

# EQUALITY BULLETIN

*Usawa kwa Wote; Equality For All*

EDITION #43

25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2026

## NGEC OPENS COUNTY DIALOGUES AS NOMINATION RULES NEAR

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) opened grassroots dialogues in Meru, Kisii and Nyamira counties on Tuesday on the barriers to political participation ahead of the 2027 General Election.... [Continue to Read..... Page 04](#)



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## MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION SECRETARY / CEO



This edition records a week in which the Commission put one question to three counties. Meru, Kisii and Nyamira returned three women in 138 non-reserved elective seats in 2022, and none of the three has ever elected a woman as Senator or as a constituency Member of Parliament. Between 14 and 18 September 2026 we sat with women, with young people and with older members of society in each county to establish why.

The answer came back in five declarations, signed by women, youth, older members of society, persons with disabilities, and minority and marginalised communities. Their signatories commit to register in large numbers, to join political parties, to field more candidates in 2027 and to keep the peace. They also place demands on political parties: finance the campaigns of Special Interest Group aspirants, reduce nomination fees, and issue nomination certificates in electoral areas where those aspirants can win. We will review those commitments and report publicly on what was undertaken and what was done.

Beyond the electoral thread you will find our work on community recognition and coding, on the draft national policy on the elimination of child labour, and from our offices in Kilifi, Kitui, Turkana, Nakuru, Garissa and Malindi. The edition closes in Moscow, where the Vice Chairperson set out our practice of observing elections through an equality and inclusion lens. Inclusion in 2027 will not be decided on polling day. It is being decided now, in the rules being written this month.

**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**



Michael Nzomo  
**Commissioner**



Dr. Margaret Karungaru, **MBS**  
**Commissioner**

## NGEC OPENS COUNTY DIALOGUES AS NOMINATION RULES NEAR

*Meru, Kisii and Nyamira returned three women in 138 non-reserved seats in 2022. The Commission has opened dialogues in all three, weeks before political parties certify the rules that govern the 2027 primaries.*



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa and Commissioner Michael Nzomo during the courtesy call on Meru County Commissioner George Omolo.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) opened grassroots dialogues in Meru, Kisii and Nyamira counties on Tuesday on the barriers to political participation ahead of the 2027 General Election.

The programme ran from 14 to 18 September 2026 and was conducted concurrently in the three counties, each with its own delegation. Meru was led by the Chairperson, Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, with Commissioner Michael Nzomo. Kisii was led by the Vice Chairperson, Thomas Koyier, with Commissioner Margaret Karungaru. Nyamira was led by Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru with the Commission Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Dr Purity Ngina.

The forums examined the cultural, economic, political and institutional barriers that keep women out of competitive elective office, including gender-based violence and violence against women in politics, and sought agreement on county actions ahead of the election.

### BEFORE THE BALLOT

In the 2022 General Election women won two of 56 non-reserved elective positions in Meru, one of 56 in Kisii and none of the 26 in Nyamira. No woman was elected Senator or constituency Member of Parliament in any of the three counties.



Nationally, women were 1,962 of the 16,100 candidates cleared to contest, or 12 per cent, while the success rate among

cleared candidates was about 11 per cent for women and about 11 per cent for men. The Commission's position is that the barrier operates before the ballot.

### THE CALENDAR

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission published the electoral timetable for the 2027 General Election on 19 August 2026 in Gazette Notices 13497 to 13503, Kenya Gazette Vol. CXXVIII, No. 144 (Special Issue). Nomination rules certified in October and lodged in November 2026 govern how parties conduct primaries and how they compile the party lists from which twelve special interest seats in the National Assembly and four in the Senate are filled. The Commission holds that a party that lodges rules making no provision for the nomination of youth, persons with disabilities or minorities has, in practical terms, settled that question for the entire electoral cycle.

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## WHAT WAS DEMANDED

The declaration requires political parties to support the campaigns of Special Interest Group aspirants with financing, to reduce the fees required for nominations, and to accord those aspirants nomination certificates in election areas where they can easily win.

The instruments for persons with disabili-

ties and for minority and marginalised communities record that those groups are entitled to reserved seats in Parliament and County Assemblies, and ask political parties to nominate them deliberately for the seats available.

The instruments record the electoral timetable issued by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission as binding on everyone in the conduct of the 2027 General Election.

Each instrument carries a note that the

Commission is an independent constitutional commission, that the declaration is for public education and accountability, and that the Commission does not support, endorse or oppose any political party, candidate or aspirant.

The Commission will convene a review of the commitments before 6 November 2026 and will report publicly on what was committed.



Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru and Commission Secretary and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Purity Ngina during the courtesy call on Nyamira Governor H.E. Hon. Amos Nyaribo at his office.



Vice Chairperson Thomas Koyier and Commissioner Dr. Margaret Karungaru during the courtesy call on Kisii County Commissioner James Kamau

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS DEMAND WINNABLE SEATS AND FUNDED CAMPAIGNS

*Five category declarations adopted in Meru, Kisii and Nyamira require political parties to finance campaigns, reduce nomination fees and issue certificates in election areas where Special Interest Group aspirants can win.*



Elders following proceedings at the NGEC county dialogue at Meru National Polytechnic.

Special Interest Groups in Meru, Kisii and Nyamira counties have demanded that political parties finance the campaigns of their aspirants and issue nomination certificates in seats those aspirants can win.

The demand is carried in the Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, adopted in each of the three counties at the close of dialogues convened by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) under Article 59 of the Constitution.

The declaration was adopted in five category instruments covering women, youth, older members of society, persons with disabilities, and minority and marginalised communities. Each is signed by representatives of the category and witnessed for the Commission.

All five record that since 2013 the number of members of the category elected and

nominated to represent the county in the National Parliament, the Senate and the County Assembly has been very few. All five record concern that violence, intimidation, discrimination, stereotyping and inaccessible information keep their members out of the electoral process.

### WHAT WAS PLEDGED

Signatories commit to register in large numbers and to mobilise members to register as voters, to mobilise young people who have attained the age of 18 to acquire national identity cards and use them to register, to join political parties of their choice and exercise full rights as members, and to demand full inclusion in party governance and management.

They commit to field higher numbers of candidates for the seats available in 2027, to promote peace before, during and after the elections, and to monitor the conduct of the elections and hold to account the agencies responsible for free, fair and peaceful elections.

The older members' instrument commits elders to use their standing to influence higher numbers of youth, women, persons with disabilities and marginalised people to contest, and to steer peace initiatives and reconciliation programmes before, during and after the elections.

“

We are concerned that gender-based violence, intimidation, stereotyping and inaccessible information keep our members out of the electoral process.”

Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, women's instrument.

..... Continued on page 07

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## WHAT WAS DEMANDED

The declaration requires political parties to support the campaigns of Special Interest Group aspirants with financing, to reduce the fees required for nominations, and to accord those aspirants nomination certificates in election areas where they can easily win.

The instruments for persons with disabilities and for minority and marginalised communities record that those groups are entitled to reserved seats in Parliament and County Assemblies, and ask political parties to nominate them deliberately for the seats available.

The instruments record the electoral timetable issued by the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission as binding on everyone in the conduct of the 2027 General Election.

Each instrument carries a note that the Commission is an independent constitutional commission, that the declaration is for public education and accountability, and that the Commission does not support, endorse or oppose any political party, candidate or aspirant.

The Commission will convene a review of the commitments before 6 November 2026 and will report publicly on what was committed.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) opened its Meru County dialogues on Tuesday, 15 September 2026, with courtesy calls on the County Commissioner and the county government.

The delegation was led by the Chairperson, Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, with Commissioner Michael Nzomo. The calls set the agenda for a week of dialogues on the barriers that keep women out of competitive elective office ahead of the 2027 General Election.

At the office of County Commissioner George Omolo, discussions covered women's political participation, gender-based violence, female genital mutilation, teenage pregnancy, harmful cultural practices, and women's access to land and inheritance.

Omolo called for more inclusive electoral participation, an end to political violence and vulgarity, and action on the financial barriers facing women candidates. Jaldesa said the Commission will prior-

## REGIONAL | MERU COUNTY DIALOGUES

# MERU PLEDGES SUPPORT AS NGEC OPENS ELECTION DIALOGUES

*The Commission's delegation met the county administration and the county government on the opening day, placing women's political participation, gender-based violence and the cost of candidature on the county agenda.*



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa and Commissioner Michael Nzomo during the courtesy call on Meru County Commissioner George Omolo on 15 September 2026.

itise targeted engagement with men and with perpetrators of gender-based violence, alongside survivor-focused interventions, to drive behaviour change and reduce violence.

## COUNTY COMMITMENTS

Deputy Governor H.E. Linda Kiome received the delegation at the county government, where Meru County pledged to support Commission interventions on gender equality and inclusive empowerment.

Kiome set out the county's grassroots women empowerment initiatives and called for greater focus on young men vulnerable to political violence and exploitation. She cited the Meru Youth Service, which engages 20 youth per ward through paramilitary training and community service, with 940 youth expected to graduate by March 2027.

She also called for programmes targeting older men and asked the Commission to support the formation of men's groups

capable of attracting structured county support.

## MALE ENGAGEMENT

Jaldesa said intentional male engagement is a Commission priority, particularly for men aged 36 to 60 who often fall outside existing empowerment programmes. She committed Commission support through capacity building, legal aid clinics and technical assistance on inclusive policies.

In the 2022 General Election women won two of 56 non-reserved elective positions in Meru, and no woman has been elected Senator or constituency Member of Parliament in the county.

The Meru forums opened on Wednesday with the Commission placing the agenda of the week, followed by the dialogue with women. The programme ran to Friday, with each dialogue day closing with a communique issued by the Special Interest Groups in that session.

## MERU WOMEN DEMAND INCLUSIVE NOMINATION RULES FROM POLITICAL PARTIES

*Young and older women, including women with disabilities, told the Commission that stereotypes, discriminatory norms and harmful practices keep them out of elective office, and directed their strongest demand at political parties.*



Women, including women with disabilities, at the NGECE dialogue in Meru County on 16 September 2026.

Women in Meru County demanded that political parties open leadership to women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalised groups during a Commission dialogue on Wednesday, 16 September 2026.

The dialogue was the first of three peer sessions in the county and formed part of the county engagements of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) in Meru, Kisii and Nyamira on safe, inclusive and meaningful political participation in the 2027 electoral process.

Participants included young and older women and women with disabilities. They called for the dismantling of negative stereotypes, discriminatory norms and harmful cultural practices that limit women's leadership.

The demand placed before political parties was that they reduce financial barriers, adopt inclusive nomination rules and support Special Interest Group aspirants to contest and win.

Drawing on her experience as a political leader from a conservative community,

the Chairperson, Hon. Rehema Jalde-sa, challenged women to claim their space in leadership.

“

We shall ensure we have a higher number of women vying for various political seats available in the 2027 elections”

**Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, women's instrument, adopted in Meru County**

### POLYTECHNIC CALL

Earlier in the day the delegation, led by Commissioner Michael Nzomo, called

at the Principal's Office of Meru National Polytechnic, where it was received by Deputy Principal Lucy Ithima.

Ithima set out the institution's role in youth empowerment through technical training programmes. The delegation later took part in a tree-planting exercise at the college.

### THE COUNTY RECORD

In the 2022 General Election women won two of 56 non-reserved elective positions in Meru. No woman has been elected Senator or constituency Member of Parliament in the county.

Nationally, women were 1,962 of the 16,100 candidates cleared to contest, or 12 per cent, while the success rate among cleared candidates was about 11 per cent for women and about 11 per cent for men. The Commission's position is that the barrier operates before the ballot.

The dialogues are designed to document the experiences and perceptions of women, young people, persons with disabilities, minority and marginalised groups and older members of society on political participation,

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and to examine how patriarchal norms, family and community expectations, political party practice, campaign financing and institutional arrangements affect the ability of Special Interest Groups to seek, attain and exercise leadership.

The session closed with a communique from the Special Interest Groups in the dialogue and with the adoption of the women's instrument of the declaration by Special Interest Groups on inclusive electoral preparations and participation ahead of the 2027 General Election.

It records that since 2013 few women have been elected to represent the county in the National Parliament, the Senate and the County Assembly, and commits signatories to demand full inclusion in political party governance and management.

The Meru programme continued on Thursday with young people and concluded on Friday with older members of society.

**Y**oung people in Meru County signed a declaration on Thursday, 17 September 2026, committing to mobilise for voter registration and to increase the number of youth contesting elective positions in 2027.

The signing closed the third day of engagements by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) in the county, where young people raised concerns on exploitation, political violence, civil registration and access to government programmes.

The County Executive Committee Member for Youth Affairs, Sports, Gender and Social Development, Elias Murega Julius, set out the youth programmes available in the county.

Officials of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission and of the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties gave guidance on voter registration, political party membership, party governance and responsible participation in campaigns. Commissioner Michael Nzomo challenged young people to move beyond social media rhetoric and to take practical steps towards participating in governance.

#### THE COMMITMENTS

**U**nder the declaration the youth committed to mobilise for voter registration,

#### REGIONAL | MERU YOUTH DIALOGUE

## MERU YOUTH SIGN DECLARATION TO CONTEST 2027 ELECTIVE SEATS

*The declaration commits young people to mobilise for voter registration, enter political parties, field more candidates in 2027 and hold electoral institutions to account for a free and fair process.*



Young people at the NGEC dialogue in Meru County on 17 September 2026, at which a youth declaration was signed.

to seek greater participation in political parties, to increase the number of youth contesting elective positions, to promote peaceful elections, and to hold responsible institutions accountable for free and fair electoral processes.

#### WHY THE TIMING

**N**omination rules certified in October and lodged in November 2026 govern how parties conduct primaries and how they compile the party lists from which twelve special interest seats in the National Assembly and four in the Senate are filled.

The Commission holds that a party that lodges rules making no provision for the nomination of youth, persons with disabilities or minorities has, in practical terms, settled that question for the entire electoral cycle.

The dialogues also sought to identify the forms, drivers and consequences of gender-based violence and violence against women in politics, including technology-facilitated violence, and to assess the prevention, reporting, referral and accountability mechanisms available.

In the 2022 General Election women won two of 56 non-reserved elective positions in Meru, and no woman was elected Senator or constituency Member of Parliament

in the county. Nationally, women were 1,962 of the 16,100 candidates cleared to contest, or 12 per cent.

“

We shall ensure we have a higher number of youth vying for various political seats available in the 2027 elections”

**Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, youth instrument, adopted in Meru County**

The youth instrument of the declaration by Special Interest Groups on inclusive electoral preparations and participation ahead of the 2027 General Election commits signatories to mobilise young people who have attained the age of 18 to acquire national identity cards and use them to register as voters, and to field higher numbers of youth for the seats available in 2027.

The Commission will convene a review of the commitments made in the three counties before 6 November 2026 and will report publicly on what was committed.

## MERU ELDERS COMMIT TO MENTOR YOUTH SEEKING ELECTIVE OFFICE

*Representatives of the Njuri Ncheke Council of Elders joined the closing dialogue, where participants undertook to mentor young aspirants, promote peaceful campaigns and hold institutions to account for a free and fair 2027 process.*



Older members of society and representatives of the Njuri Ncheke Council of Elders at the NGEC dialogue in Meru County on 18 September 2026.

Older members of society in Meru County committed on Friday, 18 September 2026, to mentor young people seeking elective positions and to promote peaceful campaigns ahead of the 2027 General Election.

The dialogue closed the four-day programme of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) in the county and drew in representatives of the Njuri Ncheke Council of Elders, custodians of Meru culture and customs.

Participants examined equality, inclusion and the role of older members of society in electoral participation as active and responsible citizens. They set out the barriers to equal participation and the importance of older persons remaining engaged in political and governance processes.

Discussions addressed the role of traditional leadership in promoting social cohesion, responsible citizenship and equal opportunities.

### INTERGENERATIONAL ROLE

Representatives of the Njuri Ncheke recognised their influence in facilitating

“

We shall at all times steer peace initiatives and reconciliation programs prior to the elections, during campaigns, during voting and even after the elections are over”

**Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, youth instrument, adopted in Meru County**

intergenerational dialogue and knowledge transfer. They acknowledged the importance of engaging younger generations on values and practices that promote equality and equal opportunity, regardless of gender or other forms of discrimination.

The dialogue underscored the role of elders in mentoring young people, encouraging responsible political participation and supporting peaceful electoral processes. Participants committed to strengthen-

ing intergenerational engagement.

### THE UNDERTAKINGS

The engagement concluded with commitments to active voter registration, greater participation in political parties, mentoring young people seeking elective positions, promoting peaceful campaigns and elections, and holding responsible institutions accountable for free and fair electoral processes.

The dialogues sought stakeholder commitments to county actions for safe and meaningful participation in the 2027 electoral process, and examined how patriarchal norms, family and community expectations, political party practice and institutional arrangements affect the ability of Special Interest Groups to seek, attain and exercise leadership.

In the 2022 General Election women won two of 56 non-reserved elective positions in Meru. No woman has been elected Senator or constituency Member of Parliament in the county.

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The session closed with the adoption of the older members' instrument of the declaration by Special Interest Groups on inclusive electoral preparations and participation ahead of the 2027 General Election. Signatories commit to use their positions to demand the full inclusion of youth, women, persons with disabilities and marginalised people in political party governance, and to steer peace initiatives and reconciliation programmes.

The Commission will convene a review of the commitments made in Meru, Kisii and Nyamira before 6 November 2026.



Male participants contributing to the NGEC county dialogue at Meru National Polytechnic.



A participant contributing to the NGEC county dialogue at Meru National Polytechnic.

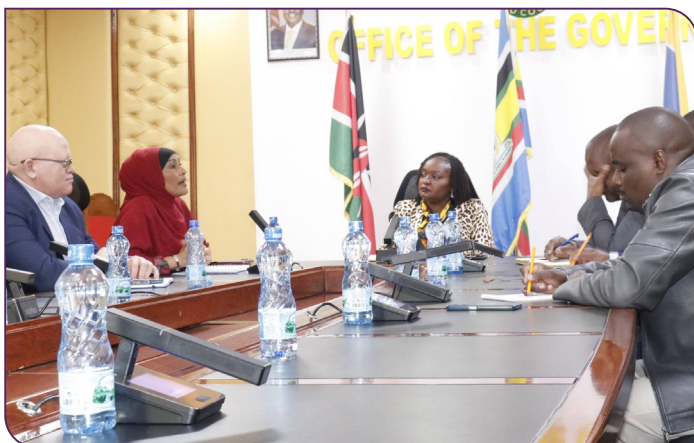


A participant contributing to the NGEC county dialogue at Meru National Polytechnic.

## PICTURE SPEAK



NGECE Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa and Commissioner Michael Nzomo with Meru Deputy Governor H.E. Linda Kiome and Commission officers at the Deputy Governor's office.



NGECE Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa and Commissioner Mbituka paid a courtesy visit to Deputy Governor H.E. Linda Kiome in Meru County



Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru and Commission Secretary/CEO Purity Ngina, paid a courtesy visit to Nyamira Governor H.E. Hon. Amos Nyariboin Nyamira County



Vice Chairperson Thomas Koyier and Commissioner Margaret Karungaru paid a courtesy visit to the Kisii County Commissioner Mr. James Kamau in Kisii County



A group photo of NGECE staff in Kisii after a visit to CEC gender Kisii County



*Participants in Kisii during the women inclusive electoral participation forum*



*Women in Nyamira County during inclusive electoral participation discussion forum*



*Participants during the equality and inclusive electoral participation discussion forum in Meru County*



*A participant addressing fellow participants during the inclusive election participation discussion of the elderly in Kisii County*



*A Youth participant speaking during the youth electoral participation forum in Meru County*

## KISII COUNTY COMMISSIONER LINKS DISINHERITANCE TO WOMEN'S POLITICAL EXCLUSION

*James Kamau told the Commission delegation that land scarcity, disinheritance and the marginalisation of widows undermine women's economic security and their capacity to enter public life in Kisii.*



NGEC Vice Chairperson Thomas Koyier and Commissioner Dr Margaret Karungaru during the courtesy call on Kisii County Commissioner James Kamau on 15 September 2026.

Kisii County Commissioner James Kamau linked the disinheritance of women from land to their absence from elective politics during a courtesy call by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) on Tuesday.

The delegation was led by the Vice Chairperson, Thomas Koyier, and opened a week of dialogues on the barriers limiting the political participation of Special Interest Groups ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Kamau said gender-based violence takes different forms and is driven by interconnected social, cultural and economic factors. He named the disinheritance of women, unequal access to land and other productive resources, violence, and the continued marginalisation of widows.

With land becoming increasingly scarce in Kisii County, he said, exclusion from inheritance and property ownership carries consequences for women's economic security, personal safety and ability to participate effectively in public life.

Kamau said systems and practices that sustain inequality must be challenged, the implementation of inclusive policies strengthened, and cases of violence, cruelty and discrimination acted upon rather than ignored.

He set out the role of the National Government Administration in protecting vulnerable members of society, responding to reported violations and supporting equality efforts, and said limited financial resources and institutional constraints continue to hinder the scale and effectiveness of interventions.

### THE COUNTY RECORD

In the 2022 General Election women won one of the 56 non-reserved elective positions in Kisii County. No woman was elected Senator or constituency Member of Parliament in Kisii, Meru or Nyamira. Nationally, women were 1,962 of the 16,100 candidates cleared to contest, or 12 per cent, while the success rate among cleared candidates was about 11 per cent for women and about 11 per cent for men.

### BEFORE THE BALLOT

The Commission's position is that the barrier operates before the ballot. Registration and nomination fees, discriminatory party processes, violence and intimidation, technology-facilitated abuse, limited campaign financing, inaccessible political structures and patriarchal attitudes prevent qualified individuals from becoming candidates.

The Commission acknowledged political parties that have reduced aspirant application fees for women, youth and persons with disabilities, and asked parties to extend affirmative measures to all categories of Special Interest Groups, publish nomination rules early, provide information in accessible formats and local languages, and support aspirants through the nomination and campaign processes.

The Commission maintains that removing barriers to political participation is a constitutional obligation. The Kisii dialogues fed into a county declaration setting out commitments, the institutions that carry them and timelines for implementation.

## KISII WOMEN CITE COST OF POLITICS AMONG MAIN BARRIERS

*Nomination fees, transport and mobilisation costs push candidature beyond reach, participants said, while dependence on political patrons exposes women aspirants to exploitation and compromises their independence.*



Women at the NGEC dialogue in Kisii County on 16 September 2026.

Women in Kisii County named the cost of politics, political violence and restrictive social norms as the principal barriers to elective office at a Commission dialogue on Wednesday.

The session, convened by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), examined the challenges women encounter in the electoral process, the opportunities available and the measures required to enhance their inclusion ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Participants said nomination fees, campaign materials, transport, mobilisation and other election-related expenses place political leadership beyond the reach of many women. Limited access to economic resources and campaign financing forces some aspiring leaders to depend on political patrons, which may expose them to exploitation or compromise their independence.

Political violence and intimidation were raised as equally serious concerns. Women seeking elective office may face threats,

verbal abuse, sexual harassment, character assassination and attacks directed at their families and private lives. On digital platforms, women candidates are increasingly exposed to cyberbullying, misinformation and technology-facilitated gender-based violence intended to silence them.

“

We shall in our own capacity monitor conduct of elections and hold all agencies with greatest responsibility of ensuring fair, free, and peaceful elections to account.”

**Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, women's instrument, adopted in Kisii County**

### NORMS AND PARTIES

Participants said political leadership is still viewed in some communities as a male responsibility, while women are expected to prioritise domestic and caregiving duties. Women who express political ambition may encounter resistance from spouses, families or communities, and are subjected to personal scrutiny and moral judgement that male aspirants rarely face. Women are welcomed into political parties as voters, campaigners and mobilisers but remain under-represented in decision-making structures, participants said. High nomination fees, unfair party primaries, weak enforcement of inclusion commitments and inadequate protection from violence reduce their chances of progressing from party membership to candidature.

Limited access to civic and voter education was also identified as a barrier.

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## KISII WOMEN CITE COST OF POLITICS AMONG MAIN BARRIERS

***Nomination fees, transport and mobilisation costs push candidature beyond reach, participants said, while dependence on political patrons exposes women aspirants to exploitation and compromises their independence.***

..... Continued from page 15

Participants said information on voter registration, party membership, nomination procedures, campaign regulations, elective positions and the reporting of electoral offences must be provided continuously, in local languages and through channels accessible at the grassroots.

### WHAT WAS ASKED

The dialogue called for mentorship and leadership development programmes, and for training in electoral laws, public speaking, campaign planning, fundraising, media engagement, digital communication and personal security.

Participants asked political parties to conduct transparent nominations, review prohibitive fees, support women aspirants, enforce measures against harassment and discrimination, and include women in party leadership and decision-making structures. They called for stronger implementation of the two-thirds gender principle, prompt response by security and justice institutions to threats and attacks against women candidates, and reporting mechanisms that are accessible and survivor-centred.

The day opened with a tree-planting exercise led by the Vice Chairperson, Thomas Koyier, as part of a greening initiative by Technical and Vocational Education and

Training institutions.

In the 2022 General Election women won one of the 56 non-reserved elective positions in Kisii County, and no woman was elected Senator or constituency Member of Parliament.

The session closed with the adoption of the women's instrument of the declaration by Special Interest Groups on inclusive electoral preparations and participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, which commits signatories to monitor the conduct of the elections and to hold to account the agencies responsible for a free, fair and peaceful process.



Women participants in Kisii during the women inclusive electoral participation forum

## KISII YOUTH DEMAND LOWER NOMINATION FEES AND TRANSPARENT PRIMARIES

*Participants told the Commission that clanism, ageism and patronage shut young people out of party structures, and that recruitment into electoral violence remains the sharpest threat to their participation.*



Young people at the NGECE dialogue in Kisii County on 17 September 2026.

Young people in Kisii County called for lower and more equitable nomination fees and transparent nomination processes during a dialogue convened by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) on Thursday.

The session examined the constraints on youth political participation, the opportunities available and the measures required ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Participants named financial constraints, high nomination fees, unemployment and economic dependence as the principal obstacles facing young people who wish to contest. They said the cost of campaigns places leadership beyond the reach of many capable young people and creates an environment in which financial influence can outweigh ideas, competence and commitment to public service.

### PARTY PRACTICE

Political party practice was identified as a further barrier. Young people raised discrimination within parties, limited representation in party leadership and decision-making structures, exclusion from nomination processes, and the preference

given to established or well-connected candidates.

Participants said clanism, ageism, gender discrimination and patronage restrict opportunities for young people, particularly young women, persons with disabilities and those from marginalised communities.

Electoral violence, political intimidation and the manipulation of young people by political actors were named as major hindrances to participation. Participants said young people should never be recruited as agents of violence or treated as expendable instruments during campaigns, and should instead be supported as champions of peaceful elections and issue-based leadership.

Misinformation, disinformation and weak digital literacy were identified as growing threats. Participants said social media gives young people a platform for political engagement, mobilisation and civic education, and can also be used to spread propaganda, incite communities and manipulate public opinion.

Other barriers raised included inadequate

civic and voter education, geographical and infrastructural challenges, limited access to reliable electoral information, weak implementation of legal protections, cultural and social norms, and inadequate accessibility for persons with disabilities. Difficulties in obtaining national identification cards were raised because an identity document is required for voter registration and for access to many public services.

“

That we shall mobilize our young people who have attained the age of 18 to acquire national identity cards, and use those cards to register as voters.”

**Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, youth instrument, adopted in Kisii County**

..... Continued on page 16

## KISII YOUTH DEMAND LOWER NOMINATION FEES AND TRANSPARENT PRIMARIES

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..... Continued from page 15

### WHAT WAS ASKED

Participants proposed reforms within political parties to guarantee youth representation in leadership and decision-making structures. They called for political mentorship, sustained civic education, leadership training, stronger digital literacy programmes and firmer enforcement of laws and policies that protect equal political participation.

Economic empowerment was raised as equally important. Participants said access to employment, entrepreneurship, skills development and sustainable livelihoods places young people in a stronger position to make independent political choices and reduces their vulnerability to manipulation through money, misinformation or political patronage.

The session closed with the adoption of the youth instrument of the declaration by Special Interest Groups on inclusive

electoral preparations and participation ahead of the 2027 General Election. Signatories commit to acquire national identity cards and register as voters, to join political parties of their choice, and to demand full inclusion in party governance and management.

In the 2022 General Election women won one of the 56 non-reserved elective positions in Kisii County. Nationally, women were 1,962 of the 16,100 candidates cleared to contest, or 12 per cent.



Vice Chairperson Thomas Koyier leads a symbolic tree-planting exercise as part of the greening initiative by Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions (TVETs) in Kisii County.



Commissioner Karungaru leads a symbolic tree-planting exercise as part of the greening initiative by Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions (TVETs) in Kisii County.



Kisii Youth attentively listening at the NGECD dialogue in Kisii County



Kisii Youth giving insights at the NGECD dialogue in Kisii County

## KISII OLDER PERSONS DEMAND ACCESSIBLE REGISTRATION AND POLLING CENTRES

*Participants said long queues, inaccessible centres and the loss of privacy when assistance is required deter older voters, and that parties treat them as a voting bloc rather than as contributors to policy.*



Older persons at the NGEC dialogue in Kisii County on 18 September 2026.

Older persons in Kisii County called for accessible registration and polling centres and for voting assistance that preserves privacy and dignity, at a Commission dialogue on Friday.

The session, convened by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), closed its programme in the county and examined the participation of older members of society in electoral processes, the barriers they face and the measures required ahead of the 2027 General Election.

Participants raised inadequate access to electoral information, limited assistance during voter registration, inaccessible registration and polling centres, long queues, mobility and health challenges, and insufficient consideration of the needs of older persons with disabilities. Concerns were raised about privacy and dignity where voters require assistance to cast their ballots, particularly voters with visual impairments.

### EXCLUDED FROM DECISIONS

Participants said older persons are frequently excluded from public meetings, civic education forums, political

party structures and other spaces where electoral decisions are made, and are in some cases treated as a reliable voting bloc rather than as citizens whose views shape party manifestos, nomination processes

“

That we shall use our positions and demand the full inclusion of youth, women, PWDs, marginalized people in the political party's governance and management”

**Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, older members' instrument, adopted in Kisii County**

Older women face additional barriers arising from gender discrimination, harmful cultural practices, unequal access to property and economic resources, limited leadership opportunities, online harassment and violence. Participants said these intersecting inequalities discourage them

from participating as voters, candidates, party officials, election observers and civic educators.

The dialogue called on electoral institutions and political parties to invite older persons to public forums, consult them in the development of party policies and provide clear, accessible and timely electoral information. Registration and polling centres should be physically accessible, adequately staffed and organised to give older voters support, privacy and dignity.

Political parties were asked to establish fair and transparent nomination processes, eliminate discriminatory requirements and create opportunities for older persons, women, youth and persons with disabilities in party structures, campaign teams, decision-making committees and electoral positions.

### ROLE OF ELDERS

Participants said elders and religious leaders should use their influence to champion equality, peaceful participation and accountable leadership.

..... Continued on page 20

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Older persons can help communities scrutinise candidates' manifestos and track records, reject bribery and political manipulation, discourage the misuse of young people as agents of violence, and promote engagement across generations.

The dialogue also set out the role of older persons in transferring values, knowledge and leadership experience to younger generations.

The session closed with the adoption of the older members' instrument of the declaration by Special Interest Groups on inclusive electoral preparations and participation ahead of the 2027 General Election. Signatories commit to encourage and support youth, women, persons with disabilities and marginalised people to register as voters, and to use their standing to demand the full inclusion of those groups in political party governance and management.

In the 2022 General Election women won one of the 56 non-reserved elective positions in Kisii County, and no woman was elected Senator or constituency Member of Parliament.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) and the Nyamira County administration agreed on Tuesday to coordinate action against intimidation, political violence and goonism ahead of the 2027 General Election.

The delegation was led by Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru with the Commission Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Dr Purity Ngina, and held courtesy calls on Governor H.E. Hon. Amos Nyaribo and on County Commissioner Benson David Leparmorijo.

The Commission commended the Governor for his commitment to inclusive governance and for the county's openness to engaging on the barriers to political participation, and said county leadership support is material to the conduct of grass-roots dialogue.

The consultation forms part of a series of dialogues in Nyamira, Kisii and Meru examining the barriers limiting the participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, minorities and marginalised communities in the 2027 electoral process.

## REGIONAL | NYAMIRA COUNTY DIALOGUES

### NYAMIRA ADMINISTRATION COMMITS TO COORDINATED ACTION AGAINST POLITICAL VIOLENCE

*The delegation met Governor Amos Nyaribo and County Commissioner Benson David Leparmorijo on the opening day, in a county where no woman won any of 26 non-reserved seats in 2022.*



NGEC Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru and Commission Secretary and Chief Executive Officer Dr Purity Ngina during the courtesy call on Nyamira Governor H.E. Hon. Amos Nyaribo on 15 September 2026.

#### THE COUNTY RECORD

In the 2022 General Election no woman was elected to any of the county's 20 ward representative seats. None of Nyamira's 26 non-reserved directly elected positions, comprising the Governor, the Senator, four constituency Members of Parliament and twenty ward representatives, was won by a woman.

Women continue to serve through reserved and nominated positions. The Commission said the absence of women from elected ward representation raises questions about political party nominations, campaign financing, voter attitudes, accessibility and the broader conditions under which candidates compete.

#### SECURITY COORDINATION

At the office of the County Commissioner, the Commission briefed Leparmorijo on the objectives of the consultation and on the national effort to identify county-specific measures ahead of the election.

The meeting examined collaboration on

gender-based violence, technology-facilitated violence and other barriers to safe and inclusive political participation, particularly for women, youth, persons with disabilities and other Special Interest Groups.

Both parties affirmed the role of security agencies in safeguarding the right of citizens to participate freely and safely in political life, and agreed on closer coordination in addressing intimidation, political violence and goonism.

The Commission said the engagement reflects a whole-of-government approach to the barriers to full and equal participation in electoral processes. The Nyamira dialogues opened the following day with women, and continued with young people and with older persons, religious leaders and community elders.

**#EndPoliticalViolence**

**#WomenInInclusion**

**#InclusiveElections**

## NYAMIRA WOMEN CONFRONT A RECORD OF NO ELECTED SEATS

*Women across generations, including women with disabilities, met the Commission in a county that returned no woman in any of its 26 directly elected positions in the 2022 General Election.*



*Women, including women with disabilities, at the NGECE dialogue in Nyamira County on 16 September 2026.*

Women in Nyamira County told the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) on Wednesday that campaign costs, party nomination processes and gendered attacks keep them out of elective office.

The dialogue was led by Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru and brought together women across generations, including women with disabilities, as part of the Commission's county engagements ahead of the 2027 General Election.

In the 2022 General Election none of Nyamira's 26 non-reserved directly elected positions, comprising the Governor, the Senator, four constituency Members of Parliament and twenty ward representatives, was won by a woman.

### BEFORE THE BALLOT

Participants set out the prohibitive cost of campaigning, political party nomination processes that favour male candidates, limited access to property and campaign resources, gender-based violence and technology-facilitated abuse, and social norms that question women's legitimacy as leaders.

They said that where women do break through, their leadership attracts scrutiny, hostility and gendered attacks that

male counterparts rarely face.

“

That we the vulnerable groups including women demand full inclusion in the political party's governance and management”

**Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, women's instrument, adopted in Nyamira County**

### INSTITUTIONS IN THE ROOM

Representatives of the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties and of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission joined the dialogue, bringing the institutions that shape the 2027 ballot into direct engagement with the women whose participation depends on the decisions those institutions take.

At a media briefing led by Lentupuru, the Commission called on women and other Special Interest Groups to register as voters, participate peacefully in political processes, consider offering themselves as

candidates for elective office and exercise their right to vote.

At the conclusion of the engagement participants adopted the women's instrument of the declaration by Special Interest Groups on inclusive electoral preparations and participation ahead of the 2027 General Election. Signatories commit to register in large numbers, to field higher numbers of women for the seats available in 2027, and to demand that political parties finance their aspirants and reduce nomination fees. The Commission will track the declaration as the country moves towards 2027.

The Commission said the full and meaningful participation of women and other Special Interest Groups is a measure of whether the country's democracy represents all its people, and that where entire groups remain absent from elected office, the decisions that shape their lives are taken without them.

The Commission had opened its Nyamira engagements the previous day with courtesy calls on the county government and the county administration.

The Commission called on political parties, electoral institutions, county governments and communities to act on the priorities raised in Nyamira.

## PICTURE SPEAK



*NGECC and ORPP members deliberate on the joint audit of political parties ahead of the 2027 General Elections*



*A presenter presenting to members of the coordination meeting to strengthen community recognition and classification frameworks in Kenya.)*



*NGECC's Nakuru Douglas Wawire speaking at the public participation forum on the Draft National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour at the Kenya Red Cross Society Hall, Nakuru*



*Delegate members at the fifteenth Development Partnership Forum*



*Participants engage in group discussions at Dadaab for the review of the Garissa County Gender Policy*

## COMMISSION URGES NYAMIRA YOUTH TO REJECT RECRUITMENT INTO VIOLENCE

*Young people at Nyamira National Polytechnic were called on to serve as peace ambassadors, verify information before sharing it and remain engaged from voter registration through to holding leaders to account.*



Commission Secretary and Chief Executive Officer Dr Purity Ngina with Nyamira National Polytechnic Chief Principal Mr James B. Kinara during the tree-planting exercise at the institution.

Young people in Nyamira County were called on Thursday to reject political violence and intimidation and to take up roles as peace ambassadors within their communities.

The dialogue was held at Nyamira National Polytechnic and led by the Commission Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), Dr Purity Ngina, as preparations for the 2027 General Election gathered pace.

The session examined the barriers limiting the political participation of young people and other Special Interest Groups, including political party nomination practices, the cost of campaigning, accessibility, gender-based violence, technology-facilitated violence and political intimidation, including goonism.

### THE ELECTION DATE

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission has set 10 August 2027 as the date of the General Election, which places the decisions that shape who participates within the current period.

Nyamira's record carries weight in the discussion. No woman was directly elected to the County Assembly in the 2022 General Election.

Young people were asked to verify information before sharing it, to resist being used to perpetrate violence, and to remain engaged throughout the electoral cycle, from voter registration and civic education to peaceful campaigning, voting and holding leaders accountable.

County Commissioner Benson David Leparmorijo and officials of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission attended the dialogue, bringing community voices into engagement with the institutions responsible for the electoral process.

“

We shall at all times promote peace prior to the elections, during campaigns, during voting and even after the elections are over.”

**Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, women's instrument, adopted in Nyamira County**

### AT THE POLYTECHNIC

Ahead of the dialogue the Commission undertook a tree-planting exercise at Nyamira National Polytechnic. Dr Ngina was received by the Chief Principal,

Mr James B. Kinara, with staff and students.

The Commission said the exercise forms part of its corporate environmental responsibility, and that sustainable institutional growth depends on investment in both people and the environments that support them.

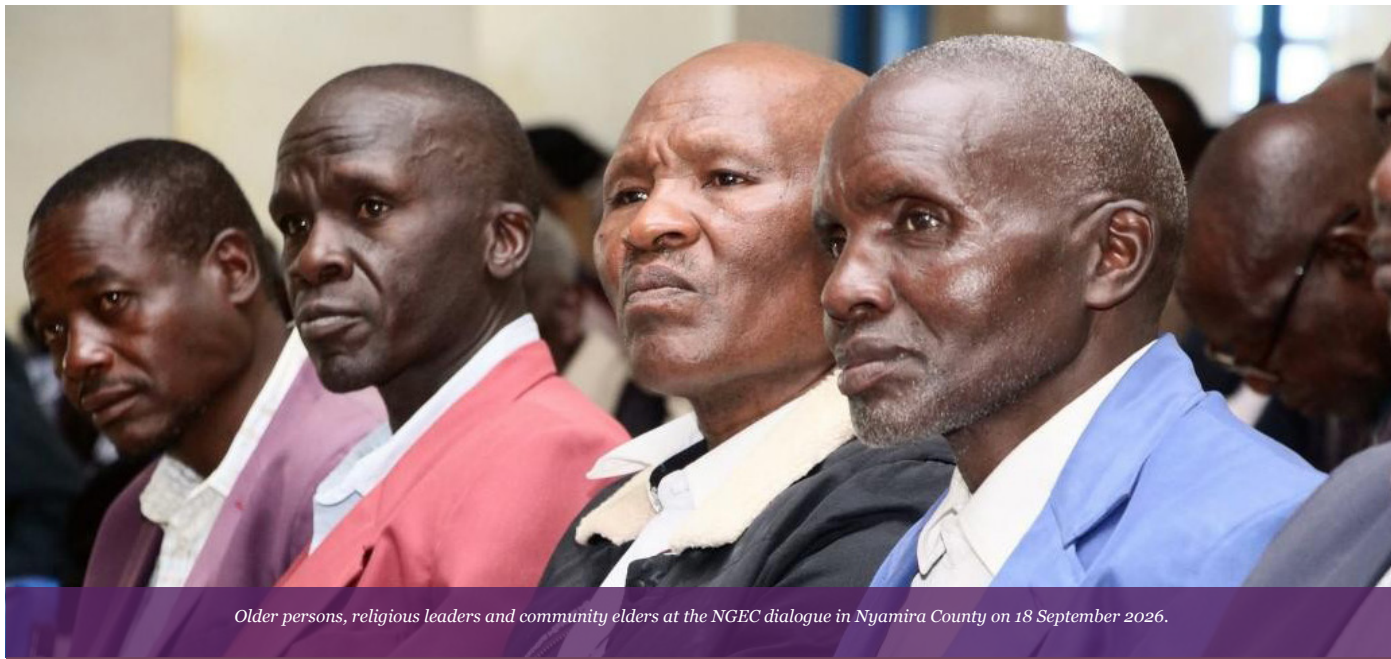
The dialogues sought to document the experiences of young people, persons with disabilities and minority and marginalised groups on political participation, and to secure commitments to county actions for safe and meaningful participation in the 2027 electoral process.

The session closed with the adoption of the youth instrument of the declaration by Special Interest Groups on inclusive electoral preparations and participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, which commits signatories to promote peace before, during and after the elections and to hold electoral agencies to account.

The Commission said youth participation cannot be measured by attendance on polling day alone, and is measured by whether young people are informed, organised, safe and able to participate, compete and lead free from fear.

## COMMISSION ASKS NYAMIRA ELDERS TO CHALLENGE STEREOTYPES ON LEADERSHIP

*The closing dialogue examined how clan, family and religious authority shapes candidate credibility, and asked elders to apply their standing to peaceful participation and the inclusion of women and youth.*



Older persons, religious leaders and community elders at the NGEC dialogue in Nyamira County on 18 September 2026.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) on Friday asked Nyamira's older persons, religious leaders and community elders to challenge stereotypes that keep women and young people out of leadership.

The dialogue was led by Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru and closed the Commission's engagements in the county, following earlier sessions with women and with young people.

It brought together individuals whose standing within Nyamira's villages, churches and clans carries influence over community attitudes and decisions.

### INFLUENCE AND CREDIBILITY

The session examined the influence elders hold within families, clans and places of worship, and how that influence can enable or constrain political participation for women, youth, persons with disabilities and other Special Interest Groups.

Discussions addressed the part elders play in shaping perceptions of candidate credibility, how disputes over political ambition are resolved within families, and the extent to which cultural and religious norms determine whether women and

young people are encouraged or discouraged from seeking elective office.

In the 2022 General Election no woman was elected to any of the county's 26 non-reserved elective positions. Participants were told that addressing this ahead of 2027 requires more than institutional reform, and requires a shift in the attitudes that take shape long before any ballot is printed.

“

We shall also use our position as elders to implore on political parties to deliberately nominate youth, women, PWDs, marginalized people for various seats as per the constitution of Kenya”

**Declaration by Special Interest Groups on Inclusive Electoral Preparations and Participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, older members' instrument, adopted in Nyamira County**

### PEACEBUILDING ROLE

Elders were asked to use their standing to challenge harmful stereotypes concerning women and young people in lead-

ership, to promote peaceful political engagement within their communities, and to support the participation of persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups.

The dialogue considered the traditional role of elders in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and how established community structures could be applied to prevent political violence and intimidation ahead of the election.

The Commission said the influence elders exercise within their households and communities will shape how inclusive the 2027 electoral process becomes, and that this cannot be achieved through policy alone.

The session closed with the adoption of the older members' instrument of the declaration by Special Interest Groups on inclusive electoral preparations and participation ahead of the 2027 General Election, in which elders undertake to influence higher numbers of youth, women, persons with disabilities and marginalised people to contest the seats available in 2027.

The Commission will convene a review of the commitments made in Meru, Kisii and Nyamira before 6 November 2026.

## NATIONAL | POLITICAL PARTY COMPLIANCE

### NGEC AND ORPP PLAN JOINT AUDIT OF POLITICAL PARTIES

*The audit will test party compliance with the constitutional and legal requirements on equality, inclusion and non-discrimination in the representation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, older members, minorities and marginalised communities.*



Officers of the National Gender and Equality Commission and of the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties at the consultative meeting on the joint audit of political parties.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) and the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties have agreed to conduct a joint audit of political parties ahead of the 2027 General Election.

The two institutions held a consultative meeting on the audit.

The engagement examined compliance with the constitutional and legal requirements on equality, inclusion and non-discrimination within polit-

ical parties, including the participation and representation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, older members of society, minorities and marginalised communities.

The Commission and the Registrar said the joint audit will strengthen collaboration between the two institutions, promote inclusive political party practice, and support a more equitable and accountable environment for participation in the 2027 electoral process.

**#PoliticalAccountability**

**#ElectoralCompliance**

**#GenderEquality**

**#YouthInPolitics**

**#PWDInclusion**

**#MarginalisedCommunities**

**#EqualRepresentation**

## NATIONAL | YOUTH AND ECONOMIC POLICY

### NYOTA HAS REACHED MORE THAN ONE MILLION YOUNG KENYANS

*The Commission Secretary attended the fifteenth Development Partnership Forum, chaired by the Deputy President, where presentations set out the skills, certification and placement pathways being built for young people.*



Deputy President H.E. Kithure Kindiki chairing the fifteenth Development Partnership Forum.

Presentations to the fifteenth Development Partnership Forum reported that the NYOTA programme has benefited more than one million young Kenyans.

The forum was chaired by the Deputy President, H.E. Kithure Kindiki, and was attended by the Commission Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC).

The forum carried a strong focus on young people. The presentations set out the Government's efforts to place young people at the centre of decision-making and of the country's economic transformation.

Alongside NYOTA, the presentations covered Kazi Majuu, Recognition of Prior Learning and dual training, through which the Government is investing in pathways that equip young people with the skills, opportunities and certifications required to participate meaningfully in the economy.

Recognition of Prior Learning enables young people to obtain certification on the basis of skills and experience acquired through previous training and work. Dual training connects classroom learning to practical workplace experience and prepares young people for the demands of the twenty-first century labour market.

## COMMISSION CONVENES AGENCIES TO HARMONISE COMMUNITY CODING ACROSS GOVERNMENT

*A community absent from government databases, or recorded differently across them, can lose access to identity documents, public employment, official statistics and affirmative action. The meeting is building a route to formal recognition.*



*Representatives of government institutions, constitutional commissions, academia and civil society at the coordination meeting on community recognition and classification.*

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) is hosting a multi-stakeholder coordination meeting to strengthen the frameworks by which communities in Kenya are recognised and classified.

The meeting brings together senior technical representatives from national and county government institutions, constitutional commissions, statutory agencies, academia and civil society organisations.

They include the Commission on Administrative Justice, the Council of Governors, the National Treasury, the State Departments responsible for immigration and citizen services, justice, gender and affirmative action, devolution and education, the Office of the Attorney-General, the Public Service Commission, the Teachers Service Commission, Multimedia University of Kenya, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and the National Council for Population and Development.

Civil society organisations representing minority, indigenous and marginalised communities are taking part, among

them the Samburu Women Trust and the Ogiek Peoples' Development Programme. The Commission holds that communities which experience exclusion must be represented in decisions concerning their identity, recognition and access to public services.

### WHERE IT FAILS

Discussions are examining the administrative and legal barriers associated with community coding and classification across government databases. Where a community is absent, incorrectly classified or recorded differently across civil registration, national identification and public service systems, the consequences reach every dealing that community has with the State.

These inconsistencies can delay or prevent access to national identity documents, restrict participation in public employment, weaken representation in official statistics and exclude communities from affirmative action programmes and other public opportunities.

The Commission's position is that an administrative coding problem becomes an equality and human rights concern.

### TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK

The discussions are facilitated by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and are examining how government institutions can harmonise their standards, clarify their respective responsibilities and develop a step-by-step advisory framework for communities seeking formal recognition and coding.

Participants have been taken through the National Policy on Ethnic Minorities, Indigenous and Marginalised Communities, launched in 2025. The policy addresses historical marginalisation and the protection, participation and development of communities that have remained inadequately recognised within national systems.

..... Continued on page 27

The Commission holds that equitable planning depends on the accurate identification and counting of communities, and that harmonised coding and classification is necessary for inclusive national planning, the equitable distribution of resources, access to documentation, fair representation and the constitutional guarantees of equality and freedom from discrimination.

The Commission said stronger institutional coordination and community participation can establish a transparent and accessible recognition framework under which no community remains invisible within the systems designed to serve all citizens.



A presenter presenting to members of the coordination meeting to strengthen community recognition and classification frameworks in Kenya.)

## COMMISSION SEEKS DISAGGREGATED DATA IN DRAFT CHILD LABOUR POLICY

***The Nakuru Regional Office told a public participation forum that data broken down by sex, age, disability, location and socio-economic status is required if interventions are to reach the children most exposed to exploitation.***



Participants at the public participation forum on the Draft National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour at the Kenya Red Cross Society Hall, Nakuru.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) has asked that child labour data be disaggregated by sex, age, disability and location in the draft national policy on the elimination of child labour.

The Commission's Nakuru Regional Office made the recommendation at a public participation forum on the Draft National Policy on the Elimination of Child Labour, convened by the State Department for Labour and Skills Development at the Kenya Red Cross Society Hall in Nakuru.

The forum brought together government agencies, civil society organisations and community representatives, drawn from state and non-state actors and from members of the public, to review the draft and provide input ahead of its finalisation.

### INTERSECTING RISK

The Commission used the platform to argue for a policy framework that responds directly to the intersecting vulnerabilities that raise a child's risk of exploitation.

The Commission's position is that child labour is not experienced uniformly, and that a child's vulnerability is shaped by the intersection of disability, poverty, gender,

location, displacement, family circumstances and other compounding factors. A policy that does not account for these differences risks overlooking the children most exposed to harm.

### WHAT WAS PROPOSED

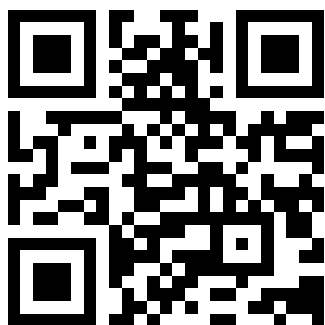
The Commission recommended that child labour data be systematically disaggregated by sex, age, disability, county and sub-county, urban or rural location, socio-economic status and other relevant vulnerability characteristics.

Without that level of detail, the Commission said, interventions risk being too broad to reach the children who need protection most, because protection cannot extend to children the system does not count.

The Commission said disaggregated data enables targeted interventions, better resource allocation and accountability in tracking progress towards eliminating child labour in all its forms.

The draft policy is being prepared by the State Department for Labour and Skills Development. The Nakuru forum formed part of the public participation preceding its finalisation.

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## REGIONAL | DADAAB ACCESS TO JUSTICE

### COMMISSION AND COUNTY SEEK COORDINATION WITH DADAAB LAW COURTS

*The courtesy call on the head of station addressed the survivor-centred handling of gender-based and sexual violence cases and closer coordination among justice-sector actors in Dadaab and the wider county.*



Garissa Regional Office Head Abdiwahab Ibrahim and Garissa County Executive Committee Member for Gender and Social Services Hon. Hawa Sahal with Principal Magistrate Hon. Vincent Nyaga at the Dadaab Law Courts.

The Commission and the Garissa County Government have called on the head of station at the Dadaab Law Courts to strengthen coordination on access to justice and gender-based violence cases.

The head of the Garissa Regional Office of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), Abdiwahab Ibrahim, and the County Executive Committee Member for Gender and Social Services, Hon. Hawa Sahal, paid the courtesy call on Principal Magistrate Hon. Vincent Nyaga.

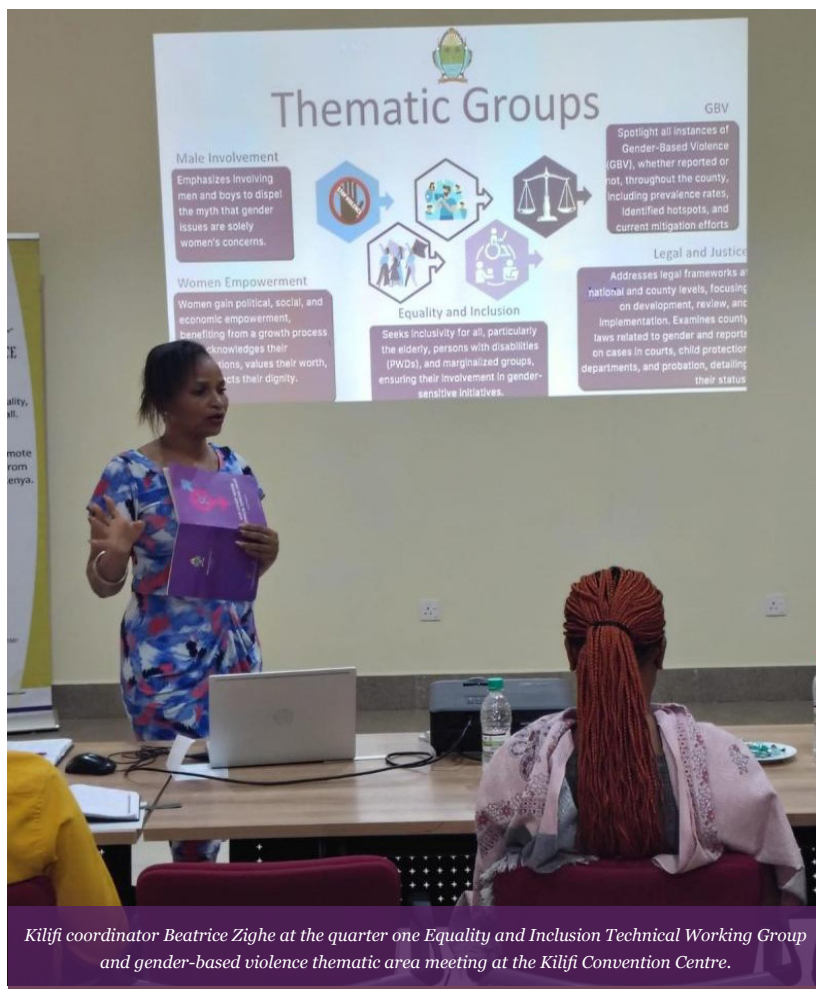
The engagement addressed collaboration between the Commission, the county government and the Judiciary on access to justice, the handling of gender-based violence and sexual and gender-based violence cases, survivor-centred justice, and coordination among justice-sector actors.

The parties reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening institutional linkages and to supporting a coordinated, accessible and responsive justice system for women, children and other vulnerable groups in Dadaab and the wider Garissa County.

## REGIONAL | KILIFI EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

### NGEC KILIFI CONVENES QUARTERLY EQUALITY AND GBV COORDINATION MEETING

*The quarter one meeting reviewed achievements, emerging challenges and gender-based violence trends in the county, and examined disability inclusion and the responsiveness of the referral system to Special Interest Groups.*



Kilifi coordinator Beatrice Zighe at the quarter one Equality and Inclusion Technical Working Group and gender-based violence thematic area meeting at the Kilifi Convention Centre.

The Kilifi Regional Office of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) convened the quarter one Equality and Inclusion Technical Working Group and gender-based violence meeting at the Kilifi Convention Centre.

The meeting brought together stakeholders to strengthen coordination and to mainstream equality, inclusion and the prevention of and response to gender-based violence in Kilifi County.

It was supported by Tiko, an African non-profit organisation that partners with governments, health providers and community-based organisa-

tions to improve access to integrated healthcare for adolescent girls across sub-Saharan Africa.

The meeting reviewed quarterly achievements, emerging challenges and gender-based violence trends. Discussions addressed the strengthening of disability inclusion and the coordination of responses to gender-based violence so that they answer the needs of Special Interest Groups.

The Commission leads the thematic area and provides technical leadership and coordination on gender equality, inclusion and freedom from discrimination in Kilifi County.

## NATIONAL | ACCESS TO JUSTICE

### PROSECUTION FILE ABSENT AS BARICHO COURT SETS NOVEMBER MENTION

*The Commission appeared for the scheduled mention in a matter in which it has intervened, and the court fixed 4 November 2026 after the prosecution reported that the file had not reached the trial court.*



Advocate Desire Njamwea leading the Commission's appearance at the Baricho

The Baricho Law Courts have set 4 November 2026 for the mention of Republic v. Kennedy Gachioki after the prosecution reported that the case file had not reached the trial court.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), led by Advocate Desire Njamwea, appeared at the scheduled mention. The appearance follows the Commission's intervention in the matter.

The prosecution informed the court that the file had not been presented from the headquarters of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The court issued the further mention date to allow the matter to proceed once the file is available.

The Commission said its legal representation and advocacy are directed at fair, humane and inclusive justice processes, and at safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly where barriers hinder their meaningful participation in the justice system.

## NATIONAL | LABOUR JUSTICE SYMPOSIUM

### COMMISSION JOINS LABOUR MIGRATION AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE SYMPOSIUM

*The three-day symposium is examining gender-responsive labour adjudication, sexual harassment and gender-based violence in employment, and emerging jurisprudence on labour mobility and equality, with the Commission taking part as a stakeholder.*



Delegates at the ELRASE IV 2026 Employment and Labour Relations Symposium.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) is taking part in the ELRASE IV 2026 Employment and Labour Relations Symposium, held from 16 to 18 September 2026.

The symposium is themed Labour Migration and Access to Justice: Strengthening Judicial Responses for Inclusive and Effective Labour Justice Systems.

It brings together stakeholders to deliberate on emerging issues in employment and labour relations, including

gender equality and decent work, access to justice for women and mobile workers, gender-responsive labour adjudication, sexual harassment and gender-based violence in employment, and emerging jurisprudence on labour mobility and equality.

The Commission said its participation advances gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusive access to justice, and strengthens its collaboration with justice-sector and labour stakeholders towards an inclusive and effective labour justice system.



Prime Cabinet Secretary Hon. Musalia Mudavadi addressing the delegation at Strathmore University during ELRASE IV 2026



Panelists during a panel session at the three-day ELRASE IV 2026 symposium

## REGIONAL | GARISSA COUNTY GENDER POLICY

### GARISSA COUNTY OPENS REVIEW OF ITS GENDER POLICY

*The review in Dadaab is assessing progress, identifying emerging equality and inclusion priorities, and strengthening the provisions of the policy to answer the needs of women, men, girls and boys across the county.*



Stakeholders at the review of the Garissa County Gender Policy in Dadaab.

The Garissa County Department of Gender has opened a review of the Garissa County Gender Policy at a stakeholder meeting in Dadaab.

The Garissa Regional Office of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) is taking part alongside other stakeholders.

The review assesses progress, identi-

fies emerging gender equality and inclusion priorities, and strengthens the provisions of the policy in response to the evolving needs of women, men, girls and boys across the county.

Stakeholders are contributing evidence, experience and recommendations to keep the policy responsive, inclusive and aligned with the county's development priorities.



Members discussing during the engagement

## REGIONAL | TURKANA COUNTY PARTNERSHIP

### TURKANA COUNTY COM-MITS TO JOINT PLANNING WITH LODWAR OFFICE

*The Chief Officer for Gender and Youth Affairs undertook to plan interventions jointly with the Commission and the State Department, and to support the forthcoming leadership mission to the county.*



The Turkana County Chief Officer for Gender and Youth Affairs Evans Lomodei, receiving the Commission delegation.

The Turkana County Chief Officer for Gender and Youth Affairs Evans Lomodei, has undertaken to plan interventions jointly with the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) ahead of its leadership mission to the county.

The undertaking was given during a courtesy call by the Commission led by NGEC's Regional Coordinator Nahashon Lotaruk on the Chief Officer.

The engagement covered county programmes targeting Special Interest Groups, among them women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, older persons, and minority and marginalised communities.

It also covered the areas of partnership through which equality and inclusion can be strengthened in county policies, programmes and service delivery. Lomodei was briefed on the establishment of the Commission's Lodwar Regional Office, which serves the North Rift and Ateker regions and brings Commission services closer to communities. Discussions further covered preparations for the Commission's leadership mission to Turkana County.

He welcomed the Commission's presence in the region and reaffirmed the county government's commitment to working with the Commission and the State Department in planning interventions jointly and supporting the mission.

## KITUI CHILDREN'S COURT USERS COMMITTEE ADDS GENDER TO MANDATE

*The committee is renamed the Kitui Gender and Children's Court Users Committee, with the Commission's regional office serving as its secretariat and following up on agreed actions.*



Stakeholders at the engagement that expanded the Kitui County Children's Court Users Committee into the Kitui Gender and Children's Court Users Committee.

The Kitui County Children's Court Users Committee has expanded its structure and mandate to take in the gender agenda and is renamed the Kitui Gender and Children's Court Users Committee.

Stakeholders agreed to the expansion at an engagement joined by the Kitui Regional Office of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), which took part in deliberations on strengthening access to justice, protection and inclusion for women, girls and children.

The Commission's Kitui Regional Office will serve as the secretariat of the expanded committee. In that role the office will support stakeholder collaboration and

information sharing, follow up on agreed actions, and advance interventions responding to the needs of women, girls and children across the county.

### WHY IT WAS EXPANDED

The expansion recognises that the challenges facing women, girls and children are interconnected. Gender-based violence, child abuse, discrimination, harmful practices and barriers to justice require coordinated action that places the rights, safety and dignity of survivors at the centre of justice processes.

Stakeholders agreed that institutions working separately cannot address those challenges effectively.

### WHAT IT COVERS

The expanded committee brings together judicial officers, government agencies, law enforcement institutions, civil society organisations and other stakeholders.

It provides a platform for sharing information, strengthening referral pathways and jointly addressing gaps in prevention, protection, investigation, prosecution and access to support services.

The Commission said the expanded committee is a foundation for ensuring that cases involving children and gender-based violations are handled with the urgency, sensitivity and coordination they require.

## KITUI FORUM LINKS RESOURCE PRESSURE TO COMMUNITY TENSION

*Participants examined how growing pressure on water, land and pasture deepens existing inequalities, and what is required for women, youth and persons with disabilities to influence climate decisions.*



Participants at the stakeholder engagement on climate action, community resilience and natural resource governance convened by FAIR Kenya in Kitui County.

A stakeholder engagement in Kitui County has examined how growing pressure on water, land, pasture and other resources deepens existing inequalities and contributes to tension among communities.

The engagement was convened by FAIR Kenya and joined by the Kitui Regional Office of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC). It addressed climate action, community resilience and the peaceful governance of natural resources. The Commission's position is that the effects of climate change are felt most severely by communities already experiencing economic hardship, discrimination and limited access to essential services and decision-making platforms.

### WHO CARRIES THE RISK

Women, young people, persons with disabilities, minorities and marginalised communities face greater exposure to climate-related risks, while their experiences, knowledge and proposed solutions are not always reflected in climate policies and programmes.

The Commission said inclusion must go beyond representation and give these groups genuine opportunities to influence decisions, access climate resources and take part in implementing local solutions.

### RESOURCE GOVERNANCE

Participants reflected on the relationship between climate change and the governance of natural resources, and on transparent, participatory and peaceful resource-governance mechanisms as a means of preventing conflict, promoting fairness and ensuring that available resources benefit everyone.

The engagement considered the barriers that prevent Special Interest Groups from participating fully in climate planning, financing, adaptation and disaster preparedness.

The Commission said the leadership and lived experience of those groups are necessary to solutions that are practical, responsive and sustainable, and that it will continue to press for their recognition as partners and leaders in climate action.

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## COUNTER TERRORISM CENTRE NOMINATES COMMISSION TO KITUI SECURITY GROUP

*The nomination followed a letter of 21 August 2026 and gives the Commission a seat in deliberations on community policing, public safety and locally driven security strategies in the county.*



*Members of the Security and Community Policing Working Group at the San Marino Hotel in Kitui County.*

The National Counter Terrorism Centre has nominated the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) to the Security and Community Policing Working Group in Kitui County.

The nomination followed a letter from the Centre dated 21 August 2026. The Commission's Kitui Regional Office took part in the working group meeting held at the San Marino Hotel in Kitui County.

The meeting was convened under the Kenya and European Union Partnership and within the framework of the National Strategy to Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism. It brought together stakeholders to deliberate on community policing, public safety and locally driven security strategies.

### BEYOND SECURITY MEASURES

The Commission's position is that preventing violent extremism requires more than security interventions, and demands inclusive approaches that address discrimination, marginalisation, economic exclusion and other conditions that may increase vulnerability.

The Commission said women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, and

minority and marginalised communities must be meaningfully represented in security planning, decision-making and implementation.

### WHAT THE SEAT CARRIES

The Commission said its participation will help ensure that community policing structures recognise the different security needs and experiences of population groups.

It said its participation will also promote gender-responsive approaches, accessible reporting mechanisms and stronger community participation in preventing violence and building cohesive and resilient communities.

The Commission sits on the working group alongside the National Counter Terrorism Centre, the Ministry of Interior and National Administration, the European Union in Kenya, the County Government of Kitui and other stakeholders.



*Participants engage in group discussions on building safer communities in Kitui County*

## KITUI MARKS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE AT ZOMBE PLAY- GROUNDS

*Governor Julius Malombe and Mary Omari, Chief Liason Officer from National Counter Terrorism Center joined the commemoration in Kitui East, where the participation of communities in peace-building was placed at the centre.*



Governor of Kitui County H.E. Dr. Julius Malombe with Mary Omari, Chief Liason Officer from National Counter Terrorism Center development partners and community leaders at the International Day of Peace commemoration at Zombe Playgrounds.

**K**itui County commemorated the International Day of Peace at Zombe Playgrounds in Kitui East Sub-County.

The commemoration was attended by the Governor of Kitui County, H.E. Dr. Julius Malombe, Mary Omari, Chief Liason Officer under the Protective and Defense Department from the National Counter Terrorism Center, development partners, community leaders and other stakeholders. The Kitui Regional Office of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) took part.

In his remarks, Malombe set out the importance of peaceful coexistence, unity and collective action in building a secure and prosperous Kitui County. He said sustainable development cannot be achieved where communities are divided, exclud-

ed or unable to resolve their differences through dialogue.

### A COLLECTIVE DUTY

**T**he commemoration examined the role that individuals, communities and institutions play in promoting peaceful coexistence. It affirmed peace as a collective responsibility requiring continuous dialogue, unity, tolerance, mutual respect and the participation of communities in addressing the challenges affecting them.

### INCLUSION IN PEACEBUILDING

**T**he Commission said peace must be inclusive, and that women, young people, persons with disabilities, older persons, minorities and marginalised communities must be represented in

peacebuilding, community policing and decision-making processes.

It said the experiences and perspectives of those groups are necessary to identifying emerging threats, preventing conflict and developing solutions that respond to the realities of communities.

The Commission said its participation reflects its work on equality, inclusion and non-discrimination as foundations for sustainable peace, and that communities which respect diversity and protect human dignity strengthen social cohesion and resilience against violence, insecurity and extremism.

**#InternationalDayOfPeace**

**#PeaceAndInclusion**

## REGIONAL | KILIFI SENATE MASHINANI

## SENATE MASHINANI PROGRAMME REACHES GEDE SCHOOLS AND MALINDI HOSPITAL

*The Commission joined a Kenya Women Senators Association delegation at two Gede schools, and the Senate Health Committee at the upgraded forty-bed maternity wing at Malindi Sub-County Hospital.*



*Members of the Kenya Women Senators Association delegation and the Commission at Gede Special School during the fifth edition of the Senate Mashinani Programme.*

The Malindi Regional Office of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) is taking part in the fifth edition of the Senate Mashinani Programme in Kilifi County. The programme runs from 21 to 25 September 2026 and combines grassroots oversight with community engagement.

### AT THE SCHOOLS

The Commission joined a delegation of the Kenya Women Senators Association (KEWOSA) on visits to Gede Special School and Gede Comprehensive School. The engagements covered advocacy, sensitisation and educational mentorship.

They addressed the challenges affecting children and young people, among them the triple threat of adolescent pregnancies, gender-based violence and new HIV infections. Dignity kits

were distributed to girls and to boys.

### AT THE HOSPITAL

The regional office joined the Senate Health Committee and other stakeholders on a visit to the newly upgraded forty-bed maternity wing at Malindi Sub-County Hospital. The visit assessed maternal healthcare services and provided mothers with practical guidance and support on exclusive breastfeeding and maternal and infant health. Dignity kits and mosquito nets were distributed to mothers.

The Commission said the engagements form part of its work on equality, inclusion and access to essential services, and on ensuring that the needs of communities are reflected in governance and service delivery.

## REGIONAL | NORTH RIFT AND ATEKER REGION

## NGEC OPENS INTER-COUNTRY REGIONAL OFFICE IN LODWAR

*The new office covers the Ateker and North Rift region. Its first formal engagement was a courtesy call on the Turkana County Commissioner, ahead of a Commission mission to the county.*



*Officers of the NGEC Lodwar Inter-Country Regional Office during the courtesy call on the Turkana County Commissioner.*

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) has established an inter-country regional office in Lodwar covering the Ateker and North Rift region.

The office led by the Region's Coordinator Nahashon Lotaruk paid a courtesy call on the Turkana County Commissioner in its first formal engagement with the county administration.

The visit introduced the regional office and its mandate and set out the areas of collaboration between the Commission and the administration going forward.

Discussions covered the Commission's forthcoming Turkana County mission, under which it will engage directly with communities and county leadership on the gender and equality issues affecting the region.

The County Commissioner received the delegation and undertook to work closely with the Lodwar regional office.

## NGEC PRESSES FOR SHARED ELECTORAL OBSERVATION TOOLS IN MOSCOW

*The Vice Chairperson set out the Commission's practice of observing elections through an equality and inclusion lens, covering accessibility, assisted voting and priority for older persons, pregnant and lactating mothers and persons with disabilities.*



NGEC Vice Chairperson Thomas Koyier EBS at the Round Table on Electoral Observation Practices at the Human Rights House in Moscow, Russia.

The Vice Chairperson of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), Thomas Koyier EBS, has called for the sharing of electoral observation tools among institutions at a round table in Moscow.

Koyier is in Moscow, Russia, for a Round Table on Electoral Observation Practices at the Human Rights House.

He set out the Commission's experience of observing elections through an equality and inclusion lens, under which observation examines accessibility, assisted voting, priority for older persons, pregnant and lactating mothers and persons with disabilities, and the participation of other vulnerable groups.

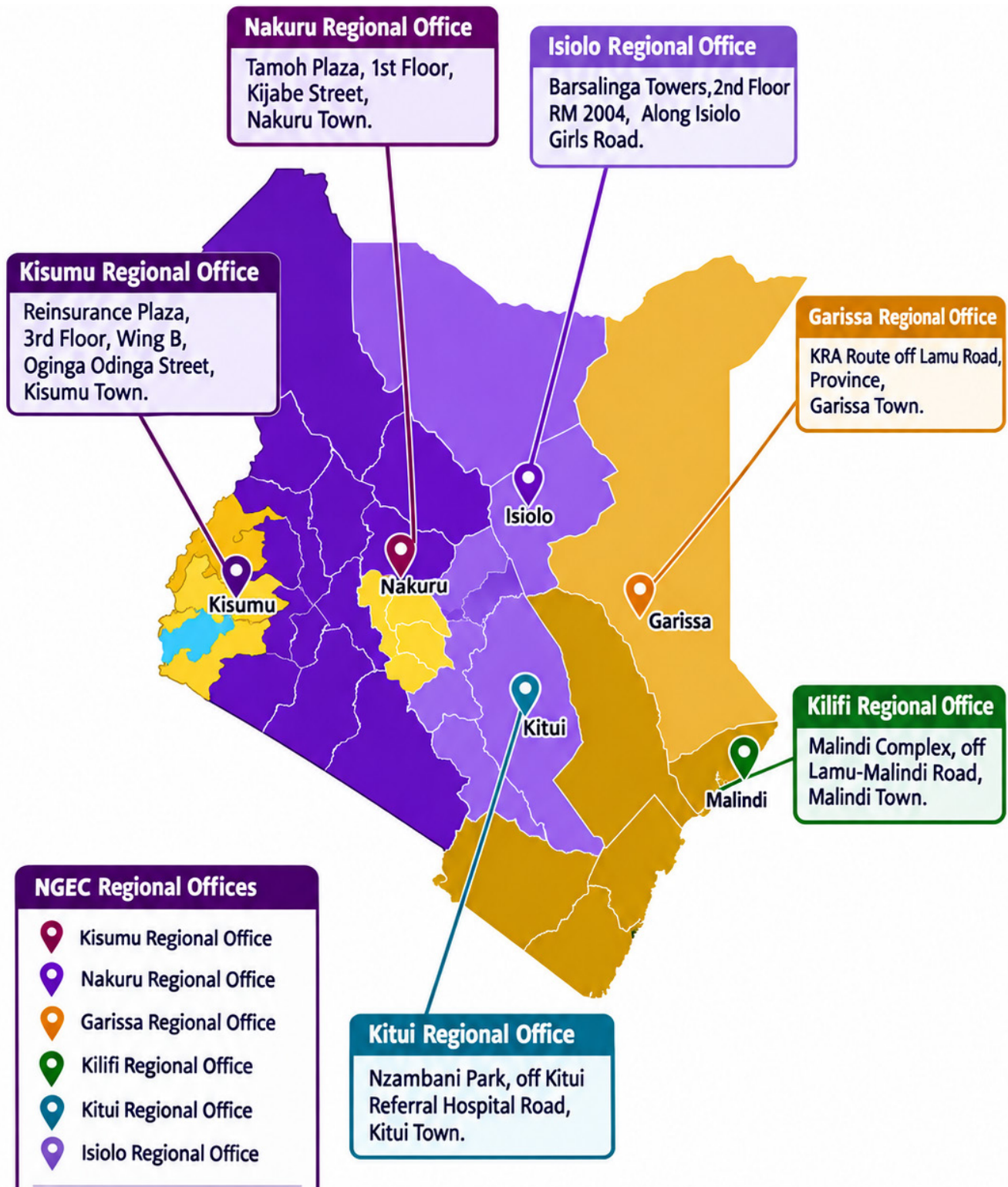
### OBSERVATION TOOLS

Koyier called for stronger collaboration among institutions and for the sharing of electoral observation tools, which he said would advance inclusive and meaningful participation in electoral processes.



A group photo of stakeholders and NGEC Vice Chairperson Thomas Koyier EBS in Moscow, Russia, participating in a Round Table on Electoral Observation Practices at the Human Rights House.

## 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.

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