Quality Education

An inside perspective from HFH primary schools in Western Kenya

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Abstract
Quality education is an important topic for primary education in developing countries. How to establish quality education? And how to measure it? This explorative study gives an inside perspective from primary schools related to development partner HFH. The aim of the study is to gain insight 'from the field' in topics that are affecting quality education and to create a tool for HFH to monitor the development of quality education in primary schools. Interviews are conducted in fourteen primary schools with head teachers and teachers, and also four local partners are interviewed. Through qualitative analyses of the interviews, a common view of quality education is retrieved and results point out that community support and teaching processes are vital factors in challenges, achievements and improvements for quality education. The paper concludes by reviewing policy and providing a tool for HFH to monitor the develoment of quality education in primary schools.

Introduction

How to improve education in developing countries? And how to make it sustainable? Millennium goals, Education For All (EFA) and Free Primary Education (FPE) mark the importance of education. Good education makes developing countries move forward through investing in children's future. Harambee Foundation Holland (HFH) is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) from the Netherlands striving to improve educational standards in Western-Kenya. HFH is facing the question of how to work on this process of improving quality education and how to measure quality education in the schools. Therefore this research was conducted in order to get insight in subjects that are found important in the field, to develop a tool and look for a way forward for HFH on quality education. The goal of this tool is for HFH to make it possible to assess certain aspects of quality education that are found important in this study. In a descriptive explorative manner of conducting this research, fourteen primary schools in Western-Kenya have been visited and through interviews with head teachers, teachers and local partners insight is gained in views on and the current situation of quality education.

Background information

This first section of the paper will give some background information on HFH, Kenya and its educational system and the aims of this study on quality education. This is important as to place the results in the right context.

Harambee Foundation Holland
HFH is an NGO from the Netherlands that helps improving schools in Western Kenya mainly through building classrooms, libraries and providing materials and facilities. Thanks to these projects, class sizes are reduced and child and teacher comfort are increased which enables learning to take place. Next to the building work, HFH arranges meetings and workshops in order to share knowledge about specific topics (e.g. leadership) that affect education. Also communities are more involved in schools and education through helping in the work of HFH. Communities for example provide bricks or help in the actual building. This is linked to an important vision HFH carries in her name: 'Harambee' is the Swahili-word for 'joint work'. HFH works with several local partners and values good relationships with the schools they have partnered with. Their

projects have dealt with several institutions, from primary schools to secondary schools, polytechnics, Early Child Development Education (ECDE) and an Educational Assessment and Resource Centre (EARC).

Kenya: MOE, FPE & ECDE

Kenya is a former colony of the United Kingdom and has been independent since 1963. Kenya has its own Ministry of Education (MOE) and the country is divided in 46 districts in which each district has its own District Education Officer (DEO). The DEO is to provide teaching and learning materials for schools, is in charge of teacher's payments and makes guidelines for the district, being dependent on the MOE. At the school level there is the head teacher who is the team leader of the school and attends meetings with the DEO, partners and school sponsors. The MOE gives guidelines on Free Primary Education policies (FPE), which are channelled down to School Management Committees (SMC). Parents are to assist in school management through PTA meetings and the board membership; they are to assist in providing physical infrastructure, which is not offered by government under FPE. The MOE pays the school fees of every child in public Primary schools, whereas parents are to pay for additional necessities such as exams taken in grade eight, uniforms, school meals, and boarding facilities. The policy having been initiated as a campaign pledge caused that it was not well introduced to Kenyans, resulting in the attitude of many communities that there is a free pass to all education expenses (Nyamute M, 2006). Communities thus don't feel responsible to be involved in and to provide for education. Many schools in Kenya therefore have school sponsors to provide materials, facilities and also give spiritual input. Not only for parents and communities but also confusion occurred for teachers and management teams as there was a lack of clear guidelines concerning roles and responsibilities.

This FPE was established in 2003 and although through FPE the goals of EFA are more likely to be achieved. As a result of this FPE, the enrolment rates went up by 90% (MOE, 2004). But also schools and classes got overcrowded because more pupils were able to go to school, and lack of facilities, materials and human resources are very common. Recent goals concerning education improvement from the Government of Kenya are implemented in the KESSP (Kenya Education Sector Support Programme) and the Vision 2030 Goals. These pay attention to ECDE in particular which eventually is to be integrated in Primary Education (NESC, 2007; Republic of Kenya, 2006). Another process going on in education in Kenya is the UNICEF-campaign that focuses on child friendly learning environments. So from EFA-goals and FPE-campaigns, policies are now moving towards processes within quality education focusing on child and learning processes.

The educational system

In 1985 the 8-4-4-system was adopted in Kenyan education, which means Primary School contains eight years, with a follow-up education of four years secondary school and four years higher education. After eight years of Primary School, pupils take KCPE-exams (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education) and the results determine whether and to which kind of secondary school they go. Secondary schools are divided in district, provincial and national schools and finish with KCSE (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education) of which the results on their turn determine to which kind of follow-up education the pupil goes. This system thus has a strong focus on performance and results.

The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) that took place in Jomtien, Thailand, in March 1990, articulated the significance of the early years as the foundation

for the life of an individual. Kenya has responded to this significance by developing early child development policies (Republic of Kenya, 2006). With the introduction of FPE, a decline in ECDE enrolments was found because parents have to pay for ECDE (MOEST, 2003). Therefore special attention is now drawn to ECDE and it is recommended that this will eventually be implemented in the 8-4-4-system (NESC, 2007).

<u>Quality education and the aims of the study</u>
Along with moving global policies and the Kenyan Vision 2030 goals and educational policies, HFH is now moving their work towards a focus on quality education. Although quality education is of great importance as an investment in children's potential, it is a big challenge to make visible achievements for quality education as not every aspect of it is clear to measure. Whereas facilities and KCPE-results are easy to be seen and measured, learning, teaching and school development processes are harder to get a grip on. Therefore this research is conducted in order to gain insight in the establishment of quality education in the field of primary schools dealing with HFH. A lot has been written about quality education and there is no single answer to the question of how to establish quality education. HFH finds it imortant to work with a vision that gives ear to what their local partners and people in the field say. Therefore this research is done in an explorative manner as it is important to hear views and gain information from 'the field'. Through this study a foundation is laid on which further policy can be developed. Another outcome of the study is a tool for assessing quality education in the HFH-schools. This tool is useful for HFH in order to monitor progresses and development in the schools they deal with. So the study consists of two goals:

1. To gain insight in the establishment of quality education in primary schools related to HFH;
2. To develop a tool for HFH in order to monitor developments for quality education in primary schools related to HFH.

The first goal will function as a foundation for the development of the tool mentioned in goal two. In order to gain insight in the subject of quality education, five areas will be distinguished. Firstly there will be searched for a common view on what quality education is. Then challenges affecting quality education will be mentioned. After that, achievements that have improved quality education in the schools will be discussed after which follow the next improvements to be made. Lastly an overview will be given of the roles of different parties working on quality education in the primary schools. On the basis of these results, a foundation is laid from which quality education can be approached. This foundation will lead to a tool with which HFH can assess quality education in primary schools repeatedly in order to get a grip on the development of quality education in the schools.

      Before discussing the results, a section of research methods will give insight to how the data are collected and analysed. The result section is split into the five categories of looking at quality education: views, challenges, achievements, improvements and roles. Then conclusions and discussion follow, in which also the second goal of the research, developing a tool, will come forward.

Methods

In this section methods of data collection will be discussed. First the sample will be specified. Then the instruments and the procedure for data-collection are explained. In conclusion, the method of data-analysis is elucidated.

Sample

The sample of this research consists of head teachers and teachers in fourteen primary schools of HFH and also four local partners of HFH. Although HFH has dealt with fifteen primary schools, one school wasn't visited because of challenges in traffic. The opinion of people in the schools on quality education is considered important because they are the ones working in the field and thus possess direct experience in subjects concerning quality education. The opinion of local partners of HFH is considered important since they are highly involved in the local work and important topics about quality education. This gives us insight in topics that play an important role locally, in 'the field', and supports the idea of ownership or empowerment of those locally involved.

In the schools semi-structured interviews were held with the head teacher, or deputy head teacher when the head teacher was not available, and with one or several teachers, dependent on availability at the moment. In total five head teachers were interviewed, four deputy head teachers, four times both or several board members were interviewed and in one case, neither the head teacher nor the deputy head teacher was available so the senior teacher was interviewed. As for the teachers, in seven schools one teacher was interviewed individually, in five schools several teachers were interviewed and in two schools none of the teachers were available for an interview. This makes the dataset of interviews in schools consisting of fourteen head teachers-interviews and twelve teacher-interviews. Interviews with head teachers took two hours averagely and interviews with teachers took half an hour.

A different part of data collection is the HFH-partners interviews. These interviews were held to gain insight in the relationship between HFH and the partner and also to hear their view on the development, challenges and achievements of quality education. Four local partners were interviewed and interviews again took about two hours per interviewee.

Instruments

As mentioned above, the data are collected through interviews. The interviews are semi-structured as to allow comparisons. Through open-ended question such as "What do you feel is quality education?" or "In your opinion, what are the challenges in your school for giving quality education?", insight is gained in what subjects are important for and/or affecting quality education. These open-ended questions give the interviewees the possibility to answer freely and according to their own perception of what important issues are.

This research has an explorative character as one of the goals is to gain insight in issues concerning quality education in the primary schools of HFH. The research is conducted without clear expectations or hypotheses but with the idea of describing the current situation as it comes forward in the interviews. So no hypotheses are verified or falsified; only the information from the interviews is used to explore and then describe the current situation. The fact that there were no clear expectations together with the goal of gaining insight in the current situation makes this an explorative descriptive research. Furthermore, this explorative character gives a foundation for the development of the tool to monitor the development of quality education in schools. On the basis of what is said in the interviews and what can be concluded from this information, the inside-perspective gives a framework for this tool. The goal of the research is not to test

or verify the tool but only to creat one, so it would be recommended to do this in a later stadium or use the tool with this limitation in mind.

Procedure
In order to maintain good quality data and reliable results the procedure for school visits should be the same every visit. Therefore the same procedure is followed in every school when visiting. Schools are visited preferably in the mornings, taking into consideration unforeseen obstacles (e.g. when travelling a long way) so enough time is left to finish the full procedure. School visits are paid unannounced as to avoid unnecessary organisation or preparation from the school's side. Interviews with local partners are held in consultation with the interviewee on time and location.

Before starting the interview, it is been made clear to the interviewee that the intention of the interview is purely for the research and in no way to check upon someone's work and that the information will be treated confidentially. The interview questions are asked exactly as written in every interview as to avoid bias. When considered necessary probes are used to encourage the interviewee to tell more about a certain subject. These probes can be silence or encouraging questions. The last question of every interview is "Is there anything else you want to share concerning quality education?" in order to give the interviewee the possibility to raise subjects they find important that weren't covered before.

Analysis
Through qualitative research methods the interview data are analysed in order to gain insight in issues concerning quality education in the primary schools of HFH. Within the interviews a selection is made in parts that say something about five different main categories. These categories give structure to what is said and are the following:

1. <u>views</u> on what quality education is and/or how it should be achieved;
2. <u>challenges</u> in achieving quality education;
3. <u>achievements</u> for quality education;
4. how quality education should be <u>improved</u> in future;
5. what <u>roles</u> HFH, schools and local partners play in achieving quality education.

Apart from the first category, these categories where asked after specifically in open-ended questions to head teachers and local partners. Teachers were asked about school processes specifically but were given space to elaborate on other issues concerning quality education. Purpose of the interviews with teachers is too pay attention to challenges experienced in the classroom as this is the place where quality education should be at work. The interviews are thus searched for what is said in the categories mentioned above, not only in answers to specific questions but also in the wider range of the interview. For example when asked about challenges in the school for giving quality education, respondents could elaborate on what conditions are required to give quality education, which is a perception or a view on what quality education is. So in an answer concerning challenges, some quotations belong to other categories. After having selected quotations and parts of interviews concerning the five main categories, different sub categories are added within the main categories as to organise the data in detail.

The first category, views on quality education, gives an answer to how quality education is perceived by head teachers, teachers and local partners. Is there a common view on what quality education is and how it should be achieved? These views on what quality education is and how it should be achieved give insight in what the most important topics are within HFH primary schools and their local partners involved.

Secondly, challenges for quality education are described. What challenges are faced in achieving quality education? Results describe the challenges that are present at the moment and why they are important for quality education. These are described in the context of the views for quality education.

Next to challenges, achievements are also influencing the level of quality education. This third category gives answer to the question what has been achieved for quality education and why these are important achievements.

Whereas achievements have already been made, improvements signify the next step towards quality education. This fourth category describes what else is considered important to improve quality education. This gives a focus or direction towards important topics for improvement in the future.

As HFH works with global partnerships, in relationships with several local partners, different parties take up different roles in working on quality education. The roles of different parties are bundled and an overview is given of their involvement.

These five categories are discussed in the next section 'results'. Within these five main categories different sub categories are distinguished in order to give structure to the data and to organise the results into more detail.

Results

In this section the results of is the analysis of the interview data are discussed. Although some overlap in information might occur, the statements are discussed per main category. The overlap might occur because for example an achievement can be a challenge as well: even when a school has improved in classroom occupation, classes may still be overpopulated. Within the five main categories a distinction between different sub categories is made as to organize the statements. Firstly the views on quality education will be discussed, after which follow challenges, achievements, improvements and lastly roles of different parties.

Views on quality education
A view is a mode of looking at something or a manner of comprehension. So when a view on quality education is discussed, these modes of looking at quality education or the manner of comprehending quality education can be similar or different between different respondents. Now the interesting part within these views is to find a common mode of looking at quality education: is there a common view on quality education and how should this be achieved? It should be noted that only the local partners were asked for views on quality education explicitly. Head teachers and teachers occasionally mentioned their view on what quality education is and these were taken into consideration as well.

Within the main category of views on quality education some respondents focus on conditions that should establish quality education, such as a conducive environment, either physically or through healthy relationships: "Quality education requires a healthy and child friendly environment. It's not only relationships that need to be healthy and create the environment; it also means proper water and food". Other respondents focus on desired outcomes "quality education is that children pass exams and join national schools" or "quality education makes children self-reliant citizens". A distinction can thus be made between *required conditions* and *desired outcomes* of quality education. Required conditions can be defined as "a certain mode or state that is necessary to offer quality education" whereas desired outcomes are "a wanted result of quality education". *Required conditions* can also be challenges when the mode or state mentioned is not adequate, and on the other hand a *required condition* can also be an achievement when the mode or state mentioned is present. A *required condition* can thus be a challenge or an achievement as well, but is in every case seen as a necessary mode or state to give quality education. This necessity underlines the importance of the presence of the condition. The same applies to *desired outcomes*, which can be challenges when the school doesn't achieve these outcomes, but also achievement when the desired outcomes are 'perceived outcomes'.

In the UNESCO EFA global monitoring report for quality education (2002), a model for assessing quality education is used in which input-, process-, contextual- and output-factors for quality education are distinguished (UNESCO, 2002, derived from Heneveld and Graig, 1995; OECD/NCES, 2001; Scheerens, 2002). Output-factors are easily comparable with the mentioned 'desired outcomes', for they signify what quality education should lead to or 'a wanted result of quality education'. The input-, process- and contextual factors however could all be 'required conditions'. Within these factors the model describes how child background is an influential input-factor for the learning process. Also it shows how input-factors such as materials and facilities determine processes in the school. This same idea is described in UNHCR's framework (2001) for school quality, in which supporting inputs such as community support, policies and materials and child characteristics influence processes going on in the school, which then lead to student outcomes. So in this framework a distinction is made between contextual and educational conditions. And again these conditions should lead to student outcomes. Whereas UNESCO and UNCHR describe direct and indirect relations to student

outcomes, the US national department of education (NCES, 2000) describe different educational contexts, namely school, teacher and classroom, that influence each other but all influence student learning directly as well. Whereas educational and contextual factors are easily distinguished as influential factors for quality education, factors within the educational context are less easy to separate. UNESCO does this through separate input- and process-factors, NCES trough school, teacher and classroom and UNHCR doesn't separate different school-factors. For this paper however, the difference between educational and contextual factors is maintained. For the educational context, it isn't necessary to define a clear distinction between different factors as the research is explorative and the views mentioned will be stated in required conditions. The definition for required conditions as 'a certain mode or state that is necessary to offer quality education' will be maintained. And an *educational context* is thus a mode or state concerning school, teaching and learning that is necessary to offer quality education, and a *contextual factor* is thus a mode or state outside educational settings that is necessary to offer quality education.

Required conditions

For the required conditions, what do respondents point out? First, the required conditions within the *educational context* will be discussed, after which the required conditions in the *contextual factors* are described. Table 1 shows the amount of respondents that mention a certain sub category. Within the educational context two sub categories can be distinguished: *the physical environment* and *teaching processes*. The *physical environment* is described as the conditions in school consisting of buildings, materials and facilities. *Teaching processes* are defined as contexts in which the operation of educating a person takes place.

Views on quality education	Head teachers (14)	Teachers (12)	Local partners (4)	Total (30)
REQUIRED CONDITIONS				
Physical environment	2	2	2	6
Teaching processes	5	2	2	9
Community support	3	1	1	5
Government support	1	0	1	2
Partner support	0	0	1	1
DESIRED OUTCOMES				
KCPE-results	2	2	0	4
Outcomes not covered in KCPE	2	3	3	8

Table 1: Amount of respondents per sub category for views on quality education

First of all for the *physical environment* respondents point out that a learning environment should be conducive, healthy and safe. In order to establish quality education it is needed that teachers have enough teaching materials, to communicate what children learn, and enough classrooms to pay individual attention to a pupil. Concerning the child's health, lunch programs and clean water are required so that children can concentrate and learn. This physical environment influences the learning from outside the classroom (e.g. concentration because of enough food and clean water) as well as through processes in the classroom (e.g. adequate teaching materials which improves the teaching interaction).

Next to the required conditions in the physical environment of the school, the second sub category is the *teaching processes*. This sub category is mentioned most by five head teachers, two teachers and two local partners. Within these teaching processes, the teaching content, teacher attitudes and teacher support all play an important role. First of

all for the *teaching content* it is required that there is room in the curriculum for teaching not only rote memory but also skills, morals and important attitudes to pupils to make them self-reliant, responsible and make them fit into society properly. Some schools do this through Religious Christian Education, others though guiding and counselling lessons or question boxes. Also respondents find this should be the ideal of teachers and the head teachers: "Quality education is to educate a person, to form and transform a person. It's not rote memory and results". The *teachers' attitudes* should be learning orientated instead of exam orientated and should not have a focus on rote memory only but also on acquiring skills, morals and certain attitudes. Another required condition that is also in interaction with *teaching content* and *teachers' attitudes* is *teacher support*. Teachers need to be trained properly but need to be updated through for example in-service activities and knowledge-sharing meetings as well. Head teachers and teachers report they sense a need of feeling capable in their jobs "teachers should be assisted to know what quality education is. Some teachers just teach". A required condition for teachers would thus be that they are trained and have the possibility to improve in their job. A further condition mentioned concerning teacher support is meetings in which knowledge is shared, "teamwork is the key to quality education. Teachers are a team; they share classes, share knowledge, but are also a team with learners". Through these meetings not only knowledge is shared and updated which creates a feeling of capability, but also it increases the feeling of cooperation and teamwork within the school. Some schools report that through their teamwork they share classes and this increases teachers' commitment. Another issue mentioned is the establishment of healthy and friendly relationships between staff within the school but also with parents. A teacher thus plays a vital role in not only the educational context but is also a link to *contextual factors* (namely the community).

Next to these *educational contexts*, *contextual factors* are pointed out by respondents as requirements for quality education. These contextual factors can be summarized in one word: support. *Support* is the activity of providing for or maintaining by supplying with money or necessities. Head teachers and teachers report they feel they need support from parents, communities, government and local partners also they see the importance of cooperation between school, community and government and partners. As for the *support from parents and communities*, respondents find it's needed to have parents and communities close to the school to monitor child development more closely, to have close cooperation and also it is needed that parents experience the importance of education. "We should have the parents closer to monitor the children" and "Because of poverty we also need parent education, to let them experience the importance. We need to mobilize and sensitize communities around". This awareness would lead to cooperation, collaboration and also an attitude that "values education, not only degrees". Furthermore, respondents report they feel it is needed to sense support from *government and partners* as well. One of the issues mentioned is that there should be no corruption but a trustworthy relationship between school and government and partners "we need partners that we can trust. When you can't trust a partner you cannot rely on them which is not a stable base to work from". This would lead to better cooperation and a feeling of support. Also schools and partners report a need for adequate quality assessment, meaning quality assessment not only for village schools but also for rural schools. Quality assessors, employed by the government, are required to be committed and have the attitude to want the best for the school. This prevents schools from feeling left behind or being alone in the mission for achieving quality education.

<u>Desired outcomes</u>
What do respondents point out as wanted results of quality education? Ideally, these desired outcomes should be established through the required conditions mentioned above. The desired outcomes mentioned by respondents can be divided into two sub categories, namely *KCPE-results* and *learning outcomes that are not covered in KCPE*. Table 1 shows that two head teachers and two teachers point out good *KCPE-results* as quality education. Three out of these people (two head teachers and one teacher) also point out that this is not the only desired outcome and that quality education leads to *learning outcomes that are not covered in KCPE* as well. In total eight respondents mention this sub category. Notable is also that three of the local partners point out these other learning outcomes, and none of the local partner name *KCPE-results* as an outcome of quality education.

Firstly, quality education leads to good KCPE-results. KCPE is taken in grade eight and determines whether and to what kind of secondary school pupils are allowed to. Also it assesses the knowledge of pupils in the subjects of Maths, English, Swahili, Social Studies and Science. The idea of quality education in this sub category is learners to pass their exams with good results "quality education is that children pass exams and join national schools".

But, when looking at the other sub category, quality education is not KCPE-results only. A lot of student learning is measured through KCPE, but quality education should lead to attainment of certain morals, skills and attitudes that are not covered in KCPE as well "we shouldn't strive for rote memory only, also morals, skills, knowledge, life skills. That's another outcome that's not covered in KCPE". These morals, life skills or attitudes are put as "learners to think "I am here, where do I want to go next?" It's not book learning and believing somebody else will employ me. Quality education makes people productive (…) the ideals of quality education are self-reliance and own responsibility". Respondents point out not everything should depend on KCPE-results because "for some that didn't perform well in KCPE, what is there after primary school? These talents die at an early age", and "We want them to pass and to pass well. Outcome quality education is how they relate to the community, do they relate differently?" Also for the longer term quality education should make a difference. "Quality education makes somebody productive to society and empowers them. It's knowledge and skills that make somebody manage life, future and society. They have to fit in anywhere, enlighten them."

The attainment of self-reliance, responsibility and productiveness is in line with what is said about required conditions, namely that there should be room in the curriculum for teaching skills, morals and attitudes. But also quality education should lead to attainment of what is examined in KCPE. The focus on KCPE-results should leave room for these values as the acquirement of skills, morals and certain attitudes such as self-reliance are considered important. Not only in childhood but also for the longer term these attainments are valuable. An implication is therefore that in the Primary School learning and teaching processes (in the required conditions for quality education), a focus should be on the attainment of these skills as they are desired outcomes.

Figure 1: Views on quality education

All in all the views mentioned are summarized in Figure 1 (see above). Within the views on quality education a distinction is made between *required conditions* and *desired outcomes*. A *required condition* is a certain mode or state that is necessary to offer quality education. A *desired outcome* is a wanted result of quality education. Within the required conditions, *contextual factors* are separated from *educational factors*. *Contextual factors* are a mode or state outside educational settings that is necessary to offer quality education, and the one and only important topic in this is *support*, the activity of providing for or maintaining by supplying with money or necessities. For the *educational context*, a mode or state concerning school, teaching and learning that is necessary to offer quality education, the two sub categories mentioned in views on quality education are the *physical environment* and *teaching processes*. The *physical environment* is described as the conditions in school consisting of buildings, materials and facilities. *Teaching processes* are defined as contexts in which the operation of educating a person takes place. These *required conditions* should lead to desired outcomes of quality education in learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are assessed in KCPE-results, but respondents point out the importance of learning outcomes that are not covered in KCPE. These *desired outcomes* describe the ideal of the attainment of skills, morals and certain attitudes to make pupils self-reliant. This should therefore be a focus within *teaching processes*.

This common view as visualised in Figure 1 and described above is received from head teachers, teachers and local partners. No clear differences are found between these groups of respondents suggesting that generally speaking they share a same mode of looking at quality education. The only notable difference in views is that of desired outcomes. Local partners do not mention *KCPE-results* at all, only that desired learning outcomes are *not covered in KCPE-results*. Head teachers and teachers find these results important, but also find *other learning outcomes* such as skills, morals and attitudes important.

Challenges for quality education
A challenge is a demanding situation that affects quality education negatively. Because of these demanding situations or challenges that are not met, the desired outcomes of quality education are affected in a negative way. For the challenges, the sub categories that were found in 'views on quality education' are used in order to see in which areas challenges are present. Table 2 shows the amount of respondents per sub category within challenges for quality education. Firstly the challenges within the educational context are discussed. These are in the physical environment, the teaching processes and the sub category of pupils is added. Secondly, challenges with in the contextual factors are in community support and government support. Partner support was mentioned as well as a required condition in 'views on quality education' but is not mentioned as a challenge.

Challenges for quality education	Head teachers (14)	Teachers (12)	Local partners (4)	Total (30)
EDUCATIONAL FACTORS				
Physical environment	12	4	1	17
Teaching processes	11	10	4	25
Pupils	11	8	1	20
CONTEXTUAL FACTORS				
Community support	12	7	3	22
Government support	8	3	4	15
Partner support	/	/	/	/

Table 2: Amount of respondents per sub category for challenges for quality education

<u>Challenges in the educational context</u>

The educational context as described in 'views on quality education' consists of the *physical environment* and the *teaching processes* in the school. For this section of challenges for quality education, the sub category '*pupils*' is added as many challenges concerning pupils are mentioned in the interviews (20 out of 30 respondents mention this sub category). Firstly challenges concerning the *physical environment* will be discussed, after which follow challenges concerning *teaching processes* and lastly *pupils*.

Physical environment
Challenges in school concerning the *physical environment* are mostly about the overpopulation in the school or the lack of materials and facilities. Both lead back to the same factor: a ratio that is out of proportions. This can be the ratio of book:pupil, teacher:pupil or large classsizes. Other challenges concerning the physical environment are in hygiene or health and in maintenance. Especially head teachers mention challenges in the physical environment (twelve out of fourteen head teachers raise the subject). The *disproportional ratios* occur in classrooms, seats, space, staff, learning materials such as pens, books and teaching aids. "We struggle with the overpopulation due to FPE. We have a lack of facilities, teaching aids, we only have the books that are given by the government, we're lacking classrooms". This is a challenge to quality education because children and teachers are not comfortable "There are not enough seats so children are not comfortable. Grade one even has to sit on the floor", it's impossible for teachers to give individual child attention, children have to share materials which makes the actual learning more difficult, and teachers can't communicate what they teach because of lack of materials. "Because of the FPE we have to cope with overpopulation. More classrooms are needed because teachers can't teach adequately for this many pupils in one class". Also the lack of resources influences the curriculum: "there are not enough classrooms, we're understaffed, and the compound is too small so we're not able to do all

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the activities". So the basic needs that are not met affect required conditions in *teaching processes* and paying individual child attention. "The child:teacher ratio is a problem, they're not to handle in class and there's not enough time to meet all needs".

Secondly, challenges in *health and hygiene* are about basic facilities such as water and lavatories, but also about materials for meeting special needs of girls who are in their state of adolescence or children with impairments. Some extra attention has to be paid to these special needs but when this is not possible the most vulnerable ones suffer from inadequate materials and facilities and they miss their opportunity of receiving quality education. "When girls are in their state of adolescence it affects them. Parents are neglecting and there's not enough facilities to help them". Basic facilities such as clean water are important because when water is lacking children become thirsty and this affects concentration, and when water is not clean this affects the child's health negatively. Another important factor mentioned concerning health is the *provision of lunch*. Children drop out or are absent because they are looking for food or they cannot concentrate because of a lack of food. "Children are needy, they have a poor background and some need boarding. Some families brew their local beers, abuse their children, the environment is not conducive. We should have school lunches so the child labour will decrease". In some schools a lunch program is available for pupils in class 8 when they have to perform for KCPE. The challenges in this are that children that are not in class 8 feel left out, and also it confirms the focus on KCPE-results whereas quality education requires a foundation in early years "lower primary is the foundation for the rest of the learning".

Lastly, challenges in physical environment concern *maintenance*. Especially the maintenance of books is a challenge because of the quality of the books. They are not sustainable, schools lack space to keep the books and also because of the changing curriculum from the government the investing in books is difficult. "The government changes the curriculum very often so many books are declared useless and are wasted. The books or learning materials are not sustainable." Next to this, because of the *disproportional ratios* it is also challenging to improve for example dormitories because other facilities and building need priority.

Teaching processes
Other challenges in the educational context are in *teaching processes*. In 'views on quality education' respondents have mentioned required conditions concerning teaching content, teachers' attitudes and teacher support, also pointing out the necessity of paying individual child attention. When asked for challenges in the school, challenges for teaching are mentioned by all groups of respondents with 25 respondents out of 30 in total that raise the subject. Teachers play a vital role in establishing quality education as they are the ones to teach knowledge, skills, morals and attitudes to their pupils, or the ones that "form and transform a person". Challenges concerning *teaching processes* are in *disproportional ratios, teaching content and teacher support.*

Firstly the challenge of *disproportional ratios* is the challenge that is most mentioned concerning *teaching processes*. These *disproportional ratios* affect thus not only the *physical environment* of the school but also the teaching in the classes. Because of the disproportional teacher:pupil ratio it is challenging to monitor each child's development individually so the individual child attention is affected negatively. "There are too many children and it's too hard work. So many children in one class are not to handle, it's too many things to mark and attention can't be paid to children individually. Now there's no individual feedback possible because of large class sizes." Also it is difficult to teach adequately, to instil discipline in large classes even when teachers are trained well. On the one hand it is found that "teachers need to be trained; they see quality education as

passing KCPE and working late hours. But children are not only to learn for exams, they should also learn to be skilled", but on the other hand teachers also report that "teachers can be trained well but still there are too many pupils to handle". So teachers' training is an important *required condition* but doesn't come to its full right when the teacher:pupil ratio is still disproportional. Also these *disproportional ratios* are affecting teachers as handling large classes is tiring, the workload is big and because of time that has to be spent on marking not enough space is left to actual teaching which makes that objectives are not achieved. "Classes are too large and because you don't know every child's background it's hard to answer to individual needs. Also it gives a lot of work marking exams"

For the *teaching content* the curriculum is an important factor contributing to quality education. A required condition in the teaching content is the teaching of skills, morals and attitudes that will make pupils fit into society. The teaching of these will lead to the attainment of skills, morals and attitudes that are not covered in KCPE but are an important outcome of quality education, also for the longer term. When asked about challenges in the school, only some head teachers and teachers point out challenges in the curriculum for quality education. Firstly a challenge is the enabling of teaching the full curriculum (such as time, organization, money and facilities, "there is no time for practicing learned theory because each lesson takes only 35 or 40 minutes"), and secondly a challenge is the teaching content of morals, skills and attitudes. For example shaping attitudes for the girl child is challenging: "another challenge is the teaching about pregnancy. We have to minimize pregnancies because otherwise the girls drop out. I want my students to tell when they are pregnant instead of to hide, so we can work towards a solution. That's a challenge". This should be achieved through guiding and counselling.

Lastly challenges in the educational context are about *teacher support*. Not only teachers need support in improving teaching methods to manage large classes. Also they need to be trained in mentality or attitude "they need to know quality education is not just passing KCPE". Another challenge is some teachers lack commitment and some schools lack teamwork so teachers, as well as pupils, would be bothered by guiding and counselling. Research has shown significant association between teacher commitment and pupil attainment (Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington & Gu, 2007) and therefore it is a key factor in improving quality education. But commitment can only be maintained when teachers are persistent and resilient. This can be established through colleague support or a supporting working environment (Fullan & Sharratt, 2007). Teachers sometimes find their work challenging because of a lack of cooperation between teachers and school administration. So reporting from teachers that point out a need for teamwork, commitment and support are in line with what is said in literature. Also in many schools the payment problem causes poor commitment of the teachers because "how can you work on an empty stomach". *Teacher support* is thus not only challenging in training possibilities, but also in teamwork and commitment.

Pupils

Pupils are part of the educational context as well because they are part of the school environment. Not only their community, home background (see below) or school factors can be a challenge, but also pupils themselves can be a challenge to receiving quality education. This sub category is about pupils as an influence on the establishing of quality education. Answers about how pupils can be a challenge for quality education can be divided into two categories: *challenges in the classroom* and challenges concerning *pupils' priorities*. Especially people working in the school environment mention this category of pupils; only one out of four local partners has mentioned pupils as a challenge. Head

teachers and teachers are working in closer interaction with pupils and would therefore be more likely to raise the subject.

Challenges in the classroom are mostly about bringing pupils with different abilities, backgrounds and needs to one level. Because of the *disproportional ratios* it is even more difficult to pay attention to children individually. "Because of large classes it's impossible to keep records and make plannings and set aims for slow learners. They cannot be assisted." Also pupils with special needs are affected by the disproportional ratio. "Communication is a challenge. There are no tools or materials to communicate what you teach. And for the special needs children when there's no hearing aids it's even harder to communicate. We need a donor to assist for special needs. It's a growing issue (…) many pupils are absent or drop out." The overaged pupils are a special category within the special needs children as the sudden enrolment of overaged pupils is seen as a consequence from FPE. Also some special needs children are the vulnerable ones or the orphans, who require some extra attention. "There are some orphans in the school but because of the large number of students we can't identify their needs and they drop out". Other *challenges in the classroom* are a language barrier, mostly reported in rural schools, and the girl child who suffer more easily from cultural practices.

Challenges concerning *pupils' priorities* are in their attitude towards education. Pupils sometimes seem to value work and food more than their education. This causes absenteeism, bad concentration and indiscipline. "Pupils drop out. They're not motivated for education. They rather go for the money and so they're absent. And children receive only half of the education because during harvest they work". For many cases this should be seen in the context of home background and cultural practices. "Challenges that come from pupils are indiscipline, absenteeism and parents that are not concerned about education. Some pupils have to walk very far or have to do too many chores at home so they can not concentrate in school". Other influences are from peers or health problems.

Challenges in the contextual factors

Contextual factors as described in 'views on quality education' consist of community, government and partner support. For the challenges, 22 respondents mention challenges concerned with *community support*, fifteen respondents name challenges in *government involvement* but none of the respondents mention challenges about partners. A reason for this might be because relationships with partners are not challenging as schools are grateful for their support. But a reason could also be that challenges concerning partner support are not mentioned as the interviewer is considered representative of a partner (HFH).

Community support

In their views on quality education, respondents pointed out that one of the factors that contribute to quality education is community support. The sub category of community support seems to be challenging according to all groups of respondents. With 22 respondents who mention community support as a challenge, this sub category wins a second place in the top list of challenges. Twelve out of fourteen head teachers mention the subject which is many. Also three out of four local partners and seven out of twelve teachers is a significant amount. Within the sub category of community support, different sub categories can be divided. These are 1. Means at home; 2. Attitudes at home and 3. Home-school cooperation.

Children in school come from different home background with differences in means, income and social economic status (SES). *Means at home* could be explained as resources in the home background of the child. These resources, or lack of resource, can challenge the child's learning at school. Respondents point out that many children come

from low SES home backgrounds and this influences the child's learning in school negatively. Challenges are in health, uniforms and chores or child labour, that cause absenteeism or indiscipline. Parents often don't have the means to take care of their children, because of poverty, so the children lack health care or food. This could cause absenteeism or drop out as it is reported that "There's a high rate of poverty so children drop out because they lack food at home and are forced to work, to look for employment". Also in health issues "Many pupils are absent or drop out because of lack of healthcare, for example there are no medicine available for malaria" and "There's the medical challenge, parents pay no attention to sickness which affects the learning because a child can't learn when it's feeling ill". Furthermore, parents are supposed to provide uniforms for their children in school but cannot always take care of this and so "some children don't have uniforms or the uniforms are torn, that makes the child shy and this affects learning in a negative way". So the means (or the lack of means) in the home background of the child affects the learning in school.

Another issue concerning the home background of the child is the *attitude at home.* Attitude at home could be defined as a certain mindset towards the importance of education that affects the child's learning in school. In many schools the attitude from children's home background are a challenge because respondents mention that they sense children are tossed between home and school. This is exactly the opposite from what is required: cooperation between home and school. Research has found that increased family involvement predicts improvements in student-teacher relationships and children's performance and attitudes toward school (Dearing, McCartney, Weiss, Kreider & Simpkins, 2004). Positive student-teacher relationships encourage motivation and achievement (Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder, 2004) and especially for children with low SES benefit from these positive relationships (Hamre & Pianta, 2005). Parents' attitudes concern the value of education, the role of the government and an attitude towards parenting. Firstly, according to the respondents many parents don't seem to value education or are uninformed about the importance of education. "Many pupils are not encouraged at home, school is demanding from them but so are parents at home so the pupils are tossed between parents and teachers". Not only are the pupils tossed between home and school, also an irresponsible parent attitude prevents pupils to receive follow up education, whereas it is wanted that pupils 'go somewhere after Primary School'. "There's a lack of cooperation from parents. Some are illiterate and don't see the value of education, they don't take it seriously. As a consequence, children finish Primary School but often don't get follow up education" Another consequence is that teachers feel they're not only doing their teacher's job, but also have to come in as a parent: "The community is illiterate, poor, doesn't see the need of education very much. Parents don't seem to be very bothered about discipline so children have to be disciplined in school which is then a teacher's job. Parents have to give a good environment for teachers". Secondly, because of the implementation of Free Primary Education (FPE), parents have adopted a certain attitude towards their and the government's contribution towards education. "Parents are not willing to assist the school financially, for example they feel the government and the sponsor provides everything and don't feel responsible themselves." And also towards parenting the attitude of parents are a challenge to schools and the child's learning in school. Respondents feel parents do not feel responsible or don't feel their children and their children's education have priority. So "poor parenting is a challenge, the attitude at home affects education, when the attitude is positive the child will pick this up. Also parents don't care, a child needs to feel comfortable and this only happens when the parent concerns. This is due to illiteracy; parents are no role models and lack time for children. The priorities are upside down". The combination of the challenges in attitudes and also the challenges in means at home

make it difficult for children to learn in school. "One challenge is the parent responsibilities. The teacher sometimes has to come in as a parent, for example when the pupil is sick it's the teacher who has to take the child to hospital. And also in providing meals; children are hungry. The school lunch is only for a few children because they have to pay for it". So on the one hand a lack of care is a challenge to schools, but on the other hand a lack of means from the parents which creates that the parent is not able to take good enough care of the child.

The third sub category within challenges in community background is the *home-school cooperation*. Schools expect parents to cooperate and to be involved as to monitor the child's development and to feel supported in decision making. Schools do not always feel supported by parents because "parents want to see good results immediately, they are not patient". Also cooperation is needed to make decisions and homes and schools don't have the same objectives for education: "It's about handling a community that's not informed educationwise. They only want us to account for money, that's their only interest. They don't show up to discuss issues which makes decision making very hard."

Government support

Also government support is considered as a required condition for quality education, and in this category challenges are also reported. Fifteen respondents point out issues in *government support* of which special attentions is drawn to the *educational system*. The government is expected to support in resources and in quality assessment. "The government has good policies, but there are no resources. They don't give enough. Human resource is there but it's not adequate, not enough". A challenge in the provision in resources is, according to respondents, that it takes too long and the government only funds when the school is almost collapsing "but then where do you start from?" Another issue also discussed in the community support section is that through FPE, parents expect the government to provide in everything and feel they have no responsibility at all: "Our hands are tied. The government has, through FPE, not involved parents to finance and parents now have the mentality that they don't have to contribute, that the government will take care. The government doesn't provide sufficient books and parents are now to provide which they don't." Another challenge, mentioned 2 times, concerning the government is corruption. This is one of the reasons why teachers who don't perform well are not fired, their threat to good quality education notwithstanding. Other shortcomings in government performance are a lack of quality assessment and the facilitation of knowledge sharing between teachers. Quality assessment is mainly happening in village schools. Rural schools facing the gravest challenges are more difficult to reach and are therefore not assessed. Teachers feel a need for sharing knowledge and learning from other schools but lack the possibility to arrange meetings and they expect the government to take care of this.

Special attention should be paid to the *educational system* as implemented by the government. Schools are part of the educational system and subject to the policy of the government. The system supports but also challenges the improvement of quality education. Challenges are in ECDE-implementation, follow up education and class repetition, which is not allowed by the government but sometimes better for the learner. The challenge in ECDE is that it should give a good foundation for children to enrol and achieve in primary school but because of lack of knowledge, funding and quality assessment this becomes difficult. "Lower primary is the foundation for the rest of the learning but especially in lower primary there's no quality education. ECDE is not supported by the government and gives poor foundation to further learning. The government tries (through FPE and provision in books) but ECDE is still lacking. ECDE is actually worse that primary education" ECDE, that should give good

foundation for learning in primary school, is now hidden in the system "let the government ECDE be absorbed in the system. It's compulsory to enter class one but it's hidden in the 8-4-4-system. And it's not free". One teacher opts that ECDE should be adopted in the system because also the relationship with parents becomes a challenge through ECDE as a fee payment is required and parents often don't see the value of ECDE, "parents are to provide materials because the government doesn't and they've developed a negative attitude towards ECDE because of fees". Next to the challenges concerning ECDE, some children are less talented or are not allowed into secondary schools because of their grades in KCPE. Others have the required results but lack the means for further education. "Pupils want grades to be able to go to college. Everything depends on grades. Opportunities sometimes cannot be taken because lack of fees, talented pupils for example can't afford to pay fees for their follow up education". Not only the fact that talents fail to be developed because of finances is a challenge, but also the focus on these grades is challenging because quality education should not only be grades but also skills, morals and attitudes. "Everything is about numbers. Education doesn't respond to the needs of the country. Getting a degree is not quality education. Quality education feeds and gives back to the community". This challenge in the educational system affects *desired outcomes that are not covered in KCPE*. Also this is a challenge in the educational system because these children who do not attend follow-up education will have to fit into society and develop in a different way. The educational system should thus support and build capacity for community development. An alternative to secondary school and universities should therefore be available. "There's no alternative to university, but primary school doesn't equip for society. Pupils need skills, colleges are needed"

In summary, the challenges mentioned by most respondents are about *teaching processes* (25 respondents), *community support* (22 respondents) and *pupils* (20 respondents, of which 19 are head teachers and teachers). The *physical environment* and *teaching processes* are very much affected by the *disproportional ratios* in the school. Another important factor is the *attitudes at home*, which influence community support and pupils' attitudes negatively. The lack of cooperation between school and community affects *teaching processes* as well because schools don't feel supported by the community. So these three factors of teaching processes, pupils and community support are linked in various directions and therefore challenges in one sub category affect challenges in other sub categories as well. For example a change in attitudes at home would also change the attitudes of pupils in the classroom and meanwhile change community support, which will change teaching processes. On the other hand a change in disproportional ratios would also change teaching processes and the physical environment of the school, which improve learning processes in the classroom.

Achievements for quality education

Next to challenges schools face, achievements should also be mentioned. An achievement for quality education is an accomplishment that has been made which has improved the quality of education in the school. These accomplishments can differ in character and thus also lead to different 'outcome' achievements. Now which achievements are mentioned by head teachers, teachers and local partners and how do they contribute to quality education? Again the results are divided into educational and contextual factors, in which for the educational factors physical achievements are distinguished from non-physical achievements. The amount of respondents per sub category in achievements for quality education is shown in Table 3.

Achievements for quality education	Head teachers (14)	Teachers (12)	Local partners (4)	Total (30)
EDUCATIONAL FACTORS				
Physical environment	10	2	4	16
Teaching processes	13	5	4	22
School status	10	0	0	10
CONTEXTUAL FACTORS				
Community support	9	0	2	11
Government support	2	1	0	3
Partner support	3	0	3	6

Table 3: Amount of respondents per sub category for achievements for quality education.

Educational context

Within the achievements in the educational context, *physical achievements* and *non-physical achievements* can be distinguished. A *physical achievement* is characterized by its material aspects that can easily be seen and thus measured. For example a new classroom is a physical achievement because it can be seen and also it is easy to measure the amount of classrooms in a school. *Non-physical achievements* on the other hand are mentioned as well and are less easy to see or to measure. These non-physical achievements concern knowledge, attitudes or feelings and their effect on quality education are thus judged more subjectively. In both sub categories support from government, community and local partners have showed to be of great importance. Firstly, for the *physical achievements* support from government, community and local partners has helped to improve the *physical environment* such as classroom buildings, facilities and learning materials. All four local partners have mentioned physical achievements, which was likely because these local partners are involved in the upgrading of the physical environment through the work of HFH. Through the building of classrooms the class sizes are decreased "which enables a teacher to teach instead of lecture". Also pupils and teachers are more comfortable through the improved physical environment which upgrades the learning and motivation. Also some schools were supported in creating a fish pool or farming facilities which gives the school some extra income. The improvement of the physical environment also caused *non-physical achievements* such as pupils and staff that are now proud of their school, closer cooperation from the community and improved school status. For the *non-physical achievements*, support from government, community and local partners has established a feeling of support which upgraded staff commitment, teamwork and cooperation between school, community and partners. Through the quality assurance of the government, the cooperation in making action plans from the community and the knowledge sharing of partners, schools feel they are supported because their relationships are now closer and they feel empowered in improving quality education. "We compare and visit other schools to learn and to share. This school enabled other schools to develop."

Not only support from outside the schools has made such achievements possible, also inside the school many achievements are made. Through good leadership, staff commitment and curriculum monitoring, quality education is improving as well. From these *non-physical achievements*, the achievements concerning *teaching processes* are the ones most respondents (22 out of 30) mention. Not only head teachers and teachers but also all four local partners see the importance of achievements in *teaching processes*. A lot of attention is drawn to the sub category *teacher support*. Good practices in school such as cooperation between teachers, admin, management and head teacher, cooperation between staff and parents, staff commitment, positive staff attitude and teamwork all contribute to quality education. Teamwork has found to be a significant predictor of teacher team commitment (Park, Henkin & Egley, 2005) and this team is a key factor in establishing a school culture of quality improvement (Fullan, 2004; Harris & Muijs, 2005). "We have frequent briefings so teachers can air out; we've developed a free environment. And teachers are self-motivated. The admin is not too strict so we can work freely and seriously, we don't feel checked upon. There's a conducive environment, we have teamwork." These good practices are achieved through the monitoring of teaching, knowledge sharing, good leadership from the head teacher, lunch programs for staff, guiding and counselling for staff, consultation and delegation of duties and/or the formation of an academic counsel. "There's cooperation between teachers and good leadership creates teamwork. This has improved the situation for quality education" Other achievements inside the school are concerning *teaching content*. This subject has already been discussed in the context of *required conditions* in *views for quality education*. It was said that teaching should not only be focused on rote memory but also on skills, morals and important attitudes. When asked for achievements, the teaching of morals, skills and attitudes are mentioned in the manner of the availability of active guiding and counselling. This teaches pupils moral behaviour and also it reduces drop outs. "Also we have an active guiding and counselling facility in the school, which lowers the drop out". Another achievement in teaching content is the ECDE that has been put in place and when it runs properly it gives a good foundation to quality education. Other achievements are in creative solutions to teaching certain attitudes. For example one school "formed groups of pupils to draw attention to school maintenance. These groups compete and every Friday we reward the best class. This makes children responsible".

These physical and non-physical achievements improve the *school status*. The school status is the relative position of the school in the community environment. Strikingly only head teachers mention the school status as an important achievement. An improved school status is achieved through pupil achievement, mainly measured in KCPE-results but also in the amount of pupils that receive follow up education now. "We are proud, proud because of the improved KCPE-results. We send pupils to secondary schools and even national schools and pupils love education now." When parents, pupils and community see other children perform their attitudes towards the school and education changes. "We are among the best performing schools (…) parents trust in the school because of the good performance." Also pupil performance in KCPE motivates and encourages teachers in their job. As a result of this improved school status and parents' interest, enrolment goes up in the school. On the one hand, this higher enrolment is an achievement because it proves the school is doing well, but on the other hand it's a challenge as well because it increases the *disproportional ratios* (see *challenges for quality education*).

Contextual factors: the importance of community support
As found in *views on quality education*, not only the *educational context* affects quality education, also *contextual factors* are influential. *Contextual factors* are the support from

parents/community, government and local partners. For the achievements in these contextual factors, the ones concerning *community support* are mentioned by most respondents (11 respondents). *Government* and *partner support* are mostly mentioned in the context of support in improving the *physical environment* and *teaching processes* through arranging meetings or seminars. Both have enabled these achievements in the school. "They have supported us with textbooks and classrooms which attracted pupils and they are now interested in education. It's like a springboard toward better quality education".

  Achievements *in community support* are caused by improved *school status* and improved performance (see above) but additional activities are undertaken as well in order to improve *community support*. Increased support, in materials as well as in cooperation and other resources (e.g. school lunches, PTA-teachers - additional teachers supported by parents), is achieved through the involvement of a school patron, workshops, parent sensitization by head teacher or partners, the introduction of parents day and action planning together with parents and school staff. These actions lead to an improved attitude of parents, they are more willing to support. Also these actions lead to increased cooperation (instead of a focus on accountability, parents now involve in action planning for the school), and physical support in lunch, materials, buildings and PTA-teachers. The physical support and cooperation with the school leads to an improved *educational context* for quality education. Next to that, the improved attitude is not only important for cooperation between school and community, but also it leads back to the *home background* of pupils which now gives a better foundation for teachers and learners to enjoy quality education. Community support can thus be seen as a link between *contextual factors* and *educational context*, as they influence both. Achievements in community support are thus vital ones. Community support is not only 'a springboard' towards better quality education, quality education is carried by the community as they give a constant influence on educational contexts as well as home background. For the support increases when the achievements increase, whereas government and partners enable and then the school and community are to pick up.

In short, achievements for quality education are mainly in the *physical environment*, *teaching processes* and *community support*. The *physical environment* makes pupils and teachers more comfortable which improves motivation, and also teaching processes are better because of improved ratios. Achievements in other required conditions, *teaching processes,* are made through knowledge sharing, improved commitment and good leadership. *Teacher support* has been found a vital factor. Also in *teaching content*, achievements in active guiding and counselling and ECDE-implementation have been found important. The contextual factor mentioned most is community support. Respondents expect the community to be involved continuously, so that the school development is carried by the community. Partners and government are expected to enable and to serve as 'a springboard' towards quality education.

  This leads to a model in which contextual factors (support) are separated from quality education within the school, since support is supposed to influence and contribute to the educational factors. Figure 2 shows the foundation of school development in the context of community, government and partner support, of which community support is thought to be most vital. The arrows pointing towards the school environment signify the influence which support has on the development of quality education in the school. Within the school environment, required conditions in the educational context and desired outcomes are mentioned. When these factors improve, this leads to improved school status. It is reported that this improved school status enhances community involvement. When community involvement increases, community empowerment can develop. As community empowerment is a goal of HFH and their

local partners, this is a wanted development that the community leads and takes over the development of quality education in schools. Through this taking over and leading development, partner support can decrease and dependency on government support decreases. For the partner support, this decreasing or schools being less dependent on partners is important as it is not desired to make the community and schools dependent on others but to give the community the possibility of being self-reliant.
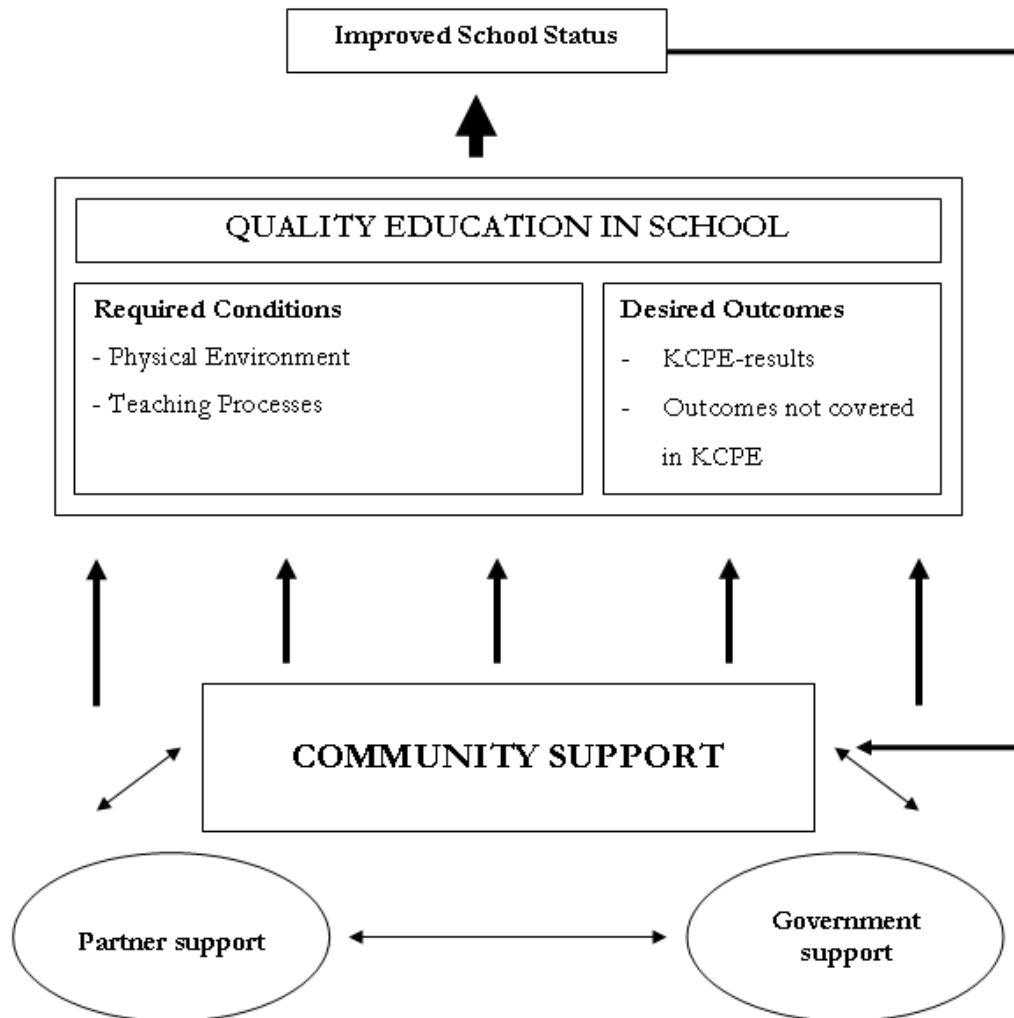

Figure 2: Community support in relation to the development of quality education in school

This model has some limitations. First, the model has not been tested empirically. The model is only based on the findings from the interviews. It would be interesting to find out whether the direct link between school status and community involvement is valid, and whether community involvement significantly increases or not. Secondly, the model doesn't take in challenging factors or unforseen negative influence. For example influential leaders with negative attitudes within the community might prevent increased involvement. Nevertheless, the model visualises how respondents view the development of quality education.

Improvements for quality education: the next step
Next to the present challenges and already made achievements, improvements should give priorities of what is the next step to better quality education. These are based on the challenges schools face, because the challenges make what has to be improved, and on the achievements because these have already been improved. Improvements are thus the desired achievements for quality education in the near future. Improvements can vary between schools as every school faces different challenges, achievements and thus improvements. The amount of respondents that point out different sub categories of improvements for quality education are displayed in Table 4.

Improvements for quality education	Head teachers (14)	Teachers (12)	Local partners (4)	Total (30)
EDUCATIONAL FACTORS				
Physical environment	6	3	0	9
Teaching processes	8	5	3	16
CONTEXTUAL FACTORS				
Community support	4	1	1	6
Government support	1	0	0	1
Partner support	5	0	4	9

Table 4: Amount of quotations on improvements for quality education

The educational context
Just as is done with achievements, physical and non-physical improvements can be distinguished likewise. For the *physical improvements*, it is surprising that none of the local partners have mentioned the *physical environment* in the category of improvements. They tend to focus on partner support and teaching processes, suggesting these are more contributing factors to quality education. *Physical improvements* are about the *physical environment* such as buildings, teaching aids and classrooms that are not sufficient. But also because of the disproportional ratios human resources should be improved, meaning more staff is needed. "It's most required that we need adequate teachers, there's understaffing now, classrooms, furniture, books… It's strained now, pushed beyond its limits. There's a big need for classrooms and staff." These physical improvements of buildings, facilities and human resources are factors that can be improved through partner, government and community support. Again community support is suggested as high but challenging potential because on the one hand the community is not always found very helpful but on the other hand the community is also considered vital as they influence the educational context through support and cooperation and the contextual factors through cooperative attitudes and values towards education.

The *non-physical improvements* are about *teaching processes*. Again, teaching content and teacher support play an important role in these processes. *Teaching processes* is the sub category that is mentioned by most respondents, distributed between head teachers, teachers and local partners.

Firstly the *teaching content* in the classroom can be improved in better time management because too much time is spent on marking and not all the learners can be reached. This is also in connection with the *disproportional ratios* in school and thus in the classrooms. "A solution should be found for the marking, too much time is spent on doing that and the slow learners can't be reached. 35 minutes is too short to give them feedback. More teachers should be welcomed, because that would mean less work. Also the salary is not sufficient. I have to do my own farming to feed my family and because of these worries about money we are stressed and preoccupied and can't teach properly". Next to that the teaching of morals, skills and attitudes can be improved through

Religious Christian Education, guiding and counselling implementation and *teacher attitudes*. Furthermore ECDE should be improved because this is supposed to give a good foundation for education. "The ECDE construction is helping and improving the learning. Foundation is the basis. That is for the building, but also for ECDE".

Secondly quality education can be improved through *teacher support*. Teachers point out they feel a need for knowledge sharing and learning in their jobs. "Children don't seem to like to learn. In some schools they do, I'd like to visit these schools to learn from these teachers but that has to be arranged top-down and the ministry doesn't listen, doesn't provide". It's not always the teachers themselves who see the need of training: "Teachers should be assisted to know what quality education is. Some teachers just teach. This is partly the government's responsibility but we also try to do in-service activities." But not only in their profession should teachers be assisted, in some schools there's a need for improved attitudes. An important factor in this is commitment, "Teachers are trying. We're not all the same. The majority is committed. Some teachers need guiding and counselling, and officers to check on their work". Attitudes should be shaped in a way that schools want to move forward and assist other schools to move forward as well. "HFH already provided many facilities. But what they also do is shape attitudes, in management challenges. For example diversify in ways to teach. We are the ones managing the schools, they've enabled us. We should lead in showing interest, moving forward. Also what HFH does is workshops, exposure to new ways. We should partner with someone and pass the sharing through interaction or common activities." Supposedly these workshops, seminars or meetings should be organized with community, partner and government support.

Then lastly many schools point out a solution is needed to pay attention to *special needs*. Giving each child the required individual attention is challenging, but another challenge is paying attention to the most vulnerable ones such as orphans, to special needs, overaged pupils and also to the girl child. Some of these would be better off with boarding facilities because of unstable homes. Girl education should be emphasized as well because although most of the girls go to school through FPE, they are the ones who drop out easiest because of pregnancies, early marrying and home requirements.

Contextual factors: cooperation

Improvements in the contextual factors are concerning cooperation. Although government support is only mentioned by one respondent, the contextual factors are considered important as to improve cooperation. This cooperation should be within the school, between schools and between school and support givers like community, government and partners. Within the school it has already been found important that good cooperation between teachers, head teacher and management team is established. For some school this is challenging, for others good cooperation is already achieved and for some this can still be improved. As is mentioned above, teachers' attitudes play an important and vital role in improving quality education. It is required that staff has attitudes that lead to moving forward. This moving forward also requires cooperation from community and government. *Community support* is required to monitor children more closely and to improve resources in the school. "The next step towards better education I think is we should have the parents closer to monitor the children. Encourage the educated parents to be a good example, a role model." *Government support* is required in practical ways such as arranging activities for knowledge sharing, workshops and seminars, community sensitization activities and also in providing in (human) resources. Through the arranging of meetings and the knowledge sharing from *partner support*, teaching processes can be improved. By involving the community and collaborating with government and schools, partners can enable the improvement of

quality education "they [HFH] are able to collaborate with the government, and the government is not able to do it".

Improvements for quality education are thus mainly in the categories of *teaching processes* and *community support*. *Disproportional ratios* or a big workload are challenges that need working on. Also improvements through active guiding and counselling and ECDE implementation would establish achievements in *teaching processes*. Next to that knowledge sharing and commitment are key factors concerning *teacher support*. For the category of *community support*, cooperation between school and community is and would be a large improvement. Not only in practical support but also in decision making and monitoring pupils.

Different roles, one goal
As already mentioned in the previous, a variety of involved parties play a role in achieving quality education. For example in 'achievements for quality education' it was stated that the support of a partner like HFH is "a springboard towards quality education" and that community support is seen as a constant influence on quality education through improving the educational context as well as attitudes in the home background. To get a clearer view of different roles of involved parties in working on quality education, this section will give an overview of their roles on the basis of what is reported in the interview. Firstly, the role of HFH in their work on quality education is described, in which also local partners and schools have reported their view of this role. After that more insight is given in the involvement of local partners and the role of schools in working on quality education. Lastly some comments are made about community involvement, as this is an important topic in HFH policy and work in the field.

Harambee Foundation Holland
    The goal of HFH is to "contribute to a substantial improvement of the educational opportunities and living conditions of the local population in development countries focused on primary and secondary schools in Western Kenya" (HFH, 2009). They do this mainly through the improvement of infrastructure (buildings, materials), involving the local community in the process. This is not only improving the schools, but another aim is to work on community development. In their policy, HFH doesn't want to focus on building work only, but also on development of management issues and teaching quality in schools and on sharing knowledge between schools in order to improve quality education.
    HFH's work locally is supported by local partners that are closely involved. Four local partners are interviewed, of which all four have different background and relations in the field. One of the partners, the District Education Officer, represents the government. Another partner represents a larger organization working on community development (IcFem). Then thirdly, one of the partners is a pastor in Roman Catholic church and is involved in HFH projects in Roman Catholic schools. And the last partner is not connected to a larger organization but has a large professional experience and over the years established a good relationship with HFH. As all four partners have very different backgrounds, they all have different roles in supporting HFH in working on quality education, and their views on the work of HFH might differ as well. Within the comments on the role of different parties in contributing to quality education, a distinction is made between work activities and work attitudes, for the work not only consists of certain actions but is done with a vision as well. *Activities* are specific actions that are undertaken in order to improve quality education. *Attitudes* describe a certain vision or behaviour towards the way of improving quality education (a 'view on quality education'). Two partners focus on the *activities* of HFH: "they improve quality education through improving infrastructure". One of them also mentions seminars and workshops that are arranged by HFH on specific topics that help improve quality education. Two other partners mention HFH *activities* focused on community involvement such as workshops or seminars on good parenting. Three out of the four partners mention a certain *attitude* that is important in the work HFH does. This *attitude* is the establishing of a relationship through shared responsibility, support and collaboration. In their work "relationship and communication are key issues".
    What is reported from the head teachers and teachers in the schools is on a similar not, for the same *activities* are mentioned: the improvement of infrastructure and the exchanging of knowledge through workshop and seminars. These *activities* result in on the

one hand improved learning processes and on the other hand improved (more positive and committed) attitudes from teachers and community. In addition, the school status improves which increases motivation and commitment. Also the HFH work *attitude* gives a moral boost to schools and community, through which motivation and commitment improve. Schools report that HFH sends good messages through letters and advice, and shows what sustainable improvement is.

Because of their policy in which community development has a special focus, the community is also highlighted in this section. Although the community has not been interviewed or asked about their role in achieving quality education for this paper, some expectations and reporting are made about community involvement

Local partners
Not only HFH has a role in improving quality education, also their local partners are involved in this process. As was stated above, the four local partners interviewed have different backgrounds and therefore also different roles. Especially the representative of the government is more involved in policies than are the others. One common *activity* all four partners report is monitoring. This is the monitoring of the progress of HFH-projects, but also the monitoring of processes in school that can contribute to quality education. This can be on maintenance, budget, building work, but also the relational environment (e.g. teamwork) and good leadership. One local partner mentions his role is not only monitoring but also some counselling of teachers. Through the counselling of teachers, *teaching processes* are worked on. Other roles the local partners fulfil are in being a representative of HFH, to supervise their work in schools, to work on community involvement and to establish good relationships with schools and with partners. These activities are done with an *attitude* of shared responsibility and support. Also, local partners are a link between schools and HFH in order to ensure a certain degree of accountability.

Schools
Not only HFH and her local partners strive to improve quality education through their projects. Schools and their school environment play a vital role in achieving sustainable improvements in quality education. HFH and her local partners are "a springboard towards better quality education", but the school environment is the environment in which it should be maintained, sustained and in which there should be strived for continuous improvement.. Through HFH-projects the school environment is to be empowered, which suggests the school environment "takes over and leads in showing interest and moving forward".

The role of the head teachers in schools can be divided into the *activities* they undertake and the *attitudes* they carry out. For the *activities*, these are mainly the daily responsibilities of a head teacher such as record keeping, curriculum planning and supervising, resource management, budget planning, administration and coordination in the school. In contrast, the *attitudes* head teachers communicate as being part of their role are closely linked to 'good leadership'. Although not all head teachers mention this attitude, head teachers who do mention this attitude point out the importance of a vision on quality education and the delegation of this vision to staff; establishing good relationships and cooperation with management, staff and parents; represents the school and guides and networks with other schools. He is a leader "who works through people"; relationships, communication and cooperation seem to be key issues in their leadership, not only within the school, but also with parents and other schools. "My role as a head teacher is to be a source for parents support in providing basic needs for their child's education and a counsellor to advice parents. Next to that I guide teachers and network

with other schools. I delegate to the deputy head teacher and teachers, this also makes the staff committed to the work within the school." Through the harmonisation and establishment of good relationships there is a sense of cooperation and as a result staff is more committed to the work. Commitment is key to ensuring student achievement and improving quality education (Harris & Muijs, 2005). Delegation, shared responsibility and teamwork/collaboration are mentioned as achievements in teaching processes as well as important roles of a head teacher. Through these factors the head teacher is not the only one leading the school but there is a case of "teacher leadership". Harris and Muijs (2005), in their work on teacher leadership, use the definition of teacher leadership as a model of leadership in which teaching staff at various levels within the organisation have the opportunity to lead (Harris & Muijs, 2005). Later they point out that "teacher leadership is connected with professional initiative and learning, both within and between schools, that is focused on improvement at classroom, department/year group and whole-school levels" (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 89). So teacher leadership is to be found on different levels in different contexts, and through teacher leadership the school culture (Fullan, 2004) has a foundation made up of several staff members. An interviewed teacher has put it as: "We are the ones managing the schools (…) we should lead in showing interest, in moving forward." So leadership doesn't concern one person or the head teacher only, teacher leadership creates shared responsibility and teamwork which create a committed school culture. For creating this school culture, having a shared vision in school is most important (Leithwood, Harris & Strauss, 2010; Harris & Muijs, 2005). In interviews it was mentioned that teamwork makes the workload less challenging and improves teaching methods through sharing knowledge. This is also part of the school culture and shared leadership. Another teacher who is very satisfied about the head teacher in the school emphasizes the importance of good relationships between staff in the school and the influence of the head teacher in this: "the head teacher should harmonise staff, know the teachers including their problems and identify tasks to be done. He has to be disciplined and honest, for example he should not hide and be transparent about resources. And he's in charge of stakeholders. The head teacher now is a patient man and good with people. He listens, digests ideas to find a solution. He is not authoritative but cooperative" So next to the daily activities of a head teacher, he or she is also supposed to be the one carrying out a vision with certain attitudes that is focused on the continuous improvement of quality education.

When looking at the activities and attitudes of HFH and head teachers of the schools, their activities have no direct link but their attitudes are both focused on improving quality education. Head teachers that are striving for good leadership are highly involved in *teaching processes* next to their daily management activities. HFH is mainly working in the improvement of *physical environment* but also improves *teaching processes* through workshops or seminars. Also head teachers report that the advice and messages HFH shares with them are useful. So for HFH, in their goal to "contribute to a substantial improvement of the educational opportunities and living conditions of the local population in development countries focused on primary and secondary schools in Western Kenya", the head teachers of the schools are the link between HFH and the school environment as they, through good leadership, can improve teaching processes, delegate a vision and involve staff and parents.

Community
When discussing different roles in achieving quality education, community involvement has again shown to be of high importance. Although the community wasn't a factor asked after specifically, in the interviews their influence was again a topic of interest. Also

because of a special focus in the policy of HFH, it is interesting to gain insight in what is mentioned about the role of the community in quality education.

Firstly the community is expected to show involvement in the building activities initiated by HFH. The community has to provide in at least 10% of the building work (HFH, 2009) This involvement is important because "otherwise they take it for granted" and this is not in line with ideals of self-reliance. But not only these *activities* are expected from the community, other expectations from the community concerning *attitudes* are in parenting and the value of education. Head teachers in particular expect some degree of cooperation and parents taking their responsibilities. "As a head teacher my role is to ensure that students get quality education. I do this through monitoring teachers and sensitizing parents. Some parents don't show up at school when there are meetings so I always try to go to public places I'm invited as well, for example at funerals where I can speak about girls and education". This attitude and the need of involving parents have also evolved from the implementation of FPE. Communities seem to have the attitude that the government will take care of educational development and therefore communities don't have to provide themselves anymore. This passivity should develop towards involvement leading to school support from the community and self-reliance.

But next to expectations and their supposed role in contributing to quality education, community development is a goal of HFH-projects as well. What is reported is that through the HFH-project the community learns what it means to have something sustainable. "HFH are good partners, they are together with the community. Instead of under a tree they helped us with sustainable buildings. The community learns what it's like to have something permanent". Another head teacher reports that "thanks to HFH the community knows what it means to invest, to create something sustainable. It makes the community more self-reliant". Other 'community outcomes' that are achieved through HFH-projects are that parents are proud of what they have achieved and they value education more. These are important community attitudes, because as is said in '*achievements for quality education'*, the continuous improvement of a school is carried by *community involvement*.

A last comment that has to be made about community development is that the community does not only support the schools, schools can also feed back to the community. "A school has needs but an environment also has needs, for example in feeding. We can feed the school but maybe the reason that children don't eat is because the community needs fertilizers. So the school can cooperate in environment issues and community development". A school should thus not only be carried by the community, also be part of the community for cooperation lies with both camps.

Discussion and conclusion

The goal of this study is to gain insight in important topics concerning quality education through explorative research and to create a tool in order to monitor the development of quality education in HFH- primary schools. Head teachers or representatives of fourteen HFH-primary schools were interviewed. In twelve of these schools, interviews were held with teachers as well. In addition, four local partners of HFH were interviewed. This information is used to get a view of what the important topics are concerning quality education 'in the field' of HFH work.

Conclusion

The results section gives an overview of what respondents point out in the interviews. A short overview will be given of the results within each section of views, challenges, achievements, improvements and roles. Then another question to answer is what conclusions can be drawn from these results?

For the views on quality education, a common view describes required conditions and desired outcomes for quality education. A *required condition* is a certain mode or state that is necessary to offer quality education. A *desired outcome* is a wanted result of quality education. Within the required conditions, *contextual factors* are separated from *educational factors*. *Contextual factors* are modes or states outside educational settings that are necessary to offer quality education, and the one and only important topic in this is *support*, the activity of providing or maintaining quality education by supplying money or necessities. For the *educational context*, a mode or state concerning school, teaching and learning that is necessary to offer quality education, the two sub categories mentioned in views on quality education are the *physical environment* and *teaching processes*. The *physical environment* is described as the conditions in school consisting of buildings, materials and facilities. *Teaching processes* are defined as contexts in which the operation of educating a person takes place. These *required conditions* should lead to desired outcomes of quality education in good *KCPE-results* but particularly in *learning outcomes that are not covered in KCPE*. These *desired outcomes* describe the ideal of the attainment of skills, morals and certain attitudes to make pupils self-reliant. This should therefore be a focus within *teaching processes*. This common mode of looking at quality education is used as a reference for the other categories of challenges, achievements and improvements. It should be noted that only head teachers and teachers mention good *KCPE-results* as *desired outcomes* for quality education, whereas local partners do not mention this at all and focus on *outcomes that are not covered in KCPE*. An explanation for this difference could be that schools and especially head teachers, considering their role in school management, feel responsible and accountable for school results. Within the educational system, KCPE-results are a vital factor in education; therefore it is likely that schools value these results more than local partners.

Challenges that are mentioned by most respondents are about *teaching processes, pupils* and *community support*. The physical environment and teaching processes are very much affected by the *disproportional ratios* in the school (e.g. teacher:pupil-ratio or book:pupil-ratio). Another influential factor are the *attitudes with regard to (the importance of) education at home* that influence community support and pupils' attitudes negatively. Furthermore, the lack of cooperation between school and community affects *teaching processes* as well because schools don't feel supported by the community. So these three factors of teaching processes, pupils and community support are linked in various directions and therefore challenges in one sub category affect challenges in other sub categories as well. Surprisingly, for challenges concerning support, none of the respondents mentions challenges about partner support. A reason for this might be that relationships with partners are not experienced as challenging since schools are grateful

for their support. Another reason could be that challenges concerning partner support are not mentioned as the interviewer is considered to be a representative of a partner (HFH).

Physical environment, *teaching processes* and *community support* are categories of achievements that are mentioned by most respondents. The *physical environment* makes pupils and teachers more comfortable which improves motivation, and also *teaching processes* are better because of improved ratios in materials (e.g. book:pupil). An explanation for the high amount of respondents that mention improved *physical environment* is that HFH has worked on this in all of the interviewed schools. Therefore, the mention of achievements in *teaching processes* may be a more significant result. Although their partner (HFH) has a focus on building work, head teachers, teachers and local partners stress the importance of *teaching processes*. Achievements in this sub category are made through knowledge sharing, improved commitment and good leadership. Concerning *teaching content*, achievements in active guiding and counselling and ECDE-implementation have been found important contributions. These achievements lead to an improved *school status*. Strikingly, only head teachers, and no teachers or local partners, mention the *school status* as an important achievement. An explanation for this could be that head teachers function in a management role and therefore they consider school status as an important achievement. The contextual factor mentioned by most respondents is *community support*. Respondents expect the community to be involved continuously, so that the school development is carried by the community. Partners and government are expected to enable and to serve as 'a springboard' towards quality education.

Also the category of improvements for quality education points out the importance of *teaching processes* and *community support*. This is in line with focuses in challenges and achievements mentioned above. Improvements concerning *teaching processes* suggest active guiding and counselling, ECDE implementation, a solution for the workload and investing in *teacher support* through sharing knowledge and improving commitment. For the category of *community support*, cooperation between school and community would be a major improvement. Not only in practical support but also in decision making and monitoring pupils. For the *physical improvements*, it is surprising that none of the local partners have mentioned the *physical environment* in the category of improvements. They tend to focus on *partner support* and *teaching processes*, suggesting these factors make a larger contribution to quality education. The focus of the local partners on *teaching processes* instead of *physical envirnoment* could be explained by thier role of monitoring and working on teamwork in the schools on behalf of HFH. However, it could also be seen as a requirement or guideline of how they view the next step towards improving quality education in schools.

Lastly, concerning the roles in working on quality education, different parties prefer different sets of activities in order to reach one goal: establishing quality education. HFH undertakes building activities as well as seminars and workshops to improve the *physical environment* of the school and *teaching processes*. HFH works with an attitude that values shared responsibility and collaboration. Local partners are involved in supervising and monitoring: of building activities and the of processes in school. Their attitude is to establish good relationships with a sense of shared responsibility. The roles of head teachers in schools are found to be vital. Next to their daily management activities, they exert a major influence on *teaching processes* through good leadership. Here, delegation (leading to shared responsibility in schools) and commitment are key factors. Lastly, *community involvement* is expected through providing materials and shared decision making. But also community development is a goal of HFH work in showing the community what it means to have something sustainable and making the community more self-

reliant. Both these factors lead to an increased valuation of education in the community to a community that values education more and therefore increased cooperation between school and community.

All in all, the topics raised by most respondents are in *teaching processes* and *community support*. In 'views on quality education' the focus on the teaching of skills, morals and attitudes is a leading subject, which is seen as a challenge. Important achievements or improvements to be made about this are in ECDE-implmenation and the implementation of guiding and counselling. Other issues concerning *teaching processes* are in teacher support, for which guiding and counselling are important, but sharing knowledge and improving teacher commitment as well. Here, the *support of HFH, community* and good leadership of the head teacher are important roles. For the sub category of *community support*, negative *attitudes* within the community challenge the establishment of quality education through the influence this attitudehas on pupils and the lack of cooperation. In achievements for quality education, *community involvement* was found to be a key issue for improving quality education.The reasoning is that through improvements in school, community involvement will be stimulated and cooperation will increase. Through the work of HFH this process is enabled and communities have been found helpful to schools not only in providing materials but also in shared decision making and monitoring pupils. So whereas partners such as HFH function as a springboard to better quality education, the cooperation between community and school carries the development of the school towards continuous quality education improvement.

Discussion

These findings are important for organizations and people working in the field of improving quality education. Although this study was conducted only in HFH-schools in a specific area, in Western-Kenya, many NGO's are working in the same field and many countries are facing the same developmental challenges in education (e.g. Uganda has the same FPE-implementation). Although no school, organisation or relationship is the same, the results might apply to developmental organisations and schools in similar conditions. For HFH and her partners, these findings give insight in their last ten years of work and could give directions to their policy in order to continue making progress in quality education.

It should be mentioned that this research including its the conclusions and implications, have known some limitations. Firstly, because of the intercultural aspects when conducting the interviews, some bias might have occurred in interpretation and reporting. Interpretation might have been biased because of cultural differences in communication. Furthermore, the interviewer may have been perceived in relation to HFH and this could have caused socially desirable answers. Another limitation is in the descriptive explorative character of the research. Because of the open-ended questions important topics may have been overlooked as they didn't come up in the interviews. Because the data are purely qualitative, significant relations couldn't be tested while it would have been interesting to test and confirm the relations between different sub categories quantatively.

But despite these limitations, some apparently surprising findings have come up. Firstly the KCPE-results of the students determine whether or not they are allowed to secondary schools, but respondents value *learning outcomes that are not covered in KCPE-results* more. Furthermore, *teaching processes* are mentioned by a significantly large number of respondents, leading to the question whether investments in infrastructure should still be first priority. are still necessary. *Community support* is another highly valued aspect of

quality education, however what can be expected from the community considering their mostly challenging economic status?

When looking at the results of this study, the large focus on KCPE-results in the education system of Kenya is surprising as respondents as well as the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC, see below) describe other factors as contributing to quality education as well. The education system is arranged in a way that follow-up education is dependent upon KCPE-grades. KCPE-grades also determines school status and within schools and educational environments, upgrading KCPE-grades is an important focus. This induces a curriculum that lacks the teaching of life skills, morals and attitudes, and a preference for secondary schools over other types of education such as polytechnics that might fit certain students better. The system thus does not support all aspects of quality education, but has a focus on standardized learning outcomes measured in exams. But as it is found that respondents value other outcomes that are not covered in KCPE more, these should be measured as well.

The preference for improving *teaching processess* is surprising, especially when compared to the (lower) number of respondents that focus on improving infrastructure. Apparently *teaching processes* are more affecting than infrastructure is to quality education. This is particularly surprising because teachers also point out the need for teaching materials. The seemingly logical thought that a suitable building and teaching materials are necessary conditions for teaching to take place, does not correspond to actual practice, nor to preferences of respondents. Quality education can be seen through what is called 'a deficit notion', a notion focusing on what poor quality is. This view highlights the negative influence of overcrowding and lack of resources for good quality education. However,views are moving towards a different conceptualisation of teaching and learning processes (O'Sullivan, 2006). The focus on inputs and resources in school is making way for other themes in quality education as research has found resources do not influence quality education ('desired outcomes') as much as teaching processes do (Hanushek, 1997; Riddell, 1998; Chapman and Adams, 2002). This does not mean that no attention should be paid to resources, materials and facilities. These conditions need to be worked on as well, while also investing and improving *teaching processes*. For school children should not suffer from long-taking processes of first achieving the one and then the other. It does also mean that *teaching processes* are indeed an important factor and that respondents point out issues that are playing a role in global policy developments as well (UNESCO, 2005; UNCHR, 2001). A quality impact evaluation of Education since FPE in Kenya's neighbouring country Uganda has also shown that investing in school management and teacher training is effective in raising quality education (IOB, 2008). So although investing in *teaching processes* does seem to be 'the next step' to quality education after having improved infrastructure, it appears to be 'the simultaneious step at the same time' in improving quality education, meaning working on the *physical evnrionment* and *teaching processes* at the same time.

Then lastly the other 'hot topic' in the interviews appeared to be *community support*. Since the implementation of FPE, communities have been found to be passive in contributing to schools (Nyamute,2006). This is a challenge to schools because the government doesn't provide for everything that schools need and since FPE schools face challenges in disproportional ratios due to overenrolment. On top of that, communities do not always see the importance of education and negative attitudes at home affect children's learning processes in school. The community is not only a challenge, thanks to *community support* schools have made achievements in pupil monitoring, enabling of lunch programs and decision making. In order to improve *community support*, respondents point out the importance of community sensitisation. Also Uganda, that faces the same challenges in community support, suggests the activity of community sensitisation (IOB,

2008). Apparently communities have a lot to offer in quality education development, although many communities face challenges in *means at home* due to poverty. But when looking at the achievements, these are mostly achievements made by sharing knowlegde, sharing responsibilities and shared decision making. And these are achievements that are not necessarily dependent upon means at home. Meaning the biggest contribution communities can make is in cooperating.

Practical implications: the HFH-tool

The question that is still to be faced is how to measure quality education? Just as learning outcomes are not measured by KCPE-results alone, quality education is not only measured by ratios and numbers. The Dutch inspection measures student learning outcomes as an indicator of good quality education, but also *teaching processes* such as instruction time, child friendlyness, individual child attention and the quality of school management (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2009). In their quality assurance the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) takes into account of pupil background factors and development partners, next to learning outcomes, *teaching processes*, infrastructure and the quality of school management (KNEC, 2010). When it turns out that schools are low-performing after quality assessment, schools are supposed to do action planning and make progress. The Dutch inspection for example requires school management to set aims for progress and evaluates these repeatedly (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2009). So when measuring quality education, not only numbers and results can give information about quality, but also checklists of ongoing processes and indicators of good management. Therefore the tool that is the second goal of this study consists of checklists concerning ongoing processes in the school contributing to quality education.

In order to create the tool, the idea of inside perspective or views from the field is maintained. This means that the aspects occuring in the tool are aspects that are mentioned in the interviews. Interviews were searched for aspects that influence or contribute to quality education in the schools. This can be mentioned as a required condition in views on quality education. For example concerning the *physical environment* clean water is mentioned as a required condition for quality education. This same subject of clean water can be a challenge as some schools report they lack clean water. Also it could have been mentioned as an achievement, when the school has achieved the access to clean water, or as an improvement when a respondent finds clean water is important for the improvement of quality education. In this manner several aspects have been identified and are now present in the tool. The sub categories that are used in the result-section of this paper have been the framework for creating the tool. But as the tool functions in order to monitor quality education in the school, some contextual factors are left out. *Governemnt support* is something schools have little influence on and is therefore not added in the tool. Also *partner support* is left out, as the tool is used by a school partner. Concerning contextual factors only *community support* is therefore taken into account in the tool. This is because community support was found vital in establishing quality education and the only supportgiver schools have a significant amount of influence on. Furthermore, the desired outcomes of quality education describe *KCPE-results* and *outcomes that are not covered in KCPE*. These outcomes concern skills, morals and certain attitudes useful in life and society, but are thus too difficult to measure. The attainment of these *outcomes that are not covered in KCPE* though is through certain teaching content such as guiding and counselling. The possibility of achieving desired outcomes are thus covered in the category of *teaching processes* in the tool. *KCPE-results* are not measured in the tool, as these are clear outcomes but also outcomes that respondents find are not fully representative for quality education and should not be valued as much.

The result of the HFH-tool, consisting of these aspects, can be found in Appendix 1. The left column of the table consists of the aspects that contribute to quality education according to respondents. Each aspect can be judged on a scale with a maximum of 3 points. The scale is depending on the aspect, as some aspects have a scale from 1 to 3 and other aspects are made out of a checklist in which points can be gained from 0,5 to 3. Each sub category can gain a total of 12 points. Through giving points to each aspect, monitoring is possible as weaker and stronger aspects can be identified. Also through repeated measuring (for example once every six months) development can be monitored. This measuring can be done by HFH or her local partners, in cooperation with the head teacher of each school.

It should be mentioned that this tool is based on what is retrieved from the interviews and not from quantitative data. Therefore, it could be possible that one aspect is more influential on quality education than another, but gains equal points in the tool. For example, disproportional ratios could affect quality education stronger than attention for special needs, but they are assessed with the same range of scores (max. 3 points). This is due to a limitation of the study: only qualitative data are gained and no significant relationships between quantitative data were measured. The qualitative data did not allow to draw conclusions on the relative influence of different aspects. The goal of the tool is to monitor the development of quality education and not to judge the school with a grade. This should be kept in mind when using the tool: the focus is on assessing stronger and weaker aspects so as to monitor which problems should be tackled. As the tool is only developed with this study but is not tested, it is recommended to review the tool when it has been used for practical implications.

For HFH this means that with this study and with this tool, they can monitor school develoment in a broad perspective. The tool gives guidelines for monitoring school development and the study gives insight in ongoing processes in primary schools. But not only this is useful for HFH, also schools and local partners may benefit for the development of quality education is 'joint work' and a shared responsibility.

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Appendix 1: the HFH-tool

Name of the school:	POINTS
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	

Disproportional ratios
   o   Adequate teacher:pupil ratio
   o   Adequate book:pupil ratio
   o   Adequate class sizes
For each tick 1 point: a maximum of 3 points possible
	... * 1 = ... (max 3)

Water access *1=not at all; 2=some/not clean; 3=clean water access*	1 2 3
Facilities for girls (lavatories, sanitary towels) *1=not at all; 2=some; 3=adequate*	1 2 3
Lunch program for children *1=not at all; 2=only for some; 3=available for all children*	1 2 3
	TOTAL: ... out of 12
TEACHING PROCESSES	

School culture
   o   Delegation of duties to teachers (shared responsibilities)
   o   Guiding and counseling for teachers
   o   In-service training
   o   Teachers are committed
   o   Teachers are cooperative
   o   Teachers and management/administration are cooperative
For each tick 0,5 point: a maximum of 3 points possible
	... * 0,5 = ... (max 3)

Teamwork
   o   Arranged knowlegde sharing for teachers
   o   Collaborative action planning
   o   Formation of an academic council
   o   Lunch program for staff
   o   Regular staff meetings or additional briefings
   o   Teachers are sharing classes
For each tick 0,5 point: a maximum of 3 points possible
	... * 0,5 = ... (max 3)

Teaching content
   o   Active guiding and counselling for pupils
   o   Adequate ECDE implementation
   o   Individual learning aims for pupils
For each tick 1 point: a maximum of 3 points possible
	... * 1 = ... (max 3)

Attention for special needs *1=not at all; 2=only some; 3=special arrangements made*	1 2 3
	TOTAL: ... out of 12
COMMUNITY SUPPORT	
Sensitisation activities to improve community's attitude *1=not at all; 2=adequate activities; 3=not necessary: community is cooperative*	1 2 3

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
   o   Collaborative action planning
   o   Good turnup of parents in classmeetings
   o   Good turnup of parents in PTA-meetings
   o   PTA-teachers in school
   o   Shared decision making
   o   Willing to assist in achieving aims
For each tick 0,5 point: a maximum 3 points possible
	... * 0,5 = ... (max 3)

Parents are assisting in monitoring child's progress *1=not at all; 2=only some; 3=adequate parent cooperation*	1 2 3
Community is supporting in paying fees and providing in school's needs *1=not at all; 2=not enough; 3=adequate community support*	1 2 3
	TOTAL: ... out of 12
TOTAL SCORE ON QUALITY EDUCATION	**... out of 36**