

Title: Participatory and Integrative Teaching Approach (PITA) Project

Lead Consultant: TUMA – Faculty of Education, Humanities, and Science (FEHS)

Description

PITA Project functions as an educational outreach programme of the Faculty of Education, Humanities and Science (FEHS), working in partnership with Meru District Council (District Secondary Education Office) and ELCT Meru Diocese. Its aim is to provide in-service education to secondary school teachers within selected areas of pedagogy, viz.:

- 1) Multi-disciplinary approach to environmental education, 2.
- 2) Language supportive pedagogy, and 3.
- 3) Gender responsive pedagogy, basing on the current competence-based learner centred participatory curriculum.

The selected 34 project schools belong to the following groups of schools:

- Community secondary schools (27 schools)
- ELCT Meru Diocese schools (6 schools)
- Government special school for students with disability (1 school)

PITA Project Community Services Activities in 2024/2025

A. Environmental Education

PITA project actively advocates the teaching and learning of environmental education in secondary schools. Both multidisciplinary environmental education through all school subjects, and special focus on science subjects have been practised in project workshops in 2024/2025. In addition, project schools are encouraged and supported to start and maintain school vegetable gardens, which provide food to the schools as well as gardening skills both to the students and teachers.

Activities

(i) Weather Station

To support the TUMA Department of Science and Technology, and the development of teaching and learning of science subjects in secondary education, six (6) automatic weather stations have been installed at TUMA campus and at five ELCT schools. The weather stations were purchased from TAHMO (Trans-African Hydro-Meteorological Observatory) in 2024. The selection of the host schools for the weather stations is based on their geographical location as the aim is to provide

varied meteorological data. The host schools together with the TUMA campus weather station will function as resource Centers for nearby schools.

(ii) Science teachers' workshops on the methodology of conducting practical laboratory experiments

As carrier-subjects of environmental topics, science subjects Geography, Biology, Chemistry and Physics are key subjects for environmental education. One of the strategies to awaken students' interest in studying science subjects is to develop teaching methods so that practical hands-on activities (laboratory practicals, real objects) are used to teach the topics.

Project school science teachers' workshops on the methodology of conducting practical laboratory experiments in Biology, Chemistry and Physics subjects were conducted in July – August 2025.

(iii) Science competition based on waste management

In 2025, the science competition task was based on the annual environmental theme of waste management. Project school form 1 and Form 2 students were tasked to prepare a waste management system for their schools. In addition, a campaign day, themed “Zero Waste Day,” was held on April 4th, 2025. On this day, project school teachers from all subjects actively engaged students in learning about effective waste management. The school-wide cleanup activities were conducted, extending to surrounding areas including village offices, the local dispensary, the village market, and nearby water sources.

(iv) Professional agrologist supports the gardening activities of PITA schools

In 2025, PITA project, through Arusha-based agricultural NGO **ECHO East Africa**, <https://echonet.org/our-work/regional-impact-centers/east-africa-impact-center/>, has conducted trainings at PITA project schools on sustainable agricultural practices to improve the food and nutrition security of the schools. Trainings took place in February-May 2025 at each PITA school while being supervised by Heads of Schools and selected teachers.

B. Language Supportive Pedagogy

Activity

Language competition based on annual environmental themes organised in project schools

The essay writing competition for PITA secondary school students was organized to inspire creativity, critical thinking, and effective communication skills among students. The competition took place at all PITA project schools in October 2025 for English language. The eligible participants were all Form I or Form III students from 34 PITA project schools.

C. Gender Responsive Pedagogy

Teachers' and heads of schools' skills in gender responsive pedagogy (GRP) have been strengthened through project activities. GRP covers areas such as gender responsive lesson planning, teaching and learning materials, classroom set-up and management, and gender responsive school management. The aim of GRP is to support the learning process of both girls and boys.

Activity 1: Campus workshop for teachers, counselling & guidance teachers and heads of PITA schools on gender responsive pedagogy

The workshop that was held on 9-10/12/2024 at Makumira Cultural Arts Centre was attended by 285 teachers, 33 heads of schools; 36 members of TUMA Faculty of Education, Humanities and Science; 2 representatives of ELCT; 4 representatives of Meru District Council; 8 representatives of TCRS (Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service); and 1 representative of Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM)

Activity 2: School cluster workshops for teachers, counselling & guidance teachers and heads of PITA schools on gender responsive pedagogy (GRP)

PITA school cluster workshops on GRP were conducted in February-March 2025 for PITA teachers, heads of PITA schools, and Ward Education Officers. Participants included 34 Heads of Schools 34; 302 teachers. Among these 91 (30%) were female, and 211 (70%) were male; and 23 Ward Education Officers.

Activity 3: Conference on 'Gender in Education' on 1/9/2025 at Tumaini University Makumira

A number of topics were covered during this conference, such as “Gender and Safeguarding” presented by Ms. Neema Kitundu, from The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE); “Sera ya Maendeleo ya Wanawakena Jinsia, na Sera ya Maendeleo ya Mtoto – presented by Ms. Martha Mnzava, Community Development Officer, Meru District Council; “Strategies Used by School Administration in Protecting Vulnerable Children” presented by Dr Felix Goldman, from Tumaini University Makumira.

Participants included 34 Heads of PITA project schools, 102 Teachers of PITA project schools, 45 TUMA lecturers, 2 representatives of ELCT, and 4 Meru District Council representatives.

Activity 4: Workshop for Heads of Schools on Gender Responsive School Management on 12/12/2025

This activity involved 34 PITA Project Heads of Schools; and 34 Second Masters / Mistresses.

Project Status: Completed