

EQUALITY BULLETIN

Usawa kwa Wote; Equality For All

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THE CASE OF THE ILIMANYANG

A National Gender and Equality Commission mission to Turkana County this month has brought the Ilimanyang, one of Kenya's smallest and most vulnerable minority communities, into the national policy conversation... [Continue to Read...](#)

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EDITORIAL TEAM

The Equality Bulletin is a fortnightly publication of the Public Communications Division, Executive Office of the CEO

> Head of Public Communications :

Daniel Waitere

> Visual Communication Designer:

Elizabeth Kinyua

> Contributors :

Alice Njeri

Eric Muchiri

Risper Micheni

Salome Wanjiku

> Contacts

The National Gender and Equality Commission

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

☎ +254 (709)375100

☎ 0800720187

✉ info@ngeckkenya.org

🌐 www.ngeckkenya.org

✕ [@NGECKENYA](https://twitter.com/NGECKENYA)

📘 [@NGECKKenya](https://www.facebook.com/NGECKKenya)

📺 [@ngeckenyatv](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCq3333333333333333)

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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION SECRETARY / CEO



Welcome to Edition 45 of the Equality Bulletin.

In Edition 44 we introduced you to the Ilimanyang of Kapua, on the shores of Lake Turkana. This edition stays with them. Our special report traces how the Commission's visit placed one of Kenya's smallest communities before the nation. It also sets out the medical assessment we are planning to connect affected families to services long beyond their reach.

We also take you into the South Lokichar oil fields, where families in Kapese fear displacement as production approaches. The Commission has placed their concerns before the responsible duty bearers.

More than 70 political parties have committed to fairer nominations ahead of the 2027 General Election. At the 89th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Senegal, we presented Kenya's record on gender-based violence and the rights of marginalised communities. Stories from Isiolo, Garissa, Kitui, Kisumu and Nakuru complete the edition.

I wish you an insightful read.

PURITY NGINA, PhD, MBS
COMMISSION SECRETARY/CEO
NATIONAL GENDER AND EQUALITY COMMISSION

THE COMMISSION



Hon. Rehema Jaldesa
Chairperson



Thomas Okoth Koyier, **EBS**
Vice Chairperson



Caroline N. Lentupuru, **MBS, HSC**
Commissioner



Dr. Michael Nzomo, **PhD**
Commissioner



Dr. Margaret Karungaru, **MBS**
Commissioner

THE CASE OF THE ILMANYANG

A Commission mission to the shores of Lake Turkana has placed one of Kenya's smallest minority communities before the nation and set in motion a multi-agency medical assessment that could connect affected families to services long beyond their reach.



Members of the Ilimanyang community follow proceedings during the Commission's forum in Kapua.

A National Gender and Equality Commission mission to Turkana County this month has brought the Ilimanyang, one of Kenya's smallest and most vulnerable minority communities, into the national policy conversation.

The Commission's delegation, led by Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, met the community and its representatives in Kapua village on 7 October 2026. The following day, the community's case was before a Cabinet Secretary, the Speaker of the Turkana County Assembly and senior national and county officials.

The engagement formed part of the Commission's mission to Turkana County from 3 to 10 October 2026. The mission assessed the lived experiences of minority and marginalised communities, refugees and host communities, and communities affected by oil and petroleum operations. The encounter with the Ilimanyang came to define it.

Most of the community lives in Kapua, on the remote shores of Lake Turkana, with some members in the neighbouring vil-

lages of Kapora, Kokal and Kalokol in Turkana Central. Families depend almost entirely on small-scale fishing, a livelihood under pressure from diminishing lake resources, recurrent drought and a lack of modern fishing gear.

A DECLARATION IN KAPUA

By a show of hands, community members told the delegation that they lack identity cards, medicine and access to schooling. They then made a declaration: they wish to be recognised as persons with disability, in addition to their status as a minority and marginalised community.

The delegation observed an unusually high prevalence of severe physical disabilities and developmental conditions among community members. The pattern of cases points to a possible hereditary or genetic component that requires specialised medical investigation.

The community has for years drawn attention over recurring reports of a rare condition believed to run in affected family lineages. Community advocates and

medical commentators have linked it to Hypohidrotic Ectodermal Dysplasia, a recognised genetic disorder that medical literature associates with absent or reduced sweat glands, sparse hair and missing or malformed teeth. Affected persons report pouring water over their bodies through the day to stay cool in the intense heat of the lakeshore.

No conclusive medical determination has yet been made. The specific condition, its mode of inheritance, its prevalence and its severity remain unconfirmed. Without that evidence, affected persons have remained outside formal disability registration, specialised care programmes and social protection initiatives.

"They have not known until yesterday that they are persons with disability," Chairperson Jaldesa told Government officials the day after the Kapua meeting. She noted that the Ilimanyang are often confused with the El Molo of Marsabit County, a community she knows through her own ties to Marsabit, and said the two communities are unrelated.

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Support to date has taken two forms. In 2023, the Turkana County Government classified the Ilimanyang as a special affirmative action group for prioritised relief food during severe droughts, and humanitarian organisations have supplied protective skin ointments. Both interventions have eased immediate hardship. The community's structural needs in identification, education, health, water and representation remain largely unmet.

A NATIONAL CONCERN

The Ilimanyang case featured at a high-level meeting with national and county Government officials on Thursday 8 October 2026. Chairperson Jaldesa framed the Commission's findings around a direct test: whether public services reach the communities that are smallest in number and furthest from the centre. She told the meeting that the community numbers about 600 people and that the Commission would carry its declaration to the au-

thorities responsible.

She then made a personal commitment. *"From today, I've decided to be their champion,"* she said. *"As a marginalised woman myself, I am going to use this position. I will be their voice."*

She drew a parallel with persons with albinism, for whom Government provides free sunscreen, and called for researchers to study the community's condition.

..... Continued on page 06



Ilimanyang elders, women and children follow proceedings during the meeting with the Commission in Kapua village.



Cabinet Secretary for East African Community, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands and Regional Development, Hon. Beatrice Askul Moe, addresses the high-level meeting on 8 October 2026.



Speaker of the Turkana County Assembly, Hon. Charles Lokiyoto Ewoi, follows proceedings at the high-level meeting on 8 October 2026.

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Cabinet Secretary for East African Community, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands and Regional Development, Hon. Beatrice Askul Moe, who hails from Turkana, thanked the Commission for bringing the concerns of the communities it met before Government. She noted that her ministry coordinates the development of the arid and semi-arid lands that cover most of Kenya's territory. She committed that relief support would reach the households that need it most, including minority communities, women and households with persons with disabilities, and that Government records which do not capture these families would be corrected. On the Ilimanyang, she indicated her ministry's support for the proposed medical camp.

Speaker of the Turkana County Assembly, Hon. Charles Lokiyoto Ewoi, described the Ilimanyang as *"a special group"* that the County already recognises in employment and decision-making, with members serving in county offices, including his own. He noted that many members cannot eat hard foods and depend on soft diets. He called for affirmative action that would treat an Ilimanyang candidate at a job interview in the same way as a person with disability.

Together, the three positions mark a turning point. The Ilimanyang now stand before national and county decision-makers as rights holders with claims the Constitution already recognises.

Article 27(6) requires the State to take legislative and other measures, including affirmative action, to redress historical disadvantage. Article 56 obliges the State to put in place affirmative action programmes that give minorities and marginalised groups access to education, health, economic opportunities, employment and political representation. Article 204 establishes the Equalisation Fund for basic services in marginalised areas, and Article 260 defines the marginalised communities and groups these protections serve. Under Section 8 of the National Gender and Equality Commission Act, the Commission monitors, coordinates and advises on the mainstreaming of special interest groups, including minority and marginalised communities.

THE MEDICAL CAMP

The Commission resolved during the mission to convene stakeholders on their return to Nairobi, including the National Council for Persons with Disabilities. The Commission is now planning a multi-agency social medical camp in Kapua, bringing together government agencies, medical specialists, disability experts, development partners, academic institutions and humanitarian organisations.

The camp will undertake medical examinations and screening, conduct genetic and clinical assessments where feasible, and establish baseline demographic and health data on affected persons. It will

support disability assessment and categorisation under the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2025, facilitate registration of eligible persons for disability-related services and benefits, and identify immediate medical, rehabilitative and psychosocial support needs. Persons found eligible will receive disability certification, placing them within the category of persons with disability alongside their minority and marginalised status.

Proper classification is the hinge on which the community's prospects turn. Once affected persons are assessed and registered, they become eligible for the disability services and benefits the law provides. Once the community's needs are documented, county and national planners have the evidence to include it in development plans and budgets.

The priorities emerging from the mission are specific: identity documents, education bursaries, health facilities within reach, clean water access points for cooling, specialised dermatological care and protective supplies, affirmative employment, political representation and ring-fenced allocations in the Turkana County Integrated Development Plan.

The same mission that met the Ilimanyang in Kapua also visited communities affected by oil and petroleum operations at Lokichar. In her remarks, the Chairperson reminded leaders that Turkana *"has given Kenya its oil" and "has kept alive communities found nowhere else in this country."*

..... Continued on page 07



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa addresses members of the Ilimanyang community in Kapua village.

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If the commitments made in Turkana this October translate into assessment, registration and sustained investment, the coming ten to fifteen years could produce outcomes Kapua has never seen. A child screened at the medical camp could finish school on a county bursary, graduate from a national university and return home as Turkana's first Ilimanyang oil engineer, doctor or teacher.

"Kenya owes Turkana an equality that arrives in time," the Chairperson said.

The work of counting the Ilimanyang has begun, and the Commission intends to see it through.



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa briefs journalists in Kapua after a public session with the Ilimanyang community.

“

In the eyes of the Constitution, no community is too small to count, and no community is too far to reach.”

Hon. Rehema Jaldesa,
Chairperson, National Gender
and Equality Commission



The Commission delegation at the office of the Turkana South Deputy County Commissioner in Lokichar during a courtesy call.

NGEC ENTERS OIL FIELDS AMID FEARS

On its first visit to the South Lokichar oil blocks, the Commission heard Kapese families who fear displacement, question the land acquisition process and lack water, food and medicine, and pledged to place their concerns before duty bearers.



The Commission delegation tours the Amosing oil block in South Lokichar with Gulf Energy officials.

The National Gender and Equality Commission visited the South Lokichar oil blocks in Turkana South for the first time, touring the Amosing oil block and hearing from Kapese families who fear being displaced by oil drilling.

At Amosing, Gulf Energy is preparing to begin production in November. The Commission assured nearby communities in Kapese that their concerns will be placed before duty bearers for action.

The delegation was led by the Vice Chairperson, Commissioner Thomas Koyier, with Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru and officers of the Commission's Secretariat. They were accompanied by the Turkana South Sub-County security team, led by the Deputy County Commissioner, Mr Gedion Ombongi.

Gulf Energy's Social Performance Manager, Mr John Eris Lothike, took the delegation through the facility. He reiterated the company's commitment to supporting host communities as part of its business model.

THE KAPESE TESTIMONY

At Kapese, the Commission brought the concerns of residents, the national government administration and the company into the same conversation. Residents told the delegation that the processes surrounding the acquisition of their land are not transparent and that the investor has not fully involved the community. They said they fear being displaced to make way for oil drilling.

Elder Lokwang Etidong alleged that corruption has affected the compensation process and called on Gulf Energy to come out clearly on its plans for the community. Another elder, Simon Ekutan, who heads the Kapese settlement, said several delegations had promised to address the community's plight without results. He said dust from oil vehicles is affecting residents' health and that local people have not received the job opportunities they once had under Tullow Oil. He said the community faces water shortages while water is plentiful inside the company's rig site.

Residents also described a lack of water, food, medicine and schools. They said that since disarmament, livestock raids by neighbouring communities have left them exposed, and they alleged mistreatment by officers of the Anti-Stock Theft Unit, including the seizure of livestock.

DUTY BEARERS RESPOND

Vice Chairperson Koyier assured residents that the Commission had recorded their concerns and would place them before the responsible duty bearers for action.

Mr Ombongi acknowledged the residents' concerns and undertook to convene a multi-stakeholder forum to resolve them. He said residents need to understand the laws and guidelines that govern oil exploration, particularly from a national security perspective, and that the deployment of security officers to guard the project should not be cause for worry.

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Elder Lokwang Etidong sets out the community's concerns to the Commission delegation in Kapese.

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He said he will ask Gulf Energy to consider providing piped water to residents, and that the company and the Government will agree on where a health facility can be set up.

THE CHAIRPERSON'S CHARGE

Commission Chairperson Hon. ReHEMA Jaldesa carried the oil question to residents in Lokichar and to national and county Government officials in Lodwar during the same mission.

Addressing the officials in Lodwar on 8 October 2026, she said drilling at South Lokichar resumes on 1 November and that first oil is expected in December. She told them that about 3,600 people face the compulsory acquisition of their land, and that compensation must match the value of that land.

"The time to secure equity is now, before production begins," she said. "The Commission asks that women, youth, persons with disabilities and all the members of the host community have a guaranteed place in the decision on compensation."

She added that employment, local content and community funds must benefit the local community.

Speaking to residents in Lokichar, the Chairperson set out where the law places them. The land is community land. Under the Constitution, the oil beneath it belongs to the national Government. The Petroleum Act, 2019 determines how the community shares in what is extracted, and she told residents that the community's 5 percent share remains in law.

She said she was in Parliament when the Act was passed and was among those who fought for its local content provisions. She acknowledged friction between national and county local content frameworks.

She called for young people to benefit through employment and local content, and asked that a well-built training centre in the area, which has yet to be put into operation, be opened to create opportunities for local youth.

"Those are rights, and we are after rights," she said. *"We are providing your voice. That is why we are here."*

THE MANDATE

The visit forms part of the Commission's mandate to monitor whether women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons and other members of host communities share equitably in the benefits of development,

including compensation, employment and essential services. Land acquisition and compensation fall under the mandate of the National Land Commission.

With production approaching, the decisions on land, compensation, water, health and jobs taken in the coming weeks will determine whether the families of Kapese share in Kenya's oil or carry its costs. The Commission has recorded their testimony and will follow it through with the duty bearers responsible.

“

Benefit that bypasses women and young people will deepen the very inequality this project should help to close.”

Hon. ReHEMA Jaldesa,
Chairperson, National Gender
and Equality Commission

NGEC ENTERS OIL FIELDS AMID FEARS

On its first visit to the South Lokichar oil blocks, the Commission heard Kapese families who fear displacement, question the land acquisition process and lack water, food and medicine, and pledged to place their concerns before duty bearers.



Deputy County Commissioner Mr Gedion Ombongi, who led the Turkana South Sub-County security team, addresses Kapese residents during the Commission's visit.



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, Vice Chairperson Commissioner Thomas Koyier and Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru follow proceedings at a stakeholders' meeting at Aroo Teachers Training College, Lokichar.

NGEC ENTERS OIL FIELDS AMID FEARS

On its first visit to the South Lokichar oil blocks, the Commission heard Kapese families who fear displacement, question the land acquisition process and lack water, food and medicine, and pledged to place their concerns before duty bearers.



A Kapese resident makes her point during the Commission's dialogue forum in Lokichar.



A Kapese resident speaks at the Commission's forum on residents' fear of displacement to make way for oil drilling.

OVER 70 PARTIES ENDORSE DECLARATION

The declaration commits political parties to fair nominations, inclusive party organs and protection of special interest group aspirants, with a joint NGECE and ORPP progress review set for February 2027, ahead of the nomination period.



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa holds up a copy of the Declaration on the Inclusion of Special Interest Groups in Political Parties and the 2027 General Election, flanked by political party officials, at Villa Rosa Kempinski, Nairobi, on 14 October 2026.

More than 70 political parties have endorsed a declaration committing them to strengthen the participation of special interest groups in party leadership and nominations ahead of Kenya's 2027 General Election.

The parties endorsed the Declaration on the Inclusion of Special Interest Groups in Political Parties and the 2027 General Election at a high-level policy forum convened by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) and the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP), with support from UN Women, at Villa Rosa Kempinski in Nairobi on 14 October 2026.

The declaration covers women, youth, persons with disabilities, older members of society, and minority and marginalised communities. It gives NGEC and the ORPP a basis for follow-up before the General Election scheduled for 10 August 2027.

WHERE EXCLUSION BEGINS

Opening the forum, NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Dida Jaldesa said meaningful political participation must begin within political parties, where de-

cisions on leadership, candidate selection and representation are made.

She cited Article 91 of the Constitution, which requires political parties to respect the right of minorities and marginalised groups to participate in the political process and to promote gender equality and equity. She also pointed to the legal requirements on gender representation in party governing bodies and the link between inclusive governance and eligibility for the Political Parties Fund under the Political Parties Act.

Women remain under-represented in elective office. In the 2022 General Election, seven women were elected governors, up from three in 2017. Women won 29 of the 290 constituency seats in the National Assembly, three of the 47 elected Senate seats and 115 of the 1,450 ward representative positions.

Aspirants at the Commission's recent county dialogues in Meru, Kisii and Nyamira reported unaffordable nomination fees, shifting rules, unexplained direct nominations, delays in resolving disputes and intimidation both online and offline.

WHAT PARTIES PLEDGED

Under the declaration, parties committed to adopt and file nomination rules with the ORPP within the applicable timelines, prepare party lists that comply with constitutional requirements on gender and representation, and review fees and procedures that create barriers for aspirants.

They undertook to strengthen the representation of special interest groups in party organs and to act against violence, intimidation and harassment, including technology-facilitated abuse targeting women candidates, holding members and supporters accountable under the Electoral Code of Conduct.

Parties also committed to cooperate with the joint NGEC and ORPP audit of political parties, provide the information it requires and review progress with the two institutions in February 2027.

The Commission acknowledged parties that had reduced or waived nomination fees for special interest groups and urged others to do the same. It called for nomination rules and timelines to be published early and applied consistently.

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On nomination disputes, the Chairperson referred to proposals in the Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2024 and said any reform must be guided by constitutional requirements, legal certainty and timely access to justice. Aspirants unfairly displaced during nominations, she said, must

have affordable, accessible and timely remedies.

She urged Parliament to give full consideration to proposals for alternating women and men on party lists, called on parties to explain direct or consensus nominations, and cautioned against the use of young people to perpetrate electoral violence.

The declaration invites parties absent from the forum to endorse it and calls on special interest groups to register as party members, seek nominations and contest elective positions. The February 2027 review will show whether parties have turned the commitments into practice.

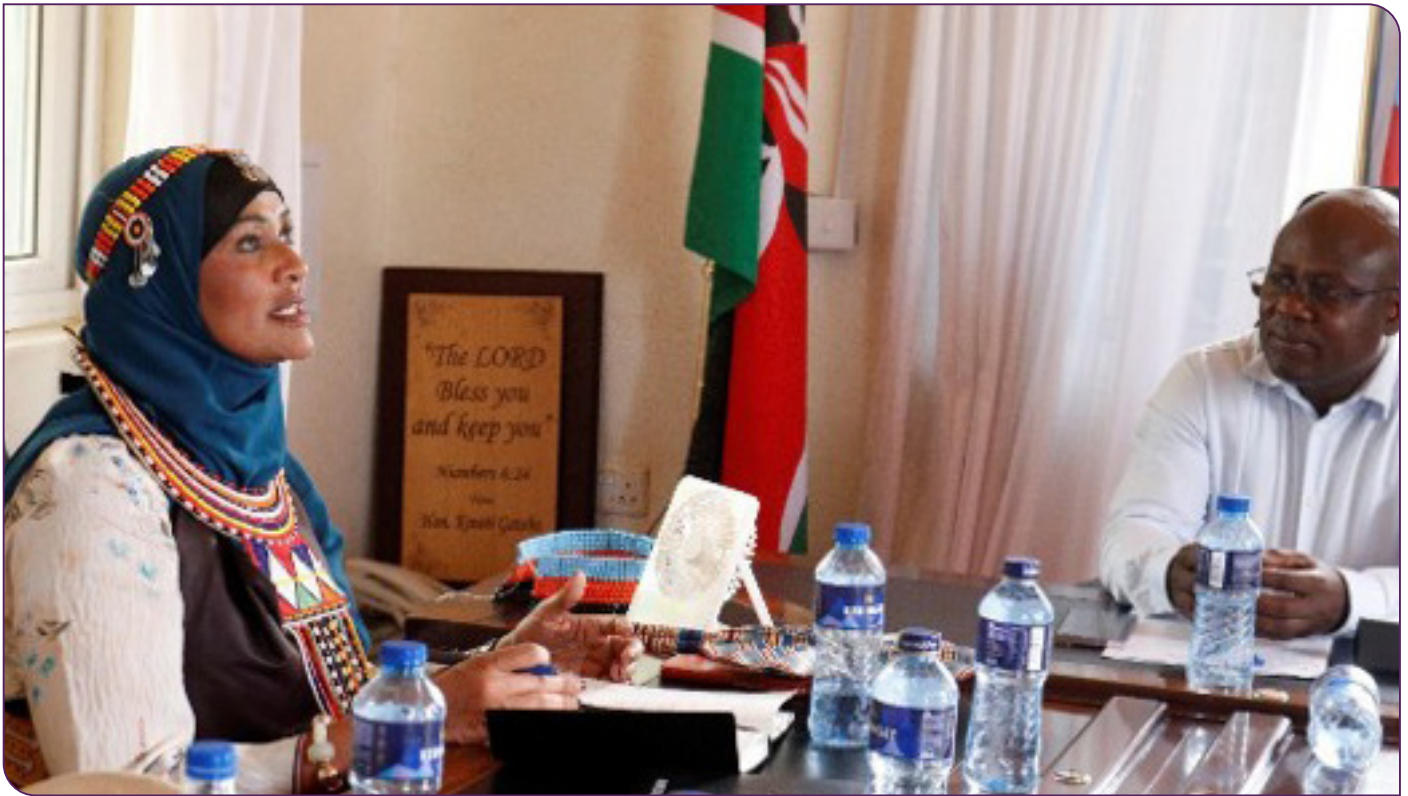


NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Dida Jaldesa opens the high-level policy forum at Villa Rosa Kempinski, Nairobi, on 14 October 2026.



Likoni MP Hon. Mishi Mboko confers with ODM Secretary General Hon. Catherine Omanyi at the head table during the forum.

PICTURE SPEAK



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa meets the Deputy Governor of Turkana County at his office in Lodwar.



Cabinet Secretary for East African Community, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands and Regional Development, Hon. Beatrice Askul Moe, addresses the high-level forum in Lodwar.



Mr Josphat Lowoi addresses the high-level forum in Lodwar.



Turkana County Deputy Governor Dr. John Erus addresses the public forum in Lodwar



NGEC Chief Executive Officer Dr Purity Ngina plants a tree at the Turkana County Government offices in Lodwar.



NGEC Vice Chairperson Commissioner Thomas Koyier addresses the Commission's public education forum in Kapese.



Kapese residents and county leaders at a public forum convened by the Commission in Kapese, Lokichar.



Women follow proceedings during the Commission's engagement in Kapua.



Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru addresses a community forum at Kapese.



A Turkana elder addresses participants at the Commission's public education forum in Kapese.



The Commission's delegation with the Turkana South Sub-County security team at the Amosing 1 oil block in Lokichar.



Oil storage tanks at the Amosing 1 oil block in Lokichar.



Land in the Kapese area, part of the land earmarked for acquisition for oil drilling.



Gulf Energy workers at the Amosing 1 oil block in Lokichar.



A service yard at the Amosing 1 oil block in Lokichar, Turkana County.

FORUM PRESSES TWO-THIRDS GENDER PRINCIPLE

Participants at a Council of Governors and UN Women Kenya engagement called for deliberate action and stronger institutional commitment to realise the two-thirds gender principle ahead of the 2027 General Election.



National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) Commissioner Dr Margaret Karungaru served as a panellist at an engagement on women's leadership hosted by the Council of Governors in partnership with UN Women Kenya.

The engagement, titled "*Catalyzing Women's Leadership for 2027 and Beyond*", examined how to remove barriers to women's leadership, strengthen women's participation in political and public decision-making and accelerate the realisation of the two-thirds gender principle.

BEYOND THE NUMBERS

Participants called for deliberate action, stronger institutional commitment and sustained collaboration among stakeholders.

They said meeting the constitutional requirement goes beyond numbers. It requires an enabling environment in which women participate meaningfully, lead with confidence and influence the decisions that shape their lives and communities.

THE COMMISSION'S ROLE

The Commission works with stakeholders to strengthen women's effective participation and representation in leadership, so that progress made translates into meaningful inclusion in the 2027 elections and beyond.

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NGEC CREATES MALE ENGAGEMENT DIVISION

The new division targets men between the constitutional definitions of youth and older persons, the country's most productive age group, for whom the State has no dedicated empowerment framework.



Men follow proceedings at a Commission forum in Kaharati village, Murang'a County, in 2025.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) has established a Division of Male Engagement to reach men who fall between the constitutional definitions of youth and older persons and who have no dedicated support from Government.

The division will also run interventions for young men, men with disabilities, older men and men from minority and marginalised communities. It will be headed by Mr Lewis Mwaniki, who has moved to the Commission's headquarters from the Nakuru Regional Office, where he served as Regional Head, and who will coordinate its activities with a dedicated team. Mr Douglas Wawire has taken over as Nakuru Regional Head.

THE MEN IN BETWEEN

Article 260 of the Constitution defines Youth as persons who have attained the age of 18 but not 35, and an older member of society as a person who has attained the age of 60. Each definition anchors programmes, funds and affirmative action measures.

Men in their late thirties, forties and fifties fall between the two. The Constitution makes no specific provision for them as a special interest group, and no structured empowerment forum exists for them.

The Commission has observed that this group, the most productive in the economy, struggles to reach Government opportunities such as empowerment funds and programmes.

The same gap leaves them exposed. The Commission has observed that men in this age group are vulnerable to exploitation in criminal activity and substance abuse, and that they feature among perpetrators of gender-based violence. Reaching them through economic inclusion and dialogue is central to the division's purpose.

VOICES FROM KAHARATI

In Kaharati village, Murang'a County, 15 men gathered in 2025 for a Commission public education forum addressed by Commissioner Dr. Michael Nzomo, PhD. They spoke openly about concerns men seldom raise in public: how power is shared in households where women have been empowered, their role as heads of families and providers, and the pressure of providing for their families with few economic openings.

Kaharati was one of many such conversations. Since the current Commission leadership assumed office in December 2024, the Chairperson, Hon. Rehema Dida Jaldesa, has consistently advocated for men's voices in the gender equality

agenda and has ensured that men are heard and given a platform across the Commission's forums and grassroots engagements. Economic empowerment has featured prominently in every forum the Commission has convened.

A LONGSTANDING CONCERN

During his parliamentary vetting in November 2024, Commissioner Dr. Michael Nzomo, PhD raised concern that the boy child had been neglected. During the debate on the Commission's new leadership, Members of the National Assembly also stressed that gender equality includes addressing the needs of both the boy child and the girl child. The Commission has previously published a report on the status of the boy child.

The new division carries that work into a structured programme. Its mandate rests on the Commission's statutory duty to promote gender equality and freedom from discrimination for all persons, including men in every age group and special interest group.

For the men who spoke in Kaharati, and for millions of Kenyan men between 35 and 60, the division means their concerns now have a dedicated home within the Commission, with a team charged with acting on them.



Commissioner Dr. Michael Nzomo, PhD, addresses men at a public education forum in Kaharati, Murang'a County.

A NEW SPACE FOR MEN TO ENGAGE.

Introducing the Division of Male Engagement

The Division brings men and boys into meaningful conversations and action on gender equality, non-discrimination, inclusion and positive social change. Because equality works better when everyone is part of the conversation.

Listen. Engage. Act.

#EqualityNeedsEveryone #MaleEngagement

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WHY MALE ENGAGEMENT?

EQUALITY NEEDS EVERYONE

If you have felt left out of the conversation on equality, this is your invitation in. Equality is stronger when men and boys take part in it. Male engagement gives men and boys a clear place to understand, contribute to and champion equality.

Listen. Engage. Act.

#EqualityNeedsEveryone #MaleEngagement

info@ngeckkenya.org 0800 720 187 (Toll Free) 0748353653

SCHOOL GBV RESPONSE MODEL DRAFTED

A draft model for reporting and responding to school-related gender-based violence in Nairobi County schools sets out referral pathways and institutional roles, and now goes to technical experts for refinement before wider validation.



Members of the Technical Working Group at the workshop on the draft Inclusive SRGBV Reporting and Response Model for Nairobi County schools.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) and Population Council Kenya have developed a draft Inclusive School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) Reporting and Response Model for Nairobi County schools.

The draft builds on an evidence synthesis and on engagement in four Nairobi County schools. A Technical Working Group has supported the process from its inception, reviewing the evidence synthesis and guiding the school-level engagement.

WHAT THE MODEL PROPOSES

The draft sets out a tiered implementation approach, an operational reporting and response pathway, institutional roles and referral arrangements.

It also poses specific questions on which the Technical Working Group's input is required before the model proceeds to wider validation.

NEXT STEPS

A workshop of the Technical Working Group is refining the draft to strengthen inclusive, coordinated and effective reporting and response mechanisms, so that schools provide safe learning environments for all learners.



Stakeholders engage in discussions during a meeting to refine the Inclusive School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) Reporting and Response Model for Nairobi County schools.

NGEC JOINS 15-BILLION TREE DRIVE

The Commission planted trees in Nairobi, Kitui and Isiolo to mark Mazingira Day 2026, linking Kenya's restoration target to the inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalised groups in conservation.



Commission staff join Kenya Forest Service officers at the Mazingira Day 2026 tree planting at the Bomas of Kenya.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) joined the Kenya Forest Service and other stakeholders at the Bomas of Kenya to commemorate Mazingira Day 2026, in support of the national target of growing 15 billion trees by 2032.

The event, graced by Dr Paul Kipronoh, Principal Secretary in the State Department of Agriculture, featured a tree planting exercise promoting environmental conservation and the restoration of degraded landscapes as part of national efforts to address climate change and protect natural resources.

IN THE REGIONS

The Commission's Kitui Regional Office marked the day on 10 October 2026 by planting trees at the Kenya Water Institute (KEWI) in Kitui.

The exercise stressed proper tree planting, care for planted trees and environmental protection as a collective responsibility, alongside sustained action to conserve biodiversity, restore degraded ecosystems and safeguard the environment for present and future generations.

In Isiolo, Chairperson Hon. Rehema Dida Jaldesa planted a tree to mark Mazingira Day during the County's commemoration of the International Day of the Girl Child.

INCLUSIVE CONSERVATION

The Commission holds that environmental sustainability requires collective action, and that conservation initiatives must enable women, young people, persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups to take part in protecting the environment.



Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa plants a tree in Isiolo.



Officers of the Commission's Kitui Regional Office plant trees at the Kenya Water Institute, Kitui, on 10 October 2026.

PREGNANT GIRLS MUST SIT EXAMS

Marking the International Day of the Girl Child in Isiolo and Garissa, the Commission called on duty bearers to treat the school holiday as a season of protection against early marriage, FGM and pregnancy.



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Dida Jaldesa addresses partners, parents and learners at the International Day of the Girl Child 2026 commemoration in Isiolo.

NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Dida Jaldesa reminded parents in Isiolo that every registered candidate must sit the national examinations, including girls who are pregnant or already mothers.

She spoke as Chief Guest when she joined the County Government of Isiolo, partners, parents and learners to mark the International Day of the Girl Child 2026, held under the theme “*End Child Marriage and Invest in Girls’ Rights*”.

A SEASON OF PROTECTION

The Chairperson asked chiefs, children’s officers, police, religious leaders and elders to treat the coming school holiday as a season of protection. These weeks carry the highest risk of early marriage, FGM and pregnancy for girls.

She donated sanitary kits so that no girl misses school because of her period.

INSTRUMENTS FOR WASO

During the celebrations, Waso Primary School appealed for musical instruments to nurture learners’ talents and strengthen their participation in co-curricular activities.

The Chairperson facilitated the donation of the requested instruments, and the Commission’s Isiolo Regional Office delivered them to the school, fulfilling the commitment made on the day. The handover was witnessed by Headteacher Mr Charles Githai-ga and Ministry of Education Assistant Director Mr Eric Bundi.

IN GARISSA

The Commission’s Garissa Regional Office, through the County Child Protection and Gender Technical Working Group, joined stakeholders in Garissa County to mark the day.

The commemoration focused on ending child marriage, protecting girls from harmful practices and promoting their rights, education, safety and empowerment. It also highlighted the need to strengthen child protection systems, raise awareness of the challenges facing girls and deepen collaboration among stakeholders.



Stakeholders at the International Day of the Girl Child 2026 commemoration in Garissa County on 11 October 2026.

KITUI WOMEN LEARN CLIMATE-SMART FARMING

A Commission forum in Kitui brought women entrepreneurs together with agricultural experts to share farming and business practices suited to drylands, where women often feel the effects of climate change first.



Women entrepreneurs and partners at the Commission's Climate-Smart Agriculture sensitisation forum in Kitui.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), through its Kitui Regional Office, held a one-day sensitisation forum on Climate-Smart Agriculture practices for women entrepreneurs in Kitui.

The forum brought together stakeholders, agricultural experts and women-led enterprises to share practical approaches to farming and doing business in a changing climate.

FARMING THE DRYLANDS

Participants examined climate-resilient farming techniques, sustainable resource management and adaptive business strategies suited to dryland environments, where every drop of water and every planting decision counts.

The Commission notes that women are central to food production and household food security, yet are often the first to feel the effects of climate change and the last to access the knowledge, resources and markets that build resilience.

THE MANDATE

The forum forms part of the Commission's work to promote gender equality, inclusive economic empowerment and climate resilience for women and other vulnerable groups.



Stakeholders, women and entrepreneurs participate in the Commission's Climate-Smart Agriculture sensitisation forum in Kitui.

YOUTH URGED TO REJECT GOONISM

At a university dialogue in Kisumu, the Commission called for online political spaces that young people, women and persons with disabilities can enter without discrimination, intimidation or technology-facilitated gender-based violence.



Participants at the University-Based Digital Democracy Dialogue in Kisumu.

Young voters at a university dialogue in Kisumu were urged to reject political violence, goonism and online abuse ahead of the 2027 General Elections.

The National Gender and Equality Commission's (NGEC) Kisumu Regional Office joined stakeholders at the University-Based Digital Democracy Dialogue, held under the theme "Promoting Issue-Based Political Engagement, Digital Democracy and Support for Women's Leadership among Young Voters Ahead of the 2027 General Elections".

AN OPEN ONLINE SPACE

Speaking on "Young Voices, Inclusive Leadership: Advancing Gender Equality and Digital Democracy Ahead of 2027", the Commission's Kisumu Regional Head, Mr Davis Ochieng', said online spaces must be open to young people, women and persons with disabilities.

They should be able to follow civic information, join political conversations and take part in decision-making without facing discrimination, intimidation or technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), he said.

POLICIES OVER IDENTITY

The youth were urged to put policies ahead of divisive identities and to shun hate speech and misinformation.

Universities, government institutions and civil society were asked to help young people exercise their constitutional rights responsibly and to support women's leadership and the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

The dialogue forms part of the Commission's mandate to promote equality and freedom from discrimination, and to ensure that women, youth and persons with disabilities take part safely in Kenya's political life.



A participant actively listening at the University-Based Digital Democracy Dialogue in Kisumu.

STRENGTHENING NAKURU'S RESPONSE TO GBV

A coordinated network of shelters and service providers is working to strengthen survivor protection, referrals and access to essential support ahead of the 2026 16 Days of Activism.



Members of the Nakuru County Shelters Network at the meeting convened by the Commission's Nakuru Regional Office.

Access to safe shelter is a critical first step for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). Lasting protection also depends on coordinated services that help survivors access psychosocial support, legal assistance and pathways to rebuild their lives.

Recognising the importance of this coordinated approach, the National Gender and Equality Commission's (NGEC) Nakuru Regional Office convened the Nakuru County Shelters Network to strengthen collaboration among stakeholders involved in GBV prevention, protection and response.

The engagement comes as preparations gather momentum for the 2026 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, observed annually from 25 November to 10 December. Among the proposed activities is a public education and legal aid clinic in Molo Sub-County, intended to strengthen awareness of GBV and access to support services.

Discussions focused on strengthening referral pathways, improving survivor-centred

protection and enhancing access to psychosocial support. Effective coordination among shelters and other service providers is essential to ensuring that survivors can access appropriate assistance without encountering unnecessary delays or gaps between services.

The meeting also recognised the emotional demands placed on frontline workers who respond to cases of violence. Psychosocial support for these workers is an important consideration in sustaining effective response systems, given the difficult experiences they encounter in supporting survivors.

To support ongoing public education and service delivery, the Network received NGEC publications for use in its engagement with communities and other stakeholders. The materials are intended to contribute to greater awareness of equality, human rights and protection from violence.

For survivors seeking assistance, Kenya's national GBV helpline, 1195, provides round-the-clock counselling and referrals.

Awareness of available services must be matched by effective local coordination so that survivors can connect with appropriate support, including safe shelter and legal aid.

The Nakuru engagement reflects the importance of sustained collaboration between national institutions, county stakeholders and service providers in strengthening protection systems.

As preparations continue for the 16 Days of Activism, NGEC will continue working with relevant stakeholders to promote effective policies, coordinated referrals and sustainable mechanisms that protect survivors and support those responding to violence.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of GBV response systems depends on whether survivors can access timely, appropriate and dignified assistance when they need it. Strengthening coordination across Nakuru County's shelter network is an important part of making that protection a practical reality.

NGEC ADVANCES INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The Commission joins Nakuru County stakeholders in strengthening coordination and identifying practical measures to expand access to quality, equitable and inclusive education for learners with disabilities.



Members of the inaugural Special Needs Education Stakeholders Technical Working Group convened by the Catholic Diocese of Nakuru and Cheshire Disability Services Kenya under the BEN-MAPP 2 programme.

Access to quality education for children and young people with disabilities depends on accessible learning environments, appropriate support services, adequate resources and education systems that accommodate the needs of every learner.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), through its Nakuru Regional Office, is engaging education stakeholders to advance these priorities following its participation in the inaugural Special Needs Education Stakeholders Technical Working Group convened by the Catholic Diocese of Nakuru in partnership with Cheshire Disability Services Kenya under the BEN-MAPP 2 programme.

The forum examined practical approaches to expanding access to quality, inclusive and equitable education for children and young people with disabilities. It also provided a platform for strengthening coordination among institutions working to advance their rights and promote their well-being.

The engagement underscores the importance of coordinated action in addressing barriers that prevent learners with disabilities from participating fully in education. These barriers require responses

that include accessible facilities, appropriate learning support, assistive devices, adaptive technologies and institutional arrangements that enable learners to participate on an equal basis with others.

Kenya's Persons with Disabilities Act, 2025, affirms the right to inclusive, quality education on an equal basis with others, supported by appropriate assistance, assistive devices and adaptive technologies. Realising this right requires institutions responsible for education and disability inclusion to translate legal provisions into practical measures that respond to learners' needs.

For NGEC, this involves promoting compliance with equality and non-discrimination obligations while advocating for education systems that accommodate children with disabilities. Accessible learning environments, reasonable support, adequate resources and accountable institutions are essential to ensuring that disability does not become a barrier to educational participation.

The participation of children with disabilities in decisions affecting their education is equally important. Their experiences and perspectives can help institutions identify gaps in service delivery and de-

velop responses that promote meaningful participation, belonging and educational achievement.

The Technical Working Group provides a platform for stakeholders to strengthen collaboration, identify implementation challenges and coordinate interventions within their respective mandates. Sustained engagement will be necessary to ensure that commitments to inclusive education translate into practical improvements for learners and their families.

Through its regional offices and engagement with relevant stakeholders, NGEC will continue to promote equality, accessibility and non-discrimination while supporting efforts to strengthen institutional responses to the needs of special interest groups.

Ultimately, progress in inclusive education must be measured by whether every child can access learning, participate meaningfully and develop their potential without facing barriers arising from disability. Achieving this requires coordinated action, appropriate support and sustained accountability from the institutions responsible for protecting every learner's right to education.

NGEC BRIEFS AFRICAN COMMISSION ON GBV

At the 89th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Commission set out Kenya's record on gender-based violence, femicide, minority rights and the protection of widows, and the investment still required.



NGEC Chief Executive Officer Dr Purity Ngina, at the 89th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Senegal.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) has presented Kenya's record on gender-based violence (GBV), femicide and the rights of marginalised persons to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR).

Delivering the Commission's statement at the 89th Ordinary Session, held from 12 to 21 October 2026, Commission Secretary and Chief Executive Officer Dr Purity Ngina, MBS, anchored Kenya's commitments in the African Union's Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, adopted in July 2004. The declaration, she said, *"remains a vital commitment to the dignity, safety and equal participation of women and girls."*

"The Commission's broad mandate enables us to address overlapping barriers to protection, participation and redress," she told the session.

FROM TASKFORCE TO COUNTIES

The Commission sat on the Presidential Technical Working Group on Gender-Based Violence, including Femicide, and submitted institutional memoranda on GBV trends, contributing factors, legal and policy gaps, enforcement, financing

and institutional readiness. Its contributions informed the national report, which called for stronger prevention, survivor-centred responses, accountability and coordinated action.

After Cabinet endorsed the report, the Commission reaffirmed its oversight role in implementation. With the State Department for Gender Affairs and Affirmative Action, it convened training to translate the recommendations into county action, covering prevention, accessible reporting, referral pathways, survivor support, safe shelter and legal accountability.

Dr Ngina told the session that adequate financing, clear institutional responsibilities and continuous monitoring are essential if national commitments are to produce measurable improvements in protection, particularly for women and girls facing multiple forms of discrimination and exclusion.

She cited the Commission's investigations and advisory in 2025 following the murder of a teenage refugee girl in Dadaab, which urged Government and humanitarian agencies to strengthen prevention and response in humanitarian settings. In 2026, the Commission's advocacy on

the sexual abuse of boys called on schools, communities and authorities to protect all children and ensure their access to justice.

RESULTS IN THE COUNTIES

Through its partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Commission has strengthened GBV prevention and response in Kajiado, Machakos and Nairobi. In Machakos, training equipped teachers, school administrators and teacher training college lecturers to address school-related GBV and child protection. Anti-SGBV committees, consultation rooms and a school prevention and response policy have strengthened reporting and case management, and a pilot karate programme engaged 50 students and eight teachers in GBV awareness and self-defence.

The partnership has linked survivors' safety with economic resilience. In Kajiado, 150 survivors received solar lanterns for safer movement at night. In Nairobi, the Innovate Against GBV business contest connected more than 30 survivors to entrepreneurship training and incubation support, and the LIFT board game helped women and girls explore practical choices on empowerment.

..... ***Continued on page 28***



The Kenyan delegation, including NGECE Chief Executive Officer Dr Purity Ngina (right), at the 89th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Senegal

..... Continued from page 27

On access to justice, the partnership supported learning at the Shanzu Gender Justice Court on specialised services and coordinated survivor support. The Commission also took part in seven Court Users Committees, contributing to child-sensitive justice and the prioritisation of cases involving children and GBV. Forums with traditional and faith leaders, male champions and youth on masculinity, power and harmful norms encouraged men to join anti-GBV campaigns, support reporting and mentor younger men.

Kenya's experience has also reached other countries. Through JICA's Knowledge Co-Creation Programme in Tokyo, the Commission shared county-level interventions and lessons with participants from 14 countries.

MINORITIES AND WIDOWS

The statement drew attention to communities where gender discrimination intersects with ethnicity, geography, disability, poverty and displacement. The Commission's research on minority and marginalised communities, including girls' access to education, has supported more informed planning. As a member of the National Technical Working Committee, the Commission facilitated the development of a national policy framework for marginalised communities and continues to advocate its adoption and implementation. Through the Africa Indigenous Peoples' Dialogue, it has pressed for inclusive financing, culturally appropriate services

and accountability.

On widows, the Commission and its partners convened a high-level forum on disinheritance, harmful practices and economic vulnerability, producing recommendations on succession, matrimonial property and legal protection. The Commission has also contributed to the technical committee developing the Widows Bill.

Dr Ngina said sustaining these gains requires investment in prevention, accessible survivor services, safe shelters, effective investigations and timely justice, alongside stronger protection against online abuse and exclusion. She reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to work with governments, communities, civil society and regional and international partners to advance *"an Africa where every woman and girl lives safely, participates equally and exercises her rights with dignity."*

“

The Commission's broad mandate enables us to address overlapping barriers to protection, participation and redress.”

Dr Purity Ngina, MBS,
Commission Secretary and Chief
Executive Officer, NGECE

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#GenderEquality

NGEC CARRIES PASTORALIST WOMEN'S AGENDA TO COP17

At the global biodiversity conference in Yerevan, the Commission is pressing for pastoralist communities, and the women who steward their land, to share in the commitments Parties make for nature.



The Green Zone at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17) in Yerevan, Armenia, held from 19 to 30 October 2026. Photo: COP17 Yerevan

National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa is in Yerevan, Armenia, carrying the concerns of pastoralist communities, and of the women among them, to the global biodiversity agenda.

She is attending the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17), which runs from 19 to 30 October 2026 under the theme of taking action for nature.

On 20 October, the Chairperson took part in a COP17 Presidency event on the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. The event examined the role of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices in biodiversity conservation, the recognition of traditional ecological knowledge as a source that complements scientific data, and the implementation of Article 8(j) of the Convention.

FROM ULAANBAATAR TO YEREVAN

The Commission's engagement in Yerevan builds on its participation in Au-

gust at the UNCCD COP17 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Speaking at a dialogue with African Indigenous pastoralists there, the Chairperson set out three requirements for rangeland communities: stronger financing, secure land rights and protected mobility corridors.

In Yerevan, Parties are reviewing the midterm of the Convention's Gender Plan of Action. The Commission's focus is on whether commitments in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, on the participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and on women's equal rights to land and natural resources, reach pastoralist women in practice.

THE COMMISSION'S STAKE

The Commission's participation draws on its mandate to promote equality and freedom from discrimination for special interest groups, including women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and minority and marginalised communities. Kenya's Constitution recognises community land and binds every State organ to equality and non-discrim-

ination.

The agenda the Chairperson carries to Yerevan comes directly from the ground. Earlier this month, the Commission held hearings across Turkana County, where pastoralist communities raised land compensation, water and access to services. Those concerns are reported elsewhere in this edition.

Within marginalised communities, the women, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities are often the least visible in decisions on land and natural resources. The Commission's position is that biodiversity commitments must be measured by whether they reach these groups.

The Commission will continue to press these concerns with Parties and partners as the conference moves towards its close on 30 October 2026.

#COP17

#Biodiversity

#EqualityForAll

NGEC CARRIES PASTORALIST WOMEN'S AGENDA TO COP17

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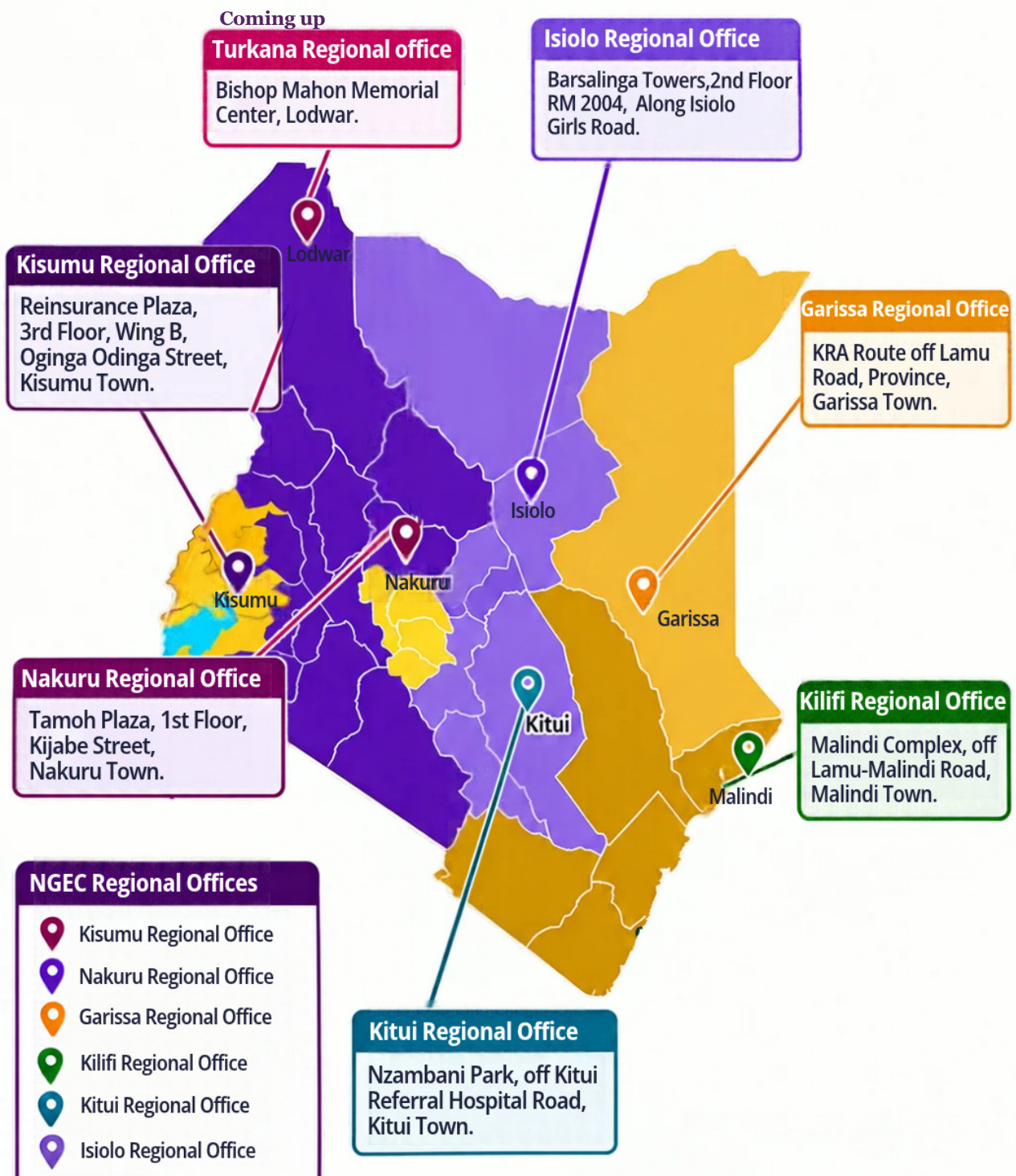


Delegates follow proceedings at the COP17 Presidency event on the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in Yerevan on 20 October 2026. Photo: COP17 Yerevan



Delegates pass the Armenia National Pavilion at COP17 in Yerevan, Armenia. Photo: COP17 Yerevan

NGEC NATIONAL FOOTPRINT



About NGEK

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEK) is a Constitutional Commission established under Article 59 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. Our mandate is to promote gender equality and freedom from discrimination for all.

Contact Us

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

info@ngeckenya.org

Follow Us

@NGECKenya
 @NGECKenya
 @NGECKenya
 +254 (709) 375 100
 www.NGECKenya.org