



# Equality Bulletin



## “Empowering Resilience: Isiolo’s Youth Pioneering Disaster Risk Reduction Efforts”

### TOP NEWS

- NGEK’s Leadership in Gender-Responsive Climate Action: Leading Kenya’s gender-focused initiatives for COP29.
- Empowering the Future: Girls in Malindi advocate for change.
- Bridging the Gap: The Pastoralist Leadership Summit promotes gender equality and youth empowerment.
- Empowering Resilience: Isiolo’s youth lead disaster risk reduction efforts.
- Empowering Indigenous Voices: Indigenous communities play a key role in fighting climate change.
- Breaking Ground on Justice: Reforming Kenya’s sexual offences laws begins in Machakos.

In the quiet, sun-drenched plains of Isiolo County, a ripple of voices and laughter echoed through the grounds of Akadeli Primary School, transforming the modest rural institution into a beacon of hope. Stakeholders gathered to commemorate the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDRR), a day dedicated to raising awareness and inspiring action to mitigate disaster risks.

Against the arid backdrop of Burat Ward, the event, hosted by the National Drought Management Authority (**NDMA**), was a powerful reminder that resilience can be cultivated in even the most challenging environments.

The theme of this year’s IDRR, “Empowering the Next Generation for a Resilient Future,” resonated deeply with the young faces gathered at the school.

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## A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the second edition of the Equality Bulletin. The response to our inaugural issue has been overwhelmingly positive, and it underscores the significance of this publication as a powerful tool for our mission. With each edition, we are building a legacy of information, advocacy, and collaboration that will strengthen NGEK's role as a pivotal voice in gender equality and inclusion in Kenya.

As we move forward, the Equality Bulletin will continue to highlight our strides across multiple sectors, emphasizing our work in policy reforms, community outreach, and partnerships aimed at advancing equity. By documenting our achievements, we not only enhance visibility but also inspire actionable insights and foster an informed community dedicated to tackling inequalities. This publication is designed to serve as a reference for our shared vision, spotlighting stories that exemplify resilience, progress, and innovation.

I encourage each member of our team to view this bulletin as your platform. I urge you to share your technical insights, write columns, pen articles, and showcase how your efforts drive us closer to our goals. To our valued partners, your contributions are equally welcome; your collaborative projects and insights help paint a fuller picture of our shared commitment to an inclusive society.

Let us continue to harness the power of communication, using each edition of the Equality Bulletin to inspire, inform, and bring about meaningful change.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to this journey toward a fairer, more inclusive Kenya.

Warm regards,

**Dr. Purity Ngina, PhD**

Chief Executive Officer

**National Gender and Equality Commission**



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## NGEC Champions Gender-Responsive Climate Action as Kenya Gears up for COP29 and Launches National Gender and Climate Change Action Plan

As global climate change continues to disproportionately affect vulnerable groups, the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) has taken on a pivotal role in ensuring that Kenya's climate policies are both inclusive and gender-responsive. This commitment was recently demonstrated at two key events: the COP29 Country Position Drafting workshop and the inception of Kenya's National Gender and Climate Change Action Plan (NGCCAP) 2024-2027.

At the COP29 Country Position Drafting workshop, held at Maanzoni Lodge, NGEC championed the inclusion of gender and marginalized groups in Kenya's climate action strategy. Focusing on "Harnessing Equity and Inclusion in Global Environmental Governance," NGEC's advocacy ensured that the impacts of climate change on women, youth, persons with disabilities, and indigenous communities are central to the country's climate agenda. This effort aligns with the Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender, which has emphasized the need for gender-responsive policies in global climate governance.



NGEC Head of Gender and Women Division Tabitha Nyambura facilitates a session on gender-responsive climate action advocating for the inclusion of women, youth, and marginalized communities

NGEC highlighted several critical issues, including the need for gender-disaggregated data that goes beyond age and sex to include ability, geography, and other intersecting factors. This nuanced approach is necessary to tailor climate responses to the specific vulnerabilities of different groups.

In addition, the Commission called for gender-responsive climate finance, advocating for simplified access to resources for women, youth, and marginalized communities who are on the frontlines of climate-related disasters.

The Commission also underscored the importance of translating climate strategies into formats accessible to persons with disabilities, making inclusivity a principle rather than a formality. By pushing for gender-responsive indicators to track the implementation of climate policies, NGEC is ensuring that progress is measurable and impactful, particularly for those most affected by climate change.

Parallel to the COP29 preparation, Kenya has embarked on developing its first National Gender and Climate Change Action Plan (NGCCAP) 2024-2027, a comprehensive framework that will guide gender-inclusive climate action over the next three years. This plan is a testament to Kenya's commitment to embedding gender equity into its climate policies, particularly under the directives of the 2016 Climate Change Act and Vision 2030.

The inception workshop, held from October 14-18, 2024, brought together a wide array of stakeholders, including key ministries, international organizations, and civil society. The aim is to mainstream gender considerations across sectors such as agriculture, energy, and health, all of which are heavily impacted by climate change.

NGEC's role in the NGCCAP development is central, ensuring that the concerns of marginalized groups—especially women, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities—are adequately reflected in the plan. The commission will lead public consultations to gather input from these communities, ensuring their participation in shaping the country's climate policies. This plan will promote inclusive resilience strategies, particularly in access to climate-smart technologies and resources.

As Kenya prepares for COP29 and moves forward with the NGCCAP, NGEC's leadership is crucial in steering the country toward a future where gender equity is at the heart of climate governance. By advocating for inclusive policies, equitable access to climate finance, and robust monitoring systems, NGEC is ensuring that Kenya's climate resilience strategies leave no one behind. This approach not only strengthens Kenya's position on the global stage but also sets a precedent for integrating gender and social inclusion into national and international climate action.

## Empowering Resilience: Isiolo's Youth Lead the Way in Disaster Risk Reduction



Isiolo Office Regional Head Nahashon Lotaruk (center) engages with participants at the forum, fostering collaboration and dialogue for a brighter future.

Isiolo County, like much of Northern Kenya, has borne the brunt of recurrent droughts, and nowhere is this hardship felt more acutely than among vulnerable populations. Children, youth, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities have become familiar with the devastating impacts of water scarcity, food insecurity, and heightened risks of gender-based violence during prolonged droughts.

Yet, amid these challenges, the event was a celebration of hope and a call to action, focusing on equipping the next generation with the tools they need to confront these disasters head-on.

Representatives from various organizations, including NGEK, USAID, Action Against Hunger, the Meteorological Department, and faith-based and civil society organizations, were in attendance, reaffirming their commitment to empowering communities.

The gathering highlighted the essential role schools play in shaping resilient futures, underscoring that education is not just about imparting knowledge but about safeguarding lives. Schools, it was emphasized, must be safe havens, spaces where children can not only learn but also be protected from the looming threats of disaster.

For the students of Akadeli Primary School, the day's activities were a blend of learning and empowerment. The importance of early warning systems was driven home, with the message clear: knowledge is power, and timely access to information can save lives. For Northern Kenya's youth, understanding the risks they face and knowing how to act in times of crisis is no longer a luxury—it is a necessity.

But the day was not just about awareness; it was about inclusion. NGEK's presence at the event was a powerful statement, reinforcing the Commission's commitment to protecting Special Interest Groups (SIGs) in disaster risk reduction (DRR) efforts.

Children with disabilities, young girls, and other marginalized groups are often the most affected when disasters strike, and yet, they are too often left out of conversations on disaster preparedness. This is a reality NGEK is determined to change. Through advocacy and policy interventions, the Commission ensures that vulnerable groups are not just beneficiaries of DRR strategies but active participants in shaping them.

As the day's discussions unfolded, it became evident that protecting children and youth from disasters, particularly within the school environment, must be a priority. Schools, after all, are the heart of communities, and by safeguarding them, entire families and neighborhoods can be shielded from the worst effects of disasters. The call for child-centered DRR policies echoed throughout the event, with speakers emphasizing the need for governments and organizations to integrate the unique needs and vulnerabilities of children into disaster preparedness and climate adaptation plans.



The event also shone a spotlight on successful disaster risk reduction strategies that have already taken root across the region. From early warning systems that alert communities before a drought worsens, to school programs that educate young people on climate resilience, there were many stories of triumph shared. Yet, the underlying message was clear: more needs to be done. Every child, regardless of their background, deserves the right to safety, security, and a voice in decisions that affect their future.

By the end of the day, the air was filled with a renewed sense of purpose. As the children of Akadeli Primary School made their way home, they carried with them not just the lessons learned, but a new sense of empowerment. In a world where disasters are becoming more frequent and severe, equipping the next generation with the knowledge and tools to confront these challenges is not just an act of education—it is an investment in the future.

In Isiolo, that future may still be fraught with uncertainties, but as the IDDRR commemoration revealed, it is also full of hope. Through the collective efforts of NDMA, NGEK, and all the stakeholders involved, there is a growing belief that even the most vulnerable communities can become resilient.



## Bridging the Gap: Pastoralist Leadership Summit Prepares for Gender Equality and Youth Empowerment

Recently key stakeholders gathered in Nairobi, united by a shared vision: to shape the conversations that will steer Kenya's pastoralist communities toward gender equality, youth engagement, and social transformation. The Drylands Learning & Capacity Building Initiative (DLCI), acting as the Secretariat for the Pastoralist Parliamentary Group (PPG), alongside the Northern Frontier Development Council, convened a preparatory meeting for the upcoming Pastoralist Leadership Summit (PLS), 2024.

As the date for the summit nears — set for November 28-30, 2024, in Wajir — the purpose of this preparatory session was clear: to strategize on the pressing issues affecting pastoralist communities, focusing on gender equality, youth development, and emerging social challenges. Key participants included representatives from the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), the State Department of Gender and Affirmative Action, NAMATI, Frontier Counties Development Council, and other civil society organizations with a vested interest in pastoralist affairs.



**Participants at the preparatory meeting for the Pastoralist Leadership Summit 2024, focusing on gender equality and youth empowerment in Kenya's pastoralist communities.**

The Pastoralist Parliamentary Group (PLS) first created the Pastoralist Leadership Summit in 2013 as a leadership forum designed to connect with devolved governance structures.

Over the years, it has been a critical platform for realigning pastoralist voices with national policy, amplifying their concerns on issues such as peace and security, climate change, and land rights. The 2024 summit, under the theme "Unlocking Policy and Financial Bottlenecks to Maximize Pastoralism Potential in Kenya," promises to delve deeper into these matters, with a renewed emphasis on gender, youth, and emerging social issues.

A key point of focus during the meeting was the glaring gender disparity in elective positions within Kenya's Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) counties. Participants acknowledged that patriarchal systems continue to undermine women's political representation and societal contributions.

Despite the challenges, there was an urgent call to elevate women's roles in leadership, particularly in county assemblies, which currently have very few elected female representatives.

The meeting highlighted the pressing need for safe houses and shelters for victims of gender-based violence (GBV), a rampant issue in many pastoralist regions. In addition, the lack of accessible legal services and paralegals for GBV cases remains a critical gap.

The meeting urged the fast-tracking of gender justice courts in pastoralist regions to expedite GBV cases and provide survivors with the much-needed psychosocial and legal support.

Furthermore, there was consensus that male engagement is crucial for breaking down ingrained cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequality. Efforts to change the mindsets of both men and women must be concerted and sustained, with a particular focus on grassroots-level engagement.

Furthermore, there was consensus that male engagement is crucial for breaking down ingrained cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequality. Efforts to change the mindsets of both men and women must be concerted and sustained, with a particular focus on grassroots-level engagement. The call to include pastoralist regions in the national GBV action plan, tailored to their unique challenges, was strongly emphasized.

The pastoralist youth were front and center during the deliberations, with concerns raised about the increasing prevalence of drug and substance abuse. The porous borders in pastoralist regions have exacerbated the drug problem, leading to a rise in mental health issues among the youth. Stakeholders agreed that comprehensive mental health services and rehabilitation centers are urgently needed in these areas. There was also a call to strengthen positive parenting practices and gender-sensitive community interventions to address these challenges at their root.

In a bid to find sustainable solutions, the meeting proposed a learning visit to Kwale County, where successful drug rehabilitation programs have already been implemented. Additionally, stakeholders urged the government to increase resource allocation to departments handling youth and drug abuse in pastoralist regions. Programs that promote peer mentorship and school-based counseling were recommended as integral to preventing youth from falling into cycles of addiction and disengagement.

From healthcare access to identity crises, the meeting explored the array of emerging social issues affecting pastoralist communities. Hospitals in remote ASAL regions lack steady electricity and water supplies, which hampers basic medical services such as childbirth and the operation of incubators. The need for scholarships to train local students in medicine and nursing was also underscored as a critical step toward building a self-sustaining healthcare system in these areas.

Registration and documentation processes emerged as another area of concern. Complex procedures, high costs, and the double registration of refugees and host communities with the government and UNHCR have left many individuals in an identity limbo. Children born to Kenyan fathers and refugee mothers face significant challenges in obtaining citizenship. The meeting called for a simplified registration process and the establishment of mobile registration centers in pastoralist regions to mitigate these difficulties.

As Kenya prepares for the 2024 Pastoralist Leadership Summit, the issues discussed at the preparatory meeting serve as a timely reminder of the work that lies ahead. The meeting participants left with a renewed sense of purpose, armed with concrete recommendations to bring forward to the summit in Wajir. With a focus on unlocking the potential of pastoralism through inclusive policies and financial reforms, the summit promises to be a turning point in addressing the unique challenges faced by pastoralist communities.

## Act Now: Annual SRHR & Climate Change Summit 2024

**Kisumu, Kenya** – In a powerful display of advocacy, the Kisumu regional team took center stage at the 2024 Annual Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) & Climate Change Summit. Bringing together voices from diverse sectors, the summit highlighted the critical link between gender equality and climate resilience, emphasizing the need for solutions that address the unique vulnerabilities and strengths of marginalized groups in the face of climate challenges.

The Commission's presence as a key panelist signaled a strong commitment to promoting gender-responsive approaches to climate action. Leading the regional delegation, Davis Okeyo, Kisumu's regional head, underscored the urgent need for inclusive strategies that prioritize both health rights and climate resilience. Okeyo's remarks shed light on the heightened impact of climate change on women, girls, and other vulnerable populations, calling for equitable solutions that address systemic challenges.

"Climate change disproportionately affects women and other marginalized groups," stated Okeyo. "As we address these urgent issues, it is imperative that our responses are not only effective but also equitable, ensuring all voices contribute to shaping sustainable solutions."

The summit, a gathering point for policymakers, environmentalists, and rights advocates, underscored the essential integration of gender into climate policy. Discussions emphasized the importance of creating safe spaces for all individuals, particularly those most affected by climate volatility, to have an active role in decision-making processes.



NGEC Kisumu Region Head Davis Okeyo presents during the 2024 Annual Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) & Climate Change Summit in Kisumu

In its advocacy, the Commission reiterated its pledge to continue embedding gender considerations in climate policies, with a focus on fostering resilience across vulnerable communities. The event underscored the necessity of tailored policies that account for the distinct experiences of women, youth, and marginalized genders, who often bear the brunt of climate-related hardships.

With stakeholders from multiple sectors collaborating on sustainable development and resilience frameworks, the summit marked a significant step toward aligning SRHR priorities with climate action. The Kisumu team's contributions to the summit underscore a commitment to advancing inclusive, evidence-based policies that honor the health and rights of all individuals amid the pressing realities of climate change.

## Stakeholders Trained on Gender-Responsive Climate Information and Services in Nairobi

The IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) concluded a three-day workshop in Nairobi, aimed at strengthening the capacity of key national stakeholders in producing and communicating gender-responsive climate services.

The workshop, held from October 14 to 16, brought together representatives from various government ministries, state agencies, and organizations, including the Ministries of Environment, Health, Energy, Agriculture, and Water, as well as the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), Kenya Red Cross, and the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA).

The event, held under the framework of the Weather and Climate Information Services for Africa (WISER) project, focused on addressing gender disparities in climate service delivery.



Participants from government ministries and organizations gathered for the ICPAC workshop on gender-responsive climate information and services, focused on enhancing stakeholder capacity.

With the growing climate challenges facing Kenya, particularly in agriculture, water, and health, participants were equipped with the skills necessary to integrate gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) across the climate services value chain.

The workshop's objectives included raising awareness on the critical linkages between gender and climate services, addressing gender disparities in access to climate information, and creating a collaborative WISER Kenya GESI network to support continuous integration of GESI considerations in climate advisories.

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Participants also explored the disproportionate effects of climate change on women, indigenous groups, and persons with disabilities, and how mainstreaming gender in climate services can help these groups better adapt to climate impacts. Discussions emphasized the need for gender-disaggregated data, stakeholder participation, and tailored climate information for vulnerable groups.

The workshop covered a wide range of topics, from gender concepts in climate services to action planning and monitoring. Participants committed to applying the skills acquired by actively contributing to the WISER Kenya GESI network and supporting ICPAC activities in counties like Garissa and Tana River, which are especially vulnerable to climate change. This effort forms part of the broader goal of improving access to reliable, early warning services and increasing resilience to extreme weather and climate events for all Kenyans.

## NGEK Advocates for Survivor Empowerment through Entrepreneurial Initiatives

The Commission (NGEK) recently participated in a significant roundtable discussion in Nairobi aimed at promoting the economic empowerment of human trafficking survivors through entrepreneurship.

This event, organized by the Awareness Against Human Trafficking (HAART), convened a diverse array of stakeholders, including Madam Marygorret Mogaka from the Counter Trafficking in Persons Secretariat, Dr. Radoslaw Malinowski from the Polish Aid Project, and H.E. Amb. Mirosław Gojdz from the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Kenya, alongside survivor entrepreneurs eager to discuss pathways to economic recovery.

The discussions centered around strategic approaches to enhance the economic opportunities available to survivors, emphasizing the importance of sustainable solutions.

HAART, a prominent NGO dedicated to combating human trafficking in Eastern Africa, framed the dialogue within the context of the UN Four P's Strategy (Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, and Partnership).

A primary focus of the discussions was the potential impact of financial incentives for businesses that hire survivors versus direct grants for entrepreneurial ventures initiated by survivors themselves.



**Group photo of participants at the Nairobi meeting on empowering human trafficking survivors through entrepreneurship, organized by HAART with NGEK and key stakeholders.**

Participants deliberated on the critical role of corporations in facilitating the economic rehabilitation of survivors and highlighted the necessity of ensuring that empowerment programs are co-created with the input of the survivors, rather than imposed top-down.

The event also provided a platform for survivor entrepreneurs to share their experiences, shedding light on the cultural barriers that impede their economic empowerment. The dialogue underscored the importance of developing long-term career pathways rather than relying solely on short-term job placements.

In addition, the participants explored the potential of technology to create economic opportunities for survivors, while also considering the associated risks that need to be managed.

Discussions included the intersection of race, gender, and socio-economic status, leading to a consensus on the need for tailored empowerment initiatives that address the unique challenges faced by different survivor groups.

NGEK welcomed the opportunity to engage in this important conversation, noting the recent launch of a Kenya Judicial Bench Book on Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation. This resource aims to equip judicial officers with the knowledge necessary to identify and support trafficking victims effectively.

The Commission also reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to the Palermo Protocol, highlighting the country's robust legal framework designed to combat human trafficking.

The Commission emphasized the government's role in creating a conducive environment for all citizens, advocating for regulatory frameworks that ensure safety and job security for those seeking opportunities both domestically and abroad.

The Commission reiterated its commitment to collaborating with both State and non-State actors to promote the principles of equality and non-discrimination, ensuring that the voices and needs of trafficking survivors are prioritized in all economic empowerment initiatives.

The roundtable discussions marked a critical step towards establishing a comprehensive framework for supporting the economic empowerment of trafficking survivors in Kenya, demonstrating a collaborative effort to foster meaningful change in the lives of those affected by human trafficking.

## Empowering the Future: A Girl's Vision for Change in Malindi

In a vibrant celebration of resilience, hope, and determination, the International Day of the Girl Child was marked on October 11, 2024, at the Maono Youth Space in Malindi. The event, hosted by the Judiciary and supported by Maono, brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), the Law Society of Kenya (LSK), the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), Rotary Club, and local organizations, to amplify the voices of young girls and advocate for a brighter, more equal future.

The theme of this year's observance, "Girls' Vision for the Future," set the tone for discussions focused on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and the urgent need to address issues affecting girls in the coastal region of Kilifi, particularly in Malindi. At the heart of the celebration was a powerful commitment to eliminating the entrenched challenges faced by girls, including early marriages, teenage pregnancies, child labor, and lack of access to education.

Hon. Elizabeth Usui, chairperson of the Judiciary's Malindi Court Users Committee, opened the event with a stirring call for equality and justice. She outlined the harsh realities that girls in Malindi face—poverty, gender violence, and social isolation—and urged those present to join forces in creating a safer and more equitable society.

"We must fight for equality and non-discrimination. We owe it to the girls of Malindi to create an environment where they are confident, fearless, and can realize their full potential," she said.

Her words resonated deeply, as representatives from various sectors highlighted their ongoing efforts to combat SGBV, offering legal, healthcare, and social interventions for survivors.



**Participants at the International Day of the Girl Child event in Malindi, including NGEC, LSK, ODPP, and local organizations, unite to amplify young girls' voices and advocate for equality.**

The ODPP representative emphasized the importance of evidence in prosecuting SGBV cases, while the LSK vice chairperson reminded the audience of the free legal aid available to survivors, urging communities to take advantage of these services. The representative from Haki Yetu reinforced the importance of legal empowerment and urged members of the community to become activists for change in their own homes and villages.

NGEC's Kilifi regional coordinator Beatrice Zighe took the opportunity to shed light on advocacy efforts and policy recommendations aimed at gender equality. She encouraged the girls and young women in Kilifi to seize the opportunities available to them, particularly through the devolved funds set aside by the County Government. "Change begins when we empower ourselves with knowledge and share that knowledge with others," she emphasized.

The event also saw contributions from healthcare professionals, human rights activists, and social workers, all advocating for a coordinated approach to tackling SGBV.

The County Department of Health's GBV focal person discussed the comprehensive health services available to survivors, including emergency prevention medicine, mental health support, and forensic evidence collection. However, she noted the challenge posed by a broken age assessment machine at Malindi Sub-county Hospital, which hampers efforts to effectively address cases involving minors.

Red Cross representatives shared their work in supporting survivors through economic empowerment and emergency response services, while the Pope Francis Rescue Center representative spoke about the crucial role shelters play in providing safety and legal assistance to survivors, particularly during court hearings.

As the event drew to a close, stakeholders agreed on the need for continued advocacy for children's rights and a united front against SGBV. Plans were laid out for future sensitization forums in Marafa, aiming to educate communities about children's rights as part of November's Children's Service Month.

The International Day of the Girl Child celebration in Malindi was not just a day of speeches and discussions. It was a powerful reminder that the future belongs to girls who are empowered to speak out, fight for their rights, and envision a world free from violence and discrimination. The collaboration between the judiciary, civil society, and local organizations demonstrated that when communities come together, real change is possible. For the girls of Malindi and beyond, the vision is clear: a future where they are equal, fearless, and unstoppable.



## Empowering Indigenous Voices in the Fight Against Climate Change

In a room filled with the hum of diverse perspectives and united aspirations, representatives from the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), Mainyoto Pastoralists Integrated Development Organization (MPIDO), the World Bank, GIZ, and Africa's Indigenous Peoples in Nairobi.

The technical workshop was a critical step in revisiting the Indigenous Peoples Call to Action, initially presented during the inaugural Africa Climate Summit in 2023. The atmosphere was one of urgency and solidarity as stakeholders sought to build on the momentum of that historic moment.

Hosted by MPIDO, the event saw Indigenous leaders, development partners, and policymakers engage in passionate discussions. Their goal: to ensure that Africa's Indigenous populations—often the first to feel the devastating effects of climate change—are not left behind in the global push for solutions.

This workshop aimed to refine key messages from the previous year's summit, translating them into actionable steps that could be implemented across the continent.

A key objective of the workshop was the review of the outcomes from the Nairobi Climate Summit. This allowed Indigenous organizations to reflect on the progress made and chart a course for stronger engagement with the African Union (AU), regional economic communities (REC), and international institutions such as the United Nations.

It was clear that effective climate action must go beyond rhetoric and declarations. It requires long-term partnerships, investment, and a deep understanding of the lived experiences of Indigenous communities.

The workshop yielded significant recommendations for addressing the pressing challenges of climate financing, renewable energy investments, and biodiversity conservation, with a focus on Indigenous rights.

Stakeholders emphasized the importance of implementing Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes in all projects affecting Indigenous lands by 2025. This would ensure that Indigenous voices are not just heard but respected, particularly in the growing sectors of carbon trading and renewable energy.

The need for equitable climate financing was another critical point of discussion. Participants called for the establishment of an Indigenous-led Climate Fund, aimed at ensuring that 5% of national and global climate finance is directly allocated to Indigenous-driven projects by 2026. This, they argued, would allow Indigenous communities to have a direct say in projects that impact their livelihoods and the ecosystems they have long protected.

In an era where carbon trading and renewable energy are becoming central to climate strategies, Indigenous leaders at the workshop made it clear that they should not be passive beneficiaries but active participants. They proposed creating a benefit-sharing framework and a training program for Indigenous peoples to better understand and engage in carbon trading. This would not only safeguard their rights but also ensure that they reap the economic benefits of these burgeoning industries.

The conversations were forward-looking but grounded in the realities of Indigenous life. The proposed establishment of a biodiversity monitoring program, led by Indigenous communities themselves, reflects a recognition of the invaluable knowledge these populations hold.

Such initiatives, if successfully implemented, could result in a 30% increase in biodiversity indices in participating areas over five years, setting a powerful precedent for Indigenous-led conservation efforts globally.

For NGEC, the workshop emphasized the crucial intersection between gender, equality, and climate change.



NGEC Programme Officer Fanuel Lolopich (third left) articulates key insights during a roundtable discussion with participants, emphasizing the importance of indigenous voices in the fight against climate change.

NGEC's presence and participation in the workshop highlighted its commitment to ensuring that vulnerable and marginalized populations are at the forefront of Kenya's climate agenda.

As the workshop concluded, participants left with a renewed sense of purpose and a shared vision for the future. The Indigenous organizations in attendance are set to take their recommendations to international forums, including the Convention on Biological Diversity in Colombia and the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) in Azerbaijan.

The African Union is expected to take a leading role in implementing these recommendations, with climate change likely to become a central theme for the Union in 2025.

For now, the work continues. The partnerships formed and the commitments made in that room will shape the future of climate resilience across Africa's Indigenous lands. And as these communities stand at the front lines of climate change, their voices, rights, and knowledge will be essential in guiding the path forward.

## Breaking Ground on Justice: The Journey to Overhaul Kenya's Sexual Offences Laws Begins in Machakos



**Stakeholders from NGEK, UNICEF, and the Kenya Law Reform Commission at the NCAJ retreat in Machakos, collaborating to reform Kenya's Sexual Offences Act.**

In the quiet town of Machakos, a group of dedicated legal minds gathered for an intense working retreat. The purpose was singular but monumental: to initiate the process of overhauling Kenya's Sexual Offences Act. Hosted by the National Council on the Administration of Justice (NCAJ), the retreat brought together an array of stakeholders, including UNICEF, the Kenya Law Reform Commission, and the National Council of Children Services. Their mission was not only legal but deeply personal—reshaping laws that affect the most vulnerable members of society.

This gathering marked the beginning of what could be a seismic shift in how sexual offences are legislated in Kenya. Under the leadership of the NCAJ's SGBV Committee, the retreat aimed to draft the first amendment bill to the Sexual Offences Act, a crucial step toward a complete repeal and replacement of the outdated legislation. The task was not just to tweak language, but to reconsider the very framework of laws meant to protect victims, ensure justice, and deter crimes of sexual violence.

On the first day, the Vice Chairperson of the Committee meticulously walked the drafters through the instructions—blueprints for what the new law should achieve. With pens poised, the drafters, some drawn from parliament and the Kenya Law Reform Commission, set to work.

Their efforts weren't just about drafting lines of text but sculpting a legal foundation that could withstand the scrutiny of courts, lawmakers, and the public. Every clause was a battleground for clarity, precision, and justice.

It wasn't smooth sailing. As the drafters worked, they encountered instructions that were unclear, or at times, entirely absent. New issues emerged that had not been anticipated by the original committee guidelines. Instead of abandoning these complexities, the team meticulously packed and tracked these points in a separate document, recognizing that each issue represented a potential hurdle for justice that needed to be addressed before moving forward.

After days of intensive back-and-forth, the first draft of the amendment bill was completed. It was a significant milestone, but not the final step. The draft did not incorporate all the elements of the Cradle Bill—a working document developed to address children's rights within sexual offence laws—but it was a comprehensive start. The work doesn't stop there. The Amendment Bill and a matrix of unresolved issues will now be presented to the larger SGBV Committee for review and guidance.

The team also identified issues that are better handled through policy reforms, regulatory updates, or practice directions rather than legislative changes. What remains is the core task: to refine the bill into a document that can be taken to the Kenyan public for participation, ensuring that it reflects the voices of all those who will be impacted by it.

The drafting team at Machakos laid the groundwork for what could be a transformative shift in Kenya's approach to sexual offences. Their work, though still in its early stages, signals hope for a more just and equitable legal framework, one that better protects the rights and dignity of survivors of sexual violence. The road ahead is long, but this retreat marks the beginning of a journey toward greater justice for all.



## Kilifi County Gender TWG Strengthens Coordination to Tackle Gender Inequality and GBV

The Kilifi County Gender Technical Working Group (TWG) has charted a clear path forward to address rising concerns over gender inequality and gender-based violence (GBV), following its recent meeting. With the Commission (NGEK) taking a lead role in the coordination of these efforts, the meeting underscored the urgent need for enhanced collaboration between state and non-state actors to drive impactful gender equality initiatives.

The Commission which chairs the Equality and Inclusion thematic group, presented a comprehensive report highlighting the challenges faced by special interest groups (SIGs) in accessing essential services like healthcare and education. The Commission emphasized the importance of strengthening advocacy and aligning policy interventions to ensure the voices of these marginalized groups are not only heard but prioritized in decision-making processes.

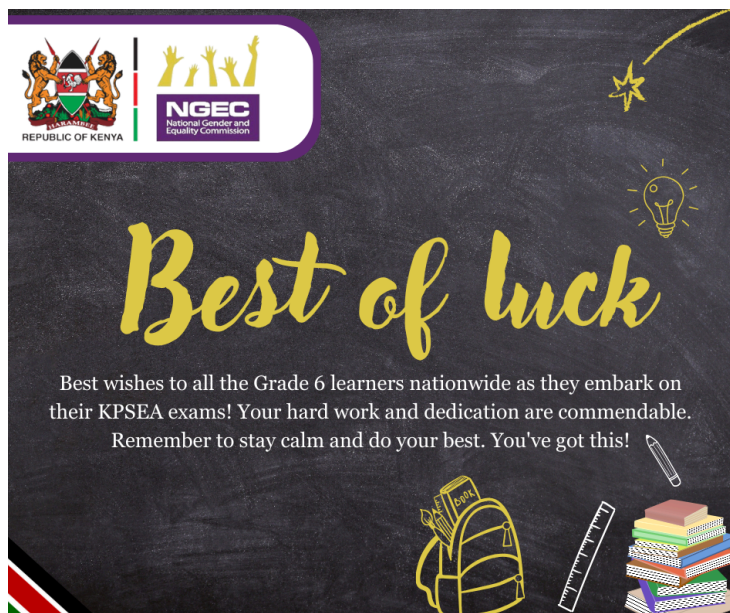
A key outcome of the meeting was the formation of a strategic plan to support the upcoming 16 Days of Activism campaign against GBV. NGEK will play a central role in coordinating county-wide awareness activities and mobilizing stakeholders. With rising GBV cases, particularly involving elderly victims, the meeting called for stronger reporting mechanisms and better support services for survivors. Participants agreed that addressing these issues requires a unified framework, with all actors working together to implement data-driven, evidence-based solutions.

In addition to addressing GBV, the TWG also focused on the economic empowerment of women, recognizing it as a critical component of gender equality. Discussions centered around increasing access to funding and skill development programs for women entrepreneurs, as economic independence was identified as a key driver of women's participation in decision-making.



Members of the Kilifi County Gender Technical Working Group (TWG) pose after a meeting focused on strengthening collaboration to address gender inequality and gender-based violence, with NGEK leading coordination efforts

Legal reforms were another major area of focus, with stakeholders calling for gender-sensitive training for law enforcement and judicial personnel to improve the handling of GBV cases and ensure survivors receive justice. Male involvement in gender advocacy was also highlighted, with strategies shared on how to engage men as allies in promoting gender-sensitive initiatives. This meeting marks a major step toward creating a cohesive and strategic response to gender inequality in Kilifi County, with NGEK firmly positioned at the helm of coordination efforts.





REPUBLIC OF KENYA  
NGEK  
National Gender and Equality Commission

VIRTUAL MEETING:

**CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON ACCESSIBILITY TO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY, AND THOSE WITH LIMITED MOBILITY**

7 NOVEMBER, 2024 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING LINK TO REGISTER AND ACCESS THE MEETING:  
<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/74021dda-741e-4c5f-b364-821da179f75a@ebcd7d35-f8b6-4135-85e3-80230196d951>

SCAN ME:



## Anna Qabale Duba's Educational Model in Marsabit: A Lifeline for Marginalized Families, and Proof of Local Resilience

In the remote village of Torbi, Marsabit County, Anna Qabale Duba, a celebrated nurse and the 2022 Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award winner, has implemented a pioneering educational model that uplifts both children and adults. Her initiative has become a beacon of hope, proving that with local determination and commitment, even the most underserved communities can sustain impactful educational and life-skills programs.

Duba's model, managed through the Qabale Duba Foundation, centers on a community-run school that operates on a unique schedule: children attend classes in the mornings to build critical educational foundations, while adults—primarily parents and caregivers—attend afternoon sessions focused on literacy, health, and empowerment. Topics like maternal and child health, reproductive health, family resilience, and eradicating harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM) are prioritized in these sessions, addressing immediate community needs and promoting transformative cultural shifts.

This October, the village celebrated a major milestone as 42 children and 20 women marked the completion of a school year at Torbi Pioneer Academy. Duba's model stands as a testament to the power of indigenous resilience and locally-led solutions in addressing deep-rooted issues in health, education, and economic empowerment. Through her program, the people of Torbi are seeing the profound impacts of integrated education, with decreases in early marriages and FGM, and a notable increase in hospital deliveries and girls' enrollment in school.

Duba's journey from one classroom made of tin sheets accommodating only six children, to a full-fledged academy with over 350 students, demonstrates a remarkable trajectory of community-driven progress. With the funds from the Aster award and her previous Global Citizen Award, she acquired 40,000 square meters of community land, now home to a proper school with classes from grades one to eight. She has future plans to construct an adult literacy center, a health center, and a hostel for students, solidifying her long-term vision for holistic community development.



**Anna Qabale Duba (right), founder of Torbi Pioneer Academy, poses with students. Her community school model in Marsabit empowers both children and adults through education and health training.**

Duba, who was the first graduate from her village and a Mandela Washington Fellow, leveraged her education and influence to advocate for girls' education and gender equality across Marsabit County. Her foundation not only supports schooling for children but also empowers adults to dismantle harmful cultural norms that hinder progress. As a mother of two, she remains a formidable advocate, not only transforming Torbi but also inspiring other regions to adopt similar models that bridge gaps in education, healthcare, and social justice.

Amid Marsabit's harsh climate and recurring droughts, her initiative offers a glimmer of resilience for families who would otherwise migrate in search of sustenance, often at the cost of their children's education. Thanks to champions like Anna Qabale Duba, communities in Marsabit can now envision a future where education and empowerment become foundational pillars of local resilience.

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