

# NEWSLETTER

Uwezo Uganda Bi Annual Newsletter – ISSUE 7, June 2022



## WELCOME TO THE 7TH ISSUE OF OUR NEWSLETTER



Uwezo Uganda continues to thank you for your support and collaboration particularly during these socio-economic challenging times. During the half year, a lot has happened in the education sector and at Uwezo Uganda including the launch of Uwezo Uganda 2021 National Learning Assessment Report. The blended launch event took place on Tuesday 18th January with about 60 participants attending face to face at Fairway Hotel and others connecting via zoom. A detailed update of the launch is provided herein the newsletter.

We continue to register a number of achievements through the various assessments conducted like; the Assessment of Life Skills and Values in East Africa (ALIVE). The baseline and end line assessments of Community Led Learning (CLL) and Family Led Learning (FLL) activities, Early Language & Numeracy Assessment (ELANA), and Assessment of children's creative writing skills in Uganda. The various assessments conducted enable provision of evidence around different aspects that affect learning with a focus on ensuring improved and equitable quality learning for all children in Uganda.

This newsletter provides high level updates based on selected program area of communication, advocacy, contribution to global knowledge and assessment. We truly appreciate your feedback every time we share with you our newsletter. Here is an update of what we have been up to for the period January – June 2022.

Yours Sincerely, On Behalf of Uwezo Uganda

Mary Goretti Nakabugo, PhD  
Executive Director, Uwezo Uganda  
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# UWEZO UGANDA NEWS UPDATES

## COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

### THE 2021 NATIONAL LEARNING ASSESSMENT REPORT LAUNCHED

On Tuesday 18th January 2022, Uwezo Uganda launched the 2021 Uwezo Uganda National Learning Assessment report titled, Are our children learning? Illuminating the Covid-19 learning losses and gains in Uganda. The event was blended, with about 60 participants attending face to face at Fairway Hotel while 167 participants connected virtually via zoom. The Uwezo 2021 National Learning Assessment report is among the latest in a series of national assessments of children's foundational literacy and numeracy skills that Uwezo has carried out in Uganda since 2010. The 2021 assessment was conducted amidst the COVID-19 restrictions including school closures. The report contributes to the education recovery strategy post- the COVID-19 period. In addition to assessing the reading and numeracy competencies and the household data, the assessment also collected data on the learning continuity amidst the school closures during the COVID-19 restrictions. The findings on learning suggest that some improvement was made in 2018-21 in the pace of children's progress, in the upper primary grades, towards foundational reading and numeracy competence. This apparent improvement may be partly attributable to home-based study in 2020-21 while children remained in the same grade for longer than usual as schools remained closed. Partly too, it may reflect better teaching before the pandemic.

Those who had acquired these competences automated and retained them despite the prolonged school closure. But the findings also illustrate the delay of younger children's progress as a result of the school closures. In some respects, the gap between older and younger children has widened. The school survey findings show underlying problems of insufficient staffing and physical structures that affected primary schools before the closures and will continue to impede effective learning. In other respects, there are indications that greater attention is being given to children's safety in school. The report can be accessed at [here](#) and the summary of findings can be accessed at [here](#).



*L-R, Mr. Robert Ikwap - Assistant Commissioner for Basic Education - MoES representative, Dr. Mary Goretti Nakabugo, Executive Director - Uwezo Uganda, Dr. Grace K. Baguma, Director - National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and Ms. Dolorence Naswa Were, Executive Director - Uganda Society for Disabled Children officially launching the Uwezo Learning Assessment report*

### 50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE NCDC

Uwezo Uganda delivered a keynote address on the topic "Models of curriculum design, development and implementation to enhance holistic learning" at the launch of the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). The keynote delved into what holistic learning or whole child development entails and what models of curriculum development and implementation would be best suited to foster development of a whole child. The presentation can be accessed at the following [here](#).



*Dr. Mary Goretti Nakabugo, Executive Director - Uwezo Uganda giving the keynote address at the launch of the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC)*

# UWEZO UGANDA NEWS UPDATES

## CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL DEBATE THROUGH CONFERENCES

### PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPARATIVE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SOCIETY (CIES) CONFERENCE

Uwezo Uganda participated in the annual Comparative International Education Society (CIES) conference that took place at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis, USA, and virtually from 18 -22 April 2022 under the theme, "Illuminating the power of idea/lism". During the conference, we presented three papers, chaired two panels and served as discussant for one book launch.



Kindly Join Uwezo Uganda @CIES 2022: Illuminating the power of Idea/lism

Tues, April 18th

7:45 to 9:00am CDT (3:45 to 5:00pm EAT) Venue: Pajamaes Sessions, VR 112

**Panel Session:** Listening to other voices: Methods and results from life skills assessment in East Africa, Peru and India

**Paper:** A participatory approach to developing contextualized tools for assessing life skills and values: The process and lessons from East Africa  
Chair- **Mary Goretti Nakabugo**

Tues, April 19th

5:00 to 6:30pm CDT (1:00 to 2:30 am EAT Wed, 20th)

**Panel Session:** Voices from the South: Classroom environment & learning outcomes-experiences from East Africa  
Chair- **Mary Goretti Nakabugo**

Thur, April 21st

6:00 to 7:00am CDT (2:00 to 3:30pm EAT) Venue: Pajamaes Sessions, VR 117

**Paper Session:** The power of play in early childhood: learning and evidence from the BRAC Play Lab model in the Global South

**Formal Paper Presentation:** Local idealism versus central government indifference: case studies of community-based preschools in Uganda

Presenters- **James Urwick & Mary Goretti Nakabugo**

9:00 to 10:30pm CDT (5:00 to 6:30 am EAT) Venue: Pajamaes Sessions, VR 112  
**Panel Session:** Implementing curriculum reforms in under-resourced contexts: what can we learn from Uganda?

Chair- **Mary Goretti Nakabugo**

**Paper Presentation:** Assessment in a reformed lower secondary school curriculum in Uganda: making a fundamental change?

Presenters- **Emmy Zoomlamai (FICH) & Mary Goretti Nakabugo (Uwezo Uganda)**

Fri, April 22nd

6:00 TO 7:30AM CDT (2:00 to 3:30 pm EAT) Venue: Pajamaes Sessions, VR 126

**Book Launch:** Access, quality, and global learning crisis: Insights from Ugandan primary education.

Discussant- **Mary Goretti Nakabugo**

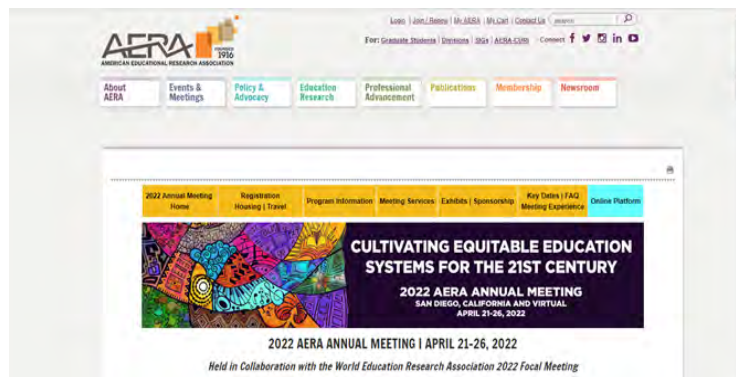
Full programme and registration: <https://cies2022.org>

[www.uwezouganda.org](http://www.uwezouganda.org)

[Uwezo Uganda](#) [@UwezoUganda](#) [Uwezo Uganda](#) [info@uwezouganda.org](#)

### PARTICIPATION IN THE AERA ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN COLLABORATION WITH THE WORLD EDUCATION RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (WERA)

Uwezo Uganda participated in the American Education Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting that took place at San Diego, California, USA and virtually from 21-26 April 2022 under the theme, "Cultivating Equitable Education Systems for the 21st Century".



While at AERA meeting, we participated in the Classroom Assessment Special Interest Group (SIG) Business Meeting and also attended Classroom Assessment: Innovation Trends to Enhance Student Learning Paper Session and the Practical Issues in Classroom Assessment: Deconstructing and Reconstructing Research to Offer Practical Recommendations Symposium. We particularly benefited from attending a paper presentation by Prof. Thomas Guskey of University of Kentucky on how grades can be an effective form of feedback to facilitate learning.

### UWEZO UGANDA CHAIRS A SESSION AT THE ACA CONFERENCE

Uwezo Uganda attended and participated in the 3rd edition of the African Curriculum Association (ACA) conference that took place in The Gambia. While there, we chaired a paper session on; harnessing the wisdom of crowds for developing curricula- the Ghanaian experience and had an opportunity to share key highlights about the young person's pilot assessment that was conducted by Uwezo Uganda in 2020.

# UWEZO UGANDA NEWS UPDATES

## UWEZO UGANDA IN THE MEDIA

Uwezo Uganda continues to contribute to the global and national education debate through broadcast and print media. We have been consulted and referenced regularly as an independent voice on contemporary issues relevant to education in Uganda including, among others, the impact of Covid-19 and the effects of the prolonged school closures on the education sector.

During this period, Uwezo Uganda has been interviewed and hosted by various media houses, both at global and national level. Reference has been made to Uwezo 12 times on TV and Radio and 8 times in the newspapers. Here are some of the links to the references made:

- [NPR Show- On Point – The intergenerational impacts of global learning loss](#)
- [Daily Monitor – Are our children learning? Latest report shows mixed results](#)
- [Daily Monitor – Equip teachers to perform well](#)
- [Nile Post – Young learners hit hardest by Covid-19 measures](#)
- [Devex – After 22 months closed, Uganda’s schools are struggling](#)
- [The World – Uganda finally opens up schools after pandemic closures](#)
- [KFM Show- VPN – Will the new budget help sort Uganda’s economic challenges](#)

**TOPIC: WILL THE NEW BUDGET HELP SORT UGANDA'S ECONOMIC CHALLENGES?**

**Guests:**



**JANE NALUNGA**  
Country Director- SEATINI.



**RAMATHAN GGOOBI**  
PSST - Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development.



**Dr. MARY GORETTI NAKABUGO**  
Executive Director- UwezoUganda.

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## UWEZO UGANDA PARTNERS WITH IDEAS42, TO EVALUATE THE EFFECT OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGE MESSAGES

In partnership with a USA-based non-profit organisation, ideas42, we evaluated the effect of behavioural change messages that were shared during the Uwezo Uganda 2021 national learning assessment, to encourage parents to re-enroll their children, and children to return to school when schools reopened. Data analysis and report writing are ongoing and the findings will be shared in the next issue.



*A child received a certificate of planned completion during the 2021 Basic assessment*

# UWEZO UGANDA NEWS UPDATES

## ASSESSMENT UNDERTAKINGS

### PREPARATORY WORK FOR ALiVE ASSESSMENT

The preparation for the regional life skills and values dubbed Assessment of Life Skills and Values (ALiVE) started. During this period, Uwezo Uganda and Luigi Giussani Institute of Higher Education (LGIHE) jointly undertook a mini pilot of the assessment items in the four districts of Oyam, Pallisa, Mbarara and Wakiso. The tool development was finalised and a full district pilot undertaken in Buikwe district in the month of April 2022. During the full district pilot, 400 youths aged 13-17 years old from 20 sampled villages were assessed on the three life skills; collaboration, problem solving, self awareness and the value of respect. The full assessment will be undertaken in 20 districts across 400 villages in August 2022.



*Young adults trying out a collaborative task in Buikwe district, during a district full pilot of ALiVE*

### PREPARATIONS FOR YOUNG ALiVE

As a buildup of the evidence generated through the household based ALiVE national assessments in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, it is hoped that we will be able to i) Generate interest of the various government education stakeholders to explore how best to enhance these competencies through enactment of policies. ii) Ignite a public conversation on the importance of nurturing these competences and the role of parents and communities in nurturing them.

Based on this, ALiVE has planned to move to the second phase where we will explore the possibility of conducting classroom assessments together with the various ministries of Education but also explore on how to use the evidence already generated to advocate for systemic change.

It is in this regard that a phase two kick off workshop was held in Uganda from May 30th to June 1st to develop a road map that will guide the initiative for the next three years. The workshop aimed to provide an opportunity to explore how best to work collaboratively by tapping into each organisation's values and principles. The workshop brought together 7 implementing organizations (2-Kenya, 2-Uganda, and 3-Tanzania), RELI representatives, government departments, and LEGO Foundation.

### ASSESSMENT OF CLL AND FLL CONDUCTED

The baseline and endline assessments of Community Led Learning (CLL) and Family Led Learning (FLL) activities were conducted between February and May 2022. The assessments were conducted under the collaboration between Uwezo Uganda and the Strengthening Education Systems for Improved Learning (SESIL) an initiative of the Ministry of Education and Sports and the UK Government in Uganda, to establish the effect of Community Led Learning (CLL) and Family Led Learning (FLL) activities on learning. The baseline and endline assessments that used literacy (local language) and numeracy targeted children benefiting from after school classes conducted in the CLL centres (cohort 1), children benefiting from the Family-Led Learning (FLL) materials distribution activity (cohort 2) and children who were not participating in any CLL activity (cohort 3).

The baseline assessment conducted in February targeted 2,400 children in six districts of Maracha, Yumbe, Obongi, Sironko, Kapchorwa and Kween. Similarly, at end line conducted in May, the same districts were reached to assess the same children assessed at baseline in order to gain an understanding on whether the CLL and FLL activities had improved learning outcomes for children. The results of this assessment will inform scale-up of the CLL initiative.



*Volunteers undertaking CLL activities in Kapchorwa district*

# UWEZO UGANDA NEWS UPDATES

## FIELD TRIAL 2 OF ELANA CONDUCTED

The Field Trial 2 activities for the PAL Network's Early Language & Numeracy Assessment (ELANA), a citizen-led assessment across the learning areas of language and mathematics were conducted. The Trial was conducted in 45 villages / enumeration areas where 25 households in each selected village/enumeration area were reached and all children aged 4-10 years in the selected household assessed. ELANA is implemented as a partnership between People's Action for Learning (PAL) Network and the member organisations in 12 low and middle-income countries in the Global South. The citizen led assessment that uses a common tool will assess the status of early language, literacy and numeracy skills.



*A volunteer undertaking ELANA field trial 2 assessment in Buwama B village, Mpigi district*

## WRITING SKILLS ASSESSED

Uwezo Uganda in partnership with PAL Network has conducted a pilot project to assess creative writing skills among children aged 8-12 years. In partnership with Jinja partner, Jinja Areas Communities Federation (JIACOFE), the pilot assessment was conducted in 10 enumeration areas in Jinja district and city, visiting 200 households.

The pilot is intended to enrich existing Uwezo and PAL Network's assessment tools that focus on assessing reading skills. The project builds on the Beyond Basics Assessment that was conducted in East Africa that targeted children in primary 5 and 6 in 2016.







*Uwezo volunteers conducting the writing assessment in Jinja district*



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, and Echidna Giving who have funded our work in 2022. We also acknowledge partnerships with Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) through the Strengthening Education Systems for Improved Learning (SESIL) programme, Lego Foundation, People’s Action for Learning (PAL Network), Regional Education Learning Initiative (RELI), Zizi Afrique Foundation and Luigi Giussani Institute of Higher Education through which we have been able to implement a number of activities and remained a key stakeholder and contributor to Uganda’s education sector. We also appreciate the continued support of the Ministry of Education and Sports.

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