

# Kenya's progress towards the un development essay



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## Description of the UN Millennium Development Goal

The UN millennium development goals were established in the year 2000. They consist of eight international goals that various countries and international organizations agreed to achieve by the year 2015. In the year 2005, the G8 countries agreed to provide funds to the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and African Development Bank to necessitate achievement of these goals. These funds were meant to ease the high debts owed by these countries. It was also meant to alleviate poverty and improve health and education.

Each of the UN millennium development goals aimed at specific targets and had specific dates that were to be achieved (Millennium Development Goals UNDP, 2008). This paper represents the way Kenya has achieved universal primary education as one of the millennium development goal and challenges it has faced.

In achieving universal education, the goal aimed at increasing the number of students in primary school. It also aimed that everyone gets to school and completes primary education. The goal aimed that all children irrespective of gender should have a chance to go to school. By 2015, all the pupils who go to school should complete a full course of primary schooling (National Economic and Social Council of Kenya, 2007).

## Country Profile

Kenya is a country in eastern Africa. It is bordered by Ethiopia and Sudan in the north, Somalia in the east, Uganda in the west and Tanzania in the south.

It is also to the south east of the ocean. The country covers a total land area of 582, 650 km most of which consists of dry land. About 80% of land is arid while 20% is cultivable. The country had a population of 41. 07 million as in July 2011. According to census that was conducted in 2009, the population was 38. 6 million with 19. 1 million males and 19. 4 million females. The major ethnic composition consists of Cushites, Bantus and Nilotes. The largest populous group is Kikuyu. The most populous areas are urban areas and major towns such as Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu. Also, the areas with fertile soils are more densely populated than those with poor soils. This population is plagued by high infant mortality rate, low life expectancy and HIV/AIDS. The Kenyan population is estimated to be growing at 1 million people in every year (Calverton, 2004).

Kenya education system is based on 8-4-4 system. Primary education starts from the age of 6 or 7. This is after a successful completion of a nursery school or pre unit. Since the introduction of free primary education in 2003, there has been increased enrolment of pupils in schools. In the year 2003, enrolment increased by 18% (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2004). This increase was as a result of abolition of fees. Also, there was a decrease in the number of dropouts and improved access to education. Gross enrolment rate also increased with a very small variation of the ratio of boys to girls. In 2007, the government introduced free secondary education. This would help cater for the large population of pupils completing primary school education (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2004).

The Human Development Index has improved in recent years. This shows improved standard of living, economic growth, education and health  
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facilities. Though there is an improvement on HDI, majority of Kenyans still live in poverty. Security in some areas is very poor characterized by banditry, livestock theft, rape and destruction of poverty. Malaria and HIV/AIDS is still a threat to the economic growth of the country (Calverton, 2004).

In Kenya, all provinces and districts are equipped with state hospitals where medical services are provided at affordable cost. The ministry of health together with these hospitals and dispensaries form the basis of health care system. The ministry of health provides the major health care and operates more than half of the health facilities in the country. Health resources are scarce and are still a burden to the country. Access to these medical services is difficult in some areas due to geographical locations of some of these facilities. The major sources of these resources come from households attending these facilities, the government and donors (National Economic and Social Council of Kenya, 2007).

The total revenue for the government has been increasing over time. In the years 2003 - 2004, the revenue target was above the expected and rose to Kes 13, 122 million. The economic growth rose from 1. 1% in 2002 to 3. 7% in 2005. This has been brought about by good governance and management as well as environment favorable for investment. The government aims at keeping inflation levels at a low rate by increasing export growth. The actual expenditure of the government rose from 24. 5% of GDP in 2001 - 2002 to 27. 2% of GDP in 2004 - 2005. In the year 2011, the Gross Domestic Product per capita in Kenya was estimated to be 476. 88 US dollars. There has been

an increase in GDP from 1960 as it has averaged 389.3 US dollars (CIA World Fact Book - Kenya. 2008).

### Progress to the Goal

There has been improvement on achieving universal education goal in many parts of the world. For instance, in the sub-Saharan region, some of the barriers to enrolment in education were removed. School fees that included compulsory uniforms and stationeries were removed. Some countries eliminated school fees, and this resulted to the increase in enrolment in several regions (Millennium Development Goals UNDP, 2008).

The first MDG-related activity was carried out in 2002 when the first workshop on MDGs was held. Its objective was to promote understanding in achieving these goals and their frequency in national reporting. Since then, a task force was established to implement MDGs campaign. The MDGs progress report formed a major reference for the work of MDGs campaign (National Economic and Social Council of Kenya, 2007).

Kenya has shown great efforts in meeting the UN millennium development goals. The Kenyan government has well elaborated development blue print, the vision 2030. This development blue print is based on three pillars, namely economic, political and socio-cultural. The main aim of this vision is to make Kenya a newly industrializing, middle-income country and provide high quality life to its citizens (Millennium Development Goals UNDP, 2008). The country had witnessed many changes when incorporating vision 2030 and achieving the millennium development goals.

In implementing universal primary education, the government of Kenya introduced free primary education in 2002. It was introduced by H. E President Mwai Kibaki after he took over the government from KANU. The national school enrollment has increased since the introduction of free primary education. It is estimated that the national enrolment rose from 93% from 2002 to 107. 7% in 2007. There is a great likelihood that Kenya will achieve full primary enrolment by the year 2015. In 2009, the gross enrolment increased to 110% from 107. 7% in 2007. The number of boys and girls who enrolled in school was almost the same in the year 2009. This shows achievement of this goal (Kenya %u2011 Data and Statistics, 2008).

Implementation of this goal has been met with several challenges. There is an increase of enrolment each year hence there is the need for additional resources. This also creates more need for the increased need of resources in secondary and tertiary education. Also, there has been a need for increasing the number of teachers and teaching facilities. The classrooms are congested, and this has increased pupil %u2011 teacher ratio. Despite these challenges, the country introduced free primary education in the year 2007. This was to meet the great number of pupils completing primary school education. This has given the children from poor economic backgrounds a chance to obtain education. The government and development partners must achieve this by providing resources needed to meet these needs.

Strategies to Meet the Goal

In order to achieve the goal of universal education, the government of Kenya has put forward several strategies. These strategies aim at combating challenges that the government has come across in implementing this goal. These strategies include providing additional support to boarding schools in arid and semi-arid areas. It has also provided funds for special education and offering primary curriculum in slum areas. The ministry of education and health of Kenya is also working in collaboration to provide health and nutrition to the students. This will ensure that there is long-term sustenance of free primary and secondary education (Calverton, 2004).

Another strategy that the government of Kenya has put to place programmes is that it has aimed at quality, equity and access to education. The government is working closely with the private sector to provide expansion of education, especially in secondary education. In order to cope with great enrolment rate in secondary school that has been attributed by free primary education, the government is increasing funding in secondary school.

The government has also increased facilities in public schools to cater for the large population. The government is working on improving teaching and learning environments, increasing the number of teachers in classes and providing enough furniture. It is also working to increase the number of schools in arid and semi-arid areas and urban slums. These strategies aim at providing better education that is sustainable.

Action

Other people can take action in this goal by participating in educational for all campaigns. The main aim of the goal is to mobilize millions of people to ensure that there is education for all children. Footballers, charity organizations and artists can take action in participating in this campaign.