



## Results from Uganda



**LINK**  
EDUCATION

2019-2022



## Link's work in Uganda

Since 1999, Link has been supporting schools in Uganda to deliver the best quality education they can with limited local resources. In 2019, we continued these efforts by launching the second phase of our innovative STEAR (School Transformation through Enriching Accountability and Resilience) project which aimed to increase accountability between school leadership, parents and learners, and strengthen advocacy efforts.

The project began by supporting district education staff to undertake school reviews at 100 state primary schools. The results revealed that just 45.5% of schools met minimum national leadership standards; many schools struggled with low attendance and retention; and most of the Parent Teacher Associations or community-led School Management Committees lacked the agency or knowledge to hold duty bearers accountable. Frustration was common at all levels of the system.



100 schools



54,290 learners



3 districts

We targeted three areas for improvement.

# Our Interventions

## School self-evaluation

Without data, schools struggle to know where their gaps are and how to address them. Stakeholders received training on the national education standards, data collection, conducting a self-evaluation, and priority identification. These stakeholders then worked together to create school improvement plans which included monitoring tools to check school resources are being used effectively.



## Advocacy training for community structures

Stakeholders did not know what to do or how to help. Link training targeted members of School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations to educate them on their roles and responsibilities. This included instruction on school grants and budgeting, monitoring techniques and tools, and ideas on how they could hold school and district leadership accountable.



## Training school leadership

Teachers need to understand what they are teaching and how to teach it. Link worked with curriculum experts to train headteachers on a newly developed curriculum, which included coaching tools so learning could be passed to classroom teachers. This training has enabled teachers to remove barriers hindering effective teaching and supports them to better plan for and assess learners.





# Our results – More supportive communities

Through this project, School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations gained a greater understanding of what was happening in their schools. We saw a number of these groups step up to meet critical school needs, often from their own pockets.

Kyeamya Primary School built a new two-stance latrine, entirely from parental contributions, to address poor sanitation for pupils.



To address the issue of girls being targeted by sexual violence when travelling to school, Kitana Primary School built a dormitory for girls, and parents erected a fence around the school to curb unauthorized access.



Waiga II Primary school had an all-male staff of just eight for more than 800 pupils, half of which were girls. After Link training, a female community member was brought in to offer pastoral support for the girls.



Parental groups in two project schools introduced feeding programmes to encourage learners back to classes after COVID-induced lockdowns, and to help with financial hardships experienced by many. Teachers also received meals so they could increase time spent with pupils.



# Our results – Accountability in management

More schools adopted a management model involving school improvement plans, resulting in increased accountability between school leaders and the community. Headteachers and government staff are more transparent about their use of funds and activities, whilst communities commit to supporting their school. In the 100 schools, over 6300 community members attended the school-community data-results-planning meetings, 619 of which were children and 164 were people with disabilities.



"We monitor activities in terms of use of resources. If the headteacher says he or she needs counter books, we verify and approve the purchase. When [state] money comes, we allow the headteacher and his team to sit and plan for this money, and then share his workplan and budget with the management for approval. He then presents [these] before we approve the funds."

School Management  
Committee Chairperson



# Our results – Improved teaching

School leadership and community structures are working together to monitor teaching, and to encourage learners to achieve the best possible results.



- At Kitana Primary School, the headteacher has started monitoring pupils' exercise books and can now see where teachers' lessons plans are actually effective.
- Bulindi COU school's headteacher has developed his own supervision checklist to help compare planned lessons against what is actually taught, and therefore support teachers to perform at their best.
- Kyeramy Primary School's headteacher told us that her teachers used to be suspicious of her for monitoring their lessons. Now, she is welcomed into classrooms, can review teaching plans, and teaching quality has improved.



- Bulindi COU school parents promised a UGX 100,000 (\$28.90) award to pupils who achieved the top grade in their exams. Two pupils won the grant, and parents noted that pupils and teachers' performance improved with the incentive.
- In 2021, Sir Tito Winyi Primary School had four pupils passing exams at the top grade one, and 33 passing with grade two, the best performance in five years.

## Our results – School inspection and accountability

Engaging District School Inspectors in community meetings has been a turning point in many schools. These meetings support school stakeholders (parents, teachers, local leaders and learners) to identify improvement priorities and come up with school improvement plans that focus resources on critical learning needs.

In Buliisa District, the Inspector of Schools believes Link interventions made their work much easier. She told us that School Management Committees who understand their roles make big contributions to schools in her district. One school reported an underperforming headteacher to the District Education Officer, while another withheld payment from a contractor who had done shoddy work.



**"You came at a time when I had just received the appointment into this office of inspector. Your staff supported me to carry out my work by guiding me on critical gaps the school performance review identified in the schools in lower Buliisa. We have improved a lot in the department. We now share inspection findings during meetings and disseminate findings to headteachers. These are things that used not to happen."**

School Inspector

# What Happens Next?

Uganda has experienced the world's longest school shutdown. As a result, millions of learners, especially the most vulnerable, have been deprived of the quality education they need for a brighter future.

We are currently seeking new partners to support our work in Uganda and help transform lives through learning in the post-pandemic world.

We will continue to focus on systems strengthening, leadership & teacher training and community engagement, but are also expanding our work to promote education in emergency settings and to explore the ways in which education can promote climate change resilience.



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