1.0 Introduction
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a universally agreed set of standards and obligations built on varied legal systems and cultural traditions. These basic standards, also called human rights, set minimum entitlements and freedoms that should be respected by governments. They are founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability and therefore apply to every human being everywhere. With these rights comes the obligation on both governments and individuals not to infringe on the parallel rights of others. These standards are both interdependent and indivisible such that we cannot ensure some rights without or at the expense of other rights.¹

The UNCRC is the first legally binding international instrument that incorporates the whole spectrum of human rights – civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights and it applies to all children under the age of 18 who are often in need of specialized care and attention. The UNCRC emphasizes that children are holders of rights and that these rights are entitled to every child and that countries that are signatory to the treaty will fulfil the requirement of the treaty. Furthermore, it puts equal emphasis on all of the rights and there is no hierarchy of these human rights. Hence, the articles of the Convention are indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.² This is an important key to interpreting the UNCRC.

Kenya is a signatory to this Convention which ratified it in July 1990. However, ratification of international human rights instruments and protocols may not necessarily translate into effective safeguarding of the rights in question if ratification is not followed up with a clear framework for implementation. Thus, the overriding goal of this study is to analyze the extent to which Kenya has implemented the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

¹ See CRC Preamble
² Ibid