

THE ROLE OF TANZANIA EDUCATION AUTHORITY IN SUPPLEMENTING THE GOVERNMENT EFFORT IN IMPROVING QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN TANZANIA

By: Charles Mapima - Tanzania Education Authority

Abstract

Financing of education in Tanzania, like in many other developing countries, has always been one of the most intriguing problems in our efforts to develop the social sector. The Government invariably accepts the fact that it has the obligation to provide education to its citizenry but the financial resources available for that purpose have never been commensurate with the requirement of the populace that is entitled to education. This discrepancy manifests itself in compromised accessibility, equity and quality of education.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tanzania Education Authority is a corporate body established by section 5(1) of the Education Fund Act No.8 of 2001 to manage the Education Fund. The Fund was established by section 4(1) of the same Act, as one of the Government's interventions to address the challenges of the education sector.

The aim of the Fund is to supplement the Government effort in financing the education sector with a view of improving quality, increasing access, and equity at all levels. The sources of funds into the Education Fund include a budgetary allocation, investments, and voluntary contributions from education stakeholders.

Tanzania Education Authority mobilizes education stakeholders including companies, development partners, NGOs, various other institutions and individual persons to contribute to the Education Fund. This mobilization is done by organizing fundraising events, speaking at professional meetings and at business meetings. Motivated stakeholders give their contributions to the Fund by way of cash, materials or professional services.

All contributors of the Education Fund are awarded the Certificate of Educational Appreciation by Tanzania Education Authority, according to the provision of the Education Fund Act.No.8 of 2001. The Certificate entitles the bearer to a Tax relief under the Income Tax No. 11 of 2004. TEA also undertakes publicity of companies, businesses and other institutions which have contributed to the Education Fund.

Resources from the Education Fund are deployed by TEA to support education projects undertaken by educational institutions at all levels – primary, secondary and tertiary.

2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION SECTOR

The education sector is challenged to cope with the socio economic and technological advancement in general, as envisaged by the Millennium Development Goals and the Tanzania vision 2025 which seeks to develop a well educated and learning society. To answer to this demand the education sector has in place various legal and policy frameworks including; the Education Act No.25 of 1978 as amended from time to time (now the Education Act, Cap.353), The Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995, the Higher Education Policy of 1999, revised 2007, the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) of 1997 revised in 2001, the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) and other macro-level policies.

All these are working tools to ensure enhancement of creativity, entrepreneurship and professionalism in the country. The current situation of the education sector shows a significant shortfall from the desired level of development. One indicator of this state of affairs is the level of enrolment at various levels of education. Tanzania is among sub Sahara countries with the lowest enrollment rate at tertiary level. Statistics prepared by the University of Dar-es-Salaam in 2006, Tanzania has the lowest participation rate at University level among SADC countries. According to the statistics, South Africa has a participation rate of 9.11, Kenya 1.47, Uganda 1.23, Lesotho 0.98, Malawi 0.42, Mozambique 0.33, and Tanzania 0.27.

Another challenge of the education sector is to expand enrollment of the secondary level to cope with the influx of primary school leavers emanating from the success of the Primary Education Development (PEDP) where the enrollment is 100%, that is, all school going age children are enrolled. There is a political will, Government and community effort to construct at least one secondary school in every division in the country. However the major concern is the quality of the schools in terms of availability of all the needed infrastructure (e.g. dormitories, laboratories and classrooms) competent teachers, adequate teaching and learning materials. These challenges call for large financial investments over and above the financial ability of the Government, hence it is inevitable for other stakeholders to join hands in supplementing the Government effort in financing education development.

3.0 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EDUCATION FUND AND TANZANIA EDUCATION AUTHORITY

The establishment of the Education Fund by Act No.8 of 2001 and the Tanzania Education Authority as a corporate body mandated to manage the Fund, must be seen as a positive move by the Government to address the problem of financing education in the country. The following are some of the functions and objectives of the Fund;

- i. To secure adequate and stable financing of education through mobilization of voluntary contributions.
- ii. To raise the quality of education and increase access and equity.
- iii. To apply the money deposited into the Fund for the purpose of improvement and promotion of education

- iv. To monitor the use of the funds disbursed and ensure adherence to the objectives of the Fund.
- v. To receive gifts, donations, grants or other moneys on behalf of the Fund.

4.0 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION FOR THE EDUCATION FUND

It is clear from the foregoing that the challenges ahead are enormous. They are challenges that require concerted efforts by all the stakeholders in the education sector to be directed towards achieving the objectives of the Fund.

Tanzania Education Authority engages in publicity campaigns through media, public meetings and one to one meeting with education stakeholders and the public at large to share information on the need to contribute towards improvement of the education sector.

Motivated potential contributors who are willing to contribute to the Education Fund may donate cash or materials to the Education Fund or to Fund Assisted Educational Projects or Programs (FAEP). FAEP are projects which have been approved by TEA for financing. Moreover contributors may choose to sponsor Needy students (i.e. orphans or those under abject poverty identified through coordination and collaboration of Ten cell leaders, Village councils, District councils and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training).

5.0 INCENTIVES TO CONTRIBUTORS OF THE EDUCATION FUND

The Education Fund Act stipulates the following incentives to contributors of the Education Fund;

i. Award of the Certificate of Educational Appreciation and granting of Tax Relief

Every contributor shall be awarded a Certificate of Educational Appreciation (CEA). The awardee of CEA shall be entitled to apply the whole amount in the CEA as an allowable deduction under the Income Tax Act No.11 of 2004.

ii. Publicity

Contributors shall be recognized by publicly announcing them through various news media, and by publicly awarding them the Certificates of Educational Appreciation, honoring them for their contribution to education development, and encouraging others to emulate them.

6.0 UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES FROM THE EDUCATION FUND

Tanzania Education Authority (TEA) utilizes the resources of the Education Fund to support educational projects presented by schools, colleges, Universities and regulatory bodies with a view of improving quality, increasing access and equity at all these levels of education.

TEA receives applications from abovementioned institutions in form of project write ups, scrutinizes them on the basis of predetermined criteria for allocation of funds, and allocates funds as is available from the Education Fund. TEA informs would be beneficiaries and the public at large on procedures and guidelines for accessing funds from the Education Fund, through various news media e.g. electronic media (radio), and printed material – brochures, leaflets and forms.

Apart from allocating resources to Educational projects, TEA is concerned with monitoring and evaluation of funded projects. It has an established unit to carry out monitoring and evaluation of funded Educational projects, with a view of ensuring proper utilization of the Fund's resources.

7.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

TEA has established guidelines and procedures for monitoring and evaluation of projects supported by resources from the Education Fund to ensure proper and efficient utilization of such resources. According to the guidelines TEA carries out the following activities;

- i. Visits to the projects to witness progress.
- ii. Auditing to ensure proper use and value for money.
- iii. Compiling monitoring and evaluation reports.

8.0 PERFORMANCE OF TEA

Since its inception in 2002, the Education Fund has supported 860 educational projects in 584 educational institutions in predetermined priority areas worth Tsh.27,986,442,993. The priority areas include;

- i. Provision of teaching and learning materials including text books, laboratory equipment and ICT equipment.
- ii. Training of academic staff in specialized skills
- iii. Curriculum development and review
- iv. Application and exploitation of Information and Communication Technology
- v. Support for the strengthening of quality assurance institutions.
- vi. Support to disadvantaged groups such as disabled, orphans, the indigent and female students.
- vii. Construction, expansion, remodeling of buildings to provide for adequate classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories and student hostels.

Specifically TEA supported students with disability by providing special equipment for use in teaching and learning.

Apart from the projects supported, TEA has been supporting a program known as the pre-entry program whereby girl students who fall just below the threshold of qualifying for science based courses at Institutions of Higher learning are retrained for six weeks and given a qualifying examination to join Engineering and other science based programs at the Institutions of Higher learning.

This program has significantly improved enrollment and increased equity in science programs.

Throughout the six years of operation TEA has obtained clean Audit reports.

9.0 CHALLENGES OF TANZANIA EDUCATION AUTHORITY

The major challenge of TEA is to secure adequate and sustainable resources into the Education Fund. There are more than 2,000 requests for support submitted to TEA, which have not been financed due to the limitation of funds.

The other challenge is to cause a paradigm shift for the public to contribute to education development.

10.0 CONCLUSION

TEA is aware of the support given through Corporate Social Responsibility by various institutions including members of the Construction Industry Forum 2008, to education and other social development projects. This is a commendable undertaking which TEA cordially acknowledges.

However for a more focused intervention with greater impact, TEA is soliciting collaboration with such institutions whereby the institutions would contribute to the Education Fund, and Tanzania Education Authority would utilize the funds to support priority areas of the education sector for maximum impact in improving quality, increasing access and equity.

TEA requests members of the CI Forum 2008 to deliberate on methods of collaborating with TEA in supporting Educational Projects. Some possible methods are;

1. An amount of contribution from each member of the forum for a specified period of time.
2. Each member of the forum undertaking to support a Fund Assisted Educational Project located in their own areas of operation.
3. Each member proposing to TEA an Educational project they would like to undertake, for approval as Fund Assisted Project and supporting it, hence be recognized as a contributor of the Education Fund.
4. Any other way members of the forum may deem the suitable way of collaboration with TEA in improving quality of education, increasing access and equity at all levels.