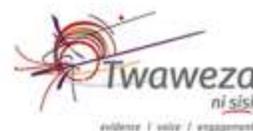




## INDEPENDENT OBSERVATION OF BEYOND BASICS ASSESSMENT PILOT PROCESS FOR TWaweza TANZANIA

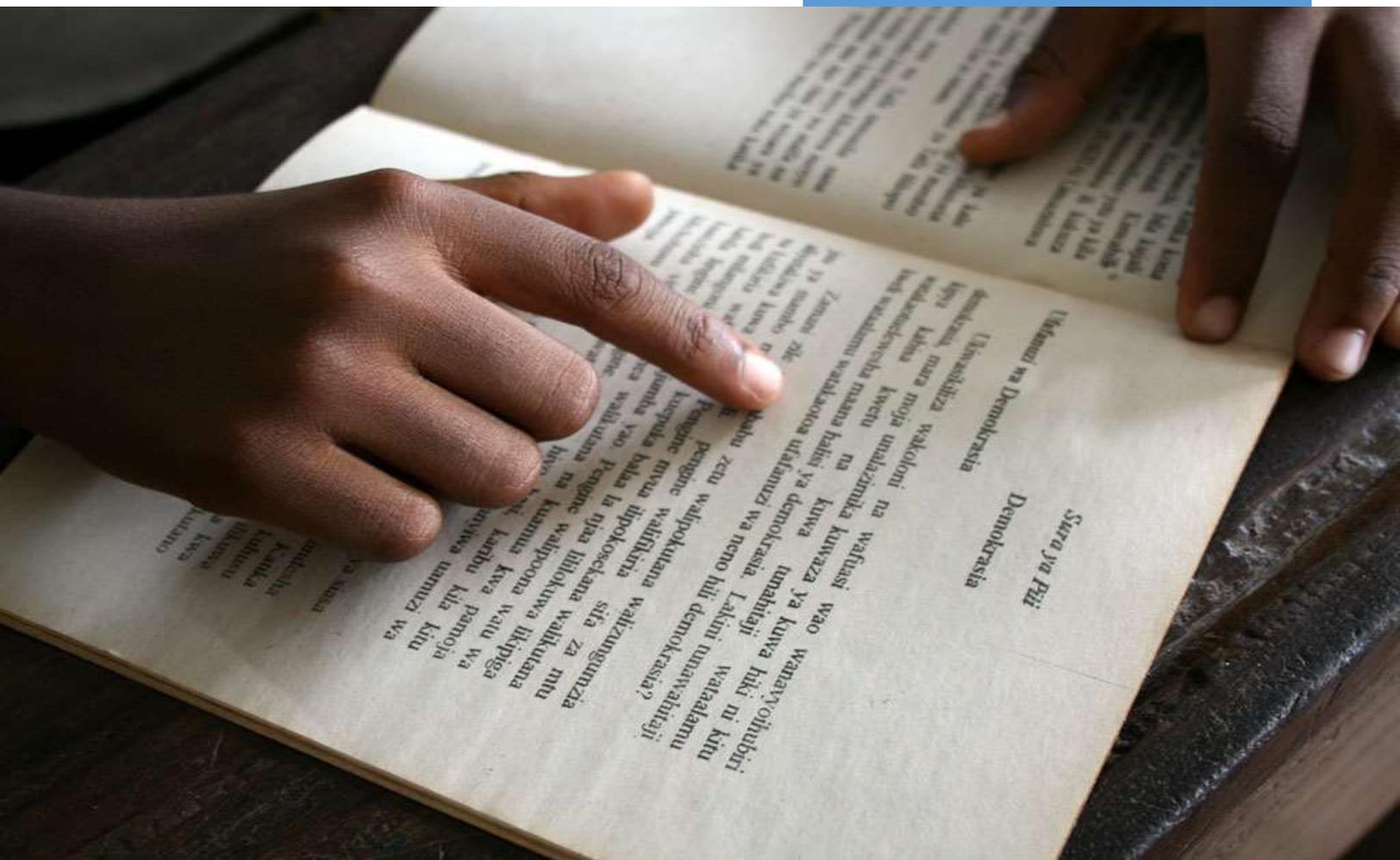
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Twaweza Tanzania

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## INTRODUCTION

Twaweza/Uwezo has introduced a new learning assessment tool known as Beyond Basics (BB). This, unlike the other Uwezo learning assessment, is school based. The tool tests learning levels of Standard 5 and 6 against Standard 4 levels of Kiswahili and Mathematics. As its name suggests, BB goes beyond basic learning skills (writing, reading, and arithmetic) to assess aspects of problem solving skills and other competencies such as comprehension.

In September 2016, Twaweza sampled 200 schools in 10 districts of Tanzania to pilot the assessment. Along with the pilot process, two independent consultants were assigned to accompany assessors in two different districts for the purpose of shadowing and provide independent observation and analysis of the process. The two districts selected were Handeni (Tanga) and Chamwino (Dodoma). The assignment was carried out from Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016. Each of the consultants visited 5 different schools with 4 teams of assessors. In total, the consultants visited 10 different schools and shadowed 16 assessors (8 teams of assessors in total).<sup>1</sup>

The consultants were not tasked with detailed technical review of the Beyond Basics assessment methodology. The consultants, specialists in the thematic area of education and specifically on the education sector in Tanzania, drew on their expertise for the context, analysis and interpretation of findings. The overall objective of the exercise was to observe the Beyond Basics methodology for independent quality assurance, but moreover, to gather additional insight into whether and how the results that Beyond Basics method brings may be useful to the Head Teachers and teachers. Specific objectives included:

1. Assess Head Teachers' and class teachers' expectations of how well the students would perform on the test, before the test; and again after the test results were disclosed
2. Observe the sampling process, the testing procedures, handling of the exercise overall
3. Explore qualitatively the reasons for discrepancies between expectations of results (before) and the actual results (after) with the Head Teachers and classroom teachers

As the consultants accompanied only a sub-set of all districts in which Beyond Basics took place, the insights cannot be generalized to all Beyond Basics locations and teams. Nevertheless, the insights gathered are illustrative and suggest areas for further inquiry.

This report presents the analysis of the process as observed by the consultants. In respect to this the report covers the following:

- The Findings and Analysis:
  - The Process: this section includes the assessors' competence and professionalism in conducting the assessment; technical aspects (the tests composition and marking process); and logistics including transport, distance, and safety issues.

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<sup>1</sup> The specific list of schools visited and assessors observed may be requested from [info@twaweza.org](mailto:info@twaweza.org)

- Analysis: this section includes analysis of the interviews with the head teachers and teacher prior and post the learning test. In that, head teachers and teachers were interviewed before the test regarding their expectations on the performance and were again interviewed after the test to discuss the actual performance results against their prior expectations. The analysis is also informed by the focus group discussions with the head teachers and teachers after the results. The contextual factors, in particular the school situation, were also taken into consideration during the analysis.
- Recommendations: this section provides suggestions for further improvement of the process and the way forward.
- Conclusion



## METHODOLOGY

The analysis is based on observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and daily reflections with the assessors. The consultant observed the process including the initial introduction with the head teachers, students sampling procedures, assessors' explanations and communication of the objectives and purposes of the test to teachers and students, the assessment process (timing and supervision), marking, and post- results meetings to head teachers and teachers.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the consultants observed school environment such as the structures (classrooms, desks, toilets, water, and electricity), and books and teaching materials. The consultants also secured basic data from the schools. Most of this information was also filled in the forms that the assessors had for the schools.

The consultants conducted interviews pre and post assessment with the head teachers and Kiswahili and Mathematics teachers of Standards 5 and 6. The teachers filled the forms that indicated their expectations prior to the exercise following their review of the exercise papers. After the students did the exercises and results were out, the consultants interviewed the teachers again regarding the results against their prior expectations. Together with the assessors, the consultant facilitated focus group discussions with head teachers and all teachers present in the school. The consultants took differential roles of asking and probing questions and writing notes. Each evening the consultants had a reflection session with the assessors to think through the exercise, what occurred, and what could be done differently for effectiveness and also for ensuring smooth process for the following day.

### *Data Analysis*

Data obtained from the above mentioned different tools, were analyzed using basic qualitative data analysis techniques and simple quantitative analysis through excel spreadsheets. The use of excel spreadsheet and basic functions were adequate due to relatively small N of data collected in 10 schools.

For qualitative data analysis, the information was categorized into general themes related to the purposes of the assessment. These themes included students' competencies (Kiswahili and Mathematics); teachers' expectations and their roles; external (non-teachers/teaching related) factors such as truancy and home environment; policy factors; and school situation/learning environment. These general themes were extracted from the focus group discussions and also the individual teacher interviews. The categorization of qualitative data into themes enabled systematic analysis of the unstructured information that was gathered from the discussions and observations. The analysis was triangulated by the different tools used such interviews, observations, focus group discussion, and reflection. Literature on education in Tanzania further underscored the reliability of data collected and its analysis.

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<sup>2</sup> The names of head teachers and teachers who were interviewed are withheld in this report.

A basic quantitative analysis was deployed through excel spreadsheet in order to analyze data from the individual teacher interviews. As attached in appendices 1 to 4, head teachers and teachers from each school visited were interviewed prior and post-assessment results. Their expectations were then analyzed against the actual results. The teachers filled these forms and their answers were analyzed using spread sheet to provide a systematic and structured understanding of the data.

In doing so, the consultants used coding to translate the data from the questionnaires into excel language (numbers). The coding was done as follows:

For the expectations (pre-results)

- $\geq 75\% = 3$
- $50\% = 2$
- $\leq 25\% = 1$

For the post- results, the coding was as follows:

- Lower than expected = 1
- As expected = 2
- Above expectation = 3

The analyses were illustrated in the graphs that are presented in the findings and analysis section below.



## FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### *The Process*

The BB pilot process underscored the feasibility of the assessment. This was evident from the organizational perspective as well as the technical aspect of the assessment.

### *Organizational proficiency*

On the organizational part, Twaweza/Uwezo had secured all required permits to carry out the assessments in school from the Ministerial levels to the District levels, the assessors who were conducting the assessment were well trained and understood their roles well.

Furthermore, there was clear and regular communication between Twaweza/Uwezo offices and assessors in the field work. Such clear communication lines were crucial especially due to incidences (mostly on sampling) that needed clarifications from the head office as they were beyond the assessors' scope of judgment and/or decision making. For example, teachers would complain that a sampled student has a mental disability, or a sampled student has not attended school for the past two years but he was in the attendance and present in school that day leading to chances of being sampled. The assessors insisted on the sampling and formula compliance. Nevertheless, if a student is mentally disabled it is not fair to assess them at the same level as the rest of the students. Whether the students were truly disabled or not could not be determined but the emphasis by teachers could also not be ignored. That is why having a clear communication to clarify such incidences were crucial. On the other side, this brings about a challenge of which Twaweza/Uwezo need to put into consideration – that is – the scope and the mandate to which the assessor could be trusted to make decisions on such issues that may arise in the school. This is an issue that could be dealt with during the pre-assessment training for assessors. It is crucial since there could be times when a situation arises and there is no communication signal from the field.

### *Assessors*

The assessors exhibited sufficient experience and competence in carrying out the task from initial meetings with the head teachers, the assessment (testing and supervision), marking, and focus group discussion.

The assessors' professionalism was displayed in their management of time, communication with the head teachers and also the teachers and students. The purposes and the objectives of the assessment were well communicated to the teachers and also to the students. The clear communication contributed to the smooth relationship and collaboration with the teachers during the supervision of assessment and in focus group discussions.

During the focus group discussions, after the results, the assessors were careful in bringing the teachers back to discussion about their role as teachers more than attributing the poor results to

other factors. Such emphasis displayed confidence and understanding of the objective behind the focus group discussion guide.

Team work between assessors was excellent. They divided roles and collaborated in tasks. This team work enhanced efficient use of time, which could otherwise bring inconveniences in the school timetable. Team spirit was also evident in the way all assessors for each district were in constant communication through WhatsApp groups which they had formed for this particular project.

They were compliant with the procedures from sampling to the marking. On the other hand, the assessors came out rigid in some instances for example in marking, which will be expounded in technical aspect of the assessment.

### *Logistics, safety and other administration issues*

There were various challenges including logistics. Transport to schools was unreliable and risky. The assessors are dependent on *bodaboda* (motorbikes), which are of high risks especially when taken for long distances. Due to that, there were also delays in starting the tests as it was often difficult for the assessors to arrive in school at 7:30 am. Arriving late means administering the tests up to evening, which distracts the schools timetable.

### *The technical aspect*

The consultants observed a number of aspects that are technical in the assessment process. The sampling process was systematic and followed a scientific formula. In this, there was no room to temper and teachers saw the transparency in sampling students. Even when teachers tried to manipulate they found out that there was no room for that as the sample was clear and it accommodated changes whenever there was inconsistency in attendance registry. Always, the assessors had to re-do the attendance roll call even when the teachers had already done it. It was always found out that there were students who were ticked present but were absent. In the occasion where the teachers had not yet taken the attendance, they were often ticking some absent who were later on found to be present by assessors. These different manipulations were done by teachers in their efforts to put aside low performing student from doing the assessment. It was thus commendable that the assessors were faithful in following the sampling formula as that led to the true representation of the class.

The consultants observed a number of technical issues in both Kiswahili and Mathematics tests. In Kiswahili, the framing of question no. 3 could have led to different interpretation by the students. In that, the question required the student to write 3 sentences on what is happening on the photograph. However, the marking scheme focused on the writing competence (e.g. punctuation and other writing rules) rather than interpretation of what is taking place in the photo as asked in the question. Many students failed this question, not because failure to interpret what is happening in the image but due to missing punctuations and other writing rules such as the proper use of capital and small letters. This question could have been framed in a clearer way.

In Mathematics, there were a number of technical issues such as missing question (no. 4b), numbering (e.g. there was no no. 5, so there were two no. 4 questions and then 6). The missing question (no. 4b) had an implication on performance although the assessors tried to explain to their best and write in on the black board before the start of the test. Yet, a significant number of students did not do the question, which led to them missing the whole point on the multiplication section.

Technical issues were also observed in marking of the test. The marking scheme was rigid and it did not accommodate critical thinking that the student might have manifested in their answers. For example, in mathematics there were incidences where a student has done the calculation correctly but copied the answer wrongly, yet they were marked zero. Because the marking scheme directed the assessors to focus only on the answer in the answer column. In Kiswahili, as explained earlier, there were rigidity in marking question no. 3.

Also, the “all or nothing criteria” does not necessarily reflect the competence of the students in a topic. For example, there were students who would get all questions but one correctly in a section but were considered in the same failure category as those who got all wrong. There is a need for Uwezo to look into ways that they could address this discrepancy.

### *The Analysis*

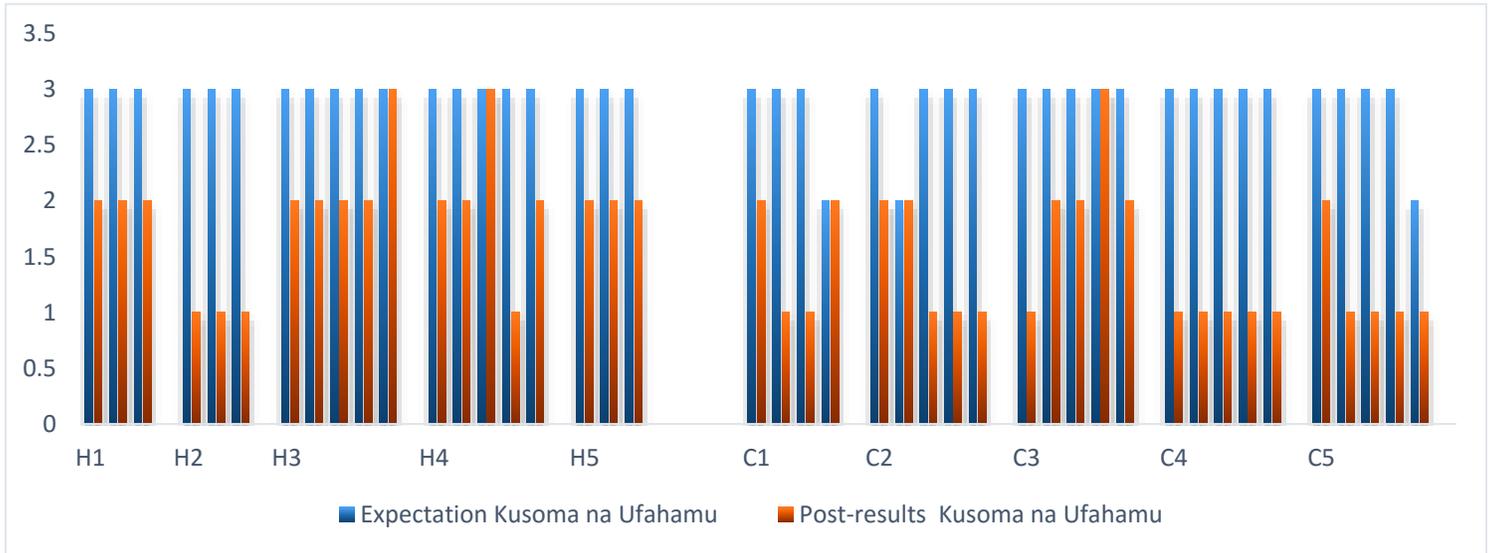
The analysis here is driven from the interviews with teachers prior and post the assessment, focus group discussions, and the contextual factors including the school situations such as environment, equipment, capitation grant, student-teacher ratio and other necessary learning infrastructures.

### *Teachers expectations vs. actual results*

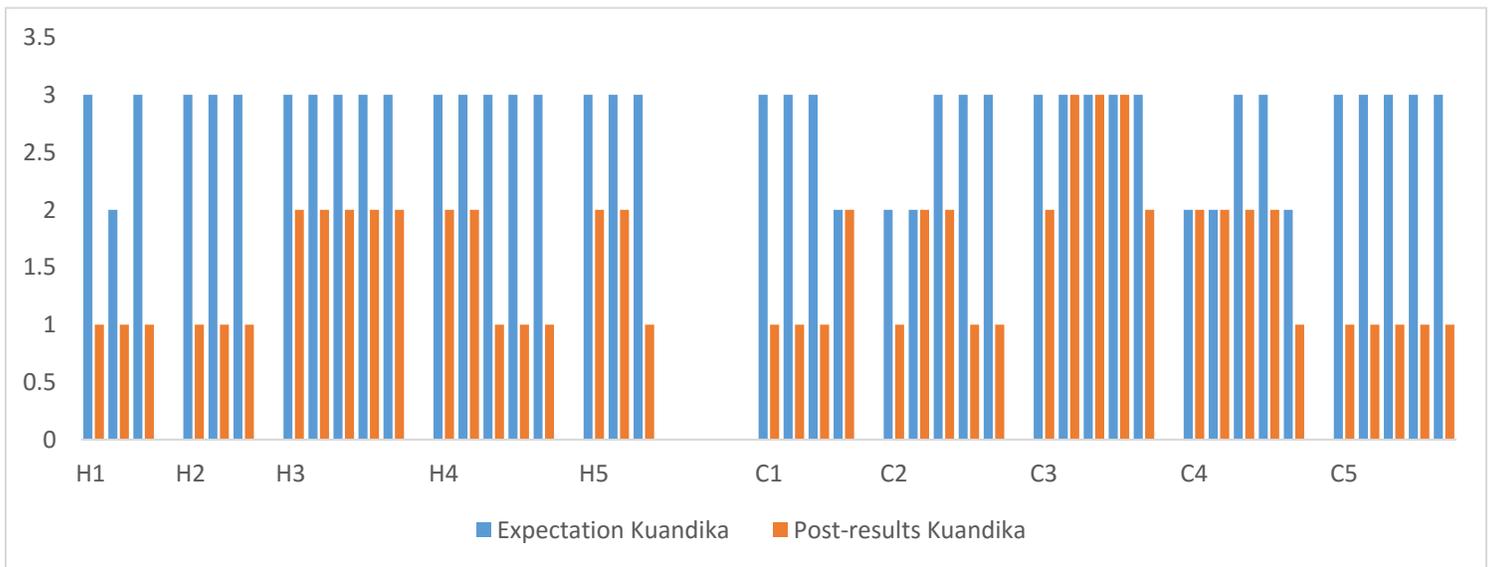
As illustrated in the charts below, teachers had higher expectations than the actual results. In average, most expected that their students would get 75% and above. The results challenged the teachers as they came out below their expectations. Individual teachers gave a number of explanations to lower performance, an analysis of which is combined with the findings from focus group discussions presented in the later section.



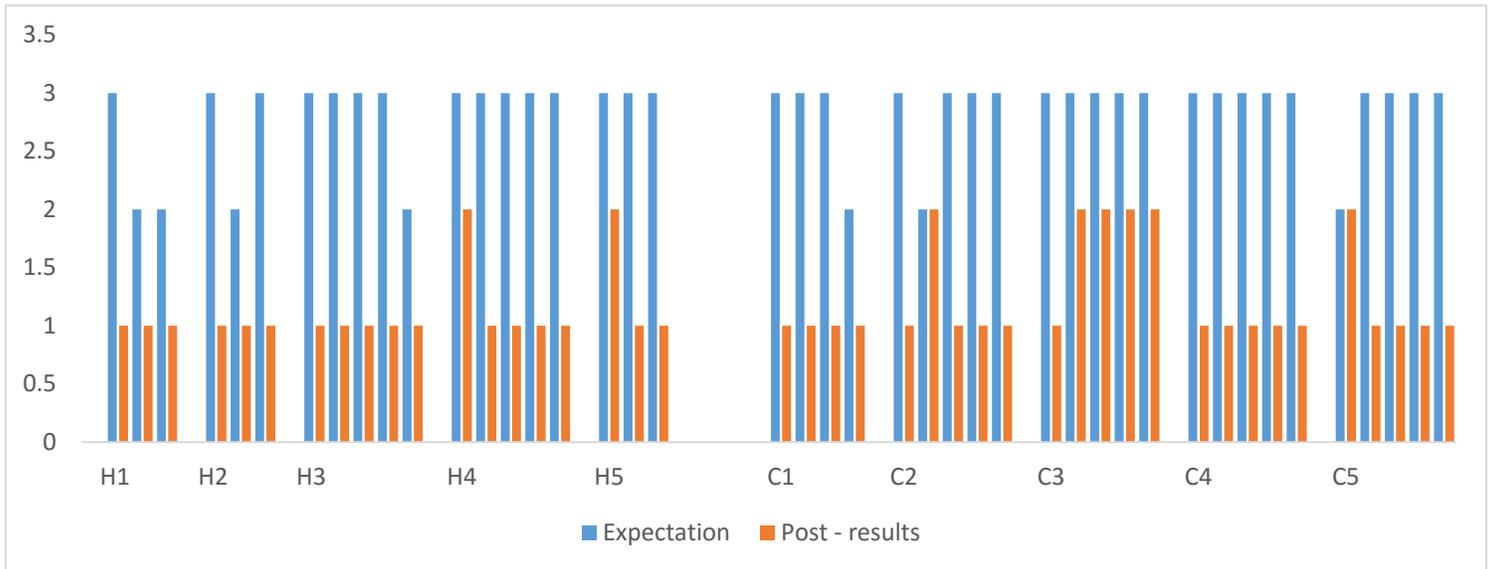
**Chart 1: Kiswahili – Reading and Comprehension**



**Chart 2: Kiswahili - Writing**



**Chart 3: Mathematics**



**Key (for all of the above 3 charts)**

Key:

There was coding of which in the expectations (blue line) as follows:

- 75% and above (i.e. options *iv* and *v* answers in the prior-test interview multiple-choice questions) = 3
- 50% (i.e. option *ii*) = 2
- 25% and below (i.e. options *i* and *ii*) = 1

For the post- results, the coding was as follows:

- Lower than expected (i.e. option *a* in the post-results interview multiple-choice questions) = 1
- As expected (i.e. option *b*) = 2
- Above expectation (i.e. option *c*) = 3

H- Schools in Handeni (the numbering 1 to 5 is equivalent to the one in the matrix attached in the annexes)

C- Schools in Chamwino (the numbering 1 to 5 is equivalent to the one in the matrix attached in the annexes)

## DISCUSSIONS

During the focus group discussions, most of the teachers attributed the poor results of the test to factors that are beyond their capacity as teachers. These included policy issues, home environment, truancy, lack of teaching equipment, and poor school conditions. Nevertheless, the consultants together with the assessors kept the focus on inquiring, prompting and discussing about the teachers' role and what they could do to improve the performance. The analysis here focuses on the role of teachers and the discussion on what they could do to further improve the situation.

### *Teachers and teaching shortcomings*

The following is the summary of what the teachers admitted as common practices, which do not help students in learning neither in comprehension. To note, the disaggregation of the results showed that students failed the questions that required critical analysis and comprehension. For example, in mathematics, students did better in additions, subtractions, and even multiplications than in the mathematics for life questions.

Since the learning outcomes are measured through the final national exam results, teachers admitted that they focus on ensuring the students are doing well in the final examinations. It is thus difficult to measure students' understanding of the subject matter beyond the exam results. Similarly, with the new emphasis accompanied from the government and also the Big Results Now (BRN), teachers also focus on KKK (kusoma, kuandika, na kuhesabu) at the lower classes. In Mainga, for example, the head teacher said since they have only 2 classrooms, their focus is to teach standard one and two how to write and read, then standard four and seven so that they could pass the exam and the rest of the classes are left untaught most of the school sessions. This was the case in different schools visited both in Chamwino and Handeni. In this light, the teachers focus on meeting the basic government targets rather than ensuring students are learning for skills.

*“Kama mwalimu, cha kwanza nalinda kazi ndo maana tuna concentrate kwenye darasa la nne na la saba, kukaririsha” – Mwalimu, Handeni District*

*English translation: “As a teacher, my first priority is to protect my job that is why we are concentrating on standards four and seven through memorization”*

Lack of interest on the teaching subject. Teachers explained that they teach some of the subjects that they are not interested with. This is due to shortage of teachers particularly in schools that are located in remote areas. The teachers have big work load of teaching more up to five subjects in various classes, some of which subjects are not in their interests or expertise but due to shortage of teachers they have to do it nonetheless. This is reflected in teacher student ratio, which is higher than the standard average of 45:1 as illustrated in table below.

**Table 1: student-teacher ratio**

	School	No. of students	No. of teachers	Ratio
	Handeni			
H1	Mainga	259	4	65
H2	Kwedukabu	719	7	103
H3	Kwamgala	923	21	44
H4	Kabuku Nje	1352	24	56
H5	Mzundu	916	16	57
	Chamwino			
C1	Mvumi Misheni	853	14	61
C2	Manzase	643	11	58
C3	Majeleko	430	8	54
C4	Msanga B	275	7	39
C5	Champumba	349	5	70

The absence of enthusiasm in teaching plus the work load discourages the teachers from close follow up of each student learning and performance. In explaining this, the head teacher of Kwedukabu asked us how do we expect his standards one and two teacher to ensure each student is learning, while she is the only teacher for both classes with 365 students all mixed in one classroom. There is no motivation for close follow up.

The strict hierarchical relations between teachers and students. Teachers explained they are not close to students in knowing their personal problems that may have affect their learning. The teacher-student relations are abstract and this creates fear on the students' side to disclose their learning challenges.

### *Remedies/Solution within the means of teachers*

Upon reflections and further discussions, the teachers suggested remedies and ways within their own capacity and scope through which they could address the challenges.

Teaching for life skills in addition to teaching for exams. The teachers thought they could start putting more efforts in ensuring that students get skills that are not only for passing exams but also for addressing real life problems. This can be done by moving away from focusing on memorization to allow broad understanding of the subject topic. Teachers also suggested that they should ensure that the topic is understood well before moving to another topic out of time pressure to finish the syllabus.

In connection to the above, teachers suggested that they should be providing regular short exercises in classroom and also for home work. However, there were teachers who challenged this view by arguing that it is over burdening the students given already long hours of school (from 7am to 3pm) and the walking, often more than one-hour distance to home.

Other suggested remedies included learning competition between classes by giving them same tests. The teachers admitted that the BB were an eye opening to them that they could be administering same tests/questions to students of different classes to steer up learning desire. Similarly, teachers suggested that they could form learning clubs among students so they can be learning themselves.

Non-performance or lowest performers should repeat classes. At the moment, the head teacher has no mandate to stop a failing student from continuing to an upper class. This is problematic because to do that it needs approval from the district level, which could be bureaucratic and thus discouraging the teachers from following up. On the same note, the failing standard IV students are at times allowed to continue with the directive from the above. For example, in 2016, the standard IV results in Handeni for 2015 came in February, two months after the opening of the school year, after which they were told to continue all students even those who failed.

<i>"Serekali iwe inakubali watoto warudie"</i> – Teacher, Handeni
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<i>English Translation: "the government should let students repeat"</i>
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In trying to address the above policy related challenges, teachers thought that they could have an extra-time class to teach those non and lower performing students so that they could catch up with the rest. One school, Mzundu, for example already has this class "Darasa Rekebishii", which puts together all those students from different classes who struggles in writing and reading. This may not be practical for all schools since some of them have students who come from a long distance where they have to walk for at least one hour before they reach home.

Due to scarcity of adequate classrooms, teachers suggest that instead of lumping students from 3 or 4 classes together in one classroom, it would be best to improvise by leaving one class at a time and put benches outside for the rests where they could be taught separately and without a rush. This, the teachers disclaimed, might not be possible all the times because of weather conditions.

Due to shared challenges, teachers suggested that they need to improve collaborations among themselves in order to assist each other even in lesson preparations, discussions, and teaching. This might address the high burden by moving from specific teachers to make it a collective responsibility.

In relations to the above, the teachers suggested that the timetable is too packed and they could reduce it for more effectiveness and efficiency in teaching. Having many subjects in a day with few teachers and scarce classrooms is counterproductive. Worse still, since there is no meal provision in schools, the afternoon classes are ineffective.

Given the external factors such as truancy, home environment that discourages learning, poverty, and associated factors, teachers thought that they could work more closely with the village authorities to sensitize and create discipline among parents and students to ensure that children attend school.

### *External (non- teacher) challenges*

Focusing on the teachers' shortcomings and suggested remedies is crucial in understanding and addressing one of the key causes of low learning in schools. As it was indicated in the Unesco's Education for All Monitoring Report (2014), teachers are central in addressing the learning crises across different countries in the world. Nevertheless, it is necessary to consider the context through which the teachers operate. In this process, the consultants thought the analysis would be incomplete without consideration of the external factors that contribute to low teaching performance. These factors are policy-related, students' home environments, and poor school condition. This section briefly presents this factors and their negative impact on teachers' performance and students learning.

### **School situation**

All schools visited are in bad conditions in all sorts. The classrooms are not enough to accommodate all students hence crowded. The provision of new desks had good intentions but the desks have further squeezed the classrooms. The new free education rhetoric has brought excessive burden to schools as parents are not willing to contribute to school meals neither equipment while there is an increase in enrolment. Worse still, the capitation grant that is received is based on the statistics of last year (students number) before the increased enrolment. Although, all head teachers acknowledged that the capitation grants have been coming on time (each month) this year as compared to previous years, it is strained due to increased number of students and absence of contributions from parents.

There was no any school that provided meal for students. The teachers are forced to allow students to break and go home for lunch from 12:30 to 2:00pm but some of them do not find food at home and some do not go because of long walking distance from home. As a result, there is enormous distraction and inability to concentrate in the afternoon classes.

**Table 2: Capitation grant vs. actual number of registered students**

	School	Total capitation grant received in TZS (Jan- Aug. 2016 total)	No. of students registered 2016	Average per students (TZS)
H1	Mainga	1,024,579.23	259	3,956
H2	Kwedukabu	2,321,000.00	719	3,228
H3	Kwamgala	3,070,000.00	923	3,326
H4	Kabuku Nje	5,031,000.00	1352	3,721
H5	Mzundu	3,457,000.00	916	3,774
C1	Mvumi Misheni	3,890,000.00	853	4,560
C2	Manzase	2,140,000.00	643	3,328
C3	Majeleko	1,695, 000.00	430	3,942
C4	Msanga B	976, 000.00	275	3,549
C5	Champumba	1,458, 000.00	349	4,178

## Truancy

Of the biggest challenges observed in all schools visited is truancy. There are various factors contributing to non-attendance. These include hunger, livelihood (e.g. farming seasons and also the nomadic lifestyle), distance from school to home, and home environment that is unfriendly to learning. The table below illustrate the extent of truancy as indicated by the number of registered students versus the actual students who were present on the day of visit/BB test.

**Table 3: Truancy**

	School	No. registered students	Average students per class (registered students divided by 7)	Estimated No. registered students less standard 7. <sup>3</sup>	Actual students present on the visit day	Average No. of Truants
	Handeni					
H1	Mainga	259	37	222	149	73
H2	Kwedukabu	719	103	616	536	80
H3	Kwamgala	923	132	791	480	311
H4	Kabuku Nje	1352	193	1159	750	409
H5	Mzundu	916	131	- <sup>4</sup>	825	91
	Chamwino					
C1	Mvumi Mishiwi	853	122	731	Not recorded	N/A
C2	Manzase	643	93	550	434	116
C3	Majeleko	430	61	369	340	29
C4	Msanga B	275	39	236	208	28
C5	Champumba	349	50	299	282	17

In accordance to the above figures, the problem is serious in particular Handeni. In Kabuku Nje primary school, estimated 409 (about 35% of the students) were absent from school in the day of visit. Similar to Kwamgala primary school, of which estimated 40% of registered students were absent from school in the day of visit. Truancy is a serious problem especially in Handeni.

## Policy related challenges

Teachers mentioned a number of the factors that are beyond their own means as they emanate from the higher policy and administration level. These include the restricted head teachers'

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<sup>3</sup> Standard 7 had already done final exams and so had left the school. Thus, the columns present estimated no. of actual registered students minus class 7. (The estimated is based on the average number of students per class)

<sup>4</sup> The day for assessment was a day before standard seven graduation day- therefore all students (including standard 7) were told to be in school for preparation. In fact, students were not wearing uniform that day and there were no classes as they were cleaning the environment and performance rehearsals.

decision making ability on academic related matters at the school levels. For instance, the head teachers cannot prevent a non-performing student to continue to the next class without approval from the district education office. This reluctance to prevent non-performing students from advancing is also echoed in the standard 4 exam arrangements, of which teachers are told to allow even failed students to continue to standard 5.

There is a salient complain from teachers regarding the quality of text books. In this, teachers explained that there are several books for one subject without an indication of the main text book. This is a problem since the books have, at times, contradictory information. This could be difficult for primary school students who are suppose to learn the basic facts and comprehension of the same.

*“Vitabu vya kiada pia vinachanganya sababu vinatofautiana kwenye mambo muhumi, kwa mfano kitabu kimoja cha historia kinasema kuna steji tano za evolution ya mwanadamu na kingine kinasema 7 sijui nimwambieje mwanafunzi ipi ni sawa” – Teacher, Handeni*

English Translation: “Text books are confusing because they have contradictory information in important matters, for example, one history book says there are 5 stages of human evolution whilst another one says there are 7 stages, I don’t which one is correct to tell the student”

The education policy promotes urban bias in particular teacher allocation, whereby there is no any incentive for teachers in remote rural areas. Teachers who works in urban areas and in those schools near administration offices (local government) have the same remuneration packages as those working in remote areas. There is no hardship allowance for teachers working in difficult areas. As a result, teachers allocated in remote rural areas constantly seek ways to be reallocated and those who stay lack motivation. The difference in teacher-student ratio based on the location was evident in the schools visited. Those that were located near the highway/tarmac road such as Kwamgala in Handeni have more teachers at ratio of 44:1 respectively, similarly in Msanga B in Chamwino has 39:1 ratio. In Champumba in Chamwino where there are only six teachers (70:1) the school is located in extremely isolated remote area Transportation to the district office is unreliable. A teacher would travel by boat during raining season through Mtera, and/or *bodaboda* and a bus to get to the district offices. Similarly, Kwedukabu in Handeni, which is a three hours *bodaboda* ride to the tarmac (Mkata) and then after 60 kilometers to district offices, has a teacher ratio of 103:1.

*“We normally go for the capitation grants only once in three months. We do not go there on monthly basis as should be the case” – Head Teacher, Chamwino*

In general, all schools visited were in bad shape in terms of infrastructure and availability of teaching and learning materials. The efforts to remedy the situation, however, are faced with stark challenge as a result of the free education policy introduced by the Government early this year. As a result of this policy therefore, parents are unwilling to contribute to mend the deteriorating situation in schools.

“Wazazi hawako tayari kuchangia chakula, tumejaribu sana pia na kamati ya shule” – Head Teacher, Handeni

*English Translation:* “Parents are not willing to contribute schools means, we, together with the school committee, have tried a lot”



## RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents recommendations informed by the analysis above. In that respect, the recommendations are in two parts: (1) recommendations for BB process; and (2) recommendations for the government and education stakeholders in the country.

### *Recommendations for BB process*

The BB pilot process has been an eye opening to the importance of testing the learning levels of students beyond the basic skills. The process was useful not only to Twaweza's work but also most important to teachers who realized the low learning level of their students. There are several areas which the BB process should consider in order to improve it and to ensure smoothness and sustainability in conducting it. These are:

- Thorough proof reading of the testing papers to avoid any errors that may affect students' performance.
- Ordinary teachers could be more involved in the preparation of the test questions and also in preparation of marking schemes. This could be done randomly (through a sampling procedure) to select teachers from various schools in Tanzania. Doing so, will not only ensure ownership of the process by the teachers, but also empower them in understanding ways through which they could enable and test students on skills that are beyond basics.
- The safety of the assessors in the field should be considered further in particular those who go to schools that are located in remote areas. The safety should include transport and accommodation risk analysis. There were schools that assessors had to take 3 or more hours *bodaboda* ride to reach the school. There were no other options than hiring the motorbikes.

### *Recommendations for Government and other education stakeholders*

- First priority in ensuring learning in our schools is feeding students. It is almost inhuman to let children of that age stay without any food for the whole day. Literature is clear that hunger leads to stunting both in brain and also physical. The government, at any cost, needs to revisit its education strategy and ensure there is meal provision and a school feeding program.
- The education policy makers and politicians need to accept the reality of education as a technical professional field. This include empowering head teachers to make academic decisions and have a certain academic latitude in their schools guided by practical policies.
- Continuous in-service training to teachers should be a priority in particular on new teaching styles that ensure learning and development of critical thinking and comprehension capacities. New ways of effective teaching of mathematics should be given priority. Through these seminars, teachers could also be sharing experience in good practices.

- Schools should be equipped with adequate teaching and learning facilities including basics such as the rulers, globe map ball, compass and clear black boards among other basics. These often missed in the school that were visited.

### *Specific Policy Recommendations*

The recommendations below are driven from those listed above. They are specifically listed here to underscore priority.

- Provision of school meals. This is the first policy point that the education system in Tanzania needs to reconsider and take education budget action. The government could increase the rate of capitation grant per student to include food provision in school. The meal provision will not only ensure learning but will also systematically address the national health problem of malnutrition, which the government survey found to be severe among children and has led to stunting (URT, 2014).
- Continuous awareness raising to parents on their integral responsibility to ensure learning and contribute towards education for their children. The government through its local systems should accentuate the parental responsibility to support its efforts on education for all.
- Provide more incentive to teachers in owning the efforts to ensure learning and high performance in schools. Teachers understand the learning challenges and ways through which they could address some of those challenges, thus the government needs to capitalize on the teachers' potentials by motivating them morally (example through trust and decision making capacity) and materially (hardship allowances and in-service training).



## CONCLUSION

Overall, the BB process is commendable to assess learning in Tanzania. It is a needed complement to Uwezo as it goes beyond to evaluate learning skills that are crucial in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The pilot process has not only highlighted areas of strength and improvement for BB but it has also, even more importantly, underscored issues of learning and education in Tanzania.

Teachers of those schools that BB was conducted have also been empowered by coming to a realization of low learning levels in their schools. This was evident from the analysis of their expectations versus the actual results. The teachers also had a chance to reflect on their own shortcomings and what they could do, within their own means, to improve the situation. Such opportunities are rare in the education system in Tanzania and it should be encouraged.

The above recommendations are informed by analysis, which was only possible due to BB process. In this light, the BB process will be an evident based assessment through which the education planners can be informed. The process should be rolled out for full implementation.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Tools for Individual Interviews (Head Teachers (Walimu Wakuu)) before and after the test questionnaires

#### WALIMU WAKUU – kabla ya majaribio & majadiliano

Wilaya: \_\_\_\_\_ Jina la shule: \_\_\_\_\_ Tarehe \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) Kwa jumla, umepokea ruzuku kiasi gani kwa mwaka huu mpaka sasa?  
Andika kiwango: \_\_\_\_\_ TSH
- 2) Kwa uzoefu wako, kuna kitu chochote ambacho kimebadilika kwenye ruzuku kwa mwaka huu, ukilinganisha na mwaka jana?
  - a. (Andika jibu): \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Unazungumziaje mabadiliko hayo? (Elezea: Je, yamefanya mambo kuwa rahisi, ama yameongeza changamoto?...):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Kwa mtazamo wako, nini kimebadilika kwenye shule hii toka serikali ilipotangaza “elimu bure” mwazoni mwa mwaka huu?
  - a. (Andika jibu):  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Unasemaje kuhusu mabadiliko hayo? (Elezea: Je, yamefanya mambo kuwa rahisi, ama yameongeza changamoto?...):  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Umeona majaribio ya hisabati na Kiswahili ambayo tutatumia kuwapima watoto wa darasa la 5 na 6. Kwa mtazamo wako, unaweza kutuambia unadhani wanafunzi watafaulu katika uwiano upi?
  - a. Unadhani ni asilimia ngapi ya wanafunzi funzi waliopimwa leo watafaulu kwa kiwango cha juu kwenye jaribio la **hisabati**? Chagua moja:
    - i. Hakuna (0)
    - ii. Karibu robo (25%)
    - iii. Karibu nusu (50%)
    - iv. Karibu robo tatu (75%)
    - v. Karibu wote au wote (100%)
  - b. Katika uwiano gani unadhani wanafunzi waliopimwa leo watafaulu kwa kiwango cha juu kwenye jaribio la **Kiswahili la kusoma ufahamu**? Chagua moja:

- i. Hakuna
  - ii. Karibu robo (25%)
  - iii. Karibu nusu (50%)
  - iv. Karibu robo tatu (75%)
  - v. Karibu wote au wote (100%)
- c. Katika uwiano gani wanafunzi waliopimwa leo unadhani watafaulu kwa kiwango cha juu jaribio la **Kiswahili la kuandika**? Chagua moja:
- i. Hakuna (0)
  - ii. Karibu robo (25%)
  - iii. Karibu nusu (50%)
  - iv. Karibu robo tatu (75%)
  - v. Karibu wote au wote (100%)

### WALIMU WAKUU – baada ya jaribio & majadiliano

Wilaya: \_\_\_\_\_ Jina la shule: \_\_\_\_\_ Tarehe \_\_\_\_\_

Umeona MATOKEO ya majaribio ambayo yalitumika leo kuwapima watoto waliopo darasa la 5 na 6 kwenye somo la hisabati na Kiswahili. Unaweza kutuelezea matokeo ya wanafunzi ukilinganisha na matarajio yako?

1) Katika somo la **hisabati**, wanafunzi:

- a) Wamefanya vibaya kuliko nilivyotarajia
- b) Wamefanya kama nilivyotarajia
- c) Wamefanya vizuri kuliko nilivyotarajia

2) Kama wanafunzi wamefanya vizuri au vibaya tofauti na matarajio yako, unadhani nini sababu *kuu* ya utofauti kati ya matarajio yako na matokeo ya wanafunzi?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3) Katika **kusoma Kiswahili**, wanafunzi...

- a) Wamefanya vibaya kuliko nilivyotarajia
- b) Wamefanya kama nilivyotarajia
- c) Wamefanya vizuri kuliko nilivyotarajia

4) Kama wanafunzi wamefanya vizuri au vibaya tofauti na ulivyotarajia, unadhani nini sababu *kuu* ya utofauti kati ya matarajio yako na matokeo ya wanafunzi?

\_\_\_\_\_

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5) Katika **kuandika Kiswahili**, wanafunzi...

- a) Wamefanya vibaya kuliko vilivyotarajia
- b) Wamefanya kama nilivyotarajia
- c) Wamefanya vizuri kuliko nilivyotarajia

6) Kama wanafunzi wamefanya vizuri au vibaya tofauti na ulivyotarajia, unadhani nini sababu *kuu* ya utofauti kati ya matarajio yako na matokeo ya wanafunzi?

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## Appendix 2: Tools for Individual Interviews (Teachers (Walimu)) before and after the test questionnaires

### WALIMU – kabla ya majaribio & majadiliano

Wilaya: \_\_\_\_\_ Jina la shule: \_\_\_\_\_ Tarehe \_\_\_\_\_

Darasa unalofundisha (Inaweza kuwa zaidi ya moja): \_\_\_\_\_

Somo unalofundisha (Inaweza kuwa zaidi ya moja): \_\_\_\_\_

Umeona majaribio ambayo yatatumika leo kuwapima watoto wa darasa la 5 na 6, kwenye somo la hisabati na Kiswahili. Kwa mtazamo wako, unaweza kutuambia ni kwa uwiano upi unadhani wanafunzi watafaulu?

- 1) Katika uwiano gani unadhani wanafunzi waliopimwa leo watafaulu kwa kiwango cha juu kwenye jaribio la **hisabati**? Chagua moja:
  - i. Hakuna (0)
  - ii. Karibu robo (25%)
  - iii. Karibu nusu (50%)
  - iv. Karibu robo tatu (75%)
  - v. Karibu wote au wote (100%)
  
- 2) Katika uwiano gani unadhani wanafunzi waliopimwa leo watafaulu kwa kiwango cha juu kwenye jaribio la **Kiswahili la kusoma ufahamu**?
  - i. Hakuna (0)
  - ii. Karibu robo (25%)
  - iii. Karibu nusu (50%)
  - iv. Karibu robo tatu (75%)
  - v. Karibu wote au wote (100%)
  
- 3) Katika uwiano gani unadhani wanafunzi waliopimwa leo watafaulu kwa kiwango cha juu kwenye jaribio la **Kiswahili la kuandika**? Chagua moja:
  - i. Hakuna (0)
  - ii. Karibu robo (25%)
  - iii. Karibu nusu (50%)
  - iv. Karibu robo tatu (75%)
  - v. Karibu wote au wote (100%)

## WALIMU – baada ya jaribio & mjadala

Wilaya: \_\_\_\_\_ Jina la shule: \_\_\_\_\_ Tarehe \_\_\_\_\_

Darasa unalofundisha (inaweza kuwa zaidi ya moja):

Somo unalofundisha (Inaweza kuwa zaidi ya moja):

Umeona MATOKEO ya majaribio ambayo yalitumika leo kuwapima watoto waliopo darasa la 5 na 6 kwenye somo ya hisabati na Kiswahili. Unaweza kutuelezea matokeo ya wanafunzi ukilinganisha na matarajio yako?

7) Kwenye somo la **hisabati**, wanafunzi:

- a) Wamefanya vibaya kuliko nilivyotarajia
- b) Wamefanya kama nilivyotarajia
- c) Wamefanya vizuri kuliko nilivyotarajia

8) Kama wanafunzi wamefanya vizuri au vibaya tofauti na ulivyotarajia, unadhani nini sababu *kuu* ya utofauti kati ya matarajio yako na matokeo ya wanafunzi?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9) Kwenye **kusoma Kiswahili**, wanafunzi...

- a) Wamefanya vibaya kuliko nilivyotarajia
- b) Wamefanya kama nilivyotarajia
- c) Wamefanya vizuri kuliko nilivyotarajia

10) Kama wanafunzi wamefanya vizuri ama vibaya tofauti na matarajio yako, unadhani nini sababu *kuu* ya utofauti kati ya matarajio yako na matokeo ya wanafunzi?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11) Kwenye **kuandika Kiswahili**, wanafunzi

- a) Wamefanya vibaya kuliko nilivyotarajia
- b) Wamefanya kama nilivyotarajia
- c) Wamefanya vizuri kuliko nilivyotarajia

12) Kama wanafunzi wamefanya vizuri ama vibaya tofauti na matarajio yako, unadhani nini sababu *kuu* ya utofauti kati ya matarajio yako na matokeo ya wanafunzi?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 3: Focus Group Discussion Guide

### MREJESHO KWA WALIMU

#### Maswali ya ziada:

- 1) Somo la **hisabati**: Tayari umeona matokeo ya somo la hisabati, je matokeo haya ni kama ulivyotarajia, au ni mabaya kuliko ulivyotarajia au ni mazuri kuliko ulivyotarajia? Kwanini unadhani imekuwa hivyo? (ruhusu walimu kutofautiana – uliza ili kupanua mjadala mf. Waambie watoe sababu zao)

#### Dodosa:

- Unafikiri nini sababu ya wanafunzi kufanya vizuri (au vibaya) tofauti na matarajio yako?
- Kama ni sawa na matarajio yako, unazungumziaje matokeo hayo? Je, ni matokeo mazuri au mabaya?
- Kama matokeo ni mazuri, Je, ni mazuri kama inavyopaswa (katika kiwango kinachopaswa)?
- Wapi ambapo wanafunzi wanapata shida/wanashindwa kwenye hisabati? (ruhusu mjadala), matokeo yanawezaje kuboreshwa?
- Uliza njia tofauti tofauti za kuboresha matokeo – Je ni kuhusu vifaa? Ama utoaji na usahihishaji wa kazi za nyumbani? Au ni kuhusu muda ambao mwalimu hutumia darasani kufundisha?

Unadhani walimu wa hisabati wa shule hii wanaweza wakafanya maboresho haya? Kwanini wanaweza au kwanini hawawezi?

- 2) **Kusoma Kiswahili**: Tayari umeona matokeo ya kusoma Kiswahili, je matokeo haya ni kama ulivyotarajia, au ni mabaya kuliko ulivyotarajia au ni mazuri kuliko ulivyotarajia? Kwanini unadhani imekuwa hivyo? (ruhusu walimu kutofautiana – uliza ili kupanua mjadala mf. Waambie watoe sababu zao)

#### Dodosa:

- Unafikiri nini sababu ya wanafunzi kufanya vizuri (au vibaya) tofauti na matarajio yako?
- Kama ni sawa na matarajio yako, unazungumziaje matokeo hayo? Je, ni matokeo mazuri ama mabaya?
- Kama matokeo ni mazuri, Je, ni mazuri kama inavyopaswa (katika kiwango kinachopaswa)?
- Wapi ambapo wanafunzi wanapata shida/wanashindwa kwenye kusoma? (ruhusu mjadala), matokeo yanawezaje kuboreshwa?

- Uliza njia tofauti tofauti za kuboresha matokeo – Je ni kuhusu vifaa? Ama utoaji na usahihishaji wa kazi za nyumbani? Au ni kuhusu muda ambao mwalimu hutumia darasani kufundisha?

Unadhani walimu wa Kiswahili wa shule hii wanaweza wakafanya maboresho haya? Kwanini wanaweza au kwanini hawawezi?

- 3) **Kuandika Kiswahili:** Tayari umeona matokeo ya kuandika, je matokeo haya ni kama ulivyotarajia, au ni mabaya kuliko ulivyotarajia au ni mazuri kuliko ulivyotarajia? Kwanini unadhani imekuwa hivyo? (ruhusu walimu kutofautiana – uliza ili kupanua mjadala mf. Waambie watoe sababu zao)

**Dodosa:**

- Unafikiri nini sababu ya wanafunzi kufanya vizuri (au vibaya) tofauti na matarajio yako?
- Kama ni sawa na matarajio yako, unazungumziaje matokeo hayo? Je, ni matokeo mazuri ama mabaya?
- Kama matokeo ni mazuri, Je, ni mazuri kama inavyopaswa (katika kiwango kinachopaswa)?
- Wapi ambapo wanafunzi wanapata shida/wanashindwa kwenye kuandika? (ruhusu mjadala), matokeo yanawezaje kuboreshwa?
- Uliza njia tofauti tofauti za kuboresha matokeo – Je ni kuhusu vifaa? Ama utoaji na usahihishaji wa kazi za nyumbani? Au ni kuhusu muda ambao mwalimu hutumia darasani kufundisha?

Unadhani walimu wa Kiswahili wa shule hii wanaweza wakafanya maboresho haya? Kwanini wanaweza au kwanini hawawezi?