

Brainstorming Workshop for the Research Programme About And With Children in Tanzania

Summary of the Main Issues Raised and Recommendations from the Workshop's Participants

REPOA Conference Hall, 28 – 29 JANUARY 2004

AN OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ISSUES RAISED AND RECOMMENDED BY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The rationale behind the three-year research programme about children in Tanzania to be carried out by REPOA in collaboration with UNICEF is that the welfare and development of children is important for the future of families, communities and the nation. It also arose out of the concern that the rights of many children in Tanzania were under stress. This was revealed in a Review of issues related to children's rights in Tanzania. The Review was circulated to participants as a background paper.

Pursuant to this motive (at the initial stage of the research programme), REPOA in collaboration with UNICEF found it worthwhile to organize a 2-day Brainstorming Workshop for research about children in Tanzania. The Workshop essentially included both adult and children participants from a number of social groups and institutions.

The overall objective of the workshop was to elicit and solicit views and ideas on how the research can be realized. The Workshop anticipated three key outputs which included: establishing key specific priority research issues and areas, establishing key methodological issues and considerations, and establishing suggestions on policy issues related to children's welfare and rights (e.g. on feasible approach).

This report presents an overview and summary of the main issues and recommendations, which emerged, from workshop.

2.0 MAIN/KEY ISSUES RAISED IN PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS PUT FORWARD BY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

The main issues, which came out from the presentations and discussions, can be categorized into the following:

2.1: Rationale for the Research

Rationale issues essentially emphasized on the question of justification and relevance of the research these include:

- Children of Tanzania are facing a number of problems and challenges such as sexual abuse and harassment, poor learning environment, child labour, female genital mutilation just to mention a few

- There is increasing evidence that despite the presence of a number of national and international arrangements for promotion of children's rights, experience reveals that Tanzania's children are under stress and do not fully enjoy their rights
- A comprehensive study on children's affairs in Tanzania is not yet in place but what exists are limited and area specific studies
- A number of recent developments (especially from the 1980s onwards) in Tanzania and globally also are part and parcel of the rationale and drive toward carrying out a comprehensive and systematic study intending to address issues of children's welfare and rights. These developments include: globalization, shift from a socialist ideological inclination to a more liberal and market economy in Tanzania. Participants noted that these recent developments have both negative and positive impact on children's welfare and rights in Tanzania, the magnitude of which is not yet comprehensively understood or researched. There was therefore a general consensus and justification for the need for carrying out the research programme with/about children in Tanzania.

2.2 Key Specific Priority Research Areas and Issues

A considerable number of research areas and specific research issues came from presentations and discussions. An interesting experience was that many of these research areas and specific research issues were similar in different group discussions. Table (1) summarizes the main ideas and views on areas of research about children's welfare and rights from four group discussions.

They could be categorized as follows:

1. Attitudes of adults
 - Preference for male children;
 - Stigmatization of children with disabilities
 - Female Genital Mutilation
2. Children' and education
 - Quality education
 - Time and playing venues
 - Time for school homework
3. Child abuse and harassment
 - In schools
 - Corporal punishment
 - Child labour
4. Vulnerable children
 - Orphans
 - House girls and houseboys
 - Disabled children
5. Children's democratic rights
 - Freedom of expression
 - Right to vote by age of 15 years
 - Children's have responsibilities
6. International issues
 - Globalisation
 - New technologies
7. Public transport for school children

- Children are harassed
8. Basic needs of children
- Good nutrition
 - Stable family environment

Table 1: A SUMMARY OF MAIN IDEAS/VIEWS FROM THE THREE CHILDREN GROUPS AND A TEACHER'S GROUP

PRIMARY SCHOOL GROUP	SECONDARY SCHOOL GROUP	SPECIAL NEEDS GROUP	TEACHERS GROUP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's rights to quality education should be promoted • Fight against child labour is needed. • Children need time and playing venues. • Preference of male children and discrimination of female children should be stopped. • Fight against child abuse and harassment is needed. • Fight against harassment of houseboys and house girls are needed. • Children should not be given a lot of work after school hours because this denies them time to revise what is taught at schools. • There is rampant harassment of school pupils in commuter buses (daladala). • There should be no stigmatization to children with HIV/AIDS. • Corporal punishment especially caning does not improve pupil's behaviour and therefore should not be entertained. • Children who are orphans should be helped and not harassed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to quality education need to be a reality. • Children/pupils need to be given opportunity to express themselves and participate in decision-making. • Globalization has positive and negative impact on children's rights, welfare and upbringing. • Fight against child harassment, child abuse and child labour is needed. • Child's right to life should be promoted. • Factors causing school dropouts need to be researched on. • Transport is a big problem to schoolchildren. • Caning and other corporal punishments should not be entertained. • Children should not be discriminated because all are equal. • Parents have primary responsibility of educating their children. • FGM (female genital mutilation) should be fought against. • Factors influencing child labour and child abuse should be examined (e.g. why some little girls engage in prostitution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled children should not be discriminated or segregated. • Disabled children need quality education as other children. • Disabled children need special care and priority (e.g. on the question of transport). • Special education schools for disabled children are few and this denies others their right to education. • Disabledness should not be perceived as a "nuisance" by some parents and society at large. • Children's rights should be promoted in schools, families, towns and villages, etc. • Children need to learn in a conducive environment e.g. need of quality toilets, sports grounds, etc. • Children have rights and responsibilities; therefore children should fulfill their responsibilities. • Children need fora for expression of their views at schools e.g. pupils committees. • Children need to be given right to vote (e.g. for the president of the country) at the age range of 15 years onwards. • More educated people are needed in Tanzania as a way of fighting poverty and full utilization of our natural resources else the latter will continue being managed by foreigners. • Children who are in difficult conditions need the attention of everybody who is able to assist morally or materially. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patriarchal and oppressive cultures should be fought against. • Child abuse is a rampant problem these days. • Quality education is needed (primary and secondary). • Children need time and space (venues) for playing/sports. • Children need healthy nutrition. • Education on HIV/AIDS should also be imparted to children. • Transport is a big problem to children especially in Dar es Salaam. A lasting and sustainable solution is needed. • Participation of children in decision-making and freedom of expression to children are needed. • Children need proper, close and serious upbringing. • Development of science Technology and other development such as globalization have both positive and negative impact to children's rights, welfare and upbringing. • Parents and the society at large need to be educated on children's rights. • Worst forms of child labour should be strongly fought against. • Factors such as divorce, single parenthood, communication breaks down between children and adults pose a serious challenge to child upbringing.

Prioritisation of Issues

The issues raised in the above Table (1) show more similarities than differences in all the four groups. It is interesting to note that even the special needs group, which one would have expected to raise divergent views and ideas focusing relating their special vulnerabilities, largely raised issues which were also raised by the other groups. This partly indicates that children should not be discriminated on whatever basis because their concerns, their rights and privileges are similar.

On the part of primary school and secondary school groups there was an attempt toward ranking in terms of the most priority issues and concerns which they raised. The primary school ranked the most priority issues and concerns as: 1. Need for quality education and quality schooling environment, 2. need for playgrounds and opportunities, 3. need for avenues of participation in decision making and expression of their views/ideas, and 4. Fight against crimes on children (e.g. rape, FGM, sexual abuse and harassment, etc). The secondary school group ranked them as: 1. corporal punishment should be stopped because is not good for children's upbringing, 2. transport problem to school children needs sustainable solution, 3. Injustices against children such as FGM and child labour should be fought against; 4. children need playing venues and opportunities, 5. children need avenues for participation in decision making and expression of their ideas/views. Generally the children's views related closely to their welfare and rights. The children did not address the specific research framework that was presented in Day One of the Workshop because the framework was not given to them. The organizers and facilitators wanted the children to express their views without any constraints.

More specific issues and considerations with to the proposed research framework were essentially established by adult participants who also discussed them (in groups) on Day One of the Workshop. Among the main priority research areas and issues, which came forward, include, but not limited to:

- Compilation of the existing review of literature on children in Tanzania
- Evaluation of the existing policy issues and arrangements for children in Tanzania
- Qualitative in-depth research on the role of children in households. Issues to be focused on include, but not limited to:
 - How the child copes with stresses (e.g. where does the child go when aggrieved)
 - Child's voice and participation in decision making and participation across age range (children age range)
 - Study/research about children with special needs (especially those with disabilities) and those living in most difficult conditions (e.g. those living in streets)
- Children's social and democratic rights
- Costs and returns in social investment in children
- Problems, needs and aspirations of children who are under 5 (years)
- Research on sexual abuse and harassment of children
- Magnitude of adults' intervention (e.g. parents, teachers, etc) in children's affairs and children's feelings and positions on such intervention
- Understanding on children's rights by the general public
- The dominant socio-economic and cultural factors, which inhibit realization of children's welfare and rights in Tanzania. This may include study on socio-economic and cultural factors which enhance exclusion and vulnerability of children
- Adolescent children who engage in drug abuse and trafficking because no substantive data exist.

- Children’s living environment research on the environment in which children live and ultimately suggest what can be done to support households which can’t afford basic parental responsibility
- Thorough study on a seemingly hostile relationship between school children and conductors of commuter buses in Dar es Salam in particular. Is it an economic issue? Is it an attitude issue, etc?
- Conduct a cohort study focused on VISION 2025 which will involve:
 - Tracking a group of children from birth to the age of 15. Additionally it was suggested to track a group of 0 to 5 for a period of 15 years.
 - Examining geographical differences

2.3 Methodologies for the Research Programme: Methodological Issues and Considerations

Like in section 2.2 above, issues related to methodologies for the research largely came from adult participants. One of the most dominant areas in regard to recommendations and discussions on the research framework was the question of “how” to carry out the study on children in Tanzania. The debates and discussions essentially dwelt on what needs to be done in the pre-research phase, research phase and post- research phase. Key issues and recommendations in these three phases include:

2.3.1 Pre-Research Phase Methodological Issues/Considerations

- Flexibility is needed in age ranging. Focus need not be 5-17 years only as suggested in the presented research framework.
- The research programme need to be prepared to utilize and acknowledge partnership and networking strategy
- The proposed research framework need to be revised especially after assessing the basic concepts and methodologies of research with/for children
- The research framework needs to be “research with/for children combining traditional’ research methods and research with children.” Research with/for children seek for more involvement and participation of children in the research through such activities as agenda setting (establishing priority research areas and issues) and participation in the actual research. However this does not preclude other social groups and actors. An important aspect noted with regard to this methodology is that it is an ideal one and needs an intensive preparatory phase and enough time
- Scope and geographical coverage needs to be established
- Capacity building especially on how to do research with/for children is needed
- More fora, workshops and information sharing and experience sharing are needed in pre-research phase as well as in other subsequent phases of the research. Such fora and workshop will enhance updates and developments on the research framework proposal and ultimately will contribute toward the birth of a more comprehensive proposal appropriate for envisaged research about children in Tanzania. There is a need for a period of about six months to make a comprehensive preparation of research with children in Tanzania.
- Setting up a task force, steering committee, a relatively small group that takes the lead.

2.3.2 Research Phase issues/Considerations

- A representative sample (drawn from both rural and urban settings) which will not just seek for short and parochial answers about children’s affairs in Tanzania will be needed

- A number of research activities need to go hand in hand with intensive preparation for research with/for children framework. Such activities include, but are not limited to: (i) **evaluation of policy arena and positions in regard to children's welfare and rights**, (ii) **Survey of the existing literature on children in Tanzania**. Such research should also include a profiling of organizations working with children's issues. It was also recommended that more networking need to be upheld during pursuit of these activities which will go hand in hand with intensive preparation for research with/for children.
- A strategic and regular mechanism of information dissemination on the progress of the research need to be worked out during the actual implementation of the final research framework

2.3.3 Post- Research issues/Considerations

Three main recommendations were strongly emphasized in regard to the out of the research programme on children in Tanzania. The include:

- Need for user friendly mechanisms of dissemination of the information and research findings such as translating research reports into Kiswahili or simplification of some reports into levels capable of being easily "consumed" by the general public
- Need for strategic and sustainable advocacy, educational and sensitization programmes for promotion of children's welfare and rights
- Publication of the research findings/reports in form of pamphlets, newsletters, journals and books for the general public's, Government's and other stakeholders' consumption and use was also highly recommended

2.4 Policy Related Issues and Considerations: Feasible Policy positions

Another output, which the workshop anticipated, was to get views on policy positions especially their feasibility. Input to this area also came from adult participants. The main aspects brought forward are:

- There is need for examining/research on the existing legal, policy and institutional framework related to children's rights and welfare in Tanzania and establish the extent to which they are pro-children's welfare and rights. This therefore is part of the priority research areas
- Establish the discrepancy between theory and practice, if there

2.5 Other Critical Problems and Issues Related to Children's Welfare and Rights

There were also other problems and issues, which drew the attention of many participants in regard to children's welfare and rights. These include:

- Transport problem especially among urban school children (e.g. Dar Es Salaam pupils). A number of unanswered questions were raised e.g. on why has the government failed to come out with a sustainable solution to this problem, why is there hostile relationship between conductors of commuter buses and students (is it an economic issue or attitude issue) etc?
- Children in whatever locality they may be (schools, households, etc) need playing venues and grounds
- Discrimination of children on whatever basis (e.g. colour, ethnicity, physical appearance, etc) was strongly discarded

- Right to quality education and its realization was recommended as one of the fundamental areas for investment in children welfare. This was reflected in both adults' and children's presentations and discussions
- There are a number of "crimes" on children in Tanzania which are increasing day after day and whose explanation(s) are not yet systematically established. Such crimes on children include: rape, sexual abuse and harassment, to mention only a few.
- Children need to be given avenues and opportunities for expressing their views and participation in decision making

2.6 Concluding Remarks

The Brainstorming Workshop generally achieved its purpose because many good ideas on how to carry out the research with/for children in Tanzania were generated from presentations and discussions. The Workshop generated some outputs, which were anticipated (on research priority areas and issues, on methodologies of the research, on feasible policy, etc). The workshop revealed a very high morale and concern of participants with regard to promotion of children's rights and welfare. Indeed the Workshop laid a very good foundation for a long voyage toward the 3-year research with/for children in Tanzania

With regard to the way forward, it was recommended that initial activities and/or researches be carried out hand in hand with intensive preparations for the comprehensive research with/for children in Tanzania. Among the recommended activities to be carried out hand in hand with preparation of a comprehensive methodology on research with/for children include compilation of the existing literature on children in Tanzania and examining policy, legal and institutional framework, with a view of establishing the extent to which they are pro-children's welfare and rights and establish any discrepancies between theory and practice. Last but not least, the workshop organizers promised to keep participants and other key stakeholders posted on the progress on the pre-research phase, research phase and post-research phase.

APPENDIX 1: Workshop Programme

The Brainstorming Workshop for the Research Programme on Children in Tanzania

REPOA Conference Hall

Wednesday 28 January

Time	Event	Responsible person (s)
08:30-09:00	Registration	REPOA
09:00-09:10	Opening and welcome	Executive Director (REPOA)
09:10-09:30	Individual introduction	Participants
09:30-10:00	Objectives and expected outputs of the Workshop	REPOA
10:00-10:30	Presentation of the proposed research programme	Professor Mascarenhas
11:30-11:00	Tea/Coffee break	Participants and Facilitator
11:30-12:30	Plenary discussion on the objectives and proposed research programme and scoping study	Participants
12.30 - 1.30	Lunch	Participants
13.30-14.30	Group work on priorities on research	Participants and Facilitator
14.30-15.30	Presentation and discussion of group work	Participants
15.30-15.45	Closing of Day One.	REPOA

Thursday 29 January

08:30-09:00	Registration for the Children's Forum	REPOA
09:00-09:20	Individual introduction of Children and other participants	Dr Nyoni
9.20-9.30	Welcoming the Guest of Honour	Hilda Gondwe, representative of the Permanent Secretary
9.30-9.45	"Informal" Opening of the Children's Forum	Guest of Honour
9.45-10.15	Tea/Coffee Break	Guest of Honour and participants
10.15-11:30	CHILDREN'S FORUM ON ISSUES RELATED TO CHILDREN'S RIGHTS	Facilitators
11:30-12:30	Presentation of children's views by groups of children. Participants from Day One join in at this point	Children and facilitators
12:30-13:30	Lunch	Children and other Participants
13:30-15:00	Discussion of the views from both children forum and day one of the workshop	Participants from Day One of the Workshop
15:00-15:15	The Way Forward	REPOA/UNICEF
15.15-15.30	Closing of the Workshop	REPOA
15:30-16:00	Tea/coffee	Participants