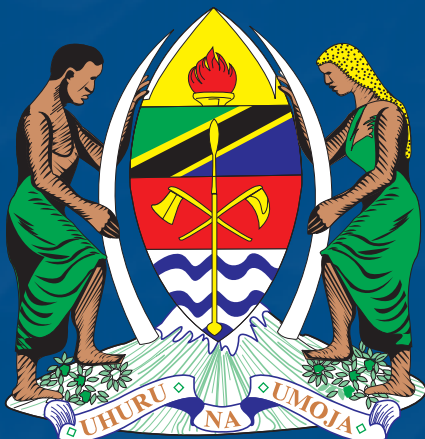




EDUCATION AND VULNERABILITY

to poverty in Tanzania



Policy Briefing Paper

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TANZANIA

2002/3 TzPPA

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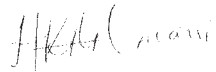
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FOREWORD

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper is derived from the information provided by research participants in the communities and the conceptual framework in the TzPPA Main Report. Consultants from Maarifa ni Ufunguo an NGO member of the TzPPA Implementing Consortium (IC), namely Ms Kate Dyer and Mr. Amani Manyelezi, drafted the paper. They were backstopped by the ESRF TzPPA Management Team comprising Mr. Deogratias Mutalemwa, Dr. Charles Ehrhart, Dr. Rose Mwaipopo, Ms. Anna Dominick and Ms. Vivian Bashemererwa. In developing the paper, a deliberate decision was taken to use a participatory process. Therefore, during the early stages of its preparation, initial ideas were exchanged with a number of experts in a roundtable forum. Subsequently, a consultative workshop with representatives from the IC member institutions, other NGOs, UDSM, DFID, UNICEF, TTU and the private sector helped to generate the recommendations.

Last but by no means least, members of the Research and Analysis Working Group provided useful comments when reviewing the paper, after which they approved it for publication.



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Executive Director ESRF

November, 2003

ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

BEDC	Basic Education Development Committee
CG	.....	Consultative Group
DBSPE	.....	District Based Support to Primary Education
DID	.....	Department For International Development
ECCD	.....	Early Childhood Care and Development
EFA	.....	Education for All
MEMKWA	.....	Non-formal Education Programme
MOEC	.....	Ministry of Education and Culture
MOH	.....	Ministry of Health
NGO	.....	Non Governmental Organisation
PEDP	.....	Primary Education Development Programme
PRS	.....	Poverty Reduction Strategy
SACMEQ	.....	Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
TBA	.....	Traditional Birth Attendants
TEN/MET	.....	Tanzania Education Network/Mtandao wa Elimu Tanzania
TTU	.....	Tanzania Teachers Union
TzPPA	.....	Tanzania Participatory Poverty Assessment
UDSM	.....	University Of Dar-es-Salaam
UNICEF	.....	United Nations Children Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This Policy Briefing Paper returns to the basics in order to help current education-sector planning and reforms stay focused on the overarching goal of improving people's lives. It considers why education matters in a developing but poor country like Tanzania. Studies to review the curriculum, advise on textbook policy, mainstream HIV/AIDS in schools, advise on monitoring are all necessary, but without a clear focus on the goal, we risk missing it. The issue is much more than the familiar one of ensuring equitable access to quality education for all. If the changes we make in the education sector fail to address the vulnerability of individuals, households, communities and the nation as a whole, we risk wasting our time. As in a badly taught lesson, the pupils may be busy, but they derive nothing of value that they didn't already have.
2. This Paper is based on research results from the Tanzania Participatory Poverty Assessment (TzPPA). The TzPPA carried out participatory, policy-oriented research in thirty mainland sites from March to July 2002. It reflects information and insights developed by community members, local authorities, and multi-disciplinary specialists drawn from Government, academic and research institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). These results are enriched, supported and clarified by quantitative and qualitative secondary data assembled from a variety of sources. Research utilised participatory methods. Key findings have passed through as many as four layers of triangulation. The participatory principles responsible for this foundation were maintained in the subsequent stage of writing-up. Indeed, contributions from the Ministry of Education and Culture, independent researchers, academics and NGO representatives amounted to multiple checks and balances against error and bias.
3. The TzPPA plays an important part in Government's Poverty Monitoring System. It is being executed by the President's Office, Planning and Privatisation and implemented by a multi-sectoral consortium of Government and Civil Society Organisations. This Policy Briefing Paper is one of several in a series intended to provide a convenient, one-stop resource for readers needing to quickly grasp key information, analysis and recommendations on a given subject.

The Paper builds upon the conceptual framework for vulnerability presented in the TzPPA's Main Report. It sees individuals, households and communities as subject to a range of shocks and stresses that threaten their wellbeing. Individually and collectively, people use their assets (including human, social, political, natural, physical, and financial capital) to try countering these impoverishing forces.

Though many of their efforts are successful, some actually create new problems while solving others. Examples of such counter-productive response options include selling off assets (such as land or tools) to meet short-term needs and withdrawing children from school so they can work at home or engage in cash labour. Though the latter strategy may help the child's household access food and other basic needs, it succeeds at a terribly high price for his or her future prospects. Government and its partners in development must work together to ensure that families have viable alternatives to "dis-investing" in their human capital. Instead, people should be empowered to acquire the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values that can help them effectively manage threats to their wellbeing.

4. This Briefing Paper makes an important distinction between “education” and “schooling.” The former is seen as a broad, lifelong process providing a range of skills, knowledge (including ‘traditional knowledge’) and values. In contrast, schooling is much more narrowly defined. It is an institutionalised approach to education that has much to offer but sometimes degenerates into a ‘jug and mug’ approach to learning.
5. This Paper presents a vision of the role for education in national development. The debate about education reform in Tanzania has to be broadened out from a concern with ensuring equitable access to quality education for all, into a focus on the transformative power of education for currently marginalized and disadvantaged groups, and for the population as a whole. *Hence it is not a narrow sectoral concern but a central one for poverty eradication, and for enabling Tanzania to address the challenges, internal and external, of the 21st century.*
6. Research participants in the TzPPA had a very high expectation of the value of education. They regarded it as an *intrinsic asset* contributing to their immediate sense of wellbeing, and as an *enabling asset* helping them to improve their livelihoods and access social and political capital. Participants’ most strongly articulated need was for relevant education, by which they meant education that opens up future life chances.
7. Actual schooling experiences frequently fail to live up to these ideals and expectations. Some of the problems are familiar to planners: long distances to school, a school environment not conducive to learning, insufficient materials, inadequate quality and quantity of teachers, overuse of corporal punishment, and poor quality of learning outcomes. Others are less well documented. These include the cultural gulf between home and school, particularly for some livelihood groups, such as pastoralists. In addition, there is the perception that primary education is no longer sufficient, but people do not have the resources to access vocational or secondary education.
8. Above all, children do not enter school on day one of standard one with equal likelihood of success in schooling, and most children still leave school labelled as a “failure” by the Primary School Leaving Examination. Those children at greatest risk of being labelled failures are poor children, orphans, girl children, children with disabilities, and communities where over years there have been low levels of human capital development. The long-term vulnerability of these children springs from the fact that if schooling doesn’t provide the necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values, they are less likely than other groups to be able to access them from elsewhere, and due to the on-going prejudice and discrimination they face in obtaining employment, they badly need the means to secure their own livelihoods.
9. In the face of this experience of schooling, some households and communities respond by trying to improve access and quality, whereas the response of others, often the already marginalized or more vulnerable, is to further disengage from the system, by not attending or ignoring the schooling system altogether. It is argued that current planning around sector reform and the Primary Education Development Plan in the context of the Poverty Reduction Strategy are relevant and helpful, but insufficient in themselves. Some of the problems observed in the course of the research are due to the fact that it took place in the early days of PEDP implementation. However, the PRS and sector targets and indicators tend to focus on inputs to schooling which can be ‘counted, costed and carried’ – such as bricks and mortar, books and teachers, whereas communities themselves also prioritise many intangibles in addition to these.

10. The report identifies ways in which government could complement people's existing efforts to improve education by:
 - ❑ Ensuring sufficient places for learning, close to communities.
 - ❑ Investing in comprehensive Early Childhood Development, most especially in poor communities.
 - ❑ Enabling schools to play their part in breaking cycles whereby poverty is handed on from generation to generation, by compensating for the early disadvantages of chronic ill health, poor nutrition or inadequate mental stimulation.
 - ❑ Improving the content of schooling, with a stronger focus on skills, knowledge and information related to daily life, and on the positive values acquired through education. These include hope and optimism, positive attitudes towards accommodating change, cooperation, participation, and positive use of power, equal opportunities and rights. Addressing these concerns would meet research participants' concerns about the relevance of education.
 - ❑ Ensuring quality, particularly through strengthening the inspectorate to carry out its duties and through promoting accountable governance structures at community level.
 - ❑ Promoting finance mechanisms for the sector that would reduce both actual dependency on donors and the concomitant attitude of dependence. Gaps between educationally motivated communities and those who do not value formal schooling must not, however, be widened, by assumptions that all are equally able or willing to contribute to its costs.
 - ❑ Developing and using indicators for the success of the education sector which have a stronger correlation with poverty eradication, and can capture community, parental and child attitudes as to whether schooling is, over time, becoming more effective in meeting people's high expectations of the power of education.

11. A summary of specific recommendations is included at the end of this Briefing Paper. The overarching concern, however, is to reaffirm the central role of education in national development. It is more than a matter of classrooms being built and additional teachers employed – it concerns a vision of how, and according to whose knowledge, values and attitudes development takes place.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale

Numerous studies have been conducted by many different stakeholders into the education sector in Tanzania, many of them insightful and detailed about their particular area of focus: Why another one (e.g. Mercer, White and Katunzi 2000)?¹ The answer, in short, is to return to the basics and ask, “What is education for? Why does the education system matter for a developing but heavily indebted country like Tanzania?”

Studies to review the curriculum, advise on textbook policy, mainstream HIV/AIDS in schools, and advise on monitoring are all important steps towards improving the sector. However, without a clear focus on the overall goal, we risk losing sight of it altogether. To borrow from budget tracking work, numerous studies familiarise us with the inputs, processes, outputs and sometimes even outcomes in the sector, (in so far as they relate to things like ‘a more conducive learning environment’), but very rarely to the overall point. If the education development we are focusing on fails ultimately to address the vulnerability to poverty of individuals, households, communities, districts and the nation as a whole, we risk squandering our time. It becomes like a badly taught lesson. The pupils may be very busy and quiet, but what have they really acquired by the end of it that they didn’t have at the beginning?

1.2 Background

Subject: This Briefing Paper has been written to help in understanding the relationship between education, schooling and people’s future wellbeing. It is also about how the type of education and schooling people get today can affect Tanzania’s mid- to long-term prospects for poverty reduction.

Sources: The Paper is based on the results of participatory, policy-oriented research conducted by the Tanzania Participatory Poverty Assessment (TzPPA) in thirty mainland sites from March to July 2002. As such, it reflects information and insights developed by community members, local authorities, and multi-disciplinary specialists drawn from Government, academic and research institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). These results are enriched, supported and clarified by quantitative and qualitative secondary data assembled from a variety of sources.

Methodology: Research was based on participatory processes that have been tested and proven reliable by literally hundreds of governments, academic institutions and non-governmental organisations around the world. Many common methods were used. However, a number of novel tools were also employed to tease out and explore specific parts of the TzPPA’s Research Agenda.

Crosschecking of results systematically took place in individual research activities, by comparing the results of different Discussion Groups and through “Feedback Sessions” at community and district levels. As such, key findings have passed through four layers of triangulation. The participatory principles responsible for this firm foundation were maintained in the subsequent stage of writing-up. Indeed, contributions from Ministry of Education and Culture, independent researchers, academics and NGO representatives amounted to multiple checks and balances against error and bias.

¹Malcolm Mercer, Kathleen White and Naomi Katunzi (2000) Joint Mid-Term Evaluation of EC, DFID and IA Support to the Education Sector Development Programme Design, Preparation and Management Process.

Context: The TzPPA plays an important part in Tanzania's national Poverty Monitoring System. Therefore, it is being executed by the President's Office, Planning and Privatisation and implemented by a multi-sectoral consortium of Government and Civil Society Organisations. This Briefing Paper is one of several in a series intended by to provide a convenient, one-stop resource for readers needing to quickly grasp key information, analysis and recommendations on a given subject.

1.3 Summary of report and structure

The overall message is clear. Most people value education very highly. This partly explains why 1.6 million children enrolled in school after the introduction of free primary education in January 2002². Schooling is valued for its potential to break the cycle of vulnerability, and people look to it to provide basic skills, including those directly related to livelihoods, as well as desired attributes like confidence. People see themselves as disadvantaged without it. However, people were also very clear about how their experience of primary schooling falls short of the ideal. Some vulnerable groups risk being further marginalized by the schooling process. Many research participants are not happy; they are ambitious about what education could and should do.

Their concerns cover access to schooling, its relevance to life outside school, including knowledge skills, attitudes, and values, and their achievements from it. When needs and interests are not being met, or the costs (financial or otherwise) are too high, they opt out altogether or at least away from government primary provision. Participants are highlighting the importance of addressing directly concerns which are usually identified as 'cross cutting' – including governance, accountability and sound financial provision – but then all too often inadequately implemented because of lack of clarity about where responsibility for implementation lies. As such, the voices raised here are a valuable resource in improving not only education, but understanding the actual and possible role of education in poverty reduction.

To highlight what the voices are saying, and what their implications are for policy makers, this Briefing Paper adopts the following structure:

- Section two elaborates the key conceptual framework for linking education and vulnerability and explains working terms and concepts.
- Section three looks at the special role of education as an asset – its potential for breaking the cycle of poverty and the high expectations which people have of it. This is contrasted with the practical experience of schooling in many of the research communities, and their implications for the most vulnerable in any community.
- Section four looks at how households respond to poor quality or irrelevant education, looking both at the dynamics of individual disengagement, and of collective attempts to improve access and quality.
- In Section five, government education priorities under the PRS, are considered in the light of the voices from the grassroots level, and are seen to be relevant, but insufficient to meet all the concerns raised.
- Section six moves to recommendations as to how government can complement people's efforts to improve their experience of education, looking not only within the education sector, but also cross-sectorally into concerns of governance, accountability, participation, and financing.
- Section seven summarises and concludes the arguments appealing for the centrality and urgency of attention to education to break the cycles of poverty and vulnerability.

²Though since schooling is compulsory, it is also likely that this was a factor in the high levels of enrolment,

2.0 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: EDUCATION, SCHOOLING AND VULNERABILITY

2.1 Conceptual framework

Defining vulnerability: “Poverty” is not just about whether someone has money in her or his pocket. Indeed, poverty refers to a lack of material goods, such as food and shelter, but also to illness, social isolation, insecurity, powerlessness and hopelessness. As such, poverty and vulnerability are not synonyms. Poverty is about being below a socially defined minimum level of wellbeing now. In contrast, vulnerability is about the likelihood of falling below (or further below) a minimum level in the future. Therefore, a person, household or community is “vulnerable” to the degree that they might be poorer tomorrow than they are today.

Causes of vulnerability: People’s vulnerability is a result of the number and intensity of things pushing them towards poverty versus the number and effectiveness of their response options. Perhaps this can most readily be understood through the use of an allegory wherein people are struggling to climb a ladder of wellbeing and prosperity. As they climb, people encounter a wide variety of forces trying to push them down. In response, they deploy countermeasures that include dodging, mutual support, etc.

Impoverishing forces: Things that threaten to push people down the ladder of wellbeing are called “impoverishing forces.” Government’s current Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) cites several common impoverishing forces in Tanzania; namely floods, drought and HIV/AIDS. Meanwhile, the 2001 Disaster Vulnerability Analysis recognises the importance of major accidents, fires and refugee inflows, conflicts, pests/plagues, landslides and earthquakes.

For the most part, these “shocks” strike individuals, households and the communities in which they live suddenly. Other impoverishing forces are experienced as ongoing “stresses” that exert steady downward pressure on people’s wellbeing. The most important categories of impoverishing forces identified by participants in the TzPPA are: environmental, macro-economic, governmental, socio-cultural, health and those linked to people’s place in the life cycle.

Countermeasures: So long as they have hope, people are never passive in the face of these impoverishing forces. Indeed, children, women and men in all kinds of circumstances ordinarily resist being pushed down the ladder of wellbeing. Their resistance is determined, creative and often effective. It entails trying to:

- Prevent some impoverishing forces from occurring
- Dodge others
- Lessen the impact of those they cannot prevent or evade
- Cope with the consequences
- Resume climbing the ladder of wellbeing

The countermeasures people can deploy when confronted with impoverishing shocks and stresses reflect (i) the assets they have at their disposal and (ii.) the context of complex circumstances that sometimes facilitate and sometimes limit what can be done with what they have.

Assets: The six major types of assets that provide people with opportunities and options in the face of impoverishing forces are: human, social, political, natural, physical and financial capital. “Education” is an important type of human capital. In fact, many people consider it and health to be amongst the most important forms of capital they can have. Education – and the knowledge and skills it implies – is special because it cannot be used up, lost or stolen.

Limiting factors: “Limiting factors” restrict how, and at what cost, people can act to counter impoverishing shocks and stresses. Of course, lack of enabling-assets (such as information, skills and tools) is one type of constraint commonly affecting people in Tanzania. However, there are many others, including lack of hope, discriminatory cultural practices and policies, inadequate rains, and lack of markets.

Virtuous versus vicious spirals: People’s vulnerability to poverty reflects the number, nature and intensity of impoverishing forces they face versus the effectiveness of available countermeasures. The relationship between shocks and stresses, response options and limiting factors is complex. However, core principles can be summarised as follows:

- ❑ Through foresight and deliberate action, people routinely prevent some shocks and stresses from occurring.
- ❑ The impact of other impoverishing forces is only diminished. This is often the result of limiting factors that impair or outright obstruct implementation of effective countermeasures.
- ❑ The way in which some problems are countered can give rise to new hardships and/or limiting factors. In other words, people’s attempts to fend off impoverishing forces can initiate a “vicious spiral.”

Limiting factors frequently leave people with a narrow menu of ineffective and/or poisonous options. Poisonous response options address immediate problems while giving rise to others. For example, withdrawing children from school provides additional labour to help households survive tough times. However, “disinvesting” in education undermines the child’s capacity to ensure her or his future wellbeing and contribute to that of their families, communities and country.

Education can be part of a response option which is positive, and which forms a virtuous spiral. This is the familiar argument that education can be one of the most powerful tools breaking the cycle by which poverty is inherited from generation to generation, breaking out of the poverty cycle.³ The virtuous spiral is not an easy choice. In terms of education there are costs of various sorts. First are financial ones whether direct (such as charges for night watchmen), indirect (such as uniform) or the opportunity cost of attending at all. There are also potential social costs, where, for example, there is a gulf between the culture of home and that of the school. In this case, opting for schooling can mean opting away from a whole set of culturally and socially endorsed values – as it is for some Maasai for example who pursue education particularly at higher levels.

Supportive national and local policies can assist in the process of combating impoverishing forces, by lowering the costs, financial and other, of opting into the virtuous circle. On the other hand, failure to provide positive policy support to the virtuous spiral is, in practical effect, making it more likely that marginalized groups will either be forced into the vicious spiral, or not challenged out of an attitude of dependence on extended family networks or other forms of support. A human right’s perspective puts the obligation on the part of duty bearers whether at international, government, community or household level, to promote education because of the potential of the virtuous circle. Unfortunately, sometimes duty bearers and claim holders lack capacity to carry out their obligations, sometimes due to lack of authority (legal, moral, cultural), responsibility (legal, moral, social) or resources (financial, human, institutional). When these capacities are lacking, vulnerability to impoverishing forces increases.

³See for example: Kevin Watkins (2000), *Breaking the Cycle of Poverty*, Oxfam Education Report, Oxford, page 5

A word of caution is required in seeing education as a contributor only to a virtuous circle. The question is, virtuous from which perspective? When all children, regardless of parental income, receive the same primary education based on the same curriculum and values, the outcome from a national perspective is likely to be different from when children from families with higher income can send their children to fee-paying schools, with varying curricula, medium of instruction and so on.

Grassroots responses to the Poverty Reduction Strategy, recorded by Hakikazi Catalyst, show some people feel 'more private provision is increasing access to services, and reducing the pressure on government services'. Others say the current system is a problem as it is dividing Tanzanians into 'haves' and 'have nots', and only the haves get access to good quality services in health and education.⁴

It is important to consider the ways in which the policies and choices of national government or of the international community, impact on individuals, households and communities. In terms of vulnerability, the issue is whether these policies and choices enhance the possibility for vulnerable groups entering the virtuous circle and strengthen its effectiveness, or whether the opposite is achieved, by action or by omission. Assessing this, and making recommendations for change is the concern of the rest of this document.

2.2 Key working definitions

2.2.1 Education and schooling

It is necessary to *distinguish between education and schooling*. Traditional proverbs refer to '*elimu ni ufunguo wa maisha*' (education is the key to life) and '*maarifa ni ufunguo wa maisha*' (knowledge is the key to life) but not to, '*shule ni ufunguo wa maisha*' (schooling is the key to life). Perhaps this is because every generation has always managed to hand on to the next a range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that has been sufficient to ensure its survival. Especially before the 19th century, in Europe and East Africa, this was largely without the help of formalised schooling and examination systems. This is the understanding of education – a broad based lifelong process encompassing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values by which learners acquire what they need to function in, and contribute to, the society they live in. It includes 'traditional knowledge' and wisdom. It is a flexible creative process, in which all are potentially learners and all are potentially teachers.

Schooling and education are not interchangeable terms, and the relationship between them as conceptualised here is that schooling is a subset of education. Schooling is a smaller, institutionalised, and, in the main, government controlled, component of education, which takes place mainly in classrooms. Frequently it is caricatured by the 'jug and mug approach', which assumes the learner knows nothing and the teacher's job is to fill them with all the knowledge and understanding which has been defined by the schooling system as relevant and important.

A narrow focus on schooling risks ignoring the vital role of knowledge from elsewhere. As one elder in Bagamoyo complained during the research, 'schools are making them blind', meaning schools have broken down the process by which men passed on skills, knowledge and understanding to their sons, and women to their daughters.

⁴Hakikazi Catalyst (2002) Bouncing Back: Some grassroots responses to the PRSP, Concern, Dar es Salaam

Previous PPAs in Tanzania have not made the distinction between education and schooling, but rather have assumed that in talking with communities about the problems of schooling, they are addressing the issue of education. The focus of this PPA was on vulnerability, and participants were not asked directly for a definition of education, but the hints and echoes and suggestions which emerge from comments on schooling imply that there is a broader concept in people's understanding, which is not encompassed in much of current schooling, but is covered by the wider remit of education, and which needs to be addressed if vulnerability is to be reduced. Many of the most vulnerable in Tanzania are living in a context where, for various reasons broadly linked to the forces of 'modernisation', their broader educational needs are not being met in the way that they would have been in the past, and yet neither is the existing schooling system meeting the needs they identify for themselves.

A similar problem of definitions is in the implicit assumption that primary education equals basic education. In Tanzania, basic education encompasses pre-primary, primary, secondary, adult education and non-formal education. This broader definition reflects the range of individual and national learning needs and the national need for education as well as schooling. As adult educators know, adults cannot be 'schooled' in the way that children can (and nor can many children in difficult circumstances, such as street children). In short, schooling is not the same as education, and primary education is not the same as basic education. The importance of these points will be returned to shortly, in comparing the potential value of education with the actual value of primary schooling as expressed by research participants.

2.2.2 Appropriateness and relevance

Appropriateness and relevance were mentioned frequently in the research communities as being the connection between what is learned in primary schools and future life prospects. In Mwakizega (Kigoma Rural), neither parents nor children could see the value of primary schooling in terms of their future life prospects, and so did not value it. The Hadzabe in Mongo wa Mono (Mbulu) felt similarly that there was no connection between formal education and the lives they lead. On the other hand, where people do see a strong connection between education and life after school they are ready to invest. Recent research in Kilimanjaro found, for example, that secondary school is more highly valued than primary as *'Dalili ya matunda kuiva inaonekana'* ('the fruits of good education are visible') and in general parents are more willing to pay for secondary, than primary education.⁵

Respondents were clear in their use of relevance to mean a positive feature of education that would broaden their future life chances. We need to respect this conceptualisation of relevance, rather than implying a narrowly instrumental one which would seek to provide only as much schooling as is seen elsewhere as appropriate for future labourers or factory workers.

2.2.3 Outputs

Output refers not only to the formal qualifications obtainable, if any, from formal schooling, such as the Primary School Leaving Certificate, but also the other values and attitudes which a learner acquires during the course of the schooling. Besides the formally documented curriculum, schools also have a 'hidden curriculum'. These are the lessons that are picked up very readily by children even though they are not part of formal teaching. To quote from Nyerere, 'If the teacher fawns on visiting officials, and then treats a poor farmer as though he is dirt, the children will grow up believing that is the proper way to behave in

⁵ Maarifa ni Ufunguo (2003) Financing Education in Kilimanjaro: the story continues, page 20. More willing, but less able for reasons of cost.

our developing nation. It does not matter what the teacher says in civics classes or elsewhere; they will learn from what he does.’⁶ Other examples include, when a pupil with learning problems is verbally abused by other pupils and this action is not rebuked by the teacher, or when girl pupils are only asked the ‘easy questions’ and boy pupils the more demanding ones. Whilst in some cases, attitudes of resilience are fostered by these hardships; there is also the danger that a child’s sense of self worth may be damaged with implications for their future confidence and outlook on life, and hence also future vulnerability.

3.0 THE ROLE OF EDUCATION AS AN ASSET

The potential role of education as an asset in breaking cycles of vulnerability was recognised across almost all research sites. When people rejected this idea it was schooling, rather than education, which came in for criticism.

The value of assets can be understood in two ways. They can be:

- intrinsic, meaning that in itself the asset contributes to the sense of wellbeing
- or instrumental, meaning that its value is in what it enables you to access or obtain, whether in material terms or in terms of social capital or political voice.

From the PPA research, it is clear that people see education as both an intrinsic and an instrumental asset.

3.1 Education: its potential role

For many respondents education is seen as an intrinsic asset, which means that possession of it seems to give people a sense of wellbeing. Women in some pastoralist communities used it in this sense, suggesting that having education would in itself make them a better person, aside from its implications for social and political capital. Lack of education is also strongly correlated with a range of other problems and limitations. Participants in Mtambani B (Ilala) related it to low confidence and self-esteem. Lack of education elsewhere was equated with being timid and unable to speak out for example at public meetings. These intangible gains are integral to what people understand as being the potential value of education. This links strongly with the sense of education as a basic human right.

For others the value of education or schooling is as an instrumental asset. Its value lies in what it enables you to access, obtain and do. The kinds of things people see themselves as missing, in the points below relate to education in the broadest sense, including knowledge and information about policies, or farming methodologies, as well as skills of literacy and numeracy. They believe that schooling, by providing skills like literacy is a step in the desired direction.

- Respondents in Ilala said that without education you cannot access information about microfinance institutions.
- In Mwanza Municipal, fishermen protested that without education, they were ignorant about the amount payable to TRA, basic bookkeeping, as well as policies and regulations that affect them. They also noted their need for education in cooperative skills for working together to market their produce and to defend their common interests.

⁶ Nyerere J. K. (1966) The Power of Teachers speech delivered at Morogoro Teachers College.

- ❑ In Kwediboma (Handeni), it was said low education meant quite simply that you were unemployable. Moreover, those without formal education cannot access knowledge about new farming methods, as there is a tendency for agricultural extension officers to work with farmers who are already better off.
- ❑ Respondents in Kwabada (Muheza) associated lack of education with not having the initiative to learn or to follow advice. This reinforces the practice whereby, for example, agricultural extension workers tend to work with 'progressive' farmers, partly because they are more likely to respond, and partly because uneducated people find it harder to engage with educated outsiders.
- ❑ In Mkongo (Rufiji) it was argued that urban women are more educated than rural women so they get credit more easily than rural women. 'Due to low education women cannot access credits and also cannot run their development projects for example business' 'kutokana na elimu duni akina mama hushindwa kupata mikopo na pia kuendesha shughuli zao za maendeleo mfano biashara.'
- ❑ In Iwungilo, researchers were told small-scale miners without relevant skills or knowledge, work by trial and error. They fear making a big find and then being able to do nothing if companies or experts come in and take the benefit. They were concerned about their ignorance of legal protection, and laws concerning land ownership.
- ❑ In Iwungilo (Njombe), elderly women were complaining they cannot read instructions on medicines and fertilizers so they use them badly, and waste money, or damage their health.
- ❑ In some places the nature of education as an asset is gender specific: girls in Kasanda (Kibondo) felt that not being educated would mean that they would not be able to educate their own children; men equated it with a lack of life skills which was said to be as bad as being disabled.

Most of these examples show education as an asset to individuals and households, but it is also an investment in defending the community. In Twatwatwa (Kilosa), respondents saw this as the value of sending children for formal schooling, so that they acquired the skills and knowledge to defend the community from impoverishment whether from natural causes or unsympathetic policies. Respondents in many sites also identified the need for a 'voice' to cope with relations with people in authority, and in this sense education is instrumental in accessing political capital. Education was said to give people confidence to speak out at meetings and be listened to. Maasai women in Mwaru (Singida Rural) said they were disempowered by lack of education from speaking out at meetings. Participants from Mtambani B (Ilala) said 'a person can't develop without education, and they can't know their rights without education.' In Nkasi (Rukwa) lack of education was equated with the lack of accountability of school committees to the villagers. Research participants did not themselves elaborate whether the reason for this was lack of understanding of their roles and responsibilities on the part of the members of the school committees, or lack of willingness to carry them out, or unwillingness on the part of ordinary villagers to demand such accountability, or some other reason. However, in Ilala, lack of education was equated with less ability to deal with government bureaucracy.

Education is also instrumental in nurturing social capital. Sometimes this is more obvious in terms of informal education than in formal schooling. For example, in some Maasai communities, some children are selected to go for formal schooling while others are selected to stay home, where they become imbued with the culture and social structures of the tribe and the boma. By this means they acquire assets very different to those of the formally schooled child, but which have served the community for time immemorial. By implication there is also a sense that in some cases formal schooling can erode social capital.

The conflicts of culture between the prioritisation of different kinds of assets, and the way women and youth feel excluded in public meetings by lack of access to formal education is becoming

increasingly apparent, as also is the sense that some educated Maasai are poor representatives of Maasai culture in that they have become very individualistic.⁷ Poverty and vulnerability in the face of social and economic change are at the root of some of these conflicts, but access to and the nature of education is frequently where they are played out.

3.2 Schooling: the experience of education in practice

For many people the experience of schooling lives up to its potential. It is the life experience of many educated people reading this paper. It is the underlying principle of the 1995 Education Training Policy and its articulation into the current Primary Education Development Plan, and the fervent hope of the many of the parents who immediately enrolled their children in school as soon as the main burden of fees was removed in January 2002, and the many more who wished to do so.

However the actual experience of education as explained by most respondents in the PPA research fails to live up to the ideal. What they experience is much closer to what was defined earlier as "schooling," and this has devalued education in the eyes of those who can see a more immediate means of securing a livelihood. In Mongo wa Mono (Mbulu), respondents said "formal education is unimportant if one has adequate food." In Loiborsoit (Simanjiro) researchers noted that schooling seems largely irrelevant, as the whole community's orientation is around cattle, and vulnerability is defined as what happens when cattle get diseased. In Ndogowe (Dodoma Rural), pupils said that the curriculum only helps those who are intent on seeking formal sector employment. For those that do not, their counterparts out of school are better equipped for their future livelihoods, as they started learning the relevant skills earlier. In Mwakizega (Kigoma Rural) researchers were told that security of exam papers was never a problem as no one was sufficiently interested in passing them to bother to cheat: "Mitihani ya darasa la saba huku Ilagala haihitaji ulinzi" (Standard VII national examination papers here in Ilagala Division do not need any security). Similarly, the group secretary of an income generating group in Sokoni sub-ward, Kinondoni said, "it makes good economic sense therefore to send and/or let children work, rather than enrol them in school."

Thus, across livelihood groups, it would appear that existing formal schooling is marginal to the concerns of those whose prime focus is maintaining their livelihood and basic food security. If formal employment is seen to be an unimaginably distant possibility, people are unlikely to prioritise schooling against more immediate needs. The other intangible benefits of education are insufficiently important by comparison. However, research also highlighted that for research participants who were unable to pursue traditional means of securing their well being, such as where access to land or cattle was a problem, the value of schooling was heightened. This explains the anger of some young men in pastoralist communities when their fathers denied them schooling, as they felt this would diminish their future life chances because of their inability to communicate in Swahili.

For those who have not rejected the schooling process the major problems identified across the different research sites were these:

- The long distance to school

⁷ Comment from Loiborsoit

- ❑ Unconducive learning environments and lack of materials
- ❑ Inadequate quantity and quality of teachers
- ❑ Conflicts between livelihoods and culture and schooling
- ❑ Corporal Punishment
- ❑ Insufficiency of primary education
- ❑ Failure of schools to address the lack of "readiness to learn" for those from marginalized groups

Data does not allow the prioritisation of these different issues. In terms of livelihoods, most of the above problems are more evident in livelihoods based in more remote areas.

The complaints should not be interpreted as a denigration of the efforts to develop the education sector in recent years. Rather it should be appreciated that the research focussed on understanding vulnerability, which skews data towards the problems rather than the success stories of education. Nevertheless, the stories, which are told, are a reality for many Tanzanians, and sector reform will be immeasurably reinforced by taking on board the lessons and implications that became apparent during the research.

3.2.1 The long distance to school

In many research sites respondents complained about the long walking distance to school. This is not a new and unknown point. According to the HBS, households are furthest from primary schools in rural areas, with 8% of households being more than 6km from their nearest school.⁸ Distance has particular implications for children and adults with disabilities, most of whom, according to respondents, are illiterate. According to other sources this is because of the logistics involved in carrying a child who cannot walk well to a distant school.⁹ Distance to school is also a psychological issue with many Hadzabe, who reject boarding schools out of a wish to be closer to home and parents.

3.2.2 School environment not conducive to learning; lack of materials

Many research sites complained that there were too few classrooms, and that even the classrooms that were in the schools were in a very bad state of repair. Lack of sufficient classrooms also means that the existing ones are overcrowded. Head teachers were similarly articulate about their precise shortfall in textbooks by standard and by subject. The contrast between people's high hopes and expectations of education, and the practical reality and discomfort of actual schooling, whether for teachers or pupils, is very clear. There is no need to dwell in detail on this point. It is well recognised in current planning, and as PEDP implementation moves forward the situation is likely to be better now than at the time of the fieldwork.¹⁰

3.2.3 Inadequate quantity and quality of teachers

Many respondents were concerned about the numbers of teachers in the schools. Most single stream schools are still thinking in terms of one teacher per standard, regardless of the number of pupils in the higher classes, and many schools are overstretched due to the influx of pupils in January 2002. Again, planning processes are fully aware of these problems, and they are likely to be less acute now than at the time of the fieldwork.

⁸ HBS, July 2002, summary version, page 40

⁹ See also Kuleana (1999) Kuleana taking root: People's Perceptions of Child Rights, page 38

¹⁰ See for example, MOEC (DEDC) (July 2001) Primary Education Development Plan 2002 – 6; (July 2002) PEDP Implementation Stocktaking Report; (November 2002) Statement to Consultative Group Meeting, Dar es Salaam.

However, less well documented, and potentially on-going are problems with the quality of education such as these:

- Teachers' inability to deal with, or ignorance of, the special needs of some learners.
- An albino child with eyesight problems reported his need to be close to the blackboard. Owing to the lack of response from his teacher to his complaint, he had to rely on classmates to read out to him what they were writing so he could also make notes.
- Values or attitudes, which damage the learning experience and children's motivation.

These include:

- (i) The inability or unwillingness of teachers to challenge name calling and stigmatisation of children with disabilities (albino boy resident in Kwabada, Muheza);
- (ii) The failure of teachers to insist on all pupils making notes, even when their parents have provided them with pens and books (Kongo, Bagamoyo), or comments such as " Whether you work on the assignment or not, at the end of the month I get my salary." (Iwungilo, Njombe), both of which undermine the motivation of the pupils who want to work; and
- (iii) Imposing too much shamba work, most of which is basically unpaid labour, and which has very little to do with either self-reliance or agricultural science (Lutukira, Songea Rural), and means that agriculture becomes associated with boredom and/or punishment. Some of these problems are compounded by teachers staying in the same post for many years (Songea Rural), often without professional development, so they themselves eventually lose interest in their work.
- (iv) Unprofessional behaviour: Specific complaints about teacher behaviour included irresponsibility of teachers including drunkenness on duty after pay day (Chikwaya, Newala).

All of these have long-term implications for the future capacity of individuals and communities to combat impoverishing forces, if they fail to acquire necessary skills, and instead acquire a negative attitude towards schooling. In fairness to teachers, themselves change agents with huge potential, their motivation is frequently undermined by the poor quality of the teaching/learning environment, their working conditions, and the overload and stress they suffer on a daily basis. This overload has actually been increased by recent PEDP developments.¹¹ Some teachers themselves reported tiredness and low morale as a cause of low quality education.

Interestingly, complaints about teaching/learning methodologies do not come up as such. Possibly people who have a fairly low level of education themselves are less likely to be critics of the education or schooling process than they are of its perceived shortfall in beneficial outcomes (see below 3.2.7).

3.2.4 Conflicts between livelihoods and culture and access to schooling

School terms and academic years do not always fit well with other demands made on those children at school. An obvious case is the high levels of absenteeism during the planting season. Another more localised issue in Ikombe (Kyela), is girls needing to go to market on Fridays to sell pots, which help to cover the costs, including opportunity costs, of attending school. Cultural conflicts also arise. Girl children in Kongo (Bagamoyo), for example, said that girls often drop out at puberty because after they come out from confinement they are so far behind their colleagues that have remained in school that it is not worth trying to catch up. Unless initiation confers stronger benefits in terms of social capital, than formal schooling does in terms of skills and knowledge which will enhance future life chances, there is a risk that girls in this situation have de facto opted into the vicious circle, and that in future their vulnerability will be increased.

¹¹ Such as teaching 'double shifts' of students.

3.2.5 Corporal punishment

Pupils were particularly frequent critics of this. In Chunya (Mbeya), pupils said it discouraged them from coming to school. In Iwungilo (Njombe), they complained that it is unfair to use it on pupils for not understanding what is being taught. Other abuses like getting pupils to punish each other physically instead of the teacher doing it were also mentioned. Pupils in Mwakizega (Kigoma Rural) cited a particular fear of teachers who come to work drunk because they do not teach properly and beat children on a random basis. This has immediate implications for a child's sense of wellbeing, and promotes a situation when they opt out of formal schooling in order to maintain that wellbeing in the short term, but with possible long term damage to the skills and capacities they might have acquired in school. This is another example of their response option pushing them into the vicious circle of increased vulnerability. Whilst policy on corporal punishment is clear, it is also apparent that in many places it is not being enforced. There is also increasing evidence from organisations like UNICEF Tanzania, and Kuleana, that schools where corporal punishment is not practised often achieve overall higher levels of performance from their pupils.

3.2.6 Poor quality of primary education outcomes

Concern about this exists at the level of the individual learner, and at the level of the community. When schooling is not delivering the basic skills that will enable a child to combat impoverishing forces in the future, the outlook is poor. One participant from Pongwe had a particular concern, expressed like this: *"Mimi nashangaa watoto wanaomaliza la saba miandiko yao kama ya darasa la pili! Hawawezi hata kuongea Kiingereza. Sijui elimu ya Mtanzania inaenda wapi?"* I am very surprised that standard 7 leavers write like those in standard 2! Also they can't even speak English! I don't know where Tanzanian education is heading for".

As even the targets for raising the PSLE pass rate show, schools fail the vast majority of their pupils. Even with the success in raising the pass rate from 22% in 2000/01 to 28.6% in 2001/2, the target of a 50% pass rate by 2005 is a long way away. Even when reached, it will imply that half the children completing primary are being labelled as failures.¹²

Many individual failures combine into a collective community problem. Some schools have not had a pupil proceed to secondary education for many years, with damaging implications for overall levels of human capacity in the community. Attributing reasons for this is complicated. Participants in Maliwa (Makete) reported encouraging children to perform badly in exams for fear of them passing, being selected and the parents being forced to incur additional costs for secondary education, which they cannot bear, and for which they subsequently get into legal trouble when they are unable to pay the costs of secondary education. Nevertheless, in other communities, researchers picked up a sense of mass failure, creating a feeling of shame, and a lack of confidence in the community's own capacity to solve its own problems. In terms of the original conceptual framework, this reduces the response options open to that community in the face of impoverishing forces.

3.2.7 The insufficiency of primary education

Pupils reported being demotivated by knowing that primary education is insufficient to secure future employment or self-employment, while at the same time they have a very low expectation

¹² In mitigation of this, some 'failures' access private secondary schooling, and in the past secondary education successfully, but overall only about one fifth of children access secondary education at all.

of proceeding to secondary education.¹³ Parents in Ilala spoke of their fear of the costs of secondary education and asked to be assisted with it, explicitly because primary education is no longer enough. "Success" is largely seen as being achieved by those who graduate from further or higher education. It is observed in terms of capacity to cope with new ideas and live in a competitive environment, thinking analytically and creatively.

Many of those who end their schooling at primary, or even secondary level, are particularly disadvantaged as they have started the process of education, but not had the benefit of taking it to its conclusion. With only part of an education, they finish up dislocated, and no longer sharing the common values of their immediate community, while at the same time still lacking the skills and knowledge for employment/self-employment. Research participants saw that often they end up unable to use the assets they do have, and can become a liability in terms of propensity towards loitering and petty criminality, or worse.¹⁴ All this increases vulnerability at individual, household and community level.

3.2.8 Exclusion and stigmatisation

Respondents complained that children of poor people, and other vulnerable groups such as the disabled, suffer discrimination at school by both teachers and other pupils. In Iwungilo (Njombe), it was said that the impact of poverty on these children is obvious because they are poorly dressed and dirty. Sometimes they drop out because of lack of uniform and because they are hungry, especially in times of food shortage. Sometimes attendance is poor as pupils stay at home not wanting to risk missing out on whatever food there is there, particularly if there is not likely to be any food at school.¹⁵ They are said to lack confidence in speaking with other children, and become very timid, so that teachers see them as not very able. As they do not have enough basic equipment, they are used by teachers to carry out chores, but this also creates a negative relationship with the teachers, as the pupils feel exploited.¹⁶ Researchers found little evidence of individual teachers, or the schooling system, challenging this damaging situation for poor children and those from other marginalized groups.

3.3 Implications for groups who do not access adequate education

The PPA research highlighted that lack of access to education is a particular problem for certain vulnerable groups, because of the strength of the impoverishing forces they face. These forces operate here and now in the context of schooling, in the discrimination that diminishes their chances of fulfilling their potential in that context. However, quality education also has the potential to compensate them for other disadvantages they face. This challenge is particularly great, as it will have to prepare them also for the prejudices they will have to face beyond school in translating the skills and knowledge they have acquired into viable livelihoods. Hence, we cannot accept at face value the comments of some research participants that existing schooling is not relevant to them. The need is to ensure that the schooling meets their diverse needs. These groups include: poor children in general, orphans, girl children, those with disabilities, and communities without adequate human resources to drive their development.

¹³See also Maarifa op cit on this.

¹⁴ In Semtema A, in Iringa Urban, the community was concerned with this dislocation, manifested in youths selling drugs and commercial sex work.

¹⁵ In addition, in Manyoni, school-feeding programmes based on parental contributions had failed because the parents themselves were food insecure.

¹⁶ See also the comment of pupils in Bagamoyo about work on the school shamba, 'We work but who ultimately consumes?'

3.3.1 Children living in poverty

As described above, children living in poverty can have a very negative experience of education. In the face of this, dropping out and earning an income can be a much more attractive option. Even work on the fruit farms in Kwabada (Muheza) can bring 700/- a day, which was a clear incentive to pupils there. The problem here is the perpetuation of the cycles of poverty and vulnerability. Children working on the fruit farms are exposed to the dangers of cold and malaria as they sleep rough at night, damaging their immediate future income earning opportunities, as well as their longer term ones by not acquiring any marketable skills. This is a classic case of the response option of individuals or households pushing them in the long run into the vicious circle described in figure one, and ultimately into a poverty trap.

3.3.2 Girl children and women

Despite initiatives to ensure equality of access to schooling, there are still differences. Women in Loiborsoit (Simanjiro), asked if there was a difference between the enrolment of girls and boys, replied, "Of course!" and girl children are often also removed from school early to undergo initiation or out of fear of them becoming pregnant before marriage. Nevertheless, research participants prioritised the need for education. Women in Kwediboma (Handeni) said that later in life they do not have radios, or time to sit and listen to them, as they are too busy fetching water. Hence, if they are not exposed to new ideas at school they are unlikely to be later. They felt themselves ignorant about important issues that affect them, such as laws about inheritance. Women in pastoralist communities prioritised education more highly than men, arguably because without the other attributes of power, which would make them listened to in public meetings, education is seen as the key. Women living in polygamous relationships in Kwediboma felt themselves particularly vulnerable. First or second wives may get support from the husband but other wives need to be able to fend for themselves, and without the know-how to, for example, run a small business, they are very vulnerable.

Different access to and experience of education (including of the hidden curriculum) matters especially for girls as traditional gender stereotypes limit their livelihood options. If they are not exposed to means of meeting their strategic gender needs¹⁷ through primary education, they are unlikely to access the knowledge and understanding later in life, especially in the context of the current low level of adult education provision from government.

3.3.4 Orphans

The issue of orphans, especially AIDS orphans, is a serious and growing one. Current estimates are that there are more than 2.5 million AIDS orphans in Tanzania. Generally participants observed that it is a lower priority to send orphans to school than other "nuclear" family members. Orphans in Mwanza Municipal said it was an indicator of wealth for an orphan to be sent to school at all. The future implications of this bothered them, as without education you do not come into contact with people with modern ideas 'because of lacking confidence and not knowing how to contact them', a situation very like the experience of poor children in school.

¹⁷ Caroline Moser (1989) Gender Planning in the Third World, Meeting Practical and Strategic Gender Needs, World Development, vol. 17 no 11, page 1799 - 1825

However, it is more than just an issue of money. For orphans, access to education, which includes wider issues of values and guidance, is particularly important; non-orphans usually get such informal education from family members, but if an orphan fails to get it from school, they risk not getting it at all.

3.3.5 Children with disabilities

Let this small case study stand for many,¹⁸ since issues of disability will form the subject of a topical briefing paper in their own right. Sophia Athumani is a cripple with a bad leg. As a child her parents kept her from school for fear of the ridicule and bullying she would be exposed to if she went. Now she is the parent of two children, her husband has left her, and without education, she has neither the means to earn an income or to pay for the cost of medical treatment for her leg. In other words, by trying to help her escape stigmatisation from schooling, this woman was left disadvantaged in trying to secure her own livelihood.

This is by no means a unique case. The standard estimate for the number of disabled in a given population is 10%. Some would argue that in Tanzania the figure is likely to be lower because lack of access to adequate health provision is likely to result in early death. Others say that the figure is likely to be higher due to the impact of, for example, cerebral malaria, which is not felt in countries where health provision is better. The underlying point, however, is that the proportion of the population with some kind of disability, and hence generally some additional vulnerability is significant.

3.3.6 Communities with low levels of human capital

Some communities have had no child proceeding to secondary education for many years. An individual of failing PSLE can be a blow to self-esteem, but when this is magnified up to the level of a village or community, the impact is also felt at the level of collective and communal activities. In Kwediboma (Handeni), researchers were told "When parents are illiterate and children are also illiterate then there is no one to lead." Pupils in Iwungilo (Njombe) blamed traditional ways of thinking, particularly men's preference for polygamy, and their being the sole decision makers and household treasurers for denying some pupils access to schooling. In Ndogowe (Dodoma Rural), participants spoke of a vicious circle of poor school environment and lack of home support, so children do not acquire skills and overall the community remains backward.

It is not only an issue of skills, it is also the confidence in addressing matters of common concern. Institutions of local democracy, such as the village council, water and school committees themselves, require people who feel sufficiently empowered to take on the challenges they present. Where the schooling system has disempowered all but a minority who proceed to secondary, or who drop out and succeed without formal educational qualifications, making institutions of democracy work is a serious challenge. There are many communities who cannot find enough parents, especially women with form IV education, to serve on school committees, and there are many other places where either parents do not want to be too close to the teachers by serving on those committees, or do not feel able to demand simple information, let alone accountability from the representatives supposedly elected from amongst them.

3.4 Conclusion

Poverty, gender, orphan status, or disability already disadvantages a child and leaves him or her vulnerable to a range of impoverishing forces. This includes a reduced likelihood of accessing

¹⁸ See also, for example, Kuleana op cit pages 17, 21, 38, 49, 50, 53, 90

education, as well as the likelihood of facing additional discrimination as adults in securing employment or maintaining a livelihood. Education has the potential to level out these disadvantages, but only if the costs, (financial and otherwise) of becoming part of the 'virtuous circle' are not prohibitive, and if prejudices in the wider community are addressed.

It is particularly important that children from marginalised groups access education, since their access to other kinds of social, political, or other capital is likely to be weaker than that of their wealthier, non-orphaned, male, or able bodied peers. There is, again, a vicious circle in which lack of access to quality education is part of the process by which the poor and disempowered are, in practical terms, excluded from decision making about either the form or the content of education in their communities. Being able to influence this would help them to address their own problems of vulnerability.

In short, inability to access good quality education, and/or the experience of failure at schooling, is likely to have significant implications. The following section looks at what people's options are, when faced with poor quality or irrelevant schooling.

4.0 HOUSEHOLD RESPONSES TO POOR QUALITY OR IRRELEVANT SCHOOLING

4.1 Attempts to improve access or quality

4.1.1 Community construction and rehabilitation of schools

The past eighteen months have seen a flurry of activity in construction and rehabilitation of primary classrooms. According to figures presented to the Consultative Group in November 2002, 13, 868 classrooms had been built, in accordance with plans,¹⁹ many with high levels of community involvement. For many parents, this is an expression of their wish for their children to access good quality education. They may not, in the research data, comment on the teaching/learning methodologies to which their children are exposed, but they vote with their feet in terms of willingness to contribute to community labour.

An interesting question is why parents are willing to work in this way now. Community construction is by no means new, but in some villages, classrooms have been constructed to lintel height and then left unfinished for many years. What has changed recently is not community interest in education, but:

- funding, which means that resources are arriving at school level, through the capitation and development grants.
- governance structures, whereby at least in theory, school committees are more accountable than before to the wider community, in the context of village democracy.

These points have strong resonance with the conceptual framework. They are an example of how initiatives at national policy level can promote the virtuous circle of investment in education as a response option, by reducing the costs at household and community level of making this choice.

¹⁹ In fact, precise data are hard to come by, since classroom construction is still going on and in some districts the allocated sums have enabled much higher levels of construction, due to community participation in construction work.

4.1.2 Establishment of pre-schools in pastoralist areas

A number of pastoralist research sites reported the establishment of pre-primary schools. The function of these seems to be to improve performance, particularly in Swahili, in order for children to derive greater benefits from primary schooling. Another reason is that the pre-school is a response to the long distances involved in reaching a school located in a distant sub-village. Local leaders hope that these pre-primary schools will get upgraded into full school, with teachers provided by the government. Hence the initiation of a pre-school is the first step in a more ambitious project to bring formal schooling within easier physical reach.²⁰

These initiatives, and their rationale as conceived by the community, link up to the conceptual framework, in that establishing these schools is a collective community initiative which reduces the cost at household /individual or sub village level of pursuing the virtuous circle, and reduces the risk of the vicious circle of pulling children out of schooling.

4.1.3 Supplementing government education provision

This can be seen in the growth of community secondary schools, which can be seen as a community response to the inadequacy of primary education described in 3.2 above, and the insufficiency of places in government secondary schools. Community secondary schools are a collective community response to a commonly perceived problem, and government has responded, where possible, by providing teachers and equipment. This is an example of national policy supporting collective initiatives towards the virtuous circle.

4.1.4 Opting for private schooling

Private fee paying education, primary as well as secondary, is a response to perceived shortcomings in existing education provision. Demand for it can be seen in the mushrooming of English medium primary and secondary schools, some of which are of dubious legality and competence.²¹ This is not the place to argue a case for or against private education, but it is worth considering the way it fits into the conceptual framework of this paper: Is the private good of access to 'better quality' education the same as the public good of a common educational experience for all children?²² Does the policy of freeing up private education provision strengthen the virtuous circle of reduced vulnerability at an individual or household level? And does this add up to an overall picture of reduced vulnerability at national level.

Also worth considering is why English medium 'international schools' are mushrooming. Is it because parents feel that the type of education offered will prepare their children better for coping with the challenges – including impoverishing forces - of the 21st century? If so, their view implies that the existing primary schooling is an inadequate contribution to asset formation, and to being able to be part of the virtuous circle of reduced vulnerability. This could imply the need to examine closely what private schools are doing, and make this type of education available more widely. Alternatively, if opting for private schooling is mainly a symptom of the poor quality experienced in many government schools, as documented above, it is remediable by investment in the sector without serious review and re-conceptualisation of the content and process of the schooling offered. Assessing which of these is the case, is worthy of a study in its own right.

²⁰ Advice from Roundtable Discussion Dar es Salaam, 26th February 2003

²¹ See example press reports such as The Guardian, 7th February 2003 'The unsaintly non international schools' page 6. Also Lassibillie G and Jee-Peng Tan (1999) Are Private Schools more Efficient than Public Schools? Evidence from Tanzania. World Bank

²² See the example of J. K. Nyerere, (1970) 'Education for Self Reliance'

4.1.5 What communities are not doing

It is noticeable that there appear to be distinct limits to what parents and communities are able or willing to do collectively to address schooling problems. Children consistently identify abuse of corporal punishment as a reason for lack of enthusiasm for, or dropping out of, school. Teachers' drunkenness on duty is also identified. However, very rarely do these problems get addressed at the level of school committees. One Kilimanjaro parent, who felt her children were being bullied by other pupils at school, partly because she was a poor single parent, and that the teachers were allowing it to happen, just laughed at the idea that she could go to the school and complain. It was not even thinkable.²³ There is a growing body of evidence of the power of communities to have a very positive influence over their schools,²⁴ but where this is confined to financial contributions or local level financial management, without the empowerment and willingness to take on wider issues of accountability and social development, much potential is being lost, to the detriment of the future life chances of individuals and communities.

4.2 Further disengagement from schooling

Most of these responses are individual or household in the first instance, but when a critical number of people make the same response, it can be seen as adding up to a community response. However, it is different from the collective responses recorded in 4.1, which are about working together to bring positive change. These points have already been alluded to in describing the problems of schooling and their implications.

4.2.1 Attending but with little hope or expectation of benefit

This can be seen in many of the research sites, where expectations of education have been lowered, even to the point where lack of interest in the examinations has become common.²⁵ It tends to promote an attitude of resignation and indifference to the directions of people in authority, and it feeds into a negative attitude to education in general, and a suspicion of watalaam (those with qualifications), making it harder to break the cycle of poverty and vulnerability.

4.2.2 Reduced concern with primary schooling

One of the results of poor quality primary schooling has been to strengthen the focus on post-primary as the most likely source of the benefits that people look for in education. Prior to the abolition of school fees, one Moshi Rural village chairman advised, "A wise man is one who reduces his payments on education because others do not pay their contributions, and they are the ones whose children are very successful".²⁶

His advice was to save money for secondary and vocational education, where you would not be subsidising other people's children, and where as has been quoted earlier the 'The fruits can be seen'.

4.2.3 Ignoring the schooling system

Ignoring the schooling system manifests itself in not enrolling in school, or enrolling but not attending, or moving away from the area. In Twatwatwa (Kilosa), this behaviour was so common that eventually

²³ Maarifa op cit page 18

²⁴ See for example, Africa Region Human Development (2001) Community Support for Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. World Bank, Working Paper Series.

²⁵ See Mwakizega above, 3.2

²⁶ Maarifa (2001) Cost Sharing: A case Study of Education in Kilimanjaro, page 24

the school was closed down. In Songea Rural, where there is a problem with households moving out of reach of the school, elders were heard to comment that if you haven't been to school yourself, you do not see the point of sending your own children there. The result of this is a lost opportunity for individuals, households and communities to be systematically exposed to new influences, or be given the opportunity to reflect on those influences. Traditional values and attitudes are more likely to be reinforced as a response option, as opposed to response options that have greater resonance with the shocks, stresses and opportunities of life in the 21st century.

4.3 Conclusion

Households and communities choose between options of either further disengaging from the education or schooling that is on offer, or attempting to improve the access to and quality of that education. The former is usually connected with the vicious circle and the latter to strengthening the virtuous one. It is very hard to disaggregate these responses by livelihood group. In so far as a pattern emerges, it is that:

- ❑ People who opt to invest are those who can afford to wait for the return, and by and large, they are not the poorest in any community.
- ❑ Where the pull of the home, community, and a different set of values, often towards informal education, is strong, rejecting poor quality schooling is more likely.
- ❑ Where the parents have never seen the benefits of education, they are less likely to prioritise it for their children. This is an issue of role models.

This connects back to the vicious circle of the original conceptual framework, and the risk that adults with low levels of education themselves will not wish to, or perhaps be unable to invest in the education of their children.

What does this imply for government priorities in terms of education as a priority sector as expressed in the Poverty Reduction Strategy?

5.0 GOVERNMENT EDUCATION PRIORITIES UNDER THE POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY (PRS)

5.1 The relevance of much of the existing focus

The PRS focuses efforts on reducing income poverty, improving human capabilities, survival and social well being and limiting the extent of extreme vulnerability amongst the very poor. Couched in the broadest terms, the relevance of education to improving human capabilities is clear. According to the PRS, government priorities for the education sector are as follows: ²⁷

- ❑ School mapping carried out in two thirds of districts
- ❑ Enrolment expansion: Gross Enrolment Rate to 85%, and Net Enrolment Rate to 70% - both well exceeded
- ❑ Transition from primary education to secondary increased
- ❑ Capacity building of education personnel
- ❑ Recruitment and deployment of more Grade A teachers
- ❑ Teacher upgrading through in-service and pre-service courses.
- ❑ Raising the pass rate of the Primary School Leaving Examination
- ❑ Construction of classrooms and teachers houses

²⁷ Further details can be found in URT (2002) Poverty Reduction Strategy Progress Report 2001/2

It can readily be seen that many of the concerns raised earlier about the limitations to accessing education as an asset will be addressed by these initiatives, once implemented. However, it can also be seen that PRS targets alone reflect a bias towards a 'count, cost, carry' approach to service provision. The priority is towards those components that can be readily counted, costed and delivered to the school site – such as classrooms, teachers and books. Earlier discussion argued that there is significantly more to education than this – as is indicated by the high expectations people have of the potential of education, as both an intrinsic and an instrumental asset. Classrooms, teachers and books are at best outputs, which contribute to a more conducive learning environment, but the link between that and people's expectations of education and reduced vulnerability to poverty is indirect. In Mkongo Kaskazini (Rufiji) the school facilities were found to be very good, but progression to secondary very low, with a high number of dropouts due to pregnancy, which pupils said had the effect of demotivating those who were left. This would suggest that current targets and indicators for the PRS do not adequately highlight the potentially positive relationship between schooling, education and wider development concerns, including poverty reduction. Their focus is rather on monitoring purchases for the sector.

It would be unfair to comment on the education sector in terms of the PRS alone, since the Primary Education Development Programme has been elaborated to operationalise those targets, as well as to be consistent with Education and Training Policy, EFA commitments, Vision 2025, and the overall sector development programme.²⁸ As PEDP developed, it was never envisaged as a complete and perfect plan. It was seen as a sound enough basis on which to begin work, and that as the plan period proceeds, new components would be elaborated. The first part of the plan was very much focussed on quantitative aspects – enrolment expansion to incorporate the approximately 3 million children out of school, and ensuring that there were adequate classrooms, teachers and teaching/learning materials to accommodate them. All of these required high levels of financing and also of officer time across the key ministries to bring them into operation. It was acknowledged that the 'quality aspects' would be incorporated in the course of time, and it has to be noted that the fieldwork of the PPA was carried out between March and July 2002, when the surge in enrolment was being experienced, with all its attendant problems, but the quality improvements were not always visible.

A stronger focus on quality is now happening, with a number of recent studies relating to quality incorporated into a succinct document 'Strategies for the Improvement of Quality of Primary Education: a Review Report',²⁹ other priority areas such as Non-Formal Education, including MEMKWA provision for children out of school, are in the process of being elaborated and approved. The urgent need for school committee capacity development – long in the hands of DBSPE and NGOs – and originally budgeted for under PEDP, is now being operationalised.

This on-going progress is exciting, because if adequately funded and implemented, it will address many of the concerns being raised by the researched communities who contributed to the PPA, and documented in 3.2 above. This is, however, a big caveat. As communities involved in KIHACHA have said: 'A policy which is not implemented is not a policy; a policy which is not funded is not a policy'.³⁰ Similarly, as was said in the CG meeting, in December 2003, 'the poor cannot eat policies'; there is a need to move on towards effective implementation.

²⁸ See MOEC (BEDC) (2001) Education Sector Development Programme, Primary Education Development Plan 2002 – 2006, page 2 - 3

²⁹ MOEC (2003), incorporating studies into: Primary education curriculum design and content, pre-service teacher education and training, continuous professional development, student assessment and examinations, educational monitoring and support mechanisms, sustainable provision of educational materials.

³⁰ Contribution from Round Table Discussion, Dar es Salaam, 26th February 2003.

5.2 On-going challenges

The recent developments and proposed developments for the sector are vital, since they have the potential to take the service beyond narrowly defined schooling and into the broader scope of real education. As the quality report says, PEDP resources will be wasted without an improvement in quality because:

- The resources invested will not have been translated into learning outcomes, which is the ultimate aim of education.
- the adults of tomorrow, who are today's pupils, will not have acquired the basic and essential tools for their survival and prosperity.
- the social and private returns to education such as externalities pertaining to economic productivity and improved wages will not have been gained'.³¹

The voices from community level need to be listened to carefully, however. Their common sense about the requirements for education, reinforce elements of the current direction of education planning. They also suggest ways in which it can be enhanced to support individual and community efforts to reduce vulnerability. These voices and priorities are the focus of the next section, and they suggest that future planning, implementation and monitoring should be based on dialogue with stakeholders at the grassroots level.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: COMPLEMENTING PEOPLE'S EFFORTS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION AND SCHOOLING

Much that is already going on and planned, and/or which has come to fruition since the PPA fieldwork was done is already positive. The need is to continue to identify those activities of national and local policy which reduce the costs and increase the benefits for households and communities of struggling to be part of the virtuous circle, in which education is a tool in combating impoverishing forces, rather than the vicious one which compounds them.

These recommendations come from two main sources. The first is directly from the research participants themselves, who took the opportunity to make specific and direct recommendations. The second is from two roundtable discussions, one in Arusha, and one in Dar, which took place in the course of drafting this paper. These brought together government and civil society experts to reflect on the findings of the fieldwork. Hence, these recommendations are included in the text here, partly as research findings, and partly with wider elaborations to highlight the justification for them.

Whilst some of the necessary actions relate specifically to the education sector, others relate more broadly to concerns of governance and accountability. This is not surprising. Poor governance is clearly articulated in the main PPA report as an impoverishing force, and addressing questions of poverty and vulnerability very definitely require initiatives reaching beyond the confines of any one 'priority sector' into cross-sectoral concerns.

Key components could include the following:

³¹ MOEC (2003) op cit page 4 - 5

6.1 Access: ensuring sufficient places for learning close to communities from which the students come

The issue of distance to school was brought up earlier and it is a particular concern of pastoralist communities where distances are immense. National policies need to support local initiatives like the pre-schools cum nascent primary schools mentioned earlier, so that communities can access education at a lower cost in terms of time and energy which could be spent on other things. Parents in Mwaru (Singida Rural), for example, get up at 5am to walk their children to school and protect them from wild animals on the way.

Many children are enrolled in school, but do not attend for lack of physical space in class. Community led building initiatives must be supported to provide places as quickly as possible.

Over-age children were excluded from the benefits of the first year of PEDP, because of a lack of a MEMKWA programme. This is a vital priority and is now coming on-stream. Those who failed to enrol at the correct age were frequently those whose parents could not afford to enrol them under the 'cost sharing' regime. In other words, they were already vulnerable because of poverty. Without ignoring the on-going contribution of civil society organisations, and the policy priority to develop a fully fledged non-formal education strategy, it is vital that this initial vulnerability is not compounded by a slow start to alternative provision, or by it being an alternative that is hard to access, or that fails to recognise their particular learning needs. To do so would be an implicit push towards the vicious circle for already vulnerable children and young people.

6.2 Enabling schools to compensate for the lack of "readiness to learn"

Children do not enter school on day one of standard one with equal likelihood of 'future success' measured in terms of passing PSLE and proceeding to secondary school. Children who are chronically unhealthy, or lack adequate nutrition, mainly those from poor households, already have the chances stacked against them. Similarly children who have lacked essential mental stimulation during their first three years of life find the demands of schooling difficult to meet. Schools show themselves in many respects unable to deal with lack of 'readiness to learn' on the part of many of their pupils, and in this sense they are not ready for the range of children that arrive in school.

If they were, it would have the effect of 'levelling the playing field' and compensating children from already disadvantaged households, which is what is part of what is needed to break the cycle of vulnerability. In education, as in development work more generally, it is necessary to start with where the 'beneficiaries' are, not with where some outside definition expects them to be. Nutrition programmes (school feeding), access to health care, and early childhood provision, including pre-schools all contribute to this process of making children ready for schools, and also schools ready for children. Their potential importance is not underestimated at community level. In Mwaru (Singida Rural), the pre-school was rated as only second in importance to the posho mill in the village on the grounds that it had raised awareness within the community of the importance of sending children to school.

In terms of promoting 'readiness to learn', distinguishing between pre-schools and the broader approach of early childhood care and development (ECCD) is critical. Pre-schools are a MOEC responsibility and target only 5-6 year olds. ECCD is based on the well-established principle that the early years, between birth and seven can be critical to the development and future of the child. Ensuring that survival, protection and development needs are met (including basic nutrition, health, welfare, early learning and so on), assists in addressing the imbalances in access and

achievement in later formal education.³² This approach is in line with the first Education for All (EFA) goal, established at the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000. An exclusive focus on the activities of one ministry, through for example pre-schools, risks making that goal less rather than more reachable.³³

6.3 Improved content of schooling

6.3.1 Skills

The first and foremost are basic literacy and numeracy. Whilst not ignoring the value of traditional knowledge about agriculture and pastoralism, marginalized groups in the research focussed on the need to acquire direct vocational skills, such as improved farming methods out of their primary schooling. In the absence of adult education, or sufficiently comprehensive agricultural extension services, if they do not acquire such skills at school, it is unlikely that they will acquire them later.

Many sources³⁴ also prioritise the need for acquiring through school, capacities for critical, analytic, creative thinking, and problem solving skills. Again, if they are not acquired through schooling, it is not obvious where the impoverished farmers of Kwabada, for example, are going to learn how to take the initiative, or how to engage as critical partners in thinking about the advice they are given with a view to breaking out of the vicious circle of vulnerability. Instead, it is more likely that their traditional response options, uninformed by more modern knowledge and information, will be uncritically reinforced.

Of serious concern is the focus on raising existing pass rates (see the PRS targets cited above) and increasing secondary enrolment. The risk is that they reinforce the existing approach to primary education which focuses on selecting children to secondary through a norm referenced examination,³⁵ rather than focussing on providing learners with what they are articulating as their skill requirements. The emphasis on *elimu ya kujitegemea* (education for self reliance) fitting into 40 minute periods³⁶ is valid if the aim is to reduce the amount of labour time on school *shambas* (see above 3.2.3), and provide more time for other learning, but if the need is for access to information and practical skills about modern farming methods, another approach may prove more useful. It may also be a greater incentive for households to enrol their children in school, as it raises the opportunity cost of having them out of school, and makes the vicious circle of withdrawal or drop out from school less attractive. It should not be interpreted that 'skills education' defines relevance as being limited to making farmers better farmers. The methodologies of teaching agricultural science can in themselves promote problem solving and critical thinking – skills that can then be transferred to other curriculum areas, including at the level of secondary education.

³² Evans Judith L, R G Myers and M Iifelf (1993) *Early Childhood Counts; A Programming Guide on Early Childhood Care for Development* World Bank: Washington D.C., WBI Learning Resources Series.

³³ It is worth observing that there is a difference between pre-schools as community initiatives and get a full primary school as mentioned in 4.1 – which are not at root about early learning – and the need for ECD.

³⁴ For example, MOEC (2003) op cit pages 5 – 9; TEN/MET (2002) NGO statement on education, to Consultative Group Meeting, Dar es Salaam, 2 – 5 December 2002.

³⁵ For example in Kwabada participants said 'the job of the teacher is to make students pass; not passing is like sowing without harvesting' 'kazi ya walimu ni kufaulisha watoto. Usipofaulisha ni sawa na kulima bila kuvuna'

³⁶ As an ordinary subject amongst others on the curriculum

6.3.2 Quality and relevance: knowledge related to daily life

For the foreseeable future, primary education will be ‘terminal’ – that is the most that most children will ever receive. What constitutes relevant, quality education in these circumstances? The policy of ‘Education for Self-Reliance’ tried to rise to this challenge, facing the fact that most children would not become future doctors or engineers, but still required an education which would prepare them to actively improve their livelihoods and future options. *Elimu ya kujitegemea*, focused on valuing manual labour and developing skills in modern agriculture. Many Tanzanians are still not yet seeing the benefits of the globalised economy, and more needs to be done through primary schooling to help all pupils, whether proceeding to secondary school or not, acquire skills relevant to the rapidly accelerating rate of change of the modern world.³⁷ To fail to do so leaves them more vulnerable than in the past when the forces of modernisation did not reach so comprehensively into every aspect of daily life. In the face of this situation, some already marginalised groups are additionally vulnerable if they fail to access adequate education.

It was observed earlier that education is an asset, which is instrumental in achieving access to other desired goods. In the absence of sufficient, systematic and comprehensive access to information and knowledge related to daily life from other sources, the main place where the majority of the population can be so exposed, is through their schools. Specific areas, which were mentioned by participants in the course of the research, included legal awareness, family planning, HIV/AIDS education, cooperative education (to help with marketing), and environmental education (to keep places clean and healthy), and financial expertise. In several places people were requesting specific information about particular government policies, as well as a need for understanding policy-making processes. For example, in Mwanza, improved training and education, the integration of environmental protection and community participation are all part of the plan for fisheries sector development, but most ordinary people do not know about it.

Incorporating material such as this into school curricula may be an initial challenge, but it would certainly be an incentive to enrolment. At the district feedback meeting in Tarime, it was said, ‘the current syllabi are designed to channel every pupil to eventually become a doctor or an engineer, yet not all make it to the university. More than 80% of those completing primary school do not proceed, and these should have a syllabus that is appropriate to them, to enable them to reduce poverty. For example, the syllabus of our neighbours (Kenya) shows that from class four, they cover financial management related issues including how to deal with financial institutions that provide credit. For those who do not proceed with secondary education, this informs them of what financial institutions to approach for credit that enables them to become self-reliant.

It is also a clearly articulated community need, which highlights the need for adult education to be revived, shifting sector development from its current focus on primary education to more broad based basic education. This needs to be constructed not only in terms of ‘pure’ adult literacy, de-linked from concerns about improving livelihoods, as such a connection promotes sustainability.

Not appreciating this was one of the problems with the adult literacy programmes of the 1970s. Positive new initiatives, such as the ICBAE pilots, are more broadly integrated with information dissemination, extension and outreach services of various ministries, including promoting income generation and agricultural extension, helping to make the classes financially self sustaining, rather than wholly donor dependant. Citizen needs for information about public policy and policy processes, combined with feedback mechanisms so that people can inform decision makers about

³⁷ Phillip Schlechty (1990) *Schools for the 21st Century*, Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco

how/whether policies are working, is also a priority.³⁸ Such mechanisms would also contribute to the process of capacity building, promotion of participation and accountability. Participation is both a skill and a value, and will be returned to below under 'promoting accountable governance structures' (6.4) Values such as these are an important component of what can be acquired through education in its broadest sense.

6.3.3 Values acquired through education: hope and optimism

The main PPA report is clear about the importance of hope, as opposed to hopelessness, as a characteristic that extends people's range of possible response options.³⁹ This can come from vulnerable people feeling there are more powerful collective forces trying to assist them in their struggles. Even for those running the education sector as a whole it has recently been said 'optimism will be critical in our way forward'.⁴⁰

The current schooling system does not promote such optimism. Even despite the PEDP target of raising the pass rates, the system fails the vast majority of its pupils. Demotivated teachers and the negative learning experiences of many poor pupils, girls, and children with disabilities, have already been mentioned. The PSLE is norm referenced,⁴¹ and sets out to fail those who do not meet the cut off point for accessing secondary education. In terms of promoting a sense of optimism, criterion referencing would be preferable.⁴² The latter would enable all children to graduate from school with a certificate showing the things they can do, rather than with the knowledge that they have not proved good enough to go to secondary school. It is necessary to support a system that rewards learners for what they can do, including solving problems and thinking critically, rather than damaging their optimism and confidence because of what they cannot.

Bringing the school and the community closer - positive attitudes towards accommodating change: Accommodating change is required at all levels of society,⁴³ but for some communities the tension between the values of home and of school is more acute than others. Often schools fail to address these cultural tensions, or uncritically promote 'modern' practices without appreciating the perspective of the learners and their communities.⁴⁴ The Rufiji example of good school buildings but low progression to secondary schooling because of dropouts due to pregnancy is an example of the way modern schooling can sometimes fail to connect with the dynamics of the community in which it is situated. Similarly the Bagamoyo elder who complained 'schools are making the students blind', is not likely to prioritise the schooling of his children and grandchildren, and is more likely to promote traditional response options to all challenges, out of ignorance of other possibilities. The need is for schools to work within the communities in which they are situated to help accommodate change processes so that people are making an informed choice between, for example, the respective benefits of traditional and

³⁸ As can be seen in the responses provided to Hakikazi Catalyst to their 'Ten Tough Questions' at the end of the 'Tanzania Without Poverty' booklet which provides a simple language guide to the PRS.

³⁹ Reference – insert reference from main report when final draft is available

⁴⁰ MOEC op cit page 5

⁴¹ MOEC (2003) Strategies for the Improvement of Quality of Primary Education, page 39

⁴² Criterion referencing assesses children against particular skills and knowledge they are meant to have acquired. In theory you could get a 100% pass rate. With norm referencing a benchmark (norm) is established and those above it are defined as passing or achieving a certain grade – the skill levels of that norm are not as important as passing the prescribed percentage of children.

⁴³ See for example, Daily news 1st March 2003, front page, Presidential appeal to look at the national economy in a fresh way in order to engage with the challenges of globalization

⁴⁴ See for example, Kuleana op cit page 73; teachers in one village were forbidding children from attending ngoma dances, but not 'madisko', in the face of the feeling of the elders of the community that the former were more acceptable.

modern medicine, or the type of fishing gear likely to provide sustainable improvements in the catch.

Where the psychological, social and cultural distance to school is short, parents are more likely to enrol their children, and adult learners more likely to seek to participate. The education on offer must make the virtuous circle a relatively easy response option, rather than being akin to conversion to a different way of thinking.⁴⁵ Specific examples of what this might mean could be:

- Inclusion of animal husbandry in the curriculum to attract out of school children like those in Nzanza (Meatu) who said 'even if you have cattle, without education you can lose them.
- Use of TBAs, or other respected women from the community in family life education for girls, so that elders in a community are comfortable that school is not teaching pupils inappropriately.

Cooperation: In Kwabada (Muheza), respondents complained that those who had done well in business refused to share information about market opportunities or charged 100% interest on loans. Fishermen in Mwanza Municipal specifically noted that their inability to collaborate and work together left them collectively more vulnerable to poverty. Skills of cooperative practice are not only taught in formal lessons, they are part of the hidden curriculum messages that come across to pupils. Current teaching learning methodologies rarely promote collaborative learning. Rather, the schooling system promotes competition for secondary school places and the success of a small number of individual pupils whilst the rest leave as failures.

Participation: There is a rich literature on child participation, which suggests that participation is a skill that has to be learned; it is not innate.⁴⁶ Since so much development work is premised on the basis of community participation, it would be desirable for children to be learning the skills of participating and contributing to the wider good whilst at school. Unfortunately, in some cases, pupils are similarly taught negative lessons about participation. Pupils in formal schooling are rarely given any say over what they learn and how. They are rarely allowed to participate in decision making about school spending priorities, and if they are given places in school committees, they most often sit in silence and their voices are not heard.⁴⁷ The issue of participation will be returned to shortly in terms of accountable governance, both within the sector, and for poverty reduction initiatives more generally.

Use of Power: Some hidden curriculum messages about the use and abuse of power are also negative. In Newala, there were complaints about teachers getting pupils to beat each other, rather than the teacher doing it. This was said to be causing enmity amongst the pupils as well as truancy, and the hidden curriculum message is likely to be about the lack of accountability of those who abuse their positions of authority. Pupils in Bagamoyo disliked the fact that only the prefect received a reward (exercise books) when all pupils had been involved in cultivating the teachers' shamba. Some boys had reached such a point of resentment over the use of power, that they were refusing to work on teachers' shambas, saying 'While we work, who ultimately consumes?'

⁴⁵ Cf. village government in Budutu who spoke of 'elimu jadi' and 'elimu darasani' as two different ways of bringing up children kuleana op cit page 39

⁴⁶ See for example amongst many others: Flekkoy and Kaufman N (1997) *The Participation Rights of the Child: Rights and Responsibilities in Family and Society*

⁴⁷ See for example, TEN/MET workshop report, 'School Committee Capacity Development' April 2002.

Equal opportunities and rights: As has been noted earlier, the experience of schooling of some children is very negative. Children from poor families, and children with disabilities are frequently on the receiving end of prejudice and name calling, which, as teachers do not challenge it, is tacitly being endorsed.⁴⁸ The vital importance of access to education for children from already marginalized groups has already been argued, on the grounds that they are less likely also to acquire alternative assets.

6.4 Ensuring quality

6.4.1 Quality assurance

The quality report cited above is optimistic that whilst it is true that some standard 7 students have barely acquired necessary skills, there are others who are doing very well, even compared to other SADC countries.⁴⁹ Presumably, then the issue is quality control in the sector⁵⁰ to ensure that major inequities in access to quality are ironed out. Some people are working extremely hard to access education for their children – such as the Mwaru (Singida Rural) parents who get up at 5 am to walk them to school. Another case is that of an albino boy in Kwabada (Muheza) who missed 5 months of schooling due to sicknesses related to his condition. However, he managed to copy from his classmates all the notes he had missed, and still came 4th in the end of standard 3 exams. It is of little consolation to people such as these to know that others are doing very well out of the education service. If people who work as hard as this to acquire formal education finish up not seeing its benefits, because the quality of what is being offered in their school will not enable them to acquire the skills, knowledge and values they prioritise, it will send a very negative message to others less well motivated in those communities.

Failure to prioritise quality assurance, or to fund it adequately, is also an implicit choice which reinforces the vicious circle, as only a minority have the possibility of opting for private education. It is being increasingly widely recognised that communities, under the right circumstances, can play a positive role in promoting the quality of education.⁵¹ Accountable governance structures are a key part of this, as is an active presence and support from the inspectorate to reinforce the process of schools listening to parental and community concerns.

6.4.2 Promoting accountable governance structures at community level

Accountable governance structures depend on community participation. The theory behind this is that when ordinary people are brought into decision making circles, the decisions made are more likely to be supportive of communities' own initiatives for coping with stresses and shocks, including the stress of poor quality and/or under funded education. This has vital implications for reducing vulnerability. When participation is limited, and communication flow is top down, with minimal feedback, communities often respond to directives with little understanding. An example of this is in Kibondo, where in line with directives, pre-schools have been set up but without adequate preparation, so only volunteers are available, and there is not a solid understanding of the potential of pre-school education and ECCD. When there is strong communication, a clear feedback mechanism, and the information flow is pro-active from the

⁴⁸ See also Maarifa (2003) op cit page 52

⁴⁹ MOEC (2003) page 5

⁵⁰ *ibid* page 44 – the inspectorate service is short of one third of its complement of inspectors, works with inadequate funding, in-service training, offices and equipment and even indicators to monitor the quality of what they are doing.

⁵¹ See for example, Africa Region Human Development (2001) Community Support for Basic Education in Sub-Saharan Africa World Bank, Working Paper Series

bottom up, there is more chance of policy decisions being made which reinforce communities' own positive initiatives. This increases communities' own resilience to shocks and stresses and has the additional benefit of increasing people's sense of confidence and optimism, and the sense of being able to make a difference to decisions about their daily lives, creating a virtuous circle in its own right.

Current education programmes have the seeds of being able to create this positive relationship between community priorities and national policy. A key underlying issue is information flow, so that people know about and understand policies rather than seeing them as just handed down from on high. Whilst welcoming the cutting of school fees, respondents in some communities were confused by the swing between free education of the 1970s, cost sharing of the 80s and 90s, and now a return to 'free education'. Similar confusion existed at the time of the research about the age of enrolment and provision for MEMKWA.

A major contributing factor to communities' willingness to participate in local governance of education, is a feeling that it is genuinely accountable and makes real decisions. The current PEDP cites 'ownership' of the school at community level, and school committees have more power than in the past to make decisions about their local school. The current situation in which schools have bank accounts and are responsible for accounting for development and capitation grants is a big step in the right direction.

This has implications for the role of school committees and the type of training or capacity development that they receive. A careful balance must be maintained between ensuring that committee members can follow correct procurement and accounting procedures for public money, and giving them the freedom and flexibility in their activities, including spending priorities, for school committees to respond to locally articulated needs and priorities, and for school and community to be brought closer together. If the level of participation is only about ratifying that spending decisions are in line with guidelines, a very low level of participation is all that can be expected.⁵²

School committees also need support in promoting the processes of local democracy and their responsibility to be accountable to the wider community. There is currently evidence that the poorest and most marginalized do not participate in school committees because they have not acquired the voice and confidence to ask to be appointed to such committees. Again, the danger here is that their voices will not be heard, and that decisions will be made about local levels of contributions to (for example) school feeding, which will be beyond the poorest households. If this happens, then the chances of local decision-making supporting the resilience of the poorest households will be weakened, and the risk of them not being able to escape the vicious circle will be heightened.

Decision making at the lowest relevant level does not only refer to village level. Its need is also felt at district level. This is the principle of subsidiarity, which underlies local government reform. Respondents in Mwanza, saw district officials just as implementers in a process of top down planning. They may not even know if what they are doing has a negative impact on the poor and vulnerable or not. This lack of local accountability promotes ineffective policy formulation and implementation and argues for the need for a proper feedback mechanism in the process of formulation and monitoring of policy.

⁵² The current regulations, for example are 33%, general costs such as pens, chalk etc, 33% classroom rehabilitation, 17% office and administration costs, 17% examinations. TEN/MET op cit, suggests that this unduly limits the capacity of school committees to respond to locally articulated priorities.

6.5 Financing of the education sector

Abolishing cost sharing in primary education was a massive assistance to many poor families. However, the problem has not been solved. In Ilala, parents claimed at the time of the fieldwork that they are now paying more than before. In Iwungilo (Njombe), parents are expected to pay 1500/- in education tax which is payable in addition to the development levy. If they fail, they are arrested and have to pay an arrest fee of 2000/-, a night watchman fee of 2000/- and bail of 5000/- (all without receipts), all of which leads to greater impoverishment. A young research participant in Sentema (Iringa) told researchers how tax collectors had come to his house and collected money which was set aside for meeting basic needs. Without the money he was unable to pay for a school uniform, unable to pay compulsory school contributions, and eventually had to drop out of school.

These anecdotes raise an important policy issue: How to finance the sector sustainably without donor dependence and without obligatory community contributions? As was argued earlier, vital adult education programmes of the 1960s and 70s died when donor support was withdrawn. It is neither realistic nor sustainable to recommend on-going donor support. District officials in Mwanza expressed concern that there is now 14m/- available in Mwanza to help the poor and orphans, but the number of applicants continues to increase, leading them to fear that willingness on the part of inhabitants to solve their own problems will diminish in favour of dependence on donors, whether from inside or outside the country.

On the other hand, the spirit of voluntarism is a delicate flower, easily damaged by compulsion. If contributions cease to be voluntary, and the value of community contributions of time and labour are 'assumed' in the calculation of the unit cost of, for example, classroom construction across the country, the net effect will be to widen the gap between educationally motivated communities and those who are yet to be persuaded of the value of education. This is because it raises the cost of community initiatives towards the virtuous circle, and makes it more likely that individual marginal households will be forced into disinvesting from education, pushing them into the vicious circle of increasing vulnerability.

It will also encourage the attitude of the Kilimanjaro village chairman, cited earlier, who was tired of his contributions subsidising people unwilling or unable to pay, and his preference for opting out of government primary schooling. The advice of this village chairman connects directly with the conceptual framework: whilst what he says may be sound from the point of view of an individual or household, it is much less obviously helpful in terms of reducing overall vulnerability at community or even national level. The risk is that it widens the gap between the vicious and the virtuous circles as potential response options - those who are educationally motivated and those who do not see the value of existing schooling, and one way or another opt out of it.

Flexible policy responses are needed at national level which promote self-help and self-reliance in communities already convinced of the value of education, as with the growth of community secondary schools, at the same time as supporting communities where a critical mass of the population do not see the value in the formal schooling on offer. These flexible responses to financing basic services have to take into account the range of contributions people are paying. In Same, respondents complained that planners seemed not to realise that they were contributing to several different projects in different sectors at the same time, a very heavy financial burden for them.

Large families continue to be faced with a bigger burden than those with smaller families, and support is necessary to ensure that the child is not disadvantaged by the parents' preference for a

large number of children, or the fact that de facto family size can be increased when an orphan is accepted into the household of an extended family member.

6.6 Indicators of success for the education sector

With so much funding coming into the sector at present, it is vital to be able to measure whether it is achieving what the plans have set out to do. Measures do exist: most obviously they concern enrolment and completion rates.⁵³ Enrolment can be seen as a proxy for people's general estimation of the value of education. Currently this is high, as is seen from the surge in enrolment since January 2002. Completion rates can be seen as a proxy for whether initial enthusiasm is maintained. If parents lose confidence in the value of education, as they were doing in the late 1980s and 1990s, both enrolment and completion rates fall, as parents see little value in pursuing education in the face of the costs involved. They disinvest from the sector and their children drop out from school before the end of the primary cycle. However, there are limits to the usefulness of these as proxies, as schooling is compulsory, and it seems likely that some parents are enrolling their children in school because they have to and not because they particularly want to,⁵⁴ early drop outs may also be more due to the pressures of multiple impoverishing forces rather than a comment on dissatisfaction with the education service. Other indicators have been suggested, such as the existence and effective operation of school committees in a community, but this lacks the necessary rigour if poor parents do not feel able to either sit on the committees or to expect accountability from them. As was recorded earlier from Nkasi (Rukwa) the school committee was said to be unaccountable to the villagers.

It seems possible that the on-going SACMEQ initiative may be able to recommend useful ways forward, as they are rigorously looking at indicators of quality and achievement in education and attempting to correlate them with poverty through indicators such as levels of household possessions. It is hopeful that their findings, over time, can provide detailed and more specific information about the effectiveness of education in overcoming poverty and vulnerability, and suggest how curriculum content and teaching methodologies can be improved to promote positive outcomes. If this can be achieved it has the potential to be a powerful technical planning tool, and will in time enable the education service to confirm the faith of many parents in the value of formal education.

In the short run, however, it seems unlikely that survey based studies such as these can be of much assistance in assessing levels of satisfaction with the education service. What needs to be captured is where parents, children and communities feel that the education sector is doing what they need it to do. This is a wide-ranging issue encompassing all the various points raised in section 6. It is a highly nuanced concept, which varies greatly according to circumstances. Arguably more useful would be small scale qualitative 'panel studies' carried out systematically over time in the same schools/communities, to capture comments from a cross section of respondents (men, women, teachers, girl pupils, boy pupils, girls and boys out of school / in NFE, village government) about the inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes of education, including any changes identified over time, and responses to them.

Another possibility would be to use 'report cards' whereby communities communicate to decision makers their evaluation of the quality of the education service.

⁵³ The UNESCO International EFA Reporting identifies a total of 18 for which countries are expected to be able to report

⁵⁴ Kuleana op cit page 39

7.0 CONCLUSION

If education development ultimately fails to address the vulnerability to poverty of individuals, households, communities, districts and the nation as a whole, sector development risks being a serious waste of resources and potential. This paper has explored the connections between education and vulnerability in the context of the TzPPA. A conceptual framework has been presented which argues for the existence of both vicious and virtuous circles. In the face of impoverishing forces, whatever assets are available are mobilised to maintain wellbeing, or fight off a further decline. Where these response options fail, a poverty trap is frequently created, and those so trapped badly need additional support to enable them to acquire, or return to a state of well being.

The power of education, in the eyes of many, is seen primarily as an 'instrumental asset' - one which enables those who have it to access or obtain other things that they want. These include the possibility of a more secure livelihood or the confidence to talk effectively with people in authority. This hope and belief in the power of education, has been contrasted with many people's experience, which is much closer to that of narrowly defined schooling, which is not oriented to the needs and priorities of the learner. The implications for already marginalized groups are particularly acute, since often they are already deprived of other assets and if they cannot access education as an asset their future options will be further diminished. Vulnerable groups have a desperate need for government intervention to lower the costs of being part of the virtuous circle.

In the face of poor quality and irrelevant schooling, one response option is to have little to do with school – either to ignore it completely, or to attend but with little hope of it doing any good. A more positive, and usually collective response has been to make the access to and quality of education better, – either by improving the physical infrastructure, or by establishing pre-schools where no schools previously existed. Others opt out of government primary education and into the private sector, or put their resources and energies into post primary education or training.

It has been acknowledged that not all primary education in Tanzania reflects this dismal picture. There are schools that are beacons of hope, and the government's efforts both through the PRS and the PEDP are relevant and beginning to bear fruit. However, it has also been argued that much more can be done to break the cycle of poverty and vulnerability through education. Government initiatives need to respond carefully to what is already happening at community level so as to complement the initiatives that people themselves are taking. This implies a great deal more than a few technical changes to plan documents. It concerns a whole vision of education and its transforming power in development.

Hence the first and foremost need is for national dialogue and debate around 'What is the vision of education for the development of Tanzania?' There used to be a very clear vision, outlined in 'Education for Self-Reliance', which has basically disappeared. It is still not clear what has replaced it. The 1995 Education and Training Policy provides a sound basis for running the education sector, but does not encompass a clear vision of the role of education in social and economic development in the context of the challenges of the 21st century. To address concerns of vulnerability, the focus needs to shift from debates about how to ensure that marginalized groups get equitable access to quality schooling, to how to ensure that the power of education is mobilized to reduce vulnerability.

If this vision is developed and achieved, Tanzania will have broken the cycle of poverty and vulnerability, and it will be a lesson of untold value. It will be a lesson that is not taught with one teacher at the front of the class; it requires us all to play our part as teachers, learners and facilitators.

With this in mind, what does the TzPPA recommend as ways forward?

Summary of recommendations:

1. Renewal of a national vision for education that harnesses the power of education to reduce vulnerability.
2. Ensuring that this vision is reflected in TAS priorities and in the PRS sectoral targets, indicators and strategies
3. Enhance financial support to community building initiatives to provide places for children in school, and reinforce this with deployment of additional teachers
4. Ensure effective non-formal provision is brought on stream quickly through (i) adequate finance (ii) flexibility in implementation so that the widely varying needs of learners – from school drop-outs in remote areas, to urban street children - can be systematically met.
5. Reconceptualising Early Childhood provision so that it meets children's needs in a holistic and cross sectoral way and compensates for the lack of readiness to learn of many young children. This requires collaboration between MOEC, MOH, Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, Department of Social Welfare as well as others, in a child centred approach.
6. The provision of a curriculum which addresses concerns about relevant skills, knowledge and information related to daily life as well as values and attitudes, which implies providing for a more central role for the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) in strengthening Sector Development.
7. This implies links with the Teacher Training Colleges and the teacher training curriculum for pre-service and in-service, so that teachers have the capacity to deliver the curriculum effectively.
8. There is equally a need for a central role for the National Examinations Council (NECTA) within sector development, to ensure that a revised curriculum is being effectively examined.
9. The schooling system must do everything possible to ensure that all children's experience of education is a positive and empowering one, reinforced with role models, and supportive guidance and counselling to ensure they are able to make the best of the opportunity for their own personal, as wider community, development.
10. Similar standards of education must be delivered in all schools across the country. This implies (i) mechanisms in place to support the professional development, and equitable deployment, of teachers and (ii) that the inspectorate service has the strength in terms of staff numbers, resources and authority.
11. Teachers need to be motivated through an enhanced vision of the role of education in national development, acquired in their own professional development, and supported with hardship allowances to carry out their role as agents of change at local level.
12. Local structures of accountability, from school committees, through village councils to district level, need to be strengthened through assistance with information flow, and capacity development to fulfill their roles and responsibilities, towards meeting the needs of the vulnerable and marginalized in their communities.

13. Redesigning financing mechanisms by promoting more active partnerships among different sources of school financing (communities, government, the private sector, CSOs - and donors) for education to ensure that more resources are available to (i) compensate historically disadvantaged areas (ii) reduce donor funding dependency by promoting local level resource mobilisation in such a way that it does not widen the gap between educationally motivated communities and households and those who are not (iii) take account of the additional burden on households where the impact of AIDS is felt most strongly.
14. Complement existing monitoring of the education service with (i) participatory research to generate qualitative information about perceptions of the value of education and whether it is living up to its potential. (ii) use of survey based techniques and indicators, such as those from SACMEQ which enhance understanding of linkages between education and poverty.

**For further information about the TzPPA, contact the Economic and Social Research Foundation at
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