

**FACING UP TO THE CHALLENGE OF UNIVERSAL PRIMARY
EDUCATION, (UPE) IN UGANDA THROUGH DISTANCE
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

By

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This paper is part of an on-going study for PhD studies at the University of Pretoria, South Africa and should therefore not be quoted without permission from the author.

1.1 BACKGROUND

Uganda is set in the heart of Africa astride the Equator. It has a total of 236,860 sq. miles (91,249 sq. km). Of this, swamps and open water cover 17% while forest reserves and national parks cover about 12%. Currently Uganda has a population of nearly 22 million people with an annual population growth of 2.6% (Ministry of Education and Sports 1999:4). Majority of the people are of school going age. Also, 89% of this population lives in the rural areas.

Uganda was a British protectorate from 1894 till October 9th 1962 when it received its independence. Prior to independence school education, which was introduced by Missionaries in 1877, was modelled along the British System of education. This heritage is still evident in the school system even today.

The school system is structured in a hierarchical manner in a 7-4-2-3 system. That is to say 7 years of primary, 4 years Secondary 'O' level, 2 years Secondary 'A' Level and minimum of 3 years at University level. At the end of each stage, there is a national examination. This structure therefore makes the education system highly selective and pyramidal in nature. Figure 1 illustrates this.

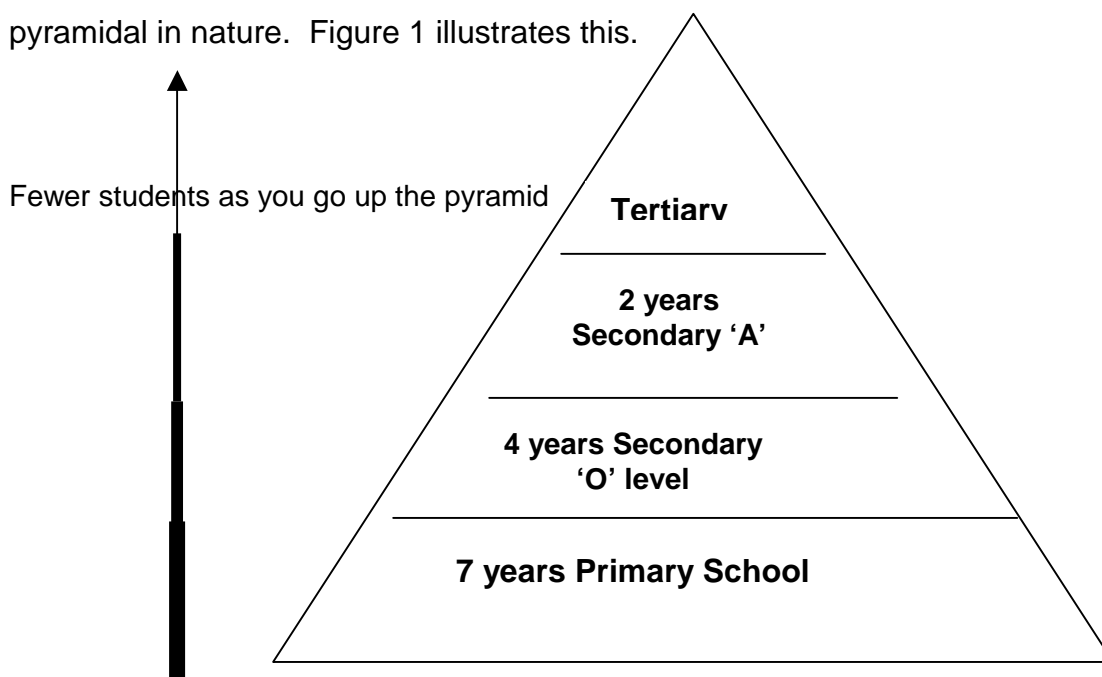


Figure 1: Pyramid Shaped School Education in Uganda

Inspite of this structure, school education has continued to expand since 1962 when Uganda gained its independence from the British. For example, in 1999, Uganda had 10,500 primary schools and 625 secondary schools (Ministry of Education and Sports 1999:5). But by 2001, these numbers had grown to 12,280 primary schools and 1,850 Secondary Schools (Ministry of Education and Sports 2001a:3) www.education.go.ug/Factfile_2001.htm . Private individuals and non-governmental organisations run particularly many of the secondary schools as indicated in the following table.

	Primary	Secondary
Government	10,368	455
Non-governmental	1,912	1,395
Total	12,280	1,850

Table 1: Schools in Uganda in 2001

Source: Ministry of Education and Sports (2001a:3)

www.education.go.ug/Factfile_2001.htm

It should however be pointed out that this expansion did not take place during all the years since independence. The Amin-era of 1971 -1979 however affected all sectors of life very negatively. This was a period of anarchy. A period "characterised by insecurity, a decline in economic productivity, brain drain, and break down of the social services" (Aguti, 1996:4).

Apart from expanding the school system, Uganda has also looked at alternative means of meeting the demand particularly of higher education. The government has encouraged entrepreneurs to open up training institutions or universities and government has also strongly recommended the use of distance and open learning. The government White Paper on Education recommends that "*...an open university should be planned and provided before the year 2000*" (Republic of Uganda 1992:95). Although an Open University has not yet been established, plans are under way to do so. In November 1999, the Minister of State for Higher Education commissioned a Task Force to look into the possibilities of setting up an Open University in Uganda. This Task Force completed its assignment and submitted its report to the Ministry of Education and Sports that is now following this up and the Open University of Uganda should soon be established.

So clearly Uganda is faced by the challenge of increasing demand for education and an expanding school system which by implication also implies an increased need for teachers. Distance education has been used to rise up to this challenge and in the next sections, the focus will be on how this has been used to try to meet the need for more teachers particularly for the primary school system.

1.2 UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION POLICY (UPE)

School education was introduced in Uganda by the White missionaries mainly for the children of chiefs and to provide for functionaries needed by the British colonial government. So right from the onset, this school system was not for all and it therefore grew to become highly selective and competitive with fewer and fewer students continuing to the next level of education (see figure 1.1). As a result, many Ugandans remained illiterate with literacy rates standing at only 65% with the primary education '*reaching only 50 percent of the age group*' (Ministry of Education and Sports 1999:7). It is against this background that in December 1996 President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni launched a policy of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in accordance with the government White Paper on Education (Ministry Of Education And Sports 1992). Under this policy, government was to provide 'free' education to a maximum of four children from each family. This has now changed because President Museveni has now said that '*all children of school-going age should benefit from Universal Primary Education (UPE)*' (Olupot, 2002). The major objectives of UPE are:

- Making basic education accessible to the learners and relevant to their needs as well as meeting national goals;
- Making education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequalities;
- Establishing, providing and maintaining quality education as the basis for promoting the necessary human resource development;
- Initiating a fundamental positive transformation of society in the social, economic and political field; and
- Ensuring that education is affordable by the majority of Ugandans by providing, initially the minimum necessary facilities and resources, and progressively the optimal facilities,
- Enable every child to enter and remain in school until they complete the primary education cycle. (Ministry of Education and Sports 1999:10)

As a result of this policy, a lot has been achieved:

1.2.1 Achievements of UPE

Increased Access

Enrolment figures after the launching of UPE shot up from nearly 2.5 million in 1996 to nearly 6.8 million in 2000 (Ministry of Education and Sports 2001b: 1)

www.education.go.ug/faq.htm. This increase was mainly for two reasons. The backlog of school age children who had not been accessing school were now able to do so while more of the children who had attained the school age but would not have afforded education prior to UPE were now able to join school. The overall numbers of children in the primary school by 2001 stood as follows:

CLASS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
P1	803,803	797,005	1,600,808
P2	551,453	537,072	1,088,525
P3	537,622	526,931	1,064,553
P4	488,468	478,142	966,610
P5	408,509	384,272	762,781
P6	316,162	282,382	598,544
P7	228,385	179,337	407,722
TOTALS	3,334,402	3,185,141	6,519,543

Table 2: Children enrolled in the Different Classes in Primary School in 2001

[SOURCE: Ministry of Education and Sports 2001b:3]

www.education.go.ug/Factfile_2001.htm

This policy also has a specific focus on the education of girls, the disabled and the orphans. There has therefore been an increase of enrolment of girls from 39% in 1970 to nearly 49% by 2001.

To facilitate easy access to schools, the Ministry of Education and Sports has also embarked on building of more primary and secondary schools. For example, by end of 1999, 4,000 additional classrooms were constructed for primary school children while by end of 2001, a total of 6,321 had been completed (an additional 2,321 classrooms in one year) (Ministry of Education and Sports 2001c:3)

www.education.go.ug/policy_statement_2001-2001.htm.

It is therefore clear that UPE has helped improve access to education as seen by the increase in enrolments and the increase in the number of classrooms that have been put up.

More Teachers Trained

An increase in the number of children in school invariably implies an increase in the need for teachers. To deal with this and as part of the wider reform under the Primary Education and Teacher Development Project, there have been deliberate efforts to restructure primary teacher education and to increase the number of teachers trained/retrained/upgraded. As a result, between 1995 and 1999 *“7,800 in-service teachers have been trained or upgraded. In addition 3,023 candidates in pre-service courses for teachers have completed their training ...”* In addition another 2,118 were expected to complete their training (Ministry of Education and Sports 1999: 12). So while the number of teachers has grown, the number is still too low compared to the massive number of children in school now.

The different training programmes, especially distance education programmes mounted to meet the UPE challenge will be discussed in further detail in section 2. In the meantime, some of the challenges faced by UPE will now be briefly outlined.

1.2.2 Challenges Faced

Providing Physical Facilities

The massive increase in pupil numbers immediately created a problem of classroom space. Although the Ministry has embarked on a drive to build more schools, and provide instructional materials, this is still far inadequate for as the Ministry acknowledges. *“the increase in the number of schools has not kept pace with the increase in the number of students”* (Ministry of Education and Sports 1999:11).

Quality of Education

This is one area that is of concern to many in the country. There are fears that perhaps the massive numbers in schools without commensurate expansion in facilities, teachers, and teaching/learning materials may have compromised the quality of education. Although no thorough studies have been carried out, the Ministry of Education and Sports itself

voices this concern when in its report says, “*the quality of teaching has probably been affected by the adverse pupil-teacher ratio after the introduction of UPE*” (Ministry of Education and Sports 1999:12).

The other issue related pupil-teacher ratio is the morale of the teachers. Prior to the introduction of UPE, most schools charged additional fees through the Parents Teachers Associations. Some of this money was used to supplement teachers’ salaries. This is no longer the practice and so teachers must rely on the extremely low salaries. This seems to have affected the morale of the teachers. The fear therefore is that UPE may have indeed compromised the quality of education in the country and this issue certainly requires further exploration but is not the focus of this paper.

Coping with the UPE Bulge

The Ministry of Education and Sports has done a commendable job ensuring that UPE is introduced and that the primary school system copes in every respect with growing numbers. However, the forthcoming challenge is going to be coping with the bulge in secondary and higher education. This is pressure is already being felt. In 2001 for instance, 360,000 children sat the Primary Leaving examinations and of these 250,000 qualified for post primary education. However, only 150,000 children were admitted into the 734 government-aided secondary schools and 29 technical and farm rural schools. 100,000 children were therefore not placed in any of the government schools (Mugaba, V. 2002 www.enteruganda.com). The same scenario was repeated with those who sat the Ordinary level examinations. Although 103,262 students sat the examinations, both government-aided and private institutions only took in 57,110 leaving over 40,000 children with no admission! (Eremu 2002) Table 3 gives these figures.

Training Teachers

As mentioned earlier, the increase in pupil numbers as a result of UPE has raised the challenge of the need for more teachers. Government has done some work in this regard and a number of teachers have been trained and upgraded, however, the teacher-pupil ratios are still poor. For example in 1996 the ratio was 1:37.62 and by 1999, this had declined to 1:63.63. Also, the number of untrained teachers is still high. For example, in 1989 only 52.2% of the teachers had been trained but by 2001 this had risen tremendously

to 75%. In effect, 25% of the primary school teaching force is still untrained. This coupled with the poor teacher-pupil ratio certainly creates pressure on the school system.

It is for this very reason that the Ministry of Education and Sports has acknowledged the role and place of distance education in meeting this gap. The various initiatives since 1995 when government began to prepare for UPE will be discussed in section 2.

	Primary Leaving Examination	Secondary School: 'O' Level Examination
Number who sat the examination	360,000	103,262
Number admitted to:		
<i>Government Schools</i>	150,000 (Including into technical schools)	22,575
<i>Government Technical Schools</i>		4,580
<i>Primary Teachers Colleges</i>	Not applicable	7,380
<i>Private Schools</i>	Not available	22,575
Total admitted	150,000	57,110
Number not admitted	100,00	46,152

Table 3: Number of children Admitted into Post Primary Schools and Institutions in 2002

Source:

Primary School figures (Mugaba, V. 2002 www.enteruganda.com)
 Secondary School 'O' level Figures Eremu J (2002) 'Budo Sets Cut-off at 13' The New Vision 10th April 2002

UPE has come a long way since 1996 when it was launched and a lot has been done but a lot more is required if Uganda is to ensure that the objectives of UPE are truly achieved and that the quality of its education is not compromised in any way.

2.0 DISTANCE EDUCATION TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As discussed in the first part of this paper, there is still great need for more teachers for the primary school system in Uganda however, the current teacher training schemes are not adequate to train all the new entrants and at the same time train the untrained and upgrade the under-trained. As Odaet (1988:687) says, one of the major problems facing the education system in Uganda is "*the shortage of qualified teachers and the increasing*

number of unqualified teachers.' Distance Education has therefore been seen as a viable alternative of supplementing the efforts of the full-time teacher training colleges.

The government White Paper of Education also particularly acknowledges the role that distance and open learning can play in this. So the Ministry of Education and Sports has recommended the use of distance and open learning methodologies for the training and retraining of teachers. The White paper on Education recommends,

From 1992/93 onwards crash programmes for training and re-training teachers will be mounted. Increased enrolment and training of teachers will be undertaken ... through the in-service system, training on the job and long distance. (Republic of Uganda 1992:4)

To implement these recommendations, Uganda moved on to start distance education projects in teacher training. In January 1992, Mubende and Kiboga districts launched the Mubende Integrated Teacher Education Project (MITEP) so as to train its untrained primary school teachers. The success of this project led to the launching of the Northern Integrated Teacher Education Project (NITEP) with the aim of training the untrained primary school teachers in the northern region of the country. This project has also wound up but the former Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo (ITEK) now Kyambogo University, is now running it as a national programme. The same applies to the Teacher Development and Management System (TDMS) that was also launched as a pilot project this time for the training of Headteachers. TDMS wound up as a project and the programme is now also being run by Kyambogo University as a national programme (Aguti 1996:13-14, Aguti 2000)

Apart from these efforts at using distance education for the training of teachers, Makerere University the oldest university in the country also launched an External Degree Programme (EDP) in 1991. Under this programme, two undergraduate degree programmes are currently being run Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com) and Bachelor of Education (B.Ed). The B.Ed is programme meant to upgrade diploma teachers to Bachelors level. The Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree has also been launched.

There is growing interest in the private universities also in distance and open learning. Uganda Martyrs University for instance is already running a Diploma in Education course

for Primary School Teachers. This programme like the one being run at Kyambogo University is aimed at giving primary school teachers with Grade III level Teachers Certificate opportunity to upgrade and obtain a Diploma.

It is therefore clear that Uganda has keen interest in the use of distance and open learning for the education of its citizens. Uganda has particularly used distance and open learning for training, retraining and upgrading its teachers. The next section will now discuss each of the programmes that have been run for purposes of training primary school teachers. But first here is a brief outline of how teachers for primary school are trained in the country

Majority of the primary school teachers in Uganda are teachers with a Grade III Teachers Certificate. Grade III teachers are trained by the Primary Teachers Colleges and the minimum entry requirement is an 'O' level Certificate with 6 passes including in Mathematics and English Language. It is also possible for a Primary School Teacher to up-grade to Diploma or Graduate level. Figure 2 shows the different teacher training routes for Primary School teachers in Uganda.

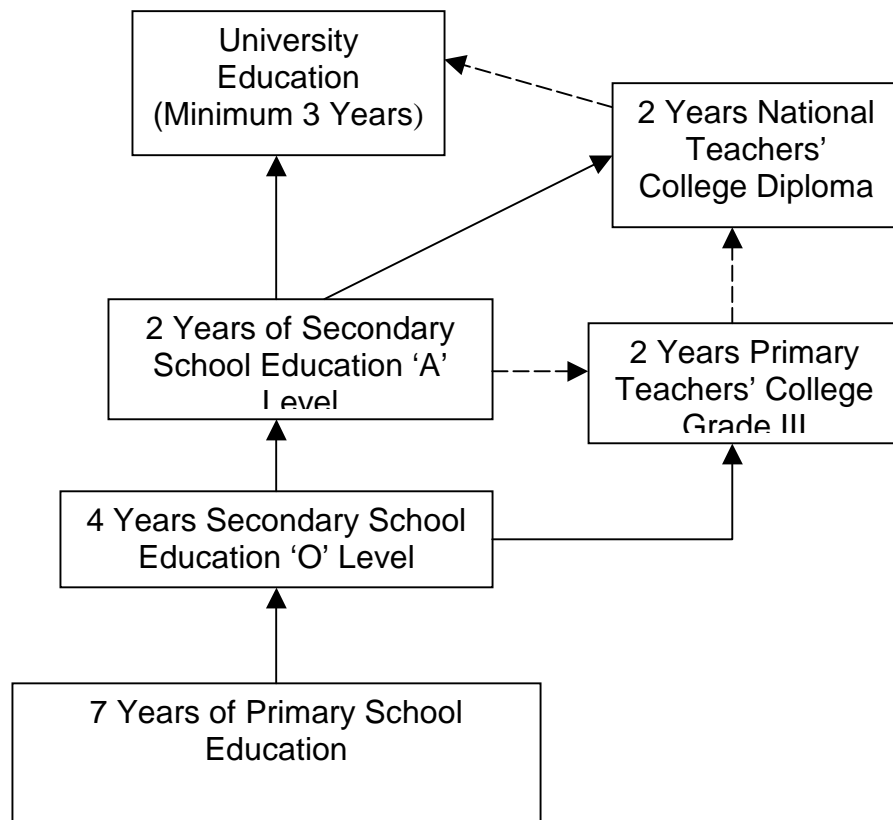


Figure 2: Structure of the Education system Showing Teacher Training Routes

Primary School teachers are therefore of varied qualifications for those who are trained while at the same time, there are still many in the teaching force without any training at all. Figure 3 represents this.

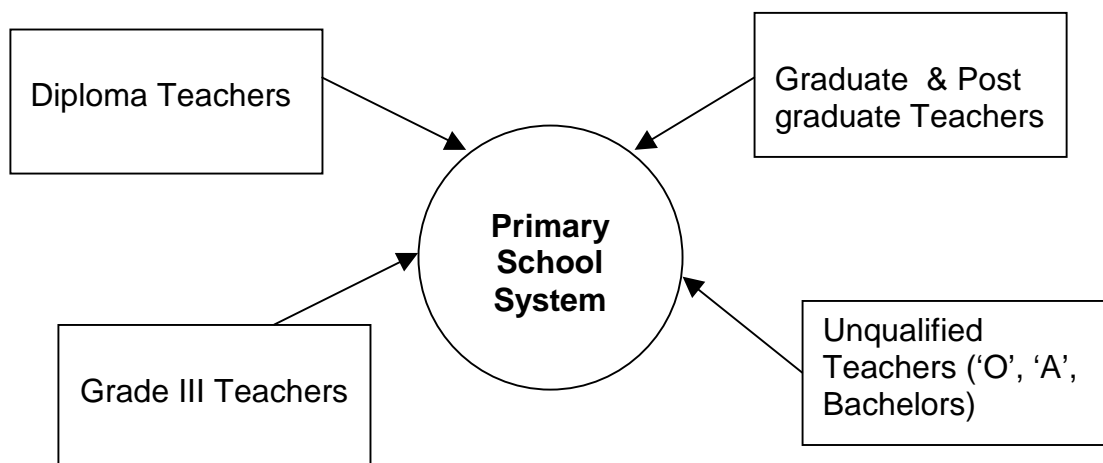


Figure 3: Teachers in the Primary School system

2.2 MUBENDE INTEGRATED TEACHER EDUCATION PROJECT (MITEP)

As mentioned earlier in section 1.2 the government declaration of UPE was in part a response to what the White Paper on Education had presented. However prior to the launching of UPE, some districts in Uganda were fore sighted and saw the need to train their untrained and under trained teachers. The first districts to do this were Mubende and Kiboga Districts that had up to 80% untrained teachers. An In-service distance education project Mubende Integrated Teacher Education Project (MITEP) was launched in January 1992 with funds from overseas Development Agency (ODA) and Action Aid United Kingdom (AAUK). The aims of the project were:

- i) to improve the quality of primary education in Mubende District by providing practical access to high quality education and training of untrained primary school teachers;
- ii) to test the feasibility and evaluate the cost effectiveness of the MITEP teacher training methodology, in order to assess its worth as a model for replication throughout Uganda.
(Robinson & Murphy 1996:15)

To train the teachers, the course was run using a study package that included:

- written study materials
- residential sessions; and
- student support services.

The study materials were developed based on the Grade III revised Primary Teachers' College syllabus. The students of this project were assessed in the same way as the residential Primary Teachers' College students. 900 students were selected using results of a placement test that every short listed applicant did (Robinson & Murphy 1996:17)

2.2.1 Achievements of MITEP

Overall, it can be said that MITEP was successful although it faced some problems. The following are however some of these achievements:

Training of Teachers

Although MITEP set out to train 900 teachers and actually proceeded to recruit that number, not all the 900 completed and/or passed the final examinations. Only 306% completed and passed all the examinations and therefore attained the Grade III Teachers Certificate, 384 failed the examinations while 197 did not complete the course (Robinson & Murphy 1996:17). Although the pass rate was only 34%, it can be said that at the end of the project, MITEP had helped 306 previously untrained teachers receive training and gained certification.

It can also be argued that since no learning is really totally futile, of those who failed the examinations, some learning must have taken place and so perhaps they emerged better teachers than they were before. For as Robinson and Murphy (1996:21) found out, *'even where teachers did not succeed, benefits were frequently claimed (improved lesson planning and schemes of work, better classroom organisation, more use of locally made visual aids, and increased knowledge of subjects and teaching methods)*.

Increased Interest in Distance Education

MITEP became the precursor to similar distance education projects in other districts and eventually nationally. The lessons learnt from this project were utilized in the launching of the Rakai Integrated Teacher Education Project (RITEP) based in Rakai District and later the Northern Integrated Teacher Education Project (NITEP) that was based in the North and East of the country (Robinson & Murphy 1996:22, Aguti 2000: 259).

It is particularly important to note that the government funded NITEP began by utilising materials that were developed for MITEP - an indicator of governments increased interest

and support of distance education. In a small but significant way, MITEP helped in this regard.

2.3 THE NORTHERN INTEGRATED TEACHER EDUCATION PROJECT (NITEP)

The Northern Integrated Teacher Education Project (NITEP) was started in April 1994 as part of the Northern Uganda Reconstruction Programme (NURP). From 1986 to date, some parts of the North and East of Uganda were ravaged by war and civil strife that destroyed social services and all other sectors leaving the districts paralysed (Wrightson 1998:13, Aguti 2000:259). Government therefore set up NURP in a bid to help those districts affected. Education was one of those services that needed reconstruction.

The objectives of NITEP were:

- i) To improve the quality and performance of 3,040 untrained school teachers on the Northern Districts in a two year period.
- ii) To increase the number of trained and qualified primary school teachers in the Northern Region by about 17 per cent in the four-year implementation period.
- iii) In four years, to have tested the viability and cost-effectiveness of an innovative teacher training methodology so as to evaluate its worth as a model for replication on a nationwide scale (Wrightson 1998:16)

The study package for this project was in many ways similar to that used by MITEP. This included:

- Printed study materials
- Audio cassettes. This was limited and did not cover all the subjects of study. The only subjects that had the audio component were Professional Studies, Music and mathematics (Wrightson 1998:24)
- Student study group meetings mainly through the study centres and the Coordinating Centres.
- Residential sessions
- Tutor visits and support

2.3.1 Achievements of NITEP

This sub section will briefly outline some of the achievements of NITEP.

Training of Teachers

At the beginning of the project, it had specifically been stated that NITEP intended to train a total of 3,040 teachers thereby increasing the number of teachers in the region by 17%. 3,128 students enrolled for the training programme but of these, 2,755 sat for the Grade III Teachers' Certificate Examinations. Of these, 1,763 passed the examinations after the first sitting and a further 288 after the second sitting giving a total of 2,051 (66%) (Wrightson 1998:55).

So by the end of 1998 NITEP had succeeded in training and passing 2,051 teachers. A commendable achievement considering the conditions under which NITEP was run in a war ravaged and troubled region.

Distance Education 'experts'

One of the major components of NITEP was the training of student support staff. This was meant to ensure that NITEP had trained staff offering student support to its students. Besides, some of the staff of NITEP eventually registered for the University of London Diploma in Distance Education as a result of their involvement with NITEP. It could also be said that NITEP perhaps more than even MITEP helped boost national interest and appreciation of distance education.

Implementation Structure

The service delivery model that was used by NITEP involving Ministry of Education and Sports, Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo (ITEK), Primary Teachers' Colleges and Primary Schools has become the basis for the national implementation phase. Under the Primary Teacher Development and Management Plan, Coordinating Centres are expected to play a very pivotal role in the training and monitoring of trainees. This is a NITEP legacy.

2.4 TEACHER DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (TDMS)

Teacher Development and Management System (TDMS) was developed as part of the overall Primary Education and Teacher Development Project (PETDP). Funding for this component came from various sources including, Government, IDA, USAID, in its initial stages and The Royal Netherlands Government, Irish Aid at the later stages. TDMS

activities, were initially meant to cover only 10 districts but this eventually spread to all the districts of the country.

The overall aim of TDMS was to improve teaching and learning in primary schools by developing a teacher education system that *'integrated pre- and in-service training approaches'*. The specific objectives of TDMS were:

- *'to develop and streamline TE curricula...'*
- *'to develop materials... to foster the implementation of the new curricula'*
- *'to conduct training of teacher educators...'*
- *'to set up a TE framework based on a network of core primary teachers colleges(PTCs) and associated coordination centres (CCs) and outreach primary schools (OSs);'*
- to use the core PTC-based network to conduct pre-service and in-service training of primary school teacher and headteachers (Odaet and Higwira 1994, Makau April 2001:4).

To achieve these various objectives, a number of different training programmes were therefore run by TDMS. These included:

- In-service training programme for the untrained primary school teachers
- The Headteachers' Management Training Course
- Outreach Tutor Training Programme

TDMS run these programmes through a Central and District Management Framework that involved:

- Ministry of Education and Sports officials at the Headquarters,
- Principals, Deputy Principals and Tutors of Primary Teachers Colleges,
- Institute of Teacher Education Kyambogo
- District Education Officers

The study package for the various programmes was very much similar to that used by NITEP and as mentioned earlier, the concept of decentralised management of the programmes and provision of student support was a NITEP legacy.

2.41 Achievements of TDMS

Training of Education Staff

TDMS has been able to train different categories of education staff ranging from Principals of PTCs to Community Mobilisers. The following table gives a summary of total numbers trained under the different categories.

Staff Category	Numbers Trained
Untrained Teachers Upgrading to Grade III	8,685
Headteachers	7,414
Principals of Core PTCs	18
Deputy Principals in Core PTCs	36
Heads of programmes based in Core PTCs	54
Coordination Centre Tutors	539
Volunteer Community Mobilisers	13,000

Table 4: Number of Education Staff Trained Under TDMS

[Source: Adapted from Makau (April 2001:9,10)]

However it should be pointed out that in spite of these achievements, with the launching of UPE, the needs and pressures far outstrip this. The launching of UPE meant a further recruitment of untrained teachers and TDMS did not have the capacity to absorb all these numbers (Makau April 2001:13). But the addition of more than 8,000 trained teachers to the primary school system is something that the country would never have achieved using the full time residential training through the PTCs.

Development of Teacher Education Curricula and materials

For each of the programmes that were run, TDMS developed study materials. Both the distance education students and the internal students are using these materials. TDMS introduced in the country courses that were not there before. For example prior to TDMS, there was no training programme for headteachers in the country. The Outreach Tutor Training programme is also a new addition in the country. TDMS has therefore in this respect helped enrich Teacher Education programmes in the country.

Involvement of a Cross Section of Education Staff

As mentioned earlier, to run the TDMS programmes, a cross section of education staff from the Ministry of Education and Sports, Teachers' Colleges and from the districts were all involved. Bringing together all these persons was a major achievement. Albeit it did create some other managerial problems but this is a good beginning of integration of staff and services; an important element that is still missing in the Uganda education system.

Overall, it can be said that TDMS achieved most of its objectives and the fact that now there are plans to institutionalise its activities is testimony that the government of Uganda has confidence in Distance Education for the training of primary school teachers particularly in the light of Universal Primary Education (UPE).

2.5 DIPLOMA IN PRIMARY EDUCATION (EXTERNAL)

The External Diploma in Primary Education was launched in April 1999 at the then Institute of Teacher Education (ITEK), now Kyambogo University. This programme was launched so as to upgrade Grade III teachers to Diploma level using distance education. The general aims of the programme are:

- Increase intake in Primary Education up-grading courses to meet urgent national needs of the teachers in Primary school.
- Provide opportunity to eligible and interested teachers who can not pursue full-time courses in the colleges/institutions or Universities
- Develop a more flexible mode of education that caters for a variety of needs, changing circumstances and learning requirements of the teachers.
- To develop manpower for Universal Primary Education. (Kyambogo University 2000)

Students enrolling for this Diploma are expected to take a minimum of three years and a maximum of five years.

The study package for this programme includes print based study modules especially developed in a distance education mode, compulsory residential sessions and student group meetings.

2.5.1 Achievements of the Diploma in Primary Education

Although this programme is only in its third year of running, there have already been some achievements. As mentioned earlier in Section 2.1 to teach in the primary schools in Uganda, a teacher needs a minimum of a Grade III certificate. Therefore up-grading teachers to the Diploma level does not add any new teachers to the teaching force. It however enables teachers to up-grade to a higher qualification. For this reason it cannot therefore be said that this Diploma programme solves the need for more trained teachers to cope with UPE.

However, more and more districts are recruiting only those teachers that have a minimum of a Diploma in Education for headship positions. In this regard, this Diploma programme should help increase the number of teachers that can rise to this level.

Since its launching in April 1999, there have been two intakes already. The first intake was of 800 students while the second intake was of 1800 students. Unfortunately it is not clear how many precisely of these students are continuing with the programme.

Apart from training more teachers, the study materials being produced on this programme are being used by other teacher as well on similar but full time programmes. In so doing this programme should help strengthen the Diploma in Education Programmes in the country.

Perhaps one last thing that needs to be pointed out here is that, this programme is working in close cooperation and collaboration with core Primary Teachers Colleges that are implementing the TDMS programmes.

The different programmes that have been discussed in this paper do indicate that Uganda has attempted to use distance education for the training of primary school teachers and this has in many ways helped Uganda face the challenge of UPE. However, as already indicated, there have been a number of challenges and this last section of the paper will discuss this.

2.6 CHALLENGES FACED

2.6.1 Sustainability

Nearly all the programmes discussed here with the exception of the Diploma in Primary Education have had a heavy reliance on External funding. Although this helped start and run the programmes to end of their project lives, it raises the question of sustainability. For as Makau (April 2001:21) says,

The TDMS project illustrates the need for Uganda to pro-actively consider long-term sustainability of social development initiatives. External funds constituted the highest proportion of the resources invested in the project (e.g. over $\frac{3}{4}$ of Phases I-III...)
Uganda needs to consider how dependence on external funding could be reduced.

Therefore as Uganda struggles to meet the enormous UPE demands, the question of sustainability of the distance education teacher education programmes need to be critically given attention.

2.6.2 Quality

The issue of quality is still an unresolved one in both UPE and Teacher Education. True through these programmes a number of trained teachers have been added to the system, however, the enormous increase in primary school enrolments far outstrip these efforts. A lot more therefore needs to be done otherwise the schools will continue to be filled by untrained teachers and this could adversely affect the quality of primary school education.

Also, whereas distance education is growing in the country there are still fears that the products are 'not as good' as those trained through the full time residential programmes. The onus therefore is on the providers of distance education to ensure that the systems put in place facilitate quality teacher training.

2.6.3 Relating to Policy on Recruitment

Government employs majority of teachers in Uganda and so their salaries are dependant on what the government policy is. For example traditionally primary school teachers were holders of a Grade III teachers certificate and so their salary was set at that level.

However with the opportunities for upgrading it is becoming increasingly difficult for government to accommodate all the upgraded teachers in the salary budget. This is particularly the case for primary school teachers who upgrade to either diploma or graduate level.

Many of these teachers have upgraded but have had problems being registered and salary adjusted to the new level achieved. This is demoralising and is likely to affect the enrolments in some of these distance education programmes.

2.6.4 Integrating Information Communication Technologies in the Programmes

All the programmes discussed in this paper relied on print materials and did not integrate other technologies. The challenge therefore is for distance education programmes in Uganda to begin to explore possibilities of integrating ICTs in their programmes. This is critical especially because of the widespread use of ICTs. Teachers trained in Uganda need to be knowledgeable in these ICTs if they are to have any competitive edge in the world of education today. Also, in Uganda, a new syllabus on computer Science has been developed for primary schools and for this syllabus to be effectively run the teachers involved must have knowledge and experience in computers. One way of achieving this is by integrating computers in the teachers training.

This is likely to have a lot financial and management implication for all distance educators but it needs to be given thought.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

This paper attempted to discuss the Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy in Uganda and the attempts that have been made to cope with the challenge of providing teachers for the many schools and pupils through training by distance. It is clear that headway has been made in meeting the increasing need for primary school teaches in Uganda but the current efforts are still inadequate for the enormous need created by UPE. Also, the programmes that have so far been run have faced a number of challenges and there is need for distance educators to rise up to these challenges if the potential of distance education in Uganda and the interest created are to be fully exploited.

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