# More girls complete P7 in Kalangala

BY DAVID SSEKAYINGA

**KALANGALA.** A total of 556 candidates sat the 2025 Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) in Kalangala District, with the majority passing in Division Two, according to district education officials.

Results indicate that 84 candidates passed in Division One, 372 in Division Two, 56 in Division Three and 30 in Division Four.

The district also registered a higher number of girls sitting the examinations than boys, with 290 girls among the candidates.

Education stakeholders in Kalangala have attributed the improved retention of girls in upper primary school to deliberate interventions aimed at keeping them in school, particularly from Primary Five onwards.

Mr Lawrence Lweera, the director of Bridge of Hope Nursery and Primary School, said the introduction of boarding sections for girls in upper primary has played a significant role.

"When a girl grows older, especially from Primary Five, we discourage them from returning home daily and instead encourage parents to enrol them in the boarding section.

This helps prevent teenage pregnancies, which are a major cause of school dropouts," Mr Lweera said.

He explained that the approach was initiated by school heads as a response to high dropout rates at that level.

"Parents have also supported us by willingly placing their daughters who are at risk of early pregnancy or exposed to sexual activity in the boarding section," he added.

The Kalangala LC5 Chairperson, Mr Rajab Semakula, said the district's improved performance is partly due to opening space for organisations that focus on the welfare and education of the girl child.

"We realised that dropout rates were very high, especially among girls, so we welcomed organisations to help address the problem. We are now beginning to see positive results," Mr Semakula said.

However, Mr Lweera lamented about lower completion rates among boys, which is largely linked to child labour.

**STATISTICS**

**Kalangala, an archipelago of 64 inhabited islands, has 28 primary schools, five of which are privately owned. The district has five secondary schools, four of which are public. Current enrolment in public primary schools stands at 5,662 pupils, while private schools account for 1,157 learners.**

"Many boys are increasingly involved in income-generating activities such as making brooms and other forms of labour," he said.

Mr Semakula said they realised they will also need educated boys to match with the girls in future.

"We have therefore asked these organisations to introduce programmes targeting boys so that we can reduce dropout rates across the board," he said.

Currently, Kalangala District's school dropout rate stands at 34 percent.

Mr Semakula also attributed improved retention to the government's decision to allow boarding sections in government-aided primary schools within the district.

"Given the nature of Kalangala, with its many islands, some children have to move from one island to another daily to attend school. Government accepted our request and allowed the introduction of boarding sections," he said.

Despite the improved outcomes, the number of candidates who sat PLE slightly declined from 564 in 2024 to 556 in 2025.

According to the 2024 district education report, completion and retention levels remain low, with only between 30 and 34 percent of pupils who enrol in Primary One managing to complete Primary Seven.

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Staffing remains a major challenge. At primary level, only 172 teachers are on the government payroll against a requirement of 189.

The situation is worse at secondary level, where only 79 teachers are available out of the required 112.

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