

Reconceptualization of Education Policy and Practice Following the Coronavirus Pandemic in Kenya

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Abstract: Ramifications of the global Corona Virus Disease have been experienced differently in all the sectors of the economy. In particular, the nature of the scourge has challenged the efficacy of both policy and practice in the area of education. The current Kenyan education policy framework has been criticized as being inadequate to address such challenges. Consequently, substantial education policy review is essential to consolidate the gains in progress like the 100% learner transition policy in the basic level of learning. Drawing from the Covid-19 experiences as well as relevant theory of justice and fairness, this review attempts to reconceptualize education policy in Kenya's education system. Particularly, both critical review and interventions in policies meant to promote inclusive learning; online teaching to minimize disparities for the poor and marginalized; education financing and reinforcement of risk management are made. Also, interrogated are policies on capacity building for the teaching personnel to enhance their preparedness; a shift in pedagogical approaches; curriculum review to capture emerging issues and strengthening monitoring and evaluation of the learning environment in the country's immediate and long-term plans.

Keywords: Covid-19, Education, Policy, Practice, Reconceptualization

Introduction

The study of Areba (2020) postulates that for Kenya's already fragile education sector, the coronavirus pandemic has spawned extraordinary challenges for the government, learners, and parents. These challenges have already laid bare some policy gaps in the education system

(Areba, 2020). The pandemic challenges have prompted haste innovative remedies such as virtual learning and teaching. Depending solely on virtual strategies as a panacea implies that students from vulnerable families are plummeting more behind under education system that already discriminates against them (UWEZO, 2020). As the state begins to grapple with these challenges, a key question arises on how Kenya's education policy can be re-conceptualized to adapt to global changing trends to give all Kenyan learners equal education opportunities regardless of the background they come from.

Before the Corona Virus Disease-19 (COVID-19) pandemic struck in late 2019, many countries in the world, including Kenya, were already tackling daunting tasks meant to honor access to schooling which is one of the basic rights of everyone. In spite of the widespread enrolments at the initial grades in several states, millions of children – over 250 million globally – had dropped from schools, with another almost 800 million grown-ups who are functionally illiterate (World Bank, 2020a). Furthermore, even those enrolled in schools, were not sure of continued enrolment. About 387 million which is 56% of school-age pupils globally were projected to lack basic literacy skills (World Bank, 2020b). From the funding perspective, there existed a formidable challenge prior to the emergence of COVID-19. The initial 2020 approximation of the financing deficit to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (UNESCO, 2020d) particularly for the purpose of provision of education of high quality in developing nations is a stunning \$148 billion yearly. Experts project that the COVID-19 might aggravate these funding deficits by up to a third (UNESCO, 2020d).

COVID-19 was identified first in Wuhan Province of China in December 2019, and has

been spreading swiftly to Europe, Asia, and the rest of the globe. As of 22nd September 2020, there were 31,174,627 reported COVID-19 incidents, with 962,613 deaths worldwide (COVID-19 WHO African Region External Situation Report 30, 2020, henceforth, COVID-19 WHO, ARESR, 2020). Both the worldwide number of the established corona virus cases and deaths have constantly increased ominously. As at that period, 215 states and a single global conveyance had confirmed corona virus incidents. Ten nations had the highest number of incidents: USA (6, 740, 464), India (5, 562, 663), Brazil (4, 544, 629), Russian Federation (1,115, 810), Peru (768, 895), Colombia (765, 076), Mexico (697, 663), South Africa (663,282), Spain (640,040), and Argentina (631, 365) (COVID-19 WHO, ARESR, 2020).

In the same period, it was reported that a collective 1,149,940 Corona-Virus cases were in the African continent, with a single case in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). To date, South Africa has more than half, 58% (663,282) of incidents in the continent. Others with a significant number of cases are Ethiopia with 70,422, Nigeria with 57,613, Algeria with 50,214, Ghana with 46, 062, Republic of Kenya with 37,218, Cameroon with 20,690, Côte d'Ivoire with 19,327, Madagascar with 16,136, and Senegal with 14,759. The ten countries account for 995,723 of all reported cases which is 87% (COVID-19 WHO, ARESR, 2020).

The aggregate number of fatalities reported in the African continent in the same period was 25,008 involving 45 countries, giving a general case casualty ratio (CCR) of 2.2%. From its inception in Africa, majority of causalities have been in South Africa with 64% which is 16,118 persons, Algeria with 6.8% which is 1,689, Ethiopia with 4.5% which is 1,127, Nigeria with 4.4% which is 1,100, Kenya with 2.6% which is 659, among others. Countries including Ethiopia, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and Algeria, bear 83% of confirmed deaths which translates to 20,693 of deaths confirmed in the continent. The itemized figures in the continent denote 3.7% of established corona virus incidents and 2.6% of casualties reported globally (COVID-19 WHO, ARESR, 2020).

Many of the casualties in these death rates are educators, learners, and providers of education necessities. This implies a big setback to the education sector.

Literature Review

Globally and almost all African states have executed measures to reinforce social distancing, concentrating on border and travel restraints, institutional cessations, sanctions on large assemblies, full lockdown restriction, and partial lockdowns. Subsequently, the Corona Virus Disease-19 epidemic has caused the greatest interruption of the education sector, depriving about 1.6 billion learners in over 190 nations and in all regions of education. Cessations of institutions and other educational avenues have affected 94% of the global learner population and up to about 99% in lower-middle- and low-income countries (Olingo, 2020).

In March 16, 2020, the Government of Kenya announced the cessation of all schools, colleges, and universities to prevent any further spread of Covid-19 following the identification of the country's first positive cases. The shutdown affected approximately 18 million learners in pre-primary, primary, and secondary, including 150,000 refugees (State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education, Kenya (SDELBEK)), 2020). In May 2020, the MoE SDELBEK issued the Kenya Basic Education Corona Virus Disease-19 Response Strategy to provide guidance for continuity of learning during school closures and the transition back to school after the pandemic has subsided (SDELBEK, 2020). The plan aims to:

1. Provide access to equitable, inclusive, and quality, equitable schooling to learners during and after the pandemic to make sure there is uninterrupted learning;
2. To facilitate the production of virtual teaching and learning resources, and to further develop existing open/distance learning programs;
3. Train teachers to effectively support open/distance learning, which includes monitoring, and assessing progress;
4. Develop, and implement intervention programs which will target the sidelined

and vulnerable learners; specifically, girls and special needs learners; and

5. Provide psychosocial support to education officers, teachers, and learners, and other shareholders in the education sector.

KICD has been leading the learning continuity efforts with radio, TV, and digital interventions for students and teachers. They are partnering with several private EdTech providers like Ubongo to provide additional content where gaps exist (SDELBEK, 2020).

However, questions remain about whether learning is really happening through these efforts. According to UWEZO (2020), two out of ten parents were not informed that children were supposed to continue learning virtually, or by other means, while at home. It is widely accepted that there is no policy on schools and teachers' preparation. Teachers are not yet equipped with the skills needed to effectively execute distance learning, especially at the pre-primary and primary level.

On June 6, 2020, the President of Kenya announced that schools will reopen on September 1, 2020. The Ministry of Education is charged with the mandate of ensuring schools are ready to reopen with appropriate safety measures and that plans exist to close learning gaps. On June 18, 2020, the Education Cabinet Secretary, George Magoha, communicated that KCSE and KCPE exams will be conducted in March 2021 if schools are reopened by September 2020 (Angote, 2020). However, with Covid-19 cases and deaths on the rise, the government of Kenya only okayed the opening of candidate classes and grade four being a pioneer class under the new Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) and the rest of other classes and forms were pushed to January 4, 2021 with a lot of uncertainty of reopening given the upsurge in COVID-19 cases (Angote, 2020).

COVID-19 is aggravating educational imbalances that existed before it came up by sinking the chances of education attainment for majority of the mostly susceptible learners from continuing with their learning (Mbovane, 2020). These are young people and adults, especially those from among the poor from informal settlements, girl children, refugees, persons

with incapacities and compulsorily expatriated persons. Losses due to erudition, in addition, portend to spread across coming generations and expunge years of development, negatively affecting assistance of girl children and women education with regard to access and retention. About 23.8 million other learners and young people (up to the tertiary level) might leave school or not enter at all in the coming years due to the epidemic's economic effect alone. Likewise, the education distraction might spill over to other critical aspects of human existence. Cessations of learning organizations prevent the unhindered delivery of important services to students and populations, which includes accessing enough food, access to work (by parents), and an increase of the risk of violence against girls and women (Mbovane, 2020).

As financial pressures upsurge and growth aid is drained, educational funding might be confronted with significant bottlenecks, aggravating enormous pre-COVID-19 financing gaps in education. For developing countries Kenya inclusive, that gap is at an astounding \$148 billion yearly, and it may go up by up to 33.3% (International Monetary Fund, 2020).

However, this catastrophe has also inspired a spirit of innovativeness within the education sector as evidenced in the approaches espoused during the pandemic including the use of television, radio, and take-home assignments as a way of continuing with education and training (UWEZO, 2020). Online learning solutions were established; appreciation for fast responses by states and stakeholders all over the globe in assisting education continuity is noticeable, including the Global Education Coalition convened by UNESCO (SDELBEK, 2020). The crucial function of educators, states, and other main stakeholders is underscored too; this is the welfare of employees in the education sector. It is observed that these transformations have underscored the promising future of learning. In particular, the fast-tracked reforms in methods of ensuring educational quality might not be disconnected from the urgency of ensuring all learners are enrolled without exception. This applies to learners and youth who are affected by meager resources to access learning (Black, 2020a).

The situation is similar for the teaching fraternity and the urgency for improved training in fresh approaches of delivering education, plus offering assistance. This scenario calls for reconceptualization of education policy and practice following incidences of COVID-19 in Kenya. The COVID-19 catastrophe plus the unmatched distraction in the education sector are not over. Up to 100 nations are yet to candidly declare dates for institutions to reopen and world-wide states, parents, unions, and learners are contending with the time and the way to approach the subsequent phase (Global Education Cluster, 2020). Nations have plans of re-opening institutions countrywide, based on grade levels and by giving priority to those classes that are meant to take summative examinations, or via confined openings in areas with small numbers of cases of the pandemic. Conversely, due to the upsurge of the spread of the virus, many of the nations studied between May–June 2020 had not agreed on the reopening dates for learning institutions. These resolutions bear huge socio-economic repercussions and might portend lifelong consequences on teachers, on learners, youth, and parents – particularly women – and certainly on communities as a whole (Global Education Cluster, 2020). Averting the access to learning is an urgent issue that needs to be addressed by global leadership and all stakeholders in education through policy re-evaluation. This is one of the ways to protect the welfare of millions of learners and teachers.

The ramifications of the Covid-19 pandemic have been differently experienced globally in all the sectors of the economy. Specifically, the pandemic has raised questions on the efficacy of both policy and practice in education. The current Kenyan education policy framework has been criticized as being inadequate to address such challenges as the ones posed by the Covid-19 pandemic (Areba, 2020). Notwithstanding improvement in increasing access, retention, quality and completion rates, the Kenyan education system continues to face major legal and regulatory policy challenges. Most remarkably, there are several laws pertaining to education which are weak, disjointed, and often inconsistent (UWEZO, 2020). In 2006, the Ministry of Education (MoE) launched the National ICT Strategy for Education and Training. It sanctions

the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development to publish, print, and prepare syllabuses relating to ICT education. KICD is further required to design digital curriculum content, design and transmit virtual learning resources, and offer educator's in-service training (Republic of Kenya, 2005). Conversely, ineffective facilities and inadequate funding have hindered the setting up of ICT structures in institutions. Consequently, substantial education policy review is essential to consolidate the gains that have so far been made in this sector, including the 100% learner transition policy in the basic level of learning in the country.

Theoretical Orientation for The Study

This article is based on the justice and fairness theory proposed by John Rawls (1971) who believes in justice as a principle in the government of contemporary social order. The framework offers a context that clarifies the significance of a society that is assumed to comprise of equal and free people, of political and personal liberty, of cooperative arrangement, and of equal opportunity that benefit the more and less advantaged members of societies. It supports the idea of justice from the view point that people are equal and free (Rawls, 1971). Educational system frameworks must do away with hurdles that prevent children from poor backgrounds from developing their talents in order to be successful regarding social aspects (Rawls, 1971).

The theory emphasizes that the most important goods such as wealth and income, opportunity and liberty, and the bases of self-respect are supposed to be shared equally so that all in society are able to realize their interests (Rawls, 1999). Any uneven distribution is detrimental to the pursuit of the interests of the less fortunate. With respect to policy in education, the issue is essentially seen as one of those providing access to the poor but bright learners (Republic of Kenya, 2005). The theory maintains that children need to have equal opportunities at all levels of education irrespective of their social and economic backgrounds. Each citizen should be accorded, through schooling, an opportunity to exercise freedom and improve their status. Through relevant education policy reform, this will guarantee appropriate conditions

to implement the pillars of equal opportunity, where all have access to an education that suits them (Rawls, 1971). Doing so in light of the COVID-19 situation in Kenya, it is hoped that handicaps that are inherited from being born poor will be removed or reduced (Rawls, 1971).

The theory of justice and fairness was found to be relevant to this study because the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been experienced in various ways globally in all sectors including education. In particular, it has challenged the efficacy of both policy and practice in the education sector. The current Kenyan policy on education framework has been criticized as inadequate to address such challenges as the ones posed by the pandemic, hence exposing learners and teachers to all sorts of injustices leading to inequalities in offering education as a common good. Inevitably, substantial education policy review is essential to consolidate the gains that have so far been made in this sector, including the 100% learner transition policy in the basic level of learning in the country. The COVID-19 challenges to the education sector are a barrier to poor families in their quest for education as they cannot afford to keep their children in school, hence not giving them equal opportunity (Areba, 2020).

Despite its strengths, Rawls' theory has been challenged - marked bibliography of critical articles appeared in early 1982 (Wellbank, Snook, & Mason, 1982) and five volumes of critical papers were published in 1999 (Richardson & Weithman 1999). Many of the critics have not noted that Rawls' theory is visibly not re-joining all the political and ethical challenges humanity face. The ideologies he proposed are envisioned to be utilized to certain basic institutions of society and are not automatically binding for other distribution issues - such as wealth between generations, health services, or justice across borders (Wellbank et al., 1982). Humanity obligation regarding world development remained principally unaddressed by Rawls until he discussed the norms of foreign policy in his book *The Law of Peoples* (1999). Also, the principles were projected by him to be utilized in a well-ordered society. How social institutions should remedy injustices of the past, and what should be done when living under unjust arrangements, are

significant issues that Rawls scarcely addressed (Richardson & Weithman 1999). Conversely, the strengths outweigh the weaknesses in his work.

Methodology

The study selected and reviewed empirical literature related to the subject between 2005-2020. The reviews were done under the following sub-titles:

1. Policy to enhance education financing and coordination for long lasting impact;
2. Policy to make strong the flexibility of systems of education for equitable and sustainable development; and
3. Encouraging education policies on innovation to hasten change in teaching and learning.

This study utilized discourse analysis which interprets documents in order for the investigator to give meaning and voice to a topic under assessment (Bowen, 2009). The study collected information from published articles on education policy covering information about Kenya. The study only reviewed articles that were concerned with education policy.

Results and Discussion

The study sought to review education policy and practice following the occurrence of the Corona Virus Disease-19 in Kenya under the following sub-titles:

1. Policy to enhance education financing and coordination for long lasting impact;
2. Policy to make strong the flexibility of systems of education for equitable and sustainable development; and
3. Encouraging education policies on innovation to hasten change in teaching and learning.

Policy Choices to Mitigate the COVID-19 Catastrophe in Kenya

To be able to lessen the potentially upsetting effects of the Corona Virus Disease-19, government and other shareholders need to consider the policy options presented in this section.

Policy to enhance education financing and coordination for long lasting impact. According to International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Outlook (2020) on global economy, the epidemic has taken the globe into the worst worldwide recession in history. This result might have enduring impact on economic growth and public financing. The ramifications have been particularly severe on developing countries including Kenya. The national government in Kenya needs to craft policies to alleviate long-range effects on school-age children despite limitations on public spending, with educational mediations being part of the national Corona Virus Disease-19 inducement programs along with public health, and social protection initiatives. The global community might need to intervene to protect financing of education. Increasing monetary space, something that is already prominent in the international agenda, especially with regard to education, is already an obvious issue (IMF, 2020). There are several conjointly reinforcing entry avenues to get there.

Reinforce domestic resource mobilization policies, give education first importance and deal with ineptitude. Since broadening the tax framework in nations with big informal sectors takes a long time, alternative measures such as being strict on tax evasion and avoidance, revising tax inducements and agreements, among others, need to be explored urgently (Domestic Tax and Education, 2016). Undeniably, education institutions share a responsibility to raise the economic base by making better education service delivery and cost effectiveness. Priority should be given to reforms and innovations that are going on at the moment. The relevant ministries like Education and Finance should systematically and sustainably work out an allocation formula that should increase allocation to the education sector to reduce the negative effects occasioned by the Corona Virus Disease-19. Locally and internationally, stakeholders should argue for investments in education and in other sectors in order to give urgency and progress to reforms with monetary support for related development and reform in public fiscal administration as a whole (World Bank, 2020a).

Reinforce global coordination policies to address the debt crunch. A number of low-

income nations categorized as heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) have unrelentingly experienced snags in servicing their huge external debts. Many of these nations including Kenya are in sub-Saharan Africa. The comparatively escalating level of Kenya's external debts and mounting debt liability carries with it severe repercussions on the nation's progress and liability sustainability responsibility (IMF 2001a & IMF 2001b). Similarly, to many low-income sub-Saharan African states, a bigger percentage of Kenya's external debt comprises of official debts. A breakdown of official debt indicates that in 1970s, debt was largely from bilateral base. As from the 1980s, multilateral debt adds up to the main percentage of overall debt stock. The portion of multilateral debt was augmented temperately in 1980s chiefly as a consequence of huge payouts of modified loaning by the World Bank (O'Brien & Ryan, 1999).

As from the 1990s, the percentage of concessional debt has been increasing. Kenya's debt is estimated to hit sixty-nine per cent of GDP by 2023. An upsurge of over 10% points over pre-crisis levels. Public debt service is estimated to rise from 9 to 12% of GDP between 2020 and 2023. In the absence of access to supplementary aid in the form of debt relief and concessional financing, the nation will find it difficult to fulfill creditor dues in the near future (World Bank, 2020a). The G20 nations recently granted a "debt service cessation" for the developing nations till 31st December, 2020 (OECD, 2020). The cessation might allow a brief financial elasticity, but it falls short in addressing the plight of all susceptible nations like Kenya. It also does not apply itself on the long-range question which is sustainability of debt. One of the approaches to lay an economic base for developing nations is to relieve, postpone, and restructure debt. Nations should spend on education, and this needs all stakeholders to act.

Develop policy to safeguard formal development aid for education. Because of the magnitude of the worldwide emergency in education, sponsors are required to make sure that assistance pledges to the sector are constant, augmented, and focused especially on risks and for children in emergencies. The pandemic has made worse the result of connecting inequalities

on educational opportunity, leveraging educational activities to communicate essential alterations to public health behavior is important (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2020).

Policy to Reinforce the Flexibility of Systems of Education for Equitable and Sustainable Growth

Education, as an indisputable right of everyone, is the foundation of equal, just, and inclusive civilizations and is a major factor of sustainable growth. Reinforcing the flexibility of education systems allows nations to react to the instantaneous difficulties of re-opening institutions safely and put them to cope in a better way with future catastrophes. This is possible through the policies presented in this section.

Policies focusing on equity and inclusion. Over one million Kenyan learners are perpetually out of learning institutions regularly on grounds that they are too poor, too far from schools, or incapacitated (The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2009). Approaches to build robust education systems to cater for all students and the necessity to know and supply group needs that are marginalized and make sure that they access quality and full-term education as a key. Students in areas that are marginalized need to be given first priority so that their learning is not further put to danger. School feeding programs are also significant to vulnerable children, more so for girl children from poor homes who might not afford food (Mundy & Proulx, 2019). Further, incentives are also important to encourage participation rates and to increase school re-enrollment and attendance. The government and donors must guarantee that the education system addresses the susceptibilities and necessities specific to children, adults, and to gender dynamics in catastrophes. Outdated gender customs, with monetary pressures on families, must not stand in the way of girls and the less privileged students from going back to schools and completing their schooling.

Strengthen policies on capacities to manage risks at all levels of education. To survive disasters, capacity development is needed at the individual and institutional levels. It is the capability to make and implement emergency strategies, including alternate

education pathways to alleviate impacts. The capabilities of stakeholders in education, in many cases, need reinforcement to assess and review prevailing sector strategies and policies to add to adaptive reactions to the COVID-19 disaster. To achieve this, incorporating data about risks and effects on information systems and educational management helps to facilitate the planning and implementing of educational policies and programs that are crisis-sensitive and include disaster preparedness. Education players at grass roots require capacity building to analyze risks to the health of students, educators, and parents, and to detect students at the verge of leaving school. The grass root shareholders require the ability to evaluate the scope and efficiency of alternate frameworks for continuity of quality education provision (Jacklin, 2020).

Guarantee robust leadership and organization policies. The many relevant stakeholders required to address and mitigate the impact of disasters can result in replication, ineptitude, and misperception when there is no vigorous leadership and organization. The leadership for disaster planning and management at the Ministry of Education is important for flexibility in the education sector. National education leadership warrants that human-centered approaches are supportable, affiliated with country-wide priorities, and able to alleviate the effect of calamities on students and education communities. Vigorous organization approaches are also required in order to optimize inputs of all shareholders, building on complementarities, including civil society groups, to address the needs of those most sidelined (Mundy & Hares, 2020).

Policy on enhancing consultation and communication strategies. Education officers, educators, parents, guardians, and those who give care to children play essential roles in the responses to the COVID-19 catastrophe as they take on supplementary tasks in unfamiliar times. To engage these shareholders in education may boost the education sector's elasticity. Consulting and communicating with all education stakeholders including educators, students, and those most sidelined are significant to the actual implementing of strategies and reactions in supplying the prerequisites of students, and

to enrich their flexibility as well as that of the education sector (Jacklin, 2020).

Encourage education policies on innovation to speed up positive revolution in learning and teaching. Innovations were introduced in line with the reactions to aid schooling and instruction in the wake of worldwide closing of schools and slowing down of non-formal training. However, reactions have revealed important divisions starting with the digital divide. Losses regarding learning as a result of long school closures indicate that a number of educational outcomes are in danger. UNESCO (2020) states that it is not possible to have the world as it was before the onset of the COVID-19, and so nations seek to “build back resilience”. There is need to warrant that the education sector be inclusive, flexible, and equitable. The extensive efforts put in the present to react to the effects on the education system remind all that any variations formerly considered hard or incredible to execute are possible. Society has to utilize the chance to discover novel approaches to mitigate the difficulties in learning and generate solutions that are workable.

Crafting policies to address learning losses and averting dropouts, particularly of relegated students. As the country reflects on post-COVID-19 aftershocks, it should be underscored that what has been learnt from the pandemic hinges on three priorities: making up for losses to learning, returning of students at risk of dropping out of school, and concentrating on socio-emotional welfare of learner population, educators and non-teaching staff. Any meaningful policy enhancements should revolve around these three priorities.

Policies to aid educators’ readiness. If inclusive and equitable learning is to be assured amid the pandemic, it is important that all stakeholders (teachers, tutors, lecturers, support staff, managers) are prepared and assisted in their mandate. The use of technology, on its own, might not guarantee improved learning outcomes. More than empowering educators with ICT knowledge, it is important to guarantee their assessment and skills on pedagogy to address learner deficiency and to put to work the fast-tracked curriculum and differentiated learning approaches which might surface on resumption of learning.

Digital systems require appropriate content, suitable instructional models, operative teaching practices, and a reassuring learning environment (Jacklin, 2020). Trainers’ capacity building and professionalization are significant to make sure they are adequately qualified, rewarded, and equipped. The government must reinforce support systems for educators, organizers, and guardians in the successful and safe utilization of technologies for learning (Jacklin, 2020).

Re-Conceptualizing definition of the right to education to encompass internet access as right. There has been substantial responsiveness with regard to the utilization of technologies to guarantee continuity of learning as COVID-19 escalates in numbers. In Kenya, the Ministry of Education (MoE) launched several initiatives premeditated to enhance continuity in learning, which encompassed education programs that were aired through TV, radio, and YouTube. In collaboration with the Kenya Publishers Association, the MoE made electronic copies of textbooks accessible at no cost on the Kenya Education Cloud for all schoolchildren. The MoE, through the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority and in collaboration with Telkom Kenya, deployed Google’s Loon Balloons carrying 4G base stations over Kenyan airspace (UWEZO,2020). Nevertheless, while these are sound measures premeditated to sure that no learner is disadvantaged. it is a reality that access to these services is erratic, and several learners have not benefited from these initiatives, in both rural and urban areas (UWEZO,2020).

The digital remedies to enhance schooling which were in place on the eve of the pandemic need to make central inclusion and equity to ensure that all students are beneficiaries. There is a need of an open and free source of technologies for instruction and learning since it is not possible to provide quality education with content built externally to the instructional context and foreign to the human relations between instructors and learners (UNESCO, 2020). It is also not possible that education can depend on digital contexts whose control is by private entities alone (UNESCO, 2020). The government should support open educational provisions and open digital access from all sectors.

Reform policy to eliminate obstacles to connectivity. The catastrophe revealed the reality of the deep digital divide and associated equity gaps which need critical attention (World Bank, 2020a). To eliminate technological obstacles, the government and development partners need to work harmoniously by spending on digital resources and bringing down costs on connectivity. Narrowing the digital divide needs investment in digital literacy for the marginalized. Equally, depending on technology might not, result in actual learning, especially the ones sidelined. It is essential to make sure that, as students get access to the internet, guardian support and accessibility of learning materials is assured which will permit optimum benefit from digital solutions (Mundy & Hares, 2020). Low-technology and no-technology methods must not be disregarded for people who have poor access to technology. Generally, the government requires coming up with policy to ensure that learners from the humblest families will not be left behind (Republic of Kenya, 2005).

Reinforce policies on monitoring records of learning. Dealing with the global pandemic requires incessant monitoring of data to do with students, educators, and that regarding to institutions. Monitoring should be based on a combination of prevailing data and assessment structures and feasible new methodologies customized to this specific setting (UNDP, 2020). To strengthen flexibility, data collected should aid in monitoring the learning-teaching environment and assist to evaluate school accountability. The timeliness and quality of data are important and suggest a matching approach that brings down the digital divide and increases teachers' skills in teaching practices for distance education. A system of education monitoring is important because of the data underlying it. Commitments should be made through thorough policies to assist schools generate quality data that they utilize and forward upstream to permit the continuous monitoring of the learning outcomes (UNDP, 2020).

Reinforce policies on articulation and flexibility across all levels of education. A significant component of a robust system of education is its flexibility, which generally depends on a robust articulation between types and levels of education and the capacity to put

together alternate approaches of delivery. For instance, hybrid/mixed learning which offers quasi-personalized learning paths for learners demands an amalgamation of teaching approaches, and mobilizing alternative pedagogical resources from country-level and global avenues. However, mixed learning brings up the question of recognition. Looking at preserving combined systems, robust connections should be established between formal and non-formal structures, which include recognizing, validating, and accrediting of skills and knowledge attained through all types of learning. These robust connections will permit the education system in the country to become more equitable and inclusive. They will also be more operative in fulfilling their mission, more effective in their operations, prudent in the use of resources, and better prepared to serve the wants of their clients and society at large (UNESCO, 2020b).

Conclusion

The tremor caused in education by the COVID-19 pandemic has been extraordinary. It brings to the spotlight efforts to achieve global education goals but also the marginalized poor. This far, education stakeholders have remained robust, and this lays a ground for a re-bounce. However, there is risk of a spiral to exclusion and learning loss. Yet, each negative spiral of aggravating socio-economic circumstances indicates its reverse image of a positive spiral. This may lead to the future of the education we want which is inclusive in its delivery, releases the potential of individuals, and in the collective fulfillment in all aspects of life through education policy reform. There is limitless drive and untapped resources to count on for the restoration, not only of education's essential services, but of its essential targets through reform of policy. It is the responsibility of governments globally to live true to principle, and institute reforms through comprehensive policies, so that not only will learners regain their promised future but that all education stakeholders find their role in making it happen.

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