

**EFFECTS OF POOR NUTRITION ON THE LEARNING OF LOWER
PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN 6-9 YEARS IN
NANYUKI NORTH ZONE, CENTRAL DIVISION, LAIKIPIA EAST
DISTRICT, KENYA.**

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ABSTRACT

This is a research report on a study carried out in the Nanyuki North Zone of the Central Division of Laikipia East District. The purpose of the study was to help determine the magnitude of the problem of malnutrition and under nutrition in the area and the effects of the same on learning activities. The target population consisted of all school going children aged between six and nine years numbering about 924 and enrolled in 25 primary school. From this a sample of 200 children and 12 teachers were sampled. The findings reveal the problems are widespread and severe, and have attracted several donor agencies including international NGO's. Findings on learning activities reveal a close relationship between hunger and lack of vital nutrients and the standards of performance in learning activities. However some exceptions were found, among some ethnic groups where inadequate proteins did not to affect performance. Socio- cultural beliefs and practices were found to affect nutrition status and also hindered the distribution of relief food and other interventions. Government interventions were found to be particularly inadequate and need to be strengthened to reduce the 'wastage' of children.

The study also reveals trends in eating habits among children in private primary schools in area near Nanyuki town. Many children are now 'eating out' more and eating the 'the wrong foods' according to the teachers and further research is needed in this area.