EDITION #26 NOVEMBER 2025





EQUALITY BULLETIN

UNBALANCED

Fifteen years after the 27 August 2010 promulgation of Kenya's Constitution, the Not More Than Two-Thirds Gender Principle awaits full implementation — with new political goodwill offering hope.

For over 15 years, successive Parliaments have failed to enact the law despite repeated court directives. The most notable intervention came in September 2020, when former Chief Justice David Maraga advised President Uhuru Kenyatta to dissolve Parliament for its persistent non-compliance — a bold, unprecedented move highlighting a constitutional crisis and political inertia. Legal challenges followed, and Parliament remained intact.

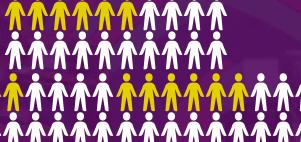
Today, the political landscape shows renewed goodwill. Parties across the spectrum have expressed willingness to collaborate on legislative solutions to finally implement the gender rule, signaling a potential end to the long stalemate. Lawmakers, civil society, and gender advocates are convening under the guidance of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) to harmonize amendment bills, set clear timelines, and ensure Kenya's constitutional promise transitions from paper into practice. Page 5.

23.5%

Women hold 82 out of 349 seats in the National Assembly (23.5%)



21 out of 67 seats in the Senate (31.3%)





Crossing Borders, Bridging Gaps: NGEC Shares Kenya's Equality Blueprint with Cameroon



Fighting SGBV Head-On: NGEC Empowers Makueni Duty Bearers

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Counting What Matters: Women's Invisible Labour Exposed

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A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Kenya is standing at a moment of constitutional clarity. As the nation reviews the Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill (No. 2 of 2025) and the Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill, 2025, we are reminded that gender balance in leadership is not an aspiration — it is a constitutional guarantee long overdue. These reforms bring us closer to fulfilling the promise of the 2010 Constitution: a Kenya where representation reflects reality, and every voice counts.

But the quest for equality extends well beyond legislative chambers. It must take root in our classrooms — in the spaces where identity, confidence, and human potential are first shaped. At the KEPSHA National Conference, I reaffirmed what I deeply believe: CBE cannot transform Kenya unless gender equity becomes its heartbeat. True systemic change depends on schools where boys and girls learn without bias, lead without restraint, and dream without ceilings.



The Commission remains committed to strengthening this agenda across all sectors. Whether we are working on legislative reforms, championing educational inclusion, or protecting the rights of vulnerable communities, our focus remains constant: building a Kenya where equality is lived, not merely promised.

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

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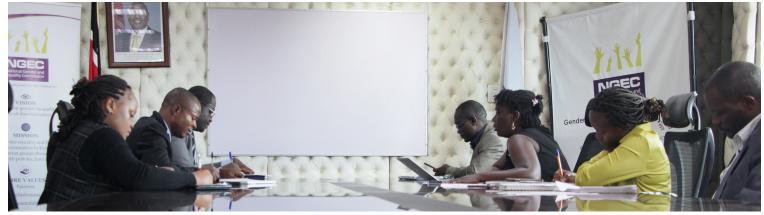
Dr. Margaret Karungaru, **MBS**Commissioner





Kenya Shows the Way: NGEC Hosts Cameroonian Delegation on Governance, Fairness and Inclusion

Benchmarking visit highlights Kenya's strides in promoting equality, protecting vulnerable groups, and strengthening accountability in public institutions.



. Yang Francis Fombi (left) of Cameroon's Public Independent Conciliator Office, with NGEC officials during a benchmarking visit

promoting gender equality, fairness, and in governance following engagement between the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) and a delegation from the Office of the Public Independent Conciliator (PIC), North West Region of Cameroon, led by Dr. Yang Francis Fombi.

The delegation visited Kenya to benchmark institutional practices, explore mechanisms for safeguarding the rights of special interest groups, and understand the legal and operational frameworks that enable NGEC to promote equity and accountability.

The engagement provided an opportunity to examine Kenya's multi-layered approach to governance, combining legal oversight, policy advisory functions, and civil society ~

insights on handling complaints and and marginalized groups. investigations, emphasizing that timely, ensuring equality.



Delegates observed how integrates oversight mechanisms with interventions to equitable access for women, youth,

Kenya has emerged as a leading example in engagement. NGEC's Legal team shared persons with disabilities, children, minorities,

transparent, and fair processes are The visit underscored the importance of crossessential for protecting rights and border collaboration in enhancing governance and institutional capacity. By sharing Kenya's experiences, Cameroon's delegation was able to benchmark strategies for strengthening transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement.

> "By learning from Kenya's successes and challenges, institutions across the region can enhance their capacity to implement inclusive and equitable governance," Dr. Fombi stated.

> NGEC and PIC discussed ongoing collaboration, joint research, and capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening public institutions and fostering trust between citizens and the state.

Bridging Justice Gaps: NGEC Empowers Makueni Duty Bearers on SGBV

Response

Public education forum and legal aid clinics strengthen mechanisms to protect survivors and enhance access to justice

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) has intensified efforts to enhance justice reform and service delivery in tackling Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Makueni County. Led by Commissioner Nzomo Mbithuka, the Commission facilitated a public education forum targeting duty bearers to strengthen institutional responses and ensure effective protection for survivors.

"Justice is only meaningful when it is accessible, timely, and responsive to those most vulnerable," said Commissioner Mbithuka during the forum.

The engagement brought together local leaders, law enforcement officers, social service providers, and legal practitioners to discuss practical measures for improving responses to SGBV cases affecting Special Interest Groups (SIGs), including women, youth, persons disabilities, marginalized populations.

Central to the discussions was the these populations to SGBV. development of effective strategies



for preventing, reporting, and responding to SGBV. The forum and clinics specifically Special Interest Groups, recognizing the heightened vulnerability of





Silent Voices, Shattered Barriers: NGEC Pushes for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Kisumu



Davis from the Kisumu Regional Office and other participants at the dialogue forum

by the National Gender and Equality decision-making platforms. Commission (NGEC) Kisumu Regional participatory governance, and protection directly affect their lives. for women and girls facing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

youth with disabilities face limited tailored communication channels. access to quality schooling, lack of inclusive materials, and insufficient teacher training in sign language and adaptive methodologies.

For the Deaf Community, challenges are particularly acute. Many schools lack qualified instructors, interpreters, and assistive devices, leaving students reliant on informal networks or family members to access education.

adulthood, limiting opportunities for sexual economic independence. not merely a policy requirement but a recourse. human rights imperative, critical to potential and ensuring NGEC meaningful participation in society.

Equally pressing is the systemic~

In a groundbreaking dialogue convened exclusion of PWDs from county development and

Office, stakeholders gathered to examine Despite legal mandates for inclusive governance, the systemic barriers that continue to many PWDs report being left out of consultations, marginalize PWDs, with a focus on budgetary planning, and oversight committees, ensuring equitable access to education, effectively silencing their perspectives on policies that

The dialogue stressed that inclusion in governance is essential for responsive, accountable, and equitable Education remains a formidable barrier development. Stakeholders called for structured for many PWDs in Kisumu. Despite mechanisms that ensure PWDs' active engagement, constitutional guarantees, children and including accessible meeting spaces, interpreters, and



The forum also shed light on the heightened These educational inequities extend into vulnerability of women and girls with disabilities to gender-based and violence employment, civic participation, and Participants emphasized that exclusion from decision-NGEC making and lack of awareness exacerbate risks, highlighted that inclusive education is leaving survivors without adequate protection or

> stressed that inclusive information dissemination is critical, advocating for sign language interpretation, accessible written materials, and community-based outreach programs.

Empowering Youth: NGEC and Partners **Equip Korogocho** Leaders on GBV and SRHR

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), in collaboration with the Women Peace Climate Resilience Justice Association, Miss Koch Kenya, and supported by the Hanns Foundation Kenya, convened a youth engagement forum at the AYiera Initiative Children and Youth Empowerment and Development Centre in Korogocho, Nairobi.



The forum aimed to equip young leaders with the knowledge, skills, and capacity to understand, prevent, and respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV), femicide, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

The engagement brought together youth leaders, community advocates, and stakeholders to discuss practical strategies for addressing GBV, femicide, and SRHR affecting challenges voung people. rights-based Sessions focused on approaches, preventive strategies, and advocacy skills, enabling participants to spearhead community awareness campaigns and influence positive change.

The forum provided a platform for interactive discussions, skill-building exercises, and youth-led presentations, creating opportunities for participants to design initiatives that resonate with local realities and address pressing issues within their communities.

The initiative emphasized that youth are pivotal in shaping community norms and driving societal change.





Securing Justice for Every Child: How Courts and Communities Are **Championing Child Protection**

NGEC joins forces with Court Users Committees to tackle abuse, promote awareness, and strengthen access to justice for children in Kenya

In a decisive display of collaboration between justice institutions and local communities, the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) joined members of the Court Users Committees (CUC) at Malindi and Kitui Law Courts to launch the Children Service Month under the national theme, "Securing Justice for Every Child."

The launches, held in Garashi Location, Public procession at Kitui Law Courts during the launch of Children Service Month Kitui Law Courts, brought together judges, government officials, civil society actors, and community representatives. The events were Along the route, officials engaged directly with members. aimed at raising awareness of children's rights, expanding access to legal services, and reaffirming the shared responsibility of safeguarding Kenya's youngest citizens.

Lucy Gitare led a vibrant public procession,



Magarini Sub-County, Malindi, and at the transforming the legal advocacy campaign into a received moving, participatory civic spectacle.

parents, guardians, and youth, providing practical guidance on children's rights, parental responsibilities, and the statutory protections offered under the Sexual and social services engaged, the girl Offences Act, Children's Act, and related legislation.

At the Kitui launch, Hon. Presiding Judge The procession highlighted the Commission's empowerment approach: combining statutory frameworks with ~

grassroots mobilisation to make the law accessible, understandable, and actionable for ordinary citizens.

The Children Service Month also showcased tangible results of child protection interventions. In Garashi, a 14-year-old girl, rescued from a household where she was denied education and subjected to abuse, legal support counselling services coordinated through NGEC and local CUC

With access to education reinstated is now enrolled in school and participating in community programs for vulnerable youth.

Uniting Against GBV in Isiolo: Commission and Partners Strengthen Community **Protection Systems**

NGEC and Plan International Kenya collaborate to enhance reporting, accountability, and survivor-centred interventions in counties with cross-border vulnerabilities

The Isiolo Regional Office of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) hosted a delegation from Plan International Kenya, including representatives from Somalia, in a strategic engagement aimed at strengthening community-based responses to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the Horn of Africa.

The meeting focused on enhancing reporting pathways, community feedback mechanisms, and survivor-centred interventions, underscoring a shared commitment to ensure that the voices of vulnerable populations inform justice processes and social protection strategies.

Isiolo County, situated at Kenya's northern corridor, is uniquely characterized by crossborder mobility, pastoralist livelihoods, and socioeconomic vulnerabilities, which compound the risks of GBV. Reports from community-based organizations indicate that women and girls frequently face sexual violence, domestic abuse, and early marriage, while access to justice remains limited due to cultural stigma, remoteness, and lack of awareness.



NGEC Isiolo Regional Office officials and Plan International Kenya representative

A case study from Garba Tula subcounty highlights these challenges. A young mother, Fatima*, was unable to report repeated domestic abuse because the nearest police station was more than fifty kilometres away, and cultural norms discouraged women from speaking out. Intervention by a communitybased paralegal program, supported by NGEC and Plan International, helped Fatima access legal counsel, medical care, and psychosocial support, demonstrating the critical role of localized, survivor-focused initiatives.

Similarly, in Isiolo town, adolescent girls in informal settlements face sexual harassment and exploitation during commutes to school. Community forums facilitated by NGEC have enabled survivors to report incidents safely, while raising awareness among parents, teachers, and local authorities. These examples illustrate the urgent need for robust reporting and support systems.

Plan NGEC and International discussed mechanisms for harmonized reporting. knowledge exchange, and regional policy alignment, ensuring that interventions are not confined by administrative borders. This approach strengthens accountability and ensures that prevention and response mechanisms are consistent across communities.

By fostering partnerships with development actors such as Plan International, the Commission continues to advance inclusive protection systems, strengthen accountability mechanisms, and ensure that marginalized groups have equitable access to justice.





SSS CONTINUATION

Clock Ticking on Equality: Leaders Push for Two-Thirds Gender Rule

Compliance

NGEC with support from UN Women gathered Members ofParliament. policymakers, gender equality advocates, Special Interest Group (SIG) representatives and civil society to thrash out how Kenya will finally implement the long-promised Not More Than Two-Thirds Gender Principle. The engagement reviewed two competing constitutional amendment bills before Parliament and focused on the practical modalities, timelines and political strategy required to move the principle from constitutional aspiration to enforceable reality.



NGEC Vice Chairperson

The meeting, described by NGEC's Vice-Chair Thomas Koyier as a "critical push" on behalf of Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to ensuring that the two-thirds requirement is not merely rhetorical but translated into concrete systems of representation and redress. "Achieving the two-thirds gender principle is a constitutional obligation and essential for strengthening our democracy," Koyier told participants.

Two bills, one goal - and practical differences

Parliament currently considers at least two constitutional amendment instruments that seek to give effect to the gender threshold: The Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (National Assembly Bill) and The Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2025 (Senate Bill). Both bills propose mechanisms to attain gender parity but on technical design nomination formulas and special seats to whether seats will be allocated through party lists, county delegations or specific nomination formulas that kick in only when an elective house falls short of the threshold.



certainty (so amendments cannot be easily challenged), political practicability (how to build the required support across and regions), and fairness (ensuring measures do not entrench patronage or undermine constituency representation). A parliamentary bills digest prepared for legislators highlights potential procedural hurdles — including reconciliation of House amendments and the timing of implementation vis-à-vis election cycles.

Implementing the two-thirds principle requires not only technical wording but political votes: some constitutional changes need a two-thirds majority in each House and, depending on the clause, possibly additional thresholds or countybased majorities. Speakers at the meeting stressed harmonisation of the bills and cross-party coalition building as essential.



KEWOPA representative Hon. Donya Dorice Aburi reminded the audience that the rule is "not a request constitutional guarantee" whose realisation has been delayed for more than a decade and a half. She urged lawmakers to mobilise across party lines to secure the numbers required for amendment.

drafting the implementation A recent Two-Thirds Analysis Report commissioned modalities face competing priorities: legal in 2025 maps legal options, institutional roles and implementation scenarios. The report underscores that there is no single silver-bullet: countries use a mix of reserved seats, top-up mechanisms and party quotas, each with trade-offs in terms of legitimacy, voter representation and administrative complexity. Kenva's 2010 Constitution envisaged the principle but left Parliament to fashion the practical mechanisms — a vacuum that successive parliaments have struggled to fill. The 2025 report recommends a hybrid model that combines special seats with a clear formula for top-up nominations and sunset clauses to ensure the solution is transitional rather than permanent.

> The parliamentary bills reflect some of those prescriptions: the Senate bill proposes formulaic nominations to top up representation where either House falls short, while the National Assembly bill sets out alternative party-list approaches. Both aim to avoid requiring a referendum by relying on parliamentary amendment procedures, but each path carries constitutional and political tests that must be navigated carefully.

> Analysts noted the practical and symbolic costs of continuing delay. Studies and opinion pieces have argued that the failure to meet the two-thirds threshold undermines governance quality, excludes half the population from leadership pipelines, and diminishes Kenya's international credibility on gender rights. Economically, diversity in leadership correlates with broader development gains, while politically, exclusion fuels disenchantment with democratic institutions.

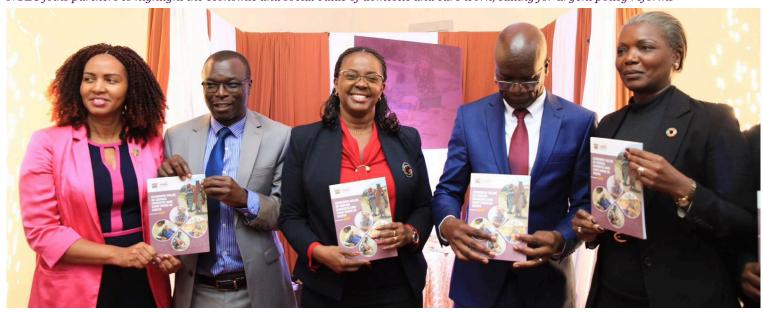
> For fifteen years Kenya has lived with a constitutional promise whose delivery has been deferred; the current window — with two bills before Parliament and heightened civil society pressure - offers a rare chance to convert principle into practice.





Counting the Invisible: Women's Unpaid Labour Exposed in Landmark Report

NGEC joins partners to highlight the economic and social value of domestic and care work, calling for urgent policy reforms



PS Anne Wang'ombe and other leaders at the launch of the "Economic Value of Unpaid Domestic and Care Work in Kenya,

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) The statistics are more than numbers; women spend more time on domestic participated in the launch of the "Economic Value of they reflect lived realities. In Nairobi's responsibilities and less time on income-Unpaid Domestic and Care Work in Kenya 2025", a informal settlements, Mary, a mother of landmark report developed jointly by the Kenya three, manages cooking, cleaning, and National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), the Ministry of child care, while working a casual job to Gender and Affirmative Action, UN Women, and Sweden Sverige.

The report reveals that women in Kenya spend 25.8 billion hours annually on unpaid domestic and care work, equivalent to 23.1% of Kenya's GDP. These invisible hours - dedicated to child care, elder care, household chores, and family wellbeing - are critical to sustaining society, yet remain largely unrecognized in economic and policy planning.



Unpaid domestic and care work is often invisible, yet it forms the backbone of communities. Globally, women shoulder the majority of these responsibilities, a trend confirmed by International Labour Organization (ILO) studies, which note that women perform up to threequarters of unpaid care work worldwide.

In Kenya, the consequences are profound. Women who devote hours to caregiving and household management face reduced opportunities for formal employment, entrepreneurship, and education. This inequity perpetuates gender gaps in income, leadership, and social mobility, and undermines national productivity.

meet her family's needs. The eight hours she dedicates daily to household care are unseen, unvalued, and unpaid, yet they sustain her family and community.

International examples provide roadmap for reform. Sweden and Norway have successfully implemented policies to redistribute unpaid care work, including extensive parental leave for both genders, subsidized childcare, and integration of unpaid work into national economic surveys. Canada similarly recognizes unpaid care in policy frameworks and social protection schemes.

Failing to account for unpaid care work has profound implications. Women's constrained participation in the formal workforce reduces household income, national productivity, perpetuates gender inequality. At a social level, children may experience reduced access to quality education and health services, while the elderly lack adequate care.

The economic invisibility of care work also exacerbates gender pay gaps, as

generating activities. Research from the UN Women Global Gender Gap Report indicates that countries failing to redistribute unpaid care work experience slower economic growth and reduced female labour participation, a trend reflected in Kenya's persistent gender disparities employment leadership.



Participation in this launch underscores NGEC's commitment to women's labour is recognized, protected, and fairly compensated, translating constitutional rights into societal outcomes.

Recognizing unpaid care work is essential for realizing Article 27 of the Constitution, which guarantees equality and freedom from discrimination, and aligns with Kenya's commitments to Sustainable Development particularly Goal Five on gender equality and women's empowerment.





Equity at the Chalkface: DrPurityNgina Champions Gender Justice in Education

Inclusive classrooms, responsive pedagogy and systemic reform featured in keynote at KEPSHA 2025



Dr Purity Ngina addressing school heads at the KEPSHA National Annual Conference in Mombasa

At the Kenya Primary School Heads Research Center (APHRC) highlights Association (KEPSHA) National Annual that boys and girls continue to Conference 2025, school leaders from experience unequal treatment in learning across the country gathered in Mombasa to environments. Disparities manifest in deliberate on sustainable education, teacher attention, resource allocation, gender equity, and Competency-Based participation in STEM activities, and Education (CBE). The event marked a opportunities for leadership. pivotal moment in the national dialogue on how education systems can be truly Girls in many primary and secondary inclusive and transformative.

Commission (NGEC) Secretary, Dr Purity and Ngina, delivered a keynote address that opportunities, while boys are often left no room for ambiguity: gender equity shielded from engaging in domestic is central to Kenya's educational reform.

"When schools treat all learners fairly, they rooted unleash human potential, strengthen trust, unconscious biases that shape teacher and ensure lasting change," Dr Ngina behaviour and classroom interactions. emphasized.

Equity as a Catalyst for Systemic Change that all learners can participate and CBE Sustainability," stressed that meaningfully, develop competencies, and equity is not a peripheral concern but the exercise agency within the learning foundation upon which the sustainability process. Without deliberate attention to of CBE and systemic transformation rests.

Despite remarkable strides in enrolment, practical tool for transformation. gender disparities remain entrenched in classrooms across the country. Research by Competency-Based Education aims to the African Population and Health ~

schools are still underrepresented in The National Gender and Equality science laboratories, leadership roles, extra-curricular **STEM** sciences or health-related subjects. These imbalances are compounded by deepsocial expectations

Inclusive education is not simply about Her address, themed "Harnessing Gender access to classrooms; it is about ensuring gender equity, CBE risks becoming a theoretical framework rather than a

shift focus from rote learning to skills

development, critical thinking, and learner agency. Yet, evidence from Kenyan schools indicates that many educators are ill-equipped to integrate genderresponsive teaching methods into CBE. This gap highlights the critical need for teacher training that incorporates awareness of gender dynamics, inclusive pedagogical strategies, and participatory learning techniques.

Dr Ngina underscored that schools must foster environments where gender stereotypes are actively challenged, resources are distributed equitably, and leadership opportunities are accessible to all learners. Creating such inclusive spaces strengthens trust, cultivates confidence, and ensures that every child's potential is fully realized.

School leadership is central to embedding equity in education. Dr Ngina's address urged heads of institutions to champion inclusive policies, monitor classroom practices, and lead cultural shifts within schools. By prioritizing equity, school leaders help shape a culture where learning, participation, and achievement are not determined by gender or social background.

Equally important is the integration of equity-focused research and data into decision-making. Monitoring participation rates, performance outcomes, and learner engagement across gender lines ensures that policies are informed by evidence and that systemic gaps are addressed proactively.

The KEPSHA 2025 conference provides an essential platform for policy dialogue, professional collaboration, and shared learning among school leaders and educators. Dr Ngina's participation reflects the NGEC's commitment to transforming gender equity from policy rhetoric into practical, measurable outcomes within classrooms.

For Kenya's education system, sustainability hinges on creating inclusive classrooms, empowering teachers with gender-sensitive tools, and cultivating learning environments where all children-regardless of gender or background—can thrive. Equity is not merely aspirational; it is the cornerstone of effective CBE and the foundation for a more just, capable, and resilient

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