

**Organisation/Department:** UNICEF/Education

**Location City/Town:** George Street, Kampala Uganda

**Type of Job:** Internship/Volunteer

**Duration/Hours:** 3 Months /Full time

**Salary:** N/A

**Intern's Name:** Sylvia Atuhaire

**Name of Supervisor:** Dr. Margo O'Sullivan

**Title:** Chief of Party, Basic Education

## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to explain what I did and learned during my 3 months internship period with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in the section of Basic Education (BE). The report is also a requirement for the partial fulfillment of Kobe University Internship Program (KUIP). It focuses primarily on the assignments handled, outcomes, future career plans, and comments on working environment and internship grant, and conclusions

## What is UNICEF?

UNICEF is the United Nations Children's Fund, the world's leading Child Rights Organisation works in Uganda to help the government meet its obligation under the UN convention on the rights of the child and to meet the millennium development goals. UNICEF supports government ministries in policy and planning through evidence-based advocacy and technical assistance.

UNICEF's Uganda country programme 2010-14 helps to ensure all children access relevant, high-quality primary education in their home communities, at the appropriate age, thus improving their chances for completion with full proficiency of basic competencies. UNICEF believes that every child has a right to education, proper health care and protection and equal treatment. UNICEF gives children the best start in life, helps children survive and thrive, get kids into schools and creates a protective environment especially in emergencies.

UNICEF works closely with other agencies, Government institutions, development partners, NGOS, young people and civil society.

## Basic Education Section



*Basic Education Team*

UNICEF Basic Education section mission is to keep children learning, support girls' education movement (GEM), promote Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Basic Requirements Minimum Standards (BRMS) for education institutions in Uganda.

The overall goal is quality education that enables all children to learn successfully. Create an enabling knowledge, policy, legislative and budgetary environment; create an enabling learning environment for children in all learning spaces, increased demand for services and strengthened practices for the fulfilment of children's rights. Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) are ensured through integrated Disaster Risk reduction and response.

## Duties and Responsibilities under the Supervision of the Chief, Basic Education (UNICEF):

1. Supported the implementation of the BRMS (Basic Requirements Minimum Standards) project national survey of 12% of all primary schools in Uganda on the status of BRMS.
2. Represented the Chief of Basic Education (Dr Mago O'Sullivan) in several partnership meetings and workshops that included the following:
  - Unity/USAID Quality Enhancement Initiative (QEI) workshop  
The main objective of the workshop was to review the progress made in the implementation of interventions under QEI focusing on 4 pillars of management, pupil, teacher and community.
  - Multi-lingual Education Network (M-LEN) meeting  
The objective of the meeting was to review and comment on the M-LEN decision making process document (phase1) adopted by Mango tree, discuss about the participants in the Tone workshop in Nairobi, organizational status of MLEN network forum and decide on the way forward.
  - UWEZO Uganda (Annual Learning Assessment Report) Launch/meeting  
I represented Basic Education Team on the Launch of UWEZO Annual Learning Assessment Report. Most education partners including Uwezo coordinators from Kenya and Tanzania, FENU, NPA, NCDC, Unity/USAID, Mango tree and MoES, parents, Uwezo volunteers were present.
  - MOSIQUE workshop  
This was hosted by Royal Embassy of Netherlands. MOSIQUE is Monitoring Sharing Improved Quality of Education. It's an Initiative to strengthen teacher quality to ultimately improve learning outcomes. Their main Goal is "Improved learning outcomes at learner level" through improved teaching practices.
  - UNATU Partners Conference  
The conference objective was to present to the partners UNATU's contribution to education reforms, progress report, Budgetary plans, an initiative of teacher's financial institution scheme, and the way forward in terms of support and mode of cooperation. Well attended by Education international, Unity/USAID, Royal Netherlands Embassy, UNICEF, among others.
3. Participated in the Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) Training and obtained a certificate in EPR in areas of Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) specifically education, health, child protection, and water and sanitation (WASH).
4. Updated TRACE Resource Centre/ Basic Education library by documenting and cross checking all existing books.



*Sylvia at UNATU Conference*

5. Participated in the UNICEF 3<sup>rd</sup> quarterly inventory count exercise for 2 days as external observer from Basic education section and as support staff to supply officers doing the inventory at UNICEF National Warehouse located in Ntinda Kampala.
6. Organised/prepared UNICEF Basic Education Resource text books to be distributed to development partners and UNICEF regional zone offices.
7. Received/reviewed financial accountability documents for liquidation from different UNICEF development partners.
8. Accompanied the new UNICEF VSOs for orientation at Madrasa Resource Centre (Early Childhood Development-ECD centre) under ECD Specialist. The VSOs are going to be based in the districts as trainers at Primary Teachers Colleges (PTCs).

## **Comments on Assignments:**

UNICEF working environment is friendly and everyone is kind, fully supportive and generous. I had overall supervisor (Dr. Margo O’Sullivan) but at the same time I was working closely with other Education Specialists depending on which activity I was assigned. They were all reachable and very helpful by providing necessary information and guidance on different tasks and giving feedback on my work.

There were challenges sometimes especially the way UNICEF does its business such as office procedures. However, I felt most privileged to associate and work with such an important and highly reputable organization as UNICEF; understanding what UNICEF does its operations and challenges.

I enjoyed working with the team. Surprisingly, most times I was not referred to as an intern but as Basic Education Staff especially at Partners’ meetings that I represented UNICEF (Basic Education Section). This gave me a lot of self-confidence and exposure.

## **Impact of my Work:**

I believe my contribution had a lot of positive impact towards achieving the overall objectives of the UNICEF Education Section and other related sections. For example my work on TRACE library and written reports on different workshops I attended and represented UNICEF Basic Education were well appreciated by Basic Education Team as very helpful.

I am very glad to have done my internship at UNICEF (Uganda); it has given me a firsthand experience with the International Organisation. The way they transact their business/operations which turned out to be quite diverse from what I had on my mind, especially the working environment, which I think will be a valuable asset for my future work life.



*Sylvia at work*

## **Outcomes / Lessons Learned:**

My experience at UNICEF was very enriching, having been surrounded by both international and national skilled specialists, with the main mission of improving quality of education, keep children learning, in safe schools and good environment in Uganda and other developing countries.

The internship gave me an opportunity to interact, learn and share ideas with the UNICEF specialists in different fields which broadened my thinking and practical skills on development using Human capital development approaches such as education and health support.

Through many attended workshops, I understood further the challenges facing the quality of education; I got familiar with UNICEF operations especially in education and emergency preparedness and response support.

Moreover, trying to negotiate consensus in partnership meetings was extremely fascinating, especially given the extreme diversity of opinions, although they were at times tedious, it provided an excellent opportunity to participate and witness debate at the international development partnership level.

## **How the Internship Grant helped me:**

I must eulogize and give many thanks to Kobe University Internship Programme for their generosity of providing financial support to interns in international organisations. It's through their generosity that I found it possible to afford daily meals while at work, meet accommodation and transport expenses to and from work.

Had it not been the award of the grant, I wouldn't have afforded the 3 months internship at UNICEF. However, I must stress that the awarded stipend was inadequate to cater for the return air-ticket and all 12 weeks living expenses in Kampala capital.

## **Summary of UNICEF Internship Experience:**

My experience at UNICEF was amazing, and it is one that I will certainly never forget.

The chance to interact and network with people at this level, providing an insight into the workings of United Nations delegations and other development partners was an unparalleled opportunity.

The internship provided me with an opportunity to familiarize myself with a variety of issues ranging from the emergence preparedness and response, child protection, water and sanitation, and education key issues such as; keep children learning and safe schools, early childhood development and child friendly schools.

Above all, I obtained a UNICEF Certificate in Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR), therefore my internship was a fantastic experience that is most enjoyable and rewarding.



*Dr. Margo O'Sullivan & Sylvia*

## **Future career plan:**

My future career plan is to be an Education-Economics Specialist with advanced knowledge in both theory and practice. I would like to work for international development organizations such as; UNICEF, World Bank, ADB, UNDP and JICA in the fields of education planning, financing, policy formulations and implementations. And contribute to global

development through better educational policies that guarantee and support quality education, gender equity, reduce income inequality and promote economic development in developing countries. While working at an international organisation, I will enrol for a Doctor course (PhD) at GSICS - Kobe University.

## **Conclusion:**

In nut shell, I appreciate the way I was guided throughout the internship by my supervisor Dr. Margo O'sullivan, (*Above Picture*) beginning with the given opportunity to expand my knowledge in education development, and UNICEF cooperation/partnerships with other development partners under her supervision.

The gained practical skills and knowledge, gave me enough background to contribute to the achievement of UNICEF vision in future, and the quality of education in developing countries, which definitely made me enjoy my work every hour.



*Kobe University Team Visit to UNICEF-Uganda*

I recommend fellow students to consider an internship opportunity at UNICEF (Uganda); for sure though challenging, it's rewarding and a doorstep for future career advancement.

**Kampala city** is very beautiful with excellent restaurants, hospitable people and above all, you can't afford to miss enjoying the fresh fruits and foods grown under natural tropical environment.