

6,000 FAIL PRIMARY TEACHER EXAMINATIONS

They are meant to handle the nation's pupils, to expertly chaperone the country's next generation into the best they can be. The state's successes and posterity depends on them, Teachers. What happens when they do not make the grade?

The education ministry on Friday released the 2016 primary teacher examinations results, in a way denoting the dire education levels in the country and calling for change of strategy to improve standards: 6,142 of the total 16,273 candidates who sat the papers to be the country's next educators, flunked.

While 10,131 candidates 'aced' the examinations the figure is an upgrade from the 5,969 who passed the previous year. Several stakeholders, including the Uganda National Teachers Union (UNATU) general secretary, James Tweheyo, said the 6,142 failure number was way "unacceptable".

"It shows a deeper problem. These (Grade III Teacher Certificate Examinations) are elementary tests that anyone who fulfills requirements and is in training and worthy to be a teacher should pass," the UNATU general secretary said.

But, it all goes back to pre-entry requirements and attitude towards teacher education and general (education) standards in our country, he said.

"The creamiest of the cream should be encouraged to enroll into these colleges, to be the ones teaching the rest. But our society seems to push into education only those who cannot make it at other professions."

Veteran educationist Pamela Kihumuro called upon the Government to up incentives to attract best brains into the teaching profession, otherwise the "quality of education keeps going down by the day".

A report by non-profit organisation Twaweza last year also highlighted significant numbers of in-service teachers, who had passed the teacher education examinations but could not solve simple arithmetic problems, let alone read Primary Six comprehension tasks.

So, big puzzles for the education sector.

The First Lady and education minister Mrs. Janet Museveni, released the results at the Office of the Prime Minister at a function which attracted heads of teacher training colleges, curriculum developers and other technocrats and students.

But the minister said the results portrayed improvement on previous years, which was "commendable".

The minister stressed teachers' responsibility to generate adequate human resources that the country needs, in correlation to the 2020 middle-income status target.

In a tinge, which was sincerer, Mrs. Museveni called on the nation's teachers to be a lot assiduous and "caring", admitting numbers alone were "not enough."

"We need teachers with right attitudes. Teachers who care about the children they are entrusted with. We want teachers who understand that the future of the children they take care of (and the country's future) is in their hands," said the education minister, passionately.

She said her ministry would put in place measures to improve standards of teacher education and that they



First Lady Janet Museveni (right) receives the results of the Primary Teachers College Grade III examinations from Prof. Eli Katunguka, the vice-chancellor of Kyambogo University, on Friday

would no longer "tolerate" institutions below standard.

Mrs. Museveni promised her ministry's continuous facilitation of the colleges to improve staffing and teaching facilities, at the same time strengthening monitoring and supervision.

There were 57 examination centres for the 2016 Grade III Certificate Examinations, including 45 public and 12

privately owned PTCs.

All the subjects were scored with an overall percentage pass of over 85%, with exception of mathematics education, which was passed at 76%.

Isaac Abiriga from Erepi PTC in Moyo district was the best candidate, scoring aggregate 16 out of the possible nine and an A in school practice. Quaraish Kyomuhendo from

the Canon Apolo PTC in Kabarole was first runner up, with aggregate 17 and also an A in school practice.

Private teacher training colleges, markedly Busoga University PTC and the St. John The Baptist PTC in Ggaba posted the most failures. The minister said they would carry out assessments and try to address their "challenges".

PTC results

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Those who passed with distinction: 6
Credit: 9,596
Pass: 529
Failed (to repeat): 5,628
Ungraded: 514
Total: 16, 273

BEST COLLEGES

- Bundibugyo PTC - Bundibugyo district
- Rakai PTC - Rakai district
- Bushenyi PTC - Bushenyi district
- Bishop Stuart PTC Kibingo - Mbarara district
- Ndegeya PTC - Masaka district
- Canon Apolo PTC - Kabarole district

All of these attained an overall percentage pass of more than 85%.

WORST COLLEGES

- Busoga University PTC - Iganga district
- St John the Baptist PTC Ggaba - Kampala district
- Namutamba PTC-Mityana district
- Nazigo PTC - Kayunga district
- Walugogo PTC - Iganga district

All of these attained an overall pass below 40%.

Other concerns related to whether the 'just-qualified' teachers would find their way inside a classroom, with government's stringent policy on recruitment.

But the education ministry's permanent secretary, Alex Kakooza, said local governments had "provisions"