

Are our children learning?

Annual Learning Assessment Report



Uwezo is an East African Initiative, with overall quality assurance and management support from Twaweza.

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We are deeply indebted to the 4,800 Uwezo volunteers who visited 34,667 households and assessed 81,650 children. Our 80 District Partner Institutions and 80 District Contact people worked tirelessly to recruit volunteers, attend trainings, and coordinate the assessment and communication activities. A team of 10 Regional Coordinators and 60 Research Associates coordinated the training of volunteers and supported the secretariat in monitoring the assessment process.

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We wish to express gratitude to our National Advisory Committee members including Professor Deborah Kasente, Dr Akim Okuni, Dr Daniel Nkaada, Mr James Muwonge, Ms Els Heijnen Mr. Fred Mwesigye and Mr Fagil Mandy who selflessly guided us through the 2012 cycle and many of whom participated in monitoring the assessment process itself. We recognize the collaborative support we continue to enjoy from our Ministry of Education, and particularly thank the official Ministry representative to our Advisory Committee Dr Daniel Nkaada for his tremendous support.

We thank the head teachers of the 2,279 public primary schools and the members of the 34,667 households that we visited. Your hospitality and welcome made our work a pleasure. We thank everyone else who has contributed in one way or another to bringing the Uwezo 3 cycle to a conclusion.

Finally, we acknowledge the Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF) for hosting Uwezo in Uganda over the 2012 cycle. Specifically we thank its Executive Director, Richard Ssewakiryanga who also doubled as Uwezo Uganda Country Coordinator until June 2012 for the immense support.

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Foreword

Rakesh Rajani, Head, Twaweza East Africa

‘If we only had more money’ and other myths of improving education etc.

This report presents the 2012 findings of Uwezo at Twaweza, Africa’s largest survey of basic literacy and numeracy. The results are not good. This is Uwezo third annual report, and little has improved over the past years. In Primary 3 only one out of ten have Primary 2 level literacy and numeracy skills and even by the time they reach Primary 7, two out of ten children have not mastered these skills.

Moreover, across the country there are harsh regional variations. Children in Central and Western regions consistently outperform children in Eastern and Northern regions.

Education is meant to be a ticket to a better life. The rude realization is that sending your child to school is not enough; that indeed schooling is not the same as learning; and that the majority of children in school do not have the competencies they require.

Contrary to popular perception, this is not because the government or society does not value education. Ample government pronouncements and public opinion polls show that education is a key priority for both the state and parents. They also put money where their mouths are. Both invest heavily; government education budgets have tripled in the last decade and parents incur significant costs to send children to, and keep them in, school.

So why is this goodwill and money not bringing positive results? Why do learning outcomes not improve?

Many explanations are given. Pundits from within and outside government proffer thousands of pages and hours of opinion and recommendations. The problem is that much of this is not backed by a critical reading of the research or a keen analysis of the science and politics of delivery. Many decision makers and critics alike do not seem to have the discipline to use evidence to guide thinking. Anecdotes and easy assumptions are offered as broad truth, with a lazy confidence and a sad lack of intellectual curiosity. Most of these focus on the need for more – more money, more books, more teachers, more training, more desks, more classrooms, more laboratories, and so forth. Others simply call for heads to roll, without a clear policy prescription of what new heads would need to do differently.

The dismal Uwezo findings offer an opportunity to rethink education analysis and strategy. We offer three suggestions:

First, we need to focus firmly on learning outcomes rather than schooling inputs as the central metric for education progress. Leaders, teachers and activists alike should care about and track the competencies children develop more than numbers of desks or teachers trained.

Second, we need to ask, in a thoughtful and scientific fashion, what drives learning outcomes? In doing so we would do well to begin with evidence of what works. This includes examining rigorous evidence from within the country and global studies from contexts similar to ours. A growing body of evidence, some of which challenges long held views, can help guide policy. The other approach is to identify examples of what is called positive deviance – how a few people have done better despite facing the same constraints as others – and to try to understand the secret to their success. The teachers and students who work hard and perform well in the most difficult circumstances need to be celebrated, listened to, and emulated.

Third, learning and innovations thrive in an environment of openness. A society that is transparent, that shares data and stories, where there is free speech and critique, where ideas travel and can be both challenged and celebrated, is a society that can regenerate its thinking and its practice, and that can transform its institutions. It can also make government more efficient and save billions. The Government would do well if it opened

up information about the entire education system – all the way down to the school level – so that anyone could know about the teachers, materials and other resources, policies and curriculum, examinations, monitoring and quality assurance, projects and innovations, much more easily. Technology allows us to do this in dramatically more creative, fast and inexpensive ways than ever before. It would require a deep norm shift to democratize information in this way – to accept and act as if it belongs to the public – but its potential benefits for society are enormous.

This open thinking can drive better learning. Teaching every child to read, and to count well, is not rocket science. Ugandans have achieved far greater feats. So the lack of progress in literacy and numeracy may be a louder signal about the whole education process than low instructional competence or technical knowhow.

So far we have focused on what the government should do differently, for it bears the primary responsibility for providing quality education for all. That said, just waiting for the authorities may prove to be folly.

The core point of the Uwezo and Twaweza approach is to engage all Ugandans to play their part. It recognizes that change starts with you and me taking responsibility, analysing the situation and taking informed action.

Read to your child. Review her homework. Talk to her teachers. Volunteer to help the schools. Follow the money. Ask questions to the school committee. Learn what has worked. Experiment with new ideas. Speak up. Hold leaders accountable.

All the time keeping our eyes focused on the prize: can our children count, read and write?

The truth remains that if we want our children to learn, we need to look in the mirror. For change will not just come, unless we make it happen.

Change is me. It's you. It's all of us.

John Mugo, for Uwezo East Africa

Change will be achieved by You and I – One Child at a Time

Our three countries – Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya - have celebrated five decades of independence. These have also been five decades of our own education – teaching our children what we want, managing our own structures and resources for education. Yet, this Uwezo report demonstrates that we are clearly far from achieving our dreams for our children. A strong body of evidence exists across East Africa that too much blame has been heaped on our governments and too much expected of them. During the sixteen years of Universal Primary Education in Uganda, we have censured, we have negotiated, we have been disappointed. Yet we know that there is energy in ordinary citizens – parents, teachers, local leaders, neighbours – to bring about the change we are looking for. What then can we do better to improve learning in our schools?

For the third time in Uganda, Uwezo successfully engaged thousands of citizens to conduct its annual learning assessment in 2012. A band of 4,800 volunteers assessed 34,667 households, one household at a time. They walked from place to place, and assessed 81,650 children across the country, one child at a time. They conversed with parents, local councils, head teachers and teachers on the status of education in our local councils, our parishes, our districts and our great country. This achievement could be the beginning of ordinary citizens participating to bring about change, right where they are.

Rather than just wait for the government to come to our school and improve it, what can we do about it? Rather than just wait for the teacher to struggle with our child to help her to read or count, what can I do about it? Rather than just complain how our school is not teaching children to learn, what can I do about it? Rather than just blame someone else for the low learning competences of my child, what can I do about it?

This report communicates a grim picture: only a tenth of children in our schools today are achieving what they should be. We can allow this message to be the end, so that we just continue to complain, or we can agree to do something about it, and be part of the change.

We must believe that every child going to school today can learn. We must stand and be counted – do our best as teachers, manage school resources and bring in more resources as head teachers, attend meetings and contribute positively as parents, read with children and assist them in learning at home as citizens. The millions of children attending school today can learn if every household in Uganda took this opportunity to do something. This change can only be achieved by you and I, so that all our children will learn – one child at a time.



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Introduction: Sixteen Years of Universal Primary Education with Minimal Learning

Mary Goretti Nakabugo, Country Coordinator, Uwezo Uganda at Twaweza

Universal Primary Education (UPE) is a promise made by Uganda’s government to its people. Since 1997 when the UPE Act was passed, official school fees have been eliminated and education has been made accessible for millions more children in Uganda. We have seen significant growth in the number of schools, classrooms, and teachers over the past decade. Primary school enrolment rates – for both boys and girls – have also skyrocketed. While there are still children from poor or marginalized backgrounds who are out of school, their number has dramatically fallen. Uganda is almost at the point of claiming truly “universal” primary education, at least in terms of enrolment.

Unfortunately, that isn’t the whole story. The massive expansion in enrolment has not been matched by an equivalent increase in the quality of education. Children are completing primary school without the basic and necessary competencies they need to be good citizens and help develop our country. Many children in Uganda under perform significantly in reading comprehension and in numeracy. There needs to be a shift in focus from quantity to quality in Uganda’s education system – both in terms of the government’s perspective and in that of the public.

There also needs to be a change made in the engagement of parents in the education system. Many parents rely on the government to fully facilitate their child’s education – from the daily lessons, to serving school lunches, to providing scholastic materials – and don’t see their own role as critical to the process. Parents who don’t check in with their children on their schoolwork often don’t know how their children are progressing – and how well or poorly the education system is serving them.

Now in its fourth year, Uwezo at Twaweza continues to ask the question – are our children learning? Through the annual assessment, which takes place in households all across the country, Uwezo determines children’s learning levels, shares instant feedback with parents, and disseminates the regional and national results. The 2012 report sampling size makes it one of the largest surveys in Uganda, covering 80 districts, 2,387 enumeration areas (EA) or villages, 2,279 public schools, and 34,667 households in which 81,650 children aged 6-16 were assessed.

Uwezo has continued to strengthen and build upon its assessment processes, communication and outreach strategies, volunteer base, and professional network. The findings of each assessment are used to convince ordinary citizens, including mothers and fathers in every town and village across Uganda, education activists and government officials that we need to change the way we think about education. We need to measure our success by the quality of learning outcomes and not merely by the number of buildings and pupils. Uganda’s education can do much better. Uwezo believes informed and motivated citizens are the key to creating universal quality education in our country and we hope that this report will inspire you to play a key role in improving children’s learning.

1.1 The Scale of Uwezo

Uwezo’s scientific and highly scalable model is implemented throughout the country during each annual assessment. Its nationwide coverage allows for significant comparisons and conclusions to be drawn from the data. In 2012 the Uwezo assessment was undertaken in 80 districts of Uganda; in each district 30 enumeration areas/villages were randomly selected, and in each EA children from 20 households were assessed and information was sought from one public school. Table 1 below shows the reach of Uwezo’s 2012 assessment in comparison to 2011.

Table 1: Uwezo Uganda’s Reach in 2012 Compared to 2011

Scale	2011	2012
Districts Reached	79	80
Households	35,359	34,667
Enumeration Areas Reached	2,329	2,387
Schools Reached	2,115	2,279
Children Assessed (6-16 years)	88,373	81,650

1.2 Unique Features of Uwezo

Uwezo is based on an innovative citizen-driven approach to social change. Uwezo’s approach is to engage ordinary citizens – parents, guardians, and teachers – in their children’s education and to inform and mobilize communities to find their own solutions and to demand change from their leaders.

Uwezo is also unique in terms of the tools used. Uwezo’s assessment tools are simple, but comprehensive, and are easily administered. The assessment is carried out by trained volunteers, often within their own communities, and is scalable to cover the entire country. Uwezo’s assessment produces fresh data every year – something unseen in Uganda before, and also rare in Africa. Uwezo communicates its results year round with individuals at the grassroots as well as policymakers.

Uwezo is part of Twaweza, a citizen-centred initiative focusing on large scale change in East Africa.

1.3 Key Findings about Learning in Uganda

FACT 1

BASIC LITERACY AND NUMERACY COMPETENCIES IN LOWER PRIMARY

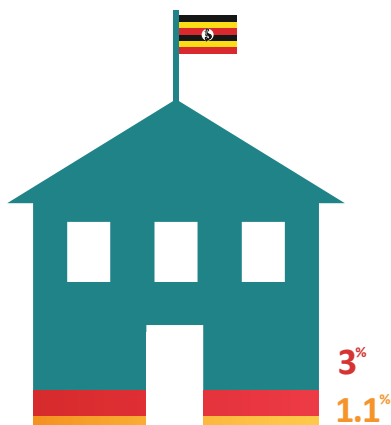


Only one out of every ten children assessed in Primary 3 was able to read a Primary 2 level story and correctly solve Primary 2 level numeracy questions up to division level.

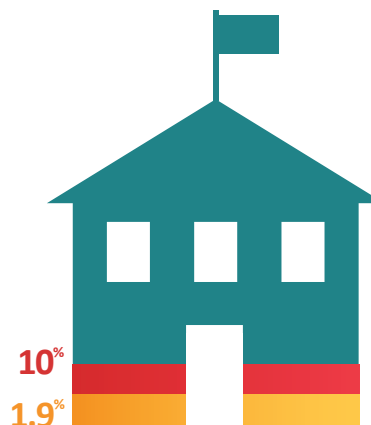
Most children in lower primary lacked the required competencies in basic literacy and numeracy.

FACT 2

PERFORMANCE IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS IS BETTER THAN IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS



GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS



PRIVATE SCHOOLS

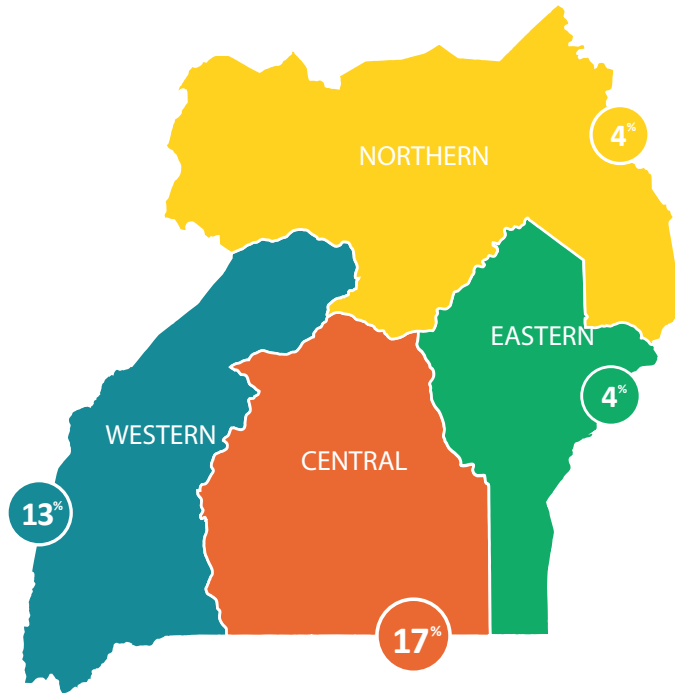
KEY

- Children in Primary 3 who could read a Primary 2 level story
- Children in Primary 3 who could correctly solve Primary 2 level numeracy questions up to division level

Children in private schools performed better than those in government schools in literacy and numeracy in the lower levels.

FACT 3

THERE WERE MAJOR REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY



Percentage of children who could read a Primary 2 level story

For example, two out of every ten children in Central Region could read a Primary 2 level story compared to less than one out of ten children in Eastern Region who could do so.

FACT 4

COMPETENCIES IN BASIC LOCAL LANGUAGE LITERACY WERE LACKING

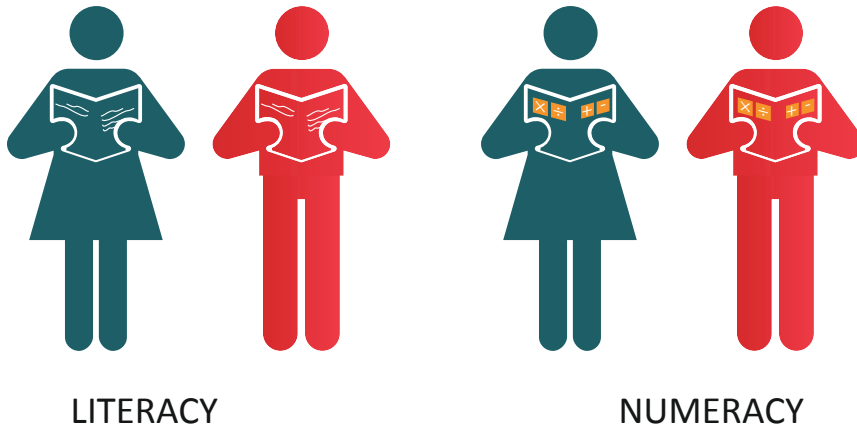


Where local language literacy tests were given, only one out of every ten children in Primary 3 was able to read and understand Primary 2 level local language story.

Children lacked the required competencies in basic local language literacy despite the existing policy on teaching and learning in local language in lower primary.

FACT 5

THERE WERE NO SIGNIFICANT GENDER DIFFERENCES IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY



There were no significant gender differences in literacy and numeracy, though boys performed marginally better than girls in numeracy.



We were the first children
to reach the school.

the name of Agnes
the first children

FORMATION
PERITY

Design and Methodology: Selecting Enumeration Areas/Villages, Schools, Households and Children

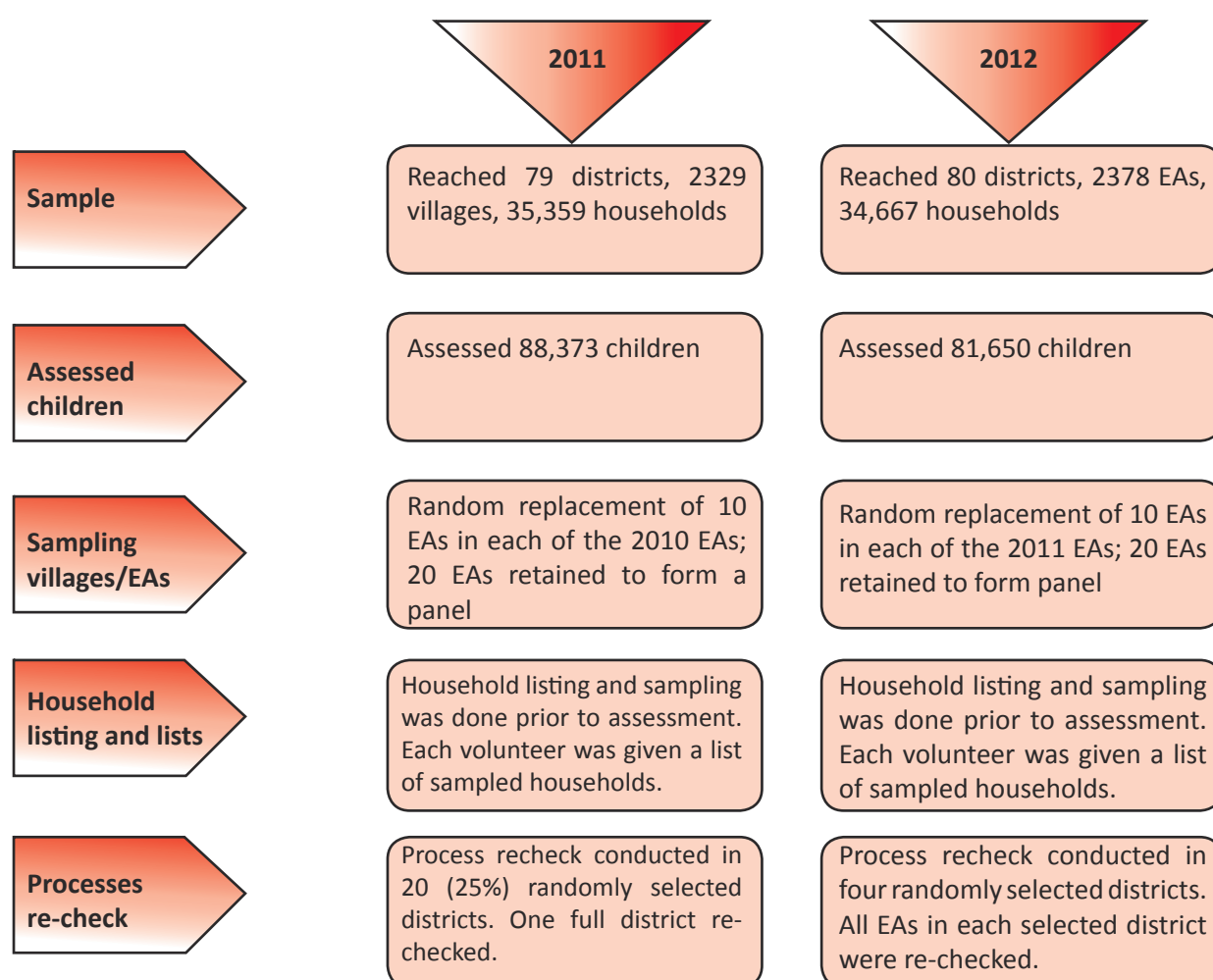
2.1 Sampling methodology

The sample frame for the 2012 assessment was adopted from the 2002 Uganda Population and Housing Census (UPHC) list of enumeration areas (EAs) provided by Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS). The frame was updated in 2007/08 from 56 to 80 districts. Data were collected in all 80 districts. A representative sample of 48,000 households was drawn for the survey using a stratified two stage sampling design.

In the first stage 30 EAs were selected in each of the 80 districts using probability proportional to size, a sampling procedure where the selection probability for each element (EA for our case) is set to be proportional to its size (number of households). This implies that EAs with higher numbers of households had a higher probability of being selected. In each of the 30 selected EAs, a new list of households was generated and served as a sampling frame for the household selection in the second stage. The second and final stage involved selecting 20 households from each of the 30 EAs using systematic random sampling from household lists done prior to the survey.

Figure 1 below summarizes the processes involved in the 2012 assessment in comparison with the 2011 assessment.

Figure 1: Processes Involved in the 2012 Assessment Compared to 2011



2.2 Selecting the schools

Government schools serving the assessment EAs were selected for collection of school-based data. In situations where the EA did not have a government primary school serving it, then the school which most children attended, in the neighbouring EA, was surveyed.

2.3 Selecting the children

The survey targeted all children who regularly resided in the household, between the ages of 6 and 16 years, irrespective of whether they were attending school or not. However, only children attending school were actually assessed, due to ongoing objections about the assessment of out of school children from the Ministry of Education and Sports. All children in a selected household who were aged 6-16 and attending school were assessed on basic English literacy and numeracy. Overall a total of 81,650 children were assessed.

2.4 Testing tools and processes

A rigorous process of test development yielded four sets of tests in English, numeracy and four local languages (Luganda, Ateso, Runyoro and Leblango) with the same level of difficulty, for use during the national assessment. This was done by a group of test developers and education experts including practicing primary school teachers and subject specialists from the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB). The Uganda Primary Two (P2) curriculum was used as a point of reference in the development of these tests.

The tests were widely shared with researchers and educationalists at different levels of development. Extensive pre-testing (three times) in both rural and urban settings, and a full district pilot was done to further validate the tests. Section 2.5 below gives an overview of the tests used for the 2012 assessment.

2.5 Testing English literacy and numeracy

2.5.1 English tests

The English tests were produced at letter, word, paragraph, story and comprehension levels. During the administration of tests, volunteers started with the letter level and would then move a level higher depending on the child's ability. To proceed to the subsequent level, the child had to read the text at each level with ease, speed and accuracy. Comprehension becomes increasingly important as the child moves up in test levels – for sentences the reading should not sound like a string of words and to pass the story level, at least one of the questions had to be answered accurately.

Below is a sample literacy test.

LITERACY TEST SAMPLE

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

o	k	i	d	u
r	f	s	b	n

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

roof	dig	two	bus	his
sit	name	bed	son	cat

Paragraph/Sentence Level: (Should attempt any of the two paragraphs)

Juma is a bus driver.
He has one child.
Her name is Bena.
She is in primary two.

Dina and Dora are sisters.
They live with their aunt.
She is called Erina.
She is kind to them.

Story Level: (Should attempt both questions)

My father is Mr. Babu. He is a farmer. He grows bananas and beans. My mother is Mrs. Nusula Babu. She sells maize in the market. Children in our school like her maize. They always buy it all.

Questions

1. What crops does Mr. Babu grow?
2. Where does Mrs. Nusula Babu take her maize to sell?

2.5.2 Numeracy tests

The numeracy tests consisted of eight levels; counting of numbers 1-9, recognition of numbers 10-99, recognition of numbers 100-999, recognition of place value, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. In administration of the numeracy tests children were first asked to attempt the counting level, progressing to higher levels depending on their ability. Below is a sample numeracy test.

NUMERACY TEST SAMPLE

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 | 22 | 73 | 21 |
| 45 | 34 | 84 | 69 |

Number Recognition 100 – 999: (Should attempt any 5, at least 4 must be correct)

- | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 147 | 465 | 527 | 731 |
| 222 | 320 | 880 | 642 |

Place value: (Should attempt all, all must be correct)

Number	H	T	O
2 <u>4</u> 3			
12 <u>9</u>			
<u>4</u> 74			

Addition: (Should attempt any 3 (one from each row), at least 2 must be correct)

$20 + 13 =$	$11 + 42 =$	$14 + 21 =$
$\begin{array}{r} 62 \\ +24 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 53 \\ +34 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 44 \\ +33 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$
$\begin{array}{r} 155 \\ +220 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 265 \\ +623 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 324 \\ +453 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$

Subtraction: (Should attempt any 3 (one from each row), at least 2 must be correct)

$24 - 12 =$	$22 - 11 =$	$26 - 14 =$
$\begin{array}{r} 45 \\ -23 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 25 \\ -13 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 79 \\ -35 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$
$\begin{array}{r} 333 \\ -212 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 764 \\ -542 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 876 \\ -654 \\ \hline \\ \hline \end{array}$

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

$4 \times 4 =$	$6 \times 3 =$	$8 \times 2 =$
$5 \times 4 =$	$3 \times 8 =$	$7 \times 3 =$
$4 \times 3 =$	$12 \times 2 =$	

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

$18 \div 3 =$	$4 \div 2 =$	$8 \div 4 =$
$10 \div 2 =$	$6 \div 2 =$	$15 \div 3 =$
$9 \div 3 =$	$18 \div 6 =$	



Findings from the National Assessment

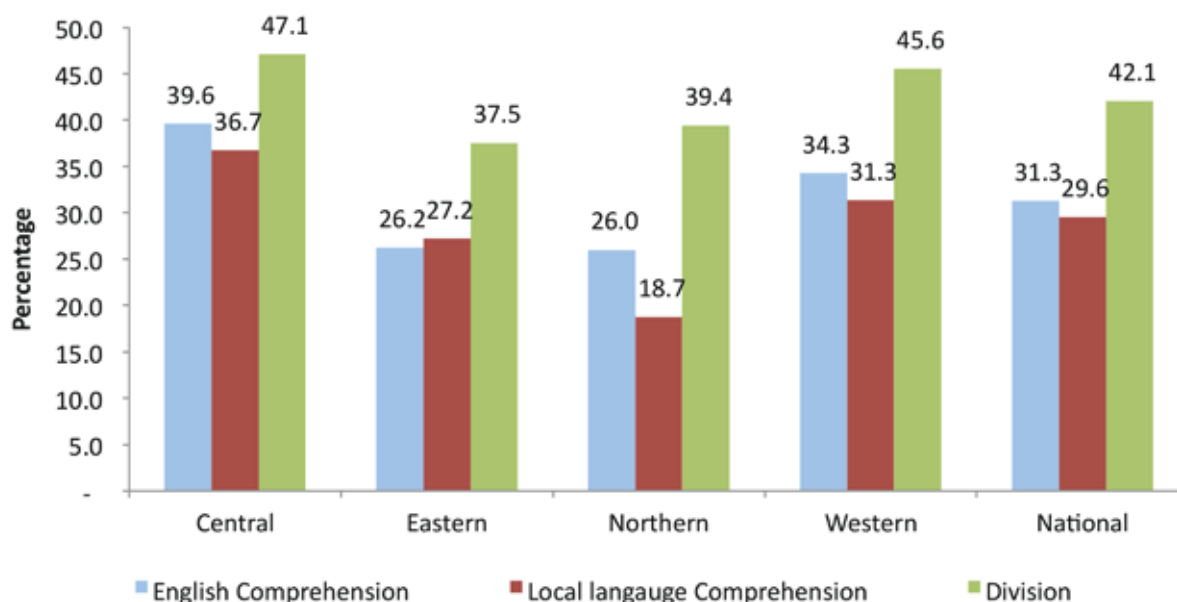
3.1 English Literacy and Numeracy

Table 2: Percentage distribution of literacy and numeracy competencies of P2 standard, P3-P7 pupils

Numeracy	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Comprehend	Total
Nothing	1.4	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	2.7
Identify 0-9	3.2	4.2	1.3	0.4	0.2	0.1	9.3
Identify 10-99	1.6	4.1	2.8	0.7	0.2	0.1	9.6
Addition	1.0	3.4	4.5	2.2	0.9	0.5	12.5
Subtraction	0.7	2.5	4.4	3.7	1.9	1.1	14.2
Multiplication	0.3	0.8	1.4	3.0	2.2	1.9	9.6
Division	0.6	1.9	2.2	3.6	5.8	28.2	42.2
Total	8.8	17.5	16.7	13.8	11.2	32.0	100.0

Overall, only 3 out of 10 of all the children assessed nation wide were able to read and understand a Primary 2 level story text and correctly solve Primary 2 level numeracy questions up to division level (Table 2). Unsurprisingly, a majority of the children having these skills were in Primary 7. The implication is that many children are being promoted to the next level of education without attaining the appropriate learning competencies, and some are even completing primary education without attaining basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Figure 2: Percentage of pupils (P3 - P7) who can do Primary 2 work, by region



From the regional point of view, children in Central Region were able to comprehend Primary 2 level English and local language stories and solve Primary 2 level division better than other regions (Figure 2). For example Central Region performed better than Eastern Region on division tasks by a 10 percentage point margin and on English comprehension by a 13 percent margin. Overall, children in Eastern Region performed poorly compared to other regions.

3.2 English Literacy

Literacy was assessed at six levels, as below.

Table 3: Uwezo English Literacy Competence Assessment Levels

Level 1 (non-readers/nothing):	the inability to recognize letters of the alphabet
Level 2 (letter):	the ability to recognize letters of the alphabet
Level 3 (word):	the ability to read words of Primary 2 level difficulty
Level 4 (sentence):	the ability to read a paragraph of Primary 2 level difficulty
Level 5 (story):	the ability to correctly read a story of Primary 2 level difficulty
Level 6 (comprehension):	the ability to correctly read and understand a story of Primary 2 level difficulty and answer related questions.

Table 4 below, summarizes the percentage distribution of literacy competencies of Primary 2 tasks by Primary 1 up to Primary 7 children. Our report emphasizes analysis of results for children in Primary 3 and 7. At Primary 3 children are expected to have completed the Primary 2 curriculum and should therefore perform these tasks with ease. By Primary 7, the final class of the primary education cycle in Uganda, children are expected to find no difficulty at all with Primary 2 level work.

Table 4: Percentage distribution of literacy competencies of P2 standard by class, P1 - P7

Class	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
P1	58.3	33.7	6.3	0.9	0.8	100
P2	33.4	41.2	17.6	4.4	3.5	100
P3	19.7	35.0	25.0	10.8	9.5	100
P4	10.1	22.3	25.3	17.2	25.0	100
P5	3.7	9.3	11.9	18.2	56.9	100
P6	1.3	3.5	6.0	12.3	76.8	100
P7	1.0	1.5	1.8	6.2	89.6	100
Total	23.5	24.8	14.6	9.5	27.6	100

Overall, only 3 out of 10 (27.6%) children assessed in Primary 1 up to Primary 7 were able to read a Primary 2 level story (Table 4). Of those in Primary 3 only 1 out of 10 (9.5%) children assessed were able to read a Primary 2 level story. Even by Primary 7, 1 out of 10 children still could not read a Primary 2 story.

There was a slight improvement in overall literacy competencies in 2012 as 3 out of 10 (27.6%) children could read and comprehend a Primary 2 level story compared to 2 out of 10 (23.9%) in 2011.

Figure 3: P3 pupils who cannot comprehend a P2 story

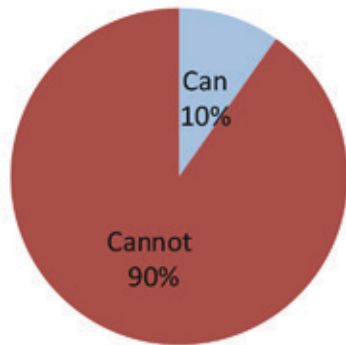


Figure 4: P7 pupils who cannot comprehend a P2 story

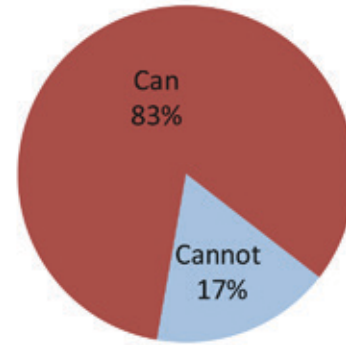
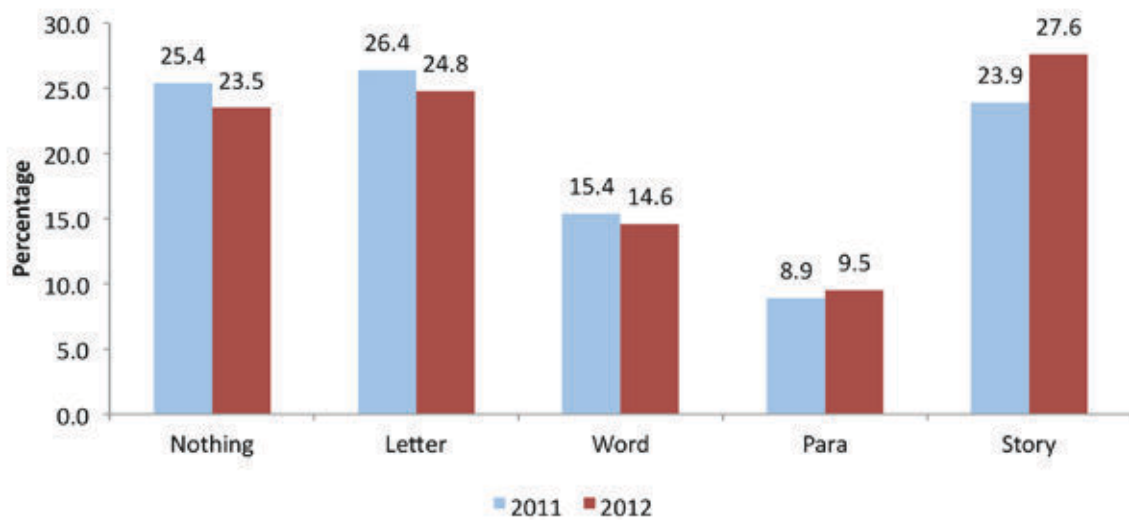


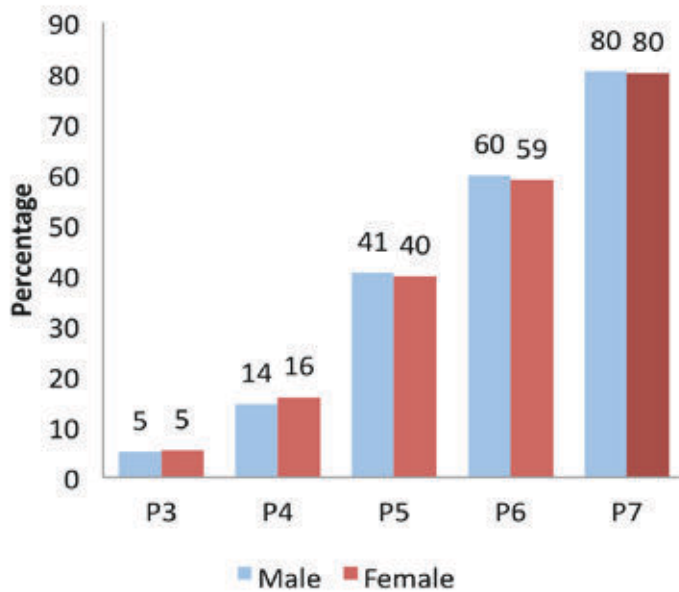
Figure 5: Percentage of children at different levels of English literacy, 2011 and 2012



Evidence also shows that only a few children who were able to read a Primary 2 story could comprehend it (Figures 4 and 5 above). Only 1 out of 20 children assessed in Primary 3 was able to read and comprehend a Primary 2 story. Further, in Primary 7, 2 out of 10 children were still unable to read and comprehend a Primary 2 story.

English Literacy, by Gender

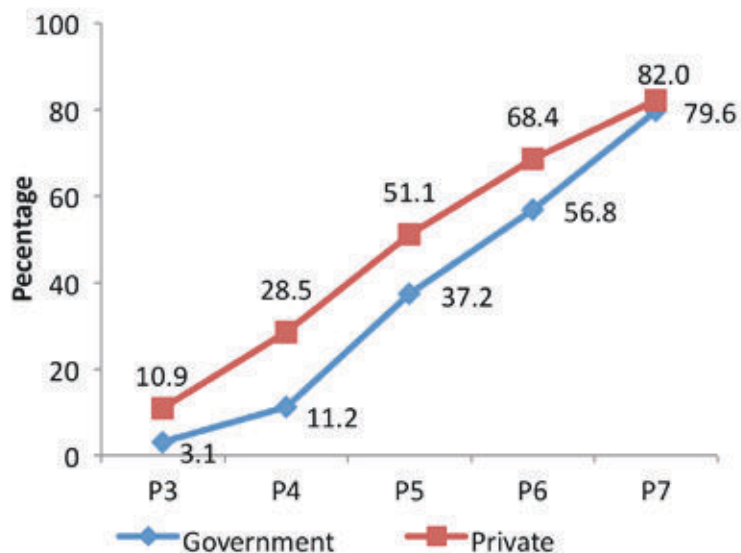
Figure 6: Percentage distribution of English literacy, by class and gender



There were no significant gender differences in literacy as shown in Figure 6.

English Literacy, by School Ownership

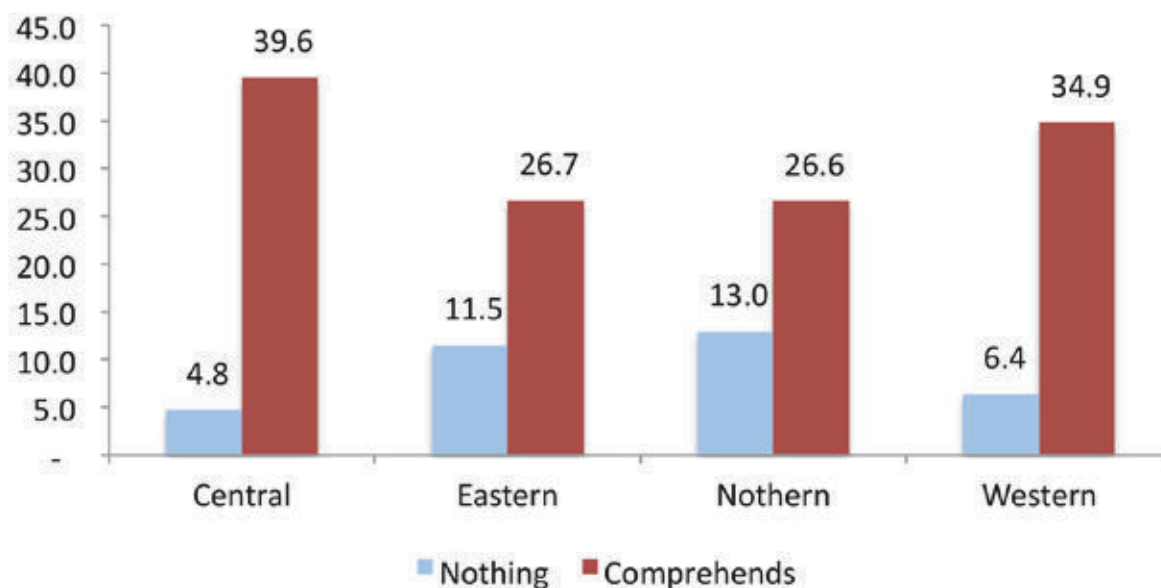
Figure 7: Percentage distribution of English literacy, by class and school type



Children in private schools could comprehend a story text of Primary 2 level difficulty better than those in government schools at lower and middle primary level, by a margin of over 10 percentage points (Figure 7). This variation in comprehension was more evident at Primary 4 level (with a margin of 17 percentage points). However, this gap narrows as children progress to higher classes and almost closes by the time they are in Primary 7 (with a margin of two percentage points).

Regional Differences in Literacy Competencies

Figure 8: Percentage distribution of P3 - P7 pupils who can comprehend a story or read nothing, by region



There were major regional differences in English literacy competencies. Almost 4 out of 10 children in classes Primary 3 to Primary 7 in Central and Western regions were able to read and comprehend a Primary 2 level story compared to 2 out of 10 children in the Eastern and Northern regions who were able to do so.

3.3 Numeracy

Numeracy was assessed at seven levels, as below.

UWEZO 2012 assessed Numeracy levels as

Table 5: Uwezo 2012 Numeracy Competence Assessment Levels

Level 1	(nothing) the inability to count at least 4 out of 5 numerical numbers from 1 – 9.
Level 2	(1-9) the ability to count numerical numbers from 1 to 9
Level 3	(10-99) the ability to recognize numerical numbers from 10 to 99
Level 4	(addition) the ability to solve at least two numerical written addition sums of Primary 2 difficulty
Level 5	(subtraction) the ability to solve at least two numerical written subtraction sums of Primary 2 difficulty
Level 6	(multiplication) the ability to solve at least two numerical written multiplication sums of Primary 2 difficulty
Level 7	(division) is the ability to solve at least two numerical written division sums of Primary 2 difficulty

Table 6: Percentage distribution of numeracy competencies of P2 standard By class, P1 - P7

Class	Nothing	Identify 0 - 9	Identify 10_99	Add	Subtract	Multiply	Divide	Total
P1	30.0	53.5	10.2	3.6	1.6	0.4	0.8	100
P2	10.2	41.6	21.1	11.4	8.5	3.1	4.3	100
P3	4.9	21.8	20.1	18.7	15.5	6.1	12.9	100
P4	2.9	9.4	11.1	16.6	19.0	11.2	29.8s	100
P5	2.0	4.2	5.0	10.5	16.1	13.7	48.6	100
P6	1.2	1.8	2.3	5.5	8.6	9.1	71.6	100
P7	1.2	0.9	0.8	2.4	3.7	6.3	84.7	100
Total	9.9	24.1	11.5	10.4	10.5	6.5	27.1	100

Figure 9: P3 pupils who can perform P2 division

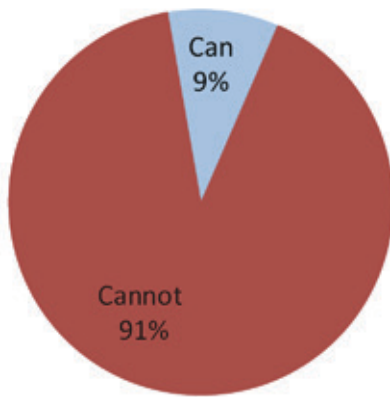


Figure 10: P7 pupils who can perform P2 division

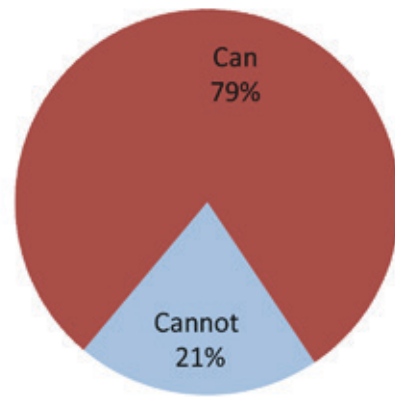
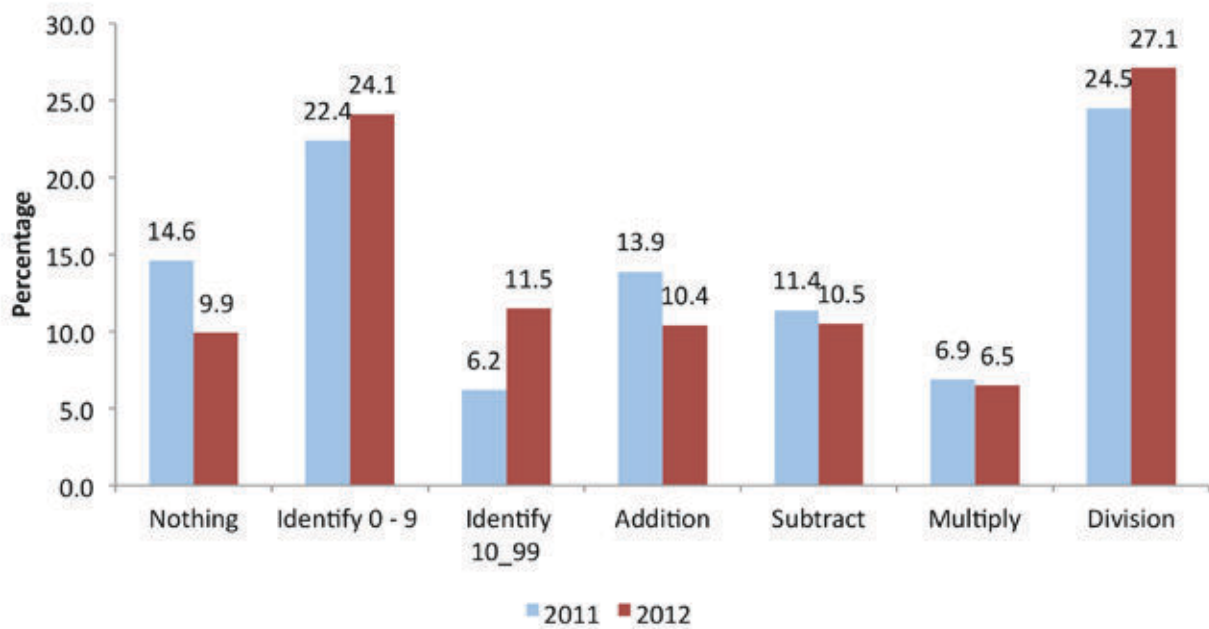


Figure 9 above shows that only 1 out of 10 children in Primary 3 were able to correctly solve Primary 2 numeracy questions up to division level. Figure 10 shows that even by Primary 7, 1 out of 10 children were still not able to do Primary 2 level numeracy. This implies that many children in Primary 2 are being promoted to the next level of education and being allowed to complete the primary education cycle without attaining basic numeracy competencies.

Numeracy, 2012 versus 2011

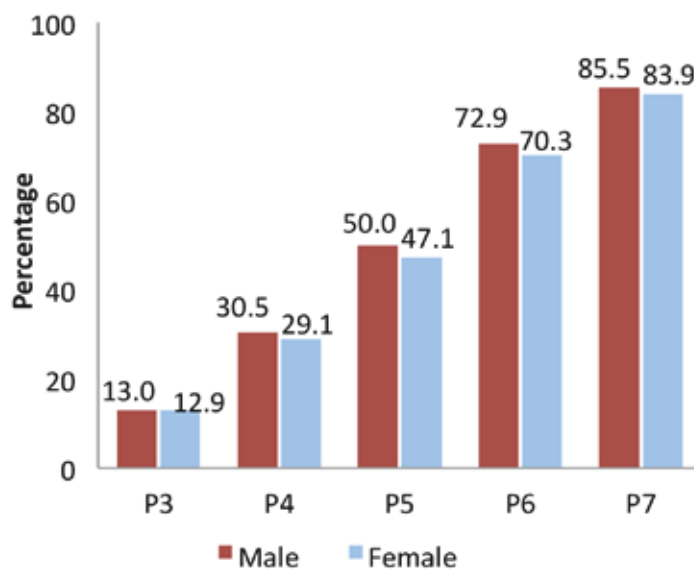
As indicated in Figure 11 below, 3 out of 10 children were able to do Primary 2 level division sums in 2012, as compared to 2011 when 2 out of 10 children could.

Figure 11: Percentage of children at different levels of numeracy, 2011 and 2012



Numeracy, by gender

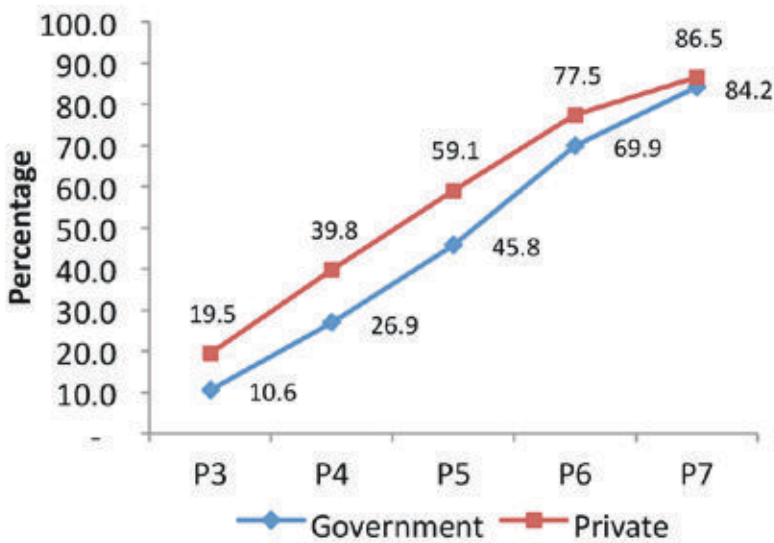
Figure 12: Percentage distribution of numeracy, by class and gender



As Figure 12 shows, there was no major difference between boys and girls in division competencies, though boys performed marginally better than girls.

Numeracy, by School Ownership

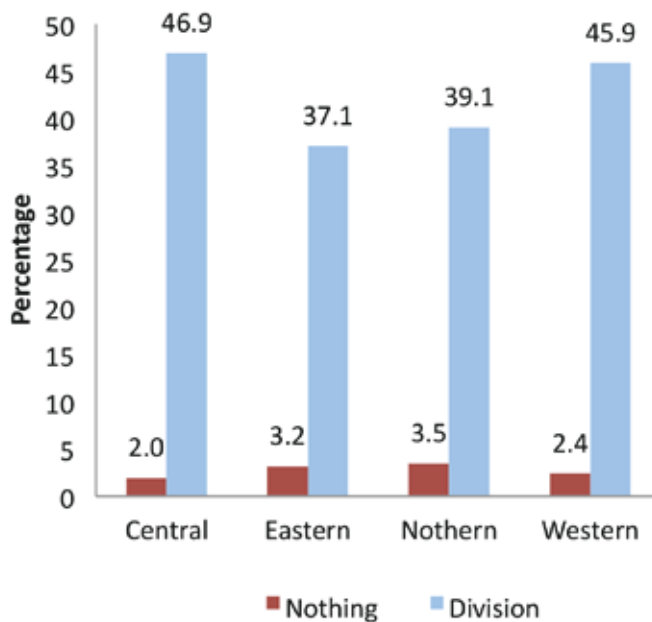
Figure 13: Percentage distribution of numeracy, by class and school type



Private schools performed better than government schools in numeracy at lower primary levels (by 10-13 percentage points) but this difference narrowed to two percentage points by Primary 7 (Figure 13).

Regional Differences in Numeracy Competencies

Figure 14: Percentage distribution of P3 - P7 pupils who can do division or cannot count, by region



The best performing regions in numeracy were Central and Western, where 5 out of 10 children were able to correctly solve Primary 2 level division (Figure 14). In the Eastern and Northern regions only 4 out of 10 were able to solve Primary 2 level division. Many children had poor numeracy skills across the country.

3.4 Local Language Literacy

In the 2012 assessment, four local languages were piloted, namely, Luganda, Rutooro/Runyoro, Ateso and Leblango. These were piloted in the following districts (Table 7):

Table 7: Districts in which Local Languages were Assessed

Region	Local language	Pilot District
Central	Luganda	Kiboga
		Mityana
		Masaka
		Mpigi
Eastern	Ateso	Amuria
		Kumi
		Katakwi
Western	Runyoro/Rutooro	Hoima
		Kabarole
		Kyenjojo
Northern	Leblango	Lira
		Dokolo
		Oyam
		Amolator

Table 8: Uwezo Local Language Literacy Competence Assessment Levels

Local language literacy was assessed at seven levels, as below.

Level 1	(non-readers/nothing) is the inability to even recognize letters of the local language alphabet.
Level 2	(letter) is the ability to recognize letters of the local language alphabet
Level 3	(syllable) is the ability to recognize syllables of the local language
Level 4	(word) is the ability to read simple words of the local language
Level 5	(sentence) is the ability to read a simple paragraph of the local language
Level 6	(story) is the ability to correctly read a simple 'story' text of the local language
Level 7	(comprehension) is the ability to correctly read and understand a simple 'story' text of the local language

Table 9: Percentage distribution of local language literacy competencies By class, P1-P7

Class	Nothing	Letter	Syllable	Word	Paragraph	Story	Total
P1	64.3	27.8	4.0	2.3	0.8	0.9	100
P2	42.1	31.5	9.3	9.3	3.0	4.9	100
P3	27.3	26.1	11.1	15.5	6.2	13.8	100
P4	19.4	17.0	9.0	15.2	10.8	28.7	100
P5	14.1	11.3	5.9	13	10.4	45.4	100
P6	7.6	6.3	4.0	8.2	7.3	66.7	100
P7	5.8	3.7	2.3	5.7	4.7	77.8	100
Total	31.0	20.2	6.9	9.9	5.9	26.1	100

Overall 3 out of 10 children assessed in local languages in Primary 1 to Primary 7 were able to correctly read a Primary 2 level local language story (Table 9 above).

Local language literacy of P3 and P7 children

Figure 15: P3 pupils who can comprehend a P2 story

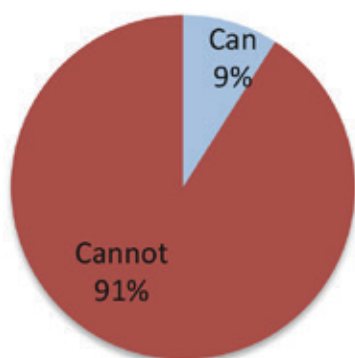
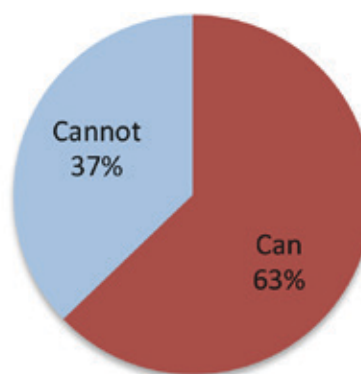


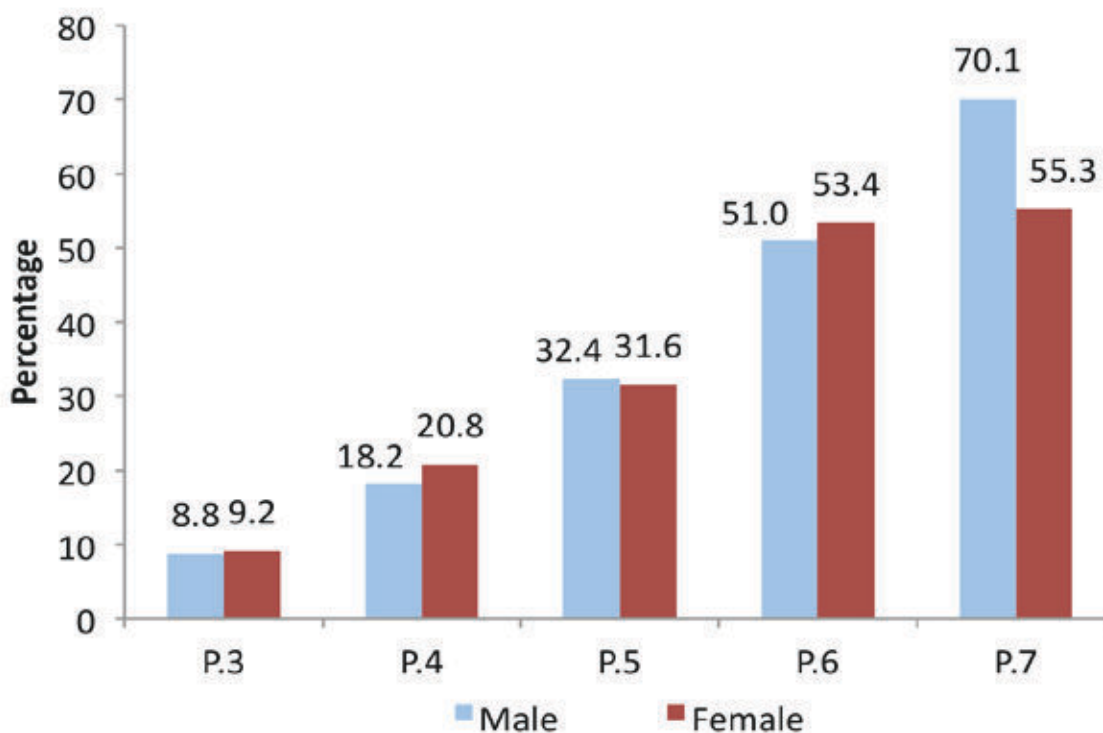
Figure 16: P7 pupils who can comprehend a P2 story



Only 1 out of 10 children in Primary 3 was able to read and understand a Primary 2 level local language story and only 6 out of 10 children in Primary 7 were able to do so (Figures 15 and 16).

Local Language Literacy by Gender

Figure 17: Percentage distribution of local language literacy, by class and gender



The difference between boys and girls in local language comprehension is insignificant between Primary 3 and Primary 6 levels. However, at Primary 7 there is a significant variation with boys doing much better than girls by a margin of 15 percentage points (Figure 17).

Regional Competencies in Local Language Literacy

There are regional variations in performance in local languages, with children in the regions with established local languages (i.e. Central and Western, where Luganda and Runyakitara have well developed resources) performing better than those in Northern and Eastern regions.

Table 10: Percentage distribution of local language literacy competencies of P2 standard by class, P3-P7

LUGANDA

%Distribution of local language reading and comprehension competencies by region, P3-P7 pupils								
District	Nothing	Letter	Syllable	Word	Sentence	Story	Comprehension	Total
Kiboga	17.7	11.7	8.6	12.2	10.2	4.0	35.8	100
Masaka	11.1	9.7	6.5	11.9	9.4	10.3	41.2	100
Mityana	18.6	8.5	6.8	11.2	5.4	7.6	42.0	100
Mpigi	11.1	14.0	6.7	15.2	9.9	15.4	27.8	100
Total	13.1	11.0	6.9	12.8	9.1	10.5	36.7	100

LEBLANGO

%Distribution of local language reading and comprehension competencies by region, P3-P7 pupils								
District	Nothing	Letter	Syllable	Word	Sentence	Story	Comprehension	Total
Amolatar	8.3	22.5	10.2	15.0	8.2	14.2	21.6	100
Dokolo	14.3	24.9	7.6	14.0	8.7	7.7	22.8	100
Lira	17.3	24.2	9.2	16.1	7.5	9.2	16.5	100
Oyam	28.1	11.5	5.8	11.2	10.4	13.2	19.8	100
Total	19.1	20.5	8.2	14.4	8.5	10.7	18.7	100

RUNYORO/RUTOORO

%Distribution of local language reading and comprehension competencies by region, P3-P7 pupils								
District	Nothing	Letter	Syllable	Word	Sentence	Story	Comprehension	Total
Hoima	25.8	15.9	6.8	12.0	8.0	10.3	21.3	100
Kabarole	6.4	11.0	6.3	16.1	11.0	14.9	34.3	100
Kyenjojo	8.8	12.4	4.5	9.5	9.5	13.8	41.5	100
Total	14.6	13.3	6.0	12.6	9.4	12.8	31.3	100

ATESO

%Distribution of local language reading and comprehension competencies by region, P3-P7 pupils								
District	Nothing	Letter	Syllable	Word	Sentence	Story	Comprehension	Total
Amuria	21.4	17.1	10.7	9.6	5.4	7.9	28.0	100
Katakwi	34.7	17.7	6.5	6.1	3.6	3.1	28.3	100
Kumi	23.5	16.9	8.9	11.5	5.5	7.5	26.3	100
Total	24.8	17.1	9.1	9.9	5.1	6.9	27.2	100

Apart from the Eastern Region where performance is almost uniform across the districts in the region, in the other regions performance varied from district to district.

Table 11: P3 competencies in local language reading

Local language	Nothing	Letter	Syllable	Word	Sentence	Story	Comprehend	Total
Luganda(Central)	21.45	18.71	13.14	18.44	8.24	3.61	16.41	100
Ateso(Eastern)	40.7	26.75	12.82	9.13	3.36	1.44	5.81	100
Leblango(Northern)	32.01	38.88	9.82	10.47	3.53	3.8	1.49	100
Runyoro/ Rutooro(Western)	22.17	24.29	8.51	20.09	7.6	9.56	7.77	100
Total	27.25	26.12	11.14	15.49	6.18	4.81	9.01	100

Similar to the above observations, 2 out of 10 children in Primary 3 in Central Region are able to read and understand a Primary 2 level Luganda story text compared to 1 out of 10 children in the same class who are able to read in Ateso and Runyoro/Rutooro (Table 9 above). Only 2 out of 100 children in Primary 3 in Northern Region are able to read and understand a Primary 2 level Leblango story text.

3.5 Household Indicators

The 2012 assessment also explored a wide range of household indicators. In the following sections we present some of these variables. Any possible relationship between these variables and learning outcomes warrant further investigation.

Parents' visits to their Children's schools

Table 12: Percentage distribution of parents visiting their children's schools, P3 – P7

Region	Yes	No	Total
Central	47.0	53.0	100
Eastern	39.6	60.4	100
Northern	37.5	62.5	100
Western	38.8	61.3	100
Total	41.0	59.0	100

Central Region had the highest number of parents visiting schools to talk to teachers about their children's learning, while Western Region had the lowest number of parents visiting schools.

Children whose parents visited and talked to teachers about their children's education appear to perform better in both English comprehension and in numeracy than children whose parents did not. However, without performing further analysis of the data and without further investigation, this association is uncertain.

Provision of midday meals

Receiving a meal at lunch time can help children to maintain energy levels to focus on school work. Table 13 provides a breakdown of the different ways in which children receive meals during school hours. It is positive to note that very few school children are going without food during school.

Overall, it was reported that most children in the country got some form of midday meal (96%) as only 4.2% reported to have no midday meal. The majority of those who had no midday meal were in Eastern and Northern regions (5.3% and 7%) respectively.

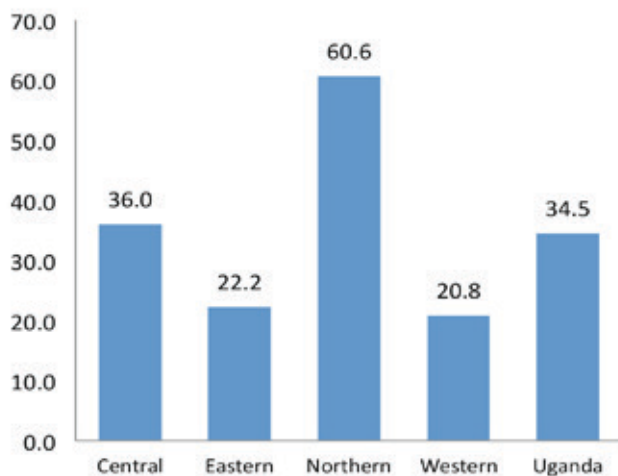
Table 13: Percentage distribution of children (P3-P7) by type of midday meal, byregion

Region	Packs	Given money	School provides	Goes home	None	Total
Central	33.5	15.3	41.4	7.4	2.4	100
Eastern	5.7	10.7	39.4	38.9	5.3	100
Northern	7.9	3.8	11.1	70.2	7.0	100
Western	53.7	4.2	8.6	31.2	2.3	100
Total	24.7	9.0	27.1	35.0	4.2	100

3.6 School Indicators

Teacher Housing

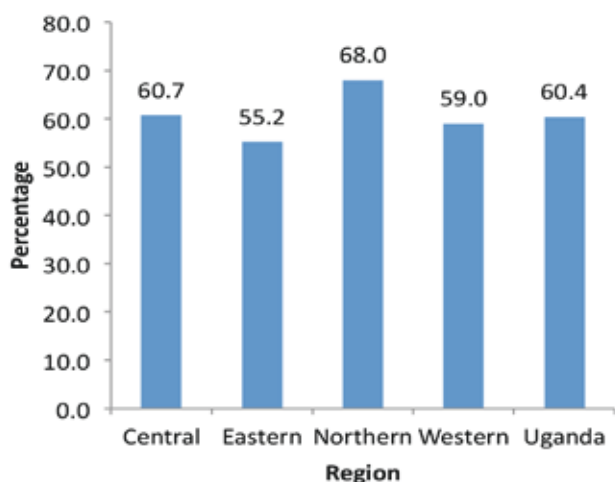
Figure 18: Percentage distribution of teachers housed at school, by region



On average 3 out of 10 teachers are housed within schools. Northern Uganda reported the highest number of teachers housed within schools (Figure 18). Western Region reported the smallest number of teachers housed within schools.

Access to Clean Water Sources

Figure 19: Percentage distribution of schools with clean water sources, by region



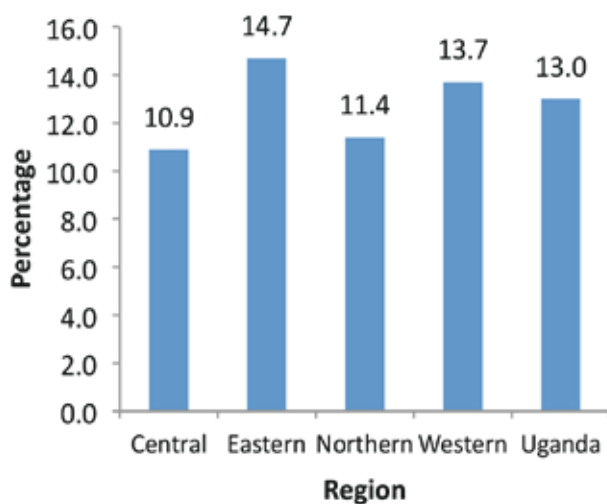
On average 6 out of every 10 schools sampled had clean water sources within the school. Northern Uganda reported the highest number of schools with clean water sources. Eastern Region reported the lowest number of schools with clean water sources (Figure 19).

Teacher and Pupil Attendance

Our findings indicate that teacher and pupil absenteeism remains a challenge in Uganda's education system.

Pupil Attendance

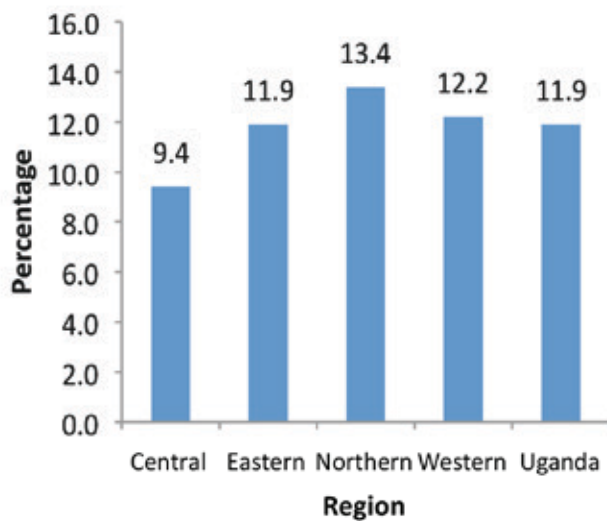
Figure 20: Percentage distribution of pupil absenteeism, by region



Similar to our 2011 findings, at least 1 out of every 10 pupils was absent from school on the day of assessment in 2012 (Figure 20).

Teacher Attendance

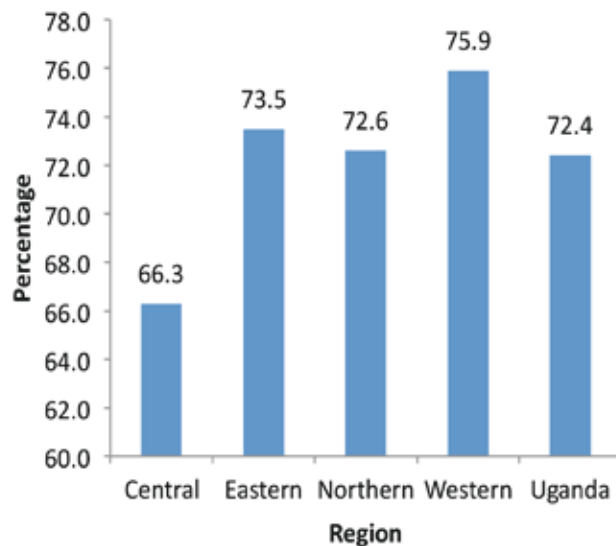
Figure 21: Percentage distribution of teacher absenteeism, by region



At least 1 out of every 10 teachers was absent from school on the day of assessment in 2012 (Figure 21).

School Open days

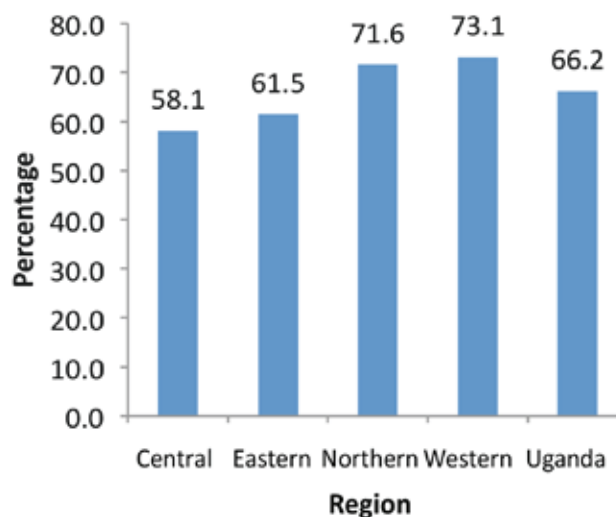
Figure 22: Percentage of schools that hold school open days, by region



On average at least 7 out of 10 schools held class days in which parents came to check on the performance of their children. Western Region had the most schools that held class days (8 out of 10 schools) (Figure 22).

Publishing UPE grants

Figure 23: Percentage of schools with education grant publicised on noticeboard, by region



On average at least 6 out of 10 schools displayed the UPE grants they received from government on school noticeboards in visible places where all stakeholders visiting the school could easily access the information. The most schools displaying information on UPE grants were in the Northern and Western regions (at least 7 out of 10) (Figure 23). Given that schools are required to display this information publicly, the average remains low.



Chapter 4

Regional Findings

The following sections present findings of the 2012 National Assessment of learning according to the four regions of the country: Central, Northern, Eastern and Western regions.

4.1 Central Region

Central Region is the most populated region with the highest number of children going to school. Data were collected from 16 districts in Central Region, representing urban and rural settings.

4.1.1 Reading English

Overall 3 out of 10 children could read a Primary 2 level story.

In Primary 7, 9 out of 10 children could read a Primary 2 level story.

In Primary 3, 2 out of 10 children could read the same story.

Table 14: Percentage distribution for reading competencies of P2 standard in Central Region, by class

Class	Nothing	Letter	Word	Paragraph	Story	Total
P1	40.4	46.3	10.7	1.4	1.2	100
P2	18.8	40.0	27.6	7.5	6.1	100
P3	10.2	26.2	30.3	16.7	16.7	100
P4	5.9	13.6	22.7	20.4	37.5	100
P5	2.4	5.8	9.3	17.4	65.1	100
P6	0.9	3.1	5.2	9.3	81.5	100
P7	1.0	1.2	2.3	4.7	90.8	100
Total	14.3	23.5	17.0	11.0	34.3	100

District Performance

Highest learning levels: Kampala where 7 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can read a Primary 2 level story.

Lowest learning levels: Mubende where 4 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can read a Primary 2 level story.

Table 15: Percentage distribution for reading competencies of P2 standard in Central Region, P3 – P7 pupils by district

District Name	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
Kalangala	0.7	11.8	19.7	8.4	59.5	100
Kampala	2.3	3.6	13.7	14.1	66.4	100
Kayunga	6.4	21.4	17.7	16.3	38.3	100
Kiboga	10.6	16.0	16.0	13.1	44.3	100
Luwero	3.5	10.4	17.3	12.6	56.2	100
Lyantonde	10.2	11.9	12.7	12.7	52.6	100
Masaka	9.5	11.9	17.3	17.0	44.4	100
Mityana	9.0	12.2	18.1	10.9	49.9	100
Mpigi	4.9	12.7	18.1	15.9	48.3	100
Mubende	4.7	21.4	23.3	14.9	35.7	100
Mukono	4.3	15.2	14.3	14.0	52.2	100
Nakaseke	2.7	13.1	16.9	17.1	50.2	100
Nakasongola	3.9	13.6	17.5	12.7	52.3	100
Rakai	6.3	17.2	18.2	14.6	43.6	100
Ssembabule	4.6	13.6	17.9	16.4	47.4	100
Wakiso	1.1	7.6	13.7	16.9	60.7	100
Total	4.8	11.8	16.2	14.9	52.3	100

Primary 3 and 7

In Primary 3, 1 out of 10 children could comprehend a Primary 2 levels English story
 In Primary 7, 8 out of 10 children could comprehend the same Primary 2 level story

Figure 24: P3 pupils who can comprehend a P2 story

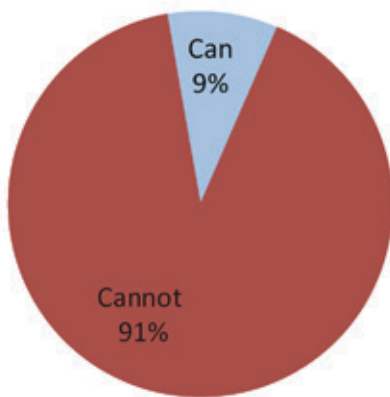
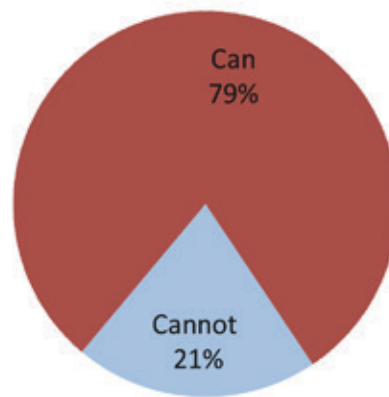


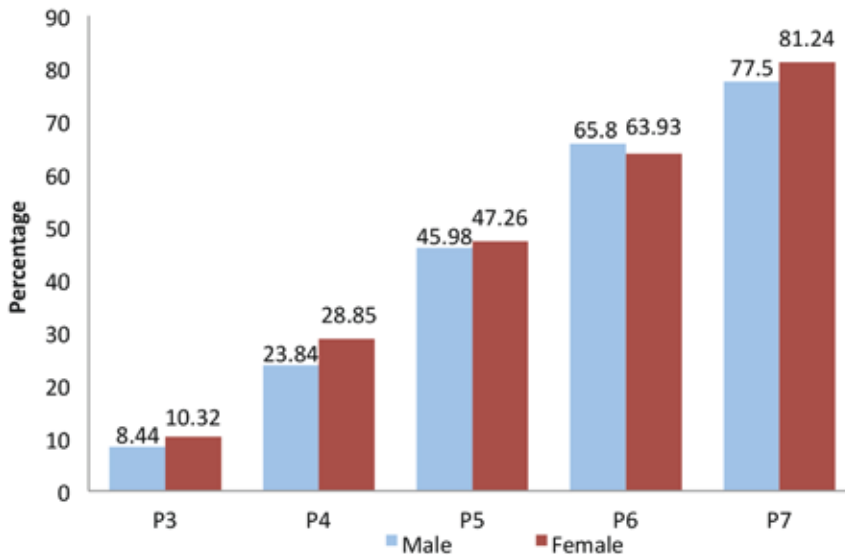
Figure 25: P7 pupils who can comprehend a P2 story



Gender

There was minor variation in performance between boys and girls (Figure 26). Differences of note occurred in P4 and P7 where girls outperformed boys. P6 was the only class in which boys performed better than girls.

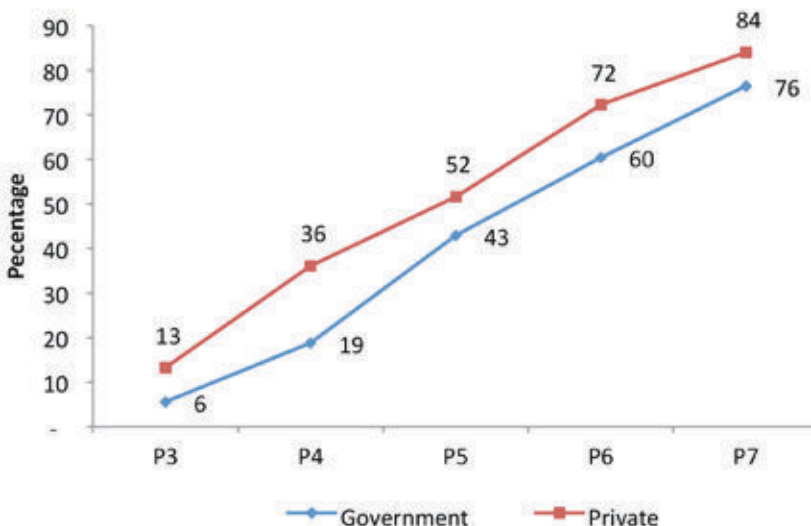
Figure 26: Percentage distribution of English comprehension competencies in Central Region, by class and gender



School Ownership

Children enrolled in private schools in Central Region performed better in English reading than those in government schools at all levels.

Figure 27: Percentage distribution of English comprehension competencies in Central Region, by school type and class



4.1.2 Numeracy

Overall, 3 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division
 In Primary 7, 8 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division
 In Primary 3, 2 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division

Table 16: Percentage distribution for numeracy competencies of P2 standard in Central Region, by class

Class	Nothing	Identify 0 - 9	Identify 0-99	Addition	Subtract	Multiply	Division	Total
P1	20.0	57.2	14.7	4.5	1.9	0.8	1.0	100
P2	5.9	33.1	24.5	12.8	12.3	5.3	6.2	100
P3	2.5	16.2	20.6	15.7	19.8	9.0	16.2	100
P4	2.2	7.6	9.0	13.8	18.2	12.9	36.3	100
P5	2.1	3.3	4.4	8.3	16.0	13.3	52.7	100
P6	1.2	1.8	2.6	.4	8.4	9.2	72.6	100
P7	1.3	1.0	0.9	2.4	5.5	5.1	83.9	100
Total	6.3	21.5	12.6	9.4	11.8	7.6	30.8	100

District Performance

Highest learning levels: Kalangala where 6 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can perform Primary 2 level division.

Lowest learning levels: Masaka where 3 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can perform Primary 2 level division.

Table 17: Percentage distribution for numeracy competencies of P2 standard in Central Region, P3 – P7 pupils by district

District Name	Nothing	Identify 0 - 9	Identify 10-99	Addition	Subtract	Multiply	Division	Total
Kalangala	2.0	3.4	7.2	8.9	11.9	8.4	58.4	100
Kampala	1.3	3.9	6.0	8.9	13.7	12.4	54.0	100
Kayunga	3.2	9.7	12.8	15.2	12.8	8.1	38.4	100
Kiboga	5.0	10.1	8.5	11.9	13.5	8.1	42.8	100
Luwero	4.6	6.7	4.9	9.0	15.1	7.6	52.3	100
Lyantonde	2.4	9.1	7.2	11.2	16.6	7.1	46.5	100
Masaka	1.8	13.2	12.2	15.0	15.8	10.4	31.7	100
Mityana	3.6	8.5	6.0	8.8	14.7	7.3	51.0	100
Mpigi	2.7	11.3	10.2	12.5	16.6	9.3	37.3	100
Mubende	1.3	8.4	10.0	16.8	15.1	8.9	39.5	100
Mukono	2.0	3.6	12.7	4.9	15.0	9.9	51.9	100
Nakaseke	0.9	7.0	10.8	9.4	13.7	9.3	48.8	100
Nakasongola	1.3	6.4	7.9	9.5	11.4	8.7	54.8	100
Rakai	1.5	7.1	12.9	11.5	15.6	10.3	41.1	100
Ssembabule	2.9	10.0	8.9	11.6	14.4	11.9	40.3	100
Wakiso	0.2	3.6	4.7	5.4	16.0	13.4	56.7	100
Total	2.0	7.0	8.8	10.1	14.8	10.4	46.9	100

Primary 3 and 7

In Primary 3, 2 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division

In Primary 7, 8 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division

Figure 28: P3 pupils who can do P2 division

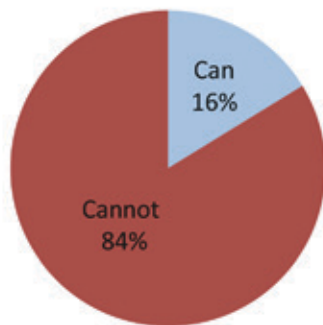
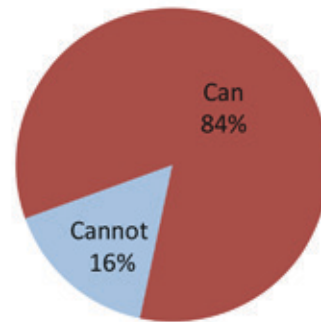
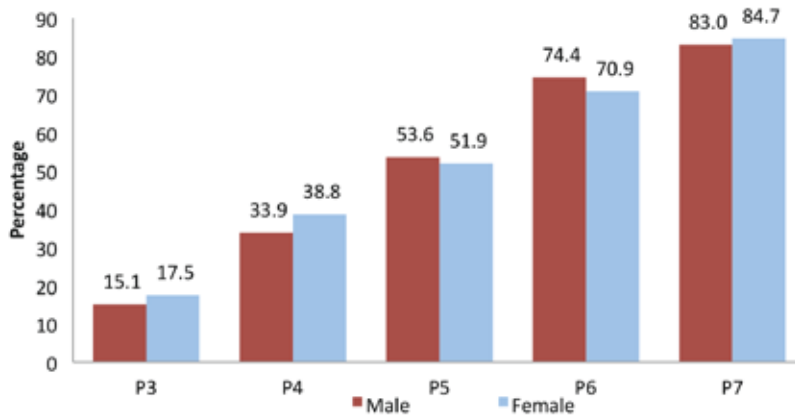


Figure 29: P7 pupils who can do P2 division



Gender

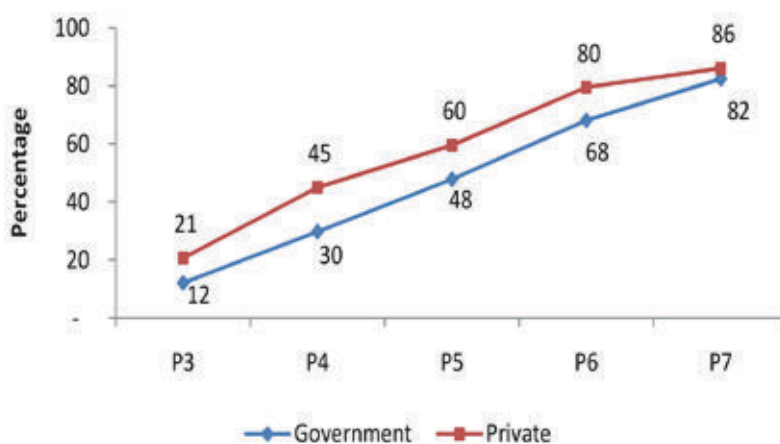
Figure 30: Percentage distribution of numeracy competencies in Central Region, by class and gender



Gender differences in numeracy were minimal. Boys performed better in Primary 5 and Primary 6, whereas girls performed better in Primary 4.

School Ownership

Figure 31: % Percentage distribution of numeracy competencies in Central Region, by school type and class



Children enrolled in private schools in classes Primary 3 to Primary 7 in Central Region performed better in numeracy than their counterparts in government schools. On the whole, the results from Central Region are consistent with the results at the national level in which private schools performed better than government schools, especially in lower classes.

4.2 Northern Region

Data were collected from 21 districts in Northern Region including districts in the north east and the north west of Uganda.

4.2.1 Reading English

Overall 4 out of 10 children could read a Primary 2 level story.

In Primary 7, 9 out of 10 children could read a Primary 2 level story.

In Primary 3, less than 1 out of 10 children could read the same story.

Table 18: Percentage distribution for reading competencies of P2 standard in Northern Region, by class

Class	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
P1	75.4	21.0	2.8	0.4	0.4	100
P2	48.4	39.6	8.7	1.6	1.8	100
P3	28.1	38.6	22.4	6.6	4.4	100
P4	14.3	24.5	27.4	15.9	17.9	100
P5	5.3	9.2	11.9	19.0	54.7	100
P6	1.5	2.8	6.0	13.2	76.6	100
P7	1.6	1.2	1.1	5.5	90.7	100
Total	33.1	23.1	12.5	8.2	23.2	100

District Performance

Highest learning levels: Kaabong where 5 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can read a Primary 2 level story.

Lowest learning levels: Lira where 3 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can read a Primary 2 level story.

Table 19: Percentage distribution for reading competencies of P2 standard in Northern Region, P3 – P7 pupils by district

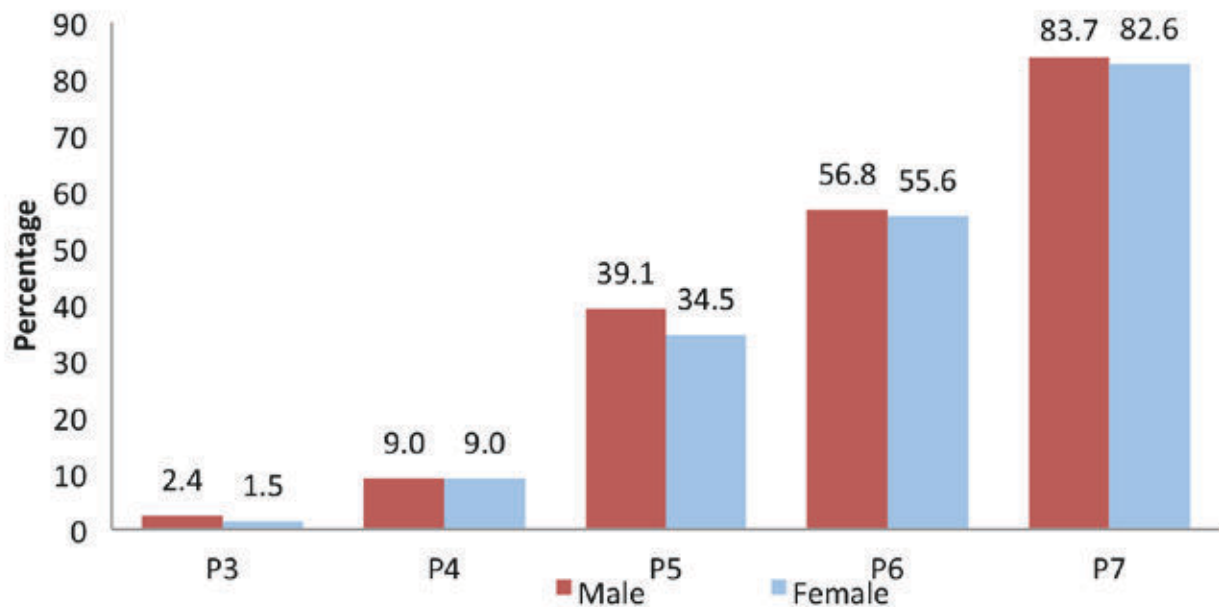
District	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
Abim	10.2	19.9	14.4	10.6	44.8	100
Adjumani	10.3	21.1	16.1	12.1	40.4	100
Amolatar	5.1	19.6	23.5	14.9	37.0	100
Amuru	14.0	26.3	14.7	11.5	33.5	100
Apac	15.0	19.3	19.4	14.6	31.8	100
Arua	13.0	20.0	16.1	12.8	38.1	100
Dokolo	13.5	21.1	19.2	12.5	33.6	100
Gulu	9.9	19.1	18.5	13.0	39.6	100
Kaabong	2.9	8.0	22.2	15.8	51.2	100
Kitgum	9.0	18.1	16.8	16.6	39.5	100
Koboko	13.2	20.7	15.6	10.7	39.9	100
Kotido	9.7	15.8	14.0	13.3	47.2	100

District	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
Lira	13.6	23.6	18.7	12.5	31.7	100
Moroto	10.8	14.0	15.6	20.7	38.9	100
Moyo	12.6	19.2	15.9	8.3	44.0	100
Nakapiripirit	4.7	19.2	15.5	15.9	44.8	100
Nebbi	14.9	24.4	18.4	8.2	34.1	100
Nyadri	20.2	18.7	13.1	10.9	37.1	100
Oyam	20.3	15.5	14.0	13.5	36.8	100
Pader	19.1	17.4	15.7	10.1	37.8	100
Yumbe	6.8	22.0	17.8	16.0	37.5	100
Total	13.0	19.6	17.2	12.8	37.4	100

Gender

Gender differences in numeracy were minimal. Boys performed better in Primary 5 and Primary 6, whereas girls performed better in Primary 4.

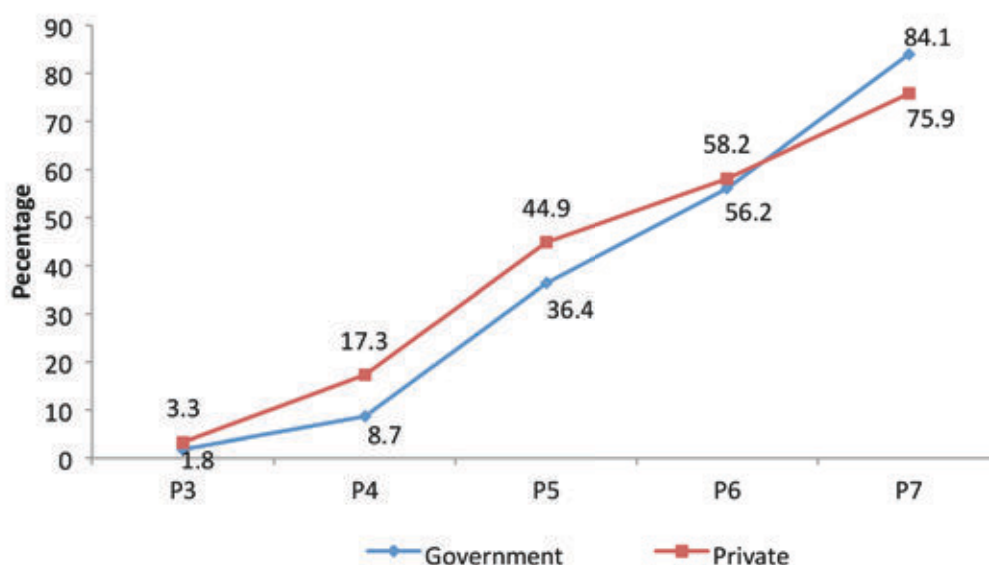
Figure 34: Percentage distribution of English comprehension competencies in Northern Region, by class and gender



School Ownership

Children enrolled in private schools in Northern Region performed better in English reading than those in government schools up to and including Primary 6. However in Primary 7 children in government schools outperformed their peers in private schools by a margin of 8%.

Figure 35: Percentage distribution on English comprehension competencies in Northern Region, by school type and class



4.2.2 Numeracy

Overall, 2 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division
 In Primary 7, almost 9 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division
 In Primary 3, 1 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division

Table 20: Percentage distribution for numeracy competencies of P2 standard in Northern Region, by class

Class	Nothing	Num1_9	Num10_99	Addition	Subtract	Multiply	Division	Total
P1	37.4	50.2	8.2	2.8	0.8	0.1	0.5	100
P2	13.8	44.0	20.4	11.3	4.9	2.3	3.4	100
P3	6.7	19.5	21.5	22.4	15.2	4.6	10.1	100
P4	3.3	8.0	10.6	19.2	20.6	11.1	27.2	100
P5	2.2	4.0	4.9	11.4	15.3	14.9	47.4	100
P6	1.1	2.0	2.1	4.9	8.0	8.9	72.9	100
P7	1.3	0.7	0.8	1.7	2.0	6.6	86.9	100
Total	13.0	23.9	11.3	11.4	9.8	6.2	24.5	100

District Performance

Highest learning levels: Adjumani where 5 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can perform Primary 2 level division.

Lowest learning levels: Apac where 3 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can perform Primary 2 level division.

Table 21: Percentage distribution for numeracy competencies of P2 standard in Northern Region, P3-P7 pupils by district

District Name	Nothing	Num 1_9	Num 10_99	Addition	Subtract	Multiply	Division	Total
Abim	3.0	10.3	12.7	12.6	9.8	9.2	42.5	100
Adjumani	0.8	5.0	7.0	10.3	12.9	9.9	54.2	100
Amolatar	1.0	3.6	10.6	20.0	17.7	11.6	35.6	100
Amuru	2.0	11.1	12.4	17.2	11.7	7.1	38.6	100
Apac	3.0	8.5	13.1	18.3	17.6	10.5	28.9	100
Arua	4.0	8.0	11.4	10.9	13.2	6.7	45.9	100
Dokolo	3.0	9.5	9.1	17.2	16.8	9.4	35.0	100
Gulu	3.4	6.8	6.1	14.9	14.4	10.3	44.0	100
Kaabong	0.7	5.8	10.1	17.7	17.0	10.0	38.7	100
Kitgum	2.5	9.9	11.4	14.2	13.9	12.9	35.1	100
Koboko	2.0	7.0	6.1	10.6	14.6	7.7	52.1	100
Kotido	4.5	8.2	8.7	13.5	13.7	11.7	39.7	100
Lira	3.9	11.9	10.9	16.0	16.7	10.4	30.2	100
Moroto	3.1	11.2	8.7	20.6	12.2	11.7	32.5	100
Moyo	4.4	8.5	6.5	11.7	10.5	8.6	49.9	100
Nakapiripirit	1.9	10.3	10.4	19.5	11.2	11.8	35.0	100
Nebbi	3.4	6.0	12.1	10.8	16.3	5.9	45.5	100
Nyadri	4.9	7.2	5.5	14.8	12.1	7.2	48.3	100
Oyam	5.9	9.8	9.8	14.3	15.7	13.9	30.7	100
Pader	6.4	8.6	11.2	12.0	10.6	7.8	43.5	100
Yumbe	2.5	11.3	9.7	14.5	15.9	7.5	38.7	100
Total	3.5	8.7	10.1	14.7	14.5	9.5	39.1	100

Primary 3 and 7

In Primary 3, 1 out of 10 children can perform Primary 2 level division

In Primary 7, 9 out of 10 children can perform Primary 2 level division

Figure 36: P3 pupils who can do P2 division

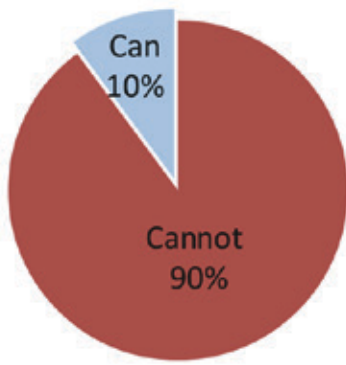
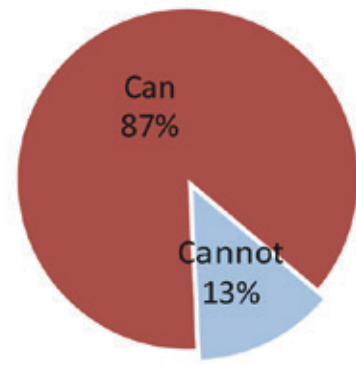


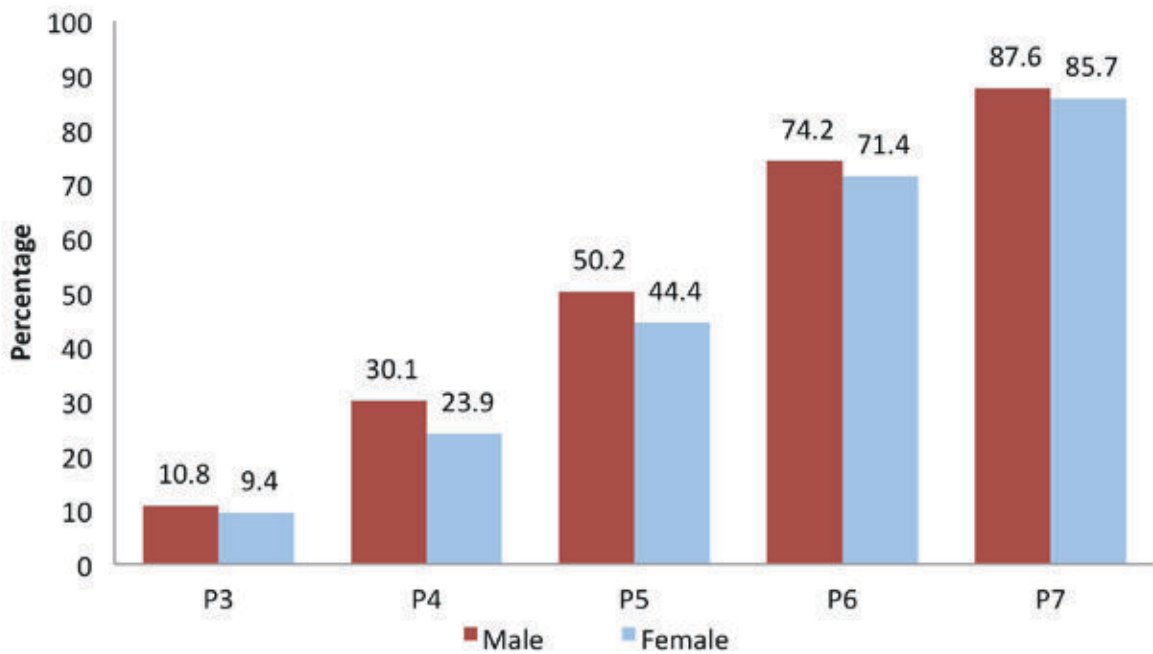
Figure 37: P7 pupils who can do P2 division



Gender

Gender differences in numeracy were minimal.

Figure 38: Percentage distribution of numeracy competences in Northern Region, by class and gender



4.3 Eastern Region

Data were collected from 24 districts in Eastern Region representing urban and rural settings.

4.3.1 Reading English

Overall 2 out of 10 children could read a Primary 2 level story.

In Primary 7, 9 out of 10 children could read a Primary 2 level story.

In Primary 3, less than 1 out of 10 children could read the same story.

Table 22: Percentage distribution for reading competencies of P2 standard in Eastern Region, by class

Class	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
P1	68.3	27.6	3.3	0.3	0.5	100
P2	46.2	40.9	10.0	1.8	1.2	100
P3	27.1	44.5	19.6	5.1	3.7	100
P4	12.7	33.6	28.2	12.5	13.0	100
P5	4.7	15.6	16.4	18.3	45.0	100
P6	1.7	5.5	8.0	16.2	68.6	100
P7	1.2	2.1	1.8	9.4	85.5	100
Total	28.1	27.6	13.5	8.2	22.6	100

District Performance

Highest learning levels: Jinja where 5 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can read a Primary 2 level story.

Lowest learning levels: Pallisa where 3 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can read a Primary 2 level story.

Table 23: Percentage distribution for reading competencies of P2 standard in Eastern Region, P3-P7 pupils by district

District	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
Amuria	17.3	18.2	15.6	10.5	38.4	100
Budaka	11.6	30.5	18.7	11.8	27.4	100
Buduuda	7.0	24.5	20.2	13.5	34.8	100
Bugiri	10.2	25.8	17.8	14.0	32.3	100
Bukedea	23.5	22.8	17.0	9.0	27.7	100
Bukwo	7.8	21.2	17.4	14.3	39.3	100
Busia	13.2	20.1	17.4	11.5	37.7	100
Butaleja	11.5	27.7	21.2	13.0	26.7	100
Iganga	9.0	26.1	17.1	12.6	35.2	100

District	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
Jinja	4.7	15.5	15.8	15.1	48.9	100
Kaberamaido	13.3	25.3	16.2	8.5	36.7	100
Kaliro	12.2	29.7	15.1	14.1	28.9	100
Kamuli	9.4	25.6	24.0	14.5	26.5	100
Kapchorwa	7.0	20.1	18.4	13.8	40.7	100
Katakwi	22.0	23.5	11.7	9.3	33.6	100
Kumi	19.7	17.9	13.4	11.4	37.6	100
Manafwa	10.3	28.0	14.9	9.7	37.2	100
Mayuge	5.8	21.3	24.3	14.1	34.6	100
Mbale	11.1	24.8	17.4	9.8	36.9	100
Namutumba	11.7	30.5	13.9	10.7	33.2	100
Pallisa	13.4	33.0	15.9	11.4	26.4	100
Sironko	12.2	24.5	17.2	13.1	32.9	100
Soroti	15.0	24.6	12.2	10.9	37.3	100
Tororo	12.1	25.1	18.2	11.0	33.6	100
Total	11.5	24.5	17.4	12.2	34.4	100

Primary 3 and 7

In Primary 3, less than 1 out of 10 children could comprehend a Primary 2 level English story.

In Primary 7, about 8 out of 10 children could comprehend the same Primary 2 level story. .

Figure 39: P3 pupils who can comprehend a P2 story

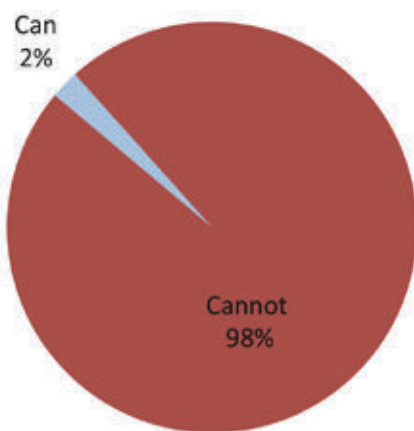
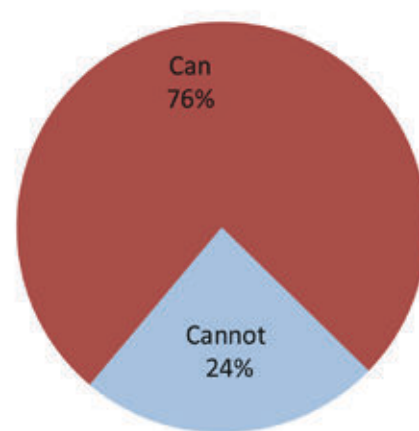


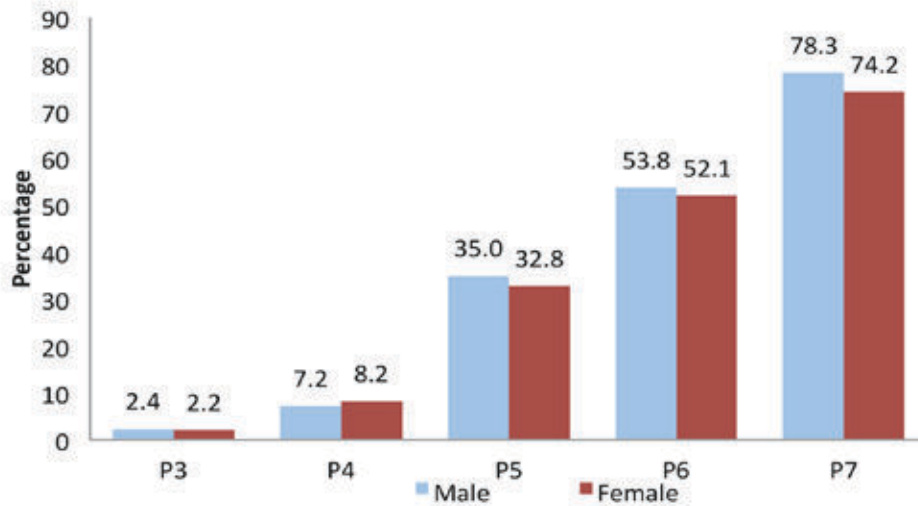
Figure 40: P7 pupils who can comprehend a P2 story



Gender

Gender differences in English reading were minimal.

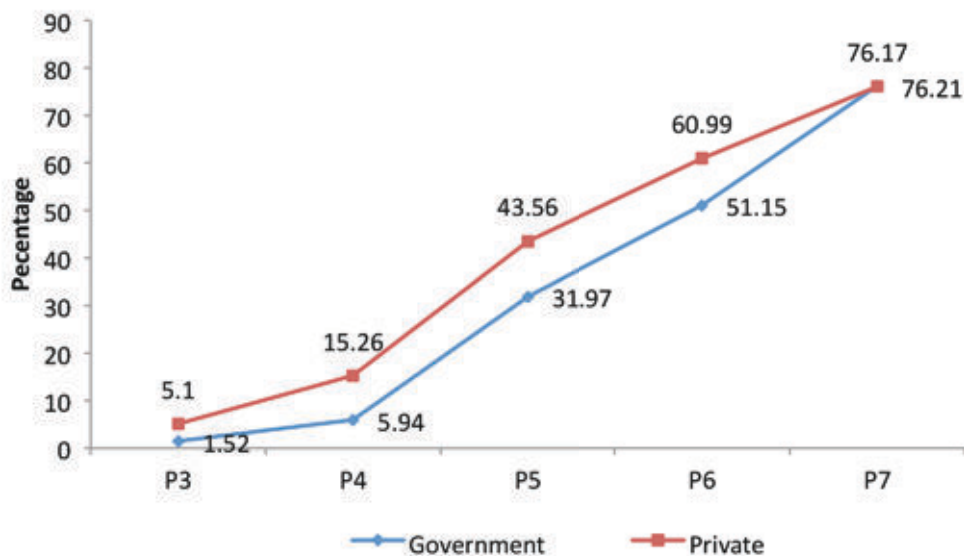
Figure 41: Percentage distribution of English comprehension competencies in Eastern Region, by class and gender



School Ownership

Children enrolled in private schools in Eastern Region performed better in English reading than those in government schools at all levels except Primary 7.

Figure 42: Percentage distribution of English comprehension competencies in Eastern Region, by school type and class



4.3.2 Numeracy

Overall, 2 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division
 In Primary 7, 8 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division
 In Primary 3, 1 out of 10 children could perform Primary 2 level division

Table 24: Percentage distribution for numeracy competencies of P2 standard in Eastern Region, by class

Class	Nothing	Identify 0 - 9	Identify 10_99	Addition	Subtract	Multiply	Division	Total
P1	34.9	54.7	6.4	2.2	0.9	0.2	0.7	100
P2	12.6	53.2	16.9	7.4	5.5	1.5	3.0	100
P3	5.9	31.3	21.2	16.9	11.1	3.8	9.8	100
P4	3.4	13.4	15.0	18.2	18.0	9.0	23.0	100
P5	2.0	5.7	6.6	13.6	18.2	12.3	41.6	100
P6	1.4	1.9	2.6	7.5	10.8	9.8	66.0	100
P7	1.5	1.0	1.0	2.9	3.9	7.1	82.7	100
Total	11.0	27.4	11.1	10.3	9.9	5.7	24.7	100

District Performance

Highest learning levels: Jinja where 5 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can perform Primary 2 level division.

Lowest learning levels: Kamuli where 3 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can perform Primary 2 level division.

Table 25: Percentage distribution for numeracy competencies of P2 standard in Eastern Region, P3 – P7 pupils by district

District Name	Nothing	Identify 0 - 9	Identify 10 - 99	Addition	Subtract	Multiply	Division	Total
Amuria	3.2	12.9	9.5	9.6	11.3	8.2	45.4	100
Budaka	3.3	14.6	14.6	17.3	12.5	6.4	31.3	100
Buduuda	2.0	13.4	12.1	12.6	14.7	10.0	35.2	100
Bugiri	3.6	13.8	8.9	17.6	12.5	6.0	37.7	100
Bukedea	8.3	18.6	15.8	10.9	10.7	6.2	29.5	100
Bukwo	5.2	11.0	10.6	11.2	11.4	11.0	39.7	100
Busia	4.4	13.5	8.4	10.8	13.8	8.2	41.0	100
Butaleja	3.2	13.6	15.6	13.7	14.4	8.2	31.3	100
Iganga	2.4	14.0	14.0	14.0	13.6	6.0	36.0	100
Jinja	2.0	7.7	6.4	8.1	12.8	9.8	53.3	100
Kaberamaido	2.8	12.0	14.0	10.9	9.4	7.6	43.3	100
Kaliro	3.5	13.7	9.9	13.5	16.6	10.0	32.7	100
Kamuli	2.6	13.8	12.8	17.7	15.0	10.6	27.4	100
Kapchorwa	2.4	12.1	8.3	12.3	15.5	7.9	41.5	100

District Name	Nothing	Identify 0 - 9	Identify 10 - 99	Addition	Subtract	Multiply	Division	Total
Katakwi	2.3	12.6	6.9	9.6	11.7	7.2	49.7	100
Kumi	4.6	13.5	13.5	8.3	12.6	5.6	42.0	100
Manafwa	3.3	14.3	10.8	15.4	14.8	7.6	33.8	100
Mayuge	2.6	8.7	14.3	21.2	14.2	7.8	31.2	100
Mbale	2.7	12.0	10.3	13.2	16.0	9.2	36.7	100
Namutumba	3.3	12.4	13.3	12.0	13.4	8.4	37.3	100
Pallisa	2.6	15.6	10.9	14.2	15.2	9.8	31.7	100
Sironko	2.6	16.8	12.7	13.5	13.7	8.0	32.7	100
Soroti	4.5	13.8	8.5	11.2	12.6	8.1	41.4	100
Tororo	3.7	9.0	10.1	13.5	13.8	11.9	37.9	100
Total	3.2	13.0	11.2	13.5	13.7	8.4	37.1	100

P3 and P7

In Primary 3, 1 out of 10 children can perform Primary 2 level division

In Primary 7, 8 out of 10 children can perform Primary 2 level division

Figure 43: P3 pupils who can do P2 division

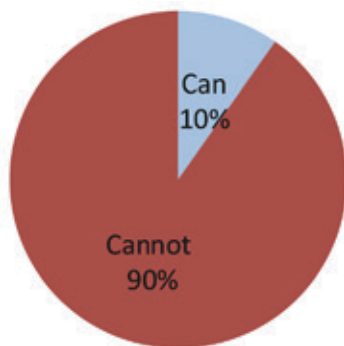


Figure 44: P7 pupils who can do P2 division

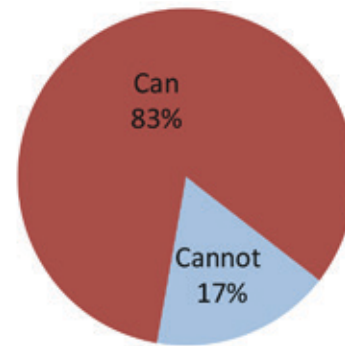
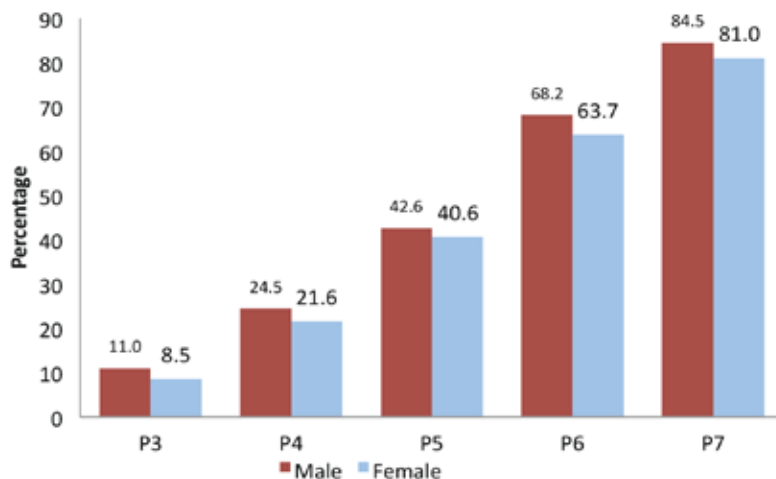


Figure 45: Percentage distribution of numeracy competencies in Eastern Region, by class and gender



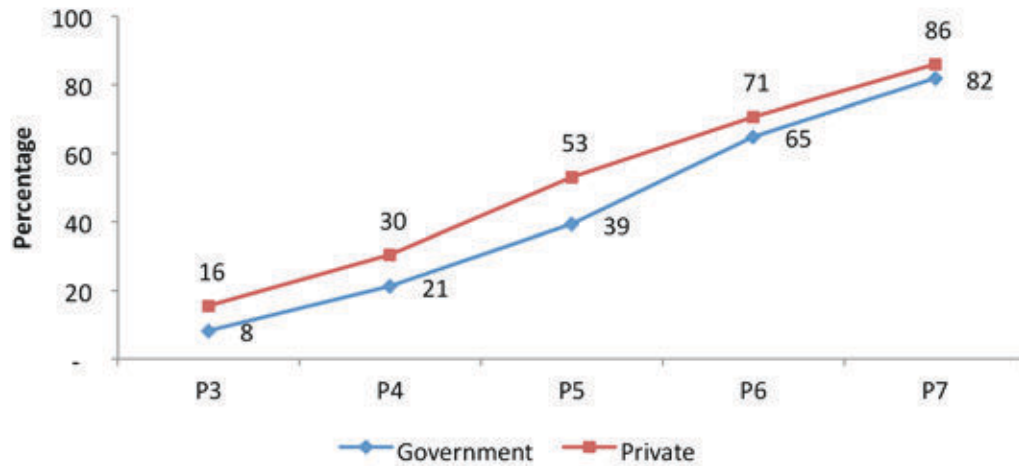
Gender

Gender differences in numeracy were minimal. Boys perform marginally better in all classes.

School Ownership

Children in private schools perform better throughout primary school than children in government schools. The largest difference is in Primary 5.

Figure 46: Percentage distribution of numeracy competencies in Eastern Region, by school type and class



4.4 Western Region

Data were collected from 19 districts representing urban and rural settings.

4.4.1 Reading English

Overall 3 out of 10 children could read a Primary 2 level story

In Primary 7, 9 out of 10 children could read a Primary 2 level story

In Primary 3, 1 out of 10 children in Primary 3 could read the same story text.

Table 26: Percentage distribution for reading competencies of P2 standard in Western Region, by class

Class	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
P1	50.7	38.8	8.1	1.3	1.1	100
P2	24.1	44.0	21.8	5.9	4.3	100
P3	14.3	30.1	28.1	14.7	12.8	100
P4	7.2	14.6	22.4	21.4	34.5	100
P5	2.2	5.2	9.0	18.3	65.3	100
P6	1.3	2.1	4.0	10.4	82.3	100
P7	0.6	1.3	1.5	4.6	92.0	100
Total	20.0	24.5	15.0	10.5	30.1	100

District Performance

Highest learning levels: Bushenyi where 7 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can read a Primary 2 level story.

Lowest learning levels: Kibaale where 3 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can read a Primary 2 level story.

Table 27: Percentage distribution for reading competencies of P2 standard in Western Region, P3 – P7 pupils by district

District	Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
Buliisa	16.5	22.7	15.8	9.3	35.8	100
Bundibugyo	7.6	15.3	18.3	16.5	42.3	100
Bushenyi	0.8	4.6	10.8	15.8	68.0	100
Hoima	14.9	17.1	13.2	13.5	41.3	100
Ibanda	1.5	8.6	14.9	20.5	54.6	100
Isingiro	4.0	7.6	19.5	16.3	52.5	100
Kabale	3.8	15.6	20.6	16.8	43.2	100
Kabarole	6.5	10.6	15.5	14.6	52.8	100
Kamwenge	8.9	16.9	18.4	15.5	40.4	100
Kanungu	3.7	12.5	15.5	12.3	56.0	100
Kasese	12.9	16.6	18.2	12.1	40.3	100
Kibaale	5.3	22.7	22.1	16.4	33.5	100
Kiruhura	7.2	13.7	18.3	18.1	42.7	100
Kisoro	2.2	17.3	15.4	17.4	47.8	100
Kyenjojo	10.2	13.2	15.4	13.1	48.1	100
Masindi	9.9	19.1	12.6	11.6	46.9	100
Mbarara	1.1	4.9	13.0	15.0	66.0	100
Ntungamo	3.1	9.4	16.0	19.9	51.7	100
Rukungiri	3.3	9.8	13.5	21.6	51.9	100
Total	6.4	13.3	15.9	15.4	49.0	100

Primary 3 and 7

In Primary 3, less than 1 out of 10 children could comprehend a Primary 2 level English story
In Primary 7, 8 out of 10 children could read the same Primary 2 level story.

Figure 47: P3 pupils who can comprehend a P2 story

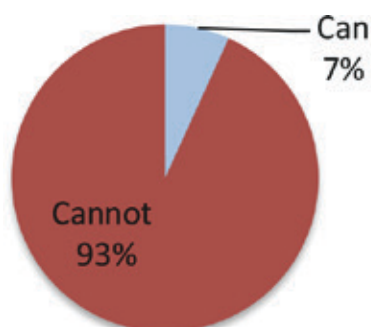
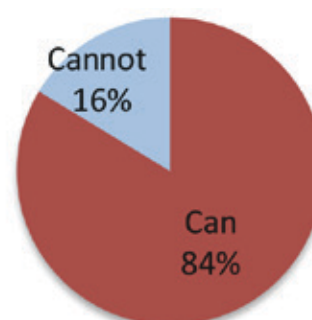


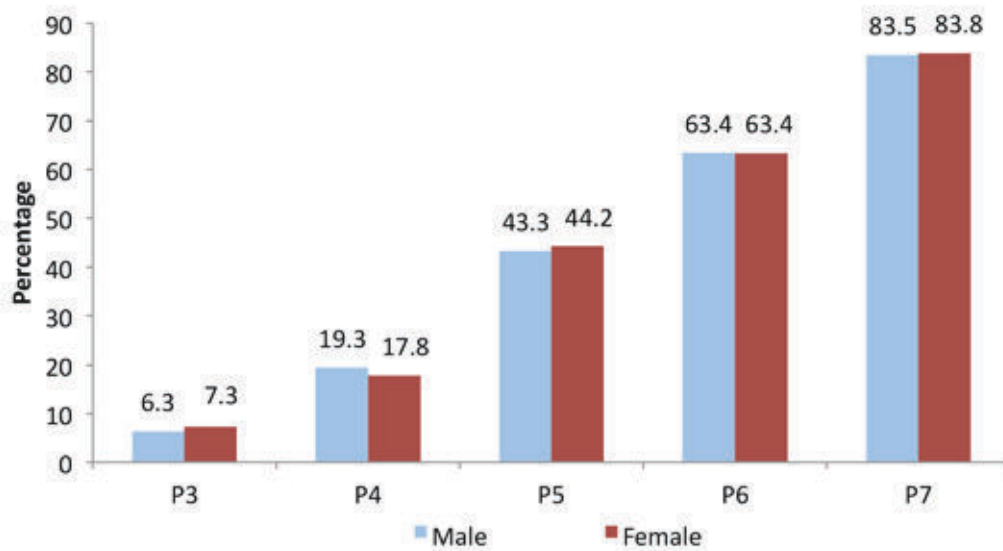
Figure 48: P7 pupils who can comprehend a P2 story



Gender

Gender differences in English comprehension were minimal at all levels.

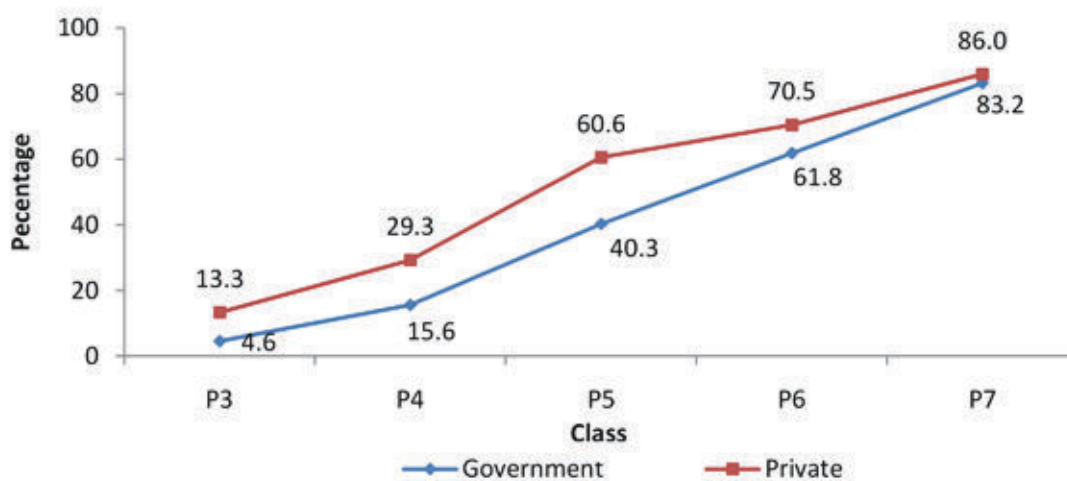
Figure 49: Distribution of English comprehension competences in Western Region, by class and gender



School Ownership

As found in the national results, children in private schools outperformed their counterparts in government schools at all levels. The differences were most pronounced at lower levels of primary school.

Figure 50: Distribution of English comprehension competencies in Western Region, by school type and class



4.4.2 Numeracy

Overall, 3 out of 10 children can perform Primary 2 level division

In Primary 7, 9 out of 10 children can perform Primary 2 level division

In Primary 3, 2 out of 10 children can perform Primary 2 level division

Table 28:Percentage distribution for numeracy competencies of P2 standard in Western Region, by class

Class	Nothing	Identify 0 - 9	Identify 10_99	Addition	Subtract	Multiply	Division	Total
P1	28.2	51.6	11.5	4.9	2.6	0.4	0.8	100
P2	9.3	36.7	22.2	14.0	10.4	2.9	4.4	100
P3	4.6	18.5	17.2	20.8	16.3	7.0	15.5	100
P4	2.5	7.4	8.9	15.1	19.6	12.3	34.2	100
P5	1.5	3.4	3.5	8.2	14.3	15.0	54.1	100
P6	1.0	1.3	1.8	4.5	6.5	8.1	77.0	100
P7	0.5	0.9	0.6	2.2	2.4	6.6	86.7	100
Total	9.8	23.1	11.2	10.7	10.5	6.6	28.2	100

District Performance

Highest learning levels: Bushenyi where 6 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can perform Primary 2 level division.

Lowest learning levels: Kibaale where 3 out of 10 children between Primary 3 and Primary 7 can perform Primary 2 level division.

Table 29:Percentage distribution for numeracy competencies of P2 standard in Western Region, P3 – P7 pupils by district

District Name	Nothing	Identify 0 - 9	Identify 10_99	Addition	Subtract	Multiply	Division	Total
Buliisa	3.6	12.0	11.1	13.6	12.2	6.2	41.3	100
Bundibugyo	2.7	7.5	9.9	15.6	17.0	10.2	37.3	100
Bushenyi	0.4	2.3	3.4	7.1	13.3	9.8	63.8	100
Hoima	3.8	10.4	7.3	14.2	13.9	12.2	38.3	100
Ibanda	0.4	5.2	5.6	12.5	16.9	13.2	46.2	100
Isingiro	2.1	7.0	8.4	12.1	13.4	10.9	46.2	100
Kabale	1.4	13.0	8.0	10.8	13.3	12.2	41.3	100
Kabarole	3.9	8.6	13.0	13.5	14.4	8.4	38.2	100
Kamwenge	2.3	8.4	7.5	12.4	14.9	12.7	41.8	100
Kanungu	0.2	4.5	7.6	11.1	11.8	9.2	55.7	100
Kasese	4.7	11.5	11.2	13.5	12.5	10.2	36.5	100
Kibaale	1.9	10.9	14.6	16.3	11.1	10.2	35.0	100

District Name	Nothing	Identify 0 - 9	Identify 10_99	Addition	Subtract	Multiply	Division	Total
Kiruhura	8.5	7.3	7.0	12.4	13.6	9.2	42.1	100
Kisoro	2.5	9.9	6.4	8.7	12.3	13.2	47.1	100
Kyenjojo	2.4	5.8	6.2	9.7	16.0	7.0	52.9	100
Masindi	3.2	11.5	6.6	13.1	10.4	9.2	46.1	100
Mbarara	1.4	3.2	3.9	9.4	13.0	7.6	61.6	100
Ntungamo	1.2	4.8	8.5	17.3	14.1	8.3	45.8	100
Rukungiri	1.5	3.8	6.1	8.9	21.1	13.6	45.0	100
Total	2.4	7.8	7.9	12.1	13.7	10.2	45.9	100

Primary 3 and Primary 7

In Primary 3, 2 out of 10 children can perform Primary 2 level division

In Primary 7, 9 out of 10 children can perform Primary 2 level division

Figure 51: P3 pupils who can do P2 division

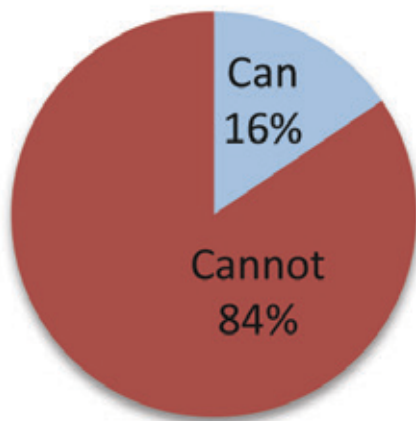
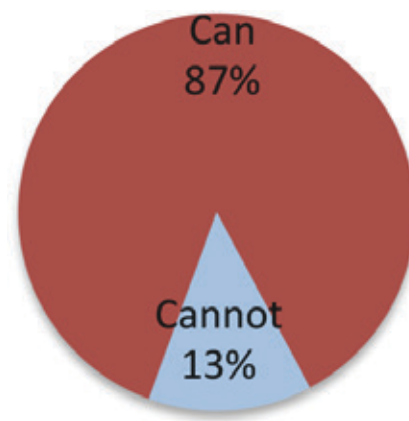


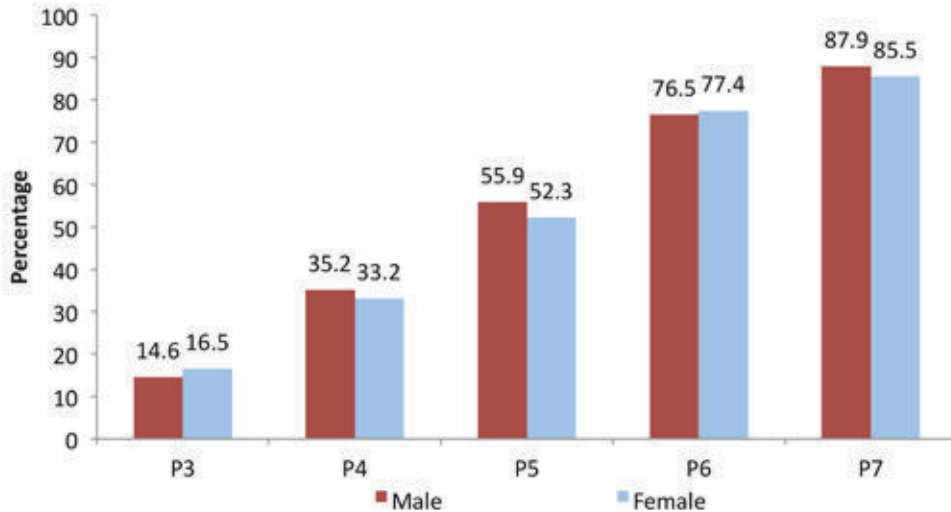
Figure 52: P7 pupils who can do P2 division



Gender

Apart from Primary 5 when boys outperform girls by 4%, there are only minor gender variations in terms of numeracy in Western Region.

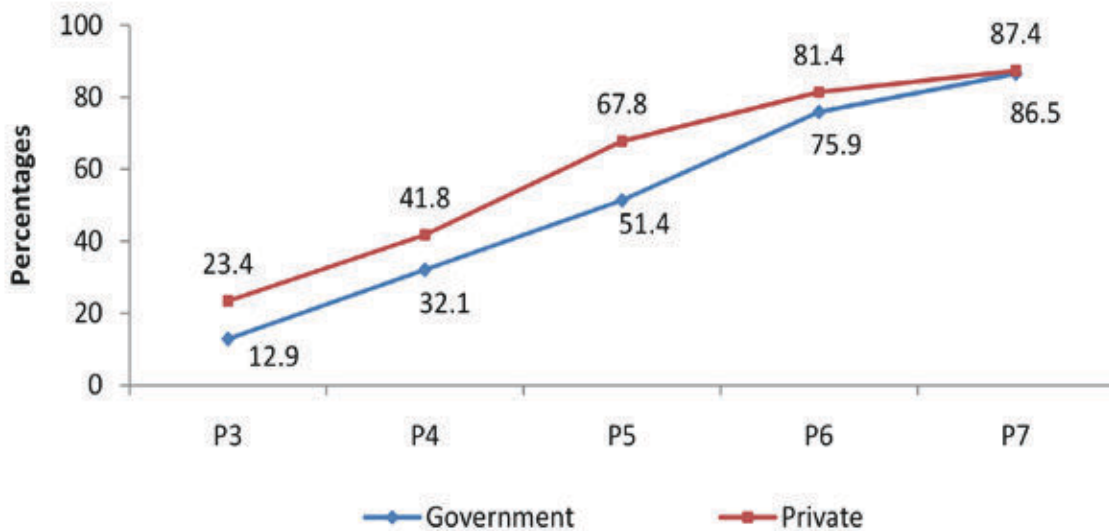
Figure 53: Percentage distribution of numeracy competencies in Western Region, by class and gender



School Ownership

As per the national and regional trend, students in private schools perform better than students in government schools, particularly in lower levels of primary school. By Primary 7 performance is almost equivalent.

Figure 54: Percentage distribution of numeracy competencies in Western Region, by school type and class





Conclusion

The Uwezo 2012 findings demonstrate that children are in school but they are not learning to the expected levels.

Only 1 out of 10 children assessed in Primary 3 was able to comprehend a Primary 2 level story and correctly solve Primary 2 level division. Even in Primary 7, five years after they should be proficient in Primary 2 level work, 2 out of 10 children still cannot comprehend the same Primary 2 level story or complete the division test. The findings clearly demonstrate that the national picture is poor.

In terms of gender, there are no substantial differences: boys and girls perform equally poorly.

However the findings also show that Uganda is not one country in terms of education. There are stark regional disparities. In Central Region, two out of ten children could read a Primary 2 level English story compared to less than one out of ten children in Eastern Region. There are also differences between government and private schools, particularly in the early formative years of primary education. In private schools 1 out of 10 children in Primary 3 could read a Primary 2 level story compared with 3 out of 100 of their peers in government schools.

The data shows that there is a crisis of learning in our schools. The question is: what is to be done?

Fast, we need to identify effective evidence-based strategies that have worked in Uganda or in similar contexts. We particularly need to focus on the interventions that have been confirmed to be impactful by rigorous independent evaluation.

The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has collected evidence of what works from around the world, including Uganda and other countries in East Africa. This body of evidence should be studied by policy-makers in Uganda. Similarly the recently published book *The Rebirth of Education: Schooling Ain't Learning* by Lant Pritchett (Professor of the Practice of International Development at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and member of the Twaweza Advisory Board) provides insightful analysis and suggests a potential approach to reform. There are also numerous studies that have been conducted in Uganda that should be considered seriously rather than left lying on shelves.

Government and key policy partners have a responsibility to do their homework and make sound policy decisions. And they must learn from the past. The strategies and investments of the last ten years have not borne fruit in terms of learning outcomes; the last thing we need to continue with is more of the same and expect different outcomes.

While government has the primary responsibility, the challenge of quality education is a societal challenge that involves us all. Action should be taken at every level. Parents should engage more with what their children are doing in school by checking homework and exercise books. Teachers should ensure that they leave space for dialogue with parents on children's performance. Community leaders should publicise the importance of education and the future value it brings.

Civil society – faith based organisations, trade unions, the media and non-governmental organisations – needs to take a long hard look in the mirror and ask what it is that they are doing to make sure that every Ugandan child learns. A key element of civil society engagement in education centres on transparency and openness. All data about UPE grants, and about performance should be made publicly available to enable all of us to play our role.

Concerted and active citizen engagement may not only help to get things done at community level, it may also bring pressure to bear on government to deliver better.

Our Partners

Expanded list of individuals and institutions we acknowledge in 2012

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3	Uganda National Examination Board (National Assessment of Progress in Education - NAPE)		
4	Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) - James Muwonge and Jane Yoyeta Magoola		
Volunteers(4,800 Volunteers)			

Vision 2040 was recently launched in Uganda with a clear message that if we don't ensure our children are learning we will never achieve its ambitious goals. Our children deserve a quality basic education.

No doubt, massive investments in education have been made over the years. Since 1997 when the UPE Act was passed, official school fees have been eliminated and education has been made accessible for millions more children in Uganda. We have seen significant growth in the number of schools, classrooms and teachers over the past decade. Primary school enrolment rates – for both boys and girls – have also skyrocketed. But as numbers of children going to school increase, is the quality of education improving as well? Are our Children Learning?

This report presents the findings of the Uwezo Uganda annual learning assessment. The assessment was conducted between March and April 2012, in 80 Districts countrywide. A total of 81,650 children aged 6-16 years were assessed in basic literacy (English and four local languages) and numeracy. The assessment is based on school and household data.

The report has three main sections. The introduction section gives an overview of the processes and tools, including an overview of key findings. The second section is a national report, while the last section presents a regional focus on the findings.

The research was undertaken by Uwezo, meaning 'capability' in Kiswahili, an initiative that seeks to improve literacy and numeracy levels among children aged 6-16 years in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, through an innovative, citizen-driven and public accountability approach to social change.

Uwezo is committed to the open sharing of data. We welcome you to undertake independent analysis, to debate and share the findings. Full data sets and further information can be downloaded from www.uwezo.net.



Change is me. It's you. It's all of us.