ST PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Inclusive Education for Urban Refugee Children in Kenya: An evaluation research in Dagoretti Division, Nairobi West District.

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Development Studies

By

MARGARET GACHIGI KAMAU

DATE 16th AUGUST, 2011

ST PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Print to PDF without this message by purchasing novaPDF (http://www.novapdf.com/)

ABSTRACT

Due to armed conflict and human rights violation in countries in the Eastern Africa, Kenya has been hosting refugees from these countries ever since 1970 and is currently hosting 393,368 refugees, the sixth largest refugee hosting country in the world, a growing number now living permanently in Nairobi (UNHCR 2010, JRS 2010:1, UNHCR 2010a:9). Despite the long stay of refugees in Kenya and despite Kenya's obligation to providing education to all children including refugees who are considered among the marginalized in the education sector, there has been insufficient documentation on the progress the education system has made in responding to the special needs of refugee learners in schools through inclusive education (GoK 2009b:13, 17, UNESCO 2010:13).

This research aimed at evaluating the extent to which education in public schools in Dagoretti Division is responding to the diverse needs of refugee learners through inclusive education as stipulated in National Special Needs Education Policy framework (2009) with an aim of identifying gaps which if addressed, can help improve the quality of inclusive education programming for refugee children in the District. This will in turn reduce the marginalization of refugee children in the education in the urban areas of Kenya and assist in actualizing the universal goal of education for all children by 2015 and it's accrued benefits.

The evaluation research was carried out between 20th November and 15th March, 2011. Purposive sampling was used to identify the 14 out of 24 schools in the Division as well as the 327 respondents. It utilized a mix of in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, semi-

ST PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Print to PDF without this message by purchasing novaPDF (http://www.novapdf.com/)

structured questionnaires and review of secondary data were the research methods used to assess the inclusive education experience of refugee children in the district.

The main findings of the research are that inclusive education is differently expressed in the schools in the Division mainly relying on the ingenuity of the school administration. Schools are also unfamiliar with the National Special Needs Education Policy framework (2009) and are therefore not using it to guide inclusive education of refugees in their schools. They are instead using other official guidelines given earlier such as the Safe School Policy. The practice of inclusion of refugees in the schools as it currently stands is marred by among others: insufficient training of teachers and City Education Department Officials on how refugee can learn in an inclusive setting, language that is a barrier to the refugee learners, low expectation of the performance of refugee children by teachers, incidences of maltreatment of refugee learners by other learners and inclusive education not integrated as a whole school philosophy. Efforts towards inclusive education of refugees are also not sustainable since they over-rely on technical and financial support from development partners who are neither coordinated nor promising long term support. The inadequate capacity by City Education Department (CED) to monitor the same, the minimum participation of refugee parents in school management as well as lack of total commitment by staff to support refugee inclusion are some of the other drawbacks to realizing inclusive education for refugees in the District.

To enhance the practice of inclusive education for refugees in Dagoretti Division, the researcher has proposed among other recommendations: urgent orientation of the schools and CED on the National Special Needs Education Policy framework (2009) and deliberations on it's

ST PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Print to PDF without this message by purchasing novaPDF (http://www.novapdf.com/)

actualisation; inclusion to be viewed as a whole-school approach and not just for refugee children; training of all teachers on forced migration issues; more active participation of refugee children, their parents and the community in education concerns for the refugees; a greater coordination and superintend role by the CED to ensure inclusion translated to daily activities in schools; increased awareness among the stakeholders on the EFA commitments and a rallying to support it. There is also a need for a closer collaboration between the schools, the development partners such as UNHCR and Nairobi City Education Department in a variety of issues including sharing of vital statistics and resources. Overall inclusive education should determine the ideology and daily activities of schools which in turn reduce the marginalization of refugee learners.

ST PAUL'S UNIVERSITY

Print to PDF without this message by purchasing novaPDF (http://www.novapdf.com/)