Abstract:

In this paper, we explore the need, possibilities and opportunities for linking formal and non-formal education in Uganda with a view to helping learners acquire, build and sustain productive skills they need for creating wealth and enjoying sustainable livelihoods. We start the paper with a clarification of the difference between formal and non-formal education and a description of the characteristic features of each and the context in which they are provided in Uganda. Locating the paper in the capability approach, we argue that linking formal and non-formal education has a huge potential for promoting practice-oriented learning and skills application which will in the long run help to address the loopholes in Uganda’s education system which many have described as theoretical and incapable of meeting the needs of people. We briefly describe methods we used and proceed to note that practice-oriented education is likely to maximize participation levels of ordinary Ugandans in government’s poverty reduction programmes and facilitate the process of wealth creation and the attainment of the goals of prosperity for all in the country. We explore some of the good practices in non-formal education in Uganda and assess opportunities and possibilities for linking formal with non-formal education as a strategy for diversifying and recognizing the various learning options available for promoting and accelerating socio-economic transformation among the people. We highlight some of the challenges which are likely to be faced in an attempt to bridge the gap between formal and non-formal education and suggest the way forward. In concluding the paper we note that the dream of eradicating rural poverty and attaining prosperity for all in Uganda will remain wishful thinking if no deliberate attempts are made to appreciate diversity in learning and integrate as well as recognize the various learning options in country.

Keywords: Education, Formal Education, Indigenous Education, Informal Education, Lifelong Learning, Non-formal Education, Wealth