

Universal Primary Education in Kenya: Advancement and Challenges.

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Abstract

Universalisation of primary education (UPE) has been a global issue since the early sixties, yet several decades later and even in the 21st century, many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are still grappling with it. Unlike their counterparts in the developed world, its realisation in developing countries has been faced with a myriad of constraints. Kenya has a long standing commitment to providing educational access to its primary school going children. This has been reflected in the country's Economic Plans, Sessional papers and other development plans. Most importantly, Kenya acknowledges provision of basic education for its citizens as a human right, as is enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya (2010). Furthermore, Kenyan citizens have a right to free and compulsory education as is stipulated in the Basic Education Bill of 2012. Moreover, Vision2030 has acknowledged education as a component of the social pillars. Although the first step towards this was articulated by the Kenyan government immediately after independence in 1963 and later in 2003, little has been done to establish the extent to which Universal Primary Education has been advanced in Kenya. Therefore, there is need to do stock taking of the advancements made towards this goal. Furthermore, examining of the obstacles that have persistently hindered its success over the years is critical for realisation of universal education. This paper will therefore address the extent to which universalisation of primary education has contributed to advancement of access to basic education and the obstacles that have hindered its success.

Key words: Universal Primary Education, advancement, access, enrolments, completion and wastages

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