For many years, the Wamanyiri community were not involved in school development, student learning or any other issue related to school, and meetings were held in schools, parents blamed the teachers instead of discussing how to improve their children's performances. More recently things have changed for the better. Since the establishment of the Parent Teacher Partnership (PTP) and several sensitization sessions, the community are now demanding information and participating in school development plans, while parents and schools communicate regularly and clearly. The PTP are helping to develop family involvement in school improvement plans and the school is now well managed, with the School Committee and the PTP collaborating well with the school leadership. They advocate for the school, and are focused on improving pupil performance.

Wamanyiri Primary School is located 8 kilometers from Busega administrative center called Nyashimo in Simiyu region. The school started in 1962 and has a total of 575 pupils (287 girls and 288 boys). Tackling truancy.

Wamanyiri community is surrounded by Lake Victoria where many pupils go for fishing and other activities after school. Before the establishment of the PTP, some pupils did not come to school and stayed at the lake all day. Now, because of the PTP and the greater community knowledge on the importance of attending school, pupils are required to stay at home and do homework and other home-related activities.
ADDRESSING EARLY PREGNANCY

Early pregnancy is one of the barriers to finishing standard seven for many girls. Women members of the PTP are advising and talking to girls, especially those in standard 5-7 on how they can protect themselves from early pregnancy, and the importance of education and their roles in the future.

IMPROVED PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONS

Parents and guardians are welcome at the Head Teacher's office and in the school classrooms. They are treated with respect and teachers find time to sit with them and talk about what they have observed.

"Before we were not allowed to come to school, it was not written anywhere, but when we came, it was explained as we are interfering with the school rule, hence parents were not involved, but now it is different, Head teacher now welcome parents anytime and teachers are cooperating with parents."

Emmanuel Buswelu (Member of the PTP)

A GREATER SENSE OF COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

The Wamanyiri community now feel a sense of pride and ownership in the school's achievements. They are better informed about the challenges and success of the school, understand the benefits of a good quality school, and know how they can contribute.

PROMOTING AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS

To support after school activities, one of the PTP members, Mr Emmanuel Buswelu decided to organise after school learning and revision sessions. He requested two pupils who were bright and just completed standard seven to help children from standard 1-4, and for standard 5-7, those who are top and perform well in their respective classes should assist others.

"I was concerned to see our children moving around after school hours, some go to videos and other dangerous activities, so I thought this initiative will help them to learn more and help each other and to keep our kids busy at home"

(Mr. Emmanuel Buswelu, PTP member)

Mr. Renatus Makige (Head Teacher)

PTP members are working in their respective classrooms to ensure the school and pupil performance improves. They also guide and advise parents. For example, if a parent has concerns about a child, or a child has special needs, PTP members help with guidance and counselling.

Teachers are now enabled to talk about how parents can monitor their children's progress and check on their homework. All parents and guardians, even those who cannot read and write well, are treated with respect.

Mr. Renatus Makige (Head Teacher)

We are overwhelming with all the support we are receiving from the community, community are now fully engaged, we have discussed on other income-generation activity the school can start to reduce dependency.

We are overwhelming with all the support we are receiving from the community, community are now fully engaged, we have discussed on other income-generation activity the school can start to reduce dependency.
Mary Emmanuel, who completed standard seven this year and is currently waiting to join secondary school, hopes to become a teacher. She is using her time to help other children to learn by assisting them in Mathematics, reading and English: “I am happy with what I am doing, I enjoy helping them, instead of sitting home, I want to be a teacher in future, so this is the beginning”. Currently, more than 60 children who live nearby are benefiting from these after-school sessions.

Other PTP members also took the initiative to address the issue of after-school activities through talking to the owners of street video centres, where many pupils were often seen, to ensure they would be not be allowed to enter.

WHAT’S NEXT FOR WAMANYIRI’S PTP?

Wamanyiri PTP members believe that parents need to support their children’s learning. They will continue to talk positively about the value of education to help children to develop good study habits and to advise parents regarding after-school activities.