

# **Women's Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Obstacles Facing Women and Girls Access to Education: the Case of Kenya**

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## **Abstract**

Today, many African nations and international communities have committed themselves to eliminating gender and education disparities by the year „2005“. I ask my self-how are rural African women included in these policies of education for all and how their educational needs are being met by their governments. The continent of Africa in no doubt faces many challenges that range from educating its population, to economic development. However, due to many western „so called“ developmental programs such as Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), Africa Growth and Opportunity Agreement (AGOA) and the recent trends of globalization, substantial African governments have neglected to address the needs of their women population and education. Rather, educational policies that are generated are geared towards assisting those already educationally advantaged groups. For the past four decades, women and education inequality has been the most discussed subject in many developing countries. Many of these developing countries are located in Sub-Saharan Africa. The emphasis put on gender and education should alert us to the fact that education is necessary for women and men, either economically and socially, and it advances development for both women and men. Studies have indicated that educating girls increases women's wages, health productivity, and it also allows women in developing countries to gain access to rising job markets, thus, making them the main benefactors (Hill et al., 1). In order to address issues of gender and education disparities, Sub-Saharan African governments need to acknowledge that gender gap in education does, indeed exist. *One does not cultivate his field without acknowledging to himself that he will die of hunger.* When these governments start to invest more in women's education and schools openly extend their enrollments to include girls, the outcomes will be tremendous. Educating women will reduce the number of women living in poverty, women will be less dependent on their husbands, and most importantly, the number of illiterate women will begin to decline. However, when policy makers fail to invest adequately in educating women, it reduces the potential benefits of education productivity that influences household income, and reduces women's quality of life.

**Key Words:** Gender; Women; Pastoralists; Education; Kenya

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