

Examiners, who earn what Uneb boss describes as “not enough money”, are particularly a source of great anxiety.

BY ARTHUR ARNOLD WADERO

For seven decades, the Uganda National Examinations Board (Uneb) has collected and manually stored at its offices in the Kampala suburb of Ntinda examinations data graded at the end of each educational cycle at both primary and secondary school levels.

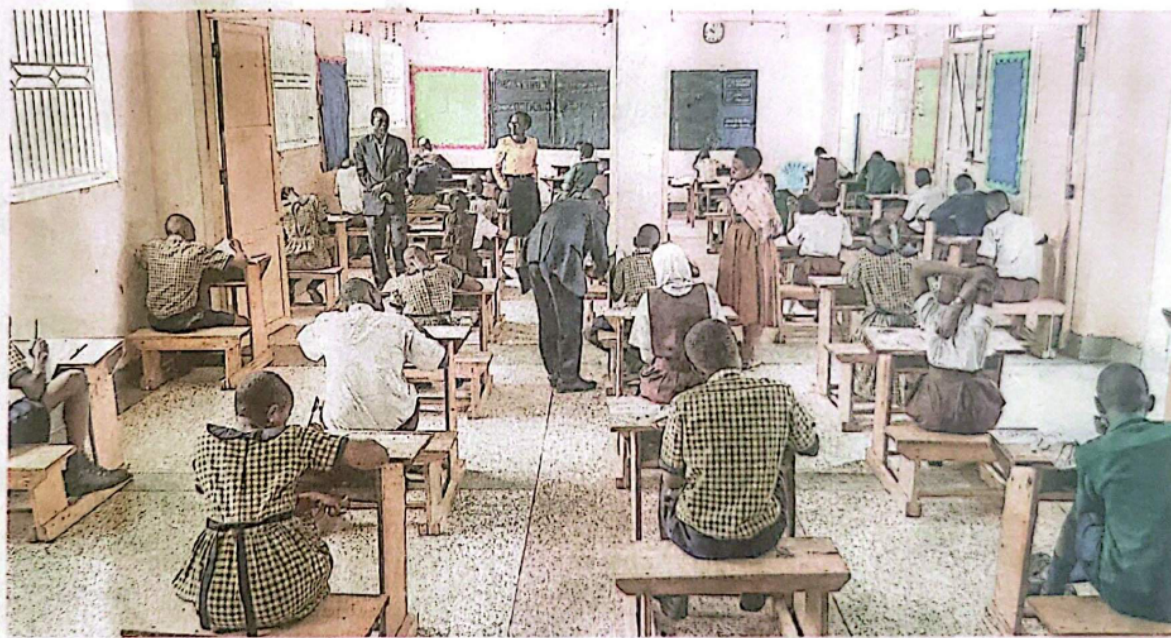
The national assessment body is convinced, now more than ever, that, as Daniel Nokrach Odongo, its executive secretary grimly put it, “maintaining data of people who sat examinations right from 1954, and [having it] archived in the Board’s offices” is a disaster waiting to happen.

“We have been pleading that we be assisted to establish functional disaster and business continuity offices,” Mr Odongo recently told lawmakers on the Education and Sports House Committee.

It is just one of many problems that the body, which was established in 1983 by an act of Parliament, is saddled with. Uneb runs the rule over three critical examination sets. These include the Uganda Primary Leaving Examination (PLE), the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE), and the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE).

It, however, does this on a shoestring

Why Uneb is vulnerable to examinations malpractices



Invigilators and scouts monitor candidates of Kairos Nursery and Primary School as they wrote Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) on November 3, 2025. PHOTO/IBRAHIM KAVUMA

budget, putting the country’s examinations system in a vulnerable position. Examiners, who earn what Mr Odongo described as “not enough money”, are particularly a source of great anxiety.

“Currently, we are paying under the old curriculum Shs720. We made a

small revision to Shs756 per script. This is the amount of money you pay an examiner to mark a whole script of one of our candidates,” Mr Odongo disclosed, adding that the fees should be revised to Shs1,000 for each script marked.

The case is not different for examiners

who handle UCE and UACE scripts.

“For UCE, the new curriculum, we are putting it at Shs1,260, but the examiners are demanding Shs2,000. We may not reach Shs2,000, so we are saying a realistic average is Shs1,500 per script,” Mr Odongo revealed, adding, “UACE

is currently at Shs1,488, but we think a realistic figure would be Shs2,000 per script, giving a funding shortfall of Shs512.”

The same dark clouds hover above invigilators under Uneb’s care, with the chief invigilator getting Shs45,000 against a planned target of Shs60,000.

“That gives a funding gap of Shs15,000. This is the amount of money that we pay to invigilators to move from wherever they are to a school or an examination centre that they have been posted to, and it should help them to pay transport costs as well as feeding when they are on duty. So, Shs45,000 is not sufficient,” Mr Odongo said, adding, “We cannot get whatever we want because we know the cake size. So we think Shs60,000 is a realistic average, giving us a shortfall of Shs15,000.”

Ms Shamim Nirere, the executive director of Izere Education, said it is inevitable that Uneb—riddled with funding shortages—would become “vulnerable to financial fraud and corruption by institutions and individuals.”

Uneb’s failure—due to cash constraints—to operate an off-site backup system left lawmakers on the parliamentary Education and Sports Committee bewildered.

Jonam County MP Emmanuel Obgiertho described the state of affairs as “a disaster itself”.