

## Forum for Education NGOs in Uganda (FENU)

Remarks by CSOs on the GPE application process

To the GPE Validation Workshop

31<sup>st</sup> May 2013. At Golf course Hotel, Kampala.

Presented by:

FENU Secretariat

The Hon Minister,

All protocol observed.

I am delighted to be here this morning to give brief remarks on the process of formulating and preparing the GPE country proposal.

On behalf of the CSOs here and those that have not been able to come here, I wish to reiterate our appreciation of the involvement and engagement of CSOs in the on-going GPE application process. This confirms appreciation of CSO contribution and commitment to the education sector. In equal measure we are very pleased that ECD has been considered in this project. It is our sincere hope that ECD will from now continue to be part of the mainstream sector budget and implementation. That this will lay a foundation for ECD service delivery to become part of the public education service delivery.

This process has come a very long way and with the CSO involvement at each step. Sometimes though, meetings have been called at pretty short notice. While this may be understood, we note that we have missed on the chance to consult more widely in the country. CSOs have only been able to consult with 13 districts (Masindi, Hoima, Kibaale, Bullisa, Kiryandongo and Masindi municipality, Apac, Kyenjojo, Kamwenge, Fortportal, Ntoroko and Bundibugyo districts, and more than 70 CSOs in Kampala) and Parliamentarians. We wish we had more chance to reach out to more districts.

The feedback I am giving today is therefore a consolidation of the reports from these consultations. Since we all have a chance to have a full presentation of the proposal component by component, and a number of CSOs is present here this morning, I will only be as brief as possible.

I will start by quickly giving general comments and suggestions and then the specific suggestions on each component. I wish to state early that we did take much care not to introduce new areas or activities since we have had a chance to suggest these before. What we have here this morning are only suggestions we felt would improve on the project.

**General concerns:**

- There is no clear statement on the coverage of the project. We would thus suggest that the project is carried out across the different districts so that the positive outcomes are shared and felt in different regions and how this would be determined.
- It has been noted that, the sector budget has been on the decline over the recent years. The GPE premise for funding is that it should not be a substitute for the government education sector funding. Although this is made clear in the draft, CSOs are keen to see it equally explicitly articulated that the education sector budget won't be reduced over the next three years and that at the end of the project the sector budget is increased to the equivalent of the project funds or more in order to sustain this work.

- We have also noted that for some components and sub-components, the activities are not clearly articulated along with the implementation methods and responsible centres.

Here below we give the specific components and sub-components where there is need for further articulation of activities, responsibility centers and monitoring and measurement of results.

### **Component I (effective teachers)**

We all know that the District Local Governments are responsible for the recruitment, deployment and management of teachers in primary schools. We also know that teacher payroll management has presented a big problem to nearly everyone and sometimes reasons for this are routed in the districts especially the new districts that still lack the requisite structures and personnel plus equipment to carry out their mandate. The specific feedback we got from our consultations is that activities for teacher payroll management right from the school level need to be very well articulated. The Ministry of Local Government along with the Ministry of Public Service were strongly emphasized.

There should be clear interventions that will improve the Teacher presence at school and time on task beyond inspections by either the District inspectorate or the Directorate of Education Standards.

### **Component II (Effective schools)**

School Management Committees are very central to effective schools and it is much appreciated that there are part of the proposal. It was noted that while this is so, there were fears that a significant number of schools is either without a fully constituted SMCs or none altogether. It was there recommended that SMC recruitment precedes the training. It was also noted that head teacher training is not part of the monitoring and evaluation system.

There was also a concern whether we can expect to succeed with the online inspection data tracking system in places where there may be no computers, no electricity, no computer literate personnel, etc. equally there was a feeling whether the BRMS should be the only criteria for schools to receive grants.

### **Component III (Technical Assistance)**

It was felt that the last component on technical assistance is very crucial for the success of the project. However, there is concern that this component is not yet as well developed as the others. Activities are not yet clearly spelt and mapped out and it is not very clear who will do what and how.

We do hope that the presence of all of us here will help improve on these issues and other areas we have not been able to mention for the shortage of time. We will only be happy to share a full report from our consultations in addition to what we can contribute now.

Thanks once again.