

# Universal Primary Education and School Entry in Uganda

## **Abstract**

This paper examines the initial effects of the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in January 1997 on school entry in Uganda. Given that advanced age at school entry has historically been associated with primary school dropout, the paper focuses on the effects of fee elimination on the age at which a child enters school. Data from the 2000 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey and 2001 Education Data Survey are employed to examine the effects of UPE on the probability that a child begins attending school before age nine. School fee elimination under UPE is found to cause a 3% increase in this probability on average. Effects are found to be particularly pronounced for girls and for children in living in rural areas.

JEL codes: H41, H43, J18, O55

Keywords: Uganda, Africa, Universal Primary Education (UPE), Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), school fees, regression discontinuity