

SCHOOLS IN BUGANDA, BUSOGA, WEST NILE SUB-REGIONS TOP LISTS

By Martin Kitubi

While the number of candidates who qualify for Senior One has increased, that of schools failing to register a candidate in Division One has also increased over the last three years.

Data obtained from the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) and analysed by *New Vision*, shows that a total of 7,469 government and private schools did not register a candidate in Division One in the just released Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) results.

According to the UNEB data, a similar number of 7,226 schools did not register a candidate in Division One in 2024, while 6,833 others were registered in 2023.

Most of these under-performing primary schools are rural schools spread across all regions.

According to the data, Buganda has had the biggest number of schools that have not registered first grades, recording 1,454 in 2023, 1,555 in 2024 and now 1,566 in the just-released PLE.

In second position is Busoga sub-region, having registered 743 primary schools in 2023, 811 in 2024 and 794 in the just-released PLE results.

West Nile is third and it registered 596 primary schools without a first grade in 2023, 630 in 2024 and 680 others in 2025.

The other regions that make up the top five include, Teso in fourth position with 530 schools in 2023, 543 in 2024 and 551 in 2025, as well as Acholi in fifth with 483 schools in 2023, 492 in 2024 and 501 in 2025.

New Vision has learnt that the education ministry has tasked the respective local governments with studying their performance reports from UNEB and explain the cause of this under-performance.

The 2025 PLE results were released on Friday by the First Lady and Minister for Education and Sports, Mrs Janet Museveni, at State House, Nakasero in Kampala.

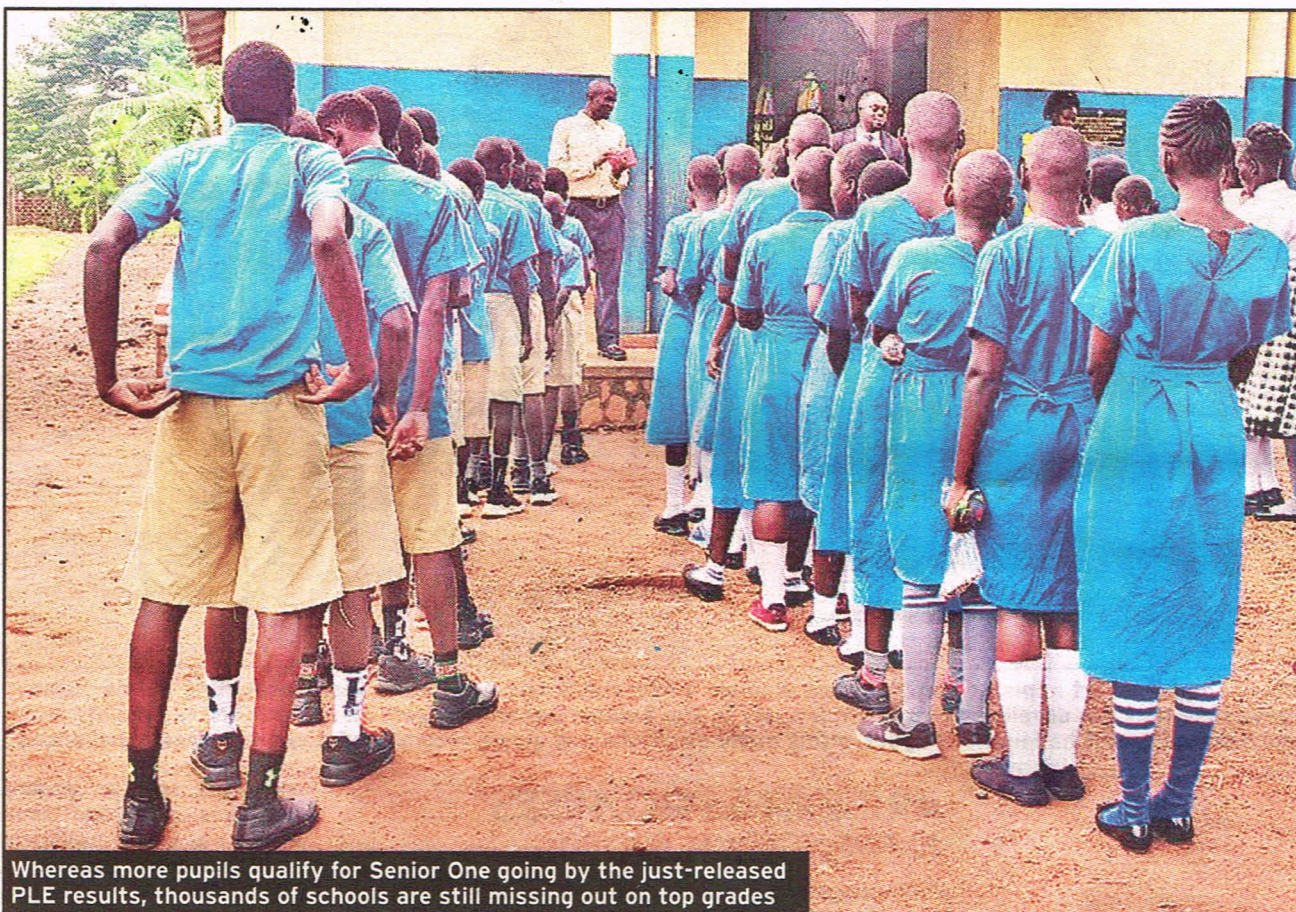
LOCAL GOVTS SPEAK OUT

Mastulah Tibiwa, the Bugiri district education officer, attributed the under-performance of certain schools in her area to not just teachers, but parents and limited funding.

While it's the responsibility of the teachers to teach and train learners, Tibiwa said the parents have abandoned their roles in the children's education.

"Let me tell you, these

PLE: OVER 7000 SCHOOLS WITH NO FIRST GRADE IN 3 YEARS



Whereas more pupils qualify for Senior One going by the just-released PLE results, thousands of schools are still missing out on top grades

GENERAL PERFORMANCE

Data from Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) shows that the number of candidates who qualified to progress to the next level of education, increased.

Out of the 817,883 registered candidates, 807,313 of them sat for Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE), with just 10,570 learners who failed to turn up.

Of the total, 91,990 pupils passed in Division One, 388,293 in Division Two, 165,226 in Division three, 84,724 in Division Four.

This implies that a total of 730,233 of the 2025 PLE candidates qualify for the next level of education, compared to 722,730 in 2024.

According to UNEB, English had the highest percentage of candidates (18.5%) demonstrating higher ability levels, followed by mathematics (16.4%) and social studies with religious education (15.9%).

In addition, two-thirds of the candidates exhibited medium ability level in all the four subjects, while the percentage of candidates who exhibited lower ability levels was almost the same in all the four subjects at 16%.

children do not eat at all. You can never concentrate in class without eating. They spend 10 hours of the day in school without a meal. The parents do not care at all," Tibiwa said.

"While some parents support school feeding, in many UPE [Universal Primary Education] schools, the parents' contributions towards school feeding were stopped because

Henry Kabulo, the retired Bugiri district education officer, blamed the poor performance on the lack of feeding in most rural schools.

the policy does not allow the charging of any fees. We now have a big challenge, children are coming to school, but they do not concentrate," she said.

Tibiwa said many teachers are struggling financially, and they are torn between keeping at school and hunting for other sources of income.

That's not all, she said the teachers in her district are overstretched due to the crowded classrooms.

"As Bugiri district, we have a shortage of 600 teachers at primary schools alone. Classrooms are crowded and

teachers cannot do much. On the teacher's side, many of them are stressed with loans and on the run," Tibiwa said. She is optimistic that once the

BETWEEN THE LINES

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PLE: Number of schools without First Grade (2023-2025)

REGION	2023	2024	2025
Acholi	483	492	501
Ankole	397	457	441
Buganda	1454	1555	1566
Bukedi	441	441	457
Bunyoro	369	345	373
Busoga	743	811	794
Elgon	482	481	514
Kampala	34	54	60
Karamoja	99	107	114
Kigezi	351	366	409
Lango	424	457	449
Rwenzori	252	259	279
Teso	530	543	551
Tooro	178	228	281
West Nile	596	630	680
GRAND TOTAL	6833	7226	7469

teachers' salaries, recruitments and school feeding are sorted out, education will improve and that all these schools will finally see a candidate in Division One.

HUNGER

Henry Kabulo, the retired Bugiri district education officer, blamed the poor performance on the lack of feeding in most rural schools.

"In these rural schools, both the teachers and learners are living hungry and you can only expect hungry results. For the sugarcane- and rice-growing districts, such as Bugiri, agriculture is denying many of these children the chance to be in school. They hardly attend class," Kabulo said.

CALL FOR MORE TEACHERS

In a separate interview, Nicholas Odeba, who retired from the Zombo district education officer position, asked the Government to increase the recruitment of teachers and fill the gaps in these perennial under-performing schools.

"I want to tell you that no school produces good grades without quality teachers. The performing schools not only have financial support, but also have infrastructure and teachers. In Zombo, you find one teacher attending to 300 learners. The classrooms are crowded," Odeba said.

FUNDING ISSUE

Odeba added: "I want you to visit any of those performing schools and compare it with our under-performing schools. The difference is not just in the infrastructure, but funding. The directors of private schools give them the money they need. Compare that with UPE schools."