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UNICEF EDUCATION

Education Case Study

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

Flexible pathways help build the skills and competencies of vulnerable out-of-school adolescents

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A study conducted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) in 2016 revealed that 3.5 million children in Tanzania (2 million of primary school age and 1.5 million of secondary school age) were out of school. These include children who never attended school, dropped out of either primary or secondary school, or completed primary school but did not progress to secondary education. While some younger children have the advantage of re-entering primary school for free, out-of-school adolescents—who are often from the poorest households and cannot afford the cost of vocational education training—face more limited alternative learning pathways. Adolescents who never attended school lack minimum proficiencies in reading, writing and arithmetic, and almost all out-of-school adolescents lack employability skills.

Innovative and flexible approaches are needed to prevent school dropout and to build the competencies of vulnerable adolescents. To provide alternative pathways for adolescents who missed out on secondary education, the MoEST and Institute of Adult Education (IAE), with technical and financial support from UNICEF, launched an Integrated Programme for Out-of-School Adolescents (IPOSA) in 2019. The programme aims to develop literacy and numeracy skills of adolescents who never attended school; develop life skills such as personal empowerment, good citizenship, positive interpersonal relationships and skills for employability; and develop vocational and entrepreneurship skills so adolescents can cope with and participate actively in their lives, families and society. The IPOSA curriculum empowers young people to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for them to gain livelihoods and contribute fully to social and economic development.

RESULTS

Exceeding annual enrolment targets, IPOSA has been gaining ownership within the government as well as attracting donors, garnering interest to scale up nationally.

- Since its inception in 2019, IPOSA has benefitted over 30,183 adolescents (15,394 girls) in eight regions (Dar Es Saalam, Dodoma, Iringa, Kigoma, Mbeya, Njombe, Songwe and Tabora) with the highest rates of out-of-school children found in the 2015-16 study.
- In 2023, UNICEF is aiming to enrol 5,000 adolescents (3,000 girls) in the programme in 11 additional districts. This includes four districts in Tabora Region, four districts in Kigoma Region and three districts in Songwe Region.
- Since 2019, UNICEF has trained 320 IPOSA facilitators and teachers in IPOSA management skills as well as in entrepreneurship, vocational, life and literacy skills, with the goal of capacitating teachers to support the unique needs of out-of-school adolescents and promote their lifelong learning and employment.
- To make learning content more engaging and relevant, UNICEF provided technical guidance and digitised 2 of IPOSA's 15 teaching and learning modules developed by the IAE, adapting materials to digital formats including video, text, audio, animations and simulations. To accommodate the needs of young people, more modules will be digitised in the coming year. The IAE is also reviewing the existing modules to attract more adolescent girls to courses that are perceived as those for boys and young men, such as courses in electricity, carpentry and masonry.
- **Likewise, so is youth participation.** Using skills gained from the programme, numerous IPOSA graduates have formed empowerment clubs and obtained small loans and grants with guidance from district community development officers, growing their clubs into mature business ventures and applying their skills learned to earn a living. For example, in Kaliua District, Tabora Region, an IPOSA empowerment club secured a loan of US \$22,400 from the town council's youth and women development funds to build five primary school classrooms and a village health centre. Another club from Kasulu town council secured a US \$55,000 loan to build a small factory equipped with machines for carpentry and woodworking. These IPOSA graduates are now earning through various employment opportunities in the factory such as building school desks and household furniture.
- **Programme achievements proliferate self-financing and sustainability.** District councils have drawn on IPOSA learners to undertake some necessary technical work, such as the construction of washrooms and classroom repairs, both motivating the students and empowering the programme financially. Producing high quality work at a competitive price, IPOSA learners cemented the self-operation and financing of the programme without additional funds from UNICEF, thus paving the way for sustainability.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Government ownership is essential to programme success and continuity.** Responding to a national priority on youth development, national and local government authorities took the lead in the design and implementation of IPOSA. Without this ownership, investment and management from above, ambitious plans to scale up would not be possible.

NEXT STEPS

Currently, the Government is working to expand this alternative learning pathway to six other regions (Manyara, Pwani, Shinyanga, Simiyu, Singida and Tanga) using its own resources and in partnership with the IAE and Korea International Cooperation Agency. Additionally, an evaluation of the programme—led by the IAE and MoEST, with technical and financial support from UNICEF—will be completed by June 2023 and inform scale up plans.

Cost effectiveness: From 2019 to date, UNICEF Tanzania has invested approximately US \$448,000 in the Integrated Programme for Out-of-School Adolescents to promote alternative and flexible pathways to education, providing literacy, vocational, entrepreneurship and life skills to over 30,000 adolescents (51 *per cent* girls).

For more information, please contact:

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