

# GOOD PRACTICES TANZANIA

PROVIDING ALTERNATIVE LEARNING FOR ADOLESCENT MOTHERS



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*In Tanzania, 23 per cent of women ages 15-19 years have started childbearing; 17 per cent have had a live birth; and 6 per cent are pregnant with their first child. While only 5 per cent of women age 15 have started childbearing, 44 per cent of women are either mothers or are pregnant with their first child by age 19*

TDHS 2010

***Tanzania has one of the highest rates of adolescent pregnancies in the world. When a female secondary student falls pregnant, the practice has been to permanently expel her. This is the fate of approximately 6000 female students every year. This is anticipated to change within the context of the rollout of the new Education and Vocational Training Policy 2014. Meanwhile, providing alternative learning opportunities for young mothers who have been expelled from secondary education due to pregnancy has helped them to continue their education and provide evidence for advocacy towards more human rights-based practices for the education sector.***

Within the framework of UN Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP 2011-16) in Tanzania, UNESCO piloted a project to support adolescent girls and young mothers who were expelled from school due to pregnancies in 10 wards in Shinyanga region: 5 wards in Shinyanga rural district and 5 wards in Kahama district. The implementation of the project started in 2012 and the project ended in August 2015. The training was program was made of 2 parts: theoretical and practical training. The main implementing partners of the project were the Institute of Adult Education (an arm of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training) and Kahama Town Council, Msalala District Council and Shinyanga Rural District.





**How great is the need for this work?** Tanzania has made progress in secondary school enrolment from 6.7% (2003) to 36.9% in 2012/12. One of the key challenges that remain is the high level of dropouts from secondary education. An estimated 6000 female secondary students drop out/are expelled from secondary education each year due to pregnancy (16 per day). Although not mandated by any law or policy, these girls are routinely expelled from school.

**Is change possible?** In June 2014 United Republic of Tanzania passed the new Education and Vocational Training Policy. While the Policy is silent on the re-entry of girls who have delivered, it does not prohibit them to do so. This enabling environment has seen the development of the first ever guidelines on how to enable pregnant girls to continue with their studies by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. Simultaneously Tanzania Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare are developing a joint Comprehensive Sexuality Education National Curriculum, to prevent these pregnancies in the first place. Furthermore, the country has launched a Child Marriage-Free Zone campaign to accelerate efforts to end child marriage including efforts to criminalize the practice; all to ensure that children are allowed to be children, specifically that girls are able stay at school and their human rights are respected.

**Is it imperative to change?** Tanzania is a signatory to Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) which all support and commits Tanzania to respect the universal right to education. Pregnancy does not end girls and young women's right to education. The lack of access to reproductive health services and information and/or due to sexual violence that are often the cause of the pregnancies, are all violations of human rights and the subsequent expulsion of the girl is a further violation of her rights.



*Agnes, a course participant with her father, Paschal in Shinyanga*

Why UNESCO focus on Shinyanga? Shinyanga Rural and Kahama are two districts in Shinyanga region in the northern part of Tanzania. Shinyanga has the highest rate of child marriage in the country, whereby currently 55% of girls get married before the age of 18. It has one of the lowest rates of uptake of family planning in the country. 15.1% of women in Shinyanga are using any method of family planning and 12.5% of women modern methods of family planning respectively, putting Shinyanga on the bottom of Mainland regions along with Mara and Mwanza when it comes to realisation of women's right to decide on the number and spacing of pregnancies. (All TDHS 2010)

Programme background: The intervention was initiated by UNESCO and focused on teenage pregnancies in Shinyanga, and Kahama. The situational analysis conducted by UNESCO also included Pemba, Zanzibar, but the agreement made with Japanese Aid for the funding did not cover Pemba, partially due to the fact that the Zanzibar Education and Training Policy allows girls to go back to school, although many girls still do not return. Meanwhile UNESCO also supports girls who are in school in both Pemba and Shinyanga.

Upon the selection of Institute of Adult Education as the implementing partner, an educational needs assessment was conducted, to facilitate the further development of the programme. The finding of the assessment was that the Institute's programme developed with UNICEF support, the Integrated Post Primary Education (IPPE) model, with three

components (academic, generic knowledge and vocational skills) could be useful for this group of mothers. The assessment revealed that the mothers foremost need two components of IPP (prevocational and generic knowledge). This package was developed and adapted to the needs of the mothers.

Some of the subjects had existing training materials developed by the Institute of Adult Education with UNICEF support, for the rest, programme funds were used to develop training materials. The selected subjects and trades were tailoring, cookery, soap-making, batik-making. Generic skills: gender (existing training material used), adolescent reproductive health education (new training material developed), parenting skills (new), environment (existing), HIV and AIDS (existing), tradition culture and entrepreneurship skills. Before these courses, foundation courses were provided which had three subjected, communication languages of Kiswahili (new), English (new) and math (new).

In August 2013 the Institute of Adult Education led a process of awareness raising to the local government authorities (local leaders, councillors, ward educational coordinators) to create demand for the courses in the centres. The first courses started at the end of 2013. Then theoretical courses followed (prevocational and generic). The examinations were held in 2014 and 2015; the graduation ceremonies took place August 2015.



## THE RESULTS

- 220 young mothers who had been expelled from secondary education were identified through community outreach, and engaged in the programme.
- 149 girls graduated in Integrated Post-Primary Education on 13 and 14 August 2015 in the two focus districts of Shinyanga.
- 149 girls are preparing to enroll in non-formal secondary education in January following their graduation.
- UNESCO has participated in the development of the ***Guidelines on how to enable pregnant girls to continue with their studies*** for the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MOEVT), this programme has been used to visualize the more than 50,000 girls expelled due to pregnancy in the last decade, the need to stop further expulsion and the opportunities to assist the already expelled girls to get back on track to realizing their educational dreams.



At the end of the programme period the girls have been equipped with adequate theoretical knowledge to enable them to re-enter secondary education (in January 2015 all the girls involved in the programme will do this through non-formal distance and evening classes); they have gained skills in batik, soap and paraffin production as well as tailoring and animal husbandry; they are better able to look after themselves and their children due to enhanced life skills.



*OVERALL RESULT: 220 ADOLESCENT MOTHERS IN SHINYANGA PARTICIPATED IN, 149 MOTHERS GRADUATED FROM, INTEGRATED POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN AUGUST 2015*

*RESULT 1: IMPROVED  
GENERIC SKILLS*

*RESULT 2: DIVERSE PRACTICAL  
SKILLS BEING UTILISED TO  
CREATE AN INCOME*

*RESULT 3: STRENGTHENED  
LIFE SKILLS AND SELF  
CONFIDENCE*

## **KEY STRATEGIES**

### **Duty Bearers**

1. Capacity-building to secondary teachers and Ward Education Coordinators on the status of girls young women who have dropped out of secondary education due to pregnancy.
2. Community mobilization by teachers to identify girls/young women who have dropped out of secondary education due to pregnancy.
3. Development of Integrated Post Primary Education modules that are relevant to young mothers (generic and pre-vocational).

### **Rights-holders**

4. Provision of Integrated Post Primary Education through non-formal means, including evenings.
5. Provision of support to students in registration of business groups for income-generation through sewing, batik- and soap making as well as for loans.



## Lessons learned

- Teenage mothers have different needs from their age mates but this does not mean that they don't have a right to education.
- Teenage mothers have increasing economic needs in the short-term, vocational training can ensure these needs are fulfilled.

## Critical elements for replicating, scaling up or sustaining this intervention:

- The three prong-approach ensures that the girls were reached, they may have not been as interested in the intervention if it was only theoretical training being provided
- Adequate resources include supportive parents

## What more is needed:

- The national debate about the re-entry of girls to education needs to be scaled up and the finalization and national dissemination and training on the implementation of the *Guidelines on how to enable pregnant girls to continue with their studies needs to be prioritised.*
- More vocational training opportunities are needed for marginalized girls.
- Comprehensive sexuality education needs to be scaled up nationally.

My daughter did two years at secondary, Form 1 and Form 2; at Form 2 she became pregnant at 15 years of age. When she gave birth she was breast-feeding for some time and then joined the UNESCO programme. She is the mother of a baby girl but now she knows how to sew and she can make soap. The programme has helped her to improve her self-confidence; not only that, she used to see the baby as a burden, now she is better equipped to care for her child.



"I am planning to try to join the rest of the girls from the UNESCO centres in January as they re-enter secondary education through evening classes of the Institute of Adult Education. I don't have a problem with the headmaster who asked me to leave secondary school, he was just following the government guidance. So I don't blame him. I think maybe it is right to be removed from school for a short time, I would have been laughed at and I would have probably been so discouraged to learn and I would have failed. However, after delivery I think I should be allowed to continue with school, maybe if people laugh at me I could be given an opportunity to choose to go to a different school."

Subira, one of the 149 UNESCO supported course graduates

**PARTNERS:**

**UNESCO Tanzania**

**Ministry of Education and Vocational Training**

**Institute of Adult Education**

**Kahama Town Council**

**Msalala District Council**

**Shinyanga Rural District Council**