

Women continue to be treated as second class citizens and are highly under-represented in government. Lack of access to property and polygamy are problems for rural women. Physical abuse is not condoned but occurs.

Economic, social and cultural rights are recognized as goals of public policy, but the ability of the GoK to address them is circumscribed by fiscal constraints. Inflation, declining public sector employment and strong population growth have diminished prospects for the average Kenyan, most of whom have an inadequate standard of living. Primary and secondary schooling is highly valued, although access has been limited due to a dramatic rise in school fees. University professors returned to work in September following an unsuccessful nine-month strike to have themselves union-certified: five organizers were subsequently dismissed from their teaching posts.

The number of street children in Kenyan cities has grown considerably (30,000-50,000 in Nairobi alone - UNDUGU Society estimates) as a result of poor economic conditions and dislocation caused by ethnic clashes. Government response has been minimal.

A government task force to review laws relating to the disabled was established in October, 1993. It has yet to formulate any policy recommendations. While Kenya has no official human rights organ, the independent 'Kenyan Human Rights Commission' acts as a credible data collection and rights-monitoring group.

CANADIAN POSITION

Canada continues to press for improved human rights, strengthened democracy and better governance in Kenya. Canadian officials regularly meet with senior GoK officials in Nairobi and Ottawa (most recently to discuss the trial of Koigi wa Wamwere).

Canada continues to chair DDDG meetings, to which prominent Kenyans involved in democratization and human rights are invited. In coordination with other donors, Canada observed all but one by-election held last year; played a part in a UNDP/GoK-chaired national committee on the displaced; and maintained contact with a wide variety of Kenyan human rights activists and NGOs. We have provided funding to the Institute for Education and Democracy in Kenya, as well as assistance to the Catholic Church in aid of victims of ethnic clashes.