BRIEF ON MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (KENYA) PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

1.0 Background
The Peace Education Programme was introduced in February 2008. The aim of this programme is to impart knowledge and skills for peaceful co-existence and inculcate values such as tolerance, appreciation of diversity, patriotism, nationhood, interdependence, respect for and sanctity for human life and appreciation of the environment. The programme is therefore intended to facilitate behavior change among members of the school community and in particular the learners, who are young and at the formative stage.

This programme is implemented through partnerships and collaboration with Development Partners and members of the civil society. Other partners implement community based programmes that serve to complement initiatives through the school.

2.0 Rationale
• The government of Kenya recognises the importance of education in promoting peace at the present time and in the future. In this regard, the Ministry of Education aims at ensuring that both the content and the process of education promote peace, social justice, respect for human rights.
• Kenya is committed to providing basic and quality education to every child. In view of this, it is the country’s desire to provide a learning environment that is harmonious and safe for all. Further on, integration of peace education promotes development of values and attitudes for positive living hence facilitate holistic development of the learners. The country therefore puts emphasis on education as the very foundation through which a just and peaceful society can be built.
• Peace Education is in tandem with the Kenya Vision 2030 which is the blue print for economic growth and development in Kenya. The vision through one of its pillars, the Political Pillar, envisages enhancement of patriotism and nationhood. In particular, the pillar provides for strategies in peace building and conflict management with an aim of;

(i) promoting processes for national and intercommunity dialogue in order to build harmony among ethnic, racial and other interests groups;
(ii) promoting peace building and reconciliation to improve conflict management and ensure sustained peace within the country; and
(iii) inculcating a culture of respect for the sanctity of human life that does not resort to the use of violence as an instrument of resolving personal and community disputes. This should start with the family, schools, the church and all the public institutions.”

• The post election violence witnessed in Kenya in 2007/2008 indicated the need for enhancing skills and values for peaceful coexistence among Kenyans and in particular the young people as they were extensively involved in the violence.

3.0 Objectives

• To prepare learners to become responsible citizens and equip them with skills that promote peace and human dignity at all levels of interaction.
• To make learners aware of causes of conflict and ways of resolving conflicts peacefully.
• To use the classroom as a springboard through which the global values of positive interdependence, social justice and participation in decision making processes are learned and practiced by learners.
• To foster positive images that leads to respect for cultural diversity so that young people may learn to live peaceably in diverse communities around the world.
• To promote nationhood and citizenship among learners.
While this objectives basically focus on the learners it is appreciated that they can only be achieved when members of the school community including the parents embrace peace.

4.0: Achievements

- Trained 18 National Master Trainers on peace education
- Developed Peace Education Training Manuals
- Developed primary school Teacher Activity Books for;
  - Classes 1-3
  - Classes 4-5
  - Classes 6-8
- Trained over 8,000 field officers and teachers on peace education
- Launched the peace education programme by the Hon. Minister of Education.
- Disseminated of 50,000 copies of peace education materials.
- Developed a draft policy on peace education
- Carried out a monitoring exercise for the peace education programme and development of a peace education monitoring report
- Sensitisation of 3,000 principals of secondary schools on peace education
- Organized a national Peace education Campaign where children and young people appeal for peaceful coexistence in the society (ongoing)

The campaign incorporates;
  - a peace awareness caravan
  - Peace Torch to all the Counties
  - Peace education campaign forums in all the Counties

5.0: Implementation

Peace Education is participatory and activity oriented. It neither taught as an extra subject in class nor examined as a standalone subject. It is integrated into
all the subjects with the Life Skills Curriculum, social studies and religious studies being the main carrier subjects. It is also implemented through co-curricular activities like music drama festivals, peace clubs among others.

6.0: CHALLENGES

- Effective implementation of Peace Education calls for capacity building of teachers on the methodology of teaching peace education. This is a costly venture.

- The main carrier subject for Peace Education in Kenya is life skills education. Recent evaluation of life skills education in Kenya revealed that the implementation of the curriculum is weak.

- Principles and values imparted through peace education may be in conflict with cultural practices in the community eg in some communities cattle rustling is part of their traditional practice.

7.0 CONCLUSION

Effective implementation of the Peace Education Programme calls for the engagement and concerted effort by all players.