

Acres of Mercy Education and Literacy Program

Objectives

1. Equipping children from disadvantaged families with basic education and literacy skills to enable them come out of poverty
2. Making literacy the centre of community change and transformation

EDUCATION

Kenya achieved almost 90% enrolment of children into primary schools after the introduction of Free Primary Education Policy in 2002. Statistics indicate that educational attainment of 17-22 year olds between 2006 and 2011 was that only 46% of primary school going children attended school.

In a study carried out in 2011, statistics show that the average pupil from a poor household has left primary school before completion and many more repeat grades. For every 10 pupils who start school, 6 may drop out. Rural and poor children are more likely to drop out. 32 million primary school children worldwide repeat a grade, 31 million have dropped out of these 9% or 2.88 million are in Sub Saharan Africa.

Studies have also shown that high repetition and dropout rates are associated with inadequate levels of basic learning achievement in reading and mathematics. Between 2008 and 2012, large scale reading assessments were conducted in 26 countries among national samples of pupils in Class 2 to Class 4. Half of the children tested could not read a single word. Yet "language capacity is at the root of all academic performance."

Pupils who are not able to read do not have the prerequisite skills for successful learning in later grades, skills which are a foundation for further learning. Many youngsters are completing primary school each year without having acquired basic literacy skills denying them the basic tool they can use to increase their life chances and economic opportunities that could lift them out of poverty or other disadvantaged backgrounds, denying them a basic human right.

THE NEED

Poverty is the single biggest problem in communities across Africa. The population of people living below the poverty line in Kenya stands at 56%. For Machakos County the figure stands at 59%. Illiteracy fuels poverty and ensures people living in poverty cannot work out of the poverty they face, they have no economic means to take their children to school, seek medical health, engage in economic activity to create more wealth and hence decreases life expectancy due to diseases, crime, environment degradation and increases societal ills.

Children from poor households face the highest risk of dropping out of school or repeating grades and their chances of one day coming out of poverty are diminished because their parents having children of pre-primary education age (typically 3 to 6-year-olds) send them to school – often prematurely – as primary education becomes tuition-free. A number of early enrolled children may not be sufficiently prepared for school, making this experience more challenging for them. This has contributed to repetition and early school leaving in the first grade of primary education in many developing countries

THE SOLUTION

Acres of Mercy, Kenya runs Msingi Bora Learning Centre, an Education and Literacy program in Nguluni, Kenya a rural village in Machakos County to fight illiteracy and to give children and their parents/guardians a fighting chance in life. The program is an Education and Literacy Centre where we:-

1. Focus on early intervention – ensuring the more vulnerable pupils access pre-primary programmes to facilitate school readiness through a 1 hour reading program every afternoon 5 days a week;
2. Investing resources in education quality in early grades to ensure successful early learning including teacher development; providing better teacher salaries to improve quality of teaching and quality of learning;
3. Increasing parental and both local and international community involvement in supporting learning outcomes
4. Provide primary level curriculum education up to class 7 aiming to reach class 8 by 2015.
5. Continually learn to improve education outcomes for the pupils
6. Strive to provide school environments that support high attainment levels through better school infrastructure.

A major part of the solution is of course willing and generous partners and friends. Call or contact us today to discover your personal possibilities for involvement

With such involvement we will be able to replicate this program across the country one village at a time

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Statistical Sources: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Demographic and Health Surveys and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys; Kangundo District Development Plan 2008-2012