

More students opt for technical education

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PIC: Uganda Business Technical Education Board Chairperson Vernacious Baryamureeba hands over the Uganda Community Polytechnic results to State Minister for Education Rosemary Sseninde, at UBTEB offices in Kampala on January 30, 2018. Looking on is UBTEB executive secretary Onesmus Oyesigye. (Kennedy Oryema)

EDUCATION | VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

KAMPALA - Primary school leavers are increasingly turning to vocational education and training, officials revealed on

Tuesday during the release of results of the Community Polytechnics Certificate Programme.

The three-year programme covered courses, including electrical installation, motor vehicle mechanics, welding and metal fabrication, block laying, plumbing and fitting as well as carpentry and joinery.

Eighty percent of the 4,283 candidates, who were examined at the end of the programme in November and December last year, can make shoes, repair vehicles, make clothes or manage small businesses.

There was a marginal increase in the number of candidates from 4,331 in 2015 and 4,629 in 2016 and the number of registered examination centres rose from 102 in 2016 to 113 in 2017 (10.8% increase).

The UBTEB executive secretary, Onesmus Oyesigye described the performance as impressive as 10.5% of the students passed with a distinction, 60% with credits and 9.4% with pass grades.

However, although the general performance remained good, a slight drop by 0.1% was recorded compared to the 80.1% pass rate of 2016.

Oyesigye attributed the drop to poor performance in English and Mathematics, which he said has continued to affect the pass rate in most programmes.

“Some candidates have difficulty in comprehending the questions, making it difficult to answer questions effectively,” Oyesiga

stated.

Female candidates had an overall better performance compared to males; they performed better in block laying and concreting practice, plumbing and pipe fitting, garment design and construction, as well as food preparation. Male candidates dominated the rest of the programmes.

The Minister for Education and Sports, Janet Museveni extolled the high completion rate and the increase in number of female candidates.

She directed the ministry's BTVET department to address the challenge of poor performance in English and Maths by retooling instructors and teachers.

The UBTEB board chairperson, Prof Venancius Baryamureeba, said there was need to aggressively market vocational education to students in order to attract talent and innovation.

In 2011, the Government launched the 'Skilling Uganda' programme, an ambitious plan to create a pool of at least one million Ugandans with skills and competencies relevant in the labour market by the year 2020.