



## Quality Matters:

### *Communicating across the EdQual Community*

EdQual RPC is a Research Consortium led by the University of Bristol UK and sponsored by the Department for International Development, UK. The RPC also includes the University of Bath, UK; the University of Cape Coast, Ghana; the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; the Kigali Institute of Education, Rwanda and the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa.

EdQual runs research projects mainly in Africa, aimed at improving the quality of formal basic education for disadvantaged groups. These include: *Implementing Curriculum Change to Reduce Poverty and to Increase Gender Equity; Leadership and Management of Change for Quality Improvement; Literacy and Language Development through Primary Education; School Effectiveness and Education Quality in Southern and Eastern Africa; The Use of ICT to Support Basic Education in Disadvantaged Schools and Communities in Low Income Countries.*

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#### Measuring Quality



*Majani Mapana school, Tanzania*

The children in the picture above are learning about measuring length. The length of a classroom or a blackboard is straightforward to measure; it's much more difficult to measure what goes on inside the classroom or around the blackboard. At the most basic level of measurement, the quality of the childrens' education will be judged by exam results, and for some governments, that is the only measurement currently used. But an exam is just a test of how much of what the pupils have been shown or told, they have retained and understood. It does not measure how much the school has contributed to that learning. Schools that achieve the same exam results may have started from completely different places. No-one would deny that the school who enables low achievers to gain the same exam results as a school who starts with well-educated pupils, has done better. Measurably better. But ways to measure this quality of input, of 'education quality', are not always understood, and the good practices and skills of the 'better' school neither recognised nor shared. And it could equally be true that the well-educated pupils' school is delivering a better *quality* of education than another, similarly placed school. Using exam results as the only measure of quality masks the differences in how the results are achieved.

*"Quality indicators should move beyond inputs governments provide in terms of infrastructure, teachers and materials. Greater attention should be given to what happens in the classroom, with specific reference to teaching and learning time utilization. There is the need for policy makers to be guided by the fact that providing expanding access through the construction of classrooms and increasing enrolment as well as decentralizing decisions per se does not guarantee quality in education. What matters most is how teachers and pupils make use of the resources available to promote teaching and learning."*

- George Oduro, Michael Fertig and Hillary Dachi, of EdQual's Leadership & Management Project.

EdQual seeks to work across the board to enable educators at all levels to identify, implement and measure education quality. The researchers know that it is as important to share their research and their findings with policymakers as it is with teachers, and in return to listen to what the policymakers and teachers share with them and with each other. Teachers can achieve great things in their classrooms, once they understand why and how to do so, but it is policymakers, local officials and educationalists who spread the best practices and see where and how skills can be improved. The District Education officials in Ghana that Rosemary Bosu talked to (see page 2), identified the management role of head teachers as somewhere they could make a significant difference, through support and feedback. In Tanzania and South Africa, the research teams have established strong links into government policy-making, enabling them to contribute to national level education decisions. And in Rwanda, EdQual is actively engaging in one to one contact with stakeholders responsible for ICT in education. Most important of all, EdQual is enabling informed communication between those who can help each other, in order to help themselves and others.

## Circuit Supervisors in Ghana talk about Quality

*Rosemary Bosu is a researcher, and the Communications Officer, with the Leadership and Management Project at the Institute of Educational Policy, University of Cape Coast, Ghana. As part of the research programme, she has been talking to Circuit Supervisors in the districts where head teachers are actively contributing to the research. Circuit Supervisors play a key role in the local Education community in Ghana.; their responsibilities include visiting 'their' schools at least twice a term, gathering information about the schools, monitoring school related activities, supervising the activities of head teachers and other staff, and offering professional support to teachers. They are in a unique position to provide valuable insight into the teachers' roles, aspirations and issues. This article presents the views of four circuit supervisors on quality education, on their responsibilities, and on the challenges associated with their supervisory roles.*



*Rosemary Bosu*

The circuit supervisor is an important stakeholder in the provision of quality education. In Ghana, they are our foot soldiers in the implementation of educational policies; they act as liaison officers between the schools and district education office, and explain educational policies of education to head teachers. Amoesiwah, Bafouh, Buerteh and Aka-Ekyei have been circuit supervisors for between one and five years.



*Circuit officers - Bafouh (5 years experience), Buerteh (1 year) and Amoesiwah (2 years)*

All four supervisors agree that in order to improve the quality of education at the basic level, all stakeholders have a role to play. The pupil must be prepared to learn; the community must be prepared to help the children and the school; the education sector must be prepared to provide the necessary things for them and the head teacher must supervise the school effectively. These aspirations present a variety of challenges.

*Amoesiwah describes quality education as "a situation where the needed resources for teaching are available and the pupils are prepared and eager to learn."*

One of the supervisors' most effective responsibilities is to provide professional development support for teachers, including head teachers. This support is mainly in the form of in-service training. They face a number of challenges, varying from school to school, but some are sadly common across the districts. The key area in which head teachers need the supervisors' support to deliver quality education, is in their management role; the supervisors agree that some head teachers lack authority and fail to secure the respect of their staff.

Add to this the fact that many schools, especially the public schools, do not have enough funds to run the school and a head teacher's lack of confidence becomes a real challenge.



*Classroom facilities at a Junior High School, Ghana*

Lack of commitment from either teachers or head teachers is an issue that the supervisors take very seriously. They gave an example where "the head himself would not come to school early, would not vet lesson notes and so on, or do the immediate things for him to monitor at the school level to ensure that teachers do their work."



*Example of records checked by circuit supervisor*

*"We give head teachers professional training or assistance, mainly related to problem solving in school; such as how to solve conflicts between teacher and teacher, between the teacher and pupil, and between the community and the school."  
Aka-Ekyei*

"[Head teachers] can lack the moral authority to ensure that effective teaching and learning take place in schools" say the supervisors. While acknowledging the difficulties, they feel strongly that the directorate responsible for selecting head teachers needs to ensure that *capable* head teachers are appointed.

As circuit supervisors, they note that they can support the head teachers by increasing their supervisory role, and building the capacity of the heads in relation to managing the school. They also emphasize the need to create awareness among the teachers that the head teacher is the circuit supervisors' representative and the sole supervisor of the school.



*At a primary school in Ghana, the teacher demonstrates on the only PC available while pupils wait their turn*

*Bafouh has had five years experience in the field, and believes that quality education is related to teaching, learning and learning outcomes or results. He says, "When the teacher teaches and the child learns at the end of it, we have good results. That is quality education."*

*Source; Dr Rosemary Bosu, University Cape Coast, Ghana*

## Looking for Quality

But how do teams in any country, whether they are called circuit supervisors, school inspectors or headteachers, start to assess whether a school has "education quality"? Several sets of people are trying to generate indicators that assessors, whatever their role, could feasibly use. An Oxfam project in Shinyanga, central Tanzania, for example, has compiled the set of indicators shown below. These indicators do not cover all the qualities highlighted in the UNICEF Child-Friendly School model (cf page 5) but may help anyone involved in education to think about how they might start to judge the quality of their own schools.

### Quality Indicators used in Oxfam's Education Quality Improvement through Pedagogy project

#### **Behaviour change**

- pupils demonstrated what they had learned in answering and in posing questions;
  - pupils appeared able to express themselves;
  - pupils showed confidence and creativity;
  - pupils were able to abide to peer groups;
  - teachers accepted participatory pedagogy;
- teachers and district officials accepted mentoring.

#### **Efficiency and effectiveness**

- schools were well organized;
  - schools were disciplined;
- children's books were for most part marked;
- teachers had work plans/schemes of work.

#### **Good relationships**

- pupils looked happy and assured;
- teachers treated pupils with respect;
  - children's work recognized by teachers;
- pupils participated in debates, participatory organs;
- pupils contributed ideas and these were accepted.

#### **Eagerness for personal and others' development**

- value of selection to secondary education perceived highly;
- more pupils and teachers use library and borrow books;
  - teachers accepted change in pedagogy.

*Source - Galabawa & Alphonse, 2005:14  
Galabawa, Justinian J.C.J. and Ndibalema N. Alphonse. 2005.  
Research on the quest for education quality indicators:  
Issues, discourse and methodology. Bristol: EdQual.*

## Evaluating School Quality

*The United Nations' Millenium Development Goals and numerous other initiatives have set targets across Africa for the delivery of 'quality' education and Sub-Saharan countries particularly are working to develop the infrastructures needed to do this. But how do those trying to implement it know when they've found 'quality education'? How can they prove it? And, most vital of all, how can they spread best practices across some very different places and people? Massoud Mohamed Salim is an EdQual-sponsored PhD student based at the Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol UK. He is also Head of the Division of Policy and Planning, in the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, Zanzibar. His role in the Ministry means he has a very clear view of what's needed for any government, particularly one in a developing country, to deliver Quality Education. And of the difficulties involved not just in assessing whether or not his Ministry's schools are doing that, but in what to do about it if they are not. Here he outlines some of the research being used to support his government's work in Zanzibar.*



*Massoud Mohamed Salim*

Massoud's PhD title is *Explaining Issues of School Effectiveness and Self-Evaluation at the System and School Level in the Context of Zanzibar*.

Like many developing countries, Zanzibar's School Evaluation system is currently based only on inspection reports. While these do include reference to "the overall school management and administration, teaching and learning process, school climate, students' discipline and cooperation", the reports' findings are not related to any analysis of the students' performance in public examinations. Nor are they used to understand more fully how, or if, the school is progressing.

Massoud explains; Judgements on the effectiveness of the schools "are mainly based on examination performance in which schools that produce many students who progress to the next level are considered to be 'more effective'. Thus schools continue to be judged according to their performance". This is inspection without feedback or follow-up, and it ignores any opportunity for sharing best practice, making the activity only partially useful and ultimately unproductive.

Such a limited, statistical view of schools' performance fails to take account of how effective the school has been in achieving its exam results. Two schools with the same results may have delivered a significantly different level of 'quality education'. A school with an intake of low level achievers that still delivers reasonable exam results will have contributed a great deal more to their education than a school with a different, high achieving intake, which delivers the same results. Most

importantly, once the contribution made by the school is acknowledged, and its successful practices and skills understood, then other schools can benefit from these.

Massoud is very conscious of the issues involved in defining and then managing 'quality' education, both at a government policy level across education in Zanzibar and at an individual school level. He explains, "The recently developed new education policy advocates for both (i) establishing monitoring and evaluation of education at all levels so as to measure the performance of the system, and (ii) developing indicators for monitoring educational programmes and learning achievement."

His research will both inform and support these policies; "the principal aims of [my] research are to (i) understand stakeholders' views on the overall concept of educational quality in terms of secondary schooling, effective schooling, current school evaluation system, and factors that enhance or hinder secondary school effectiveness, and (ii) investigate various factors associated with students' achievement and school effectiveness and develop multilevel models that could enhance school self-evaluation using a large scale analysis of examination and other data from a hundred and ten secondary schools in Zanzibar. The research findings will inform policy-makers and practitioners about what constitutes secondary schools effectiveness which could be employed in the whole aspect of school self-evaluation."

As has been said above, once the value added through effective school practices has been identified, other schools can benefit from this knowledge. But Massoud's department recognises that not all skills and practices are directly transferable across all schools—some will share certain features with a successful school, others will benefit from different policies or support. This is one of the key reasons why school self-evaluation can be so valuable.



*Two Secondary schools in Zanzibar*

If a school is able to look at itself and understand where it is successful, and why, or even where it is failing and why, it is well placed to improve. In general, Zanzibar schools are not yet at this point. And neither are some of the stakeholders—further work needs to be done to demonstrate the best way forward to all concerned. Massoud explains: “At present, there is a need to carry out research that will investigate various factors associated with students’ achievement and school effectiveness in order to develop shared understandings among key education stakeholders. The lack of shared understandings of what constitute secondary school effectiveness makes school self-evaluation a difficult and complex task to be implemented.”

In fact a few schools in Zanzibar are starting to look at self-evaluation but only for very limited purposes. “Some secondary schools, especially in urban areas, organize and conduct internal (trial) examinations. These examinations provide data for comparison purposes. However, they are mainly focusing on preparing students before taking their Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations (CSEE) at the end of Form Four (senior four) education. In this respect, the system become ineffective as it is only examination oriented.” Massoud points out that this just reflects the current means of judging school effectiveness in Zanzibar but he is encouraged by the fact that the schools feel able to take the initiative and engage in the process.

*Source; Massoud Mohamed Salim  
Ministry of Education & Vocational Training, Zanzibar  
University of Bristol UK*

## Judging School Quality – going beyond exam scores

School quality is not just about improving examination scores. Children learn much more in school than they are actually tested on; they learn values related to how we live and work together and carry these lessons through life. And they acquire attitudes to work. For children whose home environments are unstable or chaotic, school may be the main place where they experience security and receive care from an adult. Most international organisations concerned with education now adopt a ‘rights-based’ approach. UNICEF has taken a lead in applying a concern for child rights to envisaging what a good quality school should look like.

### UNICEF Child-Friendly School model

*“The Child-Friendly School model is a simple one at heart: Schools should operate in the best interests of the child. Educational environments must be safe, healthy and protective, endowed with trained teachers, adequate resources and appropriate physical, emotional and social conditions for learning. Within them, children’s rights must be protected and their voices must be heard. Learning environments must be a haven for children to learn and grow, with innate respect for their identities and varied needs. The Child-Friendly School model promotes inclusiveness, gender-sensitivity, tolerance, dignity and personal empowerment.”*

*[http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index\\_focus\\_schools.html](http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_focus_schools.html)  
accessed 19December2008*

*Source: Angeline Barrett  
University of Bristol, UK*



*A private girls' secondary school in South Africa*

## School Inspection of Educators' Work in South Africa - The Developmental Appraisal System (DAS)

*Mathramuthu Pillay is the EdQual Institutional Coordinator at the Education Policy Unit (EPU), University of Witwatersrand, South Africa. He is responsible for the Implementing Curriculum Change Project in South Africa, Pakistan and Rwanda. The project aims to understand how curriculum change in mathematics and science education may be implemented in ways that contribute to poverty alleviation and promote gender equity within the contexts of South Africa, Rwanda and Pakistan. Mathematics and science curricula have been at the centre of major reforms in South Africa aimed at developing learners' critical thinking skills, including their mathematical and scientific literacy. Transforming these curriculum reform initiatives into effective practice is a challenge that is faced by educators all over the world. South Africa's relatively recent Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) stresses the importance of problem solving, critical thinking and argumentation skills. There has been little, if any, sustained research, however, that aims to identify appropriate tools and strategies through which this aspect of the new curriculum can be implemented. Rwanda is currently implementing an entirely new outcomes based curriculum. In Pakistan, there are particular gender issues arising in both curriculum design and implementation.*



*Mathramuthu Pillay*

### Background

The education system in South Africa from 1948 to 1994 was fragmented into 17 departments of education: these were composed of separate education departments for White, Coloured, Indian and Black persons. The department of education for black persons was further subdivided into education for black persons living in so-called 'white areas', called the Department of Education and Training (DET) and those living in Bantustans (areas demarcated for the exclusive settlement of black persons) with their own governments within South Africa.

The Department of Education and Training was staffed by white persons in all senior positions of management and black professionals in middle and lower management positions. The management structure was the education arm of the Apartheid Government that was used to keep the black population ignorant and deny them access to meaningful education. It was the belief by white intellectuals that black people were incapable of progressing beyond "hewers of wood and drawers of water" (quoted from the doctoral thesis of Hendrik Verwoerd: former president of South Africa).

### Formation of the teachers' Union

The DET was notorious for conducting inspection in schools that victimised black educators. This inspection process, known as operation Sibasa, was carried out by black circuit managers and subject advisors. The inspectors would go on fault finding missions to schools individually or as a panel of inspectors and conduct an investigation that would highlight non-compliance to government policy. Where educators at schools deviated from government policy, they became victims to this kind of inspection.

In response, black educators formed a union called the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU). This union militated against the inspection system and barred inspectors from their classrooms and schools; cars were stoned, burned out and inspectors were threatened with bodily harm if they dared to visit schools.

### The need for inspection services in education

Public education is a public good (product) that is funded by the taxpayer (more by the wealthy than the poor) and demanded predominantly by the middle and lower class of society. The wealthy send their children to private schools. Thus the supply and demand principle that operates in economics does not ensure quality. A lawyer or medical doctor that does not provide quality services will find their consulting rooms empty as the public will vote with their feet. Public schools are crowded because parents send their children to school with the belief that they will be provided with good education and because they cannot afford to pay for private education.

The South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) realised the need for inspection services and worked on a framework called the Development Appraisal System (DAS). This system is composed of three stages:

*Stage 1: The Head of Department (HOD) at the school level visits the educator and observes a series of lessons. S/he then collects and scrutinises the preparation work for the lesson, the application by learners (books, assignments, journals, projects, group work, etc)*

*Stage 2: The HOD together with the School Management Team (SMT) discuss the report written by the HOD on the preliminary findings listing the areas that require improvement. This team then ranks the items on the list that require immediate intervention. The team then decides on the item that will bring about the greatest benefit for the learners. The team also decides who will be engaged to assist the educator with the intervention. The School Governing Body (SGB) raises funds for the school and a portion of this money can be used to provide intervention programmes that will lead to the provision of quality education. The educator is invited to a meeting with the SGB and SMT; the educator is in the company of critical friends and persons who are tasked with the improvement of education at the school. The educator is informed of their role and contribution they wish to make. The educator is exposed to the report and decisions taken by the SGB and SMT. Attendance to and cooperation with their decision is then discussed. The educator is then given the opportunity to raise alternate solutions for consideration. A final decision is then taken and put into operation.*

*Stage 3: A second round of evaluation is undertaken by the HOD after the completion of the course of the intervention. If there is improvement the list is revisited to look at another aspect for improvement. If there is no improvement, exit mechanisms from the post are explored. Redeployment in another capacity is considered, before the termination of service is executed, which seldom happens.*

### Application of the Developmental Appraisal System

There are other educator unions operating in South Africa that have come together with SADTU and formed a council of educator unions called the Educator Labour Relations Council (ELRC). This body is formulating a common policy with all labour unions regarding inspection for educators. The provincial departments of education will then be called upon to implement this system. This system of Developmental Appraisal will hopefully be able to break with the past and create more cooperative mechanisms of teacher development, able to put quality education at the heart of the school system.

*Source: Mathramuthu Pillay,  
University of Witwatersrand, South Africa*

## Expanding Horizons

*Audrey Msimanga is an EdQual-sponsored PhD student based at the Marang Centre, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. Her PhD is on Science Education and she is working closely with the EdQual Project based at Wits; Implementing Curriculum Change in Maths and Science Education.*



*Audrey Msimanga*

EdQual is justly proud of all the EdQual PhD students but it is always gratifying to have their worth recognised by the rest of the academic world. To her great credit, Audrey Msimanga, EdQual's PhD student based at Wits SA and Bath UK, was selected to attend this year's European Science Education Research Association (ESERA) Summer School 2008. This is the first time that a non-European has been accepted.

The ESERA Summer School is a highly prestigious and competitive week-long event organised for the top 45 Science Education PhD students in Europe. It provides them not only with the opportunity to meet together but also to benefit from lectures, workshops and tuition from top science education researchers in Europe. Each student is a member of a small group of 6-9 students and two experienced 'coaches', who work together throughout the week.

The highlight for Audrey was the personal feedback from her group. "Before the Summer School we received copies of our group members' work to read. At the Summer School each student had 90 minutes to present to their group. This was the most beneficial part for me. Because of the diversity of disciplines and research foci in the group the feedback was very rich, ranging from specific theoretical and methodological queries to more general comments which helped to clarify things in my mind."

*"ESERA was fantastic indeed - my most amazing experience of the year."*

*Audrey Msimanga*

## Engaging Key Stakeholders

*One of the most important aspects of EdQual's research programme is the active involvement and support of senior national and local policymakers. This is crucial to the impact and sustainability that the research findings can have in terms of actual policy and practice in their own and other countries. In each EdQual partner country the Institutional Coordinators (ICs) leading the Research Teams have worked to achieve this. In Ghana and in Tanzania, for example, Dr George Oduro and Dr Hillary Dachi, ICs for EdQual's Leadership and Management (L&M) and Language and Literacy (L&L) Project teams, have established a range of formal and informal dialogues with key Education figures.*

### In Ghana....

Ghana is currently working with all three of the DfID UK-sponsored Education Research Programme Consortia (RPCs) in Africa – EdQual, the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE), and the Research Consortium on Educational Outcomes and Poverty (RECOUN). This has offered significant opportunities for a coordinated approach to the research programmes involved and for engagement with the Education authorities and with other non-government organisations (NGOs) working in the country.

In May 2008, Professor J.S.Djangmah (University of Cape Coast, Ghana) chaired a meeting in Accra to coordinate communications across the three DfID Education RPCs in Africa with the Ghana Education Service (GES) and Ministry of Education (MOESS). EdQual's Dr George Oduro reported on a series of meetings with policymakers and stakeholders as well as a Policy Briefing on the concerns of the State Primary School head teachers. The decisions and agreements reached at the meeting should mean that the relevant Ministries and supervisory authorities are both briefed and interested in EdQual's research, as well as the wider picture offered by all three RPCs.

### And in Tanzania...

In July 2008, EdQual's Language & Literacy (L&L) research team held a series of meetings in Tanzania, designed to ensure that policymakers and key opinion-formers would be ready to use their research findings. Ambassador N. Kuhanga chaired a meeting in Dar es Salaam with representatives of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), and the Tanzania Education Network (TEN-MET). This was a valuable opportunity to raise awareness of EdQual's progress and to secure the support of these key decision makers. In fact, Dr Joseph Kisanji of TEN-MET pointed out, the current custom of tripartite discussions, involving government, donors and Civil Society Organisations, is increasingly being pushed to include Academia, to enable input such as EdQual's to be heard across the board.

The L&L team have also conducted press briefings and held one-to-one briefings. Now both radio and newspapers are so

informed and involved that they are asking District Education Officers what they are doing about the issues raised by the team's Baseline Research Study. In Dar es Salaam, the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education is a member of the research team's National Reference Group, and the MoE's Policy & Planning Unit actively participate in research meetings.



*Azimio Primary School, Tanzania*

Also in July 2008, Dr Alphonse Ndibalema of the University of Dar Es Salaam chaired a workshop specifically for District Educational Officers (DEOs) working in the Tanzanian districts where the L&L and L&M projects are underway. This was to make them aware of the purpose and findings of EdQual's research. DEOs are a particularly valuable channel for EdQual research as they work very closely with schools; they can act both as informed contributors and as disseminators of policy and practice.

There was much discussion around the practical difficulties for teachers trying to teach in a language that not all their learners readily understand. But is this a problem of the language of instruction or indicative of other factors?

DEO Mercy Mkinda observed that anecdotal evidence showed that using English as a medium of instruction promotes pupils' understanding of English language. She said "There has been good performance in English subjects in the schools that are using English as a medium of instruction as opposed to schools using Swahili as a medium of instruction."





*A house for nine teachers in Tanzania*



*A packed class in a school in the KEEA district, Tanzania*

She saw the problem as a difficulty in learning English, or the matter of choice on what should be the language of instruction.

DEO A. Msheli pointed out that teachers have been demotivated by poor living and working conditions, making them reluctant to learn new things and accommodate changes. His experiences have led him to believe that in public schools, much time is wasted by poor time management skills, leading to just the poor performances in the Primary School Leaving Exams that might be expected. In contrast, the effective time management evident in privately owned schools contributed to good learning achievements. "The poor quality in public schools is more historical, and language has nothing to do with learners' performance but teachers should increase their commitment", he said.

The Tanga City Education Officer noted that because of the ongoing reforms in the public education sector, the responsibilities of head teachers have increased significantly, with a variety of effects on their work performance. The Leadership and Management Research Project is currently looking at the role of, and demands on, head teachers in both Tanzania and Ghana, and agrees that the expectations currently made on them as leaders, managers and teachers, are overwhelming some of them. Others, however, are rising to the challenge and actively looking for professional development and support from their local supervisors.

The Kibaha Township DEO argued that one of the big problems in the communities and schools is gender stereotyping. She also insisted on the need to strengthen teachers' motivation if the quality of education is to be improved.

Professor Casmir Rubagumya, who is leading the research team on the Language and Literacy Project, argued that it was crucial to improve the teaching and learning environment, in

order for pupils to learn and perform better, and that language is not the only factor to consider when planning interventions.

*The Tanga City Education Officer asked that the preliminary findings be shared with the DEOs; this is a very encouraging sign that they are prepared to take the findings on board. They even agreed to a request not to transfer those head teachers involved in the Action Research until the end of the project in 2010.*

Speaking on behalf of the DEOs, the Tanga City Education Officer confirmed how valuable the meeting had been. He said that they had had previous experience of researchers going into their districts and leaving without sharing their findings. As a consequence, the research had made very little difference. By involving the DEOs from the start, EdQual researchers had earned the DEOs' support.

This is very encouraging for the teachers and head teachers who are actively contributing to the Action Research in both the Leadership and Management and the Language and Literacy Projects. Their voices are not only being heard, they are being looked for and listened to by those who can respond to their findings, both locally and nationally. And as the research findings become public and are presented at national and international level, so the teachers' voices are heard at every level. The effect may not be immediate but they are undeniably a very important part of any changes to policy or practice.

It is by establishing relationships like these that the EdQual research will find its advocates on the ground and its first successes in the schools. These meetings in Ghana and Tanzania have provided a strong foundation for guiding EdQual's findings directly to where they can make a difference.

*Source; Workshop Reports from EdQual Language & Literacy, and Leadership & Management Projects*

## Conference Talk

### *Think Globally Act Locally; A Challenge to Education Leaders*

*Aneth Komba is one of EdQual's PhD students from University of Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. She is based at the University of Bath UK. Her PhD thesis is on Leadership & Management of Schools for Poverty Reduction and she is working closely with the EdQual Project in Ghana on Leadership and Management of Change for Quality Improvement. Here she reports on the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management (CCEAM) Conference held in Durban, South Africa, September 2008 - Think Globally Act Locally; A Challenge to Education Leaders.*



*Aneth Komba,*

The five-day conference was attended by education stakeholders from all over the world and more than 60 papers were presented. EdQual RPC was well represented, with papers from the Programme Director, Professor Leon Tikly (University of Bristol UK) and Dr Thandi Ngcobo (University of Natal, South Africa); from Michael Fertig (University of Bath UK); and from Aneth Komba, PhD student (UDSM Tanzania and University of Bath UK).

Aneth reports: "Over the course of the Conference, several key issues were raised. First, as the world has become a global village, education leaders and managers are challenged to think and to act to a greater extent than previously. Secondly, given the current global character, there is a need to reconsider the role of educational leadership, management and administration in order to achieve national economic and social progress. Thirdly, educational leaders and managers are challenged to put themselves second to learners. Fourthly, it was evident from the presentations that education policies in most developing countries do not predict the actual practices. In this regard, it is high time policy makers, researchers, practitioners and community members worked closely at all stages of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation."

*"At the centre of strategies for accelerating the achievement of quality education is effective leadership at all levels of the school system." Michael Fertig, George Oduro & Hillary Dachi*

One of the key EdQual Research Projects is Leadership and Management of Change for Quality Improvement. Both Michael Fertig and Leon Tikly are directly involved in this research and presented papers on this subject. "Educational Leadership and Quality Education in Disadvantaged Communities in Ghana and Tanzania" was co-written by Michael Fertig with Dr George Oduro (Cape Coast University,

Ghana) and Dr Hillary Dachi (University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania). It reviewed differences and similarities across the different contexts in which both Tanzania and Ghana are seeking to deliver quality education, and the leadership challenges these present. One of the key challenges, they suggested, is "the way Ghanaian and Tanzanian educators perceive and conceptualize their school leadership roles in the context of quality education."

*"Schools should become a condominium of families and teachers"*  
*Aneth Komba*

Leon Tikly and Thandi Ngcobo's paper also focused on leadership challenges, this time in South Africa - "Key Dimensions of Effective Leadership for Change: A Focus on Township and Rural Schools in South Africa". Their paper argued that "despite years of reform effort, South Africa ...has failed to significantly raise the performance of historically disadvantaged learners." They suggested: "A factor that has consistently been identified in the international literature over the last quarter century at least as being critical for managing change and raising the achievement of learners is that of effective leadership."

Poverty alleviation is one of the over-arching themes of EdQual. Aneth presented a paper based on her PhD subject - "Poverty Alleviation Strategies in Tanzania; the role of family's social capital in children's primary schooling". The paper was based on a pilot study that involved teachers, pupils, parents, a Ward Educational Officer (WEO), and a District Education Officer (DEO). The findings indicated that "the various amounts of social capital (financial, human and cultural) possessed by the parents affected the children's schooling both positively and negatively". On the basis of the findings, she concluded that "the role of ensuring that children have access to quality education is the joint responsibility of the parents, community members and schools.... Hence, there is a need to develop a concrete home-school partnership that clearly specifies the roles of each partner".

(Full texts of the Conference presentations can be accessed at <http://www.emasa.co.za/node/42>)

*Source: Aneth Komba, UDSM Tanzania*

## Breaking Through the Glass Walls—Communicating EdQual Research

*"Our main objective is to persuade policy makers and practitioners to engage with new knowledge to improve the quality of education. We need to break the glass that separates researchers from them."*

*Dr. Rosemary Bosu, Communications Officer for EdQual, University of Cape Coast, Ghana*

The focus on Education For All, particularly in Africa, in recent years has led to a lively debate on education, on its quality, delivery and efficacy in different places and contexts. Meanwhile policymakers' determination to make education accessible to as many children as possible has led to a rapid expansion of enrolments in primary and secondary schools. In many cases this has resulted in large class-sizes and 'crash' teacher training programmes. EdQual is actively contributing its research findings to the discussions around what is meant by 'quality education' and how it can be delivered without losing this energy for change.



*What did your child learn at school today?*

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This difficult balance between making education accessible and creating the informed infrastructure required for *quality* education, demonstrates both positives and negatives. The meaning and importance of 'education quality' is discussed in newspapers, on TV and on the radio. In September 2008, EdQual researchers met in Kigali, Rwanda to share experiences and learn more about how to put their research to work to change policy and practice in positive and lasting ways.



*Kitopeni Primary School, Tanzania*

They were joined by two guest facilitators. David Campbell brought expertise on using the media in Africa. David is director of Mediae Kenya, an organisation set up 8 years ago to develop communications that inform and improve people's lives, in particular through TV, video, radio and print. Joel Samoff stimulated thinking on scaling up successful innovations. Joel is a professor at Stanford University, USA with thirty years of experience researching education policy in Africa. He is co-author of a review identifying the conditions that allow innovation to flourish.

EdQual researchers heard from both David and Joel how important it is to *show* people what counts in quality education. They discussed techniques for communicating with different audiences, to convey relevant findings and recommendations.



*"Do you help your students to be creative?"*

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TV has increasingly become the best channel for reaching large audiences of students, parents and teachers. Local language newspapers are read widely in urban areas. However, articles targeted at policymakers are best placed in key national English language newspapers. In Ghana the University of Cape Coast has done this successfully, placing articles in the *Daily Graphic* and *Ghanaian Times* highlighting the need for leadership training for head teachers.



*Some of the News communications featuring EdQual*

### Engaging with the Ministry

Face to face communication with policymakers is also key to sharing findings, understanding contexts, and knitting the research to policy agendas in order to achieve change. This is about building trust and respect. EdQual regularly shares research findings with senior policymakers at the same time as benefiting from their advice. In Rwanda, in Ghana and in Tanzania, EdQual has established National Reference or Advisory Groups that include senior officials from the Ministries of Education. The Tanzanian Advisory Group has encouraged EdQual in Tanzania to participate in public debate on quality. In Rwanda, the researchers have one to one contact with policymakers responsible for ICT in education, and are invited to key meetings at the Ministry. In Ghana, Dr George Oduro has established contact with Directors of Education at all levels.

EdQual is a Consortium  
of six education institutions  
in the UK and Africa



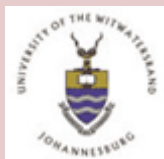
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## Teachers, Policymakers, Academics—EdQual is communicating to and between all of them

On the other side of education policy, researchers across EdQual report that action research has changed their relationship with teachers. When EdQual first went into the field, there seemed to be a glass wall dividing teachers from academics. Now, teachers view their academic co-researchers as a useful resource, people they can consult about challenges they face in their schools.

### Opening up to Teachers

*".....research has become a large academic debate, almost a mini-culture. Doctoral fellows expect me to talk about what is going on in a classroom. Teachers expect me to talk about research."*

*Kakoma Luneta, EdQual's Implementing Curriculum Change Project,  
University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa*



*Head teachers and researcher compare findings in Action Research schools in Kitopeni and Majani Mapana, Tanzania*

"The head teacher was keen to know how his Action Research fitted in with the project...and how it would be communicated, especially to education leaders in Tanzania, including the district official."

*Facilitator's report from Kitopeni, Korogwe, Tanzania*

"It is exciting for both Action Researchers and facilitators that research can feed directly into communications with District Education Officers and the Ministry as well as external donors"

*Facilitator's report from Majani Mapana, Tanga, Tanzania*

*Source: Dr Angeline Barrett, Communications Manager  
EdQual, University of Bristol, UK,*

**For more information on EdQual, its research projects and researchers, or to download the latest publications including the EdQual Newsletters and Annual Reports, log onto [www.edqual.org/](http://www.edqual.org/).**

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