



From	Uwezo Uganda
Type of Organisation	Not for profit education-focused organisation
Presented to	To the Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC)
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This position statement herein the *“issue paper”* presents our analysis of the issues in education and possible recommendations on how to make education affordable, accessible and relevant for **ALL CHILDREN** noting that education has the possibility of enabling all children to have a chance in life.
- 1.2 This position statement is informed by reflections from our work as citizens working in the space of improving equitable and quality education for all children in Uganda. Our work spanning for slightly over a decade (from 2010) has revolved around the question; ***Are our children learning?*** The Republic of Uganda being a signatory to major education treaties since 1990 has made significant strides to expand access to basic education. In the history of our country, there are more children in school than ever before; there are more classrooms, capitation to schools and teachers recruited in schools. Institutions have been established to increase access to education across the country. Though still comparatively low, the education budget has now hit 2.7% of the GDP and the education development partner support to education has increased. Equally, parents continue to support education through payment of fees and other levies. The Ministry of Education and Sports has also formulated several policies aimed at improving access and increasing equity for underserved groups such as girls, children living with disabilities, teen mothers, areas previously characterised by conflicts (in need of reconstruction) and areas where poverty levels are high, progression through levels from primary to tertiary education and training and specific geographical contexts (particularly the North and East).
- 1.3 Despite these massive investments in education, the outcomes have not matched them. In a decade, as Uwezo Uganda, we have partnered with relevant Ministry of Education and Sports agencies and other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) across the country to establish the learning levels among children of the school going age in Uganda. Through the support of the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, we have drawn nationally representative samples of children and we have reached almost all districts across the country. We have used simple tools of literacy and numeracy, which we have developed collaboratively with practising teachers, teacher educators and curriculum specialists from Ministry of Education and Sports’ National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), to assess the learning levels of all children (both in and out of school) that are aged 4-16 years. The assessment items pegged on a P2 curriculum are aimed at providing illustrative results of the learning levels.

- 1.4 We have assessed over 560,000 children aged 4-17 years, children in over 217,000 households across all districts in Uganda using over 31,000 citizen surveyors from 11,000 villages in partnership with over 550 Civil Society Organisations.
- 1.5 The results over the last 10 years show that despite the massive investments in education, more than 70% of the children in P3-P7 (and 90% of those in P3) have not mastered the learning expectations of a P2 curriculum. Further, the results show that children in schools delay to acquire learning by at least 2 years and some take up to 5 years. For instance, there are close to 20% of P7 learners who have not acquired P2 reading and numeracy levels at the time of completing primary education. However, our findings also show that attending preschool for at least two years enables children to benefit from primary education more efficiently, acquiring foundational skills earlier and with less grade repetition.¹
- 1.6 The results of the learning assessments show that learning levels across the country are not the same. In our last assessment (conducted in 2021 at the height of COVID 19 in 29 districts), we established that there exist regional disparities in performance and gender dynamics in learning levels. For instance, whereas 57% of the children in P3-P7 in Wakiso district could read and comprehend a P2 text and do a P2 division task, only 13% of the children in Namutumba district could do the same. Associated factors of learning include classroom sizes, the levels of education of caregivers, pre-school attendance prior to joining school, language of instruction and WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) conditions at the school.
- 1.7 In looking at environments where learning takes place, we have established that schools still lack basic resources and infrastructure that include inadequate teachers and acute shortage of classrooms (See Table 1 below). For instance, schools in Eastern and Northern regions of Uganda have regressed in pupil classroom ratio since 2015. Similarly, the pupil toilet ratio has regressed in Northern and Western Uganda in 5 years. Nationally, a classroom is accommodating 98 children while 107 children are sharing a toilet stance. This inequitable distribution of learning resources affects the learning outcomes of our children negatively.

Table 1: Basic school resources and infrastructure

Indicator	Pupil-classroom ratio		Pupil-toilet stance ratio	
	2015	2020	2015	2020
Region/Year	2015	2020	2015	2020
Central	68	67	76	70
Eastern	104	112	111	109
Northern	105	146	133	177
Western	72	71	69	81
All Uganda	84	98	93	107

Source, Uwezo Uganda (2021, pg. 27)

- 1.8 **But why would the question of foundational learning bother us?** It has been passed on to us that a house can only stand for as long as its foundations are strong. And this cannot be further from the truth in education. Our analysis from the assessment of learning and research that we have conducted has led us to identify the triple problem with learning; and this has affirmed our position that learning should be made to be the indicator for success in education. First of all, **the learning levels across the country are low** despite the massive investments by Government of Uganda, Development Partners and the parents. Secondly, **the learning levels are not distributed equally** in Uganda. This is to the disadvantage of children from poor households, girls, children attending government schools, overage children, in some cases specific genders, homeless children, children who did not attend pre-school, children who lack competence in the language of instruction, children whose mothers

¹ Uwezo (2019) *Are our children learning? Uwezo Uganda eighth learning assessment report*, Kampala: Twaweza East Africa.

lack basic learning competencies, and children living with one or multiple forms of disability.

Thirdly, **children despite staying in school are delaying to acquire the grade appropriate competencies.** The curriculum is way ahead of children. At any given time, children are behind the curriculum expectations by 2 years and in some cases 5 years. This introduces the twin problem; frustration on the part of the learners and the system inefficiency that gobbles the already constrained resources in education.

- 1.9 **On frustration on the part of children;** we appreciate and duly acknowledge that children develop through elaborate developmental milestones as their brains expand and mature, they learn from the known to the unknown, and form constructs from concrete to abstract². These realities require that environments are created and stimulated to help children to learn. Environments that include well prepared, enough and adequately resourced teachers, teaching and learning resources that are distributed equitably (those who need more are given more). When this does not happen, children lag and in some cases these children may never learn. Therefore, foundational learning is the foundation for sustainable learning (children can continue to learn more complex skills and competencies).
- 1.10 **This leads to the second challenge around system inefficiency;** when children do not learn, schools hold them back (often known as grade repetition) which institutionalises delayed learning. This way, the education system spends at least twice the resources to help the child learn for every grade that the child learns. This makes education expensive. The presence of overage children spirals. Our findings show that less than 30% of the children are attending age appropriate grades in Uganda. The 70% are spending at least twice the allocated resources to learn. This is unsustainable. (Uwezo 2021, pg. 5)
- 1.11 **Delayed or total acquisition of foundational learning skills can spiral beyond basic education;** the children without learning are more likely to drop out of school. Currently, transition to secondary school stands at 59% (UBOS, 2021, page 20) out of the primary school completion rates of 59%. To make this illustration clear, of every 100 children that join P1, those that complete P7 are 59 yet of these 59, only 35 get admitted into secondary school signalling wastage of 69% children who join any P1 class in any given year³. These numbers keep reducing such that by end of S6, only 12 children out of the 100 who joined P1 will complete representing wastage rate of 88% (UBOS, 2021 page 23). It should also be noted that only a few students enrol in Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training. (UBOS, 2021, pg 30) ⁴
- 1.12 **To us, we submit that the measure of the goodness in a policy is to test its results;** And by all evidence presented, the policy interventions that have been pursued have fallen short of being aligned towards learning and therefore create wastage, resulting in a system clog.

2.0 Policy Responses from the Government White Paper on Education of 1992

- 2.1 The Government White Paper on Education of 1992 is the parent policy framework within which education has been planned, designed and implemented and delivered in Uganda. Yet the results from the Uwezo surveys and assessments point to the challenges that the White Paper intentions have failed to confront and solve. For instance, whereas learning outcomes improved by almost 6% between 2018 and 2021 when we conducted two national assessments (from 26% to 32%⁵), the proportion of children without foundational skills is still alarming.

²[Influence of Piaget's Theory on Educational Practice](#)

³ https://www.epdc.org/sites/default/files/documents/EPDC_NEP_2018_Uganda.pdf
[Statistical Abstract 2021](#)

⁵ Between 2018 and 2021 when Uwezo conducted the learning assessment, the proportion of children in P3-P7 who could take numeracy tasks, read fluently and comprehend a P2 text increased from 26% to 32% meaning that most children in primary schools are still lacking foundational learning skills.

- 2.2 With the population of Uganda growing at an annual rate of 3.04%, the percentages of children with delayed, low and inequitable learning outcomes could translate into millions. If urgent interventions are not put in place, both proportions and real numbers, of children likely to miss out on foundational learning is likely to go higher than it stands today.
- 2.3 Drawing from the White Paper, (Pg 4-5), 23 issues were identified that would be classified into funding, planning, implementation and institutional capacity. Some of the issues cited in the White Paper still remain sticky to date. We identify the following issues that remain sticky to be the causes behind the low, delayed and inequitably distributed learning outcomes across the country. These issues include
- (i) Teacher shortages to cater for the curriculum needs,
 - (ii) Increasing cost of education that remains the main barrier to retaining children in school and transition into secondary school and beyond,
 - (iii) Higher education (already grappling with its own quality challenges) is not optimally helping the basic education to resolve the challenges of quality
 - (iv) The overemphasis on summative assessments to measure education success coupled with the over-reliance on the use of national examinations to select and reject children for transition into secondary school levels and higher levels of education,
 - (v) Continued disparities in allocation of education resources
 - (vi) Challenge of physical planning of schools
 - (vii) The data challenge across levels of education.
- 2.4 In addition to the issues above, the **problem of low, delayed and inequitably distributed learning outcomes is evident**. This is a pointer to curriculum design and delivery challenges, funding mechanisms and equity in resourcing education a challenge that starts with pre-primary and finds its way to post-secondary education and training. *Furthermore, the limited integration and recognition of pre-primary into the education system precludes many children from acquiring desirable learning competencies, which jeopardises sustainability of learning. In addition, the overemphasis on academic skills at the expense of life skills and values denies an opportunity for whole child development⁶.*
- 2.5 To address the challenge, a number of policies have been formulated. Among the policies adopted include the Universal Primary Education (UPE) (1997), Inclusive Education (under UPE), 1997, sustained implementation of the 1965 language policy and the recent National Teacher Policy are among policies developed to further the delivery of education. It is not in doubt that there are policy pronouncements on almost all aspects of education. Institutions and semi-autonomous agencies have been established to deliver the education policy intentions. These policy intentions align with the Government Paper on Education (1992).
- 2.6 In resolving the 23 issues, the White Paper recommended the review of the education system as follows
- 2.6.1 An extension of the primary school years from 7 to 8 years with the medium of instruction in lower primary being mother-tongue and later on English
 - 2.6.2 Secondary school to consist of ordinary level implemented in three types of schools; General, comprehensive and vocational and the advanced level of two years after two years
- 2.7 Evidence shows that transition rates still remain unimpressive with almost 88% of the children who join P1 not transitioning into A- Level, this is without considering grade repetition realities.
- 2.8 Our evidence shows that, the language in education also remains to be a sticky issue. Children are experiencing delayed acquisition of the reading and comprehension competencies in select

⁶ Whole-child development is “a holistic development approach which aims to create the conditions within education systems and school communities that aims to develop the whole child, physically, socially, emotionally, and academically, with the active engagement and support of the community”. Porticus and ACER (nd) *Measuring what Matters: Insights on the Value of Whole Child Development*. <https://api.cofraholding.com/media/2047/measuring-what-matters-insights-on-the-value-of-whole-child-development.pdf> [Accessed online on 09/06/22]

local languages where these languages are to be used as the medium of instruction (Table 2 below).

Table 2: Reading and comprehension of select local languages by grade

Language/Grade	P3	P4	P5
Luganda	20%	46%	60%
Runyankore/Rukiga	15%	32%	58%
Leblango	5%	13%	30%
Lusoga	1%	4%	11%
Total	10%	24%	38%

Source, Uwezo Uganda, 2021

In addition, general evidence from our 2021 assessment further indicates that lower primary children who attend classrooms where only local language is used tend to have lower learning outcomes compared to their counterparts in multi-lingual classrooms or where English is used as a medium of instruction, raising issues on teacher capacity in terms of using local language as a medium of instruction, among other possible factors (Table 3 below).

Table 3: Ability of Children in P1-3 to Read Words and Do Subtraction, by School Languages of Instruction

Skill	Primary schools attended	School's languages of instruction:			
		Local language only	Mixture of local & English	English only	All
Able to read words in English	All types	15.8 (804)	25.7 (4,223)	47.6 (584)	26.6 (5,611)
Able to read words in English	Government-aided only	14.7 (653)	21.2 (2,966)	30.4 (181)	20.5 (3,800)
Able to read words in a local language	All types	13.8 (326)	19.5 (1,521)	30.3 (132)	19.3 (1,979)
Able to read words in a local language	Government-aided only	13.2 (250)	18.8 (1,018)	25.6 (39)	17.9 (1,307)
Able to do subtraction	All types	17.5 (798)	25.5 (4,205)	38.7 (584)	25.8 (5,587)
Able to do subtraction	Government-aided only	15.6 (647)	22.9 (2,952)	28.7 (181)	22.0 (3,780)

3.0 Policy Recommendations for achieving foundational learning and sustainable learning

- 3.1 Learning is complex and requires not only allocation of resources but careful thought on deciding on the type of resources, quantity of resources and mechanisms of deploying those resources. To start with, planning for education should focus on learning and not just accessing education; **learning (demonstration of knowledge, competencies and skills) should be the measure of educational success.**
- 3.2 Education is now an acceptable human right (both as a fundamental but most importantly a facilitative right to achieving the right to self-determination). Learning and completion of basic education (at least 12 years) should be policy concern and an intention captured in planning and delivery of education in Uganda. 12/13 years of uninterrupted schooling

(mandatory) will coincide with maturation (most children will complete 12/13 years when they are young adults and therefore possible to be integrated into preparation for employment through vocational and university education). To begin with, the right to compulsory minimum 12/13 should be adopted and pursued. No child should leave school without completing these minimum years. Furthermore, pre-primary education should be integrated into the basic education structure through a thought-out policy formulation, resource allocation and continuous monitoring. This will stimulate the right environment for children to acquire foundational learning competencies that they require to learn more complex skills beyond reading, numeracy and other skills beyond the foundational skills.

3.3 We draw specific recommendations from our work over the last decade. The recommendations are organised around seven (7) issues namely:

- (i) Improve opportunities for learning in pre-primary and lower primary education as a foundation for sustainable learning
- (ii) Review the structure of education
- (iii) Modify the National Teacher Policy
- (iv) Continuously monitor learning starting with foundational learning
- (v) Focus on whole child development
- (vi) Amend education financing mechanisms
- (vii) Rethink policy formulation and implementation

Recommendation 1

Improve opportunities for learning in pre-primary and lower primary education as a foundation for sustainable learning

1. We support universal access to early childhood care and education (ECCE) for children aged 3-5 years by taking on the following strategies:

- (i) Implement a mandatory two-year pre-primary education prior to admission into P1.
- (ii) There should be framework to partner with private players, religious institutions and communities to avail spaces for access to ECCE across the country.
- (iii) The Government should consider extending subsidies to low cost private/community based pre- schools with space to accommodate children as part of accelerating access as opposed to starting with constructing ECCE centres. Our 2021 research into community-based preschools indicates that they, if supported, have the potential to increase access to affordable pre-primary education.⁷ This will be a temporary measure while Government raises funds to construct adequate ECCE facilities across the country.
- (iv) There should be an established pre-primary facility in each existing Government school to increase access and transition into primary school
- (v) Review the pre-primary curriculum to focus mostly on pre-reading and pre-numeracy skills.

2. We call for an increase in teacher numbers, to allow for more interactive methods of teaching and learning and to realise the desirable average pupil to teacher ratio of 40:1 and lower through the following strategies:

- (i) Expand the definition of teachers, define the institution of teacher assistants, recognise, recruit and deploy teacher assistants to school
- (ii) Expand the identification and recruitment of volunteer teaching assistants at the community level, recruited by schools

⁷ Uwezo Uganda (2021) *Research report on 'developing sustainable models for community-based preschools in Uganda*. Kampala: Uwezo Uganda. Accessible at: [Untitled \(uwezouganda.org\)](https://www.uwezouganda.org) [23/12/2022]

- (iii) Implement scalable, low cost and innovative learning approaches such as ‘Teaching at the Right Level’⁸ and ‘community-led learning’.
- (iv) Provide classrooms more efficiently in the North and Eastern parts of the country
- (v) Encourage and reward local community effort, in line with the ideas of the White Paper where temporary structures are needed urgently.

Recommendation 2

Review the structure of education from the current 7-4-2-3 to 2-6-6-3

1. We associate ourselves with the following principles in recommending a structure of education
 - (i) Universality in access to education and learning opportunities as a right for all children
 - (ii) Learning as a measure of education success
 - (iii) Efficiency in delivering education for current and future generations
 - (iv) Sustainability of education programs to address the current and future problems
 - (v) Continuous improvement to increase efficiency and effectiveness of delivering education
 - (vi) Partnership by wide range of stakeholders in delivering quality universal education to all groups of children

2. In recommending an appropriate education system for education for Uganda, we observe:
 - (i) That all children (anyone below 18 years) should have an opportunity to compulsory and quality education of a minimum 10 years,
 - (ii) That system and structure of education should be cost-effective for its sustainability borrowing from various efficiency models in education⁹,
 - (iii) That education serves both the utility and economic functions,
 - (iv) That at the exit point, the learner should have basic skills that transit them to training for work,
 - (v) That education for learners below 18 years should all be considered as basic education,
 - (vi) That a learner should be tracked from entry to exit point,
 - (vii) That effort should be made at the entry point of education to ensure that children acquire foundational skills that help them to learn basics and automate learning,
 - (viii) That repetition is a serious waste of resources. However, transition into subsequent grades should not be automatic without considering accountability and acquisition of basic skills

3. We recommend a 2-6-4-2 system of education [2 years of mandatory pre-primary, 6 years of primary and 4 years of secondary (O- Level) and 2- years of A- level). This structure aligns with the **Harmonisation of the East African Education Systems and Training Curricula**¹⁰. **Specifically:**
 - (i) That the first 5 years (2 years at pre-primary and Primary 1, 2 &3) should be spent as reception and early learning years. This fits in all the evidence around early childhood care and education including the UNESCO framework that considers ECCE as age from birth to 8 years.
 - (ii) That the acquisition of the competencies at ECCE makes a smooth transition into primary school education where expanded competencies should be focussed on,

⁸ Teaching at the right level is an innovative reading and numeracy learning approach that focuses learning on the level where a child is instead of the grade. Learners are assessed to establish their reading and numeracy levels and activities used over a period of less than 50 days to help the child to learn.

⁹ https://economics.uq.edu.au/files/4038/Shawna_Grosskopf_et_al_Efficiency_Models_for_Education.pdf

¹⁰ <https://www.eac.int/education>

- (iii) We maintain our position that the country should implement a mandatory 2 year pre primary education prior to children joining Primary 1 and the ECCE should continue into Primary 1, 2 and 3 with emphasis on reading and numeracy and self care as competencies. We hold the position accepted globally that the age appropriate for joining Primary 1 should be maintained at 6 years.
- (iv) In Primary 4,5,6, our position is to expand the competencies from the foundational to functional literacy and numeracy with increased learning areas as will be designed by the National Curriculum Development Centre,
- (v) The secondary school competencies should serve as pre-training skills level. We recommend the sustenance of the 6 years divided into O- level of mandatory 4 years and 2 years of A Level. We endorse the differentiated curriculum at the A- level as opportunities for multiple pathways for students seeking higher education and post-secondary training opportunities.
- (vi) This will result in a
 - 2 years mandatory pre-primary education
 - 6 years of primary education (3 years linked to ECCE)
 - 6 years of secondary education (4 and 2 years)
 - Post secondary training should be disaggregated into Certificates, Diploma and Degrees
- (vii) We argue that reducing the primary education cycle by one year would release the much-needed resources for investment in strong foundations and avert wastage of resources the country faces as a result of millions of children who currently repeat, dropout or go through the primary education cycle without having acquired the basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- (viii) We recommend a progressive implementation of the structure of education starting with pre-primary phased approach in the implementation of the structure

Recommendation 3

Implement the National Teacher Policy with some modification

1. We endorse the National Teacher Policy (2019) for its dual purpose; professionalising teaching and improving learning.
2. We associate ourselves with the 9 elements of professionalising service as espoused by Brown (2001)¹¹ that include: 1. Initial professional education 2. Accreditation 3. Skills development 4. Certification 5. Licensing 6. Professional development 7. Professional societies 8. Code of ethics 9. Organisation certification
3. We call for optimisation of the existing resources (human and infrastructure) while implementing the National Teacher Policy. By this, we submit that the proposed UNITE's role in realising its mandate should be:
 - (i) To develop the curriculum for non-degree programs for persons eligible for recruitment, training, registration, recognition and licensing to practice as teachers
 - (ii) To accredit institutions for non-degree programs for persons eligible for recruitment, training, registration, recognition and licensing to practice as teachers institutions
 - (iii) To develop standards and enforce them to non-degree programs for persons eligible for recruitment, training, registration, recognition and licensing to practice as teachers
 - (iv) To use feedback from the Teachers Council, Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEb), NCDC, Quality assurance and other stakeholders to review the curriculum for

¹¹ <http://www.alexsbrown.com/wp-content/uploads/prof9.pdf>

- non-degree programs for persons eligible for recruitment, training, registration, recognition and licensing to practice as teachers
- (v) To set bare minimums for institutions offering degree programs for persons eligible for recruitment, training, registration, recognition and licensing to practice as teachers
- (vi) To recommend additional training/ standards that would support the envisaged council

We submit that the proposed UNITE should not play the dual role of standard setting and training. Instead, the training institutions should retain the independence of training in strict compliance with the roles captured above.

4. We call for the progressive implementation of the National Teacher Policy (2019) while taking a progressive implementation that will remove teacher supply panics occasioned by the increased qualifications for teachers and the efforts required for the teachers in the system to upgrade their qualifications,
 - (i) A progressive implementation will help to align the teaching profession with the possible curriculum and structure of education that may come out of the education review process,
 - (ii) A progressive implementation will allow for system feedback on sticky issues around the completeness of the policy in addressing the requirement of professionalising teachers. In our analysis, the implementation of the policy could likely face some challenges that include but not limited to:
 - The readiness among the different agencies that will be required in the implementation of the policy. Some of these agencies may require systemic adjustments to fully support the implementation of the policy,
 - The financial and technical resources needed to implement the policy may be voluminous considering the competing resource interests,
 - The institutional arrangement needed for the policy is beyond the control of the Ministry of Education and Sports. For instance, the Parliamentary calendar is beyond the Ministry whereas some aspects of the policy require legislation.
5. We call for a rethought on some aspects that include but not limited to
 - The decision to predetermine the qualifications of a teacher under 6.2 may be “premature”. In our submission, the Council should be left with the full-envisaged mandate.
 - Provision 6.3 on the initial professional education including entry qualifications should be left to the proposed National Institute of Teacher Education
 - There should be an institutional autonomy that includes financial autonomy for the institutions to function optimally
 - There should be an established Education Tribunal¹² as an arbiter in the conflicts arising from the Council and Institute’s work.
6. We call for a review of specific sections of the National Teacher Policy. We stand for competencies as the basis for determining qualifications, preparation, registration, recognition, licensing and regulation of conduct of teachers. While this is desirable, we stand for a progressive approach to avoid the deficit challenges. With over 300,000 teachers in the system, this is a resource that cannot be assumed. Therefore, we propose that
 - A framework that will help the teachers to progressively achieve the intentions of TEPT should be developed as part of the policy,
 - In the next 3-5 years, steadily roll out the intentions of the policy while systematically phasing out the current PTC model

¹² In the course of the two institutions implementing their mandates, there could be dissatisfaction. There should a self-curing mechanism that professional teachers can seek redress without necessarily approaching Courts of Law. This is a standard establishment for professional organisations.

- For teachers choosing the 'leadership pathway' (p.36) at the primary level, a B.Ed. degree or post-graduate diploma in education could be part of the requirements or strongly encouraged.

Recommendation 4

Continuously monitor learning starting with foundational learning

1. It is our submission that both Assessment for Learning (AfL) and Assessment of Learning (AoL) have a role to play in learning (classroom practice improvement) and tracking system efficiency. We submit that UNEB should be supported to develop a framework that balances the two (formative and summative assessments). This is at the policy level. We encourage public and private partnerships in assessments to:
 - (i) Develop a wide pool of assessments across the levels and competencies in the education cycle,
 - (ii) Development of a repository of summative assessments
 - (iii) Creation and maintenance of an item data-bank for formative assessments,
 - (iv) Increased participation of not for Government organisations seeking to develop proofs of concepts for assessments for various purposes
2. We call upon the effort to deliberately explore the opportunities for not for government formative assessments to be used for classroom practice. This can be borrowed from healthcare systems where private laboratory results can be used anywhere to make prescriptions
3. We call upon the Government to develop and implement the assessment for learning framework, institutionalise it and make it part of the decisions in education. The Government should consider the following strategies:
 - (i) Adopt a framework of recognising assessment for learning (formative assessment) apart from summative assessments that are administered at the end of each level of education,
 - (ii) Partner with non-state actors (e.g. CSOs such as Uwezo) to recognise and institutionalise independent data on monitoring learning,
 - (iii) Build teacher capacities to effectively apply assessment for learning for classroom decisions,
 - (iv) Expand national assessments to include measurement of values and life skills to foster whole child development. Lessons can be drawn from methodologies and tools for assessing life skills and values that have been developed, tested and utilised by the [Assessment of Life Skills and Values in East Africa \(ALiVE\)](#) initiative, of which Uwezo Uganda and other CSOs in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania are part.

Recommendation 5

Focus on whole child development

We call upon the Government to look at education from the point of whole child development at the foundational learning level. The Government should consider the following strategies:

- (i) Adopt a framework of expanding the curriculum to focus on whole child development,
- (ii) Partner with other non-Government actors to operationalise implementation of a whole-child development curriculum in foundational teaching, learning and assessment.

Recommendation 6

Rethink education financing

1. We submit that Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) should continue implementing UPE while fixing implementation gaps that include:
 - (i) Continued review of the capitations to reflect the realities. Capitation should be reviewed periodically (e.g. every 4 years)

- (ii) Increased capitation for children living with disabilities
- 2. We call on the progressively realisation of resourcing basic education through the development of a public private engagement framework that will:
 - (i) Specify the novel ideas of private sector participation in education
 - (ii) Define and operationalise the use of private spaces to provide education. For instance, while the Government seeks to build infrastructure to accommodate the rising number of learners in need of education, the Ministry of education should (re)consider sending flows to private schools admitting children from poor families and institute strong monitoring mechanisms to ensure the private school owners use tax payers' money for the purpose for which it is disbursed,
 - (iii) With the support from Ministry of Finance and Planning, explore the modalities of funds flowing from the private sector to funding education. These include private ventures and impact bonds for those interested in investing in education without setting up schools/institutions as service providers.
 - (iv) Develop a recognition framework/physical planning that classifies schools as small, medium and large schools and develop a resource allocation for each category of schools at all levels of education. To us, the increasing population means that we are progressively moving away from small schools. Uganda should now plan with large schools in mind.
- 3. We call upon the establishment of a coordination mechanism for the not for profit support to education
- 4. We call upon the development and implementation of a community/parental participation framework to provide guidance on parental participation and engagement in education,
- 5. We stand for the removal of tax on scholastic materials including special rates for publishers of material in mother tongue to increase production and access.
- 6. Popularise the language in education policy and ensure teachers are adequately trained and supported to facilitate teaching and learning using mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Implementing the local language policy without paying attention to quality is creating more damage than good
- 7. We call for the set up of an equalisation fund that would benefit from different sources including a universal service fund on private service providers to support children living with disabilities. There could be specific flow from high cost private schools (as part of their net earnings) that should go towards supporting equity measures in education

Recommendation 7
Rethink policy formulation and implementation

- 1. We maintain the position that the goodness of a policy lies in its results
- 2. We recommend that all policies governing education should be audited with a view of:
 - (i) Establishing the conflicts in the policies
 - (ii) Identifying policies that are outdated
 - (iii) Harmonising policies with the same intention
 - (iv) Having a framework of periodicity in reviewing and monitoring implementation of the policies in the sector to ensure that they don't just remain on paper

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About Uwezo Uganda

Uwezo Uganda is a non-profit education-focused organisation with a mission of contributing to the improvement of basic education in Uganda. Our vision is one of a society in which all children are realising their full potential. We are concerned both with the general level of children's learning and with variations in learning outcomes. The basic questions we ask are:

- (1) Are our children learning?
- (2) Do our children have fair and equitable opportunities for learning?

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