

THE ROLE OF MOBILE SCHOOLS IN IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL
ACCESS FOR PASTORALIST COMMUNITIES IN KENYA: A CASE
STUDY OF MOBILE SCHOOLS IN WAJIR DISTRICT, NEP.

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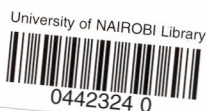
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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the role of mobile schools in improving educational access for pastoralist communities: A case study of mobile schools in Wajir District, NEP. There was need to study the factors that influence their effectiveness given that the enrolment of pupils in such schools is wanting. Out of 98 pupils sampled for study, 97 completed the questionnaire, seven (7) mobile school teachers participated in the study and DEO Wajir, school committee representative and NGOs representative were also interviewed about mobile schools. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents. The research instruments were questionnaire and interview guides. Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis.

The findings of the study revealed that mobile schools is the preferred way of providing education to the highly mobile communities .There is increased stakeholder interest in the project e.g. Aridlands Resource Management Programme, MOE and UNICEF .It was also realized that the rigid national curriculum failed to reflect the environment and knowledge of pastoralist children. The government funding of mobile schools is very low thus placing a burden on parents to augment teachers' salaries and fund learning materials. Teacher's welfare was not adequately addressed such that recruitment of P1 teachers became problematic as they constantly looked for employment opportunities in urban areas.

From the foregoing findings the following recommendations were made: A policy framework on pastoralist education should be developed within the framework of education for all. It is vital that the challenges confronting the mobile schools teachers are resolved especially their remuneration and welfare. Deliberate effort should be undertaken to recruit and deploy more teachers to mobile schools and provide incentives for them to stay. Government should allocate recurrent and development expenditure to mobile schools just like the formal schools. Teaching/Learning resources such as textbooks, charts as well as pencils, erasers and

chalkboards should be made available. There is need to employ integrated approaches such as education in conjunction with water, rural development, health, nutrition and sanitation. Community mobilization and empowerment will go a long way in improving the quality of mobile schools, thus improving the quality of education and providing context for the demand for education to grow. There is need for boarding schools to be set up to cater for the graduates of mobile schools to continue their education. Policymakers in governments and partner non-governmental organizations need to establish the best possible conditions for mobile schooling to function effectively by ensure that schooling opportunities are made available beyond the fourth grade.