

PIE EDUSOLS – OUT OF SCHOOL FREE LEARNING IN WESTERN PROVINCE OF KENYA

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of being out of schools is quite a critical issue that creates not only problems of the uneducated future generation but also contributes to the proliferation of antisocial elements in the country for example, high unemployment levels, increased dependency ratios, increased criminals related activities, lack of technological advancement and economic growth

Education is therefore the only best strategic intervention through which these antisocial elements in a country can be eliminated. People acquire knowledge skills and attitudes about various things in life from various resources. Of these resources, formal education through schooling education, adult education, non formal education and Open distance learning (ODL).

Open and Education resources and Open learning centers will offer good intervention to potential learners. Open learning is predicted on the belief that openness in many forms is a key element to reaching out to many possibly removing some barriers presented by more traditional forms of education.

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ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Free Primary Education in Kenya starts in Standard One. Yet Nursery education is very vital. Some parents don't afford to pay nursery levies due to extreme poverty then their children drop out of school or don't join E.C.D at all. Class one merit is based on E.C.D qualifications. In case of HIV / AIDS, ailing parents or those who have lost their parents as a result of AIDS, drop out of school to do jobs (child labor) to sustain themselves, their ailing parents then their siblings.

Age 3 – 16 whose mothers have no formal education; drop out of school due to numeracy and literacy increase than their peers whose mothers have completed primary education. (Uwezo net Kenya [www. twaweza. Org](http://www.twaweza.org) 2010).

Parental negligence is a contributing factor to most school drop outs in Western part of Kenya. Yet children should be protected from all forms of abuse and negligence.

According to these family backgrounds, children may grow up without parental love, care and security. Although these children deserve the right to obtain basic needs. There is no one to guide or motivate these children towards education or their survival and development. Some of them belong to single parent families.

The scattered and excluded communities in certain regions lack awareness, moreover schools are so far and communications is a big barrier. Some of them totally don't go to school.

A report by local news in Kenya on 1st July 2010, states that pupils at the lake region drop out of school due to peer pressure and poverty stricken background to do fishing in Lake Victoria others in the wider province areas get fish in big rivers such as Yala and Nzoia. They even risk their lives by using traditional methods of fishing. After their minimal or sometime no harvest goes to sell to people within their environment. In other areas some of the youth do difficult jobs such as ploughing farms. Some school drop outs get employed as herds' boys (child labor).The little money they earn is like peanuts, thus very little for their upkeep.

A number of special needs cases aged 3- 16 years are neglected and not taken to school though they are few special need schools in the province that can accommodate them. Their parents fail to understand that disability is not inability. A lot of sensitization has to

be done so that special needs cases to be taken to school for they have a right to education. The youth face varied such as peer pressure, early marriages, early sexual onset, drug and abuse, teenage pregnancies, gender bias and HIV and AIDS pandemic.

THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT CARRIED OUT BY PIE EDUSOLS REVEALED THAT:-

- 10% are orphaned as a result of Aids
- 35% are from poor backgrounds
- 2% are from the parents are in prison
- 2% are abandoned and neglected

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF KAKAMEGA RESEARCH PROJECT TOWARDS OPEN FREE LEARNING

Kakamega youth group (K.C.Y.G) has begun a research project to promoting learning through wide band optical an setting up of a village I.C.T centre. The project aims to generate comparative understanding and capacity building in the ways in which citizens most importantly the youth to participate willingly to access learning using the formal school primary school curriculum. As a force contributing to social and economic development, open and distant leaning is fast becoming an accepted and indispensable part of the main stream of education system.

This growth has been stimulated in part by interest among educators and trainers in the use of the new internet based and multimedia technologies and also by the recognition that traditional ways of organizing education need to be reinforced by innovative methods. If the fundamental rights of all the people planning is to be realized.

ODL offers free education to the youth out of school. They learn at their own pace and by removing barriers to learning such as having to wear school uniforms and age limitations.

Volunteer teachers' facilitating learning get access to ODL, resources at Wiki educator pie Edusols. <http://www.organisation>.

BARRIERS

1. Technical i.e. lack of broad band access

2. Economic i.e. inadequate resources to invest in the necessary software and hardware.

Case study 1

OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSESMENT

- I. Getting the history and background of the children who live in the rural urban slums and other areas.
- II. To identify children whose rights has been violated in their home environments

Case Study

Shaniki aged 10 lost both parents as a result of AIDS. She was in class 3 by then. She was left under the care of her grandmother who was widowed several years ago. Her joy and happiness deteriorated. She lived a gloomy and quite life. Suddenly she stopped playing with her peers during games time and other leisure times. They often did without meals since her grand mother could hardly afford a meal and did not have any income. She produced very little on her farm to sustain themselves. Sometimes they relied on aids from well wishers.

She eventually dropped out of school and got employed as an ayah. She later joined the open school. After a series of counseling sessions to her and her grandmother to join the open by Pie Edusols. She does well in both class and co-curriculum activities. The family receive their basic needs from well wishers who donate on monthly basis.

Case Study 2

Pamba is a pleasant boy aged eleven years. He is from the urban slums. He lost parents during election chaos. In Kenya 2008 he had no option other than to flee the streets of Kakamega town. He was in class three at a time he lost his parents.

While on the streets, he joined other street boys who introduced him into activities such as taking drugs, theft and so on. When Pie Edusols did survey, they came across him. After series of counseling and guidance sessions with him, he agreed to join the open school. An uncle of this was identified and after he was talked to, acceptance to , take up the boy on his home.

The assessment at the school reveals that he's a slow learner in academics but does well in Physical activities such as games and drama.

OUTLINES OF SOME STRATEGIES THAT KCYG EMPLOY TO ADDRESS

Activity	Objective	Strategies	How relate to child rights
Design and Develop learners materials	Provide quality learner friendly learning material	* Related to learner context (interests, experiences, needs and environment. Interests (pictures, cartoon, map, graph, chart, Activities, games, drama, group work, individual work) Experience (real life experience, problem situation) Needs (relate to world of work, challenges gender. Engage interactive learning (learner - content learner – instructor, learner – community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering age, general education level, social ability so on protect learners interests , non discrimination participation • Cater for individual differences (different level of activities, multiple option activity, group activity, pictures demonstration and Hinds, highlighting underline size of letter. • Promote thinking, argument encourage express their views.
Learners Centered Learning environment	Create learners friendly learning environment	* Flexible learning (no rigid rules and regulations) * Learner autonomy * Learner control Multiple option for learning (self learning material, visiting teaching, face to contact programme, collaborative learning, situational learning multimedia – Audio cassettes, Compact	* Opportunity for learners interests, active participation decision making and conversational skills, on discrimination. * Nondiscrimination, Friendly communicative with each others.

		disk, video Radio and television programmes * Space for friendly learning – study centres (resources facilitators place for exhibit learner production, wall news paper,	
Pie Edusols	Create supportive health learning environment	Support learners for social activities Provide skilled educators / guidance and counseling / asses and evaluate.	Listen to children’s voice Openness

CONCLUSION

It is a matter of urgency to address the issues access and scaling up quality education for all. The formal education system doesn’t cater for education for all.

A better approach and methodology have been adopted by developing countries as a way to address their educational requirements.