



Strengthening Human Rights Education Globally Tanzania National Project

Baseline Study

Executive Summary

The baseline study for the *Strengthening Human Rights Education Globally* (SHREG) project in Tanzania was carried out between October 2014 and November 30, 2014 by Equitas staff and their partners, TUSONGE in Tanzania.

The main objective of the baseline study was to establish pre-operation conditions as a point of reference for ongoing monitoring and reporting of project results. It will also serve to monitor project outcomes, inform project activities and provide a base for knowledge building and sharing activities.

Building on its innovative human rights education programs, during the next five years, the SHREG project will empower key actors (including children and/or youth) to become leaders in making their communities safer, more equitable, more democratic and more respectful of human rights. The activities of the program will be piloted in three communities, selected by TUSONGE: Msaranga (Moshi Urban District), Biriri and Ivaeny (SIHA District).

Participation is a fundamental right and stands at the heart of this project. It implies being able to participate meaningfully in the social, cultural, economic and political environment. It means being able to be involved in decision-making that affects our lives. As such, the baseline study aims to gauge local stakeholders' perceptions of the participation of women, of marginalized groups and of youth in the spheres of decision making in the communities.

A mixed methods design was applied and included:

- 13 interviews conducted with community leaders in Msaranga, Biriri and Ivaeny
- 12 focus groups conducted with community members in Msaranga, Biriri and Ivaeny (n = 134)
- 3 pilot focus groups with children in Msaranga (n = 35)
- Review of the current legal structures and frameworks in Tanzania with regards to children

Focus groups were run in a workshop format using participatory activities that generated qualitative data. Participants were encouraged to reflect on the level of participation, opportunities and barriers, as well as the needs to increase the participation of women, marginalized groups and youth. Focus groups with adults and youth were triangulated with community leader interviews.

Conclusions are based on the overall results across the communities surveyed. The results begin by presenting who the most marginalized are in the communities and identifying participants' perceptions of the level of women, youth, and marginalized groups' participation in the communities. The remaining results are presented using Equitas' model for participation, which has three essential elements -- motivation, capacity and opportunity.

Baseline Study Results

- Participants in all three communities described participation as a means to know about an issue, share ideas as a group and come up with a collaborative solution. Attendance is also perceived as a form of participation. Social events like weddings and funerals were given as examples, as well as attendance at meetings.
- The list below presents the groups considered to be the most marginalized by focus group participants.
 - Children (orphans and street children, children under 10 years old, impoverished children, children with one parent, children who are developmentally delayed)
 - Elderly (60-80)
 - People living with disabilities (PLWD)
 - Widows and widowers
 - Youth (boys, drug addicts, 15-20, alcoholics)
 - Chronically ill (HIV/AIDs, cancer, diabetic)
 - Other: women; people living with albinism
- It should be noted that discussion around marginalized groups is complex. There are varying levels of marginalization amongst these groups, and the challenges faced by each group vary.

Current level of participation of women, youth and marginalized groups

- Women are perceived to be the 'center' of the community. 83% (n = 117) of focus group participants rate women's participation as average or high. 75% (n = 13) of community leaders perceive women as being involved or highly involved in decision-making. However, this does not necessarily equate to meaningful participation in decision-making, as participants (male and female) revealed the impacts of a patriarchal culture whereby women are expected to fulfill multiple domestic roles, but are not included in any meaningful way in decision-making processes neither in the home or community. Women's participation is instead linked to domestic activities and attendance at community and family decision-making meetings.

- 59.6% (n = 117) of focus group participants rate youth's participation as average or high. Though in some cases, youth are employed in farming and industry, negative perceptions of youth participation, behavior and attitude exist in the communities regarding motivation, drug and alcohol abuse
- 48.3 % of community leaders (n=13) rated youth participation in decision-making as low. Community leaders often pointed out the structures that are highly patriarchal, and do not value youth participation in decision-making at the family or local government level.
- 38% of community leaders (n = 13) perceive marginalized groups participate in decision-making, the lowest level of participation compared to youth and marginalized groups.

Capacity

- The data collected revealed a number of negative perceptions on the part of the people surveyed about the capacity of women, youth and marginalized groups in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that are needed to participate effectively.
 - Women, youth and marginalized groups expressed a need to be better equipped to participate meaningfully, with some reporting negative self-perceptions of their own capacity
 - Men expressed the need for more training and support with regards to gender equality
 - Community leaders expressed the need for training and support within the local government authorities with regards to children's participation in decision-making
 - Participants in each community (male and female) perceive that orphaned and street children often lack access to education and face poverty, which puts them at risk for child labour, trafficking, early marriage and sex trade

Motivation

- The data revealed that respondents had the desire and willingness to participate. However, as discussed above, capacity and opportunities are lacking, particularly for the most marginalized.
- Motivation, opportunity, and capacity are intricately linked. Underlying factors mentioned by all groups surveyed which impact negatively on their effective participation include,
 - Poverty and lack of economic opportunities—a situation that is worse for women and young girls
 - Patriarchal structures and traditions that limit the participation of women, children and youth
 - Gender-based violence, early marriage and unwanted pregnancy
 - Accessibility and mobility for disabled people in the communities surveyed
 - Discrimination and stigmatization of PLWD, orphans, people living with chronic diseases like HIV/AIDs
 - Ignorance of rights and responsibilities
 - Existing top down policies for people living with disabilities and people living with HIV/AIDs

- Significantly, 99% of the focus group participants reported that they would like to continue to participate in the SHREG project

Opportunities

- Participants identified the fewest opportunities for marginalized groups to participate in the community.
- VICOPA groups (micro-credit savings groups) are described by participants (male and female) as an existing way issues such as poverty are being addressed.
- Women who have participated in VICOPA programs described feelings of empowerment, and have positive perceptions of their ability to participate in the community and provide for their families.
- Focus group participants (male and female) emphasized the family sphere as a place where women, children and youth should be given opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Participants identify VICOPA groups as an opportunity for youth to increase their participation in the community, but did not include marginalized groups.
- Youth participants (male and female) voiced their desire to participate in the community decision-making process.

Though there are many challenges facing Msaranga, Biriri and Ivaeny, there are existing systems in communities for security, building economic opportunity, as well as a strong sense of community within the churches, schools, VICOPA groups and sports grounds.

The conclusions point to the importance of strengthening the communities through increasing the participation of youth, as well as children, both of whom represent a significant marginalized group. Amongst children and youth, exist some of the most vulnerable—children living with disabilities, child laborers, orphans and young girls at risk of early marriage and pregnancy.

Youth, especially young women, need support to build their skills and need to be provided with meaningful opportunities to participate. However, this study confirmed the importance of working with all community stakeholders to promote changes in relations of power and create positive opportunities for participation, especially for women and youth, as well as marginalized groups, including children. For example, it is essential to work not only with youth, but also with adults in the community to change negative perceptions of youth. It is the same with respect to the promotion of equality between women and men, and girls and boys, which requires close work with families, as well as the each community to transform patriarchal dynamics.

TUSONGE's programs have already begun this process. This was evident from the discourse in focus groups from participants who have previously benefited from their programming. The data reveals that people considered marginalized are most excluded, vulnerable and often victims of human rights violations, indicating the need to redouble efforts to reach them.

This baseline study is essential to establishing the conditions against which future evaluations can be compared. The study itself provided an opportunity for community engagement and involvement in the project. The baseline study also acts to inform the development of activities in the targeted communities with regards to the meaningful participation of women, youth and marginalized groups, including children. As such, the conclusions from the baseline inform the following recommendations as we move forward in the implementation of the SHREG project.

- Share the results of the baseline with community members and relevant stakeholders
- Increase the knowledge of human rights and responsibilities within the communities
- Engage youth in decision-making processes at the community and family level
 - Provide opportunities to build practical knowledge and skills in areas which will better their lives, such as entrepreneurship
 - Provide opportunities to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes at the ward level
 - Provide opportunities for youth and community leaders to discuss methods and strategies of involving youth
- Beyond equal representation, human rights work and Human Rights Education needs to model a gender perspective by adopting strategies that exemplify the kind of opportunities, access, social models and interactions that are desirable in a society. In addition, specific attention needs to be paid to developing strategies for enabling community members and leaders to integrate a gender perspective in their lives and in their work.
- Work with communities to develop new spaces for participation and to strengthen existing structures and systems that will encourage positive changes in power relations.

To change existing negative perceptions about women, youth and marginalized groups, requires the engagement of the entire community (with adults, leaders, men, etc.). To promote equality between women and men and to fight against various forms of discrimination and exclusion will require more outreach to the wider community in order to transform the dynamics that favor the marginalization. In addition, education, training and outreach are crucial to increase participation of marginalized groups, youth and women, as well as children.

Finally, it is imperative to the success of the project that emerging actions do not undermine established familial and community systems, but balance personal/family interests and group/community well-being.