

The effect of Public sector provision, governance and institutionalisation on Physical security

Effect: Positive (The study finds that the program has contributed to peacebuilding and social transformation in the region, hence contributing to physical security)

Confidence in study findings: Low (one study, low confidence)

Short summary

The paper finds a positive impact of the Alternative Basic Education Karamoja (ABEK) program on physical security in Karamoja. The program is credited with increasing security by offering an alternative to violence and helping to break the cycle by “transforming child warriors into pupils” (p.339). This is achieved by enrolling children in school, which discourages them from participating in cattle raiding and other forms of violence. ABEK has acted as a preventative measure against the recruitment of children into armed groups by offering an alternative path that focuses on education and personal growth. The success of ABEK highlights the importance of developing context-specific and culturally sensitive approaches to peacebuilding and education. Interventions that acknowledge local norms, values, and challenges are more likely to be effective and sustainable

Long summary

The intervention

Alternative Basic Education Karamoja (ABEK) program in Uganda, a non-formal education (NFE) program to provide basic education to children, youth, and adults from pastoral communities. ABEK responds to the needs of the local population by offering flexible learning hours, mobile learning centres, and a curriculum that reflects the local culture, economy, and ecology.

How is the intervention expected to work

ABEK employs the principles of redistribution, recognition, representation, and reconciliation to achieve its goals. It redistributes educational resources to marginalised pastoralist communities, recognising and respecting their cultural identity. By involving the community in program design and implementation, ABEK ensures representation and fosters social cohesion. This approach promotes reconciliation and builds relationships between individuals and communities.

There are two ways in which the centres operate: Sedentary ABEK centres cater to children who live permanently in homesteads, while mobile ABEK centres serve children who move constantly with their animals in search of pasture and water. Teachers in mobile centres travel with the communities. Both types of ABEK centres offer flexible learning hours so that children and youth can balance their schooling with their responsibilities. After four years in ABEK (P1-P4), learners can transfer to formal schooling at the P5 level if they wish. The program follows an ‘open door policy’, meaning that out-of-school youth and adults can join ABEK at any time (p. 337-338)

ABEK’s culturally relevant curriculum, developed in consultation with the community, incorporates topics relevant to the lives of the students, such as livestock education, crop production, and peace and security. By employing local teachers, the program builds trust

with the community and ensures that education is more appealing and engaging for the people (p.339)

The evidence base

There is one qualitative study assessing the effect of **Public sector provision, governance and institutionalisation on Physical security in Uganda**. This study is by *S. Datzberger. (2017). Peacebuilding through non-formal education programmes: a case study from Karamoja, Uganda. International Peacekeeping, 24(2), 326-349.* All references are from that study.

The evidence

- 1) Focus group discussions in Moroto revealed that ABEK has empowered married girls and young mothers by providing them with educational opportunities. This aligns with the program's goal of addressing gender inequality in education (p.339)
- 2) To illustrate ABEK's role in reducing the number of children turning into warriors, the author quotes a local senior district official who stated that ABEK "has helped to break the cycle of child to warrior by enrolling them to school." (p.339). Additionally, a survey by SCU found that 88.2% of parents believed that mobile ABEK discouraged children from cattle rustling (p.340).
- 3) It is also emphasised that ABEK's curriculum incorporates culturally relevant themes. Interviews state that "You can't do anything in Karamoja if you don't talk about the cow" (p.338). Survey data shows a significant percentage of parents (72.9%) believed ABEK helped children understand the importance of environmental protection, a crucial topic in the context of Karamoja's environmental challenges (p.338)

Confidence assessment

Overall confidence: Low Confidence Qualitative Study (It is unclear whether the study uses an established small n approach; the procedural steps for data analysis is not clearly defined; no explanation and justification for sample/case selection strategy is provided; no triangulation done; sources of potential data bias is not addressed)