

Community financing of education: issues from Kenya

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Abstract

Given the squeeze on national budgets and the need for priorities over investment choices in education, many governments have turned to communities in the search for alternative sources of revenue. In Kenya, there is a long and rich history of community involvement in the financing of education at all levels, rooted within the phenomenon of the dynamic self-help movement *harambee*, which underpins much of Kenya's grass roots development activity. Within education, the conscious partnership between communities and government has been most manifest within the unaided *harambee* secondary school sector, although a more recent policy shift has witnessed the transfer to communities of all capital expenditures associated with a structural and curriculum reform, particularly at primary level. Despite opening up access to education to a high percentage of the school age population, there remain, however, fundamental questions associated both with the quality and equity of systems dependent upon community financing.