

An evaluation of the effectiveness of Community Support grants for Early Childhood Education to enhance educational access in Nyandarua District, Kenya

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Abstract

Any investment programme in ECDE aims at an overall programme of expanding access in order to enhance ECDE services that are of high quality for the children aged 4 years to 5 years. Such children are children living in difficult circumstances such as Arid and Semi Arid lands (ASAL), urban slums and other poverty stricken areas in Kenya. The Kenya government has proposed to achieve this goal for the ECDE investment programme under Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP) by establishing a policy guideline which is national and service standards for ECDE, enhancing capacity building and community mobilization and giving support grants to the communities. Other strategies are reviewing of the ECDE curriculum, promoting ECDE health and nutrition and preparing the children ready for primary schooling. The evaluation was concerned with the effectiveness of the implementation of Community Support Grant programme in order to enhance enrolment in ECDE for children aged 4-5years. The objectives of the study was to evaluate whether enrolment in ECDE for learners aged 4-5years have been enhanced after the implementation of community Support Grant, challenges facing the implementation of Community Support Grant and the way forward in implementing Community Support Grant in Murungaru Zone Nyandarua South District. The paper has lots of significance to ECDE policy makers who need to enforce the ECDE policies as opposed to the way the policy is being practiced. The ECDE children stand to benefit since the policies and practice will be in tandem. The transformation of society can't be complete if the ECDE sector appears to be forgotten; hence national development remains a dream. A summative evaluation was done guided by Scriven's Model of Expert –Oriented Evaluation Approach. The worrying reality however is that despite the Government's effort in financing all the ECDE centres in Murungaru Zone, some of the schools have been registering a drop in enrolment. Some of the challenges facing the implementation of Community Support Grant is; Free Primary Education Policy, Poverty, attitude, misappropriation of funds, parents level of education and inadequate funds. The paper concludes that ECDE being bedrock to the foundation of learning, serious considerations on enrolment and challenges facing the implementation need to be enforced in order to benefit the child.

Key words: Community Support Grant, Early Childhood Education.

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