BEC 2025 Report
Executive Summary

Overview of the Census

The Baseline Education Census (BEC) 2025 is Uganda's first-ever nationwide education census. It enumerated 88,242 formal schools and non-tertiary institutions attended by about 13.6 million learners, establishing an authoritative baseline for planning, policy formulation and monitoring of the education sector.

The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) conducted the census under the UBOS Act (Cap. 333), in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), with full funding from the Government of Uganda. Its primary objective was to generate baseline statistics on all institutions following the national formal curriculum in order to strengthen the Education Management Information System (EMIS). Specifically, it set out to list all formal schools and non-tertiary institutions by level; to generate statistics on learners, teaching and non-teaching staff; and to generate statistics on infrastructure and instructional materials.

The census covered pre-primary, primary, secondary and non-tertiary levels in all Government and private institutions. About 4,100 enumerators, organised in parish-based teams, collected data electronically using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) on tablets, with daily secure transmission to UBOS servers. Fieldwork ran in five phases between April and November 2025, aligned to the school calendar, followed by mop-up and independent validation visits that confirmed the accuracy and completeness of coverage. To guard against inflated enrolment, all classes in a school and all schools in a parish were enumerated at the same time, unannounced visits were made, and only learners physically present and verified were counted. Results are presented at national, sub-regional and district levels, using the 17 constitutional sub-regions.

The Education System at a Glance

Uganda's formal education system is predominantly privately provided at every level except primary attendance. Private institutions account for 92% of pre-primary schools, 71% of primary schools, 73% of secondary schools and 83% of non-tertiary institutions. Government schools nonetheless carry the majority of primary learners (57%), which is where pressure on teachers, classrooms and sanitation is greatest.

Level	Schools	Of which private	Learners	Teachers	Pupil/Student-Teacher Ratio
Pre-primary	38,347	35,154	2,374,674	82,763	29:1
Primary	43,567	31,010	9,118,314	270,176	34:1
Secondary	5,498	4,014	2,008,133	49,631	40:1
Non-tertiary	830	693	74,024	Not reported	Not reported
Total	**88,242**	**70,871**	**13,575,145**	**402,570**	—

Pre-primary Education

Pre-primary education is almost entirely private: of 38,347 pre-primary schools, 35,154 were private and only 3,193 were sections attached to Government primary schools. Private schools served 2,169,335 of the 2,374,674 learners (91%). Male learners (1,207,966) slightly outnumbered females (1,166,708). Buganda had the most schools (15,846) and learners (863,799), while Karamoja had the fewest (211 schools and 13,888 learners).

About 1.8 million learners were of the official pre-primary age of 3–5 years, but 534,366 were aged 6 years and above, indicating delayed transition to primary school. The teaching force of 82,763 was overwhelmingly female (78,518, or 95%). Nationally, there were 29 pupils per teacher, 20 per classroom and 23 per latrine stance. Rural schools had higher pupil-teacher ratios (32:1) than urban schools (26:1), and Karamoja and Rwenzori had the highest at 40:1.

Water, sanitation and hygiene conditions were mixed. While 86% of schools (33,154) relied on improved drinking water sources, only 21,503 (56%) had a functional handwashing facility with both water and soap, and 10,802 had none at all. Only 3,587 schools (9%) disposed of solid waste properly, and just 301 of these were in rural areas.

Primary Education

Primary is the largest level of the system, with 9,118,314 learners in 43,567 schools (12,557 Government and 31,010 private). Government schools served 5,211,732 learners and private schools 3,906,582. Females (4,586,970) slightly outnumbered males (4,531,344); boys predominated in the lower classes, while girls outnumbered boys from Primary Four upwards. Class sizes fell sharply through the cycle, from 1,767,898 learners in Primary One to 739,204 in Primary Seven.

The primary Gross Attendance Rate was 97.9% (females 101.4%, males 94.6%), but the Net Attendance Rate was only 70.8%, meaning nearly three in ten children aged 6–12 years were not attending primary school at the appropriate level. Regional disparities were stark: the NAR ranged from 83.8% in Buganda to 16.5% in Karamoja, whose GAR (23.6%) was also the lowest in the country. Of the country's parishes, 3,087 had no Government primary school and 1,373 had no primary school of any kind, with Bugisu most affected on both measures.

Government schools operated under far greater strain than private schools. There were 48 pupils per teacher in Government schools against 24 in private schools (national 34:1), 50 pupils per classroom against 21 (national 31:1), and 61 pupils per latrine stance against 30 (national 42:1). Madi had the highest pupil-teacher ratio (54:1) and West Nile the highest pupil-classroom ratio (52:1). Government schools in Kampala recorded 188 pupils per stance, and Government schools in Bukedi 72 pupils per classroom. Of 270,176 primary teachers, 160,570 worked in private schools.

Most primary schools (37,247, or 85%) had improved drinking water, but 6,320 still relied on unimproved sources. Just over half (24,248) had handwashing facilities with water and soap, while 11,629 had none. Only 3,329 schools (8%) disposed of waste properly, including just 156 Government schools, and Karamoja had none.