

Kericho District Education Board Initiatives in Development of Education in Colonial Kenya

Ngeno Kipkemoi Robert, Prof. John Chang'ach, Dr. Kefa Lidundu Simwa,
Moi University, Department of Educational Foundations
School of Education P.O. Box 3900, Eldoret (co.de 30100) Kenya

Abstract:- Local Native Councils (LNCs) in Kenya played a key role in development of education during the colonial period. Although they were set up as a ploy by the colonial administration to closely monitor African activities at local level, their educational implications were never foreseen. This paper attempts to give a glimpse of Kericho District Education Board which was one of the Institutions under Kericho LNC which shaped development of education in colonial Kenya through infrastructural development, allocation of bursaries, allocation of grants-in-aid and building grants and payment of teachers' salaries using second world war bonus. Primary and secondary sources were consulted mainly archival documents from Kenya National Archives, Oral interviews and Journal articles.

I. INTRODUCTION

Kericho District Education Board as an institution within Kipsigis LNC discussed several policy issues that influenced positively the development of education in colonial Kenya. These were; the development of physical infrastructure, award of bursaries to students and formation of bursary committee, provision of building grants and grants- in- aid and war bonus payment to teachers.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Policies about public health and safety in schools can trace their roots to the colonial period. Kipsigis LNC took a central role in this respect either by formulating such policies or by actively providing facilities that aided in the construction of infrastructure that met the required standards at low cost. The board in a meeting on 20th January 1942, noted that no memorandum had been sent out by the Medical Officer. Plans of village schools in other districts had been supplied to him for reference. It was also noted in July of the same year that a memorandum on school sanitation and hygiene had been sent out to European members, but a revised memorandum had since been made by the senior Health Inspector, Kisumu. The Medical Officer stated that this memorandum was to be taken as the accepted policy for Nyanza in matters of school hygiene (KNA: PC/NZA/2/11/16).

The Medical Officer reported the purchase by LNC of a boring auger for latrines. This would be sent around on loan. A health worker would be available to supervise the first

operations. On the subject of buildings, it was noted that the best way to improve the type of school would be to get a new one instituted as an example. Mr. Andersen offered to do this, at one of the aided schools of the Africa Inland Mission (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16). Copies of the memorandum were given to members in the meeting on 17th February 1943. It was agreed that if a Swahili version were available, the discussion would take place on it at the next meeting. It was reported that the boring auger had been used at Sitotwet and Kiptere. The future arrangement would be made by the District Commissioner. The new building at Cheptenye was to be submitted to the Medical Officer. It was suggested that 18 inches were the most suitable width for a school (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16). Copies of the memorandum on school buildings and sanitation in Swahili were available at the meeting on 13th July 1943. They were, therefore, to be sent to the African members. At that time, the new building at Cheptenye had not been erected but money had been collected for the purpose (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16).

Public health issues are critical in education administration in Kenya. This is evident in the promulgation of several education policies that guide it. They include the safety standards manual for schools in Kenya, the Education Act (cap211), the public health Act (cap 242), and the ministry of public works building and regulations/standards. The safety standards manual for schools in Kenya for example outlines in detail guidelines that should be adhered to by all schools including; safety on school grounds, safety in physical infrastructure, health and hygiene safety, safety in the school environment, food safety, teaching, and learning environment, socio-cultural environment of the school, transportation safety, disaster risk reduction and school (MOE, 2008).

Safety in physical infrastructure specifically is mainly concerned with physical facilities such as classrooms, offices, toilets, dormitories, libraries, laboratories, kitchens, water tanks, and playground equipment, among others. It states that such physical structures need to be appropriate, adequate, and properly located free from any risks to users. The policy states how classrooms, dormitories, and sanitation structures should be in terms of size, how doorways are designed, the spacing of beds, and pit latrine depth among others (MOE, 2008).

III. KERICHO DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD BURSARIES

Kericho Local Native Council (KLNC) played a central role in the provision of educational bursaries. This was one of KLNC's initiatives in the promotion of education in colonial Kenya. Erasto Arap Sio who was the Inspector of schools and a secretary in the Kericho District Education Board (KDEB) meeting that was held on 20th January 1942, said that no answer had been received about the provision of money for bursaries from central funds. It was reported that no boys from Kabianga were on the select list for secondary schools. Therefore, the board opined that the amount allotted for bursaries was sufficient. The other reason why funds were sufficient was that there had not been many applications for the course at Kapsabet for which grants had been provided (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16). Although this decision seems logical, however, members of the KLNC needed to have increased budgetary allocation which could have been used to encourage more students to join teacher training at Kapsabet to catch up or be at par with other LNCs in Nyanza Province. As indicated by Rono (2000), the colonial government started participating in the development of education in KLNC later than it did among all other communities in Nyanza Province.

The minutes of the KDEB meeting dated 17th February 1943 stated that there were no new entrants for secondary school from the district. At that time, bursaries were being provided from central funds. The Director of Education stated that for LPT candidates, the number of fees would be considered when deciding bursary to be awarded to them. The Board resolved that the normal amount of bursary to be awarded should not exceed 50% of the total fee to be paid. For LPT training in Nyanza, the fee was seventy shillings (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16).

In July 1943, the Board resolved that no bursaries would be given in the future for teacher training. Applications for bursaries made by parents of candidates for secondary education would be considered by a sub-committee consisting of a District Officer, Erasto Sio, and Douglas Mutai. On 20th September 1946, the KDEB asked the following members to sit on the Committee of inquiry into the number of bursaries to be awarded to successful candidates for Secondary Education: Douglas Mutai, Arap Too, Azariah Chepkwony, and Chief Arap Tengecha (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16).

It is important to mention here that apart from KDEB granting bursaries, it also acted as an educational policy enactment institution. As noted, it appropriated policy on the bursary amount to be granted per student, whom to get a bursary, and formed a committee that would be in charge of that process. This became a yardstick for the education bursary allocation policies and committees that would later come up in post-colonial Kenya such as the CDF Bursary fund Committees established in 2003 as noted by Oketch (2020). Globally, policy guidelines exist that guide the provision of education bursary

schemes. In Malawi, (NOVC 2006, as cited by Oketch,2020) for one to benefit from the education bursary scheme, the expected beneficiary should be genuinely needy, not a recipient of another scholarship, and should have a positive attitude towards education. These conditions are also reflected in the 2021 KTDA education bursary application form where the following eligibility conditions are stated; applicant must be a Kenyan citizen, be from a needy family, and be required to keep good grades in high school. (<https://ktdateas.com>). In Kenya today several Institutions provide educational scholarships namely KTDA, Equity bank, Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB), and Cooperative bank.

IV. GRANTS-IN-AID AND BUILDING GRANTS

KDEB played a significant role in the provision of funds for building schools and provided grants-in-aid. On 20th January 1942, it deliberated on a letter from the Director of Education which accompanied the draft rules on grant-in-aid. From this deliberation, the following issues were raised; the new salary scale for teachers which was expected to come into force in 1943 was to be reported to the Advisory Council on African Education, particularly the effects of its proposals on the cost of existing services (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16).

Concerning the appointment of a European supervisor, the Board considered that such an appointment was not an urgent necessity because there were only twelve aided schools. It was advisable to have all these schools supervised by one man on a part-time basis. It was agreed that the Principal of the Government African School could not undertake such work because of his responsibilities. (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16). The board agreed with the idea however, it was impossible to carry it owing to the lack of a suitable man. In the meantime, it was hoped to have a unified scheme of work used in all the aided schools. The Board also was entirely in favour of powers being given to District Education Boards to make bye-laws. Concerning scales of salaries for teachers who would not be eligible for new terms of service, it was decided to bring the matter up at the next meeting. It was recommended that elementary teachers should be put on the Government scale of 25/= x 1/50 to 40/= . The Board agreed that Elementary Teachers who had passed primary should be on a scale of 30/= x 2/= to 50/=, this was to be confirmed at the next meeting (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16).

The secretary reported that the Director of Education had issued a circular (No. 34 of 1941) on salaries of teachers with partial passes. These should be considered eligible for a minimum of the appropriate scale. They would not however be regarded as eligible to receive any increment until they had obtained a full pass in the examination. If during the intervening period their work had been entirely satisfactory and they eventually obtained a satisfactory pass in the examination, the possibility of placing them at the point on the scale which they would have reached had they passed the examination at the first attempt would be considered (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16).

The Board on 17th February 1945, made additions and modifications to teachers' salary scales as follows.

Table 1: Teachers' Salary Scale

Teacher	Salary
E.T and PSC Teacher	28/= x 2/= Bar at 36/=
Failed Junior Secondary Teacher	28/= x 2/= 40/=
Junior Secondary School Certificate	30/= x 2/= 40/=

Source: KNA: PC/NZA/2/11/16

Given increases in salary scales, the payment of war bonus, and the anticipated inauguration of a provident fund the board reiterated its decision not to add any new schools to the grant-in-aid list until its financial position was clearer. The board also deliberated on the bars in salary scales for teachers. Suggestions for tests to which teachers would have to submit before they could pass the bars in their salary scales were circulated to members. Requests from headteachers for special consideration in the matter of salary could not be answered until the new civil service board had made proposals. (KNA: PC/NZA/2/11/16).

Management and payment of teachers' salaries and administration of professional development examinations were the responsibility of the Local Native Council, but this was regulated by the national government. It is clear from the KDEB discussion that management in the teaching profession is laced with predation. The headteachers presented a request for special consideration by the board. This can be viewed as an attempt to deny students and teachers under them their share in the context of limited financial resources that prevailed at the KLNC at the time.

In the meeting of 8th February 1944 held at Kabianga, it was resolved to divide the grant of 3000/= equally among the following three schools as follows:

Table 2: Grants to Mission Schools

School	Mission	Location
Kaploug	Roman Catholic Mission	Buret
Cheptenye	Africa Inland Mission	Belgut
Gaborok	Local Native Council	Belgut (formerly Kiptere)

Source: (KNA: PC/NZA/2/11/16).

The 20th September 1944 KDEB meeting indicated that permission to pay the sum of 500 shillings to Tenwek was still being awaited from the Director of Education. The money was available in the KDEB fund and would be paid out immediately after the sanction had been given. Concerning non-recurrent grants, steps were being taken to erect the Elementary practice school (LNC) at Kabianga (Kapmaso). The commencement of

the building depended on the brick supply. The LNC had agreed to vote 300 pounds from the balance of the 1945 special cess for equipment grants in 1947 (KNA: PC/NZA/2/11/16). KDEB's interest in infrastructural development even in missionary-run schools was a reflection of the then prevailing global mood in the positive development of African education and the welfare of the African population in general. Kallaway (2009) noted that new ideas on colonial education were emerging between 1930-960, particularly within the missionary and philanthropic circles. International missionary networks and the International missionary council devoted several of their conference sessions to the links between the education and welfare of the African population.

It was confirmed in the KDEB meeting held on 21st February 1947 that the sum promised of 500 shillings to Tenwek for Elementary Training course 1946 had now been paid to be a building grant for temporary buildings. On the issue of the non-recurrent grants, it was noted that the 1945 special cess had brought in more than the estimated 5000 pounds. A small surplus was available for equipment. The board, therefore, approved the following: to ask for a supplementary estimate of 180 pounds for furniture grants, since only 200 pounds was inserted in the estimate, and the amount required was 380 pounds. Half of this amount (190 pounds) was to be used for the bulk purchase of cut timber for desks, the money to be used by the Education Officer to make purchases based on a tender submitted by Mr. Kelly of Kakamega.

The KDEB was informed on 21st February 1947 that the Director of Education considers 20' x 25' to be the most useful size of the classroom and that the size should be standard when building with public funds. It was pointed out that the 150 pounds given to mission schools were a grant-in-aid only, and considerable additional expenditure would be incurred which must be met by the community either by cash donations or by free labour or both. The board clearly stated that if funds are limited, it was a mistake to spend too much on buildings. A good floor, good furniture, and a roof were more important than the walls of a building. It was in that assumption that savings could be affected, therefore members were asked to consider plans for temporary buildings on permanent foundations (KNA: PC/NZA/2/11/16). This is corroborated by Windel (2009) who asserts that projects were designed to provide education at little cost to the state and to address welfare concerns in the era of global depression. The colonial government often worked with missions in the recruitment of students for teacher training in government schools and also allocated grants to mission schools that cooperated with it.

The District Commissioner stated in the KDEB meeting of 21st February 1952 that collections for building grants needed to be regularised therefore the Board decided that special receipt books in Kericho should be issued. The DC agreed to get these books printed and they were to be issued to the chief concern when permission was granted for the collection. The DC recommended that the collections were to

be made only from 1st May – 31st December so that people would have the chance of paying their poll tax and fees at the beginning of the year (KNA: DC/KAPT/1/4/15). This is confirmed by Mathew Korir who stated that building grants were collected from each elder who had school-going children. Failure to comply, often a calf or a cow was confiscated (O.I Mathew Korir, 8/4/19).

The Education officer stated that 10683.70 shillings remained unallocated. KDEB agreed to allocate Shs. 10000 for WGM Tenwek intermediate school. The recurrent balance of shillings 14988.40 was to be refunded to the ADC and the board requested that the ADC should revoke this sum for building. If this was done the Board agreed to allocate 10000 shillings WGM Cheptenye Intermediate and Shs 2800 each to AIM Litein and RCM Kaplong for the teachers' house. The money for workshop grants for Intermediate schools recommended by the Beecher report had not yet been received (KNA; DC/KAPT/1/4/15).

V. THE SECOND WORLD WAR BONUS

The monthly rate for LNC employees in Kericho District had been fixed at three shillings. The total number of teachers employed in the aided schools was thirty, including the last three months of 1942 therefore the sum of money required was 1314/= to meet the payment of bonus up to the end of 1943. At the meeting on 13th July 1943, the Board resolved that war bonus would be paid to teachers on the grant-in-aid list as soon as the LNC supplementary estimate had been sanctioned (KNA: PC/ NZA/2/11/16).

Unlike other districts in Nyanza Province, a war bonus was not paid to cater for fees for the descendants of the ex-soldiers. Gregory Smith who was a District Commissioner had proposed the construction of a technology school in Kapkatet that was to provide technical education in Kericho District but the Kipsigis disagreed with the suggestion because they believed that the land allocated to Kabianga Government African School was enough to accommodate both school and technical college. This was heightened by the fact that the community had earlier been evicted to pave way for tea plantations in Kericho therefore they believed that setting up a technical college at Kapkatet was a ploy to acquire more land from the colonialists (O.I Jonah Chepsengeny 2/2/19).

VI. CONCLUSION

Public health and safety policies are salient in education in Kenya today. include the safety standards manual for schools in Kenya, examples include the Education Act (cap211), the public health Act (cap 242), and the ministry of public works building and regulations/standards. All these policies are aimed at enhancing the safety of learners in school and provide good environment for learning. This paper has revealed that such policies trace its foundations to the institutions such as District Education Boards which were established during the colonial

period. These institutions deliberated on health and safety issues on education and promulgated educational policies concerning them. District Education Boards specifically KDEB promulgated policy that guided the award of education bursaries. It clearly outlined that any bursary that was to be awarded was not to exceed fifty percent of the total fee.

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