

*Original Research Article*

# Implementation of the Primary Education Development Programme in Tanzania, 2002 - 2006: Experiences from some Rural Schools in Dodoma and Singida Regions

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Abstract

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**This study is an attempt to assess the implementation of the first phase of the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) in Tanzania with a focus being the status of the factors that contribute to teaching – learning achievement. Data for the study were collected from 15 primary schools in Bahi and Iramba District Councils. Both Bahi and Iramba District Councils have managed to increase pupil enrollment, which has met some challenges overcrowded classrooms, furniture shortage, unsuitable pupil - teacher ratio and overstretched sanitation services. Furthermore, it was noted that there is an unrealistic deployment of teachers, as well as an acute shortage of female teachers. Such shortfalls impend success of teaching – learning, minimum levels of learning competencies hence, posing a threat to the achievement of PEDP objectives, poverty deduction and MGDs goals.**

**Key Words:** EFA, MGDs, PEDP, Pupils, Basic/Primary School, Bahi, Iramba, World Vision, Tanzania, Dodoma, Singida

## INTRODUCTION

The Jomtien's (Thailand) Education for All (EFA) conference held in 1990, and the World Education Forum held ten years later in Dakar, Senegal in 2000. These conferences and ratifications of conventions as well as agreements formed a watershed for country's basic education reform agenda.

Virtually every country in Sub Saharan Africa has identified improving access to basic education as one of its highest national priorities in line with EFA goals. In 1995 the government of Tanzania brought in place the Education and Training Policy (ETP) to translate the country's Jomtien commitment into action. The Education and Training Policy (ETP) set clear objectives which are to increase primary school enrollment, assure equitable access, improve quality, expand and improve the optimum use of learning facilities, and achieve operational efficiency. Other ETP policy aims include enhancing partnerships with various stakeholders such as donor countries and civil societies in the delivery of education, broadening the financial base. The cost-

effectiveness of education, and streamlining education management structures through the devolution of authority to schools, local communities, and local government authorities were core issues of the policy (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995)

Under the ETP the Sector wide Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) was instituted. The ESDP is a Tanzanian government's long-term human development and poverty eradication targets that redress the fragmented interventions that were being undertaken. It has to be noted that the ESDP was implementation and translation of the Millennium Development goals (MDGs) and targets into action. In implementing the ESDP the aims and objectives, the Basic Education Master Plan was instituted provided under the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) for five years, that is, from 2002 to 2006. The PEDP was primarily aimed at expanding enrollment, improving the quality of teaching and the learning process, building capacity in the public and private sectors of the education system, and

strengthening the institutional arrangements that support the planning and delivery of education services. (URT, 2001)

In addition, the primary education in Tanzania was an integral part of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP/MKUKUTA – Kiswahili acronym) that gain, a policy document that addresses the MDGs. The NSGRP/MKUKUTA emphasized the importance of human resource development as a pre-requisite to economic development and thus to reduce income poverty in the country. NSGRP sets achievement of UPE as a priority development target. PEDP sets out a strategy to translate into practice the international EFA 2000 goals, and the NSGRP targets. The PEDP is a comprehensive strategy to ensure that all children enrolled and complete seven years of quality primary education. According to Sumra, (2003) the PEDP is perhaps is the most ambitious attempt, after Universal Primary Education (UPE) drive in 1977, to affect primary education in Tanzania. PEDP goes beyond the aims of UPE, which was primarily concentrated on expanding access.

Additionally, PEDP address access and place emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning, increasing funding available at the school level, and making institutional arrangements more democratic and transparent throughout the system. Thus, Education Development Program (PEDP) is one of the first components of the Education Sector Development Program (SEDP) set the stage for universalisation of primary education among others has been the main goal of all educational policy and planning.

Until the beginning of this millennium Tanzania like the rest of Sub-Saharan African countries was lagging behind in terms of the net enrolment ratio (NER) in primary education where on average, 30 per cent of the children out of school in the 1990s and early 2000s. Yet, not all of those enrolled completed a seven year basic education cycle. This scenario has been reversed in some regions during the implementation of the first phase of a five year Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP I, 2002–2006) such as 100 per cent NER in Kilimanjaro and 80.2 per cent NER in Tabora regions (Mbelle and Katabaro, 2003).

Fundamentally, PEDP consisted of four main strategic priorities, which are; 1) Enrolment expansion for the achievement of Universal Primary Education by 2006; 2) teacher recruitment and deployment and classroom construction 3) improving the quality of teaching and learning processes; 4) strengthening the institutional arrangements that support the planning and delivery of education services this was aimed to improvement of management through strengthened institutional and human resource capacity and improved governance at central, Local Government Authority (LGA) and school levels. In order to accomplish this strategy, the Government of Tanzania set aside 25% of its recurrent

budget for education, of which 62% is for primary education. Furthermore, there was increased funding commitments for example a \$10 capitation grant was also introduced by the government, like the development grants, controlled by school committees. This was intended to cover some of the additional school-based costs with funding support from the Government of Tanzania, Canada Development Agency (CIDA), European Union (EU), Irish Aid and Norwegian Royal Agency for Development (NORAD); other agencies are the Royal Netherlands, Department for International Development (DFID), Belgium International Development Cooperation Agency (BTC), Finnish International Development Agency (FINIDA), Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), France International Development Agency (AFD) and the World Bank.

According to Haki Elimu (2005) established that PEDP produced impressive gains in enrollment, provision of textbooks, and classroom construction that have occurred between 2002 and 2006. For example, exceeded the target of 1.5 million students (Sumra, 2003); nearly 30,000 new classrooms were built from 2002 to 2004 (World Bank, 2005); the PEDP's achievements by 2004 was as follows: ([www.unesco-iiicba.org/Resources/TTISSA/TanzaniaEducation.doc](http://www.unesco-iiicba.org/Resources/TTISSA/TanzaniaEducation.doc))

- A total of 1,368,315 children were enrolled in standard I in 2004 which is less than the target of 1,640,969 by 272,654 the shortfall is due to both massive enrolment in the first year of PEDP of 11-13 year olds in grade I enrolment.
- The government through the Local Government authorities is recruiting a total of 15,283 new teachers targeted for the year.
- A total of 10,788 Grade IIIA teacher trainees have been enrolled in teachers' colleges, (10,037 in government teachers' colleges and 751 in private teachers' colleges).
- 14,709 classrooms constructed and 4,374 classrooms under construction; 884 teachers houses constructed and 333 houses still under construction; 14,700 pit-latrines constructed and 17,373 pit-latrines under construction, 286,488 desks purchased and supplied to schools and 10,399 chairs, 5,874 tables 580 shelves and 2,497 cupboards were made through NGOs, CBOs and community efforts.
- Government decentralized to school committee level procurement of textbooks and other education materials. Pupil Books Ratio at 1:4 at Grade I-IV and 1:6 at grades V to VII

### Study objectives

This study is an attempt to assess the implementation EFA and PEDP in Tanzania drawing experiences and evidences from some primary schools Bahi and Iramba which are located in rural areas. The focus is mainly on

factors that contribute to teaching – learning achievement at school levels taking into account issues related to enrollment, school facilities, teachers deployment, as well as ratios for teacher-pupils, instructional materials such as textbooks.

## METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS

Data for the study were collected from schools in the early 2009 from two district councils of Bahi (7 schools) and Iramba in Dodoma and Singida region respectively. Data were collected in February (Iramba) and March (Bahi). The population of the study comprised of 15 primary schools in (Iramba 8 schools) and March (Bahi 7 schools).

### Data Collection

The survey method was used for the study. Data for the research work was collected with the use of a checklist, which was completed by the researchers during the visit to the primary schools. The researchers in the company of a school staff observed the facilities in each school visited. The checklist solicited for information. Furthermore, information was collected on the source of water supply and school sanitation and the nature of landscape in the schools. The systematic random sampling technique was employed to select 15 primary schools. Since this study was descriptive in nature, simple percentages were used in the data analysis.

## STUDY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of PEDP has prompted Enrolment at primary schools nationwide has leapt from 59% in 2000 to 90.5% in 2004, putting the country well on course to achieve the second MDGs of primary school education for all by 2015. Enrolment has grown so fast in Tanzania that the school system is creaking with overcrowded classrooms, shortages of books, teachers and toilets. (URT, 2004)

### Enrolment

The net enrolment rate is a measure of the coverage of the education system, representing the number of pupils divided by the intended age group (e.g. 7- to 12-year-olds). There is a marked improvement in enrolment and less absenteeism as education has become more attractive to pupils. This study has established an increase in enrolment and attendance rates and decrease in gender gaps in schools. Such enrollment increase complies with the fundamental human right of

children (girls and boys). On average, in Iramba girls' enrolment has increased by an average of 73% from 2005 (see Table 1 below).

This has resulted in an overall reduction of gender gaps. However, accorded low value by parents to girls' education, and encourages early marriages that impact negatively on girls'.

The enrollment of children in both district councils (Bahi and Iramba) drives has put added pressure on already under-resourced schools; there are clear evidences of widespread problems with school quality, overcrowded classrooms greatly hamper instilling foundation skills and competencies critical for later learning and success of a pupil, poor infrastructure, a lack of materials, acute teacher shortages and inadequate teacher - pupil contact time are endemic.

Overpopulated classrooms designed for 45 pupils, but catering for over 100; this is argued to be unfavourable for both teachers and pupils on a number of grounds such as teacher inability to providing sufficient extra help/support and attention to individuals; it is impossible to furnish classrooms with furniture as they occupy more space, and a classrooms accommodates over 100 pupils hence having them to sit on the floor during lessons. An overcrowded classroom is a breeding ground for some other problems like, cheating during examinations, and ineffective management of the pupils. Access to rural schools has enormously to improve in rural Tanzania has over recent years in implementation of in EFA and PEDP.

### School facilities

Use of participatory mobilization approaches for infrastructure development by District Councils, NGOs, Ward Development Committees and Village authorities prompted villagers/community to participate actively in PEDP school projects, creating a sense of user-ownership that allows for greater long-term project sustainability. It was learnt that community members were meeting PEDP's obligation of labour contribution for construction of classrooms, technical matters and support for Industrial construction materials like cement and corrugated iron sheets was/being provided by District Councils, NGOs such as World Vision.

The study has established that there are initiatives for improvement of educational environment, learning and teaching, and hygiene in schools. However, this was not the same in all visited schools; in some schools there are condemned classrooms with dilapidation walls, disintegrating floors due to lack of maintenance, broken and in some instances lack of doors and holes on the roof. Yet, a system is not in place for repair broken furniture as well as broken doors.

Newly built classrooms are not done according to a standard as envisaged by the experts. According to the Ministry of Education building norms, classroom walls are

**Table 1.** Pupils' school enrolment – Iramba District Council

School	Pupils enrollment 2003 - 2008			Pupils completed standard 7 2003 - 2008			% of pupils completed standard 7 2003 – 2008			Attendance rate (%) 2003 - 2008		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Ng'anguli	295	243	538	133	83	216	100	100	100	92	93	92
Simbalungwala	246	255	501	243	213	456	100	100	100	86	89	88
Makunda	296	288	584	178	193	371	100	100	100	91	93	92
Kyalosangi	194	154	348	155	136	291	100	100	100	90	92	91
Kinampanda	221	208	429	203	195	398	100	100	100	91	91	91
Kisharita	163	140	303	136	112	248	100	100	100	97	98	98
Kyengege	309	324	633	289	307	596	100	100	100	88	89	89
Misigiri	299	279	578	315	327	642	99	99	99	92	93	93
Total	2023	1891	3914	1652	1566	3218	99.8	99.8	99.8	91	92	92

**Source:** Study Survey 2009

supposed to be made of building stones/blocks while the floor should be made of concrete. In some schools such as Simbalungwala, Ng'anguli in Iramba District Council and Mundemu primary school in Bahi district walls of the classrooms are described as poor or very poor. The conditions of the floors are too dusty. Disappointingly, despite policy emphasis, all visited schools' infrastructures do not also have special provisions for disabled access to their buildings.

### Water and Sanitation

All schools visited have no access to clean water supply within the school; therefore pupils in visited primary schools drink water from a well, seasonal riverbed that is unprotected and some of them share drinking water with livestock and sometimes contaminated with both human and livestock waste. Since there are no reliable sources of clean and safe water within the schools for pupils and teachers, both must take precious time meant for studying to fetch water and increase in physical labour for pupils and teachers. Moreover, unsafe water has exposed them to disease and parasite infection that specially impact the health of children, loss in quality of life, and expenses; and inability to maintain proper hygiene.

It was learnt in the visited schools that efforts are daily being made by school teachers to have water in which every school day pupils are sent to collect water from any available sources for cooking and sometimes for their teachers consumption, this happens during class hours, therefore, pupils miss out classes and suffer from tiredness when the return; it is also common seeing them with water can every morning.

The sanitation facilities are not adequately enough to serve the children (see Table 2); hence, poses particularly difficult challenges for many children in these schools. It was argued by school committees that funds

for the construction of adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities were not available. Increased number of pupils in schools has overstretched the sanitation and hygiene facilities to high enrolment rate.

In an attempt to curb the shortage in some schools toilets structures Back – to – Back -toilets (see picture I below) designed that one side is meant for boys and other for girls have been constructed; the survey learned that these are meant to utilize resources and minimization of costs; in others toilet structures had no doors hence exposing users to passers-by (see picture II below); this in particular denies girls privacy. In some instances schools have badly built toilets, with risks of subsiding for instance those at Ulemo and Makunda Primary school in Iramba District (Figure 1 and 2).

Poor school sanitation facilities is a serious problem in most surveyed schools; for instance in Iramba an average ratio for pupil - pit latrine is of 1:150; against the national standard ratio of 1:20 for girls and 1:25 for boys. Despite this alarming situation it was argued that on the whole children's access to basic sanitation facilities in surveyed schools has kept on, and that are, has improving since 2000. The argument is based on short or lack queues at toilet facilities during the class breaks.

Moreover, all surveyed schools adolescent girls generally avoid school during their menstrual periods or when they are ill, leading to high absenteeism and low educational attainment.

*In a group discussion Zaituni Robert who is in class 7 pupil at Ulemo Primary School reacted that a number of pupils hates entering the school toilet and would rather desist from using the toilet until they are back home.*

### Classroom Space

According to United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Center (UNESCO), the minimum student



**Figure 1.** Back – to - back toilets (Ulemao P/school)



**Figure 2.** Toilets with no doors (Makunda)

**Table 2.** School facilities

Districts		Classrooms			Teacher houses			Pit latrines		
	School	Demand	Available	Shortage	Demand	Available	Shortage	Demand	Available	Shortfall
Bahi	Chibaya	2	2	-	2	-	2	4	6	2
	Msihi	10	7	3	10	1	9	18	15	3
	Asanje	9	7	2	9	1	8	16	8	8
	Mundemu	18	10	8	18	7	11	35	12	23
	Tinai	9	5	3	9	1	8	14	6	8
	Mchito	9	8	1	7	1	6	15	4	11
	Ng'anguli	9	6	3	6	2	4	20	15	5
Iramba	Simbalungwala	16	8	8	18	2	16	28	16	12
	Makunda	17	7	10	7	3	4	20	10	10
	Kyalosangi	10	7	3	20	2	18	14	9	5
	Kinampanda	8	4	4	25	1	24	16	22	-
	Kisharita	11	6	5	13	4	9	29	7	22
	Kyengege	15	13	2	14	4	10	34	24	10
	Misigiri	23	9	14	23	7	16	28	16	12

**Source:** Study Survey 2009

classroom space should be 1.5 square meters with one - seater desk, which would translate to 67.5 square meters for a room expected to hold 45 students. The Ministry of Education recommends a 7.5m x 6.0m classroom. This translates to 45 square meters or about 1 square meter per child in a room with 45 children.

Most of the visited schools have student spaces that are below the required benchmark. This is mainly due to the large class sizes (number of pupils) witnessed after the introduction of free primary education. The main concerns of the classroom physical space include: safety and accessibility to learning; arrangement of furniture;

Table 3. Furniture

School	Desks			Tables			Chairs			Book shelves		
	Demand	Available	Shortage	Demand	Available	Shortage	Demand	Available	Shortage	Demand	Available	Shortage
Chibaya	17	28	-	4	9	-	4	9	-	2	-	-
Msisi	156	100	56	30	12	18	30	15	15	2	-	2
Asanje	162	82	80	9	5	4	12	6	6	12	6	6
Mundemu	253	180	73	43	30	13	50	28	22			
Tinai	103	26	77	19	5	14	21	7	14	11	2	9
Mchito	108	60	48	21	10	11	21	11	-	-	-	-
Zanka	154	77	77	16	12	4	16	12	4	3	1	2

Source: Study Survey 2009

Table 4. Teacher – pupil ratio

Districts	Teacher – pupil ratio	# of teachers			Total # of pupils			Ratio
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Bahi	School							
	Chibaya	2	-	2	43	44	87	1:43
	Msisi	3	5	8	241	227	468	1:59
	Asanje	5	-	5	194	167	361	1:72
	Mundemu	2	10	12	334	335	696	1:57
	Tinai	4	1	5	169	157	326	1:65
	Mchito	4	3	7	181	184	365	1:52
	Zanka *	6	3	8				1:49
	Ng'anguli	5	1	6	331	286	617	1:103
	Simbalungwala	4	7	11	316	286	602	1:54
Iramba	Makunda	6	1	7	329	341	660	1:94
	Kyalosangi	2	15	17	168	138	306	1:18
	Kinampanda	12	13	25	170	185	355	1:14
	Kisharita	4	1	5	206	213	419	1:84
	Kyengege	4	11	15	354	405	759	1:50
	Misigiri	9	9	18	322	306	628	1:35

Source: Study Survey 2009

\* Newly established school

and the teachers' use of physical resources.

### Pupil-Textbook Ratio

Textbooks are an important learning input that provides the learner with different learning experience. Government policy on pupil-textbook ratio stipulates that lower primary (standard/grade 1- 4) should have a ratio of at most 3:1. The availability of educational materials has a major bearing on educational outcomes and an important step is an improvement in classroom learning and ensuring quality in children's education. Teachers have guides textbooks have been distributed in all primary schools. The shortage of textbooks has been eased as results shows that during average pupil/book ratios were 2:1 in most schools.

### Furniture

The majority of primary schools do not have adequate furniture for seating the students (see Table 3). A critical case was noted Mundemu primary school where all class 1 – 4 pupils they sit on the floor while attending lessons, doing examinations due to lack of desks. Some NGOs like World Vision have supported various primary schools in Bahi with 272 desks; this has eased desks shortage but they are not enough due to increasing number of enrolled pupils (see Table 3 above) for example a shortage in surveyed schools in Bahi was 908 desks and 1026 for Iramba. Such shortage has prompted decline of academic performance because pupils cannot improving their handwritings, concentrate on their studies and there is a failure for them to maintain cleanliness while at school. Some girls pointed out that absence of chairs is unfriendly to them.

## Pupils – Teacher ratio

The desired national pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) is 45:1, but at present the average ratio is 59:1. This has been caused by expanding enrollment since the inception of PEDP. Schools in the study area face high student-teacher ratios (see Table 4); since classrooms are overcrowded, teachers are overstretched. The effect of such large class size on learner achievement is that weak pupils are more disadvantaged as the teaching methods in most schools focus on the average student. Certainly, when teaching in large classes teachers provide fewer exercises and practice so as to reduce the amount of marking to do. There is also limited space to conduct group work that would enhance effective coverage of content.

## Deployment of teachers

Problems in teacher supply are more often about shortages of subject specialised teachers, either in terms of subject matter or the ability to work with pupils with special needs. The District Councils are responsible for teachers' allocation. It was learnt that teachers resisting postings to schools in remote, areas but willing to be deployed in semi-urban schools. Due to this, there is congestion of teachers in some semi urban areas while remote rural schools remain with acute shortages. Statistics from surveyed schools in Iramba shows that, there were no female teachers in most rural schools as well as those in remote areas. It has been learnt that allocating female teachers are hardly allocated in remote areas. Such a situation girls in those schools they rely on support from male teachers. The deployment of teachers is very complex, for unclear reasons, teaching positions are not being filled in an efficient and effective manner in most of schools in the district. Invariably, the key issue is the unattractiveness of rural schools, especially in remote locations.

According to Ward Education Coordinators for Kinampanda (Iramba) Mr. Guttu and Mr. Mazengo for Mundemu (Bahi) pointed out that the deployment of teachers in most rural areas is problematic, owing to the following factors: geographic limitations, shortage of housing, poor communication, shortage of clean water, lack of electricity, poor health services, and lack of social amenities such as shopping centers and places for recreation. Due to shortage or absence of teachers (see Table 4) some of them are prompted to teach subjects, in which they have no experience at all. Furthermore, absence of female teachers has an impact on female pupils as they have no lack role models and cannot be provided counseling services especially on issues related to puberty.

## CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that PEDP has been a success in decentralising education resources; in achieving impressive enrollment, in improving gender equity; in building classrooms and in training and recruiting teachers at the national level. It is evident that surveyed schools faces big problems associated with the sudden increase of pupil enrollments due to PEDP, there are some problems which have not even been given sufficient attention for example, construction of new classrooms, provision of water and sanitation services and deployment of teachers. In the absence of many facilities and the presence of such huge problems, it is clear that the education given is of a very inferior kind that it will be unlikely to offer a high quality education by the end of PEDP II and meet MGDs in 2015 as well as Tanzania development vision of 2025.

The findings of this study indicated a serious level of inadequacy of facilities in all the primary schools that need attention. The learning environment and the resources available to aid in the learning process a vital factor that impact on a child's ability to learn. Teachers are key resources in the learning process. The number of children per teacher in a classroom setting contributes directly to the individual attention a teacher is able to give each child; this has proved problematic in the surveyed schools.

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