Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Secondary Education Bursary Fund

Triple Tragedy: The Girl Child’s Struggle to Access Secondary Education Bursary Fund

The Case of Kasarani, Starehe and Embakasi Constituencies in Nairobi County, Kenya

Youth Initiatives - Kenya

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Special gratitude goes to the education administrators, school heads, teachers, parents and students who voluntarily accepted to participate in the study. To all who supported the process, including those we could not possibly name, we feel most indebted for it was only with their support that attainment of the study objectives became a reality.
Executive Summary

Since 1993, the Government of Kenya has continued to finance the secondary education bursary scheme with the aim of reaching the most vulnerable and poor segments of children in the secondary age bracket especially girls. The main objective of the fund has been to enable children in the target groups to access secondary education and ensure that beneficiaries remain in school to complete the secondary school cycle. However, the fund has faced numerous challenges on the efficiency and equity fronts. This study sought to assess the level and extent of gender responsiveness in the budgeting process for the fund, the implementation, management and performance of the fund, the impact of the fund in improving the access and participation in secondary education especially for the girl child and the poor, the general lessons learnt, challenges to the implementation of the fund and the forgone benefits that could have accrued to non-beneficiaries. The study was conducted in following three constituencies in Nairobi County; Kasarani, Starehe and Embakasi. These areas play host to huge populations of people living in informal settlements. Study data were obtained from the MoE, PDE, Constituency Bursary Fund Committees (CBFCs), schools, communities groups and selected key informants.

Level of Gender Responsiveness of the SEBF Budgeting Process: At the ministry level, where the core budgeting process takes place, structures to make the budgeting and allocation of the bursary gender responsive are non-existent. The only indicators used to determine allocations of the fund are enrolments and poverty indices which do not lend themselves to any gender considerations. In addition, the data used for these indicators are often inaccurate. At the constituency level, where the actual award of the bursaries takes place, the existing structures intended to make the process gender responsive are either weak or blatantly ignored.

Efficiency in Targeting of the Poor and Girls: Although the education officials in the higher hierarchy believe that the fund reaches the poor and girls, study evidence from interviews at the point of impact, the schools, shows that allocation of the fund is greatly marred by conflicts of interest, politics and ‘local network’ influences. As a result, the fund remains inefficient in targeting the intended groups of beneficiaries. The non-poor seem to have a disproportionate share of the fund primarily because they have the information and necessary networks to influence access to the fund.

Bursary Demand Gap and Gender Based Trends: Overall, the demand gap on the fund remains high with the proportion of beneficiaries hardly reaching 20 percent of all applicants. This proportion could be much lower if all the potential applicants got the right information and were able to apply on time. Although the proportion of girls getting the fund relative to the number of girl applicants was on average higher, the impact of the fund on girls in real terms is
still minimal since fewer apply. The proportion of the needy girls who remain excluded from access to the fund therefore remains high.

**SEBF Programme Implementation, Management and Performance:** A lot of Government effort has gone into attempts to improve the implementation, management and performance of the fund. To improve the efficiency of the fund, the government has developed and circulated relevant guidelines in the form of circulars. Between 2003 and 2010, five such circulars had been issued by the Ministry of Education. However, these efforts are yet to yield the desired results in terms of improved efficiency in the performance and equity in the implementation of the fund. There have been constant fluctuations in the amounts of bursary finances allocated to the bursary fund, nationally, over time. Overall, there has been a general decline in the amounts allocated for the fund by the treasury since 2006. Notably, even after an initial allocation of KES 1.3 billion to the fund during the 2011/12 FY, the treasury ended up reallocating KES 0.4 billion away from the SEBF leaving only KES 0.9 billion for the fund. These trends only intensify the demand and competition for the fund with the net result being that more and more children from poor households seeking secondary education will remain excluded. For purely practical and circumstantial reasons, the constituency bursary committees have had to operate outside the policy guidelines. This mode of operation has often distorted the intended equity outcomes of the fund.

**Performance Perception of the Constituency Bursary Fund Committees:** There were differing perceptions on the performance of the Constituency Bursary Fund committees (CBFCs). Whereas the CBFCs consider themselves as being able to perform their function, most of the stakeholders believed they were operating at the whims of the local political leadership. In response to this political pressure and other extraneous considerations, the bursary committees often operated outside the policy guidelines given by the Ministry of Education.

**Capacity Needs of CBFCs:** Notwithstanding the training that committee representatives had received, some capacity gaps were identified during the research. These include: training on the evaluation criteria for bursary applications, financial management, accounting and budgeting, data and information management, gender mainstreaming and basic ICT literacy.

**Impacts:** The fund has had no impact on access to secondary education since its present design does not allow Standard 8 leavers seeking to enter Form One to apply and rely on the awards to enrol in secondary schools. Furthermore, the bursary fund only focuses on those who are still in school and thus excludes any meriting dropouts. The fund has enabled beneficiaries to remain in school but this impact is minimal because total beneficiaries are relatively few coupled with lack of consistency in allocation of the bursary to the same beneficiary in subsequent
tranches. As a result of this inconsistency, the fund has had negligible impacts on the number of dropouts. The study document many cases of secondary school dropouts in the poor neighbourhoods in all the three constituencies. Due to the low amounts awarded, against the ever increasing fees charged by public schools, the impact of the fund on beneficiaries’ fee balances is only significant for those who are able to pay substantial amounts of the fees. The very poor students still have huge fee arrears even after receiving the bursary.

**Challenges:** The bursary secondary education bursary fund still faces enormous challenges. Most community members, teachers, students and out of school, youth noted that the single biggest problem that the fund faces is the political interference emanating from the influence and sway that MPs have over the function of the committees. Although the ideal scenario anticipates nomination of the CBFC members by the District Education Board (DEB), in practice, the most committee members were nominees of the MP. Other challenges include; inadequate funds, lack of information among prospective beneficiaries, high poverty among informal settlement population hence high demand, low amount of awards and an ineffective monitoring and evaluation system for assessing impacts.

**Possible Impacts of the Fund on Non-Beneficiaries:** Non-beneficiaries face a host of forgone benefits of the fund. These include consistency in school attendance, motivation to better performance, reduction in dropouts and repetition and freeing household incomes to be spent on other pressing needs. Financing education interventions focusing on improving access among the poor can be seen to be self-financing since such interventions can significantly reduce costs associated with internal inefficiencies of the school system due to repetitions and dropouts.

**The Way Forward for YIKE:** Based on the findings on the present SEBF situation in terms of implementation management, performance and levels of gender responsiveness and challenges, opportunities exist for Youth Initiatives Kenya (YIKE) and other stakeholders to mount interventions to improve the fund. As a way forward, YIKE should consider mounting programmes to raise community awareness on the fund and similar sources of finances that can improve access to secondary education for girls and the poor generally. Youth initiatives Kenya can also spearhead a policy advocacy initiative bringing together other stakeholders with the aim of mounting a policy advocacy initiative to influence the Government into mitigatory action.

**Recommendations:** To make the entire bursary budgeting, management, implementation more gender responsive and efficient in targeting the poor and girls the study recommends; revision of the allocation criteria, mounting of training on gender issues in education to policy makers and fund implementers, trainings to committees on application evaluation and means
testing, revision of the current means testing instruments, strengthening of M&E structures, using schools to identify needy cases and improving communication channels on information about the SEBF.

**Concluding Remarks:** As presently structured and implemented, the secondary education bursary fund budgeting process has low levels of gender responsiveness. The inherent challenges of political interference and high demand pressures make it impossible to attain any meaningful level of gender responsiveness in the budgeting process. The attainment of any form of equity in the implementation of the fund is therefore inconceivable under the present level of political interference. In the case of the Kasarani, Starehe and Embakasi constituencies, any interventions to improve the fund's efficiency in targeting the poor with a focus on girls will have to start by stamping out political patronage from the management of the fund.
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<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBFC</td>
<td>Constituency Bursary Fund Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDF</td>
<td>Constituency Development Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEB</td>
<td>District Education Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEO</td>
<td>District Education Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>DQASO</td>
<td>District Quality Assurance Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
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<td>FY</td>
<td>FY</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRB</td>
<td>Gender Responsive Budgeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immune Deficiency Virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KES</td>
<td>Kenya Shillings</td>
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<tr>
<td>KNUT</td>
<td>Kenya National Union of Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCST</td>
<td>National Council for Science and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDE</td>
<td>Provincial Director of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>POI</td>
<td>Point of Impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEBF</td>
<td>Secondary Education Bursary Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>STD</td>
<td>Standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNWOMEN</td>
<td>United Nations Women Organization</td>
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<td>YIKE</td>
<td>Youth Initiatives Kenya</td>
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I Introduction and Background

The Secondary Education Bursary Fund (SEBF) has been in existence for nearly two decades. The main rationale for the creation of the fund had been an attempt to enable children from poor, marginalised and vulnerable economic groups to access and complete the secondary education cycle. Over time, the Ministry of Education has made efforts to reform the management and implementation process of the fund with a view of eliminating identified inefficiencies. A few studies have been conducted in the past over the management and implementation of the fund. However, not much effort has gone into establishing the level and extent to which the fund has been targeting the intended groups. Towards this end, this study sought to assess the level and extent of the integration of gender responsive structures in the budgeting process of the SEBF and their effectiveness.

A brief History of the Fund

The Secondary Schools Bursary Scheme was introduced in the 1993/1994 FY with an initial allocation of KES 25 million. By the 2002/03 FY total allocations had reached KES 548 million. At the inception of the scheme, funds were disbursed directly to secondary schools from the Ministry of Education (MoE) headquarters, based on the schools' student enrolment. Schools were expected to distribute the bursary funds in accordance with guidelines issued by Ministry of Education. Ideally, the bursary scheme was set to cushion students in the lower income groups from the high costs of secondary education.

However, a number of complaints were levelled against the manner in which the fund was being administered prior to 2003. These included undeserving students benefiting from the fund, very few beneficiaries being reached, ghost students being awarded bursaries and beneficiaries being awarded insignificant amounts. In 2003, the Ministry and other stakeholders decided to modify the scheme in line with government policy on decentralization and to respond to complaints of mismanagement and lack of impact. Instead of sending funds from headquarters directly to schools, the funds are channelled through constituencies. Some of the scheme enhancements included use of constituency poverty indices to ensure that a more comprehensive consideration of poverty in targeting the needy, beneficiaries identified by Constituency Bursary Fund Committees (CBFC) that include a broader participation by various education stakeholders in a constituency and comprehensive guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education on allocation and disbursements of bursary funds.

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3 Oyugi 2010.
Kenya’s Secondary education bursary is an example of a demand-side financing mechanism where finances from the central government or donors are targeted directly at schools to defray tuition and user fees. It is however noteworthy that, even after the modification of the bursary scheme, there was not even an implicit mention of any efforts to make the budgeting and allocation process gender responsive.

**Evolution of the Bursary Fund Implementation Policy**

Over time, the bursary fund process has faced a number of challenges. In order to address these emerging challenges, over the years, MoE has been revising management guidelines through a number of circulars. Table 1.1 details the chronology of the MoE circulars and their functions in terms of the challenges they addressed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circular</th>
<th>Main Function</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Circular Ref. No. G9/1/61 of 22/9/2003</td>
<td>Introduced the system of administration of bursary funds at constituency and district levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Circular Ref. No. S19/17/155 of 24/1/2008</td>
<td>Provided guidelines on minimum allocations of KES 8,000 to boarders and barred day scholars from the bursary scheme and;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Circular Ref. No. S19/17/155 of 1/4/2008</td>
<td>Emphasized strict adherence to previous guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Circular of 3/7/2008</td>
<td>On composition of CBFCs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education, 2010⁴

According to MoE (2010), the changes in the management and implementation of the bursary fund has lead to the realization of two major achievements namely; more students benefiting from the bursary and an equitable spread of beneficiaries across the constituencies.

The constituency bursary committees (CBFCs) are responsible for evaluating applications and awarding bursaries to successful applicants at constituency level, using the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education. These guidelines are aimed at ensuring that the objectives of the bursary scheme are met. The guidelines also stipulate the minimum amounts to be awarded to applicants in each school category. The condition of minimum amount is meant to ensure that sufficient funds are awarded to the very needy students to keep them in school.

Following the introduction of Free Day Secondary Education in January 2008, the bursary scheme excludes day students from benefiting. This was based on the understanding that the government meets (KES 10, 625 per student per year) which forms the bulk of day school fees. The guidelines provide for a minimum allocation of KES 8,000 per student in boarding secondary schools per year. A needy student fills application form (A) that is then submitted to the CBFC

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for processing and award. On their part, the CBFCs are required to submit returns on the bursary scheme to the Ministry of Education headquarters after each award. Evidence from the findings show that CBFCs, in all the three constituencies, have faced serious challenges in attempting to meet the requirement on minimum amounts for bursary awards. First, most public schools in the Kasarani, Starehe and Embakasi are day therefore hosting majority of secondary school students. Second, the total annual fees payable by day scholars in public schools is, on average, as high as KES 15,000. Third, there is a significant proportion of children from informal settlements in the three constituencies, who attend private schools. In response to these challenges, the CBFCs have had to ‘domesticate’ the guidelines and innovate on how to make it possible to reach at least some of the poor students.

**Contextualizing the Gender Responsive Budgeting Concept**

In this section, attempts are made to conceptualize the term Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) as it is understood conventionally and also within the context of education financing through means tested systems. Further, the section briefly delves into the role of the study in examining the present GRB situation in SEBF and the utility of study evidence in informing policy on equitable education financing.

**Gender Responsive Budgeting:** Gender responsive budgeting (GRB) is a means of integrating a gender perspective into all steps of the budget process namely; planning, drafting, implementation and evaluation. This is intended to ensure that budget policies take into consideration the gender issues in society and neither directly nor indirectly discriminate against either women or men, girls or boys.

Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) initiatives can be quite diverse, but they all have one essential question in common: *What is the impact of the government budget, and the policies and programmes that it funds, on women and men, girls and boys?* In the context of the this study, GRB is thus an attempt to ensure that gender-related issues are considered and addressed in all government policies and programmes, and especially in the budgets allocated to the Secondary Education Bursary Fund(SEBF).

Taking cognisance of the UNSECO definition of Gender Responsive Budgeting, analysis in this study, not only focused on the gender responsiveness of the fund process at the constituency level but also went into the budgeting processes at the MOE. Focus on the MOE draws from the

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5 A systematic indicator guided mechanism of determining if an applicant qualifies or is eligible for a given form of assistance


fact that it is at this level where actual budget planning, drafting and implementation guidelines are developed.

Focus and Relevance of the Study: Why a GRB Evaluation of SEBF?
This section concentrates on what the evaluation focused on, its relevance and why an evaluation of the Secondary Bursary Fund, in terms of the level of Gender Responsiveness in its budgeting, is critical to efforts towards attaining gender equity in secondary education financing in Kenya.

Establishing the Level of Gender Responsiveness in MoE Budgeting: The most critical budget decisions on the SEBF are made at the MOE level. In view of this, the study analyzes the entire MOE planning, and budgetary allocation system to establish the level of gender mainstreaming in the criteria for budgetary allocations and whether gender considerations are integral to the budgeting process at this level. The decision to start the analysis process at the MoE level stems from the fact that the Constituency Bursary Fund Committees (CBFC) are supposed to operate within the confines of the guidelines developed by the MoE. Where GRB is not explicitly set in the MOE guidelines, it becomes unlikely that structures supportive of GRB can be found at the constituency level. To this extent, therefore, analysis of Gender Responsiveness of Budgeting in Education financing focuses on the various phases of the budgeting process at the MoE.

Gender responsiveness of the Allocation Criteria: The study focuses on gender responsiveness in allocations of the Secondary Education Bursary funds at the constituency level. This decision was informed by the fact that, in essence, actual budgeting decisions are made at the ministry level with the CBFCs being left with the sole administrative task of reviewing applications and allocation of the funds using an MoE designed criteria. However, it is expected that, even in the absence of any explicit gender responsive structures in the MoE guidelines, actual disbursement at the constituency level may integrate gender considerations. The study also attempts to establish the level of gender responsiveness in fund allocation in terms of administrative structures and contextual decisions by fund administrators at the constituency level.

Establishing Progress and Achievement of the scheme: In establishing the progress and achievements made in the process of implementing the secondary bursary scheme, the study focused on the following: implications of the fund on access, sex disaggregated trends in allocations and the quantity and continuity of funding to beneficiaries.

Implications of the Fund on Access: Using data on enrolments, number of beneficiaries, beneficiary fees balances at the end of each academic year and beneficiary
dropout rates, analysis has been conducted to determine the extent to which the bursary fund has improved access to secondary education among the neediest students.

**Establishing Sex Disaggregated Trends in Bursary Allocations:** In establishing the gender disaggregated trends in the allocation of bursaries among beneficiaries, the study attempts to quantify how the population of female beneficiaries has changed in the last five years (2006-2010) relative to the total number of beneficiaries.

**The quantity and continuity of funding to beneficiaries:** The study also attempted to quantify the average per student funding and the levels of continuity in support to beneficiaries.

**Determining Strengths of the scheme:** Using in-depth interviews and group discussions, the evaluation sought to establish the main strengths of the scheme relative to past modes of disbursement and other similar funds.

**Documenting Challenges and Limitations:** Examples of indicators of challenges and limitations relevant to the study included; a gender disaggregated need gap, efficiency challenges, systemic and policy gaps and levels of awareness.

**Determining a gender disaggregated need Gap:** Considering the fluctuations in the total amounts allocated by the MoE towards the secondary education bursary fund, the study sought to determine the gender disaggregated need gap by conducting a sex disaggregated quantification of the proportion of applicants receiving the fund relative to the total number of applications.

**Assessing the Efficiency in disbursements:** The evaluation establishes some of the challenges that the fund faces with regard to efficiency. These include timing of disbursements, application procedures and targeting.

**Establishing the systemic and Policy Gaps in GRB:** Attempts have also been made in the study to establish existing systemic and policy gaps in GRB for the fund in relation to MoE budgetary allocations and the award criteria.

**Determination of Awareness Levels on the Fund:** Depending on their circumstances, prospective applicants are faced with varying levels of information asymmetry on the fund’s availability and application processes. The study attempted to determine levels of student awareness of the fund and how this affects access to funding.

**Documenting Lessons Learnt and making recommendations:** The 2003 modification by the MOE on the way the management and administration of the fund was based on lessons from
the past mode of disbursement. Similarly, the study sought information from beneficiaries and stakeholders on what has worked well and the structures/processes that would require further modification in a way that optimizes targeting of beneficiaries and above all make the planning, budgeting and implementation processes more gender responsive.

**Grounding Education Policy Advocacy on Research Evidence:** Being an action and change driven study, the research evidence from findings of the study have been used as a basis for informing YIKE’s future activities. The proposed activities include; awareness creation, establishment of local partnerships and designing an advocacy plan and approach to influence government and stakeholder interventions in the area of gender responsive budgeting in education financing.
2 Methodology and Approach

A broad methodological framework was employed for the different phases of the study. The two main phases were, the pre-fieldwork phase and the evaluation phase. The methodology for delivery on the project was therefore segmented into two main phases as outlined below:

Pre-Fieldwork Phase
Activities in this phase comprised prior logistical arrangements to make the fieldwork phase both time and resource efficient. Key activities undertaken here included; obtaining research authorization, mapping of study sites, preparation/piloting of research instruments and development of a sampling frame.

Composition of the Study Team: The study team comprised the lead consultant, the Gender & Governance project officer at YIKE and three research assistants.

Research Authorization: An official research authorization was sought and obtained from the National Council of Science and Technology (NCST). This official authorization was instrumental in demonstrating to prospective respondents that the study was an objective evidence-seeking research exercise for the purposes of informing policy formulation; as opposed to a “politically motivated audit” of CBFCs’ activities.

Mapping of study sites: Prior to fieldwork, the study team used available secondary information to map study sites including schools, CBFC offices, relevant departments and stakeholder organizations.

Preparing and Piloting of Instruments: Study tools/instruments were developed by the study team and reviewed in a participatory exercise with the YIKE team for finalization. The tools were then piloted to ascertain their validity and reliability.

The sampling Frame: A sampling frame was used to predetermine the number of respondents from each respondent group to be targeted during the evaluation. Table 2.1 presents the details of the study sample. Different groups of respondents were sampled purposively based on a number of criteria.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent/Study Site Category</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Criteria/Rationale</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Category 1: Ministry of Education (MoE)** | • Chief finance officer  
• Senior officer in charge of bursaries  
• Director of basic education  
• Provincial director of education | • Are knowledgeable on the secondary bursary fund issues  
• Take part in actual management and administration of the fund |
| **Category 2: MoE at the Local Level** | • DEOs – Embakasi, Njiru, Starehe, Kasarani | • Are knowledgeable on the secondary bursary fund issues at the constituency level  
• Carry out the role of intermediaries between MoE and CBFC in the actual management and administration of the fund at constituency level |
| **Category 3: Constituency level** | • MPS- Embakasi, Kasarani and Starehe  
• CBFCs - Embakasi, Kasarani and Starehe  
• Councillors | • CBFCs evaluate applications and award bursaries and have bursary allocation related budget data  
• MPs and councillors are part of the political influence on the fund |
| **Category 4: Schools** | **Sampled schools**  
**Kasarani**  
• Our lady of Fatima  
• Baba Dogo Secondary  
**Starehe**  
• Pumwani Girls  
• St Teresa’s Girls  
• Starehe boys centre  
**Embakasi**  
• Kayole South secondary  
• Mwangaza  
• Dandora Secondary | • Type of attendance (day/boarding)  
• Gender of students (Male/female/mixed)  
• Population (high/low)  
• Category (District, provincial, national) |
| **Respondents** | • Headteachers  
• Guiding and counselling teachers  
• Beneficiary students  
• Non beneficiary students  
• A few case studies documented | • Headteachers sign application forms. Some are representatives in the CBFCs  
• Teachers interact with students and understand the needs and financial problems  
• Students – shared their experiences and perceptions as beneficiaries and non beneficiaries |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent/Study Site Category</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Criteria/Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category 5: Community level</strong></td>
<td><strong>a. Chiefs</strong>&lt;br&gt;Starehe&lt;br&gt;• Mathare location chief&lt;br&gt;• Kariokor location chief&lt;br&gt;Kasarani&lt;br&gt;• Korogocho location chief&lt;br&gt;• Kasarani location chief&lt;br&gt;Embakasi&lt;br&gt;• Kayole location chief&lt;br&gt;• Dandora location chief</td>
<td>• Chiefs sign application forms. Are in touch with the local population and understand the socio-economic circumstances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>b. Out-of-school youth</strong>&lt;br&gt;Baba Dogo&lt;br&gt;Dandora&lt;br&gt;Kayole&lt;br&gt;Mathare</td>
<td>• Shared their experiences on what keeps the youth in their circumstances out of school, their non educational needs and perceptions on the bursary fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>c. Parents</strong>&lt;br&gt;Baba Dogo&lt;br&gt;Dandora&lt;br&gt;Kayole&lt;br&gt;Mathare</td>
<td>• Shared their experiences on challenges they experience in financing their children’s education and their perceptions on the bursary fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Category 6: Organizations that run similar funds</strong></td>
<td><strong>Local Level</strong>&lt;br&gt;Kasarani: Miss Koch&lt;br&gt;Embakasi: Dandora Youth Group&lt;br&gt;Starehe: Mathare Youth Group</td>
<td>• Shared experiences on their interventions targeting youth education especially in the area of access to secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Corporate level</strong>&lt;br&gt;Equity Cooperative bank</td>
<td>• Shared experiences and best practices in their interventions in secondary education financing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Foundation level</strong>&lt;br&gt;Jomo Kenyatta Chandaria</td>
<td>• Shared experiences and best practices in their interventions in secondary education financing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Faith based Organizations</strong>&lt;br&gt;World Vision</td>
<td>• Shared experiences and best practices in their interventions in secondary education financing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fieldwork Phase
Scheduled evaluation activities were carried out in this phase.

Data collection: The survey collected both secondary and primary data by reviewing secondary data on bursary fund allocations both at the national and constituency level (Starehe, Embakassi and Kasarani). The study reviewed the MoE budgeting criteria and its guidelines on secondary bursary fund allocation at the constituency level. Primary data were collected on the number of students receiving allocations, the amounts allocated and the number of beneficiaries as a proportion of all applicants. Primary data on stakeholder perceptions on strengths of the scheme, its achievements, effectiveness, efficiency, limitations/challenges and emerging lessons were also collected through interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD).

Survey Tools/Instruments: To implement the study in a way that facilitated the collection of comprehensive data and information mix, approaches involving desk reviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions were used. The main study instruments employed were:

- **Data Fact sheets**: Were used to collect data on bursary allocation trends at the national, constituency and school levels including a sex disaggregation of applications and beneficiaries.

- **Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guides**: Were used in the evaluation to collect qualitative information from student groups, teachers, parents out-of-school youth and CBFC members on their perceptions on the bursary scheme.

- **Interview Schedules**: These were used in collecting data and information from selected key informants deemed to have information relevant to the present study.

- **Documentary/Policy Review Guides**: Various documents with study related literature and data were reviewed. The guides were used to make the review process systematic by providing guiding indicators on what to look for from the available information.

- **Audiovisual Recording**: Through video recording, the study captured voices and documented the opinions and perceptions of beneficiaries and needy potential beneficiaries who have not been reached by the bursary scheme.
3 Findings

3.1 Level of Gender Responsiveness of the SEBF Budgeting Process

This section presents findings on the level and extent of gender responsiveness of the Secondary Education Bursary Fund in terms the allocation criteria at both ministry and constituency levels, the targeting of the urban poor especially girls and gender based differentials in the bursary fund demand gap.

3.1.1 Gender Responsiveness of the Allocation Criteria

Ministry Level

To allocate the bursary funds to constituencies in a way deemed equitable, the Ministry of Education uses both enrolments and poverty indices at the national and constituency levels. The revised guidelines for disbursement of secondary bursary through constituencies stipulates that the amount allocated to each constituency is based on four indicators; the number of students from the constituency and enrolled in secondary schools, the national secondary schools enrolment, the district poverty index and the national poverty index. The following formula forms the basis of the allocation of the bursary funds to each of the 210 constituencies.

\[
\text{Constituency Bursary} = \frac{\text{Total enrolment in constituency}}{\text{Total national enrolment}} \times \frac{\text{District poverty index}}{\text{National poverty index}} \times \text{Total amount allocated for bursary}
\]

Allocations of the bursaries at the national level tends to assume equal gender distribution in secondary school enrolments through out the country. As presently designed, the allocation formula makes no provisions for gender based enrolment differentials. Ideally, the male and female GERs and NERs could be useful indicators and basis for infusing a gender matrix in the bursary allocation formula.

Constituency Level

At the constituency level, applicants are required to fill a means testing instrument known as FORM “A”. This form contains data on a student’s personal details including gender, academic performance, type of school, total fees paid and outstanding fee balance. The instrument also seeks for data on family’s socio-economic circumstances and head teacher’s report on student’s discipline. Based on data given by an applicant on form “A”, scores are awarded using a rating scale for three major indicators namely; a student’s family status, affirmative action/special circumstances and discipline. Table 3.1 gives the distribution of scores on FORM “D”.

\[
\text{Constituency Bursary} = \frac{\text{Total enrolment in constituency}}{\text{Total national enrolment}} \times \frac{\text{District poverty index}}{\text{National poverty index}} \times \text{Total amount allocated for bursary}
\]
Table 3.1  Application Evaluation Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.  Family Status</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Total orphans</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Single parent without a source of income</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Partial orphan (mother/father alive) without a source of income</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Both parents alive – without a source of income</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B.  Affirmative action/ Special circumstances</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Girls child</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Boy child</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Slums/pockets of poverty/marginalised</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Special needs (Handicapped)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C.  Discipline</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Excellent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 V. Good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Good</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Fair</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applications are then ranked based on scores attained by each applicant on form “D”. Ideally, applicants with the highest scores should be awarded bursaries. Most study participants however observed that, due to undue influences, these scores are hardly used as the primary basis for allocating the bursaries. While form “D” does not have any scores for performance, it is often used by school principals to decided the names of applicants that they forward for allocation of bursaries. Gender is also one of part of the criteria under part B of form “D” and it gives the girl child a one point advantage over the male applicants. In addition, MoE officials interviewed indicated that constituency bursary fund committees are supposed to set aside 5 percent of total allocations for exclusive allocation to the girl child. There were, however, no indications from committees talking part in the study that this 5 percent policy has ever been implemented. The one point difference between male and female applicants is however not a strong affirmative intervention that can place the girl applicant at a significant advantage over their male counterparts. It is noteworthy that an information gap exists on the criteria used in the bursary allocation at the constituency level between education officials and other stakeholders at the school and community levels. While most education officials believed that the CBFCs followed the criteria provided in allocating the bursaries, most stakeholders felt that the committees do not follow the criteria.
Challenges Faced by CBFCs in Adhering to the Set Criteria

The Embakasi committee members candidly indicated that they had been unable to follow the laid criteria for the allocation of funds. Even though students filled applications and forwarded, these forms were never used as the basis for awards. Often, the area member of parliament, members of the committee and school principals simply forwarded their lists of applicants for consideration. As a rule, each secondary school principal was allowed 20 chances. It was therefore upon the principal to decide whose application they would forward for consideration. Interviews with school principals and teachers revealed that once the 20 chances had been allocated, a school’s internal bursary committee deliberated on the who to include in the list to be presented at the constituency bursary committee. This internal vetting of potential beneficiaries was in fact an exception rather than the norm since most principals simply drew their lists without any consultations with class teachers on who are the neediest cases. The situation of non-adherence to the allocation criteria in Embakasi constituency was confirmed from observations by other respondents.

Adherence not 100 percent. It depends on how well you are known by person fronting your name. Some working parents still benefit. Students from same family gaining every time.

The criteria are not adhered to. The MP he has followers and whether needy or not they will be given bursary. They have never adhered to any. No vetting is done when filling forms. Students just get bursaries. Without politics, the committee can stick to the criteria and do a good job.

Committee members in Kasarani and Starehe constituencies claimed that during the allocation phase of their work, every effort was made to follow the allocation criteria provided by the Ministry of Education. The members explained that once applications had been received, evaluations followed and based on rankings of applications, students were awarded bursaries. Most study participants at the community and school levels were however of the contrary opinion and felt that the committees never followed the allocation criteria. Students and teachers in both constituencies pointed out at many cases of needy applicants who have never received any bursary while a significant number of the non-needy always received the bursary. A few points of fund leakage were also identified. Embakasi CBFC members indicated that, at times, members were allocated allowances for spending the time doing committee work. In Kasarani, number of the participants. In illustrating the adherence challenges that committees face, one member of the Kasarani CBFC noted that:

CBFCs have had to make some adjustments in the funds to cater for other activities which have been overlooked by the ministry. Some amount of the fund is put aside to facilitate meetings, reimbursement of transports and lunches. This has opened loopholes where some committees might set aside huge amounts for these and allocate themselves high allowances at the expense of the students thus reducing the amount to be given to students.

Committee member, Kasarani CBFC
Challenges to adherence to Criteria
The main challenges to adherence to the set bursary allocation criteria include; internal vested interests, nepotism, tribalism, lack of proper understanding of the evaluation process, external political influences and local power cartels and a high demand pressure. These challenges often work in combination to lead to a distortion of the allocation criteria or total disregard of the criteria in favour of political expediency. In the interest of political expediency, local politicians including MPs and councillors often mount pressure on the committees to allocate low amounts so as to reach as many applicants as possible. Instances were cited at Dandora and Mwangaza secondary schools in Embakasi constituency where applicants were often shown a false list of beneficiaries at the CBFC office but when they go back to their schools, their cheques never come.

The highest number of representatives on the committee are the MPs people so they can only do what serves their political interests. If the committee was not politicised, they can sit and do a good job. They want to please everybody. At times students and parents go their and they see their names on a long list but when they come here (to school), the money is not there.
Principal Dandora Secondary School, Embakasi

Gender Mainstreaming in Allocation Criteria
Observations by education officials showed that, for the most part, there were hardly any comprehensive levels of gender mainstreaming in the allocation criteria. Right from the ministry level, allocation of the fund is only dependent on gross enrolments and poverty indices. No reference is made to gender considerations on enrolment proportions. The only instances when aspects of gender mainstreaming are found in the allocation criteria are in the ranking by gender at the constituency level where girls have a point advantage over boys in applications scores, inclusion of women on the CBFCs to constitute one third of the members. Another instance is the affirmative rule in which 5 percent of the total allocations to a constituency should exclusively go to girls. Findings however show that the 5 percent rule and the one third rule have never been enforced in any constituency while the one point advantage is hardly followed.

Throughout the process, gender mainstreaming has never been a focus. All applications are compiled and applicants selected according to the criteria. There is no publicizing for more girls to apply thus gender is not an issue during the process.
CBFC member, Kasarani Constituency

No gender considerations. Anybody gets a portion of the KES 100,000 bursary they have allocated to the school and the money be given. According to them, as long as they have given the cheque it does not really matter who the money goes to. Generally boys are brighter than girls thus warranting boys to benefit more than girls and no efforts are made to create a balance.
A Principal, Embakasi Constituency
Gender has never been a focus but when the school gets bursary, it is distributed equally. The school receives cheque from the committee and decides on how to distribute.

*Senior teacher, Embakasi Constituency*

**Gender Equity in Disbursements**

There were mixed observations on the extent of gender equity in the disbursement of the bursary funds. At the ministry and provincial directorate of education, the overall picture was that of a fairly equitable distribution of the bursary funds. Observations by the ministry officials in charge of the bursary suggest that the number of female beneficiaries ranged from 40-50 percent of all beneficiaries. It was noted that even at 40 percent of total disbursements, allocations to girls is still equitable relative to their population within the total secondary school enrolments.

Study findings reveal that at the constituency and school levels, boys seemed to dominate allocations for a number of reasons. First, boys were more likely to apply for the bursary compared to girls who are more reserved and would not want to portray themselves as coming from poor families. Secondly, in the informal settlements where the study was conducted, there were, on average, more boys than girls enrolled in secondary schools. Third, where resources are limited, household decisions to selectively enrol boys ahead of the girl child is a common practice among slum and informal settlement populations. In explaining the reasons for gender imbalance in access to the secondary education bursary fund, the district quality assurance officer (DQASO) made the following observations.

"Boys seem to receive more bursary than girls. In view of Kasarani, most areas are slums and if a parent is unable to pay fees, the girls are assumed they can do other activities to survive, but since most parents will depend on the boy in future they will help him through school as he is seen as an avenue for future assistance."

*District Quality Assurance Officer and CBFC Member, Kasarani*

It also emerged that the gender imbalance problem was more common in schools where students sent their applications independently. Gender distribution was more balanced in schools where principals were allowed to select beneficiaries. In Embakasi constituency, for example, principals indicated that they always made effort to balance the list of proposed beneficiaries by gender.

Study data from Kasarani constituency shows that in overall males have consistently dominated bursary allocations. The highest allocations to male students were registered during the 2006/07 (61.2 percent) and 2008/09 (65.6 percent). Although the number of female beneficiaries has consistently remained below 50 percent, over the period under review, the allocation of the fund in this constituency can be said to be generally equitable when the proportions of females receiving the fund is weighed against the total female enrolment situation.
Table 3.2  Distribution of Number of Bursary Beneficiaries by Gender, Kasarani, 2006/07-2010/11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>2006/07</th>
<th>2007/08</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
<th>2010/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries % by Gender</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kasarani Constituency Secondary Bursary fund Committee Records, 2010

3.1.2 Efficiency in Targeting of the Poor and Girls

Ministry Of Education

Historically, the level of girl participation in secondary education has been low in Kenya due to a variety of social, cultural and economic factors. In this respect, any interventions to improve access to secondary education that does not integrate affirmative action in favour of girls may not be seen to portend any equity implications. Findings from interviews and discussions with study participants revealed that the entire bursary fund process from the applications stage through the evaluations to the award phase does not seem to target the poor in general and girls in particular. Most respondents noted that, often, the process is marred by external interference in a way that mostly left those applicants with the right connections to benefit from the bursary funds. In most instances, the “connected” applicants and their families are not the neediest. The following are corroborating views from the select stakeholders:

“Though we have guidelines, there are vested interests. In some constituencies like Starehe, they could set aside some fraction of the fund to be allocated to the MP to decide. You can imagine what happens when councillors and MPs decide.”

Assistant director in charge of Bursary, MOE

“The number of boys in school is bigger than that of girls thus the issue of inefficiency is not seen and, in case of this (problems with gender equity in allocations), a committee watchdog is in place to ensure it does not happen.”

District Quality Assurance Officer and CBFC Member, Kasarani

“It’s not targeting poor; most students came from boarding schools and could not afford boarding fees. If bursary was getting to the poor then those students (joining day schools from boarding schools) would have gone through school with no difficulty. As of now, there is no policy to award girls more bursaries. Really, the bursary doesn’t target the poor. In Mwangaza, it depends on who knows whom. In my view, the poor only happen to benefit by luck.”

Principal, Mwangaza Secondary School

The feeling that the bursary fund was not targeting the intended economic groups was widespread both secondary school students and out-of-school youth who took part in the study.
“It is not efficient in targeting the poor because the non-deserving students are the ones benefiting from the fund. In my case, I had to stay out of school for nearly half a term because my parents had no money and I never got the bursary….also, the bursary does get to the poor because awards are based on the performance.”

**Berly, a non-beneficiary girl in form 4 at Baba Dogo Secondary School, Kasarani**

“Evaluation of applicants is not properly done. This is because some non-deserving students get the bursary while the really needy students are denied the opportunity.”

**Winnie, a girl beneficiary in form 2 at Our Lady of Fatima Secondary School, Kasarani**

“It is not fair because the girls who have received the bursary here in our school are not really poor. They can pay fees. I applied for the bursary last year but I did not get but someone who applied this year ended up getting before me.”

**Millicent, a non-beneficiary girl in form 3 at Pumwani Secondary School, Starehe**

“People get this bursary due to connections. In fact it is those who work in the offices and are close to MP who get. They also seem to give the bursary based on performance.”

**Linda, a non-beneficiary girl in form 4 at Baba Dogo Secondary School, Kasarani**

“Targeting of the poor is not observed because it depends on how you perform in class and who do you know.”

**Christine, a non-beneficiary girl in form 3 at St. Teresas Secondary School, Starehe**

“For gender equity in disbursements to be achieved, performance in school should not be looked into. The decision to award the bursary should just be based on a student’s family background.”

**Samson, a boy beneficiary at Kayole South Secondary School, Embakasi**

### 3.1.3 Bursary Demand Gap and Gender Based Trends

The study also sought to establish the demand gap for bursary fund. Findings indicate that in all the three constituencies, the fund was facing an overwhelming demand gap. Irrespective of gender, the number of applicants by far outstripped the amount of funds allocated to each of the constituencies.

**Kasarani:** Available data for this constituency shows that the demand for funding was quite overwhelming. By base year, the 2006/07 FY, total applications were 5,278 (3200 boys [60.6 percent], 2,078 [39.4 percent]). The data however shows that by the end year, total application had declined to 3001 (2000 boys [62.5 percent], 1001 girls [37.5 percent]). Data also shows that out of a total of 5,278 applicants during the 2006/07 FY, only 729 students, constituting 13.8 percent were awarded bursaries. This suggests that during this FY, six out of every seven
applicants could not get the bursary. Figure 3.1 illustrates the bursary fund demand gap for Kasarani constituency over the period spanning 2006/07 to 2010/11.

**Figure 3.1 Secondary Bursary Fund Demand Gap in Kasarani Constituency, 2006/07 – 2010/11**

Illustrations on Figure 3.1 show that total applications have generally declined over time since 2006/07. The highest coverage of 31 percent was attained in the 2007/08 FY. The level of coverage has generally remained below 20 percent of all applications.

**Starehe:** Data from the Starehe CBFC show that both the demand and coverage have been on the increase since the 2008/09 FY when the total number of applicants were 556 compared to a total of 1179 during the 2010/2011 FY. The number of beneficiaries as a proportion of total allocations rose marginally from 26 percent during the 2008/09 FY to 28 percent during the 2009/10 FY before increasing significantly to 47 percent during 2010/11. It is noteworthy that the total number of beneficiaries who attend public schools within the constituency constitute a relatively small proportion of all beneficiaries. For example, while a total of 558 beneficiaries was recorded during the 2010/11 FY, only 138 beneficiaries, who constitute only 24.7 percent, were drawn from public schools in the constituency. This raises serious concerns of accountability and equity. It is inconceivable that in a constituency with 12 public schools and poor majority only one in every five beneficiaries were schooling within the constituency. If the remaining 74.3...
percent of beneficiaries attend schools outside the constituency then most are likely to be in boarding schools which means the allocation process generally excludes the majority poor who attend public day schools within the constituency (Figure 3.2).

**Figure 3.2  Secondary Bursary Fund Demand Gap in Starehe Constituency, 2006/07 – 2010/11**

**Embakasi:** The demand gap for this constituency could not be established with certainty due to the inability of the outgoing committee to avail comprehensive data on disbursements. Only data for the 2010/11 FY were available. The total number of applicants for the bursary for the 2010/11 FY was given as 364 while the total number of beneficiaries was also given as 364. The constituency had 13 public secondary schools from which 250 (136 boys, 114 girls) applications had been received. The difference of 114 beneficiaries, the committee explained, mostly represented beneficiaries who emanated from the constituency but were attending secondary schools outside.

The inability of the outgoing committee for this constituency to avail data was actually an attempt to cover up on the opaque manner in which they had carried out their work during their tenure. Given the observations from most of the study participants that the demand for the bursary was overwhelming, it is unlikely that this expansive constituency could only have received 364 applications. However, this apparent 100 percent coverage of applicants may
actually be a confirmation of the committee’s approach in disbursements where, rather than vet all applications to rank applicants, school principals were simply asked by the MP and committee to submit names of 20 applicants to be allocated the funds. The rest of beneficiaries were cases fronted by the MP, councillors, influential local opinion, committee and members themselves.

**Gender differentials in the Demand Gap**
Having shown the overall demand gap in the quest for the secondary bursary fund in the three constituencies, it is critical to show what gender differences exist in the demand gap for the bursary fund.

**Kasarani:** With the exception of the 2009/10 FY, males dominated applications for the bursary fund at 60 percent of all application or higher. The general higher male presence among applicants is a confirmation of their domination of access to secondary education in Nairobi in general. The net result is a comparative higher male demand for the bursary seen from more applications. As shown on Table 3.3 the demand gap remained significantly high where, on average, nearly 80 percent of all applicants across the gender divide were not receiving the bursary. During the 2006/07 FY, the demand gap for both males and females was 86.1 percent where only 13.9 percent of male and female applicants were awarded bursaries. This high demand gap is attributable to the fact that there was a high number of applicants during this FY against a low allocation of KES 3,305,689. During the 2007/08 FY, the demand gap had declined significantly to 75 percent for males and 58 percent for females. Similarly, this decline in the demand gap is attributable to a decline in the number of applicants coupled with an increase in total amount of bursary allocated to the constituency to KES 5,510, 552. However, the decline in the demand gap during the 2007/08 FY cannot be said to have been as a result of increased coverage of the fund, rather, it is attributable to the adverse effects of asymmetry in bursary information thus locking out many potential applicants.

Data on Table 3.3 show that there has been an overall tendency towards affirmative action for females in bursary allocations in this constituency. While there were proportionately more male applicants through out the period under review, the number of female beneficiaries as a proportion of female applicants was equal or higher than that for males. For example during the 2007/08 FY, compared to 25.3 percent for males, the number of females receiving the bursary as a proportion of female applicants was higher at 41.6 percent. Female proportions were also higher during the 2010/11 FY at 20.7 percent compared to 13.0 percent for males.
Observations by participants corroborated the evidence from the data showing that while nearly 80 percent of applicants do not receive the bursary in Kasarani about 60 percent of all applicants in Starehe do not receive the bursary. The high demand gap in Kasarani constituency draws from the fact that applicants are awarded a higher minimum amount of KES 8,000 compared to a flat rate of KES 5,000 for Starehe. Because of the lower minimum allocations in Starehe, the fund can be spread more to reach more applicants.

Demand for bursary is very high. I challenged the MP to allocate some amount from CDF kitty to bursary like in other places where they allocate 10% to bursary. The MP said he prefers to build schools than give bursary to individuals. The impact would have been felt if there were more bursaries and more students go to school. If Mwangaza could get more bursaries the students would remain in class, the school would be able to pay teachers and feed the students.

Principal Mwangaza Secondary School

Many students apply for bursary but only a few receive. This year, 400 students applied but only about 80 received the bursary.

CBFC member, Kasarani

**Starehe:** During the 2007/08, a higher proportion of female applicants, 42.1 Percent compared to 34.2 percent of males had received bursary allocations. The female bursary demand gap was 57.1 percent compared to 65.8 percent for males. The demand gap in the 2008/09 FY was higher for females at 75.1 percent compared to 69.2 percent for males. The overall rise in the demand gap was as a result of a decline in total amount of bursary allocated to the constituency against an increase in the number of applicants. In 2010/11, the demand gap improved across the gender dived to 49.8 percent for males and 54.7 percent for females.
Table 3.4  Gender Based Differentials in the Bursary Demand Gap in Starehe Constituency, 2006/07 – 2010/11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Bursary Allocated (KES)</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>3,651,118</td>
<td>1,868,496</td>
<td>800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries as % of Applicants</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants % by Gender</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries % by Gender</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

… Data Missing / Not Available
Source: Starehe Constituency Secondary Bursary fund Committee Records, 2010

**Embakasi:** No credible data were available from this constituency that could form the basis for drawing valid conclusions on the level of gender differences in the demand gap. The lack of records and data was a sign of lack of transparency in the management of the bursary funds by the outgoing office and its predecessors. The myriad problems facing this particular committee were corroborated from observations by different stakeholders at the ministry, provincial education offices, district education offices, schools and communities.

### 3.2 SEBF programme Implementation, management and Performance and CBFC Capacity Needs

The implementation, management and performance of the SEBF programme are critical indicators of its effectiveness and efficiency. This section focuses on study findings on the nature of the fund’s operational environment in terms of how it has been implemented, managed and its overall performance. In addition, the section looks at what the study found to be the key capacity needs of the constituency bursary committees.

#### 3.2.1 Governance, Implementation and Management: The Budgeting process

**Governance**

The secondary school funds are disbursed from the Ministry of Education to Constituency Bursary Fund Committees (CBFCs) Bank accounts then to schools and finally the beneficiaries; the students. The CBFC comprises a wide range of representation of members from various stakeholders in Government, NGOs, CBOs, and communities.

**Membership of CBFCs:** The current membership of CBFC has a minimum of twelve and a maximum of fifteen members, a third of who are women. Ideally the committees should be made up of:

- One representative of Kenya national Union of Teachers (KNUT)
- One representative of Kenya Secondary School Heads Association
- One representative of Kenya primary School Heads Association
• One representative of NGOs in the Area working in the education sector
• One representative of Maendeleo ya Wanawake
• Two Chair persons of PTAs of two secondary schools
• One chairperson of Board of Governors
• One MP’s representative (from among CDF committee members)
• Representative of Local Authority (where more than one local authority exists, each have one representative
• One District Officer

As noted in MoE (2008), the current composition of some CBFCs has the Area MP as the patron and the councillors as members. It is further observed that this arrangement has lead to external interference in the administration of the scheme. In order to improve on the management of the scheme, the MoE has proposed that any form of external influence will be eliminated by excluding members of parliament and councillors from membership. The members of parliament and councillors will be actively engaged as oversight members through the DEB (a body to play an oversight role to the scheme).

**Educational qualification of Members:** According to the existing MoE Guidelines, the chairperson of a CBFC is expected to be a holder of a minimum of form four level certificate and be well versed in current trends in education. The education qualification requirement of other members are also a minimum of four certificate. The treasurer should be a person of high integrity and in possession of basic knowledge in book keeping and accountancy. The names of the CBFC members for each constituency and their academic qualifications are to be communicated to the Ministry headquarters.

**Nomination of CBFC members:** Selected members are supposed to form the nominating panel of the CBFC. These should include:
• District Commissioner (Chairperson)
• District Education Officer (Secretary)
• Member of parliament
• One councillor
• One DEB member (a religious representative)
• One secondary Schools Heads Representative
• One Primary Schools Heads Representative

**Roles and responsibilities of DEOs and CBFCs**

**DEO’s Role:** The main roles of the DEO’s is to ensure that guidelines are adhered to, handling any complaints arising from allocations and presiding over the inaugural meeting of the CBFC where election of the CBFC chairperson and treasurer is done. In addition, the DEO is also a mandatory signatory of the CBFC account.
CBFC’s Role: The main roles of CBFCs include:
- Coordination of targeting and identification of beneficiaries at the constituency level;
- Issuance and receipt of bursary application FORM A;
- Vetting and consideration of bursary applications using the established criteria (FORM D);
- Verification and ensuring that all bursary cheques are dispatched to the relevant schools;
- Preparation and submission of returns/reports on the constituency bursary awards to the MOE permanent secretary;
- Preparation and filing of CBFC deliberations and minutes

The MoE directives stipulate that, in carrying out the above roles, the CBFC should strictly adhere to the guidelines on the minimum allocations to students as per the MOE guidelines issued from time to time. It is the duty of the DEO to ensure strict adherence to the guidelines during awards.

Tenure of office: According to the MOE guidelines, CBFC members should ordinarily serve for a term of three years, renewable only once upon satisfactory performance. Where the services of a member of the CBFC are terminated through disciplinary action or natural attrition, the CBFC, in liaison with the DEB, should make an appropriate replacement.

Operation of the CBFC Bank Account: Each CBFC has a bank account for its funds. The signatories to the accounts include the chairperson, treasurer, and DEO. The DEO’s signature is mandatory for any transactions and is the final person to sign cheques. The case of Nairobi province was however different, before the creation of the new districts, and cheques had to be signed by the PDE. The CBFC prepares cheques for respective schools after awarding the funds. The cheques are then posted or delivered directly to the respective schools. Ideally, beneficiaries should not be allowed to handle cheques. Lists of all applicants and beneficiaries are also supposed to be clearly displayed on the notice boards.

The Budgeting Process

Ministry Level
The main budgeting processes of the secondary education bursary fund (SEBF) starts at the ministry of finance that makes a decision on the amount to be allocated to the fund. Not much is known on the actual basis for the amounts allocated by treasury to this fund. From the interviews with respondents, it was apparent that the decision by treasury on the total amount allocated to the SEBF was at best arbitrary or dependent on political good will and extent of lobbying done by the Ministry of Education when seeking budgetary allocations for a given fiscal year. The foregoing observation is lent credence by the fact during the 2011/12 FY, the ministry of finance ended up slashing the secondary education bursary fund allocation from KES 1.3 billion to 0.9 billion three months after presenting the former figure in its budget.
**Financing:** The constituency Bursary Fund is fully financed by the government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education. It is independent of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and other devolved funds. Study findings, however, show that among the most of the informal settlement population, the fund is often confused with the CDF. Figure 3.3 illustrates the financing channel of the bursary fund from the Exchequer to the student and school as point of use of use.

**Figure 3.3 Flow of Bursary Funds from Central Government to Beneficiaries**

Figure 3.4 illustrates the SEBF budget allocation trends for the period spanning 2003/04-2010/11. allocations increased by 40.5 percent from KES 548 million during the 2002/03 FY to KES 770 million during the 2003/04 FY. The bursary budget allocation relatively stagnated between 2003/04 and 2006/07 before declining by 25.0 percent from KES 800 million during the 2006/07 FY to KES 600 million during the 2007/08 FY. The amounts declined further by 16.7 percent to KES 500 million before stagnating again. Compared against the every increasing enrolment in secondary education and a generally high national poverty levels, the decline in the budget allocations to SEBF mean the demand for the fund has intensified over time.
Once the lump sum amounts shown on Figure 3.4 have been allocated to the SEBF during the budget process, a weighting formula integrating the national and constituency poverty indices, number of secondary school going children enrolled at the national and constituency levels and the total amount of money budgetary allocation for the fund is used to allocate the funds. The following formula is used to compute the amount of SEBF funds that each constituency receives in each FY.

The weighting aspect of the formula essentially ensures that whatever financial resources available are distributed equitably across the country with poorer constituencies and those with higher enrolments expected to receive higher allocations. The accuracy of this approach has been put into doubt in the past where constituency poverty rankings have been suspected to have been doctored for political motives. This kind of political meddling, it is understood, is intended to show richer constituencies as poorer and vice versa. In effect, this means that constituencies with high levels of poverty end up receiving lower allocations.

Table 3.5 presents data on total bursary allocations to all the eight constituencies in Nairobi County for the period 2003/2004 to 2008/2009. Cumulatively, Embakasi constituency had received higher allocations of KES 33.5 million over the period under review compared to a low of KES 13.3 million for Kamukunji constituency.
### Table 3.5 Bursary Allocation Trends to Nairobi County Constituencies

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Makadara</td>
<td>3,828,733</td>
<td>3,842,922</td>
<td>4,497,313</td>
<td>5,142,110</td>
<td>3,578,690</td>
<td>3,213,819</td>
<td>24,103,587</td>
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<td>Kamukunji</td>
<td>2,837,838</td>
<td>2,520,529</td>
<td>2,529,086</td>
<td>2,349,432</td>
<td>1,686,427</td>
<td>1,468,395</td>
<td>13,391,707</td>
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<td>Starehe</td>
<td>2,798,476</td>
<td>2,468,104</td>
<td>2,938,436</td>
<td>3,066,752</td>
<td>2,189,572</td>
<td>1,916,721</td>
<td>15,378,061</td>
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<td>Lang’ata</td>
<td>3,047,547</td>
<td>3,475,942</td>
<td>3,497,739</td>
<td>3,702,718</td>
<td>3,325,864</td>
<td>2,314,198</td>
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<td>Dagoretti</td>
<td>2,521,578</td>
<td>2,099,317</td>
<td>3,300,405</td>
<td>3,692,874</td>
<td>1,402,836</td>
<td>2,308,047</td>
<td>15,325,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westlands</td>
<td>3,555,193</td>
<td>3,475,942</td>
<td>2,104,674</td>
<td>1,947,080</td>
<td>2,646,315</td>
<td>1,216,925</td>
<td>14,946,129</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kasarani</td>
<td>4,583,600</td>
<td>4,912,225</td>
<td>4,478,312</td>
<td>5,510,552</td>
<td>4,150,995</td>
<td>2,755,276</td>
<td>26,390,960</td>
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<tr>
<td>Embakasi</td>
<td>6,096,834</td>
<td>6,927,902</td>
<td>5,480,193</td>
<td>6,306,138</td>
<td>4,827,704</td>
<td>3,941,336</td>
<td>33,580,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>29,269,799</td>
<td>29,722,883</td>
<td>28,826,158</td>
<td>31,717,656</td>
<td>23,808,403</td>
<td>19,134,717</td>
<td>162,479,616</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: MoE, Directorate of Secondary Education

The main role of the Ministry of Education (MoE) in the planning, drafting and budgeting process for the SEBF fund is only restricted to presenting its budget estimates to treasury each fiscal year. The MoE’s estimates are however not binding on the ministry of finance which has traditionally held the prerogative to decide what share of the national budget is allocated to each ministry. It is also noteworthy that MoE’s estimates for SEBF are never presented to treasury in isolation, rather, they are presented together with other competing budget needs. This joint budgeting is in part responsible for the fluctuations in the amount of money set aside for SEBF over the last seven years.

Figure 3.5 illustrates the bursary allocation trends in the three study constituencies over the period spanning 2003/04 to 2008/09. Similar to the national SEBF allocation trends, the total amounts of bursaries allocated to the three constituencies had been on a general decline. Owing to a comparatively higher secondary school population relative to the other two constituencies, Embakasi constituency had consistently received higher allocations.
District Education Offices
At the provincial and district levels in Nairobi, the fund had been managed by the provincial director’s (PDE) office since inception. However, by the time of the study, a transition was already under way to pass on the coordination function from the PDE’s office to DEOs of the newly created districts in Nairobi. Noting that the primary budgeting function for the fund takes place between the treasury and the Ministry of Education, the provincial and district education offices have limited roles in the budgeting process.

Secondary Education Bursary Committees
Budgeting processes were found to differ from one constituency to another. At the Kasarani committee, once the allocation has been credited to the committee’s bank account the committee receives information through a letter from the PDE’s office. The chairman then convenes a budgeting and planning meeting to make a decision on how to allocate the available funds. Members of the committee explained that the key guiding factors in their budgeting and allocations are the number of schools and the minimum amount allowed by policy. This committee gives a uniform amount of KES 8,000 to each beneficiary and therefore the total number of beneficiaries depends on how much bursary funds are allocated to the constituency in a given FY. Committee members also indicated that, in their budgeting, some proportion of the fund, of about KES 100,000, was usually set aside for ‘emergencies’. According to the committee, these emergencies include the very needy cases.
who for some reason were not allocated the bursary during normal disbursement. The committee usually relies on information provided by principals, chiefs, religious leaders to decide on which needy cases can receive support from the emergency kitty.

The budgeting process used by the Embasaki committee, at the time of the study\textsuperscript{8}, was a mix of both internal and external considerations. At the budgeting stage, school principals in the constituency were asked to submit names of about 20 internally selected applicants who were allocated a bursary of KES 5,000 each. On their part, school principals often chose the brightest students much to the exclusion of truly needy cases whose performance may have been adversely affected by constant absence from school. This approach looks like a stakeholder driven budgeting process but, in essence, it is merely a smoke screen for covering up the committee's underhand dealings in allocating the fund. The KES 100,000 given to every school is merely meant to ensure that, at least, every school in the constituency receives part of the bursary fund. In explaining their role in the budgeting process at the constituency level one principal interviewed in Embakasi noted that:

> They would ask me to present my list of students then they just allocate KES 100,000. After allocations have been made, the cheque comes as a lump sum attached with list of beneficiaries.

One senior teacher also corroborated the principal's explanation of the approach used by the Embakasi CBFC in the budgeting:

> The committee would ask the school to give them a certain number of students to be given bursary. But the committee members have since been changed so with effect from next meeting it will be involving principals of all schools.

The outgoing committee members also pointed out that, for the time they were in office, their budgeting processes were faced with serious extraneous influences. CBFC members observed thus:

> There is political interference especially from the area MP. Sometimes the MP comes to the meeting with the list of those applicants whom he wants to benefit from that fund without consulting the committee members. There are cases of non-deserving students benefiting from this fund simply because their parents are either the cronies of MP or a councillor. There were challenges from the DEOs these two DEOs have so much interest in this fund because of their cronies who they want to please with the fund.

\textit{FGD with outgoing Embakasi CBFC members}

\textsuperscript{8} The study period coincided with a transition in the management of the Embakasi CBFC. Towards the end of the study, a new CBFC with all new members and officials had been installed for the constituency.
The above observations are evidence that the budgeting process in this committee was greatly influenced by political interference. So pervasive is the political interference problem to the extent that, in reality, committees found it difficult to adhere to the expected budgeting process.

The budgeting process in Starehe Constituency was quite different from the approach used in Kasarani and Embakasi constituencies. Upon receipt of the funds, the committee set aside the KES 25,000 meant for administrative work while the remaining portion of the total bursary allocations were said to be spent on student bursaries. The committee members explained that, for practical reasons, they have been unable to restrict themselves to the policy that segments allocations by school type. The minimum allocations for the bursary fund are KES 8,000, KES 10,000 and KES 15,000 for public day, public boarding and national schools respectively, however based on equity and demand considerations, the committee usually allocates a uniform amount of KES 5,000 which is below the minimum even for public day schools. Interviews with respondents at the district, provincial and MoE headquarters also revealed that during the previous years, the Starehe committee had come up with a local policy where a certain fraction of the fund was reserved to be allocated at the MPs discretion.

Though we have these guidelines, there are vested interests. In some constituencies like Starehe, they could set aside some fraction of the fund to allocate to the MP to decide on who to give. You can imagine what happens when councillors and MPs are the ones to decide…..

*Key informant, Ministry of Education*

It also noteworthy that, although the CBFC members who participated in the study gave a rosy picture of their budgeting activities, it was clear from observations by DEOs, officials at the PDEs office, the Ministry of Education, principals, teachers and other stakeholders that the committees hardly followed the laid down rules on budgeting and disbursement. Observations by committee members also confirmed some of these distortions to the budgeting procedure. For example, committee members in Starehe constituency admitted that they were at times forced by circumstances to exceed the KES 25,000 allocated for administrative work to get money for paying allowances to members who spend the whole day doing committee. In Kasarani, committee members also had requested the ministry to authorize the use of KES 100,000 for renovating a temporary structure at the district headquarters for purposes of using it as an office.
3.2.2 Performance and Efficiency of the Fund

Consistency in Support to Beneficiaries
Ideally, for the bursary fund to have any meaningful impact on access and participation in secondary education it should be allocated with some reasonable level of consistency. The study sought to investigate the level of consistency in targeting of beneficiaries. At the ministry level, the funds are allocated in two tranches. The first tranche is allocated in January and the second tranche made in May. However, interviews with stakeholders at the district education offices, CBFCs, schools and communities revealed that release of the funds from the ministry was often late and bursaries for the first tranche were received in schools either towards the end of first term or at the start of the second term. This disbursement inefficiencies between the ministry and constituency levels eventually impacted on consistency of support to prospective beneficiaries.

There is no consistency in issuing of the bursary fund. Very few students receive bursary in consecutive years. There is no awareness and most students once they have applied assume they will automatically be awarded the year to come.

*A Staff member at DEO’s Office, Kasarani*

Allocation of the bursary is not consistent, in this school only six students have been receiving consistently.

*Principal Dandora Secondary School, Embakasi*

No consistency. The child may be assisted this term and dropout in the next term. The allocation is haphazard I can say.

*Principal Kayole South Secondary School, Embakasi*

Constituency bursary fund committee members however attributed the lack of consistency in funding to the high demand for the fund. Committee members noted that most applicants were equally needy and therefore consistent allocation of the bursary to particular students would exclude other equally needy cases. In most cases, the committees opted to allocate the bursary to different applicants in each tranche.

Most beneficiary and non-beneficiary students, parents and out of school youth also concurred that the allocation of the bursary was never consistent. In most cases, a beneficiary would receive the bursary only once in their entire secondary life. Some dropout cases were actually past beneficiaries who only received the fund once and were unable to continue with their education when they did not receive subsequent awards.

Timeliness in Disbursements
Traditionally, the bursary fund disbursement process has been plagued by chronic delays in transfers from the treasury to the Ministry of Education and later to from the Ministry of
Education to the constituency committees. Education ministry officials interviewed concurred that delays in disbursements had been a problem in the past but that the situation had improved in the last two years. Stakeholders at the PDE, DEO, constituency and school levels however indicated that the disbursement process of the fund remained time inefficient. School principals thus observed:

There is no specific time and most of time there are delays. Within the school, there are no delays because once we receive the funds the beneficiaries always get funds after a week.

*Principal, Kayole South Secondary School, Embakasi*

The situation on timeliness is grave. The money comes into the account in the May and stays there until July. What is the money doing in the account instead of allocating to students who are already at home because of delays in releasing the funds? The students are sent home while the money lies in the bank.

*Principal, Mwangaza Secondary School, Embakasi*

Being at the very tail end of the fund disbursement process, most students felt that one of the biggest challenges facing the bursary fund was the long periods it took between the time they placed their applications and the time the allocation lists appear in schools and cheques written. Students narrated instances where applications sent during third term of the year receive allocations as late as the second term of the following year. Other cases of delays were cited where the bursaries were allocated long after students who applied while in form four had sat their KCSE examinations and left school.

**Application procedure**

Study findings show that while most education administrators rated the bursary application process as comprehensive, students who undertook all the procedures involved in the application felt that the bursary application process was tedious, long and time wasting. Students pointed out that what made the process quite demoralizing was the fact that even after all the effort made in filling the form and visiting different offices, there was never certainty that one would be awarded. Three major difficulties were cited by students as major stumbling blocks in the application process. First, it was difficult getting information on where and when the forms are available. Second, the area chiefs who are supposed to comment in on section of the form often demanded bribes or took applicants round in circles by asking them to visit their offices endlessly. Third, the requirement that first time applicants in form 1 present their forms to former primary head teachers for signing and comment was deemed both expensive and without basis. A good number of students had joined secondary schools located far away from their primary schools. Most students did not believe that the information obtained from former primary schools was of any use in the evaluation process.
It is very stressful, it takes a whole century...even you can give up. The biggest problem is at the chiefs office. We went to the chiefs office at around 9am. When we about to enter we were told it is tea time. at around noon, there an emergency so the people behind jumped the queue. By the time they were through, it was ten minutes to lunch. So she (the chief) went for lunch. She finally came back and we were finally signed for the forms at around 4pm, by which time, we already very hungry.

Miriam, a form 4 student at Pumwani girls secondary school who lives in California, Starehe.

Ministry officials indicated that they always sent circulars to DEOs on the amount of money allocated to CBFCs for the purposes of reproducing application forms but findings revealed that the entire bursary fund process lacked a systematic approach for the distribution of application forms. In any case, committee members indicated that the KES 25,000 allocated to administrative functions is obviously inadequate and can hardly accommodate application production costs for all prospective applicants in a constituency. While some students reported receiving forms from their schools, others obtained the forms from the CBFC offices while another group obtained the forms from informal channels such as parents, neighbours or family friends with connections to CBFC committee members. Community members and out-of-school youth also noted that there were deliberate attempts by those who have insider information on the availability of the bursary funds to hoard both the information and application forms. The lack of information made it difficult for many prospective applicants to get the forms on time and send in their applications.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Efforts to monitor and evaluate the process and implementation of the bursary fund are critical to an objective assessment of its impacts. Ministry officials at the PDE’s office and MoE headquarters teams were dispatched to various constituencies regularly to monitor the fund implementation process and make recommendations on improvement based on their observations. In other provinces, cheques for funds released to schools are signed by DEOs while for the case of Nairobi province, all cheques had to be signed by the PDE before release to schools. The revised guidelines for the disbursement of the bursary funds (2005) clearly stipulate that DEOs/PDEs shall not sign any cheques deemed to be contrary to the guidelines. This monitoring measure is to ensure that the CBFCs are accountable to the ministry. In addition, CBFCs are required by policy to regularly submit bursary returns to the permanent secretary Ministry of Education within two months of receipt of funds.

On their part, most schools filed returns with the CBFCs in the form of lists of beneficiaries. Some school principals however noted that they never filed any returns with the CBFCs. The only forms of accounting that such schools were involved in were the issuance of receipts to the beneficiaries and circulating the list of beneficiaries on school notice boards. Ministry officials
pointed out that since the commencement of the training programme for committee members, the return rates from CBFCs to the ministry have improved from 60 percent to 80 percent.

3.2.3 Performance and Capacity Needs of the Constituency Bursary Fund Committees

Perceptions on Performance of the CBFCs
Overall, ministry officials felt that the committees in the three constituencies had the capacity to carry out their functions. This was based on the view that three representatives from each CBFC countrywide had attended training organized by the Ministry of Education. Even in instances where committees may not have had adequate technical capacity to administer and implement the scheme, ministry officials held the view that the committees would do a good job under the guidance of the DEOs’ and PDEs’ offices. Participants interviewed in schools also concurred that overall, committees had the capacity to perform their functions. The selected committee members were reported to have received training on Strategic planning, financial management and criteria in selection.

Starehe: Committee members here believed that they had both the technical and collective capacity to carry out their functions in the administration and implementation of the bursary fund. Committee members cited that among them were professionals in various fields such as accountancy and education. This, the members noted, enabled the committee to benefit from a combination of sectoral competencies in carrying out their functions.

Karasarani: Committee members indicated that they were capable of performing their functions but that it was however not possible to have all the members attending all meetings whenever they are called. As a result, during the evaluation stage, the committee takes much longer to conduct evaluations of applications. During group discussions, committee members observed the membership’s understanding of budgeting issues were varied since not all were in the accounting profession but reiterated the fact that, often, those who participate in their budgeting process have the capacity to do the work. The committee’s understanding of gender issues in budgeting was however limited. Members cited the inclusion of female representatives as one strength towards making the allocation more gender responsive. Committee members pointed out that the women representatives were always aggressive in ensuring that there was always gender balance in the allocations.

Embakasi: Committee members in this constituency felt they had the necessary preparation to carry out all activities of the different phases in implementing the fund. Members attributed their ability to carry out their functions to the fact that they had been trained by the ministry on how to carry out their functions.
Overall, most study participants held the view that the committees had the capacity to carry out their functions in terms of basic budgeting and allocation of the funds. The presence of professionals like KNUT representatives, school principals, NGO and chairmen and treasurers with at least O-Level education were considered capacity enhancers. Stakeholders taking part in the study also cited the training given to the committee members as a major capacity boosting factor which significantly improves their capacity to administer and implement the fund. However, as confirmed by committee members who participated in group discussions, most stakeholders were also of the opinion that external political pressure and interference has had a profound adverse impact on the committees' ability to carry out their functions independently and professionally.

**Functional Capacity Needs of CBFCs**

Notwithstanding the trainings that committees had received, the study found out that there were capacity improvement areas that committee members could still benefit from to help improve their capacities. The main training areas identified include:

**Evaluation Criteria:** Although committee representatives had received training on how to select and rank applications, most members of the participating committees and other stakeholders strongly felt that there was need for more training on how to evaluate applications. The study also revealed that while form “A” collected quite some comprehensive information about the applicant’s socio-economic profile, FORM “D”, which is used to rank applications, only considered a limited number of indicators. Capacity enhancement for committee members should therefore focus on training on means testing based a comprehensive analysis of an applicants socio-economic attributes.

**Financial Management:** Committee members are drawn from diverse backgrounds. In addition, knowledge in financial management is not a requirement for nomination to the committee. Such a situation makes it difficult to establish committees with sound financial management practices. Mounting training programmes targeted at financial management programmes is critical to committees’ ability to remain professional in their work even in the face of intense external political pressure.

**Accounting and Budgeting:** Observations by ministry officials indicated that, for a long time, only approximately 60 percent of committees, country wide, were able to file their returns with the ministry. This low rate of returns filling was attributable to a variety of factors of which one was the inability of committees to organise their budgeting and accounting records in a systematic format for purposes of accountability. Study findings also show that with the exception of Kasarani constituency, there were hardly any meaningful accounting data from the Embakasi and Starehe constituencies. Improving the capacities of committees through training
committees on budgeting, accounting and relevant book keeping skills would be critical to the provision of reliable data for monitoring and evaluation.

**Data and Information Management:** As noted by committee members, it was also observed that the committees lacked data on basic indicators on the performance of the fund. It is therefore imperative that targeted training be carried out to empower committees with knowledge on how to collect and keep data on key indicators of the funds performance. This will be instrumental in obtaining useful data for purposes of accountability, impacts and informing decision making on future interventions.

**Gender Mainstreaming:** Understanding of gender issues was the foremost deficiency area noted through the entire bursary funding process right from the budgeting process at the ministry level all the way to budgeting at the constituency level and allocations at the school levels. Committees also lack any members with known background in gender issues in education and budgeting. It can therefore be observed that training to committee members on approaches to mainstreaming gender in their budgeting process will go a long way in making the SEBF budgeting more gender responsive. It is expected that making the process more gender responsive will have a profound positive impact on access and participation in secondary education by girls, especially those from poor households.

**Basic ICT Literacy:** Lack of basic ICT skills was evident in the fact that, where data were available, they were only found in hard copies. In general, however, SEBF data were generally scant. Ministry and PDE officials also noted the fact that they still do not receive quality data and the little that were forwarded from constituencies came in hard copies which were difficult to extract and covert into useable formats.

**Operational Capacity Needs of CBFCs**
Beyond the training needs, it was evident that committees and other government departments involved in the implementation of the fund required other enabling resources, in whose absence, not much benefits can be drawn from training to committees. Example of these enabling resources include:

**Computers and Related Equipment:** CBFCs still relied heavily on support from their MPs’ constituency offices for secretarial support. This obviously intensifies the political interference problem. Providing CBFCs with a secretariat complete with its own computers, printer and related ICT equipment will be instrumental in improving their independence.

**Staff:** CBFCs required at least one full time secretarial staff to play the role of coordinating the committees’ activities even in the absence of committee members who work on voluntary basis. The presence of secretarial staff would also be instrumental in timely collection and storage of
accurate data and processing of applications. The PDE and ministry departments in charge of the bursary also cited lack of staff as one of the constraints they face.

**Information Management Software:** Both the application process and the returns generate enormous amount of data which therefore require point of impact (POI) data management software to enable constituencies to remit their returns to the ministry in a more organised and meaningful form. This will make the monitoring and evaluation of impacts of the fund more effective since it will be based on reliable data. In addition, the use of a networked software based data sharing will eliminate the use of enormous amounts of hard copy data that go to the bursary department at the ministry which, unfortunately, lacks staff.

### 3.3 Impacts, Lessons learnt, Best Practices and Challenges

**Impacts**
The main on aspects of secondary education on which impact of the bursary fund were investigated include access to secondary education by the poor, access by poor girls, dropouts, beneficiary fee balances and consistency in school attendance.

**Access to secondary education by the poor:** As presently designed, the SEBF concentrates on applicants who are already attending public secondary schools. This approach effectively locks out standard 8 graduates seeking to join secondary schools. In this respect, the SEBF has no direct role in improving access to secondary education since it only targets those who are already in the school system.

**Access by poor girls:** The overriding factor in determining beneficiaries is level of need. Affirmative gender considerations only gives girl applicants one point higher than boys. In view of the current means testing process, the identification of some beneficiaries from within secondary schools and the distortion caused by political interference; it can be deduced that, as presently structured, the fund has no role in improving access for poor girls.

**Dropouts:** The dropout data from schools were scant and showed generally suggested low dropout levels. However, findings from discussions with community groups including parents and out-of-school youth show that there was a huge drop out problem among the youth in informal settlements. Majority of the out-of-school youths who participated in the study were secondary school dropouts. Although the beneficiaries had been enabled to remain in school, the impact the bursary in terms of numbers of beneficiaries who were kept in school was negligible. The low dropouts seen in school data was therefore a reflection of poor EMIS in schools rather than a true reflection of the dropout situation in a schools located in informal settlements.
**Fee balances:** Findings from interviews with stakeholders and data from the three CBFCs show that beneficiaries in Starehe and Embakasi constituencies received a flat rate of KES 5,000 while beneficiaries in Kasarani received a flat rate of KES 8,000. Viewed against the evidence that most day schools charged as much as KES 15,000 or more as annual fees, the amounts allocated still left the beneficiaries from the poorest families with huge cumulative balances. Data from schools showed that fees balances remained high even for some beneficiaries who had been lucky enough to receive the fund more than once. At the present levels of funding, the overall impact of the fund fee balances is remains minimal.

The 5000 shillings allocated is not enough. There is always fee arrears and at some point the student will go home. For instance, there is a student who is a beneficiary and the mother is in jail. He has a huge balance of about 17000 shillings yet he has been getting the bursary consistently. Another girl has benefited but has a balance of 11,000 shillings. The school has a deficit of 1.1m shillings in students’ arrears. The principal has had to use her own money to make some activities run.

*Principal, Mwangaza Secondary school, Embakasi.*

**Consistency in School Attendance:** Perhaps one of the most important impacts of the bursary fund has been consistency of school attendance for beneficiaries and even prospective beneficiaries. Most principals were lenient with applicants whose names had been forwarded by the school to be funded. Such prospective beneficiaries were allowed to continue studying even in instances of delay of funds.

**Key Lessons Learnt**
The following key lessons can be drawn from the management, budgeting and implementation processes of the bursary fund as practiced between the MoE, the three constituencies and the schools.

**CBFC dependence on CDF Infrastructure and political Interference:** Because of the position of the MPs in the constituency, they are bound to bring their political influence to bear on the bursary fund implementation process. It was noted that since the CBFCs lacked any infrastructure of their own and often relied on the CDF infrastructure, this close operational proximity to the CDF and constituency offices intensified and even complicated the extent of political interference.

**The impact of timing of targeting on access to secondary education:** As presently designed, the SEBF only targets students who are already in the school system. This essentially means that the fund can only keep those who have already accessed secondary education in school but cannot contribute to access for the very poor.
Demerits of spreading the fund thin: There is an overwhelming demand for the bursary fund to levels that compelled CBFCs in Starehe and Embakasi to allocate flat rates of KES 5,000 which was inadequate in meeting the fees and user charges even for day scholars. Even in Kasarani constituency, where beneficiaries received KES 8,000, the amount was still not enough to meet the school fees needs of beneficiaries.

The roles of schools in providing information on applicants: School principals and teachers can play an important role in accurately identifying the neediest cases. This would eliminate the problem of the inability of the present system to target the poor students.

Information dissemination and inequity in access to funding: Findings reveal that there exists some asymmetry in access to information about the fund. It emerged that those who have more information about the fund and the necessary networks to access the fund, represent the groups that least need the bursary funding. The general lack of information among the poor and the cartel-like distribution of the forms greatly disadvantages the poor who generally lack the information and the networks to influence access to the fund.

CBFC training and effectiveness of implementation: The training given to CBFCs has a positive impact on their understanding of roles and management of the fund. In the absence of the challenges of pervasive external political interference, limited funding and high demand, the committees are capable of effectively managing and implementing the fund according to the policy guidelines based on the training given by the ministry. A case in point is the Kasarani CBFC that has consistently received commendations from the ministry in their professional management of the fund.

Best Practices in the SEBF
Overall, the stakeholder perceptions on the challenges that the SEBF fund faces overshadowed their views on possible best practices. These challenges notwithstanding, the following were identified as some of the best practices in the way the funds were administered and implemented.

Adoption of minimum amount: Prior to the launch of the training programmes committees, under the influence of MPs, yielded to the demand pressure and allocated applicants very low amounts of the bursary. Observations by study participants indicated that, in the past, beneficiaries received as low as KES 1,000. In the post training phase and coupled with stern instructions from the ministry and the PDE’s offices, the committees had since adopted minimum amounts to be allocated to beneficiaries. The flat rate allocated in Starehe and Embakasi constituencies was KES 5,000 while in Kasarani the flat rate was KES 8,000. These amounts were not enough to clear all fees but, at least, they could cover reasonable proportions of the total fees, especially in day schools.
Inclusion of women representatives in CBFCs: The policy provision for the inclusion of women representatives in the committees is one way of ensuring that the budgeting process is gender responsive. Study participants indicated that during allocations, women representatives were often active in advocating gender equity.

Affirmative action: Although not very strong, facets of affirmative action like the one point advantage to girl applicants and the policy pronouncement that 5 percent of the fund should exclusively target girl applicants, if strengthened, would go along way in making the bursary budgeting process more gender responsive.

Consultation of school principals: In some instances, the CBFCs requested principals of schools to conduct an assessment of needy cases in their schools and nominate names of to be submitted for allocation of bursaries. This practice falls outside the guidelines but one that goes along way in improving equitable distribution of the fund across constituencies.

Internal vetting of applications in schools: Some of the schools that had had the privilege of being allocated slots for beneficiaries conducted internal vetting of applications before arriving at a decision on the meriting cases to be forwarded. This approach helps in eliminating the chances that a school principal can abuse discretion to nominate and forward names of non-deserving cases to be funded. Although the allocation of slots for schools was a practice outside the guidelines, and possibly an innovation by committees to shield themselves from claims that they do not allocate any funds to some schools, it is nonetheless an innovative approach at in-building equity in the distribution of the funds and improving targeting of the poor students.

Some Foregone Impacts of the Fund on Non-Beneficiaries
Through focus group discussions with non-beneficiaries in schools and out-of-school youth in informal settlements, within the three constituencies, the study sought to identify some of possible positive impacts the fund could have had among non-beneficiaries.

Improved access and participation in secondary education: If the bursary were to reach more poor youth from the informal settlements, who attend secondary schools, the gross (GER) and net (NER) enrolment ratios in these locations would improve significantly. Coupled with increased allocation, restructuring the bursary allocation process to target standard (STD) 8 leavers would also significantly improve the access to secondary education among the poor youth in informal settlements. In this respect, the SEBF can borrow the Starehe boys centre funding model where applications for support is done long before pupils can sit their STD 8 exams to allow for processing of applications.

With help from the bursary, youth can conquer challenges e.g. of getting jobs and certificates. It’s very hard to make it in life without education. I am still willing to go
to school. My brother has applied many times but has never succeeded. If my brother is chased away from school and we end up in our rural home near Lake Victoria, the other thing that we would think of doing is fishing to get money. This will interfere with studies…but the bursary can only help in fees but not facilitate other needs.

Dickens, an out-of-school youth in Kayole, Embakasi

Consistency in school attendance: Consistent and substantial bursary allocations would ensure that learners attend school regularly without the fear of being sent away thus losing valuable study time. In addition, consistency in school helps learners to concentrate in class work and improves performance and the overall quality of learning.

Motivation to better academic performance: Most students believed that the allocation of the bursary was heavily dependent on academic performance. Awarding more poor students would improve their performance by keeping them in school and also being motivated to work hard so as to continue to benefit.

Reduction in dropouts and repetition: Non-beneficiaries indicated that access to the bursary could have forestalled the many cases of dropouts and repetition due to the fact that the poor end up missing classes. In this regard, it can be argued that an effective bursary funding scheme can be self financing because it helps eliminate educational costs associated repetition and dropouts.

Freeing household income: To most out-of-school youth and non beneficiaries, their families face serious economic difficulties. Access to the bursary would significantly reduce household expenditure on education so that the “savings” on education can be used to provide basics like food, rent and school uniforms which most lack.

The SEBF Implementation Challenges
The major challenges that the fund continues to face include:

Political interference: This was the foremost challenge that the implementation of the fund faced in all the three constituencies. New policies on managing the bursary fund should focus on addressing this challenge because it is one major threat even to the best gender responsive budgeting policies for the bursary fund that can ever be formulated. One guidance and counselling teacher pointed out that:

The money is too little and the committees face political interference. Politicians want to advance their self-interest at the expense of needy youth who need education. Non-deserving students also benefit which is against policy.

A guidance and counselling teacher, Starehe Constituency

There is interference from the local Member of Parliament and her cronies who come with their requests. When information is passed, some people are told to
take their forms to a particular office (a politician’s office). At times the forms are brought late to the DEO’s office and if the officers at the DEOs office do not do as asked, they are threatened.

*CBFC member, Kasarani*

**Insufficiency of the fund:** The fund remains insufficient relative to the demand. The total amounts allocated to this fund annually had been on a decline since the 2006/07 FY. A significant increase in the amount allocated to this fund had initially been announced in the 2011/12 budget at KES 1.3 billion, however, owing to emerging economic shocks caused by draught and famine, the ministry of finance has since slashed the bursary budget by KES 0.4 billion down to KES 0.9 billion. Viewed against an ever increasing demand, the declining budgetary allocations impedes targeting of the poor especially girls since no special provisions can be made for affirmative action.

When so many people apply and do not get bursary either due to committee malpractice…and when students come to check in school and find their names missing conflicts emerge as students do not know who to believe.

*Principal, Dandora Secondary School, Embakasi*

**Low bursary fund amounts:** Closely related to the inadequacy of the amounts allocated to the bursary fund is the problem of low allocations relative to the fees charged by most public schools in the three constituencies. Even the highest allocations of KES 8,000 registered in Kasarani constituency would not meet all the fee requirements for most public secondary schools. Study participants noted thus:

Another conflict is when the committee reduces the money allocated per student so that more students can benefit. This does not match the fee balances hence diminishing the impact of the bursaries towards the clearance of balances and keeping students in school.

*Principal, Mwangaza Secondary school, Embakasi*

CBFCs have had to make some adjustments in the funds to cater for other activities which have been overlooked by the ministry. Some amount of the fund is put aside to facilitate meetings, reimbursement of transports and lunches. This has opened loopholes where some committees might set aside huge amounts for these and allocate themselves high allowances at the expense of the students thus reducing the amount to be given to students.

*District Quality Assurance Officer, Kasarani*

**Corruption Networks:** Interviewees cited instances of corruption in the disbursement pipeline between the CBFCs and schools where the combined cheque and list system was abused by those who transmit the cheques to schools. In some cases, the list containing the names of real applicants were reported to be replaced by other names favoured by the cheque pushers and school principals. The following observation lends credence to the existence of this challenge:
Sometimes cheques would be sent to schools but it was discovered that some principals chased the students who had applied and brought their own people (undeserving cases). To address this, the committee was allowed to write individual cheques for each beneficiary and invite the parent who can collect it and present to the school. This became expensive but a better strategy. The student or parent collects the cheque and those who have not collected are traced to know their whereabouts.

*District Quality Assurance Officer, Kasarani*

You find a case where four students from a school, apply and are awarded bursaries, one cheque is written and schedule is then attached. However, the people handling the cheque and list between the CBFC and the school simply pluck out the schedule and give the cheque to the school with the names of their children or relatives given on a new forged schedule as the new beneficiaries. In another strategy, out of the four or so names on the original list of beneficiaries attached to cheques, only one is genuine while the rest are fake. The cheque is finally presented to the school in the name of the only genuine student.

*Chief, Korogoch, Kasarani*

**Lack of knowledge on gender responsive budgeting:** Most respondents reached by the study have little or no understanding of gender issues in budgeting. This partly explains why the allocation formula used by the ministry does not take due cognisance of the need for gender considerations. Senior ministry officials in charge of budgeting process not only had no knowledge on the relevance of gender considerations in budgeting but also saw no need for gender considerations. Instead, they felt that the guiding principle in budgeting for the fund should be the level of need.

**Weak gender mainstreaming and affirmative action structures:** A few structures attempt to mainstream gender considerations in the allocation of the bursary fund. These structures, which include the inclusion of women in CBFCs, the one-point advantage for girl applicants and the 5 percent reservation for targeting girls have either been difficult to implement or have had little impact on GRB in the bursary fund.

**Exclusion of the poor in private schools:** Evidence from discussions with community groups and observations made by the research team shows that a significant proportion of children of secondary age, who live in informal settlements, actually attend private or non-formal secondary schools. The policy guideline that restricts funding to public schools, therefore, only succeeds in excluding the poor. This is more so because the private and non-formal secondary schools in these informal settlements are actually low cost institutions that attract the poor who were unable to find a place in public schools.

**Incomprehensive allocation formula:** The present formula used by the MOE to allocate bursary funds to constituencies only considers enrolment and poverty indices. Unfortunately,
even the poverty indices relied on by the formula are often doubtful, as their computation have
been criticised before as being politically motivated. The formula is incomprehensive because it
fails to integrate the gender differentials in enrolments and the need to make allocations
responsive to existing gender inequities in access and participation in secondary education.

**Flawed means testing process:** The means-testing instrument used in determining an
applicant’s level of need, FORM “A” collects a great deal of data that remain unused during the
evaluation process. The data left out of the evaluation indicators on “FORM D” are actually the
some of the most important measures of an applicant’s level of need. One teacher at St Teresas
girls secondary school participating in the observed that “Identifying the true beneficiary is a
big challenge to the committees. Some schools have been given chance to identify the
really needy cases”.

**Information asymmetry:** Having information about the timing of the bursary is the first step
towards accessing the funds. Unfortunately, there seems to be a deliberate attempt by local
networks in collaboration with CBFCs to withhold, as much as possible, information on where
to get the forms, the steps to be undertaken by applicants, the timing for receiving applications
and where to return the forms after completing them. Such a situation only leaves prospective
applicants with the “right connections” to get information on time and submit their application.
The majority poor, who are unlikely to have “agents” in the local networks, thus, end up
excluded. The irony in this scenario was the finding that those with the information and the
networks are often the non-poor.

There is an urgent need for creation of awareness to the general public especially
in the slum areas. Most of those who would want apply do not get the correct
information and many confuse secondary bursary fund with the CDF.
*Quality Assurance Officer, Kasarani*

Targeting of the poor is still minimal. The people in the middle (class) tend to
benefit more because they either have the information or they have influence. We
are still sending the poor girls home because of fees arrears and they have not
received the bursary.
*Dean of Students, Academics, St. Teresa Girls Secondary School, Starehe.*

**Inconsistency in funding:** Due to a multiplicity of factors such as demand pressure, high
poverty levels and political pressures, allocation of the bursary even to some of the neediest
cases, in subsequent allocations, is never guaranteed. In such instances, even past beneficiaries of
the fund end up dropping out of school because the bursary support has ceased.

**Delays in Allocations:** The flow of the funds between the Ministry of Education the CBFCs
was extremely slow. cheques were released to schools months after the funds have arrived in
the CBFC accounts. Such a situation confronted some schools with serious financial strains as
they had to keep most prospective beneficiaries in school while they await arrival of cheques. When uncertain of an applicant’s prospects, some principals simply sent the poor students with arrears home.

The delays are grave. The money arrived in the CBFC account in May we are now in July and no allocations have been done. What are they (committee) doing? Some kids are now at home. It should be at least 2 weeks to process the money but here, they play games and I don’t know why….

*Says a principal in Embakasi Constituency*

**Lack of automated systems:** The entire SEBF process lacks any systematic automation for purposes of data and information management. For example, at the constituency level an automated system for feeding in application data for ease in processing applications is lacking. In addition, the data collection, storage, and transfer between the CBFCs, the DOEs, PDE and the ministry remain largely manual. This makes the application processes, evaluation and reporting quite cumbersome and inefficient. Moreover, automation of the application evaluation process can significantly eliminate the problem of undue influence in the selection of the needy cases. As a result of the lack of system automation, it is difficult to identify and target previous needy cases and those applicants whose economic circumstances have since changed for the worse since the last application.

**Weak M&E systems:** M&E systems were weak or non-existent in key levels of the management and implementation of the bursary fund. Fund records were scant or non-existent in Embakasi and Starehe constituencies. In terms of reporting and filling of returns, there were no systematic instruments to be used by CBFCs to file their returns. Each CBFC therefore opted to present their returns in whichever format they chose. This challenge explains, in part, why the CBFCs, DEOs, PDE’s office and the MoE lacked comprehensive data on the running of the fund. In the absence of accurate, reliable and credible data, gender based differentials in impacts become difficult to establish.

**3.4 Towards the integration of Gender Responsive Budget Approaches in the SEBF: A SWOT Analysis**

The study sought to conduct a SWOT analysis at different levels of the bursary funding process to establish what contribution the ministry, PDE’s Office, the DEO’s office, constituency committees and schools would have towards making the bursary funding process more gender responsive. Each level of the bursary administration and implementation process had their own strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities.
**Strengths**

Various institutional strengths were noted from the interviews conducted with key informants. The main strengths recorded in various levels of the bursary funding process included:

**Ministry:** As identified by MoE officials, the main institutional strengths through which the ministry can potentially contribute to making the SEBF process more gender responsive include:

- Competent and qualified personnel with a good understanding of education budget issues;
- Availability of necessary communication equipment such as computers for data storage and analysis for purposes of advising the process on equity implications and;
- The political support that bursary fund initiative enjoyed. This ensured that funds are allocated to the SEBF initiative every FY .

**PDE’s Offices:** The main strengths of this office included its close proximity to the constituency offices within the province. Its officers in charge of the bursary processes were accessible and regularly visited field offices. Staff also indicated that they had developed a comprehensive template for collection and compilation of relevant M&E data.

**DOEs’ Offices**

Only the Kasarani District Education Office could cite the presence of a quality assurance officer who assists in giving guidelines to the committee as a strength. The other two constituencies could hardly identify any areas of strength since they had scant staff and even lacked office space. Their contribution to the improvement of the bursary process with a view of the making it more gender responsive was therefore not discernible at the time of the study.

**Constituencies:** CBFC members cited a number of strengths which they were already drawing on to help make the process more gender responsive:

- **Strategic Location:** CBFC committees operated from the constituency offices or within close proximity to these offices. It was therefore easy to locate them.

- **Capacity building:** Committees had received relevant training on how to perform their functions and this was expected to improve their effectiveness and efficiency in the management of the funds.

- **Record keeping:** Although not very comprehensive, the joint secretariat that served both the political arm of the constituencies and the CBFCs were able to keep at least some basic data on the fund. At least, the available data could be used to determine the gender distribution in the number of beneficiaries. Data on the amounts disbursed by gender were however lacking.

**Schools:** Principals cited the presence of guidance and counselling departments staff as some of the strengths through which schools can make a contribution towards making the bursary
budgeting process more gender responsive. The guidance and counselling staff interact very closely with students who, in turn, open up to them in confidence. In this way, it becomes possible to identify the needy cases who would benefit most from bursary funding. Because of this improved pupil-teacher relationship, most teachers felt that the school is best placed to know the needy and bright students are.

Weaknesses

Ministry: The main weaknesses identified at the ministry level that were thought to impede efforts to make the SEBF process more gender responsive include: Shortage of personnel, lack of comprehensive data, delay and non-submission of data on returns from CBFCs, the data are massive and come in hard copies and the financial scandal within the ministry that was under investigation at the time of the study.

DOEs: The main weakness cited by DEOs offices was lack of empowerment to carry out their functions since the PDE’s was still overseeing the process. Participants from the DEO’s offices pointed at duplication of functions as the two offices oversee the same processes.

Schools: A number of weaknesses were identified in schools. First, most of the schools had no organized approach to obtaining information on the fund and disseminating this information to students. Secondly, although most schools had internal welfare systems, they hardly functioned and even where they did, there was no guarantee that cases identified by schools would benefit from bursary. In many instances, the decision to send a student’s name for consideration for bursary funding was the prerogative of the principal. Thirdly, there was lack of coordination of the application process where most schools did not provide application forms. In most schools in the three constituencies, each prospective beneficiary had to look for the forms on their own and apply.

Threats

All stakeholder at different levels have the potential to contribute towards making the bursary budgeting process more gender responsive. Study findings revealed that there are different threats to this potential at each level.

Ministry

As the epicentre of the budgeting process for the secondary education bursary funds, the Ministry of Education can play a significant role in improving the level of gender responsiveness of the budget process. However, the ministry’s potential to play this role is impeded by among
other factors; inflexible policy guidelines, constant budget fluctuations, lack of knowledge on gender issues in budgeting, an ever increasing demand and political interference.

**Inflexible policy guidelines:** As presently structured, the policy guidelines only recognize poverty indices and enrolment as the only determinant of bursary fund budget allocations to constituencies. The formula makes no references to gender differences in enrolments between constituencies. The means testing instrument used in ranking the level of need of applicants, FORM “D”, gives girls only a single point advantage over boys. Considering the lower number of applications from females, and the general low female enrolment in secondary education, the screening process does little in improving girl representation in access to the fund. In reference to the incomprehensiveness of allocation and means testing parameters, one ministry official noted that “the formula we are using has a few flaws…we agreed with the World Bank officials on the need to refine the allocation process by revising the formula”.

**Constant budget fluctuations:** As already seen in earlier sections, the amount of finances allocated to the SEBF has fluctuated over time against national budget constraints and competing budgetary priorities. Available data show that the bursary allocations had been on a decline since 2006. Viewed against the ever increasing demand for the funds, these fluctuations in budgetary allocations to the fund significantly threaten the ministry’s capacity to march funding to demand especially from the needy in general and girls in particular. The decline in amounts allocated makes it difficult for the ministry to allocate any funds that could be used for purposes of equalization and affirmative action in a way that elevates the girl child’s present situation in access to secondary education.

**Lack of knowledge on gender issues in budgeting:** There was a general lack of knowledge on gender issues in education budgeting. Ministry officials interviewed indicated that the present formula used in allocations did not integrate gender considerations. There were no expert staff to inform gender mainstreaming in the bursary budget process. Although ministry staff reiterated the need for gender equity in the provision of funding, no concrete structures existed to support the rhetoric.

**An ever increasing demand:** The demand for the bursary fund is ever increasing with an increase in access to secondary education. This increasing demand has an effect similar to declining budget allocations since the ministry will strive to meet this increasing demand away from attempts to create a portion of the fund to cater for equalization and affirmative action to support the poor especially girls.

**Political interference:** Although political interference was largely a problem at the constituency levels, for the case of Nairobi province, the study found that politicians from
the constituency level would storm the bursaries department every time there was a delay or problem with the disbursement of the bursary funds to their constituencies.

**District Education Offices**
The main threats noted by district education officers were political interference and lack of staff.

**Political interference:** Ideally, the DEOs should have administrative authority over the formation and operations of the CBFCs, however, they face high levels of political interference. Members of parliament, who are the ‘patrons’, often took over the roles of the DEOs and ended up running the funds. The upshot of this power struggle is that the DEOs have lost the power to oversee nominations of committee members. The MPs merely stuff the committees with their cronies. One DEO thus noted “MP’s representatives have no respect for the office and would rather the bursary office is run by politicians and not CBFC”.

**Lack of staff:** Due to the nature of their work, DEOs are unable to attend all CBFC meetings and therefore use TAC tutors who, being primary school teachers, lack the authority to direct the operations of the committees according to the DEO’s mandate.

**Constituency Committees**
Five main threats to the contribution of the committees towards making the budget process more gender responsive include:

**Vested Internal Interests:** The situation of external political interference had opened floodgates over the bursary fund in a way that made it possible for even committee members to present their own lists for consideration. This practice was reported to be most common in the Embakasi CBFC. This threat was in fact part of the reason for the disbandment of the outgoing CBFC.

**Political Interference:** Like the case of the ministry, political interference in the implementation of fund was perhaps the biggest threat to the impact of the fund in reaching the targeted groups and making it truly gender responsive. The impact of political interference was more direct at the constituency level because it skewed representation on the committee in favour of the MP’s cronies. This sets the stage for further interference since the MPs’ cronies simply do their bidding. One principal pointed that “There is a lot of Interference from outside where, at times, lists are imposed on our school which don’t even have names of students in our School”.

**Poverty:** Closely related to the increasing demand for the fund is the poverty situation in the three constituencies that have consistently registered high poverty indices. High
poverty means high demand for the bursary. Since the bursary is limited, disproportionately high numbers of standard eight leavers fail to proceed to secondary school. It is because of this high poverty that study visits to communities in the informal settlements revealed a huge population of students who had dropped out of secondary schools. What was surprising about most dropout cases was the fact that most of the youth, who left school because of inability to pay fees, had been attending public day schools which are relatively affordable following the implementation of the government’s free tuition policy in 2008. parents and out of school youth indicated that part of the reason they never applied for the bursary in the first place is because they never had even the little money for fare to the points where the bursary forms were available.

Lack of Information/Ignorance: Most of the non-beneficiaries and out of school youth did not know where to get the application forms the bursary. There was also a general perception among students and out-of-school youth that the bursary is a preserve for those with connections so many never even bothered to apply. Mothers in some poor neighbourhoods narrated that they had been victims of con artists who sold the application forms to them while promising that all the ‘buyers’ would receive the bursary.

Opportunities
The study sought to establish the untapped potentials in the various institutions which can play a role in making the budgeting more gender responsive. Most participants in different categories were however unable to identify any existing opportunities that they could employ to make the budgeting in the bursary funding more gender responsive. These difficulties are attributable to the fact that most stakeholders have difficulties in comprehending the place of gender in budgeting. This finding points at the need for awareness creation and advocacy on need to make budgeting in education more equitable through gender responsive budgeting. Notwithstanding the conceptual difficulties that study participants faced, a number of opportunities were identified.

Presence of NGOs in informal settlements: A good number of local and international NGOs and CBOs targeting the poor existed in the informal settlements. Some of these organizations have interventions in education financing. Where the funding by these organizations would reach a significant proportion of the poor who are seeking secondary education, the number of the cost-excluded poor accessing secondary education would increase. More importantly, interventions in secondary education financing by NGOs potentially diminishes the demand for the SEBF thus freeing up more resources to reach more poor secondary education seekers in the informal settlements.
The role of school principals and teachers: The present secondary bursary fund has been an improvement of the previous scheme, which was revised in 2003, in which school heads decided who benefited. This study found that the kind of means testing instrument used by CBFCs was defective and failed to target the poor. As a result of this challenge, there is a need to incorporate the contribution of principals and teachers in the vetting of cases that deserve support.


Conclusions
From the main study findings, the following conclusions can be drawn.

As presently structured, the budgeting process between the Ministry of Education and treasury is inflexible and places no emphasis on gender considerations. Focus on enrolments and poverty indices only attends to generic equity between constituencies but makes the entire budgeting process at the MoE non-gender responsive.
Much as the objectives of the fund suggests that the bursary is intended for the poor children especially the girls, evidence from the study points at male domination of access to the fund. The means-testing process at the constituency level only gives the girl child a slight advantage over the boy applicant. Where the award process is subjected to other additional considerations, the single point advantage is often eroded by the quest to spread out the fund to as many parts of the constituency and applicants as possible. The one third rule for the inclusion of women was largely adhered to by committees, however, its impact was on gender responsiveness of the allocation of the bursary was restricted to the initiative by individual women committee members to ensure some level of gender balance was adhered to in allocations. Given the evidence on internal vested interests and external political interference, the possible influence of the women representatives in making the process more gender responsive was often diminished.

The constituency committees are unable to adhere to the criteria set for the allocation. At best, the CBFCs can only follow some or part of the criteria. Among the bursary committees, the leading challenge to adherence to the award criteria is the fact that committees are stuffed with cronies of the MPs who are the CBFC patrons. Owing to the local realities of high demand for the bursary arising from the high poverty levels and the external political interference, the committees have had to domesticate the MoE criteria and base awards on considerations outside the laid down guidelines. In part, the high demand challenge explains, the decisions by CBFCs to allocate bursaries below the minimum of KES 8,000 set by the ministry.

The high demand challenge that the fund faces is further intensified by the low allocations that constituencies receive relative to their total enrolments. Spreading the fund thin, in the absence of any affirmative action and equalization structures embedded in the bursary award process, only increases the chances that girls will be excluded from the secondary education cycle; where they still remain underrepresented.

Inspite of the fact that the bursary fund was established to attend to the secondary education access and participation challenges facing the poor children and those living of pockets of poverty in informal settlements, the guidelines remain unresponsive to the plight of the secondary school goers and seekers in slum areas. While the most of the schools found in urban informal settlements are public day or low-cost private schools, the MoE guidelines of 2008 explicitly excludes day schools from accessing the bursary. In essence, therefore, the policy on exclusion of public day schools essentially excludes the majority of the very group that can benefit most from the bursary fund.

Contrary to the objectives, the bursary fund has not played any role in the improving access to secondary education among children from Nairobi’s informal settlements, especially girls. The
decision to allocate the fund to only applicants who are already within the school system effectively locks out potential Form One entrants who remain excluded because of costs of education. The only aspect of secondary education on which the bursary has some positive impact, albeit insignificant, is retention. Overall, the expected positive impact of the bursary on girl access to secondary education is non-existent because the fund cannot enable Standard Eight leavers to enter Form One. Since vulnerable girls and those in poverty are the least likely to transit to secondary school, redesigning the fund to take the structure used by Starehe boys and girls centres, which cater for seekers of form one places, would be a major step towards making the process more gender responsive.

There is asymmetry of information on the bursary process. The main problem with this situation is the fact that the poorest, who need the bursary most, have no information on where to get forms and the procedures to be undertaken. It is the better informed non-poor who are therefore more likely to access the fund. On the student side, access to the fund is adversely affected by the fact that most of the students believe that it is a preserve of the brightest. This perception means the poor students, who may not be the best performers, have no motivation to apply for the bursary. The fund management and implementation structures given by the Ministry of Education are either non-existent or ineffective at the constituency level. There is a cartel like behaviour involving CBFC members and their close networks in the dissemination of information about the fund. No specific places exist where forms are to be found. In the end, only a small proportion of needy children send in their applications and, with no connections, their chances of being awarded are greatly diminished.

In terms of performance, the fund remains grossly inefficient as a result of inconsistency in awards to beneficiaries, long delays between processing of application and award of the bursaries. The application procedure remains inefficient because it collects data that hardly forms part of the evaluation process. In the end, prospective applicants for the fund, who view the process as cumbersome and having little chance of success, find no point in applying.

Despite the training given to representative, most CBFC members still require additional training to enable them perform their functions more effectively. In addition, CBFCs still require enabling work environments with necessary facilities like computers, printers, copiers and even a permanent secretariat. Because most committee members are expected to work as volunteers, they end up spending significant amounts of bursary funds on their non-core expenditures like lunch, sitting and commuter allowances.

Overall, the biggest challenges to the attainment of the ideal of making the bursary process gender responsive include political interference, lack of knowledge of gender issues in budgeting, the high demand for the fund, the low and declining allocations and the lack of gender
considerations at the initial stages of the budgeting and process and bursary fund allocation processes at the ministry.

**The Proposed Way Forward for YIKE**

In view of the findings and conclusions, this study proposes the following:

**Dissemination of Findings:** In its present design and implementation process, the secondary bursary fund continues to face enormous efficiency, logistical and equity challenges. By disseminating the study findings on the impacts, best practices and the challenges the fund currently faces, YIKE will assist different stakeholder groups to identify the existing opportunities for mounting interventions to support government initiatives in financing secondary education, improve efficiency in targeting and help make existing and future education financing instruments more gender responsive.

**Awareness Creation:** To help bridge the information gap between that has traditionally impeded access to the fund among the poor in informal settlements in the three constituencies, YIKE should mount participatory community awareness raising programmes. Such programmes should be aimed at informing the target groups on where to get application forms, the application process requirements, and where to present their completed applications. At another level, the awareness creation process should empower communities to hold the bursaries committees to account in a way that improves the credibility and transparency of the bursary award process. In addition, the awareness creation process should expose the communities to other existing secondary education financing initiatives that are otherwise unknown to the majority.

**Local Partnerships:** One way of improving community awareness on the secondary bursary and other opportunities on secondary education financing is to form partnerships with local community groups who can be instrumental in proving information to communities. The local partnerships will be instrumental in expanding coverage with information support to the youth seeking information on available secondary education financing opportunities. Such an approach will be both cost effective and more sustainable since it relies on existing structures and networks.

**Policy Advocacy:** On the basis of the study findings showing different challenges to the management, implementation, inefficiency in targeting the poor, non existence or low levels of gender responsiveness in the budgeting process, YIKE should engage different stakeholders with the view of advocating for changes in the present bursary policy. The advocacy can draw from the lessons learnt and recommendations on strategies to improve the funds efficiency in targeting the poor and especially the girl child.
Recommendations

Recommendations for Improved Gender Responsiveness in Budgeting

**Revision of the allocation formula:** Revising the existing formula used to allocate the bursary to include provisions for gender equity will be one major step towards making the budgeting process more gender responsive.

**Training on gender issues in education budgeting:** The key policy and decision makers and institutions lack critical knowledge on gender issues in education budgeting. This calls for targeted training tailored to advocate for and raise stakeholder awareness on approaches to making education budgeting more gender responsive.

**Training to committees on application evaluation and means testing:** CBFCs should be given comprehensive training on systematic approaches to evaluation of the application process and how to objectively conduct the means testing process to accurately determine the truly needy cases.

**Revision of the means testing instruments:** FORM “A” and “D”, the means testing instruments currently in use in determining an applicants level of need, is incomprehensive and has weak components on female access to the fund.

**Strengthening M&E:** There is an urgent need to develop a comprehensive M&E system that can be used to accurately measure gender differentials in impacts of the fund. The M&E data will form a credible basis for formulating more structures for making the SEBF more gender responsive.

**Using schools to identify the needy cases:** Owing to the present level of political interference, in the management of the bursary fund coupled with an unreliable application evaluation and means testing process, identification of potential beneficiaries at the school level would improve the level of targeting of the poor.

**Integrating affirmative action structures in fund allocation:** Equity enhancing structures are presently non-existent or extremely weak. There is therefore need to integrate effective affirmative action structures in the bursary process to improve targeting and increase chances that the poor students, especially girls, benefit.

**Improving communication:** The present level of information asymmetry leads to the exclusion of the very vulnerable groups that fund is meant to target. There is an urgent to
improve the channels of communication so as to reach the poor with information on when applications should be made, where to get the application forms and where to return the forms once they are completed. This will increase the chances that the presently excluded poor have a fair chance of accessing the bursary.

**Recommendations towards an Enabling Environment for mainstreaming GRB**

From the findings, it is clear that structures to make the bursary funding process gender responsive are either very weak, non-existent or crowded out by committee decisions that are not based on the existing guidelines. Even upon the development of a good policy to make the bursary budgeting process more gender responsive, an enabling environment is required for the structures meant to make the budgeting process gender responsive to work.

**Delinking the SEBF from politicians:** The need to delink the bursary fund from politics and political influence is the foremost intervention that needs to be implemented urgently. At present, the influence that the offices of the local MPs wield over the bursary fund is overwhelming. So pervasive is the influence that no amount of trainings to committees can bring about any meaningful change in the way the fund is managed. In many instances, decisions about who gets the bursary are presently made at the whims of the MPs and their local political networks.

**Timely disbursement of the funds:** There is a need to infuse efficiency enhancers in the disbursement process so as to ensure that funds get to schools in reasonable time. The bursary funds have traditionally delayed in reaching the schools with the result that prospective beneficiaries end up being sent out of school or dropping out altogether.

**Simplifying the application process:** The application process used presently is long, tedious and even costly. This means that the poor, who need the bursary most but cannot afford the many trips one has to make to different offices, end up being excluded from access to the fund. Making the application simple and restricting application to only data that will be used for an applicant’s means testing can significantly improve access to the fund by eliminating the cost-disincentive associated with visiting to many offices at the application stage.

**Increased funding for CBFC operations:** Although the present study was not an audit of the SEBF, the is evidence that the CBFCs often divert part of the money to non-core activities such as allowances and office needs, over and above the KES 25,000 allocated to their administrative functions. These fund “leakages” diminish the amount of fiancés available to beneficiaries. The ministry should therefore consider increasing the amount of finances allocated to administrative functions of the CBFCs to eliminate the leakages.
The Secondary Education Bursary Fund was initiated by the Government of Kenya in 1993 upon the realisation that a huge population of the poor and economically vulnerable households could not send their children to secondary schools. The main objective of the fund has therefore been to enable children in the target groups to access secondary education and ensure that beneficiaries remain in school to complete the secondary school cycle. However, the fund has faced numerous challenges on the efficiency and equity fronts.

This study was commissioned by Youth Initiatives – Kenya, with financial support from UNWOMEN, to assess the level of gender responsiveness of the budgeting process, the implementation, management and performance of the fund, the impact of the fund in improving access and participation in secondary education especially for the girl child and the poor, the general lessons learnt, challenges to the implementation of the fund and the forgone benefits that could have accrued to non-beneficiaries. Based on its findings, the study makes recommendations on YIKE’s intervention priorities and policy recommendations that can help improve the level of gender responsiveness of the secondary education bursary fund.