



We the people

Ugandans' experiences of public service delivery

1. Introduction

Public services are a critical point of interaction between government and citizens. One of the primary needs citizens have from their government is the equitable provision of water, education and healthcare. These services are central to citizens' lives and are also the most common point at which citizens encounter their government and make judgements about its performance.

Governments must consider the twin challenges of access and quality of services: ensuring that these services are available to as many citizens as possible and ensuring that they are of good quality: the water provided is clean and safe, education equips children to become productive and engaged citizens, and healthcare saves lives and helps citizens to live better.

This brief presents data on Ugandan citizens' experiences of key public services, specifically

education, health, and water and sanitation. Do their children go to school, and if so, what challenges do they encounter? What measures do citizens take when someone in their household falls ill, or to prevent this from happening? Where do they get their drinking water from, and what type of toilet do they use?

Data for the brief come from Twaweza's new *Sauti za Wananchi* survey. *Sauti za Wananchi* is a nationally-representative, high-frequency mobile phone panel survey. Information on the overall methodology is available at www.twaweza.org/sauti. For this brief, data were collected from 2,000 respondents in the baseline survey of the *Sauti za Wananchi* panel, conducted in August and September 2017.

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Sauti za Wananchi



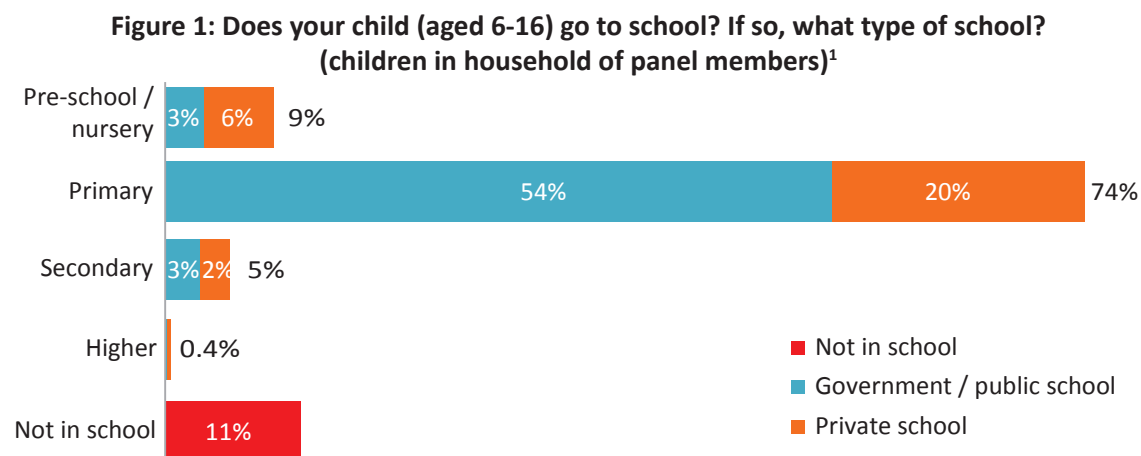
The key findings are:

- 3 out of 4 children (aged 6-16) are currently in primary school
- Parents report teacher and equipment issues as the main problems affecting their children's schooling
- 5 out of 6 children under five years sleep under treated bed-nets
- 3 out of 4 children under five have vaccination cards
- Half the population seek treatment from a government health facility
- Very few citizens have health insurance
- 7 out of 10 citizens use an improved source of drinking water in the dry season, rising to 8 out of 10 in the wet season
- Collecting water takes much longer in the dry season
- One in four urban households use "hanging latrines"

2. Nine facts about Ugandan citizens' experiences of education, health and water services

Fact 1: Three out of four children (aged 6-16) are currently in primary school

Three in four children aged 6-16 (74%) are current primary school pupils, most in government schools (54%). One in ten of this age group are not attending any school.



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, baseline survey, August-September 2017; n=3,350

Fact 2: Parents perceive distance to school and contributions as the main problems affecting their children's schooling

The most referenced school associated problem is distance, cited by one in five parents (19%) followed by excessive school contributions (12%). However, more parents (25%) reference

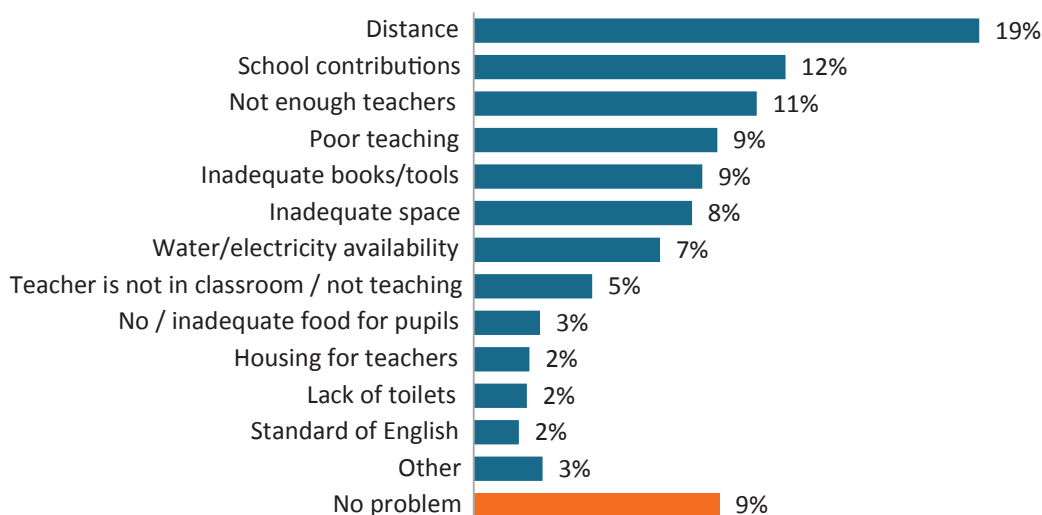
1 Percentages in the charts may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

teaching issues than any other, when asked about the main problem affecting their child or children's schooling: one in ten (11%) mention a shortage of teachers and a similar number (9%) cite the poor standard of teaching. A further one in twenty (5%) mention teacher absenteeism.

Similarly, shortages of facilities and teaching supplies are named by many (24%): inadequate books and teaching tools (9%), inadequate space (8%), and a lack of water and/or electricity (7%).

Those in urban areas are slightly more likely to cite school contributions (14%) and space (10%) as problems, and less likely to cite a shortage of teachers (6%), but distance is the top problem in both urban (18%) and rural (20%) areas (not shown in charts).

Figure 2: What, in your opinion, is the main problem affecting your child's schooling?



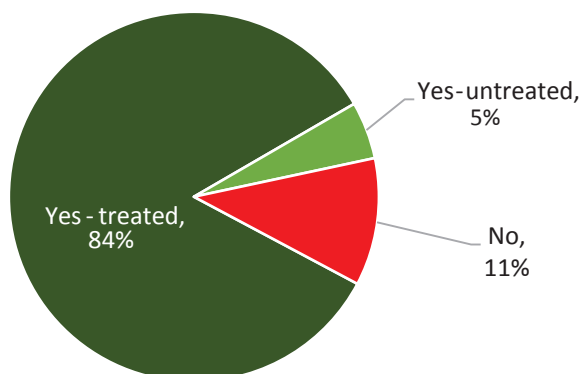
Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, baseline survey, August-September 2017; n=3,350

Fact 3: Five out of six children under five years sleep under treated bed-nets

A clear majority of Uganda children under five years of age (84%) sleep under insecticide-treated bed-nets, of the type known to provide strong protection against malaria transmission. A further 5% use an untreated bed-net, while one in ten (11%) do not sleep under any type of net.

There is no clear difference between urban and rural areas in terms of use of bed-nets, and no clear link between wealth and bed-net usage (not shown in charts).

Figure 3: Did your child (under 5) sleep under a bed-net last night, was the bed-net treated?

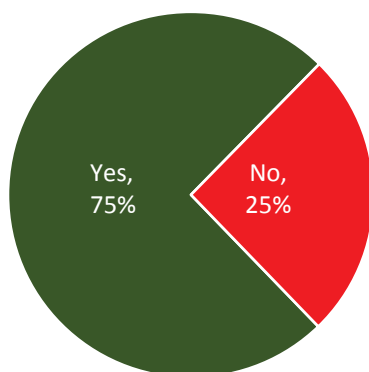


Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, baseline survey, August-September 2017; n=1,790

Fact 4: Three out of four children under five have vaccination cards

Three out of four Ugandan children aged under five years (75%) have vaccination cards. This figure is slightly higher in urban areas and substantially higher among wealthier households (not shown in charts).

Figure 4: Do you have a vaccination card for your child (under 5)?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, baseline survey, August-September 2017; n=1,790

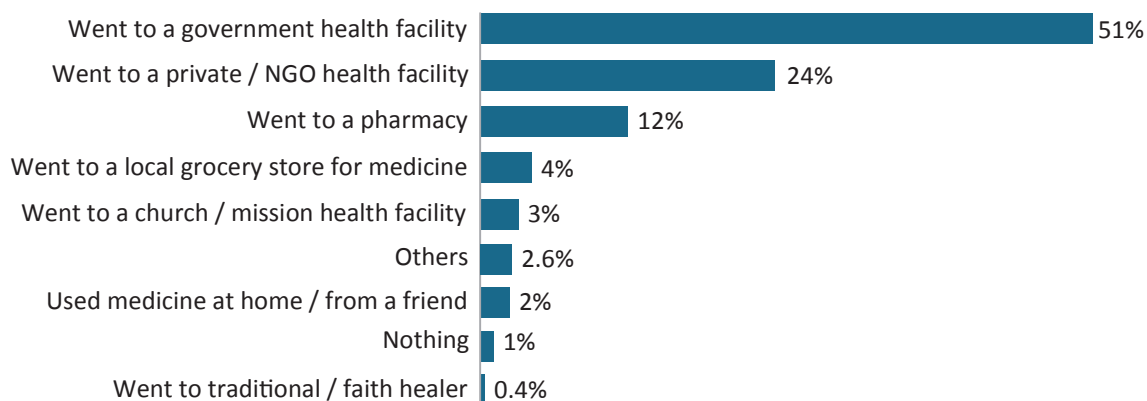
Three in four children under five (73%) have received the first dose of the DPT vaccination, but fewer (66%) have received all three DPT doses. Fewer still have received a measles vaccination (60%) or been given a dose of Vitamin A (55%) (not shown in charts).

Parents of half of all children under five (50%) are confident that the child has been dewormed, including three in ten (31%) who received the dose during 2017 (not shown in charts).

Fact 5: Half the population use government health facilities

When seeking treatment for illness or injury, half the population (51%) turn first to government health facilities. A further one out of four (24%) turn first to private or NGO health facilities, and others go to the pharmacy (12%).

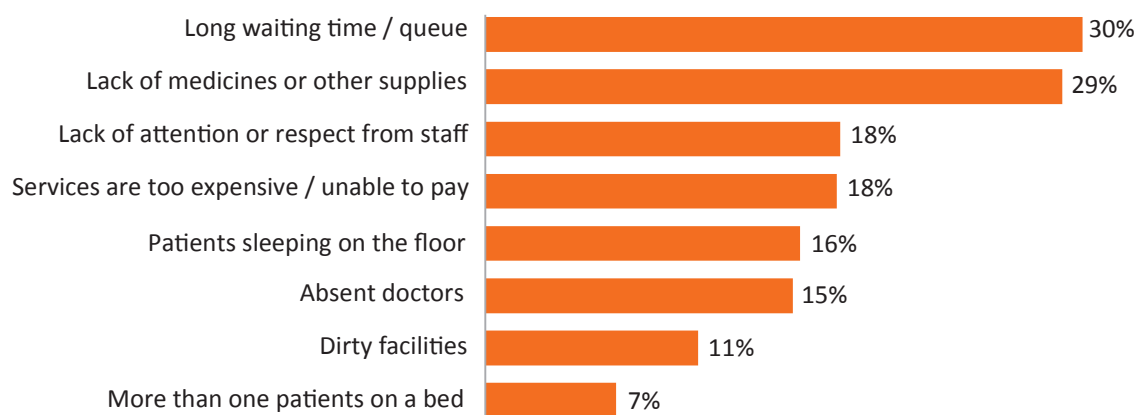
Figure 5: The last time you / someone in your household suffered an illness or injury, what was the first action you / they took to find relief?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, baseline survey, August-September 2017; n=1,760

The most commonly encountered problems at government health facilities are long waiting times or queues (30%) and a lack of medicines or other supplies (29%).

Figure 6: The last time you visited a government health facility to seek treatment for yourself / someone else, did you encounter any of these problems during the visit?

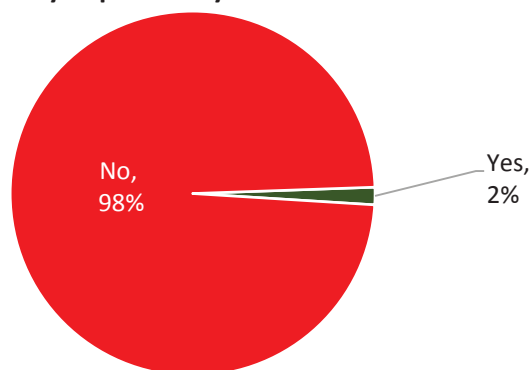


Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, baseline survey, August-September 2017; n=830

Fact 6: Very few citizens have health insurance

One in fifty citizens (2%) have health or medical insurance, meaning 98% do not.

Figure 7: Do you personally have health or medical insurance?



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, baseline survey, August-September 2017; n=2,000

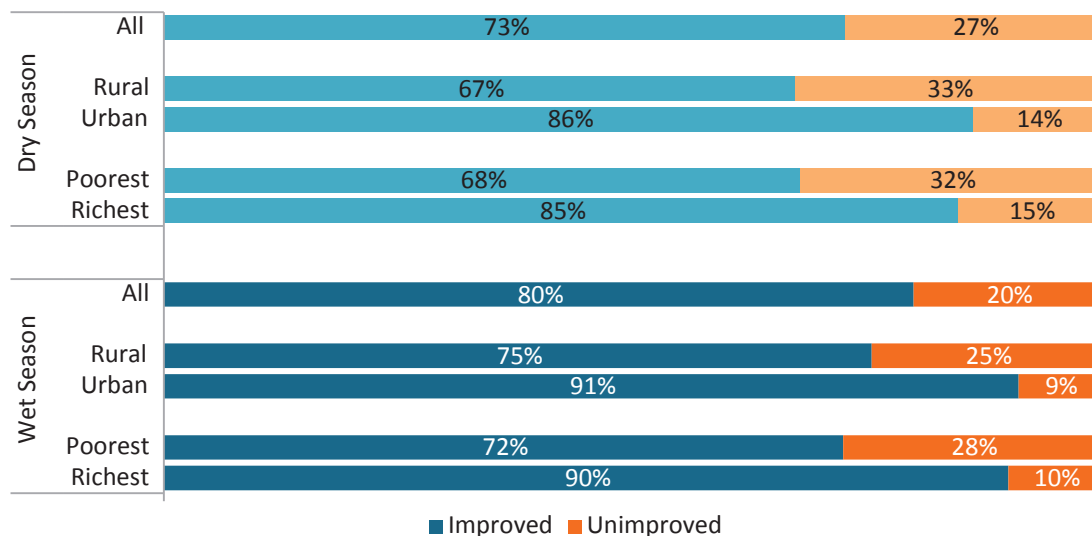
Fact 7: Seven out of ten citizens use an improved source of drinking water in the dry season, rising to eight out of ten in the wet season

Household access to improved² water supplies is slightly higher in the wet season compared to the dry season. Eight in ten households (80%) access water from an improved source during the rainy season, up from seven in ten (73%) in the dry season.

At all times of the year, households in urban areas have better access to clean and safe water than their rural counterparts. Similarly, wealthier households are more likely than the poor to access drinking water from an improved source.

² As defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO), “improved” water sources include piped water, boreholes, protected wells and protected springs, and rainwater collection. Other sources, including unprotected wells and springs, surface water sources (rivers and dams, etc.), water carts and trucks and bottled water, are classified as “unimproved”.

Figure 8.: What is the household's main source of drinking water in the dry season? And in the wet season?

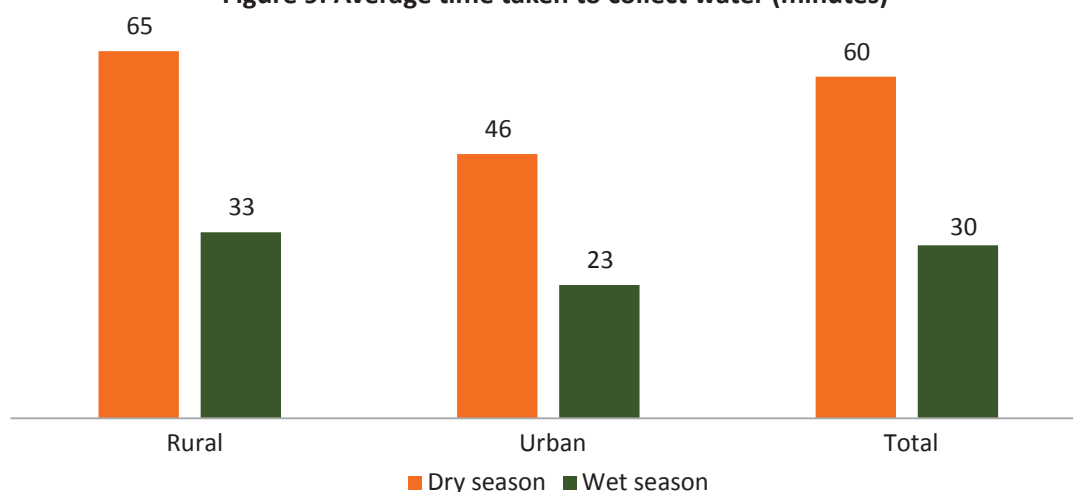


Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, baseline survey, August-September 2017; n=2,000

Fact 8: Collecting water takes much longer in the dry season

On average, it takes a little over one hour (65 minutes) for rural households to collect their water in the dry season, twice the amount of time needed in the wet season (33 minutes). A similar difference can be seen in urban areas, where average collection times are also twice as high in the dry season (46 minutes) compared to the wet season (23 minutes).

Figure 9: Average time taken to collect water (minutes)

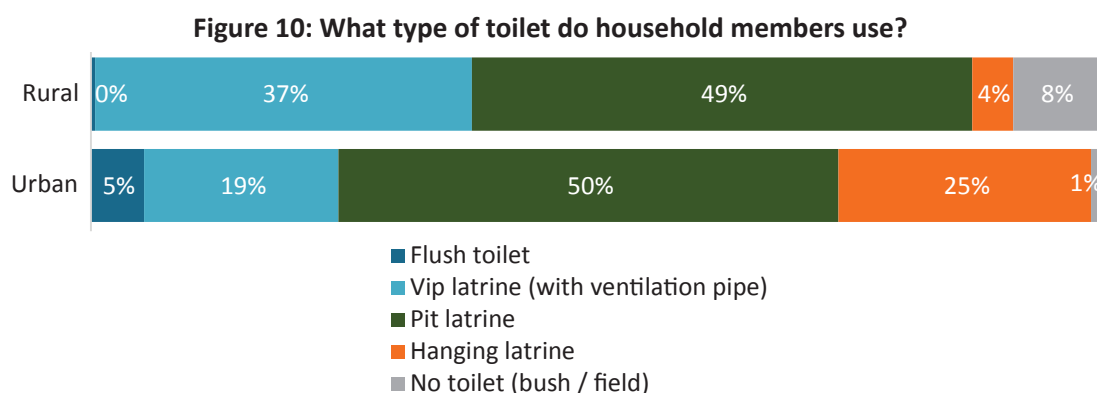


Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, baseline survey, August-September 2017; n=2,000

Fact 9: One out of four urban households use “hanging latrines”

One in four households (25%) in urban areas use so-called “hanging latrines”, situated above water – either a stream or lake, or piped directly into drains or streams. This arrangement can be very bad for public hygiene, encouraging the spread of water-borne diseases such as typhoid and cholera.

One in twenty urban households (5%) use flush toilets and one in five (19%) use a ventilated pit latrine. In rural areas, four in ten (37%) use ventilated pit latrines.



Source of data: *Sauti za Wananchi*, baseline survey, August-September 2017; n=2,000

3. Conclusion

The story emerging from these data on service delivery in Uganda is of a divided country. Urban and wealthier households have more access to better services. Although this may not come as a surprise, the data show the divisions are stark and merit attention.

When looking at access to services, we find that a substantial 1 out of 4 children of school age are not in school and do not have vaccination cards, only half of Ugandans use government health facilities and between 3 and 4 out of 10 people do not have access to an improved water source. In addition a substantial proportion of children are not being vaccinated against childhood illnesses.

The quality of services is naturally more difficult to access based on citizens’ perspectives. However citizens see problems in terms of teachers and facilities in education, and encounter long waiting times and a lack of supplies and medicines in health centres. Although the majority of Ugandans use improved water sources in both the wet and dry seasons, there are still a substantial 3 out of 10 poor and the same number of rural households which use unimproved sources.

These data provide an initial overview of Ugandans experiences of basic public services. In future rounds of *Sauti za Wananchi*, we will look into each of these sectors with more depth and provide greater insights on weaknesses and strengths of service delivery. In this way, citizens’ own experiences can help to guide and inform policy decisions around the delivery of services and bring us closer to a more equitable Uganda in which all citizens enjoy access to quality education, health, water and sanitation services.