

Refugees help Obongi to get two PLE first-grades

For three straight years, the number of candidates passing Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) in Division One in Obongi district has been on a steady decline – from seven in 2023, four in 2024 and two in 2025.

Felix Abraham Idraku, the district education officer, said the 2025 results are the worst he has seen for Obongi in several years.

Idraku attributed the poor performance to several factors, but singled out the high pupil to teacher ratio and last year's industrial action as the biggest contributors to the poor performance. He said teachers on average teach classes of 112 learners, far higher than the recommended 53.

“Having 112 learners in a class affects effective teaching and learning because the teacher cannot reach every learner during lessons,” Idraku said.

2025 UNEB RESULTS

According to the results that were recently released by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), out of the 2,317 candidates who registered for the 2025 PLE in Obongi, only two candidates passed



Felix Abraham Idraku

in Division One, while 397 were in Division Two.

A total of 848 candidates passed in Division Three, 452 in Division Four, while 600 failed. A total of 18 candidates missed the examinations.

The two candidates who passed in Division One were South Sudanese refugees who sat for the exams at Orinya and Bongilo primary schools. Idraku was not surprised that the two

candidates who passed in Division One were refugees because schools that have displaced children tend to benefit from donor support.

Obongi district was carved out of Moyo district in 2019 and currently has 45 primary schools, 24 of which are government-aided, while 21 are community-supported.

HEADTEACHER'S VIEW

Abdallah Data, the headteacher of Obongi Town Primary School, said late reporting of children to school is one of the factors contributing to poor performance.

He said most learners report to school at least two weeks after the term has opened.

“The majority of our children reach Primary Seven when their level of understanding is for Primary Five because of gaps in syllabus completion,” Abdallah said.

Humphrey Benson Otim, the Obongi chief administrative officer, said activities such as fishing, night discos, teenage pregnancies and drug abuse contribute to absenteeism.

PARENTS' VOICES

Rukia Chandia, a parent in the district, blamed the poor performance on fishing and night discos. She said most children go fishing during school time. Chandia called for bylaws to bar children from fishing during school time.

Musa Malish, another parent, called for regular meetings between the teachers and the parents to discuss the challenges and offer solutions.

He said on average, each primary school in the district registers four teenage pregnancies annually. Otim added that a few teachers perform their duties as expected in the schools.

“We pay salaries as early as 24th of every month, but the teachers are not performing their duties. The headteachers and inspectors do not give us the names of the non-

performing teachers,” Otim added.

He also decried negligence from parents, explaining that whenever they organise meetings at schools, it is only women who attend.

INTERVENTIONS

Otim said because of the poor results, over 100 teachers, deputy headteachers and headteachers have been transferred to various schools in a bid to stem the complacency that comes with being in one place for long.

Otim added that with support from the rewards and sanctions committee, the non-performing teachers have been identified and serious measures will be taken on them including withholding their salaries, demotions and de-registration.

Idraku said he will convene a stakeholders' meeting to analyse the results and come up with solutions to improve performance. He said the education department will come up with a bylaw to ensure that parents support learners with meals at home and scholastic materials.