

*Early grade learning in Kenya  
amidst COVID-19 crisis*

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# Context of Early Childhood Education in Kenya

- For many years, the community played a critical role in supporting 70% of the early childhood centres, while Municipal council and private sector supported 30%
- Through NACECE, DICECE structure ECD personnel were inducted/trained (DICECE officers and preschool teachers)
- In the same structure, curriculum was developed and implemented
- In 2010, the constitution devolved preprimary education and child care facilities to the county government

# Devolution of Preprimary Education

National Government

Policy  
Standards  
Curriculum  
development  
Assessment

County Government

Hiring teachers  
Infrastructure  
Feeding program  
Teaching learning  
materials

# Enrollment

	2013	2018
Enrollment	2.8 Million	3.4 Million
NER	66.9%	77%
Preprimary Education Centres	40143	41779
Trained teachers	83814	106938
Untrained teachers	17248	11338

*Republic of Kenya, 2018, 2019*

# Teacher Education and Professional Development

- Preservice teacher development programmes are handled at different levels including universities and diploma colleges for teachers training for preprimary, primary and secondary levels.
- Curriculum reforms and the introduction of CBC, the minimum training level for teachers in Kenya is designed to be diploma
- Implication - preservice teacher training programmes at all levels must be redesigned to adequately prepare persons entering the teaching profession on pedagogical aspects.

# Challenges

- **Regional disparities** in access to preprimary education opportunities (ASAL NER 18%)

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- **Lack of policy** establishing a minimum level of **funding for preprimary**
- **Inadequate regulation** and enforcement of **quality standards**
- **Weak inter-sectoral coordination** which should bring together interventions from key sectors such as health, nutrition, education and social protection
- **High turnover of trained teachers** and low teacher morale due to lack of scheme of service
- **Shortage of instructional materials** and teacher professional development

# COVID 19 and Early Learning

- **1<sup>st</sup> case** of COVID 19 reported on **13<sup>th</sup> March 2020**. Learning institutions were closed between 15<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> March .
- As of **June 20<sup>th</sup>** overall Covid 19 disease burden was **4478** (*National Emergency Response Committee on coronavirus, 2020*).
- **129 children aged 0-9 years** COVID 19 Positive (*Ministry of Health, 2020*).
- Impact on education sector: **disrupted learning** to over **18 million** children with approximately **3.4 million preprimary** age.

*(Republic of Kenya, 2020, Were, 2020).*

# Challenges Paused by COVID 19 to Early Learning

- Interrupted learning - **increased anxiety** and uncertainty among learners.
- **Lack of access to digital platforms** due to lack of access devices and internet connectivity at home.
- **School feeding programmes for Learners from** low income households, (ASAL, urban slums), interrupted
- Different levels of **parental knowledge and attitude** as parents are expected to support children in learning.
- **Loss of jobs and income** for some non-teaching staff, BOM teachers and those from private institutions.



## Survey in five Nairobi Slum on Knowledge Attitudes and Practice April 2020 (1769 Participants) by the Population Council

Skipped a meal or ate less in past two weeks	68%
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Received some form of assistance (cash, voucher, food, soap)	7%
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Food as single most unmet need	74%
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Increased food prices	77%
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Complete or partial loss of job	4 out 5
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# Measures to mitigate COVID 19 Effects

- The **Ministry of Education** through the KICD is offering lessons through **EDU TV** channel, **Radio**, **Kenya Education Cloud**
- Evidence from a **perception survey** by KICD between 28<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> May, from **2664 participants** indicated that **several interventions** are being implemented.
  - **45%** of the solutions **targets learners in primary and secondary** schools
  - **2.8%** target parents
  - **3.1%** target teachers
  - **4 in every 5 learning solutions** are loaded on **mobile phone** (android enabled cellphone).

# Play Based Learning

- **Play is educational** when it is joyful, meaningful, actively engaging, iterative and socially interactive (Zosh, et al., 2017; Parker & Thomsen, 2019).
- Learning comprises acquisition of **skills** including **cognitive, social, emotional, creative and physical**.
- Many education systems have **reduced opportunities** for playful learning and **increased** emphasis on **structured approaches to learning** for school readiness and achievement (Jay & Knaus, 2018).

# Play Based Learning

- **Integrated approaches** to teaching and learning combine different levels of ~~teacher~~ and ~~child directedness~~ and value the development of a breadth of skills and knowledge such as learning through play (Parker & Thomsen, 2019).

# Play Based Learning: Integrated Pedagogue

Active learning

Collaborative and cooperative learning

Experiential learning

Guided discovery learning

Project based learning

# Way Forward

- **Blended learning** (online and face face) from early learning should be embraced. But will require **ICT infrastructure** in place, electricity, ICT gadgets,
- **Teachers** to be **enabled** through **capacity building**, to acquire **necessary skills, gadgets, data** to allow connectivity and supervision
- Provision of **radio and television programmes** will be viable for the **unreached children** when the marginalized communities are supported to **acquire the needed equipment** (radio, TV, etc) and electricity

# Way Forward

- Supporting **access to teaching and learning materials in remote areas** and improving **water and sanitation infrastructure** and knowledge of health, hygiene in preparation for school reopening is critical.
- **Support schools to observe public health guidelines** (social distancing, handwashing/sanitizing etc)
- Need for schools to **use integrated pedagogy** to enhance learning through play.

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*Asante sana*  
*Thank you*