



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION COUNTRY PROFILE

Tanzania

PREPARED FOR

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CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Linguistic Context	4
Official Language of Instruction Policy	4
Class Time	6
Pre-Service Teacher Training Curriculum for Literacy	7
Teacher Language Proficiency/Language Specific Training	8
Teacher In-Service	8
USAID Reading Program Approach and Ongoing Programs	9
Community Engagement within USAID Projects	10
Other Donor Funded Reading Programs	10
References	12

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ABBREVIATIONS

CBP	Children's Book Project
CoL	Communities of Learning
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DFID	U.K. Department for International Development
EGR	Early Grade Reading
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HT	Head Teacher
L1	First Language
L2	Second (or additional) Language
LOI	Language of Instruction
LOI1	Language of Instruction Spoken at Home
LOI2	Subsequent Language of Instruction
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MTE	Mother Tongue Education
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
O-level	Ordinary Level
PCI	Project Concern International
PD	Professional Development
REEP- A	Research for Effective Education Programming–Africa
TIE	Tanzanian Institute of Education
TRC	Teachers Resource Centers
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

INTRODUCTION

Enhancing reading skills in the early primary grades is a key education priority for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Despite some improvements in access and learning in sub-Saharan Africa, literacy levels in the early grades remain low, and progress has been slow. Efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the early grades have led to an increased focus on the role of the language of instruction (LOI). Recent research has demonstrated that mismatches between the LOI and the language that students and teachers speak and understand best can hamper effective teaching and learning (University Research Co., 2019). Thus, it is critical to understand the LOI policy and linguistic context of a country when trying to improve learning outcomes in the early grades, as this can be a potential barrier to gains in literacy and learning outcomes.

Currently, USAID supports **Early Grade Reading (EGR) initiatives in 19 countries across sub-Saharan Africa**. Many policies in these countries have recently shifted toward adopting the LOI spoken at home (LOI1) as the language for initial literacy acquisition, and then transitioning to a second or additional language, such as a regional, national, or international language, as the subsequent language of instruction (LOI2).

Government policies and strategies related to teachers and LOI reflect country priorities, approaches, and objectives for early grade literacy, and thus are crucial to the design of programs that are effectively aligned with country literacy aims and approaches. During the design phase of donor-funded reading programs, decisions are made regarding the manner and extent to which national policies are incorporated into project design, and when alternative approaches or additional elements need to be considered. However, government policies on LOI, and other information relevant for informing design, are often difficult to find and are not easily accessible.



The LOI country profiles aim to address this need. The profiles will allow the USAID Africa Bureau, USAID Missions, and partner organizations to quickly understand the country's linguistic and policy context in order to design an approach that most effectively helps improve EGR outcomes. These profiles, designed for 18 of the countries with current or upcoming USAID EGR initiatives, aim to clearly and succinctly describe and illustrate the country's linguistic landscape and official LOI policy. This country profile in particular provides information on language policy and practice in Tanzania.

LINGUISTIC CONTEXT

According to *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, published by SIL International, there are 127 languages in Tanzania. Of these, 125 are living and two are extinct. Of the living languages, 117 are indigenous and eight are non-indigenous. Furthermore, two are institutional, 20 are developing, 58 are vigorous, 39 are in trouble, and six are dying. One unestablished language was also identified (Eberhard, Simons, & Fennig, 2020).

The official languages of Tanzania are Swahili (or Kiswahili) and English. Kiswahili is the de facto national language, with 47 million speakers, 15 million of which speak it as their first language (L1) and 32 million as their second language (L2). English is the de facto national working language, with 6 million speakers, all of whom speak it as their L2. The most widely spoken indigenous language is Sukuma, a developing language, with 8.13 million speakers.

Other widely spoken developing languages include Makonde (1.99 million speakers), Haya (1.94 million speakers), Hehe (1.21 million speakers), Nyakyusa-Ngonde (1.21 million speakers), and Gogo (1.08 million speakers). Likewise, Nyamwezi (1.47 million speakers) and Ha (1.23 million speakers) are both classified as vigorous languages (Eberhard, Simons, & Fennig, 2020). See Figure 2 for detailed information on languages and populations that speak them.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION POLICY

Prior to 2015, Kiswahili was utilized as the medium of instruction in primary school, and English served as the medium of instruction for secondary and post-secondary education. In 2015, the government announced that all instruction should be delivered in Swahili in primary and secondary school, after

Most widely-spoken languages in Tanzania

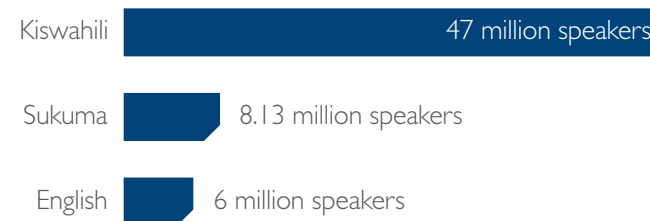
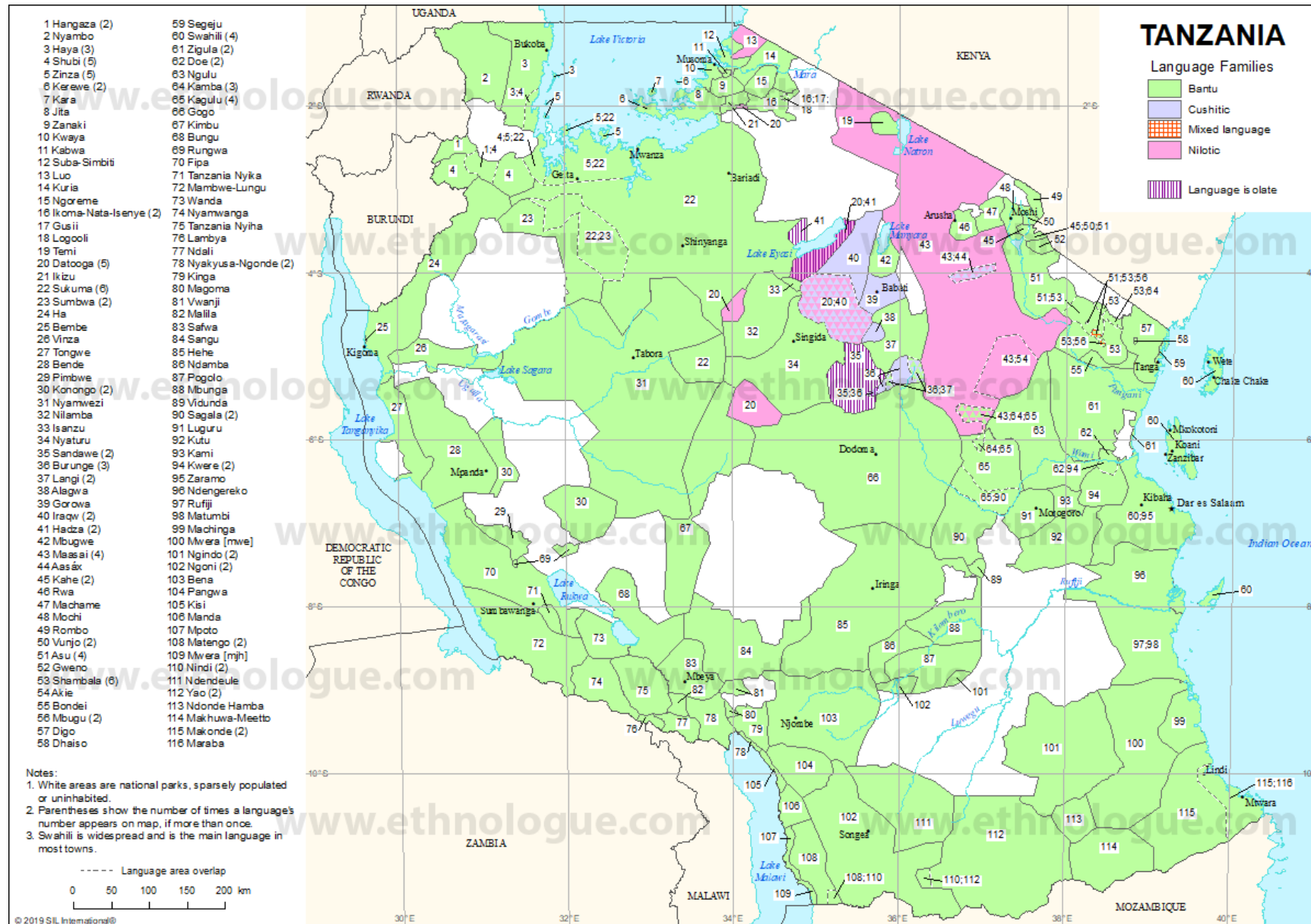


Figure 1. Map of Tanzania



Figure 2. Linguistic mapping of Tanzania



Source: Eberhard, David M., Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig (eds.). (2020). *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*. Twenty-third edition. Dallas, Texas: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com>.

which English should be used as the LOI (UNICEF, 2016). Since Swahili is not the LI for the majority of the population, most students are not learning to read and write in their mother tongue (Muzale & Rugemalira, 2008; UNICEF, 2016).

CLASS TIME

The Tanzanian formal education system provides two years of pre-primary school followed by seven years of primary school. The following core subjects are taught in the primary school grades (Grades 1 to 7): Kiswahili, English, mathematics, social studies, science, practical arts, and religion. The social studies subject includes elements of history, geography, civics, commerce, accounting, environmental studies, political science and family life education. Students in Grades 1 and 2 study elements of health instead of English and social studies. Each teaching period lasts 30 minutes in Grades 1 and 2 and 40 minutes in Grades 3 through 7 (UNESCO, 2010). The subjects and the number of weekly periods are shown in the table below:

Table 1. Primary Education Weekly Lesson Timetable

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade						
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
Kiswahili	10	10	5	5	5	5	5
English language	—	—	6	6	6	6	6
Mathematics	10	10	5	5	6	6	6
Social studies	—	—	5	5	5	5	5
Health	2	2	—	—	—	—	—
Science	—	—	4	4	6	6	6
Practical arts	6	6	8	8	10	10	10
Religion	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total weekly periods	30	30	35	35	40	40	40

Source: UNESCO, 2010

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING CURRICULUM FOR LITERACY

In Tanzania, teachers fall into two categories: certificate teachers or diploma teachers. Certificate teachers receive a teaching certificate after completing two to four years of pre-service training and staff pre-primary and primary schools across the country (UNESCO, 2010). Teaching certificates range from Grades A to C, with Grade A being the highest certificate offered. The Grade A teaching certificate is attained through a two-year training program for students who have attended four years of secondary school and passed the General Certificate of Education (Ordinary level, or O-level) examination with a minimum qualification of “division II”.¹ The course entails one year of training at a teachers’ college and an additional year gaining practical teaching experience in a primary school (Nordstrum, 2013). Grade B and Grade C teachers have completed seven years of primary education and no secondary school, and thus are expected to attain four years or two years of teacher training, respectively (UNESCO, 2010). Diploma teachers hold a Diploma in Education and staff secondary schools and teaching colleges in the country. The Diploma in Education is attained through a two-year course for students who have a minimum qualification of “division III” in the Advanced-level examination, meaning they have completed an additional two years of secondary education. In Tanzania, roughly 82% of teachers are Grade A, 14% Grade B or C, and 4% had a diploma or university degree (UNESCO, 2010).

Pre-service teachers study educational psychology, curriculum and educational evaluation, as well as methods of teaching different subjects (UNESCO, 2010). Teaching practice forms part of the two years of teacher training and is done in two blocks lasting one to two months each. However, teaching practice does not require candidates to practice teaching in Grades 1 to 3 (Akyeampong, Lussier, Pryor, & Westbrook, 2013).

For a Grade A teacher certificate, educational studies comprises 50% of study hours, while methodological studies makes up 38%, and general studies and religious studies each comprise 6% (Meena, 2009). Table 2 shows the subjects by learning area for a Grade A teacher certificate.

All Educational Studies subjects, as well as Civics Education, are obligatory. As for methodology subjects, all student teachers must take Teaching Methods for Pre-Primary Education. Additionally, student teachers are required to specialize in four methodology subjects. On the basis of specialization, student teachers are prepared to teach four primary school subjects and pre-school (Meena, 2009).

¹ Academic certificates indicate the level of performance in different subjects tested; they are graded into divisions I to IV, with IV being the lowest.

Table 2. Subjects Required for a Grade A Teacher Certificate

General Studies	Educational Studies	Methodological studies
Civics Education	Foundations of Education	Kiswahili Teaching Methods
	Psychology of Education, Guidance and Counseling	English Teaching Methods
	Curriculum and Teaching	Social Studies Teaching Methods
	Education Research, Measurement and Evaluation	Mathematics Teaching Methods
	Principals of Early Childhood Education	Science Teaching Methods
		Vocational Skills Teaching methods
		Teaching Methods for Pre-Primary Education

Source: Meena, 2009

TEACHER LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY/LANGUAGE SPECIFIC TRAINING

There is no language specific training for student teachers or teachers other than the Kiswahili and English Teaching Methods subjects that form part of the pre-service teacher curriculum. However, the Education Sector Plan 2016/17-2020/21 specifies a strategy for improving teachers' English abilities. As stated in the Plan, the strategy is:

“Formalise the training of primary teachers by semi-specialised subject cluster, including the existing arts, maths/science and early years streams and adding a language stream with an emphasis on English teaching” (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2018, p. 87).

TEACHER IN-SERVICE

The Tanzanian Institute of Education (TIE), in conjunction with other stakeholders, is responsible for in-service teacher professional development (PD), including introducing teachers to new or revised curriculum. In 2017, the government introduced a national framework for teachers' Continuous Professional Development (CPD). The framework states that school-level professional development, through Communities of Learning (CoL), is the core strategy for teachers' CPD (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2017). According to the framework guidelines, the Head Teacher, in consultation with the teachers, schedules two to three hour CoL sessions on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis. The frequency and content of the CoL sessions should be based on teachers' needs. A list of possible CoL learning activities is provided in the framework document, including: child observation, planning for learning, mentoring and coaching, and assessment.

Teacher PD is also provided at the district level. According to the framework guidelines, the district PD sessions “should consist of the provision of engaging, interactive and hands-on workshops and seminars that introduce new knowledge and skills to teachers, encourage them to share, problem-solve, reflect and innovate (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2017, p.11). District-level PD sessions can be as short as a one-day activity or as long as a five-day activity, and occur at least three times per year. Content of the initial sessions is focused on the competency-based curriculum for pre-primary, and reading and writing in Grades 1 and 2. Sessions on math, literacy, and content area subjects for teachers in Grades 1 to 6 are to be rolled out gradually.

The framework also provides guidelines to ensure harmonization of PD activities. To accomplish this, the framework stipulates that the TIE must approve, endorse and accredit any CPD programs offered by educational providers that will last longer than two weeks at the school level. Additionally, the framework prescribes that CPD programs to be offered at the district and or ward (cluster) level for any length of time must also be approved, endorsed and accredited by the TIE.

Additionally, Grade B and C teachers have the opportunity to upgrade their qualifications to Grade A through an in-service upgrading course (Nordstrum, 2013). The upgrading course is a one-year program, admitting teachers with a minimum qualification of two credits and two passes in the Certificate of Secondary Education Examination.

USAID READING PROGRAM APPROACH AND ONGOING PROGRAMS

In alignment with the U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education, USAID's programming in Tanzania aims to support the needs and priorities of the partner country in order to ensure that gains from the programming are sustained.

As such, USAID is implementing the **Tusome Pamoja (Read Together)** activity², a five-year (2016–2021), \$67 million initiative that aims to improve the quality of early grade basic skills instruction, strengthen skills delivery systems, and increase engagement of parents and communities in education. Implemented by RTI International (with partners Room to Read, Plan International, and Miske Witt & Associates), the activity operates in five focus regions to target more than 1.4 million students in Grades 1 through 4, as well as 26,000 teachers. Its overarching goal is to support the improvement of lifelong learning skills, defined as the mastery of early grade reading, writing, and arithmetic.

2 For more information, see: <https://www.usaid.gov/tanzania/education>

Working with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) on the mainland, the President's Office for Regional Administration and Local Government, the Zanzibar Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, and regional secretariats, Tusome Pamoja targets teachers and students in the regions Zanzibar, Mtwara, Morogoro, Ruvuma, and Iringa.

The activity has three main objectives: 1) Improving the quality of early grade basic skills instruction by building upon existing knowledge and developing new teaching and learning materials for students in preprimary education and Grades 1 to 4 as well as building knowledge and skills for teachers and school leaders and establishing school-based CoL; 2) Strengthening skills delivery systems, with an emphasis on performance management for education system administrators, including mentoring, monitoring, evaluation analysis, and research; and 3) Increasing engagement of parents and communities in education, thereby strengthening their participation in school governance, school management, and their children's learning.

The Tusome Pajoma activity has the following expected results:

- All Grade 1 and 2 pupils in the five Tusome Pamoja target regions have received new learning materials: approximately one million supplementary and decodable readers have been distributed.
- All Grade 1 and 2 teachers in the five Tusome Pamoja regions (over 12,000 in total) have received training on evidence-based early grade reading instruction, improving their knowledge and skills as educators.
- Tusome Pamoja will continue to identify and build on existing initiatives in the areas of reading, writing, and arithmetic to further develop cost-effective interventions that can be reproduced and expanded to benefit the country as a whole (USAID, 2018).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN USAID PROJECTS

Tusome Pamoja: Community and Parental Engagement around Education³

Plan International USA is implementing the community engagement component of the Tusome Pajoma activity through a \$6 million sub-grant from RTI International. The aim of this component is to increase the engagement of parents and community members in their children's education in approximately 3,000 school communities in Zanzibar and four regions within mainland Tanzania. In support of improved learning outcomes, specifically reading outcomes, Tusome Pamoja initially works to establish structures that sponsor greater collaboration between households, community, and school while respecting and supporting existing structures such as school management committees and village assembly committees. Plan International USA's role is to develop training programs for and incorporate social behavior change communication strategies to engage parents and the wider school community. Specifically, Plan International provides targeted training for parents and community members to support measurable reading progress and skills of young children. It also seeks to increase involvement of civil society in measuring basic skills helps hold schools and educational institutions accountable for improving quality. To accomplish this, Tusome Pamoja works closely with the Government of Tanzania, Zanzibar, and other active stakeholders at the national and local levels.

OTHER DONOR FUNDED READING PROGRAMS

Alongside USAID, several other organizations are involved in implementing projects to address literacy and language issues, which are detailed below, across Tanzania.

Global Partnership for Education (GPE)⁴

In January 2020, GPE approved a four-year grant (2020-2024) totaling US\$112.5 million to enhance universal access to and participation in quality pre-primary, primary, and non-

formal education with particular attention to learners from vulnerable groups. The GPE-funded program in Mainland Tanzania is focused on improving literacy and numeracy for children of pre-primary and lower primary ages with special attention to marginalized children. The grant includes four components:

1. Developing the teaching profession by strengthening the role of teachers resource centers (TRC) to provide ongoing PD for in-service teachers; producing and distributing PD modules; providing in-service training via TRCs for primary teachers and officials on the purposes and usage of the special-needs assessment kit.
2. Providing development and supply of teaching and learning materials. This includes updating, printing and distributing materials and equipping TRCs with appropriate equipment.
3. Strengthening capacity to plan, manage, coordinate and monitor education and training by facilitating the implementation of the new school quality assurance system; facilitating the standard two national assessment for 2019-2021 and doing the program monitoring and evaluation.
4. Improving access to quality pre-primary and special needs education.

Additionally, GPE provided a four-year (2018-2022) \$5.76 million grant to Zanzibar with the aim to increase children's enrollment in primary school at the right age and with two years of pre-primary exposure and make all levels of pre-primary, basic, and secondary education accessible to all disadvantaged children (particularly rural poor and children with physical and learning difficulties).

Sweden is the grant agent for the GPE grants and supports the Government in Tanzania in planning, implementation, timely follow-up and reporting of the program. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) and UNICEF are coordinating the partnership respectively in Mainland and Zanzibar.

³ For more information, see: <https://www.planusa.org/tanzania-tusome-pamoja-%E2%80%93-let%E2%80%99s-read-together>

⁴ For more information, see: <https://www.globalpartnership.org/where-we-work/tanzania>

Children's Book Project for Tanzania⁵

The Children's Book Project for Tanzania (CBP) is a charity that was founded in 1991 with the goal of developing a strong reading culture and support for literacy in Tanzania. CBP receives funding from the Canadian Organization for Development through Education (UNICEF, 2016). CBP was started in response to Tanzania's shortage of books for children and the lack of skills among book sector personnel to produce reading materials. The objectives of CBP are:

- To produce children's books in Kiswahili in collaboration with publishers so as to improve accessibility to a variety of reading materials;
- In collaboration with teachers, to improve children's reading and writing ability and skills; and
- To encourage and support indigenous authorship, design, publishing, and printing.

Activities of CBP include:

- Publishing;
- Distribution of books to primary schools and to several teacher training colleges and practicing schools from the Eastern Zone;
- Training through offering workshops for writers, illustrators, editors, booksellers, and publishers; and
- Readership program for primary school teachers, with a main focus upon teaching reading and writing skills as well as progressive child-centered teaching methodologies

⁵ For more information, see: <https://www.netzkraft.net/profil.php?teilnehmer=1200&lg=en>

Project Concern International (PCI)⁶

Since 2016, PCI has been implementing literacy improvement interventions in the Mara Region with the support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition program. The program aims to improve literacy outcomes through the provision of school meals and helps increase attendance, enrollment, and attentiveness for students in 231 schools in the Mara region of Tanzania. Program interventions include increasing student access to books and educating communities about the benefits of establishing libraries through school leaders and communities. PCI trains library teachers on library establishment, administration, and use. Teachers also received training on how to promote reading habits among students. Other interventions include hosting reading competitions, establishing reading clubs, encouraging students to borrow books and literacy instruction materials, and encouraging parents to contribute reading materials.

⁶ For more information, see: <https://www.pciglobal.org/new-school-libraries-help-unlock-literacy-among-students-in-tanzania/>

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