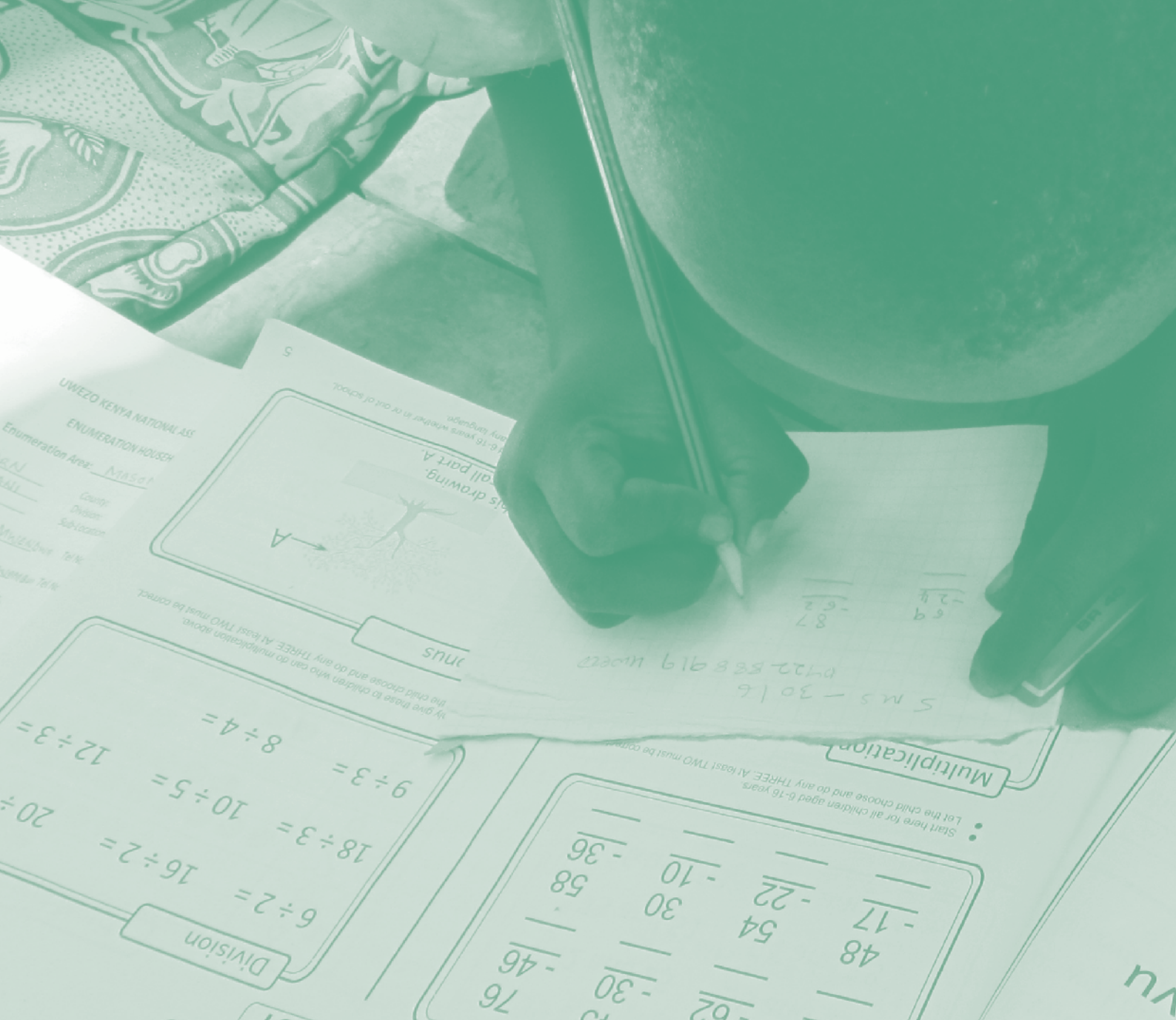


Are Our Children Learning?

Literacy and Numeracy Across East Africa

2013





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Uwezo is part of Twaweza, an independent East African initiative that promotes access to information, citizen agency and improved service delivery outcomes across the region. The data for this report was collected in 2012 by the Uwezo country teams led by Dr. John Mugo in Kenya, Richard Ssewakiryanga in Uganda and Zaida Mgalla in Tanzania. Dr. Mary Goretti Nakabugo, the current country coordinator in Uganda oversaw the finalisation of the data analysis process while Dr. Sara Ruto, Regional Manager, Uwezo provided overall leadership and support. The country teams rely on hundreds of local partners and thousands of volunteers who play a crucial role in the success of this initiative. We acknowledge their effort and continued commitment. We also acknowledge, with gratitude the roles played by Women Educational Researchers of Kenya (WERK) and the Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF) who were the Uwezo hosts in Kenya and Uganda respectively.

For two consecutive years, we have benefited from the technical skills and expertise of Dr. Sam Jones, who has cleaned the data, undertaken analysis and compiled this report. Dr. Youdi Schipper of Uwazi at Twaweza oversees the technical side of the work. Editing support was provided by Risha Chande, Communications Manager. Overall guidance and quality assurance on the project and report is provided by Rakesh Rajani, Head of Twaweza.

The work of Uwezo at Twaweza is supported by thoughtful and progressive donors, including the Hewlett Foundation, DFID (UK), Sida, Hivos, CIFF, AJWS and the World Bank. We appreciate their continued support. The findings and recommendations herein do not necessarily represent the views of any of these partners.

All the data used in the report are drawn from the Uwezo 2012 and earlier national assessments and can be downloaded from www.uwezo.net.

INTRODUCTION



1. INTRODUCTION

Sara Ruto and Rakesh Rajani¹

Why do we send our children to school? Do we do so to be able to say ‘my child is in school’? Or do we do so to enable our children to learn?

Across East Africa more and more children are going to school. Billions of shillings have been poured into the education sector, with budgets increasing in recent years. A range of programs, policies and laws prioritise and promote education. Government leaders, civil society groups, media and donors continually emphasise the importance of quality schooling. The key question then is: how have these efforts and pronouncements translated into demonstrable learning outcomes for children across the region?

Uwezo at Twaweza is part of a family of citizen-led household-based assessments that seek to establish children’s actual learning proficiencies. The model was established by ASER/Pratham in India in 2005 and has since been adapted for use in Pakistan (2009), Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda (2009), Mali (2011) Senegal (2012) and recently in Mexico (2013). In 2012 alone, these assessments covered over one million children in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, including about 350,000 in East Africa. Conducted annually, children aged 6 to 16 years across East Africa are tested on their ability to perform basic literacy and numeracy tasks set at the Grade 2 level.

This report has two main objectives. First, it presents the headline findings of the third round of the Uwezo learning assessment surveys, implemented in Kenya, Mainland Tanzania and Uganda in 2012. Second, based on the three rounds of the Uwezo surveys, it highlights emerging evidence of trends in learning outcomes over time.

The principal finding in this report, echoing results from previous years, is that children are not learning. Children are not acquiring the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy consistent with the official curricular requirements in their countries. Indeed, the low learning levels suggest a continued crisis that demands attention. Specifically:

- 1 Less than a third of children enrolled in Grade 3 have basic Grade 2 level literacy and numeracy skills;
- 2 A significant number of children do not possess foundational Grade 2 level skills even as they approach the end of the primary school cycle. This implies that the quality of learning is low. Less than a third of children enrolled in Grade 3 have basic Grade 2 level literacy and numeracy skills;
- 3 There are large differences in learner achievement among the three East African countries, with Kenya performing better, and Uganda faring worst;
- 4 Tanzania has sizeable differences in literacy and numeracy skills. The skills gaps in Kenya and Uganda are much smaller;
- 5 Within countries there are large disparities; for example, the best and worst performing districts in East Africa are all in Kenya;
- 6 Children from poorer households consistently achieve lower competency levels, on all tests and across all ages; and
- 7 Out of every ten teachers, at least one is absent from school on any given day in East Africa.

¹ Dr Sara Ruto is the Regional Manager of Uwezo East Africa at Twaweza. Rakesh Rajani is the Head of Twaweza.

The 2013 report plots learning trends over the last three years with disappointing findings: learner achievement in these basic tests have remained constant across East Africa with slight changes in numeracy in Tanzania.

These findings are worrying. East Africa has declared ambitious aspirations for the future in the Vision 2025 (Tanzania), 2030 (Kenya) and 2040 (Uganda). What does the fact that our school systems produce illiterate and semi-literate children imply for the realistic achievement of these 'Visions'? Can vibrant economies and creative democracies be built in East Africa when the majority of our children cannot read and count well? And as inequalities – between the rich and poor, urban and rural – get reinforced, what does it mean for the social cohesion the region desperately needs?

And this is not a problem faced by East Africa alone; around the world more than 250 million primary school age children cannot read or count well, some even after four or more years of schooling².

This report is being released on the eve of 2015; the year by when nations of the world had committed to all children having 'measurable learning outcomes, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills'³ with specific targets on access, early childhood education, gender parity, adult literacy and quality education, and that no child would be left behind. But as the 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report demonstrates, not a single goal will fully be achieved globally by 2015, and millions of children are in fact being left behind.

That said, it is gratifying to note that today many acknowledge these concerns and agree that we cannot continue with 'business as usual'. Many agree that the learning crisis requires us to take an 'access plus equitable learning approach'. But it is not enough to acknowledge it. We need to see tangible actions that will redress the situation, and ensure that children are in school and learning.

On the eve of 2015, we need fresh sets of solutions informed by different mindsets. We need to question the beliefs and practices that have become accepted wisdom. We need to re-examine whether our obsession with learning inputs and organizing classrooms by grade and age in fact enable learning. We need to figure out what it will take to get teachers to come to school every day and teach well, so that we do not waste children's time and crush their aspirations. We need creative, evidence-based ideas on what works to drive our policy agenda, and sharp political economy analysis and action to get the execution right.

In the past 15 years, a committed global coalition – involving governments, activists, donors and others – came together to achieve significant progress on *expanding access* to education. How we learn the lessons from that effort to convene an even more powerful coalition of *delivery on learning outcomes* will perhaps be the greatest challenge for the next decade.

If we put our minds, hearts and imagination to it, we could make it happen.

The principal finding in this report, echoing results from previous years, is that children are not learning. Children are not acquiring foundational skills of literacy and numeracy consistent with the official curricular requirements in their countries.

² 2013/4 EFA Global Monitoring Report, Unesco. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225660e.pdf>

³ World Education Forum, Dakar Goal 6. For more details, see: www.unesco.org/education/efa/wef_2000

UWAZO SURVEYS



2. UWEZO SURVEYS

The Uwezo learning assessment surveys began in Kenya in 2009, followed by mainland Tanzania and Uganda in 2010 (Uwezo 1). The surveys were conducted again in all three countries in 2011 (Uwezo 2) and the third survey round (Uwezo 3) was completed in 2012. Over this period, the tests and surveys were carried out among a nationally representative random sample of children of primary school (age up to 16), and so the results can be used to monitor national and regional performance, trends over time and to compare districts (within and between countries).

2.1 Coverage of the Surveys

Table 1 summarises the coverage of the three survey rounds in each country, indicated by the year of data collection. Surveys have been nationally representative

from the start but from 2011 they were also representative at district level. All (census) districts, with the exception of nine, were covered from 2011⁴. As the table shows, in terms of the number of districts included (and consequently the number of children surveyed), there are important differences between the surveys within each country. Specifically, the Uwezo 1 surveys covered approximately one third of all districts in each country. These districts were randomly selected to ensure representativeness at regional and national levels. In the subsequent rounds, virtually all districts were covered. Across all surveys, the sample size is large and therefore provides unparalleled coverage of the potential diversity in learning outcomes according to socio-economic and geographic differences. Indeed, we have a sample of approximately 1000 children for each district in each survey round.

Table 1: Coverage of the Uwezo Survey Rounds

Country	Year	Districts	%	Schools	Villages	Households	Children
Kenya	2009	70	(44)	2,160	2,160	32,179	74,781
	2011	123	(78)	3,474	3,608	53,522	125,661
	2012	156	(99)	4,539	4,559	64,909	145,564
Tanzania	2010	42	(32)	1,010	1,062	18,098	35,540
	2011	132	(99)	3,733	3,841	57,945	110,435
	2012	126	(95)	3,624	3,752	56,106	105,352
Uganda	2010	27	(34)	748	786	12,380	32,768
	2011	79	(99)	2,115	2,329	35,359	100,715
	2012	80	(100)	2,279	2,378	34,667	92,188
Total	2009/10	139	(37)	3,918	4,008	62,657	143,089
	2011	334	(90)	9,322	9,778	146,826	336,811
	2012	362	(98)	10,442	10,689	155,682	343,104

Notes: % indicates the percentage of all districts covered; the district list is based on the administrative divisions in the latest release of population and housing census data at the time of the survey design; all other columns give the number of units sampled and included in the cleaned data.

Source: calculated from the Uwezo 1, 2 and 3 data.

⁴ In 2012, 6 districts in the Mtwara region and Rungwe of Tanzania were excluded because the regional administrative authorities prevented the survey from being conducted in their area. In Kenya two districts were not covered due to difficulties with local implementing partners.

2.2 Uwezo Research Design

Before considering the main findings three technical aspects of the surveys and the data used herein should be mentioned.

First, other than the first year, Uwezo uses a two-step sampling approach. The stratum is the district, and all census districts are included. The next step involves using probability proportional to size (PPS) to select 30 enumeration areas (EAs - typically villages) per district. Finally, in each EA, households are listed and based on calculation of an *n*th number, 20 households are selected. The design ensures representation at district and national levels for all children aged 6 (and in Tanzania 7) to 16 years.

Second, all the data used here has been subject to cleaning based on the same data management protocol. Additionally, missing observations on test scores have been imputed (based on a random regression method) to reduce systematic bias. For this reason, the results presented here may vary slightly from previously published regional and national reports.

Third, readers should be aware that the tests contained in the Uwezo surveys are not identical (see Appendix B). Although the same methodology is used to develop the tests, the tests are still based on the curriculum expectations of the respective countries. Even so, these differences are slight. Moreover, to aid comparability across countries, only equivalent questions across the surveys are included in the literacy and numeracy results. Differences within countries over time in the tests are included to avoid “repetition bias” which would occur if children become habituated to the tests.⁵ The above points are important because they may introduce some additional noise or non-sample error into the data. Whilst this is difficult to quantify, we do not believe it is so large as to undermine the principal findings reported here.

2.3 Literacy and Numeracy Tests

The content of the Uwezo surveys is described in the country-specific survey reports (see www.uwezo.net). For every household, a short set of questions was administered to the household head to collect basic information (e.g, household characteristics). Additionally, a short literacy and numeracy test was administered to each child in the household aged between 6 (7 in Tanzania) and 16 years.

The enumerators or volunteers also recorded further details about the child, including whether he/she attends school and at what grade. In all countries a literacy test was administered based on the English language, which is the principal language of instruction in Kenya and Uganda.⁶ In Tanzania and Kenya (but not in Uganda) a further literacy test was administered in Kiswahili. However, in a small number of districts in Uganda, a (pilot) literacy test was administered in four local languages, namely Luganda, Leblango, Lunyoro-Rutooro and Ateso. The literacy tests entails reading a letter (letter sounds), reading a word, reading a paragraph and reading and comprehending a short story. Numeracy tests involve number recognition, place value and performing basic operations of addition, subtraction and division (the latter only in Uganda and Kenya).

The Uwezo tests are set according to the Grade 2 level curriculum for each country, which is the level to be attained after two years of primary education. Thus, assuming education quality standards are maintained, one should expect pupils at Standard 3 or above to correctly answer all the test questions. This is termed a ‘pass’ in the presentation of the results. To simplify the presentation, we also often present results for a single literacy test. For each child, this refers to the highest score on any one of the literacy tests. Thus, if a child in Tanzania is able to pass the English literacy test but fails the Kiswahili test she would receive the score from the English test (and vice versa). Appendix B provides examples of the literacy and numeracy tests used in the 2012 Uwezo survey round in the three countries.

⁵ A rotational panel is used where each year 10 new EAs, forming a third of this sample, are added. In addition, household lists are generated each year. This lessens the likelihood of the same households being sampled. This notwithstanding, approximately two thirds of the enumeration areas in each district are retained from previous rounds, so there is a small risk that some households are surveyed in multiple rounds.

⁶ In lower primary school in Kenya and Uganda the local language of the catchment area ought be used; this policy tends to be followed more widely in Uganda.

Uwezo East Africa Sample Tests

ENGLISH TEST KENYA

LETTERS	WORDS	PARAGRAPH
p j	food pan	This is my aunt Rukia.
t b	toe line	She lives in Mombasa.
m a	plate yam	She has two big children.
		They are my cousins.

STORY

Ali and Sara have a small dog. The name of the dog is Puppy. The dog loves to eat bones. Yesterday Ali brought the dog a big bone. Puppy wanted to hide and eat the bone. He did not stop to think. He went into the house. In the house there was a mirror. Puppy saw another small dog with a bone. He wanted to get that bone from the other dog. He ran to get the bone. Puppy hit his nose on the mirror. He felt a lot of pain. Sara laughed at the silly dog.

- Q1. What is the name of the small dog?
Q2. Why did Sara laugh at the small dog?

KISWAHILI TANZANIA

SILABI	MANENO	AYA
ko pu	maji kaa	Asha anaishi Ilala.
ta na	njia choo	Nyumba yao ina rangi nyeupe. Pia ina bustani nzuri. Asha anapenda maua.
bwe ri	mwiba mbuzi	

HADITHI

Hapo zamani paka alikuwa na pete ya dhahabu. Panya alikuwa rafiki yake wakiishi pamoja. Siku moja paka alipotaka kuvaa pete yake hakuiona. Aliamua kumuuliza rafiki yake kama alijua pete ilipo. Panya alijibu kuwa hajaiona. Paka aliamua kufanya upekuzi ili kuitafuta pete. Panya alipoona anashikwa alimeza pete na kukimbia. Paka aliamua kumkimbiza panya mpaka amshike. Akimshika atatoboa tumbo achukue pete. Hiyo ndiyo sababu paka anakula panya.

MASWALI

1. Wanyama gani walikuwa marafiki?
2. Kwanini paka anakula panya?

LEBLANGO UGANDA

LETTERS	SYLLABLES	PARAGRAPH
b k	na ru	romo tidi kado
i p	pe to	odero abic gulu
g a	ni me	dita nino apap

Akello tye kede mwaka abiro. Apap amito cwalo Akello I cukul. Akello awot cako kwan. En awot cako kilaci acel. Otino acako kwan diki.

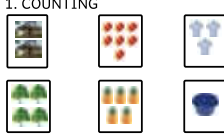
Tin obedo ceng abicel. Toto Okello awot icuk. Ento Okello pe awot icuk. En tin aweyo ot kede dyekal. Okello maro paco acil.

APENY

1. Okello tin timo tic ngo?
2. Toto Okello wot kwene?

NUMERACY UGANDA

1. COUNTING



2. NUMBER RECOGNITION 10-99

17	22	73
21	45	34

3. NUMBER RECOGNITION 100-999

147	465	527
731	222	320

4. PLACE VALUE

Number	H	T	O
43			
129			
474			

5. ADDITION

62	53	155	265
+ 24	+ 34	+ 220	+ 623

6. SUBTRACTION

45	25	333	764
- 23	- 13	- 212	- 542

7. MULTIPLICATION

4 x 4 =	6 x 3 =	8 x 2 =
5 x 4 =	3 x 8 =	7 x 3 =

8. DIVISION

18 ÷ 3 =	4 ÷ 2 =	8 ÷ 4 =
10 ÷ 2 =	6 ÷ 2 =	15 ÷ 3 =

KEY FINDINGS





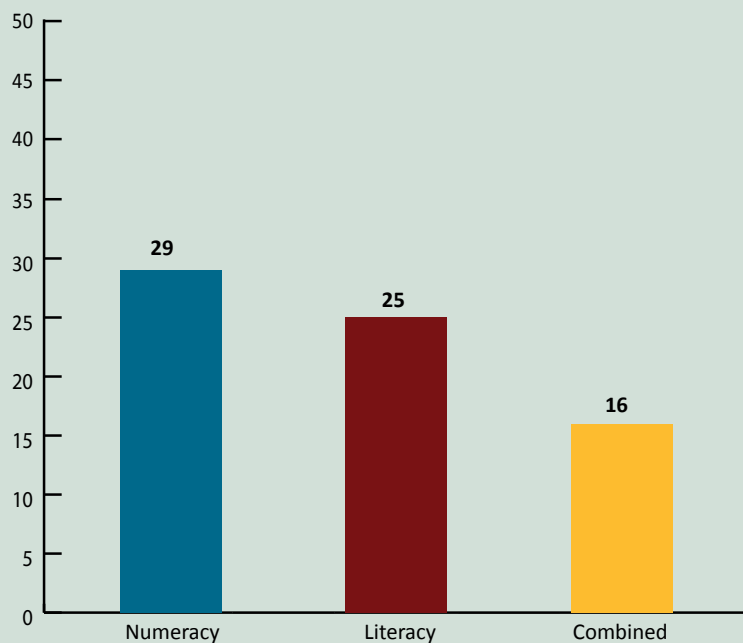
3. KEY FINDINGS

Fact 1: Less than one third of pupils enrolled in Grade 3 possess basic literacy and numeracy skills.

The first two rounds of the Uwezo surveys provided clear evidence that the basic numeracy and literacy skills of primary school children were deficient across the region. The third round points to the same conclusion. Figure 1, which refers to the three countries together, reports the percentage of children enrolled at Grade 3 of primary school who are able to pass the Grade 2 level numeracy and literacy tests they were assessed in.⁷ In addition, the figure shows the percentage of Grade 3 pupils in the region that passed both the literacy and numeracy tests – i.e. this measures the proportion able to pass both tests at the same time (“combined”).

The evidence has remained constant. Less than one in three Grade 3 pupils passed any of the tests. Specifically, 29% of Grade 3 pupils passed the numeracy test while 25% passed the literacy test. Approximately one in six pupils (or 16%) passed both the literacy and numeracy tests (combined). Many children in East Africa are not acquiring basic competencies during the early years of primary school (as per national curricula). Country-specific pass rates for these tests by grade are found in Appendix A.

Figure 1: Test pass rates for children enrolled in Standard 3, East Africa



Notes: “combined” refers to passes on both the numeracy test and at least one of the literacy tests in the survey.

Source: calculated from the Uwezo 3 data.

The evidence has remained constant... Many children in East Africa are not learning basic competencies during the early years of primary school (as per national curricula).

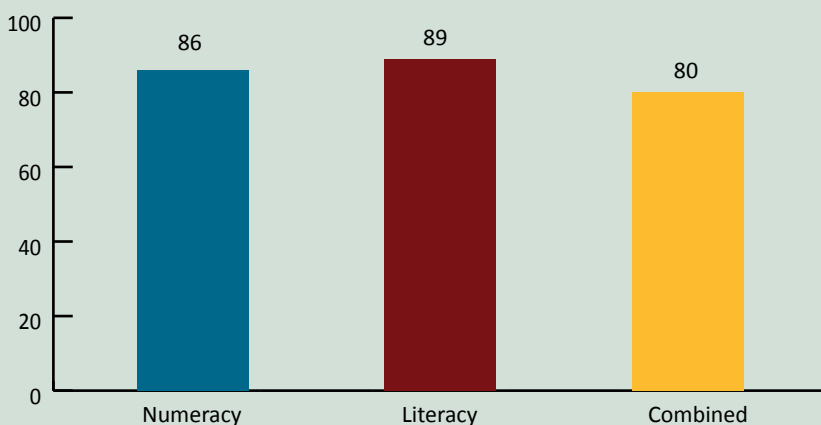
⁷As noted in the Introduction, the child is said to have passed the literacy test if he or she can read a short paragraph in any one of the languages tested.

Fact 2: Among pupils enrolled in Grade 7, two in ten do not have Grade 2 level literacy and numeracy competencies.

Consistent with the previous surveys, the evidence is clear that some children nearing the end of primary school do not have the basic competencies they ought to have acquired in lower primary. Figure 2 shows the share of pupils enrolled in Grade 7 (the final year of primary school in Tanzania and Uganda; the penultimate year in Kenya) who passed the tests, set at the Grade 2 level. The Grade 7 pass rates are better than the

Grade 3 results, as is to be expected, but nevertheless a significant share of pupils continue to fail the tests. One out of five or 20% of children in Grade 7 are not able to pass both the literacy and numeracy tests. Evidently, therefore, the number of years of completed schooling does not effectively translate into genuine learning for a substantial share of pupils. Country-specific pass rates for these tests by grade are in Appendix A.

Figure 2: Test pass rates for children enrolled in Standard 7, all East Africa



Notes: "combined" refers to passes on both the numeracy test and at least one of the literacy tests included in the survey.

Source: calculated from the Uwezo 3 data.

Evidently, therefore, the number of years of completed schooling does not effectively translate into genuine learning for a substantial share of pupils.

STORY

My name is Agaba. I have a friend. She is called Akello. Today my mother took us to school. She drove us in her car. It was very early in the morning. We were the first children to reach the school.

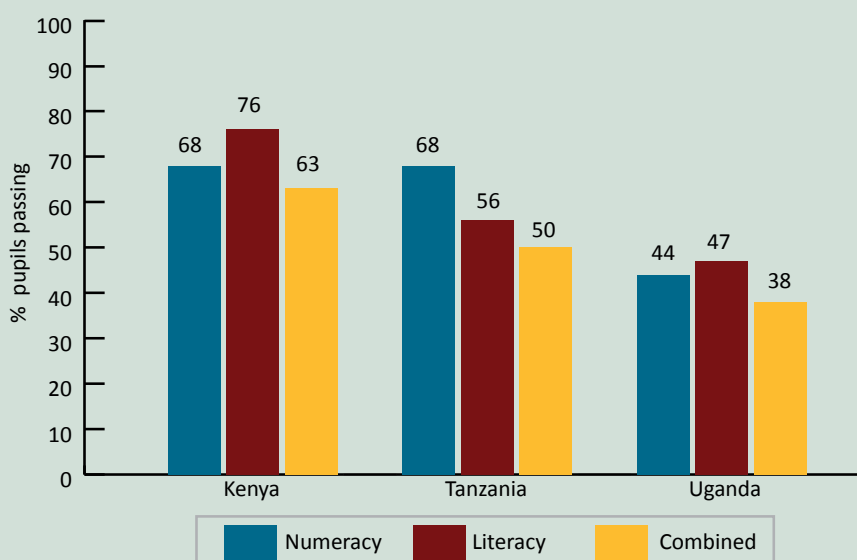
Sample story from Uganda that some Primary 7 children cannot read.

Fact 3: There are large differences in test results among countries.

Differences in literacy and numeracy skills among children in different countries can be driven by many factors. One of these is the share of children at each age that are attending school. For this reason, when making comparisons between countries, it is informative to include all children (of a given age) not just those who are attending school. Figure 3 compares pass rates for all children aged 10-16 in each country and highlights substantial differences between Kenya, Tanzania and

Uganda with respect to the basic literacy and numeracy skills (test results) of school age children. While Kenyan and Tanzanian children perform approximately the same on the numeracy tests, 20% more Kenyan children are able to pass the literacy test (76% versus 56%). On average, Ugandan children perform worst on all tests – less than 4 in 10 children aged 10-16 years display both numeracy and literacy skills at a Grade 2 level.

Figure 3: Test pass rates for children aged 10+, by country



Notes : “combined” refers to passes on both the numeracy test and at least one of the literacy tests included in the survey.
Source: calculated from the Uwezo 3 data.

While Kenyan and Tanzanian children perform approximately the same on the numeracy tests, 20% more Kenyan children are able to pass the literacy test (76% versus 56%).

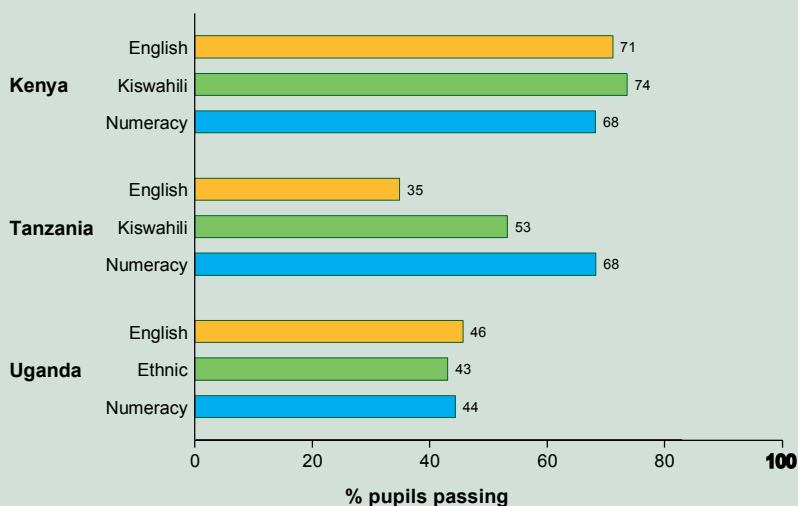
Two points are worth reiterating. First, that the best and worst performing districts come from Kenya may point to a higher equity gap in that country. Second, a number of the bottom districts in both Uganda and Kenya are bordering districts and this may point to similar factors affecting learner achievement.

Fact 4: Differences between literacy and numeracy skills are largest amongst Tanzanian children.

The Uwezo tests include literacy tests in more than one language. To get a better sense of how children perform on the full range of tests, Figure 4 shows pass rates for the different languages included in the tests (as well as the numeracy test) included in the Uwezo 3 survey. In Kenya and Uganda, we see that children perform similarly across all tests, indicating no large gap in literacy and numeracy skills. This is not the case for Tanzania.

Even though Kiswahili is the medium of instruction in Tanzanian government primary schools, Kiswahili literacy falls significantly behind average numeracy skills. Moreover, English skills are even weaker – while 68% of Tanzanian children aged 10-16 are able to pass the numeracy test only 35% can pass an English literacy test. This is of particular concern given that secondary schooling in Tanzania is taught in English.

Figure 4: Test pass rates for children aged 10+, by country



Notes: tests in local languages (“ethnic”) were piloted in a small number of Ugandan districts. Source: calculated from the Uwezo 3 data.

Even though Kiswahili is the medium of instruction in Tanzanian government primary schools, Kiswahili literacy falls significantly behind average numeracy skills.

Fact 5: There are large differences in pass rates across the region.

To understand differences in pass rates within each country, it is helpful to make comparisons between administrative districts. Table 2 shows the top and bottom districts in the region and for each country, based on the proportion of children aged 10-16 that can pass both the literacy and numeracy tests.

Table 2: Ranking of top and bottom ten districts, by combined pass rate

(a) East Africa overall					(b) Kenya			
Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate	Rank	Region	District	Pass rate
1	Kenya	Nairobi	Westlands	87.7	1	Nairobi	Westlands	87.7
2	Kenya	Central	Kikuyu	85.3	2	Central	Kikuyu	85.3
3	Kenya	Central	Ruiru	84.8	3	Central	Ruiru	84.8
4	Kenya	Eastern	Imenti South	84.1	4	Eastern	Imenti South	84.1
5	Kenya	Central	Nyeri South	81.7	5	Central	Nyeri South	81.7
6	Kenya	Central	Thika West	80.8	6	Central	Thika West	80.8
7	Kenya	Central	Muranga North	79.6	7	Central	Muranga North	79.6
8	Kenya	Rift Valley	Naivasha	79.5	8	Rift Valley	Naivasha	79.5
9	Kenya	Rift Valley	Keiyo	79.1	9	Rift Valley	Keiyo	79.1
10	Kenya	Central	Githunguri	78.9	10	Central	Githunguri	78.9
353	Uganda	Eastern	Kaliro	25.8	147	North Eastern	Ijara	39.3
354	Uganda	Nothern	Lira	25.5	148	Rift Valley	Laikipia North	38.4
355	Uganda	Nothern	Apac	25.3	149	North Eastern	Wajir East	38.3
356	Uganda	Nothern	Yumbe	25.0	150	Eastern	Laisamis	36.2
357	Uganda	Eastern	Kamuli	24.8	151	Nyanza	Kuria West	35.5
358	Uganda	Eastern	Butaleja	23.4	152	Rift Valley	Pokot North	32.6
359	Uganda	Nothern	Nakapiripirit	23.3	153	Rift Valley	Samburu East	32.1
360	Uganda	Nothern	Kotido	16.8	154	North Eastern	Fafi	31.3
361	Uganda	Nothern	Moroto	15.4	155	North Eastern	Wajir South	30.8
362	Kenya	Rift Valley	East Pokot	7.2	156	Rift Valley	East Pokot	7.2

(c) Tanzania				(d) Uganda			
Rank	Region	District	Pass rate	Rank	Region	District	Pass rate
1	Ruvuma	Songea Urban	78.8	1	Central	Kampala	64.1
2	Dar Es Salaam	Temeke	77.3	2	Central	Wakiso	62.8
3	Morogoro	Morogoro Urban	76.0	3	Eastern	Jinja	54.2
4	Dar Es Salaam	Kinondoni	73.7	4	Western	Mbarara	54.1
5	Arusha	Arusha	72.9	5	Western	Bushenyi	53.5
6	Arusha	Arusha Rural	71.8	6	Central	Mukono	50.7
7	Mbeya	Mbeya Urban	70.5	7	Central	Luwero	49.3
8	Mwanza	Ilemela	70.3	8	Central	Kalangala	49.1
9	Kilimanjaro	Mwanga	69.6	9	Central	Mityana	47.1
10	Kilimanjaro	Moshi Urban	69.6	10	Western	Masindi	46.9
117	Tanga	Kilindi	34.3	71	Eastern	Budaka	25.9
118	Dodoma	Kongwa	34.1	72	Eastern	Kaliro	25.8
119	Shinyanga	Bariadi	33.7	73	Nothern	Lira	25.5
120	Kigoma	Kasulu	32.1	74	Nothern	Apac	25.3
121	Kagera	Biharamulo	30.9	75	Nothern	Yumbe	25.0
122	Mara	Musoma Rural	30.0	76	Eastern	Kamuli	24.8
123	Mara	Tarime	29.1	77	Eastern	Butaleja	23.4
124	Arusha	Ngorongoro	28.2	78	Nothern	Nakapiripirit	23.3
125	Tabora	Igunga	27.8	79	Nothern	Kotido	16.8
126	Mara	Serengeti	27.1	80	Nothern	Moroto	15.4

Source: calculated from the Uwezo 3 data.

Table 2 shows large gaps in education outcomes between districts in each country. Taking the region as a whole (Panel a), Kenyan districts dominate the top ranks where approximately 80% (or more) of all children aged above 10 years are able to pass both the literacy and numeracy tests. Although the tests are at Grade 2 level, this at least indicates that these districts are able to ensure that that vast majority of children have a solid foundation for future learning. With the exception of one Kenyan district (East Pokot), the worst performing districts are generally found in Uganda. In these locations, at most one in every four children aged 10 or over pass the literacy and numeracy tests. For each country, large

differences between the best and worst districts are found. The gap in the mean pass rate between the top and bottom districts is equal to 80% in Kenya, 52% in Tanzania and 49% in Uganda.

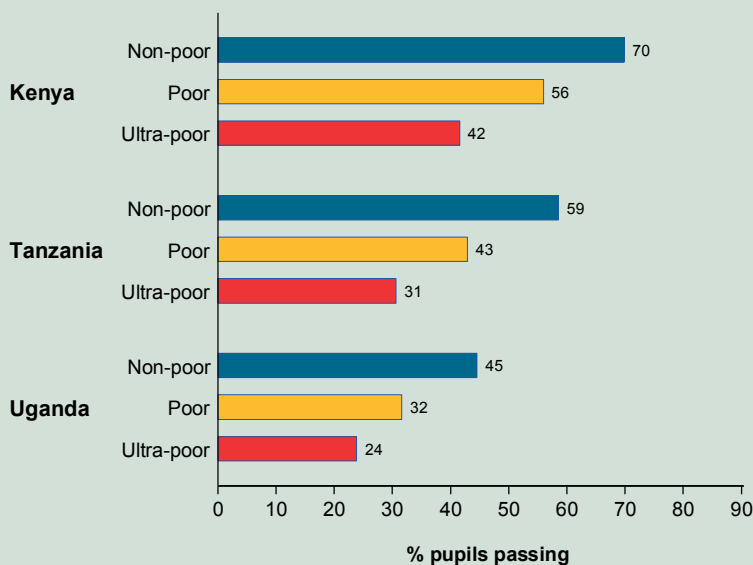
While such district ranking at best shares ‘thin’ information, it is still instructive. Two points are worth reiterating. First, that the best and worst performing districts come from Kenya may point to a higher equity gap in that country. Second, a number of the bottom districts in both Uganda and Kenya are bordering districts and this may point to similar factors affecting learner achievement.

Fact 6: Children from poorer households consistently perform poorly.

An alternative way of comparing literacy and numeracy skills within countries is to make comparisons between children from different backgrounds. To do so, households in the survey were categorized into three socio-economic groups according to durable assets owned, access to electricity and/or clean water, and mother’s formal education level. Using this somewhat crude measure, one finds large differences across the socio-economic groups in terms of literacy and

numeracy skills (Figure 5). Figure 5 shows that the proportion of children passing both the literacy and numeracy tests in non-poor households in each country is approximately double the pass rate of children in ultra-poor households. The gap between poor and ultra-poor households is the same in Kenya and Tanzania (28 percentage points), but is lower in Uganda (21 percentage points).

Figure 5: Average pass rates on both the literacy and numeracy tests by household socio-economic status, all children aged 10+



Source: calculated from the Uwezo 3 data.

The gap between poor and ultra-poor households is the same in Kenya and Tanzania (28 percentage points), but is lower in Uganda (21 percentage points).

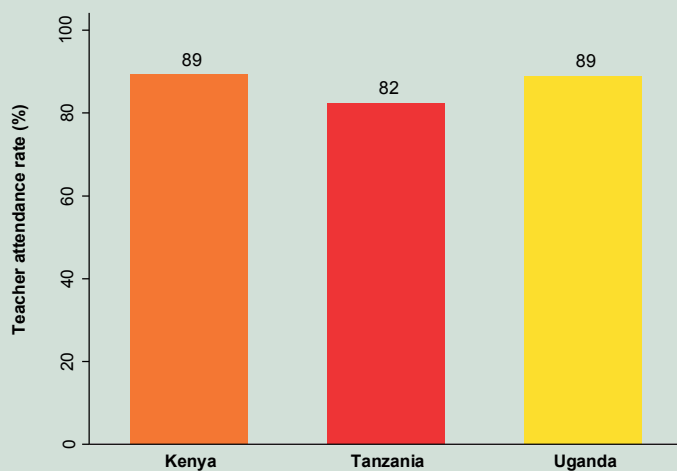
Fact 7: At least one teacher in ten is absent from school in East Africa on any given school day.

The Uwezo survey process involves a school visit where data on varied school characteristics, such as enrollment and attendance is collected. In each enumeration area (EA) where children are assessed, data are also collected from a public primary school. If a school is not located within the EA, then data are collected from the nearest public school attended by children from that EA. In 2012, a total of 10,422 schools across East Africa were observed. A significant number of teachers are absent from schools on any given day. Figure 6 reports the attendance rate of teachers, calculated as the proportion of teachers present in school out of the total number

of teachers. It shows that approximately 11 percent of teachers are absent in Kenya and Uganda, while around 18 percent are absent in Tanzania. In absolute terms, this implies that an average of 13% of teachers are absent from primary school in the region.

These results paint a grim picture, especially for Tanzania where almost 2 in every 10 teachers are absent from school. Being in school does not however mean that the teacher is teaching. A study that investigates actual teacher learner contact may have even more alarming results.⁸

Figure 6: Average teacher attendance rates (in %) for government primary schools in East Africa.



Source: calculated from the Uwezo 3 data.

...this implies that an average 13% teachers are absent from primary school in the region.

⁸The service delivery indicators by the World Bank in Kenya established that 4 in 10 teachers were not in class, and that teaching time stood at 2 hour 40 minutes out of the expected 5 hours 42 minutes.

UWEZO ROUNDS 1-3: TRENDS IN LEARNING

Safari ya Mombasa



Aliwaongoza kupanda feri.
Wanaimebeba watu na magari.
Wanazi walishangaa sana. Kweli
Mombasa ni mji wa kupendeza.

Wekesa na Nafula walitembelea mji
Mombasa? Ni kitu gani ambacho kiliwashangaza
wanafunzi?



Wekesa na Nafula ni wanafunzi. Siku
moja mwalimu wao alipanga safari.
Ilikuwa safari ya kwenda Mombasa.
Waliamka mapema siku ya kusafiri.
Hawakunywa chai. Walikwenda shuleni
moja kwa moja.

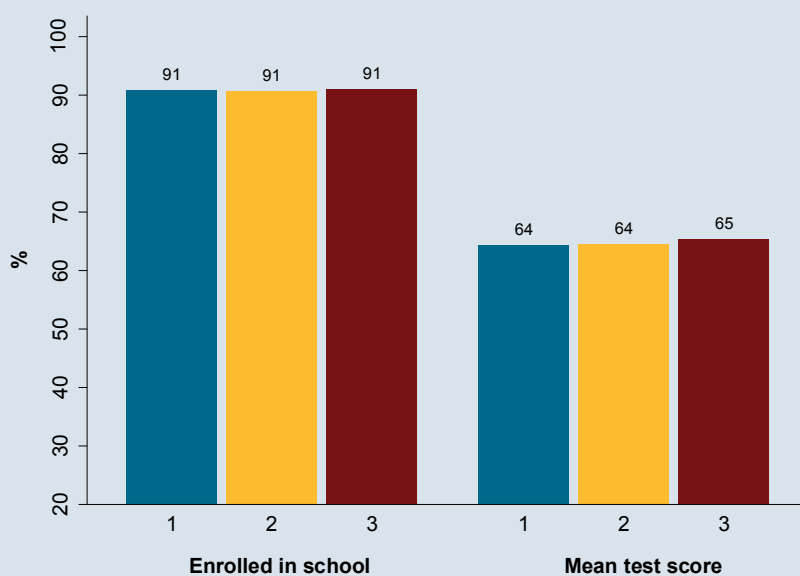
4. TRENDS IN LEARNING

Overall trends in basic competency levels have been stable since 2009/10.

Since three rounds of Uwezo surveys have been completed, all of which are representative at regional and national levels (despite some sample differences between the three rounds), the data now allow for an analysis of trends over time. Figure 7 summarises regional trends across the three rounds, respectively denoted by the numbers 1, 2 and 3. It shows the proportion of all surveyed children that report to be attending school as well as the regional mean of the

average score for each child from the literacy and numeracy tests combined.⁹ The data show that there have been no significant changes in outcomes at regional aggregate level or in each country (Figure A.2, Appendix A). In short, for the three years Uwezo has conducted national assessments, the learning needle has hardly moved. It is a constant reminder that many children continue to remain illiterate and innumerate.

Figure 7: Average rates of enrolment and the mean test score for all surveyed children in East Africa, by survey round (all children)



Notes: enrolment refers to either primary or secondary schooling, not pre-school.
Source: calculated from the Uwezo 1, 2 and 3 data.

The data show that there have been no significant changes in outcomes at regional aggregate level or in each country... It is a constant reminder that many children continue to remain illiterate and innumerate.

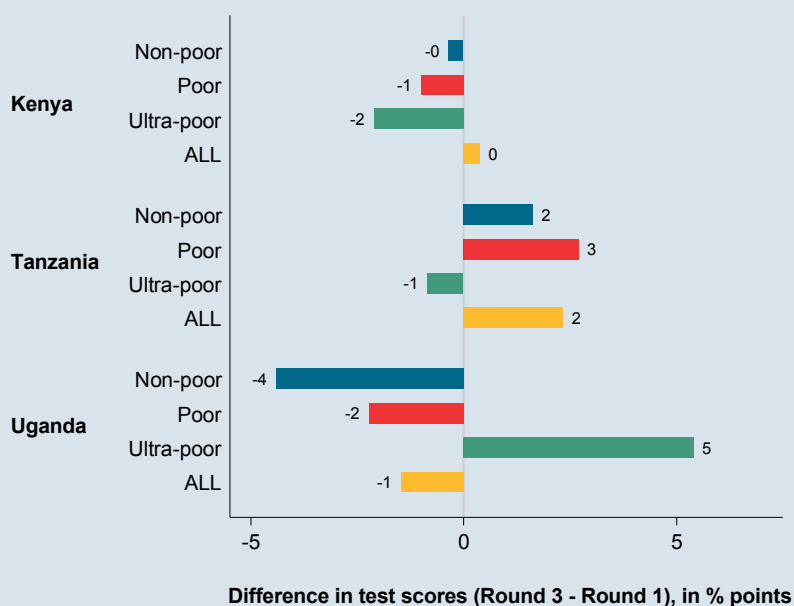
⁹ The mean test score for each child differs from the combined pass rate. The latter is not used as it distributed less smoothly (there are fewer values it can take), meaning that it may overstate differences that occur due to measurement error.

There is no evidence of large improvements in test scores either across countries or socio-economic groups.

Looking further at trends over time, we consider changes in the average test score between the first and third rounds of the Uwezo surveys, differentiated by country and by socio-economic group. Again, we find few large changes.¹⁰ This is illustrated in Figure 8, which reports the difference in percentage points in the average numeracy and literacy test scores for each socio-economic group (defined in the same way as described in Fact 6, Section 2), as well as for the country as a whole. A negative value indicates that the test score has fallen between the first and third rounds; a positive value indicates that it has risen over time.

In both Kenya and Tanzania, the changes are slight and are only significantly different from zero for the non-poor and poor groups in Tanzania. In Uganda, we find somewhat larger changes across the socio-economic groups, which are all statistically significant. Mean test scores for non-poor households appear to have declined while they have moderately risen for ultra-poor households. It is important to stress, however, that this finding may well be driven by sample error and/or changes in household socio-economic status. Further rounds of the Uwezo surveys are necessary to validate these trends.

Figure 8: Changes in mean test scores between first and third Uwezo survey rounds, by country and socio-economic group (all children)



Notes: pass rates refer to the combined literacy and numeracy test.
Source: calculated from the Uwezo 1, 2 and 3 data

In Uganda...mean test scores for non-poor households appear to have declined while they have moderately risen for ultra-poor households.

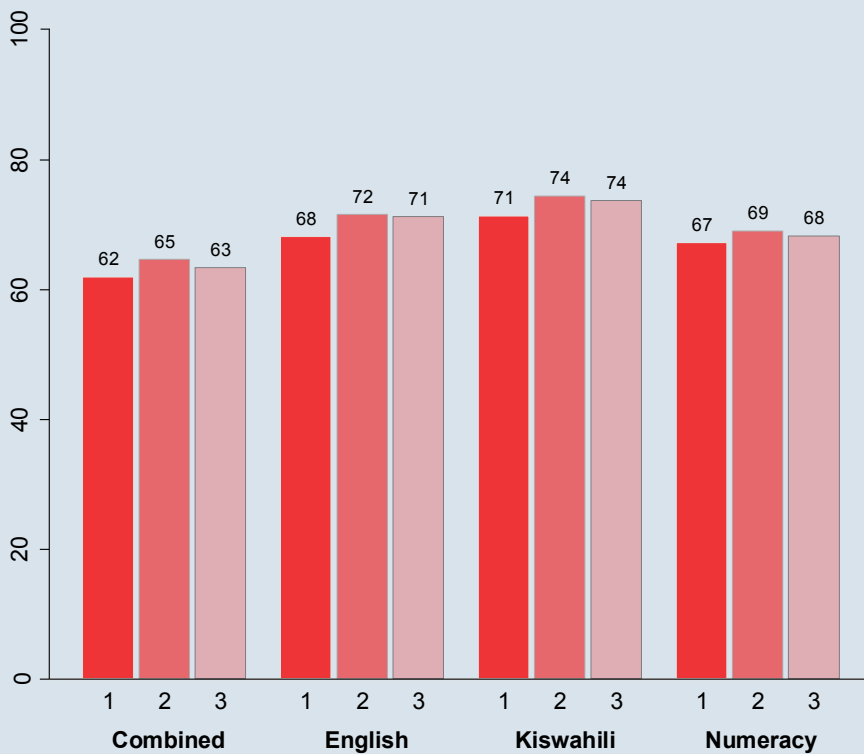
¹⁰ For the full national results, all changes are significant in a statistical sense. However, this reflects the very large sample sizes involved and does not take into account non-sample error that may arise due to small changes in the Uwezo tests.

Average pass rates on the Uwezo tests have not changed in Kenya.

Pass rates across the individual Uwezo tests have been extremely stable in Kenya over the survey rounds. Thus, there is no evidence to suggest that school quality is either improving or declining. Over the last three years, the competency level for children aged 10 and above, which corresponds with children who officially ought

to be in Grade 4/5 and above, has hovered between an average of 62% and 65%. This implies that almost 4 out of 10 children are not literate or numerate at Grade 2 level a full two to three years after they should be. Overall, Kiswahili skills are stronger than numeracy skills.

Figure 9: Test score pass rates for individual tests in Kenya by survey round (all children aged 10+)



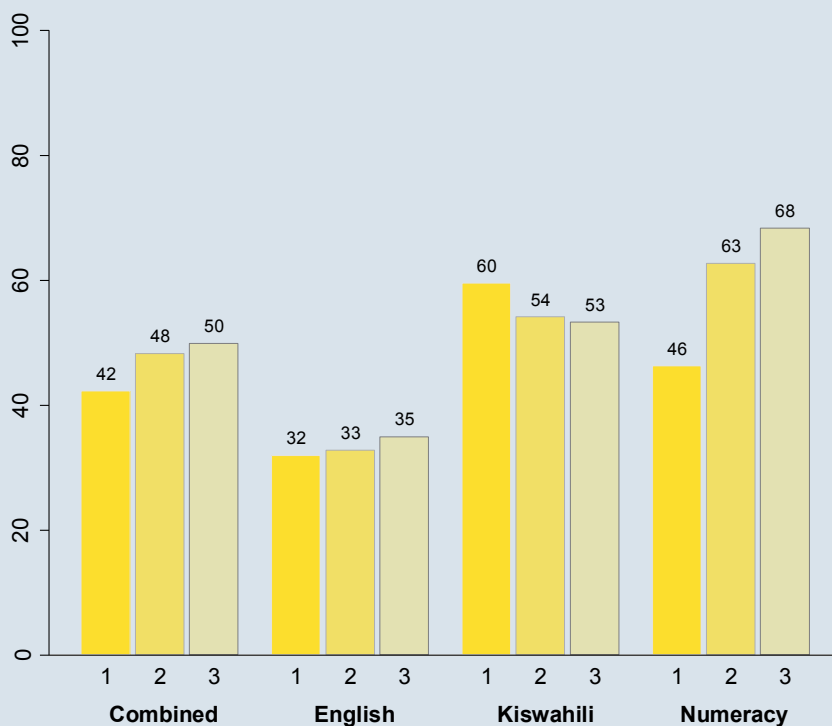
Almost 4 of every 10 children, in this advanced age bracket (considering that these are Grade 2 level tests) remain unaccounted for in the literate and numerate community.

Tanzanian children have moderately improved in terms of numeracy tests since 2010, but their literacy skills show no evidence of improvement.

The first round of the Uwezo surveys covered approximately 30% of districts in Tanzania, compared to almost 100% of districts in subsequent rounds. Figure 10 indicates a relatively large improvement on the numeracy test between the first and last survey rounds. At the same time, there is no evidence of any improvements in the literacy tests over time. Comparison of the second and third rounds results should be considered more reliable since there is

greater similarity in coverage of the samples and greater similarity of the tests, especially in numeracy. Here, we note that differences in pass rates on the tests are much smaller. Nonetheless, average numeracy pass rates improved from 63% to 68% which would be consistent with a trend improvement in basic numeracy skills. Further rounds of the Uwezo surveys are necessary to validate these trends.

Figure 10: Test score pass rates for individual tests in Tanzania by survey round (all children aged 10+)



Source: calculated from the Uwezo 1, 2 and 3 data

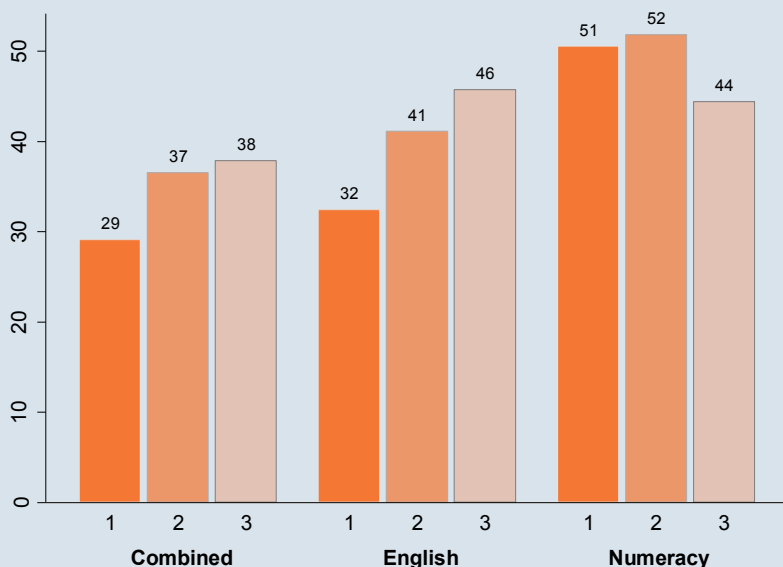
Average numeracy pass rates improved from 63% to 68% which would be consistent with a trend improvement in basic numeracy skills.

Ugandan children have moderately improved on the Uwezo English literacy test, but numeracy skills have fallen slightly.

Contrary to the trends reported for Tanzania, Ugandan children show a moderate improvement in English literacy skills but a decline in numeracy skills over time. If one compares the Kenya and Tanzania results, the Uganda evidence shows more variation across the years,

with children initially performing better in numeracy competencies compared with English. Again, because it is difficult to establish robust trends from just three observations, further rounds of the Uwezo surveys are necessary to validate these findings.

Figure 11: Test score pass rates for individual tests in Uganda by survey round, (all children aged 10+)



Source: calculated from the Uwezo 1, 2 and 3 data

If one compares the Kenya and Tanzania results, the Uganda evidence shows more variation across the years, with children performing better in numeracy competencies compared with English.

CONCLUSION



5. CONCLUSION

This report summarises the main findings from the Uwezo 3 survey, undertaken in Kenya, Mainland Tanzania and Uganda in 2012. Covering virtually all districts in these countries, with large sample sizes within each district, the Uwezo surveys represent an extremely rich source of information to monitor trends in learning and to compare such outcomes both within and between countries across the region.

The Uwezo 3 results are highly consistent with those of the previous rounds. We find that many children that attend school are not learning basic skills within the first few years of education. Moreover, a substantial proportion of children in their final years of primary school have not mastered Grade 2 level competencies. Thus, the education system is failing many children.

As previous surveys have shown, differences between and within countries are large. Kenyan and Tanzanian children perform similarly with respect to numeracy skills; however, Kenyan children show higher literacy skills. Ugandan children perform least well on the tests on average. Nonetheless, English skills of Tanzanian children are particularly weak. We also find very large differences in learning outcomes between districts and between socio-economic groups within the three countries. This indicates that despite a commitment to universal primary education, large disparities in educational opportunities remain.

Considering the results from different rounds of the Uwezo surveys, there is little evidence of large changes in learning outcomes. Whilst it is difficult to establish robust trends over time with only three data points, the results suggest that learning outcomes in Kenya have remained extremely stable. In Tanzania there is some evidence for an improvement in numeracy skills. In Uganda, we find a moderate improvement in literacy skills but a moderate decline in numeracy skills.

Despite the despondent mood the lack of progress suggests, the problem still remains, and so, we echo the words of the EFA global monitoring report that

With 250 million children not learning the basics and the 2015 deadline for the Education for All goals fast approaching, it is vital for a global post-2015 goal to be set to ensure that, by 2030, all children and youth, regardless of their circumstances, acquire foundation skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Setting a goal is not enough on its own, however; it is also crucial to monitor progress to make sure countries are on track to achieve the goal¹¹.

On the eve of 2015, we need fresh sets of solutions informed by different mindsets. We need to question the beliefs and practices that have become accepted wisdom. We need to re-examine whether our obsession with learning inputs and organizing classrooms by grade and age in fact enable learning. We need to figure out what it will take to get teachers to come to school every day and teach well, so that we do not waste children's time and dash their aspirations. We need creative, evidence based ideas on what works to drive our policy agenda, and sharp political economy analysis and action to get the execution right.

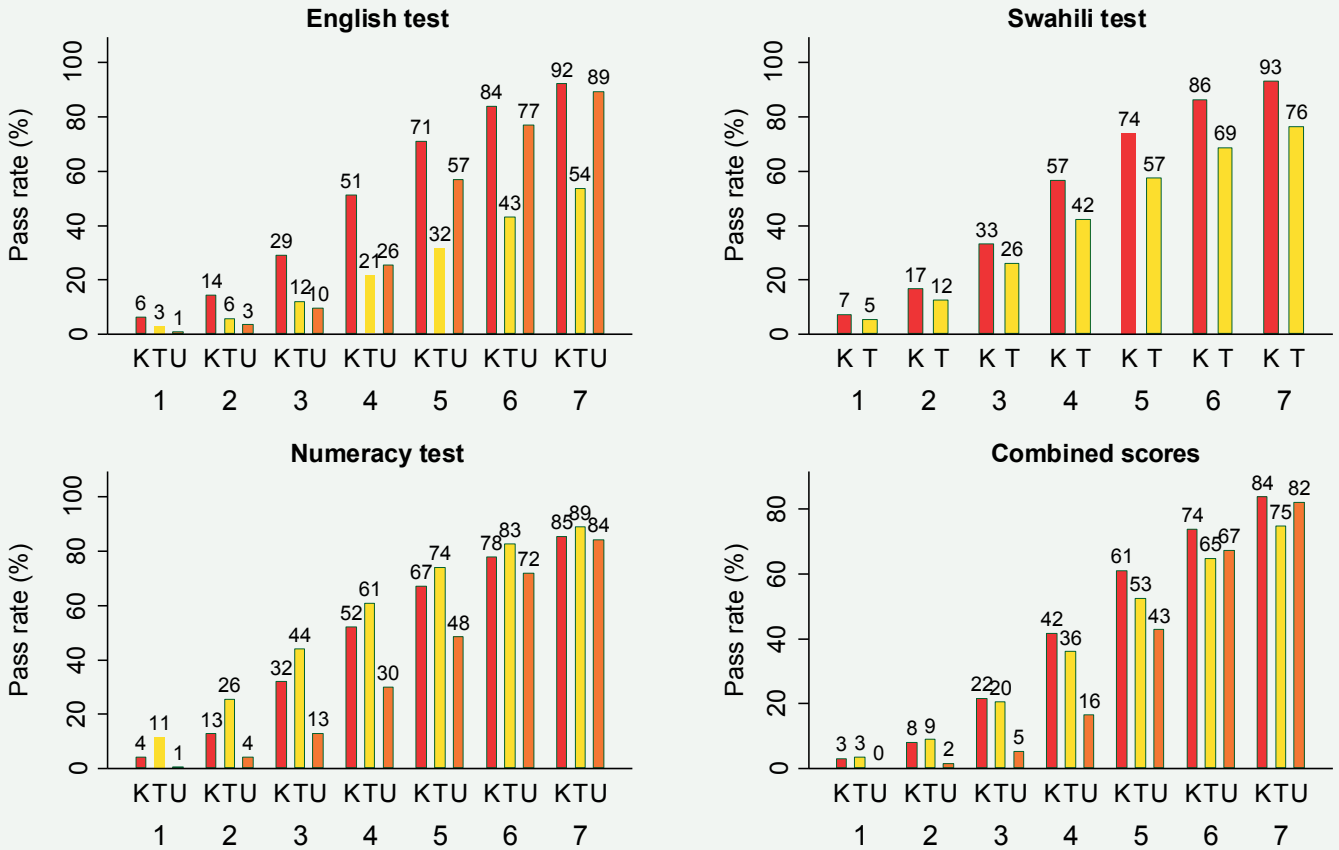
In the past 15 years, a committed global coalition – involving governments, activists, donors and others – came together to achieve significant progress on *expanding access* to education. How we learn the lessons from that effort to convene an even more powerful coalition of *delivery on learning outcomes* will perhaps be the greatest challenge for the next decade.

If we put our minds, hearts and imagination to it, we could make it happen.

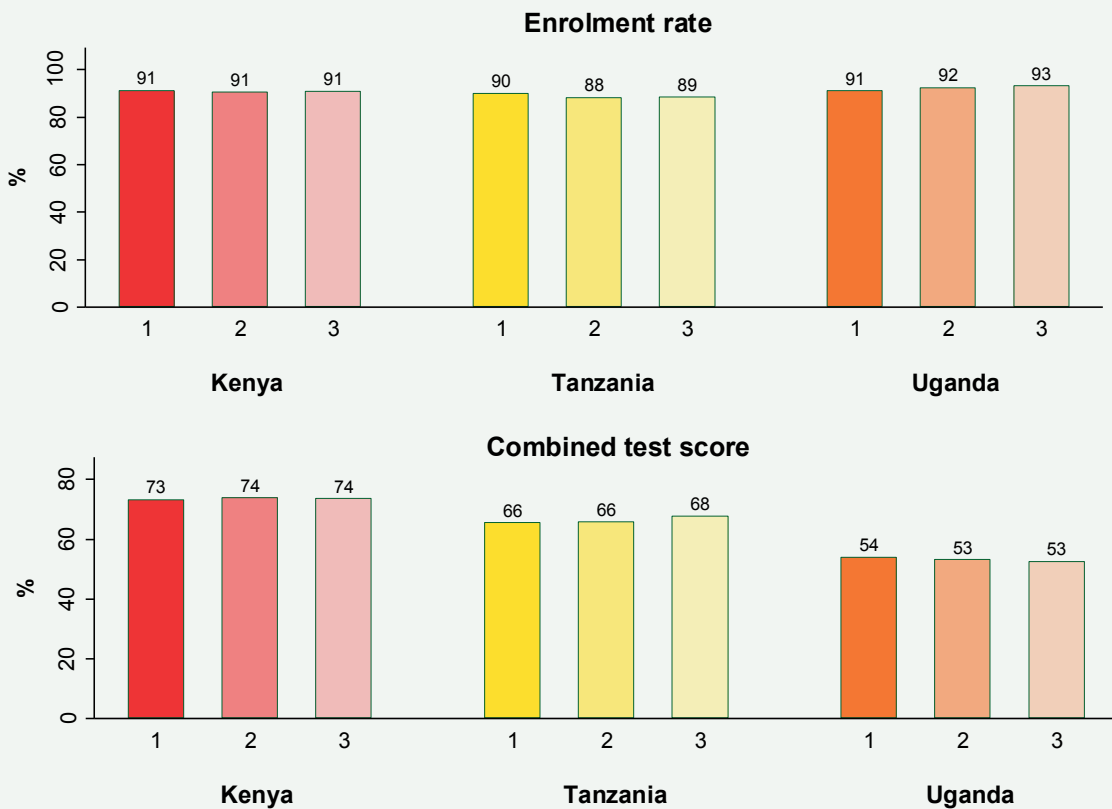
¹¹ 2013 EFA Global Monitoring Report, UNESCO (p89). <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225660e.pdf>

Appendix A: Country level findings

Figure A.1: Test score pass rates for individual tests in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, by grade in which child is enrolled (1-7)



Source: calculated from the Uwezo 1, 2 and 3 data



Appendix B: Sample of Uwezo tests

NUMERACY KENYA

1. COUNT AND MATCH

●●●●●●●●	7
●●●●●●●●●	9
●●●●●●●●●●	3
●●●●●●●●●●●	1
●●●●●●●●●●●●	4
●●●●●●●●●●●●●	6

2. NUMBER RECOGNITION 10-99

17	54	25
85	72	48

3. WHICH IS GREATER

39 and 61 74 and 56
16 and 82 67 and 18
23 and 19 92 and 48

4. ADDITION

14	71	57	30
+23	+21	+42	+50
—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—

5. SUBTRACTION

67	44	52
-35	-21	-41
—	—	—
—	—	—


6. MULTIPLICATION

2×3= 5×2= 2×2=
4×5= 3×4= 2×4=

7. DIVISION

4÷2= 24÷3= 15÷3=
6÷2= 6÷3= 10÷5=

8. BONUS



1. What is this drawing?
2. What is the meaning of the colour?

HISABATI TANZANIA

TAJA IDADI

<input type="checkbox"/>	●●●●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/>	●●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/>	●●●●●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/>	●●●●●●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/>	●●●●●●●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/>	●●●●●●●●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/>	●●●●●●●●●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/>	●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

UTAMBUZI WA NAMBA

23	15	79	66
35	86	46	92

NAMBA EPI NI KUBWA ZAIDI

67	au	37	88	au	72
54	au	24	10	au	20
22	au	23	91	au	19
44	au	66	11	au	21

KUJUMUISHA NAMBA

12	35	62	45
+13	+10	+26	+47
—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—

KUZIITISHA NAMBA

2 × 4 = 3 × 2 =
5 × 3 = 6 × 1 =
7 × 4 = 10 × 3 =
11 × 2 = 12 × 5 =

KUJIOA NAMBA


-17	-38	78	59
-12	-25	-35	-30
—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—

HISABU KATIKA MATSHA

Shilingi 300 Shilingi 200 Shilingi 500
+ Shilingi 200 + Shilingi 150 + Shilingi 300

NUMERACY UGANDA

1. COUNTING



2. NUMBER RECOGNITION 10-99

18	24	61	75
86	35	59	43

3. NUMBER RECOGNITION 100-999

103	225	732	834
705	334	665	909

4. PLACE VALUE

Number	H	T	O
246			
602			
572			

5. ADDITION

21 + 12 =	20 + 14 =	23 + 11 =
62 + 15 =	23 + 32 =	36 + 52 =
243 + 522 =	135 + 642 =	254 + 423 =

6. SUBTRACTION

15 - 11 =	17 - 12 =	14 - 11 =
32 - 21 =	65 - 32 =	95 - 52 =
754 - 321 =	896 - 452 =	987 - 531 =

7. MULTIPLICATION

3 × 4 = 6 × 2 = 8 × 2 = 4 × 4 =
14 × 2 = 7 × 3 = 4 × 3 = 3 × 5 =

8. DIVISION

4 ÷ 2 = 6 ÷ 3 = 8 ÷ 4 = 10 ÷ 2 =
9 ÷ 3 = 12 ÷ 2 = 16 ÷ 4 = 15 ÷ 3 =

ENGLISH TEST KENYA

LETTERS	WORDS	PARAGRAPH
h u o x u m j b s l	day hand sun chair foot year coat tea rat ball	Nakuru is a big town. It has a busy market. There are many shops. Many people live there.

STORY

Janet had a birthday party. The party was at her home. I went there with my brother. There were other boys and girls. Janet came out to meet us. Her mother was happy with us. She told all of us to sit down. Some girls in red hats gave us food.
There was rice, beans, meat and bananas. They also gave us sweets and juice. The birthday cake was white and pink. It was very sweet to eat. We sang and danced for two hours. We enjoyed the party very much.

Q1. Whose birthday party was it?
Q2. How can we tell that the people were happy?

ENGLISH TANZANIA

LETTERS/SOUNDS	WORDS	PARAGRAPH
t f d r s z u j b y	pin car hat hen pupil chest milk water bell book	Asha lives in Moshi town. She lives near a market. Everyday she buys fruits. She likes oranges.

STORY

Rama lives in Msoga Village. His father is Mzee Komba. He is a farmer. He grows maize and beans. He sells crops in the market.
Mzee Komba also keeps cows. Rama feeds them well. The cows give milk to the family.

QUESTIONS

1. What does Mzee Komba sell in the market?
2. Who feeds the cows?

ENGLISH UGANDA

LETTERS/SOUNDS	WORDS	PARAGRAPH
o r k f i s d b u n	roof sit dig name two bed bus son his name	Juma is a bus driver. He has one child. Her name is Bena. She is in primary two.

STORY

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?

KISWAHILI KENYA

SILABI	MANENO	AYA
di te be sa ha ru ko mi wu zo	anga tawi amu mwana kope reli ila leo popo wino kisu	Leo ni siku ya karamu. Kaka anaenda sokoni saa hii. Tutakula nyama kwa wali leo. Majirani zetu watakuja kwetu.

UFAHAMU

Sisi tunaishi Ena katika kaunti ya Embu. Baba yetu amiejenga nyumba nzuri huko. Nyumbani kwetu kuna mifugo wengi sana. Kuna mbwa, paka, kuku na mbuzi. Katana ndiye mlinzi wa boma letu. Tumepanda migomba, michungwa, mahindi, maharagwe na chai. Wakati wa mvua, boma letu hupendeza sana. Kunakuwa na vyakula vya aina nyingi. Tunafuraha kula mahindi ya kuchoma na ndizi. Kila asubuhi tunakunywa chai au maziwa. Baadaye tunajitayarisha na kwenda shuleni. Tunaporudi nyumbani, tunamweleza mama yote tuliyosoma shuleni.

S1. Katana anafanya kazi gani?
S2. Ni mimea mingapi iliyotajwa katika hadithi?

KISWAHILI TANZANIA

SILABI	MANENO	AYA
ko pu ta na bwe ri nye lo kwa cha	maji kaa njia choo paka meza mwiba mbuzi zimwi kobe	Asha anaishi Ilala. Nyumba yao ina rangi nyeupe. Pia ina bustani nzuri. Asha anapenda mauu.

HADITHI

Hapo zamani paka alikuwa na pete ya dhababu. Panya alikuwa rafiki yake wakiishi pamoja. Siku moja paka alipotaka kuvaa pete yake hakuona. Aliamua kumuliza rafiki yake kama alijua pete ilipo. Panya alijibu kuwa hajoiiona.

Paka aliamua kufanya upekuzi ili kutafuta pete. Panya alipoona anashikwa alimeza pete na kukimbia. Panya aliamua kumkimbiza panya mpaka amshike. Akimshika atatoboa tumbo achukue pete. Hiyo ndiyo sababu paka anakula panya.

MASWALI

1. Wanyama gani walikuwa marafiki?
2. Kwanini paka anakula panya?

ATESO UGANDA

ANYUKUTAN	AKIROT	AKIRO
o s t p l d m k u w	ke tu bi mo pu ge re bi so de	Emonyi ikoku. Ekoto ikoku ainak. Emame toto. Elosit toto atan. Eypapie toto abongun.

AITATAMET

Eboliasi idwe osomero. Epesete idwe emopira. Eminasi idwe abolia. Ejok abolia emopira. Itopololi idwe.

AINGISETA

1. Inyobo ejokiar abolia emopira?
2. Inyobo iswamaete idwe osomero?

Appendix C: District ranking, by mean pass rate on combined test for all children aged 10-16 years

KEY: 100 - 81 % 61 - 80 % 41 - 60 % 21 - 40 % 0 - 20 %

Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate (%)	Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate (%)
1	Kenya	Nairobi	Westlands	87.7	34	Kenya	Rift Valley	Baringo North	73.4
2	Kenya	Central	Kikuyu	85.3	35	Kenya	Rift Valley	Koibatek	73.3
3	Kenya	Central	Ruiru	84.8	36	Kenya	Rift Valley	Nakuru	73.0
4	Kenya	Eastern	Imenti South	84.1	37	Tanzania	Arusha	Arusha	72.9
5	Kenya	Central	Nyeri South	81.7	38	Kenya	Central	Nyandarua South	72.4
6	Kenya	Central	Thika West	80.8	39	Kenya	Nyanza	Manga	72.2
7	Kenya	Central	Muranga North	79.6	40	Kenya	Rift Valley	Laikipia West	72.1
8	Kenya	Rift Valley	Naivasha	79.5	41	Tanzania	Arusha	Arusha Rural	71.8
9	Kenya	Rift Valley	Keiyo	79.1	42	Kenya	Nyanza	Masaba	71.4
10	Kenya	Central	Githunguri	78.9	43	Kenya	Eastern	Meru Central	71.3
11	Tanzania	Ruvuma	Songea Urban	78.8	44	Kenya	Central	Nyandarua North	71.1
12	Kenya	Nairobi	Nairobi North	78.6	45	Kenya	Rift Valley	Laikipia East	71.0
13	Kenya	Nairobi	Nairobi West	78.1	46	Kenya	Rift Valley	Marakwet	70.6
14	Kenya	Central	Gatanga	77.5	47	Tanzania	Mbeya	Mbeya Urban	70.5
15	Tanzania	Dar Es Salaam	Temeke	77.3	48	Kenya	Rift Valley	Wareng	70.5
16	Kenya	Eastern	Maara	76.7	49	Kenya	Rift Valley	Kericho	70.4
17	Kenya	Eastern	Makueni	76.6	50	Kenya	Nyanza	Borabu	70.4
18	Kenya	Rift Valley	Baringo Central	76.5	51	Kenya	Rift Valley	Nandi South	70.4
19	Kenya	Nairobi	Nairobi East	76.4	52	Tanzania	Mwanza	Ilemela	70.3
20	Kenya	Rift Valley	Eldoret East	76.2	53	Tanzania	Kilimanjaro	Mwanga	69.6
21	Tanzania	Morogoro	Morogoro Urban	76.0	54	Tanzania	Kilimanjaro	Moshi Urban	69.6
22	Kenya	Eastern	Mbooni	75.6	55	Tanzania	Iringa	Mufindi	69.6
23	Kenya	Central	Kirinyaga	75.6	56	Kenya	Eastern	Nzau	69.4
24	Kenya	Eastern	Mbeere	75.6	57	Kenya	Central	Limuru	69.3
25	Kenya	Central	Lari	75.5	58	Kenya	Eastern	Mwala	69.2
26	Kenya	Nyanza	Gucha	75.3	59	Kenya	Rift Valley	Nandi East	69.1
27	Kenya	Coast	Taita	75.1	60	Kenya	Coast	Kilindini	69.0
28	Kenya	Eastern	Kangundo	74.6	61	Tanzania	Kilimanjaro	Rombo	68.7
29	Kenya	Rift Valley	Nandi North	74.0	62	Tanzania	Kagera	Bukoba Urban	68.6
30	Kenya	Central	Gatundu	73.9	63	Kenya	Western	Emuhaya	68.6
31	Tanzania	Dar Es Salaam	Kinondoni	73.7	64	Kenya	Rift Valley	Nakuru North	68.5
32	Kenya	Rift Valley	Eldoret West	73.6	65	Kenya	Central	Thika East	68.4
33	Kenya	Central	Kiambu	73.5	66	Tanzania	Iringa	Iringa Urban	68.2

Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate (%)
67	Kenya	Rift Valley	Trans Nzoia East	68.0
68	Kenya	Coast	Kaloleni	67.8
69	Kenya	Nyanza	Rongo	67.8
70	Kenya	Rift Valley	Nandi Central	67.4
71	Kenya	Eastern	Embu	67.3
72	Kenya	Eastern	Kitui North	67.0
73	Kenya	Rift Valley	Tinderet	66.8
74	Kenya	Central	Muranga South	66.4
75	Tanzania	Manyara	Babati Rural	66.3
76	Tanzania	Iringa	Njombe	66.1
77	Kenya	Rift Valley	Sotik	66.1
78	Tanzania	Iringa	Njombe Mjini	65.8
79	Kenya	Eastern	Tharaka	65.7
80	Tanzania	Tanga	Korogwe Urban	65.6
81	Tanzania	Pwani	Kibaha Urban	65.5
82	Kenya	Eastern	Meru South	65.3
83	Kenya	Rift Valley	Kipkelion	65.1
84	Tanzania	Arusha	Meru	65.0
85	Tanzania	Mwanza	Nyamagana	64.9
86	Kenya	Coast	Mombasa	64.6
87	Kenya	Rift Valley	West Pokot	64.4
88	Kenya	Eastern	Yatta	64.3
89	Uganda	Central	Kampala	64.1
90	Tanzania	Kilimanjaro	Moshi Rural	64.1
91	Kenya	Eastern	Kibwezi	63.9
92	Kenya	Eastern	Marsabit	63.4
93	Tanzania	Tanga	Pangani	63.3
94	Kenya	Rift Valley	Bureti	63.1
95	Kenya	Western	Vihiga	63.0
96	Kenya	Rift Valley	Bomet	62.9
97	Uganda	Central	Wakiso	62.8
98	Tanzania	Kilimanjaro	Hai	62.7
99	Kenya	Rift Valley	Trans Nzoia West	62.6
100	Kenya	Coast	Taveta	62.5
101	Tanzania	Kilimanjaro	Same	62.4
102	Kenya	Nyanza	Homa Bay	61.7
103	Kenya	Nyanza	Siaya	61.6

Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate (%)
104	Kenya	Rift Valley	Molo	61.6
105	Kenya	Nyanza	Nyamira	61.5
106	Kenya	Coast	Lamu	61.5
107	Kenya	Western	Lugari	61.3
108	Kenya	Eastern	Machakos	61.3
109	Tanzania	Pwani	Kibaha Rural	61.2
110	Kenya	Nyanza	Bondo	61.0
111	Kenya	Western	Bungoma East	60.9
112	Kenya	Western	Mt Elgon	60.7
113	Kenya	Eastern	Imenti North	60.6
114	Tanzania	Manyara	Simanjiro	60.4
115	Kenya	Western	Butere	60.3
116	Tanzania	Iringa	Iringa Rural	60.1
117	Kenya	Western	Bungoma South	59.9
118	Kenya	Rift Valley	Kajiado North	59.7
119	Kenya	Nyanza	Kisii Central	59.6
120	Kenya	Eastern	Isiolo	59.5
121	Tanzania	Rukwa	Sumbawanga Urban	59.5
122	Kenya	Western	Hamisi	59.2
123	Kenya	Western	Bungoma West	59.0
124	Tanzania	Kigoma	Kigoma Urban	58.9
125	Kenya	Rift Valley	Kajiado Central	58.8
126	Tanzania	Tanga	Tanga Urban	58.7
127	Kenya	Eastern	Mwingi	58.6
128	Kenya	Nyanza	Rachuonyo	58.6
129	Kenya	Western	Teso North	58.4
130	Kenya	Eastern	Tigania	58.4
131	Kenya	Central	Nyeri North	58.2
132	Tanzania	Iringa	Makete	58.1
133	Tanzania	Singida	Manyoni	58.0
134	Tanzania	Morogoro	Kilombero	57.6
135	Tanzania	Pwani	Mafia	57.5
136	Tanzania	Iringa	Kilolo	57.4
137	Tanzania	Dodoma	Dodoma Urban	57.4
138	Tanzania	Manyara	Babati Urban	57.3
139	Kenya	Rift Valley	Trans Mara	57.3
140	Kenya	Nyanza	Rarieda	57.2

Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate (%)
141	Kenya	Western	Kakamega South	57.1
142	Kenya	Western	Busia	57.0
143	Tanzania	Shinyanga	Maswa	57.0
144	Tanzania	Lindi	Nachingwea	56.8
145	Tanzania	Pwani	Bagamoyo	56.6
146	Tanzania	Tabora	Tabora Urban	56.6
147	Kenya	Nyanza	Suba	56.4
148	Kenya	Coast	Msambweni	56.4
149	Kenya	Coast	Kwale	56.0
150	Tanzania	Kilimanjaro	Siha	55.9
151	Kenya	Western	Kakamega North	55.8
152	Tanzania	Dar Es Salaam	Ilala	55.8
153	Kenya	Western	Mumias	55.7
154	Kenya	Rift Valley	Loitokitok	55.7
155	Kenya	Western	Samia	55.6
156	Kenya	Nyanza	Kisii South	55.5
157	Kenya	Coast	Kilifi	55.4
158	Tanzania	Mbeya	Ileje	55.2
159	Kenya	Western	Bungoma North	55.1
160	Kenya	North Eastern	Mandera East	55.0
161	Uganda	Eastern	Jinja	54.2
162	Uganda	Western	Mbarara	54.1
163	Tanzania	Iringa	Ludewa	54.0
164	Kenya	Nyanza	Gucha South	54.0
165	Kenya	Nyanza	Kuria East	53.9
166	Kenya	North Eastern	Wajir North	53.6
167	Tanzania	Mbeya	Kyela	53.6
168	Uganda	Western	Bushenyi	53.5
169	Tanzania	Arusha	Karatu	53.3
170	Kenya	Western	Kakamega Central	52.8
171	Kenya	Nyanza	Migori	52.6
172	Kenya	North Eastern	Garissa	52.5
173	Kenya	Rift Valley	Narok North	52.2
174	Kenya	Nyanza	Nyando	52.1
175	Tanzania	Rukwa	Mpanda Mjini	51.9
176	Tanzania	Mara	Musoma Urban	51.8
177	Tanzania	Tanga	Korogwe	51.8

Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate (%)
178	Kenya	Eastern	Kyuso	51.7
179	Tanzania	Singida	Singida Rural	51.6
180	Tanzania	Singida	Singida Urban	51.6
181	Tanzania	Pwani	Kisarawe	51.5
182	Tanzania	Kagera	Misenyi	51.5
183	Tanzania	Manyara	Mbulu	51.3
184	Tanzania	Dodoma	Mpwapwa	51.3
185	Kenya	Western	Teso South	51.2
186	Kenya	Coast	Malindi	51.2
187	Tanzania	Shinyanga	Shinyanga Urban	51.1
188	Kenya	Western	Kakamega East	51.0
189	Tanzania	Tabora	Sikonge	51.0
190	Tanzania	Mbeya	Mbeya Rural	50.9
191	Tanzania	Tanga	Mkinga	50.9
192	Kenya	Eastern	Moyale	50.8
193	Kenya	Rift Valley	Turkana North	50.8
194	Uganda	Central	Mukono	50.7
195	Tanzania	Lindi	Ruangwa	50.5
196	Tanzania	Kagera	Karagwe	50.5
197	Kenya	Rift Valley	Pokot Central	50.3
198	Tanzania	Morogoro	Morogoro	50.3
199	Tanzania	Manyara	Hanang	50.0
200	Tanzania	Tanga	Muheza	49.5
201	Kenya	North Eastern	Lagdera	49.5
202	Uganda	Central	Luwero	49.3
203	Tanzania	Pwani	Mkuranga	49.1
204	Uganda	Central	Kalangala	49.1
205	Kenya	Western	Bunyala	49.0
206	Tanzania	Mbeya	Chunya	48.6
207	Tanzania	Ruvuma	Mbinga	48.3
208	Tanzania	Lindi	Liwale	48.3
209	Tanzania	Morogoro	Ulanga	48.1
210	Kenya	Eastern	Chalbi	48.1
211	Tanzania	Singida	Iramba	48.0
212	Kenya	Rift Valley	Kwanza	47.9
213	Tanzania	Arusha	Monduli	47.8
214	Kenya	Nyanza	Kisumu East	47.6

Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate (%)
215	Kenya	Rift Valley	Samburu Central	47.5
216	Uganda	Central	Mityana	47.1
217	Kenya	Rift Valley	Narok South	46.9
218	Uganda	Western	Masindi	46.9
219	Kenya	Rift Valley	Turkana Central	46.8
220	Uganda	Central	Nakaseke	46.7
221	Tanzania	Mwanza	Kwimba	46.7
222	Kenya	Coast	Tana Delta	46.5
223	Tanzania	Mara	Bunda	46.5
224	Tanzania	Ruvuma	Namtumbo	46.4
225	Kenya	Coast	Kinango	46.4
226	Kenya	Eastern	Garbatula	46.3
227	Uganda	Central	Nakasongola	45.5
228	Tanzania	Kagera	Bukoba Rural	45.4
229	Tanzania	Mwanza	Geita	45.3
230	Tanzania	Kigoma	Kigoma Rural	45.2
231	Tanzania	Kagera	Chato	45.1
232	Kenya	Eastern	Igembe	44.8
233	Tanzania	Morogoro	Kilosa	44.8
234	Kenya	Coast	Tana River	44.8
235	Tanzania	Manyara	Kiteto	44.7
236	Tanzania	Rukwa	Mpanda	44.6
237	Tanzania	Rukwa	Sumbawanga Rural	44.6
238	Uganda	Western	Kyenjojo	44.5
239	Uganda	Eastern	Kapchorwa	44.2
240	Uganda	Eastern	Bukwo	43.6
241	Kenya	Eastern	Mutomo	43.6
242	Tanzania	Kigoma	Kibondo	43.5
243	Tanzania	Mwanza	Sengerema	43.3
244	Uganda	Western	Kabarole	43.2
245	Tanzania	Pwani	Rufiji	43.1
246	Uganda	Western	Ibanda	43.1
247	Tanzania	Lindi	Lindi Rural	43.0
248	Uganda	Central	Lyantonde	43.0
249	Kenya	Nyanza	Kisumu West	42.9
250	Tanzania	Mwanza	Magu	42.9
251	Tanzania	Mbeya	Mbarali	42.8

Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate (%)
252	Tanzania	Lindi	Lindi Urban	42.8
253	Uganda	Western	Kanungu	42.6
254	Tanzania	Shinyanga	Kahama	42.5
255	Tanzania	Tabora	Urambo	42.4
256	Tanzania	Ruvuma	Tunduru	42.2
257	Tanzania	Kagera	Ngara	42.1
258	Uganda	Eastern	Kumi	42.0
259	Uganda	Western	Rukungiri	41.6
260	Kenya	Rift Valley	Samburu North	41.3
261	Uganda	Eastern	Amuria	41.3
262	Tanzania	Dodoma	Kondoa	41.0
263	Tanzania	Tanga	Lushoto	40.8
264	Tanzania	Morogoro	Mvomero	40.6
265	Tanzania	Shinyanga	Kishapu	40.6
266	Tanzania	Ruvuma	Songea Rural	40.6
267	Uganda	Central	Mpigi	40.6
268	Uganda	Eastern	Katakwi	40.0
269	Tanzania	Tanga	Handeni	40.0
270	Tanzania	Mwanza	Missungwi	39.9
271	Kenya	North Eastern	Wajir West	39.8
272	Kenya	Rift Valley	Turkana South	39.8
273	Tanzania	Tabora	Uyui	39.4
274	Kenya	North Eastern	Ijara	39.3
275	Tanzania	Mara	Rorya	39.3
276	Uganda	Central	Kiboga	39.1
277	Uganda	Eastern	Busia	39.0
278	Tanzania	Shinyanga	Bukombe	38.9
279	Uganda	Nothern	Moyo	38.7
280	Uganda	Western	Isingiro	38.5
281	Kenya	Rift Valley	Laikipia North	38.4
282	Uganda	Western	Kisoro	38.3
283	Kenya	North Eastern	Wajir East	38.3
284	Tanzania	Dodoma	Chamwino	38.1
285	Tanzania	Kagera	Muleba	38.0
286	Tanzania	Arusha	Longido	37.1
287	Tanzania	Mwanza	Ukerewe	37.0
288	Tanzania	Rukwa	Nkasi	37.0

Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate (%)
289	Tanzania	Tabora	Nzega	37.0
290	Tanzania	Shinyanga	Meatu	36.9
291	Uganda	Eastern	Kaberamaido	36.8
292	Uganda	Central	Rakai	36.7
293	Uganda	Nothern	Gulu	36.7
294	Uganda	Western	Hoima	36.6
295	Uganda	Central	Ssembabule	36.5
296	Kenya	Eastern	Laisamis	36.2
297	Tanzania	Shinyanga	Shinyanga Rural	35.7
298	Uganda	Eastern	Mbale	35.6
299	Kenya	Nyanza	Kuria West	35.5
300	Uganda	Nothern	Pader	35.5
301	Tanzania	Lindi	Kilwa	35.3
302	Uganda	Central	Kayunga	35.2
303	Uganda	Eastern	Soroti	35.2
304	Uganda	Western	Ntungamo	35.0
305	Uganda	Western	Buliisa	35.0
306	Tanzania	Dodoma	Bahi	34.8
307	Uganda	Nothern	Amolatar	34.5
308	Tanzania	Mbeya	Mbozi	34.4
309	Tanzania	Tanga	Kilindi	34.3
310	Uganda	Western	Bundibugyo	34.2
311	Tanzania	Dodoma	Kongwa	34.1
312	Uganda	Eastern	Iganga	33.9
313	Tanzania	Shinyanga	Bariadi	33.7
314	Uganda	Eastern	Tororo	33.6
315	Uganda	Western	Kabale	33.5
316	Uganda	Nothern	Dokolo	33.5
317	Uganda	Central	Masaka	33.2
318	Uganda	Nothern	Kitgum	33.1
319	Kenya	Rift Valley	Pokot North	32.6
320	Uganda	Nothern	Abim	32.5
321	Uganda	Western	Kasese	32.4
322	Uganda	Eastern	Manafwa	32.1
323	Kenya	Rift Valley	Samburu East	32.1
324	Tanzania	Kigoma	Kasulu	32.1
325	Uganda	Nothern	Koboko	31.8

Rank	Country	Region	District	Pass rate (%)
326	Uganda	Western	Kamwenge	31.7
327	Uganda	Nothern	Adjumani	31.5
328	Kenya	North Eastern	Fafi	31.3
329	Uganda	Nothern	Amuru	31.1
330	Uganda	Western	Kiruhura	31.0
331	Tanzania	Kagera	Biharamulo	30.9
332	Kenya	North Eastern	Wajir South	30.8
333	Uganda	Eastern	Sironko	30.5
334	Tanzania	Mara	Musoma Rural	30.0
335	Uganda	Eastern	Bugiri	29.4
336	Tanzania	Mara	Tarime	29.1
337	Uganda	Nothern	Kaabong	29.0
338	Uganda	Nothern	Arua	29.0
339	Uganda	Eastern	Namutumba	28.6
340	Uganda	Eastern	Buduuda	28.2
341	Tanzania	Arusha	Ngorongoro	28.2
342	Uganda	Central	Mubende	27.9
343	Tanzania	Tabora	Igunga	27.8
344	Uganda	Eastern	Mayuge	27.3
345	Tanzania	Mara	Serengeti	27.1
346	Uganda	Western	Kibaale	27.0
347	Uganda	Nothern	Nebbi	26.8
348	Uganda	Eastern	Bukedea	26.7
349	Uganda	Nothern	Nyadri	26.4
350	Uganda	Eastern	Pallisa	26.2
351	Uganda	Nothern	Oyam	26.2
352	Uganda	Eastern	Budaka	25.9
353	Uganda	Eastern	Kaliro	25.8
354	Uganda	Nothern	Lira	25.5
355	Uganda	Nothern	Apac	25.3
356	Uganda	Nothern	Yumbe	25.0
357	Uganda	Eastern	Kamuli	24.8
358	Uganda	Eastern	Butaleja	23.4
359	Uganda	Nothern	Nakapiripirit	23.3
360	Uganda	Nothern	Kotido	16.8
361	Uganda	Nothern	Moroto	15.4
362	Kenya	Rift Valley	East Pokot	7.2

Why do we send our children to school? Do we do so to be able to say ‘my child is in school’?
Or do we do so to enable our children to learn?

Across East Africa an increasing number of children are going to school. Billions of shillings have been poured into the education sector in recent years. But has this investment translated into demonstrable learning outcomes for children? The Uwezo assessment seeks to provide rigorous evidence to help answer just this question.

In the largest survey of its kind conducted annually across East Africa, Uwezo at Twaweza assesses about 350,000 children aged 6 to 16 years on basic literacy and numeracy. This report presents the headline findings of the third round of the Uwezo surveys, implemented in Kenya, Tanzania (Mainland) and Uganda in 2012. The principal finding is that children are not acquiring foundational skills of literacy and numeracy consistent with the official curricular requirements in their countries. In short, children are in school, but not learning.

What should be done? We need different mindsets. We need to question the beliefs and practices that have become accepted wisdom. We need to re-examine whether our obsession with learning inputs and organizing classrooms by grade and age in fact enable learning. We need to figure out what it will take to get teachers to come to school every day and teach well, so that we do not waste children’s time and dash their aspirations. We need creative, evidence based ideas on what works to drive our policy agenda, and sharp political economy analysis and action to get the execution right.



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