April, 2014

Plan Uganda Experiences in promoting Social Accountability in schools through the School Facility Community Score Card

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CCCD   Child Centered Community Development Organization
CSC   Community School Score Card/ Community Score Card
DEO   District Education officer
FGD   Focus group discussion
KI   Key Informant
KII   Key Informant Interview
NGO   Non Government Organizations
Plan Uganda Plan Uganda
PS   Primary School
PSGC   Participatory School Governance for Children
PTA   Parents Teachers association
SC   School Council
SMC   School Management Committee
TAP   Transparency and Accountability Program
UPE   Universal Primary Education

Definition of Key Concepts

Accountability - An obligation to work in compliance with agreed rules and standards or to report fairly and accurately on performance results against the availed resources, mandated roles and plans.

Facility - refers to the school.

Service providers - The term refers to the teachers as the ones that provide the services; this also includes the school administrators.

Service users - This term is used to refer to the learners or pupils as users and beneficiaries of a good school, it term also includes the parents.

Stakeholder -This includes the service users of the facility who are the pupils and parents, the service providers who are teachers and school administrators, the community around the school, the district authorities and well-wishers.

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Executive Summary

This report is based on a study commissioned by Plan Uganda to document good practices, impact and lessons learnt from the Community Score Card process to support program design in Plan, as well as the replication and scaling up of this tool by key partners. Since 2012, Plan has been implementing a Participatory School Governance programme in the districts of Luwero and Tororo districts whose major focus was on the improvement of the way the schools were being governed. It is within this framework and context that the community school scorecards project was introduced, as a way of promoting and strengthening parents' engagement in school governance processes and generally to strengthen social accountability structures and mechanisms in schools. The project was conceptualized against a background of poor educational outcomes for children in Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme resulting from low community participation in the education processes and little recognition of parents' and teachers' shared responsibility in protecting instructional time and ensuring that students and teachers attend class and prioritize learning.

The objective of this documentation exercise is to profile this project as a best practice thereby drawing lessons for future programming and/or scaling up. Information was gathered through focus group discussions (FGDs) with the different categories of stakeholders including teachers, school management committees, parents and pupils. Individual interviews were held with the district education officials and the Plan–U field officers. The report highlights the project approach, the major achievements, challenges and lessons as well as the key recommendations.

it is indeed my sincere hope that this booklet will make it easier for CSOs, governments, children, adults, and young people to get a practical feel of the impact of promoting social accountability in every process of service delivery as well as the value of promoting child participation.

sincerely yours,

Fikru Abebe
Country Director, Plan Uganda

Children of Semyungu Primary school making class votes on decision taken by the children council representatives in their meeting

Have your Say.
Should we pack our
own food or parents
Contribute to providing
food for at school?
For

Project Approach

The school facility community scorecard (CSC) process uses the "community" as its unit of analysis and focused on monitoring at the local level. Using the methodology of requesting user perceptions on quality, efficiency and transparency, the CSC process allows for tracking of inputs or expenditures, monitoring of quality of services, generation of benchmark performance criteria, comparison of performance across facilities, generating a direct feedback mechanism between providers and users, building local capacity and strengthening citizens voice and community empowerment.

The introduction of the project followed a stepwise approach that involved confirming the target population (parents, pupils, teachers and school management committees), selection of participants and agreement on the procedures to be followed. The procedure subsequently involved systematic stages, each completed separately on a given day before the scorecard was consensually agreed upon. These stages included: preparatory ground work, input tracking, performance community score card, self-evaluation scorecard for service providers, and interface meeting and action plan. Each of these stages was significant in the success of the project. The preparatory stage provided an avenue for dialogue with stakeholders which resulted in buy-in of the project. The input tracking was useful in generating standard indicators. The performance community scorecard and the self-evaluation exercise helped to identify key local reforms and recommendations, while the interface meetings and action plans generated consensus among the stakeholders on the way forward.

The active participation of all key stakeholders was a major strength of the approach. Secondly, the self-evaluation exercise and the emphasis on learning instead of fault finding among different stakeholders created harmony and oneness essential for the success of the project. Finally, the involvement of children right from the onset communicated respect, brought to the fore the felt needs and perceptions of this primary beneficiary group and was an inspiration for hard work and success. For example 81% of the pupils feel that their views are respected. The participatory approach also played a crucial role in ensuring that the project background, purpose and methodology were mutually understood

Nakikonge primary school children council meeting, attended by the elected councillors and their patrons

and appreciated by all those who would eventually participate in its implementation. Limited understanding of projects by beneficiaries and stakeholders usually drags their successful implementation.

The project had a strong monitoring and evaluation component embedded in the very design of the project. The district officials were able to visit all the schools included at least once a term using facilitation from the plan office. The focus on a few and clear indicators namely; provision of midday meals, Improved participation of parents in their children's' education, and development of instructional materials and text books relevant to current curriculum made it much easier to monitor and measure success in these

core areas. These had been identified in previous surveys as priority areas requiring intervention. Furthermore, the project was based on a thorough understanding of the prevailing context through a baseline study that generated indicators for follow up measurements of change.

Project Achievements

The introduction of the transparent accountability program was an eye opener to parents regarding their roles and the subsequent realization that if they are passive in the education of their children, they should not expect to witness or even reap positive results from there. The positive results of the project within a year of implementation can be seen in the core result areas of midday meals (almost 100% in all the schools), increased parental participation from around 38.6% during the baseline to about 50%. The provision of scholastic materials, though partial, stands at over 80% in addition to other related benefits including increased recognition and protection of children's rights, teachers housing, and revival and enhancement of a sense of community involvement among educational stakeholders in the district.

There has been an increase in parents' involvement in the school management through regular attendance of meetings, where priorities for the school are identified and strategies to meet these priorities laid. The parents' attendance in school meetings has increased not just for women but among men as well who hitherto took a very limited interest in attending meetings. Through regular attendance, parents have come to appreciate their roles in the education of their children as well as the context within which the schools operate. In Kagogo and Namayamba primary schools, attendance of meetings increased to about 50%. More so, in Kagogo, the number of males attending was found to be more than that of the females which previously was unheard of a year before. Some of the benefits of this participation, pointed out during the documentation exercise include better performance of children, reduced teacher absenteeism, improved teacher-pupil relationship and improved parent-teacher and parent-child relationships. Each of these benefits is positively contributing to a better environment for children's education.

The project has also resulted in an increase in the provision of midday meals for pupils, which is almost universal (100%). In all the ten schools children receive at least a cup of porridge at midday while in some schools such as St. Charles Nakikonge pupils in higher classes receive solid food for lunch. This has been made possible through parents' awareness of the role that lunch/proper feeding plays in children's ability to learn. An evaluation of the project at the end of 2013 had indicated that the percentage of pupils who had lunch at school had increased from 40% at baseline to 70% by December 2013 (Plan, 2013, p.6). The associated benefits of provision of midday meals, as shared by all categories of respondents, including the pupils were cited as; improvements in levels of pupil concentration in class, reduced absenteeism, and more positive relationships between pupils and teachers.

Parents are beginning to appreciate the fact that it is their responsibility to contribute adequate scholastic materials for the proper education of their children. The provision of scholastic materials has increased the morale of the children and facilitated their learning at school.

Children's rights and responsibilities within schools, and communities resulting in improved safety for children as well as a sense of confidence among children. Besides massive sensitization, the direct participation of children has improved in the CSC processes has proven to the parents, teachers and other community members that children have worth, need to be listened to and they have ideas that can make a difference in the general welfare of not only themselves but whole communities. Respondents shared that more children are being sent to schools as a result and at school there is tremendous reduction in corporal punishments. The children's voices are heard in meetings and at home and children are gaining boldness and confidence to report abuse. It was even shared that the number of girls becoming pregnant has reduced and less girls are dropping out of school.

Other benefits associated with the TAP project include; Improved sanitation, hygiene and access to water; appreciation of the need and efforts towards addressing teachers' housing needs, increased financial accountability and efficiency in the use of resources. The project has generally led to more participatory forms of management in the schools

and from the head teachers' perspective it has contributed greatly to ease of administration through increased participation, and a transparent process of information sharing. The revival of interest in sports through availability of play materials has also been noted, with positive impacts on children's confidence and self-esteem. This year, 10 out 10 of the TAP schools participated in the sports contribution. Plan Uganda provided uniforms to a number of schools like St Charles Lwanga, St. Kizito Waluleta etc.

Major factors (best practices) driving the success of the project

A combination of factors played a role in the success of this project. All of them are linked to the design and approach of the project that was essentially participatory, inclusive and had strong linkages with previous interventions. Key among the specific elements includes

- Regular meetings between stakeholders as a means of learning and bonding there was at least one parents meeting and one visitation day in each of the 10 schools.
- Involvement of children not as passive recipients of benefits but active stakeholders whose voices can be heard and respected
- Participation of diverse groups of stakeholders, which has strengthened a cohesive community and team work, essential for achievement of results.
- Emphasis on community sensitization with regard to the shared responsibilities in the promotion of education. This has had a very significant influence in improving participation levels and interest
- Innovativeness and flexibility of the community in meeting needs. An example of a best practice refers to accepting cash or in-kind contributions for midday meals and construction and renovation of teachers' houses.
- Complementarity of the project to previous interventions. The project followed the school governance project and built on the strengths and structures including spaces for participation
- The active involvement and responsiveness of the district local government to identified needs. At least each of the TAP schools was visited once.

Challenges

Outstanding challenges to the sustainable adoption of this intervention as well as its results include, among others, a lack of space for the expansion in the number of schools, limited funds allocated for the renovation of school structures, inadequate motivation of teachers by the government including, though not limited to, meager salaries, a delay in the solicitor general and the ministry of education pronouncing itself on the issue of midday lunch, as well as social cultural barriers that affect the priority placed on girl child education. Unstable family relationships including the separation of parents leave some children without proper guardianship. This affects their schooling. Some of these socio-cultural and other family related factors have to be concurrently addressed with psychosocial interventions.

Opportunities

Opportunities include the widespread positive regard of the project by the community, the cascading effects of the programme to other non-participating schools, and the buy-in and support from the district local government and community leaders.

Lessons from the project and emerging practices

There are several lessons that have been learned /can be taken from the TAP project namely:
- Participation in school governance is dependent upon a full understanding and appreciation of roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder and working in concert towards identifiable goals.
- Participation towards improving school governance, transparency and accountability is not necessarily dependent on the levels of income. Financial and material resources are important but not adequate to cause desirable outcomes in participation and quality education. Other significant ways to participate include the sharing of ideas through regular interactions with all concerned parties.
- The improvements in governance will not only depend upon the

participation of parents, teachers and local leadership but also, and most importantly, the children themselves.

- Improving governance is dependent upon the understanding and appreciation of children's rights and responsibilities within schools, households and communities. Hence any programming to improve school governance should continue to incorporate the key aspect of children's rights.

Recommendations

Based on the impacts of the TAP project and the approach it undertook, it is recommended that the project be scaled up to include more schools in the area and later on be transferred to other Plan Ugandaganda programme districts.

For better grounding of the project methodology and benefits, it is recommended that the oversight role of the implementing organisation i.e. Plan Uganda be extended over a period of at least 3 years before the intervention is solely left in the hands of the community.

Whilst the challenges of UPE schools are distinct and therefore their targeting is justifiable, some aspects of the project such as sensitization and technical support and advise can be extended to the private schools in order for these best practices to equally be rooted in such schools.

In areas were the participatory school governance has not been implemented, while implementing the TAP, it will be better to first educate the children on their responsibilities before telling them their rights.

Chapter One
Introduction and Background

Plan Uganda is a child centered community development organization (CCCD) with programs and projects in eight impact areas. Through its participation and governance plan, it is committed through CCCD to support children, families, communities and civil society in holding state institutions accountable. CCCD acknowledges that civil society provides a platform for interface between rights holders and duty bearers. Plan Uganda recognizes that the balance between power given by the people to the government and accountability to people by duty bearers is not just compliance with laws and regulations but also the overall outcome reflected in the wellbeing of citizens. Such wellbeing is ensured in a society where individuals, families, groups, communities and the duty bearers share values that contribute to the wellbeing of the people.

In 2012, Plan Uganda introduced the school governance programme[1] to supplement the previous programmes on the improvement of the way the schools were being governed in two of the five districts, namely, Luwero and Tororo. (other districts were: Lira, Kampala and Kamuli). The School Governance for Children Program was aimed at providing support to improve education outcomes by strengthening school governance mechanisms that promoted participation of all the education stakeholders. The stakeholders included: pupils and their parents; community members in school governance that is the school management committee (SMC); the Parents Teachers Association (PTA), the local leaders, school teachers and school administrators. This was a fulfillment of the strategic objective

[1]Plan Uganda (2012) BASELINE SURVEY IN PARTICIPATORY SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN TORORO AND LUWERO DISTRICTS IN UGANDA

no. 4 of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Uganda that states: "To build capacity of districts by helping Education Managers acquire and improve on their knowledge, skills and attitudes to be able to plan, monitor, account and perform managerial functions."

In Uganda most of the implementation of activities is conducted through a decentralized. The local governments are mandated to plan, budget, and mobilize resources. In the case of schools, it is the School Management Committees. The SMC should plan, budget and mobilize resources taking into account the local needs and national standards. While the official discourse may dominate, individual attitudes and capabilities play an important role in understanding and interpreting their roles. Although not well documented, there is a variation in the way different types of schools implement the governance policy as officially conceived, and in involvement of school communities and stakeholders.

Background to the study to the Transparency Accountability Programme

Plan Uganda under the participatory school governance for children introduced community school scorecards as a way of promoting and strengthening parents' engagement in school governance processes. This is premised on the fact that education laws emphasize community participation in school governance yet head teachers remain the main decision-makers (Education Act 2008 s[2]5), Parents and learners view education as the sole responsibility of government and participate little in school budgeting, decision making, management and monitoring processes. There is little recognition of parents' and teachers' shared responsibility in protecting instructional time and ensuring that students and teachers attend class and prioritize learning.

Studies have shown that countrywide half of the pupils who are enrolled in primary one repeat or drop out before completing seven years and, learning outcomes are generally poor. A national assessment (UWEZO 2012[3])

[2]Republic of Uganda (2008) The education (Pre-primary, Primary and Post Primary) 2008. Acts supplement number 8: http://planipolis.iiep. unesco.org/upload/Uganda/Uganda_EducationAct.pdf
[3]UWEZO (2012) Are our Children Learning? Literacy and Numeracy across East Africa http://www.uwezo.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/

Parents in Abongit primary school mapping out community development needs

revealed that 95% of primary three children could not understand a primary level two text; and only 12.9% could solve a division number of primary two level. Girls and children with disabilities are disproportionately affected. The assessment also reported that fourteen (14%) of schools in Uganda have no standard classrooms.

According to the Uganda Education Management Information System (EMIS) report of 2009[4], the average primary school completion rate was reported to be 52% with the retention rate in primary school being 53% for boys and 42% for girls. During the release of the primary seven national examination results in February 2014, it was reported that over one million pupils or about 71% of those who enrolled in primary one under the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 2006 were no longer in school. This big figure could be attributed to drop-out, repeating of classes, deaths or existence of 'ghost' pupils in UPE.

A school survey by Plan Uganda revealed that class sizes mostly surpass 100 pupils. Only 4% of schools have adequate teacher housing, leading to teacher absenteeism and fatigue. Textbooks arrive late and sharing is common. Forty Four percent (44%) of schools have no water points thereby exposing pupils to waterborne diseases, drowning in rivers as they try to draw water from unprotected sources and labor exploitation by teachers. The behavior of 22% of teachers was rated poor owing to administration of corporal punishment, child sexual abuse and inebriation. Pupils often arrive late for classes and are inappropriately dressed, while girls are vulnerable to early marriage. District Education Officers (DEOs) lack the resources and skills to effectively monitor schools and engage with children and parents as key stakeholders and governance efforts remain uncoordinated (Plan Uganda's School Survey, 2008).

Universal Primary Education in Uganda and its challenges

When UPE was being established in Uganda, the major objectives were
• Making basic education accessible to the learners and relevant to their

needs as well as meeting national goals;

- Making education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequalities;
- Establishing, providing and maintaining quality education as the basis for promoting the necessary human resource development;
- Initiating a fundamental positive transformation of society in the social, economic and political field; and
- Ensuring that education is affordable by the majority of Ugandans by providing, initially the minimum necessary facilities and resources, and progressively the optimal facilities,
- Enable every child to enter and remain in school until they complete the primary education cycle. (Aguti 2002[5])

UPE provides "free" education to all primary school-going age (6-13 year old) children in Uganda on a cost-sharing arrangement whereby parents are expected to provide exercise books, pens, uniforms and lunch at school. More than a decade later what has been realized is high enrolment in primary one. However the dropout rates, absenteeism by pupils and teachers, lack of concern by parents, failure by government to meet its obligation have become the key features of UPE. It is also interesting that the promoters of UPE hardly enroll their own children in UPE schools. This raises serious concern about the implementation of the policy in Uganda. Although it is a key policy priority objective to improve considerably the quality of primary education (ESIP 1998[6]), deterioration in the quality of primary education has been cited in the majority of studies that have tried to evaluate UPE. Deteriorating UPE quality is most frequently related to the following five negative effects of UPE: overcrowding due to extra-large classes, inadequate training, motivation, commitment and monitoring of teachers, less active and voluntary contribution by parents to primary education, less disciplinary controls and regulation and lack of housing for teachers especially in rural areas.

[5]Aguti Norar (2002)Facing Up To The Challenge Of Universal Primary Education, (UPE) In Uganda Through Distance Teacher Education Programmes http://www.col.org/pcf2/papers%5Caguti.pdf
[6]Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports (1998) Education Strategic Investment Plan [ESIP] 1998-2003 http://doc.iiep.unesco.org/cgi-bin/wwwi32.exe/%5Bin%5D/?t2000=009576/%2810O%29

Problem statement

Uganda was one of the first African countries to introduce Universal Primary Education (UPE). Many additional schools were built, teachers trained and tuition fees abolished. Nevertheless, nearly one in twenty school-age children have never enrolled in school[7] and Uganda has one of the highest percentages of primary school dropouts in the world. Children who have never registered for school remain invisible and so do the causes for their non-enrolment. These children, along with those who drop out of school, are likely to be the most disadvantaged and hard to reach. Achieving universal primary education requires more than full enrolment. It also means ensuring that children continue to attend classes. When the government of Uganda introduced Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997, the school enrolment increased threefold all over the country (MOES, 2007[8]). However, according to the UN (2010[9]), in sub-Saharan Africa, more than 30 per cent of primary school students drop out before reaching a final grade. This situation is not different in Uganda as according to the education abstract of 2004, more than 40% of the pupils who had been enrolled in primary one in 1997 did not sit for the PLE at the end of the seven years implying that they had dropped out of school. Reasons for drop out can be related to school governance and stakeholder involvement. One of the reasons why UPE has still not materialized is the absence of investment in an equitable mainstream education system. Quality private education for the 'haves' and poor public education for the 'have-nots', continue to leave poor and otherwise marginalized children behind. For those who have not dropped out of school, a big proportion cannot qualify for the universal education implying that they have scored more than 28 total aggregates in the four subjects at Primary Leaving Examination (PLE). Even though tuition fees have been abolished in Uganda it has not made UPE entirely free as parents may still have to pay for scholastic materials, examinations, uniforms, and school development funds. Despite the no-tuition policy, poverty has been cited as the reason for non-enrolment and school dropout. However, there seem to be salient issues especially related to school governance and stakeholders' involvement. In principal,

[7]2014 out of school study conducted for Strommie Foundation, UNICEF, UNHCR, Save children, Eriks, (Un published)
[8]Ministry of Education and Sports. (2007) Education Statistical Abstract 2006 .Kampala, Ministry of Education and Sports
[9]UN 2010 We can end poverty by 2015. Millennium development goals fact sheet. http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG_FS_2_EN.pdf

all stakeholders are expected to participate in the education of the child. Uganda as a country has been criticized for having good policies in all sectors with poor implementation. One would therefore wonder how the different (education stakeholders) individuals interpret, make sense of and understand the various education policies in relation to governance within Uganda.

Purpose of the Transparency Accountability Program (TAP)

Plan adopted the use of community scorecard because of its varied utilities and its direct relationship with Plan program framework, which sets out the organizations' commitment to quality programming through ECCD approach. The community scorecard (CSC) process uses the "community" as its unit of analysis and focused on monitoring at the local level. Using the methodology of requesting user perceptions on quality, efficiency and transparency, the CSC process allows for tracking of inputs or expenditures, monitoring of quality of services, generation of benchmark performance criteria, comparison of performance across facilities, generating a direct feedback mechanism between providers and users, building local capacity and strengthening citizen voice and community empowerment.

Plan Uganda implemented the Transparency and Accountability Program using a community school facility scorecard known as the Community Score Card (CSC). This was used to strengthen social accountability structures and mechanisms in ten schools. The approach was underpinned by the belief that processes supporting bottom-up community involvement to provide direct feedback about the quality of services to service providers lead to mutual accountability and improved services. The project focuses on roles and responsibilities of all actors to protect learning time, on 'feeding back' rather than criticizing, and discussing legitimate roles for students and communities to feedback and monitor education service quality. Having implemented this exercise in 2013, the programme registered a number of successes which can be copied and implemented or scaled up in other areas of the country within the Plan Uganda districts as well as elsewhere. It was therefore deemed critical to document this project as a best practice.

The Specific Objectives of the assignment were;

1) To document good practices, impact and lessons learnt from the CSC process to support program design in Plan, replication and scaling up by key partners -both government (Ministry of Education) and Civil Society Organizations(CSOs).

2) To develop accessible and easy to read publication materials that can be used for information sharing for future programmatic planning and academic referencing

Methodology

Survey design

The documentation of good practices, impact and lessons learnt adopted a cross sectional survey design that incorporated qualitative data collection and analysis methods. The qualitative methods involved use of focus group discussion (FGD) and key informant interviews.

Sources of data and study participants

Both primary and secondary data have been utilized in coming up with this report. Secondary data sources included relevant project documents including the project baseline reports, the project impact report and some field reports. Primary data sources included key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The FGDs were conducted among the pupils (boys and girls), teachers, parents (who included PETs and CECs-, and School Management Committee representatives). The key informant interviews were held with the head teachers or their deputies and officials in the DEO's office who participated in the implementation of the project.

Data Collection Methods and Tools

In collecting the data, the following methods were used:

a) Document review in order to:
    i.   gain an understanding of the project background and context,
    ii. collect data on already documented project variables,
    iii. Access baseline data for comparison with the community scorecard documentation assignment.

b) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
    FGDs were held in all the 15 schools (both intervention and control

Children council session for the Ntinda primary school council

schools) with different categories of project beneficiaries. To ensure an accurate capture of the responses, permission was sought to audio-record the discussions. The discussions were moderated in a way that ensured active participation of all people present.

c) In-depth interviews
These consisted of one-to-one unstructured interviews with selected key informants including plan staff, district education staff and technocrats, implementing partners and local leaders/elders among others.

Sample size, sample study sites, and sample selection

The documentation exercise was carried out in Luweero district, Makulubita sub county in all the ten (10) schools under the participatory school governance project areas namely: Bowa, Kalasa, Kagogo, Kiribeda, Mugogo, Nakikonge, Namayamba, Ntinda, Semyungu, and St. Kizito and five (5) non-TAP scorecard PSGC that include: Kanyanda, Good Shepherd, Kagambe, Kangave and Bulamba primary schools. Of these, Good Shepherd was the only private school visited, the rest being Universal Primary Education schools (government aided).

Data processing and analysis

This study mainly generated qualitative data from different sources which were textual in form, consisting of notes and stories generated from in-depth interviews and FGDs. Each of the discussions (both KI and FGDs) was recorded. Results from the field data were triangulated with the existing reviewed documents and some quantitative data. Direct quotations from the qualitative data have been included in the report to bring out the voices of the study participants but also to support arguments made in the report. Some of the quantitative data generated is presented in graphs and charts.

Chapter Two
Project Approach

The Transparency Accountability Program for the School Community Score Card (TAPSSC) was piloted among the schools that participated in Participatory School Governance for Children (PSGC) in Makulubita Sub County, Luwero district. The TAP program was envisaged after it was found out that despite the high knowledge of school governance through the PSGC, there were outstanding issues in schools particularly pertaining to accountability both in financial and other resources as well as the general performance of the learners.

Implementation of TAP

To introduce TAP in schools, there were a number of stages followed. This systematic process in the introduction is largely responsible for the successful implementation of the project.

Buy in phase
This phase was mainly internal for the Plan Uganda staff and District officials. First the Plan Uganda staff met and came to consensus how the project would be implemented, in which schools and who will be the technical manager. Secondly, they had to get a buy in of the technocrats at the district education office (DEOs) and the politicians especially those on the district education committee. When audience was acquired there was a workshop (training discussion) held by Plan Uganda staff, the technocrats and the politicians to ensure that all were speaking the same language though representing different constituencies. This was necessary as the district officials participated in the introduction of the project with the Plan Uganda staff.

Children in Semyungu Primary school scoring/ rating service provision in the school

Introduction of TAP in schools

The introduction of the project in the schools followed a series of steps namely,

Stage 1.Confirming the target population

The TAPCSC process targeted four key service users and providers. Pupils and parents were in the group of users, teachers were identified as services providers and school management committees were identified as service monitors for education. Groups were created for each of the four categories of people. These were to act as the initial group that would create cascading effects to other people.

Stage 2. Selection of participants

In each school 14 pupils were selected of which 9 were members of the students' council and 5 were prefects. On average, 30 parents were selected including at least 3 members of the PTA and 3 members of the SMC. The number of selected teachers varied from 6 to 10 depending on the total number of teachers in the school and their proximity to the school.

Thus in the schools without teachers quarters, it was not possible to have all of the required teachers to participate due to absenteeism or the time the activities were taking place, they were not there. In each school, the head teacher was automatically included among the teachers selected in all ten schools because of their central role as the school accounting officers.

Procedure

The procedure for introduction of TAPCSC was through a 5-step process that generated and developed a scorecard for each target school. For ease during implementation as well as ensuring consistency, each step was done on a specific day.

During the initial stage, a step-by-step integration of an advocacy process was conducted alongside the scorecard process. This provided a framework for specific issues that emerged from the scorecard process. The advocacy issues from the scorecard process were finalized and consolidated by a facilitation team into an advocacy strategy for all the schools. These processes are explained below.

In essence the project followed five steps of implementation namely: preparatory ground work; input tracking; performance community score card; self-evaluation scorecard for service providers, and interface meeting and action plan.

Step1: Preparatory ground work

The preparatory stages involved meetings with the different stakeholders especially those directly implementing government policies. During this task, meetings were held with the district and sub county stakeholders. Furthermore, community awareness sessions were conducted. The major objective for the preparatory stage was to have a buy in of the project by the different stakeholders and get a common understanding on the whole process. This stage took a full day.

The facilitation team comprised of eight Plan staff and four district officials and four community volunteers. The project held combined start up meetings with district and sub county stakeholders. Subsequently community awareness sessions were conducted in ten schools targeting separate category of participants from each school

Step 2: Input tracking
This was the second step which was done with the service providers to generate standard indicators. It was supposed to show a rough picture of the efficiency and resource limitations within which the schools operated. It is at this stage that the input tracking matrix was developed to compare the schools' actual level of physical assets and service inputs with its entitlement for such items according to the government's implementation framework.

Step 3: Performance Community Score Card
This third step was divided into two parts; one establishing the context and voting, and secondly identifying key local reforms and recommendation. The former was conducted using focus group discussions. One group was for the parents and another for the pupils. The scoring system was explained to participants who utilized a five point scoring scale to capture participants' individual feelings relating to a given indicator where 0 = worst, 1=worse, 2=bad, 3=good, 4= better and 5=best. In order to ensure full participation, the indicators were translated into Luganda (the common dialect) which was understood by all participants. For the children, age was put into consideration; the tools were designed in a child-friendly manner, in which children used faces and colors to score the various items. In some cases, stones and sticks were used to discern interest.

For part two which involved identifying key local reforms and recommendations, the conversation was geared towards discussing the reforms needed to ensure the attainment of an improvement in the quality of services provided in schools. The groups' scoring results and proposed reforms/recommendations were then summarized in a community scorecard, which was presented at the interface meetings.

Step 4: Self-evaluation scorecard for service providers
This step was similar to step three above except that it targeted the service providers namely; teachers and the school administrators. The service provider self- assessments were conducted after the service users' scoring and this was done on a separate day. The scores from the service users were introduced to the service providers and staff of schools. Through a focus group discussion, service providers undertook a self–evaluation. A maximum of 7 teachers, and 13 or 14 children per

Table 2.1 Summary of the steps in the school score card		
Advocacy Process	**Scorecard Processes**	**Advocacy Tools**
Issue Scoping	Preparatory Groundwork (awareness raising, training, consultation)	Issue Selection Mapping/ Scoping for potential advocates
Issue Identification	Input Tracking Matrix	Duty Bearers Accountability Framework Mapping
Issue Selection	Scoring Process-Performance Scoring + Self-Assessment-Finalization of scores	Apply selection criteria Setting objectives and indicators of success
Analyse policy politics, power; Preparing evidence, Communicating	Preparations for Interface	Power, Political, Policy Analysis; Advocacy; Communication planning, Evidence gathering f/work
Lobbying, Influencing	Interface Meeting/Action Planning	Using evidence for advocacy
Advocacy monitoring evaluation of change	Implementation, Reflection, Monitoring	Implementation of advocacy strategies, coalition building

Children contributing in a community radio call program

school participated in the process. The scoring methodology used for service provider self- evaluation was exactly the same as that used in stage 3 and included establishing the context and voting procedures, deciding and voting on indicators, identifying key local reforms/recommendations and summarizing a scorecard. The scoring was uniform in all participating targets. This helped to get uniform information for computation. After the service provider scoring, the service providers were taken through principles of analyzing power and politics that lie behind the scores given. A stakeholder analysis was conducted and stakeholders of influence, power and importance were identified, including whom not to leave out at the interface meetings.

Step 5: Interface meeting and Action plan
This was the last stage of the Community School Score card. It involved the operationalization of the other steps specifically step two to four. It used the input tracking matrices and the scorecards generated by service users' groups and service providers. It was conducted to ensure that feedback of the community is taken into account and that concrete measures are sought to eliminate the constraints to service delivery. During this step, the community was asked to provide feedback to service providers and local leaders and to negotiate collective actions for the improvement of service performance, deciding on how and when to attain it. Feelings and constraints of users and service providers were also discussed.

Monitoring and Evaluation of TAP

In order to monitor and evaluate the success of the TAP program, three indicators were developed to which the TAP program was expected to contribute, namely, the provision of midday lunch, parental participation in children's education and availability of instructional materials.

- **Provision of a midday meal:** the objective of this indicator was to ensure access to midday meals by all children in selected UPE schools by September 2013. This was to be achieved through increasing awareness of parents and other stakeholders on the importance of school feeding.
- **Improved participation of parents in their children's' education.** The objective of this indicator was to promote meaningful engagement

of parents in the academic life of their children in selected UPE schools by September 2013. This was to be achieved through enhancing the capacities of parents to provide scholastic materials and monitor pupils' performance in school

- **Development of instructional materials and text books relevant to current curriculum.** The objective of this indicator was to improve access to instructional materials and textbooks in selected UPE schools by January 2015. This was to be achieved through facilitation and advocacy activities to establish strong networks and collaborations at all levels.

Summary of Findings from the Baseline and End line Survey

In order to summarize the baseline and evaluation results, this report considers the indicators that were developed for the TAP and issues that merged. The performance according to these indicators is summarized in the proceeding sections.

Provision of Lunch

During the baseline, only 40%[10] of the pupils in the 10 schools sampled were having lunch. This proportion rose to 70%[11] in all the schools where TAP was being implemented during the impact evaluation. When we went back for the documentation, it was interesting to note that having midday meals had become universal in the first term of 2014. Initially, midday lunch was expected to be a cup/mug of porridge. Since then, the situation has changed in sense that in some schools those in Grade 3 (Primary three and above) or at least primary six and above eat solid food at school.

We have two types of children in relation to midday lunch. There are children who take porridge as has been the trend and those who in addition also eat other food. But we so much wanted for all of them to have solid food at school. The only children that have food/lunch at school are those in P.6 and P7. These pupils made an arrangement themselves

[10]Plan Uganda (2012) BASELINE SURVEY IN PARTICIPATORY SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN TORORO AND LUWERO DISTRICTS IN UGANDA
[11]Plan Uganda (2014) SCHOOL FACILITY COMMUNITY SCORECARD IMPACT STUDY IN LUWERO DISTRICT, MAKULUBITA SUB COUNTY (Unpublished)

and they brought their parents at school who agreed to feed them without contributing a lot of money but providing food in kind like cassava, preparing it and serving it along with porridge.- Head teacher, St Peters, Semyungu Primary school impact evaluation.

In the schools where only primary six and primary seven pupils have lunch, it is because they remain at school after 4.00 PM for extra lessons.

In addition to the improvement in the performance of the learners who were getting lunch, the political leadership in the district drafted a bylaw which will compel parents to provide lunch for their children. They have sent this to the educational department as stakeholders so that they can give their views before it is brought back for ratification by the district council. However, the education department had not yet responded and they are in charge of the school administrators who will be implementing the bylaws.

Provision of Learners Scholastic materials (Exercise books)

The TAP exercise made parents realize that they need to have a goal when they send the children to school. A number of times, many parents thought that once a child goes to school, you pay all the requirements, and then there is no need for further involvement. However, during the evaluation, it was discovered that there was need for monitoring the children's work and career guidance. This is because parents have a high influence on what the children can be in future. It was also found out that more than 50% of the learners had got scholastic materials from the parents.

What I learnt first was that we should have a goal as to why we pay fees for the children. Secondly, I thought that once the child is at school, the responsibility is transferred to teachers, which is not the case, for even parents are still responsible for the education of their children while at school- female parent from St. Kizito Primary School-impact evaluation

Parents' Meetings

Between the baseline and the evaluation periods, there was a slight improvement in the attendance of meetings by parents rising from around 38% at baseline to around 50% during the evaluation. Attendance was and is still primarily by the women but with great strides achieved

Children of Kalasa primary school reading out school priorities for the team

regarding male involvement. According to the baseline, the lack of parental participation was not because they did not know why they should participate in the affairs of their children education but was a result of their failure to take their participation seriously.

Enabling a Conducive Learning Environment for the learners

A good environment is a prerequisite for quality learning. This applies for those that are learning and those imparting the knowledge. The baseline information showed that only one in four (28%) of the teachers was housed at the school and this varied from one school to another with St Kizito Waluleta, Mugogo, Ntinda, Semungu and Kagogo with no single teacher being housed at the school, while Kalasa mixed school had all the teachers housed at school. All the schools were thinking of a program to start the construction of teachers' houses and planning fund raising activities to get materials that they cannot afford locally that is roofing materials and cement. Parents of Kiribeda (SMC and PTA) mobilized the community so that they can provide building materials by providing labour for sand (digging and transportation to site), and laying the foundations. In addition the community was able to bring things that were sold during the fundraising in which they raised 1.4 million.

The evaluation established that the SMCs of three schools namely Kagogo, Mugogo, Kalasa have started working on putting together school rules to curb indiscipline among pupils including bulling of their peers. If this is implemented, it will be one of the ways of improving the school environment for the learners

Other issues that emerged during the baseline and the impact evaluation

Parent participation and involvement in the education of children Non-responsiveness of parents towards their children's education emerged as a priority issue during the baseline. Involvement included factors influencing the child's education, like the provision of scholastic requirements like uniforms, exercise books, text books, or meals.

During the evaluation, it was discovered that parents had started taking education of their children seriously. Although not to the level expected, some were able to provide scholastic materials. The implication is that if the program is strengthened, then parental participation will increase within the near future.

Children participation in their education

The second issue that emerged during the baseline survey was pupil's absenteeism. There was a direct link between the child's performance and school attendance. This also resulted into school drop outs. One of the reasons for absenteeism among older girls was teasing especially when they have big breasts, however in the evaluation; this was not mentioned at all as a cause of absenteeism.

Lack of midday meals had consistently come up. During the evaluation, most of the children were having meals at school and this had not only reduced absenteeism but improved the discipline of children in general and reduced loitering around the schools especially during lunch time. Afternoon classes started being full as in the morning.

The school environment

The smooth learning teaching process requires that both the environment and the necessary requirements be provided. During the baseline, it emerged out that in all schools there were inadequate textbooks to be

used by the pupils and the teachers. This scenario had not changed much by the time the evaluation was done. This problem was more serious in the lower classes for which the ministry had not yet provided any text books. Most of the books teachers had were for upper primary and some teachers complained that some of these books did not have enough material that can enable the children to pass while others seem not appropriate

The insufficient number of teachers continues to come up as a serious issue in schools as was at the baseline. The DEO's office was working to ensure that it will mitigate on this issue soon. At the beginning of 2014, the DEO's office followed up this and each school was able to receive the required number of teachers as per the school ceiling. Although the government could easily solve the issue of teachers (DEOs office), many teachers who have been posted in schools do not have accommodation within the school or near the school. What some SMC proposed that they will ask parents to contribute insufficient and inappropriate infrastructure came up during the baseline. Many schools do not have enough classrooms, some don't have a head teacher's office yet almost all do not have teachers' houses. Some SMCs have taken this up and are beginning to make bricks that they will use to construct staff quarters

Government Policy
The last emerging issue was related to government policy. Everyone thinks that government is concentrating on numbers without considering quality, which is significantly affected by the amount of funding, infrastructural capacity and teacher motivation. During the evaluation, no change had been announced on the policy of UPE especially in relation to funding per child.

Action Plan

During the baseline, an action plan was developed forming the key message to the important stakeholders as indicated in Table 2.1

The activities of the TAPCSC have been rotating around this proposed action plan. First it was discovered that the greatest challenge the UPE program was facing was the negative attitude of parents towards their child's education. This meant that any improvement needed to target the parents

Table 2.1 Summary of action plan developed during 5 STEP score card				
Issue	**Target**	**Message**	**Channel**	**Action/ Activity**
Negative attitude of parents toward their children's education	Parents And Children	• "Uneducated child is a liability" • "Let's join hands for the brighter future of our children" • "Sow today and reap tomorrow" • "Feeding is good for learners performance"	• T-Shirts • Radio spot message • Murals/ community notice board • Drama shows • Parents meetings • Compound messages • Open days	• Hold parents meetings • Facilitate school open days • Identification of drama group • Mobilize funds for service providers • Procure mega phone for community mobilization • Establish community notice board • Develop T-shirts, spot messages and murals

first and then the children. The key messages that were developed were:
- " Uneducated child is a liability"
- "Let's join hands for the brighter future of our children"
- "Sow today and reap tomorrow"
- "Feeding is good for learners performance "

Parents have realized this as one of the Luganda word they used was "Obutasoma buluma bukulu" implying that the pain of being uneducated is felt when one has grown up.

"Omwana bw'otamusomesa oba omukotogedde, they say obutasoma buluma bukulu"- DEO office (loosely translated as; If you do not educate your child, you have done him/her a disfavor"

It was thus important that they joined hands for the brighter future of the children if they are to reap for the future. All stakeholders also realized that feeding is very important for the learning.

Chapter Three
Project Achievements
"Gwo'tawola, Tomubanja"

In spite of its short implementation period, the results of the TAP project are already evident in the participating schools and communities. The greatest result has been a tremendous change in the attitude of parents and the community toward their roles and responsibilities as key stakeholders in the education of children. The opening caption in this chapter, "Gwo'tawola, tomubanja" (literally translated as: "you cannot ask for repayment from someone you have never lent" or "you do not reap where you did not sow" quoted from an interview with parents of Kagogo primary school captures this change of attitude. The introduction of the transparent accountability program was an eye opener to parents regarding their roles and the subsequent realization that if they are passive in the education of their children, they should not expect to witness or even reap positive results from there.

Consequently this awareness has resulted in the readiness to work together towards addressing of numerous challenges that had hitherto confronted the delivery of education in the UPE schools. Positive results have been recorded in the increased participation of parents in the day to day governance of the schools, provision of midday meals, improved water supply and the general sanitation of schools, more respect of children's rights both at school and within the communities, and improved financial accountability and efficiency in the use of other resources at school among others. These changes are directly impacting positively on the quality of governance and decision making in schools, performance of children, reduced dropout rates, reduced child abuse and denial of basic rights of children and increased cohesiveness

Parents of Kisoko community identifying
mapping out home steads that require support

in society towards common goals specially education. These benefits are elaborated in the following paragraphs.

Achievements

Increased parental Participation in children's Education

There has been an increase in parents' involvement in the school management through regular attendance of meetings, where priorities for the school are identified and strategies to meet these priorities laid. There has also been development of positive attitudes among parents regarding the direct involvement in the education of their children through for example supply of scholastic materials, lunch as well as following up on the performance and discipline of the children. Besides the general meetings, schools have also started organizing grade-specific parents meetings to allow parents of pupils in particular grades to interact with teachers and pupils and discuss their children's performance. FGDs with parents strongly reiterated the positive change in attitude and practices of parents regarding their children's education and the general school governance through sensitization and awareness building. They pointed out that most parents now know that the primary responsibility for the education of children lies not with the external duty bearers such as teachers or even the government but the parents themselves. The latter are now perceived as joint stakeholders in the education and child development process instead of sole duty bearers as exemplified in the quotation from one of the FDGs:

"TAP has sensitized us parents and now we know our responsibilities as we work hand in hand with the government. Through TAP we know that the child is not only for the government but also us so it's our responsibility to ensure that they have a conducive learning environment when at school (Parents FDG, Ntinda primary school).

We used to quarrel about certain things like lunch and also scholastic materials but when TAP came things were discussed what our roles should be. Many parents have started providing lunch and scholastic materials. In addition, Plan also came in and constructed for us a toilet and provided a water tank. This has helped our children to be clean (Parents FGD, St. Charles Lwanga primary school).

A pupil of Agwiati in Tororo addressing parents in a community debate

TAP has taught parents to know that the school is theirs and not the government so it's their responsibility. The community around the school now know that they own the school, they are participating in the construction of buildings, latrines, teachers' houses just as parents so we have benefited as teachers from the TAP Program (Teacher, Kiribedda Primary school).

Before it had not come parents never used to come in meetings but now they come (pupils FGD, Kalasa primary school).

The changed attitudes towards participation have not just been recorded among parents with children in given schools but among community members as a whole. There is a renewed understanding of the responsibility of the communities towards children's education and general development and the need for joint effort and team work between all stakeholders. It was revealed during the field study that school meetings these days are increasingly attracting non-parents in a given school as well due to what has been termed as productive discussions and information shared during such meetings.

In most schools, the average number of meetings held during this first term (2014) was 3 including 2 general meetings and 1 grade –specific meeting for each class. Whilst before the tap project, attendance of meetings was screwed towards women.

Since TAP came, the response of men to meetings has changed, so TAP brought attendance tests that checks performance, attendance and participation of parts of this meetings so in terms of gender its 50% men 50% women (Parents FGD, Kiribedda primary school).

There has been a an improvement in education somehow to those schools that are involved in TAP program because parents now take their children to schools and pay and or provide the school requirements, they buy them scholastic materials to their children like books and pens they know the importance of educating both the girl and the boy child (Teachers, Good Shepherd primary school).

The comment of the teacher from Good Shepherd primary school attests

to the fact that the benefits of the program have been visible to and are positively perceived by non-participating schools as well.

A related benefit has been in the increase vigilance of the parents in monitoring their children's performance in school. This still is a result of sensitization and appreciation of the roles of parents in their children's education.

After sensitizations by PLAN, they come and see how is my child performing especially before examinations....As she says it never used to happen because parents thought that visitations is for only boarding pupils and schools, but this year we have been coming to visit this school to discuss performance issues and it was checked in attendance of parents and such records are kept in the school and also pupils performances were put on notice boards and when we come we check on and advice pupils (Parents FGD, Makulubita).

When you speak to the teacher it means that a teacher is a friend to that child so that there is a relationship between that teacher and child so that child is comfortable discussing their issues..... Our children perform better compared to when I used not to come for meeting because now I speak to their teacher and ask why they still perform poorly (Parents FGD, Makulubita).

The child who always plays the class when he sees their parent comes to school and class the pupil puts in much effort....   Like us do not check we like after all but those who are visited fear that when they come and cross check with (Pupils' FGD, Kanyanda primary school).

Numerous benefits were associated with parental monitoring and follow up visits namely identifying and appreciating the strength and weaknesses of the child, the frequency of homework, minimization of truancy by the children and the strengthening of positive relationships between children and teachers. The display of pupils' results on notice boards and the tracking of visitations by the parents are enhancing transparency and accountability on the part of the teachers, the school management (the service providers) to the service users. Pupils also become more accountable when they know that their parents are constantly interested in

and monitoring their performance. Consequently the general performance of pupils in these schools is improving.

Conversely in some control schools, there was a reported perpetual negative attitude towards attending meetings at school and participating in other governance activities. This is still interpreted as a preserve of idlers as well as a waste of time since it is not perceived to result into positive impacts. One head teacher of a private school reported such an attitude towards school meetings:

"When you call them for a meeting they say Yee, waliyo emmere? Shaaaah Neda" me going to the meeting Abo abagenda bebatalina byakola" meaning that those who go to attend meetings have nothing to do."(Head teacher, control school)

The differences in attitudes attest to the positive impacts of the project on parental participation in schools and hence the improvements in school governance. Altogether, positive changes were reported among parents towards more direct participation in the education of children as a direct benefit from the TAP project. The project is having an indirect spillover effect to non-participating schools within the community to some moderate levels but with the potential to lead to spiraling effects in the future and to improve the quality of education on a large scale within the district.

Increase in Provision of a Mid-day Meals to pupils

Lack of lunch at school had been a recurrently cited challenge in the quality of education in the UPE programme and a major factor leading to regular pupil absenteeism and high dropout rates. Through the TAP project there have been increased levels of provision of meals to pupils through combined efforts of parents and the school management. This resulted from regular interactions in meetings between the school management, teachers, parents, and pupils where lack of provision of lunch was identified as a priority problem. Once parents understood its importance and their primary role in provision of meals to their children instead of assuming that it is solely the responsibility of government, they have become more responsive. In all the ten participating schools, information gathered showed that the greatest majority of pupils are provided with at least a cup of porridge while in a few cases some pupils particularly those

in the upper primary get solid food. An evaluation of the project at the end of 2013 had indicated that the percentage of pupils who had lunch at school had increased from 40% at baseline to 70% by December 2013 (Plan, 2013, p.6).Figure 3.1shows a positive trend in provision of midday meals from the time of the baseline to the time of collecting data for documentation of this project;

Figure 3.1 Proportion of Children having lunch
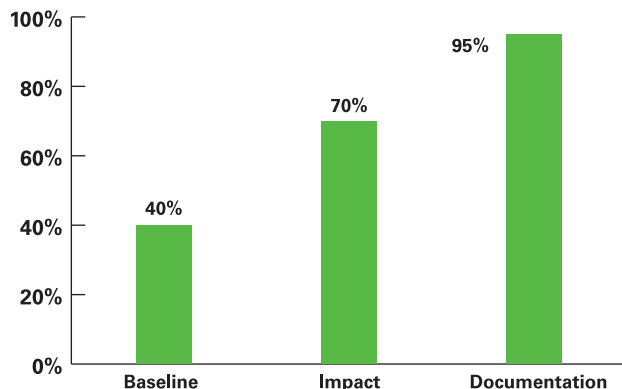
In some schools like Namayamba, having midday lunch has been 100% for all the children by the time this study was conducted. Pupils, teachers and parents were in agreement concerning the concomitant benefits of mid-day meals.

Before TAP came pupils would escape because of hunger but now they do not as council talked about porridge we have it at 10.00am (Pupils FGD, Bbowa primary school).

Before TAP, during lunch time, children would loiter around people's gardens. This has since stopped. (Namayamba, impact evaluation)

The observable changes associated with provision of midday meals include improvements in levels of pupil concentration in class, reduced absenteeism, and more positive relationships between pupils and teachers. Respondents shared that pupils used to abhor school because they

perceived lack of lunch as a form of punishment and/ or insensitivity to their needs by both parents and the school management.

The increase in the provision of midday lunch did not increase on a silver plate. Many tricks were done to show parents why this is needed.

When we call a meeting, call around lunch time. What we do is to first give food to the children. For the parents, we give them food when the meeting has ended and you see them hungry and yawning, so they can feel being hungry. Through this, parents have been encouraged to pay lunch fees for their children. We have used this strategy in most schools. Testing this way the parents has worked- KII District

Provision of Scholastic Materials

Majority of parents now make an informed decision and effort to provide pens, pencils, books and uniforms to their children. Parents are beginning to appreciate the fact that it is their responsibility to contribute towards the success and proper education of their children and that provision of adequate scholastic materials is one such way in which they can participate:

With scholastics it's no longer a problem, parents have understood that element most because they buy books, pens, pencils, uniforms, shoes to children so its not a big problem as it was and this is because of Plan, TAP and school score card (Parents FGD, Ntinda primary school).

The provision of scholastic materials has increased the morale of the children and facilitated their learning at school as echoed in the pupil's voices:

Before, if we ask some parents for books and pens they would say, 'even if I buy them you are going to fail'; and yet without them you have nowhere to write but since TAP came this has changed (Pupils FGD, Kalasa primary school).

My parents bought for me pink text books; I used to get 20 but I try to get 40% (Pupil, Kanyanda primary school.

From the findings of the TAP, the DEO's office is now following up on the issue of provision of textbooks. In third term of 2014, all the TAP schools were able to receive an assortment of text books as displayed in Figure .3.1

## Improved sanitation, hygiene and access to water

Improved general sanitation at schools and in the communities has been another key achievement of the project. The schools that previously faced a challenge of lack of access to safe water namely, Semyungu, Ntinda and Mugogo primary schools now have bore halls or water tanks within easy reach. These schools together with Plan Uganda constructed a borehole within a distance of 500 meters from the school. As indicated in the evaluation report and reiterated in this documentation exercise, all the stakeholders including the school management, the parents, and the local communities worked hand in hand with Plan Uganda to ensure that water access points were constructed. These have also continued to monitor and ensure the proper use and functioning of these water sources. Besides the improved access to safe water, the TAP project has also resulted in improved sanitation and hygiene practices both within schools, households and communities. The installed facilities couples with ongoing discussions and seminars within schools and communities regarding proper sanitation and hygiene and other primary health care issues including prevention of common illnesses, keeping homes and schools clean, STI and HIV/Aids and other diseases have instilling positive personal hygiene habits and practices among the children. This, according to interactions with the parents and other stakeholders, is leading to gradual improvements in the general health conditions of not only children but other community members. Better health and hygiene for children has direct positive effects on regular attendance in schools and it also reduces costs on health care by households which saves resources to support children in schools.

Addressing teachers' Housing needs

Through local community sensitization and subsequently the initiative to provide labour and local resources, some teachers' houses are being constructed, albeit to a limited extent, which has enabled teachers to stay within the vicinity of the schools. According to the baseline data, the percentage of teachers housed in the ten schools averaged 28% except for Kalasa primary school which has accommodation for all the teachers.

With the increased levels of joint discussions and identification of priorities for each school, more schools are making efforts through local resource mobilization (including provision of sand, bricks, manual labour etc.) and fundraising initiatives to construct houses for the teachers.

Figure 4.2 Proportion of teachers housed by school (Baseline)
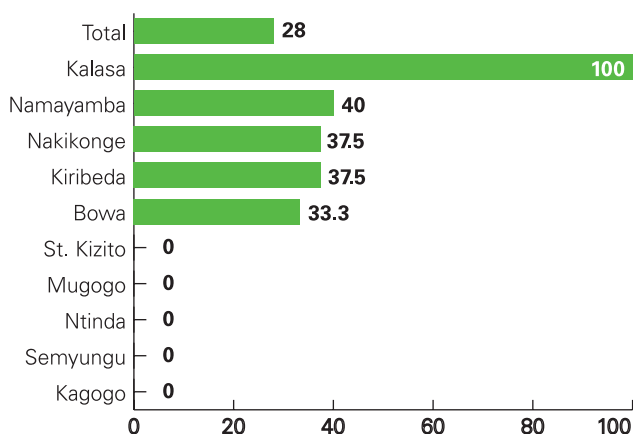
Our teachers did not have where to sleep but we discussed and are constructing a house (Parents FGD, Bbowa primary school).

The increased willingness to contribute towards infrastructural development including renovation of teachers' houses and construction of kitchens was attributed to the increased awareness among parents and the community concerning their stake in the schools.

Parents have realized that it's their responsibility to rehabilitate the building from TAP. The construction of the new kitchens is on going (final stages). Parents are making bricks for a staff houses and they are going to make 1000 bricks (Headmaster – St. Charles Lwanga Nakikonge primary school)

Though it is still a challenge to construct teachers' houses, the appreciation of the need by not only the affected teachers but the parents and other stakeholders is a positive indicator of the changing attitudes towards the

active participation in the education system. With such an attitude, it becomes increasingly easier to mobilize resources and for the community to provide what is locally available in order to address the challenge. This positive attitude is evident in all the schools that participated in the TAP programme.

As the number of teachers living long distances from schools reduces, there is a gradual reduction in teacher absenteeism and later coming with ultimate improvements in the delivery of education and the general performance of pupils.

Improved respect for children's rights and responsibilities, and improved self confidence among children

There is now a generally improved awareness of children's rights and welfare and even the children hitherto neglected such as those that had various disabilities have begun to receive attention from the community in general and the parents in particular. This has been attributed to massive and intense sensitization about children's rights and the need for the community to take joint responsibility for the protection of these rights. Consequently, children are receiving more attention in various spheres:

The community has benefitted a lot in issues of children. There are children who have unique needs and their parents had neglected them and were not proud of them but when PLAN came such kids were brought out and PLAN started 'children communication committee' they are taken for treatment to become very normal so children conditions have greatly improved (Teachers FGD, Kiribedda primary school)

The most important thing pupils have a right to choice so we are able to sit and talk and they speak out that 'my parent treats me like this', so we know that we have to sit down and speak, but before we used to speak and the child does not say anything (Parents, Kalasa primary school).

Before PSG we used to treat kids badly but after that we do not punish them that bad and children can stand up and speak out for themselves, so for us we use to just cane them without finding out why they behaved that way may be they stay with step parents or guardians after TAP we find out why such children absent, come later so we can help them and themselves

now speak out (Teachers FGD, Kiribedda primary school)

As stated in the last quotation, the programme has led to a better understanding of children's rights and a consequent reduction in child abuse through such practices as corporal punishment. Instead teachers and parents are ready to listen to the children and to investigate the circumstances surrounding certain behaviours as well as exploit more humane ways of dealing with indiscipline instead of rushing to use the cane. For the teachers to admit to such a change is a huge achievement of the TAP project. At the same time the discipline among children has improved as reported by the teachers:

Discipline among pupils has seen a change, pupils respond to bells, they come to school in time and they also attend their lessons in time, even if you call them for only activities they come in time and do what they are supposed to do (Head teacher, Kinyanda Primary school).

Better discipline including time keeping, regular attendance of school, completion of homework and respect for teachers are key to improving performance in school as well as development of responsible behaviours even as adults. Teachers have also gained a better understanding of the benefits of listening to children's voices and involving them in decision making both at school and at home.

Children testified to their increased sense of self-worth and confidence which has also helped them to develop essential life skills such as public speaking and how to approach elders or persons in leadership positions to present issues that concern them or even to report abuse.

When TAP came, we now have self confidence
I was shy but the coming of TAP taught us how to speak; now I speak without shame (Pupils FGD, Namayamba PS; St. Kizito Waluleta P/S; Kagogo PS; St Charles Lwanga Kiribeda).

This sense of confidence was very evident in the way pupils in various schools freely participated in discussions during the data collection exercise

Other benefits relate to improvements in the enrolment of girls as a result

of sensitization about the equality of rights of children as well as the emphasis on the education of the girl child. Before the project, the baseline revealed relatively higher levels of drop out of girls than boys since neither the parents nor the girls themselves showed much interest in schooling. This picture is changing and the number of girls dropping out of school has declined. There are also more meaningful interactions between boys and girls at school and in class because of the improved confidence and self-esteem created through the various activities of the project. Girls and boys can now engage in similar work, similar sports and also freely sit together in class. A related gender issue has been the improved level of access to pads by girls since parents were sensitized and urged to try to meet this need as a way of keeping girls in school. This is having a positive effect on the retention of girls as well as their free interaction at school.

For the first time in many years, we have all girls that were in P6 registering for PLE, without any getting married, becoming pregnant or just dropping out of School (Head teacher, St. Charles Lwanga)

Increased financial accountability and efficiency in the use of resources

Due to the active involvement of all stakeholders, there has been reported increased transparency in the use of resources including funds sent to schools. The parents are keen in monitoring what the funds received have been used for and this coupled with more active monitoring from the district education office has resulted in more efficiency;

Before money would be sent and the Headmaster or committee who would often swindle the money but now there is a follow-up on accountability. Before money would be sent but no monitoring but now there is transparency –they [parents] try to find out the money sent was used for what e.g. acquiring balls - which was not there before (DEO's office, Luwero district).

The increased financial accountability and efficiency in the use of other resources minimizes wastage and is directly leading to improvements in the learning environment at schools.

Other benefits Accruing from the programme

Besides the intended thematic goals of increased parental participation, provision of midday meals and scholastic materials, other benefits have also been cited including the following:

The project has also been associated with a reduction in early teenage pregnancies due to increased interest in education by parents and the children as well as the joint monitoring by all stakeholders.

Early teen pregnancies have dramatically been reduced, you do not have any of such cases anymore because PLAN has assisted people to understand the value of education... what I beg is TAP to go up to secondary school levels (Teacher, Kiribedda primary school).

A reduction in teenage pregnancies has great impacts on the retention and completion rates of children as well as their general performance in school. Hence this is indicative of the good practice model of the TAP project.

The project has also led to improvements in co-curriculum activities through encouraging provision of sports uniform, play materials, and safe spaces (play grounds) which enhance the holistic education and development of children.
We got sportswear that is a sweater and we had a meeting with patron, council member, teachers and head teachers (Pupils FGD Kanyanda primary school).

The revival of interest in sports through availability of these materials has also had positive impacts on children's confidence and self-esteem with spiral effects for participation in decision making and free discussion of issues that concern them with their parents, teachers and the local leadership.

The head teachers in a couple of schools reported how the TAP project has made administration easier and even led to more efficient use of resources. They cited the reduced need to print letters of invitation to parents for meetings because of the active involvement of children and the improved communication between the children and the parents. Secondly, parents come to meetings on time and rarely require reminders, something that was a big challenge before the onset of the project.

It (TAP CSC) has made administration easier now days we do not spend money writing letter inviting parents and now parents came in good numbers and on time which was not there in the past if you tell them by 2.00pm they will be here as a result of PSGC, we first talk to pupils and tell them how to talk to their parents so that their parents are not harsh on them and there is a sign of success (Head teacher, Kagembe primary school).

The result has been efficient time management with direct effects on the quality of teaching, learning and administration. To ascertain to this fact, in a number of schools, during the field work, the school administrators just informed the pupils to tell their parents to come and participate in the discussion and it was so.

Although it may not be attributed to TAP alone but also to the previous programs by Plan, many stakeholders feel that there has been a general drop in non-enrolment and school dropout as this was strengthened by TAP.

Major factors driving the changes in the project and the extent to which children voices are playing a key role

A number of factors and good practices have been responsible for the success of the project. Key among these include the regular interaction of stakeholders through regular meetings, the involvement of children, the linkage of the project to the previous one of school governance within the same area, the innovativeness and flexibility in addressing common challenges and the direct involvement and responsiveness of the district leadership.

Regular meetings as a means of learning

The regular meetings between teachers, parents, the school management and the pupils as well as the ongoing sensitization campaigns at the community level have provided an environment where stakeholders learn and adopt new mindsets and also unlearn some of the negative attitudes they had developed over time regarding children's education. The greatest influence has been on the understanding of each stakeholder's role and

Children of Kisoko girls in a group peer mediation session

responsibility and how to work towards the realization of mutually set goals for the ultimate benefit of the children. The fact that anybody could explain the purpose and objectives of TAP and ably articulate the benefits realized so far explains why the project succeeded. An analogy of being woken up from slumber was used by parents to demonstrate the extent to which the project has helped them realize their ability to bring about the desired change in the education of children:

We were asleep but because of TAP we woke up and it's now our responsibility to either construct pit latrines, kitchen and that's why we are still here if it was before we would have gone already… TAP has helped to develop a good relationship between parents and teachers because that thing had brought a big gap between parents, teachers and pupils… TAP has helped us to check ourselves, parents in the community find out why a particular child has not gone to school, they follow such children up even if they are not their real kids, inspectors also move around schools tirelessly and because of we are all involved- teachers, parents, pupils, community and everyone ,even tight punishments reduced, out of 100% its only1% of the children who are still being punished(Parents FGD, Kiribedda primary school)

The mutual learning through active participation has in turn led to increased confidence and self-worth among parents, children and the community. Most now believe in their resources and ability to cause change and this is leading to improvements in the quality education of children.

Children's Participation as a facilitative factor

Involvement of children not as passive recipients of benefits but as active stakeholders whose voices can be heard and respected has been highly beneficial. While raising awareness of children's needs and priorities, their participation has also directly promoted their sense of responsibility and motivation for learning. Consequently there is less absenteeism and drop out and there is more meaningful interaction between parents, children and teachers as partners. Listening to children during the self-evaluation and reporting on different stakeholders presented a great inspiration to address issues identified. According to the DEO's office Luwero district,

Pupils gave their views/reasons why they drop out, absenteeism and not reporting at school on the 1st day. They mostly blamed their parents that

they give them heavy punishment, first do a lot of work in the morning and at times they are not aware of the work, they do and after finishing the parent asks did you fetch water, remove the uniform and first bring water or makes a mistake the parent get annoyed and says you will not go to school. (KI DEO's office)

Similarly the children's participation in school meetings jointly with teachers and parents has a multiplicity of effects including not only enhancing participatory governance in schools but also increasing the community's awareness of the rights and abilities of children beyond the formal classroom. Teachers commented on the usefulness of the suggestion box in providing for children's voices and raising issues of concern about children as having been very crucial. The following excerpts from interviews with teachers and echo the extent of children's participation:

We use those very pupils who went to a workshop they also educate their fellow pupils things like their rights, and responsibilities (Kalasa primary school).

This issue of leadership where prefects were just appointed before today they are free to apply for whichever post they want and are freely and fairly elected so it was not there until TAP and PLAN (Kiribedda primary school).

Minor conflicts of children are solved by peer mediators which were before done by teachers (Bbowa primary school).
In general meetings the head teacher reads out our expenditures and inputs so it gives parents a good picture and seen pupils, initially pupils did not take part in these decisions but after TAP today they attend such meetings (Kanyanda primary school and Kagogo Primary School).

Some issues were brought out by pupils like water which had been taken as minor but lately action had to be taken because the borehole has been made as well as the tank work. Also they did not have sugar for porridge and they raised it and now their porridge is sugared so their ideas are taken into consideration which was not the case before (Kiribedda primary school).

As evident in the above voices, children participate as peer educators, correct and guide fellow children by mediating between minor conflicts and

Girls in Luweero making contribution in a community media program

attend meetings along with parents, teachers and the administrators. They have gained enough respect to attend meetings where budget issues are discussed and where they can raise other issues of concern such as water accessibility. Besides enhancing their self-esteem, this level of involvement of children is a strong form of training of future leaders that will espouse the ethics of transparency and accountability, essential for effective service delivery including quality education.

Participation of diverse groups of stakeholders has strengthened a cohesive community and team work, essential for achievement of results.

The inbuilt participatory methodologies have been very critical to the success of the programme. Involvement of all stakeholders including the children, the community members, the parents, teachers, school management and the local district leadership attests to this strength. A recurring benefit from this has been the development of cohesion within the communities and consequently the faster achievement of results. The bottom–up approach to planning where children, parents and school management together decide the priorities in the school increased a sense of ownership and the motivation to work towards the meeting of such priorities. A sense of unity has been created through closer interactions and discussions of issues affecting schools, children's education and other aspects of community life. This sense of togetherness has had a multiplier effect on motivating stakeholders for more participation and hard work to address jointly identified challenges and priorities.

A well sensitized community

Emphasis on community sensitization with regard to the shared responsibilities in the promotion of education had a very significant influence in improving participation levels and interest. The self-evaluation and the no-blame strategy adopted by the project in assessment of performance of different stakeholders helped to strengthen the resolve to work towards bridging identified gaps. Additionally, the use of drama and music as forms of information education and communication helped attract attendance and participation and they have been effective in passing of key messages across different social and age strata within the communities. Parents and community leaders shared that it is much easier

to identify with these messages as they represent real life models and situations in the communities. The community dialogues also helped to spread messages across both participating and non-participating schools and thus the whole community is aware of benefits and even those not directly targeted by the programme have benefited. This is evident in the responses gathered from the non-participating schools where there was a fair understanding of TAP and its benefits and how they too are picking lessons from the programme.

Innovativeness and Flexibility of the community in meeting needs

An example of a best practice refers to accepting cash or in-kind contributions for midday meals and construction and renovation of teachers' houses and other structures. People who do not necessarily have money feel free to contribute other items and they are accepted and respected. In the past, the focus on monetary contributions was a barrier to participation.

Other innovative ways of passing on messages were in the modeling of challenges and desired changes by the people in positions of responsibility. Provision of food during initial meetings was positive and this instilled a caring spirit as well as the buy in into the practice of participation. Conversely, at one point, local facilitators decided not to have any refreshments for the duration of the meetings and when the attendants complained it was used as a platform to discuss the urgency of providing meals to pupils. This seems to have driven the message so strongly among the parents and other stakeholders to reach a point of prioritizing midday meals for children.

Complementarity of the project to previous interventions

The project followed the school governance project and built on the strengths and structures including spaces for participation e.g. SMC, CES, PET, CMC, and CEC. This facilitated a quicker understanding of the project and a faster realization of results. This is a major lesson for future programming that instead of implementing disjointed interventions, projects need to build on the achievements of those previously implemented in order to assure long-term benefits and sustainability.

District Responsiveness to identified needs

The project setting was directly within the context of a government

programme that is UPE and yet this does not usually mean that the government structures will be supportive. In the case of TAP, the bringing on board of the district leadership right from inception stage and the subsequent support from the district has been a very significant factor in the achievement of results. This also is associated with the relationship built over time between the NGO- PLAN and the local government and the visible results of previous projects implemented in partnership. This mutual trust that has developed over time between PLAN and the local government has compelled the district to become more responsive to the needs identified within the target communities. Without the responsiveness of the district, it may not be possible to realize change in the quality of education since they are directly in charge of teacher recruitment, textbooks and other learning materials, and school inspection all of which are indispensible aspects of enhancing quality education. The district offices worked with Plan in ensuring that TAP succeeds which is not common with many projects.

Currently each person knows his/her responsibility, teachers, pupils and parents. Even us at the district, we evaluated ourselves and we also realised that we were not doing all our work especially in monitoring.

We have realized the problems of schools, through a critical analysis, we know those that need teachers, we have reserved some teachers in a case a school has more than one female teacher who has gone on maternity or in case of unexpected circumstances sickness. (KII District)

This was confirmed by the children
We did not have many teachers but now we have and we have learnt that if a teacher gets a problem another one steps in his or position to help us that is the most important thing it has done for us- FGD Pupil Semuyungu primary school

Children in Semyungu electing their leader by casting votes

Chapter Four
Challenges, Lessons, Best Practices And Recommendations

No single project can be implemented without challenges. The TAP project still has to overcome some hurdles in order to realize long-term benefits towards the quality of education in the target communities. These challenges as well as lessons learnt from the implementation of the project are highlighted in this chapter. The concluding section provides key recommendations for future programming and/or scaling up of the project. But first, a brief discussion on how power dynamics influenced the outcomes is provided

Dynamics of power and how this influenced the outcomes of the project

The involvement of all the stakeholders namely the pupils, parents, teachers, schools administrators, local councils, school governing structures and the district officials is one of those attributes which the TAP using the community schools scorecard (TAPCSC) was able to achieve. During the impact evaluation, focus group discussions were organized comprising all the stakeholders save for the district official but all could discuss freely. Responsibility sharing and identification as shown in the Table below influenced the success of the project.

Before the TAP program, there was a general feeling that head teachers and their committees misuse the funds given to schools. However, in schools were TAP has been, now there is trust in the way the administrators are using the funds.

Before money would be sent and the headmaster or the committee would eat up the money but now there is accountability. Before money would be sent without any monitoring but with transparency, they try (parents and pupils) to find out the money sent was used for what- (KI DEO's office)

During the documentation exercise, one of the greatest complain that came from administrators was the fact that currently, children know too much about their rights. According to the administrators, this takes away their freedom as they over demand.

The other issue was that the children were first told about their rights. This is because of the first program (The school governance project) before their responsibilities.

The challenge is children know their rights but not responsibilities, PLAN children are not children any more but a problem so they use what their children's rights to mistreat us teachers, they are stubborn because of their rights but they do not know their responsibilities. (Teachers FGD, Kiribedda Primary School)

Current governance challenges and opportunities –

Current governance challenge

One of the challenges school administrators are facing is lack of space. A number of schools apart from Kalasa primary school among the government schools, none of them had a designated room for library. Unfavorable School environment makes it hard for some children to continue with school which eventually leads to school drop outs. The problem of space though parents are willing to work with anyone to solve it cannot easily be solved by parents neither the district officials within a short time. This problem is even aggravated by lack of money allocated for renovation. The picture below can show the state of some of the school building showing that no renovation has been done onto them since UPE started. Worse still, no money is allocated for renovation of the buildings within the ministry of education budget.

Unless the issue of accommodation and infrastructure is worked on,

Figure 4.1 Example of some of the poor school buildings

Kalasa primary school- lower grade blocks

teachers' absenteeism will not be solved soon.

The delay in the solicitor general and the ministry of education pronouncing itself on the issue of midday lunch will continue being a challenge to school administrators. This is because, whereas it may be taken on while Plan Uganda is still on the ground, all what has been gained may be lost within a year or two unless a law is in place compelling parents to compulsory provide meals for their children.

The other challenge is that it is those parents who do not come for meetings who usually have a lot of complaints. Parents who do not come for meetings are often quarrelling about things like school fees because they do not attend meetings to understand what the money is used for. The documentation exercise was done during the examination period and the research team observed children who were not going for exams because they had not paid Shs. 1000/= which is approximately 40 cents in comparison to a dollar. This is because some of these parents think that the government paid everything concerning the education of the child which is misinterpretation of the UPE statute. To confirm this statement, children had to say,

Parents who do not come for meetings are always quarreling about the fees. Sometimes when you tell them to come for a meeting, they will ask you if they will be food when themselves do not want to pay for us money for lunch. Pupils St. Charles Lwanga Nakikonge

Teacher motivation

A good environment is a prerequisite for quality learning, this applies for those that are learning and those imparting the knowledge. During the score card exercise one of the problems identified was lack of housing for the teachers (see section 28)

The issue of underpaying teachers has been discussed in many forums. The citation below can summarize was

"No nation can be better than the quality of its education; no education can be better than the quality of its teachers; no family can be better than the quality of education of its members" DEO Hoima (Cited from out of School study in Uganda).

This implies that the issue of motivating teachers is fundamental to the quality of education anywhere in the world.

Social cultural barriers

Despite the enormous campaign on the equal rights and education of the girl child by Plan U, some discussions with children still showed that there are still parents who think that it is not important to educate a girl child. Furthermore, family problems or children not staying with both biological and immediate relatives.

The number of female teachers is surpassing that of male teachers and most of those are young ladies. As such, some schools have up to five female teachers out of eight in a school. These are challenges which cannot easily be addressed locally since there is a law on equal opportunities. The law also allows a mother to have maternity leave of 60 working days which translates into 12 weeks since there are 5 working days in a week, which is a complete academic term. In addition, reproductive health advocates are advocating for six months exclusive breastfeeding. However, schools do not have houses in the neighbourhood which complicates matters more.

80% of the teachers are women who are still young. They are youths and they have to produce you cannot tell them please hold on. The big challenge is that 3 have given birth and two are sick (pregnant) this means

they will all ask for a leave two have given birth and others have morning sickness so are challenging but schools in this program they have a dialogue that one has given birth it is not badly off can come not full time so that children/pupils do not loose. There are no houses but the child is still young at that age but there is away they manage their situations we had discussed if the school has a cook for porridge let the teachers cooperate and make her a baby sitter when they are in class teaching she will be looking after the baby of not you will find those in younger class babysitting you do not see the option. Otherwise pupils will start babysitting because pupils like holding young children and they say it is me that the teacher wants to hold her baby. (KII District official)

There are still some parents who have negative attitude towards the education of the girl child.

Another challenge that affects the learning of children was broken families. Children in broken families find it had to continue at school. There is also usually a feeling that step parents mistreat children who are not their own.

The relationship between the child, mother and father also determines whether the child will be provided for when it comes to scholastic materials. If the further is drunkard and the mother is the one who does most of the provision, it is difficult for her to provide everything- St Paul Kagogo.

Opportunities
TAP has been embraced by all the stakeholders and this is an opportunity which should not be missed:

TAP has helped teachers, parents and government have a good relationship in order to educate its children. Before TAP our parents did not come for meetings at school. We used to blame each other but today everyone plays their role independently and our children are free to speak and their voices are heard (Teachers FGD, Kiribeda Primary school).

We are all open so we have that role so you people overlook at children and parents and leave teachers who also need to go for those workshops so that they instill it because we have a lot of time with pupils we are best implementer so at times those programmes come in holiday when we are away.

Children of Namayamba primary school electing their leader

Do teachers respect your views
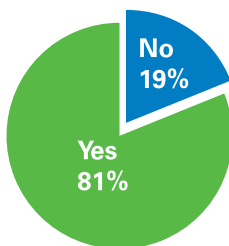
Since the introduction of TAP children currently feel that their views are respected. Children were also asked if they felt that their views are respected by their teachers and as indicated in the Figure 4.3 majority of the pupils believed that their views are respected. Generally the stakeholders (parents, pupils, teachers, community leaders) viewed the school environment to be largely conducive for the implementation of TAP and they feel that it should also be taken to others schools for everyone to enjoy the benefits of the program.

The parental friendly method of collecting fees, especially for midday meals, is another opportunity. Many schools are encouraging those who say they have no money to pay either in installments or in kind.

Children feel that they can have school gardens which can supplement the parents' contribution. This had been opposed by some parents thinking that the food will be eaten by the other children whose parents do not participate.

The Cascading methods of implementing TAP-CSC; that is training of few people (different stakeholders) who also eventually train others leads to multiplier effects. This multiplier effect helped even the non-TAP schools also to learn from the TAP since these schools were in the neighbourhood.

There is also willingness by the district team to use the acquired methods in the monitoring of the schools. When the district official was asked what you promise on TAP, he said:

To continue monitoring my duties and see that education standards are raised and people are fulfilling their responsibilities plus monitoring all programs.

Since TAP included members of the community, it will continue even after Plan Uganda has withdrawn from the program (KI District official).

The recommendation by those who have benefitted from the project to see that it goes to other places is also an opportunity which should not be missed out.

TAP program should be scaled to others schools because even us we were not in a good state but now are well for instance water issue there are some schools which don't have water they can go there and they help them. FGD Pupils, Semuyungu)

The interest that fathers are beginning to take in their child's education is an opportunity that cannot be missed. There is evidence that in some schools, the proportion of men attending meetings has now surpassed that of women.

Parents of Kiribeda (SMC and PTA) mobilized the community so that they can provide building materials by providing labour for sand (digging and transportation to site), digging the foundations. In addition the community was able to bring things that were sold during the fundraising in which they raised 1.4 million. The SMCs of three schools namely Kagogo, Mugogo, Kalasa have started working on putting together schools rules to curb indiscipline pupils including bulling of their peers. If this is implemented, it will be one of the ways of improving the school environment for the learners. Once the majority of teachers begin staying within the school or near by the school, this will reduce to absenteeism, late coming and time wasting. It will also mean that teachers can be able to work long hours at school.

It was also felt by the children that when their parents come and speak to the teachers, teachers put effort to these children. This implies that the attendance of meetings by parents is another way of providing a conducive environment to both the learners (pupils) and the service provider (teachers) and this was supported by both the pupils and the teachers.

Those parents who come for meetings, talk to teachers about their children and these teachers get to know these children, so they put more effort on them compared to those whose parents do not come (Pupils, Bowa and Kiribeda primary schools)

Those children whose parents come to school, somehow they study well because of the necessary materials they provide and lunch. But those who do not come, lack scholastic materials and usually their performance is poor – Teachers, Bowa church of Uganda Primary school

Key Lessons and Learning

Participation in school governance is dependent upon a full understanding and appreciation of the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder and the need to work in concert towards identifiable goals. The gradual increase in community participation in school governance has been reinvigorated through ongoing education and sensitization and the reintroduction or creation of safe spaces for participation within the school structures. Assuming that parents will provide for and actively engage in their children's education by virtue of the fact that these children belong to them is a misconception. The parents and the communities need to be helped to unlearn the long held view that the government is solely responsible for the education of the children and to begin to appreciate the mutuality of responsibility. This has the power to influence attitudes and actions of the communities.

Another significant lesson is that participation towards improving school governance, transparency and accountability is not necessarily dependent on the levels of income. Financial and material resources are important but only one of the many ways of being involved through direct provisions. Other significant ways to participate include sharing of ideas through regular interactions with the school management, the pupils, the community and the local government leadership. When there is transparency through regular information sharing, the parents and other community members appreciate what is possible through government and external provision and what they as key stakeholders, can contribute within their means. Therefore, in enhancing school governance and

education generally, responsibility should never be totally removed from the parents and the communities, rendering them passive as this not only affects school governance and children's performance in schools but also enhances an environment where apathy thrives within other spheres of community life.

The successful involvement of children bears a key lesson regarding the benefits of respecting children's rights as primary stakeholders in school governance. The improvements in governance will not only depend upon the participation of parents, teachers and local leadership but also importantly the children themselves. It appears that when children are given freedom of speech, they are able to articulate their problems and concerns better and when these are addressed, they are inspired to work harder, to be more responsible and disciplined. Hence openness, transparency and accountability mechanisms in schools have to be deliberate in including children.

Improving governance is also dependent upon the understanding and appreciation of children's rights and responsibilities within schools, households and communities. Hence any programming to improve school governance should continue to incorporate the key aspect of children's rights. These have to be understood across the board but also carefully communicated so that there is a balanced interpretation of these rights along with the responsibilities of the children in order to reduce tensions in interpretation.

Best practices for the school score card

- The way the process was introduced started by a buy in by the policy makers. This meant that it became our project not their project.
- The development of the project based on the previous experience and studies conducted
- Involvement of all the stakeholders from the start Focus on a few indicators makes the monitoring and evaluation of the project easy. The three indicators were provision of midday meals, parental participation in the education of their children measured by participation in the school meetings, and provision of the scholastic requirements.

- Regular meetings between stakeholders as a means of learning and bonding there was at least one parents meeting and one visitation day in each of the 10 schools.
- Involvement of children not as passive recipients of benefits but active stakeholders whose voices can be heard and respected
- Participation of diverse groups of stakeholders, which has strengthened a cohesive community and team work, essential for achievement of results.
- Development of an action plan at the end of the school score card exercise meant that stakeholders due their responsibility and were willing to take it on.
- Emphasis on community sensitization with regard to the shared responsibilities in the promotion of education. This has had a very significant influence in improving participation levels and interest
- Innovativeness and flexibility of the community in meeting needs. An example of a best practice refers to accepting cash or in-kind contributions for midday meals and construction and renovation of teachers' houses.
- Complementarity of the project to previous interventions. The project followed the school governance project and built on the strengths and structures including spaces for participation
- The active involvement and responsiveness of the district local government to identified needs. At least each of the TAP schools was visited once.

Recommendations for sustainability in Plan Uganda

Increase programme period. The one year period was generally considered too short to firmly have desired changes rooted in a community. Respondents suggested 4-5 years in each community

If it was possible, plan should stay for a hundred years so that even our children can get the benefits of this project- Pupils Namayumba primary school

Consider involving both community/private and government aided schools for a smooth impact in a given community so that no child is disadvantaged

by attending a given school. The differentiation can be in the form of support extended but for issues that require sensitization and general awareness-raising, both school categories can be included. This can also increase mutual learning of lessons and best practices that are cost effective.

There are some schools that lack amenities like water, classroom structures, which need to benefit from Tap. Pupils St. Paul Kagogo

The program should go to more schools in the district. The district official even proposed that the methodology will be scaled up to other sub counties in case they have a development partner

It is recommended that the TAP can be adopted by most of the stakeholders as it is an inexpensive way yet the benefits are great.

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