



Who is Twaweza?

Over the past few weeks Twaweza and our work has been the subject of extensive public debate in Tanzania and beyond. Thus far we have largely been silent in this debate. The main purpose of this press conference is to tell the story of who Twaweza is, what we do, and what we value. Through this we hope to deepen public understanding of our work and its contribution to the country, the region and the world. We will first provide an update on the events of the past few weeks.

Events

Twaweza has faced a few weeks of a more challenging series of engagements with selected government institutions since the July 5 launch of the two most recent Sauti za Wananchi briefs, titled *'Speaking truth to power?'* and *'Captains of their own ship?'*.

We have received two letters from COSTECH seeking clarification about our research clearance, and asking us to demonstrate why legal action should not be taken against us. We have responded to both letters.

In addition, immigration officials have retained the Executive Director of Twaweza's passport since 24 July. On August 1, he was denied the right to leave the country for meetings in Twaweza's Nairobi and Kampala offices using an emergency travel document obtained through the normal process. We are not aware of any court order mandating this restriction of his travel outside Tanzania.

Twaweza

Twaweza is an open and transparent organization, and collaborates closely with critical actors in our drive to contribute to democracy and development in Tanzania. We often work with and support the efforts of government, bringing evidence, ideas and stories to shine a light on reality and try to contribute to the search for solutions.

Founded in 2009 by Tanzanian activist Rakesh Rajani, with operations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, Twaweza works to promote: active citizens (people working to address their own problems, and engaging with government to do so when needed); responsive authorities (governments that hear and take seriously citizens' concerns and ideas); and children learning so they can grow up to be productive and engaged citizens.

Uwezo

One of Twaweza's major programs is Uwezo, Africa's largest citizen-led learning assessment. Thousands of citizens are trained to collect data and assess whether children aged 6 to 16 can read a Standard 2 level story in English and Kiswahili and whether they can do Standard 2 multiplication. Through constant monitoring of education quality and widespread dissemination of the results, Uwezo has contributed to mobilizing millions of dollars into the Tanzanian education system aimed at improving learning outcomes. Many other countries see great value in this type of citizen-led learning assessment and Uwezo has collaborated with governments and civil society organizations from more than seven countries to advise them on implementing their own such initiatives.

In addition, Twaweza, through our Uwezo initiative, has worked extensively with the government to try to ensure quality education for all the children of Tanzania.

Uwezo assessment findings brought the learning crisis to the attention of the government; namely that despite the important successes of enrolling more children in school and building new schools, children were not learning basic literacy and numeracy skills. Ultimately even the government's own assessments produced similar findings and a number of MPs and other government leaders have used Uwezo data in debates and discussions about education policy.

The results from our annual learning assessments have catalyzed discussions about education and strategic initiatives in education in approximately 150 districts. The discussions particularly emphasize the critical role that stakeholders especially citizens and local governments can and should play in improving education in their areas.

Because of the contribution of Uwezo and other Twaweza research, we were selected to be a member of the Task Force to develop the National Standard 2 Assessment Framework.

KiuFunza

Through our KiuFunza program, another significant project implemented in 11 districts between 2014 and 2016, Twaweza demonstrated the importance and the do-ability of sending capitation grants directly to schools instead of via local governments. Our trial contributed to convincing the government to adopt this as policy and since 2016 the grants have been going directly to schools.

KiuFunza also trialed the concept of performance pay or cash on delivery for teachers, offering early grade teachers a small bonus for every student who was able to grasp specific early grade literacy and numeracy skills. The aim was to motivate teachers to ensure that children grasp these skills as per the national curriculum. The government was pleased with the results and we are now working in partnership with the ministries of local government and education to use government data and systems to trial a performance pay pilot for teachers with the aim of improving learning outcomes.

Sauti za Wananchi

Sauti za Wananchi is another major Twaweza initiative. Sauti za Wananchi offers government actors, decision-makers, media and other interested stakeholders the opportunity to have their finger on the pulse of the country. Never before has there been the capacity to know what citizens on average are thinking and experiencing so quickly and cost effectively. Sauti za Wananchi is a pioneer in its field and because of our experiences with designing, implementing and managing the program, we have worked closely with the World Bank to co-author a book on how mobile phone surveys should be done. An initiative that has been innovated and honed in Tanzania is being used as a model and as learning for organizations all over the world.

A range of government departments have made use of the insight offered by Sauti za Wananchi including the police force, ministry of education and vocational training and national audit office who have used the infrastructure to collect data to support their work. We have also been requested to provide numerous in-depth briefings to a range of government officials.

Sauti za Wananchi was launched in 2013 in Tanzania and Twaweza has conducted 65 call rounds using the infrastructure, and published over 50 publications from the views, voices and experiences of citizens. In that time Sauti za Wananchi data have gained close to 1,000 pieces of media coverage and millions of social media engagements and impressions.

These are just three of the major multi-year initiatives of Twaweza. In addition, we engage in hundreds of other smaller and shorter projects all designed to ultimately create a more productive and collaborative relationship between citizens and their government.