



PAL NETWORK
People's Action for Learning

East and Southern Africa

ICAN-ICAR Report

2026

The State of Foundational Learning in Kenya,
Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda



Foreword

Reimagining Our Shared Educational Future in East and Southern Africa

The 2025 round of the International Common Assessment of Numeracy and Reading (ICAN-ICAR) offers a powerful moment of reflection, gratitude, and renewed urgency for our region. Across Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda, the dedication of our communities, local partners, and national leadership shines brightly. Over 1,700 citizen volunteers traversed 1,071 enumeration areas and visited more than 21,000 households to bring the real, unvarnished story of children's learning directly into the light. To these volunteers and to the families who opened their homes: your commitment is the heartbeat of this movement, demonstrating that the future of our children is a shared civic responsibility.

The report's findings show that while near-universal primary enrolment has been achieved, the foundational learning crisis remains an urgent reality. Across the East and Southern Africa (ESA) region, subject of this survey, only 20.9% of 10-year-olds achieve minimum proficiency in both reading and mathematics. Behind these numbers lie stark intra-regional variations and compounding inequalities.

Across all four countries, reading lags significantly behind mathematics. In Uganda, while 34.4% of 10-year-olds reach the numeracy benchmark, only 4.3% reach the reading benchmark. The data shows that urban-rural divides, language of instruction mismatches, and unequal access to learning materials at home widen the learning gap as children progress through the upper primary grades. Out-of-school children consistently show lower proficiency, underscoring the vital importance of household-based assessments that measure learning for all children, not just those sitting in classrooms.

Yet, within these challenges lie undeniable grounds for hope and clear pathways for progress. Results from Kenya and Tanzania demonstrate that high foundational learning levels are achievable within our region when children acquire basic competencies early in their educational journey. Moreover, the positive impact of home learning environments – such as access to storybooks, parental support with homework, and alignment between home and school languages – provides a clear blueprint for action.

This report is not merely an assessment; it is a call to collective action. Moving from data to impact requires commitment across four key priorities. (1) to treat early literacy as an regional emergency, scaling phonics-based learning in lower primary grades. (2) Pair language-transition policies with quality instructional practices, ensuring children build strong foundations in languages they understand. (3) Direct resources, textbooks, and community-led home learning support to rural communities, out-of-school children, and low-asset households. (4) Promote citizen's participation in assessments to increase awareness, guide policy, monitor equity, and hold systems accountable to every child.

We have the evidence, the community will, and the regional insights to rewrite this narrative. Let us transform these findings into bold policy actions, targeted investments, and vibrant community informed solutions so that every child across East and Southern Africa acquires the foundational skills needed to thrive.

Armando Ali

Chief Executive Officer, PAL Network



Acknowledgements

This report draws on the foundational learning evidence generated through the International Common Assessment of Numeracy (ICAN) and International Common Assessment of Reading (ICAR), implemented by the People's Action for Learning (PAL) Network as part of its 2025 global assessment cycle. The regional analysis presented here for Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda would not have been possible without the contributions of a wide range of individuals and institutions.

We gratefully acknowledge the PAL Network member organizations that led implementation in each of the four countries, and the Country Leaders and Project Management Teams who saw the assessment through from design to data collection: Emmanuel Manyasa, Zachary Kweni, Carol Onsomu, and Ochi Boaz (Usawa Agenda, Kenya); Tarcisio Abibo, Amélia Maria Ussene and Lino Andre (TPC Moçambique, Mozambique); Baraka Mgothamwende, Daud Siwalaze, Otto Millinga, and Benjamini Masebo (Uwezo Tanzania) Mary Goretti Nakabugo, Faridah Nassereka, Joseph Kasasa, Judith Nyakaisiki, Vincent Kalibbala, Dativah Ahabwe, Bonita Namatovu, and Grace Agaba (Uwezo Uganda). Their technical expertise and deep contextual knowledge were central to producing data that is both rigorous and locally grounded.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the field enumerators and data collection teams who conducted household-based assessments across the four countries, often reaching remote and underserved communities. We sincerely appreciate the 90 local partner organizations in Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda, part of a network of 137 partner organizations across the initiative, whose mobilization efforts made implementation possible on the ground. We also appreciate the local leaders, village elders, community representatives and parents who engaged and supported the process at every step.

We are sincerely grateful to the government entities across Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda, including the Ministries of Education, National Statistical Offices, and Country Technical Advisory Committees, for their invaluable partnership throughout this initiative. Their active engagement, particularly in leading and validating Enumeration Area selection against national census frames, was instrumental in grounding the assessment design in national realities and lent essential credibility and legitimacy to the findings presented in this report. This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to strengthening the evidence base for foundational learning across the region.

We acknowledge the PAL Network Secretariat, which coordinated the 2025 ICAN-ICAR cycle across all 12 participating countries and ensured methodological consistency with global reporting standards.

Finally, we thank every child in Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda who took part in ICAN-ICAR — including those out of school or frequently absent, whose inclusion is central to this report's aim of making learning visible for all children. Their curiosity and willingness to participate are the foundation on which this report stands.

Executive Summary

The 2025 round of the International Common Assessment of Numeracy and Reading (ICAN–ICAR) confirms that the East and Southern Africa (ESA) PAL Network members (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Mozambique) continue to face a foundational learning crisis defined less by access than by achievement. Across Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Mozambique, primary enrolment is high and, in several countries, close to universal. Yet household-based assessment of over 17,000 children aged 5–16 shows that most children are not acquiring the reading and numeracy competencies expected for their age or grade. Among 10-year-olds across the East and Southern African region¹. In ESA region, only 23.1 percent of children reached the minimum proficiency level (MPL) in reading, 45.3 percent in mathematics, and just 20.9 percent achieved combined proficiency.

Within the three East African Community (EAC) countries assessed- Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania- the regional picture is one of shared challenge but sharply divergent performance. Kenya records the strongest learning outcomes in the region² (44.8 percent reading and 68.5 percent mathematics MPL at age 10), with Tanzania close behind (39.8 percent reading and 54.9 percent mathematics MPL at age 10). Uganda presents a distinct profile: while 34.4 percent of children reach the numeracy benchmark, only 4.3 percent reach the reading benchmark, one of the widest reading-numeracy gaps recorded in the study. Mozambique records the lowest proficiency across all measures (19 percent mathematics and 9.5 percent reading) at age 10.

Learning gaps in ESA Hub is not evenly distributed. Gender disparities are comparatively small, with girls holding a slight edge in literacy and boys a slight edge in numeracy. The urban–rural divide is noteworthy (for example, 46.4 percent of urban Grade 4 learners in Kenya reach MPL compared with 30.4 percent of rural learners, and a similar though smaller-magnitude gap in Mozambique), the gap between children who speak the language of assessment at home and those who do not (a 25-percentage-point gap in Kenya alone), and the gap between in-school and out-of-school children, who consistently show lower proficiency. These inequities compound with age and grade: proficiency gaps that are modest among six-year-olds widen considerably by the time children reach upper primary, particularly in Uganda.

The evidence points to a consistent set of drivers behind these patterns: mismatches between the language of instruction and the language spoken at home; limited reading resources at home and low rates of being read to; uneven access to textbooks and homework support; household socio-economic disadvantage, as reflected in asset ownership and parental education; and unequal access to digital devices. Sections 5 and 6 of this report translate these findings into a set of regional insights and a corresponding policy and action agenda, with particular attention to what the evidence means for the ESA region as a whole, drawing out what the evidence means for each of the four participating countries; Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Mozambique; as they work towards SDG indicator 4.1.1(a).

¹ Mozambique borders both Eastern and Southern Africa. The UN geoscheme (M49) classifies Mozambique as an **Eastern Africa member state** <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49>, alongside Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and other countries. Further, **SADC (Southern African Development Community)** <https://www.sadc.int/member-states> classifies Mozambique as a member state, so in most political, economic, and development contexts it's treated as part of **Southern Africa**, alongside South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, and Namibia.

² Under PAL_Network, country composition of the **ESA region** includes Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Botswana. This report shares evidence from four countries within the hub: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Mozambique. The East African Community comprises Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.



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1. Regional Overview

1.1 Snapshot of foundational learning in the East and Southern Africa hub

Foundational learning outcomes in East and Southern Africa reflect both progress in enrolment and persistent challenges in literacy and numeracy. National ministries of education and global monitoring reports consistently highlight the paradox of high access but low learning achievement.

In Kenya, the Ministry of Education's Basic Education Statistical Abstract (2025) reported a primary net enrolment rate of 92 percent, yet citizen-led assessments (Uswa Agenda FLANA, 2025) found that only 45 percent of Grade 3 learners could read a Grade 2-level text in English, and fewer than 35 percent demonstrated basic numeracy proficiency. Teacher distribution in Kenya remains uneven, with pupil-teacher ratios exceeding 50:1 in arid counties compared to 30:1 nationally. Uganda's Education Management Information System (2025) reported a ratio of 48:1 in public primary schools, while Mozambique's Ministry of Education recorded ratios above 60:1 in rural provinces. Kenya's arid counties face similar constraints, with ratios exceeding 50:1, compared to the national average of 30:1. These figures highlight governance and equity gaps in teacher distribution, which directly affect classroom learning. Gender disparities further complicate the picture. While girls outperform boys in literacy in Kenya and Uganda, dropout rates remain higher for girls in Mozambique and Tanzania, often linked to early marriage, child labour, and socio-cultural barriers. This combined reality where girls excel academically but face systemic exclusion illustrates the complex equity challenges at play.

Uganda Education Management Information System (UEMIS, 2025) recorded 9.1 million learners in primary education, but 26.7 percent were over-age, reflecting inefficiencies in progression. The pupil-teacher ratio in public primary schools stood at 48:1, nearly double that of private schools. Uwezo assessments (2017-2025) revealed that fewer than 3 in 10 Grade 3 learners could read a Grade 2 story in English, underscoring persistent literacy gaps.

The Ministry of Education of Tanzania reported 11.4 million learners enrolled in primary education and 3.4 million in secondary education by 2025. While the official primary completion rate reached 96 percent, UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report (2025) noted that 59 percent of children at age 10 remained in learning poverty, unable to read a simple text with comprehension. Language-of-instruction transitions from Kiswahili to English continue to hinder early-grade literacy.

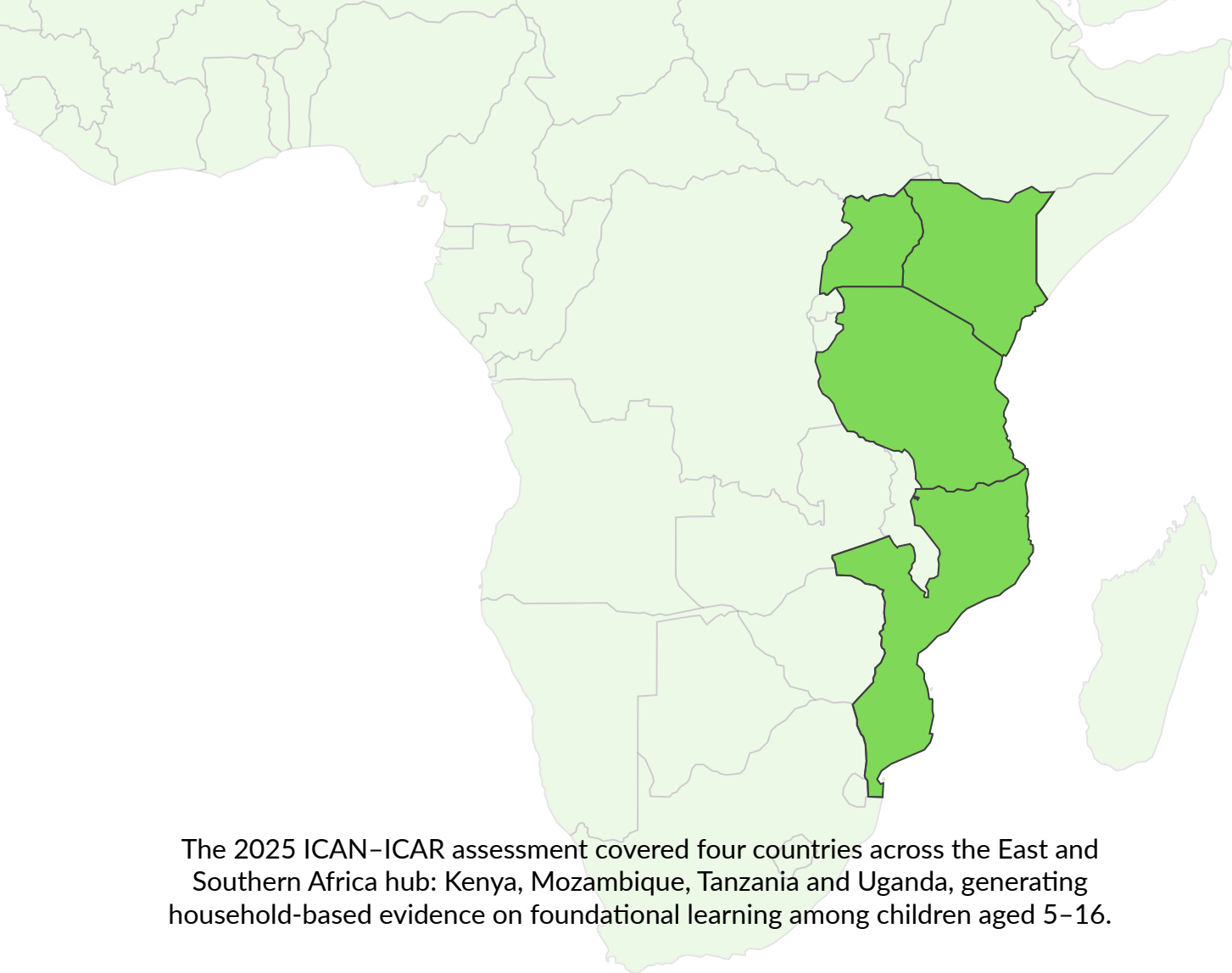
Mozambique Education Sector Statistical Survey (2025) highlighted enrolment of over 6 million learners in primary education, but literacy and numeracy levels remain critically low. Teacher shortages are acute, with pupil-teacher ratios exceeding 60:1 in public schools. Regional disparities are stark: northern provinces record literacy rates below 25 percent, compared to over 50 percent in Maputo City.

1.2 Why the East and Southern Africa hub matters in the global learning crisis

The East and Southern Africa hub is central to the global learning crisis because of its demographic scale, systemic diversity, and persistent inequities. With over 120 million school-age children across Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Mozambique, the region's performance directly shapes global progress toward SDG 4.1.1(a), ensuring all children achieve minimum proficiency in literacy and numeracy by the end of primary school.

Despite near-universal enrolment, learning poverty remains alarmingly high. The East and Southern Africa Region also embodies the rural-urban divide that defines the global learning crisis. Urban schools in Nairobi, Kampala, Dar es Salaam, and Maputo consistently outperform rural and pastoralist communities, where infrastructure gaps, language barriers, and weak governance undermine learning.

In sum, the East and Southern Africa hub matters because it illustrates the paradox of schooling without learning at scale. The persistent learning poverty, despite investments in resources and policy frameworks aimed at improving foundational learning, is a call for urgency. Its diversity of contexts, from resource-constrained rural contexts to relatively better-resourced urban areas, provides critical lessons for global education reform. Addressing foundational learning in ESA region is not only a regional priority, but a global imperative, as progress here will influence whether the world achieves SDG 4 targets.



The 2025 ICAN-ICAR assessment covered four countries across the East and Southern Africa hub: Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda, generating household-based evidence on foundational learning among children aged 5–16.



1.3 Brief description of ICAN-ICAR and the East and Southern Africa hub participation

The International Common Assessment of Numeracy and Reading (ICAN-ICAR) is a globally comparable, household-based tool designed to measure foundational learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy among children aged 5-16. It aligns with SDG 4.1.1(b), which calls for all children to achieve at least minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics by the end of primary education. Unlike school-based assessments, ICAN-ICAR captures both in-school and out-of-school learners, making it particularly relevant for regions where exclusion and dropout rates remain high.

In the East and Southern Africa hub, four countries (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Mozambique) participated in the 2025 round of the ICAN-ICAR study. Their engagement reflects both the diversity of education systems and the shared urgency of addressing learning poverty in the Global South. Kenya implemented ICAN-ICAR through partnerships with Usawa Agenda and the Ministry of Education, complementing the country's national assessments such as FLANA and/or NASMLA, respectively. Results highlighted stark disparities between urban and rural counties, with literacy proficiency in Nairobi exceeding 65 percent, compared to less than 20 percent in the northern part of the country.

Alongside EMIS, Uganda used ICAN-ICAR data to capture learning outcomes in both conflict-affected and stable districts. Findings showed that while enrolment is high, fewer than 30 percent of Grade 3 learners could read a Grade 2 text, underscoring systemic challenges in early-grade literacy. In Tanzania, ICAN-ICAR was integrated into its broader curriculum reform monitoring. The assessment revealed that language-of-instruction transitions continue to hinder literacy, with 59 percent of children at age 10 in learning poverty, despite near-universal primary completion.

Mozambique leveraged ICAN-ICAR to fill gaps in national monitoring systems. Results confirmed severe inequities, with northern provinces recording literacy rates below 25 percent, compared to over 50 percent in Maputo City. High pupil-teacher ratios (above 60:1) further constrained learning outcomes.

The hub's participation demonstrates the feasibility of harmonised tools across diverse linguistic and curricular contexts. It also underscores the value of citizen-led and institutional partnerships in generating evidence that is both globally comparable and locally relevant. By situating national results within a regional framework, ICAN-ICAR enables policymakers to identify common challenges such as teacher shortages, inequitable resource distribution, and language barriers, while also highlighting country-specific strengths and innovations.



1.4 Methodology

This report draws on the 2025 implementation of the International Common Assessments of Numeracy (ICAN) and Reading (ICAR) in Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda that was conducted as part of the PAL Network's first multi-country, household-based ICAN-ICAR cycle (PAL Network, 2025). This methodology follows the harmonised design described in the global report, with technical details, including sampling frames, translation protocols, scoring and Minimum Proficiency Level (MPL) alignment.

1.4.1 Design and target population

In Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda, the assessment was household-based and nationally representative, targeting all children aged 5-16 years regardless of schooling status. Assessing children at home rather than at school ensures that out-of-school children, frequently absent children, and over-age or retained children, groups typically invisible to school-based assessments, are included in the data.

Each country applied a two-stage, stratified probability sampling design. In the first stage, Enumeration Areas (EAs) were selected with Probability Proportional to Population Size, with stratification by geographic region and urban/rural classification. In the second stage, twenty households were selected within each EA. The Household Listing Method was used, whereby field teams first generated a complete, updated list of households in the EA and then systematically selected twenty households from it, often with community leaders present. Only households with at least one child aged 5-16 were surveyed. Sampling weights were calculated as the inverse of each household's overall selection probability and adjusted for household and child non-response. One important exception applies within this report: estimates for Tanzania are unweighted, and comparisons involving Tanzania should be interpreted with this in mind.

1.4.2 Achieved Samples and Fieldwork

The standard sampling framework targeted at least 222 EAs and approximately 4,440 households per country, which national teams adapted and finalised in collaboration with their National Statistical Offices. All four countries met or exceeded expectations on coverage: EA completion was 100 percent in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, and 98.5 percent in Mozambique. The samples achieved were as follows:

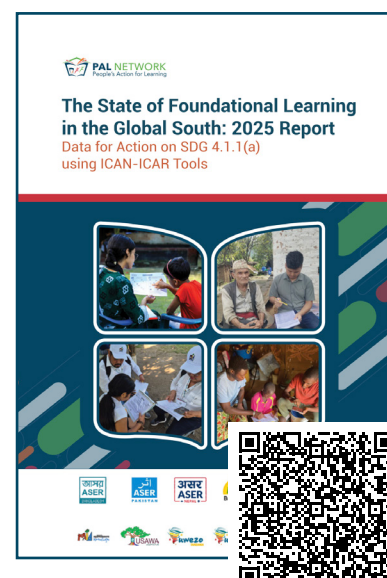
Country	Enumeration Areas (EAs)	Households surveyed	Children surveyed	Children assessed
Kenya	222	4,459	7,076	6,669
Mozambique	255	5,082	8,255	8,022
Tanzania	372	7,220	14,796	13,167
Uganda	222	4,363	9,531	8,886
Total	1,071	21,124	39,658	36,744

Source: PAL Network (2025), Table 2.2.

Fieldwork took place between August and September 2025. Surveys began in the second week of August in Kenya, the first week of August in Mozambique, and the last week of August in Tanzania and Uganda. The timing relative to each country's academic calendar differed — the school year begins in the first week of January in Kenya and Tanzania, the last week of January in Mozambique, and the first week of February in Uganda- which is relevant context for interpreting where children were in their learning year at the time of assessment.

1.4.3 Assessment instruments and languages

The International Common Assessment for Numeracy comprises 36 items across five mathematical cognitive areas, with the heaviest emphasis on Number and Operations (23 items), complemented by Measurement (6), Shape (3), Data Display (2) and Pattern (2). The International Common Assessment for Reading comprises 30 items



across three areas: Oral Language Comprehension (4 items), Decoding (10) and Reading Comprehension (16). Both instruments were administered orally, one-on-one, using printed booklets, with responses captured digitally in SurveyCTO. Adaptive “stop rules” ensured that children who struggled with easier items were not asked for harder ones, keeping the assessment within each child’s ability range; on average, ICAR took 6 minutes and ICAN 8 minutes per child, with a total household survey duration of about 35 minutes.

The language of assessment was designed to match the language of instruction: English in Kenya and Uganda, Portuguese in Mozambique, and Kiswahili in Tanzania. Tools were adapted through a structured process involving local item writers and reviewers, double backward translation, and redevelopment of items (such as letter recognition and word reading) where direct translation was not possible. Alongside the assessments, contextual questionnaires collected data at community, household, parent and child levels, including the Washington Group Child Functioning Module to screen for functional difficulties.

1.4.4 Alignment with global standards

ICAN and ICAR are aligned with the Global Proficiency Framework, and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics has confirmed that the tools meet the global reporting criteria for SDG indicator 4.1.1(a). In August 2025, PAL Network and ACER-UK convened approximately 40 international literacy and numeracy experts to establish MPL-aligned cut-points for both instruments through the Pairwise Comparison Method. Results in this report are therefore expressed as the proportion of children at or above the globally defined minimum proficiency standard, reported at the two global reporting points: children in Grade 4 and children aged 10.

1.4.5 Field teams, training and data quality

Citizen volunteers carried out implementation of the assessment, who were mobilised through national member organisations, Usawa Agenda (Kenya), TPC Moçambique (Mozambique), Uwezo Tanzania and Uwezo Uganda. The members were supported by a wide network of local partner organisations (46 in Kenya, 26 in Uganda, 10 in Tanzania and 8 in Mozambique). Across the four countries, 1,731 citizen volunteers were mobilised: 444 in Kenya (51 percent female), 346 in Mozambique (48 percent female), 639 in Tanzania (42 percent female) and 413 in Uganda (39 percent female).

Training followed the network-wide tiered cascade, from the PAL Network Secretariat to national Project Management Teams, Master Trainers and enumerators. Uganda conducted 18 enumerator trainings, Tanzania and Mozambique 10 each, and Kenya 1, reflecting differences in enumerator pool sizes and geography.

Data quality was assured through the Monitoring and Recheck protocols embedded in the Citizen-Led Assessment model: pre-field quizzes and practice, in-field supervision and phone monitoring, Inter-Rater Reliability checks against an 80 percent consistency threshold, near-universal desk rechecks of digital submissions, and field rechecks in selected communities. Sampling protocols required a minimum 70 percent response rate and capped household substitution at 15 percent.



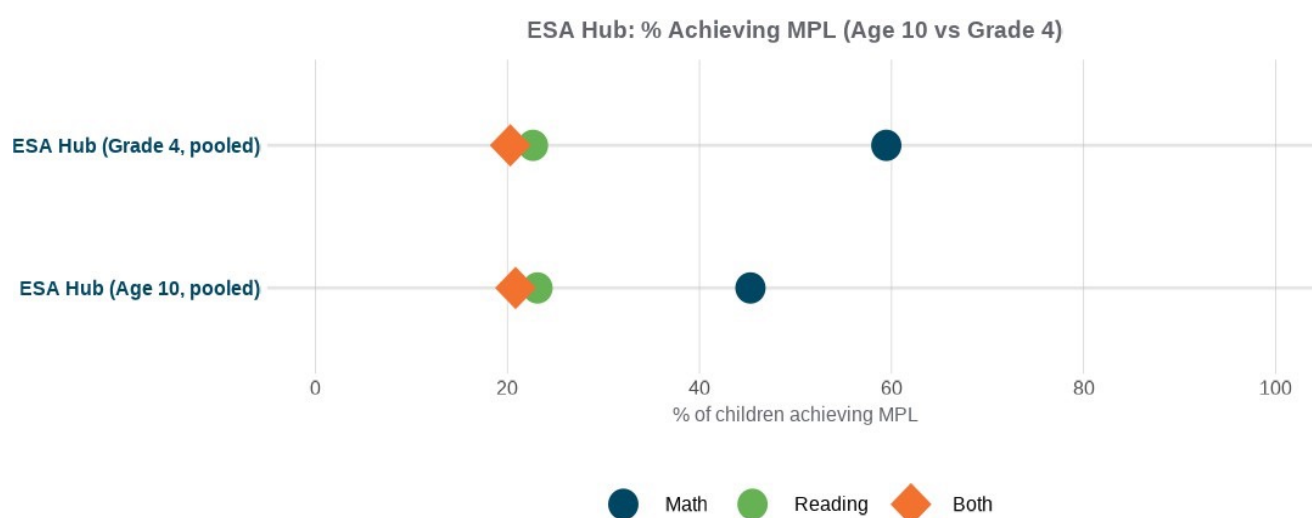
2. Key Findings Across ESA

2.1 Percentage of children achieving Minimum Proficiency Levels (Reading, Math, Both)

The pooled results show that children across the ESA region are more likely to achieve the minimum proficiency level (MPL) in mathematics than in reading. Among 10-year-olds, 45.3 percent reached the MPL in mathematics compared to 23.1 percent in reading (Figure 1). Only 20.9 percent achieved proficiency in both cognitive areas. A similar pattern is observed among Grade 4 learners, where 59.4 percent achieved the mathematics benchmark, 22.7 percent achieved the reading benchmark, and 20.3 percent met the benchmark in both reading and mathematics.

Across the region, reading achievement is consistently lower than mathematics achievement. Since children must meet the benchmark in both subjects to be counted as proficient in both cognitive areas, the lower reading performance is reflected in the relatively small proportion of learners achieving both competencies.

Figure 1: ESA Overall MPL (Age 10 and Grade 4)



2.2 Comparison of percentage of children achieving Minimum Proficiency Levels (Reading, Math, Both) across ESA region countries

Variation on MPLs across the four ICAN-ICAR participating countries is shown in Figure 2 for children aged 10. Kenya has the highest proportion of children achieving the MPL in both domains. Nearly seven in every ten Kenyan children (68.5 percent) achieved the mathematics benchmark, while four in every ten children achieved the reading benchmark. In both reading and mathematics, four in every ten Kenyan children met minimum proficiency. Tanzania follows, with 54.9 percent of children achieving the mathematics benchmark, 39.8 percent achieving the reading benchmark, and 34.5 percent achieving proficiency in both cognitive areas.

About one-third of Ugandan children (34.4 percent) aged 10, reached the mathematics benchmark, only 4.3 percent achieved the reading benchmark. Consequently, only 4 percent met the benchmark in both subjects. Mozambique records the lowest minimum proficiency achievement across both domains, with 19 percent of children achieving the mathematics benchmark, 9.5 percent achieving the reading benchmark and 7.4 percent meeting minimum proficiency in both (Figure 2).

The Grade 4 results show a ranking across countries (Figure 3). Kenya continues to record the highest achievement, followed closely by Tanzania. Uganda shows a marked improvement in mathematics, with 60.2 percent of Grade 4 learners reaching the mathematics benchmark. However, reading achievement remains low at 5.8 percent, resulting in only 5.3 percent of learners achieving proficiency in both subjects. Mozambique continues to record the lowest achievement Mathematics and Reading skills.

Kenya has the highest proportion of children achieving the MPL in both domains.

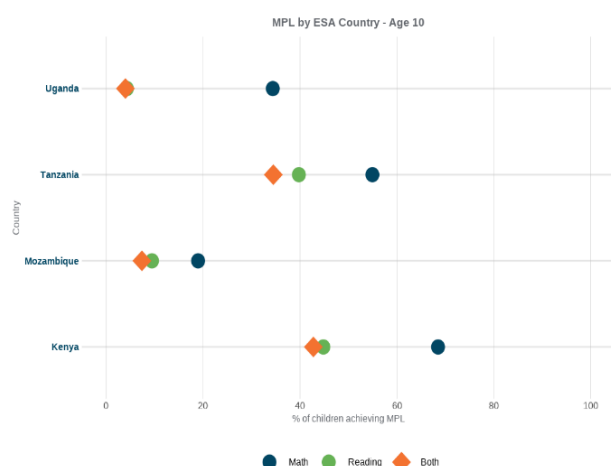


Figure 2: MPL by ESA Country (Age 10)

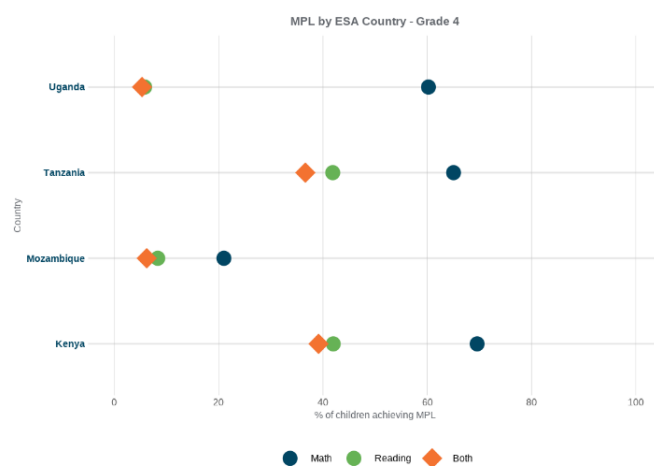


Figure 3: MPL by ESA Country (Grade 4)

2.3 Proficiency in Reading and Mathematics by Age

Figure 4 shows the proportion of children aged 6–12 years who achieve the minimum proficiency level (MPL) in both reading and mathematics across the four participating countries. Proficiency increases with age in all four ESA countries, although the level and pace of improvement differ substantially.

Kenya records the strongest performance across the age range. The proportion of children achieving proficiency rises from approximately 7 percent at age 6 to 23 percent by age 8 and 43 percent by age 10. This upward trend continues into the later years, reaching about 50 percent at age 11 and 56 percent at age 12. The results suggest a relatively steady improvement in the proportion of children attaining the expected level of proficiency as they grow older.

Tanzania follows a broadly similar pattern to Kenya, but at consistently lower levels. Proficiency increases from around 3 percent at age 6 to 15 percent at age 8 and 34 percent at age 10, before rising to approximately 42 percent at age 11 and 49 percent at age 12. The relatively close trajectories of Kenya and Tanzania indicate stronger gains in proficiency during the later primary-school years compared with the younger ages.

The pattern is different in Mozambique. Proficiency remains very low through the early ages, increasing from almost zero at age 6 to only about 6 percent by age 9. Thereafter, the proportion rises progressively, reaching 7 percent at age 10, 14 percent at age 11 and 15 percent at age 12. Although there is evidence of improvement with age, the overall level of achievement remains considerably lower than that observed in Kenya and Tanzania.

Uganda records the lowest levels of proficiency across the age range. Achievement remains close to zero between ages 6 and 8, rising only progressively to approximately 2 percent at age 9 and 4 percent at age 10. By ages 11 and 12, around 8 percent of children achieve proficiency.

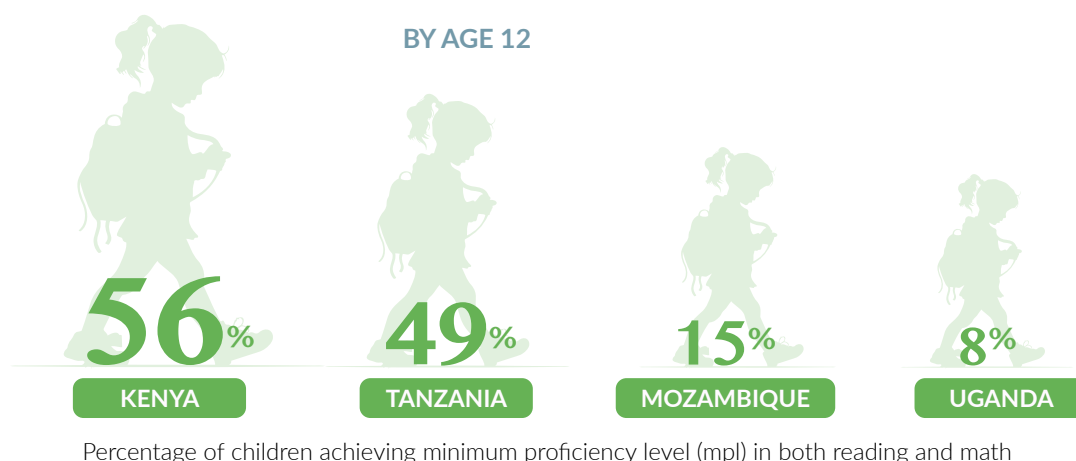
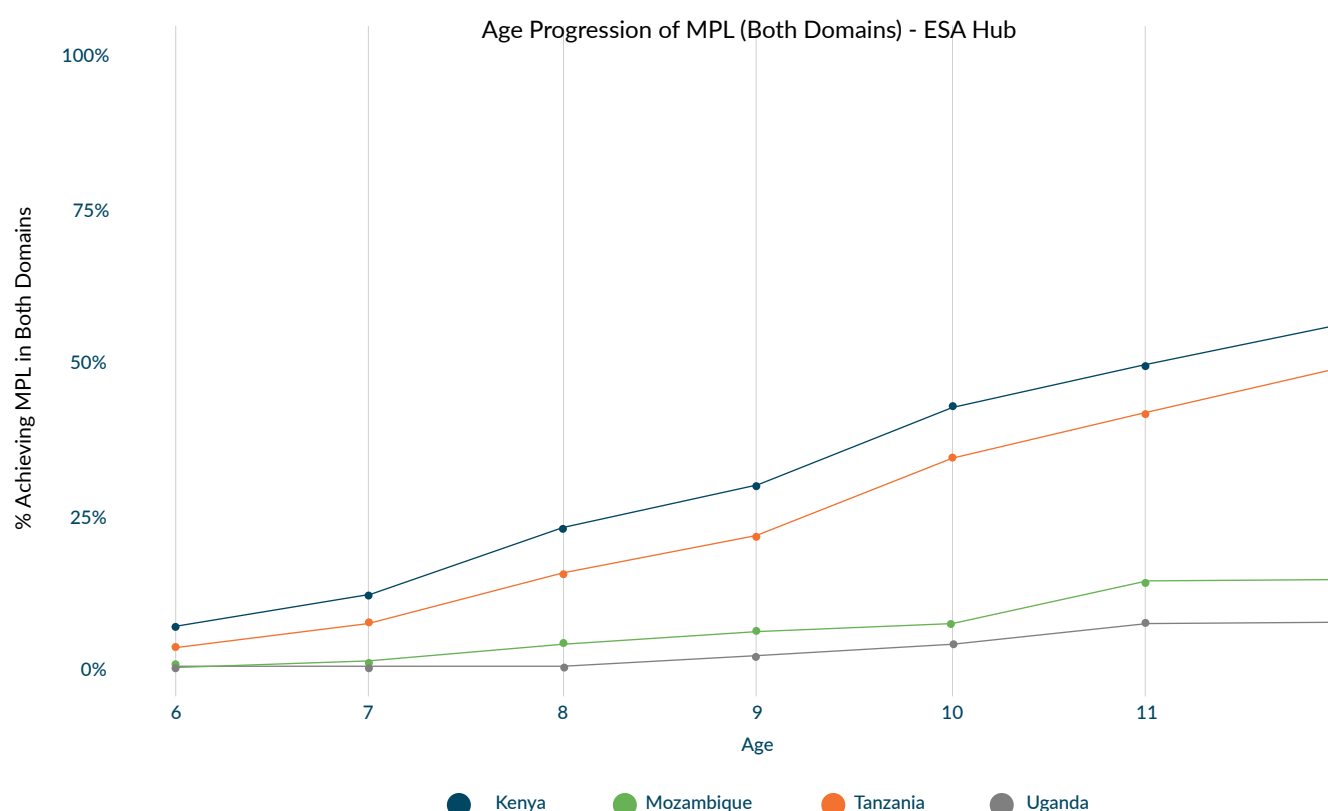


Figure 4 : Age Progression by Country



2.4 Proficiency in Reading and Mathematics by Grade

Figure 5 shows the proportion of learners achieving the minimum proficiency level (MPL) in both reading and mathematics across Grades 1 to 9 in the four participating countries. Proficiency increases with grade level in all four countries, although the pace and extent of improvement vary.

Kenya and Tanzania show similar patterns of progress. In Kenya, the proportion of learners achieving proficiency increases from 5.2 percent in Grade 1 to 26.2 percent in Grade 3 and 47 percent in Grade 5. It rises further to 65.4 percent in Grade 7 and reaches 80 percent by Grade 9. Tanzania follows a similar trajectory, increasing from 4 percent in Grade 1 to 22 percent in Grade 3, 51 percent in Grade 5, 65.5 percent in Grade 7, and 79 percent in Grade 9. While Tanzania records a slightly higher proportion than Kenya in Grade 5, the two countries show very similar levels from Grade 6 onwards.

Uganda shows a slower progression in the early grades. Proficiency increases from just 0.2 percent in Grade 1 to 1.5 percent in Grade 3 and 11 percent in Grade 5. The pace of improvement becomes more pronounced in the upper primary grades, with the proportion reaching 34 percent in Grade 7, 53 percent in Grade 8, and 69 percent in Grade 9. This pattern indicates that substantial gains in foundational competencies occur later in the school cycle than in Kenya and Tanzania.

Mozambique records the lowest levels of proficiency across most of the grade progression. The proportion of learners meeting MPL increases from 0.3 percent in Grade 1 to 3 percent in Grade 3 and 13 percent in Grade 5. It then rises to 25 percent in Grade 7, 34 percent in Grade 8, and 48 percent in Grade 9. Although proficiency improves consistently across the grades, the gains remain considerably smaller than those observed in Kenya and Tanzania.

BY GRADE

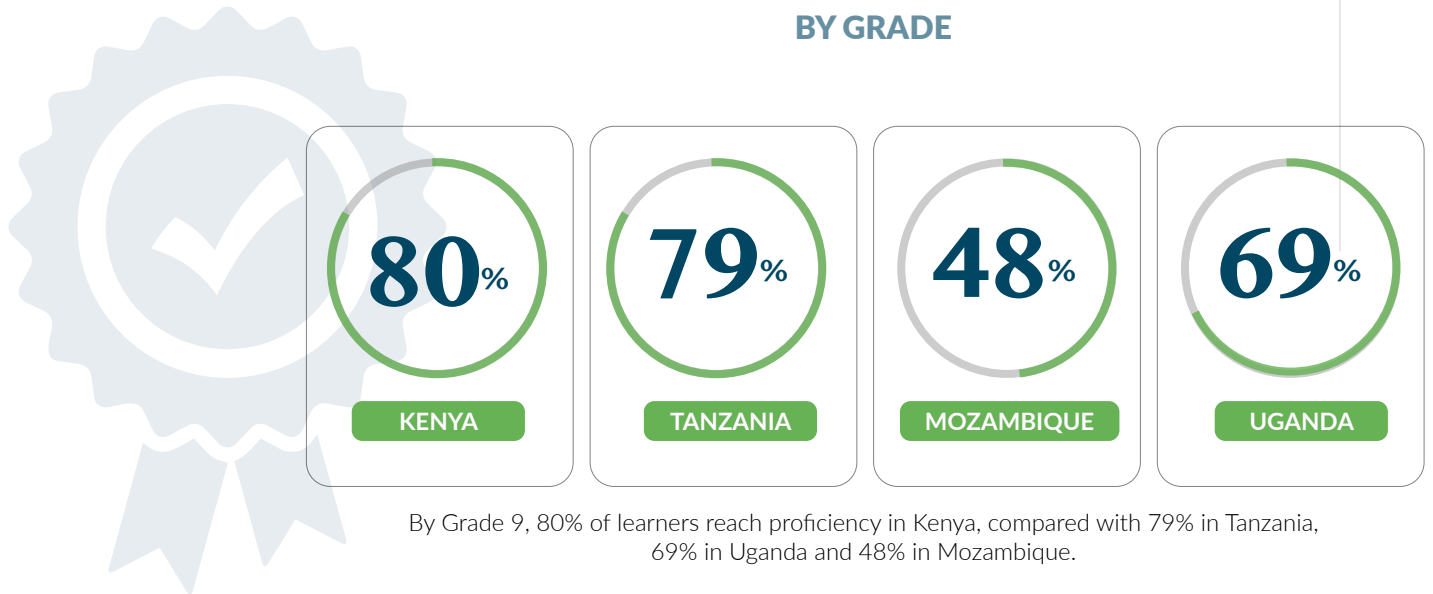
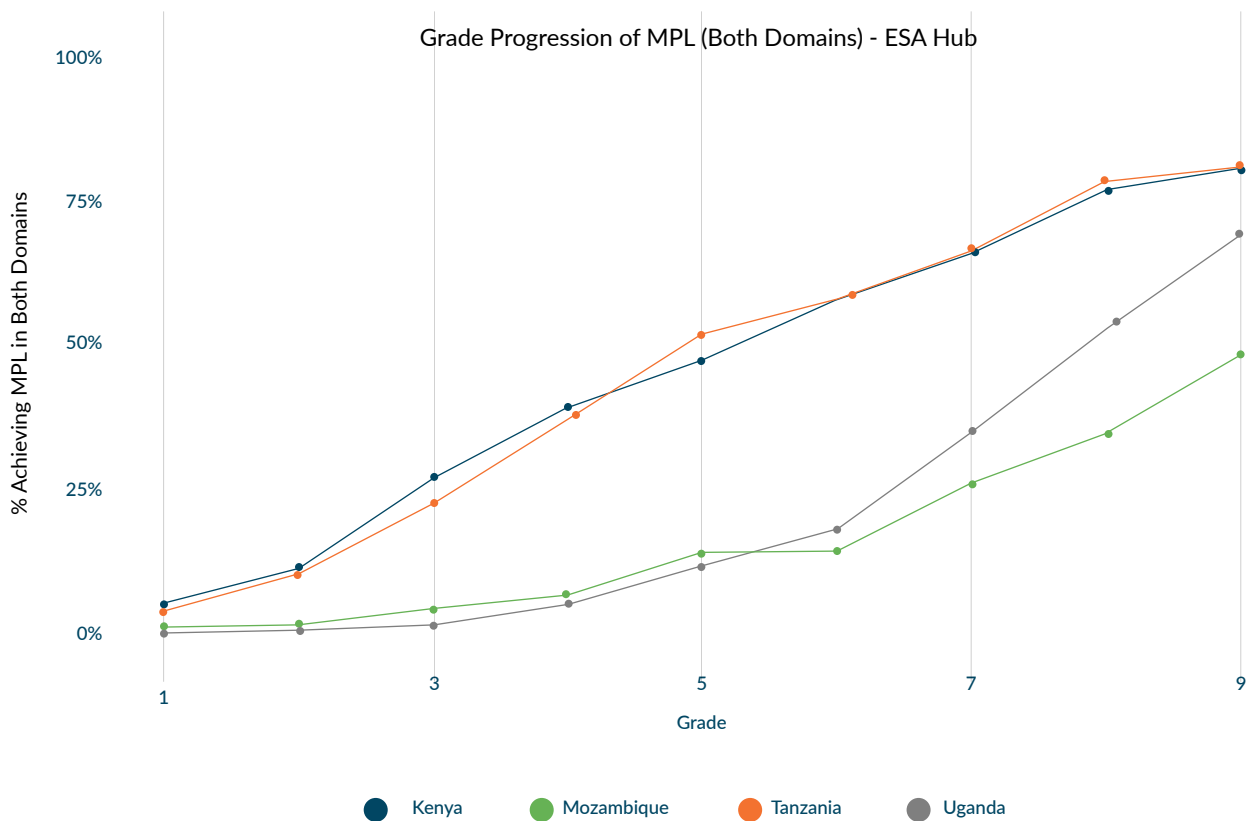


Figure 5: Grade Progression by Country





3. Inequalities in Learning Outcomes

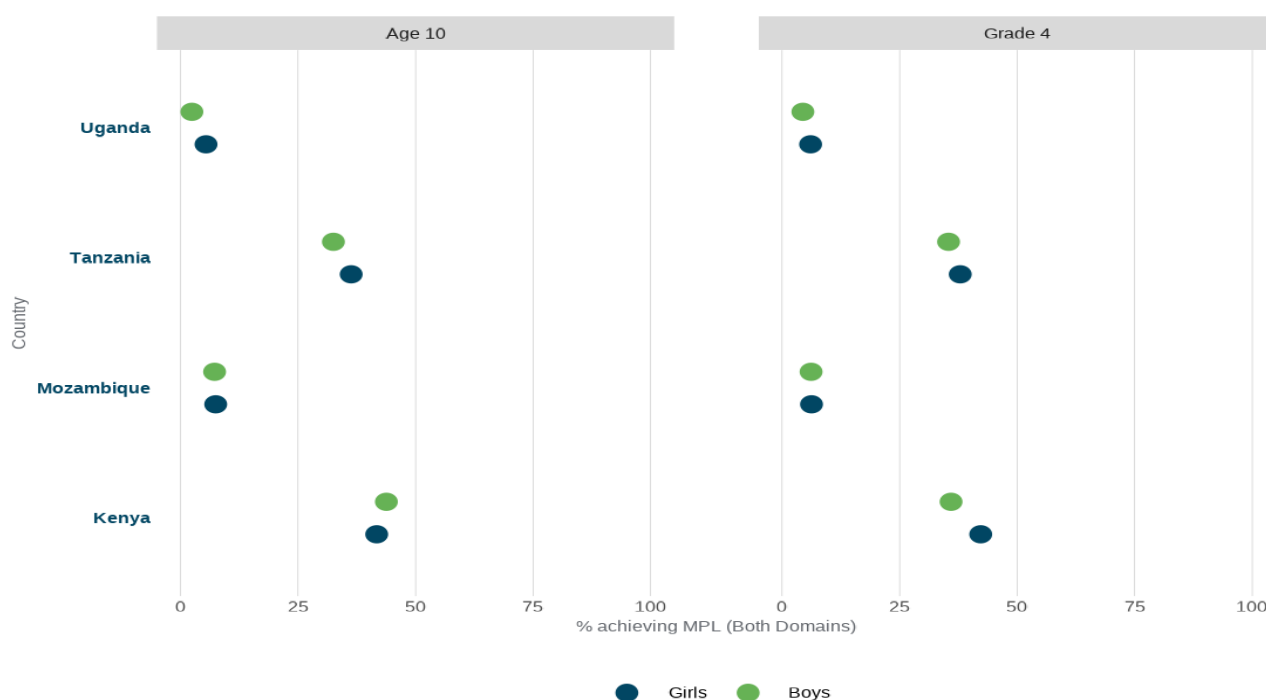
Across the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) region, foundational learning achievements reveal inherent disparities across countries in four critical areas: gender patterns, urban-rural divides, learning progression, and schooling status of children. This section presents the evidence for each and concludes with implications and recommendations for policy and programming across the region.

3.1. Gender Patterns

Gender-based disparities in foundational learning outcomes across the ESA region are relatively narrow. Minimum Proficiency Level (MPL) achievement in reading and numeracy reveals minimal variation between boys and girls, with girls demonstrating a marginal advantage in literacy, while boys slightly lead in numeracy.

The extent of the gender gap varies by country and within countries. Figure 7 illustrates these differences, highlighting both narrow and wider gaps across the ESA countries. Kenya demonstrates the smallest gender gap in performance for both genders. In Tanzania, there is a slight advantage in literacy performance by girls compared to boys. Mozambique and Uganda present with wider gaps in both genders for both reading and numeracy, to an extent reflecting localised barriers to achievement of learning outcomes.

Figure 7: Gender gap in Minimum Proficiency Level achievement, ESA countries

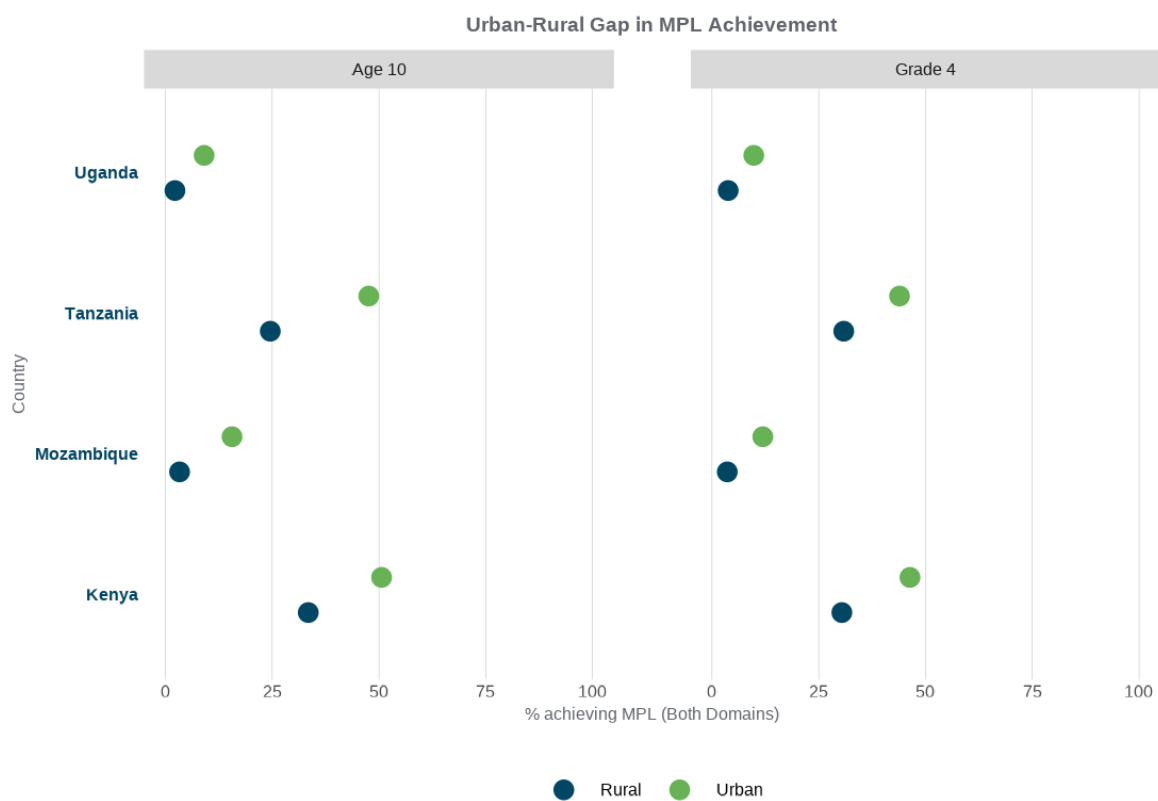


3.2. Urban vs. Rural Disparity

Geographical location shapes learning outcomes across East and Southern Africa. Evidence from Figure 8 reveals that children in urban areas outperform their rural peers.

By Grade 4, the gap in achieving minimum proficiency between urban and rural learners is particularly distinct. In Kenya, 46.4 percent of urban learners reach MPL compared to only 30.4 percent of rural learners. A similar pattern is observed in Tanzania, where 43.9 percent of urban learners achieve MPL compared to 30.9 percent of rural learners. The disparity is more evident in Mozambique and Uganda, where overall MPL achievement is low. In Mozambique, only 3.6 percent of rural learners reach MPL compared to 11.9 percent of urban learners, while in Uganda, 3.8 percent of rural learners achieve MPL against 9.8 percent of urban learners. The variations across the region and within countries may yield from the impacts of urbanization, unequal distribution of resources, and diverse socio-economic factors.

Figure 8: Urban vs. Rural MPL achievement, ESA countries



3.3. Age and Grade Learning Progression

Acquisition of basic reading and numeracy competences increases with age. At age 10, which is the expected age for Grade 4/5 in ESA countries, fewer than 30 percent of children across the countries achieve MPL. Among children aged 13–15, a significant proportion demonstrate limited competences for Grade 2/3 level literacy and numeracy tasks, as demonstrated in Figure 9, that if unattended, would compound learning acquisition gaps over time.

Across the four ESA countries, learning trajectories reveal an upward trend, but the progression curve is flat in the lower grades and for younger children. Although large proportions of children reach the upper primary grades without acquiring minimum foundational competencies, higher percentages gain foundational mastery by Grade 5 and 6 across the region as depicted in Figure 10.



Figure 9: ESA pooled age progression in MPL achievement

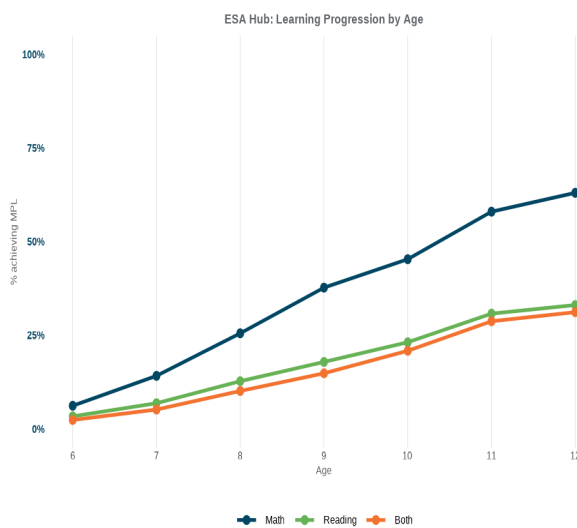
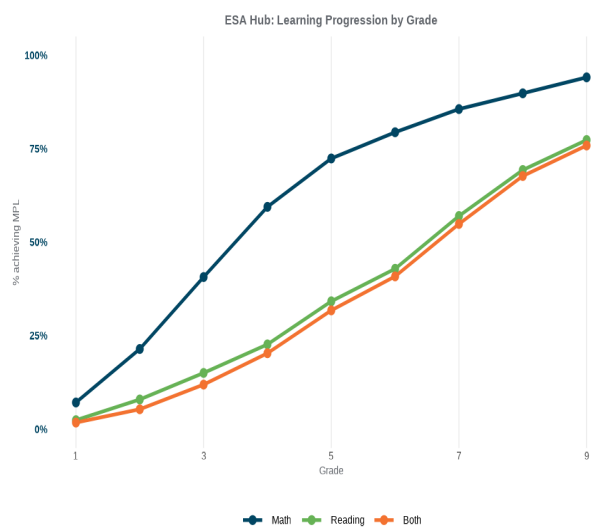


Figure 10: ESA pooled grade progression in MPL achievement



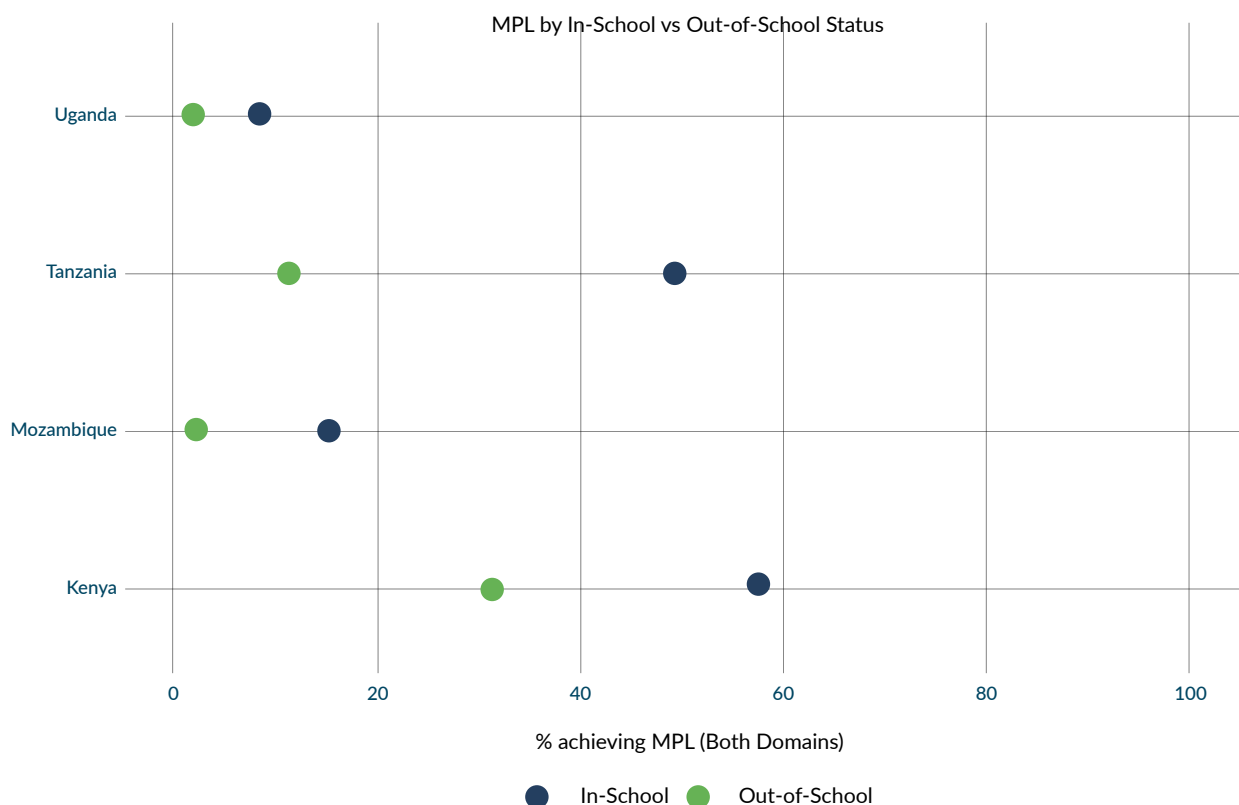
V

3.4. In-School vs. Out-of-School Children

Inequalities exist between children in school and those out of school. Out-of-school children across all age groups demonstrate severely lower proficiency rates in reading and numeracy compared to their peers who are in school.

At ages 10 to 14, proficiency levels among out-of-school children remain low across most ESA countries. Tanzania and Kenya show relatively higher performance compared to Mozambique and Uganda, as revealed in Figure 11. Out-of-school children face substantial gaps in foundational literacy and numeracy and are considerably less likely to attain the proficiency levels observed among their in-school peers. These disparities may be further compounded where multiple factors intersect, particularly geographical location and socioeconomic disadvantage.

Figure 11: MPL (Both) achievement by enrolment status, ESA countrre



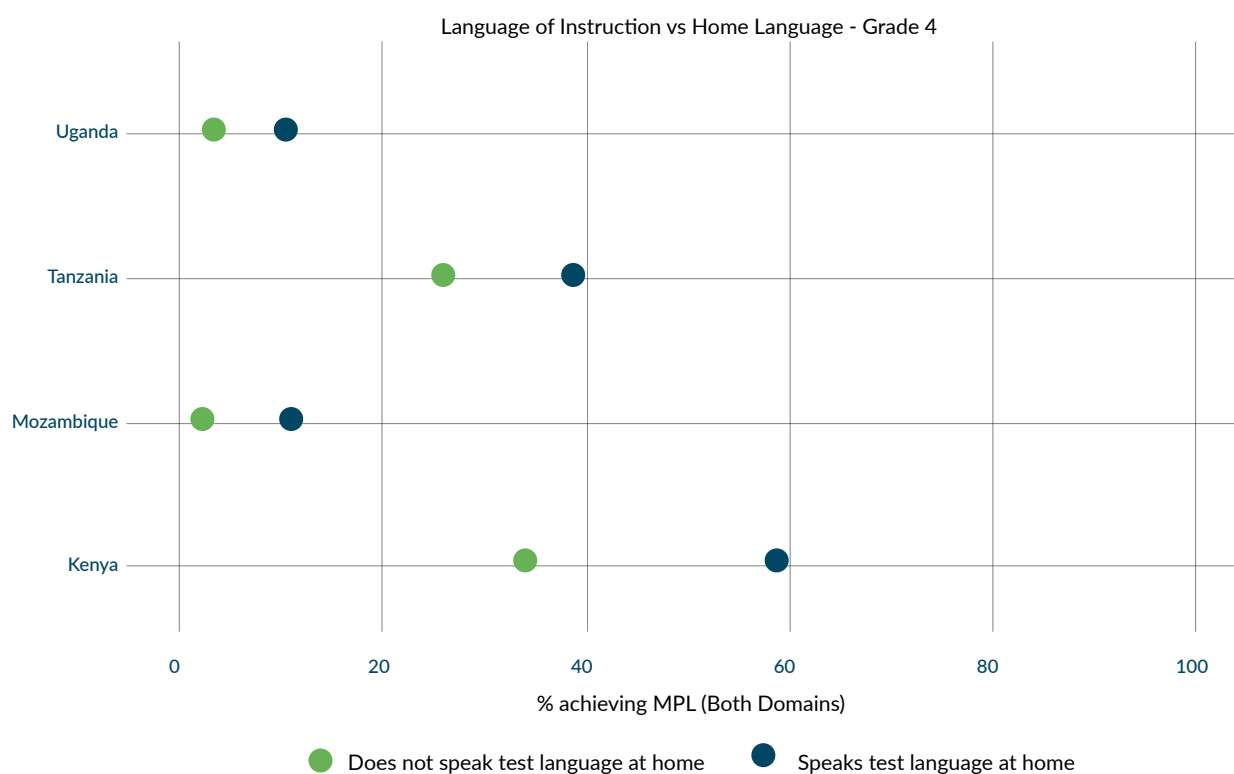
4. What Is Driving These Results?

4.1 Language of instruction vs home language

The distance between the language in which children are assessed and taught, and the language they speak at home is a driver of foundational learning in ESA region. ICAN-ICAR global assessment is administered in each country's language of instruction and the share of children who speak that language at home varies widely across the region. This variation maps closely onto reading outcomes. In Kenya and Uganda, where the assessment is conducted in English, about one in four children speaks the test language at home (23.2 percent in Kenya and 29 percent in Uganda). In Mozambique, assessed in Portuguese, just over half of children (52.8 percent) speak the test language at home, while in Tanzania, assessed in Kiswahili, the great majority do (85.4 percent).

Figure 12 shows that in every ESA country for which household-language data are available, children who speak the test language at home reach the combined Minimum Proficiency Level (MPL) at a higher rate than those who do not. The gap is substantial and consistent. In Kenya, 58.8 percent of children who speak the test language at home achieve MPL in both cognitive areas, compared with 33.8 percent of those who do not, a gap of 25 percentage points. In Tanzania the corresponding figures are 38.6 percent versus 25.8 percent, in Uganda 10.3 percent versus 3.1 percent, and in Mozambique 10.7 percent versus 2.1 percent. In relative terms the divide is largest in both Uganda and Mozambique, children who speak the test language at home are roughly three to five times as likely to reach combined proficiency as those who do not.

Figure 12: Percentage of children achieving MPL in both cognitive areas, by whether the child speaks the test language at home (Grade 4), ESA region countries.



Tanzania findings are particularly instructive for the region because they show that language match is an important, but not sufficient, condition for foundational learning. Tanzania has the highest share of children speaking the test language at home, at 85.4 percent. However, only 38.6 percent of these children achieve minimum proficiency in both reading and mathematics. This suggests that familiarity with the language of assessment does not, on its own, guarantee that children will acquire the foundational skills being assessed.

The finding is particularly notable given that reading outcomes in Tanzania continue to lag behind numeracy, even among children who speak the test language at home. This points to the influence of other factors, including the quality and consistency of instruction, children's exposure to reading, access to learning materials, and the broader conditions in which learning takes place.

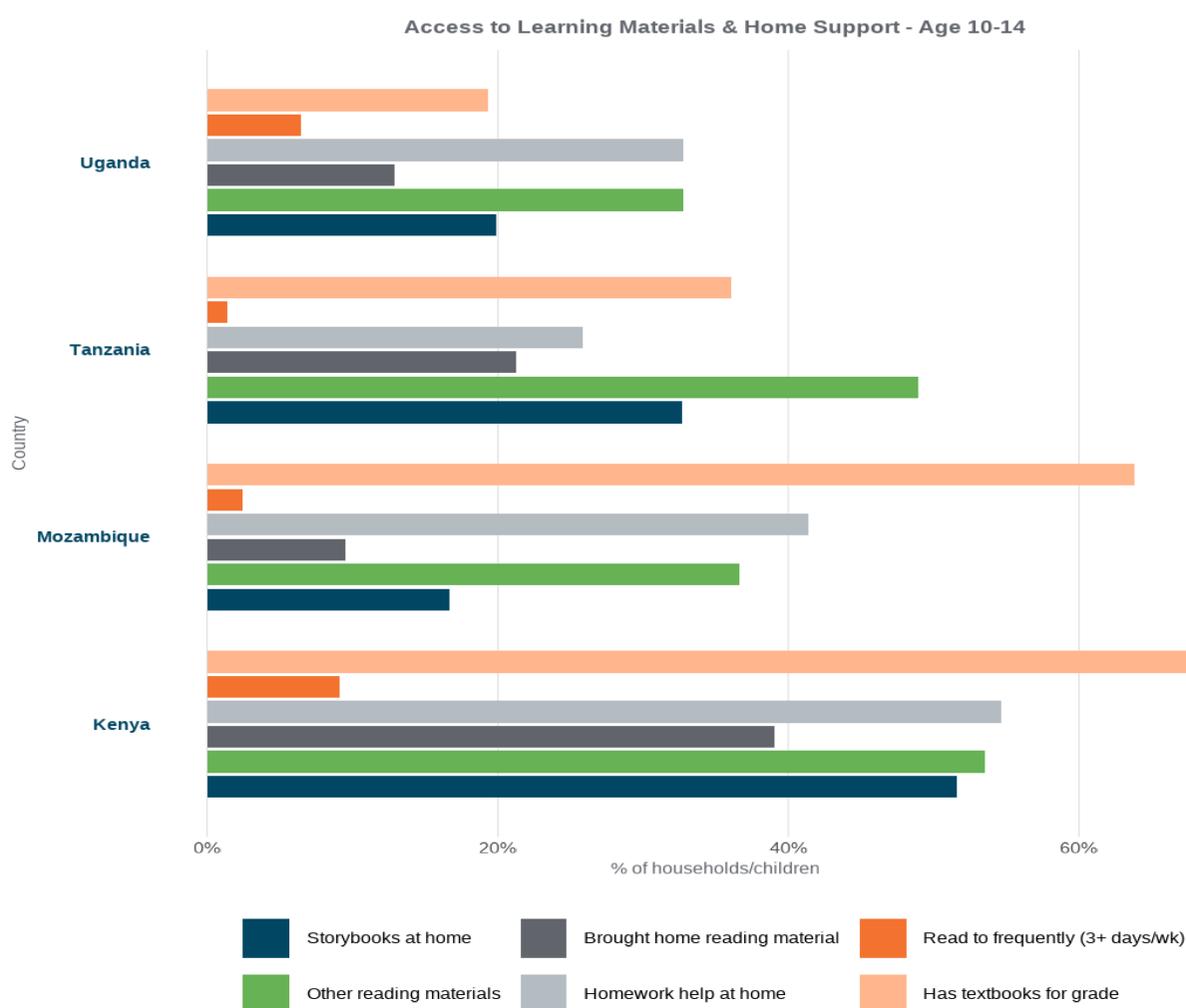
4.2 Access to Learning Materials and Home Support

Print-richness of the home and the support children receive with their schoolwork is a factor of foundational learning.

Figure 13 summarises six indicators of the home learning environment for children aged 10–14: whether the household has storybooks, whether it has other reading materials, whether the child brought home reading material, whether the child receives homework help at home, whether the child is read to frequently (three or more days a week), and whether the child has the textbooks required for their grade.

Print-rich homes are the exception rather than the rule across the region, and access is deeply uneven between countries. Storybooks are present for roughly half of children in Kenya (51.6 percent) but for only about a third in Tanzania (32.6 percent), one in five in Uganda (19.9 percent), and one in six in Mozambique (16.6 percent). Being read to frequently is rare across the ESA region, ranging from just 1.4 percent of children in Tanzania and 2.4 percent in Mozambique to 6.5 percent in Uganda and 9.1 percent in Kenya, underlining how little early exposure to sustained reading practice most children in the region receive at home. Textbook access for the child's own grade is more common but still far from universal, and it varies sharply: from 69.8 percent in Kenya and 63.8 percent in Mozambique down to 36.1 percent in Tanzania and just 19.4 percent in Uganda.

Figure 13: Access to learning materials and home support (percent of households/children), children aged 10–14, ESA region countries.



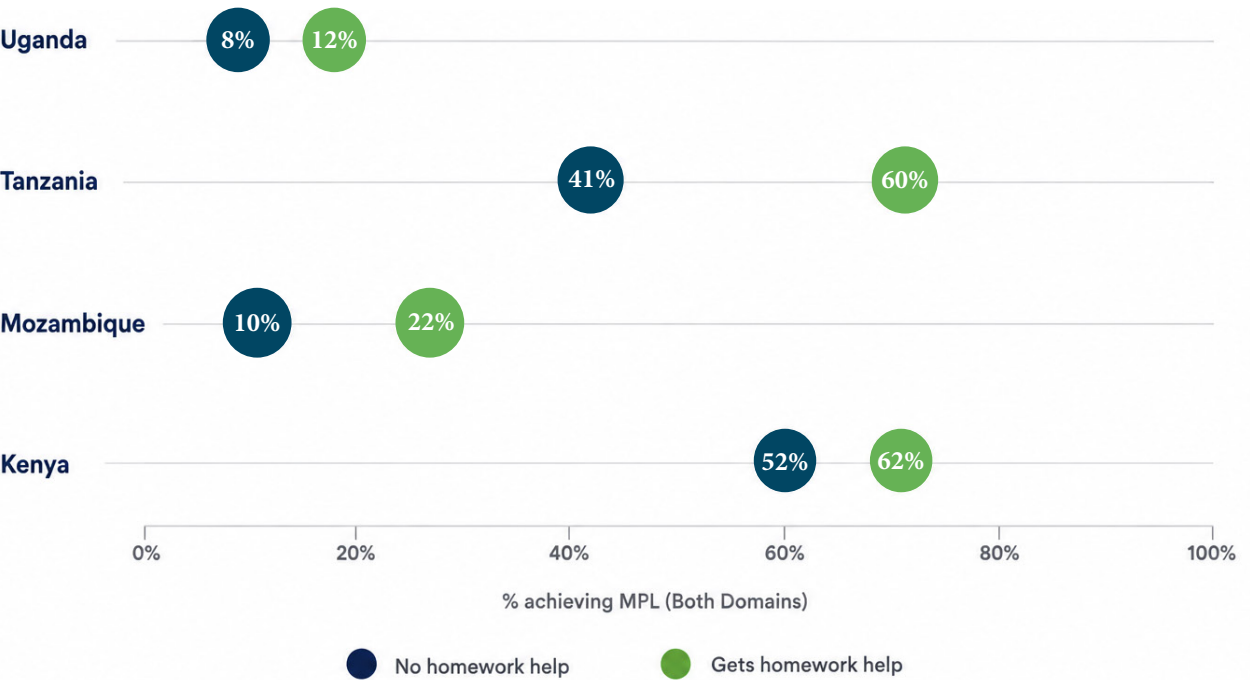
Home support with schoolwork follows a similar, and telling, pattern as shown in Figure 14. Just over half of children in Kenya (54.7 percent) receive help with homework at home, compared with 41.4 percent in Mozambique, 32.7 percent in Uganda, and only 25.9 percent in Tanzania. Tanzania combines a relatively high share of children who speak the test language at home with one of the lowest rates of homework support in the region, a reminder that removing the language barrier does not by itself guarantee a supportive learning environment at home.

Figure 14 links this support directly to outcomes, showing MPL in both cognitive areas for children who do and do not receive homework help. In every ESA country, the direction is the same: children who receive homework help reach combined proficiency at a higher rate. In Tanzania the difference is especially large: 60.1 percent of children who receive homework help achieve MPL in both cognitive areas, compared with 41.9 percent of those who do not, a gap of over 18 percentage points. Mozambique shows a similar relative gap (21.4 percent with help versus 8.6 percent without), while the gaps in Kenya (62.5 percent versus 51.3 percent) and Uganda (11.7 percent versus 6.6 percent) are smaller in absolute terms but consistent in direction.

Figure 14: Percentage of children achieving MPL in both cognitive areas, by whether the child receives homework help at home, ESA region countries.

MPL BY HOMEWORK SUPPORT AT HOME

Percentage of children achieving MPL (Both Domains)



Foundational learning in ESA is shaped well beyond the classroom. Children who have books at home, who are read to, who have their textbooks, and who receive help with their schoolwork are consistently more likely to reach minimum proficiency. Yet these are precisely the resources that are scarcest and most unequally distributed across the region, and they tend to cluster together; the same households that lack books often lack homework support as well. As with language, these associations are descriptive rather than causal: access to books, textbooks, and homework help is closely tied to household wealth and parental education, so the gaps reported here reflect broader socio-economic inequalities as much as the specific resources measured. They nonetheless point to a practical agenda for the region: expanding access to reading materials and strengthening the home learning environment, for example through teacher–parent partnership models, alongside the language-transition support discussed in Section 4.1.

4.3 Schooling and enrolment patterns

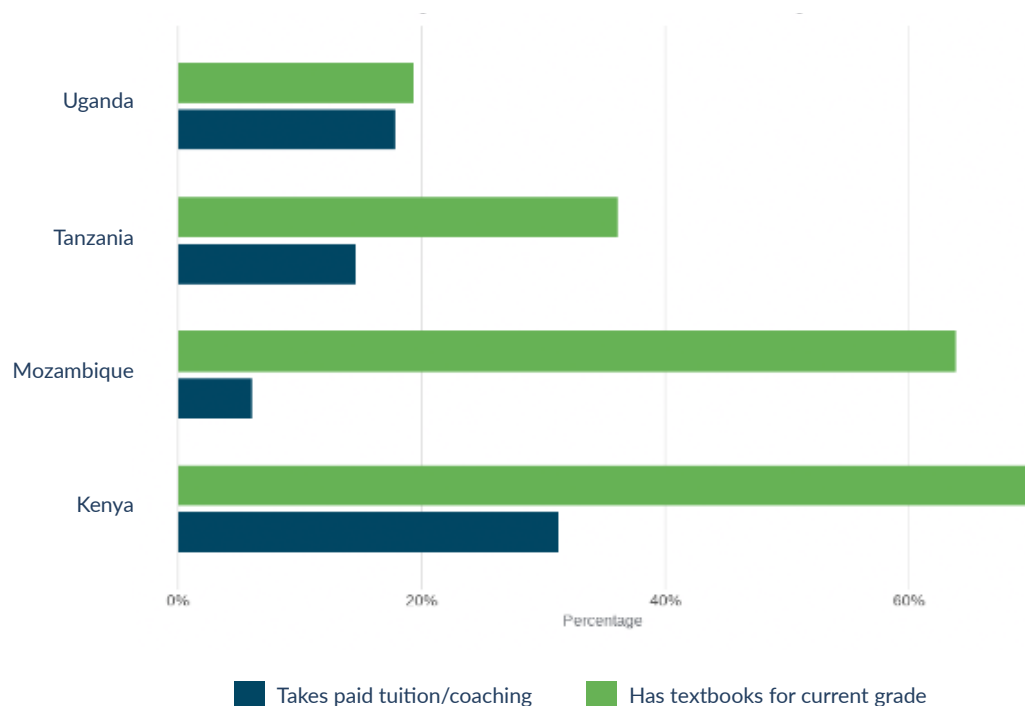
Figure 15 below shows the percentage of children receiving paid tutoring and having access to textbooks in Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda. Mozambique has the lowest percentage, with only 6.1 percent of children receiving paid tutoring, while Kenya has the highest rate (31.2 percent). In Tanzania and Uganda, the rate stands at 14.6 percent and 17.8 percent, respectively.

Access to schoolbooks is essential for children's learning. The study revealed that Kenya and Mozambique have made progress on this indicator, with access rates of 69.8 percent and 63.8 percent, respectively. Tanzania falls in the middle (36.1 percent), while Uganda faces significant limitations, with access to schoolbooks at only 19.4 percent.

The results suggest that access to textbooks may be a more comprehensive resource for supporting learning, while paid tutoring tends to benefit only a portion of students. Kenya shows a balance between the two indicators (paid tutoring and access to textbooks), while Mozambique reveals gaps: although there has been progress regarding textbooks, low access to paid tutoring is due not only to socioeconomic inequalities but also to a limited supply of such services, reduced household purchasing power, and differences in educational policies. Tanzania occupies an intermediate position, with moderate scores on both indicators. Finally, Uganda faces limitations in the availability of educational resources in both schools and households, which directly compromises the quality of children's teaching and learning.

Figure 15: Schooling Patterns (Tuition & Textbooks)

SCHOOLING PATTERNS: TUITION & TEXTBOOK ACCESS - AGE 10-14

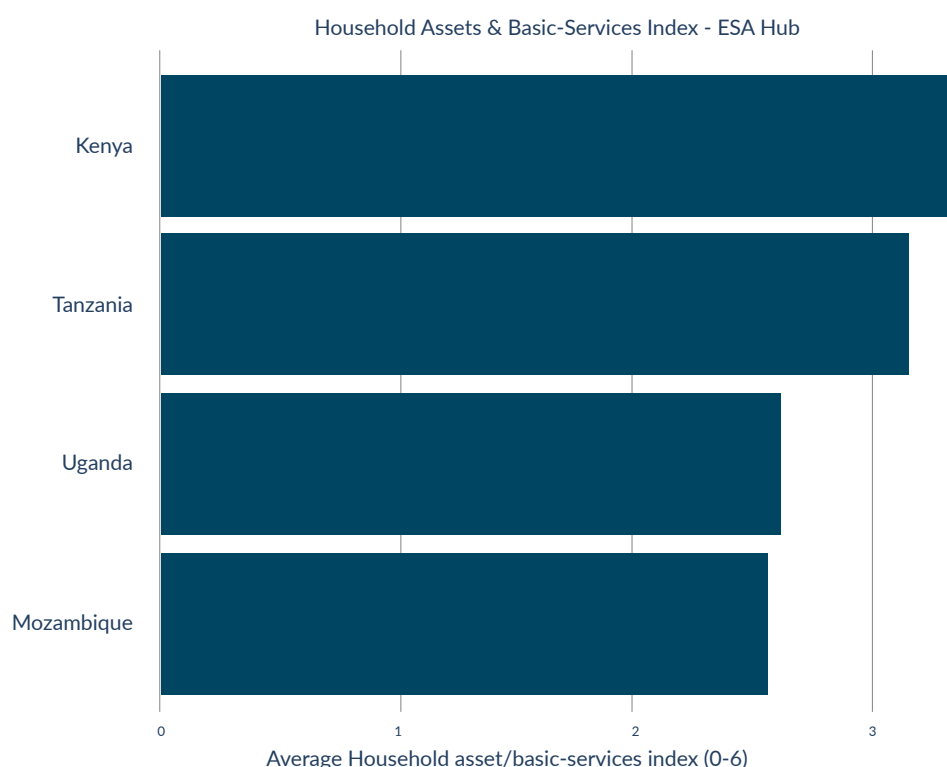


Access to textbooks reaches far more children than paid tutoring — 69.8% in Kenya and 63.8% in Mozambique, compared with 31.2% and 6.1% receiving paid tutoring.

4.4 Community and Family Factors (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique)

Results in Figure 16 show an association between better socioeconomic conditions of households and higher levels of child learning. Kenya has the highest average household asset index (3.35). In contrast, Mozambique has the lowest index (2.56) among the four ESA countries. In Tanzania and Uganda, asset indices are at median levels, also indicating challenges for families regarding access to material resources.

Figure 16: Household Asset Index



Children whose parents have completed primary school perform better on the MPL than children whose parents have not completed that level of education, as shown in Figure 17. In Mozambique, when neither parent has completed primary school, the MPL stands at 4.9 percent; however, when at least one parent has completed primary school, the MPL rises to 18 percent. In Tanzania, the data follows the same pattern: when neither parent has completed primary school, the MPL is 27 percent, rising to 48.5 percent when at least one parent has completed that level.

In Uganda, an improvement is observed, although the figures remain low: from 3.5 percent to 13.2 percent when at least one parent has completed primary school. In Kenya, the MPL reaches 61.4 percent when at least one parent has completed primary school, demonstrating a higher proportion of educated parents and reflecting the best performance among the four countries.

Kenya and Tanzania have higher rates, suggesting better learning conditions. Mozambique and Uganda, on the other hand, have lower rates, reflecting structural challenges in access to parental education and, consequently, in children's learning.

When at least one parent has completed primary school, children's proficiency rises sharply — from 4.9% to 18% in Mozambique and from 27% to 48.5% in Tanzania.

Figure 17: MPL by Parental Education

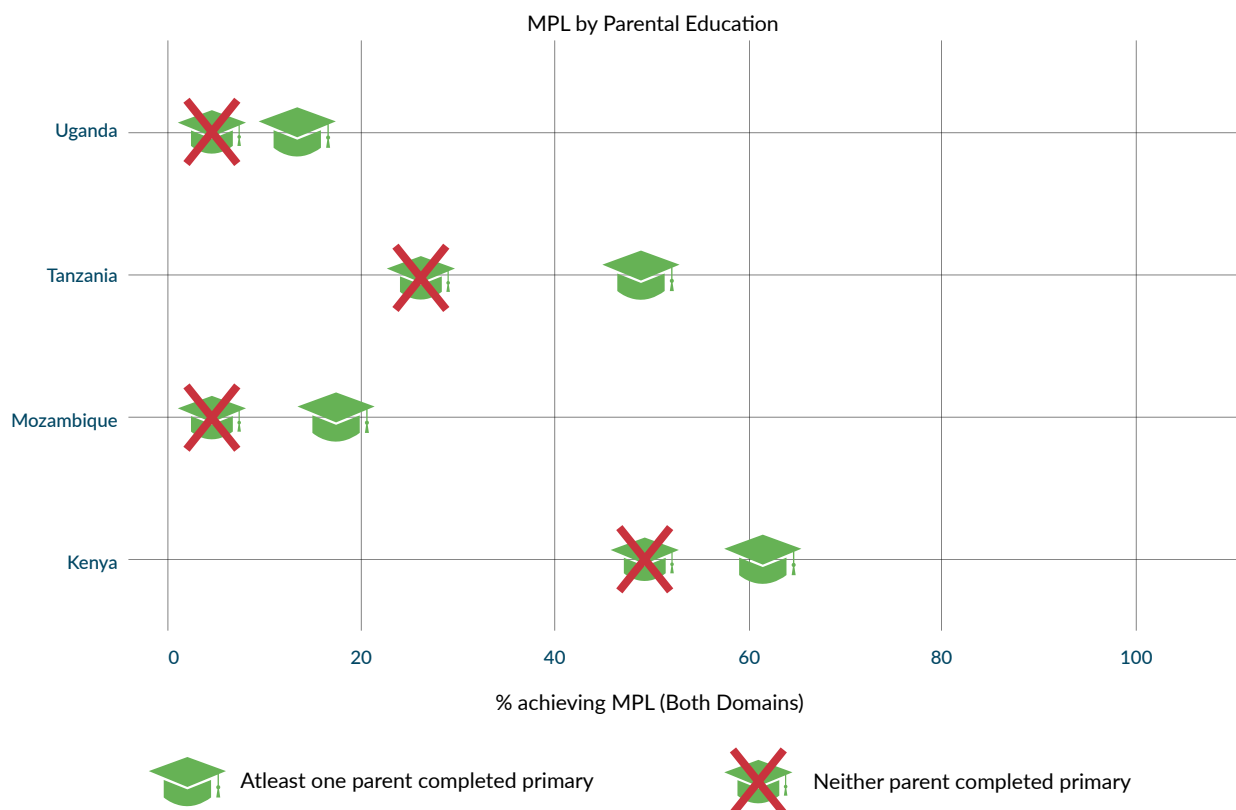


Figure 18 below shows a clear association between household ownership of digital devices and children's performance on the minimum proficiency level (MPL) across the four participating countries. In all four countries, children living in households with access to digital devices record higher MPL attainment than those in households without such access.

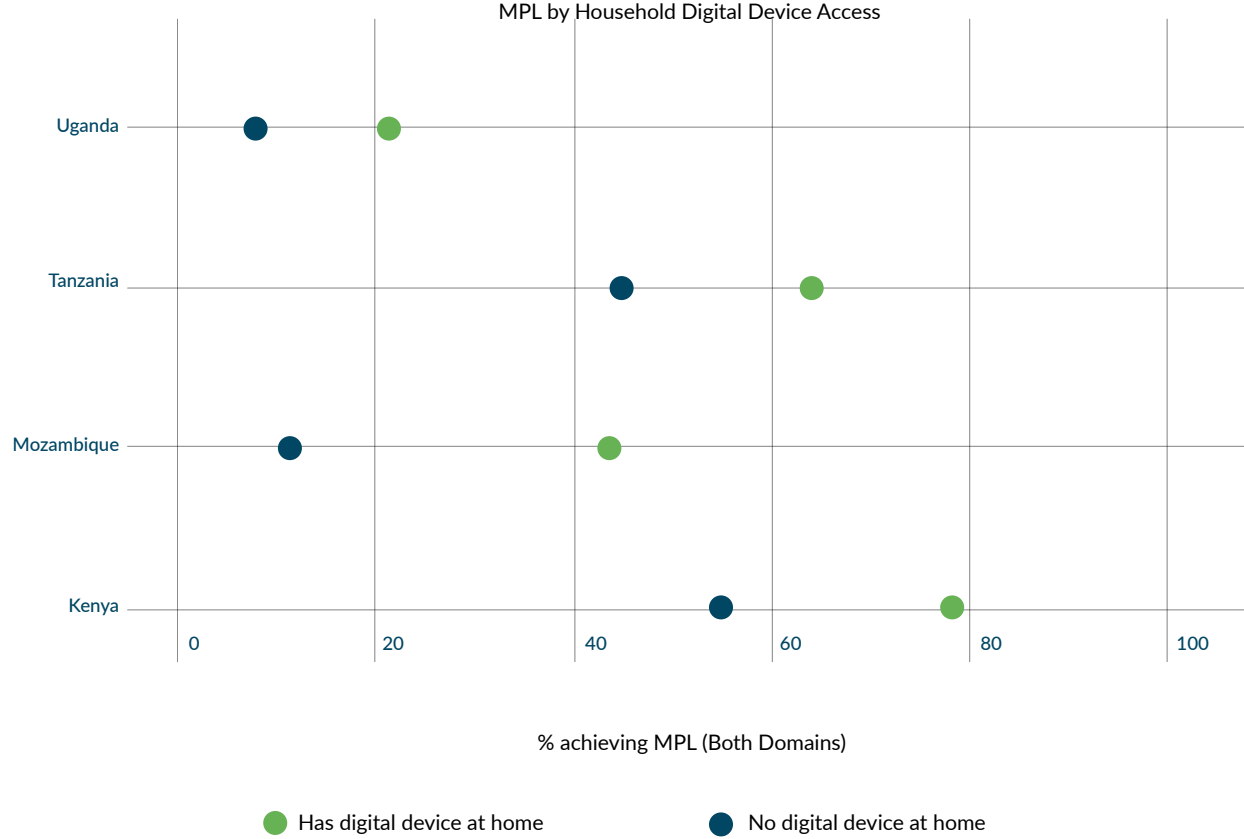
The difference is particularly pronounced in Kenya, where the proportion of children achieving MPL increases from 55.0 percent among those living in households without digital devices to 78.3 percent among those with access to digital devices. Uganda shows a similar pattern, although at substantially lower levels overall: MPL attainment rises from 7.8 percent among children without household access to digital devices to 21.5 percent among those with access.

The association is even larger in Mozambique, where the proportion achieving MPL increases from 11.2 percent in households without digital devices to 43.7 percent among children with access. In Tanzania, the difference is also substantial, with MPL attainment increasing from 44.8 percent among children in households without digital devices to 64.0 percent among those in households with access.

The results show a positive association between digital device ownership and MPL performance. Kenya leads the way, demonstrating that technological integration can be decisive for learning. However, Mozambique and Uganda face the greatest challenges, with low MPL scores even when digital access is available.

Digital access is associated with higher learning outcomes across all four countries — with MPL rising from 11.2% to 43.7% in Mozambique and from 55.0% to 78.3% in Kenya.

Figure 18: MPL by Digital Device Access



5. Key Regional Insights

This section draws together the evidence presented in Sections 2–4 into four regional insights spanning all four ESA region countries — Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Mozambique — examined on an equal footing as the participating members of the 2025 ICAN–ICAR round. The findings point to ESA region’s foundational learning that remains a major challenge across the region. The results, however, demonstrate that stronger learning outcomes are achievable.

Across the ESA countries, mathematics outcomes are generally stronger than reading outcomes. However, proficiency in both cognitive areas remains low, largely because a relatively small proportion of children meet the minimum reading benchmark. This gap is particularly important because reading is a foundational skill on which learners depend to access and progress in other areas of learning. The regional picture, however, is not uniform. Kenya and Tanzania demonstrate that substantially higher levels of foundational learning are possible within the same regional context, with proficiency increasing considerably as learners progress through the grades. Their performance provides an important reference point for what can be achieved when learners acquire foundational competencies earlier and continue to build on them through the school cycle.

At the same time, the results from Uganda and Mozambique underscore the scale of the challenge. Large proportions of learner’s progress through the grades without acquiring the expected foundational skills, and improvements in proficiency occur later and at a slower pace. This suggests that simply remaining in school does not necessarily translate into adequate learning, particularly where foundational gaps are not identified and addressed early.

5.1 Reading lags in either literacy or numeracy

The single clearest pattern across the ESA region is that reading, not numeracy, is the binding constraint on foundational learning. At age 10, 45.3 percent of children across the Hub reached the mathematics MPL, compared with just 23.1 percent in reading, and because combined proficiency requires meeting both benchmarks, only 20.9 percent of children achieved proficiency in both cognitive areas. This pattern holds across all four countries, but its severity differs sharply. In Kenya, the reading–numeracy gap is the narrowest in the region (44.8 percent versus 68.5 percent), and in Tanzania it is comparable (39.8 percent versus 54.9 percent). Uganda shows the widest gap: 34.4 percent of children reach the numeracy benchmark, yet only 4.3 percent reach the reading benchmark, a 30-point gap that leaves combined proficiency at just 4 percent nationally. Mozambique records the lowest absolute achievement in both cognitive areas (19 percent mathematics, 9.5 percent reading), with a narrower gap between the two only because both are critically low. For the ESA region as a whole, this signals that reading, and early-grade reading in particular, is the most urgent and most unevenly addressed foundational skill, with Uganda and Mozambique requiring the most immediate policy attention.

5.2 Learning progression in ESA contexts

Proficiency rises with both age and grade in every ESA region country, confirming that foundational skills are being built over the school cycle. The question is how early, and how consistently? Kenya shows the steadiest progression, rising from roughly 7 percent proficiency at age 6 to 56 percent by age 12, and from 5.2 percent in Grade 1 to 80 percent by Grade 9. Tanzania follows a closely similar trajectory, reaching 49 percent by age 12 and 79 percent by Grade 9, with the two countries converging from Grade 6 onward. Uganda’s trajectory tells a different story: progression is nearly flat through the early grades and ages (close to zero through age 8, and just 1.5 percent by Grade 3), before accelerating in upper primary to reach 69 percent by Grade 9, suggesting that gains, while real, arrive far later in the school cycle. Mozambique shows the slowest progression of the four countries: proficiency remains near zero through age 9, reaching only 15 percent by age 12, and rises from 0.3 percent in Grade 1 to 48 percent by Grade 9. Kenya and Tanzania demonstrate that earlier, steadier acquisition is achievable within the region; Uganda shows that gains can still be realised but are significantly delayed; and Mozambique’s flatter curve points to more fundamental, system-wide constraints on learning acquisition throughout the primary cycle.

5.3 Inequalities across the hub exist

The cross-sectional analysis by age and grade patterns provides a strong proxy for inequalities: gaps that are small among the youngest children widen substantially as children grow older, rather than closing. Across the four countries, the gap between Kenya (the strongest performer) and Uganda or Mozambique (the weakest, on this measure) in combined proficiency is only a few percentage points at age 6 but widens to roughly 40–50 percentage

points by age 12 (56 percent in Kenya versus 8 percent in Uganda and 15 percent in Mozambique). A similar compounding pattern is evident in the urban–rural, language, and household-resource gaps documented in Section 3 and Section 4.1–4.4, which tend to reinforce one another rather than operate independently. The implication for the ESA region is that foundational learning gaps are most cost-effectively addressed early, in the pre-primary and lower primary years, before they widen into the much larger gaps observed by upper primary in every country, but most severely in Uganda and Mozambique. This round should also be treated as a baseline: establishing a regular ICAN–ICAR cycle would allow the Hub, and each of the four countries, to track whether these gaps are in fact narrowing or widening over successive rounds.

5.4 Out-of-school children remain a major gap

ICAN–ICAR is household-based rather than school-based; hence it captures a population that most national assessments miss: children who are out of school entirely. Across the ESA region, out-of-school children aged 10–14 show lower proficiency than their in-school peers in every country. Kenya and Tanzania’s out-of-school children perform somewhat better than their counterparts in Uganda and Mozambique, but in all four countries they remain well behind in-school children. This finding matters directly for the Hub’s SDG 4.1.1(a) commitments: because minimum proficiency is defined for all children of the relevant age, not only those enrolled. Out-of-school children represent a structural blind spot in school-based monitoring systems across Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Mozambique alike. Addressing foundational learning in the ESA region therefore cannot rely on school-based data and interventions alone; it requires deliberate strategies, in each of the four countries, to reach children who have dropped out, never enrolled, or are chronically absent.



6. What it Means for ESA

This section highlights key priorities that policymakers, implementing partners, and citizenled assessment networks across the ESA region should address. The four priorities below apply to all four participating countries: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Mozambique, with country-specific emphasis noted where the evidence points to a particular area of urgency.

6.1 Strengthen early grade reading and numeracy competencies

Given that reading is the most consistent binding constraint on combined proficiency across the region, and acutely so in Uganda, where reading MPL (4.3 percent) trails numeracy MPL (34.4 percent) by 30 points, and in Mozambique, where reading MPL stands at just 9.5 percent, early-grade reading should be treated as the single highest-priority investment area for ESA region governments and partners. Priority actions include:

1. Expanding the use of structured teaching early reading programmes across Grades 1–3 in all four countries, so that learners acquire strong foundational literacy skills early in their schooling;
2. By leveraging ICAN-ICAR, FLANA, Uwezo, and equivalent national assessment data, scaling interventions can be directed toward the lowest-performing counties, districts, and provinces while tailoring actions to local contexts rather than applying uniform national programming;
3. Establishing peer-learning exchanges across the Hub so that instructional approaches contributing to Kenya's and Tanzania's comparatively stronger reading outcomes can be examined for relevance to Uganda's and Mozambique's contexts; and
4. Early and regular, citizen-led measurement of foundational learning, particularly in earlygrade reading should be institutionalised in every country to ensure that investments are closing the reading gap.

6.2 Address language transition challenges

Language of instruction is a measurable driver of proficiency across the ESA region, but the relationship doesn't automatically produce good learning outcomes on its own. In Kenya and Uganda, where assessment is conducted in English, only 23.2 percent and 29 percent of children respectively, speak that language at home, and children who do speak the test language at home substantially outperform those who do not (a 25-point gap in Kenya). In Mozambique, assessed in Portuguese, just over half of children (52.8 percent) speak the test language at home, yet proficiency remains critically low, indicating that language match alone is far from sufficient. Tanzania offers a further caution: despite 85.4 percent of children speaking Kiswahili, the language of assessment, at home, by far the highest match in the Hub, only 38.6 percent achieve combined proficiency. Governments across the Hub should therefore:

Pair language-transition support (structured reading programmes, mother-tongue-based early literacy instruction, and teacher training in transitional pedagogy, particularly in Kenya, Uganda, and Mozambique) with sustained investment in reading quality more broadly, particularly in Tanzania, where the language barrier is smaller but instructional and home-support gaps remain the larger constraint.

6.3 Target rural and disadvantaged learners

Geography and household disadvantage remain the sharpest fault lines in foundational learning outcomes across the ESA region. Urban learners consistently outperform rural learners at comparable grade levels (for example, a 16-percentage-point urban–rural gap in Kenya and a similar pattern in Tanzania, and a gap in Mozambique where only 3.6 percent of rural learners reach MPL compared with 11.9 percent of urban learners), and these gaps compound with the household-level disadvantages documented in Section 4: lower asset ownership, lower parental education, sparser home reading materials, and reduced digital device access. In Kenya, MPL among children with at least one primary-educated parent reaches 61.4 percent, more than double the rate among children of parents with no primary schooling; in Mozambique, the equivalent rise is from 4.9 percent to 18 percent, and similar gaps appear in Tanzania and Uganda. Governments and partners across all four countries should:

Expand access to textbooks and storybooks in low-asset households, and piloting low-cost, teacher-parent partnership models to strengthen home learning support where school-based interventions alone cannot close the gap.

6.4 Use citizen/led data to inform policy

The 2025 ICAN–ICAR round demonstrates the value of citizen-led, household-based assessment as a complement to national Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) and school-based examinations, particularly for reaching out-of-school and rural children who are structurally under-represented in administrative data. Usawa Agenda (Kenya), Uwezo Tanzania, Uwezo Uganda, and Facilidade Moçambique (Mozambique), mobilising 444, 639, 413, and 346 citizen volunteers respectively in 2025, have already shown that this model can generate nationally representative, globally comparable evidence across the ESA region. Governments and development partners in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Mozambique should:

Formally embed Global assessments (ICAN–ICAR), and national assessments (Uwezo and FLANA) and equivalent citizen-led assessment cycles into national learning-monitoring frameworks; use their disaggregated findings to guide resource targeting toward the counties, districts, provinces, and population groups identified in Sections 3–5; and commit to a regular, ideally annual or biennial assessment cycle across all four countries so that progress toward SDG 4.1.1(a), and whether the inequalities identified in this report are narrowing or widening, can be tracked over time.

Make learning visible for every child: embed citizen-led assessments in national systems to track progress and close learning gaps.







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