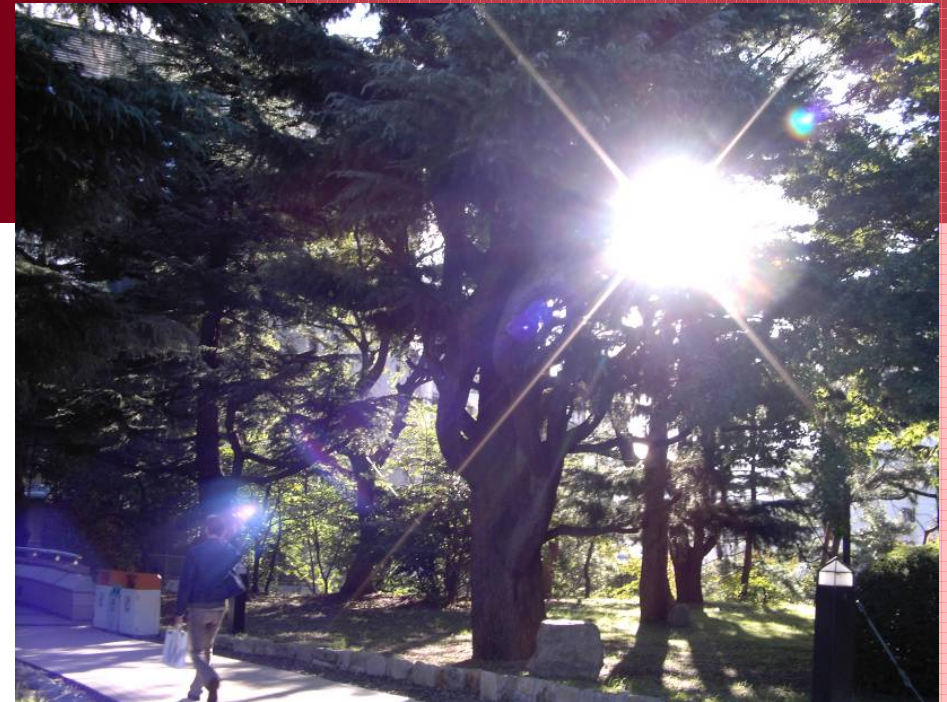


*International Symposium  
on Self-reliance and Sustainability of EFA*

***A Critical Analysis on Free  
Primary Education Policy—  
Evidences from Africa***

*(Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Uganda)*



***23 April 2008, Mita Conference Center, Tokyo***

*Mikiko Nishimura*

*Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies,  
Kobe University*

---

# ■ Content of the Presentation



1. Background of the research
2. Research focus and methodologies
3. Findings
4. Critical reflection

## ■ Background of the Research

- UPE Policy in the form of fee abolition as popular intervention for achieving EFA since the mid-1990s (Avenstrup, et al. 2004)
- Lack of review on the past experiences and analytical studies on its impacts and challenges (Allison, 1983; Bray, 1986; Prince, 1997; Deininger, 2003; Sifuna, 2007; Nishimura, et al.2008).
- Need for the broad based understanding of financial and administrative systems for sustainable educational development in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Criticisms on the uniformity of the educational policies (Samoff, 1999; Foster, 2000; Brown, et al, 2001; Klees, 2001).

## Members of the Research Activities

*Network of the Africa-Asia University Dialogue Project supported by Hiroshima University, JICA, UNESCO, and UNU*

Country	In Japan	In Africa
<b>Kenya</b>	Nobuhide Sawamura (Hiroshima University)	Daniel N. Sifuna (Kenyatta University)
<b>Malawi</b>	Keiichi Ogawa (Kobe University)	Joseph Chimombo and Demis Kunje (University of Malawi)
<b>Ghana</b>	Shoko Yamada (Nagoya University)	Joseph Garthey Ampiah (University of Cape Coast)
<b>Uganda</b>	Mikiko Nishimura (Kobe University)	Albert Byamugisha (Ministry of Education and Sports)
<b>Regional Advice</b>	Motoki Takahashi (Kobe University)	

# ■ Comparative Analytical Framework

## ■ Performance Gap:

Educational performance at the regional, district and at school levels.

## ■ Financial Gap:

Source of income at the district and school levels, actual expenditure at the district and school levels, process of education finance.

## ■ Administrative Gap:

Performance of School Management Committee, administration of in-service teacher training, monitoring and evaluation of educational quality at the district level.

## ■ Policy Gap:

Compliance with the central ministerial policy at the district and school levels (e.g. no school fees, no underage pupils, automatic promotion).

## ■ Perception Gap:

Perception of district officers, school teachers, parents and SMC on UPE policy and parental perception on the cost of schooling.

## ■ Research Questions for the Field Research

1. What are the **administrative constraints** for smooth implementation of provision of primary education under the UPE/FPE policy?
2. What are the **financial constraints** for smooth implementation of provision of primary education under the UPE/FPE policy?
3. How do **stakeholders perceive** UPE/FPE policy?
4. What are the possible **links among the administrative, financial and perceptive factors, school performance and local compliance with the central policy?**

# ■ Sampling Methodology

## *Sampling Criteria (Purposive Sampling)*

- ◆ Collect data from **16-20 schools in each country**
- ◆ Include at least **2 districts**
- ◆ Do not include extreme regions
- ◆ Include **rural and urban/peri-urban** schools
- ◆ Include **good, average, and poor** performing schools

## **Interviewees in Each Country**

	Sample Size
◆ <i>District Level</i>	
• District Education Officer	2+
• Inspector of Schools	2+
• District Administrative Officer	2+
• District Finance Officer	2+
◆ <i>School Level</i>	
• Head Teacher	16-20
• Teacher	32+
◆ <i>Community Level</i>	
• Parents	32+
• SMC Members	16+





# Selected Findings ① General Impacts of UPE/FPE Policy

Common Themes	Unique Themes
<p><i>Positive</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b><u>Government's commitment</u></b></li> <li>➤ <b><u>Increased enrolment</u></b></li> <li>➤ Provision of teaching/learning materials</li> <li>➤ Additional classroom construction</li> <li>➤ <b><u>Donor contribution</u></b></li> </ul> <p><i>Negative</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Overcrowded classrooms</li> <li>➤ Lack of funds</li> <li>➤ Low teacher motivation</li> <li>➤ Over/underage pupils</li> <li>➤ <b><u>Passive attitude of parents</u></b></li> <li>➤ Dropout of pupils</li> </ul>	<p><i>Kenya</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Declined examination results</li> <li>➤ Decrease of dropout vs. increase of repetition</li> </ul> <p><i>Malawi</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Decline in quality indicators</li> <li>➤ No serious passive attitude of parents</li> </ul>

## Selected Findings ② Finance

Common Themes	Unique Themes
<p><i>Capitation Grant</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b><u>Not guided by baseline survey</u></b></li> <li>➤ Delay of funds</li> <li>➤ Inadequate amount of funds</li> <li>➤ Mismanagement of funds at school level</li> </ul> <p><i>Resource Base</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Heavy dependency on central budget</li> <li>➤ <b><u>Minimal or no resource at district level</u></b></li> <li>➤ <b><u>High private costs</u></b></li> </ul> <p><i>Consequence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b><u>Minimal or no resource for monitoring schools</u></b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Kenya</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Capitation grant directly transferred from the central Ministry to school</li> </ul> <p><i>Malawi</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b><u>No capitation grant for more than 10 years under FPE policy</u></b></li> <li>➤ Heavy burden of leave grants to teachers, teacher death and transfer</li> <li>➤ Unpredictability of donor finance</li> </ul> <p><i>Uganda</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Notable variability of primary education finance at household, school, and district levels</li> </ul>

## ■ Selected Findings ③ Administration

Common Themes	Unique Themes
<p><i>Nature of Policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Top-down policy implementation</u></li> <li>➤ <u>Unpreparedness of the system for the changes</u></li> </ul> <p><i>Policy Conflict</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Automatic promotion vs. increase in enrollment</li> <li>➤ Fee abolition vs. inadequate amount of UPE capitation grant</li> </ul> <p><i>Consequence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Lack of clear policy on roles</u></li> <li>➤ <u>Lack of training for capacity building</u></li> <li>➤ Poor condition on school management</li> </ul>	<p><i>Uganda</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Local political intervention</li> <li>➤ Some impact of the introduction of Universal Secondary Education Policy</li> </ul> <p><i>Ghana</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Weak function of School Management Committees</li> <li>➤ No gap in capacity and tasks given at district level</li> <li>➤ Compulsory primary education policy</li> </ul> <p><i>Uganda, Ghana, and Malawi</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Decentralization made technocrats have less power at district level</u></li> </ul>

## Selected Findings④ Stakeholders' Perception

Common Themes	Unique Themes
<p><i>Majority of stakeholders' views</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Current policy is good but not well implemented</u></li> <li>➤ <u>Automatic promotion policy should be abolished</u></li> </ul> <p><i>Parents' views</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Primary schooling is very important for boys and girls</u></li> <li>➤ They would send their child to school even if fees are charged</li> <li>➤ <u>They contribute a lot to school</u></li> <li>➤ <u>The direct cost of schooling is lower now than before UPE policy (c.f. Malawi)</u></li> </ul>	<p><i>Kenya and Uganda</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Positive views on provision of teaching and learning (T/L) materials</li> <li>➤ <u>Gap between what parents perceive and what they actually do</u></li> </ul> <p><i>Malawi</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Negative perception of stakeholders on nonexistence of provision of T/L materials</li> <li>➤ <u>The cost of schooling is perceived to be higher than before the policy</u></li> <li>➤ Majority of parents had no alternative ideas</li> <li>➤ <u>Fee abolition was not complied due to no resource base</u></li> </ul>

## Selected Findings⑤ Policy Suggestions

Common Themes	Unique Themes
<p><i>Effective Implementation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b><u>Consultation with key stakeholders</u></b></li><li>➤ <b><u>Baseline survey for a more systematic implementation</u></b></li><li>➤ More sensitization about the policy</li></ul> <p><i>Efficient Means</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Need for an effective system of <b><u>monitoring the program</u></b> as well as <b><u>tightening accountability</u></b></li><li>➤ <b><u>Cost effective strategy</u></b> to raise quality of primary schools with limited resources, while maintaining the current enrollment</li></ul>	<p><i>Kenya</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Special attention for orphaned and vulnerable children</li></ul> <p><i>Kenya and Uganda</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Preschool provision</li></ul>

---

## ■ **Quote from a district officer in Uganda**

*“UPE was top-bottom policy without any consultation with people. The only option was ‘to adjust ourselves to accommodate it.’ People own things that they have made decisions themselves. People do not see it as their program because there was no consultation. People should have been consulted.”*

---

## ■ **Quote from parents on Automatic Promotion Policy**

- ◆ *“The child should first pass the existing grade before being promoted since he or she will run into problems in higher grades. This policy breeds laziness among the children.”*
- ◆ *“It would be waste of money if a child who does not read and write well is promoted.”*
- ◆ *“It is very bad because children cannot achieve anything at the end of education.”*

## ■ ***Critical Reflection on FPE Policy***

- Policy implementation fails when international policy goals are adopted in a **top-down** manner with insufficient consultation with stakeholders.
- Policy implementation also suffers when there is **no readiness** in administration, finance, and perception for the policy.
- Local stakeholders can give **positive views** on the policy but that does not mean that they **act on it**.
- Some **policy conflict** is embedded in UPE policy
  - Automatic promotion vs. Overcrowded classrooms
  - Reduced budget for monitoring vs. Increased number of schools
  - Fee abolition vs. Inadequate amount of UPE grant

## ***Critical Reflection- Issues***

- **Financial and administrative system** for sustainable implementation of FPE and ensuring quality of education;
- **Mutual accountability** of the education system at different levels (National-District; District-Schools: Schools-Community) for self-reliance and sustainability of FPE policy;
- **Cost-effective stop-gap strategies** to tackle policy conflict embedded in FPE policy to strengthen self-reliance such as:
  - Cost-effective monitoring system at school level;
  - Management system of large classes;
  - Targeting strategy on the disadvantaged groups; and
  - Equity-sensitive calculation of FPE/UPE grant.

---

Thank you very much for your attention.

*The full report of the research is available on the  
following website :*

*[http://www2.kobe-u.ac.jp/~ogawa35/english/e\\_top.htm](http://www2.kobe-u.ac.jp/~ogawa35/english/e_top.htm)*

---

## ■ Selected Reference

- Allison, C. (1983). Constraints to UPE: More than a question of supply? *International Journal of Educational Development*, 3(3): 263-276.
- Avenstrup, R., Liang, X., Nellesmann, S. (2004). Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and Uganda: universal primary education and poverty reduction. A paper presented at the Scaling up Poverty Reduction; A Global Learning Process and Conference in Shanghai, May 25–27, 2004.
- Bray, M. (1986). If UPE is the answer, what is the question? A comment on weakness in the rationale for universal primary education in less developed countries. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 6(3): 147-158.
- Brown, A, Foster, M., Norton, A. and Naschold, F. (2001). The Status of Sector Wide Approaches, *Working Paper* No. 142. Overseas Development Institute.
- Deininger, K. (2003). Does Cost of Schooling Affect Enrollment by the Poor? Universal Primary Education in Uganda. *Economics of Education Review*, 22: 291-305.
- Foster, M. (2000). New Approaches to Development Cooperation: What Can We Learn from Experience with Implementing Sector Wide Approaches? *Working Paper*, No. 140. Overseas Development Institute.

---

## ■ Selected Reference

- Klees, S. J. (2001). World Bank Development Policy: A SAP in SWAPs Clothing. *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, 3(2): 1-11.
- Nishimura, N., Yamano, T. and Sasaoka, Y.,2008. Impacts of the Universal Primary Education Policy on educational attainment and private costs in rural Uganda. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 28(2): 161-175.
- Prince, A. (1997). Quality of learning in Nigeria's universal primary education scheme: 1976-1986. *Urban Review*, 29:189-203.
- Samoff, J. (1999). Education Sector Analysis in Africa: limited national control and even less national ownership. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 19(4):249-272.
- Sifuna, D. N. (2007). The Challenge of increasing access and improving quality: An analysis of universal primary education interventions in Kenya and Tanzania since the 1970s. *International Review of Education*, 53: 687-699.