

Ntoroko flood-hit schools perform poorly in exams

According to the recently released PLE results, only five candidates from Ntoroko District attained First Division.

BY ALEX ASHABA

Persistent flooding in Ntoroko District has once again highlighted deep inequalities in access to quality education after several flood-affected primary schools registered poor performance in the recently released Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) results.

According to the PLE results, only five candidates from Ntoroko District attained First Division.

Since the beginning of 2025, floods have submerged classrooms, staff houses and learning materials, forcing learners to abandon permanent school structures and continue studying in makeshift tents, where many remain to date.

Some of the affected schools include Masaka, Umoja and Rwangara Primary Schools, where flooding destroyed property and disrupted learning. At Umoja and Rwangara, pupils have been studying in temporary tents after classrooms were partially submerged.

Schools in Kanara and Butungama sub-counties, which were among the worst hit earlier in the year, recorded mainly Second and Third Division results. Education leaders attribute the poor performance to prolonged displacement, poor learning environments and repeated disruptions to the school calendar.

At Masaka Primary School, the head teacher, Mr Vincent Asiimwe, said the school registered 28 candidates, none



Men on a canoe at Masaka Primary School, Butungama Sub-county in Ntoroko District. Large parts of the district have been flood after River Semuliki burst its banks. PHOTO/MONITOR

What he says.
Since schools reopened after Covid-19, our pupils have been studying under tents at Rwenyena IDP camp. This learning environment is the main reason for our poor performance,"

Mr Benson Ajuna, head teacher, Umoja Primary School

of whom attained First Division.

"Out of the 28 candidates, 17 passed in Second Division, 10 in Third Division and one candidate did not turn up for the exams," Mr Asiimwe said.

He compared the performance with 2024, when the school produced one First Division candidate with Aggre-

gate 10, despite similar challenges.

"With the persistent floods, I believe we have performed fairly well. Parents want First Division, but given our situation, this was very difficult because we did not complete the syllabus properly," he said.

Mr Asiimwe explained that the school closed before the end of the first term, conducted mock examinations in the second term while teaching in flooded classrooms.

This culminated in low concentration levels, even in the third term.

"For the whole of last year, all school structures, including staff quarters, were submerged. We shifted and erected tents, and that is where learners have been studying. Even when schools reopen, that is where we expect to continue from," he said.

He added that the learning environment continues to undermine learners' potential.

"If the environment were conducive, these children would perform much better. Some pupils miss classes whenever their communities flood and families relocate to safer places," he said.

Flooding has also caused a sharp decline in enrolment at Masaka Primary School, from 695 pupils in 2024 to 342 in the third term of 2025, as displaced families moved away with their children.

At Umoja Primary School, the head teacher, Mr Benson Ajuna, said flooding has crippled learning for years, with many buildings at the school partially submerged since 2019.

"Since schools reopened after Cov-

id-19, our pupils have been studying under tents at Rwenyena IDP camp. This learning environment is the main reason for our poor performance," he said.

In 2025, the school registered 30 candidates, with 29 scoring Second Division and one scoring Third Division. In 2024, all 21 candidates attained Second Division.

"For me, these results are good, considering what we go through. But parents want First Division, which we can achieve if learning conditions improve. We need permanent school structures," Mr Ajuna said.

At Rwangara Primary School, five out of 43 candidates attained First Division, while 38 scored Second Division.

In 2024, four flood-affected schools, Umoja, Rwangara, Kachwakum and Kamuga, were forced to share one examination centre at Rwangara Primary School. Out of 86 candidates who sat PLE, none attained First Division; 76 scored Second Division, seven scored Third Division and three missed the examinations.

Although Ntoroko District registered 1,408 Primary Seven candidates in 2024, with 125 pupils (nine percent) attaining First Division, educationists say district-level performance masks the hardships faced by learners in flood-prone communities.

In 2023, Rwangara Primary School, which served as an examination centre for flood-affected schools, registered 56 candidates, three of whom attained First Division.

Education leaders say this shows that learners in flood-prone areas can excel if provided with stable learning environments, adequate infrastructure and timely government intervention.

Head teachers, parents and community leaders have called upon government, humanitarian agencies and development partners to prioritise the construction of permanent, flood-resistant school structures and to relocate schools from high-risk flood zones.

"These children are not failing because they are weak. They are failing because the system has failed to protect their right to learn," said one teacher, who asked not to be named for fear of reprimand.