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***PROMOTING EDUCATION AND LEARNING THROUGH CIVIL
SOCIETY PARTICIPATION:
THE TANZANIAN EXPERIENCE***

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Introduction

The United Republic of Tanzania, which includes the mainland (the former Tanganyika territory) and the Unguja and Pemba Isles of Zanzibar, is the largest country in East Africa, located on the Indian Ocean and covering 945,085 sq. kms. It borders the DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique. The country is divided into 25 administrative regions, 20 for the mainland and 5 for Zanzibar. These regions are sub-divided into 113 districts which are further sub-divided into divisions, wards and villages, the latter being the basic structure for local government.

Tanzania is one of the Least Developed Countries in the world with a per capital income of USD 280. It is also categorized as a HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor country).

Tanzania enjoys stability, national unity and social cohesion in environment of democracy and political and social tolerance. These attributes continue to be cultivated, nurtured and sustained.

Tanzania Development Vision 2025

The Tanzania Development Vision 2025 envisages the total elimination of poverty by 2025 and thus accords high priority to the education sector which is considered pivotal in bringing about social and economic transformation. It is expressly stated in the Vision 2025 document that:

“Education should be treated as a strategic agent for mind set transformation and for the creation of a well educated nation, sufficiently equipped with the knowledge needed to competently and competitively solve the development challenges which face the nation. In this light, the education system should be restructured and transformed qualitatively with a focus on promoting creativity and problem solving” .

This represents a national vision and aspirations for a economic and social development of the Tanzania society of 2025 which would have the following characteristics:

- high quality of life,
- Peace, stability and unity,
- good governance,
- a well educated and learning society; and
- a competitive economy capable of producing sustainable growth and shared benefits.

Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)

Poverty is defined not only in terms of incomes and expenditure but also in terms of access to health care, education and water as well as intangibles such as respect, status, isolation within a community and a feeling of powerlessness.

The poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP) is a medium-term strategy, set in the HIPC debt relief context and developed through broad consultations between government and civil society organizations. It is important to have a concerted and coordinated effort from all sections of the society for an effective fight against poverty. Education is a crucial factor in alleviating poverty because lack of education has been found to be both a cause and effect of poverty. The PRSP underpins all other sector-specific reforms in Tanzania because it focuses effort on:

- (i) reducing income poverty
- (ii) improving human capabilities survival and social well-being and.

(iii) containing extreme vulnerability among the poor

Education enables people to use their capabilities and to increase their earning potential. It also empowers individuals to participate in the transformation of their own lives and of society at large. A lack of basic education undermines efforts to improve health and nutrition, reduce infant, child and maternal mortality, and to address the causes and impact of HIV/AIDS. Considering the enormous potential of a well-educated nation in achieving economic and social well-being, the attainment of universal primary education (UPE) is a priority development target.

The PRSP re-emphasises that education is at the heart of development and has clearly prioritised education sector development in the effort to alleviate poverty. The PRSP provides a mechanism for the articulation of the Government's overall development policy. The PRSP also provides the mechanism through which to rationalise and channel international support and assistance against the Government's own development priorities.

Education And Training Policy (ETP)

The Government's desire to improve the provision and quality of education resulted in the formulation of the Education and Training Policy (ETP) in 1995. The ETP encompasses the entire education and training sector. Major objectives of this policy are to achieve increased enrolments, equitable access, quality improvements, the expansion and optimum utilisation of facilities, and operational efficiency throughout the system.

Other broad policy aims include enhancing partnerships in the delivery of education, broadening the financial base and the cost effectiveness of education, and streamlining education management structures through the devolution of authority to schools, local communities and Local Government Authorities (LGA's)

Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP)

Following the ETP, a sector-wide approach to education development was initiated to help achieve the Government's long-term human development and poverty eradication targets, and to address the problem of fragmented interventions. The essence of the sector-wide approach adopted in the

Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) is collaboration by key stakeholders, using pooled human, financial, and material resources for the tasks of planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating education. This approach establishes new relationships which promote partnership, co-ordination, and ownership amongst all groups of people with a vested interest in education.

The ESDP is an extensive undertaking which derives its objectives from the ETP. Those which are relevant to the primary education sub-sector include: comprehensive efforts to improve the quality of the education process, increases and improvements in access and equity for all children, the decentralisation of management structures, the devolution of authority to local levels, and a broadening of the financial base which supports the education system.

Since 1995 the Government has introduced a series of education reforms through a sector-wide development programme in order to address the existing problems in the sector. The challenges facing the primary education sub-sector above all stem from an education system, which has been trying to educate a very large number of children from relatively poor households. All along, this has been done within the constraints of a chronic public resource shortage. Addressing these issues is not a straight-forward task because the problems and their causes are interlinked, both within the education system itself, and with many factors external to the education sector.

Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP)

The 1990 Jomtien “World Conference on Education for All” (EFA) was instrumental in identifying internationally agreed targets for the provision of education as a basic human right. Tanzania also is party to the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action, an international review of educational progress made since Jomtien, and has joined the many nations which have ratified the United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP), whose broad objective is to achieve universal primary education (UPE), is one of the first outcomes of the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) and covers primary education provision, as well as education for out-of-school children and youth. The targets of priority investment are: enrolment expansion

focussing on classroom construction, teacher engagement, and teacher deployment; quality improvement, encompassing in-service and pre-service teacher training, provision of teaching and learning materials and system-wide management improvements, through a range of capacity building efforts.

Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP)

The current Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP) focuses on performance improvement in the delivery of goods and services. The Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) is an integral part of the wider public sector reforms. It is the primary mechanism for the decentralisation and devolution of power to local levels, a main feature in the delivery of education at primary level.

The Government's goal of broadening democratic participation and accountability at all level demand increased involvement of men, women and children from the communities. Partnerships between teachers, schools and communities have been developed in order to strengthen school management. At the school level, there is a School Committee, which is accountable to the Village Council in District Authorities and to Mtaa Committee in Urban Authorities.

Through the provision of financial and human resources, the Government further empowers the school committee to be responsible for the management and development of the school.

School Level

The School Committee's responsibilities include:

1. To sensitise and involves all pupils, parents and school staff in respect of the roles they can play in maximising the benefits of school
2. To oversee the day-to-day affairs of the school.
3. To work together with the Head Teacher and other teachers to prepare a Whole School Development Plan.

4. To approve Whole School Development Plans and budgets and submit them to the mtaa committee, or village council and subsequently to the ward development committee and eventually to the Local Government Authorities (LGAs) for scrutiny, coordination and consolidation, and submission to Regional Secretariats.
5. To facilitate planning, budgeting and implementation of the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) – funded activities.
6. To open bank accounts and to efficiently and effectively manage funds received for implementation, while guaranteeing maximum accountability and transparency in the processes used, including making incomes and expenditures publicly available.
7. To ensure safe custody of property acquired using the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) funds.
8. To prepare and submit accurate and timely progress and financial reports to the village council, mtaa committee, and LGAs.
9. To effectively communicate educational information to all parents, pupils, community stakeholders, and to the village, ward/mtaa, and LGAs.

- **Ward Level**

The community and the leaders in the ward work together to ensure that all children of school age are enrolled and attending school.

The Ward Education Co-ordinator (WEC) co-ordinates primary school development in all the schools within the ward.

The WEC's responsibilities include:

1. To ensure that all girls and boys of school age in the ward are enrolled and attending school by 2004.
2. To share information with, and facilitate the participation of all parents and the wider community in realising the PEDP objectives.

3. To help identify priorities for school development plans and to assist in the planning process.
4. To ensure that the implementation of PEDP-funded activities operates in a transparent and accountable manner, by guiding and enforcing the proper use and accounting of funds by school committees.
5. To co-ordinate the formulation of Whole School Development Plans with the ward.
6. To effectively communicate educational information to schools and other local stakeholders.

- **District/Urban Authority Level**

The LGAs assume full responsibility for the management and delivery of all primary school services within its boundaries. Council level planning, management and monitoring capacity are strengthened.

In line with principles of local, government reforms, the LGAs do the following:

1. Involve the meaningful participation of all community stakeholders in planning, monitoring and implementation processes.
2. Prepare, in a participatory and inclusive way, three-year and annual development plans for the districts' primary schools;
3. Use the development plans as a basis for preparing and monitoring requisitions for Investment Grant transfers to schools;
4. Guide and enforce the proper use and accounting of PEDP funds by the school committees, directly, and through ward development committees and village councils;
5. Produce and submit regular financial reports to the government;

6. Provide technical support to school and village committees in the tasks of procurement, fund utilisation, and proper and timely reporting;
7. Regularly monitor, review and evaluate the progress of PEDP activities; and
8. Effectively communicate educational information to village, wards, schools and other local stakeholders groups, as well as to regional and national levels.

Civil Society Organisations (CSO)

Civil society covers a wide range of organised groupings which occupy the public space between the state and individual citizen. They are normally interest groups with different degrees of accountability to their membership basis. It is believed that democracy can not fully flourish in the absence of civil institutions. This is so because, in practice, the more diverse the society, the more each segment of that given society is represented. In Tanzania they include:

The beginning of last decade witnessed social, political and economic changes in Tanzania that affected the nature and scope of the civil society activities. The relationship between the stakeholders in government and civil society has also changed thus enhancing the role of the private sector. The role of the non-government organisations has been defined, making them important stakeholders in society. Government has committed itself to creating an enabling environment for NGOs to operate. Laws have been enacted to support their operations.

The Government's policy to provide primary education of a high quality to all children requires the participation of a broad range of actors. Non-Governmental and other civil society organisations have an important role to play in this endeavour.

In respect of Primary Education Development Plan, the responsibilities of NGOs and other Civil Society organisations are:

1. To participate effectively in planning, implementing and monitoring educational activities at all levels;

2. To participate as a joint stakeholder in the annual process of reviewing the education sector;
3. To contribute their experience and knowledge, as well as human, financial, technical, and material resources to the improvement and provision of primary education;
4. To share information with, and facilitate meaningful community participation in primary and non-formal education;
5. To effectively collect and communicate educational information to and from schools, communities, government, and other stakeholders; and
6. To conduct education policy analysis and advocacy.

The Civil society in Tanzania has organised itself into about 2000 groups falling under the following broad categories:

- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), both national and international;
- Religious organisations;
- Professional associations;
- Trade Unions;
- Voluntary and Self-help groups;
- Organisations representing socially excluded groups such as women and people with disabilities;
- Community-based organisations (CBO);
- Anti-corruption organisations; and
- Legal aid organisations
- Political parties.

How civil society participates in the development and management of education in Tanzania.

The Education Act Number 25 of 1978 (amended 1995) is the basic legal document governing the provision of education in Tanzania. It stipulates the roles and powers of different actors in education including the Minister, the Chief Education Officer, Local Authorities as well as private owners and managers of private institutions.

Areas of Cooperation with NGOs/CBOs

Non-Governmental Organizations and Community Based Organizations

co-operate diversely with the central government, donor community, parents pupils, adult learners and local community in the management of education. The major focus of NGOs and CBOs intervention and activities include:

- Resource Mobilisation
- Organizational and institutional capacity; building
- Strengthening the capacity of school committees and school heads;
- Teachers development;
- Advocacy;
- Quality improvement
- Early child development;
- Improving school infrastructure;
- Programmes for out of school children;
- Adult Literacy;
- Promoting education for better living; and
- HIV/AIDS

Although the role of CSOs is very important, their interventions are on a small scale, covering small geographical areas and lower administration level. They have however comparative advantage for serving vulnerable sections of poor and remote communities. At best, their educational activities are complementary to and integrated with government education programmes. Therefore, many CSOs are now adopting a more strategic approach to programme work emphasizing their involvement with grassroots groups and ability to understand, document and present community level interests to education planners and decision makers at all levels.