



Community-Based Early Literacy Program, Promotion of Integrated Development and Relief Services (PIDERS): Manyara Region, Tanzania:

1. Background, Early literacy is the foundation for lifelong learning and educational success. In Manyara Region, many children enter primary school without adequate pre-literacy skills due to limited access to quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) services, shortage of learning materials, low parental awareness, and insufficient community support for early learning. To address these challenges, PIDERS established a Community-Based Early Literacy Program aimed at improving literacy readiness among children aged 3–8 years through community participation, caregiver engagement, teacher support, and inclusive learning approaches. The initiative aligns with Tanzania's ECD agenda and promotes holistic child development. 2. Overall Goal to improve foundational literacy skills among young children in Manyara Region by strengthening community-based early learning systems and promoting quality Early Childhood Development services. 3. Specific Objective: Increase access to quality early literacy opportunities for children aged 2–8 years. ,Improve children's readiness for primary education through literacy and numeracy stimulation., Strengthen the capacity of parents, caregivers, community volunteers, and teachers to support early learning, Promote inclusive education for children with disabilities and other vulnerable groups ,Enhance community awareness of the importance of early childhood development and literacy, Strengthen collaboration among communities, schools, local government authorities, and development partners in supporting early learning initiatives. 4. Target Beneficiaries: Direct Beneficiaries, Children aged 3–8 years. Pre-primary and lower primary school pupils. Children with disabilities. Out-of-school children requiring school readiness support. Indirect Beneficiaries, Parents and caregivers. Community-based childcare providers. Early childhood educators and teachers. School management committees. Community leaders. Local government education officers. PIDERS particularly focuses on marginalized rural communities and vulnerable households. 5. Geographic Scope: Region, Manyara Region: Primary Areas of Intervention, Babati District and Babati Town, Simanjiro District, Hanang District, Kiteto ,District, Other underserved communities within Manyara Region , PIDERS headquarters are located in Babati and much of its ECD work is implemented in Manyara communities., 6. Program Component, A. Community Reading Corners: Establishment of community learning spaces where children can: Access storybooks. Participate in reading activities. Practice letter recognition. Develop vocabulary and communication skills. B. Parent and Caregiver Education: Training sessions focus on: Positive parenting. Early stimulation activities. Home-based reading practices. Language development. Child protection and nurturing care. Parents are encouraged to spend time reading and storytelling with children at home. C. Teacher Capacity Building Training of teachers and facilitators on: Child-centered teaching methodologies. Early grade reading instruction. Inclusive classroom practices. Development of low-cost learning materials. Literacy assessment techniques. D. School Readiness Activities: Activities include: Pre-literacy games. Storytelling sessions. Rhymes and songs. Numeracy readiness exercises. Social-emotional development activities. E. Inclusive Education Support: The program promotes: Identification of children with disabilities. Referral and support services. Accessible learning environments. Inclusive teaching methods. PIDERS has emphasized improving access and quality services for children living with disabilities in Manyara. F. Community Awareness Campaigns: Community meetings and campaigns focus on: Importance of ECD. Early literacy development. Child nutrition and health. School enrollment and attendance. Child protection. 7. Expected Outputs: Community literacy centers established. Teachers and caregivers trained. Reading materials distributed. Parents engaged in literacy activities. Children enrolled in early learning programs. Community literacy awareness increased. 8. Key Outcomes: Educational Outcomes Improved letter recognition and vocabulary among children. Increased school readiness. Improved reading performance in early grades. Better transition from pre-primary to primary education. Social Outcomes, Increased parental involvement in children's learning. Stronger

	community ownership of education initiatives. Improved inclusion of vulnerable children. Institutional Outcomes, Enhanced teacher competencies. Strengthened local ECD systems. Improved collaboration between schools and communities. PIDERS' broader ECD work seeks to improve children's holistic development and lifelong learning outcomes. 9.Achievements: The program has contributed to: Greater awareness of the importance of early childhood development. Increased participation of parents and caregivers in children's education. Enhanced literacy support in community settings. Expanded advocacy for inclusive education. Strengthened partnerships with ECD stakeholders and government institutions. PIDERS also collaborates with the Tanzania Early Childhood Development Network (TECDEN) to promote quality ECD and ECCE services nationally. 10.Lessons Learned, 1. Parents Are Critical Partners Children perform better when parents actively participate in reading and learning activities at home. 2. Community Ownership Improves Sustainability Programs are more sustainable when community leaders and local structures are involved from the beginning.3. Early Intervention Matters Children exposed to literacy activities before primary school demonstrate stronger learning outcomes. 4. Inclusive Approaches Benefit All Children Supporting children with disabilities improves overall learning environments and promotes equity.5. Local Learning Materials Increase Relevance: Using local languages, stories, and culturally relevant materials improves children's engagement. 6. Multi-Sector Collaboration Is Essential: Combining education, health, nutrition, and child protection interventions produces stronger child development outcomes. 11.Sustainability Strategy: Training community volunteers and caregivers. Strengthening school-community partnerships. Supporting local government ownership. Developing community-managed reading centers. Continuous capacity building for teachers and facilitators. Integration with national ECD and education policies. Conclusion: The Community-Based Early Literacy Program implemented by PIDERS in Manyara Region seeks to ensure that young children acquire strong foundational literacy skills before entering formal schooling. Through community participation, caregiver engagement, teacher training, inclusive education, and advocacy, the initiative contributes to improved educational outcomes and holistic child development across rural communities in Manyara Region
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