



EQUALITY BULLETIN

REBOOT

CS Wendot reaffirms NGEC's mandate, pledges gender indicators in performance contracts

When the Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services, Hon. Hanna Wendot Cheptumo, stepped onto the podium at Safari Park Hotel to launch the National Gender and Equality Commission's (NGEC) Strategic Plan 2025–2029, she did more than deliver a speech—she reset the tone of national accountability on equality and non-discrimination.

For the National Gender and Equality Commission—whose constitutional mandate includes monitoring, advising, investigating, and advocating on issues of equality and non-discrimination—this moment was more than symbolic. It was structural.

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A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to Issue 019 of the Equality Bulletin, a special edition that captures a defining moment for the National Gender and Equality Commission. In this issue, we highlight the successful launch of the NGECE Strategic Plan 2025–2029 and the 2025 Usawa Awards—a twin event that reaffirmed our national mandate and drew renewed political support for gender and equality programming.

We share key highlights from the Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Hon. Hanna Wendot Cheptumo, who affirmed NGECE's constitutional oversight role and announced plans to reintroduce gender-mainstreaming indicators in performance contracting. We spotlight remarks by Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, our Commission Chairperson, who issued a bold call for full resourcing of our KSh 7 billion Strategic Plan, and Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a, MP, and Chairperson of the National Assembly Committee on Social Protection who pledged parliamentary backing to drive its implementation.



You'll also read about the trailblazing Ministry of Defence, awarded top honours at the Usawa Awards for institutionalising gender reforms within the Kenya Defence Forces, as well as powerful youth testimonies that reveal NGECE's role as a true platform for Kenya's next generation. This edition also offers a clear breakdown of our new Strategic Plan as presented during the launch—its thematic pillars, action framework, and financing strategy. These stories, and many more, capture a Commission ready to deliver and a country leaning toward accountability.

Let's stay the course.

Purity Ngina, PhD, MBS
Chief Executive Officer
National Gender and Equality Commission

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Parliament Backs NGEC's KSh 7B Equality Agenda

The launch of the National Gender and Equality Commission's (NGEC) Strategic Plan 2025–2029 doubled as a powerful pitch for meaningful resourcing and a timely show of political support from Parliament. In her keynote remarks, NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Dida Jaldesa laid out a candid case for funding, grounding her appeal not in sympathy, but in constitutional obligation and institutional accountability. She was promptly backed by Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a, Chairperson of the National Assembly's Departmental Committee on Social Protection, who pledged Parliament's support to ensure NGEC is adequately equipped to deliver on its expanded mandate.



Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a, Chairperson of the National Assembly's Departmental Committee on Social Protection

Speaking at Safari Park Hotel, Hon. Jaldesa reminded guests that the Commission's mandate—to promote equality and freedom from discrimination—is rooted in the Constitution and is central to the life of the nation. Yet, she noted, this mandate has been persistently underfunded. "Together, our first two strategic plans were costed at nearly Ksh. 9 billion. What we actually received over 10 years was about half of that. For a constitutional Commission whose work touches the soul of the nation—equality, dignity, protection—this is more than a budget issue. It's a measure of national will," she said.

The newly launched 2025–2029 Strategic Plan is costed at Ksh. 7 billion and seeks to sharpen the Commission's policy and oversight role across a dynamic range of challenges—from political exclusion and gender-based violence to digital equity, climate justice, peace disruption, and the economics of inclusion. "This Plan is not a



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Dida Jaldesa

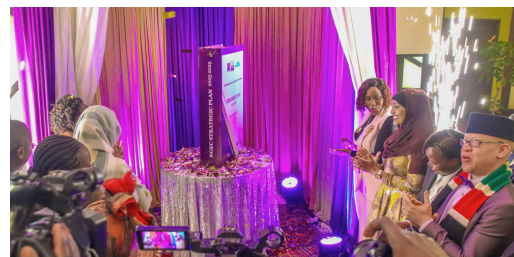
reinvention. It is a continuation—with sharper tools, clearer direction, and deeper resolve," Jaldesa noted, adding that the Plan also reintroduces a strengthened awards and sanctions framework to reward progress and call out regression in equality and inclusion.

Jaldesa urged government, civil society, and development partners to treat the Strategic Plan as a shared national priority. "We are not just seeking resources; we are calling for seriousness," she stated. "Equality cannot be deferred. Inclusion cannot remain aspirational."

Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a echoed this appeal, calling the Strategic Plan both focused and realistic, noting that it draws heavily from the Commission's past experiences and lays out a practical roadmap for deepening impact. She singled out the Plan's intention to expand NGEC's physical footprint by at least five regional offices, describing it as a deliberate move to bring protection, redress, and public awareness closer to communities. "Equality must be felt where people live," she said.

In her firm commitment to the Commission, Hon. Ng'ang'a declared, "As Chair of the Departmental Committee on Social Protection, I publicly affirm our support in ensuring the Commission is adequately resourced to deliver on this mandate." She also promised stronger legislative backing, adding, "Beyond financial support, we are committed to ensuring that NGEC's reports, once submitted to Parliament, receive timely attention and action."

The renewed partnership between the Commission and Parliament marks a positive shift in how gender and equality issues may be addressed going forward. Jaldesa's leadership was acknowledged by Hon. Ng'ang'a, who praised the Commission has renewed energy and focus under her stewardship. "To the Chairperson, Commissioners, staff, and partners of NGEC—congratulations on this new Plan. You have our support," she concluded.



Launch of NGEC's Strategic Plan 2025–2029

As the Strategic Plan enters the implementation phase, NGEC now stands on stronger ground, bolstered by Parliament's commitment and a clear message that the work of inclusion deserves not only applause but also investment.



Hon. Alice Ng'ang'a, Chairperson of the National Assembly's Departmental Committee on Social Protection during the launch

The coming years will test how well this goodwill is translated into budgets, action, and results—but the foundations are now firmly laid.

From Protest to Platform: Youth Anchor at NGEC

In a moment that wasn't planned but will not be forgotten, youth leader Navrouze Desouza delivered a heartfelt, unscripted tribute to the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) during the launch of its 2025–2029 Strategic Plan. His words struck a chord, not because they were polished, but because they were lived.

Desouza, who is the Head of Communication and Advocacy at Y+ Kenya, stood to speak as a youth representative—but what came out was a rare and honest account of what meaningful engagement with government can look like. “In a country where young people are often told to wait, to calm down, or to understand,” he began, “NGEC did something different. It paused to listen. Not to lecture, but to understand. And in doing so, it earned our trust.”

This statement came just weeks after Kenya's youth—particularly Gen Z—led a series of protests demanding accountability, inclusion, and reform. Many institutions responded defensively. But according to Desouza, NGEC had already done the hard work of listening and platforming young people long before protests erupted.

In a sector where youth inclusion is often symbolic or reduced to photo ops, Desouza painted a different picture of NGEC: one where engagement is real, consistent, and impactful. As he told it, NGEC didn't just invite young people to meetings—it invited them into decision-making spaces. A regular youth consultative forum, composed of members from universities, TVETs,



Mr. Navrouze Desouza the Head of Communication and Advocacy at Y+ Kenya

informal settlements, and startups, now sits with NGEC to raise issues and propose solutions. And they are heard.

He recalled a critical moment: “Eventually, we started saying, ‘This boardroom is now ours.’ The room, he said, became a space where young people weren't just tolerated—they were taken seriously. Beyond consultation, NGEC facilitated professional growth. Ten young people received Coursera scholarships to pursue technical courses. Others received training in e-mobility, digital transformation, and entrepreneurship.

“It was not charity,” Desouza emphasized. “It was investment. And it positioned us not as passive recipients, but as active partners in shaping the future of this country.”

Such initiatives have had a ripple effect: creating youth advocates who understand policy, speak the language of inclusion, and are empowered to lead change in their communities. Desouza's remarks struck a deep chord because they revealed a side of NGEC many may not know—one that is quietly but deliberately building a base of informed, equipped, and confident young Kenyans.

At a time when youth frustration is boiling over and public institutions are under pressure to respond better, NGEC has already laid the groundwork for trust. Desouza's message was clear: this is not the time to stand at arm's length. “It's high time more young people get closer to NGEC, engage with it, and be part of what it's doing.”

He ended with a rallying call—not just to youth, but to partners across sectors: “Support NGEC. Strengthen its capacity. The KES 7 billion Strategic Plan isn't just a document—it's a blueprint for equity. And with the right support, no voice, especially that of the youth, will be left behind.”

In Desouza's unscripted speech, NGEC didn't just gain applause. It gained credibility. He gave the Commission what it seldom gets but has certainly earned: the testimony of impact. And perhaps more importantly, he reminded the country that if inclusion is to mean anything, the youth must not just be present—they must be heard. And in NGEC, it seems, they already are.

Justice Delayed, Dignity Denied: Nakuru Partners Unite to Unblock Stalled GBV Cases

Nakuru Regional Office leads urgent action to uphold the rights and dignity of Special Interest Groups amid persistent gender-based violence challenges.



Participants engaged in discussions during the Nakuru East & West EITWG partners meeting

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) Nakuru Regional Office convened a decisive meeting with partners from Nakuru East and West's Equality and Inclusion Thematic Working Groups (EITWG) to confront a pressing issue: the alarming backlog of stalled gender-based violence (GBV) cases affecting Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

At the heart of the gathering was an unwavering commitment to justice for survivors and the inclusion of marginalised communities often left behind by systemic inefficiencies. The partners took stock of progress, unearthing bottlenecks within judicial and administrative systems that have hampered the timely resolution of GBV cases. “Justice delayed is justice denied,” said Lewis Mwaniki-NGEC. “Our role is not only to advocate for laws and policies but to ensure they translate into real, tangible outcomes for those affected, especially the vulnerable.”

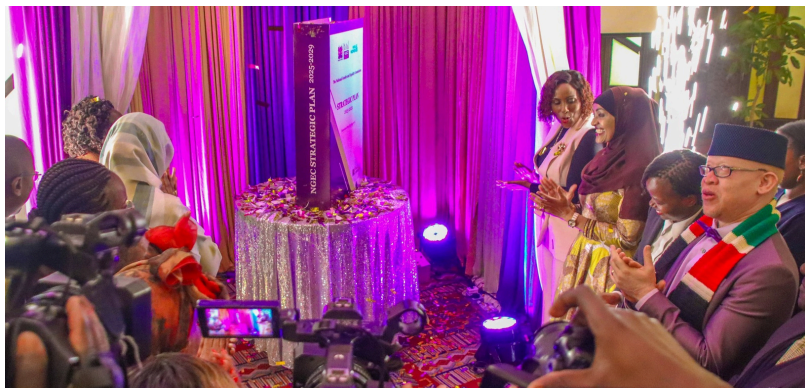
The Commission's proactive stance highlights the necessity of coordinated multi-sectoral responses to GBV, calling on all stakeholders—from law enforcement to community leaders—to collaborate in dismantling barriers to justice.

For many survivors, stalled cases represent more than administrative delay—they are a denial of dignity and security. NGEC's resolve to tackle these issues head-on is a beacon of hope that Kenya's promise of equality will be more than words on paper.

» CONTINUATION

Ministry Affirms NGECKENYA Mandate, Commits to Enforce Gender Metrics

Cabinet Secretary Hanna Wendot Cheptumo signals a turning point in Kenya's equality journey, reaffirming NGECKENYA's constitutional mandate and launching its bold new Strategic Plan



launch of NGECKENYA's Strategic Plan 2025–2029

The Government has reaffirmed the National Gender and Equality Commission's (NGECKENYA) constitutional oversight mandate and committed to deepening collaboration with the Commission, including reinstating gender mainstreaming indicators in the national performance contracting framework. This policy affirmation was announced by Hon. Hanna Wendot Cheptumo, Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services, during the launch of NGECKENYA's Strategic Plan 2025–2029 and the 2025 Usawa Awards held at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi.

In a strong show of support for the Commission's watchdog function, CS Wendot described NGECKENYA as "the country's constitutional compass on equality and non-discrimination," adding that its role is not merely ceremonial but critical: "to watch, to remind, to guide, and yes, when necessary, to challenge."

"The Ministry recognizes this oversight role as a key complement to our policy development and implementation role," she stated, positioning NGECKENYA as an indispensable partner in translating legal guarantees into institutional action.

One of the most consequential policy pronouncements in her address was the Ministry's ongoing engagement with peers to reintroduce gender mainstreaming indicators in

performance contracting guidelines—a move that would re-anchor accountability for inclusion across Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs).



Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services, Hon. Hanna Wendot Cheptumo

"My Ministry's aspiration is that MDAs will not just be measured by outputs and shillings spent, but by how those outputs advance inclusion and dignity," she said. "In so doing, gender equality shall be a metric of performance in service delivery."

The announcement comes at a critical time, as calls for more meaningful and measurable inclusion gain momentum across the country, particularly among youth, women, and marginalized populations. If adopted, the reintroduction of these indicators would reverse a multi-year gap that left many institutions with little incentive to prioritise gender equality and social inclusion in their annual work plans. Beyond policy alignment, the CS reiterated the Ministry's commitment to increasing financial resourcing for both NGECKENYA and the State Department for Gender Affairs and

Affirmative Action, noting that the two institutions—despite their critical mandates—remain among the most underfunded. "Yet their work touches the most vulnerable, that should ideally get higher resource allocations," she observed. "I will use my voice at the Cabinet table to elevate the gender machineries' mandates and lobby for substantive and sustained resources."

CS Wendot further commended NGECKENYA's growing footprint and grassroots visibility across counties, noting the complementarity between the Ministry's 46 county gender officers and the Commission's expanding reach. She also acknowledged NGECKENYA's proactive role in shaping policy discourse on child protection, gender-based violence, femicide, and constitutional reforms related to the two-thirds gender rule.

Significantly, she invited deeper partnership between the Ministry and NGECKENYA, especially in areas where their mandates align, saying: "We are your policy partner, not your competitor."

This alignment is especially critical as the Ministry rolls out the newly completed National Male Engagement and Inclusion Strategy, a policy shift that affirms the place of men and boys as not only allies in the gender agenda, but also as individuals with unique vulnerabilities requiring attention. The CS argued this marks a new phase in gender mainstreaming that "leaves no one behind."



NGECKENYA Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa in a candid exchange with Cabinet Secretary for Gender, Culture and Children Services, Hon. Hanna Wendot Cheptumo

The speech marked a defining moment in government-Commission relations, one that places NGECKENYA at the centre of national planning and delivery on equality and inclusion. With a strong public affirmation of its mandate and a renewed commitment to structural reform, the Commission's Strategic Plan 2025–2029 enters implementation with rare momentum and political backing.

As CS Wendot put it: "Let us, together, convert the bold words of this Plan into lived realities... for every Kenyan whose dignity still hangs in the balance."

Breaking the Silence: Women Defenders and NGECE Forge a New Frontline Against GBV

A powerful alliance takes centre stage to uphold dignity, justice, and equality for survivors and special interest groups in Kenya.



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa receives a report from Salome Nduta the Executive Director of The Kenya Hub

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) hosted a consequential courtesy visit by the Women Human Rights Defenders Hub—The Kenya Hub, a women-led feminist organisation championing the protection and empowerment of Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) across Kenya and beyond. This meeting signals a critical juncture in the ongoing battle against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), a scourge that continues to haunt communities despite legal frameworks and policies designed to eradicate it.

At its core, the visit was more than a routine engagement; it was a strategic collaboration aimed at transforming Kenya's response to GBV by putting survivors—particularly those from vulnerable and special interest groups—at the centre of the conversation. Through candid discussions and shared visions, NGECE and The Kenya Hub confronted the stigma and social isolation that survivors endure, emphasising the need for survivor-centred approaches that prioritise dignity, safety, and justice.

Gender-Based Violence remains a formidable challenge in Kenya, deeply rooted in cultural norms, economic inequalities, and societal stigma. Despite the existence of robust legislation—such as the Sexual Offences Act (2006) and the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act (2015)—survivors frequently face barriers in accessing justice and support.

During the meeting, the partnership between NGECE and The Kenya Hub took a bold stance: tackling GBV through a holistic, survivor-centred lens that shifts the focus from victim-blaming to victim empowerment. This approach demands not only protection and justice for survivors but also the active dismantling of stigma, which too often leaves survivors isolated and justice elusive.

“We must hear the voices of survivors and centre their experiences in every aspect of our response,” said Hon. Rehema Jaldesa during the engagement. “Justice is not just about punishing perpetrators—it is about restoring dignity and safety to those harmed.”

The Kenya Hub represents the rising force of grassroots, women-led movements that have been instrumental in breaking cycles of silence and shame around GBV. These defenders work tirelessly across counties and communities, advocating for holistic protection that recognises the diversity of women's experiences and challenges.



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa during the courtesy visit

Collaboration with law enforcement agencies was a key focus, aiming to enhance accountability and ensure perpetrators face the full force of the law. Moreover, the partnership advocates for education and legal support programmes that empower communities to recognise GBV, challenge harmful stereotypes, and stand with survivors.

“The women defenders at the grassroots are not just victims or bystanders; they are frontline agents of change,” said the Executive Director of The Kenya Hub. “Their leadership is critical in transforming social norms and ensuring survivors are supported, not stigmatised.”



Salome Nduta the Executive Director of The Kenya Hub

Despite progress, numerous obstacles remain. Deep-rooted patriarchal attitudes, poverty, inadequate resources, and lack of access to justice services continue to hamper efforts to eradicate GBV and discrimination against special interest groups.

As the NGECE and The Kenya Hub forge stronger ties, their joint call to action resonates powerfully across Kenya's social and political landscape: silence no more. Every survivor deserves respect, justice, and a life free from violence and discrimination.

NGEC's Ksh 7B Plan to Anchor Equality in National Development



NGEC CEO Dr. Purity Ngina Presenting the Plan during the launch of the Strategic Plan 2025–2029

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) Strategic Plan 2025–2029, outlines a bold and structured agenda to entrench equality and inclusion across every layer of national development. Presenting the Plan during the official launch, NGECE CEO Dr. Purity Ngina described the five-year blueprint as both a continuity of mandate and a sharpened commitment to constitutional obligations and global aspirations.

Anchored on Vision 2030, the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), the Fourth Medium-Term Plan (MTP IV), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the African Union's Agenda 2063, the Strategic Plan is costed at KSh 7 billion.

Its implementation will rely on a blend of exchequer allocations, development partner support, private sector partnerships, and contributions from civil society actors.

At the heart of the Plan are five thematic areas:

1.Compliance, Monitoring and

Reporting – focused on enhancing adherence to equality principles across state and non-state institutions;

2.Investigations and Redress – aimed at reducing rights violations through responsive complaints handling;

3.Public Education and Mainstreaming – designed to promote public awareness and implementation of affirmative action frameworks;

4.Research and Knowledge Management – to increase data-driven policy formulation through targeted evidence generation and dissemination;

5.Institutional Capacity Strengthening – to enhance NGECE's operational reach, staffing, infrastructure, and regional presence.

Dr. Ngina reported that the preceding 2019–2024 Plan achieved a 63% implementation rate despite constrained funding, limited human capital, and visibility gaps. Those experiences, she noted, informed the structure and focus of the new Plan.

“This is not a reinvention,” she explained. “It is a continuation, refined by experience and grounded in

-both past results and future ambition.”

The Commission has designed a detailed implementation and coordination framework to ensure accountability and effectiveness, with execution tracked through annual workplans and 109 performance indicators. The plan includes a costed Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework that will support real-time learning, periodic reviews, and adaptive programming.

An important feature of the Plan is its renewed focus on Special Interest Groups (SIGs)—including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, children, older persons, and marginalized communities. Through targeted compliance checks, redress mechanisms, and public education campaigns, the Commission aims to ensure that inclusion is not aspirational but practical and measurable.

Dr. Ngina emphasized that the Strategic Plan is not just an internal guide but a national call to action. “Equality is not the work of one Commission—it is a shared national commitment,” she said.

With a comprehensive action plan, clear thematic direction, and a costed implementation framework, NGECE's Strategic Plan 2025–2029 signals a maturing institution ready to scale its impact—provided the country matches ambition with resources.

Ministry of Defence Blazes Trail as KDF Scoops Top Gender Mainstreaming Honour at Usawa Awards 2025



Maj Gen Joyce C Sitienei receives the Gender Mainstreaming Award

At the 2025 Usawa Awards hosted by the Commission (NGEC), the Ministry of Defence emerged as a standout trailblazer, receiving the coveted Gender Mainstreaming Award in recognition of its progressive and structured approach to institutionalizing gender equality within Kenya’s security sector. The award was received by Maj. Gen. Joyce Sitienei, Deputy Vice Chancellor at the Centre for Strategic and Security Studies, National Defence University–Kenya, on behalf of Defence Cabinet Secretary Hon. Soipan Tuya.

In her speech delivered by Maj. Gen. Sitienei, the Cabinet Secretary affirmed the Ministry’s commitment to advancing gender equity, stating, “I am standing before you today to report that the matter of gender equality and women empowerment has been progressively institutionalized and internalized by the Ministry of Defence.”

She went on to highlight that the Ministry had launched its first Gender Policy in 2017, which has since guided efforts to embed gender across its command structures and decision-making levels. Most notably, she revealed that just this month, the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) adopted a Prevention against Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) Policy—a rare move among militaries across Africa and beyond.

This year’s Usawa Awards, held alongside the launch of the NGEC Strategic Plan 2025–2029, celebrated a total of 57 winners across national and county governments, state corporations, tertiary institutions, universities, and the private sector. The awards were a showcase of compliance, ambition, and innovation in the implementation of the constitutional two-thirds gender principle and broader gender equality standards.



Africa Nazarene University was honoured at the 2025 Usawa Award

In the category of Excellent Performance in Gender and Social Inclusion, the following entities were honoured:

Institutional Cluster	Name of Institution
Ministry/State Department	Ministry of Defence
	Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs
	Office of the Attorney General and Department of Justice
	State Department for Public Service and Human Capital Development
State Corporation	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
Semi-Autonomous Government Agency	Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE)
Public University	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
Tertiary Institutions	Kenya Coast National Polytechnic
	Musakana Technical Training Institute
	Okame Technical and Vocational College
County Government	Nairobi City County Government

In the University Council Gender Parity Category, six institutions were recognised for attaining gender parity in the composition of their governing councils:

University Council Awardees (Gender Parity, 2024)

African Nazarene University
Dedan Kimathi University of Technology
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
Mama Ngina University College
Presbyterian University of East Africa
South Eastern Kenya University

Among private sector players listed on the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), the awards celebrated both attainment and progress toward gender parity within boards of directors.

In the Attained Gender Parity category, plaques and certificates were awarded to:

NSE Listed Companies – Gender Parity in Boards (2024)

Bank of Kigali Group PLC
BOC Kenya Ltd

In the Nearing Gender Parity in Board Composition category, recognition was extended to:

NSE Listed Companies – Nearing Gender Parity (2024)

Stanbic Holdings PLC
Standard Chartered Bank Ltd
WPP Scangroup
Bamburi Cement PLC
East African Breweries PLC
Unga Group Ltd
Safaricom PLC

And in the Adherence to the Two-Thirds Gender Principle category, the following companies were acknowledged for their compliance:

NSE Listed Companies – Compliant with Two-Thirds Gender Rule (2024)

Sasini PLC
I&M Holdings Ltd
HF Group Ltd
Equity Group Holdings
Sameer Africa PLC
Sanlam Kenya PLC
Liberty Kenya Holdings
Britam Holdings Ltd
Home Africa Ltd
British American Tobacco Kenya
Lap Trust Imara I-REIT
New Gold Issuer (RP) Ltd

The Usawa Awards, now an annual fixture, continue to affirm NGEC’s role in promoting accountability for gender inclusion across public and private institutions. This year’s spotlight on the Ministry of Defence’s transformative gender policy implementation signals a powerful message: that gender equality is no longer peripheral, even in sectors long considered traditional or male-dominated.

In celebrating all 57 winners—across MDAs, universities, parastatals, counties, and private corporations—the 2025 Usawa Awards were a moment of collective affirmation that the journey to full gender equality is not only possible but already well underway. And in Maj. Gen. Sitienei’s words, echoed by her Cabinet Secretary, it is a journey that is reshaping even the most fortified of institutions from within.

Launch of the Strategic Plan







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+254 722 396 035
+254 758 746 006
info@bloomdyslexia.com







The National Gender and Equality Commission


STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2029

Usawa kwa Wote: Equality for All



Scan Me



PWD Duo Steals the Show at NGEN Launch

In a bold show of commitment to inclusion and equality, the Commission (NGEC) placed two remarkable individuals at the heart of its high-level Strategic Plan 2025–2029 launch and Usawa Awards celebration: DJ Wiwa and Alan Herbert Onyango. The two, both persons with disabilities and trailblazers in their fields, didn't just perform—they embodied the very values NGEN stands for: dignity, equality, teamwork, integrity, and inclusivity.



Winfred Muchiri, better known as DJ Wiwa

Winfred Muchiri, better known as DJ Wiwa, lit up the venue not just with her music, but with her story. Born with cerebral palsy, DJ Wiwa operates her DJ equipment using her feet—a sight that defies expectation and redefines excellence. Her playlist set the tone: powerful, uplifting, and relevant, keeping guests on their feet and proving that disability is not inability.

A passionate advocate for women and girls with disabilities, especially around reproductive health and hygiene, DJ Wiwa continues to use her platform to promote visibility, empowerment, and self-expression.

Equally compelling was the eloquence and stage presence of Alan Herbert Onyango, the event's moderator. A seasoned communications professional living with albinism, Alan brought poise, clarity, and warmth to the high-level proceedings. As a TV host, producer, and founder of the Black Albinism Initiative, Alan is no stranger to shaping national conversations around inclusion.

Alan's moderation carried both depth and ease—guiding the flow of the programme while anchoring the core message of the event. He personified NGEN's values, demonstrating what inclusive representation looks like when integrated not as a favour, but as a norm.

Dr. Mwaura, who has worked closely with the Commission over the years, commended NGEN's choice to platform DJ Wiwa and Alan Herbert. He noted the Commission's consistent record in walking the talk on disability inclusion.

"This is not charity. This is not tokenism. This is what empowerment looks like in practice," he said. Indeed, the event sent a strong and deliberate message: that Kenya's future must be shaped by all its people. From the music to the messages, the launch was a celebration of ability, resilience, and leadership—where those who are often spoken about got the space to speak for themselves and shape the national agenda.

By giving the stage—literally and symbolically—to DJ Wiwa and Alan Herbert, NGEN demonstrated that its values are more than words on paper. They are the foundation of how the Commission works, engages, and leads.



Master of Ceremonies Alan Herbert during launch of the Strategic Plan 2025–2029

The launch of the Strategic Plan 2025–2029 and the Usawa Awards was not just an unveiling of policy or recognition of progress. It was an honest and inspiring glimpse of what an inclusive Kenya can and should look like—where talent rises, barriers fall, and all voices are heard.

As the last note played and the final applause rang out, one thing was clear: inclusion, when made real, has the power to transform not only events—but hearts, minds, and systems. DJ Wiwa and Alan Herbert didn't just headline the launch. They made history with it.

NGEC Bulletin Editorial Team

Produced by the Public Communications Division under the Executive Office of the Commission Secretary/CEO

Daniel Waitere - Head of Public Communications

Eric Muchiri - Graphic Designer, Photographer and Writer

Alice Njeri- Writer



CONTACT US

P.O. Box 27512-00506, Nairobi, Kenya
1st Floor, Solution Tech Place, 5 Longonot Rd, Upper Hill,
Nairobi, Kenya

Toll Free : 0800 720 187
HQ Reception : +254 709 375 100

Kisumu Regional Office
Reinsurance Plaza, 3rd Floor, Wing B,
Oginga Odinga Street,
Kisumu Town.

Nakuru Regional Office
Tamoh Plaza, 1st Floor, Kijabe Street,
Nakuru Town.

Garissa Regional Office
KRA Route off Lamu Road, Province,
Garissa Town.

Kilifi Regional Office
Malindi Complex, off Lamu-Malindi Road,
Malindi Town.

Kitui Regional Office
Nzambani Park, off Kitui Referral Hospital Road,
Kitui Town.

Isiolo Regional Office
County Estate, Along Kiwanjani Road
Isiolo Town