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VEPK

Education is life – Elimu ni uhai

Report on Whole School Development Programme

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**Village Education
Project Kilimanjaro**

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ABBREVIATIONS

DEO	District Education Officer
MAT	Mathematical Association of Tanzania
TIE	Tanzania Institute of Education
TPC	Tanganyika Planter Cooperative
TRC	Teachers' Resource Centre
VEPK	Village Education Project Kilimanjaro
WEO	Ward Education Officer
WSDP	WholeSchool Development Programme

Background and introduction to the work in 2013

VEPK has worked in the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania since 1994. All its projects are concerned with basic education for village children and young people. The Whole School Development Programme (WSDP) is now its main project. The aims of the WSDP are: to improve teaching and learning; to raise the level of teachers' understanding and knowledge with regard to their subjects and generic teaching skills; to assist head teachers with management and administration; to build closer links between schools and the community; to work closely with the district education authorities in all parts of the programme and to work with education officials at all levels with the aim of influencing policies of the Ministry of Education & Vocational Training.

The current WSDP was approved by the District Education Officer and implemented in 2006. The programmes in 2007-2010 laid foundations and developed work with in-service training in specific primary schools, seminars for teachers, training for head teachers and school committee members, and workshops to provide a forum for the DEOs and Chief Inspectors of the Kilimanjaro region to improve their work and skills and to suggest relevant changes that would help their work. A formal partnership and collaboration was established with Singa Chini Teacher Training College.

At the end of 2010 plans were made to introduce the WSDP to a new ward, Mabogini, in order to implement the model which had evolved from working in Marangu. In 2011 and 2012 work in the 11 schools in Mabogini ward went from strength to strength with most encouraging results.

This year the WSDP has reached new levels for being valued and recognised. The link with Singa Chini Teacher Training College continues, and work with the tutors from that College and the District Inspectorate continued and brought about a very satisfying and important result.

In the year there have been changes in the people who work on the programme. David Jones, our volunteer manager for the programme's operations left in June 2013 to join an organisation in Moshi dealing with youth projects.

In August 2012 Barbara Kerr had joined the programme. Barbara is full-time on the programme and has enabled the programme to flourish in the Mabogini schools.

Jane Firth, a very experienced teacher of pupils in the early years of primary school and a teacher-trainer, continued to work with the primary school teachers to improve the teaching of basic mathematics, and visited Tanzania twice in the year.

In February Jill Nash was in Tanzania for her final assignment. Jill's two-month assignment was, as before in 2012, to assist the teachers of Benjamin Mkapa primary school with English as a foreign language.

In April Anna Herrera, an undergraduate teacher/educationalist from Finland, worked on the programme for three months running a pilot project using Jiandae kwa NOEC language awareness course, written by Katy Allen, with Paulina the teacher of standard I pupils at Mabogini primary school.

Dr Anne Samson, an educationalist and teacher-trainer from London (although born and brought up in South Africa) researches for, plans for and oversees the WSDP and visits Tanzania at least twice each year. Katy Allen is the director of VEPK and is in Tanzania for several months each year, and is mainly involved on administrative aspects of the programme.

Summary of work done in the primary education sector in 2013

Support for teachers

The schools in Mabogini have continued to receive support for in-service training sessions and follow-up visits. All of these have been organised by the Ward Education Officer, Mr Msuya, who has provided invaluable support to VEPK's work.

English

Jill Nash completed her work at Benjamin Mkapa primary school, and worked with the teachers of English holding in-service sessions to help them with specific difficulties they encountered in their lessons.

Anna Herrera joined the programme as part of her degree course. Anna worked with Paulina, the teacher of standard I pupils at Mabogini primary school. Permission had been granted for a short pilot project to use the first book of the two-year course of Jiandae kwa NOEC (Get Ready for NOEC) which is a language awareness course specifically written for Tanzanian schools, in Swahili. The course encourages children to look at their own language and at words in their language which have come from English. In the course they are introduced to over 350 such words (for instance, jacket/jaketi, pencil/penseli, train/treni). The course also concentrates on general knowledge and skills development. An explanation of the course, and Anna's reports on her assignment are contained in **Appendix 1**.

Mathematics

The main focus in the year continued to be the teaching of mathematics. In previous years the focus had been only on the first three years of primary school; pre-primary, Standard I and Standard II, as this is the critical foundation in a child's understanding of mathematical concepts. Jane Firth continues to train teachers on the teaching techniques needed for those early years. However, Barbara Kerr has started working with teachers of mathematics in all standards, and her work has produced very encouraging and interesting results.

In order to develop from the early years mathematics Jane and Barbara held seminars in February for teachers of mathematics in standard III. These were held over several Mondays so that teachers could put some activities into practice with their pupils between sessions. Standard III is quite different from the earlier years as it is the first year in which the pupils spend a full day at school, it is the first year that pupils have different teachers for their different subjects, each lesson is longer being 40 minutes rather than 30 minutes, and more subjects are introduced in standard III. The use of the 'concrete' (real items) so that pupils understand and see the mathematics was emphasised but also regard was given to using activities alongside written exercises. The teachers learned from the seminars and realised that the work of the early years' teachers was important in laying foundations, and that the topics throughout the

standards are inter-linked and that each teacher has a part to play towards the end-of-primary leaving examination which the pupils sit in standard VII. A report of the seminar is at **Appendix 2**.

In September/October Jane Firth gave a day's presentation at the Mathematical Association of Tanzania's annual conference in Mbeya. Jane's presentation was on how to teach mathematics to pre-primary, standard I and standard II pupils, with the emphasis on the use of 'concrete'/real items so that regard is given to the development and ability of the pupils. Other issues covered were the importance of teaching 'place value' (units, tens, hundreds), and the importance of number-bonds (all additions and subtractions of numbers from 0 to 10).

Also in September/October Jane Firth gave a series of seminars to teachers of pre-primary pupils in the Tanganyika Planters Cooperative (TPC) estate which is part of the Moshi rural district education system.

The report of Jane's seminar given at TPC is attached as **Appendix 3**.

Barbara Kerr's work in the year started with follow-up visits to teachers in their classrooms to assist teachers of pre-primary, standard I and standard II pupils. These were mostly undertaken in the four target schools; Muungano, Mwamko, Chekereni and Mabogini primary schools.

However, it became clear that team-teaching and mini-training sessions would be a better way of encouraging teachers to try new techniques and for them to gain more knowledge of the topics which cause difficulty in mathematics. It was important to start to work with teachers of all the standards. The schools suggested that help should be given to teachers of standard VII as that is the year of the national primary-school-leaving-examination. This was a place to start, and with the use of the data analysis (see below) the teachers soon realised that teaching mathematics is a development of concepts and skills and that the work in all standards has its part to play in preparing pupils for their standard VII national examinations. In the four target schools teachers of other standards, and not just those of standard VII, started to attend the mini-inset sessions in which Barbara concentrated on how to teach the topics which cause the most difficulty. These topics were known to be weak areas from the data analysis.

One of the greatest developments in the year has been Barbara's analysis of examination results. Barbara obtained pupils' examination papers, after gaining the trust of the Academic Officers in the District Education Office, and analysed the results in different ways. Her analyses showed: each question and whether individual pupils got it right or wrong which thus showed at a glance those questions which few or no pupils could answer; how many pupils came within different scores settings, such as 0-10, 11-20 etc; how many pupils achieved more than the expected level of half marks etc. These various visual summaries show an alarming picture of the lack of learning taking place.

Barbara Kerr's annual report, and her summary of data collection are attached as **Appendix 4**.

General

In each of Jane Firth's visits she conducted a seminar on Story-telling. These were mainly in Swahili, and were for teachers of the pre-primary and standard I pupils, and aimed to encourage teachers to use stories in their teaching and also to build the confidence of the pupils through story-telling and acting. These seminars were very successful, and Jane's reports are attached as **Appendix 5**.

Support for parents and communities

During Jane's visit in February/March she conducted two workshops of 'Chatter Matters' for parents of babies and young children from the neighbourhood of four primary schools in Mabogini ward.

'Chatter matters' encourages parents to talk to their babies and children and to play with them. This not only assists the development of children's motor-skills, the development of their speech and thinking skills, but also prepares them for school.

The parents – with some men attending each workshop – were very keen to help their children. They had little knowledge about how children develop and so knew little of the play activities that were suitable for helping 'motor' skills, thinking skills and speech development. After many activities in the seminars the parents understood that they had an important role to play in their children's development especially before they go to school.

This is an area of work which needs expanding and which is well-received by parents.

Jane's report of these workshops are attached as **Appendix 6**.

Support for headteachers and evaluation of our work in Mabogini

During Dr Anne Samson's visit in July/August she attended a meeting in Mabogini ward with the Ward Education Officer, Mr Msuya, and the head teachers of the eleven primary schools with which the WSD programme has been involved.

The meeting was to assess how VEPK's work had helped, and how it might have improved teaching and management/leadership in the schools. The views of those present were positive, and it seems that the WSD Programme in Mabogini ward has brought noticeable results in the teaching of mathematics to the early years, and has begun to assist schools and their teachers to work together.

An evaluation of two primary schools (one a target school, and one not a target school) in Mabogini was undertaken by two District Schools Inspectors with Dr Anne Samson and Barbara Kerr in attendance. This found that the work in mathematics is making a good impact in the classrooms.

A report of the school evaluation and of the report by Anne in August 2013 for the District Education Officer are attached as **Appendix 7**.

Support for the inspectors and trainers on how to assess and teach 'participatory teaching'

In August Dr Anne Samson facilitated a final session with the district inspectors of schools for Moshi Rural district and the tutors of Singa Chini Teacher Training College to conclude their discussions on the assessment of pupils' work.

Currently, the only methods of assessment in the schools are written work in exercise books and tests and examinations. As the government is stressing 'participatory teaching' it is important to bring in new methods of assessment. A representative of the Zonal office of the inspectorate of schools for the north-eastern zone was present, and helped to guide the session to its conclusion. After discussion it was agreed that a report of the conclusions from these sessions should be written and sent to the Ministry of Education & Vocational Training passing through the Zonal Chief Inspector of Schools for the north-eastern zone. The conclusion was that restricting the mode of assessment which teachers can use in their lessons to written work is hampering the adoption of 'participatory teaching' or 'child centred learning'. The teachers should be able to include in their lesson plans that they will use other methods of assessment,

such as observation of activities, observation of pupils' demonstrations, listening to pupils in their group-work etc. The report was written and it was signed by all parties, and presented to the Zonal Chief Inspector of Schools for the north-eastern zone. Despite involving the Deputy Zonal Chief Inspector the report awaits the Zonal Chief Inspector who is on extended sick leave.

A report of this final workshop, along with the report which has been sent to the office of the Zonal Chief Inspector of Schools for the North-Eastern Zone, awaiting delivery to the Ministry of Education & Vocational Training, are attached as **Appendix 8**.

Support for School Committee members

Tutors from Singa Chini teacher-training college, Mr Mkiramweni and Mr Lusingu, had conducted seminars for us in order to train school committee members. This guided the members on how to form the committee and elect new members, the constitution of each committee, the preparation for and conduct of meetings, the forming of sub-committees and their roles, the duties of the members and also what the committee is not permitted to do.

VEPK commissioned Mr Mkiramweni and Mr Lusingu of Singa Chini Teacher-Training College to write a handbook for school committee members, so that they can be guided in their roles and responsibilities. This has been printed and was distributed to schools in Mabogini ward in July.

Workshop for District Education Offices and their Chief Inspectors of Schools

Four workshops have been held in the past for District Education Officers and the District Chief Inspectors of Schools from the seven districts of Kilimanjaro region. The District Education Officers and Chief Inspectors of Schools had been keen to continue with training workshops in order to improve the performance of their offices, and for them to form suggestions for improvements to primary education which could be disseminated.

Kazi Services in Dar es Salaam was identified as a good facilitator/trainer, and their chief consultant-trainer, Zuhura Muro, received an outline of needs for the training workshops. From this Kazi Services produced an excellent proposal for a series of training workshops. This was discussed with the Zonal Chief Inspector of Schools for the north-eastern zone, and some cost-sharing was sought, so that payment of the daily allowances to be paid to the Officers and Inspectors could be met by each District. Unfortunately, the budgets of each District have not included this, and the matter has been halted with the ill-health of the Zonal Chief Inspector.

The proposal from Kazi Services is attached as **Appendix 9**.

Meetings

In Tanzania there have been many meetings with the ward education officer of Mabogini ward, and with the District Education Officer for Moshi Rural District, the Academic Officers for Moshi Rural District, the District Inspectorate, the tutors at Singa Chini Teacher Training College, and with the Zonal Chief Inspector of Schools for the north-eastern zone and his deputy. Meetings have also taken place with various people at the Ministry of Education & Vocational Training in Dar es Salaam, including those involved in the process of getting permits to enable our volunteers to work on the programme and in government schools.

In the UK Katy Allen, the director, had a meeting with The Hon. Justine Greening, Secretary of State for International Development. The meeting was specifically to make Ms Greening aware of the New Original English course books for teaching English in the primary schools (see below), and to discuss the

role of DfID in Tanzania and its apparent lack of interest in VEPK's researched projects. Ms Greening wrote to DfID as she promised, but no further meeting with DfID in Dar es Salaam took place.

Links with other projects

Other projects in Tanzania have approached VEPK for its books and materials for teaching mathematics and English. EdUKaid in Mtwara, southern Tanzania, are using the Jiandae kwa NOEC language awareness course in one of their schools. A new project in rural Singida is using Jane Firth's www.Hisabati books for local schools to which it is linked. A private school in Arusha has obtained the School Committee Handbook for its primary school committee.

A new partnership has been formed between VEPK and F.T. Kilimanjaro. That is a Dutch-based charity which has worked for many years in the area of Lower Moshi and particularly in the TPC (Tanganyika's planters cooperative) estate. Theirs is an inter-related approach comprising infrastructure, agriculture, income-generation, health and education. For their education work they were keen to use the expertise of VEPK. Jane's seminars for pre-primary teachers in September/October were the first step in the collaboration.

FT Kilimanjaro and VEPK have entered into a partnership for a pilot project to be run in six schools in Lower Moshi throughout 2014 for the teaching of mathematics and English. This will be run using Jane's mathematics books for teaching in the early years, and the NOEC English books (see below) for teaching English.

National level – seminars, collaborations and education materials

General

In February the national Form Four (O'level) examination results caused consternation across the nation as the majority of students had failed, and of those who passed many only obtained Division IV. The Prime Minister, Mr Pinda, ordered a commission to go round the country and to collect evidence as to why the results were so poor.

Katy Allen and Barbara Kerr contacted the Commission's chairman, Professor Mchome, and arranged to meet those of the Commission who were in Arusha in March. The three commissioners were The Hon. Mama Bernadette Mushashu, a member of the East African Parliament, Mr Mabruki Makame, a retired Zanzibar educationalist, and Mama Tunu Temu, the head of the legal department at the Ministry of Education & Vocational Training. The discussions lasted nearly two hours and the commissioners were grateful for and interested in Katy and Barbara's views. These were that until and unless primary education is addressed then the results from secondary schools will not improve. Katy and Barbara had concentrated on the teaching of mathematics and English but also provided an overview of shortcomings in the primary education system.

A report of the Commission has yet to be published. The papers which were prepared for the Commission and handed over in the meeting are attached as **Appendix 10**.

Mathematics

The three books written by Jane Firth, www.Hisabati (wasaidie wanafunzi wafahamu.hisabati – let's help the pupils to understand mathematics) for pre-primary, standard I and standard II are being used by the teachers to great effect. The books guide the teachers how to teach using many activities, with 'concrete'/real items first so that pupils understand and see the mathematics in operation. The books are in Swahili and are very clear with many illustrations.

In March Barbara Kerr presented a session on ‘the real square in pi-r-squared’ to the Mathematical Association of Tanzania’s Pi-Day conference at Azania Secondary School in Dar es Salaam. By the end of the session the pupils in the audience were guessing the answers to questions on the area of a circle to within two decimal points of the correct answer.

A newspaper article, written by Barbara Kerr and Jane Firth was published in the Tanzanian Guardian on Pi-Day (14th March – to correspond to 3.14!). A copy of that article is attached as **Appendix 11**.

In August Barbara Kerr and Katy Allen went to visit the curriculum coordinator for mathematics at the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE). Barbara and Katy had prepared a file with detailed analyses of the primary mathematics syllabus and its deficiencies with recommendations for improvements. Barbara and Katy were then introduced to the Director of Research, Information & Publications, Mr Wangeleja. After discussions Mr Wangeleja invited VEPK to enter into a collaboration with TIE for a pilot project in a primary school in Dar es Salaam in order to collect evidence with a view to the rewriting of the mathematics syllabus. Mr Wangeleja suggested, as a first step, that the main document which Barbara and Katy had prepared for him be turned into an academic paper for a mathematics journal so that it could be cited officially. This paper was submitted to him in October and Mr Wangeleja is to contact journal editors. A copy of the paper is attached as **Appendix 12**.

English

The project proposed by VEPK to reintroduce a tried and tested English course for the teaching of English as a foreign language in primary schools continues. The books known by the acronym NOEC were in use as the only textbook in all primary schools in the 1960s, and pupils learned enough English in the first two years of the course to be able to pursue all their lessons in English from then onwards. By the time those pupils entered secondary school they were fully competent in English.

Recent examination results and research show that the standard of English is in a critical state, as is the standard of mathematics and even Swahili both in the primary and secondary sectors.

The teachers’ ability, particularly in English, is very low. There are over 40,000 teachers of English in Tanzania’s primary schools, and on-the-job support is the only feasible solution to start to redress the decline in standards.

After meeting the President in the State House in November 2011 it was announced on national radio and in the government daily newspaper that the NOEC books had been approved by the President. The President appointed one of his aides to liaise with VEPK. However, very little has happened since then despite efforts by Katy Allen and Dilly Mtui to progress things.

In order to publicise the books further Katy and Dilly gave a presentation to the Parliamentary Committee on Social Services in Dar es Salaam in January 2013. Eighteen members were present and all supported the books. In February Katy and Dilly hosted a press conference in Dar es Salaam. After that Katy and Dilly appeared on three television channels on separate morning Swahili interview programmes. In August Katy and Dilly met the newly appointed Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education & Vocational Training who gave his support to the books being reintroduced. Meetings followed with the new Director-General of TIE and the Commissioner for Education at the Ministry and the matter is slowly progressing.

A recent email of 23rd October from the Permanent Secretary instructed those acting on his behalf to help to conclude the matter promptly.

Katy Allen continues to run a weekly article in the Citizen newspaper every Sunday using excerpts from the NOEC books with comprehension questions. Those articles will cease on 26th January 2014 when material from NOEC book two has been exhausted.

A paper prepared in order for the new Permanent Secretary to know about the NOEC books is attached at **Appendix 13.**

Overall Findings

In conclusion this has been a very successful year.

In Mabogini ward the training and support in the teaching of mathematics has flourished with all teachers in the four target schools attending the mini-training sessions. They now realise the nature of mathematics' teaching as a development of number concepts, facts and skills which are inter-linked across the years. The collection and analysis of data has been instrumental in showing the teachers where the gaps in knowledge lie and in showing that the inter-related topics share the lack of pupil knowledge and understanding. The data also showed improvements from one mock examination to another which motivated one teacher enormously after he had been working with his pupils on some difficult topics.

The invitation to collaborate with TIE with a view to changing and improving the national mathematics syllabus is recognition that VEPK's work is well-researched and works in practice. It is an honour to have received such an invitation and is also testament to VEPK's claim that only long-term projects can bring about any real change in education.

The www.Hisabati books (wasaidie wanafunzi wafahamu.hisabati – let's help the pupils to understand mathematics) for pre-primary, standard I and standard II have been distributed to the teachers with whom we work. The books are very clear with many illustrations and the teachers are finding them extremely helpful in their work. With the pilot projects in 2014 the books will be used more and their use will be properly monitored.

The School Committee handbook is now in use in the schools in Mabogini ward, and will be distributed to the schools involved in next year's pilot projects. Its use and helpfulness will be monitored.

The work of Dr Anne Samson with the inspectors and teacher-trainers, culminating in the report on the assessment methods to be permitted to be used in the classroom, is a major step forward. The restrictions on assessment methods were affecting the adoption of 'participatory' or 'child-centred' teaching/learning. Once the teachers know that the school inspectors accept something then they can practise it without worry or fear of infringing government guidelines.

The short pilot project using the Jiandae kwa NOEC was a great success, and next year's pilot projects will give more exposure to this new language awareness course. The work in publicising and promoting the Jiandae kwa NOEC and the NOEC books has paid off, and it seems that the project to introduce the books into every primary school is coming to fruition.

VEPK is now well-known in education circles, and that reputation has been earned from its long-term commitment to development work in the primary schools.

Future Plans

Our work in Mabogini ward will continue, with the addition of the pilot project in partnership with F.T. Kilimanjaro in six primary schools. Of those six, two are in Mabogini ward and so have already had training from VEPK in new methods and techniques. Jane Firth will be responsible for seminars and support in the teaching of mathematics to pre-primary, Standard I and Standard II pupils. Barbara Kerr will take responsibility for the training for mathematics teaching in the upper standards. Katy Allen with Dilly Mtui will be responsible for the English training and pilot use of the Jiandae kwa NOEC and the NOEC books.

The new collaboration with the Tanzania Institute of Education will begin with a pilot project in one primary school in Dar es Salaam, and logistics for running the project will be worked out with TIE. Jane and Barbara will lead the mathematics training, and Katy Allen will lead the English training.

VEPK will be producing a series of guides for teachers to help them to tackle difficult topics in the primary mathematics syllabus. These have been written by a previous volunteer, Geoffrey Dixon, and aim to give teachers knowledge and confidence in those topics. The guides have been translated into Swahili and need to be put into a format ready for printing.

Katy Allen, Dilly Mtui, Anne Samson and Barbara Kerr will continue to work with the Ministry of Education & Vocational Training in attempts to effect change in the primary education sector. Particularly it is hoped that the Jiandae kwa NOEC and the NOEC books will be adopted for use in primary schools. If that happens then it is anticipated that Katy would lead a training programme for the teachers on the use of the books.

VEPK has a very committed core team in Anne Samson, Jane Firth, Barbara Kerr, Dilly Mtui and Katy Allen. Their combined expertise enables VEPK to deliver work of a very high quality. The WSDP is undoubtedly fulfilling its aims. The pace of change is as expected in the context of education and in the context of Tanzania.

VEPK hopes that donors who support its WSD programme feel pleased to be associated with a slow but steady success story which whilst benefiting large numbers of beneficiaries in the Moshi Rural district is already extending its area of benefit far more widely across Tanzania.

VEPK expresses whole-hearted thanks for that support.