

# **A Report On a Survey On Education in Kuria West District**

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**Research commissioned by:**

**Dr. Sangai Mohochi**

**Research carried out by:**

- 1. Chacha Joel Kerata**
- 2. Waisiko T. Kebata**
- 3. Cosmas Mokami**

**Report written and compiled by:**

- 1. Waisiko T. Kebata**
- 2. Chacha Joel Kerata**

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## **A Report On a Survey On Education in Kuria West**

### **Objectives of the Survey**

- To study the level of transition of learners in Kuria West District.
- To study the educational facilities in schools and their efficiency.
- To find out the number and categories of educational institutions in Kuria West District.
- To find out the number of professionals in Kuria West District.
- To find out the rate of school drop out in the district.

### **Introduction**

Geographical Location:

Kuria West District is the southernmost district in Nyanza province. It borders the Republic of Tanzania to the South, Kuria East to the North-East and Migori District to the North-West.

The district is divided into 3 administrative divisions namely: Kehancha, Mabera and Masaba. Kuria West district is one of the poorest districts in the country and the community depends on subsistence farming. It is one of the marginalised districts in terms of development. The district has the least human resource, i.e. the number of professionals coming from the district are few and indeed countable. The development problems faced by the district dates back to the time when it was still in the Greater Southern Nyanza district. Most of educational resources that were meant for the district could seldom reach the community hence the developmental lag in terms of education.

### **Research Methods**

- Interviews
- Observations

The above research methods deemed fit for the research in order to get the first hand information. A group of three researchers went round the whole district in sample areas collecting valuable data. The following were the sample areas:

- (i) At least three primary schools per division.
- (ii) At least a secondary school in each division.
- (iii) Educational offices within the district.
- (iv) Administrative offices (provincial) in the district.
- (v) Central bureau of statistics Kuria West district.
- (vi) Residents of Kuria West districts especially parents.

The findings of the research have been discussed under the following subtitles:

- (i) Number of schools and students/pupils within Kuria West district.
- (ii) Performance level of students/pupils within the district.
- (iii) Transition level of students/pupils within the district.
- (iv) State of facilities in educational institutions within the district.
- (v) Number of professionals in Kuria West district.

### **Number of Schools and Students'/Pupils' Enrollment**

Administratively, Kuria West district is sub-divided into three divisions namely:

- Kehancha division
- Maberera division
- Masaba division

In Kehancha division, there are 43 primary schools and 12 secondary schools. There are no middle/tertiary educational institutions in the division. In Maberera division, there are 24 primary schools and 6 secondary schools. In this division there is one (1) polytechnic which is almost defunct, and whose benefits, the community is yet to realize. In Masaba division, there are 22 primary schools and only 3 secondary schools. Just like Kehancha division, Masaba has not any tertiary educational institutions. In total, in the entire Kuria West district, we have 89 primary schools and 21 secondary schools.

The enrollment in the 89 primary schools stands at 38,048 pupils with the girls being 20,435 and boys being 17,613. In the 21 secondary schools, the enrollment stands at 5487 students with the boys being 3620 while girls being 1867. In terms of enrollment, the following schools were captured:

Masaba division:

School	No. of Boys	No. of Girls
Bohorera Primary	287	249
Muchebe Primary	124	119
Nyanchabo Primary	224	195
Nyankore Sec. School	161	88

Maberera division:

School	No. of Boys	No. of Girls
Kiburanga Primary	169	149
Ngochoni Primary	152	122
Maberera Primary	239	266
St. Augustine Motemorabu Secondary School	74	52

Kehancha division:

School	No. of Boys	No. of Girls
Nyasese Primary	141	131
Nguku Mahando Primary	265	338
Kebobono Primary	108	102
Ikerege Sec.	227	181

NB: - The enrollment in primary schools in the district is much higher than that of secondary schools.

- The rate of enrollment for girls depreciates as they move up the levels of education.

### **Performance Level of Students/Pupils**

Compared with other neighbouring districts, the performance of learners in Kuria West is still very low and below average. Pupils in primary schools were found to be doing fairly well, though more needs to be done. Their counterparts in secondary schools do not match by any means the performance of students in the neighbouring schools.

For example, in last year's (2007) KCSE, there were only 19 students who made it to the university from Kuria district while in the neighbouring Miguri district, a school by the name Kanga boys high school produced about 80 students for the university education. This implies that the performance of students in secondary schools in Kuria West district is not satisfactory hence needs intervention.

The table below, shows data that was collected in terms of performance in schools within the district. In the last three years:

Mabera division:

School	Year 2005		Year 2006		Year 2007	
	No. of Candidates	M.M.S. %	No. of Candidates	M.M.S. %	No. of Candidates	M.M.S. %
Kiburanga Pri.	18	356.67	24	313.81	20	363.96
Mabera Pri.	19	265.78	21	250.48	19	267.48
Ngochoni Primary	15	273.18	12	306.22	13	296.62
Kugisingisi Prim.	17	268.14	19	271.44	19	291.13

Masaba division:

School	Year 2005		Year 2006		Year 2007	
	No. of Candidates	M.M.S. %	No. of Candidates	M.M.S. %	No. of Candidates	
M.M.S.						
Bohorera Primary	23	268.45	23	272.68	25	274.88
Muchebe Primary	18	234.67	14	259.56	15	220.33
Nyanchabo Primary	15	242.68	17	257.33	18	295.16

Kehancha division:

School	Year 2005		Year 2006		Year 2007	
	No. of Candidates	M.M.S. %	No. of Candidates	M.M.S. %	No. of Candidates	
M.M.S.						
Nyasese Primary	16	228.62	16	226.40	18	235.33
Nguku Mahando "	17	210.33	16	221.75	17	243.76
Kebobono "	21	192.67	18	226.30	20	227.45

In the course of the research, the following were seen as factors militating against good performance of students in secondary schools within Kuria West district compared to other neighbouring districts:

- Lack of enough facilities in schools
- Poor facilities in schools
- Family background
- Lack of enough teachers
- Lack of role models

Owing to the number of pupils and students in schools in Kuria West the research found out that the facilities are inadequate and over strained. For example in Bohorera primary school in Masaba division has 536 pupils and only eight (8) classrooms whose carrying capacity should be 40

pupils per class. Desks in these classrooms are also inadequate. In most primary schools visited by the researchers, it was found out that four (4) pupils share a single desk. Mostly affected are the secondary schools who lack basic facilities such as libraries, laboratories, computer laboratories. For example, Nyabikaye secondary school was found to be having no library. However the head teacher's office doubles as a books store. The school also lacks a science laboratory; what they have is a small room containing equipment and a cupboard of chemicals. The room has not enough chairs and tables on which experiments can be conducted. In a nutshell, most secondary schools in Kuria West district share the same fate. A few of them were found to have "working" libraries with outdated books with relevant books being just but a handful.

The few available facilities in schools in Kuria West district, though necessary we found to be in poor conditions and inefficient. The schools were found to be lacking enough latrines/toilets. However the few available we found to be in poor state and dilapidated that they posed a health hazard -- to the students and staff. For example, in Ikerege primary school with student population of over 600 pupils was found to be having only 8 latrines some of which lacked doors on them. Sorore secondary school in Kehancha division with a student population of 88 students has only 2 latrines that serve both girls and boys in the school. Chalkboards in most schools were also found to be in poor state; most of them were found to be badly painted. Generally the available conditional facilities in schools were found to be wanting. Most primary schools have their classes having floors that are not cemented (earthen floors) which are a fertile ground for jiggers, dust causing coughs. For example, Bohorera primary, Nyasese primary, Muchebe primary, Ngochoni, Ngukumando primary were found to have earthen floors. Most schools were also found to be dependent on pressure lamps as their source of lighting except schools that are along the highway which are connected to electricity.

Both primary and secondary schools were found to be lacking enough teachers. Primary schools in Kuria West district with pupil population of 38,048 have only 544 teachers translated to a pupil teacher ratio of 70:1. Secondary school student population is 5487 have about 174 teachers translating to a student teacher ratio of 32:1. Due to this factor of lack of enough teachers, teachers are found not to be more efficient in teaching due to the number of students/pupils he has to handle. For example, a teacher of Mathematics with 70 pupils in classes will not be able to give an assignment and mark it and perhaps correct pupils in good time. A school like Nyasese primary school with pupil population of 272 has only 4 teacher, Bohore primary school with pupil population of 536 has only 8 teachers.

Generally in Kuria West district, there are not enough role models on education. Most people in the district are farmers and many children tend to emulate their parents by considering and preferring farming to education. Two sub-locations in Kuria West district were visited and the following was found as tabled below:

Nyabikaye Sub-location:

No. of University Students (past 5 years)	-- 5
No. of Middle-level College Students	-- 8
No. of Graduates	-- 5
No. of P1 Trained Teachers	-- 24

No. of Diploma Trained Teachers	-- 4
No. of Graduate Teachers	-- 2
No. of Medical Doctors	-- Nil
No. of Pharmacists (Diploma)	-- 1
No. of Engineers	-- Nil
No. of University Lecturers	-- 2
No. of Policemen/Warriors/Soldiers	-- 4
No. of Tour Guides (Certificate)	-- 1

**Masaba Sub-location:**

No. of University Students (past 5 years)	-- 2
No. of Middle-level College Students "	-- 2
No. of Graduates	-- 2
No. of Diploma Holders	-- 1
No. of University Lecturers	-- 1
No. of Policemen/Warriors/Soldiers	-- More than 10

MB: Most people in Masaba Sub-location, prefer joining forces with a notion that they start getting "their money" faster compared to any other profession.

**Transition Level of Pupils/Student**

The transition rate of pupils/students in Kuria West district has never been 100%. The transition rate of pupils and students within the district is affected and thereby determined by the following factors:

- (i) School drop-out
- (ii) Ignorance of parent
- (iii) Performance of pupils/students
- (iv) Financial constraints.

**School drop-outs:**

School drop-outs have been sited as being one of the major causes of wastage in education in Kuria West district. Every year both secondary and primary schools experience drop-outs. From the statistics collected from the education office, it revealed that the rate of drop out of girls was 59% and that of boys was about 41%. The following were found to be reasons for high school drop outs in the district:

- Poverty
- Early marriage

- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Attitude
- Child labor
- Peer influence

In Kuria West district, the most predominant economic activity is farming with relevant frequency of 96.5%. The main food crops grown include maize, cassava, sorghum, finger millet and bananas. Cash crop in Kuria West district is tobacco which remains seasonal. Despite all these, it was evident that most households and individuals have inability to afford basic necessities such as food, clothing, health and education for children. Most households were also found to have inability to generate new income. Due to the poverty that people (parents) in Kuria West district face, they are unable to pay school fees for their children. For example within the environs of Kugisingisi primary school in Maberera division, the head teacher of Kugisingisi primary school complained of parents' inability to pay for their nursery school children, the small levies that were charged by the school. Due to this inability of parents to pay the small levies for their nursery school children, most children were found to be baby sitting their younger siblings at home. This inability of parents to pay fee is also evident in secondary schools. Due to the fact that much money (fee) and services are required in secondary schools, the situation becomes even worse at this level. In last year's KCPE, 7 pupils from Nyasese primary school got an admission in Sorore secondary school. Three (3) out of the 7 students have already dropped out of Sorore secondary school due to inability of their parents to pay for their small fee even though the government have subsidized secondary school fee.

Due to increase in the demands of life, most students drop out of school with an aim of fending for their daily needs by engaging themselves in income generating activities such as:

- car wash
- grazing
- tobacco farming
- Bodaboda
- Touting
- Criminal activities {stealing cows}

Due to poverty, many a family force their young girls out of school into early marriage in order for them to get cattle which is considered as wealth in the Kurian context. Due to these early marriages, many girls are forced to drop out of school even when they are educationally promising and this explains why the number of girls depreciates as they move higher in the educational ladder. Mostly in Kuria West district early marriage also results from Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) where after initiation girls tend to feel mature and ready for marriage even though they may be young as far as their age may be concerned.

#### Attitude:

Generally, it was found out that the attitude of both parents and students/pupils is negative towards education. Most parents and students/pupils within the district have not known quite well the value of education. Most of those children who were found to have dropped out of school are said to have done so due to ignorance of their parents and themselves on the value of education.

According to the Assistant Chief of Masaba sub-location, most children who dropped out of school considered schooling a waste of time and hence opt for farming as a better option. Negative attitude of both parents and school going children in the district was found out to be due to lack enough role models in villages from which most of them hail.

Due to the fact that many young men are farmers, they tend to influence their age mates who are in school to drop out of school. Young girls who drop out of schools and get married, also pose an influence to young girls. Young men and women in the villages tend to emulate each other and this impact on the high rate of high school drop outs in the district.

### Child labour:

Child labour within the district was also found to be a contributing factor to high rate of school drop out. During tobacco growing season which is usually between the month of September to the month of May, schools register high rates of drop out. This is so because most parents who grow tobacco force their school going children to remain at home to help in weeding harvesting curing and marketing the crop. A head teacher of Kugisingisi primary school observed that each year between September and May the following year, the school registers the lowest number of pupils due to a high drop out experience during these months due to child labour. However, he also observed that once the tobacco growing season ends, many other pupils come back to school though they are observed as lacking morale to being in school.

### Recommendations:

#### 1. Establishment of a Model School

Since most of the students from the district are not able to access national secondary schools, it is commendable that a model school be founded within the district that is able to compete favourably with the national schools in Kenya. The model school to be founded should have the following:

- Enough qualified teachers
- Modern classrooms
- Enough and efficient both conditional and educational facilities.
- Computer labs which are well equipped to keep students at par with the current world technologies.
- A variety of subjects from which students should choose the options that they can perform better in.

## 2. Sponsorships / Scholarships

Owing to the fact that most parents are poor leading to their bright children dropping out of school, it is commendable that bright and needy students be sponsored to avoid wastage in education in Kuria West district.

The few students who are done with the Bachelor's degree should be helped to secure scholarships to enable them to undergo their postgraduate courses so as to have more educationists within the district.

## 3. Community Sensitization

The community in Kuria West should be sensitized so as people can change their attitudes towards education. The few educated people should be used in the sensitization process through Chief's Barazas, churches etc. The way of life of the educated should be emulated, i.e. people to get married when they are prepared to do so, avoidance of FGM, etc.

The local leaders, i.e. administrative leaders and political leaders should also join hands in sensitizing the community. Other stakeholders in education from national level should also join hands in helping the district be in position to share the national cake on equal basis as other districts.

## 4. Economic Empowerment of the Community

So as the residents of the district to be able to maintain their children in school, they should be economically empowered. The government should introduce a stable cash crop in Kuria West other than the seasonal tobacco crop.

There should also be the formation of self help groups which can generate income to the community. This can only be possible if NGOs join hands in the establishment of such self help groups.