Sustainable Development Goal for Education: The Case of Kenya's Efforts towards Universal Basic Education

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ABSTRACT

The agenda for education globally is currently being driven by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among the seventeen goals, education's SGD4 is a stand-alone goal whose priority Target One, articulates that by year 2030, all girls and boys should complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education. Kenya has strived towards this target of promoting access to education at these two levels through various approaches. This is arrived at through waiver of tuition fees, subsidies and putting in place other policies among them one hundred percent Transition policy so as to increase access to basic education at these two levels. However, even with tremendous growth in enrolments at primary school levels, not all of them complete primary school cycle. In addition, the transition to secondary school level is still a challenge, since out of those who complete primary school level, not everyone proceeds with education. On the other hand, transition rates to secondary school for boys and girls indicates that inequality still abound. This paper documents the extent to which Kenya has promoted twelve years of Universal Basic Education, the trends for Primary to Secondary Transition Rates (PSTR) from year 2011 to 2022, and establish the differences in transition rates between boys and girls. Lastly the obstacles that impede transition of pupils from primary to secondary school level, hence impacting on achievement of universal Basic education.

Keywords: Primary to Secondary Transition Rates, Sustainable Development Goals; Universal Basic Education; Pupil Completion Rate; Out of School Children

INTRODUCTION

Globally, governments world over have been in a continuous drive for ensuring no one is left behind in the provision of quality basic education as a basic human right. This has been articulated in international conventions, of which Kenya ascribes to. To begin with, the conventions promoting the provision of universal primary education led to the introduction of Free Primary Education in Kenya in year 2003. This was by then a priority in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) and the earlier EFA goals as ratified at Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 and Dakar, Senegal in 2002 (Republic of Kenya,2003). Overtime, focus gradually shifted to the central role of education in attainment of MDG'S and its effect on social and economic development (UNESCO, 2010). Although the MDG'S were established in year 2000, they had a set target for year 2015 and crystalized the general need for linking primary education to other components of basic education and the other MDG's. This later culminated into establishing of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

Education is one the stand alone goals in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) which are aimed at being acheieved by 2030. Sustainable Development Goals for Education is SDG4 out of the 17 global goals. The main focus of SDG4 is on inclusive and equitable quality education. This targets that all boys and girls access and complete free equitable and quality primary and secondary education by 2030 (Global Campaign for Education, n.d.). Over the years, inspite of the goals set by the international conventions and protocals, the out of school children of schoolgoing age challenge has persited. For instance 263 million children,

adolescents and youth between the ages of 6 and 17 were out of school by 2014 according to United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2016). Out of this, 61 million were children of primary school age (about 6 to 11 years), 60 million constituted young adults of lower secondary school age (about 12 to 14 years) while 142 million was youth of upper seondary school age (about 15 to 17 years) for the school year ending 2014. This shows that by that time, more than half the out of school population constituted youth of upper secondary school age (ibid, 2016). Further interrogation on this indicates that a total of 202 million adolescents and youth of between 14 and 17 years was the total population out of school at secondary school level at the time. Data for 2017 indicates a drop of this population by 4 million globally from 202 million to reach 198 million and this may be attributed to the outcomes of the setting in of SDGs in 2015(UNESCO, 2017). Moreover, according to the Global Monitoring Report, the total out of school population globally fell to 258million in 2018, from 262million in 2017, which was a further fall from 263 million in 2014 (UNESCO, 2020). This shows a gradual improvement in access to basic education worldwide.

Noteworthy, Kenya has embraced educational reforms to promote access and inclusivity in education over the years. To begin with, Free Primary Education (FPE) was implemented in year 2003. This policy move was aimed at providing education access to all school going children with disregard of their social economic or cultural inhibitions. This saw dramatic increased enrollments in primary schools causing a number of challenges emanating from the strain on the available resources (Republic of Kenya, 2007). Later, FDSE was introduced in year 2008 in order to cater for the large numbers unable to transit to secondary school level especially children from poor households due to lack of fees. Therefore, this scenario reflects Kenya's gradual expanded focus beyond primary education to enhancing access at secondary school level. By increasing government's capitation, at secondary school level, education is made affordable to many. But the extent to which pupils' transit from primary to secondary school level is of interest to this paper in documenting the progress made so far in attaining SDG4.

Implementation of Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) didn't automatically translate to resolving the problem of access to secondary school. Later, therefore, Kenya implemented the 100 per cent transition policy in year 2018 (Ministry of Education Kenya, 2019) with the aim of ensuring that no one is left out from transiting to secondary school. The 100 per cent transition policy was a major step towards Universal Basic Education through promoting access to at least 12 years of basic education. These policies, however, have promoted access and participation to some extent but not without challenges. Some Kenyan communities are still left out due to reasons ranging from economic, cultural, social, geographical, environmental, and political dimensions. It's against this backdrop that this paper documents the extent to which Kenya has promoted twelve years of Universal Basic Education. Data for Pupil Completion Rate (PCR) for primary school level and Primary to Secondary school Transition Rates (PSTR) from year 2011 to 2022 was used. Obstacles impeding on primary to secondary school level transition from past studies have been documented.

In order to establish the status of access to basic education beyond primary school level, PCR and PSTR are the parameters used. The concepts of PSTR and PCR are defined herein as used in this study. PSTR is enrollments in grade one at secondary school expressed as a percentage of enrollments in final grade at primary school in the preceding year. Therefore, this represents the level of access to secondary school level. On the other hand, this article will also look at the output indicator of Pupil Completion Rate (PCR) for primary school level. PCR is total primary school graduates expressed as a percentage of eligible school age (13 years) population.

SGD4 AND UNIVERSALIZATION OF BASIC EDUCATION

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an extensive array of universal sustainable development targets for the economy, society and environment launched in 2015. These set of SDGS succeeded the Millennium Development Goals as reference goals for 2015 to 2030. In this context education was

identified as a standalone goal-SDG4. Noteworthy, is the fact that, attainment of SDG4 targets among others, the pledge to;

'Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes'

and to

'Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education' by 2030 (United Nations, 2015).

These goals are the aftermath of assessment on policy focus of MDGS which was mainly on access to and completion of primary education. It was then followed by EFA whose main emphasis was access to quality basic education for all children, youth and adults. Therefore, SGD4 not only continues the EFA focus on basic education for all, but also pays attention to equitable access to post basic education. Moreover, it aims at increasing lifelong learning opportunities for all. This is however, beyond the scope of this paper (UNESCO, 2019).

Although there have been efforts towards ongoing global goal focus on access to Universal Basic Education as targeted in SDG4 since 2015, this has not been without challenges. Internationally, the achievements made in reaching the unreached is mixed. To begin with, UNESCO (2020) noted improved primary completion and secondary completion rates. This was however among the poorest in relation to the average for the case of primary school completion. On the other hand, among the poorest, the secondary school competion rates fell further behind (ibid.). Hence, the population that is yet to be reached through access to basic education continues to increase making it challenging to close the gap. According to UNESCO (2017), the initial globally increased completion rates at primary school level stagnated from year 2008. Furthermore, the out of school population share of sub-Saharan Africa in the global total increased from 24% in 2000 to 38% in 2018 (UNESCO, 2020). This increase was however attributed to the population growth rate which is higher than elsewhere in the world. However, by and large, this region may also be impacted upon by exclusion due to other factors such as poverty, language, location, gender and ethnicity (UNESCO, 2020). In addition, the reason for lack of change on primary school completion rates was attributed to effects of cutting short of aiding education in low income countries. This move was as a result of financial crisis, a factor that protends the likelihood of same effect on secondary school completion rates in low income countries. This is further illustrated in Table 1 and Table 2 which have shown the summary of the percentage of Out of School children which are categorised in three levels: Primary School level, Lower Secondary School level and Upper Secondary School levels. While Table 1 is in refercnce to year 2018, Table 2 is in reference to 2021 for countries categorised along SDG region.

Table 1 Out-of-school rate as percentage population out of school in the three levels(Primary, Lower and Upper Secondary) by SDG region, 2018.

Region	Primary School age(%)	Lower Secondary School age(%)	Upper Secondary School age(%)	Gross total per centages of OOS children, adolescent and youth
Europe and Nothern America	1.7	1.6	6.7	10.0
Latin America and the Carribean	3.8	7.2	23.0	34.0
Central Asia	2.0	5.2	26.7	33.9
Southern Asia	6.8	15.2	45.5	67.5
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	3.2	9.7	20.6	33.5

Northern Africa and Western Asia	9.2	13.9	29.8	52.9
Sub-Saharan Africa	18.8	36.7	57.5	113
Oceania	5.0	5.4	24.6	35
World	8.2	15.6	35.2	59

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics database

From Table 1, the data presented indicate percentages of out of school children in the different SDG regions. The three regions with the highest out of school population, from highest to the lowest are as follows: sub–Saharan Africa, Southern Asia and then Northern Africa and Western Asia. On the other hand, the region with the least was Europe and Nothern America. An overview of this data indicates increase in percentage growth rate of out of school children with increase in the level of education. Specifically, at primary school level, there was low OOS population, but increased with increase in level of education. This translates to imply that the proportion of out of school children is heavily affecting secondary school level than the primary school level for all the regions represented.

From the foregoing, the region that is heavily affected is sub–Saharan Africa with the highest percentage at 18.8% at Primary School, 36.7% at Lower Secondary and 57.5 % at Upper Secondary. A keen look at these figures indicates that for primary school level, only 81.2 % of this population is able to access school and stay till completion. In addition, at Lower Secondary, only about 63.3 % is able to complete this level, whereas, only about 42.5 % are able to complete upper secondary. Therefore, promoting access to education at secondary Level was still a glaring problem standing almost at three times as many as those at Primary School level. Therefore, global focus on provision of free and compulsory education to include secondary school level is important as stipulated in SDG4. On the other hand, Europe and Nothern America region had very small percentage population proportions of out of school children at these three levels. This data was as follows: 1.7 % at Primary School, 1.6 % at Lower Secondary and 6.7 % at Upper Secondary. This region was almost meeting 100% of the population accessing education at primary and lower secondary school levels with about 98% accessing primary school and lower secondary school level and about 93% accessing upper secondary. This variation between the regions with the highest and those with least populations is such a big gap showing that sub-Saharan region may require more focus in its basic education sub- sector.

However, according to the UIS (2022) the out of school children, which is an indicator of SDGs, stood at 244 million in year 2021. This constituted, 121 million youth of upper secondary age (15-17 years), 57 million adolescents of lower secondary age (between 12-14 years) and 67 million children of primary school age of between 6 to 11 years. Another cross regional summary according to SDG region carried out in 2021 is indicated in Table 2. The Table presents an overview of the percentage population of specific education level for various SDGs region.

Table 2: Out-of-school rate as percentage population out of school in the three levels(Primary, Lower and Upper Secondary) by SDG region, 2021

Region	Primary School age(%)	Lower Secondary School age(%)	Upper Secondary School age(%)
Sub-Saharan Africa	20	33	48
Northern Africa and Western Asia	9	10	23
Central and Southern Asia	7	13	39
East and South-Eastern Asia	4	7	16

Latin America and the Carribean	4	7	20
Europe and Nothern America	2	3	9
Oceania	7	4	20
World	**9**	**13.9**	**30.2**

Source: UIS and GEM Report model estimates.

According to Table 2, the trend is the same as that of Table 1 in terms of proportion of children out of school. It stood at 9%, 14% and 30% for primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school going age respectively by year 2021 (UIS, 2022). This is however an increase from 8.2% (primary school age children), 15.6% (lower secondary school age) and 35.2% (upper secondary school age youth) in 2018 as indicated in Table 1. Consequently, this implies that achieving the SDG target is elusive. From the data in Table 2, the SDG regions greatly affected by out of school population that are hard to reach were:- sub Saharan Africa, then Northern Africa and Western Asia, followed by a tie of Central and Southern Asia and Oceania. On the other hand, the region with the least percentage population proportion of out of school at primary school level was Europe and Nothern America. As the region with the highest percentage population out of school at all the three levels, SSA records 20% at primary school level. In other words, only 80% of the population was in school hence unable to meet Universal Primary Education targets. Furthermore, at lower secondary school level, out of school children was at 33 %, meaning that only 67% was the only population in school. Worse still, for Upper secondary school age, the Out of School children was at 48 %, which imply that slightly more than half the population was out of school, warranting attention. When comparing this information with the region with least percentage of population out of school, the following is noted. Europe and Nothern America was 2% which translates to mean 98% of this age group were in school. For lower secondary at 3% meant that 97% population was able to access school while for upper secondary, 91% accessed school. Therefore, the gap between the regions in terms of reaching SDGs targets varyies greatly, with sub Saharan Africa requiring more efforts.

This table confirms that developing countries have huge population still unreached in terms of schooling at primary school level, unlike the developed countries. Further, there are huge disparities of Out of School Children (OSC) rates and numbers between regions and across levels of education globally, hence, validating the need to establish the status of access to basic education in Kenya using PCR and PSCRs. Since Kenya is domiciled in sub Saharan Africa, there is need to document the state of affairs with regards to the aforementioned objectives in the introduction of this paper. Noteworth is the fact that globally, the accomplishment of efforts to reach the leftouts in education is mixed. Completion rates for primary and secondary school has improved on average, with children from rural areas and among the poorest, emerging marginally faster. However, for the case of secondary school completion, the poorest are falling further behind, hence making closing the gap an uphill task that may end up taking decades (UNESCO,2020). Inspite of this scenario, sub–Saharan Africa has persistently registered the highest numbers of Out of school categories both at primary school and secondary school level.

TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

Globally, the 2030 targets for SDG4 on education, is ensuring provision of publicly-funded, inclusive, equitable, quality primary and secondary education. Efforts to ensure all school going population access school, have been on for long. According to UNESCO (2015), the percentage rates of those unable to access school fell in low-income countries from 32% in 1992 to 23% in 1999 and to 14% in 2008. This suggests that every one out of four children had not been to school by 1992, yet by 2008, the ratio was higher among the disadvantaged. Additionally, the advancement in terms of access had also improved. Looking

progressively at the percentage in a given cohort who managed to complete the primary school cycle, had also increased. Globally, there was increase from 77% in 1999 to 81% in 2008 managing to go through the primary school to completion. Noteworthy is the fact that after year 2000, several countries increased the primary to secondary school transition rates. For instance, Afghanistan, China, Ecuador, Mali and Morocco increased by about 27 percentage points between 1999 to 2012, that is, from 7% Gross Enrollment Rates in 1999 to 34% in 2012, almost five times growth (United Nations, 2015). This was however, before SDGs. On the other hand, in order to determine the status of primary to secondary schools' transitions globally, the available data to use in proxy is gross enrolment ratio for lower secondary education level. There was also increased gross enrolment ratio globally, from 71% in 1999 to 85% in 2012 and from 45% to 62% in upper secondary. Regional disparities were also observable. Whereas, most regions had over 96% gross enrolment ratios at lower secondary in 2012, it was at 89% in the Arab States in South and West Asia and yet was at 50% in sub-Sharan Africa. This reflects that half the population of school going age was still unreached in sub–Saharan Africa. At upper secondary school level, the inequality was even higher. Whereas gross enrollment ratio was around 100% in Northern America, for Western Europe and in Central Asia, in sub–Saharan Africa, it was at 32%. This suggests that at sub–Saharan Africa, the problem of accessing school and completing the basic education cycle was still persistent. Consequently, the aftermath of FPE policy in the 1990s witnessed growth in transition rates from primary to secondary school in the sub Saharan Africa, but on relatively lower strides than the enrolments in majority of the countries (United Nations, 2015).

The government of Kenya committed itself to attaining Education For All goals by 2015 target year during the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000. Progress in domesticating this through the Constitution of Kenya 2010 by acknowledging that education is a basic human right for all children within its borders is an indication to this. This was followed by variuos reforms such as The Children's Act 2001 and Basic Education Act 2013 which ensures that all children in Kenya are provided with access to compulsory primary education. In addition, the government introduced Free Primary Education in 2003 and later Free Day Secondary Education (FDSE) in 2008. This policy was geared towards increasing enrolments in secondary school level by cushioning the poor households and hence retain learners in school. In addition, it was intended to help mitigate illiteracy, high cost of education, low completion rates and low quality education at the secondary level (MoEST, 2005). Moreover, the FDSE policy also intended to address the low transition rates from Primary School to secondary school level. According to the subsidized FDSE policy, the government was expected to meet the tuition fees per student, while the parents were expected to meet other requirements. These include lunch, transport and boarding fees for those in boarding schools, besides development projects. These efforts were all intended to achieve the goal of promoting access to basic education in line with global agenda for Education 2030 as guided by SDG4. These efforts have led to increased enrolments in primary school level, completion rates and subsequent increased transition to secondary school level. However, not all pupils who complete primary school are able to proceed to the secondary school level, yet it is one of the SDGS targets to be met by Kenya government.

Table 3 Primary Secondary Transition Rates and Primary Completion Rates in Kenya from 2011 to 2022 according to Economic Survey of Kenya 2016/21/22.

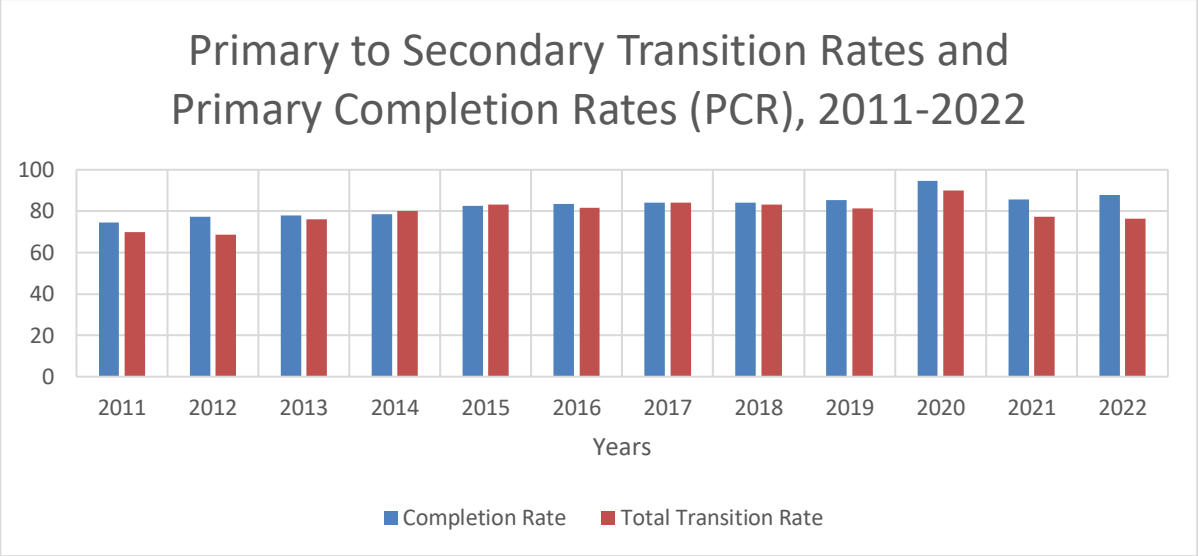
YEAR	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Primary Completion Rate	74.6	77.3	78	78.5	82.7	83.5	84	84.2	85.4	94.6	85.8	87.8
Primary to secondary Transition Rate	69.91	68.55	76.06	80.19	83.21	81.69	84.17	83.12	81.21	90.13	77.43	76.24

Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS)-Economic Surveys- 2016, 2021 & 2022

There was steady increase in Primary Completion Rates from 2011(74.6%) to 2019 (85.4%). However, the greatest increase was in year 2020 at 9.2 percent points to reach 94.6%, yet at this time is when the world was suffering Covid 19 pandemic. This scenario was one time increase as was witnessed in the subsequent year 2021 a reverse in rates at 8.8 percent points to reach 85.8% nearing almost where it was previously in 2019. However, in 2022, it increased slightly again to reach 87.8%. This data shows there was increased access to the complete cycle of primary school education in the last twelve years, which may be attributed to introduction of Free Primary Education policy. This suggests that Kenya has made progress in line with SDG4 to some extent. However, primary education level in Kenya was made up of eight years cycle, yet according to SDGS, countries are expected to target provision of at least 12 years of basic education. Over the years understudy, transition from primary to secondary school has been unstable, considering that by 2011 FPE had been in place for an entire eight years. The numbers completing primary school were expected to be many and for that matter even the numbers joining secondary school, but the situation was varying. For instance, in 2011 it was as low as 69.91% and yet in 2012, it went down by a further 1.36 percent point to reach 68.55%. Conversely, from 2013 to 2015, there was increase from 68.55% in 2012 to 83.21% in 2015. Thereafter, in the subsequent year 2016, there was a drop to 81.69% and then an increase to 84.17% in 2017 and later in 2018 a drop to reach 83.12%. and further to 81.21% in 2019. However, 2020 recorded the highest increase by 7.1 percent points to reach 90.13% and thereafter a drop in 2021 to reach 77.43 and further drop in 2022 to reach 76.24%. The data therefore indicates that in 2020 both PCR and PSTR increased greatly and then dropped in the year that followed. This shows that despite the interruptions by COVID 19 pandemic, leading to closure of learning institutions, there was increased completion rates and subsequent increase in transition rates. This may be attributed to the fact that at the time, the government of Kenya adopted remote teaching and learning to support distance learning and online learning delivered through radio and internet. (UNESCO, 2020). Therefore, this paints a picture of unsteady strides in growth of transition rates from primary to secondary school level over the years.

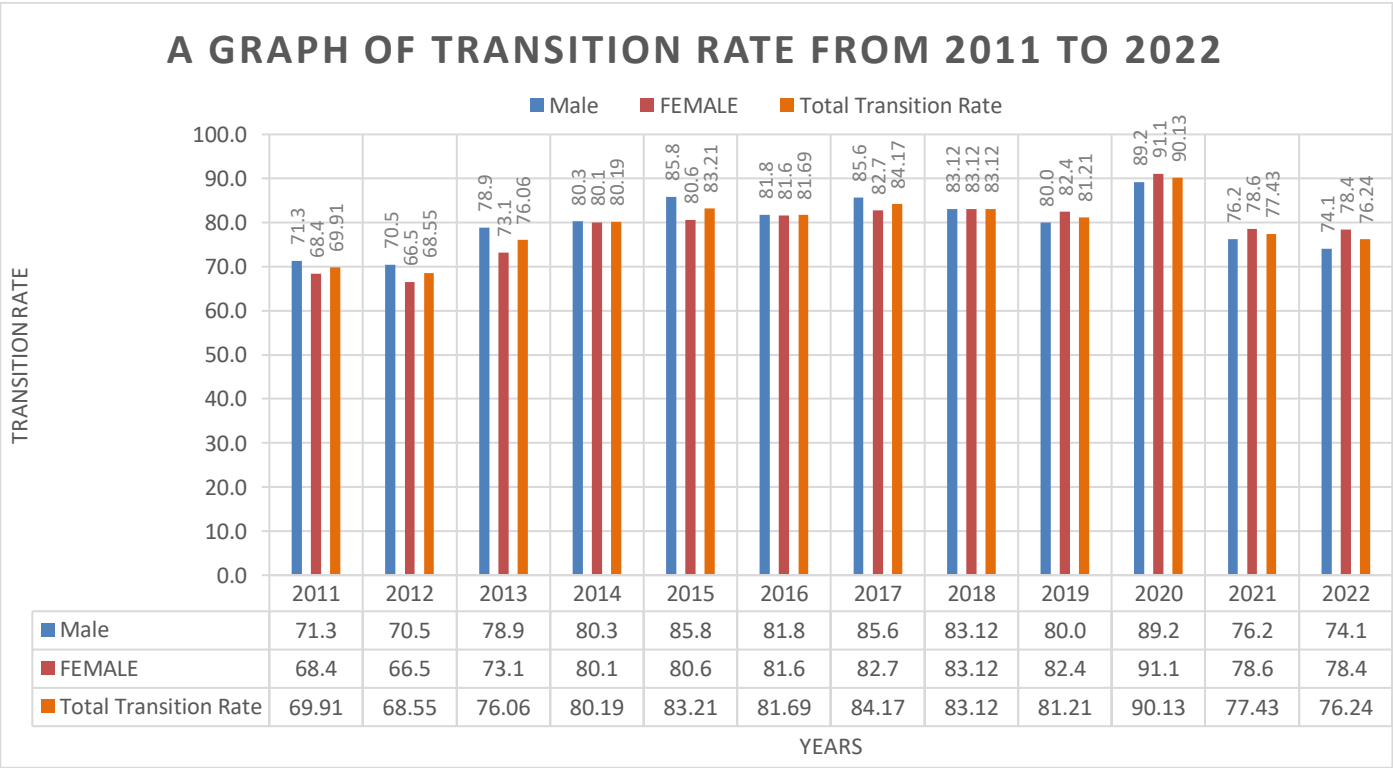
The data in Table 3 is further illustrated in Figure 1 as indicated herein. What is noteworthy is that PCR rates are higher than PSTR in majority of the years. The data shows a total of 9 out of the 12 years under investigation. The three years where transition rates were higher than completion rates are years 2014, 2015 and 2017 whose differences were at 1.69, 0.51 and 0.17 percentage points respectively. The cause for this may be attributed to the fact that access to primary school had been increasing due to the aftermath of introduction of Free Primary Education since 2003 and its enactment in the policy instruments. Conversely, FDSE policy was introduced in 2008 to cater for the large numbers completing primary school education to transit to secondary school. With the persistent high population of adolescents and youth out of school, 100% transition policy was introduced. The intention was to ensure that no one is left behind in accessing secondary education. However, Table 3 indicates that the direction of primary to secondary Transition Rates have varied over the years. To begin with, the FDSE policy was intended to increase access to secondary school education of which primary to secondary school transition rates are an indicator. From the available data in Table 3, the PSTR in 2011 and 2012 were still as low as 69.91% and 68.55% respectively. This confirms that, the financial component as a hinderance to secondary school education may not have been the only determiner for the dismal rates. Moreover, the introduction of 100 percent transition policy in 2018, still had no effect on the rates as the there was a drop. The PSTR for 2018 to 2019 dropped by a margin of 1.9 percent instead of increasing. There was however an increase in 2020 due to COVID 19 effects of home learning to 90.13%, but this was followed by a big drop to 77.43% and 76.24% in 2021 and 2022 respectively. This data confirms what Momanyi & Ndung'u (2018), opine that the transition rates averaged at approximately 67% from 2004 to 2016 against average completion rate of 79.7%. This indicates that an average rate of 12.7% of population completing primary education do not proceed to secondary school which is a large proportion.

Figure 1: Primary to Secondary Transition Rates and Primary Completion Rates (PCR), 2011-2022



A further analysis of the Primary to Secondary Transition Rates data along gender lines shows there had been disparities. The male students' primary to secondary school transition rates were generally higher than that for female from 2011 to 2017, but had a tie in 2018. Thereafter, in 2019 to 2022, the females were transiting at a higher rate than males. This means that 100 percent transition policy had an effect on females. This may be attributed to among others, the affirmative action on unconditional readmission to school for teenage mothers (Ministry of Education, 2020). This confirms what UIS (2016) opines those inequalities occurring as students' transit from primary to secondary schools. The report also attributes this to wastages in terms of joining school late, grade repetition which in turn affects their chances of completion of the secondary school level.

Figure 2 Primary to Secondary School Transition rates along gender lines



OBSTACLES IMPEDING PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL TRANSITION

Transiting from primary to secondary school level is an indicator for progress in provision of basic education and an essential component of development. Without transition to secondary school level after having completed primary school would translate to imbalanced development in basic education provision. From the foregoing in the Kenya scenario, transition in the 12 years understudy has been at an average of 79.33%. This is however, higher that what Momanyi and Ndung'u (2018) reported concerning year 2004 to 2016 which averaged at 67%. Although one would assume that there has been an improvement, this is relatively low considering introduction of Free Secondary Education in 2008 was aimed at enhancing access, transition and retention at secondary school level. Moreover, 100 percent transition policy that was introduced in 2018, was aimed at promoting access regardless of performance in examination. Yet even with these policies the numbers of OOS adolescents are still many. One of the main hindrances to education worldwide impeding transition from primary to secondary school have been associated with poverty. This is also largely reflected through global campaigns of ensuring that all children of school going age and adolescents are in school through provision of free education. Kenya, is one such a case, but the challenge still abounds, an issue that has been echoed by Teacher's Arena (2020). The Kenya Secondary School Heads Association (KSSHA), attribute it to inadequacy of infrastructure to accommodate the numbers transiting from primary to secondary schools (Teachers' Arena, 2020). However, provision of free education leaves parents to bear the cost of other items like uniforms, lunch, transport and boarding fees for those in boarding schools, as well as costs of approved school projects. Mwikya, Chelotii, & Mulwa, (2019) opine that cost of education had the greatest influence on primary to secondary school transition.

The causes of low transition rates among vary. Studies on causes of low transition rates among girls, report that high cost of secondary education and household poverty are the main causes (Njeri & Gakunga, 2022). Other studies indicate that the secondary schools had minimal capacity to absorb the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) graduates, in addition to cost of education as a limitation to primary- secondary school transition, hence causing low transition (Airo et al., 2022; Odhiambo & Consolata, 2015). Other factors include the level of family income, level of education of family head and availability of physical resources according to a study according to a study by Airo et al. (2022). Other studies have argued that lack of parental involvement in education of their children has lead to low PSTR in order help in control of situations such as drug abuse (Kimutai & Cheboi, 2020).

Further, along gender lines, the cause for females' low transition rates in comparison to males, a major cause was Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Majority of girls among some of the communities are married off after sitting for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education and others remain at home to assume the roles of women. Hence, sociocultural factors contribute to low primary to secondary school transition as confirmed by Naibei et al., (2022). In addition, early marriages, economic status and school environment contribute to low transition rates among girls (Mackatiani at al., 2022). Therefore, the obstacles impeding attainment of SDG4 range from financial component emanating from poverty, social cultural, communal and stakeholders' involvement modalities.

SOLUTIONS TO THE OBSTACLES

Efforts towards achieving SGD4 targets remains a challenge internationally, with sub- Saharan Africa being the mostly affected, where Kenya is housed. Therefore, in order for Kenya to improve on SDG4, the challenge of enhancing access to basic education need to be addressed through some of the following approaches according to the outcome of various studies conducted in Kenya. Overall, the government should come up with various strategies far and above fundings considering that out of school population still persist. To begin with, it should also increase capitation to secondary schools in order to cater for the vast

numbers joining this level of education. In addition, schools also have a role to play. In order to eliminate the heavy burden of other costs of education born by the parents, the government needs to encourage schools to strengthen income generating projects that would subsidize the costs and enhance school infrastructure. Other solutions suggested include putting cost cutting measures in place such as converting classrooms into micro libraries, sharing facilities with neighboring institutions and introducing income generation activities (Nyangia & Orodho, 2014). children are out of school and this calls for a comprehensive strategy that goes beyond government subsidies

On matters of schooling and its environs, Odhiambo et al. found out that there was need for strengthening and monitoring of teacher preparation, delivery of content and ensure that school's environment is gender-sensitive and disability friendly (2016). This is in order to ensure that the teaching /learning resources and teachers are adequate in order to have effective transition (Wanyonyi et al., 2023; Njeri & Gakunga , 2022; Kirimi & Waiyego, 2016; Chumba et al., 2021). There is need for teachers to be equiped with skills on management of large classes (Abuya, et al. 2020). On the other hand, in order to mitigate against gender differences in transition from primary to secondary schools, stakeholders' sensitization meetings should be put in place among such communities so that equal chances are given to both boys and girls (Oku et al.,2019; Oiro et al., 2022). Finally, in order for access to basic education is realised, there is need for cooperation among all the stakeholders, that is, the governement, teachers, parents and the larger community in general.

CONCLUSION

This paper sort to assess Kenya's status on attainment of SDGs in line with Universal Basic Education. It's worth noting that Kenya has made some progress. Inspite of government's various efforts towards attaining the SDG targets, the progress to this end is still riddled with obstacles. These include poverty levels, financial related issues, inadequate capacity in secondary schools and social cultural issues. Therefore, there is need for Kenya to reassess its policies in order to address some of the cultural factors. It should also increase capitation for basic education and also raise education subsidies to cushion parents from being burdened through other levies charged by schools. Finally, the need for the government to strategize on long term poverty eradication strategies and all stakeholder's cooperative involvement in both levels of education are critical.

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