

ARE OUR CHILDREN LEARNING?

Illuminating the Covid-19 learning losses and gains in Uganda

FORT PORTAL CITY REPORT, BASED ON UWEZO 2021 LEARNING ASSESSMENT

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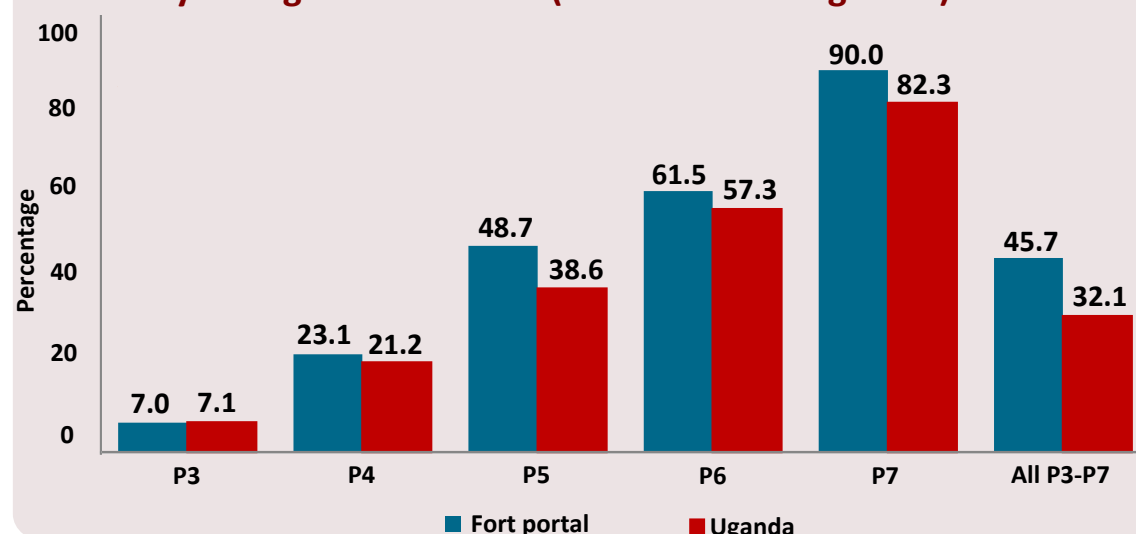
About the Fort Portal City Report Card

Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic that led to the closure of schools for almost two years, in August 2021, Uwezo Uganda in partnership with selected district-based Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) conducted a national household-based learning assessment for children aged 4-16 years across 29 districts in the country. The assessment focusing on literacy and numeracy was pegged on primary 2 curriculum. In Fort Portal city, a total of 416 children (196 boys and 220 girls) participated in the assessment. This report card presents selected key findings on learning in Fort Portal city. In some instances, this report compares the learning situation in Fort Portal with the national situation.

1. How well can children read and count, by class in Fort Portal city? [%]

The aim of education is to ensure that children learn. Thus, if effective learning occurred in primary education, assessments should provide evidence attesting that learners are able to meet the expected competencies. Once again, Uwezo finds that children do not perform to standard, very few children (7%) in Primary 3 are able to do Primary 2 work. And even by Primary 7, the end of the primary cycle, 10% are unable to do Primary 2 reading and mathematics. Generally, learning levels in Fort Portal are higher than the national averages. Nonetheless, the big percentage of children that are not acquiring the basic literacy and numeracy competencies should be of major concern.

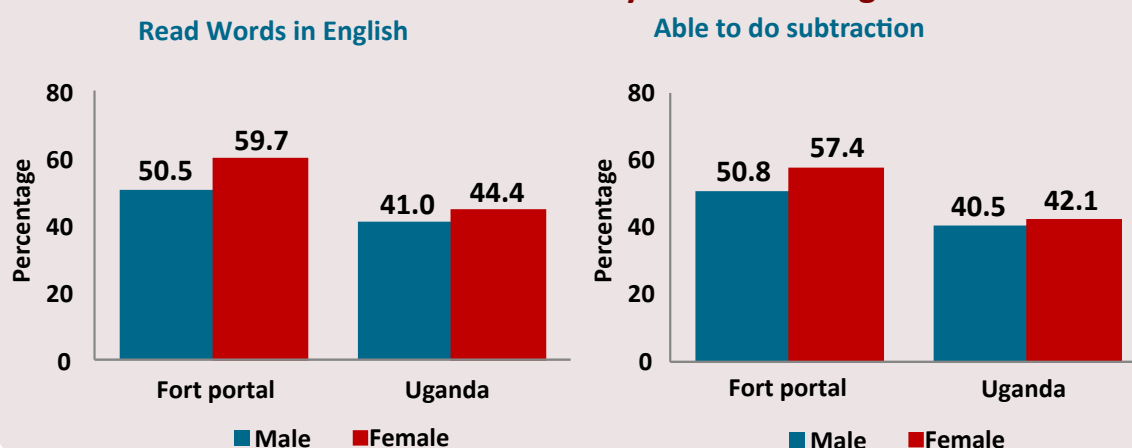
FIGURE 1: Percentage of children in P3-P7 who could read a P2 story in English and divide (Fort Portal vs Uganda)



2. Are boys and girls in Fort Portal able to read words and do subtraction? [%]

Ability to read words and do subtraction is a foundation to literacy and numeracy. Figure 2 shows the proportions of children aged 4-16 in Uwezo samples who were able to read words, in English and to do subtraction tasks (when presented in mathematical symbols). A half of the children aged 4-16 in Fort Portal district cannot read words and do subtraction tasks. There are more girls than boys in Fort Portal district who can read words and subtract.

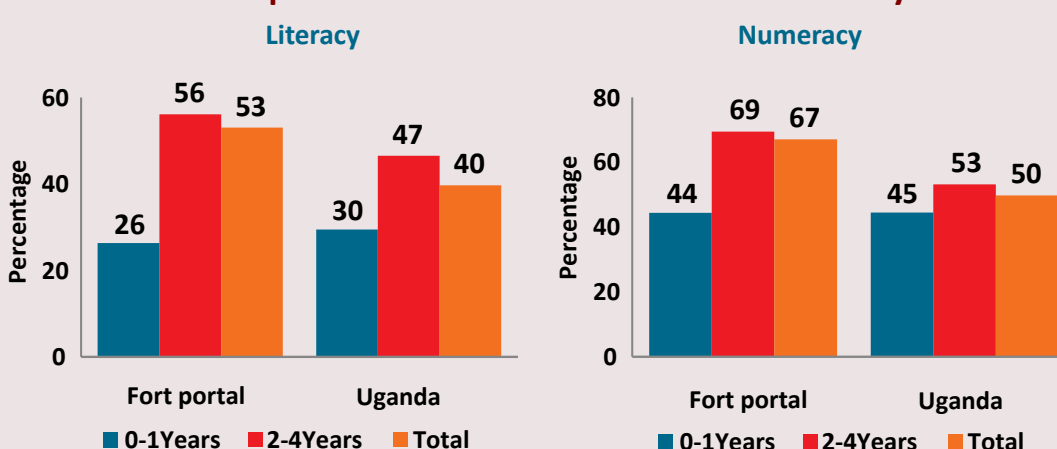
FIGURE 2: Proportion of children aged 4-16 years who could read words and subtract in Fort Portal city in relation to gender



3. How are the reading and numeracy competencies relating to pre-school attendance in Fort Portal city? [%]

Evidence from around the world indicates that pre-primary or early childhood education can provide a solid foundation for children entering primary school and support them to achieve expected learning outcomes. Children with two or more years of preschool education tend to post better learning outcomes than their counterparts with one or less years of preschool attendance.

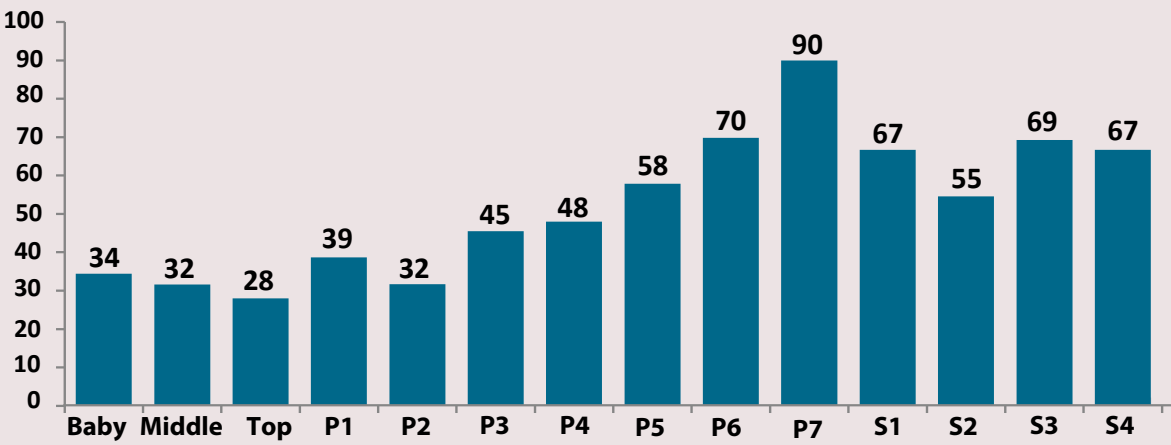
FIGURE 3: Children's reading and numeracy competencies in relation to pre-school attendance in Fort Portal city



4. Were children in Fort Portal city engaged in home-based learning during the Covid-19-induced lockdown? [%]

Some home-based learning took place during the Covid-19 lockdown to keep children engaged. These activities included radio lessons; printed materials from the government, television-learning lessons and printed materials from other sources apart from government. Children in higher classes were engaged in learning activities during the pandemic than children in lower classes.

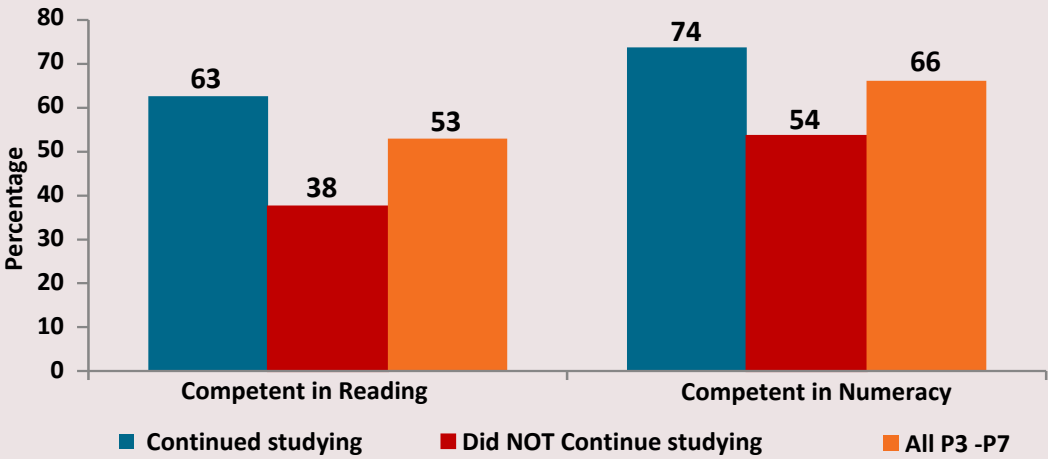
FIGURE 4: Pupils Engaged in Home-based Learning (Percentages)



5. How are reading and numeracy competencies related to learning during the Covid-19-induced lockdown?

A number of interventions happened when schools closed during the lockdown. Figure 5 shows reading and numeracy competencies with reference to whether children continued studying during the lockdown or not. Children who continued studying when schools closed realised better learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy than their counterparts who didn't have the same opportunity. There is a 25% difference in literacy and 20% difference in numeracy.

FIGURE 5: Rates of English Reading and Numeracy Competence of Children in P3-P7 in Fort Portal City in Relation to Continued Studying during the Lockdown



Uwezo Assessment in Fort Portal City

The Uwezo assessment in Fort Portal city was conducted in August 2021. Three hundred (300) households were randomly sampled from 15 enumeration areas. A total of 416 children (196 boys and 220 girls) aged 4-16 participated in the assessment conducted by 30 citizen surveyors (volunteers).

The assessment was conducted by Uwezo Uganda in partnership with Human Rights and Democracy Link Africa (RIDE AFRICA) , the Uwezo partner in Fort Portal city.

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