



Overcrowded classrooms in Tanzania mean the **student to teacher ratio** is on average

43:1



Our Presence in Tanzania



Country Overview

The United Republic of Tanzania lies along on the eastern coast of Africa and is known for its wildlife, grasslands and Africa's highest peak, Mount Kilimanjaro. There are more than 100 languages spoken across the country, making it the most linguistically diverse country in East Africa. Although the unofficial national language is Swahili, only an estimated 10 percent of Tanzanians speak Swahili as their first language and an estimated 90 percent speak it as their second language.

As of October 2015, John Magufuli is the elected fifth president of Tanzania. According to the World Bank, his government has prioritized and made strides toward reducing corruption, improving public administration and better managing public resources. Over this time, the country has sustained high economic growth, averaging 6 to 7 percent increases each year.

However, poverty remains an issue across the country. While the poverty rate has declined over the past decade to now 27 percent, the number of poor citizens has not actually decreased because of the high population growth and those born into poverty. The World Bank reports that approximately 13 million people consistently remain poor in Tanzania.

Additionally, although the government has made efforts to expand access to social services like education, health and water, the quality of these services has declined. This is due to Tanzania's population growth outpacing the supply of services.

Country Information

Population	56.7 million
Land area	947,303 km ²
Languages of instruction	Swahili
Launch of operations	2012
Room to Read offices	Dar es Salaam

Educational Landscape

Tanzania has shown great progress in primary education where access, completion and equity have all improved. This is largely due to the Fee-Free Basic Education Policy, which makes education compulsory until the age of 15. The World Bank shows that from 2015 to 2018, primary school enrollment rose by 17 percent and secondary school enrollment increased by 23 percent. In addition, there was a 39 percent increase in student retention through primary school.

Despite this progress, attendance rates and transition rates remain low from primary to secondary schools. Based on UNICEF data, net attendance drops from 81 percent to 28 percent from primary to lower secondary school. In upper secondary school, there is only a 3 percent net attendance rate. While this is partially because education is no longer compulsory, students are also forced to drop out of school to enter the labor force or early marriage.

While the gender gap has narrowed, still only 38 percent of upper secondary school students are girls. The World Bank also reflects on the persistent discrimination toward women and girls that remains in terms of housing conditions, gender-based violence, employment, ownership of assets, and access to clean drinking water and sanitation.

History and Results

Room to Read has worked to advance literacy, the local language children's book publishing industry and gender equality since we launched our Literacy and Girls' Education Programs in Tanzania in 2012. Initially working in the Morogoro Region, we have now expanded into the Pwani and Tanga Regions, as well.

Our Results in Tanzania	
Literacy Program	
New children benefited in 2019	395,916
Children benefited cumulatively	1,621,783
Active schools in 2019	3,159
Schools cumulatively	3,210
New books distributed in 2019	211,872
Books distributed cumulatively	590,331
Girls' Education Program	
New participants in 2019	437
Number of participants cumulatively	3,869
New secondary school graduates in 2019	556
Secondary school graduates cumulatively	1,680



We are proud to have effected system-level change in Tanzania by developing high-quality teaching and learning materials. As part of USAID's Tusome Pamoja (Let's Read Together) project, Room to Read partnered with RTI International and the ministries of education in Tanzania to improve Swahili-language teaching and learning materials in the country. We produced a total of 116 fiction and nonfiction books for students in Grades 1 to 4, and we scripted lessons for teachers to use in literacy instruction for all four grades. These materials were shared in 3,000 local primary schools, benefiting an estimated more than 1.4 million children.

We also implemented our innovative Financial Education Life Skills (FELS) clubs in Tanzania beginning in 2018. Building from our life skills education programming, we developed a financial education curriculum in partnership with Aflatoun International, the leading expert in financial skills programs for children and youth in developing countries. FELS clubs focus on financial empowerment, financial inclusion and financial literacy for girls. In the first year of the project, we reached 2,722 girls at 10 schools and saw impressive increases in girls' financial and entrepreneurial knowledge. Tanzanian community members also emphasized that these skills are particularly important to help girls build a life once they graduate.

We will continue to implement our programs and be a catalyst for change by transforming the lives of thousands of children across Tanzania.

Give with confidence. Room to Read has achieved 13 fourstar ratings from Charity Navigator since 2007, an achievement that less than 1% of charities can claim.

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