



Press Release | 19 June 2018

Over 90% of pupils in Primary 3 inside and outside of refugee settlements cannot read, comprehend and divide at Primary 2 level

Children in refugee settlements are further disadvantaged by high pupil to teacher, textbook, and classroom ratios

19 June 2018: Despite significant differences in education inputs between schools inside and outside refugee settlements, learning outcomes are low among children in both places. Over 90% of pupils in P3 cannot read, comprehend and divide at P2 level.

Furthermore, 1 out of 4 children in P3 – P7 inside (21%) and outside (28%) settlements can read, comprehend and divide at P2 level.

However in Adjumani, all refugee children can read, comprehend and divide by the time they reach P7 compared to 87% of children in P7 outside refugee settlements, and in Isingiro, 4 out of 10 children (42%) in P5 in refugee settlements have P2 literacy and numeracy skills compared to fewer than 3 out of 10 (27%) of P5 pupils outside settlements.

These findings are released to mark World Refugee Day by Uwezo Uganda at Twaweza. The data were collected by Uwezo, a citizen-led assessment of learning outcomes in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. These data are from the seventh Uwezo assessment that was carried out in October 2017. The data were collected through an Uwezo citizen-led assessment in the four districts with the highest population of refugees in 2016: Adjumani, Isingiro (Nakivale), Yumbe and Arua.

The data also show that Somali pupils in P3 – P7 (65%) living in settlements in Uganda are much more likely to be able to read, comprehend and divide than Ugandan children (27%). In addition, refugee children who have been in Uganda over one year are more likely to have P2 literacy and numeracy skills than those who have been here for less than a year.

In terms of services, the situation is more varied. Although boreholes are a source of water for many in refugee settlements (36%) and outside (45%), more refugees have piped water into their dwelling (35%) than those outside the settlements (13%). Although solar is the main source of lighting for both groups, more refugees use it (66%) than those outside the settlements (40%).

However, refugees are vulnerable when it comes to food and housing: in all the districts surveyed, only 7% of refugees (compared to 34% of the non-refugees) eat three or more meals per day. The majority (77%) of those living in refugee settlements have dwellings made out of mud / stick / polythene. This can be contrasted to 6 out of 10 (61%) of those living outside of settlements who have houses made out of brick or stone.

And in terms of school conditions, refugee children face severe disadvantages. Inside refugee settlements, there are higher pupil to classroom ratios with two or three times as many refugee children

per classroom as their peers outside the settlements (e.g. in Arua 350:1 compared to 127:1, in Adjumani 139:1 and 85:1). There are higher pupil to textbook ratios inside settlements, with refugee children in the four districts sharing one textbook between 27 to 111 children compared to non-refugee children sharing one textbook between 1 to 4 children. And there are many more pupils per teacher inside refugee settlements: in Isingiro there are 83 pupils per teacher inside settlements compared to 28 per teacher outside. In Arua there are 190 pupils per teacher inside settlements compared to 78 per teacher outside.

However the picture is more even when it comes to facilities. Children inside and outside settlements are equally likely to have to sit on the floor (28% do in settlements and 30% do outside); to have exercise books (93% inside, 100% outside) and have pens or pencils (88% inside and 93% outside).

Dr Mary Goretti Nakabugo, Manager of Uwezo Uganda at Twaweza said *“We are excited to provide, for the first time in Uganda and globally, detailed insight into the educational outcomes and the conditions for learning in refugee settlements, and to compare these with the situation for children in host communities. It is clear that refugee children face a myriad of challenges in terms of school conditions, services and facilities. Yet the learning outcomes are equally low for all children. The data further echo Uwezo’s core message that more school inputs do not necessarily translate into better learning outcomes. Instead of continuing to inject money into school infrastructure and services we need to look critically at the conditions under which children learn. A good starting point for investigation may be the much higher competencies shown by Somali children.”*

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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, Twitter: Twaweza_NiSisi
- Twaweza is a not-for-profit company working in Kenya Uganda and Tanzania with a vision of an open society, built on the human impulse to make a difference; where information and ideas flow, citizens engage, and authorities are responsive to the needs of the people. Our flagship programs include *Uwezo* 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.
- This pilot was funded through the Humanitarian Emergency Refugee Response in Uganda (HERRU), UK Department for International Development (DFID), Uganda