Better farming practices give children more food, happiness

By Dickson Ng’hibi, 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

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

Why it pays more to empower women than men

Water flows after over 50 years of hardship

Better farming practices give children more food, happiness
Better farming practices give children more food, happiness

By African Child Reporter, Tanga

A l and mwalwe, both pupils at Kwata Primary School at the 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 all, and we only eat vegetables, as there were 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 have no food, they would ask you to concentrate. But how can you concentrate with an empty stomach?"

And for mwalwe, 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 are also 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.

Kwemazundu Village, the home of Ali and mwalwe, 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 tillling traditionally affected crop yields.

According to mwalwe, a chairperson for Kwemazundu farmers' group; the average harvest per acre per year is very low and was unable to meet household food needs and income generation. To face the reality mwalwe reports: "...the average harvest per acre per year was not high compared to the national average, for each food crop harvested last for only two to three months.

"We were practicing poor methods of rice farming through the old 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."

Ali and mwalwe, 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 sorely 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-tome dream.

Complementing the national initiatives to green revolution initiated under the Big Results Now (BRN) policy, magama 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 magama-ADP started in this area, things have changed. We now harvest at least 5-6 tonnes per hectare," testifies mwalwe, 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 revealed.

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."

mwalwe 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 level, you may be surprised to learn that it has little to do with food shortages as global supplies of far outstrip demand.

Far more people die from causes related to chronic hunger than to famine. Chronically hungry people are extremely 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, "efforts by magama-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 agroecological practices adopted in paddy production, which is one of the main cultivated crops, is proper spacing.

Although she owns just half an acre of land, she says, "With the support of magama-ADP, I have managed to harvest enough to eight bags which is almost 800kg. Before World Vision's intervention, I only harvested 300 kg 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 Abdallah, whose family of five is happier now than before the magama-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 magama-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 proper 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 Ramadan Sebulu, who is now in his 90s but still very strong and hasn't lost his memory, Kwemazundu 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.

Sebulu, who once served as magama 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 magama-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 Kwemazundu community to develop adaptation mitigations such as tree planting campaigns around water sources.

For his part, Rajabu Sekukonja, an agricultural 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 magama-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 irrigation 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 determined by the 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 of the rainfall in the whole months is due to variations from year to year of the onset and termination of the rainy season. But with magama-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 magama-ADP has done," the extension officer noted.

For WVT, changing lives through improved crop production and household income and social services is all matters. And now that rice farming at Kwemazundu has been revived, the lives of children, such as Ali and his friend, mwalwe, has changed too. "I love my village," said Ali. "At home; we have more than enough food...things have changed. As you can see, we are not afraid of food at home, my parents also have managed to buy me new clothes and shoes...I can now walk proudly."

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Water flows after over 50 years of hardship

By Dickson Ng’hiyi, 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 how Abubakar Shemkunta (50), the Chairperson for manika Village, says when he meets the African Child reporter. His village is among 36 forming Bungu Division which is located in Kgoro District, Tanga Region. Manika lies almost 50 kilometres from Korogwe Town. The village is found near Saki 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.

Hoping to realise the villagers’ needs, World Vision Tanzania through its Bungu Area Development Program (Bungu-ADP) referred 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 Saki 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, women are free to pursue new opportunities and improve their families’ lives.

It’s 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 ground water.

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

He adds that women and children, especially during the present occasions of going to fetch water which was enough was likely contaminated.

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 Hertiwa, 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 upstream and downstream twice a day," says 12-year-old Hertiwa, who lives in a remote and mountainous area of Liwa Village, which is located next to manika 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.

Hertiwa is not happy. Lucy, Iddi and Charles, are happy as well as new water is not a problem at all. They expressed appreciation and thanks to World Vision administration and staff in general for ensuring that the school and the entire village community for many years.

Robert Kjaali, 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 Kjaali, 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.

Kjaali also says, "There has been increased children’s school attendance, level of education and literacy rates because children are now faster to go 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."

Kjaali 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 the 1.8 billion people 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 the child Shemkunta (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 mwauki. "What I can 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 Danai msiasa 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 msiasa.

Kjaali, 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, Kjaali 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 three baths a day. "my children are happy, they attend school without any mis, maybe when they are ill. Thank you World Vision Bungu-ADP for providing us this salvation, indeed you have rescued us from suffering," Kjaali applauds.

The government has a bank account to save money obtained from contributions for maintaining water supply services 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 a strategy 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 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 Kgoro District and has benefited 36 villages in Bungu Division covering an area of 285 km2. The division constitutes of six wards.

Bungu-ADP has been 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.
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.

Form Four student Margaret 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.

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

Members of the Mamboleo Group in Muheza District, Tanga Region attend to their dairy cattle.
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 share in agricultural 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, women’s income pays 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 worldwide. However, 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 (bodolasas) 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, and now I 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 him 10 beehives, from which we 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 child 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.

A woman 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.

Her group members - Fatuma Gabo, Asha Abdallah, Salma o maw, o mary mgya, Alia 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 explains.

According to her, although many women in the area are still poor, they are determined to solve their family problems. This they achieve with help from the world vision foundation, Fatuma insists.

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.
Wilde many in Tanzania’s rural settings are still being forced into child labour and early-age- goings. The success hadn’t happened by chance. It has been realised after the intervention of the World Vision Tanzania (WVT) through its magoma Area Development Programme (ADP), referred 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 major donors to 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 employment, and therefore to economic advancement. The agency estimates that 80 per cent of school-going aged 3-6 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 and 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 kindergarten and primary schools have increased to 112 per cent and 109 per cent respectively.”

According to a World Vision’s 1999 baseline survey, classified magoma Division as a newly community and one of the identified areas of growth included the education sector which required immediate and articulated responses by stakeholders.

The survey showed that there were 36 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 shortages of classrooms, teachers’ houses, latrines, teaching aids and desks which contributed to poor teaching-learning environments. Most primary school 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 children’s exhorted pupils at different education levels to share a classroom and at some points, 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 to overcrowding, ineffectiveness and inefficiency.

making reference to the 1999 survey, Luhui says, “even children aged 3-4 years could not study because there were only 3 nursery schools in the division, most children joined Standards no 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 refreshers 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 perpetrated 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.

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 interschool mock examinations for Standard VI and VII, the magoma ADP has educated 15 school health clubs and facilitated the formation of children parliament for accommodating children. The model House helps to build self confidence amongst the children. Now, they can express themselves more as far as children rights are concerned,” Kiango explains.

Additionally, she says, the magoma-ADP programme has supplied 28 schools with a total of 15,098 text books. “This has reduced the book-pupil ratio from 1.7:1 in 1999 to 1:3, which is about the national standard of 1:5,” she notes.

Information available at World Vision’s magoma ADP office indicate that with the need to train teachers in the 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 such 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 in the 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 in any school.

Support of learning materials, mock examinations, and refresher trainings to teachers, capacity building to school committees and strengthening of school feeding programmes has 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 been helpful in curbing FGM and early child marriage.

The ADP is working in 4 wards namely meshawa, magoma, Kerenge and Kizara. A total of 25 villages falling in the region have benefited from the programme. The ADP was a World Vision - Germany sponsored programme that started in the year 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. The phase two of the programme is implementing four projects on health, education, food security and water.

magoma ADP is in its third phase and will come to an end in 2015.
Village cuts child mortality, saves mothers’ lives

By Dickson Ng’iibly, Muheza

The village of mbambala, which is located in the rural area of Vuvu in the region of Tanga, is one of the areas where children are at risk of being born to mothers. This is because the health facilities in the area are not well-equipped to handle the health needs of the residents. Many children are born in the village without proper care, which results in a high mortality rate among children.

To overcome this problem, the residents of mbambala have decided to build a new health facility in the village. The facility is being constructed with the help of the World Vision Tanzania (WVT) organisation. The facility is being built to provide health services to residents of the village and the surrounding areas.

The facility will provide basic health care services, including newborn care, maternal and child health care, and reproductive health care. The facility will also provide health education to the residents of the village.

The facility is being built with the help of local volunteers who are working hard to ensure that the facility is completed on time. The facility is expected to be completed in the next few months, and it will be operational soon after.

The residents of the village are looking forward to the completion of the facility, as they believe it will greatly improve the health situation in the area. The facility will provide much-needed health care services to residents of the village, including newborn care, maternal and child health care, and reproductive health care.

The facility will also provide health education to the residents of the village, which is very important in ensuring that they have access to quality health care.

The facility will be a great asset to the village, and it will help to improve the health situation in the area. The residents of the village are grateful to the World Vision Tanzania (WVT) organisation for their support in building the facility.

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Faith based forums (FBF) 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.