



**IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE-NOVEMBER 2, 2018  
CHILD PREGNANCY IN KENYA**

The National Gender and Equality Commission has learnt, with great concern, the unprecedented numbers of school going children who gave birth during this year's Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examinations. The Commission has also noted that the Ministry of Education has called for a probe into the matter.

Child pregnancy has adverse social, economic, cultural and political consequences, which include early marriage and death. Others are health complications for the young girls such as low birth weight in newborns, obstetric fistula, and school dropout, unsafe abortion mental disorder, low esteem and sense of hopelessness among others. Children born to very young mothers are predisposed to higher risks of illness, death, abandonment, neglect and poor upbringing.

On April 25 2017 the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) launched a report titled '**Lost Childhood; Drivers of child pregnancy in Kenya**'. The report was a seminal product of an enduring inquiry conducted by the Commission in six counties, based on existing information on the prevalence rates of child pregnancy. The counties were Samburu, Kwale, Nairobi, Nakuru, Busia and Homa Bay. The report was shared with representatives from the National and County Governments as well as non-State actors.

Some of the recommendations of this inquiry were the following: -

**National Government**

1. To provide leadership and political good-will to all initiatives on prevention and response to Gender Based Violence (GBV) including prevention of child pregnancy.
2. Kenya should consider ratifying all optional protocols under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
3. Kenya must strive to implement the Kenya Constitution 2010, the Children's Act and all international and regional treaties ratified

4. The government should consider voting resources towards installation of rescue centers or shelters for the abused girls and boys, and GBV recovery centers with capacity to offering forensic laboratory services;
5. Work closely with private sector as the main provider of digital services to develop strict regulations and control of cyber space for sexual crimes targeting girls and boys.
6. There is need to invest in female role models for girls to build their confidence and self-esteem

### **County Governments**

1. Ensure proper infrastructure is in place to facilitate adequate GBV prevention and response. The County Government should consider voting resources towards installation of rescue centers or shelters for the abused girls and boys, and GBV recovery centers with capacity to offering forensic laboratory.
2. Provide Child/Adolescent Friendly Services in all county health facilities to care for the vulnerable children and the child mothers who need special medical care and socio economic empowerment.
3. There is need for health facilities to establish fully equipped Mental Health Units providing services in line with the mental health Act and policy. These services should include child and adolescent friendly facilities with trained staff.
4. Counties should strengthen the drug abuse prevention and support programs developed by National Authority for the Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NACADA), and scale up drug and substance abuse prevention programs in schools.
5. Undertake advocacy and awareness programmes to educate the community on existing laws and policies to prevent child pregnancies. Particular focus should be placed on reducing the vulnerability of children with disabilities from well-known double tragedies of child pregnancies

The Commission has shared the report with the Ministry of Education. The report is also available in PDF format on this link in our website:

<https://www.ngeckkenya.org/Downloads/Lost%20Childhood%20Drivers%20of%20Child%20Pregnancy%20in%20Kenya.pdf>

**SIGNED**



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