

## National Strategy for Girls' Education in Uganda

### Policy Briefing Background

September 2014

This brief summarizes the revised edition (2013) of the *National Strategy for Girls' Education (NSGE)*, prepared and led by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) in collaboration with UK-AID and the UN Joint Program on Gender Equality (UNJPGE).

### Girls' Education

Education for girls is a basic human right and should be interpreted as such by all stakeholders and duty bearers. In addition, it is established that there are many social benefits accruing from sustained improvements in girls' education. These include, but are not limited to, higher family incomes, greater economic productivity, better nutrition, delayed marriage, improved maternal outcomes and infant survival rates, together with overall improvements in education outcomes for children. Investing in girls' education therefore yields high returns and directly contributes to economic development.

### Strategy Background

The National Strategy for Girls' Education (NSGE 2004) aims to articulate Uganda's strategy to achieve the national goal of narrowing the gender gap in education by addressing the most pressing barriers to girls' education. Clustered in four essential dimensions, namely social & cultural factors, school related factors, political & economic factors as well as administrative factors. The strategy also acts as a plan of action, highlighting the role of different stakeholders in the sector, for a more coordinated promotion of girls' education.

Over the years, a number of emerging issues have been identified that prompted the revision of the strategy in 2013. These include: renewed emphasis on girls' education (nationally and internationally); emphasis on the quality of education; promotion of science & maths education; Skilling Uganda; and the persistence of barriers to girls' education. The revision was also intended to create a framework within which critical challenges such as gender based violence (GBV), teenage pregnancies and early marriages are decisively addressed. Finally, this revised version is expected to widen the coverage to all education sub-sectors, beyond primary and secondary.

### Situation Analysis

Uganda has made significant progress in promoting girls' education in areas of policy, programme design, strategic partnerships, retention and completion. There has been an increase in the number of girls accessing education, particularly for primary schooling. The introduction of Universal Secondary Education (USE) and Universal Post Primary Education Training (UPPET) in 2007 increased secondary school enrolment by 25% from 2006 to 2008, with girls constituting 46% of the increase (National Development Plan, 2010). In the same period, enrolment of girls in BTVET increased by 46%. At university level, there has been an increase in girls' enrolment partly due to the affirmative action scheme of 1.5 additional points to girls in public universities. This enrolment reached its peak in 2004 when female enrolment was as high as 48% (NDP, 2010).

### Key Facts

- The goal of the National Strategy for Girls' Education (NSGE) is to promote girls' education as an integral part of Government's efforts to create gender equity and equality in the education system
- NSGE timeframe: 2015-2019 (5 years)
- Persistent challenges to girls' education: gap between policy and practice; persistent gender gaps at critical points of access; persistence of low value attached to girls' education; teenage pregnancy; inadequate gender capacities among key actors; sexual abuse; early sexual engagement; lack of child friendly school environment
- Key areas of policy intervention: effective policy implementation framework; harmonized education sector programmes; requisite resourcing; institutionalized research; capacity utilization and enhancement



