KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

MAPPING OUT BEST PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ORPHANED AND VULNERABLE STUDENTS (OVSs) IN KENYA AND RWANDA

A PROPOSAL PRESENTED BY KENYATTA UNIVERSITY AND NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA TO THE AAU MRCI INITIATIVE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For a long time in Africa, much attention has been focused on access to primary education especially with the intention to achieve the goals of Universal Primary Education (UPE). However, of late and with strategies such as the introduction of free secondary education in Kenya, there is an increasing interest in addressing access for the anticipated high number of applicants to higher education. Further, Higher Education (HE) is now recognized as critical in any country for the following reasons among others:

1 Creates high-level skills and human capital;
2 Increases productivity and promotes national development;
3 Equalizes opportunities regardless of background;
4 Facilitates employment and improves mobility for individuals;
5 Increases salaries and savings;
6 Increases consumption and transformation of low skills industry to knowledge based economies for the public.

For the above reasons, Kenyatta University (KU, Kenya) and the National University of Rwanda (NUR, Rwanda) feel obliged to find out ways that have been used by diverse partners towards the inclusion of disadvantaged children in education at various levels and that could be replicated to improve Higher Education for Orphans and Vulnerable Students (OVSs) who are often left out of the education system due to various constraints. The two institutions hypothesize that empowering this category of students with Higher Education will improve their capacity and opportunities to pursue productive and fulfilling careers.

Data for this project will be collected through; desk research, expert survey of civil society representatives from civil societies and significant others dealing with improving access for disadvantaged children, focus group discussions with the assisted disadvantaged children. Besides age, gender, and geographic criteria of choice, several other variables including religion and the socio economic factors will be taken into account in the course of their selection.

A report on the best practices that are to be found in the two countries will be documented and then disseminated and promoted through workshops and seminars in universities across the continent. This will not only help in addressing poverty related issues but will also assist in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We especially propose to address the first goal that addresses the reduction of extreme poverty. We observe that currently, levels of extreme poverty are being accelerated by the rising numbers of orphans and vulnerable children who are often excluded from or are pushed out of higher education due to lack of fees among other factors.

1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 OVC and Education

Over 110 million children under the age of 18 in the developing world have lost one or both of their parents. In sub-Saharan Africa alone there are about 43 million orphans, representing more than 15% of all children. Although some orphans are cared for by family members or communities in some way, many of these families are living in poverty. Some measures to assist these children are required to provide them with adequate food, health care, clothing, education and psychosocial support. The need for public assistance however varies by country, depending on the number of orphans, the socioeconomic conditions and local decisions about the type of support to provide and the best way to provide this support.

In 2001, Kenya had an estimated 1,659,000 orphans (or 12% of all children) out of whom about 892,000 (or 54%) were orphaned through AIDS. In the same year, 12% households with children were caring for orphans with an average number of orphans per household standing at 1.9%. Many homes with orphaned children were found to be child-headed, thus creating multiple challenges for the girl child. Even with the decreasing rates of HIV prevalence in the country, it is projected that in 2010, Kenya will have 2,099,000 (14% of all children) of whom 73% will be orphaned by AIDS.

Number of Orphans in Several African Countries, 2006

Country	Number of Orphans
South Africa	2,200,000
Tanzania	2,500,000
Zimbabwe	1,300,000
Kenya	1,700,000
Uganda	2,000,000
Rwanda	810,000
Ethiopia	4,000,000
DR Congo	680,000
Burundi	660,000

Source: UNICEF, 2006

The table above shows the distribution of HIV/AIDS orphans in several South of the Sahara African (SSA) countries. The table shows clearly that the number of HIV/AIDS orphans varies from country to country. As it were, both actual and potential orphans are vulnerable. Gillespie (2005:1) reports that when parents fall sick, particularly in poor families, children come under intense stress that may continue in different forms for the rest of their lives. In many cases, such children become increasingly vulnerable to malnutrition, ill-health, abuse and exploitation. Such children are usually excluded from meaningful educational involvement. All vulnerable children, at whatever level in life, need to be supported.

While becoming an orphan is obviously an extremely emotional event for children and has results in the restructuring of households to accommodate orphans, the effect of orphan status on learning is something that has attracted the attention of many stakeholders of education including international organizations, universities and educational policy makers. (Bennell et al, 2002; Case et al, 2004; Deininger et al, 2003; Ainsworth and Filmer, 2002).

For a fact, orphaned and vulnerable students more often than not face most of the following challenges when pursuing their university education:

- Dropping out of the university due to unaffordable fees
- Stigmatization due to lack of certain common things like clothes
- Low attention span due to hunger
- Social exclusion and marginalization
- Perceived irrelevance of education
- Sexual risks
- High demand for labour at home
- Low motivation for learning due to anxiety and depression
- Erratic class attendance

These category of students need various measures of support ranging from those interventions necessary for survival, such as food and health care, to those interventions that will provide a better quality of life in the future such as quality education, psychosocial support and economic self-sufficiency.

As rights based institutions, universities should play a role in protecting OVC against forces that are likely to lock them out of quality higher education. In addition, universities have undeniable advantages and duty in the following areas:

- Identification of vulnerable children and orphans;
- The provision of support to all children especially the orphaned and vulnerable ones;
- Monitoring of the well being of OVC.

Universities also have the potential to provide a range of education–related services to OVC, such as providing meals to those students who cannot afford to buy food by themselves and linking children in particularly difficult circumstances to other relevant services to meet specific needs. Higher education offers students experiencing homelessness the best hope for escaping poverty and homelessness when they mature to adulthood.

1.2 The Kenyan Context

Despite the introduction of free secondary education in Kenya, the many poor families in the country cannot afford to send their children to school. This is because, besides the tuition which is waived by the government, there are many other hidden costs such as; uniforms, food and accommodation among others that way heavily on parent's budgets. These requirements impact heavily on access to secondary education by students from poor families in general and orphans and other vulnerable students in particular.

Tertiary education is still unaddressed when it comes to offering of assistance to the OVSs and especially the poor. Statistics indicate that, in Kenya only less than a quarter of students who qualify for admission get admitted to universities through Joint Admissions Board (JAB). For instance, in 2007 out of 68,000 students who qualified for university admission having scored a mean grade C+ (Plus), only 16,151 (23%) were admitted into public universities. The remaining 51,849 (77%) could only get admitted through the self-sponsored programmes which is not only expensive but also constraining in terms of access to student friendly accommodation and student welfare services such as;

counseling and mentoring programs that may be available only to those accommodated on campus. The situation is even worse for orphans and vulnerable Students (OVSs), majority of who have financial constraints and are therefore locked out of university education even when they are admitted by the Joint Admissions Board (JAB), since everyone has to pay for their own food and accommodation even within university premises. The increasing numbers of orphans as a result of the rising cases of HIV and AIDS has compounded the situation. There is therefore a dire need to find ways to confront this scenario. On 3rd December 2008, Kenyatta University launched an OVS scholarship fund to support the Orphans and Vulnerable Students wishing to enhance their Higher Education. This project therefore, is going to be a welcome initiative in complementing the Kenyatta University OVS scholarship fund.

1.3 The Rwandan Context

The number of orphans in Rwanda is quite high especially as a result of the 1994 genocide and epidemic disease prevalent in the country. During 100 days of genocide in 1994, more than 800,000 Rwandans were murdered. Children lost parents and relatives, entire families were wiped out, and the lives that these children had known were shattered. By the end of the genocide, hundreds of thousands of children had been orphaned. With a widening HIV/AIDS epidemic and continuing outbreaks of malaria, a total of 613,000 orphans were living in Rwanda by the year 2001. Over 43% of these children have been orphaned by AIDS. UNICEF officials in Rwanda have called the HIV/AIDS epidemic the "silent genocide."

Today, Rwanda's children continue to face extreme challenges:
- Rwanda has one of the world's largest proportions of child-headed households, with an estimated 101,000 children living in 42,000 such households.
- More than 400,000 children are out of school.
- Rwanda has one of the world's worst child mortality rates - 1 in 5 Rwandan children dies before his or her fifth birthday.
- While many orphans are lovingly cared for by extended families, friends or orphanages, the loss of income accompanying parents' deaths often stretches already meager resources to the breaking point. Education can be impossible to

afford in a society where it is customary to charge school fees even for public schools.

The National University of Rwanda (NUR) was created in 1963 courtesy of the UNDP and UNESCO. The University's mission is to generate and disseminate high quality multi-disciplinary knowledge and promote effective research, skills training and community service for national competitiveness and sustainable socio-economic development.

The national University of Rwanda aims to become an innovative, world class and self-sustainable University that is responsive to national, regional and global challenges. NUR recognizes that in Rwanda as elsewhere, the benefits of higher education directly influence quality of life. A 2003 government survey revealed that 66% of households with post-secondary education ate three times a day, while only 1% of households with little or no education did so. In 2003, only 27,243 students were enrolled in higher education, in contrast to the 1.8 million enrolled in Rwanda's universal primary education system. National University of Rwanda also appreciates that the institution has a responsibility in alleviating the challenges facing orphans and vulnerable children in the country.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Governments with significant populations of children who are orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS and other devastating causes may be faced with a range of issues, including a rise in vulnerability to crime, high rates of prostitution, various forms of exploitative work, a growing population of uneducated and unskilled laborers and long-term foreign aid dependence by the government. These problems are compounded by higher dropout rates from public universities. According to statistics from the Admission Unit in Kenyatta University, majority of students who drop out from their university studies are those who are orphaned and vulnerable. These students end up loosing lifetime opportunities to improve not only their individual destinies but also that of their keen and country at large. Consequently, the need to improve on the opportunities that OVSs in Africa have to education in general and to higher education in particular cannot be overemphasized.

3. JUSTIFICATION

Higher Education lays a solid foundation for an individual to attain full potential and exploit the opportunities available in life. Looking at the global trends of the ever increasing number of disadvantaged children, it is worth finding out modes of improving their access to higher education since, empowering this category of students with Higher Education will improve their capacity and opportunities to pursue productive and fulfilling lives.

4. PROPOSED WORKPLAN

Activity	Purpose	Diagnostic	Expected Output	Time Frame	Requirements	Responsibility	Location
Consultative meetings among the researchers in the two universities	Formulate project process		Formalized working relationship and project process	1 month	Transport.	Consultants.	Nairobi
PROJECT PROCESS							
Review of secondary data	Review of information on project area	Project reports. Maps. Interviews	Baseline information on project area	2 months	Transport. Cooperation	Consultants.	Nairobi
Project sites visits and meeting administrative and opinion leaders.	Familiarization with project areas. Introduction of project purpose Establishment of dialogue with civil society organizations. Orientation of the study	Discussion. Observation. Participatory tools. Discussions.	Establish rapport with relevant civil societies. Setting of study dates. Cooperation from stakeholders Selection of civil societies for best practices	3months	Transport Subsistence Venue Meals Stationery	Consultants.	
Data collection and validation and CAP preparation	Familiarization with project areas. Appointments Introductions of the project purpose. Establishment of dialogue with community Orientation of study	Discussion Observation Study tools Discussions	Establish contact and rapport with selected civil society organizations Setting of exercise dates Co-operation from stake holders	5 months	Transport Subsistence Venue Meals Stationery	Consultants.	Project sites selected venues
Field work	To collect information Ensure documentation of lessons learnt	Survey tools On –site analysis	Survey tools Report Recommendation	5 months	Transport Subsistence Honorarium	Consultants.	Project sites

			s				
	Ensure future sustainability of projects						
Data analysis, interpretation and preparation of the draft report	Compile, analyze and draft a study report	Analysis of the findings	Draft Study report	3months	Stationery Per diem	Consultants.	S.O offices
Presentation of draft report at a workshop	Dissemination of findings and discussions	Presentations Discussions	Comments and Suggestions on the report		Venue Draft report Subsistence Transport	Consultants.	Selected Venue
Finalization and submission of report	Handing over of the final report		Final report		Transport	Consultants.	Selected venue

5. DETAILED OUTPUT

An analytical study and planning recommendations that would include:

(i)   A participatory diagnostic study and survey of practices in addressing access to education for the disadvantaged children

(ii)   Policies that promote education opportunities for OVSs;

(iii)   Studies on challenges in the promotion of education opportunities for OVSs

(iv)   Policy guidelines on the support of local civil society groups and producer organizations to enable them to adequately assist OVSs in exploiting opportunities for their education.

(v)   Formulation of policies aimed at strengthening rural women's capacity for strengthening their development of key OVS programmes;

(vi)   Studies of needs and options for increasing the capacity of service providers to deliver quality services to support access and retention of OVSs in higher education.

vii)   Suggestions for appropriate modalities and approaches to addressing the problem.

Viii)   Develop a detailed model based on the identified best practices that can be replicated by the universities.

(vii)   Dissemination of the best practices proposed for universities in Africa

6. PROJECT OUTPUT VERSUS THE CHALLENGE FUNDS OUTPUT

It is proposed that this project will inform universities on successful models that have addressed the plight of the poorly represented groups of students in general and of the Orphaned and vulnerable children in particular

7. BUDGET

Budget line	Sterling Pound(£)
Desk Review and Development of Instruments	
➢ **Subsistence: 4 experts x 10 days x 2 universities @ £80**	**£6,400**
➢ **Travel: 4 experts x £200(Out country)**	**£800**
➢ **4 experts x £105 (In country)**	**£460**
➢ **Accommodation 4 experts x 3 days x £65 (Out country)**	**£780**
➢ **4 experts x 7 days x £65 (In country)** ➢	**£1,820**
Field trips, data collection and analysis	
➢ **Training of researchers 20 x 2 universities @ 50**	**£2,000**
➢ **Data Collection: Subsistence + Accommodation: 10 people x 10 days @£50**	**£6,000**
➢ **Data Entry and Analysis £2,475 x 2 universities**	**£4,950**
➢ **Report Writing £950 x 2 universities**	**£1,900**
Setting up of OVS Pilot Centre	
➢ **Personnel**	
• **2 Project Coordinators @£ 100**	**£4800**
• **2 Assistant Coordinators @50**	**£2400**
• **2 Secretaries)@30**	**£1440**
➢ **Equipment**	
• **3 Computers with internet connection and Printers per university @ £310**	**£1860**
• **Accessories (Flash disks, stationery) @ £100 per university**	**£200**

Documentation & Dissemination x 2 universities	
Policy development one day sessions, One per country (15 pax per country @£ 80)	**£1200**
Printing of policy documents (100 copies per country @ £1	**£ 100**
Policy dissemination one day sessions, one per country (50 pax per country @ 50)	
Total	**£37,110**
Administrative costs @ 15%	**£5566.5**
GRAND TOTAL	**£42,676.5**

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Appendix 1: Professor Olive Mugenda – Vice-Chancellor, Kenyatta, University, Kenya

Olive Mugenda is the Chief Executive Officer and Vice-Chancellor of Kenyatta University since 2006, the first lady Vice-Chancellor of a Public University in the Eastern African region. Prior to this appointment, she held several administrative positions i.e. Chairman of Department, Director of Linkages and International Programs, Dean of Faculty, Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Finance, Planning & Development. She has experience studying in a number of institutions in Africa and abroad including University of Nairobi, Iowa State University (USA), Oxford University and University of Warwick (England) thus earning a variety of academic degrees. She received BA in Education (1979), MSc in Family Consumer Studies (1983) and PhD in Family Studies, Education and Research Methods (1988). Recently in 2007, she graduated with a Masters of Business Administration from Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI). Her professional interest is in the promotion of women education. Prof. Olive Mugenda has taught and supervised a number of eminent personalities in the society, some of whom serve in key positions in Universities and industry. Prof. Mugenda has conducted extensive research in the area of higher education especially with a bias towards women's access to Science and Technology courses in Universities. She has researched and published books, chapters in books and papers in referred journals.   Prof. Mugenda has been at the forefront in advocating for peace and unity not only within the University but also in the nation. In May, 2008 she presented a paper on the Role of Education in Enhancing national Unity in a conference for secondary school heads in Kenya.

APPENDIX 2: Professor Silas Lwakabamba – Rector, National University of Rwanda

Born in 1947 and educated in Tanzania Professor Silas Lwakabamba had to go to the University of Leeds for his training in engineering. After graduating with Bsc (1971) a PhD (1975) in mechanical engineering from Leeds, he returned to Tanzania to join the staff of the faculty of engineering, which had just started in the University of Dar es Salaam. He progressed rapidly through the ranks to attain his professorship in 1981. He gained managerial experience along the way, becoming head of department, associate dean and eventually dean of the faculty of engineering.

In 1985, Professor Lwakabamba joined the UN- sponsored African regional centre for engineering design and manufacturing (ARCEDEM) based in Nigeria as a founding director of training and extension services. As founding rector of the Kigali institute of science technology and management science, (1997). He is now in a still more challenging pioneering role. Professor Lwakabamba is a member of several boards and committees, National. Sub-regional and international. He is particularly proud to have participated in the setting up of African network of scientific and technological institutions (ANSTI) under UNESCO, and especially, the setting up of the sub networks on water resources engineering, Mechanical/ Production Engineering/ Power (1976-1986). Professor Silas Lwakabamba is currently president of the institute of engineers of Rwanda and he is chairman of the board of Directors of parasitical telephone company. He is also a member of various national commissions and steering committees on economic affairs, information and communication technology, human resource development and higher education. He has some thirty publications to his name. He is married with four children.

APPENDIX 3: Prof. Wangari Mwai

Professor was born in 1960 and educated in Kenya where she obtained her three degrees. Professor Mwai went to the University of Nairobi for her Bachelors degree and Masters Degree. She graduated with a B.Ed (1984) and MA Literature (1988). She later proceeded to Maseno University and graduated with a PhD (2001). She also holds a Bachelor of Theology in missions and is an ordained priest with the Anglican Church of Kenya.

Currently Professor Mwai holds the office of the Director, Centre for Resource Mobilization, Kenyatta University and is an Associate Professor at the Department of Literature, Kenyatta University. Through out her academic career she has actively participated in a number of community outreach projects both locally and internationally. Prior to her appointment, she held some administrative positions at the Maseno University in Kenya such as Chairman of Department, Coordinator for research in the Arts and Social. She has also taught and supervised several Masters and Ph.D students.

She has also won research awards on gender and also participatory communication. Some of these projects include two gender based project funded by Organization for Social Science Research in East Africa (OSSREA) and a qualitative research training programme funded by German Foundation for International Development (DSE). She was an award winner with the acclaimed Eastern African Lake Victoria research Programme (VICRES).

Professor Mwai has also been a member and consultant of various national commissions and steering committees on Gender, Oral literature and Community outreach. She is a member of several organizations such as; Chairperson Foundation for Kenya Women Artists (FEMART Kenya), National team- national peace unit program, National team on engendering the PRSP, Collaborative centre for gender and development (CCGD).

She has also been a researcher and trainer with: the Unicef Artists and Intellectuals, Kenya Oral Literature Association (KOLA), the Kisumu convention - the street child chapter, qualitative educational researchers in East Africa, Kisumu Forum for Gender and Development (KIFGAD) Family Planning Association of Kenya-male involvement project (FPAK-MIP) and the Association of African Woman in Research and Development (AAWORD). She has a diversity of publications to her name reflecting the various arenas she has worked in. She is married with three children.