

Rwanda recorded a significant improvement in national examination performance this year, with pass rates rising sharply in both the Primary Leaving Examination and Ordinary Level tests.

The PLE pass rate reached 88.21% in the 2025/26 school year, up from 75.6% last year, while the O-Level pass rate rose to 85.7% from 64.35%, according to results released Thursday by the National Examination and School Inspection Authority.

The improvement means a larger share of learners who completed the two examination levels will progress to the next stage of education, although education officials will also face increased demand for places in secondary schools.

A total of 276,579 candidates sat the PLE, with 243,958 passing. At O-Level, 149,015 candidates sat the examination and 127,702 passed.

NESA Director General Dr. Bernard Bahati said the results showed an improvement in student performance compared with the previous school year. He also pointed to a shift in the distribution of marks, with fewer learners recording low scores and more moving into higher performance categories.

The results showed a gender gap at both levels. In the PLE, boys recorded a pass rate of 89.59%, compared with 87.1% for girls. At O-Level, boys passed at a rate of 89.8%, while the rate for girls was 82.62%.

State Minister for Education Claudette Irere welcomed the improvement and credited students, parents and teachers for their efforts in preparing for the examinations. She also noted that the larger number of successful learners would have an impact on school placement as students move to the next level.

The results were released alongside an investigation into suspected examination malpractice. Irere said 243 cases had been identified during the PLE and O-Level examinations.

The cases remain under investigation, and results of students suspected of cheating are being withheld until the inquiries are completed. Irere said the rules governing national examinations would be applied where wrongdoing is established.

The 2025/26 PLE and O-Level results were released on Aug. 20 following the completion of the national examinations earlier this year.