



PEDAGOGY MASTER CLASS

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Tools and Demonstrations of Harambee

Insights from East Africa



My introduction

- A distinguished social work scholar, practitioner, and policy advocate.
- Hold a Ph.D. in Social Work from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, MSc. in Social Work (Medical Social Work) and a BSc. in Social Work and Healthcare (Medical Social Work) from St. Elizabeth University.
- An award-winning researcher.
- EA ASSWA Regional Representative

Introduction

- ❑ At Kenya's independence in 1963, social services
- ❑ especially education and health were inadequate and thus inaccessible to most citizens.
- ❑ To remedy the situation, the then leadership resorted to a traditional approach of resource mobilization, a concept of pulling together resources both physical and human, in order to build a new nation.
- ❑ This came to be known as the Harambee
- ❑ In Rwanda it is Umuganda movement, in Uganda Bulungi Bwansi (Community Self-Help Work).

Background

- Harambee is a community self-help philosophy widely associated with Kenya and parts of East Africa.
- The term means “pulling together” in Swahili and refers to collective community action where people mobilize local resources to address social, economic, and development challenges.
- It became particularly prominent during the leadership of Jomo Kenyatta, who promoted it as a national development philosophy after independence.
- Harambee demonstrates how communities can mobilize resources, labour, and social networks to achieve common goals without relying solely on government support.

Tools used in Harambee

a) Community Fundraising

One of the most common tools of Harambee is collective fundraising. Community members contribute money, materials, or livestock to support a project.

Examples

- ❖ Building schools
- ❖ Supporting medical treatment
- ❖ Paying school fees for vulnerable students
- ❖ Constructing churches or community halls



Contd.....

b) Collective Labour (Self-Help Work)

Harambee often involves voluntary labour contributions where community members physically participate in projects.

Examples

- ❖ Construction of classrooms
- ❖ Road maintenance in rural areas
- ❖ Digging water wells
- ❖ Community farming initiatives

Contd...

c) Social Capital and Community Networks

Harambee relies heavily on social relationships and trust networks. Elders, local leaders, and community groups coordinate contributions and mobilization.

Key actors

- Local chiefs and elders
- Religious leaders
- Youth groups
- Women's groups
- Community-based organizations

Contd....

d) Leadership Mobilization

Political and community leaders often support Harambee events to mobilize resources and inspire participation.

During public events, leaders encourage citizens to contribute towards projects such as:

- Schools
- Hospitals
- Water projects
- Community development initiatives

Contd...

e) Cultural Norms and Moral Obligation

Harambee functions through shared cultural expectations that members of the community should support each other.

Important values include:

- Solidarity
- Mutual aid
- Collective responsibility
- Ubuntu-like communal ethics

Image / Case Study



Health Projects

Harambee initiatives have supported:

- ❖ building dispensaries and clinics
- ❖ funding medical treatment for sick community members
- ❖ organizing blood donation drives



"Education is the most powerful weapon
which
you can use to change the world."

Dr. Wilkins Ndege Muhingi

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Thank You
Asante!

