

**Comparison.** This is higher than those who passed the 2016 PLE.

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**KAMPALA.** The Uganda National Examinations Board (Uneb) yesterday reported that 571,252 candidates qualified for post-primary education after they scored between grades One and Four, representing 90.9 per cent of the total candidates who sat the exams.

This is higher than those who passed the 2016 PLE where only 541,089 (87.02 per cent) candidates qualified to proceed for post-primary education.

"More pupils qualified to join post-primary institutions than the previous year," said Mr Dan Odongo, the Uneb executive secretary, while releasing the results yesterday.

State minister for Primary Education Rosemary Seninde encouraged those who did not make it to keep trying. "Those who have not done well, it is unfortunate. But the world doesn't come to an end," she said.

A total of 57,354 candidates registered Grade U, which is categorised as "Failure" by Uneb, meaning they will have to repeat Primary Seven.

**571,252**

**Passed.** The total number of students who passed last year's PLE, compared to 541,089 in 2016.

Although Uneb registered growth in number of overall candidates sitting PLE from 640,833 in 2016 to 646,190 last year, Mr Odongo noted that 66 districts blocked several candidates from sitting the exams because they had failed pre-tests in their respective schools.

This, he added, contributed to fewer candidates appearing for the national exams in the individual dis-

# 90% qualify to join secondary school



**Jubilant mood.** Pupils of Bernadette Primary School, Wakiso District, celebrate after posting excellent results in last year's PLE.  
PHOTO BY JOSEPH KIGGUNDU

tricts. He cited Mubende, which had 10,805 sitting PLE in 2016 but the number declined to 9,141 last year. Bulambuli District had the biggest decline in number of PLE candidates between 2016 and 2017. Yumbe reg-

istered more pupils sitting PLE compared to the previous year.

According to Uneb, 78 candidates out of 89 who sat PLE at Upper Prison School, Luzira, Kampala, passed and one failed. The Uneb chairperson,

Prof Mary Okwakol, appealed to government to consider those who engage in examination malpractice as a national security threat. "The easiest way to destroy a country is to compromise its education. Malprac-

tice continues to be a threat to the security of our education system and will now need to be viewed as a national security threat," Prof Okwakol said.

Performance in English language declined at both distinction and credit levels while Social Studies and Integrated Science posted better results than the previous year. Overall, boys performed better than girls and the latter had more ungraded candidates, implying failure.

Like in the past, schools from eastern region continued to dominate the failure rates. The schools were mainly from Kween, Bukwo, Tororo, Kayunga, Mbale, Mayuge, Kamuli, Bulumba, Budaka and Bududa districts.

## UPE performance

Although the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme accounted for two thirds of the total PLE candidates who registered, their performance remained wanting. For example, UPE schools had 18,363 candidates in Division One compared to 38,819 from non-UPE schools.

Uneb registered 466,235 candidates under UPE compared to 179,955 in non-UPE schools.

"The number of non-UPE candidates is much lower than that of UPE schools, at only 28 per cent of the total candidature. Non-UPE schools are located in urban areas which are better resourced," Mr Odongo observed.

He said results of 2,559 candidates were withheld pending further investigation into suspected cheating.

The Uneb executive secretary said the vice was largely committed within examination rooms managed by invigilators who are mainly teachers.

"These are mainly cases of external assistance given to candidates by third parties inside the examination rooms," he said.

Ms Museveni reported that refugees contributed to high numbers of PLE pupils in Arua, Moyo and Adjumani districts.

## Minister to cancel centres that conduct pre-registration tests