



Press Release  
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## **Where children live matters more than anything else for learning: the gap between the best and worst performing districts is 60 percentage points Inequalities persist across learning outcomes, school inputs and services**

**27 February 2018, Dar es Salaam:** Among children aged 9 to 13, 38% are unable to complete Standard 2 work but the differences between districts are huge. In Iringa Urban, the best performing district, 75% of children aged 9 to 13 are able to pass basic literacy tests in English and Kiswahili and basic numeracy tests. The worst performing district is Sikonge, where only 17% of children were able to pass those basic tests. Regionally, 64% of children in Dar es Salaam aged 9 to 13 years are able to pass the three tests, but only 23% of their peers in Katavi can do the same. The difference between rural (51%) and urban (65%) areas overall is less pronounced than the differences between specific locations.

In Dar es Salaam, just 16% of students aged 11 are one or more years behind at school. In Katavi that figure rises to 72%.

These differences show that location exerts a far greater influence on learning outcomes than poverty and other traditionally analyzed demographic variables. Four out of ten children (42%) in ultra-poor households passed all three tests compared to nearly six out of ten (58%) of their counterparts in non-poor households.

Aidan Eyakuze, Executive Director of Twaweza said *“A lot has been made of the influence of wealth on educational opportunities and outcomes. But, our data suggest that where the child lives has the most profound effect on whether or not they will learn. Location has a greater influence on learning outcomes than poverty, whether a child’s mother is educated, whether the child attended pre-school or even whether they are stunted. Although there is cause for concern, the data also offer policy actors the opportunity to target interventions and to focus resources on the areas, and the children, that need them most.”*

These inequalities are visible across generations; three out of four children (74%) whose mothers have secondary education or higher, passed all three tests compared to 46% of children whose mothers have no formal education.

These findings were released by Uwezo Tanzania at Twaweza in a report entitled *Are our children learning? Uwezo Tanzania Annual Learning Assessment Report 2017*. The report is based on data collected by Uwezo Tanzania, Africa’s largest citizen-led assessment of learning outcomes in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. In the sixth round of data collection by Uwezo Tanzania in 2015, a total of 197,451 children were assessed from 68,588 households. Data were also collected from 4,750 primary schools.

Inequality by location is also evident in school inputs, resources and services.

- In Dar es Salaam, half of schools (51%) have access to electricity while in Geita, just 2 out of 50 (4%) enjoy this service.
- Geita also does poorly on water supply with only 12% of schools providing clean and safe water while in Kilimanjaro, close to 8 out of 10 schools (78%) do.
- In Kilimanjaro, 26 pupils share one toilet, but in Geita it is 74, or three times as many pupils.

- Similarly, 5% of schools in Geita provide lunch while the share of schools in Kilimanjaro is 79%
- In Dar es Salaam, six pupils share one textbook while in Kilimanjaro, just two pupils share one textbook
- Kilimanjaro is also the best performing region in terms of pupil-teacher ratio (36:1) compared to 52:1 in Katavi.
- Pupil absenteeism is problematic across the country but some areas are harder hit: in Dodoma, 79% of pupils were present on the day of Uwezo assessment visit while in Mtwara, 61% were.

Zaida Mgalla, Manager of Uwezo at Twaweza (Tanzania) says *“Uwezo data clearly show that inequality within the education system cuts across learning outcomes, school resources and services available. The good news is that this means that we have examples of what to do to get things right within the country. The government must take targeted action to ensure that the disadvantaged children and districts that are trailing are not left behind.”*

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**For more information:**

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**Notes to Editors**

- This report, the tools used for the assessment and the underlying data can be accessed at [www.twaweza.org](http://www.twaweza.org), or [www.uwezo.net](http://www.uwezo.net)
- Uwezo assess learning outcomes by administering a test of Standard 2 level to children age 7-16. Tests are in English literacy, numeracy and Kiswahili literacy.
- The 2015 round of the Uwezo survey assessed the poverty status of households based on the following six criteria: access to clean water (in the home); access to electricity; ownership of a mobile phone; ownership of a radio; ownership of a television; ownership of a means of transport (bicycle, motorbike or car). A household was categorized as “non-poor” if it met at least four of the criteria; as “poor” if it met less than four of these criteria; and “ultra-poor” if it met none of the criteria.
- 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.
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