# Education Reform Efforts in Itanzenia



Location: Zanzibar, Tanzania

Tanzania is a beautiful, diverse country that sits

Ocean. It is home to approximately 47. 4 million

people. Agriculture makes up nearly 25% of the

of the coast of the mainland of Tanzania and is

predominant religion of Tanzania (including

inhabited by over 1 million people. The

**Public Education in Tanzania** 

finishing primary education

Zanzibar) is Islam.

education

gross domestic product. Zanzibar is an island off

According to the U.S. Agency for International

Development, many children in Tanzania,

especially girls, drop out of school before

30.8% of children make it to lower secondary

education and 1.9% enter upper secondary

Most of the higher education and job

on the East Coast of Africa along the Indian

# **Special Studies**

My global special studies focused on the public education of Tanzania and the implications of its current state. My studies consisted of a literature review of the country, volunteer efforts and learning opportunities abroad, daily journal entries, and a synthesis paper of my overall experience.

# **Agency/Community Partner**

My global field experience was with Growth International Volunteer Excursions (GIVE). Their mission is to inspire growth, empower global citizens, and ignite sustainable change worldwide. GIVE partners with host communities in an effort to improve infrastructure, education, sanitation, water supply, and the environment. Education efforts include English tutoring for the residents of Kiwengwa in Zanzibar and the construction of an accessible school (per the community's request).

#### Outcomes

In the course of the few weeks that I was in Tanzania, I worked alongside local fundis (which means "skilled workers" in Swahili) in constructing an accessible school in Kiwengwa, engaged in conversations with local adults and youth in English, discussed topics relating to volunteerism with the Zanzibar Volunteer Society (ZAVOS), and tutored English to the residents.

Major accomplishments included:

- Tutoring 7 young people daily on various parts of speech in English
- Painting several classrooms, preparing construction materials such as cement, and transporting such construction materials to the fundis
- Completing the next phases of classroom and bathroom construction at the school site

# Skills Utilized/Developed

From my global field experience, I increased my

- Engage in discussion with stakeholders and gain buy-in from them
- despite language barriers

## Connections

### Field Placement:

After returning from Tanzania, I had the opportunity to share my experiences with the psychiatric, nursing, and social work staff at the Adult Partial Hospitalization Program within the St. Joseph Mercy Health System. Through my presentation, I raised awareness about educational disparities in Tanzania and facilitated a dialogue of how this may relate to their work within the field of mental health.

#### SW 799 Social Entrepreneurship:

While taking this course, we talked about the pros and cons of giving donations to underdeveloped countries. Pros could include performing a charitable act while cons could include stifling the country's economic growth and development by providing donations.

#### Career:

As a former educator, it was interesting to compare and contrast issues relating to education in America and Tanzania. I hope to one day work with an organization that provides global experiences to young adolescents in order to engage them with global issues and raise awareness within their respective communities.

## **Lessons Learned**

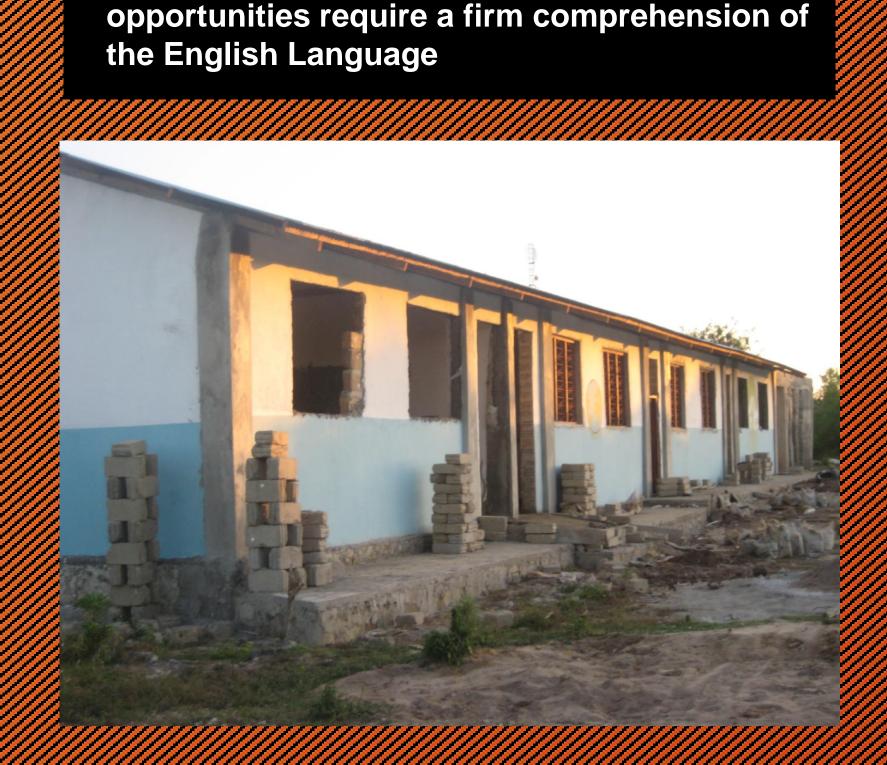
- The best way to empower a community is to specifically ask them in which ways they would like support and have them participate in some way
- Donations to other countries can be detrimental to their local economy
- Education and knowledge are important factors when discussing solutions to large world problems and disparities

#### Advice

- Make a strong effort to learn the native language of the country to which you plan to
- Apply to as many funding sources as possible
- Identify and process one's own privileges, biases, and/or prejudices before traveling

I would like to thank the Office of Global Activities for financially supporting my dream of having a global studies experience, GIVE for guiding me





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ability to:

- **Assess community needs**
- Interact and communicate with individuals
- Gain buy-in from youth about their education

- travel
- Try to stay as busy as possible in order to combat homesickness while abroad

through this experience, St. Joseph Mercy Health System's Partial Hospitalization Program for their generous donations, family and friends for their enduring support, and the University of Michigan School of Social Work.

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