



PRESS RELEASE - Teacher Payroll

10th June 2013

We all know that teachers are at the heart of education. We all know that without good teachers our children will not learn. And we all know that there are big problems with teacher absenteeism, which is having a devastating impact on public education. But how much focus is there on why so many teachers are absent?

At a recent meeting of the Access and Quality thematic group of the Forum for Education NGOs in Uganda (FENU), NGOs and civil society came together to discuss the key issues effecting access to quality education across Uganda.

FENU is a network of over 100 NGOs who work on education issues, and at last weeks' meeting it was agreed that campaigning on teacher payroll was central to tackling teacher absenteeism.

A recent study based on unannounced visits to 160 schools found that nearly 20% of teachers were not in school, and that only 19% of those in school were in the classroom teaching. These shocking figures clearly have many causes, but the problems in the payroll system cannot be helping the situation.

Teachers are often berated for their levels of absenteeism, but is it surprising that many seek alternative employment alongside teaching when many have not been paid for months on end? The average teacher in a government school is paid just 260,000Ush a term, and yet even that salary is often delayed.

The Ministry of Public Service, the Ministry of education and local government must work together to sort out the current problems in the teacher payroll system as a matter of urgency.

We are right to demand that teachers are in the classroom teaching our children, but we will never achieve quality education until teachers are valued and paid on time. FENU is therefore committed to working to ensure that both sides of the bargain are upheld; that teachers teach and that government pays teachers for the invaluable work they do.