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East Africa, Factor 16: Education

East Africa: Investing in education, training and extension

East Africa: Education

The country I have selected is East Africa and the factor I have chosen to talk about is education. This will be about more than just education it will also involve East Africa's background information and its current economic situation. East Africa is a rather large country and contains a lot of people but the big problem in this country is that most of the children do not have an education. I would like to suggest that we do something to get these children in school. East Africa contains a lot of adults and children so a normal family is around 4 people. People in East Africa like to eat a variety of different types of food but as we all know everyone has their favorite meal. The main meals include potatoes, rice, mistake (mashed plantains), and a maize meal that is cooked up into a thick porridge. Beans or a stew with meat, potatoes, or vegetables often accompany the porridge. In East Africa, there were 4.6 million children out of school in six countries in 1999. ("East African Children's Education fund EACEF" Bela July 21, 2015) Education has increased but the number of children not in school is still in the millions and that is a lot of children put at a disadvantage. The healthcare in East Africa is not the best but it has majorly improved. Private health sector representatives from Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Uganda. ("National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Project" October 28, 2014) This will help make it to where less people get sick and stay healthier and hopefully live a longer life. East Africa's economy is far behind when it comes to most things such as healthcare, agricultural growth, and education. Kids in East Africa are put at a major disadvantage without an education. This also puts the economy at a major disadvantage because their future representatives will be few due to lack of education. Lack of education will limit the possible abilities of the country. There are hundreds to thousands of smart kids out there who never get a chance at an education due to barriers set before them. If those kids had an education they could grow up and lead East Africa into a great economic situation. We just need to invest devoted people, time, and money to getting these children an education.

An urban area where most farms are located is in Kenya. An average farm size in Kenya is quite small (1 to 2 HA). If someone owns 2 HA land they would own up to 21,578 square feet and would be 4.94 acres of land. There is a large variety of crops to be grown in East Africa. The main types of crops grown are sugar cane, maize, plantains and beans. ("Eastern Africa" D. Anthony Low, Harold G. Marcus 2014) They also produce meat and dairy products mainly for the local consumption. There could be more crops grown if we were to give a course in school for farming. Most families in Africa live off crops that they grow. The crops they grow however are limited because most lack the knowledge to grow different types of crops. This could allow the family to get more nutrition and have more energy. A great variety of families in Africa don't barely get food at all due to lack of money and knowledge of how to grow crops and end up starving. This could decrease the number of deaths from starvation in East Africa. Agricultural practices in East Africa include terracing which is a common soil and water conservation practice. It is known to increase agricultural yields. ("Eastern Africa" D. Anthony Low, Harold G. Marcus 2014) Scientists found that it also increases soil organic carbon to semi-natural ecosystem levels. This will help with soil being used to farm on.

There are multiple barriers a family in East Africa face on a usual daily basis when it comes to school. The main Barrier a typical family would face would be the cost of education, physical barriers, and cultural barriers. The cost of education is making it almost impossible for most to attend school because most families cannot afford the expensive costs of school. You need money just to attend the school plus money for the uniforms that the child must wear. Physical barriers would be the walk to school because there are few schools in East Africa. Most kids must walk miles to get to school which requires them to have water to keep hydrated and most families do not have access to clean water or just water in general. If there were more schools this could be avoided because there would be much less distance to travel and it would make it easier to get to school. Cultural barriers make it difficult for most with a religion to go to school because they cannot wear the uniforms or the head pieces' messiah girls wear due to their religion. Messiah girls are sometimes not allowed to attend school because of their beliefs. Uniforms should not be the priority here the priority should just be to focus on getting these children into school so they can get an education.

A barrier that is a large issue when it comes to building schools that most do not address is the bathrooms. When building schools, you must factor in gender issues. When girls get to a certain age they can start their menstrual cycle and they might want to keep it private. Some families cannot afford their daughters to have the products necessary for dealing with such things so girls will not attend school in fear of people knowing. They would need at least a small supply of feminine products to help more girls to be able to attend without fear of judgement. Girls and boys also become more reluctant to want to share a bathroom with the opposite gender the older they get so there would need to be separate bathrooms. These issues are not often discussed because people are usually uncomfortable speaking of the subject but it is something that needs to be discussed.

There are several agricultural barriers in East Africa. Barriers to improving agricultural productivity would be that governments need to invest more in public goods such as rural roads, rural schooling, agricultural research, extension services, clean water, and healthcare. There has been very little improvement in production factors such as labor and land. Agricultural growth in Africa is normally achieved by cultivating more land and by mobilizing a larger agricultural labor force. This produces very little improvement in yields. On average now cereal yields are less than half that Asia obtains. Most believe that East Africa will not be able to keep up in agricultural growth in the next few years due to lack of productivity.

One way to improve employment is by consuming socially provided goods and services. Another would be to make transactions from the developing countries most governments will not be able to provide much due to lack of money. Another is by receiving transfers from members of their families and communities. This will help to collect donations in order to support the cost of making businesses for people to obtain a job at. This would raise the amount of employment rates in East Africa. East Africa employment rates are behind due to lack of local markets or businesses not providing enough jobs for the communities.

Barriers to accessing food markets and adequate nutrition. There is a program to improve food and healthcare that may be implemented successfully. After they are implemented successfully they may fail if the general policies are not favorable to nutrition. They must show a measurable impact for them to be successful. Most go to local markets for food they mostly purchase that they do not know either how to

produce or cannot produce. Crops are still limited due to lack of knowledge in farming but most can find fresh food products when shopping at local markets or other types of fresh food markets in East Africa.

Africa south of the Sahara (S.S.A.) has significantly improved its agricultural performance since the mid 1990's. There is still a lot of debate going on about whether East Africa will be able to keep up in years to come when it comes to agricultural growth. Africa is growing at the average rate of half of what other developing countries. Growth in labor and land productivity has it hasn't been severely bad most would say it's around average. Cereal yields are low but it is like that now in most countries. Then fertilizer use remains low. If more people were to have an education in finance or types of farming skills, we could raise these averages. Most would be able to use fertilizer when growing numerous crops and could continue to bring up growth. Africa's agricultural growth remains far behind other countries but could be raised with an education. ("Urban Unemployment and Economic Growth in Africa" C.R. Frank JR, 03/09/2010)

Household income is close to becoming almost U.S. \$800. Income per capita is the closest to meeting the international Middle Income threshold of the U.S. \$1000 in a well living family. The Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania EAC partners are catching up in better incomes fast. ("New Barriers hinder African Trade" Gumisai Mutume, January 2006) An education in finance future leaders could lead the country into a higher minimum wage or just a higher wage in general. A proper education in finance could even lead them to have this done successfully and not fall into any type of debt cycle like previously done in the past. The economy would thrive with the proper education in business or finance. In many poor countries, with each additional year of schooling, people earn 10% higher wages. These earnings, in turn, contribute to national economic growth. ("Education and the Developing World: Why Education is Essential for Development" 2002)

The growing numbers of very poor urban dwellers means that policy makers need to consider how to keep food prices affordable. They would have to do this without recreating subsidies that stifled economic growth in the past. This would raise the amount of food available to be purchased in East Africa. Experts on economic growth in Africa tend to note that among all regions of the world, Africa trades the least within its region. The education I have mentioned that must do with finance and business could lead the economy into trades with other countries or within the region. This could raise the number of products available to local people in Africa.

Along with school we would have to invest for food at school. This way parents are not forced to work to the point of exhaustion, because children would get fed two meals a day including breakfast and lunch. Parents would have more money to spend on different household items because they wouldn't constantly must be working just to purchase types of fresh food to eat each day. They could focus on just supper for weekdays and then they would focus on meals for weekend consumption. More schools could also help with the amount of kids who pass away from hunger because kids would get fed at school and would at least get a few meals a week. If there are more schools in the area it would be easier to attend and the cost of education could be lowered due to the amount people in that area would be able to afford. The physical barrier in walking miles to school would be avoided due to amount of more schools which would be less distance to travel.

The present situation in East Africa is that there were 4.6 million children out of school in six countries with data in 2010. A reduction from 12.5 million recorded in these countries in 1999. This puts lots of children at a disadvantage along with parents. (“Urban Unemployment and Economic Growth in Africa” C.R. Frank JR, 03/09/2010) Mothers are forced to stay home and not have a job so they can take care of their kids because they are said to be the caretakers of the home. If kids were at school more instead of at home more women could get jobs which could raise income at home and could even boost the economy. These situations are improving though thanks to local charity’s and foundations who are helping to build schools.

“In its six years of operation, EACEF and its partners have built or refurbished 35 classrooms, 5 water tanks, 3 libraries, 2 kitchens and dining halls, and have implemented 3 schools feeding programs and 2 peer mentorship programs.” (“East African Children’s Education fund EACEF” Bela July 21, 2015) They are improving majorly from what they were. The amount of education available is growing and more children are being offered an education they were not able to receive before. The situation is improving and not worsening thanks to the EACEF. There programs are in the best interest of East Africa and its children.

Improving education would make it to where kids would have healthier food with better quality thanks to the health codes that schools must maintain when feeding children food. It would make it to where the family would have a little more money so they don’t have to purchase as much food since their children are being fed food at school. This could raise the amount of purchases other than food that could cost more for their household and make a better economic system. It would raise the amount of purchases which would make people more credit worthy also. This would benefit women who are mothers by giving them time to be able to apply for jobs maybe in local markets or other places in their community.

Education could also help water scarcity because there would be a water system set up whether it’s well or some type of barrel system to provide water for the children. This way more kids would be able to get some type of water throughout the day. Since school takes place in the daytime you wouldn’t truly need lights the sunlight shining through the window or lanterns would suffice for light. This could conserve the amount of light needed. This could also decrease the amount of kids who die from starvation. More than 2.5 million people risk imminent risk of death from severe acute malnutrition. (“Famine Threatens 2.5 Million Children in Africa and the Middle East” Malcolm G. Farley, June 21, 2017) If there are more schools in the area it would be easier for more children to attend and they would get food at school. This could also help those who pass away from thirst thanks to the water that would be provided at school for the children.

There is a great organization in place that helps with school systems, water scarcity, and lack of nutritious food. This organization that helps to better all of this is called the Oxfam. Oxfam has helped to build resilience to droughts by repairing and restoring wells. It has helped 200,00 people and 1,145 primary schools access clean water. Using an electronic cash transfer system by donations 32,200 people have received cash to buy food and water. The system they have put in place has a website where they tell people of their operations and show how they have helped each place then they ask if you would donate to their cause. (“This ATM provides families in Kenya access to safe clean drinking water” Divya Amladi, July 20, 2017) People tend to be more likely to donate to those who can tell what they do and how it has helped others to make sure that this organization is working. They then take the money that is

donated after people have read what their site says and they give it to those who need it to purchase necessary needs for their home.

I would recommend that we invest in the EACEF because they have been working hard to make sure that kids have an education and proper food and water. "The East African Children's Education Fund, also Known as the EACEF, is a multinational non-profit organization partnering with local communities across East Africa to improve education standards. EACEF works primarily in Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda and maintains supporting offices and affiliates in the United States. In its six years of operation, EACEF and its partners have built or refurbished 35 classrooms, 5 water tanks, 3 libraries, 2 kitchens and dining halls, and have implemented 3 schools feeding programs and 2 peer mentorship programs." ("East African Children's Education fund EACEF" Bela July 21, 2015 This could be brought up on a major scale if we could invest money into it so that more kids would have a chance at a better education.

The United Nations needs to pitch in more to raise money and more awareness of what is really taking place in East Africa when it comes to education, healthcare, and agricultural. They could truly use all the help they could get I am suggesting to help their education because it could help many of the other factors they are lacking in. The United Nations needs to raise more money in effort to help East Africa or just Kenya alone. Local rural and urban families need to support this cause fully for this all to come together to help the children lacking an education. Education is the key to society nowadays and Kenya is far behind in education. There are many options we could take in helping them whether it is raising money from those we know to send a team out to Kenya to help in building these schools, or having an electronic transfer system that takes donations from all over to help other foundations. If we use an electronic transfer system, we could help these foundations grow largely to get more schools built and to help these kids to get an education they greatly deserve.

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