



Education  
is  
our Right  
not  
a PRIVILEGE

EFFICACY ASSESSMENT

# Policies on Gender Mainstreaming in Education in Kenya

# Contents

Executive Summary	1
Legal Framework	3
Existing Gaps	4
Recommendations	6

# Executive Summary

Gender equality in all spheres of life is a global priority. Gender equality in education is particularly important as it creates an equitable learning environment where all learners, regardless of gender, possess the same opportunities to succeed. Gender equality policies aim at promoting equal access to education, fosters gender sensitive- curriculum and teaching methods and practices, addresses gender based violence in schools and improves educational outcomes for all genders.

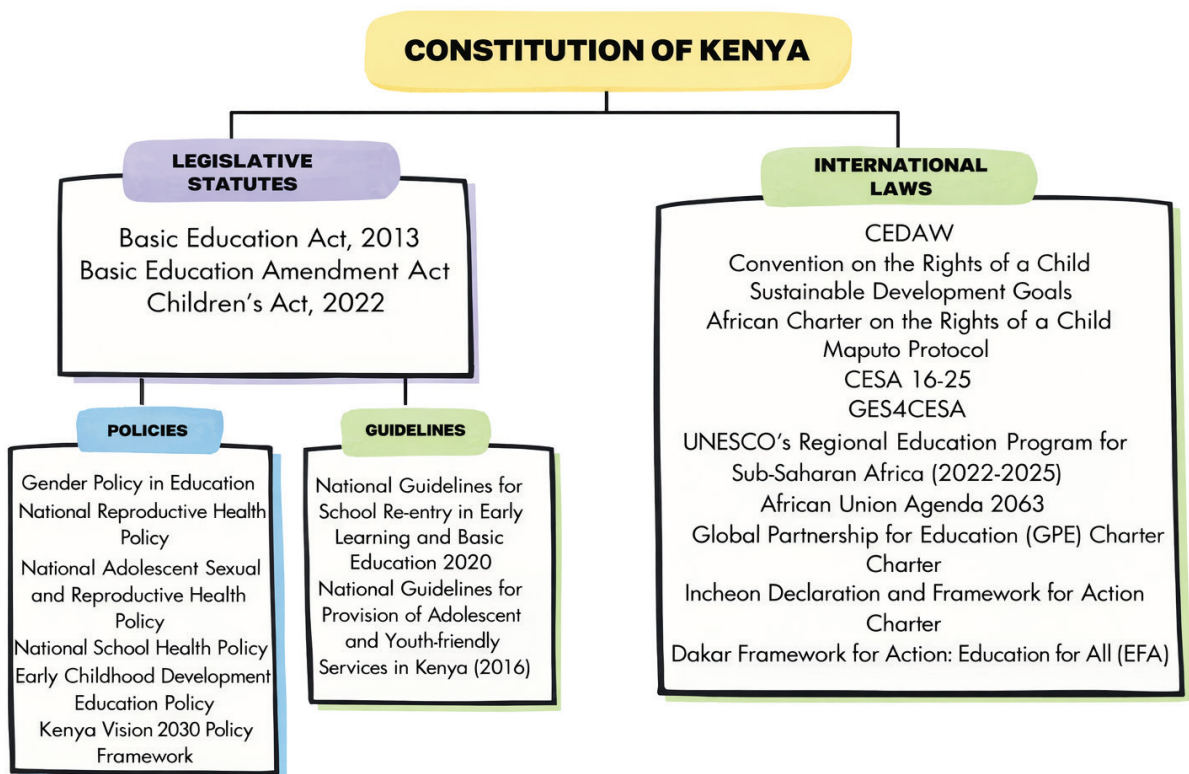
Kenya has made significant progress in advancing gender equality and equity in education through targeted policies and interventions which have been informed by global trends, international law which Kenya is a party. It has developed a robust normative legal framework to promote gender equality and equity in education through among others a Constitution that guarantees the right to education and equality and freedom from discrimination based on any ground. Several other laws and policies have been enacted and developed for the advancement of gender parity and mainstreaming in education as will be shown in this paper.

Despite education being an unalienable right enshrined in most domestic and international policies, gender disparities still exist. In Kenya, these are exacerbated by inadequate implementation of laws and policies, lack of gender responsiveness as well as socio-economic challenges such as poverty and sexual and reproductive health challenges. In addressing gender inequality and inequity in education some gaps have been identified such as; limited implementation of the existing education policies, failure to address and advocate for gender-responsive environments, the policies inability to address economic challenges that contribute to girls lower retention in schools and limited teacher training on gender-responsiveness.

To address these challenges it is recommended that; there needs to be policy and programmatic reforms to ensure gender responsiveness in education, budgetary allocations to cover incidental costs such as menstrual hygiene products, food and transportation, as well as deliberate inclusion of preventive measures to address sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) issues such as school related gender based violence (SRGBV).

# Legal Framework

The normative legislative framework governing gender equality and equity is as illustrated below;



# Existing Gaps

Implementation of policies remains a main challenge in actualizing gender equality in education. The Kenyan government struggles to enforce most of these policies and enforcing gender equality due to lack of resources, especially in rural areas. Even in areas where these policies are enforced, their effectiveness is subpar in many areas. Local policies also fail to address and advocate gender responsiveness environments. Consequently, this leads to increased dropouts among girls, due to issues such as school related gender-based violence and lack of menstrual hygiene management measures amongst others.

Another challenge facing education and affecting the uptake by girls is their inability to address economic issues that contribute to girls' lower retention rates in school. For instance, while free primary and secondary education eliminates tuition fees, parents are often burdened by other indirect costs like transportation, food, and school uniforms and menstrual hygiene products. For families with limited resources, many might prioritize boys' education over girls.

While there are policies addressing negative cultural practices such as child marriage and FGM, that would limit access to education for girls, there are communities especially within rural areas which still hold the practices dear. Consequently, it results in many girls from these areas having limited access to education compared to boys, despite the presence of regulations aimed at protecting and empowering them

Further, there is limited teacher training on gender responsiveness. Most teachers are influenced by their subconscious biases and gender stereotypes about gender which could affect their teaching pedagogies. E.g. the examples they use in class as

well as roles assigned to students. Often the bias indicates a preference toward boys. This could affect academic outcomes for girls thereby discouraging attendance.

Finally, there is a lack of monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the current laws on policies on education towards addressing gender equality. Lack of clear monitoring mechanisms to track gender-specific outcomes. The absence of data disaggregated by gender and region hampers efforts to evaluate progress and refine strategies. Similarly, the emphasis on quantitative metrics, such as enrollment rates, often overshadows qualitative aspects like the quality of education and the socio-cultural dynamics affecting learning experiences.

# Recommendations

To achieve gender equality in education, there have to be policy changes as well as and programmatic changes to supplement the policy changes. One approach to ensure that local policies are effective at increasing girls' access to education is increasing financial support to help cover indirect education costs such as menstrual hygiene products, uniforms and food. As illustrated previously, free primary education rarely materializes in practice since it only covers tuition fees. Therefore, the government must amend its policies to ensure that free education on paper translates to free education in practice. It is illogical for the government to claim free education without disclosing how much parents have to pay to cover other costs associated with their children's education.

It is also important that Kenyan education policies adopt provisions that are gender responsive and that eliminate gender bias and stereotypes to eliminate biases against girls noting that biases can be perpetuated not only through their peers but also teachers. To enhance this, teacher training on gender responsive pedagogies and teaching curricula should be developed and encouraged to ensure holistic appreciation of gender equality within the education system.

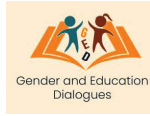
Further, there should be a policy audit to review, expunge and collate education policies. There are some policies that are out of date and do not respond to current education needs and would need to be expunged or reviewed. Also, the education policies should be collated into one comprehensive document that will ensure all information is accessible. Currently, there are various policies in different documents and ministries making it difficult to obtain information. Because change is constant and circumstances keep changing, new provisions are bound to be developed.

The same should be integrated into the existing policies rather than put in new legislation.

Deliberate inclusion of preventive measures to address SRH issues such as school related gender based violence in education policies will ensure that students, teaching and non-teaching staff are safeguarded against gender-based violence.

To support the policy recommendations that need to be made, some programmatic recommendations to supplement the work of the policies include having continuous stakeholder engagement. This includes sessions with teachers, parents and even learners. Such sessions will allow for an information exchange opportunity where the stakeholders share their lived experiences which would inform the development of responsive policies as they would address actual challenges rather than theoretical challenges as perceived by the drafters.

Finally, collaboration with other ministries and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) will ensure achievement of greater results. This is mainly because there can be consolidation of resources including financial and technical capacity to create awareness, monitoring and evaluation, research as well develop and/ or review policies. Taking a multi- sectoral approach as part of collaboration ensures that all aspects of intersectionality are covered in the policies and there is no lacuna in the policies.



Forum for African Women Educationalists Kenya



MEN END FGM



Siprosa



PAL NETWORK People's Action for Learning



JASLIKA



AMPLIFY GIRLS

*A world where gender equality shapes every learner's opportunity to thrive.*



Forum for African Women Educationalists Kenya



**PAL NETWORK**  
People's Action for Learning

**GIRLRISING**



**RELI**  
Regional Education Learning Initiative



**AMPLIFY GIRLS**



**JASLIKA**



**Siprosa**



**GRiC**  
Grassroots hub for Innovations and Change



**MEN END FGM**



---

*A world where gender equality shapes every learner's opportunity to thrive.*