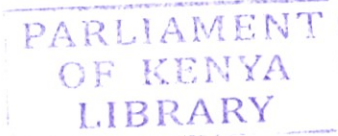


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Report on a
petition on
abolition of
class 8 examination
fees tabled by
Hon. Sabine Chege
Wed Oct 30, 2013
9:09 AM
Luv
30/10/13

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PETITION ON THE ABOLITION OF CLASS 8 EXAMINATION FEES AND INTRODUCTION OF FREE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME FOR ALL PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

Pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order No. 227 (2) of the National Assembly, the Hon. Irungu Kang'ata, Member for Kiharu presented a petition on 18th June, 2013. The petitioners were urging the House to revise the budget estimates for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and compel or cause the Ministry to provide funds in its budget for the primary free school feeding programme for all public primary school pupils in Kenya and payment on behalf of all Standard 8 public primary school pupils of Kenya National Examinations Council's (KNEC) final examination fees.

Detailed hereunder, find the Ministry's brief and views on the two issues raised by the petitioner on Free Primary School Feeding Programme, and Abolition of KCPE Examination Fees:

1. INTRODUCTION OF FREE SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Background

The State of School Meals Programme in Kenya

Health and nutrition have significant impact on the overall educational achievements of school-age children. School Health, Nutrition and Meals programme is aimed at promoting good health, hygiene and nutrition among school-age children. Ensuring that children are well fed, healthy and able to learn are essential to the effectiveness in an education system. Good health and nutrition increase enrolment and stabilize attendance of all pupils including the disadvantaged. Kenya has had a school meals programme since 1980 with the support from World Food Programme and at the moment there are two types of feeding programmes namely; Regular School Meals Programme (RSMP) and Home Grown School Meals Programme (HGSMP) with a total beneficiary of 1.3 million pupils.

Objective of Programme

The overall objective of the feeding programme is to support the Government's effort towards attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and this has become a significant strategy for reaching marginalized communities in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) Districts. It is true that school meals plays an important role in enhancing access and retention in the marginalized, pastoral and agro-pastoral areas of Kenya which are affected by food insecurity.

a) Regular School Meals Programme (SMP)

The Government of Kenya (GoK) with support of World Food Programme (WFP) provides a mid-day meal to 600,100 pre-primary and primary school children through the Regular SMP in 45 ASAL districts and Nairobi slums. The Regular programme involves the physical distribution of food commodities to schools with the bulk of the food commodities imported into the country. This support is currently captured as appropriation in aid where the total cost of food to all the pre-primary and primary schools in 2012/13 was Ksh 1.2 billion.

b) Home Grown School Meals (HGSM) Programme

The programme covers 759,366 pre-primary and primary school children mainly from 61 ASAL districts with a total of 2068 schools. This is a government funded programme where funds are disbursed directly to school accounts and the school does the procurement of food locally following the laid down government regulations and guidelines. The current unit cost of feeding one child per day is Ksh10. It is also true that other parts of the country, regarded as high potential and not in the programme, also have pockets of poverty with some households facing serious food challenges and children from these families can greatly benefit from free school meals programme.

Requirement of Home Grown School Meals

$$=759,366 \times 195 \times 10$$

759,366 being total enrolment of children.

195 being feeding days in a year.

Kshs 10.00 being the unit cost of feeding one child per day

Total cost of feeding 759,366 children = Kshs1, 480,763,700 00 (approx Kshs 1.48 billion) per year.

Food Basket Ratio

Cereals- 150 grams/child/day

Pulses - 40 grams/child/day

Vegetable Oil - 5 grams/child/day

Salt - 2 grams/child/day

However, the Ministry has an allocation of Ksh 900 million in the Printed Estimates in 2013/14 Financial Year against a requirement of Ksh 1.48 billion. The beneficiary schools with an enrolment of 759,366 in the programme are currently underfunded by Ksh 580 million. However, the number of children in all public primary schools is 8.8 million and not 6 million. To feed all of them the Ministry will require Ksh 17.1 billion which translates to Ksh 1.4 billion per month.

Cost of feeding all public primary schools

$$= 8,754,143 \times 195 \times 10$$

8,754,143 being total enrolment of children.

195 being feeding days in a year.

Kshs 10.00 being the unit cost of feeding one child per day.

Total cost of feeding 8,754,143 = Kshs. 17,070,578,850.00 or approx Ksh 17.07 billion per year.

To provide a mid-day meal to all children in public primary schools in one year, the Ministry shall therefore require Ksh 17.1 billion. This will be very expensive and may be unsustainable in the long run given that the Ministry has to continue providing very essential services like instructional materials to primary schools under Free Primary Education (FPE) and in some cases infrastructure funds.

2. ABOLITION OF CLASS 8 EXAMINATION FEES

Background Information

In Kenya, Education is one of the sectors that consumes a large percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This is an indication of the importance the Government places on the education sector, being mainly responsible for the development of the human resource needed to drive the economy of the country.

Education is a crucial sector recognized in the **Kenya's Vision 2030** under the Social Pillar which aims at creating a just, cohesive and equitable social development in a clean and secure environment. In line with this, the government took bold steps to introduce the Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 followed with Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) in 2008, among other programmes, with the sole purpose of improving quality, access, and expansion of

education aimed at increasing literacy rates countrywide. This raised enrolment in public primary and secondary schools from 5.9 million in 2003 to 8.8 million in 2013 and 1.3 million in 2008 to 1.9 million in 2013, respectively.

Justification for Having Examinations and Charging the Same

Assessments and Examinations are objective and accurate methods of determining the quality and success of an education system. It is therefore crucial and necessary to have the KCPE examination which is useful in assessing the level of performance for each child at Primary Education level, and for enabling transition to secondary school.

To run Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination, it costs the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) about **Ksh 1,300 per candidate**. In this year 2013, with KCPE candidature of **844,475**, KNEC will use **Ksh 1.1 billion to administer the examinations**. The main cost centres for managing the KCPE examinations include the following:-

- *Supervision and invigilation expenses*
- *Administration of the examination expenses*
- *Printing examination expenses.*
- *Test development expenses and*
- *Purchase of certificates for each candidate*

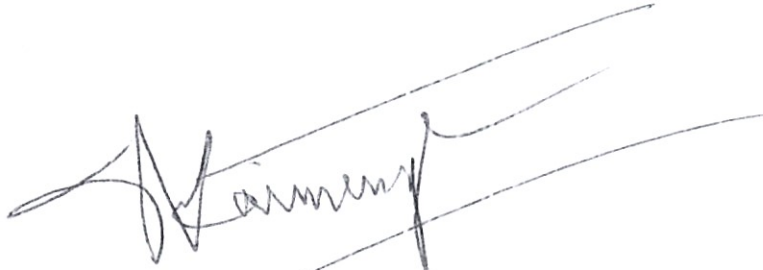
The examination fee charged by KNEC is **Ksh 800 per candidate** which contributed to about **Ksh 676m** in 2013. This figure is below the expected amount which has been rising for the last few years due to increased cost of running the examinations. This status has led to KNEC running a budget with a deficit which currently stands at about **Ksh 750m**.

The Treasury provides KNEC with a capitation of only **Ksh 300m** annually which is too low compared to a budget of **Ksh 3.8 billion** used for running **KCPE, KCSE** and other **20 Examinations** which KNEC administers each year. Indeed even if the Ksh 300 million capitation was given to KNEC to be used to running KCPE examinations alone, there would still be a shortfall of about **Ksh 376m**.

Based on the above explanation therefore, the examination fees charged on KCPE candidates is justified unless as proposed by the petitioners, the Government increases capitation to **Ksh 680m**, a figure equivalent to what KNEC raises from KCPE examination fee or (Ksh 800 per candidate) and not **Ksh 560m**.

However, and due to the budgetary constraints the country is currently facing, coupled with competing demands in other priority areas, increasing the allocation for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) in order to meet the cost of Class 8 examination

fees, will be unsustainable. Experience over the years also shows that no candidate has ever failed to register for KCPE examinations because the parent could not afford to raise fees.



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CABINET SECRETARY

