

Progress Towards Attainment of Education for All (EFA) Among Nomadic Pastoralists: How Do We Dismantle the Gender Differential Jinx in Mandera County, Kenya?

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to document the current strategies put in place in Kenya towards the attainment of education for all (EFA) and millennium development goals (MDGs) among nomadic pastoralists the country. The guiding question is how can we dismantle the gender differential jinx hampering attainment of educational equity in Mandera County? The paper uses a combination of secondary and primary data sources. The primary data was obtained from a sample of 45 teachers undertaking their school-based degree programmers at Kenyatta and Mount Kenya Universities. Mixed methods employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to analyze the data. It was found that despite the milestones achieved towards attaining EFA and MDGs in Kenya at the national level, Kenya still faces a number of challenges; some of them have significantly thwarted the possibilities of improving access and quality of education especially in nomadic pastoralist study areas of Mandera County of the country. The critical factors hindering the attainments of the targets include: poverty and the high cost of education as a result of uncontrolled latent user-charges introduced at school level, negative and retrogressive socio-cultural practices that specifically impact on the girl child, un-conducive learning environment due to schools that are not child-friendly, and insecurity among others. It is commended that strategies to dismantle the gender differential jinx in Mandera County should focus more sharply on the girl-child by using instructional techniques favorable to the girl-child, intensify the support to low-cost girls boarding schools and mobile schools to continue educational provision during nomadic shifts by parents, expand child-friendly schools and intensify peace education as well as education in emergency, among others. [256 words].

Key words: Education for all (EFA), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Nomadic pastoralists, equal opportunities, Gender jinx, access and quality education, pragmatic policies.

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