

Public primary schools in Dar es Salaam: Poor toilets, little sport

Key findings

- Numerous schools suffer debilitating sanitary conditions
- Many schools lack proper playgrounds

Introduction

Since 2002, the Government of Tanzania has been implementing the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) with two specific aims: making education more accessible and improving its quality. While significant success has been made in extending access, improving quality remains a challenge.

Dar es Salaam is the largest city in the country and the one closest to where policies are made, so it is often assumed that the situation there is generally better than elsewhere. Still, the media has published anecdotal evidence about schools in Dar es Salaam lacking learning materials and being in dire need of improvement. Against this backdrop, Uwazi carried out a survey between August and December 2010 to assess the quality of amenities in a sample of 40 primary schools in the three districts of Dar es Salaam: Ilala, Kinondoni, and Temeke.

This brief is the second in a series about the quality of public schools in Dar es Salaam. The results show that many public schools in Dar es Salaam lack proper playgrounds and face debilitating sanitary conditions.

Finding 1: Sanitation facilities are inadequate in most schools

The Government target for school sanitation facilities is one pit latrine/toilet per 20 girl pupils and one per 25 boy pupils. The situation in schools that were surveyed shows that this target is far from being met (see Figure 1). The average pupil to latrine ratio is 90:1. Only 11 out of the 40 (27.5 percent) schools have fewer than 47 pupils sharing a toilet. Among those, only 6 out of 11 (Gerezani, Buguruni Viziwi, Oysterbay, Muhimbili, Mnazi Mmoja and Amana primary schools) have enough toilet facilities to meet the national target.



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Released May, 2011.

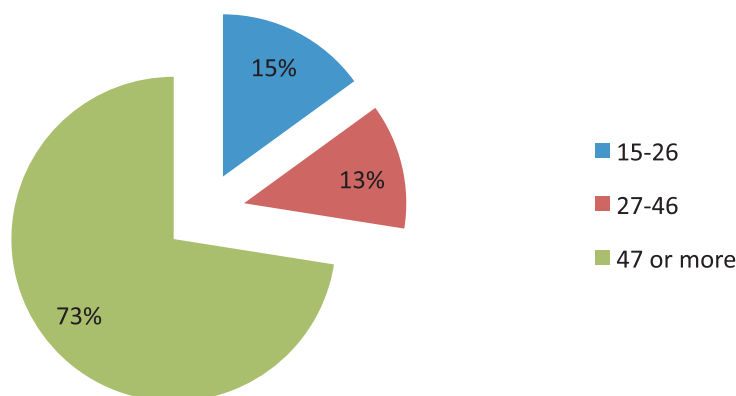


The numbers are just one aspect of the situation, as the majority of latrines are also of poor quality. Particularly striking examples are found at Msisiri Primary School in Kinondoni district and Vijibweni Primary School in Temeke district. Donated by a well wisher, the 10 plastic latrines at Msisiri are simply not sufficient for the school's 1,173 pupils. At Msisiri, at least there is a DAWASCO water connection. Vijibweni is not as lucky. That school has 2,126 pupils, 12 toilets, and neither a piped water connection nor a water well. According to the head teacher, they do what they can and rely on good relations with their neighbours, who sometimes provide the school with water.



In some instances, latrines are in such a poor condition that lower primary school boys have invented a way of relieving themselves while still standing outside (see photograph).

Figure 1: Number of pupils sharing a toilet/latrine and proportion of schools involved

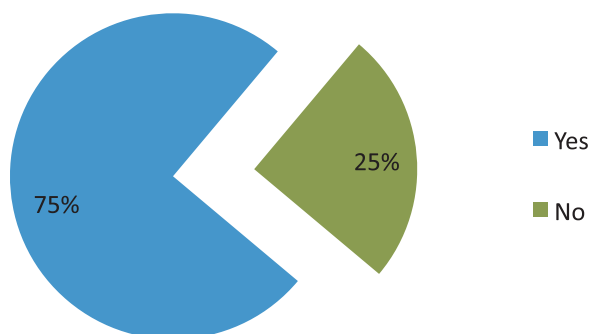


Source of data: Uwazi, 2010.

Finding 2: One out of every four schools does not have a playground

In the primary school curriculum, there is a sports-related subject called '*Haiba na Michezo*.' Despite the fact that the majority of schools claim to offer this subject, most lack proper sporting grounds and associated equipment. With so many other problems facing schools, sport is a low priority and often does not get the attention it deserves. One out of every four schools in the survey reported not having a playground, and most of those that do have them indicate that they are inadequate. Most are open fields with make-shift goals used for football and/or for running. At Boma Primary School in Ilala district, the playground is said to have been encroached upon by neighbours and is therefore no longer available for school sports.

Figure 2: Does the school have a playground?



Source of data: Uwazi, 2010.

Conclusion

Good quality sanitation facilities are important for a healthy learning environment and should be made a priority in all schools. One solution that could be explored is to ensure that sanitation facilities (toilets and water taps/wells) are installed before schools are opened, and that they undergo the necessary maintenance each year.

Recently, the Government reinstated sports subjects and competition in games to encourage gifted youngsters to pursue sports and to make the learning environment more exciting. To achieve meaningful results in this area, the Government needs to make sure that, all schools have proper playgrounds; that schools receive and/have at least the minimum package of sports equipment every year; and that school compound is protected for example by fencing to avoid that neighbours encroach on spaces reserved for playgrounds. Otherwise the Government's commitment to revive sports in schools may not be adequately realised.

Annex: Public primary schools visited in the survey

Temeke District (16)	Ilala District (13)	Kinondoni District (11)
Vijibweni	Buguruni Moto Mpya	Kawe A
Mji Mwema	Boma	Kumbukumbu
Mivinjeni	Amana	Mapambano
Toa Ngoma	Buguruni Viziwi	Mbuyuni
Kibada	Msimbazi Mseto	Oysterbay
Chang'ombe	Gerezani	Kinondoni
Geza Ulole	Muhimbili	Msisiri
Mtoni Kijichi	Ukongu	Mlimani
Kimbiji	Buguruni Moto	Bunju A
Kurasini	Buguruni	Mtongani
Kibugumo	Mnazi Mmoja	Kunduchi
Tandika	Uhuru Wasichana	
Mgulani	Bunge	
Mikwambe		
Kigamboni		
Mbagala		

Source of data

This brief is part of ongoing citizen monitoring at Uwazi, www.uwazi.org. The data were collected through a monitoring survey conducted by Uwazi between August and December 2010. All data can be obtained from Uwazi.