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# Report on Whole School Development Programme

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**Village Education  
Project Kilimanjaro**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

DEO	District Education Officer
TIE	Tanzania Institute of Education
TRC	Teachers' Resource Centre
VEPK	Village Education Project Kilimanjaro
WEO	Ward Education Officer
WSDP	WholeSchool Development Programme

## **Background and introduction to the work in 2014**

VEPK has worked in the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania since 1994. All its projects are concerned with basic education for village children and young people. The Whole School Development Programme (WSDP) is now its main project. The aims of the WSDP are: to improve teaching and learning; to raise the level of teachers' understanding and knowledge with regard to their subjects and generic teaching skills; to assist head teachers with management and administration; to build closer links between schools and the community; to work closely with the district education authorities in all parts of the programme and to work with education officials at all levels with the aim of influencing policies of the Ministry of Education & Vocational Training.

The current WSDP was approved by the District Education Officer and implemented in 2006. The programmes in 2007-2010 laid foundations and developed work with in-service training in specific primary schools, seminars for teachers, training for head teachers and school committee members, and workshops to provide a forum for the DEOs and Chief Inspectors of the Kilimanjaro region to improve their work and skills and to suggest relevant changes that would help their work. A formal partnership and collaboration was established with Singa Chini Teacher Training College.

At the end of 2010 plans were made to introduce the WSDP to a new ward, Mabogini, in order to implement the model which had evolved from working in Marangu. From 2011 to 2013 work in the 11 schools in Mabogini ward went from strength to strength with most encouraging results.

This year, as well as maintaining contact with and support to the schools in Mabogini ward, the WSDP has been involved in a pilot project in six primary schools. These comprise two schools from Mabogini ward, and so those were included in the WSDP in any event, and four schools from the adjoining Arusha Chini ward. This project was at the request of a Dutch organisation, FT Kilimanjaro, and the project is being run in partnership, with FT Kilimanjaro paying half of the costs and providing some administrative assistance and VEPK providing the expertise and running the project. During the course of the year four more schools from Arusha Chini ward requested to be part of the programme. Two of those schools will join the project in 2015. The other two were too late with their request to be accommodated in FT Kilimanjaro's budget.

This year the WSDP has probably had its greatest impact. The pilot project is to improve the teaching of mathematics and English. This is being achieved by using the maths books prepared by Jane Firth for pre-primary, Standard I and Standard II classes, and providing maths support for teachers of all Standards, and using for the first time the English courses prepared by Katy Allen. The results are already impressive, and it is hoped that as the project progresses and expands there will be a compelling body of evidence to prove that the books, which guide the teachers thoroughly and adopt sound teaching practices, are a feasible solution to the decline in maths and English teaching and should be adopted in all schools.

In the year Barbara Kerr continued to be full-time on the programme and to lead the mathematics part of the project which included the continuation and expansion of her valuable work on data collection.

Jane Firth, a very experienced teacher of pupils in the early years of primary school and a teacher-trainer, continued to work with the primary school teachers to improve the teaching of basic mathematics, and visited Tanzania twice in the year.

Dr Anne Samson, an educationalist and teacher-trainer from London (although born and brought up in South Africa) researches for, plans for and oversees the WSDP and visits Tanzania at least twice each year. This year Anne made three visits and held seminars with the Inspectors of Schools and the tutors from Singa Chini Teacher Training College as well as visiting schools and ascertaining the progress.

Katy Allen is the director of VEPK and is in Tanzania for several months each year, and whilst mainly involved on administrative aspects of the programme she is now heading the English part of the pilot project.

## **Summary of work done in the primary education sector in 2014**

### **The new pilot project for improving the teaching of mathematics and English**

FT Kilimanjaro is a Dutch-based charity which has worked for many years in the area of Lower Moshi and particularly in the TPC (Tanganyika's planters cooperative) estate. Theirs is an inter-related approach comprising infrastructure, agriculture, income-generation, health and education. They realised that they lacked expertise in education and particularly in the primary education sector, and had heard of VEPK's work and organised a meeting to discuss working in partnership.

Six schools were chosen by FT Kilimanjaro to participate in the project: Mtakuja and Mserikia schools from Mabogini ward; Dr Omari Juma, Arusha Chini, Ronga and Mikocheni schools from Arusha Chini ward. The project is, initially, to improve the teaching of mathematics and English. VEPK had worked extensively with Mr Msuya, the Ward Education Officer for Mabogini ward, and was now introduced to Mr Ngowi the WEO for Arusha Chini ward. In addition, Mr Mlay is FT Kilimanjaro's coordinator for its education programme, and VEPK had previously worked with him when he was head teacher of Mserikia school in Mabogini ward.

VEPK had meetings with all the schools, and requested that Key Teachers be chosen in each school for mathematics and English. The role of the Key Teacher is to coordinate all teachers in the subject who are involved in the project and to act as the main liaison with VEPK. The Key Teachers attended the training seminars along with the other teachers. Some of the Key Teachers are also classroom teachers for the Standards at which the project is directed. The training seminar was to be for mathematics teachers of pre-primary, Standard I and Standard II, and for English teachers of Standard I and Standard III (see below under *English*). However, the training could not begin without official consent.

The project had to gain approval from the District Education Office especially for the use of the English course books. Those books do not follow the current curriculum, as it is considered that that curriculum is seriously flawed and has contributed significantly to the decline in English teaching and learning. The letter of approval to run the project was written in January 2014 but was not obtained by FT Kilimanjaro until late in February. This set back the start of the project, and the initial seminars run to help the teachers to use the books and to understand the courses did not take place until the first two weeks in

March. No sooner were the seminars over than the schools closed for the Easter holidays. At the very beginning of the school holidays there was a party at a school in Mabogini ward to note the retirement of several teachers. The District Education Officer attended that meeting and made a verbal announcement that the English course books should not be used in the schools. This was not, and to date has not, been recorded in writing to either the director of FT Kilimanjaro or of VEPK. The WEOs told their schools that they could continue to use the books as the official letter was the only thing in writing and it approved the project. Interestingly, the two schools in Mabogini ward stopped using the English books and never resumed, whereas the four schools in Arusha Chini ward continued to use the English books. The WEO of Mabogini ward was frustrated by this but there was little he could do.

The teachers have enjoyed the first year of the project and are pleased to be the first ambassadors for such a worthwhile project. They are very keen for the project to continue, and they are most appreciative of the support given to them on the project and they are becoming more open with their views, concerns and suggestions. This rapport takes time to establish and is very important as the Tanzanian culture is not to speak out openly and there is great respect for the hierarchy which, in itself, limits freedom of expression.

### ***The new English courses***

Tanzanians who attended primary schools in the 1950s and 1960s had an excellent education and eventually sat Cambridge examinations and obtained internationally recognised validity for their education. All of that was dropped in the 1970s and the old teaching materials were also discarded. The start of the decline in education, and especially in primary education, can be pinpointed to the 1970s. Not only were new books introduced, but in 1998 it was decided to start to teach English as a foreign language in Standard I, as opposed to Standard III, thinking that the more years of English tuition the better. However, many pupils enter primary school without knowing Swahili which is the medium for education in primary schools. The pupils also need to learn to read and write in Swahili, and to become used to school routines. The introduction of English to Standard I has been identified by many in Tanzania as of no benefit at all and, in fact, to be detrimental. On top of this pupils are not motivated to learn English despite knowing that if they go to secondary school then all their subjects will be taught in English. It is also worth noting that in the 1950s and 1960s pupils learnt English in Standard III and Standard IV and then went to Middle School for Standard V to VII where all the lessons were in English. So they learned sufficient English in two years to be able to cope with their education being through the medium of English. Today very few pupils who start in secondary school know enough English to understand what is going on.

There were two things to do: to look at the course books which were used before and from which the pupils learned so much within the first two years; to devise a two-year course for Standard I and Standard II so that the proper learning of English could start in Standard III as was always the case before.

This is the background to Katy Allen writing the *Jiandae kwa NOEC 1 and 2* which is a language awareness course for Standard I and Standard II, and to Katy preparing the old NOEC course books for use again in the schools. The *Jiandae* is a brand new course with ideas that are wholly new to primary teachers in Tanzania. The NOEC is a 'tried and tested' course, but from which a syllabus was extracted in the 1970s without proper regard to the contents of the books and the aims and purposes of many of the sections. That syllabus has been added to and messed around with until the current syllabus which is

narrow and prescriptive and which has led to textbooks which do not form a course but are discrete for each Standard/year.

An explanation of the aims and contents of the Jiandae and NOEC courses is in **Appendix 1**

### ***English training for and implementation of Jiandae***

The initial two week training seminar introduced the teachers of Standard I to Jiandae. The seminars were given in Swahili so that the teachers could thoroughly understand. The seminar comprised many ‘mini teaching practices’ in order for the teachers to practise teaching from the book. The Jiandae course is only a teacher’s book with classroom posters. This is something quite new, and the teachers are used to having Pupil’s books and to setting work from that book. The Jiandae is far more interactive, and throughout it used the ‘think, pair, share’ teaching technique. So, the pupils will think about something, then discuss it with their partner, and then share their thoughts with another two pupils. In this way a pupil is only ever involved in a group of four pupils, and this is designed to encourage every pupil, however, shy, to be involved and to build confidence.

The book guides the teacher thoroughly in what to say to the pupils or what to ask them, and provides many drawing, miming, singing, acting and discussion activities. The course is conducted in Swahili and is designed to teach the pupils some general knowledge about their own country, which currently is greatly lacking, and to learn about places and people outside their own environment. This leads to looking at countries where English is the native language in order to try to motivate the pupils to learn English. For instance, if they wanted to play football for Manchester United, what language would they need to know? Or, if they wanted to be a pilot what is the international language? The pupils are then introduced to words in English which have been adopted into the Swahili language, and hence are very easy for them to learn. The teacher is guided in the pronunciation and the stress. For instance, ‘Jacket/Jaketi, blanket/blanketi’ etc.

A summary of the training seminar for Jiandae is contained in **Appendix 2**.

The teachers enjoyed the training course, but it was a worry whether they could use the book effectively in their own classrooms. The Easter holidays came immediately after the course, and Katy Allen had to return to England because of her ill mother. The teachers were left to their own devices until Katy returned in August. This is not what was planned for the first year of the pilot project, but circumstances had dictated.

On Katy’s return her expectations were low which turned out to be unfounded. The teachers in the four schools using the books (see above in ‘The new pilot project...’) had been using the books to good effect and the pupils were enjoying the teaching techniques and were wholly involved in the lessons. Details of Katy’s observations of lessons using the Jiandae are contained in **Appendix 3**.

### ***English training for and implementation of NOEC Book One***

The initial two week training seminar introduced the teachers of English Standard III to the first book of the NOEC. The seminars were given in Swahili so that the teachers could thoroughly understand. The seminar comprised many ‘mini teaching practices’ in order for the teachers to practise teaching from the

books, using the extensive Teacher's Notes and finding their way around all the books. There is 'Teacher's Notes' from which the teachers teach and this takes the place of lesson notes, but there is also 'Teacher's Handbook' which is a reference book of teaching techniques and explanations about some of the English words and structures. It was important for the teachers to know what is in the Handbook, and how to refer to it and use it when they are preparing their lessons. For instance, in Swahili there is no equivalent of 'the', and so the Handbook gives, in Swahili, an explanation of the main ways in which 'the' is used in English together with a note on the difference in pronunciation if a vowel follows, for example, 'the man' and 'the apple'. There are also short explanations for teaching techniques for 'Look and Say', 'Show and Say', 'Show and Ask' etc. The Pupil's Book is all in English and is used only in some lessons. The teachers needed to get used to the amount of oral work which the 'Teacher's Notes' guides them through.

The seminars were successful and the teachers could see how good the books are and how they guide the teachers thoroughly. A summary of the training seminars for NOEC Book One is in **Appendix 4**.

On Katy's return in August her observations of the teachers using the books were very encouraging. It was clear that the pupils understood what they were saying and doing, and that the whole class was involved with activity and oral practice. However, the Teacher's Notes provide for some extensive oral work through the use of 'Action Chains' and the teachers were avoiding these. It was clear that the teachers were afraid of how to organise the Action Chains and how to get the pupils to say them. Katy ran an extra workshop for the teachers solely to practise the Action Chains and to see how to conduct them in the class. This was a very useful workshop and not only did it achieve its aim, but it was a valuable chance for the teachers to be together and to discuss any other problems or successes.

A note of the lessons observed is in **Appendix 3** and a note of a meeting with the English teachers and a note of the additional workshop are in **Appendix 5**.

### ***Mathematics – initial seminars and follow-up school visits***

The initial focus of the mathematics part of the pilot project was to train the teachers of the early-years, that is pre-primary, Standard I and Standard II, and to use the books prepared by Jane Firth. An initial seminar was held in Swahili to guide the teachers in the layout of the books, and to make them aware of what was in each part, and particularly to see that the Appendices in each book followed a certain order of making the teaching materials, setting out the details of each game/activity and setting out the songs and their actions. The seminar then demonstrated that without any preparation the books could be used and the lesson would be acceptable. This was not to be recommended but merely showed that the books were easy to follow, and that if the teachers follow them then the pupils will be active and will 'see' the mathematics and will understand.

Jane then gave seminars to the teachers of pre-primary, Standard I and Standard II in order to demonstrate the activities and the progression of each topic. A summary of those seminars is in **Appendix 6**.

Jane's observations on her visit in October were a little disappointing. Much of this can be attributed to the very late start of the pilot project. The teachers had already reached a certain point in the syllabus using the government textbooks and it is thought that they were not confident enough to adopt Jane's books. Many of them did not know whether to start at the beginning and risk not getting through the

syllabus, whether to try to use Jane's books along with the government textbooks, or whether to carry on as they had started with just the government text books. Only a few teachers had the confidence to use Jane's books. However, Jane's observations were very useful and have emphasised the need for the seminars to stress even more how the books do follow the Tanzania syllabus. A summary of Jane's observations from her school visits is in **Appendix 7**.

### ***Mathematics – work in the other Standards***

Barbara Kerr, drawing on more than thirty years of experience in primary schools in Australia, visited each school in the pilot project each week to give support to all teachers of mathematics. Barbara started with an emphasis on topics taught in Standard VII as this is the final year of primary school and the pupils sit national examinations. From Barbara's work here it became clear to the teachers that many weaknesses in knowledge in Standard VII were because of lack of understanding of topics in the lower Standards. In this way Barbara slowly encouraged more and more teachers of mathematics to attend her weekly sessions. In some schools teachers who do not teach mathematics but who have in interest attended. Slowly Barbara has made each school aware that mathematics is progressive and, therefore, that every teacher has an important part to play. It has been emphasised that teaching in the early-years is the most important as those basic topics form the basis of all other topics in mathematics.

A summary of Barbara's school visits and sessions is in **Appendix 8**.

### ***Mathematics and data collection and analysis***

One of the most successful aspects of the pilot project has been Barbara's analysis of examination results. Barbara's very good relationship with the District Academic Officers continues and they entrust her with original examination scripts and national question papers. Barbara then produces various different types of analyses. One type shows each question and whether individual pupils got it right or wrong which then shows at a glance those questions which few or no pupils could answer. Another type shows how many pupils come within different scores settings, such as 0-10, 11-20 etc, and another shows how many pupils achieve more than the expected level of half marks etc.

These various visual summaries show a rather depressing picture of the lack of learning taking place overall. However, after several of Barbara's weekly sessions and with targeted school tests it was demonstrated that vast improvements had taken place in pupils' understanding of the targeted topic/topics and this, in turn, was very rewarding for the teachers concerned.

Barbara Kerr's annual report, and her summary of data collection are attached as **Appendix 9**.

Dr Anne Samson on her visits in May and July/August further analysed the data with Barbara. Anne's report of this analysis is in **Appendix 10**.



### **Mathematics in non-pilot project schools**

Barbara has continued to visit and give in-set sessions to mathematics' teachers in schools in Mabogini ward with which VEPK was involved last year, before the new pilot project. Some of these visits and training sessions are summarised in Babara's annual report in **Appendix 9**. Indeed, Barbara continues to provide data analysis to the schools in Mabogini ward, and some comparisons of results are set out in the report in **Appendix 10**.

### **Support for the inspectors and trainers on how to assess and teach 'participatory teaching'**

In previous years Dr Anne Samson facilitated sessions with the district inspectors of schools for Moshi Rural district and the tutors of Singa Chini Teacher Training College to discuss the assessment of pupils' work and how this must interact with 'participatory teaching'. This year Anne was keen to start to address the full meaning of 'participatory teaching' not particularly in theory, but very much to see what it looks like in the classroom. Anne made a start with the teaching technique of 'think, pair, share', particularly as this is the technique largely used in the Jiandae books for English in Standard I and Standard II. This was an interesting session and the tutors and inspectors were intrigued by the technique, but also the use of it gave an insight into their confusion over what is 'participatory teaching' in practice.

A summary of the session is in **Appendix 11**.

### **Meetings**

In Tanzania there have been many meetings with the WEOs of Mabogini and Arusha Chini wards, and with the District Education Officer for Moshi Rural District, the Academic Officers for Moshi Rural District, the District Inspectorate, the tutors at Singa Chini Teacher Training College, and with the Zonal Chief Inspector of Schools for the north-eastern zone and his deputy.

### **Links with other projects**

The main link has been with FT Kilimanjaro with work on the pilot project. Further to the pilot project FT Kilimanjaro have asked VEPK to prepare a scheme of work for all learning in four private pre-primary schools. This has been started and will be completed at the beginning of next year.

Child Reach in Moshi town requested a meeting with VEPK and there might be a future collaboration. However, Child Reach is involved in school clubs and school garden work but has no plans for direct involvement in the improvement of education, although their work in school clubs could be of some interest.

Of greater interest is an approach made by So They Can to VEPK. That Australian organisation works in Manyara region and had heard of VEPK through the paper Katy Allen wrote in 2008 about the how to address the decline in English teaching and learning. Meetings took place and finally agreement was reached, and VEPK will be conducting training in January 2015 in 4 schools in Manyara region. This will be to train the teachers in the use of Jane Firth's maths books for pre-primary, Standard I and Standard II, and to train the teachers in the use of Jiandae for Standard I, and NOEC Book One for Standard III. This will be very interesting as the general standards in rural schools in Manyara region is lower than those in

Kilimanjaro region, and VEPK will only be able to make follow-up visits once in every term. It will be a true test of the effectiveness of the books.

In order to share VEPK's expertise in primary education in Tanzania and especially in the teaching of mathematics and English, VEPK approached the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development, East Africa (AKU-IED). This was prompted by a seminar AKU-IED had hosted for the teaching of mathematics but which focused on secondary and tertiary to the exclusion of primary. Dilly Mtui and Katy Allen met Professor Anjum Halai and her colleague Dr Geoff Tennant and they acknowledged that their research and expertise did not extend to the primary sector. Discussion took place about VEPK's work in both mathematics and English. It was arranged that VEPK will present its research, practice and findings at the AKU-IED's Research Seminar Series on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

Katy Allen also made contact with Professor Mark Roberts of the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) which recently formed a partnership with the Tanzanian Ministry of Education. AIMS Tanzania is new and Professor Mark Roberts is heading up the new initiative. Again, this project is focused on secondary and tertiary teaching of mathematics with little if any focus on the primary level. Dilly Mtui and Barbara Kerr met Mark in October 2014 and whilst AIMS Tanzania's first activity is a Masters in mathematics they are planning some in-service training for secondary school teachers. Mark thought there might even be a primary component in that in-service training but the training involves a ten day residential course in South Africa. When Mark is fully in post in January 2015 he suggested that he meets VEPK again to discuss things in more detail.

## **Overall Findings**

This has been one of the most successful years of the WSDP. VEPK's cadre of experts with their years of experience of education in Tanzania and its primary schools is putting into practice what is believed to be the most effective and feasible solution to the severe decline in mathematics and English teaching and learning.

The pilot project has started well, despite the initial setbacks. It is, at heart, a test of whether the books for early-years mathematics and the English course books will work; that is in terms of the teachers being able to use the books, the teachers learning from them to improve their own subject knowledge, and the teachers being guided to give lessons in which the pupils are involved, understand what they are doing and learn and develop skills.

The proof lies with the teachers who are using the books, and especially those who are using the English books. The English books take the teachers away from the government syllabus and the textbooks with which they were familiar. The teachers have, so far, demonstrated that they are working hard to do their best, and the results are encouraging. Also the teachers are becoming more honest and open with their views and comments. There is not a culture of frankness nor of self-criticism. It is a very big development that the teachers are speaking openly about the books, about things they find difficult, about things not sufficiently covered on the training course, and about the project as a whole.

For VEPK to have been approached out of the blue by So They Can is a great accolade. To have another pilot project in a very different set of schools will be an exciting challenge.

With all plans there are things that do not work out. The proposed pilot project with the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) came to nothing which was disappointing. The suggested series of training workshops for District Education Officers (DEOs) in the seven districts of Kilimanjaro region never got off the ground as there was no commitment forthcoming from the DEOs because of VEPK's request for some cost-sharing. The Zonal Chief Inspector of Schools for the north-eastern zone was despondent about this outcome and was very apologetic.

No meetings of any note were held in the Ministry of Education nor with TIE. The general election is to be held in October 2015 and officials are not likely to be responsive to anything new with the election approaching. Last year's enthusiasm expressed by officials of TIE and the Ministry of Education has not continued. It is expected that there are financial reasons for the enthusiasm changing to lack of interest.

The pilot project and next year's additional pilot project are now key to VEPK's work in order to produce strong evidence that the books fulfil their aims.

### **Future Plans**

In January 2015 seminars will be run again for the pilot project with FT Kilimanjaro in Mabogini and Arusha Chini wards. There are two new schools on that project and their teachers will learn how to use the books, and the teachers from the other schools are keen to attend again, and for the English teachers some will be adopting Jiandae 2 and NOEC Book Two and will need to be trained in the use of those. Seminars will also take place on the new pilot project in Manyara region.

As a development to the pilot project being run with FT Kilimanjaro will be some training for head-teachers and for school committee members.

VEPK hopes it has two or three new volunteers to help the training on the pilot projects and the follow-up school visits in both mathematics and English.

It will also be important to try to meet any presidential candidates if at all possible in advance of the general election in October 2015.

VEPK once again hopes that donors who support its WSD programme are pleased to read of the programme's development. The benefit of VEPK's work is set to benefit many more teachers and pupils next year.

All at VEPK are extremely grateful for the support that makes this valuable work possible.