

Equality

Related Concept

Fairness, Equity, Egalitarianism



The Kenyan Constitution holds the promise for an equal, just and fair society. Article 27 guarantees equal benefit and protection before the law, regardless of race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, health status, ethics or social origin, colour, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, dressing, language or birth. Article 27 (6) further provides affirmative action and states mechanisms to redress past injustices. Special consideration is given to children, persons with disabilities, youth, minorities and marginalized groups and older persons as stipulated in Articles 53, 54, 55 and 57 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010.

10% of Kenya's wealthiest households control 42% of the wealth, while 10% of the poorest households control 1%

More than 64% of Kenya's population lives on less than Kshs. 7,200 per month.

The gap in education attainment between children from low income and those from middle-income households is 40-60% wider now than it was 30 years ago

Although women account for 70% of agricultural labour, women own only 1% of title for land in Kenya, and only 5-6% of women have joint land ownership



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Inequality is not only unethical, but also economically inefficient, socially divisive, politically corrosive and environmentally destructive, with far-reaching effects. In Kenya for instance, a culture of corruption has evolved into a means of accessing opportunities' and resources; leading to high revenue loss, poor quality or complete lack of public services and social amenities. Socially, ethnic divisions persist as communities perceive political dominance translates to access to resources and opportunities. The 2007/2008 post-election violence and recent incidences of insecurity demonstrate how inequality facilitates economic, social and political divisions resulting in conflict and crime. The environment has not been spared either as natural reserves such as the Mau Forest have been destroyed due to human encroachment. Most of these effects are related to land, which remains among the highest source of tension and inequality in post-independence Kenya.

In addressing inequality, it is important to consider that economic and social inequalities are intertwined and rooted in both formal and informal structures and practices that disadvantage certain members of the society. While economic inequalities can be remedied by re-distribution, social and cultural inequalities can, in accordance with the Constitution be remedied by recognizing the rights of every person, whether young or old, male or female, with or without disabilities, rich or poor, urban or rural. For these constitutional provisions to translate to equality for all, it is important to debunk and reject the dominant discourse that economic growth will translate to poverty reduction as wealth trickles down. This should be followed by policy goals and implementation strategies to ensure that the benefits of economic growth are (re) distributed and enjoyed by every member of the society, thereby reducing the gap between the poorest and wealthiest.

The Kenya Dialogues Project (KDP) at SID is committed to creating a public covenant and leadership around four key promises of the Constitution of Kenya. The four promises are: **Public Participation, Integrity, Equality and Devolution**. They enshrine the constitutional vision of a democratic, just, equitable and economically prosperous Kenya. KDP supports active citizenship and responsive governance by building and promoting balanced, respectful and enriching relationships between the public, civil society and government. We create and support spaces for citizens and their leaders to interact in positive, forward-looking ways so as to solve shared challenges within shared communities



Actions sought by KDP to strengthen public participation at national and local level

- **Improve citizens' confidence in their ability to positively influence development priorities and outcomes in their localities,**
- **Engineer attitudinal change and reduce misperceptions about public participation among both leaders and citizens,**
- **Strengthen existing spaces and frameworks for sustainable citizen participation,**
- **Avail accurate information to enable evidence-based, impactful citizen Participation**