

Milestones on Social Protection and Education in Kenya since Independence

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Abstract

This paper is premised on the relationship between education and social protection policies in Kenya since independence, and thereby contributing to the growing political and academic discussion on how social investment and social protection are interrelated. It focuses on how government policy in two policy domains that is education and social protection affects social stratification and cohesion. The paper is based on principal methodological innovations, in which policy-makers influence social protection into two distinct dimensions: one is concerned with how much the state has and intervenes in the provision of education/social protection and how much it leaves to individual, family and market, and the second is concerned with the bias towards equality or stratification found in the state system itself. The paper critically examined and analyzed the existing literature and theories to describe the strides made on social protection through education. The discussion led to the conclusions on where we are at 50 years of independence as far as social protection is concerned? What need to be done for improvement on social protection? What the paper could not bring out? And how the missing information could be achieved?

Key Words: Social Protection, Education, Policy, Cohesion

Introduction

Kenya lies across the equator in eastern Africa, on the coast of the Indian Ocean. Kenya borders Somalia to the east, Ethiopia to the north, Tanzania to the south, Uganda to the west, and Sudan to the northwest. In the north, the land is arid; the southwest corner is in the fertile Lake Victoria Basin; and a length of the eastern depression of the Great Rift Valley separates western highlands from those that rise from the lowland coastal strip.

In the 700s, Arab seafarers established settlements along the coast, and the Portuguese took control of the area in the early 1500s. More than 40 ethnic groups reside in Kenya. The land became a British protectorate in 1890 and a Crown colony in 1920, called British East Africa. Nationalist stirrings began in the 1940s, and in 1952 the Mau Mau movement, rebelled against the government. The fighting lasted until 1956. On December, 12, 1963, Kenya achieved full independence.

Social protection is a set of interventions whose objective is to reduce social and economic risk and vulnerability, and to alleviate extreme poverty and deprivation. A comprehensive social protection system should include four broad sets of interventions: **protective, preventive, promotive and transformative** (UNICEF, 2008). Social protection as a concept is the process of cushioning the vulnerable in the society. It is the public actions taken in response to levels of vulnerability, risk and deprivation which are deemed socially unacceptable within a given polity or society' (UNRISD 2010).

Social protection refers to policies and actions which enhance the capacity of poor and vulnerable groups to escape from poverty, and better manage risks

and shocks. It encompasses the instruments that tackle chronic and shock-induced poverty and vulnerability (Sabates-Wheeler and Haddad, 2005).

Social protection thus deals with both the absolute deprivation and vulnerabilities of the poorest, and also with the need of the currently non-poor for security in the face of shocks and life-cycle events. The 'public' character of this response may be governmental or non-governmental, or may, involve a combination of institutions from both sectors (World Bank, 2001).

Education refers to the provision of reliable and adequate information. It deals with knowledge acquisition and dissemination. Apart from knowledge, education has to do with acquisition of skills and values necessary for human survival.

Milestone brings the ideal of success, breakthrough, progress, landmark, advance, etc. It seeks to establish what steps have been made. It's being speculative that something has happened.

The idea of "social protection education" refers to the process by which, people are enlightened on issues related to social protection. When people are enlightened its anticipated there some progress. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) identifies universal social protection and equity as the central goal of social policy (UNRISD, 2006; Wiman, Voipio & Ylonen, 2007).

At independence, as far as social protection matters are concerned, Kenya was almost at zero, that is, the starting point. Three things which adversely affect social protection were rampant; these were ignorance, poor health and poverty. The first education commission at independence, sought to fight the three enemies of social protection, through the

development of the first six educational goals. The national goals focused on national unity, national development, individual development, cultural preservation, individual development, cultural transformation and international consciousness (Republic of Kenya, 1964). Since independent there has been more educational commissions and committees which tried to shape education in the country, so as to be responsive to the needs of her citizens. Even the education goals have been added up to eight.

The country has progressively been using education to protect the people of Kenya from vulnerability. The curriculum has been the tool of implementation. Courses like Gender studies and HIV and AIDS have been mainstreamed in education so as to empower the citizens against the pandemic and Gender violations.

Kenya is a signatory of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which are recognized as having significantly shaped the global policy debate and resource allocations for development cooperation, through raising the profile of key aspects of development. At national level, they have generated new data and helped build greater commitment to tackling core development challenges. A defining feature of the goals has been that they provide clear, concrete and measurable objectives, with a range of targets and indicators for areas like health, education and poverty reduction. However, others have argued that the lack of attention to governance in the MDG framework has translated into a lack of focus on issues of inequality and poverty, undermining some of the spirit

of the initial MDG discussions (Watkins 2013; Darrow 2012).

The Statement of the Problem

Although much activities related to social protection have been subscribed to; its worrying that 50 years after independence Kenya is still struggling with the issues that undermine social protection. For instance, Kenya's government introduced free primary education in 2002 and free tuition secondary education in 2008. However, in 2009 the Ministry of Education released a report which indicated that only 21% of visually impaired children are attending schools (Republic of Kenya, 2009). Children with visual impairments remain excluded due to a number of challenges, including the high cost of sending a child with visual impairments to school; stigma by their parents and society; perceived challenges traveling to and from school; and lack of assistive devices to allow them to participate fully in their classes. Uwezo Kenya (2012), revealed that, **eleven** out of 100 children in class 8 cannot do simple class 2 division. Seven out of 100 can neither read a simple English nor a Kiswahili story. Then this leads to the question, "what are the milestones made in social protection through education in Kenya since independence?"

The Purpose

The purpose of this paper was to describe the milestones made on social protection through education so as to establish what may be done to enhance social protection. To achieve this purpose the following objectives were formulated:

- i) To identify education and social protection policies in Kenya.
- ii) Find out what measures the government has taken to ensure social protection through education in Kenya.
- iii) To determine the public involvement to ensure social protection through education in Kenya.
- iv) To establish what strides have been made in social protection through education in Kenya.

- v) To ascertain drawbacks to social protection through education in Kenya.

Methodology

The paper is a review of related literature on social protection in Kenya. The review focused mainly on government policies, previous studies, and other credible source. Documents and record were analyzed based on the major themes of the paper. The information gotten was assessed critically in relation to the focus of the paper.

Literature Review and theoretical analysis

Education and Social Protection Policies in Kenya

Kenya's commitment to poverty reduction has been articulated in various policy documents, development plans, and budgetary allocations, including Kenya Vision 2030 (Republic of Kenya 2007). The Government of Kenya developed three-year Strategy to guide the implementation of interventions aimed at addressing the needs of the poor and vulnerable in the country (Republic of Kenya, 2009). This was a positive effort toward ensuring social protection. The Constitution of Kenya (2010) contains a comprehensive Bill of Rights. Article 43 guarantees all Kenyans their economic, social, and cultural (ESC) rights. It asserts the "right for every person...to social security and binds the State to provide appropriate social security to persons who are unable to support themselves and their dependants."

In 2011, the policy on social protection was introduced. The Policy aimed to ensure that all people have the requisite financial cushion to enable them to maintain a decent living standard including access to healthcare during and after their active productive ages, income security provided

through household and child benefits that facilitate access to nutrition, education, and healthcare, income security through social assistance for older persons, people with disabilities, and those in active age groups who are unable to earn sufficient incomes in the labour market (Republic of Kenya, 2011).

Measures the Government has taken to Ensure Social Protection through Education in Kenya

The prior to introduction of the social protect policy, the government of Kenya employed various social protection initiatives such as education bursaries, school feeding programmes, fee waivers in public health facilities, Orphans and Vulnerable Children's (OVC) programme, older persons cash transfer and youth enterprise fund, among others. Without the policy on social protection, there were duplications, wastage and conflicts. Though we are at implementation stage, it's as though we are at piloting stage, this evidenced through, out cries of various groups that they have not benefited from the safety measures put in place. For instance, the old persons' cash transfer had raised a heated debate on the existent of the funds across regions.

The Public Involvement to Ensure Social Protection through Education in Kenya

Social protection interventions are provided by many different stakeholders including Government ministries and agencies, the private sector, communities, households, and other non-state actors. Before the introduction of the social protection policy, the different actors operated in isolation from each other, which diminished their potential impact. It's not clear the extent to which the policy has streamlined provision of social protection interventions, hence avoiding waste, duplication and conflicts.

Strides Made in Social Protection through Education in Kenya

Through Kenya Social Protection Sector Review (Republic of Kenya, 2012), it was

found that, In those cases where programmes have been robustly monitored and evaluated, this has yielded substantial evidence that they have increased household consumption and school enrolment and improved health outcomes. This implies that the opposite is true, that is, where there has been poor monitoring the results are undesirable. Such cases could be the majority, especially where provision of social protection interventions is a bit informal, or where there is lack of monitoring and evaluation skills.

Drawbacks to Social Protection through Education in Kenya

Dependency on donor funding of most of social protection intervention, eg. Free primary education. Limited funding, especially to ensure the interventions are keenly monitored and evaluated.

Conclusions

Kenya has clearly made strides to ensure, at policy level, a coherent framework for social protection in. Moreover, efforts to document learning from the sector, such as the recent Social Protection Review, clearly demonstrate the will and capacity to develop interventions based on evidence. However, the evidence presented in this paper suggests that attention has been given to social protection interventions, though we are yet far from winning the battle against poverty, ignorance and health

Recommendations

- a. More funds should be allocated to social protection interventions.
- b. Train more personnel to monitor and evaluate social protection programmes and practices.

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