



ARE OUR CHILDREN LEARNING?

Five Stories on the State of Education
in Uganda in 2015 and Beyond



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Abbreviations

ABE	Adult basic education
ALA	Annual learning assessment
BTVET	Business, technical and vocational education and training
CGDE	Centre for Global Development through Education (Ireland)
ECCE	Early childhood care and education
ECD	Early childhood development
EFA	Education for All
FAL	Functional Adult Literacy (Ugandan programme)
GER	Gross enrolment ratio
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus / Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports (Uganda)
MoESTS	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (Uganda)
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Uganda)
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (Uganda)
NAR	Net attendance ratio
NER	Net enrolment ratio
NFE	Non-formal education
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIR	Net intake rate
NSGE	National Strategy for Girls' Education
PTA	Parent-teacher association
RtL	Reading to Learn (East African project)
SACMEQ	Southern African Consortium for the Measurement of Educational Quality
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDI	Service delivery indicator
SES	Socio-economic status
SNE	Special needs education
UCRNN	Uganda Child Rights NGO Network
UPE	Universal Primary Education (Ugandan programme)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USE	Universal Secondary Education (Ugandan programme)



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Uwezo Network

We are deeply indebted to the 1,738 Uwezo volunteers who visited 17,340 households and assessed 28,147 children. Uwezo's 28 district partner institutions ably led by the executive directors and district coordinators worked tirelessly to recruit volunteers, attend trainings, and coordinate the assessment and communication activities. Thanks to the leadership of the 28 districts and Local Council I leaders of the 870 villages visited for granting us entry into their spaces of operation. A team of 3 East African trainers, 3 national trainers, 6 regional coordinators and 16 research associates coordinated the training of volunteers and supported the secretariat in monitoring the assessment.

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Foreword

CONNECTING PAST ACHIEVEMENTS (EFA GOALS FOR 2015) WITH FUTURE ASPIRATIONS (SDGS FOR 2030)

JOHN MUGO AND AIDAN EYAKUZE

Five and a half decades ago, the wave of African independence from colonial rule ushered in new hope in East Africa. Here at last was the chance for the free movement of people, liberty to choose our own leaders, the opportunity to chart our own direction and a chance to ensure equitable education. The first decades of post-independence social policy focused on expanding access to education at all levels. By the mid-1980s however, the steep enrolment curve had flattened. The long-anticipated fruits of independence seemed to have turned sour. Even the World Education Conference held in Thailand in 1990 did little to rekindle hope for East Africa's educational ambitions.

A second, and even more ambitious wave to provide universal access to primary education (UPE) started in Uganda in 1997, preceding the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000. Universal primary education moved to Tanzania in 2002, followed by Kenya in 2003. Though mainly driven by political directives, this move ushered in a fresh ray of hope, and primary school enrolment received a big boost. Sadly however, studies that followed five years after universal primary Education (UPE) in each country showed worrying trends of stagnating enrolment ratios and declining quality of education.

Aspiration and Achievement

This fifth report of the Uwezo Annual Learning Assessment reviews the historical narrative of the Education for All (EFA) goals set by the Dakar Forum. It raises the key question: after all the noble intention and

the investment in ideas, time and money, did we actually achieve the EFA goals? This broader reflective report is a timely contribution in 2016, soon after the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, which include an even more aspirational Goal 4 - inclusive, equitable, quality lifelong education. Specific targets and indicators will be finalised this year.

This report expands our analysis and engagement in two important ways. The first is a conceptual expansion. Within the context of learning outcomes, the report interrogates the extent to which access to primary school, access to early childhood education, gender equality and adult and lifelong learning were achieved by 2015.

Secondly, the report compares the findings of the Uwezo 2014 survey and learning assessment, with other selected education studies. The aim is to engage with a broader range of analytical audiences, especially the national and district-level decision makers in education, as well as academia and civil society organisations involved in education. It invites us to look beyond the narrative of learning outcomes, to critically examine the baseline from which the SDGs will start, and use this to monitor progress into 2030.

But we remain true to the fundamental question that has motivated us to do this work, one that remains deeply relevant, perhaps more so now than ever before – are our children learning?



Introduction: The Context Of Education In Uganda

In spite of a promising start to independence in the 1960s, Uganda experienced extreme political disorder and civil conflict between 1970 and 1986 resulting in a collapse of public services. The survival of formal education during those years was largely due to non-government institutions. Consequently, Uganda retains a strong tradition of school ownership by religious and community organisations as well as private individuals, alongside government schools.

The period from 1990 to 2007 was one of notable economic recovery and great improvement in service provision, notwithstanding the devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the country. A significant aspect of service improvements was Uganda's drive over the ten-year period from 1997-2007 to achieve universal primary education (UPE) and gender parity in access to primary education in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). By 2006, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) for primary education had settled at 116% with a gender parity index of 1.01 (UNESCO, 2008, p. 307). The removal of tuition fees from government primary schools from 1997 to 2002 was a major contributing factor in achieving these gains in children's access to schooling.

However, the period 1990-2007 was also characterised by economic liberalisation, including the privatisation of many services (Collier & Reinikka, 2001, pp. 31-47). This trend strengthened the role of the market in higher, adult and secondary education, resulting in opportunities that were more diverse but not equitably distributed.

Since about 2008, educational development in Uganda has faced new constraints. In part due to the global financial crisis and slower economic growth, development partners have been less willing to support the education sector financially. Concerns about bureaucratic accountability have further contributed to this situation (USAID, 2013, pp. 163-168). Additionally, the civil conflicts in Somalia and South Sudan have threatened regional stability and prompted higher defence spending in Uganda. As a result of these and other factors, public funding for education has recently been declining both in real terms and as a proportion of the national budget (Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MoESTS), 2015, p. 175). As a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP), funding for education in Uganda ranks amongst the lowest in the region. According to data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), the education budget for 2013 amounted to just 2.2% of GDP (UIS, 2016).

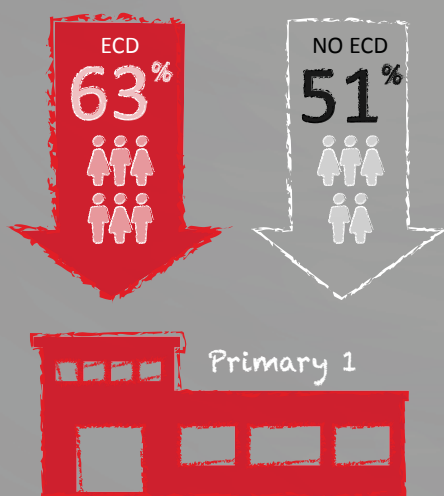
The series of four Uwezo assessment reports for Uganda published since 2010 have indicated that, despite the significant gains in children's access to primary education, few children are learning as intended. This fifth Uwezo report has a wider scope. As in previous years, the report provides an overview of the status of schooling and learning in Uganda based upon data from the Uwezo annual learning assessment (ALA) conducted in October 2014. However, this year's report includes evidence and analysis on educational indicators from other key sources. The findings are presented as five stories that closely relate to the six goals of

Education for All (EFA). The EFA goals were adopted internationally in 2000 alongside the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for achievement by 2015. The report not only examines the extent to which the EFA goals have been met but also establishes the baseline for assessing progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030.

Stories 1 and 2 focus on early childhood development and access to primary education, which correspond to EFA Goals 1 and 2. Story 3 on adult literacy and more broadly on adult education relates to EFA Goals 3 and 4. Story 4 examines inequalities in education not just those related to gender (EFA Goal 5) but the persistent inequalities of many kinds that cut across all levels of education. These first four stories prepare the ground for Story 5 on educational quality (EFA Goal 6), the evidence for which is largely drawn from the results of the latest Uwezo assessment of children's literacy and numeracy. The concluding section of the report discusses priorities for the achievement of SDG 4 in Uganda.

Key Findings From The Five Stories About Education In Uganda

KEY FINDING 1



Children who had attended ECD were more likely to enter primary education at the correct age of six years than those who had not attended ECD. Among pupils aged 6 who attended ECD, 63% of them were in Primary 1. Whereas among pupils aged 6 who did not attend ECD, only 51% of them were in Primary 1.

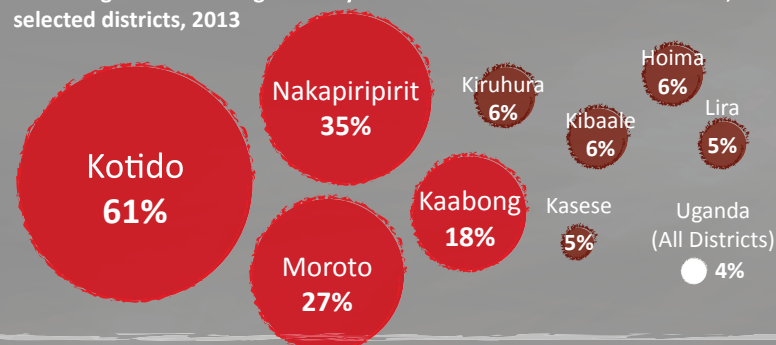


Primary 3 pupils who had attended ECD were almost three times (25%) more likely to read a Primary 2 level story than those who did not (8%).

KEY FINDING 2

Although Uganda has almost attained universal primary education for all (94% net enrollment according to MoES, 2014 and 96% enrollment according to Uwezo, 2014), stark regional disparities in access to primary education persist. For example, universal primary education is far from being achieved in the Karamoja region. There are large proportions of children aged 9-16 years in Kotido, Nakapiripirit, Moroto and Kaabong districts who have never been to school.

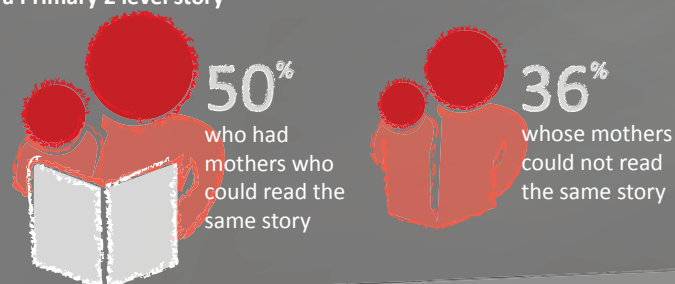
Percentage of children aged 9-16 years who have never attended school, selected districts, 2013



KEY FINDING 3

There is a major gender gap in adult literacy rates i.e. 79% literacy rate for men compared to 66% literacy rate for women in 2012. And Uwezo data appears to show links between mothers' and their children's literacy. The 2013 Uwezo Assessment showed that 50% of children in Primary 3 to 7 with mothers who were able to read a Primary 2 level story were also able to read the same story, compared with 36% of children with mothers who were unable to read the story.

Children (Primary 3-Primary 7) who are able to read a Primary 2 level story

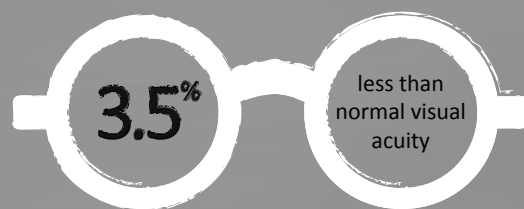




KEY FINDING 4

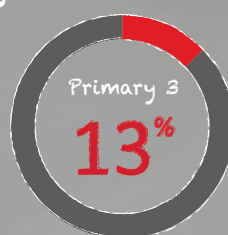
Supporting pupils with disabilities remains a challenging task for Uganda's education system. Uwezo's most recent learning assessment found that 3.5% of all children aged 6-16 years who were assessed had less than normal visual acuity in both eyes (2.5%) or one eye (1.0%). While many of these cases may have been ones of common myopia, such children are placed at a disadvantage if they do not receive, or cannot afford, sight tests and appropriate vision aids.

About 182,000 primary and secondary school pupils in Uganda had been formally recorded as having disabilities and related special educational needs (SEN) in 2013, but less than 3% of these pupils (or 1 in every 36 pupils) received a subvention grant from the government.

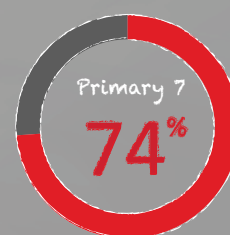


KEY FINDING 5

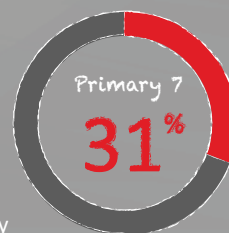
Learning outcomes in Uganda remain very low.



able to read a Primary 2 level English story and correctly solve Primary 2 level division



able to read a Primary 2 level story in their local language



Tim Lewis
Lynch, David

Report Lines

Supplies

11/11/11

110

5. 7. 1881



Assessment Methodology

The third and fourth rounds of Uwezo's annual learning assessment, undertaken in 2012 and 2013, respectively, surveyed children in all 80 districts of Uganda (as of 2008). The fifth annual learning assessment conducted in October 2014 was undertaken in 28 districts. This scaling down of the assessment was an organisational decision to create space for reflection and learning in preparation for Uwezo's new strategic period from 2015 to 2018.

The sample frame used for the fifth round was adopted from the 2002 Uganda Population and Housing Census (UPHC) frame which had been updated in preparation for the 2014 national census.

To select the 28 districts for the assessment, the 112 districts as of 2014 were divided into 10 regional sampling strata based upon similarities in cultural and geographical characteristics, which may affect basic learning. Characteristics included weather, economic activity, beliefs, languages and culture. Each region comprised between 8 and 21 contiguous districts except Kampala, which comprised a separate region because of its unique character as an entirely urban district and capital city of Uganda with diverse cultures. Prior to the final sample selection, districts in their respective regions were sorted with respect to the major language spoken and by district code.

This was to ensure that major tribes in the regions as well as newly created districts were represented in the sample. Given these considerations, the 28 selected districts were deemed nationally representative.

As had been done with prior Uwezo assessments, 30 enumeration areas (EAs)/villages were randomly selected in each district using probability proportional to size sampling procedure, with the exception of Kampala city where 60 enumeration areas were selected. This meant that EAs with higher numbers of households had more chances of being selected. The second stage involved randomly selecting 20 households from each EA.

One government school in which the majority of the children residing in the selected EA were enrolled, regardless of whether it was within or outside the EA where the children lived, was selected. The selection of the school was done with the help of chairpersons / members of the local council.

Data were collected at EA, school and household levels using a structured survey tool (see www.uwezo.net for the research tools). All children aged 6-16 years in each sampled household were assessed on basic literacy and numeracy. Sample tests are attached in Appendix 2.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Pre-school is important for



Learning



Reducing drop outs



Reducing repetition of classes



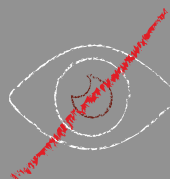
Reducing late entry to primary school

63%
VS
51%

Children who are age 6 (correct age for P1) and attended ECD, in P1.

Children who are age 6 (correct age for P1) and did not attend ECD, in P1.

Source: (Uwezo, 2014)



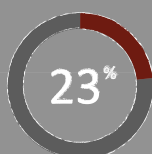
Right now early childhood education is provided by faith agencies and private schools. Limited government involvement or scrutiny.

Nursery schools up 10x
But access and quality are unequal



Source: (Ejuu, 2012)

Growing demand
Participation figures vary



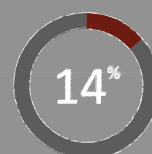
Attendance of children 3-5

2011
(Uganda Bureau of Statistics)



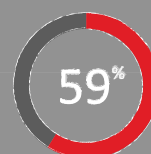
Enrollment of children 3-5

2013/4
(Ministry of Education, Sports and Technology)



Enrollment of children 3-5

2015
(UNESCO)



Children in P3 who have attended two or more years 2014
(Uwezo)

Pre-primary net attendance ratios, by location of household, 2011

Net attendance ratio (%)



Urban

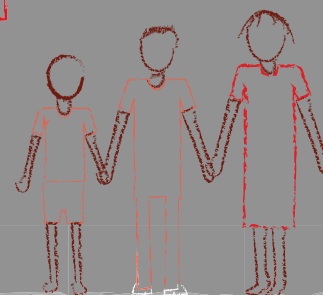
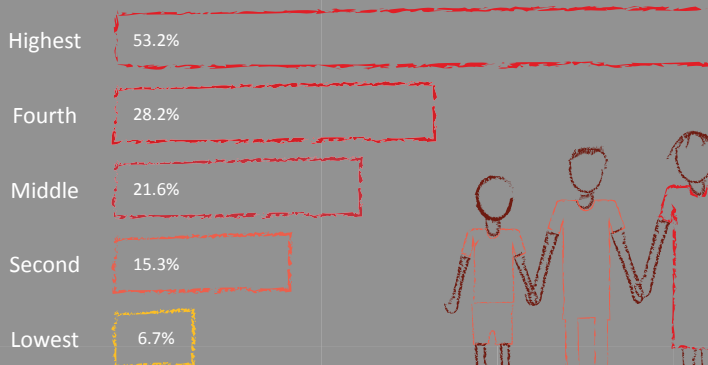
Rural

All

Source: (UBOS, 2012)

Pre-primary net attendance ratios, by household wealth quintile, 2011

Net attendance ratio (%)



Current Policy

Comprehensive policy for early childhood development

Comprehensive training framework

2007

2008

2011

2015

Education act – pre-school is first level of education
Government role (in policy): advocacy, regulation, monitoring and evaluation

UNESCO Education For All Report: government will provide a subsidy to pre-schools

What can be done

Given financial constraints and international examples, two choices



Partner with existing ECD providers and seek, through subsidy and regulation, to raise standards and to minimise fees for poorer households.



Attach a reception class (for children aged five years) to existing primary schools as a general provision.

Story 1: Early Childhood Development – Preparing Children to Enter School at the Correct Age

BACKGROUND

The benefits of pre-primary education for children's development and subsequent education have been clearly demonstrated. A study in East Africa by the Aga Khan Foundation is particularly relevant, showing the cognitive gains attributable to pre-primary attendance in typical low-cost community settings. These findings are convincing because of the robust design of the study (Mwaura et al., 2008). Previous research done in middle-income and some low-income countries further shows the potential benefits of ECD in promoting enrolment and achievement in reducing grade repetition and dropout at the primary level (Myers, 1992, 2004).

In Uganda, the demand for early childhood development (ECD) has been growing rapidly. One factor in this increasing demand is the high level of participation of women in the labour force, reported as 77% in 2012 (UNESCO, 2015). However, as in many other low-income countries, provision for children below the age of six depends on a patchwork of community, private and faith-based agencies, with very limited support from government. Uganda's policy document for ECD explicitly describes such provision as 'the mantle of the private sector' (MoES, 2007, p. 8). Within this existing patchwork of ECD, it can be difficult to distinguish between developmental activity and mere childcare. Furthermore, much of the activity seems to escape official attention altogether.

Available sources on pre-primary education indicate not only extreme inequality in access to this level of schooling but also extremely variable quality in ECD provision. There is a stark contrast between urban nursery schools, which are affordable only to wealthier families, and the more rudimentary ECD centres, many of which are neither officially recognised nor registered. In the prevailing environment of market-based provision, MoESTS faces a huge task of promoting and monitoring the training of teachers and caregivers, ensuring the use of age-appropriate methods and enforcing acceptable standards of management, health care and sanitation in ECD centres (see Ejuu, 2012c).

EVIDENCE

A. ECD participation

To date, different government agencies have provided inconsistent measures of participation in ECD. The most plausible estimate is the net attendance ratio (NAR) of 23.4% among children aged three to five years in 2011 from the most recent Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS) (UBOS, 2012, p. 26). No earlier data are available to assess the trend in participation, as the previous survey in 2006 did not collect information on pre-primary education. However, a 'sign of the times' is that the number of pre-primary (nursery) schools recorded by MoES increased from 703 schools in 2007 to 7,368 schools in 2012 (Ejuu, 2012c, p. 17).

The UDHS data further show that the provision of ECD is extremely inequitable with Uganda being comparable to Nigeria in this regard (UNESCO, 2015, p. 59). Figures 1 and 2 illustrate marked variations in the NAR between households located in urban and rural areas, and between different household wealth quintiles. These inequalities will be discussed in greater detail in Story 4.

Figure 1: Pre-primary net attendance ratios, by location of household, 2011

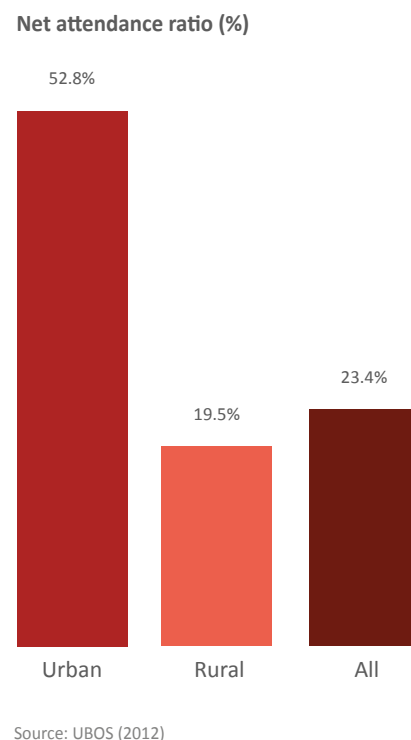
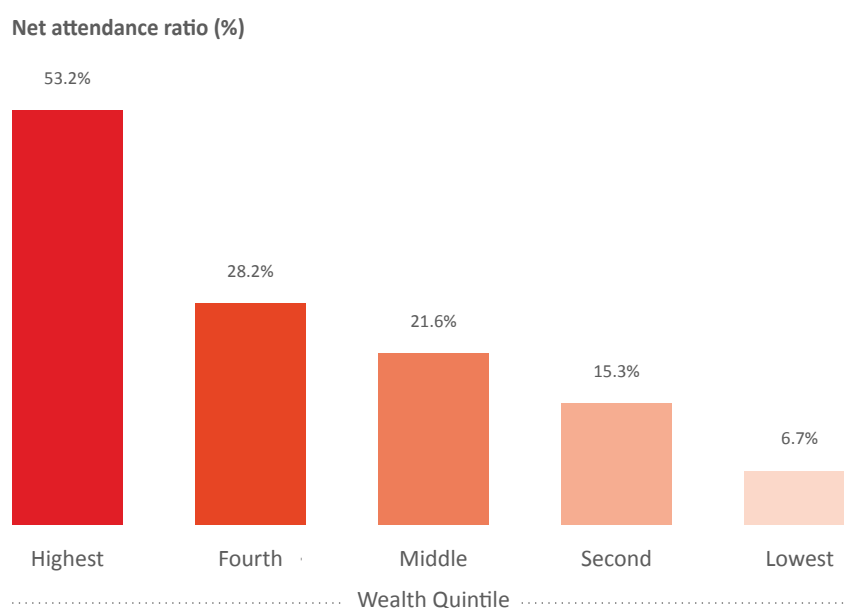


Figure 2: Pre-primary net attendance ratios, by household wealth quintile, 2011





Other measures for ECD include the net enrolment ratio (NER) of 9.49% for 2013/14 reported by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES, 2014, p. 233) and the NER of 14% for 2010 reported by UNESCO (2015), both with reference to the same age group. One likely explanation for the considerable variation in estimates is that the MoES Annual School Census is not including a considerable part of ECD provision, an inference which is supported by the ECD policy review of 2012 (Ejuu, 2012c, p. 22). In turn, the school census may lack sufficient resources to more comprehensively assess participation. However, for the future planning of ECD in Uganda, it will be essential that authorities collaborate to achieve a more reliable record of participation.

Data from the fifth Uwezo assessment conducted in October 2014 throw additional light on the situation. Table 1 shows the years of ECD attendance reported among the Primary 3 pupils assessed. The cumulative percentages show that 59% had attended for at least two years and 74% for at least one year. The pattern for the Uwezo 2013 sample was similar. Although these proportions are not adjusted for the sample design as precise national estimates, they indicate the situation and give some support, retrospectively, for the UBOS NAR finding. The main explanation for the disparity between Uwezo and national estimates is due to the large scale of Uwezo's assessments and the fact that data are collected at household level. This enables Uwezo to more comprehensively capture ECD participation than small-scale studies and surveys undertaken at school level.

B. ECD participation and age of entry to primary school

One of the potential benefits of attendance at ECD institutions is to encourage entry to primary school at the correct age. Late school entry is a major problem in Uganda that will be discussed further in Story

Table 1: Number of years of ECD attendance among Primary 3 pupils, 2014

YEARS OF ECD	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE
4	32	1	1
3	1,050	35	36
2	670	23	59
1	458	15	74
0	768	26	100
TOTAL	2,978	100%	

Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

Table 2: Percentages of individual age cohorts in Primary 1, by ECD attendance and non-attendance

	PERCENT IN PRIMARY 1	TOTAL PERCENT OF AGE GROUP IN PRIMARY 1
AGE 6, ATTENDED ECD	63	58
AGE 6, NO ECD	51	
AGE 7, ATTENDED ECD	52	53
AGE 7, NO ECD	57	
AGE 8, ATTENDED ECD	28	31
AGE 8, NO ECD	36	

Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

2. Uwezo findings on ECD participation (attendance for one year or more) and the age of children in Primary 1 are shown in Table 2. The data show that children who had attended ECD were more likely to enter primary education at the correct age of six years than those who had not attended ECD. Sixty-three per cent of those aged six who had attended ECD were in Primary 1, but the percentage was 12 points lower for those who had not attended ECD. The following rows show that late starters were more likely not to have attended ECD. Although both ECD attendance and timely entry to primary school tend to be closely associated with household wealth and parents' levels of education, ECD centres can help to raise parents' awareness of primary schooling

requirements, especially among the less educated, and encourage an educational culture in the home.

POLICY CHOICES

Public funding of pre-primary education is justifiable because it is, no less than primary education, a universally relevant public good, laying the foundation for literacy, numeracy and informed citizenship. The equity argument for public funding is also strong. At this level of education, a market approach to provision does not produce efficient results, since the households whose children have the most to gain from the service are the ones least able to afford it. This is not to deny the value of community involvement. Local communities may be able



to provide some facilities but it is relatively difficult for them to train or pay teachers without public support.

Despite its recent growth, ECD in Uganda continues to be marginalised given the strong ongoing emphasis on Universal Primary Education (UPE). For example, the MoES Annual Performance Review continues to have a section entitled “pre-primary and primary education” in which only primary education is discussed. Nevertheless, there are signs of impending change and policy development.

Following an independent report which criticised the government’s neglect of ECD (Uganda Child Rights NGO Network, 2006), a comprehensive policy for ECD was published in 2007 (MoES, 2007). This policy resulted in pre-primary education being recognised officially in the 2008 Education Act as the first level of education. For the pre-primary age group, the policy defined the role of the government as one of advocacy, regulation, monitoring and evaluation. It called for adherence to the official curriculum guidelines and for a more coordinated system of training for teachers and caregivers. A holistic approach to ECD was advocated and public-private partnerships were mentioned. However, the policy carefully avoided any suggestion that the central government would contribute to the pay of qualified pre-primary teachers or provide any subsidy to ECD institutions.

A review of ECD policy implementation after five years (Ejuu, 2012c) considered that the policy had raised awareness and encouraged the involvement of more service providers, increasingly supported by national and international NGOs. But the review identified a lack of suitable structures of support and expertise at the level of the district authorities. The review also noted the near absence of financial planning for this sub-sector and the lack of mechanisms to enforce the guidelines provided by MoES (Ejuu, 2012c, pp. 19-24).

The patchwork of ECD providers is served by an equally complex patchwork of training providers, mostly private and unregistered. From 2009, MoES, with the help of Kyambogo University, took the important step of setting out a training framework for ECD (MoES, 2011). This framework outlines various programmes at different levels for the training of ECD teachers and other caregivers, with guidelines for curriculum, management and staffing. However, many of the training colleges are family businesses, not professionally managed and far from being able to meet the desired standards (Ejuu, 2012b). Therefore, this aspect of ECD also requires more public intervention. Provision for the in-service upgrading of existing caregivers on affordable terms is a vital part of such intervention. More research on the quality issues at this level is needed. However, an evaluation of an improved pre-school programme in Bangladesh, in a comparable low-income setting, suggests that more interactive learning methods could be implemented at very low cost and have a positive effect on children’s cognitive development (Moore et al., 2008).

Policy change now seems possible. The latest EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2015) mentions that the government of Uganda “plans to introduce a small monthly per-child subsidy to ECCE centres, conditional on meeting minimum standards and complying with the curriculum” (p. 66). It is hoped that the government acts on this promise soon.

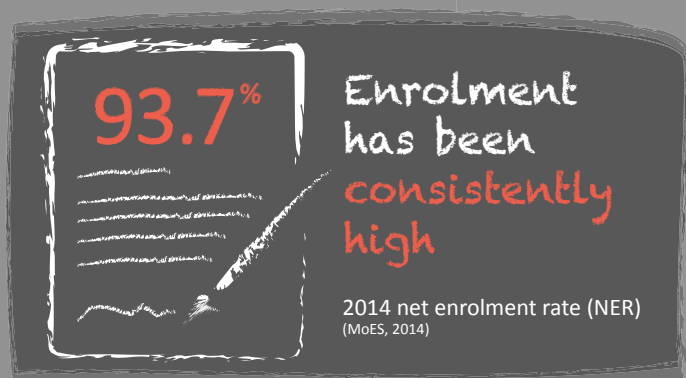
Recent information further suggests that the government intends that the education sector’s policy for ECD should form part of a more comprehensive, “integrated” ECD policy, which is in the process of development. This policy development is in principle led by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and involves five other government ministries (World Bank, 2012, p. 7). In this regard, three observations are offered for consideration. First, in a country

context in which approximately one-third of children aged 0-5 years suffer from severe to moderate stunting, ECD centres in Uganda are potentially important sites for nutrition interventions (UNESCO, 2015, p. 334). Second, ECD centres are equally important sites for the early observation of disabilities, which can improve the prospects for appropriate support in education and health care. Third, adequate tuition in health will necessarily be an important component in the training of all ECD caregivers. All of these areas highlight the need for close cooperation between government entities, in particular, the education and health ministries.

Considering the financial constraints affecting Uganda and examples of initiatives taken in other countries, the government could choose one of two strategies. The first strategy would be to partner with existing ECD providers and seek, through subsidy and regulation, to raise standards and to minimise fees for poorer households. The plan mentioned earlier to introduce a per-child subsidy to ECCE centres seems consistent with this approach. The second strategy would be to attach a reception class (for children aged five years) to existing primary schools as a general provision. South Africa provides an example of this option (see UNESCO, 2015, p. 59).

There are pros and cons in embracing either strategy. Implementing the first strategy would strengthen the whole pre-primary sub-sector, rather than providing for just one year. On the other hand, reception classes under the second strategy may be formed in relatively few primary schools and absorb most of the qualified teachers, as has been the case in Lesotho (see Urwick & Griffin, 2012, pp. 75-77), thus adding to the inequality of provision. As part of the first strategy, however, the government would need to establish its own ECD centres in certain remote and poor areas where cost-sharing would be difficult.

THE JOURNEY THROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL



But the issues are:



58.5%
Children entering grade 1 at the correct age



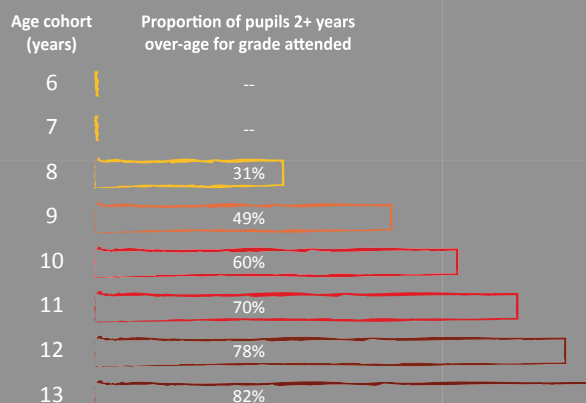
32.1%
Stay in school until Primary 7



9-12%
Repetition for all grades except **Primary 7 (6%)**

Source: (MoES, 2013, 2014)

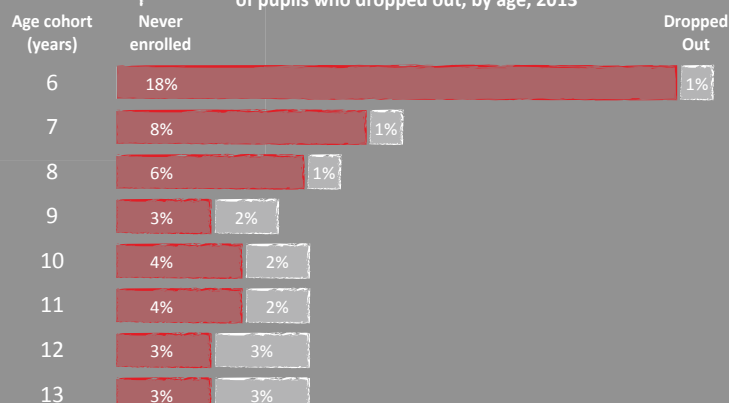
Age differences in class



Source: (Uwezo, 2014)

Dropouts

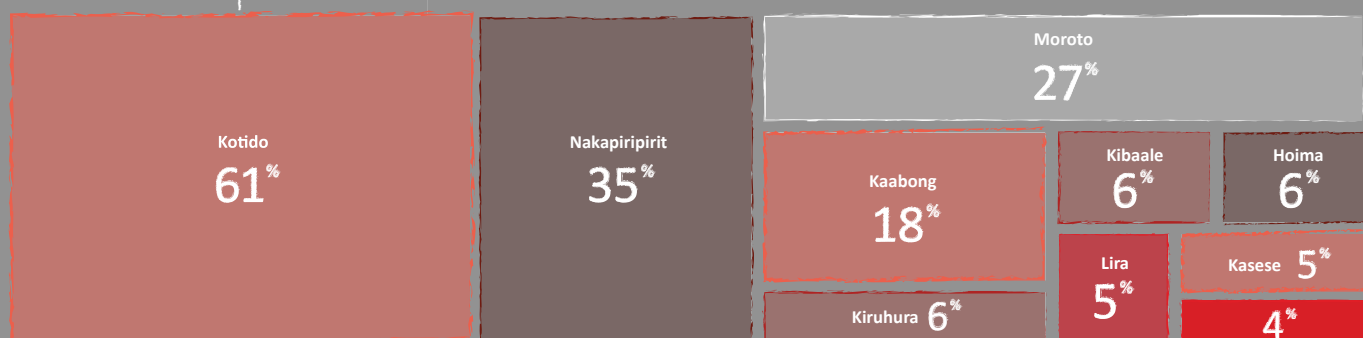
Percentage of children never enrolled and percentage of pupils who dropped out, by age, 2013



Source: (Uwezo, 2014)

Unequal access

Percentage of children aged 9-16 years who have never attended school, selected districts, 2013 - Uwezo

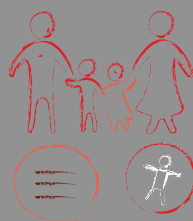


Source: (Uwezo, 2014)

Factors affecting late entry and drop outs



Household factors found to have positive effects in both areas included the educational level of the household head, whether the household head was female, whether he or she was the child's parent, and the wealth of the household.



Other factors: parents' perceptions about children's readiness, insecurity (Northern region), maternal orphans, children with disabilities. More than half of children with self-care or communication difficulties dropped out in 2013.



No legal mechanisms to enforce entry at the correct age.

What can be done



Greater ECDE attendance can decrease late entry



Outreach efforts to parents on importance of enrolling at the correct age



Decrease direct and indirect costs, especially by ensuring schools receive the funds they are supposed to



Disincentivise repetition – right now it can mean schools get more funds and schools use it to make sure more children pass exams



Reconsider whether seven years is really the right length of time for primary school

Story 2: Starting Late and Failing to Finish – Why Are Many Ugandan Children Not Completing Primary School?

BACKGROUND

Uganda's effort in achieving and maintaining a high level of enrolment in primary education since launching the Universal Primary Education policy in 1997 has attracted much favourable comment. For the primary education sub-sector the gross enrolment rate (GER) was officially estimated as 110.0% in 2014 and the net enrolment rate (NER) as 93.7%, the latter having remained fairly steady for the past decade (MoES, 2014, p. 234).

The official statistics, however, conceal two very persistent limitations to access: first, late entry to primary school and, second, dropout and consequent non-completion of the primary cycle. This story will focus on the extent of these problems, the factors involved and possible responses in line with the EFA goals. Evidence from the fifth Uwezo Assessment will be presented together with findings from other sources.

Warning signs are the official statistics of a net intake ratio (NIR) of 58.5% and a rate of survival to Primary 7 of only 32.1% (MoES, 2014, p. 235). Relevant research includes the work of Lewin and Sabates (2011) on access to primary education in 13 African countries, including Uganda, in the period 2000-2009. For Uganda, Malawi and Madagascar, the

study shows a steep decline in participation through the primary grades, which changed little over the period (Lewin et al., 2011, pp. 7-8). It also draws attention to the wide range of ages per grade level in most of these countries, which reflects late entry and presents great problems for the delivery of primary education.

EVIDENCE

A. Enrolments in primary school

Results from the fourth Uwezo assessment confirm the official enrolment figures, indicating that only 4% of children aged 9 to 16 years have never been enrolled in school (Uwezo, 2014, pp. 31-32). However, stark regional disparities in access to primary education persist. For example, universal primary education is far from being achieved in the Karamoja region. Figure 3 shows the large proportions of children aged 9-16 years in Kotido, Nakapiripirit, Moroto and Kaabong districts who have never been to school.

B. Extent and causes of late entry and non-completion

The distribution of children by age and by grade in school in the fourth Uwezo assessment shows a persistent pattern of

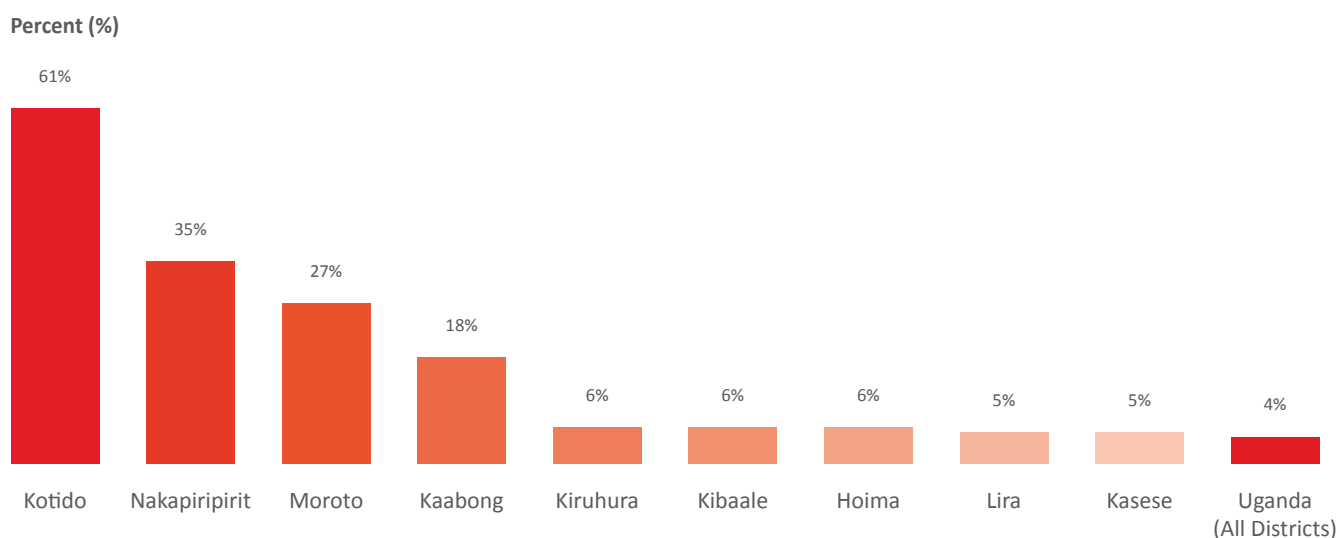
late entry and over-age attendance. As the data in Table 3 show, over-age attendance in primary school has become a common trend. The last column shows the proportions of children who are two or more years over-age for their grade: a procedure which allows for changes of age during the school year.

In addition, the same assessment revealed a significant minority of children aged 6-13 years who had never attended school or had dropped out (Table 4).

The problem of late entry pre-dates UPE in Uganda (see Nishimura et al., 2008) and remains a major challenge. Consistent with the Uwezo assessment, Uganda's statistical abstract for education indicates high levels of over-age enrolment throughout the primary cycle (MoES, 2013, p. 24). However, the report tends to gloss over the problem as it does not report over-age proportions by grade level. It also aggregates data for children aged over 12 years. Data extracted from the report and summarized in Table 5 show the high proportions of pupils, by grade, who are two years or more above the correct age for their grade (e.g. aged eight years or above in Primary 1).

The implication of the data in Tables 3 and 5 is that a considerable proportion of adolescents are attending primary schools,

Figure 3: Percentage of children aged 9-16 years who have never attended school, districts with the highest rates, 2013



Source: Uwezo (2014)



with a curriculum not designed for their age group and teachers not trained to teach the curriculum to children of a wide range of ages in a single class. The wide age range adds to the other difficulties that teachers face, including overcrowding in classes and sparse learning materials. Lewin and Sabates (2011) rightly suggest that a “monograde pedagogy” may not be suited to this situation (p. 37). Researchers such as Pritchett and Beatty (2012) have argued for pegging teaching and learning to actual learner’s ability as much as possible as opposed to grade-level teaching. The situation links directly to the poor learning outcomes that the Uwezo assessments have recorded for several years and to non-completion of the primary cycle.

The rate of survival to Primary 7—the most recent estimate being 32% in 2012/13—had improved only slightly over the previous five years (MoES, 2014a, p. 235). And despite a policy of automatic promotion, the repetition rate ranges between 9% and 12% of pupils for all grades except Primary 7 for which it is about 6% (MoES, 2013, p. 29). In comparison to these challenges, under-age enrolment—about 4% of Primary 1—is a relatively minor problem and likely to diminish as early childhood provision expands.

Research in Madagascar by Wils (2004) found that late entrants to primary education were less likely to complete the cycle. In Uganda, studies by Moyi (2011, 2013) measured and discussed influences on late entry to primary school and on dropout and complete non-attendance by children aged 13-16 years using data from the Uganda National Household Survey of 2005/6. Household factors found to have positive effects in both areas included the educational level of the household head, whether the household head was female, whether he or she was the child’s parent, and the wealth of the household. These household effects were supported by the findings of a study on the equity effects of UPE (Duclos et al., 2013, p. 15). In research on late entry in rural Uganda, Nishimura and others (2008) show that parental perceptions that children were ‘not ready for school’ played a major part (p. 167). Moyi (2013) also found that

Table 3: Age cohorts by grade, 2013

AGE COHORT (YEARS)	MEDIAN SCHOOL GRADE ATTENDED	CORRECT GRADE FOR AGE	PROPORTION OF PUPILS 2+ YEARS OVER-AGE FOR GRADE ATTENDED (%)
6	P1	P1	--
7	P1	P2	--
8	P2	P3	31
9	P2-3	P4	49
10	P3	P5	60
11	P4	P6	70
12	P4	P7	78
13	P5	S1	82

Notes: P = Primary; S = Secondary Source: Uwezo (2014)

Table 4: Percentage of children never enrolled and percentage of pupils who dropped out, by age, 2013

AGE COHORT	NEVER ENROLLED (%)	DROPPED OUT (%)
6	18	1
7	8	1
8	6	1
9	3	2
10	4	2
11	4	2
12	3	3
13	3	3

Source: Uwezo (2014)

Table 5: Over-age pupils by grade in primary education, 2012/13

GRADE	ENROLMENT	NUMBER OF PUPILS 2+ YEARS OVER AGE	PERCENTAGE
P1	1,883,803	413,010	22
P2	1,307,745	386,720	30
P3	1,312,592	503,477	38
P4	1,317,315	548,324	42
P5	1,138,789	495,962	44
P6	920,145	366,691	40
P7	579,431	--*	--

Source: MoES (2014)

*Not available: but it may be noted that 71% of children enrolled in Primary 7 were at least one year above the correct age, i.e., aged 13 years or more.



the Northern region had a relatively high rate of complete non-attendance at school (over 10%), reflecting its state of insecurity in 2005/6. In terms of other children at risk, late entry and dropout were more likely for maternal orphans and for children with recorded disabilities. Among the latter, more than half of those with difficulties in self-care or communication had dropped out of school or never attended.

School-related factors also interact with household factors but the evidence is more limited. As mentioned in Story 1, it is a reasonable hypothesis that ECD attendance increases the likelihood of entry to primary school at the correct age, but this factor was not measured in any of the studies cited above. The direct and indirect costs of school attendance are very variable even in the UPE context and play a part in late entry and dropout (see Nishimura et al., 2008, 167; Deininger, 2003). 'Schooling effects', for example, quality of school inputs such as teachers, textbooks and physical facilities, which are better known from the literature on academic achievement in developing countries (with varied effects) may also be relevant.

A further complicating factor is that the Education Act of 2008, Section (3) (a), states that "primary education shall be universal and compulsory for pupils aged 6 (six) years and above", but no legal mechanisms exist to enforce this. Parents send children to school at their own will so it is difficult to enforce the right age of entry.

POLICY CHOICES

One important policy response to the problems of non-enrolment, over-age entry and non-completion of primary school, which was introduced in Story 1, is to make early childhood care and education more widely accessible through public intervention. This would make parents, especially parents in rural areas, more aware of young children's capacity for learning and of their own responsibilities in relation to their children's schooling. In addition, more intensive efforts could be made by local authorities and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), through local community leaders, to raise parents' awareness of the long-term importance of entry to primary school at the correct age. Much has already been done to reduce the distances between homes and schools which, in the past, contributed to late entry.

The private costs, both direct and indirect, of primary school attendance also need to be addressed. These costs are affected by the efficiency with which public funding is made available to schools. This has been an area of difficulty at the district level. Under Uganda's decentralisation policy, the districts are responsible for administering primary and pre-primary education, but there has been considerable evidence of maldistribution of the capitation grant for primary schools (Reinikka & Svensson, 2011). This is a persistent problem, which was much worse in the 1990s (Hallak & Poisson, 2007, p. 109). MoESTS has now adopted a 'straight through

process' for payments whereby funds are sent directly to schools as opposed to being channelled through local government authorities (MoES, 2014, p. 111) so as to ensure equitable distribution of the grant.

The high level of repetition is another long-term problem requiring a policy response. Issues have been raised about possible perverse incentives for primary school staff to use repetition. Unless conditions are attached, the capitation grant could have this effect (Nishimura et al., 2008). Schools have also been thought to use repetition in Primary 6 in the hope of achieving a higher pass rate in the Primary Leaving Examination. Monitoring at the district and community level is needed in order to prevent such practices.

Lastly, the seven-year span of the primary cycle needs to be reconsidered as other education sub-sectors grow in importance. The length of the primary cycle combines with late entry and poverty-related factors to make it difficult for some children to complete the cycle. Many educational systems have a six-year primary cycle and Uganda's educators will need to consider whether, with improved provision of teachers and learning materials and improved methods, they could not achieve equivalent results in a shorter time.

ADULT EDUCATION



Cost of minimum adult literacy is cheaper than educating a child up to Primary 4

Source: (Lauglo, 2012)



Adult literacy is not the responsibility of the ministry of education but instead the ministry of gender



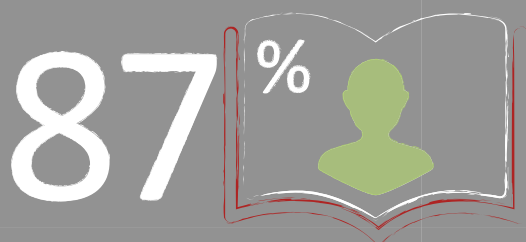
Overall adult literacy 2005 – 2012

Source: (UNESCO, 2015)



Literacy rates in 2012

Young people (15-24) literacy rate



64* mothers have primary education only

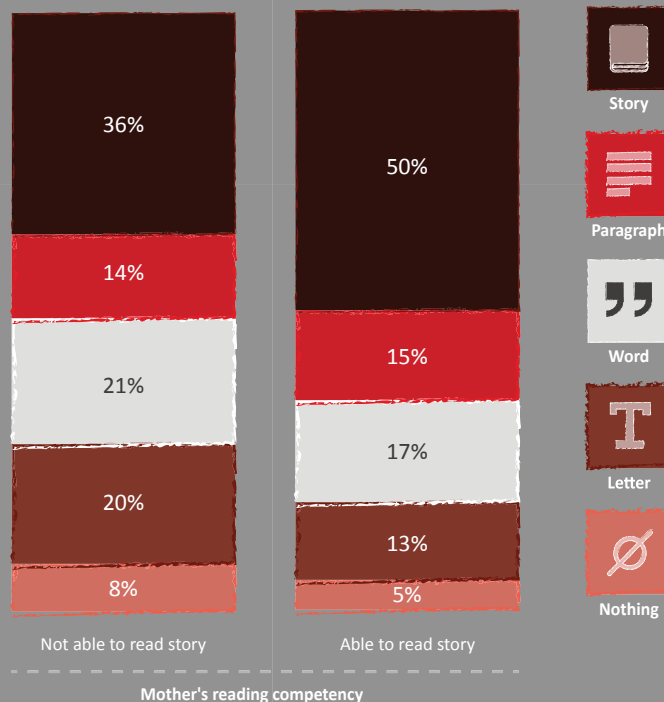


24* mothers have no formal education

Uwezo data appear to show a link between mothers' and their children's literacy.

Percentage distribution of Primary 3-7 children's competences in English literacy, in relation to mother's ability to read a Primary 2 level story, 2013

Source: Uwezo (2014, p. 29)



Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development provides literacy programs for adults in 26 districts with materials in 8 local languages



On average 120,000 adults per year complete adult literacy programs, 80% are women

Source: (MoESTS, 2015)



Market-driven approaches means adult education is less accessible to the poor and un- or under-employed.



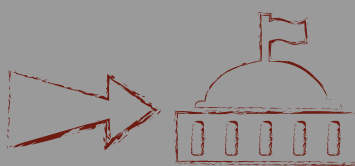
In 2014, 40,000 students enrolled in Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Source: (MoESTS, 2015)



Compared with 1.375 million secondary students, while 72% of secondary age students are not in school.

What can be done



Transfer responsibility for adult education to ministry of education for better coordination and monitoring



Increase funding by specialized tax for vocational training and tax incentives for training opportunities from corporations

Story 3: Where to from Primary School? The Continuing Struggle for Adult Literacy

BACKGROUND

In a working paper prepared for the World Bank soon after the Dakar Forum, Lauglo (2001) made the case for a substantial investment in adult basic education (ABE) as part of the international effort to achieve the EFA goals in Sub-Saharan Africa. He argued that Universal Primary Education policies alone could not overcome the problem of illiteracy and that it was essential to complement UPE with support for ABE. Many reasons were advanced for strengthening provision of ABE, including evidence from Uganda and elsewhere indicating that the public cost of achieving minimum literacy through ABE compared favourably with the cost of providing primary education up to Primary 4 (Lauglo, 2001, p. 35).

This advice, however, has seldom been heeded in the post-Dakar period, either by African governments or by their major development partners. Adult education in general, like ECD, emerges as a 'poor relation' of primary education. Within Uganda's strategy for poverty reduction—a World Bank requirement for lending in the region—primary education has been presented as the priority policy (MoFPD, 2004). That MoES annual performance reports and statistical abstracts say very little about ABE, which is assigned to other government bodies, shows its continued marginal status in the education sector.

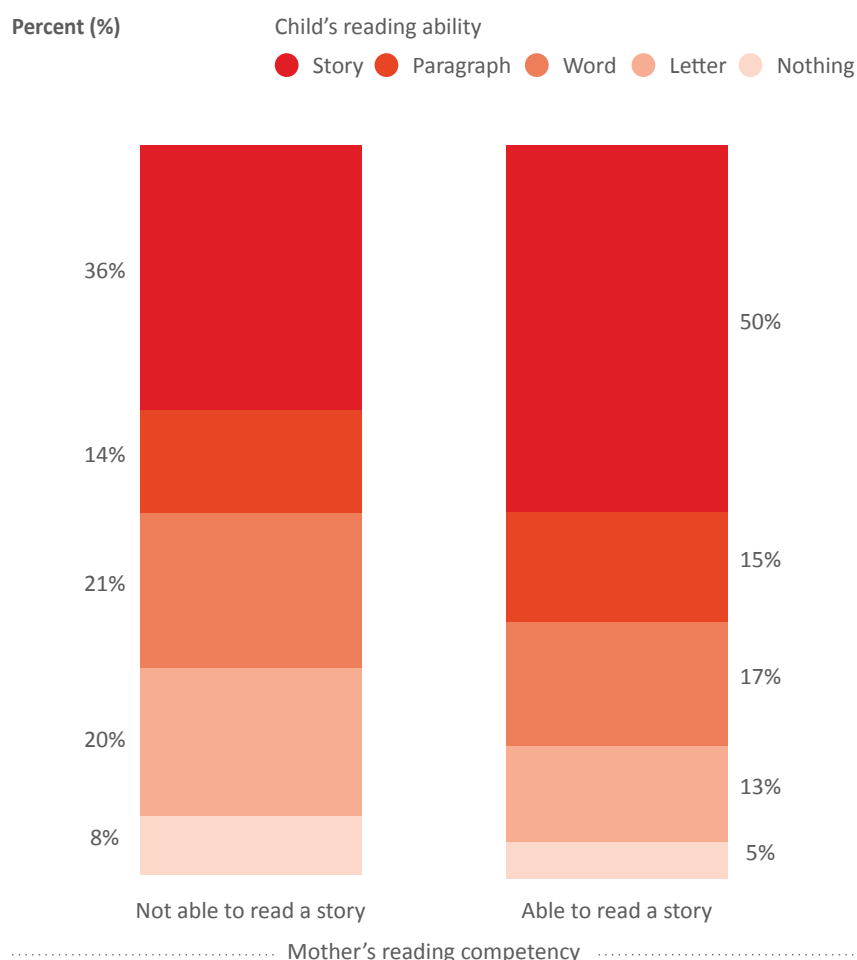
EVIDENCE

A. Adult literacy rates

The overall adult literacy rate in Uganda was estimated at 73% for the period 2005 to 2012 (UNESCO, 2015) with no sign of the rapid improvement sought by EFA Goal 4. MoESTS reports an increase of 1% in overall adult literacy between 2012 and 2014 (to 74.6%), while for young people aged 15-24 years it still reports the 2010 figure of 87.3% (MoESTS, 2015, p. 142). The fifth Uwezo assessment conducted in 2014 found that 64% of mothers had primary education only, while 24% had no formal education.

Previous Uwezo assessments have shown a relationship between adult literacy, especially the literacy of mothers, and child literacy. The 2013 Uwezo Assessment showed that 50% of children in Primary 3 to 7 with mothers who were able to read

Figure 4: Percentage distribution of Primary 3-7 children's competences in English literacy, in relation to mother's ability to read a Primary 2 level story, 2013



Source: Uwezo (2014, p.29)

a Primary 2 level story were also able to read the same story, compared with 36% of children with mothers who were unable to read the story (Figure 4).

Therefore, Uganda faces not only the challenge of helping older generations of illiterate adults but also a huge quantity of unfinished business in the form of primary school leavers and dropouts who have not acquired the literacy skills that are vital for vocational training and improved wellbeing. As Uwezo findings indicate, the same problem applies in relation to numeracy (see Story 5). Ekaju, reporting ethnographic research on the outcomes of UPE, in a range of social settings, comments that "questions still abound about the practical relevance of UPE for lifting the extremely

poor families out of poverty or for realising life-long learning" (Ekaju, 2011, p. 50). This situation adds to the tensions discussed by King (2007) "between basic and post-basic education" and between service delivery and the promotion of employment.

B. Efforts to provide ABE and non-formal education for youth

It is difficult to provide a summary of the current programmes in ABE and non-formal education (NFE) given the lack of a recent comprehensive report on this sub-sector. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD), however, has general responsibility in this area, especially for adult literacy programmes.

MoGLSD is reported to be providing a

Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) programme in 26 districts of Uganda, with materials in eight local languages. Over the past decade about 1.2 million adults attending this programme have been examined, or approximately 120,000 per year, 80% being women (MoESTS, 2015, pp. 142-143). In a context where there are about 1.4 million students in secondary education and yet about 70 per cent of young Ugandans never receive secondary education, the GER being 28.1% in 2014 (MOES, 2014, p. 238), the FAL output is low. Over time, however, the preponderance of women participating in FAL may help to close the gender gap in literacy rates; in 2012 the rates were 79% for men and 66% for women.

Alongside FAL, there are a range of NFE programmes that are aimed at young people with particular needs or disadvantages and are delivered mainly by NGOs, with mixed funding from government, non-government and aid-donor sources. To describe these programmes as 'NFE' is to understate their scope, in that some initiatives aim to support young people within and outside of formal education.

C. Beyond literacy—Broader educational opportunities for young people and adults

For those who progress through NFE, some opportunities for further training are provided in the Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BTNET) sub-sector and, at a somewhat higher level, in outreach programmes provided by higher education institutions.

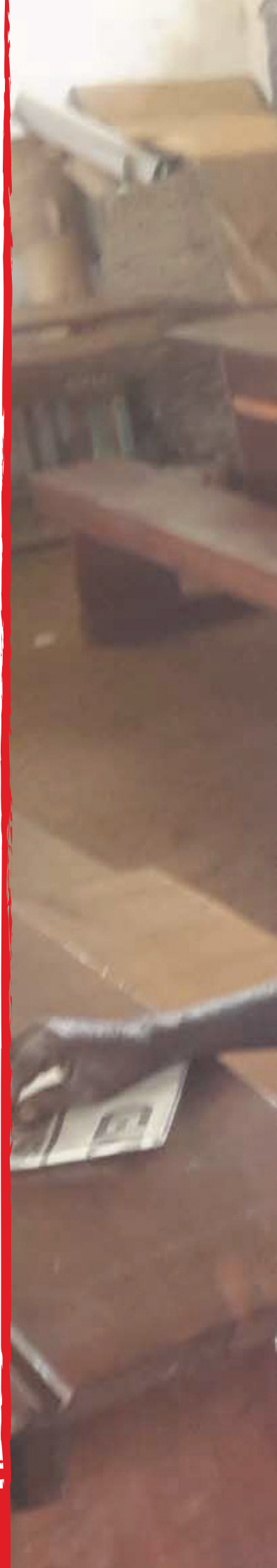
There is a range of institutions within the BTNET sub-sector, some of which are able to provide basic vocational training to young people who have not completed secondary education. However, the sub-sector is relatively small, with an enrolment of about 40,000 students in 2014 (MoESTS, 2015, p. 80). This contrasts with an enrolment of about 1,375,000 students in secondary education. Although the general trend of enrolment in BTNET over the past five years has been upwards, there was a decline between 2013 and 2014, attributed to "prevailing negative perceptions towards BTNET coupled with the unattractive nature of BTNET as a career pathway" (MoES, 2014, p. 80). This is unfortunate in view of the huge demand for employment. Avoidance of competition with secondary education and effective targeting of the labour market are challenges for the sub-sector in relation to EFA Goal 3: Meeting the learning needs of all young people and adults.

Another source of disadvantage for Uganda's poorer adults who seek to advance their education lies in the current, market-driven approach to higher education. This is illustrated by Openjuru's (2011) account of the Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (IACE) at Makerere University. Since the 1990s, IACE has greatly diversified its offerings, many being non-degree and relatively short courses. But, for reasons of survival, in the context of very little public or external funding, IACE has focused on areas of training that are marketable to adults who are able to pay. The beneficiaries are therefore people who are already in steady employment, but hope to gain a competitive advantage in the workplace or the labour market, rather than job seekers with limited education. The author notes the need for financial support from the state or from development partners in order to reduce the financial barriers to admission and to promote the social goals of lifelong learning (Openjuru, 2011, pp. 66-67).

POLICY CHOICES

A transfer of responsibility for adult education (especially the FAL programme) to MoESTS may be in the interests of the sub-sector, since regular reporting on ABE is lacking. Control of educational programmes by a single ministry would also be useful for financial planning and the articulation of formal and non-formal programmes.

To source additional public funding for adult education is vital. One example is South Africa where companies pay a Skills Development Levy modified by an Employment Tax Incentive (ETI). The levy is ring-fenced for use in vocational education programmes, while the ETI reduces companies' liability to tax in proportion to the training opportunities that they provide. A part of the tax collected by the government from corporations could be structured in this way.



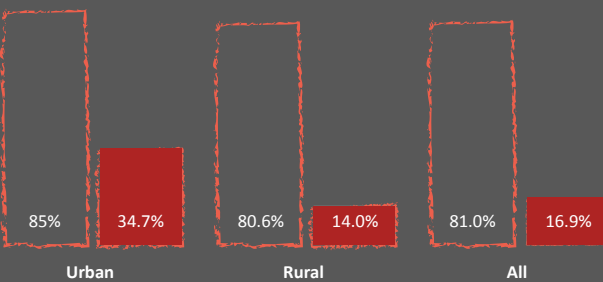


INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION

Inequalities exist in accessibility, inputs, processes or outcomes

Primary and secondary net attendance ratios, by location, 2011

Primary NAR Secondary NAR



Source: UBOS (2012)

Orphans and children with disabilities

Children with disabilities are either not in school or not recognized as disabled.

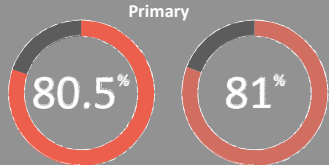
Recorded orphans and children with disabilities as percentages of school enrolment, 2013

Source: (UBOS, 2012)

	In primary	Proportion among school age children	In secondary	Proportion among school age children
Orphans (of all kinds)*	17.45%	17.9% (10-14 yrs)	18.97%	22.4% (15-17 yrs)
Children with disabilities**	2.45%	12.3% (10-14 yrs)	0.60%	12.3% (15-17 yrs)

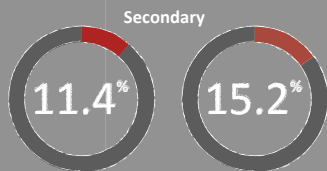
Source: MoES (2013), *Maternal, paternal and double orphans. **Recorded as 'Special Needs Education' (SNE) children.

Attendance



Children with disabilities Children without disabilities

Source: (Batara et al., 2014)



Children with disabilities Children without disabilities



Visual acuity: 3.5% of all children aged 6-16 years who were assessed had less than normal visual acuity in both eyes (2.5%) or one eye (1.0%)

Source: (Uwezo, 2014)



Currently 5,000 grants for disabled children



Total 181,997 children with special needs in schools (this is likely to be much higher in reality)

Gender



Primary net enrolment ratios

However in Karamoja, 43% of girls are in school, in West Nile 48%

Source: (MoESTS, 2015)



Secondary net enrolment ratios

Influenced by household wealth and parents' level of education

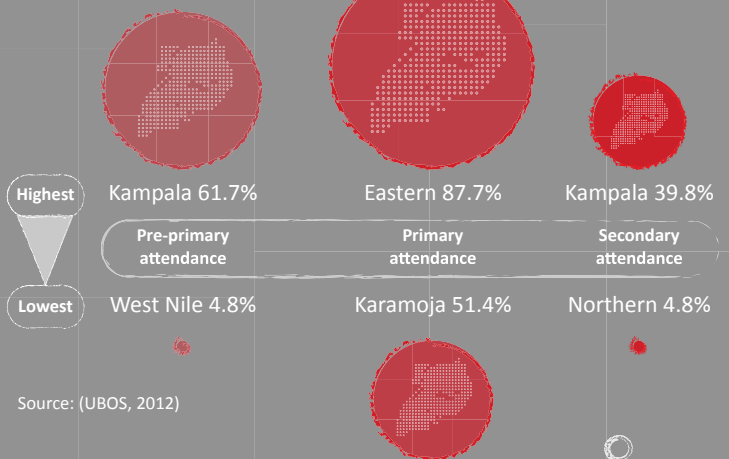
Source: (MoES, 2014)



In rural families girls are expected to do more domestic work than boys and are given lower priority for secondary and higher education. Girls are also at risk of sexual harassment and abuse.

Source: (Kabesiime, 2010 and Jones, 2011)

Regional Differences



Source: (UBOS, 2012)

Wealth



Wealthiest

86.5%

Primary attendance

33.1%

Secondary attendance



Poorest

73.2%

4.3%

Source: (UBOS, 2012)

Wealth effects are also demonstrated in the differences between private and public schools. Private and urban primary schools tend to have advantages in socioeconomics, physical facilities and teacher workloads, as well as younger students, all of which contribute to higher achievement.

Pupil-teacher ratios, 2013

Level of education	Government	Private	Total
Primary	55: 1	24: 1	46: 1
Secondary*	25: 1	20: 1	22: 1

Sources: (MoES 2013, 2014)

* Secondary ratios were calculated by Uwezo from the official statistics

Student-classroom ratios

72:1 in government primary schools 33:1 in private primary schools

Source: (MoESTS, 2015)

What can be done



More public money for pre-primary and stricter enforcement of age of entry to primary school



More equal distribution of teachers, classrooms and other resources



Screening for disabilities and educational needs for all pupils

Story 4: Recognising the Many Facets of Inequality in Education

BACKGROUND

Inequalities in education are of many kinds and may be differentiated according to the dimension of comparison, for example, differences of location or social circumstances, or according to the aspect of education considered, for example, accessibility, inputs, processes or outcomes. The EFA goals placed emphasis on equality of access to primary education under Goal 2, 'equitable access' to post-basic education under Goals 3 and 4, and 'gender equality' under Goal 5 (UNESCO, 2000). Equal educational treatment of the sexes has received particular attention in Uganda since 2000. But in the context of 2015, other dimensions of inequality in education seem more challenging. This report, therefore, considers inequalities relating to location and environment, household characteristics, school ownership, orphanhood and disability, as well as sex. It will note especially some unplanned differences of access and inputs in the context of public funding.

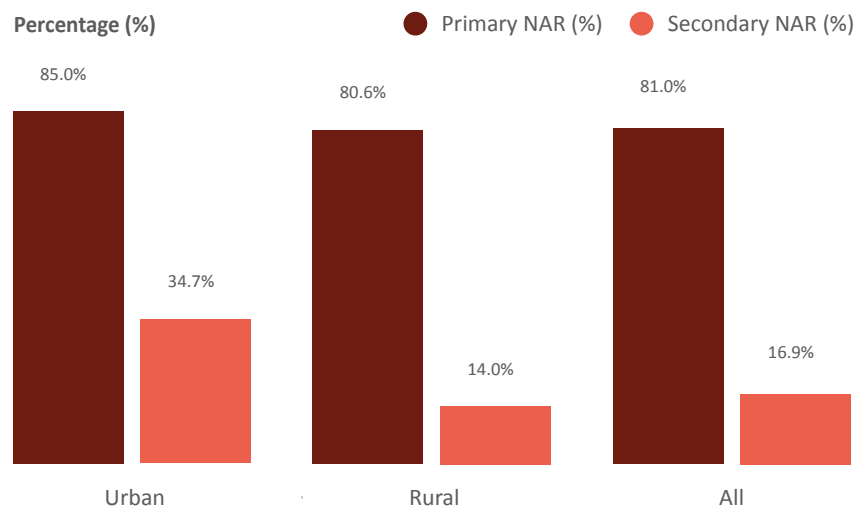
EVIDENCE

A. Urban-rural and regional inequalities

As in other developing countries, children in smaller and less urbanised settlements in Uganda tend to be at a disadvantage in all aspects of education. In Story 1, the great urban-rural divide in access to pre-primary education was noted, resulting in an uneven starting line for primary education. With respect to primary and secondary education, Figure 5 compares the net attendance ratios (NARs) for urban and rural areas based on household survey data (UBOS, 2012). It should be borne in mind that NARs reflect the influence of both non-attendance and of late entry. As expected, the difference in attendance is slight at the primary level, but large at the secondary level. Research on pupils' achievement in primary education also shows significant urban-rural disparities when other factors are controlled (Zuze & Leibbrandt, 2011, p. 174; Wamala, 2013, p. 86) and Uwezo findings indicate a similar pattern.

Table 6 compares the NARs for pre-primary, primary and secondary education for the ten sub-regions used by the 2011 UDHS. Thanks to the UPE policy, no major differences at the primary level are recorded, except for the

Figure 5: Primary and secondary net attendance ratios, by location, 2011



Source: UBOS (2012)

Table 6: Pre-primary, primary and secondary net attendance ratios, by sub-region, 2011

SUB-REGION	PRE-PRIMARY NAR (%)	PRIMARY NAR (%)	SECONDARY NAR (%)
KAMPALA	61.7	84.9	39.8
CENTRAL 1	35.8	87.3	23.7
CENTRAL 2	34.8	79.6	22.4
EAST CENTRAL	17.9	84.5	20.0
EASTERN	13.0	87.7	13.8
KARAMOJA	6.0	51.4	7.4
NORTHERN	11.2	79.0	4.8
WEST NILE	4.8	78.9	9.7
WESTERN	26.1	79.7	15.5
SOUTHWEST	30.0	78.6	14.9
ALL UGANDA	23.4	81.0	16.9

Source: UBOS (2012)

low score of Karamoja sub-region. But at the pre-primary and secondary levels, for which private costs are higher, the advantage of the central sub-regions and the disadvantage of the northern sub-regions are clear. These differences between sub-regions reflect different degrees of urbanisation to some extent as well as different kinds of rural environments and historical factors such as the role of religious bodies and the effects of civil conflict. Later, in Story 5, the data presented in Table 13 clearly demonstrate regional inequalities in the distribution of

learning outcomes, partly driven also by the proportions of households living in urban or rural areas.

Certain districts face particular difficulties that impede formal education of any kind. The best known examples are Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripirit districts in Karamoja sub-region (also mentioned in Story 2), which are areas characterised by nomadic pastoralism in an arid and insecure environment. Another example is Bundibugyo district on the western border, which has a low population density, very



poor infrastructure and extreme poverty. Other examples are Gulu, Kitgum and Pader districts in the Northern region, which have widespread poverty and are recovering from the destruction and the displacement of people caused by conflict before 2008 (Wasswa-Matovu, 2009, pp. 279-281).

B. Socio-economic status and school ownership as factors in inequality

A child's attendance and achievement in school is generally influenced by the socio-economic status (SES) of the household. Important aspects of SES include the wealth, education and occupational status of the child's parents/guardian. For example, by household wealth, the NARs for primary school in 2011 ranged from 86.5% for the highest wealth quintile to 73.2% for the lowest quintile. Rates for secondary education exhibited more extreme variation from 33.1% for the highest quintile to 4.3% for the lowest quintile (UBOS, 2012, p. 26).

At the primary level in Uganda the influence of SES is mitigated by the policy of free tuition, but remains important due to its cultural dimension, the opportunity costs of school attendance and the non-tuition direct costs. The latter may include parent-teacher association (PTA) levies, transport fares, books, meals, uniforms, shoes and stationery. Tuition fees are universally required at the pre-primary level and required for many students at the secondary level, although some qualify for free tuition under the Universal Secondary Education (USE) scheme.

To some extent at the primary level and to a great extent at the secondary level, the influence of SES is mediated by the difference between government and 'private' (i.e., non-government) schools. The owners of the latter include religious bodies and communities as well as private individuals. The fifth Uwezo assessment indicates that stark inequalities persist between learning outcomes in government and private primary

schools (see Figure 9 in Story 5). However, other important differences of performance between schools within the public sector are also related to SES. In a study of Primary 6 achievement conducted in 2000 by the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), Zuze and Leibbrandt (2011) show how both private and urban primary schools tend to have advantages in SES, physical facilities and teacher workloads, as well as younger students, all of which contribute to higher achievement. There is no reason to think that the importance of these factors has diminished since that time. For example, Table 7 compares pupil-teacher ratios for primary and secondary education in public and private schools for 2013.

The most recent data available indicate that large class sizes have continued to be a problem in government schools. MoESTS records pupil-classroom ratios for 2013/14 of 72:1 in government primary schools compared with 33:1 in private primary schools (MoESTS, 2015, p. 44).

No corresponding data are provided for secondary schools. However, a study by the Centre for Global Development Through Education (CGDE) observed very large classes in secondary schools (CGDE, 2011b). In general, it has been challenging for the government to provide for the rapidly increasing student intake under the USE scheme.

C. Inequalities relating to orphanhood and disability

As mentioned in Story 2, orphans and children with disabilities have a relatively high risk of non-completion of schooling, especially at the secondary level. Separating the two categories, children with disabilities in general have poorer educational prospects than orphans. As shown in Table 8, the proportions of orphans among primary enrolments (17.45%) and secondary enrolments (18.97%) are not far removed from their proportions in the school-age population, estimated at 17.9% for the 10-14 years age group and 22.4% for the 15-

Table 7: Pupil-teacher ratios by level of education and by sector, 2013

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE	TOTAL
PRIMARY	55: 1	24: 1	46: 1
SECONDARY*	25: 1	20: 1	22: 1

Sources: MoES (2013, 2014)

* Secondary ratios were calculated by Uwezo from the official statistics

Table 8: Recorded orphans and children with disabilities as percentages of school enrolment, 2013

CATEGORY	LEVEL OF EDUCATION	
	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
ORPHANS (OF ALL KINDS)*	17.45	18.97
CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**	2.45	0.60

Source: MoES (2013)

*Maternal, paternal and double orphans.

**Recorded as 'Special Needs Education' (SNE) children.



17 years age group (UBOS, 2012, p. 21). However, the proportions of children with disabilities enrolled in school are far lower than their proportions in the school-age population, estimated as 12.3% for both the 10-14 years and 15-17 years age groups. This implies that most children with disabilities are either not attending school, or, if attending, the children are not identified as having disabilities.

A working paper of the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) used data from the 2011 UDHS to estimate net attendance ratios for children with disabilities (Batana et al., 2014, p. 77). For primary education, the estimate was 80.5%, only slightly below the figure of 81.0% for children without disabilities. For secondary education, the estimate was 11.4% compared with 15.2% for children without disabilities. These findings suggest that large proportions of children with disabilities are attending school, but are not being reported as having disabilities. This then raises the question whether the school authorities have recognised the disabilities or provided any support to these children. Such action is made even more difficult if the pupils concerned do not attend school regularly.

Uwezo's most recent learning assessment found that 3.5% of all children aged 6-16 years who were assessed had less than normal visual acuity in both eyes (2.5%) or one eye (1.0%). While many of these cases may have been ones of common myopia, such children are placed at a disadvantage if they do not receive, or cannot afford, sight tests and appropriate vision aids.

Supporting pupils with disabilities is a challenging task. Current MoESTS interventions include subvention grants to children with disabilities but these are limited to 5,000 pupils (MoESTS, 2015, pp. 148-149). The number of children provided with grants is a small fraction—less than 3% or 1 in every 36 pupils—of the total reported number of 'SNE pupils' in primary and secondary

education, which was 181,997 for 2013 (MoES 2013, pp. 50-51). In turn, this figure is likely to be far below the actual number of children with disabilities in school. Efforts are being made to provide additional SNE training to some primary school teachers and to improve the effectiveness of the special schools. However, an improved system of recognition of and referral for children with disabilities should be a priority.

D. Gender parity—Achievements and limitations

At the national level, very similar numbers of boys and girls have been enrolled in primary school for the past decade. For 2014/15, MoESTS reported primary gross enrolment ratios (GERs) of 117 for boys and 118 for girls, and net enrolment ratios (NERs) of 96 for boys and 98 for girls (MoESTS, 2015, p. 77). The UPE policy was accompanied by several special programmes of support for girls' education, notably the National Strategy for Girls' Education (NSGE) and the Promotion of Girls' Education scheme for funding of physical facilities (both MoES initiatives), and the Equity in the Classroom programme (funded by USAID), which promoted greater gender equity through teacher education (Kabesiime, 2010, pp. 337-338; Wasswa-Matovu, 2012, p. 293).

At the sub-regional level, however, some gender imbalances in primary enrolment persist. The official data for 2014/15 show that, in Karamoja sub-region, the proportion of girls in total enrolment was 43% and in West Nile it was 48% (MoESTS, 2015, p. 78). Both sub-regions are areas of extreme poverty where girls are particularly at risk of not entering school at all.

In secondary education, enrolment parity has not yet been achieved. For 2013/14, the GERs were 32 for boys and 28 for girls, and the NERs were 27 for boys and 25 for girls (MoES, 2014, p. 84). The analysis of Moyi (2013, p. 11) indicated that the wealth and educational level of parents had more effect on girls' prospects of completing Primary 5

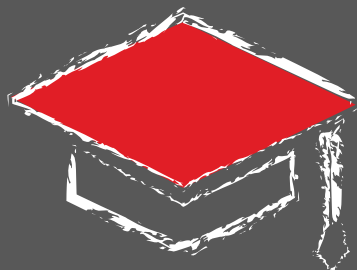
than on boys' prospects—a finding which has implications for girls' access to secondary education.

The processes by which poverty and traditional gender discrimination in rural society impede the education of adolescent girls and young women are illuminated by the policy discussion of Kabesiime (2010) and the research of Jones (2011). Rural families continue to expect girls to do more domestic work than boys and to give them a lower priority in provision for secondary and tertiary education. Jones also shows the extent to which female secondary students are at risk of sexual harassment and abuse, both within and outside the school, and argues that the NSGE does not adequately address the many problems facing girls in attending and completing school. Programmes of support for girls' education will continue to be needed, with more focus on the problems affecting adolescent girls aged 13-18 years.

POLICY CHOICES

The challenges of inequality are huge and diverse. There are no simple remedies. However, areas for action may include the following:

1. Increased public financial support for pre-primary education and a stricter requirement of entry to primary school at the correct age would help to give children a common foundation of opportunity in education.
2. More equitable distribution of teachers, classrooms and other resources between regions and between schools, especially within the public sector.
3. All pupils should be screened for disabilities and possible special educational needs at an early stage in their schooling. For pupils referred by teachers, assessment by health and SNE specialists must be available as a free service.



Education Quality

Pupil-teacher and pupil-classroom ratios of primary schools, 2014

Region	Pupil-teacher ratio	No. schools	Pupil-classroom ratio*	No. schools
Central	41	268	67	268
Eastern	62	209	104	209
Northern	55	235	99	235
Western	41	148	64	148
All	50	860	84	860

Source: (5th Uwezo Assessment, 2014)

*Only usable classrooms were counted.

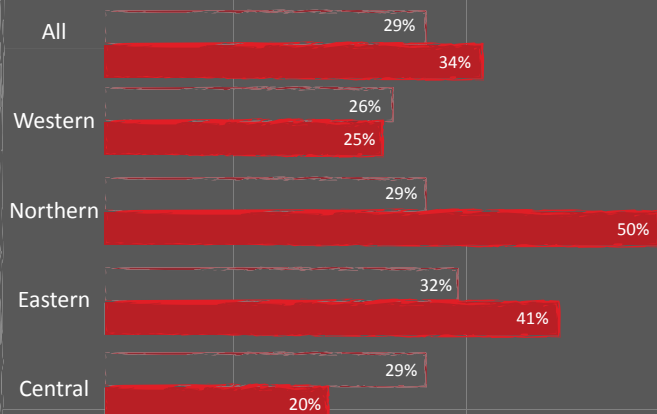
Major challenges in schools



Insufficient knowledge on the part of teachers.



A high rate of teacher absenteeism: 24% of teachers were absent from the school and 53% were not present in the classroom.



Teacher absenteeism

Pupil absenteeism



Pupils' textbooks were lacking in 90% of the Primary 4 classes observed, although writing materials and blackboards were generally present.

Source: (Wane & Martin, 2013)

Quality of outcomes

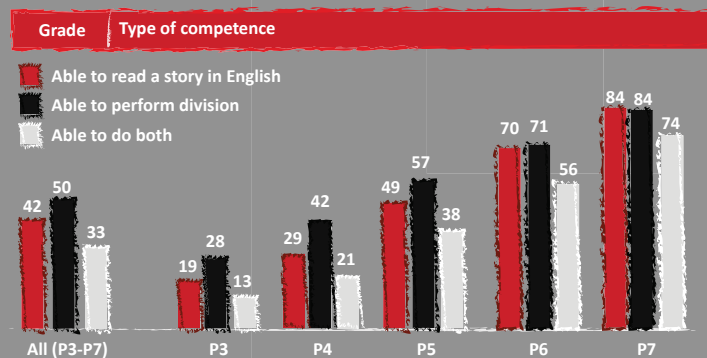
Percentage distribution of competencies among Primary 3-7 pupils in English literacy and numeracy tasks of Primary 2 level difficulty, 2014

There may be inconsistencies in addition in this table as numbers have been rounded.

Numeracy	English literacy					Total
	Nothing	Letter	Word	Paragraph	Story	
Nothing	1	0	0	0	0	2
Counting 0-9	2	4	2	0	0	8
Identify 10-99	1	2	2	0	0	5
Addition	1	4	4	1	1	11
Subtraction	1	4	5	3	3	15
Multiplication	0	1	2	2	3	9
Division	1	4	6	5	33	50
Total	6	19	21	12	42	100

Source: (5th Uwezo Assessment, 2014)

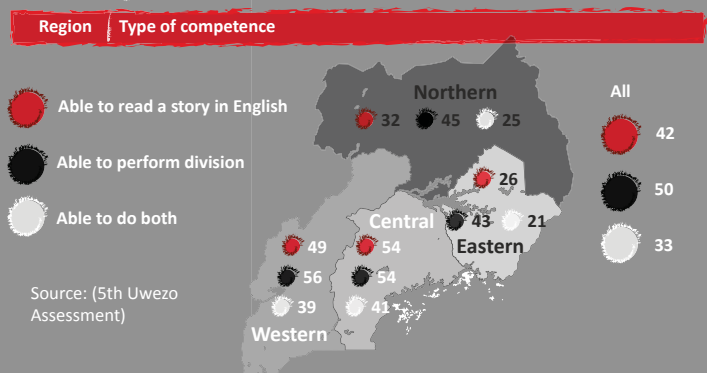
Proportions of P3-P7 pupils with full competence in Primary 2 level literacy and numeracy tasks, by grade, 2014



Percentage distribution of pupils' literacy competencies in local languages, by grade, 2014

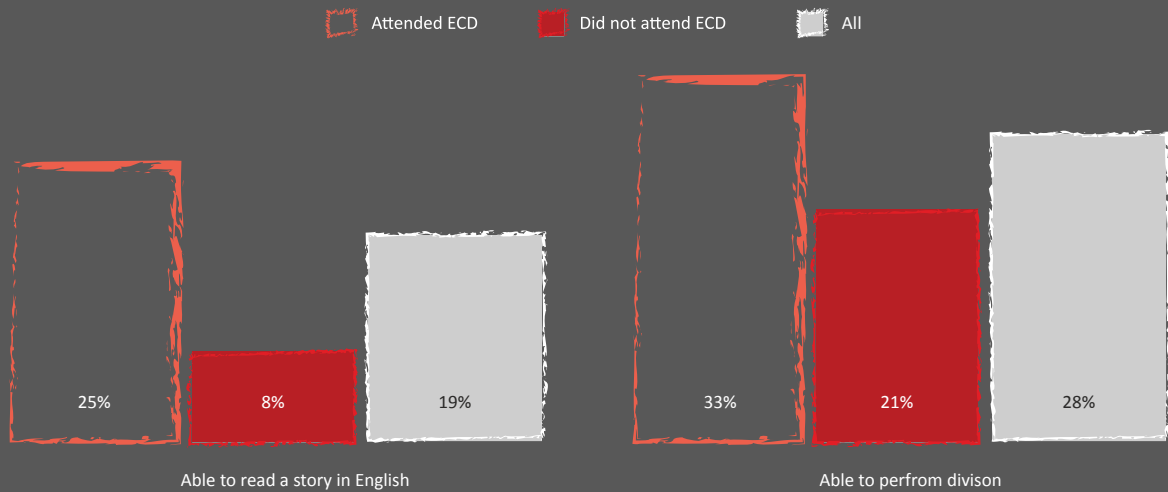
Grade	Local language literacy						Total
	Nothing	Letter	Syllables	Word	Paragraph	Story	
P3	32.3	11.3	18.8	9.9	18.3	9.5	100
P4	27.1	7.1	15.0	13.2	23.8	13.9	100
P5	15.5	6.1	11.1	12.5	36.9	18.0	100
P6	6.5	2.3	8.3	8.7	49.7	24.6	100
P7	3.3	3.4	2.9	6.2	52.9	31.3	100
Total	20.5	6.9	13.0	10.8	32.0	16.9	100

Proportions of Primary 3-7 pupils who were competent in English literacy, numeracy and both tasks, by region, 2014



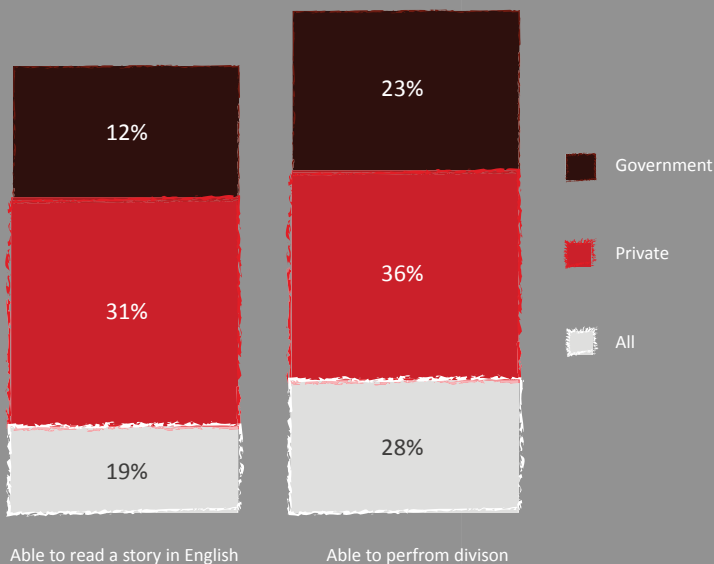
Source: (5th Uwezo Assessment)

Proportions of Primary 3 pupils who were competent in English literacy and numeracy tasks, by prior ECD attendance, 2014

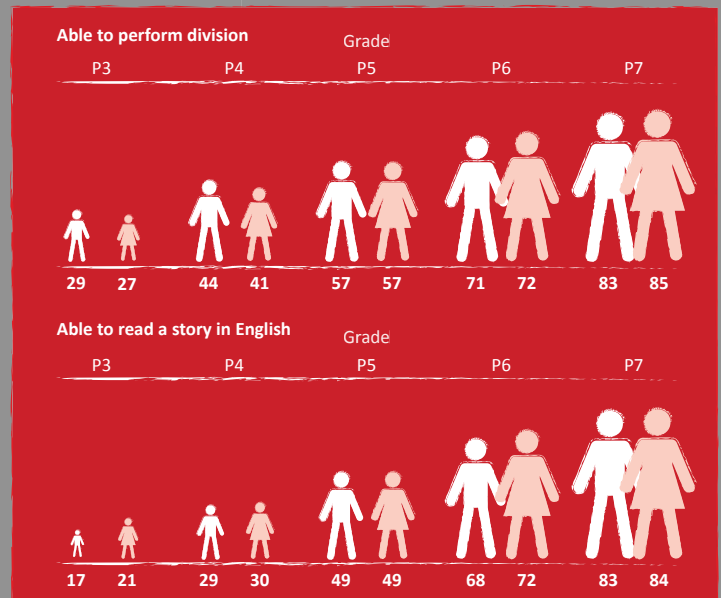


Source: (5th Uwezo Assessment, 2014)

Primary 3 pupils who were competent in English literacy and numeracy tasks, by school ownership, 2014



Primary 3-7 pupils who were competent in English literacy and numeracy tasks, by gender and by grade, 2014



Source: (5th Uwezo Assessment, 2014)

What can be done



Need systematic reform of the education sector. Policies, evaluation and assessment should focus on learning outcomes as the measure of success.



Critical issues are: the curriculum, teacher motivation and accountability, and school leadership.



Need to review evidence globally and locally and make decisions based on this.



Need to ensure the active engagement of all interested parties – from parents to the President.

Story 5: In Pursuit of Quality in Education

BACKGROUND

Most of the structural factors that influence access to schooling and account for inequalities—such as levels of urbanisation, geographical regions, administrative areas, household socio-economic status and school ownership—also account for variations in educational quality. The concept of quality itself, however, can be applied to the inputs, processes and outcomes of education, all of which are relevant to the achievement of policy goals. Inputs and outcomes, being more easily quantifiable, tend to attract more research in Uganda and elsewhere.

At policy level, government efforts have been directed at improving inputs, such as ensuring that many more children are enrolled in school and building physical infrastructure. Less focus has been placed on qualitative research into educational processes and whether such investments result in better educational outcomes, most importantly, whether children are learning. Therefore, this final story will examine the quality of basic education in Uganda through the lens of children's learning outcomes. The analysis will be informed by findings from the fifth Uwezo assessment conducted in October 2014.

To begin, evidence is presented on key indicators of educational inputs in primary schools, including teachers, classrooms and textbooks (Section A). Section B presents results on children's competence in English literacy and numeracy, and Section C focuses on literacy in local languages. Sections D through G then examine rates of English literacy and numeracy in relation to key variables that may affect learning outcomes, including region of residence, school-related factors, mothers' literacy and the child's sex. To conclude the evidence section, findings from qualitative research on the processes of teaching and learning in Ugandan schools (Section H) and the national curriculum (Section I) are discussed.

EVIDENCE

A. Key indicators of educational inputs in primary schools

The 2014 Uwezo assessment collected evidence on the provision of primary school teachers and classrooms in different regions of Uganda. Table 9 presents data on mean pupil-teacher and pupil-classroom ratios—two key indicators of educational quality—

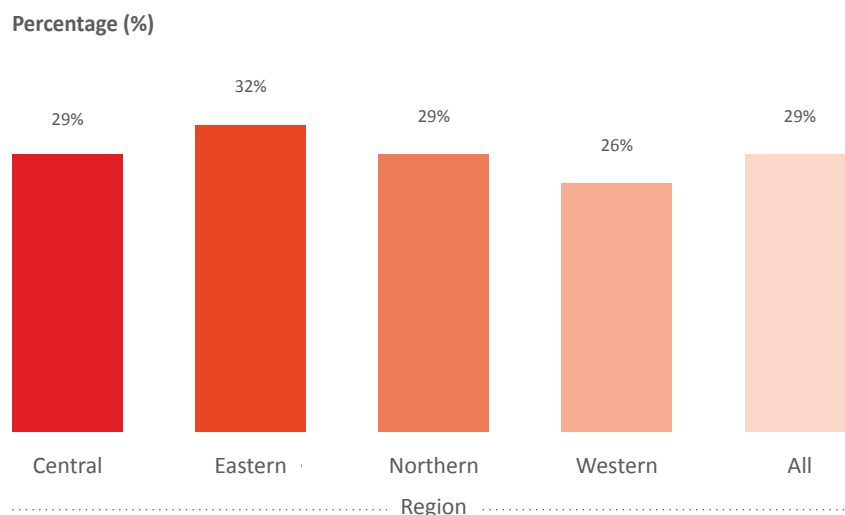
Table 9: Pupil-teacher and pupil-classroom ratios of primary schools, 2014

REGION	PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO	PUPIL-CLASSROOM RATIO*	NO. SCHOOLS
	MEAN	MEAN	
CENTRAL	41	67	268
EASTERN	62	104	209
NORTHERN	55	99	235
WESTERN	41	64	148
ALL	50	84	860

Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

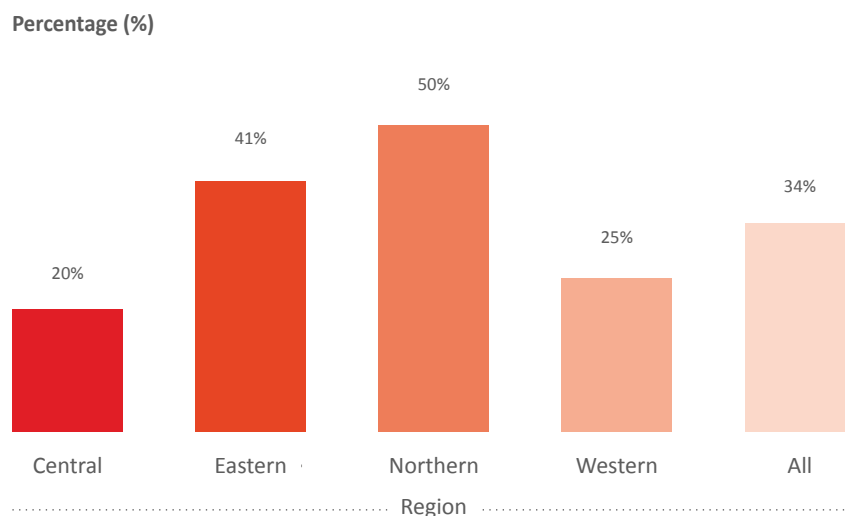
*Only usable classrooms were counted.

Figure 6: Average percentage of P1-P7 teachers absent during the week of the Uwezo assessment, by region, 2014



Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

Figure 7: Average percentage of P1-P7 pupils absent during the week of the Uwezo assessment, by region, 2014



Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

for the sample of 860 primary schools that participated in the assessment. The findings reveal a situation somewhat worse than the official statistics would suggest (compare Table 7 in Story 4). They also show that the shortage of classrooms in primary schools amounts to a crisis across Uganda and is particularly serious in the Eastern and Northern regions. The problems of teaching very large classes are further discussed in Section H on teaching and learning processes.

Evidence on the quality of other educational inputs comes from the World Bank's service delivery indicators (SDIs) survey for Uganda (Wane & Martin, 2013). In typically essentialist style, this survey focused on a few 'critical' features, making comparisons between the education and health sectors. The findings highlight three important problems facing primary schools. The first was insufficient knowledge on the part of teachers, particularly in the areas of pedagogy and curriculum content (p. 4). Second, a high rate of teacher absenteeism was recorded. During unannounced visits to the schools surveyed, 24% of teachers were absent from the school and 53% were not present in the classroom. Third, pupils' textbooks were lacking in 90% of the Primary 4 classes observed, although writing materials and blackboards were generally present.

Findings from the Uwezo assessment confirm and elaborate on these patterns of absenteeism. Figures 6 and 7 show the proportions of P1-P7 teachers and pupils, respectively, who were recorded as absent during the week of the Uwezo assessment, by region. Although many of the teacher absences may have been authorised, the statistics are worrying with many schools lacking an effective system to cover for

absent teachers. Pupil absenteeism is especially high in the Northern and Eastern regions.

Since the importance of textbooks and of 'time on task' for academic achievement in low-income settings has been recognised for a long time (see Heyneman & Jamison, 1980; Benavot and Gad, 2004), these findings are very unsatisfactory. The Uwezo assessment also found that only 74% of the children surveyed had received a mathematics lesson on the day before they were assessed. In the Northern region, this figure was only 59%. These data reflect the absenteeism of teachers and pupils and, perhaps, teachers' low commitment to teaching.

Teachers' knowledge and skills are another important aspect of input quality. We note that Wamala and Seruwagi (2013) have studied the effects of 'teacher competence' on Grade 6 achievement, using SACMEQ scores on reading and numeracy. They found that teacher competence, as measured by tests of subject knowledge, was a significant factor in achievement when other relevant factors were controlled for. These findings have to be treated with caution, however, as it is not explained whether teacher competence was measured at the school level or the classroom level. Pupils are exposed to the influence of many teachers. Teacher competence also has many dimensions, of which subject knowledge is just one. The work of Zuze and Leibbrandt (2011) gave a fuller account of school factors in student achievement but used older data.

The general shortage of textbooks in Uganda's primary schools provides a context for interpreting findings from the Reading to Learn (RtL) project of the Aga Khan Foundation in Kenya and Uganda. This project actively involved parents in

promoting their children's literacy and provided local-language books for the purpose (Abuya et al., 2013; Oketch et al., 2014). The enthusiasm of parents for the project was greatest in Uganda (where two districts of the Northern region were selected), precisely because of the scarcity of textbooks, especially in local languages. Such potential for parental support cannot be realised widely until the textbook supply improves.

B. English literacy and numeracy among primary pupils

As in previous years, the 2014 Uwezo assessment records children's ability to read English text and local language text in selected districts and to perform arithmetic tasks at various levels of competence (see Appendix 2 for the description of the levels of competence for the literacy and numeracy tests). All tests were pegged at Primary 2 level. Therefore, learning outcomes are discussed for children in Primary 3 and above.

Table 10 cross-tabulates the distributions of literacy (reading) and numeracy competencies for Primary 3-7 pupils. The data show that 42% of these students could read a Primary 2 story, 50% could perform numeracy tasks up to division and 33% had 'full competence', i.e., they could perform all literacy and numeracy tasks. The findings from the previous Uwezo assessment were very similar and results over the past four rounds of the assessment indicate no change in learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes are worse when individual grades are considered (Table 11). Among Primary 3 pupils, 19% (2 in 10) could read a Primary 2 English story, 28% could do numeracy tasks up to division level, but only 13% (or just over 1 in every 10) pupils

Table 10: Percentage distribution of competencies among Primary 3-7 pupils in English literacy and numeracy tasks of Primary 2 level difficulty, 2014

NUMERACY	ENGLISH LITERACY					TOTAL
	NOTHING	LETTER	WORD	PARAGRAPH	STORY	
NOTHING	1	0	0	0	0	2
COUNTING 0-9	2	4	2	0	0	8
IDENTIFY 10-99	1	2	2	0	0	5
ADDITION	1	4	4	1	1	11
SUBTRACTION	1	4	5	3	3	15
MULTIPLICATION	0	1	2	2	3	9
DIVISION	1	4	6	5	33	50
TOTAL	6	19	21	12	42	100

Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

had achieved full competence in literacy and numeracy. Of the Primary 7 pupils assessed, approximately 3 out of 4 children (74%) had attained full competence in literacy and numeracy which implies that 1 in every 4 pupils in Primary 7 were not fully competent at the Primary 2 level.

C. Literacy in local languages among primary children

Data in Table 12 exhibit a similar pattern with regard to literacy in local languages among Primary 3-7 pupils. As in the 2013 Uwezo assessment, the findings show relatively

weak literacy in local languages vis-à-vis English, in spite of the fact that the national curriculum stipulates that local languages should be used as the medium of instruction in Primary 1 through Primary 3. Refer also to Section H below for further discussion on the national curriculum.

1 out of 10 pupils (9.5%) in Primary 3 were able to read a Primary 2 level local language story, and only 3 out of 10 of pupils (31.3%) in Primary 7 were able to do so. These literacy rates are much lower than those recorded for reading an English story. Data in Table 11 show that 19% of pupils in Primary

3 and 84% of pupils in Primary 7 were able to read a Primary 2 level story in English.

The challenges of developing skills in local languages have been documented elsewhere, including parents' greater reluctance, more so than teachers, to accept the value of local language instruction (CGDE, 2011a). In addition, in locations where local language is used as the medium of instruction, it is not taught as a subject, making it difficult for children to gain appropriate skills in reading the language.

Table 11: Proportions of P3-P7 pupils with full competence in Primary 2 level literacy and numeracy tasks, by grade, 2014

GRADE	TYPE OF COMPETENCE		
	ABLE TO READ A STORY IN ENGLISH	ABLE TO PERFORM DIVISION	ABLE TO DO BOTH
P3	19	28	13
P4	29	42	21
P5	49	57	38
P6	70	71	56
P7	84	84	74
ALL (P3-P7)	42	50	33

Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

Table 12: Percentage distribution of pupils' literacy competencies in local languages, by grade, 2014

GRADE	LEVEL OF COMPETENCE						TOTAL
	NOTHING	LETTER	SYLLABLES	WORD	PARAGRAPH	STORY	
P3	32.3	11.3	18.8	9.9	18.3	9.5	100
P4	27.1	7.1	15.0	13.2	23.8	13.9	100
P5	15.5	6.1	11.1	12.5	36.9	18.0	100
P6	6.5	2.3	8.3	8.7	49.7	24.6	100
P7	3.3	3.4	2.9	6.2	52.9	31.3	100
TOTAL	20.5	6.9	13.0	10.8	32.0	16.9	100

Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

Table 13: Proportions of Primary 3-7 pupils who were competent in English literacy, numeracy and both tasks, by region, 2014

REGION	TYPE OF COMPETENCE		
	ABLE TO READ A STORY IN ENGLISH	ABLE TO PERFORM DIVISION	ABLE TO DO BOTH
CENTRAL	54	54	41
EASTERN	26	43	21
NORTHERN	32	45	25
WESTERN	49	56	39
ALL	42	50	33

Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

D. English literacy and numeracy among primary pupils by region

Table 13 provides a regional breakdown of data for Primary 3-7 pupils who could read a story, those who could perform division, and those who were assessed as fully competent. The results clearly show the disadvantage of the Northern and Eastern regions, especially in literacy. At district level (see Appendix 3), the variation in proportions of students with full competence is even greater, ranging from 57% of students in Kampala to 14% in Buyende and Namutumba districts both in the Eastern region. The Northern and Eastern regions are historically the most disadvantaged in many aspects of welfare. Nonetheless, the reasons for rates of full competence below 20% in particular districts deserve further investigation.

E. English literacy and numeracy among primary pupils by schooling experience

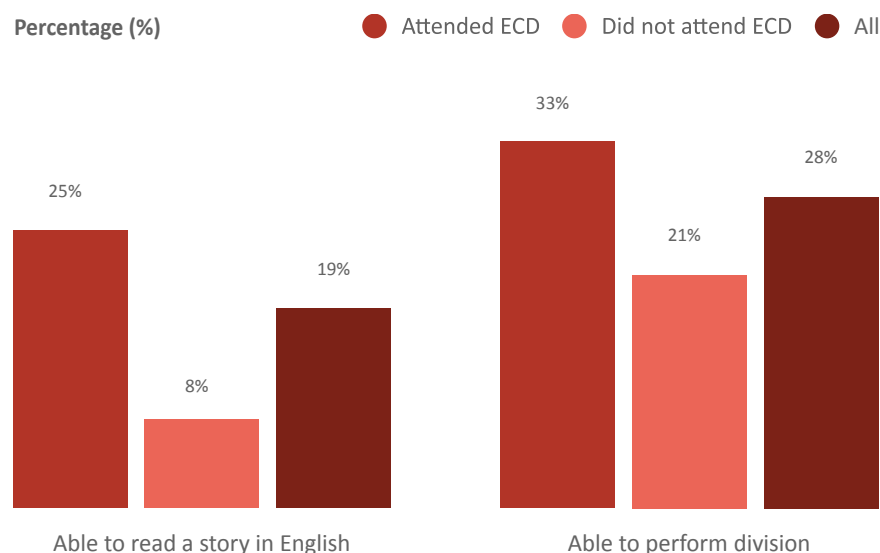
As noted in Story 1, research in Uganda has not given enough attention to the effects of pre-primary school attendance on primary education outcomes. Figure 8 compares rates of literacy and numeracy among Primary 3 pupils who had and who had not attended some form of ECD. There seems to be an advantage of exposure to ECD, which is consistent with findings from previous Uwezo assessments and other studies, for example, Mwaura and others (2008).

Another potentially important factor in learning outcomes, highlighted in Story 4 on inequalities in education, is whether children were attending a public or a private primary school. Figure 9 compares rates of English literacy and numeracy competence among Primary 3 pupils in government and private schools. As expected, there is a clear advantage for pupils attending private schools. Even in private schools, however, the rates of competence are far from being satisfactory.

F. English literacy and numeracy among primary pupils by socio-economic status

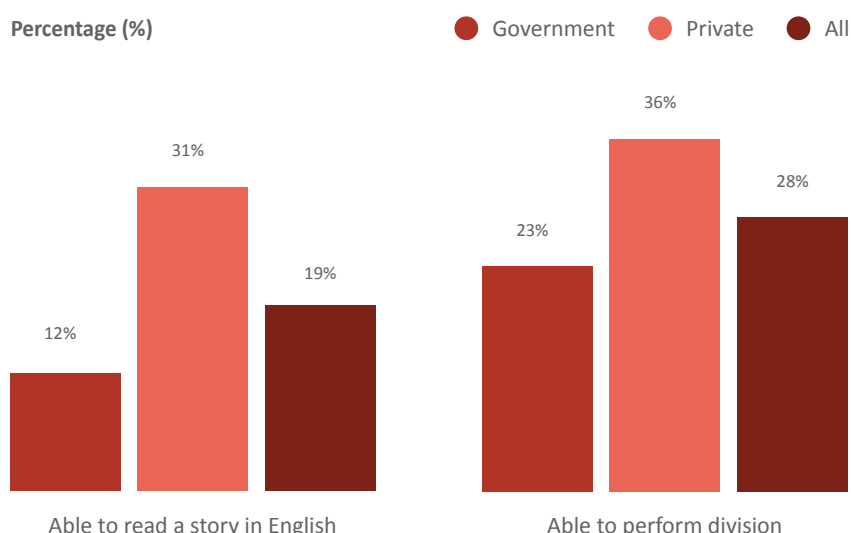
The fifth Uwezo Assessment includes one measure of parental socio-economic status (SES): mother's level of education. Table 14 compares the proportions of Primary 3-7 pupils who passed the literacy and numeracy tests according to their mother's level of education. The data show a strong relationship between the two variables. Adult literacy is also a relevant factor in children's learning outcomes. The 2013 Uwezo survey found half of the Primary 3-7 pupils whose mother could read a Primary 2 level story were also able to read the story. But this proportion fell to 36% among children whose mothers were unable to read (Uwezo, 2014, p. 29).

Figure 8: Proportions of Primary 3 pupils who were competent in English literacy and numeracy tasks, by prior ECD attendance, 2014



Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

Figure 9: Proportions of Primary 3 pupils who were competent in English literacy and numeracy tasks, by school ownership, 2014



Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

Table 14: Proportions of Primary 3-7 pupils who were competent in English literacy and numeracy tasks, by mother's level of education, 2014

MOTHER'S LEVEL OF EDUCATION	PUPILS' COMPETENCE	
	ABLE TO READ A STORY IN ENGLISH	ABLE TO PERFORM DIVISION
NONE	32	42
PRIMARY	41	50
SECONDARY	65	64
POST-SECONDARY	74	68
TOTAL	42	50

Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

Table 15: Proportions of Primary 3-7 pupils who were competent in English literacy and numeracy tasks, by gender and grade, 2014

GRADE	TYPE OF COMPETENCE			
	ABLE TO READ A STORY IN ENGLISH		ABLE TO PERFORM DIVISION	
	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE
P3	21	17	27	29
P4	30	29	41	44
P5	49	49	57	57
P6	72	68	72	71
P7	84	83	85	83
ALL	43	40	49	50

Source: 5th Uwezo Assessment

G. Literacy and numeracy among primary pupils by gender

As noted in Story 4, Uganda's UPE scheme and accompanying programmes to promote girls' education all aimed to reduce gender differences in access to primary education. Table 15 shows the proportions of Primary 3-7 pupils, by gender and by grade, who were competent in literacy and numeracy. The data indicate no disadvantage in learning outcomes for girls at the national level. Rather, girls performed slightly better than boys in English literacy.

H. Evidence on the processes of teaching and learning in Ugandan schools

The processes of teaching and learning are the main link between school inputs and learning outcomes. However, these vital aspects of education are not easily studied through quantitative research methods. Therefore, relevant evidence from qualitative research about teaching and learning in Uganda's primary and secondary schools are discussed in this section.

As mentioned in Story 4, very large class sizes remain a problem, especially in government primary schools. A study on the issues of teaching large classes (Nakabugo et al., 2008) illuminated the difficulties for pupils and for teachers. The study, which focused on English and mathematics classes in Primary 3, observed conditions such as 8 pupils per bench and between 6 to 8 pupils per textbook, in classes ranging in size from 61 to 130 pupils. In these circumstances, teachers were forced to rely heavily on the chalk board. Predictably, it was challenging for teachers to use interactive methods, to control behaviour and to mark exercises frequently. The study further explored useful teaching strategies for such situations,

including approaches to group work and to team teaching.

However, the combination of very large classes and scarcity of furniture and learning materials constrains teaching and learning, even for the most dedicated teachers. A longitudinal study by Duraisamy and others (1998), on middle schools in Tamil Nadu state in India, gives evidence of a link over time between a rise in pupil-teacher ratios and a decline in academic achievement.

I. Curriculum challenges

In an attempt to improve the effectiveness of primary school teaching, MoES through the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) rolled out a new thematic curriculum in Primary 1 through 3 nationally between 2007 and 2009. This curriculum included the use of themes and local languages for teaching in these early primary grades and was designed to promote child-centred methods. The shift to using local languages as a medium of instruction (while continuing to teach English as a subject) was informed by the Government White Paper on Education (Government of Uganda, 1992) and recommendations of a Curriculum Review Report in 2004, which was piloted and then rolled out nationally in 2007 (Ward, Penny and Read, 2006; Heugh et al. 2014). Qualitative research conducted over 2009/10 to evaluate the impact of the changes found that the curriculum was generally well regarded by teachers, who perceived that it was improving the acquisition of literacy and numeracy (CGDE, 2011a). Although class sizes were large in many cases, the teachers observed were generally able to manage their classes and to engage children actively in the learning process. The main limitations (similar to those found by Nakabugo et

al., 2008) were the scarcity of materials, especially textbooks, inadequate classrooms and furniture, the use of a narrow range of teaching methods and very limited use of continuous assessment. Parents were found to be more reluctant than teachers to accept the value of local language instruction.

A parallel qualitative study focused on the effectiveness of mathematics and science teaching in lower secondary education (CGDE, 2011b). The teaching of biology, chemistry and physics at this level had been made compulsory since 2005 and a special in-service training programme for mathematics and science teachers had been operating since 2007. In common with the study of primary teaching, this research found a dominant pattern of whole-class teaching with a combination of exposition and question-and-answer, but at this level exposition had more emphasis. About one-fifth of the lessons observed were based on a group activity, usually because 'practical work' in science, with limited equipment, had to be done in groups. The group-based lessons were not necessarily more effective than the whole-class ones. Teaching quality was affected by the availability of classrooms, laboratories and learning materials, which varied greatly between schools. Other general constraints on quality included ambitious syllabi that were seldom fully covered, a heavy emphasis on school examinations (held at least twice per term) and a corresponding neglect of continuous and formative assessment.

In general, mathematics and science teachers are in short supply and many are employed in more than one school, with negative implications for the quality of their work. Lastly, as the USE policy is implemented alongside UPE, it is important

for the Ugandan government to provide curricula which are achievable in fairly challenging conditions and which provide scientific literacy for middle level as well as higher occupational roles.

POLICY CHOICES

Over the last five years, Uwezo at Twaweza has consistently emphasised the importance of learning outcomes, in particular that what children learn in school should be the primary barometer of educational success. Although the massive expansion in access to schooling provided by UPE is commendable, the Uwezo assessments have revealed, year on year, that we are still a long way away from providing children with their right to quality education that will equip them to become healthier, wealthier and more productive citizens.

In addition to a limited focus on quality in terms of policies, measurement and assessment of the education sector often emphasises inputs: number of textbooks bought, classrooms built, teachers trained. In part this is because these are quantifiable measures which can show improvements in the short term. Learning outcomes, and working to improve them, is a far more complex process for both measurement and action. Ultimately, improving learning outcomes requires systemic reform of the entire sector, considering the incentives and motivations of all actors, from the Minister to teachers, taking sufficient account of evidence globally and locally, and understanding the real context and constraints in which education is being delivered.

Through our work, Twaweza has identified critical areas that we believe can significantly influence learning outcomes. In particular, we are focusing on the curriculum, teacher motivation and accountability, and school leadership. Our work over the years has led us to conclude that, despite the myriad of factors influencing learning, addressing these issues could deliver real change.

In these areas, Twaweza is carefully reviewing all available evidence and developing a series of hypotheses on what works to improve education. We are also running a range of experiments to validate our hypotheses, from small scale single school interventions to a fully representative randomised control trial. We particularly emphasise an approach known as positive deviance which helps to uncover local community-generated solutions to social issues.

Although there are a multitude of policy choices to improve learning, we would encourage paying particular attention to the findings of this type of research, conducted by a range of civil society organisations and academics, in making decisions on courses to pursue in the education sector. Only through careful use of research and evidence, alongside a collaborative approach that includes all interested actors – from parents to the President – will we be able to make sure that our children learn in school.



Conclusion: Departing Towards the Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been agreed internationally for the period 2015 to 2030 (United Nations, 2015) encompass the same ideals with respect to education that inspired the EFA goals of 2000. Under SDG Number 4, education is to be 'inclusive and equitable' and of good quality, with a commitment to 'promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' (United Nations, 2015, p. 14). The sub-goals for education include universal access to ECCE, affordable vocational and tertiary education, and equitable access for vulnerable people, including those with disabilities.

These priorities for education, however, are set within a framework that emphasises sustainable life on the planet, rather than unrestrained use of natural resources. The problem for all countries is how to improve the quality of life in the present without compromising the welfare of future generations.

Within the education sector, a priority for the post-2015 period, as indicated by evidence presented in this report, is to achieve a better balance of investment between the various levels and types of education, which are interdependent. In the context of present financial constraints, this priority implies that primary education must be delivered more efficiently. Stricter enforcement of the age of entry is essential. Public resources would be better used in expanding access to ECD than in repeating primary pupils who are already over-age. The task of distributing enough textbooks, a long-term challenge, deserves particular attention.

From the findings of this report as a whole, it is clear that great inequalities exist which affect children's attendance at school, as well as the inputs, processes and outcomes of their education in Uganda. Major factors in these inequalities seem to be region and level of urbanisation, parents' wealth

and level of education, school ownership, orphanhood and disability. Although such inequalities are present in all educational systems to some degree, their extent in Uganda reflects the long road the nation still has to travel to achieve equality of opportunity.

With regard to the goals of improving equity and quality in education, Ugandans have political and technical choices to make about how far and by what methods they will raise additional revenue in order to strengthen the role of the state. The pattern of development during Uganda's period of recovery has left a large part of the educational system dependent on private sources of finance, especially the fees paid by parents. Wider access and a more consistent quality of education in the future will depend mainly on the efforts of the state.

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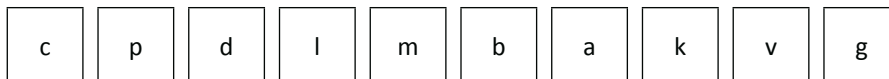
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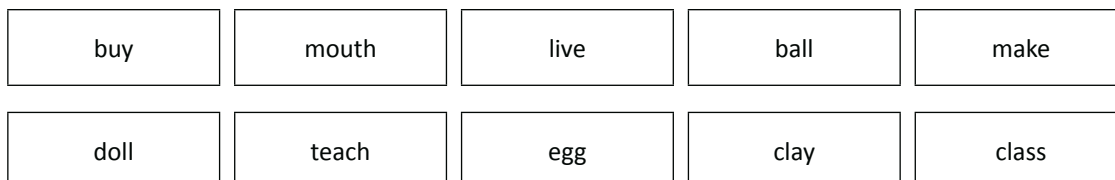
Uwezo Uganda 2014 Sample Tests

SAMPLE ENGLISH TEST

Letter identification: (Should attempt any 5, at least 4 must be correct)



Word level: (Should attempt any 5, at least 4 must be correct)



Paragraph: (Should attempt any of the two paragraphs, the child should read with speed without making more than 2 mistakes)

Kato has two children.
Joy is the first child.
Sam is the second child.
They live in the city.

Keri loves to eat.
She likes fish and milk.
Fish is good for children.
Fish makes children strong.

Story Level: (The child should read with speed without making more than 2 mistakes. The child should also attempt both questions)

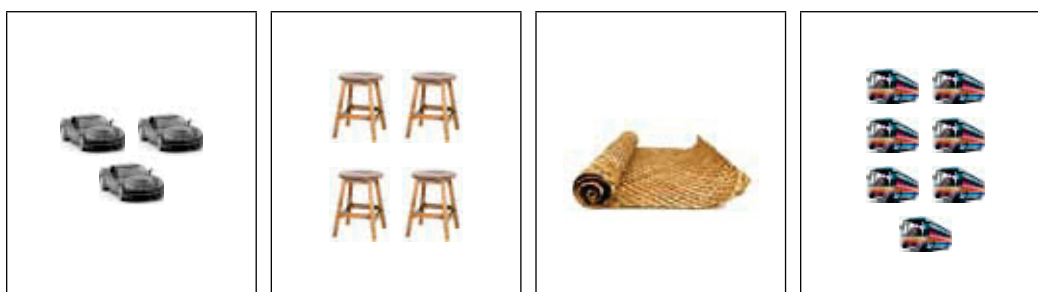
Jane is a little girl. Jane goes to Rainbow Primary school. Jane is in Primary two. Blue is her best colour. Jane has a sweater with three buttons. The sweater keeps Jane warm. Jane uses a coat when it rains.

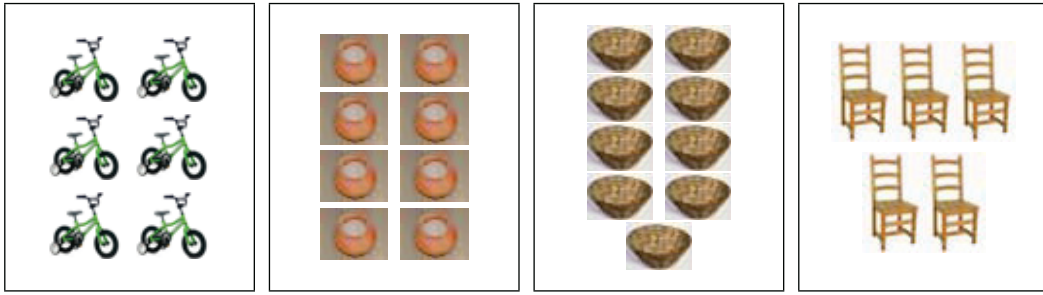
Questions:

1. In which school is Jane?
2. Why does Jane use a sweater?

SAMPLE NUMERACY TEST

Counting: How many members are there in each set? (Should attempt any 5, at least 4 must be correct)





Number Recognition 10 – 99 :(Should attempt any 5, at least 4 must be correct)

17	25	31	47	59	66	82	93
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Addition: (Should attempt any 3, at least 2 must be correct)

$\begin{array}{r} 17 \\ + 31 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 66 \\ + 32 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 82 \\ + 15 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 59 \\ + 20 \\ \hline \end{array}$
$\begin{array}{r} 87 \\ + 10 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 46 \\ + 42 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 73 \\ + 25 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 56 \\ + 32 \\ \hline \end{array}$

Subtraction: (Should attempt any 3, at least 2 must be correct)

$\begin{array}{r} 55 \\ - 10 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 26 \\ - 14 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 63 \\ - 42 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 57 \\ - 46 \\ \hline \end{array}$
$\begin{array}{r} 48 \\ - 25 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 19 \\ - 18 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 92 \\ - 21 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 26 \\ - 12 \\ \hline \end{array}$

Multiplication: (Should attempt any 3, at least 2 must be correct)

$8 \times 1 =$	$3 \times 6 =$	$4 \times 3 =$	$5 \times 4 =$
$2 \times 5 =$	$3 \times 3 =$	$3 \times 12 =$	$3 \times 9 =$

Division: (Should attempt any 3, at least 2 must be correct)

$6 \div 2 =$	$28 \div 2 =$	$4 \div 2 =$	$12 \div 3 =$
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$15 \div 3 =$

$9 \div 3 =$

$21 \div 3 =$

$8 \div 2 =$

RUNYORO RUTORO SAMPLE TEST

Engigo (asome 5, hakiri ahike 4)

vu

na

ko

ri

ga

pa

su

wu

mi

hu

Ebigambo (asome 5, hakiri ahike 4)

musana

temba

mapeera

kwecuma

yoga

bwomeezi

burofu

kucwa

yega

bataahi

Enkarra (asome 5, hakiri ahikirize 3)

Kasuku egamba neesubiriza abantu nebintu.
Kusubiriza kukorwa abaana nibeega kubaza.
Tosobora kweg a otasubiriize nohuliriza.
Naiwe yega kusubiriza amaraka bwona.

Owaitu tulya enseenene inuzire muno.
Enseenene igira amapapa namaguru.
Enseenene zihuhuukya amapapa gaazo.
Amapapa gaazo titugalya garwaza.

Oruganikyo (agarukemu ebikaguzo biri byona)

Owaitu Kitoba bacumbisaaga muno enku. Enku zikakeeha omu kibira kyaitu. Zakayo yayegesa abantu kukora esigiri. Esigiri zinu zicumbisa enku ntaito. Birobinu abantu bacumbisa enku ntaito.

Ebikaguzo:

1. Abantu ba Kitoba bacumbisa ki?
2. Habwaki Zakayo yabeegeseze kukora esigiri?

APPENDIX 2

Uwezo Assessment Levels of Competence

ENGLISH LITERACY COMPETENCE LEVELS

LEVEL	COMPETENCY	DESCRIPTION
Level 1	Nothing	The inability to recognise letters of the alphabet
Level 2	Letter	The ability to recognise letters of the alphabet
Level 3	Word	The ability to read common words
Level 4	Paragraph	The ability to read sentences
Level 5	Story	The ability to read a story
Level 6	Comprehension	The ability to read a story and make meaning of it

LOCAL LANGUAGE COMPETENCE LEVELS

Local language literacy is assessed more or less in the same way as English literacy assessment; with only one level added, that is, reading of “Syllables” after letter recognition.

LEVEL	COMPETENCY	DESCRIPTION
Level 1	Nothing	The inability to recognise syllables
Level 2	Syllable	The ability to read syllables
Level 3	Word	The ability to read common words
Level 4	Paragraph	The ability to read sentences
Level 5	Story	The ability to read a story
Level 6	Comprehension	The ability to read a story and make meaning of it

NUMERACY COMPETENCE LEVELS

LEVEL	COMPETENCY	DESCRIPTION
Level 1	Nothing	The inability to count items symbolising numbers 0 to 9
Level 2	Counting 0-9	The ability to count items symbolising numbers 0 to 9
Level 3	Identify 10-99	The ability to recognise numbers 10 – 99
Level 4	Addition	The ability to solve at least two numerical written addition sums
Level 5	Subtraction	The ability to solve at least two numerical written subtraction sums
Level 6	Multiplication	The ability to solve at least two numerical written multiplication sums
Level 7	Division	The ability to solve at least two numerical written division problems

APPENDIX 3

Uwezo Uganda 2014 District Rankings

Table A.1: Percentage of Primary 3-7 pupils with full competence in English literacy and numeracy tasks at Primary 2 level, by district

DISTRICT NAME	COMPETENT	RANK
Kampala	57	1
Bushenyi	47	2
Lyantonde	47	3
Kiruhura	46	4
Kisoro	42	5
Mpigi	40	6
Butambala	36	7
Kasese	35	8
Nakapiripirit	35	9
Sironko	34	10
Buikwe	34	11
Moyo	33	12
Kaabong	32	13
Nakasongola	30	14
Kyegegwa	28	15
Mityana	28	16
Arua	28	17
Iganga	27	18
Gulu	27	19
Hoima	25	20
Pallisa	24	21
Bulambuli	21	22
Agago	21	23
Amolatar	19	24
Kumi	18	25
Zombo	15	26
Buyende	14	27
Namutumba	14	28
National average	32%	

APPENDIX 4

Our Partners

PAST AND PRESENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

1	Mr. Obbo Katandi Gabriel	Former Head of Primary Education Department, National Curriculum Development Centre
2	Mr. Richard Ssewakiryanga	Executive Director, Uganda National NGO Forum
3	Dr. Yovan Lubaale Moses	Lecturer of Statistics, Makerere University
4	Prof. Deborah Kasente	Professor of Gender Studies, Makerere University
5	Mr. Zacharia Kasirye	Former Education Advisor, Save The Children Uganda
6	Mr. James Tweheyo	Secretary General, Uganda National Teachers Union
7	Pro. JC Ssekamwa	Former Dean of Faculty of Education, Nkumba University
8	Dr. Daniel Nkaada	Commissioner for Basic Education, Ministry Of Education and Sports Uganda
9	Mr. James Muwonge	Director, Socio Economic Surveys, Uganda Bureau of Statistics
10	Dr Ronald Bisaso	Dean, East African School of Higher Education Studies and Development, Makerere University
11	Dr Sarah N. Ssewanyana	Executive Director, Economic Policy Research Centre, Makerere University
12	Mrs Grace Kanyiginya Baguma	Director, National Curriculum Development Centre
13	Prof Joyce Asiimwe Ayikoru	Dean, Faculty of Education, Kyambogo University
14	Mr Patrick Kaboyo	Executive Director, Coalition of Uganda Private School Teachers Association
15	Prof Albert James Lutalo-Bosa	Vice Chancellor, Team University

UWEZO SECRETARIAT

1	Dr Mary Goretti Nakabugo	Manager, Uwezo Uganda
2	Faridah Nassereka	Senior Program Officer - Research
3	Judith N. Tumusiime	Assistant Communications Officer, Uwezo
4	Ismail Sentamu	Assistant Program Officer, Research
5	David Mugurusi	Assistant Program Officer, Research
6	Martha Chemutai	Assistant Program Officer, Communications
7	Judith Nakayima	Program Assistant

UWEZO - ASER FRATERNITY

1	Rakesh Rajani	Founder, Twaweza East Africa
2	Dr Sara Ruto	Director, PAL Network
3	Dr John Mugo	Director of Data and Voice, Uwezo Kenya
4	Zaida Mgalla	Manager, Uwezo Tanzania
5	Dr Rukmini Banerji	ASER, India
6	Aidan Eyakuze	Executive Director, Twaweza East Africa
7	All staff and associates in Kenya and Tanzania	

TEST DEVELOPERS

1	Katherine Akello	Kyambogo University
2	Hussein K. Male	Mathematics Textbooks Author and retired educationalist
3	Gertrude Namubiru	National Curriculum Development Centre
4	Eunice Omunyokol	Head Teacher, Akamuriei Primary School, Amuria District
5	Elizabeth Bakahuuna	Nakaseke Primary Teachers' College
6	Ejoku Alex	Amukurat Primary School, Amuria District
7	Egadu Francis	Retired Educationalist
8	Winnie Nakkazi	Ndejje University
9	Emmanuel Otim	Kyambogo University
10	Elly Musana Wairagala	National Curriculum Development Centre
11	Gerald Bukenya	National Curriculum Development Centre
12	Grace Kihika	Retired Educationalist
13	Nimayos Otim	Tutor, Canon Lawrence Primary Teachers College Lira
14	Omoding Martin Achor	Kyambogo University
15	Gabriel Obbo Katandi	National Curriculum Development Centre
16	Kyambadde Ruth	Kyambogo University
17	Dr. Kizza Mukasa	Makerere University

UWEZO UGANDA DISTRICT PARTNERS

	DISTRICT	DISTRICT PARTNER INSTITUTIONS	HEADS OF DISTRICT PARTNER INSTITUTIONS
1	AGAGO	Passion 4 Community Development	Lagen David
2	AMOLATAR	Lango Samaritan Initiative Organisation	Oyo Anthony
3	ARUA	Approaches to rural Community Development	Manasseh Acdri
4	BUIKWE	Education and Development initiative Uganda	Jjuuko Robert
5	BULAMBULI	Christian Childcare Program	James Kidulu
6	BUSHENYI	West Ankole Diocese (Education Department)	Rev. Didas Natweta
7	BUTAMBALA	Kalamba Community Development Organisation	Bombo Fredrick
8	BUYENDE	Community Vision	Ejakait Emokor Michael
9	GULU	Concerned Parents Association	Ochen Fred Brian
10	HOIMA	Hoima District Union of Persons with Disabilities (HUDIP)	Bigirwenkya Gilbert
11	IGANGA	LIDI Uganda	Nkuutu Menha Prince
12	KAABONG	Kaabong Peace and Development Agency	Lonya John
13	KAMPALA	Girls Education Movement Uganda	Irene Nafungo
14	KASESE	Karambi Action for Life Improvement (KALI)	Katusabe Beatrice
15	KIRUHURA	Family Health Resource Center	Mugume Innocent
16	KISORO	Peace Education Trust	Rev.Dr. Ephraim Mbabazi
17	KUMI	Teso Dioceses Development Office	Rev.Canon Naptan Opwapa
18	KYEGEGWA	Patience Pays Professionals Organisation (PAPRO)	Matovu Charles
19	LYANTONDE	Rural Action Community Based Organisation	Haq Makumbi
20	MITYANA	Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE)	Sarah Nakintu
21	MOYO	Community Empowerment for Rural Development	Asipkwe Jean Christabel
22	MPIGI	Child Support Organisation of Mpigi	Musisi Sonko Joseph

	DISTRICT	DISTRICT PARTNER INSTITUTIONS	HEADS OF DISTRICT PARTNER INSTITUTIONS
23	NAKAPIRIPIT	Building Communities Initiatives	Francis Lokiru
24	NAKASONGOLA	Nakasongola District Farmers Association	Butamanya Johnson
25	NAMUTUMBA	Namutumba NGO Forum	Stephen Mubetera
26	PALLISA	Palisa Civil Society Network	Makeri Wilberforce
27	SIRONKO	Network for Community Development	Harris Namutebi
28	ZOMBO	Life Concern	William Anyolitho

EAST AFRICAN TRAINERS

1	Jackson Atria
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3	Jornada Ngisa

NATIONAL TRAINERS

1	Amongin Joselyn
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12	Lubogo peter
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14	Salaama Rose Bavuga
15	Winnie Babirye
16	Nakalembe S Evelyn



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