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PRESS RELEASE

AFTER THE UN, THE AFRICAN COMMISSION CAUTIONS AGAIN UGANDA OVER PRIVATIZATION IN EDUCATION

In a series of [recommendations](#) published this week, the African Commission on Human And Peoples' Rights (African Commission) expressed its deep concerns about the growth and lack of regulation in private schools, which could be violating the African Charter on Human and Peoples' rights. The African Commission expressed its worry that "that the increase in the establishment of private schools [...] could result in discrimination against children from low-income households. It further noted that the growth of private education *"has been encouraged by the Government"*, which *"raises the concern of the government gradually releasing itself from the obligation to provide quality public education"*.

Accordingly, the African Commission recommended that Uganda "increase its investment in public education to match the increasing enrolment, and ensure the quality thereof, to avoid forcing parents to resort to private schools". It also requested that Uganda "regulate the quality of education being provided by private schools".

The recommendations from the African Commission have come shortly after another human rights body, the UN Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, made similar [recommendations](#) to Uganda. Just a few months ago, in June 2015, this UN Committee in charge of monitoring the human rights obligations of Uganda stated that the State should "assume the primary responsibility for the provision of quality education to all children", by *"strengthen[ing] regulations and expand[ing] monitoring and oversight mechanisms for private education institutions"*.

Responding to the Commission's Observation Ms Nakulima Saphina, - Senior Program Officer at ISER, who led a [research](#) around the impact of privatization in education on the right to education in Uganda presented to the African Commission said: *"the Commission was spot on in its recommendations. The research clearly indicated that the increased growth of private schools in the country was a threat to children from low- income households, and for the development and social cohesion in the country."*

Ms. Namusobya Salima - Executive Director at ISER reacted: *"I am glad that the African Commission has joined the UN Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights in calling upon Uganda to focus on strengthening the public education system because failure to do so has facilitated the proliferation of private players in the sector, resulting in discrimination, rising inequality, and a number of other negative consequences for the realisation of the right to education."*

ISER therefore urges Government of Uganda to take concrete and targeted steps to address the concerns raised in the concluding observations on the State report of Uganda made by the African Commission And the UN Committee. It also asks the authorities to come up with an action plan for their implementation geared at regulating private actors in education to ensure universal access and quality of education for all children in Ugandan. Finally, ISER also calls upon all stakeholders including the Uganda Human Rights Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission and all Civil Society to monitor government's implementation of the concluding observations.

END.

Documents:

- Link to ISER research report on Impact of Privatisation in Education
http://www.iser-uganda.org/images/downloads/privatisation_discrimination_and_right_to_education.pdf
- Link to the concluding observations from African Commission
<http://iser-uganda.org/images/downloads/concluding-observations-on-the-5th-periodic-state-report-of-uganda-2010-2012.pdf>
- Link to the concluding observations from the UN Committee on ESCR
http://iser-uganda.org/images/downloads/INT_CESCR_COC_UGA_20934_E.pdf

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Notes

- At its 57th ordinary session held from 4th-18th November 2015, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights reviewed Uganda's human rights records and adopted several made recommendations to Uganda. These recommendations followed consideration of the 5th Periodic State Report of the Republic of Uganda (2010-2012) on the implementation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights during the Commissions 56th Ordinary session.