

Participatory workshop

**Research in the stakeholder dialogue on  
education, gender and inclusion**

Wednesday, 20 February 2008  
International Conference Center, Dar es Salaam,  
Tanzania

*Workshop Report*

May 2008

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The government of Tanzania is committed to equity and non-discrimination policies in education, in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education For All (EFA) process. The government has initiated a series of reforms to ensure equal access to primary education of good quality for all children, to expand secondary education, and to promote education and empowerment of girls. Gender equality is recognised as a goal in itself and, moreover, as a cross-cutting issue. In addition, the government has started to formulate inclusive education strategies to reach educationally marginalised groups, out-of-school children in particular. Furthermore, quality of educational outcomes has become an issue in poverty reduction strategies (e.g. ADEA, 2008).

According to the education sector reports, Tanzania will soon reach the universal primary education. Fairly, the Tanzanian initiatives and experiences have been applauded. The PEDP and SEDP have succeeded in expanding and improving education provision in Tanzania. In the generally very positive development trend the equality issues remain a challenge, particularly for secondary education and higher education. Further attention to the questions of the remaining, repeating and dropout children; and ensuring options for transition are required for reaching the international and national goals.

The challenges of the education sector development with a focus on gender and inclusion were discussed during a one-day workshop on the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2008 in Dar es Salaam. The workshop was organised by the University of Dar es Salaam and the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, in cooperation with the Embassy of Finland in Tanzania.

The workshop was launching a joint research project of the two universities, *Educated Girls in Tanzania: Socio-cultural Interpretations of the Meaning of Formal Education*. The project consists of doctoral studies and explores factors that contribute to successful educational careers of girls and women, including girls and women with disabilities. The workshop provided a forum for defining the state-of-art regarding challenges and successes in the education sector development from the gender and inclusion perspectives.

The workshop draw 66 participants representing the Government, Universities, NGOs and Development Agencies (for the full list of participants, see Annex 2). The workshop consisted of opening speeches given by the Embassy of Finland and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, introduction to the theme, a panel discussion, group work and a concluding session (see Annex 1). This workshop report is structured accordingly.

The discussions aimed at sharing information and views among education sector decision-makers, development partners, civil society organisations and researchers in order to further enhance educational achievements of girls and women.

## 2. OPENING REMARKS

### **Embassy of Finland**

Satu Santala, the First Secretary of Embassy of Finland in Tanzania gave the opening remarks on behalf of the ambassador. She welcomed the initiative by stating that this joint research project is a good example of what cooperation really is; looking for solutions and sharing experiences.

Tanzania has achieved success in education sector, still significant challenges remain, e.g. most children with special needs are still out of school. Also, gender balance in post-primary education is still poor. The First Secretary shared some of the success factors in the Finnish national experience as an inspiring perspective for the day's discussions. Reasons to success in international assessments of learning achievements consist of:

- High quality and coverage of the education system
- Equal opportunities for all
- De-centralised decision authority
- Well-educated and motivated teachers
- Research – practice –dialogue to challenge policies.

Ms. Santala concluded that sharing of experiences is the biggest value of joint research and dialogue. Dialogue should be encouraged throughout the research project. Today is a good opportunity to get inspiration to reflect the current situation and to work for the future of education sector.

### **Ministry of Education and Vocational Training**

The opening remarks of Professor Hamisi Dihenga, the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Education and Vocational Training were delivered by Mr. A. Mwaimu, Director of Planning Department. He stated that the good attendance in the workshop is a sign of commitment towards realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA) targets.

The full development of human thinking and actions is created through education. Education enables people to play active roles in the society. Therefore, education has to be a right of every individual irrespective of colour, gender, sex, style of living and/or other backgrounds. In order to realise the right to education for all, issues of establishment and ownership of schools and colleges, enrolment and selection, provision of educational resources and the whole educational environment need to be revisited.

Since 1997, The Government has addressed the issue of enrolment, taking into consideration equity, gender parity and inclusion, through the Education Sector Development Programme. Challenges remain in reaching gender parity in secondary and higher education. Also drop out rates for girls have increased due to pregnancy and various other reasons. Accommodating children with learning difficulties and disabilities remains a challenge.

This workshop should highlight broadly on gender and inclusion concepts to cultivate common understanding among all stakeholders in education. Gender identity, gender

roles, gender gaps and gender needs need to be considered. As for inclusion, the value of inclusive education to children has to be seen. Issues of communication, classroom management, behaviour management, individual help, assistive gadget/aids usage, planning lessons as well as understanding and responding to the negative attitudes towards inclusive education are very important.

With these remarks from the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Mwaimu declared the workshop officially opened.

### **University of Dar es Salaam**

Dr. Eustella Bhalalusesa, Dean of Education Faculty at University of Dar es Salaam thanked the honorary guests for their opening remarks. She explained that a cooperation agreement was established between Universities of Dar es Salaam and Jyväskylä in 2004. Since then, there has been research co-operation. Some joint publications have been produced in the course of joint projects. The Dean thanked the organising team for effective workshop preparations and the panellists as well as all participants for allocating their time to participate in the workshop. All participants introduced themselves and the organisations they represented.

### **University of Jyväskylä**

Dr. Elina Lehtomäki, the team leader of the joint research project of Universities of Dar es Salaam and Jyväskylä explained the overall purpose and theme of the workshop. Essentially, the purpose of the workshop was to highlight the role of research in discussing gender balance and inclusion. It is clear that the Government's commitment related to issues of education, gender and inclusion is strong. Tanzania has also signed the UN convention of disability in 2007 which provides a framework for the future work in the area. Challenges remain in the areas of quality of education and transition of girls and students with special needs to the higher levels of the education system. The educational management also needs capacity building in order to better respond to inclusion of SNE and gender.

## **3. SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR DEVELOPMENT – FOCUS ON GENDER AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

The workshop organisers had invited panellists representing different types of organisations to share their views on what has been done to address issues of gender and inclusion.

### **Ms. Ussu Mallya, Tanzania Gender Networking Programme**

Ms. Mallya provided an NGO perspective on the achievements and challenges in the education sector, with the focus on gender and inclusive education. Through mainstreaming gender in the policy planning and implementation, the education sector has achieved significant results in increasing gender parity in education. Gender parity has been reached in primary enrolment and also girls' exam results have improved. The practice of collecting gender disaggregated information has been adopted.

According to Ms. Mallya limited conceptualisation of underlying gender and inclusion issues at policy, strategy and budget levels and lack of sufficient resources have the

potential to limit the realisation of desired impact. The achievement of gender parity is prohibited by narrow application of the concepts of 'gender and inclusion' with more emphasis on 'enrolment and access', and less on infrastructure development, teaching and learning, funding and institutional arrangements. Also, the underlying gender issues e.g. burden of care work load for girls at household and school levels; gender based violence; sexual harassment and lack of participatory approaches are all linked to quality education.

In addition, Ms. Mallya pointed out that limited funding of the education sector has impact on gender and inclusive education at all levels. Lack of resources results less conducive environment, lack of books and other teaching equipments and inadequate number of schools and teachers. This has a big gendered impact especially on girls' attendance, retention and performance; and even more so for children living with disability.

Ms. Mallya emphasised the importance of recognising and supporting roles played by progressive CSO's in the struggle for gender and inclusive education in the country. An environment in which civil society organisations are recognised as legitimate participants in debates about the education system should be created. Recognition and widely supported advocacy initiatives to improve gender parity and inclusion in education especially in rural areas will sensitise the communities and increase empowerment of girls.

For gender parity and inclusion in education to be realised, Ms. Mallya stated that *'policy actions and strategies need to address both practical and strategic needs of girls& boys, women and men. This means combining the practical way of accessing education as well as having effective strategies to deal with underlying gender and inclusion inequalities and girls empowerment!'*

**Professor Mwajabu Possi, Institute of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Dar es Salaam**

Professor Possi gave a very inspiring introduction to development of inclusive education and gave strong recommendations to further work in the field. The policy of mainstreaming disability has resulted in development of integrated schools. Even though the policy for inclusion is in place, physical and social barriers to actual inclusion remain.

According to professor Possi first of all, a joint understanding on the philosophy should be reached among all stakeholders. Government should introduce a more clearly stipulated policy of inclusion supported by awareness creation done through media in collaboration with NGOs. With increased awareness, early assessment and intervention can be improved. Special needs education should also be mainstreamed in the teaching profession to ensure the capacity of teachers to deal with special needs. Also research can contribute a great deal to mainstreaming special needs by focusing on action research. This research can bring up concrete examples of successful interventions and activities and to give valuable information for policy development process.

### **Ms. Regia Mtema, Tanzania Federation for People with Disabilities**

Ms. Mtema defined the meaning of inclusive education as a situation where “*all students in a school, regardless of their strengths or weakness in any area become party of the school community*”. The positive achievements in the area include the increased (although still very low) enrolment of people with disabilities, increase in the number of accessible (government) schools, higher performance of students with disabilities enrolled in inclusive schools to the ones in special schools, higher number of graduates with special needs at all levels.

According to Ms. Mtema still, a clear policy of disability is lacking and the enrolment of persons with disabilities in education is extremely low. The overall limited resources have their impact on special needs education; special materials and aids are lacking and there are very few teachers with adequate qualification to teach students with special needs. There are also many problems in teacher-student relationships. Despite the joint effort made by the government, activists and other stakeholders, stigmatisation of people with special needs remains a problem.

In order to fight these problems, Ms. Mtema recommended that;

- All stakeholders should ensure that all disabled children are enrolled in schools and are given assistive gadgets for their smooth learning in order to achieve quality education.
- Education on disabilities should be included in the curriculum
- Parents, communities, DPOs and other organisations should participate in planning and decision making concerning provision for special educational needs
- Teaching colleges for inclusive education teachers should be included
- There should be clear policy specifying special attention to disabled people
- Budget for inclusive education should be increased.

### **Plenary discussion**

In the plenary discussion followed by the three presentations, various comments, questions and suggestions were raised by the participants. A question on use of inclusive teaching methods was raised as a concern. Especially in the context of privatisation of education, there will be real challenges to monitor whether teaching is carried out in an inclusive manner. As an overall concern, one participant asked how the future generation can get equal opportunities to educate themselves and to make a better future.

When it comes to utilisation of research results, representatives of Ministry of Education and Vocational Training were asked how the ministry has taken into account the research done on gender and inclusion. In general, ‘we know what to do, not it just has to be done’. The researchers pointed out that more research on society’s attitudes to gender and disability is needed. Research should also look at issues affecting girls’ confidence. It was also suggested for a seminar should be organised with the key actors and planners to discuss the philosophy of development and education in Tanzania.

In their responses, the panellists agreed that more understanding and analysis on gender differences is required to be able to tackle all problems. Still, the problem of communicating research findings to decision-makers remains. This requires joint effort

of all stakeholders. Also, research results should be communicated back to the research groups and to the wider audience more effectively.

Regarding the issue of inclusive teaching, learning between public and private schools would be beneficial to make the best use of the existing knowledge and experiences. In general, more focus has to be given to early intervention to support students with special needs.

#### **4. ENHANCING COOPERATION FOR GENDER BALANCE AND INCLUSION IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR DEVELOPMENT**

In the afternoon session, workshop participants were divided into four groups according to their background organisations. Researchers, government representatives, NGO/INGO representatives and development partners were all asked to agree on three major challenges related to gender and inclusion in the education sector and suggest actions on how to tackle these challenges. All groups worked actively and came up with concrete activities listed in the following table:

Table 1: Summary of workshop reports

	Challenges to be tackled	How	In cooperation with
Government Representatives	Lack of Proper Strategies for policy implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Government to come out with practical plans and strategies that could address effectively gender and inclusive education issues</li> </ul>	CSOs/NGOs Development Partners Community members
	Inadequate resources allocated for gender and inclusive education programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Government to allocate more resources for gender and inclusive education programmes</li> <li>✓ To create awareness to educational stakeholders on equal distribution of resources.</li> </ul>	CSOs/NGOs Development Partners Community members
	Low level of enrolment of girls and children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Government to allocate more places for girls and children with disabilities</li> <li>✓ Advocacy and community awareness to change mindset</li> <li>✓ Build more hostels and /boarding schools for girls; with proper division between girls and boys</li> <li>✓ Put in place facilities/infrastructure for children with disability and girls</li> </ul>	CSOs/NGOs Development Partners Community members
Researchers	Raise awareness of the role of the education services in promoting inclusion and equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Establishment of information centers</li> <li>✓ Mass education through media</li> <li>✓ Seminars, workshops</li> <li>✓ Dissemination of research findings</li> <li>✓ Integrating gender /inclusion in curriculum from primary schools</li> </ul>	NGOs Policymakers; MOEVT, Ministry of social welfare CBOs and FBOs Local government Development partners
	Reviewing bylaws and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Collecting views from various stakeholders</li> <li>✓ Conferences</li> <li>✓ Seminars</li> </ul>	Related NGOs Policy makers The community
	Capacity building and empowerment of educators/teacher and other stakeholders on gender and inclusive education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Training and retraining</li> <li>✓ Seminars and workshops</li> <li>✓ Resources mobilization; Fiscal and material</li> </ul>	Individual teachers Ministry of Education and Vocational training

NGO/INGO	Inadequate space and inadequate means of CSOs engagement in policy_process regarding gender, education, and inclusion. This has been due to NGOs own divided agendas, varied capacities, inconsistency participation and lack of institutional arrangement/framework for participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To act as a pressure group on issues of common interest, we will seek to get involved rather than be involved, creating a strategic networking and information sharing.</li> <li>✓ Agree on common agenda when participating in education, gender and inclusion.</li> <li>✓ Put in place workable institutional arrangement for NGOs participation.</li> </ul>	Thematic networks/groupings for instance gender organizations, education networks, and CSOs dealing with disability, Relevant ministries, Researchers, and academic organizations, Development partners.
	Poor understanding of Gender and inclusion concepts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Community sensitization on education, gender and inclusion concept to members</li> <li>✓ Community empowerment to give them skills and raise awareness to be able to confront responsible organs to deal with specific issues related to gender disparities and exclusion in education</li> </ul>	
	Inadequate resources (funds) in supporting different activities of NGOs done in education, Gender and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ By developing a collective and individual organization fundraising strategies for collective and individual activities.</li> <li>✓ Enhance partnership-working environment for effective utilization of little funds to provide comprehensive expertise from different partners to address Gender, and inclusion issues in education.</li> </ul>	
Development Partners	Expertise in Gender awareness analysis and inclusion, Management of Children with disabilities, Taking into account different needs of children	<p>Training of teachers in gender and inclusive education skills such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Sign language</li> <li>✓ Counselling skills</li> <li>✓ Child friendly teaching methods(interactive)</li> <li>✓ Providing technical support</li> </ul>	MOEVT Teachers training colleges and institutions
	Early assessment of disabilities and gender needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Awareness building in communities</li> <li>✓ MCH service providers</li> <li>✓ Traditional birth attendants</li> <li>✓ Skills in detecting disabilities</li> <li>✓ Early rehabilitation</li> </ul>	Ministry of Health, Local Government, Traditional birth attendants Ministry of community Development, Gender and Children, Media, CSOs
	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To provide financial support and guidance to the programmes(not limited only to only the above issues)</li> <li>✓ Promoting good governance</li> <li>✓ Monitoring</li> </ul>	All relevant ministries CSOs

## **5. WORKSHOP OUTCOMES/PROCEEDINGS**

After the groups had each presented their reports, a general discussion was carried out on the critical issues and roles of each type of organisations in enhancing gender equality and inclusion. It was widely agreed that cooperation between ministries has to be enhanced in order to trickle down the plans (e.g. school infrastructure, health, feeding etc.) to the implementing local government bodies. Inter-ministerial cooperation should be strengthened in the identification of children with special needs at an early stage. Focusing on inter-sectoral cooperation on district level is essential.

It was accepted that often the role of civil society organisations is to pilot new types of interventions. Discussions were carried out on how to upscale and mainstream good practices piloted and by the CSOs. Role of complementary education, e.g. girls' clubs in schools is essential in dealing with livelihoods and education related issues outside school. Provision of livelihoods for children with special needs was brought up as a challenge for post-primary education.

In the concluding remarks, Dr. Elina Lehtomäki from the University of Jyväskylä emphasised that sharing information among stakeholders is essential when actively tackling issues of gender and inclusion. Policy implementation requires cooperation at ALL levels. Active involvement and information sharing at all levels and among all stakeholders are essential. The importance of partnerships in achieving better results should be given more emphasis.

Joint efforts are needed to increase resources and to develop effective strategies to for gender and inclusion. Standard setting is required for gradually building up accessible infrastructure. There is a strong demand for cooperation and technical assistance for early identification of children with disabilities. Awareness-raising should not only be a one-time effort but a continuous process both at professional and community contexts.

Cooperation is essential when building and enhancing expertise in gender and inclusion. Good quality research is needed to confirm that everyone is at school and getting a quality education. The role of research is to confirm successes and to identify challenges. Information should be made available to all stakeholders in order to make the best use of the existing information, to identify gaps and to create evidence based dialogue and action.

## **6. WORKSHOP EVALUATION AND THE WAY FORWARD**

All participants were given the opportunity to give written feedback to the organisers and to reflect on how they are going to utilise what they've gained during the workshop. Thirty (30) forms were received and feedback was also given in discussions throughout the day.

According to the workshop evaluations, participants highly valued the opportunity to share experiences, challenges and ideas in a heterogeneous group. It seems that there are not enough opportunities for such a high quality stakeholder dialogue on gender and inclusion. The dynamics of the workshop was appreciated; the combination of plenary sessions, group work and discussions in different groups provided opportunities for fruitful discussion and brought up various perspectives. Many participants also recognised the value of the knowledge gained on the issues of gender and inclusion. The debate between stakeholders raised new ideas and also defined and clarified roles and responsibilities of different actors. The workshop was also seen as a good networking opportunity and many participants agreed on continuing to communicate in the future.

Participants were also asked to reflect on how they are going to utilise the workshop experience in their work. Respondents were determined to share the gained knowledge in their organisations and in their professional networks. Continuous sensitisation and awareness-raising activities have to be carried out within organisations and with the target groups. A great effort is required to mainstream issues of gender and inclusion in policy and programme planning and implementation. Researchers stated that more needs to be done to incorporate gender and disability in educational research, and more research should be done at grassroots level to identify gaps.

For the future stakeholder dialogue, the participants desired increased government involvement, inclusion of teachers and parents and wished for more time to be allocated for developing joint, concrete action plans.

It was agreed that the workshop report, including a list of participants with everyone's contact details, will be distributed to all participants through e-mail to share the conclusions of the day's discussions and to facilitate networking. Possibilities for establishing an electronic data bank / discussion board will be investigated. The research project will inform about its progress through the website of the Finnish Embassy in Dar es Salaam.

## Participatory Workshop

**RESEARCH IN THE STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE  
on EDUCATION, GENDER AND INCLUSION**

Wednesday, 20 February 2008  
International Conference Center, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

## PROGRAMME

8:30-9:00 am	<b>Coffee and Registration</b>
9-10:00 am	<b>Opening Session</b> Welcoming remarks Research – Practice dialogue
10-12:00 am	<b>Introduction to the theme and agenda</b>  <b>Panel Discussion</b> <b>“Successes and Challenges in the Education Sector Development – Focus on Gender and Inclusive Education”</b>
12-1:00 pm	<b>Lunch break</b>
1-2:00 pm	<b>Group Discussion</b> <b>“What should we do? Enhancing Gender Balance and Inclusion in the Education Sector Development”</b>
2-2:30 pm	<b>Coffee and refreshments</b>
2:30-4:00 pm	<b>Reports from Groups</b>
4:00-5:00 pm	<b>Closing Session</b> <b>General Discussion</b> <b>“Conclusions and Further Thoughts”</b>

**PARTIPATORY WORKSHOP  
ENHANCING STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE on EDUCATION, GENDER and INCLUSION  
Wednesday, February 20, 2008 at Dar es Salaam International Conference Centre in the PPF Tower**

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