

Uganda: Back Poor Secondary Schools, Not the Richer Ones – NGOs

opinion

By Moses Talemwa

Early this year, Munaihe (name changed to protect his identity) received the news that he had passed his primary leaving examinations with aggregate-5. Unfortunately, Munaihe's mother was not as excited as her son.

The poor family from Namutumba could not pay for him to join senior one at the local seed school.

"They told me that they had to take care of my two other brothers and so I had to wait until the money became available," says Munaihe, who is now into sugar cane vending.

Munaihe could easily have been admitted for senior one at Bukonte Seed SS, however, his family is too poor to afford the Shs 65,000 tuition, per term required there. He could also have made the admission list at Kisiki College Namutumba, the district's best-performing school, according to last year's O-level results. But, being a private school, it is even more expensive.

Munaihe is part of a large family of nine children, all surviving on the best efforts of their mother. He is also the victim of what 100 organisations around the world are calling a flawed support system by the World Bank.

The NGOs, which include Uganda's Initiative for Socio-Economic Rights (Iser), argue that the World Bank should end its support of education for the privileged and instead look at seed schools like Bukonte, and take more out of poverty.

REVISIT PRIORITIES

The executive director at Iser, Salima Namusobya, believes the World Bank should revisit its priorities on education.