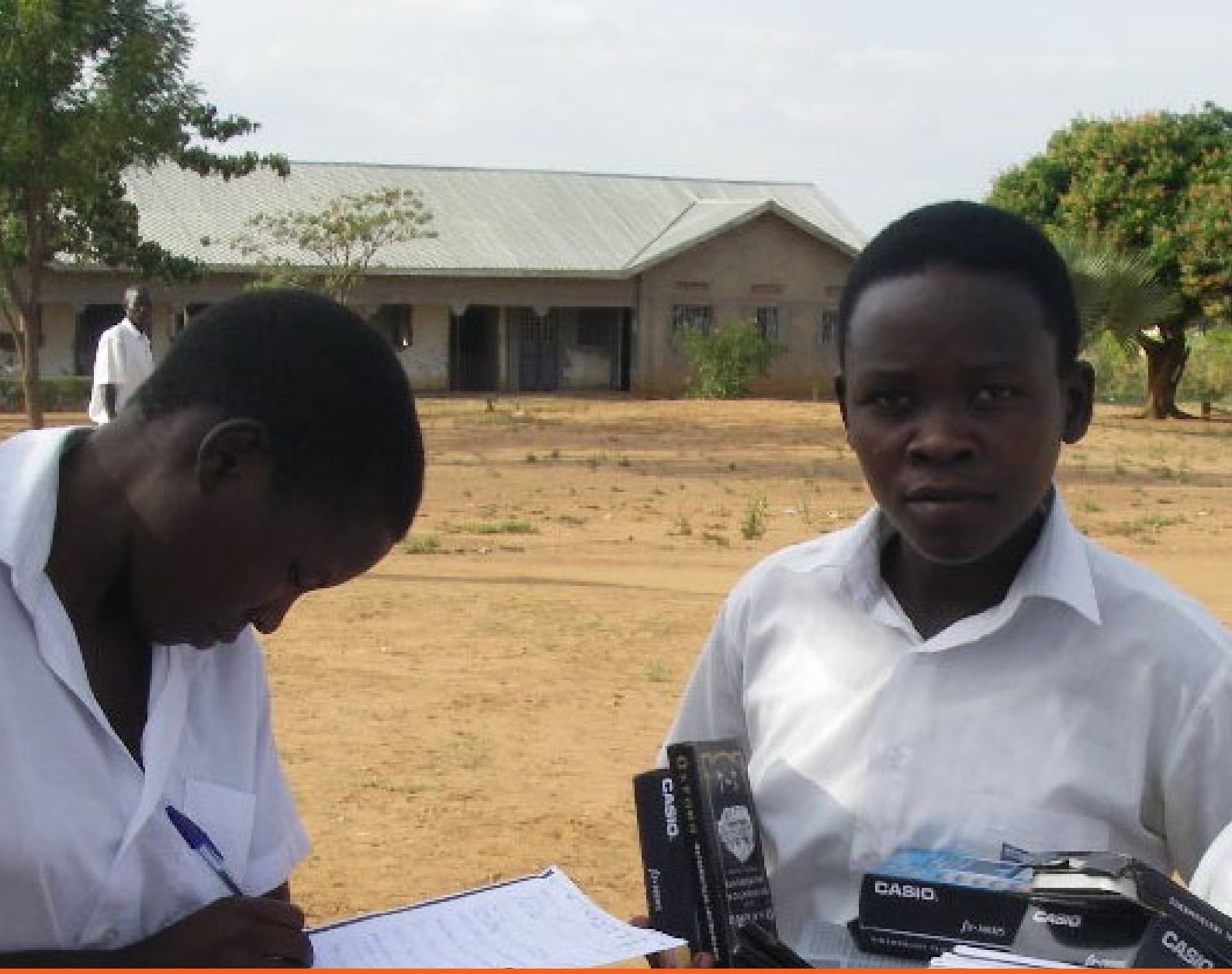
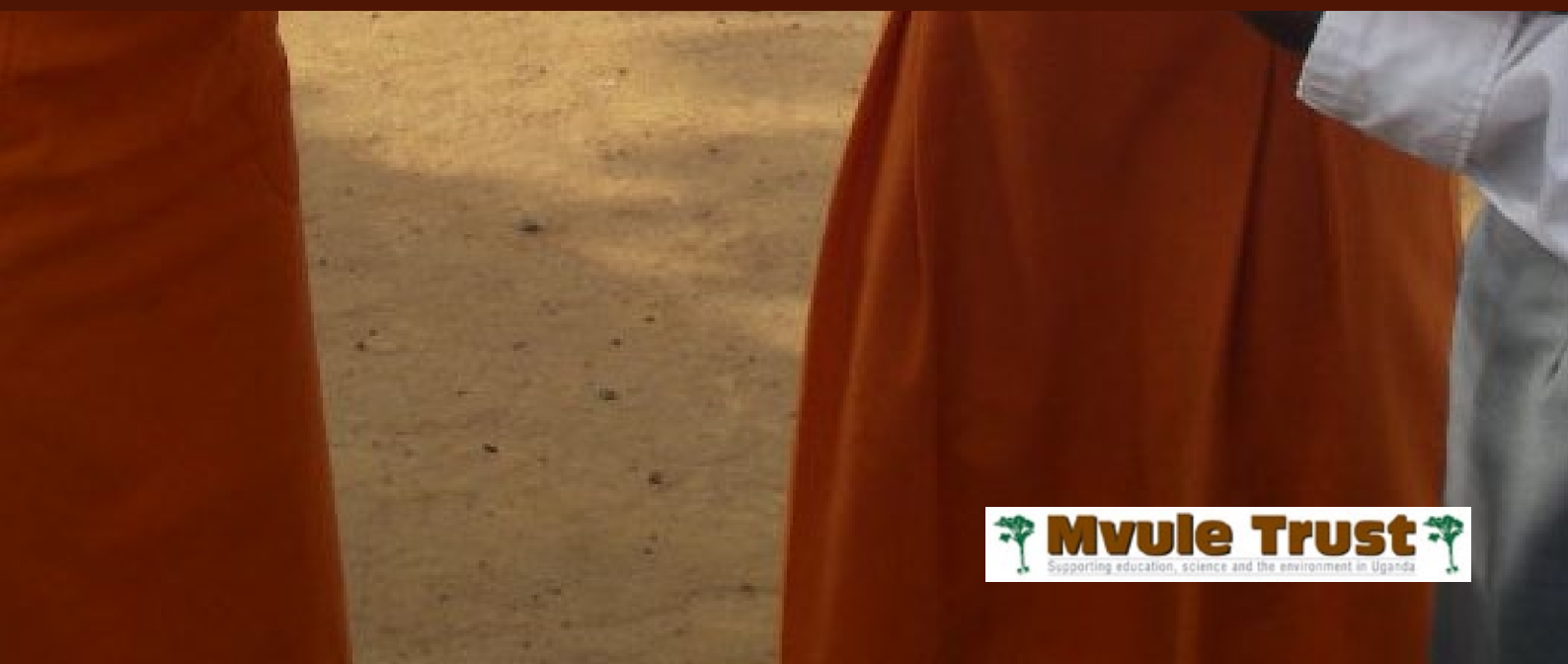


“These days are for those WHO ARE EDUCATED”

A tracer study of 433 scholarship beneficiaries in Uganda



Mvule Trust
Supporting education, science and the environment in Uganda

PUBLISHED BY MVULE TRUST

WRITTEN BY
Cathy Watson, Director Mvule Trust
&
Charles Opolot-Okurut, Associate Professor of Mathematics Education, Makerere University

EDITED BY
Cathy Watson

PHOTO CREDITS
Cover and inside pages: Mvule Trust

CORRECT CITATION
Watson C & Opolot-Okurut C. 2012. *"These days are for those who are educated" A tracer study of 433 scholarship beneficiaries in Uganda.* Kampala & London: Mvule Trust.

ISBN 978-0-9574668-0-7

MVULE TRUST
PO BOX 22366
Kampala
UGANDA

Highfield House
Park Road
Combe, Witney
OX29 8NA
UNITED KINGDOM

www.mvuletrust.co.ug

THESE DAYS ARE FOR THOSE WHO ARE EDUCATED

A tracer study of 433 scholarship beneficiaries in Uganda

By Cathy Watson & Charles Opolot-Okurut • MVULE TRUST • Kampala-London

Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations

A levels	Advanced levels, comprises grades S5 and S6 which are the last two years of secondary school
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Association
CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
CCT	Conditional cash transfer
FAWE	Forum for African Women's Education
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HR	Human resources
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MOH	Ministry of Heath
MT	Mvule Trust
NGO	Non-governmental organization
O levels	Ordinary level, comprises grades S1 through S4
P1-7	Primary 1 through primary 7, the first through last years of primary school
PAD	Project appraisal document
PLE	Primary leaving exam
PTC	Primary Teachers College
S1-S4	Senior 1 through Senior 4, the first four years of secondary school
S5 and S6	Senior 5 and Senior 6, the final two years of secondary school
STF	Straight Talk Foundation
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UCC	Uganda College of Commerce
UDHS	Uganda Demographic and Health Survey
UNEB	Uganda National Examination Board
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UPPET	Uganda Post-Primary Education and Training
URDT	Uganda Rural Development and Training
USE	Universal Secondary Eucation
UWESO	Uganda Women's Effort to Save Orphans
SS	Secondary School
STI/D	Sexually Transmitted Infection/disease

Note: $ is USD in this report

$1= Uganda Shillings (UGX) 2400

Ugandan educational terminology and system

Uganda has seven years of primary school (P1-7) and six years of secondary school (S1-6). Passing the Primary Leaving Exam (PLE) at the end of P7 is required to enter secondary school. About 40% of pupils who begin P1 sit the PLE. PLE results are ranked by division, with Division 1 indicating the best results and Division 4 and "U" the poorest. Nationwide, less than 10% of pupils get a Division 1, (UNEB 2012), and most Mvule Trust districts register only a handful of Division 1 passes and often none by girls. About 65% of those sitting the PLE go on to secondary school.

Once in secondary school, students study for four years, S1-4, for the O level exam, which they sit at the end of S4 (roughly the equivalent of US tenth grade). Achieving passes and credits on the O level exam is necessary for pursuing A levels or a certificate at a technical tertiary institution such as an agricultural college. O level exam results are ranked by division. Division 1 indicates the best results and Division 4 the worst. About half of those who sit their O levels go on to A levels.

Students study for their A levels in S5 and S6, the final two years of secondary or high school. They sit the A level exams at the end of S6. Two passes at A-level are necessary for pursuing a diploma at a tertiary institution or a degree at university. Tertiary institutions are non-university educational institutions that provide training in professions such as forestry, nursing, medical laboratory technology or teaching. Sometimes these are referred to as BTVET institutions (Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training). Vocational schools provide training in practical fields such as catering, tailoring, brick-laying and carpentry and may admit P7 leavers.

Acknowledgements

Mvule Trust gives heartfelt thanks to the following people: Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin, who offered the $5 million in 2005; Anthea Case and Harriet Gillett and others at Arcadia, Lisbet's organisation; Mvule Trust trustees David Lyon, Richard Dowden and Joel Kibazo; William Pike, co-director Mvule Trust; Katherine Manchester, who worked for Mvule Trust 2008-2010; Victoria Cadman, who managed The Guardian 2009 Christmas appeal for Mvule Trust; and former Mvule trustee, Madeleine Watson; Aggrey Kibenge and Dr YK Nsubuga of Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports; journalists and staff at The Guardian; and the staff of Straight Talk Foundation, which provided administrative support to Mvule Trust and sexuality education to its beneficiaries.

For this report, we thank researchers Stella Abwol, Colline Atala, Joyce Nakia, Jockus Kabairwe, Simon Butsatsa, Elia Alitia, Robert Chaciga, Ronald Hakiza, Florence Kyokusiima, Emily Awor, and Phillip Orinyo. Professor David Chapman of the University of Minnesota, preeminent scholar of bursaries for girls in Africa, kindly gave comments.

Finally, immense credit is given to Josephine Abalo, who has run Mvule Trust with integrity since 2006; Mary Achom, Mvule Trust's field worker, counsellor and data officer; and Fred Mwesigwa, the transport officer. All three were indispensable in conducting the tracer study.

We also would like to acknowledge the heads of institutions that hosted our students. At the dissemination of the findings of this report in October 2012, we heard from, among others, Dr Wilson Kasolo of the National Forestry College and Alfred Oluk, Director of the Lira Medical Laboratory Training School. They spoke of an impact we did not investigate. By funding many students at a time and paying lump sums of fees by cheque – in contrast to the small cash payments by parents that trickle in over the semester – Mvule Trust gave these institutions working capital with which they made improvements. The laboratory school, for instance, was able to move out of rented premises and build its first administration block, tile its lab and buy stools for the computer lab (open to the public) with Mvule funds. This was a positive contribution that we did not know that we had made.

Finally, immense credit is given to Josephine Abalo, who has run Mvule Trust with integrity since 2006; Mary Achom, Mvule Trust's field worker, counsellor and data officer; and Fred Mwesigwa, the transport officer. All three were indispensable in conducting the tracer study.

Foreword

This is not just another report by an NGO on education in Africa. This study – rare if not unique in the aid world - has traced young Ugandans who have been given secondary or tertiary school scholarships by Mvule Trust since 2006. Mvule sought out adolescents, especially girls, who had completed primary school or O or A levels but could not afford to go on. Some 2500 were given scholarships, and we traced the progress of more than 430, drilling down into what prevented them from going to and staying in school and what happened to them, and their families, once they did.

It revealed a wealth of detail about the day-to-day lives, hopes and attitudes of ordinary Ugandans. Exceeding our most ambitious dreams, education utterly transformed the lives of individual students, offering them a future that is closed to those who do not go to school. And in an unexpected ripple effect, it also transformed families and communities. Remarkably, having one child in school often inspired families to find school fees for others. Mvule students also passed on their knowledge and ambition to siblings and neighbours' children. And once they graduated, they almost always paid for an average two siblings to go to school and built houses for their parents.

These findings come at a crucial time for Africa. When I taught in a rural Ugandan school 40 years ago, almost none of the parents could read and write but did not feel particularly disadvantaged. Most of the children that I taught were the first in their families to learn. Today to be without education is to be severely disadvantaged. But we were shocked to find that less than 20% of the mothers of the Mvule O level students had completed primary school. It seems that little educational progress has been made in those four decades. Today, as African economies grow faster and faster, the illiterate will become poorer and even more marginalised. As one Mvule girl said: "These days are for those who are educated".

This remarkable report shows just how difficult it is for girls from poor families to stay in school. It also gives glimpses of astonishing courage and despair that are deeply moving. One girl said: "I was an outstanding (school) fee defaulter. So when Mvule Trust asked the academic registrar about needy students, he thought of me, an abduction survivor from a war-ravaged area."

But it was not easy. Rumours went around some villages that Mvule was recruiting for devil worship or prostitution. Mvule girls were often mocked. But its counsellors urged them to keep their eyes on the prize, and most came through with dignity, achieving their dream of raising the education level of their family.

Nor was it cheap. To find, select and support a student through even a modest upcountry boarding school for four years cost about $1780. That is the price. And after all the UK and US governments spend about $10,000 per student in secondary education each year.

The study showed how education affected other aspects of life. It is well known that girls who are at school are less likely to get pregnant or married early. So we asked about best friends from primary school who did not make it to secondary. The contrast was like night and day: most had five children already. The study also found that, contrary to accepted wisdom, boys who became educated were anxious to have a learned wife, not an illiterate one.

Too many aid donors and agencies remain in offices in African capital cities and accept whatever statistics they are given. Every government wants to announce that all its children are in school. But trips to the poorer suburbs of capitals or distant rural areas tell a different story. The figures are not as high as governments and aid donors like to believe, and the drop-out rate is phenomenal.

This report shows that given the funding and effective support structures, education can be made available to the children of the poor, a gift that will then be passed on and never lost. I have always believed that the most effective aid is that spend on education. In this report we have the evidence.

Richard Dowden
Director, The Royal African Society and Mvule Trustee

Introduction by Cathy Watson

I set up Mvule Trust in late 2005, after receiving an offer of $5 million from philanthropist Lisbet Rausing for any work with children in Africa. Lisbet could not have known then how she would directly pay for almost 2,500 young people to be in school – about 9,800 school years – indirectly benefit another 5,000 siblings (at least two per recipient by our reckoning), inspire neighbours to educate their children (possibly another 1,000 in school), and give hope and often improved living conditions to hundreds of parents.

Nor did any of us know then the extent to which we would delay early marriages and early births and therefore avert deaths of young mothers – more ripples of keeping girls in school. All told, we directly paid for the education of 150 teachers, 145 foresters and agriculturalists, and 370 health workers. Indirectly, we 'created' another 300 or so young people in those professions, in the sense that we paid for their O or A levels, and then they found their way from there.

I had been living in Uganda since 1986, first as a journalist and then as a 'social entrepreneur'. I started a youth newspaper called Straight Talk, which grew into an NGO, which helped adolescents understand their bodies and emotions and avoid HIV. When Lisbet made the offer, I opted to educate girls. Straight Talk was about ideas. I wanted Mvule Trust to be concrete.

Scholars like Alain Mingat and Jee-Peng Tan (1996) assert that, in low income countries, primary education is the most "socially profitable" level of education in which to intervene. But Uganda had commenced Universal Primary Education in 1998, so in 2006 secondary education seemed to be the greatest need: only 16% of Ugandan adolescents aged 13-18 were attending secondary school. (UBOS & Macro International Inc. 2007)

Initially we gave grants to the Foundation for African Women's Education (FAWE), World Vision, ADRA, the Ugandan NGO, UWESO and to two radical schools, Cornerstone and URDT, to support about 1500 young people – 75% girls and 25% boys – in secondary school. We paid for some labs, libraries, solar lighting and energy-conserving stoves. But 75% of our funds went on school fees. In 2007 the Ugandan government started a form of Universal Secondary Education (USE) that removed fees for the first year of secondary school, S1. As a result, we took no new students in S1 and started paying for girls and a few boys at A level and in tertiary institutions. We put so many girls into Uganda's forestry college that we increased female enrolment from 15% to 30%.

We focused on the remotest and poorest areas: the Luo-speaking north, emerging from war; West Nile, bordered by Congo and Sudan; pastoralist Karamoja and Teso, the latter having suffered rebels, cattle-rustlers, two floods and a drought since 2003; and the districts of Kasese and Bundibugyo. The latter had only ever produced one doctor, who died in the Ebola epidemic of 2007. The outlier was Kisoro. Inhabited by socially conservative cousins of the Rwandese, the district had our lowest pregnancy and drop out rate. In 2009, we started managing all aspects of the scholarships ourselves.

This report is not the story of an NGO, however, but an effort to shed light on the impact of scholarships and education. Scholarship schemes, because they track the same individuals year after year, are a rare opportunity to see what education does.

Education is strangely unfashionable. The loosest Millennium Development Goal has been education, which for many years reported success on getting children into primary school, ignoring that most were learning little and dropping out before completing. Despite the plethora of proof that education, among its many benefits, improves children's health, increases economic development, life expectancy and social cohesiveness, and reduces crime and birth rates, development circles are weary of it. Education is not an 'innovation' like microfinance, which when Mvule Trust was starting, was believed to alleviate poverty with loans of $10. It is a long and costly haul.

Over the years, Mvule Trust spent $450 a year per secondary student – in line with CAMFED, which spends $288-550 per year of high school per recipient (https://camfed.org/donate/appeals) and the Earth Institute, Ericsson and Millennium Promise partnership, Connect to Learn, which spends $600. (https://connecttolearn.zissousecure.com/donate/2012-holiday) These sums far exceed the cost of microfinance or the $110 per person per year that Sachs' Millennium Villages claim fundamentally changes lives (www.unmillenniumproject.org/mv/mv_faq.htm). This tracer study, however, shows that education not only

Education not only unequivocally transforms the life of the child on the bursary, but also positively influences the lives of his or her siblings, parents and even neighbours.

unequivocally transforms the life of the child on the bursary, but also positively influences the lives of his or her siblings, parents and even neighbours. So the $350–$600 a scholarship helps not just one person, but as many as five. A true figure for the cost of the Mvule Trust intervention might be closer to $100 per person per year.

Such sums are trifling, compared to the investment that the rich world makes in adolescents: the US government spends $10,600 per high school student per year (US Census Bureau, 2012) while the British government spends a similar equivalent of US$10,013 (OECD, 2012).

In the struggle to raise enrolment in poor countries, scholar David Chapman notes that "Perhaps the sharpest debate is between (a) those who argue that the most appropriate way to reduce school costs to families is for international organizations to directly subsidize the costs of education in selected countries, thereby allowing the government to abolish school fees, and (b) those who argue for a more targeted scholarship program, in which only those most in need of financial assistance receive it". (Chapman and Mushlin, 2008)

Mvule Trust does not believe that scholarships are superior to USE. Ideally, donors will support governments to lower the cost of secondary education and scholarship schemes will continue. Many people in the wealthy world have an intense desire to help youth in poverty to stay in school, particularly girls – witness The Guardian appeal in 2009, which raised $500,000 for Mvule Trust and the resilience during recession of donations to child sponsorship organizations. (Kennedy, 2009) "For millions of households in wealthy countries, international child sponsorship programs represent the most intimate and direct form of involvement with the poor in the developing world," write American scholars Wydick, Glewwe and Rutledge (forthcoming). This is unlikely to change, so it is important to know more about them and do them well.

Furthermore, where USE exists, such as in Uganda, enrolment remains low, partly because less than half of children complete primary school, but also because the government spends less than $100 per secondary student per year (UNESCO, 2011). And seven years into USE, about 900 sub-counties still do not have a USE secondary school. (Personal communication, Dr YK Nsubuga)

Scholarships are somewhat unjust since they are never enough for all those who need them. Anxious not to single out a few children in a village, NGOs like Plan International and Save the Children have shifted from sponsoring individuals to pooling funds, often raised on behalf of individual children, to improve life for everyone. World Vision states that, "The best way to change a child's life is to change the community in which that child lives". (http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/sponsor/learn-about-sponsorship) In some cases, however, World Vision gives certain benefits to the sponsored child, such as school fees, that are not available to other children.

Another approach to increasing enrolment is conditional cash transfers (CCTs) to families if their child attends school. CCTs and the pooling of donations to help all children in a community can seem less individualistic and possibly more effective. In contrast, scholarships can seem like dowdy old-fashioned charity. One study of Oportunidades, the Mexican CCT programme, found that receiving these CCTs for 5.5 years increased the number of years a child stayed in school by 0.8-1 year. Another found that it increased formal schooling by 0.66 years. (I could not find any studies on how many extra years children stay in school under the World Vision-type pooling approach.)

So how many extra years of school do individual child sponsorship programmes confer? Economists Wydick, Glewwe and Rutledge (forthcoming) followed up on 10,144 individuals sponsored by Compassion International in Bolivia, Guatemala, India, Kenya, the Philippines and Uganda, the largest study of child sponsorship to date. They found that scholarships to individuals increased years of completed schooling by 1.53 years on average – greater than Opportunidades. The impact was highest in countries where 'years of school attended' was lowest. In Uganda, sponsorship conferred an additional 3.12 years.

Wydick et al. also found that individual child sponsorship delayed age of marriage and childbearing for the sponsored individual, increased years of education for non-sponsored siblings, and created "positive spillover effects" for other children in the village. Finally, "formerly sponsored children (were) much more likely to send remittances to parents and other siblings than non-sponsored children".

This is not to say that scholarships for individuals are better than CCTs (or the pooled approach about which we know less). CCTs impose conditions such as immunization, so they work on other areas besides education. Nevertheless, the data of Wydick and colleagues show that scholarship schemes, like Mvule Trust, are relevant. Mvule Trust was excited to find that its scholarships also delayed marriage and childbearing, increased years of education for siblings, had spillover to village mates and caused strong support for parents (remittances).

Scholarships have an impact from the moment they are received, Mvule Trust found. As the child starts and continues in school, they change the family's calculation about education – what appeared a poor use of money becomes attractive. "Education is seen as an investment", writes Harvard's Richard Murnane, "because it entails costs in the present and because it increases productive capacity and income … of the educated individual … in the future. Families need to consider the private costs and benefits when choosing how to allocate scarce family resources." (Murnane et al., 2001)

The study threw up findings that we did not expect, for instance, that some villages suspected us of recruiting girls for sex work and that some girls felt bewitched by neighbours envious of their scholarship. It also uncovered little known benefits of education, such as the investment that educated young people make in their natal families. One of development's most famous statistics is that an educated girl will invest almost all of her future income in her family. Nike uses it in its Girl Effect campaign (www.girleffect.org/learn/faq) and Connect to Learn echoes it: "When a girl is educated, she can earn 25% more income, 90% of which she'll invest in her family and community." http://www.connecttolearn.org/Our-Work/Scholarships)

What Mvule Trust has found, however, is that educated girls – and boys – pour their earnings first into their parents, brothers and sisters. "I have built a house for my parents," said a girl, 24, whose family lost everything – "cups, plates, clothes" – to rebels. She earned $150 a month from her first job after forestry college and spent it on "a house that not even a bullet can pass through."

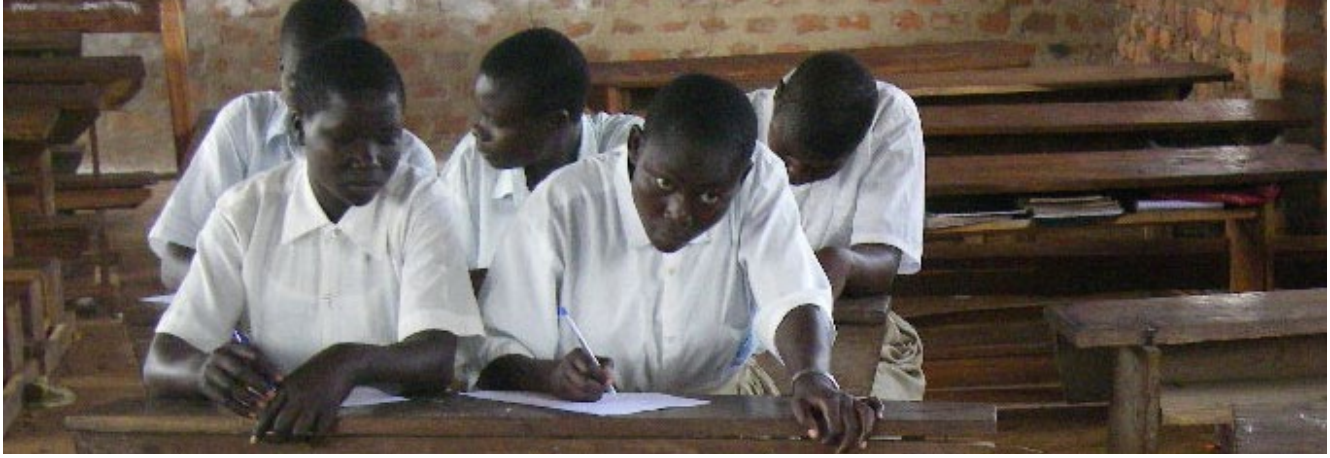
Mvule Trust was astounded by what beneficiaries claimed the scholarship had done for their families. Wydick, Glewwe and Rutledge (forthcoming) found that, on average, siblings of sponsored children stayed in school for an additional 0.53 years. Mvule Trust's impact may have been greater: almost all beneficiaries said that their younger siblings were in school because the scholarship freed up money and because they acted as role models. Later, beneficiaries who got jobs directly paid for about two siblings each in school.

Good as all this was, it seems hard to believe that it can explain the extent of the effect that beneficiaries related. MIT economist Esther Duflo (2012) studied a programme in West Bengal in which participants were given a few livestock or poultry. After it ended, the families were saving, eating and earning more, working harder, and had better mental health than the control group. The sale of milk, eggs or meat could not account for this. Duflo could only conclude that optimism and hope, caused by the programme, had unlocked their energy.

Similarly, Mvule Trust concludes that much of its impact was due to optimism and hope. People with hard lives and who were initially mistrustful, received help for something beyond their dreams. "My parents used to see education as a mountain that was too difficult to climb," said a boy. This helped to galvanize the entire family and often the neighbourhood. There is a lot to be excited about with scholarships and education.

Most beneficiaries were well on the way to escaping poverty. The exceptions were those that left school before O levels. As Peter Uvin (2009) notes about Burundi, "The economic benefits of education are much more of an all or nothing nature – not a gradual process – than is usually acknowledged. It is not as if each year of schooling makes (a youth) one-thirteenth better off. Rather, after one passes the level at which one can read and write, there is a long plateau of few increased personal quality of life gains, and then a dramatic increase after tenth grade, and especially after completion of high school." Mvule Trust saw this leap after O levels, the equivalent of tenth grade, with more beneficiaries earning over $1.25 a day, the poverty threshold, and heading into secure jobs.

Mvule Trust hopes that this study will be food for thought for educationalists, development groups and those wanting to conduct scholarship schemes. Scholarships, well targeted and administered, can bring about social change. The true range of social benefits of education is yet to be known.



©MVULE TRUST

CHAPTER 1
THE SEARCH FOR FORMER STUDENTS

Tracer studies in education are rare. It is a given that education is good, so former students are not often sought. Tracer studies are also laborious, requiring weeks in the field. For reasons of cost and time, NGOs and development agencies usually move on without looking back.

World Bank project appraisal documents (PADs) "occasionally refer to 'tracer studies' and 'longitudinal studies' that would be useful in assessing outcomes", says *Girls' Education in Africa: What Do We Know About Strategies That Work?* (Kane, 2004). But, notes the report, "it is difficult to find out whether they have been carried out. One indication that they may not have been (is that), … in the preparation of new PADs, lessons from these longitudinal and tracer studies are almost never mentioned."

This chapter examines how Mvule Trust located scholarship recipients and provides comparative data on them.

Methodology

Mvule Trust is not a research body, but rather a micro NGO run day by day by two young Ugandans who themselves studied on scholarships. So it felt its way forward on the tracer, led by the co-author of this study, Charles Opolot-Okurut, professor of education from Uganda's Makerere University, a once august institution that today is swamped by 35,000 students up from 3000 in 1970.

Even though Mvule Trust had kept in touch with many beneficiaries, it still had many unanswered questions, including:

- Were beneficiaries genuinely needy? Could they have completed their studies without the scholarship?
- What happened to siblings? Did the scholarship make it more or less likely for them to stay in school?
- How did parental attitudes to education affect persistence? Did the parents' meetings help?
- Were there negative consequences, such as loneliness or loss of friendships?
- What do those who have finished school do, what do they earn and how do they spend it?
- Did supplies such as calculators and sanitary pads improve performance?
- Where did students perform best? Boarding, day, single sex or mixed schools?
- Why do girls generally perform worse than boys – despite guaranteed school fees?
- Did the scholarship delay sexual debut, marriage and childbearing?
- Did it make girls less or more marriageable, raise or lower bride price, or affect students' attitude towards family size?
- What do students recall from the sexual and reproductive health workshops?
- What do students say about counselling by Mvule staff?
- What caused beneficiaries to leave school? Who were they? What happened?
- What happened to the beneficiary's best friend in primary school? Where is he or she now?
- How did Mvule Trust beneficiaries fare academically compared to other students?

This document examines some of these questions in greater depth than others: a hazard of a study is a mountain of data.

By the time the study commenced, Mvule Trust had supported over 2,100 young people in education. Some groups were too small to generate larger insights, such as 20 young people supported for vocational studies in southeastern Uganda. So Mvule Trust decided to focus on four larger and more homogenous groups:

- 108 *S4 non-completers*, 99 females and 9 males, who had been taken on in the first year of secondary school (S1) in 2006 but left school before sitting their O level exams at the end of S4.
- 251 *O level completers*, 185 females, 66 males, who sat their O levels in 2009. Mvule Trust did not assist them further either because they scored poorly or fell out of touch.
- 205 *A level completers* – all girls – who were taken on for A levels in 2007.
- 222 young people, 214 females, 8 males, to whom Mvule Trust awarded scholarships to study professional technical subjects such as forestry and lab technology.

Deciding which of these 786 individuals to trace began with a search of Mvule Trust's database. At the point of entry to the scheme, Mvule Trust had captured information about every beneficiary, including distance from home to water source, on a bio-data form. Often the student had drawn a map to his or her home. These would turn out to be of less use than going to their old school and asking their whereabouts.

A questionnaire and interview guides were designed and tested. The questionnaire was tailored to each group. For example, the S4 non-completers were probed about why they left school, while professional graduates were probed about work.

The interview guide was semi-structured. The researchers, young radio journalists, interviewed a subset from each group. Trained by the professor, they asked, "tell me your story" about topics such as "your best friend from primary school". One hundred and forty-two beneficiaries – nine S4 non-completers, 62 O level completers, 29 A level completers and 42 professionals – were interviewed, generating over 1,000 pages when transcribed.

In tracer studies, sampling needs to be random or the research may suffer from selection bias. It might favour, for instance, those still single or most desperate for a further scholarship. Mvule Trust attempted stratified random sampling for the professional group. But, for the others, it used a mix of purposeful and snowball sampling. "The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases", says Patton (1990). Snowball sampling is a technique where a few individuals with required characteristics are spotted and asked to locate others eligible for inclusion, who then find others with similar characteristics, and so on. (Opie, 2004.)

Ultimately, however, Mvule Trust's approach was a pragmatic "Let's talk with as many as we can", the researchers often sampling those they found. Fieldwork for the A level and professional groups took place in October-November 2011 and for the S4 non-completers and O level completers in March 2012.

Initial findings

The tracer study aimed to sample 60% of the 786 individuals, totaling 472. In all, it spoke with 55% or 433, as follows:

- S4 non-completers – 51 were located out of 108 individuals or 47%
- O level completers, –174 were located out of 251 individuals or 69%
- A level completers – 85 were located out of 203 students or 42%
- Students who took professional courses – 133 were located out of 222 or 55%.

The vast majority (89.3%) of the respondents was female (Table 1.1). The youngest were the O level completers, of whom almost 40% were aged 18-20. The oldest were the professionals with 83% aged 24 or over. (Table 1.2)

All the beneficiaries were from needy homes. But the S4 non-completers and the O level completers were needier than the A level and professional students.

Table 1.1 Respondents by group and gender

Group	Number	Number and % female	Number and % male
S4 non-completers	51	45 (88.2%)	6 (11.7%)
O level completers	174	142 (81.6%)	32 (18.4%)
A level completers	85	83 (97.4%)	2 (2.4%)
Professionals	123	115 (93.5%)	8 (6.5%)
Total	433	387 (89.3%)	46 (10.6%)

Table 1.2 Age analysis

Group	AGE					
Cohort	18-20	21-23	24-26	27-29	30-32	>32
S4 non-completers	12 (24.0%)	28 (56.0%)	10 (20.0%)	-	-	-
O level completers	59 (37.9%)	84 (54.6%)	13 (6.9%)	-	-	-
A level completers	3 (3.5%)	61 (24.8%)	21 (24.8%)	-	-	-
Professionals	-	21 (17.0%)	74 (60.2%)	21 (17.1%)	3 (2.4%)	4 (3.2%)

Table 1.3 Comparative background data on the four groups

	S4 non-completers	O level completers	A level completers	Professional qualification
Total orphan	29.4%	12.6%	17.9%	17.9%
Partial orphan	45.1%	47.1%	33.4%	21.0%
Lived in mud house prior to scholarship	94.1%	75.7%	86.0%	67.2%
Polygamous family	54.0%	47.1%	68.0%	44.3%
One meal a day prior to scholarship	34.0%	20.3%	21.4%	17.0%
Father did not complete primary	50.0%	56.1%	27.0%	22.0%
Mother did not complete primary	82.3%	82.2%	50.0%	54.5%
Fathers are farmers	71.4%	73.3%	55.0%	40.0%

All the beneficiaries were from needy homes. But the S4 non-completers and the O level completers were needier than the A level and professional students. The neediest were the S4 non-completers, of whom 74.5% had lost one or both parents and 94% lived in a mud hut at the start of the scholarship. Overall, the professionals were the least likely to be orphans (38.9% being partial or total orphans compared to over 50% for the other groups), have a father who did not complete primary school, or have eaten just once a day prior to the scholarship. Still, 54% of their mothers had not finished primary school and 67% had grown up in a mud hut. (Table 1.3)

The primary leaving exam (PLE) results of the four groups mirrored neediness. The poorest – the S4 non-completers – had the lowest PLE results: only 2% with a Division 1 pass (Division 1 is the highest). The professional and A level group had more than twice the Division 1 passes of the O level group. (Table 1.4)

In all groups, over half the beneficiaries said they were now the best-educated person in their families. (Table 1.5)

Many recipients continued education after the scholarship without Mvule support: from 43% of S4 non-completers to 72% of the A level completers. (Table 1.6)

The professional group was most likely to be married or cohabitating: almost 40%. A level education had the strongest effect on delaying marriage with just 6% married, divorced or cohabiting. (Table 1.7)

Slightly over 40% of S4 non-completers and professional beneficiaries had produced children, compared to about 17% of O level and A level completers. It is a measure of the poverty of the S4 non-completers that, although far younger than the professional group, they were twice as likely – 17.7% versus 8.9% – to have had two or more children. (Table 1.8)

Finally in all groups, the proportion with children exceeds the proportion that is married or cohabiting. About 22% of the S4 non-completers are single parents, three times the proportion of single parenthood in the other three groups. (Table 1.9)

Several points emerge from this data. First, the higher up the education system that Mvule Trust intervened, the less needy recipients were. However, even the somewhat better off A level and professional students were not likely to have studied further without Mvule Trust.

Second, the students' baseline educational results – the PLE – were lowest for the poorest students and highest for the wealthiest. This was as expected. "The relationship between family socioeconomic status and the academic performance of children is well established in sociological research", note researchers Considine and Zappala. (2002).

Third, there is much less marriage than the common belief – that girls cannot stay in the village unwed for long – might predict. Even among the S4 non-completers less than 30% were married, despite being three or more years out of school.

Fourth, scholarships appear to lift young people over a hurdle in their education at a critical time. Once over it, the student often carries on, paid for by the very family that felt unable to pay for school earlier. Scholarships can change the ecology of a family.

Limitations

The study did not interview non-funded students in the same schools, non-funded siblings, parents, teachers or individuals in households that did not receive a scholarship. Doing so would have produced a more 360 degree view of the scholarships.

Table 1.4 Primary leaving exam results by group

	Division 1	Division 2	Division 3
S4 non-completer	2.0%	84.0%	16.0%
O level completer	7.5%	76.9%	15.6%
A level completer	22.8%	67.1%	10.1%
Professional qualification	17.6%	69.6%	12.7%

Scholarships appear to lift young people over a hurdle in their education at a critical time. Once over it, the student often carries on, paid for by the very family that felt unable to pay for school earlier. Scholarships can change the ecology of a family.

Table 1.5 Most educated in the family by group

	% of beneficiaries who said that he or she is most educated in family	% of beneficiaries who identified another family member as the most educated person
S4 non-completer	57.1%	29% brother, 8.2% sister, 6.1% father
O level completer	67.5%	20.7% brother, 8.3% sister, 3% father
A level completer	74.7%	14.5% brother, 7.2% sister, 2.4% father, 1.2% mother
Professional qualification	55.4%	21.5% sister, 15.7% brother, 7.4% father

Table 1.6 Return to school without support from Mvule Trust by group

	Number and % that went back to school
S4 non-completer	22 out of 51 or 43%
O level completer	94 out of 174 or 53%
A level completers	57 out of 77 or 72%

Table 1.7 Comparison of marital status between the four groups

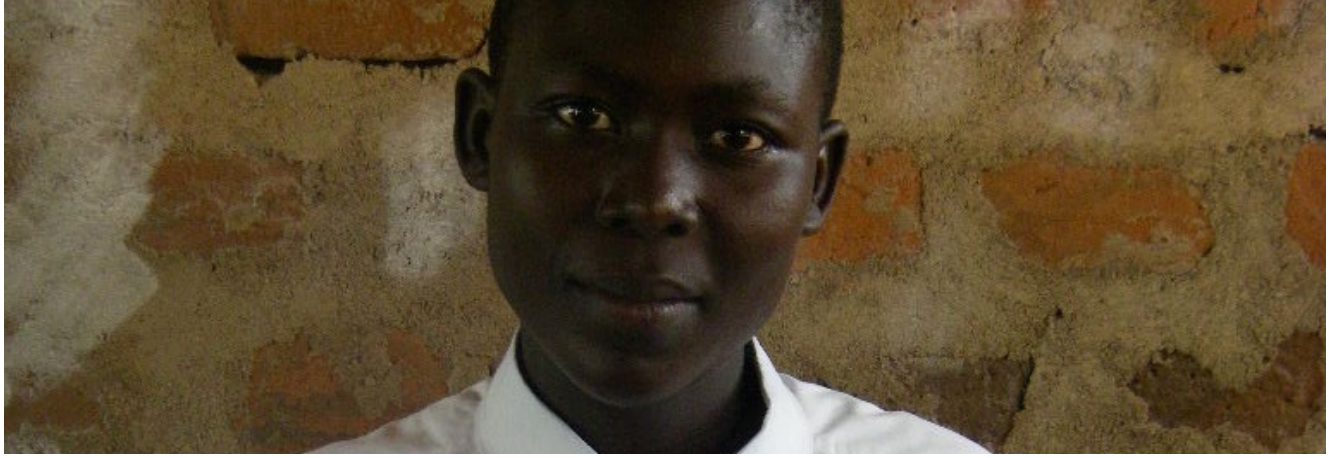
	Single	Married	Divorced	Cohabiting
S4 non-completer	72.4%	19.5%	5.9%	2.0%
O level completer	87.4%	10.7%	1.3%	0.6%
A level completer	94.1%	4.7%	4.2%	4.2%
Professional qualification	61.8%	33.3%	0.8%	4.1%

Table 1.8 Comparison of number of children of beneficiaries by group

	No child	One child	Two or more	Total that have become parents
S4 non-completer	59.6%	25.5%	17.7%	43.2%
O level completer	83.0%	15.7%	1.3%	17.0%
A level completer	83.5%	7.1%	9.4%	16.5%
Professional qualification	54.5%	36.6%	8.9%	45.5%

Table 1.9 Single parenthood

	Married/cohabiting	Have become parents	Single parents
S4 non-completer	21.5%	43.2%	21.7%
O level completer	11.3%	17.0%	5.7%
A level completer	8.9%	16.5%	7.6%
Professional qualification	37.4%	45.5%	8.1%



©MVULE TRUST

CHAPTER 2
THE WORKINGS OF A SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

There is little literature on how 'to do' scholarships. NGOs make their own way, often landing on an approach and defending it. Because poverty is so profound in Africa, it is easy to find needy adolescents and justify almost any process. There are no comparative studies of the best way to administer scholarships.

Mvule Trust also developed its own way to work. After selection, described below, it found places for students in schools as near their homes as possible and visited them in school twice a year. On each visit Mvule Trust would talk with the head teacher, bursar and, if available, a teacher in charge of sponsored students. It would counsel individual Mvule students and meet them as a group. They ranged from one or two to 20 per school. "They gave us good advice like loving school and protecting ourselves against diseases," recalled one girl. Most students received some supplies. In addition, Mvule Trust provided sexual and reproductive health sessions, often for the entire school. Finally, it hosted 529 parents to two-day workshops. All along it was concerned with the integrity of its system and winning community trust.

This chapter looks at Mvule Trust's selection process and provision of supplies; the first emerges fairer and less able to be tampered with than expected, while supplies emerge as more essential than expected. It discusses the types of schools the beneficiaries attended and Mvule's counselling, sexual health talks and parent sensitizations.

Selecting beneficiaries

Mvule Trust used several methods to locate young people. In 2006, the primary school leavers, who became the S4 non-completers and O level completers in this study, sent in letters of application, encouraged by teachers who had heard of the scholarship through the district education office. Mvule staff then travelled to the field to interview those whose applications were selected. The aim was to verify the applications and assess them personally; not all applicants went through.

For the A level and professional group, Mvule Trust looked for young people who were staying at home or dropping out of school. It ran announcements in churches, mosques and local language newspapers and on the radio. "I was on the point of giving up," said one girl. "But when I went to pick up my O level results, a teacher told me that there is this scholarship that they are advertising on the radio and that I should try my luck. And that is how I got it."

Mvule Trust looked particularly for young people, who had sat their O or A level exams two or three years earlier. Calling for those who were still at home several years after their exams eliminated those with relatives who might support them. Many were serving as substitute teachers, which weighed in their favour.

Mvule Trust also heeded suggestions from teachers in institutions, where it already had beneficiaries, about students enrolled but struggling to stay there. "The scholarship scheme found me at school," said one girl. "I had no fees and my father had piled debts. I was always thinking that I will be chased away. The headmistress, seeing that I was bright, gave me a form to fill and that

"I was on the point of giving up. But when I went to pick up my O level results, a teacher told me that there is this scholarship that they are advertising on the radio and that I should try my luck."

is how I got the scholarship." "I was an outstanding fees defaulter," said another girl. "So when Mvule Trust asked the academic registrar about needy students, he thought of me, an abduction survivor from a war-ravaged area."

Picking up students on the verge of dropping out reduced the waste of parents' investment in getting a young person into an institution and found young people with the drive to stay in school.

Although the letter application system located needy children, a more experienced Mvule Trust today would replace that by visits to schools, conversations about needy pupils with teachers, and examination results. When it started work with The Guardian in January 2010, Mvule Trust obtained a list of all pupils in Katine sub-county who had sat their PLE in 2009 and searched hut to hut for the 25 best. The top girl had already conceived and been married off. But Mvule took the next 24 girls and the top boy.

In contrast, for the older students, today Mvule Trust would continue to locate them through public appeals and working with educationalists, but also supplement this method with district exam result lists.

What Mvule Trust did not do is follow the approach of NGOs that recruit students through village structures. Community meetings cost funds that Mvule opted to spend on scholarships. Also, it is hard to see how members of village committees avoid choosing their own relatives, who may be equally needy. Chapman & Mushlin (2008), describing the US Ambassadors' Girls' Scholarship Program in Sierra Leone, note "…in most of the communities, a high proportion of selection committee members were also parents or guardians of … scholarship recipients, though these children qualified under the criteria …" Until a comparative study is conducted, it will not be known which system is best.

Mvule Trust succeeded in finding beneficiaries who were deprived, as below. The UDHS (Uganda Demographic and Health Survey) and Uganda Bureau of Statistics' National Household Survey indicate national figures for comparison.

- 39% to 75% of Mvule beneficiaries were partial or total orphans. Nationally, about 35% of older adolescents are orphaned or vulnerable. (UBOS & Macro International Inc. 2007)
- 49% to 68% came from polygamous households. Nationally, about 40% of women aged 35-40 have co-wives. (UBOS & Macro International Inc. 2007)
- 64% to 94% of their families were dwelling in mud houses before the scholarship. The national figure is 46%. (UBOS 2009/10)

Of the mothers of the S4 non-completers and O level completers, 83% had not completed primary school. That national figure is 78%. Over 50% of the fathers and about 18% of the mothers of the A level and professional groups had completed secondary school – higher than the national figures of 11% and 4.2% respectively. (UBOS & Macro International Inc. 2007) But many of their parents were deceased.

Mvule located the very needy partly by working in Uganda's poorest regions. Just 5% of 13-18 year olds in the north and 8% of 13-18 year olds in the west were in secondary school, compared to 44% in Kampala and 29% in the central region. "Poverty, and factors related to poverty, play an important role in whether children are sent to secondary school," states the UBOS & Macro International Inc. 2007.

"Mvule found me at home. My father had stopped looking for my fees. A student who is poor has no soap and is laughed at by other students because she has not bathed. She is scared because she has to spend the whole day without eating. When the scholarship came, they took us to a day school. Walking there, men would touch our breasts without our permission. When I told Mvule, they took us to boarding school. The knowledge I got from school will remain with me until I die."

Girl funded for O levels

Mvule also used other indicators of need, such as the child staying at home after completing P7. Almost one third – 14 out of 51 – of S4 non-completers had stayed at home for over a year before receiving the scholarship. (Table 2.1)

Of the O level completers, 17% had stayed at home for over a year. (Table 2.2) This figure was 20% for A level completers and 45% for the professional group.

Another flag of distress was if a child had re-sat P7. "I repeated just to stay in school," said one girl. Five of 51 S4 non-completers and 14 of the 174 O level completers (data not shown) had spent two or more years in P7. (Table 2.3)

Finally, Mvule Trust asked probing questions, developing an ear for veracity. Of the 174 O level completers, 68 had credible stories of having "no one" to pay their fees in S1:
"No one – that is why I started fishing to get money."
"No one because my guardian has nine children."
"No one since my mother struggled to send me to S1 and failed."
"No one – that is why I went to be a house girl in Kampala."

About 20 said they were trying to pay the fees themselves:
"With my brick laying skills."
"With my mother through selling cassava."

Death had deprived at least another ten of support:
"My uncle died in Somalia."
"My mother died of cirrhosis."

Table 2.1 Number of years that S4 non-completers stayed at home between finishing P7 and starting S1

	0 years	1 year	3 years	5 years	7 years	Total
Girl	33	7	3	1	1	45
Boy	4	2	0	0	0	6
Total	37	9	3	1	1	51

Table 2.2 Number of years that O level completers stayed at home between finishing P7 and starting S1

	0 years	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	11 years	Total
Girl	121	16	3	1	2	1	144
Boy	26	4	0	0	0	0	30
Total	147	20	3	1	2	1	174

Table 2.3 Number of times that S4 non-completers re-sat P7 and primary leaving exam

	Once	Twice	Three times	Total
Girl	42	3	0	45
Boy	4	1	1	6
Total	46	4	1	51

A level and professional students had stories of dropping in and out of school and missing weeks: "By mid term, the school would demand that you clear all the fees or not attend class or have meals," said one girl. "Once they sent us home for the money. I spent two weeks uprooting groundnuts, waiting for them to dry and then selling them. That is how I sat my exams. If I wanted books, I had to rear a hen and sell it."

The tracer study found scant suggestion that any of the 433 students traced did not merit the scholarship. More of a problem was that there were so many needy young people. Chapman & Mushlin (2008) have noted this. Describing the US Ambassadors' Girls' Scholarship Program in Sierra Leone as "successful in getting scholarships to girls who met the selection criteria," he explains that one "reason was the pervasive poverty of the recipient communities … the number of girls who qualified for scholarships far exceeded the number of available scholarships … those who received the scholarships deserved them, but … many non-recipients also met the selection criteria … the excess of eligible girls posed a serious dilemma."

Mvule funded a number of beneficiaries whose fathers were civil servants but whose families were overwhelmed by sickness, discord and many children. It felt that they should not be excluded because they were not from peasant families, or because their families were beset by social problems such as alcoholism.

The father of one beneficiary was a secondary school teacher. But he drank, had two wives and had children by additional women. "Daddy has 14 children," the beneficiary explained. "My mother does not live with him and has two children by different men, one of whom is me. She also has HIV. My father's wives are not educated and did not like him supporting me. I really had it tough. Mvule couldn't believe my story because my father is a secondary teacher. I prayed to make Mvule understand. Four days later they said – you have succeeded. Since then I got a free mind to read. I got 16 points on my A levels, which brought me to campus. I am now a happy person."

A final point about the selection process is that young people are often envisioned as 'in or out of school youth' – two distinct groups. But the reality is that needy youth are usually both in and out of school. A common pattern is to study through O levels and then make way for 'a follower':
"There was no money to take me to A level because, when anyone reaches S4, our mother tells us that 'I have no more money for you. I have to bring your sibling to your level first'."
"After S4, my father surrendered with my education so that he could help the other siblings to that level. I had no hope totally."

Alternatively, a student repeats lower, cheaper years of school, or moves schools to avoid settling fees. "My brother never found out what he got on his A levels because of his many debts," said a girl. "He passed but used to change schools every year because he would promise to pay fees but could not."

Maintaining integrity

Scholarships have a bad reputation because they are believed to be easy to subvert. Mvule Trust aimed for transparency and clarity in its processes and communications with students, schools, parents and districts.

The tracer study found no evidence of district officials or head teachers, for instance, trying to bend the scheme to their ends. Indeed, it found suggestions of the opposite. One beneficiary was the daughter of a district education officer, who had died. Even this well-connected child almost failed to continue after O levels. Her mother, a primary teacher, had eight biological children, plus nieces and nephews to care for; her father's land was lost when the family could not prove purchase. The girl crocheted mats to raise fees. She missed the first three weeks before Mvule Trust found her. No influential people interceded for her.

The tracer study detected only one case of double funding – a student who Mvule Trust funded for S5 and S6, during which she also received a scholarship from the school worth about $30 a month, which she used to support her family.

Gaining community confidence

Young people themselves were often amazed that outsiders would help people that they do not know and are not related to:
"I will be someone important as a result of Mvule Trust. They have behaved as if they do not have relatives!"

"Mvule Trust was not my neighbour. But when I applied, they came for me, yet they did not know me."

"Mvule Trust acted like a parent to us. It is only a parent who gives some things with no strings attached."

But villages could be deeply suspicious about outsiders educating young people with no apparent benefit to themselves. It might seem surprising that an NGO offering scholarships would not be welcomed with opened arms. But poverty trapped many villagers in suspicion. "Poor people feel that they are failures," explained one beneficiary. "When you tell them something that can help them, they will think that you are up to something bad. That is how bad poverty can be."

Indeed, frightening theories emerged about Mvule's motivations:
"When I got the scholarship, many people had a wrong concept," said a girl. "They heard a rumour that we were being recruited to be sex workers or wives. Because my mother is weak and I have a humble background, they used not to believe that I was at school. They could say I was practising prostitution in Kampala and that, when I become pregnant, I would abort. But now many believe that I am at school and tell me 'you will be our subcounty leader' because no one in the area has studied to my level."

"My grandmother was misled by other people that I was being taken by devil worshippers," said another girl.

Initially startled, Mvule Trust learnt to expect, and not be affected by such rumours. They diminished gradually, helped by regular visits, careful follow up, holding students to standards, keeping meticulous lists of beneficiaries, and dispassionately looking out for the well-being of beneficiairies.

"Those people of Mvule Trust helped me to get out of the village," said one S4 completer. "I had gone back to repeat P7 but they helped me to go to secondary school. They were very nice people and I think that they never had any mission behind because they did not ask for anything in return."

Scholastic materials and other supplies

Having selected needy youth, a constant dilemma was how much support to give besides fees. Should students also receive pocket money? Would this not create total dependency? Should families not supply sanitary towels?

Mvule Trust gave less than $20 worth of supplies per student per year. This modest amount was nevertheless a cornucopia when delivered to the school. The tracer study found that supplies had four strongly positive impacts.

Relief from worry, better concentration, peace of mind:
"Mvule Trust provided mosquito nets, geometric sets, books, pens and school uniforms. Those materials relieved my stress, gave me time to concentrate on my studies and really improved my concentration."

Regular attendance, improved participation: supplies meant that the beneficiary had what was needed for classwork (pens, notebooks) and the course (gumboots, lab coat, a saw for forestry) and could not be sent away for not having it. "They provided me with scholastic materials such as calculators and books. I was able to stay comfortably in school, attend and participate in class."

Something to share to reduce resentment: "We could share stationery and pens with other students, which created a good relationship gradually. And our mosquito nets were so long that if I was on the top bunk, it could reach all the way down and all of us could benefit."

"Mvule would advise us to take studies seriously and be a good example for our sisters. Because if you start misbehaving then everyone in the community will say, 'This one can do nonsense!'"

Protection from sex for things: the supplies liberated girls from using sex to fulfill basic needs: "The materials helped me to complete education because, if I lacked them, it would have prompted me to get into a relationship which would see me drop out." "The scholastic materials helped so much. If I had lacked and got them from a boy, he would in return ask me to pay with my life."

Despite the sharing, however, supplies made other students jealous: "On the day Mvule came, other students would be whispering 'they have brought them things'. They would rush to beg from us, yet they were the very ones calling us beggars."

Beneficiaries developed strategies for responding: "When the supplies came, they would say we are peasants licking others' shoes. But we would tell them that it is God's making to be helped." Many understood that the jealousy was triggered by other students' feelings of neglect: "They could say 'you are lucky to have people who care unlike some of us that have no one.'"

Not all categories of student received scholastic materials; Mvule Trust never supplied monthly sanitary pads. One nursing student received supplies only once. "My mother died when I was at school. I became a beggar to those from better off families. Some understood and could say she has no one to help her. They gave me some of their pads and soap, and that was how I survived." "Sometimes I lacked pads and materials," said another student nurse. "I would borrow from this friend today and that one tomorrow. Much as I did not hear them complain, neither did I enjoy it."

Boarding versus day and single sex versus mixed schools

Descriptions of scholarship schemes rarely dwell on the type of school the beneficiaries attend. But Mvule found that students performed better in boarding school.

Mvule Trust began in 2006 by favouring day schools. They are cheaper, and Mvule wanted to support local schools and more students and maintain family bonds. But within two years it moved the majority of students into boarding schools. Although austere, they at least had electricity and regular meals.

Students associated day school with not learning due to, among other factors, the long walk, sexual harassment on the way, and teacher absenteeism. "If you are a day scholar, it could rain and wet your books," said a girl, elaborating yet other challenges. "When someone falls sick, you are told to stay to nurse that person. Or before school, you have to dig or else you will not have food. So you dig, then prepare for school. You are always late and tired, which affects your concentration." "Because I was a day scholar," said another girl, "I would not have enough paraffin for reading books." Probably less than two percent of beneficiaries lived in homes with electricity and light to aid study in the evening.

The tracer study also investigated single sex versus mixed schools. Some girls preferred girl-only schools. "There you do not fear to participate because you are all girls together," said one, who became a policewoman. "Coming from a village school, a single sex school is better."

Others, however, preferred mixed boarding schools, frequently saying that boys could help with maths. But being with boys had drawbacks too. One girl, whose mixed boarding school's motto was "grow and serve," said, "The boys would tell us that now we had grown, we had to serve them."

Another girl said, "If I had remained in the mixed day school, I would not have got the points to go to university. I would have got much interference from boys. Boys like criticizing what girls say. I am happy that Mvule took me to a single sex boarding school."

Scholarship schemes need to think hard about what schools their students attend. Day schools may be a particularly bad choice for girls.

Sexual health sensitizations

Mvule Trust tried to reach all beneficiaries with sexual and reproductive health workshops. In secondary schools, it stressed delaying sex, but demonstrated condoms.

At the forestry and other colleges, where students were older, the focus was on healthy relationships, condoms, family planning and testing for HIV.
"Yeah, I remember the talks!" said a girl sponsored for A levels. "They would advise us to take studies seriously and be a good example for our sisters. Because if you start misbehaving then everyone in the community will look at you and say, 'This one can do nonsense!'"

"The talks really motivated me," said another. "Because getting pregnant while on a scholarship is like throwing money in water. You would have really disappointed the person giving you finances."

Even the girl S4 non-completers, over 20 of whom left because of pregnancy, remembered what they had heard:
"They told us to study hard and be disciplined."
"They told us to cooperate, concentrate on studies."
"They told us not to practise on the opposite sex."
"They talked about dangerous diseases and life without education."
"They said that we should be hardworking children and abstain from sex."

Indeed, most of the secondary school girls said the talks helped them abstain: "They helped me to know that I still have a lot of time to enjoy sex."
"When my boyfriend asked for unprotected sex, I was able to say NO."
"Even though we were in the same school, when my boyfriend demanded for sex, I was able to talk with him and until he took my side of abstinence."

Many claimed to be still delaying sex, years after the scholarship.
"The talks helped me abstain up to now even though I have a fiancé," said an A level girl.
"I have self-esteem and I have learnt to defend myself against boys and men. I am abstaining," said a girl who did not complete S4.

The emphasis on delaying sex seems correct in the local context; beneficiaries themselves described sexual relationships as incompatible with academic success. "The talks helped me avoid sex that would have hindered my dream and failed my future," said an A level girl.

"From the sexual health talk, we learnt how to maintain ourselves, behave in society and talk to men. If a man is talking to you, you have to face him directly, not be like a child. It should not be the man talking to you and you get grass and start chewing. I am maintaining my virginity and do not have a boyfriend. If you have many boyfriends, you can fail. We also talked about family size. If you have many children, it can be difficult to care for them and you may be forced to get a loan. If you fail to pay back, the money lender will sell your land and remove all the things from your house. Is that good? I prefer a small family."

Girl supported for O levels

"We had a sexual health talk. First, Mvule called its beneficiaries and warned us that if any girl gets pregnant or any boy makes a girl pregnant then they will be terminated, and Mvule will get another student, who is serious. Then they called the whole college and showed movies, and we discussed protection against HIV. I had been careful throughout my life, like I am faithful to my boyfriend at home and do not have any lover at the college. When I go back, we test for HIV and have protected sex. Even so such talks motivated me to continue. So I am sure of not breaking those rules and I will complete my course successfully."

Girl sponsored for forestry

"The talks left me free from HIV, made me a counsellor of others, and enabled me to progress in education. I have also not faced defilement charges," said one of the two A level boys.

Sex and boys were commonly offered as reasons why girls perform poorly despite having a scholarship. "It's automatic. Once you are in love you cannot do well with books," said an O level completer. "Earthly things like having many boyfriends can make you fail," said another.

Counselling

Besides sorting out logistics like examination board numbers, Mvule Trust's main interaction with beneficiaries consisted of listening and encouraging, counselling and mentoring. But Mvule did not just try to make the beneficiaries feel good. It also issued a caution. Girls recalled: "They talked about good performance and, if not, one will lose the scholarship."
"Mvule Trust used to say – if you conceive in school, be assured of losing your scholarship."

Mvule Trust gave beneficiaries a chance to improve academically and only insisted on effort, rather than excelling academically. It also readmitted girls with babies on a case-by-case basis. So its bark was worse than its bite. But many girls said that this clear message helped them to work hard and refuse sexual overtures. "I wanted to impress those who were paying my school fees," said an O level completer. "I wanted my life to be bright. So when boys would come, I would tell them that I am not interested." Boys were also terminated from the scheme if they impregnated a fellow student.

Parent meetings

A final plank in Mvule Trust's approach was parent meetings: "Those workshops helped me and my parents because they were telling me to hurry and marry," said a girl.

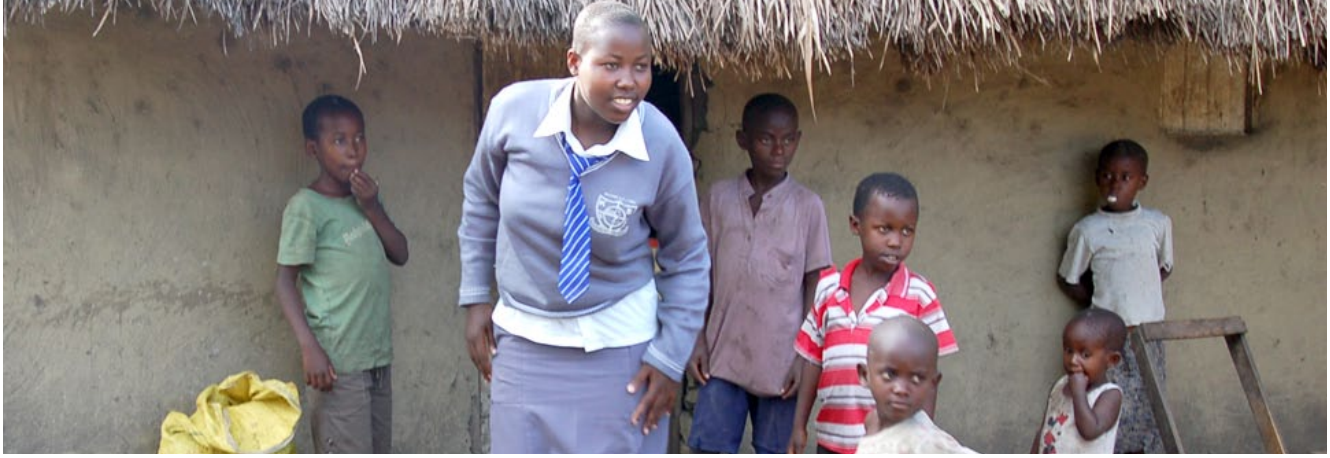
"They watched those films about HIV/STDs."
"My mother was advised to engage her children in income-generation," said an A level girl. "So she initiated me into baking pancakes. Now I buy my own pads."

Parents are often depicted as uninterested in educating girls and not comprehending the benefits of education. In fact, parents have immense experiential knowledge of their own – such as that girls often do conceive or drift off to marry. Workshops can help parents overcome these worries.

Equally, parents are stereotyped as more interested in educating boys. This too is an over-simplification. In the more affluent Ugandan districts, more girls than boys are in primary school, and only slightly more boys than girls in Uganda complete secondary school.

The study found parents needing conversations about boys too. "My parents attended a workshop and their attitude to education changed," said a boy, who later won a government scholarship to university. "They used to see educating a child as a mountain that was too difficult to climb, but when they got that advice, they got encouraged. They wanted me to be in school and tried their best."

NGO assumptions about parents are often patronizing, so content needs to be carefully thought out. More convincing for parents than any dialogue about the value of education was seeing their child bring home a salary thanks to his or her training. So Mvule wavered, asking itself – do we pay for ten more young people in teachers' college or parents' workshops? It was a question it never completely settled.



©MVULE TRUST

CHAPTER 3

POSITIVE IMPACTS: "There is now light in the family"

The Mvule Trust scholarships, as expected, were found to have had positive impacts on beneficiaries. Less expected were the positive impacts on siblings, parents and neighbours.

For instance, the example set by a successful Mvule beneficiary encouraged other young people to resume and/or continue in school. Beneficiaries often counsel others not to give up education. "Yes, I am a role model!" said a girl, who Mvule Trust funded for A levels, to the researcher, who found her at a primary school. "I had been invited by the district inspector to talk to P7 pupils. I hope you saw many girls coming to me. One was a girl whose parents wanted to force her into marriage. I have often visited the father. At first he told me that 'even educated women die' but later he gave up on her getting married. I was happy finding her still at school because I had challenged him on marrying that girl off." At least one girl was in school, who would have dropped out, if Mvule Trust had not funded this now feisty young woman.

This chapter also looks at the impact of the scholarship on marriage and childbearing

Impact on the beneficiary

Beneficiaries had moving stories of how the scholarship had transformed them. Change often began as soon as the scholarship was received. A girl who took A levels said, "Before I got the scholarship, I was locked in worries. I used to go into the thicket and cry. But when Mvule Trust gave me a chance to go to school, I was elevated from the grassroots. My life changed immediately."

A girl, now a lab technician said, "I was stranded with no hope. Someone came asking for any student who had done well in sciences. He saw my papers, and that's where happiness started. When I told my mother, she didn't believe me and said, 'if you are getting married, just tell me'. She didn't believe until she saw my books. She said 'there is now light in the family'."

A young man, now employed by Uganda's Virus Research Institute, described his journey: "My life has been a long way. I started by sleeping in a grass-thatched house having one meal a day. But now I am working and have even got a woman. I sleep in a permanent house where there is water. In the past, deep in the village, I burnt castor oil seeds to make a candle to read. Now I just switch on power."

Phrases like "that's where happiness started from" and "there is now light in the family" typify the breathless way that beneficiaries talked about being plucked out of the village to study. Getting an education requires super human effort for a rural person in poverty. Accordingly, beneficiaries often describe the scholarship in physical terms – it picked, molded, built, pulled and lifted them: "It opened a way," and "It pulled me from nowhere."

In addition to physical analogies, beneficiaries also used images of going from the dark to the light, shaking off dirt, dust and mud, and being relieved of a weight. "Mvule Trust raised me from the dust of helplessness to

"My siblings are encouraged by what I have done. I have never seen them saying I am not going to school today. Even if sick, they are determined to study."

helpfulness," "...from the dark to a very bright future," "...from mud into a shining person," "...from a tunnel and brought me to light." One girl said, "Mvule Trust has lifted the yoke of illiteracy off me and helped me finish poverty."

Impact on the family

Although individuals had a strong sense of how they personally benefited, few saw the scholarship as for themselves alone. The scholarship was for the family, not just the child. "Our family is at the verge of change," said one girl. "A star is coming from the sky and is going to shine."

"The scholarship was a miracle to me," said a girl, who now works with Uganda's agricultural advisory services. "It lifted me up so others in the family are also benefiting."

Impact on siblings

Mvule Trust found that a scholarship for one child in a family altered the trajectories of the brothers and sisters.

The first way a scholarship benefits siblings is by relieving parents of the burden of fees for the beneficiary. Then they are often able to pay for another child or children in school. "My parents had just returned from the camp for displaced people so they had not even a coin for my fees," said a girl, now an environmental health officer. "My sister had already been sent home from school because my parents could not afford her fees. When Mvule rescued me, it enabled my parents to send my sister back to school."

Alternatively, a scholarship broke the logjam of transport costs to school, or exam charges. "By the time I got the scholarship, my parents had borrowed money from relatives for my elder brother and me, and everybody seemed tired of our family," said a girl, now a health assistant. "My brother was to miss his final exam. But when I got the scholarship, it gave room to my parents to pay for my brother's exam and he was able to complete his education."

Second, parents often felt energized to educate their other children, seeing the success of the beneficiary. "Mvule Trust had a positive impact on our guardians taking our brothers and sisters to school," said a girl.

Third, the siblings themselves were heartened by the success of the beneficiary. "My siblings are encouraged by what I have done," said a girl, now a forester. "I have never seen them saying I am not going to school today. Even if sick, they are determined to study."

And fourth, once a beneficiary gets a job, as noted, he or she will try to pay for siblings' school fees. "I am supporting my sister who is in university and my brother who is in S6," said a girl, now a nurse. This was most apparent with beneficiaries who got jobs – on average each was paying for two siblings in school but it was seen in all the groups.

Helping siblings is such a cultural imperative that failing to do so caused beneficiaries grief. "I wish I had been the first born," a girl regretted. "I would not have let my followers suffer. My sister wasn't so determined when it came to education and ended up getting married early. I would have supported her and my brother, who only studied up to P6."

"The scholarship gave hope in the family. We have the benefits of education and there is respect for us. We used to be discrimated against in community projects, but after S4 I was incorporated in the village health team. We carry out sensitization programs that not only benefit my family but the whole community."

"At first my mother never minded about us being in school. But now she can go and work for other people to make sure she takes her children to school. This is because she has seen the difference and has hope in my education. People in my home cannot read a letter if they receive one. Since I know how to read, everyone brings the letters to me."

"If they call for S4 leavers in my community, I can go. Like on Monday, I am going to collect the number of new births and deaths on behalf of the government. This is also important for my family because when I get that money I will go home and buy some little things. For the community, instead of looking outside for someone, I am here to help."

Three girls supported for O levels

Impact on parents

Ugandan children feel obliged to help their parents as well. So another priority of Mvule beneficiaries who became employed was improving their parents' welfare, usually by building a house; this can improve the well-being of the entire family and may boost parents' ability to pay fees for other children.

"I am saving to build a permanent house for my parents and to buy them a dairy cow," said a 23 year old girl, who studied forestry and now works in a private plantation.

"I was able to switch my mother from a grass-thatched house to an iron sheeted one and pay fees for my sister," said another beneficiary.

"I bought windows for my parents' house to build with concrete, and I pay fees for my siblings," said a third.

There were legions of such stories.

Helping the family is axiomatic. "I think if I had not got the scholarship," said a former beneficiary, now a midwife, "my people would not have seen the benefit of bringing me up because I would have nothing to help them with. I use my salary to pay fees for my two sisters and support my parents and relatives."

Impact on community

The positive impact on the community ranged from the symbolic to the concrete. A beneficiary who has completed education and found a job is living proof of a village's ability to produce a winner. A girl who perseveres in education is a revelation. "I am the only girl who has reached university in our village, so I act as an eye opener to those who are still studying."

A beneficiary may bring services to a village. "I have set up a tree nursery where community members come for seedlings," said a boy. "They say at least you are doing some development in the village." "I train people in the village on agronomic practices from which they have benefited in good yields," said a girl.

A young person, who has studied a course that no one had ever heard of, shows that life has unknown possibilities. "The community is very proud of me," said a girl. "But in the beginning they said 'now why forestry of all courses?' Of course, they were hearing of the course for the first time and didn't know that it can provide employment."

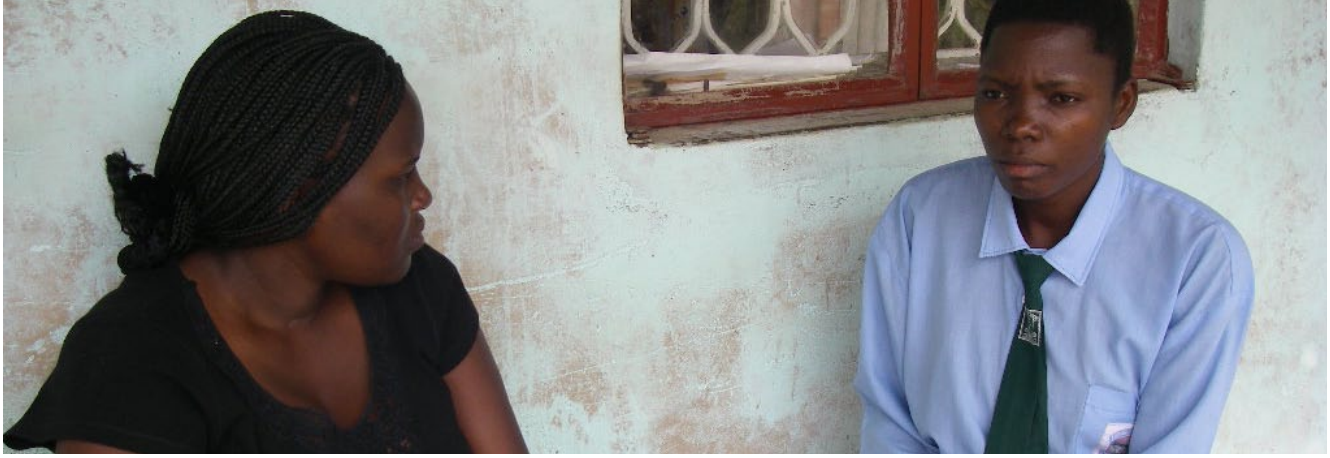
"If I had not got the scholarship, my people would not have seen the benefit of bringing me up. I would have nothing to help them with. I pay fees for my sisters and support my parents."

A girl, who studies instead of marrying, shows that it is possible for females to follow a path other than that of sex and men. One girl, now a nurse, has six brothers, none of whom completed O levels. "Villagers say: that girl would have produced many children by now but she has kept on track. Some say openly that they wish they could also have daughters who persist without minding about boys."

Finally, the tracer study found many stories of girls seeking Mvule beneficiaries for counselling: "When I go home," said the nurse, "some come to me asking – 'what do we need to do so we may also make it?'"

Another girl, also a nurse, said, "Those parents, who were trying to challenge my father that he made a mistake educating me, often send their daughters for me to advise them. These children stay around the fire where we talk, and later their parents pick them up. I feel that my example has helped them."

One girl, sponsored for A levels and now at university, said, "I am a role model. One girl became pregnant at school. Her parents sent her to me, and she asked me, 'how did you make it?' I shared with her and she was able to go back to Primary Teachers College. Her parents take care of the child."



©MVULE TRUST

CHAPTER 4

NEGATIVE FINDINGS: "They called us poor ones"

The dark side of scholarships, such as harassment of beneficiaries, loss of childhood friends, and family fights, are rarely recognized. They are documented here along with suggestions on how to minimize them.

Ill feeling towards beneficiaries

Life can be so harsh in rural Uganda that a scholarship recipient, who is being helped to escape its confines, can be ridiculed and abused. "They used to call us orphans who depend on whites because they have nowhere to go," said one girl. Other beneficiaries reported being called "dogs for the whites", "collected from the rubbish pit", "donor dependent", "ants", "poor farmers " and " from the underground" (witches).

Beneficiaries said they were often blamed when something went wrong: "In case of any misconduct, the blame would be put on us."
"There was stigma. Fellow students could attach every evil thing to us."

Schoolmates would openly wish them harm: "They were saying that if God wishes I should get pregnant and drop out of school and be like them or even die."

Several girls reported fearing being poisoned or bewitched. Asked, "What do people in the village say about you?" a girl, who became a nurse, said, "They say I am so lucky and arrogant. So I do not like going to the village. I do not want them to see me. I go in the night only and come back early in the morning. They (might) charm me with local medicine." Another beneficiary claimed her neighbour poisoned her drinking water, killing the family cow.

Such reports were shocking. However, it was, in fact, a minority of Mvule beneficiaries who faced hostility. For the 174 O level completers, for instance, the reactions of others ranged from happy, to ambivalent, to abusive. There were twice as many generous reactions to scholarship holders as there were ambivalent or hostile ones. About 50% reported classmates, family members and neighbours wishing them well: "People were happy and encouraged us to read hard not waste Mvule's money."

A further 25% described people reacting ambivalently to them: "Some would cheer us, while enemies ... (wished) us failure all the way." The final 25% or so reported considerable malevolence. "They called us proud and kept on telling us that we would also die even if we were supported by Mvule Trust,"said one girl. Sample comments in these categories are presented in Table 4.1.

Ill will was more reported by girls than boys. One boy said, "I did not face any of those. I do not think people talked anything about me but even if they did, they made sure they talked it far away from me. But as of me, I did not hear anything." Girls were demotivated and injured by the words of others, which might be one reason for their more rapid drop out. A gender difference is at play here. Boys are meant to strive while girls are meant to accept their fate – so a girl breaking out of her norm is more of a threat, to be reduced to her rightful size.

Table 4.1 Reactions of others to Mvule beneficiaries (O level completers)

 **Happy for beneficiary/praising Mvule/exhorting beneficiary to work hard**	 **Jealous/sad/ambivalent about scholarship/Mvule**	 **Abusive/mocking/not happy about Mvule**
They said that it is good to educate a girl. People prayed that MT should continue giving me school fees for our family to grow up. They would tell us to use the chance to the maximum. They would say MT is helping the needy since I would have dropped out. That MT helps people who have performed well and have no one to pay for them. That MT should continue because it moved me from S1 to S4 and the knowledge I have is from MT. People were saying that MT has a heart for the needy. We were advised to mind about our education. People speak good about MT because without it I could not have studied. People said MT had shaped beneficiaries and helped them in paying for their fees. They said we had to work hard because MT could take us up to the highest level of education. People were admiring our scholarship because of paying fees in time and scholastic materials They were saying without MT we could not have finished O levels. That if MT had not come, beneficiaries would have been mothers. They said that beneficiaries were going to continue up to when they get tired of schooling They say we are very special, we are not sent away for school fees. They encouraged me as a girl to read hard. It is a pleasure to get a scholarship. MT is a blessed NGO because it removed the burden from the parents. They were happy and repeatedly said “you have blessings from God”. They give praise names for beneficiaries. The advised me to work hard so that I do not disappoint my sponsor. Most people were very happy and always encouraged us to be in school as long as school fees were being paid by MT. People would appreciate that MT has helped needy students and would request that more needy students be taken.	They would say that we are lucky but also that we are dogs for the whites. Some people say that MT beneficiaries are the poorest people. Others say we are the luckiest. Some were happy and just wished to be part. Others were jealous and nicknamed us. Some people were very happy for us. Others felt jealousy. Some talk ill of MT beneficiaries but the majority have good comments. People encouraged me to work hard. But jealous ones said MT could drop me and I would be like them – uneducated. Some would say why has good luck not come to my family. But some appreciated MT’s work. Some could appreciate. But students would abuse me that my parents are so poor and that it’s just due to donor money that I am in school. Some people were happy and wished to be part. But some were jealous, saying, “They are only helping you for four years and after we shall be the same.” There were those who were happy but others were not happy about a person prospering in education. Some pretended to be close to me because I was getting those free things. But others hated me.	Girls would call us nonsense because we were just catered for by unknown people and say we would not succeed. Some students said we were collected from rubbish pit and that MT helps prostitutes. Some teachers could look down on me compared to students who were self-dependent. They said that I am donor dependent. People discouraged us, saying MT was from underground (the world of witches etc). Fellow students would abuse us that MT got stupid people to pay for us. They called us proud and kept on telling us that we would also die even if we were supported by MT. They were referring to us as people who were useless and could not afford anything in life. They called us the poor ones. It made me feel like the poorest in the world. At school they called us nicknames like ants. They could say “you are so proud.” Some people called my father a poor idiot who depended on the mercies of others. Sometimes they used to laugh at us, that we like free things. They used to call us orphans even when some of us were not. They would tell us that those girls, who go on in school, end up as prostitutes.

Some beneficiaries had the emotional maturity to keep the scholarship secret or pass it off as God's will. But others may have brought the malice upon themselves. In at least one school, beneficiaries refused to do chores, saying that after all their fees paid for the teachers' salaries. So beneficiaries were not always sinned against but also sinned. NGOs need to counsel particularly girls on how to manage the ill will their scholarship may arouse.

Loss of childhood friends

Being on a scholarship or becoming educated also inspires fear in others. "The scholarship has had a negative effect on my former friends in the village," said a girl. "They look at me as a great person. They hide when I am about to greet them."

Between some Mvule girls and their old friends, there is now a social distance: "We were five girls in my last year of primary," said a girl, now a health assistant. "Only I made it to secondary. The rest lacked fees and got married. Now they have a lot of unplanned children. They fear to talk to me and feel inferior. Imagine I had not got the chance to continue with studies. Maybe I would appear older than my age, in rags with malnourished children!"

Some Mvule beneficiaries mourned these friendships and disliked the isolation that they were experiencing. But some seemed to exult in being better off. One girl with A levels said of her best friend from primary school. "Each time I want to meet her, she hides. Her fear is that I have gone to school. She is ashamed of the life she is living. She has faded and is not as good looking as she used to be."

NGOs need to talk about how beneficiaries conduct themselves in the village with the aim of making education less disruptive and divisive. Imagine if a scholarship scheme increased stigma for the girls who did not carry on in school? Conversations about education not making one person superior to another are vital. Not boasting and even keeping quiet about scholarship can help (see below).

Family fights and tension with neighbours

Family members sometimes quarreled because of the scholarship. "At home, my brother's wife was against me because of (it)," said a girl. "She even went to a witch doctor to charm me to run mad. And, indeed, I did my A levels with a terrible headache. But I persisted with God's mercy and here I am at university today."

"People in my family are happy that I got this scholarship and that I am able to reach university. Nobody could imagine such a happening in our family, and all my followers have hope that I will help them also complete education. Then negatively, the girls I used to be with are now married. So when their mothers look at me, they are not happy. They put me down by saying, 'Lets's wait and see if you will get to anywhere better without being married. You will come from school with a bastard since you always have sex there while lying to the whole village that you are studying.' I just keep quiet and walk away. But then they say I am arrogant!"

Girl funded for forestry, now at university

"There is jealousy from my neighbours and if they continue being jealous of me they can kill me. They are using the local herbs to bewitch me. One day they put something in front of my house. So I realized that they wanted to kill me. I got a mental disorder but people prayed for me then the thing disappeared."

Girl funded through O levels

"I can't go telling people that I got a scholarship. That person has a daughter or son who needs assistance. How will he or she feel? So I didn't tell anyone."

Stepmothers could also be bitter. "When I was in S4 vacation, my dad said he was unable to pay for me because the other mothers also have children who need to go to school and that I should stop at O levels," said a girl. "Then good enough Mvule Trust came in. But our stepmothers did not wish me luck and even abused us."

Sometimes conflict erupted between families, which in at least one case became so bitter that the family of the beneficiary had to move. "In my village, two of us applied," said a girl. "I was called but our neighbour's child wasn't. So there was hatred until my grandmother shifted from the area."

Behaviour, such as boasting, made it worse. "When someone is prospering, there is what we call *nugu* (jealousy)," said a girl "My father, who is a secondary school teacher, was telling people his daughter has got a scholarship, forgetting that he was one of the few who has seen the benefit of education in the village."

Aware of this, some beneficiaries minimized conflict by keeping their scholarship quiet. "I can't go telling people that I got a scholarship," said a girl, now a lab assistant. "That person has a daughter, son or relative who needs educational assistance. How will he or she feel? So I didn't tell anyone." A girl, who trained as a forester and became a game guard in a national park, said, "The people in the village do not know. It is only my brother and mother who know".

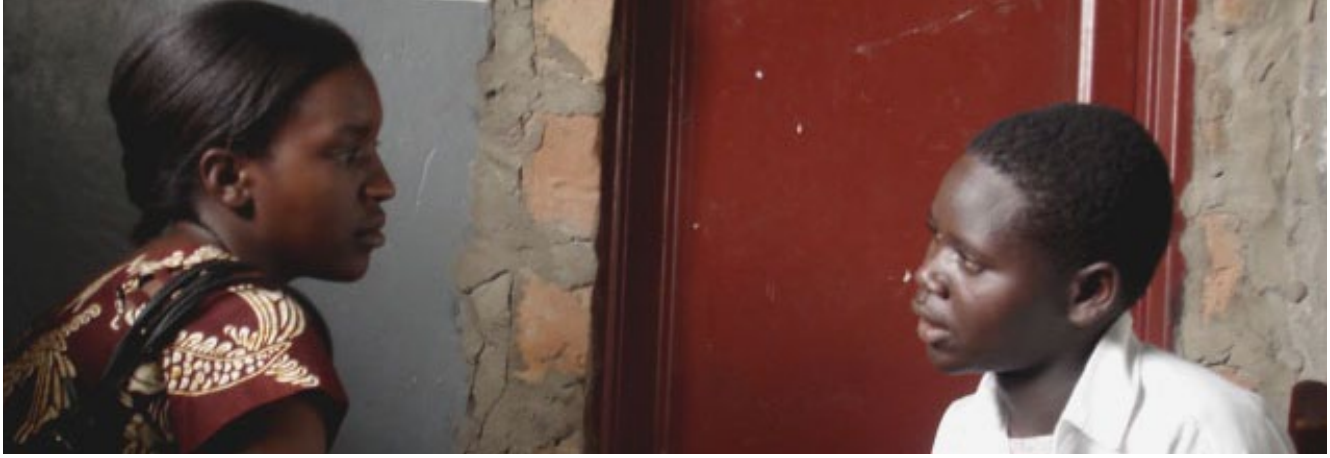
Religion can be another way to defuse jealousy. One female forester said, "People in the village respect me because I am educated though from a poor family. But they kept wondering where my parents got the money from. My mother just told them that God was in control."

Another type of family tension emerged when some parents felt their newly educated child could take over paying for their young siblings. Asked "how did your Mvule Trust scholarship affect your mother's capacity to pay fees for your siblings?" one girl, now a forester, said, "Well, it has affected my mother in that she doesn't even think of educating my followers. She says that I will be responsible for them after getting a job."

Beneficiaries often depicted being the only educated person in the family as lonely and stressful with decisions and money demands falling on them. "The problem of being the only educated person in the family is that people will think that you are selfish if you do not give them the things that they want. Yet being educated does not mean that you have the money to look after everybody," said one professionally-qualified girl. "If you are the only educated person in the village, you are given very many burdens," said another. "Your sister comes to you and says she wants school fees. The next day your father could be sick and you are expected to provide help. You find that you are the family hero. If you are short tempered, you might even create enemies because they will expect a lot that you will not be able to provide."

A final tension, some beneficiaries reported with frustration, was that their parents were continuing to have children, the meager family resources becoming ever more stretched and mothers risking death in childbirth. "When I was in forestry college, my mother nearly lost her life giving birth to our last born," said a girl.

Conflict is an inevitable byproduct of a scholarship scheme amid poverty. Parent workshops and counselling for beneficiaries need to address this. Parent workshops can also gently address family planning and child spacing.



©MVULE TRUST

CHAPTER 5

S4 NON-COMPLETERS: "We missed a chance"

This chapter reports on 51 students who did not complete S4, the year in which O levels are taken. These S4 non-completers have always worried Mvule Trust. Girls were more likely than boys not to complete S4: 20% of the 495 girls taken on in 2006 did not get their O level certificates compared to just 5% of the 174 boys. This was worse than the national drop out rate for girls at 9.36%, but about the same as that for boys, at 5.58% (Table 5.1).

Mvule beneficiaries, on the other hand, dropped out less than the students who began S1 under the universal secondary education (USE) in 2007 and 2008. Under USE, 24% of boys and 31% of girls did not reach S4. "The remaining students either repeated a class, transferred to non-USE schools or else dropped out of school", stated the USE/UPPET National Headcount 2012 report of the Ministry of Education and Sports. (MoES 2012)

Mvule Trust worked in districts where drop out before the O level exam was particularly high. In Yumbe and Amuria, for instance, about 50% of boys and 60% of girls dropped out between S1 in 2006 and S4 in 2009. (MoES 2009)

In sum, it appears that Mvule beneficiaries dropped out of school *faster* than the national average but less than students on USE and far *less* than their district average. Having a scholarship is not always enough to keep an adolescent in school.

Looking at their responses, it seems baffling that these young people left school before completing their O levels. The scholarship had elated them, many believing that they were on the cusp of total change: "I became very excited because I knew I was going to live a better life."
"I was happy because I thought I would become someone in future."
"I felt so proud of going to secondary school."
"It was joy and I got more exposure and knowledge."
"I experienced how one can study and become a comfortable person."

Table 5.1 National enrolment figures for 2006 cohort

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	% dropped out S1 to S4
Class	S1	S2	S3	S4	
Total enrolment	208,861	201,754	198,797	193,158	7.5
Girls' enrolment	98,392	95,641	93,887	89,175	9.36
Boys' enrolment	110,469	106,113	104,910	103,983	5.58

"The scholarship was well because of good feeding. I could take breakfast, lunch and supper. I was happy because I thought I would become someone in future."

So why did they lose it? It appears that these were the most disadvantaged beneficiaries, their circumstances such that they were always at risk of not being able to take advantage of school. A sign of their poverty was that boarding school meant something as basic as regular food: "The scholarship was well because of good feeding," one said. "I could take breakfast, lunch and supper," marveled another. Pregnancy and poor academic results were proximal causes of drop out.

The students lamented their loss of the scholarship and the return to the hard life. But even if things did not work out the way that they and Mvule Trust had hoped, beneficiaries learned English, an achievement that completing primary school does not ensure. They were proud of their years in school and believed themselves more able to think critically and to solve problems than others in the village; 57% became the most educated person in their family, and 43% went back to school for at least a while.

Confounding ideas about education and gender, girls were more likely to go back than boys. Also, half of the girls who returned to school had a baby, so those with babies were as likely to return as those without.

After the tracer study, Mvule Trust felt more sanguine about these young people – scholarship NGOs need to enforce standards or they risk losing their integrity. It was not possible to keep all the beneficiaries in school. Some of the students, particularly the girls, were simply not that interested in education at that moment in their lives. Even the best selection process could not have foreseen which students those would be. However, survival rates through O level could have been improved by placing the beneficiaries, especially the girls, in boarding school.

Background characteristics

Six were male; 45 were female. At the time of the study, their modal age was 21-23 years; 72.5% were still single. (Table 5.2) At least 22 of the 45 girls and one of the six boys had offspring by the time they were traced. (Table 5.3)

Table 5.2 Background characteristics of S4 non-completers

		Number	%
Gender	Male	6	11.7
	Female	45	88.2
Age	18 - 20	12	24.0
	21 - 23	28	56.0
	24 - 26	10	20.0
Marital status	Single	37	72.5
	Married	10	19.5
	Divorced	3	5.9
	Cohabiting	1	2.0

Table 5.3 Number of children produced by S4 non-completers

Number of children	Number	%
None	29	56.9
One	13	25.5
Two	8	15.7
Three	1	2.0
Total	51	100.0

On almost all the social criteria that follow, this group fared the worst of all groups traced. Almost three-quarters were orphans: 29.4% had lost both parents, 2% their mothers and 43.1% their fathers. (Table 5.4)

Over 90% lived in mud houses and none in a permanent house at the time of receiving the scholarship. (Table 5.5)

Over half (54%) were from polygamous families. (Table 5.6)

Before the scholarship, 34% were living in households that ate just one meal a day. (Table 5.7)

Half of their fathers and 83.3% of their mothers had either never attended, or not completed primary school. (Table 5.8)

Over 70% of fathers and 65% of mothers were farmers. (Table 5.9)

In sum, these students came from the most orphaned and deprived families (the latter in terms of education and economics) in the study.

Table 5.4 S4 non-completers by orphanhood

Parental Status	Number	%
Mother dead	1	2.0
Father dead	22	43.1
Total orphans	15	29.4
Non-orphans (both parents alive)	13	25.5
Total	51	100.0

Table 5.5 Type of house that S4 non-completers inhabited in 2006

Type of house	Number	%
Mud house	48	94.1
Semi permanent house	3	5.9
Permanent house	0	0
Total	51	100.0

Table 5.6 Number of wives of father/guardian

Number of Wives	Number	%
One	23	46.0
Two	15	30.0
Three	5	10.0
Four	5	10.0
>Four	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5.7 Meals per day in beneficiary households at start of scholarship

Meals per day	Number	%
One	17	34.0
Two	29	58.0
Three	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0

"I lost the scholarship and was sent away from school because I went for a disco. Life became very hard and doom came back to my life."

Table 5.8 Level of education of parents

Level of education parents	Father		Mother	
	Number	%	Number	%
Never been to school	15	30.0	27	52.9
Incomplete primary education	10	20.0	15	29.4
Complete primary education	11	22.0	5	9.8
Incomplete secondary education	5	10.0	3	5.9
Complete secondary education	3	6.0	-	-
Vocational school/training	5	10.0	1	2.0
Higher education	1	2.0	-	-
Total	50	100.0	51	100.0

Table 5.9 Occupation of parents

Occupation parent	Father		Mother	
	Number	%	Number	%
Farmer	35	71.4	33	64.7
Job in private sector	1	2.0	2	3.9
Job in public sector	5	10.2	-	-
Self-employed	3	6.1	-	-
Unemployed	3	6.1	3	5.9
Other	2	4.1	-	-
Housewife	-	-	13	25.5
Total	49	100.0	51	100.0

Departure from education

Departure from school occurred in classes S2, S3 and S4, which lost 17, 29 and 5 students respectively. (Table 5.10)

Former beneficiaries were asked to tick as many as they wanted of 14 boxes in response to: "What was the main cause of you leaving the Mvule Trust scholarship?" (Table 5.11) For girls, the most common was pregnancy, ticked by 21. Often it was intertwined by poverty ticked by 15 girls: "Due to poverty at home, I had to accept a certain boy who made me pregnant." Fourteen girls ticked death of parent; 11 ticked early marriage. "Indiscipline" saw three girls leave. One said, "I was sent away because I went for a disco. Life became very hard and doom came back to my life."

For boys, the most common reasons were ill health, death of a parent and poverty. Four out of six boys mentioned ill health. "I wish I had got better treatment for my eyes but I had no one to help," said a boy.

"If I had not fallen sick, I would not have stopped school," said another. "But I am now ready to go back. I still love school."

At least 15 former beneficiaries mentioned poor grades. "I dropped out due to poor performance. I wish I could have passed well," said a girl. All the beneficiaries had had the ability to succeed, however: all the boys and 83% of the girls had passed their PLE in Division 2, one girl passed in Division 1 and eight in Division 3. Several regretted not working harder. "I wish I had dedicated my time to reading my books," said a girl.

Table 5.10 Class at time of drop out

Class	Females	Males	Total
S2	15	2	17
S3	25	4	29
S4	5	0	5

Table 5.11 Reasons for leaving the Mvule Trust scholarship by gender

	Male		Female	
Reason	Number	%	Number	%
Sexual harassment at school	0	0.0	1	2.3
Inadequate teaching in the school	1	14.3	1	2.3
Indiscipline in the school	1	14.3	2	4.6
Bullying in the school	0	0.0	5	4.6
Unfriendly environment	1	14.3	4	9.1
No fees	0	0.0	5	11.4
Distance of home from school	2	28.6	6	13.6
Poor academic performance	0	0.0	8	18.2
Other reasons	1	14.3	10	22.7
Early marriages	2	28.6	11	25.0
Ill health	4	57.1	11	25.0
Pregnancy	0	0.0	21	46.6
Death of parent	3	42.9	14	31.8
Poverty	3	42.9	15	34.1

Feelings about leaving school

Whatever the reason, S4 non-completers felt strongly about leaving. One boy said, "My heart is paining about my drop out. The life of a person who has gone to school is better than the life of one who has not gone."

Some thought that Mvule Trust should have done more: "It should have provided weekly counselling by phone," said one girl. "It should have transferred me to another school. I know my boyfriend talked to the head teacher to drop me off," said a second. "I would have done better if Mvule had given me a chance," said a third.

Others blamed themselves. "I should have apologized in writing and verbally for what I did," said one girl. "I do not think that there was anything that Mvule Trust did not do. The mistake was mine," another girl said. A third girl said, "Mvule Trust was advising us to concentrate on studies and stay away from bad groups. I did not pick their advice. I spent their money for nothing."

Pregnancy

The 21 girls who left because they were pregnant felt a mix of fury and regret: "How I wish I had not accepted to have unprotected sex with that boy."

"When I flash back, I feel so offended because I gave birth before even finishing S4."
"I had sex and got pregnant. I have got a lesson."
"If I had not got pregnant, I would have finished O and A levels and be an educated person."

Girls stressed that Mvule Trust had tried to help. One girl said, "They encouraged us to abstain, stay in school and avoid bad peer groups. Still I became pregnant. I personally take the blame. I forgot all that was said." Another girl said, "I did not follow what they told us."

Pregnancy rarely led to a stable relationship. Of the 21 girls who conceived, the tracer found 15 living in their natal home: "The boyfriend who impregnated me took me to his parent's home but life was bad there and I came back to my father's."
"After the boy impregnated me, my parents sent me to the boy's place. But he abandoned me and later I was accepted home."

Finally, returning to school after having a baby is possible, especially if a girl is single: 11 of the 21 girls went back to school. In the current Ugandan family, childcare is almost always on hand. Of these 11 girls, seven were paid for by their mothers, one by a father, one by a husband, one by a guardian and one by a brother. No former beneficiary said that they experienced harassment from school administrations for being a young mother.

However, this is not tantamount to saying that it makes no difference if the girl has a baby. None of the girls with babies were getting out of poverty and few had gone far in school – none had reached A levels, for instance. "We are the same as those who never went to secondary school because I stopped in S2 and am not having any simple job and am not capable of supporting my family or buying clothes for my young ones," said one girl.

"The situation is back where Mvule Trust got me from," said a single mother, 23, with two children. "When I was at school, I knew it was my ticket to get out of poverty. But since I missed that scholarship, poverty has just taken a permanent seat at home."

Additional education after losing the scholarship

When contacted by the study, most non-completers asked Mvule Trust to support them again: "I will go to any course."
"I would like to go back to school again."

However, 22, or 43% of the 51 traced had already returned to school, 21 of whom were girls: 46% of the girls had another try at education compared to just 16% – one in six – of the boys.

Three did not complete their O levels but 19 did. Of these, 11 stopped there; one dropped out in S5; three completed A levels, and three achieved certificates or diplomas; one qualified in hairdressing. (Table 5.12)

Mothers supported almost 50% of returning students. Five former beneficiaries paid their own fees. Three brothers and one father, aunt, husband and guardian also stepped up to pay. (Table 5.13)

It was not easy for any individual or family: "My parents struggled to put me back in school until I completed S6."
"My first born brother took over the responsibility."
"I stayed at home for two years then my guardian took me back to school, but he is harsh while giving me school fees."

A girl who went back to school, only to fall out again, said, "My cousin took me back but unfortunately passed away before I could complete S4. So I worked in an eating-place for fees, but dropped out again." Another said, "I was taken to a day school where I completed S4. Then I went to a primary teachers college where I stopped in first year due to fees."

Table 5.12 Additional education

Level reached	Female	Male	Total
Reached S4 but did not sit O levels	2	0	2
Stopped in S3	1	0	1
Completed S4 and sat O levels	10	1	11
Stopped in S5	1	0	1
Completed S6 and sat A levels	3	0	3
Hairdressing qualification	1	0	1
Certificate in counselling	1	0	1
Diploma in counselling	2	0	2
Total	21	1	22

Table 5.13 Who paid the school fees?

Sponsor	For girls	For boys
Self	4	1
Mother	10	-
Father	1	-
Brother	3	-
Aunt	1	-
Husband	1	-
Guardian	1	-

Work and earnings

The six boys and 29 of the 45 girls gave information about their occupation and earnings. Ten of the girls said that they were farming, earning UGX20,000-30,000 a month, (about $11 at the prevailing exchange rate of UGX2400 to $1). Seven said that they sold fish, charcoal or "items" in the market or on the roadside, earning UGX30,000-40,000 a month, (about $15). Six girls brewed alcohol, earning UGX10,000 to 40,000, (averaging about $10 a month). One was a tailor, earning UGX10,000-30,000 a month, ($4-$12).

Four outliers were a girl selling handbags after S6; a girl in S6, who was selling phone airtime; a girl who had completed a counselling diploma and was teaching primary school; and the girl with the hairdressing certificate. A fifth outlier, who said she was earning UGX90,000-150,000 a month, ($38-$63), was selling secondhand clothes to put herself through S4. She was the highest earner.

A link emerges between the outliers and parents with more education or occupations outside of agriculture. The father of the girl selling handbags was a mechanic in Juba. The father of the girl selling airtime was a driver, while her mother had some secondary education. The hairdresser's father had been to secondary school. Both parents of the young woman selling clothes had had full primary education.

Of the boys, two were farming; two were working in bricks and/or making charcoal; and two were bicycle taxi men. The taxi youth earned the most – about UGX100,000 a month ($42). One charcoal maker said his income was UGX10,000-20,000 a month, (less than $10).

Thus, few of these young people have escaped poverty, the possible exception being the taxi youth and one or two of the female 'outliers'.

Parental response to the scholarship

Far from not appreciating education, parents were ecstatic about their child's scholarship: "My parents said 'A good NGO has brought light to our family!'"
"My parents were so happy, saying 'Our child has got a big chance of success.'"
"They said thanks to Mvule, our child is now in school and not just at home."

Parents advised their children to take advantage of the scholarship: "They told me that it is good and I have to be serious with it."
"They said that I had got something good so I should do something good."

When their child lost the scholarship, parents were devastated: "When I was dropped off, my mother began crying, saying 'what a misfortune to our family!'"

"My mother was annoyed, and life was difficult, and I regret."

Some parents resented Mvule Trust's decision to stop paying for their child. "My parents became angry – why did Mvule Trust stop with someone who was at the doorway?"

Significantly, no parent was reported to have said, "In our family, we do not educate girls so we are allowing you to go as an exception", or "Mvule should have taken our son instead", or "We knew you would drop out. Girls can't learn". They uniformly wanted education for their daughters and their sons.

Community reaction to S4 non-completers leaving school

In front of the community, losing the scholarship was humiliating. "People said that we wanted sex and not education. There was much stigma," said a girl.

Asked what the community says about young people who fail to stay in school, the S4 non-completers spoke of discouragement, anger and regret: "They are discouraged when a child drops out of school, and they regret a lot."
"If the cause of coming home is lack of fees, the community feels pity. But if the student drops out voluntarily, they are angry."
"If one just leaves school like that, that person is a regret for the people."

The community said squarely that the former students had squandered an opportunity: "People said we missed a chance."
"They said that we shall regret because these days are for those who are educated."
"They said that leaving school is not good. Education is the key to the world."

Life was uncomfortable. Some villagers were triumphalist that these young people had not "made it". People made statements like: "You see now?" "Those are undisciplined students." "Those are people who have failed." "That girl/boy is stupid and unserious."

Communities spoke of waste and spoiling: "They say that we have spoilt school fees for nothing."
"We are considered as people who waste time for nothing."
"They say you are wasted."
"Resources were wasted on people who just come back home unproductive at the end of it all."

In some of the rare statements disparaging girls, one beneficiary said, "In my village they say that it is wasting money on a girl child." Another said, "They normally say that it is a waste of time to take a girl to school." But there was also the following comment: "The community was not happy if their girls stay home."

Positive impacts

Despite their own frustration, their parents' grief and the community's cutting remarks, beneficiaries felt that even these few years in school were positive.

First, those "few years" constituted far more schooling than most people had in the village, and 57% of the S4 non-completers became the most educated person in their family. (Table 5.14)

Second, the scholarship enabled some young people to make a transition that they would not have made without it. "My parents never thought I would join secondary school," said a girl. "It enabled me to go to secondary school as my parent has been poor," said another girl.

Third, the scholarship freed-up income for the family: "My parents were happy because the money which they were supposed to use to pay for me they used to buy food and basic needs."

Table 5.14 Most educated person in family

Person	Number	%
Father	3	6.1
Brother	14	28.6
Sister	4	8.2
Myself	28	57.1
Total	49	100.0

"I am not happy because I am not at school because my mother cannot afford my fees. I got the scholarship in S1. I enjoyed being in class. They gave me a mosquito net, books and pens, and I attended a sexual health talk where I learnt about the bad effects of transactional sex and early marriage. My difficulties were from home and I became pregnant along the way. The scholarship was not affected because they allowed me to continue. But then I dropped out because of sickness." *S4 non-completer from West Nile*

"I got the scholarship in 2006 and was very happy. That happiness made me concentrate so that I was one of the best performers. I stopped in S2 because I was pregnant and stayed home for two years to look after my child. Then Mvule took me back but I had to start in S1 again. Then the scholarship ended. I do not want to marry the father of the baby. He is irresponsible. First, he denied me when I conceived. Second, he dropped out and does not like education. The scholarship enabled me to acquire some education. I am now an informed girl who knows good from bad. I request Mvule to think about me again because life is very hard here." *S4 non-completer from Teso*

Fourth, the scholarship inspired some parents to support other offspring in school: "It affected my parents' thinking about education and made them struggle for my followers."

Fifth, benefits rippled outside the family: "My mother started advising other children from poor families to go to school and work hard."

Finally, most S4 non-completers were sure that they had gained knowledge and life skills. "I learnt that bush burning destroys soil fertility," said a girl. "So what I do now is leave the grass to rot, and this has improved my produce. And people consult me about any school problem of their children."

They described the autonomy – the ability to be self-directed and manage themselves – they now felt. "I am more informed and shaping my future," said a girl. Compared to a friend who had not gone to secondary school, they declared themselves more able to read and write and speak English: "My life is different because I can read and write better than my friend who left school after P7."
"I can write an accurate and official English letter, which those others cannot do."

One boy, who funded the remainder of his O level exams by making and selling bricks, said he had been saved from the self-destruction of out-of-school boys: "Their life is in danger because they are drinking. Whereas for me, I know something to control my life."

Impact of the scholarship on marriage and childbearing

Most of the S4 non-completers left education in 2007-8, so it was notable that 72.5% were still single three to four years later. Indeed, since 76% were aged 21 or over, it is surprising that more are not married. The median age of marriage in Uganda for girls with some secondary education is 19.1 years, (UBOS & Macro International Inc. 2007). "I stood firm and didn't go for early marriage even though my parents could not pay my fees," said one girl.

Even the girls, who conceived, felt that the sexual health workshops had helped them. "I am different from other girls because of the workshop," said one young mother. "It had an impact because when I went to test for HIV, I was still negative."

Another girl said, "I managed to hold my life from risky

"I was impregnated while on the scholarship, and Mvule stopped helping me. Still, I am grateful for their support because if it wasn't for my own mistakes I would still be in school. Mvule Trust advised us to keep in school and abstain from sex. And although I was impregnated, this information is still helping me because at least I know how to use condoms and I understand the value of education. To me, poverty is not having any source of income. I think I am still poor because I haven't got any job. My father died but my mother is alive. I have five sisters and four brothers. The most educated person in my family is my brother, who is studying for a diploma in guidance and counselling. My mother's attitude towards education changed when I got the scholarship. Also there is a teacher in our village, who we are told studied through Mvule Trust." *S4 non-completer from Kasese*

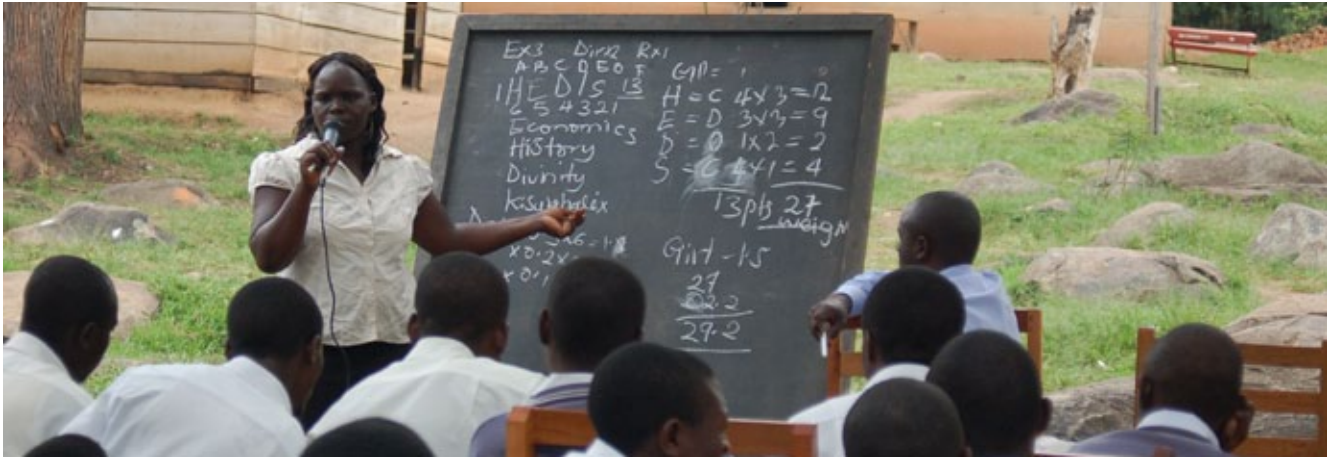
"My life is not OK because of leaving school. But I can now read and write and if I go back to school, I think I will be a very important person in my community. These days education is the only way of earning a living. Both my parents are alive and they have 11 children." *S4 non-completer from Bundibugyo*

behaviours because of the talks, but the boy was not willing to protect me and that is why I got pregnant." They felt better off than girls who did not go to secondary school. One said of her friend, "She is in bad life with five children."

The girls wanted to delay marriage, be economically self-reliant and not marry a man with another wife: "Educated women do not wait for their husbands to satisfy their needs. They work for it. I want to be such kind of woman," said one girl.
"Educated girls do not over rely on their husbands and they help their parents with problems like paying fees for their brothers and sisters," said another.

At least one girl thought that she was on her way to such independence: "After Mvule taught me about creativity, I was able to work for some pocket money rather than getting a man to give me."

Childbearing was slightly less delayed than marriage. By the time of the study, 49% of the females were mothers. The median age of first birth for women with some secondary education is 21. (UBOS & Macro International Inc. 2007)



©MVULE TRUST

CHAPTER 6

O LEVEL COMPLETERS: "I can defend my family"

This chapter looks at the lives of 174 students, who completed their O levels with support from Mvule Trust but who were not funded further. The "treatment intervention" with these young people was four years of secondary school plus the Mvule package: counselling, mentoring, sexual health sensitizations, supplies and workshops for some parents.

One achievement was to lift these young people into an educational elite, statistically. Just 193,158 or 12% of the 1,610,008 children, who began primary school in 1999, reached S4. (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2011) These 174 students were among that group. Despite this apparently exclusive status, however, O levels alone do not equip a child for solid prospects. There are scarce jobs for O level leavers, and the curriculum does not light a path to a profession or job creation.

But all was not lost. Mvule Trust's second achievement was to have pushed these children to a point where their parents or other relatives were willing to pay for further study. And indeed, 53% did continue in school, usually supported by parents who had been doubtful about education when their child needed to start secondary school. "This time my parents were not stubborn like they were when I completed primary," said a boy. "I asked them – 'Will you accept for me to lose the four years I have been in school?' They thought about it and took me to A levels."

The 47%, who did not continue in education, felt abandoned and incompletely educated. "I never completed my education. After O levels I dropped out," said a girl. "I wish I could go on and *complete* because I want to help my family," said another. One joy of the tracer study is that Mvule Trust reconnected with former students. It resumed funding five O level completers – three girls in nursing, agriculture and teaching, two boys in mechanics and carpentry.

Students' stories revealed the spectacular effort it takes, especially for day school girls, to get through. "Having school fees is not enough to make a girl capable of passing," said a girl. "Do you know the number of boys who want to have sex with us?" snapped another girl.

Whether or not these students carried on in education, most were optimistic that they would get out of poverty, even if they were not there yet. "The level I have reached cannot allow me to be poor like those ones who have not gone to school because I have knowledge of making money," one explained.

Mastering English was particularly useful. "Now I can speak English, I can get some jobs," said a boy. "In Sudan, I worked as a traffic guide because I know English. I am getting out of poverty. Two years ago I had no mattress and would sleep on an empty stomach. Now I have built my own house and can afford two meals a day."

Background characteristics

Of the 174 O level completers traced, 142 were female (81.6%) and 32 male (18.4%): 37.9% were aged 18-20, 54.6% aged 21-23, and 6.9% aged 24-26. The majority, 85.1%, were still single. (Table 6.1) Males were more single (96.9%) than females (82.4%) (not shown in table).

A total of 136 or 79% had not yet produced a child (Table 6.2). None of the males had fathered a child, but 25.5% of the females had become mothers (not shown in table).

Orphanhood was high (Table 6.3): 59.9% were either total or partial orphans; 13.8% had lost both parents; 3% had lost their mothers; and 43.1% had lost their fathers, the highest paternal loss of any group and almost twice the national figure of 23% for children aged 15-17. (UBOS & Macro International Inc. 2007)

Almost 76% lived in mud houses when the scholarship began in 2006. (Table 6.4)

Forty-seven per cent (47.1%) said that their fathers had two or more wives. (Table 6.5)

About 18% of the beneficiary households were surviving on one meal a day at the time that Mvule Trust took on the student. (Table 6.6)

Table 6.1 Background characteristics of O level completers

		Number	%
Gender	Male	32	18.6
	Female	142	81.6
Age group	18 - 20	66	37.9
	21 - 23	95	54.6
	24 - 29	13	7.5
Marital status	Single	148	85.1
	Married	23	13.2
	Divorced	2	1.1
	Cohabiting	1	0.6

Table 6.2 Number of children produced by O level completers

Number of children	Number	%
None	136	79.0
One	31	18.0
Two	5	2.9
Total	172	100.0

Table 6.3 Orphanhood among O level completers

Parental Status	Number	%
Mother dead	5	3
Father dead	72	43.1
Total orphans	23	13.8
Non-orphans (both parents alive)	67	40.1

Table 6.4 Type of house that O level completers lived in at the start of the scholarship

Type of house	Number	%
Mud house	131	75.7
Semi permanent house	41	23.7
Permanent house	1	0.6
Total	173	100

Table 6.5 Number of wives of father/guardian

Number of wives	Number	%
None	2	1.3
One	90	52.9
Two	46	27.1
Three	22	12.9
Four	8	4.7
>Four	2	1.2
Total	170	100

Table 6.6 Meals per day in beneficiary households at the start of the scholarship

Meals per day	Number	%
One	31	17.9
Two	101	51.4
Three	39	22.4
Four	2	1.2
Total	173	100

Of the mothers, 41.1% had never attended school. Thus these students were from marginally more educated homes than the S4 non-completers, 50% of whose mothers had never been to school. A further 41.1% of mothers had incomplete primary education. Just 16 mothers (14%), but considerably more fathers (30%), had exposure to secondary school or more. (Table 6.7)

Most of the fathers (73.6%) and mothers (68.9%) said they were farmers; 25% of fathers had a private or public sector job. (Table 6.8)

Academic performance

All beneficiaries were capable of performing academically: 13 individuals or 7.5% had passed in Division 1 in their primary leaving exam (PLE), 76.9% in Division 2, and 15.6% in Division 3. As is the pattern nationwide, the boys had higher academic results at the end of primary school than the girls, 21.9% having a Division 1 pass compared to 4.3% of the girls. (Table 6.9)

At O level, academic performance was poorer with just 2.9% of the students achieving a high pass (Division 1) and just 15.9% achieving a Division 2. Boys did more than twice as well as girls, with 36.6% achieving a Division 1 or 2 pass compared to 14.3% of girls. Girls were more likely to perform poorly, with 21.5% scoring a Division 4 or below, compared to 9.4% of boys (Table 6.10). Adolescence is a difficult time for girls everywhere; additionally, Mvule Trust worked in districts where boys far outnumbered girls in the final year of O levels. In Bundibugyo in 2009, girls constituted just 21% of the S4 class. In Amuria, they constituted just 32%. (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2009)

Perhaps not surprisingly, those students who had scored well on their PLE were more likely to score well on their O levels: 77% of those who scored a Division 1 on their PLE scored a Division 1 or 2 on their O levels, compared to just 16% of those who scored a Division 2 on the PLE.

The O level completers were in schools that were either single sex day schools (0.6%), mixed day (40.2%), mixed boarding (37.9%) or single sex boarding (21.3%). Students performed best in boarding schools. Of the 70 students in day school, nine individuals or 12.8% scored a Division 1 or 2. In contrast, of the 101 students in boarding school, 22.7% achieved a Division 1 or 2. (Table 6.11)

Table 6.7 Level of education of parents

Level of education parents	Father		Mother	
	Number	%	Number	%
Never been to school	37	21.6	69	41.1
Incomplete primary education	59	34.5	66	40.0
Complete primary education	24	14.0	14	8.5
Incomplete secondary education	20	11.7	10	6.1
Complete secondary education	14	8.2	2	1.2
Vocational school/training	11	6.4	3	1.8
Higher education	6	3.5	1	0.6
Total	171	100.0	165	100.0

"The level I have reached cannot allow me to be poor like those ones who have not gone to school because I have knowledge of making money"

Table 6.8 Occupation of parents

Occupation parent	Father		Mother	
	Number	%	Number	%
Farmer	120	73.6	115	68.9
Job in private sector	5	3.1	1	0.6
Job in public sector	20	12.3	2	1.2
Self-employed	3	1.8	2	1.2
Unemployed	9	5.5	7	4.2
Other	6	3.7	4	2.4
Housewife	-	-	36	21.6
Total	163	100.0	167	100.0

Table 6.9 PLE results by gender

PLE Grades	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Div 1	7	21.9	6	4.3	13	7.5
Div 2	21	65.6	112	79.4	133	76.9
Div 3	4	12.5	23	16.3	27	15.6
Total	32	100.0	141	100.0	173	100.0

Table 6.10 O level results by gender

PLE Grades	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Div 1	3	9.4	2	1.4	5	2.9
Div 2	9	28.1	18	12.9	27	15.9
Div 3	17	53.1	84	60.4	101	59.0
Div 4 and below	3	9.4	35	25.1	38	22.2
Total	32	100	139	100	171	100

Table 6.11 O level result by school type

O level result	Single Sex day		Mixed day		Single Sex boarding		Mixed boarding		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number
Div 1	0	0.0	3	60.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	5
Div 2	0	0.0	6	22.2	6	22.2	15	55.6	27
Div 3	0	0.0	45	44.6	18	17.8	38	37.6	101
Div 4/below	1	2.8	17	36.1	10	27.8	12	33.3	38
Total	1	0.6	69	40.4	35	20.5	66	38.6	171

This difference was particularly marked for girls: girls were more than twice as likely to score a Division 1 or 2 if they were in boarding school rather than day school. Nineteen per cent of girls in boarding school scored a Division 1 or 2 compared to 7.4% of those in day school. (Table 6.12)

The difference was less marked for boys, with 41% scoring a Division 1 or 2 in boarding school compared to 33% in day school. (Table 6.13)

The majority, 67.5% or 114 out of 169 O level completers traced, have become the most educated person in their family: 20.7% had brothers and 8.3% had sisters who were more educated than they were. Just five fathers and one mother were the most educated in the family. (Table 6.14)

What happened after the O level exams?

After their exams, all Mvule students with a Division 3 pass or better were meant to reapply to Mvule Trust. However, some lost touch. Yet others did not have the combination of O level passes to enable them to go on. Whatever the reason, none of the 174 traced were offered a further scholarship with Mvule. So what happened next?

The most interesting finding was that 94 individuals or 53% of the 174 O level completers did go on without Mvule support. Mvule Trust believes that this does not signify that they could have completed O levels without Mvule, but rather that their families were now determined to educate them to 'completion'. Two became agriculturalists, 11 became health workers, 25 became teachers, and 15 completed their A levels. (Table 6.15)

As with the S4 non-completers, confounding ideas that girls are always discriminated against, a higher proportion of girls (54.4%) than boys (46.8%) continued with education. Furthermore, 12 categories of individuals stepped up to help the girls compared to six for boys. Mothers, fathers, brothers, uncles, scholarship, self, sisters, parents, grandparents, aunt, guardian, husband, and school or scholarship funded the girls. Boys were helped by self, mother, brother, father and aunt. No boy got a scholarship. (Table 6.16)

Table 6.12 O level result by school type : girls

O level result	Single sex day		Mixed day		Single sex boarding		Mixed boarding		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number
Div 1	0	0	1	50.0	1	50.0	0	0	2
Div 2	0	0	3	16.7	6	33.3	9	50.0	18
Div 3	0	0	36	42.9	18	21.4	30	35.7	84
Div 4/below	1	3	14	36.4	10	30.3	10	30.3	35
Total	1	0.7	54	38.8	35	25.2	49	35.3	139

Table 6.13 O level result by school type : boys

O level result	Mixed day		Mixed boarding		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	Number
Div 1	2	66.7	1	33.3	3
Div 2	3	33.3	6	66.7	9
Div 3	9	52.9	8	47.1	17
Div 4/below	1	33.3	2	66.7	3
Total	15	46.9	17	53.1	32

Table 6.14 Highest educated person in family

	Number	%
Father	5	3.0
Mother	1	0.6
Brother	35	20.7
Sister	14	8.3
Self	114	67.5
Total	169	100.0

Table 6.15 Educational level reached after completing O levels

Course/educational level	Females	Males	Total
Repeated S4 and sat O levels	1	1	2
S5	6	0	6
S6	5	4	9
Completed S6 and sat A levels	13	2	15
Certificate in agriculture	2	0	2
Certificate in bricklaying and concrete practice	0	2	2
Qualification in library science	1	0	1
Certificate in computer science	1	0	1
Certificate in secretarial studies/stenography	3	0	3
Certificate in tourism, hotel management/catering	1	1	2
Certificate in nursery teaching	7	0	7
Certificate in nursing assistant	1	0	1
Certificate in nursing and midwifery	10	0	10
Diploma in psychiatric nursing	1	0	1
Diploma in computer science	1	0	1
Attending or qualified from Primary Teacher College	17	4	21
Attending National Teacher College (secondary)	1	0	1
Diploma in social work	1	0	1
Diploma in business entrepreneurship/accounting	2	0	2
Tailoring qualification	3	0	3
Unspecified computer course	1	0	1
Unspecified vocational course	1	0	1
Attending university	0	1	1
Total	79	15	94

Table 6.16 Who paid the school fees?

	Mother	Self	Brother	Sister	Parent	Father	School/Scholarship	Aunt	Uncle	Guardian	Husband	Grandparent
For girl	17	7	8	6	6	13	8	1	8	1	1	3
For boy	4	4	4	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0

"Now I speak English, I can get jobs. I am getting out of poverty. Two years ago I had no mattress and slept hungry. Now I have built a house and can afford two meals a day."

Work and earnings

Sixty-one respondents provided information on employment, earnings and how those earnings are spent. (Table 6.17) Respondents could tick earning categories – UGX20,000-80,000 or 90,000-150,000 or 160,000-220,000/month – or specify a precise amount.

Those most securely employed were three qualified teachers and a policewoman, earning UGX200,000, or about $85 a month. Two outliers were a boy earning UGX400,000-500,000 a month making charcoal and a girl earning UGX350,000 a month with a children's NGO. But "farmers" and those selling in markets were earning below the poverty line of $1.25 a day.

The additional years of education, the lack of pregnancy and the O level certificate brought economic benefits for most of these young people. They were earning better than the 29 S4 non-completer girls, most were earning less than $15 a month. The O level leavers also had better prospects – seven were qualifying either as teachers or nurses.

Finally, the O level completers were spending their money purposefully: 18 of the 61 were paying or saving for their own education and 11 were supporting siblings in school. About 10 girls with babies – married and single – were supporting their offspring. Six mentioned helping their mother. (See Table 6.17)

"My life is good. I got the scholarship in 2006. I was at home preparing to go to the garden in the morning and I heard on the radio that an NGO had come to pay for students in villages without fees. I applied and with God's help went through. Mvule paid for my O levels and provided materials like calculators that can help a student. They also taught us about how AIDS. It helped me to abstain. I am HIV negative. I don't see any disadvantages with Mvule because they did their job well. I did pass poorly in O level, however, so could not get another scholarship. So I planted four acres of cotton, sold it, took the money to the bank and got a loan which is enough to take me to nursing school, which is where I am now. I am now the most educated person in the family. And the community can now say that they have an educated person. The fees that would have been paid for me are now used for my brothers who are now in S3 and S4."

Girl funded for O levels

"I was sponsored but Mvule dropped me after S4! I hear they only wanted science students. But maybe it was because of my perfomance. With Mvule I went to a day school. At home I lacked paraffin to read. On Saturdays I prepared things for market on Monday. Then my father fell sick, and I would be at school, thinking of him. All this affected my performance. Still, Mvule enabled me to complete my O level and transformed me from an illiterate to a person who makes better decisions. My family is lucky to have someone who can read and write. Poverty is very bad. I am getting out of poverty because now I cultivate my own produce to sell, not like before when I was digging for other people. My best friend from primary married a very rude man and is mistreated. I feel pity for her. If I get money I will go back to school and study accounting. Then I can look after my brothers and sisters and future children very well.

Girl funded for O levels

Table 6.17 Source of and use of income

Gender	Source of income	UGX/month	How earnings are spent
F	Teaching in private school	60,000	School fees for her son
M	Making bricks	400,00-500,00	Paying his own fees in S6
F	Part-time nursery school teacher	20,000-80,000	Saving for school fees. Has just S6. Wants to go on.
M	Farming	40,000	Paying own school fees – still in S4
F	Teaching	40,000	Started primary teacher college, dropped out for lack of fees
F	Working as a house girl	NA	In S5, paying own school fees
F	NA	10,000	Educating siblings
F	Worked in a dairy	100,000	NA
M	Fishing	15,000	Saving to study nursing
F	Teaching in a primary school	200,000	Paying siblings' fees and supporting natal family
F	NA	50,000	Food and paying her own school fees
F	Selling local brew	NA	Wants to join university
F	Knitting sweaters	30,000	Saving to return to school
F	Cooking for builders	72,000	Part pays for her nursing fees
F	Selling fruit	120,000	Part pays for her nursing fees
F	Selling dried fish in holidays	50,000	Buys requirements for her teaching course
F	Teaching in a primary school	200,000	Saving
F	Teaching in a primary school	200,000	Paying siblings' fees
F	Policewoman	200,000	Paying brother's fees
F	Knitting and farming	10,000	Saving for school
F	Part time teaching	20,000-40,000	To pay for her own tuition
M	Farming	10,000-20,000	To pay his basic needs like soap and clothes
F	Selling fish and farming	40,000	NA
F	Teaching in a primary school	35,000	Buying food and other basic needs
M	Selling craft work	20,000-80,000	Pays for younger brother in school and helps his mother
F	Laying bricks	20,000	Pays for her own tuition on bricklaying course
F	Selling produce and fish	40,000	NA
F	Works in an orphanage	350,000	Pays her own rent/saving
M	Construction work	144,000	Pays for rent, food, and supports mother
M	Burning charcoal and growing vegetables	50,000	Helping mother buy paraffin, soap and clothes for siblings
F	Selling second hand clothes in market	30,000	Buying family's basic needs; she is married with one child
F	Selling cassava	10,000-20,000	Buying basic needs and clothes for her child and natal family
F	Sewing in someone's shop	50,000	Help siblings and mother
F	Unqualified teacher	80,000	Saving to return to teachers college. Had to drop out in Year 1
M	Making charcoal	150,000	Paying for S6
F	House maid/helper	80,000	Saving and helping mother
M	Working (unspecified)	100,000	Paying sister's fees
F	Teaching in secondary school	200,000	Paying brother's fees
F	Operating a small clinic as a nursing aid	80,000	Saving it for siblings' fees
F	Selling alcohol	20,000-40,000	Buys basic necessities like soap and paraffin
F	Stone quarrying	40,000	Helping mother to buy necessities
M	Teaching	50,000	Paying fees for younger sister
M	Brick laying	50,000	Saving to get back to school
M	Selling potatoes	40,000	Saving to go to commerce college
F	Selling farm produce	50,000	Helping siblings and mother
F	Helping aunt with her children	20,000-80,000	Saving for nursing school
F	NA	20,000-80,000	Buying basics like sugar
F	Making fried cakes	20,000-80,000	Caring for her two children since the man does not
F	Farming	20,000-80,000	For domestic use in her married home
F	Housewife - farming	20,000-80,000	For home use
M	Farming	20,000-80,000	For running marital home
M	Farming	20,000-80,000	Helping mother
F	Farming	20,000-80,000	Married – uses it for the home and child
F	Faming	20,000-80,000	Married – uses it for the home and child
F	Nursery teaching	20,000-80,000	Helps him/herself and siblings
F	Farming	20,000-80,000	Taking care of two children when they fall sick – single mother
F	Farming	20,000-80,000	Buying basics and treatment for child – single mother
F	Farming	20,000-80,000	Buying basics like salt and soap
F	Sells farm products	20,000	NA
F	Nursery teaching	20,000-80,000	Supports brothers and sister with scholastic materials
F	Farming	20,000-80,000	Buying pads, soap and vaseline for myself

Marriage and childbearing

Only 17 girls of the 177 traced were married. Their feelings about marriage ranged from content, to ambivalent, to unhappy.

Content: "I am happily married and life is going on well."
"I am married to a faithful and patient man. I am enjoying my marriage."
"My relationship is fine since the husband is a caring man who can help the family."

Ambivalent: "Our relationship is good because he is not quarrelsome."
"I stay with my husband, a policeman. He is a drunkard but friendly."
"My husband is a carpenter. He loves me. We sometimes quarrel but have never fought."

Unhappy: "I am married but life is not easy for me. I am staying as a housewife with a baby, and this has blocked me from doing other things."

The tracer study asked how education had affected respondents' attitude to marriage. It then sorted their responses into five categories. The first group, all female, said it had kept them busy and away from men, as well as friends who were marrying, so they were protected from early marriage by temporal, spacial and social reasons. "If I had not got the scholarship, I would be married because of group influence," one girl explained.

A second group believed that they had been saved from marrying an impoverished or uneducated man and would get a better partner because education had raised their standard: "If I hadn't got Mvule, I would have married a man who can't afford to manage the family," said one girl. A boy echoed, "If I had not gone to school, I might have married a girl of less education but now chances of an educated girl are high."

A third group, all girls, believed they were now higher value partners, who should attract a higher bride price and a husband with more assets. A fourth group noted that being in school had given them time to observe the suffering of married women and that it had made them cautious: "I am not in a hurry to get married because girls who are married without jobs are suffering."

The final group said going to school had convinced them to enter into marriage from a position of strength – educated and with a job.

These views, shown in Table 6.18, show a fundamental shift from thinking of marriage as a solution to poverty to a partnership that is chosen deliberately. Girls remarked on how they once saw marriage – "after completing primary, I thought of marriage if I did not get fees" – and how they saw it now: "I used to think marriage is the way to solve the problems of ladies but now I've known that it is not a last resort."

Girls did not complain about being too educated to get a man. "Going to school did not affect my chances," one explained. "I had a long list of men running after me. Marriage is good after education because then the man does not minimize the woman. My husband paid eight cows, 11 goats and UGX1,800,000. He respects me because I am educated."

Uniformly, the students wanted fewer children than the norm in their community. "Now I only want four, but back then I would have produced all that are inside me," said a girl, reflecting the belief that the womb produces until it gets tired.

Impact on siblings

One unexpected finding is the extent to which beneficiaries invest in their family. Eleven of the O level completers were paying for siblings in school. In addition, 73 of the 174 respondents said that the scholarship had freed up money to pay for siblings' education. Some 35 students mentioned other changes in their family as a result of their education: an uncle suddenly feels like funding another sibling; younger siblings look up to a more educated older one; the beneficiary teaches them what he or she has learnt; younger children are inspired to work hard to get sponsored too. " I was made knowledgeable and give advice to my brothers and sisters." "I give hope to my uneducated sisters." "My brothers and sisters are passing very well."

Table 6.18 Impact of education on marriage

Protected them from early marriage	Helped them get a better partner	Helped them to be a better partner	Gave them time to see the suffering of married women	Made them want to marry after education and job
It kept me away from early marriage.	If I had not gone to school, I might have married a girl of less education but now chances of an educated girl are high.	Going to school made me a more important person. Now I can be married as an educated person.	Those who married are suffering more than me.	Now I know that the right time for marriage is when I can support the family.
I was studying and so never thought about marriage.	Going to school helped me to be married with a man who is educated.	I was able to learn a lot about handling my life.	Going to school helped me to live healthily because my friends have been affected.	My future is to get married after my education and when having a job.
I would have got married if Mvule was not responsible for me.	If I hadn't got Mvule, I would have married a man who can't afford to manage the family.	They now have to pay a higher bride price than for someone who did not go to school.	I never want to get married due to difficulties I see people facing in their marriages.	School has changed my thinking. I now think first of a job or completing a course before marriage.
If I had not gone to school, I would have got early marriage.	I could have been married earlier without checking for my choice.	I can attract more bride price than one who never went to school.	I am not in a hurry to get married because girls who are married without jobs are suffering.	It has changed the way I think about marriage. My dream is to be independent.
I concentrated on my education, which made me not to get married.	I feel that, after becoming a professional accountant, I can be able to attain or marry any man of my choice.	I got to know the rightful way of marriage and my bride price will be justified with my education.	I see married friends suffering. I don't want to undergo the same. I want to study, work hard and marry an educated working ma	Education affected me in a positive way because marriage is not the way to get out of poverty.
If I did not get the scholarship, I would be married a long time because of group influence.	Going to school made me able to make wise decisions on the kind of guy to marry.	In my community educated girls are paid higher than those who are not educated.	Women in my village who are married suffer. They work like donkeys and are beaten by their men. That does not inspire me to get married.	I used to think marriage is the way to solve the problems of ladies but now I've known that it is not a last resort.
I desisted from the tendency of early marriage.	Since I went to school I have to marry someone who went to school.	Once you get to school, bride price for you changes compared to the one who never went back to school.		You have to first finish education and marriage will be later when you are on your own.
It changed the way I think about marriage because I had to delay. I am at home and still not married.	I saw that you need to plan and get a responsible man, rather than just going.	It changed me in a positive way because I knew I would make a better partner.		I came to learn that education is the first priority in young people's lives.

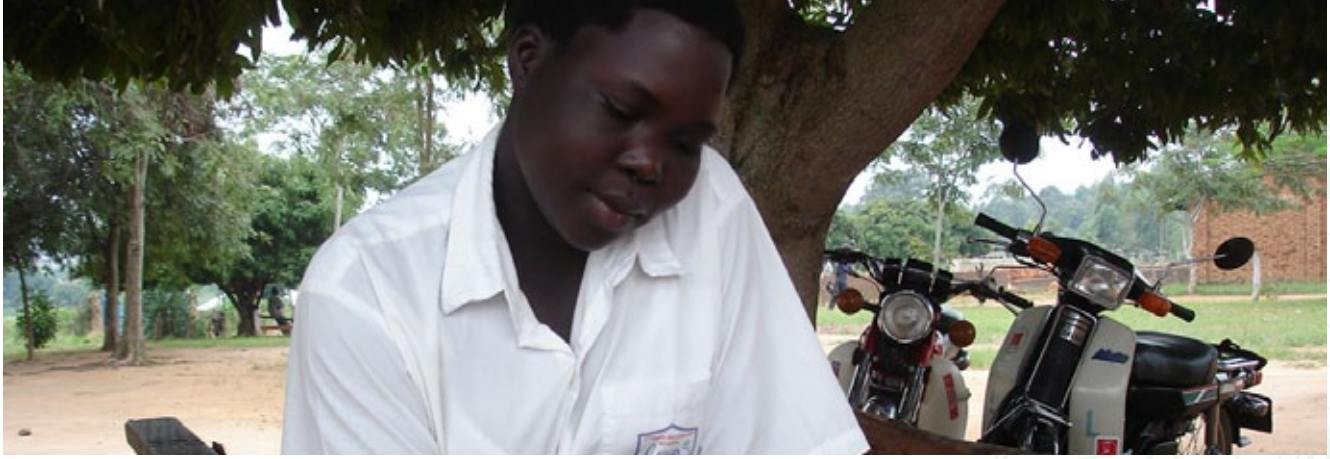
A small handful of beneficiaries, however, said that the scholarship had not helped their siblings, sometimes explaining that their family was too poor: "My parents cannot get money." And a few were clearly resentful of Mvule Trust for not having funded them further, claiming that the scholarship had had no impact on their family at all.

A table with the responses of all 174 students about the impact of education on their families appears in Appendix 1 (Table A1). It is important to peruse as it demonstrates that scholarship NGOs can confidently claim that when they fund one child in school, other siblings will also benefit. As noted in the introduction, this is precisely what Wydick et al. (forthcoming) found in their exhaustive study of 10,144 beneficiaries of scholarships from Compassion International – increased years of education for non-sponsored siblings and "positive spillover effects" for other children and adolescents in the village.

That 53% of the O level completers continued in education is remarkable. The scholarship was like an ocean swell that lifted them over the sharp coral reef that had been blocking entrance to secondary school. By the time they finished their O levels, the ecology of the family had changed. Its doubt about education may have been removed by seeing the non-monetary benefits of education. "My family knows I can defend it. Someone cannot fool me in English,"said a boy fiercely, proud that his ability to speak English can protect his family from being duped.

"The whole family is respecting me, and I am the one called to interpret for the village if there was anyone addressing the people in English," said a girl, also stressing the importance of English to a family and community's competence in interfacing with officialdom.

Alternatively, the family might not have wanted the adolescent to waste the four years he or she had already spent in secondary school. Or its economic circumstances might have improved. Finally, a child who has completed O levels is a far more attractive investment than a P7 leaver. Focused enough not to have become pregnant or dropped out in S1-4, he or she has demonstrated 'seriousness'. Relatives, parents and scholarship agencies feel emboldened to help them further.



©MVULE TRUST

CHAPTER 7

A LEVEL COMPLETERS: "I am a role model"

In 2007, Mvule Trust took on 205 girls for Senior 5 (S5) and Senior 6 (S6), the two years leading to A levels exams, which they sat in late 2008. Of these, the tracer study located 85 or 41.4%. These included 83 girls and two boys, who were taken when two girls dropped out. Mvule Trust was interested in this group because it had been out of high school from 2009 to 2011 – long enough to deduce something about the experiences of young people from poor backgrounds who are offered the chance to complete secondary school.

What emerged were a postponement of marriage and the fervent pursuit of education: 72% were in further education or had already completed it, with no further help from Mvule Trust. A multitude of relatives and players from churches, to aunts, to NGOs were sponsoring them. A further 20% were supported by Mvule Trust. Those A level completers who were working were themselves supporting siblings in school.

For the 8% who had not continued, however, achieving A levels was not enough to make them feel that they had succeeded. "I am not happy because after my A level, I went back to the village like any other girl," said one girl. "I keep thinking that I should have gone for a professional course after O levels. It haunts me."

"I am thankful to the sponsor that they gave me A levels," said another girl. "But after educating someone to A level, at least push them for a course rather than leaving them. Such a person can get wasted as though they had never been to school at all."

In retrospect, Mvule Trust might have done better to place some of these students in courses like laboratory technology, which can lead to employment in a rural community.

Background characteristics

At the time of the study, 72% were aged 21 and 23 years and 94.1% were still single. (Table 7.1)

Less than 17% had become a parent (Table 7.2).

Overall, 50.1% were orphans, of whom 17.9% had lost both parents, 6% had lost their mother, and 27.4% had lost their father . (Table 7.3)

Almost 86% of them resided in mud houses at the time they received the scholarship; only 5% lived in permanent houses. (Table 7.4)

Over 68% were from polygamous families. (Table 7.5)

Prior to the scholarship, 21.4% of the households survived on one meal a day. (Table 7.6)

A quarter of fathers and 14.5% of mothers had some exposure to secondary school, while 26% of the fathers and 17% of mothers had vocational/technical or higher education. This educational attainment is above average for Uganda. Nevertheless, 27.4% of fathers and 50.6% of mothers had either not attended or not completed primary school. (Table 7.7)

Table 7.1 Background characteristics of A level completers

		Number	%
Gender	Male	2	2.4
	Female	83	97.4
Age	18 - 20	3	3.5
	21 - 23	61	71.7
	24 - 26	21	24.8
Marital status	Single	80	94.1
	Married	4	4.7
	Cohabiting	1	4.2

Table 7.2 Children produced by S6 completers by gender

Number of children	Male	%	Female	%
None	1	50.0	70	84.3
One	0	0.0	6	7.2
Two or more	1	50.0	7	8.5
Total	2	100	83	100.0

Table 7.3 A level completers by orphanhood

Parental status	Number	%
Mother dead	5	6.0
Father dead	23	27.4
Total orphans	15	17.9
Non-orphans	41	58.3
Total	84	

Table 7.4 Type of house A level completers lived in at start of scholarship

Type of house	Number	%
Mud house	72	85.7
Semi permanent house	8	9.5
Permanent house	4	4.8
Total	84	100.0

Table 7.5 Number of wives of father/guardian

Number of wives	Number	%
One	26	31.7
Two	29	35.4
Three	14	17.1
Four	5	6.1
>Four	8	9.7
Total	82	100.0

Table 7.6 Meals per day in beneficiary households at start of scholarship

Meals	Number	%
One	18	21.4
Two	46	54.8
Three	20	23.8
Total	84	100.0

Table 7.7 Level of education of parents

Level of education	Father		Mother	
	Number	%	Number	%
Never been to school	12	14.3	16	19.3
Incomplete primary education	11	13.1	26	31.3
Complete primary education	7	8.3	14	16.9
Incomplete secondary education	21	25.0	12	14.5
Complete secondary education	11	13.1	1	1.2
Vocational school/training	14	16.7	9	10.6
Higher education	8	9.5	5	6.0
Total	84	100	83	100

Fifty-five per cent of fathers and 42.4% of mothers identified their occupation as "farmer"; 23.6% of the men said they were employed in a public or private sector job. (Table 7.8)

In summary, beneficiaries came from a range of homes – from farming families with little education to professional families with considerable education but in financial crisis.

Life before the scholarship

Although from relatively better educated families, these young people lived from hand to mouth: 23.5% were dropping in and out of school, 47.1% were "at home"; and 29.4% were engaged in what Ugandan's call "petty business". These categories blur.

Those who were at school were there precariously. "I was at A-level but about to drop out because of school fees load on my mother."
"My father was the one paying school fees but, when we became many, it became risky."
"I was on and off school because parents were not able to pay school fees easily. I used to cry and pray."

Beneficiaries, who were "just at home" felt hopeless and "stranded": "I was at home with no hope of ever getting back to school."
"I used to suffer because there were many children to be paid for by the father."
"I had no fees because my sibling had joined S1, and all the money was used on her. I was told to wait until she finishes."

"Petty business" consisted almost entirely of brewing and selling food: "I used to dig and make local brew for money for necessities."
"I was brewing beer from cassava for upkeep."
"I was brewing local gin and selling food."
"I was making pancakes with start up money from my mother."
"I was roasting groundnuts with my grandmother for fees."

A few girls also knitted: "I knitted and sold table cloths … next to a video hall."
"I used to do gardening and knit table cloths to raise school fees."

One girl helped her sister in her hair salon. The boys did typically male pursuits – smuggling petrol and making bricks: "I used to buy paraffin from a neighbouring country and sell it."
"I was involved in brick laying but it was damaged by disastrous rains."

Education after the scholarship

Ninety two per cent of the 77 A level leavers, who supplied information on their educational status, went on to further studies. Of these, 20 continued with Mvule support, while 57 found other funding. In all, 72% continued without Mvule help. Thirty-two went to university, 25 studied for diplomas, and 12 for certificates. Fifteen took up health careers; 27 went into business, administration or economics. The full list is in Table 7.9.

Students were supported by 19 sources of school fees in all: self, mother, father, parents, uncle, aunt, brother, sister, cousin, grandfather, grandmother, the school attended, husband, church and five types of scholarships – Mvule Trust (20 students); district quota scholarships (12); the NGO Invisible Children (5); the Ministry of Health (MOH – two full and one partial scholarships); and "State House" (1).

Mothers were the individual most likely to pay completely for a student (5); self (2); grandfather (2); aunt (2); sister (2); grandmother (1); brother (1); cousin (1); husband (1).

Uncles excelled at "chipping in": one uncle supported one student fully and uncles paid part of the fees for five students. Five young people paid part of their own fees. Mothers paid part fees for three; fathers paid part fees for three. Table A2 in Appendix 2 collapses data on course, study, how it was paid for, employment status, earnings, and expenditure (see below for discussion of earning and expenditure).

Table 7.8 Occupation of parents

Occupation parent	Father	%	Mother	%
Farmer	47	55.3	36	42.4
Job in private sector	2	2.4	12	14.1
Job in public sector	18	21.2	-	-
Self-employed	1	1.2	5	5.9
Unemployed	5	5.9	1	1.2
Other	12	14.1	7	8.2
Housewife	0	0	24	28.2
Total	85	100	85	100

Table 7.9 Course/educational level reached

	Females	Males	Total
Certificate in community work with children/youth	1	0	1
Certificate in records management	1	0	1
Certificate in nursing and/or midwifery	10	0	10
Diploma in electrical engineering	1	0	1
Diploma in water sanitation engineering	2	0	2
Diploma in lab technology	1	0	1
Diploma in clinical medicine	1	0	1
Diploma in human nutrition	1	0	1
Diploma in psychiatric nursing	1	0	1
Diploma in guidance and counselling	1	0	1
Diploma in social work or development	6	0	6
Diploma in business/accounting	10	0	10
Diploma in forestry	2	0	2
University degree in information technology	1	0	1
University degree in procurement and logistics	3	0	3
University degree in development studies	4	0	4
University degree in social work	4	0	4
University degree in business studies	9	0	9
University degree in HR/public administration	3	0	3
University degree in economics/microfinance	2	1	3
University degree in counselling and guidance	1	0	1
University arts degree in science	1	0	1
University arts degree in education	4	0	4
University degree in community rehabilitation	1	0	1
Total	71	1	72

"I had no fees to go on for A levels because my sibling had joined S1, and all the money was used on her. I was told to wait until she finishes."

Work

Because many students opted for lengthy courses, the majority was still in school or looking for work when the tracer study found them. However, seven had jobs, earning between UGX60,000 a month (a salesgirl in a supermarket) and UGX300,000-400,000 in local government and NGO jobs. This group was on the road out of poverty.

Worryingly, however, of the ten who studied for a business course, only one is employed, although her job as a school bursar brings in UGX150,000 a month. Social work and development diplomas seem to lead to employment more easily and better remuneration.

Positive impact on siblings

A level completers who were working, were spending their money purposefully. Four girls with jobs were paying for seven siblings (average 1.75 siblings each). Another five girls were paying for siblings' or cousins' school materials. At least two were paying their own fees.

Marriage

A level completers had similar views on marriage to the O level completers. They no longer saw it as an escape route from poverty but more of a project between partners to be entered into after education. They wanted educated men and small families.

My best friend from primary school

All groups were asked about what happened to the best friend from primary school. This was an effort to find a counterfactual. The most comprehensive accounts came from the A level students, who had the entire primary and secondary cycle behind them.

If the friend had not continued after primary school, she invariably had over four children already: "My best friend did not join secondary and has been married to three men. She has five children."

"My friend completed PLE while pregnant and has five children now."
"My two best friends both dropped out after PLE. One married immediately and has four children. The other got married after two years and has six."
"My friend has five children."

A number started secondary school but dropped out, with marriage a usually unsuccessful default position:
"She dropped out of school because she wanted to reach Kampala. Since then she has had two kids and is divorced from the husband who took her there."
"My friend joined secondary but due to lack of fees dropped out. She got pregnant and is at home with her parents."
"My friend got pregnant in S1 and married a man who infected her with HIV after marrying another wife."
"My friend completed S4 and went to a neighbouring country because she aborted and her parents refused to pay her fees."
"Both of us completed O levels but my friend conceived with a married man and now quarrels never cease between her and her co-wives."
"My friend completed S6 but got involved in nightclubs and did not take interest in education. Her parents disowned her."

A few were working: "She refused school much as her parents wanted her to go. Now she is doing clothes business."
"Some are gambling with life in Juba."
"She joined the army after S4."

Only two out of the over 70 girls described happy outcomes for their best friend from primary school: "She was brighter than me. Despite being chased from school for lack of fees, she finished with funds from relatives and is now on government sponsorship at Makerere University." "My old friend and I are together doing a business diploma."
Mvule Trust was alarmed by this bleak picture.

"I am 23 years old and a total orphan. I have six brothers, who all dropped out in primary. Right now I am in nursing school under government sponsorship, Mvule Trust having paid for my A levels. After my O levels, I had no hopes. But when Mvule picked me up, I was able to go on, and I am now somewhere. So Mvule Trust impacted on my life positively, and I have improved on the education standards in our family. I went to a boarding school. The other students were happy with us. For instance, when Mvule brought text books for the school library, they said it was a gift for the whole school because Mvule had beneficiaries there. Everyone used those books. I hope to marry in the future but still have a long way to go because I have to complete my bonding period with the hospital. I hope to get a man who is educated, who can contribute to the family income. A man who is not educated will keep depending on you."

Girl funded for A levels, now in nursing school

"I lost my father at two years and my mother at eight. I joined school whem I was totally an orphan and was dependent on an aged aunt. When I reached S4, nobody picked me up, but because I was doing well, the head teacher retained me. After my O levels, I had an accumulated fees bill of UGX500,000 so I was not able to pick my results. Luckily, after many problems, Mvule Trust offered me a scholarship. In the village, I am an example to the girls because I have tolerated and persevered. Everyone is wishing their daughter to be like me. In church they give me as an example." They say, "Work hard and become like Mapenzi". My boyfriend is also an orphan. I have encouraged him to enrol at university and now he is in his first year. We are struggling to raise his tuition. I sacrifice some of my needs for him. I want him to study because I want a man who is educated, who is understanding and had a similar struggle in life.

Girl funded for A levels, now at university

©MVULE TRUST

CHAPTER 8

PROFESSIONALS: "My parents appreciate me"

Between 2007 and 2010 Mvule Trust funded 222 young people, of whom 214 were female and eight male, to study on professional courses and become qualified as nurses, midwives, laboratory technicians, foresters, environmental health officers or clinical officers. These courses lasted between two and a half and three years. Of these, 205 qualified. The tracer study located 60% or 123 individuals. Of those traced, 92 young professionals or 75% were in health – qualified as lab technicians, nurses, midwives, clinical officers or environmental health inspectors. Another 30 or 24.3% had trained in forestry or beekeeping at the National Forestry College, and one had studied business. (Table 8.1).

This was an exciting group with high levels of employment and investment going back into their families by educating siblings and building houses for their parents. This investment in the natal family has been little documented elsewhere, the focus being more on the investment that the girl makes in the family that she creates by marrying and having children. "When a girl … gets a solid education, she is better able to … raise a healthy family," says Connect to Learn. (www.connecttolearn.org) Mvule Trust's study however, suggests that educating girls strongly benefits the family they are born into and not just their future family. Boys were equally forthcoming in helping their parents and siblings.

The young professionals were also delaying marriage so as to help their natal family financially, a pattern that is less developed with the younger O and A level groups, few of whom have started work. "I have protected sex with my lover, but marriage is not my priority," said a young woman forester. "I want to first build a house for my grandmother and educate my sisters' children."

Background characteristics

Of the 115 females and eight males traced, 21% were aged 21-24, slightly over 60% were aged 24–26, and 22.6% were aged 27 or over. About 62% of the graduates were still single. (Table 8.2)

Of the males, 37.5% had one or more child; the figure for females was 46.1%. (Table 8.3)

A total of 22 or 17.9% were total orphans and 26 or 21% were partial orphans (data not shown). Prior to the scholarship, 67.2% lived in mud houses. Today 66.2% live in permanent houses, and only 15.5% still live in mud houses. (Table 8.4) This reversal can be partly explained by over 65% having achieved employment.

This was the only group in which the majority of beneficiaries (55.7%) came from households where the marriage was monogamous. (Table 8.5)

Before the scholarship, 80.5% of beneficiaries' households had at least two meals a day. (Table 8.6)

Table 8.1 Qualification attained or course studied

Qualification	Number	%
Assistant laboratory technician	15	12.2
Clinical officer	2	1.6
Enrolled comprehensive nurse	43	35.0
Enrolled comprehensive nurse & midwifery	16	13.0
Environmental health assistant	14	11.4
Forestry/agroforestry/beekeeping	30	24.3
Registered nurse	2	1.6
Business	1	0.8
Total	123	100

Table 8.2 Background characteristics of 'professional' graduates

		Number	%
Gender	Male	8	6.5
	Female	115	93.5
Age	18 - 20	0	0
	21 - 23	21	17.0
	24 - 26	74	60.2
	27 - 29	21	17.0
	30 - 32	3	2.4
	32 +	4	3.2
Marital status	Single	76	61.8
	Married	41	33.3
	Divorced	1	0.8
	Cohabiting	5	4.1

Table 8.3 Number of children produced by gender: professional group

Number of children	Male	%	Female	%
None	5	62.5	62	53.9
One	2	25.0	43	37.4
Two	1	12.5	7	6.1
Three	0	0.0	3	2.6
Total	8	100.0	115	100.0

Table 8.4 Type of house beneficiary lived in before the scholarship and now

Type of house	House Before		House Now	
	Number	%	Number	%
Mud house	82	67.2	18	15.6
Semi permanent house	26	21.3	21	18.2
Permanent house	14	11.5	77	66.2
Total	122	100.0	116	100

Table 8.5 Number of wives of father/guardian

No of wives	Number	%
One	68	55.7
Two	30	24.6
Three	14	11.5
Four	4	3.3
>Four	6	4.9
Total	122	100.0

Table 8.6 Meals per day by household

Meals	Number	%
One	21	17.1
Two	68	55.3
Three	31	25.2
Four	3	2.4
Total	123	100.0

Almost 30% of beneficiaries' fathers had either never attended or failed to complete primary education; for mothers the figure was 54.6%. However, 50.1% of fathers and 17.4% of mothers had secondary or more education, far above the Ugandan average. (Table 8.7)

Just 46% of the fathers and 35% of the mothers identified their occupation as "farmer". About 35% of fathers had private or public sector jobs, and almost 15% of the mothers also worked in the public sector. (Table 8.8)

Despite this relatively high level of education among parents, over half (55.4%) of the beneficiaries found themselves, after qualifying, to be the most educated person in their family. (Table 8.9) This was a needy group, but less needy than the A level group and far less needy than the S4 non-completers and O level completers. Of this group, 43% of the females and 75% of the males had been out of education for more than a year when Mvule Trust took them on (data not shown).

Employment

This group is of great importance to Mvule Trust as it is the only group that was trained for employment. So the paramount questions are: did they find a job and, if so, what did they earn and what did they do with their earnings?

Data on employment was available for 118 of the 123 young people, of whom 66.4% were employed in jobs with salaries. Of the rest, 6.9% described themselves as self-employed, 0.9% as casual labourers (one individual), 7.8% as "unemployed and looking for work", 0.9% (one individual) as "in full time training/apprenticeship", 2.6% as in part time training, and 1.7% as housewives. One individual (0.9%) was in further education and nine (7.8%) were volunteering. A final 4.3% was engaged in "other". (Table 8.10)

"After my A level, I could not go on. My uncle, a carpenter, who had paid for me, had to pay for his children. A friend told me about the Mvule advert. I applied but never heard. I knew I was defeated and could cry. But then, being a Christian, I felt hope rising in me and I called Mvule. They said, 'You have not yet reported? You got a place at forestry college!' I went straight, packed and slept in the taxi park. When I got to the college, I was so focused that I didn't need luxurious things. I had three bars of soap, and life started. I now work for an NGO. I have planted 17 acres of trees. The salary is UGX900,000! In my family, I am the one who pays everything – for my mother and my brother in S4 and the requirements for my sister at university. In the village, they say, if Stella studied under difficult conditions, why not us?"

Girl supported for a diploma in forestry

"I am a lab assistant in a health centre. Getting this job was a hassle. People say we bribed because 15 applied and only two of us went through. But I got it without bribery. We have worked three months without pay, but they say we shall start getting a salary at the end of this month. If I save the money they owe us, I can clear my brother's tuition at nursing school. Before the scholarship, my plan was to get married. But now I feel it is not yet time because I would like to upgrade professionally. I used to live a miserable life and envy those who went to university. But now I no longer envy them because I know that I shall reach that level with the foundation Mvule laid for me. I am the first born of eight. Now hope is alive in my family and what makes them happiest is that I have a permanent job. My siblings will study now."

Girl supported for medical laboratory training

Table 8.7 Education of parents

Level of Education	Father		Mother	
	Number	%	Number	%
Never been to school	10	8.3	26	21.5
Incomplete primary education	25	20.8	40	33.1
Complete primary education	10	8.3	16	13.2
Incomplete secondary education	15	12.5	18	14.9
Complete secondary education	26	21.7	6	5.0
Vocational school/training	17	14.2	11	9.1
Higher education	17	14.2	4	3.3
Total	120	100.0	121	100.0

Table 8.8 Occupation of parents

Occupation parent	Father		Mother	
	Number	%	Number	%
Farmer	46	40.4	43	35.3
Private sector	6	5.3	3	2.5
Public sector	37	32.5	18	14.8
Self-employed	12	10.5	6	4.9
Unemployed	3	2.6	5	4.1
Other	10	8.8	5	4.1
Housewife	-	-	42	34.4
Total	114	100.0	122	100.0

Table 8.9 Highest educated person in family by gender of beneficiary

Person	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Father	0	0.0	9	7.8	9	7.4
Brother	0	0.0	19	16.5	19	15.7
Sister	1	12.5	25	21.7	26	21.5
Myself	7	87.5	60	52.2	67	55.4
Total	8	100.0	115	100.0	121	100.0

Table 8.10 Employment status by year of graduation

Employment	Year of Graduation						
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total	%
Salaried job	2	9	32	30	4	77	66.4
Self-employed	1	1	3	3	0	8	6.9
Casual labourer	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.9
Unemployed and looking for work	0	1	6	1	1	9	7.8
In full time training/apprenticeship	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.9
In part time training	0	0	0	2	1	3	2.6
Housewife	1	0	1	0	0	2	1.7
In further education	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.9
Volunteer	1	1	2	1	4	9	7.8
Other	1	1	2	0	1	5	4.3
Total	6	13	48	37	12	116	100.0

"After training, I became a big person and started living a new life, which made me happy. I was appreciated by parents and other relatives after obtaining a job."

Looking at employment by profession (Table 8.11):

- 100% of the enrolled comprehensive nurse midwives and the registered nurses were employed.
- Of the enrolled comprehensive nurses, 69% were employed, 9.5% were self-employed, 7.1% were in part time training, 7.1% were volunteering, 4.3% in further education, and another 4.3% were casual labourers.
- Of the environmental health assistants, 69% were employed, 15% were unemployed and looking for work, and another 15% were "other".
- Of those who had studied forestry or agriculture, 55% were employed, 14% were unemployed, 6.8% were housewives, 3.4% were in training, 3.4% were in further education, and 10% were volunteering.
- Of the two clinical officers, one was employed and one looking for work.
- Of the lab technicians, 47% were employed, 20% were self-employed, 20% were volunteering, and 6% was looking for work.

Thus, 100% of the enrolled comprehensive nurse midwives and registered nurses, 69% of the enrolled comprehensive nurses and environmental health assistants, 55% of the foresters and agriculturalists, 50% of the two clinical officers, and 47% of the lab technicians were in salaried jobs.

Females were less likely to be employed than males, although the number of males is small: 65.5% (113) of females compared to 75% (8) of males. (Table 8.12)

Jobs appear to have been fairly easy to obtain. Over half of the employed graduates found a job within three months of completing training: 25.2% within a month, and 27.4% within one to three months. A further 7.4% were employed within four to six months, 22.1% within seven to 12 months, and the final 17.9% after 12 months. (Table 8.13)

Three foresters, however, had not yet found a job by the time of the tracer study. Their stories illustrate some of the challenges. One young woman survives by volunteering for environmental groups and attending workshops. Paying per diems for workshop attendance is one of the banes of NGOs, but it is her livelihood. "I get allowances and use that money to pay for my rent and help my mother, who digs and also sells *chapati* by the road. I am gaining experience and creating relationships with many people, something that might help me in the future."

A second young woman worked on a short contract after graduating, earning UGX267,000 ($110) a month, with which she built a house for her parents. Since it ended she has had short assignments. "Sometimes they call me to patrol with them in the forest reserve. They give me an allowance for soap and transport." A permanent job is elusive. "I stay very far in my village and as you know you can't just sit and the job comes. I have to walk nine km from home to town. Sometimes they advertise the job, you photocopy your papers, and at the end you are not even shortlisted. Those are the few difficulties but I have hope God will get me a job."

A young man, who did not yet have a job, said, "They ask for 'a small gift', that is money which I don't have. It is also a bribe, which is even a sin."

Investing in siblings

The vast majority of the graduates are deeply engaged in helping their siblings to stay in school (Table 8.14). Of 77 beneficiaries with salaried jobs, 84% were supporting at least one sibling in school; 26% were supporting three or more siblings. In all, these 77 former beneficiaries in full time employment were supporting over 151 siblings.

Even beneficiaries without full time salaried employment were supporting siblings' education: 63% of the self-employed, 43% of the unemployed, 43% of those volunteering, 66% of the housewives, 66% of those in training were paying for siblings in school.

Table 8.11 Employment status by course

Employment status	Lab technician	Clinical officer	Enrolled comprehensive nurse	Enrolled comprehensive nurse midwife	Registered nurse	Forestry, agriculture or beekeeping	Environmental health assistant	Other	Total	%
Employed	7	1	29	16	2	16	9	0	80	66.1
Self-employed	3	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	8	6.6
Casual labourer	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.8
Unemployed and looking for work	1	1	0	0	0	4	2	1	9	7.4
In full time training/ apprenticeship	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.8
In part-time training	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	2.5
Housewife	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	1.7
In further education	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	1.7
Volunteer	3	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	9	7.4
Other	1	0	1	0	0	2	2	0	6	5.0
Total	15	2	42	16	2	29	13	2	121	100

Table 8.12 Employment status by gender

Employment	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Employed	6	75.0	74	65.5	80	66.1
Self-employed	0	0.0	8	7.0	8	6.6
Casual labourer	0	0.0	1	0.9	1	0.8
Unemployed and looking for work	0	0.0	9	8.0	9	7.4
In full time training/apprenticeship	0	0.0	1	0.9	1	0.8
In part time training	0	0.0	3	2.7	3	2.5
Housewife	0	0.0	2	1.8	2	1.7
In further education	0	0.0	2	1.8	2	1.7
Volunteer	1	12.5	8	7.0	9	7.4
Other	1	12.5	5	4.4	6	5.0
Total	8	100.0	113	100.0	121	100.0

Table 8.13 Months spent hunting for a job

Months	Number	%
Less than one month	24	25.2
1–3 months	26	27.4
4–6 months	7	7.4
7–12 months	21	22.1
Over 12 months	17	17.9
Total	95	100.0

Table 8.14 Support for siblings in school by employment status

Employment	Number of siblings supported						
	None	One	Two	Three	>Three	Total	%
Employed	12	13	22	16	14	77	68.8
Self-employed	3	1	1	1	2	8	7.1
Casual labourer	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.9
Unemployed and looking for work	4	0	3	0	0	7	6.3
In full time training/apprenticeship	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.9
In part time training	1	0	2	0	0	3	2.7
Housewife	1	0	2	0	0	3	2.7
In further education	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.9
Volunteer	2	1	3	0	1	7	6.3
Other	1	1	2	0	1	5	4.5
Total	24	18	35	17	18	112	100.0

"I have protected sex with my lover, but marriage is not my priority. I want to first build a house for my grandmother and educate my sisters' children."

In total, the 112 beneficiaries for whom the tracer was able to collect this data, were supporting over 219 siblings in school, about two per beneficiary: 24 were supporting none, 18 were supporting one sibling, 35 were supporting two siblings, 17 were supporting three siblings and 18 were supporting more than three. Thus there is a clear multiplier effect. By educating 112 young people to professional level, Mvule Trust enabled almost twice that number again to be in education.

Out of poverty

Once employed, how much did the graduates earn? Table 8.15 shows the income bands of 94 former beneficiaries from whom Mvule Trust collected this information. About half (48.9%) of the 94 earned between UGX250,000 and 500,000 a month. About 38% earned less than UGX250,000 a month, and almost 10% earned more than UGX500,000 a month. Only 7.4% earned less than UGX100,000 a month. Over 90% of these graduates were out of poverty, earning over $2 a day.

The best paid were foresters with 77% earning over UGX250,000 a month and almost 40% earning over UGX500,000 a month. (Table 8.16). Health workers earned considerably less. It should be possible at a later date to calculate the rate of return on the investment in these young people. The school fees per forester trained, for instance, were an astoundingly low UGX2.15 million or $900.

Table 8.15 Monthly income of employed beneficiaries

Monthly Income in UGX/ ('000)	Total	%
< 100K	7	7.4
10 –250K	32	30.1
250–500K	46	48.9
501–750K	7	7.4
751–1000K	2	2.2
Total	94	100.0

Just as exciting, of these 94 beneficiaries, 79% were ploughing at least part of it back into educating their siblings. Table 8.17 looks at income and siblings supported: 75% of those earning less than UGX100,000 a month supported siblings, compared to 81% of those earning between UGX100,000 and 250,000, compared to 87% of those earning between UGX250,000 and 500,000, compared to 86% of those earning UGX500,00-750,000, compared to 50% of the two individuals earning UGX750,000-1,000,000. So broadly, the more they earned, the more likely they were to support siblings.

Table 8.18 looks slightly differently at how beneficiaries spent their earnings. Beneficiaries were asked to mention all the ways they use their money, hence 94 respondents generated 255 responses. Beneficiaries spent money for three main uses: 60% on family needs, 59% on personal needs and 53% on educating siblings or other relatives. About 16% of the beneficiaries invested their income into business and 35% made savings.

The qualitative data help us to grasp the pervasiveness and power of the beneficiaries' desire to help the family that they were born into. "I am a bread winner for the family, I bought windows for my parents' house, which we will build with cement and I pay fees for my siblings," said a young woman.

"I have learnt not to marry soon," said a young man, now a forester. "I need to support my mom and siblings first, who need to get at least a diploma."

Table 8.16 Monthly salaries by profession

	INCOME					Total
	Less than UGX100,000	UGX101,000-250,000	UGX251,000-500,000	UGX501,000-750,000	UGX751,000-1,000,000	
Assistant laboratory technician	3	5	4	1	0	13
Clinical officers	0	0	1	0	0	1
Enrolled comprehensive nurse	4	16	17	0	0	37
Enrolled comprehensve nurse and midwife	0	5	10	0	0	15
Environmental health assistant	0	2	8	0	0	10
Forestry/agroforestry and beekeeping	0	4	7	5	2	18
Registered nurse	0	0	2	0	0	2
Other	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total	7	32	49	7	2	97

Table 8.17 Monthly income of employed beneficiaries by number of siblings supported

Monthly Income in UGX/ ('000)	None	One	Two	Three	>Three	Total	%
< 100K	1	2	1	0	3	7	7.4
101–250K	6	8	13	3	2	32	30.1
250–500K	6	6	12	11	11	46	48.9
501–750K	1	0	3	2	1	7	7.4
751–1000K	1	0	1	0	0	2	2.2

Table 8.18 Use of income

Income use	Number	% of responses	% of individuals
Family needs	63	24.7	60.0
Personal needs	62	24.3	59.1
Re-invest into business	17	6.7	16.2
Savings	37	14.5	35.2
Education of siblings/relatives	56	22.0	53.3
Other	20	7.8	19.1
Total	255	100.0	

Marriage and childbearing

Being on average four years older, beneficiaries from this group had thought more about marriage and had had more sexual and romantic experience than those in the other three groups. They said the scholarship and the education they had received had changed how they thought about marriage: "It should take place after one has settled in life and is able to earn some money."

"Marriage should not be rushed as it may be difficult to progress academically and professionally once one is married."

Education altered the type of man that most of the girls wanted as a husband. "I am thinking of getting a man of my own class," said one girl. Boys expressed similar feelings about needing an educated partner and feeling freed of the peer pressure to marry early. One forester said, "I am planning to marry at 30. I feel my spouse should have at least a diploma so she can support the children if something happens to me. Had it not been for the scholarship, I would have married due to peer influence. But now I interact with intellectual and healthy minds that are productive."

Several girls remarked, however, that they could not find a comparably educated male in their home area and that, second, less educated men "feared" them. "This scholarship has kept me away from early marriage," said one young woman, "because now that I am back in the village men fear to approach me, an educated woman." Third, being now well educated, the Mvule girls also believed they would attract a higher bride price. While proud of this, they thought that this could make it additionally hard for a man to wed them. This was the only group for which these marriage changes, which could be construed as negative, emerged.

Like the O and A level girls, some of the female professionals noted that over-reliance on marriage for happiness and economic security was risky. "My plan was to get someone who can make me happy, and I thought that marriage was the only way to happiness. But now I have come far with the scholarship, I know that is not right. Now I know that when you are not self-sustaining, marriage will not change anything in your life."

Perhaps the most extraordinary finding was that, in a reversal of wanting a daughter to marry early so as to bring in bride price, once girls get a salary their parents often hope that their daughters delay marriage so as to help their natal family for longer. One female beneficiary, who now runs a pharmacy, got married at 23. "My family was not happy when I married. My father takes me as the only child who can help them. But I thought it was not good to overstay at home because in our village they laugh at you. So I decided to start my own family. When I told my father that I will still help them at home, he agreed. So I got married."

The girls wanted far smaller families than the one they were born into and did not want polygamous marriages. "I want three children, and God should give me a man not married such that we start fresh our family."

Often the desire for a smaller family came from the wish to prevent their children from suffering like they did as children: "(I want) a maximum of four. I don't want them to go through what I went through."
"I would like to have three that I can cater for, rather than having eight like my parents and failing to support them."
"If God blesses me with a man, I would love to have two because if you have too many you won't be able to give them all they need. In my family, we were too many, and I saw my mother struggle to cater for us."

In another example of how educated girls benefit the extended circle around them, at least one girl wanted to have a small family so that she could help her relatives. "I want only three children because the cost of living is high. I also want to be able to look after, for instance, an uncle's children so that the community does not say that I am selfish and don't look after cousins."

Those females who had had babies were pragmatic. "I got the baby accidentally when I was in my S4 vacation," said a forester. "I was not prepared for it. But it could not stop me from continuing with my studies. It only took me nine months to get back to school. By one year, the baby was running and talking and that was the time I took him to his grandmother, the mother of the man. I do visit him once in a while."

Another girl gave birth before she graduated from forestry college, and Mvule Trust continued to pay her fees. She said, "The baby was just one consideration and responsibility among others. I am still living with my parents with the baby. I agreed with my man that the first thing is to build my parents' house, and then live together, because I know that if you are with a man you can forget helping your parents."

A life transformed

The most significant change in the life of the beneficiaries was getting an education, followed by a job with earnings. A job and a salary transformed how the beneficiary saw him or herself and related to others.

"I started earning a salary and became liberated and independent."

"I completed and qualified as a nurse and got employed and am able to provide for myself and family."

"The biggest change is getting a well-paying job and a caring and educated man, who wedded me."

Overwhelmingly they believed they were role models. "I changed the mindset of people at home and the community about educating a girl child, not as they used to think before."

These beneficiaries had power and status within their families and communities. "I reunited our family and we can now sort out disputes as a family."

"After training, I became a big person, started living a new life, which made me happy – I was appreciated by parents and other relatives after obtaining a job."

"It lifted me to another level of people in the community and gained respect from them and improved my standard of living and I am economically empowered ."

©MVULE TRUST

CHAPTER 9
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The study found that scholarships are more transformative than even their keenest proponents suggest. By focusing narrowly on individual recipients and their future families, to date most scholarship schemes have missed the almost immediate positive impact of scholarships on beneficiaries' siblings, parents and neighbours.

Within the family, the scholarship freed up money that could be used to put other siblings into school. So a realistic analysis of a scholarship might conclude that for every adolescent funded, two or more return to, stay in, or start in school. That is one multiplier effect. The next would be the siblings that are paid for by the scholarship recipient once he or she starts earning money. In the professional group, employed former beneficiaries were paying for on average two siblings in school and sometimes more.

"My family was not doing well," said a female forester. "The other children had stopped going to school. But since I got the job, I have paid for all to go back."

Since the average Ugandan woman gives birth to about seven children (UDHS 2011), these might be different siblings to those picked up by the parents. So four siblings may indirectly benefit from a scholarship to one child in the family. A third multiplier effect in the family would come from beneficiaries helping their parents (such as buying them a cow), thereby making parents more able to pay school fees for other offspring.

The study also found that, without any training, beneficiaries counselled others. Sometimes the adolescent approached the beneficiary, but sometimes parents, or even a district education official, would ask a beneficiary to talk to others. Many beneficiaries became activists who influenced others to remain in school. They also became role models for education, work and personal relations, such as not seeking a recourse in men and not marrying or having a child early. These role models led to yet more siblings and other young people persisting in school. "I have a sister who did not like school because she had an attitude that she could not finish," said a girl. "But now that she has seen what I have done, she joined teacher college and picked interest again."

In sum, instead of saying, "It costs $450 to put a girl in secondary school for a year", scholarship schemes might rightly say, "It costs $450 to put a girl in secondary school for a year and for that you also get two other siblings and a neighbour's child in school almost right away". And instead of stating, "An educated girl will have fewer children who she will make sure attend school", scholarship schemes can claim with justification that, "An educated girl will build a house for her parents, pay for at least two siblings to qualify as teachers or nurses, become a mobilizer for delayed marriage and school persistence, and have fewer children who she makes sure attend school".

The study also found that many young people continued in education without Mvule Trust's support – 42% of S4 completers, 53% of O level completers and 72% of A level completers. This was exciting because it suggested that a scholarship could start a student off on a trajectory and not necessarily have to fund a student all the way through. However, it was a conundrum to understand at first, since these young people would not have begun a lower level of education without Mvule Trust. So how did they go on?

"Many things changed about me. I increased my ability to think, read and write. I can now make solutions for my family, and they have hopes in me."

Mvule Trust concluded that this was part of the transformative effect of scholarships. They changed the ecology, self-image and calculus of a family. Education, having been a risky investment, became a good one once they saw a girl (or boy) complete their O or A levels. Indeed, multiple adults (aunts, uncles, priests, older brothers and others) gladly stepped up to help the student. The higher up the education system a child goes, the more support he or she gets. A child leaving primary school can usually call only on his or her parents. A child who has got through A levels – particularly girls and in families where almost no young person has gone on to higher education – can have many sources of funding. Expectations are high that the young person is on the brink of being able to pay back by helping the family. Mvule Trust concludes that this makes scholarships more sustainable. A child does not always have to be funded for the entirety of his or her education, but sometimes just long enough to give 'courage' to the family, after which they take over.

The study found that even a small amount of secondary education was transformative. Even the dropouts felt that they had benefited, shedding the timidity and shame of illiteracy: "It has helped me to express myself and no longer have fear." They were also grateful to speak English and felt more capable than friends who had not gone to secondary school. The same applied for those who completed O levels but went no further: "Many things changed about me. I increased my ability to think, read and write. I can now make solutions for my family, and they have hopes in me."
"Mvule Trust has helped my community because they have seen a product of education."

These less tangible outcomes are important.

However, the study found that it is when a beneficiary gets a job that communities are fully convinced of education as an investment. So it was the professional group, with their trainings in lab science, midwifery and others, that has seen their lives most transformed and lifted out of poverty. Conversely, beneficiaries often felt they had not succeeded unless they earned a salary.

A girl with a business diploma, who had not yet found a job, said, "As per now, people do not see me as a role model. I have not given any fruits of my stay in school." Mvule Trust concludes that supporting students on practical courses that lead to employment is the soundest investment. A student who trains to be a teacher after O levels can go on to university as a mature student.

More evidence that a scholarship was transformative came from beneficiaries' accounts of what had happened to their best friend from primary school. Mvule Trust was shocked by the lack of positive stories and the accounts of suffering. The most common answer was that they had dropped out of school, conceived and fallen into marriage for lack of options: "They tell me they do not have hope. Some say that they are just waiting for their day to die."
"My friend got married to a man of two women because she lacked fees. She now has HIV."
"They end up rotting in the villages. They go nowhere."

The most commonly cited number of children that their primary school friends had at this stage was five, according to A level girls. One girl spoke of two friends dying from abortion. Mvule can only conclude that there is no other positive route except education.

More happily, this study found that Mvule Trust scholarships reached youth who were needier than the national average. But some recipients were needier than others: those who dropped out were the poorest, the most likely to be orphans, and had the weakest academic record in primary school. Those sponsored for A levels and professional courses were less needy, partly because destitute youth rarely reach those levels to begin with. The conclusion is that by working in poor areas and using multiple selection criteria, trusted informants in schools and in depth interviews, scholarship schemes can locate needy young people.

The study looked at the constituents of the package that Mvule Trust provided. Besides school fees, other indispensable elements were supplies, sexuality talks and counselling. Without supplies schoolwork was hindered and girls put at risk of sex for things. The sexual health

talks and counselling stressed delaying sex and the fact that the scholarship hinged upon academic performance and not conceiving or causing a pregnancy. This helped students to focus and gave girls a riposte to males who wanted sex. Useful, but not essential, were parent meetings.

The study found that communities were often suspicious of Mvule Trust, but grew more trusting as they saw students gaining education. Also, while many villagers, relatives and school mates were happy for the beneficiaries, there was considerable ambivalence – wishing them well but envying them – and much outright hostility, wishing them harm and attempts at poisoning and witchcraft: "A neighbour was very jealous because her children never succeeded. She tried make me run mad."

Mvule Trust concludes that 'how' matters, including being transparent, communicating clearly to communities about where their children are going, terminating students who are making little effort and taking the scholarship for granted, and helping students to manage jealousy. Beneficiaries can diffuse tension by being helpful, encouraging others to apply for the scholarship, ignoring what others say until they become tired of saying it, sharing school supplies and items and simply saying that the scholarship was God's will. "People in the village kept wondering where my parents got the money from. My mother just told them that God was in control."

The tracer study found less anti-girl and less pro-boy bias than expected. Largely, it found families where no one was going far in education. One girl said that she belonged to a clan that traditionally did not go to school. "My father was deceived by others that he was wasting his time taking me to school, that in their clan they don't study." Although brothers were slightly more educated than sisters in three of the four groups, in many families girls were supported as much as boys and sometimes before them. "My brother would sometimes come home without sitting his exams because they must first pay my fees because I am ahead of him," said a girl. There were no accounts of jealous brothers or a father wanting his son, rather than daughter, to get the scholarship. In addition, girls in this study received more support to go on after O levels than boys.

Gender issues did emerge, however. Girls dropped out faster than boys, boys harassed girls in mixed schools, and some girls were pressured to marry. One said, "Neighbours told my grandmother that 'she cannot do anything in school, so let her get married so that you can enjoy bride price while still alive'." But after she got a job, such pressure vanished. Instead, "now each time I send my family money, they say if she were not educated, who would be supporting us? If we had forced her to get married, there would be no one to think about this family." Gender is more nuanced than is often made out.

Education transformed how young people, particularly girls, saw marriage. It delayed marriage by keeping them busy and removing them from the village. One girl explained that, "If I had stayed home, time would have come when they are marrying off a friend. Then another time will come when someone's daughter is taken. So the community will start comments as to why you are not getting married. This would have influenced me into early marriage. But then when I got the scholarship, I stayed away from such." Many beneficiaries were delaying marriage until they had finished educating their siblings. "I am not thinking of getting married soon because I have my siblings who I have to take care of so that they can have a better future," said a girl.

The scholarship and the education they acquired also changed the kind of partner they wanted, made them feel a higher value partner themselves, made them want to avoid the suffering of uneducated women in unequal and violent marriages, and made them determined to marry by choice rather than in a vain attempt to escape poverty: "I had thought marriage was a 'prison' but now I view it as 'being with a friend and companion'."

Finally, all the beneficiaries, except the S4 non-completers, were on their way out of poverty.

Recommendations

To donors: increase funding to education and include scholarships for areas where educational levels are particularly low. Demand high standards of implementation as per below, and make accountability a centrepiece. Insist on tracer studies.

To scholarship implementers and NGOs interested in scholarships: To find needy beneficiaries, start by working in the poorest regions. Then look for those who live in poor conditions (mud hut, few meals a day), have low parental education, and have lost one or more parent. Other criteria are: have been out of school, have repeated a grade to stay in school, are missing weeks of school, or have accumulated unpaid fees. Be flexible – some children with educated parents are in great need. Students are often not clearly in or out of school, and some of the most deserving students may be hanging on in school.

Subject beneficiaries to interviews and consult teachers. Teachers see which students are hungry and missing class, so they are good sources of information about students who are both needy and determined. You can also use district lists and go house to house to find strong students. Districts in Uganda, at least, do not have a system to ensure that their best primary and O level students continue in school.

Place the students in schools within their region. Bringing them to the capital city, or to a large regional city, is confusing and makes them less likely to work in their home areas when they qualify.

Think critically about the type of school. Day school costs less per student and the scheme will be able to enrol more students. This is tempting. But girls (and sometimes boys) will do better (higher academic results, less pregnancy) in a boarding school. Home conditions can be ill disposed to learning. Putting girls in a day school can be a false economy. Boarding school is not an extravagance; most are exceedingly austere in upcountry Uganda (and probably elsewhere in Africa). But the students at least usually eat three meals a day and have some light to study by.

Provide essentials, like sanitary pads, uniforms, mattresses and maths sets, especially for girls, who may end up in a sexual relationship to get them. Remind beneficiaries that other students lack these items and will be envious, so they should share them within reason. If a child is severely needy, she will not have assistance from home and must have supplies. Not giving supplies is another false economy as girls may get pregnant and drop out, 'wasting' the investment in them and disappointing their community. Older students in professional schools can often find their own basic needs, like sanitary pads, but may need stethoscopes and other work equipment.

Provide comprehensive and culturally and age-appropriate sexual health talks to support the students to manage their sexuality safely. Demonstrate condoms and provide information about contraception, but stress delaying or stopping sex in secondary school. Villages and schools suspected that Mvule Trust was trafficking girls to be sex slaves. Had it provided contraception, controversy would have exploded. Also, many beneficiaries said love relationships damaged the school performance of girls.

If a girl conceives, she needs to take at least one year off. Getting pregnant should not be taken lightly. It is another child to care for, in an already overwhelmed family, among other things. However, a baby does not mean the end of education. Half of the girls who got back to school in the S4 non-completers group had a baby, so it is possible and schools can be welcoming to young mothers. Scholarship schemes may choose to support a young mother if she is still keen to apply herself to education. This should not dilute the message, however, that girls and boys should put school before sex.

Education changes girls' and boys' outlook on marriage and children, and they will want to delay both. Girls will face neighbours saying that they are getting old and spoiling their marriage chances. Parents of girls in school may be told that they should remove the girl from school and collect bride price. Girls and families need support not to heed this talk, which is usually motivated by jealousy.

" I refused to pay attention to what they were saying and just studied. It was God's wish that I should be helped. I was also patient with life because I knew that when you are doing well, you get more enemies."

Make expectations clear to beneficiaries: to keep their scholarship, they need to work hard, be disciplined and not conceive, or impregnate a girl. Prevent drop out by setting high expectations for academic and personal behaviour and convey them clearly. This gives students something to aim for. Students repeatedly said that the worry about losing the scholarship made them work harder and avoid pregnancy. "I would tell boys to leave me alone. I thought they might destroy my chance of being sponsored, yet they cannot pay for my school fees," said an O level completer.

Funding beneficiaries, who make good use of the scholarship, and dropping uncommitted ones are important for the credibility of a scholarship scheme. It is also vital to detect fraud. Well-administered scholarship schemes can allocate scholarships judiciously and not suffer diversion of funds by having an acute ear for inconsistencies in the accounts of bursars and potential beneficiaries and by being honest itself. Fairness and transparency are important, giving hope and quelling rumours that the scheme has ulterior motives, such as sorcery.

The least advantaged students – from the poorest households with least education – will drop out first. Work against drop out by knowing the students and recognizing that even among very needy young people, some will be more disadvantaged than others. If possible, give extra support (counselling, feedback) to those most at risk of drop out, such as those whose mothers have never been to school. Consider placing the most disadvantaged students in boarding school. Students that drop out confirm fears that "education is not for people like us, and girls just get pregnant" and harden the prejudice that girls are the "despised sex that cannot achieve", as one boy put it.

Community suspicion and anger are normal. ("Most were jealous and would say 'Now this one is going to study up to university'." "Many were so jealous. They said, 'She has got an opportunity yet our parents are so poor'.") A scholarship scheme can never take everyone who needs a scholarship and is bound to create some bitterness, which is hopefully counterbalanced by positives. Holding students to high expectations helps to reduce the resentment that other students inevitably feel towards scholarships. A scheme should not keep a child, who is not trying when there are so many who need.

Be correct in all dealings with communities, as they may think you are a human trafficker or from another world (Satanic). Take your time with the community. They will start to trust you when they see their child returning from school in the holidays and gaining an education.

Rather than castigating a community for not educating girls, accept that girls may indeed be a poor investment when they leave primary school; they can easily conceive. However, by the time they complete O or A levels, they are close to getting a job and bringing returns. The family has reason to hope in them and becomes willing to fund them further, making sacrifices and sometimes even selling their most precious asset – land – to do so.

Beneficiaries do not have to excel academically, or be near the top of the class. However, teachers should report that they are doing their best. The scholarship needs to be both based on need and be merited. Be patient with poor academic performance, however, since poor students come from poor schools and may take time to catch up. They may also be shy and lack confidence, scarcely able to speak English, the language of instruction. Mvule Trust found that many students took several years before they started to achieve their personal best.

Do not see drop outs as signs that the scheme is failing. Some dropouts are inevitable. Some boys prefer to fish, for instance, than go to school. Try to investigate reasons. Have a medical scheme and be alert to problems such as short sightedness. Young people, who drop out, need reminding that even a few years of education is beneficial and that, if they work hard, they can get back to school or make money.

Be prepared to drop students who, for example, escape for discos, organize strikes or show little interest in school. Replacing them with students from the same school will motivate non-beneficiaries to put in effort in the hope of a scholarship, raising the standard for everyone. Consult with teachers about who to replace them with: they know who is working hard, yet on the verge of dropping out.

Counsel and mentor students. Many are suffering grief about the death of parents and/or are deeply troubled by, for example, a sick mother or how their brothers and sisters are faring without them.

Keep a clean and separate database of the cohort you began with so that you can calculate survival rates. Then keep a list of all those currently on the scholarship, including the 'replacements'. Update the lists each term and save them, with dates in at least two places, including an external drive. Mvule Trust's database crashed several times. Work as though you will conduct a tracer study. Keep detailed lists, including phone numbers. One of the many benefits of a tracer study is that you can pick up students you once funded, who have soldiered on valiantly and need more help, or who have performed unexpectedly well. Conduct a tracer study.

The fact that suffering is intense in villages and few young people are in school, means that scholarships can cause strife within schools, families and communities. This is one reason why beneficiaries have to be held to a high standard, demonstrate that they value the scholarship and strive to be role models. They should be cautioned against being haughty and encouraged to be active and helpful at home and school. Not all hostility can be dispelled, however, and beneficiaries may experience belittling and frightening abuse and threats; some people will want them to fail.

Advise the recipients to carry themselves with dignity and diffuse the talk by being helpful to others. They and their family members should not boast about the scholarship. It may be possible to keep the scholarship a private matter between the parent, child and school. Brainstorm with the recipients on what to do about the jealousy. "I would wonder how I can handle myself in the village because people were very envious of me because I was in school and they thought I was getting a lot of money from Mvule," said one girl. "This made me scared of my life. I would even fear witchcraft. I would make sure that I go very early in the morning to school but then coming back home was an issue." Another girl said, "I just refused to pay attention to what they were saying and just studied. It was God's wish that I should be helped. I was also patient with life because I knew that when you are doing well, you get more enemies."

Girls may lose their childhood and village friends as their lives diverge. The girl who did not go on to secondary school invariably becomes a mother and wife, her life starkly different from the life of an in-school girl. The breakdown of the friendship happens from both sides, the out-of-school girl often jealous of the in-school girl and bashful about her poverty and the in-school girl feeling somewhat superior. Educated girls may receive threats of witchcraft and be frightened to go home. NGO staff needs to be alert to this. Counsel them on how they carry themselves in the community. The jealousy may not be the girls' fault – no matter how hard they try, it may arise – but they can try not to fan it. They should be kind and not give themselves airs. They and their family should be discrete and not boast about the scholarship. Bringing benefits back to the village, counselling neighbours' children, paying for younger siblings and helping parents, are all ways to win over jealous neighbours. Girls need to be prepared for this ambivalence. Boys experience it less.

Given the ambivalence the community feels about educated girls, deploying the girls as peer educators or mentors might not be productive. In any case, girls and boys already do considerable counselling and role modelling in the village.

Parent meetings are useful but not essential. You may be sponsoring just one of their ten children, and they have many other concerns. If held, the content should not be patronizing, and parents need to be reassured of your motives for sponsoring their child. In demonstrating to communities that girls' education is important, getting 20 girls through nursing school may have the equivalent value of workshops with 200 parents. Since parents' meetings have a cost, this is a choice an NGO must make.

Depending on the education system, aim to get young people through the equivalent of tenth grade (O levels). Then support them in professional courses, such as nursing or agriculture, which the community can easily

"I would tell boys to leave me alone. I thought they might destroy my chance of being sponsored, yet they cannot pay for my school fees."

appreciate and which more easily lead to employment. A levels and university are not for everyone and may not lead to a job. Communities may see this as a failure. Even if a girl is the most educated individual in her community, if her education does not lead to more money for the family, it can become a source of derision, further discrediting the value of education.

Invest in courses that can help to restore vitality to rural Africa, such as forestry and agriculture. To pursue those disciplines however, young people need to have basic science education in high school (at least some science O levels in the Ugandan system). Encourage them to focus particularly hard in science class. If possible support science learning, including science camps for girls, lab building, training of science teachers and the purchase of equipment and reagents. Mvule Trust did all of these in its early years but they require larger funding than it could muster for long.

Although O and A levels give young people competency in English as well as skills such as critical thinking, they do not necessarily lead to higher incomes if the young person remains in the village. Counsel and mentor young people to be self-starters, look for opportunities, and volunteer. Point out opportunities, like being census enumerators or an election observer or registering births and deaths.

Families often do not support a child to start secondary education because they do not believe it will improve the family. Scholarship schemes can get young people over this hurdle and through O levels, after which families, excited at the prospect of an educated and earning member, may then take over paying the cost of further education. So it may not be necessary to carry all scholarship recipients on to the next educational level.

Take some boys on the scheme. Few boys go to secondary school in Africa; they are also needy. Otherwise, they may try to raise school fees through arduous and risky work, like smuggling, or sink into alcoholism and crime. They are likely to perform better in exams than girls, at least in Uganda , which creates a burning sense of injustice if a girl with lower marks is assisted and they are not. Both boys and girls reinvest in their natal families once educated. The tracer study found that more girls than boys assisted by Mvule, went on to further education supported by families. Constantly reassess assumptions about gender.

Finally, trust no one, not ever yourself. Have the scholarship scheme externally audited yearly. A key aspect of the audit should be surprise visits to schools, that are selected by the auditors themselves. These verify if everyone on the scholarship is in fact enrolled.

References

Chapman D & Mushlin S. 2008. Do girls' scholarship programs work? Evidence from two countries. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 28(4) p. 460-472.

Considine G & Zappala G. 2002. The influence of social and economic disadvantage in the academic performance of school students in Australia. *Journal of Sociology.* June 2002 vol. 38 no. 2 p. 129-148. Available at: http://jos.sagepub.com/content/38/2/129.short

Duflo E. 2012. Hope and Poverty. Available at: http://www.freakonomics.com/2012/05/23/hope-and-poverty/

Kane E. 2004. *Girls' Education in Africa: What Do We Know About Strategies That Work?* Africa Region. Africa Region. Human Development Working Paper Series. Washington DC:The World Bank.

Kennedy J. 2009. The not-for-profit surge. *Christianity Today*, May. pp.22-27.

Mingat A & Tan JP. 1996. *The full social returns to education: Estimates based on countries' economic growth performance.* Human Capital Working Paper No. 16131. Washington DC: World Bank.

Ministry of Education and Sports, 2009. *Final Education Statistical Abstract 2009.* Kampala. Government of Uganda.

Ministry of Education and Sports. 2012 Provisional results of the Universal Secondary Education (USE/UPPET) and Universal Post O' Level Education & Training (UPOLET). National head count exercise conducted on the 27th March 2012. Kampala: Education Planning and Policy Analysis Department. Available at: http://www.education.go.ug/

Murnane R, Moock P & Saavedra S. 2001. Evaluating Educational Investments. Background Paper for the Core Course "Strategic Choices in Education Reform" of the World Bank Institute. Washington DC: The World Bank.

Nsubuga YK, Personal communication. September 2012. Kampala.

OECD. 2012. *Education at a Glance 2012. OECD Indicators.* Paris:OECD. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2012-en

Opie,C. 2004 *Doing educational research: a guide to first-time researchers.* London: Sage.

Patton M. 1990. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) & Macro International Inc. 2007. *Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2006.* Calverton, Maryland, USA: UBOS and Macro International Inc.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics. 2010. *Uganda National Household Survey 2009/2010: Socio-economic module.* Kampala: Uganda Bureau of Statistics.

Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB). 2012. *PLE 2011 performance report.* Available at: http://www.uneb.ac.ug/index.php?link=Performance&&Key=PLE&&Code=PrimaryAbout

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2011. Enrolment by grade in general secondary education (ISCED 2 & 3) 1999-2011. Available at: http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=179&IF_Language=eng

UNESCO. 2011. *Financing Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Meeting the challenges of Expansion, Equity and Quality.* Montreal: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

US Census Bureau. 2012. D.C. Leads Nation as U.S. Per Pupil Tops $10,600, Census Bureau Reports. Available at: www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/...real.../cb12-113.html

Uvin P. 2009. *Life after violence: a people's story of Burundi.* London: Zed Books.

Wydick B, Glewwe P, Rutledge L. forthcoming. *Does International Child Sponsorship Work? A Six-Country Study of Impacts on Adult Life Outcomes.* University of San Francisco. Available at: http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CCwQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fagecon.ucdavis.edu%2Fresearch%2Fseminars%2Ffiles%2Fwydick-does-international-child-sponsorship-work.pdf&ei=576HUNuxCpC1hAe5-YCYCQ&usg=AFQjCNGfmK2mnaL-1JQfyliLe5Bom0LLzg&sig2=TcHV_q_vjYsKme1AzFDaJA

Table A.1 Impact of education on the familes of O level completers

Sex	Yes	No	Yes – it freed up money for their school fees	Yes – it changed attitude of family or siblings to education	Yes – I am paying for my siblings in school now	Yes – I have become educated so will pay for them in future	Yes – but answer unclear or sibling paid for by Mvule Trust
F	x						Unclear
F		x	**My parents cannot get money.**				
F	x		My sisters also got chance of going to school. They got the money I was supposed to take.				
F	x		The parents managed to pay school fees for them.				
M	x		My brother, who followed me, was paid for by my father because I was catered for.				
F	x		Because the fees that would have been given to me were given to them.				
F	x		The little they would have raised on me helped my younger brothers and sisters on their education.				
M	x		The money I earned paid for my sisters because MT had sponsored me and the burden was reduced.				
F	x		Through getting the scholarship and materials like pens, it helped the parents to pay others' fees.				
M	x		The fees you paid for me made us manage to pay for some of the other children.				
F	x				I pay for them.		
F	x						Unclear
F	x		It assisted them in paying fees for my siblings.				
F	x						Unclear
F	x		It helped my parents to afford fees for the younger ones.				
F	x		My parents were able to pay for the young ones.				
M	x		It helped my parents pay for younger siblings.				
F	x		The little that mother raised was given to my younger brothers and sisters as fees because Mvule Trust had taken me up.				
F	x						Unclear
F		x					
F	x				Whatever I get, I spend on my brothers' and sisters' education.		
F							
F	x			I was a role model to them and I would also explain to them the benefits of education.		I shall sponsor some of my sisters when I complete my studies.	
F	x		MT paid for me and then the rest of the money helped my brothers and sisters.				
F	x			It enabled my parents to take my siblings to school since they learnt all the good things of being educated.			
F	x			My siblings were able to look up to me and be in school. They developed hope that maybe they will also get an organization that can help them.			
F		x					

Table A1 continued

Sex	Yes	No	Yes – it freed up money for their school fees	Yes – it changed attitude of family or siblings to education	Yes – I am paying for my siblings in school now	Yes – I have become educated so will pay for them in future	Yes – but answer unclear or sibling paid for by Mvule Trust
F	x			I act as a role model so they appreciate the fact that I am in school.			
F	x		When I received books, I gave them to the ones not having. This encouraged them to stay in school.				
M	x			It made them take an interest in joining the scholarship.			
F	x		It enabled my mother to send my sister to at least O level.				
M	x					If I achieve my dream of being a nurse, I can help them with school fees.	
F	x		Yes, because one brother was able to finish S6 and he is waiting for quota system to go to university.				
F	x						Unclear
M	x			They have changed their attitudes toward education because my elder brother sent his daughter to school.			
F	x				I spend my earnings as a teacher (UGX200,000) on school fees for my siblings.		
F	x						Unclear
F	x						Unclear
F	x						Unclear
F	x			Yes, I was made knowledgeable and give advice to my brothers and sisters.			
F	x			I give hope to my uneducated sisters.			
M	x			My brothers and sisters are passing very well.			
F	x		It has given opportunity to my brothers and sisters to go to school.				
F	x		Because Mvule paid my fees, my parents could struggle to pay for my siblings.				
F	x						Unclear
F	x		My siblings were able to get education because the number of children is reduced.				
M	x			They are seeing me going to school so they take an interest in school.			
M	x			It is encouraging them to study very hard so that they can get a scholarship.			
M	x		My little brother was paid in secondary.				
F	x		They got the chance to attend secondary schools.				
F	x		It reduces the burden for my parents.				
F	x						MT paid for my sister.
F	x		My parents were able to educate my followers.				
F	x			It made them struggle to pass well and get a scholarship.			
F	x			It improved our family status and told them to join school.			

Table A1 continued

Sex	Yes	No	Yes – it freed up money for their school fees	Yes – it changed attitude of family or siblings to education	Yes – I am paying for my siblings in school now	Yes – I have become educated so will pay for them in future	Yes – but answer unclear or sibling paid for by Mvule Trust
F		x					
F	x		It made my parents pay for my sister to some level.				
F		x	It relieved my parents of heavy burden so some of my sisters were paid in school.				
F	x						Unclear
F	x						Unclear
F	x		Yes, my followers are now in school and the little money was shared on them.				
M	x		The little money my mother got was spent on my young sister's primary education.				
F	x			They are trying to read very hard so that they pass highly so that they are sponsored.			
M	x						MT sponsored a brother in secondary school.
F	x		It gave them that chance of being in school.				
F	x						Unclear
F	x			I gave them knowledge of what I was getting in school.			
F	x			They are working hard to reach my level. I have become their role model.			
F		x					
F		x					
F	x						Unclear
F	x		It helped them to go to school out of the money that was supposed to be used on me.				
F		x					Unclear
F	x						Unclear
F		x					
F	x					Mvule Trust brought me to this level, so I will pay their fees.	
F	x			Because I am educated, I am telling them to go to school.			
F	x					I will pay and change their life.	
F	x			It made them more active so they will also be taken.			
M	x					After I complete I will pay their fees.	
F		x					
F	x		The money for me was used for their fees.				
F	x		It made my uncle struggle to pay for our third born.				
M	x						Mvule paid for my brother.
F	x		It gave a chance for paying school fees for them.				
F	x						Unclear
F	x						Unclear
F	x						Unclear

Table A1 continued

Sex	Yes	No	Yes – it freed up money for their school fees	Yes – it changed attitude of family or siblings to education	Yes – I am paying for my siblings in school now	Yes – I have become educated so will pay for them in future	Yes – but answer unclear or sibling paid for by Mvule Trust
F	x		Yes, my mother was able to help some of my brothers and sisters in primary school.				
F		x	No, because my parents did not educate my other sibling.				
F	x		Yes, it gave a chance to my sister's son.				
M	x			They promised to go on with school.			
M	x			I am a role model for them.			
F	x		My parents became able to buy uniforms and other needs for my siblings.				
F		x	My parents were not able to raise anything.				
F	-	-					No siblings
F	x		My parents could now pay for my siblings.				
M		x					
F		x					
F	x				I am helping the young ones (selling second hand clothes).		
F		x					
F	x		My parents saved money for their fees.				
F	x						Unclear
F	x		They were able to pay for them.				
F	x			It created interest in my parents in educating siblings.			
F	-	-					Unclear
M	x		The burden was taken away, hence parents concentrated on siblings.				
F		x					
F	x						Unclear
F		x	They were married.				
F	x		The burden was reduced and they paid for my siblings.				
F	x		Similar answer.				
F	x			My brothers and sisters had dropped out but rejoined with hopes that maybe they would get someone to help them.			
F	x			I was a yardstick of education for my family.			
F	x		My mother used the money she would have used for me for my siblings.				
F	x						Unclear
F		x	Parents could not afford to pay.				
F	x		My parents could help my siblings since MT took control of me.				
F		x					
F	x		Without MT the money would not have been enough to educate us all.				
F	x		My parents were able to pay for my brother until he completed vocational.				

Table A1 continued

Sex	Yes	No	Yes – it freed up money for their school fees	Yes – it changed attitude of family or siblings to education	Yes – I am paying for my siblings in school now	Yes – I have become educated so will pay for them in future	Yes – but answer unclear or sibling paid for by Mvule Trust
F	x			My parents got courage to educate the others saying that maybe God can do a miracle again and they will also be sponsored.			
F	x		It created room for them to educate my brothers and sisters.				
F	x		The money that would have been used as my fees was added to theirs so they went to school.				
F	x		I used to share my books with them and it helped my parents to pay for my siblings.				
F		x					
F	x		My mother was able to provide for my siblings.				
M	x		My parents were able to raise funds for my brother who went to technical school.				
M	x			They learnt many things that I used to tell them.		I am paying for my sister's fees.	
F	x		My parents were encouraged to bring all of them to school so that they can also get scholarships and when they did not get, they struggled and paid for their education.				
F	x						MT paid for my sister.
F	x		It helped them to pay for my siblings.				
F	x			It improved the education level in our family and my father was encouraged to work hard to educate my siblings.			
F		x					
F		x					
M	x		When I was educated by MT, my parents used the money they earned to pay siblings' needs.				
M		x					
F	x			After Mvule sponsored me, my uncle adopted my sister in S1.	I contribute to my sister's fees.		
F	x						MT paid for my sister.
F	x			My siblings also got a chance of being supported by my uncle.			
F	x		My mother used the money she would have used for me to pay for my siblings' fees.				
F	x		I was the last born so my grandmother was able to pay for the grandchildren.				
F	x			It made them want to study like I study.			
M	x		My parents were able to pay for their fees.		I contribute to sister's fees.		
M	x			Every person born in the home is encouraged to attend school.			
F		x	My parents are poor and cannot afford to pay.				
M	x			My uncle was encouraged to pay for my cousins.			
M		x					

Table A1 continued

Sex	Yes	No	Yes – it freed up money for their school fees	Yes – it changed attitude of family or siblings to education	Yes – I am paying for my siblings in school now	Yes – I have become educated so will pay for them in future	Yes – but answer unclear or sibling paid for by Mvule Trust
F	x			The support to me made my parents happy and helped them to pay for other children at school. I always teach my brothers and sisters and they pass well.			
M	x		My parents became able to pay for my other brothers.				
F	x				I am struggling to pay for my siblings.		
F		x					
F	x			I advise them to be in school, although some are not in school.			
M	x		After MT paying for me, my father educated my siblings in primary school.				
F	x		My family was not doing that well, but when I got the scholarship, they were able to help my older sister.				
F	x		My sisters also got a chance of studying because the little money for me was given to them.				
F	x		It created room for my brother to study.				
F		x					
F	x		After MT took me, my parents were able to pay for my brothers and sisters.				
F		x	We lost our mother and our stepmother does not want us to study.				
F	x				The MT scholarship can help me to help them with my salary.		
F	x				Similar answer		
F	x				I can take responsibility in educating some of them.		
M		x					
F	x		The money that was to be used for me was used to pay for my brother.				
F	x			They study because I studied.		If I get money I can help them.	
F	x		The money that would have been paid for me was used to support my brothers.				
F	x						
F	x			They were able to have hope that good things come to those who wait.			
F	x			One of my brothers decided to study because he was seeing me. The others were already married.			
F	x		The money that would have been used on me was given to my brother to continue schooling.				
F	x		My parents were able to pay fees for other siblings.				
F	x		My father was able to pay for other brothers and sisters.				

Table A2 What happened to A level completers. Course pursued and who paid for it; employment, earnings and spendings

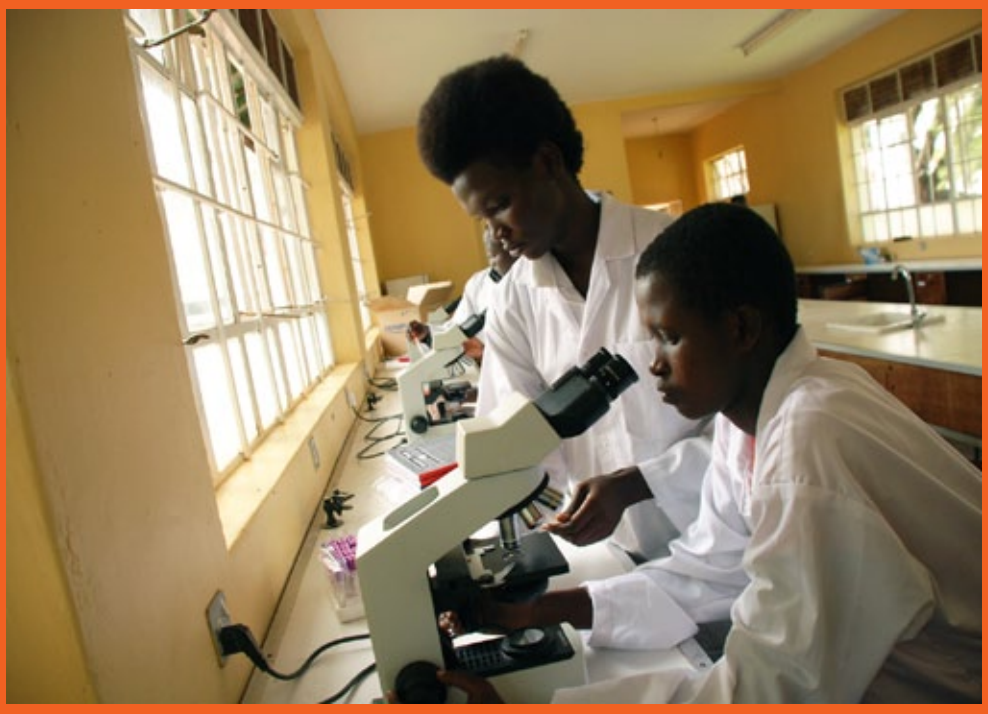
What course?	Who paid for it?	Employed as	Salary or earnings	Spending it how?
Certificate in nursing	MOH scholarship	Not yet	Small MOH allowances	Buys pens, books and uniforms for siblings
Certificate in records management	Self	Grows sunflowers	UGX300,000 a season	Her own school fees
Accounting diploma	Mother and self	Farming	—	Her own school fees
Business diploma	Mvule Trust	Not yet	—	—
Social work diploma	Father	Sales assistant in supermarket	UGX60,000 a month	Her rent and "things" for her family
Social work diploma	Mvule Trust	Community development officer	UGX300,000 a month	Paying school fees for one sister and one brother
Development diploma	Cousin	Church development worker	UGX400,000 a month	Pays fees for two siblings
Accounting diploma	Husband	School bursar	UGX150,000 a month	On her husband and son. Intends to pay for one sibling in school
Accounting diploma	Mvule Trust	Not yet	Not yet	—
Accounting diploma	Mvule Trust	Not yet – applying for jobs	Small money from farming with parents	—
Lab technology diploma	Grandmother sold land	Works in clinic	UGX 300,000	No biological siblings. Helps cousins with school needs
Social work diploma	Grandfather	Works in disability NGO	UGX100,000	Paying for one sister in secondary school
Youth work certificate	Self	Nursery teacher	UGX100,000	All siblings are married. "Hopes to pay" for one cousin in school
Business diploma	Mvule Trust	Not yet	Small money from farming with mother	—
Development studies diploma	Sister	Selling secondhand clothes	No income yet	—
Development studies diploma	School and self	Works in aunt's shop	No income yet	—
Social work degree	Mother	Not yet	Small money from farming with mother	—
Nursing	Father/MOH	Not yet	Digging and waiting for deployment	—
Business degree	Father	Not yet	Not yet	—
Clinical officer	Father/uncle	Not yet	Not yet	—
Nursing	MOH scholarship	Not yet	Not yet	—
Accounting degree	Mother and self	Not yet	Burns bricks	For her upkeep
Nutrition diploma	Mvule Trust	Still in school	Part-time hairdresser	For pocket money at school
HR degree	District scholarship	Still in school	—	—
Forestry diploma	Mvule Trust	—	—	—
Business degree	Government scholarship	Still in school	—	—
HR degree	State house scholarship	Not yet	Selling farm produce	Saving to start business. Pays fees for "only" two siblings
Economics degree	Mvule Trust	Volunteering for district	No income	—
Development studies degree	Invisible Children scholarship	Has applied for a job	—	—
Social work degree	District scholarship	Not yet	—	—
Degree in procurement	Sister	Still in school	—	—
Management degree	District scholarship	Not yet	At home	—
Counselling degree	Invisible Children scholarship	Intern with NGO	No salary yet	Contributes "something small" for her sister in S3
Development studies degree	Mother/uncle	Not yet	No income. Digging with mother	—
Procurement degree	Invisible Children scholarship	Still in school	Sells secondhand clothes during holidays	Her personal needs
Procurement degree	Uncle/father	Still in school	—	—
Development studies degree	District scholarship	Intern with NGO	—	Helping her brother to buy books and pens for school
Business degree	District scholarship	Still in school	—	—
Science degree	District scholarship	—	—	—
Business degree	Mother	Still in school	—	—
Nursing	Uncle	Applying for jobs	—	She provides pocket money for her sister in school

Table A2 continued

What course?	Who paid for it?	Employed as	Salary or earnings	Spending it how?
Nursing	Parents and a church scholarship	Still in school	—	—
Nursing	Mother	Working so she can pick her results	Planting crops	Saving the little she earns to pay to "pick her results "
Social work degree	Aunt	Graduating	Not yet	—
IT degree	Mvule Trust	Still in school	—	No money and life is very hard at the university
Education degree	Mvule Trust	Still in school	—	—
Business diploma	Mvule Trust	Looking for a job	Digging as she looks	—
Nursing	Mother	Just completed school	Farming to raise money to pick her exam results	—
Nursing	Mvule Trust	Not yet	—	—
Nursing	Aunt	Just completed	—	—
Nursing	Mvule Trust	Waiting for results	—	—
Business diploma	Uncle/self	Intern at sub-county headquarters	—	Hopefully when I get a job I will pay for my siblings
Business degree	Grandmother/self	Still in school	UGX150,000 for cleaning school	—
Social work degree	Grandfather sold land	Still in school	—	—
Business degree	Mother	Still in school	—	—
Development studies diploma	Father	Still in school	—	—
Business degree	Mvule Trust/brother	Still in school	—	—
Psychiatric nursing	Mvule Trust	Still in school	—	—
Counselling diploma	Brother	Not yet	—	—
Social work diploma	Mvule Trust	Still in school	—	—
Development economics degree	Mvule Trust	Still in school	—	—
Did not study further	—	—	—	—
Water engineering diploma	Mvule Trust	Still in school	—	—
Water engineering diploma	Government scholarship	Looking for a job	—	—
Engineering degree	Gov scholarship/uncle	Still in school	—	—
Accounting diploma	Mvule Trust	Still in school	UGX 70,000 knitting table cloths	Spend it on mother, personal need and school supplies for siblings
Microfinance degree	Mvule Trust	Still in school	—	—
Development studies degree	District scholarship	Just completed	—	—
Community rehabilitation degree	District scholarship	Just completed	Intern – no salary	—
Education degree	District scholarship	Just got a teaching job	No salary yet	—
Education degree	Invisible Children scholarship	Intern	No salary	—
Forestry diploma	Mvule Trust	Just completed	No job yet	—
Education degree	Invisible Children scholarship	Still in school	—	—
Public administration degree	District scholarship	Still in school	—	—

“My parents are just amazed, given what we have gone through with no income. They cannot imagine a person like me coming from that family. The scholarship brought me to a level where I do not have to entirely depend on others but rather help them. Like now I have started a small project. My father is raising passion fruit and I will graft them. I am also building a house for my parents and paying fees for some of my siblings. I believe that through this my family will see me as a blessing to them.”

Girl supported for a diploma in forestry, now working for Uganda’s National Agricultural Advisory Services



Mvule Trust beneficiaries from northeast Uganda at Jinja School of Medical Laboratory Technology.

Mvule Trust