

# **Influence Of Provision Of Teaching And Learning Materials By Undugu Basic Education Programme On Vulnerable Children's Participation Rates In Nairobi County, Kenya**

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## **Abstract**

*The objective of the study was to examine the influence of provision of teaching and learning materials by Undugu Basic Education Programme on vulnerable children's participation rates in Nairobi County, Kenya. The research instruments employed for data collection were questionnaires for teachers and head teachers, interview guide for the director and focus group discussion guide for UBEP pupils. By means of a descriptive research design, data was collected from director, headteacher, teachers and students in UBEP programme. A census of 20 teachers, 4 headteachers and 4 directors was considered. The pupils that participated in the study were 100 of which 25 each came from Mathare, Ngomongo, Kibera and Pumwani respectively. The findings indicate that the provision of adequate resources, such as textbooks and school supplies, plays a significant role in supporting the teaching and learning process. The study findings showed a large correlation between provision of teaching and learning materials ( $r=0.747$ ,  $p$ -value 0.000) and participation rates of vulnerable children in education. The study concluded that provision of teaching and learning materials by Undugu Basic Education Programme significantly influenced vulnerable children's participation rates in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study recommends enhancement of the provision of teaching and learning materials and infrastructure, promote of inclusive education and targeted programs for vulnerable children. Policies should prioritize inclusivity and equal access to education for all children, including those with disabilities. Educational institutions should provide appropriate facilities and accommodations to meet the diverse needs of students.*

**Keywords:** *Provision of Teaching and Learning Materials, Undugu Basic Education Programme and Vulnerable Children's Participation Rates.*

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## **I. Introduction**

Participation in quality education and training forms the basis upon which, social, economic technological, ethical and political sustainable development of any nation is founded. Education and training are considered a useful ingredient to improving economic competitiveness, raising incomes, improving health, accomplishing peace and stability programmes, and achieving sustained growth of nations. The responsibility for providing education is the obligation of government (Rose, 2018) since education is considered both as a social good and a merit good (Wright, 2018). Globally, governments use education as a means for fighting diseases, ignorance and poverty. However, DeStefano and Schuh-Moore (2019) found that the government alone is unable to provide education for its entire citizenry for most countries. DeStefano and Schuh-Moore agreed with Colclough (2019) that the government providing the bulk of basic education is justified since if left to the free market, the private sector might under invest in it.

The effect is that individuals and societies directly will be affected, and the country in general will suffer economically as there will be dearth of adequately trained workforce. These thus call for the need for alternative basic education avenues to supplement the education provided by the various governments. Alternative Education

also known as Nontraditional Education is an education with a philosophy and style which differ from that of mainstream education. Alternative Education does not take place in the normal physical environment guided by normal curriculum. It could be home based apprenticeship or independent style and it is a contrast to conventional school system. Conventional school discourages freedom of thought, personal expression and social development personal expression and social development (Prompona, Papoudi & Papadopoulou, 2020). Alternative basic Education enables out of school vulnerable children to be independent thinkers and future responsible citizens that can give a positive contribution to the economy of their states. Alternative basic education became part of the international discourse on education policy in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Robertson, 2022).

Latin American countries have excelled in developing alternatives within the formal school system (Vegas & Petrow (2017). They developed two programmes namely Colombia's Escuela Nueva (EN) or (The New School) and Chile's Programma de las 900 Ecuelas (Programme of the 900 Schools). The New School Programme has its roots in the Unitary School System of the early 1960s: a programme that was supported by UNESCO in several Latin American and African countries. The initiation and expansion of the programmes in the three countries were urged by the vision of the two programmes targeted the hitherto neglected groups that is the rural population in Columbia and in the case of Chile-the urban poor through flexible alternative approaches integrated in the overall education plan. The Escuela Nueva (EN) programmes adopt what they term as an integrated approach. This entails concentrating on all the elements of education that is (learners, teachers, community), to curriculum and pedagogical issues to other support mechanisms (Vegas & Petrow, 2017). Chile's programme of the 900 schools (P900) uses an integrated approached comprising seven components, geared towards improving quality and effectiveness of learning as well as including local communities in the process (Carlson, 2020). Even though the out of school street children phenomenon is a global problem, it is more prominent in Africa, Latin America and Asia. For instance, in Brazil (Cesar et al., 2020.) notes an increase in the number of out of school street children, which is blamed on Brazilian social policies.

In Africa the situation is not any different. Since 1999, enrolment rates in sub-Saharan Africa have been increasing five times as fast as in the 1990s, with countries like Benin, Ethiopia, Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania registering rapid advances (UNESCO, 2015). Current trends will leave some 61 million children out of school in 2015 and there are indications that the rate of progress towards universal primary education is slowing. Regional progress has also been uneven. Most of the countries that are off track in achieving universal primary education by 2015 are low-income countries that, having started from a low base, are either increasing enrolments impressively but too slowly, such as in Burkina Faso and the Niger; or stagnating, such as Eritrea and Liberia. Countries affected by conflict feature prominently in this group. Continued inability of many children to access the formal school system could be interpreted as a testimony, not only of the failure of the formal school system, but also of the need for alternative basic education approaches that would address the needs of the out-of-school vulnerable children (De Bruin, 2019).

In the Kenya Vision 2030, Kenya recognizes that education and training of all Kenyans is fundamental to the success of the Vision. The Vision by which the country hopes to become a middle-income country by the year 2030 recognizes that education equips citizens with understanding and knowledge that enables them to make informed choices about their lives and about the society. The education sector is, therefore, challenged to provide skills necessary to steer Kenyans to the economic, political and social goals of Vision 2030. Through education and the Vision 2030, Kenya endeavors to provide globally competitive quality education, training and research to her citizens for development and enhanced individual well-being. The overall goal for 2015, for instance, was to reduce illiteracy by increasing access to education, improving the transition rate from primary to secondary schools, and raising the quality and relevance of education. Other goals include the integration of out of school vulnerable children into learning and training institutions, achieving an 80% adult literacy rate, increasing the school enrolment rate to 95%, and increasing transition rates to technical institutions and universities from 3% to 8% by 2015.

Education Curriculum (NFBEC) to be used by the NFECs and ABE schools in Kenya. Since the launching of the curriculum, there has been little effort by the Ministry of Education or the KIE in investigating how the implementation has taken place. According to Tashi (2022) constructing capacity to support innovation is an attempt to understand and elaborate on the factors that are able to support, or hinder, the implementation of new ideas and practices in a system such as a school or ABE centres. It should be recognised that not all ABE programmes have the capacity to implement a given innovation to the same extent.

The basis of individual, institutional and national development is basic education (Jacob & Stephen, 2021). However educational participation and net gain from education becomes meaningless when access, transition, completion and equity for the marginalised is not well taken care of Rose (2018) promoted the expansion of education to many more children as a priority agenda that developing countries south of the Sahara should pursue. Basic education provision is foundational for access, retention, transition, completion and equity of quality education for all, for Sub-Saharan African countries. Research has shown that still there are more than one million eligible vulnerable children who are out of school in Kenya. This article sought to determine the

extent to which provision of teaching and learning materials by Undugu Basic Education programme influences vulnerable children's participation rates in Nairobi County, Kenya.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The out of school vulnerable children phenomenon creates the main loss of human capital development. As noted by Orodho (2018), out of school street children are potential criminals. These are human beings who will live a life of depending on other people. When they grow into adulthood, they will create a huge social and economic destabilization factor and a definite cause of political instability (Oketch & Somerset, 2019). Their existence in the urban informal settlement and the streets of major cities and towns definitely indicates drop in primary school participation in education and training and an increase in dropout rates (Lewin, 2017).

Capitalizing in the poor out of school vulnerable street children is key to ensure that they can be responsible individual members of the society. To this point education and training is fundamental. For this reason, several alternative basic education programmes have developed to complement participation in education and training and therefore assisting to bridge the existing access to education gap. This is not an easy task. Undugu Basic Education Programme of Kenya is the pioneer provider of education to street children and therefore it has promoted the provision of teaching and learning materials. However, the previous studies have not established how this program influence the vulnerable children's participation rates. It is against this background that the researcher wishes to determine the extent to which provision of teaching and learning materials by Undugu Basic Education programme influences vulnerable children's participation rates in Nairobi County, Kenya.

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study was to determine the extent to which provision of teaching and learning materials by Undugu Basic Education programme influences vulnerable children's participation rates in Nairobi County, Kenya.

## **II. Literature Review**

In order to realize the Education for All and Millenium Development Goal two and three, Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2018) say that just investing in the development and expansion of the normal public system is not enough. It is considered a challenge for governments and state systems to enroll school aged people the world over and as such expanding existing facilities does not support the agenda of opening up schools to never enrolled (Hartwell, 2018). Alternative basic education has been used as an avenue to improve access of hard-to-reach children to education through provision of teaching and learning materials (DeStefano and Schuh-Moore, 2018, DeStefano, Hartwell, Schuh-Moore & Benbow, 2019). Global mention can be made of Bangladesh, where the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) Primary Schools, is another example of alternative basic education that provided education to the underserved through provision of the learning materials such course books for the learners.

According to Ainscow (2020), the BRAC offered access to education gateway as well as provided the enabling environment for the achievement of international educational milestones. The government had backing from donor community and partners in order to achieve these feats. Regionally, there are a lot of alternative basic education programmes that have brought about results in terms of provision of teaching and learning materials. For example, Uganda's community oriented primary education programme schools which supported school aged children to access schools through providing them with the necessary items like school uniform, stationery and school bags. Also, mention can be made of Zambia's Community Schools for orphans and the vulnerable which provides uniforms, shoes, books and stationary supplies to the most vulnerable pupils in their institution (Chimombo, 2018).

In Kenya, Undugu Basic Education Programme is the premier alternative basic education programme that has been put together for many children who are vulnerable and not enrolled in school in the urban informal settlements in Nairobi City County. The Undugu Basic Education Programme (UBEP) gives access to education and training to the vulnerable out of school children in four informal settlements areas. UBEP provides access to participation in education and training through a four-year basic education programme carefully tailored to their living conditions of the vulnerable children. The curriculum used in teaching the vulnerable children and young people at four schools in the informal settlements of Mgomongo, Kibera Pumwani and Mathare, includes reading, writing, arithmetic, Swahili, and English. In comparison to the curriculum used at formal schools, the curriculum is more competent and practical oriented. It is closely connected to real life situation and challenges. The UBEP schools attract children who dropped out of formal schools and are actually vulnerable or too old to attend primary school. Moreover, the UBEP students receive instruction in economics, agriculture, natural sciences, and home science.

Although many developing countries attempt to provide education at a free and compulsory scale, it is often not possible to provide universal access to education through the government provision alone. Non-

governmental provision has thus grown by default to fill the gap (Orodho, 2018). The alternative basic education programme has been designed not with lifelong education in view but offer a beginning point so that enrollees would exit to join the state provided educational systems. This system according to DeStefano, Hartwell, Schuh-Moore and Balwanz (2019) showed increases in access, participation and completion rates. The Undugu Basic education programme provides adequate physical facilities and resources such as buildings for classrooms, workshops and offices, teaching/learning resources such as textbooks and desks and tools for practical subjects.

### III. Research Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey research design was used because it helps to determine the frequency of happenings of the phenomenon and ascertain whether or not relation exist between the variables (Siedlecki, 2020). The target population was four UBEP schools in Nairobi County with a total population of 4 head teachers 4 UBEP directors, 52 teachers and 955 pupils. The researcher used purposive sampling technique. The researcher therefore sampled 16 (30%) teachers and 100 (10%) UBEP pupils since the larger the sample the higher the reliability. All the four headteachers and one UBEP director were selected.

Data in the study was collected using questionnaires, document analysis guide, focused group discussions and interview schedule. The questionnaires were used to gather information from the head teachers and teachers. Interview guide was also be used to gather data on the influence of UBEP schools on pupils' participation in primary education. Focused group discussions were used to obtain data from the pupils. The researcher examined data from both published and unpublished documents that already exist at Undugu Basic Education Programme. The documents were reviewed to supplement data from the interviews and questionnaires. The gathered data was validated, edited and then coded. Analyses was done using SPSS after which quantitative data was summarized using various descriptive and inferential statistics to determine relationships stated in the objectives before being presented using tables, bar graphs and pie charts.

### IV. Research Findings And Discussions

#### Descriptive Statistics

The study sought to determine the extent to which the provision of teaching and learning materials by the Undugu Basic Education programme influences vulnerable children's participation rates in Nairobi County, Kenya. Likert scale questions were adopted in the assessment where the teachers and head teachers indicated the level of adequacy of listed resources. The findings are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Teachers and Head teachers' opinion on teaching and learning Materials**

Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	SD
Pupils have school uniform and school bags.	0	4.1	8.2	69.4	18.4	4.02	0.66
The number of desk and chairs in the classroom are adequate.	0	2	18.4	57.1	22.4	3.92	0.70
Capacity and resources in the library are adequate for the number of learners in the school	0	8.2	8.2	61.2	22.4	3.98	0.80
The size of the playing ground is adequate for the number of learners in the school.	0	0	8.2	65.3	26.5	4.18	0.57
The capacity of the dining hall is adequate for the number of learners in the school	0	0	10.2	59.2	30.6	4.20	0.61
<b>Aggregate Score</b>						<b>4.06</b>	<b>0.67</b>

The aggregate mean of 4.02 with a standard deviation of 0.66 showed that the majority of the teachers (69.4%) agreed that pupils have school uniforms and school bags. From the findings, a majority of the teachers and head teachers (57.1%) agreed that the number of desks and chairs in the classroom are adequate and 22.4% strongly agreed. This was supported by an aggregate mean of 3.92 and a standard deviation of 0.70. This implies that the desk and chairs in the classroom are adequate. Over half of the respondents (61.2%) of the teachers and head teachers agreed that the capacity and resources in the library are adequate for the number of learners in the school and 22.4% strongly agreed (mean=3.98, standard deviation=0.8). This shows that the capacity and resources in the library are adequate for the number of learners in the schools. The size of the playing ground is adequate for the number of learners in the schools as shown by the majority of the respondents, 65.3% who agreed and 26.5% strongly agreed (mean=4.18, standard deviation=0.57). The study established that, as agreed by the majority of the respondents (59.3%), the capacity of the dining hall is adequate for the number of learners in the school (mean=4.20, standard deviation=0.61).

The findings of the study affirm that the schools under investigation ensure that pupils have school uniforms and school bags, and that there is an adequate number of desks and chairs in the classrooms. Additionally, the capacity and resources in the library are sufficient for the number of learners in the school, and

the size of the playing ground as well as the capacity of the dining hall meet the needs of the students. These findings are consistent with the literature presented by Hartwell, (2018), who discussed the educational initiatives undertaken in Uganda. The Uganda community-oriented primary education program not only provided access to education but also created an enabling environment that facilitated the achievement of international educational milestones. This suggests that the provision of necessary items such as school uniforms, stationery, and school bags, as observed in Uganda community-oriented primary education program schools, is vital in supporting school-aged children to access and engage in education. The alignment between the study findings and the literature demonstrates the importance of adequate infrastructure and resources in educational institutions. By ensuring that pupils have school uniforms, bags, and the necessary items, and by providing an appropriate learning environment with sufficient desks, chairs, library resources, playing grounds, and dining halls, these schools promote a conducive atmosphere for learning and support the overall educational experience.

The respondents further indicated that the availability of teaching and learning materials contributes to increased access to education. They explained that teaching and learning materials provide students with the necessary resources to engage actively in the learning process. Materials such as textbooks, workbooks and other educational tools help present information in a structured and accessible manner, making it easier for learners to comprehend and retain knowledge. By having access to these materials, pupils can have more opportunities to learn and develop their skills. The respondents noted that some students learn better through visual aids, while others benefit from hands-on activities or interactive digital resources.

The teachers and the head teachers further noted that the Undugu Basic Education Programme increase access to basic education for vulnerable children. The Undugu Basic Education Programme specifically focuses on vulnerable children, who face barriers to accessing education due to various reasons such as poverty, homelessness, disability, or social exclusion. By identifying and reaching out to these children, the programme provides them with opportunities for education that they might not have otherwise had.

They also asserted that the Undugu Basic Education Programme often provides financial support or scholarships to cover these costs on school fees, uniforms, and other related expenses, making education more affordable and accessible for vulnerable children. By removing financial barriers, the programme helps ensure that children from disadvantaged backgrounds enroll and stay in school. The respondents further explained that in addition to financial support, the Undugu Basic Education Programme also provide essential learning materials, textbooks, and school supplies to vulnerable children. Having access to these resources equips them with the tools they need to participate fully in their education and enhances their learning experience. From the findings, the program protects and promotes the best interests of vulnerable children's access to basic education. From the group discussions, the students noted that they are provided with learning materials that include textbooks, exercise books, stationery supplies, school bags and school uniforms, supplementary reading materials and learning aids. The pupils stated that they have relatively enough textbook and stationery and there are chairs and desks enough in the classroom. They stated that UBEP provides textbooks covering various subjects such as Mathematics, English, science, social studies, and languages. These textbooks serve as a primary resource for students to study and understand the curriculum content. These books are used for taking notes, completing assignments, and practising exercises across different subjects. UBEP provide stationery supplies like pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, and sharpeners to ensure that students have the necessary tools for writing and drawing. The UBEP distribute school bags or backpacks to students. These bags serve as a means for students to carry their books and other materials to and from school. UBEP also offer supplementary reading materials such as storybooks, magazines, or educational pamphlets. These materials enhance students' reading skills, promote literacy, and provide additional knowledge beyond the core curriculum. In addition, the pupils noted that the learning materials attract children to school. The students noted that they could not have gone to school if did not have the learning materials.

One of the pupils stated;

*If I didn't have the learning materials, I wouldn't be able to go to school. These materials, like books and exercise books, are very important for my education. They help me learn and understand things better. I'm really thankful that I have these materials because they make it easier for me to participate in class, do my assignments, and learn different subjects.*

The findings of the study highlight that the Undugu Basic Education Programme plays a crucial role in increasing access to basic education for vulnerable children. The teachers and head teachers observed that this program specifically targets vulnerable children who face barriers to education due to factors such as poverty, homelessness, disability, or social exclusion. By identifying and reaching out to these children, the Undugu Basic Education Programme provides them with opportunities for education that they may not have otherwise had.

These findings align with the literature provided by DeStefano, Schuh-Moore, Balwanz, and Hartwell (2019), who discussed alternative basic education programs. Their research indicated that such programs have shown positive outcomes in terms of increasing access, participation, and completion rates in education. The

Undugu Basic Education Programme, with its focus on vulnerable children, can be seen as an example of an alternative basic education program that successfully addresses the barriers to education and contributes to increased access and participation.

The connection between the study findings and the literature emphasizes the importance of targeted programs, like the Undugu Basic Education Programme, in addressing the specific needs of vulnerable children and improving their access to education. By providing tailored support and opportunities, these programs help overcome barriers and enable vulnerable children to engage in education, leading to increased access, participation, and completion rates.

### Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is used to examine the relationship between two or more variables. The findings are in Table 2.

**Table 2: Correlation Matrix**

		Teaching and Learning Materials	Participation rates
Teaching and Learning Materials	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	49	
Participation rates	Pearson Correlation	.747**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	49	49

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The study reveals a large correlation between feeding programme from the pearson correlation findings in table 2, the study reveals a large correlation between provision of teaching and learning materials and participation rates of vulnerable children in education. ( $r=0.747$ ,  $p$ -value 0.000). With a significant  $p$  vale of less than 0.05, the findings show that there was a positive statistically significant association between the provision of teaching and learning materials and participation rates of vulnerable children in education in Nairobi County, Kenya. The findings of the study demonstrate a positive and statistically significant association between the provision of teaching and learning materials and the participation rates of vulnerable children in education in Nairobi County, Kenya. This implies that when adequate teaching and learning materials are available, it positively impacts the enrollment and engagement of vulnerable children in their educational journey. The literature provided by Chimombo (2018) supports these findings by highlighting the efforts of Uganda's community-oriented primary education program in supporting school-aged children to access education. This program ensures that children are provided with essential items such as school uniforms, stationery, and school bags, which are crucial for their active participation in school. Furthermore, Zambia's Community Schools for orphans and the vulnerable also play a significant role in enhancing participation rates by providing uniforms, shoes, books, and stationary supplies to the most vulnerable pupils in their institution.

### Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical method used to examine the relationship between a dependent variable and the independent variables. The findings are shown in Table 3, 4 and 5.

**Table 3: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.883 <sup>a</sup>	.780	.775	.123

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teaching and Learning Materials

According to the findings in Table 3, the coefficient of determination (R squared) is 0.780 and adjusted R squared of 0.775 at 95% significance level. The R squared of 0.780 implies that teaching and learning materials can explain 78% percent of the variation in participation rates of vulnerable children in education in Nairobi County, Kenya. The remaining 22 percent of the variation in participation rates can be explained by other factors which were not part of the model.

**Table 4: ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	2.500	1	2.500	166.195	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	.707	47	0.015		
	Total	3.207	48			

a. Dependent Variable: Participation rates  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Teaching and Learning Materials

Findings in Table 4 show the F value indicating whether the set of independent variables as a whole contribute to the variance in the dependent variable. The F value was 166.195 and was significant ( $p = 0.000$ ) at 95%. This means that Teaching and Learning Materials was significant in predicting participation rates of vulnerable children in education in Nairobi County, Kenya.

**Table 5: Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.092	0.187		5.840	.001
	Teaching and Learning Materials	0.629	0.096	0.582	6.552	.021

a. Dependent Variable: Participation rates

Findings in Table 5 show that provision of teaching and learning materials has a positive and statistically significant effect on participation rates of vulnerable children in education as shown by a coefficient of 0.629 and p-value of 0.021. The study found that for every unit increase in the availability of teaching and learning materials, there was a corresponding increase of 0.629 units in the participation rates of vulnerable children. This aligns with the research conducted by DeStefano and Schuh-Moore (2010), which emphasizes the use of alternative basic education as a means to enhance access to education for hard-to-reach children. One of the key strategies employed in this approach is the provision of teaching and learning materials. By ensuring the availability of such materials, alternative basic education programs aim to overcome barriers and facilitate the engagement of vulnerable children in the learning process. Therefore, the study's findings are consistent with the insights provided by DeStefano and Schuh-Moore (2010), highlighting the importance of providing teaching and learning materials to improve the participation rates of vulnerable children in education.

## V. Conclusion

The study concluded that the Undugu Basic Education programme's teaching and learning materials had a positive influence of on the participation of vulnerable children in education. The provision of adequate resources, including textbooks and school supplies, was found to play a significant role in supporting the teaching and learning process. The study further emphasizes the importance of infrastructure and resources in educational institutions in creating a conducive learning environment and supporting overall educational outcomes. Adequate classrooms, workshops, libraries, playing grounds, and dining halls were reported, which contribute to the holistic development of students. These materials provide students with the necessary resources to actively engage in learning and enhance their comprehension and retention of knowledge. The Undugu Basic Education Programme's efforts to provide financial support, scholarships, and essential learning materials are commendable in reducing barriers to education and promoting equal opportunities for vulnerable children.

## VI. Recommendations Of The Study

The study recommends that policies and practices should prioritize the provision of adequate teaching and learning materials, including textbooks, stationery supplies, and educational tools. Additionally, efforts should be made to improve infrastructure in educational institutions, including classrooms, workshops, libraries, playing grounds, and dining halls. Adequate resources and infrastructure create a conducive learning environment and support the overall educational experience.

The study also recommends that policies should prioritize inclusivity and equal access to education for all children, including those with disabilities. Educational institutions should provide appropriate facilities and accommodations to meet the diverse needs of students. Additionally, targeted programs should be expanded to support vulnerable children, including financial support, scholarships, and essential learning materials. By addressing the specific needs of vulnerable children, these programs can reduce barriers to education and promote equal opportunities.

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