

Kenya



REGION: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Also included in this region: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte-d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania

PART I: ENROLMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS

The Kenyan HE system loosely follows the North American model. Just over 80% of students were enrolled in comprehensive universities in 2018, with most of the rest in short-cycle HEIs. Enrolments increased by over 350% between 2006 and 2018, rising from about 135,000 to 612,000. The fastest growth happened after 2013. This rate of increase was substantially faster than across the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Global South. The number of HEIs also increased more than fourfold, with most of this occurring in the short-cycle sector. As a result of these patterns, Kenyan HEIs were roughly of the same size in 2018 as in 2006. Just under 85% of students attended public providers in 2018, which was slightly below the average for the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa.

TABLE 1 – Types of higher education providers

CATEGORY	INSTITUTIONS	INSTITUTIONS COUNT IN 2018		
		PUB.	PRIV.	TOTAL
Comprehensive universities	Universities	31	30	61
University Colleges	Universities constituent colleges	0	0	0
Hybrids	Technical Universities; Polytechnic University-Colleges	2	0	2
Short-cycle HEIs	Polytechnics; Teacher training institutions	82	343	425

FIGURE 1 – Numbers of institutions by type, 2006-2018

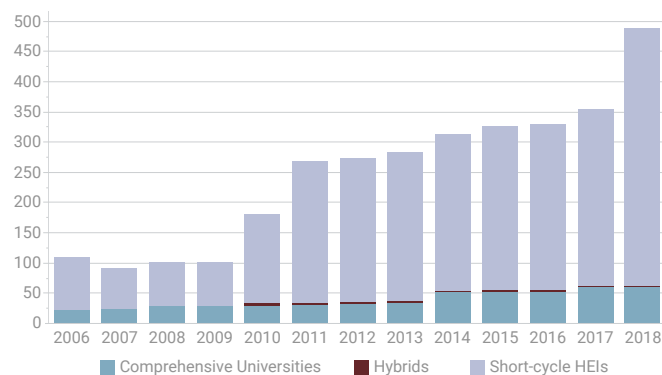


FIGURE 2 – Total enrolments with public and private higher education providers, 2006-2018 (Millions)

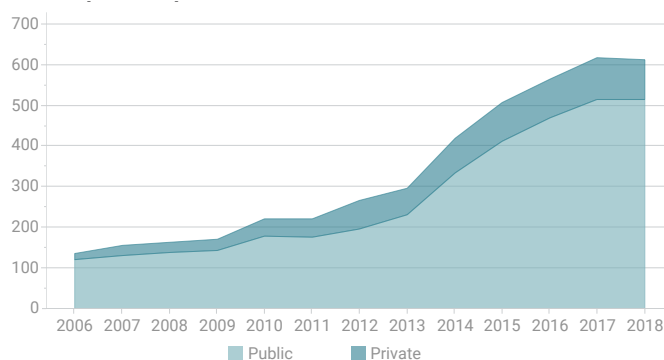


FIGURE 3 – Changes in enrolment, in Kenya, the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018

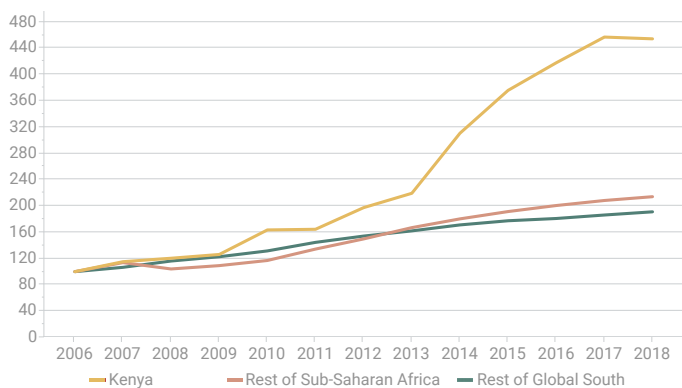


FIGURE 4 – Share of enrolments by institution type in Kenya and the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, 2006 and 2018 (2006=100)

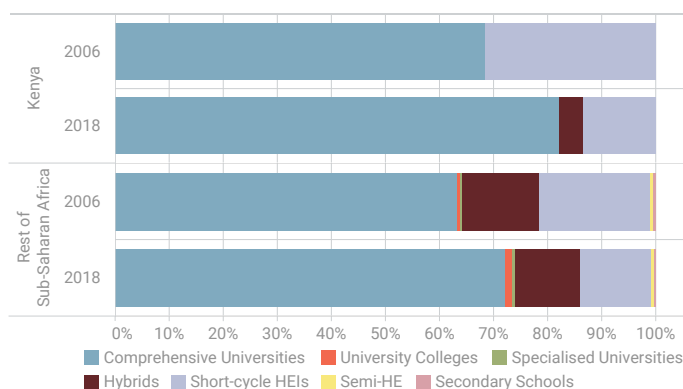


FIGURE 5 – Share of enrolments in public and private institutions, by institution type in Kenya and the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, 2018

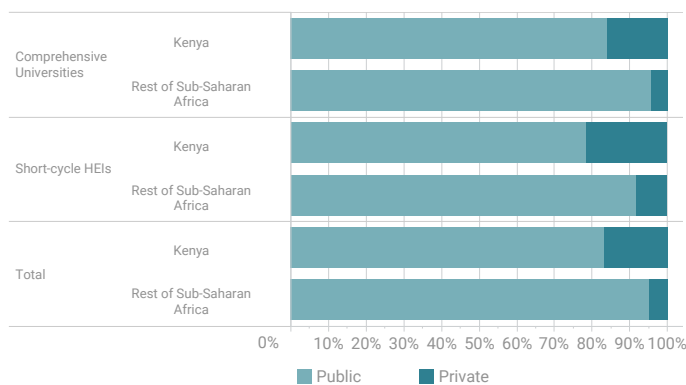
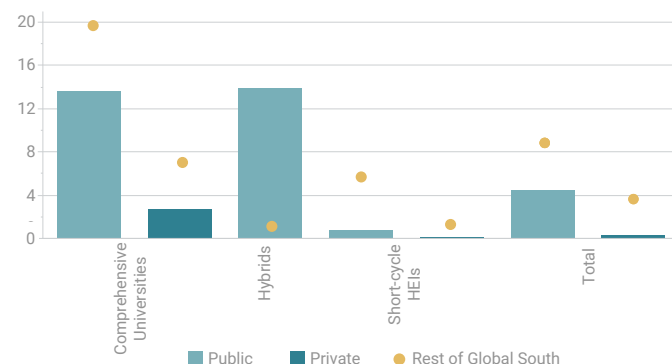


FIGURE 6 – Average institution-size by institution type in Kenya and the rest of the Global South, 2018 (Thousands)



PART II: HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCING

Public HE spending in Kenya more than tripled between 2006 and 2018. Transfers to public HEIs rose slightly more slowly, but also ended the period nearly three times as high as in 2006. Still, the massive increase in student numbers after 2013 meant that funding per student fell significantly from USD 4,500 in 2006 to USD 2,500 year in 2018. Relative to GDP, Kenyan public spending on HE was 0.8% in 2006 and 1.1% in 2018. This latter figure was above the averages for the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Global South.

FIGURE 7 – Change in real total public spending on higher education in Kenya, the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

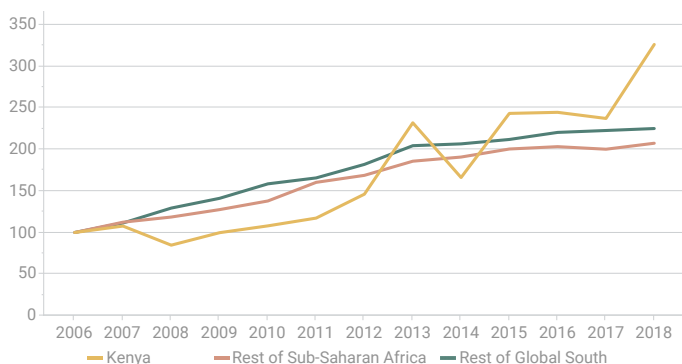


FIGURE 8 – Total public spending on higher education relative to GDP in Kenya, the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018

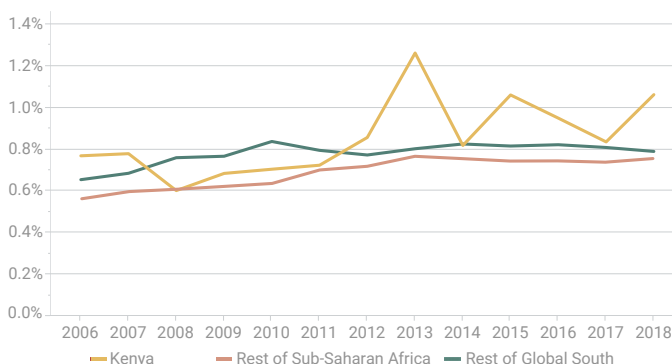


FIGURE 9 – Change in real government transfers to public institutions by institution-type in Kenya and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

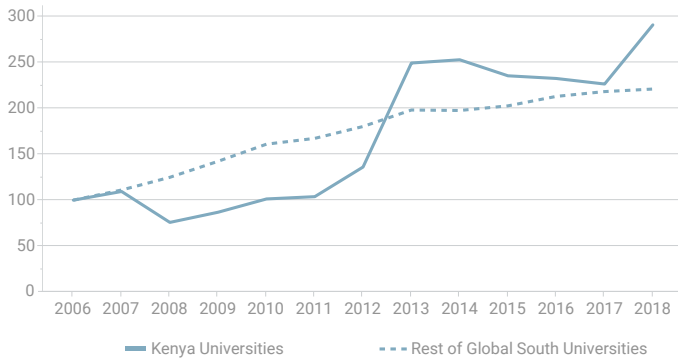


FIGURE 10 – Per-student government transfers to public institutions by institution-type in real PPP, in Kenya and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018

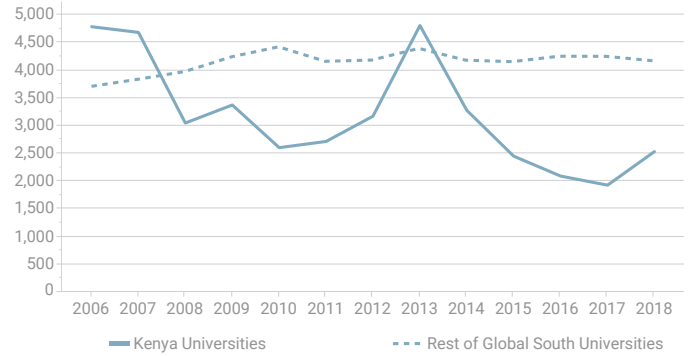


FIGURE 11 – Government transfers relative to total institutional spending of public institutions by institution-type in Kenya and the rest of the Global South, 2006 and 2018

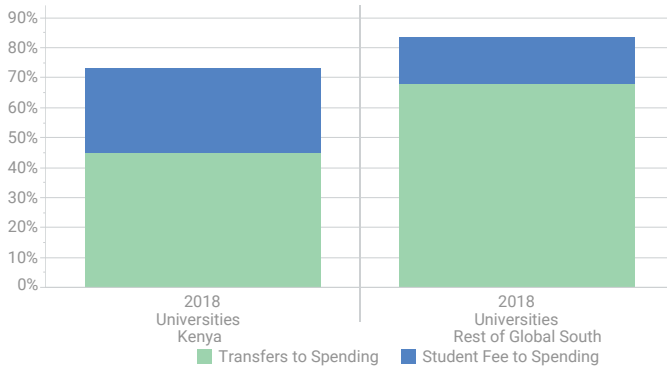


FIGURE 12 – Change in real total institutional spending of private institutions by institution-type in Kenya and the rest of the world, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

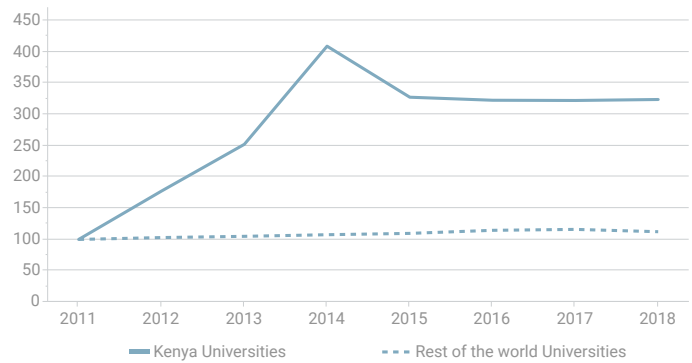


FIGURE 13 – Per-student total institutional spending of private institutions by institution-type in Kenya and the rest of the world, 2006-2018

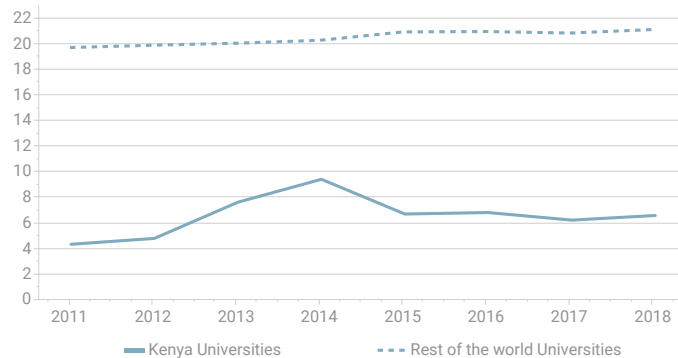
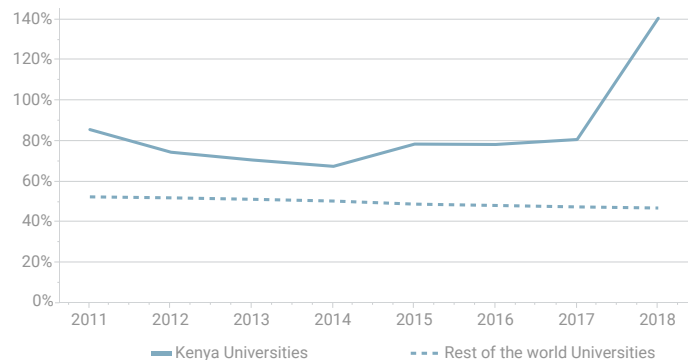


FIGURE 14 – Student fee revenues relative to total institutional spending of private institutions by institution-type in Kenya and the rest of the world, 2006-2018



PART III: STUDENT FEES

Kenya has a differentiated student fee regime. Most students at public universities in 2018 were admitted through the standard admissions stream and charged standard fees, whereas students not admitted through this stream paid more. Standard fees at public universities consistently fell over the study period, basically because they failed to keep up with inflation. Meanwhile, differential fee revenues per student were eight times as high as standard fees in 2018. At private universities, fee revenues per student increased substantially over the period of interest, mostly due to a reported doubling from 2017 to 2018, which may need to be verified in future data.

FIGURE 15 – Share of students at public institutions under each type of tuition regime in Kenya, the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the Global South, 2006 and 2018

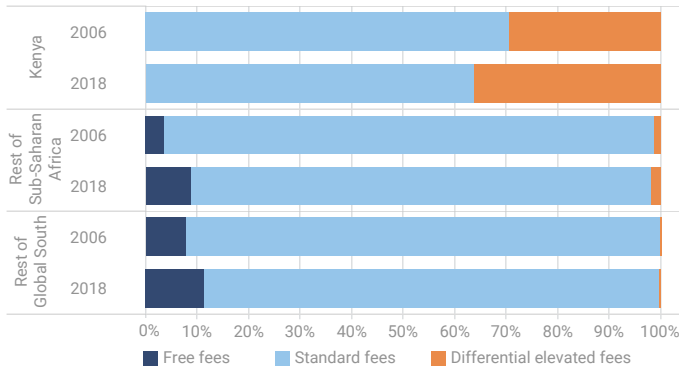


FIGURE 16 – Fee revenues per student paying typical rates at public institutions by institution type in PPP, 2006-2018

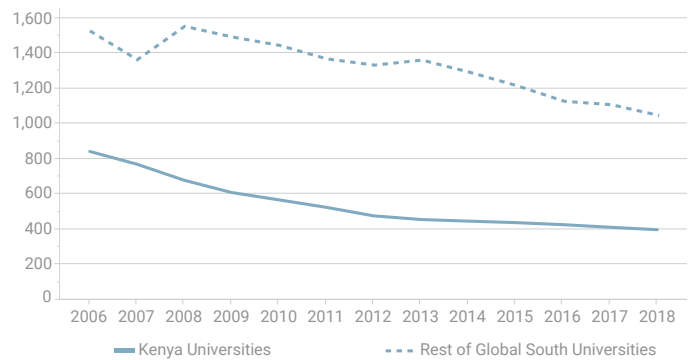


FIGURE 17 – Fee revenues per student paying elevated different fees at public universities, as percentage of full fee-paying costs, 2006-2018

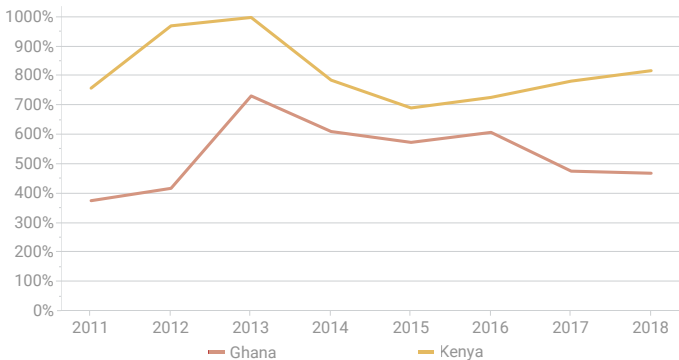
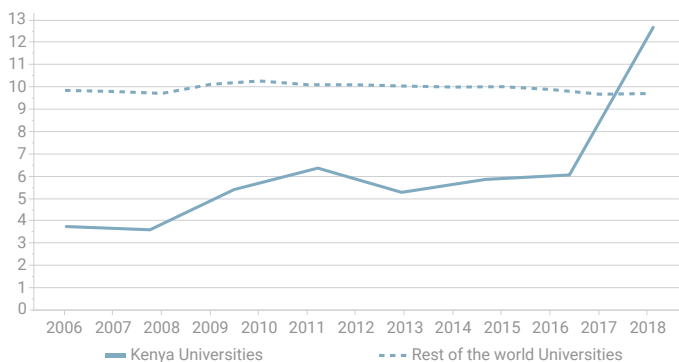


FIGURE 18 – Fee revenues per student at private institutions by institution type in PPP, 2006-2018



Kenyatta University, Kenya



PART IV: STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

Government student financial aid in Kenya is essentially loan-only. Grants are available, but amounted to less than 1.5% of total student financial aid disbursements in 2018. The proportion of the student body receiving loans not only kept pace with surging enrolments from 2006 to 2018, but the proportion of students receiving loans increased from 28% to 45%. One of the ways the loan program achieved this growth in coverage, however, was by reducing the amounts lent per student. Total student financial aid disbursements increased from equalling 0.1% of GDP in 2006 to 0.13% in 2018. This final figure exceeded the average for the rest of the Global South, but still fell behind the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa.

TABLE 2 – Student financial aid regime, including recipients and amounts disbursed in 2018

CATEGORY	PROGRAMS	BASIS OF ALLOCATION	RECIPIENTS	AMOUNTS DISBURSED (USD)
Grants	Higher Education Loan Board (HELB) bursaries	Need-based	21,093	4,111,822
Loans	Higher Education Loan Board (HELB) loans	Open enrolment	282,101	279,499,365

FIGURE 19 – Total disbursements to students in financial aid relative to gross domestic product in Kenya, the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the Global South, 2006-2018

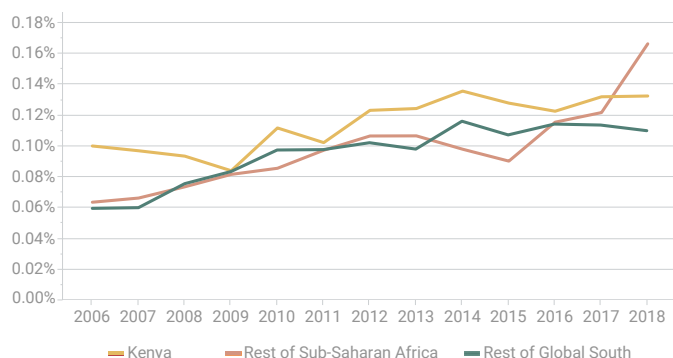


FIGURE 20 – Change in amounts disbursed to students by form of financial aid in Kenya and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018 (2006=100)

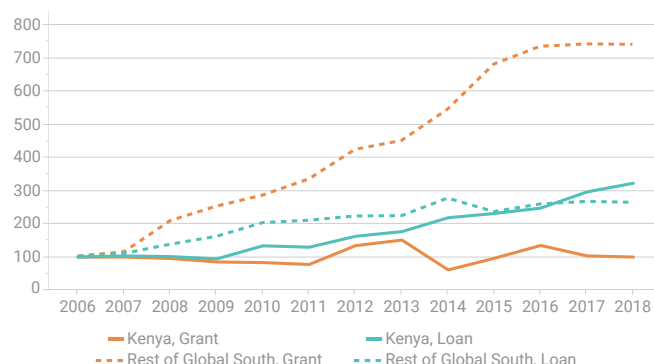


FIGURE 21 – Share of higher education students receiving student financial aid by type in Kenya and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018

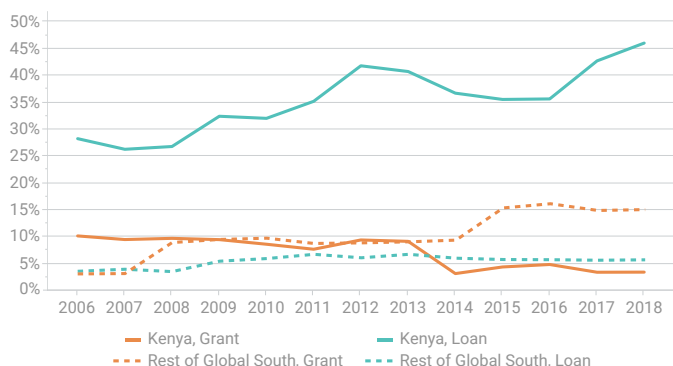
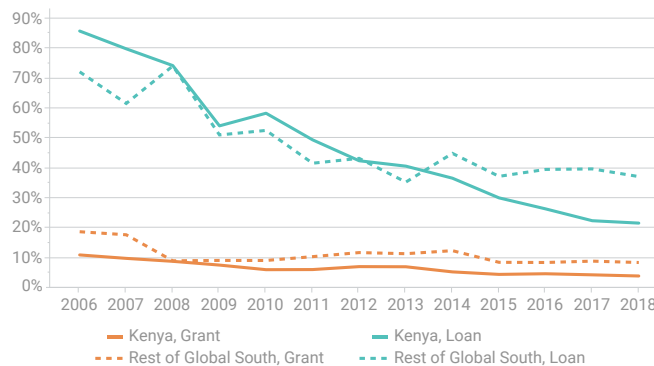


FIGURE 22 – Financial aid per recipient relative to GDP per capita by form of financial aid in Kenya and other Global South countries that offer financial aid of this type, 2006-2018



***Note:** For more on methodology and data quality please see [Appendices A and B](#).