Challenges Facing Education in Marginalized Areas: A case study of Kinango Sub-County

by

ELIMISHA CHARITY CAMPAIGN

ABSTRACT

'***Ad Astra Per Aspera***' – to the stars through difficulties. This paper looks at the complex challenges affecting education in marginalized areas in Kenya, particularly the critical interplay between climate change, poverty, educational quality, gender inequality, accessibility, distance and inclusivity as the pathway for students in marginalized areas to reach for the stars. Centering on Kinango Sub-County, Kenya as our case study, we explore how these factors coincide to make noteworthy barriers that prevent the access and attainment of education. Moreover, this research combines both quantitative data about travel distances alongside economic household data with qualitative insights from the community residents and educational stakeholders to provide an in-depth analysis of the challenges and possible avenues that can be geared towards resilience and viable solutions. We conclude by recommending both policy initiatives and community-based solutions to develop high-quality equitable education for marginalized areas to enhance the academic potential of their children.

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to the students, families and communities of marginalized areas in Kenya, who maintain unwavering resolve despite their educational barriers. To the children of Kinango, we pray that your dedication to learning will always transcend your current obstacles, may your pursuit of knowledge never be dimmed. May this study contribute to a brighter future for all.

Ad astra per aspera!

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASAL- Arid and Semi-Arid Lands

CBC- Competency-Based Curriculum

COK 2010- Constitution of Kenya, 2010

CRPD- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

DLP- Digital Literacy Project

ECDE- Early Childhood Development and Education

FPE- Free Primary Education

GEM-Global Education Monitoring

GPI- Gender Parity Index

ICT- Information and Communication Technology

ODL-Open and Distance Learning

PTA-Parents-Teachers Association

SDGs-Sustainable Development Goals

SRGBV-School-Related Gender-Based Violence

SEN- Special Educational Needs

SIDT-Social Identity Development Theory

UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract…….……ii

Dedication…….iii

Acknowledgement…….……...iv

List of Abbreviations…….……....v

Table of Contents…….……..vi

List of Figures……viii

1.0 Introduction……..….8
2.0 Methodology……...……9
3.0 Research Design…….…9
4.0 Data Sources…….....9
5.0 Data Collection Procedures…….....10
6.0 Data Analysis……..……10
7.0 Study Area and Population…….11
8.0 Sampling Technique…….……11
9.0 Ethical Consideration……..11
2.0 Limitations…….....11
3.0 Validity and Reliability……11
4.0 Expected outcomes……...11

CHAPTER ONE: DISTANCE AND ACCESSIBILITY OF EDUCATION IN MARGINALIZED AREAS……12

CHAPTER TWO: QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN MARGINALIZED AREAS…….……..17

CHAPTER THREE: INCLUSIVITY IN EDUCATION IN MARGINALIZED AREAS……....20

CHAPTER FOUR: POVERTY AND EDUCATION IN MARGINALED COMMUNITIES…….……..25

CHAPTER FIVE: INCLUSIVITY IN EDUCATION……28

CHAPTER SIX: CLIMATE CHANGE AND EDUCATION …….…….31

CHAPTER SEVEN: EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION (ECDE)…….……33

CONCLUSION…….36

RECOMMENDATIONS……..37

BIBLIOGRAPHY……..……44

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Distribution of Travel Distances Endured by Students (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign Survey)

Figure 2: Travel Distances Across Education Levels (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign Survey)

Figure 3: Data on the Causes of lack of Quality Education in Kinango (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign)

Figure 4: Distribution of Educational Attainment by Gender (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign Survey)

Figure 5: Distance Counts to Educational Institutions by Gender (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign Survey)

Figure 6: Challenges Affecting School Attendance Related to Poverty (Data From Elimisha Charity Campaign)

Figure 7: Data of Students Who Have Missed School Due To Adverse Climatic Conditions (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign)

Figure 8: Teacher Motivation (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign Survey)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."- Nelson Mandela

In the vast and vibrant terrain that is Kenya, education shines as a hope for marginalized communities to fight and escape economic hardship and social inequality. While Kenya remains dedicated to providing equal educational opportunities to all its citizens, obstacles such as geographic isolation, economic inequalities and cultural boundaries prevent many people from pursuing their educational goals. A good example is Kinango where quality education remains an extremely difficult target to achieve because of both hostile natural conditions and climate related disruptions.

As Kenya navigates its path to development, the need to address these educational inequalities is becoming increasingly urgent. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 and Vision 2030 emphasize the nation's resolve to tackle education as a transformative drive for social advancement and financial development. Be that as it may, the stark contrast between policy desires and ground realities in marginalized regions underscores the requirement for a nuanced understanding of the complex connection between structural boundaries, social standards and natural variables that shape access to education.

This paper explores the complex elements and instructive dynamics of educational access in the marginalized areas of Kenya using Kinango as a case Study. It analyses the intersection of climate change, poverty and gender inequality looking to uncover the pathways through which these factors conspire to hinder educational opportunities. It looks closely at a few imaginative community-driven initiatives and policy interventions that appear promising in bridging the gap and building strength and resilience while facing these challenges. Moreover, this paper takes a comprehensive examination at the problems and potential solutions with the aim of contributing to a more advise a more enlightened discussion educational policies and approaches in marginalized areas in Kenya and on a more individual note, to assist Kinango and its neighbors to harness the full potential of education and hence realizing the truth in the old wise *scientia potentia est* – knowledge is power.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The study incorporates a mixed-methods approach to explore all factors influencing educational access and outcomes within the marginalized area of Kinango, Kenya. The study relies on quantitative data results from the Elimisha Charity Campaign survey and qualitative insights from academic literature, reports and specific contextual details from Muungano Comprehensive School and Nzovuni Secondary School and the area around the schools.

2.1 Research Design

The research implements a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. The research design gathers different types of quantitative and qualitative data which are analyzed individually before integrating them to form a comprehensive view on the research problem. The specified design proves suitable because it allows for the triangulation of data sources, strengthening the validity and reliability of the findings.

2.3 Data Sources

The study utilizes the following data sources:

2.3.1 Primary Data

The Elimisha Charity Campaign administered surveys to students and community members in the vicinity of Muungano Comprehensive School and Nzovuni Secondary School in Kinango.

The survey collected quantitative data on:

- Travel distances to school
- Education levels of respondents
- Perceptions of challenges to educational access
- Household economic status

2.3.2 Secondary Data

There was sourcing of Peer-reviewed journal articles from databases such as JSTOR, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate. The articles focusing on:

- Education in marginalized communities in Kenya
- Impact of distance and accessibility on education
- Gender inequality in education
- Effects of climate change on education
- Policy interventions for educational improvement

A review of reports from organizations such as UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and Kenyan government ministries was done. These reports provided:

- Statistical data on education enrollment, completion rates and outcomes
- Policy frameworks and initiatives related to education in Kenya
- Analyses of the challenges and opportunities in the education sector

2.4 Data Collection Procedures

Members of the Elimisha Charity Campaign survey administered surveys. The survey was done in person to ensure that there was a high response rate and to help respondents with any questions they may have had. All participants gave their informed consent was obtained before data collection. The survey included both closed-ended and open-ended questions.

The research comprised a systematic review of academic literature and reports about the topic. The research utilized the search terms "*education in Kenya*", "*marginalized communities*", "*gender inequality*", "*climate change*", "*educational access*" and "*policy interventions*." The research focused on publications from the past 15 years to guarantee the relevance of the available information.

There was also an examination of relevant documents on education policies in Kenyan marginal areas through an analytical approach to find essential themes alongside strategic initiatives and educational barriers.

2.5 Data Analysis

2.5.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

- The survey data was Survey data was entered into Microsoft excel for analysis.
- Descriptive statistics like frequencies and percentages were calculated to summarize the characteristics of the sample and the key variables.
- The research employed inferential statistics for analyzing the relationships between diverse variables such as travel distance and education level, and gender and educational outcomes.
- The data from the Elimisha Charity Campaign survey was used to generate pie charts and bar graphs to visually represent the findings.

2.5.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

A thematic analysis was used to analyze academic articles, reports and the open-ended survey responses. This involved observing repetitive patterns and themes in the data, coding the data according to these themes and then interpreting the significance of the themes in relation to the research questions. Zotero software was used to manage and organize the qualitative data.

2.5.3 Mixed-Methods Integration

Triangulation allowed for integrating the quantitative and qualitative research data. It examined convergent and divergent information from diverse data sets to determine points of alignment and difference. Narrative synthesis was used to create a unified and extensive explanation of educational access barriers and result conditions in Kinango.

2.6 Study Area and Population

The research took place within Kinango Sub-County situated in Kwale County,Kenya. The research site was chosen specifically because it is a marginalized area that faces major barriers that prevent it from obtaining quality education. The study population encompassed students, parents, teachers and community leaders who resided in proximity to Muungano Comprehensive School and Nzovuni Secondary School.

2.7 Sampling Technique

The research employed purposive sampling to pick both participating educational institutions and study participants. The researchers chose Muungano Comprehensive School and Nzovuni Secondary School because these institutions reflect typical issues school communities in Kinango's marginalized areas face. Participants who had both experience and knowledge regarding the local education system were chosen.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

- Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection.
- Participants were informed that they were free to opt in or out of the study at any point in time.
- No personally identifiable data was collected.

2.9 Limitations

- The study limited its focus on a single sub-county in Kenya.
- The sample size of the survey was small and this might limit the generalizability of the findings.
- The reliance on self-reported data may be subject to recall bias and social desirability bias.

3.1 Validity and Reliability

In terms of validity, multiple data sources were employed to validate the findings through triangulation. A test trial was conducted on the survey instrument to verify proper measurement of the study's targeted constructs. Standard data collection methods were implemented to ensure the reliability of the study. Experienced researchers performed the data analysis.

3.2 Expected Outcomes

The research intends to deliver a comprehensive analysis of the factors that influence educational access in marginalized areas using Kinango's educational environment as a case study. The analysis results will be utilized to recommend policy changes which focus on enhancing education delivery in marginalized areas in Kenya. The research also aims to enhance existing literature about education systems in developing countries particularly the marginalized parts.

CHAPTER ONE: DISTANCE AND ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES AFFECTING EDUCATION IN MARGINALIZED AREAS IN KENYA

An insurmountable distance is often one of the problems that lurks as a silent yet formidable barrier to educational equity preventing access for students in Marginalized areas. Many students face a colossal daily obstacle to attend school because getting to school is their biggest challenge. The lack of accessible transportation creates more than a mere inconvenience and this is because it controls both accessibility and opportunity levels and the future potential of young people.

A school located near a student might seem geographically accessible by map but this does not reflect the actual transportation challenges students face from treacherous terrains, poor road conditions and unsafe conditions during their commute. The Global Monitoring Report 2023 found that Kenyan students walk an average of 2 kilometers to school each day, with 15 per cent of learners traveling more than 3 kilometers[1]. The report further states that the distance a learner covers to school is important as it greatly influences the learner's safety, well-being and school participation.

Walking extensive distances causes physical exhaustion that lowers students' capability to stay focused and accomplish academic goals. Students lose considerable time during their travels because of long commutes which otherwise could be spent studying and completing productive tasks. The journey poses safety risks to students because they become more vulnerable to accidents and harassment and violence while traveling long distances on unsafe routes at early morning and late evening times.

The lack of alternative transportation options exacerbates the impact of distance on access to education. People in marginalized areas must rely entirely on walking since they have no other transportation options to get to school yet this limits their school access especially for students who have disabilities or live far from their intended educational institutions.

Other than long distances, there is also an issue of sub-par transport since certain areas do not possess standard road networks or accessible public transit or school bus routes. This makes it so that students with disabilities experience unequal access to education because they neither have reliable transportation nor do they get the specialized mobility assistance they need. Without adapted transport solutions, these children face not only logistical hurdles but also societal stigma, which reinforces exclusion[2]. The exclusion from education and the lack of specialized transportation services prevents children with disabilities from tapping into their full potential while simultaneously maintaining social and economic disparities and inequalities.

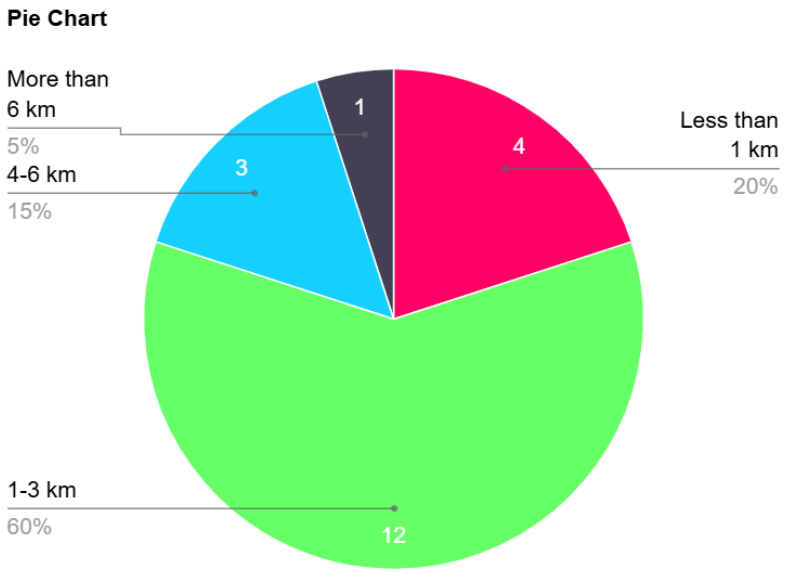
In Kinango Sub-County, problems relating to distance and accessibility have reached a critical level. Kipambani Primary School for instance suffers from severe absenteeism with around 30%

[1] GEM Report UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report 2023: Technology in education: A tool on whose terms?* (1st ed, GEM Report UNESCO 2023).
[2] Ace Mobility, 'Accessible Transport: A Gateway to Education and Inclusion for Children with Disabilities in Kenya' (Ace Mobility, 2023) https://acemobility.co.ke/accessible-transport-a-gateway-to-education-and-inclusion-for-children-with-disabilities-in-kenya/ accessed 6 March 2025

of their students being absent everyday[3]. Student absenteeism occurs mainly because of extensive walking distances to and from schools which creates safety concerns for students. Kinango faces a severe problem with distance because the area lacks suitable transportation infrastructure. The majority of students commute to school through walking while those dwelling in distant areas face particular difficulties because of this method. Student access to school remains difficult due to the challenging terrain together with insufficient road networks which make school travel both unsafe and delayed.

As part of Elimisha Charity Campaign ongoing efforts to understand the provide solutions for educational challenges in marginalized areas, we collected data about travel distances of some of the students in Kinango Sub-County.

Figure 1: Distribution of Travel Distances Endured by Students (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign Survey)



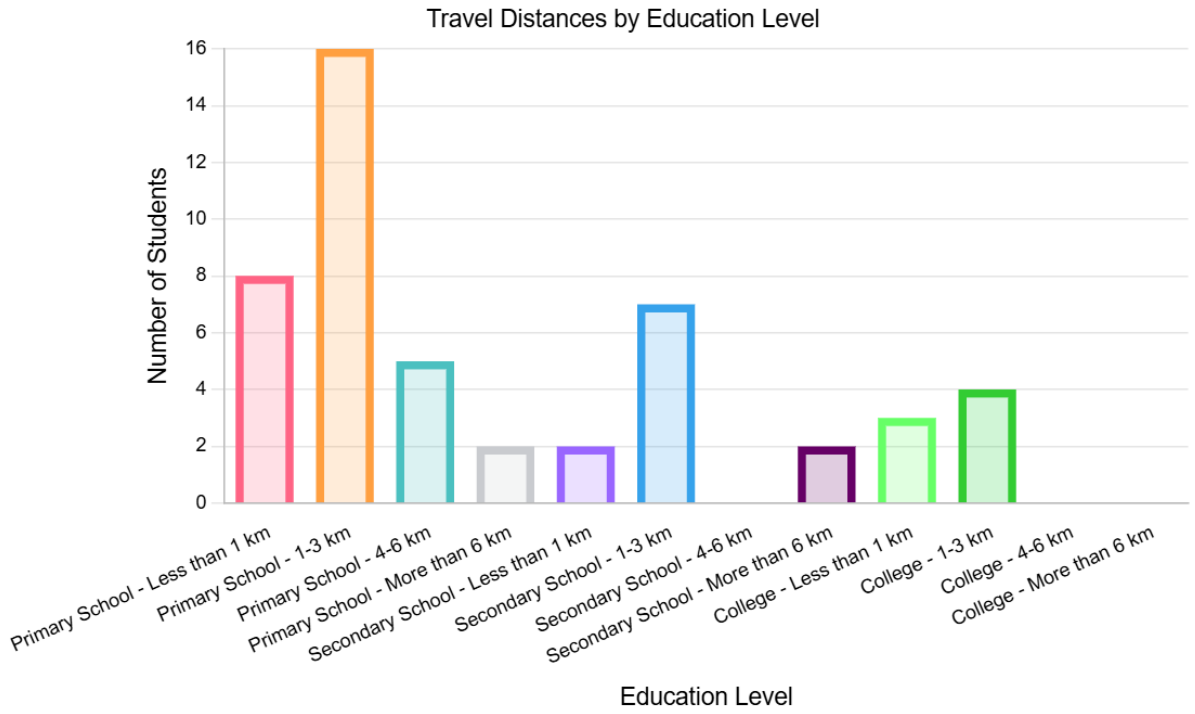
This pie chart visually represents the distribution of travel distances endured by students in our survey, conducted by the Elimisha Charity Campaign. The data indicates that 20% of students travel less than 1 km to school which seems to be within reasonable limits. A total of 60% of students need to make daily journeys spanning from 1-3 km.

[3] Protas Njati Miriti, 'Silent Suffering, Lost Futures: Survey Report Documenting Extent, Trends and Factors Behind Low Enrolment Levels in Select Primary Schools in Kilifi and Kwale Counties' (Haki Yetu, 2023) https://hakiyetu.ke/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Silent-Suffering-Lost-Futures.pdf accessed 6 March 2025

Alarmingly, 15% of students need to travel 4-6 kilometres to get to school while 5% have the longest commute, traveling over six kilometres. No students omitted reporting their travel distances in the survey conducted by the Elimisha Charity Campaign which strengthens the validity of this collected data.

The extensive distance reveals a major obstacle. It shows Kinango lacks reliable transportation options and difficult terrains. The described distances are not just mere statistics ,they represent study time lost, the energy expended and the safety risks faced by students.

Figure 2: Travel Distances Across Education Levels (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign Survey)



The bar graph provides a comparative view of travel distances across different education levels and hence highlights specific challenges at each stage. Most primary school students travel 1-3 km as indicated by Elimisha Charity Campaign data (16 out of 25 students) while 5 students commute 4-6 km and 2 students experience distances exceeding 6 km. Most secondary students travel between 1-3 km for school (7 students) and 2 students have to travel over 6 km each day. The commute distances of surveyed college students are short because the majority (7 students) travel less than 1 kilometer while another group (4 students) covers 1-3 kilometers. It is clear to see that students from primary and secondary schools bear a heavier weight in regards to

transportation distance in their daily activities. This can further be correlated with increased drop-out rates alongside poorer academic performance due to exhaustion and time constraints.

The Kenyan acknowledges that distance is a barrier to educational access and so they developed multiple policy tools to enhance educational accessibility across the country. For instance, the Kenyan government has extended education opportunity to distant locations through the promotion of open and distance learning (ODL) approaches[4]. However, there is an absence of a national policy governing open and distance learning programs creating complications in regards to resource mobilization and program quality assurance activities. The government faces numerous obstacles with its development effort to use communication technology because information alone cannot solve resource deficiencies.

The Kenyan government is trying to wors through multiple policies and projects to promote gender equality across the educational sector. Through Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2003 the government created a program to eliminate education expenses for female students from low-income backgrounds. However, higher enrollment rates through Free Primary Education have resulted in quality issues, overcrowded classrooms and insufficient resources for the program.

Moreover, the government has implemented a Gender Equity in Education Policy whose aim is to achieve gender equality throughout all aspects of education but maintains a slow pace of implementation. There is also the "*Wasichana Wetu Wafaulu*" Program which distributes sanitary pads to school girls however it encounters difficulties in distribution.

The implementation of e-Learning faces hurdles like deficient infrastructure, unskilled teachers, sustainability problems and a lack of guided policy directions from the national government. At the national level the previously established strategies have neither been adopted nor implemented to this day. The government's investment in the Digital Literacy Project (DLP) has not resolved the issue related to teacher skills and digital educational resources. A study reveals that one of the most significant factors blocking e-learning implementation in Kenyan public institutions emerges from deficient ICT and e-learning infrastructure[5]. The challenges facing implementation of distance education in Kenya are costs, ignorance, poverty and conservativism

The educational inequality problems within marginalized Kenyan areas find their clearest manifestation in the remote Kinango Sub-County. The Elimisha Charity Campaign data shows that primary and secondary students endure long school journeys because they walk extensive distances in areas without proper transportation infrastructure among unsafe terrain. Whereas physical fatigue and absent study time destroy academic success and raise dropout statistics these challenges also endanger student safety which deepens existing community disadvantages. Data presents compelling evidence which proves distance represents a crucial challenge that affects

[4] Jackline K Anyona, 'Factors Affecting Performance in Open and Distance Learning in Kenya's Public Universities' (PhD Thesis, Kenyatta University, 2009) https://ir-library.ku.ac.ke/server/api/core/bitstreams/258199cd-b1b1-40f8-b569-a63be846ed0b/content accessed 6 March 2025

[5] Grace O Onchwari, 'Challenges of Implementing E-Learning in Kenya: A Case of Kenyan Public Universities' (2015) 16(5) International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning https://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/1816/3196 accessed 09 March 2025

student access to education so system-wide efforts must be created to face this major obstacle and make education accessible to Kinango youth and similar areas.

CHAPTER TWO: CHALLENGES AFFECTING QUALITY EDUCATION IN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES IN KENYA

Access to quality education is paramount in alleviating marginalized communities' social and economic hardships. Kenya has bolstered steps to ensure that access to education is no longer an issue among marginalized groups. These steps have made the nation the primer at realizing the Sustainable Development Goals particularly (SDG4) on Quality Education contributing to a literate generation. The right to free and compulsory basic education is a guaranteed right for every child under the constitution of Kenya 2010[6]. Moreover, the state is mandated to put affirmative action programs to ensure that minorities and marginalized groups are provided special opportunities in the educational and economic field[7]. Through the Ministry of Education and other lending institutions, the Government of Kenya has fronted projects geared towards protecting these constitutional rights.

In canvassing the issue of quality education, we have to ask ourselves, what is quality education and what is the merit to assess whether quality education is being dispensed? Based on the UNICEF paper "Defining Quality Education" (2000), quality education encompasses several key dimensions related to learners, environments, content, processes, and outcomes[8]. The environment is characterized by access to infrastructure including classrooms, desks and chairs, access to a library, a computer and the internet. All these play a divine role in providing quality education to learners. The government and other stakeholders may provide access to education but it is futile if the reception is poor. Quality education beats the cycle of simply absorbing information and therefore promotes critical thinking and deep learning. Education becomes relevant when it can be harnessed to provide probable solutions to everyday challenges. The education system in Kenya is structured to be competitive and this presents a challenge where students come from different backgrounds and face variant challenges yet are subjected to the same examination and assessments with a teacher oriented perspective. Although the pencil-and-paper tests in many countries are seen as providing standardized assessments to provide equitable opportunities for entry to secondary education, in practice, they seem to be promoting teacher-centered approaches to rote learning by testing recall or production of factual knowledge (Arthur 2001). Studies show that teachers have poor knowledge of assessment strategies, including designing activities and test items relevant to their classroom work[9].The teachers themselves lack the adequate training to handle the students at the different levels of education. Students need thorough attention, well thought for learning asessment and student engagements. The motivation in classes is fuelled by punishment rather than the general interest in learning from the students. Morale is an important element of learning and if there are no adequate measures to motivate the students and the teachers alike the quality of learning holds less water.

[6] Article 53(b) The Constitution of Kenya 2010.
[7] The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 Article 53(b) .
[8] 'UNICEF Defining Quality Education 2000'.
[9] Sifuna,D. N.,& Sawamura,N.(2010).Challenges of quality education in Sub-Saharan African countries. *NovaScience eBooks* (p. 241).

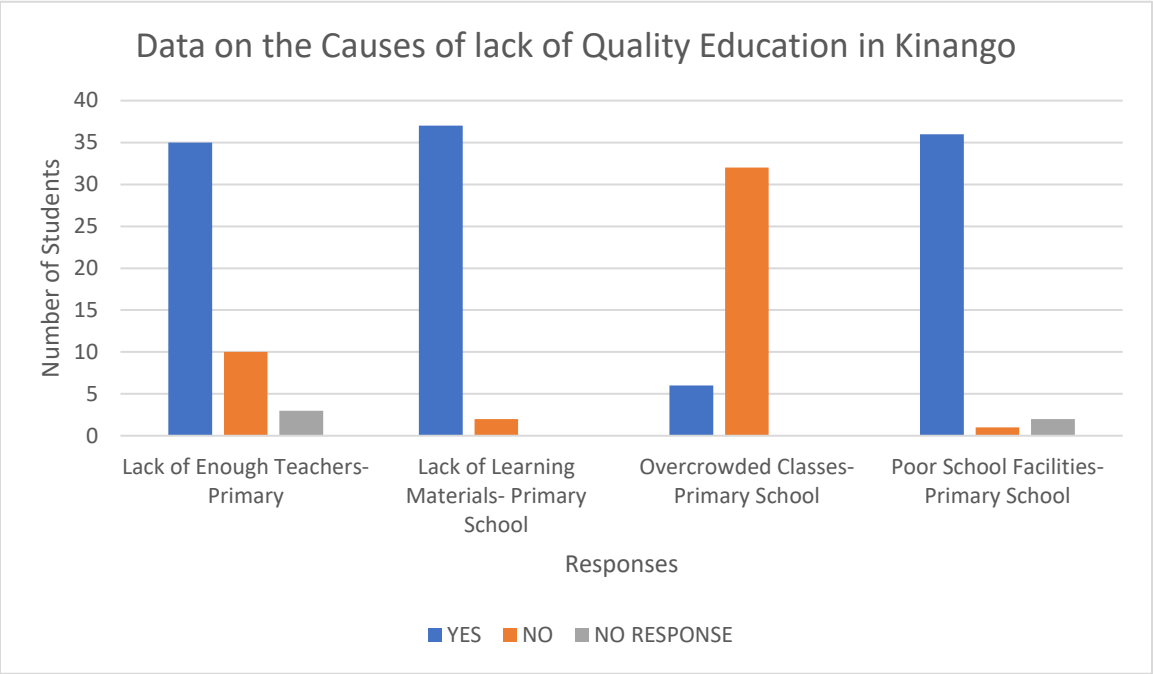
This approach is lacking from inception since there are few learning materials, the techniques and teaching methodologies are not quite apt and the ratio of the student to teachers is high to the roof. This inadvertently affects the quality of education especially in marginalized areas.

Values, attitudes, and skills necessary for responsible citizenship and positive participation in society are the core tenets that are spread through the Sustainable Development Goals of education as children are taught how to be creative and innovative in alleviating their standards, especially in vulnerable and marginalized communities. While it may be contentious on whether having these resources is the primary gateway to quality education, it is our opinion that it serves as the basis for laying the foundation for bridging the gap to according the same. According to UNICEF Reports, poor-quality teaching and large class sizes are hardscrabble to children getting a quality education. There are instances where the ratio of children to the number of teachers is too high to accord effective learning, case in point 77 to 1 in Turkana County. The situation is as disadvantageous to the children as it is disadvantageous to the teachers who spend more effort, time and commitment in teaching. Their spirits are amputated. They are inadvertently cut to the knees because the process is tedious and counterproductive.

Elimisha Charity Campaign took on a comprehensive study in two schools; Muungano Comprehensive School and Nzovuni Secondary School in Kinango Sub County. The method used to collect the data was a qualitative approach that took into the interests of children in their school work and their assessment of the quality of education they receive from their schools. They highlighted key and common issues that revolved around lack of learning materials (books, computers, etc), overcrowded classrooms and poor school facilities (toilets, desks and electricity). The children in the two schools highlighted an acute shortage of printed books to aid learning at the different levels of learning. This is surmountable to an artist without a painting brush, he can only do so much given the limitation. Shortage of learning materials especially printed works is a common issue in the Kinango sub-county. Even though the government has established schemes through the Ministry of Education to distribute books under the goal 'one learner, one textbook'[10], the level of access is still limited. The few textbooks are left in the school premises and are therefore can only be accessed on attendance which again is a challenge to some students. The situation becomes gross enough that students are in their final years and need time to prepare for the test that is bound to determine their 'fate'.

[10] CS Ogamba launches distribution exercise of textbooks for Grade 9 learners : Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development. (n.d.-b). https://kicd.ac.ke/in_the_press/cs-ogamba-launches-distribution-exercise-of-textbooks-for-grade-9-learners/< accessed 9 March 2025.

Figure 3: Data on the Causes of lack of Quality Education in Kinango (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign)



The graph above highlights the responses from the children in both schools in regards to the quality of Education they receive from the Kinango. The highest number (37) (97%) of response came for a yes on the fact that the school lacks enough materials to support learning. About 35 students (87%) of the students highlighted the issue of poor school facilities affecting education in the region. Unsurprisingly, the students showcased notable numbers to show that they had enough primary school classrooms with a strikingly 80% of the students being comfortable with the size of their classes. This shows that the government is making an effort to bolster the education infrastructure in these marginalized areas. However, in making bold steps to achieve quality education, much is yet to be done.

CHAPTER THREE: GENDER INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION

A persistent shadow of gender inequality continues to loom over the educational sector of marginalized communities in Kenya. The situation on the ground shows disparities in educational access, retention as well as outcomes which contradict statistics that paint a picture of near-equal enrollment rates. The discriminatory situation goes beyond numerical statistics, it reflects deep cultural influences and economic circumstances together with institutional obstacles that obstruct girls' and women's educational progress. A study in 2010 by Amunga, Musasia, and Maiyo explored gender and regional inequalities in Kenyan education and found that near parity in enrolment in many regions has failed to translate into parity in academic achievement. The girls register low achievement in national examinations when compared to boys nationally and in their respective regions in the country[11].

These disparities do not affect every part of our nation similarly, certain regions and communities exhibit higher levels of inequalities than others. Marginalized areas face numerous difficulties because gender inequality intersects with other forms of social challenges such as poverty, ethnicity and disability to create a complex web of barriers that are difficult to overcome.

One of the most significant barriers to girls' education in marginalized communities is the prevalence of early marriages. An article by Uraidah Hassani notes that girls are also less likely than boys to complete secondary education, often due to child marriage, early pregnancy, and domestic responsibilities[12].

When young girls get married off it not only eliminates their educational rights it also exposes them to various health risks, economic vulnerabilities and social isolation Early marriage creates a cycle of poverty and inequality which restricts girls from achieving their dreams and limits their ability to contribute to the development of their communities.

Even in instances where girls succeed in enrolling in school, they still encounter obstacles which block their path toward completing school Schools are often unsafe environments for girls, with reports of sexual harassment, abuse, and exploitation. School-related trauma and repeated absences and dropout become common outcomes for girls in such situations. A study by Ndhiwa Community Empowerment and Development Project and Team Kenya found that there is a direct link between violence in and around schools and negative outcomes in girl's education. There are significant consequences to SRGBV, with some of the clearest relating to physical and psychological health, and academic achievement. The predominance of violence against girls in school reflects deeply entrenched social and cultural norms that reinforce gender inequality and an imbalance of power between males and females and between adults and children[13].

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[11] Jane Amunga, Amadalo Maurice Musasia and Maiyo Julius, 'Gender and Regional Disparities in Enrolment and Academic Achievement in Kenya: Implications for Education Planning' (2010) 23 Problems of Education in the 21st Century 9.

[12] Uraidah Hassani, 'A Critical Moment to Prioritize Girls' Secondary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa' (World Bank Blogs, 19 April 2024) https://blogs.worldbank.org/africa-rising/critical-moment-prioritize-girls-secondary-education-sub-saharan-africa accessed 9 March 2025.

[13] Ndhiwa Community Empowerment and Development Project and Team Kenya, *School Related Gender Based Violence (SRGBV) in Ndhiwa, Western Kenya; causes, extent, success of current interventions and recommendations*

The absence of proper sanitary supplies together with essential school equipment and school uniforms creates barriers for girls to maintain regular school attendance. An article by World Vision Canada notes that while lack of hygiene and sanitation affects all school-aged children, inadequate facilities are most detrimental to girls. Many schools have unsafe latrines or unsanitary water supplies, making it impossible for girls to remain in school when they begin to menstruate. The shortage of safe, separate and private sanitation and washing facilities is one of the leading factors preventing girls from attending school[14].

Household responsibilities that girls are '*traditionally*' expected to perform create significant disharmony between studying and school activities. Girls shoulder a disproportionate share of household chores and childcare responsibilities which takes away from the time they should be using to study. This also affects their ability to focus on schoolwork and effectively participate in school. Jessica L. Navarro and others in their article note that studies suggest that girls and young women provide substantially more assistance in the home than their male counterparts. Girls and young women may be more likely to engage in home/family responsibilities due to social norms related to gender-role stereotypes, which may be expressed both in their own socialized beliefs and the expectations of their parents[15].These gender-related challenges create a "*leaky*" education system for girls as they tend to drop out at higher rates compared to boys especially during secondary education and higher learning.

Progress in gender parity within Kenyan education has shown particular success in pre-primary and primary education however gender disparities still persist and continue to impact education opportunities between in secondary and tertiary education. The Free Primary Education (FPE) together with 100% primary to secondary education transition have driven forward this educational progress. However, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) continues to be male dominated within technical and vocational education programs.

Kinango demonstrates multiple expressions of gender inequality. A study done by Ruth Ndete Mwangi that targeted one primary school in Kinango found that there is a need for a comprehensive training of teachers on gender responsiveness, guidance and counselling at all levels of teacher education to enable them address gender issues in schools hence curb girls' dropout[16]. It is clear from her recommendations that in Kinango, factors such as cultural norms, domestic chores, and sexual harassment's influence girls' academic performance. The school leadership together with teaching staff faced challenges because of their minimal understanding

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for future work (August 2016) https://www.teamkenya.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/School-Related-Gender-Based-Violence-SRGBV-Report-1-1.pdf accessed 9 March 2025.

[14] World Vision Canada, 'Girls' Education: Facts & How to Help' (World Vision Canada) https://www.worldvision.ca/stories/education/girls-education-facts-and-how-to-help accessed 9 March 2025.

[15] Jessica L Navarro and others, 'It Isn't Just Mom: Gendered Provision of Family and Home Responsibilities Among Emerging Adults During COVID-19' (2024) 15 Frontiers in Psychiatry https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2024.1330424 accessed 9 March 2025.

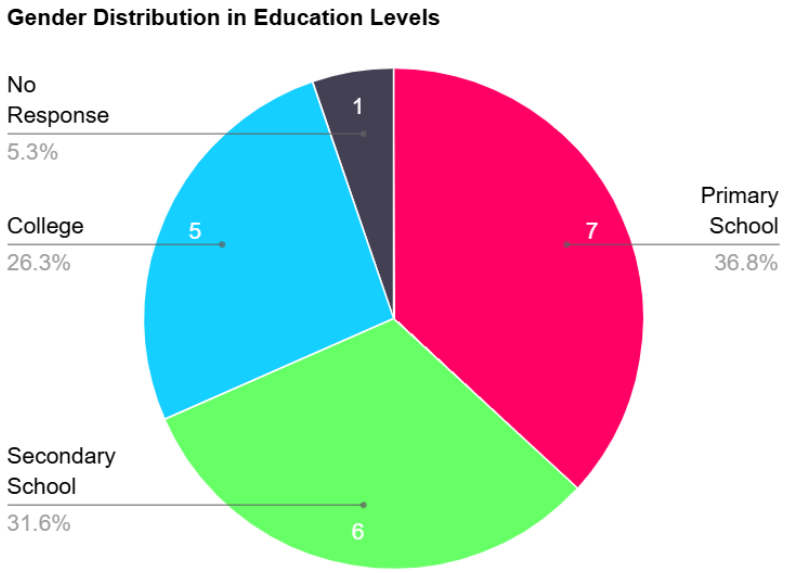
[16] Ruth Ndete Mwangi, 'Using the lens of gender responsiveness to investigate school leadership efforts to keep girls in school: a case study of a public primary school in Kinango Sub County in Kwale County, Kenya' (2014) Aga Khan University (Unpublished Masters Thesis) https://ecommons.aku.edu/theses_dissertations/1810/ accessed 9 March 2025

about guidance and counselling practices as well as gender-responsive strategies which prevented them from helping girls deal with teenage challenges.

A report done by Society for International Development indicates that only a total of 51% of Kwale County residents have a primary level of education[17]. This together with poverty and resource shortages disproportionately affect girls by increasing their exposure to child marriage and other forms of exploitation.

The following is data gathered by Elimisha charity campaign in regards to gender inequality:

Figure 4: Distribution of Educational Attainment by Gender (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign Survey)

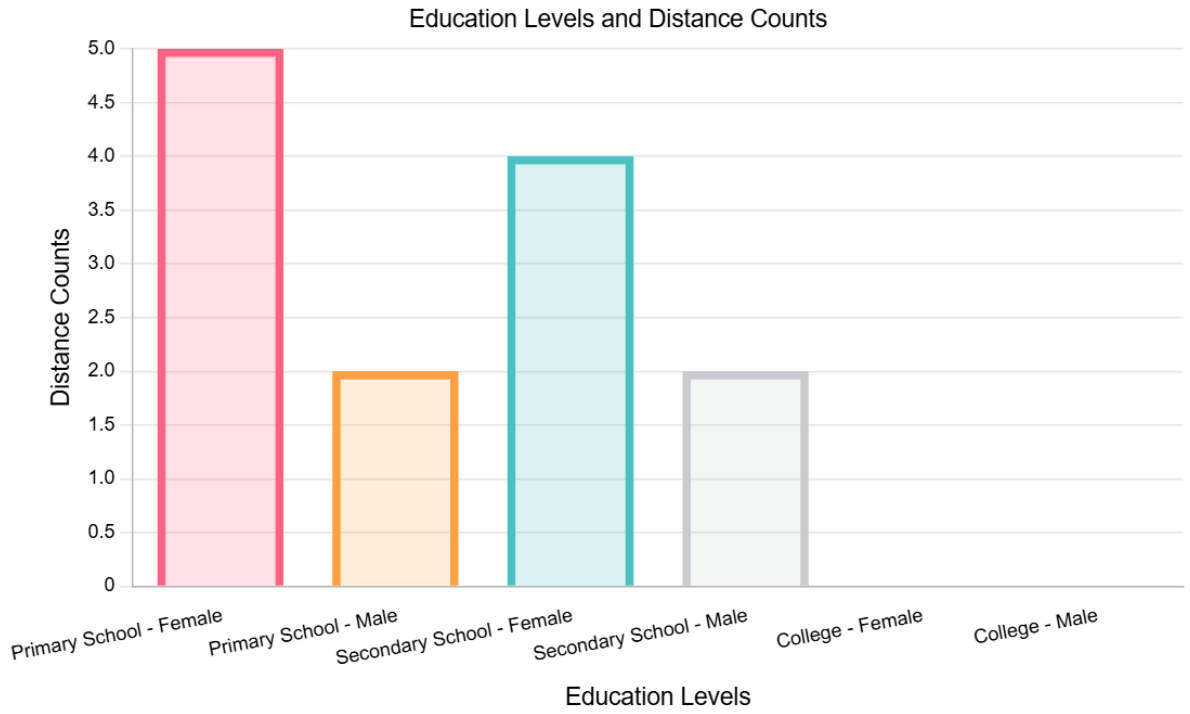


The educational attainment statistics show that participants either attended Primary School or Secondary School or College with minimal unresponsive cases. Analysis from the Elimisha Charity Campaign data shows that Primary School educational access remains optimal since it includes a total of 7 cases across both genders (5 females + 2 males). The data shows Secondary School has 6 total counts comprising 4 females and 2 males but the college level presents significant concern since only 5 students were present with 2 females alongside 3 males. A single "No Response" entry implies there exists unaddressed reasons why specific individuals failed to disclose their educational activities. This data demonstrates the persistent challenges faced by

[17] Society for International Development, 'Inequalities in Kwale County, Kenya' https://inequalities.sidint.net/kenya/county/kwale/#education accessed 9 March 2025

marginalized communities where educational attainment remains unevenly distributed along gender lines.

Figure 5: Distance Counts to Educational Institutions by Gender (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign Survey)



The bar chart illustrates distance counts according to gender distribution within three educational levels consisting of Primary School (Female/Male), Secondary School (Female/Male) and College (Female/Male). The data, collected by the Elimisha Charity Campaign, shows that while female students from Primary School have higher distance counts (5) compared to their male counterparts (2), this trend shifts at higher educational levels where both genders experience significant drops particularly evident at the College level where both genders recorded zero counts for distance greater than 6 km. The notable difference in educational access difficulties between primary, secondary and college shows that barriers increase which leads to higher student drop-out rates. This disproportionately affects females due to socio-cultural demands. The revealed inequities in education require stakeholders to implement purposeful support strategies that should benefit all students but prioritize keeping vulnerable female learners from dropping out.

The information displayed throughout both the pie chart and bar graph underscores current difficulties and inequality patterns in Kenyan education while focusing on marginalized regions such as Kinango Sub-County. The data demonstrates multiple cultural, socio-economic and systemic barriers which restrict equal educational opportunities for girls. The pie graph demonstrates primary and secondary education enrollment levels exceed those of college enrollment. The educational pattern matches national data about how gender disparities exist across different educational levels, especially within higher education. The low number of reported college attenders demonstrates that girls encounter numerous obstacles in their attempt to advance their education. The hindrances delaying female education stem from cultural norms which accelerate child marriage practices and economic demands that require girls to generate monetary revenue before seeking continued education.

The bar chart further extends the understanding of these challenges through displaying distance statistics based on different educational levels. Most girls are accessing fundamental education in primary school but their attendance decreases dramatically between secondary school and college. Primary education counts confirm higher participation of female students but they encounter multiple obstacles when advancing through the education system from primary to secondary education and tertiary levels.

This pattern reflects the systemic issues within the education pipeline that prevents girls from receiving adequate education opportunities. The barriers include gender-based violence, inadequate resources and societal expectations. These barriers become substantially worse in Kinango because local cultural norms both devalue girls' education and view early child marriages as a path to economic stability. The combination of gender inequality, financial need and resource scarcity forms a complex situation for girls who want to finish their schooling.

While collecting the data we had a section where the locals could give additional comments. One responded saying "*reduce early marriages,*" directly declaring the necessity of combating this harmful practice. Another informed us that insufficient resources and lack of food *"forces girls to early marriages and teenage pregnancies in aims to help their families,"* demonstrating the extreme levels of desperation that pushes young girls to take such measures. These comments reveal how social economic conditions and traditional cultural practices create continuous gender inequalities.

CHAPTER FOUR: INTERELATIONSHIP OF POVERTY AND EDUCATION IN MARGINALIZED AREAS

In Kenya, many children in minority areas often fall through the cracks, limiting their potential and contributing to a cycle of poverty[18]. Poverty is conversely attributed to the quality of education in marginalized areas. It becomes quite a challenge for third-world countries which have myriads of vulnerabilities to offer quality education to their populace. 36.1 % of all Kenyans live below the poverty line (KNBS, 2018). Schools in impoverished areas often are disadvantaged because they lack the funding to get learning materials. Living in poor neighborhoods often means attending poor schools with poor teachers, leading to a poor education and limited job opportunities, perpetuating the cycle. There are cases where some communities lead in abject poverty and the struggle is between balancing their meager resources with their arsenal of needs and the responsibility to educate their progeny in the need to get rid of the cycle of poverty. In severe cases, it has been reported that some children have had to drop out of school. Parents struggle to pay examination fees remuneration for teachers employed by the School Board to reduce the teacher-to-student ratio. Moreover, the payments for the building levies to construct more classes to accommodate the growing numbers of school attendees. According to UNESCO, if all adults had just literacy and numeracy skills, an estimated 171 million people could escape extreme poverty. However, UNESCO also estimates that there are 781 million illiterate adults around the globe[19].

Poverty and education take a multi-dimensional approach. It cuts across deprivation of resources, opportunities and social inclusion. Social inclusion plays a huge role since the children must be part of the system to get quality education. This showcases the psychological element of a quality education. Being poor and going to school can either save you or drown[20]. It is not only important to attend school but one has to mentally and socially be in school to succeed. Keeping in mind the fact that social inclusion consists of an objective, participatory component and a subjective feeling of belonging and acceptance, schools can provide opportunities to develop both these components and hence social inclusion (Allen et al. 2017)

The case study by Elimisha Charity Campaign in Kinango highlights instances where some children have failed to attend school due to financial difficulties .The financial constraints stem from various challenges including lack of school fees while some have had to work to support their families. This is a common trend among marginalized communities in some parts of Kenya.

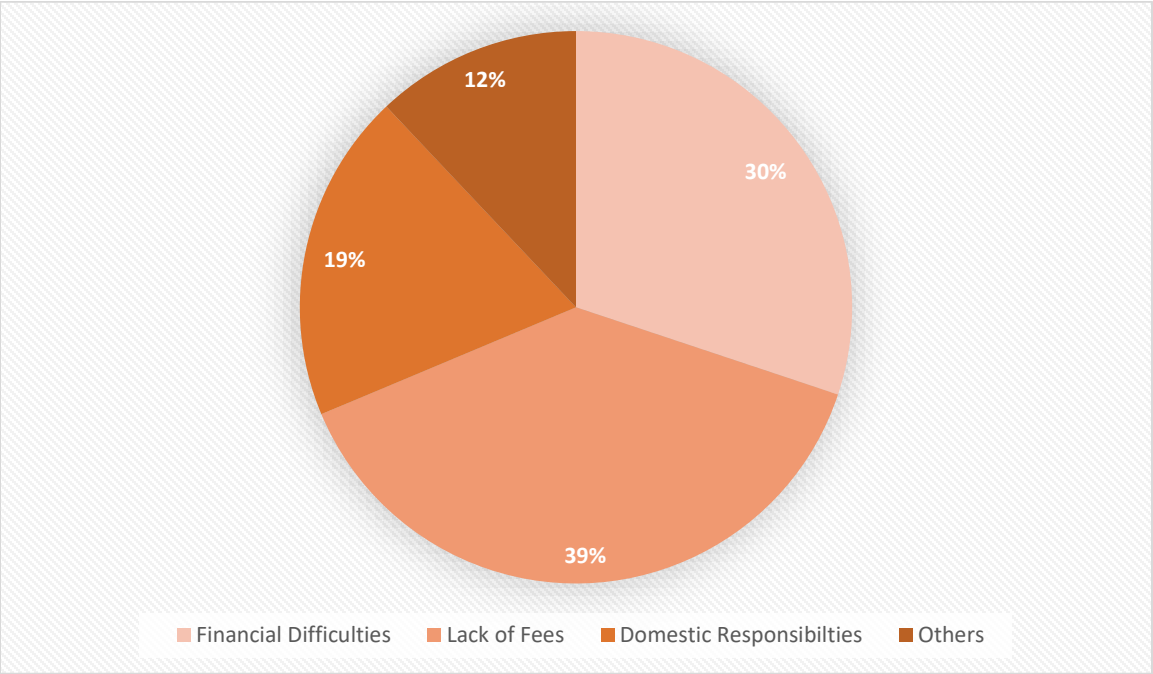
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[18] "Supporting Children in Marginalized Communities: Bridging the Gap for a Brighter Future - Women Educational Researchers of Kenya" https://werk.co.ke/supporting-children-in-marginalized-communities-bridging-the-gap-for-a-brighter-future/>
Accessed 9 March 2025

[19] https://www.concern.net/news/quality-education-explained<

[20] Gorski, P.C., & Landsman, J. (Eds.). (2013).The Poverty and Education Reader: A Call for Equity in Many Voices (1st ed.).**https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9781003448013/poverty-education-reader-julie-landsman-paul-gorski**< accessed 11 March 2025.

Figure 6: Challenges Affecting School Attendance Related to Poverty (Data From Elimisha Charity Campaign)



The numbers speak for themselves and figures don't lie. The chart above from Kinango provides that about about 39% of the students have either not attended school due to lack of fees or they are aware of some student who has failed to attend classes due to the problem. About 30% of the students face financial difficulties. The data collected by Elimisha Charity Campaign in their outreach programs highlight how financial constraints affect to a great number the attendance of the students. Domestic responsibilities that mostly included fetching water and helping in fending for their families hit at 19%. The rest of the students comprising of 12% included other financial-related challenges affecting education.

Poverty and education fuel each other and are interchangeable. Poverty leads to lack of education and lack of education leads to poverty. From the data from Elimisha Charity Campaign, we see how marginalized areas in the country are affected by a lack of economic enablers to education. The government has put in place measures to offer free and proper quality education by providing books and enacting frameworks to curb the problems. This has included establishing the Equalization Fund, empowering people through human rights and social protection and focusing on inclusive economic growth by ensuring resources reach vulnerable populations[21]. The measures and plans aim alleviating the situation in these areas and part of these goals is eliminating illiteracy and lack of access to education. The government has also come up with a new funding model, though the reception of the model was contentious, this showcases the government's efforts to allocate funds to fit the different needs of students at various levels.

CHAPTER FIVE: INCLUSIVITY IN EDUCATION

The achievement of an equitable and just society heavily depends on educational inclusivity because it is the cornerstone of social development. It transcends the mere act of funding school access but also represents our dedication to building learning spaces that let every student regardless of their background or abilities achieve their maximal potential. The implementation of inclusive education in marginalized communities represents a fundamental moral necessity because discrimination along with social exclusion predominates in these areas. Inclusive education is the most effective way to give all children a fair chance to go to school, learn and develop the skills they need to thrive[22].

Inclusivity in education in marginalized communities is vital. Through inclusive education different students with different backgrounds are brought together in one learning space which eliminates social barriers to create mutual understanding and respect for differing perspectives. Inclusive education also teaches marginalized children the required skills they need to fight discrimination and turn into capable advocates for their rights while developing complete social participation abilities.

The COK 2010 has established the foundation for education opportunities for leaners with disabilities. Article 54 (1)(b) of the constitution provides that *a person with any disability is entitled to access educational institutions and facilities for persons with disabilities that are integrated into society to the extent compatible with the interests of the person*[23]. Under the Basic Education Act 14 of 2013 each and every child with disabilities has the right to receive free and compulsory education. According to the sector policy for learners and trainees with disabilities Kenya needs to move towards inclusive learning systems which reject segregation as the primary option.

The dedication Kenya has for inclusive education receives support from multiple international frameworks that the country both endorses and officially approves. The frameworks serve as the basis for national policies and practices aimed at promoting the rights of persons with disabilities together with inclusive learning for all students. An example is Article 24 of Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that provides that states parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning[24].

Moreover, there is the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education which calls for regular schools with an inclusive orientation as the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. It is also in line with Standard Development

[22] UNICEF, 'Inclusive Education' (UNICEF) <https://www.unicef.org/education/inclusive-education> accessed 9 March 2025
[23] Constitution of Kenya, 2010, art 54(1)(b)
[24] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (adopted 13 December 2006, entered into force 3 May 2008) 2515 UNTS 3

Goal 4 that is, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Although inclusive education is provided for by law and policy it encounters multiple difficulties during actual implementation exclusively in marginalized areas. For instance, Children with disabilities, ethnic minorities and other marginalized groups encounter prejudice and discrimination from teaching staff, their peers and members of their community. Attitudinal barriers take the form of prejudice, discrimination and stigma toward persons with disabilities. An article by Abdulrahman Isah Abubakar affirms this by stating negative attitudes and stereotypes are one of the most significant barriers to the effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities[25]. A fact sheet on the Ontario Human Rights Commission website further states that students with disabilities continue to face negative attitudes and stereotypes in the education system. Lack of knowledge about and sensitivity to disability issues on the part of some educators, staff and students can make it difficult for students with disabilities to access educational services equally[26].

Marginalized communities also lack sufficient resources and teaching staff and this prevents the proper development of the necessary infrastructure to create inclusive educational environments. A study by Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis also found that limited community involvement in planning and implementing inclusive education initiatives can affect the sustainability and effectiveness of inclusive education programs in marginalized areas in Kenya[27].

Cultural norms and traditional beliefs sometimes create challenges preventing complete group inclusion particularly for girls and children with disabilities. The Social Identity Development Theory (SIDT) proposes that The development of out-group derogation depends on the level of identification that a child has with his/her in-group, the extent to which prejudice is an in-group norm, and the extent to which the in-group members perceive the members of the out-group as a threat[28].
Schools under the Basic Education Act operate a systematic segregation process that forces children with disabilities to enrol in separate facilities as per their disabilities. Although an inclusive education system may not be possible to achieve in the Kenyan law is not doing enough and falls short of fulfilling its obligation under the CRPD to establish equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

[25] Abdulrahman Isah Abubakar, 'Disability Inclusion Barriers' (The Guild, 2023) <https://www.theguild.edu.sg/disability-inclusion-barriers/> accessed 9 March 2025
[2626] Ontario Human Rights Commission, 'Main Barriers to Education for Students with Disabilities Fact Sheet' (n.d.) <https://www3.ohrc.on.ca/en/main-barriers-education-students-disabilities-fact-sheet> accessed 9 March 2025
[27] Delphina Dali and Faith Pepela, 'Promoting Inclusive Education in Kenya' (*Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis*, 18 October 2024) <https://kippra.or.ke/promoting-inclusive-education-in-kenya/> accessed 9 March 2025
[28] Nesdale, D., Maass, A., Durkin, K., & Griffiths, J., 'Group norms, threat, and children's racial prejudice' (2005) 76 Child Development 652

A majority of the educational facilities in marginalized areas do not meet proper requirements for students who have physical disabilities because they lack necessary features such as ramps and accessible restrooms. A study examining school enrollment and attendance patterns for children with disabilities in Kenya suggests lower school participation for children with disabilities, potentially due to the limited availability of educational services[29]. Moreover, most schools often fail to provide reasonable accommodation such as systems like assistive devices and modified instructional resources that would help students with disabilities fully engage in classroom activities. This is further reinforced by the fact that the Basic Education Act 14 of 2013 fails to provide reasonable accommodations in education, which amounts to disability discrimination[30].

Tackling these challenges demands complete cooperation between policy makers, educators, community leaders and families. It is only through our dedication that the existent prejudice will be eliminated, and resource allocation and inclusive practices will be the new reality.

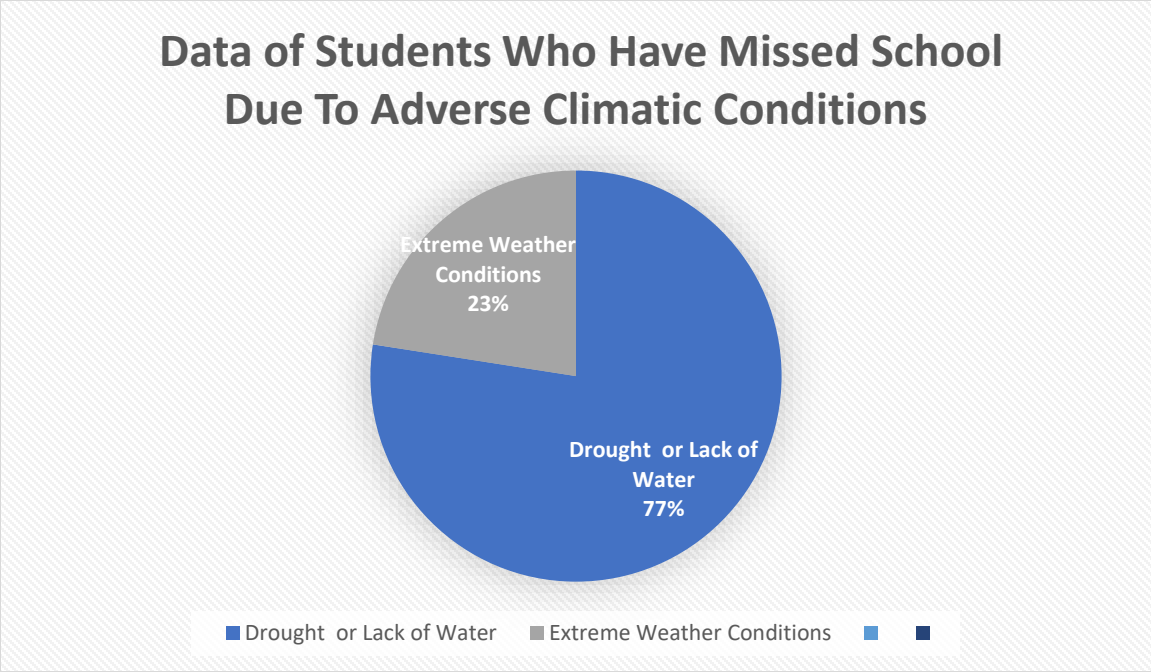
[29] Peter Moyi, 'School Enrolment and Attendance for Children with Disabilities in Kenya: An Examination of Household Survey Data' (2017) 4 Forum for International Research in Education 1
[30] William Aseka and Arlene S Kanter, 'The Basic Education Act of 2013: Why It Is One Step Forward and Two Steps Back for Children With Disabilities in Kenya' (2014) 2 African Disability Rights Yearbook 33

CHAPTER SIX: CHALLENGES ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT AFFECTING EDUCATION IN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

The gravitating effects of climate change are felt by all. We all share in the risks of these natural calamities that are a result of our mistakes as a human race. Huge strides have been made towards destruction of the flora and fauna with the shallow intention of accruing economic benefits at the expense of environmental sustainability. What do we get in return, rising sea levels, disastrous hurricanes and unforeseen weather changes including floods that lead to a devastating loss of lives and property? Is it worth it? The conversation about how we have compromised our environment is germane and concerning. Hope is not lost, the international community has enacted frameworks to save, remedy and sustain our ecosystems through enactment of frameworks and conventions that address these issues. The United Nations Framework Convention On Climate Change is the vocal convention on mitigating the effects of climate change. More charters and protocols have been drafted to address the increasing global temperatures and melting snows as well as curbing industrial emissions which contribute to the greenhouse gases. The Paris Agreement 2016 has precision in addressing the issue of lowering global temperatures below 1.5 degrees Celsius. The agreement requires commitment by the different states in drafting legislation and coming up with frameworks, guidelines and policies that meets their set targets at keeping the global temperatures below 1.5 degrees. The states are obligated to enact legislations that align with International Environmental Laws to help solve the issue of climate change. Governments are to not only develop these policies and frameworks but see to it that they are working.

The effects of climate Change are felt by everyone and influence different sectors differently. Education in rural areas does not escape the spotlight in this regard according to a study done Elimisha Charity Campaign in Kinango Sub-County.

Figure 7: Data of Students Who Have Missed School Due To Adverse Climatic Conditions (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign)



From the data collected, we found that drought and lack of water are a major drawback to students attending schools contributing to 77% of school non-attendance. Water is essential in multiple spheres of a student in class. Water will be needed to clean, water the environment and importantly to drink in an event to quell the increased heat waves which reduces concentration spans of students. Extreme weather conditions as a result of climate change and environment have led to the 23% of students from Kinango missing out on education. The unprecedented heavy rainfall that leads to floods destroys bridges leading to schools and fills up roads to schools. This sparks safety concerns since students cannot go to school at the expense of their lives.

While we cannot forsee certain Acts of God we can prepare to protect ourselves in the event of such happening in the future. The government has established emergency kitties to compensate families and cater for their welfare before a more viable solution is sought for.

CHAPTER SEVEN: EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION (ECDE)

"*Early childhood development is a smart investment. The earlier the investment, the greater the return.*"**-** James Heckman

The linchpin of human development depends on Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) because it creates the initial building blocks that contribute to future learning and societal development. Children experience rapid brain development throughout their early years that create the essential foundations for their cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being. The investment in ECDE extends beyond normal financial capital. Investing in ECDE creates more than just instructional and care services, it represents a strategic investment in the development of society's future.

The critical importance of Early Childhood Development Programs needs recognition at both national and international levels to enable proper policymaking focused on complete child growth especially for marginalized areas. The benefits of quality ECDE goes way past the classroom, it forms the trajectory of people and communities in so many significant ways.

ECDE gives children opportunities to associate with their peers, learn to share and develop compassion. During the pre-school years, dramatic transformations occur in children's social skills, social reasoning, emotional understanding, emotional regulation, self-awareness, and self-control[31]. Moreover, ECDE programs promote brain advancement and hence cultivate critical thinking, problem-solving abilities and a deep-rooted adoration for learning.

Children who take part in quality ECDE programs are more likely to succeed in school, graduate from college, and secure stable work, breaking cycles of poverty and inequality. A study by Gertler and others showed that disadvantaged young children who were exposed to high-quality early stimulation interventions as infants and toddlers earned up to 25 percent higher wages 20 years later as adults[32].Moreover, children who are poorly nourished and nurtured, or those who do not receive early stimulation, are likely to learn less in school and earn less as adults[33].

ECDE holds great promise as a catalyst for transformation in marginalized communities in Kenya, paving a pathway to break cycles of poverty and inequality. However, the execution of effective ECDE programs in these areas is faced with a lot of challenges, creating a stark paradox between the recognized potential and the lived realities of children in the areas. This is not merely a logistical issue, it is a complex intersectionality of socio-economic disparities, systemic neglect, and persistent barriers that demand urgent attention.

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[31] K. L. Bierman and M. Motamedi, 'SEL Programs for Preschool Children' in J. A. Durlak, C. E. Domitrovich, R. P. Weissberg, and T. P. Gullotta (eds), *Handbook on Social and Emotional Learning: Research and Practice* (Guilford, 2015) 135-150.

[32] Paul Gertler et al., 'Labor Market Returns to an Early Childhood Stimulation Intervention in Jamaica' (2014) 344 Science 998, DOI: 10.1126/science.1251178

[33] Paul Gertler et al., 'Economic Benefits of Early Childhood Development Investments' (ECDPeace.org, n.d.) <https://ecdpeace.org/work-content/economic-benefits-early-childhood-development-investments> accessed 9 March 2025

While Kenya has made strides in recognizing the significance of ECDE, the application of the policies set in place into practice in marginalized areas often falls short, All this at the expense of defenseless children. A few factors contribute to this execution gap. For one there is Socio-Economic Disparities. A study posted by Kenya Projects Organization (KENPRO) found that socio-economic differences affecting effective implementation of ECDE also cut across regions, with some being labeled 'marginalized' or Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASAL). Regional disparities have significant role in facilitating access to early childhood care and education, where enrollment levels in rural and marginalized areas are low in comparison to those in the urban areas. Children from the marginalized communities in rural Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) suffer from lack of access to early childhood education[34].

Another way is through poverty and financial constraints. A majority of families in marginalized areas struggle to make ends meet making it difficult for them to afford to enroll their children in ECDE programs. Moreover, monetary limitations at both the large scale and small-scale levels hinder ECDE implementation in marginalized areas. Kenya has endured and continues to endure overwhelming debt burdens and this has led the government to decrease funding for subsidized education, including ECDE. As government funding reduces more financial responsibility for ECDE is placed on families and this places a disproportionate burden on low-income households. In addition to this, inadequate funding translates into a lack of essential resources, such as classrooms, desks, chairs, play facilities, and learning materials.

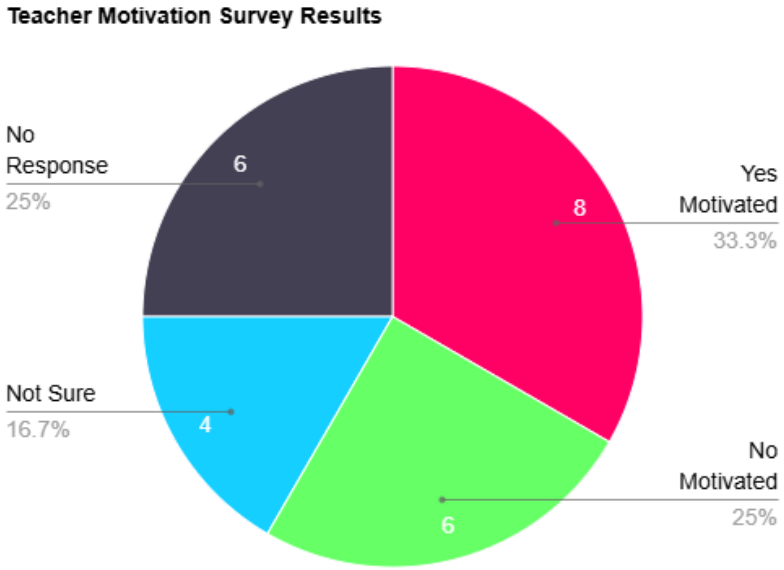
A presentation by Dr. Amita Chudgar and Dr. Changu Mannathoko at the International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All Policy Dialogue Forum found that across 24 countries strikingly similar patterns of inequitable teacher distribution when comparing teachers of marginalized children to their counterparts. They also found that teachers of children in marginalized areas are less trained, less qualified, less prepared[35]. The Teacher-child ratios are often extremely high and unbalanced. This makes it difficult for teachers to provide individualized attention and support to each child. Moreover, ECDE teachers are often poorly paid and lack job security, leading to high turnover rates and a demoralized workforce.

The survey conducted by Elimisha Charity campaign also involved asking the participants if they thought the teachers were well motivated. The following were their findings:

Figure 8: Teacher Motivation (Data from Elimisha Charity Campaign Survey)

[34] Kenpro, 'Challenges Facing Early Childhood Development Education in Kenya' (Kenpro, n.d.) <https://www.kenpro.org/challenges-facing-early-childhood-development-education-in-kenya/> accessed 9 March 2025

[35] Amita Chudgar and Changu Mannathoko, 'Marginalized by Social Origin, Economic Status or Location' (International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All Policy Dialogue Forum, November 2012) <https://teachertaskforce.org/sites/default/files/migrate_default_content_files/chudgarandmannathoko_1.pdf> accessed 9 March 2025



Based on the above pie chart, there is a mixed perception of teacher motivation. While a majority of respondents believe teachers are motivated, a substantial number either disagree or are unsure. Additionally, the "no response" category might suggest that the topic may be sensitive or that some respondents may not have enough information to form an opinion. A conversation with some of the respondents revealed that they believed teachers are well-trained but not motivated, often due to poor compensation for PTA teachers. Some respondents also emphasized the need for adequate teacher training on the curriculum (CBC).

These systemic challenges make for a divided and uncoordinated approach to ECDE, restricting its viability and sustainability.

CONCLUSION

There are multiple challenges facing education in marginalized communities as particularized by Kinango Sub-County and require a comprehensive approach to tackle. The study shows that distance and accessibility is a significant barrier to education and showcases educational inequities since children from disadvantaged backgrounds are affected the most. Infrastructural development is a major huddle across the different challenges according to the study on Kinango.

Poverty, Gender inequality and climate change compound the challenges in these marginalized areas. Poverty limits active involvement of parents to support educational pursuits for their children. Gender inequality remains pervasive with girls facing teenage pregnancies and societal pressures like early marriages and domestic responsibilities like taking care of their siblings. Climate change disrupts educational systems by destroying the infrastructure, delaying learning and leaving the marginalized communities in consistent cycle of educational setbacks.

The Study by Elimisha Charity Campaign has therefore analyzed the challenges and proposed possible solutions and interventions geared towards alleviating the challenges faced in marginalized areas. Some of the solutions are community driven while most indulge the policy interventions for meaningful change. This study calls for targeted interventions by government and community organizations in developing inclusive educational frameworks and policies to address these unique challenges.

By focusing on equitable access to education and resilience of marginalized communities, it is possible to realize Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4). This will pave way for a brighter future where every child has access to quality education and will not be left behind regardless of their social-economic background or location.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DISTANCE AND ACCESSIBILITY

Students within not only Kinango Sub-County but a majority of marginalized areas in Kenya are forced to walk extensive distances before reaching their education facilities every day. Data collected through the Elimisha Charity Campaign demonstrates that a very large number of students experience extensive daily walking distances which negatively affects their health, school performance and security. This matter represents both a practical challenge and a fundamental issue in educational equity. Tackling this intricate issue demands various approaches which resolve both immediate needs alongside promoting long-term systemic change.

Immediate Relief

A localized community-based transportation system should be established to specifically assist students who travel long distances and those in primary school.

Implementation

A shuttle system should be created through partnerships with local business owners using either boda-boda motorcycle taxis or small vans. The community will manage these systems independently which establishes employment opportunities for local citizens. The program should give priority to safety through the enforcement of controlled routes while drivers are professionally trained and all passengers must wear helmets.

Moreover, the government can implement a bicycle Distribution Program that will give out durable bicycles to students who reside between 3 to 6 kilometers from their school. The program will enables students to move independently as it decreases their travel duration substantially. Proper education regarding bicycle maintenance alongside road safety stands as an essential requirement for proper implementation.

A study done by the World Bicycle Relief providing bicycles to students in rural Africa increased school attendance by 28% and academic performance of increased up to 59%. It also noted that the short term, bicycles help children attend school regularly and arrive better rested and in the long term, bicycles help children complete their education, preparing them for better jobs and reducing the likelihood of extreme poverty[36].

The program involves more than transporting students to their school buildings. The program functions as a restorer of dignity and a creator of hope because it demonstrates to students that their education holds value.

[36] World Bicycle Relief, 'Why Bicycles for Education?' (World Bicycle Relief, 2019) https://worldbicyclerelief.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/wbr-why-bicycles-for-education.pdf accessed 10 March 2025

Mid-Term Strategy

Advocate for the development of infrastructure along with strategic technological applications to enhance education accessibility for students.

Implementation

The local government should collaborate with stakeholders to enhance road conditions through infrastructure development focused on improving the safety of all transportation routes. This should include gravelling dirt roads, building footbridges across rivers, and ensuring proper drainage.

A project that creates mobile learning centers should be put in place. The mobile learning centers should provide remote areas with tablet devices along with internet connections and educational resources. The facilities can rotate between villages, providing access to quality education for students to ensure students from distant areas obtain proper academic education.

As noted earlier in this paper there is an absence of absence of a national policy governing ODL It is very importance to advocate for creation and deployment of such policies. As a country we should invest in building high-tech digital learning content for online teaching and train our teachers to effectively deliver remote instruction.

A report published by the Brookings Institution states that embedding components of innovation into a country's existing education platform is crucial for enhancing educational outcomes. It also continues to mention that Mobile learning represents a way to address a number of our educational problems, particularly in low-resource settings[37].

Long-Term Vision

Advocating for policy changes that will prioritize education in marginalized areas in Kenya and address the root causes of educational inequity.

Implementation

Advocate for the increased funding of rural education institutions by government agencies for acquiring sufficient infrastructure together with training teachers and educational resources. More over a financial incentive program, housing benefits and room for professional development should be put in place to motivate teachers to work in rural areas.

The empowerment of local communities is crucial because their involvement in educational decision-making processes is needed. Local communities can make progress through school management committees, conducting community assessments and supporting initiatives that improve educational outcomes. A study by the world bank found that empowering local

[37] B Olsen, M Rodríguez, and M Elliott, 'Deepening Education Impact: Emerging Lessons from 14 Teams Scaling Innovations in Low- and Middle-Income Countries' (Brookings, October 2022) <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Brookings_Report_AR_FINAL.pdf> accessed 10 March 2025

communities to manage schools can lead to improved educational outcomes and increased accountability[38].The government should also create partnerships with public agencies, Non-governmental Organizations, community-based organizations and private sector entities to tackle education concerns in marginalized parts of the country.

2. QUALITY EDUCATION

Kinango Sub-County serves as a test to the many students lacking quality education in marginalized areas. In realizing sustainable goals, education has to be at the forefront in our commitment. We must look at the quality and not the quantity of education. Much can be dispensed but little has significance in terms of innovation and creativity. In addressinfg these novel issues, the government and other stakeholders should look into the ways to fund infrastructural development in schools. The schools lack sanitation facilities and learning materials as highlighted before.

The government should also invest in digital technology in schools in marginalized areas. This will not only protect their constitutional right to access information but also improve on the rendering and reception of information.

3. GENDER INEQUALITY

A conditional cash transfer program should be implemented for families in marginalized areas whose daughters are 10 to 14 years old. The program applies a requirement where young girls must stay enrolled in school and not be married off. The targeted program actively fights economic desperation by addressing its role as the main cause of child marriage as locals explained it. A paper published by UNESCO found that Conditional cash transfers do have positive effects on school attendance and educational attainment, both in terms of promotion from one grade to the next and, consequently, in the number of years of schooling completed by participants[39].

It is also essential to partner with local religious and community leaders to develop and deliver culturally sensitive workshops specifically addressing the harms of early marriage and promoting the benefits of girls' education. A confidential reporting channel for early marriage suspicions must be established so girls have protected ways to get assistance. Such a system must establish links to legal help along with social support organizations.

The government should dedicated fund to support educational and sanitary needs of girls in the marginalized parts of Kenya through scholarships along with bursaries that cover educational costs and purchase of uniforms and sanitary supplies. This educational assistance will benefit

[38] Marlaine E. Lockheed and Adriaan M. Verspoor, *Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries* (Oxford University Press 1991) <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/fr/279761468766168100/pdf/multi-page.pdf> accessed 10 March 2025

[39] Fernando Reimers, Carol DeShano da Silva and Ernesto Trevino, 'Where is the Education in Conditional Cash Transfers in Education?' (UNESCO, 2006) <https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/where-is-the-education-in-conditional-cash-transfers-in-education-06-en_0.pdf> accessed 10 March 2025

girls who belong to the poorest families. Moreover, all schools should improve and or maintain safe private sanitation facilities that includes equipping themselves with menstrual hygiene products.

Schools should train teaching staff about gender-sensitive educational practices and counseling methods. They should be educated to detect SRGBV issues and deliver assistance to female students who confront barriers because of cultural norms or household responsibilities. In addition, a school feeding initiative particularly in Kinango must be created to fight food scarcity for improved student attendance and academic focus.

Establishing a mentorship program pairing successful women from marginalized areas with girls in secondary schools in order to provide the girls with guidance, support and role modeling and this will in turn encourage girls to continue their education. Bridging programs for girls transitioning from primary to secondary school should also be created to address any academic gaps and build their confidence.

Advocacy efforts should push for affirmative action programs throughout marginalized areas across national levels to boost girl student enrollment in tertiary education.It is also important to organize community education forums to bring members of the community together for learning about essential topics of gender equality, girls' rights, education and other vital matters. This is very crucial because there is a need for culturally sensitive approaches and the importance of addressing social norms. Moreover, local community-based organizations should receive support to help them deliver programs which help women gain empowerment and increase their understanding of gender equality.

4. POVERTY IN EDUCATION

The poverty problems faced by the students in Kinango are not only fueled by financial constraints but also societal dimensions. We have seen that the issue of poverty and education are interrelated. In addressing the issue the government and all stakeholders should aim at creating a conducive environment for students by ensuring that there is social inclusion and fairness. This is by including feeding programs, introducing grants to disadvantaged children and awarding the same on a need based criteria. The teachers should be encouraged to holistically look at the welfare of their students. They should be involved in the active teaching and assessments to determine or detect instances where their students are drifting due to unfair treatment, fee arrears or truancy to fend for their families or other related circumstances.

The government should provide access to finance to the communities living in marginalized areas. This will allow the parents of the children to capital to set up businesses to support the education of their kids. The government can also enhance the lending of educational kitties to bolster efforts to keep students in schools.

5. INCLUSIVITY IN EDUCATION

Measures need to be taken to make sure local educational policies match both national Basic Education Act legislation and international CRPD framework requirements. Local authorities must execute Article 54 (1)(b) of the COK 2010 to provide integrated educational facilities that serve persons with disabilities.

Local government must develop inclusive education policies through efforts of advocacy at their respective levels. Stakeholder consultations must occur to guarantee that new policies specifically support children with disabilities and ethnic minorities along with other marginalized groups.

Educational institutions must establish thorough training sessions that teach teachers proven methods of inclusive education. This will provide teachers with essential tools to assist different learning requirements and create inclusive learning spaces. The training provided should also provide training that emphasizes understanding cultural norms and addressing biases that may affect teaching practices and this in turn can help mitigate prejudice against marginalized students.

Studies concerning teacher training for inclusive education indicate that effective training encompasses developing teaching skills and integrating theory and practice, thereby enabling educators to tailor their responses to the diverse learning needs of children with SEN[40].

Educational institutions should create alliances with their communities to improve parental engagement in their schools' decision-making structures. Participation of families in school events enhances their support for inclusive educational approaches. Moreover, it is important to Conduct community awareness campaigns highlighting the importance of inclusive education. The campaigns should purpose to change negative perceptions and stereotypes about disabilities and promote a culture of acceptance and respect.

Based on studies conducted by Šukys and others found that there is a meaningful relationship between parental involvement and academic success of inclusive education. Based on the findings, the studies recommend that educational leaders should pay more attention to parental involvement in order to promote inclusive education[41]. Studies done by Afolabi also support these findings[42].

Dedicated inclusive learning facilities should set up specialized resources and qualified personnel in marginalized community centers. These centers provide learning environments

[40] Jingjing Qu et al, 'A Bibliometric Analysis of Research on Inclusive Education for Children With Special Educational Needs from 2015 to 2024' (2025) 9 Frontiers in Education <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/education/articles/10.3389/feduc.2024.1475876/full> accessed 10 March 2025

[41] S Šukys, A Dumčienė, and D Lapėnienė, 'Parental Involvement in Inclusive Education of Children with Special Educational Needs' (2015) 43 Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal 327, 338 <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2015.43.2.327> accessed 10 March 2025

[42] O E Afolabi, 'Parents Involvement in Inclusive Education: An Empirical Test for the Psycho-Educational Development of Learners with Special Educational Needs (SENs)' (2014) 9(2) International Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies 196, 318 <https://doi.org/10.5897/IJEAPS2014.0364> accessed 10 March 2025

which function as safe locations where children can both learn and interact socially. Moreover, a flexible educational plan needs development to support diverse learning forms and skill levels so that all students can participate actively with academic material.

A paper published by the Shanlax International Journal of Education noted that the presence of inclusive education settings promotes the development of social learning opportunities, facilitates the cultivation of healthy peer connections, and offers students with disabilities significant communicative examples to follow. Moreover, it stated that Curriculum may be modified to accommodate the diverse learning preferences and capabilities of students by providing different kinds of representation which includes supplying learning materials in different forms[43].

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT

The common issue in marginalized communities as we have seen in Kinango is access to water and the devastating effects of unprecedented weather changes. Much of the efforts against climate change lack vigor due to lack community involvement. Grass root engagement with the local community on ways to mitigate the grave impacts of climate will strengthen commitments and build the capacity for long term achievement of cleaning our air, land and water. The local community will therefore be trained on climate education and as a result they will have active participation in developing policies and frameworks that help to alleviate the situation.

The government should also invest in early detection systems to ascertain when the communities will be struck by droughts and heavy rainfall that may affect school. Moreover, the government should invest in technology to ensure that when these situations occur, learners can continue with studies the comfort of their homes.

The government should also invest in climate resilient infrastructure. Most of the bridges in different parts of the country break due to lack of the tenacity to hold in the extreme temperatures.

The short-term solution of accessibility to water is investing on water harvesting infrastructure. The stored water will be used in schools to address the water issues before the government can establish and dig boreholes in the areas.

[43] Mayonel J Jardinez and Lexter R Natividad, 'The Advantages and Challenges of Inclusive Education: Striving for Equity in the Classroom' (2024) 12(2) Shanlax International Journal of Education 57-65 <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1421555.pdf> accessed 10 March 2025

7. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION (ECDE)

The Kenyan government needs to allocate higher national budget resources specifically for ECDE to sustain educational infrastructure and improve resources and teacher compensation. The LANCET series also emphasizes investment in early years can have significant benefits, estimating returns of 8–19 times the initial investment in ECCE. These investments are essential for maximizing children's potential and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[44].

There should be implementation of subsidies for low-income families enables financial assistance toward the cost of ECDE program enrollment. The implementation of this strategy would enable every child to receive premium education irrespective of their economic standing.

ECDE teachers should receive continuous educational programs which help develop their competencies regarding child development, classroom management and curriculum implementation practices. A study conducted by Abhinav Shrivastava and Prof Somesh Dhamija found that the amount of training and development that teachers receive has a significant impact on the level of academic achievement that students achieve and that teacher training improves students' performance by increasing their understanding of how to select and apply the most effective teaching approaches[45]. Moreover, a competitive package including better pay and benefits should be introduced for ECDE teachers to prevent staff from quitting or being unmotivated. A workforce free from instability supports the delivery of reliable high-quality educational practices.

The implementation of customized programs must focus on children in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) areas together with other marginalized areas. The interventions must adapt to local requirements and acknowledge cultural backgrounds in order to be successful. Through NGO partnerships the initiative will be able to access additional resources that strengthen ECDE program implementation in underserved areas.

ECDE programs should integrate digital learning tools by using suitable educational technology that improves learning experience for each and every age group. The growing use of technology in education demands that we give special attention to this. To further enhance this it is important to educate teachers through proper training sessions about effective use of technology in education to enhance their learning material delivery methods.

[44] Viktorya Sargsyan, 'Building Strong Foundations: The Importance of Early Childhood Development in a Changing World' (World Vision, 10 March 2025) <https://www.wvi.org/stories/education/building-strong-foundations-importance-early-childhood-development-changing-world> accessed 10 March 2025

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