue addressed by the Education Sector Investment Plan (ESIP) is the shortage of teachers. The undertakings (conditionalities) agreed upon at the October 2000 ESIP review reflect this high-priority concern. This report highlights issues of concern to USAID/Uganda. For a more complete account of the ESIP review, the Aide Memoire of the review is attached.

### USAID/Uganda's Tranche 7 Conditionalities

The Ministry has fully met two of the five conditionalities:

- Funding for education, primary education, and instructional materials
- Accountability of public expenditures (audits)

It has partially met three of the five conditionalities:

- Budgeting based on minimum-quality standards
- Parental and community support for improving education
- Management of districts and schools

### New Directions

USAID/Uganda has decided to refocus its present program and future strategy in the education sector on four areas:

- Quality
- Girls' education
- Computerization of ITEK and PTCs
- Combined health and education activities, including HIV/AIDS

Based on the new focus, the ESIP process, and discussions with Ministry staff, this report suggests four objectives and related support activities:

- Reduce the wastage in teacher education
- Improve teachers' performance in the classroom

- Improve pupils' health and safety
- Decentralize education services

The modalities for support will have to be selected once objectives have been determined. The report makes some general recommendations for deciding upon objectives and modalities of support.

- **Project support.** In designing project activities, USAID/Uganda should work closely with the Ministry, the Education Sector Consultative Committee (ESCC), and the Education Funding Agencies Group (EFAG) to set objectives. The Ministry is actively engaged in complying with the conditions set by the ESIP Review, which reflect its own priorities and those of most funding agencies. For two reasons, USAID/Uganda should try to align its objectives with ESIP priorities. First, the Ministry will pay less attention to activities that it sees as outside of its main focus (witness our review of Tranche 7 conditionalities). Second, any funding agency activities outside those set by the Ministry in the ESIP are effectively diverting Ministry resources from the priorities it has set for itself.
- **Budgetary support.** USAID/Uganda could choose to participate in the ESIP funding process, using the same conditionalities (or undertakings) that are agreed to by the Ministry and the Education EFAG. Like the European Union, USAID/Uganda could even earmark its funding for specific parts of the ESIP program. Earmarking would help to align USAID/Uganda's budgetary support with project support. For Tranche 8 funding in particular, during which time period the Mission is reorienting its education sector objectives and program, budgetary support to the ESIP process would support the Ministry's current high-priority actions.

USAID/Uganda could also choose *not* to participate in the ESIP funding process. If it chooses instead to develop its own conditionalities, these should be presented in terms of results, not actions. Several of the Tranche 7 conditionalities dictated specific actions that the Ministry must undertake rather than policy objectives it must meet. In some instances, the Ministry was fulfilling the spirit of the conditionalities but following different—sometimes more reasonable—actions. Where budgetary support is used in the future as a tool for policy reform, it should not prescribe specific actions.

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**GLOSSARY**

BEPS	Basic Education and Policy Support Activity
CCT	Coordinating Center Tutor
EFAG	Education Funding Agencies Group
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESIP	Education Sector Investment Plan
ESCC	Education Sector Consultative Committee
GOU	Government of Uganda
ITEK	Institute for Teacher Training at Kyambogo
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MTBF	Medium-Term Budget Framework
PAF	Poverty Action Fund
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PTC	Primary Teacher College
TDMP	Teacher Development and Management Plan
TDMS	Teacher Development and Management System
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## I. INTRODUCTION

Between October 10 and November 3, 2000, I consulted with the United States Agency for International Development/Uganda (USAID/Uganda) on its Strategic Objective #3: Education. I was fielded by GroundWork, a member of the Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) project consortium, which organized the consultancy.

### **Statement of Work**

The solicitation for technical assistance in the education sector summarizes these three tasks:

- Participate in the fourth Education Sector Investment Plan (ESIP) Review, scheduled to take place between October 16 and 19
- Compile documentary evidence on the Government of Uganda's (GOU's) compliance with the 7<sup>th</sup> tranche conditionalities and prepare a document to that effect
- Finalize the proposed conditionalities for the 8<sup>th</sup> tranche disbursement

Upon my arrival at USAID/Uganda, the Scope of Work (SOW) was modified. The mission had just received approval of its Concept Paper for its Integrated Strategic Plan (September 19, 2000) and thus decided not to continue programming budgetary support (Non-Project Assistance) as had been planned. The Deputy Director directed me not to develop Tranche 8 conditionalities but instead to begin exploring new directions for the remaining years of the current program and a strategy for the newly approved SO 8, which encompasses education and health.

During my consultancy, I also undertook a few additional short tasks, which are reported here.

### **Organization of the Report**

This introduction is followed by four chapters, in line with the organization of my revised SOW:

- The ESIP Review
- Tranche 7 conditionalities
- New strategic directions
- Other tasks

## II. ESIP REVIEW

I attended the fourth ESIP Review meeting, October 16-19, at the Nile Conference Center. This chapter summarizes what took place at that meeting. The attached Aide Memoire of the meeting describes more fully the objectives of the review, its accomplishments, and issues and concerns that arose.

### The ESIP Framework

The ESIP and its semi-annual reviews are directly linked to USAID/Uganda's September 2000 Concept Paper for its Integrated Strategic Plan, which supports the government's Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP).

Because government believes that education has an impact on the lives of the poor, it has established education targets and monitoring indicators in the PEAP. The long-term targets of the PEAP are to approach 100 percent enrollment by 2003, with a pupil-teacher ratio of 41:1 by 2009. Current targets are in Table 1.

Table 1. PEAP primary education targets

	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
Pupil-teacher ratio	68:1	58:1	48:1	45:1	45:1
Pupil-classroom ratio	131:1	118:1	99:1	88:1	79:1
Pupil-textbook ratio	6:1	6:1	4:1	3:1	3:1

At the ESIP Review in October 2000, government, funding agencies, and other stakeholders reviewed progress toward meeting these targets and completion of other undertakings related to the targets.

This was the fourth six-monthly ESIP Review, the first having taken place in April 1999, the second in September/October 1999, and the third in April 2000. The broad aim of the review was to identify strengths and weaknesses of the education system and to make recommendations for improving equitable access, quality, and efficiency.

### Progress Toward Undertakings

The ESIP Review participants looked at two sets of undertakings that the Ministry was to have completed by this meeting. One set of seven was carried over from the previous review in April. Another set of twelve were introduced in April. The Ministry announced to the review participants which undertakings it had met and which it had not met (the complete table is annexed to the attached Aide Memoire).

#### *Undertakings Carried Over from April 2000 Review*

The ministry has met the following undertakings carried over from April 2000:

- The semi-annual independent audit
- Computation of outstanding teachers' arrears payment and measures in place to prevent further arrears
- A system for using resource-based minimum quality standards and unit costs for MTBF strategic planning (satisfactory progress)

The ministry had not met the following undertakings carried over from April 2000:

Updating of teachers' payroll  
 Completion of restructuring of MOES  
 90 percent of established primary teachers' posts filled

One other undertaking was judged unrealistic and left to be modified.

#### *Undertakings Set for October 2000 Review*

At the October 2000 review, the Ministry had met most of the undertakings introduced in April to be met by this review. These are:

- Budget and releases in line with MTBF, MOES, and Poverty Action Fund (PAF) guidelines, maintaining a minimum of 31 percent of recurrent discretionary expenditure for the education sector with at least 65 percent of this for primary education. (Actually, the budget is at 29 percent; shortfalls were mainly with the primary teachers' wage bill and instructional materials)
- Joint reviews and regular meetings of the Education Sector CC
- Annual independent audit
- Teacher utilization studies and costed action plan in the Mid-Term Budgetary Framework (MTBF) (on track)
- Access to the payroll of 80 percent of district ceilings for primary teachers; strategies developed to attract teachers to disadvantaged communities
- A system of monitoring and evaluating progress in the sector, including EMIS and NAPE
- Meeting of target ratio for textbook and non-textbook instructional materials for four core subjects;
- Post-primary Education and Training Policy framework and costed plans; and
- Costed plans for district and center capacity building; completed restructuring and recruitment of MOES personnel (90 percent of posts filled)

The two undertakings not met are:

- A policy framework for equitable access for disadvantaged groups
- Completion of a monitoring and evaluation system, including an Education Standards Authority

### *Revisions to the Undertakings*

The Ministry and the funding agencies agreed to change the format of undertakings and to reduce their number. Thus, there are now four undertakings that are ongoing, to be reviewed at each semi-annual meeting.

Three of these are expressed in terms of performance indicators toward which progress should be measured for each review:

- Budget releases for education at minimum of 31 percent and for primary education at minimum 65 percent of recurrent discretionary expenditures
- Pupil-teacher, pupil-core textbook, and pupil-classroom ratios calculated nationally and by district
- Sharing of appropriate age range of girls and boys in P7 nationally and by district.

The fourth ongoing undertaking is an independent audit every six months.

In addition, three “process” undertakings—actions that move them toward meeting the performance criteria listed above—that had not yet been met have been retained. These are:

90 percent of established primary teachers’ posts filled

- A policy framework for equitable access for disadvantaged groups
- Completion of a monitoring and evaluation system, including an Education Standards Authority

The funding agencies have agreed to drop all other undertakings.

### **ESIP Issues of Interest to USAID**

This report will not repeat the thorough account of the ESIP review covered in the attached Aide Memoire. Instead, it focuses on issues particularly relevant to USAID’s interests: teachers, equity, decentralization, and instructional technology.

### *Teachers*

Teachers are of interest to USAID for two reasons. First, the overarching objective of the SUPER project was to improve teachers’ conditions and training. Second, the performance of teachers—related directly to their conditions and training—is the single most important influence on the quality of the primary education system, and USAID’s program and strategy will continue to address quality issues. The ESIP review identified the shortage of qualified teachers in primary schools as the most serious problem faced by the education sector.

























































**ANNEX IV. THE AIDE MEMOIRE**

The Aide Memoire of the Fourth Education Sector Review, October 2000 is included in this report as a separate document.