



Education
Partnerships
Group

A review of Uganda's Universal Secondary Education Public Private Partnership programme

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Education systems the world over are failing to give disadvantaged children the learning opportunities and outcomes they need to succeed in life.

The Education Partnerships Group (EPG) is a charity that works with Governments to shape and strengthen their education systems. We believe that ultimately no intervention to improve the quality of education can be sustainable and scalable without a system in which all actors are clear about their responsibilities; are held accountable for them; and understand how to access support.

We also believe that every child has the right to a high quality education, wherever they go to school, which means it's important to think about the non-state sector as well as Government-run schools.

We work across three main areas:

1. Helping Governments think about the organisational structure of their system and where responsibilities lie. This could involve designing a public private partnership that gives Government the right to regulate quality in private schools in return for providing a subsidy. Or it could mean bringing privately run schools into the state system. Or devolving power over Government schools downwards to give Local Government and Headteachers more control.

2. Helping Governments think about the way they hold their system accountable for children's learning. This could involve designing a school evaluation model and helping to roll it out. Or using school-level data to develop improved metrics for understanding performance.

3. Helping Governments develop processes for how to better support schools. Accountability data doesn't improve systems by itself, it must be used to identify schools' support needs and the best available interventions to provide this support. We can help build frameworks to do this using the latest research and evidence.

We also evaluate all our work and disseminate this research as widely as possible so we can contribute to the global debate on these vitally important topics.

EPG has an active portfolio of engagements in South Africa, Uganda, Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone and India, and is growing a pipeline of opportunities in other countries in Africa and Asia.

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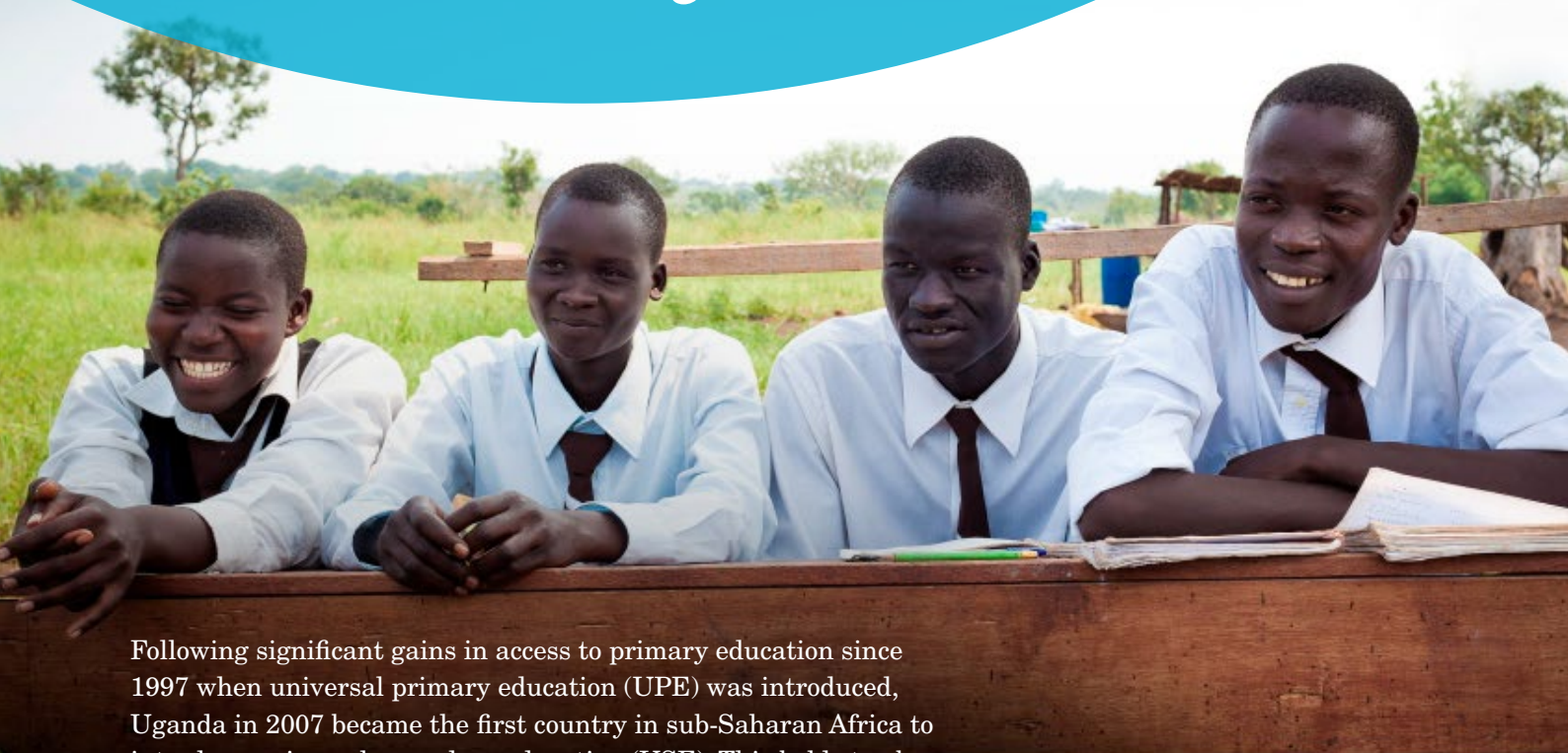
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Acronyms

BoG	Board of Governors
DES	Directorate of Education Standards
DFID	Department for International Development
EMIS	Education Management Information System
GoU	Government of Uganda
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAPE	National Assessment of Progress in Education
PLE	Primary Leaving Examination
PPP	Public Private Partnership
UPPET	Universal Post Primary Education and Training
USE	Universal Secondary Education

Executive summary



Following significant gains in access to primary education since 1997 when universal primary education (UPE) was introduced, Uganda in 2007 became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to introduce universal secondary education (USE). This bold step by the Government of Uganda led to an increase in lower secondary enrolment of nearly 25% between 2007 and 2012.¹

However, the challenge to expand secondary school enrolment remains immense. Net enrolment in secondary education — estimated by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) to be 25 percent in 2015² — is among the lowest in East Africa. Meanwhile the secondary-school age population is rapidly increasing, finances are constrained, and there is a growing need to improve quality along with access.

Since USE was launched in 2007, a Public Private Partnership (PPP) has been a part of Government plans to expand access to secondary education. Under the PPP, the Government transfers a subsidy of 47,000 UGX per student per term to private USE schools. The programme grew from 363 schools in 2007 to more than 800 in 2016, covering nearly a third of all students enrolled in secondary school in Uganda.

2007

Uganda became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to introduce universal secondary education (USE).

¹ Barrera-Orsorio, F.; De Galbert, P.; Habyarimana, J.; Sabarwal, S. (2016), 'Impact of public-private partnerships on private school performance: evidence from a randomized controlled trial in Uganda'. Policy Research working paper; no. WPS 7905; WDR 2018 background paper. Washington, D.C. World Bank Group.

² According to UBOS statistical abstract, 2017



Despite success in expanding school access, problems with implementation of the PPP, and aims to expand public delivery of secondary education, have led to calls for the phase-out of the programme. Amidst uncertainty about the future of PPPs in education in Uganda, and the pressing need to expand secondary provision, EPG, with the support of the UK Department for International Development, set out to review the existing PPP. The review aims to address a specific request by the MoES Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Working Group to support MoES in making evidence-based decisions about secondary education expansion in Uganda. After gathering and analysing the available evidence, the results of that review are presented in this report.

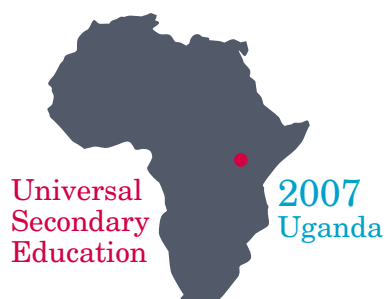
Our overall conclusion is that the PPP has played an important role in increasing secondary education access cost-effectively. For example, research shows that approximately 30% of students enrolled in PPP schools, representing about 130,000 students in total, wouldn't be enrolled were it not for the Government subsidy.³ Our analysis also shows that it is less costly for Government to subsidise PPP schools than fund alternative public provision. But the PPP has weaknesses, particularly in terms of accountability to Government, and it must be improved. Potential actions for an improved partnership framework are outlined in our conclusions and policy implications.

“

Approximately 30% of students enrolled in PPP schools wouldn't be enrolled were it not for the government subsidy


3 Barrera-Osorio, F.; De Galbert, P.; Habyarimana, J.; Sabarwal, S. (2016).

Background



Public Private Partnership



1/3 of all students enrolled in a secondary school in Uganda are part of the PPP programme 

In 2007 Uganda launched 'Universal Secondary Education' to make secondary education more accessible, particularly for the increased number of children graduating from primary school as a result of universal primary education, launched in 1997.

A key part of that policy was a 'Public Private Partnership' with existing private schools to make them more affordable for students and families and therefore increase enrolment.

Since 2007, the PPP programme has grown substantially. Starting with 363 schools in 2007 enrolling approximately 40,000 students, the programme has grown to over 800 schools enrolling nearly half a million students, or nearly one-third of all students enrolled in all types of secondary schools in Uganda.

24%

Net enrolment to secondary education in 2016



Nevertheless, Uganda still has low enrolment overall in secondary education, with the Ministry of Education and Sports estimating net enrolment to be 24 percent in 2016.

Further, despite its size and relative importance, there are several challenges in the design and implementation of the current PPP programme which undermine its potential effectiveness.

In 2014, His Excellency President Museveni made the first of several statements stating that the PPP programme should be ended and the money which would have otherwise gone to subsidise students' education in private PPP schools should be utilised to construct new Government secondary schools. This is to help achieve the Government's stated commitment to make sure there is at least one Government secondary school in every sub-county.



The proposed reversal of this PPP could potentially be problematic for two reasons:

1. The current PPP programme is large and a withdrawal of financial support to PPP schools could pose a risk to the continued access of many students;
2. It could prevent the Government from leveraging the opportunities presented by the non-state sector to improve quality of education and leverage increased financing into the sector, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 which calls for all possible financing streams to be harnessed for education.

To prevent the education of many children in PPP schools being put at risk, and to address some of the design and implementation flaws of the current PPP, there is a need to reconsider the policy framework of the current PPP and its suitability of purpose; the performance, quality and costs of PPP schools relative to other types of schools; and the views and opinions of stakeholders with an interest in this PPP and the concept of Government partnership with non-state actors more broadly.



To prevent the education of many children in PPP schools being put at risk, and to address some of the design and implementation flaws of the current PPP, there is need to reconsider the policy framework of the current PPP and its suitability of purpose.

Project objectives and key questions

The Ministry of Education and Sports, with support from the UK Department for International Development, commissioned EPG to review the current USE PPP programme. The objective of the review is to support MoES in making evidence-based decisions on expanding secondary provision in Uganda. An important part of this is to understand how effective partnerships could be a part of secondary school expansion. The terms of reference were agreed with the M&E Working Group in September 2016. Under that agreement, the review seeks to respond to the following guiding questions:

What has been the contribution of the current PPP model in helping to deliver secondary education in Uganda?

We analyse available data to understand the contribution the USE PPP makes to the secondary education sector.

What governs the current PPP and how appropriate is this framework?

We address this by analysing the policy framework governing the current PPP and assessing its suitability against key criteria.

What is the performance, quality and cost of PPP schools and how does this compare to other types of schools?

To answer this, we analyse available data and also conduct primary research into a nationally representative sample of secondary schools.

To help address the above questions, we also consulted a range of stakeholders to help understand perceived strengths and weaknesses of the current PPP, and opinions on how it should and could be changed.



The objective of the review is to support MoES in making evidence-based decisions on expanding secondary provision in Uganda.

Within the overall objective for the PPP review we seek to:

1. **Enhance** the evidence base on the impact of the PPP schools in the Ugandan secondary school education system, through conducting primary research into the relative cost, quality and performance of PPP schools relative to other types of schools.
2. **Analyse** how the policy framework for PPPs in Uganda can be improved, by reviewing the coverage and suitability of existing policies and governance structures and identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement.
3. **Understand** the views of key stakeholders in secondary and non-state education provision, to ensure that future PPP policy development considers a range of stakeholder perspectives.
4. **Provide** the MoES with recommendations for revising the PPP framework, based on the findings of the primary research and policy review as well as an analysis of the Ugandan education budget.



Overall, this primary research provided evidence that USE PPP schools deliver a similar level of quality as Government schools but at a lower cost.

Key findings from primary research

EPG compared a nationally representative sample of USE PPP schools, Government USE schools, and private schools. Overall, this primary research provided evidence that USE PPP schools deliver a similar level of quality as Government schools but at a lower cost.

- There is little difference between the academic performance of government USE and PPP schools — with USE PPP schools providing only slightly better quality education than Government USE schools according to the School Effectiveness Measure (SEM) adopted by UNEB. SEM measures how much all students progress during their time in secondary school to provide an assessment of the quality of the school.
- PPP schools achieve similar academic performance despite teachers being paid around 25% less and having less experience and fewer qualifications.
- There is a strong positive correlation between how well managed a school is and its performance; well-managed schools get better

student results. This indicates that improving school management across all types of school would be a good area for intervention and support.

- Government USE schools charge at least as much in overall student fees (including tuition and any other fees such as admissions, exams, uniforms, or library fees) as PPP schools. Government USE schools also receive more in total resources from Government, once student grants and teacher salaries are considered.
- USE PPP schools on average have been less frequently inspected due to limited resources, which has exacerbated a problem of limited accountability of PPP schools.



Government USE schools charge at least as much in overall student fees as PPP schools.



Key findings from a review of the policy environment

EPG reviewed the existing policy documents related to the plans and governance of the PPP. This review of the policy environment includes analysis of the policy intent, policy implementation, and legality of the PPP.

- There are clear regulations regarding the establishment of private schools and enrolling in the PPP. Over 800 schools have successfully enrolled on the PPP programme. Few incentives and lower funding than Government-aided USE have not prevented the enrolment of schools in the PPP programme.
- However, the legal status of PPP schools is unclear within the provisions of the 2008 Education Act or 2015 PPP Act. Rectifying this could help strengthen the link — both real and perceived — between the Government of Uganda and PPP schools.
- There are also weaknesses with what should be the primary tool of accountability for the PPP — the memorandum of understanding. The tools and processes which the MoU makes provision for and which would help to hold schools accountable are, for the most part, not utilised. Further, the memorandum of understanding is not a part of the current PPP legal framework.
- Nevertheless, in reality PPP schools have substantive freedoms to manage themselves, including recruiting and managing their own teachers. This is a strength of the PPP but also a cause for criticism and concern from some stakeholders. The policy framework puts certain restrictions on schools' autonomies but such restrictions have been difficult to enforce.



The practice of inspections is weak and inconsistent and, due to limited resources, applied in less frequency to PPP schools.



Students must score 28 or better on their primary leaving exam (PLE) in order to be eligible for a Government-funded place in a PPP school. This means nearly one-fifth of students eligible for secondary school are not eligible for a Government-subsidised secondary school place.

- The inspection framework exists on paper for all types of schools, including PPP. There are also guidelines for the inspection of PPP schools. However, the practice of inspections is weak and inconsistent and, due to limited resources, applied in less frequency to PPP schools. There is little follow-up to inspection and little connection between inspection or other measures of performance with any sanctions or rewards.
- Students must score 28 or better on their primary leaving exam (PLE) in order to be eligible for a Government-funded place in a PPP school. This means nearly one-fifth of students eligible for secondary school are not eligible for a Government-subsidised secondary school place. Given constraints on school financing and places, it is a challenge to ensure that the USE initiative is equitable.
- The regulation regarding the ability of PPP schools to charge fees is unclear in the policy framework. Guidelines are confusing and in some places inconsistent.
- The PPP intended to target areas in most need of additional access to secondary school provision. It has only been partially successful in achieving this; there are still many sub-counties without a Government-funded secondary school, or any school at all.


 A photograph of two young boys in school uniforms. The boy on the left is smiling and looking down at a project on a table. The boy on the right is looking towards the camera. A large blue curved shape is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing a quote.

Stakeholders generally agree that PPP interventions should be carefully targeted at those areas most in need of additional provision.

Key findings from stakeholder consultations

We circulated a self-administered questionnaire to a range of education stakeholders from Ugandan civil society with differing perspectives on PPP policy issues. The questionnaire asked for respondents' opinions and perceptions on various aspects of implementation of the PPP.

- **Purpose.**

Stakeholders from different perspectives generally agree about the importance of working with the non-state sector in delivery of public education objectives. Stakeholders believe that the PPP in education must continue because Government cannot afford to expand universal education at all levels, and commonly see education as a shared responsibility between parents, communities, private sector and Government.

- **Fees.**

Stakeholders generally agree that the level of the per student capitation grant should increase. The stakeholders overwhelmingly acknowledge that the level of financing to PPP schools is inadequate. They also agree that there is value in Government providing different levels of funding to schools because it would demonstrate Government's commitment to action to improve quality in rural and poorer communities. Stakeholders generally agree that

the Government should regulate how much in fees parents pay to deter schools from charging exorbitant fees.

- **Targeting.**

Stakeholders generally agree that PPP interventions should be carefully targeted at those areas most in need of additional provision.

- **Partner selection.**

A majority of the stakeholders believe that the criteria and the selection process should be improved, including an assessment of operators' track record on quality.

- **Accountability.**

While there is awareness about how information is collected and by whom, there is little understanding of how the Ministry reviews or monitors performance of PPP schools, or how MoES holds PPP schools accountable. They agreed that Government should have MoU agreements which are time bound, reviewed, and that allow for early termination on grounds of poor performance and lack of accountability. All the responding stakeholders report that they are not aware of the Ministry terminating any MoUs for PPP schools up to this point.

- **Branding.**

Stakeholders generally agreed that the contribution of Government to PPP schools is not clearly acknowledged, but that it was important that it be acknowledged.



Conclusion

Implications from PPP review findings

The findings outlined in this review have led to the conclusion that there is a role for non-state actors in delivering education in Uganda, but any partnership between Government and non-state actors must be governed through a new and better framework. The analysis has pointed to weaknesses of the PPP scheme in terms of generating quality improvements, as well as a lack of clear policy guidelines in the engagement of non-state actors. Furthermore, challenges have been repeatedly identified related to lack of public understanding about the PPP framework and Government's role.

Four key concepts have emerged to outline a way forward. These concepts and recommended policy actions are outlined below. A new policy framework that defines the partnership between Government and non-state education providers and ensures the expansion of quality secondary education should be based upon:

FOUR KEY CONCEPTS

1. Accountability
2. Visibility
3. Affordability
4. 'Deliverability'



1. Accountability

- **Strengthen Government oversight of non-state partners.**

Government is the guarantor of education for all and must have strong oversight of non-state partners, including requirements for financial transparency and improved systems to monitor the use of public funds.

- **Increase the rigour of the partner selection and commissioning process and link it to quality.**

The selection process should include a review of schools' operational models and should check alignment with MoES objectives, to ensure that Government is partnering with capable and reliable partners. Partners should also be selected based on their track record in education service delivery and plans for achieving quality learning outcomes for students.

- **Clarify the legal and governance structures around partnership schools.**

Partnership schools should have to sign legally binding, time-limited agreements with Government, which incorporate metrics focussed on student learning outcomes.

- **Improve accountability through more rigorous and targeted inspections.**

Inspections should focus on observed practice with regard to school management and teaching and learning. Inspections should be targeted at poorly performing schools and used as a method of sanctioning schools and promoting school improvement.



2. Visibility

- **Improve public awareness of Government contribution to any future public-private partnership through clearer branding.**

Partnership schools under a new framework should be rebranded so that Government contribution is clearly communicated and acknowledged.



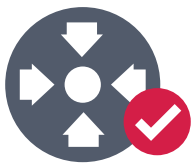
3. Affordability

- **Ensure cost-effectiveness for Government.**

A new model should be a part of Government's plan to make rapid progress on USE in a way that is achievable and sustainable.

- **Ensure affordability for poor families.**

As with the existing PPP model, any new partnership model should aim to expand access to secondary education for disadvantaged communities. For example, higher capitation grants could be offered as incentives for those willing to establish schools in poorer, more rural areas, which would enable them to lower their fees and make access more affordable and equitable.



4. ‘Deliverability’

- **Select partners that are aligned with MoES objectives.**

Partners should be clearly aligned with the MoES objectives of delivering quality and equitable education for all.

- **Develop a more manageable structure with fewer partners.**

MoES could work with groups or networks of schools to reduce administrative burdens.

- **Target the location of partnership schools strategically with a focus on equity.**

Partnership schools should agree to operate only in areas identified by MoES as priorities, where disadvantaged communities are located and where existing capacity is insufficient to meet demand.



As with the existing PPP model, any new partnership model should aim to expand access to secondary education for disadvantaged communities.

Phasing out the existing PPP scheme could be a first step to creating a partnership model through which MoES can leverage the support of non-state actors to more rapidly and cost-effectively expand secondary education, while also ensuring that any new model is manageable, accountable, and aligned with Government objectives for the sector.

Introduction

Uganda launched Universal Secondary Education (USE) in 2007, following the ruling National Resistance Movement's manifesto of 2006 which promised all children would be able to attend secondary school. At the time, Uganda's net enrolment rate at secondary level stood at between just 19.8 and 21.3 percent⁴. To address this, and with funding support from the World Bank, Uganda launched the USE programme which had the following objectives:

- **increasing** equitable access to universal post primary education and training (UPPET);
- **assuring** achievement of the Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in education delivery by 2015;
- **enhancing** sustainability of the universal primary education (UPE); and,
- **reducing** the high costs of UPPET.⁵

To achieve this, USE had three main modalities:

1. An experiment with double-shifting in Government-aided secondary schools;
2. A programme of construction of Government-aided 'seed' secondary schools in sub-counties without secondary schools;
3. A Public Private Partnership (PPP) with existing private schools to provide greater access to secondary schooling. This was to *"improve efficiency, strengthen partnerships with the private sector, improve targeting of resources to schools that are in particular need of support, and mobilize external resources"*.⁶

Since 2007, a Public Private Partnership (PPP) with existing private schools has been a part of the Government of Uganda's plans to expand access to secondary education and achieve Universal Secondary Education (USE). The PPP has helped to increase enrolment in secondary education, but the programme has several flaws. His Excellency President Museveni has publically shared doubts over the contribution made by the PPP and its costs, and has directed MoES to phase out the current programme. The role that the PPP has played in USE to date, and uncertainty about the future of any secondary education PPP in Uganda, have meant that there is need to review the Government's current policy of working with PPP schools in detail. EPG has undertaken research and analysis to review the existing PPP with the endorsement of the M&E Working Group in 2016.

⁴ 9.8% from World Bank Data Bank — UIS estimate; 21.3% from 'Ministry of Education and Sports sector fact sheet 2002 – 2016'.

⁵ 'Implementation of Universal Post Primary Education and Training (UPPET) and Universal Post O-level Education and Training (UPOLET) — Policy Guidelines for the Public Private Partnership Schools.'

⁶ World Bank, Project Appraisal Document for Uganda Post Primary Education Training (PAD-UPPET). Adaptable Program Lending (APL1) Project (2009)

This review focuses on the third modality, that of public-private partnership. This is for two main reasons.

First, the PPP programme in Uganda is an important part of the secondary sub-sector. When the PPP launched in 2007, 363 private providers of low-cost secondary education in 314 sub-counties without a Government-aided school joined the programme. They enrolled between 40,595⁷ and 44,944 senior one students, as only senior one was eligible in the first cohort.^{8,9} Since then, the PPP programme has grown to about 800 schools which have signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Education and Sports. In 2016 these schools enrolled over 460,000 students, which represented 46.2 percent of those students enrolled under the USE programme, and 32 percent of all students enrolled in secondary school in Uganda.¹⁰

Second, there is substantial uncertainty around the future of the PPP in its current form in Uganda. Since early 2014, His Excellency President Museveni has publicly shared doubts over the contribution made by the PPP and expressed his desire for recurrent expenditure to PPP schools to be instead used for the construction of Government secondary schools.¹¹ Doubts have been expressed about PPP schools' accountability for performance and for the use of public funds. Moreover, there is a lack of clarity amongst the public about Government's role in supporting these schools.

Therefore, given the size of the PPP programme and its significant contribution to the secondary education sector, as well as the criticisms levelled against it and its uncertain future, it is necessary to review the PPP programme. A decade since its introduction, it is an appropriate time to revisit the PPP and consider the quality of the policy framework governing it and analyse the effectiveness of schools operating within it. The objective of the review is to support MoES in making evidence-based decisions on expanding secondary provision in Uganda. As agreed with the M&E Working Group, this includes providing recommendations for how effective public-private partnership frameworks can be established in the Ugandan context, to ensure that PPP is part of the



There is substantial uncertainty around the future of the PPP in its current form in Uganda.

Government's broader plans to provide accessible, quality public secondary education. This work was agreed with and endorsed by the M&E Working Group in late 2016.

The review seeks to:

1. Enhance the evidence base on the impact of the PPP schools in the Ugandan secondary school education system, through conducting primary research into the relative cost, quality and performance of PPP schools relative to other types of schools.
2. Research how the policy framework for PPPs in Uganda can be improved, by analysing the coverage and suitability of existing policies and governance structures and identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement.
3. Understand the views of key stakeholders in secondary and non-state education provision, to ensure that future PPP policy development considers a range of stakeholder perspectives.

It is important to note that this review has not appraised schools' compliance to existing policy and regulations; as discussed below, other studies have made assessments on the extent of schools' regulatory compliance. We have elected not to do this because school and student outcomes in terms of academic performance, and observed quality of teaching and management practices, are of more interest and utility in attempting to define policy recommendations than an assessment of inputs and compliance with regulations. Furthermore, an analysis of the level of compliance to existing policy would be of limited utility when those very policies and regulations are themselves part of the review and are being analysed for their suitability and appropriateness.

7 MoES Factsheet 2016.

8 Proposed World Bank Support for the implementation of USE programme, Technical paper No. 8 'Draft policy and framework for provision of quality education in private secondary schools under USE programme'.

9 General implementation guidelines for Universal Secondary Education (USE), November 2006.

10 MoES Factsheet 2002–2016

11 <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/President-orders-scrapping-of-private-schools-from-USE/688334-2486732-qiw39az/index.html>

A review of the evidence on PPPs in education

International evidence

In many countries, school-age populations are increasing and government budgets are constrained, placing governments under considerable pressure to deliver education in a more effective, efficient and equitable manner. This need has often outpaced growth in government capacity to deliver education. As a result, more and more parents are sending children to private schools, including non-state schools run by NGOs or faith-based organisations and community schools. Public private partnerships (PPPs) — whereby governments partner with non-states actors who are responsible for some portion of the financing, management or delivery of education — have emerged to help ensure that non-state providers of education are contributing to the overall education system in alignment with government priorities and regulations.

In the global context, there is strong interest in understanding the contribution of PPPs to improving access to education, particularly for the poor, and education quality. With few rigorous studies completed to date, the evidence is limited. PPP arrangements come in different forms, with various contractual arrangements, funding mechanisms, ownerships structures and accountability procedures. In 2016, EPG commissioned an independent review of the evidence on the impacts of different forms of education PPPs.¹² This review found modest positive evidence of a relationship between the use of public subsidies to non-state schools and improvements in student learning.¹³ Although there is potential for PPPs to improve education access and quality, the review overall identified a need for more data on PPPs, and suggested that governments pilot new approaches to PPPs carefully and gather evidence to inform policy decisions.

The evidence to date on the effectiveness of PPPs in education is limited. Few rigorous studies have been implemented either in Uganda or other developing country contexts. A rigorous review commissioned by EPG last year concluded that the evidence on the impact of education PPPs is overall positive but not very strong and further piloting and evaluation of PPPs is much needed. Several small-scale quantitative and qualitative studies of the PPP in Uganda have concluded that the PPP has helped to increase secondary school enrolment but have raised questions about whether the PPP has improved equity or quality. There is consensus in the existing literature about the need for greater monitoring and oversight of the PPP by Government.

¹² Aslam, M., Rawal S., Saeed S., (2017), 'Public-Private Partnerships in Education in Developing Countries: A Rigorous Review of the Evidence', Ark

¹³ The review included analysis of examples in seven different contexts (Colombia, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Venezuela) of government subsidies to private or faith-based schools. It concluded that there is some evidence to support the claim that these programmes have the potential to improve learning although there were limitations to the methodologies of some of the studies reviewed.

Assessing the PPP in Uganda: studies to date

On the secondary education PPP in Uganda specifically, the most rigorous study to date was commissioned by the World Bank.¹⁴ This robust, randomised control trial showed that the PPP policy was effective in improving access to, and quality of, private schools. 101 schools were selected to participate in this study. All of the schools were private schools which wanted to join the PPP programme. Half of these schools, chosen at random, joined the PPP programme in 2011. The other half joined the programme in 2012. The research looked at the difference in performance of these two groups of private schools. The RCT found the following:

- The PPP programme succeeded in absorbing a considerable number of students. Enrolment increased in senior 1–3 in those schools participating in the programme by an average of 34–38 in each year group.
- Students performed better in PPP schools. NAPE (National Assessment of Progress in Education) test results indicated that students in PPP schools achieve higher scores in English, mathematics and biology than students in other private schools. The measured learning gains of between 0.2 and 0.25 standard deviations are statistically significant for English and maths, but not for biology.
- More teachers were present in class at PPP schools. Schools inside and outside of the PPP programme employed a similar number of teachers, with similar levels of qualifications. However, teachers were 21% more likely to be absent in non-PPP private schools.
- More science laboratories were built in PPP schools. This was the only discernible impact on infrastructure.
- School governance was very similar in PPP schools. In PPP schools, governing bodies discussed teacher motivation more and infrastructure less. There were no changes

to frequency of meetings, or attendance of governors. Concerns that public funding through the PPP programme would lessen the involvement of parents in the management of the school were not realised.

- Schools in the PPP programme had a higher rate of survival. A total of seven schools closed permanently throughout the entirety of the study, with two closing from treatment schools and five from control.



This robust, randomised control trial showed that the PPP policy was effective in improving access to, and quality of, private schools.

It should be noted that the research did not compare the performance of Government, PPP and private schools. Therefore, the findings of the RCT do not provide answers as to whether PPP schools are more effective in imparting learning than Government schools and therefore are not fully relevant to the broader question of the value of choosing a PPP modality over Government school construction to expand access.¹⁵ This policy review aims to address this by collecting data on both PPP and Government-aided schools, in order to make credible comparisons to attempt to identify lessons for policy making.

A World Bank note on 'Private Schools and Public Private Partnerships' lays out arguments both for and against the PPP.¹⁶ It expresses some concerns about the performance of PPP schools compared to Government-aided schools, according to NAPE (National Assessment for Progress in Education). However, the note points out that the much lower funding available to PPP schools, and the likelihood of them operating in more rural and challenging areas, may be cited as reasons for this. Further, the note argues that the PPP programme should continue and not be phased-out, due to the following: 1) still unmet need in many under-served areas; 2) the relative affordability of PPP schools; and 3) the cost-savings the policy presents for the Government of Uganda.

14 Barrera-Orsorio, F.; De Galbert, P.; Habyarimana, J.; Sabarwal, S. (2016), 'Impact of public-private partnerships on private school performance: evidence from a randomized controlled trial in Uganda'. Policy Research working paper; no. WPS 7905; WDR 2018 background paper. Washington, D.C. World Bank Group.

15 Aslam, M., Rawal S., Saeed S., (2017), 'Public-Private Partnerships in Education in Developing Countries: A Rigorous Review of the Evidence', Ark

16 Wodon, Q., Tsimo, C., (2016), 'Note no. 7 — Education, Private schools and public private partnerships', SABER Equity and Inclusion Program, World Bank Group

The other available literature on the PPP in Uganda focuses mainly on assessments of the extent to which the USE PPP has met its intended objectives and whether it is implemented according to its guidelines, based primarily on qualitative and perception data drawn from relatively small samples of schools. There is little rigorous, empirical research which compares the relative quality, performance and costs of PPP schools compared to equivalent Government-aided and private schools.

The Economic and Policy Research Centre (EPRC) conducted qualitative research in 61 PPP schools and assessed the performance of the PPP programme according to modified version of the analytical framework in OECD's seven standard aid evaluation criteria.¹⁷ The study concluded that the PPP is performing moderately well in terms of good accountability, relevance, effectiveness, impact and participation, but that it is performing poorly in terms of efficiency and sustainability. Particular challenges were identified with compliance to PPP regulations, partly due to lack of knowledge about those regulations. However, it should be noted that these assessments were based primarily on the perceptions of PPP school leaders interviewed for the study. Further, analysis of 'impact', 'effectiveness' and 'overall performance' were based on measurements of inputs and compliance, rather than on objective data on student learning outcomes. Nevertheless, the report made two recommendations which resonate with other studies, primarily to increase the capitation amount and to improve monitoring of schools with stricter enforcement of regulations.

EPRC also conducted a cost-benefit analysis of the UPPET programme.¹⁸ This found that, overall, the programme is sustainable as it yields a positive 2:3 cost-benefit ratio, due to the higher earning potential of students who attend and finish secondary school. However, this study analysed the UPPET programme as a whole and did not disaggregate the cost-benefit ratio of the PPP component individually. Given the substantial contribution PPP makes to USE — 48% of USE schools and 46% of USE students — it can be surmised that the PPP itself is sustainable and



The study concluded that the PPP is performing moderately well in terms of good accountability, relevance, effectiveness, impact and participation, but that it is performing poorly in terms of efficiency and sustainability.¹⁷

presents a positive cost-benefit ratio. However, this is not substantiated by discrete data or analysis.

The Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) have also conducted research into the PPP.¹⁹ This mostly qualitative study makes the following key claims and recommendations:

- Despite increases in enrolment since the launch of the PPP, access has not been increased in an equitable way, either geographically or for groups of vulnerable students. The ISER study recommends that need analysis be conducted on areas before Government partners with private schools through PPP. It also recommends 'social impact assessments' to ensure PPP will be beneficial to their communities.
- PPP schools do not provide the intended high quality of education, though this assessment was based on an assessment of inputs and infrastructure in a small number of PPP schools, rather than a comparative analysis of academic performance. The study recommends that schools which fail to comply with standards are withdrawn from partnership.
- As with EPRC's recommendations, the ISER paper recommends that the current capitation amount is insufficient to meet schools' operational costs and that the grant should be increased, including in line with inflation, while at the same time regulating what fees schools can charge.

17 Kasiye, I., Barungi, M., (2015), 'Performance of Public-Private Partnerships in delivering social services: The Case of Universal Secondary Education Policy Implementation in Uganda', EPRC Policy brief no. 52

18 Ssewanyana, S., Okoboi, G., Kasiye, I., (2011), 'Cost benefit analysis of the Uganda post-primary education and training expansion and improvement (PPETEL) project', EPRC Research Series No. 86.

19 A threat of opportunity? Public-Private Partnerships in Education in Uganda, ISER, 2016



The existing research papers are generally aligned in their claims that the PPP capitation amount should increase and that greater Government monitoring and oversight of the PPP is needed.

- Again, as with EPRC's analysis, that PPP schools are not sufficiently monitored or supervised by the Government, which is failing in its responsibility to do so, thereby negatively affecting quality of education and performance. They recommend the Ministry of Education and Sports should conduct stricter monitoring and enforce stricter compliance.

While the above recommendations are broadly sensible and chime with those made in other studies, it must be noted that the research findings upon which they are based are drawn from a small study sample of schools, only 28 in total. Therefore, the study relies upon case study and anecdotal evidence. While such information is useful for illustrative purposes, with such a small number of schools it is difficult to draw rigorous findings. Further, it must be noted that the data collection methodology is unclear and that the qualitative data collected was through 'intentional observation', with no further information given on specific tools. This review attempts to redress these challenges by collecting data in 200 schools, using established data collection tools and methodologies, to provide statistical power to the analysis.

Finally, Bo Joe-Brans' (2014) masters thesis study suggested that the USE PPP suffers from a lack of 'true partnership', either in design or implementation.²⁰ This asymmetry in roles and responsibility between Government and private partners leads to a lack of effectiveness of the programme, due to weak accountability of schools to Government. This finding echoes that of the other studies summarised above. Further, the analysis suggests that further discussion with a wider group of stakeholders about the design and implementation of PPP would be a sensible way to improve PPP. Greater engagement with more stakeholders could improve transparency and help to drive educational quality.

Conclusion: summarizing the evidence

Overall, the existing literature presents a mixed view of the PPP and there is some disagreement and inconsistencies between the analyses. There are mixed views on:

- **Equity:** The PPP has helped to increase secondary school enrolment but it is unclear how equitable these increases have been.
- **Performance:** Conclusions about the performance of the PPP are generally based on the perceptions of a limited number of respondents and measurements of inputs and compliance with regulation. The main source of information to date on student learning outcomes is the World Bank RCT which, though suggestively positive, does not compare the learning outcomes of PPP schools with Government-aided schools.
- **Cost-efficiency:** Arguments of lower unit-costs and affordability to parents are countered with claims that the PPP does not provide good value for money.

But the existing research papers are generally aligned in their claims that:

- **The PPP capitation amount should increase** so that it can cover the costs of educating students who otherwise wouldn't be able to afford it
- **Greater government monitoring and oversight of the PPP is needed**, including stricter enforcement or regulatory compliance, in order to assure quality.

20 Bo-Joe Brans, (2011) 'Analyzing PPPs as a policy tool for Universal Secondary Education in Uganda', Universiteit van Amsterdam

This overview of the existing literature also shows that overall there is a lack of empirical evidence regarding the USE PPP in Uganda. Much of the evidence is based on perception data or assessments of inputs and compliance, rather than an objective analysis of the comparative performance of PPP and government schools with regard to actual student learning outcomes. Further, analysis of compliance does not equate to an objective assessment of the quality of pedagogical and management practice observed in PPP schools, and how these relate to that in other types of schools. Nor is there a macro-level analysis of the economic contribution of the PPP to the education sector. Without such comparative analysis, it is somewhat difficult to draw credible conclusions about the performance of the PPP and its relative contribution to the Ugandan secondary education sector.

This review of the USE PPP seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of the PPP programme, informed by primary research, an assessment of the suitability of the policy environment, and consultations with stakeholders. It seeks to build on the information available to date and provide a more holistic and rigorous analysis of the PPP.

To complement the primary research, EPG developed tools that can support the Ministry's planning processes: specifically, (a) a school demand mapping tool which can inform a strategic phase-out of PPP schools and the placement of any new schools and (b) a financial modelling tool which can help the Ministry to cost different scenarios for secondary school expansion, including with and without a PPP, and taking into consideration growth projections of the secondary school-age population. (This component was added after the initial agreement in September 2016 and is presented in Annex 2.)



This review of the USE PPP seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of the PPP programme, informed by primary research, an assessment of the suitability of the policy environment, and consultations with stakeholders. It seeks to build on the information available to date and provide a more holistic and rigorous analysis of the PPP.

Primary research findings

1. Data and Methodology

This section is primarily based on the results of EPG's Uganda Secondary School Survey 2017. The 2017 Uganda Secondary School Survey took place between July and August 2017, using a team of 25 enumerators, with 5 days of training taking place in Kampala. Data was collected using Android tablets and the “Survey to Go” app. This survey involved administering several instruments (full details available in Annex 1);

1. Students questionnaire (to 6 students per school)
2. Parent questionnaire (in a sub-sample of 60 schools)
3. Lesson observation and teacher questionnaire (2 lessons per school)
4. School Manager / Head Teacher questionnaire
5. Focus group discussions with school Boards of Governors and parents

Sampling

A nationally representative sample of 200 schools was drawn, randomized within strata based on region, school type, and school value-added (School Effectiveness Measure) category.

The sample included 132 PPP schools, 37 government schools, and 31 private schools (schools were then weighted in the analysis according to the inverse probability of being sampled, to ensure accurate representation of the actual distribution of schools). Two schools refused to participate in the survey, and were replaced by a randomly selected school from the same strata.

Schools were selected from a sample frame consisting of the final matched EMIS-UNEB dataset. This means that some schools that were not able to be matched were not part of the sample frame, but it meant that we were able to stratify the sample according to

The 2017 Uganda Secondary School Survey

To compare PPP USE schools with government USE schools and private schools, we carried out a nationally representative survey of 200 schools. We posed research questions about different aspects of **quality** (including student progress, school management, and teaching practices); the impact of the private sector on school access, particularly for disadvantaged groups; **cost-efficiency** of different types of providers, including their fee structures and expenditures; and **potential for scale** of different provider types.

student exam performance (value-added) as well as by school type and by geographic location. Probability weights are applied to schools in the analysis, equal to each school's inverse probability of being sampled.

Other data sources

Where appropriate this section also draws on other sources of data, including:

- UNEB Official exam results for 2015 and 2016
- The 2016 Optimetriks EMIS dataset
- The EPG “World Management Survey” 2016
- The EPG 2017 Uganda Secondary School Survey
- Uganda Education Statistical Abstracts
- National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE)
- Uganda National Panel Survey (2005, 2011)

2. Size and composition of the non-state sector

Uganda has around 4.3 million children of secondary school age (13–17), of whom only 24 percent are actually enrolled in secondary school. Including over-age enrolment, the gross enrolment rate is 38% (UBOS National Household Survey 2016/17). Uganda has a high population growth rate, and the secondary school age population is growing by over 100,000 per year (UBOS Population Projections 2015–2020).

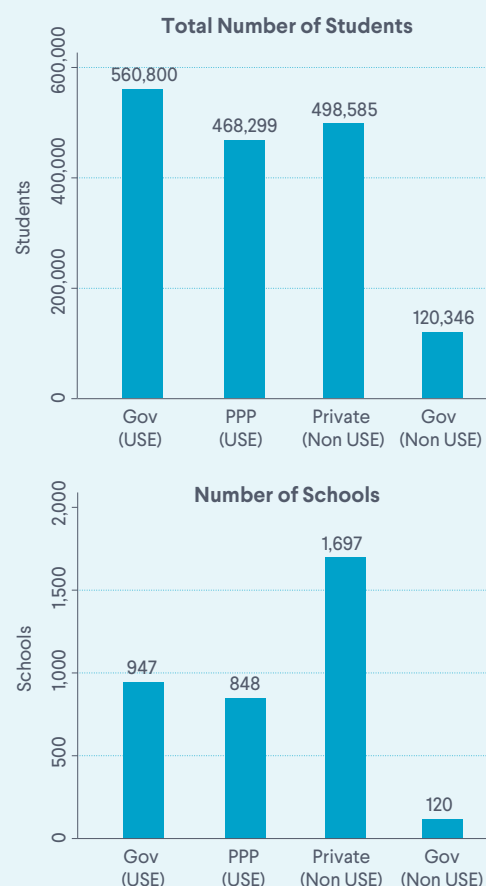
Most secondary schools in Uganda are private schools, and most students attend private schools, many of them partly financed by government funding. Uganda announced free secondary education in 2007. Due to a lack of sufficient places in government schools, the Universal Secondary Education (USE) programme was partly enabled by the provision of government financing for students to attend private schools. There is a total of 1.6 million students in the 6 grades of secondary school (S1 to S6). Of these, 646,000 (41 percent) are in government-managed schools and 874,000 (59 percent) in independently-managed schools. Based on 2016 data, **almost 1 million students (59 percent) attend private schools, of which 470,000 (28 percent of total secondary enrolment) attend private USE (PPP) schools**, meaning they hold a subsidized

place through the USE scheme. In terms of the number of schools, the government operates 1,021 (29 percent) and private or independent operators manage 2,475 (71 percent).

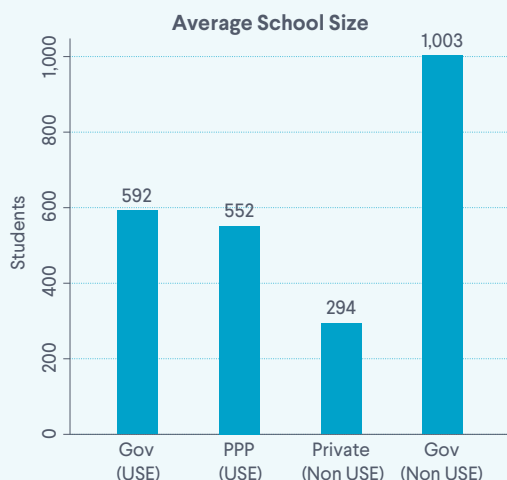
Our primary research looked at four types of schools:

- 1. Government USE schools:** Typical government schools (includes seed schools and community schools that have teachers on the government payroll)
- 2. Private USE schools:** Private schools in the USE subsidy scheme — also referred to as PPP schools
- 3. Private non-USE schools:** Fully private schools, not part of the USE subsidy scheme.
- 4. Government non-USE schools:** Elite government schools, highly selective and high fee charging

Figure 1: Student enrolment by school type



Source: EMIS 2016

Figure 2: Government schools are larger than private schools

Source: EMIS 2016

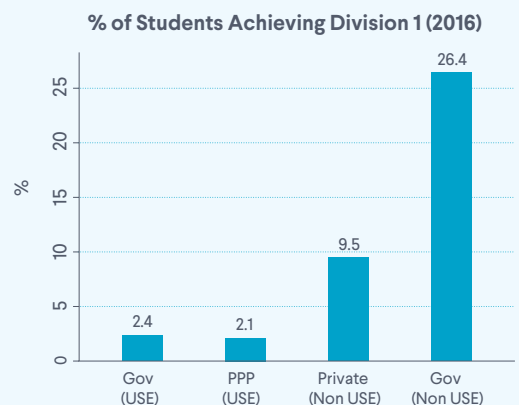
Though there are more private schools than government schools, government schools are on average larger. Non-USE government schools have on average 1,003 children enrolled, and USE government schools have 592.

3. Quality of government and non-state schools

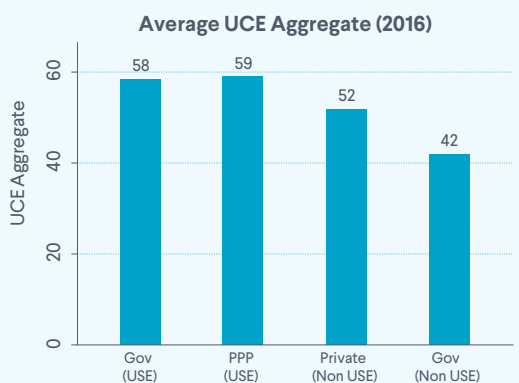
Student Learning Outcomes

The ultimate test of school quality is how much students learn. Students' progress is poor at both public and private USE schools, but students at private USE (PPP) schools make slightly more progress than students in government schools.

PPP and government USE schools get similar average test score results (percentage achieving Division 1 and average UCE aggregate). As Uganda has a standardized national test at the end of the 4th year of secondary school (S4), the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE), we are able to compare the exam results of government and private schools.²¹ The level of test results is similar in government USE (average UCE aggregate of 58) and PPP schools (average UCE aggregate of 59). Better scores are obtained by students in private non-USE schools (average UCE

Figure 3: Student test scores

Note: Difference between Gov USE & PPP is NOT statistically significant



Note: Difference between Gov USE & PPP is statistically significant

Source: EMIS 2016 and UNEB Exam Results 2016

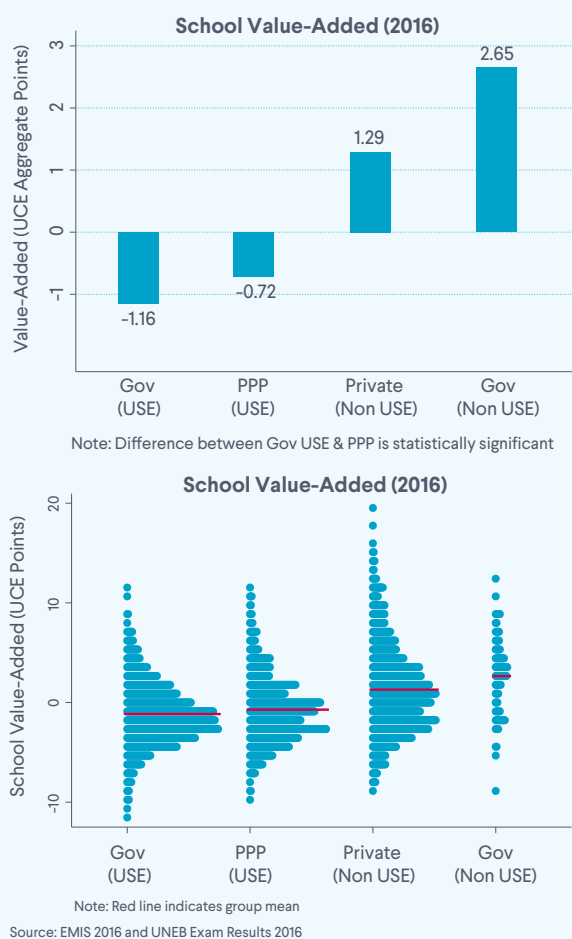
aggregate of 52) and government non USE schools (average UCE aggregate of 42).

When we look at student progress (the School Effectiveness Measure) rather than just the level of test scores, PPP schools perform slightly better than government USE schools. Just looking at the level of test scores is problematic as this partly reflects differences in ability that students had when they entered the school. A better measure of school quality looks at progress, taking into account their starting point. To do this we make use of students' Primary Leaving Exam (PLE) scores and calculate a value-added model of school quality, known as the School Effectiveness Measure, which accounts for primary school scores.

There is substantial variation in quality within each type of school that is hidden by the overall average. Panel 2 of figure 4 below

²¹ In order to make this comparison we matched the MoES EMIS data with the UNEB exams data. As there is no unique school identifier code we performed this matching using school names, using a matching algorithm and manual checks. There are 3,496 schools in the EMIS database and 3,124 exam centres in the UNEB database. We successfully matched 2,654 schools.

Figure 4: School Effectiveness Measure (Value-Added)

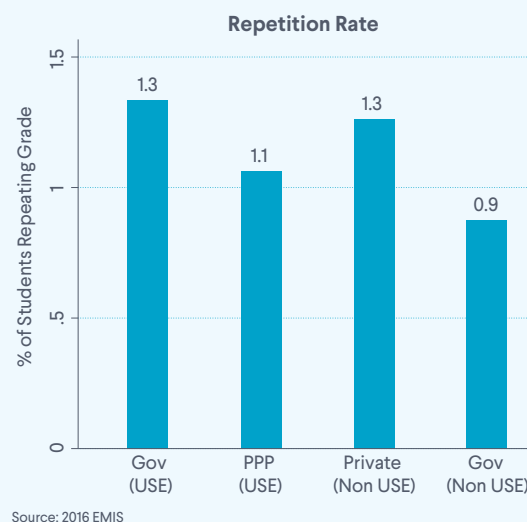


shows the distribution of school quality within each school type. For all types of school, government and private, USE and non-USE, there exist both highly effective and highly ineffective schools.

Other sources support the finding that average test score levels (not progress or value-added) are similar in private and government schools. Analysis of the National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) found no significant difference between public and private results on reading and numeracy for S2 students in 2010, and a very small advantage for private school students on writing (Najjumba and Marshall, 2013).

Government USE schools have a slightly higher proportion of students repeating than PPP schools. We ascertained from the national administrative data the percentage of students who are repeating a grade. Government and private non-USE schools have a slightly higher

Figure 5: Repetition rate



percentage of students repeating grade levels but repetition rates for secondary are low across all school types.

4. Costs of secondary education

How much do state and non-state schools cost?

In Uganda by far the largest contribution to lower secondary schooling comes from households (63%), followed by international donors (19%) and then the Government of Uganda (16%). Private schools rely more on fees from parents than government schools, but government schools do also typically charge fees. In the rest of this section we explore in further detail how much households spend on secondary school, and how this compares with government financing.

Sources of finance for education

	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary
Gov of Uganda	16%	11%
Households	63%	78%
International	19%	9%
Generated by School	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%

Source: UNESCO IIEP National Education Accounts 2016

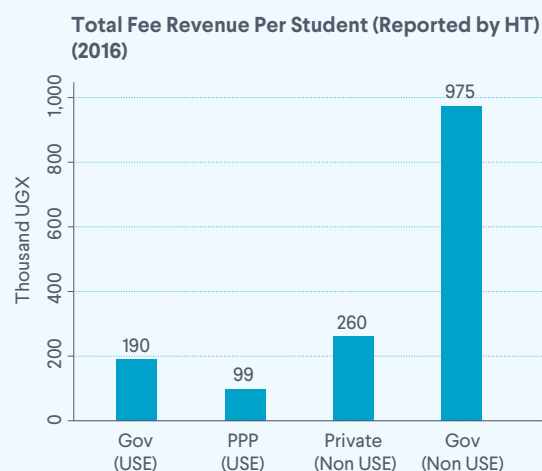
Fees

We triangulate data on fees from four sources; reports from head teachers in the 2016 EMIS, reports from parents in the 2014 national household survey, reports from head teachers in our 2017 survey, and reports from students in our 2017 survey.

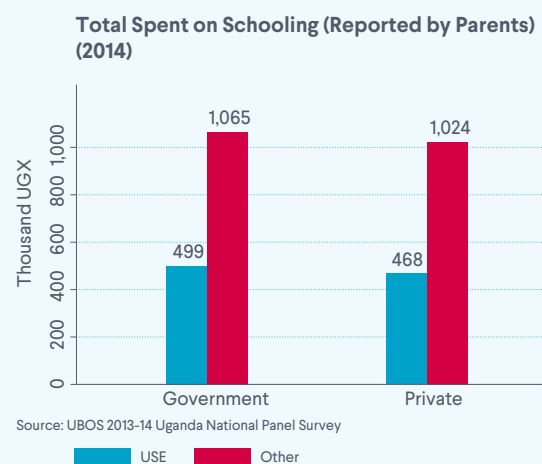
The highest fees are charged by elite government non-USE schools, followed by private non-USE schools. This finding is consistent from the 2016 EMIS and the 2014 survey. Head teachers at elite non-USE government schools report that their fee revenue is Sh.975,000 per student. A similar picture is found looking at responses from parents in the 2014 National Household Survey.

In our survey we focus on the difference between government USE and PPP schools, and capture a wide range of fee costs from both students and head teachers, including tuition but also lunch, uniforms, remedial classes, buildings fees, admissions, parent-teacher associations, exams fees, library fees, and any other cash or in-kind contribution. Fees at non-USE private schools are around Sh. 300,000 per term. Fees at government USE schools and PPP schools are around half of fees at private schools — between Sh.128,000 and Sh. 164,000 depending on whether students or head teachers are reporting. Broadly speaking there is a strong correlation between amounts reported by students and head teachers. Fees are around Sh.50,000 per term higher for non-USE students than for USE students.

Figure 6: Fees (2016 EMIS & 2014 survey)



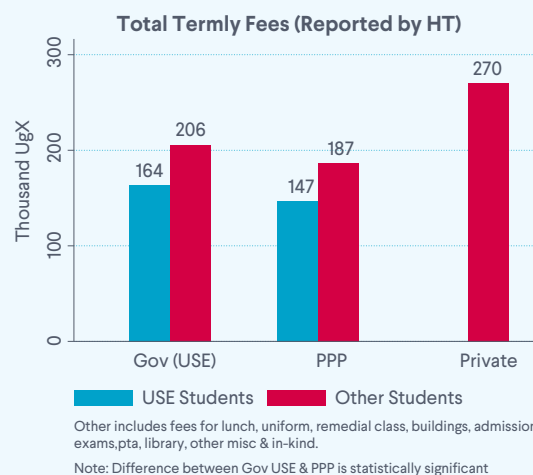
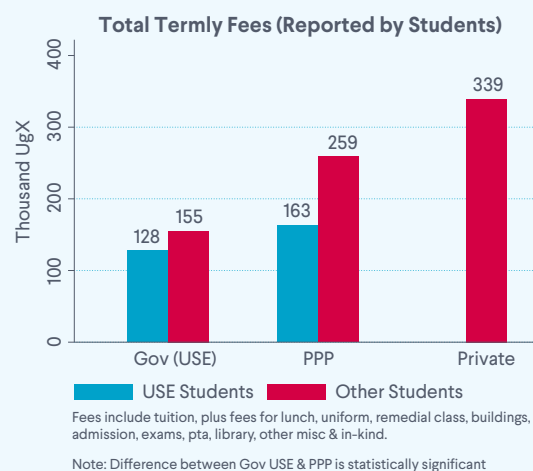
Source: MoES & World Bank Secondary Schools GPS Mapping 2016



Source: UBOS 2013-14 Uganda National Panel Survey

Source: 2016 EMIS and 2014 UBOS National Panel Survey

Figure 7: Fees (2017 survey)



Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

Government Subsidy

There are two main forms of government spending on secondary schools — salaries and capitation grants (in this section we focus only on recurrent costs and exclude capital and construction costs). **Teacher salaries make up the largest proportion of government spending on secondary schools — a total of Sh.214 Billion per year, compared with Sh.127 Billion spent on non-wage costs.**

Capitation grants are paid to both government schools and private schools, through the USE (S1-S4) and UPOLET (S5-S6) schemes. PPP schools receive Sh.47,000 for USE and Sh.85,000 for UPOLET per pupil per term. Government schools receive slightly less per student, Sh.41,000 (USE) and Sh.80,000 (UPOLET). However, government schools also receive teacher salaries paid in kind (in addition to other costs such as infrastructure development, maintenance, and instructional materials) which far outstrip this difference.

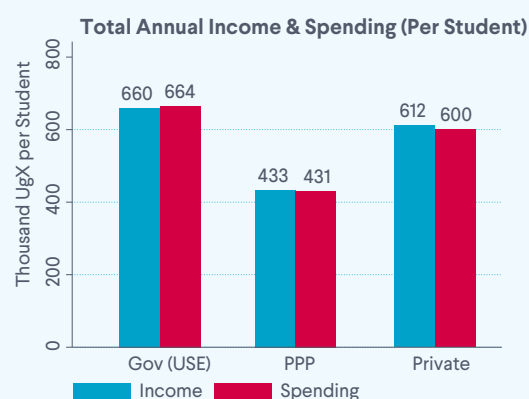
Total Cost and Spending

Schools' total costs consist of government spending and household spending. We take two approaches to this; first, asking head teachers at schools for their total annual revenue and total annual spending. Second, we complement this with data from the Government of Uganda budget for teacher salaries. Teacher salaries represent 63 percent of total transfers to local governments for secondary schools. Thus, our estimate of total income and spending for government schools is an underestimate as it does not include any other in-kind transfers from central or local government.

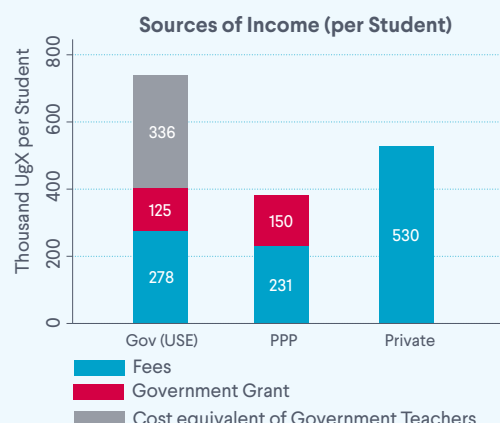
Total annual income and spending (per student) as reported by headteachers is highest in government schools (Sh.660,000), followed by private non-USE schools (Sh.600,000), with PPP schools reporting the lowest (Sh.430,000). Disaggregating this income by source, shows first what was already well-known — that the level of capitation grant per student is slightly higher in PPP schools than in government schools, but more surprisingly our research shows that fee revenue per student in

government schools is actually similar and possibly greater than in PPP schools. In addition, the cost of government spending on teacher salaries alone is nearly as large as the total cash revenue that both government and PPP secondary schools receive in grants and fees.²²

Figure 8: Total Annual Income and Spending



Note: Differences between Gov USE & PPP are statistically significant



Note: Difference in fee revenue between Gov USE & PPP is statistically significant, difference in government grant revenue is NOT

Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey and 2016 Uganda National Budget



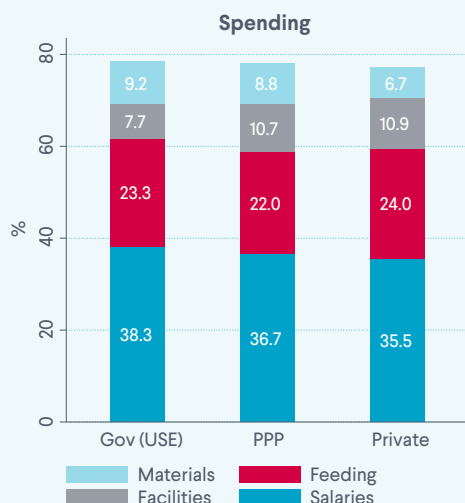
Total annual income and spending (per student) as reported by headteachers is highest in government schools (Sh.660,000), followed by private non-USE schools (Sh.600,000), with PPP schools reporting the lowest (Sh.430,000).

22 We focus in this report on recurrent spending, and do not estimate the one-off capital costs of school construction.



Government schools report spending a similar proportion of their income on teacher salaries (38%) as PPP and private schools

Figure 9: Distribution of spending

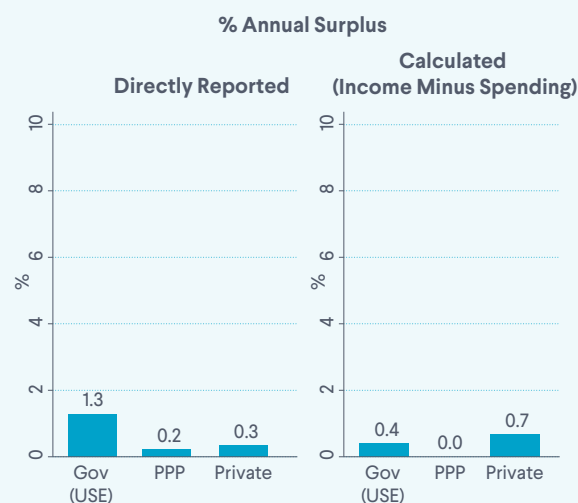


Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

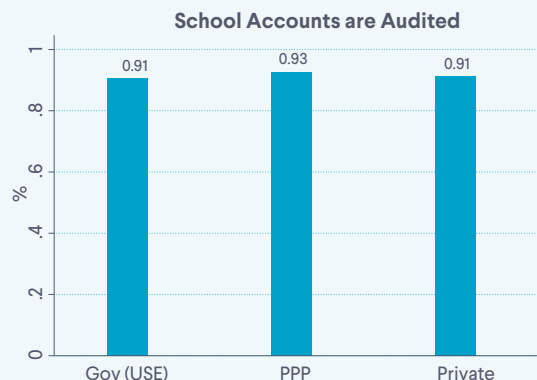
Government schools report spending a similar proportion of their income on teacher salaries (38%) as PPP and private schools (37% and 36% respectively). This is an unexpected finding given the government teacher salaries are paid directly by government without going through schools. Schools spend 22-24% on food, 8-11% on facilities, and 7-9% on teaching and learning materials.

It is a common perception that private schools are motivated by profit rather than by providing a quality education, but we find little evidence that private schools are very profitable, with the caveat that this data is all self-reported. We asked schools directly how much surplus they made each year as a percentage of their overall revenue. Private schools reported an average of less than 0.5 percent. We also calculated the surplus based on the reported total income and spending of schools. This figure was less than 1 percent. Over 90 percent of schools reported that their accounts are audited. We therefore found no evidence to support the idea that private schools are highly profitable businesses.

Figure 10: Profits and Audits



Note: Differences between Gov USE & PPP are NOT statistically significant



Note: Differences between Gov USE & PPP are NOT statistically significant

Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey



It is a common perception that private schools are motivated by profit rather than by providing a quality education, but we find little evidence that private schools are very profitable...

5. Student perceptions

Access

Students at PPP schools do recognize that government funding makes it possible for them to attend their school. A majority (65 percent) of PPP students said yes to the question of whether they are able to attend their school due to government funding, compared to only a slightly higher percentage of students at government schools (78 percent).

Figure 11: Does USE matter for access?

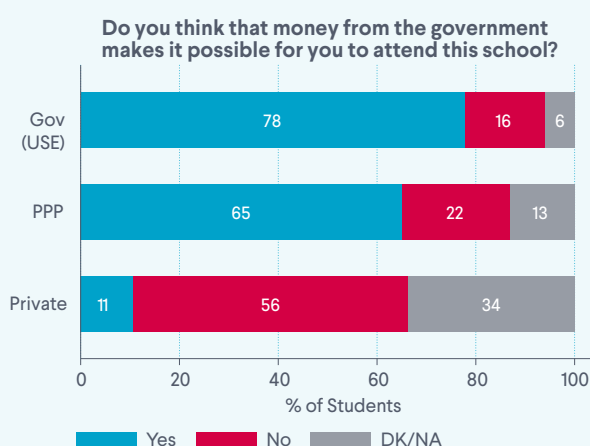
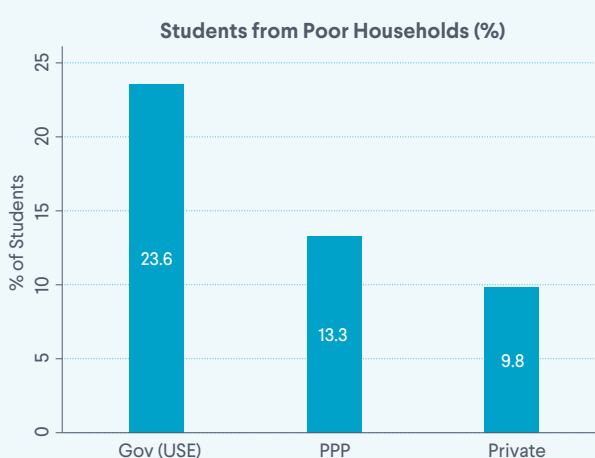


Figure 12: Student Poverty



On average government schools have poorer students than PPP or private USE schools.

24 percent of students at government schools are poor,²³ compared to 13 percent of students at PPP schools.

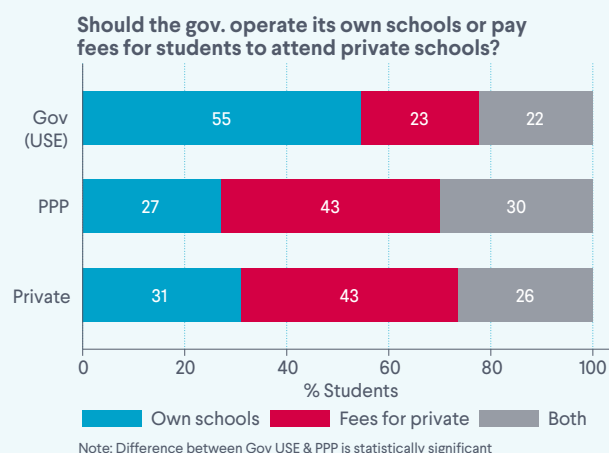


73% of students in PPP schools think that government should continue to subsidise fees at private schools, compared to only 45% of government school students.

Student perceptions of PPP policy

Most students think government should continue to subsidise places at private schools, though this varies for students attending government and private schools. We asked students directly whether they think government should run its own schools or pay fees for students to attend private schools. Here there was a big gap between students in government and PPP schools. 73 percent of students in PPP schools think that government should continue to subsidise fees at private schools, compared to only 45 percent of government school students. Overall as more students attend private

Figure 13: Student Perceptions of PPP Policy



²³ We define poverty as falling in the bottom 20 percent of the overall distribution of households in our sample, according to a simple asset index. We use the Poverty Probability Index (PPI®) a simple approach to measuring poverty in which the answers to 10 questions about a household's characteristics and asset ownership are scored to compute the likelihood that the household is living below the poverty line.

schools than government schools, the majority of students think that government should subsidise fees at private schools.

Quality

Overall 74 percent of students think that their school provides a high quality education, and 79 percent are satisfied with the quality of education provided by their school. The difference between PPP and government schools is small and not statistically significant. We asked 6 students from each school directly their satisfaction with the quality of their school. Of the students who think that their school provides a high quality education, the most common reasons provided were related to UCE examination results and the quality of teaching and teachers. By far the most important factors reported by students in choosing their school are quality (the most important factor chosen by 44 percent of students) and the level of fees (34 percent).

Non-cognitive skills and values

There is no difference between students in PPP and government schools in terms of two ‘non-cognitive’ or ‘character’ skills; self-management and social awareness. In addition to learning academic skills, schools also impart non-cognitive skills. We ask a series of questions to measure the ‘self-management’ and ‘social awareness’ of students, drawn from the California CORE project (West et al., 2017). The self-management questions are a series of statements which students can agree or disagree with — “I get distracted easily”, “I refuse things that are bad for me, even if they are fun”, “I do things that feel good in the moment but regret later on”, and “Sometimes I can’t stop myself from doing something, even if I know it is wrong.” Second, we ask about social awareness. Again, students are asked to agree or disagree with a series of statements; “I get along with students who are different from me”, “When others disagree with me, I am respectful of their views”, “I can disagree

Figure 14: Student Perceptions on Quality

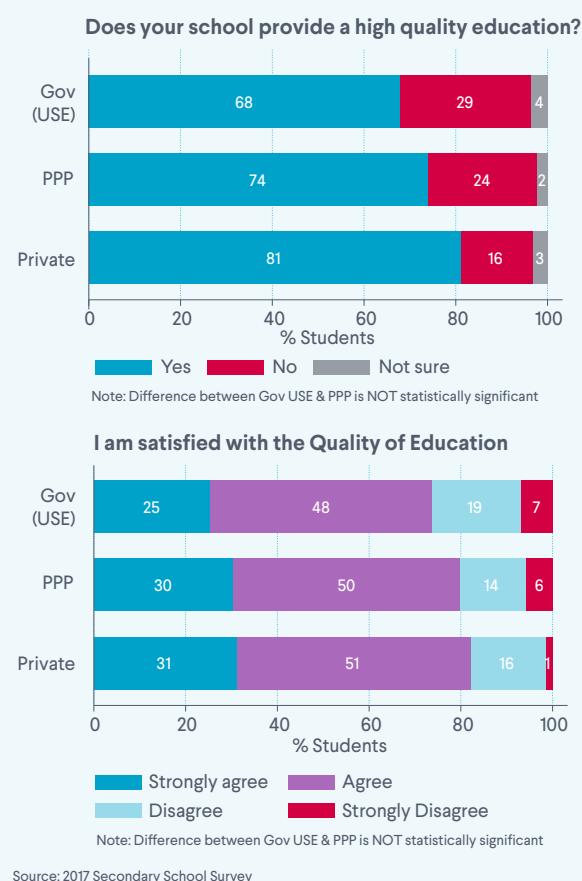
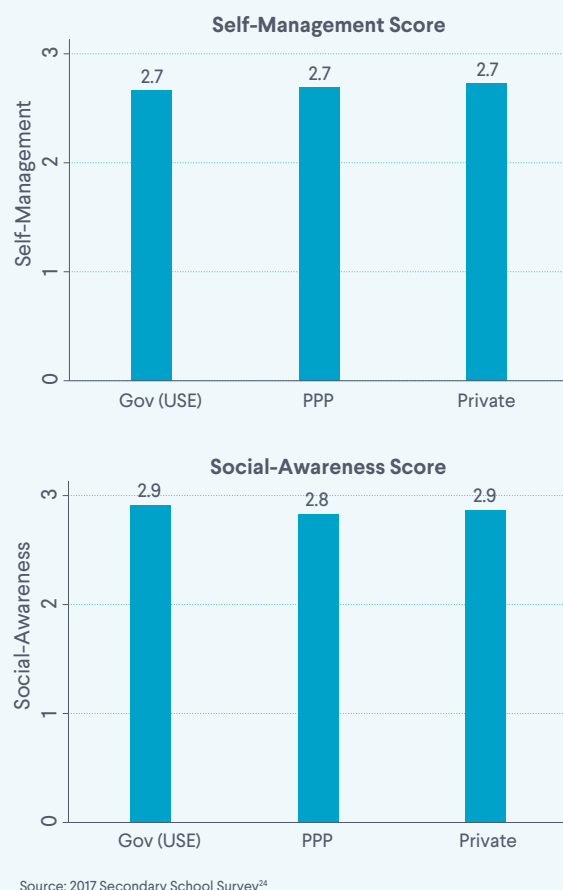


Figure 15: Non-Cognitive Skills



24 Self-management scores for individual schools range between 2.2 and 3.4, and for social awareness range between 2.3 and 3.6.

with others without starting an argument”,
“I care a lot about other students’ feelings”.

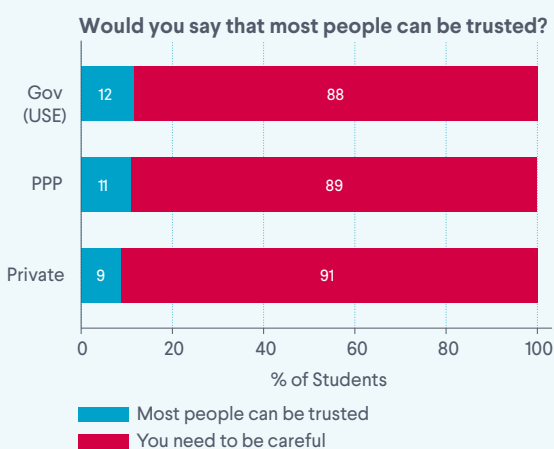
“

95 percent of students we asked said they were proud to be Ugandan, with no difference between students of government and private schools.

Socialisation

95 percent of students we asked said they were proud to be Ugandan, with no difference between students of government and private schools. In addition to imparting cognitive and non-cognitive skills, another function of schools is socialization — creating a nation. The majority of students (61 percent) identify equally as Ugandan and their tribal grouping, again with no difference between students of government and private schools.

Figure 16: Generalised trust



Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

Trust

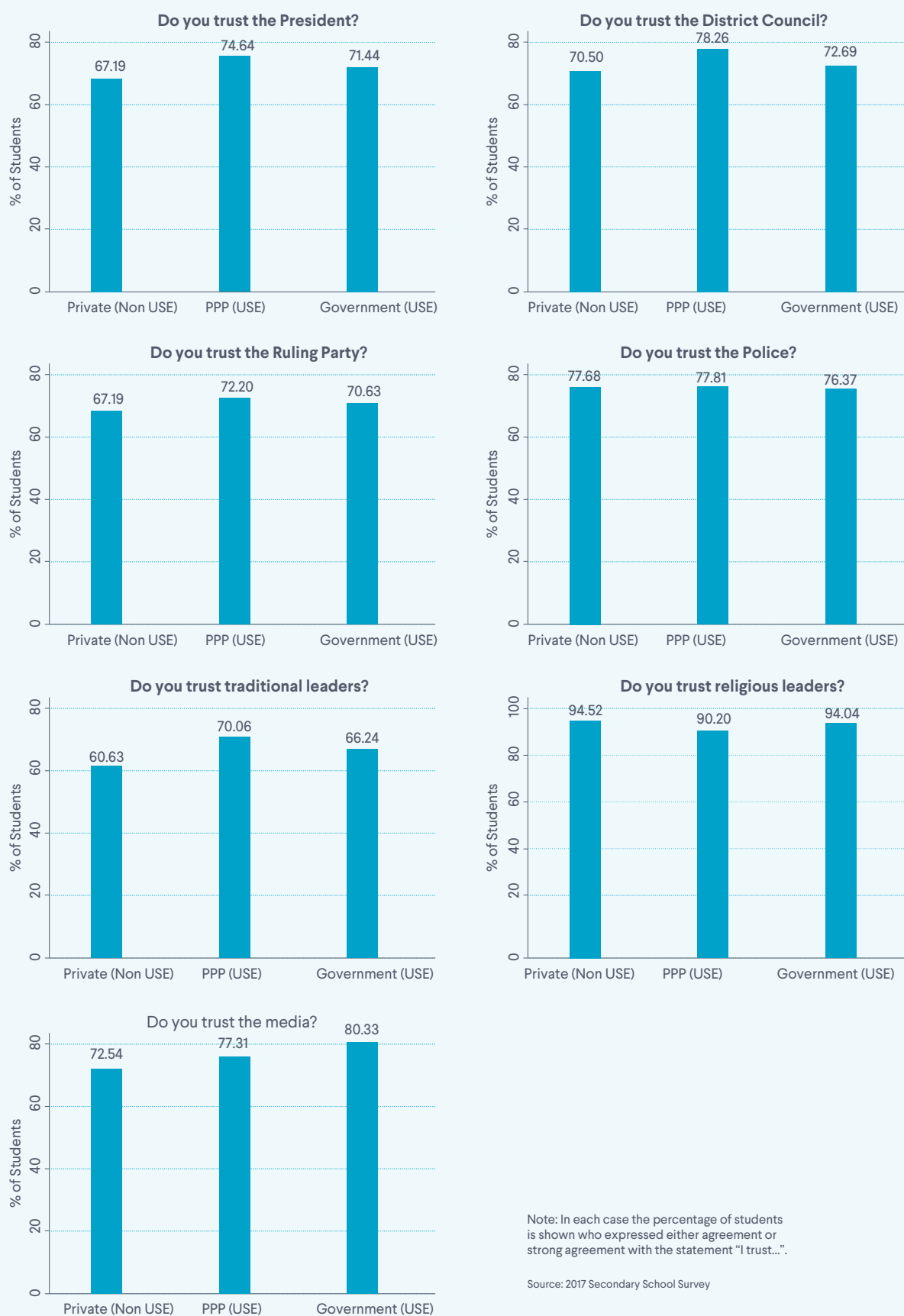
Generalised levels of trust amongst secondary school students in Uganda are low, but there is no difference between government and private students. Our survey asks a series of questions to measure students’ trust in different institutions. First, we measure how trustful students are overall. A vast majority (89.6 percent) considers they need to be careful rather than trust anybody.

Trust in specific institutions (such as the government or the police) is much higher, with no clear pattern in the differences between private and government students. We ask a series of questions to measure how much students trust particular institutions. They are presented with a series of statements of the form “I trust the President” or “I trust the Police” and asked to rank their agreement on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is strong disagreement and 4 is strong agreement. For simplicity, we classified all responses expressing some degree of agreement as a statement of trust in the institution in question.

“

Generalised levels of trust amongst secondary school students in Uganda are low, but there is no difference between government and private students.

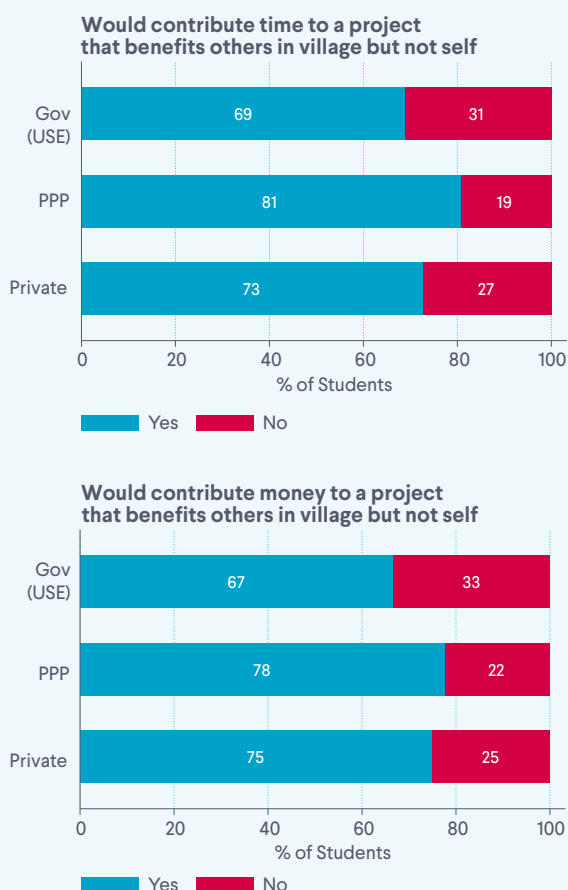
Figure 17: Trust in specific institutions



Civics

Students in PPP schools are more likely to say that they would contribute time or money to a community project. Schools also transmit civic values to children. We presented students with a scenario in which a project was being carried out, which would benefit other people in their village, but not them. First, we asked if they would be willing to contribute time to the project. In both private and public schools, most students claimed they would, but the percentage was higher for students in PPP schools (81 percent versus 73 percent in private and 69 percent in public schools). A follow-up question asked if the students would contribute money to the same project. Again, most students agreed in similar proportions.

Figure 18: Civic values



6. Parents' views

Parents are important stakeholders in the educational system. They are the ones who make most decisions on school choice and have their own opinions on how schools should be run. To acknowledge their importance, we interviewed parents in a sub-sample of 60 schools.

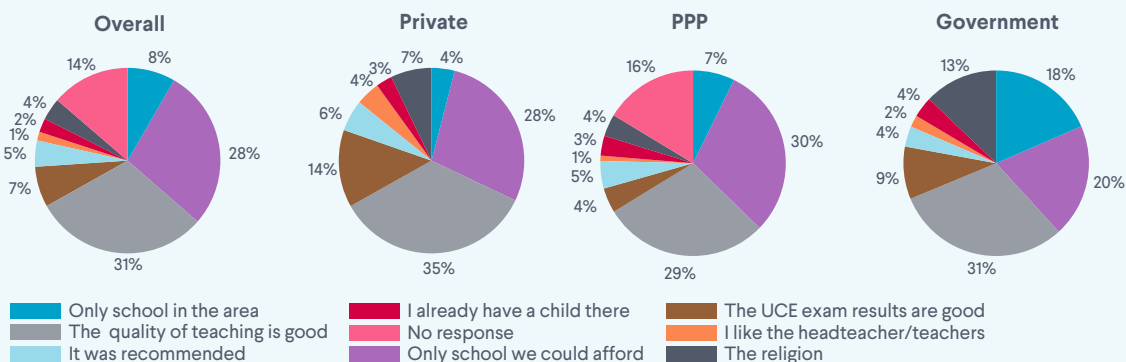
School choice

Around one third of parents choose their school because it is the only one in the area that they can afford. Around one third choose their school on the basis of teaching and exam results, with the remaining third comprising a variety of factors such as personal recommendation or connection, or religion. We asked parents for the reasons they considered important when making the decision, and had them select one factor they considered most important. Overall, 38 percent of the parents said the main reason for deciding on a school was either quality of teaching or exam results, and 36 percent that it was either the only school in their area, or the only one they could afford. Parents who choose government schools are more likely (18 percent) to say that it is the only school in their area, compared with 7 percent of PPP school parents.

“

Overall, 38% of the parents said the main reason for deciding on a school was either quality of teaching or exam results, and 36% that it was either the only school in their area, or the only one they could afford.

Figure 19: Main reason for school choice (parents)

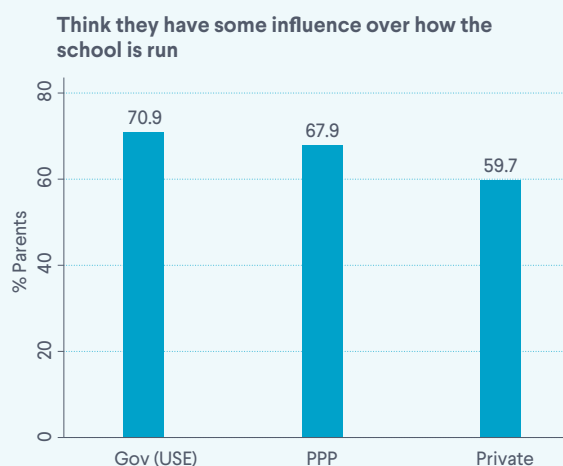


Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

Parents' role and influence

Parents often have an interest in how schools are managed. A large percentage of parents consider themselves to have some influence on how their children's school is run. This number is similar for PPP and government schools: 67.95 percent and 70.91 percent, respectively. Private school parents however, have significantly less clout, with only 59.72 percent considering themselves to have some kind of influence.

Figure 20: Parental influence over school operations



Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

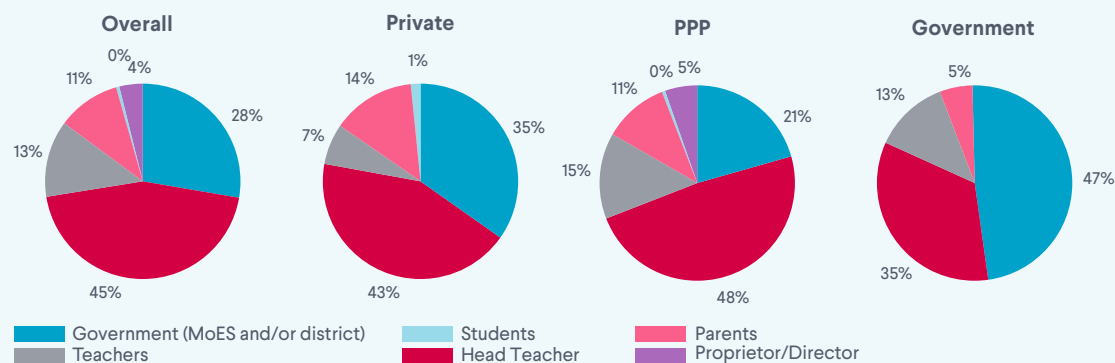
Despite their influence, parents generally consider other agents to be most important in ensuring that the education that their children receive is good. The two most cited

were the government (MoES and/or district) and the head teacher. Not surprisingly, government school parents consider government to be most responsible, followed by the head teacher. In contrast, both private and PPP parents considered the head teacher first and government second. This was most noticeable in PPP schools, where 48 percent of parents considered the head teacher as most responsible and only 21 percent selected the government.

Parents of students at private schools are more likely to think that parents are responsible for school quality. 14 percent of private school parents chose the “parents” option as the main responsible for school quality, while only 11 percent did for PPP schools and 5 percent for government schools. Additionally, private schools were the only group on which “parents” was a more frequent response than “teachers”. This is particularly interesting considering they are less likely to consider themselves influential in school management than parents in PPP or government schools.

Only at PPP schools did parents consider the proprietor or director to be responsible agent for ensuring school quality (even if it was only 5 percent of the answers). This is an important result, as having a clear responsible who is in charge of school management leads to higher accountability.

Figure 21: Responsibility for school quality



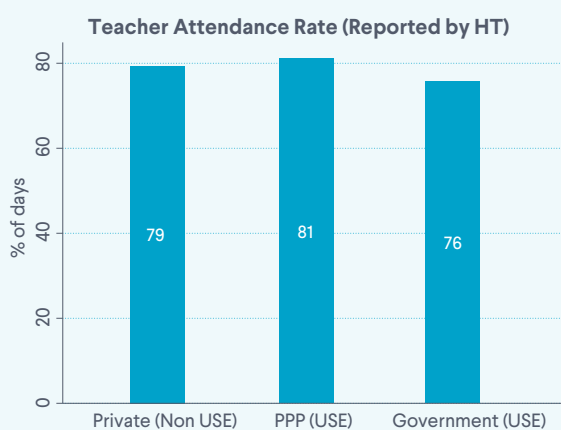
Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

7. Teachers and Teaching

The most important factor of schools for student learning is the quality and amount of teaching that actually takes place. To capture this, we carried out lesson observations in 2 classes per school visited.

Teacher attendance as reported by headteachers is higher in PPP schools (81 percent) than government schools (76 percent). These reports may not be accurate, so we also directly observed teacher presence in the classroom.

Figure 22: Teacher attendance rate



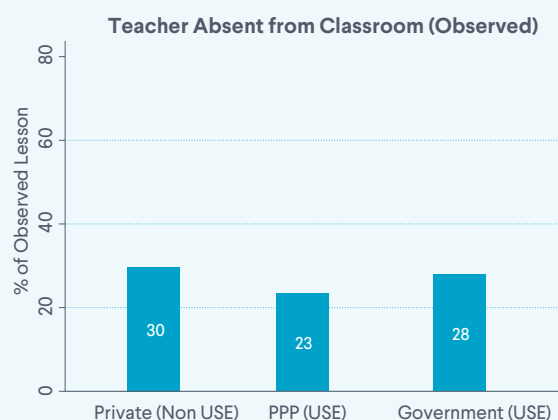
Note: Difference between Gov USE & PPP is statistically significant

Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

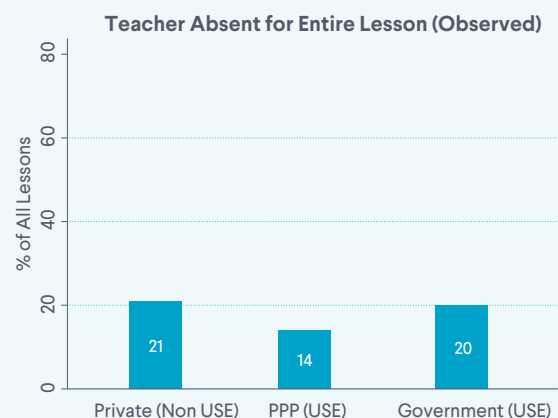
Teachers are absent from the classroom for around 25 percent of scheduled lesson time, but the differences between schools are not statistically significant. We monitored how

much time during a scheduled lesson the teachers was actually in the classroom. For around 15-20 percent of all lessons that we observed across PPP and government schools, there was no teacher present in the classroom for the entire lesson.

Figure 23: Teacher absence from classroom



Note: Difference between Gov USE & PPP is NOT statistically significant



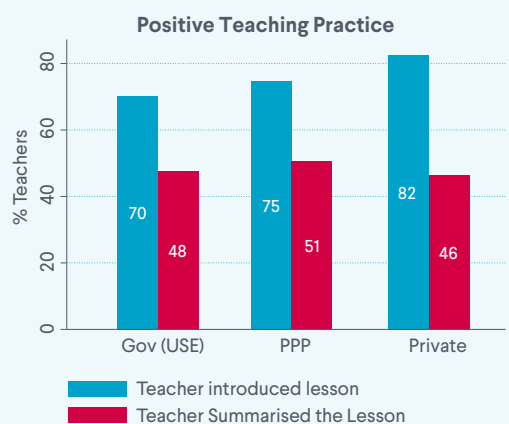
Note: Difference between Gov USE & PPP is NOT statistically significant

Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

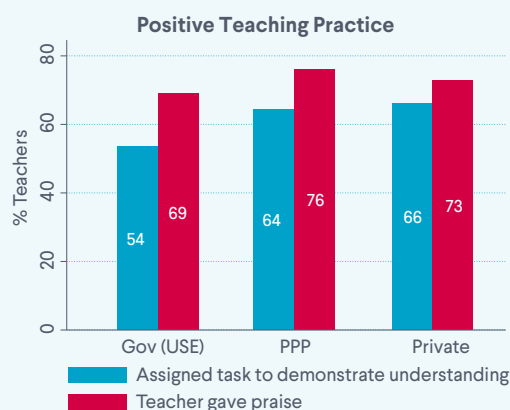
Teaching Practice

Teachers are slightly more likely to carry out specific positive teaching practices in PPP schools, but this difference is only statistically significant for one of these (assigning a task to students to check understanding). Observers sat in lessons and noted when they saw teachers carrying out a range of specific positive and negative practices. Around 75 percent of teachers introduced the lesson at the start of the lesson, and only around half summarized the lesson at the end. Around 75 percent gave praise to pupils during the lesson. A smaller percentage of teachers assigned tasks to students to allow them to demonstrate their understanding, and here there was a difference between PPP (64 percent) and government (54 percent) teachers. Teachers were only rarely observed pinching, hitting, or slapping a child (less than 5 percent of lessons).

Figure 24: Teaching Practice



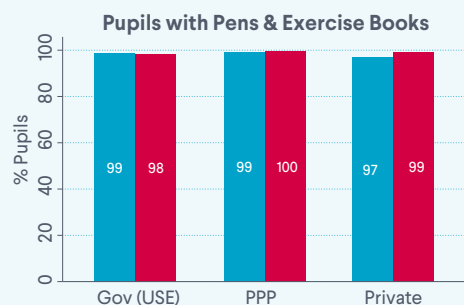
Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey



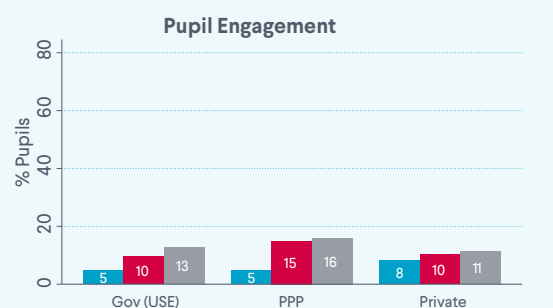
Note: Difference between Gov USE & PPP is only statistically significant for task assignment

Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

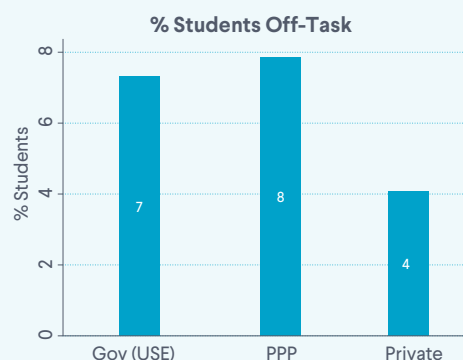
Figure 25: Student Engagement



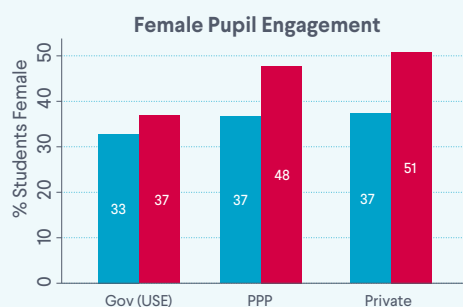
Note: Difference between Gov USE & PPP is NOT statistically significant



Note: Differences between Gov USE & PPP are NOT statistically significant



Note: Difference between Gov USE & PPP is NOT statistically significant



Note: Differences between Gov USE & PPP are NOT statistically significant

Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

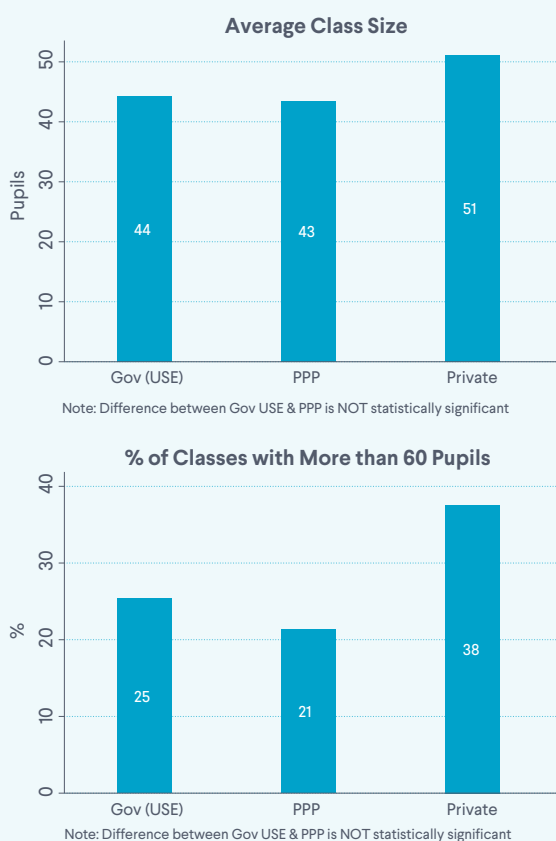
Student engagement in lessons is very low, with few individual children called upon.

Around 7–8 percent of students in both PPP and government USE schools were off-task at any one moment during a lesson. Fewer than 16 percent of pupils in any one lesson have the opportunity to write on the blackboard, be called on individually, or be called on by name (with no significant differences between school types).

Class sizes are similar in PPP (43 students) and government schools (44 students). Also, a similar proportion of classes have more than 60 pupils (21 percent in PPP and 25 percent in government).

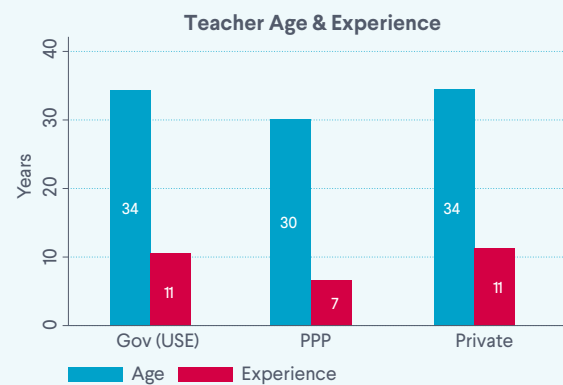
PPP schools pay lower salaries than government schools, and recruit teachers that are on average 4 years younger and with 4 years less experience. Teachers in PPP schools though have similar levels of formal qualifications to government school teachers.

Figure 26: Class Size

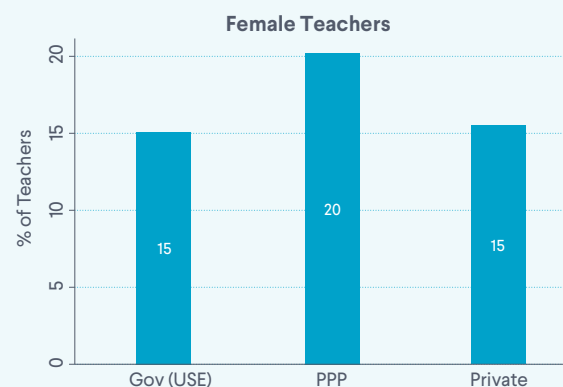


Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

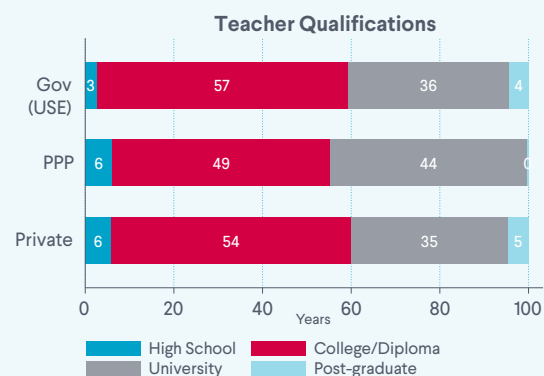
Figure 27: Teacher characteristics



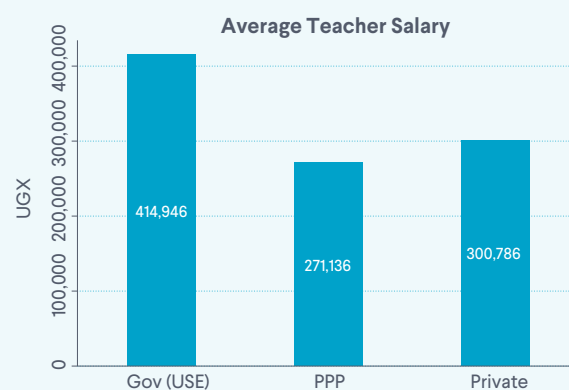
Note: Differences between Gov USE & PPP are statistically significant



Note: Difference between Gov USE & PPP is NOT statistically significant



Note: Differences between Gov USE & PPP are statistically significant



Note: Difference between Gov USE & PPP is statistically significant

8. Management

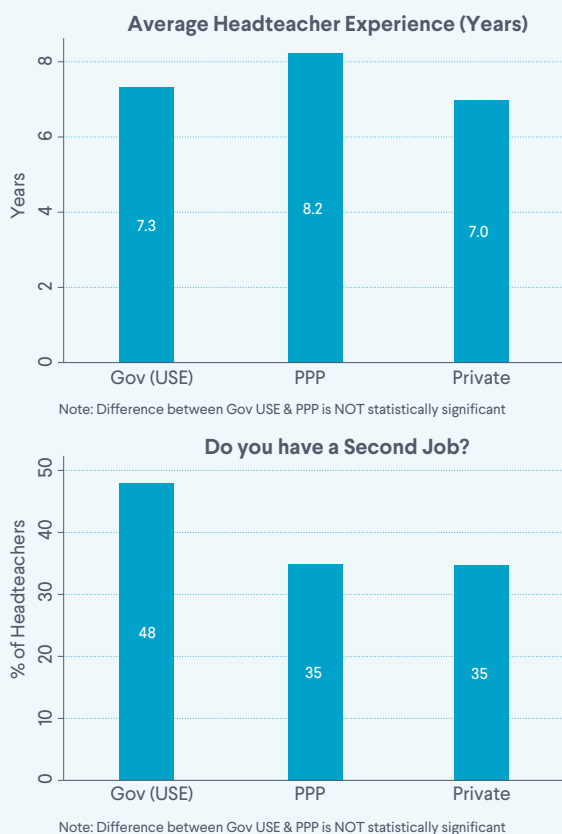
So far we have learnt that PPP schools teach students more, with more and better teaching. How do they do this? This section looks at how well schools are managed, but does not find large differences.

Headteachers in PPP schools are likely to have more experience and be less likely to hold a second job than government teachers.

Here the difference in years of experience as a headteacher is not statistically significantly different for PPP and government schools. We also asked headteachers whether they held a second job, which government headteachers were more likely (48 percent) to say yes to than PPP headteachers (35 percent).

We adapted the “World Management Survey”²⁵ for Uganda to understand how headteachers perform in four areas of management; target-setting, monitoring, operations, and people management.

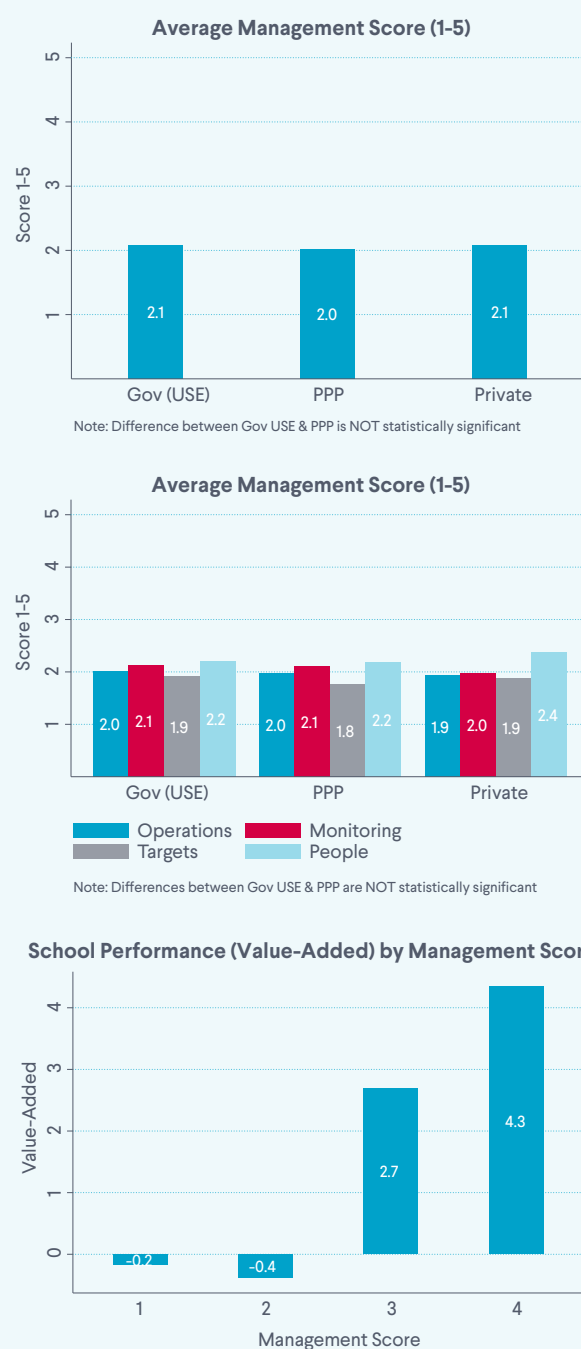
Figure 28: Headteacher characteristics



Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

Previous research from both Uganda (Crawford, 2017) and other countries (Bloom et al., 2015) has found that one of the factors explaining differences between school performance is how well schools are managed — how headteachers set expectations, monitor performance, make improvements, and get the best from their staff. Each headteacher is asked a series of questions about how they actually manage the school on a day-to-day basis, with their answers being scored against a scale from 1 to 5.

Figure 29: Management quality



Source: 2017 Secondary School Survey

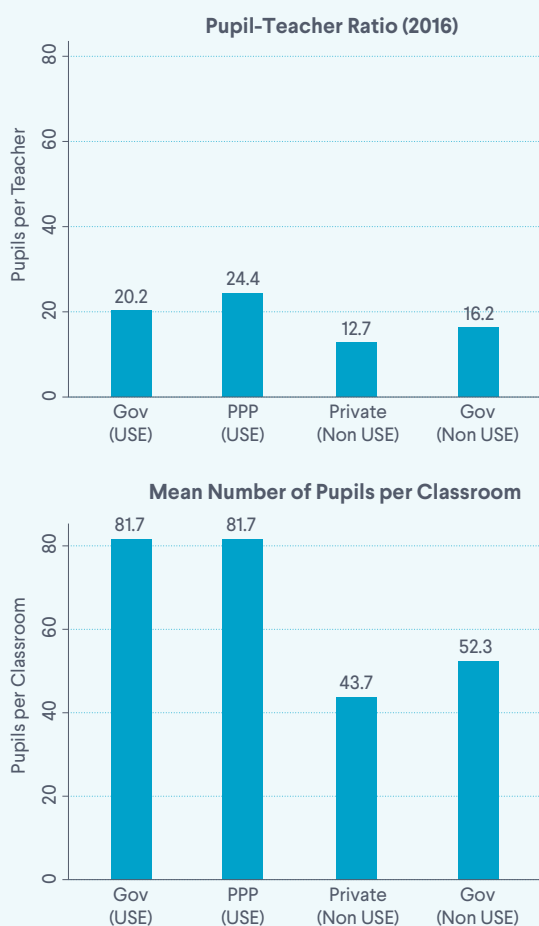
25 <http://worldmanagementsurvey.org>

Overall there is no statistically significant difference between school types in any of these four areas. At the same time, as in previous studies, we find that the schools that are well managed have substantially better student value-added than poorly managed schools.

Staffing and Facilities Levels

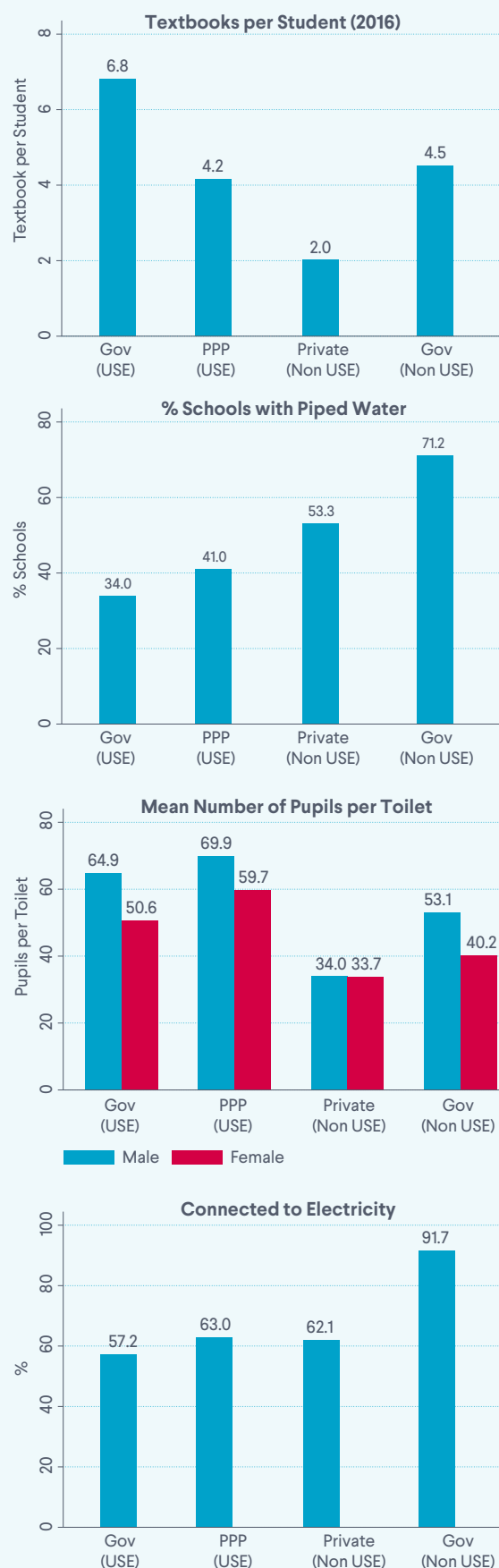
Government schools tend to have both more teachers and more non-teaching staff than private and PPP schools. There is a difference though in terms of pupil teacher ratios — private schools have lower ratios (13 students per teacher) than government USE schools (20), but private USE have the highest average ratio (24 students per teacher). Despite low pupil-teacher ratios, the average number of pupils per classroom is much higher — 82 students in government and PPP schools, and 44–52 students in private and government non-USE schools.

Figure 30: Staff and Classrooms



Source: 2016 EMIS

Figure 31: Facilities

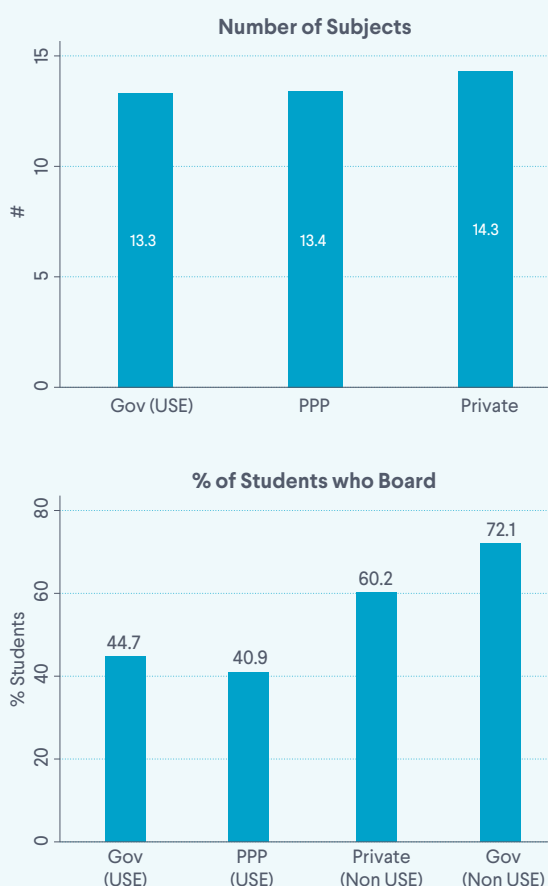


Source: 2016 EMIS

Private and PPP schools tend to have better facilities than government schools — they are more likely to have electricity, piped water, and a study library. Private schools have more toilets per student than government or PPP schools. Government schools however have more textbooks per student on average than private and PPP schools.

On average private schools offer one more subject at UCE level than either PPP or government USE schools, who both offer the same number of subjects. PPP and government USE schools have a similar proportion of students who board — just under half.

Figure 32: Number of Subjects, and Boarding Students



Source: Number of subjects from 2017 Secondary School Survey & Boarding students from 2016 EMIS

9. Feedback on PPP

Headteachers' views

What do school head teachers think about the USE PPP scheme? We asked headteachers of private USE (PPP) schools directly for their thoughts about the strengths and challenges of the programme, and how they thought it could be improved. Below we highlight some of the common themes that came out of the interviews with each of the 200 head teachers in our sample.

Headteachers overwhelmingly like the programme, saying that it allows them to pay teacher salaries and enrol more students, particularly poorer students who might not otherwise be enrolled, and to improve quality and learning by purchasing learning materials.

“USE has helped to uplift the standards of the schools by providing them with scholastic materials like text books, science kits, solar power to school, it has enabled poor parents to have their children attend school”

The challenges identified with the programme are to do with the funding level being too low, and payment sometimes being received late (only 38 percent of headteachers reported receiving their last disbursement in full, and only 57 percent received it on time). Several said that the capitation amount has not been increased in line with inflation, and should be increased to around Sh 60-100,000 per student.

“The USE funds give a lot of headache and gives an impression from the parents, community, some local leaders that the funds are used for personal use yet the money is little and we do not receive it in full. The funds do not cater for food yet the students come from very far and need to eat. the amount does not match with the prices and cost of living which strains the school administration. Funds are too inadequate to buy commodities like chemicals.”

Other suggestions included some headteachers saying they would like to be provided with teachers on the government payroll.



Only 14% of headteachers reported that their school had signed a performance agreement with the MOES in addition to the initial Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

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Parents' views

We also have qualitative results from focus group discussions with parents from 25 schools. Below is a summary of the themes that were discussed by parents.

On teachers

One parent from a PPP school pointed out one reason why it might not be a good idea to put teachers on the government payroll:

"In private schools, proprietors put pressure on teachers to produce results. In government schools, teachers know that the salaries will come, but for teachers in private schools it is the school that pays the teachers so the teacher has to be paid after seeing their results."

On profits

Parents were generally relaxed about private schools having the ability to make some profit from the school. *"It is the right thing, they should make profits, because if you let me do business I would want to make profits, since everyone eats from their job."*

Interviewer:

"Do you think they built that school concerned with the quality of education or they are business people who are in the sector to make money?"

Parent:

"This school was built before the USE scheme began by men who were concerned about the lack of education in the area. They saw really the whole area was dying if they didn't put a school. Its fees have been very low which the community can afford, so they did not charge a lot of fees like other schools were"

On branding

Parents agreed that there should be government/MoES branding at PPP schools to inform the community that though the school is privately owned, it is financed by government. *"I think there should be. It would be better to put a signpost to show that this school is of USE."*

Stakeholder consultation responses

As a part of the PPP review, we undertook a stakeholder consultation process. This involved reaching out widely to education stakeholder organisations in Uganda who have diverse views and knowledge of PPP policy issues. We circulated a self-administered questionnaire which asked for stakeholders' opinions about the PPP framework implementation. It is important to note that the responses presented here are perceptions and perspectives of individual respondents and the institutions they represent.

The questions prompted responses specifically on: i) the respondents' understanding or knowledge of how things are currently done, or have been done in the past; and ii) the respondents' opinions, reflections, positions, and feedback on how things should be done. The questionnaire covered ten key policy components:

- i. General questions**
- ii. School/partner selection/commissioning**
- iii. Targeting — location and population**
- iv. Duration of partnership**
- v. Accountability and monitoring**
- vi. Sanctions and termination process**
- vii. School governance**
- viii. Financing**
- ix. Management — teachers, curriculum, etc.**
- x. Communication and branding**

The stakeholders who returned response sheets include: Twaweza; the Orthodox Church Schools Association; Promoting Equality in African Schools (PEAS); Federation of Non-state Education Institutions (FENEI — Eastern region and Central region); Uganda Moslem Education Association; Rights Trumpet; National Association of Private Universal Secondary Schools (NAPUSES); Economic Policy Research Center (EPRC); Institute for Social and Economic Rights

One component of the PPP policy review was to collect the input of a range of education stakeholders from Ugandan civil society. Participating stakeholders responded to a questionnaire which asked about their understanding of the current PPP and their views on what should be done with regard to the PPP in the future. There was consensus among the stakeholder respondents that continuation of some form of PPP is critical to the expansion of education, but also consensus around the need to improve the existing framework, including selection criteria and processes; a system for holding schools accountable for performance; government regulation of fees; and communications and branding of PPP schools to recognize Government's contribution.

(ISER); and Uganda National Association of Private Schools and Institutions (UNAPSI).

The sub-sections below summarise respondents' reflections, opinions, and knowledge of the different policy components.

1. General comments and understanding of PPP

The first question was on whether government should partner with private/non-state actors in the delivery of education. All the responding stakeholders agreed that it is important for government to partner with the private actors for a number of reasons including: leveraging more resources for government to meet their education objectives; enabling innovation across the system; expanding access for marginalised groups (e.g. girls and poor communities); boosting government provision of education by diversifying the sector; bridging the financing gap in the sector; and improving quality through co-monitoring and supervision of teaching and learning outcomes. These responses reflect the general objectives of the PPP as stipulated in the PPP framework for Uganda.²⁶

The stakeholders in their responses also acknowledged that the main purpose of partnering with private schools through the PPP framework is to enhance accountability in the system through providing quality assurance and higher standards of education, improving literacy thereby enhancing poverty eradication, and increasing efficiency and choice. The stakeholders' opinions reflect the general assumption that the private sector has more accountability to the public than government. When asked what the strengths of the USE PPP are the responding stakeholders agree that the PPP has: i) increased opportunities for enrolment in secondary schools; ii) improved access to quality education especially for the marginalized groups; iii) supplemented government capacity to provide education services, which plays a critical role in the social and economic development of the country; iv) enhanced efficiency in the provision of education services by creating competition in the education market; v) provided a cost effective way

for expanding access to secondary school education, as the outcomes are reasonable given the cost per student; and vi) fostered government commitment to fulfilment of the right to education.

However, the stakeholders also point out that there are several weaknesses of the PPP framework as a delivery mechanism for USE. Some of the *perceived* weaknesses identified are:

- PPP schools have bad quality of education;²⁷
- Inadequacies in the government such as lack of policy guidance on the partnership, corruption, and lack of accountability affecting the implementation of the PPP;
- Weakened school management: Government rules have made parents adamant to listen to the Boards of Governors and school administration;
- Partnership benefitting teachers who get paid but may not actually do much to improve learning;
- The lack of accountability structures, especially given that the PPP is open to profit-making schools; partnership not driven by quality education;
- Insufficient funding levels;
- Inadequate understanding of the policy by stakeholders (e.g. some stakeholders believe that government should invest in the infrastructure of PPP schools);
- MoUs signed do not clearly indicate the roles of each parties.

Notwithstanding the weaknesses mentioned above, **the stakeholders believe that sustainability of the PPP in education is imperative because government cannot afford expanding universal education at all levels, but more importantly because education is a shared responsibility between parents, communities, private sector and government.** The PPP framework offers government an opportunity to tap into private enterprise while at the same time

²⁶ "Government of Uganda (September 2010). *Public-Private Partnership Framework Policy for Uganda*".

²⁷ Our survey findings reveal that PPPs don't perform any worse than government USE schools, and both categories are far out-performed by government non-USE schools.

expanding government egalitarianism to achieve political commitments for national development. The sustainability of the PPP framework in education will, however, be dependent on proper alignment of the PPP mission with the vision of the education sector. The government must work to address the weaknesses of the current PPP and provide a clear policy framework for implementation that clearly stipulates the roles and responsibilities of each party.

2. School Partner Selection/Commissioning

When asked how Government selects the people/organisations that run PPP schools, the stakeholders differ in their understanding. **What these differences in opinion project is a lack of clear criteria for selection and a misunderstanding of the implementation guidelines for the PPP framework.** While some of the stakeholders admit that they are not aware how selection is done, others believe that the selection was based on location, physical status of the school at the time i.e. schools that met the minimum standards, length of time the school had been in operation. There are also those who believe that the originally selected schools were community schools that were paying fees below 50,000 Uganda Shillings at the time the framework was introduced, and those private schools that were in densely populated sub-counties with no government school at the time.

In fact, **a majority of the stakeholders believe that the criteria and the selection process should be improved.** Some of the improvements proposed are: streamlining the selection process such that the USE grants are going to the most underprivileged or marginalized communities; using data to ensure that PPP schools are in areas of high demand; developing indicators as minimum standards that guide the selection of schools; and involving the communities in selecting the private partner.

Specifically, the stakeholders point out that the most important factors that the Ministry/Government should consider when selecting USE PPP partners are school location, the schools' track

record on quality, and enough school age population to consume the services. There are also those who believe that the USE PPP partner schools should be non-profit status and must have a track record of compliance with government standards and policies.



When asked how Government selects the people/organisations that run PPP schools, the stakeholders differ in their understanding. What these differences in opinion project is a lack of clear criteria for selection and a misunderstanding of the implementation guidelines for the PPP framework.

When asked what the role of Government (both central and local) is in conducting selection processes for PPP USE partners, there seems to be general consensus that the Government role should be setting and disseminating policy and guidelines, oversight through inspections and monitoring, and providing funding.

A few of the respondent stakeholders seem to be aware of schools or groups of schools run by single proprietors, networks such as PEAS, and faith-based organizations such as the Church of Uganda, Catholic Church, the UMEA, and the Orthodox Church. Some believe that there are advantages to running network schools such as improving efficiency for government and ensuring proper supervision and accountability. Others believe that the network approach is not warranted as a delivery model for the USE PPP.

3. Targeting (locations and populations)

There are differing opinions about how the original targeting of the USE PPP was undertaken. The difference in understanding of how targeting was done arises from the fact that there was no formal plan or document that stipulated how an existing school would get onto the program. Some believe that the USE PPP originally targeted under-served areas, schools per sub-county policy, or non-profit schools that were struggling.

It seems that **targeting school interventions is an important factor for the stakeholders who responded**. There is general agreement among the stakeholders that school interventions should be targeted to improve equity in the system based on select criteria and depending on the priorities of the education system. Some of the parameters that should be prioritized include infrastructure development, improving teaching quality, scholastic materials, and teacher welfare.

When asked whether PPP can ensure access for most disadvantaged children, there is general agreement that **if well designed and implemented, the PPP framework can increase equity and access to the marginalised**. Additionally, a well-designed PPP could improve system efficiencies by expanding school choice, school resources, and teaching workforce. The role of the government through the Ministry of Education and Sports would then be to ensure compliance through monitoring and supervision.

One of the contested issues under USE is whether students who score below 28 at PLE should be eligible for USE. A majority of the stakeholders agree that these students should be eligible because they are in most cases from rural and disadvantaged schools/areas of the country and are normally faced with unfortunate circumstances which are beyond their control. To exclude these children from enrolment under USE would therefore further disadvantage them. The opponents of eligibility for poorly performing students point to a systemic failure arising from automatic promotion under UPE which requires wider system reforms.



When asked whether PPP can ensure access for most disadvantaged children, there is general agreement that if well designed and implemented, the PPP framework can increase equity and access to the marginalised.

4. Duration of Partnership

The current MOUs signed between the Ministry of Education and Sports and the proprietors of the schools are open-ended with no expiration timeline. There is only a loose reference to 'performance reviews' every two years, which generally do not happen. When asked how long the current MoUs with USE PPP schools last, many of the respondents were either not aware or thought that the timeline is one to four years. Some of those who knew that the MoUs are indefinite went ahead to propose that there should be periodic reviews of the MoUs and in the event of termination by the Government, the proprietors should be compensated.

In fact, **the stakeholders agree that the MoUs should be time bound and should be reviewed periodically**, although they do not agree on the duration. The proposals on how long the MoUs should last range from two, to four, to five, to ten years. There are also proposals that MoUs should be reviewed after appraisal and satisfactory school performance and compliance to USE guidelines. It has also been proposed that the MoUs should include clauses to allow termination based on specific circumstances, measurable outcomes conditioned on delivery of quality education.

With regards to whether having fixed-term MoUs would allow MoES greater legal scope to remove weak providers, some of the stakeholders believe that removal of weak providers is not a solution because it leaves children under such schools disadvantaged. In fact, some believe that providers become weak when they are not monitored,

and would rather see such weak providers strengthened with further training and retraining of staff in charge of the schools. Nevertheless, some stakeholders believe that **Government should have MoU agreements that allow for early termination on grounds of poor performance and lack of accountability.**

5. Accountability and Monitoring

There is consensus that information about PPP school performance is gathered through termly head counts and other data collection questionnaires by District Education Officers (DEOs), DISOs, District Inspectors of Schools (DISs) and Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs).

While there is awareness about how information is collected and by whom, **there is little understanding of how the Ministry reviews or monitors performance of PPP schools.** Some stakeholders note that they are not aware of any systematic performance monitoring, but point out that this would technically be the role of the Private Schools and Institutions (PSI) department and the DEO.



While there is awareness about how information is collected and by whom, there is little understanding of how the Ministry reviews or monitors performance of PPP schools.

Additionally, **the majority of the stakeholders report that they are not aware how MoES holds PPP schools accountable** although some believe that it is through random spot checks and withholding of funds. For the PPP schools that are doing badly, some stakeholders believe that Government issues threats of withdrawal of funds, but are reluctant to take any serious measures to punish them.

With regards to what measurement or indicators should be of most interest and high importance for MoES in holding PPP schools accountable, the following emerge:

- Inspection for high standards and compliance to education standards;
- Student learning outcomes;
- Child protection;
- Health and safety;
- Student enrolment in schools;
- Linking SDG 4 indicators to USE;
- School accountability;
- School performance in national exams;
- Retention of qualified staff; and
- School infrastructure development.
- The stakeholders propose avenues through which MoES should hold PPP schools accountable including the following;
- Academic performance and financial accountability through follow-ups on school activities and intensifying school inspections to curb absenteeism;
- Hold PPP schools to the same standards as other government schools, because children are not private;
- Set clear outcomes targets in the MoUs such as termly reporting by providers and spot checks by government through the DEOs office;
- Ensure that schools make annual returns with audited accounts and periodical whole school systems audits.

6. Sanctions & Termination Process

All the responding stakeholders report that they are not aware of the Ministry terminating any MoUs for PPP schools.

Additionally, there is general lack of awareness on whether the Ministry uses any sanctions before terminating PPP MoUs with schools. There are a few stakeholders who believe that the Ministry uses sanctions or terminates MoUs with PPP schools on the recommendation of the district and ministry inspectors.

There are interesting observations that emerge when stakeholders are asked what should happen to children in PPP schools where MoUs are terminated. Highlighted below are some of the observations:

- Transfer children to more compliant PPP schools;
- Be given option to stay at the private school;
- Enrol in nearby government school and if there is no government school, PPP schools should be supported to improve;
- Where student numbers are high and no alternative schools are within close proximity, government can sign temporary MOUs to directly manage the school to allow continuity.

There are some stakeholders who believe that the situation should never reach the point of terminating the MoU, especially if Government was doing its monitoring role. However, where circumstances have culminated in termination, both parties should consider settling before the actual termination.

7. School Governance

There is agreement among the stakeholders that schools are governed by Boards of Governors (BoGs) and head teachers, although there are cases where BoGs are not functional and the directors/ proprietors of the school usurp the powers of the head teacher.

Most of the stakeholders who responded believe that the PPP schools' governance is not working well, even though it varies from school to school. They intimate that there are issues that warrant better accountability such as finances, student performance, student welfare and effective supervision from the government.

The existing structures for governance at the PPP schools composed of the proprietors/directors, head teachers, and the BOGs would be sufficient with more robust regulations and guidelines for accountability, as per the stakeholders' responses. There are several proposals that stakeholders raise which are important in improving school governance:

- i. Binding a robust policy framework with clear accountability measures;
- ii. Increase funding (capitation grants) and improve school management;
- iii. Put in place qualified teaching and non-teaching staff, and work on staff motivation;
- iv. Institute well-balanced BoGs, with clear governance structures and training for governors;
- v. Ensure that inspection systems work and M&E systems are fully functional.



Most of the stakeholders who responded believe that the PPP schools' governance is not working well, even though it varies from school to school.

8. Financing

With regards to the fees that PPP schools charge or can charge for, **the stakeholders report that PPP schools charge fees to cover operational costs of running the schools.** These fees are also dependent on the needs of the school and the location. The fees charged include: PTA fees, lunch fees, boarding fees, development fees, uniform fees, library fees, laboratory fees, to mention a few, because the funds from government are not enough. **The stakeholders generally agree that the Government should regulate how much in fees parents pay to deter schools from charging exorbitant amounts.** The justification for the fees however, should be determined after an evaluation with parents' input.

There is not a common understanding among the stakeholders about how USE funds to PPP schools are accounted for. Some believe that the DEO generates accountabilities through head counts and oversees accountabilities presented by the head teachers. Others believe that registered district auditors present audited books to the Ministry. There are also those who report that there is no defined system of accountability owing to the irregularity of funds releases to schools.

Information gathered from several stakeholders reveals that the USE PPP schools generally do not make profits, even though they intend to and should be able to. This corresponds to the primary data we collected in our school survey. In fact, some note that if PPP schools could make profits, they would run sustainably and plough funds back into the system to improve education provision. If they made profits, taxing the PPP schools then would be understandable. However, in a weak regulatory environment, making profits would seem predatory.

The stakeholders overwhelmingly acknowledge that the level of financing to PPP schools (47,000 per student per term) is inadequate and shows that government does not take education as a priority. Additionally, there is massive support for linking student termly capitation grants to inflation.



The stakeholders overwhelmingly acknowledge that the level of financing to PPP schools (47,000 per student per term) is inadequate

The responding stakeholders acknowledge that **there is value for Government to provide different levels of funding to schools because it would demonstrate Government's commitment to affirmative action to improve quality in rural and poorer communities,** and it would also improve equity in education.

There is **overwhelming support for increasing PPP capitation grants so schools have more money to deliver quality as opposed to keeping capitation the same to increase the number of children who can access schools.** Increasing capitation grants would ensure that children get quality education: access without quality is counterproductive. It is also recognized that increasing capitation may require that the number of PPP providers is reduced to ensure that there is proper accountability for the funds. PPP partners should be based on ability to deliver high quality education outcomes to the poorest in areas of high demand.

9. Management (Teachers, curriculum, etc.)

With regards to teacher requirement, there is general understanding that each school has its own policy on how they recruit, but the teacher must be qualified as per national standards. Also, the rules for teacher recruitment in PPP schools should be similar to those in public schools as long as the teachers are well qualified, registered, and licensed.

USE PPP schools have the same curriculum requirements as non-PPP schools. While some respondents believe that USE PPP schools should have the flexibility or scope to innovate in the delivery of the curriculum, others do not see the necessity of such. **Where schools are allowed autonomy to innovate in the delivery of the curriculum, the innovation should be aligned with the goals of the nation and the government should be able to provide oversight.** Such innovations are important because it builds diversity of talents and student attitudes.



...some communities believe that Government takes care of all school expenses including meals and this often results in tensions within communities.

10. Communication and Branding

When asked whether communities are aware of government contribution to USE PPP schools, the respondents agree that communities are aware. However, **they cite miscommunications pertinent to the grants because some communities believe that Government takes care of all school expenses including meals and this often results in tensions within communities.** This miscommunication is further exacerbated by politicians who misinform.

The extent to which USE PPP schools acknowledge the contribution of government is not clear from the stakeholder responses. However, the **stakeholders acknowledge that it is important to recognize government contribution** because;

- It is important to say that the school is supported by government;
- It helps the PPP school retain political support;
- It binds the partner to be accountable; and
- It gives the community a sense of ownership of the program and the school and therefore an incentive to ensure that there is value for money.

The stakeholders also note that for more government recognition to be achieved, there should be more engagement from government, active monitoring, and involvement of a wider range of stakeholders in identifying partners and signing MoUs.

Review of PPP policy environment

A key part of this review is to assess the appropriateness, strengths and challenges of the policy environment which governs the PPP programme.

To guide this, we have drawn on the World Bank's Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) 'Engaging the Private Sector' (EPS) framework. This provides an internationally recognised framework within which to analyse the policy environment and produce an assessment comparable to that conducted in other countries. In analysing the range of documents available to us to conduct the SABER EPS assessment we also made a number of observations which do not fall neatly into the SABER EPS analytical framework. We therefore present a discussion of two key policy topics following the SABER EPS analysis: these are issues of targeting and the legality of the current PPP. A list of policy documents assessed as part of the review of the policy environment is included in Annex 3. Though not consciously designed as such, taken together these constitute the de facto governing policy framework for the PPP programme as may be collectively referred to hereafter as the 'policy environment, or 'policy framework'.

1. Assessing the PPP using the SABER framework

The World Bank's SABER framework assesses policy intent; what a policy/policy framework looks like on paper. In this way, it assigns a score not based on how the world is, but how the world would be according to the policy. To assess policy intent, the SABER framework mostly considers 'legal' authority, though for the purposes of this review, we have considered all official GoU and MoES documentation related to the USE PPP which was provided to us in order to make an analysis of policy intent — even if such documentation is not itself a 'legal' document or instrument.

We reviewed existing policy documents related to the PPP and analysed (1) Policy intent and policy implementation using the World Bank's Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) framework as a guideline and (2) other key policy issues not covered by SABER, namely geographic targeting of PPP schools and the legality of the PPP.²⁸

Two policy areas that emerged from the SABER analysis as priorities in Uganda are (1) holding schools accountable and (2) empowering parents, students and communities in order to increase both accountability and equity. In terms of targeting, we found that the PPP has only been partially successful in achieving its intent to target areas most in need of additional access to secondary school. MoES could take a more direct role in targeting and monitoring where it partners with non-state schools. On the issue of legality, we determined that the legal status of PPP schools is unclear; it is imperative that a future PPP framework is embedded in Uganda's current legal framework to ensure that there is a clear system by which all partners are held accountable.

²⁸ The SABER framework is based on international evidence on the policy actions governments can take towards engaging private schools in order to improve education access and quality.

The authors of the SABER EPS framework also indicate that SABER-EPS could be used to analyse policy *implementation* — the way the world is. Therefore, we use information gathered through our primary research and other sources to also estimate an ‘implementation score’, in addition to a score for policy intent. While an EPS framework for assessing policy implementation is currently under development, this has not yet been made a public good. Therefore, scores for implementation are not guided by formal SABER instructions but are judged based on our professional judgement and reading of other available evidence.

It is important to note that we have taken the approach that ‘implementation’ should not be interpreted as necessarily compliant with existing policy. Rather, where the observed reality and primary evidence would provide a different answer to the SABER questions to a reading of policy intent, the corresponding score has been assigned accordingly. Therefore, an implementation score may actually be higher than a policy intent score, due to policy not actually being adhered to, applied or enforced. The policy lesson in these cases may be that an application or strict enforcement of existing policy may actually be detrimental and that an appropriate response would be to reform policy to reflect certain elements of what is actually happening on the ground (see ‘encouraging innovation by providers’). Moreover, certain areas will represent higher priorities for policy change in Uganda than others. *The ‘implementation’ scores are included here to provoke further thought and discussion on the question of turning policy intent into tangible action.*

The EPS SABER framework provides a structure for analysing four types of private sector engagement:

1. independent private schools;
2. government funded private schools;
3. privately managed public schools;
4. voucher schools.

For the purpose of this review, we have used only the second framework, that for government funded private schools, as it is this which is most relevant to Uganda’s USE PPP.

The four main areas for analysis — ‘policy goals’ — in the SABER EPS framework are:

1. encouraging innovation by providers;
2. holding schools accountable;
3. empowering all parents, students and communities; and
4. promoting diversity of supply.

These policy goals have been established as part of the SABER framework because global evidence has demonstrated that improvements in these areas can strengthen provider accountability and learning for all.²⁹ In this section, we will consider each of these four policy goals, beginning with a brief definition and rationale for each one according to SABER. We will then provide some brief commentary to explain the scores we have assigned to each one. Full details of the assessment are available upon request.

It must be noted that we are using the SABER EPS tool as a guiding framework. Our use of this tool does not represent an official endorsement by the World Bank Group or the SABER initiative.

Policy goal 1:

Encouraging innovation by providers

This policy goal captures whether private schools have autonomy, for example to appoint, deploy or dismiss teachers, determine curricula, or manage operating budgets. This is based on international evidence that local decision-making in education can have positive effects on student outcomes. School autonomy can also improve the power of the poor in determining how schools operate.

Status of policy intent	Emerging 
Status of policy implementation	Advanced 

Key points:

- PPP schools have substantive freedoms to recruit and manage their own teachers. This is a strength of the PPP but also a cause for criticism and concern from some stakeholders.

²⁹ Baum, D., Lewis, L., Lusk-Stover, O., Patrinos, H. (2014); ‘What Matters Most for Engaging the Private Sector in Education: A Framework Paper’, SABER Working Paper Series number 8.

- In reality, PPP schools have relative autonomy to deliver the national curriculum and allocate resources as they see fit. The policy framework puts certain restrictions on this but in practice such restrictions are difficult to enforce. Overall, PPP schools have autonomy over how they recruit teachers, what they are paid and how they are dismissed — and this autonomy is exercised; our research shows that PPP schools pay lower salaries than government-aided schools but are still able to recruit teachers with broadly similar qualifications as government schools. In this regard, both policy intent and implementation are *advanced*. It is worth noting however that this autonomy has generated some criticisms levelled at the PPP programme that schools do not recruit sufficiently qualified and experienced teachers and that teachers do not receive sufficient employment protection.

Regarding how the curriculum is delivered and resources allocated at a classroom level, schools in reality have more freedom and autonomy than the policy framework suggests. The policy framework indicates that, ultimately, central government can decide how schools can direct curriculum delivery and resource allocation. This is particularly evident with regard to school budgets. In this area, the PPP framework suggests a high degree of central government involvement in how individual school budgets are set, approved and amended — over and above the role of board of governors. However, in reality, this framework is ultimately too cumbersome to be implemented. The ability of MoES to enforce policy is limited and this means schools' *de facto* autonomy is greater than the policy intent suggests. Ensuring school autonomy is facilitated under the actual, intended policy framework — and not just a by-product of a lack of compliance — would be a sensible reform objective.

It is worth noting here that the SABER EPS scoring rubric is somewhat limited in this area. This is due to the fact that the rubric does not fully account for a situation whereby schools have the authority to set standards and allocate resources, but also that central or local governments have the ability to monitor and oversee this. Instead, the scoring rubric makes total authority of government 'latent' while complete, un-monitored authority of

schools is 'advanced'. The lack of a more nuanced middle option means that the policy intent scores in this section will be biased towards 'latent' while conversely, the 'implementation' scores we have assigned will lean toward 'advanced'.

Policy goal 2: Holding schools accountable

Increases in autonomy should be accompanied by standards and interventions to improve quality. The combination of increased levels of school autonomy and accountability has been found to positively impact student performance. This policy goal captures whether there are effective approaches in place to raise accountability, such as school inspections and quality assurance procedures, sanctions for underperformance, school management and monitoring of student outcomes.

Status of policy intent	Emerging 
Status of policy implementation	Latent 

Key points:

- The inspection framework exists on paper for all types of schools, including PPP. There are also guidelines for the inspection of PPP schools.
- However, the practice of inspections is weak and inconsistent and due to limited resources, applied less frequently to PPP schools.
- There is little follow-up to inspection and little connection between inspection or other measures of performance with any sanctions or rewards.
- There are inherent weaknesses and challenges with what should be the primary tool of accountability for the PPP — the memorandum of understanding. Further, the tools and processes which the MoU makes provision for and which would help to hold schools accountable, are for the most part not utilised.

For the student standards (emerging) and student assessment (established) indicators, PPP schools are subject to the same requirements as other types of schools.

Other indicators are of more interest with regard to PPP schools. Specifically, financial reporting, inspection, improvement planning, and sanctions and rewards.

Financial reporting. The policy intent for financial reporting is established, with guidelines for type and frequency of reporting and clear guidelines that disbursements of funds are conditional upon submission of correct records and accounts for previous funding. However, in reality funding disbursements are not related to either the content or timing of reports; only 38 percent of headteachers reported receiving their last USE disbursement in full, and only 57 percent received it on time.³⁰ This means effective implementation of financial reporting is only *emerging*.

Inspection and improvement planning. The policy intent for inspection of PPP schools is *established*, with several key documents discussing the need for and frequency of inspection.³¹ There is even an ‘inspections plan’ for UPPET schools, which suggests schools should be inspected every two years for leadership and management, finances and funding, infrastructure and pupil learning achievement in national exams. There is also *emerging* intent for inspection to lead to school improvement planning; documents state that following inspections, schools should receive feedback and recommendations for improvements, with help to implement these. However, experience has shown that the inspection process is implemented infrequently and in an ad-hoc manner, with the focus of inspection being inputs and infrastructure, rather than observed teaching practice and student learning outcomes. Following inspection, schools are left with little substantive and actionable feedback, and further inspection is not informed by previous inspection visits and findings. This means that the implementation of inspection practice is *emerging* while school improvement is *latent*; when

inspectors do visit schools, the nature of that visit does not constitute a meaningful inspection which can help prompt school improvement. Further, the situation regarding PPP schools in reality is worse, because according to the Directorate of Education Standards, they are reportedly visited less frequently than government-aided schools. This is because DES chooses to direct the limited resources it has to inspecting schools it feels it could have a realistic chance of impacting, given government’s control over and responsibility for public schools. This challenge of ‘inadequate monitoring of the Private Schools’ was recognised in the early stages of the PPP³², though little seems to have changed to improve the situation a decade on.

Sanctions and rewards. As above, the policy intent (*emerging*) regarding sanctions and rewards is more advanced than the reality of implementation (*latent*). PPP specific documentation states follow-up inspections can be made, with sanctions being applied if necessary, including non-performing schools being discontinued from the programme. However, as stated above there is little connection between inspection and performance analysis with follow-up actions of any sort, and there are few reported instances of where schools have been removed from the programme.

Challenges with the PPP MoU. The primary tool for holding PPP schools accountable is the memorandum of understanding (MoU) which each PPP school must sign with MoES in order to join the programme. This document outlines the general principles guiding the PPP programme, as well as the responsibilities of government and the proprietor of the private school. However, the MoU document makes limited provision for GoU/MoES to sanction PPP schools in the event of under-performance, short of terminating the MoU altogether — the grounds for which are also unclear. The MoU does state that a ‘performance agreement’ must be signed between PPP schools and MoES and that PPP schools will undergo a performance review every two years. However, our research shows that only 14 percent of

30 Uganda secondary school survey 2017, EPG

31 Proposed World Bank Support for the Implementation of USE Programme — Action No. 6 — Inspection Plan of Public and Private Schools in Uganda under the UPPET Program — December 2008

32 Proposed World Bank Support for Implementation of USE Programme — Technical Paper No. 8 — Draft Policy and Framework for Provision of Quality Education in Private Secondary Schools under USE Programme — March 2008

headteachers reported that their school had signed a performance agreement with the MOES in addition to the initial MoU, while only seven percent of headteachers said that their MoU had ever undergone review. Further, although a performance review every two years is stated, the MoUs overall are not time limited, suggesting that as long as a performance review is passed, or if it does not happen at all, then the MoU can continue indefinitely. Therefore, the MoU document itself is an insufficient instrument to sanction schools and hold them accountable, while the document and process named in the MoU which may actually allow MoES to do this — the performance agreement and bi-annual assessment review — do not in most cases exist. There are also concerns over the legal status of the MoU (discussed below).

framework. Guidelines are confusing and in some places inconsistent.

- Nevertheless, school fees are an essential revenue stream for all types of schools, including PPP and government-aided USE schools.
- Government-aided USE schools charge at least as much, and in some cases more, fees than PPP schools.
- Overall, PPP schools operate on less revenue than government-aided USE schools, as government schools receive per student capitation grants and salaried teachers from government, as well as charging user fees.

Policy goal 3: Empowering all parents, students and communities

Poor and marginalized children and youth disproportionately lack access to quality education services. Governments need to use various mechanisms to increase the ability of parents and communities — and those from underserved groups in particular — to hold providers accountable. Empowering parents, students and communities includes ensuring that information about school performance is available, giving parents some voice and therefore influence on what happens in the school, and ensuring that all students are afforded the same opportunities.

Status of policy intent	Emerging 
Status of policy implementation	Latent 

Key points:

- The PPP eligibility threshold of 28 means nearly one-fifth of students eligible for secondary school are not eligible for a government subsidised secondary school place. This raises questions about the equity and universality of universal secondary education.
- The regulations regarding the ability of PPP schools to charge fees is unclear in the policy

This policy goal focuses on four key areas:

1. information;
2. voice;
3. selection; and
4. contributions.

Most relevant for this review are selection and admissions, as it is within these areas where there is most difference in the rules and regulations of PPP schools compared to other schools. Nevertheless, the information and voice will be briefly considered.

Information. Annual examination results are shared with the public through newspapers and text messaging services. However, inspection results are not available publically. UPPET inspections guidelines state that inspection reports are shared with 'key stakeholders' but does not state who these are. In this regard, policy intent and implementation in this area is emerging. However, the situation for PPP schools in this area does not differ to that of other school types.

Voice. The UPPET inspection guidelines state that inspectors need to explore how schools seek to encourage parental and community involvement, though the guidelines do not explore what the results of such engagement might be. Beyond this, PPP schools are generally subject to the same inspections regime as other forms of school. However, as mentioned above, the reality of this means that DES often focusses its attention and resources on government-aided schools instead of

PPP schools. This means that both policy intent and implementation in this area is still latent.

Selection. On paper, the policy intent is established. The basis for this is the 2008 Education Act (s.31.3.f), which states that private school headteachers must “*undertake that the school will not refuse admission to any pupil on any discriminatory grounds.*” Further, the PPP MoU states that: “*Once a school has been accepted to participate in the programme, regardless of the character of the Foundation Body, it is expected to be national, non-sectarian and egalitarian in its operations and activities.*” This means students cannot be excluded on any grounds.



...while schools themselves are not allowed to refuse admission to students based on academics, and the PPP overall has helped to increase access, there is an inherent inequity built into the PPP which prevents students with low scores from accessing a subsidised school place.

However, as stated in the ‘Policy guidelines for the public private partnership schools’, “*The selection criteria for students’ entry in PPP institutions shall be on merit based on UNEB assessment. However, a few modifications may be considered when necessary to ensure that all eligible candidates can access UPPET*”. This means that for a student to be eligible for a USE funded place, they must have achieved at least a 28 aggregate at PLE and not be repeating a grade.³³ Therefore, while schools themselves are not allowed to refuse admission to students based on academics, and the PPP overall has helped to increase access, there is an inherent inequity built into the PPP which prevents students with low

scores from accessing a subsidised school place. Students with a score lower than 28 are eligible to attend secondary school but through the USE programme are not deemed worthy of government support. According to the 2016 PLE results, this means that approximately 17.9 percent (96,650 of 541,089) of candidates who passed their PLE and were eligible to proceed to secondary school did not score well enough to be eligible for a government subsidised secondary school place.³⁴ This leads to questions about the universality of USE. In fact, the eligibility threshold appears to have been tightened after the initial launch of USE, when it was initially even lower at 32 PLE aggregates.³⁵ This change arguably made the programme even less equitable and universal — a criticism levelled at the PPP by numerous stakeholders.

Further, the reality of admissions into USE and PPP schools suggests that schools are in fact able to apply admissions criteria, due to demand exceeding supply. 515 PPP schools — 61 percent — are over-enrolled, meaning they have more students than they have capacity for (capacity calculated as the number of classrooms per school multiplied by 60, the number of students per class recommended in the PPP MoU). Although many schools are over enrolled, it is likely that they are still able to select the students that are admitted — and this is supported by evidence from other sources. The PEAS network of non-profit PPP schools commissioned a midline external evaluation which found that approximately 52% of PPP schools report applying an admissions threshold score which is higher than the threshold for USE capitation subsidy.³⁶ Overall, these findings suggest that improvements can be made when it comes to student selection and equity, and the implementation score is estimated to be *latent*.

Contributions. This is a challenging area when assigning scores for both the policy intent and implementation. The 2008 Education Act is unclear about schools’ abilities to charge fees. The Act states:

No person or agency (sic.) shall levy or order another person to levy any charge for purposes

33 Circular No. 01 of 2008 re. USE/UPPET guidelines, 2008 (23rd January 2008)

34 UNEB PLE results 2016

35 2006 ‘General Implementation Guidelines for Universal Secondary Education’

36 EPRC, (2017), Evaluation of the PEAS network under Uganda’s universal secondary education (USE) programme, Midline survey report

of education in any primary or post primary institution implementing UPE or UPPET programme.

‘For purposes of education’ may be interpreted to mean ‘tuition’ fees, though this is unclear. The Act does appear to provide flexibility for charging fees of some kind:

The provisions of subsection (1) shall not be construed to deter the management of any school or institution implementing UPE or UPPET programme from collecting or receiving voluntary contributions or payments from parents and well-wishers to contain a state of emergency or any urgent matter concerning the school.

This clause is particularly important and problematic. If we acknowledge the necessity of additional funds to provide educational services (as suggested by the primary evidence which shows fee revenue is required), then ‘any urgent matter concerning the school’ could be construed as simply providing the basic level of service delivery, which otherwise would not happen without the additional revenues. It is also complicated because Section seven, clause 44 states: “*The (private) school owner may charge such school dues as the management committee or board of governors, may prescribe from time to time*”.

As the role of PPP schools within the Act is unclear (as discussed below), it could be interpreted that the rules applying to all private schools also apply to PPP schools, which would appear to allow some form of fee charging. Further, the Act states:

(1) Any person or agency who levies charges beyond the maximum charges provided by the Minister under section 57(g) or who wrongfully denies access to education to a pupil or student who is a beneficiary of UPE or UPPET for failure to pay extra charges commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty currency points or imprisonment not exceeding twelve months or both.

Section 57g only allows for statutory instruments to be used for regulating the fees payable at any school. Therefore, an assessment of other relevant

policy documents is required to understand the framework for fee charging at PPP schools.

However, an analysis of other relevant documents does not fully clarify the situation. *The Policy Guidelines for the Public-Private Partnership schools’ state: “The grants are essentially to facilitate the teaching and learning process and will exclusively be used for that purpose and not for feeding and accommodation. Any inevitable diversion of grants should be approved by BOG and authorized by the MoES.”* These guidelines both: 1. acknowledge that USE funds may need to be utilised for non-specified purposes, due to the overall level of funding not being enough; and 2. suggest that schools are allowed to charge fees for non-tuition related costs, such as lunch and boarding. However, in other documents, this is less clear. In the January 2008 circular letter to schools regarding USE, it states parents and guardians should provide for children in terms of clothing, feeding, medical care and transport and that “*Headteachers should desist from collecting money from parents for provision of uniforms and lunch*”. Therefore, within relevant PPP policy guideline documents, there is both acknowledgement that non-tuition costs cannot be covered by USE grants and so need to be funded from elsewhere, and at the same time limitations placed upon headteachers’ ability to levy funds to provide these things.



...within relevant PPP policy guideline documents, there is both acknowledgement that non-tuition costs cannot be covered by USE grants and so need to be funded from elsewhere, and at the same time limitations placed upon headteachers’ ability to levy funds to provide these things.

The PPP MoU does not clarify this issue. It states that it is the duty of the PPP school proprietor to ensure USE monies are ‘used specifically

for teaching and learning purposes'. Further, it says that 'it is not acceptable for the Proprietor / head teacher to expel or discontinue any student from such a school on grounds of fees without due consultations with the Ministry responsible for Education and Sports.' However, it does not explicitly state that PPP schools are not allowed to levy fees.

In reality, fees are an important and necessary revenue stream for PPP, and in fact all types of school. This necessity for PPP schools is recognised in a government document which states that 'inadequate funding' is one of the key challenges of the PPP and that: *"The (PPP) schools have to find alternative sources of funding to pay for all school running costs beside the govt. (sic) contribution."*³⁷ Although fees constitute a larger proportion of total revenues for PPP schools than they do for government-aided schools (compared to revenues and non-monetary support from government), government-aided schools still charge similar or higher rates of fees to PPP schools; fees reported by USE students in both PPP and government schools vary between Sh. 150,000 and Sh. 200,000 per term. This is corroborated by data from the 2016 EMIS, which found reported fees of Sh.190,000 in government USE schools, and Sh.99,000 in PPP schools. This means that, overall, government-aided schools have more revenue per student: total average annual income and spending (per student) as reported by headteachers is Sh.660,000 in government schools, compared to Sh.430,000 in PPP schools.

Therefore, policy intent in this area is gauged to be emerging, as the inconsistent policy framework suggests that voluntary parental contributions are permissible, and it is therefore highly likely that they pose an obstacle to accessing education. However, in terms of policy implementation, the primary evidence suggests this area is still latent. This is because the financial situation of nearly all schools of all types necessitates them to charge fees, making them de facto compulsory and therefore presenting a tangible barrier to equitable access.

Policy goal 4:

Promoting diversity of supply

Educational choice can be used effectively to raise school quality and increase access. By opening choice options to a more diverse set of providers, governments can increase client power and make providers directly accountable to students and parents for results. Greater private school competitiveness has also been shown to have positive effects on the quality of both public and private schools. To increase school competition and choice, governments can allow multiple types of providers to operate; promote clear, open, and unrestrictive certification standards; and make government funding (and other incentives) available to non-state schools.

Status of policy intent	Emerging
Status of policy implementation	Emerging



Status of policy implementation	Emerging
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Key points:

- There are clear regulations regarding the establishment of private schools and enrolling in the PPP.
- Over 800 schools have successfully enrolled on the PPP programme, suggesting clear regulations do not create a barrier to market entry.
- Few incentives and lower funding than government-aided USE have not prevented the enrolment of schools.
- More rigorous screening and scrutiny of applicant schools would be appropriate, particularly an assessment for schools' ability to achieve good student outcomes.

On paper, there are high certification standards and relatively low barriers to market entry for private schools, meaning the Ugandan PPP scores highly for policy intent in these areas. The Education Act 2008 states that 'Any person, community or organisation' can open a private

37 Proposed World Bank Support for Implementation of USE Programme — Technical Paper No. 8 — Draft Policy and Framework for Provision of Quality Education in Private Secondary Schools under USE Programme — March 2008

school, as long as they are suitable and meet the requirements for licensing and registration. There are clear and rigorous standards in place for operating, licensing and registering schools and the private schools licensing and registration regulations make it very clear that those processes are free of charge.³⁸ That the PPP programme has grown to over 800 schools suggests that very few organisations have found certification requirements a barrier to entry. This means the score for policy implementation in this area is gauged as established. However, there are concerns about the quality and performance of some PPP schools, as well as the profit-motives of some proprietors. As one MoES official stated: *“when we entered this partnership, we did not do effective due diligence on schools. Some did not meet the minimum bar.”*³⁹ The relative ease with which schools can be established and then join the PPP, combined with concerns over the capacity and motivations of some PPP school operators, suggests that MoES could conduct more robust scrutiny of those organisations applying to join the PPP. As well as assessing infrastructure and other inputs, some assessment of a prospective schools’ ability to achieve good learning outcomes could be made, particularly for applications from existing schools, or from proprietors and organisations which already run other schools.



PPP schools do not receive any substantive financial or in-kind support to help them establish themselves.

Where the Ugandan PPP scores lower in the SABER EPS framework are for *‘funding’* and *‘incentives’*. Firstly, PPP schools receive less total revenue from government. Although the capitation amount for PPP schools is Sh. 47,000 per student compared to Sh. 41,000 for government-aided USE

schools, the total volume of resource received from government by government-aided USE schools is greater, once the cost of teacher salaries has been factored in. A 2014 MoES PSI department policy appraisal document demonstrated this when it calculated that government-aided schools receive a total Sh. 211,000 per student per term, once the Sh. 41,000 per student per term USE capitation grant is added to a per-student, per term proportion of an average size school’s annual wage bill for teachers. This is compared to Sh. 47,000 total per student per term paid by government to PPP schools.⁴⁰

Primary research data also corroborates this point of great government funding to government-aided USE schools compared to PPP schools. It suggests that the total value of support received by government-aided USE schools, in terms of capitation grants and salaried teachers (and not including user fee revenue), is more than the total cash revenues in PPP schools, which includes user fees. Further, the cost of government spending on teacher salaries alone is nearly as large as the total cash revenue that PPP secondary schools receive in grants and fees.⁴¹ Therefore, the score for both policy intent and implementation in this area is gauged as latent.

PPP schools do not receive any substantive financial or in-kind support to help them establish themselves. One of the key technical documents governing the early implementation of the PPP is very clear on this issue: *“The schools are started on a self-help basis without any intervention from the government coffers”*.⁴² The rationale for this is understandable, as part of the risk-sharing between government and private partners. However, this lack of start-up support is arguably a barrier to government being able to target the deployment of PPP schools in a strategic way to meet the greatest need. Although at isolated points some support was given to PPP schools in the form of textbooks and science laboratory equipment⁴³, this has not been a regular or consistent component of the PPP programme. Further, PPP schools do not receive any tax incentives, which has previously been

38 Guidelines for Establishing, Licensing, Registering and Classification of Private Schools/Institutions in Uganda — April 2013

39 Interview with MoES official

40 ‘An Appraisal of the Possible Implications of the Policy Reversal on Public Private Partnership for USE/UPOLET’, MoES PSI department, July 2014.

41 Uganda secondary school survey 2017, EPG

42 Proposed World Bank Support for Implementation of USE Programme — Technical Paper No. 8 — Draft Policy and Framework for Provision of Quality Education in Private Secondary Schools under USE Programme — March 2008,

43 Strategic Plan for Universal Secondary Education in Uganda (2009-2018), p.21

identified as a challenge.⁴⁴ In terms of providing timely information to schools regarding financial disbursements, the status is emerging. As stated in the policy guidelines, this is because schools should expect to receive disbursements following submission of an authorised workplan within 15 days of the academic year starting. However, even within this document the guidelines are confusing because it says disbursements will be made termly and quarterly.⁴⁵ Further, primary research data suggests that the reality of this issue is much more challenging; as previously noted only 38 percent of headteachers reported receiving their last disbursement in full. Therefore, the policy implementation is gauged as latent.

2. Targeting

An analysis of the available documentation presented some issues for which the SABER EPS framework does not allow a thorough exploration. The first of these is targeting of PPP school locations.

Key points:

- The PPP intended to target areas in most need of additional access to secondary school provision.
- It has only been partially successful in achieving this; there are still many sub-counties without a government-funded secondary school, or any school at all.
- MoES could take a more direct role in targeting priority areas for more schools and strategically planning on where to partner with non-state schools to expand provision.

The 2008 Education Act states that it is the government's responsibility of “ensuring equitable distribution of education institutions”. Therefore, government should be mindful of this in planning for expansion of schooling provision,

including where non-state schools are selected for partnership. Further, private school registration is dependent on:

- *whether the proposed school forms or will form part of the education development plan prepared or approved by the committee responsible for education for a given area; and*
- *whether the proposed school meets or will meet the educational needs of the country or area, as the case may be.*⁴⁶

The PPP was broadly established in line with these requirements — it was generally targeted at rural and poorer areas. In particular, the objective was to bring an accessible, affordable government-funded school to every sub-county in the country. As the PPP policy implementation guidelines state:

*The government envisaged that the entire country had to be considered while providing the education service thus planned to have at least one secondary school for this purpose in every Sub-County. There were Sub-Counties without a government secondary school although they had some private secondary schools, while others had no secondary school at all. There were also Sub-Counties with government secondary schools which had hit maximum capacity in terms of the available facilities. In a situation like this the government opted for the PPP arrangement which would avail the needed number of schools to undertake the UPPET programme.*⁴⁷

In total, it is estimated that there were 271 sub-counties which did not have a government secondary school and it was in these areas that were considered to be areas of need where the PPP was initiated in the first instance.⁴⁸

However, it was difficult to achieve the original intention of reaching under-served sub-counties. According to one MoES official, it was quite difficult to convince schools to join the programme: “Initially, private schools were sceptical, (they)

⁴⁴ Proposed World Bank Support for Implementation of USE Programme — Technical Paper No. 8 — Draft Policy and Framework for Provision of Quality Education in Private Secondary Schools under USE Programme — March 2008

⁴⁵ Policy Guidelines for the Public Private Partnership Schools

⁴⁶ Guidelines for Establishing, Licensing, Registering and Classification of Private Schools/Institutions in Uganda — April 2013

⁴⁷ Policy Guidelines for the Public Private Partnership Schools

⁴⁸ ‘An Appraisal of the Possible Implications of the Policy Reversal on Public Private Partnership for USE/UPOLET’, MoES PSI department, July 2014

thought it was an attempt by government to take over schools. Some schools objected, (they) didn't want government involved in their business."

In addition to this, the Ministry lacked the capacity to verify the registered schools. As reported by one MoES official:

"The policy was that if a sub-county has no government aided school at all that is when we give it a PPP private school. But when you go to the ground you can even find three PPP schools in the same sub-county because, at the time of registering in 2007, it was so much politicking and there was no technical person at the ministry who would even query or verify the registered schools. It is reported that where PPP were set-up in close proximity with government schools Ministry officials did not first discuss the arrangement with the affected schools."

These challenges have not been fully addressed as the PPP has grown to over 800 schools. Although there are now 99 sub-counties which only have a PPP school there are 718 sub-counties without a government-funded school and still 216 sub-counties without any form of school at all.⁴⁹ According to an MoES official interviewed, one challenge has been the re-defining of administrative units:

"The creation of many administrative units has been the great factor in maintaining PPP. New districts come with new sub-counties, and these need a school each. Sub-counties without secondary schools are growing not reducing even with grant aiding — it is now a moving target."

This suggests that the PPP programme has potential to provide education in areas which are in need of it, but that this will be achieved most quickly and effectively if MoES takes a more direct role in strategically targeting where it partners with non-state schools.

3. Legality of the PPP

Key points:

- The legal status of PPP schools is unclear within the provisions of the 2008 Education Act
- Rectifying this could help strengthen the link — both real and perceived — between the Government of Uganda and PPP schools
- The PPP should be reconsidered in context of the 2015 PPP Act and any new PPP framework should be embedded in the existing legal framework

The Public Private Partnerships Act of 2015 provides for all PPP agreements and in particular applies to the design, construction, and maintenance and operations of services provided under social infrastructure, including education services. The policy tool for implementation of the partnership is the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed between the MoES and the management of the partnership schools. The MoU is not one of the types of public private partnership agreements covered under the Public Private Partnerships Act of 2015.

As with the PPP Act, the 2008 Education (pre-primary, primary and post-primary) Act was passed *after* the PPP started (Initially, the PPP was governed under the 1970 Education Act⁵⁰), yet despite this neither the PPP policy framework nor PPP schools are clearly referenced or defined in the legislation. Nevertheless, the 2008 Act lays clear foundations for co-operation with the non-state sector in delivery of public education. In Part 1, it clearly states the following objectives:

- *to give full effect to the decentralization of education services;*
- *to promote partnership with the various stakeholders in providing education services;*

49 2016 EMIS

50 Proposed World Bank Support for the implementation of USE programme, Technical paper No. 8 'Draft policy and framework for provision of quality education in private secondary schools under USE programme'.

While both ‘decentralization’ and ‘partnership with various stakeholders’ are broad statements, they provide the framework within which co-operation with the non-state sector can manifest itself as some form of public-private partnership (PPP).

Further, the Education Act also clearly states one of its intention is to: *promote quality control of education and training*. Therefore, by both acknowledging the government’s intention to decentralise and partner to provide education services, and stating it is the government’s role to control quality, the Act implies government’s jurisdiction over the PPP partners it engages to ensure quality service provision. This is important, because the position of PPP schools is otherwise ambiguous within the Act (described in more detail below). For example, while the role of government vis-à-vis PPP schools is not clearly stated, with regard to private schools the Act is clear:

The responsibility of Government in private education institutions shall be to ensure that private education institutions conform to the rules and regulations governing the provision of education services in Uganda.

Further, the Act allows for flexibility in how the objectives of the Act are achieved. For example, the Act allows that

the Minister shall, from time to time, issue statutory instruments regarding Universal Primary Education, Universal Post Primary Education and Training, school meals, school charges, school uniforms, management and governance of education institutions in accordance with this Act.

This allows for the establishment of the PPP policy as part of UPPET. This is strengthened by the following provision:

Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Minister shall appoint relevant implementing agencies for effective implementation of the Act.

If private and non-state schools are interpreted as a ‘relevant implementing agency’, then the PPP is a valid policy instrument for the Minister to use to achieve the objectives of the Act. The Act is also very clear that:

For the avoidance of doubt, it shall be the responsibility of the Minister to ensure that decentralized education services are in harmony with or conform to the national policy on education. This therefore suggests that the PPP, perceived as a form of decentralized education service provision, is aligned to wider national policy on education, including complying to the same statutory requirements and performance standards.

However, there appears to be a gap for how the primary form of partnerships — PPP schools — are regarded and defined within the Act itself. This is problematic, because it means the legal status of a substantial number of Uganda’s secondary schools is unclear. This is not the case for private schools, which have a very clear definition in the Act:

“private school” means a school not founded by government and which does not receive statutory grants from Government;”

Further, government-aided schools are also clearly defined:

“Government grant aided school” means a school not founded by the Government but which receives statutory grants in the form of aid from Government and is jointly managed by the foundation body and Government.

The ‘statutory grants’ such schools receive are described thus:

“statutory grants” means salary, capital development grants, capitation grants and instructional material grants given to the Government-aided schools at a rate determined by Government from time to time.

Further, regular ‘grants’ as defined under the Act include *“annual recurrent and capital grants from Government, salaries and wages capitation and instructional materials.”*

Therefore, while PPP schools receive some form of grants as defined under the Act — as they receive annual recurrent capitation grants for salaries and wages — they are not recognised as ‘grant-aided’ schools because they are not

“jointly managed” by the foundation body and the government (as outlined in part three, section eight of the Act). This therefore means that while PPP schools receive money, government is not fully acknowledged for providing this support. The Act, by defining government grant-aided schools as those which are *jointly managed* by government, limits the space for official recognition of government support to PPP schools.

Therefore, the challenge here can be summarised as follows. ‘Private schools’ are not founded by government and do not receive grants from government, while ‘government-aided schools’ mean a school not founded by government, but which receives support from government and is jointly managed by government. Both types of schools are very clearly defined. However, **PPP schools receive funding from government but are not jointly managed by government, thereby sitting somewhere between the other definitions. There are no definitions within either the PPP Act or the Education Act which allow for this arrangement.** Therefore, not only are PPP schools in a vague position regarding definitions within the 2008 Act, but the Act itself can be perceived as one of the reasons the government is not accruing the credit for supporting PPP schools.

The USE memorandum of understanding document does not clarify this issue. Although the MoU says it is ‘*promoted under the constitution of the republic of Uganda*’, this does not necessarily make this a legally binding document. Technically, all contracts signed between any Ministry, Department, Agency or local government of the Government of Uganda should seek the approval of Attorney General before any document is signed.⁵¹ Further, any contracts or agreements worth above a value of Sh. 50 million must be approved by the Solicitor General.⁵² Although the PPP MoUs do not state a specific value of financial support, a school of 355 USE students would exceed this amount annually (based on Sh. 141,000 per student per year), thereby suggesting that such agreements would require the approval of the Solicitor General. Agreements which do not seek such

approval “are null and void, and are not binding on Government”.⁵³ As the PPP MoU document was not approved by the Attorney or Solicitor General, let alone all 840+ of them that have been agreed over the course of the last 10 years, this poses a serious question over the legal status of the PPP schools and puts them in an exposed and liable position.



PPP schools receive funding from government but are not jointly managed by government, thereby sitting somewhere between the other definitions. There are no definitions within either the PPP Act or the Education Act which allow for this arrangement.

It is imperative that any partnerships that could be negotiated under the expansion for provision of USE are embedded in the current legal framework, with legally binding agreements between Government and its partners to be reviewed periodically. This will help to ensure that new MoUs can be used as accountability mechanisms. More specifically, it would address some of the current legal gaps in the current PPP framework such as:

- Providing for guidelines on selection, minimum qualifications required, and procurement of partners;
- Providing for disqualification of partners in the bidding and evaluation of the PPP;
- Providing for procedures and types of PPP agreements and related matters within the partnership;
- Providing for undertaking of inception and feasibility studies of the PPP as well as analysing value for money.

51 ‘Role of the Attorney General in the procurement process and other government commitments by Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Local Governments’, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, 2013.

52 Ibid

53 Ibid

Conclusion

This review attempted to answer the following key questions:

1. How important is the current PPP model in helping to deliver secondary education in Uganda?
2. What governs the current PPP and how appropriate is this framework?
3. What is the performance, quality and cost of PPP schools and how does this compare to other types of schools?
4. How economically feasible and beneficial is the current PPP and how would PPP be a financially viable policy option for future planning?

To answer these questions, we have analysed existing MoES/GoU data, generated and analysed new primary evidence, analysed school mapping data, reviewed the policy framework including through the use of an international assessment method, consulted key stakeholders, and analysed the Ugandan education budget and generated projections for future resource allocations. Our findings pertaining to each question are summarised below.

1.

How important is the current PPP model in helping to deliver secondary education in Uganda?

The current USE PPP is a very important part of the current Ugandan secondary education landscape. This is acknowledged by nearly all stakeholders, even those organisations with a less positive view of PPP in principle. PPP schools educate nearly one-third of all students in secondary schools, and nearly one-half of those who attend secondary school on a USE capitation grant. Although secondary education is still not universal and the PPP has not necessarily been as strategically targeted to serve the very poorest, evidence still suggests that the PPP has played a substantial role in helping deliver education to a lot more students who, before 2007, would have struggled to access an affordable school place. We conclude that this has been helped by the fact that on average, PPP schools cost the same or less as government schools in terms of fees to parents. This, coupled with the fact that some PPP schools are in places where there is not government provision, makes them at least as accessible as government-aided schools, and in many cases more so. This accessibility is important.



The PPP has played a substantial role in helping deliver education to a lot more students who, before 2007, would have struggled to access an affordable school place.

Despite the importance of the PPP, this is not widely acknowledged. The important contribution the programme plays in helping to deliver secondary education in Uganda is not fully understood by many key stakeholders, from government to parents. Discussion about phased withdrawal of financial support to PPP schools risks seriously underestimating the negative consequences on the wider secondary sector, both

in terms of reducing current enrolments — which are already low — as well as harming the sector's ability to grow and absorb more students in the future. Further, there is a challenge regarding the awareness of the contribution government makes in financing the PPP. This creates confusion amongst stakeholders about what government provides and what, and how much, can be sourced from elsewhere, such as through levying user fees. This challenge in awareness and perception of government involvement also presents a challenge with establishing proper accountability for schools, because stakeholders are confused about who is responsible for what.

2.

What governs the current PPP and how appropriate is this framework?

The governing framework for the PPP programme has substantial weaknesses, which mean service delivery is not as effective and efficient as it could be. While there is adequate legislative provision for the government of Uganda to partner with private schools for educational service delivery, the legal status of the USE PPP and of PPP schools themselves is questionable. This does not mean that the PPP or PPP schools are illegal, but that definition of the PPP, and the roles and responsibilities of, and protections afforded to, the respective parties are unclear. This has led to confusion amongst stakeholders, including government, about regulatory requirements. Further, the key governing document, the memorandum of understanding, is too weak to be used to hold schools to proper account; the key provisions it makes for this purpose rarely exist or are implemented. Combined, these factors mean that when commitments are not met by either party, there is very little recourse available. GoU is unable to properly sanction poorly performing schools, while private schools have little ability to redress weaknesses from government, such as capitation disbursements coming late or not in full.

It should be noted that many of the problems affecting the governance and accountability of the PPP programme are not restricted to it but are present across the secondary system and affect other types of school. For instance, school inspection practices are relatively weak across the system, due to both lack of resource and un-impactful inspection activities. However, due to the additional sensitivity of tax payers' money being placed in the responsibility of non-state actors through this PPP, it is arguably even more important to ensure that the governance and accountability structures for such PPP schools are implemented and effective.

3.

What is the performance, quality and cost of PPP schools and how does this compare to other types of schools?

In terms of student academic performance, PPP schools perform at least as well as government-aided USE schools and arguably better. Despite the concerns of numerous stakeholders, PPP schools actually tend to have better facilities than government-aided USE schools. Further, students at PPP schools perform the same in absolute terms as those in government-aided USE schools, and also make more progress during their time at school. This is not because PPP schools are better managed; there is no difference in the quality of management between PPP and government-aided USE schools. Nor is it because teachers are any more qualified in PPP schools. It is likely that PPP schools tend to exhibit better, more positive teaching practices than government USE schools. This is demonstrated by teachers who are generally younger with less experience and who are paid less than their counterparts in government USE schools. This challenges the assumption that increasing salary or experience would lead to dramatic improvements in student learning outcomes. Further, students in PPP schools tend to be slightly more positive and enthusiastic about their experience at school.

This better performance is achieved at a lower per student unit cost in PPP schools than in government USE schools. Although PPP schools receive a slightly larger per-student capitation cash amount than government USE schools, the overall amount of government resource provided to government USE is substantially higher once teacher salaries are considered. In addition to this, government USE schools still charge at least the same, and if not higher, total fees to students and their families. This means that the overall per student resource available at government USE schools is substantially more than in PPP schools.

4.

How economically feasible and beneficial is the current PPP and how would PPP be a financially viable policy option for future planning?

The cost-efficiency of the PPP, coupled with its large contribution to the secondary sector, suggest the programme is financially beneficial to the Ugandan education sector. Students in PPP schools are educated more cost-efficiently than in government-aided USE schools, as they achieve the same or better results at the same or less cost, both to government and parents. Given that one third of all those enrolled in secondary school are in PPP schools, the combined savings to government are substantial.

However, **the capitation amount from government is not sufficient to prevent the necessity for schools to charge fees.** This means that, even when these fees are low and 'affordable', the very poorest are at risk of being excluded, thereby challenging the equity of the programme. While the research did not explicitly seek to address the issue of affordability both for students and government, there is general consensus from all stakeholders that **the capitation grant should be increased for PPP schools,** to both help improve quality and increase access in a more equitable way.

Implications from PPP review findings

The findings and conclusions outlined above have led us to three main implications for the consideration of the Ministry of Education and Sports. First, the analysis points to several gaps in the policy framework for PPPs in the delivery of USE which require careful consideration and addressing. Second, challenges have been repeatedly identified related to lack of understanding about the PPP framework and government's role, which could be addressed through better communications and branding. Third, the evidence has shown that there is a role for private actors in delivering education in Uganda, but any partnership between government and non-state actors must be governed through an improved framework.

Four key concepts have emerged to outline a way forward. These concepts and recommended policy actions are outlined below. A new policy framework that defines the partnership between government and non-state education providers and ensures the expansion of quality secondary education should be based upon:

FOUR KEY CONCEPTS

1. Accountability
2. Visibility
3. Affordability
4. 'Deliverability'



1. Accountability

- **Develop a policy framework for the engagement of non-state actors by which the Government ensures that schools improve access and quality and are more accountable.** An improved framework could help to ensure that MoES enters into effective partnerships that help it achieve its education goals while ensuring that Government remains the guarantor of education for all with strong oversight of non-state partners. Specific actions to develop an improved framework include:

- **Strengthen government oversight of non-state partners and accountability through clarifying the legal and governance structures around PPP schools.** PPP schools should have to sign legally binding, time-limited agreements with the Government of Uganda, which incorporate metrics focussed on student learning outcomes. This would allow MoES to sanction poorly performing schools. By attaching performance management metrics to student learning outcomes, it would focus schools on the central business of schooling — helping students achieve — while also providing a logistically feasible way for MoES to measure these outcomes.

- **Improve accountability through more rigorous and targeted inspections.** Inspections should focus on observed practice with regard to school management and teaching and learning — rather than on less meaningful indicators such as infrastructural inputs. Due to limited resources, inspections could be targeted at poorly performing schools and used as a method of sanctioning schools and promoting school improvement. This inspection process would help schools to improve and if they do not, the inspections record would be another way of helping MoES to evidence sanctions measures, and ultimately, termination of a PPP arrangement.

- **Increase the rigour of the partner selection and commissioning process.** To ensure government is partnering with capable and reliable partners who are aligned with its objectives, the way in which these are selected could be strengthened. The selection process should include a review of schools' operational models and should check alignment with MoES objectives. Partners should also be selected based on their track record in education service delivery and plans for achieving quality learning outcomes for students.



2. Visibility

- **Improve public awareness of the government contribution to any future public-private partnership through clearer branding.** Partnership schools could be rebranded so that government contribution is clearly communicated and acknowledged. This would have the benefit of communicating to parents and communities that government is in fact involved in helping provide in education. This could also help foster greater accountability between government, schools and parents; if parents are aware of the amount of government support received by the local school, then they can be clearer on the contributions expected from them by the school; while schools can draw upon a clearer connection with government to strengthen requests for support and service provision



3. Affordability

- **Ensure cost-effectiveness for Government.** A new model should be a part of Government's plan to make rapid progress on USE in a way that is achievable and sustainable.
- **Ensure affordability for poor families.** As with the existing PPP model, any new partnership model should aim to expand access to secondary education for disadvantaged communities. For example, higher capitation grants could be offered as incentives for those willing to establish schools in poorer, more rural areas, which would enable them to lower their fees and make access more affordable and equitable.



4. ‘Deliverability’

- **Select partners that are aligned with MoES objectives.** Partners should be clearly aligned with the MoES objectives of delivering quality and equitable education for all.
- **Develop a more manageable structure with fewer partners.** MoES could work with groups or networks of schools to reduce administrative burdens. Partners should be clearly aligned with the MoES objectives of delivering quality and equitable education for all.
- **Target the location of partnership schools strategically with a focus on equity.** Partnership schools should agree to operate only in areas identified by MoES as priorities, where disadvantaged communities are located and where existing capacity is insufficient to meet demand. Through the latest 2016 EMIS data, MoES understands where the greatest need for additional capacity is. MoES should target its expansion activities not only in those sub-counties which do not have any secondary schools at all, but also in those areas where existing capacity is insufficient to meet demand. A revised partnership modality could be deployed to address both of these issues, with MoES only partnering with non-state school operators who agree to operate in areas already identified by MoES as their priority. Further, this strategic targeting should consider likely future need, based on projections of the number of eligible students in the future. In this way, MoES would be in more control of the expansion of secondary education provision, while still harnessing the resources of the non-state sector to this objective.

Phasing out the existing PPP scheme is a first step to creating a partnership model through which MoES can leverage the support of non-state actors to more rapidly and cost-effectively expand secondary education, while also ensuring that any new model is manageable, accountable, and aligned with Government objectives for the sector.

Annexes

Annex 1: Analysing demand for school places and financial implications in view of a PPP phase-out

To complement the primary research, EPG developed tools that can support the Ministry's planning processes: specifically, (a) a school demand mapping tool which can inform a strategic phase-out of PPP schools and the placement of any new schools and (b) a financial modelling tool which can help the Ministry to cost different scenarios for secondary school expansion, including with and without a PPP, and taking into consideration growth projections of the secondary school-age population. The objectives of these tools were to address the following questions:

- i. How economically feasible and beneficial is the current PPP?**
- ii. How would PPP be a financially viable policy option for future planning?**

For this we will analyse the costs of the phase-out assuming based on MoES plans that there will be a step-wise withdrawal.

Key findings from demand mapping and financial modelling tools

EPG has developed and shared with MoES two tools that can assist with strategic planning of the PPP phase-out and plans for secondary school expansion more broadly: a school demand mapping tool and financial modelling tool. We share preliminary findings from the use of these tools.

- In Uganda, there are 718 sub-counties without a government-funded school and 216 sub-counties without any form of school at all.⁵⁴ There are now 99 sub-counties which only have a PPP school. Withdrawal of public support to USE PPP schools in these areas could lead to an increase in the number of out-of-school children, particularly where there aren't enough nearby government schools or classrooms to absorb the eligible secondary school-aged population.
- The phase-out could first be implemented in schools which are close proximity to government schools that are not enrolled at full capacity. These locations can be visualised using the mapping tool.
- While it is difficult to know how many students would continue to enrol in private schools without USE support, we estimate that it is equivalent to the percentage of the overall student population who chooses to attend private non-USE schools now, 40%. 60% is a reasonable

estimate for those who would seek to have a funded school place in a government school.

- Based on these figures, with a step-wise phase-out that includes phase out of S1 and S5 in 2018, Government will have withdrawn support worth UGX 23 billion from private USE and UPOLET in 2018. But Government will need to spend UGX 33 billion on additional teachers alone in public USE schools due to the phase-out. What appears to be a savings may end up costing Government more in the short and long term.

A.1 Analysing demand for school places

The most important consideration with regard to phasing out PPP schools is whether children will have access to a government secondary school if private school becomes unaffordable. EPG has shared with MoES an interactive mapping tool which can serve as a useful analytical instrument for planning any phased withdrawal of the PPP. The mapping tool is a useful way to conduct a case-by-case analysis of schools considered for phase-out based on their capacity and the capacity of nearby schools.

In Uganda, there are 718 sub-counties without a government-funded school and still 216 sub-counties without any form of school at all. There are now 99 sub-counties which only have a PPP school.⁵⁵ Withdrawal of public support to USE PPP schools in these areas could lead to an increase in the number of out-of-school children, particularly where there aren't enough nearby government schools or classrooms to absorb the eligible secondary school-aged population.

EPG with support from DFID developed an interactive mapping tool with a bespoke interface, which can visually represent data on where schools are located by school type, the number of places that each school has, and the student population. This can be used as an analytical tool to aid decision making. The current version of the map uses 2015 EMIS data and 2014 Census data.

The most important consideration with regard to phasing out PPP schools is whether children will have access to a government

secondary school if private school becomes unaffordable. The phase-out could first be implemented in schools which are close proximity to government schools that are not enrolled at full capacity.

Second, MoES should consider other criteria for the phase out — such as whether schools have a track record of compliance, accountability, and high quality performance, and are therefore delivering good value to Government. This would begin to send a strong message about the need for all schools to be accountable for outcomes.

A note which was shared with the MoES Private Schools and Institutions (PSI) department in September 2017 is available in Annex 2. The note proposed some guiding principles for the phase-out, based on minimising potential negative effects and ensuring cost-efficiency.

A.2 Finances and cost modelling for expansion of secondary education

EPG is developing a cost-modelling tool with MoES that can be used to plan for different scenarios for achieving secondary school expansion with an understanding of likely costs. Modelling a phased withdrawal from the PPP shows that, while withdrawal may appear to lead to cost savings at face value, it is likely in the end to be more expensive for the government. As Government phases out of the current PPP, it will save the amount that it currently transfers as the capitation amount to PPP schools. However, research from various sources strongly indicates that not all students enrolled in PPP schools would be able to continue to attend school without a subsidised place. A portion of these students would look to attend public USE schools, which will generate new costs for government in terms of teacher salaries and infrastructure.

1. Overview of model assumptions and secondary school enrolment

The Government of Uganda aims to ensure that education is supplied to every part of the country and to address cases where there is excess demand for education and limited school places. To help

understand how educational provision can be expanded effectively, equitably and affordably, EPG has developed a financial model for education policy and planning to help MoES understand the costs for various scenarios of secondary school expansion. This section discusses assumptions used to generate the financial model and the implications of the phase-out of Universal Secondary Education (USE) and Universal Post O-Level Education and Training (UPOLET) support from private schools.

The desired volume of students to be accommodated in schools has to ultimately be decided by the Ministry. However, in order to generate the model, certain assumptions have been made regarding the likely student flow in the future. **Gross Intake Rate (GIR) to the first grade of lower secondary and retention between the grades have been identified as key factors that will affect the number of students enrolled in lower and upper secondary.** Ideally, the commitment of the government through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implies that 100% of children aged 13 years would have opportunities to go into lower secondary and that 100% of them will remain in the system and only leave after completing at least lower secondary. But considering that the

secondary GIR at baseline is only 40%, the model assumes that Government will focus on pragmatic improvement of the system by setting a target such as 70% enrolment by 2025.

The model also proposes modest improvements in retention after each level of lower secondary to an average of 95%. Under the assumptions of improved GIR and retention, the expected future enrolment in lower and upper secondary is presented in Table 1 below.

The population eligible for lower secondary is projected to increase from 3.9 million in 2018 to 5 million in 2030 while the population eligible for upper secondary will increase to 2.3 million. **If the conditions set in the model are observed, enrolment in lower secondary will rise from 1.7 million in 2018 to 3.26 million in 2030 while that of upper secondary will reach more than half a million in 2030.** The Gross Enrolment Rates in lower and upper secondary are expected to reach 65% and 23% respectively with upper secondary expected to grow faster under the assumptions proposed.

Table 1: Expected secondary enrolment based on model assumptions

	2018	2022	2026	2030
Population eligible for lower secondary	3,927,480	4,325,731	4,615,660	5,010,215
Population eligible for upper secondary	1,787,550	2,002,134	2,194,392	2,309,805
Expected enrolment in lower secondary	1,701,500	2,293,539	2,909,406	3,261,727
Expected enrolment in lower secondary	177,053	284,050	433,758	538,544
Gross Enrolment Rate — LS	43.3%	53.0%	63.0%	65.1%
Gross Enrolment Rate — US	9.9%	14.2%	19.8%	23.3%

Source: UBOS population estimates; technical computations based on assumptions

Figure 7: Assumptions made for the expansion of secondary education

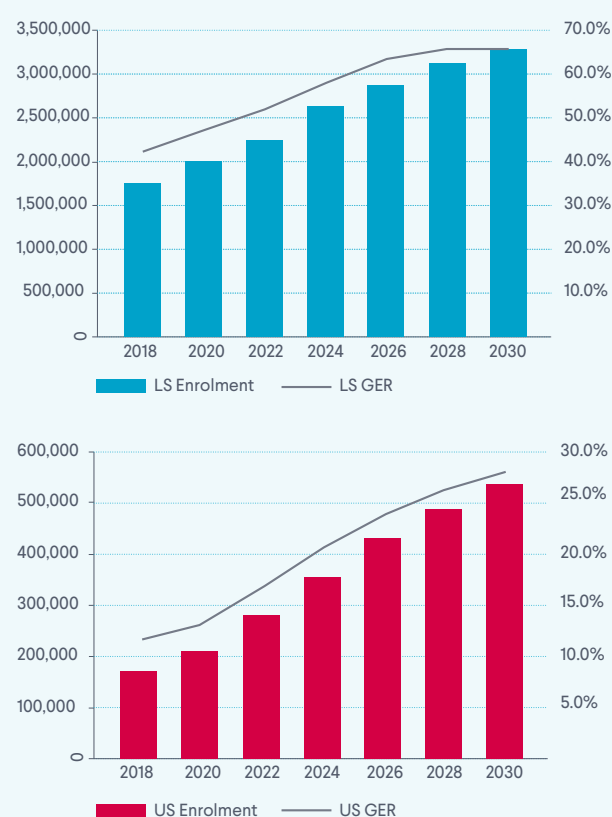
	Baseline ⁵⁶	Target	Year
Gross Intake Rate in secondary 1	40.3%	70.0%	2025
Retention between S1 and S2	94.6%	95.0%	2025
Retention between S2 and S3	94.1%	95.0%	2025
Retention between S3 and S4	88.5%	95.0%	2025
Transition from LS — US	26.3%	40.0%	2025
% Enrolment in Private USE schools	28.1%	28.1%	2023
% Enrolment in Private Non-USE schools	29.4%	29.4%	2023
% Enrolment in Public USE schools	36.8%	36.8%	2023

Source: UBOS population estimates; technical computations based on assumptions

2. Phasing out PPPs from participating private schools

The Government has resolved to phase out financial support to USE private (PPP) schools and instead support the establishment of government schools in sub-counties that currently do not have one. Consultative processes within the Ministry and stakeholders have yielded a scenario that balances the phase out and allows for continuity of students whose places are already funded by Government. Under this scenario, the Government will implement a grade-wise phase out of PPP starting in 2018, and will not support newly admitted students to secondary one in private schools in addition to secondary five. In 2019 the Government will fully drop support to all grades in upper secondary but will continue supporting students in secondary three and secondary four. In 2020, the Government will only support students enrolled in secondary four in private schools. By

Figure 34: Projected enrolment (Gross enrolment rate) in lower and upper secondary



2021, the government will have fully withdrawn from the PPP. Students enrolled in 46 identified community schools have been recommended to continue receiving support from government.

Impact of the grade wise phase out in lower secondary

In lower secondary the number of students who attend private USE (PPP) secondary schools is expected to increase from 440,000 in 2017 to over 600,000 in 2021 and further to 900,000 in 2030. With the annual grade step-wise phase out, the number of students supported under USE PPP will gradually drop from 440,000 in 2017 to 118,000 in 2020. By 2030, the phase out would leave only an estimated 16,754 students enrolled in the 46 community schools for support.

To estimate what will happen to the students dropped from the support, we consider the trends in enrolment to private Non-USE schools. Even

⁵⁶ All baseline figures on enrolment and school related data are based on the 2015 Uganda Secondary Schools Mapping

though there are three possible categories of schools to go to (private Non-USE, public USE and public Non-USE), 41% of students according to the baseline data choose to enrol in private Non-USE schools. We assume that this is the proportion of students who will remain in private schools after the withdrawal of support from Government. The rest (59%) are likely to turn to government USE schools. Cost savings to Government would be UGX 6,000 per student currently receiving a subsidised school place, which is the difference between capitation grants to PPP schools and Government schools. This assumes that capitation grant amounts to public school students remain at UGX 41,000.

Due to the drop in the number of students supported in private schools, the amount spent on USE will drop from UGX 62 billion in 2017 to UGX 49 billion in 2018 releasing UGX 13 billion in the process. The saving is in fact likely to be as high as UGX 18 billion because, based on the projected growth in enrolment, if Government were to continue supporting students in PPP schools, the total subsidy amount would be UGX 67 billion, rather than UGX 62 billion. The saving is likely to increase to UGX 61 billion in 2020.

Table 2: PPP phase-out in lower secondary

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Enrollment in PPP schools	440,245	478,077	523,648	562,772	603,065
Secondary 1 (with phase-out, students with Govt-funded school place)	123,169	4,687	4,687	4,687	4,687
Secondary 2	116,720	126,750	4,442	4,442	4,442
Secondary 3	107,926	117,201	128,373	4,107	4,107
Secondary 4	92,430	100,373	109,941	118,155	3,518
Total number students benefiting from PPP	440,245	349,011	247,443	131,392%	16,754%
Total subsidy to PPP schools (millions)	62,075	49,211	34,889	18,526%	2,362%
Amount that would have been spent supporting PPP (millions)	62,075	67,409	73,834	79,351%	85,032%
Potential cost saving (millions)	0	18,198	38,945	60,825%	82,670%
Reduction in number of students who will be supported in PPP schools	0	129,066	276,205	431,380%	586,311%
Proportion of non-supported students who could remain in PPP schools	40.8%	40.8%	40.8%	40.8%%	40.8%%
Non supported students who may potentially remain in PPP schools	0	52,693	112,765	176,118%	239,371%
Non supported students who may potentially leave PPP schools	0	76,373	163,440	255,262%	346,940

Source: Technical computations based on student flow assumptions

Impact of the grade-wise phase out in upper secondary

In upper secondary, the number of students likely to go to private UPOLET schools will rise from 31,000 in 2017 to 62,000 in 2021 and further to 164,000 in 2030. In two years beginning in 2018, the Government will have finalized withdrawal from private UPOLET schools. The spending from Government will drop from around UGX 8 billion in 2017 to no shillings in 2019, freeing up resources for other Government use.

Similar to lower secondary, it is expected that some students may opt to attend public UPOLET schools. While four in 10 students in private USE schools will mostly likely remain in private UPOLET schools, half of students whose support will be withdrawn are likely to stay. The other half in lower secondary will most likely turn to public schools. Government will make a saving of UGX 5,000 per student in upper secondary who transfers to a Government school.

Table 3: PPP phase-out in upper secondary

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Enrollment private UPOLET schools	30,936	36,071	523,648	562,772	603,065
Secondary 5 (with phase-out, students with Govt-funded school place)	16,427	0	0	0	0
Secondary 6 (with phase-out)	14,509	16,917	0	0	0
Total number students benefiting from PPP	30,936	16,917	0	0	0
Subsidy per student in private UPOLET schools	255,000	255,000	255,000	255,000	255,000
Total subsidy to PPP schools (millions)	7,889	4,314	0	0	0
Amount that would have been spent supporting PPP (millions)	7,889	9,198	10,717	12,944%	15,878%
Number of students who will not be supported in PPP schools	0	19,154	42,028	50,762	62,267
Proportion of non-supported students who could remain in PPP schools					
Non supported students who may potentially remain in PPP schools	0	9,333	20,478	24,734	30,340%
Non supported students who may potentially leave PPP schools	0	9,821	21,549	26,028	31,927

Source: Technical computations based on student flow assumptions

Table 4 presents a summary of resources that will be available to Government for other priorities accruing from the grade-wise withdrawal of PPP.

The table shows how much the Government would have spent by not withdrawing the PPP support versus when the withdrawal is considered. The difference is referred to as a saving and will rise

from UGX 23 billion in 2018 to UGX 73.7 billion when the Government finalizes the withdrawal. **However, this may not be a saving since there is need to consider demands in public schools should students whose support is withdrawn seek alternative in government USE schools.** In the next section the impact of providing for these students in public USE schools is discussed.

Table 4: Potential cost savings from phasing out PPP (millions)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Support to PPP in USE without phase out	62,075	67,409	73,834	79,351	85,032
Support to PPP in UPOLET without phase out	7,889	9,198	10,717	12,944	15,878
SUB TOTAL	69,963	76,607	84,551	92,295	100,910
Support to PPP in USE with phase out	62,075	49,211	34,889	18,526	2,362
Support to PPP in UPOLET with phase out	7,889	4,314	0	0	0
SUB TOTAL	69,963	53,524	34,889	18,526	2,362
Potential savings with phase out	0	23,083	49,662	73,769	98,548

Source: Technical computations based on student flow assumptions

3. Inputs to public secondary schools and impacts of phase out of PPP

There are about 30,000 teachers in public lower secondary schools, 70% of whom are employed by Government while the rest are employed by school boards. The Student Teacher Ratio (STR) is 1:20 based on all these teachers. Even though the distribution of teachers in secondary schools is not based on STR, the model uses it to have an indication of the resources required by the system.

That said, the system will require more teachers for the growing enrolment under the overarching assumptions. Assuming that there will be no transfer from the PPP schools, public schools will require 38,000 government employed teachers up

to 2030 and about 11,000 between 2018 to 2021 to maintain the baseline STR of 1:20. This is on the assumption that the share of teachers employed under school board management will remain stable at 30% over the period. In contrast, **if some students drop out of private schools and join public USE schools as discussed in earlier sections, the teacher requirements will rise to 62,000 up to 2030 and about 24,000 in the period of phasing out PPPs.** The requirement will be much higher should the Government make provisions for all the students in PPP schools in public USE schools.

In terms of resources requirement, recruiting additional teachers will consume all the resources released by the withdrawal of support from PPPs. For instance, in 2018, the

Government will have withdrawn support worth UGX 23 billion from private USE and UPOLET but will need to spend UGX 33 billion on additional teachers in public USE schools alone. Another factor to consider is the additional facilities that will be required. Growth in enrolment will require additional classrooms, libraries, science laboratories and sanitation facilities. The financial analysis on facilities and infrastructure requirements is yet to be complete. Initial estimates show that, due to population

growth between now and 2030, with no withdrawal of the PPP, there is a need for UGX 1.1 trillion in investment in facilities infrastructure for government schools. But with PPP withdrawal, if students transfer to government schools, the infrastructure requirement would rise to an estimated UGX 2.0 trillion. These are conservative estimates which are not based on the construction of new schools but improvements to existing facilities.

Table 5: Teacher requirements

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Teachers in lower secondary education (0 transfers from PPP)	33,860	36,697	40,116	43,028	46,019
Teachers in lower secondary education (transfers from PPP)	33,927	40,729	48,672	56,360	64,130
Category 1: Government teachers based on 0 transfers from	23,577	25,552	27,933	29,961	32,043
Category 1: Government teachers assuming transfers from PPP	23,623	28,360	33,890	39,243	44,654
Category 2: School Management Board teachers — 0 transfers	10,283	11,145	12,183	13,068	13,976
Category 2: School Management Board teachers — with	10,303	12,369	14,782	17,116	19,476
Share of School Management teachers over the total	30.4%	30.4%	30.4%	30.4%	30.4%
Desired Student Teacher Ratio	20	20	20	20	20
Attrition rate	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Additional gov't teachers required — 0 transfers	2,045	2,655	3,116	2,832	2,945
Additional gov't teachers required — with transfers	2,092	5,417	6,347	6,329	6,541
Average teacher salary (million UGX per year)	12	12	12	12	12
Additional resource for teacher salaries (million UGX) —	0	31,854	37,397	33,989	35,340
Additional resource for teacher salaries (million UGX) — with	0	65,000	76,168	75,950	78,492
Difference in resource requirement between the two cases	0	33,146	38,771	41,961	43,152

Source: Technical computations based on student flow assumptions

4. Conclusion

What Government considers as a step-wise withdrawal to take effect in 2018 in order to support its secondary education access goals may actually yield untenable results regarding access to secondary school education. What looked like savings from the withdrawal of the PPP is not sufficient to meet additional teacher requirements alone in public USE schools, in addition to the added costs of school facilities and infrastructure. If the Government must implement the step-wise withdrawal of support from private schools, it must be prepared to make provisions in public schools for students who are likely to transfer from private schools.

Annex 2: PPP policy documents

The documents assessed as part of the review of the PPP policy environment are below. Though not consciously designed as such, taken together these constitute the de facto governing policy framework for the PPP programme:

- The Education (Pre-Primary, Primary and Post-Primary) Act, 2008
- General Implementation Guidelines for Universal Secondary Education (USE) — November 2006
- Circular Letter re. Implementation Guidelines for the Universal Secondary Education (USE) Programme (4th January 2007)
- Circular No. 01 of 2008 re. USE/UPPET guidelines, 2008 (23rd January 2008)
- Proposed World Bank Support for Implementation of USE Programme — Technical Paper No. 8 — Draft Policy and Framework for Provision of Quality Education in Private Secondary Schools under USE Programme — March 2008
- Proposed World Bank Support to the Universal Post Primary Education and Training Program — Technical Mission, July 16 — August 5th 2008, Aide Memoire
- Increasing the Participation of the Private Sector in Providing Secondary Education in Uganda — Draft Document 31 August 2008
- Proposed World Bank Support for the Implementation of USE Programme — Action No. 6 — Inspection Plan of Public and Private Schools in Uganda under the UPPET Program — December 2008
- Strategic Plan for Universal Secondary Education in Uganda (2009-2018)
- Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Education and Sports between Foundation Bodies/Proprietors of Private Secondary Schools under Public Private Partnership (PPP)
- Policy Guidelines for the Public Private Partnership Schools
- Guidelines for Establishing, Licensing, Registering and Classification of Private Schools/ Institutions in Uganda — April 2013
- Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards Manual
- Minimum Standards for Secondary Schools
- UNEB ‘statement of results’ document



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