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AUDITOR GENERAL'S
PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT ON
PROVISION OF BURSARIES AND SCHOLARSHIPS
BY THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KIRINYAGA

SEPTEMBER 2026

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FOREWORD

I am pleased to present this performance audit report on the Provision of Bursaries and Scholarships to Needy Learners by the County Government of Kirinyaga. My Office carried out the audit under the mandate conferred to me by Article 229(6) of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, to confirm whether or not public money has been applied lawfully and in an effective way. In addition, Section 36 of the Public Audit Act, Cap.412B requires the Auditor-General to examine the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which public money has been expended.

Performance, financial and compliance audits form the three-pillar audit assurance framework that I have established to give focus to the varied and wide scope of the audit work done by my Office. The framework is intended to provide a high level of assurance to stakeholders that public resources are not only correctly disbursed, recorded and accounted for, but that the use of the resources results in positive impacts on the lives of all Kenyans. The main goal of our performance audits is to ensure effective use of public resources and promote service delivery to Kenyans.

The Report is submitted to Kirinyaga County Assembly in accordance with Article 229(7) of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 and Section 39(1) of the Public Audit Act, Cap.412B. I have also submitted copies of the Report to the Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service, Principal Secretary, The National Treasury, Principal Secretary, State Department for Devolution, Clerk of the Senate, Governor, County Government of Kirinyaga and the Chairperson, Council of Governors.

FCPA Nancy Gathungu, CBS
AUDITOR-GENERAL

11 September, 2026

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ISSAI	International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions
NG-CDF	National Government-Constituency Development Fund
OAG	Office of the Auditor-General

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Meaning
Administrative Expenses	Costs incurred in managing and administering the bursary and scholarship programme, excluding funds disbursed directly to beneficiaries.
Bursary	A non-repayable financial award provided to needy learners to assist in meeting part of the cost of education, usually awarded on a periodic basis and not guaranteed for the full duration of study.
Double or Multiple Allocation	The awarding of bursaries or scholarships more than once to the same beneficiary, either within the same ward, across different wards, or from multiple public providers.
Electronic Funds Transfer	A cashless method of transferring funds electronically from one bank account to another, recommended as an efficient alternative to cheque payments.
Grievance Redress Mechanism	A structured system for receiving, recording, investigating, and resolving complaints and appeals from bursary and scholarship applicants and beneficiaries.
Learning Institutions	Educational institutions to which bursary or scholarship funds are disbursed on behalf of beneficiaries, including secondary schools, universities, colleges, and vocational training centres.
Monitoring and Evaluation	The systematic tracking and assessment of programme implementation to determine

	effectiveness, efficiency, and achievement of intended objectives.
Overpayment	A situation where funds credited to a beneficiary exceed the actual school fee balance, often resulting from multiple allocations.
Persons with Disabilities	Individuals with physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental impairments who may face barriers to accessing education and are prioritized under Sustainable Development Goal Target 4.5.
Public Bursary Providers	Government entities that provide bursaries or scholarships, including county governments, the Ministry of Education, National Government-Constituency Development Fund, National Government Affirmative Action Fund, and other public funds.
Scholarship	A non-repayable financial award, often covering full school fees, usually awarded for the duration of study, based on academic merit and/or financial need.
Timely Disbursement	Release of bursary or scholarship funds to learning institutions on or before school opening dates to ensure uninterrupted learning.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background of the Audit

1. Bursaries and scholarships are forms of non-repayable financial aid that support students in meeting the cost of education. Bursaries aim to promote access to quality education by assisting students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue their academic goals. Scholarships on the other hand are awarded to students based on financial need, academic merit, talent, or other notable achievements.

2. Both bursaries and scholarships are awarded to students from low-income families, or those who have a demonstrated need for financial assistance to cover the cost of tuition and related expenses, such as books and living expenses. Scholarships cover school fees for the entire duration of study, while bursaries are awarded on a less consistent basis and are not guaranteed.

3. The mandate for the provision of bursaries and scholarships in Kirinyaga County is vested in the County Executive Education Bursary Committee. Other role players include National Government Administrative Officers, other Bursary Providers (the Ministry of Education, the National Government Affirmative Action Fund, the National Government Constituencies Development Fund, the Presidential Secondary School Bursary), and the National Treasury and Economic Planning.

4. The Auditor-General authorized the audit after considering the following factors: -

    i) According to the Hansard report dated 30 April, 2024, the Senate discussed the oversight of County governments in the management of bursary and scholarship funds, highlighting instances of mismanagement and corruption across several counties. The members also underscored the need for regular monitoring and evaluation to gauge the impact of bursary and scholarship programs in improving educational access and retention for learners.

    ii) In September 2024, Members of the National Assembly discussed the need to have the various bursary and scholarship funds consolidated, to address gaps in the current education funding model. This consolidation aimed to create a more efficient system for providing bursaries and scholarships, ensuring

resources are more equitably distributed and increasing access to funds for more needy learners[1]

iii) Even though Article 53(1)(b) of the Constitution makes provision for every child's access to free and compulsory basic education, various obstacles still hinder the efficient delivery of these initiatives in counties. The results of the Pre-study indicated that the provision of bursaries and scholarships by county governments faces various set-backs that hinder the full achievement of the intended objectives. These include; inadequacies in verification of applicants, late disbursement of bursary and scholarship funds, lack of coordination amongst the various bursary and scholarship providers, and a lack of regular monitoring and evaluation, which prevents counties from effectively measuring such Programmes' impact and informing necessary adjustments.

iv) The provision of bursaries and scholarships is linked to Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Quality Education. Target 4.5 focuses on ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, and eliminating gender disparities, by 2030.

Objective of the Audit

5. The main audit objective was to assess whether the County Government of Kirinyaga has ensured access to bursaries and scholarships by needy learners. Specifically, the objective assessed whether the County Government of Kirinyaga has ensured:

   i. Adequate allocation of bursaries and scholarship funds; and
   ii. Timely disbursement of bursaries and scholarships to needy learners.

Scope of the Audit

6. The audit focused on the activities of the County Government of Kirinyaga in ensuring access to bursaries and scholarships for needy learners within the County. These are identification of needy learners, allocation of bursaries and scholarships, and disbursement of funds. The audit covered the financial years 2021/2022 to 2024/2025, which was deemed sufficient to establish trends and provide a

[1] The National Assembly Hansard report dated Wednesday 25 September, 2024, Page 21.

comprehensive assessment. The audit was conducted between September, 2024 and December, 2025.

Summary of Major Audit Findings

i) Inadequate identification of Needy Learners

7. Review of one hundred and ninety-seven (197) sampled bursary and scholarship application forms revealed that one hundred and two (102), representing 52%, had the required attachments, while ninety-five (95), representing 48%, were not fully supported.

8. In addition, review of one hundred and ninety-seven (197) sampled bursary and scholarship application forms revealed that one hundred and six (106) forms, representing 54%, were duly filled out, while ninety-one (91) forms, representing 46%, were not properly filled out. Further analysis of the ninety-one (91) application forms that were not properly filled out revealed that fifty-six (56), representing 62% of the applicants, had not indicated their outstanding fee balances and other required information leading to inadequate identification of needy learners.

9. Inadequate identification of needy learners was attributed to weak oversight by the Executive and the Ward Education Bursary Committees. In addition, the provision of scholarships was not anchored in County Regulations, consequently, there were no formal guidelines for the selection of beneficiaries. The Regulations did not provide a distinction between the requirements for bursary and scholarship applicants, which led to weak checks and balances over the award of bursaries and scholarships applicants.

ii) Inadequate Allocation and Award of Bursaries

10. Analysis of the bursary allocation schedules in the twenty (20) Wards for the Financial Years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 revealed that the average allocation was uniform, with each bursary applicant receiving between Kshs.1,700 and Kshs.3,500 on average. The Ward Bursary Committees did not take into consideration the category of the learning institutions or the social and financial vulnerability status of the applicants. Further, the Ward Bursary Committees did not vet or assess the applicants' levels of financial and social vulnerability.

11. In addition, review of beneficiary lists in three (3) sampled day schools revealed that allocations to learners ranged between Kshs.2,254 and Kshs.3,012 per applicant in financial years 2021/2022 and 2023/2024,despite the fact that the approved annual fee for day secondary schools was Kshs.22,244.

12. The inadequate allocation and award of bursaries was attributed to the lack of a standard tool by the Ward Bursary Committees for scoring applicants based on their assessed social and vulnerability status. In addition, the Regulations did not specify the minimum and maximum allocations, leaving the award amounts to the subjective discretion of the Committees. Finally, due to political interference, the fund was perceived as a public entitlement, leading to its distribution to all applicants uniformly, regardless of their financial need or vulnerability.

iii) Multiple Allocation of Bursaries and Scholarships to Single Beneficiaries

13. Review of beneficiary lists for the financial years 2022/2023, 2023/2024, and 2024/2025 revealed that one hundred and one (101) beneficiaries received bursaries twice within the same year. Further, review of student fee statements for the 2024 and 2025 academic years in four (4) out of the six (6) sampled schools revealed that twenty-four (24) students received bursaries from more than one (1) public bursary provider. Out of the twenty-four (24), eleven (11) beneficiaries had overpayments totaling Kshs.192,746 cumulatively. This excess expenditure of Kshs.192,746 represented a lost opportunity to cover additional needy students under the Programme.

14. Multiple allocations of bursaries and scholarships were attributed to lack of a coordination framework among the Wards within the County and various public bursary and scholarship providers. In addition, the County Executive Education Bursary Committee had not established an information system to integrate beneficiary data across the various Wards. In addition, there was lack of independence in the vetting process, where informal social networks exerted undue influence over the selection. Further, spreading of funds too thinly resulted in significantly low awards, prompting learners to apply to multiple providers in the hope of securing enough funds to cover their fees. .

iv) Inefficient Bursary Data Management System

15. Review of records and interviews established that the processing of bursaries and scholarships was manual. There was lack of secure storage space in the five (5) sampled Wards for safeguarding documents such as application forms, vetting minutes, and dispatch registers.

16. The inefficient bursary and scholarship data management system was attributed to the failure by the County Executive Education Bursary Committee to prioritize the adoption of a digital management information system for capturing, storing, and managing data electronically. Inefficient data management compromised data accuracy, transparency, and accountability, as well as timeliness in the bursary awards, resulting in the exclusion of deserving applicants and multiple allocations. It also made information retrieval challenging and created a risk of permanent information loss.

v) Lack of Data on Access to Bursaries and Scholarships by Persons with Disabilities

17. Interviews with the County Executive and Ward Education Bursary Committees revealed the absence of a structured mechanism to ensure that bursary and scholarship application forms reached Persons with Disabilities. Instead, the dissemination of application forms largely depended on the initiative and goodwill of village representatives, which limited equitable access to bursary opportunities for learners with disabilities.

18. Review of the beneficiary records further indicated low representation of learners with disabilities in the bursary programme. Specifically, beneficiaries with disabilities accounted for only 0.74% of the total beneficiaries in the Financial Year 2022/2023. In addition, the approved beneficiary lists for the Financial Years 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 did not capture details of learners with disabilities, thereby, limiting the County's ability to track and assess inclusivity in bursary allocation.

19. Without adequate data on the provision of bursaries and scholarships to learners with disabilities, the County could not establish the extent of the programme's contribution towards ensuring the inclusion of learners with special needs. This also limited the

ability to identify their challenges, and design and implement appropriate remedial measures.

vi) High Administrative Expenses

20. Analysis of financial records for the financial years 2021/2022 to 2023/2024 established that the administrative expenses exceeded the statutory limit of 3%. However, the audit noted that the County applied its own regulations, which allow for administrative expenditure of up to 5% of the total bursary allocation. This This excess expenditure of Kshs.1,100,671 represented a lost opportunity to cover additional needy students under the Programme.

vii) Lack of a Structured Grievance Redress Mechanism

21. Interviews with the County Executive Education Bursary Committees and Ward Education Bursary Committees revealed that only one (1) out of five (5) sampled Ward Bursary Committees maintained a complaint register, which only recorded the name of the parent or applicant and their telephone number. Key information, such as the form of complaint, date received, action taken, status of resolution, and officer responsible, were not captured.

22. Lack of a structured grievance redress mechanism was attributed to the absence of formal policy or operational guidelines by the Executive Committee defining the procedures for handling and documenting complaints. As a result, transparency and accountability were undermined in the administration of bursary and scholarship funds, as there was no verifiable record of how complaints were handled and resolved.

viii) Inefficient Mode of Bursary Disbursement

23. Review of the cash books, bank statements, and bank reconciliation statements of the County Executive Bursary and Scholarship Fund and the five (5) sampled Wards for the financial years 2020/2021 to 2024/2025 revealed that there were cancelled cheques, stale cheques, bounced cheques and bank charges amounting to Kshs.9,817,239.

24. The inefficiencies in funds disbursement were attributed to insufficient funds in the bank account, as well as errors during the preparation of cheques, such as incorrect beneficiary details and incorrect school account numbers.

ix) Inadequate Acknowledgement of Bursary and Scholarship Payments

25. Review of acknowledgement letters and school fee receipts indicated that during the Financial Year 2022/2023, only Kshs.5,558,128 representing 31% of the funds disbursed were acknowledged, while for Financial Year 2023/2024 only Kshs.14,297,677 representing 34% were acknowledged.

26. Inadequate acknowledgement was attributed to inadequate monitoring and a failure by the County Executive Education Bursary Committee to follow up with learning institutions. The accountability over bursary and scholarship disbursements was undermined, increasing the risk of diversion and misappropriation of funds. Consequently, intended learners may fail to benefit from the funds, even after the institution has received payment, as their individual fee accounts may not be credited in a timely manner.

x) Ineffective Monitoring of the Bursary and Scholarship programme

27. Interviews with the County Executive Education Bursary Committee and the five (5) sampled Ward Education Bursary Committees indicated that monitoring activities were conducted. However, the Committees did not provide any evidence or feedback reports to confirm the status of these key indicators for the beneficiaries.

28. The ineffective monitoring was attributed to lack of a standardized framework for monitoring, follow-up, and reporting on the implementation of the Programme at both the Executive and Ward levels. Inadequate monitoring and evaluation hindered the County's ability to enhance Programme effectiveness, preventing the timely identification of gaps and the prompt implementation of corrective measures.

xi) Doubt in Continued Provision of Bursaries and Scholarships to Learners in National Government Institutions

29. The audit revealed that the County Government of Kirinyaga was disbursing bursaries and scholarships to secondary schools, universities and colleges, which was outside their mandate. Analysis of list of beneficiaries revealed that during the

financial years 2021/2022 to 2024/2025, secondary schools received the highest allocation, averaging 59% of the total disbursed funds. Vocational Training Centres and other middle level colleges, however, received an average of 14% over the same period.

30. The continued provision of bursaries and scholarships to learners in institutions under the National Government was threatened by lack of an intergovernmental partnership agreement that meets the prescribed legal and procedural requirements. Consequently, the sustainability of the bursary programme is doubtful. In addition, the County has not prioritised the needs of learners in institutions that fall under the devolved functions such as pre-primary education centres, village polytechnics, homecraft centres, and childcare facilities.

Conclusion

31. The County Government of Kirinyaga has not ensured adequate provision of bursaries and scholarships to needy learners. Applicants were awarded similar amounts regardless of their individual financial need or vulnerability. Weak data management and expenditure control systems, inadequate collaboration and co-ordination with other bursary providers, and unstructured grievance handling mechanisms, limited evidence-based decision-making, equity, transparency, and accountability in the bursary and scholarship administration processes.

32. County Government of Kirinyaga has not ensured timely disbursement of bursary and scholarship funds as there were inefficiencies in the disbursement processes, weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation, to ensure timely submission of acknowledgements of receipt of funds by the learning institutions. In addition, delay in execution of an Intergovernmental Partnership Agreement between the County Government and the National Government undermined accountability and reduced the efficiency of the bursary and scholarship programme.

Recommendations

33. To ensure adequate allocation of bursaries and scholarships, the Kirinyaga County Executive Education Bursary Committee should:

a) Strengthen its oversight of Ward-level vetting and verification of application forms to ensure complete documentation. The Committee should also implement regular reporting mechanisms by the Ward Committees;

b) In collaboration with the Ward Bursary Committees, develop a formal Needs Assessment Tool that assigns points based on specific, verifiable criteria such as family status, household income, and special circumstances; and

c) Set bursary and scholarship award limits or a percentage of the fee balance to eliminate inconsistencies in decision-making across the Wards, minimize instances of spreading the funds thinly and ensure alignment with the fee structures approved by the State Department for Basic Education.

34. To prevent multiple allocation of bursaries and scholarships to single beneficiaries, the Kirinyaga County Executive Education Bursary Committee should:

a) Develop and implement a comprehensive system capable of integrating all beneficiary data through the use of a common unique identifier to enhance transparency and coordination;

b) Develop and implement a co-ordination framework to enhance information sharing and joint planning with other public bursary and scholarship providers, and promote collaboration between Ward Bursary Committees, through information and data sharing during administration of the bursaries and scholarships Fund.

c) Collaborate with the Ministry of Education and Parliament to develop a multi-agency collaboration framework for public bursary providers and consider establishing a centralized bursary issuance and administration system for all bursary providers.

35. To address inefficiencies in data management, the Kirinyaga County Executive Education Bursary Committee should explore the adoption of Information and Communication Technology by investing in appropriate systems to automate the bursary and scholarship processes. In addition, the Committee should develop specific guidelines for the allocation of bursary and scholarship funds to learners with special needs to ensure inclusivity.

36. To ensure a structured grievance resolution mechanism, the Kirinyaga County Executive Education Bursary Committee should develop and implement a formal grievance redress policy and accompanying Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to guide the receipt, handling, documentation, and resolution of complaints. In addition, the Committee should conduct public awareness outreach so that beneficiaries and applicants are informed of available grievance channels.

37. To ensure efficiency in the mode of disbursement of funds to the learning institutions, and to ensure adequate monitoring and acknowledgements of disbursements, the Executive Committee should explore adoption of technology to integrate electronic transfer of beneficiary funds to learning institutions by leveraging existing platforms like the Kenya Education Management Information System , and the Integrated Financial Management Information System .

38. To legally undertake the bursary and scholarship programme to learners in institutions under the National Government, the County Education Executive Committee should design and complete a formal intergovernmental transfer process and secure approval through gazettement by both the National Assembly and the County Assembly.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND OF THE AUDIT

Introduction

1.1 Bursaries and scholarships are forms of non-repayable financial aid that support students in meeting the cost of education. Bursaries aim to promote access to quality education by assisting students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue their academic goals. Scholarships, on the other hand, are awarded to students based on financial need, academic merit, talent, or other notable achievements.

1.2 Both bursaries and scholarships are awarded to students from low-income families, or those who have a demonstrated need for financial assistance to cover the cost of tuition and related expenses, such as books and living expenses. Scholarships cover school fees for the duration of study, while bursaries are awarded on an inconsistent basis and are not guaranteed.

1.3 The County Government of Kirinyaga has established a County Bursary Fund to assist students from needy groups such as orphans, those from poor families, and those with special needs to pursue education at recognized institutions. This promotes access to secondary and tertiary education for needy learners in the County.

1.4 The mandate for the provision of bursaries and scholarships in Kirinyaga County is vested in the County Executive Education Bursary Committee and Ward Bursary committees . The provision of bursaries and scholarships fall within the Education Sector under the County Executive Committee Member of Education.

Motivation for the Audit

1.5 The Auditor-General authorized the audit after considering the following factors:

i) According to the Hansard report dated 30 April, 2024, the Senate discussed the oversight of County governments in the management of bursary and scholarship funds, highlighting instances of mismanagement and corruption across several counties. The members also underscored the need for regular monitoring and evaluation to gauge the impact of bursary and scholarship programs in improving educational access and retention for learners.

ii) In September 2024, Members of the National Assembly discussed the need to have the various bursary and scholarship funds consolidated, to address gaps in the current education funding model. This consolidation should aim to create a more efficient system for providing bursaries and scholarships, ensuring resources are more equitably distributed and increasing access to funds for more needy learners[2].

iii) Even though Article 53(1)(b) of the Constitution makes provision for every child's access to free and compulsory basic education, various obstacles still hinder the efficient delivery of these initiatives in counties. The results of the Pre-study indicated that the provision of bursaries and scholarships by county governments faces various set-backs that hinder the full achievement of the intended objectives. These include; inadequacies in verification of applicants, late disbursement of bursary and scholarship funds, lack of coordination amongst the various bursary and scholarship providers, and a lack of regular monitoring and evaluation, which prevents counties from effectively measuring such Programmes' impact and informing necessary adjustments.

iv) The provision of bursaries and scholarships is linked to the Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Quality Education. Target 4.5 focuses on ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, and eliminating gender disparities, by 2030.

1.6 Given the above factors, the audit sought to assess the progress made by the County Government of Kirinyaga in eliminating the barriers to access to education by needy learners and the efficiency and effectiveness with which the County had utilized and disbursed bursary and scholarship funds to beneficiaries.

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[2] The National Assembly Hansard report dated Wednesday 25 September, 2024, Page 21

CHAPTER 2: DESIGN OF THE AUDIT

Objective of the Audit

2.1 The main objective of the audit was **"To assess whether the County Government of Kirinyaga has ensured access to bursaries and scholarships by needy learners."**

Specifically, the objective assessed whether the County Government had ensured:

i. Adequate allocation of bursaries and scholarship funds; and

ii. Timely disbursement of bursaries and scholarships to needy learners.

Audit Questions

2.2 The main audit question that guided the team in carrying out the audit was **"Has the County Government of Kirinyaga ensured access to bursaries and scholarships by needy learners?"**

The audit sub-questions that guided the team in achieving the audit objective were:

i. Has the County Government of Kirinyaga ensured adequate allocation of bursaries and scholarships?

ii. Has the County Government of Kirinyaga ensured timely disbursement of bursaries and scholarships?

Audit Scope

2.3 The audit focused on the activities of the County Government of Kirinyaga in ensuring access to bursaries and scholarships for needy learners within Kirinyaga County. These are; identification of needy learners, allocation of bursaries and scholarships, and disbursement of funds. The audit covered the financial years 2021/2022 to 2024/2025, which were deemed sufficient to establish trends and provide a comprehensive assessment. The audit was conducted between September, 2024 and December, 2025.

Audit Criteria

2.4 The criteria used to assess whether the County Government of Kirinyaga has ensured access to bursary and scholarship funds by needy learners are presented in **Table 1.** The detailed criteria are provided in the findings chapter.

Table 1: Audit Criteria

Audit Sub-Objective	Audit Criteria	Source of Criteria
To assess whether the County Government of Kirinyaga has ensured adequate allocation of bursary and scholarship funds.	The Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund is dedicated to providing bursaries to students enrolled in secondary schools and tertiary institutions.	Section 3 (3a), 13(3) of the Public Finance Management (Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund) Regulation, 2023.
To determine whether the County Government of Kirinyaga has ensured the timely disbursement of bursaries and scholarships to needy students.	To ensure smooth, uninterrupted learning of students under the bursary and scholarship program, it is expected that bursary and scholarship funds should be disbursed on or before school opening dates.	Best Practice

Source: OAG compilation

Standards Used to Conduct the Audit

2.5 The audit was conducted in accordance with the Performance Audit Standard, ISSAI 3000, issued by the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions. The Standard requires that the audit is planned and performed to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence. The Standard also requires that the audit should provide a reasonable basis for the findings, conclusions, and recommendations, based on the audit objectives.

Methods Used to Gather Audit Evidence

Document Review

2.6 The key documents reviewed are as indicated in **Table 2.** These documents provided insights into the management of bursaries and scholarships in the County and facilitated the corroboration of data necessary to achieve the audit objective.

Table 2: List of Documents Reviewed

Document	Purpose of Review
Approved County Budgets	• To obtain evidence on annual strategies, deliverables, and budget allocations on bursaries and scholarships.
County Financial Reports, Expenditure Schedules and Bank Statements, Uncollected, Stale and Unpresented Cheques	• To ascertain the extent of resource allocation and expenditure towards bursaries and scholarships; and • To ascertain the efficiency in the mode of bursaries and scholarships disbursement.
Disbursement Reports and Schedules	• To gather evidence on disbursement amounts and timelines; • To obtain evidence on receipt of funds by institutions; • To ascertain the extent of acknowledgement of bursaries and scholarships; and • To ascertain the extent of monitoring and coordination of bursaries and scholarships by the County government.
Beneficiary Fee Structure and Statements	
Acknowledgement Reports by schools	
Monitoring Reports	
Correspondences between Bursary and Scholarship Providers	
Application Forms and Support Documents	• To obtain evidence on the number of applicants and beneficiaries; • To obtain evidence on the adequacy of the awarded bursary and identification; and • To obtain evidence on the criteria and process for awarding bursaries and scholarships.
Beneficiary Lists	
Vetting Committee Minutes	
Complaints/ Grievance Registers and Grievance Resolution Reports	• To obtain evidence on the existence and effectiveness of redress mechanisms for aggrieved applicants.

Source: OAG compilation

Interviews

2.7 Interviews were held with various key personnel in the County Government of Kirinyaga, heads of learning institutions, and other key role players in order to gather evidence on access to bursaries and scholarships, as detailed in **Table 3.**

Table 3: List of Persons Interviewed

Interviewee	Purpose of the Interview
County Executive Committee Member, Education and Chief Officer	• To obtain evidence on the bursary application process, eligibility criteria, number of applicants and challenges in disbursement.
Executive Bursary and Scholarship Co-ordination Committee	• To obtain evidence on the legal framework and structure, budgeting and expenditure, application and vetting process, monitoring and evaluation, and programme successes and challenges.
Ward Bursary Committees	• To obtain evidence on composition and tenure, application and eligibility criteria, number of applicants, monitoring and evaluation, successes, challenges, and recommendations.
National Governments Administrative Officers	• To obtain evidence on the role of chiefs and assistant chief in identification of needy learners, eligibility criteria, challenges faced.
Principals and Heads of Finance (Sampled Institutions)	• To gather evidence on the role of learning institutions in bursary administration, accountability for received funds, sufficiency of allocations and disbursement challenges.
Controller of Budget	• To gather evidence on timeliness of funds disbursement.

Source: OAG compilation

Sampling and Sample Size

2.8 Five (5), out of twenty (20) Ward Bursary Committees in the County were sampled for the audit. These include the Baragwi, Kirinyaga Central, Kariti, Mutithi, and Tebere Ward Education Bursary Committees. The basis for their selection was Sub-County representation and absorption of funds into bursaries and scholarships. In addition, one hundred and ninety-seven (197) bursary and scholarship application forms were randomly sampled for review.

2.9 Further, eleven (11) learning institutions were sampled based on the number of beneficiaries. These included Kabare Girls, Kamuiru Boys, Rwambiti Secondary School, Kiamwathi Mixed Secondary School, Baricho Boys, Kianjega Mixed Day School, Karima Secondary School, Kerugoya Boys, Ngaru Girls, Ngiriambu Girls, and Kianyaga High.

CHAPTER 3: DESCRIPTION OF THE AUDIT AREA

Legal and Institutional Framework for Provision of Bursaries and Scholarships

3.1 The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 provides the framework for the State to ensure that education is accessible to all citizens. Articles 43(1)(f) and 53(1)(b) recognize that every child in Kenya, regardless of their background, has the right to access quality education and that they should attend school until they complete their basic education. Schedule 4 Part 2(9) of the Constitution specifically lists village polytechnics as one of the functions that have been devolved to county governments.

3.2 The Basic Education Act, Cap.211, in its guiding principles under Section 4(a) and (b), establishes that every child has the right to free and compulsory basic education. The Act also provides that youth have equitable access to basic education and equal access to educational institutions.

3.3 Section 116 of the Public Finance Management Act, Cap.412A, gives power to counties to establish other public funds. The Section also provides that allocations to the Fund should be within the established legal structures and also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of different government entities involved in the management of bursary funds. This aims at ensuring that the County Government adheres to financial regulations and accountability principles in the management of the Fund.

3.4 The Public Finance Management (Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund) Regulation, 2023, Section 3(1), established the Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund. Section 3(a) stipulates that bursaries and scholarships are to be provided to students enrolled in secondary schools, colleges, universities, and other institutions that offer tertiary education. Section 4(1)(a) states that eighty-eight percent (88%) of the allocated amount shall be disbursed by the County Executive Education Bursary Committee.

Bursary Committees and their Respective Roles

3.5 The roles of the County Executive Education Bursary Committee and Ward Education Bursary Committees for the County Government of Kirinyaga are indicated in **Table 4.**

Table 4: Bursary Committees and their Respective Roles

Committee	Roles of the Committee
County Executive Education Bursary Committee	• The Committee offers strategic guidance; • Provides application guidelines; and • Ensures objectives of the Bursary Fund are met.
Ward Bursary Committees	• Create awareness among the residents about the Fund; • Receive, review, and approve applications for bursary; • Determine the amount of bursary to be awarded to each approved application; • Monitor and evaluate the progress and performance of beneficiaries; • Maintain and operate Ward education bursary accounts; • Identify beneficiaries and issues with cheques; • Carry out such other roles necessary for the implementation of the bursary and scholarships, and • Perform such other functions as may, from time to time, as assigned by the County Executive Committee Member.

Source: Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund Regulations, 2023

Other Key Actors in the Provision of Bursaries and Scholarships

3.6 The other key actors involved in provision of bursaries and scholarships are as summarised in **Table 5.**

Table 5: Key Actors in the Provision of Bursaries and Scholarships

Institution	Role
National Governments Administrative Officers	The Officers are responsible for the coordination of National Government functions in their respective jurisdictions. Therefore, the chiefs and assistant chiefs help in identification of potential beneficiaries by vetting the applicants and recommending the applications for onward processing by the County Bursary Committee/Board.
Other Bursary Providers (Ministry of Education, National Government Affirmative Action Fund, National Government-Constituency Development Fund, and Presidential Secondary Schools Bursary)	Providing bursaries and scholarships to needy learners. The Kirinyaga County is therefore, expected to liase with these entities to avoid duplications in allocation of bursaries and scholarships to learners within the County.
The National Treasury and Economic Planning	Disbursement of bursary and scholarship funds to the County Government.

Source: OAG review of legal frameworks on key actors

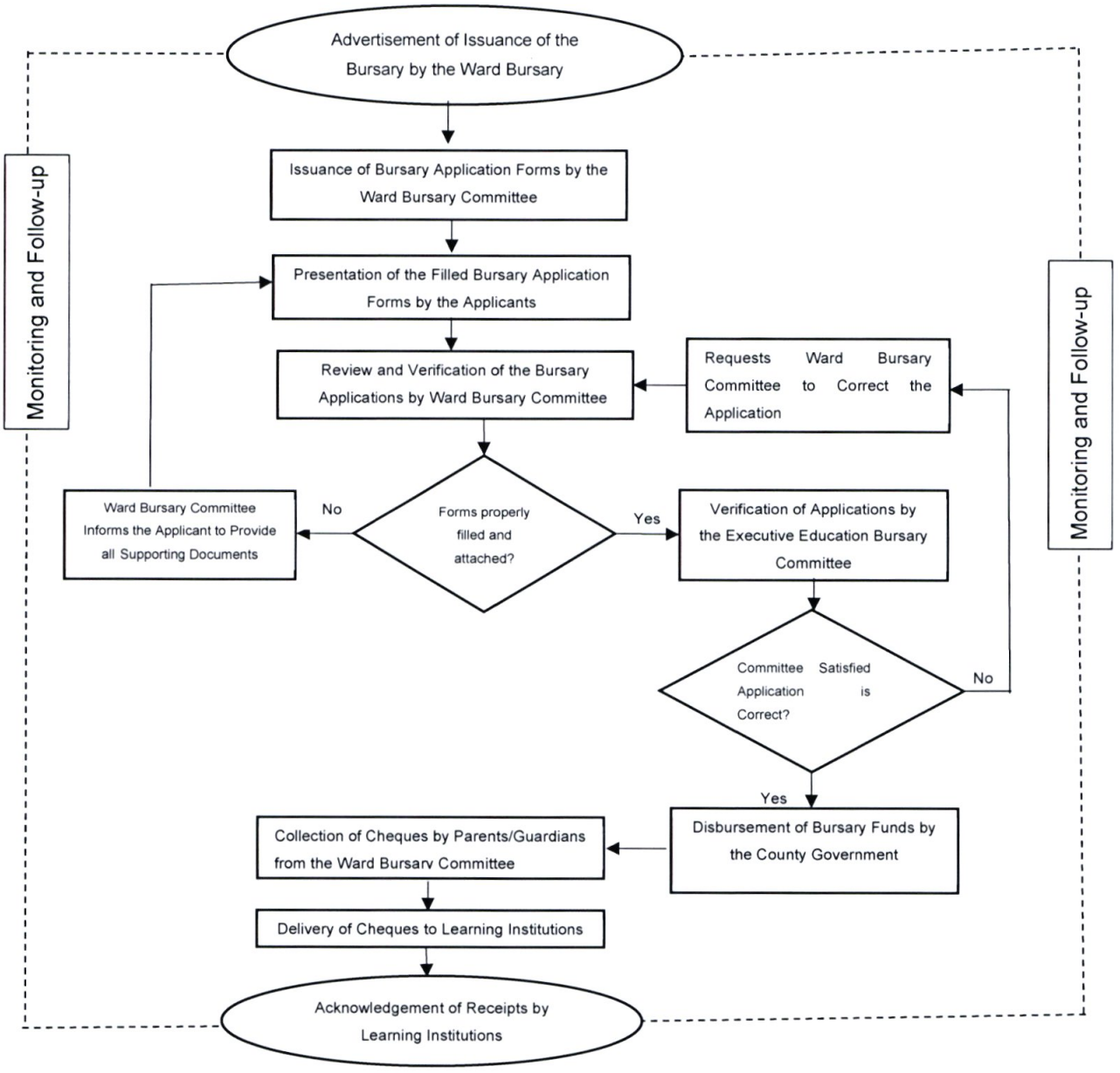
Process Description for Issuance of Bursaries

3.7 The Executive Education Bursary Committee announces bursary availability through mainstream and social media, religious and public forums. Applicants are required to obtain forms from County offices, fill them out, and submit them along with supporting documents to their respective Ward Education Bursary Committees.

3.8 The Ward Bursary Committees conduct an initial review and forward successful applications to the Executive Education Bursary Committee for final verification and approval. Finally, the Executive Committee prepares a disbursement schedule and issue beneficiary cheques to respective Ward Committees. The cheques are then collected by parents or guardians for presentation to learning institutions.

3.9 The Executive Education Bursary Committee and Ward Education Bursary Committees monitor the progress of supported learners and ensure acknowledgment of disbursed funds by learning institutions. **Figure 1** depicts the process involved in the provision of bursaries by the County Government of Kirinyaga.

Figure 1: Process Description for Issuance of Bursaries



Source: The Public Finance Management (The Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund) Regulation, 2023

Executive Scholarship Application Process

3.10 The Executive Education Bursary Committee does not publicly advertise the issuance of County Executive Scholarships. Instead, applicants either visit the County Offices on their own initiative or are recommended by their respective Ward Education Bursary Committees or other stakeholders, after which they fill out an application form. An ad hoc committee is then convened to vet these applications,

a process that should involve conducting home visits and contacting schools to verify applicants' level of need.

3.11 Using the information provided in the application forms, alongside other considerations such as societal background, vulnerability, and poverty indices, the Executive Education Bursary Committee is supposed to assign scores to determine whether to clear outstanding school fee balances or to sponsor learners until they complete their education. Once these decisions are made, and subject to the availability of funds, cheques are issued and delivered to the respective schools.

Funding for County Bursaries and Scholarships

3.12 Bursary and scholarship activities at the County Government of Kirinyaga are mainly funded by the Government through the Exchequer. Review of the financial records indicated allocation to bursaries and scholarships, under education programmes and activities, received amounts ranging from 25% to 48% of the total education budget, as indicated in **Table 6.**

Table 6: Allocation of Education Budget

Category	2022/2023		2023/2024		2024/2025	
	Amount (Kshs.)	%	Amount (Kshs.)	%	Amount (Kshs.)	%
Pre-Primary Education and Child-Day-Care Services	7,440,000	2.0%	7,440,000	2.1%	6,680,000	1.7%
County-Owned TVET & Home Craft Centre Development	678,500	0.2%	678,500	0.2%	2,038,500	0.5%
State Education Function Support Program (Scholarships and other Educational Benefits)	95,000,000	25.3%	156,600,000	44.7%	188,370,000	48.1%
General Administration	271,914,905	72.5%	185,914,905	53.0%	194,756,405	49.7%
Total	**375,033,405**		**350,633,405**		**391,844,905**	

Source: OAG Analysis of the County's Budget

CHAPTER 4: AUDIT FINDINGS

4.1 The Kirinyaga County Executive and the Ward Education Bursary Committees have made progress in the provision of bursaries and scholarships. Review of the County bursary disbursements for the 2021/2022 to 2024/2025 financial years established that, as of July 2025, the County had supported approximately 134,480 beneficiaries across the twenty (20) Wards. Despite these successes, there were weaknesses that hindered the full realization of the intended objectives, as discussed below: -

I. Inadequate Identification of Needy Learners

4.2 The Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund Regulations, 2023 require applicants to attach all necessary documentation or provide it upon demand. Applications lacking relevant documents are to be rejected. The documentation includes copies of parents' or guardians' identification cards, admission letters for Form One and first-year tertiary students, official fee statements, and the latest examination report forms for continuing students. Where applicable, applicants must also provide supporting documents such as a death certificate, a burial permit, a Persons with Disability card, or a letter explaining disability.

4.3 Review of one hundred and ninety-seven (197) sampled bursary and scholarship application forms revealed that one hundred and two (102), representing 52%, had the required documents, while ninety-five (95), representing 48%, were not fully supported. In addition, analysis of the ninety-five (95) unsupported application forms indicated that most lacked both the school fees statement and the result slips or report forms as indicated in **Table 7.**

Table 7: Missing Documents in the Applications

Required Documents	Number of Forms Missing the Document out of the 95	Percentage
1. School fee statement	65	68%
2. Result slip/report form	45	47%
3. Evidence of guardianship	8	8%
4. Person with disability card	7	7%
5. Admission letter	2	2%
6. Fee structure	2	2%
7. Parent or guardian National Identification Card	2	2%

Source: OAG analysis of sampled application forms

4.4 Further, analysis of the one hundred and ninety-seven (197) sampled bursary and scholarship application forms revealed that one hundred and six (106) forms, representing 54% were duly filled out, while ninety-one (91) forms, representing 46%, were not properly filled out. The ninety-one (91) application forms that were not properly filled lacked various information, as indicated in **Table 8.**

Table 8: Missing Information in Application Forms

Required Information	Forms Missing Information out of the 91	Percentage
1. Outstanding fee balance	56	62%
2. Academic performance	16	18%
3. Parent/Guardian declaration	8	9%
4. Ward Bursary Committee endorsement	6	7%
5. Disability Status	6	7%
6. Student admission number	4	4%
7. Applicant family information	3	3%
8. Applicant declaration	3	3%

Source: OAG analysis of sampled application forms

4.5 Awarding of bursaries to applicants with incomplete and unsupported application forms was attributed to weak oversight of Ward Education Bursary Committees activities of receipt, review, and approvals by the County Executive Education Bursary Committee. In addition, there were no guidelines for the selection of scholarship beneficiaries as County Bursary Regulations did not provide the requirements for scholarship applicants. As a result, the Committees could not ensure objective review and approval of scholarship applications.

II. Inadequate Allocation and Award of Bursaries

4.6 Among the key documents the applicants are required to submit is the school fee structure and fee statement, which provides evidence of the applicant's current fee balance and therefore, assists in determining the extent of financial need. The Ministry of Education has set a standard fee of Kshs.53,554 for National Schools and Kshs.40,535 for Extra-County and County Schools, respectively. Further, Regulation 12(2) of the Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund Regulations, 2023 requires the Ward Bursary Committees to provide scores for each requirement and award bursaries to applicants with the highest scores.

4.7 Analysis of the bursary allocation schedules of all the twenty (20) Wards for the financial years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 revealed that the average allocation was uniform, with each bursary applicant receiving between Kshs.1,700 and Kshs 3,500 on average, as shown in **Table 9** below. There was no evidence that the Ward Bursary Committees considered the category of the learning institutions, as well as the social and financial vulnerability status of the applicants.

Table 9: Average Ward Bursary Allocations

Ward	Average Beneficiary Allocation Per Ward	Number of Beneficiaries	
		2022/2023	2023/2024
1. Kiine	3,500	1,256	3,012
2. Kangai	3,100	1,637	1,895
3. Inoi	3,100	535	2,930
4. Tebere	3,000	1,433	2,446
5. Baragwi	3,000	3,074	2,718
6. Wamumu	3,000	1,687	2,114
7. Kanyekiini	2,900	142	1,982
8. Gathigiriri	2,800	2,338	2,130
9. Thiba	2,700	1,797	2,302
10. Mutira	2,700	1,837	2,398
11. Mutithi	2,600	1,630	2,033
12. Ngariama	2,500	1,907	2,274
13. Kerugoya	2,500	2,851	2,831
14. Karumandi	2,400	1,821	2,709
15. Murinduko	2,300	2,085	2,267
16. Njukiini	2,300	2,474	2,385
17. Kariti	2,300	2,411	3,066
18. Nyangati	2,200	1,957	2,658
19. Kabare	1,700	2,851	3,554
20. Mukure	1,700	2,322	2,639

Source: OAG analysis of the Bursary allocation schedules

4.8 In addition, analysis of beneficiary lists in three (3) sampled day schools revealed allocations to learners ranged between Kshs.2,254 and Kshs.3,012 per applicant in Financial Years 2021/2022 and 2023/2024, representing approximately 11% of the approved annual fee for day secondary schools of Kshs.22,244. Analysis of allocations to beneficiaries in six (6) sampled County schools in the Financial Year 2024/2025 indicated awards ranging from Kshs.2,652 to Kshs.3,921, and thus covering about 8% of the annual approved school fees of Kshs.40,535 as indicated in **Table 10.**

Table 10: Award of Bursary in Day and County Secondary Schools

Financial Year	Category of Secondary School	Name of School	Average Student Allocation in Kshs.	Approximate Number of Beneficiaries
2023/2024	Day	Kianjege Mixed Day School	2,254	286
2023/2024	Day	Karima Secondary School	2,254	284
2021/2022	Day	Kiamwathi Secondary School	3,012	373
2024/2025	County	Saint Catherine of Alexandria Ngaru Girls	2,680	25
2024/2025	County	Ngiriambu Girls High School	3,921	29
2024/2025	County	Kamuiru Boys High School	3,337	27
2024/2025	County	Kerugoya Boys High School	2,990	59
2024/2025	County	Kianyaga Boys High School	2,652	54
2024/2025	County	Kabare Girls High School	3,134	4

Source: OAG analysis of disbursement schedules and the Standard Fees Structure

4.9 The Ward Bursary Committees did not vet or assess the applicant's levels of financial and social vulnerability. The inadequate allocation and award of bursaries was attributed to the lack of a standard tool by the Ward Bursary Committees for scoring applicants based on their assessed social and vulnerability status. In addition, the Regulations did not specify the minimum and maximum allocations, leaving the award amounts to the subjective discretion of the Committees. Finally, due to political interference, the fund was perceived as a public entitlement, leading to its distribution to all applicants uniformly, regardless of their financial need or vulnerability.

4.10 As a result, the funds were allocated thinly across a large number of applicants, thereby reducing the impact of the bursaries on the needy and vulnerable learners. The objective of the County Bursary Programme was therefore undermined as needy and vulnerable learners with large fee arrears faced the risk of interruption in learning.

III. Multiple Allocation of Bursaries to Beneficiaries

4.11 Section 13 (3) of the Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund Regulations, 2023 requires the committees to liaise with other relevant public or private entities during the award of bursaries to ensure fairness and equity. Good practice also requires that bursaries be allocated equitably, reaching a wider range of deserving

individuals and explicitly preventing multiple awards to the same applicant in order to maximize their impact and ensure fairness.

4.12 Review of beneficiary lists for the Financial Years 2022/2023, 2023/2024, and 2024/2025 revealed that a total of one hundred and one (101) beneficiaries received bursaries twice within the same year. Details of these students are highlighted in **Appendices 1,2, and 3.**

4.13 Further, review of student fee statements for the 2024 and 2025 academic years in four (4) out of the eleven (11) sampled schools revealed that twenty-four (24) students received bursaries from more than one public bursary provider, as detailed in **Appendix 4.** Out of the twenty-four (24), eleven (11) beneficiaries had overpayments totaling Kshs.192,746, as illustrated in **Table 11.**

Table 11: Students Awarded Multiple Bursaries

Public Institution	Number of Students	Number of Bursaries	Total Overpayment
Kamuiru Boys High School	1	3	9,134
Kianyaga High School	1	3	15,465
Ngiriambu Girls High School	1	4	4,400
Kamuiru Boys High School	3	4	41,529
Kianyaga High School	1	4	37,018
Kamuiru Boys High School	1	5	9,000
Kamuiru Boys High School	1	7	20,904
Kamuiru Boys High School	1	14	27,894
Kamuiru Boys High School	1	14	27,402
Total	**11**		**192,746**

Source: OAG analysis of fee statements for sampled secondary schools

4.14 Based on the annual tuition fees approved by the State Department for Basic Education, the overpayments could have fully paid school fees for three (3) students in National schools or four (4) students in County schools, as shown in **Table 12**.

Table 12: Number of Students Who Would Have Benefitted from the Overpayments

Category of School	Approved Standard Fees	Total Overpayment from Bursary and Scholarship Beneficiaries	Number of Students Who Would Have Benefited from the Overpayment
National	53,554	192,746	3
County	40,535	192,746	4

Source: OAG analysis, State Department for Basic Education approved fee structure, and fee statements

4.15 Multiple allocations of bursaries and scholarships were attributed to lack of a coordination framework among the Wards within the County and various public bursary and scholarship providers. In addition, the County Executive Education Bursary Committee had not established an information system to integrate beneficiary data across the various Wards. Further, spreading of funds too thinly resulted in significantly low awards, prompting learners to apply to multiple providers in the hope of securing enough funds to cover their fees. The audit also linked double allocations to single beneficiaries within Wards to a lack of independence in the vetting process, where informal social networks exerted undue influence over the selection.

IV. Inefficient Bursary Data Management System

4.16 Section 149(2) of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 requires that all financial and accounting records that the entity keeps in any form, including electronic, be adequately protected and backed up. Good practice requires that the County Government develops and operates a records management system that not only provides for safe custody but also ensures efficient retrieval of information.

4.17 Review of records and interviews with members of the County Executive Education and Ward Bursary committees established that the processing of bursaries and scholarships was manual. There was lack of secure storage space in the five (5) sampled Wards for safeguarding documents such as application forms, vetting minutes, and dispatch registers. The records were stored in unsecured spaces within the offices of the Members of the County Assembly.

4.18 The inefficient bursary and scholarship data management system was attributed to the failure of the County Executive Education Bursary Committee to prioritize the adoption of a digital management information system for capturing, storing, and managing data electronically. Inefficient data management compromised data accuracy, transparency, and accountability, as well as timeliness in the bursary awards, resulting in the exclusion of deserving applicants and multiple allocations. It also made information retrieval challenging and created a risk of permanent information loss.

V. Lack of Data on Access to Bursaries and Scholarships by Persons with Disabilities

4.19 Regulation 10(c) of the Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund Regulations, 2023, lists disability as one of the criteria to be considered in bursary allocation. Also, Regulation 2 requires applicants to provide a Persons with Disabilities card, or a letter explaining the disability, where applicable.

4.20 Interviews with the County Executive and Ward Education Bursary Committees revealed the absence of a structured mechanism to ensure that bursary application forms reached Persons with Disabilities. Instead, the dissemination of application forms largely depended on the initiative and goodwill of village representatives, which limited equitable access to bursary opportunities for learners with disabilities.

4.21 Review of the beneficiary records further indicated low representation of learners with disabilities in the bursary programme. In the Financial Year 2022/2023, out of the total 37,641 beneficiaries, only two hundred and seventy-seven (277) representing 0.74% were learners with disabilities . In addition, the approved beneficiary lists of 50,618 and 3,797 for the financial years 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 respectively did not capture details of learners with disabilities, thereby limiting the County's ability to track and assess inclusivity in bursary allocation.

4.22 Due to the absence of adequate data on the provision of bursaries and scholarships to learners with disabilities, the County could not establish the extent of the programme's contribution towards ensuring inclusion of learners with special needs. This also limited the ability to identify their challenges, and design and implement appropriate remedial measures.

VI. High Administrative Expenses

4.23 Regulation 197(1) (d) of the Public Finance Management (County Governments) Regulations, 2015, stipulates that administration costs of a Fund shall be a maximum of 3% of the approved budget. Analysis of financial records for the Financial Years 2021/2022 to 2023/2024 established that the administrative expenses exceeded the statutory limit of 3%, as detailed in **Table 13.**

Table 13: Percentage of County Government of Kirinyaga Administrative Expenditure

Financial Year	Approved Budget Allocation (Kshs.)	3% Threshold	Administrative Expenditure (Kshs.)	Amount by which the 3% Threshold was Exceeded	% Administrative Cost Over the Approved Budget
2021/2022	105,000,000	3,150,000	3,414,153	264,513	3.25%
2022/2023	108,200,000	3,246,000	3,909,833	663,833	3.61%
2023/2024	156,600,000	4,698,000	4,870,325	172,325	3.11%
				1,100,671	

Source: OAG analysis of approved budget and audited financial statements

4.24 The high administrative costs were be attributed to conflicting provision in the County Bursary Regulations, which allow for administrative expenditure of up to 5% of the total bursary allocation. Based on the annual tuition fees approved by the State Department for Basic Education, the excess expenditure of Kshs.1,100,671 could have paid full-year school fees for twenty (20) students in National schools or twenty-seven (27) students in County schools, as shown in **Table 14.**

Table 14: Number of Students Who Would Have Benefitted from the Extra Administrative Expenses

Category of School	Approved Standard Fees	Total Extra Administrative Expenses from 2021/2022 to 2024/2025	Number of Students Who Would Have Benefitted from the Extra Administrative Funds
National Schools	53,554	1,100,671	20
County	40,535	1,100,671	27

Source: OAG analysis of the extra administrative expenses based on the approved fee structure

VII. Lack of a Structured Grievance Redress Mechanism

4.25 Public Sector Complaints Handling Guide, 2016 states that a complaint handling mechanism should be established in every public institution to ensure that complaints are given the necessary attention, to improve the delivery of services. Even where complaints are integrated into the service delivery process, there should be a designated section, office, or unit that bears the primary responsibility for the handling of complaints in the institution. It also underscores the need for all public institutions to establish delineated complaint-handling mechanisms that are part and parcel of service provision to the public.

4.26 Interviews with the Ward Education Bursary Committees and the County Executive Education Bursary Committee revealed that only one (1) out of the five (5) sampled

Ward Bursary Committees maintained complaints register, which only recorded the name of the parent or applicant and their telephone number. Key information, such as the form of complaint, date received, action taken, status of resolution, and officer responsible, was not captured.

4.27 Lack of a structured grievance redress mechanism was attributed to the absence of formal policy or operational guidelines by the Executive Committee defining the procedures for handling and documenting complaints. As a result, transparency and accountability were undermined in the administration of bursary and scholarship funds, as there was no verifiable record of how complaints were handled and resolved.

VIII. Inefficient Mode of Bursary and Scholarship Disbursement

4.28 Best practice requires that bursary payments be remitted directly to the respective educational institutions through efficient means. The audit established that Bursary funds were disbursed through cheques, while scholarships were disbursed through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to the learning institutions. Review of the cash books, bank statements, and bank reconciliation statements of the County Executive Bursary and Scholarship Fund and the five (5) sampled Wards for the Financial Years 2020/2021 to 2024/2025 revealed that there were cancelled cheques, stale cheques and bounced cheques totalling Kshs.6,986,460, Kshs.2,604,059 and Kshs. 546,300, respectively, as indicated in **Table 15.**

Table 15: Summary of Cancelled and Stale Bursary Cheques During the Financial Years 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

Ward	Cancelled Cheques	Stale Cheques	Bounced Cheques	Bank Charges	Total
Kabare Ward	1,988,500	645,000	119,800	-	2,753,300
Baragwi Ward	1,646,500	548,000	-	-	2,194,500
Mutithi Ward	1,251,700	718,150	43,200	-	2,013,050
Tebere Ward	1,220,900	213,500	383,300	63,720	1,498,120
Kerugoya Ward	571,500	306,070	-	-	877,570
County Executive Scholarship	307,360	173,339	-	-	480,699
Total	**6,986,460**	**2,604,059**	**546,300**	**63,720**	**9,817,239**

Source: OAG Analysis of County Executive Bursary & Scholarship and Wards Cash Books

4.29 The inefficiencies in funds disbursement were attributed to insufficient funds in the bank account, as well as errors during the preparation of cheques, such as incorrect

beneficiary details and incorrect school account numbers. In addition, the issuance of single cheques to multiple payees led to frequent cancellations. Further, weak coordination between the Department of Education, schools, and parents caused delays in collection, resulting in stale cheques.

4.30 This represented a collective opportunity cost of Kshs. 9,817,239 that would have been channelled to support another one hundred and eighty-three (183) needy students in National schools or two hundred and forty-two (242) needy students in County schools, as shown in **Table 16.**

Table 16: Number of Students Affected from Cancelled and Stale Cheque Amounts

Category of School	Total Amount from Cancelled and Stale Cheques	Approved Standard Fees	Number of Students Who Would Have Benefited from the Overpayment
National	9,817,239	53,554	183
County	9,817,239	40,535	242

Source: OAG analysis of the State Department for Basic Education approved fee structure versus the cancelled and stale cheques

IX. Inadequate Acknowledgement of Bursary and Scholarship Payments

4.31 Section 8 of the Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund Regulations, 2023, provides that the guiding principles in the administration of the bursary Fund are accountability, transparency, and efficiency in funds disbursement. To uphold these principles, the Committees should obtain confirmation of receipt of school fees and the subsequent crediting of beneficiaries' school accounts to ensure proper accountability of funds.

4.32 Review of acknowledgement letters and school fee receipts indicated that during the Financial Year 2022/2023, Kshs.5,558,128 representing 31% of the funds disbursed were acknowledged, while for the Financial Year 2023/2024, only Kshs.14,297,677 representing 34% were acknowledged, as shown in **Table 17.**

Table 17: Amount of Bursary and Scholarship Funds Acknowledged

County Executive/Wards	Category of Institution	FY 2022-2023		FY 2023-2024	
		Amount Disbursed	Amount Acknowledged	Amount Disbursed	Amount Acknowledged
Baragwi	Secondary Schools	3,038,700	2,200	7,508,300	1,388,000
	Tertiary	151,500	0	1,851,500	47,500
	Universities	101,000	2,500	695,200	28,000
County Executive	Secondary Schools	1,353,661	1,106,728	6,145,338	5,834,771
	Tertiary	220,000	220,000	1,568,406	263,006
	Universities	213,500	97,300	1,881,840	167,900
Kabare	Secondary Schools	2,566,000	239,200	3,769,050	24,000
	Tertiary	285,500	214,500	1,441,000	0
	Universities	304,000	214,500	955,500	0
Kariti	Secondary Schools	2,465,500	1,240,200	5,926,400	3,847,000
	Tertiary	729,000	112,500	1,216,000	6,500
	Universities	709,000	204,000	1,032,000	4,000
Tebere	Secondary Schools	3,670,000	1,606,000	5,358,040	1,949,500
	Tertiary	797,000	108,500	1,120,000	272,500
	Universities	1,184,000	190,000	1,210,000	465,000
Total Amount of Bursaries and Scholarships Disbursed		**17,788,361**	**5,558,128**	**41,678,574**	**14,297,677**
Percentage of Bursaries and Scholarships Acknowledged			**31%**		**34%**
Percentage of bursaries and scholarships not acknowledged			**69%**		**66%**

Source: *OAG Analysis of Acknowledgment Letters and Receipts*

4.33 Inadequate acknowledgement was attributed to inadequate monitoring and a failure by the County Executive Education Bursary Committee to follow up with learning institutions. The accountability over bursary and scholarship disbursements was undermined, increasing the risk of diversion and misappropriation of funds. Consequently, intended learners may fail to benefit from the funds, even after the institution has received payment, as their individual fee accounts may not be credited in a timely manner.

X. Ineffective Monitoring of the Bursary and Scholarship Programme

4.34 Section 6 of the Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund Subsidiary Legislation, 2023, requires the Committees to monitor and evaluate the progress of students supported through the Fund. During the monitoring exercise, the Committees are expected to assess key indicators such as enrollment, retention, transition, completion rates, and academic performance.

4.35 Interviews with the County Executive Education Bursary Committee and the five (5) sampled Ward Education Bursary Committees indicated that various monitoring activities were conducted as shown in **Table 18.** However, the Committees did not provide any documentary evidence or feedback reports to confirm the status of the key indicators assessed.

Table 18: Monitoring and Follow-up Activities Conducted by the Committees

Committee	Monitoring and Follow-up Activities Undertaken
County Executive Committee	Conducted annual evaluation of sponsored students' academic performance.
Baragwi, Kariti, Tebere and Mutithi Ward Education Bursary Committees	Confirmed receipt of funds by institutions and verified beneficiaries remained in school.
Kirinyaga Central	Verified receipt of funds by institutions, followed up on uncredited funds, and collected acknowledgment receipts from learning institutions.

Source: OAG analysis of Committees' interview minutes

4.36 The inadequate monitoring was attributed to lack of a standardized framework for monitoring, follow-up, and reporting on the implementation of the Programme at both the Executive and Ward Levels. Inadequate monitoring and evaluation hindered the timely identification of gaps for prompt implementation of corrective measures consequently limiting the chances of enhancing the effectiveness of the programme.

XI. Doubt in Continued Provision of Bursaries and Scholarships to Learners in National Government Institutions

4.37 The Fourth Schedule of the Constitution of Kenya on distribution of functions between the National Government and the County Governments gives the counties

the powers and functions for pre-primary education, village polytechnics, homecraft centres and childcare facilities. Further, Section 26 of the Intergovernmental Relations Act, 2012 requires that transfers or delegation of powers, functions, or competencies between National and County Governments to be by a written agreement.

4.38 The audit revealed that the County Government of Kirinyaga was disbursing bursaries and scholarships to secondary schools, universities and colleges, which was outside their mandate. Analysis of list of beneficiaries revealed that during the 2021/2022 to 2024/2025 Financial Years, secondary schools received the highest allocation, averaging 59% of the total disbursed funds. Vocational Training Centres and other middle level colleges received an average of 14% over the same period. Details of the amounts disbursed are provided in **Table 19.**

Table 19: Disbursement of Funds to the Various Beneficiary Institutions During the Financial Years 2021/2022 to 2024/2025

Financial Year	Category of Institution	Amount	Number of Students	Percentage Disbursement Per Institution (%)
2021/2022	Secondary Schools	83,647,811	37,002	68%
	Universities	21,749,300	5,362	18%
	Middle-level colleges and Vocational Training Centres	16,825,596	4,765	14%
Total		**122,222,707**	**47,129**	
2022/2023	Secondary Schools	61,228,131	27,573	71%
	Universities	11,659,135	3,017	14%
	Middle-level colleges and Vocational Training Centres	13,052,900	4,209	15%
Total		**85,940,166**	**34,799**	
2023/2024	Secondary Schools	98,576,733	39,048	67%
	Universities	20,355,183	5,085	14%
	Middle-level colleges and Vocational Training Centres	27,353,006	7,431	19%
Total		**146,284,922**	**51,564**	
2024/2025	Secondary Schools	2,238,199	483	30%
	Universities	948,693	118	13%
	Middle-level colleges and Vocational Training Centres	4,351,209	387	58%
Total		**7,538,101**	**988**	

Source: OAG analysis of bursary disbursements

4.39 The continued provision of bursaries and scholarships to learners in institutions under the National Government is threatened by lack of an intergovernmental partnership agreement that meets the prescribed legal and procedural requirements. Consequently, the sustainability of the bursary programme is doubtful. In addition, the County has not prioritised the needs of learners in institutions that fall under the devolved functions such as pre-primary education centres, village polytechnics, homecraft centres, and childcare facilities.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 The County Government of Kirinyaga has not ensured adequate provision of bursaries and scholarships to needy learners. Applicants were awarded similar amounts regardless of their individual financial need or vulnerability. Weak data management and expenditure control systems, inadequate collaboration and co-ordination with other bursary providers, and unstructured grievance handling mechanisms, limited evidence-based decision-making, equity, transparency, and accountability in the bursary and scholarship administration processes.

5.2 The County Government of Kirinyaga has not ensured timely disbursement of bursary and scholarship funds as there were inefficiencies in the disbursement processes and weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation, which did not ensure timely submission of acknowledgements of receipt of funds by the learning institutions. In addition, delay in execution of an Intergovernmental Partnership Agreement between the County Government and the National Government undermined the sustainability of the bursary and scholarship programme.

CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To ensure adequate allocation of bursaries and scholarships, the Kirinyaga County Executive Education Bursary Committee should:

a) Strengthen its oversight of Ward-level verification of application forms, and vetting of applicants, and ensure regular reporting by the Ward Committees;

b) In collaboration with the Ward Bursary Committees, develop a formal Needs Assessment Tool that assigns points based on specific, verifiable criteria such as family status, household income, and special circumstances; and

c) Set bursary and scholarship award limits or a percentage of the fee balance to eliminate inconsistencies in decision-making across the Wards, minimize instances of spreading the funds thinly and ensure alignment with the fee structures approved by the State Department for Basic Education.

6.2 To prevent multiple allocation of bursaries and scholarships to single beneficiaries, the Kirinyaga County Executive Education Bursary Committee should:

a) Develop and implement a comprehensive system capable of integrating all beneficiary data through the use of a common unique identifier to enhance transparency and coordination; and

b) In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, and Parliament, develop and implement a multi-agency co-ordination framework to enhance information sharing and joint planning with other public bursary and scholarship providers, and promote collaboration between Ward Bursary Committees, through information and data sharing during administration of the bursaries and scholarships Fund.

6.3 To address inefficiencies in data management, the Kirinyaga County Executive Education Bursary Committee should explore the adoption of Information and Communication Technology by investing in appropriate systems to automate the bursary and scholarship processes. The Committee should also develop specific guidelines for the allocation of bursary and scholarship funds to learners with special needs to ensure inclusivity.

6.4 To ensure a structured grievance redress, the County Executive Education Bursary Committee should develop and implement a formal Grievance Redress Mechanism to guide the receipt, handling, documentation, and resolution of complaints. In addition, the Committee should conduct public awareness outreach so that beneficiaries and applicants are informed of available grievance redress channels.

6.5 To ensure efficiency in disbursement of funds to the learning institutions and adequate monitoring and acknowledgement of disbursements, the Executive Bursary Committee should explore adoption of technology to integrate electronic transfer of beneficiary funds to learning institutions. The Committee should also consider leveraging existing platforms like the Kenya Education Management Information System and the Integrated Financial Management Information System.

6.6 To legally undertake the bursary and scholarship programme to learners in institutions under the National Government, the Board should design and complete a formal intergovernmental transfer process and secure approval through gazettement by both the National Assembly and the County Assembly.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Beneficiaries who Received Bursaries Twice During the Financial Year 2022/2023

Ward	Registration Number /Admission Number	Institution	Total Bursary Allocation
Njukiini	xx477	Jeremiah Nyaga Technical Training Institute	4,500
Njukiini	xx541	Kerugoya Girls	4,000
Thiba	2x4	Mukou Mixed Secondary	1,000
Thiba	D/xxx/x2007/376	K.M.T.C Nyeri	24,500
Nyangati	1xx4	Nyangati Secondary	2,000
Baragwi	C/xxx/2xx14/xx2	K.M.T.C	6,500
Njukiini	881	Kianyambo Secondary	2,200
Wamumu	Exx3/Sx/Mx/1xx40/xx22	Maasia Mara University	9,000
Wamumu	4x5	Rurii Secondary	10,000
Njukiini	27xx	Rukenya Secondary	2,200
Thiba	1x0	Mbui -Njeru Mixed Secondary	1,000
Nyangati	1xx65	Karoti Girls	5,000
Nyangati	3xx9	Rwambiti Secondary	2,000
Thiba	1xx9	Ngurubani Mixed Day Secondary	1,000
Wamumu	6xx3	Mugumo Girls Secondary	7,500
Wamumu	5x9	Rurii Secondary	8,000
Thiba	Hxx/xx2/S	Meru National Polytechnic	13,500
Thiba	xx6-4xx7-20xx	Machakos University	9,500
Thiba	8xx2	Ngiriambu Girls High School	6,000
Wamumu	4xx4	Gategi Girls Secondary	9,500
Njukiini	EC/xxB/1xxx7/2x	Embu College	4,000
Tebere	8xx9	Ngiriambu Girls High School	6,000
Nyangati	23xx	Gacatha Secondary	2,000
Thiba	62x	ST. Mary's Gachoka Girls Secondary	4,000
Nyangati	1xx4	Nyangati Secondary	2,000
Thiba	Exxx/03xx7/x1	Egerton University	21,500
Thiba	2xx6	Thiba Mixed Secondary	1,000
Nyangati	1xxx7	Kianyaga Boys	5,000
	Total		**174,400**

Appendix 2: Beneficiaries who Received Bursaries Twice During the 2023/2024

Ward	Registration Number/Administration Number	Institution	Total Bursary Allocation
Nyangati	Ax12/Px/42xx7/x3	Pwani University	7,000
Nyangati	37xx1	Kiamwathi Secondary	8,000
Baragwi	Pxx/1xx3/x2	Moi University	6,500
Nyangati	6x5	Gakuu Mixed	8,000
Nyangati	2xx3	Furaha Girls	5,000
Nyangati	7x3	Gitoni Secondary	8,000
Thiba	Bxx/Mx/2xx1/0xx2	Kabarak University	11,000
Wamumu	3xx5	St. Anne Gituba Girls'	5,000
Nyangati	1xx5	Ngurubani Mixed Day Secondary	8,500
Wamumu	4x5	Rurii Secondary	10,000
Nyangati	10xx0	Kerugoya Girls	5,000
Nyangati	2xx9	Gacatha Secondary	3,000
Nyangati	6xx1	Kithatu Girls Secondary School	4,000
Tebere	4xx9	St Francis Kanja Secondary	6,000
Nyangati	8xx3	Mukuuni Boys	4,500
Nyangati	1xx9	Kieganguru Girls	4,500
Nyangati	1xxx8/2xx1	Jeremiah Nyaga Technical Institute	6,000
Nyangati	1xx47	Kianyaga Boys	17,500
Nyangati	6x3	Kiorugari Secondary	3,000
Wamumu	Mxx587	Kenya Water Institute	13,000
Thiba	7x6	Nguka Mixed Secondary	5,000
Wamumu	5x9	Rurii Secondary	8,000
Nyangati	6xx7	Kiine Girls	6,500
Nyangati	8x2	Kangure Mixed Day Secondary	3,000
Nyangati	7xx8	Kaire Secondary	5,000
Nyangati	2xx6	Makongeni Secondary	8,000
Nyangati	1xx79	Kerugoya Boys	6,500
Wamumu	2x4	Assumption High School	17,000
Nyangati	6xx3	Ngaru Girls	11,500
Nyangati	9x8	Kangure Mixed Day Secondary	3,000
Nyangati	8xx3	Kiaragana Girls	5,000
Nyangati	6x5	Gakuu Mixed Secondary	4,000
Nyangati	2xx9	Kiangungi Baptist Secondary School	5,000
Nyangati	1xx76	Jeremiah Nyaga Technical Institute	8,000
Nyangati	Qxx/4xx8/20xx	Kenyatta University	6,000
Nyangati	Exx/3x97/20xx	University of Nairobi	6,000
Nyangati	DxxM20xx/3xx	Don Bosco Training Centre- Makuyu	6,000
Njukiini	2xx6	St Paul Karucho Secondary	6,400
Njukiini		Kenya Technical Trainers College	10,000
Wamumu	1xx41	Kamahuha Girls High	12,000
Thiba	4xx3	S.A Kyeni Girls Secondary	8,000
Nyangati	1xx6	ST Thomas Aquinas Igumori Secondary	5,000
Nyangati	1xx4	Gatuto Secondary	6,000
Nyangati	6x0	Kiorugari Secondary	3,000
Nyangati	x	Kikomba Secondary	7,500
Nyangati	8xx5	Kamuiru Boys	5,500
Nyangati	Bxx-1-2xx4-2/20xx	Kenya Methodist University	6,000

Ward	Registration Number/Administration Number	Institution	Total Bursary Allocation
Nyangati	68xx	Kiine Girls	6,500
Nyangati	Rxx/3xxx7/20xx	University of Nairobi	8,000
Wamumu	72xx	Mugumo Girls High School	7,000
	Total		**347,900**

Appendix 3: Beneficiaries who Received Bursaries Twice During the Financial Year 2024/2025

Ward	Registration Number /Admission Number	Institution	Total Bursary Allocation
Kerugoya	1xx8	Gakoigo Mixed Secondary School	4,000
Kerugoya	1xxx8	Michuki Technical Training Institute	6,000
Kerugoya	36xx	Tebere Secondary School	5,000
Kerugoya	1xx5	Gakoigo Mixed Secondary School	4,000
Kerugoya	3xx4	ST James Kiaritha Secondary School	4,000
Kerugoya	3xx2	ST James Kiaritha Secondary School	4,000
Kerugoya	1xx44	Starehe Boys High School	5,000
Kerugoya	4xx6	ST James Kiaritha Secondary School	4,000
Kerugoya	48xx	Gathambi Girls Secondary School	4,000
Kerugoya	1xxx9	ST Faustina Kerugoya Girls High School	5,000
Kerugoya	12xx2	Kerugoya Boys High School	5,000
Kerugoya	6xx6	Mutige Boys High School	5,000
Kerugoya	6xx1	Mutige Boys High School	5,000
Kerugoya	9x5	Kerugoya School for the Deaf	5,500
Kerugoya	6xx2	Mutige Boys High School	5,000
Kerugoya	9xx5	Kamuiru Boys High School	5,000
Kerugoya	3xx8	ST James Kiaritha Secondary School	4,000
Kerugoya	7x3	Kirigo Mixed Secondary School	4,000
Kerugoya	9xx1	Mutira Girls High School	6,000
Kerugoya	12xx7	Kerugoya Boys High School	5,000
Kerugoya	1xx8	Kirigo Mixed Secondary School	4,000
Kerugoya	2xx9	Kiandieri Mixed Secondary School	4,000
Kerugoya	8xx2	Kamuiru Boys High School	5,000
	Total		**107,500**

Appendix 4: Students Awarded Multiple Bursaries in the Academic Years 2024 and 2025

Learning Institution	Admission Number	Cheque Number	Bursary Sources	Amount (Kshs.)
Saint Catherine of Alexandria Ngaru Girls'	5xx9	25784	Changamwe National Government-Constituency Development Fund(NG-CDF)	6,000
		3111	Kirinyaga County	3,000
		3758	Kirinyaga County	2,500
		59769	Embakasi North NG-CDF	5,000
		18962	Embakasi South NG-CDF	6,000
		2415	Kirinyaga County	3,000
		Total		25,500
	6xx8	3111	Kirinyaga County	3,000
		15825	Ndia NG-CDF	5,000
		14444	Mwea NG-CDF	5,000
		Total		13,000
	5xx8	6001	Gichugu NG-CDF	4,000
		3229	Kirinyaga County	2,000
		3229	Kirinyaga County	4,000
		4012	Kirinyaga County	4,000
		8045	Gichugu NG-CDF	3,500
		Total		17,500
	5xx6	8045	Gichugu NG-CDF	3,500
		4279	Kirinyaga County	2,000
		6001	Gichugu NG-CDF	4,000
		3472	Kirinyaga County	2,200
		Total		11,700
Ngiriambu Girls High School	9xx1	3739	Karima Ward	2,500
		8051	Gichugu NG-CDF	3,500
		3490	Njuki-ini Ward	3,500
		3450	Murinduko Ward	5,000
		Total		14,500
	9xx2	2328	Thiba Ward	3,000
		1791	Kangai Ward	3,500
		16456	Mwea NG-CDF	5,000
		Total		11,500
Kamuiru Boys High School	9xx5	6778	Kirinyaga Central NG-CDF	6,000
		5522	PSSB	12,000
		8115	Mutira Ward	2,000
		7188	Kirinyaga Central NG-CDF	6,000
		Total		26,000
	9xx6	8102	Mutira Ward	2,000

Learning Institution	Admission Number	Cheque Number	Bursary Sources	Amount (Kshs.)
		5523	PSSB	15,000
		8205	NGAAF	5,000
		Total		22,000
	8xx4	6831	Kirinyaga Central NG-CDF	6,000
		5524	PSSB	15,000
		11047	Kanyekini Ward	2,000
		7203	Kirinyaga Central NG-CDF	6,000
		Total		29,000
	9xx7	6248	Kirinyaga Central NG-CDF	6,000
		8099	Mutira Ward	2,000
		1075	PSSB	9,000
		8637	Mukure Ward	1,600
		7169	Kirinyaga Central NG-CDF	6,000
		Total		24,600
	8xx2	10688	Mutithi Ward	2,000
		5634	PSSB	26,000
		6251	Kirinyaga Central NG-CDF	6,000
		10340	Mwea NG-CDF	5,000
		Total		39,000
	8xx0	296	NCC	8,500
		298	NCC	10,000
		301	NCC	10,000
		7075	Ndia NG-CDF	4,000
		3177	Kariti Ward	4,000
		7723	Ndia NG-CDF	6,000
		9026	Kariti Ward	3,000
		10994	Nyeri Town NG-CDF	5,000
		11507	Wamumu Ward	3,000
		5635	PSSB	26,000
		62	Kariti Ward	3,000
		7114	Nyeri Town NG-CDF	5,000
		8295	Ndia NG-CDF	6,000
		237	Mwea NG-CDF	5,000
		Total		98,500
	8xx0	7694	Ndia NG-CDF	3,000
		8227	NGAAF	5,000
		8658	Ndia NG-CDF	2,000
		10748	Mwea NG-CDF	5,000
		3176	Kariti Ward	4,000
		7728	Ndia NG-CDF	6,000
		9027	Ndia NG-CDF	3,000
		9524	Tebere Ward	3,000

Learning Institution	Admission Number	Cheque Number	Bursary Sources	Amount (Kshs.)
		10339	Mwea NG-CDF	5,000
		8950	PSSB	20,000
		63	Kariti Ward	3,000
		7048	NGAAF	5,000
		8338	Ndia NG-CDF	6,000
		275	Mwea NG-CDF	5,000
		Total		75,000
	9xx9	8802	Gichugu NG-CDF	4,000
		9560	Karumandi Ward	2,500
		9829	Gichugu NG-CDF	3,500
		5688	PSSB	30,000
		739	Baragwi Ward	5,000
		7052	NGAAF	5,000
		8524	Gichugu NG-CDF	5,000
		Total		55,000
	9xx2	6217	Njuki-ini Ward	10,000
		7481	Njuki-ini Ward	10,000
		9441	Nyangati Ward	2,500
		9467	Kiine Ward	5,000
		9573	Kangai Ward	3,000
		202	Gathigiriri Ward	5,000
		3169	Kirinyaga County Executive	20,000
		3872	Kirinyaga County Executive	11,382
		4146	Kanyekiini Ward	5,000
		5969	Child Welfare Society of Kenya	25,379
		6728	Executive Bursary	14,383
		8183	Gathigiriri Ward	3,500
		8478	Kerugoya Ward	3,500
		9111	Nyagati Ward	2,500
		10536	Nyagati Ward	6,000
		11506	Wamumu Ward	5,000
		4981	Kanyekiini Ward	10,000
		Total		142,144
	9xx6	6215	Nyangati Ward	10,000
		9318	Kirinyaga County Executive	12,060
		10259	Kirinyaga County Executive	43,788
		2745	Kirinyaga County Executive	13,089

Learning Institution	Admission Number	Cheque Number	Bursary Sources	Amount (Kshs.)
		3870	Kirinyaga County Executive	11,383
		6727	Kirinyaga County Executive	14,382
		10652	Kirinyaga County Executive	15,816
		2048	Kirinyaga County Executive	10,841
		Total		131,359
	9xx4	6667	Kariti Ward	10,000
		6911	Kariti Ward	6,000
		3080	Kirinyaga County Executive	36,354
		3871	Kirinyaga County Executive	11,382
		6729	Kirinyaga County Executive	14,383
		10654	Kirinyaga County Executive	15,816
		2049	Kirinyaga County Executive	10,841
		Total		104,776
Kianyaga High School	12xx1		Gichugu NG-CDF	3,500
		3779	Kerugoya NG-CDF	2,500
		522	Kirinyaga County Executive	20,750
		4205	Kabare Ward	2,000
		Total		28,750
	12xx6		Gichugu NG-CDF	3,500
		3779	Kerugoya NG-CDF	2,500
		4205	Kabare Ward	2,000
		Total		8,000
	12xx5		Gichugu NG-CDF	3,500
		3693	Karumandi Ward	2,500
		3430	Njuki-ini Ward	3,500
		4232	Baragwi Ward	3,000
		Total		12,500
Rwambiti Secondary School	3xx4	3511	Njuki-ini Ward	2,000
		3748	Kirinyaga County Executive	4,000
		7693	NG-CDF	3,000
		Total		9,000
	3xx2	3511	Njuki-ini Ward	2,000
			Ward Bursary	2,200

Learning Institution	Admission Number	Cheque Number	Bursary Sources	Amount (Kshs.)
		7693	NG-CDF	3,000
		9766	NG-CDF	5,000
		Total		12,200
	4xx3	3747	Kirinyaga County Executive	4,000
		7692	NG-CDF	3,000
		9766	NG-CDF	5,000
		Total		12,000
	4xx4	3747	Kirinyaga County Executive	4,000
		7692	NG-CDF	3,000
		Total		7,000

Appendix 5: Auditee's Management Response on Audit Findings

	Audit Findings	Auditee's Management Response	OAG's Comments
1.	Inadequate identification of needy learners **(Paragraph 4.2 - 4.5)**	Partially agreed. The ward bursary committees issued a one-week grace period to applicants who had provided incomplete and inaccurately filled forms during the provided application period. During this period, the committee members also contacted learning institutions for the affected applicants to gather necessary information such as fees statements and result slips. The committees used this aggregated information to process bursaries for the qualifying applicants. A standardized checklist has been introduced to guide ward bursary committees to ensure compliance with all the requirements for bursary application forms. Further, Management is in the process of proposing amendments to the PFM (Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund) Regulations, 2023 to ensure issuance of scholarships is anchored in the Act and regulations.	The Office acknowledge the action plans by the auditee to amend the PFM (Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund) Regulations, 2023 to ensure issuance of scholarships is anchored in the Act and regulations which will be verified during a follow up of the audit. The finding remains as reported.
2.	Inadequate Allocation and Award of Bursaries **(Paragraph 4.6 - 4.9)**	Agreed. Ward Bursary Committees conducted qualitative analysis of applicants' backgrounds which were recorded in committee minutes but the same were not recorded in a scoring matrix to gauge the level of need of the applicants. Management has developed a scoring tool **(Annexure 1)** that has been adopted by all bursary committees to ensure learners are awarded bursary on the strength of their scores.	Finding remains as reported.

	Audit Findings	Auditee's Management Response	OAG's Comments
3.	Multiple Allocation of Bursaries to Beneficiaries **(Paragraph 4.12 - 4.15)**	Partially Agreed. The beneficiaries who received bursaries twice within the same Financial Year were noted to be those who presented appeals to the Ward Bursary committees petitioning them to be reconsidered for re-award of bursary due to extremely high school fees balances. However, this has been rectified in subsequent bursary cycles through the adoption of a scoring system which bases bursary awards on the applicants' score ensuring extremely needy applicants are awarded higher amounts ab initio. The PFM (Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund) Regulations, 2023 posits that an applicant who has not received full financial support towards payment of the required annual school fees is eligible for grant of bursary from the Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund. The Regulations further states that in considering the applications, the committees shall liaise with other relevant public or private entities to ascertain whether an applicant has been granted bursary under another bursary scheme to cater for the same. Where the committees establish that an applicant has been awarded bursary under another scheme, they may award bursary to the applicant to meet balance provided that the committees give priority to applications who have not received bursary from any other source. The students noted to have received bursary from more than one public bursary provider applied for the different bursary fund schemes at different times of the academic year. The County Education Bursary Fund disbursed funds in first term while the NGCDF bursary followed through in second term leading to multiple allocations to the same beneficiaries which in some instances led to overpayment.	Finding remains as reported since evidence of appeals was not provided.

	Audit Findings	Auditee's Management Response	OAG's Comments
		Management is planning to roll out formal data sharing channels with other public bursary providers that will cure the issue of double allocation. Management notes the observation and has kickstarted the roll out of an integrated bursary management information system which will enhance efficient data capture, manipulation, sharing and storage. A manual record-keeping and filing system have also been centralized at the County Headquarters to ensure data security and integrity.	
4.	Inefficient Bursary data management system **(Paragraph 4.18 - 4.16)**	Agreed. Management notes the observation and has kickstarted the roll out of an integrated bursary management information system which will enhance efficient data capture, manipulation, sharing and storage. A manual record-keeping and filing system have also been centralized at the County Headquarters to ensure data security and integrity.	The Office acknowledge the action plans by the auditee. The finding remains as reported.
	Lack of data on access to bursaries and scholarships by Persons with Disabilities **(Paragraph 4.21 - 4.23)**	Partially Agreed The first step of every financial year's bursary issuance cycle involves the creation of awareness and advertisement of the bursary application to all interested applicants, including people with disabilities. The application forms are issued at the lowest levels of the County and National Government administrative structures, i.e., ward offices and Assistant Chiefs' offices, respectively, to ensure maximum outreach. In addition, Persons with Disabilities are awarded higher bursary amounts compared to the able-bodied applicants.	The audit team has incorporated the evidence provided for the financial year 2022/2023. However, the list of beneficiaries with disabilities for the financial year 2023/2024 and 2024/2024 was not provided.

	Audit Findings	Auditee's Management Response	OAG's Comments
		The lists of PWD bursary beneficiaries were available during the audit; however, we have annexed the same as **Annexure 2**.	
5.	High administrative expenses. **(Paragraph 4.24 - 4.25)**	Agreed The administrative expenditure exceeded the statutory 3% in financial years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 as per the annexed table 1 **(Annexure 3)**. This was as a result of implementing the new administrative expenses budget as prescribed by the PFM (Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund) Regulations, 2023, set at 5% of the approved budget. The net excess expenditure for the 3 years is Ksh. 45,315. Management has proposed amendments to the bursary regulations to align them with the PFM (County Governments) Regulations, 2015, which shall be forwarded to the County Assembly of Kirinyaga for enactment.	The Office acknowledges the action plans by the auditee. Finding remains as reported.
6.	Lack of a structured grievance redress mechanism. **(Paragraph 4.26 - 4.28)**	Partially Agreed. The Ward Bursary Committees and the County Executive Bursary Committee recorded complaints from dissatisfied applicants through committee minutes annexed herewith as **Annexure 4**. However, this has been rectified in subsequent financial years, and regular registers capturing requisite information are maintained by every committee **Annexure 5**.	Key information, such as the form of complaint, date received, action taken, status of resolution, and officer responsible, was not captured. Finding remains as reported.
7.	Inefficient mode of bursary and scholarship disbursement (**Paragraph 4.31 - 4.34**)	Partially Agreed. Regulation 14(2) of the PFM (Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund) Regulations, 2023 stipulates that a bursary shall be awarded to successful beneficiaries through a cheque drawn in favour of the institution in which the successful beneficiaries are enrolled.	The finding has been amended.

	Audit Findings	Auditee's Management Response	OAG's Comments
		Due to reasons such as non-collection of cheques owing to family disagreements leading to divorce and relocation, death of beneficiaries and/or guardians, displacement of families, and transfer of learners from one institution of learning to another, some cheques are cancelled while others become stale. Bursary committees considered the cancelled and stale cheques and reallocated the funds to applicants who had applied during the initial application but who had not benefited due to inadequate funds. The new beneficiaries were captured through committee minutes annexed as **(Annexure 4),** and the new allocation schedules were made available to auditors during the audit. These schedules are annexed herewith as **Annexure 6**. This reallocation of funds is also corroborated in the records of the cash books **(Annexure 7)**. The referenced bounced cheques were noted to have been caused by errors made by banks during cheque clearance, where they debited wrong amounts compared to the value of the cheque. After follow-up, the banks agreed to waive the bank charges, hence the bursary funds suffered no loss of such bank charges. Bank statements for Mutithi, Kabare and Tebere wards were availed during audit and are annexed herewith as **Annexure 8**.	
8.	Inadequate acknowledgement of bursary and scholarship payments (**Paragraph 4.35 - 4.37**)	Partially Agreed. The total bursary funds disbursed in Financial Years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 for the five (5) sampled Wards and the County Executive Bursary totalled Kshs.24,432,161 and Kshs.48,244,905, respectively. Acknowledgment receipts for the sampled Wards were available during the audit. We have annexed the outstanding	Finding remains as reported. , **Annexure 9** was also not provided.

	Audit Findings	Auditee's Management Response	OAG's Comments
		acknowledgment receipts that had not been provided during the audit as **Annexure 9**. Further, during funds disbursement, bursary committees address bursary cheques to institutional account names and not individual fee accounts.	
9.	Ineffective monitoring of the bursary and scholarship program **(Paragraph 4.38 - 4.40)**	Agreed Management has organized quarterly trainings for bursary committees to capacity build them on the guiding principles of monitoring and evaluation as espoused in regulation 17 (2) of the PFM (Kirinyaga County Education Bursary Fund) Regulations, 2023. This has been implemented due to the identification of a competency gap for the committee members, which resulted in the provision of inadequate monitoring reports.	Finding remains as reported.
10.	Provision of bursaries and scholarships to learners in national government institutions **(Paragraph 4.41 - 4.43)**	Partially agreed The County Government of Kirinyaga has been issuing bursaries to learners enrolled in secondary schools, colleges, and universities on the strength of Article 189 of the Constitution of Kenya (2010), which mandates cooperation and consultation between the National and County Governments, establishing that they are distinct yet interdependent. It requires governments to support each other, exchange information, and settle disputes through dialogue or alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms. To regularize this cooperation, the County Government has drafted and gazetted an Intergovernmental Partnership Agreement (IPA) **(Annexure 10)** with the National Government for the issuance of bursaries to learners enrolled to institutions of learning designated under the National Government.	The finding remains as reported. Further, the cited Gazette notice is dated 19 February 2026, which post-dates the completion of the audit verification exercise in August 2025.

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