



Office of the General Secretary

Report on Operations of the Secretariat – “2024 the year of take-off”



Presented to Delegates during the 2nd Annual Delegates Conference

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INTRODUCTION

The year 2024 has been a landmark period for Uganda Professional Science Teachers' Union (UPSTU), marked by significant growth in membership, and substantial organizational advancements and milestones. UPSTU has demonstrated its commitment to uplifting science education in Uganda. With continued collaboration and dedication, UPSTU has solidified its role as a transformative force in the education sector.



This report provides highlights of progress made in advocacy for the welfare of science educators, improving operational / administrative efficiency, and way forward for 2025.

As a union, our activities remain guided by strategic objectives as stipulated in UPSTU' constitution. Below is a summary of these objectives:

1. Unite all science teachers in Uganda and collectively **represent their rights and interests**.
2. Identify **science teachers' challenges** and forward them to **policymakers and other stakeholders** for consideration.
3. **Negotiate salaries** and welfare with government and private institutions.
4. Collaborate with other labor unions and **development partners** on shared goals.
5. **Foster self-respect** and dignity among the science teachers' fraternity.
6. Build financial resources and assets for the **Union's sustainability**.
7. **Promote harmony** between employers and employees.
8. Advocate for high education standards and **professionalism in science teaching**.

9. Educate and represent members on rights like anti-discrimination and **workplace safety**.
10. **Offer legal support** and guidance on labor law violations and safety issues.
11. Ensure **job security** and **fair treatment** upon termination.
12. Integrate **gender concerns** in policies for female science teachers.
13. **Undertake any lawful activities** to achieve these objectives.

The above objectives continue to inspire and shape all initiatives undertaken by the Secretariat.

SUMMARY OF KEY EVENTS AND ADVOCACY IN THE YEAR 2024

The Secretariat successfully **organized the Annual Delegates Conference (ADC)** at the end of 2023. The ADC serves as the top organ of the union where annual reports and budgets are presented to delegates from subregions across the country. This conference is a pivotal platform for reviewing progress and planning for the future.

In January 2024, UPSTU contributed a **publication to the Landmark Magazine** on the occasion of the 38th NRA Liberation Day. This initiative showcased the union's role in advancing science education and its impact on national development.

Union leaders **engaged in UNEB results analysis** and engaged with the media to address critics of science subject performance despite salary enhancements. Through social media, TV, radio appearances, and newspaper articles, UPSTU effectively defended the position of science teachers and highlighted ongoing efforts to improve outcomes.

Teacher Social Policy Dialogue and TSPD Policy Briefs Workshops (May/June 2024)

We actively participated in the Teacher Social Policy Dialogue (TSPD) and Policy Briefs Workshops organized by the ministry of education and sports

and brought together leaders from different teacher unions. These workshops allowed us to contribute meaningfully to the national discussions on teacher policies, social justice, and professional development.

UPSTU Women Leaders' Conference held on 4th Oct 2024 at Nob View Hotel, brought together women educators to discuss gender-responsive pedagogy, workplace equality, and leadership. The event highlighted UPSTU's commitment to gender equity in science education. We had prior engagements with UNESCO on a potential partnership for a project proposal we submitted regarding integrating gender-responsive pedagogy in STEM to improve girls' retention in science subjects in Uganda's five worst-performing districts. We're considering holding this the Women's conference annually as one of the activities to commemorate the International Women's Day.

Participation in national and international events further elevated UPSTU's profile. The union was represented at the International Labour Day celebrations in Fort Portal and the ILO conference in Geneva, Switzerland. These events provided platforms to advocate for science educators and strengthen global partnerships.

The union actively **negotiated salary enhancements for science tutors** in Primary Teacher Colleges who were unfairly removed from the science scale. Similarly, UPSTU advocated for ICT teachers to receive science pay regardless of their secondary teaching subjects, submitting a list of affected teachers for consideration.

A key advocacy milestone was the **successful negotiation for salary enhancements for headteachers and deputies**. The issued Addendum to Schedule 4-A reflected increases from UGX 2.3M to UGX 6.5M for headteachers and UGX 1.7M to UGX 4.5M for deputies. These efforts demonstrate UPSTU's commitment to equitable remuneration.

UPSTU commemorated the World Teachers' Day 2024 with a teachers' march through Kampala and participation in the national celebrations at Lugogo Cricket Oval. The event included **a science projects exhibition**

where winners were awarded, highlighting the innovative contributions of educators and students. The union also secured a revolving fund for its SACCO from the government during this event.

In response to **reports about early retirement** among science teachers, the Secretariat countered with facts, urging members to avoid premature decisions without proper planning. This proactive approach aimed to safeguard members from potential regrets and financial instability.

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

UPSTU distributed corporate wear to members in regions such as Greater Kampala, Masaka, Busoga, Bugisu, and Sebei in the 1st phase. This initiative fostered unity and strengthened the union's corporate identity.



The **Science in Action Project** was piloted in institutions like Sam Iga College, Trinity College Nabbingo, and Comboni College Lira. This initiative showcased innovative teaching methods and student-led projects, with videos available on UPSTU's YouTube channel.

The **ProDev Hour program**, aimed at supporting professional development and social empowerment, was launched successfully. Members benefited from sessions available on the union's website and YouTube channel, addressing topics critical to their growth and empowerment. The following sessions have been conducted:

1. *Valuing Teachers' Voices: Towards a New Social Contract for Education (World Teachers' Day 2024 theme).* | Speaker : Elong Vincent
2. *Role of Science Teachers in CBC End-of-Cycle Assessment.* |Speaker: Mwijuka Paul

3. *Money and Professionalism for Science Teachers. Speaker: Bamuteze Stanley*
4. *Benefits of the Science Teachers' SACCO. | Speaker: Luyima Edward*
5. *Mental Health and Stress Management. | Speaker: Juliet Kavuma*
6. *Legal Insights for Teachers. | Speaker: Masika Sandra*
7. *Integrating ICT in Teaching Sciences. | Speaker: Speaker: Obina Johnson Okeny*
8. *Empowering Science Teachers to Step into School Leadership Roles. | Speaker: Bamuteze Stanley*
9. *Gender-Responsive Pedagogy in STEM Education | Speaker: Jesica Avako*
10. *Effective Loan Repayment Strategies to Maintain Financial Health | Speaker: Chemisto Sulaiman*
11. *Work-life Balance For Teachers: Physical Wellness In A Demanding Profession | Speaker: Begumisa Julius*
12. *Year In Review 2024: Updates from UPSTU Secretariat | Speaker: Mugaiga Aron*

Each session fosters professional and social empowerment, with key discussions and actionable takeaways for the UPSTU fraternity.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

Significant administrative milestones were achieved in 2024. The Secretariat has **specialized departments**, including IT, Research, Legal, Accounts and Audit, and Estates Management, to streamline operations and improve efficiency.

The **Estates** department executed vital repairs and upgrades throughout the year, ensuring the Secretariat's facilities remained fully functional. Daily operations such as cleaning, security, power and service coordination were also diligently managed to provide a safe and productive environment for staff and members.

The **Accounts and Audit** department maintained robust financial management practices in 2024, ensuring all obligations were met promptly. Salaries and allowances for staff and NEC members were disbursed on time, and statutory obligations, including URA and NSSF contributions, were fulfilled without delay. Financial commitments for key events like the Women Leaders'

Conference and World Teachers' Day celebrations were successfully managed. With strong internal auditing controls in place, the union upheld prudent resource utilization and operational efficiency throughout the year.

Legal aid to our members. The legal department continues to receive cases concerning science teachers and helping them accordingly. We have observed that most affected members come to us when it's already late. i.e. when they have already undertaken commitments that are difficult to reverse. We advise all science teachers to seek legal advice before making written commitments to the concerned authorities.

Through our **ICT** department we have supported routine maintenance of hardware, software, and networks / internet for uninterrupted operations at the secretariat. The department also provided technical support for the SACCO system, further improving efficiency and service delivery, in addition to enhancing the union's digital presence on social media, YouTube and official websites for the union and the SACCO.

Through our Research and Innovations department, we continue to prepare **Project Proposals and Research Initiatives** aimed at promoting innovation and furthering the objectives of the union.

A **branded UPSTU van** was acquired to facilitate Secretariat operations, while essential office equipment such as heavy-duty printers, computers, and cameras were procured to enhance functionality. Regular processing of staff salaries, allowances, taxes, and NSSF contributions further underscored UPSTU's commitment to accountability.



Regional offices were established in West Nile and Acholi, adding to existing offices in Masaka, Kampala, Bugisu, Sebei, Busoga, Ankole, Lango, Rwenzori, and Kigezi. Membership grew to over 7,000 subscribing members, supported by effective engagement strategies and condolence contributions for members in distress.

Regular meetings for committees, NEC, and CEC were hosted to ensure effective governance. Below are some resolutions / recommendations made by NEC and are hereby presented for ratification by ADC:

- The Science and technology house be given priority and the implementation be kick started with buying of land. The Union should expedite the processes of procurement of land and construction of the science and technology Complex to save the union from rent fees.
- Approval of a supplementary budget 2024 worth 1Bn shillings to fund the procurement of land, work on architectural designs and kick-starting of the building of the science and technology Complex and also fund the budget priorities areas in the budget 2024 that are not yet funded. That this budget proposal be funded by securing a loan of one billion shillings from the UPSTU members SACCO in the current financial year 2024 and that the loan be paid back to the SACCO by the union on a monthly basis for a period of five years. It was agreed that the funds currently being used in rent will partially be used to service the loan facility.
- The members of the Standing Committee unanimously resolved and approved the Budget estimates for the year 2025 at a tune of 3,901,845,278/= as presented by the National Treasurer.
- It was also agreed that four members of the science head teachers/Deputies association and the science tutors association be incorporated in the union leadership where the chairperson will become a NEC member and four members be coopted in the Annual Delegates Conference (ADC).
- Regional chairpersons should always prepare quarterly reports from their regions and submit them to the National regional coordinator, who will compile one summarized report to the General Secretary to be incorporated in the General report to the NEC and ADC.
- Union to organize and mobilize science projects to be exhibited by our union on the world teachers' day, Projects to be manned by the learners themselves not teachers except for high order thinking

innovation brought out by the teacher. This is to enable the learners bring out to the world what the teachers have imparted in them.

- That the women's conference being organized by gender committee be organized annually in march to mark the International Womens' day.
- That UPSTU joins other public service labour unions in consolidating the mandate of public servants through formation of a public service labour unions centre

WAY FORWARD IN 2025

After securing land UPSTU is now in the process of developing it to construct the UPSTU Science and Technology Complex. This project aims to provide a permanent home for the union while reducing operational costs.

The union will continue advocating for science teachers yet to receive enhanced salaries, expand professional development programs, and strengthen membership in underrepresented regions.

Plans to conduct regional and national science fairs are also underway to promote innovation and engagement.

The union will expand professional development programs and other activities to empower members through its committees for education, gender and youth.

We will also continue to enhance membership growth and check-off systems in underrepresented regions.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Despite these accomplishments, 2024 was not without its challenges. The **delays in implementing government directives** for science educators, particularly regarding the inclusion of all headteachers and deputies

in the enhanced salary structure. However, UPSTU remains resolute in its mission to bridge these gaps.

Delay in payment of monthly salaries of civil servants by some votes in LG makes it difficult for the science teachers and the union to operate smoothly.

In terms of opportunities, UPSTU plans to expand its reach through strategic partnerships and alternative funding streams for projects.

CONCLUSION

The year 2024 has truly been a year of take-off for UPSTU, marked by resilience, collective achievement, and progress toward a brighter future. From advocacy wins to administrative advancements, UPSTU has demonstrated the power of unity and strategic vision. These accomplishments lay a strong foundation for the ambitious agenda set for 2025.

UPSTU extends heartfelt gratitude to subscribing members, NEC, staff, and stakeholders for their unwavering support and commitment. Special thanks go to H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and Mama Janet Museveni, the First Lady & Hon Minister of Education and sports for their vision of a science-led economy and their support for science educators. Together, we will continue advancing science education and empowering educators across Uganda.

Science for National Development and Transformation.

For God and my Country.

Presented by:



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