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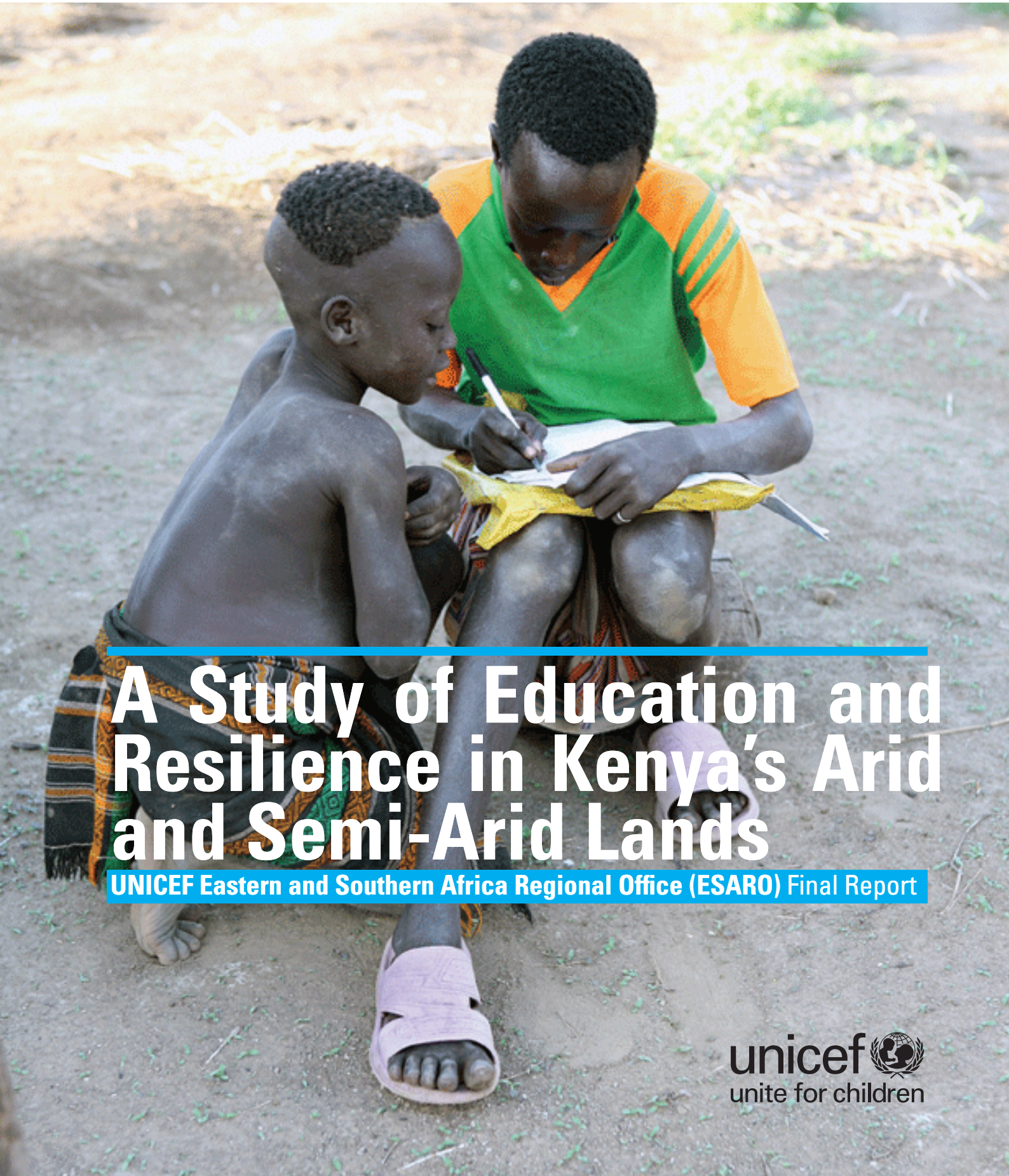

A Study of Education and Resilience in Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid Lands

UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) Final Report

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UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO)

November 2015

Cover Photo: © UNICEF/ A schoolboy teaches his brother to read.

Photo credit: Pastoralist Communication Initiative and Sylwia Pecio, 2014

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to all those who took the time to assist with this study: to our research facilitators, Ahmed Wako and Tumal Orto; our research assistants, Abass Abdulahi Harun, Deka Ahmed Ibrahim, Echwa Muzungu Richard, Hadija Ibrahim Dadacha, Anastancia Lowam, Jesca Moit and Winnie Tata; to our advisers from the Government of Kenya, Sheikh Abdi Osman Mohamed, Issako Konchora, Izzy Birch, James Odour, Hon. Mohamed Elmi, Nasir Abdulahi Harun and Dr. Nikodemus Anyang; to the UNICEF Kenya Country Office, Daniel Baheta, Shweta Sandilya, Elias Jama Noor and Charles Olaka Kesa; to those who reviewed and provided technical guidance on this document. Dr. Neven Knezevic, Eugenie Reidy, and Benoit d'Ansembourg from UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, Professor Jeremy Swift, Dr. Mario Novelli and Sir Richard Jolly. We are also profoundly grateful to all those who took the time to talk to the research team and give their views, opinions and recommendations. The statements in this publication are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies or the views of UNICEF.

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Nairobi, Kenya

November 2015

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Abbreviations

CDF	Constituencies Development Fund
ECD	early childhood development
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO)
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
K Sh	Kenya shilling (national currency)
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NACONEK	National Council for Nomadic Education in Kenya
PBEA	Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WCARO	West and Central Africa Regional Office (UNICEF)

Glossary

bhang	–	marijuana
boda boda	–	motorbike taxi; many young men make a living from riding boda boda
duksi (Somali)	–	Koranic school
jua kali (Swahili)	–	literally 'hot sun' used in reference to the artisan industry, woodwork, metal work, etc.; traditionally jua kali work is not held in high respect by pastoralist communities
madrasa	–	structured educational institutions or schools that offer Islamic studies and other subjects, from primary to secondary levels
miraa	–	a local name for khat, the leaves of a shrub that are chewed or drunk in an infusion as a mild stimulant
manyatta (Maa)	–	village; used commonly throughout northern Kenya, and in this report to refer to temporary pastoralist settlements

Photo 1: © UNICEF/ A school leaver hangs out in Kargi, Marsabit County, Sarah Wilson, 2014.

Executive Summary

How can education in northern Kenya's arid lands help build a stronger and more secure society and economy? This study uses a resilience framework to ask how various education systems in the arid lands are helping or hindering young people and their societies to absorb shocks, adapt to and minimize stresses, and transform in positive ways when confronted with internal change and external pressures. The question is based on the concept of *peacebuilding*, in which it is assumed that people and societies are resilient when they accommodate adversity through complementary absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities.[1]

The study was commissioned by the UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office and funded by the UNICEF Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy in Conflict-Affected Contexts Programme, which is supported by the Government of the Netherlands. It aims to contribute to the programme's Outcome 1, inclusion of education into peacebuilding and conflict-reduction policies, analysis and implementation, as well as inclusion of peacebuilding in education; Outcome 5, generation and use of evidence and knowledge on the links between education, conflict and peacebuilding; and Outcome 4, increased access to quality, relevant and conflict-sensitive education. The study aims to stimulate collaborative action among citizens, state and civil society in Kenya, and to contribute broader insights on education provision in Eastern and Southern Africa's arid lands.

The report conveys the perspective of a wide range of people, including those who learn in secular and religious schools, those who have just left them, teach in them, manage them and send their children to them, and those who are given a traditional education by parents and elders. The fieldwork was carried out in Marsabit, Wajir and Turkana Counties of northern Kenya, from March 2014–August 2015. All three counties have low levels of enrolment, low retention and poor performance in formal education.

Four sites were selected in each county to encompass variations in urbanization, administration, economics and environment, and various types of schools and forms of education provision. The method involved open-ended discussions inside and outside schools to establish key issues, followed by structured group discussions and interviews to probe and identify causes and effects, involving a total of 909 people.

An initial analysis was fed back to participants in a proportion of the sites to verify findings and stimulate further discussions, corrections and explanations, and a summary of the final analysis was fed back to participants across the three counties and in Nairobi. This final feedback elicited recommendations and information about how local people and officials are already beginning to tackle the problems identified by the study.

Key findings

Parents in the arid lands want their children to receive a good-quality education and are prepared to invest in it, but they say that state education is failing almost all of their children. We find that problems with quality, content and accessibility are perpetuated as much outside the schools as inside them. Parents, elders and out-of-school youth are looking for ways to take the issue in hand. Key findings related to these issues include:

- Most children are not in formal schools. In Wajir County, for example, only 27.2 per cent of primary-school-age children and 9.3 per cent of secondary-school-age children were in school in 2014, according

1 UNICEF Learning for Peace, 'Key Peacebuilding Concepts and Terminology', United Nations Children's Fund, 2014, http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/cat-about/key-peacebuilding-concepts-and-terminology.

to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST). Parents are making a clear choice for alternatives such as pastoralist or religious education and many express the opinion that these forms are more accessible, and economically and culturally relevant.

- Many schools suffer manipulation and negative politics. Politically motivated teacher transfers, uneven distribution of resources and poorly sited Constituencies Development Fund schools undermine education quality. Only those children whose parents have money and connections can access a high-quality state or private school education and hope for a good job at the end.
- Many school leavers feel economically and politically marginalized from the rest of Kenya. Most of the young people leaving secondary school are not finding secure jobs, yet feel unable to return to the rural areas. Instead, many are 'hustling' in town. A rising number of young people who have been to school are turning to drugs and crime, or joining Al-Shabaab and other insurgent groups.
- Pastoralism is the economic mainstay of the three counties, yet schools do not teach subjects relevant to pastoralism, and many portray a negative image of the livelihood. Parents, youth and community leaders are organizing a growing numbers of initiatives to secure the kind of education they want. Pastoralists, in particular, are starting schools that allow herding education and formal learning to take place hand-in-hand.

Background

> "How has education, since it started, given value to pastoralists?" – Pastoralist elder, Marsabit County

Kenya's long-term development plan, Vision 2030, aims to transform the country into a newly industrializing middle-income country, providing a high quality of life to all its citizens. As part of its social pillar, the plan calls for investments in education to achieve an overall reduction of illiteracy and enhancement of wealth creation. The focus is on access, transition, quality and relevance of education to address absorption into the labour market, inculcate a sense of national unity and patriotism, encourage social responsibility and enhance moral and ethical values.

Today, a comprehensive range of new national education policies point to ways forward on many of the problems of quality, relevance, access and management that are also identified and explored in this study. The study adds explanations as to the broader causes of failure in the system, pointing to the world outside the school gates, as much as to that within it.

Recognizing the low enrolment and success rates in formal education in Kenya's arid lands, UNICEF has been supporting MOEST in these marginalized areas. This has been, in part, a drive to meet the global goals of basic education for all. It also acknowledges the specific needs in these areas to mitigate conflict and natural disaster and to assist schools and learners in developing long-term resilience to crisis. This is part of UNICEF's global programme of peacebuilding through education.

By virtue of their arid climates, the three counties studied have characteristic pastoralist modes of production, livestock-based economies, strong social norms around mutual cooperation, and enduring customary governance arrangements. Around half of all households in the counties derive the majority of their income from livestock; most of these are mobile pastoralists (Krätli and Swift 2014). The counties export livestock worth billions of shillings to other parts of Kenya and to North Africa and the Gulf, creating further employment in transport, marketing and services (McPeak, Little, et al. 2012).

Communications, infrastructure and services are thinly spread, and weak institutions and violent political behaviour are often the norm in these

vast borderlands. People living in the arid lands are not culturally more prone to food shortage and insecurity than people living in higher rainfall and more densely populated areas, and they have a long history of sophisticated modes of cooperation and technical knowledge on dealing with drought. But, being on the insecure borders with neighbouring states, and having very low levels of state justice, policing, health care, education and investment, these counties are indeed marginalized and insecure. This is reflected in the schools. They are often poorly resourced and have less than the necessary complement of teachers. They struggle to deliver on the basic curriculum and are often not well supported by local communities. Many are forced to close, some for long periods, due to conflict or when food for school-feeding programmes do not reach them.

Due to unprecedented commitment of effort and resources by the Government of Kenya and its partners, formal school provision in the three counties has increased significantly over the years. Nonetheless, many people in the three arid counties in this study are suspicious of formal schooling, especially in rural areas. Parents increasingly perceive school as expensive and 'high risk'. They see it as importing an alien culture and largely failing to equip children with useful knowledge and skills. In all three counties, most parents select some children to go to school 'to give them a chance of getting a job' and others to be educated at home 'to keep the family's wealth'. In Turkana, in particular, many use formal school primarily as a feeding centre for their younger children, taking them out of school when they are around 8 years old after two to three years of schooling.

Enrolment levels in the arid lands of northern Kenya are low, ranging from net enrolment of 27.2 per cent of primary-school-age children in Wajir to 58.8 per cent in Turkana and 65.7 per cent in Marsabit, according to MOEST statistics for 2014. At the secondary level, net enrolment is almost the lowest in Kenya: 8.7 per cent of secondary-school-age children in Turkana, 9.3 per cent in Wajir and 12.9 per cent in Marsabit (Republic of Kenya 2015). Performance is also consistently below the national average.

Muslim parents are increasingly choosing to send children to madrasas instead of secular schools, as they trust these institutions to provide a good education. On the other hand, traditional pastoralist education, and its urban equivalent in which children learn a business or artisanal trade from family, is showing consistency in providing a relevant, but limited, education to the majority of children.

Analysis of results

The study finds inequity, irrelevance and cultural problems in education in the three counties. The causes lie not simply within the education system, but within a wider context of divisive politics and a patronage economy, barely controlled by politicized and weak institutions. Inhabitants of the arid lands explain that an ideal society is one that educates its members in three key elements of life: peace, rain and prosperity, categories that broadly accord with the political, socio-religious and economic spheres. The analysis is thus divided into these three elements.

The political sphere

> "It's the system you go into through education, not what you learn in school, which makes corruption and conflict." – Community leader, Wajir County

External political stresses on arid land societies and their education systems include the war in Somalia, insecurity along the international borders, and political and economic influences arising in other parts of Kenya. These include, for instance, insurgency on the coast, misuse of government resources and lack of financial accountability. Internal political stresses include northern Kenya's own increasingly volatile politics involving active and often-violent competition over tribally defined constituencies and boundaries, contracts, jobs and land.

Interference in the running of state schools is common.

In the process of their school education, children in the three counties tend to learn that political power and success is equated with amassing wealth and engaging in unscrupulous competition, rather than with promoting justice or the common good. In pastoralist and Muslim education in these areas, children learn to distrust state institutions. Rural children also learn to look down upon town life. The political environment invites young people into a 'tribalized' system. In both formal and traditional education systems, children learn that tribal patronage is key to success in life.

> "The educated are the ones in politics, and because they know everything, they come and tell us that people from other tribes are not good. We did not have this before. They tell us not to vote for people from other tribes, while the educated from the other tribes tell their people the same thing." – Male elder, Marsabit County

Although the study finds that children learning at secular and religious schools and at home learn positive approaches to managing conflict, we also find that these are not enough to protect them from pervasive negative politics. In formal schools, children are discouraged from tribalism, but it seeps into the 'hidden' curriculum, the unwitting or unofficial discourse of teachers and others in authority. Outside the school gates, in the towns and centres where many schools are located, the force of political tribalism is strong. While some officials, civic and customary leaders and clerics are working to counteract this trajectory; many other leaders are accused of fomenting it. Formal schooling is widely understood to be contributing to a culture of divisive politics, teaching youth to absorb and adapt in negative ways rather than helping in positive transformation.

Young people who might be expected to take positions of leadership find themselves ill-equipped to transform the system or make more than a few incremental adjustments for the common good. Those who have been educated on the rangelands learn customary leadership, but find that it has less influence in politics today. Many school leavers become easy prey to political candidates who recruit youth for campaigns, often using violence and economic incentives. Among a small but growing number of young school leavers, feelings of stress and a sense of alienation that they learn while at school and after leaving increase their vulnerability to the attractions of insurgents. The siren call of Al-Shabaab and other militant groups has influence on disaffected young people in the small towns and centres, where many school leavers find themselves neither able to succeed in an unequal and limited urban economy, nor return to a rural pastoralist life.

Culture and society

> "Society has been depending on its own systems for a very long time. There are well laid structures at all levels, at village, at clan and at sub-clan. There are people whose role it is to arbitrate. People know how the system works ... There may be a vacuum now ... Education sounds more open and liberated, but the pastoralist system survives, and it still works." – Female primary school teacher, Wajir County

Formal school education in the three counties is having a profound effect on culture, opening new horizons for some, but creating a level of confusion not previously experienced for many others. It is encouraging more and more young people to grow away from their rural origins and accelerating urbanization and the growth of a new urban underclass. The resulting divisions in society are to some extent an inevitable part of modernization, but they are also affecting people's sense of community and their willingness to work together. A new culture of blame and inertia is undermining social cohesion and societal resilience.

Yet most people in the three counties are fiercely proud of their pastoralist heritage, religion, culture and economy. The study found that, far from dying and being dependent on food aid, pastoralism is vibrant and adapting to the modern world. Across the counties, students, teachers, education officials and parents were unanimous in their view that education should support cultural and religious knowledge, governance and history. Children in religious, secular and traditional education all learn good behaviour, faith and morals, but the contradictory content of the various systems is leading to division and doubt.

While traditional and Islamic education creates strong cohesion within and between the pastoralist and religious realms, they tend to teach that modern and town life is a bad life. This does not equip children to operate with ease in the social, economic or institutional realities of modern Kenya, thus it is not helping them to influence the cultural change going on around them. Schooled children learn to look down upon their unschooled cousins and pastoralist lifestyles. They adopt 'modern' ideas about culture and society informed by notions of individualism and material success. Many of the study participants told us that children can tend to learn that the wealthy are better than the poor. They adopt 'westernized' ideas that sometimes conflict with tradition, the collective good or religious humility. Many who gain good jobs move away and stop being part of the communal welfare system.

Cultural divisions can be particularly acute for girls. Girls who have gone to school may lose their 'marriageability'. Many of them are deeply insecure inside the schools, enduring rape and other forms of sexual abuse. Yet many also report they are better able to choose whom they marry and feel they have more potential at home and in society. Many young men who leave schools with few qualifications accept lives as second- and third-class citizens in the growing towns and trading centres. A growing proportion absorbs social stress by turning to drugs or adapt by turning to crime and insurgency.

Contrary to what might be expected, successful girls and boys find themselves in a system that gives them little opportunity to work towards a fairer, more integrated society.

> "The teachers openly say that pastoralism is an outdated way of life. They do not consider that some of our parents are pastoralists." – Male secondary-school student, Turkana County

The economy

> "How can education match the economy? It should raise the economy, and if it interferes with it, it should be for the better." – County education official, Marsabit County

Parents explained that the decision to support a child, at some cost, through primary and secondary school, or to educate him or her as a pastoralist, a trader or artisan, is based on an assessment of future prosperity. Almost all rural parents said that they wanted between half and three quarters of their children to be educated at home as pastoralists. Pastoralism, they said, is where young men and women will generate wealth.

The formal economy, located in the towns, has yet to provide the majority of school leavers with a secure or well-paid livelihood, even those who have taken secondary-level examinations (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education). This has left a significant number to find work in the uncertain and poorly paid informal sector, a pattern common in much of Kenya. Schools teach little about pastoralism, yet this sector is the most significant economic activity in all three counties.

Despite the north's reputation as prone to disasters, the livestock sector contributes billions of shillings through food production and through its expanding commercial role in markets inside and outside Kenya (McPeak, Little et al. 2012). Government investment in the

pastoralist sector, however, is low, and progress on modernization is slow. In school, children learn that the best livelihood is that of a salaried worker. But the majority of children have no hope of getting such a job, since these positions are very few and are often gained through patronage connections and payments.

Through the unwitting biases in the curriculum and teachers' opinions, school-going children learn that pastoralism and other rural livelihoods are 'backward'. Many parents and boys complained that school is not relevant to them because it does not help them get a job. Girls, particularly in urban areas, were more likely to appreciate the languages and business skills they have learned and use them to set up businesses.

> "We do not choose jobs like men ... we do not stay at home waiting, but, for example, one girl is waiting to go to college. She has started cooking and selling food to the people constructing the road." – Female secondary school student, Marsabit County

School's lack of relevance to and disrespect for the rural economy is one of the major explanations for rural parents' low interest in school education and for high rates of early leaving from schools in pastoral areas. On the other hand, while the traditional education equips children to be capable pastoralists and to become part of traditional social arrangements, it does not have the capacity to teach everything they need in the changing modern economy. People explain that the different forms of education are reflecting and exacerbating a weakness in the economy that is endangering its ability to add value to and develop the quality of its primary product, livestock. Pastoralist youth want accessible and good-quality teaching in literacy, Kiswahili, mathematics and business, along with formal recognition of and contribution to their skills in livestock production.

With the decline in the traditional system of clan-based social welfare not fully replaced by state-funded social welfare systems and with the expanding informal sector, inequalities of wealth are on the increase. Thus, while the economy is relatively strong overall, its poorer members are becoming increasingly vulnerable. According to many, the irrelevance of school education to the realities of the economy contributes to this increase in vulnerability. For a worrying number of young people, the only way they can hope to earn an income is by joining criminal enterprises or militant groups such as Al-Shabaab.

Recommendations

> "We should have children going to school, but also find a way of maintaining their culture. On syllabus and curriculum, people can be in their own culture but in a better way, rather than in a western way." – County education official, Turkana County

Positive action is under way in the three counties, but it is piecemeal and limited in scope. Commitment by government, parents, elders, youth and partner organizations will be required in order to take solutions to the scale needed to confront the difficulties enumerated in this study. Yet almost every group that we talked to in the three counties blamed someone else for the problems of education and society. This is partly the nature of a study of public opinion – people find it easy to lay blame elsewhere. But it also points to a real problem of growing collective irresponsibility, created by all the stresses elucidated in this report.

In line with Vision 2030, youth need a rigorous and relevant quality education that builds strong individuals and a resilient society. Communities should be putting more positive pressure on government for better education-system performance, but they also need to make changes in their own approaches. People in northern Kenya would put their active support behind the education system if it were more relevant, accessible, inclusive of parents and youth, of better quality and better regulated. However, they feel profoundly disempowered

by the problems of neglect, bad politics and a lack of transparency and accountability in the usage of state resources. The practical issues that should be addressed immediately are as follows:

- cademic learning is largely irrelevant to the local economies of pastoral communities. There is limited or no opportunity for school-educated children to learn pastoralist-relevant skills. Instead, schoolchildren learn that pastoralism, their way of life, is 'backward'.
- Growing numbers of youth are unemployed after leaving school. While still at school, many of them suffer stress and a sense of failure, which increases risk of their 'radicalization' or other forms of exploitation.
- Children who learn herding with their parents are not getting access to literacy, language, mathematics and business skills in addition to herding skills.
- Schoolchildren feel alienated from tradition and local culture when they go through formal school. Religious teaching is not well integrated with secular teaching.
- Formal schools are often poorly run and vulnerable to mismanagement, political pressure and capture of resources by the elite. Schools are under-resourced, and available resources are spread too thin and often unsafe.

The solutions to these problems can be found in four initiatives. All of them will require new action, along with carrying forward work that is already under way. This summary concludes by presenting highlights of the four recommended initiatives:

1. Curriculum revision and new programmes of instruction;
2. Pro-youth programmes;
3. Civic education on education; and
4. Maximizing education resources.

Curriculum revision and new programmes of instruction

To contribute to improving the economic and cultural relevance of schooling, the study recommends adapting the current curriculum, improving training for teachers, and developing and certifying new programmes of instruction for pastoralist and religious education.

Making schools more relevant and successful will improve the livelihood prospects and performance of those children who attend, reducing vulnerability, politicization and the radicalization of young people. Changing the profile of pastoralism as an industry offers prospects for school leavers to invest in and add value to the sector rather than rejecting it. Elders and parents are calling for a dual system of education where those who learn herding learn formal subjects relevant to value addition and those in formal schools learn traditional subjects relevant to life in the arid lands.

To generate practical competences and appreciation of culture and values, include pastoralism at the primary and secondary levels as an economic and cultural system.

To complement young herders' learning on pastoralist livestock management, literacy, language, mathematics and business skills should be made available through community-run schools and early childhood development centres.

To bridge otherwise growing rifts between different cultures, work with Islamic and other religious leaders to integrate religious schooling into the certification system.

Pro-youth programmes

To contribute to reducing youth unemployment and alienation, youth groups and individual young people need mentoring, training, investment, markets and moral support.

Therefore, the study recommends implementing pro-youth programmes in support of young people, both in and out of school, including mentoring, improved vocational options and better investments. For unemployed youth whose education system has failed them, who feel rejected by parents and society, and who spend their time hustling in the towns, or even take up crime or join insurgencies, an approach is called for that gives them an identity and reintegrates them into the local economy and society.

To help curb early school leaving as well as problems of alienation, support peer mentoring by youth in schools for out-of-school young men and women.

To prevent a growing problem of drug abuse, review and amend discipline procedures in schools to promote measures that are supportive, applying positive disciplinary methods rather than punitive approaches. Moreover, young people, parents and teachers must not equate failing in school with failing in life.

To avoid being a route away from local tradition and culture, schools need to integrate better into local society and give parents and elders more opportunities to take an active part in school management and oversight.

To stimulate innovation and investment among out-of-school and graduate youth of all ages, certify apprenticeships, thereby increasing their value. Increase the relevance and quality of polytechnic courses, including courses relevant to the pastoral livestock economy, urban trades basic business, money management, and information and communication technology. Ensure that polytechnics have qualified teaching staff and an improved image as centres of competence and innovation.

Civic education on education

To address issues of community involvement, accountability and continuous upgrading of education quality, the study recommends a programme of civic education on education, led by and reaching out to teachers, parents, youth and elders. Parents are ready to do more, but they need to have a better understanding of the school system. Providing a programme on civic education will give parents clarity regarding what they can expect from schools and how they can be more involved. Management boards and school management committees should receive independent support and oversight.

To democratize county education forums, encourage forums led by parents/elders to take a leading role. Include young people, students and parents in large numbers, as well as experts, leaders and development partners. Critique and develop the recommended actions by inviting international and local experts to engage in depth with parents, youth, elders and officials at conferences and in future rounds of research.

Maximizing education resources

To address inequities perpetuated through the management of education services, the study recommends implementing an initiative to maximize education resources. A programme towards this end should include adjustments to the overall balance of resource distribution, sharing the burden of management with communities, raising new resources and providing materials to alleviate the issue of poorly distributed resources.

To fill the demand for accessible, relevant and quality early childhood development and lower-primary (Class 1–3) education, support a network of pastoralist-friendly schools, many of which can be community run and government

financed. Concentrate resources for upper-primary school (Class 4–8) into a smaller number of larger schools with better facilities.

To increase the numbers of teachers who are willing and able to teach in schools across the arid and semi-arid lands with the requisite skills and attitudes, offer free or subsidized teacher training places to locally identified candidates.

To improve the use of existing resources, strengthen school management and oversight, engaging parents regularly as valued partners in the education process, including as monitors and mentors.

Photo 2: © UNICEF/ Children in Turkana wait for school feeding to begin, Sarah Wilson, 2014.

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Research purpose

How can education in northern Kenya's arid lands help build a stronger and more secure society and economy in the face of external pressures and internal change? This study conveys the perspective of a wide range of people in the arid lands, including those who learn in schools, those who have just left them, teach in them, manage them and send their children to them, and those who have not received a formal school education. It is oriented towards practical outcomes and aims to stimulate collaborative action between citizens, government and civil society. It also aims to contribute strategic insights on education provision in other parts of the Eastern and Southern Africa region.

In questioning the contribution of education to peacebuilding and resilience to shocks and stresses, the study considers the effects of formal and informal[2] education on politics, society and economics in three of Kenya's northern counties: Turkana, Wajir and Marsabit. The findings are applicable not only to these three counties of Kenya, but also, more broadly, to education provision in arid land societies across Eastern and Southern Africa, with appropriate caveats in relation to differences in context.

Arid lands, by virtue of their harsh climates and sparse populations, have characteristic modes of production, strong social norms and enduring traditional governance arrangements. Along with semi-arid lands, they cover nearly half of Africa's landmass (McPeak, Little et al. 2012). Many arid lands are located at countries' borders, where communications, infrastructure and services are thinly spread. The three counties of Kenya covered in this study are exemplars of this situation.

Observers usually suggest that these counties and the peoples who inhabit them are particularly vulnerable to insecurity and food shortages. Their distance and difference from other parts of Kenya certainly renders them vulnerable to being misunderstood. An individual living in the arid lands is not necessarily more vulnerable to these problems than someone living in more densely populated and better served areas, because, even though state justice, security, health care, education and investment may be weak, isolation has often led local peoples to establish sophisticated modes of cooperation and production.

Around half of all households in the three counties derive the majority of their income from livestock; most of these households are mobile pastoralists (Krätli and Swift 2014). The counties export livestock worth billions of shillings to other parts of Kenya and to North Africa and the Gulf, creating further employment in transport, marketing and services (McPeak, Little et al. 2012).

This report aims to show how education services can succeed in strengthening arid land societies by taking account of and working with these unique features. It is divided into seven chapters. This chapter provides details of the study's origins, concepts, questions and methodology. Chapter 2 offers a description of the three counties studied, including basic statistics and a brief characterization of each county. Chapter 3 provides an overview of three main approaches to education in Kenya's arid lands – secular, religious and traditional – as a foundation for the study findings presented in chapters 4–6. These chapters detail the effect of the different types of education on local capacities to absorb, adapt and transform in the

2 For the purposes of this study, 'informal' education refers to any organized educational activity taking place outside the framework of the formal education system and aims to reach specific groups/categories of learners with life skills, values and attitudes for personal and community development.

face of shocks and stresses in the political, social and economic realms, respectively. Chapter 7 draws conclusions about how education is performing in relation to promoting social cohesion and societal resilience, and makes key recommendations for action.

1.2 Background

The study was commissioned by the UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office and funded by UNICEF's Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy (PBEA) programme in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, which is supported by the Government of the Netherlands. It aims to support increased peacebuilding and resilience through UNICEF-supported education programming in the region's arid lands with evidence and analysis. It will point towards appropriate ways of increasing access to good-quality, relevant and conflict-sensitive education and strengthening sustainable results for children in fragile settings.

UNICEF has long supported governments to ensure that every child has a chance to fulfil his or her basic right to a quality education, promoting school systems that are child friendly, rights based, gender sensitive, community engaged, academically effective and health promoting (UNICEF 2014a). In 2010, UNICEF and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) launched a global initiative for out-of-school children, accelerating efforts to achieve good-quality primary education for all children. A regional study on out-of-school children in Eastern and Southern Africa identified large disparities in access, retention and outcomes for children across the region – with access affected by wealth, locality, gender and livelihood, and provision affected by investment, administration and politics (United Nations 2014: ix–x). This work helped identify the arid lands as in need of particular attention.

As part of its effort to redress education inequities, UNICEF has been implementing the global PBEA programme that links education with peacebuilding in fragile and conflict-affected settings in order to strengthen resilience, social cohesion and human security (UNICEF 2014b). The programme maintains that education is central to identity formation, and has the potential to promote inclusion and equity and to contribute to peacebuilding. At the same time, it recognizes that education in fragile settings may also drive division and conflict. Therefore, a primary goal of PBEA is to analyse the sources of conflict, as well as potential solutions for each context.

Case studies show that education quality has been neglected in conflict-affected settings. Though more attention is recently being given to how education systems can promote or undermine social cohesion and resilience, the focus traditionally has been on protecting lives, educational assets and access to schools (UNESCO IIEP 2014).[3] The part played by education in strengthening social cohesion and reconciliation, and in relation to strengthening or weakening the social and political fabric, has been underplayed (Pouligny 2010; Novelli and Smith 2011). The practical implications of these insights are not yet fully elaborated, but they include the necessity for a broader analysis of the links between education and the surrounding context, taking into account not only what happens in schools, but also the wider social, economic and governance situation that affects and is affected by education.[4]

While a well-educated population is often a peaceful one, the causal links are not always clear. It may be that peace makes good-quality formal education possible, rather than that good-quality education makes peace. There is only limited evidence or agreement on how formal education can reduce conflict in the short and medium term.

3 Much of the discourse in relation to education in fragile of vulnerable settings has revolved around: 'education in emergencies', which prioritizes protection of children and as a response to humanitarian emergencies; 'conflict-sensitive' education that 'does no harm'; and 'education and peacebuilding' through reforms to the education sector and by contributing to political, economic and social transformations in fragile settings, either post-conflict or in fragile settings vulnerable to violent conflict. (Smith, A., E. McCandless, J. Paulson and W. Wheaton (2011). 'The Role of Education in Peacebuilding', Literature Review. New York, UNICEF.

4 UNICEF Learning for Peace, 'Key Peacebuilding Concepts and Terminology', United Nations Children's Fund, 2014, http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/cat-about/key-peacebuilding-concepts-and-terminology.

It is well known that schools are often used as recruitment grounds for militias (UNESCO 2011: 145, King 2014) and may be complicit in perpetuating biases and inequities that reinforce difference and create pressures for conflict (UNESCO 2011: 222). Poor-quality and irrelevant schooling has led to unemployment and poverty in many contexts, unequal access has generated grievances that lead to conflict, and some teaching approaches have reinforced social divisions and fostered hostility (Ibid.). Concerns with the effect of unequal or inadequate provision of education on young people's sense of citizenship and dignity, and upon their ability to make a good living and contribute to positive forms of governance and social cohesion, are the basis for this study.

1.3 Concepts and definitions

Education

Education, according to the Government of Kenya, provides for the acquisition of knowledge, skills and provision of lifelong learning. It is a primary means of social mobility, national cohesion and socio-economic development. It should aim to produce individuals who are "intellectually, emotionally and physically balanced," instilling "values such as patriotism, equality, honesty, humility, mutual respect, and high moral standards" (Republic of Kenya 2012b: XX). The purpose of education is also strongly oriented towards economic growth built through an individual 'human capital' approach. It should, according to this policy framework, support entrepreneurship, performance of non-routine tasks, more complex problem solving, better decision making, better understanding of work and more responsibility. It does this through the provision of tools for better reading, quantitative reasoning and expository skills.

John Dewey, the nineteenth century pragmatist philosopher and progressive educator, argued that education is the means by which children "come to share in the intellectual and moral resources which humanity has succeeded in getting together" (Dewey 1897). Another scholar, Giambattista Vico, an Italian philosopher of the eighteenth century, usefully described education as "training in the sense that founds community" (Vico 1965). This combination of purposes is also expressed in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand. Both platforms discuss the right to education in its broadest form, taking into account economic, intellectual, moral and community needs.

The delivery of education, in the words of the Inter-Agency Commission's background document for the 1990 conference, "goes beyond existing resource levels, institutional structures, curricula, and conventional suppliers and incorporates *whatever is needed* to meet the basic learning needs of all" [emphasis added] (United Nations 1990: 33). These needs include literacy, oral expression, numeracy and problem solving, but also respect for collective cultural, linguistic and spiritual heritages, environmental protection, social justice, tolerance, common values, morality and peace (Ibid.: 161). In the face of the vast difficulty in achieving this great ambition, the Millennium Declaration of 2000 reduced the scope of the commitment temporarily to one that focused only on numbers of children in school (or getting children into school). The effect has been to substitute 'being at school' for the right to an education in all that was specified at Jomtien (Krätli and Dyer 2009: 8).

For the purposes of this study, we use the definition from the 1990 Jomtien Conference, recognizing that education's purpose is individual *and* communal, economic *and* social, and its delivery is achieved in multiple ways – including through formal state schooling, religious teaching, vocational learning, and traditional and home instruction. We use the terms 'education provision', 'formal education' and 'schooling' when discussing school-based (often state) education.

Resilience

Resilience has been described as "the ability to anticipate, withstand and bounce back from external pressures and shocks – whether physical, emotional, economic, or related to disaster or conflict – in ways that avoid a fundamental loss of identity and maintain core functions" (UNICEF 2011). Requiring the analyst to think of a whole system and all its interacting parts in relation to adversity, resilience offers a useful grounding to questions about social interventions in fragile settings. In the case of this study, it orients us to consider not only what happens with education participants and providers, but also to take account of the systems of which they are a part, including society, economics, ecology and politics at different scales.

Two types of adverse event or process are commonly identified in relation to resilience: shocks and stresses. **Shocks** are strong and sudden blows, which may be unexpected or unpredictable and may be more or less disastrous, depending on the degree to which the system is resilient. **Stresses** are persistent pressures or strains; they may remain constant or build, or they may fluctuate in intensity and may be more or less irritating, damaging or stimulating depending on system resilience. In some cases, stress may lead to vulnerability to shocks, but in others it may lead to preparedness and strength.

Many development and relief organizations use the concept of resilience in programme design and evaluation, considering it an outcome that should be built in communities, institutions and individuals. Social scientists have pointed out that this idea of resilience may be overly romantic. As a concept derived from engineering, resilience is not a capability that is necessarily egalitarian, liberating or pro-well-being (Béné, Godfrey Wood et al. 2012: 47). A poor person may be resilient but unwell, and it is also not unusual for one person's resilience to be at the expense of another's (Ibid.: 48). A number of critics have also pointed out that using the concept for social questions may be misplaced, since seeing everything as a system can occlude the vital importance of power and agency in human decisions (Cannon and Muller-Mahn 2010: 623). People's response to adversity may not always be systematic; they can respond to adversity in numerous different ways, and their reaction to stresses and shocks will be as much emotional, individual, collective and cultural as it will be organized, calculated and skilful.

Béné et al. suggest that when thinking about social interventions, it is useful to combine the idea of 'resilience' with the idea of 'reduced vulnerability'.They suggest that 'good resilience' is the kind that faces adversity and reduces vulnerability for every member of society. This kind of resilience, they claim, emerges from three capacities: absorptive, adaptive and transformative. The first capacity is the ability to absorb or accommodate shocks and stresses without damage to the society or its members. The second is the ability to adjust to adverse events and processes in ways that improve the situation for individuals and the community. The third is the ability to create a fundamentally new and better system as opportunities and challenges arise (Ibid.: 48). Béné et al. emphasize that these capacities are necessarily complementary. An individual or society needs to be able to do all of them, even though they are sometimes contradictory. Stability and tradition are mainly maintained by an absorptive capacity, incremental change by an adaptive capacity, and innovation by a transformative capacity. But stability requires innovation, while innovation requires a degree of stability (Béné et al. 2012: 24). Adaptability, therefore, may be seen as the necessary glue that holds stability and transformative capability in creative cooperation.

Resilience and education in pastoralist societies

Official documents about pastoralist societies in the arid lands of Eastern and Southern Africa indicate, often wrongly, that they are particularly vulnerable and especially prone to disaster. Numerous documents from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government suggest that transformative and adaptive capacities are weak.

> "In the COMESA region, pastoralist communities are among the most food insecure and vulnerable groups, who are repeatedly affected by natural and man-made disaster." – Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), 2009, p. 1

Most of the people met during this study agree that fragility is increasing in several aspects of life, but they do not agree that they are particularly weak and they explain their vulnerability in a way that is different from the official documents. The official line is that vulnerability is the result of a poor climate and low levels of literacy, but many local people argue that their vulnerability is increasing as a result of external interventions.

Pastoralists tend to explain the elements of their resilience and the way they educate for it in terms of rain, prosperity and peace, as outlined in the following list:

Peace is necessary for the flourishing of all in society. It is achieved through individual, communal and institutional effort, involving leadership, communication, law and justice. It requires continuous strategic renewal. Stressors include divisive political activities, new administrative boundaries, failures of policing and corruption. When external or internal actors threaten peace, administrative, legal, judicial and diplomatic institutions need to function appropriately to check the danger. Pastoralists accept that sustained transformation is needed in both customary and state institutions (Chopra 2009; Wilson 2009). Children are expected to learn customary approaches to leadership and law from their traditional leaders; they are expected to learn how to understand state leadership from their experience at school.

Rain creates pasture, water, human beings and animals, and it comes from God. Rain also implies living in harmony with others, dealing well with difference and having morals. These beliefs and behaviours are said to create productivity, social cohesion and spiritual well-being. Religious observance maintains relations between people and God, as well as between peoples and with animals and the environment. Stressors include divisive politics, poor regulation and confusing ideologies. To assure resilience, children must learn and take part in religion, as well as mechanisms of social oversight, and develop a readiness to act on disharmony and intolerance (Baxter, Hultin et al. 1996; Watson 2010).

Prosperity leads to material well-being and comes from people's work, management and institutions of production and welfare. These institutions and individuals need to be adaptive to changing circumstances. In times of economic stress, when resources such as rain or good prices for livestock become less accessible, mechanisms for absorption must come into play, such as herding skills, mobility, mutual support, forms of insurance and social welfare. Pastoralists explain that they seek adaptability in economic diversification, marketing, formal education and new social connections (Little, McPeak et al. 2008; Brocklesby, Hobley et al. 2010).

The study design combines these three elements: education, resilience and a locally derived understanding of the socio-economic system in the arid lands. It begins with a broad definition of education from Dewey and Jomtien: the means by which children come to share in the intellectual and moral resources of the society, to build their knowledge and aptitude for individual and communal economic and social ends. To this is added a definition of 'good resilience' drawn from Béné et al: the ability to accommodate adversity through complementary absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities. The combination is applied to the locally derived elements of a resilient society: peace, rain and prosperity. The result is the research question: What is the effect of different education approaches on local capacities to absorb, adapt and transform in the face of shocks to peace, rain and prosperity?

1.4 Field questions and focus

Using a social and political economy approach that identifies stressors and strengths in the economic, political and social realms – and linking these to education processes and impacts – we asked field questions according to the following definitions:

- Education – the workings of education systems (schools and other forms of education) in terms of inclusion, access, quality, performance and impact.
- Context – stressors and strengths in the economy, governance and society.
- System – the links between the different types of education and the context in affecting society's resilience (absorptive, adaptive and transformative capabilities).

Photo 3: © UNICEF/ Girls from a Turkana secondary school take part in a focus group discussion, Jesca Moit, 2014.

1.5 Methodology

This study used a narrative research methodology, collecting evidence through discussion with a purposively sampled range of people of specific characteristics (age, gender, livelihood, education type, position). The results of a first round of discussions were fed back to a proportion of the participants and discussed further in order to develop clarity of understanding. The findings were also fed back to participants for validation and to develop recommendations.

The method is based on a principle of respect for the expertise of ordinary people, as well as that of officials and scholars, and uses a methodology that goes beyond off-the-cuff answers to generate the results of reasoned debate with people of a range of ages and callings, giving voice to those who are otherwise made inaudible by statistics. These are valid points of view, which show how different categories of people in the counties studied frame the problems, explain the cause-effect linkages and choose actions in response.

Site selection

The fieldwork was carried out in Marsabit, Wajir and Turkana Counties between March 2014 and August 2015. All three counties are arid areas with limited infrastructure, differentiated in terms of history, politics and their economies. Within each county, four sites were selected to encompass variations in urbanization, administrative modalities, economy and environment: the county town (urban area), a site a few kilometres outside the county town (peri-urban area), a small town far from the county town (a centre) and a rural pastoralist site far away from towns (rural location). Table 1 provides a list of the selected sites.

During site selection, the research team took into account the ethnic ascriptions of the majority of the people living in each location, sometimes selecting an additional site in order to create balanced coverage. All three counties have large areas where travel was unsafe during the data collection period, and the security situation limited our choices of site somewhat, but did not, in our opinion, create undue bias in the material collected.

Table 1. Research sites

	Marsabit County	Turkana County	Wajir County
County town centre	Marsabit	Lodwar	Wajir
Peri-urban area/ suburb	Milima Mitatu	St. Mary's (Lodwar), Lokichar (suburb)	Bula el-Hadow, Bula Hothan, Bula el-Bei (Wajir), Bula Kurman (Giriftu)
Town	Sololo	Lokichar (town centre)	Giriftu
Small centre	Turbi, Kargi	Kappus, Nadapal	Leheley
Rural location	Shurr, *manyattas* outside Turbi and Kargi	Keekora Akwaan (Lokiriama), Lokabuuru (Lokichar)	*Manyattas* outside Giriftu, Ganyure

Respondents' characteristics

During the study, discussions were held with 909 people, 374 female and 535 male. The lower number of women relates to the fact that among officials, workers and unemployed respondents, men outnumber women, often by more than 2:1. For example, interviews included 19 female and 72 male civil servants and NGO workers, as well as 32 male and 6 female teachers. Men hold most of the white-collar jobs in the three counties. The overwhelming majority of elders in public leadership positions are also men. The overall sampling technique is purposive, stratified and 'snowballing', designed to elicit a variety of perspectives.

The team consisted of five researchers and eight research assistants/translators (two in Marsabit, three in Wajir and three in Turkana). The make-up of the team was diverse in terms of gender, age, background and educational experience and was, in part, a reflection of the people consulted during the study. Details on the research team include the following:

- Two young Kenyan post-graduate researchers brought appreciation of youth and understanding of what it is like to go through the formal school process from rural primary schools to national university in Kenya.
- Seven young assistants, from both urban and rural backgrounds, joined the research team at different points. They all had some level of formal schooling and brought local knowledge of school in the arid counties. All were looking for secure employment or saving up to pay for the next stage of education.
- One customary leader of a pastoralist group brought understanding of pastoralist education, production and society. The leader is involved in a community school in his community, and he is a father, making choices about the education of his own children.

Table 2. Number and percentage of people consulted, by residence and school level

Type of respondent	Number	Percentage
Urban residents	293	32.2%
Rural residents	285	31.4%
Students (all three levels)	331	36.4%
Primary school students	152	45.9% (of all students)
Secondary school students	144	43.5% (of all students
College students	35	10.6% (of all students)
Total consulted during the study	909	100%

Table 3. Number and percentage of people consulted, by gender and livelihood

	Male	Female	Total	% of respondents
Students	171	160	331	36.4%
Pastoralists	112	125	237	26.1%
Unemployed/casual labourer	139	30	169	18.6%
Employed	113	59	172	18.9%
Total	535	374	909	100%
Male/female % of total respondents	58.9%	41.1%	100%	

- Two more assistants joined the team at different stages. Both have a pastoralist background and live partly from livestock and partly from employment. They have wide knowledge of the arid lands in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia, and were able to make connections between the research team and government officials and others.
- Two researchers from the United Kingdom were part of the team. Both have extensive experience regarding East African pastoralism and arid lands economies, conflict dynamics, education and resilience.
- One research adviser led the development of the research method and analysis.

Ethics and risks

Each person who participated was asked for consent for interviews and discussions. The study purpose, content and method were explained, and verbal consent was requested for participation and quotation. At all stages, the study adhered to UNICEF ethical guidelines on conducting research with children and young people. Researchers explained that respondents could ask for the discussion to stop, could withdraw at any time and ask for anything they had said to be erased from the notes. They were informed that all quotations would be anonymous, with only gender, profession and geographical location mentioned.

Sessions with children in schools took place in a public place, and children were selected to take part by their teachers. In some cases, the teachers asked them to volunteer. Young researchers, working in pairs, carried out interviews and group discussions with children in sight of responsible adults. Interviews with out-of-school children were also carried out in public places, and the researchers took special care to explain the research and to take note of any possible discomfort on the part of the interviewees and group discussion participants. All interviews had the interviewee's name removed and the data was protected from access by persons other than research team members.

The researchers undertook to bring the research report back to as many of the participants as practical, with a view to informing improvements in education provision in Kenya's arid lands and expanding understanding of the role of education in resilience and social cohesion in arid lands societies more generally.

Protection of team members was also a high priority, and the team went to considerable lengths to ascertain the security of all the areas visited for which we had support from UNICEF and/or the United Nations Department for Safety and Security.

Study implementation phases

The study was carried out in four phases, as outlined in the following list.

- **Phase 1: Data collection**

The methodological details and research questions were refined in a two-day team meeting in Marsabit town at the start of the research. This was followed by two days of trial use of the listening post and group discussion method in Marsabit County.

The study was introduced to county governments in letters from the UNICEF Kenya Country Office and the executive director of the National Drought Management Authority. Initial protocol visits to the county government – including meetings with key education officials in the county administration, the county director of education and the National Drought Management Authority coordinator were followed by formal interviews with a selection of government officials.

County directors of education kindly provided introductory letters to all the schools the teams wished to visit. At the end of each county visit, the team met for a second time with key government officials, such as the county education directors, to give feedback and debate the raw findings. Following these visits, the team met with the

UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office to develop a preliminary analysis.

On arrival at each site, the team first met with the chief or assistant chief and key contacts. The team then divided into three groups, one group talking with women and girls, one with men and boys, and the third carrying out interviews with key officials and leaders. The method involves four research tools: listening posts, group discussions, interviews and group work in schools (see Annex I for details on the research tools).

- **Phase 2: Checking and deepening the findings**

The research team returned to Marsabit County in August 2014 to give feedback and preliminary analysis to government, youth, teachers, elders, parents and others, revisiting each site and meeting groups of people who had taken part in phase 1. The team presented the preliminary findings, sought feedback, clarified points, deepened understanding of key issues and debated ways forward. A second stage of analysis was presented to and discussed with UNICEF in September 2014.

- **Phase 3: Extension of findings to Turkana County**

The third stage was to visit Turkana County to extend the research findings. The team spent 13 days in Turkana County and visited sites with the same profile as in Marsabit and Wajir.

- **Phase 4: Analysis and validation**

The data were systematized using Nvivo software. Analysis involved identification of major themes and sub-themes, along with coding of records to aggregate findings and develop explanations of cause and effect. An interim report was shared with an internal UNICEF reference group in September 2014. The draft report was shared at a half-day meeting with a reference group from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST), UNICEF and members of the county administrations and teachers in December 2014. Comments from both events were incorporated into subsequent drafts of the research report. The final draft was then summarized and a final stage of fieldwork undertaken. The findings were presented to participants in all the main research sites during small discussion groups and individual meetings. The participants were asked to validate or suggest amendments to the findings and to propose and discuss recommendations.

Research limitations and validity criteria

The study method allows for statements of general tendencies identified by participants as important and for explanations of how processes work. It also provides insight into how common or uncommon different perspectives are. However, the method does not provide quantitative material that can be extrapolated to the population or to subsections of the population, and it does not seek to represent actual proportions in the population.

Due to limitations of time and resources, the study does not compare the process, outcomes and impact of education in the three counties to the same variables in other counties in Kenya, or to other similar locations in the Eastern and Southern Africa region. Nonetheless, the findings raise issues and explain systemic connections that pose valid questions for other locations both in Kenya and the region.

The scope of the study and the interests of parents generated more detail on primary and secondary schooling in the state sector and less detail on the mechanisms of early childhood development (ECD) services, further education, teacher training, and other aspects of the management and delivery of education services.

Validity criteria for the findings are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba 1985). The credibility of findings is achieved in triangulation and iterated discussion, and final validation has been tested with local participants in all categories. By

relating participants' perspectives precisely within a broad description of their context, the study offers the means for judging how appropriate it would be to transfer the findings to other locations and settings. By including a large number of participants from a wide range of different locations and livelihoods, the study achieves dependability (i.e., if repeated today the findings would be the same). Confirmability (non-biased findings) has been achieved by testing the analytical propositions against plausible explanations provided by various observers, both within the three counties and those with expertise about them.

This research method is consistent with the research question, which seeks to articulate, aggregate and convey local people's perspectives on the problems of education in the arid lands, with a view to supporting citizen action in collaboration with UNICEF and government at all appropriate levels.

Photo 4: © UNICEF/ Sololo town, close to the Ethiopian border in Marsabit County, Sarah Wilson, 2014.

Chapter 2. Overview of Wajir, Marsabit and Turkana Counties

The three counties are characterized by their extremely low rainfall, specialist pastoralist economy, low population density, low levels of infrastructure and historical marginalization from the rest of Kenya. As pastoralist counties, they all show similar nutritional profiles, with lower levels of stunting (chronic malnourishment) than the national average, but higher levels of wasting (acute malnutrition). This is indicative of areas where health and diet are generally good, but which suffer acute episodes of severe shortages.

In the following brief characterizations of the counties, the study draws on the following sources: the 2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census Report, published in August 2010 by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), for population data; the Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey 2005/6, for data on proportion of children aged 10–14 who are able to read and write; and the Commission on Revenue Allocation's County Development Index, which is used to determine the level of marginalization, taking account of poverty, infrastructure, health and education. According to the Commission, Kenya's five most marginalized counties across the four indices are all arid: Turkana, Mandera, Wajir, Marsabit and Samburu. Specifically in relation to education, the most marginalized county is Turkana, followed by Marsabit, Wajir, Samburu and Mandera. This indicator is based on the percentage of the population who can read and write and the percentage with secondary education, both according to the 2009 census.

Map of Kenya, showing the three counties studied. Source: UNICEF Kenya Country Office.

Photo 5: © UNICEF/ Livestock at Ganyure, Wajir County, Molu Kullu, 2014.

2.1 Wajir County

Wajir County has a population of 661,941 and covers an area of 56,686 square kilometres, with 11.8 people per square kilometre.[6] Wajir town is the main urban area, home to 82,800 people. Eighty-five per cent of the county's population live in rural areas.[7] The Commission on Revenue Allocation identifies Wajir as the third most marginalized county in Kenya, which has a total of 47 counties.

The main livelihood is pastoralism, and the estimated livestock population in 2009 was 15.3 million, with a market value of K Sh 55 billion.[8] Pastoralism is a way of life that most efficiently exploits the resources of the county's arid climate. The driest of the three counties studied, the mean annual temperature in Wajir is 28 degrees, and rainfall ranges between 250 and 700 millimetres per annum; vegetation in the county supports not only livestock but also produces large quantities of gums and resins.

Residents in the northern part of the country practise a mix of small farming and pastoralism. Groundwater is collected from numerous wells, earth pans, dams and boreholes, allowing for a relatively high concentration of population. Trading ties that have been established for centuries connect Wajir County to the Somali coast and the Gulf. Today, the pipeline and road corridor that is to run between South Sudan and the new port at Lamu is planned to cross Wajir, improving links to the Kenya coast and beyond.

Most people in the county profess the Islamic faith. The main ethnic groups in the county are the Garre, and the Somali groups of Ajuran, Degodia and Ogaden.

Wajir borders Ethiopia to the north and has a long porous border with Somalia to the east. Effects of the civil war in Somalia civil war – including massacres, kidnappings and the flight refugees – are carried across this border into Kenya. Children coming from Somalia join the schools in Wajir, bringing with them a level of acceptance of violence that some locals find disturbing.

Wajir County also suffers eruptions of local political conflict, complicated by severe incursions from the war in Somalia. In 2014, there were severe and largely unreported clashes in Tarbaj between Degodia and Garre, with villages burnt, people displaced and many killed. A spill-over from political infighting and insecurity in Mandera County, the clash is the latest in a long-standing fight over political territory between political leaders.

The number of attacks attributed to terrorist and insurgency groups has also risen sharply. At the time of finalizing this report, in April 2015, an unprecedented terrorist attack occurred in the neighbouring county of Garissa. This attack by Al-Shabaab militants reached world headlines, with the murder of 148 people in the student residences of Garissa University. Insecurity in Wajir and the neighbouring counties of Garissa and Mandera have caused teachers from other parts of Kenya to leave their posts and request transfers to safer places, resulting in severe teacher shortages in this area.

Political patronage affects both the economy and the county's infrastructure. Politicians are understood, for example, to have created new settlements by drilling boreholes, constructing schools and other amenities, and installing a chief. Many people appreciate the easier access to services over the short term, but it is also common to hear anxieties about diminishing pastures as a result of the growing number of these infrastructure centres. Although this occurs in the other counties studied, it is most pronounced in Wajir County.

5 Commission on Revenue Allocation (2013), 'Policy on the Criteria for Identifying Marginalized Areas and Sharing of the Equalization Fund - Financial Years 2011-2014'; Nairobi: Commission on Revenue Allocation. http://www.crakenya.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/CRA-Policy-on-marginalisation-driteria.pdf

6 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census Report.

7 Kenya Open Data, www.opendata.go.ke.

8 Wajir County Government, 2014, www.wajir.go.ke.

Wajir County was most recently affected by drought in 2011. Though the situation was not so severe as in neighbouring Somalia and Ethiopia, by 2012, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that 171,568 people – around one quarter of the county's population – were receiving food aid.[9] In 2014, the Ministry of Health reported that 26.4 per cent of children in Wajir County were stunted (chronically malnourished) compared to the national average of 26.0 per cent, and 21 per cent of children were underweight compared to a national average of 11 per cent.[10]

The government budget for the county for financial year 2013/14 was K Sh 6.01 billion, with K Sh 119 million (2 per cent) coming from local revenues. Wajir has a doctor-to-population ratio of 1 to 356,340.[11] In 2009, the population reporting that they have primary education was 64.4 per cent (37th out of 47 in Kenya), while those with secondary education were 9 per cent (40th in Kenya).[12] In 2005/6 26.2 per cent of children aged 10–14 could read and write (45th in Kenya).[13]

There were 204 public and 27 private primary schools, and 39 public and 5 private secondary schools registered in Wajir in 2014, not including *duksi* Islamic primary schools (Republic of Kenya 2015: 38, 78). Net enrolment is low. In 2014, net enrolment at the primary level was 35.6 per cent of boys and 20.4 per cent of girls (27.2 per cent combined), while in secondary schools, enrolment numbered 10,514, with 14.1 per cent of boys and 5.4 per cent of girls of secondary school age enrolled (Republic of Kenya 2015: 41, 81).

Photo 6: © UNICEF/ A Gabra family drinks milk in Marsabit County, Molu Kullu, 2014.

9 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Kenya: Wajir District Who What Where (as of November 2012)', Relief Web, 6 November 2012, http://reliefweb.int/map/kenya/kenya-wajir-district-who-what-where-november-2012.

10 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 'Kenya Demographic and Health Survey: Key Indicators', KNBS, Nairobi, 2014.

11 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2014; and SoftKenya.com, 'Wajir County – All about Wajir County', www.softkenya.com/wajir-county.

12 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2009 census.

13 Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey, 2005/6.

2.2 Marsabit County

Marsabit County has a population of 291,166 and a land area of 70,961 square kilometres.[14] The Commission on Revenue Allocation identifies Marsabit as the fourth most marginalized county in Kenya, of a total of 47 counties. With 4.3 people per square kilometre, Marsabit is more sparsely populated than Wajir or Turkana. The average rainfall for most areas of the county is 200 millimetres, though on Marsabit Mountain it reaches as high as 1,000 millimetres. The main economic activity is pastoralist livestock rearing. There is some fishing at Lake Turkana, small-scale arable farming on Marsabit Mountain and around Moyale, and stone and salt mining and small-scale trading near the main transport links.

The county town, Marsabit, has a population of 14,907, and the important border town of Moyale has a population of 37,387. Trading ties are strong with Ethiopia to the north and Nairobi to the south, and also extend eastward to Somalia and the Gulf. The county budget for financial year 2013/14 was K Sh 3.95 billion, of which K Sh 44 million (1.1 per cent) was local revenue. The proportion of the county development budget spent on the livestock sector was relatively high, at 9.5 per cent.

Several ethnic groups live in Marsabit County, including the Borana, Gabra, Rendille, Burji, Turkana and Dasanech. Apart from the Burji, they have a background of pastoralism. The people of Marsabit are mixed in terms of religion, between Islam, Christianity and Waaqeffannaa.[15]

Political animosities between Borana, Gabra, Burji and Rendille over control of the county government have led to hundreds of deaths and widespread tension around the time of the county elections in 2013 (Scott-Villiers, Ondicho et al. 2014). Tensions still run high, though they are largely under the surface. The vast territories of the northern part of Marsabit County harbour members of the Oromo Liberation Front, an insurgency group fighting against the Government of Ethiopia. The Oromo Liberation Front was accused of perpetrating a massacre in 2005, when 64 people – including 23 children – were killed at the primary school in Turbi as part of a political dispute.

Few of those spoken to as part of this study in Marsabit considered the 2011 drought to be a serious crisis, though many acknowledged that 2010 and 2011 were hard years. Respondents recounted that relatively few animals were lost, and they claimed, in effect, that their production system was resilient in the face of all but the worst droughts. Most pastoralist respondents had to take their minds back more than two decades to come up with a time of memorable economic disaster. Some of the smaller towns in the county were started in the early 1970s as food distribution centres, such as Maikona and Kargi. In some locations, some of the families who settled in these town during the 1970s and 1980s are returning to a more nomadic life herding livestock.

The Ministry of Health reported that 26.5 per cent of children in Marsabit County were stunted in 2014, compared to the national average of 26.0 per cent, while 30.1 per cent of children were underweight compared to a national average of 11 per cent.[16] The doctor-to-population ratio is 1:63,825.[17]

According to the Kenya Commission for Revenue Allocation (2011), 70.4 per cent of the county's population reported having a primary education in 2009 (17th in Kenya) and 8.9 per cent a secondary education (41st in Kenya);[18] 26.2 per cent of children aged 10–14 were able to read and write in 2005/6.[19]

14 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2012.

15 Waaqeffannaa, or belief *Waaq* (God) is a traditional Oromo religion practised in Kenya's Marsabit County and in Ethiopia.

16 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, *'Kenya Demographic and Health Survey: Key Indicators. Nairobi'*, 2014.

17 Softkenya.com, *'Marsabit County'*, 2012, www.softkenya.com/marsabit-county.

18 Commission for Revenue Allocation, *'Kenya County Factsheets'*, 2011.

19 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, *'Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey, 2005/6'*, 2006.

Photo 7: © UNICEF/ Children learn to herd in Turkana County, Sarah Wilson, 2014.

In 2014, Marsabit had 169 public and 40 private primary schools and 27 public and 4 private secondary schools (Republic of Kenya 2015: 38, 78). In primary schools, 31,003 boys and 28,008 girls were enrolled, and 2,997 boys and 2,136 girls were enrolled in secondary schools. Net enrolment is considerably higher in Marsabit than in Wajir, with 65.7 per cent of primary-school-aged children and 10.2 per cent of secondary-school-aged children enrolled in Marsabit (Ibid: 41, 81).

2.3 Turkana County

At 855,399, Turkana County's population is more than twice that of Marsabit's.[20] The majority of people living in the county are of Turkana ethnic origin. The Commission on Revenue Allocation identifies Turkana as the most marginalized county of all 47 counties in Kenya. The land area of 68,680 square kilometres makes Turkana the largest county in Kenya. The population density is the highest of the three counties, with 12.4 people per square kilometre. Lodwar town is home to 48,316 inhabitants and is the main town in the county. Rainfall is generally a little higher than in Marsabit and Wajir, ranging from 300–400 millimetres per annum.

The main livelihood is pastoralist livestock production, which involves around 60 per cent of the population, and livestock trade. Other livelihoods include fishing, weaving, tourism and jobs with government or NGOs. Turkana has groundwater reserves, oil and gold. Recent estimates of oil reserves in the area currently being explored are as much as 600 million barrels and could be far greater.[21] Trading ties are with Nairobi to the south, South Sudan to the north and Uganda to the west. The road that enters South Sudan at Lokichoggio is one of South Sudan's main transport arteries, connecting it to business and transport hubs at Nairobi and Mombasa.

The county budget in fiscal year 2013/14 was KSh 8.5 billion, with K Sh 8 million (1.00 per cent) coming from local revenue. The county spent 1.70 per cent of its development budget on the livestock sector in 2013/14, a percentage

20 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2012.

21 Business Daily, 15 January 2015, http://www.businessdailyafrica.com/Corporate-News/Tullow-puts-Turkana-oil-at-a-billion-barrels-after-new-find/-/539550/2147558/-/bvbu4ez/-/index.html

that is in marked contrast to Wajir and Marsabit, which spent 7.43 per cent and 9.50 per cent, respectively.

The Ministry of Health reported that 23.9 per cent of children in Turkana County were stunted in 2014 compared to the national average of 26 per cent, while 34 per cent of children were underweight compared to a national average of 11 per cent.[22] Of the three counties studied, Turkana County has historically attracted significant NGO resources. Many programmes have now closed down, however, due to reduction in donor funding to NGOs.

Turkana borders Uganda to the west and South Sudan and Ethiopia to the north. Many Turkana pastoralists regularly cross these borders with their livestock for grazing. Others come into Kenya for trade and services, including health and education. There is a long history of raiding and conflict between the Turkana and the Pokot in the south, much of which is now reportedly carried out for political and commercial interests. The Turkana are largely at peace with their international neighbours.

Turkana has some of the highest burdens of child poverty and deprivation nationally, with double the national maternal mortality rate and only 53 per cent for under-five immunization coverage. Average distance to a health facility is more than 50 kilometres, and chronic staff shortages persist,[23] with a doctor-to population-ratio of 1:52,434.[24]

In the 2009 census, 71 per cent of the Turkana population reported that they had primary education (13th in Kenya) and 9.5 per cent had secondary education (41/47 in Kenya). However, the number of children aged 10–14 who are able to read and write in 2005/6 was found to be 18.1 per cent (46/47 in Kenya). In 2014, official statistics show 205,582 children enrolled in primary schools (116,209 boys and 89,373 girls) and 14,097 in secondary schools (9,410 boys and 4,687 girls). This represents net enrolment rates of 58.8 per cent in primary school and 8.7 per cent in secondary school (Republic of Kenya 2015).

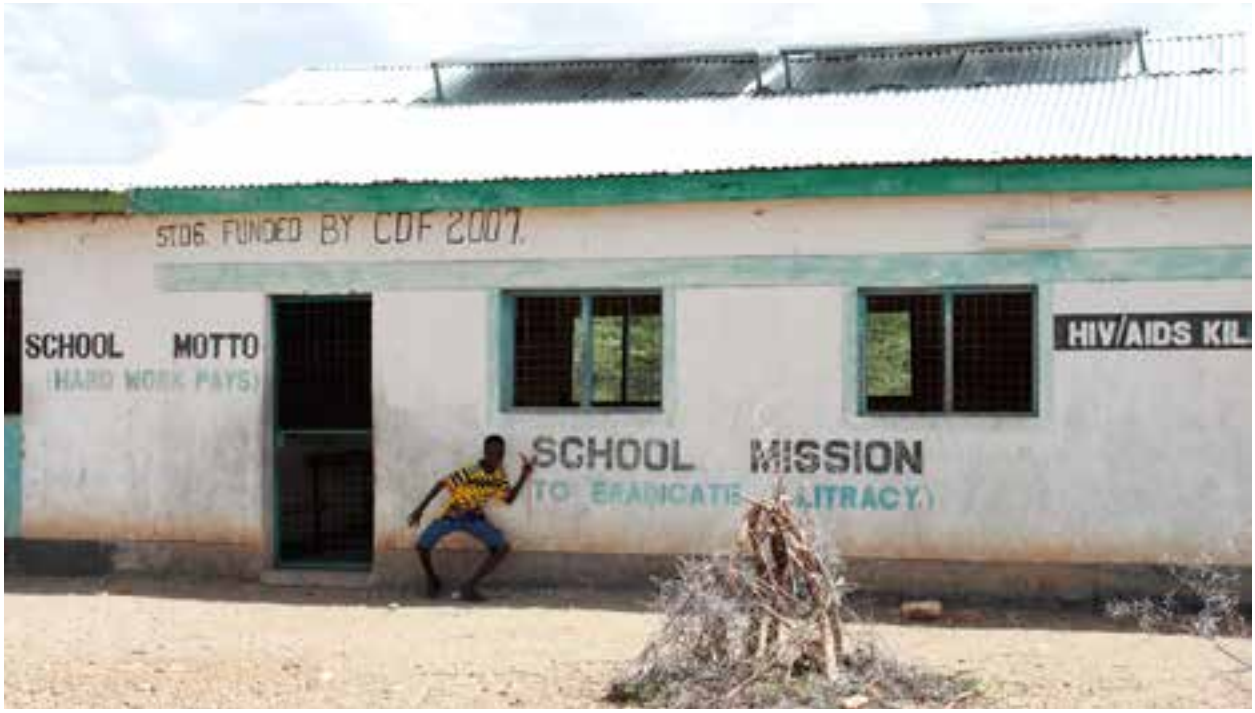


Photo 8: © UNICEF/ Lokiriama Primary School, Turkana County, Sarah Wilson, 2014.

22 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 'Kenya Demographic and Health Survey: Key Indicators', KNBS, Nairobi, 2014.

23 UNICEF Kenya, 'Annual Report 2014', United Nations Children's Fund, Nairobi, 2015.

24 Softkenya.com, 'Turkana County – All about Turkana County', Nairobi, 2012, www.softkenya.com/turkana-county.

Table 4. Basic data on the three counties studied

	Marsabit County	Wajir County	Turkana County
Population	291,166	661,941	855,399
Area	70,961 sq. km	56,686 sq. km	68,680 sq. km
Population of county town	14,907 (Marsabit) 37,387 (Moyale)	82,800 (Wajir)	48,316 (Lodwar)
Main livelihood	Pastoralism	Pastoralism	Pastoralism
Annual rainfall	200 mm (average)	250–700 mm	115–650 mm
County government budget, 2013/14	K Sh 3.95 billion	K Sh 6.01 billion	K Sh 8.5 billion
% of county government spending on livestock sector	9.50%	7.43%	1.70%
Population reporting primary education, 2009	70.4%	64.4% (37/47 counties)	71.0%
Population reporting secondary education, 2009	8.9%	9.0% (40/47 counties)	9.5%
Functional literacy among children aged 10 –14, 2006	26.2%	26.2% (45/47)	18.1% (46/47)
Number of public schools, 2007	126 primary 16 secondary	125 primary 17 secondary	202 primary 19 secondary
Number of public schools, 2014	169 primary 27 secondary	204 primary 39 secondary	364 primary 30 secondary
Gross enrolment primary, 2008*	41,915	33,373	53,625
Gross enrolment primary, 2014**	59,011	66,232	205,582
Gross enrolment secondary, 2008	3,069	4,937	5,676
Gross enrolment secondary, 2014	5,133	10,514	14,097
Doctor-to-population ratio	1:63,825	1:356,340	1:52,434

* Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 'Kenya Statistical Abstract', KNBS, Nairobi, 2014.

** Republic of Kenya, 2014 Basic Educational Statistics, MOEST/UNICEF 2015.

Chapter 3. Forms of Education in the Three Counties

Chapter 3 reviews the origin of formal education in the three counties and outlines some of the most relevant policies that govern the provision of education services today. A new and comprehensive set of government policies and plans recognizes and proposes to address many of the problems that have led to low enrolment and poor and unequal performance.

Finding that parents are still anxious about how well young people are equipped for life and about what they see as the negative contribution of schools to the resilience of the local economy and the cohesion of society, the chapter explores how parents are making choices to send only a few of their children to formal state secular schools and increasingly are choosing madrasas or educating most of their children at home.

3.1 A brief history

Until the 1960s, Turkana, Marsabit and Wajir each had only one school, for students through primary Standard 4 of primary, and delivered a good-quality 'European-style' boarding school education by most accounts. Each district commissioner received an allotment for the number of children who were required to be sent to the boarding school and passed the orders down to the local chiefs. Accounts from elders and retired teachers recall how chiefs threatened parents with fines if they did not a child to go to school. It was often the poorest children from the least influential families who went, or those who had suffered injury and could not herd. Many of them did well, becoming important players in years to come. A small elite learned English and Kiswahili and put it to use in careers in government and business. Those who passed Standard 7 were immediately absorbed into the civil service. In some locations, the history of enforcement was more acute; in areas affected by the *shifta* wars[25] after independence, for example, children were rounded up and forced to stay in schools in a fashion still remembered today.

During the colonial period, secondary schools were racially segregated with 'national' schools for Europeans, 'provincial' schools for Asians and 'district' schools for local children, mostly for boys. This segregation created a legacy that still exists today in a hierarchy of performance: national schools, county schools and district schools. National schools, of which there are now two in each county, enrol students who have achieved the highest marks on the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exam, with special quotas from within the county. The six national schools in the counties, together with the more expensive private schools, produce the majority of candidates for college and university (a few hundred each year) and primarily benefit the richer members of society, who have been able to afford the best primary education (Oketch and Somerset 2010).

Retired teachers and officials described how, at independence, in an effort to broaden the scope of education, more subjects were introduced and more schools built, but quality standards began a slow decline. Class sizes increased, they said, and qualified teachers and textbooks were too few. Schools that started out offering both vocational and academic subjects began to focus entirely on the academic. The '8-4-4' system of basic education (eight years primary, four years secondary and four years college) introduced in the 1980s aimed to promote a

25 These wars took place during 1963–1967 as part of a secessionist movement in the Somali areas of the Northern Frontier District (now North East Province). During the shifta, Government of Kenya troops confiscated large numbers of livestock and forced people into 'protected' villages.

more appropriate and less academic education. After a few years, however, the 13 examinable subjects were reduced to 8, and vocational subjects were largely removed.

As described during an interview with a retired teacher in Marsabit, the first secondary school was built in the Northern Frontier District in 1965, and the education was entirely free of charge. As more schools were built, funding was scaled back and parents were asked to pay substantial contributions. In 1971, a presidential decree was issued abolishing tuition fees for boarding schools in districts with 'unfavourable geographic conditions.' Unfortunately, many of the boarding places were taken up by children from other parts of Kenya, and the programme was later scaled down (Ruto, Ongwenyi et al. 2009). The Government then considered mobile schools, but efforts were scattered.

During the 1970s, religious houses and organizations began to increase provision of education services in each of the three counties. Today, the Catholic church sponsors three-quarters of schools in Turkana, though their curriculum is the same as that of the state. In Marsabit and Wajir, Muslim institutions have set up integrated schools that combine Islamic and state education, and there are numerous madrasas and *duksi*, which are formal and informal schools, respectively.

The Constituencies Development Fund (CDF) introduced in 2003 directed a substantial proportion of funds to providing bursaries for schooling. Its effects have been significant, but the CDF is also widely criticized for alleged mismanagement, favouritism and politicization of education (Ruto, Ongwenyi et al. 2009).

Free universal primary education was announced in 2003 and free day secondary education in 2008. Some scholars have described 8-4-4 and universal primary education as populist political moves because they lack the attendant resources and strategy for adequate implementation (*see, for example, Wasonga 2013*). For the northern districts, the technical orientation of 8-4-4 did not take account of local practical needs. The technical teaching that is supposed to be at the core of the 8-4-4 system does not, for example, include teaching on the science of pastoralism; rather, pastoralism is taught in history and social science lessons.

Some of the respondents described the 8-4-4 system as '8 minus 4 minus 4'. Others make an ironic joke of the Swahili term for free primary education, *elimu bora*, by reversing the words to imply a cheap or worthless education.

For many, particularly rural pastoralists but also urban families, school has remained an externally imposed institution to which they choose to send some of their children, while providing others with home schooling or religious education, over which they feel they have more influence and which many feel is more appropriate. (*For additional details on the forms of schooling currently offered in the three study counties, see Annex II.*)

Photo 9: © UNICEF/ Polytechnics now come under the county governments and have been heavily invested in in all three counties studied, 2015.

3.2 Education policy and formal provision

Kenya's long-term development plan, Vision 2030, aims to transform the country into a newly industrializing middle-income country, providing a high quality of life to all its citizens. As part of its social pillar, the plan calls for investments in education to achieve an overall reduction of illiteracy and enhancement of wealth creation. The focus is on access, transition, quality and relevance of education to address absorption into the labour market, inculcate a sense of national unity and patriotism, encourage social responsibility and enhance moral and ethical values.

In 2010, in recognition of the particular difficulties of delivering quality and accessible education in pastoralist areas, MOEST produced a Policy Framework for Nomadic Education that aimed to enable Kenya's nomadic communities to "realize the goal of universal access to basic education and training" (Republic of Kenya 2010b). The framework sets out to make the curriculum more relevant, to make schools more accessible through provision of boarding facilities and other appropriate delivery mechanisms, and to establish the National Council for Nomadic Education in Kenya (NACONEK) to formulate policies, mobilize funds and coordinate activity on nomadic education. Article 94 of the 2012 Basic Education Act gave provision for the setting up of NACONEK, and its officers had been appointed at the time of writing this report. Further, article 95 states that "the Cabinet Secretary may make regulations … to provide integration of the madrassa, duksi and pastoral programmes of instructions into the formal education system as appropriate to improve access and retention."

The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development is currently working on a revision of the curriculum that the Government aims to roll out by 2017. Officials report that the new curriculum will take the culture and local economy of learners into account. The Institute of Curriculum Development notes that the design process will include consultations with officials and others in the arid counties on content before it is agreed. This focus on relevance is consistent with Vision 2030.

Under the new Constitution in 2011, ECD and youth polytechnics were devolved to county administrations, while primary, secondary and tertiary schools remained national functions. In 2015, discussions are under way for the counties to also handle primary-level infrastructure. County assemblies have allocated funds for formal education, such as providing secondary school and college bursaries, since a lack of fees is one of the often-cited barriers to continuing with education. Wajir and Marsabit Counties have held 'education stakeholder forums' to discuss how to improve education services. Both counties have allocated significant funds to opening and upgrading youth polytechnics in most towns in response to high youth unemployment. Turkana County is focusing particularly on ECD and establishing centres throughout the county.

The National Education Sector Plan 2014–2017 acknowledges that the education system has traditionally emphasized academic rather than vocational specialization and that delivery of education services has been weak in some schools, especially in the arid and semi-arid lands (Republic of Kenya 2014b). The result has been low progression and transition both within and between education levels. The Education Sector Plan commits to accelerating access for hard-to-reach children, especially those in the arid and semi-arid lands and informal settlements, to mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in schools and to focussing on retention, quality and equity. The plan cites key challenges in these areas as the mobile nature of the communities, inhibitive cultural practices and persistent security issues, inadequate infrastructure, weak management, poor performance and transition/retention rates and high poverty. The strategy

allocates 3.1 billion shillings to establishing, rehabilitating and equipping low-cost boarding schools in the arid and semi-arid counties, strengthening governance through oversight of county government, enhancing monitoring and evaluation of mobile schools, exploration of alternative modes of learning to enhance access and improve quality of education.

Photo 10: © UNICEF/ Gabra children attend a mobile school in Marsabit County, Molu Kullu, 2013.

3.3 School enrolment and performance

Kenya has made extraordinary strides forward in education coverage during the decade since the Government introduced free and universal primary education in 2003. Across the country, student enrolment in public primary schools increased from 5.9 million in 2003 to 9.4 million in 2012 (Republic of Kenya 2014c). The average years in school increased from 8.4 to 11 between 2000 and 2009, the transition rate from primary to secondary increased from 46.4 per cent in 2002 to 72 per cent in 2009, and enrolment in public and private colleges tripled (Nicolai and Prizzon 2014: 19).

The national averages, however, mask a great inequality of provision. Net primary enrolment rates in Wajir in 2014 were 27.2 per cent against a national average of 88.2 per cent. Secondary enrolment in Turkana was 8.7 per cent compared to 81.5 per cent in Kisii County (Republic of Kenya 2015). In certain arid and semi-arid counties, only 2.6 per cent of boys and 1.1 per cent of girls attained the grade necessary to secure funding for higher education (Nicolai and Prizzon 2014). Although there has been consistent increases in the numbers of children attending school – net enrolment in Turkana, for example, rose from 27.4 per cent in 2009 to 58.8 per cent in 2014 – on average, around half of primary-school-age children are out of school across the three counties, either never attending or having left early (Republic of Kenya 2012b and 2015).

Rates of retention and completion are consistently low compared to the rest of the country. Statistics for Marsabit County in 2013, for example, indicate the steep decline in retention regarding the number of students achieving primary vs. secondary education, as shown in Table 6. This is also the case for the three county statistics shown in Figure 1.

Table 5. Number of primary schools in Marsabit, Turkana and Wajir counties, by type

Type of school	Marsabit	Turkana	Wajir
Public day	118	268	166
Public boarding	49	92	36
Private day	36	33	24
Private boarding	–	7	–

Source: Republic of Kenya, 2014 Basic Education Statistics MOEST/UNICEF 2015.

Table 6. Primary and secondary school net enrolment rate (%), 2014

County	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
	Primary			Secondary		
Wajir	35.60%	20.40%	27.20%	14.10%	5.40%	9.30%
Marsabit	71.30%	60.60%	65.80%	15.70%	10.20%	12.90%
Turkana	67.50%	50.80%	58.80%	11.90%	5.80%	8.70%

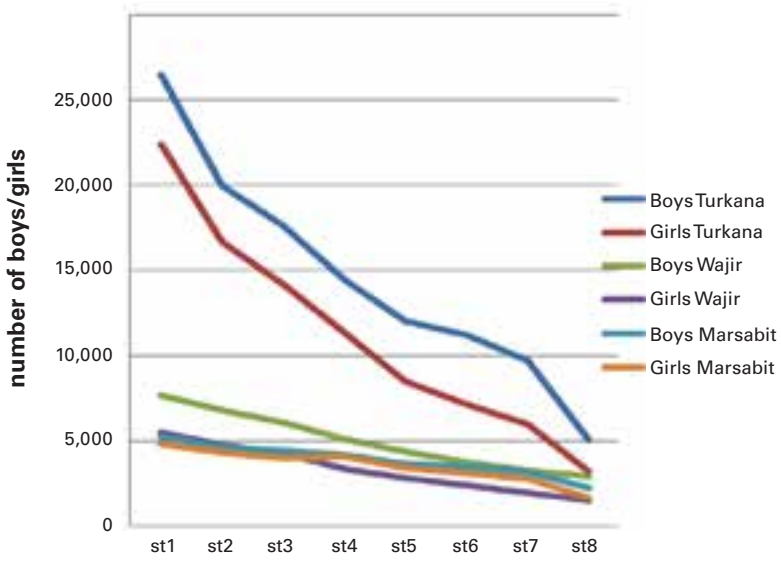
Source: Republic of Kenya, Basic Education Statistics 2014, MOEST/UNICEF.

Table 7. Marsabit County education statistics, 2013

Total enrolled	54,307
Finished Class 8 (primary)	3,356
KCPE candidates	3,092
Started Form 1 (secondary)	1,580
Finished Form 4 (secondary)	770
KCSE Candidates	708

Source: Data supplied by County Directorate of Education, Marsabit County. KCPE and KCSE candidate data from MOEST, Source: 'Overview of Education Sector in Marsabit County' 2014, paper prepared in advance of County Education Stakeholder Forum.

Figure 1. Enrolment in primary school, by gender and class



Source: Republic of Kenya, Basic Education Statistics 2014, MOEST/UNICEF.

The profile data show that, particularly in Turkana, while enrolment is strong in standard 1, it declines dramatically year on year. Statistics indicate that the expansion in primary school enrolment that came about with universal primary education did not, however, negatively affect the performance of those who managed to stay in school and take the KCPE. Turkana, for example, saw an improvement on KCPE scores between 2003 and 2010 of around 50 points, Wajir of 45 and Marsabit 10, while enrolment went up 20 per cent in Turkana, 45 per cent in Wajir and 60 per cent in Marsabit (Oketch and Mutsiya 2013: 21). The performance improvement is considerably better than many other parts of Kenya, although from a low base. According to Oketch and Mutsiya, the improvement probably reflects the fact that universal primary education enabled capable children to stay on at school. It does not necessarily indicate any improvement in the quality of teaching. Indeed, it may also reflect the tendency noted in other locations where class sizes increase, that teachers focus efforts on students with potential at the expense of others.

Actual mean performance is still low: In 2008 mean score at KCPE was 195 out of 370 in Marsabit, 188 in Turkana and 182 in Wajir, with girls' performance consistently lower than that of boys (Ibid: 21). The Kenya national mean score at KCPE between 2002 and 2011 ranged from 245.9 to 248.9 (Ibid: 15). Importantly, the actual number of children and young people who gain a pass at KCPE is very low: in the few hundreds in each county. Private schools tend to perform better than public schools and

among public schools those with students from wealthier backgrounds tend to do better.

Across the three counties, teachers, parents and officials complain of inadequate support, monitoring and resources for schools and, in particular, severe teacher shortages. The 71.4:1 student-teacher ratio in Turkana means rural schools end up with only one teacher for several grades (Republic of Kenya 2015). In Marsabit and Wajir, the ratios appear to be better, at 36.3:1 and 45.4:1, respectively, but the reality has been much affected by recent insecurity. The county governments are starting to work with the Teachers Service Commission to provide funding for additional primary- and secondary-level teachers.

Only around 2 per cent of children who enrol in primary school pass the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). At most of the 20 primary schools visited for this study, students reported that the majority of their peers had left school early, most leaving before Class 4. Some schools retain their students and see them continue into secondary school, but they are in the minority. A group of girls in Class 8 at Nadapal Primary in Turkana, for instance, pointed out that none of their class of girls is leaving school after Class 8. Of 36 students, 30 are going on to secondary school and the other 6 are repeating Class 8.

The reasons given by parents for their children not completing school are that the child is unlikely to get a job at the end; the child may not pass the exams; the financial, social and moral costs are too high; the child is not safe or is exposed to 'poisonous' town culture; the child is needed to help at home; and/or, most commonly, the child needs to learn livestock production.

3.4 Education in emergencies

During times of food shortage or insecurity, some smaller and more remote primary schools and ECD centres struggle to stay open if, for example, the food supply does not arrive (Turkana County in particular), the teachers or children are absent, the water supply fails, grants for community schools from MOEST or NGO sponsors do not materialize, or insecurity causes children and teachers to move away. The larger and better-established schools, often town boarding schools with external support (through NGOs, religious organizations or the UNICEF child-friendly schools programme), report rising enrolment during periods of emergency because they have basic supplies and some security. Such schools may also be supported through contributions from parents or local businesses.

UNICEF and MOEST plan to increase the use of schools as centres of assistance during emergency periods, providing food, basic materials, and clean water for students and the local community, as well as a safe haven for students.

Smaller rural schools, on the other hand, have little to fall back on, despite efforts by heads and teachers. These schools tend to be harder to staff due to their remoteness and insecurity, and can be the recipients of teachers moved to less comfortable postings for political or disciplinary reasons. Alternative schools set up with external assistance, such as mobile schools, are particularly precarious. According to local parents met for this study, most of these mobile schools no longer exist.

> "They [the mobile schools] were there, but we do not see them anymore. They disappeared about five years ago. They used to teach near this river." – Pastoralist Man, Turkana County

Though UNICEF's strategy for education in emergency-prone areas identifies boarding schools as the "most promising way to provide food security, safety and protection and education to vulnerable children in disaster prone areas" (UNICEF 2012), this approach risks excluding those who cannot afford these schools and does not take into account the lack of trust many parents and children have for the security of the schools or for the formal

education system as a whole (*see Sections 5.2 and 5.3 for more detail*). Some rural low-cost boarding schools visited as part of this study had a high number of urban children, both boys and girls, from relatively well-off families that preferred boarding school because they allow children to concentrate on their studies.[26]

The Government of Kenya's Basic Education Policy aims to mainstream disaster risk reduction in primary schools and specifies the necessity for coordinating the education sector, development partners, local government and private agencies in the management of emergencies or disasters to protect school property and ensure that children continue to access education in a safe manner (Republic of Kenya 2010a).

UNICEF has been active in supporting MOEST in the implementation of the policy to strengthen the education system to respond to or mitigate the impacts of shocks. This includes curriculum reform, and preparation and dissemination of disaster risk reduction and peace education materials to primary schools and school councils. UNICEF has taken a lead on child-friendly schools, designed and run so that children can learn in a safe, healthy, secure, stimulating, well-managed and protected environment.

MOEST has recently developed a new Peace Education Policy that aims to "promote and nurture a culture of peace and appreciation for diversity in Kenyan society through education and training" (Republic of Kenya 2014a: 13). The policy calls for application of 'conflict sensitivity' in education sector planning and equitable distribution of resources, and puts in place guidelines for emergency response plans and communication channels. Despite having no new resources, the policy calls for mainstreaming

Photo 11: © UNICEF/ A pastoralist girl in Marsabit County learns at home with her grandmother, Sarah Wilson, 2014.

26 Boarding schools are also problematic for many rural and/or indigenous populations in other countries, where they often take children from traditional communities in an effort to 'civilize' and 'integrate' them into the formal modern economy. Boarding schools thus tend to reinforce practices that belittle traditional communities by exercising what some conflict theorists refer to as "cultural forms of violence." (Smith, A., 'Indigenous Peoples and Boarding Schools: A Comparative Study', E/C.19/2009/CRP. 1, Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, New York, 2009).

of peace education in the curriculum as well as within the wider community. This includes revision of the Emergency Preparedness Response Plan for the education sector, which specifies a coordinated effort by public and private bodies during emergencies – laying out a set of standards around access and learning environment, teaching and learning that is relevant to the local context, and support and management of education personnel (Republic of Kenya 2010a: 19).

The extent to which the Peace Education Policy has been taken up in different schools in the three counties varies, with child-friendly schools often having more infrastructure and a greater focus on teaching topics such as leadership and peace than other schools, where capacity is generally low. Most teachers and heads in the study were aware of the new policy, but not all of them felt they had the means or skills to implement new approaches.

3.5 Other forms of education

Most children aged 7 or older are not in formal secular school, but this does not mean they are not being educated. Most Muslim children attend either a duksi or a madrasa, or both. In Wajir County, wherever there are a few children to learn, there is normally a duksi teacher. Duksi are informal and, in rural areas, migrate with the population. Learning takes place outside herding time. People are prepared to pay considerable amounts for the education that a duksi teacher can provide.

> "Our children start at duksi when they are 6 years old and they complete when they are about 14. Every end of the month, the teacher is given a goat for each child he teaches. And for every child that successfully graduates, the teacher is awarded a camel." – Pastoralist man, Wajir County

Madrasas are formal, tend to be in towns, cover more subjects and keep students for longer hours. There are three levels: Class 1–6 cover the basics of religion and literacy, Form 1–6 then include a range of academic and religious subject, and this is followed by college. Students receive a certificate on graduation from each level. Some children attend a madrasa, but not public school. Others attend both, often learning from 6 a.m.–9 p.m. throughout the week. Madrasa fees average KSh 300 per child per term. Madrasas are most common in Wajir County, but are also prominent in larger towns in Marsabit. Muslim schools tend to have higher investment from parents, who will typically be willing to spend much more on their child's religious education than on secular school.

The majority of children in all three counties receive a traditional education from parents and kin. Children embarking on a pastoralist education start learning when they are young, and their technical education continues until they have mastered pastoralism. Their lessons come from their brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, uncles and other members of the extended family. The children may miss the opportunity to learn to read and write English and Swahili and become acquainted with urban life, but they learn a wide range of subjects from livestock management, to social skills, history and customary law.

> "By the time a child is 5 years old, we already know what she or he is good at and we try and inculcate that in them. When they get to 15 years or so, we will try and nurture that thing in the child with the sub-clan members who are knowledgeable in that thing. There are children who are just born natural leaders. When the child is born like that he is nurtured as a leader, even if he is the last-born he will become a leader." – Pastoralist leader, Marsabit County

3.6 Education choices

In all three counties, parents teach the majority of their children at home. According to the 2013 Education Act, it is an offence for a parent or guardian to fail to take a child to school, punishable with a maximum one-year prison sentence and/or a K Sh 100,000 fine. Chiefs and others in authority explained that it is not desirable to enforce compulsory education for every child or at all times, in part, because most families need to teach pastoralist or business skills to at least some children in order to maintain the livelihood and culture.

In many locations, drought triggers school feeding programmes, and school enrolment goes up. The pull of school feeding programmes is well documented (Ruto, Ongwenyi et al. 2009), as are the high leaving rates when food is discontinued (see, for example, Anis 2008: 36–38). Originally intended as a support to families to help them keep their children in school at times of food shortage, in some cases, school feeding has become a long-term though unreliable way of attracting children to school. As a source of food for young children, school feeding plays a part in a form of coping resilience, but there is little evidence of its role in improving education, and unstaffed schools have become feeding centres in some cases.

Krätli (2001: 4) argues that increased enrolment rates have a direct relationship with, and may be an indicator of, increased vulnerability. He contends that pastoralists see education as a way of accessing resources outside the pastoral circuit. When herds have been lost, children are sent to school, partly to ensure they are fed and partly as a possible future investment. In Turkana County, school enrolment is highest at the ECD stage and lower primary level and falls sharply at subsequent levels (Figure 2).

Parents and teachers who participated in this study said that younger children gain from school feeding programmes. Many parents recognized that children might learn something while they are at school, but once the child is old enough to learn to herd, farm or take part in the family business – or in the case of girls, be influenced by 'town', making marriage more difficult – they are often taken out of school.

Government officials' recommendations vary, such as advising sending half a family's children to school and keeping half to herd, sending the 'best' ones to school, or sending at least one boy and one girl. Some pursue a gradualist approach that aims at 100 per cent enrolment in the future, some a pragmatic approach that recognizes that the education system cannot even cope with current levels of enrolment, while others appreciate the need for children to gain a pastoralist education that cannot be gained in formal school.

Pastoralist parents recognize that school can be useful. They watch their children from the moment they are born and select the ones who have a talent for herding to stay at home, while the others may be sent to school or to town to learn business.

> "This child has loved cars since he was a baby. He is always pretending he has a car. This is the one who I will push through school. Perhaps he will become a driver or go to technical school." – Pastoralist father, Marsabit County

3.7 Chapter 3 summary

This chapter has outlined the broad education context in the arid lands, beginning with the early imposition of schools during the colonial period and going on to describe the different forms of education available. It outlined a comprehensive range of national policies, including the Basic Education Policy, the new National Education Sector Plan, NACONEK, the Peace Education Policy and the curriculum review that recognize and point to ways forward on many of the problems of quality, relevance, access and management that are further explored in this study. The policies recognize the low overall levels of enrolment, poor performance and low retention, but they are not explicit on all of the causes of these shortcomings, questions that will be addressed in the chapters to follow.

Focusing briefly on the role of school in emergencies, the chapter noted a range of initiatives, but as yet limited delivery. The chapter has pointed to the rising popularity of madrasas in Muslim areas, where many parents and youth consider this type of education to be more reliable in moral terms. It also demonstrated people's strong belief in the consistent performance of traditional home-based education in providing a relevant, but limited, education to pastoralists and a similar belief in urban apprenticeship-type teaching within the family.

Photo 12: © UNICEF/ Rendille man in Kargi, Marsabit County, Sarah Wilson, 2014.

Chapter 4. Education, Politics and Violent Conflict

This chapter asks how the different forms of education introduced in Chapter 3 are helping young people to cope with insecurity, or, conversely, leading to their involvement in violence and illegal activities, including the misuse of state resources and corruption. It explores the extent to which education equips young people to play a part in constructively transforming or adapting the politics and security of their society.

Young people are intensely affected by local politics and violence. Politics in northern Kenya have become increasingly volatile, involving active and often violent competition over ethnic constituencies and their boundaries, contracts, jobs and land (Grenier 2013). The chapter explores the reasons why many school leavers, especially those who do not gain qualifications and cannot find a livelihood, become easy prey to unscrupulous leaders who recruit youth for campaigns and violence. It shows how feelings of stress among urban youth and their sense of alienation increase their vulnerability to attraction of insurgents. The siren call of Al-Shabaab and other violent groups has growing influence on disaffected young people, who find themselves neither able to return to a rural pastoralist life, nor succeed in an increasingly unequal modern life.

The chapter also shows how rural children educated traditionally learn to distrust the political process, but do not learn how to navigate or improve it. It notes that in both formal and traditional education systems, children learn that tribal patronage is key to success in life and that political interference in school operations is understood to be normal.

4.1 What do children learn?

In discussions with 11 groups of primary-school children, four identified 'peace' and 'learning to settle disputes' as one of the useful things they have learned in school, and 6 groups prioritized 'learning good behaviour' and 'respect'. But the participants were unable to say how learning about peace could make a difference to the violent conflicts that affect their communities. Several talked about how, even though they learn in school that peace is good, it is not possible to resist ethnic divisions outside the school gates.

> "We are taught about leadership, we are taught about human rights and the rights of other people. We are taught against favouritism. We are taught about how the colonialists segregated and discriminated against Africans, and we are taught to be fair to everyone and respect their rights."
> – Male primary school student, Wajir County

Children learn about leadership and politics in contrasting ways in the formal modes of education and the pastoralist education systems. Those children taught as pastoralists are taught about peace, leadership and customary governance, but learn little about the functions of government. They learn to distrust the formal political and administrative system and to see it as an arena of corruption and violence.

> "The one who is chosen to become a senior elder or another position starts his training about 10 years before he will come to position. During that time he is working with the one who he will take over from and learning from him." –Male elder, Marsabit County

Children who attend secular schools learn about the ideals of Kenya's Constitution, basic law, rights and the state, but they are not taught customary governance. While teachers may try to encourage fairness and good civic behaviour in class, talk in the streets and markets has quite another tone: of bad and violent politics across Kenya and unfair discrimination against ethnic groups with less political power. Young people and teachers told us that the lessons they are learning about political leadership are those of 'big man' politics and ethnic, religious and regional division.

> "Boys from different backgrounds are classmates. But then when they leave school they lose it very quickly. The force outside is too powerful." – Male secondary school teacher, Marsabit County

4.2 Learning tribalism

Many children of different ethnic groups tell us that they mingle together in school without reference to their tribes and clans. At boarding schools, they share dormitories and become close friends. For many, these friendships continue beyond school. Teachers in all the mixed-ethnicity schools visited spoke of their efforts to encourage students to resist promoting ethnic difference. Nonetheless, political tribalism is a major source of stress on Kenyan society, and it is learned from a young age.[27] Students and teachers in Marsabit and Wajir spoke of tribal tension spilling into schools. Class 8 students at a school in Wajir disagreed about this:

> Student 1: "Some of the pupils practise tribalism. They hide from the teachers. They do not want to see pupils from the other communities."

> Student 2: "There is no tribalism in this school. Our teacher told us that once we enter that gate we are one, and if anyone practised tribalism they would be punished."

While division is actively avoided in the curriculum, divisive understandings are unwittingly conveyed in the classroom by typical talk about tribes and the superiority of certain kinds of livelihoods over others, and ethnicity is part of the discourse. A mother in Marsabit told us about her own children's experience, though she feared to say which school she was talking about: "The teachers keep telling them which communities they [the children] come from. Even for the teachers, they are brought to the schools based on who they voted for."

In Marsabit and Wajir, particularly in the towns where children stay while attending school, talk on the street, chatter on social media and politicians' speeches in the high schools and stadiums fan the embers of their growing sense of grievance, a sense that one tribe is getting better treatment and more opportunities than another, or that the northern tribes are getting short-changed in relation to the rest of the country (Scott-Villiers, Ondicho et al. 2014). In a book on the role of education in the conflict in Rwanda, King notes that whereas inequalities between rich and poor often have little impact on propensity for conflict, perceived inequalities between groups significantly increases

27 Tribalism is a tendency to give political value an ethnic group and is often divisive and dangerous, whereas ethnicity itself can be understood as a status of belonging.

the likelihood of conflict (King 2014). These 'horizontal inequalities' can be exaggerated or exacerbated by the manipulations of powerful players, but also in the everyday talk of teachers and adults.

4.3 Clientelism and politics in school

It is widely believed among both rural and urban respondents that teachers take advantage of political or kin connections to maintain a position or get transferred to more desirable schools. It is also alleged that some teachers fall prey to the demands of political candidates to mobilize students in schools to campaign for him or her, and the reward is to become a head teacher or a better posting. Many respondents to the study also accuse teachers of helping to recruit young people to ethnic rivalry.

Bursaries are another form of patronage linked to politics and nepotism. Private companies, county governments, the CDF, NGOs and the Government Secondary Education Bursary Fund all contribute bursaries for school fees for secondary-school and university students. The availability of bursaries is higher in Turkana than in the other two counties because there are more NGOs and other sources of bursaries, such as Tullow Oil. Accusations of favouritism are common.

Officials note that there is little or no coordination between the various funders (a concern also noted by MOEST in the National Education Sector Plan) and that after the CDF bursaries were provided, schools no longer play a role in identifying students in need. Some students encountered during the study had collected several bursaries, and some who might have deserved support had received none. This may be caused by inefficiency in the management of bursaries, but among young people the belief is strong that the reason is favouritism and politics, often along ethnic lines.

The construction of new schools is also widely understood as affected by politics and the use of educational resources as a form of patronage. Often built using money from the CDF, new secondary day schools promise a less expensive education than existing boarding schools, but many adult respondents claimed that these new schools are built with a view to winning the votes of a particular ethnic group and end up adding to ethnic division.

> "Each [politician] claims they want a certain community to be on a side of the border because the community voted for them and the other did not."
> – Pastoralist elder, Wajir County

Education officials complained that political interference in decisions about school infrastructure and staffing is undermining the quality and equality of schooling in the arid lands. They are concerned that it affects harmonious coexistence among different groups, since the conflicts and violence that characterize political mobilization are highly polarizing. For those without wealth or from the 'wrong' ethnic group, the politicization of schools adds to the difficulty in gaining a good-quality school education.

Importantly, many parents believe that their children in schools learn as much from the way schools are managed as they do during classroom lessons. Kenya's main education policies are silent on political stresses even though international minimum standards, such as those of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, specify that policy should protect schools from being undermined by processes arising from "informal governance." The conflict-sensitivity approaches outlined in the Peace Education Policy do address the issue to an extent, guiding planners to address inequities that can lead to marginalization, grievance and conflict by undermining social cohesion.

A recent UNICEF report suggested independent monitoring mechanisms and supporting direct inputs to schools through civil society to increase the capacity of local communities to hold their schools to account (UNICEF 2011: 8). However, this assumes that the political factors or broader political economy pressing on the schools are not also pressing on local community organizations and citizen groups, segmenting communities and civil society along political and ethnic lines, and generating passivity or fear among would-be complainants.

4.4 Violence

According to our respondents, crime, political violence and corruption are not usually obvious inside schools, and schools largely protect children from these ills while they are enrolled. But young people described a predatory politics in the world outside the schools in which violent shocks are common. The political system works by creating animosity and revenge through unexplained killings, arson and hate speech, insurgency, and attacks on villages in the name of land claims (Scott-Villiers, Ondicho et al. 2014).

Parents and officials also explained how the world that a child joins when she or he goes to school is one in which the leaders who are admired are those who have money and power, however unscrupulously gained, not those who are known to have contributed to the society's well-being.

> "It's the system you go into through education, not what you learn in school, which makes corruption and conflict" – Community leader, Wajir County

When Vision 2030, the Government of Kenya's blueprint for economic growth and development, marked out northern Kenya as a target for accelerated government support to reverse its marginalization, new resources began to flow to the north. There were promises of significant infrastructural investment, including, for example, tarring the Marsabit–Moyale road and building the Lamu-to-South Sudan oil pipeline corridor. Powerful players began to manoeuvre into position to control strategic contracts and land.

In 2013, competition over resources increased further, when powers over county-level budgets were devolved from the Government of Kenya to county assemblies and the executive. Devolution aimed, at least in part, to create greater accountability between citizens and their government and reduce political violence around elections. In practice, it dislodged the old balance of power between state, local political interests and the customary order, while long-standing weaknesses in policing and justice allowed for spiralling violence (Chopra 2009). The national elections of 2013 added to the problem, since there was an unusual amount of interest in gaining the votes of the northern electorate (Carrier and Kochore 2014: 139) and young people were recruited to promote various parties in the electoral campaign, often in violent ways (Scott-Villiers, Ondicho et al. 2014).

With devolution, a new cohort of locally elected political leaders joined the 'big-man politics' in each county. It was not long before they were accused of involvement in grabbing contracts and jobs and, in some cases, participation in large-scale livestock raiding and cross-border illegal trade (Grenier 2013). Meanwhile, the articulation of national security through a hierarchy of provincial, county and district commissioners and chiefs with powers to call on police and militia continued to operate. Customary institutions also continued to play a political role, putting up candidates for election and using clan networks to guide voters.

Key informants described how the increasing complexity of political and administrative structures has generated new modes of

competition and collaboration between them, much of it invisible. This has undermined effective leadership and increased, rather than reduced, corruption and persistent violence.

> "We are taught in school about the different communities in Kenya. ... The educated then tell their community members that they are being left out in leadership and they start conflicts to revenge." – Female secondary school student, Form 4, Marsabit County

"The people then listen to them [the politicians] and start fighting, saying that a certain community should not live on this side of Wajir." – Pastoralist man, Wajir County

In all three counties, ethnic groups and subgroups have been identified as the blocs that must compete for scarce resources such as land, contracts and jobs. The identification of specific territories with political constituencies hardens the lines that separate ethnic groups and generates reasons for resentment (Watson 2010). Even as people know that the main inequalities are between rich and poor, powerful and powerless, they are encouraged to notice apparent inequalities between one tribe and another, and these identities begin to harden.

Most of the study respondents who chose to talk about political incitement recognized what political candidates were doing in trying to create ethnic divisions, but many also added that the divisiveness is difficult to resist. It is common for observers to depict fights between ethnic identities as part of a primordial culture, in line with the 'backwardness' of the arid lands people. The reality is different. The conflicts involve contemporary politics and modern crime, more often than not on a scale that includes local, national and cross-border elements, significant amounts of money and grave losses. While killings and small wars have become normal and are often barely reported in the national press, they deliver repeated shocks to the systems of governance in the three counties.

4.5 The role of schooled and semi-schooled youth

Elected political leaders are both widely distrusted and, conversely, admired. On the one hand, politicians were repeatedly caricatured as akin to 'warlords'. The data include 154 individual statements on the negative links between leaders and unemployed, semi-educated youth in promoting violent conflict for political and economic ends. The broad spread of respondents – 35 women, 42 young men, 41 students, 25 elders and five government officials – indicates how broadly this perspective is held throughout society. On the other hand, the apogee of success in the eyes of many young school leavers is the elected politician.

Members of Parliament, with their college degrees, earn vast amounts of money and wield considerable power. Unemployed young people in towns and centres find them particularly attractive when they hand out generous amounts of cash in return for taking part in their political campaigns. They described politicians as more useful than those graduates who leave for jobs in other parts of Kenya and bring nothing back to their families. Politicians, on the other hand, come back with money. In return, study respondents claim, local politicians ask their followers to promote their campaigns and sometimes to commit violence and arson in ways that manipulate the vote by creating ethnic division.

> "The young men want to listen to the politicians because they will get some money. The politician's money is free." – Male nurse, Marsabit County

People make a direct connection between being school-educated and being an instigator of conflict in the contemporary politics of northern Kenya. Though they do not mean that all those who have been to school are automatically

involved in violence, the implication is that to be a political leader a person needs to be educated, and political leadership today entails violence. Almost everyone believes that proto-politicians learn the negative ways of politics and government at school and in college.

> "One of my brothers was recently killed in Tarbaj. Education starts conflicts. Politicians make people fight over boundaries [constituencies]. When I was young, there were no boundaries." – Male elder, Wajir County

> "The educated are the ones in politics, and because they know everything, they come and tell us that people from other tribes are not good as compared to others. We did not have this before. They come and tell us not to vote for people from other tribes, while the educated from the other tribes tell their people the same thing." – Male elder, Marsabit County

In all three counties, respondents explained how 'school dropouts'[28] are the ones to carry out the violence instigated by politicians. Many of our respondents added that it is not only young jobless men involved, but also businesspeople and officials who keep their distance from actual fighting, but support violence, promote economic boycotts, provide arms, and encourage educated youth to send out hate speech on social media and mobile phones.

> "The rich go to Somalia and Ethiopia to buy weapons and give them to the youth. Every conflict has the hand of an old man. In Somali culture we respect our elders and they use that respect to tell the youth to fight. Blood runs thicker than education" – Male primary school teacher, Wajir County

For the young people who go out to fight, the impulse is born of anger and temptation.

> "The leaders bring conflicts, because if your brother is killed and you are a leader, you feel the pain. You become so angry that you forget your education. You even purchase expensive weapons for your people to go and fight" – Male primary school student, Wajir County

4.6 Peace education

Pastoralists believe that the traditional education system is better than the school system at teaching how to keep the peace. In their examination of customary peace processes among the Borana and the Gabra, Scott-Villiers, Ungiti et al. found that elders make a point of distributing responsibility for peace among various members of the community, including youth, and this is considered to be part of their education. This approach, however, is only effective among people living in the rural areas (Scott-Villiers, Ungiti et al. 2011).

Following the post-election violence in 2007–2008,[29] MOEST developed the Peace Education Policy, updated in 2014 (Republic of Kenya 2014a), which produced materials for teaching life skills, peace and living together and, with UNICEF support, provided training for several thousand teachers in 'teaching peace'. Teachers in many of the schools visited, particularly secondary schools, spoke about peace clubs and other activities that they organize to promote peace among students. They also explained that peace is difficult to teach as it is not examined and thus does not take priority in a stretched curriculum.

Peace education is systematically treated across the curriculum and through the grade levels (UNESCO IIEP and UNICEF WCARO 2011; UNICEF and UNESCO 2012). By including

28 Youth who have either left school early or after KCSE often call themselves 'school dropouts', which may therefore refer to young people who have completed secondary school or even college but are unemployed in town.

29 Tribal violence took place in the Rift Valley and coast of Kenya following the announcement of the results of the 2007 general election. Several thousand people died and hundreds of thousands of people were forced to flee to their 'tribal homelands' or to displacement camps.

peace-related topics in the curriculum both as a separate subject and within other subjects, the aim is for students to learn tolerance and peace.

Teachers and heads in certain well-established schools, some of which have external support, claimed that because their school had purposefully focused on peace initiatives and encouraged their students to embrace ethnic diversity, the schools were less affected by violent conflict taking place outside the school. However, only 2 of the 134 secondary students interviewed (or 1.5 per cent) mentioned learning about peace in school. The two attended a low-performing school in an area of protracted conflict, and felt that this teaching was necessary but did little to deal with the realities they faced in their lives outside school.

> "We are told to go and preach peace when we go home. We are taught to stay [together] as members of different communities." – Male secondary school student, Marsabit County

Peace education in schools is based on an assumption that the forging of peace lies with individuals, who can learn to opt for peace rather than violence. The reality, however, is that Kenya's political economy is a violent one and, as young people are quick to point out, violence is a means of doing politics and crime, and it drags people in because they have little other choice.

In their writing on Ethiopia's Somali Region, Richards and Bekele describe the difficulties with making a success of peace education: "It is not completely clear that all of the key conflicting stakeholders actually do want peace – aside from the spoilers in whose interest peace is not positive. Nor is it entirely clear in people's minds how education will create peace. When challenged, most people responded by saying that educated people do not fight, it is only the uneducated people who do so. Sadly, this is not the case, and this does not take into account the manipulative powers of those educated people, such as politicians, who shape an environment to their advantage, not caring whether people are injured in the process" (Richards and Bekele 2011: 61). These findings from Ethiopia are echoed by respondents to our study in Kenya.

> "The youth who have dropped out of school and those who have completed and are doing nothing are the ones who go and fight. Also, the rich talk to the elders. When the elders tell the youth to fight for their community then they never refuse." –Young woman, Marsabit County

> "The conflict is orchestrated by the educated, especially the politicians. They spread hate messages on Facebook … They use us to fight their battles or hire us for demonstrations, because they know we don't have money and we can take anything." – Young man, Turkana County

4.7 War and terrorism

The Somali war continues to cause severe problems in Kenya, especially along its long unprotected border in the northern and eastern counties, including Wajir. Although Kenya is part of the African Union Mission in Somalia, there are also allegations of Kenyan elites' involvement in supporting Somali warlords and militias in the complex geography of power and violence that characterizes the war (Anderson and McKnight 2014).

Al-Shabaab poses a significant and growing threat. It is claimed that hundreds of young Kenyans have joined the group since 2008, carrying out attacks inside Kenya, as well as fighting in Somalia (Amble and Meleagrou-Hitchens 2014: 524). Since Kenya's military entered Somalia in October 2011 to assist the African Union Mission to Somalia, Kenya has increasingly been the target of Al-Shabaab attacks, and a growing indigenous Kenyan movement is making the war an internal issue.

Between 2011 and 2012, more than 17 attacks on Kenyan police stations, churches and bus stops have been attributed to Al-Shabaab and/or its East African affiliate, Al-Hijra (Menkhaus 2014). In September 2013, a group of terrorists shot their way into the upmarket Westgate mall in Nairobi, killing some 70 people and injuring more than 200. The Government has not revealed the identities of the attackers, but commentators believe that the Al-Shabaab recruitment network in Kenya played a significant part in the event (Amble and Meleagrou-Hitchens 2014; Anderson and McKnight 2014; Botha 2014; Menkhaus 2014).

In November 2014, an attack by Al-Shabaab in the village of Arabia, near Mandera town, in the county to the north of Wajir, left 28 people dead, including 17 teachers and other civil servants, and a number of people were taken hostage across the border into Somalia.[30] The Kenya National Union of Teachers announced that teachers should not return after the Christmas holidays. Frightened teachers were shown on the Kenyan national news filling in forms to request a transfer to other parts of the country.[31]

As was most likely the intention, the distress felt by the teachers has helped fuel a growing sense among people in the north of their isolation from the rest of Kenya. Across north-eastern Kenya, schools have been without teachers ever since. Already of low quality, basic education, health and other services have been further reduced as a result of the attack. The symbolism is not lost on observers. In April 2015, an attack on the university at Garissa left 148 students and others dead, many deliberately targeted because they were not Muslims.

Some schools visited as part of the study had recently seen as many as a third of their students, as well as many teachers, leave the school to flee from political or ethnic violence. Several primary schools were closed during the study, some for protracted periods, due to violent conflict either threatening school security or causing students to move elsewhere. The Wajir county government worked hard to keep schools in Tarbaj District open during the violence that took place there in June 2014, including incidents of killings and village burnings that were part of the politically motivated conflict between Garre and Degodia, which has its locus in neighbouring Mandera County. Some teachers in Wajir town complained that children from Tarbaj were crowding into the town's schools and said they had lost other children who had fled areas close to Wajir town.

A number of students in Wajir come across the border from Somalia. Teachers explained that these children, who are brought up surrounded by extreme violence, often turn to violence to solve problems. They said that many are in school in Kenya only in order to gain identity papers, and they often find it hard to concentrate in lessons.

Among young people who had been to school, the study also found a widespread sense of being discriminated against within Kenya. The anger this generates is exacerbated by the stress of feeling like a failure and of feeling disconnected from the older generation. Their complaints are being shaped into narratives of unfair treatment by out-of-touch parents and corrupt elites. This raises the allure of insurgent groups, where recruiters give young people what seems like respect and a sense of purpose.

A growing perception among Kenyan Muslims of being treated as second-class citizens is borne out among the young people speaking in this study, many of whom do not feel Kenyan. The April 2014 Usalama Watch national campaign, in which authorities attempted to flush out Somalis illegally in Kenya, seems to have led to an increased sense of victimization and alienation among Kenyan Somalis, particularly those whose education has allowed them a broader view of Kenya and the region. Three young men in Marsabit County, explained how they think young people come to join Al-Shabaab:

30 African Union Mission to Somalia, Press Release, 28 November 2014; and Star Newspaper, 27 November 2014.

31 The Star, 'Kenya: Teachers reject call for Mandera, All Africa, 27 January 2015, http://allafrica.com/stories/201501270323.html.

"It is not only failing to get jobs. There is what I may term as loving religion. ... Some of the clerics give teachings that confuse the youth. They use the name of religion to make young people join the Al-Shabaab."

"What he is talking about is true. ... Nowadays, most young people here have been harassed by the police. Praying has even become difficult for us."

"There are people that I know from our *manyatta* [village] who were arrested by the police at night and told that they had been arrested for being members of the Al-Shabaab. They were beaten up and put in the police cell for a week. This is not what the law says should be done. ... What would make such people not join the Al-Shabaab?"

4.8 Chapter 4 summary

This chapter has shown how the political system poses a great stress on the integrity of arid lands societies and their schools. School education is affected by politics in multiple ways, including how members of the teaching staff are protected and promoted, how resources are allocated, how students are made aware of the politics of their ethnicity, and how various members of society view the curriculum as ideologically biased towards a westernized mode of life.

Photo 13: © UNICEF/ A young man chews *miraa* in a small roadside town, Sarah Wilson, 2014.

The integrity of the formal education system has thus been injured by chronic political stress and is highly vulnerable to new shocks, which reverberate through the whole society. This vulnerability was demonstrated by the cause and effect of the attack on the teachers and civil servants at Mandera in 2014 and the attack on students at Garissa in 2015.

Children in both the formal and traditional education systems learn that violence is normal. The stresses and shocks of bad politics are absorbed rather than transformed. In order to cope, young people must adapt to the realities of violence and political economy, thus negating the potentially positive impacts of peace education through the formal system.

The study details how, in formal schools, children are discouraged from tribalism, but it seeps into the 'hidden' curriculum, the unwitting or unofficial discourse of teachers and others in authority. Outside the school gates, in the towns and centres where many schools are located, the force of politicized tribalism is very strong.

In the face of bad politics, school efforts at peace education and disaster risk reduction are inadequate. While some officials, leaders, customary leaders and clerics are trying to counteract the trajectory towards ever more violent politics, formal schooling is accused of contributing to it rather than creating capabilities for its transformation.

Chapter 5. Education, Culture and Social Cohesion

This chapter turns to the question of how education affects the culture and cohesion of society and investigates how children become part of the cultural change process; what they learn in the process of their education that helps them to cope with cultural change, including its negative and difficult aspects, and how they adapt to its new norms; and what factors lead them to become leaders and citizens active in transforming society in positive or negative ways.

Formal school education is having a profound effect on culture, opening new horizons for some while creating a level of distress for others not previously experienced. In particular, this chapter notes how school is accelerating the rate at which many young people grow away from their rural origins and find themselves part of a growing urban underclass.

While traditional education creates strong social cohesion within the pastoralist realm, the chapter demonstrates how it does not equip children to operate with ease in the social, economic or institutional realities of modern Kenya, and is not helping them to engage with and influence positive cultural change. In urban areas, the large numbers of children who fail at school are likewise unable to influence the culture in a positive direction. Many of these young people absorb social stress by turning to drugs and accepting low wages. Even those who do better find themselves in a system that gives them little opportunity to work towards a fairer, more integrated society.

5.1 Social division and cultural shifts

> "In our culture, children are supposed to care for their parents when they grow old. Those children who get educated get jobs in towns and some forget their parents. This education is killing our culture." Male elder, Marsabit County.

Societies in northern Kenya are becoming more complex and fragmented, in part, due to the education system. Study respondents explain that fault lines have begun to deepen between rural and urban societies, and between the westernized and educated and those who retain tradition. The problem is particularly stark in Turkana. There are further lines of division between those who are rich and poor, and there are gendered differences to each.

For pastoralist people who prided themselves on their capabilities for unity, connection and redistribution of wealth to poorer members of society, this disintegration is a source of anxiety. In the towns, people of all ages are unsure: They value modernity but are aware that something of value is being lost. Many different people explained that their leaders were no longer reconciling the different parts of their society.

> "Society has been depending on its own systems for a very long time. There are well-laid structures at all levels, at village, at clan and at sub-clan. There are people whose role it is to arbitrate. People know how the system works. ... There may be a vacuum now. Education sounds more open and liberate, but the pastoralist system survives, and it still works." – Female primary school teacher, Wajir County

A small proportion of young people across the three counties benefit very much from the new culture they gain through a school education.

Others gain a little of the new culture and lose a little of the old, getting the basics of reading, writing and second languages, and a growing number are negatively affected. The overall effect of the cultural change is negative, in the view of many respondents to this study.

Many, including younger people, spoke of their concern about the profound cultural shift that children make as a result of going to school. They saw school as inculcating 'western' norms that value individualism and competition in opposition to local values of communalism and collaboration. More than a third of study respondents brought up and are concerned about the negative effect of school on culture.

On 291 separate occasions during the study, youth, parents and officials referred to a conflict between 'western' and traditional culture, complaining that the individualism learned in school reduces people's willingness to share and give mutual support and encourages people of wealth to look down on and exploit people who are poor. They noted that this undermines social cohesion, strains society's ability to rebuild after economic crisis, and increases the social tendency to self-inflicted shocks of conflict and violence.

> "If things continue to be the way they are, the future is heading to a deep hole … The people who pass well and succeed in life from here ought to be coming back to help us, but they don't. This is because they do not know how the Gabra people used to help each other in times of crisis. They were never taught that in school." – Male elder, Marsabit County

5.2 'A child for the government:' school-community relations

> "When a child goes to government school he is no longer a Turkana child, he becomes a child of the government. The bad thing with government schools is that they make the children benefit them, but not their families, the pastoralists." – Mother, Turkana County

Many pastoralist parents explain that when they send one of their children to school, they 'give' their child to the government, sending her or him into a new world to learn its rules and culture. As a teacher in Wajir explained, parents then tend to define their children as 'the schooled ones' or the 'the town ones' from that moment, and this affects how they treat that child from then on. Some parents talk of it almost as a sacrifice to the government. When the school called them for a meeting and asked for contributions for a volunteer teacher, one parent replied to a primary school teacher in Turkana, "But you asked me for my child, and I gave him to you. Why are you now asking for money?"

Parents see the effect school has on their child, and many of them do not like it. A large number met during this study are angry or upset that their children have spent 8, 12 or 16 years in the institution at some expense, yet they are coming out no longer able to relate well to their parents or tradition, and neither do they seem to thrive in the new culture. Parents hope that by learning the ways of government and the urban economy, their children will be able to navigate administrative, political and commercial networks of growing importance, but are unsure that school education is equipping them effectively. Some parents have low expectations and have little understanding of what a school education is:

> Q: What do you hope your child will get out of a school education?
>
> A: They will get a school education (pastoralist mother, Wajir County).

Parents' lack of admiration for the formal system is not helped by the severe teacher shortages and lack of supplies in many schools. Every

school visited during the study had volunteer teachers paid for through contributions from the parents. These volunteers are paid a small salary, have typically completed Form 4, and have little or no training. The nature of their employment means that they have little security, and parents reported they are often looking out for other jobs. Yet, these volunteer teacher often win 'teacher of the year' awards and are held up as examples of the teachers who are the most committed and culturally sensitive, especially at the primary level.

Schools that have better relations with parents tend to be those where the parents are wealthier. There seems to be a positive feedback loop between better performance and parents' greater involvement. The schools benefit from contributions from parents to pay for basic and other facilities, have more respect for and therefore involvement with parents, and students get better grades and have higher rates of retention and completion. Contrary to popular belief, there was no evidence to suggest that schools have better relations with parents where the parents themselves have been through school.

One teacher told us that the education of the child is based on three pillars: the teacher, the parent and the child. He then asked, but where are the parents? According to teachers, parents are largely disengaged from school activities. Most parents who had not been to school themselves were vague about what happens in school. Teachers complained that parents do not care about their children's grades or even whether they are in school at all. Parents griped that the teachers do not care and do not contact them when there is a problem with their child, or that nothing happens when they make complaints to the school. Some complained that they are only called to the school when the school needs financial contributions or as part of an enrolment drive.

Most parents met during the study, literate or not, do care about what happens in their children's schools, but there were only a few instances where parents and students felt able to call for or make changes. In one example, parents in the rural village of Shurr were not happy with the performance of the primary headmaster and filed complaints and held demonstrations until he was replaced. In other cases, individual families were monitoring their children's performance and making representations to the school when they felt it was needed. In Sololo, one ex-chairman of a school committee talked of asking students to report when teachers were late or absent from class. As a result, he claimed, teacher absenteeism dropped and school performance improved. These are a few of many examples of parents or community members seeking to improve their school and their children's chances of success.

The *duksi*, madrasa and pastoralist home education, which are all operated privately, tend to be valued by parents and the community. Most Muslim parents prefer to pay *duksi* or madrasa fees over secular school fees. Similarly, parents valued the private schools visited during the study more highly than public schools. In some cases these private schools also received support from the local community. In part, this higher value is axiomatic: Parents who invest money in education want to see a return. But these schools are also seen to be doing a good job, teaching children well and, in many cases, involving the parents or other community members more actively in school life. Some parents are coming together to hire teachers to teach their children, and sometimes themselves, literacy, Swahili language and numeracy.

5.3 Values

Parents' and children's ability and willingness to participate in how formal schools are run

is limited, but equally, teachers do not always engage well with the pastoralist system, often despising it or being ignorant of it. Parents explained their disaffection as coming from the loss of the child to another culture and the discriminatory attitude that they face when approaching the school. They are also disdainful and refer to the high rates of failure and the negative moral effect of school.

Girls are understood to be particularly vulnerable to the cultural influences of school, to unwanted pregnancy or becoming unmarriageable because they lose their culture. Sixty-five respondents gave examples of girls who had become pregnant or been sexually exploited while at primary or secondary school. Parents also spoke of girls who returned home with new views and habits of which they disapproved.

> "My parents taught me how to be respectful to my elders, and since I got married I have not had any problems. I know how to take care of my family, I am teaching my children also how to respect their elders. When you respect the elders, they always say that one is respectful and even when they come to the market they buy from me because they know I respect them. … We have learned how to cook and to take care of our families from our parents." – Young businesswoman, Wajir County

As noted above, using schools as humanitarian centres is one strategy for coping with emergencies through the provision of food and clean water, which can be extended to the community at large during times of particular stress or shock. Official agencies also use schools as outreach bases for public health, encouraging students to pass messages into the household. A school that is central to the community, turned to when times are hard and used in good times for community events, presents an appealing vision. But the vision has not often been realized, particularly in communities where school education has not yet been accepted without reservation. On a less ideal note, it is normal for schools to be used for political events and rallies.

Parents appreciate it when schools teach their children how to navigate urban life, and they also appreciate what they learn from their children if the children use the skills they have gained through formal school to what the parents consider to be good purpose. Then they will be listened to and their messages heard. There are problems, however, of both relevance and approach. Parents say they are unlikely to listen to children who they deem to have 'failed' in education since their advice is "not worth listening to."[32] Primary school students told us that learning about health, hygiene and good behaviour is a useful "because you can take the learning home and teach it" to parents and siblings, although "they can't always take the advice" – especially if what they learn is not relevant to local realities.

> "We are told to shower two times a day… But some of the things are not possible. There is no water in the reserve [pastoralist rangelands]. The little that is available is used for cooking." – Female primary school student, Class 7, Turkana County

> "Our brothers who are herding don't want to hear anything we've learnt about hygiene. They tell us that it is us who live in towns and insist on clean water that also have all the diseases. They also don't want to hear anything they tell us in school about livestock, they are the experts on caring for livestock." – Male primary school student, Class 8, Marsabit County

32 In most pastoralist societies, the amount a person is listened to and her/his opinions heard is related to how successful she/he is as a pastoralist. Many people will listen to those they perceive to have succeeded in school (doing well, got a job) but not to those who they perceive as failing (doing badly, unemployed).

In relation to violent conflict and other disasters, the literature is in broad agreement that schools that are engaged with the community are more likely to act effectively when there is a problem and share information widely. The community is more likely to rally to pay teachers' salaries, even if the state fails to do so, when it is actively engaged with its schools, which may even look after children who have lost their parents (Brophy and Page 2007; De Souza 2007; Krätli and Dyer 2009; Save the Children 2012).

Across the education system in the three counties, teachers and education officials have recognized the seriousness of the problem of schools being disconnected from the communities they serve. They are aware of the growing gulf between the culture learned in school and that of the community, and some are finding ways to build connections between the school and the local culture. The Turkana county government, for example, is working with an NGO to develop ECD storybooks based on Turkana culture, and a headmaster in Marsabit County said he brings customary leaders in once a term to discuss Rendille culture and governance with the students.

In most cases, parents are blamed for children's illiteracy or lack of interest, although some head teachers and teachers make efforts to communicate with parents. Formal initiatives include parent-teacher events and parent representation on school management committees and boards, but these efforts are not always characterized by respect. Teachers are arguing for county-level action to bridge the gulf between schools and communities. As yet, there is no initiative of any scale in any of the counties. This failure adds to the mistrust between parents and school and offers another explanation for their reluctance to enrol all of their children.

5.4 Morals

Moral learning is given priority in all forms of education in the three counties. For pastoralists, social skills are understood as having capabilities for voice, social networks, health, peace and good spirit, and being able to claim social benefits and rights (Brocklesby, Hobley et al. 2010: 8). This is in line with 'life skills' elaborated at the Dakar 2000 World Education Forum, which include learning to live together, "from adolescent interpersonal relationships, to gender equality, tolerance of diversity and a culture of peace" (Sinclair, Davies et al. 2008: 11).

Pastoralist children learn morals, judgement, how to make good decisions, and how to speak and listen well. In an education derived from their culture, Borana pastoralists, for example, teach their children social and technical skills from an early age. They later teach them law, social welfare, rhetoric, history, judgement, justice, listening, observation and other skills for maintaining society (Scott-Villiers 2009: 170; Siele, Swift et al. 2013: 3). This system is limited, however, in how much it can teach a child about other societies and environments, and some accuse it of transmitting an implicit anti-modern ideology.

> "From when a child is very young, he is taught not to insult people and taught how to behave. In Gabra, my children are not only my children. They are the children of the society, so any adult is considered a parent to the children. … No one brought up this way will ever die of hunger. The clan members will look after you and help you restock. Those who have moved to town and taken up the town culture have lost that." – Male elder, Marsabit County

Some of the children who are in day schools receive this kind of cultural and moral education during the evenings, weekends and school holidays. Their parents may also to take them out of school during important festivals. In this process they develop not only the values but also the networks that their parents believe they will need in later life. Some schools allow children to take time off for cultural festivals and others do not. Children in boarding schools, or who stay in far-off towns with relatives, may opt to or be instructed to stay there during the

holidays. The skills, knowledge and networks that they develop are more urban, and the divide between the two worlds begins to deepen.

> "We have a few [pastoralist] historians. The historian is a very important position. Among the Odola,[33] we have a senior historian. His father was the historian and he learnt about it from the day he was born. Now he is teaching his own son. His son doesn't go to school. He is 8 years old. If he goes to school, it will be like pouring the Gabra culture away." – Male customary leader, Marsabit County

Many children attend religious schools where they learn good behaviour, morality, religion and peace. As a group of young women in Wajir town explained, "We have learnt from madrasa about our religious beliefs and to follow them." While there are many reports from coastal Kenya about ideologues whose teaching in mosques encourages young people towards radicalization (Amble and Meleagrou-Hitchens 2014), the study encountered very few such claims in the Muslim areas of Wajir and Marsabit.

Secular primary schools teach respect, ethics and morality from a more western perspective, in line with the national curriculum, including teaching about rights and responsibilities. Child-friendly schools visited during the study placed particular emphasis on this teaching. Primary-level students told us that they are taught respect, but many also explained how they become confused when the teachers describe the pastoralist communities from which they come as backward, or when they are encouraged to work hard in order to 'come out of the darkness'. Many young people felt that teachers lack respect for their families and communities.

> "Our teachers tell us that we have come to school and cannot go back to pastoralism as we have seen the light." – Female secondary school student, Form 4, Wajir County

> "The teachers openly say that pastoralism is an outdated way of life. They do not consider that some of our parents are pastoralists." – Male secondary school student, Turkana County

As they begin to understand that teachers and the government view their pastoralist relatives as primitive, children question their own value and status in society. This leads to further confusion as children realize the subtle and not-so-subtle differences in the norms they are learning at home and school and, for some, in their religion. A female teacher in Marsabit town explained that her children get an important moral education from the madrasa, where they learn such values as respect and prayer, but that it conflicts with the modern ideas they learn in school, such as individual rights, empowerment and free speech.

> "Here [at school] we teach them their rights and freedoms ... This is to empower them, but I am sure it may also contribute to this [social conflict]. ... We empower people, but maybe we don't address how to behave if your rights are infringed, how to raise concerns. ... Sometimes the children who have been to school don't know which to follow, or they take a bit of each one. It confuses." – Female primary school teacher, Wajir County

Secular and religious schools and traditional/home education all teach tolerance and coexistence, but there is confusion between the various cultures, and between what is said and what children see and hear around them.

33 The *Odola* is one of the five Gabra traditional councils, or *yaa*, groups in Kenya.

Parents explain that the problem of culture is another reason they hesitate to send their children to formal school, although by sending some and not others, they too are contributing to growing division. Muslim parents are calling for integrated schools, which bring together Islamic and secular education as a way of mitigating this confusion and ensuring their children get the right spiritual and moral education. Both public (sponsored) and private integrated schools exist in Marsabit and Wajir and are well respected.

The different ways of life and modes of education in urban versus rural settings are producing social and geographical schisms. Children learning to be herders complain that their brothers and sisters in school do not respect them and have 'town cleverness'. Parents say that their children become distant from them. Many complain that they pay for their children's education only to watch them disappear. Some suspect it is because the child has failed in school and is ashamed. Others think their children have learned to be greedy, think only about themselves. If the student makes it to university and then formal employment, she or he may return to visit, but may have become like a foreigner to the family. The school is seen as a gateway to town where a new culture prevails. Adults in the rural areas approach towns with trepidation.

> "A dropout from Class 7 mostly goes to town. It's a poison centre. ... He was poisoned there, not by the school, where there is discipline, but by the environment." – Father, Marsabit County

> "In the reserves [pastoralist rangeland,] they don't bring their children to school because they see the poison of towns." – Rural woman, Turkana County

5.5 Disintegration

Eighty-four per cent of respondents spoke about the difficulty that young people face in performing well at school and in gaining employment afterwards. This situation is particularly severe for young men. They explained how a sense of failure, especially among those who have reached secondary school, leads a growing number of boys to using drugs, gambling, stealing and having mental health problems. Each county has its own version of substance abuse: In Wajir it is *miraa* and bhang, in Marsabit *miraa*, bhang and alcohol, in Turkana alcohol and bhang. Drug and alcohol use is fuelled by a sense of hopelessness among young people. They say they have nothing else to do, hanging out under a tree in a centre waiting for something or someone to happen.

> "I also know of a lot of them who are engaging in drugs. They chew miraa and smoke bhang because they do not have jobs, and using drugs makes them forget their problems ... They steal from people so as to get money." –Young man, Wajir town

Sending children to four years of secondary school means the family must sell a fairly substantial number of animals to cover the costs. This level of investment can threaten the viability of a poorer pastoralist's herd or a poor urban family's income, putting pressure particularly on the male children to get a job after leaving school as a way of compensating. However, jobs are hard to get and only a tiny proportion of young people find a salaried position or generate good income from business.

Pastoralists with bigger herds also emphasize the duty of the young to support their parents and are usually unwilling to give a young person a part of the herd once they emerge from school. They say that the child has already used his or her inheritance in paying for the costs of schooling. This creates tension in many families, as it is not only an economic difficulty

for the young person, but also can present a social difficulty, where they lose the status that herd ownership brings and their ability to bring a herd into a marriage as 'bride wealth' (dowry payment in livestock made by the husband)..

The sense that a child is lost to school and to town affects the influence those who have been to school have with their families. A young Rendille teacher, his parents' first-born and traditionally the child with the most influence in the family, explained how it is now his younger brother who learned herding who makes the family decisions.

Many young people who have left school but have not found a job complained that their parents would not listen to them, even when they were trying to convey potentially useful ideas they learned at school. Their parents explained that they listen to those who 'succeed in school' (gain employment) and maintain links with their families. Those who fail are "without good advice." Male elders in particular are often dismissive of those young men who have 'failed' at school, having little sympathy for their difficulties. Many young men in the study explained how stressed they feel at this treatment. They often fear going home.

> "The elders are making us enemies. ...The elders tell us that we are failures and cannot do anything. They tell them that what we do is loitering in the town and chewing miraa." –Young man, Marsabit County

> "Some of the parents make their children feel despised. After they have failed in secondary school, they get angry with them and keep referring to them as failures. The youth start behaving like failures." – Male head teacher, Marsabit County

In Wajir and Marsabit Counties, young school leavers described their sense of grievance and alienation and spoke of an attractive ideology filtering in from Somalia made more compelling by a long history of poor relations between Kenya's Somali population and the state. The literature on radicalization in Kenya indicates that the numbers who turn to ideological terrorism are small but growing. A sense of dislocation, of not belonging, is one of the prime elements in radicalization. Other elements include a sense of being exploited and discriminated against by ruling groups and being part of a 'rotten' society. These states of mind are easily stirred by 'influential ideologues' (Amble and Meleagrou-Hitchens 2014, Botha 2014).

> "Most of the boys recruited to Al-Shabaab are those who went to school. There was a boy from Mandera who had a first class honours degree from university. He went to Mandera and stayed two days and then crossed the border... After one year he came back to Nairobi without telling anyone... Then he blew himself up in Pangani police station... People lose morale, so what can they do? They think it's better to go on to the other world." – Male community leader, Wajir County

The gendered effect of school education is important in the economic, social and political spheres. In general, the problem of failure and stress does not seem so severe for girls. Many young women, particularly those in the towns, are gaining strength from the new sense of independence they develop as a result of a school education. Some girls reported that being at school has saved them from early marriage. Among groups in Marsabit, for example, girls marry as young as age 12 when they are out of school, whereas being in school, they said, both protects them and gives them more power to choose who to marry and when, as well as more knowledge in dealing well with their husband and children.

Enormous effort has been put into girls' education by MOEST and organizations such as UNICEF. For many girls, a school education offers empowerment and dignity. But it also poses a risk. Some girls fear losing their standing at home or losing wealth. A school-educated child in Turkana, for example, may receive a lower bride price than one who has not attended school.

Girls also fear increased exposure to rape and pregnancy, being unmarriageable, or being expected to marry a man who has not been educated. A high number of girls in Turkana, for example, reported that rape and pregnancy are a particular problem, and, as one person explained, the young women may not be able to marry after this has happened to her and she may lose her status in the family. Some girls then turn to hustling and working as prostitutes.

> "Rich and influential people take advantage of young women. They know that the students need the money ... they ask for sexual favours. Finally, they do not even pay the money. They know that you will not say anything." – Young urban woman, Turkana

Young people who have left school and are now in the towns and centres lack supportive structures in society. Some have been forming groups of their own. These groups can appear to be threatening to others in the town and are often accused of being those who instigate violent activities. In Sololo, Form 4 graduates have organized themselves to save up to help each other go to college. In Kargi, a group calling itself the 'University of Miraa,' involves youth hanging out in the centre, hustling for work, entertaining and helping one another. In Sololo, Lodwar and Marsabit, boda boda operators have formed groups to try to regulate their business and to protect themselves from persistent harassment by police.

> "We face the same challenges, whether you went to private or public school. ...We are all arrested by the police for no reasons and have to pay them bribes." – Male boda boda operator, Marsabit County

> "I save about two hundred to three hundred shillings a day. That means I get about six thousand a month [USD 70]. Then, if I get arrested once a month, I spend the entire six thousand on paying fines or bribing the police." – Male boda boda operator, Marsabit County

Even those youth who get jobs tend not to return to their rural families or visit only for a short time. Some send money during hard times, but many do not. Youth in towns told us how, when successful sons and daughters come back to the centres, the unemployed youth crowd around and ask for opportunities. They also told us that those who have connections in government or NGOs tend to give the opportunities to their relatives or clan members.

A total of 96 respondents, or 20 per cent of 475 elders, parents and out-of-school youth, spoke of family disintegration in relation to schooling. Young people said that their elders reject them and the knowledge they have gained. Elders accuse the youth of arrogance, thinking themselves superior to their parents now they have learned the life of the town. They observe that young men despise them because they have no school education. Girls point out that boys often reject helping their families in favour of waiting in the trading centres for elusive opportunities. Young men admit that they are impatient for money.

These young people and their elders worry that their disputes may be damaging to the resilience of their culture, as well as their own well-being. They explain that if it becomes normal for families to cease to cooperate, then the pastoralist system will fall apart, people will not

Photo 14: © UNICEF/ Livestock form the basis of the arid lands' economy. This photo shows cattle waiting for water in Wajir County, Sarah Wilson, 2014.

recover after losses from droughts, and formal and informal institutions will find it harder to prevent and resolve violent conflict.

> "We listen to the elders. The problem is when one young man does not listen to the elders then all of us are told that we do not listen." – Male college graduate, Marsabit County

5.6 Schools for the rich and poor

Those who can afford it send children to private school locally or in other parts of Kenya. This includes the majority of teachers who have children. Those for whom private school is not an option try to get their children into the best public schools or boarding schools, often by paying bribes or calling on claims of kinship. Those public schools where the parents are wealthier are able to levy higher additional contributions from parents and, in consequence, hire more teachers or provide better facilities. Thus do the wealthiest get the best education, better exam results and more co-curricular activities. The urban or peri-urban poor have access to the worst-performing schools. This impacts on both results and integration beyond school, deepening divisions between rich and poor.

5.7 Chapter 5 summary

This chapter has considered how, in most cases, schools are not well integrated with local society, weakening the institution's ability to play a key role in the community as a site of learning, celebration, collective action or disaster management in a way that promotes social cohesion and generates resilience. This failure to integrate is both a symptom and a cause of the social division to which schools are contributing.

Looking at values, morals and the psychological effects of schooling, this chapter has shown schools contributing to deepening divisions in society: between modern and traditional, and rich and poor. It has also demonstrated that these problems of division are not being resolved by traditional or religious education. While all the existing forms of education teach different versions of good social behaviour, the contradictory content presented for learning in the various systems is leading to division and confusion.

Such divisions render society more vulnerable to economic, political and social stresses. Economic resilience is affected because the culture of mutual assistance is in decline. Internal problems such as drugs, psychological stress and tribalism are helping to feed bad politics and insurgency by fuelling youth vulnerability to tribalism, radicalization and violence. Society's ability to absorb shocks, adapt to and overcome stresses and generate beneficial transformative capacity is undermined when it fails to find ways that the different parts of the society can interact effectively for the general good.

> "Education is not coming out with a uniform approach when it comes to dealing with dissent, infringement or argument. Religion has its own way. Civilization has its own way. Aada [culture or traditional law] has its own way." –Teacher, Marsabit County

Chapter 6. Education and Prosperity: The Economic Sphere

> "How can education match the economy? It should raise the economy, and if it interferes with it, it should be for the better." – County education official, Marsabit County.

This chapter turns to the relationship between education and the economic order, asking what and how are children learning that allows them to do well in the economy as it is, to cope with its weaknesses or to expand and transform it. It begins by demonstrating the significance of pastoralism in the local economy of the three counties, noting its expanding commercial role in markets inside and outside Kenya. In a brief survey of the rest of the economy, it shows how the formal sector, located in the towns, has yet to provide the majority of those who leave primary and secondary school with secure or well-paid livelihood, even those who have taken the KCSE. This has left a significant number of school leavers to find work in the insecure and poorly paid informal sector, a pattern common in much of Kenya.

Schools teach little or nothing about pastoralism, even though it is the main source of employment in the economy; rather children learn to think of it as a backward livelihood. Lack of relevance and disrespect for the pastoralist economy has become one of the major explanations for pastoralists' apparent low interest in education and for high rates of early leaving from schools in pastoral areas. While the traditional education equips children to be capable pastoralists, the chapter demonstrates that it does not have the capacity to teach them languages and literacy, so the economy, like the culture, begins to split down the middle. The different forms of education are thus not equipping the society with transformative or adaptive capabilities.

6.1 The pastoralist economy

Parents explained that the decision to support a child, at some cost, through primary and secondary school, or to educate him or her at home, is based on an assessment of outcomes that relate primarily to future prosperity. Almost all rural parents said that they wanted most of their children to be educated at home as pastoralists and the remainder to go to school and afterwards find a job. Pastoralism, they said, is where young men and women will generate wealth.

Pastoralist livestock production and trade dominate the economies of Wajir, Turkana and Marsabit and are a prime source of demand for services from growing urban centres. The 2009 Kenya National Household Survey indicates that 57 per cent of households gain livelihoods entirely from pastoralism and, overall, 68 per cent keep livestock. However, it is probable that the second percentage is much higher in reality, given that 85 per cent or more of the population live in rural areas and the majority rural activity is livestock (Krätli and Swift 2014). In addition, respondents tend to give inaccurate livestock numbers to surveyors, and people living on the edges of towns often keep small numbers of animals with relatives in the range lands.

Many parents argue that education should prepare their children primarily for the livestock economy. However, school does not teach pastoralist skills or culture, and there is a widespread belief that if all children were required to attend formal schools the result would be to ruin the pastoral production system. Thus, most rural parents educate most of their children at home and on the rangelands, while enrolling a few children in school.

Before it was dissolved in 2013, the Ministry of Northern Kenya and Other Arid Lands was one of the few champions of the pastoralist economy in policy circles. It noted that key aspects included the "strategic mobility" of people and animals, environmental care, and "communal land management institutions and non-exclusive entitlements to water resources" (Republic of Kenya 2012a: iii). These economic features require specific skills and networks to maintain and develop the system's productivity and resilience (Car-Hill and Peart 2005: 22).

The pastoralist economy includes not only livestock producers, but also a complex of businesses relating to the sale and transport of animals, involving large numbers of employees and significant added value (Umar and Baluch 2005). Nairobi and other large cities rely heavily on supplies of meat from Kenya's arid lands. The northern rangelands, which stretch from the Tana River in the south-east to Turkana in the north-west, are part of a Horn of Africa production system that had a value approaching USD 1 billion in 2010 (Catley, Lind et al. 2103: 7).

Official statistics tend to under-report the size of the production and the growth in trade, partly because much of it is uncounted and unregulated. Behnke and Muthami (2011) estimated that the contribution of ruminant livestock to agricultural gross domestic product in 2009 was K Sh 319 billion, versus the official estimate of K Sh 128 billion – a difference of 150 per cent.

There is an increasing volume of literature detailing the technical sophistication and economic value of pastoralist systems, much of it from East Africa (McPeak, Little et al. 2012: 174). The resilience of the system is due to its prudence in the face of a difficult climate, weak government support and poor security (Luseno, McPeak et al. 2003). Although the literature is not without criticism for its systemic weaknesses and inertias, it has moved beyond the blanket dismissal of the pastoralist livelihood as backward. Knowledge of this scholarship, however, has not percolated into the school curriculum.

Elders argue that the pastoralist system for redistributing wealth is one of the means by which economic stability is maintained. This is done within families as a matter of course, from fathers and mothers to sons and daughters, at times of marriage and at the birth of children. It is also organised through a traditional social welfare system that depends on all families making contributions according to their wealth (Siele, Swift et al. 2013: 206). Others point out that this system has been in decline during recent decades and many people, especially the growing number of poor people living on the edges of the towns and trading centres, no longer benefit from it (Tache 2008).

6.2 Vulnerabilities and stresses in pastoralism

Major stressors on the pastoralist system are not, as might be expected, variable rainfall, human and animal disease, or market fluctuations, but legal, administrative and political failures that undermine ability to deal with events. These include corruption of the regulation of rangeland management, causing, for example unrestricted enclosure of communal land or politically induced location of new settlements; restrictions on mobility caused by administrative and political boundary formations and conflicts; and changes to the governance, quality and quantity of welfare provision.

Nonetheless, the pastoralist system remains reasonably resilient according to many local people. For example, 2010 and 2011 were years of very low rainfall, and officially were treated as a drought crisis, but relatively few animals were lost and many people said the system was not shocked. In general, both rural and urban respondents are of the opinion that the economy is fair at present, but it lacks investment and is subject to administrative neglect, political difficulties and increasing inequality.

While pastoralism does not appear to be dying, as was once predicted, there are reports that it is becoming increasingly unequal (Barrett, Bellemare et al. 2006; McPeak, Little et al. 2012; Sandford 2013). An elite commercial and livestock-owning class appears to be emerging, many of whom are able to wield power and resources via alliances with county governments and political figures. A few people, many with salaried jobs elsewhere, have built up large herds, hiring herders rather than relying on family labour, selling substantial numbers of animals and using the cash to truck water to animals during the driest seasons (Catley, Lind et al. 2103).

> "We saw different kinds of people during the drought. There are those who had money and were unwilling to help. They took their money and bought water for their livestock. When their livestock had had enough, they sold the remaining water to us. There are those who just gave us the remaining water. Those who did not want to help are mostly the ones who, when they were at school, did not stay with their parents long enough." – Female elder, Marsabit County

At present, households with smaller herds are also doing reasonably well. In some areas of Marsabit and Wajir, we found people leaving sedentary lives in small towns preparing to move off with the herds again.[34] McPeak, Little et al. point out that mobile pastoralists are most adaptable to economic stress, while those who are on the edge of the pastoralist system; who have very few livestock and often live on the edge of trading centres and towns, are the most vulnerable (McPeak, Little et al. 2012: 22).

Young people in towns argue that pastoralism is conservative. Animal owners in the rural areas point out that the system does not receive the levels of public investment – infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, research, education or subsidy – that is needed to add value. Everyone is in agreement that the skills, institutions and networks needed for pastoralism are not being prepared for in schools because children learn little about mobile production and its associated environmental management, finance, insurance, trade and regulation.

6.3 Other economic sectors

Most non-pastoralists earn their living in the small trading centres and towns, the majority making and selling charcoal, collecting and selling firewood, mining rocks and gold, brewing, labouring, riding motorcycle taxis, or running kiosks, market stalls and *jua kali* enterprises such as welding and carpentry. Increasing numbers of people are living on the edges of the main towns and small centres. Many urban and peri-urban dwellers invest in livestock and have animals with relatives in the rangelands. A good number say they live in/near town temporarily, sometimes to receive food aid, until they rebuild their herds.

In all three counties, but particularly in Wajir, the risk management system involves families dividing their presence between the rural the urban, maximizing the potential for income and mutual support. While some urban dwellers say that they settled because they lost herds to raiding, war or drought, many say they became urban because they came first to school and did not, or could not, return to a mobile life. Many retain strong links to the rural areas, but others, especially young people, say they have lost their connection.

The private sector ranges from shops to a small number of large construction firms and a range of livestock trading enterprises. The economy of all three counties has pastoralism at its core – almost all the private sector livelihoods in the county and district towns rely on money generated through livestock production. A small

34 This phenomenon appeared to have become more common when the research team returned to discuss the research findings and recommendations one year after fieldwork had taken place.

proportion of people in the three counties is formally employed, some in the private sector and others in government and NGOs. The rise in salaried jobs began in the 1990s with increased access to education.

Though their numbers are small, salaried individuals play an important role in the economy, supporting small businesses in town and investing their salaries into livestock, which may be herded by family members or hired herders. They also say that they help their kin during drought times.

The state and NGOs offer a portfolio of opportunities that include county government recurrent and capital budgets, state services such as education and health, and a not inconsiderable flow of project funds through NGOs and religious institutions. These latter resources provide for a small number of jobs that are highly prized. The bureaucracy has recently grown expansively with the devolution of budgets and power to the county level. This has created a flourishing of government contracts, which in turn have provided stimulus to private hotels, petrol stations, retail businesses and banks. In Turkana, recent oil discoveries have led to the development of employment potential in some areas.

A significant number of people who have completed education also move to other parts of Kenya for jobs and some send remittances back home.

6.4 Wage employment

All the respondents who spoke about it understood school as designed to channel children towards a town life and formal employment. Young people recounted how their teachers told them that they would get salaried jobs if they passed their exams, and anything less would denote failure. Very few of the school-going children in the three counties reach the stage of sitting the exams, and few of those who take the exams do well. Even for those who pass exams, jobs are hard to find.

Examining a random sample of 96 individual records for references to jobs, the study found 41 (nearly 43 per cent) speaking about the effects of low performance in exams, usually due to poor-quality schooling. Another 40 (or close to 42 per cent) focused on the difficulty of getting jobs after school. Only 15 did not talk about either performance or jobs; of these, 9 were pastoralist elders (male and female) who had more interest in how children learned pastoralism. All of the seven school groups in this portion of the data spoke about performance or the difficulty of getting jobs; four focused on the difficulty of performing well, and three focused more on job prospects.

Failure in exams relates to the quality of teaching and school infrastructure, while failure to find a job or a decent living partly relates to the relevance of the education to the economy. Parents and students told us they are beginning to react to the failure of schools to equip children for earning a living by taking fewer or no children to school in the future or removing them after primary school and finding informal apprenticeships for them.

> "There will be no need to take my children to school. It is better they stay home and herd. When they are herding they will have livestock that they can sell and start businesses. I have seen businessmen who just buy and sell livestock and have more money than those who have gone to universities." – Male secondary school student, Wajir County

> "I will take my children out of school once they have completed their KCPE. They will come and learn artisanal skills in my workshop so they can go on to earn a good living. I have noticed that businesspeople are also now doing this." – Male carpenter, Marsabit County

Parents and officials said that they were encouraged to send their children to school by the example of the select few who went to school during the 1970s and 1980s and became political and business leaders or salaried professionals. In the three counties, these graduates today are running parts of the county administrations, NGOs and some of the big businesses. Some have been crucial players in national and county ministries, universities and technical organizations, influencing national and regional policies. Some have been responsible for generating a new level of acceptance for the economic productivity of the pastoral economy, while others have taken a leading role in criticizing the way of life and working to change it.

"Rich families wouldn't let their children go to school at first. My grandfather gave two bulls to make sure my father didn't go to school. Imagine that. Now those poor children who were forced to go to school are prominent people. That is what changed the negative perception of education." – Male secondary school teacher, Marsabit County

The story goes that in the 1970s and 1980s, most school graduates became rich and subsequently helped their families by restocking after livestock losses, paying school fees, building houses, or helping siblings to get jobs. When asked about more recent graduates and school leavers in the three counties, the story changed. The number of children at school has increased, but the opportunities for earning good money outside pastoralism have stagnated. While there are opportunities to run small retail outlets in towns and centres, supply firewood and charcoal, or labour at construction sites and roads, or be hired to work in fields and as herders, there is very little more lucrative and secure employment.

For most families, a secondary education is expensive, and many parents and school leavers explained how parents invest considerable amounts into their education through burning charcoal, selling herds or other ways. Parents today are uncertain whether the investment is worth it, whether school offers a worthwhile prospect or a danger to their children. They observed that most of their children do not get jobs after leaving school. They say that many have had to accept menial and casual jobs and have little incentive to come home where they would be expected to bring money or skills.

In Turkana in particular, a number of parents said school was mainly useful as a source of food for children too young to be useful at home. Nonetheless, a number of young people finish school, go on to college and secure formal employment. While the numbers who finish are small in comparison to the total number who enrol, there are enough who make a success of schooling to make most parents feel that school is a worthwhile investment.

> "The ones that were taken to school and failed in the school are in the towns staying idle there. Some are having meals on credit in the towns because they are unemployed. Despite that, I am still taking my children to school because we believe that not all of them shall fail to get jobs." – Male adult, Marsabit County

Why send a child to school at all? The results are not all bad. Enrolment statistics indicate that most children who are enrolled in school attend for the first two or three years of primary, when they learn some basics of reading, writing and arithmetic. Some stay on for a few more years. Young people and parents express appreciation for the basic skills and knowledge that they learn in early primary school. Students said they are happy to be learning languages, reading, writing and arithmetic.

A total of 12 out of 18 groups of children in primary school (nearly 67 per cent) engaging in the research gave priority to learning languages, and most added numeracy and literacy to the list of important things to learn. Most children wanted to be able to use mobile phones, mobile money and banks. They wanted numeracy 'for accounts' and literacy 'to read SMS [mobile phone text] messages' or 'to make a note of creditors'. Young women in Marsabit town working in small retail businesses reported that

the arithmetic and business skills they learned in school were useful. Others said that they saw no difference between themselves and those who had not been to primary school, apart from the ability to write down who owed them money.

> "I have learnt a lot of skills from my parents' business. They have told me that selling on credit is not bad because when the customers have money they will come back and pay. They have taught me how to dress when going to work. Some of those who have gone to secondary school and colleges do not dress well." – Young businesswoman, Wajir County

Jua kali artisans said that numeracy, literacy and measuring skills were important, though some had gained these basic skills without going to formal school. Students explained how they help their unschooled siblings learn some of these skills. A young herder greeted us in Swahili and told us he was learning it from his brother during the school holidays; a trader described getting a job in a hotel and learning Swahili and literacy from his co-workers.

A primary school teacher in Turkana gave us a broad overview of immediate outcomes: "In a good primary school, out of 40 students, 20 may succeed and 10 fail. The remaining 10 will go back to pastoralism. In a bad school, 10 may pass and 30 may fail, and the 30 go to town and do odd jobs. Of the 10 who pass, 5 may succeed in secondary, and the 5 remaining will fail or drop and find it hard to get a job. They will join the others who fail in primary doing boda boda [motorcycle taxis] and the like. The ones who succeed are pressured by their family to help them and buy them food."

Following up on this, the study asked respondents in their last year of school or who had left school during the past few years to tell us what had become of their classmates: The majority of the boys were hanging out in town earning very little. Most of them took on casual labour. A small number of young people were earning a living through riding boda boda (motorcycle taxis) and, as we saw in the previous chapter, had to struggle to make any money in the face of constant harassment from police and increasing competition from other youth. Virtually none of the classmates had gone back to pastoralism or other rural work.

> "They wake up with nothing to do and walk around town hoping to find some little work to do to earn some money." –Young man, Marsabit County

Many young men in the towns and centres described their days as 'hustling' for work or 'brokering'. Among the girls, the situation is different. Very few are to be found hanging out in the town centres. More of them said they were able to find casual work, running small businesses such as selling vegetables or *miraa*, or helping the family business in some way, and then most marry and begin running a household.

Figures 2 and 3, below, show what young people told us about their peers' activities after they had left primary and secondary school. The percentage in each livelihood is of the total number of friends of each gender listed. For example, of the total number of friends that our respondents could account for (n=785) 49 per cent of the boys and 24 per cent of the girls were said to be hustling or doing casual work.

Very few primary school leavers were reported as having gained salaried employment, but around 20 per cent of the classmates who had finished secondary school got a paid job, according to our respondents, while 19 per cent of girls and some 3 per cent of boys had gone into small business, usually petty trade, after secondary school.

Figure 2. What are your primary-school classmates doing now?

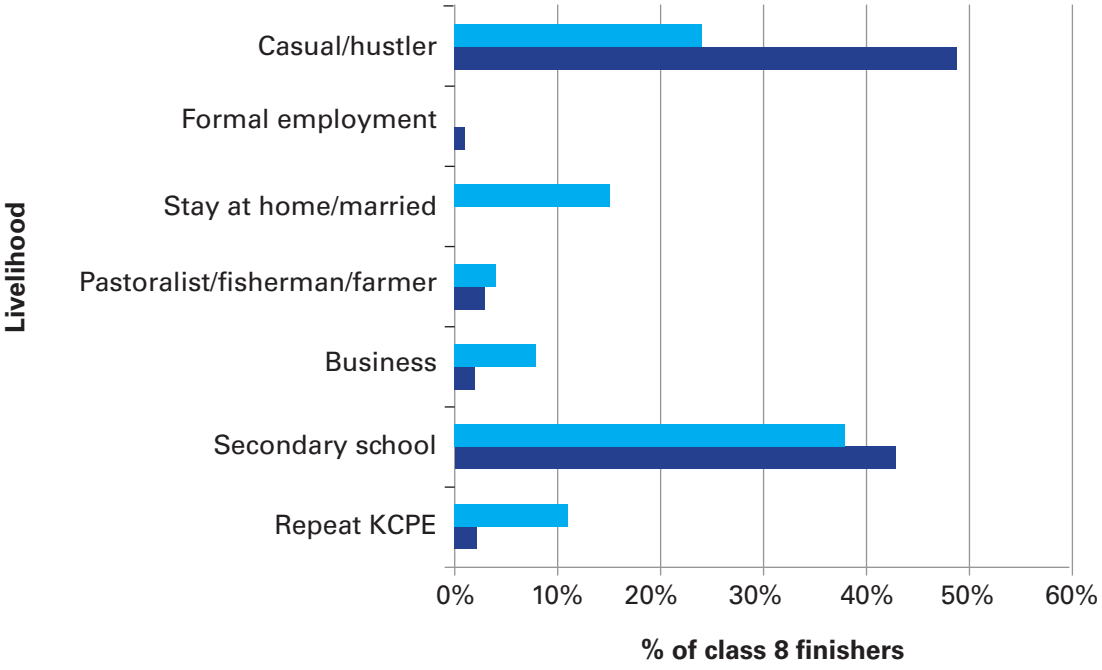
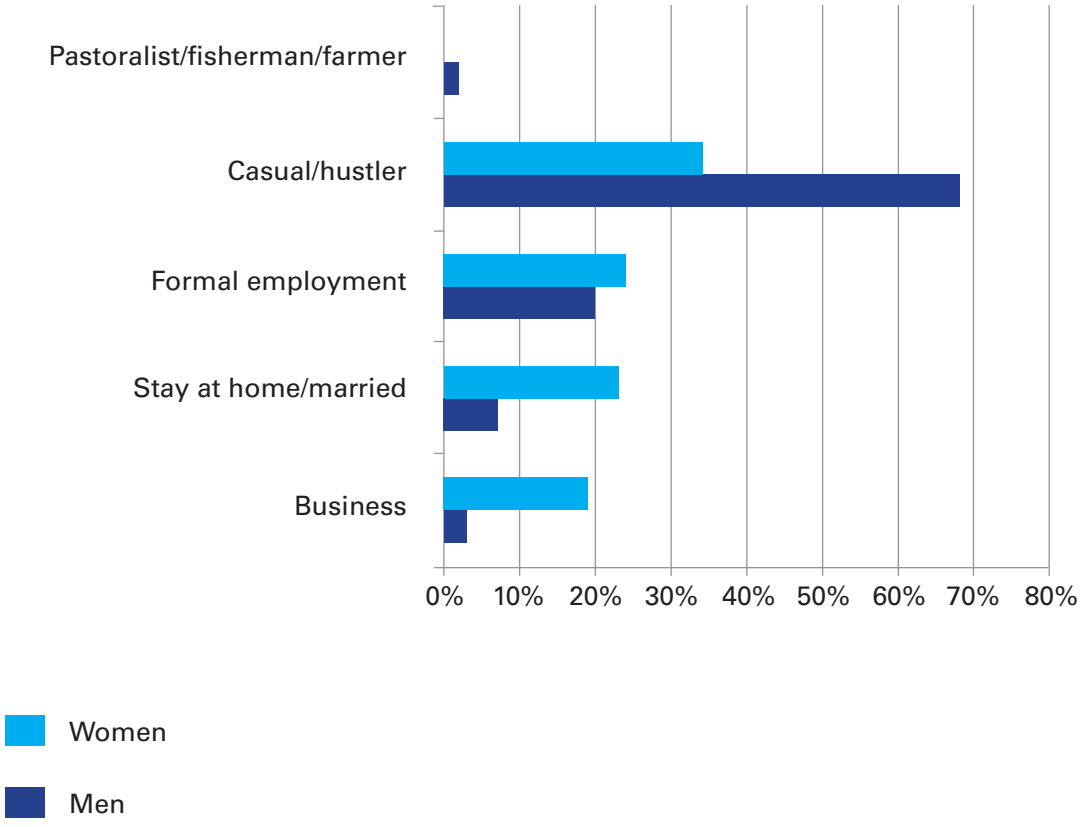


Figure 3. What are your secondary-school classmates doing now?



Many urban girls told us that they value the opportunities that school has given them and many have found what they have learnt at school useful in making a living. They typically list business skills, languages and learning about their rights. This is in contrast to young men, a high proportion of whom said that their schooling had been irrelevant. Among those spoken to in the study, only 7 per cent of women described themselves as unemployed, while, 20 per cent of men said they had nothing to do. Although this percentage cannot be extrapolated to the entire population, it provides an indication of the greater adaptability and employability of young women, which was borne out repeatedly during interviews.

> "We do not choose jobs like men ... we do not stay at home waiting, but, for example, one girl is waiting to go to college. She has started cooking and selling food to the people constructing the road." – Female secondary student, Marsabit County

A large number of people pointed out that girls are much more likely than boys to invest their earnings in helping their parents, building houses for them or helping in times of drought. Young people told us that families and society put different expectations on their children. While the boys are expected to get a job and use this wealth to continue to support their families, girls are expected to do whatever needs doing, and they are told that they can always get married if they fail to get a job.

Access to employed positions is highly unequal. It is unusual for a young person to get a job on merit. NGOs, government and businesses are all accused of ethnic bias and/or corruption in the job market. According to almost all our urban respondents, jobs go to those who have relatives inside the organization, or to who can pay or who can be exploited for sex. Elected officials are understood to have power to give out jobs and contracts as political rewards. NGO staff members are likewise accused of reserving jobs for their own clans and tribes.

> "You have to bribe for a job if you're a man and give sex if you're a woman." –Young woman, Turkana County

> "After you go to school, the government and the NGOs will ask for money to get the job. If you do not have the money, then your education does not help you at all." –Young man, Marsabit County

The study found that recruiters for state services such as the police and army expect to be bribed. It is common to hear from job seekers that amounts of as much as K Sh 300,000 (around USD 3,250) or the equivalent of one year's salary are the going rate for a job on the lowest rung of the hierarchy. Such positions require KCSE passes of better than a D+, but numerous respondents pointed out that the successful candidates often had less than that.

> "Why waste money on schooling when schooling does not get you a job. Better to save your money and spend it on buying a job." – Young urban man, Wajir County

On the other hand, some people told us that they heard of those who had got a position in the police or army without paying a bribe or having connections. Because the process is unpredictable, it still seems worth trying to get the qualifications and turning up to the recruitment days.

During the study, we were told of a number of young people who have gone to join Al-Shabaab or criminal groups. Some youth explained that Al-Shabaab offers an attractive salary and youth are joining for economic reasons.

> "When we fail to get jobs here, there are some of us who would join illegal groups like the Al-Shabaab because they pay people to join them." –Young man, Marsabit County

"If they are offered money to join illegal groups they will accept. All they want are jobs. We hear there are some who have already joined. They stay here in town." – Young woman, Wajir County

6.5 Pastoralism in the school curriculum

The literature on curricula is broadly in agreement that teaching agricultural and urban livelihoods in pastoralist areas tends to have a negative impact on school enrolment for pastoralist communities (*see, for example, Ruto, Ongwenyi et al. 2009*). Little or none of the new scholarship on the value of pastoralism or on its technical and institutional requirements is being translated into curricula taught in formal schools. Students claimed that the curriculum content does not offer much, if anything, on pastoralism or pastoralists. For some, this is desirable; as noted by one student, "My parents have brought me to school to learn. They will not accept to allow me practise pastoralism."

In the secondary schools that teach agriculture, students explained that if they opted to take the subject – rather than, for example, business studies, Internet technology, woodworking or Arabic – they learned about crop production and zero-grazing systems, neither of which have relevance for pastoralism, which is based on extensive livestock management. Further, they are not able to do the practical parts of the agriculture syllabus since the tasks are not suited to arid lands conditions.

Some young men who had left school felt that if more emphasis had been placed on subjects relevant to extensive livestock production, such as marketing, disease identification or breed knowledge, then students graduating from the arid counties and becoming professionals would have opportunities to remain within and contribute to the local economy by adding value and innovation.

"We do not teach anything on pastoralism," said one teacher in Marsabit. She and other teachers explained that the amount of material that must be covered in order to get through the curriculum and for students to have a chance of passing the exams means that there is no time to add additional topics or divert from the textbook.

Today, students who have not passed secondary school are being encouraged to join the new and revitalized youth polytechnics to gain vocational skills such as carpentry and mechanics, but not, as yet, pastoralist skills. These polytechnics, formerly village polytechnics, are sometimes looked down on as "places for people who have failed in school," as stated by a young man in Marsabit town. The artisan skills they teach are generally looked down on by people in the arid lands or seen as irrelevant for people living in small towns. A young man in Sololo town, for example, said, "They tell us to learn masonry, but there are maybe five houses being built a year here, and most of those do not use stone." Consequently, these courses tend to be taken by people from other counties.

"They tell us in school that we should learn about new technology and new things in the world, but not pastoralism." – Male student, Wajir

Young people at school reflected that if you are from a pastoralist family and complete primary school and cannot get a job, you can go back to pastoralism. But once a young person reaches secondary school, they said, every year she or he will move further and further away and it will be harder to go back. In Wajir and Marsabit Counties, we met a small number of young men who had completed secondary school and returned to herding. They were ashamed to admit that they had graduated from school and had become herders. Students pointed out that they had learned about the negatives of the pastoralist system at school. They spoke of pastoralism as a dying livelihood and an unduly hard and dangerous way of life, and they worried that it drives people to famine, poverty and conflict.

"We got educated because sometimes cattle rustlers may raid a pastoralist and leave them with nothing. If you go to school, when raiders come and steal your money, you shall have a job where you shall still earn a salary and cope after some time." – Male primary school student, Marsabit County

"They [the teachers] will advise you not to stay in the badia [Somali for rangelands or rural areas]. The drought and diseases will kill the animals. I will only go and herd if there is completely no one [else] to herd. When my parents are older, they will employ someone to herd." – Female secondary school student, Wajir County

Academic literature on the topic talks of the choice that pastoralist parents have to make between pastoralism and formal education (Ruto, Ongwenyi et al. 2009; Dyer 2010; Siele, Swift et al. 2013) and dissatisfaction among parents with the current system because it undermines a child's ability to be an effective pastoralist. In Kenya, pastoralists repeatedly complained of an education system that is seen to "take their children away or de-skill them" (Birch, Cavanna et al. 2010; also see: Car-Hill and Peart 2005; Devereux 2006; and Ruto, Ongwenyi et al. 2009). Therefore, they are no longer able to be productive pastoralists and, by implication, no longer able to cope well with drought or other crisis. In other words, the curriculum in the formal education system is undermining resilience against environmental shocks.

"Education does not help in times of drought. Our parents who have livestock have not been to school and have their own way of taking care of the livestock. They will not listen to you if you tell them to sell the livestock." – Young woman, Marsabit County

"We have learnt everything about our livestock. We know what to do when there is drought. We know how to watch for every sign of weakness in the animal. Our brothers and sisters in school do not know any of this." – Young pastoralist man, Marsabit County

6.6 Choosing a pastoralist education

Among Gabra and Borana in Marsabit County, many parents have decided that the first-born boy will not go to formal school, as he will be responsible for religious observances. In Wajir and Turkana, similar decisions are being made for economic, cultural and moral reasons. Young people described how they learn livestock production at home, including how to anticipate and deal with drought, and how they contribute to and run traditional social welfare systems.

For the proportion of rural children who have been given a pastoralist or *duksi* education, or who left primary school early and came back to the rural life, employment is guaranteed in the pastoralist system. Most of the young men who received this kind of education told us that they were happy with it; they spoke of their pride at having herds and knowing how to manage them and provide for their families. They gain a "detailed knowledge of the technical aspects of livestock husbandry – for example a sophisticated knowledge of grasses, shrubs and animals and membership of social networks which enable the capture of economies of scale in production and provide the basis of risk management" (Siele, Swift et al. 2013: 208).

The process of traditional education in pastoralism seems to be fairly consistent across all groups in the rural areas of the three counties. Deep in the bush in Turkana, for example, a boy of 12 years told us proudly that "this is my school," pointing to the goats he was herding. He explained how he has learned to

herd them, starting with baby goats, followed by young camels. After that he was allowed to lead animals to pasture alone. If he makes a mistake, he learns from it, he told us.

Elders teach young boys and girls in the evenings, covering the subjects of astronomy, weather prediction, religion and history. Older children who have shown talent for leadership are invited to sit in on legal cases heard by senior elders. They are expected to listen to the case, the deliberations and the judgement, and learn how the decisions are made and why.

Neither specialist technical knowledge for pastoralism nor the requisite social networks are available from formal schools. Rural parents also widely accuse government of undermining institutions that control rangeland management and traditional social welfare. As welfare and governance decline, they point out, the overall strength of the economy declines.

> "The traditional social welfare systems are being eroded. Education needs to be designed to take into account traditional social values. How do you create an educational system which incorporates traditional social welfare and doesn't erode it, while looking at creating skills for the labour market and having a rounded approach?" – County education official, Wajir County

Numerous rural respondents said that school is "killing pastoralism." Parents said that the departure of children to another life led to a split in society, as well as the loss of labour and skills. Although many families have more children than could inherit the herd, they want their society to remain whole.

> "School makes you incapable of being a good pastoralist because you quit herding, which is also a school on its own." – Young male boda boda operator, Turkana County

> "We need three things for our children, education, culture and pastoralism. But all three of these are being lost. Education is killing our culture and our livestock. If we have no livestock, we will also have no education since it is the livestock who pay for that education." – Male elder, Marsabit County

6.7 Chapter 6 summary

The economy, consisting primarily of pastoralist livestock production and trade, complemented by basic urban services, has shown itself to be quite resilient. School education is widely criticized as failing to equip young people with capabilities for developing pastoralism and is accused of undermining future resilience. It is also criticized for failing to equip students to become salaried workers. This is because the salaried jobs are few and inaccessible to most, and is also due to the low quality of teaching in most schools.

As discussed in this chapter, poorer members of society are becoming increasingly vulnerable. With the decline in the traditional system of clan-based social welfare not fully replaced by state systems and the rise in commercialized livelihoods, inequalities of wealth and opportunity are on the increase. This vulnerability could be the new shape of the economy, in which poor people depend on the state for intermittent welfare and on the private sector for insecure work.

Almost all the parents and youth who discussed social divisions felt that it was the task of leaders to prevent fragmentation into rich and poor, and it was the task of educators to provide a relevant education. Few felt that government was taking this task as seriously as it should.

Photo 15: © UNICEF/ Somali family members in Wajir County, Sarah Wilson, 2014.

Chapter 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Northern Kenya is under stress from bad politics, insecurity and increasing inequality. The current forms of education are contributing to the negatives as much as to the positives in this process.

When 142 students and five security guards were brutally massacred and more than 80 seriously wounded in the residence halls of Garissa University on 4 April 2015, the blow was felt across Kenya. Al-Shabaab took responsibility and made it known that the gunmen were seeking out particular categories of young women and men to kill. Their message was clear, and their purpose was to divide people by culture, religion, ideology and identity. Although other attacks on shopping malls, bus stops and buses indicate that places of education are not the only target, it appears that the terrorists targeted the university as a place where young people from other parts of Kenya were, in their view, being taught the wrong kind of knowledge and morality. During the days after the attack, the newspapers reported the terrorist message about division, and the Government announced a curfew and the closure of Islamic money-transfer systems.

This violence at Garissa University was the kind of shock that many had hoped education would help prevent, but instead it demonstrated how education is positioned at a volatile nexus of politics and ideology.This study asks whether the education system can occupy this position with greater responsibility, helping young people become constructive citizens and leaders who will create an inclusive and resilient society, in which stresses do not turn into such shocks and such shocks do not increase vulnerability.

While the gulf between the north and the south of Kenya deepened, thousands of young people took to the streets in Garissa town and Nairobi to protest the murders and the system that had allowed them to happen. Islamic and Christian leaders in Garissa met to reconfirm their cooperation in the face of extremism. These instances of public responsibility show that there is resilience still, but they are also a cry for help. Extremists are driving a wedge between cultures and territories of Kenya, amplifying deep grievances and aggravating fears between one group and another.

7.1 Social justice

The findings presented in this report reflect UNESCO's insight that poor education quality and low relevance can lead to unemployment and poverty; unequal access to education can generate grievances and a sense of injustice; and the wrong type of education can reinforce social divisions, foster hostility between groups and normalize violence (UNESCO 2011).

It is clear that the causes of poor quality, inequality and irrelevance in education in the three counties lie not only within the education system, but also within a wider context of negative politics and weak institutions. This environment invites young people, teachers, parents and leaders to absorb, adapt or innovate within a negative system by becoming part of its negative processes. With the fractures in society mirrored in the different forms of education, young people find themselves unable to transform the system or make more than a few incremental adjustments for the common good.

Unscrupulous politics, disrespect for tradition, misunderstanding of a livelihood, and a history of poor communication between people and state work directly against the provision of better quality, more equal, more appropriate and better integrated forms of education. This helps explain why, despite genuine efforts to deliver formal education across the arid lands, the programmes have yet to succeed. Policies and plans, however alert to relevance, culture and

conflict they claim to be, have not paid enough attention to this insight and are contributing to stresses and vulnerability to environmental and conflict-related shocks. In such a setting it seems contradictory to speak of how resilience can be strengthened by the education system's ability to respond to crises for which it has some role in fomenting.

Our concluding analysis of how education is affected by and how it feeds these social and institutional fractures is informed by Fraser's dimensions of justice: representation, recognition and redistribution (Fraser 1997; Fraser, Dahl et al. 2004).

- **Representation** refers to the means by which society governs itself and makes decisions. The study finds increasingly tribal political representation linked to violence in the political order, into which school-going youth are being absorbed. With little effective state regulation of political practice, and a degree of silence from the customary institutions, there seems to be little or no way that young people can curb the excesses of 'politicians'.
- **Recognition** refers to the ways in which society's institutions confer respect or disrespect on different kinds of people, awarding superior or subordinate status in a changing social hierarchy. In the cultural order, the study finds that formal education has helped create advances in gender equality, but it is also contributing to new separations between classes of livelihood. The study also demonstrates education's role in the stereotyping of identities: tribes with greater or lesser claims to resources, cultures of 'poisoned' townspeople and 'backward' pastoralists, and religions that are understood as more or less central to the national moral compass.
- **Redistribution** refers to how society shares its economic wealth among its members, counteracting the tendency of wealth to accumulate in the hands of a few. This study shows how the formal curriculum is accused of encouraging a competitive and individualistic culture associated with a decline in resource equalization and social welfare. It emphasizes the formation of a new social class of indigent youth who are getting little help. Traditional institutions of redistribution that regulated pasture and water use and imposed taxation and welfare are in decline, and new state institutions are wholly inadequate to spread economic resources in ways that people judge as fair.

The various forms of education are reflecting and contributing to new social, political and economic divisions. The three main modes of education – secular, traditional and religious – are not helping the diverse parts of society understand, hold accountable or cooperate well with each other.

Study findings show that each social group generates a narrative of the other, which though at times appreciative, is mostly critical, characterizing others as the school dropouts in the poisoned towns, the backward pastoralists, the educated elite planning conflicts from their homes in Nairobi, the down-county Kenyans. The authorities responsible for education are not finding ways to bridge these differences, and it is not altogether surprising that many parents, teachers, elders and young people are similarly failing to do so.

Each group blames the others for society's ills and thinks 'the others' should change their actions and beliefs. Many officials and teachers think that pastoralists need to be educated out of their old way of life into a new life that they consider to be safer, richer, cleaner, more worldly and settled. In contrast, many pastoralists and other citizens of the counties studied look on state education as a road to moral and economic jeopardy and a rejection of their ancient culture, religion and tradition. There is a strong sense among pastoralists that formal education is there to make people different from what they are, to encourage competition and greed, rather than to teach children all the good skills, knowledge and habits that society wishes to transmit to its younger generation. Likewise, many teachers and officials in the state system see pastoralist education as no education at all.

Parents are sending a message through the choices they make for educating their children. Many parents encountered during the study, including those living in urban or peri-urban areas, claimed that they were considering educating more of their children in the pastoralist way, at home in the family business or in Muslim schools. The low overall school enrolment rates and the very poor retention rates suggest that there is a major problem. Even among those who are enrolled in formal schools, private schools are chosen over state schools where parents are able to do so. These messages deserve attention.

Education for representation

Our assumption at the start was that by learning leadership and appreciating systems of representation in governance, young people would be equipped to find ways to transform divisive identity politics, make incremental change or at least to cope with the problems caused by bad politics. To what degree have the various forms of education fostered leadership and promoted adequate representation in governance? Do young people gain the confidence, knowledge and power to make a society that is governed well and minimizes structural and physical violence?

Some formal schools are poorly governed, while many others are simply managing on minimal resources and under pressure. A few schools are exemplary in each county, with excellent leadership and management. By attracting more resources than other schools, through parents' contributions or by seeking additional aid from government or non-government funds, they are able to improve the quality of teaching and extra-curricular activities that promote both social and political leadership. In the main, however, few parents, teachers or youth feel able to influence the way schools are run or the content and quality of what is taught, and as a result few engage with those responsible for education governance. For many people, this is the beginning of a lifelong tendency to see state authorities and representatives as unaccountable and beyond the reach of the ordinary citizen.

Almost every group that we talked to in the three counties blamed someone else for the problems of education and society. Only a small number talked of their own responsibility and action. This is partly the nature of a study of public opinion – people find it easy to lay blame elsewhere. But it also points to a real problem of growing *collective irresponsibility*, created by all the stresses and shocks elucidated in this report. The formal, religious and traditional education systems may be capable of producing potential leaders able to take the arid lands societies into a prosperous and peaceful future, but with the scope of problems they face, the divisions in society and the absence of support for them and of effective institutions for them to lead, few of them seem sure of what to do. Collective responsibility seems an ever more distant ideal.

Most of the young people met in the three counties are not reaching adulthood with the feeling that they are represented or influential in how their society is governed. The growing number of young people stranded in towns between a pastoral life and the life of a salaried employee has created a new dynamic that is feeding the increasingly febrile post-devolution politics. The three counties are borderlands in more than one sense: They have long, unprotected borders with unstable areas of neighbouring countries and are distant from the main centres of commerce and governance in Kenya. Among underemployed young people, the re-emergence of a profound dissociation, feeling that they are not full citizens of Kenya, and their turning towards religious, martial or criminal identities that seem to be a better fit are evidence that the governance of society is in jeopardy.

Meanwhile, the external shocks doled out by Al-Shabaab are on the increase. Al-Shabaab and other groups, such as Al Hijra, are exposing ethnic, geographical and religious fault lines. Their targets show how well they understand the points of weakness: ethnicity, culture and corruption. Those professing the Muslim faith

feel strongly that many national figures in politics and the press blame them en masse for terrorism of which they are innocent. Young people explain how they are first exposed to this discrimination as they participate in the education system. The Government's response has failed to allay fears and tensions between Kenyans of different ethnicities and faiths (International Crisis Group 2014: 16).

Division, inequality and a failure of political representation are endangering the cohesion of the society and its ability to exert collective responsibility, allowing the rising dominance of irresponsible politics. Schools in the arid lands are not independent of its politics, and head teachers and teachers find it hard to minimize division. The education system is not the source of these troubles, but it adds to them when it fails to prepare new generations for transforming, adapting or even coping with the complex and difficult business of politics.

Education for recognition

Our assumption at the start was that by learning and enacting equal respect for all people, young people would be able to contribute to a harmonious society that is able to develop in beneficial directions, while drawing on the best of its traditions. Society needs to maintain cohesion and avoid excessive fracture into fixed identities that can be influenced by powerful agents. To what degree have the different forms of education promoted recognition of the equal value of all kinds of identities and the necessity of respect, communication and collaboration? What are young people doing to diminish inequalities of status conferred by social institutions on different ethnicities, genders, classes or religions? To what degree has education created divisions or underwritten violence?

The formal education system provides basic literacy, numeracy and Kiswahili to thousands of children every year in the three counties, equipping them to communicate and learn. Particularly among young urban women, the system offers improved recognition and better prospects. At the same time, inequalities in formal education provision in terms of adequacy of resources, quality of teaching and management, relevance of curriculum, level of performance and actual impact are acute and deeply felt. They fuel grievances about south versus north, Muslim versus Christian and town versus pastoralist. The formal state schools are places where young people begin to learn a sense of being marginal. The disconnection between parents, their school-going children and formal educators is a source of weakness. Traditional education, meanwhile, teaches children respect for different ethnicities and (in some cases) religions, but keeps children isolated from and disrespectful of the urban side of their changing society and cuts them off from literacy and modernity. They learn what townspeople consider to be an old-fashioned deference for tradition and outdated gender and age stereotypes.

The social fractures shown in this study are not necessarily a cause for excessive anxiety, since they are to be expected in a modernizing society. It is important to notice all the instances of friendship, kinship and cooperation that bridge difference. The way pastoralist children and those who attend secular or Muslim schools teach each other is an important case in point. Nonetheless, political players thrive on division and have presided over a politicization of ethnicity and religion, which has the potential to be very dangerous, as has been repeatedly demonstrated in the three counties and elsewhere. The delicate balance of peace maintained in many areas is not robust, as can be seen from the degree to which ethnicity and difference are discussed and used in political campaigns. The schools and other forms of education seem to be unable to prevent this slide into intolerance.

Added to this, the failure of a portion of young people to find an adequate and dignified livelihood is contributing to growing resentment among them, throwing light on a widening gap between rich and poor and creating fertile conditions for the growth of intolerance between them. This is the nature of the 'poisoned' towns so many talked about during this study.

Education for redistribution

Our assumption at the start of the study was that the provision of education that serves prosperity and equitable distribution of resources would enable the economy to grow and the people to reduce vulnerability to internal and external stresses and shocks. Have the different forms of education contributed to a well-functioning and well-distributed economy? Have young people gained knowledge, skills and capabilities relevant to their society's prosperity and economic security? Has education made it possible for young people to work together against inequalities of wealth and opportunity?

Formal education is contributing to strengths in small urban businesses, particularly businesses run by women. There are important links between pastoralists, salaried individuals and businesspeople. In times of extended drought or livestock disease, money from salaries and business plays a key part of the insurance system that helps save or restock animals. For much of the time, town dwellers get access to meat and milk and benefit from participation in the livestock trading system.

The study shows, however, that access to quality formal education is not equitably distributed and formal education is not helping with a fair distribution of wealth. The urban economy, with which the school system is aligned, is generating only enough new jobs to satisfy a negligible portion of the demand from school leavers. It also appears that most of the people getting these jobs come from wealthier and better-connected households. Young people who dropped out of school or left early, who are poorer and whose grades are lower, find themselves with few options or skills. Meanwhile, the traditional education system is supporting rural production and the livestock trade to generate significant wealth, but by failing to incorporate literacy and other scholastic skills it is limiting its economic innovative capacity and its power to govern the production system through the state.

In addition to the large numbers of young people who leave school early because they do not have the money to continue, or because their parents want them to become livestock producers, there are a growing number of urbanized male youth who have been school-educated to some level and cannot find a job, and female youth who are forced to leave school because of unwanted pregnancy. They are joining the ranks of the poor who live in the centres and towns and, while they may benefit from a better level of government service than is available in rural areas, their livelihoods are stressful and uncertain.

Young jobless people face a bleak future. We learned that, for many, the only way to get a salaried job is to pay substantial amounts of money in bribes. Young men are turning increasingly to drugs and alcohol, jeopardizing their health and family relationships. This marks a profound change in the moral economy in terms of the acceptability of gross inequalities and social classes.

Considering the effects of inequity, study respondents explained that during drought or other economic stress, people who are poor, poorly educated or disconnected suffer disproportionately. Poor people have become less intimately connected to the rich in the changing economy. The pastoral production system has lost some of its capacity to redistribute animal wealth from rich to poor in all three counties. Few of those who are doing well in business and government have systematic ways of supporting people who are poor. A few still do a lot, but many others do less. Poor people can turn to government and donor safety nets and relief programmes, but these programmes are sporadic. The state social welfare system has a tendency to weaken social cohesion, according to many of those participating in the study.

Parents point out that individualistic values are nurtured in the formal school system, but they are not encouraged in traditional or religious schooling. When young people leave school, individualism becomes even more insistent in the competitive job market. This new thinking,

some observe, may be fuelling energetic entrepreneurialism among some young people, but it is also undermining the adaptive and absorptive capacity of pastoralism, the largest economic sector in all three counties.

Rather than working together to strengthen the economy, the formal, religious and traditional education systems are competing with each other for the talents of the young. Formal education has to make do with limited resources in difficult circumstances, and it builds relevant skills and knowledge for only an insignificant number of students. The skills formal education offers are most relevant to the salaried employee.

The evidence presented in this report indicates that the provision of formal education services is out of alignment with the shape of the economy in Kenya's arid lands, where livestock production and trade constitutes by far the most significant proportion of overall value. For this reason, parents are increasingly keeping their children out of the formal state education system and in so doing, are helping to perpetuate a divided society. We are reminded of Hirschman's famous set of choices in the face of an unsatisfactory situation, in which a dissatisfied person has a choice of *exiting* the institution, *voicing* a complaint about it or *accepting* it (Hirschman 1970). Parents are exiting formal education, and in this study, they are voicing complaint.

This section has drawn together the threads of the findings, using Fraser's social justice framework to analyse the relationship between education and social resilience in the three counties. The study finds that under the strains of bad politics and stresses of modernization, fractures are deepening across Kenya's arid lands societies and between northern Kenya and its heartlands. Tribal identities are hardening, rural and urban cultures and the various religious are increasingly suspicious of each other, and rich and poor are living progressively more separate lives. In other words, there is a growing situation of social injustice to which education contributes. The institutions of education by which the political, cultural and economic order should be reproduced and improved are themselves under stress, divided and weakened by the same bad politics. The causes are mostly internal to Kenya – its governance and culture – although there are also external stresses and shocks, such as the effects of the war in Somalia.

Social division affects the quality of schools and the equality of access and outcome, and in turn these effects add to social division. Economic division is helping to underwrite parallel modes of education that are not communicating with each other, which contributes to a potential weakening of innovative capacity and stability within the economy. Political interference makes schools less than ideal locations for providing security or acting as the hubs of a harmonious community. Each of these effects on schools produces the tendency to continue in the same way. How can such a tangled set of problems be set to rights?

It should be possible to develop more robust solutions to the issues that have been clarified in detail here. In July 2015, the study findings were taken back to respondents across the three counties in order to seek verification and recommendations. The proposals that follow systematize the results of these discussions, including initiatives already under way, those stimulated by the study itself and those that are only a glimmer of an idea for the future.

Photo 16: © UNICEF/ A young man wears a football T-shirt. Pastoralist Communication Initiative and Kate Eshelby, 2007.

7.2 Recommendations

> "We should have children going to school but also find a way of maintaining their culture. On syllabus and curriculum, people can be in their own culture but in a better way, rather than in a western way." – County education official, Turkana County

There are a number of small but important instances of successful action under way in the three counties. Where school leaders are actively cooperating with local community leaders, the study finds greater strength to resist politics and more invention in sharing resources between wealthy and less wealthy groups. Where customary institutions are taking a greater interest in and responsibility for formal schooling, as well as traditional education, the study finds improved school relevance, management and attendance, and better cultural bridges. The qualities at work here are *ownership, pride, energy, commitment and courage to resist bad politics and social division*. Taking solutions to the scale needed to confront the difficulties enumerated in this study requires bringing these qualities to bear on institutional commitment and regulation of resources.

Communities should be putting more consistent and positive pressure on government for recognition and better performance, but they also need to make changes in their own approaches. Parents and young people, county and national government, and supporting agencies need to be holding each other to account in the education process.

Elders, parents and young people are in agreement that society needs to give youth a rigorous and relevant education that builds strong individuals and a resilient society. This is in line with Vision 2030, which sets out the national goals for economic growth, equality and accountability. The Government of Kenya's policy gives high priority to providing a quality education for all young citizens as a primary means of fostering social mobility, national cohesion and socio-economic development.

The Government is increasingly emphasizing the relevance of schooling to future livelihoods and social cohesion, as well as access to education. Many people in northern Kenya indicated that they would put their active support behind the education system if it were more fitting, accessible, inclusive of parents and youth, of better quality and better regulated. At the same time, however, most study respondents feel profoundly disempowered by the neglect, bad politics and corruption that hinder efforts to make improvements. The real issues that must be addressed immediately are as follows:

- Academic learning is largely irrelevant to the local economies of pastoral communities. There is limited or no opportunity for school-educated children to learn pastoralist-relevant skills. Instead, schoolchildren learn that pastoralism, their way of life, is 'backward'.
- Growing numbers of youth are unemployed after leaving school. While still at school, many of them suffer stress and a sense of failure, which increases risk of their 'radicalization' or other forms of exploitation.
- Children who learn herding with their parents are not getting access to literacy, language, mathematics and business skills in addition to herding skills.
- Schoolchildren feel alienated from tradition and local culture when they go through formal school. Religious teaching is not well integrated with secular teaching.
- Formal schools are often poorly run and vulnerable to mismanagement, political pressure and capture of resources by the elite. Schools are under-resourced, and available resources are spread too thin and often unsafe.

The solutions to these problems can be found in four initiatives. All of them will require new action, along with carrying forward work that is already under way, from government, parents, elders, youth and partner organizations:

1. **Curriculum revision and new programmes of instruction**, adapting the current curriculum, improving training for teachers, and developing and certifying new programmes of instruction for pastoralist and religious education, will contribute to improving the economic and cultural relevance of schooling.
2. **Pro-youth programmes** that support young people, both in and out of school, with mentoring, improved vocational options and better investments will help reduce youth unemployment and alienation.
3. **Civic education on education** led by and reaching out to teachers, parents, youth and elders will address issues of community involvement, accountability and continuous upgrading of education quality.
4. **Maximizing education resources** by adjusting the overall balance of resource distribution to address inequities being reproduced by education service delivery, sharing the burden of management with communities, raising new resources and providing materials will address problems of poorly distributed resources.

The subsections that follow offer details on each of these initiatives.

Curriculum revision and new programmes of instruction

In Vision 2030, the Government highlighted the crucial role of education in growth and national cohesion, indicating the need for an appropriate curriculum. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development has embarked on a comprehensive national needs assessment, and the new NACONEK is now in place.

The broad direction established by Vision 2030 in favour of greater balance between cognitive and practical knowledge, greater emphasis on competences rather than objectives, and a proper concern for values, attitudes and patriotism is largely in line with the recommendations of youth, parents and elders in this study. Making schools more relevant and successful will improve the livelihood prospects and achievements of those children who attend, thus reducing tendencies to vulnerability, politicization and radicalization. Changing the profile of pastoralism as an industry offers prospects for primary and secondary leavers to invest in and add value to the sector, rather than rejecting it.

It is important to recognize that the objective of *most* parents in the three counties is to create the next generation of excellent pastoralists. Elders and parents in the rural areas are committed to making sure that most of their children learn herding and some go to formal school in order to maintain and diversify the skills needed for the livestock economy. They are calling for a dual system in which hose who learn herding also learn some formal subjects and those who learn in formal schools learn subjects or attitudes relevant to life in the arid lands.

Curriculum revision: Education's relevance to the arid lands calls for a curriculum at the primary and secondary levels that includes teaching on pastoralism as an economic and cultural system, generates practical competences aligned to the economies of rural areas and small towns, and includes formal learning on local culture and values. MOEST, NACONEK and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development will take the lead in developing and overseeing the revision. Specific calls from the respondents to the study include:

- **In early childhood education**, children should have access to picture books and other learning resources with culturally appropriate stories.
- **At the primary level**, social science lessons should include more experiential learning in the environment around the school, and children should also receive teaching on pastoralism and culture from elders.
- **At the secondary level**, more technical aspects of pastoralism and livestock marketing need to be included, for example, in the practical aspects of agriculture, while a more balanced appreciation of the arid lands economy and society within Kenya should also be emphasized.
- **At the tertiary-level**, centres of excellence should be developed, specializing in subjects relevant to the arid lands, such as livestock production, marketing and value addition, as well as providing economically relevant courses on business, engineering, and socially important courses on health, education, religion, justice, welfare and other key topics.

UNICEF and other partners should give support to ensure that young people, parents and elders are included in the curriculum review process to give realism to the decisions about which competencies are needed and to increase the sense of the ownership over and commitment to the new curriculum when it is implemented. Partners should also support the production of materials for this process. The Teachers Service Commission will be active in teacher training for the new curriculum, including actively recruiting new teachers from within the arid lands.

New programmes of instruction for pastoralists: Young people in the rangelands are keen to learn the essentials of literacy, language, mathematics and business skills to complement their learning of pastoralist livestock management. Young people from pastoralist families who have completed secondary school in towns are offering to teach these subjects as part of

a nomadic education stream. They would need government-provided training and a stipend from either the state or parents.

Elders across the three counties have been debating how their children who learn herding can also gain language, literacy and business skills and are ready to give active backing to a suitable scheme. Many are starting up their own schools or basic education activities. MOEST or county government supports some of these, for example as ECD centres, while others are not supported or monitored. Many elders are already committed to ensuring that the children who are herding learn some literacy, Swahili and mathematics from their brothers and sisters who attend school, during the holidays or weekends. They also continue to provide teaching to all children in the rangelands on culture, history, customary law, peace and other traditional topics. They should be encouraged to extend this teaching to the school-going population by coming into schools on the invitation of head teachers.

County governments are investing heavily in building and staffing ECD classes, which could offer the basis for nomadic education in rural areas because they provide elements of literacy and numeracy in ways that are appreciated by pastoralist parents and elders. They say that this allows children to continue to learn to be professional pastoralists and to keep their culture. To extend early childhood education, they are calling for provision or funding of teachers and materials to community-run schools or ECD centres. Marsabit County, for example, already provides ECD teachers to five community-run ECD centres.

The new pastoralist instruction will require discussions with parents regarding modes of delivery.This could include using adult education approaches, flexible timing for community schools, provision of special resources such as solar lamps, and different certification systems. Success will also depend on accelerated and in-service training for community teachers, drawing from the pool of local secondary-school leavers and out-of-school youth.

Both county government and the Government of Kenya need to provide political support for pastoralist instruction as a formally accepted stream in the overall education a child may receive. MOEST and NACONEK should explore the possibility for certification of successive stages of technical and managerial skills in pastoralist livestock management and marketing, as well as studies involving other aspects of pastoralism such as customary law. This process could be supported by UNICEF and other partners.

In addition, it is crucial for government to work with Islamic and other religious leaders to develop effective means of integrating religious schooling into the certification system in ways that allow for a variety of management and accountability systems. This will help bridge otherwise growing rifts between cultures.

Pro-youth programmes

Growing numbers of young people in schools are suffering stress and a sense of failure. With poor-quality teaching and an irrelevant curriculum, many young people realize quite early on that they are not going to achieve the promise of a white-collar job. School exposes them to feelings of failure and then often fails to protect them from dangers such as depression, rape, unwanted pregnancy, drugs, politics and crime. Young people explain that schools and parents are unsympathetic when they get into this kind of trouble, leaving them to cope alone. The majority of young students leave early and without good qualifications. Many say that their parents see them as worthless.

Youth also learn to disrespect the tradition and economy from which many of them originate. This means that when they 'fail' at school they feel unable to turn to their tradition. In schools, it is expected that children will learn about their tradition at home. This ignores the growing disrespect for the tradition that children gradually imbibe during their years of study through the formal and the 'hidden' curriculum.

For unemployed youth whose education system and government have failed them, who feel rejected by parents and society, and who spend their time hustling in the towns and centres or even take up crime or join insurgencies, an approach is called for that gives them an identity and reintegrates them into the local economy and society. Many unemployed young people are already forming groups to improve their prospects. Along with running businesses such as *boda boda*, some are also volunteering in the local community to demonstrate that they are trustworthy and hard-working. Some are taking up places in polytechnics or as apprentices in business or artisanal trades. Many urban parents are already supporting their young family members to learn the family business, rather than sending them to secondary school.

A pro-youth programme should have in-school, out-of-school and vocational components, including:

- **In-school mentoring and discipline** – Peer mentoring in schools by out-of-school young men and women can help provide support and guidance to those still at school and help curb early leaving as well as problems of alienation. Schools, with backing from national and county government and partners, should support peer-mentoring programmes. In some locations, a few out-of-school youth have taken initiatives and are active in mentoring in schools. Parents' groups are beginning to get more involved with issues facing their children in upper-primary and secondary schools, and these initiatives need to be encouraged by the education system. Parents want to take part in activities to help prevent early school leaving, drugs abuse, pregnancy and other problems that are becoming the norm. At a school in Turkana, for example, parents, students and teachers are holding meetings to discuss these issues.

  At the county level, MOEST should work with parents to review and amend discipline procedures in school, particularly in relation to drug use, to promote measures that are supportive, including positive discipline strategies rather than punitive approaches. Teachers need to change the message that white-collar jobs are the only determinant of education success. Young people, parents and teachers must not see failing in school as failing in life.

  While parents and elders are still the major source of cultural learning, schools need to better integrate the education they provide into local society rather than appearing to offer children a route away from it. Parents and elders need more opportunities to take an active part in schools, and schools need more opportunities for active engagement with communities. Head teachers should seek out parents and elders to help link the schools to local culture by conducting sessions for teachers and children, helping to produce culturally relevant materials for schools, hosting events and supporting culture clubs with teachers.

  Both government and non-governmental organizations should provide in-service training for teachers that develops appreciation of local culture, economy and religions. Teachers and parents are calling for training and discussion days with teachers on local culture and its dynamics, days with pastoralist families, and sessions with elders and parents. Materials for teachers' training and for early childhood teaching should be relevant to local cultures and respect children's backgrounds. County government, with support from UNICEF, should produce illustrated books and other materials that teach culture and religion at the ECD level. The Turkana county government, for example, is working with NGOs to provide Turkana storybooks for ECD centres.

- **Out-of-school support to youth and vocational learning** – Youth groups and individual young people need mentoring, training, investment, markets and moral support from their society. Elders' councils and parents' groups should commit to a programme of investment in youth business initiatives. Those with business expertise should provide mentoring on starting and

building businesses, and those who have the means should offer apprenticeships. Apprenticeships can be formalized and receive certification from government or from private sector chambers of commerce, thus increasing their value.

County governments already offer small grants and loans to youth groups, but these provisions have not had wide impact. County governments are also investing in polytechnics and, in some cases, providing free places to local students. The study suggests that the content, quality and certification of polytechnic courses require attention to increase their relevance to the local economy and help stimulate innovation and investment among out-of-school and graduate youth of various ages.

Specific recommendations from study participants include courses relevant to the livestock economy and to a wider range of urban trades. Also called for are courses on basic business, money management and information and communication technology, as core topics alongside the students' chosen courses. Potential students made clear that the polytechnics need qualified teaching staff and an improved image – they should not be talked of as places for people who fail at school, but as centres that nurture competence and innovation.

Civic education on education

The myth of the white-collar job is strong both inside and outside schools. Since it is clear to parents and young people that white-collar jobs are few and difficult to attain, their commitment to improving school management and quality is not strong. The study finds that parents are, in most cases, detached from what goes on inside schools and ignorant of what can be expected of schools. Even members of school management committees express a degree of perplexity at their role. At the same time, people are deeply concerned about the ways in which schools are undermined by political forces.

Parents are ready to do more to help to protect schools from interference and to support them to sustain quality, but they need to have better understanding of the school system. County government and UNICEF are called on by parents to provide resources for a programme of civic education to give clarity as to what parents can expect from schools, what is taught and how, the roles of parents, teachers and students, and to agree how school management committees and boards of management are best run. Management boards and school management committees should receive enhanced training and independent support to ensure their effectiveness.

Parents in several locations have begun to work together in small groups to see how they can hold their children's schools to account and better understand how the formal education system works. It appears that parents would be willing to engage more with schools if they received a warmer welcome. They would also be able to spread 'civic education on education' to other parents and youth. There is potential for young school leavers to take a role in this type of campaign, with appropriate materials, information and training.

Parents' groups advised the study team that the information and engagement on education would be best done as discussions and group initiatives, rather than by public barazas (the Swahili name for a community meeting called by government to pass messages, e.g., on the importance of sending children to school). This would also include spreading information to traditional clan forums and other groups via parents. Elders in several locations expressed strong commitment to dealing with the problems of political interference in the school system and to taking a more active part in engaging with education officials.

County education forums are widely understood to be elitist and of limited effect. Many people, including education officials, suggested that these forums should be democratized and begin at the grass-roots level rather than at higher levels of government. They should

include young people, students and parents in large numbers, as well as experts, leaders and development partners. At the same time, there are calls for broader-level events to analyse potential courses of action. The UNICEF Kenya Country Office, for example, is proposing a conference on nomadic education that would use the study findings and international and local experience to build robust programmatic recommendations. Invitees should include an effective combination of youth, elders and experts from Kenyan and other arid lands.

Maximizing education resources

Many education officials counselled consolidating existing provision, rather than adding infrastructure that cannot be maintained or properly staffed. Some suggested that ECD and lower-primary school (Class 1–3) should expand beyond its existing levels through a network of pastoralist-friendly schools, many of which can be community-run and government-financed. It will then be possible to concentrate government resources for upper-primary school (Class 4–8) into a smaller number of larger schools with better facilities. Wajir County is already moving towards this mode of provision, investing in more centralized upper-primary schools.

To increase numbers of teachers who are willing and able to teach in schools across the arid lands, the Teachers Service Commission should focus its efforts on training new local teachers to a high standard, offering free or subsidized teacher training places (this is already happening in Marsabit, paid for by the county government) and lower grade requirements for local applicants.

Use of resources could also be improved if there is improvement in school management and oversight. Schools need to engage parents regularly, not only when contributions are needed, but as valued partners in the education process, including as monitors and mentors. Such engagement will also help create informed oversight by school management committees. UNICEF and other partners are already providing training for and facilitation of school management committees as part of the child-friendly schools initiative.

7.3 Concluding remarks

The study has helped us understand the ambitions of young people who attend primary and secondary school, madrasa and duksi, polytechnic and university, and those educated by their elders in the rangelands or by their parents in the urban areas. The dream is for an education that teaches them both the tradition and the future, helping them become capable producers, skilled workers and respected family members and leaders: to travel, teach, lead and learn. Many will become pastoralists, and they know that to do this they need to learn on the rangelands, but they also want languages, literacy, business skills and technology. Many want to avoid a westernized education and would prefer to learn their religion, but they also want sciences and literacy. Others want western ideas, technologies and opportunities. Only a few want conflict between these kinds of learning. County officials would like to see more integration between the various forms of education and a conflict-sensitive education better fitted to the real economy rather than a one-size-fits-all curriculum. And despite the multiple issues that surround education in Kenya's arid lands, there is considerable commitment to change for the better.

Photo 17: © UNICEF/ Gabra educated youth attend a traditional ceremony, Marsabit County, Molu Kullu, 2014.

Annex I. Research Tools

This annex offers a more detailed narrative on the research tools used to conduct the study, describing the research team's first-hand experience in the field. It discusses four tools used to engage with participants in Kenya's arid lands: (1) listening posts; (2) group discussions; (3) interviews; and (4) school groups.

Listening posts

On the day of arrival in each site, the teams went out and met people in the streets and outside their houses. Women on the team usually met with women and girls, men on the team usually met with men and boys. We introduced ourselves and the study, and stimulated discussions on the topic of education with open questions.

We tried to make sure that we met a range of people, including young and old, men and women, in school and out of school. We recorded the discussions in notebooks at the time of the visit or later. After listening for some hours or a full day and asking people if they would be interested to participate further in the study, we met and discussed what we had heard. This discussion was also recorded. In total, we met 492 people in the listening posts.

From the listening posts, we decided who to invite to an in-depth group discussion and which issues to focus on, based on each person's interest to take part and issues that arose during the listening post.

The listening post enabled the team to gain an understanding of the site through the eyes of the people living there and gauge key issues. It is also the first stage in building a relationship with the people who continued to take part in the study.

Group discussions

We selected people of homogenous characteristics of age, occupation and gender to form each group of between four and eight people (occasionally three). In a few cases, where the researchers felt that they would not have enough numbers for a focus group, we requested that people ask a friend of the same gender if they would join the discussion.

We conducted 52 group discussions – 20 in Wajir, 22 in Marsabit and 10 in Turkana – of at least 45 minutes, with a total of 266 people. The group discussions explored the study questions in depth and were facilitated by two research team members, one facilitating and one assisting. Some of the questions that applied in most groups included:

1. What is your view on formal and informal education?
2. How do you educate your children, and what are your reasons for your choice?
3. Who is taken to formal school and who gets informal education, and why?
4. What is taught in schools, and what do you think about its relevance?
5. What happens to those who completed school? What choices are available to them?
6. How appealing/not appealing is pastoralism to those who took formal education and why?
7. How have informal education and pastoralism changed over the years?

As the study progressed, the research team used preliminary findings to inspire debate during the group discussions. The facilitators also asked people what they were doing to respond to what they described as happening with education

and resilience, and whether they would like to continue to be part of the study. This gave the opportunity for them to continue being in touch with the researchers and engaged in the study, by phone and when the team returned to visit them, in the case of Marsabit County.

Every evening, the research team met to discuss what we had heard in the group discussion and agree on ways to proceed the following day. On a few occasions, the group discussions failed to take place as agreed and the teams then conducted more listening posts. At other times, the listening posts attracted many people, we spent a longer time together, and on occasion began a group discussion then and there. This was especially so in pastoralists areas, where we were not sure of finding the same people on consecutive days.

Interviews

While some team members conducted listening posts and group discussions, other members conducted a total of 89 interviews with government officials, teachers and head teachers, local leaders and other key informants. These discussions usually lasted at least 45 minutes, sometimes significantly longer. The team discussed the findings from the interviews and focus groups when they met in the evenings and recorded these discussions.

School groups

In each site, we visited schools to spend time with students and teachers. In Wajir, we also visited a youth polytechnic. Where there was a choice, we selected schools considered to be the best and the worst by the people living in town. The selection encompassed a mix of school types – day, boarding, private, religious integrated, urban and rural.

In the schools, we asked the head teacher to invite 16 students to take part in two group discussions (8 students per group), and asked the teachers to appoint an appropriate time.

Working with girls and boys separately, the sessions took place under trees in the school compound, in sight of the teachers, but out of earshot. This ensured the students' safety and comfort, gave the discussion an informal setting, and meant that students could be free to speak openly.

In secondary schools, we asked the teachers to select students from Form 3–4, of mixed academic performance and from different parts of the county. In primary schools in the areas visited, the research team requested to have groups made up of a mix of children from Class 7–8, and where this was not possible, Class 6 of mixed academic performance and from different parts of the county.

The verification stage of the research took place in the week before KCPE exams were being held and therefore did not include Class 8 students. At two sites, we arrived during the school holidays and were able to conduct similar exercises with students outside school. This was done intentionally to ensure that we were not getting biases in the group discussions due to their taking place in the school compounds.

We worked with the children to construct diagrams and charts that explore their hopes for their lives after they left school, their understanding of the economy, and their opinions on formal and informal education, and rural and urban life.

Annex II. Details on the Forms of Education

The options open to children in the study area include public and private primary and secondary day schools and boarding schools, religious schools, traditional education, home education, and public and private tertiary colleges, universities and technical schools. In this annex, we discuss the differences in the types of education available and indicate the costs and types of learning offered in the various forms: *duksi* and madrasas; day, boarding, integrated religious and private primary schools; mobile schools; national, private and public day secondary schools; early childhood development; and youth polytechnics.

The material for this annex was gathered through interviews with teachers and students in the three counties of Wajir, Marsabit and Turkana.

Home schooling and traditional education

Few parents in the three counties send all their children to formal school. They believe that a traditional education is more fitting for certain children, providing skills at the main economic activity, social and religious capabilities and leadership.

Children embarking on a pastoralist education start learning young, and their technical education continues until they have mastered looking after the various animals. Their lessons come from their brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, uncles and other members of the extended family. However, these children miss the opportunity to learn to read and write, speak English and Swahili and become acquainted with urban life. Some children we met argued that they learned these things anyway, from their brothers and sisters or from friends.

Duksi and madrasas

Most Muslim children attend either a *duksi* or a madrasa or both. *Duksi* are informal and are able to move with pastoralists in the rural areas. Wherever there are a few children to learn, there is normally a duksi teacher. Parents pay K Sh 300 per child and they buy the teacher a camel when the child has learned to recite the Koran. The main activity in the *duksi* is learning to recite and write the verses of the Koran. Learning takes place outside of herding time.

Madrasas, on the other hand, are found in town; they are formal, cover more subjects and keep the students for longer hours. There are three levels: (1) Class 1–6, which covers the basics of religion and literacy; (2) Form 1–6, offering a range of academic and religious subjects; and (3) college. Students receive a certificate on graduation from each level. Some children attend madrasa, but not public school. Others attend both, often learning from 6 a.m.–9 p.m. throughout the week. Madrasa fees average K Sh 300 per child per term. These Islamic schools are most common in Wajir County, while also being available in Marsabit County's larger towns.

Day primary schools

The majority of school-going children attend government primary schools. The schools are free, but parents have to pay for books, uniforms and exam fees. Many parents also contribute between K Sh 50 and K Sh 400 per term to pay for additional volunteer teachers.

Teachers are not always motivated, and it is not uncommon for teachers and even head teachers to arrive as much as a week late at the start of each term. At one rural primary school that we visited on the third day of term, four of seven teachers had not reported for work, and in one

class, only 10 of the 40 students had arrived. The students said there was little point in arriving when their teachers were not there. The teachers said the children are herding and are always late. The head teacher had not acted decisively on the problem.

In towns, class sizes are big and in rural areas they are small. Teacher shortages and, in rural areas, the government recommended teacher-student ratio of 1:40 means that teachers often teach several grades. Students in Wajir and Turkana Counties, in particular, are often overage. In Turkana County, people reported that the main draw to lower-primary school is school feeding.

During our research, students told us that teachers do not always teach during lesson time, especially on days when the head teacher and deputy are away at a meeting. Instead, they sit and chat with each other in the staff room. Students also point out that volunteer teachers are more likely to be present to teach a lesson. Students, too, are also often absent, and they give all sorts of reasons for not attending school.

Boarding primary schools

Low-cost boarding schools have been introduced in pastoralist areas as a way of providing primary education to mobile populations. Although MOEST does not allocate an additional budget to these schools, some receive international support. In Turkana, for example, the United Kingdom Department for International Development, through UNICEF, has provided K Sh 4,000 per primary school student for 35,000 boarding places. Capitation grants are provided by MOEST, but head teachers report that these have not yet reached all schools. Most schools compensate by charging the parents up to K Sh 800 per term per child for boarding, but a few do not charge.

Other issues mentioned by students were shortages of food, lack of mattresses and difficulties with water. In one school we visited in Marsabit County, there were not enough teachers to stay with the children at night, so the children were left to sleep alone. Nonetheless, teachers and students said that boarding schools are popular. Parents want their children to do well, and are keen on them being in boarding school.

Children in upper primary (Class 4–8) feel they can concentrate better away from the distractions of home. Many said that they like being in school because life is not so hard as that of a herder, and they enjoy learning. Others told us how much they like to go home to herd when they can. While the intention of low-cost boarding schools is to attract pastoralists, in the schools we visited, the majority of their students appeared to be from town, often from not far away.

Integrated religious primary schools

Some primary schools have been set up by Muslim charitable organizations as 'integrated schools', public schools supported by their founding organization. They teach the standard curriculum but also Koran and Hadith. Muslim parents and teachers see this type of school as an essential direction for schooling, in that it provides a moral and religious education as well as basic skills and capabilities.

For many years, Catholic primary schools have also provided a mix of religious and secular teaching, particularly in Marsabit and Turkana counties.

Private primary schools

Private primary schools are becoming more widespread as demand grows in urban areas for a 'better' education – one where their children pass KCPE with better results and therefore have a greater chance of employment. Towns such as Wajir, Sololo, Marsabit and Lodwar have several private primary schools, which charge K Sh 800–1,500 per month. In KCPE results for 2013, the five top-performing primary schools in Wajir, Marsabit and Turkana counties were all private schools.[35] There are also a few private secondary schools, many of them affiliated to religious institutions.

Mobile schools

Many pastoralists like the idea of sending their child to a mobile school or an informal school that is close to the community. These schools teach literacy, numeracy, English and Swahili, but allow students to herd and parents to see what is happening in the school. A 'mobile school' may move with nomadic households, but the term is also used to describe a community-based school that adapts its academic schedules to the herding cycles.

Until the 2013 Education Act was passed, schools were mandated by national law to have a physical address and four walls. This left a legacy, wherein an absence of policy framework meant that the mobile schools were not properly integrated into Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) systems of management. This situation has left the mobile schools open to mismanagement. Now, however, a mobile school can be established using the name of a general area and the name of a family in which the school is situated.[36]

People explain that while they much appreciate a form of school that fits with their lifestyle, mobile schools have a poor track record, and have often been poorly managed and unsupervised. A favourite of NGOs and the Catholic Church, many organizations have started mobile schools and handed them over to MOEST when the funds ran out. People told us that many closed when the teacher was not paid for several months or the school-feeding programme was cut, and some have turned into 'static' schools.

Very few people we met had seen a mobile school, let alone attended one, though a few had heard of them. In Turkana, where mobile schools are reportedly active, the research team tried, but failed, to find any mobile teachers.

National secondary schools

There are two national secondary schools in each of the three counties, one for boys and one for girls. Some are the top-performing schools in the county, others are near the bottom. The students in them come mostly from within the county, though Wajir schools also have students from Garissa and Mandera Counties.

National secondary schools are well established and generally have teachers for every subject, as well as good student-to-teacher ratios. New secondary schools started being established in 2003, when the Constituencies Development Fund was initiated. Most of them are day schools, with few teachers.

There are other public secondary schools too, both boarding and day, established by missionaries and government. Fees for boarding are between K Sh 28,000 and K Sh 50,000 per year, while day schools charge around K Sh 15,000 per year.

Private secondary schools

The majority of successful KCSE candidates tend to come from the national secondary schools and private secondary schools. There are a few private secondary schools in the counties studied.

For example, At a private secondary school in Marsabit, a Catholic school for girls, families pay KSh 22,000 per term and entry requires a minimum of 280/500 points at KCPE and a reference from their primary school. One-hundred-fifty applicants vie for 45 places, which are given to girls of every ethnicity from around the county. Most of the students are Catholic; some come from pastoralist backgrounds, while others are from town. Some students hope to go on to attend public universities, while others have their sights set on a small business or marriage.

Public day secondary school (district school)

Fees for public day secondary schools are low, entry grades are low, and exam results are often poor. Head teachers told us how students lose

35 Kenya National Exams Council, 2013.

36 Republic of Kenya, Kenya Basic Education Act, 2013.

their aspirations by the time they reach Form 3. Students' low grades in exams undermine their confidence, and they watch their siblings who have graduated languishing without jobs.

Children may come from distant places and have nowhere to stay. In some cases, we found them sleeping in classrooms. Teacher retention is a problem, partly because teachers find themselves asked to cover too much.

Early childhood development

County governments have responsibility for early childhood development (ECD) and are just beginning to gear up. In Turkana, the county government has established 60 ECD centres and appointed facilitators for each centre. There is less focus on early childhood education in Marsabit and Wajir. Since it is early days for the expanded access to ECD, we found that few people we met had much to say on the subject.

Youth polytechnics

The county governments in Turkana, Marsabit and Wajir are seeking to address youth unemployment by supporting youth polytechnics and investing in building or upgrading polytechnics in each main town of their county.

Polytechnics offer practical and vocational courses, often in skills for which there are labour shortages in local towns, such as electrical installation, motor vehicle technology, plumbing technology, fashion design and garment making, and information communication technology. Most have boarding facilities.

Enrolment was relatively low in the polytechnics we visited, but slowly rising as the institutions become better equipped and the opportunities for school leavers become more scarce.

The Wajir county government has invested in offering free polytechnic courses. One effect of this policy has been to attract students from other parts of Kenya, but many local students, not seeing the value of a technical education and, in some cases, noting a traditional bias against artisanal work,[37] are not taking up the opportunities.

Adult education services are also being developed to provide continuing education to out-of-school youth.

37 For example, the word tumto in Borana language means a blacksmith, potter or other artisan but has derogatory connotations. Much of the artisanal work in northern Kenya is currently done by people who originate from other parts of Kenya or by people of a particular ethnic group that suffers negative discrimination. There is some evidence that this is slowly changing.

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