

# Schools, funds and learning

## Ugandans' awareness of Uwezo and the capitation grant



### Summary

- Only 7% of Ugandans can recognize the Uwezo name. However, more than half of respondents recalled hearing the Uwezo tagline about a report which says that children are going to school but not learning.
- The proportion of Ugandans who have heard of the Capitation Grant (a government policy of funding allocated to public schools, per student per year) increased from 10% in January 2014 to 35% in March 2015. It is plausible that a Twaweza-supported mass media initiative contributed to this increase.
- Two out of three respondents know that any parent has a right to inquire about the Capitation Grant in a public school
- Just 17% of respondents have ever directly inquired about the grant; those who have done so tend to be male and live in rural areas. Notably, among those who have inquired about the grant, 70% report having received the requested information. This is in contrast with the perception of those who have not inquired directly about the grant: 80% believed that if they ask, the information request would be denied.
- Radio and word-of-mouth are the key sources of information on Uwezo and the capitation grant.



## 1. Introduction

Twaweza works on enabling children to learn, citizens to exercise agency and governments to be more open and responsive in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. The Uwezo annual national learning assessment continues to be a core initiative of Twaweza and has been carried out since 2009 in Uganda. Its purpose is to collect independent data on the level of Ugandan children's capacities in basic literacy and numeracy, as well as to communicate the findings directly to parents, in the national media, and to national-level actors in the education sector. Given the efforts taken to communicate Uwezo results, we wanted to find out whether Ugandans recognize the Uwezo name and have heard of the results. Moreover, Twaweza also monitors the implementation of core education policy components, and seeks to empower Ugandan citizens to do the same.

One of the critical inputs into the Ugandan education system is the Capitation Grant – a set amount (5000 UGX for lower and 8000 UGX for upper primary, per child) per child per year that the Ugandan Government allocates to every primary school. Promoting awareness of this grant by parents, as well as their motivation and capacity to follow up with schools on whether, and how much of, the grant has been received, is an integral part of Twaweza's work on promoting accountability. In 2014, Twaweza partnered with Vision Group (a wide-reaching independent media group in Uganda with different media outlets reaching across the country) to include Capitation Grant topics and facts in a series of its radio and television broadcasts in order to increase citizens' awareness about this important education policy component. Awareness of the grant was measured initially in January 2014 and again in November 2014. In 2015, we re-visited this question to see if there are further changes to the levels observed, and whether in addition to awareness, there was any indication also of active monitoring of the grant by citizens. Most of the data presented in this brief is from the April 2015 round; where previous rounds are included for comparison.

## 2. Methodology

In April 2015, Twaweza East Africa commissioned Ipsos Uganda to gather feedback on a number of issues that arise out of the major programs we do with partners, through a nationally representative



“Omnibus” survey<sup>1</sup>. Randomly conducted, the quantitative face to face interviews with people who are 18 years and above uses a semi-structured questionnaire administered through smart phones. A sample size of 2,000 interviews was determined with an error margin of +/- 2% at a 95% confidence interval. This sample was distributed evenly based on the estimated population size, and is also representative of the rural/urban clustering

Through this survey, we sought to measure Ugandan citizen’s awareness of the Uwezo Learning Assessment and the Capitation Grant, and also their experiences in inquiring about the Grant in their local schools. Where the data is available, it is shown but also, information from earlier survey rounds is provided for comparison. These are independent, nationally representative surveys where differences between the rounds were not tested for statistical significance.

### 3. Key Findings

#### **Fact 1: Uwezo name recognition is low; however, more than half of respondents could recall hearing about a report which says that children are going to school but not learning**

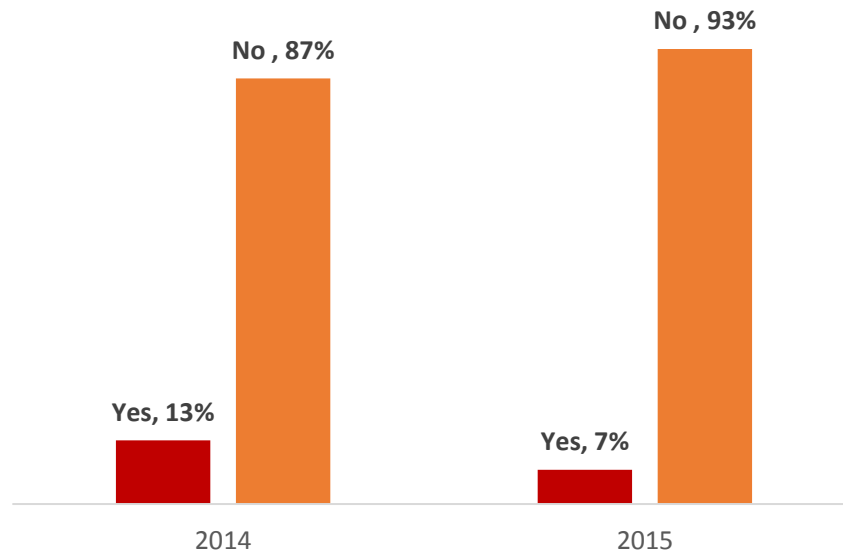
Overall awareness of Uwezo’s Learning Assessment among Ugandans is fairly low, with 7% of the polled 2015 respondents saying they had ever heard about it (Figure 1). This appears to be a decrease from early 2014, when 13% of respondents could recall Uwezo by name. A further look at the levels of awareness by region reveals generally similar levels across most of the regions: with awareness being lowest in the Western region at 5%, and highest in the Northern region at 12% (data not shown). There was little variation across gender and age groups, although it appears that the younger age groups (between 18-24 years) register a somewhat higher awareness as compared to respondents aged 25 years and above. There was also some variation in levels of awareness among the socio-economic classes, with a higher percentage of the people in the two upper-most income brackets being aware of Uwezo as compared to the lower income groups.



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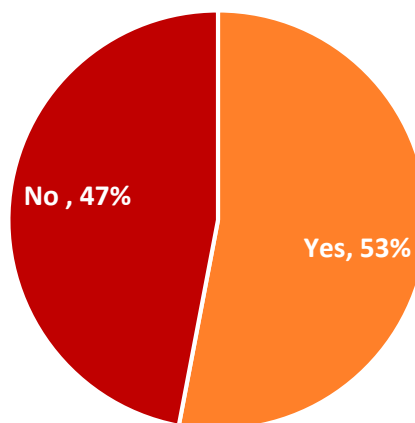
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.surveyanalytics.com/omnibus-survey-definition.html>

**Figure 1: Have you ever heard of Uwezo Learning Assessment?**  
*n=2432 (2014) and n=2000 (2015)*



In the March 2015 round of the survey, a new recall question was added. Respondents who said they had never heard of Uwezo were asked if they had ever heard of a report that says '*Children are going to school but not learning*'. As Figure 2 shows, 53% answered affirmatively. Although it is possible that people have recalled other products (reports, broadcast, studies) related to education, it is likely, given the annual presence of the Uwezo results in the national media, that at least some of that recognition is related to the Uwezo report and findings.

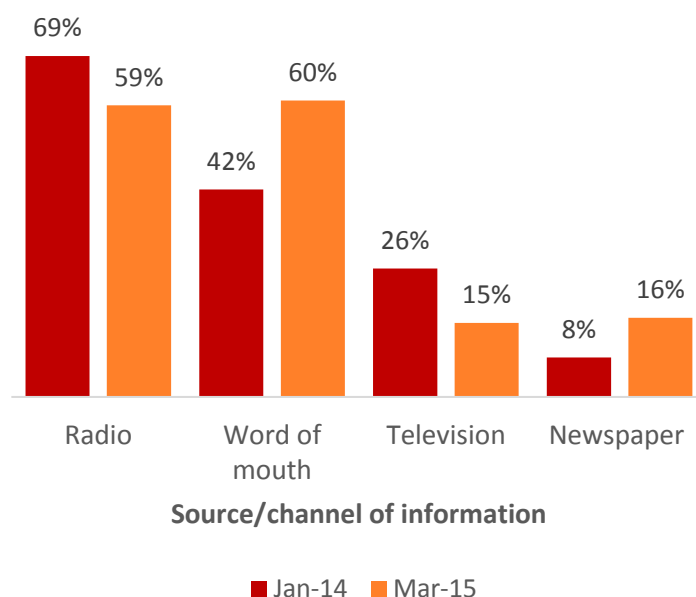
**Figure 2: Have you ever heard of a report that says that children are going to school but not learning?**  
*(March 2015; n=1865)*



This study also sought to understand the sources of information about Uwezo, as shown in Figure 3. Radio featured as the leading source, followed by word-of-mouth, television and newspaper across both surveys (January 2014 and March 2015). However, a look at the trends between the two surveys, reveals that while radio was leading with a big margin in January 2014 at 69%, its ranking appears to have dropped

significantly in March 2015 to 59%. On the other hand, word-of-mouth (from neighbors, friends, relatives, teachers, community meetings) which emerged as the second source, was at 42% in January 2014 and 60% in March 2015. Radio appears to cut across the urban/rural divide as a key source of information about Uwezo. As expected, television was stronger in the urban areas, while conversation with teachers, neighbours and relatives were stronger sources in rural areas. There were minimal variations with regards to gender, age and geographic location.

**Figure 3: Through what channel have you heard about the report (Uwezo) or (the report that says children are going to school but not learning)**



### *The Capitation Grant*

The Capitation Grant for education, sent by the Ugandan government to public schools, is designed to provide schools with additional resources for teaching and learning materials, extra-curricular activities, administration, and management. Twaweza has been tracking awareness on the Capitation Grant with three surveys carried out so far namely; in the first quarter of 2014, in November 2014 and in March 2015. Based on the survey carried out in early 2014, Twaweza worked in partnership with Vision Group to create awareness among citizens on the Capitation Grant to public schools as a way of improving their engagement and participation in their children's education. The Vision Group information initiative sought to increase awareness and engagement of citizens in monitoring the utilization of the UPE Capitation Grant and included among other things incorporating information about the grant in lots of different outputs across the various platforms such as talk shows, news, features, radio magazine programs, etc.

### **Fact 2: The proportion of Ugandans who have heard of the Capitation Grant appears to be increasing**

The data are presented for three survey rounds in Figure 4. In January 2014, survey respondents were asked to describe the Capitation Grant in their own words. Among the respondents, only 9% could describe it correctly. Correct descriptions included mentioning that it is government money sent to schools; that it is meant to be used for buying scholastic items and mentioning the correct amount (5000 UGX for lower and 8000 UGX for upper primary, per child).

A further 2% described it partially correctly. It could be assumed that the 11% who offered a description and were correct or partly correct had heard about the grant.

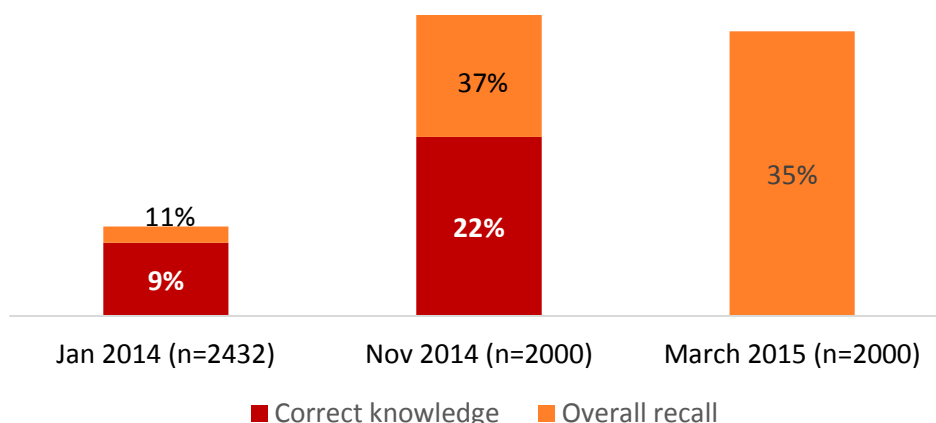
In the two subsequent surveys, the question was however posed somewhat differently. The November 2014 round was in response to the Twaweza supported and Vision Group implemented mass media campaign around the Capitation Grant. In this round, respondents were first simply asked if they had ever heard of the grant; those who had *not* heard of it were prompted by a new question asking if they had heard about “a set amount of money that the Uganda government gives, per child, to every government-aided school”.

When the affirmative responses to both of these questions were combined, the results showed that overall, 37% of the respondents had heard about this grant (this was a total of 444 individuals). However, when asked to describe what it was, 60% of these individuals (or 22% of the total number of respondents) could not describe the grant correctly. In March 2015, this question was asked again, but this time respondents were asked if they remembered the grant, without a prompt or a follow up question to ascertain the proportion of correct knowledge.



The numbers suggest that overall, respondents who recalled the grant had increased from January 2014 to November 2014, and this increase is sustained to March 2015. The proportion of Ugandans with correct knowledge (therefore likely greater understanding of the Grant) also appears to have increased between January 2014 and November 2014. However, we cannot assess whether this proportion has changed between November 2014 and March 2015.

**Figure 4: Overall recall and correct knowledge of the Capitation Grant over 3 survey rounds**



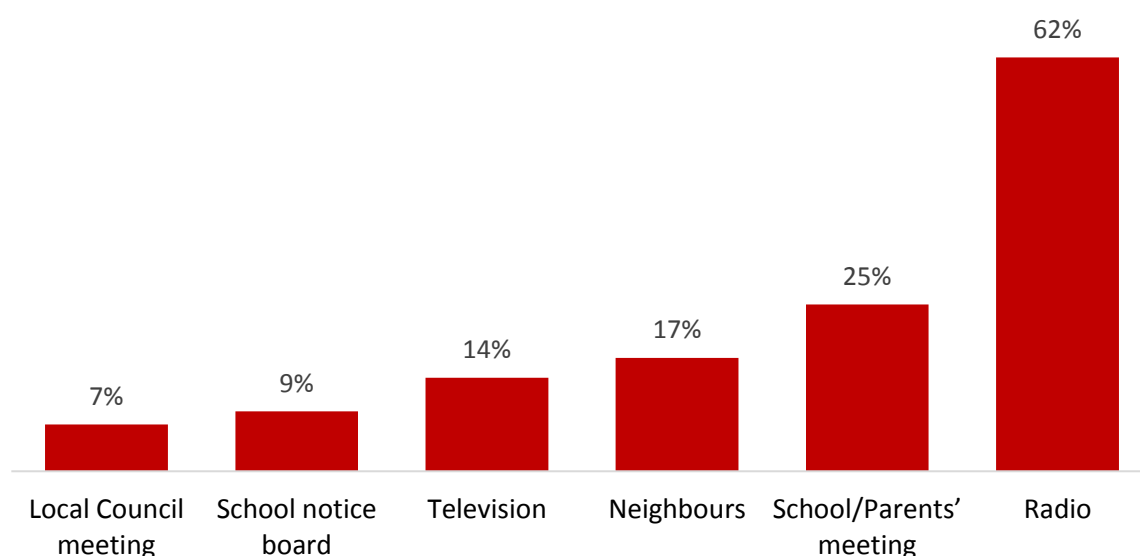
A more detailed look at the November 2014 data suggests that there is no notable variation in correct knowledge among rural and urban areas, nor among male and female respondents, nor across age groups.

There was, however, some regional variation, with correct knowledge highest in Kampala, and lowest in the Eastern region (data not shown).

### Fact 3: Radio remains the main source of information about the Capitation Grant

In both the November 2014 and March 2015 surveys, those who knew about the Capitation Grant were asked to mention the key sources through which they had heard about the grant. While radio was the top source in both survey rounds, it was cited by 62% of respondents in the March 2015 round, as compared to 45% in the November 2014 round. Similarly, the second key source was school/parents meetings which were cited at 25% in both the surveys; the third source in both rounds was “friends and neighbors” at 11% in November 2014, and by 17% in March 2015. *Figure 5* illustrates the key source of information as per the March 2015 data.

**Figure 5: Through what channels did you hear about Capitation Grant?**  
(March 2015; n=708)



### Fact 4: Awareness of the citizens' right to inquire about the capitation grant is fairly high, but there is room for improvement

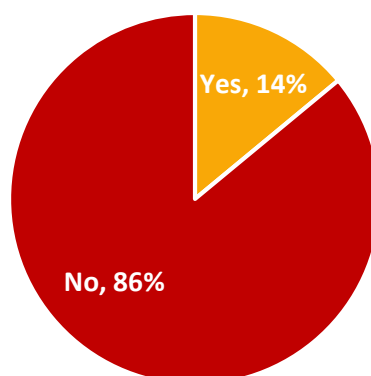
We measured respondents' awareness about their right to information on the Capitation Grant by posing three statements and asking whether they thought the statements were true or false. Overall knowledge was high across the three statements (Figure 6). The highest proportion of correct answers was for the statement that any parent has a right to ask about the amount of capitation grant the school has received (63%), although 29% thought parents do not have this right. Similarly, 61% of respondents knew that the amount of the capitation grant received should be posted publicly in schools, while 26% believed this was not required. And while 67% knew that the amount of capitation grant received is *not* private information for the head teacher, one third (33%) believed this was private information.

Statement	Correct answer	Incorrect answer	Don't know
The amount each school receives is private information for the head teacher (False)	57%	33%	10%
Any parent has a right to ask about the amount of Capitation Grant the school has received (True)	63%	29%	8%
The amount each school receives is supposed to be posted publicly (e.g., on a notice board, that can be seen by all) (True)	61%	26%	12%

### Fact 5: Few respondents have ever directly inquired about the Capitation Grant; those who have done so tend to be male and to live in rural areas

With seemingly high levels of knowledge on the right to access information on the grant amongst the public, the study further inquired whether respondents themselves have ever inquired about it from the head teachers.

**Figure 7: Have you ever asked at a school how much capitation grant the school has received?**  
(n=708)



As shown in *Figure 7*, the study found out that only 14% of respondents had actually ever sought information about the amount of grant a school received. Among the 80% of those who had *not* sought information, they believed that even if they were to ask, they would not be given the information. However, among the people who *had* asked about the amount of the Capitation Grant in schools, in fact 70% reported having received the information. Among the 30% who did not receive it, a variety of reasons were given, with the top reason being that “the head teacher was not cooperative.”

A further look at the findings also revealed significant variation across rural and urban settings with 17% in rural areas having asked for this information compared to 6% from urban areas. More male respondents had asked for this information at 18%, as compared to female respondents at 11%. Among the regions, there were also slight variations, with Northern region recording the highest (26%) number of people who had ever asked for information on the amount of Capitation Grant against Eastern at 16%, Western at 14% and Central recording the lowest at 7%.



## 4. Conclusions

- Most Ugandans do not recognize the Uwezo brand or name; however more than half the population are aware of the message that Uwezo sends out about children going to school to learn but are instead not learning. The awareness levels across the country and various demographic groups are similar. On the other hand, a decrease in recollection is noted between early 2014 and late 2015.
- Radio continues to be the main means through which people access information about Uwezo. There is also evidence that the interpersonal communication and discussion around the report is increasing, especially in the rural areas, where people have on many occasions received the information through neighbors, friends, teachers and at community meetings. The use of multiple methods and channels in sharing information about Uwezo is an effective strategy to improve reach and complement radio. In urban areas, television significantly contributes to the reach of information about Uwezo.
- There is evidence that awareness of the Capitation Grant is increasing: from 10% in January 2014, to 35% in March 2015. Given that the main spike in knowledge occurred just following a mass media campaign on the Capitation Grant implemented by Vison Group (and supported by Twaweza), it is quite plausible that this campaign contributed to the increase in the awareness. Furthermore, we are not aware of any other media campaigns to increase Capitation Grant knowledge in the same time period.
- Just as is the case with Uwezo, radio continues to be the main source through which people access information on the Capitation Grant, followed by school meetings, neighbors and television. Also worth noting is that a larger percentage of rural respondents had asked for information about the grant compared to the urban respondents.
- Generally, people know that they have a right to access information on the capitation grant but this has not translated into high levels of information seeking on the amount of Capitation Grant given to schools. It's notable that among those who have sought information, the majority (70%) report having received it; and this is particularly interesting vis-à-vis the finding that among those who have not asked for the information, 80% believe their request would not be honored. In other words, the perception of how the system responds is worse than the actual experience. This report provides a solid basis to design interventions encouraging citizens to request information about Capitation Grant receipts and use. This would serve to increase their engagement in the school system and challenge entrenched low expectations about responsiveness to information requests.

