

# Free primary education in kenya assignment

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According to the Kenyan government, education is “ A long term objective to provide basic quality education to enhance Kenyans ability to preserve and utilize the environment for productive and sustainable livelihoods, to develop quality of the human race; to realize the universal access to education and training for all including the disadvantaged and the vulnerable and as a necessary tool for development and protection of the democratic institutions of human rights” (Ministry Of Education Science and Technology, 2005 pp2).

The current Kenyan education system consists of Early Childhood Education, primary and secondary education. Early Childhood Education takes one year. At the end of the primary education, pupils sit for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) prepared by the Kenya National Examination Council. Performance in the KCPE determines who is admitted to secondary schools. At the end of secondary education, students sit for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. Primary school education in Kenya is a basic and is considered the root of all formal and informal learning in Kenya.

Free and compulsory primary education for Kenyan children was one of the key pre-election promises that led the NARC government led by President Mwai Kibaki, to ascend to power in December 2002. Since then, an estimated 1.5 million children, who were previously out-of school, have turned up to attend classes (Paul Kenya, 2008). The free Primary Education policy was first implemented in January 2003. The FPE policy focuses on attaining Education For all and in particular, Universal Primary Education.

Key concerns are access, retention, equity, quality and relevance and internal and external efficiencies within the education system (Ministry Of

Education Science and Technology, 2005a, pp3). Through the FPE policy, the NARC government scrutinized the current 8-4-4 systems, which had previously been coupled with retention and reduced enrolment before it came to power. The policys focus is on “ quality education and training as a human right in accordance to Kenya law and international conventions” (Ministry Of Education Science and Technology, 2005 pp3). VISION Quality education for development. Elimu bora Kwa Maendeleo) MISSION To provide, promote and co-ordinate lifelong education, training and research for KLenya’s sustainable development. POLICY OBJECTIVES 1. To achieve education for all (EFA) by 201 5 2. To achieve transition rate of 70% from primary to secondary from the current rate 4. To achieve 50% improvement levels of literacy by 201 5 5. To attain universal primary education (UPE). This is in line with the United Nation’s Millennium Development Goals 6. To reduce the number of primary school children drop outs. ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE POLICY .

Increase in number of children enrolled in primary schools. Primary education has witnessed phenomenal growth since the policy was established. The number of primary school pupils rose dramatically from 5. 9 million in 2002 to 7. 6 million in 2005 to 82. 78 in 2009, according to a World Bank report, published in 2010 2. Significant reduction in the repetition rate. The number of students repeating and dropping out has reduced significantly() this may be attributed to the fact that parents no longer have to think about paying school fees. CHALLENGES FACED BY THE POLICY 1.

Delays in Funds Disbursement Delays in distributing funds to support free primary school education is one of the challenges facing the policy

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implementation. This has frustrated many teachers, put pressure and on parents financial burdens. Teachers thus lack motivation to teach the increasing number of pupils as a result of the introduction of the policy. 2. Teacher Shortages A UNESCO survey on the evaluation of the Free Primary policy (UNESCO, 2005) indicates that the teacher: pupil ratio, in a significant number of schools was 1 which was far beyond the recommended maximum rate of 1: 40.

Such a high ratio has got challenges. For example, teachers find it impossible to pay attention to all learners, especially the slow ones. Also teachers were not able to give adequate assignments to the pupils, as they could not cope with the marking and teaching workload (UNESCO, 2005). 3. Teacher-Learning Facilities There is a challenge in the limited teacher-learning facilities, which forces pupils to share. Sharing of facilities such as textbooks, exercise books, pens e. t. c has affected pupil's accessibility to the books while at home and many have to do their homework arly in the morning the next day when in school.

There is also the issue of inadequate physical facilities where most schools did not have adequate classroom to accommodate the large number of pupils enrolled under the FPE programmes. 4. Managerial Skills Most school managers (the head teachers) are not well equipped in managerial skills. This is to say that their managerial skills are poor and these results to poor results by the schools they head as well as mismanagement of available funds. 5. Mobility from Public to Private and within Public Schools This may not be a major challenge ut it still is a challenge.

Teachers complain that pupils' frequent transfers from one school to another at any point of the term and in any class affect content delivery. This may be as a result of a preference for free and cheaper education, school availability and its proximity as well as the highest grade offered in a school. A lower motivation for school transfer. 6. Embezzlement of Funds and Corruption Embezzlement of funds is a core challenge. Some government officials are corrupt and hence there is mismanagement or misallocation of funds that are allocated to them, (UNESCO, 2005).

For instance, the sponsor's funds; this makes some children who are poor miss the opportune moments of schooling. In addition to that, senior officials in the Ministry of Education, in Kenya have been accused of protecting corrupt headmasters suspected of embezzling funds because they are also indirectly benefiting from incentives that are being paid by parents, disgruntled senior education officials have revealed, (UNESCO, 2005).

RECOMMENDATIONS 1 . Timely release of funds. Funds should be released as soon as they are available. This will ensure the teachers and students remain motivated to learn. Increase numbers of teachers employed and increase their wages. Increasing the number of teachers permanently employed in public primary schools will help to take care of the teacher-student ratio. Increasing their wages will also ensure that the teachers are motivated to do their work well. 3. Investing in Teacher-Learning Facilities. The government should invest in building more classrooms to reduce the current congestion in the classrooms. The government should also work hand in hand with sponsors and international investors to ensure the pupils have enough books, pens and other facilities needed by both teachers and pupils. . Training

of managers. Heads of schools should be trained on how to manage the funds given to them as well as efficiently running the schools. 5. Monitor ministry officials and those handling the funds. An organization or body that can monitor the ministry officials and those handling the funds such as the anti-corruption commission of Kenya to ensure that those handling the funds are not corrupt and those caught in corrupt practices face the law.

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