

Scaling Up Early Childhood Development and Education in a Devolved Setting: Policy Making, Resource Allocations, and Impact of the Tayari School Readiness Program in Kenya

EE4A

Evidence-based Education Reforms for Sustainable National Transformation

Dr. Benjamin Piper
RTI International
bpiper@rti.org



Introduction

- ▶ Existing evidence on the crucial contribution of high-quality ECDE to brain development, future academic Success, Health Outcomes and overall national economic growth.
- ▶ Sustainable Development Goal Target 4.2 has become a rallying cry for ECDE advocates.
- ▶ It has ignited a global movement toward expanding ECDE
- ▶ Kenya's guiding policy document for devolved ECDE, the Pre-Primary Policy, was launched in 2017
- ▶ There is a need for clear guidance to the county-level ECDE Officials on their authority to determine and implement devolved ECDE policies.
- ▶ With scarce resources, typical emphasis in ECDE has been on access: Constructing classrooms and hiring teachers
- ▶ Little resources are allocated for teaching and learning materials, teacher training and support

Literature Review

- ▶ In the course of the study, Literature was reviewed touching on:
- ▶ A) Access and Quality
- ▶ B) Decentralization and ECDE
- ▶ C) Decentralized management of ECDE investment in Ethiopia
- ▶ D) Decentralized management of ECDE investment in China
- ▶ E) Expansion of ECDE Provision in South Africa
- ▶ F) Decentralized expansion of ECDE in Zimbabwe

Kenya ECD Background

- ▶ Increased enrolment in pre-primary education from 2.71 million in 2012 to 3.2 million in 2016 representing an increase of 10.2%
- ▶ Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) increasing from 69.4 per cent in 2012 to 76.6 percent in 2016
- ▶ NER increased from 66.9 per cent in 2013 to 74.9 per cent in 2016
- ▶ Total number of pre-primary education teachers rose from 101,062 in 2013 to 107,187 in 2015
- ▶ There are still pertinent challenges in the implementation of ECDE services in the country despite these achievements.

Research Questions

This study was focused in answering three main research questions:

- a) How do education officials at devolved levels in Kenya make decisions about resource allocations in ECDE?
- b) How do education officials at devolved levels in Kenya make decisions about the implementation of policies regarding ECDE quality?
- c) Does the impact of the Tayari intervention differ by devolved location?

RESEARCH DESIGN

- ▶ Randomized Control Trials (RCT) was used in the selection of the Tayari counties.
- ▶ Non-Tayari Counties were selected by Ministry leadership based on similarities to other counties in terms of their ECDE provision and quality.
- ▶ Qualitative interviews and Focus Group Discussions were used to collect data from the devolved ECDE Leaders in Kenya.
- ▶ Senior officials of the national education system and policy representatives from the sampled counties were interviewed for the study.

Sampling of Respondents for Qualitative Data Collection

Area of interest	National leaders	Representatives from Tayari counties	Representatives from non-Tayari counties
Policy	2	7	3
Technical	2	22	15

FINDINGS

- ▶ All the assessed counties received unrestricted block grants from the central government to support county functions, including ECDE.
- ▶ Members of County Assemblies (MCAs) have the final say in deciding how much money is spent on particular sectors, including ECDE.
- ▶ There is nominal public participation in the discussions on the County Integrated Development Plans
- ▶ ECDE funds were combined under the education department, includes Vocational Education.
- ▶ Huge disparities in ECDE Expenditure across the counties.
- ▶ Most of the counties spent most of their funding on infrastructure

FINDINGS ...

- ▶ Each of the counties had established ECDE departments with full-time, county-paid employees
- ▶ Very little investments in teaching and learning materials
- ▶ Counties have set the basic qualification for an ECD teacher at the certificate level.
- ▶ Most counties have no funds for teacher training and support.
- ▶ There are big differences between Tayari counties and non-Tayari counties on ECDE implementation.

CONCLUSIONS

- ▶ Decentralization affords countries a unique opportunity to improve both the quality and equity of ECDE service provision
- ▶ There is need for the decentralized units to allocate increased funding to ECDE.
- ▶ Government systems should establish an effective and coherent ECDE system.
- ▶ Guidance is needed on prioritisation of ECDE funding activities at the county level.
- ▶ Cross learning across counties to ensure the uniform implementation of ECDE in the country.

Thank you

