



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Ministry of Education and Sports



**Report**

ON

**Dropout Study in Universal  
Secondary Education (USE)**

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Background**

USE remains core in the transformation of million lives of Ugandans especially those who hitherto had no hope of attaining secondary educations. As highlighted in the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) Policy Focus report 2004, USE/UPPET is as crucial as UPE; it is geared towards imparting skills of significant economic value to its benefactors. While Primary school lays the groundwork for learning, Secondary education gives students life skills.

The likely payoffs of USE are gigantic in social terms; more informed citizens means a healthier, more skilled population and workforce with an appreciation of education. In addition, USE also demonstrates Uganda's commitment to meeting the MDG & EFA goals (2015).

Since its launch in 2007, Government through the MoES continues to commit resources to schools (i.e both government USE/UPPET and partnership schools). Currently, the program provides training places for 602,619 (i.e 256,768 females & 337,189 males) under USE and 9,013 (i.e 1,828 females & 7,185 males) under P.7 BTVET enrolling institutions.

### **1.1 Statement of the problem**

Despite government committing itself to providing tuition, teachers, infrastructure and instructional materials to USE/UPPET participating schools, it was observed that there was a big number of students who dropout for different reasons.

Between 2007 (year of inception) and 2008, the sector registered a dropout rate of 5.3% of the 161,396 students enrolled in USE and 3.2% of the 2,365 enrolled in P.7 enrolling BTVET. The sector continued to register increasing rates of dropouts; that's to say 8.3% in USE and 8.2% for the P.7 enrolling BTVET between 2008 and 2009, and 9.9% in USE and 15.9% for the P.7 enrolling BTVET.

Against the above background, the first Cohort of USE completion rate was 74.1%- an implication that 25.9% on the first cohort did not complete the USE program. Thus this represented wastage of resources.

In view of the above, a study proposal was designed with an assumption that *“All the students who were enrolled under the USE/UPPET program should ideally have been in the school system since they were having free education. If not, then the three options were repetition, transfers to non USE/UPPET schools or dropouts from the system”*.

## **1.2 Purpose and specific objectives**

### **1.2.1 Goal**

The main objective of the study was to establish the causes of the dropouts in USE/UPPET program and how they could be mitigated.

### **1.2.2 Specific objectives**

The study;

- a) Examined the causes of dropout and transfer of students from the USE/UPPET to non USE/UPPET;
  
- b) Established whether students who dropout of USE/UPPET program actually left the school system or joined non USE/UPPET schools/institutions; and,
  
- c) Determined possible ways through which the causes of dropouts could be mitigated.

## **CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY**

### **2.0 Methodology of the study**

The main purpose of the study was to explore the relationships between transfer/dropout rate and sex/region/district/quality of USE/UPPET education and their causes. The survey was based on the findings of the USE/UPPET National Headcount report 2011, Chapter 3, Page 16, Section 3.7 (An in-depth analysis of the returns), Sub-section 3.7.1 (Substantial loss and gain in enrolment), and the Recommendations in Chapter 4, Page 25, Section 4.3, Sub-section 4.3.2 (Bullet 6). As in annex..... It was established that there were schools that showed outrageous losses (undersubscribed) and gains (oversubscribed) in student enrolment and thus needed to be investigated to inform policy for smooth implementation of the programme.

### **2.1 Study Design**

To clearly explain these causes, both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied.

**Qualitative approach;** showed the nature of relationships between the study variable, the causality and the magnitude of the effect between the different variables investigated. In simple terms it was clearly brought out the cause of transfer/dropout rate by sex and particular sub-regions.

On the other hand, **quantitative approach** was used in order to address the actual numbers and rates of dropouts/repeaters or any wastage in USE/UPPET program as defined in the education atmosphere.

## **2.2 Target population**

The target population was all USE/UPPET and non USE/UPPET schools/institutions that offer secondary education.

## **2.3 Sample size**

The sample size was 176 education institutions and they were selection with a little bias in one way or the other as schools considered were those which;

- Gained more than 80% enrolment, these were located in 52 districts as reflected in Table 3.11 page 17 of the USE/UPPET National Headcount 2011 Report extract attached,
- Lost more than half of their enrolment, these are 12 in total and are reflected in Table 3.12 page 18 of the USE/UPPET National Headcount 2011 Report extract attached, and
- Some few sampled secondary schools that are not under the USE/UPPET program; these were to act as control schools and helped to deeply understand the causes of the school dropouts in these areas from a triangulated approach. These also helped eliminate bias.

From each of the districts, 8 USE schools (5 government aided schools and 3 partnership) and 2 non USE a total of 10 schools per district under the sample.

## **2.4 Data collection**

Data collected was both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data was collected using a structured questionnaire and collect primary data. On the other hand, an interview guide and face-to-face interviews were used to collect qualitative data and to further understand the study topic. The questionnaires were administered by the researchers to save time when conducting the study.



## **2.5 Data Processing, presentation and analysis**

### **2.5.1 Processing:**

For proper understanding of the study, the data collected was edited, coded, and categorized according to themes and stored using Epiifo entry screens. Then Excel and SPSS were applied to analyze the data.

### **2.5.2 Presenting:**

Statistical results of basically descriptive nature are used. However further analysis including extraction of regressions and correlations was also be used.

### **2.5.3 Analysis:**

Data analysis involved a number of closely related operations, which were performed with the purpose of summarizing the collected data and organizing these in such a manner that they answered the research objectives. Qualitative data analysis involved searching for patterns of relationships that exist among data.

Data analysis was done using multiple regression analysis where many predictor variables were used to predict the criterion dependent variable. This drive aimed at establishing the nature, magnitude and drivers of relationships between the variables.

In multiple regression, the regression model was formed:

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + \dots + B_nX_n + e$$

Where Y was the dependent variable (Current enrolment)

$X_{1-n}$  was the independent variables (transfers and dropouts)

$B_0$  was the constant

$B_{1-n}$  was the regression coefficients or change induced in Y by each X

e was the error

Through regression analysis, coefficients of regression together with  $(n^2)$  the coefficient of correlation were obtained to establish the relationships that accrue between variables.

The correlation coefficient R measures the correlation between variables and lies in the range  $-1 \leq R \leq 1$ , where  $R=1$  is the perfect correlation and  $R=0$  shows no correlation.  $R=-1$  shows a negative correlation or an inverse correlation where the dependent variable changes positively while the independent variable changes negatively.  $R=+1$  shows a positive or direct correlation between the variables. The range between 0 and 1 shows a continuing ranging from a weak positive correlation to a perfect positive correlation and between 0 and  $-1$  a weak negative correlation to a perfect negative correlation.

## **2.6 Measurement of variables**

Variables were broken down into the dimensions of bio-data, enrolment background, dropouts and reasons, transfers and reason.

## CHAPTER THREE: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

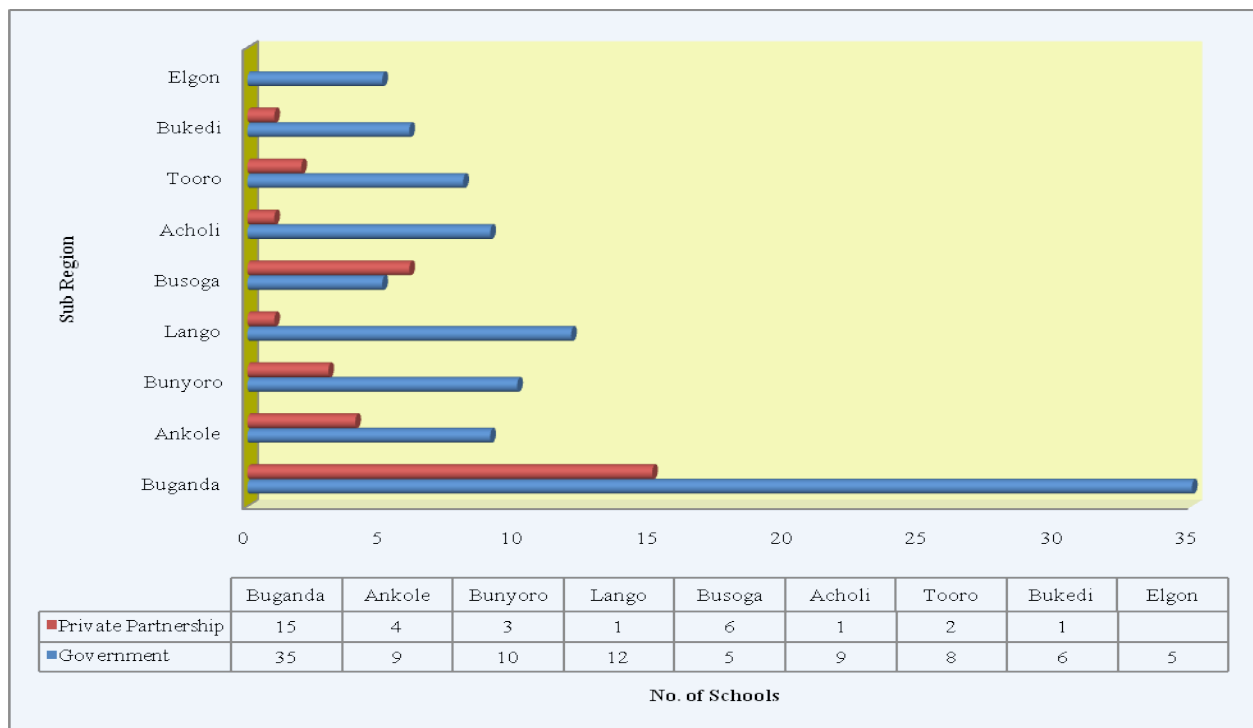
### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings from the study with well explanatory notes. Findings are presented in terms of tables and figures. They are categorized into descriptive statistics, relational and inferential as discussed below;

### 3.1 School Particulars

A total of 176 secondary schools were targeted but only 132 responded to the dropout study translating to 75% response rate with a well representation of each sub-region as shown in figure 3.1 below;

**Figure 3.1: Secondary Schools that Responded to the Dropout Study.**



Findings show that out of the 132 schools visited 75% were government aided wellas 25% are in patnership with government to implement the USE program. Of the schools visited, Buganda region had the highest representation of 39.7% while only 3.8% were from Elgon Region.

### 3.2 Students Enrolment under the USE Programme

Head count reports over the years have reflected an exodus of learners from the USE programme and for the reason the research teach tasked respondents to provide data on the Eligible USE students since inception and results are displayed in table 3.1 below;

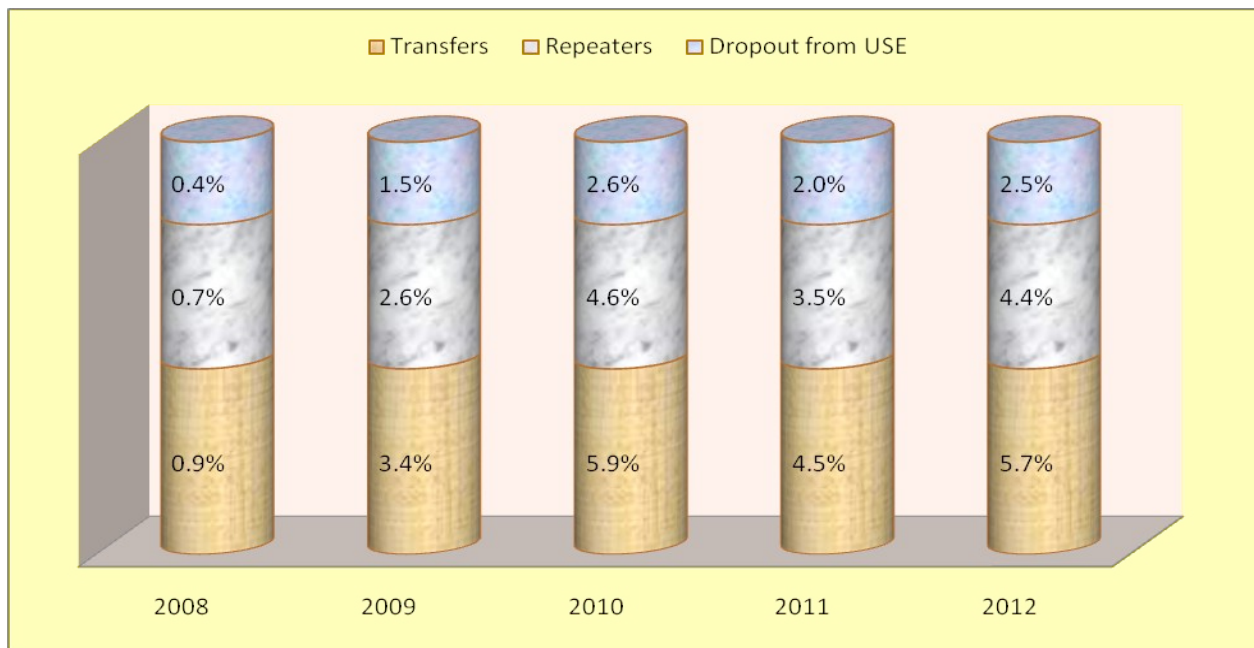
**Table 3.1: Enrolment in USE Schools Visited.**

Year	Gender	S.1	S.2	S.3	S.4	Actual Total	Expected	Not Promoted to Next Class
2007	Male	11,190				11,190	11,190	0.0%
	Female	8,922				8,922	8,922	0.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20,112</b>				<b>20,112</b>	<b>20,112</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
2008	Male	11,291	10,717			22,008	22,481	2.1%
	Female	9,251	8,545			17,796	18,173	2.1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20,542</b>	<b>19,262</b>			<b>39,804</b>	<b>40,654</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
2009	Male	9,884	10,500	9,659		30,043	32,365	7.2%
	Female	8,333	8,382	7,714		24,429	26,506	7.8%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18,217</b>	<b>18,882</b>	<b>17,373</b>		<b>54,472</b>	<b>58,871</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
2010	Male	11,344	9,137	9,272	8,485	38,238	43,709	12.5%
	Female	10,094	7,563	7,585	6,373	31,615	36,600	13.6%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>21,438</b>	<b>16,700</b>	<b>16,857</b>	<b>14,858</b>	<b>69,853</b>	<b>80,309</b>	<b>13.0%</b>
2011	Male	12,202	11,101	8,733	8,444	40,480	44,721	9.5%
	Female	10,896	9,648	7,530	6,493	34,567	38,574	10.4%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23,098</b>	<b>20,749</b>	<b>16,263</b>	<b>14,937</b>	<b>75,047</b>	<b>83,295</b>	<b>9.9%</b>
2012	Male	11,139	10,871	9,738	7,800	39,548	44,569	11.3%
	Female	9,827	9,458	8,261	6,007	33,553	39,150	14.3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20,966</b>	<b>20,329</b>	<b>17,999</b>	<b>13,807</b>	<b>73,101</b>	<b>83,719</b>	<b>12.7%</b>

Results revealed that from the schools visited, between 2007 and 2008 (two classes in question) 2.1 percent of the expected 40,654 students had not proceeded to the next class in the USE program with an equal share between the genders. However, by 2012 out of the expected 83,719 students in the schools visited only 73,101 were found to be enrolled leading to a tune of 12.7

percent gap in the program. The analysis further indicated that the gap between the expected and the actual was mainly due to transfers in other USE Schools and Non USE schools, repeaters and actual dropout as a breakdown shown in figure 3.2 below;

**Figure 3.2: Student Failing to Proceed to Next Class by Type.**



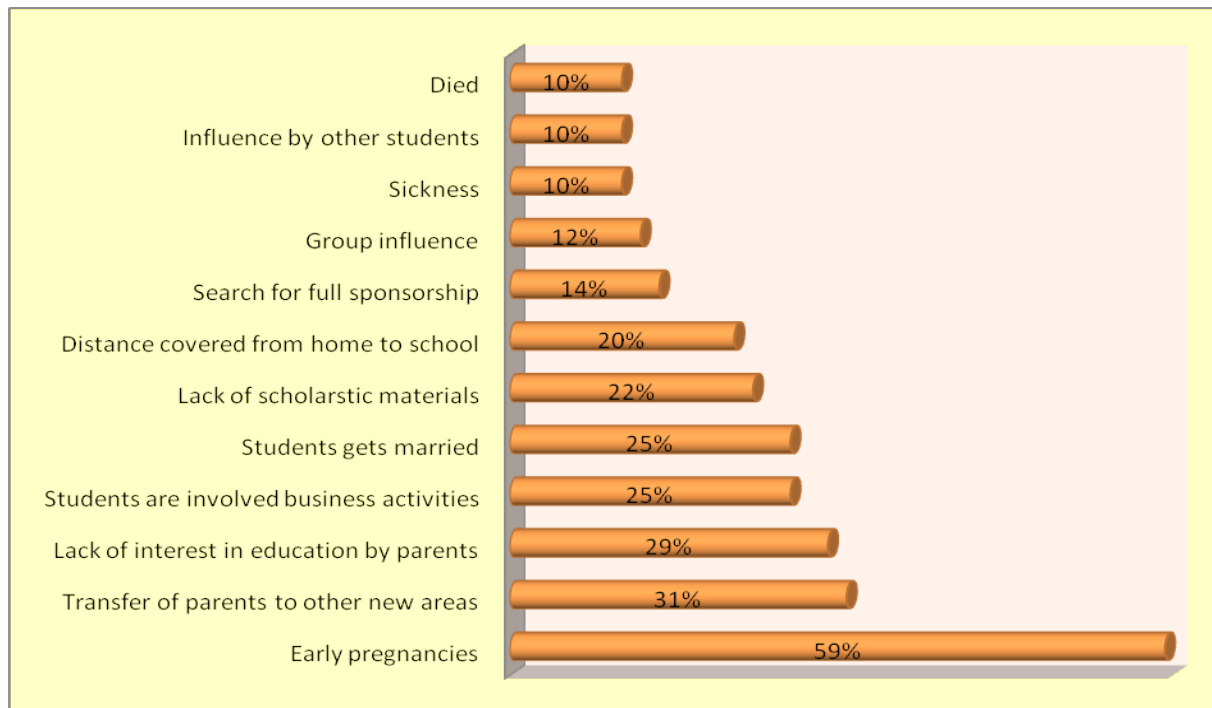
The details reveal that by 2008 the 2.1 percent that was depicted as a gap, 0.9% had transferred to other schools, 0.7% were repeaters (no longer eligible for the USE program) and 0.4% had actually dropped out. By 2012 the gap of 10,618 students (12.7%) was explained by 5.7% transferred to other schools, 4.4% repeated their respective classes and 2.5% was the dropout of the system.

### **3.3 Causes for Students Living the USE Programme**

Findings in sub-section 3.2 revealed a significant loss of students from the USE programme over the years. However, this percentage not necessarily represents dropouts but a composition of dropouts, transfers to other USE schools and transfer to non USE schools. The research team

tasked the respondents on whether their schools under lost some students in the USE programme before completion of the ordinary level and 86% of the institutions visited confirmed students had left and even went ahead to provide probable reasons for this as displayed in figure 3.3 below;

**Figure 3.3: Percentage of Schools by Reason of Dropout.**



Findings reveal that the biggest reason why students leave the USE programme is due to early pregnancies (59% of the schools), transfer of parents to other area (31% of the schools) and only 10 percent of the schools reported death, influence of other students and sickness as the cause for students leaving the USE programme in their respective schools. For further cause of students leaving the USE programme in the schools visited refer to figure 3.3 above.

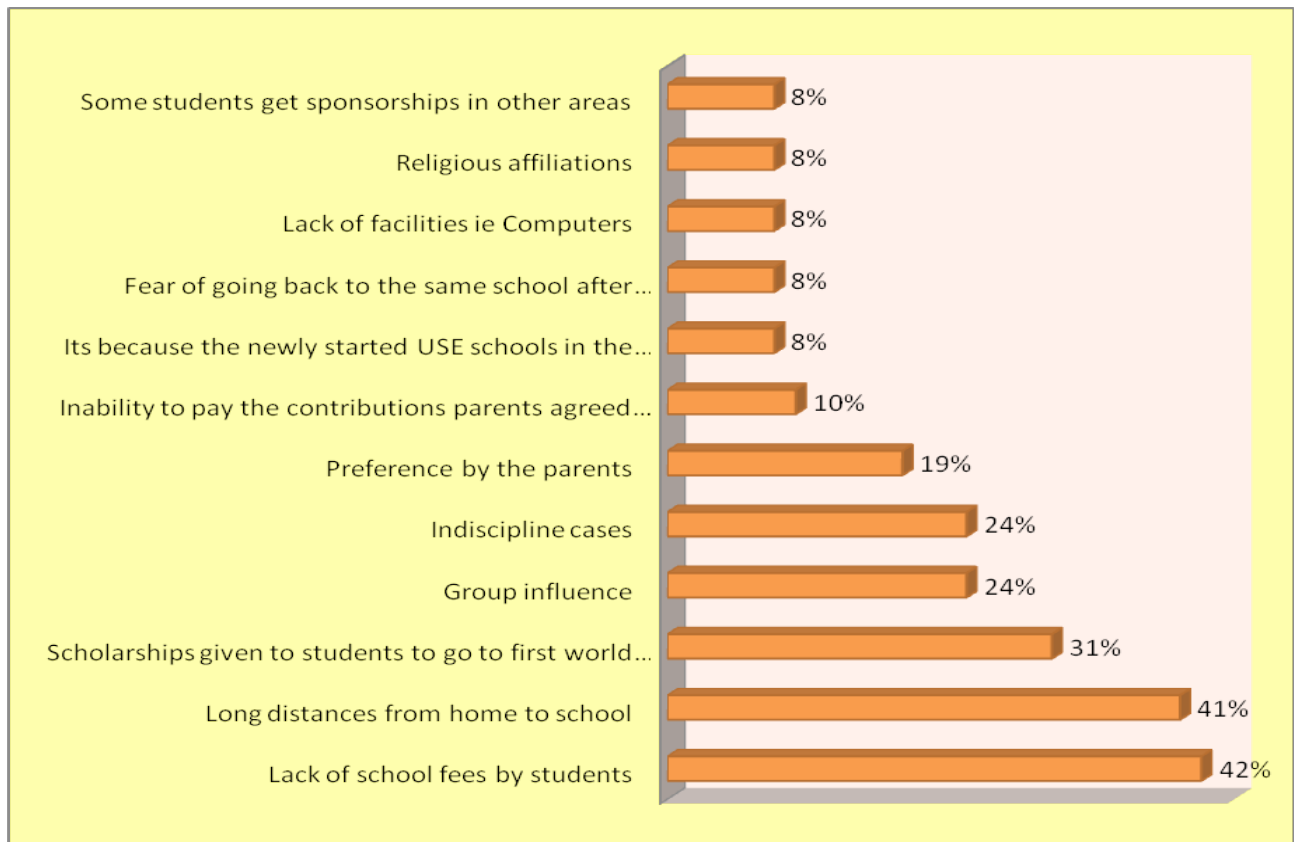
### **3.4 Transfers the School under the USE Programme**

The USE policy permits students to transfer from one USE school to another USE school provided he/she remains eligible for the programme. For that reason the study was interested in

finding out the percentage number of schools that have students transferring into the school under the USE programme and over 91% of the schools visited had students that had transferred into the school under the USE programme. The major reason for the transfer ins is transfer of parents/guardians to other new areas of work.

To a small extent do schools know the destiny of the students that leave, however the study was interested in finding out the tune of schools that track students that leave their schools and join others and over 74% of the institutions had this tracked. The team went ahead to task headteachers to provide probable reasons for the students transferring from their institutions and results are displayed in figure 3.4 below;

**Figure 3.4: Percentage of Schools by Reason of Transfer.**



Findings revealed that out of those that transfer out of the school, 42% is due to lack of school fees by students, 41 percent due to long distances from home to school. 31% of the schools indicate that students will leave for another school in case they get scholarships to join first world schools while to less extent inadequate facilities, religion and newly started USE school may cause the transfer out of the school. For details please refer to figure 3.4 above.



## **CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents conclusions from the study and further provides recommendation to better the situation in question based on the findings.

### **5.1 Conclusions**

The study determined that the main causes of dropout are early pregnancies, lack of interest in education by parents, involvement of students in business activities, early marriages and distances between homes and schools.

Whereas the main causes of transfer of students was found to be; long distances between school and home, transfer of parents to other areas, group influence, indiscipline cases and group influences.

The findings further established that students who don't proceed to next classes not necessarily dropout but on average 45% of them transfer to other schools (USE and non USE), 35% repeat classes and hence cease to be eligible for USE and 20% actually dropout of the formal education system.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

For proper tracking of students under the USE program a unique identification number (STIN) should be allocated to each beneficiary at entrance so that each is tracked to determine the

repeaters, transfers and dropout. The STIN project may be expensive but with an initial start with the USE eligible students would be worth investing to save the government wastage.

Sensitization of the communities on the USE programme will help in eliminating the dropout caused by lack of interest in Education by learners and parents, early marriages and pregnancies and involvement of learners in business at an early age.

Introduction of skill based programmes for students who fail to be promoted to the next class. This can improve the BTVET programme as well as minimizing on government wastage. However, the automatic promotion policy can also be introduced though it would affect the quality