

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

Major Research Paper

**Children's Participation as a Feature of Educational Reform in Kenya: An Analysis  
of the Child Friendly School Framework and Children's Government**

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## **Disclaimer and Inquiries**

This research paper was completed as part of the author's program requirements as a student of the School of International Development and Global Studies at the University of Ottawa. The views and opinions stated herein are those of the author solely and do not necessarily represent those of the supervisor, reader, department nor institute. Any inquiries on this work should be directed to the address below:

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## List of Acronyms

ACRWC African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child  
ASAL Arid and Semi-Arid Lands  
CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women  
CFS Child Friendly Schools  
C/G Children's Government  
CRC United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child  
DCS Department of Children's Services  
DEO District Education Officer  
EFA Education for All  
HRBA Human Rights-Based Approach  
IEBC Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission  
INSET In-Service Education and Training  
KCPE Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examination  
KEPSHA Kenyan Primary School Head Teachers Association  
KESSP Kenya Education Sector Support Programme  
LCP Learner-Centered Pedagogy  
MDG Millennium Development Goals  
MOE Ministry of Education  
MoEST Ministry of Education, Science and Technology  
NCCS National Council for Children's Services  
NCIC National Cohesion and Integration Commission  
NESP National Education Sector Plan  
PRESET Pre-Service Education and Training  
PTA Parent-Teacher Association  
QASD Quality Assurance and Standards Directorate  
SDG Sustainable Development Goal  
SWAp System -Wide Approach  
UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund  
UPE Universal Primary Education

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## Introduction

### *Research Context*

A little over twenty-five years after signing the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA), the world has made great headway in ensuring universal primary education (UPE). Yet education for all still has not been reached. Furthermore, as “efforts since 2000 to advance education around the world have become almost synonymous with ensuring that every child is in school” (UNESCO, 2015, p.14), the issue of access has until recently taken precedence over other crucial aspects of education such as quality. Kenya is a country that exemplifies this trend. While the enrolment rate for primary school in Kenya has increased significantly in the past few years – from 62% in 1999 to 84% in 2012 (World Bank, 2015) – the quality of education has been suffering. Many children are progressing through primary school without having achieved the numeracy or literacy skills expected at their level (MOEST, 2014a). As a result, more than 50% of pupils fail the national Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examination (KCPE) which they need to advance to secondary school (UNESCO, 2012). With its vision to become a middle-income country that can provide quality life to all its citizens by 2030, the Kenyan government has come to realize that serious change within its education sector is necessary (Republic of Kenya, n.d.). Thus, in an attempt to mitigate the situation, the Kenyan government has been working to revamp its education policies.

A report presented to the Office of the Prime Minister of Kenya made it clear, however, that more local and international partnerships would be needed to help Kenya attain her Vision 2030<sup>1</sup> (Cunningham, 2012). It is within this context that the Ministry of Education has collaborated with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to “localize a UNICEF global initiative, ‘Child Friendly Schools’ (CFS), into the Kenyan context” (ibid, p.2). The object of the initiative is to provide quality education to every child, irrespective of his/her circumstances, in a

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<sup>1</sup> It is the country’s development program covering the years 2008 to 2030. Its “aim is to transform Kenya into a new industrialising ‘middle-income country providing a high quality life to all its citizens by the year 2030” (Republic of Kenya, 2007, p.1).

manner that adheres to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). One way the Government of Kenya and UNICEF have found to operationalize this concept is through the Primary Schools Children's Government (C/G), a child-focused initiative whose purpose, in accordance with article 12 of the CRC, is to allow children to freely identify and discuss matters of concern to them<sup>2</sup> (MoEST, 2014b). The C/G has been in operations in Kenyan primary schools since 2010.

The reason for choosing to analyse this particular project stems both from my interest in educational programs in developing countries, and from working for one of the project's donors – Global Affairs Canada, on the Kenya team. I thought it would be interesting to study the CFS experience in Kenya – from initial project status to an institutionalized program. Moreover, considering the novelty of this initiative in Kenya, it has been the subject of little evaluation and scholarly research. The main academic research that has been done on the topic stems from Kenyan students' theses, each focusing on a different dimension of the CFS framework (for e.g. how infrastructure, food programs or the role of teachers can impact the schooling experience for the pupils). None of them, however, focuses on the element of student participation<sup>3</sup>. Consequently, the aim of my MRP will be to assess the CFS and C/G initiatives in Kenya and in doing so consider in particular the extent of children's participation as a core component of these initiatives.

### *Research Objectives and Questions*

As such, the aim of my MRP is to examine the CFS and C/G initiatives in Kenya and, in doing so, consider in particular the extent of children's participation as a core component of these initiatives. More specifically, I will seek to answer the following questions:

- a) What are the objectives of these initiatives and how have they been implemented up to this point?

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<sup>2</sup>Vis-à-vis the school and education system.

<sup>3</sup>Also referenced interchangeably as children's participation throughout the text.

- b) How do these initiatives facilitate improvements (or are likely to do so) in children's education and children's rights in Kenya?
- c) What are the necessary conditions for long term success of these initiatives?

In the interest of contextualizing this situation and analyzing how the initiatives are likely to be manifested and evolve over time (i.e., the extent to which they can be sustainable) (Muchielli, 1996 in Karsenti and Demers, 2004), my MRP consists of a comprehensive review of the literature of CFS and Children's Government in Kenya.

## *Methodology*

### *Data Collection and Analysis*

For this MRP I collated evidence through an in-depth review of scholarly journals and official documents on the following topics: i) quality education, ii) learner-centered pedagogy, iii) CFS initiative, iv) Children's Government, and v) educational policies that are aligned with children's rights as articulated in the CRC (particularly with regard to children's participation). In order to have a better understanding of the Kenyan education system, I have examined the main policy documents related to education, such as Vision 2030, the Basic Education Act, and the National Education Sector Plan 2013-2018. My analysis of the CFS framework entailed the collection and analysis of documents obtained from UNICEF and from Global Affairs Canada - which is a primary donor contributor to the CFS initiative. Likewise, my analysis of the C/G involved a review of documents pertaining to the rationale for this initiative, its structure and processes, and the outcomes to date.

To analyze the data, I conducted content analysis of the information that I gathered, using an inductive process of open-ended coding to identify emerging themes and sub-themes, and thus "patterns and categories from iterative reviews of the data set" (Stake, 2005, p. 218). Considering the relatively limited data that I obtained, it was not necessary to use sophisticated software for the coding and analysis. Rather, simple word processing and spreadsheet software, Word, Excel

and Adobe Reader were used to write marginal notes, create tables, count words and cross-tabulate.

In consideration of a theoretical perspective on CFS in Kenya, I adopted Merriam's sociological approach to the interpretation of evidence and themes (Karsenti and Demers, 2004). This meant adopting the view that nothing exists in isolation and that events are therefore shaped by the political, economic and socio-cultural context in which they are immersed. In using this approach, I considered: i) the history of Kenya's education system; ii) Kenya's cultural diversity; and iii) the way the teacher profession and children's rights are perceived in Kenyan society.

### *Limitations*

This study was limited firstly due to lack of fieldwork. Being able to spend time in Kenya would have allowed me to observe firsthand how the CFS and the C/G are being implemented in some of the schools in the country, and thus gain a more thorough understanding of the inner workings of these initiatives. Secondly, the relative novelty of children's participation in Kenya was bound to mean a limitation of relevant documentation that is available to the public. Thirdly, I was unable to get in touch with anyone from the Kenyan government (Ministry of Education or QASD), and I had very little contact with members of KEPSHA. For these reasons my literature review of the implementation of the CFS and C/G in Kenya depended a lot on UNICEF documents, and on a few Kenyan theses. This has limited my use of triangulation. Nevertheless, I believe that the documentation that was used, combined with a descriptive assessment of the educational policy, and of the socio-political context of Kenya, allowed my research to provide insights into the current status and likely prospects of these initiatives to foster children's participation as an evolving feature of educational reform in Kenya.

### *Organization of the MRP*

This MRP is divided into four chapters. Chapter One consists of a review of the conceptual knowledge base of the Child Friendly School Framework – the human rights-based approach to

development, Education for All, the notion of quality education— and the genesis of the child friendly school framework itself. Chapter Two begins with an overview of the political, economic, social-cultural context of Kenya and the national system of education of Kenya, and then delves into the origins and implementation of CFS in Kenya with an emphasis on two components: organizational reform and learner-centered pedagogy. Chapter Three focuses on the perception of children’s rights in Kenya, and on a third CFS component: children’s participation in school governance, operationalized through the Children’s Government. Chapter Four offers a synthesis of the findings of this MRP, and concludes by pointing to some of the limitations of this study as well as recommendations for further research.

## **Chapter 1: Child Friendly Schools**

While the genesis of UNICEF’s education model, CFS, can be said to have simply come out of UNICEF’s work with Save the Children US and the World Health Organization on improving the quality of health in schools, the emergence of CFS is rather more complex. Today’s CFS framework is the product of evolving policy and practice of development programming, and of shifting global perspectives concerning quality education. As such, in this first chapter I will start by unravelling the origins and the *raison-d’être* of the CFS framework. First I will examine the human rights-based approach (HRBA), the process of human development that is based on international human rights standards and directed to promoting and protecting human rights. I will then provide an overview of the progression of the world-wide goal of universal primary education, beginning with the 1990 Jomtien Education for All Conference, up to the current Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #4 goal. I will then examine differing perspectives concerning the concept of “quality education”. The second part of this chapter will examine the CFS framework in depth, focusing specifically on the purpose of the initiative, its components - especially those pertaining to child participation and how it has been implemented in the countries in which it has been introduced.

## 1.1 The Human Rights-Based Approach

The human rights-based approach to development (HRBA) began with the convergence of international development and human rights discourses in the early 1990s (UNDP, 2000). Although the principles articulated in HRBA were not new - in fact, the discourse on rights had gained strong momentum at the end of Second World War – much of the discussion on human rights as it related to development was often distorted by geopolitical interests and the rhetoric of Cold War politics (UNDP, 2000; Uvin, 2007). Following the cessation of the Cold War, a series of UN conferences<sup>4</sup> in the early 1990s helped to foster the understanding that democracy, human rights, sustainability, and social development were interdependent (Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi, 2004; Hamm, 2001; UN, n.d.a). Likewise, as the global divide between the rich and the poor continued to widen, the conviction regarding the “trickle down” theory, and its emphasis on economic development diminished in favour of an alternative human rights approach to development assistance. A focus on the rights and well-being of the poor, and on their active involvement in planning and implementing development programs gained widespread international acceptance (Hamm, 2001; Gauri and Gloppen, 2012; Gready and Ensor, 2005).

In 1997, the UN Secretary-General called on all international development organizations to incorporate human rights principles into their respective mandates and mainstream these principles in all phases of their programs<sup>5</sup> (UN, n.d.b; Uvin, 2007). As stipulated by the UN, these principles relate to “the *process* of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to *analyze inequalities* which lie at the heart of development problems and redress *discriminatory practices* and *unjust distributions of power* that impede development progress” (UN, n.d.a). Rather than just focus on program goals, on *what* was to be achieved, HRBA also focuses on *how* such goals are to be achieved. It assumes a root-cause approach by analyzing which rights are not being fulfilled and why, who is responsible, and what can be done

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<sup>4</sup>1993 World Conference on Human Rights, 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen.

<sup>5</sup>This includes the assessment and analysis, programme planning and design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (UN, n.d.b).

to address the lack of rights (Uvin, 2007). The approach identifies rights-holders and their entitlements, and the corresponding duty-bearers and their obligations. Currently the UN system officially endorses the HRBA for the following reasons: a) greater social as well as economic returns on investment<sup>6</sup>; b) a basis in voluntarily ratified legislation (which legitimizes the development process); c) a focus on ethical and moral dimensions that were downplayed in past development discourses; and d) enhancement of accountability through the identification of rights-holders and duty-bearers, and hence possibilities of redressing social injustice (UN, n.d.a; Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi, 2004; UNICEF, 2016a; Tsikata, 2004).

HRBA, however, has not been without its critics. For example, the notion of the indivisibility of rights has been regarded by some as unrealistic (Munro, 2009; Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi, 2004). Financial resources are limited, and thus organizations that adhere to the HRBA inevitably need to prioritize some rights over others within their programming (thus, in effect, blurring the distinction between rights and needs). In addition, while one goal of the HRBA is to empower the excluded and enable the most marginalized social groups to claim their rights, the human rights discourse can represent an obstacle to communication, with poorer people tending to have limited access to, let alone knowledge of, the national and international institutions that are accountable for ensuring the promotion and protection of their rights (Munro, 2009; Tsikata, 2004; Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi, 2004). Indeed, as several observers have pointed out, the roles of duty-bearers tend to be vague, and hence accountability itself is limited (Robeyns, 2006; Uvin, 2007). How, for example, can external donor agencies be held accountable for development policies that are defined by their own host governments? As so much of the discourse of human rights emanates from the international institutions, and while several national governments make empty promises in regards to human rights through the passage of legislation and the formulation of policies, there is often a large gap between policy rhetoric and actual implementation. As such, the debate about human rights might be more effective when held at grassroots level rather than implemented from above (Tsikata, 2004).

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<sup>6</sup>As it works on strengthening the capacity of both individuals and institutions to carry out their obligations rather than promote charity, and hold the State accountable, institutionalizes democratic processes etc. (UN, n.d.a).

Notwithstanding the challenges with the HRBA, as Uvin (2007) argues, “major change always starts small... [and] the promotion of human rights [needs to] begin with oneself” (p.604). What is crucial for the success of the HRBA is educating people on their rights, and building a culture of human rights awareness and commitment (Uvin, 2007; Tsikata, 2004). Of the various UN agencies, perhaps the most vocal in adhering to this precept is UNICEF that currently bases its programming on the principles of universality, non-discrimination, the best interests of the child<sup>7</sup>, the right to survival and development, indivisibility<sup>8</sup> and interdependence of human rights, accountability and respect for the voice of the child (UNICEF, 2016a).

### *1.2 From Education for All to Sustainable Development Goal 4*

At the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there was a broad consensus that human development should be at the core of the development process, and that education should play an important part. Indeed, as stipulated by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequently by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), all children have the right to education. However, despite efforts made by most countries to provide the means to ensure this right, more than 100 million children (60% of whom were girls) still did not have access to primary education in 1990, and more than 100 million failed to complete basic education<sup>9</sup> (UNESCO, 1990). In response, that same year delegates from 155 countries and representatives of more than 150 governmental organizations met in Jomtien, Thailand, and signed the World Declaration on Education for All that included universalizing primary education and significantly reducing illiteracy by the start of the 21st century. Ten years later, however, many countries had been unable to fulfill the targets of the EFA agenda. At the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, the international community reaffirmed the goal of EFA world-wide by adopting the six

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<sup>7</sup>The child has a voice, and has the right to work towards achieving his/her fullest potential (OHCHR, 2016).

<sup>8</sup>According to UNDP, there is no hierarchy of rights – “civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights are all equally necessary for a life of dignity” (UNDP, 2000, p.16). However, in putting emphasis on the right to survival and development, UNICEF is implicitly embracing a prioritisation of some rights over others.

<sup>9</sup>“Basic education refers to education intended to meet basic learning needs; it includes instruction at the first or foundation level, on which subsequent learning can be based; it encompasses early childhood and primary (or elementary) education for children, as well as education in literacy, general knowledge and life skills for youth and adults” (UNESCO, 1990, p.ix).

*Education for All* goals<sup>10</sup> (UNESCO, 2000). Later the same year, a record number of heads of state gathered in early September at the Millennium Summit at the United Nations Headquarters to discuss how to tackle extreme poverty. The Summit concluded with the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, with eight goals to reduce poverty by half by 2015, of which one –Goal 2 — specified the target of UPE by 2015 (UN, 2000).

As the EFA goals and the MDGs reached their 2015 deadline, a major evaluation was conducted to take stock of the progress that had been made. The results revealed that while EFA was still an elusive global objective, great strides had nonetheless been made in terms of educational expansion and increased school enrolments in most countries. Yet by 2015 a major obstacle confronted many of these same countries – poor quality education. As efforts since 2000 had been to rapidly expand education systems so as to ensure that every child would be enrolled in school, the issue of access to school took precedence over other crucial aspects of education, namely quality (UNESCO, 2015). In the meantime, the poor quality of learning in primary schools has led to millions of children leaving school without basic skills (UNESCO, 2015). Cognizant of this widespread problem, at the World Education Forum in Incheon, South Korea, in May 2015, conference delegates not only reiterated the important role of education as a main driver of national development, but also articulated the need to promote pedagogical processes that were humanistic, holistic and rights-based (UNESCO, 2015). This reflected a new global vision of education, one that was transformative in outlook, centered on the fourth Sustainable Development Goal<sup>11</sup>, to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all [by 2030]” (UNDP, 2017).

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<sup>10</sup>Goal 1: expand early childhood care and education; goal 2: provide free and compulsory primary education for all; goal 3: promote learning and life skills for young people and adults; goal 4: increase adult literacy by 50 percent; goal 5: achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015; goal 6: improve the quality of education (UNESCO, 2016).

<sup>11</sup>SDGs are the ‘successors’ of the MDGs.

### *1.3 Quality Education*

Throughout the developing world it has become increasingly clear that educational expansion without adequate attention to educational quality is an inefficient social investment (Masino and Niño-Zarazúa, 2016; Ankomah et al., 2005; Bergmann, 1996; Adams, 1993; UNESCO, 2005). Yet there is no universally accepted definition of quality education. On the contrary, it is a term that is dependent on the specific goals of education and the diverse values and traditions that are related to the individual's place in society. As Adams (1993) stated, "Who decides on the operational definition of quality? Quality for whom or, quality according to whom? ...To what extent can generalizations be made across nations, communities, schools, or even classrooms?" (p.3). As education consists of many different interrelated components, this raises the question as to which aspect of education should be the focus of attention if quality is to be enhanced.

In an attempt to answer these questions and thus assess the overall level of education's quality in schools, efforts have been made to classify education into three main categories or dimensions of quality: inputs, processes, and output/outcomes (Ankomah et al., 2005; Bergmann, 1996; Chabbott, 2004). Inputs refer to human resources (e.g., number and characteristics of teachers, administrators, and support staff), material resources (textbooks, school facilities, financial resources, etc.) and class size. Typical questions concerning inputs are: Does the school have enough teachers for the number of pupils in attendance? Do the teachers show up to work? Do students have access to textbooks or school supplies? Do schools have access to water and hygienic facilities? Processes refer to the forms of interaction between teachers and pupils, the management and overall environment of schools and classrooms, teaching methods, and methods of discipline. Invariably the quality of the process depends in part on the inputs available to a school system. Examples of questions concerning process are: Do teachers use interactive, child-centered teaching approaches that are relevant to the local context? Are schools safe places for students?<sup>12</sup> The third dimension - output/outcomes – refers to results, i.e., what the learner

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<sup>12</sup>Students learn better when they are engaged in their learning, through participation (Ankomah et al. 2005; Adams, 1993). This is a part of the child-centred teaching method. Whether or not the teacher includes this component in her/his methodology would then impact the quality of education of that classroom.

assimilates and takes away from his/her school experience. While outcomes are often measured by students' examination results, it also includes how well the education system has prepared students to become active and contributing members of society (Ankomah et al., 2005). Outcomes depend on both the quality of inputs and processes (Masino and Niño-Zarazúa, 2016). In addition to these three dimensions of quality, a fourth factor must also be considered – the socio-economic backgrounds of learners (e.g., health, home environment, and local socio-cultural contexts) that will influence psychosocial and service delivery elements of schooling (UNICEF, 2000; Masino and Niño-Zarazúa, 2016). This leads to questions such as: How do parents or society in general perceive or value education? How prominent is gender bias in households and society at large (UNESCO, 2005)?

#### *1.4 Child Friendly School Framework*

Within the last decade, numerous international aid organizations and national governments have focused attention on enhancing the quality of education while still paying attention to increased educational access. One such global initiative is the Child Friendly Schools framework which initially emerged as an extension of basic health care interventions in homes and schools<sup>13</sup> (UNICEF, 2014a; Chabbott, 2004). With UNICEF's influence in particular, the concept was widened beyond health and nutrition issues to include concerns with broader elements of quality in education, such as gender sensitivity, inclusiveness and human rights (UNICEF, 2009a). Following UNICEF's lead, other organizations, notably prominent NGOs such as Save the Children and Plan International, have adopted the CFS framework.

Definitions of “child-friendly schools” have inevitably varied. At the 1995 global workshop on the theme ‘What is a child-friendly school?’, held by UNICEF's Innocenti Research Centre, thirteen characteristics of a rights-based school were identified. The top three state that a CFS should: a) reflect and realize the rights of every child; b) see and understand the whole child, in a

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<sup>13</sup>Save the Children US, the World Health Organization and UNICEF collaborated in Thailand (UNICEF promoted Baby-Friendly Hospitals around the world in the 1990s). towards a concept similar to that of the “baby-friendly hospital”. “The initiative is a global effort to implement practices that protect, promote and support breastfeeding” (WHO, 2017).

broad context; c) be child-centered (see Annex A). Building on these characteristics, UNICEF has since developed a *Child Friendly Schools Manual* that is commonly used as a reference guide for quality education<sup>14</sup> (UNICEF, 2009a). The manual illustrates a fundamental conceptual shift from education as a general human rights principle towards more specific child-centered ideology whereby the determination of school environments are integrally linked to the CRC's emphasis on the "best interest of the child" (UNICEF, 2009a). The over-riding aim of the UNICEF CFS framework is to strengthen the quality of schooling in relation to children's overall needs, and to do so through more participatory approaches. This means considering not only the internal workings of school, such as pedagogy and performance outcomes that are the conventional preoccupations of educators, but also the engagement of other stakeholders in children's education such as: civil society organizations community leaders, parents, and children themselves (UNICEF, 2009a). This is a perspective that promotes a synergy among all social actors and institutions that have a major influence on the lives of children. It is a rights-based approach to children's education that endorses the precept that every child is entitled to be "an active participant in a democratic process that involves mutual respect" (UNICEF, 2009a, p.9; Akoto-Senaman, n.d.).

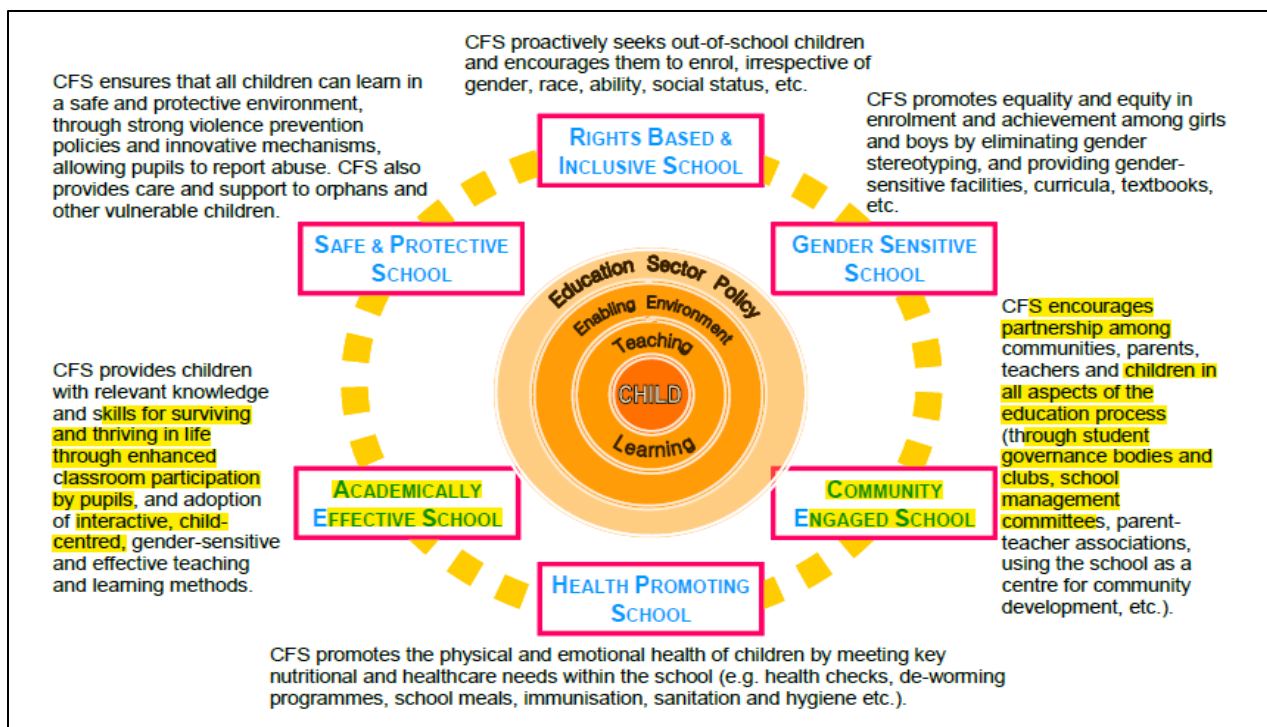
This multi-dimensional orientation has also led UNICEF to shift from a single-factor approach to a comprehensive CFS approach, which focuses on a child's health, safety, social background, as much as on the child's learning opportunities (as illustrated by the framework below, see Figure 1). Prior to CFS, UNICEF's interventions focused on improving one specific pedagogic factor at a time, such as teacher training or school infrastructure, or supplying school materials. The single-factor approach did lead to improvements, but they were often compromised by other factors in the education setting (UNICEF, 2009a). For instance, a project focusing on hygiene and life skills education might lead to increased student awareness in these areas, but if the school lacked adequate sanitary facilities, or safe drinking water, the practical effects of such training would be minimal. In contrast, as the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation concluded following an assessment of 216 education programmes - on learning and school participation implemented by various agencies and national governments across 52 low

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<sup>14</sup>Separate and smaller manuals, called *Companions to the CFS Manual*, have also been created to go more in depth on certain topics (e.g. manuals on climate change and environmental education).

and middle-income countries -, successful implementation of new educational programmes are those that address multi-dimensional constraints simultaneously (Snilstveit et al, 2016). Highlighting the range of factors that can influence the quality of children’s education, the report indicated “that [educational] outcomes of any one intervention may be affected by the extent to which other major constraints remain unaddressed” (Snilstveit et al, 2016, p.49; Akoto-Senaman, n.d.). Accordingly, UNICEF’s comprehensive CFS approach puts special emphasis on school environments overall as a basis for quality learning. These need to consist of key social factors (depicted in Figure 1 below) such as non-discrimination and inclusivity<sup>15</sup>, safety<sup>16</sup>, awareness of and respect for children’s rights, interactive child-centered pedagogy<sup>17</sup>, the promotion of children’s participation in classroom activities and in school administrative processes, and the establishment of strong school-community connections<sup>18</sup> (UNICEF, 2009a; Akoto-Senaman, n.d.).

**Figure 1 – CFS Framework**



Source:  
Fushimi,  
2014, p.6

<sup>15</sup>Does not discriminate and provides free, compulsory and accessible schooling. It eliminates gender-stereotypes and encourages respect, dignity, equity and equality to all.

<sup>16</sup>Provides a safe, healthy and hygiene environment and life-skills based education.

<sup>17</sup>Promotes quality teaching and learning.

<sup>18</sup>Promoting child participation, democratic rights and encourages school-family-community partnerships.

Figure 1, above, represents the various dimensions<sup>19</sup> that make up the CFS approach, and highlighted in yellow for emphasis are the areas that pertain more specifically to child participation at school. In this paper, I summarize the relevant dimensions, an *academically effective school* and a *community engaged school*, in the following three components: organizational reform (implementation of CFS within the educational system via teacher training on CFS), learner-centered pedagogy (interactive, child-centered pedagogy), and child participation in school governance (e.g. children’s government, student councils), which to me presents more clearly the place of child participation within the CFS approach.

### 1.4.1 Organizational Reform

As outlined above, the CFS approach entails a shift away from targeted interventions in education to system-wide educational reforms. In many respects, therefore, this implies not only a reorganization of national educational systems, but changes in cultural beliefs regarding children’s place in society as well. As a leading institutional promoter of the CFS framework, UNICEF considers it not as an approach to be applied to some schools only, but rather as a model that can be “‘sold’ as good practice for the entire education system” (UNICEF, 2009a, p.22). It is intended to engage actors within education systems, from the levels of policy-making to classroom practices. All levels are interdependent. The relative effectiveness of CFS as a systemic reform or a sector-wide approach (SWAp) to educational assistance – a modality of aid that has been favored by many international donors – depends on the caliber of the teachers in the system, on the resources available to them, and on their will and interest to adopt CFS as a basis for their teaching and their classroom management practices (Snilstveit et al, 2016; Akoto-Senaman, n.d.; UNICEF, 2009a). For this to occur, pre-service and in-service training programs are required to develop the necessary aptitudes and skills for teacher, and systems of regular peer-to-peer mentoring and the formation of school clusters need to be established (UNICEF, 2009a; Fushimi, 2009). For many countries, to ensure the sustainability of such intensive,

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<sup>19</sup>Due to lack of space, I will not explain those other dimensions further than what is included in the footnotes 15-18. For more information, refer to UNICEF’s Child Friendly Schools Manual.

comprehensive approaches to training and systemic support implies major organizational reforms.

As a matter of fact, the implementation of SWAp has proven to be very challenging in most of the countries where the CFS framework has been introduced. UNICEF itself recognizes the challenge in having to work with all levels of government and society and of engaging local capacity and other partner agencies<sup>20</sup>, especially in countries that may not be as open to children's participation or children's rights in general. It has thus created a set of guidelines<sup>21</sup> to help in the implementation of the CFS framework; however, in the interest of keeping the model flexible enough so that it can be adapted to different country contexts there is no prescribed package "clearly defining and laying out key parameters of child-friendly schools that could be adopted as an integral part of a national education plan" (UNICEF, 2009a, p. 22). Although it is possible for countries to imitate and learn from what others have done, every country still has to create its own system that is best suited to its local context. Furthermore, while system-wide interventions promote sustainability, as the model becomes an integral part of an entire education system, there is a need for a reorganization of monetary resources. This represents a challenge for the countries in which such initiatives are implemented, as the money has to be found within budgets that often have very little room for maneuver.

However, there are different modalities of introducing CFS as a measure of education reform. An alternative way to implement CFS for example, is through a 'roll-out' process. This involves the *gradual* replication of the CFS framework from one location to the next until it eventually covers every primary school in the country. "Because they [the CFS framework] are grounded in the reality of resource constraints and lack of capacity for designing and implementing ideal solutions...they adhere to the principle of 'progressive realization' of children's right to quality education" (UNICEF, 2009a, p. 18; Fushimi, 2009). This principle refers to a progressive introduction of CF features and standards over time, to ensure a smooth

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<sup>20</sup>This includes working together with different models already on the ground, who are seeking to achieve similar outcomes in education as the CFS models, such as with the Escuelas Nuevas in Colombia.

<sup>21</sup>They provide guidance on the design, construction, maintenance, operation and management, on the classroom processes of the CFS, on the school-community links and on the monitoring and evaluation processes (UNICEF, 2009a).

reform process within the education system. This process is more appropriate for countries with limited financial resources in the short term, and where there is a degree of uncertainty as to what works best. It allows each school to apply lessons learned from the other schools and to make the necessary changes if needed, all the while avoiding potentially costly errors (UNICEF, 2009a).

#### *1.4.2 Learner-Centered Pedagogy*

Another aspect of the CFS reform process that can contribute to improving the quality of education and the realization of children’s rights is the introduction of learner-centered pedagogy (LCP) in schools. The CFS manual defines it as an approach that should encourage the democratic participation of children by allowing them to participate in classroom activities, to express their opinions, to use their inner resources to solve problems, and to experiment with ideas and discover answers in a stimulating classroom (UNICEF, 2009a). It focuses on the student as a whole (needs, abilities, interests, etc.), and on teaching practices that are the most effective in promoting the highest level of motivation, learning and achievement for all learners (Henson, n.d; Vavrus et al; 2011). The 2000 Dakar Framework also specifically lists “active learning techniques” and a “relevant curriculum” as two of the conditions necessary in order to attain education quality (Vavrus, 2011, p. 35). As such, one of the Child Friendly Schools’ main concerns is child-centeredness in schools, which includes first and foremost child/learner-centered pedagogy.

Wide donor support for learner-centered pedagogy (LCP) has become more of a recurrent theme in many national education policies in the global South. However, the history of the implementation of LCP in different contexts is riddled with stories of inconclusive results or altogether failures due to practical or cultural barriers (Vavrus, 2011; Schweisfurth, 2011). Examples include low classroom resources and high teacher-pupil ratios, limited teacher capacity, and an ageing teacher population that is resistant to change (Thuranira, 2010). Furthermore, because there is a lack of research<sup>22</sup> on LCP from developing nations themselves, some question the transferability of this ‘Western’ construct (Nykiel-Herbert, 2004). The CFS

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<sup>22</sup>Though there is some, as shown later on in the section.

initiative is implemented in development countries which still follow, for the most part, a teacher-centered approach (at least in Sub-Saharan Africa: Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya for example) and in which the classroom and social realities in general are very different from the ones experienced by the Western progressivists that elaborated the learner-centered pedagogy. Such differences include for instance the importance attributed to hierarchy, crowded classrooms (due in part by higher birth rates), a lack of teaching and learning resources, and a lack of trained teachers (Nykiel-Herbert, 2004; Vavrus, 2011; Hardman et al, 2009).

One of the principal philosophical challenges of implementing LCP is the notion that knowledge can be co-constructed by teachers and learners (Vavrus, 2011; Schweisfurth, 2011; Serbessa, 2006). This challenges the hierarchical nature of educational systems in many countries, where there is an understood culturally appropriate distance between adults and children, and thus between teachers and learners, where the former are in a position of authority and a provider of knowledge, while the latter are expected to be obedient recipients of knowledge. Similarly, students may also believe that it is their responsibility to listen to lectures, take notes, memorize information, and respond to questions only upon request (Serbessa, 2006). Another important barrier to the implementation of LCP in developing countries is the imperfect grasp of the concept by teachers who have never experienced it personally. The future teachers do not have suitable models to base themselves on (Lewin and Stuart, 2003). Even where teacher training is supportive of LCP and teachers respond favorably to it, often times they do not take it back to the classroom as it is perceived to be too labor-intensive – especially in schools that are overcrowded and where there are too few teachers. There also exists an inconsistency between curricula that include high stake national examinations. In many countries, the transition from primary to secondary and from secondary to higher learning is dependent on students being able to pass high stake examinations, and the curriculum is overloaded. According to Ethiopian primary school teachers in Serbessa's study (2006), "the only way to 'get through' their subject in the available time is to deliver it in a formal didactic style, with as little 'distraction' from students as possible" (p. 13).

That is not to say that LCP is a practice that is automatically destined to fail in developing countries. In fact, Khamis and Sammons' study (2007) does speak of the positive

learning outcomes of LCP in Pakistan. Weshah (2012), who studied the implementation of the CFS initiative in Jordan, reports that the students are generally enthusiastic about having an active role in the learning process. On the other hand, LCP represents a particularly demanding change because of the profound shift required in teacher-learner power relations (Schweisfurth, 2011). It is after all much easier to update policies than it is to reform a whole education system and cultural practices. Scholars suggest that “a compromise solution might be seen as being about stages of implementation, where teachers and learners are working towards LCP as a long-term goal... Or, it may be about some essential differences attributable to a particular context and how LCE (learner-centered education) needs to be mediated to fit...[or yet, about] a more subtle approach both to LCE implementation and to the analysis of that implementation.” (Schweisfurth, 2011, p.430; Nakabugo and Siebörger, 2011; Sripakash, 2010; Croft, 2002). It is also highly important for the three groups of stakeholders most affected by this global reform movement to be involved, that is: pre-service and in-service teachers, teacher educators at teacher colleges and universities, officials in ministries of education and finance, departments and institutes of curriculum development, and national examination councils (Vavrus et al, 2011). Teacher quality has been shown to be the “single most important school variable influencing student achievement” (Verspoor, 2008, p.217; OECD, 2005), but improving quality of instruction depends to a large extent on the pedagogical training, resources and support provided to teachers.

### *1.4.3 Child Participation*

School heads and teachers have a key role to play, as the child’s schooling experience is in their hands. As such, teacher training should include training on child-centered and participatory approaches. Although UNICEF recognizes that it may be challenging to convert teachers from their didactic teaching methods to more interactive ones, new training needs to emphasize that the latter methods will make teaching, as well as learning, more enjoyable and thus improve the students’ retention, performance and participation (UNICEF, 2009a; Vavrus et al, 2011; Schweisfurth, 2011). The Child Friendly Schools manual states that child participation is an inevitable and logical outcome of applying CFS principles. It goes on to say that the child is central to the teaching and learning process; that active and interactive participation is essential

for the full development of the child's potential; and that child participation will help produce independent thinkers who are better able to adapt to changing circumstances around them (UNICEF, 2009a).

Child participation has been the subject of an increasing flood of initiatives since the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989 (Lansdown, 2001). As the most widely ratified international convention in history, there exists a growing body of literature devoted to the issue (Shier, 2001). Several authors agree on the fact that children's participation is about children having the opportunity to express and incorporate their views into decision-making that affect their lives and that of their community, so they can influence those areas (Hart, 1992; Save the Children; 2010; UNICEF, 2000.; Smith, 2007; Johnson et al. 1998). Hart (1992) and Sinclair (2004) both emphasize that choice is an important factor, which determines whether a child is participating or being exploited. Brady's (2007) definition completes the other authors'. For him, child participation "involves supporting children to develop their own views, to think for themselves and to express their views effectively" (Morojele et al., 2011, p.50; Munro 2016).

Despite the recent interest in children's participation, how to define it and put it into practice, the notion is not new. In the 1920s for example, Montessori developed child-centered participatory learning in Italy (Stephens, 1998). This said, children's participation did not become legally binding until the CRC entered into force in 1990. As one of the four core principles of the CRC, children's participation is linked to article 12 which states that "State parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with age and maturity of the child"; and reinforced by articles 13-17.

As Lansdown (2001) puts it, the implementation of article 12 involves a profound and radical reconsideration of the status of children in most societies and of the nature of the adult/child relationship. Many societies still hold on to the 19<sup>th</sup> century's conception of childhood – which saw children as immature, whose views were childish, and thus not sought (Edwards, 1996; Morojele et al., 2011; Smith, 2007). Many authors will mention the issue of power relations

between adults and children as one of the main reasons why children are regularly denied participation (Lansdown, 2001; Hart, 1992; Edwards, 1996; Johnson et al, 1998). Adults fear that if they allow children to participate in spheres that have traditionally been adult territory, their authority will be undermined. As Lansdown (2001) and Smith (2007) explain, article 12 does not give children the right the control over all decisions, or mean that whatever children say must be complied with or that they should ignore their parents. Rather, participation is about teaching children to make informed decisions and learn to think critically (UNICEF, 2000; Munro, 2016).

As Vanner (2013) explains, nothing negative has emerged from the research on child participation, but, “there is plenty of evidence that excluding children from participating in decision deprives them of crucial opportunities for personal growth and socialization” (Edwards, 1996, p.2). Children represent one-third of the human population, and they have specific needs and interests. They are the future, and thus should be given the opportunity to develop their full potential (Edwards, 1996; Johnson et al. 1998). The benefits of children’s participation are many<sup>23</sup>. It can lead to enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence, to more developed forms of self-expression and leadership skills, higher levels of academic performance, enhanced social skills and respect for others, and better teacher-pupil relationship which can lead to better behaviour. However, “children are unlikely to be able to express a view, unless they have the conditions which help them to formulate their views” (Smith, 2007, p. 154).

#### *1.4.3.1 Children’s Democratic Participation in School Governance*

Conscious of the many benefits yielded from involving children in their communities, more community development programs involving children in various capacities at the local, national and even international level<sup>24</sup> have been emerging throughout the world. Schools have long been ideal sites for such activities, most often through the form of student councils. Having grown out of tentative local arrangements to try to promote more involvement by pupils in

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<sup>23</sup>See Lansdown 2001 for a good list.

<sup>24</sup>E.g. community parliaments in India, “Gestores de paz” in Colombia, the National Children’s Congress and Parliament in Bolivia represent just a few examples (Austin, 2009).

decisions about their schools, school councils, or the like, can be a great vehicle for children's participation in school governance (Cotmore, 2004).

In order for student councils to be effective and truly representative, they have to be wary of potential adult manipulation, and should focus on representing the student body, rather than the head teachers or staff as is the case in the prefecture system (Hill et al. 2004, Hart, 1992). Children's involvement in the school's decision-making process in developing countries often have to go against a very hierarchical school management style, that is run according to their head teacher's will and interest (Leung et al. 2014; Morojele, and Muthukrishna, 2011; Harber and Mncube, 2012; Harber, 1997; 2010; Sifuna, 2000).

Perhaps the numerous benefits of democratic schooling could override those factors however. For one, "evidence indicates that schools involving children and introducing more democratic structures are likely to be more harmonious, have better staff-pupil relationships and a more effective learning environment" (Lansdown, 2001, p. 5; Harber, 2010; Leung et al., 2014; Vanner, 2013). With an increased sense of trust between students and staff, and thus an increased sense of cooperation and community, and a decrease in delinquency, students can help reduce teachers' workload (Smith, 2003; Harber, 1997, Angell, 1991; Leung et al. 2014). Furthermore democratic education can develop respect for the dignity of the individual and the rights of others, promote tolerance, acceptance of difference, strengthen respect for fundamental freedoms, contribute to the full development of the human personality, and produce informed and critical citizens (Haber, 1997). According to the CFS Manual, the CFS framework aims to attain such outcomes through the inclusion of children's governments or student governance bodies within the school as it is labelled in Figure 1 above.

### ***1.5 Summary of Evaluations' Findings on the Implementation of the CFS Framework in Several Developing Countries***

Chabbott (2004) and Osher et al.'s (2009) global evaluations synthesize the successes, challenges, and recommendations related both to the CFS objectives and to the way the framework itself has been implemented in a few development countries. Certain challenges are

cited repeatedly in both reports. One challenge relates to the loosely structured way that the CFS framework has been developed. For example, the lack of baseline data for a lot of CFS activities, of regularly scheduled progress reports and of databases has made it difficult to evaluate CFS programs. This in turn has hindered prospects of scaling up CFS activities and of receiving funds to do so (Chapman, 2001; Bernard, 1999). Similarly, “the lack of a consistent, logical approach for incorporating CFS features and standards into education sector planning has produced patchy results almost everywhere the attempt to mainstream child-friendly schools in the education system has been made” (UNICEF, 2009a, p. 38). While several countries have commended the comprehensive and holistic approach of CFS, at the same time they also highlight the difficulty in implementing such a complex approach. If developed countries were to evaluate the child-friendliness of their schools, it is likely that very few of them would meet all of the criteria of the approach (Munro, 2009). The community involvement element for example is said to be the hardest to implement and sustain and yet it is one of the most essential elements (Chabbott, 2004; Bernard, 1999). Another problematic issue is the relatively new conception of children as rights holders: “individualistic presuppositions about children do not necessarily resonate with many traditional groups in Western and non-Western societies. Although [nearly] all countries in the world have signed the CRC, many have done so with substantial caveats” (Chabbott, 2004, p.14).

Despite these challenges, many positive results of the implementation of the CFS framework have also been revealed. Bernard (1999) explains that the true value-added of the CFS is that it assembles the many diverse education activities that UNICEF has developed for schools over the past two decades under one framework. Chabbott (2004) explains that the “intersectoral approach is mentioned frequently as an essential part of the CFS framework” (p.34). Observations have also shown that most students in CFS feel that adults in their school provide important emotional support, they feel safe, supported and challenged (especially female students) (Osher et al, 2009). The students are generally enthusiastic about having an active role in the learning process (Weshah, 2012, p. 699). Furthermore, the CFS initiative was found to have a positive impact on the pupil-teacher relationship in China and Mali (as it grew more democratic and equal, it became more caring and trusting), and students in Nicaragua found that

they had a better understanding of their rights, they were able to express themselves better, and they felt more confident (Nanzhao, 2009; UNICEF, 2009a; Lumpkin, 2009).

According to the evaluations, the main recommendation to ensure the school’s successful implementation of the various CFS components is to effectively engage all educational stakeholders, from the Minister of Education to the students, throughout the entire process (Chabbott, 2004; Osher et al, 2009).

**Table 1: *Synthesis of the Evaluations’ Findings***

Successes	Challenges	Recommandations/ Conditionalities
In most of the countries, the MoE has embraced the CFS Framework	Lack of available data at the school level (e.g. attendance and dropout rates)	Effectively engage all educational stakeholders – from Min. of Education to community members
Teachers in most of the 6 countries are using LCP techniques. Really have seen a shift from teacher-centered to student-centered, but traditional notions still persist.	Insufficient resources: from instructional materials to trained teachers (major challenge) – obstacle to the implementation of LCP	Further promote LCP to parents and communities and help them to see the benefits of these methods over traditional methods.
Schools with higher levels of family and community participation and LCP had stronger conditions for learning	Schools struggle to be fully inclusive, especially in the case of children with disabilities in terms of physical accommodation and teacher training	Success of the school depends on the strength and vision of school head. Should identify strong school leaders and equip them with more skills and capacity to implement CFS
Schools visited were successful in creating environments, where females in particularly feel safe, and supported	Obstacles in involving parents and community in meaningful ways	
Nearly all schools visited provide health education to support the healthy living of students	Schools struggle in maintaining their facilities. Really depend on community support.	
Increasingly formal roles of students in their education, and in decision-making activities through C/G or student councils		

Source:  
Chabbott,  
2004;  
Osher et  
al, 2009

## Chapter 2: Kenya – Social Context and CFS

Building on the concepts and challenges reviewed in chapter 1, chapter 2 focuses on how CFS was implemented in Kenya. Following a sociological approach to the research – that nothing exists in isolation and thus that events are shaped by the political, economic and socio-cultural context they are immersed in and surrounded by - I will begin with a brief examination of Kenya’s political, economic and socio-cultural climate, and an overview of its education system. I will then review the origins and implementation of CFS in Kenya with an emphasis on organizational reform and learner-centered pedagogy as presented in Chapter 1.

### 2.1 Brief Country Overview

#### 2.1.1 History and Politics

Kenya is a Sub-Saharan country situated in Eastern Africa. It shares its northern border with Ethiopia and South Sudan, its western border with Uganda, its southern border with Tanzania, and its eastern border with Somalia (a very unstable country). From the eastern side, it also has access to the Indian Ocean. From 1888 to 1962, Kenya was a British protectorate and colony. Since gaining its independence in 1963, Kenya’s post-colonial history has at times been turbulent due to factors such as vulnerability to natural hazards, intra- and inter-communal ethnic tensions, terror attacks from Somalia, high levels of corruption and political violence associated with national electoral competition (Transparency International, 2016). Violence, repression of political dissidents and allegations of abuse of power and corruption have plagued the political scene from the early 50s onward<sup>25</sup>. In August 2010, it adopted a new constitution designed to limit the powers of the president and devolve powers to the regions (BBC News, 2015; Republic of Kenya, 2010a). Until then (2010), Kenya had a highly centralized system of governance,

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<sup>25</sup>The assassination of government minister Tom Mboya sparked ethnic unrest in 1969; in 1982, there was an air force coup attempt against the Daniel Moi’s one-party government; in 1987, the opposition groups were suppressed and arrested; in 1990 the suspicious death of foreign minister Robert Ouko<sup>25</sup> leads to increased dissent against the government; in 1991 the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (Ford) party is outlawed; in 1995, and in 2007, the disputed presidential election (believed to have been rigged) lead to violence in which more than 1,500 died (BBC News, 2015; Advameg Inc, 2016).

“which some people believe was the root of unfair allocation of resources and development opportunities” (MoEST, 2014a, p.2). The new Constitution of 2010 reorganized the political map. Kenya’s eight former provinces and over 280 districts were replaced with 47 counties under the new Constitution. The devolution aims to ensure a more equitable distribution of power and resources amongst the country’s regions, to decentralize service delivery so it is more effective and closer to the people, and to encourage a more accountable, transparent and participatory process (MoEST, 2014a). The Constitution also lays out a wide-ranging set of reforms, and a new citizens’ Bill of Rights, which devotes a section to children’s rights.

### *2.1.2. Economy*

Kenya has been experiencing steady growth over the past few years<sup>26</sup>. It is currently the largest economy in the Eastern African region, and the economic and transport hub of East Africa, but the wealth is not being distributed equally (Interactions, n.d.; Muricho and Chang’ach, 2013; Rharade, 1997). According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in 2009 43.4% of the Kenyan population was living with less than \$US1.25 a day (UNDP, 2015). The CIA World Factbook (2016) estimates that the rate remained the same in 2012. Women, who constitute 51 per cent of the Kenyan population, make up the majority of the poorest demographic. Furthermore, poverty is highest in the arid and semi-arid land (ASAL) areas, followed by the coastal area (Interactions, n.d.; MoEST, 2014a).

### *2.1.3 Socio-Cultural*

The diversity found within Kenya in terms of wealth distribution, demographics and geographical landscapes make it a country of many contrasts (UNICEF, n.d.a; Interactions, n.d.; Kenya High Commission, 2015). Kenya’s 46 million inhabitants (World Bank, 2016a) can be<sup>27</sup> divided into 42 distinct ethnic groups spread out over eight equally diverse regions in terms of natural resources, services and resources they receive from the State.

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<sup>26</sup>GDP in 2013 was 5.7%, 5.3% in 2014 and 5.6% in 2015 (World Bank, 2016b)

<sup>27</sup>15% of the population are Africans from other countries and 1% are non-Africans – Europeans, Asians, and Arabs (CIA World Factbook, 2016).

Kenya faces several social-cultural challenges. These include: inter-ethnic conflicts that still arise occasionally (Advameg, 2016); in 2015, 5.9% of adults were affected by HIV/AIDS (Index Mundi, 2016); more than 40% of the population is under 14 years old<sup>28</sup> (Index Mundi, 2016; CIA World Factbook, 2016); more than 70% of the population is still rural, which makes service delivery – including education - more difficult (MoEST, 2014a); refugees<sup>29</sup> and host communities in the ASAL compete for some of the same resources; in 2015 there were more than 309 000 internally displaced people within Kenya (IDMC, 2016); and urban areas are sprawling into unplanned settlements, further stretching the resources. Children, who make up the majority of the country’s population, tend to be most affected by these issues. Several of these issues leave many children vulnerable to one or more deprivations, such as access to an adequate education, shelter, or sanitary facilities for example.

#### *2.1.4 Kenya’s Education Context*

As mentioned above, one type of deprivation that many children in Kenya suffer from is the inability to participate in or receive quality education (MoEST, 2014a). The most vulnerable to deprivation are those children coming from female-headed households, those whose mother has no formal education, and households with more than three children. This is especially the case if they live in the ASAL (MoEST, 2014a). Other direct barriers that impact children’s school attendance include the long distances to school in rural areas, and the lack of resources to respond to orphans, children with disabilities, street children, refugees, and internally displaced children’s needs (Save the Children, 2006; MoEST, 2014).

On the other hand, the children who are able to attend school regularly face the issue of receiving a low quality education (among other things, as outlined in Table 2).

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<sup>28</sup>Kenya has one of the world’s highest birth rates (Advameg Inc, 2016).

<sup>29</sup>Out of 550 000, 250 000 of them are children (MoEST, 2014a).

**Table 2 - Major Challenges to the Education Sector in Kenya**

- Weakness in the management of teachers
- Weak financial management systems across the sector, lack of transparency of the flow of resources
- Wastage and high numbers of children out of school due to user charges
- High level of teacher pupil ratio compounded by a shortage of teachers
- Overcrowded classrooms
- Teacher training programmes viewed as being largely unfit for purpose
- Inadequacies in the provision of educational infrastructure, especially in ASAL areas
- Failures to ensure and meet the educational needs of vulnerable children
- Gender and regional disparities
- Need for a more flexible curriculum and assessment system

*Source: MoEST, 2012*

The United Nations, academics, and education stakeholders have expressed concerns over this issue of quality on numerous occasions in the past few years (KTN News Kenya, 2012; Education in Crisis, 2016; MoEST, 2014a; UNICEF, 2014b; Glennerster et al., 2011; Sifuna, 2007). In fact, Kenya has been struggling to find the right formula for its education system since its independence. In order to create a level playing field and balance the opportunities of access to education, the government abolished all school fees and introduced Free Primary Education (FPE) in the 1970s. This initiative failed due to a lack of resources. In the 1980s, the government completely redesigned the curriculum with the intent to make the system more relevant to the world of work. Vocational and technical subjects were introduced in such a way that pupils would be work-ready after the primary stage<sup>30</sup> (Rharade, 1997; Muricho and Chang'ach, 2013). The government did not commit further resources, however, and parents and communities were expected to meet the costs. This resulted in a sharp decline in enrolment, further affecting the least well-off regions.

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<sup>30</sup>The secondary stage was to consolidate the pupils' practical and theoretical knowledge.

In 1990, the enrolment rate of children in primary schools reached only 66% in the province of Nairobi and 24% in the North Eastern province (Bedi et al., 2004). Influenced by the international community's introduction of policies focusing on the need to achieve quality education for all, the Kenyan government once again worked on revamping its education policies. First, a curriculum review was conducted in 2002 to lessen the workload of both teachers and learners. However, the review resulted in the removal of several subjects, mostly practical ones. Free primary education was re-introduced in 2003 – resulting in a huge surge in enrolments - and all tuition fees and levies were abolished at the same time. This said, fees for uniforms, books, boarding, and examinations are still too high for some parents to send their children to school (MoEST, 2014a). Additionally, the education system's resources (human, financial, and physical) did not match and have yet to catch up to the hasty introduction of the reform (Muricho and Chang'ach, 2013). Sifuna (2007) explains that again “political expediency seemed to have superseded the need for a sound analysis and assessment of the needs, leading to inadequate preparation, consultation, planning, budgeting and a smooth implementation of the programme” (p. 695). This lack of planning has led, among other things, to over-enrolment and declining education quality. Kenyan government officials and KEPSHA (Kenyan Primary School Head Teachers Association) agreed that they could not afford to lose a generation of future leaders to poor education (KEPSHA, 2015; Republic of Kenya, 2007). Thus, the combination of internal dissatisfaction with the high-stakes exam-focused system<sup>31</sup> and pedagogy (rote memorization), the urgent need for better quality education, an active government leadership, and the credibility of UNICEF as a partner in the Kenyan education sector, opened the door for UNICEF to conduct a one-day orientation on the CFS approach for the Kenyan Ministry of Education (MoE) (Cunningham, 2012; Fushimi, 2009).

## ***2.2 CFS in Kenya***

### ***2.2.1 Organizational Reform***

The nature of the CFS approach matches the educational and developmental needs of Kenya, which similarly seeks to ensure an interdisciplinary and holistic learning in order to attain

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<sup>31</sup>If the student does not meet the required 250 points to pass, his/her student career ends there.

quality and relevant education as prescribed by the Taskforce, convened to review and align the education and training sector to the new 2010 Constitution (MoEST, 2015). Fushimi (2009) explains that the “broader scope of educational outcomes is something sought by the policy-makers and officials in Kenya which seek to transform its examination-oriented/driven system, [and] to acknowledge non-academic talents and competencies” (p. 15). After UNICEF’s one-day orientation, the positive response to the concept led to a series of training workshops for trainers, teachers, and the Ministry of Education, which in turn led to the MoE<sup>32</sup> (with support from UNICEF) launching the CFS pilot project (which stakeholders named ‘Improved Quality Education Initiative’ instead of CFS) in 3 of the lowest performing districts in 2002 (Garissa, Kwale, Nairobi) (Fushimi, 2009, p.15; Chabbott, 2008). The pilot project started off as in-service education and training (INSET) for teachers, using a school cluster approach. In the cluster approach, a relatively better-off school is appointed as a resource center, where teachers from nearby primary and Early Childhood Development schools and non-formal centers can meet to develop learning and teacher material, and build networks enabling peer mentoring, guidance, and a transfer of expertise without having to travel long distances (See Figure 2 below for a visual of the system) (Fushimi, 2009; Chabbott, 2008). The aim is partly to create a child- and learning-friendly environment in the schools and classrooms, as well as to empower the teachers, teacher educators, education officials and the communities to take initiatives tailored to the needs of the children in their particular classrooms.

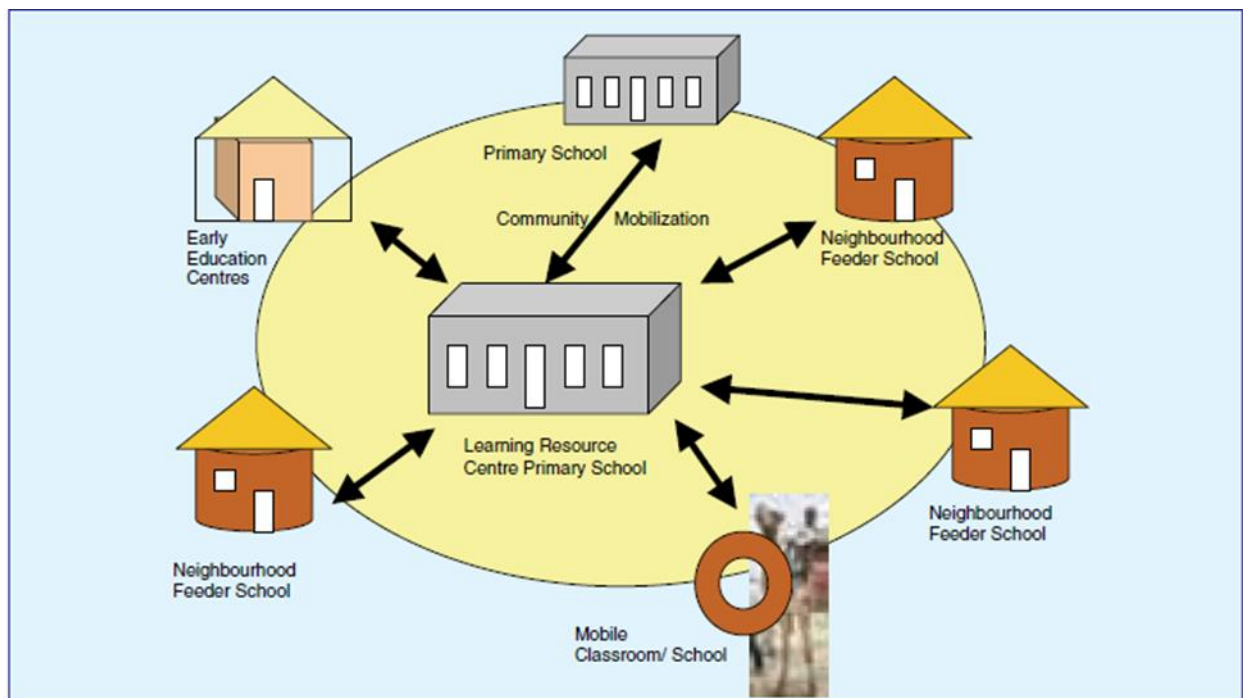
To begin with, the focus was on building capacity, including training teachers to produce affordable teaching and learning materials. Then, following a cascade approach, UNICEF led a series of workshops that produced national trainers who would subsequently train other teachers, as well as education officers, in focus districts, on the implementation of CF principles. The five-day teacher training programme presents topics such as how to develop integrated and child-friendly lesson plans, effective classroom management, designing and developing teaching and learning aids, and assessing children’s progress (Chabbott, 2008). This training is done using the cluster approach system (described above) (Muito et al 2003 in Chabbott 2008). The hope is that teachers who attend the training share the information with the rest of their colleagues. However,

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<sup>32</sup>Its name before it became the MoEST.

consistent with the results of her 2003 assessment of CFS in Kenya, Chabbott's 2008 case study reveals that the range of new techniques used in the classroom post-training was relatively narrow compared to what was covered at the INSET, and some of the teachers who were trained did not report back on what they had learned to their peers. Yet, teachers reported that their teaching had become more interactive, child-centered, and they attempted to create more stimulating classrooms. Accordingly, students reported that learning has become more enjoyable, and relevant. They were learning faster, and felt more confident to express themselves and participate in class. Parents also observed that their children were more active and attentive learners (Chabbott, 2008; Chege, 2008; ESARO, 2009).

**Figure 2: Resource Sharing Model in Kenya**



Source: *Child-Friendly Schools: Emerging Practices in Eastern and Southern Africa – A Human Rights-Based Approach*, UNICEF, 2009

By 2006, the CFS concept was gaining ground. It was then that the term *CFS* came into being in Kenya. Following a 'roll out' process (mentioned in Chapter 1) the initiative was slowly expanded from 3 to 6 to 9 to 11 districts until it eventually reached a nation-wide scope (Chabbott, 2008). The broad principles of the CFS had made their first appearance in the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP) 2005-2010. Although the term 'child-friendly'

does not appear in this policy document, it includes most of child-friendly interventions and key strategies, such as the broad concern with multidimensional aspects of educational quality and child-centered principles (Chabbott, 2008). Moreover, as the MoE began to show a better grasp of the concept itself and of its purpose, alongside UNICEF, it developed two key materials/tools: (i) the CFS Kenya manual and (ii) the CFS Monitoring Tool, to make the concept even more accessible.

The Child Friendly School Kenya manual is a set of guidelines, reflection activities, tips and tricks, and educational best practices meant to instruct policy makers and educational practitioners at all levels on how to best implement CFSs in the country (MoEST, 2009). It focuses on promoting five themes: an inclusive and child-friendly classroom, a safe and protective school, an equity- and equality-promoting school, a health- and nutrition-promoting school, and lastly a school that enhances linkages and partnerships with the community. In order for a school to determine potential gaps in how child-friendly it is, it first advises them to assess the extent to which their school is already child-friendly. Then, the manual recommends to 1) identify the people in the school who will work towards the planning and implementation of the CFS; 2) identify the needs based on the self-assessment checklist; 3) create a vision of the ideal classroom, of the desired education program and school environment; 4) create a schedule of activities with solid targets that will lead to a CFS; 5) implement the plan; and lastly 6) monitor and evaluate the progress with Monitoring Tool (MoEST, 2009).

During the first term, the school's CFS work plan should include actions and targets that it will undertake to enhance more learner-friendly teaching of reading and writing and life skills (i.e. step five). This could mean choosing from and implementing varied and relevant interactive teaching methodologies (MoEST, n.d.). The schools are then encouraged to perform an evaluation, using the CFS Monitoring Tool, as early as the second term to ensure that the school is heading in the right direction in terms of child-friendliness, but also to encourage the school management to be more accountable, transparent, and to reflect on the need to self-improve (Fushimi, 2009). The Monitoring Tool is divided into five components - each representing the themes presented in the manual - to be assessed from excellent to poor based on a list of indicators (see Annex C). The Tool does not match the manual completely, however. For

example, while the manual does promote the benefits of active and participatory learning, and the use of varied learner-friendly methodologies in relation to the first theme “Inclusive and child friendly classroom”; it does not expand on a child's’ *right* to participate, let alone make any mention of the concept of children’s government or to any related concept (student council or student involvement in school governance). Yet having a “functioning children’s government” is an indicator which the Tool uses to assess schools’ child-friendliness. Perhaps this aspect is covered during the teaching training sessions, but it is not clear from the information that I have been able to gather.

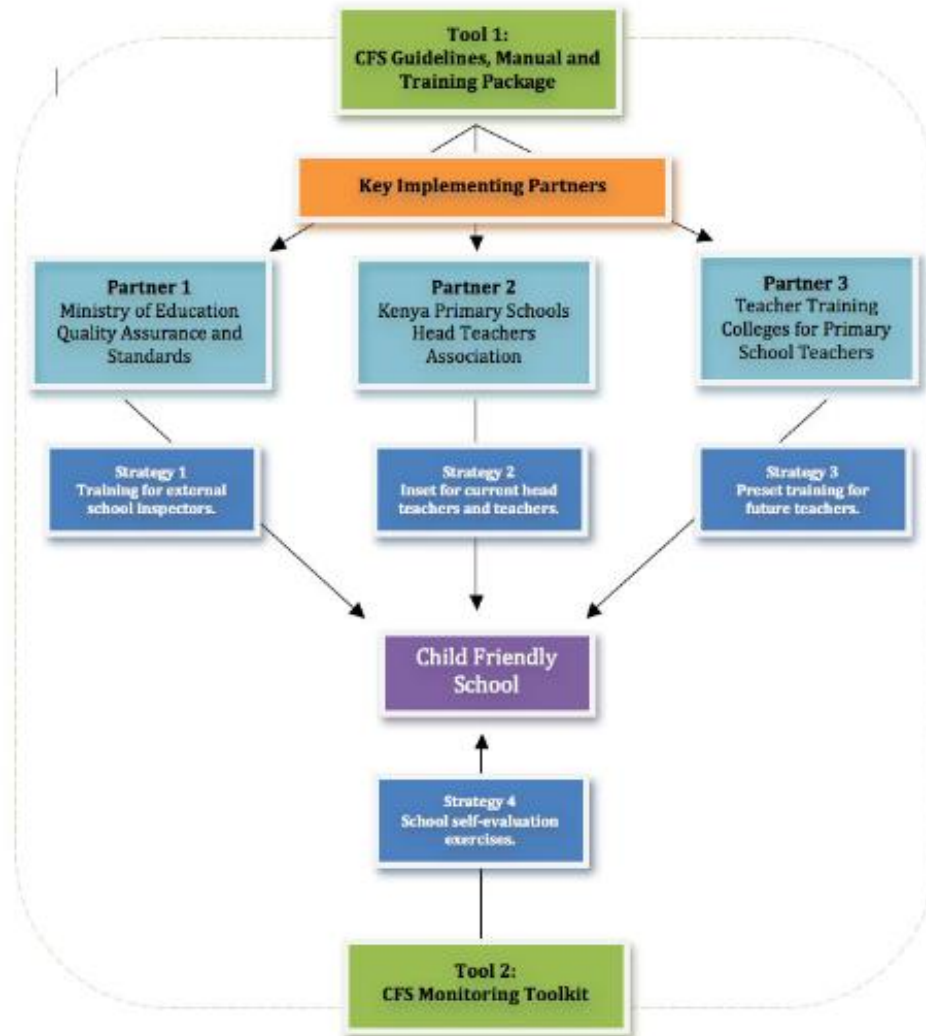
In 2009, Kenyan government officials distributed the Tool to all primary schools in the country alongside a national Circular no.1/2009<sup>33</sup> asking them to prioritize the CFS concept as an essential step in realizing Kenya Vision 2030 (Cunningham, 2012, p. 301; Fushimi, 2009). Insufficient teacher training on the CFS framework, however, prevented the Circular from being as effective as government officials would have hoped (Fushimi, 2009). Consequently, the Quality Assurance and Standards Directorate (QASD) attempted a different strategy. They conducted CFS training workshops targeting a handful of teachers in every school, and thus promoting dissemination at the grassroots level. This only seemed to work to a certain extent however, as some of the teachers who had been appointed to receive CFS training sometimes transferred out to non-CFS schools before having had the chance to pass on what they have learned - leaving behind them a knowledge gap (Fushimi, 2014). QASD officers (at the national and provincial level) now make quality assurance visits to as many schools in the country as their human and financial resources will allow. Together with the INSET, pre-service education and training (PRESET)<sup>34</sup>, and the CFS Monitoring Tool, these visits make up the main strategies towards mainstreaming CFS in Kenya. Figure 3 below gives a nice visual on the CFS mainstreaming process in Kenya.

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<sup>33</sup>In order to encourage head teachers, teachers and SMC’s nation-wide to implement similar CFS-based standards on a regular basis, the MoE issued Circular no.1/2009, “The Child Friendly Schools Initiative” defining guidelines and standards for assessing the performance for all primary schools.

<sup>34</sup>INSET and PRESET are facilitated mainly by teacher training colleges and KEPSHA.

**Figure 3: CFS Mainstreaming – Kenya Model**



*Source: Cunningham, 2012. p.298*

Following the successful outcome of the CFS pilot project, in 2008 an evaluation of the project recommended that CFS be mainstreamed through national policies and plans (UNAC, 2016). The Government’s subsequent support for the CFS program has been clearly indicated in several revised children’s rights (see Chapter 3) and education policies, such as the Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012 entitled “Reforming Education and Training Sectors in Kenya” (MoEST, 2012); and the Kenya Vision 2030 Medium Term Plan II on Education and Training, in which both call for all primary schools to be Child-Friendly as it ensures equality of learning for all children (MoEST, n.d.); and the National Education Sector Plan 2013-2018, which includes CFS

as one of its educational strategies to address the rights of every child to a good quality education, as well as the learning needs of every child (MoEST, 2015).

While INSET through the schools cluster approach is still used today as one of the main strategies for CFS dissemination; thanks to the policies above, it is now being supplemented by PRESET. Under PRESET, the CFS concept is now part of the material taught at Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs). This strategy increases the chances that CFS' pedagogical methods (learner-centered versus teacher-centered) will in fact be practiced in schools, as it is easier to introduce a new perspective to new teachers than to persuade established teachers to change from more traditional forms of pedagogy (Metto and Makewa, 2014).

### *2.2.2 Learner-centered pedagogy*

Although the scope of the CFS training (which includes learner-centered pedagogy) has expanded to PRESET for student-teachers at the Teacher Training Colleges in 2008, a number of studies demonstrate that primary classroom interactions in Kenya are still dominated by teacher-centered approaches (Kisirkoi and Mse, 2016; Nyaberi, n.d.; Metto and Makewa, 2014; Hardman et al, 2009). These are characterized by choral answering of questions, transmission of knowledge through rote learning, closed questions, and little pupil interaction. This reality could be explained by a number of institutional factors. For one, few teacher educators of TTCs have the proper teacher training qualifications. As the teacher training curriculum is overloaded, and the focus is on passing the exam, classroom methods tend to put emphasis on recall and memorization (Metto and Makewa, 2014). Secondly, the teaching profession is perceived negatively by many people in Kenya, as it is one of the most poorly paid professional careers in the country, the teaching conditions are challenging (big class sizes, lack of financial and physical resources), and unlike their predecessor generations, graduates of TTCs are no longer guaranteed employment by the government upon graduation (Thuranira, 2010). Thirdly, the strong focus on the national examinations which continue to assess student's knowledge of factual information rather than critical and analytical skills pushes teachers to use methodologies that allow them to cover the syllabus on time (Metto and Makewa, 2014). And fourthly, in order to ease the problem of teacher shortage (due to the over-enrolment in schools which has resulted

from the introduction of the FPE policy), a new law passed in 2009 extending the retirement age of teachers in Kenya. Consequently, a large proportion of the teaching force is made up of older teachers who are resistant to changing their teaching methodology (Maina, 2012).

Despite the rare practice of LCP in Kenyan primary schools, the following findings demonstrate that there are instances where LCP has started to emerge. For one, the NESP 2013-2018 states that “UNICEF's Child Friendly School (CFS) model... provides the most appropriate vehicle for improvement of the quality of education in Kenya today” (MoEST, 2015, p.72). By 2009, 40,000 teachers, head teachers, and education officials had been trained on CFS (Fushimi, 2009). In terms of subject-matter, “CFS schools tended to have a greater percentage of class time devoted to activities that would be consistent with participation in a CFS training” (UNICEF, 2016b, p.35). For example, teachers were more likely to ask probing and open-ended questions, to ask students to expand and explain in class discussion, and to ask students to apply understanding to relevant life experiences (UNICEF, 2016b). Njue’s study in 2013 supports this assertion; 90% of students in the 57 public primary schools he studied in Kikuyu District affirmed that they participate in class and are involved in decision making in their schools.

### **Chapter 3: Children’s Participation in Kenya**

On that note, Chapter 3 focuses on the third CFS component in Kenya: child participation in school governance. In adopting the CRC as the guiding framework for its work with children, the CFS approach, like the CRC, emphasizes the importance of children’s right to participation. Chapter 3 thus illustrates the place child participation holds within Kenyan society, and within the school system. More specifically, this chapter aims to answer how the Children’s Government, a component of the CFS initiative, has been implemented in Kenya up to this point, and how it facilitates the improvement of children’s education and children’s rights in Kenya.

### *3.1 Children's Participation Right in Kenya*

Since the ratification of both the CRC in 1990 and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) in 2000<sup>35</sup>, Kenya has made significant headway in including children's rights within its government structure and policies. A few policies particularly stand out, as they specifically highlight the children's right to participation within the education setting, and Kenyan society in general. The Basic Education Act<sup>36</sup> (Republic of Kenya, 2013) refers to the involvement of all stakeholders in the management of basic education and to the importance of enhancing the culture of democracy among education stakeholders, which includes children. The 2008 Guidelines for Child Participation in Kenya were created to clarify and provide direction on how to implement children's participation, both with fellow children and with duty-bearers such as parents, teachers, community members, and Government ministries (Republic of Kenya, 2008; MoEST, 2014a). Likewise, the 2008 National Children's Policy reiterates both that child participation is an essential component of children's rights, and that it is a means to achieve other rights (NCCS, 2008; MoEST, 2014a). The Kenya Vision 2030 Medium Term Plan II repeatedly highlights the importance of creating student councils (Republic of Kenya, n.d.)<sup>37</sup>. Finally, the new Constitution of 2010 includes Kenya's first Bill of Rights which emphasizes both the participation of the people (including children) within public life and children's rights (Republic of Kenya, 2010a). The creation of such policies that define children's rights and society's responsibility towards them, would lead one to conclude that children's right to participation does hold an important place within Kenyan society.

However, although children's rights are well-covered within government policies, there exists a gap between policy and practice, especially at the family level. The Kenyan society places significant importance on tradition and hierarchy, as illustrated by the list of children's duties and responsibilities found in Section 21 of the Children's Act 2001, and its revised 2010 version: "a) work for the cohesion of the family; b) respect his parents, superiors and elders at all times and assist them in case of need; c) serve his national community by placing his physical

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<sup>35</sup>Kenya was one of the first countries to ratify both documents.

<sup>36</sup>Part VIII, Section 54, sub sections 2a and c.

<sup>37</sup>Refer to paragraph 2, p.ii, p.38, 40 and 61

and intellectual abilities at its service...” (Republic of Kenya, 2001; 2010b). Such responsibility towards their family and communal welfare in general takes precedence over the children’s individual interests and rights to participate and express their opinions (Save the Children, 2006). Furthermore, UNICEF (2014c) explains that “the concept of participation is particularly difficult for disadvantaged, poor parents<sup>38</sup> to understand and practice, because they themselves are subject to, and products of exclusion in a society where disparity has remained or even widened in political, social and economic opportunities. Authoritarian childrearing methods are partly a natural reflex sometimes attributable to the misunderstanding of the ‘best interest of the child’...” (Save the Children, 2006, p. 85;).

Although children’s participation has yet to be embraced at the family level, Kenya’s 2013 CRC Report explains that initiatives promoting children’s rights to participation have started to become more common throughout the country inside and outside the school communities (Save the Children, 2006; Serbessa, 2006). For example, the National Council for Children’s Services<sup>39</sup> has formed a Child Participation Committee at the national level, the Department of Children’s Services has established Children Assemblies in all 47 counties, World Vision has set up Children’s Parliaments, and children are allowed to give their views during judicial proceedings, in community forums, and in schools (UN, 2015). The Children’s Governments (C/G) in primary schools - a component of the CFS framework – is another example of such initiatives, one which is explored in the next section.

### ***3.3 Children’s Government in Kenya***

Education officials have sought numerous ways to operationalize the CFS concept since its inception in 2003. Since then, a number of factors have played a role in the eventual implementation of the Children’s Government model. First, as explained earlier in chapter 1, a growing body of literature following the adoption of the CRC has made it clear that children can become successfully involved in “managing their own institutions such as schools, peer

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<sup>38</sup>And as mentioned above, more than 43% lives with less than \$1.25 a day.

<sup>39</sup>The NCCS is mandated to “exercise general supervision and control over the planning, financing and coordination of child rights and welfare activities and to advise the Government on all aspects thereof” (NCCS, 2016).

representation, campaigning and lobbying, policy development, advocacy, conference participation...” (Lansdown, 2001, p. 9). This evidence-based research is one factor that has impacted the design of the C/G. Second, although student councils have long been established at the tertiary education level, they were only introduced in secondary schools in 2008, while primary schools still retain a colonial militaristic prefecture system. The student council system, which promotes and encourages student participation, has thrived in secondary schools, gaining country-wide acceptance (MoEST, 2014b; Mukiti, 2014). Reports from secondary school institutions that had adopted student councils asserted that cases of indiscipline had decreased; academic performance had increased, as had the relationship between the schools and the community (MoEST, 2014b; Olengarum, 2014). Meanwhile, the general lack of student engagement in the primary schools’ prefecture system makes it increasingly unpopular among the students (MoEST, 2014b; Njue, 2014; Mulwa, 2011). These considerations coupled with “the need to involve children in making the Kenya schools child friendly has occasioned the MoEST and UNICEF to explore a participatory approach in school governance through [the] creation of [the primary schools] Children’s Government” in 2010 - whose members are elected democratically by the pupils themselves (MoEST, 2014b, p. 2). Thus, the C/G is a little more elaborate (see Table 4 *Structure of the C/G*) version of the secondary school students’ council, and its goal is to slowly replace the prefecture system in primary schools.

The MoEST (2014b) defines Kenya’s Children’s Government as follows: “a representative body composed of children elected by other children to organize social, curricular and co-curricular activities aimed at improving children’s participation in the governing of their school. A Children’s Government provides an opportunity for pupils to engage in a structured partnership with teachers, parents and school managers in the operation of their school” to discuss matters that impact them on a personal level, and to suggest solutions (p.2; ESQAC, 2016). It creates a bridge between the adult world and the child’s world.

**Table 3: Main Differences between the Prefecture System and the C/G**

Prefecture System	Children’s Government
Children leaders (CL) are chosen by the school administration and teachers	Children leaders are chosen democratically by their peers
CL work in the service of the school administration	CL work alongside the school administration, in the service of their peers
CL “act as general agents of social control, checking lateness, reporting misbehavior to teachers, organizing the tidiness of the school compound, and generally acting as messengers of the staff” (Sifuna, 2000, p. 222)	CL organize social, curricular, co-curricular activities aimed at improving children’s participation in the governing of their school
Lack of trust between the school management, and the student body, and between prefects and the student body	Promotes an environment of open discourse, and trust between the school management and the CL and student body

Sources: Sifuna, 2000, MoEST, 2014b, Njue, 2014, UNICEF, 2016c

Based on Table 3 above, the biggest deviation in the C/G model from the prefecture model is an increased role and responsibilities attributed to the students, whose opinions can help to improve the quality of primary education. In addition to instituting a model that is committed to children’s rights, as prescribed in the CFS approach, the goal of the C/G structure is to promote a holistic development of schools in an environment that is stimulating and thus thought to be more conducive to educational and personal development. This is consistent with the recent changes made to the Kenyan policies on children’s rights and education. Both the Children’s Act of 2010 and the Constitution 2010 highlight that the children’s best interests should be taken into account in all matters that concern them, and that citizens/children’s participation should be enhanced in those same matters. In line with Vision 2030’s emphasis on the fact that education should meet high quality standards and should focus on providing relevant content so that graduates can meet the needs of the economy and society (Republic of Kenya, 2007); the emphasis of the C/G is “on the provision of opportunities for learners to develop the skills and competencies necessary for successful leadership within a real life” (MoEST, 2014b, p. iii). Finally, the drive to mainstream children’s government in primary schools in Kenya is entrenched in section 54 of the Basic Education Act which states that “(2) The structures of governance and management of education established in subsection (1) shall - ... (c) enhance the culture of democracy, accountability and transparency in the governance and management of basic education” (Republic of Kenya, 2013). In essence, the C/G’s structure reveals that one of

its main objectives is to shift the schooling style to a democratic process, allowing each education stakeholder (which includes children) to be and feel fully engaged.

According to the C/G’s guidelines, the head teacher has a crucial role to play in the establishment of the C/G. It is up to him or her to first sensitize the staff and students on the benefits of moving away from a prefecture system to a C/G (MoEST, 2014b). This means that the head teacher must also educate the staff and children on the benefits of having children participate in and express their views on the management of the school. And as mentioned in chapter one, the implementation of CRC Article 12 involves a profound and radical reconsideration of the status of children. Provided the school has decided to go ahead with the establishment of the C/G, the other role of the head teacher, along with the teachers, is to mentor the students that have chosen to run for a position throughout the electoral process, and throughout their mandate as elected officials. The structure of the C/G is elaborate and each role is specifically defined. Each school has 21 elected officials organized as follows:

**Table 4: Structure of the C/G**

Number	Level	Roles
4	Executive Officials	President, Deputy President, Speaker, Deputy Speaker
6	Cabinet Officials	Education Cabinet Secretary (CS) Sports and Culture CS Justice, Peace and Cohesion CS Environmental, Health and Sanitation CS Children Welfare and Special Needs CS ICT and External Relations CS
3	Senators	1 lower primary 1 middle primary 1 upper primary
8	Members of Parliament	One for each class level

Source: Cunningham, 2014

Once the 21 members of the C/G have been elected, it is the Board of Management's<sup>40</sup> (made up of parents, school sponsors, a member from the county education board, a community member, and a student from the C/G) main duty to draw up the rules and regulation for the establishment of the C/G. Out of the 14 representatives who make up the Board, only one is a student. Although the student is included to represent the student body's voice, studies have shown that, more often than not, the student is either too intimidated to speak out, or his/her opinion is simply discounted (Harber and Mncube, 2012; Mncube and Harber, 2013). As such, it is also unlikely that the chosen student in this case would play more than a symbolic role in the establishment of the C/G's rules and structure, which contradicts the *raison d'être* of the C/G, that is to improve children's participation in the governing of their school.

In fact the C/G's guidelines state that the 21 elected officials are responsible for "participating in the formulation and implementation of school policies, in planning projects and events for the school, enhancing communication between pupils and the school administration, promoting democratic principles in leadership, engaging all pupils in decision making, empowering pupils to address contemporary and cultural issues, promote the culture of learning in school..." (MoEST, 2014b, p.4). These responsibilities are intended to enhance child participation as the C/G becomes an integral part of the structure of school governance. Beyond respecting children's right to participation, the objective in involving children in the governance of their school is to enhance the quality of their education. For example, according to evaluations of the C/G in various countries such as China and Nicaragua (see chapter 1), the C/G has been shown to create a more trusting environment between students and teachers, as well as build students' confidence as they develop their communication, planning and organizational skills (Nanzhao, 2009; Lumpkin, 2009).

While the aspiration to establish this complex C/G structure within all Kenyan schools in all 47 counties is already quite ambitious, the intent of its developers is to also institutionalize children's participation in school governance at the sub-county, county, and national levels. The primary school level C/G's activities and responsibilities are coordinated by the sub-county

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<sup>40</sup>A structure that has long been a part of Kenyan schools, much before the introduction of the C/G.

councils, which are coordinated by the county-level councils, which are in turn coordinated by the National Council (MoEST, 2014b). Since 2014, C/G representatives from all counties gather on a yearly basis in mid-June (to coincide with the Day of the African Child) to elect the new national C/G, debate extensively on the CFS topical issue of the year, and work towards creating relevant policies related to education, health, nutrition, and protection to present to the attending official from the national Kenyan government (see Annex D for the resolutions adopted in 2014) (KESPHA, 2015). The number of pupils in attendance has been growing each year. In 2015, not only were pupils from 42 counties able to attend (compared to 28 in the previous year), but the elected president was a 14 year old girl who comes from a county in the ASAL, one of the most deprived regions of the country (KEPSHA, 2015). In 2016, all 47 counties were represented (KEPSHA, 2016). Rabenstein's (2016) account of the first national summit and Kenya's Power Breakfast's account of the second national summit<sup>41</sup> (Kenya Citizen TV, 2015) reveals that children have opinions on the topics presented to them, that they're eager to share them, and that they have the capacity, and the skills to do so in an articulate manner, if given the chance.

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*Honorable Aden Duale, Majority Leader in the National Assembly, asserted that the C/G model has significantly changed the school environment, and that schools are better now (in 2016) than they were fourteen years ago. In fact, he is confident that democracy will grow and governance issues will lessen as a result of this initiative (KEPSHA, 2016).*

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Considering this is a new initiative in Kenya, a) there are very few publicly available documents on it (apart from those from the implementing partners), b) very few results recorded, especially at the school level (there are more resources at the national level, as it has been

covered by the media) and c) an evaluation has yet to be performed by the implementing agencies (UNICEF, MoEST, and KEPSHA), let alone by an independent evaluator. Thus it is hard to have an objective and comprehensive view of the initiative in Kenya. However, even based on the little information found, a few early conclusions can be made. This model which

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<sup>41</sup>See UNICEF Kenya's account of the first national summit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhxwvyqnruo>, and Kenya's Power Breakfast's account of the second national summit [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6xHyd\\_jMDw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6xHyd_jMDw).

operates at various ‘political’ levels (local, sub-county, county, and national) not only sensitizes children to contemporary issues, such as the radicalization and recruitment of children in armed conflicts for example (the topic discussed at the 2016 national C/G), but also enables them to express their concerns and ideas on these issues, including on how to improve their educational experience (KEPSHA, 2016). As explained in Chapter 1, one of the dimensions of quality education is outcomes, that is, what the learner assimilates and takes away from his/her school experience, and how well he/she is prepared to be an active member of society (Ankomah et al., 2005). As it is, the C/G is about much more than respecting children’s right to participate. It teaches them about democracy, fair elections, and public speaking on matters that affect them personally (Republic of Kenya, 2013; ESCQAC, 2016). It develops personal reflection, critical thinking, and respect for others – all skills that will benefit them in the future (MoEST, 2015; Rabenstein, 2016). All in all, the C/G model represents a significant advancement towards democratic participation of pupils (thus enhancing their rights) in comparison to the old prefecture system.

#### **Chapter 4: Summary of the findings, Discussion, and Conclusion**

For nearly three decades now, the global community has been purposefully working towards achieving universal *quality* primary education. While the initial focus was on quantitative results, or access to education, the global community came to realize that it had neglected the qualitative side of the coin. The classrooms were filling up, but children were not achieving the numeracy or literacy skills expected at their level. For instance, a 2012 UNESCO study showed that 50% of primary school students in Kenya failed the KCP Examination needed to advance to secondary school. In effect, expansion alone is rather inefficient if the quality of the education offered is poor (Masino and Niño-Zarazúa, 2016; Ankomah et al., 2005; Bergmann, 1996). As such the post-2015 education agenda now not only emphasizes access to education, but also the need for quality learning.

Influenced by its own internal agenda to become a middle-income country by 2030, its educational challenges (Table 2), its subpar educational performance, and the international

community's drive to achieve universal quality primary education, the Kenyan government has come to realize that serious change within its education sector is necessary. Together with UNICEF, a trusted and long-standing partner in Kenya, the Kenyan government has worked on localizing one of UNICEF's global education initiatives, the CFS framework, to transform its education system into a more interdisciplinary and holistic learning in order to attain quality and relevant education.

The following section synthesizes the findings and relates them to my original research questions.

***A) What are the objectives of these initiatives and how have they been implemented up to this point?***

*CFS in Kenya*

Considering the CRC frames all of UNICEF's work with children, regardless of the sector, the objective of the CFS framework is first and foremost to focus on the child's rights and best interests in the school environment. This is done by concentrating on more than just the pedagogical excellence and performance outcomes on which most schools put their primary focus. Rather, it seeks to move schools towards quality standards by taking a holistic, multidimensional, inter-sectoral, and rights-based approach that centers around the *whole* child. In practical terms, this translates into offering stimulating classrooms where all children are included, are engaged in their learning (as LCP is prescribed as best-practice by the subject experts), and work alongside the school management to improve their education. As child participation is a core principle of the CRC, and the child is central to the teaching and learning process, he/she should be able to have a say in the decisions that affect him/her.

**Table 5: Synthesis of CFS Framework Implementation in Kenya and Relevant Social Factors**

<b>SUCCESES</b>	<b>CHALLENGES</b>
<b>National / Policy Level</b>	
CFS is mainstreamed into the education policies (e.g. Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012, NESP 2013-2018)	An exam-oriented/overloaded curriculum
CFS is accepted as contributing to the social development of the country, as it fits with Kenya's Vision 2030 goals	In 2009 the retirement age of teachers in Kenya was extended by law
	Constrained funding
	Monitoring and evaluation are seen as inefficient and ineffective
	Lack of partner coordination from MoEST
<b>Teacher Training Colleges Level</b>	
CFS is now integrated in the curriculum	Teacher educators tend to use teacher-centered methodology
	Teacher educators do not have proper teacher training qualifications
<b>School / INSET Level</b>	
By 2009, 40,000 teachers, head teachers, and education officials had been trained on CFS	The range of new learner-centered techniques used in the classroom post-training is relatively narrow compared to what is covered at the INSET
Today over 8000 primary schools are CFS compliant	Primary classroom interactions are still dominated by teacher-centered approaches
The school cluster approach is adopted throughout the country	Some teachers see the CFS initiative as yet another 'innovative' programme for school improvement that adds confusing duties to their already busy schedules
CFS schools tend to devote a greater percentage of class time to activities allowing child participation	
Students report learning to be more enjoyable and relevant, and thus learn faster and feel more confident to express themselves and participate in class	
90% of the students surveyed in Kikuyu District affirmed that they participate in decision making in their schools	
<b>Community / Societal Level</b>	
Parents have observed that their children are active and attentive learners	There is a negative perception of the teaching profession
Initiatives promoting children's rights to participation are becoming more common throughout the country	Children's participation has yet to be mainstreamed at the family structure level
	In 2014, parents and community members had yet to receive training on the CFS principles or its tools

Source: Chabbott, 2008; Chege, 2008; UNICEF ESARO, 2009; Hardman et al, 2009; Fushimi, 2009; Thurairira, 2010; Metto and Makewa, 2014; MoEST, n.d.;2012a; 2015; UNICEF 2016b; 2016c; Kisirkoi and Mse, 2016; Nyaberi, n.d

The CFS framework was initially introduced in Kenya through the Ministry of Education and KEPSHA, as a solution to the country's continuing educational issues, and has since trickled down and seeped through the rest of the levels of society (as illustrated in Table 5). Today, more than 8,000 primary schools are judged to be CFS compliant (UNICEF, 2016c). While student-teacher interactions are still dominated by teacher-centered approaches – perhaps due to the negative social perception of the teaching profession, the exam-oriented/overloaded primary school curriculum, the exam-oriented teacher training curriculum, or the age of the teachers themselves – it has nonetheless been observed that CFS schools tend to have a greater percentage of class time devoted to activities that would be consistent with participation in a CFS training (UNICEF, 2016b). For example, teachers are more likely to ask probing and open-ended questions, as well as ask students to expand and explain in class discussion. Some students agree that learning has indeed become more enjoyable and relevant, and they feel more confident to participate in class. Parents also observed that their children were more active and attentive learners (Chabbott, 2008). Furthermore, Wandawa (2012) claims that the improved retention level experienced in Nairobi County primary schools is related to the implementation of the CFS approach in these schools. On that note, however, Chabbott (2008) cautions that it is difficult to establish a clear ownership for those results, considering that the CFS has been operating in the context of other education interventions directed by various development partners, such as the School Feeding Programme carried out with support of the World Food Programme, or the supply of sanitary pads for girls funded by USAID.

Although the above results demonstrate the positive impact that CFS programming is having in the schools in which it has been implemented, some teachers within Fushimi's (2014) research (*School Self-Evaluation for Quality Improvement: Investigating the Practice of the Policy in Kenya*) see the CFS initiative as yet another 'innovative' programme for school improvement that adds confusing duties to their already busy schedules. Chabbott (2008) observed that the range of new techniques in the classroom post-training was relatively narrow compared to what was covered at the INSET. Teachers reported the large class sizes, overloaded curriculum, and the strong focus on national examinations as the cause (Metto and Makewa, 2014). Teachers who feel overburdened eventually disengage. A respondent from one of the NGOs (also interviewed by Fushimi) underlined the lack of partner coordination from MoEST.

Fushimi observed that the parents and community members he talked to had yet to receive training on the CFS principles or its tools. The District Education Officer recognized that these stakeholders did indeed represent an invaluable missing link in the implementation strategy, but that the training was contingent on more funding (Fushimi, 2014).

As presented in chapter two, the CFS has been mainstreamed within the education policies of Kenya, including the NESP 2013-2018. While the NESP 2013-2018 states that “the Government has embraced UNICEF’s Child Friendly School (CFS) model, which provides the most appropriate vehicle for improvement of the quality of education in Kenya today” (MoEST, 2015, p.72), it also identifies issues and constraints related to the implementation of the CFS that seem to contradict the last statement. It describes the funding as being constrained and the monitoring and evaluation as inefficient and ineffective (despite the CFS Kenya manual’s claim that the Tool has been established to ensure results and transparency). It also states that the counties and schools have yet to consider the initiative as their own. Rather, the project is still largely seen as a donor project. Perhaps this will change once further funding and thus more training can be administered at the grassroots level. If successful mainstreaming of CFS means that the whole education system of the country embraces the CFS principles at each level, then Kenya has yet to have a fully child-friendly education system.

According to the results presented above, it seems that at this time, there are mixed feelings in Kenya about the initiative. This said, unlike other projects that have a specific start and end date, where specific outcomes are to be delivered within a specific timeframe (e.g. the Reading Kenya project<sup>42</sup> where the reading and writing performance of students are to be improved within four years); SWAp programs such as the implementation of the CFS framework, which are by their nature, more complex, tend to demonstrate their results over a longer term period, as there are more elements and levels to coordinate (Ahmed, 2011; Brown et al, 2001). This means that results should also be evaluated over a longer time span, and thus a longitudinal study would be more appropriate and pertinent for this type of program than a short term evaluation, which would not necessarily reveal an accurate picture of the program. This

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<sup>42</sup>See Project Browser for more details <http://w05.international.gc.ca/projectbrowser-banqueprojets/project-projet/details/a035541001/>.

reality would most likely leave proponents of results-based management<sup>43</sup>, who base their analysis and thinking on evaluations, and who focus on results achieved, unimpressed with this initiative that has yet to fully demonstrate that children are leaving primary school with ‘at level’ reading and math skills. While the fact that CFS has been mainstreamed within educational policies is a success in itself – it demonstrates that the Government of Kenya has accepted, and now owns the initiative - it is easier to update policies than it is to reform a whole education system and cultural practices. However, as explained earlier and shown in Table 5, there is evidence that changes related to elevating the levels of child-friendliness at school have occurred, since the implementation of the pilot project in 2002.

### *Children’s Government in Kenya*

In regards to the implementation of the C/G specifically, it is an initiative that was implemented as a way to operationalize the CFS component of children’s right to participate and express their views freely. Its main objectives are to enhance children’s school experience, as well as enhance the quality of their education. Although the use of LCP can be said to meet that objective, it only does so to a certain extent. The C/G gives an opportunity to the student elected officials to work as equals, full-fledged education stakeholders, alongside the school management and to engage on matters that impact them directly, and suggest solutions. More specific objectives include: fostering leadership skills within the student body, encouraging children initiatives to support school policies and practices, creating a stronger relationship between the children and staff, and last but not least, promoting an environment conducive to educational and personal development (MoEST, 2014b).

The C/G has been implemented at the school (in 2010), sub-county, county and national levels (in 2014). The MoEST, along with KEPSHA, and UNICEF have developed a set of guidelines to establish the C/G at the school level. The C/G’s very elaborate structure and roles

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<sup>43</sup>Results-based management is “a management strategy focusing on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts” (OECD, 2010). “It integrates: strategy, people, resources, processes and measurements to improve decision-making, transparency, and accountability. The approach focuses on: achieving outcomes, implementing performance measurement, learning, adapting, and reporting on performance, including outcomes” (Government of Canada, 2017).

(discussed in chapter three) renders it a rather ambitious endeavor. Although the idea of the C/G is consistent with the findings on the benefits of children's participation, it might take some time for teachers to allow children to participate in spheres that have traditionally been adult territory. For example, some head teachers have been found to not completely accept C/G officials participating in the school management (Noor, 2017), which is an issue considering the important role attributed to head teachers within the C/G's structure. Is it hard to comment further on that aspect, as I have not been able to find results specifically on the C/G at the school level, not even from the implementing agencies themselves. While education policies mention the need for schools to enhance the culture of democracy in the governance and management of basic education (Republic of Kenya, 2013), as well as the need to provide relevant content so that graduates can meet the needs of the economy and society (Republic of Kenya, 2007), considering the low levels of institutionalization of LCP (also included in education policies), there is evidence that policy does not necessarily indicate practice. This said, seeing that 470 elected student representatives from all 47 counties attended the last national C/G alongside some of their teachers and head teachers, clearly there exist teachers and head teachers who believe in and are supportive of the initiative. Interviews of elected officials at the national level also highlight the children's enthusiasm in holding these roles, and the seriousness with which they take their responsibilities (Rabenstein, 2016; Kenya Citizen TV, 2015).

*B) How do these initiatives facilitate improvements (or are likely to do so) in children's education and children's rights in Kenya?*

As a rights-based approach, the CFS educates and brings awareness on children's rights and the importance of children's place in society, to all of the involved stakeholders from the policy-makers to the children themselves through INSET, and PRESET training, and the C/G. Evaluations of CFS in several countries, including Kenya, report that children had a better understanding of their rights, and felt more confident to express themselves and participate in class after implementation of the CFS framework (Chabbott, 2008; Chege, 2008; ESARO, 2009; Nanzhao, 2009; UNICEF, 2009a; Lumpkin, 2009). The media coverage surrounding the national C/G has helped to not only bring this initiative to the forefront, but also reveal to all of those

watching that children have opinions on the topics presented to them, that they are eager to share them, and that they have the capacity and the skills to do so in an articulate manner, if given the chance. Since the first national C/G, it has become somewhat of a tradition for the (student) elected officials to make a trip to Parliament, and be presented to the Parliamentarians. This allows the top stakeholders to connect with and have a better understanding of an initiative that takes place at the school level, and thus decrease the gap between the top and bottom, between policy and practice. Furthermore, there has already been a positive notable and quantifiable difference in regards to Kenya's children's right to participation, as evidenced by Kenya's latest CRC report (submitted in 2012) compared to the previous one submitted to the United Nations in 2005 (UN, 2015). While the 2005 report made no mention of children participation, the 2012 report states that initiatives promoting children's right to participation have started to become more common throughout the country inside and outside the school communities. Although this is not only attributable to the CFS initiative, usually the more people are presented with an idea, the more familiar and comfortable they become with it over time. As such the CFS initiative becomes part of a bigger whole.

Children's rights also include the right to nutritious foods, the right to protection and safety, and the right to a quality education. The CFS approach aims to ensure the enactment of children's rights within an education context (see Figure 1). The single-factor approach – of focusing solely on improving teacher training or solely on supplying school material for example - did lead to improvements but these approaches were often compromised by other factors in the education setting, such as the lack of proper sanitary facilities at school, or children coming to school hungry, and thus unable to concentrate (UNICEF, 2009a). The International Initiative for Impact Evaluation's (3ie) latest report asserts that children's education outcomes are indeed influenced by a range of factors, and that outcomes of any one intervention may be affected by the extent to which other major constraints – such as children not having enough to eat outside of the classroom, or not feeling safe within the classroom - remain unaddressed (Snilstveit et al, 2016; Akoto-Senaman, n.d.). As such, the CFS initiative takes a holistic, multidimensional, and

inter-sectoral<sup>44</sup> approach so children can fully benefit from their education. Observations have shown that most students in CFSs feel that adults in their school provide important emotional support, and that they feel safe, supported, and challenged. This is especially the case for female students (Osher et al, 2009).

Furthermore, students learn better when they are engaged in their learning (Ankomah et al. 2005; Adams, 1993). Accordingly, the CFS framework promotes the use of interactive learning and LCP. In instances where teachers have claimed to create more stimulating classrooms, and use more interactive and child-centered methods, students have reported that learning has become more enjoyable, and relevant. They are learning faster, and feel more confident to express themselves and participate in class (Chabbott, 2008; Chege, 2008; ESARO, 2009). Students who enjoy learning are more likely to attend school regularly. In fact, as mentioned earlier, Wandawa's study (2012) shows that there has been an improved retention level experienced in Nairobi County primary schools where the CFS approach has been implemented. The C/G can also be helpful in that regard, as one of its purposes is to enable children to openly raise concerns they might have about issues that prevent schools from being child-friendly, and which may in turn impact their learning experience or their attendance record.

### *C) What are the necessary conditions for the long term success of these initiatives?*

In regards to the necessary conditions that will ensure the long term success of these initiatives, I would like to begin by reiterating that the inclusion of an initiative in a policy does not automatically translate to implementation on the ground. That is not to say that mainstreaming the CFS in education policies does not represent an accomplishment. On the contrary, it means that the initiative has been accepted at some level by the policy-makers. But as Tsikata (2004) suggests, the debate about human rights might be more effective when held at grassroots level rather than implemented from above. According to Chabbott (2008), the successful implementation of these initiatives will require an enhanced collaboration and

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<sup>44</sup>For CFS models this includes health, safety, security, nutritional status and the psychological well-being of the child, teacher training, appropriate teaching methods and learning resources.

partnership by the various stakeholders in education in general, including: organs of government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs); the private sector, development partners, professional association such as the Kenya Primary School Head teachers Association, among others. As for the successful implementation of the C/G specifically, the Education Standards and Quality Assurance Council (which is part of the MoEST) believes that it will require the effective participation of all stakeholders to provide a platform that will enable the learners to claim their right to education in a learning environment that is child-centered, and based on democratic participation (2016).

Secondly, an evaluation of the CFS framework (as discussed in chapter one) mentions that it is hard to properly evaluate the framework, as it often lacks baseline data, regularly scheduled progress reports and databases (Chapman, 2001; Bernard, 1999 in Chabbott, 2004). As such, Fushimi (2009) suggests placing more emphasis on longer-term strategies for outcomes and results “rather than chasing short-term, quick, and tangible outputs” (p.26). In fact, any agency following results-based management, which includes UNICEF, should focus on performance and achievement of outputs, outcomes and impacts (OECD, 2010), which can only be done with proper data collection.

Thirdly, some critical Kenyan institutional barriers related to the curriculum, the classroom resources, and to the teaching profession, are hindering the proper implementation of the CFS. For one, teachers claim that the overloaded curriculum and the focus on high-stake examinations dissuade them from experimenting with new methodology (Metto, and Makewa, 2014). This said, following the recommendations of the Taskforce, the MoEST is working on reforming the curriculum in order to: provide an education of quality, reduce wastage, focus on a competence-based curriculum, ensure that interdisciplinary and holistic learning is embedded in the curriculum, enhance pedagogical approaches that support creativity and critical thinking - and as such reform pre-service teacher training so that teachers can be prepared to offer these approaches - and finally change the assessment structure. Rather than assessing students in one sitting (as it is currently the case with the KCPE), the new curriculum intends to establish mechanisms for conducting both formative and summative evaluations to check knowledge, skills and abilities (MoEST, 2015). Second, the MoEST should establish a mechanism to

subsidize all of the components of education that parents still pay for (uniforms, books, boarding, and examinations). Third, research repeatedly emphasizes that teachers are the key change agents in the education system, and that change in the classroom depends on their caliber (Fushimi, 2009; Snilstveit et al, 2016; Akoto-Senaman, n.d.; UNICEF, 2009a). Yet, in Kenya, the teaching profession is perceived negatively, as it is one of the most poorly paid professional careers in the country, the teaching conditions are challenging, and TTC graduates are no longer guaranteed employment by the government upon graduation. A majority of the pupils at the TTCs are there, not because of their interest in teaching, but because it was the only faculty they could qualify for as it has very low entry requirements (Thuranira, 2010). Thuranira (2010) makes several recommendations that would help to counteract these factors: increasing the entry-level requirements so that the TTC does not become a dumping ground, increasing teacher salaries, and equipping TTCs with the proper resources to do their jobs properly (have qualified teacher educators, building more schools so that teachers do not have overcrowded classrooms, and ensuring that every class has sufficient classroom material).

A fourth condition that is necessary for the Kenyan primary school system to accept, adopt and practice LCP and children's participation is a change in behavior at the individual level, community/societal level, and organizational/structural level (WHO, 2012). As mentioned throughout this paper, Kenyan primary schools are dominated by teacher-centered interaction, which conforms with the significance that is attributed to tradition and hierarchy throughout much of Kenya. As such, the behavioral changes that the concepts of LCP and child participation would require may be difficult to achieve. In order for such change to be lasting, at the individual level, teachers (the ones integrating LCP and child participation in their classrooms) first need to be educated on those ideas, to increase their understanding and awareness on the subject matter and its benefits. Then, they must be sufficiently trained on the concepts so they (teachers) can feel confident in implementing them (WHO, 2012; Snilstveit et al, 2016). This can be done through in-service and pre-service training, and subsequently through opportunities to reflect on, and self-evaluate on their practices (Harris, 2003; Pierce, 2006). The CFS Monitoring Tool is designed to assist them in doing this. Furthermore, teachers need to be affiliated with professional learning communities with whom they can share values, goals and common aspirations, to learn together, and to inquire and reflect on each other's practice and lessons

learned (Harris, 2003; Pierce, 2006). In Kenya school clusters have been implemented to fulfil those needs. Nevertheless, according to social learning theory on behavior change, “people not only self-regulate their environments and actions, they are also acted upon by their environments”, meaning that they are affected by their surroundings, i.e. the conventional community’s beliefs (WHO, 2012, p.31). In order for communities to support LCP and children’s participation, the communities also need to be educated on these ideas. This can be done through information sessions, or by engaging parents and other community members in the schools (Snilsveit et al, 2016). While there are ways to educate teachers and the community members through means other than TTCs (through INSET for example), organizational support can play an important part in facilitating substantive behavioral change. Table 5 shows that in Kenya such support can occur through the integration of CFS in the TTC curriculum and through the mainstreaming of the CFS framework in education policies.

## *Conclusion*

In the end, rather than a comprehensive evaluation of the CFS and C/G’s implementation in Kenya, this research constitutes an introduction to those concepts, and to the concepts and factors that surround and impact them, which others researchers could further develop. There is a lot missing, and in reality I can only answer part of my research questions. Since the documentation was not as readily available and accessible as I had hoped, it is difficult to present a clear portrait of the reality on the ground, or to predict the initiatives’ sustainability, especially since they are still fairly new. Although the success of these types of initiatives are very much dependent on the country context, seeing that the CFS manuals, and the types of trainings and advocacy for the initiative follow a generally similar pattern from one country to the next, evaluations of other countries’ program can be helpful. Independent evaluations of CFSs in Thailand, the Philippines, Nigeria, Mali, Nicaragua, and China (countries that have very little in common) show that CFSs are still running years after the concept has originally been implemented. Furthermore, the previous section demonstrates that the CFS framework in Kenya consists of many of the elements needed to embrace behavior change. Therefore, there is reason to believe that CFSs can thrive in Kenya.

If someone were interested in expanding on this area of study, I recommend starting with the following: 1) carrying out an independent evaluation of the CFS in Kenya (considering the last one done by Chabbott in 2008, was done with the purpose to evaluate the CFS pilot project); 2) following up on the implementation of LCP in primary schools; 3) carrying out an evaluation of the Children's Government at the school level to find out for example, whether or not certain groups of students tend to be more commonly elected than others; 4) conducting a longitudinal or follow up study in five to ten years' time to evaluate how the children have fared or if they have retained any of the CFS and C/G's teachings; and last but not least, 5) studying the grassroots' perspective - of the students, parents, community leaders, teachers, and head teachers - on these initiatives.

“National unity will only be possible [...] when women and young people are both seen and heard at the decision-making table, at national as well as devolved levels of government” President Uhuru Kenyatta, 2013.

## Annex A - Characteristics of a Rights-Based, Child Friendly School

- 1. Reflects and realizes the rights of every child** -- cooperates with other partners to promote and monitor the well-being and rights of all children; defends and protects all children from abuse and harm (as a sanctuary), both inside and outside the school
- 2. Sees and understands the whole child, in a broad context** -- is concerned with what happens to children before they enter the system (e.g., their readiness for school in terms of health and nutritional status, social and linguistic skills), and once they have left the classroom -- back in their homes, the community, and the workplace
- 3. Is child-centred** -- encourages participation, creativity, self-esteem, and psycho-social well-being; promotes a structured, child-centred curriculum and teaching-learning methods appropriate to the child's developmental level, abilities, and learning style; and considers the needs of children over the needs of the other actors in the system
- 4. Is gender-sensitive and girl-friendly** – promotes parity in the enrolment and achievement of girls and boys; reduces constraints to constraints to gender equity and eliminates gender stereotypes; provides facilities, curricula, and learning processes welcoming to girls
- 5. Promotes quality learning outcomes** -- encourages children to think critically, ask questions, express their opinions -- and learn how to learn; helps children master the essential enabling skills of writing, reading, speaking, listening, and mathematics and the general knowledge and skills required for living in the new century -- including useful traditional knowledge and the values of peace, democracy, and the acceptance of diversity
- 6. Provides education based on the reality of children's lives** -- ensures that curricular content responds to the learning needs of individual children as well as to the general objectives of the education system and the local context and traditional knowledge of families and the community
- 7. Is flexible and responds to diversity** -- meets differing circumstances and needs of children

(e.g., as determined by gender, culture, social class, ability level)

**8. Acts to ensure inclusion, respect, and equality of opportunity for all children** -- does not stereotype, exclude, or discriminate on the basis of difference

**9. Promotes mental and physical health** – provides emotional support, encourages healthy behaviours and practices, and guarantees a hygienic, safe, secure, and joyful environment

**10. Provides education that is affordable and accessible** -- especially to children and families most at-risk

**11. Enhances teacher capacity, morale, commitment, and status** -- ensures that its teachers have sufficient pre-service training, in-service support and professional development, status, and income

**12. Is family focused** -- attempts to work with and strengthen families and helps children, parents and teachers establish harmonious, collaborative partnerships

**13. Is community-based** -- strengthens school governance through a decentralised, community-based approach; encourages parents, local government, community organisations, and other institutions of civil society to participate in the management as well as the financing of education; promotes community partnerships and networks focused on the rights and well-being of children

*Source: UNICEF, n.d.b*

## Annex B - Key Principles and Features of the Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) Approach

What are the main <b>PRINCIPLES</b> of CFS?	What are the <b>KEY AREAS</b> for CFS transformation? Which <b>KEY AREAS</b> will CFS transform?	What are the <b>FEATURES</b> of CFS?
<p><b>CHILD-CENTERDNESS</b></p> <p><i>Central to all decision making in education is safeguarding the interests of the child</i></p>	<p>Pedagogy (Teaching and Learning Methods)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gender sensitive Child participation</li> <li>▪ <b>Child-centered pedagogy</b>; child-centered teaching and learning</li> <li>▪ Child-friendly architecture</li> </ul> <p>~~~~~</p>
<p><b>DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION</b></p> <p><i>As rights holders, children and those who facilitate their rights should have a say in the form and substance of their education.</i></p>	<p>Learning Environment (healthy, safe and protective)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Child participation in curriculum design and school management</li> <li>▪ Girl friendly classrooms, safe &amp; secure</li> <li>▪ Parent/Community participation in gender sensitive curriculum design and school management</li> <li>▪ Gender sensitive Life skills based education</li> </ul> <p>~~~~~</p>
<p><b>INCLUSIVENESS</b></p> <p><i>All children have a right to education. Access to education is not a privilege that society grants to children, it is a duty that society fulfils to all children.</i></p>	<p>School's Ethos and Link to the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Child seeking &amp; girl friendly school</li> <li>▪ Gender sensitive in all aspects...</li> <li>▪ <b>Child participation in school governance</b></li> <li>▪ Establishing and strengthening school governing bodies and PTAs</li> <li>▪ <b>Participation of children in School Policy on gender equality</b></li> <li>▪ Existence of policies that promote social justice and fairness.</li> </ul> <p>~~~~~</p>
<p><b>PROTECTION</b></p> <p><i>All children have a right to learn in an environment where they can grow and reach their potential. They have a right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically and mentally.</i></p>	<p>Infrastructure and design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Safe (school construction, playgrounds, cafeteria...) LE</li> <li>▪ Healthy (WES, nutrition, deworming, vaccination) learning environment (LE)</li> <li>▪ Protective (gender based violence, abuse, bullying- free, corporal punishment-free, disaster risk reduction) LE</li> </ul>

## Annex C - Child Friendly School Monitoring Tool

### CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOL MONITORING TOOL

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the school: \_\_\_\_\_ TSC Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Zone: \_\_\_\_\_ Division: \_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Teachers: Total: \_\_\_\_\_ Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Pupils: Total: \_\_\_\_\_ Boys: \_\_\_\_\_ Girls: \_\_\_\_\_

No.	CFS COMPONENTS & STANDARDS	INDICATORS	SCORES ( Please tick as appropriate )			
			5	3	1	0
1.	<b>An Inclusive Child-Friendly Classroom</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership, school management</li> <li>• Interactive, participatory, gender responsive methodologies (child to child; Mediated Learning Experience)</li> <li>• Adequate/use of T/L materials</li> <li>• Trained teachers and cluster/school based INSET programme</li> <li>• School based assessment</li> <li>• Retention and completion rates</li> </ul>	MAX. 60 MARKS				
		1. School has functioning children's government which addresses problems affecting them (including peace building).	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		2. Effective supervision of curriculum in place	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		3. Proper record keeping (administrative, academic, finance and stores)	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		4. Percentage of Boys and girls actively participating in the lessons	> 80%	50% - 79%	49% - 20%	19% >
		5. Interactive pupil-centred methods used in teaching/facilitation and learning	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		6. Textbook-pupil ratio in all subjects	1:1	1:2	1:3	> 1:3
		7.. Availability and use of Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources (TALULAR) e.g. sticks, leaves, beans etc.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		8. Competence/dedication of teachers	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
		9. Proportion of teachers who had in-service training in the last 12 months	> 80%	50% - 79%	49% - 20%	19% >
		10. Quality of school assessment and feedback.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		11. Proportion of pupils who started class one eight years ago completing school and sitting KCPE	> 70%	50% - 69%	49% - 20%	19% >
12. Teacher-pupil ratio (how many pupils study with one teacher)	1:(45-55)	1: (25-44) or 1: (56-70)	1: (11-24) or 1: (71-84)	1: 10 > or 1: 85<		

2	<b>Safe and Protective School</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive discipline in use</li> <li>• Compound free from hazardous/risks materials/buildings</li> <li>• School based policies on child protection/ girl specific/ disadvantaged specific</li> </ul>	<b>MAX. 45 MARKS</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
		1. Peace, citizenship, guidance and counselling are promoted	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		2. School enforces a policy on prevention of violence and corporal punishment through positive disciplining	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		3. Safety measures in place: (I.e. (i) fire extinguishers, (ii) fire escapes (iii) drills, (iv) lightning arresters, (v) First Aid Kits, (vi) school fence) etc.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		4. School has environment/compound free from hazardous/risky materials/buildings.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		5. School has emergency preparedness and response plan and measures	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		6. School enforces policy on protection of girls/disadvantaged against sexual and other abuse and exploitation	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		7. School is free from addictive substances, violence and pornography	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		8. School has policy against discrimination with regards to gender, cultural origin, social status, religious beliefs and other differences	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		9. School has duty assigned personnel in charge of securing its premises, properties and those of pupils and teachers	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
3.	<b>Equity and Equality Promoting School (Inclusive and gender-sensitive)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrolment includes disadvantaged, orphans, children with disabilities, girls and boys from poor households</li> <li>• Records kept of absentees and reasons</li> <li>• Special needs teacher available/ deployed</li> </ul>	<b>MAX. 45 MARKS</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
		1. Detailed pupil profile available (by name, age, sex, home background, other information about a child etc.)	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		2. School development plan in place addressing the child's needs holistically	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		3. Proportion of teachers trained in special education	> 70%	50%-69%	49%-20%	19% >
		4. Availability of disability-friendly facilities and equipment (e.g. ramps, toilets, braille materials, hearing aids, clearly defined paths etc.)	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Special needs facilities available/ utilization</li> </ul>	5. All out-of-school children identified in the community and efforts made to enrol and retain them in the school.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School seeks out the non-attending and not enrolled</li> </ul>	6. Girls and boys treated equally in teaching, seating, assignment, access to materials, asking questions/feedback etc.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender sensitivity/ understanding of rights</li> </ul>	7. Gender awareness clubs operational in school	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Second chance for dropouts (both girls and boys)</li> </ul>	8. Instructional materials reflect and promote gender balance in roles of males versus females	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		9. School enforces a policy on dropouts (pregnancy/truancy/child labour)	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
4.	<b>A Health and Nutrition Promoting School</b>	<b>MAX. 55 MARKS</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate sanitation facilities</li> </ul>	1. Ratio of latrines for girls and boys	1: 25-30	1: 30-45 >	1:45 >	Not available
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food provided/food shelter</li> </ul>	2. Toilets properly used and well maintained.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water available with adequate supply</li> </ul>	3. Provision of nutrition services in school (e.g. school feeding, deworming, vitamin "A" supplementation).	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life skills based health education and treatment</li> </ul>	4. Access to safe clean water for drinking and washing.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sex education and HIV/AIDS education</li> </ul>	5. Health, hygiene and life skills education is part of the curriculum and is regularly taught .	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate physical facilities</li> </ul>	6. School has easy access to health services/sickbay/first aid (immunization/vaccination, reasonable distance to health centre).	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-curricular activities/clubs</li> </ul>	7. Number of outreach activities done by school club to prevent HIV/AIDS per term.	3 and above per term	2	1	None
		8. Number of classrooms with proper ventilation, lighting and adequate learning space for children.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		9. Appropriate use of available resources.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		10. School compound is clean and well maintained.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		11. Availability and use of well defined play areas with recreation time allocated on timetable (including for learners with special needs).	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor

5.	School Community Linkages and Partnerships	MAX. 45 MARKS	5	3	1	0
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functional SMC/ CFS team</li> <li>• School development plan</li> <li>• Child to child for school community linkages</li> <li>• Parental role in learning and teaching processes</li> <li>• School participation in community activities</li> </ul>	1. Functional SMC and CFS team.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
		2. School management committee and CFS team equally represented by males and females.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		3. Linkages with community based ECD centres.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		4. Income generating projects in place and effective.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		5. Percentage of parents participating in meetings.	> 80%	50%-79%	49%-20%	19% >
		6. Evidence of community participation in the school development plan implementation.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		7. Child-to-child activities promoted for school community linkages.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		8. Parents are interested in and support pupil's learning at home, and discuss pupils' work with teachers.	Excellent	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor
		9. Outreach activities done by school in the community..	3 and above per term	2	1	None
<b>TOTAL SCORE = 250 MARKS</b>						

Key: Criteria for ranking of indicators on Grades A to D scale for CFS Components:-

**A** = 80 – 100    **B** = 50 – 79    **C** = 20 – 49    **D** = 0 – 19

#### Interpretation of the letter grades

**A** - Excellent : There were major strengths/very good/excellent/ all expected indicators are there.

**B** - Satisfactory : On balance, strengths outweighed any weaknesses / sufficient / most of the time / nearly all good but more can be done.

**C** - Unsatisfactory: While there were strengths, there were some important weaknesses / sometimes / about half satisfactory.

**D** - Poor: There were major weaknesses / very little / almost never / insufficient

#### Assessment or Evaluation:

Carried out by: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Annex D - National Children's Government's 2014 Resolutions

### INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

- We must sensitise all of Kenya's pupils on the need to give love, care and priority in advocating for the needs of fellow pupils with special needs.
- We must provide more classes for both the abled and disabled with both computers and braille machines included.

### EQUITY AND EQUALITY

- We must promote peace and love by starting peer counseling and school courts for all pupils across Kenya (a school court is defined as a pupil council who can judge their fellow pupils fairly during times of indiscipline).
- We must promote an end to gender favouritism by giving equal access to equal shares of educational materials for all pupils; both boys and girls.

### SAFETY AND PROTECTION

- We must introduce school security clubs overseen by the children's governments to safeguard all pupils, teachers and school resources throughout the country from those who wish to steal our opportunity to learn.
- We must provide proper fences to be put in place in all schools to reduce drugs and other negative influences from entering into our school compounds and disrupting our learning environment.

### HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- We must call upon all pupils to participate in open forums to give education on the importance of proper sanitation and hygiene. We must also talk to parents during parent meetings on the need to give their children balanced diets and support school feeding programmes. And finally,

we must have all schools put up posters addressing issues on HIV/AIDS and other diseases that could threaten our future.

- We must ensure that all pupils can eat a balanced diet by giving all schools the equipment needed for planting vegetables and fruits in a school farm.

#### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND LINKAGES

- We must encourage all schools to form a pupils' disciplinary committee to address pupils' discipline cases for and by their peers. We must also formulate an appropriate language policy to help our pupils on the command of global languages. Finally, the children's government officials must talk to pupils on the need to maintain peace within the school and the neighboring community at all times throughout the country.
- We must advocate for all schools that are in need of water to encourage their communities to raise funds to build adequate boreholes for all children so we can have access to safe drinking water for all.

*Source: UNICEF, 2014c*

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