

**Educational Policy-making in Kenya:
the case for paradigm change in a developing nation**

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Governments direct the affairs of their province, state, or country. Sometimes the plan does not satisfy all the needs of the people. In communist governments it appears that those assigned control make the decisions. In a Monarchy, a single individual decides what happens among the people. A Democracy places the desires of the people first and gives them a voice in what happens to their country. Education and Politics can hardly be separated in most cases (Kivuva 2004). Kenyan politics play a major role in Education Reform implementation. Structural change (involving the number of years to be spent at every level of education) may not always be an answer to educational problems. The seriousness by which suggestions of the commissions are implemented, are more than the mere appointment of agencies and committees. Kenya's prosperity and development hinges on how well the nation educates its people (Abagi 2000: 3). Kenya's people see schooling as a vehicle for social and developmental change. The Kenyan government must consider making changes in regulating who receives education. The government and others do not consider all parties in the education of Kenya's citizens . In order to make this change, policy governing education must be amended. Requesting a government to authorize certain criteria in education is dependent on the source or the government , since many governments do not listen to outsiders or what the outsider may perceive be important in a society that they do not live (Kivuva 2004). It is not always recognizable, but Education is the mainstream

development tool of any country. Kenya, one of Africa's developing nations, has to continue to modify policy on education to maintain global development and change.

Historic Policy Decisions

Post-colonial Kenya is an excellent case study in the myriad difficulties that multiethnic States face during development and democratization (Murphy 2003). History, Political Science, and Ethnicity all play key roles in the process of Kenya's development as a modern state. The government either ignores or smothers the outcry against poverty in many of the ethnic groups and ignores these groups in the development of the country and its eventual power climb. Commissions on education are presently emphasizing two distinct arrangements of educational needs in Kenya.

The arrangements that commissions have emphasized are economic rather than the social functions of education. Colonial Community Development (CCD) was originally called Mass Education (Hill 1991). It was one of the central features of the African Policy of British intervention and insured the co-operation of the people of each community in programs designed to raise standards. The alternative Colonial Community Development eventually stuck in preference to Social Development. Social Development was rejected by Africans. It was seen as an inferior substitute for the rapid acceleration of Africans in Education. Community Development lasted until 1963 and collapsed only after it was seen as unable to meet the needs of students. After a great deal of controversy, youth were allowed to have some voice in the future of their education and the labor process. As in any democracy, the voice of the participants is

prerequisite to setting all inconsistencies right. In the beginning listening to student's voices took a simplistic, but productive, form.

Immediately after the independence of Kenya, the government attempted to restructure their education system to relate it to national needs and aspirations (Kenya Handbook).

The concerns of the newly formed government were:

- the training of more human resources to enhance economic development
- equitable contribution of national income
- closer integration to bring national unity and,
- the amelioration of national disparities

The final recommendation was to extend primary education to the upper levels (Standards 5-8) by 1980. Most regulations were not implemented due to financial constraints. This remains a growing concern in most facets of Kenyan society today.

The Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1986 on Economic Management for Renewed Growth changed the negative and apologetic metaphors for the informal economy (King 1991). It was a scheme to catalyze the main actors – government departments, external aid agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) -- in schemes that would address some of the credit needs of the informal sector. Some development took place, despite strategies to manipulate the government.

One development was a Kenyan voice to articulate the concerns and priorities of the informal sector. There is a need for sector policy to address this form of training, artisans and non-artisans. Policy has to be implemented that combines vocational and formal sector exposure. Another development was one-shot interviews (King 1991: 18).

Kenyan government training policy has undergone change in its capacity to expand the

Institute of Technology and to increase the number of institutes. Relationships exist between education and firm size, income and age. With the exception of metal work, all other sectors show the higher an entrepreneur's education level, the better is the firm's income.

Democratic Voice

Self help groups represented by the Harambee, effective from 1963-1974; were a representation of social structure and cultural traditions. The Harambee schools allowed all youth the opportunity to attend school on some small scale. As always in Kenya, wealthy families, those with monies to allocate toward education, can afford a quality education. Private schools are reserved for those with means to afford the solitude and grandeur of learning. Wealth in Kenya is seen differently than in Western culture. Often wealth is counted as land, sheep or cattle.

Traditionally land belonged to the clan or family but not to individuals (Kiluva-Ndunda 2001:106). Land and livestock were used communally and were not considered property to be inherited. Later colonial policy introduced the idea of the male head of the household. This move empowered the man to have ownership and management over policy in his homestead—the huts and land inhabited by he, his wives and all animal stock.

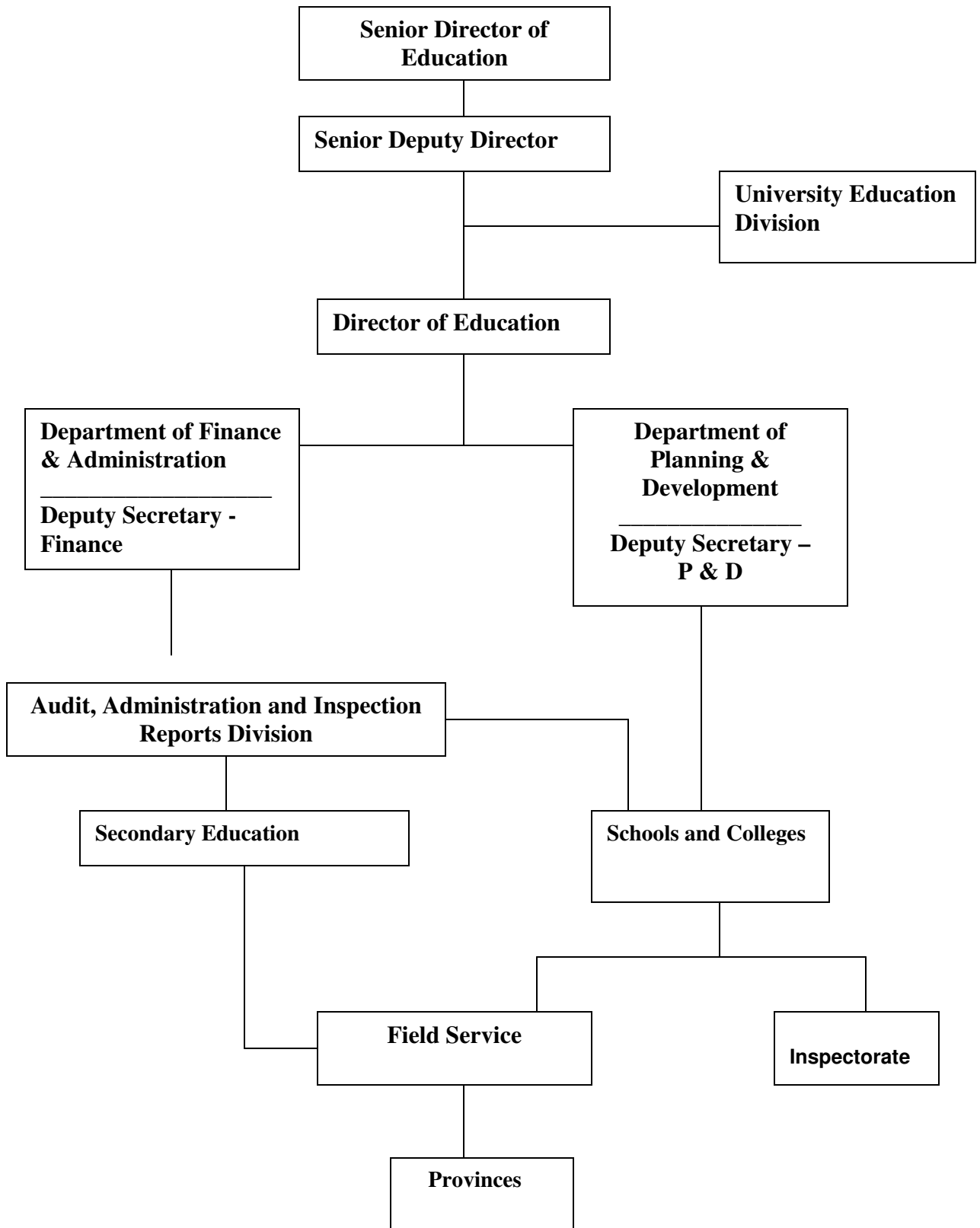
Policy in Kenya continued to grow with the main stay of the control allotted to the now in control Kenyan government. Unfortunately race and ethnic differences continue to play a part in the distribution of education. As such, many people and especially the

impoverished, received little or no education. Women, who play a less dominant role, are often limited to primary school education. Education and how it occurs is administered by Kenya's Ministry of Education

Educational Administration

The Ministry of Education is divided into two parts: Finance and Administration (F&A), and Planning and Development (P&D) [Kenya Handbook]. Each division is headed by a Deputy Secretary. Finance & Administration, an important part of the Kenyan cabinet, is responsible for day-to-day financial affairs. Its duties include taking action on policy matters and cabinet decisions. Planning and Development focuses on rural development and the preparation of the education chapter of the National Plan. One of the functions of the Director of Education is to formulate policy directions and management of professional functions relating to education. The Senior Director of Education is responsible to the Director of Education for the amendment and administration of University and other tertiary education. The Division of Secondary Education manages Secondary Education programs. The Division of Schools and College Registration implements policy on registration of schools and colleges. The Senior Deputy Director is responsible for the University Education Division. The Audit, Administration and Inspection Reports Division oversees Secondary Education. The Inspectorate is the Professional arm of the Ministry of Education charged with the maintenance and improvement of standards of education in Kenyan schools and colleges. Organization of field services is done by allotment responsibilities to Provincial education offices. This organizational design symbolizes where one goes to get any and all issues resolved or heard. The departments and individuals are the links to policy change and modifications.

Organizational Chart – Kenya Ministry of Education



An examination of policy change should look at the branches of education that make and mandate policy. These branches, the Director and Senior Director of Education, have great power in implementing policy change. Alternate power in many countries is the university student and young adult, and it includes the future leader, the secondary student. Policy change originates at these levels of education and is formulated and brought to the attention of the Directors of Education and their constituents by means of gatherings and requested meetings. A closer look at these issues provides an insight into the problems of current policies.

University policy

At the university level chronic under-financing of the six public universities is endangering the quality of teaching and research (Austwartiges Media 2004). Another problem is the countless unsupervised private universities that offer their services in an uncontrolled marketplace. The most difficult challenge facing the expanded university system lies in the efficient and effective utilization of existing resources on one hand and intensified demand for more and better education on the other (Abagi 1999). A strong policy is required to anticipate future efficient resource utilization to meet the increased demand for university education. Such policy needs to be guided by systematic research. A study by Abagi (1999) and constituents aimed at providing guidelines on alternative approaches to efficient utilization of resources for quality university education. This was an explanatory and descriptive research project that used both qualitative and quantitative data. In the face of the country's economic and social hardships, it is important that the available economic resources at all levels of education are efficiently used and well managed. As the demand for higher education continues to increase, the ability of the

government and parents to finance higher education will continue to drop during the adjustment period. This implies that alternative mechanisms and programs for financing university education and controlling education costs need to be implemented.

Education in these institutions requires government subsidy by outside agencies because the cost of complete domination of these technical and vocational schools would be too much for the government. The government affords some companies levies. Others are reimbursed a certain amount for the training students receive through labor programs (Ngerechi 2003).

Secondary Policy

The current secondary education program is geared towards meeting the needs of both the students that terminate their education after secondary school and those that continue on to higher education (Kenya 2003). There has been a tremendous increase in both the number of secondary schools and in student enrollment in response to the rapidly increasing number of primary school dropouts seeking re-entry into secondary schools. In 1963 there were only 151 secondary schools, with a total enrollment of 30,120 students. Today there are nearly 3,000 secondary schools with a total enrollment of 620,000 students. Of this total, slightly over 40 per cent are girls. The Ominde Commission (1964), whose focus was secondary education, saw the need to reform the education system so that it became a way of changing people's attitudes and a means of establishing social equality (Rharade 1997: 164). Secondary education was seen as a gateway to training the highly skilled staff that Kenya needed. Secondary education forms a four year cycle (of the 8-4-4 system of education) preparing young people

between the ages of fourteen and seventeen for higher education, training, and the world of work.

Despite the high expenditure on education by the Kenyan government as part of its contribution to the cost-sharing strategy, the implementation of the policy is beleaguered by multifarious and intertwined problems, notably lack of clarity in the policy, mode of implementation, role of the key actors/stakeholders; and, the future direction as evidenced by the various policy documents (Njeru 2003). To this end, a pertinent policy question is: how can the government of Kenya satisfy the increasing demand for the limited number of secondary school places in order to enhance access to, and participation in secondary school education, given the apparent negative effects of cost-sharing?

Njeru (2003) study found these results:

1. Not only has there been a considerable decline in the gross enrollment rate at secondary institutions, but wide and severe regional and gender disparities in access to, and participation in secondary school education has been noted.
2. The development of human and physical resources varied from one region to the other. Female teachers were mostly deployed in urban areas, whereas male teachers were deployed in other regions of the country.
3. The general access and performance of students in key subjects, particularly languages and science subjects has been dismal and on the decline.
4. The critical factors responsible for the low access to, and participation in secondary school education varied across the regions. These were key elements in an overall look at Kenya and how change can be implemented in a detailed analysis.

Primary Schools

By abolishing tuition fees for primary school, the new government has kept an important

election promise (Austwartiges Media 2004). The large rush to enroll in the public schools was not anticipated. Available funds cannot meet the current level of demand. The government obviously must spend far more in this area so that the previous high level of education can be reached again.

Educational Management

A number of institutions were set up to control education management at the national level: the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) set up in 1966, remains the sole employer of teachers; and the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC), set up in 1980, continues to be the sole body to conduct examinations outside the university (Cooksey 1994: 20).

The Teachers Service Commission Act of 1967, Chapter 212, Revised in 1968 established a single employer and unified terms of service for teachers. The Kenya Literature Bureau Act (1980) established a publishing body to print publish and distribute educational materials. The Education (School Discipline) Regulation Legal Notice 40/1972 regulates the school discipline applicable to schools. Regulations under Section 22 – Legal Notice 200/1970: The Education (Local Entry Fees for Examination) Regulations sets the standards for fees payable by candidates on entrance into schools and for specified examinations.

Gender Anaylsis

Policy making, planning and development, and implementation of policies and programs in Kenya usually take the male perspective (Kibwana 1992; Kiluva-Ndunda 2001:3). In

Kenya, men play a dominant role in all aspects of governance. The analysis of policy documents shows how policies have implications for the public sphere and how they limit women's agency. Kenyan women have had difficulty penetrating the patriarchal decision-making structure and processes of the state. Few Third World countries have national policies in place to expand access to higher education opportunities to women (Biraimah 1991; Kiluva-Ndunda 2001) education of women and men in Kenya is set out by predominately male politicians and policy-makers, and is influenced by international development agencies such as the World Bank. Continent-wide, African women experience similar patterns of marginalization in access to top managerial and policymaking positions directly affecting women's welfare and progress (Muchena 1994: 30).

Policy forbids the payment of house allowance to women who work for the government and who are married (Kiluva-Ndudna 2001). Women earn 49% of what a man makes working the same occupation. Women living in the rural areas are multiply disadvantaged when it comes to wage employment, advantages are few and non-wage activities are almost limitless. Women are the backbone of Kenyan peasantry, but they are doubly dominated as peasants who are a dominated class within underdeveloped capitalism. Thirty three years of Kenyan policy (politics, social and economic rhetoric) legitimize the public national level analysis of female and males distinctions in education.

Implications of past studies

Beoku-Betts (1998) and Kiluva-Ndunda (2001) addressed issues in policy and program

planning that relate to women rights:

1. Making gender and class policy equity issues pivotal in the policy-making process
2. Providing materials and psychological support for girls' education starting at the village level
3. Granting opportunity for reentry for adolescent mothers
4. Reintroducing sex education in schools and communities, and
5. Supporting women as intervention agents for the daughter's education.

Abagi (2000) divided policy and research into four categories: Macroeconomics, Industry and Agriculture, Health and Education and Governance and Development.

Koech (1999) noted the following current policy instruments: 1980 – 85 The Kiano Report examined the estimator and expenditures set out in the development plan of the University of Nairobi, 1979-83 to consider the scale of expansion. In the 1995 the Archbishop Kirima Report – the existence devil worship cults in Kenya and their effect on learning institutions and other elements of society and 1997 – 2010 and The Master Plan on Education and Training – designed to guide the sector into the 21st century.

Critiques of currents policy by Koech (1999):

- Current policy is not concerned with knowledge, skills and attitudes but school based and formally administered enterprise.
- Current framework ignores early childhood care and development.
- Doesn't address special needs students
- No relationship between government and public agencies
- Many agencies no real framework
- The importance of universities in organization, management and responsibility is not emphasized
- Many policy instruments are outmoded.
- The system is full of many other defects.

Implications for new policy as suggested by Koech (1999) are as follows:

- To build a society in which every Kenyan has access to and is able to benefit from an education, regardless of age, gender or special circumstances and in every social, cultural, religious, political and economic context.

- Universal access to education emphasizing personal and social development
- Ensure life-long learning to all Kenyans
- Develop and manage a national policy framework for education and training
Developing phases in the manner of policy-making
- Establish, train and recruit personnel for an effective, responsive, proactive professional national education service
- Continuous review and evaluation of agencies in charge of policy-making
- Establish and install an effective democratic and community-based infrastructure for the management of and monitoring of performance and discipline of administrative personnel.
- To increase an enabling environment
- Partnership between public and private sectors
- Mechanism for the funding of education
- Development of various programs: technical and vocational, special needs child care, etc.
- Note excellence and quality assurance
- Internalization of principles and values.

Several issues need to be addressed according to Abagi (1999):

- Cost reduction and cost recovery measures for resource utilization in public universities need to be urgently addressed.
- Governments and university administrators should stop politicizing university education. By cheating themselves they can fully subsidize the running of these institutions. In Kenya today, like most African countries, university education has ceased to be a public good. Thus, the beneficiaries, students and the private sector, must help finance university education fully. The Government should privatize most of the public universities.
- Public universities must operate as private firms, becoming more commercial (profit oriented) and respond to the labor market. Experience from some of the private universities in the country has to be tapped. These universities must be open at all times, if possible 24 hours and during holidays. This will promote efficient utilization of the resources available.
- Systematic research is needed to examine the extent of waste, in terms of finances and human resources, in public universities, with an aim to suggest policy options and mechanisms for financing university education.
- Research is also needed to establish the effect of adjustments on public university education, in terms of access, quality and relevance of their programs in the labor market.
- The public universities, with government support, have to make harsh decisions if they are interested in offering quality education, affordable by both the government and parents. The partnership approach, where the universities, the government, the donors and the private sector work together to formulate viable operational policies and activities is the starting point.

Murphy (2003) offers these implications:

- Change in the ruling political party
- Government must stop using “ethnic cleansing” to consolidate power
- Kenyans need to experience the benefits of functioning democracy
- Establish power-sharing through vote-pooling or consociationalism
- Improve the economy, thus creating more jobs and stability economic insecurity forces people to turn to their ethnic groups for support and this exacerbates ethnic differences.
- Eradicate corruption
- Settle the land dispute in the Rift Valley

Njeru (2003) policy implications:

1. Given the increasing poverty levels, the escalating cost of education, and the decline of investment in education, policy makers should look into more innovative and viable strategies for enhancing access to, and participation in secondary school education.
2. Address some of the socio-cultural and religious factors that militate against access to, and participation in secondary school education.
3. Effectively address insecurity issues in some parts of the country

Researcher Implications:

2. There is a need for technological growth in Kenya to enhance productivity.
3. Policy must be improved that includes considering how computer hardware and software professions will penetrate the learning society at all levels.
4. Teachers well-trained in the use of computers are a necessity on a need assistance basis for the student.
5. Local government must have a voice in state and national governance of Education in Kenya.
6. Local ambassadors of education must include parents, business owners, women and youth, from villages and the countryside.
7. Global languages must be taught at the primary and secondary level to insure future interaction with the world at large; particularly English.
8. Considerations of the State officials of the ministry must include the jurisdiction of their smaller communities and villages. The Ministry of Education should set-up a monitoring system to insure this compliance.
9. Revision of policy must include a review of present policy in view of global trends in education.
10. Any long-term policy that is unproductive must be removed and replaced with an alternate idea.

11. Conventions and gatherings of educators from all ethnicities should occur yearly to promote communication and unification.
12. Members of the Ministry of Education should visit outside countries to observe and learn from other administrations and educators. Training programs to meet the needs of these individuals might occur regularly to encourage global change.
13. The government of Kenya must recognize that, while it is an effective entity, a review of Kenyan policy and human development is a necessary prerequisite for productivity to increase in Kenya's many governmental branches and particularly for education, the developer of future leaders.
14. Jobs must be created that do not require a McDonald worker to have a Bachelor's degree.
15. More Educators must be placed at the Secondary level; schools are overcrowded with 50 students per underpaid teacher (Afrikaict, 2009).
16. Higher Education percentages must increase 50% from 2%, and means to pay for this education invented through strategic understanding.
17. Sex Education at Grade 7 for female is now a prerequisite. Women can no longer be treated as objects of child-bearing and in home slaves (Afrikaict, 2009).
18. Finally, the longer the government continues to hinder progress of females in this society, the longer this country will fail to develop as a nation.

Conclusion

Kenya is a country in the midst of national change. It is imperative that the government of Kenya and the Ministry of Education review the elements of human productivity that will modify how education is administered in that society today. A change in policy will assure that the growth that this country seeks occurs not through major changes, but through challenges or its citizens that are sometimes overlooked.

Women are important productive individuals in this society. Not only are women the creators of the human race, their minds and concepts lead to new understandings and their effected imaginations lead to new beginnings. As women support the education of their children, so must others support the livelihood of women. After all, woman is the mediator between the patriarchal society of men and the future leaders of this country, children.

Schools at all levels need a policy change that meets their particular needs and the needs of students. Universities are lacking the financial structure to flourish and grow.

Secondary schools lack students because fees to attend are beyond the economic levels of many of Kenya's citizens. More elementary schools will assure a greater secondary population the long run, and supplies for youth are necessary to insure the process of learning.

As in any society, a set time yearly for review of policy implementation procedure is necessary if the culture of its people is to continue to be an active part of global society.

Assurance that those individuals involved in Education and Policy-making to continue to interact with international educators assures this country of world change and stability. The government is not being held accountable for the inconsistencies in regulatory procedures. A review of the implications of this analysis may assure this developing nation of new and acceptable criteria for change can occur and a developing nation can become sustainable.

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