



Water flows after over 50 years of hardship

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World Vision®

Why it pays more to empower women than men

By Dickson Ng'hily, Muheza

Some five years back, Batuli mohamed who always wanted to have something that would help her in the fight against poverty, faced tremendous barriers when she sought opportunities that would set her free from economic hardship.

Although Batuli, who lives at mamboleo Village in muheza District, Tanga Region, had the potential to change her own life status, limited access to economic resources blocked her way to prosperity.

Batuli represents the lives of hundreds of other women in the village who struggle to feed their families, abandon pursuing their dreams of uplifting themselves and their families.

This is when the idea of women's economic empowerment initiative

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World Vision Tanzania helps women gain access to credit to empower them to be economically independent and able to support their families

Better farming practices give children more food, happiness

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Better farming practices give children more food, happiness

By African Child Reporter, Tanga

Ali and mwalilei, both pupils at Kwata Primary School at Kwemazandu Village in Korogwe District, Tanga Region, have an interesting story to tell. The happy life they are living right now has come after years of starvation and frustration.

"Can you imagine, sleeping without food? It wasn't a joke," recalls Ali. "I remember there was a time when we had no food at home, they could only prepare vegetables, as there was neither rice nor posho..."

And the hardship and frustration didn't end at home. "When you're at school," he recalls, "teachers don't know that you are starving, they would ask you to concentrate. But how can you concentrate with an empty stomach?" he asks.

And for mwalilei, whenever her parents failed to get something to eat, she could just stay at home sleeping.

Studies show that when impoverished families improve their agricultural productivity, their economy grows. And when women farmers have the opportunity to earn and control income, they are more likely to focus their spending on their children's nutrition, education and health.

Women also are integral to alleviating hunger and malnutrition because they are primarily responsible for ensuring that food for their families is reliably available, accessible and nutritionally balanced. This helps to improve their well-being as well as the economies of their families and their communities thus contribute to the growth of the country's economy.

Kwemazandu Village, the home of Ali and mwalilei, was highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Of course, one of their main staple foods is rice – a rain-fed lowland rice production, but tilling traditionally affected crop yields.

According to Jumaa msagati, a chairperson for Kwemazandu farmers' group; the average harvest per acre per year was not adequate to meet household food needs and income generation. To face the reality msagati reveals: "...the average harvest per acre per year was not high compared to the national average, for each food crop harvested lasted for only two to three months.

"We were practicing poor methods of rice farming although on the other hand, heavy dependency on rain-fed agriculture and unsustainable use of natural resources, were our other weaknesses...we had limited number of extension officers to support us as well."

msagati, in charge of about 203 farmers, mentioned to this reporter that in the highlands, farmers experienced rampant erosion that led to the decrease in productivity. This was happening to an area that solely depended on subsistence agriculture.

With such a situation, plus lack of appropriate farm inputs, transport and social services, economic development in the area, was seen as a day-time dream.

Complementing to the national initiatives to green revolution initiated under the Big Results Now (BRN) policy, magoma Area Development Programme (ADP) in line with the World Vision Tanzania (WVT)'s strategy, efforts were



made to creating sustainable livelihood amongst farmers through boosting production, increasing cash income and improving household food security.

"We had no technical skills to apply when farming...can you imagine; only 1.5 tonne was harvested in one hectare. But after the magoma-ADP started in this area, things have changed. We now harvest at least 5.6 tonnes per hectare," testifies msagati, adding, "I think their mission has been realised."

According to him, the project meant to promote rural livelihood and provide a sustainable economic development platform for improving the child's well-being in the area. "Uplifting the child's well-being was one of the leading priorities that encompassed interests in food security and economic development in general, thus taking the community to the next level," he said.

Recalling what it used to be, the chairperson says, "Life in the month of march up to June wasn't good at all. In fact, we could go to bed hungry; a number of children younger than five years old died needlessly from hunger-related causes."

msagati added, "Some of these deaths were related to outright starvation and common illnesses which include diarrhea, malaria and measles that normally affect vulnerable children whose bodies have been weakened by hunger."

It is said that chronic hunger affects more than 925 million people in the world. At the world level, you may be surprised to learn that it has little to do with food shortages as global supplies of food far outstrip demand.

Far more people die from causes related to chronic hunger than to famine. Chronically hungry people are exceptionally vulnerable when famine strikes. They have fewer resources to protect themselves and their families and are already living on the margin of survival.

Zaina Bakari, a mother of six, told African Child a similar story. Life was extremely hard. She could not manage to feed her family as much as necessary. In fact, her family was starving. "There was no surplus that we could sell as I got little which wasn't even enough to feed the family...Kids were starving and yet we didn't have an alternative."

Bakari says, "efforts by magoma-ADP in the rehabilitation of irrigation structure and promotion of horticulture in the area, yielded substantial results in terms of irrigation practices. We have discovered the potential of wet lands and this has improved household incomes and food security of many families."

According to her, education on modern farming methods and supply of pedal pumps were helpful to change the way that people conducted their agriculture. One of the agronomic practices adopted in paddy production, which is one of the main cultivated crops, is proper spacing.

Although she owns just half an acre, Bakari says, "With the support of magoma-ADP, I have managed to harvest equivalent to eight bags which is almost 800kg. Before World Vision's intervention, I only harvested 300kg per acre. Now, we have enough food for our families and surplus for extra-income we spent on taking good care of our children...families are happier now than they were

before."

ms Bakari's observation is echoed by Hidaya Abdullah, whose family of five is happier now than before the magoma-ADP programme. With a beaming smile in her face, she said, "We pray that God bless those who have played a role in changing our lives...there was this time when I could not afford to buy clothes for my children...I really thank God for magoma-ADP."

It was observed that water was supplied into the fields through traditionally hand dug canals which were not properly designed and had no definite shape for conveying it effectively. The channels lacked control devices for effective distribution.

As a result, a significant amount of water got lost on the way through seepage and evaporation. The poor canals with their inefficient mechanisms caused water scarcity and led to low crop production. This greatly affected household incomes.

The African Child also learnt that the main canal was dug by hand and was therefore narrow and shallow with a low water carrying capacity. Water was being diverted from the main canal to other small canals using temporary mud dams.

The traditional supply system did not have canals leading to individual farmers' fields; instead the water was being shared from one farm to another. This kind of arrangement reportedly created conflicts between upstream and downstream farmers.

According to Ramadhan Sebalua, who is now in his 90s but still very strong and hasn't lost his memory, Kwemazandu Village was formed in 1970 as one of the 'Ujamaa' villages established under the socialist policy. The village started with only 11 people and he was one of them.

Sebalua, who once served as magoma Ward Councillor, said irrigation infrastructure were

constructed in 1970s. However, after floods swept the village in 1977, nothing remained in place. "Some attempts were made to repair the infrastructure in 1984 and later on in 1989, but the coming of the World Vision through the magoma-ADP project has helped in making them back into life."

The old man also said that the economic statuses of household have improved following significant improvement in food security. Children are the primary beneficiaries because their parents and guardians now can afford feeding them well and meet their educational needs, he said.

According to him, the awareness on climatic change impacts has also helped a great deal in enabling the Kwemazandu community to develop adaptation mitigations such as tree planting campaigns around water sources.

For his part, Rajabu Selukonja, an agricultural extension officer, patted of World Vision on the back strongly urging the good work done should be sustained. "This area is dominated by small-scale farmers. Previously, they never produced enough food for their families. As a result, every year they relied on food aid from the government."

According to him, smallholders have partially become commercial farmers, with access to irrigation, all thanks to magoma-ADP. There have been new jobs created in the agricultural value chain, while the village's food security has also been assured.

It is said that the primary reason for irrigating land is to improve agricultural productivity in areas where surface soils are dry.

Rainfall in the area is low and unreliable. This state of climate limits the growth of agricultural crops, as well as other human activities relying on water for their growth.

The rainfall regime is predominantly from a single rainy season of march to June, as there is no rain during the rest of the year. Generally, heavy rains fall from march to April.

The relatively high standard deviation in the transitional months is due to variations from year to year of the onset and termination of the rainy season. But with magoma-ADP irrigation project, all these have become things of history.

In addition, the rainfall amount, as well as the onset of the rainy season do vary considerably from year to year, which often affected crop production, leading to low production and making the people end up in poverty.

"Irrigation is, therefore, strongly advised to improve crop production and household income to reduce poverty traps amongst farmers and this is what the World Vision has done," the extension officer noted.

For WVT, changing lives through improved agriculture, cash income and social services is all that matters. And now that rice farming at Kwemazandu has improved, the lives of children, such as Ali and his friend, mwalilei, has changed too.

"I am happy," says mwalilei. "At home; we have more than enough food...things have changed. As you can see, apart from having enough food at home, my parents also have managed to buy me new clothes and shoes...I can now walk proudly."

By Dickson Ng'hily, Korogwe

"It wasn't an easy life, as we had been living without access to clean and safe water for more than five decades and yet water is an essential ingredient for a healthy human life. We didn't have enough to drink, wash, as well as for other domestic use, it was a disaster."

This is what Abraham Shemkunta (50), the Chairperson for Manka Village, says when he meets the African Child reporter. His village is among 36 forming Bungu Division which is located in Korogwe District, Tanga Region.

Manka lies almost 50 kilometres from Korogwe Township. The village is found near Sakale Forest which is part of the eastern Arc mountains. The distance seems miles from civilisation. It's no surprise that this area was forgotten by the authorities as far as supplying them with safe water is concerned.

However, after enquiring the villagers' needs, World Vision Tanzania through its Bungu Area Development Programmes, commonly referred to as 'Bungu-ADP', decided to construct a water project, which involved installation of three water collector tanks with the capacity of 90,000 litres. The tanks stored water from Sakale water catchments.

The World Vision's support has made community's dreams of gaining access to clean water come true.

Shemkunta says the time spent walking when going to fetch water made their women subjected to the risk of harassment and sexual assault. As a result, women failed to take good care of their families. But with safe water available nearby, women are free to pursue new opportunities and improve their families' lives.

Water crisis in the area, according to Shemkunta, was caused by lack of support and planning since the area's climate is neither particularly dry nor lacking in rivers, streams and groundwater.

Recalling the year 1971, he says that the government designed a water project that would have fed the entire community of Manka and its neighbours, but the project failed due to poor management. "That is why I said earlier that water crisis in this village is a manmade problem."

He adds that women and children, especially girls, spent many hours walking to fetch water which worse enough was likely contaminated.

For young children, diseases such as typhoid, hepatitis and diarrhoea caused fatalities. The village leader says, "most people, especially children, in this village got diseases related to stomach and intestine." He explains that this was mainly caused by lack of access to clean water and proper sanitation facilities.

According to him, water was also a major problem for schools, and schoolchildren instead of spending their time learning; they had to fetch water from long distances. "Schools don't have drilled wells, so students were asked to bring water for general use at school and for the school toilet," Shemkunta notes.

"Schools were lacking water, thus being hazardous to student's health. As you know, poor water service leads to poor health, which keeps children out of studies. If illnesses keep them out of school, the burden of disease interferes with their ability to concentrate and learn. Therefore, the quality of education is being compromised," he observed.

He says providing clean water to schools was meant to make schools child-friendly. That is why he is now thanking the World Vision as his family and the rest of the families in the village and the neighbourhoods, have more than enough



Lewa Primary School pupils quench their thirst at a domestic water point at their school

Water flows after over 50 years of hardship

water.

"We now have water; we don't need to fetch it from far away anymore. Whenever we want to take a bath or wash clothes, we just turn on the tap.

Through Bungu-ADP, the villages of Msasa, Bungu, Bungu Msinga, Manka, Gare and Mheza are now enjoying safe and reliable water. "Each has more than four domestic points (DP) whereby people can have access to water easily," notes Shemkunta, adding:

"It's really wonderful. We call this act as liberation, we suffered a lot, women and children faced lots of challenges on their way when they went out to fetch water. School children couldn't perform well in their studies. They had to be up at dawn to collect water for their families before considering going to school. They had to walk for long distances to collect water."

According to him, the children get tired and some have to miss school as a result, doing this for many years eats up school time and the cycle continues. In some families, girls were not allowed to go to school at all, so that they could serve the family by getting water and taking care of other family needs.

Shemkunta's concern is echoed by a Lewa Primary School pupil Herietha, who says they could not concentrate in their studies. "It was really tough to the extent that we couldn't perform well in our studies."

"I needed to carry 20 litres of water and walk from 10 to 15 kilometres up and downstream twice a day," says 12-year-old Harietha, who lives in a remote and mountainous area of Liwa Village, which is located next to Manka Village.

"Sometimes, I fell down and injured my arm and leg or break the barrel. I used to get typhoid and had to go to the health centre several times. So, we really needed clean water for our school so as to keep us and the community in general healthy," she adds.

Harietha is not happy. Lucy, Iddi and Charles, are happy as well as now water is not a problem at all. They expressed appreciation and thanks to World Vision

administration and staff in general for ending the water problem which affected their school and the entire village community for many years.

Robert Kijazi, the head teacher for Lewa, confirms that with reliable water, the school the children's performance has generally improved. "We have been doing well, in terms of passing Standard Four and Seven national exams since then [after water supply was assured]. Currently, our passing rate stands at 100 per cent. Before the Bungu-ADP's water project, the pass rate was below 50 per cent," he informs.

According to Kijazi, water can contribute to good health, and schools are in a unique position to promote healthy, and dietary behaviors, including drinking water regularly.

"More than 95 per cent of children and adolescents are enrolled in schools, and students typically spend at least more than 6 hours at school each day. So, Bungu-ADP has helped us to ensure pupils have access to safe water in the school environment," he adds.

Kijazi also says, "There has been increased children's school attendance, level of education and literacy rates because the children no longer miss school for the purpose of going out to fetch water for their families and school. In fact, Bungu-ADP has provided hope for generations ahead."

Kijazi says at his school, pupils are not only studying, but also eat as well. Therefore, water was needed for cooking, cleaning and washing. With the help of Bungu-ADP, the school has been provided with a tap (DP) which has reduced the time spent on fetching water.

According to a recent research by the University of East Anglia (UEA), providing water could be key to helping people lift themselves out of poverty. Although people in Bungu were among some 1.1 billion worldwide who lack access to water, with the Bungu-ADP, the story has changed and the water agony is no more.

In African culture, it is obvious that

women and children, especially girls, are the ones responsible for finding and fetching water for their families to meet the basic necessities of drinking, washing, cooking, and cleaning.

For Elizabeth Kihyo (40), a mother of five, says fetching water from long distances 'is a back-breaking and time consuming. She recalls when it used to be before the Bungu-ADP water project was designed.

"The situation wasn't easy at all; we could walk up to 30 kilometres to fetch water. There were many fights and yet water was in short supply because it was just a small stream that could not cater for all of us. Women and girls were subjected to sexual harassments. In 1971, the government sought to wipe our tears by providing us with clean and safe water, but nothing was achieved," she recalls.

"Yes, there have been many bad cases related to lack of water," says 37-year-old Agnes Mwaukai. "What can I say is that, I am too embarrassed to say what happened," she says, trying hard to fight back tears as she remembers an incident of sexual harassment.

21-year-old Damalisi Mathias says that women and girls were forced to suffer in silence. "Some of us have complained to our village leaders. There were nothing to be done...life can go on without food for a few days, but not without water," says Mathias.

Kihyo, who doubles as member of the village water committee, says the time consumed when fetching water denied them the opportunity to pursue other economic activities such as farming.

Now that things have changed for the better, Kihyo and other women are happy as there will be no fear for sexual harassments and contamination from unsafe and unreliable water. Peace has prevailed.

According to her, they currently take bath three times a day. "My children are happy, they attend to school without any miss, maybe when they are ill. Thank you World Vision Bungu-ADP for providing us

this salvation, indeed you have rescued us from suffering," Kihyo applauds.

The villagers have opened a bank account to save money obtained from contributions for maintaining water supply service facilities. The village water committee has a responsibility of making sure that water issues are well coordinated and villagers are well sensitised on conserving sources of water. The water committee has also formulated by-laws to ensure that each member observes the rules for safeguarding water infrastructure and conserving water sources.

"Since achieving water security for the community and individuals is one of the greatest development challenges confronting us, we have established the village water committee. We have opened a bank account to which each household contributes 500/- monthly. The money helps us to maintain as well as service water infrastructure," she notes. The villagers are aware of environmental conservation initiatives started by the Bungu-ADP, thus commit to continue conserving water sources by planting trees and penalising those found going against the spirit of environmental conservation.

Under the same programme, people have formed groups for starting tree nurseries and planting trees. Furthermore, villagers are aware of by-laws that prevent forest fires. The environmental conservation committee was formed to oversee all activities related to environmental conservation.

The impact of water on all aspects of development is undeniable, that is why the millennium Development Goal (MDG) 7C calls to halve by this year the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

Bungu-ADP which is an integrated, community-based and child focused development programme started in the year 1997 and completed in 2014. The programme was implemented in Tanga Region's Korogwe District and has benefited 36 villages in Bungu Division covering an area of 285 km². The division constitutes of six wards.

Bungu-ADP, which has targeted, reached and benefited 68,504 people, had the goal of improving the socio-economic status of the Bungu community by the end of year 2014, using 4 projects in the areas of health, food security, management and education.

World Vision area development program

Pupils read textbooks donated by the World Vision Tanzania through its Area Development Programmes in Tanga Region



Form Four student Margret Simtego feeds her father's dairy cattle at Kwamianga Village in Hale District, Tanga Region. The school fees her family pays for her studies is obtained from proceeds of the dairy business



Members of the Mamboleo Group in Muheza District, Tanga Region attend to their dairy cattle



Group Members admire dairy cattle which they got from WVT after undergoing training



Programmes in pictures



Women and Children at Manka Village in Korogwe District, Tanga Region enjoy water from one of the taps installed by the World Vision



Dr Mark Mathube inside his office



Kwata Primary School pupils at Magoma Village in Muheza District, Tanga Region perusing books donated by World Vision

Why it pays more to empower women than men

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cropped up. "The need to stabilise our livelihoods by providing start-up funds for small businesses as well as smoothing spending flows and sending children to school, micro-credits which are often that help to promote economic empowerment, were sought," she says.

"This was a great idea because empowering women has a direct impact on children's lives," she tells the African Child.

Batuli, who is currently serving as a chairperson of mamboleo economic Group tells this reporter that her challenge was on how the group was going to reach poor women who are landless labourers, smallholders, petty and food vendors to ensure that they get the opportunities and access the benefits of economic growth.

"Since we were victims of hardships, in 2011 we decided to form a group. We now have 31 members, 9 of them are men. In the beginning, we contributed 500,000/- for start-up capital, members were encouraged to borrow with little interest," the chairperson explains.

According to her, women need credit to increase the family's income through expanded production and investment and to improve the family's welfare through increased consumption. Women have been and continue to be heavily involved in rural production. They need credit to increase their productivity and income just as rural development schemes need to improve women's productivity.

"Our group's target is to have a village with which her people, especially women and their children, are able to realise their full social, economic and civic potential," Batuli envisions.

"Women spend a larger portion of their earnings on the family than men do. That includes purchasing food, paying for health care, settling housing bills, and meeting education costs for their children. In fact, woman's income plays a crucial part in the wellbeing of the family."

o mary Kidundai, the Secretary of mamboleo economic Group, sees economic empowerment as a way in which their capacity to bring about economic change is increased and human rights in women are achieved.

As according to him, when any institution invests in women, and when they work to eliminate inequalities, families are less likely to be plagued by poverty.

Women are key agents in the process of achieving the transformational, economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development. But limited access to credit is one of the many challenges they face.

Therefore, empowering them is crucial not only for the well-being of individuals, families and rural communities, but also for the overall economic productivity, given women's big presence in the agricultural workforce countrywide.

This is why Kidundai says, "Participation in income-generating activities is of vital interest to the women throughout the country. Women participate in activities which they feel will increase their incomes, which they would spend on their children and other members of their families. In some cases, women are the breadwinners."

He adds: "Lives of women and children in our village have improved dramatically in many aspects. Children are now going to school more than ever as families have the ability to pay their fees at different levels of education. economically speaking, we have improved; imagine, as you have been told, our group started with only 500,000/-, but currently we have about 20 million/- deposited in our bank account and 1.7 million/- cash."

Things wouldn't be the way they are right now, without the support of the World Vision Tanzania

(WVT) through a programme meant to empower the community socially and economically for the purpose of improving the wellbeing of the children.

"The project has achieved its outcome of increasing household income by strengthening our credit scheme income generating activities that we had established," he notes, adding: "We thought of engaging in various income generating activities such as selling sugar and soap on credit to our members. The group also owns four motorcycles [bodabodas] from which we get 210,000/- per month."

As part of their interventions and capacity building, the WVT provided training to the group whose members come from economically disadvantaged families. They have been supported to nurture their natural creative instincts and enable them to move towards economic independence.

experts say, economic development efforts to combat poverty can only succeed if women are part of the solution. Doing so, yields a double dividend, when women are economically empowered, they raise healthier, and better educated families. Their communities too are more economically prosperous because of it.

Zaina Rashid, a mamboleo group member, says: "my life has changed completely; my children were suffering from malnutrition. I couldn't provide them a balanced diet and I was unable to take them to school. For sure, things were awful. I thank the World Vision for helping us...their initiative has helped us improve our lives."

Rashid tells the African Child that the WVT gave them 10 beehives, chicks, two dairy cattle that have bred into four as well as improved seeds for rice, cassava, nuts and sunflower. "We are now enjoying life...there is hope for tomorrow."

According to Rashid, her children faced many problems in their childhood due to lack of funds. The land her family owned was not sufficient to meet the needs to feed the family for an entire year. Her economic condition improved through savings and credit she obtained from the group. She took out a loan several times for her children's education. She was also able to buy a piece of land.

She has participated in the training on institutional development, savings, credit, cooperatives, accounts keeping, cooperative visioning and managing, business planning, leadership, women's legal rights, sustainable agriculture, gender and governance all provided by the WVT.

"I am capable to look after my children and my home even if no one supports me because I have a regular income. I am free to travel and attend different programmes inside and outside the village and my childhood dream has come true with the help of the WVT," she testifies.

even though her financial condition was not the greatest, she always thought of doing something for her society. Her dream turned into reality after joining mamboleo group as they have managed to buy uniforms and other school supplies for 15 children, while looking forward to enroll 10 children into a Community Health Fund (CHF), a voluntary pre-payment scheme, which offers an opportunity to acquire a 'health insurance' after paying contribution.

o ther group members - Fatuma Gabo, Asha Abdallah, Salma o mary, o mary mgaya, Asha Ally and Fatuma mohamed - thanked the WVT, saying access to credit has helped them alleviate poverty by expanding options when managing consumption over time.

"Traditionally, we small-scale farmers, relied on money-lenders for agricultural inputs for consumption requirements until harvest. However, we have realized that credit provision with goals of sustainable poverty reduction is of great help to the rural families," Fatuma notes.

According to her, although many women in the area are still poor, they are determined to solve their family problems. This could have been not possible without capital and financial services as well as regular incomes they get through mamboleo and other economic ventures they started with the group's support.

World Vision is committed to partnering with Tanzanians to improve their lives today and to help enact sustainable solutions for the future of their children, families, and communities. The organisation has trained and equipped village savings and credit groups, thus enabling them to help families increase their household incomes.

By Dickson Ng'hily, Korogwe

WHILE many in Tanzania's rural settings are still lagging behind in improving the education sector, the story isn't the same at magoma Village. Residents there have defied the odds and managed to improve access to education for all children of school-going age.

The success hasn't happened by chance. It has been realised after the intervention of the World Vision Tanzania (WVT) through its magoma Area Development Programme, referred to by most people there as 'magoma-ADP,' which kicked off about 15 years ago.

The African Child reporter camped at the village, located in Korogwe District, Tanga Region, recently where he met with various people, among them majoho Luhui, the magoma Ward education Coordinator.

"The state of education in this ward was extremely bad due to the fact that most of parents and guardians' awareness as far as education is concern was very poor and this was a major hindrance to improving the learning environment, thus it led to poor academic performance," Luhui tells the African Child.

According to the United Nations educational, Scientific and Cultural organisation (UNESCO), poor educational achievement in rural communities is one of the major impediments to improving employability, and therefore to economic advancement. The agency estimates that 80 per cent of school-going age children who do not attend school live in rural communities.

moreover, the Ward education Coordinator commended the work done by the magoma-ADP, saying it has changed everything. "This year, we have managed to exceed our target to the extent that no school-going age child has remained at home."

She says that parents, children, teachers and local government leaders were trained under a programme on the importance of education. members of community participated in revisiting their past, present and future where they got the opportunity to envision the kind life they aspired to live.

"This [training] brought about changes," she notes, "the passing rate [in national exams] has increased from less than 10 per cent before the programme to 90 per cent last year. The drop-out rate has decreased from 5 per cent before to 1.2 per cent, while this year, enrollment in both kindergarten and primary schools have increased to 112 per cent and 109 per cent respectively."

According her, a World Vision's 1999 baseline survey, classified magoma Division as a needy community, and one of the identified areas of growth included the education sector which required immediate and dedicated responses by stakeholders.

The survey showed that there were 19 primary schools and one secondary school in magoma Division which comprises of 25 villages. The quality of education services and resource available were considerably below acceptable standards.

Also, there were acute shortages of classrooms, teachers' houses, latrines, teaching aids and desks which contributed to poor teaching-learning environment. most primary school



Mzule Primary School pupils at Bondo Village in Handeni District, Tanga Region with their textbooks donated by World Vision

Poor residents defy the odds to uplift children's access to education

classrooms had poor structures – mud and pole walls with thatched roofs.

The study indicated that there were 61 classrooms, but only 27 of them were permanent structures and these were found in only 5 primary schools. even those available were old with worn out floor, cracked walls and leaking roofs. Lack of classrooms forced pupils at different education levels to share a classroom and at some point, pupils studied under a tree.

The survey also found that some schools were unable to offer studies at all levels - from Standard one to Seven; as a result, children had to walk more than 5 kilometres to a neighbouring village for studies. This led into overcrowding, ineffectiveness and inefficiency.

making reference to the 1999 survey, Luhui says, "even children aged 3-6 years could not study because there were only 3 nursery schools in the division. most children joined Standard one without attending early childhood development classes."

There were only 13 quarters meant to cater for 123 teaching staff. This as well discouraged us from going to work in the area. "Likewise," she says, "There were 36 latrines that were insufficient to meet the needs of 3,150 pupils as a result, there were acute cases diseases such as UTI."

The African Child was also told that the schools in the area were short of 123 teachers, something which

forced the few educators available to carry a huge workload. This as well resulted into poor academic performance.

Furthermore, teachers lacked refresher courses on methodologies for inclusive education. The pupil-desk ratio was 1:5 while the National education Policy provides that the ratio should be at least 1:2.

Children enrolment in primary schools was only 66 per cent and some children were enrolled at inappropriate age instead of the statutory age of seven years. 67 per cent of the pupils attained the ministry of education and Vocational Training (moeVT) pass mark and only 10 per cent (45/450) were selected to join government secondary schools.

School committees were inefficient and ineffective. Though school committees had been formed, they lacked basic skills for planning and managing affairs of the schools and, in most cases, they didn't know their role.

Little knowledge amongst community members on children's rights perpetuated child abuse incidences. Communities clung to adverse cultural practices such as Female Genital mutilation (FGM) which denied children, particularly girls, the opportunity to study. Also, children especially those from pastoral communities, were made to tether for animals as well as work in fields instead of going to school.

Kwata Primary School Head Teacher mary Kiango says that the World Vision programme has managed to provide support to the community in building or renovating classrooms as well as teachers' houses and offices.

"Since its inception to date, the programme has facilitated the construction of 64 classrooms, 10 teachers' offices and 6 storerooms. Nine classrooms were renovated. The magoma-ADP also facilitated renovation and upgrading of 32 latrines that had temporal and depleted structures," she notes.

Hamis and Zawadi, both Standard Six pupils at Kwata Primary School, say the World Vision's intervention in the education sector has helped a great deal in providing them with the good learning environment and has contributed to their success academically.

"The project has supported us to establish demonstration farms where children and community members learn better maize and beans farming practices. This gives us the ability to run our own farms when we grow up," Hamis notes.

Their teacher, Kiango, says the programme collaborated with the District cultural office to train 56 teachers on sports and games an effort that has made it possible to introduce new sports such as performing arts that were previously not taught.

"The programme also supported 6

interschool mock examinations for Standard 1V and VII, strengthened 15 school health clubs and facilitated the formation of children parliaments for advocating children rights. The model House helps to build self confidence amongst the children. Now, they can express themselves easily as far as children rights are concerned," Kiango explains.

Additionally, she says, the magoma-ADP programme has supplied all 28 schools with a total of 15,098 text books. "This has reduced the book-pupil ratio from 1:7 in 1999 to 1:3, which is above the national standard of 1:5," she notes.

Information available at World Vision' magoma ADP office indicate that with the need to train teachers in mind, the programme managed to facilitate the training of 128 primary school teachers on teaching methodologies for topics under the new syllabus which in turn improved pupils academic performance and was reflected in national examinations results.

Furthermore, 28 pre-primary school teachers were trained on methodologies for teaching children aged 3-6 years. The Programme also conducted seminars to create awareness on basic rights for children, particularly a girl child and sponsored care programmes for orphans in schools.

Beneficiaries testify that advocacy efforts on children rights have reduced female genital mutilation and early child marriage practices and community members nowadays openly discuss, report and take stern actions against those perpetrating them.

On the other hand, awareness on the importance of education, especially amongst the pastoral communities, prompted initiation of 9 new schools, which created more chances children to access education.

Through awareness on importance of Early Childhood Development Classes (eCDe), 20 pre-classes have been established through community initiatives under the magoma-ADP programme and this has not only improved functional literacy amongst children, but also enabled targeted children to be enrolled in Standard one at an appropriate age.

Support of learning materials, mock examinations, and refresher trainings to teachers, capacity building to school committees and strengthening of school feeding programmes have drastically improved performance and reduced dropout rates.

Zubeda, a Standard Seven pupil at Kwata Primary School, testifies that advocacy efforts on children's rights have helped in curbing FGM and early child marriages.

The ADP is working in 4 wards namely mashewa, magoma, Kerenge and Kizara. A total of 25 villages falling in these wards benefit from the programme. The ADP was a World Vision - Germany sponsored programme that started in October 1999 and expect to end in September this year.

The main goal of the programme is to contribute towards improved living conditions of the magoma community by the year 2015. During this phase, the programme is implementing four projects on health, education, food security and management.

magoma ADP is in its third phase and will come to an end in 2015.

By Dickson Ng'hily, Muheza

For more than 52 years ago during the 'Ujamaa era,' Mbambala Village is located in Muheza District, Tanga Region. One of the pressing challenges that this village has been grappling with over the years is lack of reliable health services.

For a long time, residents of the village were forced to walk long distances to access health services in the neighbouring village of Mtindilo which is about 17 kilometres away. Trekking such a distance to seek or escorting a patient to a dispensary or health centre wasn't an easy task.

A traditional midwife Lucia Kibano tells the African Child that roads connecting the area with other villages are not passable during the rainy seasons. "If it happened that someone from a family that could afford to pay for transport, the only transport that was available was a tractor," she narrates, adding:

"I remember, one lady died on her way to Muheza hospital, we couldn't help her. If the village had a health facility, that lady's life could have been saved, but with the long distance, loss of blood, she couldn't make it. Fortunately, the baby survived."

According to Lucia, those without money were carried on hammocks. "If you happen to hear a child called 'Naporu', 'Kapoli' or 'Nansia', then that child was born when his/her mother was on her way to the hospital. In fact, these are common names in Mbambala Village."

On top of all that, there was this dogma: when giving birth, women were in the first place expected to do so completely alone and if not, was given power to decide who should be around when she gives birth.

"When women realised labour was not progressing normally, they first sought help from female friends or traditional midwives which resulted into further delay in seeking medical attention from someone who is trained to handle such complications.

Women were considered to be strong and independent if they can deliver themselves without external help. This belief, at times, led to very dangerous circumstances as some women's labour were prolonged for lack of assistance, something which risked their own lives and the lives of the new-borns.

In Tanzania, those who live in rural areas, who make approximately 80 per cent of the country's population, work primarily as farmers, or farm workers. These people are more likely to be poorer, sicker, older, uninsured, and medically underserved than urban populations.

Many factors affecting the village's ability to overcome many health-related problems including child and maternal mortality were vividly seen in the Mbambala community. Some of the common reasons why maternal and child mortality remained high in the area include lack of health facility and poverty. According to Dr Mark Mathube, who is currently heading the newly built Mbambala Village Dispensary, it was difficult to accurately track child and maternal deaths at the village, unless a death occurred in a health facility. Corpses were buried without any checks or

Village cuts child mortality, saves mothers' lives



Women and their babies await their turn at a clinic supported by World Vision Tanzania

records. The overall statistics on child and maternal mortality in Mbambala were not accurate, but, even with the known number of deaths; the figures were much too high.

Dr Mathube confirms to this reporter that Mbambala as well as neighbouring villages are difficult to reach by health experts because of bad road condition. "The roads become even worse during the rainy season and are inaccessible. Yet preventable diseases, such as malaria, convulsions, and diarrhoea are very common."

The young and energetic doctor explains that people in the area had to travel long distances to access specialist services. "In urban areas, there is reliable public transport used by patients to go to medical appointments. However, in rural areas transport is unreliable, and the situation gets even worse considering the fact that rural areas more elderly who have chronic conditions, which may require multiple visits to outpatient healthcare facilities," he elaborates.

"Care during pregnancy and children are mostly in the hands of the mothers. Yet, many of them cannot read and write and therefore have no access to information and knowledge for safe pregnancy and child care," he adds.

However, things have changed for the better.

"For the past one and half years, things have changed," narrates Dr Mathube. "This is due to the fact that the World Vision Tanzania (WVT) has intervened as part of its efforts to address one or more aspects of child well-being."

According to the information available to the African Child during a preliminary survey for this project, WVT discovered that most children at Mbambala Village were not getting reliable health services such as immunisation.

In response to the challenge, the organisation decided to construct a modern health centre with all the equipment needed for the facility to function properly. The facility has outpatient department, a reproductive and child healthcare centre and a minor theatre. The facility also acts as a centre for the distribution of TB and ARV drugs.

"After the intervention, things are not the same. We really thank the World Vision for providing the village with such complete functioning health facility. To be honest, this is a classic, modern and well-furnished health facility if you are to compare it with other government operated health facilities countrywide," Dr Mathube notes.

He says that the new health facility serves nine villages, including Mbambala, Jambe and Maweni.

According to Dr Mathube, before

having the facility, many pregnant women preferred to deliver at home, often with the assistance of traditional midwives who were not registered and thus suffered complications.

Before the health centre was put up, many women, because of illiteracy and ignorance, relied on myths, rumours and misconceptions that discouraged them from using reproductive health services, particularly family planning.

Then there was this belief that the more children a woman had, the more fertile she was. However, what they didn't figure out is the dark side of the philosophy bearing the fact that giving birth to more children without proper care risked their lives and the lives of their babies.

"Since there are more cases which are related to a woman with more than five deliveries or pregnancy under 20 years of age, this facility has helped a lot...there was one case whereby a 19-year-old girl who had a third pregnancy while on labour pain she went to the washroom. I had to follow her...if I wasn't around, she could have delivered her baby in the toilet which could have endangered the new-born's life," he expounds.

"After the construction of the health facility, we have been conducting training and we encourage women to come with their

husbands or partners. We teach them how to take care of pregnancy and ways to handle complications during pregnancy, childbirth, labour, and the danger signs in pregnancy and afterwards. It is important to involve husbands in any form of maternal health education," notes the expert.

For Chris Simundwe, a chairperson for the village's health committee and father of five, the newly built dispensary has come at the right time. With the concentration of poverty, low health status and high burden of disease in rural areas, there was a need to focus specifically on improving the health of the Mbambala people, and that what the WVT exactly did.

"This facility has contributed to lowering child and maternal mortality, and helped to improve basic health care for all, including reproductive health services. I would love my people to know that when they get ill or injured, then this dispensary exists to 'save' them," he explains.

Simundwe concludes, "So, one of the basic things that the WVT has done for us is the construction of the dispensary. This will reduce hardships in taking patients to other places for medical care. For sure, the WVT has lived to its promise. This project has contributed to the child well-being. Now families have been assured of reliable medical services."



FAITH based forums (FBF) are transforming and building relationships between muslim majority communities and children in Handeni, Tanzania.

FBF was created as a way to bring the two dominant faiths together (muslim and Christian) on issues that relate to child well-being and community development.

The forum has been established for over two years with 18 groups meeting annually, with a total of 700 members from the different regions in Tanzania.

The main reason for Handeni FBF was due to historic religious segregation in the community. World Vision wanted to bridge the gap between the two faiths in order to create a sustainable future for their children.

Approximately 99% of people in mswaki area development programme are muslims. Issues arose in the community due to the presence of World Vision being known as Christian organisation. muslim families feared joining the organisation particularly under a child sponsorship capacity thinking the intention of the organisation was to proselytise.

FBF has impacted families within the



Faith based forums are key in successful community relationships



We enjoy attending the FBF and receiving training to help better our understanding on community development issues.

community by creating good relationships with children and parents, resolving conflicts due to interfaith dialogue, having meetings between different tribal elders, and inviting government representatives to be involved in these discussions.

"We enjoy attending the FBF and receiving training to help better our understanding on community development issues.

Before there was no meeting between Christians and muslims but nowadays we can meet and work together in peace," says Sheikh Ahmad Rajab mniga.

During the quarterly interfaith forum meetings, which took place on may 13, 2015, was attended by approximately 30 faith leaders. The key issues that were discussed during the forum were; Parents to unite together in promoting unity in the community, the importance of taking children to

school and addressing issue of afternoon meals, and how to rebuild peace amongst other issues.

Some of their reported successes since the establishment of Handeni FBF have been; Unity in various issues like wedding and burial ceremonies, school attendance increased due to the provision of afternoon meals, children are respecting their elders, community now promotes peace, members are listening to each other more, whilst serving and educating orphans.

All members of the FBF are confident of their future relationships. They hope to raise children well in education – teaching children moral issues and good behaviour.

They look forward to growing a stronger relationship together for community development and the next generation.

CARTOON

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