

Transforming communities through education

Irish Aid is one of Uganda's development partners supporting the transformation of the education sector. This support has been at almost every level of education, from primary through secondary, vocational training and postgraduate level.

From 2003 to 2015, Irish Aid provided Euros 38m (about sh145.2b) to the education sector. This support targeted infrastructural improvements, curriculum reform and teacher education in the primary sector, as well as curriculum reform in secondary education.

Irish Aid has a particular focus on the Karamoja sub-region, one of the most vulnerable parts of the country. Irish Aid upgraded 11 secondary schools and two teacher training colleges in Karamoja under the

Universal Post Primary Education and Training Programme at a cost of Euros 16m (about sh61.1b).

Irish Aid also provided over 2,317 bursaries for secondary education, with 1,750 beneficiaries from Karamoja sub-region and 567 from Acholi. The bursaries covered tuition and scholastic materials, basic needs, transport to and from school, healthcare and psychosocial support. Most recently, Irish Aid built and rehabilitated 21 primary schools; three in each of the seven districts of Karamoja under the Karamoja Primary Education Programme at a cost of Euros 13.2m (about sh50.4b).

Under the Government of Ireland's new country plan for Uganda 2016-2020, Irish Aid will continue to support the education sector and continue its focus on Karamoja sub-region.



Students of Kangole Girls School, one of the beneficiaries of the Irish Aid development funds

Primary education

In partnership with UNICEF, Irish Aid is focusing on improving literacy and numeracy at lower primary level, while addressing other constraints to education in Karamoja such as school governance and violence against children. Irish Aid will invest

Euros 7.2m (about sh27.5b) over the period 2016–2020, which will include support to the gender unit within the Ministry of Education and Sports.

Vocational education

Through a partnership with the Belgian Development Agency (BTC), Irish Aid is supporting improved access to and retention in quality vocational education in Karamoja, as part of its support to Skilling Uganda.

This is to be achieved through improving the capacity of two institutions; Nakapiripirit Technical Institute and St Daniel Polytechnic, Comboni in Moroto, and through the establishment of a Karamoja Skills Development Fund to support specific training initiatives and

programmes. Irish Aid will invest Euros 6m (about sh23b) over the period 2016–2020.

Bursaries

Irish Aid, will continue to support the Karamoja bursary programme for post-primary education (secondary, vocational and university), in order to improve access to and completion of quality post-primary education. Each year, a minimum of 225 students (200 for secondary, and 25 for vocational, tertiary or university education), will participate in the scheme. Irish Aid will invest Euros 4.7m (about sh18b) on bursaries over the period 2016–2020.

Fellowship training programme

Over 275 Ugandans have benefited from Irish Aid's Fellowship Training Programme over the last 20 years.

The aim of the programme is to provide higher education study opportunities to employees of Irish Aid's partner organisations. Every year, scholarships are provided to pursue masters' level training, either in Ireland or within the east and southern African region.

In 2016, Irish Aid fellowships were awarded to 24 individuals from partner organisations in Uganda, including 12 from Karamoja.

Teachers making a difference

Irish Aid recently entered into a Euros 30,000 (about sh115m) partnership with *New Vision* to support the "The Teachers Making a difference" project. The project is hinged on the objective of using fellow teachers to inspire others.

As told to Gloria Nakajubi

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