

Graduate School of Development Studies

**REALIZING THE INTERFACE BETWEEN UNIVERSAL PRIMARY
EDUCATION AND CHILD LABOUR IN UGANDA:
A case study of Soroti District**

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Dedication

To my parents Selestine Ocen and Melena Ateenyi without whom my academic background and career could not be possible to account for. To all my brothers and sisters, James Elerega, Florence Apecho, Grace Atim and Stella Agugo, I look forward to seeing you upgrade in your studies.

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List of Acronyms

CDRN	:	Community Development Resource Network
DDP	:	District Development Plan
EFA	:	Education for All
EMIS	:	Education Management Information System
EPRC	:	Education Policy Review Commission
GNI	:	Gross National Income
HIV/AIDS	:	Human Immune Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IDPs	:	Internally Displaced Persons
IFMS	:	Integrated Fiscal Management System
IGAs	:	Income Generating Activities
ILO	:	International Labour Organization
IPEC	:	International Programme for Elimination of Child Labour
LDCs	:	Less Developed Countries
LRA	:	Lords Resistance Army
MDCs	:	More Developed Countries
MDG	:	Millennium Development Goals
MOFPED	:	Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development
MGLSD	:	Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development
MOES	:	Ministry of Education and Sports
NAPE	:	National Assessment of Primary Education
NGO	:	Non Government Organization
NIR	:	Net Intake Ratio
NRM	:	National Resistance Movement
PEAP	:	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PCR	:	Pupil Classroom Ratio
PLE	:	Primary Leaving Examinations
PMA	:	Programme for Modernization of Agriculture
PTA	:	Parents Teachers Association
PTR	:	Pupil Teacher Ratio
UBOS	:	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UDN	:	Uganda Debt Network
UN	:	United Nations
UNEB	:	Uganda National Examinations Board
UNHS	:	Uganda National Household Surveys
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children's Fund

UPPAP : Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Process
UPE : Universal Primary Education

Abstract

Uganda is among a few Sub Saharan African countries claimed to have successfully implemented the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme. On this premise, the paper attempts to establish the extent to which the UPE programme has contributed to the reduction of child labour in Uganda. It argues that despite the “free” UPE programme, issues related to the quality of primary education and the increasing costs borne by parents have not yet been addressed thus justifying parents to take decisions for their children to drop out/non attendance from school in favour of involvement in child labour.

The paper further explores the forms of risks, vulnerabilities and problems encountered by parents in educating their children in primary school and attempts to dig out the coping mechanism they apply to counter the risks. As the debate between abolishing or regulating child labour heats up, the research collects perceptions of the UPE beneficiaries and attempts to determine the possible school of thought favourable for child labour reduction in this community. In accomplishing the tasks above, the human capital theory and the sustainable rural livelihood analysis formed the conceptual and analytical basis but backed by primary and secondary data.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

‘But there is another side, the “lemon,” and that is the inability or unwillingness (so far) of many developing country governments to reliably deliver even the most basic education package to the poor rural and urban periphery children who are precisely those most likely to work’ (Myers quoted from Loretta 2004:99).

This chapter introduces the question under study. It gives the background, the problem statement, the justification of the study, the research objectives, research questions, methodological overview, scope and organisation of the study.

1.1 Background

The research is premised on the international attention and consensus accredited to the Universal Primary Education (UPE) as the most acceptable means of reduction of child labour.

It assumes that, UPE will attract children to school leading to the reduction of child labour. Further, through educational skills attainment, children will access higher productivity employment opportunities leading to better income, sustainable livelihood and improved life when an adult.

It contends that, if a situation in a particular society prevails where under the UPE programme, non attendance/drop out from school becomes characteristic of that society then it justifies a conclusion to be made indicating persistence of child labour. The child labour problem will result from parental household decision making process while balancing between the education services offered, returns attached to education and those accruing from child labour.

1.2 Problem Statement

Arising from international conventions e.g. (ILO) Convention No. 138 (1973) specifying minimum employment ages for children, the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the ILO Convention No. 182 (1999) providing for the elimination of worst forms of child labour, these actions depict a discourse from aspects of age, child rights to elimination of/efforts to combat child labour.

However, within these conventions, child labour remains an international problem. The ILO estimates that, by 2004 the total world population of child labour between the

age of 5-17 stood at 217.7 million showing a decline by 11% from 2000 (ILO 2006:7) (Sakurai 2006:7).

In Uganda, the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) household survey of 2000/2001 established the population of children aged 5-17 to constitute 7.9 million. Of which 2.7 million were at work. The majority of children working were within the age bracket of 10-14 years totalling up to 1.46 million. In terms of distribution, 17% and 7% of rural and urban children respectively were engaged in child labour. By 2002, and in terms of gendered roles, girls accounted for 14% while boys were as high as 17% in child labour. Further, 88% of these children were in unpaid family work, 8% as paid employees and 4% as own account workers (UBOS 2002/2003). These children were found scattered in various economic activities at home and in the labour market (Mwamadzingo et al. 2002:2-3). In order to combat the problem of child labour, Uganda adopted a number of policy initiatives as discussed in detail in chapter three and four.

For the case of UPE, national statistics indicate its having improved in primary school enrolment. The PEAP (2004:55) shows that enrolment increased from 6.6 million in 2000 to 7.6 million in 2003. But on the contrary, there are reports of over inflated numbers of enrolled children by 1.3 million “possibly ghosts” within the programme (Uganda National NGO Forum April 2005). This casts doubt on the extent to which the UPE programme can avert the child labour problem thus justifying investigation.

In Soroti district, scanty reports show concentration of child labour in Soroti municipality and in most counties where children are found involved in the service industry (mostly girls), construction, transport, agricultural and fishing industries (mainly boys). So far, the district labour office has registered 3.000 child labour cases of boys involved in boda-boda¹ business (Soroti district child labour report May 2007). In the same vein, children are subjected to work at home in the early morning before they depart to school. While at school, the same children are subjected to tasks which they complained derived no benefits and preferred dropping off in favour of work elsewhere (Uganda National NGO Forum April 2005).

The launching of the UPE programme should have received overwhelming response in Soroti, having gone through insurgencies of the LRA, Karamojong raids and political insecurities prior to 2003. This situation caused many households to live amidst risks or vulnerabilities. For example, according to the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP 2004:106), Soroti district had 40 per cent of its total population as IDPs in 2003. This

¹ Boda- boda refers to a form of transport where bicycles, motorcycles are used for transporting people on hire basis. It is an economic activity dominated by young males.

alone indicates the high level of vulnerable situation the people have gone through depriving them their economic endowments. In such a situation, the most vulnerable i.e. children, are liable to be denied their rights and needs especially education only to be driven into child labour.

From 2004 to date, the situation in Soroti district has normalized providing a secure learning environment. But to the contrary, reports like the School Performance Review Report (March 2007), show that though high enrolment/registration is realised on commencement of academic calendar, this is not followed by actual school attendance of those registered. Cases in point are Toror, Otirono, and Opunoi primary schools which each had a total child enrolment of 680, 722 and 1099 but during inspection had 388, 606 and 758 children in attendance respectively. The report further queries the education services provided to the children under the UPE programme which may be used to account for the increased poor performance in school leading to child labour. Further, the World Bank has threatened to withdraw funding to the UPE programme citing low school completion rates (The Weekly Observer: October 25, 2007).

Within the above context, this research, using the Human capital theory, the sustainable rural livelihood analysis and the child labour abolitionist and regulatory debate, explores the extent to which UPE for the period 2000 to 2006, has contributed to the reduction of child labour in Uganda but at micro level within Soroti district taking into account its complicated historical past and current need of study.

1.3 Justification of Research/Study

Realizing the various conventions already enacted like the ILO convention No 138 and Convention No 182, the 1989 UN Convention and the 1990 Jomtien conference resolution, the ILO in 2005 acknowledged that child labour still poses a threat to the international community especially the LDCs (ILO 2006). ILO also reckons that, though the number of out-of-school children is declining, the pace of the decline is slow (EFA 2005:1). The problem of child labour would be reduced if there could be accelerated enrolment of more children to school than enrolment into child labour thus requiring a study.

Whereas scholars like Deininger (2000), Rosati and Rossi (2007) and Lyon and Rosati (2006) have studied a number of aspects related to child labour even in Uganda, it is necessary to continue investigating the persistent prevalence of child labour within the context of the proclaimed “free” UPE in relation to the rational household decision making process.

1.4 Research Objectives

The overall objectives of this study are three:

- (A) To explore the viability of the UPE program as a means of attracting children to school and contribute to the reduction of the problem of child labour in Soroti district.
- (B) To seek the perception of programme beneficiaries on how the UPE programme could be improved and the implications of abolishing or regulating child labour.
- (C) To explore the risk coping mechanisms that the community of Soroti district apply within the problems faced under the UPE programme.

1.5 Research Questions

The research paper makes attempts to answer the following questions which are broken down into the main research and sub-research questions:

The Main Research Questions

The main research questions are:

- How has the UPE contributed to the attraction of children to school leading to the reduction of child labour in Soroti district?
- How have the communities of Soroti district coped with the challenges brought forward in educating their children under the UPE programme.
- What perceptions can be derived from the UPE programme beneficiaries in Soroti district regarding improving primary education, abolishing or regulating child labour?

Sub- Questions

The sub-questions are:

- How is the UPE programme packaged so as to attract children to school and address the problem of child labour?
- What forms of child labour have persisted in Soroti district and what factors within or outside the UPE programme help account for such a situation?
- What coping mechanisms have the community in Soroti district applied to curb their vulnerability situation for improved education of their children under the UPE programme?
- What perceptions can be derived from the programme stakeholders over re-packaging the UPE programme, abolishing or regulating child labour?

- What possible alternatives are available for improving the UPE programme so as to reduce child labour?

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research paper is limited to the UPE programme and its attempts to reduce child labour in Uganda focusing on Soroti district. It lays its argument from the perspective of primary school quality indicators, costs of educating children and how they influence parental decision making for children's participation in education or child labour.

1.7 Methodological Overview

The research applied descriptive, exploratory and comparative approaches to derive empirical conclusions. These approaches were backed by data collected through primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected through use of self administered questionnaires while secondary data relied on existing publications from libraries, web sites or reports.

Coverage of the Study

The study was carried out in Soroti district covering the areas specified as in table 1.

Table 1: Showing areas of coverage of the study

County/municipality	Sub county	Primary schools
Kasilo	Bugondo	Toror and Otiromo
Serere	Kateta	Kanyangan and Okodo
Soroti	Katine	Ojama-Katine
	Tubur	Tukum
Soroti municipality	Western Division	Pamba and Father Hilders

In essence, each county/municipality was represented by at least having two schools in the research. In so doing, considerations were taken on rural-urban distribution and location for control purposes.

Sampling Design and Implementation

Three categories of the population totalling 80 were interviewed. They comprised of 30 out of 40 planned school going children, 19 out of 24 planned parents and 31 out of 67 planned technocrats and political leaders. For all of them, convenient sampling method was applied in their selection. For each school 5 best performing children of primary six were selected so as to benefit from their experience while at school. While any of the 3 parents of those children, were selected on their ability to read and write as dictated upon by the requirement to fill the self administered questionnaire. For technocrats and policy makers, only those who worked in offices related to children affairs were interviewed but dependent on their availability.

Data Collection

A team of two research assistants were identified and used for data collection. However, prior to this exercise, the self administered questionnaires were tested and the problems identified (e.g. difficult language, lack of clarity etc) were corrected before the final data collection exercise. Since the researcher was not in close physical proximity to the research assistants, several instructions had to be provided through email or telephone. The data collection exercise lasted three weeks.

Data Processing, Editing and Analysis

The data collected from this study was both qualitative and quantitative. For quantitative data, manual editing was done as an attempt to ensure quality control. While qualitative data was transcribed and arranged thematically for easy analysis through interpretative, explanatory and reflective approaches. More analysis in regards to charts and graphs was done through the use of Excel program.

The Limitations

Of the 131 sampled respondents, only 80 successfully filled the self administered questionnaires. The reasons for non response ranged from non availability of records for the case of school administrators, apathy to provide data and coincidence with low staff morale due to unpaid salaries for two months leading to absenteeism. The teachers were busy marking examinations for end of term two while the rains/floods disrupted access to parents and field officers.

1.8 Organisation of the Paper

This paper constitutes six chapters. The first chapter outlines the introduction; chapter two provides the literature review, while chapter three looks at the institutional arrangements of the UPE programme. Further, chapter four gives an overview of child labour in Uganda and chapter five highlights the findings, analysis and interpretation of research data and the conclusion/recommendations are provided for in chapter six.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a literature review to the study. It gives definitions of the research concepts and highlights the conceptual and analytical frameworks.

2.2 Definition of Concepts

The definitions of the concepts used in this research are provided for here below:

Child Labour

Sakurai (2006:8-9) provides that,

‘Child labour refers to a subset of children’s work that is injurious to children and that should be targeted for elimination’.

The ILO (2006:6) further clarifies that child labour is a narrower concept and is a subset of economically active children. It excludes those children who are 12 years and above but restricts the problem of child labour within the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138).

Child Work

To Sakurai (2006:8-9) he notes that,

‘Child work or children’s work is a general term covering the entire spectrum of work and related tasks performed by children’.

Child work is therefore associated to all the economic activities performed by children whether for market or non market activities.

These definitions denote the interconnectedness of the child with the labour market. However, differentiating between child labour and child work remains a task to some societies.

Children enrolment/registration, drop out and school attendance

In the Ugandan context, enrolment/registration refers to the process of enlisting children into the school register. At the commencement of every academic calendar, parents are required to take their children to school for this exercise. Upon registration of the children, a track record of their physical presence and learning in class (school

attendance) is monitored twice daily by a class teacher through marking their presence in the class register. In a situation where attendance fluctuates, then it tantamounts to absenteeism but if absenteeism is spread for a longer period without return to school then the child is considered having dropped out of school.

2.2.1 Forms of Child Labour/Work

It is now apparent that child labour/work operates in two arenas i.e. in the labour market and domestic environment. To Bequele and Boyden (1988:1), they point out different forms of employment relations which range from waged or non waged labour and self employment in various trades. There is also children's involvement in family chores or domestic work which are acceptable within the Ugandan context (The Republic of Uganda 2004: 11-12). Involvement of children in these activities is done with intent to free the adults for waged labour but whether acceptable or not require elimination Mwamadzingo et al. (2002:21).

2.2.2 Child Rights and Needs

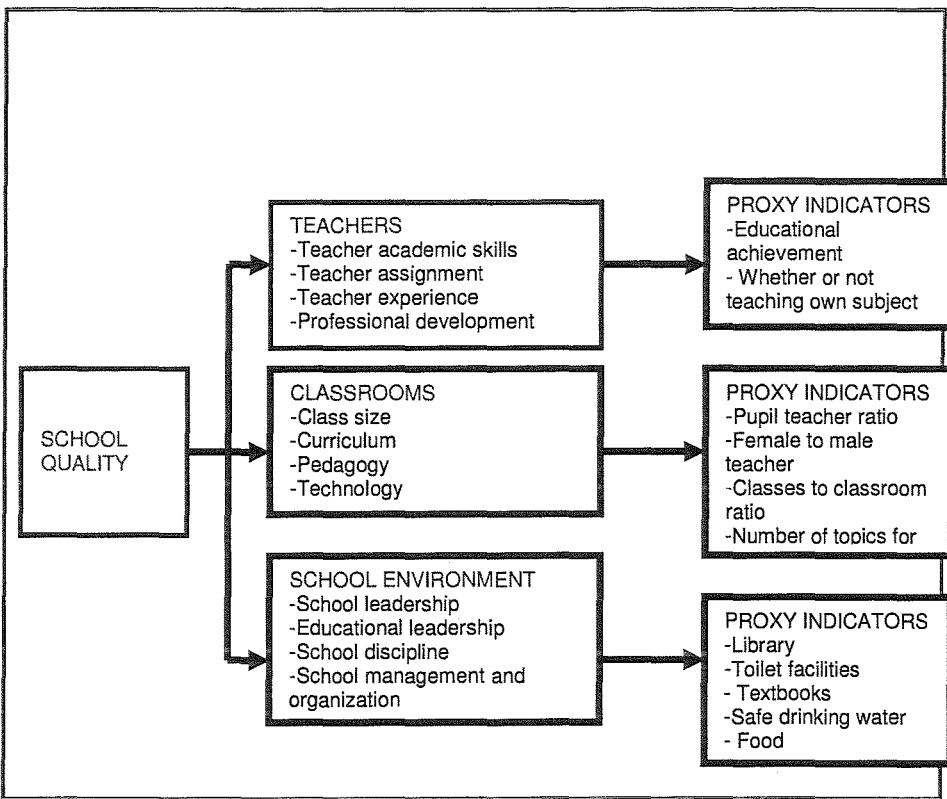
The guiding principles on child rights are spelt out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child under articles 28, 29 and 32 that provide for universal access to basic education and completion of primary education. Further, articles 32, 34 and 36 relate to the protection of children in exploitative areas (UNICEF 1991: 6).

These rights however is what the employers do not provide to the children as a result of their exploitative power and control exerted in the labour market. This is exemplified from the context of employers wage manipulation tendencies which promote child labour than adult employment thus calling for elimination of child labour.

2.2.3 Universal Primary Education/Quality Measurement

Colclough (1993:41) defines UPE to mean "the circumstance of having a primary GER (Gross Enrolment Rate) of 100 or more" but in the Ugandan context, it refers to the provision of basic education to all children. In terms of measurement of quality of UPE, there are yet disparities on how best it can be measured but the EFA Global Monitoring Report (2005:7), emphasizes that education quality can be monitored through an assessment of school inputs, processes and outcomes. However Guarcello et al. (2006:17) have made an analysis of school quality indicators based on three areas provided in figure 1 some of which were used in this study.

Figure 1: Showing Summary of School Quality Indicators



(Source: Adapted from Guarcello et al. 2006:17)

Guarcello et al. (2006:16-19) acknowledged that quality of schooling has effects on child labour but vary and effect societies differently. They cite that once the pupil teacher ratio increases, there is a possibility of increase of number of children resorting to child labour. This I propose may be applicable to the pupil classroom ratio just like other indicators.

2.3 Returns to Education

Whereas contemporary computations for the rates of return to education for Uganda are lacking, it is however observed that in LDCs, the private and social rates of return to education are high in primary as compared to secondary and tertiary education. Mingat et al (2002) quotes Psacharopoulos to have provided computation of educational returns for Low Income Countries as in table 2.

Table 2: Returns to Education in low Income Countries

Educational level	Private rate of return	Social rate of return
Primary schooling	26.4	20.6
Secondary schooling	18.5	14.1
Higher education	22.4	11.3

(Source: Mingat et al. (2002:1)

Others like Appleton (2001:8-15) and Foster (1975:384) concur that primary education has higher rates of return but more specifically to the female than the male. However one may argue that investing in education requires provision of educational infrastructure to attain quality education leading to better returns, better informed choices and improvement in attitudes and behaviour against risks or vulnerabilities such as HIV/AIDS as acknowledged in EFA (2005:9).

However, in a situation of high costs/poor quality of education, coupled with high unemployment rates of 4.3% for those aged 10-19 justifying low economic returns and poverty as is the case of Uganda (see UNHS 2002/2003:32, and UNHS 2005), then realization of returns to education will remain a fiasco to the vulnerable poor thus making parents to decline to send their children to school in favour of child labour (Kazim 1981:215-227). This indicates that the poor will not manage to accommodate the direct and indirect costs related to UPE schooling nor send their children to private schools where quality schooling is provided.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this research is based on the human capital theory, the sustainable rural livelihood approach and the debates on abolition and protection or regulation of child labour.

2.4.1 Human Capital Theory

'If you give a man a fish, he will eat, once. If you teach a man to fish, he will eat for the rest of his life. If you are thinking a year a head, sow seed. If you are thinking ten years a head, plant a tree. If you are thinking a hundred years a head, educate people. By planting a tree you will harvest tenfold. By educating the people, you will harvest one hundredfold' (Kuan-tsu quoted from Loretta 2004:99).

The celebrated human capital theory was formulated by two economists notably Schultz and Becker in the early 1960s. However, Smith, S (2003) realized that Adam Smith in the Wealth of Nations had already acknowledged the value attached to training of labour for utilization of capital. Schultz (1963:46) and Becker (1964:7-33) advanced that investment in people entails accumulation of appropriate skills, knowledge and abilities which Smith (2003:118) supported within the neo classical analysis of training and education in the labour market. Human capital approach can therefore be related to efforts undertaken by individuals to acquire personal characteristics in skills leading to future benefits. The efforts are in terms of investments in education, health and post-school investment training which in a particular time in future attracts returns in terms of income and sustainable adult life.

Through training, skills are imparted and labour becomes productive leading to national economic growth and increased income for individuals let alone other returns. The skills that are rented out to employers have to be acquired when yet young but dependent upon costs of education, its quality and the decisions made by parents in the process of skills acquisition. The acquisition of human capital also enables the attainment of particular work attributes like physical and mental fitness that are relevant to the labour market. But this is a long term investment especially to children and requires calculated and rational parental decisions.

To that effect, parents realize that engaging children to achieve these attributes involves costs which can be met within a time frame. Parents therefore optimally have to take choices and balance between the opportunity cost of educating a child and the benefits that will accrue to that type of investment, for this case the UPE programme. It's on that basis that the theory of human capital will be described herein as a theory of rational choice micro-concept because individuals make choices and balance between opportunities for growth though these choices are dependent upon family background, patterns of size and structure, including levels of parent's human capital (Arieira and Haynes- website source).

In relation to child labour, Rosati and Rossi (2001:3) assert that child labour in all its manifestations is harmful to children's welfare and derails the attainment of human capital which affects the child's present and future when an adult. Hence in order to accumulate the required skills, knowledge and abilities and in order to eliminate child labour, the only alternative is having children at school. Even if children combine school and child labour, Rosati and Rossi (2001:23) (see also Guarcello et. al.2005:56) have found that any hours spent in work will have diverse effects in human capital accumulation.

Whereas Sakurai (2006) cites scholars like Ruhm and Osterman for attempting to expound on the human capital theory by arguing that education is not the only arena for acquisition of skills or knowledge, and propose that, skills like responsibility or cooperation can be achieved outside work. Which Boyden (1999) acknowledges being applicable in Latin America or in LDCs. This argument is naïve and challengeable since it will deny children better skills but detain them in low skilled labour intensive and low income jobs thus recycling them into poverty and perpetuating continuity of child labour.

In that respect and because of the returns attached to primary education, the involvement of the state in human capital accumulation is paramount. Lieten and White (2001:34) see that the human capital perspective can look at children in terms of

immediate economic development. The approach considers child labour as an outcome of underdevelopment characterized by poverty and economic distortions that require removal to allow economic growth. Lieten and White quote Myers to have contributed that,

'[h]uman capital perspective views childhood as preparation for adulthood, and children in terms of their potential to become economically productive adults, which potential should be protected and nurtured' Lieten and White (2001:35). This should be the trend towed by LDCs under their UPE programmes.

However, the means of attaining human capital through UPE causes worries, of which Loretta argues that,

'[t]he issue rests not in that rural children are more likely to work, though, but in that children tend to work in jobs that conflict with human capital accumulation in formal schooling. For rural children, lack of school facilities, poor-quality schools, irrelevance of education, and the cost associated with schooling all coalesce to push children into work' Loretta (2004:100).

It is for this reason that some contemporary human capital theorists therefore advocate that the quality of schooling is in itself a problem (Livingstone 1997:9) and requires retooling but in this case an investigation.

2.4.2 Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Approach

The concept of sustainable rural livelihood analyzes how the rural folk make their decisions and cope with various vulnerabilities to attain a sustainable living. Ellis (2000:4) perceives the approach to be an inter-relationship between a resource ownership pattern and how they are transformed into a living within the context of the various risks met. The approach attempts to promote and strengthen the asset status of the poor through coping with vulnerabilities and shocks. Exposure to vulnerability forces the rural poor to face a difficult living, which compels children to labour. Ellis cites Carney to have noted that,

'[t]he livelihood approach sets out to be people-centred and holistic, and to provide how people make a living within evolving social, institutional, political, economic and environmental contexts' Ellis (2000:5).

On the other hand Ellis (2000:5) adds that the livelihood approach has helped in discovering the various forms and characters of livelihoods, the existence of institutionalized factors that hinder the improvement of livelihoods and the micro-macro links that connect livelihoods to policies.

What needs to be realized is that, for both human capital accumulation to accrue and sustainable rural livelihood to be attained requires a long term time dimension through the uncertainties faced. Human capital accumulation for a child will require investing in UPE but with assured continuity in secondary and tertiary education if educational returns are to accrue for sustainable livelihood. Therefore, structures and processes associated with government (policy and institutional context) like the UPE programmes are evolved to create outcome especially reducing vulnerability. Such programmes are well suited in a situation where the assets available to the people are limited and especially when they have failed to copy and to accord their children education thus resorting to offering children to child labour.

To Ellis (2000:4), the lists of these assets include human, physical, financial, natural and social capital. All of these assets are presumed to be available to households in different levels in terms of quantity and quality. These assets are used to further or construct rural livelihoods. They could be converted so as to provide children their rights and needs such as attractive, adequate and quality schooling.

In essence, these assets are used in varying degrees depending on their availability. The use of these assets is in line with the coping mechanisms that are applied to combat vulnerability and other associated risks. The availability of such assets in higher quantities in some rural areas should complement the UPE efforts and be used to better the quality of education through providing better educational infrastructure or could result into parents taking their children to private schools. Likewise, the scarcity of such assets in particular rural areas might call for government and other development partners to provide more resources with a view of providing better quality and attractive education to children, this consideration should have guided the trend taken under the UPE in Uganda.

2.5 Abolition/Protection of Child Labour

The debate between abolitionism and protectionism/regulationist of child labour stands within the values attached to child labour and education. Whereas the protectionist realise the value of both education and child work, they argue that there is a possibility of children earning while at the same time learning and this is a legitimate way towards the formation of future adults when yet young (Weston 2005:328). To Bequele and Boyden (1988:8), Salazar and Glasinovich (1998:7), they note that parents may introduce children to the world of work early to improve their employment prospects, learn a particular trade or as a means of training indolent children from deviating from family norms. The protectionists also advocate for children to work with dignity and encourage their

interaction, participation and agency development. They argue for improvement of children's work conditions.

For the abolitionist, they argue against the effects of hazards faced by children in child labour and the detraction it creates in school attendance (Weston 2005:322-328). Further, they hold on the 1973 ILO Convention 138 regarding abolition of child labour and stick to the context of age, harmfulness and hazardousness of child labour.

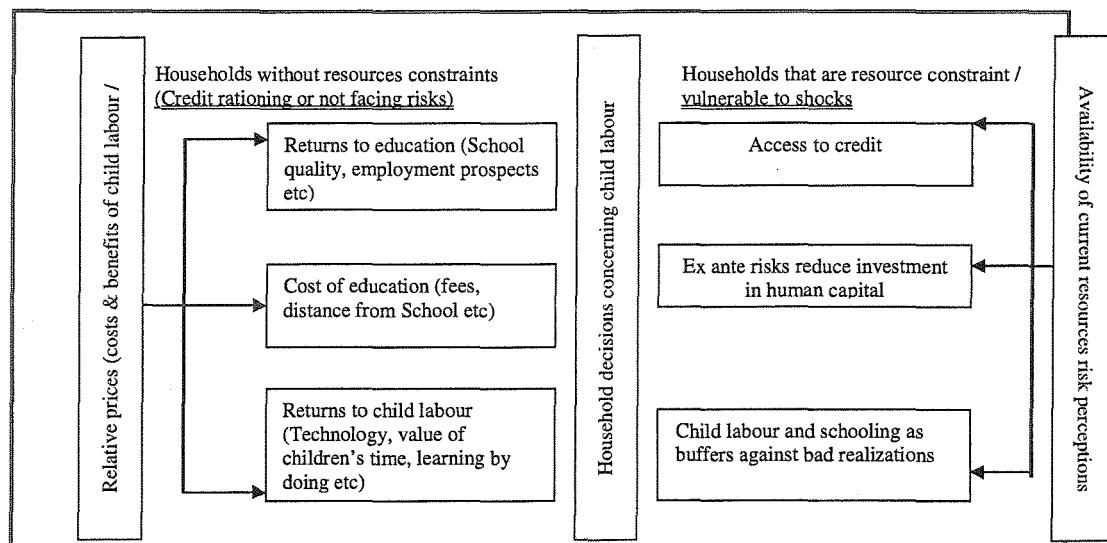
Both the protectionist and the abolitionist have strong reasons in favour of their stand points, however, this research would like to establish the position of the UPE beneficiaries in regards to whether child labour should be abolished or protected/regulated.

2.6 Households Decision Making on Child Labour

To point out that there are many causes of child labour is justifiable. However parental decisions are influential in encouraging children into child labour which Lieten and White (2001:90-91) acknowledge that parents weigh between the economic benefits and the attainment of human capital and prefer whichever is applicable in terms of family survival and steady income to the family.

To Rosati (2007:1) the same decisions apply in relation to quality of education and child labour but Lyon and Rosati (2006:3) summarises the decision making determinants as in figure 2.

Figure 2: Determinants of Household Decision Concerning Child Labour and Alternative Time Uses



(Source: Extracted from Lyon and Rosati 2006:3)

The degree of resource constraints to a household influences the level of livelihood patterns leading to child labour. The more the constraints, the less the human capital accumulation and the more the involvement in child labour. But this should not rule out the socio-cultural (especially household dynamics), economic and political factors that lead to child labour (Salazar and Glasinovich 1998:6).

For the case of Uganda, parental decisions are influential in determining children's enrolment to school as provided by Kasente (2003:2) in table 3.

Table 3: Showing Household Decision Making on Children's Enrolment for UPE in Uganda

Who takes final decision	Urban %	Rural %
Mother	24.7	16.5
Father	26.5	39.9
Both parents	29.4	26.0
Guardians	12.4	10.9
Parent/guardian and child	4.8	4.7
Child	0.3	0.2

(Source: Kasente 2003:2)

In her research, Kasente (2003:3) found that males (fathers) country wide were influential in making decision of children's enrolment. The research results were more pronounced in the Northern region which scored 55.9% followed by Eastern region where Soroti district is found with 44% scores. To reduce child labour would require more parental decisions in favour of children's school enrolment and attendance than involvement into child labour.

2.7 Government Provision of Education to Reduce Child Labour

The Jomtien conference of 1990 advocated for the attainment of education for all. It gave the impetus to nation-states to refocus on education as a right, away of combating child labour and promoting global labour market standards. Education is seen to derail children from offering their labour but concentrate on schooling while those who attempt to combine school and work end up facing interferences from concentration at school. Boyden et al. (1998:246) note that;

'[m]any who are worried about detrimental child work look to Universal Primary Education as potentially the single most powerful instrument for removing children from the labour market, or at least from types of work inappropriate for children. Education is seen by them as both a replacement activity and a source of changed mentality. Education was proposed by the reformers as the most effective deterrent

against idleness, on the one hand, and detrimental work on the other. Gradually, education came to be seen as serving children's interests better than work'.

Current comparative literature indicate that most developed countries such as Britain introduced compulsory education way back in 1880 as a means of keeping children out of work and labour. Lieten and White (2001; 67) cite Fyfe to have supported that,

'[w]hat has stayed constant in the debates about child labour interventions is the primacy accorded to education as a policy instrument. The nineteenth century campaign in industrial societies to end child employment, in which the labour movement played an important part, focused on minimum age regulations linked to educational requirements which became, over time, compulsory'.

Further living examples are provided by Lieten and White (2001) who saw Weiner to have identified Germany and the U.S., as states that used primary education a mechanism of removing child labour. They emphasized that it is the responsibility of the state to provide compulsory primary education to the citizenry if child labour is to be removed. However, for the case of developing countries the concept of compulsory and free primary education gained root in the 1960s but for the case of Uganda it only took effect in 1997 when UPE was officially launched by the NRM government.

2.8 Child Labour Determinants/Causes

There are a number of determinants of child labour. Whereas most scholars agree on poverty and economic shocks, market forces of demand and supply are also influential in the process (ILO 2006:24). However, there seems to be a debate on the extent to which poverty causes child labour. Betcherman, G et al. (2004:3) (see also ILO 2006:24) agree that due to economic returns to work, children may be forced to labour other than face the negative returns attached to low-quality and inaccessible schools. In households with vulnerable situations, children may work to reap returns of their labour but as a result of lack of access to basic services.

Nonetheless, child labour continues to be a product of socio-cultural, economic and political factors. The factors leading to it have been termed as immediate, underlying or structural causes of child labour. While others refer to as the demand side factors (or pull factors like nature of technology, inadequate laws, poor infrastructure, employer's preference for children's "nimble fingers" and the supply side factors (or push factors like poverty, family breakdown, HIV/AIDS, attitude to girls etc).

Borrowing the works of Grootaert and Patrinos (1999:1-21) they argue that at the household level, size, composition and parental educational standards are pertinent in determining child labour. They hold that the larger the household size, the more likely for

both parents and children to supply labour. Grootaert and Patrinos (1999:7-8) further cite Lloyds contribution that large households limit investment on children's education and thus perpetuate the supply of child labour.

In relation to parental education levels and household decision making process on children's engagement into child labour, Grootaert and Patrinos (1999:7-8) recognise the World Bank, Patrinos and Psacharopopoulos for establishing that more educated parents are less willing to engage their children into child labour. This finding has been proved in Ghana that educated mothers greatly influenced for their children to attend school than child labour.

Grootaert and Patrinos (1999:7-8) also argue that demand and technology conditions affect child labour. Most LDCs are characteristic of monopsonistic demand conditions, have means of production in the hands of a few and lack employment opportunities. Further some occupations still use traditional technologies which demand for child labour other than adults e.g. mining in tunnels, or those that require children's "nimble fingers".

However, in terms of child labour and human capital, child labour may be seen as an increasing function of capability deprivation and calls for the need to provide basic infrastructural facilities for quality education. In general, the level of casualty for child labour has been broken down as in table 4 providing a mix of contributory factors to child labour along side poverty.

Table 4: Showing Levels of Casualty of Child Labour

Immediate causes	Underlying causes	Structural or root causes
Limited or no cash or food stock; Increase in price of basic food	Breakdown of extended family and informal social protection systems	Low/declining national income
Family indebtedness	Un educated parents; high fertility rates	Inequalities between nations and regions; adverse terms of trade
Household shocks; e.g. death, illness, crop failure	Cultural expectations regarding children, work and education	Societal shocks, e.g. war, financial or economic crisis, HIV/AIDS
No schools; or schools of poor quality or irrelevant	Discriminatory attitudes based on gender, caste, ethnicity, national origin etc	Insufficient financial or political commitment for education, basic services and social protection; "bad" governance
Demand for cheap labour in informal micro-enterprises	Perceived poverty: desire for consumer goods and better living standards	Social exclusion of marginal groups, lack of legislation/effective enforcement
Family business cannot afford hired labour	Sense of obligation of children to their families and of "rich" people to the "poor"	Lack of decent work for adults

(Source: ILO 2002:47).

In summary, one may assert that the socio-cultural, economic and political factors all play towards the cause of child labour as depicted in the table above.

2.9 Effects of Child Labour

The only positive effect of child labour is the contribution it makes to improve upon incomes of poor households to support their consumption patterns for their survival. On the negative side, Psacharopoulos (1997:385-6) has outlined that child labour reduces educational attainment since it encourages repetition and school drop out.

Because of its impact on human capital accumulation, it therefore prohibits private and social returns to the children thus trapping families into the vicious poverty circles. The ILO (2006:20) adds that the continuous use of child labour will drive wages down thus barring parents from getting employment. It will also create a disincentive to invest on appropriate technology because labour becomes cheaper than capital.

2.10 Formulating Programmes to Reduce Child Labour

Whereas most developing countries have embraced UPE as a programme for the reduction of child labour, it is worth noting that UPE alone may not suffice in reduction of child labour. Myers (1991:4) notes that,

'[m]ost governments tend to define the problem of working children in piece meal fashion, approaching it as a series of separate issues than as a whole. In some instances, for example, it is addressed primarily as an issue of labour policy, ignoring its fundamental connections to economic, education, health, law enforcement, social assistance and family policies. In other cases, the problem is treated as a social work issue, seeking merely to ameliorate symptoms without confronting their roots in major political, social, and economic policy. Purely sectoral definitions of the problem lead to the absurdity in which the police officials regard working children as a law enforcement problem, welfare agencies treat them as a social assistance problem...., educators view them as a school drop-out problem and so forth, while virtually nobody appreciates the problem as it is experienced by the impoverished youngsters who are at the centre of it all'.

Hence, the extent to which any programme is packaged and delivered is very paramount in attainment of particular results it is designed for. For the case of UPE, Myers (1991:4-10) cautioned for the need to have ascertained the magnitude of the problem of child labour by determining the causes, effects, its distribution within society and potential points or mechanisms in which the interventions may be applied.

Likewise, the UPE programmes that most developing countries adopted need to have focused their attention on the needs and rights of the children while avoiding economic constraints to households in order to eliminate a situation where the parents would continue demanding their children to offer their labour.

It is in that perspective that scholars like Bequele and Myers summed that,

'[t]he relationship between education and child work is complex, and government action cannot afford to be simplistic. This is because...education can either reduce or exacerbate (if not attractive to the children) child labour problems, depending on how it is implemented. While it can be part of the solution, it too often contributes to the problem. Therefore it can either promote or contradict national child labour policy goals' Bequele and Myers (1995:119-21).

They further add that,

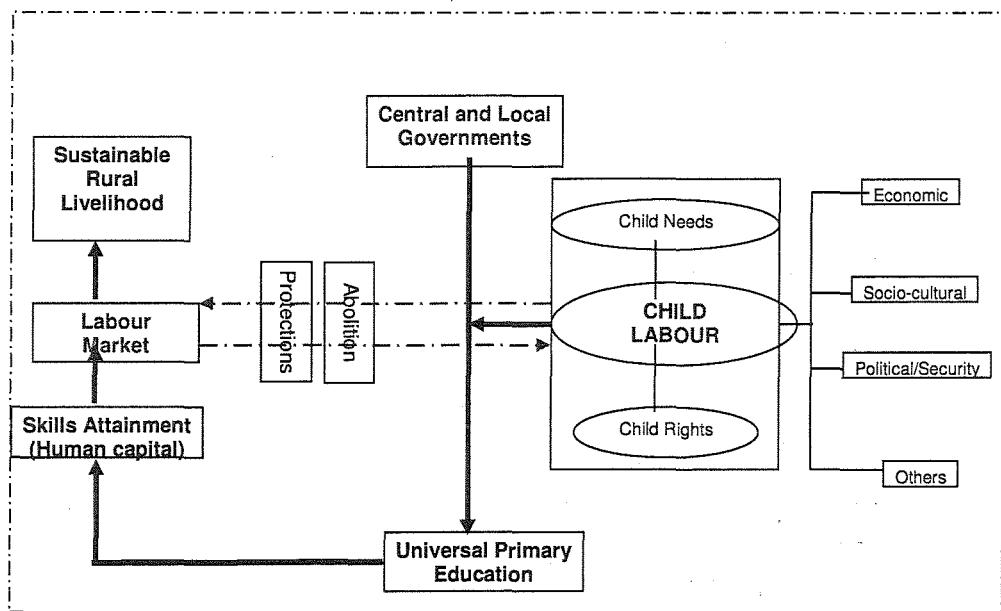
'[t]he main way in which governments can combat hazardous child work through their national education systems is to make basic education universal, but will only help working children if they also make education free of charge to the poor; make schooling accessible to working children to ensure their participation; provide complementary services, such as nutrition and health care programmes; provide adequately competent and attractive instruction relevant to the situation of working children and include in the curriculum information to protect children from workplace hazards' Bequele and Myers (1995:119-21).

To what extent has the UPE contained what Bequele and Myers have just referred to remains a question that requires investigation specifically for Uganda but basing on the quality indicators of the UPE programme?

2.11 Analytical Framework

The analytical framework of this study is based on the relationship between the households in which decisions of child labour are made, the governments through the UPE programme and the employers in the labour market who exploit the labour of the child with hidden exploitative agenda of profit maximization. It also builds on the human capital theory and the sustainable rural livelihood approach as pictorially provided in figure 3.

Figure 3: Showing the Analytical Framework



(Source: Own design)

The analytical frame work above is confined to the relationships of child labour and education using the theories of sustainable rural livelihood and the human capital development theory within the labour market.

It denotes the inability of households to meet the rights and needs of children due the socio-cultural, economic and political factors among others. As a result, the only alternative is for the children to render their labour in the labour market. However, the central government launched the UPE programme as away to attract them away from the labour market to school to attain skills and eventual entry to the labour market in more productive jobs leading to better sustainable rural livelihoods.

However despite government interventions through the Universal Primary Education programme, child labour which ever form it took has continued to persist thus forming the basis for this study.

2.12 Conclusion of Chapter Two

As advocated by Schultz (1963:46) and Becker (1964:7-33) education remains a key area in investing on human capital for productive employment and sustainable livelihood. Because returns to education are higher in primary schooling, provision of quality education would influence parents to take decisions that direct their children to school other than child labour. In order for sustainable rural livelihood, human capital, in

combination with other assets leads to better livelihood. But in the presence of vulnerabilities or risks that deter education and lead child labour as a coping mechanism, then interventions are required. These interventions, though operating under uncertainties, will require a time horizon for human capital and sustainable rural livelihood to be attained.

Chapter Three

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT OF UPE IN UGANDA

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the general background of Uganda/Soroti district and the institutional framework of the UPE programme. It highlights the establishment of the programme, its objectives, the policy framework, how the programme operates and some achievements at national level but subject to comparative analysis with research findings in chapter five.

3.2 Background to Uganda/Soroti District

Uganda is one of the Sub Saharan African countries found in East Africa. According to the World Bank (2007), its population by 2007 is estimated to be 29 million people surviving in a predominantly agricultural economy with GNI of 8 billion, GNI per capita of \$280 and per capita growth of 2.9%. The population living below the poverty line increased from 33.8% to 37.7% in between 2000 and 2003. The government places education as a key priority area among other sectors like, water, production, health and works and technical services.

Soroti district is located in eastern Uganda and is a body corporate local government designed to deliver services to the populace under the decentralization policy adopted in 1993. It has an estimated population of 470,000 people comprised of the Iteso, Kumam and the Bakenyi tribes. Of this population, children constitute about 56% of the total population.

3.3 Establishment of UPE Programme in Uganda

The UPE programme/policy was enacted upon the recommendations of the Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC) in the early 1990s. In 1996, the President of Uganda took specific interest for primary education and launched it in January 1997. The responsibility for its implementation was placed under the Ministry of Education and Sports. However, as noted by Bategeka (2005:2) the UPE programme was implemented without adequate preparation let alone having been hatched by the top comprador bourgeoisie approach without consulting the bottom peasantry.

Specifically, the UPE objective was to establish, provide and maintain quality education to promote human resource development. The UPE was to be accessible, equitable, relevant and affordable to all Ugandans (Uganda Investment Authority: nd np)

(see also Bategeka 2005:2). It also focused towards the attainment of the MDG and EFA goals. Its benefits were multi pronged. The provision of free education would delay or discourage the children from joining the labour market. It was also intended to remove impediments to access to educational services. To crown it all, it was to provide quality education to children through provision of basic prerequisites for children education at primary level.

3.3.1 The Policy Framework/Implementation of UPE in Uganda

The UPE policy is based on the principles of providing basic primary education to all children of school going age. In its initial stage, the policy provided for free education to only four children per family. However, because problems arose over definition of a family, government was compelled to let all children access to primary education (Bategeka and Okurut 2006:2).

To secure children's enrolment to school, government abolished payment of tuition fees and Parents Teachers Association (PTA)² charges with a view of relieving the parents the costs incurred in educating children.

In terms of UPE funds and expenditure, the policy requires that schools spend 35%, 25%, 20%, 15% and 10% of UPE funds disbursed to schools on scholastic materials, co-curriculum activities, contingency, school management related aspects and school administration respectively. However, its implementation fell among the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), District Local Governments, Primary schools, parents and the communities.

The MOES is responsible for ensuring funds are disbursed to districts, conduct training of teachers, planning for, assessing and monitoring quality of education, providing basic instructional materials and liaising with other ministries to promote the UPE programme.

The districts ensure that teachers are recruited; funds reach the schools, carry out school inspection, monitoring performance at school, provision of water and good sanitation and ensure schools compliance with educational regulations and laws.

In the schools, the school management committees give direction in the operation of the UPE programme, initiate, approve and manage school budgets and comply with the principles of transparency.

² The Parents Teachers Association charges were fees parents paid upon general consensus but specifically meant for promoting teachers and pupils welfare. It also catered for other development aspects within the school like school construction and payment of teachers to conduct extra teaching outside school hours especially to primary seven pupils in preparation for final examinations.

For the case of parents and communities, they ensure children are enrolled, provide writing materials, uniforms, food and local materials for construction. This shows role differentiation. However the UPE programme has turned into a political agenda that seems to have disorganised the educational set up in Uganda. The programme lays emphasis on enrolment and promotion of children to the next class after end of year examinations has become automatic whether the children pass or not thus jeopardizing quality of schooling in government aided primary schools. This partly accounts for the high rate at which investments in private schools is taking shape in Uganda.

3.3.2 National Performance of UPE Programme

Available research reports indicate that the UPE programme has had substantive progress in children's education in Uganda. According to Murphy (2003:3), he acknowledges progress in enrolment, increased financial resources to schools, teacher recruitment and basic educational infrastructure as in table 5.

Table 5: Showing Progress of UPE 1990-2002

Indicators	1990	1995	1997	2002
Pupil classroom ratio	1:50	1:39	1:116	1:95
Pupil teacher ratio	1:28	1:35	1:100	1:55
Pupil text book ratio	n/a	n/a	n/a	1:4
Total enrolments	2,281,500	2,636,400	5,303,400	7,346,600
Teachers on payroll	81,590	84,043	89,200	122,500
Expenditure in primary education	N/A	49%	60%	65%

(Source: Murphy 2003:3)

The above statistics show an increase in the share of the nation's budget to education by 11% between 1995 to 1997, and of 5% from 1997 to 2002. In essence, this was not commensurate with the doubling of enrolment in the same period. It suggests that the increase in enrolment in 1995 to 1997, and consequent years had stress on the available infrastructure especially teachers and classrooms. This had implications on the quality of teaching and learning as a whole which posed as threats to school drop out and eventual engagement into child labour. The data provided by Murphy in table 5 is found to contradict with official statistics as in table 6. However this may be a result of lack of specifying whether it covered both government and non government funded schools.

From the Uganda government perspective, the progress attained in primary education is indicated in table 6. The cumulative progress report is indicative that, at national level the UPE programme has had a 28% increase in enrolment over the period 2000 and 2003 but a decline of 5% enrolment in between 2004 and 2005. The programme also witnessed

a steady increase of teachers in the government payroll by 54%. While the number of classrooms increased in the same period by 6.3%. Further, it shows a reduction of pupil-classroom ratio from 106 in 2000 to 79 in 2005. While pupil teacher ratio decreased from 65 to 51 in the same period.

Table 6: Showing Cumulative Progresses for Primary Sector 2000-2005

Indicator	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Pupil enrolment (Government aided primary schools)	5,351,099	5,917,216	6,575,827	6,835,525	6,687,574	6,491,260
Teachers on payroll as at September 2005	82,148	101,818	113,232	121,772	124,137	126,227
Number of classrooms	50,370	60,109	69,900	73,104	78,403	82,167
Pupil teacher ratio	65	58	56	56	54	51
Pupil classroom ratio	106	98	94	94	85	79
Enrolment growth rate	-	11%	11%	4%	-2%	-5%

(Source: EMIS, 2005 (Extracted from Uganda Poverty Status Report, 2005:125)

It can be critiqued that the pupil teacher ratio and the pupil classroom ratio are still high giving some indicators of poor quality of education in Uganda.

3.4 Current UPE Performance in the Teso Region

Because the whole of the Teso region faced similar insurgencies prior to 2003 as cited in chapter one, it is necessary to highlight the trends of UPE performance as reported at the national level in table 7.

Table 7: Showing Trends in Quality Indicators for Primary Education in Teso Region 2003-2006

District	2006 PTR ³	Rank ⁴	2006 PCR ⁵	Rank	2006 Primary school completion rates %			2006 NIR ⁶ %		
					M	F	T	Rank	M	F
Soroti	53	41	78	45	56	39	47	32	58	65
Kumi	53	40	79	46	56	43	49	28	60	67
Kaberamaido	54	45	69	27	55	26	39	47	72	74
Katakwi	51	37	74	38	50	30	40	46	62	63
Amuria	46	25	76	41	31	15	22	64	52	54
National	51		76		55	42	48		50	54
									52	

(Source: Extracted from MOES: October 2006)

³ PTR means pupil teacher ratio and is derived from the total number of pupils divided by the number of teachers in a school

⁴ Rank stands for the performance of the district out of the 56 districts existent then.

⁵ PCR means pupil classroom ratio and is derived from number of pupils divided by number of available classes.

⁶ NIR means the net intake rates and shows percentages of enrolment into primary one.

The trends in quality indicators in Eastern Uganda above are indicative that the primary completion rate are very low, the Pupil Teacher Ratio and the Pupil Classroom Ratio are very high indicating educational infrastructural shortages. While the Net intake ratio that expresses 6 year old entrants to P.1 as a percentage of 6 year olds in the population was high portraying that UPE lays emphasis on school enrolment than retention or completion of primary school.

For the case of Soroti district, quality indicators have been tracked for the period 2000 to 2006. These are shown in table 8, but still indicate that little improvement seems to have been attained by far.

Table 8: Showing Education Quality Enhancement Indicators 2002-2004/2006 for Soroti District

Year	Pupil teacher ratio	Pupil classroom ratio
2000	61	142
2001	58	130
2002	57	105
2003	60	100
2004	67	98
2006	53	78

(Source: UBOS 2005:105)

Whereas the pupil classroom ratio is dropping or progressing, symptoms of over crowding in class are identifiable. However for the case of pupil teacher ratios, they seem to be stagnating and fluctuating within the same range.

3.5 Primary School Completion/Drop Out

An analysis of the primary school completion rate in Uganda indicates that a number of children do not complete primary education. Table 9 gives a clear indication of the national position of primary school completion by region.

Table 9: Showing Primary School Completion 2000-2006 ('000)

Currently attending	Attending P1 in 2000			Attending P7 in 2006			Completion rates %	Drop out rate %
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total		
Region								
Kampala	53	39	92	16	15	31	33.7	66.3
Central	251	226	477	80	85	165	34.6	65.4
Eastern	177	187	364	94	74	168	46	54
Northern	176	203	379	90	47	137	36	64
Western	251	244	496	98	86	184	37	63
Uganda	900	907	1,807	378	307	685	38	62

(UNHS: 2005/2006 Report)

From the above table, it is indicative that out of 1,807,000 children that were enrolled in primary one in 2000, only 685,000 children managed to complete primary school

nation wide in the year 2006. The total of 1,122,000 was therefore presumed to have dropped out of school between 2000 and 2006 as indicated by high drop out and low completion rates. The Government of Uganda acknowledges that,

‘[t]he school retention and completion rates seemed to be very low. Findings indicate that almost two thirds of pupils who enrolled in primary one are unlikely to complete primary seven’ (UNHS 2005/2006:21).

This however is not being given attention as indicated in a study commissioned by the Ministry of education in which Murphy (2003:60) cites Kanyike to have established that,

‘... [d]espite the fact that the rate of drop outs in primary school appears to be alarming as the children ascend through the rungs of primary school system, there does not seem to be any corresponding concern to keep the children in school as there is in enrolling them in primary one. In other words, retaining children in school does not seem to be as highly prized by the parents, community and the schools and the government as enrolling them in school for the first time’ (Murphy 2003:60).

Such a situation casts doubts on the extent to which the UPE programme can be used for the reduction of child labour.

3.5.1 Reasons for School Drop Out

Comparing the reasons for school drop out as given by Kasente (2003:5) and those provided by the Uganda National Household Survey (2005/2006:21) (see tables 14 and 15), it becomes imperative to conclude that the school drop out in Uganda has majorly been a function of its quality and the inability to meet the costs of schooling.

Whereas Kasente (2003:5) revealed that in 2001, more boys dropped out of school due to monetary cost as compared to girls, in 2005/2006 this trend changed and more girls now drop out as a result of school related costs (UNHS 2005/2006:21). Kasante’s research results tally with the reasons advanced by the Uganda government (2004:41-5), however, it is to be noted that indifference to education and poor quality schooling now count higher as reasons for the drop out alongside costs of education.

3.6 Conclusion of Chapter Three

The establishment of the UPE programme in Uganda was done with a just cause and within MDG/EFA objectives. It aimed at providing basic education to children as part of human development. Much as it was hurriedly implemented without adequate preparation, it deserves credit for having increased enrolment of

children into school. To some extent, the educational infrastructure have been realized, however the extent to which these infrastructure are adequate for efficient provision of quality education leading to retention of children to school to avoid drop out in favour of child labour remains a fallacy

Chapter Four

CHILD LABOUR AT NATIONAL LENS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on child labour in Uganda. It provides the legal framework, structures for combating child labour, its current position in Uganda and a justifiable conclusion for the elimination of child labour in Uganda.

4.2 Legal Framework of Child Labour

The legal framework regarding the elimination of child labour has its roots both at the international and national levels.

4.2.1 International Legal Instruments

In its bid to fight child labour which should not be treated as an isolated but a world wide problem, the ILO (2004:1-2) through its tripartite approach enacted specific conventions over child labour.

The adoption of the Minimum Age Convention No. 138 (1973) provided the minimum age a child can be admitted into employment. It set the minimum age at 14 years for the case of LDCs and 15 for the MDCs. It argues countries to guard the physical and mental development of the child. Within this convention however, countries can fix their minimum age of employment of children.

Adoption of ILO Convention No 182 (1999) on the worst form of child labour whose principle target is child slavery, forced labour, serfdom, bondage, prostitution, children in armed acts and many others that tantamount to the destruction of the health of children or are hazardous and exploitative to children.

The UN Convention on the rights of children emphasized the aspects of guaranteeing children's rights. Countries are cautioned against economic exploitation of children and work that interferes with their education.

The 1998 Declaration on fundamental principles and rights at work gave more weight to the issue of elimination of child labour in the world of work and called for assurance for provision of decent work.

4.2.2 National Legal Framework in Uganda

There are a number of policy interventions regarding child labour in Uganda. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) is responsible for

overseeing all aspects related to child labour in Uganda. Some of the national legal framework is provided below;

The Uganda Constitution of 1995

The Constitution especially Chapter 4, clause 34(4) provides in part that,

'Children are entitled to be protected from social or economic exploitation and shall not be employed in or required to perform work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the education or to be harmful to their health or physical, mental spiritual, moral or social development'.

Whereas these are high sounding words, the problem of child labour continues to persist in reality. On the other hand, Chapter 4, clause 34(5) defines a child as a person of any age below 16 but this contradicts with the Children's Statute section 3 that defines a child as a person below the age of 18.

The Children's Statute Of 1996

The Children's Statute No.6 of 1996 section 6, 8 and 9 provides full protection of the child from any form of discrimination, violence, neglect or abuse; it also blames cultural and social practices or any other practices that are harmful to children development.

The Employment Decree, Trade Union Decree and the Trade Dispute Act

Whereas these laws are in existence, they are more or less obsolete having been formulated in the 70s. Though the Employment Decree prohibits children below 18 years to work in dangerous and hazardous jobs, they seem to be confined within the industrial fabrics ignoring the fact that most children are in the rural areas engaged in the informal sector. The same applies to the uncommon Trade and Dispute Act that attends virtually to industrial disputes only.

Other Current Policy Interventions

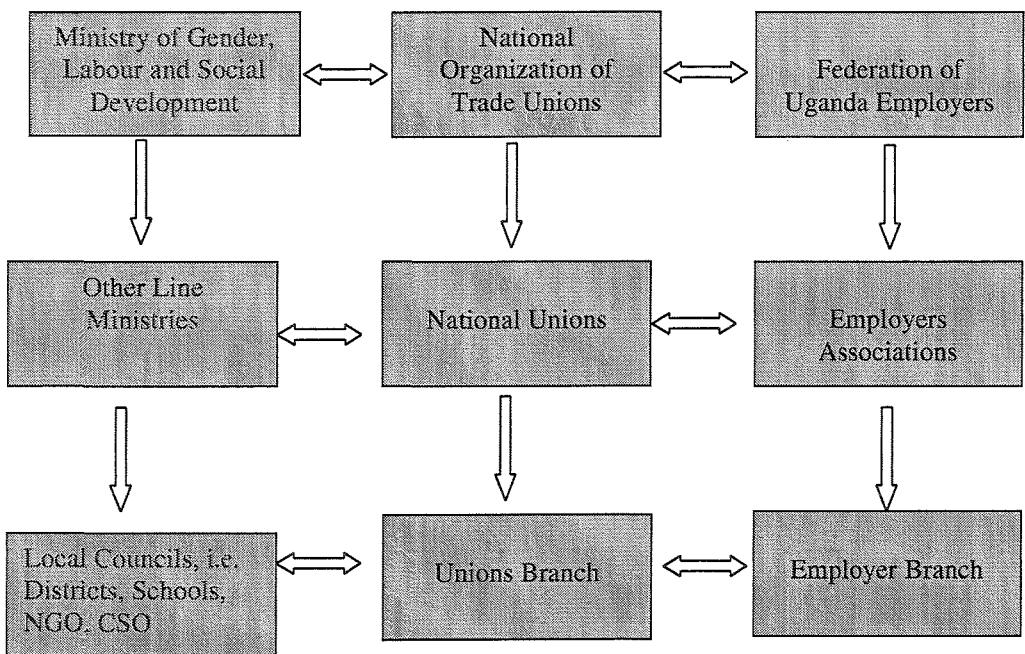
The MGLSD is finalising the development of the National policy on child labour. Meanwhile, all other Ministries are collaborating with districts as per the decentralization policy and the PEAP towards poverty eradication in households. The aim is to transform and improve family income which will support education of the child and thus reduce child labour.

However, suffice to note that within these interventions, a number of gaps exist in the attempts to address the child labour problem in Uganda. Such gaps include limited awareness of child labour laws, weaknesses in planning, implementation, monitoring and enforcement thus rendering little impact.

4.3. Structures for Combating Child Labour in Uganda

The figure below shows a well established tripartite structure to check child labour in Uganda.

Figure 4: Showing Structures to Combat Child Labour in Uganda



(Source: adopted from Mwamadzingo et al. 2002:31)

This structure portrays the availability of many players or actors each with diverse responsibilities and roles which due to limited space may not be highlighted in this paper. However, it shows attempts to check child labour at local, national and international levels.

4.4 Position of Child Labour in Uganda by 2006

Despite the celebrated UPE programme, the position of child labour in Uganda is still appalling as recognized in the UNHS (2002/2003:44-50) and UNHS (2005/2006: 127-155). The statistics for the most current position of child labour/work are shown in the table 10.

**Table 10: Showing Characteristic of Working Children and Child Labourers
2005/2006 (5-17) Years by Region (%)**

WORKING CHILDREN⁷						
Working children	Kampala	Central	Eastern ⁸	Northern	Western	Uganda
Male	12.6	40.7	38.0	23.8	34.7	33.8
Female	8.1	40.0	34.7	19.1	33.1	31.1
Both Sexes	10.3	40.4	36.3	21.4	33.9	32.4
CHILD LABOURERS⁹						
Male	9.1	21.9	19.3	10.8	16.8	17.1
Female	4.6	20.9	16.2	6.6	13.3	14.1
Both Sexes	6.8	21.4	17.8	8.7	15.0	15.6
Total figures of child labourers by region for both sexes	36,396	590,124	523,184	201,757	440,307	1,791,767
Children (6-17 years) not in School by region	75,299	232,491	228,297	361,347	311,415	1,208,849

(Source UNHS 2005/2006:127-155)

In comparison with the UNHS 2002/2003 statistics (provided in the annex 1), the following can be derived about child labour in Uganda.

The number of children engaged in child labour has increased from 1,522,000 in million in 2002/2003 to 1,791,767 million in 2005/2006. In overall 15.6% of the total children's population are involved in child labour depicting the magnitude of the problem of child labour in Uganda.

In terms of child work/involvement in economic activities, official statistics indicate 32.4% of the total population of children in economic activities as by 2005/2006.

The trend of the most affected children in child labour changed. Whereas 17% of boys and 14% of girls were engaged in child labour in 2002/2003 as reported in chapter one, in 2005/2006 these percentages reversed accordingly and girls are now more vulnerable in child labour than before. As earlier mentioned, this is now a gendered child labour problem. The statistics also show that children of the ages between 10-14 years are more vulnerable to child labour and yet this is the most required age for primary school.

Further, those most affected by child labour are the rural folk than children in the urban areas. The UNHS (2002/2003:48) showed that in all the economic activities done by children, 89% of them are to be found in agricultural activities. It is in agriculture where most of the problem of child labour is concentrated.

⁷ The working children represent all those children who were involved in economic or productive activities, it includes domestic work.

⁸ Shows child labour in Eastern Uganda where Soroti district belongs but comprises over 15 districts.

⁹ The statistics present those who were found in paid economic activities related child labour.

4.5 Child Labour and Parenthood/Orphanhood

In relation to parenthood/orphanhood versus decision making, it is worth noting that by 2002, most of these children engaged in child labour were still with their parents as shown in table 11.

Table 11: Showing Working Children aged 5-17 by Orphan-hood Status and Living Arrangements by Region (%)

Orphan hood Status	Central	Eastern	Northern	Western	Total
Both Parents Alive	67.4	73.5	83.7	76.2	75.6
Only Father Alive	7.6	6.1	1.7	2.6	4.3
Only Mother Alive	15.3	12.7	9.7	13.9	12.7
Both Parents Dead	7.7	6.1	4.7	6.9	6.2
Don't Know	2.0	1.6	0.2	0.4	0.8
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(Source: UNHS 2002/2003:46)

It follows that a majority of children engaged in child labour belonged to households whose parents were still alive and constituted 75.6% as compared to about 24% who were orphans. In relation to decision making process, this confirms that parents had a major role in taking decisions for children's engagement in child labour as argued out by Kasente (2003:2).

4.6 Profiles of Life Patterns of Children in Uganda

In relation to the context of primary education provided for in chapter three and in line with the child labour position in Uganda, a profile of life patterns of children in Uganda may be formulated as in table 12.

Table 12: Showing Children Life Patterns in Uganda

Relation To Primary School	Relation To Family Livelihood	Employability To Local Labour	Relation To Skills Attainment
Full-time school enrolment/attendance	Low use of the child for domestic chores/high use of available assets for education	Unavailable for child labour	High chances of acquisition of skills and knowledge learned at school and applicable to world of work
Enrolled but poor school attendance	Moderate use of the child for domestic chores/little use of available assets for education	Some availability of children for child labour	Combination of skills acquisition from school and labour but in minimal amount (more manual skills for manual jobs)
Children not enrolled	High utilization of children for domestic work/non use of available assets for education	High availability for child labour	Acquisition of skills required in labour intensive sectors (dependent on general physical fitness and well being)

(Source: Own Design)

The profile portrays the family resource use and allocation on the child and consequent availability for school or child labour giving the resultant skills that can be attained and their applicability in the world of work. It is indicative that there is a relationship between child education, child labour and skills attainment.

4.7 Conclusion of Chapter Four

In conclusion, this chapter pointed out among other issues the legal framework, the structural and institutional arrangement for combating child labour in Uganda. It realizes that amongst those structures, the problem of child work and child labour still prevails thus warranting the call for elimination of child labour. In the children's life pattern, one notes that there is a big relationship between child labour, education and parental decision making process especially on resource utilization for skills attainment versus employability and livelihood patterns.

Chapter Five

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings and analysis to the questions that formed the basis of this study.

5.2 Contributions of UPE to Child Enrolment

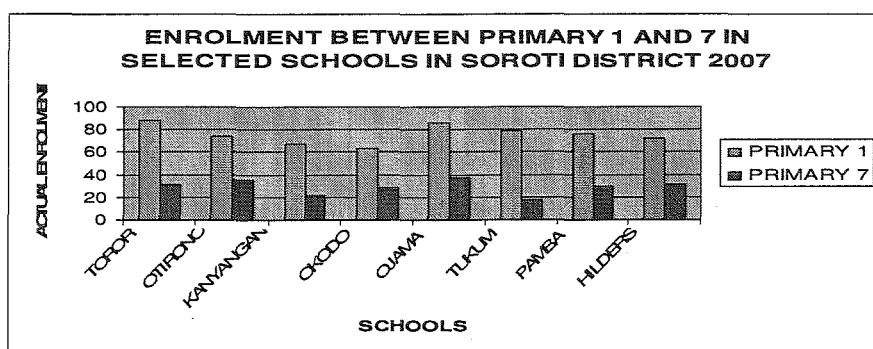
The research was able to find out that the beneficiaries of the UPE programme in Soroti district were aware of the UPE programme. They were knowledgeable of their roles and those of the implementing authorities and had a grasp of the programme aims and objectives.

Because of this awareness, most children were enrolled for the UPE programme for the period 1997-2003. However due to diminishing parental attitude to the programme as a result of poor quality educational services offered among other reasons, the district reported of a decline in enrolment in the period 2004 to 2006 (District Development Plan 2006) also tallying with the national reports (Uganda Poverty Status Report 2005:125) as indicated in table 6.

Despite the declining enrolment in the period 2004 to 2006, the research findings show that the UPE programme placed more emphasis on enrolment than retention for eventual completion of primary schooling.

Whereas the schools could not provide statistics of enrolment for the past years, a comparative analysis of the 2007 enrolment in primary one and seven alone, depicted the less emphasis on retention as in graph 1.

Graph 1: Showing Enrolment Pattern in Selected Schools in Soroti 2007



(Source: Extracted from primary data)

This trend in disparity in enrolment between lower and higher classes depicted a high drop out rate and a low primary school completion rates as pupils advanced to higher classes as revealed by Nishimura et al. (2005:8). The findings also confirm the national

statistical rates presented in table 9. However whereas the national drop out and completion rates stand at 62% and 38% respectively, in this research, the drop out and completion rates were found out at 60% and 40% respectively showing negligible deviance but if the research was carried in a wider coverage, there would be a possibility to challenge the national statistics.

However, the World Bank has established that the primary school completion rate in Uganda by October 2007 stands at 44% and has conditioned the Ugandan government to improve the completion rate to 57% or else it withdraws funding the UPE programme. In response, the government has officially intervened by declaring open enforcement of automatic promotion of children to the next class regardless of poor performance after end of year examination assessments but giving a chance for parents to be consulted whether they accept to such promotions or not (The Weekly Observer of 27 October, 2007). This trend will accelerate parental continuity in letting their children drop out for child labour.

5.3 UPE and Child Work/Labour

In terms of domestic work, the research findings indicated that all children were engaged in domestic work regardless of sex. The children reported their involvement in domestic work in the morning before going to school, in the evening after school and during holidays. Statistically, 89.6 % of the children respondents reported that they participated in domestic work voluntarily to help their parents while 20% were forced to do domestic work by their parents.

Regarding child labour, 68.4% of the children acknowledged involvement in paid up economic activities related to child labour while 26.3% showed they were never involved in paid child labour. This finding reveals that there is high prevalence of children that combine schooling and child labour hence challenging national statistics (see UNHS 2005/2006:127) that depict that only 16% of total population of children are engaged in economic activities related to child labour.

5.4 Child Labour and Parental Education Levels

In relation to parent's educational levels and paid child labour, it was evident in the research findings that the less/none educated parents favoured paid child labour. Of the children engaged in child labour, 80% had parents with limited educational levels most of whom had not completed or attended primary education. The 26.3% of the children respondents, who indicated that they were not involved in paid child labour, had parents who had gone beyond secondary schooling. These findings confirm the works of

Grootaert and Patrinos (1999: 1-21) who indicated that the levels of parents education was pertinent in determining children's involvement in child labour.

5.5 Household Decision Making for Child Labour

In relation to decision making process for child involvement into child labour, parents still counted a lot as depicted by Kasente (2003:2). During the research, children were asked on who made them get involved into child labour and 60% showed parents to be responsible, 23.3% associated child labour decisions to elderly relatives like brothers, sisters or clan members while 16.7% of the children showed their involvement voluntarily or conditionally in search for money to buy what their parents would not provide them while at school. This confirms the fact that parents are influential in allocating children's time use in child labour as advanced by Lieten and White (2001:90-91). Though this is based on the opportunity costs and returns to education, it is worth noting that by taking decisions in favour of child labour denies the family the long term steady supply of human capital returns that would accrue in the long run upon completion of schooling.

5.6 Persisting Forms of Child Labour in Soroti District

The most persisting forms of child labour that cut across in Soroti district are shown in table 13. They were found to be segmental among boys and girls. This was due to the high cultural role divide between male and female.

TABLE 13: Showing forms of Child Labour in Soroti district

BOYS ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES	%	GIRLS ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES	%
Construction (brick making or porters in construction cites)	22.3	Agriculture (weeding/harvesting)	48
Agriculture (Ox-ploughing, grazing)	26.8	Caring for children/sickly	12
Fishing	18.2	Informal sector e.g. sell of ajon (local brew)	24
Transportation (boda-boda)	18.4	Others e.g. baby sitting, serving in eating houses, domestic servants	16
Informal sector e.g. carpentry etc.	10.4		
Others e.g. charcoal burning	3.9		
TOTAL	100	TOTAL	100

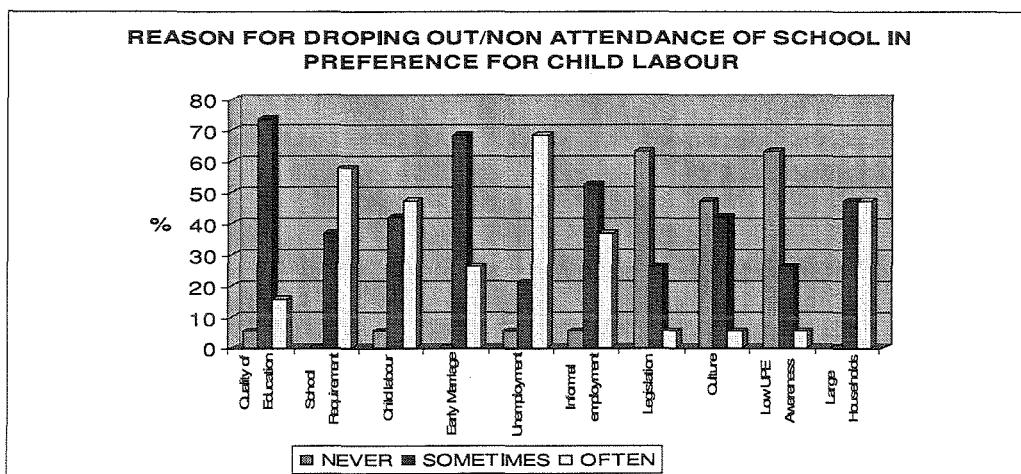
(Source: Own design)

The activities performed between the boys and girls though differed by activity and geographical location did not vary from the national trend as in the UNHS (2002/2003). However, the demand for girls in urban areas seemed more than that of boys as depicted from the nature of activities. The boys are concentrated in the transportation sector (boda-boda), charcoal burning and brick making in rural areas. The findings relate to Grootaert and Patrinos (1999:7-8) contribution that demand and technology conditions have great influence in child labour patterns and distribution between urban and rural areas.

5.7 Factors for Persisting Forms of Child Labour in Soroti District

In order to get the reasons why parents allowed their children to drop out/not attend school in favour of child labour, the experiences of parents whose children were still schooling were sought over those parents whose children had dropped or not attending school within the neighbourhood. This was on assumption that they should have interacted and observed the child labour trends. The findings are summarized in graph 2.

Graph 2: Showing Reasons for Drop Out/Non School Attendance in Favour of Child Labour



(Source: Own design)

These findings reveal that the major reasons for school drop out in favour of child labour are poor quality of school, early marriages, presence of informal employment to children, preference for child labour, inability to meet school requirements and lack of formal employment for those completing primary school.

The findings that poor quality of schools and inability to meet school requirements as factors contributing to drop out of school in preference for child labour are in line with the reasons expounded in the national surveys of 2001 and that of 2006 as in the table 14 and 15.

Table 14: Indicating Reasons for School Drop Out by 2001

Reasons for drop out	Boys%	Girls%
Monetary costs(school fund, uniform, text & exercise books, supplies)	57.9	51.3
Labour needed	8.7	15.9
Failed exams and did not want to repeat	10.9	10.1
Child perception that had enough schooling	28.2	20.9
Disability or illness	11.2	8.5
School too far	3.4	3.0

Travel to school unsafe	2.5	2.6
Poor school quality	1.4	2.4
No secondary school places	3.3	5.7

(Source: Uganda DHS Ed Data Survey 2001:59)

TABLE 15: Indicating Reasons for School drop out in 2005/2006 (%)

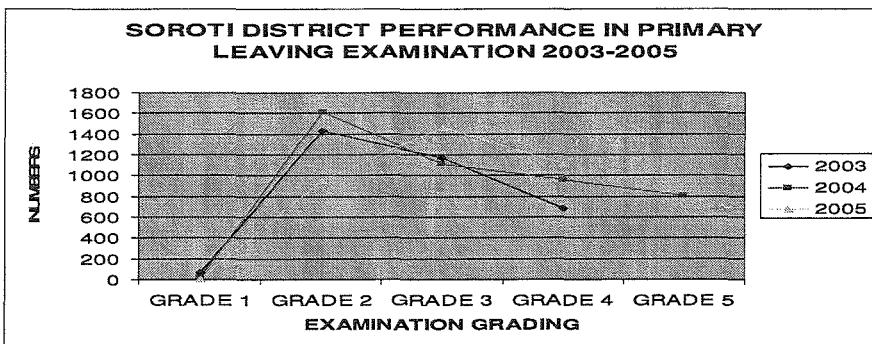
REASONS	MALE	FEMALE	UGANDA
Too expensive	35.0	42.6	39.5
Indifference to education (not willing to attend further)	30.7	14.6	21.3
Poor quality school, too far or further schooling not available	13.7	17.1	15.6
Sickness or calamity	13.8	12.7	13.2
Had to help at home	0.7	7.3	4.5
Poor academic progress	2.0	4.4	3.4
Completed desired level	4.1	1.3	2.5

(Source: UNHS 2005/2006:21)

A comparative analysis of the two tables above gives an indication that the UPE has to some extent reduced the cost of schooling but not to manageable levels, instead, the quality of schooling has worsened.

Further, the findings re-enforce the continuous poor primary leaving examination performance in Soroti district as seen in the trend of the results for the period 2003 to 2006 in graph 3.

Graph 3: Showing Trends of PLE Results



(Source: Extracted from Soroti District Development Plan 2006:7)

Because of poor quality of school, the number of children passing in grade 1 to qualify to continue in well established secondary schools has diminished. However, because of the practice of automatic primary school promotion they will end up in the

newly launched Universal Secondary Education but their performance will remain doubtful.

The district officials (citing from the DDP 2006:7) blame the poor primary school performance on the unfriendly school environment such as lack of classrooms. They cite that out of the required 2488 classrooms there were only 885, the latrine coverage was only 36% and had only 11.453 out of required 37.317 desks by 2006. Such trends in quality of primary education justify parents to take decisions for children to drop out in order to engage in child labour. It is in this respect that, UPPAP (2002:24) carried out research and established the following comments from the UPE beneficiaries.

From the parents of Bugondo sub county in Soroti district;

‘The burden of buying uniforms, pens, exercise books and mathematical sets are still heavy. This is worse in Bugondo-Bugondo primary school where they change school uniform every year. We started with green, then they changed to striped fabric and now they have gone back to green; you remain confused’ (UPPAP 2002:24)

From children in Kabola village in Soroti district

‘UPE is about free education for children in primary but children carry hoes to school and dig for teachers and are beaten if they do not carry hoes’(UPPAP 2002:24).

‘The time we spend at school gardens, we would be best used in working for food in other people’s fields’ (UPPAP 2002:24).

In Acomia village in Kateta Sub County in Soroti district children reacted against lack of employment as follows,

‘Education is a waste of time in this government because after completing it, there will be no job for you. Some of our village mates who went to school have to join us in fishing because they have failed to get jobs themselves’ (UPPAP 2002:17).

Because of such comments, EFA Report (2005) emphasises the need to improve upon quality of schooling if “education for all” is to be attained by year 2015. Likewise, Guarcello et al. (2006:16) (see also Rosati and Rossi 2007:10) are in conformity that poor school quality not only affects enrolment but perpetuates drop out leading to child labour. It further influences parent’s decision making whether to invest in children’s education or not thus affecting human capital accumulation. Hence, one can argue that improving school quality and reducing cost of schooling should become a top priority to policy issues, debates and research.

5.8 Addressing Child Labour through UPE Programme

In order to address the problem of child labour through the UPE programme, there was need to have an analysis of the following concerns: Assessment of parent's perception to educating children; Assessment of beneficiaries' perceptions to the UPE programme; Assessment of beneficiaries' perceptions to child labour abolition, regulation or protection and combination of child labour and schooling; Establishing the UPE programme implementation problems; Establishing the problems faced by households in educating their children and ; Establishing the coping mechanisms that households apply in a bid to solve the problems faced so as to continue educating their children. An analysis of the above issues would be pertinent for a justifiable conclusion on the necessary policy initiatives that could be derived to address the problem of child labour.

5.8.1 Parents' Perceptions to Educating Children

Even if the findings of this research indicated that the less educated parents favoured child labour, in overall, the perceptions of parents towards educating their children was positive as indicated in table 16.

Table 16: Showing Parents Perception to Educating children

PARENTS EDUCATIONAL PERCEPTION	%
Education enables children be self reliant and prepared to face the adult life in future	22.2
Education makes children self reliant and prepares them to sustain their families	5.6
Education is a gateway to acquisition of better employment and reap private returns	38.8
Because of current unemployment, children should drop out of school to join paid labour to pave way for a bleak future	5.6
Education could be good but because of early child drop out their future is bleak	22.2
Primary education alone is not enough requires continuity to secondary and higher education for better employment prospects	5.6
TOTAL	100

(Source: Own design)

Such positive perceptions indicated that they still attached value to education as a means of attaining human capital and reap returns to education as propounded by Becker (1964) and Schultz (1963). This still confirms education as the most plausible solution to the reduction of child labour. Any anomalies in the UPE programme therefore need be addressed to promote these perceptions.

5.8.2 Beneficiaries Perception of the UPE Programme

Using the EFA Report (2005) and Guarcello et al. (2006:17) providing measures of determining quality of education, the UPE beneficiaries were asked to establish the areas that the UPE programme had done poorly or needed improvement. In the findings, the beneficiaries partially agreed on a number of proxy indicators that required improvement. The details are provided in annex 1-3 which shows a divided mind of the beneficiaries on

the performance of the UPE programme. In some areas the programme has excelled e.g. catering for tuition, text books and class rooms while in areas like teacher recruitment, school inspection, feeding and provision of sanitation the programme has done very poorly. The reason for such performance lies on the funding. Where government has got donor funding, some positive results are seen but in tasks to be accomplished by districts or parents, then the programme faces difficulties.

In the research findings, the pupil classroom ratio remained as high as 1:89 and 1:72 as in Ojama Katine and Tukum primary schools respectively. While the teacher pupil ratio went to 1:75 and 1:70 in Ojama Katine and Otirono primary schools respectively. These ratios challenge the low official national ratios reported in the Uganda Poverty Status Report (2005:125) and MOES (October 2006).

From the children's point of view, 22% and 19% expressed need for more teachers and classrooms respectively thus confirming high pupil classroom and teacher ratios. This assessment reaffirms the world wide concern to provide quality education (EFA Monitoring Report, 2005). Otherwise, failure to provide quality education would still lead to misleading conclusions to be derived regarding returns to education or account child labour to be a deprivation of human capital (Birdsall and Behran:1983:928-46) see also (Hannum and Buchmann 2005:333-54).

In totality, the findings add up to the general assessment of UPE being seen as a nation wide problem. The Uganda National NGO Forum cites the 2004 research findings of the Uganda Debt Network (UDN) that exposed the comments of some UPE beneficiaries as below:

From Soroti district,

'[w]e have classes under trees. We are either beaten by the sun, rain or distracted by passing people, bicycles and occasionally cars". "Because we don't have enough desks, we sit in the dust and end up making our uniforms dirty. When we get home parents beat us because it is expensive to buy soap to wash our dirty uniforms more frequently than is necessary' (Uganda National NGO Forum, April 2005:16).

From Rwasinga primary school in Mbarara district,

'[T]here is a problem of shortages: shortage of text books, shortage of pens, shortage of chalk and shortage of balls with which to play. There is even shortage of teachers. Why can't government do something about these shortages' (Uganda National NGO Forum, April 2005:16).

From Kumi district,

'[I] take no breakfast at home. I get nothing at school. When it is lunch time, teachers go home to eat and tell us to play. Can you imagine spending the whole day without eating anything' (Uganda National NGO Forum, April 2005:16).

In terms of teacher quality, Bategeka and Okurut (February 2006:3) acknowledge that most of the rural primary school teachers in Uganda lack appropriate training. For example in the year 2003, out of 145.703 primary school teachers, 54.069 had no formal teacher training and another 7.960 had only a teaching certificate most of whom were deployed in rural schools. Such an assessment justifies need for improving the UPE programme delivery in Uganda, or else perpetuate school drop out, absenteeism and continuance of child labour.

5.8.3 Perceptions on Child Labour Abolition/Regulation

Just like the positive perceptions towards education as already indicated in this paper, findings also showed that all UPE beneficiaries in Soroti district did not have any support for child labour nor the combination of child labour and schooling. Further research findings indicated that the UPE beneficiaries are in total support of abolition of child labour in all its forms. All these findings are summarised in table 17.

Table 17: Showing Beneficiaries Perceptions of Child Labour (%)

Beneficiaries	Support child paid labour	Don't support child paid labour	Support combining school and child paid labour	Don't support combining school and child paid labour	Support abolishing child paid labour	Don't support abolishing child paid labour	Perceptions on improving quality of schooling
Parents	21.0	68.4	31.6	57.9	57.9	31.6	84.2
Children	40	60	16.7	83.3	66.6	33.3	100
Policy makers and implementers	3.3	96.7	6.7	93.3	76.7	23.3	100

(Source: Own Computation)

This positive support against child labour and their need for improving the quality of education, justifies their realisation that children's sustainable livelihood shall prevail in a situation when they have attained human capital so as to reap educational returns as propounded by Becker (1964) and Schultz (1963).

However the question as to why child labour continues in a society that has positive attitude to education and negative attitude to child labour seem to draw concern for further research. But none the less, the escalating poverty levels in Uganda seem to accelerate the problem of child labour. According to the Uganda national household survey, the population of the poor households increased from 34% to 38% between

1999/2000 to 2002/2003 (UNHS:2005) implying that the poor will not afford to bear the costs associated with education but to opt for alternatives like child labour.

However, such positive attitude against child labour would be utilised by policy makers to design strategies leading to the eventual eradication of the problem of child labour. Basu (1999:1114-6) for example suggests the possibility of combining both legal and collaborative interventions in a situation where such attitudes regarding child labour are prevalent.

5.8.4 Establishing the UPE Implementation Problems

From this research, the problems faced in enhancing the UPE programme were derived from the policy makers and implementer's perspective. It became apparently clear that the problems faced emanated from two angles. Those that stemmed from within the implementation process and those that emerged outside the programme.

Implementation problems within the UPE programme in Soroti district

The findings of the problems faced within the implementation process are highlighted in table 18.

Table 18: Showing Implementation Problems within UPE in Soroti District

PROBLEMS	PERCENTAGE
Inadequate funding ¹⁰	17.5
No provision of lunch to teachers and pupils ¹¹	16.0
High pupil teacher ratio	7.0
Poor sanitation at school ¹²	6.4
Poor school inspection	6.4
Poorly trained teachers ¹³	5.8
Inadequate teachers ¹⁴	5.8
Poor administration coupled with corruption	5.8
Lack of teacher accommodation	5.3
Lack of interest by teachers	4.7
Pupil absenteeism	4.7
Poorly constructed classrooms	4.7
Long distances from school	4.1
Inadequate classrooms	3.5
Low salaries to teachers	2.3
TOTAL	100

(Source: Own Analysis)

¹⁰ In all schools, the findings reveal the diminishing trends in financial flows from government to the schools. For example, in Tukum primary school, the school received 10 million, 9million, 3 million and 1 million in the period 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 respectively.

¹¹ The teacher welfare used to be catered for by PTA charges that were abolished under UPE. This deprived both children and pupil welfare services like lunch while at school.

¹² In Soroti district the latrine/sanitation coverage in schools stood at 36% (see DDP 2006).

¹³ Majority of teachers, more than 70% are still in Grade 111 (see District Staff List 2006) teachers have never upgraded due to high private costs involved.

¹⁴ The school staff structures provides for particular number of teachers per school depending on the grade of the school, but adjusting the staff requirements to tally with the required PTR by the MOES for consequent recruitment by district is slow because of budgetary implications.

Thorough analysis of the above implementation problems portrays that a lot relate to failure to meet the school quality indicators. Because of this failure, other problems have accrued like the school drop out, non attendance of school and above all continuity of child labour thus associating such phenomena to the UPE programme. The poor quality of education in Uganda is acknowledged by Okuni (2003:6) and Avenstrup et al. (2004:15) as a continuing burden to education while EFA Global Monitoring Report (2005) generalised it for most developing countries.

Implementation problems outside the UPE programme in Soroti district

Outside the implementation arena, the findings indicate that involvement of pupils to child work and child labour, early marriages and reluctance of parents/communities were the major problems emanating from the community as in table 19.

Table 19: Showing Implementation Problems outside UPE in Soroti District

PROBLEMS	PERCENTAGE
Too much domestic/child labour	20
Reluctance by parents/community to UPE	23
Early marriages	16.1
Poverty	16.2
Negative cultural practices to education	10.5
Orphanhood due to HIV/AIDS	6.6
Parents ignorance of education	4.8
Peer pressure/indiscipline	2.8

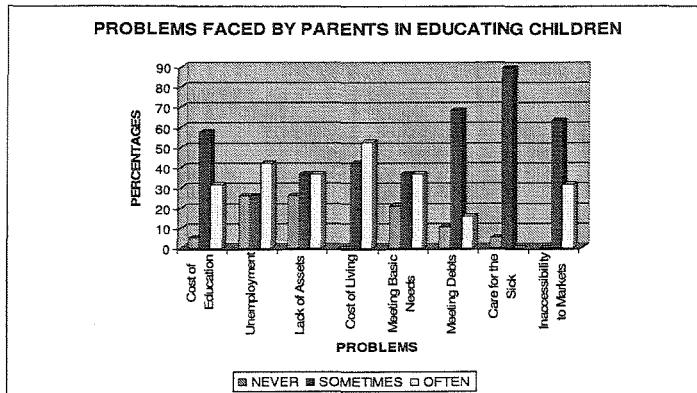
(Source: Own Computation)

Whereas these posed a threat to the enhancement of the UPE programme, some of the problems turned out to be community mechanisms of coping with the increasing risks and vulnerabilities associated with the increasing poverty levels but had effect on UPE implementation. These problems have also been established by Kasente (2003:5) (see also UNHS survey 2005/2006:21).

5.8.5 Problems faced by Households in educating their Children

To justify the foregoing problems from the policy perspectives, it was paramount to establish the problems that households faced in attempt to educate their children. These problems are indicated in graph 4. The findings depicted varied problems faced by parents. The most common are caring for the ill, meeting family debts and lack of access to market for local products. These also formed bottlenecks to their ability to generate income which would be used to invest on their children's education. Ironically, the cost of educating children also appears as a threat to the contradiction of UPE as a free education programme.

Graph 4: Showing Problems faced by Parents in Educating Children



(Source: Own analysis)

These findings relate to Nishimura et al. (2005:5-22) assertion that UPE still has direct and indirect costs to be borne by the parents. Further, Nishimura et al. (2005:5-22) rightly accepts Govinda assertion that government attempts to promote expansion of primary education may ultimately not be beneficial to the poor due to continuity of costs related factors despite their meagre coping mechanisms even when they face lack of market for their local agricultural products coupled with the prevailing ill health.

5.8.6 Household Coping Mechanisms for Children's Education

Despite the problems faced by parents in educating their children under the UPE programme, there was need in this research to ascertain how the households coped with the problems they faced in educating their children. Table 20 shows the findings of the coping mechanisms applied by the rural folk in Soroti district.

Table 20: Showing Coping Mechanisms in Soroti District

COPING MECHANISMS	PERCENTAGE
Involvement of relatives	10.9
Engagement in agriculture, animal rearing and fishing	10.0
Prioritizing consumption/purchasing basic needs	10.0
Postponing, rescheduling payments of school fees or debts	8.5
Acquisition of credit/loans	7.8
Utilizing other government public services	7.8
Restricting children to UPE schools only	8.0
Forming or joining associations	7.0
Selling of assets especially land	5.4
Marrying out girls	5.4
Cutting number of meals per day	5.4
Engaging in IGAs	5.4
Adhering to market product and labour price	5.4
Negotiating for grace periods	2.3
Advocating for better services delivery	0.7
TOTAL	100

(Source: Own Computation)

In terms of settling problems related to educating children, the use of other relatives as a coping mechanism ranked top. The societies in Soroti value those who had

accomplished education and attained some employment. Within the family or clan, they are required to reciprocate by educating the young children still at school. However some of the coping mechanisms were in themselves problematic. For example, the culture of marrying out girls as a coping mechanism denies them the rights to human capital accumulation and associated returns.

5.9 Lessons Learnt

Child labour is a complex but significant societal phenomenon. Understanding it from a poverty stricken society is difficult because in one way, it is seen as destructive to children, on the other, they value it as a coping mechanism while also realizing that investing in education to the children is of paramount importance to sustainability.

5.10 Conclusion of Chapter Five

Even at the micro level like Soroti district, child labour still poses a threat despite UPE. However, the problems embedded in the implementation of the UPE programme are resolvable through careful redress. If these problems are not resolved, human capital accumulation and child labour will continue to count on the parental decision making process. Further, the perceptions of parents on both child labour and education would pave way for appropriate interventions upon thorough research.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of research findings, the conclusion of the study, possible recommendations to increase effective school attendance within the UPE programme leading to reduction of child labour problem. It also proposes areas for further research.

6.2 Summary of the study and its findings

This study looked at the extent to which the UPE programme has contributed to increased school attendance leading to reduction of child labour in Uganda with particular reference to Soroti district. The analysis is based on human capital theory and sustainable rural livelihood. It included the debate between abolitionism and protectionism of child labour. The parental rational decision making process in choosing between human capital accumulation and children's participation in child labour was looked at from two weak points of the UPE programme notably, the inability to provide quality education, the increasing costs incurred by parents in educating children and the balance between returns to education and those associated with child labour.

The research findings indicate that to a large extent, the UPE programme has had positive impact on children enrolment into formal school. But little attention has been accorded to ensure retention of the children enrolled for eventual completion of primary schooling. This calamity is confirmed from high drop out rates and low primary school completion rates which the UPE programme has ignored. The poor quality of UPE and the costs associated to the education services offered have made parents to make decisions for their children to drop out in favour of child labour.

The findings further reveal that there is a high prevalence of combination of child labour and schooling because of failure to provide the required educational infrastructure for effective learning. In the same vein, there were gendered differences in child labour activities. The boys were more concentrated in rural based child labour activities while girls cut across rural and urban areas. The continuance of such a situation may affect human capital accumulation.

6.3 Conclusion of the study

From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that; In a situation where more funding for educational services are offered under the UPE programme, but high school

drop out and low school completion rates remain characteristic of a particular society as exemplified from the findings of this research, then a justifiable conclusion can be that there is child labour in that society. The failures found from the UPE programme can partly be used to account for the continuity of child labour in Uganda.

There is a big link between child labour, education and the rational parental decision making process. Child labour can hamper human capital accumulation if local employment opportunities are available, while poorly delivered educational services can promote decisions to be made in favour of child labour. In the same vein, child labour in conditions of poverty is considered a rational coping mechanism rather than a problem.

Parental decision making has strong influence in determining the degree towards the resource use for long term human capital accumulation and the use of children's time for child labour as a mechanism for sustaining rural livelihoods in poverty stricken societies.

The UPE programme attempts to modify the rational choice theory in that the parent's decisions reflect a demand for more effective schooling and positive returns beyond the inadequate education quality currently provided. The UPE concept of increasing quantitative access to school derails quality of schooling thus accelerating child labour; instead parents seek for an enabling environment for effective schooling to reduce child labour.

The rational decisions made by parents are mere attempts to address short term livelihood needs in the households but forgetting that they are swallowing "bitter pills" to forego the long term benefits that could accrue to the households. In the process of doing so, they are prolonging the vicious cycle of poverty and the problem of child labour within their societies.

Engaging children in work/labour per se is not bad. The combination of schooling and child labour as found rampant in Soroti district was a reflection of children's attempts to react to the household vulnerability situations. In essence, the child labour aspect was a means of providing themselves with the missing ingredients to enable children have moderate schooling. This phenomenon may not be typical but may be common in Sub Saharan Africa. However this is not to advocate for or support the continuance of mixing schooling and child labour.

6.4 Recommendations for Child Labour Reduction

Whereas many scholars have made a number of recommendations for reduction/elimination of child labour (see Lyon and Rosati 2006:2-13), in this study, the recommendations concentrate on making schooling more effective for possibilities of reducing child labour.

There is need for the immediate lifting of the ban on the Parents Teachers Associations which was placed during the launching of the UPE programme in 1997. These associations brought together parents and teachers in their bid to promote quality of teaching at school. They could through consensus, and within ascertaining their ability to pay, determine the exact charges to be levied to parents for enhancing both the teachers and pupil's welfare. Even parents in rural areas would determine their PTA charges according to their asset availability. On the other hand, it encouraged parental ownership, participation in and monitoring of the school local programmes especially those funded from the PTA charges. The removal of PTA charges made parents presume that the UPE would provide everything children required for their education but this blind fondly damaged the earlier collective responsibility parents had towards education.

The practice of automatic promotion of children from one class to another should be discouraged if it was being used for increasing children's nominal retention in school so as to woe donor support. This is not the most effective approach to retention of children in school; it encourages poor quality schooling because annual assessment/examination is rendered meaningless thus affecting rates of human capital accumulation. Instead, the UPE programme should strive for provision of quality education and an effective learning environment which meets the expectations of parents and children.

In order to address the problem of high cost of education incurred by parents, the UPE programme should take up all the costs of primary education for all the vulnerable poor. It would be necessary if a UPE cost refund scheme for vulnerable families is designed to reduce the net economic benefits for child labour and improve the opportunity cost of having children at school. This could be in a manner that those whose children complete primary studies in a year would be refunded the costs they incurred. But on completion of the whole primary schooling, a bonus would be given on condition that those children will continue in secondary or vocational education. This however requires a feasibility analysis to determine the extent to which it is achievable. This suggestion could be accommodated under the PEAP budgets as a national priority.

The UPE programme should earmark implementing sister programmes like, provision of alternative non formal education programmes, vocational training and apprenticeship training specifically targeting primary school drop outs as a means to re-integrate them into the mainstream government aided educational programmes for skills acquisition leading to sustainable livelihoods.

Further, the ongoing attempts to boost the income position of the vulnerable poor in terms of their involvement in IGAs need to be redesigned to focus on improving the economic status of the households. This is because some of these interventions were

provided in piece meal; programmes like “*entandikwa*”¹⁵ have long since perished while the current “*bonna bagagawale*”¹⁶ needs careful implementation to avoid mixing it with politics.

In a situation where the household income positions are not uplifted, leaving them vulnerable to shocks, then the need to regulate/protect child labour should be adopted other than abolition. Regulating child labour would for example require adjusting the curriculum to balance between school and work. Alternatively, school programmes that target working children need to be brought forward that provide for working time and schooling. However, where regulation applies, there is need for constant check on its abuse by employers in order not to let children end up in harmful or disastrous work.

Likewise, children should at all levels be consulted upon on interventions that affect them. At the household level, involvement of children in decision making and consequent incorporation of their views on matters pertaining to child labour and schooling would provide a platform to generate better approaches of resolving on this problem since they would possibly articulate well on their needs and rights.

Within the UPE programme, there is need for massive awareness programme for parents on the importance of education in relation to child labour. Such awareness programmes would change attitudes of parents and possibly contribute to their increased need to enrol and retain their children to school while discouraging them to make decisions that favour child labour.

The UPE implementation administrative structures appear to be very weak. There is need to strengthen programme administration and implementation at the district. Effective involvement of the already existing policy implementers such as the school inspectors, parish chiefs and community workers is required. Where possible, they would for the good of human capital accumulation and reducing child labour, sensitize households to take advantage of the programme to have their children enrolled.

Finally, there is need to address both the demand side and supply side factors that tend to inter play to promote child labour. This requires attempts to improve upon productive technology that limits the demand for child labour, or provision and effective implementation of relevant laws. In the same vein, addressing the causes of poverty alongside tackling negative attitudes towards girls and other risks like illness would pave way to check the supply side factors.

¹⁵ Entandikwa was a government poverty eradication programme which gave revolving funds to rural communities but failed due to problems of top-down design, lack of monitoring and turned out to be away of soliciting for votes during elections.

¹⁶ Bonna bagagawale is a presidential programme designed to organized people into groups capable of independently performing IGAs upon funding provided by the central government.

6.5 Recommendations for Research Interventions

While undertaking this research, it became clear that statistics on child labour and education were difficult to interpret. In undertaking research in the future, it would be paramount to generate specific data on child labour possibly using the typology here below;

Table 21: Showing Areas of Future Research on Child Labour

School Enrolment Position	School Time Dimension	Relation To Employability In The Labour Market	Possible Research Interventions
Fully enrolled/registered	Fully attending school	Never engaged in child labour	Establish factors that promote human capital accumulation other than engagement in child labour.
Fully enrolled/registered	Partly attending school	Combines schooling and child labour	Determine the extent to which the combination of schooling and child labour affects human capital accumulation within the asset mix and resource constraints.
Fully enrolled/registered	Never attending school (drop outs or absentees)	Full time engagement in child labour	Investigate how the interrelationship between access to and quality of education affects the household decision making for child labour within the resource mix.
Never enrolled/registered	Never attending school	Fully engaged in child labour	To avoid generalized conclusions to child labour, for each society, determine causes, effects and remedies of child labour in relationship to gender, location, degree of educational services offered, asset mix/resource constraints and local labour market dynamics.
Never enrolled/registered	Never attending school	Partly engaged in child labour	Carry out surveys to determine factors that deter interest to school and partial engagement in child labour.
Never enrolled/registered	Never attending school	Never engaged in child labour	Conduct studies to ascertain the factors that account for negative attitude to education, employment and training and how children use their time.

In undertaking this kind of research, determining exact number of children engaged in child labour activity while reflecting on gender aspects is paramount.

More qualitative research is required into what quality of education is considered to be appropriate and in what degrees it can be useful to influence the decision of households not to prefer engagement of their children into child labour.

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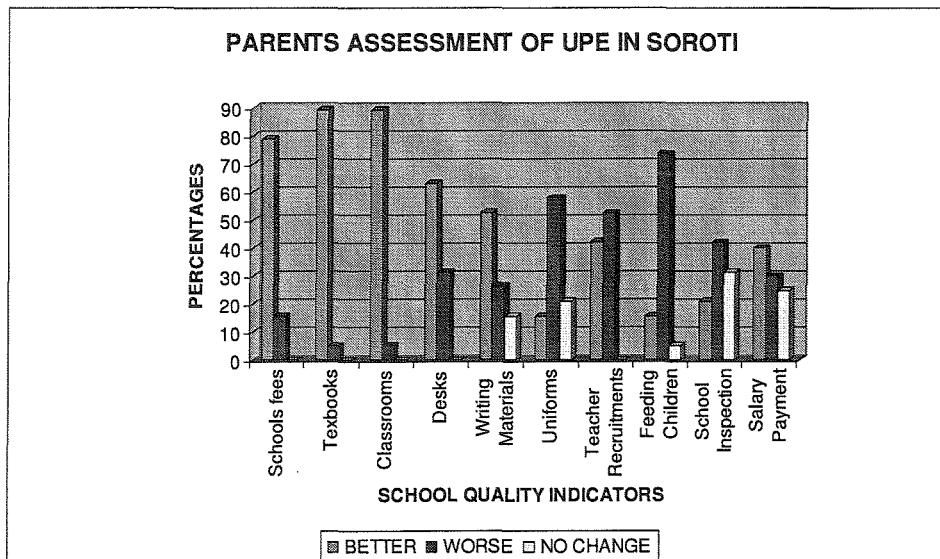
Annexes

Annex 1: Table showing number of working children aged 5-17 years by age and region

Age-group	REGION				Total
	Central	Eastern	Northern	Western	
5-9	60	37	37	33	166
10-14	209	193	202	148	752
15-17	198	140	124	142	604
Total	467	370	363	323	1,522

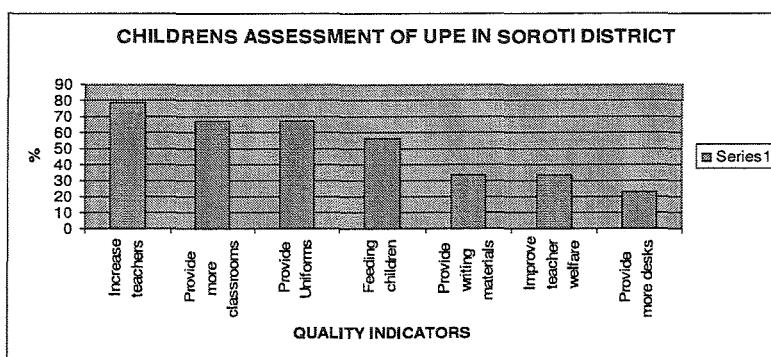
(Source: UNHS (2002/2003:46)

Annex 2: Graph showing parents assessment of UPE in Soroti district



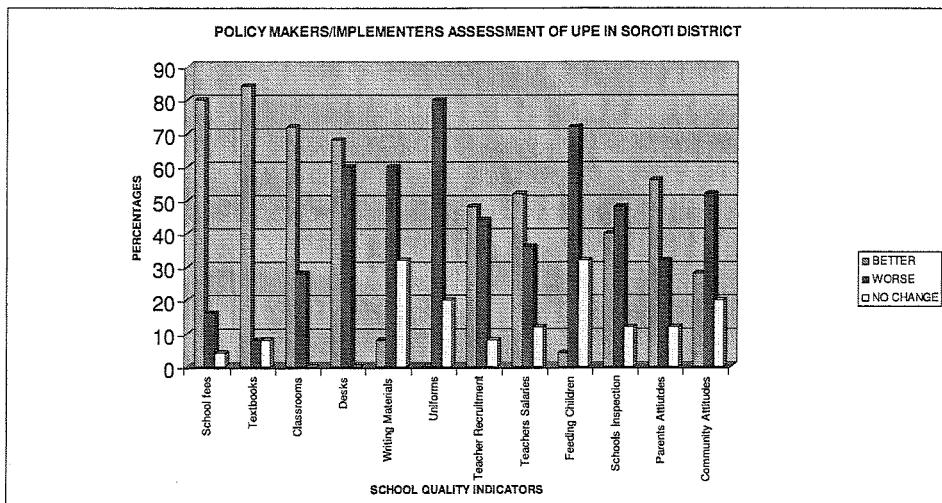
(Source: Own design)

Annex 3: Graph showing children's assessment of UPE in Soroti district



(Source: Own design)

Annex 4: Graph showing assessment of UPE by policy makers and implementers



(Source: Own design)

