

Kenya

National Higher Education Equity Policy

Governance

Who is responsible for defining national policies in higher education?

- The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and its Directorate of Higher Education¹ set higher education policy in Kenya. (<http://www.education.go.ke/index.php/about-us/state-departments/higher-education/directorate-of-university-education>)
- The Commission for University Education is responsible for the regulation, accreditation and quality assurance of higher education in Kenya.

Higher Education Policy Documents

What are the current official documents defining the national higher education strategy / policies?

- Strategic Plan 2014-2018
- Gender and Education Policy 2007

Equity Policy Documents

What broad and specific equity objectives do the policy documents identify?

- “To expand access and equity in university education” (Strategic Plan, CUE viii)
- The vision focuses on expanding the number of higher education and widening accreditation.
- The strategic plan emphasizes the need to address disparities for students with disabilities, students from marginalized areas, and vulnerable groups. The plan also calls for increasing the number of women in STEM courses

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents?

- Gender groups
- Minority groups: geographical location (students from marginalized areas)

¹ The Directorate of Higher Education is also referred to as the Directorate of University Education at times.

- Students with disability
- “Vulnerable groups”

Does the country have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups?

- No

Kenya does not have a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

What specific interventions and/or instruments of equity promotion are included in the official strategy and policy documents (monetary and non-monetary)?

Monetary Policy Instruments

- No tuition fees or low fees in public institutions / No fees for certain groups
 - Public education was free but cost sharing was introduced to relieve the burden on the government.
- Needs-based scholarships and grants / Other grants targeted for equity groups
 - Higher Education Loan Board (HELB) provides for partial loans (Odhiambo), scholarships and bursaries.
 - bursaries from the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) (Malechwanzi, Shen, and Mbeke)
- Student loans:
 - Student loans have been in place since 1973, but they become quite costly. They are open to everyone (Eisemon and Salmi).
 - Higher Education Loan Board (HELB) provides for partial loans (Odhiambo), scholarships and bursaries. “HELB prioritizes support for students on the basis of means-tested need, students who are orphaned because of HIV/AIDS, and students from regions classified as disadvantaged. However, in practice, HELB does not have the capacity to effectively measure household income, with one study estimating that approximately 25 percent of loan recipients lied about the education, employment, and income status of their parents” (quoted in Darvas, Gao, Shen, Bawany, p85)

Non-Monetary Policy Instruments

What are the main non-monetary instruments to promote equity?

- Reformed admission procedures for women

Financial Resources

What financial resources does the country devote to equity promotion measures?

- Not available

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance criteria do not take equity elements into consideration.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Not available.

Dedicated Equity Promotion Agency

Kenya does not have an agency dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

Equity Indicators

- Gender disparities are quite significant still, as are general inequities in access to higher education (Odhiambo, 2016).
- Regional disparities/socio economic class still significant. Only academic/merit entrance admissions limits opportunities for rural areas.

Sources

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The Ministry of Higher Education Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Directorate of Higher Education <http://www.education.go.ke/index.php/about-us/state-departments/higher-education/directorate-of-university-education>

Commission for University Education <http://www.cue.or.ke/>