Status of Implementation of SDG 4 on Education: Is Uganda on Track?

Photo Essay
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This specific photo essay was produced to compliment the research report on the progress of implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 “Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning for All”.

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Foreword

Between the 11th March 2019 and 27th April 2019, the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) carried out research to assess the status of implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 “Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning for All”. The purpose of the research was to inform advocacy around achieving equity and quality in the provision of education in Uganda and to feed into discussions at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) due in July 2019 at which SDG 4 is going to be reviewed.

The research was carried out in 13 districts namely; Nwoya, Amuru, Kole, Apac, Yumbe, Moyo, Adjumani, Kibaale, Amudat, Nakapiripirit, Bududa, Buyende and Buvuma. A total of 52 schools (27 primary and 25 secondary) were visited with interviews held with school head teachers and officers from the district education office in each district.

This photo essay is a result of the documentation of the research and compliments the overall research report. It is a photographic presentation of issues related to access to education for all including children with disabilities, girls and children in vulnerable situations. The photo essay also explores the state of education facilities, whether they are safe, disability and gender sensitive, and the general learning environment. Special attention was paid to provision of ramps for easy access, special latrines for children with disabilities, separate latrines for boys and girls, learning materials for children with special needs, safe drinking water within the school, state of latrines, ratios for desk, classroom, staff quarters and safety and security of the school among others.

In many of the schools visited, especially in northern Uganda and Karamoja sub region, the school facilities put up by government under the School Facilitation Grant (SFG) and those constructed with support from partners like World Bank, Irish Aid, Non Governmental Organizations etc. are of good standard. In some schools, especially the seed schools set up in areas that were previously underserved; the infrastructure is adequate and there is room for additional enrollment. In
majority of these schools, there is for example provision of special latrines for children with disabilities, ramps, and more than one laboratory for the teaching of sciences. The challenge, however, is the utilization and maintenance of these facilities. It was noted for example that the latrines for children for special needs are left open for general use except for a few cases where they are locked.

In the West Nile region, schools that are in refugee hosting communities have benefitted from infrastructure construction and upgrade courtesy of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Government of Uganda under the Office of the Prime Minister and numerous international and national NGOs.

In other areas like Buvuma, Bududa and Buyende, there is a critical need for infrastructure in form of latrines, classrooms and teachers’ houses. In many schools, learners in the lower classes of P.1 to P.4 sit on the floor in crowded classrooms, while in some scenarios there were no classrooms or latrines to speak of.

Findings indicate that much as there is commendable progress, wide disparities exist among districts and regions in terms of school infrastructure, access for children with disabilities, school sanitation and access to clean water and safety.
Target 4.5 by 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations. The Government of Uganda policy for provision of equitable access to primary and secondary education is to establish at least one primary school in each parish and a secondary school per Sub County. There has been commendable progress in this regard.

Main class room block at Purongo Seed School located in Purongo Sub County in Nwoya District. The school was grant aided in 2015 to improve access to secondary education in this previously underserved area. The school has good facilities constructed by the Government under the World Bank Adaptive Programme Lending (APLI) Project.
The Chemistry/Biology laboratory at Purongo Seed School is well equipped. The school has all the necessary facilities except a library.
To improve access to education for refugees and host communities, schools in refugee hosting communities in West Nile have also benefitted from construction of facilities and supply of teachers by both Government and development partners. This is a newly constructed science laboratory at Itula Secondary School located in Itula Sub County Palorinya Refugee Settlement in Moyo District. The structure was constructed in 2018 under the Development Response to Displacement Impact Project (DRDIP).
Ayer Seed School located in Kole District is another example of Government of Uganda efforts to improve access to secondary education in underserved areas. Like Purongo Seed School in Nwoya District, Ayer was constructed by the Government under the World Bank Adaptive Programme Lending (APL1) Project.
The science laboratory at Ayer Seed School. The school has adequate infrastructure to enable learning.
Karamoja too has benefited from construction of school facilities. Pokot Secondary School located in Amudat Town Council in Amudat District. This school too has adequate infrastructure with three laboratories, a library and enough classrooms. However, the challenge is proper maintenance of these facilities.
Poorly maintained equipment in the three laboratories at Pokot Secondary School. The equipment, like test tubes, was found very dirty and stained probably as a result of not being cleaned after use and not having been used for months.
This is the girls’ dormitory at Kalas Girls Primary School in Amudat Town Council Amudat District. This is an only girls school and has many learners who escaped Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and early marriage. The boarding facility helps them stay in school. The dormitory was constructed with support from Irish Aid.
The girls’ dormitory at Namalu Seed School in Nakapiripirit District. In most of the schools in Karamoja, there is option of a boarding facility to improve retention especially for the girl child.
The boys’ dormitory at Namalu Seed School in Nakapiripirit District. It is equally important that boys have the option to be accommodated at school to improve retention.
Until 2019, Buvuma District had only one secondary school, Buvuma College. To improve access to secondary education, the Government, under the Presidential Initiative is constructing Nairambi Seed School in Nairambi Sub County. The school enrolled learners in S.1 and S.2 this year - 2019.
One of the science laboratories at Nairambi Seed School. The school is getting the necessary infrastructure to enable learning.
Itula Secondary School in Moyo District has excess desks compared to the current enrollment. Besides Government support, the school is receiving support from development partners because it is an integrated school for both refugees and the host community.
Keyo Secondary School in Amuru District too has excess desks for the current enrollment with a desk-pupil ratio of 1:2.
Pupils in the P.2 class at Anaka P7 School in Nwoya District. The learners have adequate sitting space and plenty of learning materials including those for children with disabilities.
Pupils in one of the classrooms at Lukutua Primary school in Yumbe Town Council with a desk-pupil ratio of 1:7. All learners in P.1 and P.2 sit on the floor and the classrooms are too congested making teaching and learning almost impossible. The general desk-pupil ratio in Yumbe District is 1:6. There are many schools with learners in the lower classes sitting on the floor.
The P.1 class at Limidia Primary School still in Yumbe District is over crowded with 275 learners.
This risky and condemned mud and wattle structure with two rooms is the only facility at Namakeba Public Primary School in Buvuma District. In this structure, the P.7 and P.6 classes share a 7x4 metres room where teachers teach in turns. The school has no infrastructure; no latrine, and the children and teachers ease themselves in the bushes.
Pupils in class under the trees at Namakeba Public Primary School. With the exception of P.6 and P.7, all the other classes at the school are conducted under the trees. Learners’ attention is constantly disrupted by the hustle and bustle of the community and having to trek about 1/3 a km to the bush to ease themselves. Being in the open and criss-crossed by community paths, the school environment is not conducive for learning.
A class room divided into two at Bukibumbi Primary School located in Bukalasi Sub County in Bududa District. The school has only three classrooms in a permanent structure, two of which are divided to serve two classes each, P.1/P.3 and P.2/P.6.
A classroom at Nakapiripirit Seed School in Nakapiripirit District with part converted into a dormitory at night. Nakapiripirit has only two secondary schools making them inaccessible because of the long distances students have to walk. As such, boarding is sometimes not an option but students are forced to stay at school despite the school not having proper dormitories or even bathrooms.
An improvised dormitory for girls at Lukutua Primary School in Yumbe District. As a result of the high enrollment of 1,672 learners, the classrooms are congested, but the school administration converted two of the classrooms into dormitories. The learners sleep on the floor, ventilation is inadequate and the door is broken making it unsafe.
Physical access for children with disabilities

The science laboratories at Kuru Secondary School in Yumbe District. In most of the schools visited, the newly constructed infrastructure has provision for ramps to ease accessibility for children with disabilities.
The main classroom block at Ayer Seed School in Kole District. The building has a proper ramp up to the top floor to ease accessibility for children with disabilities.
The main classroom block at Purongo Seed School in Nwoya District constructed with a ramp up to the top floor. Unfortunately, the ramp is not well maintained.
A very steep ramp and narrow verandah at Kitiko Primary School in Buvuma District. Entrance to and exit from the classrooms is also hindered if a pupil is using a wheel chair. In some schools, ramps are poorly constructed just to tick the requirements box but they are not suitable for the intended purpose.
A physically handicapped S.2 student at Yumbe Secondary School struggling to access his classroom. Yumbe Secondary School is the oldest school in the district and as such most of the infrastructure is old and has not had any renovations done. Majority of the buildings do not have ramps.
With an enrollment of 22 learners and only three Braille typewriters, Moyo Girls Primary School Annex for the Blind in Moyo District is struggling with learning materials for the children with visual impairment.
Braille typewriter at Moyo Girls Primary School in Moyo District.
A P.2 teacher at Anaka P7 School in Nwoya District. On display are learning materials for children with disabilities. In this class there are some learners with partial visual and hearing impairment. Teacher Eunice reserves them seats at the front.
Availability and state of latrines, separate latrines for boys and girls, and special separate latrines for children with disabilities

Omuge P7 School in Bala Sub County Kole District has good provision for latrines (16 in total for an enrollment of 1,327) for boys and girls including special latrines for children with disabilities. Despite having a P.1 pupil who uses a wheel chair, the latrines intended for children with disabilities, just like in many schools, are left open for general use leaving them very dirty.
A latrine at Kalas Girls’ Primary School in Amudat District with one well maintained room for children with disabilities.
A special latrine for children with disabilities at the newly constructed Nairambi Seed School in Buvuma District.
Open and condemned latrines used by staff and learners in the boarding section at Buvuma College in Buvuma District. However, the school has some newly constructed latrines at the upper section used by day students and staff.
A latrine at Limidia Primary School in Yumbe District meant for children with disabilities but being used by the teachers because they (teachers) do not have latrines.
A latrine at Kisaalizi Primary School in Kibaale District. Majority of the latrines in this school are old and almost full.
With an enrollment of 296 learners, Nakapiripirit Seed School in Nakapiripirit District has only one latrine with three stances used by both students and the teachers. The one meant for children with disabilities is used by girls. All the latrines are poorly maintained, very dirty and the ramp on the special latrine meant for children with disabilities is damaged and unusable.
Availability of functional hand washing facilities and safe water within the school

A functional hand washing facility at Mijale Primary School in Adjumani District. Many schools had hand washing facilities but they were not functional.
Most of the schools visited in northern Uganda have access to clean and safe water. The most common source is borehole. Here at Purongo Hill Primary School, they have access to both tap water and borehole.
In addition to the borehole at Itula Secondary School in Moyo District, the school received rainwater tanks in 2018 courtesy of the Development Response to Displacement Impact Project.
Students of Pokot Secondary School in Amudat District carrying water from the river which is 2-3kms away. In Karamoja, access to safe and clean water is a major challenge and this is negatively impacting on the girl child. The Government tried to sink three boreholes at the school in 2001, 2004 and 2006 but failed because of the terrain; the school is in a rocky area.
Students of Namalu Seed School in Nakapiripirit District fetching water at a community borehole. The borehole is found in a valley about 1.5kms away and the students have to carry the jerrycans up a steep hill.
Menstrual hygiene management and availability of washrooms and changing rooms

A changing room for girls at Namorotot Primary School in Nakapiripirit District. The school has emergency sanitary towels too.
A special water borne toilet for girls as well as a changing room at Bukalasi Secondary School in Bududa District.
Availability of teachers’ houses

Unlike many schools, Otwee Public School in Amuru District has 14 units of staff houses constructed with the help of USAID and Government of Uganda.
The newly constructed staff quarters at Itula Secondary School in Moyo District. Before 2018, the staff were accommodated in the grass thatched houses in the foreground.
Grass thatched houses housing teachers at Kuru Secondary School in Yumbe District. Other teachers commute from Yumbe Town which is about 3kms from the school.
Grass thatched houses used by teachers at Purongo Hill Primary School in Nwoya District. Only the Head teacher and deputy occupy a permanent structure.
A newly constructed fence at Omuge Primary School in Kole District. The project is being done with the help of parents.
Anaka P7 School in Nwoya District has a wire mesh for a school fence. The school is safe and secure.
Children playing at Akalo Primary School in Kole District. The school has no fence thus exposing pupils to high security risks especially since there’s a path going through the school.