

Abstract.

Kenya is among the African countries that have made notable advances in the quest for Universal Primary Education (UPE). Major landmarks in this regard include free primary education, increased enrolments, and an attempt to democratize education governance through decentralized management. However, the road towards full attainment of UPE has also been marked by increasingly complex internal inefficiencies in the form of increased dropout rates, congested classrooms, shortage of teachers and basic facilities, and a policy framework that favours centralism over inclusivity. Equity concerns, with regard to gender, region, ethnicity, and socio-economic background also abound. Furthermore, overemphasis on primary education may have locked out other sectors of education from their due policy and fiscal attention. Such shortcomings compromise the ideal of UPE, namely the provision of an education that is equitable and meaningful to all—including underserved populations.