

African Journal of Education and Practice (AJEP)

WAYS CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF) PROMOTES STUDENTS' ACCESS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN GITHUNGURI SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

Muthoni Rukwaro, Prof. Jothem Olembo and Dr. Norbert Ogeta

WAYS CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF) PROMOTES STUDENTS' ACCESS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN GITHUNGURI SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

^{1*}Muthoni Rukwaro

¹PhD Student: Kenyatta University, Department of Economics and Planning of Education

*Corresponding Author's Email: rukwarotm2017@gmail.com

²Prof. Jothem Olembo, ³Dr. Norbert Ogeta

Lecturers: Kenyatta University, Department of Educational Management, Policy and Curriculum Studies

Abstract

Purpose: Kenya started offering secondary school education as part of her basic education in 2008 through subsidization of tuition fee. Nevertheless, this was not adequate due to the fact that secondary education was more costly and this has made many students especially from humble background fail to access and complete secondary education. All students must have access to and complete a full course of schooling to eliminate social and economic barriers, and gender disparity. The study was carried out to establish the influence of CDF on access to secondary school in Githunguri Sub-County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were: to find out the extent to which projects were funded through CDF, to assess the benefits of CDF projects in the school, and to evaluate the number of students per class.

Methodology: This study was conducted using descriptive survey. The study was carried out on a population of 20 public secondary schools which were randomly sampled from a total of 33 schools. Purposive sampling was used to sample 40 class teachers and 20 principals, while simple random sampling was used to select 320 students in forms three and four. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect data. The research tools were piloted in a neighbouring school using test-retest method. Quantitative data were organized with the aid of SPSS and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. Data was presented in graphs and tables. Qualitative data were arranged thematically and discussed based on the study objectives.

Findings: The study found out that even though CDF has improved the status of schools through the building of classes, laboratories and dormitories, access to secondary schools in the Sub-County is low with transition rate at 56.9% in 2014 which is below the target of the Ministry of Education of 70% by 2015.

Recommendations: The study recommended that Constituency Development Funds should be used to establish more day schools than boarding schools because they are more accessible to the poor than boarding schools.

Keywords: *Githunguri Sub-County, Constituency Development Funds (CDF), access, expansion of schools*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

There has been an outstanding increase in enrolment in all levels of education in the world, and in Kenya since independence, which is ascribed to the increase in social and private demand for education by the rapid population growth (Republic of Kenya, 2007). Education is viewed as a human right and a necessary condition of full exercise of other rights. It is one of the basic rights of every person and has been recognized as a universal declaration of human rights and universal covenant of economic, social and cultural right. Educational access is the ability to provide all students with appropriate educational institutions, materials and personnel. All students must have access to and complete a full course of schooling and eliminate social and economic barriers and gender disparity (UNICEF, 2009). This creates the need to expand schools, establish new schools and provide bursaries to increase enrolments and improve transition, retention and completion rates.

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Bill was established through an Act of Parliament, CDF Act, in 2003. The aim of the CDF is to devolve national resources at the community level with the aim of spurring economic development at the grassroots level, which would then translate to overall national economic growth and poverty reduction (CDF Board, 2012). Ultimately, the CDF, as was envisaged, would lead to poverty reduction, improved well-being of Kenyans and political empowerment of Kenyan communities. The fund intended to complement other existing funds being directed at community level. These include, Bursary Funds, HIV/AIDS Funds, Fuel Levy Funds and Roads Maintenance (World Bank, 2008).

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) provides finance for expansion of schools through construction and improvement of classrooms and laboratories, establishment of new schools and bursaries to students (Simatwa & Ayodo, 2011). The constituency fund is the independent variable while access to education is the dependent variable affected by the constituency fund through financing of classrooms, laboratories, new schools, and bursaries. This would improve access by increased enrolments through new schools, improved quality of teaching and learning through classrooms and laboratories. The retention and completion rates would improve due to reduction of economic barriers and gender disparity through bursaries.

The expansion of schools involves the renovation of existing schools, construction of libraries, laboratories, classrooms and other infrastructure to improve access by admitting more students. It also involves the provision of grants to improve school programmes. In Uganda the government aided community schools by giving capitation and development grants to improve school programmes and infrastructure. This improved access by expanding post primary enrolments by

40%, reduced student book ratio from 37:1 to 3:1 and increased girls enrolments to equal boys between 1993 and 2003 (UNICEF, 2012). The government's commitment to provide education for all, has come across a big constraint of finance rendering the available educational resources inadequate, and secondary education has therefore not been accessible to many Kenyans. One of the goals of Education For All (EFA) as agreed in the Dakar forum of 2000 is to ensure by 2015 all children have access to and complete free and compulsory basic education (UNESCO, 2008; World Bank, 2008).

Annual Reports by Republic of Kenya shows that the government expenditure on education has been higher than any other ministry (RoK, 2007-2014). The government's expenditure on education has increased by 80% from K.Shs. 109.8 billion in 2007 to K.Shs.196.2 billion in 2014. This was accompanied by an increase of secondary schools from 4215 in 2007 to 6215 in 2014. This expansion resulted to an increase in enrolment from 1.03 million students in 2007 to 1.67 billion students in 2014 (RoK, 2014). Despite this increase, there are poor enrolment and high school dropout rates in secondary schools in Githunguri Sub-County. This is evident from the data collected by Githunguri Sub-County Development Plan Statistics Survey (2012) that gives the extent to which repetition is a problem at this level of education (GOK, 2012). The 2009 national population census indicated that more than 1.5 million youths aged 14 to 18 years who should have been enrolled in secondary schools were not (RoK, 2014). Considering that the population has been growing, it is then clear that secondary education has not been accessible to many Kenyans in the area under study.

In Githunguri Sub-County, the increasing costs of living have made many students from poor families fail to access to, and thus drop out of their secondary education. Even with the subsidized secondary school education in Kenya from 2008, the operational costs of secondary schools have remained high. Where a family has more than one child of secondary school age, their education dreams are shattered due to inability to pay school fees. This has resulted to education being more developed in the urban areas than rural areas, and more accessible to children from rich families than those from poor families (Simatwa & Ayodo, 2011). With the introduction of constituency development funds (CDF) as a means of financing socio-economic developments at the constituency level in 2003, education has been one of the major sectors financed by the fund. The public is concerned with the way the fund is being disbursed, prioritized, allocated, and utilized across their constituencies. This study sought to find out what CDF had done towards students' access to secondary school education in Githunguri Sub-County.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As outlined in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Kenyan vision 2030, education is a key determinant to bright economy and an escape from poverty. But access to secondary education has been a major challenge to many countries and people (World Bank, 2012). In Kenya, access in secondary education has been low since colonial times. The educational objective of secondary education in Kenya is to improve access, quality and reduce disparities based on gender and marginal areas. Despite the rationale for introduction of CDF, there are

concerns on its contribution to students’ access to secondary schools in areas where households and communities are unable to provide adequate funds to construct physical facilities.

In Githunguri Sub-County, access in secondary schools is also a problem to many students, especially those from poor families who cannot afford to pay school fees. It is more widespread in less productive areas because schools are away from one another. In addition, the poverty index of the Sub-County is 42% and characterized by a huge wealth gap between the poor and the rich people (RoK, 2007). With secondary education becoming part of basic education and its importance to students wishing to train for careers thereafter, any form of financing education in Kenya should give priority to secondary schools level than other levels of education. The CDF Board spent Ksh 5.2 million in 2008, 4.6 million in 2009 and 3.6 million in 2010 in rehabilitation and construction of classrooms and 1.3 million in the construction of laboratories (CDF Board, 2012). Nonetheless, there are shortcomings experienced in utilization of funds from CDF in Githunguri Sub-County. which is due to lack of involvement of stakeholders and community members during decision making and monitoring of the CDF projects, inadequate skills and knowledge on project management by head teachers and BoM members.

1.3 Conceptual Framework

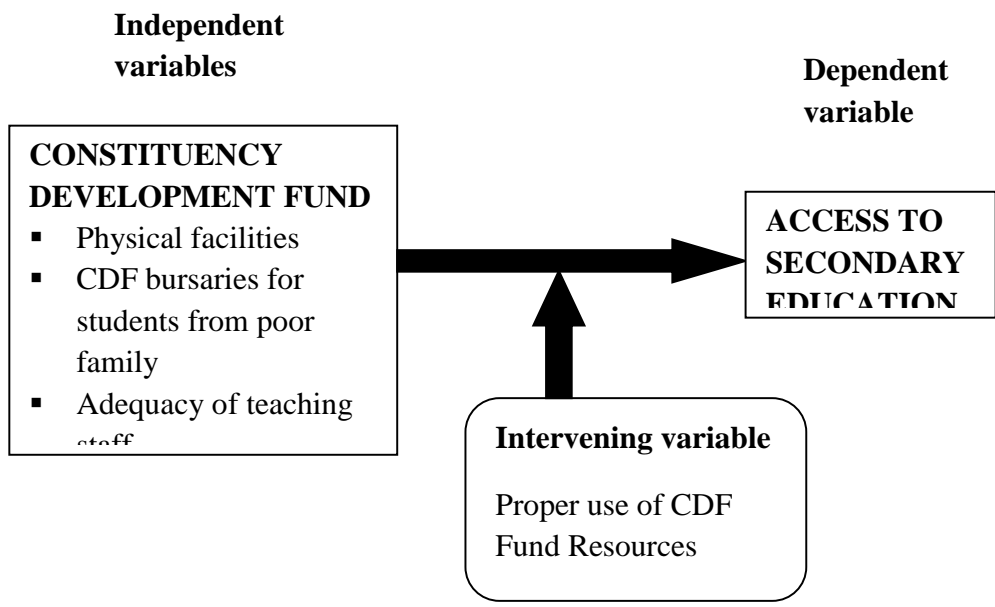


Figure 1 Contribution of CDF to Access to Secondary Education in Githunguri Sub-County

Source: Researcher, 2015

There is a close relationship between financing of education and access in secondary school (RoK, 2003). Finances expand learning opportunities, enabling students to access and complete

their education. Secondary school education in Kenya is financed through cost sharing between the government, donors and parents. In the Sub-County, CDF has been used to finance secondary education, in order to meet the educational objectives in the region. It is used to finance physical facilities like classrooms, laboratories and libraries, buy tuition materials like textbooks, stationary and laboratory equipment, and employ teaching and non-teaching staff in highly understaffed schools. It is also used to assist bright students from poor families with CDF bursaries.

2.0 SELECTED REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The expansion of schools involves the provision of infrastructure and facilities to accommodate a higher student population and to offer a wider curriculum. The infrastructure includes classrooms, laboratories, offices, dormitories, play grounds etc. According to Mccaig, Cowie and Mackin (2009), classrooms improve learning achievements and reading comprehension. The classrooms should be well ventilated with good lighting with reduced distractions to provide conducive learning environment. This allows learners to concentrate to learning without unnecessary distraction. This is collaborated by the European Union which found that construction of classrooms and their furnishing promotes active participation in learning (European Union, 2012). In Bangladesh class sizes are limited to thirty three students by the Bangladesh rural advancement committee on access to education to ensure quality learning. This enables teachers to control the students and maintain class attention with small classes (UNESCO, 2005).

The availability of laboratories affects the students' performance in examination. A national focus group on teaching of science in India (2005) found that the main reason for poor performance by a large number of students and their limited understanding of concepts in mathematics and science was marginalization of experiments in the school science curriculum. The focus group suggested that investments were needed to improve laboratories and workshops to promote experimental culture. At least a science laboratory with the necessary equipment needed to be set up in each secondary school and at least three laboratories for science subjects in higher secondary schools (UNESCO, 2002).

Small schools are wasteful and uneconomical since they lack special facilities and teachers. Large schools, on the other hand, are well organized and have something for everyone through their diversified resources and facilities. The small schools however give students a chance to participate in leadership since the students are few and have a better chance of academic recognition (World Bank, 2008). This raises questions as to the economic benefits of starting new schools that remain small in the early years instead of expanding the already existing.

According to Davies (2008) who studied schools in UK, large schools result in counter-productive and administrative pre-occupation with control and order. Anonymity also tends to work against students sharing of ideas, learning and working together. The sense of community ownership is however easily obtained in small schools located in small towns and villages in America since they generate a lot of commitment, morale and interpersonal bonding among the students, teachers and parents since they are few. A school should therefore not be more than 250

students. This study therefore sought to examine the effects of expansion of schools on students' access to education in Githunguri Sub-County.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study covers randomly selected secondary schools in Githunguri Sub-County in Kiambu County, Kenya. The subjects for the study included school principals, some teaching and nonteaching staff members as well as some school prefects. Both primary and secondary data were collected for the study. The primary data were generated from questionnaires, interviews and observations, while secondary data were obtained from official documentations. The use of questionnaires was particularly relevant because of the positions of neutrality and anonymity which public officials are expected to assume in the course of discharging their official assignments. Using random sampling technique, 20 schools were selected from the 33 public secondary schools in Githunguri Sub-County. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to sample the respondents for this study. The choice of the principal was informed by this sampling technique. On the other hand, teachers 2 class teachers were purposively selected from each school, with an interval of every third occurring person. Using random sampling, 8 students in form four and 8 students in form three from each school were selected. A sample size of 380 respondents (20 principals, 40 teachers and 320 students) participated in the study. Interview schedule and questionnaire were used, where respective questionnaires were administered to teachers and students. Twenty principals were interviewed. The collected data was entered into a computer and organized with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were analyzed descriptively and presented using graphs and frequency tables. This was convenient in giving a general overview of the problem under study. They also made it easy to draw conclusions and make recommendations for the study.

4.0 RESULTS

This section presents the major findings and discussions of data generated from primary and secondary sources. This is the proportion of questionnaires that are returned to the researcher from the sample that participated in the study. All the respondents returned their questionnaires making a return rate of 100%.

4.1 Transition rate of pupils from primary to secondary schools in Githunguri Sub-County

Access of students in secondary education in Githunguri Sub-County is still low. In 2014, there were a total of 18, 997 students in 20 secondary schools in the Sub-County, with a transition below the target of the Ministry of Education of 70% by 2015. It is also characterized with a lot of disparities between regions and sexes. Transition of pupils from primary to secondary schools in the Sub-County was obtained from secondary data and summarized in table 1

Table 1 Transitions from Primary 8 to Form 1, Githunguri Sub-County, 2009-2014

Year	Number of Total enrolment in Transition the Sub-County		
	Primary 8	Form 1	Transition rate (%)
2009	4325	2505	57.9
2010	4687	2505	53.4
2011	4691	2730	58.2
2012	4865	3204	65.9
2013	4754	3324	69.9
2014	5984	3569	59.6

Source: Republic of Kenya (2007-2014)

4.2 The extent to which projects in secondary schools are funded through CDF

The second objective was to establish the effect of the expansion of schools on students' access to secondary education. The Principals and teachers were asked to indicate the projects in their schools that are funded by the CDF. The aim was to establish whether the CDF had contributed to the expansion of schools. The results were presented in figure 2

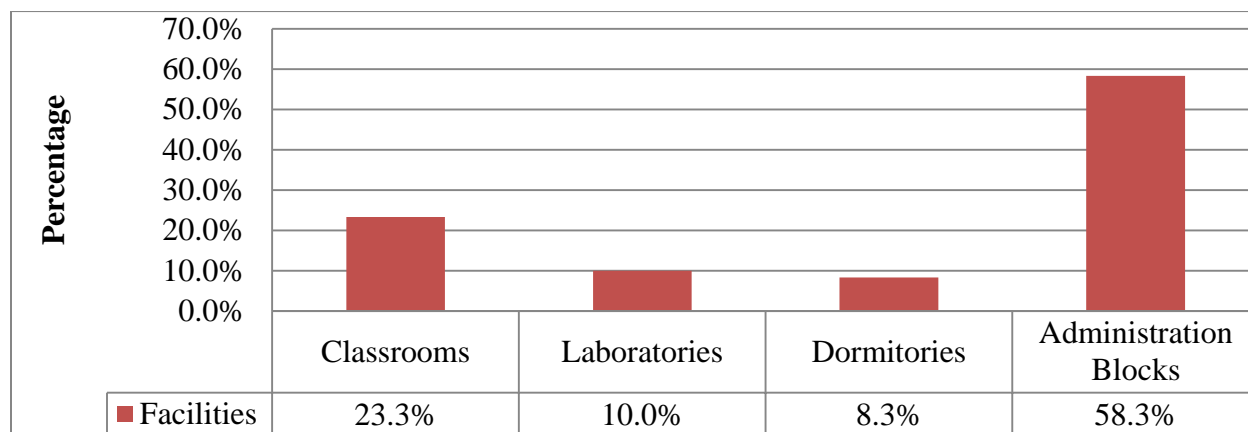


Figure 2 Projects Funded by CDF in Secondary Schools

The information in figure 2 shows that 58.3% of the schools had administration blocks, 23.3% classrooms, 10.0% laboratories while 8.3% dormitories. The finding is that the CDF influenced access through the construction of administration blocks, classes and laboratories. Construction of classes provides enough space in the class for quality teacher student interaction as argued by

Simatwa and Ayodo (2011) that classrooms should have enough space for quality and quantity teacher student interaction.

The total percentage indicates that some schools had more than one project funded by the CDF as reported by the principals. However, the largest proportion of funds was used to construct administration rather than classrooms. This implies that classes in majority of schools were congested and crowded leading to lack of establishment of child friendly schools. Child friendly schools as advocated by the Ministry of Education should have adequate classrooms for interactive learner centred methods (Ministry of Education, 2003)

4.3 Benefits of CDF Projects in Secondary Schools in Githunguri Sub-County

The Principals and teachers were also asked to state how the projects had benefited the school. The results are as in table 2.

Table 2 Benefits of CDF Projects in Schools

Response	% of Principals	% of teachers
Expansion to more streams	14	16
Enrolment of more students	34	38
Reduced class congestion	42	46
Reduced distance to school	10	8
Total	100	100

The result from the table above implies that reduced congestion in classes was the greatest influence from the CDF according to 42% of principals and 46% of teachers. Enrolment of more students also took place according to 34% of principals and 38% of teachers. The finding agrees with the World Bank assertion that since 2005 third world countries had increased enrolments at the secondary level by providing finance to improve infrastructure, construct new schools and support students (World Bank, 2008).

4.4 The number of students per class in public secondary schools in Githunguri Sub-County

The principals were asked to give the enrolments and number of classrooms per class. The students were asked to give the total number of students in their classes. The average class sizes are as in figure 3.

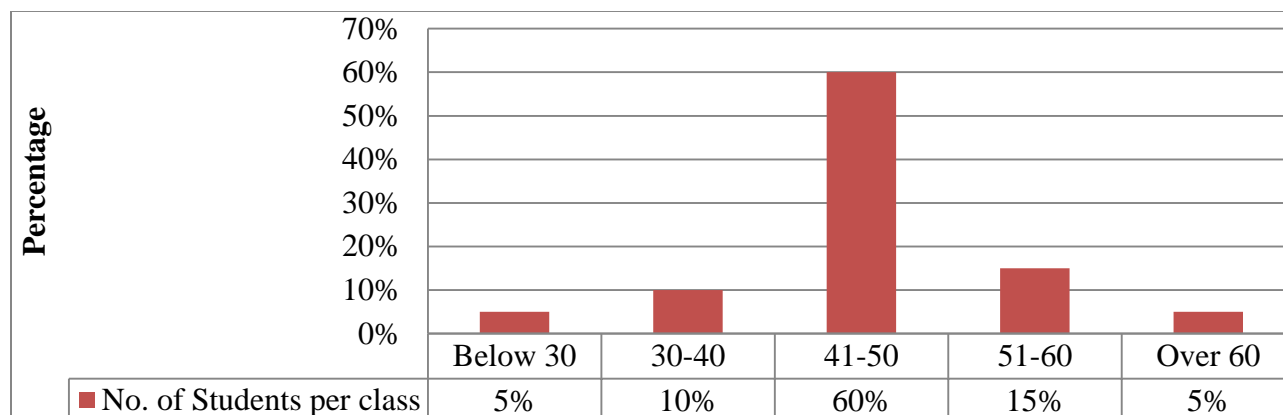


Figure 3 Average Numbers of Students per Class

The most common class size is 41-50 students constituting 63.2% of classes. Such classes are overcrowded as observed by the European Union (2008) that class sizes should be limited to 35 students to ensure quality learning. According to European Union (2008), CDF must either establish more schools or expand the existing ones to bring the class size to the government recommendation of 40 – 45 students.

The students were asked if any classes in their schools were not being used. As well, 98% said no while only 2% said yes. A visit to the schools established that four of the schools that started after 2003 did not have science laboratories and were still using classrooms borrowed from the mother primary schools. Probably, resources from the CDF funds were not carefully mobilized and allocated.

5.0 CONCLUSION

From the study it can be concluded that the CDF has improved the status of schools through the building of classes, laboratories and dormitories. However, access to secondary schools in the Sub-County is low with transition rate at 56.9% in 2014 which is below the target of the Ministry of Education of 70% by 2015. The fund has also failed to improve the high student-teacher ratio. Congestion in classes remains high with classes having over 50 students. The fund therefore has not created enough school places in Githunguri Sub-County. This is because a majority of teachers reported that students still drop out due to lack of fees and the long distance they have to walk to school.

5.1 Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings the researcher recommends the following:

1. Students should be allocated a bursary that can enable them remain in school and complete their education.
2. The procedure and legal guidelines on the awarding of bursaries should be reviewed to allow students from day schools to access bursaries that will help them pay other additional fees for

school activities and development. If not assisted through bursary allocation such students are likely to dropout.

3. More CDF should be allocated to secondary education than other levels of education.
4. Constituency Development Funds should be used to establish more day schools than boarding schools because they are more accessible to the poor than boarding schools.
5. Public awareness on CDF use and administration should be intensified.

REFERENCES

- Constituency Development Fund Board (2012). *Economic, growth and development Planning*. National report 2012.
- Davies P. (2008). *Knowing Where to Study? Fees, Bursaries and Fair Access*. Institute for Educational Policy Research and Institute for Access Studies, Staffordshire University, UK.
- European Union (2012). *European Union Intervention in Education*; received from, euro.eu.
- GOK (2012). *Sub-County Development Plan, Githunguri Sub-County 2004-201*. Ministry of Planning and National Development, Nairobi
- Mccaig C., Cowie, AP & Mackin, R (2009). *Access agreements, bursaries and fair in access to higher education*. Retrieved from: <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/2386>.
- Ministry of Education (2003). *National Action Plan on Education for All, 2003 – 2015*.
- Republic of Kenya (2003). *Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation*. Nairobi: Government Printer.
- Republic of Kenya (2014). *Economic Survey 2007*. Nairobi: Government Printer.
- Republic of Kenya (2007-2014). *Githunguri Sub-County Development Plan 2007-2014*. Nairobi: Government Printer.

- Simatwa M.W and Ayodo T. M (2011). *Effects of School Based Investments on Access and Financing of Secondary Education in Homa Bay Sub-County of Kenya*. Unpublished.
- UNESCO (2002). *A Scheme for Universalization of access to and improvement of quality at the end of Secondary and higher Stage*. UNESCO, New Delhi India.
- UNESCO (2005). *Children in abject poverty in Uganda and Bangladesh: a study of criteria and status of those in and out of school in selected Sub-Counties*. UNESCO; Uganda.
- UNESCO (2008). *Kenya scraps tuition fees in secondary schools*. UNESCO, Nairobi.
- UNICEF, (2012). *The State of the World's Children 2012*, UNICEF, New York.
- UNICEF. (2009). *Basic Education and Gender Equality*. Retrieved August 5, 2010, from UNICEF
- World Bank (2008): *Transition in Secondary Education in Sub- Saharan Africa; Equity and Efficiency Issues*. World Bank, Washington.
- World Bank (2012). *Millennium Development Goals*. World Bank Group. World Bank, Washington.
- Republic of Kenya (2007). *Economic Survey 2007*. Nairobi: Government Printer.