

**Strategic school mapping as a determinant of the effectiveness of education policy planning in secondary education, the case of ward based secondary schools (WBSS) in Kondo district in Tanzania**

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This research sought to find out the manner and degree to which strategic School Mapping (SM) criteria were adhered to for effective policy planning and appropriateness of location of the Ward Based Secondary Schools (WBSS) taking into account the education inputs variables. The major study findings revealed that, with WBSS interventions, the transition rate from primary to secondary level escalated progressively from 29.92% in 2003 to 85.67% in 2005 and form II national examinations performance in WBSS with complementary education inputs compared fairly with non-WBSS. However, a large number of students (57.77%) walk distances beyond the established standard criteria of 4.0 miles for non-boarding schools and equity-driven issues were not addressed, as more males were enrolled compared with females. Similarly, there were relatively high repetition rates at form II grades, inappropriate locations of WBSS, weak optimum utilization of educational inputs, inadequate facilities, services, and weak internal efficiency resulting into ineffectiveness of education policy planning and hence students' poor performance at WBSS. It is recommended that policy-makers and educational planners should ensure that the establishment of new WBSS adheres to School Mapping criteria when considering the schools' catchments areas, ward population, number of feeder primary schools and equitable reallocation of educational inputs. Also, further research is recommended on SM, to cover broader and larger areas with more samples included in order to arrive at a comprehensive conclusion.