

Press Release | For immediate release

**Nationally, learning outcomes are still low, 3 out of 10 in Standard 3 can do Standard 2 work**

In Mbeya Urban, the best performing district, 3 out of 4 children (aged 9-13) have basic literacy and numeracy skills

**Dar es Salaam, 29 July 2015:** While 100% of children in Standard 3 should be able to read basic English and Kiswahili stories, and do simple mathematics of class two level, a new citizen-led assessment report reveals that very few are able to do so.

**Kiswahili**

- Fewer than half of Standard 3 children (45%) can read a Standard 2 Kiswahili story.
- In Standard 7, 4 out of 5 children (80%) can read a Standard 2 Kiswahili story, meaning that 20% of pupils complete Standard 7 without having mastered basic literacy skills in Kiswahili.

**English**

- Just 2 out of 10 pupils (19%) in standard 3 can read a Standard 2 level English story.
- In Standard 7, fewer than 6 out of 10 pupils (56%) can read a standard 2 English story. Almost half of Standard 7 pupils are not literate in English, which is the language of instruction in secondary school.

**Numeracy**

- Just 3 out of 10 pupils in Standard 3 (31%) can solve a Standard 2 multiplication problem.
- By the time they reach Standard 7, about 7 out of 10 (71%) cannot solve Standard 2 multiplication.

These findings, released today by Uwezo at Twaweza, are from the *Are our children learning? Literacy and Numeracy in Tanzania 2014* – the report of the fourth national learning assessment conducted in 2013. Uwezo partners tested over 100,000 children, aged 7 to 16, from 131 districts in all 25 regions.

Not only are learning outcomes poor throughout primary school, but also there continues to be significant geographical and socioeconomic disparities.

*Urban / Rural - among 7 to 16 year old children, there is a difference of almost 20% between children in rural and urban areas in all three subjects.*

- 46% in rural areas and 67% in urban areas can read a Standard 2 Kiswahili story
- 26% in rural areas and 44% in urban areas can read a Standard 2 English story
- 36% in rural areas and 54% in urban areas can do Standard 2 multiplication

Top			Bottom		
Rank	District	%	Rank	District	%
1	Mbeya (u)	74%	127	Tunduru	23%
2	Bukoba (u)	71%	128	Uyui	23%
3	Iringa (u)	70%	129	Musoma (r)	22%
4	Arusha (u)	69%	130	Nkasi	20%
5	Morogoro (u)	67%	131	Masasi	19%

*Percentage of children aged 9-13 years who passed all three subject tests, by district rank (top and bottom five districts), 2013. r = rural, u = urban*

*Socioeconomic status of family—among children aged 7 to 16; there are large differences in performance between those from ultra-poor and non-poor households.*



*Districts with the highest pass rate are all urban. Those with the lowest pass rate are all rural.*

- 40% of children from ultra-poor households and 57% from non-poor households can read a Standard 2 Kiswahili story
- 20% of children from ultra-poor households and 35% from non-poor households can read a Standard 2 English story
- 31% of children from ultra-poor households and 46% from non-poor households can do Standard 2 multiplication

In addition to these variations, the data also show that children of more educated mothers tend to have better learning outcomes. In Standards 3-4, almost half of children (48%) whose mothers have no formal education can read a Kiswahili story while almost three out of four children (73%) in the same class level whose mothers have post-secondary education can.

At the same time, there is more positive news when it comes to gender. There were no marked differences in performance between boys and girls of all ages in Kiswahili, English or numeracy. Similarly there were no gender differences in terms of attendance. Although learning outcomes are low, they are equally low for both boys and girls.

Uwezo also collected rich data on the quality of school facilities.

- 44% of schools provide meals
- 46% of schools have access to cleaning drinking water
- 31% of schools have libraries
- On average 30 pupils share one textbook and 74 share one classroom.

*“Although the Uwezo results have been showing and continue to show low levels of learning for a number of years, there are significant disparities. Poorer, rural children are still lagging behind,” commented Zaida Mgalla, Country Manager for Uwezo Tanzania. “But the elimination of gender difference in terms of access to education is a notable accomplishment and demonstrates that concerted global and local efforts can make a difference.”*

Aidan Eyakuze, Executive Director of Twaweza said *“The data continue to point to a crisis in our education system in terms of learning outcome. But not all schools and pupils are performing equally poorly. Among these examples of success, we can find inspiration ideas and practices to ensure that all our children learn in school.”*

The Uwezo learning assessment is conducted in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda by thousands of volunteers. Children aged 6 to 16 are assessed in basic literacy and numeracy using a test based on the Standard 2 curriculum. Uwezo aims to create a national dialogue about education, learning outcomes and policy priorities.

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**Notes to editors**

- The full report, including samples of the tests used, is available on [www.uwezo.net](http://www.uwezo.net).
- Twaweza means “we can make it happen” in Swahili. Twaweza works on enabling children to learn, citizens to exercise agency and governments to be more open and responsive in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. We have programs, staff and offices across all three countries, and a world respected practice of learning, monitoring and evaluation. Our flagship programs include *Uwezo*, Africa’s largest annual citizen assessment to assess children’s learning levels across hundreds of thousands of households, and *Sauti za Wananchi*, Africa’s first nationally representative mobile phone survey. We undertake effective public and policy engagement, through powerful media partnerships and global leadership of initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership.