

Sauti za Wananchi Series | 1 July 2014

Remarks by Omari Issa, CEO, PDB

First, let me apologise for not being here. I would have been delighted to participate but, due to prior commitments outside the country, I am not able to. However, I am a strong believer and advocate of team work. My colleagues from the Education and Communications Departments are here not only on my behalf, but also on behalf of BRN.

Second, we would like to congratulate those involved in organizing the mobile phone survey. For any initiative, including the BRN, to be successful and sustainable, it is absolutely important to engage with “wananchi”. So, once again, we commend you for the initiative.

Third, we note the level of BRN awareness among wananchi. We are encouraged that, even though we are in the initial stages of BRN, as many as 15% of the respondents are aware of the programme. Perhaps they have begun to see some of the results that were not there before the initiative was launched. Nonetheless, we will enhance our communications with the objective of raising awareness through the involvement of wananchi.

Fourth, we understand that both expectations and scepticism about BRN are very high. We would like to assure the public that the BRN delivery methodology is working. Within a year of implementing the BRN programme, significant achievements in each of the six sectors have been realized. Let’s work together AS A TEAM to ensure we all succeed.

Fifth, let me now turn to today's discussion on education. Since the world is currently engulfed by the World Cup in Brazil, let me use the football analogy. Football teams are made up of goal keepers, defenders, midfielders and strikers. In addition, there are coaches, fans, referees and lines men and women. Each one of these has their respective roles. For the team to be successful, each one must play those roles fully.

In education, we have students, parents, communities, teachers, boards and management teams, teacher/parents associations, civil societies, NGOs and, last but not least, the Government. As in football, each one of these, from the student to the Government, has a role to play. Similarly, if we want to be successful in education, we need to work as a team.

Unfortunately, many of the key players in education (including students and parents) appear to have abandoned their roles. Instead, they expect the Government to do everything. To worsen the situation, some of the advocacy groups have reduced their roles to only one, that of criticizing the Government even when the latter initiates positive programmes.

If the goal keeper continues to blame the defender who, in turn, continues to blame the striker, the football team will never be successful. On the other hand, if they play as team, they stand a much better chance of succeeding.

In conclusion, I would like to encourage all of us to work together as a team. I am confident that, if we do so, we will succeed in improving the quality of education in Tanzania.

Once again, sincere apologies for missing this event. Most important, the PDB team is here. Thank you for listening to my remarks and best wishes in your discussions.