



Executive Summary

Teacher Training and Education Project
(TTE) - Uganda

Interventions to Improve Teacher Training
in National Teachers' Colleges

UGA1502911 (Muni)

UGA1503011 (Kaliro)

UGA1503111 (Kabale – Mubende)

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1 Presentation of the evaluation

The Government of Uganda received a grant from the Kingdom of Belgium to finance the Ugandan-Belgian interventions “Improve secondary teacher education in the National Teacher’s Colleges (NTCs) (UGA 15 029 11, UGA 15 030 11, and UGA 15 031 11). These three interventions are referred to as the Teacher Training Education (TTE) project. **The specific objective** of the intervention is that NTCs produce competent teachers through: 1) effective use of acquired management skills; 2) proper use of improved infrastructure and facilities; and 3) improved pedagogical competencies. To reach this objective, the project defined a strategy that addresses three areas: the organisational and financial management capacities of the NTCs, the Procurement Disposal Unit (PDU), the Construction Management Unit (CMU) and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) Teacher/Tutor Instructor Education and Training (TIET) Department (**Result 1**); improved access to quality, sustainable training and learning environments and facilities in NTCs (**Result 2**); and pedagogical approaches to pre- and in-service teacher training effectively applied in NTCs and partner secondary schools (**Result 3**). The main objective of the mid-term review was to evaluate the performance of the TTE interventions in Uganda based on the five Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability). The functions of the mid-term review, which was carried out in Uganda in February 2019, were to support steering, contribute to learning and to promote accountability.

The methodology for executing the mid-term review consisted of both qualitative and quantitative data collection through a mixed methods evaluation. The collection of data was both participatory and inclusive, ensuring all stakeholders were involved and engaged in providing inputs to the evaluation process through interviews, surveys, focus group discussions and observations. Over 300 individual surveys were administered and over 40 focus group discussions and interviews held. While there are a wide range of stakeholders involved in the programme, they are concentrated at the central level in Kampala and at the institutional level in five NTCs located in the north, northwest, central, eastern and southwest regions of the country. Data was analysed by triangulating results across central and NTC level qualitative and quantitative data, and by comparing findings across similar groups in each location.

2 Results and conclusions

2.1 Performance criteria

Relevance: Score – A: The TTE2 project is anchored in national and sectoral plans and has supported the development of policies central to the function of the MoES. The project is also one of the very few initiatives directly supporting improved secondary education quality in the country, and the only one supporting secondary pre-service teacher training countrywide. The TIET Department in the MoES has directly benefitted from the TTE2 project due to its relevance in delivering on their departmental objectives to oversee the quality and delivery of teacher and instructor education and training. The TTE2 project has supported significant capacity-building efforts for both CMU and PDU to date in areas that are highly relevant to the departments and reflective of their needs. The approach to ID for NTCs regarding their organisational and budgetary capacity has also been highly relevant. Under the infrastructure component, the intervention is highly relevant at beneficiary level by providing funds for restoring dilapidated NTC infrastructure.

The ATL component of the project is highly relevant to the needs of NTCs by providing new and existing teachers and teacher trainers with the key skills they require to improve their pedagogy and instructional approaches. The introduction of ATL methods is also crucial for the effective overhaul of the national NTC training curriculum. Lecturers at NTCs indicated that the introduction of ATL methodologies is highly relevant for their work and has helped to improve their teaching practice; as such, it represents one of the project's leading successes.

Efficiency: Score – B: The investment in institutional development (ID) for TIET has been reasonably efficient, and TIET has accomplished several of their stated priorities. While ID has been effective in helping TIET to upgrade its capabilities in operational management and oversight of NTCs, the huge volume of ID actions scheduled has been overwhelming for the department to carry out alongside other activities, leading to delays in implementation of some activities and achievement of targets. The support to ID for CMU and PDU has also been relatively efficient in terms of implementation of planned actions, but not as efficient in terms of budgetary expenditure. The support has positively resulted in the creation of regulations and guidelines for sustainable design of construction works. ID support for these two departments in the MoES were generally not as efficient as originally projected, especially for PDU, given the changes made to the implementation of the infrastructure component, which was realigned under the management of the Enabel infrastructure unit. The ID provided to NTCs has been relatively efficient in improving the efficiency of staff capacity and operations, helping to improve coordination and communication and give staff members basic management skills to better support operations, planning and budgeting. The intervention has taken efficiency into account concerning consultant and construction prices for infrastructure. It has also been very efficient in terms of procuring good quality, environmentally-friendly, sustainable building designs to reduce overall lifecycle costs. The outputs in this area are not yet delivered, but are likely to be by the deadline except for one NTC, as the work has not yet started. The delivery of ATL has been efficient and has resulted in uptake of the methodologies in NTCs. The project has offered the most in depth and extensive roll out of improved pedagogical practices in NTCs to date, focusing on a component of instruction that has been identified amongst in-service teachers throughout the country as substantially lacking. One of the most efficient delivery mechanisms employed for the roll out of ATL and microteaching was the selection and training of mentors within each college. However, the efficiency of this model is limited due to the relatively small number of mentors in each NTC.

Effectiveness: Score – B: The investment in ID for TIET and the NTCs has been reasonably effective in developing their skills in planning, budgeting, management and oversight through better communication, reporting and results-based management (RBM). These initiatives have helped to ensure greater visibility of the TIET department in NTCs and ensured that they are operating against an aligned set of work plans and outcomes. The investments in RBM have also been successful in helping these stakeholders identify targets and follow them up through field visits and regular review meetings. However, despite these investments, not all documents are developed or budget requests sent on time, and they have struggled to implement their action plans. The ID investments in CMU has been relatively effective in helping the department to improve the soft skills of its engineers and agents. CMU lacks funding for logistics such as site visits, which is a limitation on the likelihood of achieving expected results. Budgetary support provided to NTCs through the ID grants has helped them improve their capacities for budgeting, reporting and accountability, especially through digitised reporting and accounting.

There has not yet been efficient expenditure of the grants received, largely due to NTC delays in planning for, executing and accounting for activities. This has, in turn, limited the potential effectiveness of this initiative. The infrastructure designs are of good quality and in line with expectations for Kaliro and Muni NTCs. However, the intervention in Mubende and Kabale NTCs is partial; good quality and sustainable facilities will not be available for all staff and learners by the end of the project term. The time between construction hand over and project closure is too short to prove linkages between better infrastructure and the outcome of producing competent teachers. Pedagogical interventions have been relatively effective. The design of the ATL materials and content is aligned with national and international standards and of a high quality. Time on task for staff has greatly improved, and ATL has had a positive effect on student and teacher motivation. The work done on revising the General Methods course is notable. However, the effectiveness of course delivery is significantly restricted by the structure, with over 300 students in attendance at one lesson. Given the hands-on nature of the instructional approach, this format is insufficient for introducing ATL concepts. Some teachers were not comfortable with or able to effectively execute microteaching sessions in their lessons, and many seemed unprepared to administer them effectively. Continuous School Practice (CSP), though not fully executed as designed, was identified by stakeholders as a very positive approach.

Impact: Score – B: Evidence of impact from the capacity development initiatives under result 1 are yet to be fully seen, resulting in limited impact to date for ID activities. While medium-term outcomes are evidenced through operational and budgetary plans in NTCs and TIET, as well as a focus on sharing and RBM through monitoring visits and quarterly review meetings, the long-term impact of these initiatives will need to be measured at project end. CMU also faces the same issues, as much of the impact from their work is based upon utilisation of their management skills and operational guidelines by other development partners, as well as the MoES. PDU has perhaps been impacted the least from the ID components following the decision to retain the tendering process under Enabel. While this decision allowed for a more effective implementation of infrastructure activities, it did not serve to grow and embed skills in PDU for tendering and procurement. Without the support provided under TTE2, no MoES departments or NTCs would receive direct support to improve their operations, management and administration, as no other development partners are providing it. This is a positive impact from the project that must be recognised. However, capacity development initiatives to date seem to have been most successful in growing the skills of individuals in the departments, rather than the departments themselves. Embedding practices and knowledge across departments is a key gap in achieving significant, long-term impact. Impacts related to construction cannot be assessed at this stage as works are ongoing or have just started in all NTCs. The pedagogical interventions have been the most successful component related to impact, embedding ATL concepts across lecturers, mentors and students in all NTCs. Changing approaches from teacher to learner-centred methods is a critical task facing the education sector in Uganda, and this project has taken great strides to reorient teachers and students to better pedagogy. This initial success must be built upon in the next phase, supporting lecturers, mentors and students to refine their skills in ATL and microteaching and to become conversant with more difficult ATL concepts. NTC stakeholders seem motivated to take on this challenge, and with the right support supervision can perfect these methods. The ultimate impact of the pedagogy component must be measured at project close.

Sustainability: Score – C: The investment in ID for the MoES and NTCs is currently limited in terms of sustainability. As the project is ongoing and requiring TIET, CMU, PDU and the NTCs to attend trainings, undertake organisational planning and budgeting, and follow-up RBM practices through monitoring, site visits and quarterly review meetings, it is unclear if these activities will be maintained once the project closes. These initiatives have required significant budgetary and human resource support far outside of what the departments and NTCs can maintain. As such, the likelihood of on-going ID activities is extremely limited once the project closes. It is hoped that these departments can sustain these initiatives, but that can only be achieved if the final phase of the intervention focuses on consolidating and documenting learnings and ensuring skills are embedded in routine practices. Comprehensive funding of activities in the NTC master plans and TIET's strategic plan is not possible through the TTE2 project alone; TIET, CMU and the NTCs have all faced challenges integrating activities supported by other development partners into their plans as well as seeking external resources to support implementation of their priorities. This underfunding of activities is a direct threat to sustainability. There are also not enough financial means to ensure durability of the capital investments made in the NTCs, especially regarding maintenance. The pedagogical interventions are one of the most effective components to date regarding sustainability due to the mentor model. If mentors leave the NTCs, however, the already small pool of well-trained support staff can quickly diminish. Expanding the pool of mentors or developing a mentorship trainee programme for other lecturers can ensure this practice is sustained. Delays in restructuring the national secondary curriculum and NTC training curriculum present the biggest threat to the sustainability of ATL, as if the methods are not fully incorporated into these materials, the interventions of the project regarding pedagogy will quickly fade on a national scale. This presents both an opportunity and a challenge for the project that must be addressed.

Transversal Themes: Gender: The MoES Gender Unit has been very involved in the project's implementation, providing training to staff at the NTCs, participating in planning and monitoring, and supporting gender research. The main gender concerns were those of inclusion, equity and safety, especially for female students and staff at the colleges. The staff of NTCs, most of whom are male, require ongoing training and sensitisation on gender equity and inclusion to provide students with a quality education and school experience. Gender issues have been positively taken into consideration in the design of the dormitories and sanitary facilities. **Environment:** The environmental themes of renewable energy and resource conservation were embedded in NTC design and construction. Still, more low-cost, community-based approaches are recommended for sustainability, especially green spaces, solar solutions and resource recovery from waste. All infrastructure is planned to take into consideration sustainable practices for low energy and low maintenance of buildings.

2.2 Specific questions

To what extent can one concretely observe that the management tools developed or introduced by the project (integrated planning, budgeting and monitoring tool; action plan for strengthening capacities of TIET, CMU and PDU; management software, etc.) have/are to become intrinsic in the functioning of NTCs and MoES services (TIET, CMU and PDU)? Planning documents exist and are all highly relevant for the organisation and management of departments and for onward planning and service delivery according to their mandates. While they are currently developed routinely by the departments during the project, the sustainability of these initiatives is unclear given that it requires individuals to carry forward best practices and prioritise ongoing efforts to generate and maintain them.

The action plans following capacity development trainings have been implemented in part, but none have been achieved according to expected outputs and timelines. The volume of institutional development actions in the project has been substantial, and has often overloaded the capacities of staff to follow-up and deliver on their objectives, despite them being priorities. The ICT equipment and software provided are currently in working order, but budgets must be put in place to maintain and upgrade them. In the final phase, it would be worthwhile to consolidate efforts around organisational planning and budgeting and ensure the departments and NTCs each have a revised plan for the next phase. At this stage, management tools developed or introduced by the project have not become intrinsic to their functioning, but with a coordinated effort could be in the final project period.

To what extent do the project activities appear sufficient to ensure that the technical and financial capacities of the NTCs and MoES (CMU) are adequate for infrastructure maintenance? In the NTCs, capacity development is oriented towards management skills at individual and organisational level. At CMU, the project is providing training and capacity building to agents/engineers and a tool to support better designs. The effectiveness of these activities remains to be seen, as there is no major change yet within the MoES, and influence on designs made in Project Coordination Units is limited. Despite CMU being more prepared to give advice and promote sustainable designs, the link between this effort and lowered maintenance costs for educational facilities seems distant. Positively, the use of sustainable technologies has raised CMU's understanding of challenges and opportunities for using different appropriate technologies. The support in terms of budgeting has been more effective, despite a few inconsistencies. The MTR did not verify the existence of any written documents or maintenance master plans that describe these procedures. After the maintenance fund was dropped due to administrative reasons, TTE2 is implementing a small maintenance mechanism that is resolving pertinent energy and water issues in the NTCs. In terms of financial capacity, project activities appear insufficient to ensure that adequate maintenance will continue due to lack of resources. TTE2 contributes 10% of the total maintenance budget in NTCs and has worked largely as an incentive to implement and change management practices then to actually fund them.

How does the MTR evaluate the approach put in place by the project to concretely observe the change process happening in NTC classrooms in terms of pedagogy practice? Theory and practice for ATL instruction were identified in individual surveys of lecturers, mentors and students as well balanced, with lecturers stating that they were satisfied with the ATL instruction they provided to their students and confident applying ATL methods. In all of the classroom observations conducted, teachers integrated some form of ATL. An examination of the effectiveness of lecturer application of ATL revealed that the majority were implementing selected methods with an average or fair capacity. This is representative of good progress. Lecturers seemed to have the most trouble applying higher level ATL skills, and not all lecturers selected the most appropriate ATL methods for their lessons. This points to the need to continue refining and consolidating these concepts. More significant focus on classroom observation and support supervision can go a long way in providing immediate coaching and feedback. But, if these responsibilities are left only to mentors, it is likely that roll out of a significant and impactful support supervision process in NTCs will fall short of need.

How does the MTR evaluate the coordination and implementation of training activities between the Support to Development of Human Resources (SDHR) and the TTE intervention? The coordination and implementation of training activities between the SDHR project and TTE2 has been highly efficient and met with extremely positive results. Both the TTE2 and SDHR teams pointed to the positive relationship between the interventions, identifying higher level outcomes as a result of their coordination. The SDHR team cited the effective implementation of the ID components in TTE2's stakeholders, pointing to higher results and engagement in ID from these departments across the whole of the SDHR intervention.

What are the MTR recommendations at this stage of potential relevant topics for capitalisation (knowledge management), especially for the ID and pedagogy components of the project? As the SDHR project winds up, it would be pertinent for the TTE2 team to take part in developing the final evaluation tools to ensure that the findings guide the final phase of the TTE2 project's ID interventions. An action plan should be developed to guide implementation and uptake of recommendations from SDHR in the final phase. A focus on consolidating skills and knowledge from the initial phase of ID would be useful in helping embed practices. In addition, the ATL training materials are a key area for knowledge management in the project that can be shared and scaled through other partners. ATL and microteaching are initiatives that can be replicated with limited additional funding, and these approaches should be integrated into the national NTC curriculum revision. Development of policy and practice briefs on these approaches would be a useful way of documenting learnings. Process documentation of these efforts can also serve a clear function. This project provides a good model for systems strengthening for education service delivery by improving the capacities of departments to manage education inputs; providing accessible, inclusive and appropriate education infrastructure; and developing the capabilities of teacher trainers and new teachers to implement appropriate to generate better learning outcomes. This approach has national and global relevancy and can serve as a model for others looking to strengthen learning outcomes by focusing on the broader education system and actors responsible for services.

3 Recommendations

1. **MoES and NTCs:** ATL must be institutionalised and mainstreamed across all teacher training institutions in the country to ensure concepts are embedded in the national training curricula for teacher development. Making the General Methods course examinable will also ensure that ATL is formally integrated into curriculum reform. Ensuring an addendum (or partial revision) is added to the national curriculum for teacher training will directly support this and ensure ATL becomes a recognised part of the approved content. Enabel should also make public its ATL materials for uptake by government and development partners by making the materials open source.
2. **MoES Departments and NTCs:** Key to success in the final phase is prioritising the ID support that the project provides and ensuring that stakeholders have a chance to put their new skills into practice – and to receive feedback on their work from the Enabel team. Stakeholders should be part of the prioritisation exercise to ensure they have a say in identifying their final ID agenda. Do not expand and deliver more ID content; rather, consolidate and target additional actions to refine the skills and capacities in the ID components already delivered.

3. **NTCs:** Education as a Business can be one outlet for improving income generation for NTCs through marketing and selling their ATL or ICT training capacities. Opportunities for this should be researched and explored and plans put in place with each NTC to support income generation following the closure of the project.
4. **MoES Departments:** Institutionalising engagement actions between MoES departments and NTCs will not be continued unless budgets for this become a core part of departmental annual plans and are funded by government sources of revenue rather than donor. In the next phase, working with the MoES departments and NTCs to identify which components of this engagement are the most beneficial and likely to be continued can go a long way in helping to focus their efforts and earmark human and financial resources to continue them over the long term.
5. **NTCs:** To improve maintenance outcomes, continue developing capacities at NTC level, especially the estate manager, technical staff and janitors by: 1) providing training.; 2) implementing a logbook and indicators on maintenance actions; 3) providing organisational support to estimate maintenance needs coherent with master plans; 4) supporting Maintenance Committees to develop and formalise decision-making criteria regarding allocation of funds; and 5) allowing the increased participation of students in maintenance decisions.

4 Lessons learned

ID and capacity-building are challenging tasks. In a project with many other initiatives, they can be complex and difficult to implement and monitor. Uptake of skills development in existing staff, many of whom have been in their positions for some time and are used to their ways of working, is hard to realise in the short term. Long-term changes in behaviour involve multiple actions and adaptations over time. In order to ensure adequate uptake and embedded practice for new skills, it is critical to prioritise actions and not overload a skills development programme. Ongoing support and follow-up are also key to success, and the value of mentorship should not be underestimated. Adequate resources should be provided to such initiatives, as well as a clear focus on a short, achievable set of targets with plans in place to monitor and track performance milestones along the way.

The mix-up between teacher training, certification, accreditation and examination functions across a myriad of national actors and government departments presents a true challenge in the sector demanding improvement. ATL is currently not assessed as one of the competence areas for a qualified teacher. This leads to some teachers ignoring it, and a governmental failure to demand for its integration into national curricula, a process which is sadly highly politicised. More can be done in the final phase to engage key government institutions in this process and ensure that ATL is a core part of the revised teacher assessment and certification system. The project must also promote the institutionalisation and implementation of ATL approaches in pre- and in-service teacher training to improve student learning.

A focus on improving budgetary practices and procedures could be effective in embedding approaches to better-quality infrastructure construction and maintenance over the long term in educational institutions throughout the country. The relative diversity of approaches to managing infrastructure development and maintenance in NTCs indicates that identifying these best practices could be useful for the last phase of the project and serve to improve the coordination and management of construction and maintenance in education facilities countrywide.