Chapter 14
Assessment and Culturally Relevant Inclusive Education: The Case of Tanzania

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ABSTRACT
In this chapter, the authors will describe a case study that illuminates assessment, identification, and inclusive educational practices in Tanzania. The key purposes of this chapter are to briefly describe the history of special needs education and policies and assessment practices in Tanzania, to examine how one non-governmental organization project uses culturally relevant assessment and inclusive education to support assessment and education of children in Tanzania, and to offer lessons learned from this study on how assessment and teacher preparation can support inclusive practices and teacher education in Tanzania and other similar locations. This chapter incorporates assessment theory, research in the field, and an understanding of culturally relevant practices drawn from the authors’ practical work in the field and Tanzania. This chapter will add to the limited scholarly literature on assessment in inclusive education in Tanzania, while also offering research to practice solutions for teachers and teacher educators in the field.

INTRODUCTION
In this chapter, the authors will describe a case study that illuminates assessment, identification, and inclusive educational practices in Tanzania. For several years, the social model of disability has been the paradigm in the disability studies literature and the medical or rehabilitation models have been the dominant paradigms in educational systems that serve individuals with disabilities in the US and in East African countries (Peters, 1993; Stone-MacDonald & Butera, 2012). On the other hand, the capabilities approach views disability as just one of many factors that contribute to the holistic person and promotes...
fair treatment in society, so that everyone, with and without a disability, is treated as an equal member of the society. The capabilities approach extends the social model by arguing for the just treatment of individuals with disabilities consistent with a rights model focused on substantive equality and real equality of opportunity (Nussbaum, 2006; Terzi, 2005a, 2005b).

The key objectives of this chapter are: to briefly describe the history of special needs education and policies and assessment practices in Tanzania; to examine how one non-governmental organization project uses culturally relevant assessment and inclusive education to support assessment and education of children in Tanzania; and to offer lessons learned from this study on how assessment and teacher preparation can support inclusive practices and teacher education in Tanzania and other similar locations.

BACKGROUND

History of Special Needs Education in Tanzania

To a great extent, Special Needs Education (SNE) in Tanzania has been supported by non-governmental organizations. History proves that religious organizations have played a significant role in the development of SNE in Tanzania. For example, the first school for the blind was started in 1950 by the Anglican Church in Dodoma. The first school for the deaf was established in Tabora by the Roman Catholic Church in the late 1950s (Institute of Education, 1984). In 1967, the Salvation army started services for individuals with physical disabilities. Finally, in 1982, the Ministry of Education opened the first school for people with intellectual disability (still referred to as mental retardation or intellectual impairment in Tanzania) (cited in Possi, 1996; UNESCO, 1996). Government efforts were influenced by the International Year of Disabled Persons, 1981 (IYDP) by the United Nations, which called for a plan of action with an emphasis on equalization of opportunities, rehabilitation and prevention of disabilities (e.g. prevention of disabilities that are caused by preventable accidents such as children falling into open fires).

From a policy perspective, African governments tend to enact policies that assign responsibility for the education of people with disabilities in their individual countries, but they do not have the material or personnel resources to meet the demand. In fact, many countries struggle to meet the demand for education of typically developing students (World Bank Group, 2008). As of 2013, Tanzania had 21 segregated primary schools for children with disabilities and 377 self-contained special education classrooms in primary schools (out of over 110,000 classrooms at the primary level countrywide), but the data does not indicate the number of units that include students with typically developing students for some or all of the school day (Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics, 2016; United Republic of Tanzania, 2013). Disability is cited by 2.8% of children aged 7–16 years as the reason for dropping out of school, and “more than half of children with disabilities aged 7–16 years who were not attending school said that this was due to disability or illness” (Riggall & Croft, 2016, p. 82). At least every district in the country has a unit/center, which caters for services for specific groups of Learners with Disabilities. Since 2008, the Tanzanian government has been working with many local organizations and outside donors to develop more inclusive practices and strategies for addressing the needs of children with disabilities in public schools. The Tanzanian government in their National Disability Policy acknowledged that they, as a state entity, did not have the funds, resources, or personnel necessary to meet the needs of people