



# MWANZO MZURI

**Grantee**  
**HAKIELIMU**

**Grant amount**  
GBP 669,410

**Project duration**  
May 2018–April 2021

**Implementing partners**  
VIA University, Denmark and  
Mkwawa University College, Iringa

**Beneficiaries**  
Children from birth to six years old

**Location**  
Kinondoni, Iramba, Mpwapwa,  
Kilosa, Arusha, Moshi, Babati,  
Korogwe, Masasi, Tunduru  
districts



Trainees of Mwanzo Mzuri (Teachers) doing a practical play with pupils as part of observing pupils' behavior and interest.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

Early childhood development (ECD), in particular pre-primary education, lays the foundations for acquiring literacy and numeracy skills, and is universally recognised as being beneficial to the subsequent performance of children in basic education programmes.

While the national enrolment for pre-primary schools in Tanzania has increased, vulnerable children are still much less likely to attend. Children living with disabilities make up less than 1 per cent of total enrolment, and those from poor families make up just 7.5 per cent (GoT 2016). The low numbers of pre-primary teachers are a key contributory factor to this problem, while inadequate child protection from abusive teachers and attacks en route to school are also concerns.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Mwanzo Mzuri is a project run by HakiElimu, a Tanzanian non-government organisation (NGO) that works towards education for all. With funding from HDIF, the project is aiming to:

- ▀ Pilot a new and innovative child-centred approach to pre-school education that will improve school readiness and learning outcomes for children aged 0–6 years;

- ▀ Invest in infrastructure for improved learning outcomes, including latrines, water supply, classrooms or kitchen gardens;
- ▀ Empower communities with the knowledge and structures to engage in, and drive solutions for, issues of ECD, including education, violence against children (VAC), health, and nutrition;
- ▀ Monitor policy implementation and advocate at local and national level for policies and guidelines that will deliver quality and safe pre-primary education.

The innovation behind Mwanzo Mzuri draws on new delivery methods in Tanzania to improve early childhood development with a focus on child-centred inclusive learning environments and child protection.

## PROJECT GOALS

The project aims to ensure that young Tanzanians will be enrolled in high-quality and safe pre-primary education, which improves school readiness and supports them to reach their full potential by:

- ▀ Working with teams from VIA and Mkwawa universities to develop a teacher training component on the child-centred learning approach.
- ▀ Building the capacity of 80 in-service primary schoolteachers across 20 schools to cultivate a child-centred, holistic approach to teaching.



- Conducting research on the learning and teaching environment for pre-primary education in nine districts to explore challenges and also inform the project baseline and high-level advocacy campaign.
- Identifying 24 'Friends of Education' in nine districts to become friends of the Mwanzo Mzuri project to promote ECD at the community level. Friends will be oriented on the work of Mwanzo Mzuri and trained to monitor pre-primary performance in 24 project schools in nine districts, raise awareness to promote community participation to improve early learning, and facilitate local advocacy on ECD.
- Collaborating with local government, schools, and community to support community initiatives to improve the learning and teaching environment, especially school infrastructures.
- Building capacity of school committees on ECD, establishing child protection working groups to monitor and ensure that children are protected from violence and abuse.
- Engaging with members of parliament and the Education Sector Development Committee through dialogues or meetings to share ECD policy gaps, lessons, and recommendations for policy change and implementation.

### GENDER EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

In Tanzania, girls face disproportionately worse outcomes in education than their male cohorts. For example, while the proportion of girls enrolled in pre-primary and primary education is slightly higher than for boys, at secondary school stage girls are much less likely to still be in school. The project considers gender equity and social inclusion in its design, and is committed to ensuring that girls and boys equally benefit from the project.

### PRINCIPLES FOR DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT

*Design with the user:* VIA University worked closely with pre-primary schools to design the teacher training materials. The consultation included mapping ten pre-primary schools to understand their specific needs related to ECD. The university then worked with colleagues from Mkwawa University College to help contextualise the training course materials based on the feedback received.

### NEXT STEPS

HakiElimu will continue to monitor the project's progress, analyse its performance, and discuss how the information can be used to help build the case for government to integrate the training component into the national teacher training curriculum. This would require additional funding to deliver training of trainers to teaching colleges across the country.



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