



# Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding

The Role of Education in Peacebuilding

# Country Report: Uganda

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## The Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding

Between July 2014 and December 2015 the Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding, a partnership between UNICEF and the University of Amsterdam, the University of Sussex, Ulster University and in-country partners, will address one of the UNICEF Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme (PBEA) key objectives – *'contributing to the generation and use of evidence and knowledge in policies and programming related to education, conflict and peacebuilding'*.

Consortium teams carried out research in four countries over the course of the project: Myanmar, Pakistan, South Africa, and Uganda. Each team will produce a specific country report which, alongside thematic Literature Reviews, will form the basis for three synthesis reports addressing the following specific thematic areas:

- The integration of education into peacebuilding processes at global and country levels.
- The role of teachers in peacebuilding.
- The role of formal and non-formal peacebuilding education programmes focusing on youth.

In addition, throughout the research project and as a cross cutting theme in all three areas, the research project aims to understand the dynamics and impact of various forms of direct and indirect violence in relation to education systems and educational actors in situations of conflict. Each thematic focus will also include a gender analysis.

The research seeks to generate evidence that can inform policy and practice aimed at the global and national peacebuilding community, and the global and national education and international development communities.



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# Executive Summary

In assessing the role of education in Uganda's peacebuilding process, this study elaborates on three distinct yet interrelated research areas (RA). These are: the integration of education into the country's peacebuilding process (RA 1); the role of teachers in peacebuilding (RA 2); and the role of formal and non-formal education programmes focusing on youth (RA 3).



## Executive Summary

Throughout the report we deliberately distinguish between explicit and implicit forms of peacebuilding through education. The former refers to activities such as peace education, peacebuilding trainings for teachers, peace huts, clubs or programmes and initiatives purposely put in place for a conflict-affected society to come to terms with the legacies of a conflict. The latter, on the other hand, refers to activities and programmes that may not be intentionally designed to build peace but indirectly impact processes of social transformation and change, necessary for sustainable peace and development. In this context it is important to note that Uganda is no longer an immediate post-conflict state although it is still ranked number 23 among the world's most fragile states in 2015 (Fragile State Index 2015, Fund for Peace). As further highlighted in Section 1, several underlying causes of conflict at national and regional level continue to persist. In other words, the predominant focus on development within the education sector implies that the peacebuilding dimension of social and conflict transformation is not always given sufficient priority. At the same time development efforts related to national peacebuilding are also largely confined to the north of the country. Even though Uganda has made significant strides from the mid-1990s onwards to increase access to education (see Section 2 pp. 37 – 38), the political-economy of the country may often undermine efforts to promote nationwide equality, social cohesion and reconciliation through education. Against this backdrop, the core findings of this report include:

1. As in many other conflict-affected countries, education in Uganda was initially seen as an essential ingredient for economic and social development. Only recently have policies been drafted to address the integration of peacebuilding into the education sector even to some extent. To give a few examples, the Ministerial Statement (2012-13) acknowledges the need for clearer dissemination of policies related to disadvantaged and conflict-affected areas. At the same time the MoESTS (Ministry of Education Science Technology and Sports) created a careers guidance and counselling department with a mandate that includes the provision of counselling services in schools as well as the training of teachers to handle issues of conflict. In addition, Uganda's school curriculum incorporates themes on conflict and peace. More recently, the UNICEF Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy (PBEA) programme also played a serious role in integrating aspects of peacebuilding into future education sector policies. These positive achievements notwithstanding, the role of education in peacebuilding continues to be challenged by slow and weak policy implementation in areas such as: teacher training and capacities, infrastructure, socio-psychological support for both teachers and students, and education and livelihood generation for youth. In addition, ineffective decentralisation processes and the emergence of low versus high quality schools (or privatisation), as well as corruption, challenge equality and social cohesion within and through education.

2. The current national curriculum incorporates aspects of peacebuilding to some extent. Great emphasis is placed on inter-personal relationships, attitudes of peace at the individual level, or within school and community environments. Peacebuilding is approached and used as a pedagogical tool towards conflict prevention but not as a means of coming to terms with a conflict-shattered past. The history, as well as past and present causes of conflict in various regions, remains by and large unaddressed. This does not come as a surprise in the view of Uganda's highly politicised reconciliation process and a general fear of generating new tensions (also through education). Interviews with experts and organisations working on reconciliation voiced frustrations about the lack of a reconciliation process that ideally embraces the national, regional and communal levels. The implicit as well as explicit role education can and should play in this, still needs to be further discussed and debated among educationalists, practitioners and policy-shapers advocating for a thorough integration of peacebuilding into the education sector. In this, the drafts of the proposed CURASSE secondary curriculum offers promise.

3. Conflicts at regional level (see Table 4, p21) led to the creation of non-formal education programmes and initiatives. These programmes are usually put in place to enable children, youth and adults to learn and acquire knowledge in circumstances and environments which hinder equal access to formal education institutions. In many instances, such regional circumstances are fortified through conflict and therefore further weaken formal educational infrastructures. The section on equality discusses at length the peacebuilding potential but also challenges of and for non-formal education programming in Uganda.

4. The section on “low versus high standard schools” points to the rise of private schools potentially widening the gap in access to quality education in Uganda. Questions on the role of the state in overseeing and monitoring private education institutions can no longer be avoided. In particular with regards to education provided by international and local CSOs, interviewees complained about a lack of alignment and proper coordination. This frequently causes duplication of work (in particular in conflict-affected areas, such as the Acholi region), or uneven support among districts and regions, thereby having an impact on access to and quality of education in a specific district. While this does not pose an immediate threat to the peace process of the country, unequal access to quality education hampers processes of social transformation and sustainable peacebuilding and development, and may generate grievances in the longer term.

5. The section on teacher education acknowledges that the MoESTS (Ministry of Education Science, Technology and Sports) in Uganda, influenced by international agencies, now recognises that teachers have a key role in fostering peace but maximising this potential is constrained by the resource shortages, structural inefficiencies and lack of coordination between stakeholders that characterise other aspects of the education system. Existing policies relating to the recruitment and retention of teachers raise the possibility of a teaching force which offers diversity across regions but, currently, disparities in working conditions discourage teacher mobility. Recent curriculum reforms have provided a platform for schools to engage in peacebuilding but, to date, teacher training, both initial and in-service, lags behind in providing the pedagogy to realise this in classrooms. Recent PBEA initiated interventions with the Primary Teaching Colleges (PTCs) have established the importance of changing institutional ethos towards more open and respectful relationships as a pre-requisite for peacebuilding and staff and students are responding positively to this idea. However, to date most teacher educators, especially outside conflict affected areas, perceive of peace education only at the level of interpersonal relations and the connection has yet to be made to wider national peacebuilding which addresses intergroup, ethnic and regional difference.

6. Educational infrastructures for youth have improved since the last national election in 2011. However, these efforts did not necessarily increase the political and economic agency of youth. Among others, section 4 of the report illustrates how structural barriers and indirect forms of violence not only hamper youth agency but also challenge the sustainability and equal redistribution of education and livelihood initiatives. Besides, a large segment of youth lack representation in decision-making processes concerning educational programming.

## Summary of Findings and Policy Implications

### Research Area-1 Policy:

- *Significant strides in addressing inequalities in Uganda’s educational sector since 1997 did not translate into anticipated improvement of the quality and infrastructure for education thereby hampering processes of social transformation.*
- *“Low” and “high” standard education thwarts equal opportunity within and beyond education among disadvantaged societal segments and reproduces indirect/structural forms of violence.*
- *The decentralisation process has had a positive impact with regards to representation of local district officials in the education sector. Yet, service delivery, autonomy and flexibility to implement context-specific educational services remain weak.*
- *Uganda is not short in supply of transformative policies in the education sector, but weak implementation affects sustainable peacebuilding and long-term development processes.*
- *The way in which peacebuilding is currently approached in the curricula and schools, focuses mainly on conflict prevention as opposed to coming to terms with past conflicts.*
- *Non-formal education programmes at the regional level, address societal transformation and peacebuilding more explicitly than nationwide formal education initiatives.*

## Research Area-2 Teachers:

- *Resource challenges in Uganda hinder the development of innovative and creative teachers capable of becoming agents of peacebuilding.*
- *Education for peacebuilding is inadequately conceptualised and coordinated leading to piecemeal interpretations amongst stakeholders which lack clarity.*
- *Structurally, teacher education provision perpetuates the perception that conflict affected areas are less favourably treated.*
- *The hierarchical nature of the teaching profession reinforces inequalities. The equating of higher qualifications and remuneration with teaching older pupils acts against teachers establishing themselves as catalysts for change in primary schools.*
- *Currently there is the potential to recognise diversity through the national recruitment policy for teacher education and there are attempts to recognise and celebrate this in teacher training institutions – but this could be more systematically pursued.*
- *Curriculum reform also indicates progress in the recognition of diversity. The Primary and Secondary curricula show some awareness of local (ethnic) national and east African identities.*
- *Representation (of class, gender and region) remains a challenge at all levels of education with MoESTS and the international community remaining dominant in decision-making for teacher education and curriculum.*

## Research Area-3 Youth:

- *Even though educational infrastructures for and of youth have improved over the past two decades, these efforts have not increased the economic and political agency of youth at large.*
- *Structural barriers and indirect forms of violence not only hamper youth agency, but also challenge the sustainability and equal redistribution of education and livelihood initiatives.*
- *Youth lack political representation in the planning and decision-making processes targeting education programmes, skills training and livelihood initiatives.*
- *There is an underlying notion within the rhetoric of policies and frameworks to empower youth through education economically, but not necessarily politically.*
- *Micro-initiatives show greater potential to act as an implicit vehicle for conflict-resolution or reconciliation among youth than macro education initiatives at the national level.*

## Abbreviations

ABEK	Alternative Basic Education Karamoja
BEUPA	Basic Education for Urban Poverty Areas
BTVET	Business Technical and Vocational Education and Training
CDO	Community Development Officer
CHANCE	Child Centred Alternation, Non-formal Community Based Education
COPE	Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CURASSE	World Bank Curriculum Assessment and Examination Reform
DEO	District Education Officer
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
ESIP	Education Strategic Investment Plan
ESSP	Education Strategic Sector Plan
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoU	Government of Uganda
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GWAT	Gulu War Affected Training Centre
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MoESTS	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NTC	National Teaching Colleges
NYC	National Youth Council
NYP	National Youth Policy
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PBEA	Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy

PRDP	Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda
PTC	Primary Teaching Colleges
RA	Research Area
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNPBF	United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
UBOS	Ugandan Bureau of Statistics
UCY	The Uganda Civil society Youth Coalition
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPFYA	Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs
UPPET	Universal Post Primary Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USE	Universal Secondary Education
UYCVF	Uganda Youth Capital Venture Fund
UYONET	Uganda Youth Network
YLP	Youth Livelihoods Programme

# Introduction

Over the past decades education has been generally treated as an area of development programming which is separate from (post-) conflict processes of stabilisation, peacebuilding and reconciliation. This trend has been accompanied by priority setting among peacebuilding actors towards security-related issues, particularly in the early to medium post-conflict phase. In addition, the majority of education and peacebuilding interventions remain framed in terms of service delivery and formal educational infrastructures. Only recently have scholars and practitioners highlighted the transformative potential of education in conflict-affected environments in the attempt to foster social justice and build sustainable peace. UNICEF's Learning for Peace - or Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy - programme has pioneered efforts to strengthen policies and practices in education for peacebuilding in 14 countries affected by conflict. This has included significant investments in evidence building related to the role of education and peacebuilding in various contexts and regions around the world.

# Introduction

The following report on the role of education in the peacebuilding process of **Uganda** emerged out of the Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding, a co-funded partnership between UNICEF's Learning for Peace programme, the University of Amsterdam, University of Sussex, Ulster University, and a range of national research partners in participating countries. Research for this report was conducted by Ulster University in collaboration with local partners from Makerere and Gulu Universities in Uganda and numerous local research assistants at the district level. Our aim was to examine three distinct yet interrelated research areas (RA) and questions:

- **RA 1 Policy:** **How is peacebuilding integrated into the education sector at macro and micro policy levels?**
- **RA 2 Teachers:** **What is the role of teachers in the peacebuilding process?**
- **RA 3 Youth:** **How do formal and non-formal peacebuilding education programmes address the agency of youth?**

In answering these questions, this report draws on a theoretical and analytical framework developed by the research consortium members (Novelli et al. 2015). The '4Rs' framework builds on this thinking, developing a normative approach that seeks to capture the multiple economic, cultural, political, and social dimensions of inequality in education and the ways in which these might relate to conflict and peace (see Novelli, Lopes Cardozo, & Smith, 2015). The framework combines dimensions of recognition, redistribution, representation, and reconciliation, linking Fraser's (1995, 2005) work on social justice with the peacebuilding and reconciliation work of Galtung (1976), Lederach (1995, 1997), and others, to explore what sustainable peacebuilding might look like in post-conflict environments. The examination of inequalities within the education system seeks to capture the interconnected dimensions of the 4Rs:

- *Redistribution* concerns equity and non-discrimination in education access, resources, and outcomes for different groups in society, particularly marginalised and disadvantaged groups.
- *Recognition* concerns respect for and affirmation of diversity and identities in education structures, processes, and content, in terms of gender, language, politics, religion, ethnicity, culture, and ability.
- *Representation* concerns participation, at all levels of the education system, in governance and decision-making related to the allocation, use, and distribution of human and material resources.
- *Reconciliation* involves dealing with past events, injustices, and material and psychosocial effects of conflict, as well as developing relationships and trust.

The framework provides a useful tool to analyse the extent to which education is/can support cross-sectorial programming for conflict transformation in terms of redistribution, recognition, representation, and reconciliation and as an analytical tool within the education sector, as outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1: Working within the education sector: Analysing education systems using the 4Rs**

Redistribution (addressing inequalities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vertical and horizontal inequalities in education inputs, resources, and outcomes (quantitative data).</li> <li>• Redistribution in macro education reforms or policies (e.g. impact of decentralisation and privatisation on different groups and conflict dynamics).</li> </ul>
Recognition (respecting difference)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies on language of instruction.</li> <li>• Recognition of cultural diversity and religious identity in curriculum.</li> <li>• Citizenship and civic education as a means of state-building.</li> </ul>
Representation (encouraging participation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation (local, national, global) in education policy and reforms.</li> <li>• Political control and representation through education administration.</li> <li>• School-based management and decision-making (teachers, parents, students).</li> <li>• Support for fundamental freedoms in the education system.</li> </ul>
Reconciliation (dealing with injustices and the legacies of conflict)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing historical and contemporary injustices linked to conflict.</li> <li>• Integration and segregation in education systems (e.g. common institutions).</li> <li>• Teaching about the past and its relevance to the present and future.</li> <li>• Vertical trust in schools and education system, and horizontal trust between identity-based groups.</li> </ul>

By using the 4 R's as an analytical tool within RA1, RA2 and RA3, we refrain from too deterministic and descriptive an application. Instead, whenever appropriate, we will highlight how they correlate and therefore also affect the peacebuilding process. Moreover, each section is informed by an analysis of the cross-cutting peacebuilding challenges related to *violence* and *gender*.

**Section 1** responds to the common consensus among scholars and practitioners that educational interventions in post-conflict settings are embedded in complex political, economic, socio-historical and cultural environments and processes. We therefore start with a succinct overview of the main root causes of Uganda's past conflict and briefly outline persisting regional causes of conflict. Throughout our report we will revert to these dynamics and take into account the country's economic, political and cultural context. Section 1 also reviews how education is reflected in Uganda's main peacebuilding and development plans. In so doing, this section sets forth, why we consider it necessary to distinguish between implicit and explicit forms of peacebuilding in relation to education in the case of Uganda.

**Section 2** presents our research findings from RA-1, Policy. We highlight how aspects of implicit and explicit peacebuilding are presently integrated into educational policies, plans and programming and *vice versa*, how education is reflected in peacebuilding policies, plans and programming. In applying a political economy perspective Section 2 describes how education policies and programmes have implications for the long-term peacebuilding process in Uganda. Particular attention is given to education governance in terms



of macro-educational reforms and how policies contribute to equality, social cohesion and reconciliation. Ultimately, the aim of Section 2 is to assess whether policies, reforms and programmes within the education sector promote processes of peacebuilding and societal transformation (based on the 4Rs) and what kind of challenges remain.

**Section 3** provides a critical analysis of the role and potential of teachers as agents of peacebuilding in Uganda. It identifies elements of education policy interventions that have enabled teachers to become an active agent of peacebuilding in the country and the challenges and obstacles that continue to prevail. Hence, Section 3 identifies measures and processes that may increase the effectiveness of teacher training, teacher recruitment, deployment and management; teacher performance and practices and finally curriculum and textbook reform. The intention is to illuminate how teachers can better perform their role as peacebuilders in complex and difficult contexts. In drawing upon new empirical evidence this section seeks to strengthen the knowledge base on the key policy issue of teacher policy and practice in the conflict affected context of Uganda. It emphasises the need for context and conflict sensitive teacher policies that seek to redress educational inequalities, promote social cohesion and bring together communities.

Finally, **Section 4** explores how formal and non-formal education programming increases young people's agency in the peacebuilding process of Uganda. Using the framework of the 4Rs, we examine youth-relevant policies, a range of formal and non-formal education initiatives ('micro-cases'), and the voice of young people on their agency through (or in the absence of) education for peacebuilding. In building on Section 1, our analysis is based on a context-specific, conflict-sensitive and cultural political economy understanding of the challenges and opportunities that various youth constituencies are faced with, and how education initiatives respond, or fail to respond, to this. The objective is to illuminate on the importance of a genuine engagement with the voices, needs and youth-led strategies and movements.

## Research Methods

This report is based on fieldwork conducted in Uganda between January and April 2015 working with local researchers from Makerere University in the capital Kampala, and Gulu University in the north of the country across all three research areas. Research was undertaken at a variety of sites in the country, comprising rural and urban environments and diverse geographical regions, namely Kampala, Gulu, Adjumani and Karamoja. Two senior local research assistants from Gulu University were employed, alongside 6 junior local research assistants in Kampala, Karamoja, Gulu and Adjumani. To date 60 interviews with a variety of stakeholders have taken place (some on more than one research area) alongside 13 Focus Groups Discussions (FGD) and 259 student teacher questionnaires. For each research area (RA1, RA2 and RA3) we interviewed government officials, education planners, teacher education providers, teaching professionals, student teachers, local and international NGOs, and local communities.

For RA-1 (Policy), prior to and after our field research we further engaged in an extensive document review, including national development plans, poverty reduction strategy papers, national and international peacebuilding plans, policies relevant for this study, education sector plans, education sector reform plans, curricula as well as existing (academic) research and studies.

In RA-2 (Teacher) we additionally conducted FGDs with 6 groups of student teachers in 6 institutions. Four teaching sessions at teacher education institutions were observed and one at a secondary school. In addition to a background literature review, documentary analysis was carried out on the primary curriculum social studies P6 programme, the draft junior secondary social studies programme and three MoESTS approved school Social Studies textbooks. Also, a questionnaire survey was completed by 259 student teachers from 7 training institutions. It should be noted that the results from this survey will be fully analysed in a separate working paper..

In regard to RA-3 (Youth), we also organised and held in total 7 FGDs (10 participants each, n=70). Three micro case FGDs were conducted in Gulu and Adjumani. Four FGDs focused on national education and livelihoods initiatives in order to complement/substantiate or contrast quantitative data obtained from UNICEF U-Report.<sup>1</sup>

Table 2: RA-3 Youth: Focus Group Discussions			
Location	No of FGDs	Initiative or Theme	Participants
			<i>Note:</i> Whenever possible we sought to have 50% female and 50% male (aged 18-35), each FGDs consisted of 10 participants
Gulu	2	GWATC (Gulu War-affected training Centre micro-case study	20
Adjumani	1	<i>Takenyira</i> (Piggery Project livelihoods) micro-case study	10
Moroto	2	One FGD on education initiatives One FGD on livelihoods initiatives	20
Kampala	2	One FGD on education initiatives One FGD on livelihoods initiatives	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>70</b>

A validation seminar was held on 11 November 2015 in Kampala on the first draft version of this report. In total 18 people from various sectors attended the event. The report benefited greatly from their initial feedback.

1. U-report is a free SMS-based system that allows young Ugandans to speak out on what's happening in communities across the country, and work together with other community leaders for positive change. In August 2015 it counted roughly 292.000 members. More information can be obtained from: <http://www.ureport.ug/>, accessed 15 August 2015.

# Section 1: Country Background

# Section 1: Country Background

## Root Causes of Conflict, Peacebuilding Challenges & Intersections With Education

### Uganda's Uneven Peacebuilding and Development Process

Uganda's history of state formation, as well as the conflict in the northern region has split the nation into two countries, if not identities. Since 1986, Uganda experienced at least seven civil wars, located mostly in the northern regions (Lindemann, 2011, p. 388). More than 20 militant groups have thus far attempted to displace President Museveni's government both within and beyond the Ugandan borders. External diplomatic incidents and/or armed incursions occurred with Rwanda, (South) Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Somalia (Insight on Conflict 2014). Probably the most prominently debated conflict in the media, but also in scholarship and policy practice, is the war in the north of Uganda against Joseph Kony's LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) since the 1990s.

Between 1987 - 2007 Uganda resembled a "war with peace" model, suggesting that the government in power embraced the antagonisms of conflict (in the North) alongside peaceful coexistence and development (in the south), in one country at the same time (Shaw & Mbabazi 2007). Whereas southern Uganda emerged as a showpiece for Western donors to highlight remarkable successes in combating HIV/AIDS rates or fostering economic growth and development, conversely, northern Uganda's developmental progress has been challenged by two decades of war (ibid.).

In 2015, Uganda still ranks position 23 among the world's most fragile states<sup>2</sup>. Regional instability within the country persists, driven by factors such as: economic disparities and unequal distribution of wealth, resource competition, land-disputes, cattle raiding, poor governance and democratic deficits, human rights abuses and erosion of civil liberties, lack of truth, reconciliation and transitional justice, the politicisation of ethnic identity, north-south fault line, corruption and personal greed as well as tensions between cultural institutions and the government (ACCS 2013, Knutzen and Smith 2012). In this context, recent studies on the peacebuilding process of the country identified the following regions as prone to conflict: Bunyoro (Western Uganda), West Nile (North-Western Uganda), Acholi (Northern Uganda), Karamoja, Elgon, Teso (North-East Uganda), Lango (Central Uganda), Bukedi (Southeast Uganda) and the borders to the Eastern-DRC (Southwest and Western Uganda) (ACCS 2013; Knutzen & Smith 2012). Notably, the sub-region of Karamoja stands out for two main reasons. On the one hand, it is the most under-developed part of Uganda and remains extremely vulnerable to shocks (security, environmental, political or health). On the other hand, it is home to a pastoralist population from Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan and clashes within and along these borders continue. More recently, issues of land rights and illegal or exploitative mining activities also threaten processes of sustainable development and peace (Human Rights Watch 2014; Datzberger & Malagala 2015). As the head of the UNICEF regional office put it: "Future conflicts here in Karamoja are about the land, and no longer about the cow."

Thus, while Uganda is no longer an immediate post-conflict state, causes of conflict at national and regional level continue to thrive and persist. In an interview with a well-known CSO working on peacebuilding related issues in the North, it was stated:

*Uganda is still in need of peacebuilding. The situation now is that we are covering the cracks. On paper the story is that Uganda is peaceful now, but that is only on paper, we are papering over the cracks. We need to remove the paper, confront those cracks, and confront our past.* (Interview with CSO, February 2015).

More generally, interviewees, in particular from the West, Northern and North-Eastern region in the country, depicted Uganda's *status quo* as an environment that seems to be at peace but is actually deeply divided. Such sentiments are further cultivated by the lack of freedom of speech and the shrinking space for civil society as well as public deliberation, contestation and debate. In the words of one interviewee, "you are free to speak but you are not free after you have spoken." Tables 3 and 4 briefly summarize additional and persisting national and regional causes of conflict in the country.

2. See: <http://fsi.fundforpeace.org/>, accessed 1 June 2015.

## Causes of Conflict at National Level

Table 3: Causes of Conflict at National Level	
(Source: Knutzen & Smith 2012)	
<b><i>Regional and National Security</i></b>	The impunity of policy and military leaders, in particular the UPDF (Uganda People's Defence Force – previously NRA), raises many concerns. Uganda has one of the strongest militaries in the region and takes an active leadership in regional military interventions. However, the NRA/UPDF has not been held formally to account for abuses during the LRA war, disarmament in Karamoja, and pacification in West Nile. In addition, the Ugandan state denies accusations by the UN of plundering national resources from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).
<b><i>Tension Between Political and Cultural Authority</i></b>	In 1995 Museveni restored the ancient kingdoms of Buganda, Bunyoro-Kitara, Busoga, Rwenzururu and Toro which were disbanded by the regime of Obote. Although these kingdoms have some political influence and are fully recognised in law, they do not enjoy political sovereignty. Consequently, it has become increasingly difficult to distinguish between 'cultural' and 'political' authority, igniting competing loyalties. There are also attempts to restore the kingdom of Ankole, thus far, to no avail.
<b><i>Concerns about Political Inclusion</i></b>	Northern Uganda is still perceived to be politically marginalised at both the central and district level.
<b><i>Shrinking Space for Civil Society</i></b>	In recent years the GoU increasingly obstructed the work, freedom and impact of CSOs.
<b><i>Uneven Infrastructure Development</i></b>	There has been a notable lag in developing key infrastructure for Uganda's poorest regions (Acholi, West Nile, and Karamoja).
<b><i>Economic Development</i></b>	Laudable development progresses and growth rates over the recent years are still insufficient to meet the demand from a bulging population.
<b><i>Natural Resource Management</i></b>	Oil was first discovered in 1920 but drilling did not commence until 2006. Today, concerns are widespread about the lack of transparency around administration of the country's natural resources as well as redistribution to the local population.
<b><i>Land Disputes</i></b>	While land disputes are pervasive throughout the county, they currently make up roughly 94 per cent of cases before local courts in the North.
<b><i>Equitable Government Service Delivery</i></b>	Government investments in conflict-affected areas have been challenging. Furthermore, there is a perception and allegation ('cultural and tribal narrative on Ugandan politics') of continued under-investment in certain parts of the country, although those claims do not hold up to statistical scrutiny. However, even the sheer perception of inequality can be a source of resentment and conflict.
<b><i>Youth Demographic</i></b>	Uganda has the largest youth population in the world (per capita), and 79 per cent of its population is under the age of 30, representing 80 per cent of Uganda's unemployed.
<b><i>Social and Cultural Capacities for Reconciliation and Peacebuilding</i></b>	Different groups and tribes have varying methods and customs for 'traditional' conflict resolution and reconciliation, which may create tensions with the GoU justice system and a variety of state mechanisms to address conflicts in the sub-regions.
<b><i>Social Norms Related to Violence.</i></b>	Recourse to violent forms of conflict resolution is widespread in Uganda. Violence against children at school, domestic and sexual violence and abuse is widespread, affecting both men and women, including women who are pregnant.

Analogous to the above listed causes of conflict, the Advisory Consortium on Conflict Sensitivity (ACCS 2013) – comprised of International Alert, Refugee Law Project and Saferworld - identify similar national causes of conflict in Uganda, namely: Regional instability, economic disparities and unequal distribution of wealth, resource competition, poor governance and democratic deficits, human rights abuses and erosion of civil liberties, lack of truth, reconciliation and transitional justice, the politicisation of ethnic identity, north-south fault line, corruption and personal greed as well as tensions between cultural institutions and government. Building on these factors, Table 4 outlines how these national and regional-level causes of conflict are manifested at sub-regional level.

## Causes of Conflict at the Sub-Regional Level

Table 4: Causes of Conflict at Sub-Regional Level	
(Sources: ACCS 2013; Knutzen & Smith 2012)	
Western Uganda	
Bunyoro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communal land is being sold into private hands while returnees are in conflict with community members who stayed behind.</li> <li>• Land grabbing in the hope that oil will be found.</li> <li>• Commercialised agriculture is undermining subsistence livelihoods in a context of environmental degradation and food insecurity.</li> </ul>
North-Western Uganda	
West Nile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has been home to South Sudanese/Sudanese refugees since the early 1990s.</li> <li>• Part of the country which was also heavily affected by the LRA.</li> <li>• Remains in close proximity to the on-going instability caused by the LRA in DRC, South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR).</li> <li>• Transient population makes peacebuilding challenging.</li> <li>• Frustrations over the lack of justice and failure to compensate ex-soldiers and provide redress to victims of past wars.</li> <li>• Land and resource disputes.</li> </ul>
Northern Uganda	
Acholi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Despite notable progress toward peace, historic perceptions of neglect are reinforced by allegedly unequal distribution of development and services and the unexplained phenomenon of nodding disease.</li> <li>• Land-disputes between returning IDPs are intensified by oil exploration-related land grabs and gazettement of land by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA).</li> <li>• Post-conflict traumata challenge peacebuilding process including a population with unprecedented rates of domestic violence, alcoholism, sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), youth unemployment and crime, and other signs of post-traumatic stress.</li> </ul>

North-East Uganda	
Karamoja	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home to a population from Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan and clashes along these borders continue.</li> <li>• Illegal but well-established arms trade from the Horn of Africa.</li> <li>• The most under-developed part of Uganda and hence remains extremely vulnerable to shocks (security, environmental, political or health).</li> </ul>
Elgon (not shown in Figure 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Struggles with displacement from neighbouring conflicts, land gazettement by the UWA, poor infrastructure and service delivery, youth disenfranchisement resulting into criminal activity.</li> <li>• The above listed conflict drivers are exacerbated by inadequate responses to the 2010-2012 landslides and ex-combatants claiming compensation.</li> </ul>
Teso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict displacement-related land disputes and land grabbing.</li> <li>• Environmental disaster-induced displacement and food insecurity.</li> <li>• Weak local and administrative capacities to tackle widespread inter-ethnic tensions, family breakdown and SGBV.</li> </ul>
Central Uganda	
Lango	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land grabbing, resource conflicts and inadequate transitional justice</li> <li>• Corruption allegations against the judiciary, police and district authorities</li> </ul>
Southeast Uganda	
Bukedi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land and mineral disputes.</li> <li>• Changes in agricultural practises.</li> <li>• Corruption and electoral malpractice.</li> <li>• Volatile combination of acute poverty, unemployment and youth disenfranchisement, gender and family conflicts.</li> </ul>
Southwest and Western Uganda	
Borders to Eastern-DRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The deteriorating security situation since 2012 in the DRC (particularly in North Kivu and Province Orientale) led to an influx of refugees to the southwest and western regions of Uganda.</li> <li>• The high number of refugees (e.g. 66,000 Congolese sought asylum in Bundibugyo District) placed an additional strain on the resources of the GoU and host communities throughout the southwest.</li> <li>• On-going tribal clashes undermine stability in the region and the government has been unsuccessful in permanently resolving disputes.</li> </ul>

## Conflict Drivers at the Level of Education Service Delivery

In an updated conflict analysis conducted by UNICEF and IPSS (Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies) in 2014, the following conflict drivers were identified at the level of education service delivery in Uganda (UNICEF Uganda 2014, pp. 8-9):

- Inequity and exclusion from education;
- Poor quality (e.g. teacher performance) and relevance (e.g. thematic curriculum) of education;
- Inadequate infrastructure and resources;
- Alleged mismanagement of education resources;
- School-community disputes over land;
- Violence (including sexual and gender-based violence) against children in schools and communities;
- Adolescent/youth exclusion from education (formal/non-formal) and socio-economic opportunities, and
- Reported discriminatory practices based on gender/ethnicity/religion/diverse abilities in schools, which affect staff and students.

Accordingly, this report acknowledges that whilst education can be part of the solution, it can also be part of the problem. For instance, aspects of education which can possibly trigger new forms of conflict frequently include: uneven distribution of education, education as a weapon of cultural repression, denial of education as a weapon of war, manipulating history for political purposes, manipulating textbooks, self-worth and hating others, segregated education to ensure inequality or lowered esteem and stereotyping (Bush & Saltarelli 2000). Positive effects, on the other hand include: conflict-dampening impact of educational opportunities, nurturing and sustaining an ethnically tolerant climate, desegregation of the mind, linguistic tolerance, cultivating inclusive citizenship, disarming of history, education for peace or educational responses to state oppression (ibid.).

## How the Term ‘Peacebuilding’ Will be Approached and Used in Relation to Education

*Against the backdrop of the previously highlighted drivers of conflict, Uganda may still be regarded as facing peacebuilding challenges even though it is not an immediate post-conflict state.*

According to one of our interviewees in Northern Uganda: “The trauma is still there. Even in the second generation of our people.” More concretely, peacebuilding is a process that encompasses much more than security and the rule of law, democratic elections or the promotion of a free market economy. Instead, it is argued that a sustainable approach towards peacebuilding also addresses the underlying causes of conflict such as political, economic and social inequalities and injustices (Novelli et al. 2015). In using Fraser’s (2005) framework, the aim of this study is not to portray education as the sole magic bullet towards sustainable peace. Rather, the objective is to illuminate how education, among other components, can significantly contribute to greater security as well as political, economic, social and cultural transformations in Uganda. Specifically, we aim to assess the extent to which education policies, individual and institutional agency, and development programmes promote redistribution, recognition, representation and reconciliation in Uganda’s transition from negative to positive peace and sustainable development. Knutzen & Smith (2012) also stressed the need for educational responses to address the underlying causes of conflict at national and sub-national level in Uganda.

*Throughout the report, we deliberately distinguish between explicit and implicit forms of peacebuilding through education.*

The former refers to activities such as peace education, peace huts, clubs or programmes and initiatives purposely put in place for a conflict-affected society to come to terms with the legacies of a conflict. The latter, on the other hand, refers to activities and programmes that may not be intentionally designed to build peace but indirectly impact processes of social transformation and change, necessary for sustainable peace and development, that is aspects of education governance and reform that may affect structural features of the education system such as equity, representation and participation in decision-making, finance and control.



# The Integration of Education Within Peacebuilding and Development Plans

The GoU launched its first Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PRDP) in 2007 with the aim to lay a firm foundation for recovery and development in the region. One of its objectives is to promote the socio-economic development of the communities of northern Uganda to “bridge the gap between the North and the rest of the country, so that the North achieves national average level” (Republic of Uganda 2012, p. i.). Full implementation started in 2009 and the PRDP entered Phase II in 2012, which continued through June 2015. Both, the PRDP and PRDP 2 are part of the country’s overall Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP, also known as PRSP – Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) and the National Development Plan. In alignment with these instruments, the UN developed a Peacebuilding and Recovery Assistance Plan (UNPRAP), which is a sub-set of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The UNDAF represents a common response and strategy for the UN country team (UNCT) activities from humanitarian relief to post-conflict assistance and sustainable development in northern Uganda.

Table 5: Mapping of Peacebuilding and Development Frameworks			
Timeframe	Framework	Envisaged role for education	Evidence of 4Rs
Peacebuilding Frameworks			
2009-2012	PRDP-I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education as basic service provision with strong focus on improving access to education.</li> <li>• Education as humanitarian assistance.</li> <li>• Education to empower communities.</li> <li>• Reference to Public Information Education and Communication (IEC) and counselling but no specific mention of the role of education in reconciliation.</li> <li>• Education seen as a peacebuilding tool through informal ‘re-education’ and ‘re-orientation’ of the minds and hearts of the population towards peace and development; and psychosocial counselling for children and others rescued from the LRA.</li> </ul>	Strong reference on aspects of redistribution, vague reference on representation and reconciliation, no reference to aspects of recognition.
2012-2015	PRDP-II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education as a means to empower communities.</li> <li>• Education as a basic service provision</li> <li>• Improving access to education.</li> <li>• Strong emphasis on capacity building within and for education sector.</li> </ul>	Strong focus on aspects of redistribution, vague reference on issues of representation, no reference to aspects of recognition and reconciliation.
2015-	PRDP-III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Draft stage and not publicly available at the time of writing.</i></li> </ul>	
	UNPRAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of UNDAF (see below).</li> </ul>	

2010-2012	UNPBF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific focus / priority area on education.</li> </ul>	
<b>Development Frameworks</b>			
2015-2020	National Development Plan NDPII (DRAFT version)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasis on ECD and retention at primary and secondary levels.</li> <li>Stresses import of improving quality of education.</li> <li>Aims at reviewing and upgrading the education curricula.</li> </ul>	Strong focus on redistribution, aspects of recognition targeted indirectly (e.g. emphasis on Karamoja), no reference to aspects of representation and reconciliation.
	National Development Plan (Uganda Vision 2040, NDPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong focus on quality of education.</li> <li>References to revision of curricula.</li> <li>Emphasis on building centres of excellence.</li> <li>Improved access to education in particular for girls.</li> <li>References to human rights education.</li> <li>Implementation strategy to incorporate national vision to curricula at all levels.</li> </ul>	Some reference to aspects of redistribution and representation, implicit indications of recognition, no reference to processes of reconciliation.
2010-2015	PEAP (PRSP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to education, in particular for girls.</li> <li>Strong focus on quality of education.</li> </ul>	Strong focus on redistribution and emphasis on representation, no reference to recognition and reconciliation.
2016-2020	UNDAF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Places education under the strategic intent "human capital" – including social cohesion.</li> <li>Education mainly embraced as a tool to enhance learning and skills development.</li> <li>Focus on quality and effectiveness of education system.</li> </ul>	Strong focus on redistribution and vague emphasis on recognition, no reference to representation and reconciliation.
2010-2014 2010-2015	UNDAF UNDAF-AP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to education, in particular for girls.</li> <li>Strong focus on quality of education.</li> </ul>	Some reference to aspects of redistribution, no reference to recognition, representation and reconciliation.
2006-2010	UNDAF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to education, in particular for girls.</li> <li>Strong focus on quality of education.</li> <li>Informal education/sensitisation programmes in Karamoja.</li> </ul>	Strong focus on redistribution and emphasis on representation, no reference to recognition and reconciliation.
2001-2005	UNDAF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education as a means to promote human rights (e.g. peace education programmes).</li> <li>Vision of education to contribute to peacebuilding and human rights promotion.</li> <li>Access to education.</li> <li>Quality of education.</li> </ul>	Strong focus on redistribution and emphasis on representation, implicit reference to role of education in reconciliation, no reference to recognition.

In a broader sense, education is by and large seen as a vehicle towards strengthening Uganda's human capital in order to achieve the country's overarching developmental goals. For example, the PRSP (2010-2015) considers civic education as one key component to mobilise communities and transform people's mind-sets to "appreciate productivity and development" (p. 52). Although the document points to the importance of promoting cultural and ethnic diversity through various government and non-governmental programmes, it is not specified what role education could/should play therein or how and why education is expected to "transform the mind-sets" (p. 52) of the Ugandan population.

### Peacebuilding Frameworks

Concretely, all peacebuilding frameworks reviewed for the purpose of this study do not prioritise education as a stand-alone peacebuilding and recovery priority area, though education is often explicitly incorporated as a strategic objective or outcome. The mapping confirms the findings of Knutzen & Smith (2012, p.22), underlining that peacebuilding approaches clearly overlooked the transformational potential of education towards sustainable peacebuilding in Uganda. Whereas strong emphasis is placed on aspects of redistribution and in some instances also representation (e.g. empowering the grassroots through education), there is hardly any focus on issues of recognition (e.g.: social cohesion, ethnic, cultural and religious diversities) or reconciliation (e.g. addressing the root causes of the conflict). Hence, none of the frameworks provides strong evidence of understanding reconciliation processes as being reinforced and/or strengthened through education, but rather through informal or formal transitional justice mechanisms. Similarly, no reference is made to the role education could/should play with regards to respecting cultural differences or addressing historical and contemporary economic, political and cultural injustices that may trigger new forms of conflict or tensions. Interviews with government officials and civil society actors highlighted a general fear that past tensions and conflict could be revived if cultural differences or conflicts are subject to debate in schools. The chapter on "Social Cohesion" in Section 2 examines these observations in greater detail.

### Development Frameworks

Development frameworks mostly refer to education as a stand-alone area of support and programming (e.g. PEAP). Accordingly, education is either approached as service delivery to be provided to the public and/or as a means to empower the marginalised and poor but not explicitly as an approach towards societal transformation (e.g. through representation in decision making processes, recognition of social segregation or reconciliation). Rather, it appears to be treated as a tool to foster a "growth with equity" developmental model in targeting areas such as: access to education, providing opportunity and empowering the grassroots level or, more broadly, the overall quality of education. In this context, all development frameworks made mention of the fact that technical, vocational and university education are not yet adequately supporting the development of a workforce with appropriate skills.

The PEAP as well as the vision 2040 note that education should promote and institutionalise national ethical values, good morals in education curricula and other public trainings. There is no indication whether these ethical values compromise cultural diversity or are conflict sensitive. Despite a notion of promoting human rights education (mainly through informal settings and trainings), hardly any attention is given to the previously depicted causes of conflict or the historical and contemporary economic, political and cultural injustices that underpin conflict in Uganda. The country's most recent National Development Plan – NDP II (Government of Uganda 2015, Draft Version) makes reference in one of the annexes to the SDGs, including point 4.7 which by 2030 aims to "ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development." However, it remains attached as an annex and education is by and large embraced as a tool towards economic empowerment but not necessarily as a catalyst for social inclusion, cohesion and peace.

On the whole, there is a noticeable shift within the language of the first version of the UNDAF and the last one. Whereas the UNDAF from 2001-2005 recognises the importance of peace education, the two later versions of the UNDAF refer to peacebuilding much more through the formal and informal justice systems. Surprisingly, neither the PRDP (I and II) nor older versions of the UNDAF or the UNPBF acknowledged how education could transform the lives of former child soldiers or how education could promote re-integration into their communities. In addition, Uganda's peacebuilding and development frameworks have been critiqued as placing too much emphasis on the North, thereby disregarding conflicting tensions in other parts

of the country. The latest UNDAF (2016-2020) prioritises, among others, human capital, social cohesion and representation (see strategic intent No. 2), yet the role of education therein is in the main associated with skills development and improving the quality and effectiveness of the education sector. Though not listed in Table 5, it is worth mentioning that conflict sensitivity and education for peacebuilding approaches were integrated into UNICEF's draft 2016–2020 Country Programme Document through the incorporation of findings from the conflict analysis update into the draft 2016–2020 Situation Analysis (UNICEF Uganda 2014, p.10).

The revised Education Sector Strategic Plan (2007-2015) will be discussed separately in Section 2. Together with the GPE (Global Partnership for Education) Education Sector Plan 2010-2015, both plans have been updated to align with the priorities of Uganda's PEAP. In the latest versions a number of new reforms have been introduced, such as strengthening cross cutting programs in AIDS education, counselling and guidance, peace studies, refugee education and gender equity. The plan also envisages to design and train teachers to use curricula and instruction methods and materials that are appropriate for pupils in conflict areas. In addition, UNICEF reports that it *inter alia* supported the MoES in integrating conflict resolution skills and fostering positive relationships for young people in the Early Learning and Development Standards. Peacebuilding was also integrated into Uganda's revised primary teachers' education curriculum. The UNICEF country office also advocated for the inclusion of education within the Office of the Prime Minister's draft policy on peacebuilding and for placing education as a core element in the revised joint-agency UN PBF proposal (UNICEF & Learning for Peace 2013, pp.18-19).

By drawing on current western curricular trends as (presumably) important prerequisites for affecting change, educational policy and practice was geared towards developing human capital, aiding economic advancement, reducing poverty and contributing to a more participative citizenship. In Uganda, as in many other sub-Saharan African countries, previous curricula have often been legacies of pre-independence times with a heavy emphasis on summative examinations, rote learning and resultant student passivity (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008, p. 197). Revised programmes are now more likely to feature learner-centred approaches and outcomes-based targets, allied to national qualifications frameworks which stress the acquisition of core competences and skills associated with improving literacy and numeracy and STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) capabilities.

Such approaches have been interpreted as in accord with the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals, UNESCO EFA (Education for All) and recently also the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). Indeed, Chisholm & Leyendecker (2008, p.202) go so far as to claim that, "learner centred education is considered the vehicle to drive societies and economies from mainly agricultural bases into modern and knowledge based societies with the attendant economic benefits." While this process of reform is clearly donor initiated, the same authors argue that it is not necessarily or exclusively a top down approach. The host governments are attracted by such interventions, albeit, less for educational reasons than to fulfil social and economic goals. The development of a human capital model (e.g. Uganda's Vision 2040), although in the main applied in development contexts, is also deemed appropriate to conflict affected regions.

Despite challenges, advocates of such reform programmes would claim that their introduction is an important step in addressing the economic causes of conflict and in tackling economic and social inequalities through greater access to educational opportunities. On the other hand, critics have suggested that it represents "a process of westernisation disguised as quality and effective teaching" (ibid., p.196). Almost inevitably, implementation of curriculum reform proves problematic. It results in a clash between existing and newly introduced practice. At international, national and local levels there are contradictory pedagogical and political values and on the ground ideas of learner centred practice and competence-based outcomes are, sometimes, only superficially implemented (ibid.).

As a consequence, even well designed curricula may not translate into classroom reality, inevitably, at the cost of wasting precious resources (see also Altinyelken 2010). In short, many observers have regarded educational sector reform in Uganda as justification of the normative developmental model outlined above. In following modernisation-based and growth-with-equity frameworks (see for instance: Jantzi & Jantzi 2009), they aim at assimilating educational systems as developed in the West. However, as the ensuing sections on macro-education reforms, inequality, social cohesion, and reconciliation reveal; results of assimilative macro and policy reforms on the ground have been mixed at best. "Uganda has some of the world's best policies but struggles with their implementation", was a standard phrase during interviews with staff, advisors and experts from the MoESTS, international aid agencies, local CSOs, schools and Ugandan academics.

## General Overview of the Education Sector

As shown in Table 4 below, Uganda's formal education system is a three tier-system that consists of seven years of primary education, followed by six years of secondary education (four years of ordinary secondary and two years of advanced secondary), and at least three years of university/tertiary education (UBOS 2012, p.24). It is comprised of state, private, formal as well as non-formal educational institutions spanning all educational levels from pre-primary; primary; secondary; business; technical and vocational education and training; and higher education levels. This also encompasses public, private and community physical education and sports institutions (IMF 2010, p.222). The school year runs from February to December.

Education	School/Level	Grade from	Grade to	Age from	Age to	Years	Notes
Primary	Primary education	1	7	7	13	7	
Middle	Lower secondary ordinary level	8	11	14	17	4	Certificate of Education (O Levels)
Secondary	Upper secondary advanced level	12	13	17	19	2	Advanced Certificate of Education (A Levels)
Vocational	Vocational/technical						
Tertiary	Tertiary						

### Nursery/Kindergarden

For children aged 3-6, but more common in cities or towns than in rural areas.

### Primary Education

UPE was introduced in 1997, it is free for up to 4 children in a family but not compulsory and includes four main subjects: English, Maths, Science and Social Studies (SST) with the possible option of Agriculture. Following the introduction of UPE, primary enrolment increased significantly, by 73% across boys and girls (MoES 2008, p. 7). Less than 25 per cent proceed to secondary education.

### Secondary Education

Structured in two stages, namely, senior 1 (S1 – S4), leading to the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE or "O" levels,) and senior 2 (S5-S6), leading to Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE or "A" levels). Tuition fees at secondary level were abolished in 2007, yet only 20 per cent of O level students proceed to A level.

The O level system has been heavily criticised both inside and outside Uganda as overly academic in content, lacking relevance to the needs of the country's young people and dominated by examinations, which encourage rote learning (Chisholm et al. 2008; Enid 2012). In 2011 the Universal Post-primary Education and Training Project, partly funded by a US\$150 million loan from the World Bank Curriculum Assessment and Examination Reform (CURASSE) programme, initiated a radical revision of the lower secondary curriculum. The work is being carried out by a working group convened by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) with technical support from Cambridge Education, a United Kingdom based educational consultancy. Eight learning areas have been designated including social studies. Implementation was scheduled for 2015 but in June 2013 the *Independent* newspaper in Kampala reported that this has been postponed until 2017 with the official reason given that accompanying resources will not be ready until then (*Independent*, 21.6.13). *However, a draft social studies syllabus is available for consultation and again it might be expected to carry a substantial peacebuilding dimension.* At the outset the syllabus undertakes to build upon the concepts, skills, attitudes and values developed in the primary school social studies programme.

### Vocational education

Technical colleges provide a three-year alternative to secondary education and can lead to a technical institute or a teacher training college.

### Tertiary education

Uganda currently has five state, eleven religiously affiliated and ten private secular universities as well as four technical colleges (one private). The GoU provides approximately 4000 state university scholarships per annum.

### Non-formal Education Programmes

In addition to formal educational structures, the GoU currently recognizes the following existing non-formal education centres and programmes:

- Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK)
- Basic Education for Urban Poverty area (BEUPA)
- Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education (COPE)
- Child-centred Alternation, Non-formal Community Based Education (CHANCE); and
- Accelerated programmes for the conflict areas.

The peacebuilding potential of each programme will be discussed in the Section on equality (p45-53).

# Section 2: The Integration of Peacebuilding into Education Policies and Programmes

Since independence in 1962, there have been several attempts to reform the education sector in Uganda. The 1989 *Education Policy Review Commission Report* in conjunction with the 1992 *Government White Paper on Education in Uganda* laid the foundation for education reform over the last two decades. Uganda's educational reforms concomitant with curriculum change have to be placed in the wider political-economy context pertaining in Sub-Saharan Africa from the 1990s. Forces of globalisation including international pressure to introduce multi-party elections led states to commit, rhetorically at least, to the concepts of liberal democracy and market openness. In this endeavour, education came to be seen as an essential ingredient for economic and social development - and only recently also as an integral part of sustainable peace.

# Section 2:

## The Integration of Peacebuilding into Education Policies and Programmes

### Critical Analysis of Education Policies Relevant to Peacebuilding

#### Macro Education Reforms

*Education systems are not machines but arenas for conflict, and that what education systems do, reflects how people construct their roles regarding these systems, and that it is people who can facilitate the development of knowledge and sustained organisational learning. (Reimers & McGinn, 1997, p. 190)*

This section analyses Uganda's major education sector reforms, policy documents and initiatives with regards to their integration of, and focus on, peacebuilding. In doing so, particular attention will be given to:

- Education Sector Strategic Plan (2004-15)
- Revised Education Sector Strategic Plan (2007-15)
- Ministerial Statement (2012-13)
- National Curriculum Initiatives
- UNICEF-PBEA Programme
- Decentralisation of the Education Sector
- Funding for Education

Other macro reforms, such as the introduction of UPE (Universal Primary Education), USE (Universal Secondary Education), the BTVET (Business Technical and Vocational Education and Training) Act 2008 as well as non-formal educational programmes are the subject of discussion in the ensuing section on equality. They will be discussed in relation to issues affecting societal inequality and equal opportunities, which are an impediment to societal transformation and consequently sustainable development and peace.

Uganda's earlier Education Strategic Investment Plan (ESIP 1998) has been praised for its sector wide financial approach, its use of decentralised authority, and for setting realistic goals and taking ownership of donors' ideas (Penny et al. 2008). In the course of the next few years Uganda made considerable progress toward achieving UPE (and reaching gender parity in primary provision). Upon the implementation of a Schools' Facilities Grant it is claimed that by 2008 almost two new classrooms were added in each parish district (ibid. p.277). However, as also discussed in the section on inequality, broadening the base of primary education had a detrimental impact on its quality and curriculum reform in primary schools and lacked ownership and implementation at local level (see also: Altinyelken 2010, p.153). Post primary education, too, needed development and greater relevance. Despite efforts to introduce USE, the policy failed to reach the poorest students, unable to secure even minimal support from families for their schooling (FHI 360, 2015, p.22).

Following the ESIP 1998, implementation of policy was initially directed through the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP 2004-15). It was felt necessary to revise this in 2007 (ESSP, 2007-15) to fully conform to EFA FTI (Fast Track Initiative) goals, improve the quality of primary education and to place greater emphasis on post primary and vocational provision. Subsequently, a Ministerial Statement (2012-13) provided an update on the progress of achieving the targets for 2007-15. The central thrust of educational policy has remained



consistent to developing human capital and the economy. This was reinforced by the Education Act 2008 which endorsed a new 'thematic' primary curriculum and gave new impetus to secondary education. Allied to this, is the BTVET Act, 2008, which carried forward policy and programming in the vocational sub-sector. *Only recently have newly drafted policy documents taken a peacebuilding agenda into account.*

## Education Sector Strategic Plan (2004-15)

The ESSP proposed an increase in the education budget of 76 per cent between 2003-4 and 2013-14 with the share of total government expenditure rising from 19.4 per cent to 21.2 per cent. It envisaged a shift in funding priorities from the primary to the post primary and tertiary sectors but acknowledged that demographic pressure was a significant challenge to progress. The plan reinforced one central aim of the Ugandan education system as promoting "citizenship; moral and ethical spiritual values contributing to the building of an integrated, self-sustaining and independent national economy". While the importance of "a cessation of internal hostilities" was acknowledged, the emphasis was clearly on education contributing to economic growth and the eradication of poverty as a way of building national stability. There was a strong commitment to fulfilling the MDGs, promoting literacy and numeracy and to removing gender disparity in education.

Alongside basic educational needs, the pursuit of greater social equality through education is an important aspiration. *However, references to gender disparity, disadvantage and special educational needs were seen largely through the lens of providing greater educational opportunity, skills acquisition and economic progress rather than being linked directly to the causes of regional and ethnic conflict.* Issues of disadvantaged youth received limited attention but were referenced particularly with regard to providing greater variation in post primary education and promoting the non-formal BTVET programme.

A social dimension within teaching and learning was envisaged. There was the identification of the need for a curriculum which encourages critical thinking thus contributing to informed citizenship. Stress was placed on developing "cross-cutting themes" which were identified as girls' education, HIV/Aids education, agricultural education, environmental education and physical education and sports. *No direct peacebuilding dimension was included here though an appendix does refer to "children living in areas of conflict" as part of the social disadvantage agenda.* Throughout the document there are occasional references to the specific needs of conflicted areas with some intention to address disadvantage through extending "Ministry resources to programs serving conflict areas". One example of this was the strengthening of guidance and counselling provision, but, in several places, there was also the expectation that much of the work targeted toward peacebuilding would be led by CSOs. This extends to the policy of decentralisation (initiated from 1995) where there is a call for cooperation with the international community and external agencies.

## Revised Education Sector Strategic Plan (2007-15)

The ESSP was revised in 2007 to give deeper focus to emerging policy priorities, particularly those related to overcoming challenges in pursuit of MDG and EFA objectives, such as:

- children not learning basic skills at primary school;
- education not preparing students for work, and
- universal primary provision not carrying through to second level.

As a consequence, the second ESSP advocates that priorities need to be better balanced between the needs of primary education and concern for post primary education and training. It also prioritises improving the quality of education, particularly at primary level. Partially, this was a response to the demographic bulge reaching secondary school age in 2010 but there are also indications that the ESSP revisions have been influenced by international funding concerns. The review is set in a broader strategic framework than its predecessor. It claims to be informed by the government's Annual Education Sector Reviews, to be operating in conjunction with the national Poverty Eradication Action Plan and to be cooperating with other ministries providing social services. Moreover, within the education sector there is an awareness of the inter-relationship between educational achievement, curriculum reform and improving teacher education.

The core thrust of the revision is still centred on the importance of education's role in economic modernisation, thus contributing to the eradication of poverty and the elimination of AIDS. *This time education's contribution to the "cessation of hostilities" is stated in the core aims.* Improvements in literacy and numeracy continue to feature strongly at primary level with a quality outcome indicator being identified as Functional Adult Literacy (FAL). To this end the review proposes that the policy of decreasing the pupil-teacher ratio with increasing age should be reversed to ensure smaller classes at the beginning of children's school experience. The report also takes greater account of language issues. It endorses the use of local languages as the language of instruction in years P1 to P3 with P4 as a transition year to English.<sup>3</sup>This is justified less on the grounds of recognising cultural and ethnical diversity and more on its potential contribution to the quality of education.

Improving the skills of the workforce is central in post primary plans. A new secondary curriculum is envisaged for 2015 with the emphasis on competences, critical thinking and the integration of knowledge, thus complementing the primary reforms introduced in 2006-7. STEM activities are prioritised in recognition that Uganda is below the minimum STEM registration requirement for economic take-off. The importance of improving the BTVET programme is signalled with mention of a "national vision" to overcome current high costs and a lack of coordination. A 260 per cent increase in expenditure led to 1.89 million young people taking part in schemes between 2008 and 2014. The focus of BTVET is framed as an economic imperative with no reference to social education programmes being included alongside skills development.

More attention is given to teacher education in the revised strategy document. At primary level this is about increasing numbers, reducing pupil/teacher ratios, improving teacher education infrastructure in colleges and putting a scheme in place to boost teacher career progression. However, there is also recognition that teacher programmes must work in tandem with thematic curriculum reform if the latter is to be effective. From the perspectives of diversity and inclusion there are plans to include the primary teacher training in HIV/AIDS, gender issues, and psychosocial education in the primary teacher programme.

The revised ESSP seeks to advance the decentralization agenda. There is an expectation that improving the quality of education is dependent on improved management systems at all levels. These decentralisation objectives are presented as aspirational rather than fully operational. There is recognition that effective education and training depends on sound management at the level of schools and institutions and that local participation is crucial; that civil society, communities and parents should have a key role of monitoring, inspecting and in funding, where possible. The plan acknowledges that "the decentralizing policy presents challenges in assuring accountability and timeliness" (p.57). It also concedes that at the outset decentralization is only operational at primary level with other levels of education remaining largely under central government control. The section on "Decentralisation of the Education Sector" will critically reflect upon and revert to this point.

The emphasis on increasing access to education for disadvantaged groups remains prominent in the revised ESSP. With regard to gender the plan claims that near parity was achieved by 2005 in primary schools (though there are suggestions of regional differences), but that at public secondary schools the gap has actually widened. *Generally, when reference is made to disadvantaged youth and gender disparity these are more consistently associated with conflict regions.* For instance, in relation to gender equity "the Ministry [of Education] will continue applying the policy of affirmative action especially in the civil war ravaged area of northern Uganda". *Indeed, aspects of policy related to peacebuilding feature more frequently both implicitly and explicitly in the revised plan.* Implicitly, curriculum reform, critical thinking, citizenship education and effective democratic practice are connected. Explicitly, though the references are inconsistent, "peace education" and "refugee education" appear in places in the new lists of cross cutting themes. Further, the commitment to support CSO work in conflict regions is renewed, including the "aim" to directly expand government supported guidance and counselling services, provide hardship allowances for teachers in conflict areas and allocate facilities grants to schools there. Such work is acknowledged as 'important' but in relation to funding, education for economic development remains by far the key priority.

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3. The potential peacebuilding impact of language of instruction policies are discussed in greater detail in the section "Social Cohesion".

## Ministerial Statement (2012-13)

Six years into the revised ESSP the Ministerial Statement on Education 2012-13 provides a useful guide as to how the government assesses how its plan has progressed in relation to priorities. The broad aims of policy remain consistent with the following three indicators of performance in place:

- improved quality and relevancy of education at all levels;
- improved equitable access to education; and
- improved effectiveness and efficiency in delivery of education services.

Particularly, there is an enhanced emphasis on post primary curriculum reform (and accompanying teacher education) and youth engagement. *While not underestimating the continued emphasis on improving basic educational skills (and sport) and educational leadership and management, the statement indicates a stronger pro-active policy approach to initiatives for social change generally, and peacebuilding to an extent.* It concentrates on work being done in conjunction with UNESCO-UNATCOM (Uganda National Commission for UNESCO). In addition, on-going curriculum reform is targeted at moving away from traditional approaches to schooling to one that prioritises communication and higher level thinking “to build and expand human capital for economic and social transformation.” This includes the integration of such work into the National Teachers College curriculum and other teacher training programmes. For example, 123,016 teachers were trained in the Safe School initiative in 2011. *Elsewhere, the importance of the cross-cutting themes are once again emphasised (including the establishment of a gender unit at the Ministry), but the incorporation of a peacebuilding aspect continues to be inconsistent.*

The statement does highlight the need for clearer dissemination of policies related to disadvantage and conflict and to “educate and sensitise” stakeholders with regard to the inclusion provisions of the Education Act 2008, the thematic curriculum and the management of foreign / international students. Attention is also drawn to UNESCO-UNATCOM cooperation in advancing a national Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) strategy and promoting aspects of human rights and heritage education, and intercultural dialogue. The statement showcases one initiative in particular. In supporting war affected children in northern Uganda the government facilitated Laroo School for Traumatized Children by disbursing funds for 624 pupils, paying salaries and allowances to 37 staff and by officials making 4 monitoring visits. However, field research in February 2015 revealed that the school is currently closed because of a failure to pay suppliers and students are waiting to return back to school (Interviews with staff from Laroo School). National as well as local officials are debating about the future of the school and the need to retain its current peacebuilding mandate or be transformed into a different educational institution (e.g.: become part of Gulu university, or a polytechnic school). It is worth stressing those teachers we interviewed in the school pointed to the on-going need for peacebuilding in the region.

Some progress is reported on local language development. Twenty nine District Language Boards have been formed and “sensitised” to the requirements of the thematic curriculum at primary level with the support of the Uganda National Commission for UNESCO. Despite the aspirations of the revised ESSP, aims for teacher education appear to remain at an early stage of fulfilment. Work on the construction and rehabilitation of the PTCs, implementation of the early years teacher training framework, the introduction of the curriculum for newly qualified primary teachers and the operationalization of school inspection remain as medium term objectives despite their inclusion in the ESSP, 2007-15.

The notable addition within the ministerial statement in comparison to the ESSPs is that more attention is paid to the needs of youth. It identifies the accelerated growth of BTVET as an achievement and particularly work targeting out of school youth “who account for the most unproductive segment of the population.” The statement claims that 10,000 unemployed youth have been trained in a variety of vocational skills. UNATCOM involvement is credited with helping to develop a youth strategy and setting up a Youth Desk with a database and information system for youth activities. However, as highlighted in the ensuing section on equality, thus far the BTVET programmes did not result in higher levels of employment. They continue to face serious challenges in areas such as infrastructure, capacity and funding.

## National Curriculum Initiatives

In February 2007 a new national thematic curriculum was introduced to Ugandan primary schools. This was a response to falling standards at primary level despite the progress made in extending access to schooling. Alongside factors such as poorly qualified teachers, head teacher absenteeism and a shortage of resources, inadequate performance was attributed to an inappropriate curriculum. The failure of the 2000-2002 curriculum initiative resulted in the setting up of a task force of stakeholders to re-examine approaches to learning and teaching. The thematic curriculum which emerged was based on three main principles. First, the knowledge component is organised around holistic concepts deemed to connect subject areas and give relevance and meaning to children's learning. Second, there is a major focus at lower primary level on developing literacy, numeracy and life skills (the latter being promoted through a broadly based social studies area of study). Third, local language is the vehicle for delivering initial learning at P1 to 3 with P4 used as a transition year to English. The curriculum is to be taught using 'child centred' or interactive approaches with an emphasis on continuous assessment to allow learners to get formative feedback to help their understanding (Altinyelken 2010). Interviews with the NCDC and other stakeholders revealed that the introduction of the new curriculum created, in particular with regards to the new language policy, some pockets of resistance – to the extent that many private schools opted to use the old curriculum (see also section on Social Cohesion, p49).

*Examining the curriculum for peacebuilding aspects, strong emphasis is placed on nation-building with some recognition of the worth of respect for diversity.* There are references to national unity, patriotism and cultural heritage 'with due consideration to internal relations and beneficial interdependence', and the inculcation of a sense of service, duty and leadership for participation in civic, social and national affairs through group institutions (NCDC 2010). In light of Uganda's history of state formation and past conflicts, it is a challenge to promote national unity while respecting cultural diversity (see also the chapter on Social Cohesion). During interviews, respondents had mixed opinions about this interplay. Whereas some considered national unity as an important peacebuilding component, others felt that cultural diversity as such should not be dismissed and that both are equally important.

More generally, in the scope of interviews with the NCDC and the MoESTS it was argued that the peacebuilding element in the Ugandan curriculum is encompassed within the curriculum's overarching aim, namely to produce good citizens. Peace and Security is a crosscutting theme in P1 and P2, and P3 includes 'keeping peace in our sub-county division'. In upper primary and secondary, the peace dimension is mainly found in the Social Studies component and cross cutting themes such as Life Skills. Notably, and this is also discussed later under the role of education in reconciliation, peacebuilding is generally regarded as a tool of conflict-prevention, or solving conflicts at individual, group and community level, rather than a means of coming to terms with past conflicts.

Without denying the political nature of curriculum development, processes were generally described as participatory, meaning that different stakeholders are invited to or given the opportunity to participate in consultative meetings, workshops and seminars prior to revision. Funding, however, does play an essential role.

## UNICEF-PBEA Programme in Uganda

The UNICEF-PBEA (Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy)<sup>4</sup> programme was launched in Uganda in 2012 as a multi-sectoral intervention engaging the GoU through the MoESTS, MoGLSD (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development), OPM (Office of the Prime Minister) along with NGOs/CSOs and partners in 28 districts<sup>5</sup>.

With the purpose to strengthen the transformative potential of education in conflict-affected contexts to support cohesive societies and human security, the PBEA programme is geared towards five specific outcomes. These include: integrating peacebuilding and education, building institutional capacities, developing community and individual capacities, increasing access to conflict sensitive education and generating evidence and knowledge. As of 2014, the programme's key national planning process involving the GoU, UNICEF and UNCT, focused on advocacy work for the inclusion of CSE (Conflict Sensitive Education) and E4PB (Education for Peacebuilding) approaches in future education sector plans, alongside building the capacity of stakeholders to internalise and advocate for such approaches.

Other efforts, among others, included programmes targeting early childhood education and peacebuilding, or addressing violence against children in schools (see for instance: Smith 2015). In addition, UNICEF joined the OPM-chaired Platform for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding, a forum that brought together more than 20 government departments, development partners and CSOs working on conflict mitigation and peacebuilding. Lastly, UNICEF began to support children/youth and education-sector engagement in the National Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Policy (which is currently in a draft stage and still needs to be enacted by Parliament).

## Decentralisation of the Education Sector

Rural Areas	Urban Areas
LC1: village council	LC1: village council
LC2: parish council	LC2: ward or parish council
LC3: sub-county council	LC3: municipal or town division
LC4: county council	LC4: the municipality
LC5: district council	LC5: district council / mayor
<i>Local Government Act of 1997</i>	

*Looking at the way in which education is currently decentralized in Uganda, there are positive as well as negative implications for the peacebuilding process of the country.* In theory, devolution has become a concept for tackling under-representation and deepening the democratisation process of the state to grass-roots level. As such, the decentralisation of power has emerged as a central tenet of any liberal peacebuilding project. Uganda witnessed increased centralisation of powers through the various political regimes from independence. The in 1986 inaugurated NRM (National Resistance Movement) government introduced fundamental changes, in particular, the enactment of the Local Government statute of 1993 and the subsequent Local Government Act of 1997. Soon Uganda's devolution process was praised as "one of the most far-reaching local government reform programs in the developing world" (Francis & James 2003, p. 325). At the time of writing, Uganda has a total of 111 districts (excluding the capital city Kampala, which is no longer regarded as a district), yet it is expected that the number will further increase to 136 districts in the course of 2015. Its structure is delineated in the above Table 7.

4. 'Learning for Peace' – the four-year Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme – is a partnership between UNICEF, the Government of the Netherlands, the national governments of 14 participating countries (including Uganda) and other key supporters. It is an innovative, cross-sectoral programme focusing on education and peacebuilding. Its main objective is to strengthen resilience, social cohesion and human security in conflict-affected contexts, including countries at risk of – or experiencing and recovering from – conflict. Towards this end, the programme will strengthen policies and practices in education for peacebuilding. More information can be retrieved from: <http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/about/learning-for-peace/>, accessed 18.11.2015.

5. The 28 PBEA focus districts were prioritized based on results from the 2012 UNICEF conflict analysis and include all districts in the Karamoja region (Abim, Amudat, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto, Nakapiripirit and Napak), 12 districts in northern Uganda (Agago, Amuru, Arua, Gulu, Lamwo, Kitgum, Nebbi, Nwoya, Oyam, Pader, Yumbe and Zombo), and 9 districts in western Uganda (Bundibugyo, Kabale, Kabarole, Kanungu, Kasese, Kisoro, Kyenjojo, Ntoroko and Ntungamo).

*All education-sector officials we interviewed in local district councils felt that, decentralisation increased local political representation in central government. This, for the peacebuilding process of the country, is paramount, given that under-representation has been identified as one of the underlying causes of conflict.*

Increasingly, the allocation of posts to local areas has deflated the sense of grievance at regional, if not at national level and thus made it less likely that previously alienated groups will return to violence (Shaw & Mbabazi 2007). Central government remains in charge of planning, policy analysis, curriculum and examination reform, national assessment and monitoring and evaluation. The objectives of decentralising Uganda's education sector were to (Namukasa & Buye 2007, p. 98):

- eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic channels;
- reduce corruption by minimizing the number of office levels to be consulted;
- boost the level of monitoring since there would be physical proximity of local governments;
- result in the management of the education system according to local priorities;
- improve financial accountability.

More than two decades after its adoption, critics point to a striking phenomenon, however: even though Uganda seems to have exceeded expectations in the decentralisation process, it is among the worst performing countries when it comes to accountability and service delivery, including education (Ojambo 2012; Onyach-Olaa 2012; Steiner 2006). Explanations why the decentralisation process has greatly undermined its performance are in the main (ibid):

- misusing decentralisation as a tool to further strengthen neo-patrimonial power structures, resulting in a lack of commitment to democracy by the government;
- politicisation of the decentralisation process (e.g. creation of new districts as a condition for support in areas where the GoU has historically not enjoyed support);
- corruption.

In the main, CSOs complained about bureaucratic structures and waste of resources. To better illustrate this point, a Ugandan education advisor working for a renowned INGO (International Non-governmental Organisation) described the situation for the education sector as follows:

*Decentralisation sounds good in theory, because in essence it brings services closer to the people. But recently, and I am sorry to say this, it is becoming a nonsense. To give an example, I come from, we had one of the best local governments in Uganda, and everybody used to come to our region to be educated. Our district had 5 counties, but recently, they have transformed each of the counties into a district. It used to be one strong district, but these days many of the additional districts don't have the resources to even sustain their structures. It becomes a financial burden for the government; because once you are creating a new district you are also creating new jobs. When it was one district we had one chief administrative officer, one education officer and maybe five assistant education officers, one for each county. But now you have to multiply all these positions by five. It is really heavy on the tax-payers. (...) too much money goes into bureaucratic structures, while this money could be spent on improving the infrastructure of schools. The money should have been used to improve what was already in existence instead of creating more bureaucracy.*

Other interviewees felt that Uganda's decentralisation process reinforces parallel administrative structures. Alongside locally elected leaders, administrators are appointed from the 'centre' and exert more power than locally elected leaders. In the words of one interviewee:

*They [government appointed administrators] are the ones who sign the cheques and who make the final decisions and the local political leaders can only make so much noise and so many recommendations. They say we would like this for our people but at the end of the day the chief administrative officer can veto all that and can say no.*

In short, the leeway given to the district management of the education system in order to respond to local educational priorities and needs largely depend on the approval of the central government. This has led to a notion of what Namukasa & Buye 2007 termed as "centralised decentralization", in that local decision-

making processes (also in education) are not fully autonomous or detached from the central government.

In addition, heavy and costly bureaucratic structures are detrimental to educational infrastructures and the quality of education. Such weaknesses are not a direct threat to the peacebuilding process in itself, but they impede processes of social transformation in the long run. The section on “Low versus high standard schools and privatisation” will further delve into this point. For now it is worth noting that, decentralisation in Uganda has been predominantly seen as a political reform but not as means to reform the education sector as such. *While this particular study can only touch on the subject on a superficial level, more research and evidence is necessary to examine the potential and weaknesses of Uganda’s decentralized education system to reduce aspects of inequality in education.*

## Financing for Education

### Government Financing for Education

As noted, in the second UNDAF from 2006-2010, education was severely underfunded in Uganda. Over the past few years, however, some notable improvements have been made. Significant reforms led to a reprioritisation benefitting education sector budgets (Guloba et al. 2010). Table 8 below is indicative for the development that across sectors, education emerged as one of the top priorities and received the second highest proportion of the annual budget 2013/14 by the GoU after infrastructure investment (“roads and works”) and before security.

Total Expenditure Including Donor Projects)					
Sector Classifications	Outturn	Budget	Projected outturn	Composition	
	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15	Performance	Growth
Security	1,252.2	1,159.3	1,132.7	97.7 %	-9.5 %
Roads & Works	2,105.9	2,389.4	2,200.3	92.1 %	4.5 %
Agriculture	428.5	473.7	465.1	98.2 %	8.6 %
Education	1,655.1	2,026.6	1,954.3	96.4 %	18.1 %
Health	803.3	1,281.1	1,081.1	84.4 %	34.6 %
Water & Environment	389.2	420.5	363.0	86.3 %	-6.7 %
Justice, Law & Order	916.4	807.6	850.4	105.3 %	-7.2 %
Accountability	686.1	740.0	1,029.9	139.2 %	50.1 %
Energy & Minerals	333.1	732.5	539.8	73.7 %	62.0 %
Tourism, Trade & Industry	57.8	63.9	63.0	98.6 %	9.0 %
Lands, Housing & Urban Development	96.2	96.6	71.8	74.3 %	-25.4 %
Social Development	41.8	71.3	71.3	100.0 %	70.7 %
Information & Communication Technol.	50.1	17.0	17.0	100.0 %	-66.0 %
Public Sector Management	1,168.3	1,191.1	1,238.2	104.0 %	6.0 %
Public Administration	408.1	554.8	595.2	107.3 %	45.9 %
Parliament	236.4	331.9	331.9	100.0 %	40.4 %
Interest Payments Due	970.1	1,082.9	1,199.6	110.8 %	23.6 %
Domestic Interest	853.4	996.5	1,076.8	108.1 %	26.2 %
External Interest	116.8	86.4	122.7	142.0 %	5.1 %

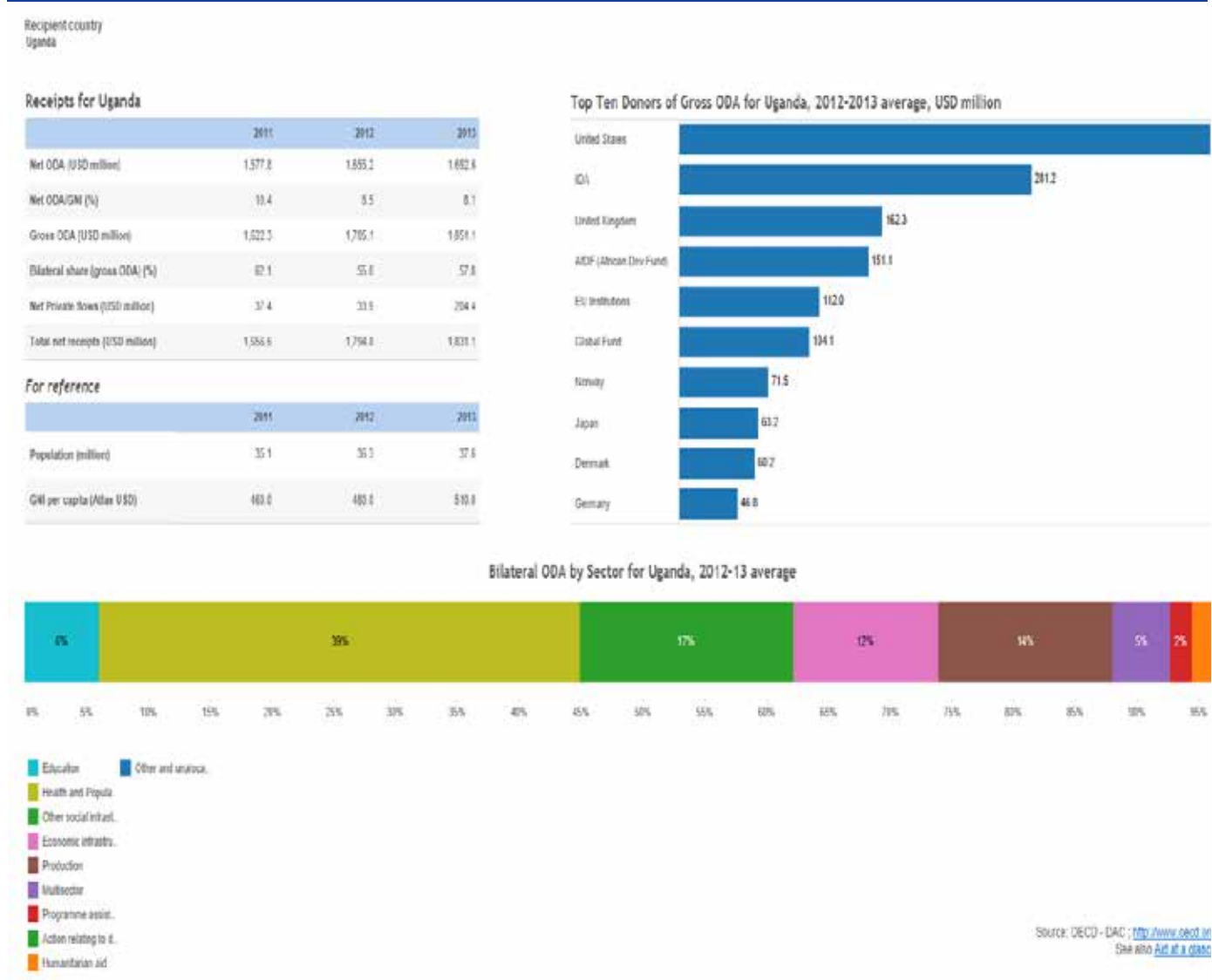
Source: (MoFPED 2015, p. 43)

In 2008 the MoES projected that the revised ESSP would cost US\$ (Ugandan Shilling) 23,591 billion for the period of 2007-2015 (MoES 2008, p.4). Three-quarters of that cost were envisaged to be borne by the GoU and a quarter by the private sector including households, enterprises and charitable organisations. The MoES also specifies the policy that the state should finance 90 per cent of the cost of academic secondary education, 40 per cent of the cost of BT/VET and 50 per cent of the cost of high tertiary education. Following the latest figures of the GPE's education sector plan, US\$ 8,254.5 billion were *de-facto* available to finance the provision of education over the period of 2009/10 to 2014/15 (GPE 2014, pp. 74-75). In order to reduce the occurring funding gap various complementary approaches are suggested (ibid. p. 77), these include:

- Improving efficiency, especially in primary education, based on getting more reliable estimates of pupils enrolments; a better placement of teachers; limiting teacher absenteeism; allocating more resources to textbooks and teaching materials and making sure that they are effectively used by the pupils and teachers;
- Setting stricter priorities among the various programs and/or re-scheduling them;
- Strengthening public-private partnership in providing education;
- Once effective action is taken about efficiency and priorities, MoEs might attempt at getting increased national and external resources. The role of donor projects is certainly vital in this regard.

## Donor Financing for Education

Figure 9: Donor Financing for Education





Uganda is highly dependent on development assistance (MoFPED 2015, p. 40-41). More than 40 developmental partners or donors provide financial support to the country. Accordingly, interviews with senior officials at the MoESTS and NCDC revealed that the line between externally driven funding allocations for specific areas and policy formulation can be very close.

Net ODA (Official Development Assistance) increased from USD 192 million in 1986 to USD 1.692 billion in 2013 (see Figure 9). Between 2012-13 the health sector received the largest share of aid, followed by social infrastructure, production and economic infrastructure. Out of the USD 1.669.6 billion of ODA, in total USD 99.7 million (6 %) were allocated for education in 2012-13. Respective key donors for education include: the United States, World Bank (IDA), United Kingdom, AfDF (African Development Fund), EU Institutions, Global Fund and other bilateral donors. Notably, funding for education decreased from USD 312.4 million in 2009 to 99.7 million in 2013 (OECD StatExtracts 2015). In addition, Uganda joined the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2011. The country's current education sector plan covers the period 2010-2015. Thus far, Uganda has received grants from the Global Partnership totalling USD 100 million.

*According to Higgins & Rwanyange (2005), financing for education did cause or trigger new forms of conflict in Uganda.* One of their main findings revolved around the degree of ownership in the Ugandan education system. Actors at the district level reported that their role in decision-making and funding allocation was restricted by central government guidelines. They claimed that district level needs were subordinated to those of central government and donors. A need for greater consideration of regional differences was highlighted, particularly given the relative instability of the northern regions (Higgins & Rwanyange 2005, p.15).

During interviews in Kampala, and three districts (Gulu, Adjumani, Moroto), the general perception that the North continues to be financially disadvantaged was refuted, given that a lot of additional financial support reached the area after the conflict (e.g. NUSAF – Northern Uganda Social Action Fund). However, mis-management of resources, corruption at all levels and lack of co-ordination did not lead to sustainable results. There was a perception that Karamoja currently receives the biggest share of the cake, and is still the most unequal region in Uganda in terms of mean years of schooling.

### Distribution of Funds

While no official data is available on how funds for education are allocated across regions and districts, contradictory statements were made by interviewees, when asked whether funds for education are distributed evenly. According to the MoESTS, funds are transferred to the districts based on the number of students enrolled in schools (Interview with MoESTS, April 2015). Yet unequal patterns of resource allocation occur because of the system of capitation grants. As a high senior official and education specialist from an IO (International Organisation) based in Kampala put it:

*Schools in the highly resourced areas have a higher enrolment than schools in the lowly resourced areas. Consequently, more will go to the former. It is not that the government wants imbalance, it is skewed because the enrolment is skewed.*

In simple terms, poorer districts receive less funding if the population is also lower, and wealthier districts with a higher population receive more resources. This, in part, explains why regions like Karamoja are continuously perceived as marginalised areas, as population figures are not as high as in other regions of the country, and (according to a new census) even decreasing. In addition, as pointed out by UNICEF regional office, it is no exception that once UPE grants to schools have been allocated, more children enrol in school at a later date – leading to additional costs which are not accounted for.

A different way of allocating funds, as argued during interviews, could be to align resources available with the multidimensional poverty index of a region. According to the MoESTS, discussions are also on-going as to whether funding allocations for schools in richer districts should be reduced (thereby shifting more responsibilities to the parents) to the benefit of schools in poorer districts (Interview with MoESTS, April 2015).

## Corruption

In Uganda, as in many other post-conflict environments, corruption is widespread. In 2014 *Transparency International* ranked Uganda's public sector as the most corrupt in the world. To give an example, in 2012 the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) was found to have misappropriated in total EUR 11.6 million of donor funds intended for the Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) in northern Uganda (Irish Aid 2014). In addition, three employees of the Ministry of Health were arrested in 2012 for the mismanagement of a USD 51 million malaria grant to Uganda from the Global Fund (IRIN Africa 2012). As a consequence donors like Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the UK temporarily suspended aid to the OPM (Aljazeera 17.11.2012). According to interviews with INGOs and local CSOs working on education, the corruption scandals did not leave funding allocations for education unaffected. The Ugandan Teacher Union (UTU) openly claims that most funds disappear at the very top level within the MoESTS (Interview with UTU, February 2015). The relationship between the Ministry and the UTU is strained following accusations from the UTU that funds from the MoFPED (Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development) transferred to the MoESTS are not fully redistributed.

## Education Inequalities

Stewart (2008) claims that as the likelihood of a civil war increases, the higher the inequality in education. What is more, education inequality can lead to inter-generational power imbalances and the socially undesirable and economically inefficient persistence of inequality (Rutaremwya & Bemanzi, 2013, p. 43). In Uganda, the main policies put in place to eradicate inequalities in education include UPE, USE and the BTVET programme.

### UPE – Universal Primary Education (1997)

UPE was introduced following a political commitment by President Museveni that the GoU would meet the cost of primary education of four children per family. This commitment was soon extended to the EFA framework, to allow all people that wanted to access primary education to do so. On the whole, the policy's main objectives are to (ODI 2006):

- Provide the facilities and resources to enable every child to enter and remain in school until the primary cycle of education is complete;
- Make education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequalities;
- Ensure that education is affordable by the majority of Ugandans;
- Reduce poverty by equipping every individual with basic skills.

As mentioned under "Funding for Education", UPE is funded through capitation grants to schools to cover the sum of per-student costs other than teacher salaries. Although both vertical and horizontal inequalities remain in the Ugandan education system, they are less pronounced in younger cohorts. This suggests that UPE measures have been somewhat successful in reducing inequalities. However, parents have had reservations in relation to the quality of education provided through UPE, particularly in relation to monitoring and incentivising teachers (Higgins and Rwanyange, 2005, p. 14-15). Also, in 2012, during the release of the P7 national exam results in February 2013, it was reported that over one million pupils (roughly 71 per cent) who enrolled in P1 under UPE are no longer in school (Kagolo 2012).

### USE – Universal Secondary Education (2007)

Uganda pioneered as the first country in the sub-Saharan African region to introduce USE, also known as Universal Post Primary Education and Training (UPPET). Covering pupils from S1- S4 (lower secondary) it is not limited to the public sector and also implemented through a public private partnership (PPP), between the MoESTS and private schools. The USE policy provides a capitation grant, tied to the number of qualifying students at each school; 47,000 US\$ (16 USD) per student is provided to private schools and 41,000 US\$ (14 USD) per student in government schools (FHI360, p. 17). The language used in the policy, as per the Education Act of 2008, creates the expectation of fee-free secondary education, but in reality the USE allocation is a small amount and no adjustments are made for the location of the school or its actual costs (Ibid, p. 18).

## BTVET – Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training

With the aim to reduce the high unemployment rates among youth, the government has conducted a phased curriculum review at all levels of education with a focus on business, technical, vocational education and training (BTVET). This led to the BTVET Act of 2008 and the establishment of the Uganda Vocational Qualifications Framework (UVQF). Subsequently, entrepreneurship was introduced as a subject at both lower levels of education and university levels with a view of imparting practical knowledge and skills to enable youth to become job creators. The objective behind these policies and programmes is to create employable skills and competencies relevant in the labour market instead of educational certificates. In doing so, BTVET reaches out to all Ugandans in need of skills and does not limit it to primary and secondary school leavers (BTVET Act 2011-20). In following a liberal economic developmental course, and with only limited public financing for BTVET available, a significant part in the area of skills training and education is left to the private sector. The extent to which BTVET has had an impact on the economic agency of youth is discussed in Section 4 (p92).

## Existing Data and Research on Education Inequalities in Uganda

Evidence suggests that the country has made significant strides in improving equal access to education over the past two and a half decades, in particular with regards to UPE and enrolment of girls. After the launch of the universal primary school access policy in 1997, enrolment more than doubled in that it increased from 3.1 million in 1997 to 7.6 million in 2003 (ODI 2006). Recently introduced education reforms have been very gender responsive. More females than males were found to benefit from the government subsidy at higher levels of household income percentiles (Guloba et al. 2010). Thus, within ten years, from 1992/03 to 2002/03, the enrolment of girls increased by more than 300 per cent (Rutaremwa & Bemanzi, 2013, p. 44). At the regional level, the impact was also significant. In the northern region, girls' enrolment increased from 39.7 per cent in 1992/93 to 72.5 per cent in 2002/03. According to a recent study conducted by the FHI 360 Education and Data Center, other positive developments include (FHI 360 2015):

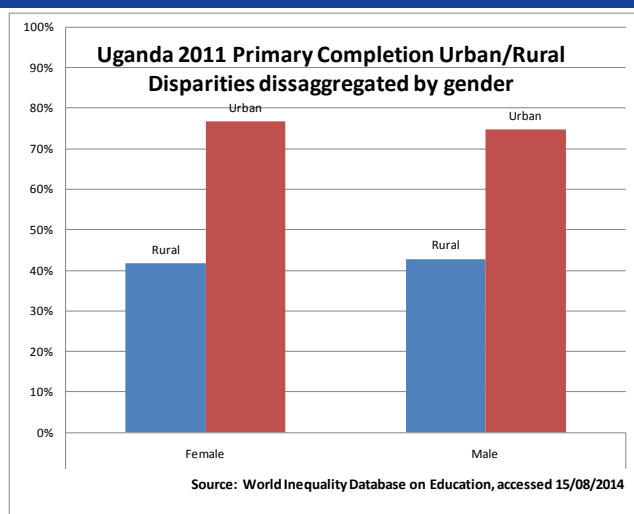
- Religion does not appear to be a salient category for inequality in education.
- Between 1991 and 2011 there has been a decrease of inequality among 15-34 year olds over time.
- Equity of resource availability between districts has improved within regions (with the exception of Karamoja where Kotido has high input-pupil ratios).

Despite these considerable achievements, inequalities persist. In the same study, the following main types of education inequalities were identified (FHI 360 2015):

- Education inequality is the highest between subnational regions followed by ethnic inequality (defined by language spoken or self-reported ethnicity).
- Compared to the rest of the country, Karamoja is the region with the greatest degree of ethnic inequality, as already-low schooling levels for all groups in this region are compounded by particular low levels among the Karamajong and related tribes. (p 14-15)
- The North and West Nile regions also exhibit high degrees of horizontal inequality.
- Ethnic inequality between females is greater than between males across all regions, consistent with global patterns (again Karamoja displays the highest numbers).
- Infrastructure needs remain high, with pupil-classroom ratios as high as 108/1 in Karamoja, and 70/1 in North and West Nile regions.
- USE has failed to reach the poorest students, unable to secure even minimal support from families for their schooling.
- With only a fraction of tuition costs covered by the USE grant, post-primary education remains beyond the reach of disadvantaged families in the North.

## Educational Attainment

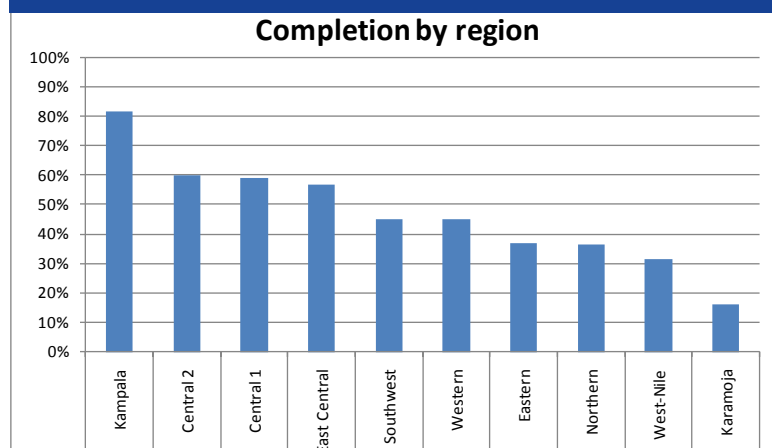
Figure 10: Primary Completion Urban/Rural 2011



The GPE (2014) reports that there are more than 662,000 children who don't go to school in Uganda and in 2011 only 53 per cent of children finished primary school. The latest version of the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2012, p. 22) further states, "the majority of Ugandans have either no formal education or only some primary education. One in five females (20 per cent) and 13 per cent of males age 6 and older have never had any formal education. Besides, 58 per cent of females and 59 per cent of males have attained some primary education only, and 7 per cent each of females and males have completed primary education, but not continued. A slightly higher percentage of both females (12 per cent) and males (14 per cent) have attended but did not complete secondary education. Only 4 per cent of females and 6 per cent of males have completed secondary or higher education."

Despite free UPE, in 2011, it is reported that 33 per cent of girls and 34 per cent of boys age 6-9 have never attended school. Studies have attributed the poor school attendance to long distance to and from schools, cost of education beyond tuition, and in the fact that children below age 8 are still considered too young to start school by some sections of society in Uganda (UBOS 2012).

Figure 11: Primary Completion by Region 2011



As depicted in Figure 11, educational attainment is much higher in urban areas than in rural. At regional level, Karamoja has the highest proportion of females and males with no education in Uganda. This may not come as a surprise in the view that Karamoja is not only the most under-developed part of Uganda but also remains extremely vulnerable to security, environmental or political shocks. It is home to a population from Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan and clashes along these borders continue. By contrast, the highest percentage of females and males who have completed secondary or higher education live in Kampala. In conflict-prone northern Uganda, reforms in the educational sector resulted in high UPE enrolment rates. The system suffers from low qualities of education, teacher absenteeism and low completion rates. Significant

strides in reforming Uganda's educational sector since 1997 have had limited improvements in the quality of and infrastructure for education.

## Infrastructure and Materials

Following the latest data extracted from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the average size of a single grade class in Grade 1 of primary schools in Uganda is 63 pupils. Furthermore, the average pupil number per textbook in primary education amounts to 2.9 (reading) and 3.1 (mathematics) pupils. It is further estimated that approximately 90 per cent of primary schools have no access to electricity. No data is available with regards to access to potable water or, more generally, infrastructure in secondary education. The World Bank states that Uganda's pupil teacher ratio for primary education is currently 48:1, though numbers vary from districts to regions. For instance, in a small scale study conducted in Kampala, Altinyelken (2010) observed a teacher/pupil ratio of 1:70 at level P1 and 2.

During interviews with the MoESTS, school officials and civil society actors, the following factors were identified:

- Curriculum reform did not go hand in hand with the development and dissemination of instruction materials;
- Many schools still lack access to safe water;
- In many schools there are no latrines for girls;
- Food shortage;
- Sanitary pads for girls (so that they don't have to miss school once a month)

At the regional level, in Karamoja, reference was made by the Head of UNICEF (Moroto office) to the lack of boarding schools. If education inequalities ought to be reduced, such facilities are essential to suit the semi-nomadic lifestyle of the local population and ensure that children can go to school. The government passed a policy but it is yet to be implemented. Currently, external donors such as Irish Aid are providing some support.

## Low Versus High Standard Schools and Privatisation

*If you are poor and from a remote village, you are lucky if you can afford sending your child to the nearest village school. If you are financially a bit better off, you will try to send your child to a school in a city. If you are wealthy you send your child to school in Kampala. If you are rich, you will send your child abroad. (Interview with CSO, March 2015)*

There was widespread consensus among interviewees that the quality of education varies tremendously from school to school affecting equal opportunities for poorer societal segments. The distinction between "higher standard" and "lower standard" schools is very common in Uganda, depending on the quality of teachers, general infrastructure, instruction materials and language or the overall condition and environment of the school. During interviews private schools were usually described as providing better quality education than public schools on the grounds that they can use a different curricula and their language of instruction and examination is usually English. As a result, students from private schools do not face the same language barriers in their school (and later professional) careers, as opposed to students from public schools who are taught in their native language from P1 to P3. Another reason revolved around the quality of teachers and resources. According to the latest Uganda Service Delivery Indicators (SDI)—based on independent surveys of 5,300 teachers in 400 public primary schools, only one in five teachers showed mastery of the curriculum they taught (World Bank 2013). More generally, a global research study on the role and impact of private schooling in developing countries (including Uganda) found strong evidence, that teaching is better in private schools than in state schools (Day Ashley et al. 2014). However, the study found only moderate evidence that private school pupils achieve better learning outcomes when compared with state schools (ibid.).

The educational background is also decisive for future employment opportunities or university enrolment. "Our system is highly competitive. A person from a public school cannot compete with someone from a private school (Interview with an academic, April 2015)". In Uganda, the quality of secondary education

determines whether a student will pass a major exam during S-6, which may enable the top 2-3 per cent to qualify for a government scholarship to university. While the top third also qualify for university entry (public or private), they have to cover all expenses.

Notwithstanding free UPE, children from poorer social backgrounds do not necessarily have access to high quality education. It is important to acknowledge that the distinction between private and public schools in Uganda is not as clear-cut as it appears in Western countries. In the main, the GoU distinguishes between “government funded schools” and “government grant aided school” (MoESTS 2008). The latter refers to a school not funded by the government but which receives statutory grants in the form of aid from the GoU and is jointly managed by a foundation body and the GoU. This led to a legal structure in the educational system in which public schools are heavily subsidised by foundation bodies. Hence, even if a school is considered as public and receives some support from the government, the school is managed by a foundation body, which according to the Education Act (2008) can entail an individual, group or organisation. The latter can also refer to a religious institution. Consequently, the quality and services provided of a public or private school in Uganda depend heavily on the funds, management and engagement by their respective foundation body but also parents and community. Data from UBOS (2013) suggests that there is a strong Public Private Partnership (PPP) element in the provision of education in the secondary sub-sector. For instance, out of the 1,576 schools implementing the Universal Secondary Education (USE), 43.3% are private schools. In terms of absolute numbers, out of the 2,838 secondary schools, the private sector constitutes 64.09%, and this figure is expected to increase as the economy continues to stabilise (MoESTS Uganda 2013, pp. 43-44). The situation is slightly different in primary schools. Out of the 18,079 primary schools that responded to the MoESTS Annual School Census in 2013, 67.5% were government owned whereas the rest are privately owned (MoESTS Uganda 2013a).

In 2008, the MoESTS inaugurated a Private Schools and Institutions department, with the mission to “promote equitable access to quality education and sports by providing technical support and guidance, and by regulating and coordinating private schools for better management and governance” (MoESTS, 2008). Since its inception the department *inter alia* provided support to 250 private schools (per school year) and enhanced its PPP within 879 secondary schools.

At regional level, Karamoja faces once again the biggest challenges. As the Head of UNICEF in Moroto pointed out:

*Yes we have made strides as a country but there is still room for improvement. I can't say that Karamoja is at the same level than other districts – or other regions. When you compare the sector performance report – the worst results are in Karamoja. We have community schools here in Karamoja which are not yet funded by the government. And private schools are very rare in this region, which the majority could not afford anyway. (Head of UNICEF, Moroto)*

Due to weak state capacities and lack of resources it is no exception that municipalities are subcontracting to local companies or CSOs to provide services in the areas of education. To give an example, it is estimated that about 80% of all schools in northern Uganda, were built by CSOs during and shortly after the conflict (Interview February 2015). Questions of what new forms of governance in the education sector may or should emerge can no longer be avoided. For now, the majority of these schools are administered by the government, despite serious funding and capacity constraints (ibid.). What is more, the partial to full privatisation of schools led to new forms of governance between state and non-state-actors in education. In this context, a senior official at the MoESTS raised concerns about the lack of complementarity between work done by CSOs and the government in the education sector. Although non-state actors are required to report to the DEO (District Education Officer), so that he/she can integrate their support and initiatives to the district work plan, not all of them come forward and report. *The lack of alignment and proper coordination frequently causes duplication of work (in particular in conflict-affected areas, such as the Acholi region), or uneven support among districts and regions, thereby having an impact on access to and quality of education in a specific district.*

Nationally, the rapid increase of private schools led to immense criticism from civil society. For instance, FENU (Forum for Education NGOs in Uganda), which is comprised of over 100 CSOs and CBOs, recently launched a public education campaign, calling for action by the GoU to prioritise public education.

Globally, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and the UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against

Women (CEDAW) have addressed the issue of the role of private actors in education in Uganda in May and June 2015. Their recommendations are reflected in the concluding observations on the initial report of Uganda (E/C.12/UGA/CO/1) (UN ECOSOC 2015), expressing concern about the

*(...) widening of the gap in access to quality education resulting from the increase in the provision of private education and disproportionately affecting girls and children of low income families.*

Accordingly, ECOSOC (United Nations Economic and Social Council) recommends, that the GoU assumes primary responsibility for the provision of quality education to all children. This shall include strengthening regulations and expanding monitoring and oversight mechanisms for private education institutions.

## Non-formal Education Programmes

Non-formal education has the potential to meet the diverse educational needs of societies that are impeded, excluded or averse from participating in formal education systems and institutional settings. As such, non-formal education programmes have been implemented in several conflict-affected regions around the world.

Among educationalists, scholars and practitioners the concept of non-formal education continues to be a loosely defined term. In the case of Uganda, the Education Act 2008, stipulates that “a non-formal education means a complementary flexible package of learning designed in consultation with the indigenous community to suit the demands and lifestyles of the community and to enrich the indigenous knowledge, values and skills with particular emphasis to literacy, numeracy and writing skills (MoESTS Uganda, 2008, p. 7).” Article (5) further holds that the responsibility of the Government in the provision of non-formal education shall be:

- a) To identify areas or communities where non-formal education programmes are required;
- b) To establish non-formal education centres;
- c) To set guidelines and provide materials for non-formal education programmes;
- d) And to pay the teachers or instructors in non-formal education programmes.

Non-formal education programmes in Uganda are usually put in place to enable children, youth and adults to learn and acquire knowledge in circumstances and environments which reinforce unequal access to formal education institutions. Such circumstances may include:

- Remote locality with weak educational infrastructures (urban-rural divide)
- Parent’s attitudes towards education
- Semi-nomadic lifestyles
- Domestic duties carried out by children that are essential to a family’s survival and therefore conflict with school attendance.
- Conflict-affected environments

For the NCDC, the main objectives of non-formal education are to eliminate or lower illiteracy levels among the population, combat regional and gender-based educational imbalances in a nation, uplift educational standards of in-service personnel (such as teachers), encourage primary vocational education and training for the poor and those on low-incomes, and enhance the EFA agenda (Baguma & Oketcho, 2010, p. 4).

Within the MoESTS, the Department for Special Needs Education, Career Guidance and Counselling is in charge of non-formal education programming.

*During interviews with officials from the MoESTS and education advisors from CSOs, non-formal education programmes were described as being more conflict-sensitive because of their context specific nature.*

The GoU currently considers non-formal education programmes as a ‘non-funded’ priority given that the MoESTS does not directly fund these initiatives and financial support is purely in the hands of external donors. Even though a policy for non-formal education has been developed, it remains unimplemented, as there is currently no official funding commitment or pledge. In short, no policy can be passed if funds are

not secured (internally or externally). As a result, the implementation of non-formal education programmes relies heavily on the support of INGOs, with Save the Children being one of the most prominent.

The MoESTS currently recognizes the following existing non-formal education centres and programmes (2008, p. 84):

- 1) Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK);
- 2) Basic Education for Urban Poverty area (BEUPA);
- 3) Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education (COPE);
- 4) Child-centred Alternation, Non-formal Community Based Education (CHANCE); and
- 5) Accelerated programmes for the conflict areas.

The peacebuilding potential of all these programmes will be briefly delineated below.

### **ABEK – Alternative-based Education Programme Karamoja**

The Local District Government in collaboration with Save the Children and donors launched an Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) programme in 1998. ABEK is a non-formal approach designed to provide basic education to children and youth from pastoral communities whose way of life limits their attendance at formal schools. After a cycle of four years learners can be transferred to formal schooling. ABEK involves learning areas such as livestock education, crop production, peace and security and human health (Focas Licht 2000). The ABEK curriculum was co-written by Karamojong and reflects and responds to the economic and socio-cultural needs and expectations of the local society. Basic reading, writing and arithmetic are integrated in these learning areas addressing conflict in a context familiar to the children (ibid.). *Almost two decades after its launch, ABEK proved to be relevant to the security/conflict conditions in Karamoja (Manyire 2011).* A local district official further highlighted (Interview, March 2015, Moroto):

*ABEK has contributed to the peace process by taking on these children, the pastoralists, who formally would not have graduated from school but become warriors. It has helped to break the cycle of child to warrior by enrolling them to school. (...) and also at the level of teaching, they [teachers] chip in aspects of peacebuilding, and also some other themes which help people to appreciate the importance of coexistence with other people (...).*

At the time of writing, ABEK had 256 learning centres out of which 236 are sedentary and 20 are mobile. However efforts are currently underway to further downsize the ABEK system and increasingly enrol children in formal schools in Karamoja (Interview with education expert, November 2015). According to Save the Children, the MoESTS currently provides funds (mainly salaries for 2 teachers) to 209 centres. The programme strengths lie in its flexible learning hours (which allows pastoralist communities to study and work), the deployment of local teachers who are well known and accepted by the Karamojong and the usage of a culturally attuned and conflict sensitive curricula. The main challenges include donor fatigue, lack of highly qualified teachers (most of them are not trained, or are in the middle of their training), the proximity of learning centres, lack of teaching materials, food and weak infrastructure. With regards to the latter, it is not unusual that pupils are taught underneath a tree.

### **BEUPA – Basic Education in Urban Poverty Areas in Kampala**

The program started in 1997, with the aim to improve the life perspectives of out-of-school children and youth between the ages of 9-18 from selected suburbs of Kampala. *Considering that Uganda's youth demographics and high unemployment rates are repeatedly seen as one of the main potential drivers of conflict, the programme exemplifies how education can implicitly contribute to efforts towards conflict prevention.* It gives disadvantaged and often also disgruntled children and youth new perspectives through education, while they can still pursue their daily routines of income generation. Learners attend a flexible training program for literacy, numeracy with integrated production and life skills. Classes are three hours long, allowing the learners to engage in other survival activities during the rest of the day. The program's core curriculum is a condensed version of the primary curriculum and delivery shortened from 5 to 3 years. The school is interlinked with the community by drawing on already existing expertise (e.g. in areas such as skills training). The most recent data available (from 2009), outlines that 60 per cent of the funds were provided by the MoESTS (mainly for instructor salaries and construction) while the remaining funds came from the KCC (Kampala City Council), bilateral donors and CSOs. *In a study published by the World Bank,*



*BEUPA is presented as one of the more successful equivalency programs offered in Sub-Saharan Africa (Inoue et. al. 2015).* In 2002, a review of the program found that of the more than 3000 students served through 54 centres in Kampala, 55 per cent were girls, more than a quarter transferred to formal schools, and only 10 per cent dropped out (Ilon & Kyeyune 2002). The success of the program was the result of a combination of factors: integration with a formal curriculum, provision of a combination of academic and life skills, as well as career guidance and strong community centres. Challenges, according to Huntington (2008) included bad quality of teachers and lack of funding.

### **Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education (COPE)**

COPE was jointly developed by the MoESTS and UNICEF with the intention to target children aged 9-14 years, who did not have the opportunity to attend school. It is an alternative educational strategy, designed to equip Ugandan children with basic literacy, numeracy and life-coping skills. COPE aimed to quickly establish primary schools where they are most needed, specifically in four northern districts of the Acholi region. *The programme reached out to older children, up to age 16, who had never attended primary education, particularly girls and physically disabled children, whose numbers had multiplied due to increased violence and conflict* (UNICEF 2010). Teachers were directly recruited and trained from the communities. Ideally, children who completed the programme within 3 years would be able to join formal schools at P5 or P6 level. To include as many children as possible, the school came to the children in the community. Similar to other programmes, evaluations point to the challenge that demand is significantly greater than what an externally-funded and sponsored programme can provide. As with all other non-formal programmes, there is a pressing need for more training of teachers. While conducting research for this study, no data was publicly available providing insights on the challenges and successes of the programme.

### **Child-centred Alternation, Non-formal Community Based Education (CHANCE)**

CHANCE reaches out to children from pastoralist or fishing communities who are based in hard to reach areas within the central and northern regions of Uganda. It is similar to ABEK with the main difference that learning centres use the government curriculum. The programmes activities focus on four strategic objectives (Save the Children 2006):

- Increase access and support to disadvantaged children, particularly children in hard-to reach areas;
- Improve and sustain quality of education by increasing the effectiveness of teachers
- Mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS and promote positive life style choices to decrease RH (Reproductive Health) risk behaviours among youth and;
- Increase parental involvement, management and community participation in education.

*While CHANCE has no explicit peacebuilding dimension or focus within its curriculum, it indirectly contributes to Uganda's peacebuilding process in contributing to improve equality and access in education.*

### **Accelerated programmes For the Conflict Areas.**

The programme targets children who have been affected by the conflict in Western Uganda. It follows an abridged curriculum approach, dividing the primary curriculum into three different levels. Level 1 encompasses P1-P3, level 2 encompasses P4-P5 and level 3 covers P6-P7. The aim is to accelerate children's learning so that they are able to fit into the regular school system later on. *Despite its success to provide education for children in conflict affected areas, several challenges towards implementation remain, shortage of funds and capacities being at the forefront.*

To sum up, more up to date evaluations and studies are necessary to further our understanding of the potential of non-formal education programming and its potential to build sustainable and positive peace in conflict affected regions. Uganda has been in the vanguard of providing non-formal education programmes in such environments but lacks long-term funding commitment (by the GoU and/or donors), capacities, infrastructures and monitoring strategies.

## Integration and Social Cohesion

This section broadly focuses on education policy areas that are relevant to integration and social cohesion with regards to the causes and effects of past conflicts, social exclusion, political marginalisation or social distrust. Notably, religion does not appear to be a conflicting impediment towards social cohesion within and through education in Uganda, though interviewees mentioned that incidences of discrimination may occur (in particular against Muslims). At the same time, interviewees also highlighted that acts of religious discrimination are usually not replicated within the education sector. Religiously segregated schools are rare and Christian schools incorporate teachings about Islam to increase understanding of different beliefs and tolerance among all students (Interview with CSO, February 2015).

With that said, challenges for social cohesion within and through education remain, such as: language of instruction policies, segregation on the basis of social background and wealth, recognition of cultural diversity, children and youth with special educational needs as well as refugees. The following sections discuss these issues in terms of how schools and/or educational programmes and initiatives impact social cohesion in the country's transition from peacebuilding towards sustainable development.

### Language of Instruction Policies

The revised education sector plan (2007-2015) endorses the use of local languages as the language of instruction in years P.1 to P.3 with P.4 as a transition year to English. This is justified less on political grounds of recognising cultural and ethnic diversity, but more on its potential contribution to the quality of education. Indeed, research on literacy development has established that the level of proficiency in the first language has direct influence on both effective learning as well as the development of proficiency in the second language (e.g. Cummins 2000). As one district government official put it (Interview April 2015):

*I think the policy itself is a good one because it makes children appreciate their language. Also, by using the very first language that a child has spoken you increase literacy, as it is easier for someone to understand something in your mother tongue than when you are just beginning another language.*

Interviews with school and government officials, teachers, civil society actors and students repeatedly referred to one main reservation among parents and communities against this policy. That is, children are believed to be disadvantaged if their first medium of instruction is not English. In the Ugandan context, such perceptions have deep historical roots. During the colonial period, acquiring literacy in the colonial language was the main tool for upward mobility and economic gain, and this view has survived well into the postcolonial era (c.f. Tembe & Norton 2008, p. 55). To this day, English is seen among all interviewees as the key to success leading to a higher societal status, better employment opportunities and (global) mobility. This corresponds well with the recent study undertaken by FHI 360 (2015), who found that students whose primary language of instruction was English had an advantage in passing the Primary leaving exam. Given that the exam is administered in English it creates an unequal playing field among students seeking government scholarships (such as USE grants) and admission to higher quality secondary schools. Other findings from FHI 360 (2015) include:

- The choice of one predominant local language disadvantages ethnic minorities. Uganda's linguistic landscape includes 63 main languages spoken by roughly 39 million people. Therefore, the limitation to 7 local languages, excludes a large part of the population.
- Teachers argued that the use of local languages made it difficult for students to transfer between districts, and, by emphasizing local content for the first four years of primary, did not do enough to 'integrate' or bring together students of different ethnic backgrounds.
- The sequential nature of the curriculum and the use of local language misses the opportunity to create a shared understanding of national identity from an early age.

Furthermore, interviewees for this study frequently referred to an acute shortage of funding to disseminate instruction materials in the local language, as well as to ensure appropriate teacher training. For Tembe and Norton (2008) parents and communities need to be better informed about the pedagogical advantages of instruction in the local language. Both need convincing evidence that the promotion of local languages will not compromise desires for global citizenship and better opportunities. *From a peacebuilding perspective,*

*there is a clear missed opportunity in making use of the policy as a means towards fostering social cohesion and transformation in valuing Uganda's national identity as being rich in cultures and languages.*

## Segregation in Education

The section on “private versus public schools” highlighted how the quality of education varies from school to school thereby weakening equal opportunities for poorer sections of society. It is important to acknowledge in this regard that not only the schooling experience itself but also educational structures influence aspects of social cohesion. While Uganda's education system presently experiences a growth of private education<sup>6</sup>, greater inclusiveness or the sense of belonging to a society through and within education is challenged by the establishment of a two-tier system. Schools and educational programmes not only become segregated on the basis of social background and wealth, but also (even if inadvertently) embrace the creation of a two-tiered society as a common value. *While this may not be an immediate trigger of conflict, it could be regarded as a form of structural violence and dissatisfaction within civil society. In other words, a two-tiered educational system may have regressive impacts on social cohesion and inclusiveness and threaten the peacebuilding process of a country in the longer term.*

## Recognition of Cultural Diversity

Uganda's school curriculum and in particular social studies at P6, as well as the social studies syllabus currently in draft (see Section 3) places emphasis on national unity while, at the same time, also recognizing the need to respect cultural diversity. Pupils learn about Uganda's diverse cultural ethnicities from different regions of the country, yet past ethnic divisions are not addressed. *There is a general fear that a strong focus on past conflicts would generate new tensions among children and learners. As one interviewee noted “We don't want to repeat what happened in Rwanda by invoking ethnic divisions that no longer exist.”*

When we pointed to the difficulty of embracing national unity in a country that is rich in cultures and ethnic backgrounds, many interviewees expressed the need to establish a much greater sense of nationalism. “We should move towards being Ugandans” was a common statement. On the other hand, cultural traditions, according to several experts in urban and rural regions, are fading away - including chiefdoms that appear to be more ceremonial than exercising power in practice. Especially in rural areas respondents were concerned not to let cultural customs (such as the chieftaincy system, traditional music or dances) that have been in place over centuries vanish. They felt that education could play an important role in maintaining these customs.

With that said the implications for fostering social cohesion through the integration of peacebuilding in education still need to be discussed among a wide range of different stakeholders. First, while there was a broad consensus that peacebuilding ought to be addressed through education at the national level, there are few examples of the curriculum addressing context-specific peacebuilding issues at the regional level.

## Children and Youth with Special Needs<sup>7</sup>

When we asked a school inspector in Adjumani about the specific peacebuilding needs within the education sector in the region, the immediate response was: “The particular need is the special need.” Despite the development of a policy for special educational needs including the introduction of educational programmes, funds (at the time of writing) could thus far not be secured by the MoESTS (Interview with the MoESTS, April 2015). Uganda is not an immediate post-conflict country; therefore, children and youth with special needs may appear to be part of the country's development rather than peacebuilding agenda. However, in certain conflict affected regions, education of and for children and youth with special needs is important. First, disabled children from marginalised backgrounds continue to be socially excluded (Interview with School Inspector, Adjumani February 2015). Second, in regions such as Adjumani, where influxes of refugees are particularly high, funding for special needs education has become a secondary as well as underfunded priority (ibid.). Local officials further pointed out that proposals to establish an urgently needed unit for children with special educational needs have been declined four times in a row due to shortage of resources. There is a strong presence of international CSOs and aid agencies dedicated to work for the wellbeing of refugees in the region. We received mixed responses to questions as to whether refugee children with special educational needs are better treated than Ugandan children. While some argued that refugees

6. Persons with special needs are understood as individuals who require assistance and support for physical/medical disabilities as well as mental or psychological disabilities and/or traumas from conflict and war.

7. See also The Right to Education Project: <http://www.right-to-education.org/news/un-human-rights-experts-make-ground-breaking-statements-privatisation-education-ghana-chile-and>, last visit 21 July 2015.

receive more support, others stressed the fact that, international aid agencies and local CSOs have now started to also provide services for Ugandan children with special educational needs to ensure peaceful coexistence. To avoid future tensions, more efforts and funding for both refugee and Ugandan children with special educational needs are necessary.

## Refugees

Uganda is currently home to approximately 400.000 refugees and that number continues to rise (UNHCR 2015). Refugees usually arrive from conflict-affected countries such as: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia or South Sudan. The right to education for refugees is stipulated in the Refugee Act 2006, the Refugee Regulations 2010 and the Ugandan Constitution (1993) specifying that for elementary education, refugees “must receive the same treatment as nationals, and in particular, regarding access to particular studies, the recognition of foreign certificates, diplomas and degrees and the remission of fees and charges” (Refugee Act 2006 point 29/iii). The OPM jointly with the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) coordinates refugees’ educational needs. Uganda has a reputation of great hospitality and generous asylum policies. “These refugees are our brothers and sisters” was a common phrase during interviews. The GoU, in collaboration with INGOs and UNHCR follows a policy of accommodating refugee children in integrated and not segregated schools. Hence not only can refugee children attend any local school in their area, but also refugee schools in the settlements are open to Ugandan nationals. Among teachers and school officials, integrated schools were described as tools of and for peacebuilding in having the potential to promote social cohesion among both Ugandans and refugees. As a refugee teacher put it:

*I believe it is not only this school but every school. When you have children from many different communities this already promotes peace in itself. But not only peace, it also sends a very good message to students about peaceful co-existence regardless their backgrounds. (Refugee Teacher, Adjumani).*

However, the Refugee Law Project (Interview April 2015) observed that refugee children still feel at times discriminated (e.g. bullying by schoolmates) because of their background. Progressive policies notwithstanding, several challenges towards integration through education persist. The most salient ones include:

### Language Barriers and Curriculum

The majority of refugees neither master English nor the locally spoken language in Uganda. The latter is in particular a barrier for refugee pupils enrolling in P1 to P3. The situation was also described as being difficult in schools located within the settlements as they are also attended by Ugandans who may not be familiar with English (Interview with Refugee teacher, Adjumani, March 2015). In such instances, Refugee teachers are required to translate into both the local as well as native language of refugees. Plans are underway to recruit more refugee teachers that are fluent in children’s native languages (Interviews March 2015). The idea is to deploy two teachers in class, one local and one refugee to relate what is being taught to refugee children. Interviews with teachers in settlements revealed that this plan is not yet successfully implemented in practice. “We really appreciate what we have but there is need for more” (Interview with Refugee teacher, Adjumani, March 2015). This applies particularly to the shortage of teaching staff.

### Refugee Teachers

The majority of teachers in schools within the settlements tend to be Ugandan nationals. For instance, in one school visited, out of 21 teachers only 4 were refugees. Reasons for low deployment of refugee teachers can be found in the shortage of trained and certified teachers, lack of necessary documents or, as mentioned above, language barriers. Teacher training for refugees are available and conducted but progress is slow. Interviews further highlighted the need for better training programmes in regard to psychosocial support to refugee children.

### Additional Expenses to Attend School

As is the case for Ugandan nationals, UPE is not entirely free for refugee children. The financial burden for parents to provide for exercise books, pencils and clothing result in much higher drop-out rates among refugee children (Refugee Law Project, Interview April 2015). Yet advocacy work for special treatment of refugees in education is challenged by the fact that the majority of Ugandans struggle with poverty themselves.

## Lack of Psychosocial Support

The need for more psychosocial support was stressed by all interviewees working with refugees in Uganda. In the settlements, South Sudanese refugee children were described as carrying a greater potential for aggression due to their recent experiences. For now, vehicles for peacebuilding and co-existence are games and sports activities as well as teaching pedagogies that use discussion. Yet, overcrowded classrooms and shortage in teaching personnel weaken the quality of such initiatives.

## Congested Classrooms and Limited Teaching Personnel

Uganda's pupil teacher ratio for primary education is currently 48:1 – though, numbers vary from districts to regions. A newly built school visited in one of the refugee settlements, currently deploys 21 teachers and accommodates almost 3000 children (numbers rise on a daily basis). Depending on the level, classrooms of up to 600 pupils per teacher are no exception. Teachers' capacities are stretched to their limits, in that they are expected to teach, mark hundreds of exercise books, ensure discipline in overcrowded classrooms and provide psychosocial support. In such circumstances, the promotion of peace and social cohesion through various educational activities and teaching appear to be of secondary importance, unless essential such needs are addressed.

## Unaccompanied Minors

There is often inadequate provision of education for refugee orphans and accompanied minors. "Some are placed under foster care but then there are those who just exist" (Refugee Law Project, April 2015).

## Secondary Education

Studies on what constitutes 'successful' integration point to the importance of skills and competences acquired, in order to allow refugees to become constructive and active members of society (Ager & Strang 2008). For the vast majority of refugees in Uganda, the course of their education ends after primary school. Referencing an INGO that exclusively works with refugees in the country, their budget currently only allows for 1.5% of the entire youth age cohort to pursue secondary education. In addition, school fees for children and youth are usually only covered up to 15 years, leaving the majority of youth excluded from educational structures. The situation is even worse when it comes to higher or tertiary education in that government scholarships are not accessible for refugees.

## The Role of Higher Education in Peacebuilding

A frequently overlooked aspect in studies addressing education in peacebuilding is the role of higher education in conflict-affected contexts. In Uganda several departments at Makerere University, and the Peace Studies Centre at Gulu University, are at the forefront of offering peace studies programmes and research. Undergraduate and graduate programmes involve subject areas such as conflict analysis, peace studies, or peace and development. We approached several established Ugandan scholars with the question on where they see possible contributions of higher education to the peacebuilding process of their country? Their answers included:

- Dissemination of information through research and publications;
- Alumni (or graduates) continue to work in areas at the policy, think-tank or non-governmental level relevant for sustainable development and peace;
- Stimulation of public debates.

In regard to the latter, universities were described as having a higher degree of freedom of speech than other actors. As such they provide an intellectually stimulating platform that can be also critical of the government.

The growing promotion and support of science to the disadvantage of humanities (affecting peace studies) was a recurring theme during interviews at Ugandan universities. Furthermore, the social and financial status of students matters, excluding candidates from less wealthy and poorer backgrounds. State scholarships are highly competitive and only students from high quality standard schools are able to compete.

## Education and Reconciliation

*The one challenge that we have never addressed is to actually reconcile a divided nation. Currently there are so many levels of division, especially the North and the South. The whole process is politicised. But because of the nature of historic conflicts that we have had, it would have been really good if we had reconciliation, a national reconciliation process. (Interview, CSO, February 2015)*

Whether or not Uganda should have (had) a national truth and reconciliation commission remains a highly debated point in the country. As far as education is concerned, school curricula are not explicitly used as a means to come to terms with a conflict affected past. *As noted earlier, the curriculum's current approach (concomitant with interviewee's responses), places great emphasis on inter-personal relationships, attitudes of peace at the individual level, or within school and community environments. Past and present drivers of conflict in various regions of Uganda are currently not included (see Figure 15 in Section 3). Peacebuilding in education is therefore approached and used as a tool for conflict prevention, and not as a means to come to terms with a conflict-affected past. As Figure 12 below, indicates, this may change in the years to come within the new social studies area syllabus, but its implementation continues to be postponed.*

Figure 12: Aspects of Reconciliation in Uganda's Curricula

### P6 - Social Studies

In so far as reconciliation is included it is conflict resolution at the individual rather than group level. This is represented as skills acquisition with students being able to empathise with other people's issues, resist peer pressure and apply negotiation to handle hostile situations in which they find themselves, in a calm and non-violent way. This is not dissimilar to some western approaches to conflict resolution where the exploration of personal conflict in primary schools is seen as progression toward group conflict. However several peace educators such Salomon (2010) question whether personal understandings of conflict resolution actually transfer to ethnic group encounters.

### Draft Social Studies Area Syllabus

In the post primary draft document there is a direct mention of reconciliation through studying its 'needs and methods'. A learning outcome is devoted to understanding the causes and effects of conflict within students' communities including the impact of race, gender and class as the causes of inequalities. Students are asked to actively engage with three examples of recent group conflict within Uganda and follow these through to studying the resolution stage. Democracy and peaceful resolution are signalled as ways forward out of conflict.

One could argue that Uganda's pressing developmental needs (in particular in the northern and eastern regions), alongside the many deficits in the quality of education across levels and districts clearly overshadowed the importance of formal and informal education to promote processes of reconciliation. Then again, the country has a poor track record of reconciliation and truth seeking at the national level. First attempts were made in 1974 under Idi Amin, who established the Commission of Inquiry into the Disappearances of People in Uganda. However political interference and intimidation prevented the implementation of the recommendations contained in the commission's report (ICTJ 2012, p.4). During the first stages of his presidency, incumbent president Museveni was praised by the international community as indicative of a new generation of African leaders. With the aim to improve Uganda's reputation he arrested and convicted several soldiers and civilians for crimes committed under the two previous regimes. Among other institutions, he set up a Commission of Inquiry into Violations of Human Rights (CIVHR) in 1986. The commission's mandate was to investigate "all aspects of human rights abuses" committed under the previous governments from the time of independence on October 9, 1962 (USIP, 2014). *One of the many recommendations made by the CIVHR also concerned the incorporation of human rights education into the curricula of schools and universities as well as into the training programmes of the army and security forces (ibid). Yet, only very few of the Commission's recommendations have ever been implemented (Quinn 2003).* In 1994 a report from the CIVHR was released but the majority of Ugandans know little or nothing about the report, which is not widely available – neither within nor outside the country (Quinn, 2003; USIP, 2014).

In many ways, the CIVHR has been critiqued as being a political strategy by President Museveni to legitimise the new government (ibid). Ironically, soon after taking power, President Museveni's party, the

NRA, was accused of human rights abuses as well. The ethnicisation of politics continued under his rule and his track record in building peace (nationally and regionally) over the past 25 years has been mixed (ACCS 2013, p. xiii, Lindemann 2011, pp. 387-388). In addition, President Museveni came under harsh criticism for his restrictions on political pluralism. Not only has he retained power for almost three decades but also recently enabled an extension to his term of office following a 2005 referendum accompanied with a contested constitutional change that allowed him to alter the limits on presidential terms. According to several interviews held with local established academics, he has repeatedly questioned in public the relevance of peace and conflict studies in Uganda.

Following a cessation of hostilities in 2006 the GoU and the LRA entered peace negotiations which lead to the signing of a number of agreements. Among others, an agreement on Accountability and Reconciliation was signed, recognizing the need to promote reconciliation, prevent impunity for serious crimes, and deliver justice to victims of gross human rights violations. To this end, it envisages an overarching justice framework comprised of both formal and informal justice mechanisms, including truth seeking, criminal prosecutions, traditional justice mechanisms, and reparations programs (Otim & Kasande 2015, p. 3).

In order to meet some of its obligations under the agreement, the GoU established a Transitional Justice Working group (TJWG) under the JLOS (Justice Law and Order Sector) in 2008. In September 2014, the government's Transitional Justice Working Group released the latest draft of its national transitional justice policy, covering acts committed from 1986 to the present throughout the country. The policy acknowledges that reparations, among other measures, are needed to reintegrate victims back into society and to deal with issues common to post-conflict situations, such as land disputes and children born in captivity. As far as education is concerned, the policy's approach is once again leaning towards conflict prevention as opposed to coming to terms with the violent legacies of the past. It stipulates under point xxi. that the MoESTS should (p. 38):

- a) *Identify and propose measures to the TJC to mitigate the adverse effects of the conflict to the education sector;*
- b) *Promote the development of education and training programmes on culture.*

In addition, point xxii urges to “undertake civic education on religious values that foster peace and reconciliation (e.g. tolerance, respect, equality, peace, and love)”, without specifying who ought to undertake these efforts. Notably, the transitional justice policy is still pending. According to Otim & Kasande (2015, p. 3) “considerable resources and political will be required to successfully push it through cabinet and parliament.”

*The PRDP-I envisioned for the first time education as a peacebuilding tool towards reconciliation, however, the ensuing PRDP-II makes no mention of it. This may be a missed peacebuilding opportunity, as victims and members of conflict affected communities in northern Uganda have repeatedly called for a truth-telling process that they believe would illuminate the root causes of the conflict, publicly acknowledge the plight of victims, and provide access to appropriate redress and reconciliation with perpetrators.* In addition, some interviewees queried why the conflict in northern Uganda is not part of the national curriculum in schools. To give an example, one interviewee stated:

*We need to gather together different narratives of the conflict and much of it will not have a uniform fashion for everybody, but at least you have a collective understanding, a public record, what we could call “social truth”. What we need is social truth to go up to the curriculums.*

Several interviewees felt that the way in which history is taught in schools is not always objective. Such an endeavour would undoubtedly require very skilled teachers. Although human rights and peace education is increasingly becoming an integral part of formal and informal education, it is not evident to what extent it explicitly relates to aspects of reconciliation. When we asked teachers how they promote peaceful coexistence in their own teaching responses included:

- We were trained to give at least one life skill advice in every lesson you teach, at times this relates to peacebuilding as well;
- We sometimes organise sporting activities to promote companionship;
- As a requirement of the curriculum, we organise debates in class;

- We encourage or (in some instances) initiate the formation of peace, environmental or sporting clubs, where everyone is welcome to become a member. These children then become a group so peace and unity is achieved.

Hence, accounts of reconciliation as a part of peacebuilding through education remained vague. No clear connection was made to address past and present conflict drivers within the country. Likewise, during class observations the lack of encouraging students to deploy critical thinking became evident.

From interviews with experts and organisations working on reconciliation, it was argued that Uganda should embrace three different levels of reconciliation, namely, at national, regional and communal level. The role education can and should play in this attempt, still needs to be further discussed and debated among educationalists, practitioners and policy-shapers advocating for the integration of peacebuilding into the education sector more thoroughly.



# Cross Cutting Challenges for Education and Peacebuilding

## Gender

There is a considerable amount of research literature confirming that peacebuilding can be more effective if built on an understanding of how gendered identities are constructed through societal power relations between and among women, men, girls, boys and members of sexual gender minorities (see for instance: Myrtilinen et al. 2014). In the case of Uganda, several programmes and initiatives are presently in place (by the GoU, aid agencies and CSOs) to promote positive models and norms of masculinity and femininity through education. This is also reflected in the language of the revised ESSP. One of the most recent efforts by the MoESTS (in collaboration with UNICEF) includes a Teacher Handbook on “Gender, Conflict and Peacebuilding”, published in July 2015. The objective is to train 1000 primary teachers nationwide in order to:

- overcome gender biases;
- engage in social norm questioning;
- create awareness of norms related to gender equality;
- build skills to engage pupils in constructive dialogue;
- provide teachers with materials to foster a shift in gender related attitudes and beliefs to promote behaviours in the classroom.

It is still too early to assess how such efforts will take root and translate into a wider and long-lasting change of societal customs and norms. In fact, the role of education in rethinking Uganda’s gender norms in peacebuilding could be an entire new study on its own. The following paragraphs therefore only summarize some of the cross-cutting gender issues we encountered in our study on peacebuilding and education. Notably, Uganda has made some progress in improving gender equality in recent years. However, inequalities within education continue to persist. These include:

**Educational Attainment:** As shown earlier, there are still some gender imbalances in school completion and attendance. The latest data from UBOS (2012) reports that 20 per cent of females and 13 per cent of males age 6 and older have never had any formal education. Figures are more balanced when it comes to primary education. There is almost gender parity in provision for primary education. In total 58 per cent of females and 59 per cent of males have attained some primary education but only 7 per cent each of females and males have completed primary school. A slightly higher percentage of both females (12 per cent) and males (14 per cent) have attended but did not complete secondary education. Only 4 per cent of females and 6 per cent of males have completed secondary or higher education (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2012, p. 22). Despite free UPE, in 2011, it is reported that 33 per cent of girls and 34 per cent of boys age 6-9 have never attended school. Studies have attributed the poor school attendance to long distance to and from schools, cost of education beyond tuition, and in the fact that children below age 8 are still considered too young to start school by some sections of society in Uganda (UBOS 2012).

**At Regional Level;** Karamoja has the highest proportion of females and males with no education in Uganda (79.8 per cent being female and 64.8 per cent being male). By contrast, the highest percentage of females and males who have completed secondary or higher education live in Kampala.

**Drop-out Rates:** During the release of the P7 national exam results in February 2013, it was reported that over one million pupils (roughly 71 per cent) who enrolled in P1 under UPE are no longer in school. No exact percentage is available on the number of female and male drop outs. In the scope of interviews the majority of respondents found that drop-out rates are much higher among girls (mainly because of early pregnancy or marriage). In an interview with the MoESTS it was noted that this trend has now changed, and boys are equally at risk of dropping out of schools. More data needs to be collected in this regard.

**Non-formal Education and Flexible Learning Programmes** have proven to be beneficial for the girl-child. One reason is in the creation of ECD centres next to schools, taking away some of girls responsibilities to look after their siblings while attending class. Mobile and sedentary learning centres are also reportedly attended by married girls and child mothers who could previously not attend schools. Yet, some serious

security concerns and constraints continue to persist. For instance, in the case of ABEK, once girls approach their teenage years, their attendance of a mobile school increases the risks of abduction for marriage. Within Karamojong culture a man is usually expected to wrestle for the women he is supposed to marry. Although boys movement is not restricted, once they are married they are no longer obliged to attend school.

**Disability:** Researchers found that disabled girls are at particular risk of violence, notably sexual violence in schools (Devries et al. 2014).

**Unequal Access to High Quality Education** affects young girls in particular. According to ECOSOC (2015), Uganda currently faces a widening of the gap in access to quality education resulting from the increase in the provision of private education and disproportionately affecting girls and children of low-income families.

## Violence

### Direct Forms of Violence

**Violence Against Children in Schools:** No nationwide, rigorous and representative prevalence data exist for the case of Uganda, but anecdotal reports and a survey conducted in 2006 by Save the Children indicate that more than 80% of children have experienced physical punishments such as caning and slapping by teachers (Devries et al. 2013). In addition, in a sample study (comprising 40 primary and 10 secondary schools across eight districts and four regions in Uganda) commissioned by the MoESTS, as many as 74.3 per cent of children surveyed reported to have experienced caning by an adult in school (UNICEF 2013)

**Sexual Harassment in Schools:** The same sample study (UNICEF 2013), found that 77.7 per cent of interviewed primary school children, and 82 per cent of secondary school children have been sexually abused at school. Teachers were repeatedly reported to be the major perpetrators of abuse (67 per cent of children indicated they were sexually harassed by male teachers).

### Indirect Forms of Violence

**Unequal distribution of wealth and widespread poverty** are concomitant with access to low and high standard education thereby hampering equal opportunities for disadvantaged societal segments nurturing social marginalisation and segregation based on wealth (see p54).

**Regional disparities** are reproduced within Uganda's education sector through inefficient decentralization processes, insufficient educational infrastructures and a system of capitation grants to the detriment of poorer and less populated regions (see p48).

**Corruption and personal greed** weaken Uganda's education infrastructures and the development of an education system that fosters equal opportunity and access.

### Repressive Forms of Violence

**Democratic deficits** limit the freedom of speech and deprive the Ugandan population of fundamental political rights. This is also implicitly reflected in the lack of critical reflection of the learning content in schools and incomplete historical accounts of past conflicts in the curricula. Besides, the potential role education could play in reconciliation processes at national, regional and communal levels remains unexploited.

# Summary of Findings and Policy Implications

The last chapter of Section 2 relates the above-delineated macro-educational reforms to aspects of inequality, social cohesion and reconciliation and *vice versa*. In doing so, it assesses and summarizes how they reinforce or hamper processes of redistribution, representation, recognition and reconciliation within and through education. While it has to be acknowledged that Uganda has made significant strides in improving access to education, the following dynamics continue to implicitly and explicitly affect sustainable peacebuilding and development in the country:

*Significant strides in addressing inequalities in Uganda's educational sector since 1997, did not translate into adequate improvement of the quality and infrastructure for education thereby hampering processes of social transformation.*

Reasons can in part be found in school management structures (public/private partnerships and foundation bodies). In short, the quality of education depends largely on the foundation (governing) body of a particular school and is not evenly regulated and monitored by the GoU. On the other hand, inefficiencies in decentralising the education sector caused severe funding, capacity and infrastructure constraints. Such processes are concomitant with a finance system based on capitation grants, not attuned to regional imbalances. One alternative could be to align funds with the multidimensional-poverty index of a specific district and region. Others urged to provide entirely free education (including school books, uniforms or food), for a period of at least 15 years. This is certainly challenged by the fact that despite consistent donor commitments, education remains an underfunded area and corruption weakens the trust and long-term commitment of donors.

*"Low" and "high" standard education thwarts equal opportunity within and beyond education among disadvantaged societal segments and furthers indirect forms of violence.*

Due to weak state capacities, misappropriation of funds and lack of public resources in education, non-state and private actors increasingly play a greater role within the education sector. Hence, questions about new emerging forms of education governance in Uganda can no longer be avoided. In particular, how Uganda's fast growing system of shared responsibilities can in the long term increase, not hamper, equity and access to high quality education needs to be subject of debate. This also requires a much stronger commitment from non-state actors to collaborate with government and local district officials to avoid duplication and ensure greater complementarity.

*The decentralisation process has had a positive impact with regards to representation of local district officials in the education sector. Yet, service delivery and room for manoeuvre to implement context-specific educational services remain weak.*

Uganda's 'centralised' decentralisation process was and still is not aligned with adequate capacity building and funding streams for education. Besides, actors at the district level reported that their role in decision-making and funding allocation is restricted by central government guidelines. District level needs are in the main subordinated to those of central government and donors. A need for greater consideration or regional differences was highlighted, particularly in the view of the relative instability of the Northern regions.

*Uganda is not short in supply of transformative policies in the education sector but weak implementation affects sustainable peacebuilding and long-term development processes.*

As highlighted in the sections on macro-education sector reform and equality, the GoU has shown commitment to incorporating areas related explicitly and implicitly to peacebuilding in education. However, the implementation of these policies is sluggish. For instance, the country's curriculum reform did not go hand in hand with the development and dissemination of instruction materials. Impediments towards implementation include: infrastructure constraints, politicised decentralization process, lack of oversight and monitoring, corruption and lack of accountability, low teacher salaries, shortage of highly qualified and motivated teachers as well as withdrawn or unconcerned parents. In addition, interviewees felt the expectations of the beneficiaries are too high and more training is necessary at schools. Rural areas noted

that one of the main challenges in implementing policies lies in the fact that Uganda as a whole nation is not at the same pace. Children from less developed regions are exposed to the exact same assessment in education.

*The way in which peacebuilding is currently approached in the curricula and schools, focuses mainly on conflict prevention as opposed to coming to terms with past conflicts.*

The language of educational documents we reviewed for the purpose of this study, as well as the majority of our interviewees, embrace peacebuilding as a process that occurs at the individual and community level with the aim to cultivate inner or communal peace. Peacebuilding is equated with conflict prevention, good citizenry and individual responsibilities towards the community – be it in the classroom or beyond. The importance of cultivating peaceful forms of conflict resolution at individual and group level should by no means be undervalued. Yet, the sheer absence of also embracing peacebuilding as a tool to come to terms with past and ongoing forms of conflict can be dangerous in two ways. First, ignoring the past fosters sentiments of frustration and anger among conflict-affected populations. Second, the absence of a comprehensive reconciliation process can in the long-term even trigger new forms of conflict, resistance or violent unrest. In Uganda, there is a general fear, that addressing past conflicts through education can revive (ethnic) tensions. If education ought to play a much greater role in the reconciliation process of the country, this clearly needs to be concomitant with highly qualified trainers, pedagogues and teaching personnel.

*Non-formal education programmes at the regional level, address societal transformation and peacebuilding more explicitly than nationwide formal education initiatives.*

Non-formal education programmes in Uganda, have the potential to embrace all four aspects of redistribution, recognition, representation and in part reconciliation in that:

- They have either a specific curricula designed to fit into their regional and cultural environment, thereby addressing peace and security issues in the region or make use of an accelerated curriculum;
- They increase access to education for marginalised and/or disadvantaged segments of the population;
- Are frequently designed to make room for flexible learning hours, which allows learners to engage in income generation activities and/or pursue household duties;
- In many instances, teachers are from, known to, and trusted by the community, or (in some instances) involved in curricula development;
- Some programmes, such as ABEK or CHANCE have been proven to change people's attitudes towards education;
- Interviewees indicated (for this study and in reviewed evaluation reports) that programmes help to mitigate direct and indirect forms of violence.

These positive contributions towards explicit and implicit forms of peacebuilding notwithstanding, several challenges in practice remain such as: lack of qualified and trained teaching personnel, weak infrastructures or no consistent funding strategies. Besides, learners are still not in a position to freely move from non-formal to formal education without being stigmatised, in particular when it comes to employment. The non-formal policy act (which still needs to be passed by parliament once funding is secured) would be one step towards that direction in creating an enabling environment.

# Section 3:

# The Role of Teachers in Peacebuilding

Many of the legacies of conflict already highlighted which have impacted on education policy and practice generally in Uganda also have an influence on the provision of teacher education. Teacher education policy along with curricular provision is formulated at a national level yet the impact of conflict has been to accentuate regional difference by contributing to economic disparities and uneven rates of development.

## Section 3:

# The Role of Teachers in Peacebuilding

As highlighted in the previous section, implementing policy in an even and uniform way has been restricted both by obstacles to infrastructural progress and social dislocation resulting from violence. This section on the role of teachers in peacebuilding acknowledges the challenges posed by applying national initiatives to teaching across regions with very different experiences of conflict. It recognises that the central and southern regions have been largely free from direct conflict and also that the drivers of conflict in affected regions have been, to an extent, localised as illustrated on pages xx-xx. This indicates the need for specific teacher education responses tailored to regional circumstances (see: Cunningham 2014, pp. 22-124). Yet, failure to deal with the legacy of conflict at a national level risks the likelihood that misunderstanding and prejudice towards conflict affected areas will prevail, thus perpetuating regional inequalities of treatment.

In the course of conducting fieldwork interviews the perception of unequal treatment of conflict affected areas, whether real or imagined, was voiced frequently. This, allied to the assumption that corruption at the centre of the government is rife, generates a debilitating fatalism among teacher educators and officials that makes leadership for change less likely (FHI 360 2015, p. 21, 24). To give an example, a school inspector expressed his frustration at the favourable position given to those groups given full kingship in the Ugandan system, indicating that this led to privileged outcomes. This traditional value system can both support and hinder the integration of peacebuilding into education and teacher training (Cunningham 2014, pp. 77-99). On the one hand, it can help foster social harmony and development, for example through its focus on restorative practices. On the other hand, political patronage and patriarchal attitudes toward gender can work in opposition to an education system aiming to promote social justice (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, pp. 27-28).

Field research in Uganda revealed that traditional values of a society can influence the peacebuilding agenda within teacher education and curriculum in several ways. In one National Teacher's College (NTC) a member of the college management group who was also a traditional leader talked passionately of work done in the community through traditional structures to re-integrate former victims of the LRA. The work was referenced in formal teaching in the college but he acknowledged that its potential was underdeveloped. Reflecting traditional values in the curricula of teacher education and schools, particularly in fostering reconciliation, is worthy of exploration. Cunningham (2014, pp.68-76), in his study of conflict transformation in schools in the Gulu district, observed aspects of practice, some drawn from local traditions, which contributed to "truth telling", restorative justice and inclusive citizenship. Often, in after school peace clubs rather than formal classes, Cunningham saw storytelling, role-play and drama used to portray individual or group narratives of past experiences which might be used to 'accord dignity to many victims of the civil war'. However, he also noted that tensions exist between aspects of local culture and knowledge of human rights. This tension around the interplay between traditional values and liberal norm promotion within teacher education governance affects the development of teachers as agents.

## Findings: Peacebuilding in Uganda and Teacher Education

The crucial role that teachers play in effective teaching and learning is well established in literature (Jaimovich 2012). Whatever the strengths of educational and curriculum policy its efficacy can best be gauged by the impact it has in the engagement between teachers and students in the classroom. Depending on the intended learning outcomes, be they instrumental or discursive, it is important that the pedagogy practised is in line with curriculum aims if the latter are to be realised. For example, the teacher of core educational pursuits such as literacy and numeracy or other skills deemed necessary if young people are to contribute to economic progress, requires specialist knowledge, expertise and motivational qualities. Acquiring these usually involves a combination of intellect, appropriate training and craft knowledge, gained through classroom experience. Therefore, if an education system is to move to higher levels of achievement the effective training of all its teachers is an essential prerequisite. Hence, in developing countries, pre-service and in-service teacher education should be prioritised.

However, when education in conflict affected countries also focuses on peacebuilding then even if a teaching workforce is competent in promoting instrumental skills it still may fall short in other key pedagogical areas. Societies emerging from conflict present special challenges. Classrooms can be highly charged as children and young people from different backgrounds bring the legacies of hurt, trauma and prejudice in the wider community to schools. In such situations teachers require a pedagogy which displays understanding and sensitivity and encourages students to interact positively when encountering difficult issues. Yet teachers themselves are also shaped by the society which produced the violence, and may, therefore, share the distress of their students. Lederach (1995) argues that individuals must first undergo a transformative process out of conflict before transformation can be harnessed as a mass societal movement. As 'agents of change' (Skilbeck 1976) teachers are in a key position to help that transformation process. Theorists differ as to whether teachers have the agency to challenge the *status quo* and effect change working within the prevailing power structures of an hierarchical society, including liberal democracies (Skilbeck 1976; Elliot 1998), or whether a transformation of societal structures, including those of education, is a necessary prerequisite if education is to redress inequalities (Freire 1970; Giroux 1992; Giroux 1996). In the context of this report Skilbeck's assertion that culture is reflexive and that curriculum in schools is both culturally determined and culturally determining is accepted and, therefore, effective peacebuilding pedagogy is potentially transformative even within existing structures. However, it is also understood that education for peacebuilding will have little impact if the wider forces in society model values and behaviour that are counteractive. Even with favourable circumstances, the implication for preparing teachers as change agents is a challenging one. The range of knowledge, aptitudes and skills required by teachers in a peacebuilding context is a sophisticated endeavour. Freire (2000, p. 53) envisages the teacher as 'a role model setting forth the values of democracy', thus establishing a mutually supportive relationship between teacher and student. Teachers need to take account of the authentic voices of students and situate the learning in the lived experiences of the communities in which they belong (Giroux 1992; Skilbeck 1976; Freire 1970).

Giroux's concept of 'border crossing' is of value for education in divided societies. This encourages teachers and their students to think through their own backgrounds, and for schooling and communities to 'cross ideological and political borders as a way of furthering their own understanding in a setting that is pedagogically safe and socially nurturing' and thereby to fashion new identities and possibilities (Giroux 1992, pp.30-33). Taking on this role requires teachers, in Freire's words (2000), to 'dare', to be risk-takers (McCully & Kitson 2005). In short, there is a common consensus among scholars and practitioners, that the teacher as 'an agent of peacebuilding' has to aspire to democratic values, foster critical thinking, teach for, and by, social justice, explore (and engage with) alternative truths, or interpretations, and offer practical approaches in action. This is a daunting list in any context but is especially challenging in a country such as Uganda which also faces the broader resource constraints of a developing nation (see Section 1 of this report). The stark reality of this challenge was probably best summed up by one University professor we interviewed:

*The Government of Uganda would love to do it [peacebuilding] but it is overwhelmed by the large number of children in schools. (Interview, February, 2015)*

Thus, in acknowledging that sustainable peacebuilding in Uganda cannot be detached from developmental goals, this section analyses the role of teachers through the lens of the 4Rs. With the intention to examine

the current contribution of teacher education to peacebuilding in Uganda, it aims to:

- Analyse governance and teacher education policy and their implications for peacebuilding;
- Examine the relationships between stakeholders responsible for developing teacher education and curriculum and their effectiveness in creating a peacebuilding dimension through teacher training;
- Discuss current strengths, limitations and future potential in teacher education curriculum and practice which influence peacebuilding capacity;
- Examine the professional status of teachers and teacher accountability as factors in promoting or inhibiting peacebuilding;
- Suggest areas that should be considered for the role of teachers in peacebuilding and development.

## Governance

### Finance and Teacher Education

When examining teacher education it is important to recognise that it operates as only one dimension of the education system and the overall challenges the latter faces have an impact on the training of teachers. The education sector must vie for funding alongside all other areas of public expenditure. Overall, although education expenditure increased in real terms between 2003-04 and 2010-11 it decreased as a share of GDP from 4.2% to 3.3% in the same period (as compared to that of a sample of other low income countries at 3.9%). Similarly, recurrent expenditure fell from 27% to 19% of the government's total and in 2011-12 this was a fall even in real terms (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014 p. 32). In view of the pressures exerted by lack of resources and rising demand, the priority the Ugandan government places on education is questionable (ibid. p.43).

Even within the education sector teacher education has to compete for adequate funding. Shifting emphases in regard to primary and secondary education saw the former's share of recurrent education expenditure drop from 61% to 54% between 2003-04 and 2010-11 and the latter rise from 18% to 30%. In the same period expenditure on BTVET remained static at 3.4%. Meanwhile, the teacher education budget fell from 5.7% to 2.5%, a real cut of a third (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, pp. 33-34). Financial pressures can only intensify as the demand for teachers increases. Already 85% of the primary recurrent budget is spent on teachers' wages. It is estimated that the school aged population (aged 6 to 18) will have risen from 34% of the total population in 2010 to 38% in 2025 (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, p.26). At a minimum it is estimated that Uganda will require an increase in teacher numbers by a factor of 1.7 at primary level, by 2.5 at secondary level and 3.8 for BTVET. At these rates this would require a 70% and 140% increase in PTC and NTC tutors, respectively (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, pp. 45-56). Further, inconsistencies within teacher education require attention. UNESCO-IIEP together with the MoESTS (p.35) further points out that 'training a primary teacher is twice as costly as training a lower secondary school teacher'. Such pressures throughout the education system cannot be ignored by those advocating the integration of a peacebuilding dimension. Needs are numerous, wide-ranging and contested. *If there is to be a greater emphasis on redistribution, recognition, representation and reconciliation teacher education has a critical role to play but, as the situation stands, perceptions of priorities within the system will have to shift. For this to happen, greater coordination and trust building at regional and district level is essential.*

Currently the shadow of corruption at central level acts against this, especially with regard to infrastructural development (FHI 360 2015, p. 23). A monitoring official of an international organisation talked of the direct impact this has on teacher education and schools provision whereby "central procurement means that corruption impacts on the person who is to develop that school" (interview, February, 2014) thus putting projects in jeopardy. Two financial considerations emerging from the overall financial position are that donor aid and public/private partnerships for student support are likely to continue to have an important role. Between 2007/08 and 2010/11 49.5% of the development budget for education came from foreign donors and findings indicate that the peacebuilding agenda has drawn heavily from these sources (FHI 360 2015, pp. 19-20). To date such interventions have been essential but failure to embed the peacebuilding



dimension in core funding (for teacher education as well as other areas of education) has the danger of leaving it peripheral and vulnerable. Reliance on public/private funding for trainee teachers tilts in favour of those from wealthier backgrounds at the expense of more equal access (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, p. 34).

## The Organisation of Teacher Education and the Role of Local Stakeholders

For teacher education to be effective it must incorporate a number of connected functions. It involves the recruitment of suitable students at the initial stage, appropriate pre-service qualifications and training, the deployment of qualified teachers to suitable posts and then providing them with access to in-service programmes to ensure continuing professional development. In conjunction with this there must be compatibility between the skills developed by teachers and the aims of the curriculum. The policy section of this report has already alluded to the revised ESSP 2007 and the Ministerial Statement 2012-13 and their aspirations for teacher education which include allying training more clearly with curriculum change, including addressing issues of diversity, inclusion and the psychological needs of children.

Currently, teacher education in Uganda has structures to meet all the functions listed above. However, there are questions as to how far each function is executed efficiently, and to what extent there is coordination between each. Centrally, the MoESTS, through its Teacher Instructor Education and Training department has overall responsibility for teacher education by maintaining standards through teacher training, curriculum and examinations. Several of the other twelve departments have some relevance for teacher education including Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Guidance and Counselling, HIV/Aids, and its gender units. Detailed administrative functions for teacher education and the curriculum, respectively, lie with semi-autonomous institutions: Kyambogo University and the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). Kyambogo has authority for the Primary Teachers' Colleges (PTCs), the National Teachers' Colleges (NTCs) and some vocational Instructor Training College (ITC) programmes. There are 52 PTCs (45 owned and funded by the government and seven privately run, including two faith based bodies), which train teachers for primary education and six NTCs, one of which is private, preparing teachers for secondary education. Of the 45 government PTCs, 23 are *core* institutions that run both pre- and in-service programmes and 22 are *non-core* institutions that have only pre-service programmes. Kyambogo also coordinates the work of 93 private Early Childhood Development (ECD) institutes. For all levels, it sets entry requirements, administers admissions and teacher registration, designs the content of teacher programmes, sets examinations and issues certification both for pre-service and in-service teachers. In doing so it has to work with the other teacher training institutions including Makerere and Gulu Universities (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, p. 60). This arrangement, whereby one practising institution has an administrative role over others, is unusual and potentially creates sources of tension and weak authority.

NCDC's main remit is curriculum design at primary and secondary levels. As a semi-autonomous organisation its status is similar to that of Kyambogo and for new curriculum initiatives to find their way into practice it is essential that there are clear lines of communication between the two organisations to ensure synergy. The study conducted by the MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar (2014) examined previous research conducted immediately prior to the introduction of the primary thematic curriculum in 2007. Its conclusions do not present an optimistic picture. It confirms the inadequacies of teacher education provision as recognised in a previous government report (MoES 2013). It reports on poor quality teaching which 'mainly focused on content at the expense of pedagogy and good classroom practice' and lacked emphasis on the changes advocated by curriculum policy (p.70) (see also Chisholm & Leyendecker 2008, p.197). The report records PTC principals suggesting that activity overload, staff shortages and absenteeism have contributed to weak implementation. Subsequently, a new primary teacher curriculum has been piloted under the auspices of Kyambogo University and is currently being implemented in the colleges. Our visits to PTCs indicate that this is at an early stage of implementation. Interviews conducted within NCDC expressed frustration at the slowness of teacher education through Kyambogo and the other institutions to respond to new approaches, especially active methods of teaching associated with peacebuilding pedagogy.

*NCDC governing council draws from the universities, teacher training colleges and other stakeholders that are involved in training teachers. We expect them to be with us but it didn't happen for primary. We developed the primary curriculum and the harmonisation came afterwards. Some get frustrated. It is cross-cutting, it needs the ministry the colleges, directors of education and the examinations board. Ah, but we seem to walk alone. (Interview with senior NCDC Officer, March, 2015)*

In contrast two leading teacher educators were adamant that teacher training institutions were often excluded from curriculum making. These divergent views indicate a lack of coordination in the implementation process.

Further frustration emanates from the restricted assessment procedures practised in Uganda as referenced in the earlier policy section.. At a general level the consequence in schools is that traditional methods of rote-learning prevail. Less motivated learners “*are lost from the system*” (INGO Representative) and do not get opportunities to engage with social issues relevant to their lives. Commenting on the teacher training institutions, including her own, a university professor lamented a narrow ethos where “*educators are not orientated in peacebuilding strategies and methods... even in the teacher education colleges [PTCs and NTCs] they have external examinations which means that the teacher trainees are learning to pass exams*”. (Interview, February, 2015)

If initial teacher education is uneven, sustaining continuing professional development has been demonstrated to be difficult. In surveying teachers Altinyelken (2010) found many who described the preparatory training for the thematic curriculum as ‘severely inadequate’. Currently, the in-service emphasis is on upgrading qualifications through the teacher training institutions. The MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar (2014) report on teacher Issues in Uganda, describes the current system at primary level as ‘fragmented’ with no institutionalised system to improve professional competences. At secondary and BT/VET levels provision is even less structured. Teacher qualifications at entry to teaching have improved since 2000 – the report acknowledged the success of CPD in upgrading and certifying under qualified teachers in government schools – but, despite this, in 2010 12.7% of primary teachers and 16.1% of secondary teachers were under qualified (85% of these in private schools).

Primary in-service focuses around the role of Coordinating Centre Tutors (CCTs) operating out of the 23 Core PTCs distributed around the country and deployed to 540 coordinating centres, usually serving clusters of approximately 18 schools. Factors inhibiting progress are identified by the MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar (2014) as lack of skills on the part of the CCTs, a reliance on a cascade model of delivery which dilutes progressively in the field and conflicting priorities, partly as a result of donor demands. A World Bank study adds to this the limitations of conducting workshops away from the school setting, especially in lower performing districts where ‘professional development may not be reaching its intended goals’ (Jaimovich 2012, p. 13). A significant weakness is that coordination is lacking between the CCTs and the district administrative structures which, through decentralisation policy, have responsibility for local primary education. This central/district tension is also evident in other aspects of education provision. For example, while primary education is devolved to the districts this is not yet the case with secondary education leading to lack of consistency between the two.

Again, initial recruitment for teacher education is a central process whereby a joint admissions board (consisting of representatives of MoESTS, Kyambogo and all other tertiary institutions) rank students by ability. Those selected for primary are eligible for a scholarship but this applies to less than 20% of NTC students. In theory at least the central method of selection should mean a wide regional diversity of students in the training institutions across the country. In contrast, recruitment and deployment of qualified teachers after training is the preserve of district officers. Attention has been drawn to the difficulty of attracting teachers to rural and more remote areas (including those previously affected by conflict), largely as a consequence of poor working environments on offer and the detrimental impact this has on educational quality and opportunity provided in those areas. As discussed later, initiatives designed to counteract this imbalance such as the *hard-to-reach hard-to-stay* strategy, by providing incentives to teachers to accept and retain posts in isolated areas, have had limited success (Jaimovich 2012, pp.8-9).

To this point this section on teacher education in Uganda concentrates on already identified weaknesses in the system. That should not detract from the progress that has been made in recent years regarding infrastructure, course planning and curriculum innovation. Rather, the purpose is to highlight constraining factors which have a bearing on developing a peacebuilding dimension within teacher education. Financial

stringency and management inefficiency have an influence on the capacity of the system to redistribute resources more equitably both to institutions and individual groupings deemed to be less well served by teacher education currently. Structural factors relating to ministerial authority, decentralised control and levels of institutional autonomy impact particularly on the voices represented in teacher education policy and practice. They also affect the manner in which policy is implemented (or not) and therefore influence the extent to which diversity is recognised in reality in the teacher education curriculum and, subsequently, in teachers' practice in schools. The dominance of a passive examinations based learning culture as a hurdle for social mobility militates against risk taking and causes resistance in tutors, teachers, students and parents toward the types of pedagogy that might contribute to peacebuilding and reconciliation in the wake of conflict. The weaknesses in state in-service education structures and the myriad of demands placed on the MoESTS' limited resources have caused international donors and NGOs to step in to move a more progressive educational approach forward through engaging directly in teacher training. With the government's priorities on basic skills this has been particularly the case with education and peacebuilding.

## The Role of International Donors and NGOs in Teacher Education and Peacebuilding

Over time the MoESTS has been taking greater responsibility for funding recurrent expenditure. As has been indicated, priorities are focused on improving the quality of basic skills provision so, consequently, the ministry has looked to external funding to support innovation in the field of social education, including peacebuilding. Interviews with stakeholders engaged in teacher education revealed both advantages and disadvantages to this approach. On the positive side external involvement allows resources to be dedicated for peacebuilding purposes. Innovative policy and practice, developed in other national contexts, can be promoted and thus international expertise acts as a catalyst for change. For example, evidence of this was clear in our interviews with NCDC staff. One saw NCDC as "working closely with [international agencies] to beef up peacebuilding using their citations" but also exercising independence on "national matters that are customised and can never be changed". *NCDC Interviewees showed an impressive understanding of how aspects of peacebuilding can be integrated into a holistic curriculum predicated on active pedagogy.* This was attributed to the influence of UNICEF, other agencies and advice taken from international consultants. However, in interviews with ministry, local government officials and management figures in teacher colleges a sense emerged that work in the peacebuilding field, however desirable, was an appendix to their central purpose. Peacebuilding was not necessarily an externally imposed agenda. There was invariably a commitment to the broad thrust of "peace education" but often the aims of initiatives were seen in isolation, were imperfectly understood in the context of wider peacebuilding objectives or were interpreted to suit existing practice. One critical MoESTS voice alluded to the lack of coherence:

*There are programmes we are running together with UNICEF on peace, special needs and so on, but they are not reflected in the planning part and yet we are arranging resources, we are arranging time, we are engaging people and actually arrange activities on the ground. Teacher education has had some peacebuilding initiatives led by UNICEF but you don't see them reflected anywhere. There is a lack of planning and a lack of focus. (Interview with MoESTS official, March, 2015)*

Interviews with NGOs working in the broad area of social education suggest they may contribute to this lack of overview through a tendency to advocate for their specific agendas with little connection to other related initiatives. This even extends to international agencies. When in Uganda the researchers attended an IIEP / UNESCO workshop on Conflict and Disaster Risk Management for senior education officials. The course was well constructed and received and made references to the peacebuilding agenda but, in subsequent interviews two respondents who had participated struggled to place the event within its wider educational framework. These issues raise the important question of ownership and balance; between, on the one hand, the availability of funding at national and local level determining engagement; on the other, a genuine desire on the part of local actors to take ownership for societal change through education. Donor and international involvement will be re-visited when examining the use of curricula and textbooks to promote a peacebuilding agenda.

# The Implications of Current Teacher Recruitment and Deployment Policies and Practices for Peacebuilding

Teacher recruitment and deployment are an important component in the relationship between education and peacebuilding. Questions of who has access to initial teacher training, the degree to which trainee and established teachers have opportunities to experience diverse environments and where they are subsequently employed, influence equality in relation to ethnic, regional, gender and socio-economic representation in the system. Once in post the distribution of teachers from different backgrounds, and their preparedness to work in a range of settings will influence the diversity experienced by the children and young people they teach. Therefore, a strategic approach to recruitment and deployment should take account of peacebuilding objectives. For this to be the case, a robust administrative structure is necessary as a foundation. Contrary to this, previous research draws attention to significant deficiencies in current procedures in Uganda, particularly with regard to deployment (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014). Attention has focused particularly on the lack of a reliable data collection system and imbalances in distribution, partly as a consequence of using the number of classes, rather than pupil ratio, as the key criterion for determining how many teachers are employed in a school. Operationally, EMIS data (2010) indicated that there are enough primary and secondary teachers in the system but that in some areas there are too many teachers employed per school and in others there are deficits. Of the 10 districts with the largest primary teacher shortages (from a sample of 31), 5 were in Northern and 3 in Eastern regions while 6 of the top 10 districts with teacher surpluses were in central district (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, p.89). This reflects the challenges of achieving adequate provision in rural and conflict affected areas and also contributes to the perceptions of regional inequality.

## Diversity Through Recruitment in the Colleges

The centralised nature of selection to teacher colleges has already been outlined. This has important potential for diversity because it can result in students travelling to other regions for training. Indeed, at the training institutions visited by the researchers college management teams drew attention to this diversity of recruitment as a positive factor, particularly in helping to bring Ugandans from different backgrounds together in the interest of national unity. Principals and senior colleagues extolled the benefits of students from different regions mixing to better understand each other, especially through extra-curricular activities in the college such as clubs and societies. Generally, colleges also provided occasional opportunities for groups to share cultural traditions such as dance with their peers. However, college staff were less explicit as to how diversity emerges in formal class time and the extent to which groups and individuals get the chance to express regional perspectives on issues of concern. The emphasis was much more on commonality than exploring the potential tensions present in diversity. For example one PTC runs a week long orientation programme for newly enrolled first year students which, in the principal's words, integrates "peace issues". Her underlying message at orientation is:

*(...) you have all come from divergent backgrounds and we are now here as a family so we need to move together peacefully and harmoniously – so we talk about those issues. (Interview with a Core PTC principal, March, 2015)*

Elsewhere in the interview she indicated that when they go into schools

*(...) we encourage students as much as possible to be neutral... we don't encourage them to promote their political and cultural groupings in order to bring conflict. We encourage co-existence. (Interview with a Core PTC principal, March, 2015)*

*The comments illustrate a tension that is present throughout the education system in Uganda with regard to peacebuilding – and indeed within peace education itself: the extent to which it is essential to investigate cultural and regional difference in order to reduce the drivers of conflict.*

Insight on the actual impact of diverse recruitment in Ugandan teacher education can be gained by comparing the statements of college management with views expressed by students in focus groups. In doing so, it should be taken into account that focus group participation was selected by college staff and, therefore, may reflect a bias toward the official college position. Within the 4 focus groups conducted in 4 different PTCs there was clear recognition from students of the benefits of being educated with others from diverse backgrounds and of the colleges' efforts to foster unity. Contributions similar to the following were

heard in each of the PTC settings:

*You find here we are all together and we are united. The college promotes justice because here I am not a member of a tribal district.... We are part of this community.” (Interview with Vice-principal, Core PTC in Northern region)*

*“We are from different tribes but when you come to such a society you find that you will get to know each other and we come to understand each other’s languages so that when I come to leave here I will not just speak one language, I may speak others.”(Interview with Principal, Core PTC in Central region)*

While there was some acknowledgement of opportunities for discussing cultural differences within the teacher curriculum, for the most part students attributed “mixing” to social interaction in clubs, societies and sports, cultural events and to informal friendship groupings. When probed, they conceded that distinct cultural groups did stick together especially when they were in a significant minority, but the implication was that college ethos and structures expected identification with unity. Each college did not offer exact numbers for the different ethnic or tribal minorities (one college maintained that in the interests of unity they did not collect such figures) but student focus group discussions in the various colleges suggested that minority representation was significantly lower than those inferred by staff.

In the NTC focus group conducted (in Northern region) there was greater disparity between staff and students’ perceptions of diversity. The focus group itself was drawn geographically from across Uganda but students agreed that those minorities from different language groups tended to stay together when out of class. Yet, diversity was valued by the students. They were aware of the cultural benefits and the personal gains of mixing with others. However, they challenged their tutors’ views as to the extent to which understanding of diversity was central to college practices. Conflict was rarely addressed in classes and was much more likely to be talked about in informal settings. Several students indicated that sharing ideas informally was a tentative process. One female from outside the region described her initial unease when she had arrived in a supposed conflict zone but had settled down through time, supported by friends. Arising from this, others expressed the view that it is important for those who “*were not traumatised*” to hear the experiences of those who had lived through conflict. Some frustration emerged from students that though the college presented them with a rich cultural mix, more formalised facilitation was required if its full potential was to be realised.

*In summary, the findings indicate that the colleges do show recognition of cultural diversity in their student populations and make varying efforts to represent this, particularly through informal cultural activities such as dance and drama. Student responses suggest that this goes some way to breaking down in-group/out-group barriers. College managers (including the three situated in the north) were proud to point out that some students from other areas every year take up full-time teacher appointments and often settle down in the local districts. A question remains as to how robust and transformative the “unifying” experience is, and to what extent it is transferred to group understanding once detached from the college environment and exposed to the everyday tensions of communities. Yet, tutors, generally, expressed caution at deliberately focusing teaching on exploring the nature of cultural and regional difference.*

There was one clear example of a university teacher educator who explicitly challenged her students through social encounter by drawing on the diversity of her students. She attributed her recently developed practice to being sponsored to complete a PhD overseas in the field of education and peacebuilding. She “activated” her students by bringing a musician in to class from a deprived area of Kampala, by sending students into the Kampala slums for three weeks to investigate social conditions and by encouraging students from rural districts and refugee backgrounds to recount their stories:

*Another time I had a Karamajong student in my class. At first he did not want to reveal that he was a Karajamong but I encouraged him. He started talking, telling the class about the Karamajong, their culture and so on... he felt proud ..but such things are not done because [it is perceived that] it makes the students feel inferior. ... I told you about the slums in Kampala. No student will say they come from there ... the case of the musician...I represent my people, they will listen to me .. once you make the students feel they are somebody they will talk... and the other students learn ... and you question them why they see the Karajamong as backward ... why do you label them like that? (Interview, February, 2015)*

This type of teaching is explicitly transformative in its aims and is within a reconciliatory framework. However, the tutor acknowledged that even few of her colleagues understood her intentions and methods and that she was much more likely to be consulted by external researchers for advice than by MoESTS officials. While

such teaching approaches, then, are far from the norm there is evidence that students in Uganda do benefit from the diversity present in teacher colleges and that central recruitment, applied more systematically and accompanied by skilled facilitation, has considerable potential to influence student teacher attitudes and behaviour towards each other in a positive way and contribute to greater equity of student treatment (FHI 360 2015, p.22).

## Teacher Deployment and Diversity

As indicated, deficiencies in qualified teacher deployment hinder redistribution through education in that failure to attract effective teachers to disadvantaged areas results in those areas continuing to underachieve. The identification of teacher requirements at local level travels up from schools and districts to the government where it is matched against funding available. The MoESTS then allocates teacher places back to the districts for recruitment. Within secondary education, a central education service commission is responsible for the recruitment process and the MoESTS for effective deployment. Lack of targeting is a factor in imbalances found in teacher recruitment but district officials and INGO workers interviewed also saw the reluctance of teachers to go to remote and troubled areas as a real obstacle to improving the quality of education for rural children. One member of an international organisation was in no doubt that *“there is an imbalance in the distribution not because the Government is not employing teachers but because the teachers are declining to go”* (Interview, March, 2015). Teachers are reluctant to move into such areas because of poor facilities and accommodation but also local teachers move out because they are attracted by urban settings. Gender is also a factor with younger females hesitant to travel to remote schools and married women wanting to remain in towns with their families. This pattern has been the norm, particularly in conflict regions.

At in-service level policies are in place to provide incentives but again their efficacy is in doubt. *Hard to Reach Hard to Stay* allowances have been offered to teachers in remote areas since 1997. The policy’s thrust is to redress regional inequalities in the quality of teaching through a strategy which positively discriminates in favour of disadvantaged areas. It is not targeted specifically at conflict areas, and does not always apply even where violence had impacted detrimentally on educational services. The premise is that additional allowances provide a mechanism for a more equitable distribution of quality teaching and thus positively influence provision by paying teachers to take up employment in more remote and disadvantaged areas. It is envisaged that an added benefit is that the mixing of teachers regionally that this encourages creates opportunities for children and young people to encounter cultural difference. However, as early as 2007 a World Bank review found that the strategy was not achieving these objectives. FHI 360 data shows that a majority of secondary teachers in the north, with the exception of Karamoja, are from the same or nearby district from where the school is situated. Limitations can be attributed to several factors. There is a failure to carry the policy through from the central to local level as a result of administrative inefficiencies, financial constraints and corruption (FHI 360 2015, p.25). One DEO from Northern region voiced his frustrations to the research team on a number of counts. The ineligibility of local teachers to be included in the incentive scheme, he felt, was a demotivator for some and a potential source of grievance. Another questioned why the scheme had been withdrawn from parts of his district:

*There was confusion.... Some teachers transferred from rural to town and they continued to get their allowance! .... When the allowances were questioned it affected work because in the course of following up on this other duties were missed. (Interview with DEO, Northern region, February, 2015)*

A MoESTS official interviewed questioned why the allowances were not directly targeted at conflict affected areas rather than to less defined aspects of disadvantage.

Teacher reluctance is also important. Better teachers tend to locate to schools outside the north where working conditions and the learning environment are more conducive. Research (FHI 360 2015, p.25) also suggests that southerners meet cultural resistance and resentment from local people. However, the FHI 360 report does find positive effects where the central recruitment has been properly implemented, especially in parts of Karamoja and West Nile. Instances were reported where teachers from outside the region had some impact on mediating local disputes. Also, their inability to converse in the local language encouraged higher standards in the use of English. The report concluded that the recruitment and deployment policy has potential ‘to promote equity and mitigate conflict’. Our findings with central and local administrators, INGOs, teacher educators and teachers affirm a mixed picture of administrative problems, selective resistance but also interesting perceptions of benefits in relation to diversity. A MoESTS officer (interview, March 2015) acknowledged that teachers from outside a region could cause cultural tensions but by *“seeing themselves*

as teaching Ugandans” they could facilitate a positive model of cultural diversity. This role modelling was endorsed by a DEO who described outsiders as “often better focused and more serious” and more likely to stay clear of locally divisive politics. There was a lack of consensus on the impact outsiders had on language development. Most recognised that their better mastery of English had benefits for students but the absence of local language made them unsuitable for teaching P1-3 under the thematic curriculum, the level to which they had often been designated and where there is most need. A DEO in Karamoja (interview, March 2015) commented on the failure of government policy to produce enough local teachers “thus threatening the local language”, because of the presence of teachers from other regions. At local level administrators in the remote areas were absorbed by everyday logistical concerns of ensuring classes had teachers. Any benefits resulting from diversity in the teaching profession were welcome side effects rather than strategically planned outcomes.

Difficulties in attracting competent female teachers to areas of teacher shortages is detrimental to the educational needs of children but it also restricts opportunities for a more inclusive experience for the young in those areas (Sperandio & Kagoda 2008). Teachers’ experiences are indicative of wider gender imbalances. The UNDP’s Ugandan case-study of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (UNDP 2012) concludes that ‘Uganda’s public administration is structured along gender lines’ and that this includes the top positions in education being dominated by men. Despite the presence of a ‘reasonably good policy framework’, women work under the ‘double burden’ of domestic duties, a recruitment and promotion system which ‘inadvertently disadvantaged’ them and the presence of sexual harassment. Yet significant progress has been made in the educational field in opening up higher and tertiary institutions to women and, according to an EFA Global Monitoring report (2015) the GoU is making 95% progress in addressing gender gaps in primary education. Females now make up almost 50% of students in the PTCs with 98 women in 2011 qualifying as teachers per 100 men (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, p. 74). Indeed two of the colleges we visited with female majorities were keen to enrol more men. MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar (2014) reports that in PTC examination outcomes neither gender nor age has any significance. Therefore, aside from the equality agenda, in future the deployment of women will be essential to ensure proper staffing and educational improvement in rural areas - but current reluctance has to be overcome. GoU policy stipulates that in rural settings every school should have at least two female teachers to ensure security and also have a positive influence on girl pupils. In support of this, policies are in place to provide appropriate living accommodation and facilities. Again, implementation is constrained by the realities on the ground but also a lack of will. A leading teacher educator at central level was aware of shortcomings, acknowledging that the situation varied from region to region but that conflict areas were the least well served:

*In the north at the moment you will find women mainly in the towns. Safety has a bearing but also family responsibilities, care of elderly parents, accompanying husbands.... There is also an achievement issue. Fewer girls complete schooling therefore there will be fewer women teachers ... The government has a system under decentralisation – there are policies on gender but they are not implemented. (Interview, March 2015)*

He then tied the issue to the need to target local languages and to provide specialisation without making it clear how this would support female recruitment.

A focus group session at a teacher college in the north offered interesting comments from female students on deployment. An all-girl group had completed a short placement in their first year and were preparing for their extended teaching practice in the field. Individually, they displayed resilience and determination to succeed but also expressed some apprehension:

*For me I am really fearing. In the northern region, the learners can be above my size in height. If they are taller than me they can just.. some learners are really mad. If you are a woman, I heard from one of the leaders in Gulu that if you are a woman and you want a position in the district, you want to become a teacher.. the officials (...) if I want to be a head teacher in the district they will use me then give me a job, that is my great fear. When you become a teacher you go to the field you meet different characters, pupils bearing different attitudes. They are very big and they feel you are just rubbish in their faces. Most of the time they fear male teachers but they think these ones are just females. But in our case we are upcoming and we know we are the girls, we will not fear shooting any bullet.. shall not fear anything, that’s what I know. (Student teacher focus group PTC, February 2015)*

Interestingly one young woman challenged the view that female role models are important when she hoped

that she would not be placed in a school with a female head:

*If you are a woman, a teacher, just out you are going to look for a job and unfortunately go into the hands of a head teacher who is a woman she is not going to treat you well because there is competition between you and her. I witnessed one where a head teacher did not want a mere teacher to be braver than her.... (Student teacher focus group PTC, February 2015)*

Clearly, much more has to be done to assure young teachers (women and men) that they can pursue successful careers in disadvantaged and remote communities.

Extensive discussions in several focus groups raised two further issues around teacher deployment. The Ugandan system makes it likely that the least qualified and the youngest teachers are sent to some of the most challenging learning and social environments. In conflict affected regions this may mean encountering individual trauma and collective grievance with little field experience. These are unlikely circumstances for the risk-taking associated with ‘agents for peacebuilding’. In summary, recruitment and employment policies acknowledge issues of *Redistribution* of resources, *Recognition* of the desirability of diversity and *Representation* of minority and gendered voices rather than providing administrators with the means to address them. Hence MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar (2014, p.93) concluded that ‘MoESTS should revise its teacher deployment mechanisms to ensure that greater equity is achieved’.

Table 13: Summary of Process of Recruitment Initiatives – Primary and Secondary

Initiative	Positive	Negative	4Rs
Hard to Reach allowances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution to community cohesion through resolution of disputes.</li> <li>Encourages English development</li> <li>Opportunities for cultural diversity</li> <li>Potential to build on PTC diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of accurate data</li> <li>Uneven implementation and uptake</li> <li>Administrative failures</li> <li>Incompatibility with P1-3 language policy</li> <li>Gender vulnerability</li> <li>Hierarchy of qualifications</li> </ul>	To date policies have tended to acknowledge redistribution, recognition, representation challenges more than address them
Gender policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 female teachers per school in rural areas*</li> <li>Adequate accommodation &amp; facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Female under-representation throughout system</li> <li>Uneven enforcement</li> <li>Concentration in towns in conflict regions</li> </ul>	

\* According to an interview with the DEO in Gulu.



# Teacher Professional Development

## Teacher Status and Morale

No examination of in-service educational training for peacebuilding can ignore the issues of teacher status and morale. If agents of peacebuilding are required to be risk-takers then, in addition to acquiring advanced teaching skills, they need recognition and support to give them confidence to act in ways which advance the common good. This includes providing them with the incentive to invest energy in in-service education and the belief that such efforts will find reward and enhance professional voice.

The MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar (2014, p.113) study's conclusion that teachers in Uganda, in the public sector at least, are relatively well paid in relation to other civil servants is misleading in regard to teachers' sense of self-worth. A National Survey on Primary Teacher Satisfaction (MoESTS Uganda 2013b) organised by MoESTS and UNESCO found teacher dissatisfaction a major concern with 47% in primary schools dissatisfied with their job (p.116). Grievances centre on low pay in relation to other desirable professions and the lack of scope for real career development. Investment in additional certification can either lead back to one's original position without the prospect of advancement or be a vehicle for abandoning classroom teaching for an administrative post. MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO-IIEP Dakar (2014) concludes that the new Scheme of Service introduced in 2012 has only moderately increased intermediate positions and not enough to provide positive career development. Our interviews, with managers, teacher educators and students, confirm the prevailing view that the teaching profession is undervalued with a widespread belief that administrative inefficiencies, regionalised discrimination, lack of proper facilities and centralised corruption undermine teacher performance. Consequently, low morale contributes to poor school leadership, high rates of teacher absenteeism (estimated at 17% in 2012) and high attrition rates for teachers leaving the profession (4% for primary and 5% for secondary). Above all, the result is inadequate teaching and learning in classrooms (Chaudhury et al. 2006; Habyarimana 2007; MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014 pp. 70-73, 93-95, 115-122)

Discussion within the student teacher focus groups provides insight into prospective teachers' views of the profession. Participants were aware of many of the drawbacks and the professional inadequacies of some educators they have experienced at first hand during teaching practice. The MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar (2014, p.78) report (p.78) challenges the assertion that students enter the PTCs as an alternative to staying on at high school for the certificate programme (HSC). However, in our focus groups in four PTCs a two thirds majority of students (asked on an individual basis) admitted that teaching was not their first choice. They enrolled either because they failed to achieve the grades to proceed to their first choice, often medicine, nursing, journalism or the law or because they did not have the financial means to do so. For many it was a "stepping stone" to their ultimate goal. For example, in one northern region PTC nine of eleven students interviewed did not expect to remain in teaching once they had earned enough money to move on. Similarly, in a central PTC which displayed an impressively supportive and inclusive environment only two students out of twelve saw themselves as lifelong teachers but, here, several of the others had been positively influenced by their college's social commitment. They were contemplating giving teaching an extended trial despite its lack of remuneration. Whatever their intentions, those in the focus groups collectively expressed a sense of concern for others that reflects positively on the colleges they attended. **Despite this, unquestionably, the negative perceptions associated with working in the education sector create a fatalistic acceptance amongst some teachers of what are seen as insurmountable challenges. That environment is unlikely to be conducive to the pedagogic innovation associated with peacebuilding.**

The inhibiting factors described above tend to be even more pronounced in regard to the BTVET programme which is covered more fully in Section 4. It needs to produce over 300 new tutors a year to meet demand. Of its current teaching staff 3,500 are in need of upgraded training in vocational skills yet no clear route exists to fulfil this need. The BTVET drive to establish adequate facilities and systematic training structures in order to build up young people's vocational capacities and make the skills learned more applicable to the country's economic needs is an ambitious challenge in itself. In a peacebuilding context providing meaningful employment is critical to tackling the youth "bubble" by giving young people hope and stability. A vocational institute visited in the north displayed impressive sensitivity in their pastoral engagement to those from families who had returned from the bush after LRA involvement and also stressed the importance of cooperative working. However, the BTVET curriculum is entirely geared to vocational skills acquisition rather than addressing wider social objectives.

The MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar (2014, pp. 123-126) also identifies another underlying factor contributing to teacher dissatisfaction: ‘the lack of teacher voice’. Again, this is of major significance in developing teachers as agents for change. The report argues for ‘a need to create a permanent structure for social dialogue between government and teachers’ (p.23). Our research supports the view that a hierarchical decision-making structure has dominated at all levels of the system and that the absence of consultation negatively impacts on teacher tutors and teachers in the field who in the past have rarely been involved in policy formation effecting classroom practice. This was echoed by a teacher union leader who talked of the union having “to force” its opinions on decision-makers. Again, teachers who suffer from a lack of recognition are unlikely to be convincing advocates of democratic practices.

## School Curriculum Analysis

### Defining Peacebuilding Through Education

Data was collected from respondents who were aware that the theme of the research was peacebuilding and its relationship to education. Therefore, all responses, explicitly or implicitly, offered individual understandings of peace education, its connection with peacebuilding and how it is interpreted in practice. Perhaps the variation in responses received is not surprising given the way in which peacebuilding has been represented both in education policy documents and in the context of reforms to teaching and learning.

Section 2 traces the developing profile of peacebuilding responses in national education from its origins in the White Paper, 1992. Rather than offering a cohesive and holistic process, developments have been characterised by a series of insertions, often a reaction to international lobbying, which at different times have placed emphasis on offering vocational skills to youth in conflict affected areas, addressing conflict related trauma, supporting refugees, relieving social distress such as HIV /AIDS and implementing curriculum change to create effective citizens. Even in the production of curricula, despite NCDC’s increasingly coherent role for social studies, ministerial statements have tended to “bolt on” social issues under the guise of the ‘cross cutting themes’. In ministerial and district statements peacebuilding is sometimes conflated as a cross cutting theme alongside, for example Inclusion and Special Needs. In fact, officially, peacebuilding is not yet a designated theme. This may help account for the lack of clarity on the part of respondents as to its exact nature and purpose.

Reforming teaching and learning has been seen as a key component of curriculum change during the time the peacebuilding agenda has been advancing. Ugandan education’s reliance on examination driven rote learning has been deemed as deficient (Enid 2012; MoESTS Uganda 2013b; MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014). This has been accompanied by the advocacy of more child centred approaches and active teaching methodologies. Such pedagogy is a pre-request for effective peacebuilding education but it does not constitute that in itself. Thus, examining the responses of interviewees, those closer to international advocacy tended to have a more nuanced understanding of the aims and practice of peacebuilding and education, particularly as it applies to ethnic and group conflict. In contrast, those with less direct exposure were more likely to interpret peacebuilding in a framework of progressive learning methods, individual relationships and personal development. In the following sub-sections these contrasting visions will be illustrated by examining curriculum revision and its implementation through teacher education.

Table 14: “Soft” and “Hard” Peacebuilding

Indirect or “soft” Peacebuilding	Direct or “hard” Peacebuilding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher educators, district officials</li> <li>• Active teaching methods</li> <li>• Personal development</li> <li>• Building individual relationships</li> <li>• Cooperative working environments</li> <li>• Association with the cross cutting themes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those closer to international advocacy</li> <li>• Specialist guidance and counselling</li> <li>• Applying active pedagogy to addressing group and ethnic conflict</li> <li>• The need for regional conflict to be addressed at national level</li> </ul>

## NCDC and Curriculum Revision

Since the start of the new millennium, the NCDC has been tasked to respond to falling educational standards and the deficit in transferable skills among school leavers by revising, first, the primary (thematic) and then the secondary (CURASSE) curriculum. The primary “thematic” curriculum has been in place since 2007. The lower secondary CURASSE curriculum emanated from a World Bank Report (Habyarimana 2007). The reforms were originally scheduled to come into operation in 2015 but have been delayed at least until 2017 on the grounds of inadequate resources.

As indicated in Section 1, the primary thematic curriculum is based on three main principles: the knowledge component is organised around holistic concepts deemed to connect subject areas and give relevance and meaning to children’s learning; the development of literacy, numeracy and life skills (the latter being promoted through a broadly based social studies area of study) (MoESTS Uganda 2011a); and the use of local language at P1 to P3 to establish foundation learning with P4 used as a transition year to English. The curriculum is to be taught using ‘child centred’ or interactive approaches. Though not yet in operation the secondary curriculum is also underpinned by a skills outcome approach. It has established a learning areas framework and a number of these areas have working groups which have produced draft syllabi. This includes social studies. As reflected in its name it seeks to integrate curriculum reform (CUR), assessment (ASS) and examinations (E) into a holistic educational process which places greater emphasis on students’ creativity and higher level thinking, and is more relevant to their lives.

The international community’s broad aspirations for primary curriculum reform, both to stimulate economic progress and produce a healthier civil society, were articulated by a UNESCO official as an effort towards:

*Improving the literacy and numeracy levels of young children to make them articulate and able to think... Be able to look beyond where they are and use those skills in their homes within their own interactions. That is why Uganda since 2007 started implementing the thematic curriculum. The emphasis was to have in the first three years the children understand their culture, create a value to their culture using their local language, understand their environment - then in grade 4 learning English. Opening-up their mind to see the world in another way ... that transition process and working on the cognitive understanding of the children... it makes a whole difference. The other aspect is ... how do we introduce life skills to the learning strands.. starts in grade 1 but that is the emphasis of grades 5-7.. that is peace education, that is where peace education is supposed to be in-built... how to look at each other, how to respond to each other.. depending on how the curriculum has been taught and how the teacher nurtures the children. That change has a lot to do with integrating peace education in the process. When you are talking about peace education in primary school you are not talking about wars and fights, you are talking about how they nurture their characters, a character building process. (interview, March 2015)*

*This graduated approach to peacebuilding, with emphasis on personal development, is visible in curriculum documents, particularly those relating to life skills (MoESTS Uganda 2011a; MoESTS Uganda 2011b) but is not placed within an explicitly named peacebuilding framework which might help teachers to see its contribution to building social cohesion and alleviating national conflicts.*

## NCDC, the Curriculum and Peacebuilding

Through textual analysis and probing questioning of NCDC officers a generally positive intent emerges with regard to embedding a peacebuilding dimension within the Ugandan school curriculum. The rationale offered is largely consistent with the international view expressed above, although those at NCDC were insistent that they adapted external ideas to national needs. From the responses of officers the following curriculum principles and their relationship with peacebuilding were identified as underpinning the centre’s work. The framework presented and the terms used reflect competence models in vogue in Europe:

- The importance of serving societal needs;
- Supporting literacy, numeracy and skills transferable to economic life;
- Building national unity while reflecting diversity and placing Uganda in its wider east African context;
- Promoting family values and social justice;
- Holistic, inter-connected learning across subject areas;
- An emphasis on communication including the use of ICT;
- Developing critical thinkers and readers;
- Aspiring toward innovative assessment processes to change the culture of teaching and learning;

- Placing Social Studies centrally in the curriculum as the main vehicle for addressing issues of societal concern – life skills, citizenship, the environment and sustainability, conflict and difficult aspects of the past.

Further, NCDC personnel demonstrated that they understood the importance of schools having a conducive, open environment to dialogue and change if these ideas were to be embedded. They were able to link child centred, active learning approaches to developing critical thinking but, then, critically, to recognise that this was only a staging post if children and young people were to engage directly with issues related to citizenship, the contested past and societal division.

The above principles are at best implicitly identifiable in the thematic curriculum but stand out more strongly in the drafts for the CURASSE curriculum. It is important to take into account that work on the primary curriculum commenced earlier than that at secondary level. Thus, the former was largely in place before peacebuilding advocacy picked up momentum. Consequently, the peace agenda is less integrated. Subsequent to initial implementation, aspects have been added and adapted, for example the life skills programme, so perhaps contributing to the uncertainties around peacebuilding expressed by those in the system charged with carrying the work into classrooms. A senior official at NCDC explained the constraints lack of resources play in trying to keep curriculum valid:

*It is very costly to go through that exercise because it requires the training of teachers, the production of textbooks and support materials. It is difficult to introduce something new after the review takes place. Instead, we try to enhance existing areas by using posters and supplementary material... it helps when donors and NGOs have the funds to support textbook initiatives. (Interview with senior NCDC officer, February 2015)*

In contrast, the secondary curriculum design team, supported by external advisors, has had the opportunity for a more systematic engagement with stakeholders and this reflects in its outcomes to date. Examination of Social studies provision in the primary (P6) and secondary curriculum (S1-4), respectively, illustrates NCDC's developing understanding of peacebuilding.

#### Figure 15: National Curriculum: Social Studies

##### P6 Social Studies

Social Studies are defined within the curriculum as an area integrating history, geography, civic education and current affairs. The provision fits into the broader curriculum by emphasising the contribution it should make to language development (at P6 this is English medium) and the acquisition of social and life skills. The latter are considered important to supporting and promoting positive behaviour towards 'HIV/AIDS related issues and regional social challenges'. Content selection is organised around the concept of the East African Community (EAC) comprising of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. What emerges is a curriculum which is primarily about promoting consensus and conformity but which also seeks some opportunity for children to consider relevant social and political issues. Content prescription is heavy and presentation is indicative of a traditional civics approach rather than a discursive programme to foster active democratic participation. Patriotism and nation building are visible with, for example, students asked to appreciate the values of an independent nation and the founders of the political struggle for independence.

The life skills programme adds significantly to this with sections on negotiation, empathy and non-violent conflict resolution skills, accompanied by exemplar active teaching approaches. One of its aims is 'to promote positive attitudes towards cultural, ethnic and religious diversity, gender equality and people with special education needs' (p.5) but questions remain as to how teachers might blend these ideas into the content outlined in the social studies course.

##### Draft Social Studies Learning Area Syllabus

The four year syllabus is presented in the style of a western learning outcomes curriculum. For example, its opening glossary terms use the jargon familiar to western educators. It is much more clearly issues-led with an investigative dimension relevant to a country emerging from conflict. Its rationale states that 'Social Studies develops the knowledge skills, attitudes and values that learners need to participate actively in society' both economically and politically there are aspects of provision which remain largely transmissional in format, for example, when eliciting patriotism or the duties and responsibilities of the citizen – though these are acknowledged to apply at local as well as national and global levels. There is an awareness of the conditional nature of knowledge in the way content is framed. It is anticipated, for instance, that historical events will be approached by acknowledging that they can be interpreted differently and that historical understanding has to be viewed in the context of contemporary situations. As with the primary syllabus there is a transnational regional awareness but also in this case there is a greater willingness to focus critically on Uganda itself and to compare its experience with that of other countries.

A comparison between these primary and secondary initiatives draws attention to the more nuanced, constructivist nature of recent thinking on the secondary curriculum while still adhering to the importance of knowledge acquisition. As with other aspects of education, fostering national unity still remains central to both the primary and secondary curricula. However, subject officers also talked enthusiastically about encouraging positive forms of citizenship with learning placed in its cultural context and related to the child's lived experiences. They stressed individual qualities such as being "responsible", "cooperative", "respectful", "loving" and "appreciative". If these have connotations of conforming then they were put alongside the active skills of "negotiation", "decision-making", "problem solving" and "resolving conflict". At primary level subject officers concurred with the UNESCO official's view which saw these skills as playing out in the context of personal relationships rather than addressing aspects of intergroup conflict; in other words a "soft" approach to peacebuilding – the nurturing of character - as being suitable for primary schools.

In contrast a subject officer at secondary level envisaged the new social studies programme explicitly covering Uganda's various violent conflicts. Motivation for this, he maintained, came from the consultation process held with teachers and other educators:

*Our education system is shaped from our history. Since independence we have gone through a number of conflicts and the need for peace. As we worked an issue that came out strongly was that we should teach land disputes and human rights. People have seen abuse of land use – there is the need to understand the process better so that the young do not have to face similar situations. That's how successful it was.. issues from our past were suggested from the working group. (Interview with NCDC officer, February 2015)*

Moreover, he argued the importance of the conflict in the north being "*taught across the whole country*". Thus, the idea of a gradient of controversy in tandem with maturity emerged from NCDC interviews whereby primary education developed peaceful personal relationships and only in P6 or P7, or more likely in secondary school, did this graduate to the handling of national issues. This gradient is a common one in peace education programmes but, arguably, it is problematic on three counts. One is the assumption that attitudes and values associated with developing positive personal relationships transfer to group conflict. The second is that in a country where a majority of young people presently do not advance through secondary education can educators afford to leave the treatment of difficult national questions to the secondary curriculum? The third is the possibility that inter-group attitudes are formed at an earlier age and by secondary school are resistant to challenge (Connolly et.al. 2002). In the context of Uganda the third point has received some attention through the PBEA's initiative on Early Childhood Development. The focus is on foundational skills but research associated with the programme claims that its community based approach 'contributes to building resilience and social cohesion' (UNICEF Uganda 2014b, p. 2) The deficit indicated by the second point suggests that the onus should fall on the youth sector and BTVET programmes to engage in more explicit peacebuilding activities.

## **The Curriculum and Textbooks**

In an education system characterised by didactic teaching the structure and content of textbooks can frequently be a dominating influence on what teachers teach. However, in the resource scarce school environments often encountered in Uganda this must be tempered by the consideration that pupils will not always have easy access to books. Until 2011 NCDC had little direct involvement in textbook production apart from setting the specification based on the curriculum. In the past publishers commissioned the texts and the MoESTS had responsibility of nominating from the approved list. Over the years there has been a constant complaint from schools that the books did not match the requirements of the curriculum. In the last four years NCDC has been allocated a greater role which its director feels has brought progress. Her organisation now has an evaluation function prior to MoESTS procurement but she acknowledged that choices are likely to be made on financial considerations rather than, necessarily, on first choices based on quality. Government schools then have to buy from the designated purchase list. Private schools have the freedom to go outside this, usually picking from the wider list of approved texts. In order to support recent curriculum innovation NCDC has also undertaken to produce exemplary "guidance" chapters for prospective authors. Financial incentives from international and NGO organisations can influence which books are produced and accepted.

- The preface clearly outlines the utility of the book including being: *rich in content; practical and activity based; suitable for rural and urban pupils and gender sensitive; can be used with minimum teacher guidance. A purpose is to create a sense of social awareness and the need to live and work together.*
- In the book's structure there is an attempt to integrate aspects of geography, history and contemporary issues. It places a heavy emphasis on East Africa as a cohesive identity with the collapse of political structures in the 1970s seen as a retrograde step - *To promote and strengthen unity and co-operation... promote trade....industrial growth... developing a common school curriculum....diverse cultures and the people have a lot to share and learn from one another... reduces political tensions... Increasing inter-marriages.*
- There is comprehensive coverage of agricultural, environmental and economic issues from a mainly geographical perspective. Problems of land degradation, pollution and sustainability are stressed and generalised solutions offered but there is no reference to wider geo-political issues or to where responsibilities lie.
- The treatment of colonialism is a balanced one. There is factual account of its spread and a clear narrative of colonial exploitation, particularly when covering Kenya and German involvement in east Africa. However colonialism's aims were also *to promote and strengthen unity and co-operation... promote trade....industrial growth... developing a common school curriculum....diverse cultures and the people have a lot to share and learn from one another...reduces political tensions... Increasing inter-marriages.* There is a balanced list of factors presented on both sides of the colonial argument but the follow up exercises give no opportunity for students to develop arguments.
- Ethnic and group conflict is mentioned and associated particularly with migration. Initially, this features Somalia, Rwanda and Burundi with interesting challenges facing post genocide Rwanda listed.
- Uganda's post-colonial era is covered by factually tracing regime changes. This acknowledges Amin's human rights abuses, especially against the Acholi and Langi. There are brief references to excessive Bugandan influence and backward practices of the Karamajong
- Recent conflicts are presented factually with little attention to deeper causes. They are summarised in 4 bullet point challenges and 3 remedial actions (international loans, one language and education.
- Only three pages directly address democratic citizenship (pp.177-179). Here there is implicit support for the democratic process and human rights based social justice – with recognition of potential subversion by political leaders. Museveni's rise to power is briefly covered with his armed rebellion – seen as a response to *massive human rights violations against the NRA.*
- The broad narrative presented in the book has the potential to open up debate. While there is an occasional comparative dimension across countries the pupil activities suggested require only recall and comprehension with no attempt to problematise issues

- There is no introductory section to explain the book's social purpose. It is structured clearly around each of the subject areas of geography and history with elements of citizenship in its final chapters.
- Migration and relationships in the wider East Africa region are portrayed as positive - *communities interacted... inter-marriages were common and this increased changes in culture .... New ideas and skills... shared by people through trade.... Disasters brought people together.*
- There is a substantial treatment of pre-colonial society with some criticism of the elitism of traditional kingdoms, especially Buganda..
- Coverage of the colonial period balances the benefits of modernity with aspects of social injustice
- *The benefits brought by Christianity go unquestioned - The missionaries wanted the people of East Africa to have a transformed socio-economic life... introduced formal education ...built hospitals... new crops... constructed roads and social facilities. Dr. Livingstone was kind, patient and solved his problems with his attackers in a friendly manner.*
- Key individuals who led early opposition to colonialism are portrayed. The accounts are factual and positive but do not glorify.
- An underlying theme is that modernity is progress. There is an implicit acceptance of prevailing economic models and the desirability of industrial development with no reference to the impact of international capital / globalisation - *Industrialisation leads to the modernisation of a country.*
- The citizenship message is a largely submissive one encouraging unity and respect. It positively reinforces attributes of hard work, the importance of environmental sustainability and resolving land disputes, the role of women and the benefits of education.
- Attention is drawn to problems facing Uganda. The picture is a deficit one, particularly in the face of demography - *Facilities like schools hospitals and houses are always not enough.* Corruption is said to be on the increase but civil servants are blamed without any reference to government.
- The narrative approach is a non-problematic one with few examples of alternative arguments being presented.
- In places, interesting questions are asked – for example, there is one on delays to oil exploration on Lake Albert but the text provides no context for this, or scaffolding for further investigation. A debate on the impact of colonialism is suggested but again the text does not offer opportunities for in-depth investigation.

## Stephan Jjuuko (2008) History: East Africa (1880-1971) Students' Book 3, MK Ordinary Level

- The book is designed for the existing History O level examination syllabus, covering the colonial and post-colonial period.
- It presents a largely balanced account of the scramble for Africa and a more critical analysis of colonialism than the primary books. Missionaries are seen as the forerunners of colonialists who *cunningly used these treaties to assert their rule over various territories.... using the collaborators against the resisters... supported a weaker society against a stronger one... using gifts.. enticing them.*
- German rule is vilified - Carl Petes is, *said to have castrated and hanged a young man who came looking for his girlfriend .....* German soldiers slept together with house boys.
- Collaborators are not demonised but Bugandans are singled out for siding with the British at the expense of African unity
- Early resisters are not gloried but in one example there are references to *love of his people... formidable resistance... gain glory and prestige... made him become a resistor.... United people... betrayed by his two ministers... defeated by Baganda British collaborators.* Exploitation of land is particularly seen as a cause for grievance. There is a strong analysis of the significance of World War 2 in changing attitudes but with no follow up activity.
- No “father” of the nation is identified with Obote pictured as flawed – *did not complete studies... abrogated the 1962 constitution... massive deaths of innocent civilians ...abuse of human rights by government soldiers.*
- A very idealised picture of post-independence education policy is presented: *Political education was taught to young people ... made them committed citizens to the national goals... learned principles of good governance and observation of human rights and dignity... teaching languages crossed tribal boundaries and helped enhance national unity... mixing helped understanding of each other... employment opportunities were created.*
- Uganda’s weaknesses are recognised – *lacked an educated class... mass ignorance ....northern and southern parts were labour reserves while the central was developing fast... Uganda was a multi-cultural state with no common history of origin.* Divisions in leadership and the lack of a common first language are cited as drawbacks.
- Overall, the book has significant limitations. Its sections are strung together with overly factual paragraphs that lack linkages indicating that its authors are conditioned to a rote learning approach without the space for the discussion of implications.

The three textbooks studied are currently in use in schools and in the secondary case the book supports the existing, rather than the CURASSE curriculum. Importantly, none of the three books have an overtly political bias (and arguably they offer a liberal stance toward issues such as sustainability and gender reform). Their main limitation is that they are unlikely to challenge traditional approaches to teaching and to support curriculum reform which promotes active, critical pedagogy.

In contrast, the recent curriculum changes outlined above are moving the peacebuilding agenda forward. Under guidance from external advisors NCDC has a vision for a student centred approach as a foundation for engaging pupils in aspects of peacebuilding which equate with the 4R framework. Recent curriculum reforms do contain representation, redistribution, recognition and reconciliation elements. As demonstrated by the proposed secondary reforms NCDC’s consultation processes are becoming representative at least to the degree that they ran subject consultation days for selected teachers. It is aware of the need to talk with teachers and other stakeholders from different regions though this alone will not ensure that all teachers have ownership of the proposals. Also, there is no avenue at present for the voice of parents or students in constructing the curriculum. Recent curriculum reforms, themselves, do have redistribution, recognition and reconciliation elements. In terms of redistribution the emphasis on knowledge that is relevant (along with the language policy at P1-P3) aims to give educational access to a wider stratum of children and young people. Also, there is a greater attention to the recognition of difference related to geographical, tribal, religious, gender and linguistic diversity. The reconciliation dimension is much more tentative but there is some understanding amongst NCDC officers at least that within traditional culture restorative practices have a role to play in formal learning. However, as with many aspects of Uganda’s educational system, curriculum policy is generally sound and informed but implementation is weak. Until the structures are in place for the effective communication of curriculum reform to colleges, schools and teachers the undoubted progress made at NCDC remains aspirational.



## Initial Teacher Education, Curriculum and Peacebuilding

Attention has been drawn to previous research which points to inadequacies in the initial teacher education system in both PTCs and NTCs (Chisholm & Leyendecker 2008; MoESTS Uganda 2013b; MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014). The frustration expressed by NCDC officials at the slowness of the education system, including the colleges, to respond to curriculum change has also been noted (see p39). This, combined with the very recent introduction of a revised primary teacher curriculum to bring it better in line with the thematic curriculum, and the postponement of secondary curriculum reform, might suggest that our visits to university education departments and colleges would not be that fruitful in revealing a peacebuilding dimension to their work. Instead, in the institutions visited researchers found interviewees receptive to the desire for the explicit inclusion of what was usually termed “peace education” in their work. This manifested itself in two guises. One related to the very specific challenges posed for college/departmental guidance and counselling services by the presence of war affected students (particularly in the north but all institutions claimed a few students with this background). Here staff recognised student need but did not feel properly equipped to respond. One Core PTC principal explained:

*Yes, there are some staff specially trained to handle such issues like a special needs education tutor and other tutors have competence in guidance and counselling. But the training is not adequate. We still need further training to deal with such issues. (Interview with Core PTC principal, Central region)*

The other was linked to the more general desire to prepare teachers to promote peaceful relationships in schools by modelling those values through the student teacher environment. In the PTCs it was clear that many of the positive voices heard were influenced by a recent PBEA teacher training programme.

### Figure 19: Case-study: PBEA Primary Teacher Initiative

A joint venture, initiated and funded by UNICEF but working closely with the MoESTS (including Kyambogo University and NCDC) with the intention to have the work mainstreamed in the system; “The first time that conflict sensitive approaches to education and ‘education for peacebuilding’ have been explicitly integrated into teacher education” (UNICEF officer)

Phase 1 UNICEF staff, MOEST officials and selected college principals and vice principals met and planned the intervention including materials.

Phase 2 Representatives travelled to Core PTCs and ran a series of five x 5 day programmes for regional clusters of college management and tutors.

The rationale is to model key principles associated with peacebuilding in schools:

*To develop a cadre of teachers from the PTCs that are able to practice some of the key principles of peacebuilding in schools – participatory learning, alternatives to corporal punishment, able to encourage the involvement of learners and to give them space to participate in school administration... If PTCs prepare teachers and begin to structure how they learn then teachers leaving the colleges and entering the schools will perhaps be different. Also, we have outreach tutors who do a lot of work in the schools... Teachers in training but also have the teacher trainers to have the capacity to transfer these principles into schools as they go but also we’ve trained CCTs in some of these child friendly principles... so working through the colleges to relate these peace messages helps them to better appreciate some of these values. (Interview with UNICEF officer)*

The programme aims to give space for professional debate and reflection placed in the specific contexts of the colleges involved.

## Impact of PBEA Teacher Training

It was obvious from the interviews conducted that the PBEA initiative, to date, has had a significant impact on college management and staff. In three of the five PTCs respondents attributed professionally reflective comments on institutional ethos, relationships with colleagues and students, and their own practice largely to their experience of the training. In some cases these views were expressed in what might be regarded as transformative language. In the fourth college management reaction was more instrumental, valuing the programme as one of several UNICEF run in-service experiences, and the tutor interviewed seemed

unable to identify the PBEA training event from others he had attended. In the fifth, the only non-core PTC represented in our study, the one tutor who attended the PBEA event was complementary and reflective on the training though this was less demonstrable in his practice as illustrated by Case Study Teaching Session 1. A number of factors made the training special for participants:

- The nature of training with its emphasis on interaction and institutional reflection based on familiar professional experiences: *We reflected on our own practices on the extent to which we are delivering and bringing change moving people from the negative to the positive (...) participatory and tutor centred (...) opportunities for participants to be critical and have input.* (Interview with a senior teacher tutor, Core PTC Northern region)
- The underlying values resonated with their own professional needs: *We looked at a peaceful college, a peaceful classroom. We discovered that the players are within – students, staff and parents, the college community are all the players of peace so why don't we involve them* (Interview with Core PTC Social Studies tutor, Northern region)
- Openness through sharing diverse experiences, engaging across management hierarchy and voicing concerns, for example around professional relationships:
- People opened up and they felt very secure to discuss issues happening in their own institutions. We were positive about it... a good model. (Interview with Core PTC tutor Central region, March 2015)
- The modelling of practical methodologies: *It was sharing experiences and devolving strategies for peace when we get back to our institutions as we handle the students. How do we integrate that as we make students feel that they are part of the learning process?* (Interview with Core PTC tutor, Northern region, February 2015)
- The direct leadership role of MoESTS officials as a motivating factor: *The ministry had good moral support on this. They worked in partnership with UNICEF. It was given priority. There is a sense that things are moving* (Interview with Core PTC tutor, Central region).
- Ownership of outcomes. College staff welcomed the task of preparing an implementation plan incorporating ideas for the new college year and having these monitored externally.

## Limitations of PBEA Training

Initially, the PBEA training has been demonstrably successful in motivating teacher educators through active engagement and professional reflection. Its participants have been stimulated by its collegial approach. Arguably, its emphasis on fostering positive institutional environments, professional conduct and promoting active teaching methods is as much to do with improving the general standards of teacher education as it is to do with peacebuilding. The positive reaction of participants is connected to the inclusive nature of the training and the cooperative structure of its organisation. An important recommendation of the MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar study (2014, pp. 123-127) was 'the need to create a permanent structure for social dialogue between the government and teachers'. The PBEA training is an example of giving practitioners a voice. Of course, improving conditions of service is a vital longer term necessity but the impact of genuine professional interaction to enable teachers and teacher educators to place their frustrations in proportion should not be underestimated. Further, gaining some ownership of policy and training facilitates a mind-set in practitioners which encourages the commitment and risk-taking necessary for a peacebuilding role.

The treatment of harder issues was less referenced in interviews. Apart from one college principal commenting on the benefits of hearing her colleagues from the north talk about the challenges of war-affected students there was little evidence that national or ethnic conflicts featured in the training. In fairness, PBEA architects see peaceful colleges and classrooms as a necessary pre-condition for tackling more difficult national problems:

*Because if you are moving into the community to resolve conflict together, when we have our own graduates within the colleges who at least are demonstrating a process of managing issues, of resolving our issues. I think those two processes are critical. I am glad that they have been done that way. There is a lot of excitement because those teachers, the administrators don't get many platforms, it could have been one of those rare opportunities for them to have frank discussions and you can imagine how much*

*they wanted to reach out.” (Interview with UNICEF officer, February 2015)).*

Our visits to education colleges and university education departments, over and beyond PBEA training, indicate that at both management and tutor levels there is a growing awareness of the importance of creating a cooperative environment and modelling professional, humane and socially just behaviour for students despite the resource shortages and established norms that prevail. Presently, staff are most comfortable for issues of diversity and social justice to be raised informally in clubs and societies and considerably greater awareness is necessary if more contentious aspects of peacebuilding work are to feature directly in the teacher training curriculum.

In turn, staff aspirations are reflected in the responses from student focus groups where participants expressed the wish to treat their own pupils with fairness in ways not always practised by the teachers they, themselves, had encountered in schools. Generally, students were conscious of their pastoral responsibilities to pupils in schools and frequently referred this back to structures and positive experiences within the colleges.

Time will tell how well the PBEA training can be mainstreamed, how easily the process can move from soft to hard peacebuilding and then spread to schools across the regions to better facilitate teachers' implementation of curriculum reform. Strategically, CCTs were deemed important participants in the training to enable its ideas to find their way down to already practising teachers. Placing further stress on CCTs and the cascade model to get the ideas into schools may prove a critical weakness.

During the course of the research four teacher training classroom teaching sessions were observed, three in PTCs and one in a university education department. Two social studies classes are used here as case-studies. One is from a PTC in the north, the other from central region. Both tutors involved attended PBEA training but the effectiveness of the latter should not be judged against the observations, given that the training is on-going and changes in practice take time to embed. Rather the case-studies provide insight into current understanding and future challenges.

#### Figure 20: Case-study Teaching Session 1, Northern Region PTC

**Session Context:** A 1st Year Social Studies class for approximately 63 female students. The tutor was male and the session was of one hour duration. It was held in a large dilapidated hall. Panels were hanging from the roof, the floor was stone, windows were broken and acoustics were harsh. Desks were roughly arranged in rows at the front of the hall but there were not enough desks for the later arrivals. Resources were minimal. A free standing blackboard lay unused in the corner. The tutor wrote on joined flipchart sheets posted on the wall. Paper was distributed for student use and a Ugandan flag was introduced as a teaching aid.

**Structure and Conduct of the session:** The class opened with students engaging in physical exercise and singing a patriotic song with great enthusiasm. The introductory phase was well structured. The tutor stated the lesson aim as preparing students for school practice by using a lesson on national unity as an exemplar. Initially, students were asked to recall relevant aspects of the social studies curriculum. This involved some interaction through whole class questioning, students responding through pair discussion and the tutor making good use of praise to reward student answers. The core of the lesson centred on the singing of another song, 'United we stand, divided we fall' and the presentation of the Ugandan national flag (which was greeted with cheers). The song was performed beautifully by the class and used to illustrate the national goal of unity. Reference was made to Uganda's different regions and the question asked "what was needed?". The answer "peace" and the reasons why this is important were drawn rhetorically from the class members. Students added the words "sharing" and "caring". Students were then engaged in a brainstorming exercise to identify the key symbols and colours of the flag and their meanings. The tutor's emphasis was on peace, unity, progress and respect for the flag. He referenced past violence, including the martyrdom of an archbishop during Amin's regime and on "some shaky areas" today where peace was problematic but there was no opportunity given for these issues to be explored or debated.

The teaching session developed by using the flip chart to relate the lesson structure being taught to the skills, knowledge and values required for a successful lesson. It concluded with questions to test learning and the class again singing the opening song.

Figure 21: Case-study Teaching Session 2 Central Region Core PTC

Session Context: The class consisted of over 200 students (40% boys/60% girls approximately) drawn from both years 1 and 2. It was a Social Studies session on the theme of resource management. The tutor in charge was female. The organisation of the session was handed over to students. The session was of one hour duration. The venue was a large hall which was in reasonable physical condition. Seating was in rows with gender mixing across the rows. The room did not have desks and there were around 20 students at the back with no seats. A large stage at the front of the room housed the main players in the role-play. The resources used were sound equipment with speakers to introduce the “radio programme” and “dummy” mobile phones planted in the audience to identify those asking questions.

Structure and Conduct of the Lesson: The tutor introduced the lesson by outlining oil exploitation as an issue of national concern worthy of debate. The facilitation was then handed over to students to conduct a role play based on a radio debate. This consisted of 1) a Presenter (male) 2) a Minister of Land and Resources (male) and 3) an Opposition Shadow Minister (female).

First the Presenter set up the issues, warning the audience that there was a real danger that the people of Uganda may not benefit from oil. There followed an animated debate which introduced students to all aspects of the oil exploration issue. The Minister opened by reading a prepared statement to correct “rumours” and allay ungrounded fears. He was immediately challenged rigorously by the Presenter. The Shadow Minister then critiqued the government’s handling of the issue, using sarcastic humour to list a series of official neglects. An animated and interactive debate followed, partly stimulated by a “phone-in” dimension whereby students representing residents from all over Uganda “called in” pre-prepared questions from the floor. Most questions were critical but some defended the government’s position. Throughout there was evidence that the issues had been very well researched. Controversial issues raised included homelessness through eviction, corruption, pollution, the widening gap between rich and poor, the neglect of agriculture in the west Nile region and the need for land resettlement. The session allowed a rigorous investigation of current political stances and the conduct of politics. After each politician summed up by referring to the forthcoming election the Presenter reminded the audience of the importance of information and transparency in public affairs. Finally, the tutor briefly drew out the pedagogical strengths of the session for students.

These two teaching sessions illustrate both the progress that is being made in Ugandan initial teacher education (case-study 2) and the distance that is yet to go (case-study 1). The tutor in the latter advocated the use of “active” strategies and did employ brainstorming, pairs work and class singing yet knowledge was presented uncritically and the concept of citizenship emerged as unquestioned loyalty to the state. Further, the class was conducted in a college culture of deference and in poor physical conditions not conducive to open engagement. Afterwards, when asked, students accepted unquestioningly that social studies lessons should honour the state but, nevertheless, in group conversation some were very critical of government actions.

In contrast, case-study 2 was truly student centred with class members directing proceedings and participating throughout. The issue under examination was controversial and of national importance. Pro and anti-government positions were aired in equal measure. The physical environment was satisfactory and peer and staff support was evident. Impressively, the active pedagogy used was designed to fit with the large numbers of students present. Afterwards, students affirmed that the idea for the session had come from tutors but they had been responsible for its planning and execution. The session’s success, given the large numbers of students taking part, raises possibilities that active pedagogies can be developed specifically suited to African conditions.

Thus, the sessions highlight the challenges of the transition between training and practice as well as the importance of institutional environment. Both tutors had attended PBEA training and were able to espouse its principles and value. However, in the classroom one tutor’s imperfect understanding was further tempered by inadequate working conditions and traditional approaches to learning while the other facilitated a social studies investigation of considerable quality in an atmosphere that was vibrant and cohesive.

## Teacher Accountability

That unprofessional conduct and absenteeism amongst teachers is a blight on effective schooling in Uganda is recognised by all stakeholders in the system including the teaching trade union (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, p. 93; Interview with UNATU Official March 2015). In the context of peacebuilding the teacher as role-model is well understood by MoESTS, college staff and students. A ministry official referred to the impact of unprofessional conduct on children as “*peace robbing*”. Generally there is a determination to improve the situation. For example, there was passionate commitment from most respondents to the non-use of corporal punishment despite the knowledge that such conduct prevailed in schools (Pham et al. 2015, p. 56). Corporal punishment was banned by circular in 2008 and this was endorsed by the Education Act, 2008. Nevertheless, it remains a dominant practice within the cultural values system of the country. A MoESTS study in 2012 found that 74% of children in primary school and 75% in secondary reported being caned by an adult (UCRNN 2014). College students demonstrated familiarity with the code of conduct and were adamant that they would employ constructive methods of discipline in the classroom. However, ministry officials and district officers acknowledged that finding a mechanism to overcome the scale of teacher indiscipline is difficult in a resource light system. Local government officials alluded to the deficiencies in administrative structures which contributed to teacher demotivation, such as the non-payment of salaries, but then pointed to teacher inadequacies and the need for punitive measures to keep teachers in line. The teacher union expressed dismay at the presence of teacher misbehaviour but was more sympathetic to a counselling approach, at least as a first step to encourage greater professionalism and accountability (interview with UNATU Official March 2015). Once again, awareness and policy were less the issue than their implementation nation-wide.

More nebulous but nevertheless strongly resonant in the data collected was the expectation that teachers should be accountable to the communities in which they teach. Perhaps, the picture of teachers as community activists and mediators who mobilise parents to support their children’s education and offer wise counsel to tribal leaders is an idealistic one but it does draw attention to formal education’s role, positioned as it is between traditional culture and modernism (Pham et.al. p. 53). One leading ministry official in the teacher education department bluntly warned against the wholesale adoption of current education ideas without regard to past strengths in the system:

*Peace must be something to be lived. Because what we are seeing here is that, the schools are now unfortunately detached from the community (and this used to be different in the past)...In other words our design has to change to move from school to the community. Our design of how to engage the learners, how to deliver the practices and the content of peace should not only now remain within the school but reach out to the community. For instance, involve the families and the parents, have a parents’ day or organise activities that involve the parents. (Interview with senior MoESTS official, March 2015)*

In advocating the professionalisation of teaching it is important that teachers do not lose touch with aspects of traditional society that unify and reconcile, nor the importance of schooling demonstrating its relevance to local conditions. Several interviewees referred to the failure of school management committees and foundational bodies to reflect the interests of local communities. As researchers we concur with the UNESCO official interviewed who argued strongly for the need for case-study research at local level to identify effective structures for the local governance of schools.

The case-study recorded below is atypical but it does provide an example of how even a privileged school can be accountable to the community in which it is situated – and how those students destined for positions of authority can become aware of traditional/modernist tensions and be sensitised to the needs of ordinary people. Stimulated by an online master’s programme on Education and Sustainability completed a few years ago, a teacher in a government run elite girls high school was mindful that many of his students would enter important roles in government and society with little knowledge or understanding of how the vast majority of Ugandans live. As Vice-principal of the school it has become central to his mission to build cooperation between his students and the local community.

Figure 22: Case-study Secondary School

Over an eight year period every senior pupil in the school participates in a numeracy programme for children in the local village primary school. Students now cultivate crops on plots in the school grounds, share practices with local farmers and take their produce to the primary school and to market. Initially parents were hostile believing that it was diverting girls from examination achievement but many now support the scheme financially. Observation of a session in the primary school and a follow-up focus group with the senior girls supported the teachers' assertions of the benefits of the work. One young woman extolled the impact on her:

I stopped thinking as a person who looked down... they are human beings, part of us and also I learned to love people in our community for who they are, not to despise them. To value those who have to work for their school fees... and that I can contribute to the development of my country.

Often peacebuilding initiatives concentrate on the disadvantaged and those deemed susceptible to recruitment into violent groups. Structural reforms are advocated to address economic inequalities. It is rarer to have social inequalities directly addressed through pedagogy. In the African context where elites perpetuate their hold on power teaching which seeks to transform attitudes amongst potential future leaders is worthy of attention.

## Cross-Cutting Challenges for Teachers and Peacebuilding

### Gender

As noted earlier, Uganda's public administration is structured along gender lines, with the top positions in education being dominated by men. According to the UNDP (2012, p. 32): Uganda needs to intensify efforts in policy, and especially in implementation, in order to achieve a minimum 30 per cent of women in decision making positions in the public administration. It will be important to build on successes in education and politics in order to consolidate gains in the public administration, and there is still a clear need to build awareness of why equal representation in public administration is important.

This does not imply, however, that no progress has been made in teacher training and deployment over past decades. To the contrary, females now make up almost 50% of students in the PTCs with 98 women in 2011 qualifying as teachers per 100 men (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, p. 74). In fact, two of the PTCs included in our research enrolled more females than males. Moreover, there is a clear recognition at policy level that deployment of women is essential to educational improvement in rural areas (see: MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014) but several implementation challenges remain. Interviewees repeatedly noted that despite policies on gender equality among teachers, implementation is impeded by several structural barriers, including:

**Safety of women:** There is a lack of appropriate living accommodation and facilities for female teachers in rural areas, affecting also the supervision of female pupils by female teachers. In addition, interviews with female teachers revealed a general fear of being disrespected and ill-treated by older male pupils who are physically stronger, male senior colleagues and officials. As reported below the survey of student teachers indicates that sexual abuse is a small but real threat even in the teacher college environment.

**Family and care-taking responsibilities** constrain females to fully commit to their professional careers as teachers.

**Lack of systematic monitoring, oversight and evaluation** mechanisms impede reform processes and policy implementation (UNDP 2012).

Clearly, much more has to be done to assure young teachers (women and men) that they can pursue successful careers in disadvantaged and remote communities. Interestingly, neither in staff interviews nor in the student focus groups was there one example given of inappropriate conduct towards the women. This may be the case but there was a sense that the subject is taboo within the college environment.

## Violence

### Direct Forms of Violence

Studies reviewed for the purpose of this report refer to a violent culture in many schools with teachers as perpetrators in many instances (see for instance: UNICEF 2013, as well as Section 2 of this report). According to FHI 360 (2015), 34 % of students reported teacher on pupil violence in Karamoja, compared to 19 % nationally.

In interviews with stakeholders considerable stress was placed on the role teacher training institutions have in changing this culture by sending new teachers into the system aware of pupil rights and better equipped to practice positive discipline. We are confident that our findings show that college environments are moving in this direction. It is interesting that neither in staff interviews nor in student focus groups was there one direct example given of inappropriate conduct involving either direct or indirect violence. However, this must be set against results from the student teacher survey. Out of 259 respondents 75 students (29.1%) said they had experienced gender violence. As this broke down into 38 males and 37 females it is likely that violence was interpreted generally rather than specifically gender related. Of 44 students who claimed to have suffered harassment (29 males; 15 females) the majority of incidences were perpetrated by peers (66%) rather than staff (30.1%). Overall, 236 students claimed to have experienced verbal abuse in their respective colleges. Of these, 160 were women and again the majority of these were peer instigated (185) with 31 students reporting harassment from staff. Instances of reported sexual abuse were few (5 males, 2 involving staff; one female by peers). However, 6 male students (3 involving staff, one a peer, 2 unspecified) and 7 females (4 involving staff, 2 from peers, 1 unspecified) claimed to have had demands made on them for sexual favours in return for grades. Further, the survey found that just over 50% of incidents were reported and, of these, action was taken on around 60%. The inference overall is that direct and indirect forms of violence are to an extent still taboo subjects within the college environment and significant work still needs to take place to bring about attitudinal change. In interviews with government and regional officials there was acknowledgement that sexual misconduct remains an issue within the system.

### Indirect Forms of Violence

#### ***Unequal Distribution of Wealth and Widespread Poverty***

Low salaries and failure to receive pay regularly causes poverty among teachers and deflates their social status in particular in rural areas. Also, respondents repeatedly referred to a lack of housing and a local means of transport as factors which sapped teacher morale.

It was beyond the scope of this study to explore the exact extent to which the sheer lack of basic needs reduces teachers' capacity to engage in wider peacebuilding activities but attention has been drawn to motivational constraints. This is certainly an issue that needs to be further explored and researched.

#### ***Regional Disparities***

Teacher education is under-resourced in Uganda (MoESTS Uganda & UNESCO - IIEP Dakar 2014, pp. 79-80). This is accompanied by a general perception in the northern and western regions in Uganda that there is an inconsistency of resource and facility provision which works against those regions. Interviewees recurrently mentioned continuing discrimination attributed partly to a legacy of the past conflict but also tribal influences. These perceptions are significant barriers to national unity and need further investigation.

#### ***Corruption and Personal Greed***

While there was no direct evidence of corruption at PTC / NTC institutional level, individuals we interviewed referred to temptations among staff to enhance their low salaries either through corruption or neglect of duties in favour of other pursuits.

### Repressive Forms of Violence

Hierarchical structures of authority in colleges remain and militate against open relationships and dialogue. Our report found that the PBEA training has the potential to be an important intervention in this regard.

In a wider sense, there is clearly an inherent contradiction about teaching human rights, social justice and democratic practices in an education setting with an undercurrent of malpractice and use of corporal punishment. Also the political influence in appointments and monitoring institutional conduct requires further investigation.

## Summary of Findings and Policy Implications

To date the resource challenges facing teacher education in Uganda have hindered the development of innovative and creative teachers capable of becoming agents of peacebuilding. Teacher education has remained largely reactive to changes which, in the case of peacebuilding, have mainly emanated from external stakeholders. Consequently, teacher education practice has continued to reflect rote learning and preparation for examinations. In relation to redistribution there are shortfalls in a number of areas. Retention of outmoded forms of teaching is unlikely to favour students in remote and disadvantaged areas and to contribute to greater social mobility, particularly when better teachers seek better conditions in the towns. Further, the prevailing influences of the central region on policy, combined with the legacies of conflict in the north and west, have perpetuated inequalities between regions in the field of teacher education as in other areas of education. The sense of grievance which results makes a national initiative on education and peacebuilding more difficult to implement where teacher morale is low and attitudes sceptical.

*The hierarchical nature of the teaching profession itself needs redistribution. The equating of higher qualifications and remuneration with teaching older pupils acts against teachers anchoring themselves in primary schools, developing professionally and becoming catalysts for change.* The increasing number of females now teaching is predominantly positioned in primary schools. As social norms give them less opportunity for professional development there is the likelihood that discrimination will take on a gender factor. The low status of vocational and technical education is to the detriment of standards and the interests of disadvantaged youth, especially in conflict affected areas such as Karamoja. Above all, the proliferation of private schools allows the better off to opt out of the mainstream government system. This not only contributes to economic inequality, but it means that many pupils are less likely to encounter those reforming aspects of the curriculum which address peacebuilding issues.

There are elements of teacher education that contribute positively to *redistribution*. International help with infrastructure is being sought to improve facilities in the north. The rebuilding of the NTC near Gulu with foreign investment is a case in point but much needs to be done to provide parity across regions. The provision of scholarships for most primary teacher candidates allows many to continue in education when otherwise they would have to drop out. However, this benefit is nullified if those who train are resentful that their paths to other professions have been blocked or if they move on when they have the financial resources to do so. The *hard to reach* and gender support schemes are potentially important in addressing regional disadvantage and gender discrimination but without the structural support to sustain them they remain policy rather than effective practice.

*Recognition of diversity in teacher education and curriculum has been detailed in this section. Teacher educators value the diversity that exists through the current national recruitment policy and there is some attempt to recognise and celebrate this in the everyday life of universities and colleges.* In practice, however, this is tempered by fears that interrogating difference might release forces which threaten unity in the college and beyond. Consequently, current imbalances in inter-group relations in colleges are likely to remain and opportunities for students to have transformative experiences through cultural interaction are restricted. As argued earlier, there is great potential for encouraging more regional mobility in college recruitment and a more systematic exploration of cultural identities. With regard to gender, progress is being made on recognising the role of women in teacher education with the proviso that there is a risk of their contribution being “ghettoised” by being overly associated with the early years of the primary school.

*Curriculum reform also indicates positive progress in the recognition of diversity. The primary and secondary curricula show some awareness of local (ethnic), national and east African identities.* Issues pertaining to family life and gender are raised at primary level and Religious Studies is offered through both the Christian and Islamic faiths though the provision follows a parallel structure rather than being interconnected as a consequence of church intervention. The language policy in the early primary school whereby the thematic curriculum is followed in local language P1 to P3 before a transition period in P4 is the curriculum’s most tangible example of cultural *recognition*. Unfortunately, it has also proved to be contentious, ironically not because of opposition to diversity itself but because of fears that it hinders general educational progress by delaying the use of English as the language of instruction (Tembe & Norton 2008; FHI 360 2015, pp. 28,29). Indeed, motivation for the policy was based on giving young children access to basic skills through mother tongue rather than its contribution to diversity. In the education system there is a lack of consensus as to



how far traditional cultural values and practices should be *recognised*. The store placed on building national unity creates uncertainty in teacher education as to the legitimacy of exploring regional and local difference. Ironically, this may constrain national visions which are truly inclusive and make it more difficult for teachers to embrace a *reconciliatory* dimension in their training.

*Representation remains a challenge at all levels of education in Uganda. Mention has been made of the hierarchical nature of decision-making with the MoESTS and international community dominant in teacher education and curriculum.* Consequently, at college and district level a lack of voice does little to counter the prevailing fatalism inducing by under resourcing. NCDC's efforts to consult with teachers in the construction of the CURASSE curriculum and the PBEA teacher training initiative are encouraging signs of greater practitioner participation and ownership. This can motivate towards more innovative teaching but for this to be transferred into peacebuilding practice it is important that teacher educators and teachers can envisage beyond the college or school a genuinely participative role for themselves and their students in wider civil society. In support of this an active, participatory citizenship dimension with a focus on issues of social justice is important within the social studies classroom. At present, if this exists at all in colleges, it is likely to be present in extracurricular activities rather than in mainstream teaching. In any case, if young people do not see real opportunities for their opinions to count at institutional level and beyond, the work will be viewed as tokenistic. Currently, teacher training appears to have generated a foundation of loyalty and respect in many students, partly through the way they have been treated, but if this is not reciprocated outside the confines of the college it will soon be dissipated.

A key role for teacher education in any overarching strategy for education and peacebuilding should take account of (a) structural and recruitment implications (b) teacher operational practices. Currently teacher education is expected to respond to curriculum change. Until now the lack of clear channels has meant that this has tended to be reactive and led to a piecemeal accommodation of a variety of social issues, frequently instigated by donors and NGOs under the vague remit of the cross cutting themes.

In considering the role for teachers in an education and peacebuilding strategy our findings point to the following considerations:

- All potential peacebuilding initiatives being consistent with, and justifying their place within an overarching national strategy;
- A strategy taking account of the importance of peacebuilding as a national priority across the nation, ensuring that all children are taught about regional conflict, but also having flexibility to allow regional needs to be met in appropriate ways;
- Clear lines of communication, coordination and consultation for the development and implementation of initiatives between donors/NGOs, the Ministry, NCDC, teacher educators, districts and teachers in schools;
- Exploration of the potential for building on the diversity already present (to an extent) in initial teacher education recruitment to ensure that students get planned opportunities to experience cultural exchange, investigate cultural and regional diversity and gain a deeper understanding of how to accommodate this to promote greater social cohesion;
- Teacher education programmes preparing teachers systematically to be agents of peacebuilding by preparing them to:
  - Offer guidance and counselling to those affected by violence, past or present
  - Contribute to a whole school ethos which values diversity and inclusion, recognises pupils' needs and listens to the voices of children and young people
  - Teach the revised curricula ensuring that in social studies and other areas of the curriculum they have the pedagogy to engage pupils on contemporary social, cultural and political issues which impact on everyday lives.
  - Facilitate clubs, societies and activities which encourage positive social activism in the school and community;
- Greater emphasis in the curriculum and in extracurricular activities on aspects of traditional cultures which contain a reconciliatory dimension.

# Section 4: The Role of Formal and Non-Formal Youth Initiatives

With the aim of strengthening human capital and economic growth, Uganda's youth are in the main approached as part of the country's overall development agenda. None of the policies or frameworks that are presently in place for youth explicitly articulate that the country finds itself in the stages of a peacebuilding process - and importantly what this means and entails for youth.

# Section 4:

## The Role of Formal and Non Formal Youth Education Initiatives

The same applies to the role of education for conflict-affected youth. Although reference is made to the situation of youth, neither the PRDP I (Republic of Uganda 2007), the PRDP II (Republic of Uganda 2012) or the UNDAF relate formal or non-formal education for youth to the peacebuilding process of the country.

Shortly after the conflict in northern Uganda, the PRDP I identified youth as both a vulnerable group affected by the conflict as well as one of the groups that should be targeted to ensure that disarmament takes place. The plan further details strategies for post-conflict harmonisation with specific actions on youth unemployment (in particular through the Northern Ugandan Social Action Fund - NUSAF). Surprisingly, the ensuing PRDP II does no longer refer to the situation of the youth or their potential to contribute to the peacebuilding process as a whole. Similarly, there is no explicit recognition on the importance of placing war-affected youth in community-oriented schools or education programmes.

Today the situation of and for youth in Uganda is characterised by structural, indirect and repressive forms of violence ranging from poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunities, low educational attainment, a rapidly growing population, inter-generational power imbalances, persisting gender inequalities and concerns around shrinking space for civil society. Economic as well as political constraints are fortified by regional drivers of conflict and the legacies of a conflict-shattered past (see Section 1). Notably, unjust social, political and economic orders not only fuelled the conflict in the North but continue to hamper the agency of youth. In the scope of our interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and literature we reviewed, the combination of the following dynamics are the most frequently mentioned impediments towards sustainable peacebuilding, development and social transformation:

- **Legacies of the Conflict in the North:** The intensity of the conflict between the LRA and the UPDF has led to a significant youth population who have been marked by wartime activities for lifetime. For Bizouras & Birger (2013, pp. 51-52) “the vast majority of youth in northern Uganda can be classified as war affected.” Most parents in conflict-affected communities have had only limited capability to pay for secondary education because of disrupted livelihoods, reduced livestock holdings (through cattle raiding) and destruction of assets (Bird et al. 2011). The war against the LRA left deep scars on the education system in northern parts of the country with a disproportionate number of children who could not attend school during the conflict. School facilities were either destroyed or parents could simply no longer afford to pay the costs associated with schooling (Republic of Uganda 2007, p.65). In sub-regions such as Lango and Acholi where the majority of the population was displaced (although similar perceptions arose across regions), levels of violent crime were commonly attributed to male youth. Having grown up in IDP camps and being largely uneducated and unemployed they were considered as a “lost generation” (International Alert 2012, pp. 20-21). The lack of formal education alongside the lack of morally instructive upbringing which is usually experienced through stable communal life, has been perceived to be in direct relation to rising criminal activity, posing a significant threat to sustained peace and stability (ibid.). The northern region also suffered from a very poor quality of education due to inadequate staffing and high rates of teacher absenteeism and weak supervision systems (Republic of Uganda 2007, p.65). In 2007, nearly 21 per cent of children in the North dropped out of school, being more prevalent among females with 23.5 per cent than male children with 17.3 per cent attributed to the high cost of education, lack of interest, early pregnancy and/or marriage, insecurity, displacement and poor health (ibid. p. 66).

Since the end of the northern Ugandan conflict the economic opportunities and overall situation for youth continues to be poor. As highlighted in the PRDP-1 from 2009-2012, conflict drivers such as land, youth unemployment and inadequate reintegration of ex-combatants have not been adequately assessed or tackled. In addition, an evaluation report of the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund’s (UN PBF) engagement in Northern Uganda highlighted that programming related to livelihoods support and youth empowerment was weak (Amutojo & Wienders 2012). Lack of sustainability was listed as one of the main reasons in the report.

- **Unemployment:** Before the 1990s the Ugandan public sector was the major employer for youth. Civil service reform started in 1992 leading to the privatisation of many public enterprises. While structural adjustment policies led to economic growth they failed to generate employment opportunities for a large segment of the population and did not increase Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) (Ahaibwe & Mbowa 2014). Since the end of the conflict in the north, Uganda's high youth unemployment rate is repeatedly depicted as a potential threat towards achieving sustainable peace and development during the peacebuilding process of the country (e.g.: ACCS, 2013; Knutzen & Smith, 2012). While we still face considerable knowledge gaps on the exact linkages between poor labour markets and violence (Cramer 2011), research has established that unemployment leads to rural-urban migration, further exacerbating joblessness and in some instances crime (UNECA 2005). For instance, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) stresses that "an increase of one percentage point [in unemployment] in the ratio of people ages 15-29 to people ages 30-54 increases the likelihood of conflict such as civil unrest or war by 7 per cent" (UNECA 2005, p.168).

In the case of Uganda, the number of unemployed youth (using an average definition of 18-30 years) consisted of 64 per cent among the total unemployed persons in 2012 (Ahaibwe & Mbowa 2014). Nationwide, the UBOS (2013) reports that urban youth tend to be more likely unemployed than rural youth, with females twice as likely to be unemployed than male youth. Strikingly, several research reports highlight that the level of education or vocational training attained did not increase employment in Uganda (Annan et al. 2006; Bird et al. 2011; Bird & Higgins 2009; UBOS 2013). Even though secondary education and/or vocational training affect the quality of work, there is no impact on the quantity of work. Unemployment may even increase with the level of education attained as there are only few job opportunities based on the skills acquired (Annan et al. 2006, pp.33–34; UBOS 2013). The Chronic Poverty Research Centre further alludes to the fact that youth in northern Uganda who stopped school at the end of their primary education did not necessarily gain better employment opportunities than those who did not go to school at all, or who had only one or two years of schooling. Paid employment depended on individuals having a minimum of four years of secondary education (Bird et al. 2011; Bird & Higgins 2009).

That secondary and tertiary education does not lead to better employment opportunities was also a recurring theme within our FGDs and interviews. Knowledge conveyed in schools was frequently critiqued for being disconnected from skills required for the job market. This also applies to tertiary education. In an interview with the National Youth Council (NYC) it was estimated that out of 4000 youth enrolled in universities less than 10% find employment. Our findings from FGDs correspond also the work of Ahaibwe & Mbowa (2014), who locate the main causes of youth unemployment in the inadequate investment or supply of jobs, insufficient employable skills (meaning the skills acquired are not compatible with available jobs) and high rates of labour force growth at 4.7 per cent per annum. They further note that agriculture is the predominant sector of employment in Uganda - providing work to 66 per cent of the workforce. Yet agriculture is one of the least preferred sectors among youth to seek for work. FGDs in Kampala, Gulu, Adjumani and Moroto revealed that in particular urban youth have many prejudices against farming and agriculture more generally. Unemployment among youth is further aggravated by Uganda's rapidly growing population.

- **Youth demographics:** The UNFPA reported in 2012 that Uganda had the largest percentage of young people under 30 in the world; that is 78 per cent of the total population. The country's population growth rate of 3.2 per cent is one of the highest in the world posing serious challenges to the economy of the country. Youth of 15 years old or less make up 48 per cent of the population (United Nations 2010, p. 5).
- **Youth and Crime:** It is estimated that 63% of prison in-mates are youth – male youth feature more prominently in crime figures than the female counterparts. The underlying factors in all these crimes are usually internal conflicts, unemployment, lack of guidance and counselling, redundancy and poverty. (National Youth Policy, point 2.9). During several conversations with experts comments were made about the tendency to look at youth in Uganda in a negative light because of the country's high crime rates. After a series of crimes in universities, including gang-rape, murders or assaults, the National Youth Crime Preventers Forum (NYCPF) was launched in June 2013. Initially, the NYCPF collaborated with the Ugandan police force to report and prevent habitual crimes. The organisation has since engaged in numerous other efforts, including self-defense trainings, offering job opportunities or the establishment of study groups to help empower youth.

Taken as a whole, the lack of agency and opportunities for youth cannot be understood in isolation from

the broader socio-economic structures and political features of the country. Uganda's conflict-affected political-economy context therefore results in the following youth specific needs: employment opportunities, improved access to education as well as educational systems and structures that prepare youth for the job market. Apart from education, our interviewees recurrently mentioned the need to provide better access to healthcare services for youth.

Moreover, the remainder of this section will illustrate that apart from a well-educated, small and mainly urban-based youth elite, the majority of youth are not taking or are given an active part in decision-making processes affecting their everyday realities, circumstances and socio-political life. In-country research further brought to light that youth in rural and remote areas, youth with disabilities and orphans are among the most marginalised. However, when it comes to efforts aimed at improving the situation of and for youth at the national and regional level, Uganda is not short on policies, frameworks, associations or institutions. Yet, numerous studies and reports (including this one) arrive at the conclusion that youth participation, agency and voice in regards to political activities and decision-making continues to be limited. Also, efforts to change the socio-economic situation of the youth through education and livelihood programmes have had only marginal success. Explanations are rooted in a persisting urban-rural divide, clientelism and nepotism, uneven redistribution of resources and a clear disconnect between policy rhetoric and implementation practices, - to name the most prominent.

With that said, the purpose of Section 4 is to assess how formal and non-formal education programmes affect the agency of youth during Uganda's transition from peacebuilding towards development. In doing so, we move beyond narrow perceptions of youth agency and a 'youth bulge' as mere threats to peace. Rather, agency is defined and approached as (Lopes Cardozo et al., 2015, p. 9):

*The space for manoeuvre available to young people (in their 2nd and 3rd decade of life) in developing conscious or unconscious strategies that either support or hinder peacebuilding in relation to the broader cultural political economy context.*

Correspondingly, this study looks into aspects of economic, political and socio-cultural agency as being detrimental to processes of social transformation and sustainable peace. In this context it is worth repeating (see Section 1), that we distinguish between explicit and implicit forms of peacebuilding through education. The former refers to activities specifically designed to address aspects of past and on-going conflicts, be it through peace education, peace huts, clubs or programmes and initiatives. The latter, on the other hand, refers to activities and programmes that may not be intentionally designed to build peace but indirectly impact the peacebuilding processes of the country.

Accordingly, the first part assesses how Uganda's policies and main macro institutions and associations focus on youth agency for the realisation of sustainable peace. This will be followed by an overview and critical discussion of the country's formal and non-formal education initiatives and their potential to increase the agency of youth during the peacebuilding process. The last section will critically reflect upon young people's experiences and understandings of their (lack of) agency for peacebuilding in a post conflict environment. Lastly, we pay attention to cross-cutting issues (gender and violence) affecting youth before we summarize our findings and discuss policy and practice implications.

## Findings: Youth-Related Policy and Framing

During interviews with youth representatives and officials as well as experts, the absence of a Ministry for Youth in Uganda was a recurrent theme in that all youth related issues fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD). To cite one interviewee (March 2015):

*One of the big issues we see here is that the infrastructure within ministries and within districts to work better with youth is just not there. The youth department in the ministry of gender has maybe five to six people. They are very good people but they are totally overstretched. That's the national co-ordination for youth policy and programming. To be fair, there is a separate secretariat for the youth livelihoods programme but the coordination, the overview, the policy development – are down to five or six people within the ministry of gender. That's all there is. There is a total lack of capacity.*

Uganda's Minister for Youth and Children is head of the Department of Youth and Children Affairs as part of the MGLSD. The aim of the department is to “ensure care, protection and empowerment of children and youths”, with a focus on policy, legislation, programmes, stakeholder coordination. Youth are represented by 5 MPs (Members of Parliament) in the Ugandan parliament, one for each region (Northern, Western, Central and Eastern) and one national female youth MP. All five of them are coming to the end of their term, because of the age limit of 35 and subsequent MPs will be elected by district youth councillors. In this context it is worth noting that the National Youth Policy (NYP 2004) currently defines youth as all young persons, female and male, aged 12 to 30 years. The draft national youth policy (which is not yet passed by the cabinet) slightly amended this definition in referring to youth as 15-29. However, from a cultural perspective, in particular in rural areas or at community level, the transition to adulthood is less the passing of an age threshold than it is the acts of taking a spouse or having a child (c.f.: Annan et al. 2006, p. 3).

The political landscape for youth in Uganda is composed of policies explicitly drafted for youth in the country, and national (political) bodies. In a nutshell, Uganda's main macro-level policies and frameworks, as well as government and civil society institutions include:

Table 23: Youth Related Policies and Institutions (macro level)	
Policies and Frameworks	Main National Bodies & Civil Society Associations
National Youth Policy 2004 (NYP)	National Youth Council (NYC)
Draft National Youth Policy	Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs (UPFYA)
National Youth Manifesto (2011-2016)	The Uganda Civil Society Youth Coalition (UCY)
National Youth Manifesto (2016-2021)	Uganda Scouts Association
	Uganda Youth Network (UYONET)

In addition to the above listed national bodies and civil society associations it has to be acknowledged that there are also civil society coalitions that are less formal in nature but still advocate for, and work on issues relevant to youth. To give an example, Uganda's Youth Coalition for Democracy (YCED) understands itself as a loose coalition of youth-led NGOs and CSOs (among others, UYONET or UPFYA are part of it) but does not intend to become a constituted organisation in the near future. The YCED took yet part in drafting Uganda's second youth manifesto prior to the upcoming elections in February 2016.

Even though Uganda is not short on policies (e.g. apart from the current youth policy under revision, there is also a youth employment policy in draft), or national bodies as well as civil society initiatives, several challenges towards policy implementation remain. To cite another interviewee: “However good the advocates are if government does not have the infrastructure to work with that effectively you will never get to the desired results.” (Interview, March 2015). Weak infrastructures also affect youth education programming to foster their agency in the country's peacebuilding process. The following chapter on formal and non-formal education planning will further elaborate on this point.

As far as peacebuilding is concerned, youth in situations of armed conflict and disaster areas are one of the

8. All other priority target groups of the NYP include: youth in-mates and those just released from prisons; youth with disabilities; illiterate youth; domestic servants/helpers; street youth; orphans; youth infected with HIV/AIDS; rural youth; unemployed youth; youth in schools and training institutions; youth in security agencies; pastoral and nomadic youth; sex workers; youth in refugee camps; youth who are terminally ill; youth addicted to drugs and substances; youth in the informal sector; employed youth below the age of 18.

main priority target groups within the NYP, alongside school dropouts, out of school youth, female youth or urban migrants, to name but a few.<sup>8</sup> Definite strategies or commitments as to how the situation of conflict-affected youth will be addressed are not specified within the policy. In addition, all policies and frameworks we reviewed share one common feature. Their rhetoric portrays youth and their situation in two distinct ways. On the one hand, youth are repeatedly depicted as vulnerable because of high unemployment rates and the exposure to several forms of indirect and structural violence. On the other hand, youth are commonly embraced as bearer of hope, or “the country’s most valuable asset” (NYP, preface), with clearly stated responsibilities such as “to contribute to the social economic development at all levels” (NYP, point. 6.2).

Both the importance of education and skills training for youth as well as low youth participation in governance features prominently in all three frameworks. However, none of them recognises the relationship between education, political literacy and consequently agency. Differently put, there is an underlying notion of empowering youth through education and skills training economically, but not necessarily politically. What is more, even though the lack of youth participation is recurrently acknowledged, strategies on how youth participation ought to be or will be strengthened remain vague. All the same, neither policy frameworks nor national or civil society institutions correlate education for youth with aspects of agency to foster sustainable peace. In fact, policy language and civil society rhetoric overwhelmingly present Uganda as a developing and not post-conflict country.

As far as funding and resource allocation for youth is concerned, the national development plan 2010-2015 prioritises expenditure on livelihoods programmes, education and vocational training. This is also detailed in Uganda’s Vision 2040 (Republic of Uganda 2010) emphasising expenditure for “entrepreneurial, employable and adolescent life skills to the youth outside school and provide them with start-up kits.” The section on formal and non-formal education initiatives will provide more details on resource allocations for youth, the government’s livelihoods programme and the youth development fund.

In the following, each of the policies and institutions listed in Table 23 will be briefly discussed with the aim of highlighting how they address youth agency and consequently aspects of social transformation and sustainable peace.

## Policies and Frameworks

### National Youth Policy 2004

After the establishment of the National Youth Council in 1993, the GoU endorsed a National Youth Policy in 2004. The policy serves as a central framework for the development of action programmes and services to facilitate and strengthen youth engagement and participation. In stipulating the rights but also responsibilities of youth, the policy’s overall mission is “youth empowerment” accompanied by the aim of providing “an appropriate framework for enabling youth to develop social, economic, cultural and political skills, so as to enhance their participation in the overall development process and improve quality of life” (MGLSD 2001). The policy’s language places, among others, strong emphasis on aspects of gender inclusiveness, youth participation and empowerment. In doing so, it advocates for the creation of a supportive socio-cultural, economic and political environment in order to empower the youth to be partners in development. Notwithstanding its core focus on inclusion, agency and empowerment, the policy does not clearly articulate *how* this ought to be implemented and by *whom* in practice. Moreover, the policy is not informed by a situation analysis of conflict-affected youth. Instead, processes of peacebuilding, and how they relate to youth agency are only indirectly addressed under point 4 of the policy, which notes that:

*(...) youth have only been inadequately involved and their resources less harnessed in the socio-economic development and in the promotion of peace, democracy, good governance and upholding the values of society.*

In a wider sense, the NYP advocates for mobilization of resources to promote youth participation and integration in the mainstream of national development. It places strong emphasis on youth empowerment but no explicit mention is made as to how this could be achieved through education. While Uganda is not approached as a conflict-affected country with regional instabilities, the policy loosely shifts some peacebuilding responsibilities to youth. Point 6.2. states that youth should “create and promote respect for

humanity and sustain peaceful coexistence, national unity and stability.” Recommendations or strategies for youth involvement, participation and leadership in peacebuilding remain vague, with one reference in point 8.3 noting to ‘promote and support youth institutions for peace and conflict resolution’.

## Draft National Youth Policy

The National Youth Policy 2004 has been recently revised (see: MGLSD 2013) but not yet passed by the Government. One general amendment is concerned with the age limit of youth to 15 – 30 in the current NYP and the explicit emphasis on vulnerable youth. Although the policy addresses important issues exposing youth to indirect and repressive forms of violence, its situation analysis (MGLSD 2013, pp. 2-13) neither acknowledges Uganda’s conflict or persisting regional conflict drivers affecting youth. During a validation seminar (held in Kampala, 11 November 2015) on the findings of this report it was noted that the policy has been once again re-drafted and a peacebuilding component was added under number 5 of the policy. This most up-to-date version of the draft policy was not available for review at the time of writing this report. Within the draft version we reviewed (see: MGLSD 2013), the policy’s main priorities target crucial areas affecting the economic and political agency of youth, including:

- Sustainable livelihoods and employment promotion;
- Skills training and entrepreneurship development;
- Youth participation and governance;
- Access to resources and services.

In order to increase youth participation and governance, the policy suggests four main strategic actions: strengthen existing youth participation structures at all levels to enhance their capacity in decision making processes, enhance young people’s civic competence to constructively implement and hold duty bearer accountable, promote programmes that include democratic values as well as ethics and integrity and promote a culture of peaceful resolution of conflicts. The latter, refers mainly to conflicts that emerge within youth groups and youth themselves.

## Uganda National Youth Manifesto 2011-2016

In addition to Uganda’s youth policy, the Uganda Youth Network (UYONET) composed of 47 youth civil society organisations drafted two youth manifestos. The first emerged out of UYONET’s sentiment that apathy among youth is one of the stumbling blocks hindering Uganda’s smooth transition to democratic governance. In response, UYONET developed, in collaboration with other (national and external) actors<sup>9</sup>, its first youth manifesto (2011-2016), based on consultative dialogues representative of different youth segments countrywide. The manifesto aims at providing a platform of a common set of recommendations for the achievement of a vibrant and empowered youth group in nation building.<sup>10</sup> Whereas issues of peacebuilding or post-conflict recovery are not prioritised, the manifesto places great emphasis on the lack of youth agency when it comes to governance. In the main it focuses on four main areas:

- Employment
- Education
- Health
- Participation in decision-making processes

Table 24: Policy Demands of the Youth Manifesto	
PD 1	The youth demand an independent Ministry separate from the current Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
PD 2	The government should restructure the national education curriculum to focus on individual empowerment. As young people “we want to create jobs and not seek for them.”
PD 3	Government should increase the budgetary allocation towards education. The national programmes of UPE and USE should be upgraded to cater for the holistic needs of young people today such as Life Skills Development and Career Guidance.
PD 4	Government should waive taxes on health products, streamline and strengthen by funding the delivery of youth-friendly basic health services like mobile clinics, health booths/posts, and friendly means of distributing contraceptives in order to provide at least 70% of the youths with easy access to reproductive health services by the year 2016.

9. These included: Deepening Democracy Programme (DDP), United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), International Republican Institute (IRI) National Endowment for Democracy (NED)

10. See: <http://www.youtheconomicopportunities.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resource/nationalyouthmanifesto2011-2016.pdf>, last visit 15 July 2015.



<b>PD 5</b>	The government should give utmost priority to the National Youth Council (NYC) by increasing its funding, strengthening the existing youth structures, build the capacity of the youths through well-coordinated youth- related activities. Government should engage an increased percentage of youths through the various district youth councils (DYC) in formulation of programmes and policies that directly affect them by the year 2016.
<b>PD 6</b>	Government and Political Party leaders must disband political party youth brigades and paramilitary groups in all subsequent electioneering processes. Government should in addition, re-organise existing youth structures as grounds for grooming future political leaders with values of tolerance and non-violence.
<b>Youth Demand</b>	Government, political parties and civil society must deliberately develop comprehensive youth leadership mentoring programmes that usher in a generation of leaders with values of integrity, patriotism and self-reliance.

As illustrated in Table 24, PD 2 and PD 3 are concerned with education, while PD 6 and the manifesto's 'Youth Demand' call for more political agency. The youth manifesto's focus on education is strongly interlinked with enhancing youth agency economically but no direct correlation between education and political agency is made. Peacebuilding or the situation of conflict-affected youth is not included, even though PD-6 broadly calls for youth leaders embracing values such as tolerance and non-violence.

Part 3 of the document is devoted to the subject of education. It calls for a reversal of the current science oriented education policy – a point that was also raised several times during interviews we conducted with local faculty members from universities (see Section 2)). Moreover, it stresses the need to guide (and not decide) the future career path of students and to subsidise the cost of university education so that youths from poor backgrounds can also afford to study at higher education institutions.

### Uganda National Youth Manifesto 2016-2021

With the aim to shape the upcoming 2016 elections, a new Youth Manifesto (2016-2021) was launched as a joint venture of the UYONET and YCED in mid-August 2015. The core themes are similar to the first version, calling for<sup>11</sup>:

- **Employment:** high quality job and enterprise opportunities for Ugandan youth with the skills and attitudes to benefit
- **Health:** increased availability and access of quality and affordable health care services for Ugandan youth
- **Education:** a skilled, talented and competitive workforce through access to quality education
- **Sports and Creative Arts:** enhanced talent identification and development as a means of stimulating social and economic well-being of young people, and
- **Youth Participation in Decision Making:** active and meaningful youth participation in the development, implementation and monitoring of government policies and programs.

The demands of the manifesto are intended to be used as a basis upon which the youths should decide who their most suitable presidential aspirant will be.<sup>12</sup>

*In Summary, regarding the view that Uganda is by and large approached as a developing and not post-conflict country, neither the NYP nor the new draft policy or both youth manifestos recognise education as an integral part of the country's peacebuilding process. While all documents clearly stress the need to "empower" youth participation in decision-making, the role of education in increasing agency, is rather embraced as a tool for economic development and not as a means to foster political participation and voice.*

11. See: <https://uyonet.wordpress.com/2015/08/12/uyonet-presents-the-situation-room-debate-series-at-the-5th-edition-of-the-annual-national-youth-festival-youthfestug/>, accessed 24 July 2015.

12. See: <http://www.ntv.co.ug/news/politics/16/aug/2015/youths-launch-their-manifesto-2016-polls-8121#sthash.J5s26Np4.dpuf>, accessed 24 July 2015.)

## Main National Bodies and Civil Society Coalitions

At the macro-level, Uganda's political landscape of and for youth offers a range of institutional mechanisms. All of these actors (government-led or civil society) recognise the important role of education for youth. Some of them, such as the NYC or UYONET, offer non-formal education programmes for youth, mainly in the form of leadership trainings. The way in which these programmes directly or indirectly foster aspects of peace is rather mixed, however. Notwithstanding established structures to nurture leadership roles and skills of youth, according to our interviewees and FGDs, a large part of Uganda's youth continue to lack agency and voice – affecting rural areas the most. The same kind of criticism, namely the marginalisation and exclusion of youth from participating in politics and governance, can be also found in recent research and policy reports (see for instance: International Alert & UPFYA, 2013; or International Alert, 2014). The causes are mainly located in the politicisation of youth or clientelism. In particular the GoU or politicians who provide funds to run youth activities are accused of controlling and manipulating youth for personal gain (ibid.). The reports continue by introducing and critically reflecting upon the main macro institutions and their structures for youth. If existent, their education programmes are highlighted, especially if and how they enhance their agency of youth.

### National Youth Council

The NYC is an autonomous body established by the “National Youth Council Act 1993”, mandated to be the leading organisation in empowerment of youth. It acts as a platform and umbrella organisation for young people and youth organisations in Uganda with the aim to organise, mobilise and engage youth in development activities. Although the NYC is not a governmental body, interviewees recurrently noted that there is a general mistrust among youth of the NYC because of its close association with the government. Despite its non-partisan structures, young people who are youth councillors are inevitably driven by political interests and consequently loyal to a particular political party.

In the main the objectives of the NYC are to:

- Organise the youth of Uganda in a unified body;
- Engage the youth in activities that are of benefit to them and the nation; and
- Protect the youth against any kind of manipulation.

The NYC has an impressive albeit heavy institutional structure ranging from the village, parish, sub-county to the regional and national level. At each level there is an elected 9-person youth council. Hence, there are thousands of youth councils all over the country. Each district council (currently 111) appoints 3 national youth councillors forming the NYC consisting of 333 people. The NYC is supposed to meet annually, though in practice these meetings have not been regularly held (Interview March 2015).

Despite the far-reaching structure of the NYC, its capacity to increase the political agency of youth is probably mixed at best. First, the NYC is heavily male dominated. In part this can be explained by how councillors are elected. In order to move upwards from acting as a local councillor to national level one has to be first elected at village/parish level. In this process many females are excluded due to early marriage, child-care, household duties, lack of education or persisting cultural prejudices towards women. Second, the NYC has a reputation of being a ‘sleeping giant’, because of its too large structures. While interviewees described the national executive committee as being composed of very pro-active and committed people; youth councillors at the very local level were frequently subject of critique. The system largely depends on the engagement of the individual and to what extent he/she responds to the interests of the youth. Third, there are only a few resources available to make the NYC operational concomitant with accusations of embezzlement of funds and corruption. Fourth, in addition to the nine-member youth council at the district level, there are also two other youth councillors, elected by young people to represent them in the district council. Interviewees raised concerns about the lack of co-ordination and co-operation between the two, thus the youth councillors who sit in the district council and the district youth council (as an extended arm of the NYC). Fifth, the structures of the NYC were repeatedly described as being heavily politicised and misused to mobilise youth for elections.

The lack of education prevents a large number of youth to actively participate in the structures of the NYC.

This is further accompanied by poor political literacy among youth. To an extent, the NYC engages in non-formal education initiatives, e.g.: leadership training programmes and the development and dissemination of a youth participation guide. There is an expectation that some of the educated youth leaders transfer their knowledge to politically illiterate youth, so that they “get to know their rights” (Interview with NYC). Apart from leadership trainings workshops on conflict resolution were also offered in the past. Overall, the NYC lacks the political neutrality, capacities and funds to engage in wide-ranging and sustainable training activities to meaningfully increase the agency of youth.

## Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs

The UPFYA describes itself as an “advocacy platform in Parliament formed in 2008, by a section of youthful members of the eight Parliaments with a shared purpose of using collective energies to effectively and meaningfully represent youth issues through legislation, budget appropriations and oversight.”<sup>13</sup> It counts officially 78 members (at the time of the field research it was composed of 75), whose mandate is to influence and mainstream a political agenda targeting issues of and for youth. Recognising that Uganda has currently only five representatives for young people in Parliament, it aims to be an additional collective voice of youth in the legislature. The UPFYA works in close collaboration with the NYC and UYONET. The forum describes itself as a pressure group (or advocacy platform) for youth within the Ugandan parliament.

On the subject of education, UPFYA advocates for a national youth volunteering programme with the objective to equip youth with practical skills and experience to become more employable. It also aims at strengthening youth legislative capacity.

## The Uganda Civil Society Youth Coalition

With the support from UNICEF and the MGLSD, the UCY came to life in 2011 based on the idea to establish a network of Ugandan youth CSOs. The purpose of the UCY is to bring young people together for a series of training that will empower them to support their organisations and fellow young people throughout the country.

## Uganda Scouts Association

The Uganda Scouts Association is one of the country’s largest and most prominent value-based youth development organisations. There are presently no official numbers on membership available but according to a senior member, it is estimated that the association counts 10.000 scouts throughout Uganda. Education plays an integral part in supporting the development and delivery of scouting. While the Scouts do not engage in large-scale peacebuilding education programmes, they believe that their activities contribute informally to the peacebuilding process of the country (Interview March 2015). Informal ways of peacebuilding take place through educational games and activities that foster processes of friendship and closeness but also conflict resolution. Such games are of particular relevance in conflict-affected areas, where children of both ex-combatants and victims or warring parents, coexist in schools and community environments.

Aspects of agency are indirectly fostered through educational activities that create self-sustainability. The ultimate aim of a scout is to be a good member of and contribute to society. As one interviewee put it:

*Scouting is a movement that is based on creating self-sustainability for the, especially the young people from the age of 6 years and way above, so we bring up kids to be able to be self-sustainable, to be able to live on their own, to be able to support themselves, not to totally rely on either parents or family or school or guardians, we should be able to be a wholesome person, a good citizen with good moral values, we should be able to have the practicability to survive, to be able to be economically viable. In this attempt our main priority is education.*

During interviews education was in the main equated with notions of empowerment to enable young people to stand on their own feet. Through educational activities and games, messages of unity and peaceful coexistence are conveyed. As it is the case with many other educational initiatives, education through scouting implicitly embraces both, conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution at the individual, group or community level – even though not intentionally designed as such.

13. See: <http://www.ntv.co.ug/news/politics/16/aug/2015/youths-launch-their-manifesto-2016-polls-8121#sthash.J5s26Np4.dpuf>, accessed 24 July 2015.

## Youth Policy Advocacy and Engagement at Uganda Youth Network

UYONET was founded in 2002 as an umbrella organization for 47 youth organisations with the objective to mainstream young peoples' engagement in development and governance processes in Uganda and East Africa. It understands itself as "a collective platform for research, training and policy advocacy for young people by young people." Its core vision is to empower youth in participating in governance and development processes.<sup>14</sup>

The network does not offer education programmes specifically designed to nurture peacebuilding processes, but engages in training efforts to increase the agency of youth. Among others, UYONET provides leadership-training programmes to equip young people with the skills to meaningfully engage in the upcoming elections in 2016 and beyond. It launched a leadership academy in 2014, which intends to train and enrol 120 young people each year. It is a non-academic yet certified programme with a wide range of leadership/political training programmes to young people aged 21-40 years.<sup>15</sup> Efforts as to how UYONET aims to reach out with leadership or citizenship programmes to a much larger less well educated youth segment, especially in rural areas, are not specified.

Despite concerns among interviewees about the political motivation of some of these institutions or associations - all of them made it one of their priorities to either advocate for or enhance the agency and participation of youth. In this attempt, non-formal education programmes or trainings for youth have become one of the main engagement tools. For now, however, such leadership or training programmes are highly selective and only accessible to a very small segment of usually already well-educated youth. Efforts to increase the political literacy of a much wider youth segment remain scarce and the nature of leadership programmes frequently marginalises less privileged youth with lower levels of educational attainment.

Similarly, in the scope of our FGDs, the majority of our participants (in total 70) in rural as well as urban areas were not aware of the possibilities to advocate for their own wants and needs at local, district, regional and national level. Interviews and class observations further indicated that Uganda's educational system hardly encourages independent critical thinking when it comes to understanding local politics. Moreover, it is questionable to what extent the above listed youth civil society networks at the macro level can sustain themselves without the support (and in some instances also guidance) of international donors or aid agencies. Most of them are run by urban based and highly educated youth in close collaboration with external actors.

*To conclude, the need to include youth in policy making is clearly recognized by the GoU. Then again, barriers to youth participation in policy practice and planning are still manifold. Especially young people with low educational attainment, from remote or rural areas and who are not parts of macro-level organisations/associations, have very little say in policy planning and delivery. The section on Youth Voice and Agency (p.103) will revert to this point.*

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14. <http://www.uyonet.or.ug/about-us.html>, accessed 28 July 2015.

15. See: <http://www.ntv.co.ug/news/politics/16/aug/2015/youths-launch-their-manifesto-2016-polls-8121#sthash.J5s26Np4.dpuf>, accessed 24 July 2015.

## Formal Education and Livelihood Initiatives

The high unemployment rates and lack of education among youth led to a range of formal and non-formal education initiatives by the GoU in partnership with aid agencies, INGOs and local CSOs. With the aim to examine how these initiatives promote agency of youth for the realization of sustainable peace, we opted to expand our analysis of education initiatives to livelihoods and income-generating programmes as well. This decision is based on consultations with UNICEF (Kampala office) and interviews and FGDs we conducted in the country. *It was recurrently emphasised that in the case of Uganda, the relationship of youth agency and peacebuilding cannot be uncoupled from youth's ability to make a living in an economically and socially sustainable manner.* On the other hand, several studies of economic approaches to enhance youth peacebuilding agency found that vocational education that seeks to enhance the livelihood and economic prospects of young people, has a key role to play in addressing the drivers of youth alienation and promoting their active participation in peacebuilding processes (Lopes Cardozo et al. 2015). In Uganda, strengthening youth's ability to generate livelihoods has become a fundamental challenge during the country's peacebuilding and development process.<sup>16</sup> The Uganda Vision 2040 shows awareness of the issue. One of the strategic actions of the plan is to establish “fully functioning vocational and technical training programmes to complement formal education; and to formulate and implement a national skills programme to impact skills to the unemployed youth” (Republic of Uganda 2010, p.46).

The GoU currently runs four main formal education and livelihoods initiatives for youth: USE (Universal Secondary Education), Tertiary Education, BTNET (Business, Technical and Vocational Training), the UYCVF (Uganda Youth Capital Venture Fund) and the YLP (Youth Livelihood Programme). In the scope of all our FGDs, youth voiced consistently the frustration that formal education (USE) lacks the practical component needed for future employability. In the words of one FGD participant in Kampala: “Our current education system has more theory power than creative power, we appreciate the theory but if we cannot put it into practice, what can we create?”

In addition several remarks in regard to indirect or structural forms of violence within the formal education sector were made. The most frequently mentioned included:

- Youth in rural areas have to compete with better educated youth in urban areas;
- The rich have access to better education and the poor are excluded;
- Regular citizens are excluded from decision-making processes within the education sector;
- People with disabilities are excluded from education and schools for youth with special needs are rare to non-existent;
- Conflict-affected areas still lag behind in education infrastructure development;

In each session we divided FGD participants into small groups with the request to prepare a short role play on their experiences with formal education programming in Uganda. In Kampala one particular role play led to a lot of acclaim among all participants pointing to the many difficulties in finding employment after secondary education. Apart from the general lack of job opportunities, youth stressed the following obstacles: employers make too high demands (e.g. requirements of work experience most youth don't have), nepotism, or lack of skills in drafting application letters and preparing for job interviews. Their concerns echo several research reports we reviewed, highlighting that the level of education or vocational training attained did not increase employment in the country (Annan et al. 2006; Bird et al. 2011; Bird & Higgins 2009; UBOS 2013). At the same time, youth participating in our FGDs generally painted a negative image of the government-led Youth Capital Venture Fund (UYCVF) and the Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP). In the following we briefly introduce and discuss government-led education and livelihoods initiatives. Particular attention will be given as to how they affect the economic, political and social agency of youth.

16. See: <http://www.ntv.co.ug/news/politics/16/aug/2015/youths-launch-their-manifesto-2016-polls-8121#sthash.J5s26Np4.dpuf>, accessed 24 July 2015.

## Universal Secondary Education (USE) and Tertiary Education

As set out in Section 2 of the report (education inequalities), Uganda was one of the first sub-Saharan African countries to introduce USE. In reality, however, secondary education is not entirely free and the GoU does not cover all occurring costs (FHI 360, 2015, p. 18). In terms of gender the nationwide enrolment rates are almost at parity with 52% male and 48% female. There is a striking gap between the southern regions and the conflict-affected northern regions. For instance in the southern regions Ankole, Buganda and Toro the number of female students entering S1 even surpassed those of male students. By contrast, conflict-affected regions in the northern part of the country are still marked by gender disparity, with 37,8% females above the age of 13 years in school in Acholi and 39% females in West Nile (MoESTS Uganda 2013, p. 48). There is generally a very small gender gap when it comes to factors explaining non-enrolment in schools. Notably, Uganda has one of the highest drop-out rates in sub-Saharan Africa at primary school level (68%) thereby affecting secondary school completion and attendance. Research on the issue suggests that poverty is the main reason for dropping out of school (Mbabazi et al. 2014). However, in the scope of a survey, a far higher proportion of households with female children and youth (30.5%) attributed domestic work to non-enrolment compared to households with male children and youth (19.9%) (ibid.). The literacy rate of youth increased remarkably from 70% in 1990 to 79% in 2001 and 87% in 2012 but the youth economic empowerment level has remained significantly low compared to adults due to limited focus on vocational education (c.f. UYONET, 2010).

Against this background, we approached FGD participants with several questions that allowed us to gain a better insight as to whether they feel formal education programmes (upper UPE, USE or tertiary education) empower them (socially, economically and politically). While answers appeared to be quite ambiguous at first, they ultimately led to an interesting finding. On the one hand USE or higher education was heavily criticized for not providing youth with the skills to gain employment hampering their economic agency. Some even noted that too much education causes social exclusion especially in rural communities, - to cite one participant:

*What can you do after you studied modern physics as a senior 13? I don't even know how to drive a car but I studied modern physics. When I returned to my community I felt so small, because I could not apply my knowledge practically. What education taught me is to speak different languages – but it exposed me. I would not like my children to go through the same educational system. It does not lead anywhere.*

On the other hand, when we asked in very broad terms whether education helps to attain peace, youth affirmed that education increases aspects of social, political and economic agency, such as

- Education prepares for leadership and focus;
- Education creates self-reliance and independence;
- Education can change your life;
- Education gives you independence in decision making;
- Education improves your networking skills.

*Hence education per se was recurrently perceived by participants as a means to increase social, economic and political agency in situations of conflict. Points of criticism mainly revolved around how education programmes are implemented, the structural barriers surrounding them and what is being taught at schools.*

The latter is also reflected in the Youth Manifesto (2011-2016), calling for a restructuring of the national education curriculum to focus on “individual empowerment” through the following policy actions: increase in budgetary allocations towards education, UPE and USE should be upgraded to cater for the holistic needs of youth, such as life skills development and career guidance (UYONET, 2010, p. 11).

Quite similarly, higher education institutions were described by FGD participants as not preparing youth for a highly competitive job market. Stronger links between universities and the private sector are needed. Interviews with local academics underlined that universities provide an intellectually stimulating platform granting youth a significant degree of freedom of speech and in part also political agency (through public events, lectures and seminars). Still, youth from poor backgrounds remain excluded given that state scholarships are extremely limited and only students from high quality standard schools are able to compete.

## “Skilling Uganda”: BTVET - Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Since 1997 the government has conducted a phased curriculum review at all levels of education with a focus on business, technical, vocational education and training (BTVET). Subsequently, entrepreneurship was introduced as a subject in both lower levels of education and university levels with a view of imparting practical knowledge and skills to enable youth to become job creators. The curriculum is competence based with the aim to shift from the traditional academic teaching to skills development. The BTVET programme is provided by 133 public institutions, about 600 private training service providers, and 17 apprenticeship programs (Youth Map Uganda 2011). While interviews with the MoESTS generally described the BTVET programme as a success, it has to be noted that none of our FGDs participants listed or mentioned the programme during our mapping exercises. According to Ahaibwe & Mbowa (2014), the BTVET programme continues to be plagued by various challenges, such as:

- Lack of infrastructure for undertaking practical lessons;
- Low-cost skills training that is mismatched with labour market demands;
- Insufficient government funding;
- Poor community attitudes towards vocational education;
- Low enrolment rates (many BTVET institutions run below capacity).

The Uganda Youth Map equally notes that (2011, p.6), “the BTVET system is hampered by a lack of coordination with the private sector and inadequate resources to provide effectively the training most in demand by the labour market. Training consequently often focuses on low-cost skills training mismatched to current and emerging labour needs.” Ahaibwe & Mbowowa therefore point to the need for an evaluation study to ascertain the extent to which BTVET programmes have de-facto contributed to employment generation among youth in Uganda.

In an attempt to re-orient the BTVET to the needs of the labour market the GoU introduced the “Skilling Uganda: BTVET Strategic Plan 2011-2020”, suggesting four main areas of intervention (MoESTS Uganda 2011b):

- Development of comprehensive public-private partnership in BTVET
- Building a unified body for managing skills development in Uganda
- Expanding the scope of the Uganda Vocational Qualifications Framework, which includes related curriculum development
- Reforming the system of BTVET funding, including the introduction of a BTVET levy.

The document stresses aspects of redistribution, in making equitable access to skills development one of its key objectives alongside improving the quality of skills provision, enhancing the programme’s effectiveness and efficiencies as well as its relevancy to productivity development and economic growth.

## Uganda Youth Capital Venture Fund (UYCVF)

With the aim to support enterprise development, the GoU introduced a Youth Venture Capital Fund in 2012 allocating a total of UGX 25 billion to support the growth of sustainable SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) by youth in the private sector. The UYCVF is often described as the predecessor of the youth livelihoods programme (see section below). It is estimated that the fund has thus far supported 5000 projects all over the country (Daily Monitor, 21.04.2015). A recent study (Ahaibwe & Kasirye 2015) conducted by the Economic Policy Research Centre (Makerere University) arrived at the following findings:

- The age cohort of youth entrepreneurs (aged 26-35 years) are more likely to access the UYVCF compared to younger youth (aged 18-25 years).
- Urban-based businesses have a higher chance of accessing the fund
- Although there has been some positive effect on business expansion, the UYVCF failed on one of its major targets – job creation for the youth

Building on these points, it is worth highlighting that since its launch several implementation challenges arose. On the one hand, funds used to be channelled through three commercial banks. Given that the UYCVF operates on a much lower interest rate, banks preferred to lend out their own money. According to a newspaper article in the Daily Monitor (21.04.2015) the GoU officially withdrew the youth capital venture fund from two commercial banks over failure to disburse funds to youths. While the MGLSD claims that banks failed to sensitize youth about the procedures of accessing funds, the banks counter-argue that tedious processes and heavy bureaucracy to evaluate the applicants made them pull out from the project. On the other hand, many rural districts do not have banks and most youth lack the means to travel to the nearest town, thereby excluding large segments of youth in remote areas. Correspondingly, all our focus groups painted a rather negative image of the UYVCF. On average only one out of ten participants indicated that she/he tried to apply for financial support from the fund. Moreover, participants felt that they lack the skills, education, qualification and guidance to apply for the funding scheme.

## The Youth Livelihood Programme (YLP) (2013 -2018)

The YLP is the brainchild of the MGLSD with an initial budget of UG Sh 265 billion from 2013-2018. It is currently financed by the GoU with a possibility of development partners' support in the future. The programme is designed to support poor and unemployed youth in establishing sustainable enterprises in all districts of the country. In doing so, it intends to be a community demand-driven programme that is implemented with guidance from the central government in collaboration with local governments. Especially CDOs (community development officers) at district level are supposed to provide advisory services to youth applying for or implementing the scheme. The YLP listened to some of the mistakes that were made under the Youth Capital Venture Fund. Its implementation scheme is based on the simple maxim of "just give money to the poor" (Hanlon et al. 2010). In short, resources are directly disbursed to beneficiaries as opposed to supporting the infrastructures that run the programme. Notwithstanding efforts to direct funds to those for whom they are actually meant for, the programme still relies heavily on expertise to make it work. Interviews we conducted with practitioners from aid agencies or CSOs doubted whether that expertise, concomitant with the right capacity, is currently in place. To cite one youth expert in Uganda:

*The majority of all youth livelihood programmes have been agriculture based, which is hardly surprising, but apparently the NAADS (National Agricultural Advisory Service) advisors haven't been involved at all in supporting groups of young people in doing agricultural activities. Thus, those sorts of connections aren't made.*

Apart from the lack of expertise to assist youth during and/or after the application process, data we obtained from the U-Report<sup>17</sup> in Kampala and Karamoja further suggests that the majority of youth is not aware of the programme or its procedures (see Figure 25). While both graphs distinguish between male and female answers, it has to be noted that that roughly two thirds of U-reporters tend to be male, which distorts the general image of responses per gender. In addition we approached youth in 4 FGDs<sup>18</sup> with questions about the YLP. In total 90% of our participants in Karamoja indicated that they heard about the programme, as opposed to only 30% of all participants in Kampala. Only one participant in Kampala attempted to apply for funding – to no avail.

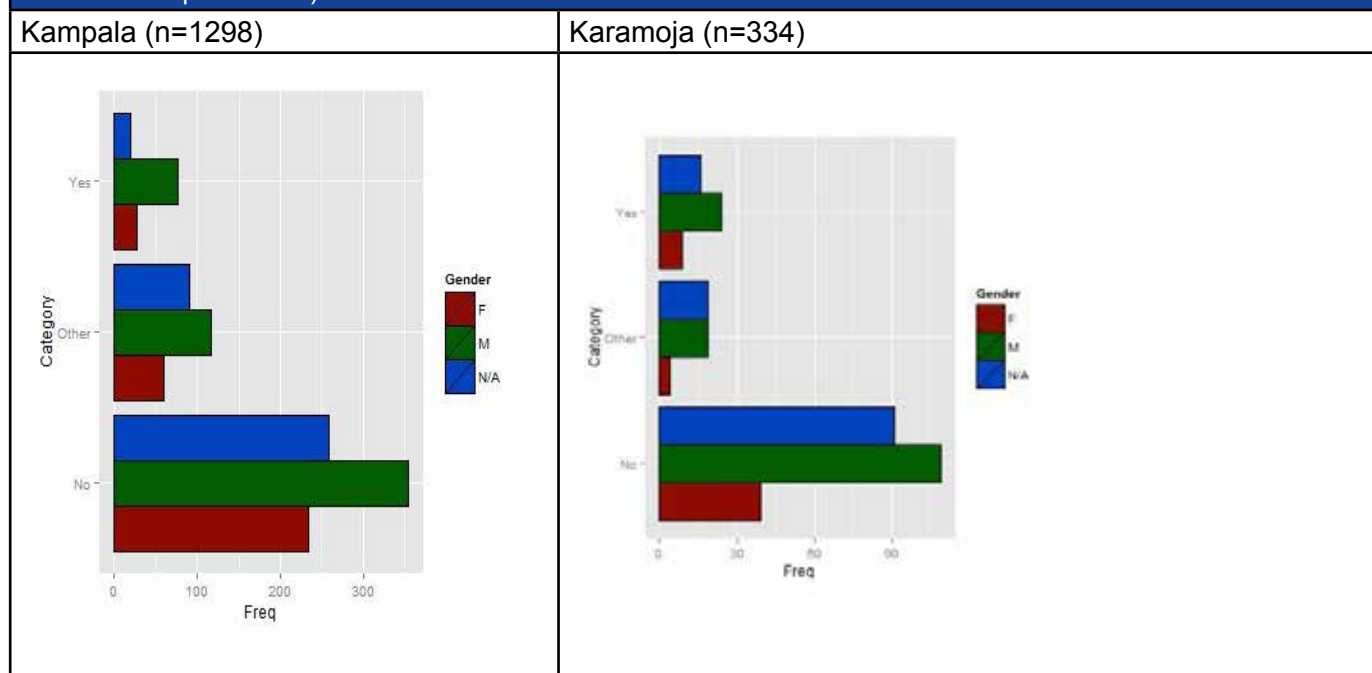
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17. U-report is a free SMS-based system that allows young Ugandans to speak out on what's happening in communities across the country, and work together with other community leaders for positive change. In August 2015 it counted roughly 292.000 members. More information can be obtained from: <http://www.ureport.ug/>, accessed 15 August 2015.

18. 10 participants each (n=40), 42.5 % female, 47.5 % male, two were held in Moroto/Karamoja and two in Kampala



Figure 25: U-Report: Do you know details about the Youth Livelihood Programme, Yes / No? (Data received from UNICEF Kampala Office)



When we asked participants what kind of challenges they face in accessing the YLP, we received the following answers:

- Lack of education and guidance to draft and submit a proposal;
- Corruption and nepotism among officials;
- Corruption among youth (e.g.: “ghost” groups that obtained funding but don’t really exist);
- Costs and time involved to submit an application;
- Lack of land titles or bad weather conditions necessary for a project (Karamoja).

*The extent to which formal education and livelihood initiatives respond to the country’s peacebuilding and political economy context is probably mixed at best. On paper the GoU shows commitment to change the situation of and for the youth in the country through formal education initiatives. In practice, policy and programme implementation continues to be impeded by several structural, political and societal constraints. At the structural level, formal initiatives fail to respond to the country’s economic environment and the persisting urban-rural divide. Political barriers include nepotism in regards to project proposal selection and subsequently access to funds from the YLP. Besides, USE is falsely depicted by the GoU as free, even though it does not cover all occurring costs. At the societal level, youth frequently lack the basic skills and education to make use of and apply for formally established livelihoods programmes, apply for jobs or successfully establish a sustainable business or enterprise, not to mention the continued exclusion of youth with disabilities.*

## Non-Formal Education Initiatives Targeting Education and Youth (micro case studies)

Non-formal education initiatives for youth addressing Uganda's peacebuilding context usually include: programmes for conflict-affected out-of school children/youth, youth engagement initiatives, technical and vocational education and training, skills and employment, livelihoods programmes and community education. Section 2 alluded to regional non-formal education initiatives that are officially recognized by the GoU - most of them also target youth. This section reverts to the topic but elaborates on micro-initiatives stemming from the civil sphere. In doing so, two micro-cases were selected based on the common understanding that sustaining livelihoods is currently one of the most fundamental challenges faced by youth in post-conflict Uganda. Hence we chose one micro-case study that seeks to empower youth (in particular females) with life skills and vocational training, and one that trains youth to create livelihoods in order to sustain themselves economically. Both initiatives share the following features: they are home-grown, emerged in conflict-affected areas and are aimed at increasing the economic and social agency of youth through education. One initiative was founded by a war-affected woman, whereas the other one was brought to life by a young male. As indicated in Table 26 below, both are embedded in slightly different conflict and peacebuilding contexts.

	1 <sup>st</sup> Micro Case	2 <sup>nd</sup> Micro Case
	GWATC Gulu War Affected Training Centre	"Takenyira" Piggery Project
<b>Location</b>	Gulu	Adjumani
<b>Peacebuilding context</b>	After the war against the LRA ended in northern Uganda, post-conflict traumata challenge the peacebuilding process, including: a population with unprecedented rates of domestic violence, alcoholism, sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), youth unemployment and crime, and other signs of post-traumatic stress. This is aggravated by land-disputes, corruption and unequal distribution of development and services.	The region was not only heavily affected by the war against the LRA but is also in close proximity to the on-going instability in DRC, South Sudan and CAR. It has been home to South Sudanese / Sudanese refugees since the early 1990s. Land and resource disputes challenge peaceful co-existence. Adjumani has also the highest suicide rate in Uganda among youth.
<b>Societal Issues affecting youth (according to our FGDs participants)</b>	Land disputes, unemployment, high population versus limited resources, extreme poverty, gender based violence, prostitution, domestic violence, substance abuse, diseases, exploitation of orphans and vulnerable children, shortage of raw materials, famine, community conflicts, high crime rates, traumas resulting from abduction during the war, poor accommodation facilities,	Unemployment, early marriage and pregnancy, low self-esteem, conservative attitudes, low education levels, lack of capital, bad peer influence, petty crime and theft, high suicide rates, unemployment, substance abuse, poverty, alcoholism.

Against this background, we sought to get a better grasp as to how both non-formal initiatives increase the peacebuilding agency of youth through education and/or trainings and consequently livelihood generation.

### Gulu War-affected Training Centre (GWATC)

The GWATC was established by Ms Betty Lalam a war-affected women from Gulu in May 2005. Initially, Ms Lalam started to teach tailoring to other war-affected girls from her home veranda with no other resources but the only sewing machine she owned. Thanks to support from the South African based company Eskom, Ms Lalam established a training centre that provided space and training opportunities for many more. Today, the GWATC has trained in total 1080 youth in tailoring, hairdressing, catering and business skills. Given that a significant amount of youth is illiterate, the GWATC also offers weekly writing and reading classes.

The centre's main focus is to reach out to youth who are most affected by the past conflict in northern

Uganda, including former abductees, school-drop outs, child mothers, widows or orphans. While the majority of beneficiaries are female, the GWATC also caters for male youth, and youth outside Gulu town including South Sudanese refugees. In Ms Lalam's view the initiative contributes to the peacebuilding process in the region in that the GWATC "gives change to the community. We change young women and youth's lives. We are simply giving them something to do, they now can survive." The centre also offers psychological support to students, though capacities and funding for counsellors are limited.

We conducted two FGDs (total 20 participants, 80% female, 20% male) with trainees from the GWATC. In one of our exercises we asked how the initiative has affected their lives in a post-conflict setting, - the most salient answers were:

- Gain skills, knowledge and experience;
- Establish a positive social network;
- Stay busy and productive;
- Pursue their desired plans for the future;
- Get a new sense of belonging to other youth ;
- "Makes their lives easy";
- Engage in other activities than farming.

Participants also highlighted several challenges they face at GWATC, such as: shortage of food (note: the GWATC does not have sufficient funds to provide for regular lunch), long walking distances to the centre, lack of water, shortage of staff and teachers, insufficient or inadequate training tools, training materials are too expensive for learners, some trainers lack good skills and have poor attitude towards learners.

*Whereas youth expressed that they felt empowered in acquiring new skills, based on the hope of changing their lives through future employment, they cannot escape several forms of indirect and structural violence surrounding the initiative and their everyday lives.* Despite the many benefits gained from training and education, both the GWATC as well as its beneficiaries struggle with self-sustainability. The former because the majority of its trainees are unable to pay fees and the centre therefore trains them with extremely limited resources for free. The latter face poor employment opportunities later on, or lack the resources for tools to start up their own businesses. No data was available on how many trainees found long-term and sustainable employment or set-up their own businesses after the completion of the training.

## **Piggery Initiative "Takenyira" (Adjumani)**

Mr. Francis Engina, a young Ugandan teacher, founded *Takenyira* in 2014. He had been teaching for the last nine years in South Sudan but was forced to return to Uganda because of the conflict. Being unemployed and left with nothing to do in Adjumani, he decided to reach out to the youth in his community and form an income-generating youth initiative specializing in piggery. At the time of our visit (February 2015) *Takenyira* counted 15 members. Thus far, they have not received any funding or external support. Mr. Engina and other senior members informally train new incoming members. In his view, the initiative is exceptional in that he has not encountered any other home grown and youth led programme in his Adjumani community. Membership is open to everyone who is interested in joining. During a FGD with members of the group (in total 10) it was noted that *Takenyira's* purpose is to:

- Generate an income for all members;
- Create social livelihoods;
- Employ group members and keep them occupied;
- Socialise;
- Create unity among group members;
- Eradicate poverty;
- Reduce unemployment;
- Develop skills and knowledge of group members;

The initiative, according to Mr. Engina, contributes to the peacebuilding process in the region through “learning to live together” and “being able to seek for help.” Moreover, in the scope of FGD exercises and discussions, members additionally expressed that *Takeyira* promotes peace through:

- Overcoming social and economic grievances;
- Creating peace and harmony first within and among themselves (then outside the group);
- Being mentally, socially and economically stable;
- Establishing relationships of mutual understanding (first within and then outside group).

Apart from helping youth to regain economic as well as social agency, the transmission of new knowledge and skills training was also connected to feelings of establishing a sense of inner peace and security. All the same, notions of peace were equated with socialising through group interactions that occurred as part of the skills training/sharing process.

Similar to the former micro-case, also *Takeyira* faces many challenges. For one, the initiative lacks funding as well as resources for marketing purposes and mobilisation of other youth. In addition, youth struggle to pay for treatment of diseases affecting their animals. Sometimes they conflict with Muslims in the community who feel excluded in the view that they cannot join piggery activities. Other challenges are concerned with bad time management or lack of commitment by their members.

*Both initiatives not only respond to but also emerged out of the conflict affected political economy context in the region. Apart from offering youth better opportunities through income generating activities, the training and education experience as such was described in both cases as an experience that nurtures sentiments of inner peace as well as a sense of belonging to other members of the group. In other words, although several structural barriers surround both initiatives, participants described them as a space that offers an informal support system through interpersonal relationships, helping members who are affected by direct and indirect forms of violence. As with many smaller programmes, their size, locality and flexible nature make them more context-specific than nationwide, one-size fits all macro-education initiatives. Then again, youth’s room for manoeuvre was frequently depicted as being limited due to lack of resources (e.g.: necessary tools to start a business or medicine for sick animals), opportunities and an enabling economic environment.*

## Youth Voice and Agency

The previous chapters of this section elaborated on the main frameworks, mechanisms and programmes that are currently in place aiming at empowering and improving the situation of Uganda's youth. When it comes to assessments as to how they increase the space of political or economic manoeuvre of youth, progress is rather slow and many challenges lie ahead.

To begin with, institutional, structural, social and cultural barriers hamper youth's **political agency**. We observed that youth's possibilities as well as capabilities to get involved in political decision-making processes are limited (among others, this point is also made by Kagaha & Matovu 2013 or Youth Map Uganda 2011). First, the design, delivery and approach of civic education, or leadership trainings, need to be enhanced. While civic and citizenship education is an integral part of the curriculum in secondary education, youth who are not enrolled in a formal education institution are often left out. In the scope of secondary school class observations and FGDs with USE teachers, we found that more research efforts should be undertaken to assess the quality of the teaching on much wider scale than we were able to cover during our stay. All the same, non-formal civic education offered by youth and/or civil society organisations and aid agencies are usually only conducted during general election time. Their approach and delivery has been critiqued for not being consistent and appropriate for disabled or non-educated youth (Kagaha & Matovu 2013). Interviewees further noted that for some youth the main motivation to attend short-term programmes designed to enhance their political literacy is the prospect of financial compensation for attendance or sodas and free lunch.

Second, the impact of national youth organisations at the macro-level, such as the NYC, depends also on the motivation, engagement and capabilities of elected individuals to advocate in the name of their constituencies. Here, political capture of youth and their organisations by political leaders is no exception. At the same time young people participating in our research conceded that youth are not only the victims but can also act as perpetrators of corruption, clientelism and nepotism.

Third, despite feelings of disempowerment and discouragement, a study that captured the voices of 1067 youth, found that the issue of citizenship is of growing importance to youth. However, apart from token participation in stakeholder meetings, youth remain excluded in the planning of development and education programmes (Youth Map Uganda 2011; International Alert 2014; International Alert & UPFYA 2013). Lastly, Uganda's Electoral College system has been criticised by youth for not allowing them to directly vote for the leaders they prefer (Kagaha & Matovu 2013).

Moreover, it would be too limited an approach to locate the lack of youth's economic agency in the quality, implementation and scarcity of income-generating education and livelihood initiatives alone. It has to be acknowledged, that the success of these programmes largely depends on the political and economic environment of the country as a whole. Simply put, even the best (small or medium) youth enterprises and businesses depend on the purchasing power of the population. Uganda is a low-income country with a GDP per Capita equivalent to 3 per cent of the world's average, though the situation is slowly improving. Whereas Uganda's GDP per capita averaged 274.65 USD from 1982 until 2014, it reached an all-time high of 422.36 USD in 2014.<sup>19</sup> Statistics from MGLSD highlight that around 400,000 youth are released into the job market to compete for only 9,000 available jobs (International Alert & UPFYA 2013). While interviewees and FGD participants consistently found fault with the way in which education and livelihood programmes prepare youth for the job market and economic environment, the general lack of opportunities for youth should not be left aside. Thus far, education planning for youth (and children) has not been thoroughly embedded in the political economy context of the country as a whole.

The formal education and livelihood programmes under our assessment have not been responsive to, or have significantly improved the space of economic manoeuvre for a large segment of the youth. Reasons include: persisting urban-rural divide, lack of education and skills among youth to apply for and implement funded livelihood projects, nepotism and incidences of corruption in selection procedures as well as regional characteristics that challenge livelihood project implementation (e.g.: land disputes or infertile soil). In addition, a research study conducted by International Alert & UPFYA (2013) highlights the limited participation of youth in the design and realisation of these initiatives.

19. See: <http://www.ntv.co.ug/news/politics/16/aug/2015/youths-launch-their-manifesto-2016-polls-8121#sthash.J5s26Np4.dpuf>, accessed 24 July 2015.

Besides, our FGDs participants listed several **societal issues** affecting the agency of youth, such as: intergenerational power imbalances, social exclusion of orphans and youth with disabilities and persisting gender imbalances. The MGLSD (2013) reports that out of the youth enrolled in schools (22.7 % aged 18-30 years), only 17.2 % are female and 29.1 % are male. Female youth are predominantly immersed in domestic work, which not only confines them in their homes but also limits their exposure to outside activities, including participation in decision-making processes concerning their everyday lives and experiences.

Finally, it is worth noting that new technologies and social media offer new opportunities for youth to express their concerns such as the U-Report, a free SMS based service that enables young people to raise awareness about issues affecting their communities and leaders to get real-time feedback on new initiatives and campaigns (Llamazares & Mulloy 2014, p. 112). The U-Report presently counts 297,775 members with an average age of 25 years.<sup>20</sup> While efforts are underway to recruit a wide range of young people, issues around access persist; recruiting certain groups, such as rural women, remains a challenge (Llamazares & Mulloy 2014, p. 112). Figures from 2011 suggest that out of 287,868 U-Reporters that time, only 36 % were female and 64 % male.<sup>21</sup> Apart from the Internet or mobile phones, broadcasting remains one of the main engagement tools of and for youth. Interviews we conducted with young radio journalists yet referred to and complained about restricted freedom of speech.

## Experiences and Responses to Different Forms of Violence Among Youth

Since the end of the war in northern Uganda, direct forms of violence are in the main domestic violence or sexual abuse. Recalling Section 2, the latter frequently also occurs in schools. In addition, several forms of indirect and structural violence thwart the sustainability of the peacebuilding process in the country including resource exploitation, unfair allocation of land-rights, unequal access to high quality education and the lack of employment opportunities. In the absence of a holistic approach to support youth in such a fragile environment, our FGD participants told us how they counter such structural barriers. Participants outside Kampala predominantly referred to the creation of self-help or saving groups, whereas informal ways of income generation and the establishment of illegal businesses was a recurring theme among youth in Kampala. Both urban as well as rural youth noted prostitution and crime as a response to indirect forms of violence.

Specifically, in Kampala, FGD participants discussed at length Nasser Road, where youth engage in activities like counterfeiting documents, or generate an income through self-taught jobs (e.g. car mechanics or computer specialists). It is simply an area in Kampala that offers an alternative way of survival for many “innovative” youth (FGD participant). “If you fail to get a regular job you go to Nasser Road. Just tell me what you want. You can order anything you like there, from a fake passport to a popcorn machine. We’ll get it for you” (FGD participant). In addition, Owino and Kaja market were mentioned as alternative ways to provide an income for youth. By contrast, youth taking part in our FGDs we held in Moroto/Karamoja, Gulu or Adjumani mainly referred to home-grown, self-help or saving groups. The latter, is frequently introduced to youth and monitored by larger INGOs such as BRAC or Restless Development. Last but not least, both non-formal initiatives (micro-case studies) came into being as a response to indirect and structural forms of violence. Strikingly, apart from skills training they create an opportunity for youth to share their past and present experiences of direct and indirect forms of violence. The GWTAC as well as *Takenyira* were described by youth as a space that helps them to nurture sentiments of “inner” peace which ultimately also influences interactions within the group if not community life.

## Youth Perception of Agency and the Role of Different Actors

In a wider sense, youth participating in our research equated notions of agency with feelings of being able to live a comfortable life. In a narrower sense, they generally understood education, skills training or livelihoods generation as a means to be empowered – no matter whether they would acquire education in a formal or non-formal way. As referred to in earlier chapters, it was not education or livelihood trainings that were the centre of critique but *how* these programmes were implemented and designed.

Correspondingly, we sought to gain insights from youth on who they feel supports or hinders their social, economic and political space for manoeuvre in their struggle for better education and/or livelihood activities.

20. See, <http://www.ureport.ug/>, accessed 9 September 2015.

21. See: <http://www.ntv.co.ug/news/politics/16/aug/2015/youths-launch-their-manifesto-2016-polls-8121#sthash.J5s26Np4.dpuf>, accessed 24 July 2015.

Figure 27 below summarises their answers.

Figure 27: Actors mapping exercise	
Actors that either hamper or do not improve youth agency	Actors that nourish or foster youth agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government, politicians</li> <li>• District Officials</li> <li>• Spouses (in some instances)</li> <li>• Youth (in some instances)</li> <li>• Unsupportive Parents</li> <li>• Schools (for being too theoretical)</li> <li>• Youth Capital Venture Fund</li> <li>• Statehouse scholarships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some INGOs or CSOs.</li> <li>• Youth / youth leaders (in some instances)</li> <li>• Community Development Officer (in some instances)</li> <li>• Supportive parents</li> <li>• Supportive spouses</li> <li>• Religious leaders</li> </ul>

All FGDs generally perceived politicians and/or government officials as a distant actor from youth. However, in Kampala, participants further elaborated that actors such as the UDPF, the police and prisons are close to youth given that they provide employment opportunities. Actors that were perceived as being distant from youth in Kampala included the NAADS (National Agricultural Advisory Service), NRM youth groups or government agencies. In rural areas, INGOs / CSOs were generally portrayed in a positive light. Notable mentions were made in regard to the work of BRAC, C&D (Cooperation and Development), Restless Development or VSO (Voluntary Services Overseas). In particular saving groups were described as a helpful way of income generation. On the other hand, youth outside Kampala also expressed that family members such as parents or spouses can be both a supporting but also discouraging actor for youth.

While contemplating what kinds of actors are unsupportive in their attempt to obtain education or participate in livelihood programmes, youth were also highly critical of themselves. They argued that some of their peers can be a bad influence in encouraging corrupt behaviour, elite or political capture, drug abuse or crime.

## Cross-Cutting Issues for Youth agency, Education and Peacebuilding

### Gender

Uganda's youth population grew from approximately 3.7 million in 1991 to 7.5 million in 2012, out of which 51 % are female and 49 % are male (MGLSD 2013, p. 2). The following gender dynamics currently affect youth's agency in the peacebuilding process of the country.

**Post-conflict Trauma in northern Uganda:** As outlined below (section on violence), researchers found strong evidence that both male and female youths experienced the most horrific aspects of the war (Annan et al. 2008; Amone-P'olak et al. 2013)family, and community contextual risk and protective factors in influencing the course of mental health using Social Ecology Model, thus, addressing both the individual and its social ecology. Knowledge of postwar contexts may inform policy and guide interventions on postwar psychosocial adjustment and reintegration in conflict-prone Great Lakes region of Africa (Rwanda, Burundi, DR Congo, Uganda, Central African Republic, and South Sudan. Women appear to be more at risk of long-term mental health outcomes than men, although male youths had higher incidences than female youths on alcohol and drug abuse (Amone-P'olak et al. 2013)family, and community contextual risk and protective factors in influencing the course of mental health using Social Ecology Model, thus, addressing both the individual and its social ecology. Knowledge of postwar contexts may inform policy and guide interventions on postwar psychosocial adjustment and reintegration in conflict-prone Great Lakes region of Africa (Rwanda, Burundi, DR Congo, Uganda, Central African Republic, and South Sudan. Both female as well as male youth lack access to mental health services – this applies not only to conflict-affected regions

but Uganda as a whole. Capacities for counselling in formal and non-formal education initiatives are weak to non-existent.

**Education:** Nationwide, in total 22.7% of youth aged 18-30 years are enrolled in schools. Of these, 17.2% are female and 29.1 are male (MGLSD 2013, p.11). A survey, conducted during the war in northern Uganda, also found that one in five female youth have received no education whatsoever, and only one in three were functionally literate (Annan et al. 2008). The latest statistical abstract from the MoESTS further highlights that the southern regions Buganda and Toro are almost at parity and the number of female students joining S1 surpassed that of males. However, in conflict-affected regions located in the north, there is still a big gender disparity, with Karamoja (80%) and West-Nile (65%) on top (MoESTS Uganda 2013, p. 48).

**Unemployment:** Apart from gender gaps in education, female youth are also twice as likely to be unemployed than male youth. Reasons include: early marriages, early pregnancies as well as domestic reproductive work and household duties that confine more females than males in their homes. During informal conversations with experts the need for second-chance opportunities for young mothers was frequently raised.

**Political Agency and Participation:** Because of the above trends in education and employment, female youth are less exposed to opportunities outside their homes, not to mention political or participatory decision-making processes and activities affecting their lives and future. Even though the NYP lists female youth as one of its main priority areas, long-standing youth institutions such as the NYC continue to be heavily male dominated. Newly created initiatives, such as the UCY place strong emphasis on gender equality in their membership and composition, but more efforts are needed, especially at regional level and in rural areas.

## Violence

### Direct Forms of Violence:

**Northern Uganda:** During the war between the GoU and the LRA, youth were often the primary victims and the perpetrators of the conflict. Data from the Survey of War-Affected Youth (SWAY) indicates that males and females perpetrated violence at similar rates, although males reported a higher number of acts of violence (Annan et al. 2008). The survey highlights that abduction during the war had been under-reported. The authors calculate that at least 66,000 youth between the ages of 14 and 30 were abducted. A third of male youth and a fifth of female youth reported abduction by the LRA (ibid.). Today the vast majority of youth in northern Uganda is still classified as war-affected or traumatised by past events (Biziouras & Birger 2013; Amone-P'olak et al. 2013). For example among different war atrocities, "witnessing violence", "deaths", "threat to loved ones", and "sexual abuse" are still the most likely predictors of symptoms of depression and/or anxiety in war-affected youths (Amone-P'olak et al. 2013).

**Nationwide:** At national level, direct forms of violence are mainly domestic violence, sexual harassment and abuse. Section 2 (p xx) of this report also alluded to direct forms of violence in education institutions and schools.

### Indirect Forms of Violence:

The economic and political agency of youth in Uganda is hampered by a range of structural barriers such as poverty, the urban-rural divide, unemployment, lack of opportunities, low educational attainment and a rapidly growing population. Youth with disabilities are among the most affected in that they are excluded from the formal education system and schools for children and youth with special needs are rare. Conflict-affected areas, such as Karamoja lag significantly behind in education and infrastructure development for children and youth.

### Repressive Forms of Violence

In the scope of our research we found that youth's space for manoeuvre continues to be limited by inter-generational power imbalances, persisting gender inequalities, an oppressive political regime and the lack of freedom of speech. The political neutrality of teachers in education institutions and their influence on youth needs to be further researched.



## Summary of Findings and Policy Implications

With the aim to uncover youth specific educational needs, opportunities and challenges during Uganda's peacebuilding process, we examined youth's room for manoeuvre from the angle of their political, economic and social agency. Such an approach builds on the common understanding that the lack of agency not only nurtures sentiments of frustrations, but can also in the long term increase patterns of indirect and direct forms of violence. Strikingly, in the attempt to unravel the role of formal and non-formal education therein, we noticed that policies, frameworks and institutional bodies advocating for youth hardly recognise Uganda as a post-conflict country. Even though the current NYP encompasses conflict-affected youth as a priority area and mentions of peacebuilding are made under point 5 in the new draft policy, Uganda is yet embraced and portrayed as a developing and not post-conflict country. Not surprisingly, neither the NYP, the new draft policy nor both youth manifestos recognise education for youth as an integral part of the country's peacebuilding process. The implications of such an approach are multiple, affecting, among others, processes of redistribution, representation, recognition and reconciliation. Thus, in assessing how education policies and formal and non-formal programming for youth strengthen or undermine youth agency during the country's shift from peacebuilding towards development, we arrive at the following core findings:

*Even though educational infrastructures for and of youth have improved over the past two decades; these efforts did not increase the economic and political agency of youth at large.*

Notwithstanding USE and the launch of new livelihood programmes to enhance the situation of youth, their design and implementation suffers from uneven redistribution (affecting rural, disabled youth and in some regions female youth) as well as poor recognition of the context specific circumstances in conflict-affected regions. As far as USE is concerned, the rapid increase in enrolment rates was not paralleled by efforts to enhance the quality of education. USE did also not fully respond to the country's persistent north-south divide in that southern regions such as Buganda, Busoga or Ankole have much higher numbers of youth entering secondary education in comparison to the conflict-affected northern regions (MoESTS Uganda 2013, p. 48). Similarly, experts, research reports but also youth who participated in our FGDs generally painted a negative image of the UYCF and the YLP. Despite some positive effects on business expansion (see: Ahaibwe & Kasirye 2015), application procedures were criticised for excluding a large majority of youth who simply lack the skills, education and guidance to draft a funding proposal (not to mention the lack of guidance in implementing an accepted project). Also the selection process of projects submitted to the YLP was recurrently perceived as being nepotistic. In the case of Karamoja, youth taking part in our research also felt discouraged in drafting and submitting a proposal to the YLP because of on-going land disputes and weather conditions disfavouring certain agricultural projects. Experts working on youth issues in Uganda further referred to a general perception among youth that private and state actors tend to increasingly support non-Ugandan businesses. Overall, it has to be acknowledged that the success of any livelihood and education initiative cannot be detached from the political-economy context of the country as whole, which leads to the next finding.

*Structural barriers and indirect forms of violence not only hamper youth agency but also challenge the sustainability and equal redistribution of education and livelihood initiatives.*

Although Uganda's GNI (Gross National Income) increased significantly by about 125% between 1985 and 2012, poverty and inequality persist as a result of uneven regional development, historical, socio-cultural, political and economic factors. In 2014 Uganda is still one of the poorest countries worldwide, ranking 164 out of 187 with 61.7% of the population living on less than 2 USD a day and 70.31% facing multidimensional poverty (Human Development Report 2014). Hence, the success of education and livelihood programmes cannot be detached from the political and economic environment of the country as a whole and education planning for youth needs to be embedded in this context. This could for instance imply to ensure that USE is entirely free and accessible to non-privileged youth also in remote areas such as Karamoja through the provision of more boarding schools. The success of livelihood and skills training programmes depends on the extent to which youth are equipped with necessary tools. In other words, the quality and quantity of employment not only depends on skills development or education but also resources and opportunities available to generate a sustainable income. Besides, training programmes should be based on an assessment on what kinds of skills are currently required in the job market. For example, researchers found that tailoring was the most common form of training for war-affected women in northern Uganda but only very few subsequently found opportunities to earn an income from this skill (Annan et al. 2008, p.vi). Lastly,

if the aim is to foster equal redistribution of education and livelihood initiatives among and for youth, more creative and perhaps even unorthodox ways of supporting youth are required. Among others, this may include tapping into the informal sector and explore to what extent illegal youth businesses (e.g. mechanics or computer technicians) can be turned into a legal source of income accompanied by recognised training and education programmes.

*Youth have only limited political representation in the planning and decision-making processes targeting education programmes, skills training and livelihood initiatives.*

Despite numerous efforts to increase the political agency of Uganda's youth through bodies and associations such as the NYC, the UPFYA, UCY or UYONET, political representation is still limited to a small group of highly educated and mainly urban-based youth. Needless to add, that this also affects decision-making processes on and around education and livelihood programming. During all FGDs youth not only expressed frustration with existing government and other development programmes but hardly referred to youth organisations or bodies at the national (macro) level. This point is also stressed in an earlier study conducted by Youth Map Uganda (2011) reflecting the opinion of 1.062 youth. While respondents noted that their participation was fundamental to the success of development programmes, they still felt excluded and expressed the need to go beyond token participation. At the same time, youth organisations and associations at the macro-level face several financial and capacity constraints to reach out to youth at large.

*There is an underlying notion within the rhetoric of policies and frameworks to empower youth through education economically but not necessarily politically.*

Policymakers as well as youth advocacy networks at the macro level pay close attention to both, improving access to and the quality of education for youth in the course of Uganda's development process. In this attempt, policy language and programming mainly equate the role of education with economic empowerment of youth in order to help young Ugandans to either create or find employment. What remains generally overlooked, however, is the role of education in enhancing the political agency of youth. This is of significant importance for two reasons. First, youth represent over half of Uganda's registered voters. Second, the lack of political agency among certain ethnical groups, enforced during colonial administration and fortified by post-colonial governments, became one of the main root causes of the war in Northern Uganda. In short, even though the need to include youth in policy making is recognised by the GoU rhetorically, there is hardly any mention of how this can be done through education, nor is research or data available on the political literacy of youth. Besides, assessments of the quality and delivery of citizenship or civic education are rare and existing leadership programmes offered by the NYC or UYONET mainly target highly educated and networked youth. Young people with low educational attainment, disabilities, from remote or rural areas and who are not parts of macro-level organisations / associations, are frequently left aside. In addition, persisting gender inequalities, such as within the NYC further hampers political representation.

*Micro-initiatives show greater potential to act as an implicit vehicle for conflict-resolution or reconciliation among youth than macro education initiatives at the national level.*

In the scope of this study we found that non-formal education or livelihood initiatives for youth at the micro-scale, show greater potential to nurture and influence reconciliation processes as opposed to macro initiatives. This may not come as a surprise for several evident reasons. For one, in light of Uganda's regional and cultural diversity, macro-initiatives such as USE, the UYCVF or the YLP have been frequently critiqued by our interviewees and other research reports as an one-size fits all approach thereby failing to take into account the many regional and local grievances in a context-specific and culturally-sensitive manner. By contrast, micro-initiatives or non-formal education programmes specifically designed for a particular region (see also section 2 of this report on non-formal education), were described by our interviewees and FGD participants as providing space to nurture a sense of belonging, community spirit as well as a culture of mutual respect. In addition, their proximity and the sheer fact that its founders are known to and from the community led to the effect that these micro-initiatives also became local and informal support systems for its members, beneficiaries, if not the wider community. This is of particular significance, in the light that formal and non-formal education and livelihood initiatives at the macro level lack the capacities and funds to provide urgently needed counseling services for traumatised youth, including the second generation in conflict-affected regions. Moreover, as long as youth continue to be embedded in a political climate that embraces youth as part of the country's development and not peacebuilding agenda, it will remain difficult to solicit strategies on how to address past and present societal tensions – not to mention the role educational structures, programmes and planning can play therein.

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# The Research Consortium on Education and Peacebuilding

## Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), University of Amsterdam

The AISSR Programme Group Governance and Inclusive Development (<http://aissr.uva.nl/programmegrups/item/governance-and-inclusive-development.html>) consists of an interdisciplinary team of researchers focusing on issues relating to global and local issues of governance and development. The Research Cluster Governance of Education, Development and Social Justice focuses on multilevel politics of education and development, with a specific focus on processes of peacebuilding in relation to socio-economic, political and cultural (in)justices. The research group since 2006 has maintained a particular research focus on education, conflict and peacebuilding, as part of its co-funded 'IS Academie' research project with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## Centre for International Education, University of Sussex

The Centre for International Education (CIE) ([www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cie](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cie)) was founded in 1989 on the premise that education is a basic human right that lies at the heart of development processes aimed at social justice, equity, social and civic participation, improved wellbeing, health, economic growth and poverty reduction. It is recognised as one of the premiere research centres working on education and international development in Europe. The Centre has also secured a prestigious UK ESRC/DFID grant to carry out research on the Role of Teachers in Peacebuilding in Conflict Affected Contexts, which aligns directly with the research strategy of the PBEA programme and will form part of the broader research partnership.

## UNESCO Centre at Ulster University

Established in 2002 the UNESCO Centre ([www.unescocentre.ulster.ac.uk](http://www.unescocentre.ulster.ac.uk)) at the University of Ulster provides specialist expertise in education, conflict and international development. It builds on a strong track record of research and policy analysis related to education and conflict in Northern Ireland. Over the past ten years the UNESCO Centre has increasingly used this expertise in international development contexts, working with DFID, GiZ, Norad, Save the Children, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank, providing research on education and social cohesion, the role of education in reconciliation and analysis of aid to education in fragile and conflict affected situations.

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