

## **Efforts toward the Policy-Practice Linkage for Learning Outcomes Improvement – the Case of Secondary Schools in Namtumbo District, Tanzania**

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This study focuses on lower secondary schools located in rural settings in Tanzania where policy interventions are hard to reach and clarifies how the learning performance improvement plan, an instrument introduced under the national policy, is accepted, internalized and contributing to learning improvement, along with its enabling and prohibitive factors.

All the schools visited provide informal boarding facilities, special instruction and private tutoring. The boarding facilities are not only for accommodation, but also ensures learning time, teacher-student contact time, instructional support in response to student needs, and prevent pregnancy.

Relationships between the school and parents and community can be strong enabling factors when they are favorable ones, but undermine schooling continuity, home learning environment, participation in and support for school activities when their trust and cooperative relationships are disrupted. Teachers recognize that principal-teacher interactions and cooperation among teachers are working, while parents and the community do not understand the importance of education. On the other hand, the parents and the community complain that the school and teachers are responsible for poor student learning. Dissatisfaction and mistrust prohibit building favorable relationships among them.

The principal and teachers understand what they have included in the school strategy. However, shortages in teachers, learning materials, boarding facilities and training opportunities, make it difficult to accomplish the strategy's objectives in a sustainable way.

Principals exchange information frequently on what works. This seems to help build a loose relationship of mutual learning.

Schools that have received minimal interventions under the current study exhibited learning improvement over the last few years. The visits of the study team appear to have stimulated collaboration among teachers, planning and implementing the strategy together, and sharing the progress with parents. These possibly support to build a favorable relationship among the school community.