

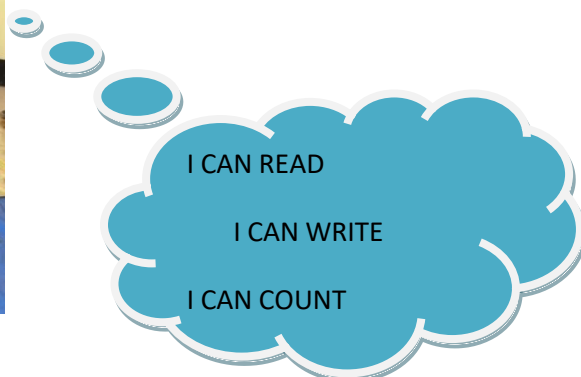
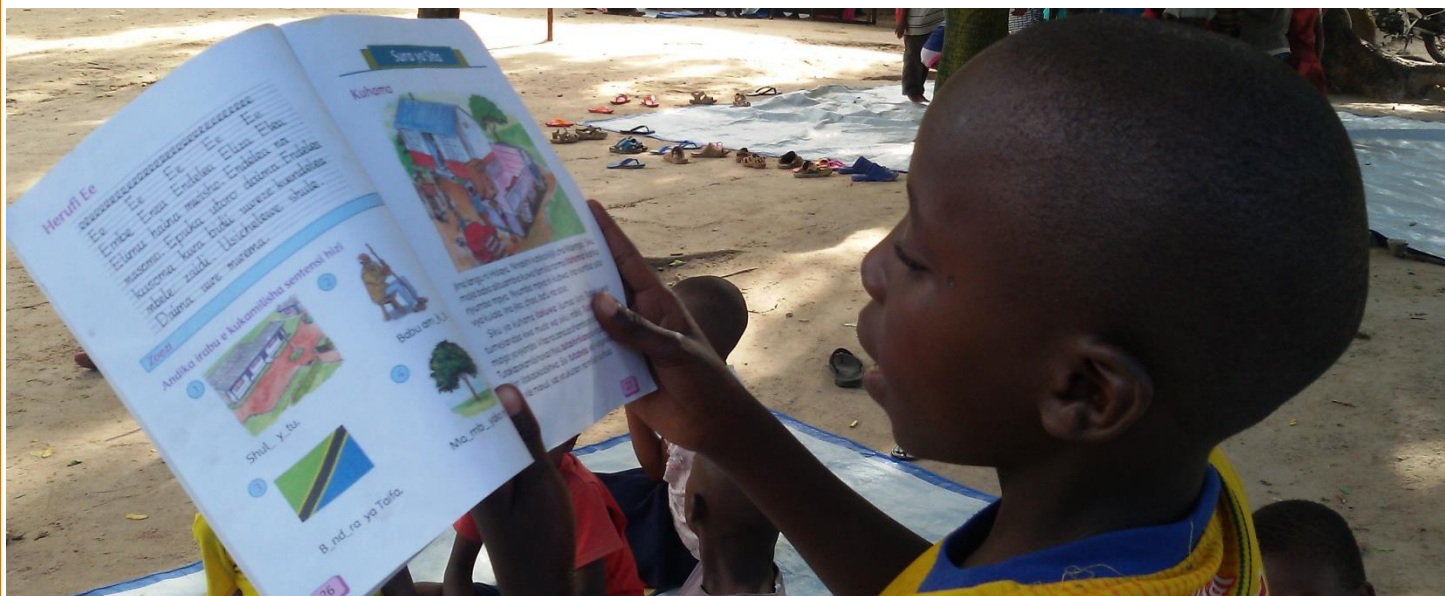


VUTAMDOGO

INNOVATIONS IN EARLY LEARNING

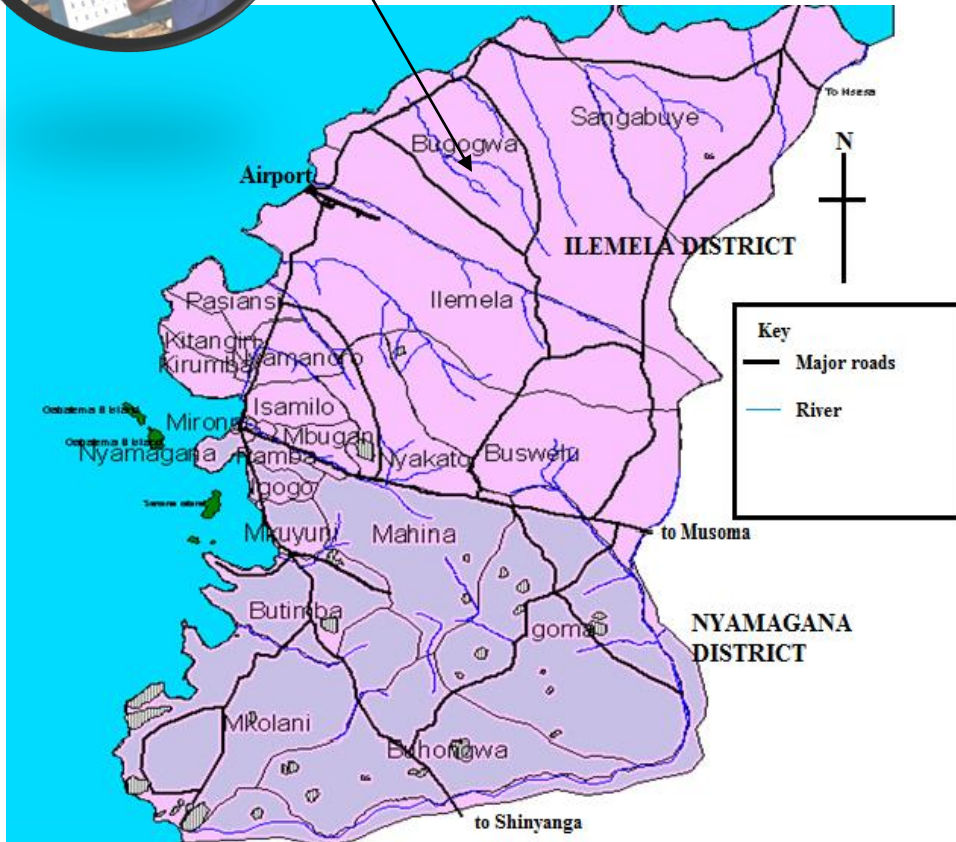
'Every truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident'.

—Arthur Schopenhauer



Implemented and Documented by Tanzania Home Economics Association (TAHEA Mwanza)

Pilot Area for VUTAMDOGO- Bugogwa and Shibula Wards



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 irabu = a e i o u
 Konsonanti kundi la I
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 - mama anabomoa duka.
 - dada amenuna.
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 - Neema ^{amebeba} ~~ama~~ konkono.
 - dada amebeba ua.
 - dada amebeba kulcu.
 - babu anakamua.
 - dada kuna nini?

KUANGWA
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Introduction

TAHEA is a professional National Non Government Organization (NGO's) founded in March, 1980 by 19 founder members. It 's registration no. is SO.6179 under the Tanzania Society Ordinance; it was regally registered in 1980, October the 14th, and later given the certificate of NGO Compliance No. 1732 of 4th December, 2006 under NGO Act. TAHEA Mwanza is a regional branch which is autonomous and works to address the local needs of Mwanza Region.

TAHEA Mwanza has grown as an organization and in service provision; we have made a difference in hard to reach communities where our services have continued to narrow the gaps of abject poverty. During the last 5 years, TAHEA Mwanza has been able to increase access to quality care, learning and development to 21,692 children aged 5-6 years in Ilemela and Nyamagana districts by promoting Preschool education through community efforts with a community managed micro finance as a synergy. During the last 2 years we piloted a literacy and numeracy program named VUTAMDOGO (Pull the Little One), TAHEA Mwanza have been able to increase the number of children attending class 1 and 11 who know how to read, write, and do mathematics from the average of 49 % in 2014 to 57.5% in 2015 and by mid - year in 2016 Class 1 average has reached 69.59%, while Class 11 is 69.84%.

We have managed to recruit 200 Youths through sports, 106 youths have started income generating group projects which include tailoring, fish farming, waste recycling and low cost products for building low cost housing. Youths learn about income generation activities and have started earning some income; they also save in their groups where they get soft loans through community managed micro finance activities. In order to participate in community development as a way of giving back to the community, youths are participating in facilitating after school programs for 7,868 (3,958 Males and 3,910 Females) children cumulatively attending class 1 and 11 from 8 community schools in Ilemela district.

TAHEA Mwanza work with the resource poor communities was awarded a Certificate of Recognition by Ilemela Municipal Council as a Social Corporate Partner in 2016, and in addition TAHEA Mwanza has been given a Certificate of Accreditation by Molly's' Network' Assessors and Independent Assessment Panel recognizing TAHEA as an organization which is meeting the community needs in an effective and efficient way, accreditation period is from March 2016 to March 2018. TAHEA Mwanza is qualified to undertake the project.

Background

Ilemela district was one of the 38 out of 133 districts (the assessment covered 5 - 16 year old children) which were surveyed by UWEZO Organization in Tanzania in 2010 (Are Our Children Learning?), the findings revealed that despite the enormous advances in education made possible by investing trillions of shillings each year, the vast majority

of children in Tanzania are not learning. By the time they enter standard 3, 100% of children should have basic competencies in literacy and numeracy. The reality is that by standard 3, 7 out of 10 children cannot read basic Swahili, 9, out of every 10 children cannot read Basic English and 8 out of every 10 children cannot do basic Mathematics. The Study further suggested possible solutions to the education crisis and one of them was to focus on learning outcomes such as literacy, numeracy, writing, critical thinking and creativity.

The literacy and numeracy challenges are not limited to Tanzania; many children across East Africa are not learning basic literacy and numeracy skills. Only two out of ten pupils (20%) in the third year of primary school can read and do basic mathematics at Standard (or Grade) 2 level. By the time they reach the last year of primary school, one out of four East African children (24%) still have not acquired these skills.

These findings were released by Uwezo, a program of Twaweza, in a report entitled *Are our children learning? Literacy and numeracy across East Africa*. Data on learning outcomes, school conditions and households were collected in 2013 in every district across the region through citizen-led household-based assessments. Learning outcomes were assessed among children aged 6 to 16 through tests set at Standard (or Grade) 2 level.

When considering all children aged 10 to 16, whether in or out of school, results are also poor. In Kenya 64% passed both on literacy and a numeracy test, in Tanzania 48% and in Uganda 36%. This means that, even in Kenya, the best performing country, less than 7 out of 10 of all children (aged 10-16) have mastered Grade 2 literacy and numeracy skills.

In addition to that, Firelight's partner organizations who implement early childhood development (ECD) programs in their communities participated in a study which was to examine correlates of child development and school readiness, and compared outcomes of children attending partners' ECD programs with outcomes of comparison children in the same communities (TAHEA Mwanza target children represented Tanzania among them).

The total sample included about 600 children across the three countries (Tanzania, Zambia, and Malawi). In the final data set, the sample ranged in age from 3.7 to 6.6 years. The Zambia Child Assessment Test (ZamCAT) was used to assess children's development and school readiness.

The Overall ZamCAT Score is a combined score including Receptive language, Letter naming, tactile pattern recognition, Fine motor skills, and Task orientation. The study found that home literacy environment and interactions were associated with slightly higher scores on a few sub scales. This means that children whose home environments had more literacy materials and interactions tended to perform better on some sub scales, including the language measures.

Children in Tanzania generally performed higher on many sub scales, as well as on the overall ZamCAT score. Children participating in ECD programs scored higher than comparison group children on receptive language, expressive language, letter naming, and fine motor skills, as well as on the overall ZamCAT score. If children who go

through ECD programs were performing better, including those who attend in TAHEA supported programs, why they performed low in Primary classes?

In 2013, Tanzania declared the situation as a national problem as many children were completing Primary School Education without knowing how to read and write. Efforts are being done to rescue the situation, one being improving the Teachers' skills in facilitating Reading, Writing and Mathematics in class 1 and 11 through In-service training, a program which started being implemented in 2015.

TAHEA Mwanza have been promoting early childhood development programs in Ilemela district which include early childhood care and education, health, nutrition, child protection for 0-6 years old children and economic strengthening program to families as a synergy for a numbers of years. The organization noted that there are problems which face children as they make a transition in early primary classes which include, poor teacher/ pupil ratio, poor class pupil ratio and the overall school infrastructure, this has impacted their literacy and numeracy skills acquisition. Currently through our new President, efforts to make sure that all children are able to have access to basic education, the fees have been waived and basic education is fees free. In 2016, the country at large have experienced a very high school enrollment in 2016 which is impacting the quality education delivery, Ilemela district is experiencing poor Classroom/ Child ratio, poor Teacher/ Pupil ratio, and the use of learner centered methodologies is not applicable to the situation, this is affecting children attending class 1 and 11 which are the basic classes in primary school education system. Currently, the average Class/ Pupil ratio is 1: 204 in class 1 and Class/ Pupil ratio in Class 11 is 1: 146 in the pilot project area with 8 Schools.

TAHEA Mwanza, in view of the importance of basic literacy and numeracy skills in children, implements a pilot project known as VUTAMDOGO (pull the little one) a community program funded by Firelight Foundation under Community Granting Initiative, an innovation to improve literacy and numeracy among children attending class 1 and 11 in 5 fishing communities. The program looks for alternative ways of other people outside the classroom to participate in improving and promoting literacy and numeracy skills through community involvement. The program uses Youths as agents of change; the program is becoming popular and is being demanded for scaling up and replication to other communities. Flora Family Foundation has given funds to support supervision, regular follow-ups, monitoring and evaluation, regular feedback and proper documentation to strengthen the program and enable others to use the approach to improve the same in their communities.

We understand that supporting programs that aim at protecting and promoting human rights, children education is key among others needs. Children have a right to quality education, and an educated person is able to claim his/ her rights and always feels protected by laws around her/ him, education is an investment we can make to children for quality human resource.

“Much of what we now take for granted in social life began as radical innovation. A century ago, few believed that ordinary people could be trusted to drive cars at high speed; the idea of a national health service freely available was seen as absurdly utopian, the concept of “kindergarten” was still considered revolutionary, and only one country had given women the vote. Yet in the interim, these and many other social innovations have progressed from the margins to the mainstream”. – *Geoff Mulgan*

In 2010, Firelight Foundation conducted a survey which was aimed at deepening their understanding of the ways that community-based organizations engage the schooling of young children. The data showed that, education was a priority investment for the community-based organizations; the survey helped Firelight Foundation to gain better understanding and gained better perspective of the non-funded activities that community based organizations engage in support of education. One of the key finding from the study, was that, community based organizations serve a critical link between families, communities, schools, and the government. Community based organizations are proactive in their efforts to influence and help these actors to support children’s education by:

- Improving the wellbeing of children so that they are ready to learn.
- Influencing families and mobilizing community support
- Supporting local schools and influencing district, regional and national government.

Firelight Foundation had two main concepts that lay as a foundation for their work on early learning and theory of change, this include 1) Education Quality and 2) Innovation. Firelight Foundation support to organizations was to learn more on which components of quality the community based organizations are likely to engage and which ones are more successful at implementing, and which ones need the most help. On the other hand Innovations were focused on the existing group of organizations that had some pedagogical expertise which they couple with their understanding of problems in order to identify solutions to overcome the challenge of helping children in resource poor settings to succeed in school. Firelight Foundation expectation was that most innovations will be social innovations in the sense that the innovations seek to redeploy the relatively abundant resources of solidarity, motivation, and labor in ways that children/ schooling system succeed. Firelight understood that, some innovations will as well include alternative financing, provision of innovative teaching practices, or governance of important components of learning. In short, Firelight Foundation thinking

on innovation was influenced by rural sociologist Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations, particularly regarding categories of adopters (innovators, early adopters, early majority late majority and laggard) all geared to improving learning outcomes, who's by product of processes will be demystified concept of grassroots innovation, that will be expressed in terms and processes that make sense locally.

THEORY OF CHANGE FOR IMPROVING LEARNING OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN IN TANZANIA

' If the ecological model of children learning sets out the set of actors and systems that affect and influence learning outcomes of a child, then the role of grassroots organizations is to mobilize, coordinate, link, and bridge between the layers of the ecology towards the same goals: upholding the right of a child to an education and ensuring that they succeed in school'

Firelight Foundation

ISSUE:



Despite of TAHEA Mwanza promoting early childhood development programs which include early learning, health, nutrition, care and support, child protection for 0–6 years old children and economic strengthening to families as a programs synergy for a numbers of years, there are problems which face children as they make a transition in early primary classes which limit them in acquisition of adequate literacy and numeracy skills which include:

- *Limited opportunities for ECD and pre-schools*, majority of children are enrolled in standard 1 without going through pre-school education thus making their orientation in school a challenge to both teachers and children (language barrier, new environment, basic knowledge etc.).
- *School learning and teaching environment does not facilitate smooth transition of young children from home i.e.* Teacher: Pupil ratio in class 1 is very poor in most of the Tanzania schools, you may find the ratio goes up to 1:200+ in class 1 and 2 (this sometimes is caused by children repeating grades).
- *The relationship between schools and communities is not supportive of the transition initiatives* thus leaving the child stranded not knowing what to expect.

-Schools are not given adequate financial, professional, technical backup by the district authorities.

- There is low demand from parents for the preparedness of children and preparedness of schools to receive children.

-Feeding program remains a big obstacle for children during transition; most Tanzania schools have no feeding programs.

-The teaching and learning approaches used in early classes are not child centered (due to the number of children in the class/ teacher/ pupil ratio is poor.

- There are practically no learning and teaching materials/ aids in schools apart from text books in many of Tanzania Schools.

This situation has impacted their literacy and numeracy skills acquisition at the desirable age and class level.

The Innovation



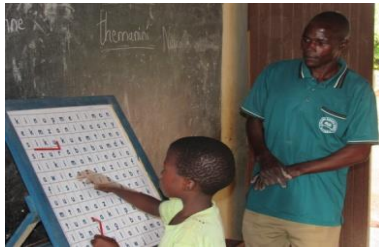
‘Social innovation is a solution to a social problem, they are activities and services with a goal of meeting a social need, social innovations are new ideas, strategies, and concepts to a solution which is more effective, efficient and sustainable than the existing solutions. In other words they are innovations that are both good for society and enhance society’s capacity to act’. *Julie Caulier – Grice. Tanzania*

Home Economics Association in partnership with Firelight Foundation through its support grant on Early Learning have implemented an innovative literacy and numeracy after school program involving children attending class 1 and 2, parents, communities, schools, teachers and the local government.

VUTAMDOGO (Pull the little one) is a social innovation to improve literacy and numeracy among children attending class 1 and 2 in primary schools. It looks for alternative ways of other people outside the classroom to participate in improving and promoting literacy and numeracy skills through community involvement. The program uses Youths as agents of change; its delivery is through after school program.



Strategy and Implementation (Methodology)



VUTAMDOGO (Pull the Little one) Literacy and Numeracy improvement program in fishing communities it is a program which is implemented at community level where the approach is being used to enhance Literacy and Numeracy skills among children attending class 1 and 11 in 5 Communities, the program puts responsibilities to Youths who had a privilege of accessing formal education (O-Level) to help younger children in their community to read, write and do basic mathematics in after school programs to support the country efforts to have educated people as Tanzania approaches its Vision 2025 . The VUTAMDOGO program is Youth-led; however Parents, Teachers/ Para Teachers, Community Leaders and the community at large have roles assigned to them for collective responsibilities to enable the program work successfully. The program takes into account that learning happens in a responsive and supportive home, school and community.



A Teacher assisting Youths during sessions



Using the community approach in the pilot program, Youths themselves are actively engaged in their fishing communities addressing their own challenges and community challenges as well, we understand the consequences of restless energy, in order to address this world wide challenge, the program empowers youths in economic activities which make them to be occupied during morning hours with income generating activities. Youths support the children to address the issues of low achievement in literacy and numeracy skills among children in early primary classes. The project brought together 200 youths to work with 2,000 children attending class 1 & 11 per year in 5 communities per year, making a total number of 4,000 children reached by the program in 2 years. The intervention is to support young children in their learning continuum by creating all possible avenues in the community to allow learning to happen to the children attending class 1 and 11. Children learn better through interaction with peers, and thus the creation of after school programs is to give such opportunities to children. TAHEA Mwanza built the capacity of the participating 100 Youth group members to acquire knowledge and skills in facilitating literacy and numeracy skills in children using community environment. Since the youths need to be organized as groups, TAHEA conducted capacity building session to build their capacity in Leadership, Participation and Engagement in Development activities so as to empower them as individuals and to identify themselves as groups which have the agency to serve their communities. Empowerment was as well done in both programming and organizational development areas where knowledge and

skills were improved towards having credible community based organizations to serve the communities they live.

The participation of parents and the larger community is key for the program; Youth groups partner/ collaborate with the existing community systems and structures to have collaborative efforts in realizing the project goal. The primary school Teachers from the participating schools were facilitated with knowledge and skills on how to mentor youth facilitators in numeracy and literacy skills including play based approaches to make it fun after a long day in their schools. Children were supported in reading, writing and doing basic mathematics in reference to the curriculum content (class appropriate contents). 24 Class 1 and 11 Teachers from the participating schools identified challenging items for children in reference to their classroom work in the 3 areas of reading, writing and basic mathematics and share them with youths during mentoring sessions. There were monitoring and evaluation teams which included parents, community leaders, schools, ward and district level education officials who participated in the follow-up and supervision of the Community Approach Model (VUTAMDOGO) in improving Literacy and Numeracy skills among children attending early primary school classes.

The program targeted many areas of language development including building letter knowledge, phonological awareness, language and motivation to read, development of vocabulary, and receptive and expressive language development in promoting Literacy. In numeracy promotion, the program used cooperative games and storybook-based activities to promote mathematical and literacy understanding while developing social skills. Games that reinforce basic numeracy skills, mental mathematics, problem solving, pattern sensing, concentration and critical thinking was promoted. Play was another avenue for learning in young children, and to make major contribution to the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional, development of children.



The development of skills and competencies was largely supported by a variety of learning materials and a wide range of experiences, the children under the guidance of Youth/ Teachers/ Para teachers were given skills in learning through play. Informal plays will were used during the after school programs, Youths however had to plan ahead, and provide necessary and diverse materials for learning materials which are locally available. Parent's role is to support young children in terms of support materials, homework monitoring and storytelling. Apart from learning through play, Teachers/ Para

teachers supported children identified in school as slow learners for intervention sessions during the after school sessions (these children were those referred from schools by participating class 1 and 2 teachers)

The program brings learning to the home and community. The Community Leaders and Youth Leaders participated in identifying sites (VUTAMDOGO Parks) in each of the Mtaa (Street) where children meet during after school sessions. Youths get skills on how to facilitate after school literacy and numeracy skills to young children; they received training sessions, assessed and re - trained while trained Teachers from the participating schools got trained on how to mentor youths during their after school practices with young children. Children were introduced to life skills activities sessions to reinforce discipline, confidence, resilience, self esteem, safety, abuse prevention and peer relationship fostering. Mini libraries services were made accessible to children in their schools, and a VUTAMDOGO Magazine was developed bi-annually promote readership among children. During Parents day's children show cased their ability to write, read and mathematics.

Follow-up at park level was conducted by youths, teachers, parents and community leaders; however TAHEA assessed and collected data on children literacy and numeracy progress to see the program success. The program implementation was to be documented for wider sharing and scaling up/ replication. VUTAMDOGO follow-up teams at park, community, school, ward, and district and TAHEA levels was strengthened in data collection, dissemination and documentation of the Model for replication and scaling up through funds given by Flora Family Foundation.

TAHEA Youth Engagement and Support

Youths are always mobile especially when they have no reliable income generation activities, to maintain them needs a program which caters for their needs which include economic activities, leadership mentoring and later introduce them to community development support activities like VUTAMDOGO program which does not directly benefit them. VUTAMDOGO program used sports entry to mobilize to gather youths together, later conducted fact finding survey on the youth status in the community which involved youths, parents, community members and community leaders. The result of the survey concluded that, youths blamed parents and the existing systems which do not include them and the situation has impacted their lives negatively (they cited an example of TAHEA programs which involves women, parents, young children and leaders only, they have been excluded, they are not part of the community) there are no opportunities for them, on the other hand, the parents, the community members and leaders blamed youths of today as being irresponsible, useless and are family burdens. The facts were used by TAHEA to develop a youth outreach program which involved youth groups formation; community managed micro finance activities, and group income generating activities.

VUTAMDOGO program was easy to implement using youths because of the following reasons:

- 1) Some of the youths needs were being addressed by the existing program.
- 2) Youths were accessing friendly loans from their groups.
- 3) VUTAMDOGO program operates in the afternoon hours, so it was quite friendly time for them as the income generating activities are done during morning hours.
- 4) It was one of the activities which youths wanted to prove to the community that they are not useless and irresponsible as the majority believed.

1.

as



Financial Management Training and Mentoring

Building the capacity of youth groups to operate Community Based Organizations who have legal status and ability to access external support including local government youth development funds. Organization Development capacity in:

- Youth leadership and Essence, participation, and engagement in development activities.
- Group dynamics, Team building, leadership and Power.
- Gender and leadership awareness creation
- Decision making and Leadership and Ethics in Leadership

- Planning for effective interventions.
- Effective community mobilization and sensitization.
- Project planning and Management
- Financial management
- Working in partnerships and collaboration with others for better outcomes.
- Registration as CBOs (constitution, mission and vision, group structure)
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Documentation

2. Programming capacity building to empower youths in literacy and numeracy facilitation in informal setting, this included:



Youth training session

- How to facilitate reading, writing, and mathematics using learning and teaching materials including games in non-school settings.
- Knowledge and skills on Promotion of organized activities as development contexts for children
- Promotion of readership skills in the community (community newsletters for print

motivation, IEC materials, mini/ mobile libraries)

- How to Facilitate Parent skills and knowledge in the development of learning materials for children.
- Skills and knowledge on how to organize Parents/ Community days for children learning activities
- Skills and knowledge on how to identify effective initiatives that enable parents and Communities to support children's well-being and learning and that strengthen links between home, ECD Centers and Schools.
- How to coordinate Community structures that enable parents, families and communities to support children's wellbeing and learning and that strengthen links between home, ECD Centers and Schools
- Knowledge to understand the role of parents and communities in supporting Numeracy and Literacy among children in early primary school classes.
- Knowledge and skills on how Parents can engage in their children's learning (development of learning materials, storytelling, homework support)
- How to link their work with School Management teams in information sharing system regarding numeracy and literacy progress among children (parent's access to reports/ intervention programs).

3) Economic Strengthening



Fish Farming to utilize the lake waters for economic purposes and positively protecting the environment.



Vocational Skills Facilitation

Why Vocational Skills to Youths?



Youth need livelihood skills which can lead to self employment, most of the livelihood skills they have are limited to traditional skills they learn in the home i.e. fishing, farming, etc. which currently do not make them employable in the public sector, they need skills which make them to be self employed i.e. carpentry, tailoring, masonry, vegetable gardening (agribusiness), brick making and laying, entrepreneurial skills for small

businesses etc. TAHEA through support from Stromme Foundation has been supporting Youths to start youth group projects which become field schools for individual youths to acquire skills which enables them to choose the type of trade they want to do as income generating activities i.e. fish farming, block making and laying, tailoring etc. The main reason is make youths involve themselves in income generation activities so as to be independent for Activities and Strategies (see appendix 1)

Community Engagement and Support



The participation of parents and the larger community is key for the program; Youth groups partner/ collaborate with the existing community systems and structures to have collaborative efforts in realizing the project goal. Community leaders sensitized and mobilized the community members and the parents on the importance of VUTAMDOGO Program in improving literacy and numeracy skills of children attending class 1 and 11

through after school sessions. The role of the community youths in the program was as well clarified including the capacity sessions on how to facilitate the reading, writing, and mathematics skills to children, a role which was to be done by TAHEA.

Community leaders involved the Mitaa committees to identified safe areas where VUTAMDOGO sessions were held. The mitaa leaders made follow-ups on the program, made sure that youth facilitators and participating teachers were always attending the children at the sites as planned; any unusual situation identified was immediately reported to the head teachers of the participating schools/ Youth leadership.

Parents and community leaders attend organized meetings planned by youth facilitators to get children progress feedback and discussions on way forward in improving the VUTAMDOGO program.

Community leaders, Head Teachers, Local government education officials attend feedback meetings organized by TAHEA every quarter to review VUTAMDOGO progress, successes, challenges and future plans to enhance the program.

Local Government Engagement and Support



Local government official's participation during vutamdogo training

VUTAMDOGO program launching was held by the Local Government Education Official (district level) with the presence of all Ward Development Committee members, Community leaders, Head Teachers, Class 1 and 11 children, and Pre Primary pupil representatives. The local government leaders from community leaders,

Ward leaders and District leaders played their roles and supported the program at all times.

The community leaders played a bigger role as the program was community based, however the Ward level and the Teachers Resource Center had a regular task of supervising the VUTAMDOGO afterschool centers for backup support.

An identified staff from a Teachers' Training College headed the team of training the Youths and Class 1 and 11 on how to facilitate reading, writing and mathematics, while the Ward level supported mentoring both teachers and the youth facilitators.

Achievements (Progress and Results)

Target population: 4,000 Children attending class 1 and 11 in 5 targeted communities

Main Objective: Increased engagement of Community Based Organizations in schooling of children in Tanzania by 2015.

Specific Objective: Improved Literacy and numeracy among children attending Early Primary Classes through community engagement in 5 communities of Ilemela district, in Tanzania by 2015.

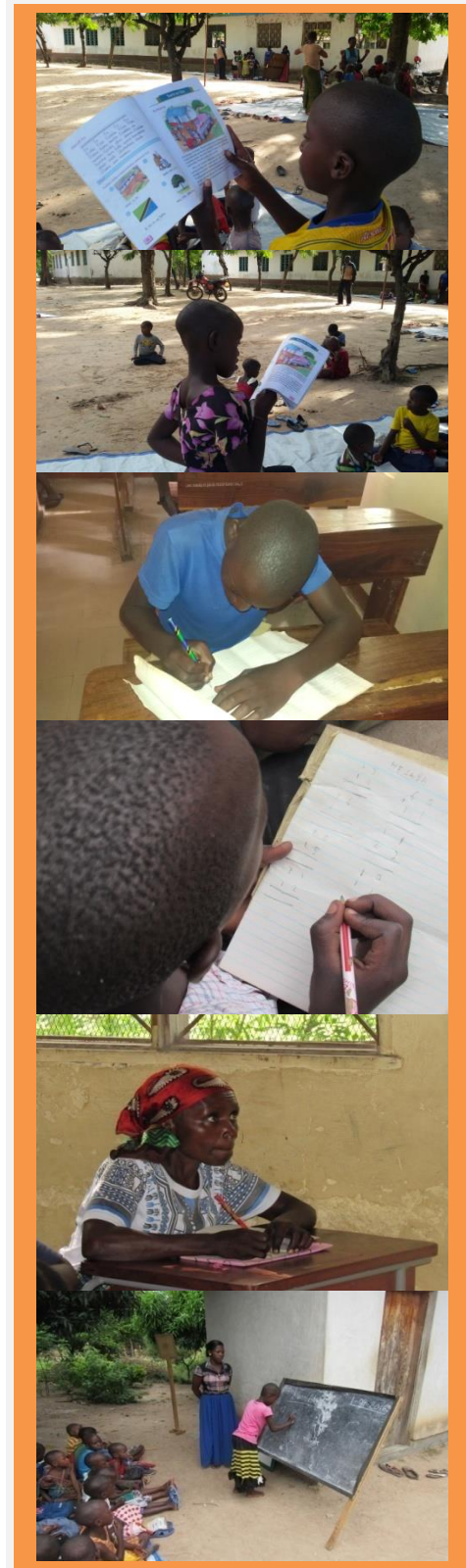
Objective 1.0: Increased youth's engagement and participation in leadership and community development by 2016.

Objective 2.0: Improved literacy and numeracy skills among children attending class 1 and 11 in 5 Youth supported communities in Ilemela district 2016

Objective 3.0: Increased family and community support in literacy and numeracy to children attending early primary classes in 5 Youth supported communities in Ilemela district 2016.

Progress to date

- **7,868** (3,958 Boys and 3,910 Girls) Children attending class 1 and 11 served by the VUTAMDOGO program 2014 to 2016.
- **31** Adults (10 Male and 21 Females) served by the VUTAMDOGO program 2016.
- **20** Youths **13+ years** (15 Males and 5 Females)
- **106** Youths served by the VUTAMDOGO program 2014 to 2016.
- **27** Teachers/ Para Teachers served by the VUTAMDOGO by 2014 to 2016.
- **3,700** Parents served by VUTAMDOGO program 2014 to 2016.
- **5** Communities served by VUTAMDOGO program 2014 to 2016.



- 8 Schools served by VUTAMDOGO program 2014 to 2016.

Results

One of the key finding from the study Firelight Foundation, was that, community based organizations serve a critical link between families, communities, schools, and the government. Community based organizations are proactive in their efforts to influence and help these actors to support children’s education by:

- Improving the wellbeing of children so that they are ready to learn.
- Influencing families and mobilizing community support
- Supporting local schools and influencing district, regional and national government.

VUTAMDOGO Innovation had in place Youth groups as Community Based Organizations who have been empowered as organizations who have taken the lead in the innovation to improve literacy and numeracy skills among children attending class 1 and 11 in primary schools by using after school program community approach. The program has been able to involve the community actors including the local government in the VUTAMDOGO program. The program has been able to influence families and communities to support the program and its delivery at community level.

Children attending class 1 and 11 in 8 Schools were the main beneficiaries of the VUTAMDOGO program innovation and their improved learning was targeted at improvement of Reading, Writing and Mathematics skills to ease transitional challenges portrayed in the introduction. VUTAMDOGO program used Tests which were collaboratively prepared by a technical team and the participating teachers; however the Terminal Examinations which held at School level became our roadmap towards success.

The VUTAMDOGO Pilot Program has been able to achieve the following:

1) VUTAMDOGO Overall Children Performance 2014–2016

| S/N | SUBJECTS | BASELINE | % SCORE 2015 | % SCORE 2016 |
|-----|----------|----------|--------------|--------------|
|-----|----------|----------|--------------|--------------|

| | | 2014 | | |
|----------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|
| CLASS I | READING | 34.08 | 44.36 | 68.38 |
| | WRITING | 15.74 | 56.36 | 71.25 |
| | MATHEMATICS | 27.36 | 47.93 | 69.13 |
| CLASS II | READING | 60.02 | 64.56 | 77.88 |
| | WRITING | 37.74 | 49.44 | 63.38 |
| | MATHEMATICS | 41.84 | 52.54 | 68.25 |

2) 5 Children (3 Boys and 2 Girls) have been mainstreamed in Class III in formal Primary School.

3) 23 Adults (14 Females and 9 Males) know how to read and write.

Lessons Learnt



VUTAMDOGO literacy and numeracy program has tried to address the constraints/ gaps which have resulted from Tanzania efforts in making sure that all children have access to education. The Dakar Framework for Action remains the benchmark for global achievement of the goals for education. While significant progress has been made, especially in the area of enrollment, achieving all six goals has proven elusive.

According to the Global Monitoring Report, although enrollment rates are rising, many of the poorest children remain out of school, and many children do not complete their primary education. In fact, in Sub-Saharan Africa, as many as 28 million children drop out of primary school each year.

Equally critical is the global effort to ensure that children are learning.

Education for All has done more to get children into school than to improve the quality of education. Recent assessments of numeracy and literacy skills show low levels of learning. There have been a number of challenges some are related to policy implementation, some are contextual related, all in all there are several noted gaps or constraints which has led to poor education delivery. In the case of fishing communities where TAHEA Mwanza has VUTAMDOGO program, the context issue is one of the

contributing factor for children performing low in literacy and numeracy acquisition, the fishing sub-sector attracted many people to work in fishing/ fishing related activities especially when the NILEPERCH fish became so popular and incomes for local fishermen grew that fishing became their livelihood asset. The situation led to many school dropout, truancy, child labor and low school enrolment, this account for illiteracy among families today, however with the loss of fishing subsector as a livelihood asset, many families became very poor and the sub-sector became a sector for rich business men. Efforts by the local government, beginning at village level school enrollment became everyone's agenda including efforts made by the non-governmental organizations during community mobilization when enrollment in Schools started to increase. The increase in enrollment did not match the school infrastructure thus issues of quality started to be affected, poor Teacher/ Pupil ratio, poor Class/ Pupil ratio, Book/ Pupil ratio, Desk/ Pupil ratio and in general the schools' learning environment started be no longer supportive for children especially those who were making transitions from home to school and from preprimary school to primary school. In addition to the situation the teaching methodologies, learning and teaching materials and the school management could hardly facilitate the learning environment of the children which has continued to affect the literacy and numeracy skills acquisition.

What have we learned in implementing VUTAMDOGO Program?

1) Program Strengths

- The program is community based; it does not need external facilitation.
- The community itself becomes a part of the solution by utilization of the available resources both human and non human.
- The program restores youth confidence and self esteem.
- The program instills the value of giving back to the community.
- The community/ school partnership is strengthened.
- Education as a responsibility of all and not only schools.
- Program methodology can be used for more vulnerable group's i.e. school children, those who missed school and adults.
- Program methodology can easily be monitored and evaluated by the community itself.
- The progress of children is immediately seen at program and school level as there is a connection of the program to the participating schools.
- The program empowers youths with knowledge and skills which are valuable in life,(livelihood and life skills)

2) Program Challenges

- The youth commitment depends on how the youth economic needs have been met/ addressed.
- Youths drop-out (less than 2%) during the program implementation, as youth look for greener pastures.

Lessons Learned

- 1) Youth is a community resource which is always neglected, if there is an inclusive system and engagement at the community level, they can actively participate in community development, however their specific needs as a group should be addressed first, and those needs include economic strengthening, community identity, and capacity development to enable them act/ engage with knowledge and skills to offer quality services.
- 2) After School literacy and numeracy programs are of bigger impact when the larger community is involved, the school partnership is present and the local government becomes part of the program.
- 3) Since the program depends on partnerships, collaborations and relationships, the program key actors should be the backbone of the program, and therefore, should be informed of what is happening at all times, feedback should be from all partners as the success depend on each playing his/ her role
- 4) The implementing organization should have good knowledge and skills in education programming and organizational development as innovations need to address challenges as they occur and coping strategies be in place to make the innovation to be meaningful, if not the program might fail.

Potential Application

The VUTAMDOGO Innovation on Community Approach on improving Literacy and Numeracy among children has shown:

- It's potential in improving writing, reading and mathematics skills in children by additional assistance in after school programs.
- It's potential of assisting children who missed school as an accelerating program to be mainstreamed in the school system.
- It's potential of facilitating adults in learning how to read and write within a very short time.



We have been mainstreamed in
Primary School through
VUTAMDOGO

Next Step

The project builds on the existing community efforts where Tanzania has clearly stipulated on community ownership of the schools, showing how community partnerships will help to realize the Tanzania Vision 2025, so the program is rooted in the communities. The current waiving of school fees to allow all children to enroll in school is one of the program motivations to reduce the arising challenges where communities have to look for solutions. One example of a coping strategy is the government call for mobilization of desks in Tanzania to enable each child to sit on a desk to enhance the acquisition of basic skills in education, which is proving to be a success. In a few years to come classroom mobilization and quality trained teachers deployment will follow suit to minimize the quality challenges, everyone is hoping for improved learning environment through the current Tanzania President efforts, thus improvement of Tanzania basic education support services.

The program aims at creating a community of practice which is knowledgeable and skilled for the program activities sustainability and TAHEA exit.

TAHEA will link the participating communities to the local government Youth/ community development and education departments for more support.

TAHEA Mwanza works with Youth groups to enhance their existence in the community to be recognized as Community Based Organizations who are functional to allow them access other sources of funds especially from the local government; the Community Based Organizations are better placed to serve the communities better.

This project is paving way on how Tanzania as a country can learn from such efforts and replicate it in other school communities to address the literacy and numeracy improvement among children in after school programs, which can be mainstreamed using the VUTAMDOGO Approach through extra curriculum school programs.

VUTAMDOGO Approach has finished the Pilot phase, now it needs to be tested in additional sites to prove the approach for scaling up and replication.

Appendices

- Program activities and strategies
- Pupils Performance Dash Boards (attached)



“Being young and not being able to read and write is very shameful, VUTAMDOGO has made me to feel good” Kwandu Shija, said.

Appendix 1

Program Activities and Strategies

| No. | PLANNED ACTIVITIES | STRATEGIES |
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| 1. After school sessions: | | |
| | Planned Activities | Strategies to be used |
| 1.1 | Orient children on after school sessions program activities. | TAHEA and Youth Leaders will take lead in mobilizing children in the participating schools on the importance and benefits of after school programs in improving literacy and numeracy skills among children in class 1 and 11. A brief explanation will be given on the program overview. |
| 1.2 | Develop Timetable for after school activities. | A time table for after school activities will be developed to include play based activities, reading, writing and mathematics skills enhancement, mini library services, scouting activities which will strengthen their school readiness and discipline in after school sessions |
| 1.3 | Enroll children in class 1 and 11 from 5 schools/ communities in after school sessions. | Youth leaders will link with the participating schools/ communities in enrolling children in class 1 and 11 in after school programs |
| 1.4 | Allocate children in the VUTA MDOGO parks in their MTAA for easy access. | Children will be allocated to VUTAMDOGO parks which are within their home environment/ easy to access and get registration numbers at the parks. The Vutamdogo parks will be given names which children and the Youth leaders will agree on to show their identity. |
| 1.5 | Develop learning activities that enhance literacy and numeracy skills among children in class 1 and 11. | TAHEA, Teachers/ Para teachers will develop learning activities which are play based, high child participation, self initiated and literacy and numeracy linked (Training package) |
| 1.6 | Develop Quarterly Activity plans for children to be conducted at VUTAMDOGO parks. | TAHEA and Youth leaders will develop a Quarterly Activity Plan to be implemented in VUTAMDOGO after school sessions. The plan will be reviewed each quarter |

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| | | for improvement. |
| 1.7 | Share VUTAMDOGO Activity plans to all stakeholders involved in the program. | The VUTAMDOGO Activity Plan will be shared with parents, teachers, community leaders, and local government at Ward and District levels. |
| 1.8 | Disseminate VUTAMDOGO Quarterly plans in participating schools and communities. | The VUTAMDOGO quarterly plans will be disseminated to the participating schools for easy coordination. |
| 1.9 | Launch the VUTAMDOGO Program at Ward level. | Launching will be held at TAHEA Resource Center to publicize the VUTAMDOGO Program and how it will work and the roles of the stakeholders will be stipulated so that the program is known to all. |
| 1.10 | Allocate Youth Groups according to the number of VUTAMDOGO Parks identified per community. | Youth groups have a good number of members who will be trained in the VUTAMDOGO approaches and will have to be assessed to be VUTAMDOGO facilitators, only those who will perform well will be allocated to VUTAMDOGO by their Youth Leaders. They will have to abide by the activity plan developed. |
| 1.11 | Conduct After School Sessions for class 1 and 11 children. | The trained VUTAMDOGO facilitators will conduct after school sessions which will not exceed 2 hours per day, except on Saturdays where mobile mini libraries/ reading competitions will be scheduled in the morning for a three hours session. |
| 1.12 | Monitor and Evaluate the after school activities on quarterly basis | There will be a participatory Monitoring and Evaluation once per quarter where Stakeholders representatives will participate, however spot check monitoring will be conducted by TAHEA and Youth Leaders simultaneously to improve follow ups to after school progress. |
| 1.13 | Document After School program activities with children and youths | Youth Leaders will be facilitated on documentation skills which involve children i.e. children stories/ home/ community stories (this practices will help to capture a lot of things which happen in after school programs) The stories will be disseminated to TAHEA FOR EDITING AND FURTHER ACTION. |

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| 1.14 | Review the After School program activities quarterly for improvement. | There will be quarterly reviews to allow sharing of successes/ failures of the approach and there after plan for improvements which will be well informed. |
| 1.15 | Report writing and dissemination | A reporting format will be developed by TAHEA for the Youth leaders to use, every group will have to write monthly reports which will be shared during M&E visits and quarterly reports will be submitted to TAHEA for compilation and dissemination to Stakeholders. |
| 2. Teachers / Para teachers sessions: | | |
| | Planned Activities | Strategies to be used |
| 2.1 | Strengthening reading, writing and mathematics skills | Teachers will strengthen skills on reading, writing and mathematics pedagogical skills to After School Youth facilitators to use in intervention sessions with children in after school sessions (These are class 1 & 11 trained teachers and who access TPAIDS training sessions with TAHEA, they will be as a mentoring group) at least twice a month. |
| 2.2 | Giving homework to targeted children on reading, writing and mathematics. | The participating Teachers will give Homework to targeted children every school day; the home work given should be within the school syllabi and teaching content. |
| 2.3 | Following up children's assignments/ homework | TAHEA and the participating teachers will develop Home Work Sign-off sheets and these would be signed by Parents/ Youth facilitators depending on the nature of the homework given, those for intervention sessions will be signed by youth facilitators, those which are homework based on school program will be signed by Parents. |
| 2.4 | Referring children with learning difficulties for intervention sessions in after school sessions. | Participating class 1 and 11 Teachers will refer all children with learning difficulties to After school session facilitators for further learning activities which help children learn from play based interventions, feedback mechanism will be |

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| | | thought between teachers and youth facilitators. |
| 2.5 | Conducting Parents meeting to give feedback on the pupil's progress in writing, reading and mathematics. | Since there are scheduled Parents meetings at school level, the after school program will use this avenue to give program progress and further action from parents to help the program activities. |
| 2.6 | Liaisoning with After school Youth leaders on Children's needs regarding literacy and numeracy skill gaps | Teachers will liaise with the After school leaders on the children's Literacy and Numeracy needs, i.e. difficulties related to Number concept, letter sounds, writing/reading skills. The information would help the Youth facilitator use play based approach in I.e. singing/ games etc in the after school sessions. |
| 2.7 | Coaching and mentoring Youth Leaders on facilitating literacy and numeracy among children. | Participating teachers will design a short program for mentorship and coaching after school youth facilitators in facilitating literacy and numeracy among children (practical ways they use at school level) |
| 2.8 | Conducting learning cycles among Youth groups. | Teachers will hold learning cycles with Youth groups to share what works and what does not work in the after school sessions. |
| 2.9 | Participation and engagement in Parents days and after school programs. | Teachers as leaders and professionals will work together with the Youth leaders to plan and engage in after school sessions and holding of Parents days |
| 2.10 | Sharing of progress reports for class 1 and 11 to TAHEA. | The program success will be reflected in children's school performance, so Teachers will avail children progress reports to after school Youth leaders for project documentation. |
| 3. Parents Activities: | | |
| | Planned Activities | Strategies to be used |
| 3.1 | Mobilize parents to have regular communications with teachers/ after school Youth Leaders about children performance, progress, and homework. | Mobilization should be done during parents meetings where Parents will be told how to participate in their children's learning which will include homework supervision, following up children's progress in school and in after school programs and support child needs. |

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| 3.2 | Reinforce parents obligation in meeting the school requests and suggestions related to homework (e.g., sign completed tasks, offer requested help, participate in homework intervention program) | Homework for children will be agreed as a part of the VUTA MDOGO program between the Primary 1 and 11 Teachers, Parents and Youths who support the after school program. Teachers will make sure they provide homework to class 1 and 11 children, can be on literacy or numeracy, Youth leaders will as well schedule tasks to be memorized before they meet for another session. Parents will have to sign for completed homework and after school assignments given to children. |
| 3.3 | Teachers/ parents and youth leaders specify regular times for homework; help children to structure time, space and materials for homework. | Teachers, parent and after school providers may suggest alternative homework routines (e.g., children decide the order in which the work will be done, while parents track time and remind children of remaining tasks which do not remove the roles and the responsibilities child have in the home) Structure homework within the flow of family life; ensure parental “availability on demand” |
| 3.4 | Parents monitor, supervise, oversee children’s homework and signing of child’s signoff sheets (if parents are not present, any adult in the family can play the role of the parent) | Teachers can help parents, after school staff, and family members understand what homework monitoring involves and why it is important Teachers can also offer support that is likely to increase the effectiveness of parental monitoring, such as homework sign-off sheets for parents, requests for comments or questions about homework performance. |
| 3.5 | -Reinforce and reward child’s homework efforts, completion, and correctness | Teachers, parent leaders, and after school staff can also give parents and other adults specific examples of how they can support children’s homework performance (Recognize and offer emotional support for child’s performance, ability, efforts). |
| 3.6 | Facilitate Parents to observe, understand and teach (life and livelihood skills which is part of child development milestones) | Parents and others who interact regularly with children often bring another major strength to the child learning processes— their knowledge of individual child’s learning styles, interests, and task |

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| | | preferences. Life skills and livelihood skills is part of learning. |
| 3.7 | Facilitate Parents to engage in interactive processes that support child's understanding by assisting and helping children with their homework. | Parental involvement focused on helping children understand learning tasks often requires considerable knowledge. Programs should include written materials i.e. mathematics/ reading/ writing books/ to help parents understand the basic objectives and components of a learning task as well as specific suggestions for checking on child's homework. |
| 3.8 | Facilitate Parents to provide feedback to teachers and after school youth leaders on the children's progress in reading, writing and mathematics as well as Homework performance. | Parent's feedback will target individual school communities, especially during Parents scheduled meetings where general feedback will be probed to have collective ideas on the overall children progress brought by after school sessions. |
| 4. Community Activities: | | |
| 4.1 | Identify safe areas for VUTAMDOGO PARKS in the communities. | Community leaders will identify safe areas to be used for VUTAMDOGO program by fairly distributing parks for easy accessibility to class 1 and 11. |
| 4.2 | Report any irresponsible behaviors of children attending after school programs so that parents/ teachers/ after school youth leaders address them as they can affect program performance. | Community members should report any ill behaviors among children who participate in after school programs i.e. attending video shows/ child labor employment to parents/ after school youth leaders immediately after happening. |
| 4.3 | Contribute towards improvement of VUTAMDOGO after school program. | Community members should support the after school programs both financial and non financial resources to VUTAMDOGO after school programs (i.e. community members to allow household premises to be used for the program) |
| 4.4 | Include advocacy / discussions about VUTAMDOGO after school program and parents participation during constitutional community meetings. | Community leaders to use the constitutional meetings organized at ten cell/ mtaa leadership to advocate for the VUTAMDOGO program. Discussions which lead to bylaws of equal opportunities for child participation can be developed. |

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| 4.5 | Attend all scheduled meetings and community days organized by the VUTAMDOGO program. | Community members will attend the competitions and VUTAMDOGO community meetings/ gathering to promote literacy and numeracy in the participating communities. |
| 5. Youth Leaders Activities: | | |
| 5.1 | To organize Youth group members in facilitating in VUTAMDOGO parks out of school sessions. | The Youth leaders will organize their members following criteria given by TAHEA. The group of youths will be trained by TAHEA to be VUTAMDOGO parks facilitators. |
| 5.2 | Identify VUTAMDOGO Sites in collaboration with local leaders. | Youth leaders will collaborate with Community leaders to identify community sites to be used as VUTAMDOGO Parks, TAHEA will visit them to qualify there suitability for the program. |
| 5.3 | Preparing the VUTAMDOGO Parks sites for conducive learning premises. | Youth Leaders will assess the needs of the premises to make an environment suitable for learning, this will include good shade, allowing movement and far from other destructive activities. |
| 5.4 | To attend all training sessions on After School Program activities organized by TAHEA | Youth facilitator will attend all the training sessions and would be given certificates of attendance; they will be tested in the field for confirmation as VUTAMDOGO facilitators. |
| 5.5 | To Plan for after school activities and adhere to the Timetable/ schedules as per requirements. | The Youth leaders and the VUTAMDOGO facilitators will be involved in planning for after school activities led by TAHEA |
| 5.6 | To liaise with the participating schools/ teachers in all scheduled collaborative activities/ homework/ intervention sessions/ feedback meetings. | Youth Leaders and the Youth facilitators of each school community will liaise with the participating primary schools, collaborative activities will be identified in a workshop organized by TAHEA. The output of the workshop will be a participatory work plan which has all agreed activities with responsible group. |
| 5.7 | To document all field lessons/ challenges/ success of after school programs and individual children. | Youth leaders/ youth facilitators/ teachers will be trained in simple language documentation to enable them to document lessons/ challenges/ success of after school programs. |
| 5.8 | To schedule consultations with | Youth leaders and Youth facilitators as |

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| | parents on the program activities/ child progress/ and action points. | part of their activity plans will schedule days for consultations with parents on the program activities/ child progress/ and action points. |
| 5.9 | To conduct Peer learning sessions among Youth groups on quarterly basis. | The Youth leaders and Youth facilitators will conduct peer learning on quarterly basis to learn from other groups experiences on VUTAMDOGO program, this will be coordinated by TAHEA. |
| 5.10 | To promote readership and competition spirit on literacy and numeracy skills among participating children under their after school programs. | Youth groups and Youth facilitators will showcase efforts towards literacy and numeracy achievement by preparing children under each group's cohort to participate in organized competitions at group and Ward levels. |
| 5.11 | To manage funds of the project according to agreed activities. | TAHEA will train Group leaders on simple Financial management practices |
| 5.12 | To disseminate progress and financial reports as per agreed timeframe. | TAHEA will develop Reporting Templates for both narrative and financial reports. |
| 6. TAHEA support Activities: | | |
| 6.1 | Build capacity of Youths leaders on literacy and numeracy programming skills. | We plan to facilitate the PRA tools to the selected Groups as well as training them on how to conduct a SWOT Analysis on the challenges of learning environment for children attending primary school. The groups will engage with the community members and the target school communities in developing the Community Action Plans. |
| 6.2 | Build the capacity of youth in promoting literacy and numeracy skills among children in after school sessions and how to follow up on child progress. | TAHEA will use workshops, meetings, seminars, ToTs, peer learning in building capacity of youth in promoting numeracy skills among children in after school sessions and progress followup. |
| 6.3 | Coaching and mentoring Youth groups in working with communities, networks and local government to support literacy and numeracy skills. | TAHEA, Ward Education Coordinators, Teachers Resource Centers Coordinators, Teachers/ Para teachers will form a mentoring Team for Youth leaders and Youth Facilitators in working with communities, networks and local government to support literacy and numeracy skills. |

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| 6.4 | Building the capacity of Youth groups in improved organizational development capacity to operate development projects. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAHEA will build the capacity of youth groups to function as CBOs in facilitating community development through: • Leadership and management skills development • Team Building • Monitoring and Evaluation • Identity and agency as a Youth group • Structure and function • Structure and programming • Relationships |
| 6.5 | Create awareness and mobilize the participating communities and schools on the importance of after school sessions and a learning community. | TAHEA will use the documented reports on class repetition, truancy and dropout records to create need for intervention, there after create awareness on learning continuum and the after school programs benefits. The role of parents and the community on the learning process of children. Mobilization of parents, class 1 and 11 to enroll in VUTAMDOGO programs. |
| 6.6 | Organize Numeracy and literacy competition among class 1 and 11 children attending after school sessions. | The competitions will be held at park level and at Ward level where representatives of children from VUTAMDOGO parks will participate, this increase children's morale in literacy and numeracy, children will have an opportunity to showcase their ability to read, write and do mathematics. The competitions will bring parents together to assess how valuable their support in their children mean and mostly the Youth participation and engagement in worthy activities will be appreciated by the communities. Relationships among key players in the learning journey of the child will be nurtured/ developed. |
| 6.7 | Participate in Monitoring and Evaluation Sessions. | Youth groups and Youth facilitators will be given skills in monitoring and evaluation of the program so that they are able to monitor and evaluate the program |

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| | | activities. |
| 6.8 | Participate in assessing impact of the after school program. | The Youth leaders/ Youth facilitators and teachers will collect data on the participating children and this will be kept as Secondary data, while TAHEA Assessment Team will use the ZAMCAT tools identified and contextualized to assess the VUTAMDOGO program. |
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| 7. Local Government support activities: | | |
| 7.1 | Providing written permit for the program implementation as it links with Primary schools and Teachers. | The after school program is in principle the extra curriculum which should happen, however it is usually ignored. Due to the fact that the VUTAMDOGO program is closely linked to Primary schools, the Local government has to be notified and permission granted to regally formalize it within the target communities and the implementation be taken as measures to improve literacy and numeracy skills among children in early primary classes. |
| 7.2 | Familiarization of the After school program for future scaling up. | Youth groups will identify avenues to share the VUTAMDOGO experiences in their target communities and local government through posters/ newsletters/ to familiarize the VUTAMDOGO program among stakeholders. |
| 7.3 | Participate in Monitoring and Evaluation Sessions. | The district officials, Ward Education officers, Assessment Team and the Teachers Resource Center coordinators will participate in quarterly monitoring and evaluation sessions organized by TAHEA. |
| 7.4 | Participate in assessing impact of the after school program. | The Assessment Team (which comprises of TAHEA Staff, TAHEA Education professional members, School Inspectors and Teachers College Tutors) will assess the impact of the program. |
| 7.5 | Supporting After School programs needed resources (Financial and | The local government at MTAA, Ward and District level will support VUTAMDOGO |

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| | non financial) | program in any possible way to make the program successful. |
| 7.6 | Learning from the project for scaling up in other school communities. | TAHEA will use M&E visits, review sessions, reports, showcasing events and other public avenues to share the project implementation and impact to all stakeholders including local government and networks at the different levels for learning purposes |