



## **UGANDA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD**

### **REMARKS BY THE CHAIRPERSON, PROFESSOR CELESTINO OBUA ON THE OCCASION OF THE RELEASE OF THE 2025 PLE RESULTS**

**Friday, 30th January, 2026**

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The First Lady & Hon Minister of Education and Sports

Honourable Ministers of State for Education

The Chairperson and members of the Parliamentary Committee on Education and Sports

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports Members of the Uganda national Examinations Board present

The Executive Director, Uganda National Examinations Board

Senior Members of Staff of the Ministry and UNEB

Members of the Press

Ladies and Gentlemen

Hon Minister, we are pleased to present to you, the results of the Primary Leaving Examination for the year 2025 in accordance with the mandate of the Board as spelt out under Section 4 of the UNEB Act, Cap 259. The examination was successfully conducted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025. The Board approved the use of the same theme as in 2024 because of its continued relevance in driving the Board's agenda.

Yearly, the examination is conducted during a very rainy month; November. Roads and bridges are damaged and some parts of the districts get cut off. The Board worries every year as to how the examination will be conducted in those parts, given the fact that the PLE examination centres are located and spread out in all villages. By God's grace, it has happened that the two days of the

examination have been without rain in most parts of the country, although some areas were affected by rain. Hon Minister the Board is blessed with some exceptionally dedicated Education officials in the districts who have worked with us to find ways of reaching those examination centres whose access had been severely affected by the damaged roads. To them, the Board owes a huge debt of gratitude.

The weather and the state of roads during this period have made the cost of the field conduct of the examination to rise appreciably. The Board has indicated the need for extra funding in its Budget Framework Paper recently presented to the Education and Sports Committee of Parliament, as an underfunded priority. Mamma, we appeal for your support for this and other equally important underfunded priorities as parliament goes through the budget process.

Candidature has continued to rise, while absenteeism has held steady at 1.3 percent in the last two years. But, as you noted in your statement last year, any drop-out is a cause for concern. I hope the Permanent Secretary and her team have been able to find out some of these causes as promised last year.

Performance at Grade 1 pass level has improved over the 2024 examination. Overall, more candidates have qualified to proceed to join the next level/cycle of education than in 2024. I have no doubt that with the efforts Government has put in towards expansion of access to post – primary education, all 730,000 learners graded/passed will find places in secondary and vocational schools.

For the second year, the Board has carried out an item analysis of the four examination papers offered at this level to establish the proficiency levels attained by our learners in this examination. This resonates well with the country's paradigm shift to Competency Based Curriculum and assessment. This analysis will be done and reported annually. From this analysis, the Board has formed the opinion that teachers need a lot of support in capacity building to enable them to interpret the curriculum and adapt their teaching approaches. For the last two years, the Board has identified two Local Governments with the lowest levels of achievement as seen from these results, and offered some capacity building support to selected teachers. With availability of funds, this intervention, small as it appears, will be maintained as a contribution to what other interventions the Ministry will make through its other agencies.

The analysis has also been carried out in more detail to show subject by subject pass levels at different grades of distinctions, credits, etc., with graphs to show more clearly the proportions passing at each grade level and the comparison by gender.

Hon Minister, in the matter of examination malpractice, the Board has witnessed an increased level of desperation on the part of school directors and their head teachers. When the examination distributors deliver the question paper envelopes to the centre, the headteacher, working with already corrupted and compromised scouts, cut open the envelopes and access a paper for the purpose of assisting the candidates before or during the examination. Evidence gathered indicate that some district education officials are becoming complicit in this. During its investigations, the Board's security team discovered the epicentre as being a private school in Kassanda district. The District Inspector of Schools, the school director, headteacher, invigilators, (who were appointed from Nansana, near Kampala) and scout were arrested. The arrest led security to other collaborating schools which had received the exam material through WhatsApp groups created for the purpose. So far eight persons have been convicted and sentenced by courts. Other suspects are out on bail while five are remanded. Our security team is hunting down some others who are currently on the run. The Board, with the support of Security Agencies, is determined to track down those persons and bring them to book. Their diabolical actions pose a serious threat to our education system. We hope that the courts will pass deterrent sentences in accordance with the provisions of the UNEB Act.

Mama, the desperation arises from the desire for their schools to get many candidates passing with Aggregate 4. This, apparently, is the gold standard by which parents rank schools. You will recall, Mamma, that in 2021 the Board presented to you a proposal to change the reporting of the results of PLE to get rid of the aggregates. You supported this proposal but observed, correctly that with COVID – 19 ravaging the country, it was not a good time to adopt and implement the proposal. I now pray that you allow the Board to reintroduce this proposal for possible approval and implementation.

Permit me Mama to extend through you our hearty congratulations to H E President Yoweri Museveni for his resounding victory in the just concluded general elections. The people of Uganda have given him a clear mandate and trust to lead them for the next five years. We pray to the Almighty God to give him good health and continued wisdom in this enormous task. Every indicator shows that great times and more gains are ahead of us.

There is a saying that behind every successful man, there is a great woman. Mama, this couldn't be more true in your case. We watched you traverse the country, standing side by side with the President in pouring rain, in the hot sun, walking through mud as he addressed rallies across the country, besides addressing your own rallies and meeting Women Groups. We thank God for you, and pray that He blesses you abundantly as you continue to support H. E. the President as well as lead the education sector.

I thank you for your support and guidance to us over the last year. Thank you, Mama for promptly appointing members to the 12<sup>th</sup> Board for UNEB, amidst your very busy schedule during the campaigns. I pray that you may find some space in your calendar to swear them in on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2026, when they take office.

I appreciate the Education and Sports Committee of Parliament and the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for the appropriation and release of funds to UNEB in time.

I am grateful to the security agencies and the field officers at various levels for their support in the conduct of the examination.

To the teachers who took time off to mark the candidates' work, and the institutions that hosted the marking exercise, I say 'thank you very much' on behalf of the Board and may God give you more blessings.

I congratulate the candidates who passed the examination at various grades. I also thank the teachers who prepared them and the parents and guardians who provided the support they needed. For those who did not pass or get the grades they expected, there are many opportunities to remedy your expectations.

I now call on the Executive Director to present the Statement of Release of Results for the 2025 Primary Leaving Examination.

Thank you for listening to me.

Professor Celestino Obua

**CHAIRPERSON**

**UGANDA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD**