

## **“Increasing the Completion Rate in Primary Education”**

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Batch 1

### **Summary of the project**

Batch one dealt with school completion rates in primary education in the short-term and the right to education for all from a long-term perspective. Research study was undertaken in three districts – Ilala, Morogoro and Njombe. We found that there is no data to follow up student dropout rates in schools, mainly because of crowded classrooms. There are no tools for teachers or principals to use when children are dropping out. Neither teachers nor principals are trying to find the reasons of the dropouts. We collected information about reasons for dropping out and tried to design tools for teachers and principals to follow up dropout.

### **Impact on the personal and professional levels**

Experiences after Lund are enormous and invaluable. Interest in professional development, paper writing, further education and managing challenges brought us continuous growth. Since then to date several activities have taken place including papers written in the following topics:

- Classroom instructional planning and assessment.
- Conceptualizing feedback process as a tool for leadership improvement in managing school tasks.
- Curriculum design and development, a course paper for newly appointed school inspectors.
- Quality results in education.
- Promotion of quality education in secondary schools.
- School improvement leadership.
- School management and administration, a course paper for newly appointed school inspectors.
- School site supervision.
- Close to school supervision.
- Leadership management for secondary school heads.
- State of education in the country with regards to access, equity, quality and management efficiency criteria.
- Role of school inspectorate in education development.
- Criteria for school performance, review paper.
- School inspectorate as a concept and system in education management.
- Presented the research report to district councillors for enforcing the recommendations.

The training programme motivated the furthering of studies and the completion of rate and corporal punishment at a master's level by one of the team members. The studies helped to prove that the hypothesis that corporal punishment affects schooling is consistent with CRC. It also contributed to the writing of the management and leadership module for training school heads and the training and coordinating orientation courses for school heads, school management teams and education coordinators.

Throughout the training the use of corporal punishment was discouraged while completion rate was emphasized. As a result there was a gradual shift from corporal punishment to other forms of preventive measures. Also of notable significance is the design of checklist items for collecting information about the state of education in the country. These checklists for primary, secondary and teacher education have now been included in the training manual and handbook for school inspectors.

### **Impact on the organizational level**

Some districts have already adopted the completion rate monitoring instrument and the accuracy of the data was noticed. The concept of a sample group as the basis for the data when computing completion rate was at the moment clear to most stakeholders. School Inspectorate, Secondary Education Development Plan (SEDP) and Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) have to cover completion rate in their reports. Over the period, district authorities also passed by-laws to:

- Check rising dropout rates as well as enforcing compulsory attendance until completion of the cycle.
- Enforce enrolment policy of all school age children including those with disabilities.
- Stop child labour of all kinds.

### **Impact on the country level**

Dropouts receive very close attention. The President and his entire team persistently and insistently make a follow-up on completion rate. Occasionally, dropouts in primary schools are called back to continue schooling. Furthermore, reasons for dropouts are now being documented in the Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania (BEST). The statistics remind education leaders and politicians to promptly act against rising dropout rates. However, dropout rates were still highest at Std IV to V level being an effect of the promotion examination at the end of Std IV. The recommendation to return examination scripts to schools in order to capture areas that require special remedies is yet to be examined.

To date the dropout rate has gone down from about 30% in 2003 to between 15% and 18.9% in 2007. If the dropout rate continues to decrease at the same speed (2% per year), it would take 10 years to eliminate dropping out completely. However, if this complemented by the growing awareness in education it could take much shorter. Likewise, workshops on child friendly education were being organized for teachers and education supervisors at the national level.

A decision has also been taken in order to enhance the monitoring of PEDP by assigning the Ward Education Coordinators (WECs) with inspectorate duties in primary schools at ward level; as for SEDP there is a coordinator for each district but without inspectorate duties. The WECs will all undergo two weeks training on five modules that have been specifically designed to empower them in their new responsibilities; they report to district education officers.

The Modules are:

- Ward education coordinator and primary education development plan.
- Whole school development plan.
- Management and leadership.
- Curriculum implementation.
- Ward education coordinator and school development supervision.

Other improvements include:

- Increase in the Capitation Grant to schools towards the procurement of sufficient teaching/learning materials.
- The improvement of Teacher/Pupil ratio from 1:57 in 2003 to 1:53 in 2007.
- Reduction of the repeaters rate from 33.4 in 2003 to 26.5 in 2007.
- Rise in gross and net enrolment rates (GER and NER) from 105% to 114.4% and 88.5% to 97.5% respectively between 2003 and 2007.
- Rise in pass and transition rates from almost 40% to over 80% in the same period.