

Emphasise feeding the school learner

Nutritionists say feeding the learner is just as important as teaching them; and if one of the two is missing, the whole goal of education is lost.

Most importantly, the quality of feeding of the children needs to be improved to ensure that good education is married to a healthy upbringing. Poor quality nutrition may also fail the task of learning.

For the last eight months, the ministry of Health has been battling with what to do with effectively feeding the learner with nutritious but affordable food.

This follows the final conviction that simply feeding children on watery beans and some baked maize flour, usually known as posho is no longer valuable.

Some schools have had to increase their budgets for food to supplement the posho and beans with rice, groundnuts, fish or meat, from time to time.

But this cost is usually passed on to the parents, who are barely able to cater to the other scholastic requirements.

This presents a problem for areas where the community or parents are struggling with food insecurity.

According to the current census report, about 11 percent of the population or slightly more than five million Ugandans suffer acute food insecurity - indicating that they cannot feed themselves.

This also means that they would be less inclined to ensure a nutritional meal for their children. So, the government policy of insisting that these parents should be compelled to feed their children is unsustainable.

Instead, the government needs to take charge of the situation and ensure all learners in the country are fed wholesomely so that their education thrives in the long run.

It is high time the two ministries of Health and Education sat down to speed up a the development of a viable diet for schools, to ensure affordability for both schools and parents, while also being nutritious for learners.



The NIE welcomes comments and suggestions from readers, especially secondary school students. If you would like your suggestions, complements published, send them to our regular email address - niecontent@ug.nationmedia.com

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