



EQUALITY BULLETIN

WHO FAILED THEM?

Kenya Confronts Rising Violence Against Children as Calls Grow for Urgent National Protection Response

A series of brutal cases involving the defilement and killing of children across Kenya between late 2025 and early 2026 has intensified national concern over the country’s child protection systems, with growing calls for urgent reforms, stronger accountability and coordinated prevention measures. From Kilifi and Nyandarua to Kisumu and Nyeri, recent incidents involving children assaulted and murdered near their homes have sparked outrage, protests and renewed scrutiny over whether existing institutions and community structures are adequately protecting children from violence and exploitation.

As grief deepens, a difficult national question is emerging with increasing urgency: who failed them? Page 10, 11

Imperative for Action:

A Collective Duty to Protect Every Child

1 Strengthen child protection systems and coordination across national and county levels to ensure prevention, rapid response, and seamless management of all cases of violence against children.



2 Enforce accountability and end impunity by ensuring every reported case is thoroughly investigated, prosecuted, and concluded without delay or interference.



3 Expand accessible, child-sensitive reporting mechanisms that are safe, confidential, trusted, and responsive to survivors, families, and communities.



4 Strengthen safeguarding and community protection structures in schools, homes, and public spaces, backed by clear policies, prevention systems, and active community vigilance.



5 Address root causes of violence against children including poverty, neglect, substance abuse, and social breakdown through integrated social protection and awareness programmes.



Picture: AI-generated



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A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

This edition brings into focus an issue that continues to demand urgent national attention—the protection and safety of Kenya’s children. The disturbing rise in cases of defilement, abuse, and killings of children reported across different parts of the country has exposed critical gaps in safeguarding systems, reporting pathways, community vigilance, and institutional coordination. These incidents are not only tragic losses of innocent lives, but also a stark reminder of the collective responsibility to protect every child from violence, exploitation, and neglect.

The stories featured in this edition further reflect the broader realities affecting vulnerable and marginalised groups across the country. From efforts to strengthen community legal aid and access to justice, to advancing workplace dignity, inclusive governance, protection of widows, refugee inclusion, and accountability in public service delivery, the engagements highlighted herein underscore the importance of responsive institutions and people-centred systems.

They remind us that constitutional principles must be felt in the daily lives of citizens—in the safety of children, the dignity of women, the inclusion of vulnerable groups, and the accessibility of justice and public services.

The Commission remains committed to working with institutions, communities, and partners to strengthen protection systems, promote accountability, and advance a Kenya where every person can live in dignity, safety, and equality.



Purity Ngina, PhD, MBS

Chief Executive Officer

National Gender and Equality Commission

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NGEC, Transparency International Kenya Strengthen Collaboration Ahead of GESI Report Launch on Inclusive Anti-Corruption

Engagement in Malindi highlights how corruption disproportionately affects vulnerable groups and underscores the need for inclusive, people-centred accountability systems

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) Malindi Regional Office hosted a delegation from Transparency International Kenya, drawn from its Mombasa and Nairobi offices, in a strategic engagement ahead of the launch of a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) report in Mombasa County.

The meeting provided a platform for the Commission to receive a briefing on emerging findings from the report and to explore collaboration in addressing how corruption intersects with inequality and disproportionately affects vulnerable groups across Mombasa and Nandi counties. The forthcoming report is part of an ongoing GESI project implemented with support from the European Union through the Transparency International Secretariat. The initiative examines how corruption interacts with existing social and economic inequalities and seeks to promote governance systems that are inclusive, equitable and responsive.

During the engagement, stakeholders emphasised that corruption is not experienced uniformly across society. Instead, its effects are shaped by disparities in access to information, economic resources, institutional support and decision-making power.

Corruption within key service delivery sectors such as healthcare, education, water, housing and social protection was identified as a major factor that limits equitable access, particularly for individuals and communities already facing structural disadvantage.

Insights shared during the engagement were consistent with findings from the Kenya Gender and Corruption Survey 2025, which indicate that corruption has differentiated impacts across gender and social groups.

The survey shows that women, youth, persons with disabilities, minorities and low-income communities often face compounded challenges when navigating public services, making them more vulnerable to corruption-related barriers.

It further highlights that women are more likely to encounter both financial and non-financial forms of corruption, including exploitative practices linked to power imbalances in service delivery environments. The findings also indicate that individuals from marginalised groups are less likely to report corruption incidents due to fear of retaliation, limited awareness of reporting mechanisms, and lack of confidence in institutional response systems.



NGEC Malindi Regional Office with Transparency International Kenya during a strategic engagement.

Discussions during the Malindi engagement identified persistent barriers that limit the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts. Stakeholders noted that reporting systems are often not designed to accommodate the needs of all citizens, particularly those facing physical, social or economic barriers.

Challenges such as inaccessible reporting platforms, stigma, fear of victimisation, and limited trust in enforcement institutions continue to discourage reporting of corruption cases. The Kenya Gender and Corruption Survey 2025 reinforces this concern, indicating that low reporting rates are closely linked to perceptions that complaints may not result in meaningful ~

action, as well as fears of negative consequences for those who come forward. Participants emphasised that strengthening reporting mechanisms to ensure accessibility, confidentiality and responsiveness is critical to improving accountability outcomes. The engagement underscored the broader implications of corruption on service delivery and social equity. When public resources are misused or diverted, essential services become less accessible, particularly for those who depend on them most. Stakeholders noted that corruption can delay access to healthcare, limit educational opportunities, restrict access to social protection programmes and reduce economic opportunities for vulnerable populations. These impacts contribute to widening inequality and undermine efforts to achieve inclusive development. The discussions emphasised that addressing corruption requires a clear understanding of how its effects vary across different groups and contexts.

The meeting explored opportunities for collaboration in strengthening civic awareness, public education and community participation in accountability processes. Participants highlighted that inclusive governance systems depend on informed and empowered citizens who are able to access information, raise concerns safely and participate meaningfully in decision-making. Efforts to expand civic education were identified as essential in improving awareness of rights and responsibilities, particularly among Special Interest Groups. Stakeholders also emphasised the importance of creating safe spaces for community engagement to build trust and encourage participation in governance processes.

The engagement between NGEC and Transparency International Kenya reaffirmed the importance of partnerships in advancing inclusive governance and accountability. Both institutions identified areas of collaboration, including public awareness campaigns, community outreach initiatives and policy advocacy aimed at integrating Gender Equality and Social Inclusion into anti-corruption frameworks. The National Gender and Equality Commission continues to play a central role in promoting equality, non-discrimination and inclusion across governance systems. Through its engagement in anti-corruption initiatives, the Commission advocates for approaches that address structural inequalities and ensure that public institutions are accessible and responsive to diverse population groups.

Kitui Confronts Rising Killings of Women and Girls as Authorities Push for Urgent, Coordinated Action

NGEC, county officials and security leadership align on early warning systems, community reporting, and stronger protection measures amid growing national concern over GBV



NGEC, Kitui County Gender Sector and the Deputy County Commissioner for Kitui Central during a consultative meeting.

A consultative meeting in Kitui County has brought together the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), the Kitui County Government Gender Sector and the Deputy County Commissioner for Kitui Central to address emerging cases of killings affecting women and girls. The engagement focused on strengthening coordination, improving early response systems and reinforcing community-based prevention measures in response to growing concerns over gender-based violence.

The discussions in Kitui come against the backdrop of increasing national concern over gender-based violence and related killings.

Recent data indicates that more than 31,000 sexual and gender-based violence cases were filed in Kenyan courts in the 2024/2025 financial year, underscoring the scale of the issue across the country. Additional reports show a rise in killings of women, with hundreds of cases recorded annually and many linked to intimate partners or individuals known to the victims.

Participants noted that these patterns highlight the urgency of strengthening prevention and response mechanisms at both national and county levels. A key focus of the Kitui engagement was the need to strengthen early detection and response systems. Stakeholders emphasised that many fatal incidents ~

are preceded by warning signs, including repeated violence, threats, and escalating domestic conflicts. The meeting explored ways to improve identification of such risks at community level and ensure timely intervention by relevant authorities. Participants agreed that strengthening early response mechanisms can significantly reduce escalation of violence and prevent loss of life.

The discussions highlighted persistent coordination challenges among institutions involved in addressing gender-based violence. Participants noted that delays in information sharing, fragmented response systems and unclear referral pathways often weaken the effectiveness of interventions. The meeting prioritised improving collaboration between local administration, security agencies, social services and community-based structures to ensure a more unified and timely response.

The engagement underscored the role of social factors in allowing violence to persist and escalate. Stakeholders noted that silence, stigma and fear continue to discourage survivors and affected families from reporting abuse early. Harmful social norms and attitudes were identified as contributing factors that normalise violence or discourage intervention. Participants emphasised that addressing these barriers requires sustained public sensitisation and community engagement to promote a culture of accountability and zero tolerance to violence.

The Commission reaffirmed that addressing gender-based violence requires coordinated action across multiple sectors. Participants emphasised the importance of collaboration between government agencies, civil society organisations, security institutions and community structures.

Inside Parliament: NGEN and Senate Push for Stronger Inclusion of Indigenous and Marginalised Communities

Strategic engagement highlights persistent gaps in representation and proposes enforceable measures to advance equity, accountability and constitutional inclusion

With millions of Kenyans belonging to Indigenous, minority and marginalised communities, concerns over underrepresentation and unequal access to services dominated discussions during a strategic engagement between the National Gender and Equality Commission and the Senate Standing Committee on Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights.

Members of the Senate Committee and NGEN identified key barriers affecting Indigenous Peoples and marginalised groups.

The engagement underscored that inclusion is not only a constitutional obligation but also a key driver of sustainable development. Participants emphasised that sustained collaboration between Parliament, constitutional commissions, county governments and other stakeholders is essential for achieving meaningful progress. The strategic engagement between NGEN and the Senate Standing Committee reflects a renewed focus on advancing ~



NGEC and the Minorities and Marginalised Affairs Unit during a presentation to the Senate Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights Committee

the rights of Indigenous Peoples, minorities and marginalised communities in Kenya. The shared commitment remains to build governance systems where representation is equitable, opportunities are accessible and no community is left behind.

Closing the Care Gap: Kenya Strengthens Family Support System

Stakeholders align on coordinated national activities to promote wellbeing, intergenerational support, and inclusive family-centred development

Ahead of the International Day of Families, the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) convened a strategic planning meeting bringing together key partners to coordinate activities and strengthen collaboration toward a unified national commemoration.

The engagement focused on aligning stakeholders around programmes that promote wellbeing, inclusion, peacebuilding and social cohesion, while reinforcing the role of families and support systems in addressing emerging social and economic challenges.

The meeting underscored the central role of families as foundational units of society, responsible for supporting wellbeing, socialisation, protection and care across generations.

Globally, the International Day of Families—proclaimed by the United Nations in 1993—is observed annually on 15 May to raise awareness of social, economic and demographic issues affecting families and to strengthen policy responses. Participants noted that families play a critical role in shaping social values, providing emotional and economic support, and contributing to stable and cohesive communities. Evidence consistently shows that strong family and community support systems are associated with improved mental health outcomes, better child development indicators and stronger social resilience.

In Kenya, national engagements around the observance have continued to emphasise the importance of family structures in fostering safe, caring and inclusive societies, particularly in the face of changing socio-economic dynamics. Discussions during the planning meeting emphasised the need to recognise the diversity of family structures and lived experiences across the country.



NGEC Nakuru Regional Office during a strategic planning meeting with key partners.

Participants highlighted that contemporary Kenyan society includes a wide range of family forms, including single-parent households, extended families, child-headed households and grandparent-led homes, all of which require inclusive policy and support frameworks. Stakeholders stressed that effective interventions must be grounded in these realities to ensure that no family structure is excluded from access to services, protection mechanisms and development opportunities. The meeting also reinforced the importance of inclusive support systems that respond to intersecting vulnerabilities linked to gender, age, disability and socio-economic status.

The engagement took place against a backdrop of increasing economic pressures, social transformation and evolving challenges affecting households across the country. Stakeholders noted that many families continue to face rising costs of living, limited access to essential services and changing social dynamics that affect stability and wellbeing.

Recent national discourse ahead of the International Day of Families has highlighted concerns around economic strain, access to healthcare, and the need for stronger social protection systems to support families, particularly vulnerable households. Participants emphasised that coordinated and inclusive policy responses are necessary to address these challenges and to ensure that families remain resilient in the face of change.

The meeting focused on developing impactful activities for the national commemoration, with particular emphasis on peacebuilding, intergenerational support, inclusion and shared responsibility. Planned initiatives will aim to strengthen community engagement, promote dialogue across generations and reinforce social values that support coexistence, dignity and mutual respect. Participants noted that strengthening intergenerational connections is critical in preserving cultural values, supporting youth development and enhancing community cohesion.

The discussions also highlighted the importance of creating safe and inclusive spaces for children, young people and vulnerable groups as part of broader efforts to strengthen protection systems. The planning process is being led by International Family Pageant Global Advocates of Peace Kenya, in collaboration with NGEC and other partners working in areas of social development, human rights and community empowerment.

Stakeholders emphasised that partnerships are essential in ensuring that commemoration activities are impactful, coordinated and reflective of national priorities. The engagement highlighted the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration in addressing complex social issues affecting families, including inequality, exclusion and limited access to services. The Commission continues to play a central role in promoting equality, inclusion and non-discrimination, particularly for Special Interest Groups including women, youth, persons with disabilities, children, older persons and marginalised communities.

Through its involvement in the IDF planning process, the Commission seeks to ensure that national efforts are aligned with constitutional principles of equality, dignity and social justice.

NGEC and Government Spokesperson Align on National Plans Ahead of International Widows Day Commemoration

Courtesy engagement focuses on amplifying visibility of widows' challenges under UN theme "Invisible Women, Invisible Problems" and strengthening inclusive policy responses



NGEC Commissioner Dr. Margaret Karungaru and Government Spokesperson Hon. Isaac Mwaura during a courtesy visit and

In preparation for the International Widows Day commemoration scheduled for 23 June, National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) Commissioner Dr. Margaret Karungaru held a courtesy visit with Government Spokesperson Hon. Isaac Mwaura to coordinate national observance activities and strengthen collaboration on public awareness and advocacy. The engagement focused on enhancing visibility of widows' lived realities and advancing inclusive policies that promote dignity, protection and socioeconomic empowerment.

International Widows Day, observed annually on 23 June, was recognised by the United Nations General Assembly in 2010 to draw attention to the challenges faced by widows worldwide, including social exclusion, economic hardship and discrimination.

This year's theme, "Invisible Women, Invisible Problems," underscores the continued marginalisation of widows in many societies, where their needs are often underrepresented in policy design, social protection systems and public discourse. Globally, it is estimated that there are more than 258 million widows, with a significant proportion living in low- and middle-income countries where access to social protection and economic opportunities remains limited.

Many face barriers related to inheritance rights, property ownership, livelihood opportunities and social stigma.

The engagement between NGENC and the Government Spokesperson centred on strategies to amplify public awareness on the challenges faced by widows in Kenya. Discussions highlighted the importance of ensuring that widows are not excluded from national conversations on social protection, gender equality and economic empowerment.

Participants noted that invisibility in policy and public discourse often translates into exclusion from services, support systems and development programmes. The planned national commemoration is expected to provide a platform for highlighting these issues and promoting greater public understanding of the structural barriers affecting widows. A key focus of the engagement was the need to strengthen inclusive policies and social protection measures that respond to the specific needs of widows. Discussions emphasised that effective social protection systems must address economic vulnerability, access to justice, land and property rights, and access to healthcare and education for dependents.

The courtesy visit marked an important step in aligning stakeholders ahead of the International Widows Day commemoration.

The planned observance is expected to bring together government institutions, civil society organisations and development partners to highlight the lived experiences of widows and promote policy dialogue on inclusion and protection.

The engagement between NGENC Commissioner Dr. Margaret Karungaru and Government Spokesperson Hon. Isaac Mwaura reflects growing national efforts to elevate the visibility of widows' experiences and strengthen inclusive policy responses. As preparations for the International Widows Day commemoration continue, the focus remains on ensuring that advocacy translates into practical interventions that improve dignity, protection and socioeconomic wellbeing.

Women Rising: Regional Leaders Push for Refugee Inclusion

IGAD delegation and stakeholders launch discussions on refugee protection, gender inclusion and women's participation in decision-making and recovery processes



NGEC Garissa Regional Head Abdiwahab Mohamed with an IGAD Gender delegation led by Amina Farah during a courtesy call at the County Commissioner's office

Efforts to strengthen women's leadership and inclusion in refugee governance took centre stage in Garissa County following the arrival of an Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) delegation led by IGAD Gender Manager Amina Farah. The delegation paid a courtesy call to the County Commissioner's office ahead of a regional capacity-building workshop focused on advancing women's participation in governance, humanitarian response and recovery processes within refugee settings.

The engagement brought together stakeholders working in governance, humanitarian response and gender equality to strengthen understanding of refugee protection frameworks and the barriers limiting women's meaningful participation in leadership and decision-making spaces. The Garissa engagement aimed to strengthen institutional and community approaches that promote inclusive participation and leadership for women within refugee governance systems.

Discussions during the engagement highlighted the importance of ensuring women are not only beneficiaries of humanitarian interventions but also active participants in governance and recovery processes. The engagement also examined refugee protection frameworks and regional obligations relating to displaced populations. Kenya is a signatory to several international and regional instruments on refugee protection, including the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention governing refugee protection in Africa. The IGAD-led engagement reflects broader regional efforts to strengthen gender inclusion and women's participation across governance and humanitarian systems in the Horn of Africa.

National Regulators Gather in Kitui as Government Pushes for Faster, Fairer and More Accountable Service Delivery

Deputy President Kithure Kindiki calls for fair, accountable and predictable regulation as over 120 state agencies align oversight mandates with national development priorities

More than 120 government regulatory authorities and agencies convened at South Eastern Kenya University (SEKU) in Kitui County for the 3rd Annual Regulatory Authorities and Agencies Conference, a national forum focused on strengthening governance, accountability and service delivery through evidence-based decision-making. The conference, officially opened by Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki, brought together senior government officials, heads of agencies and oversight institutions to examine the role of regulation in advancing efficient, inclusive and citizen-centred governance.

The annual conference brought together 129 government institutions, including constitutional commissions, regulatory bodies and state agencies responsible for oversight, licensing, compliance and service regulation across multiple sectors. The engagement focused on strengthening institutional coordination and improving regulatory effectiveness in line with national development priorities under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki emphasised that effective governance depends on institutions that are fair, responsive, transparent and predictable in the exercise of their mandates. He stated that regulatory agencies play a central role in shaping markets, safeguarding livelihoods, protecting public welfare and creating stable environments where citizens and businesses can access opportunities.

Addressing participants at the conference, the Deputy President reaffirmed the Government's commitment to improving efficiency in public service delivery and strengthening institutional accountability. He noted that regulatory bodies must exercise their statutory responsibilities fairly and consistently, particularly in areas such as



Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki with NGECEO Dr Purity Ngina at the 3rd Annual Regulatory Authorities and Agencies Conference, South Eastern Kenya University, Kitui County.

licensing, standards enforcement, inspections and approvals. The forum heard that predictable and transparent regulation is critical for improving public confidence, reducing risks and lowering the cost of doing business. Participants also discussed the role of regulatory institutions in ensuring that development remains inclusive and responsive to the needs of citizens.

A major theme of the conference was the importance of evidence-based decision-making in governance and public administration. Stakeholders highlighted that institutions are increasingly required to rely on data, research and measurable outcomes when designing policies, monitoring compliance and evaluating service delivery. Participants noted that evidence-driven approaches improve institutional responsiveness, strengthen accountability and enhance the effectiveness of public interventions.

The discussions also underscored the importance of monitoring systems capable of identifying disparities in service delivery and access across different population groups.

The Commission reaffirmed its commitment to providing oversight and advisory services on gender equality and social inclusion, while monitoring compliance with gender mainstreaming obligations under the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. The engagement also provided an opportunity for the Commission to highlight the importance of integrating equality considerations into governance systems, policy implementation and public service delivery.

Participants acknowledged that inclusive governance frameworks are essential in ensuring that all citizens have equal access to services, opportunities and protection of their rights.

The conference reinforced the role of regulatory institutions in supporting national economic and social development. Participants noted that effective regulation contributes to investment confidence, market stability and improved service standards across sectors such as healthcare, education, infrastructure and trade. The Deputy President urged agencies to align their mandates more closely with the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda by reducing administrative barriers, improving compliance systems and enhancing fairness in service delivery.

The 3rd Annual Regulatory Authorities and Agencies Conference highlighted the growing national emphasis on accountable, evidence-based and citizen-centred governance.

NGEC, Amnesty International Examine Impact of 2024 Protests on Vulnerable Groups in Kenya

Consultative meeting in Kisumu focuses on rising economic pressures, gender-based violence, youth exclusion and the need for inclusive protection systems during periods of political and social instability

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) Kisumu Regional Office hosted Dr. David Ngira, an Economic and Social Rights Researcher from Amnesty International, for a consultative engagement examining the impact of recent political processes in Kenya, particularly the 2024 protests and campaign period, on Special Interest Groups. The discussions focused on how economic hardship, unemployment, taxation policies and social unrest continue to disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, including women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, older persons, minorities and marginalised communities.

The engagement explored the broader social and economic conditions that contributed to the 2024 protests, including the rising cost of living, unemployment and proposed tax measures under the Finance Bill 2024. Participants noted that public frustration was largely driven by concerns over increasing economic hardship, particularly among young people facing unemployment and limited economic opportunities.



NGEC Kisumu Regional Office hosts Dr. David Ngira, an Economic and Social Rights Researcher from Amnesty International.

Reports from Amnesty International and other human rights organisations indicate that the protests emerged against a backdrop of high living costs, growing public debt concerns and taxation proposals affecting basic commodities and household essentials. The discussions also referenced public concerns over taxation proposals affecting sanitary towels and other essential goods, which generated significant national debate around affordability and menstrual health equity. The meeting highlighted youth unemployment as one of the key underlying factors contributing to social unrest and dissatisfaction among young people.

According to analyses referenced during the discussions, many young Kenyans continue to face challenges related to unemployment, underemployment and limited access to economic opportunities, despite being one of the country's largest demographic groups.

Stakeholders observed that prolonged economic exclusion increases vulnerability to social instability and affects access to education, healthcare and livelihood opportunities. The engagement emphasised the importance of inclusive economic policies and youth-responsive interventions in addressing long-term inequality. Discussions further examined the impact of the protests and broader economic pressures on women and girls, including reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence, assault and teenage pregnancies. Human rights reports presented during the session highlighted concerns that periods of political instability and social unrest often increase protection risks for vulnerable groups.

Participants noted that economic hardship and disruption of social support systems can heighten exposure to exploitation, abuse and insecurity, particularly for women, adolescent girls and low-income households.

The engagement also reflected on growing national concern over gender-based violence and femicide, which has continued to attract public attention and advocacy efforts across the country. The discussions highlighted evidence showing continued concern over teenage pregnancies in vulnerable communities. Stakeholders noted that social disruption, economic strain and gaps in access to protection and reproductive health services can increase risks for adolescents during periods of instability.

Recent reports from rights organisations indicate that teenage pregnancy remains a significant challenge in parts of the country, with many cases linked to poverty, exploitation and limited access to support systems. Participants emphasised the importance of strengthening protection mechanisms, access to healthcare and support services for adolescent girls and young mothers.

During the engagement, the Commission outlined measures it has undertaken to address emerging gender and equality concerns linked to economic and political developments. These include advocacy for zero-rating taxes on sanitary towels to improve menstrual health access, monitoring social protection programmes and promoting inclusive policy reforms.

The Commission also highlighted ongoing advocacy efforts to improve access to Social Health Authority (SHA) coverage for teenage mothers and older members of society as part of broader efforts to strengthen universal health coverage.

Participants noted that Kenya's transition to the Social Health Authority framework continues to place focus on improving healthcare access for vulnerable populations, although implementation challenges remain in some areas.

The engagement further explored collaboration with police gender and children's desks aimed at improving response mechanisms for cases involving violence, abuse and protection concerns.

Stakeholders emphasised the importance of coordinated institutional responses during periods of social unrest to ensure that vulnerable populations are protected and able to access essential services. The discussions highlighted the need for responsive systems capable of addressing emerging risks while maintaining access to justice, healthcare and psychosocial support.

The consultative meeting between NGEC and Amnesty International provided an important platform for examining the intersection between political processes, economic pressures and inequality in Kenya.

The discussions reinforced the importance of evidence-based policy responses, strengthened social protection mechanisms and coordinated institutional action to safeguard the rights and wellbeing of all citizens.

Bringing Justice Closer to Communities: NGENC Joins Legal Aid Outreach in Kajiado

Community legal clinic at Kiserian Market strengthens public awareness on rights, equality and access to justice for vulnerable and marginalised groups



NGEC and other organisations during a legal aid clinic at Kiserian Market in Kajiado County.

Efforts to bring legal and human rights services closer to communities were reinforced in Kajiado County during a Legal Aid Clinic held at Kiserian Market, bringing together key institutions involved in governance, equality and access to justice.

The outreach, organised in collaboration with the Commission on Administrative Justice and other stakeholders involved in legal aid and human rights protection, provided members of the public with an opportunity to seek assistance on a wide range of legal and equality concerns affecting communities. The engagement reflected growing efforts by public institutions to decentralise justice services and bring legal information closer to citizens, particularly vulnerable and marginalised populations who often face barriers in accessing formal justice systems.

Across Kenya, access to justice remains a constitutional right under Article 48 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. However, many citizens continue to face obstacles linked to legal costs, distance, lack of awareness and procedural complexity, especially in underserved communities.

The outreach placed particular emphasis on supporting vulnerable and marginalised populations, including women, persons with disabilities, older persons, low-income households and communities facing social exclusion.

Studies on access to justice in Kenya continue to show that vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected by barriers such as poverty, limited access to information and inadequate legal representation. Stakeholders observed that such barriers often prevent affected individuals from pursuing justice or seeking protection when their rights are violated. The engagement highlighted the importance of ensuring that legal aid services are inclusive, accessible and responsive to the realities faced by different population groups.

The Kiserian Legal Aid Clinic brought together multiple institutions working in areas of legal services, governance and human rights protection. Stakeholders noted that collaborative approaches improve efficiency, strengthen referral systems and ensure that communities receive more coordinated support.

The engagement also highlighted the importance of partnerships in expanding outreach efforts and improving access to justice at the grassroots level. Participants emphasised that effective legal aid requires institutions to work together in responding to community concerns and strengthening trust in public systems.

The outreach reinforced the connection between access to justice and broader issues of equality, inclusion and human rights protection. Communities that lack access to legal support are often more vulnerable to discrimination, exclusion and abuse.

Stakeholders observed that strengthening legal awareness contributes to protection of constitutional rights and supports more inclusive governance systems. The engagement also reflected the broader role of legal aid in promoting dignity, accountability and equal treatment under the law. Kenya has continued to expand legal aid and community justice programmes aimed at improving access to services for underserved populations. The National Legal Aid Service and other institutions have increasingly promoted community-based legal outreach initiatives to ensure that legal support reaches citizens at grassroots level.

These efforts align with broader national objectives of strengthening rule of law, protecting human rights and promoting equitable access to justice for all.

The Legal Aid Clinic held at Kiserian Market highlighted the growing importance of grassroots outreach initiatives in strengthening access to justice and public awareness on rights and equality. By bringing legal and human rights services directly into communities, the engagement helped reduce barriers that often prevent vulnerable populations from accessing support and protection.

Stakeholders emphasised that improving access to justice requires sustained public engagement, coordinated institutional support and systems that are responsive to the needs of all citizens.

The outreach reinforced a broader national commitment to ensuring that justice is not limited by geography, income or social status, but remains accessible, inclusive and responsive to every Kenyan.

African Women Leaders Convene in Angola to Advance Continental Agenda on Equality and Inclusive Leadership

NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa joins Pan-African Women's Organization meeting in Luanda as leaders push for stronger women's participation in governance and economic empowerment across Africa

Women leaders from across Africa have convened in Luanda, Angola, for the Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO) Meeting, bringing renewed focus to continental efforts aimed at advancing gender equality, inclusive leadership, women's rights and socio-economic empowerment. Representing Kenya at the high-level engagement is National Gender and Equality Commission Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, who joined delegates in discussions on strengthening women's participation in leadership and decision-making spaces across the continent.



NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa (right) at the Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO) meeting in Luanda, Angola, with women leaders from across the continent.

The Pan-African Women's Organization remains one of Africa's longstanding continental platforms advocating for women's rights, inclusion and participation in governance and development processes. The Luanda meeting has brought together women leaders, policymakers and stakeholders from different African countries to deliberate on shared priorities affecting women and girls across the continent.

Discussions are centred on strengthening inclusive governance, advancing economic opportunities for women, addressing structural inequalities and promoting women's participation in leadership at all levels. Participants emphasised that while Africa has made progress in advancing women's representation, significant gaps remain in political participation, economic inclusion and access to decision-making spaces.

Kenya's participation at the meeting reflects ongoing national efforts to strengthen women's inclusion in governance and leadership. The country has continued to implement constitutional and policy measures aimed at promoting gender equality, including affirmative action provisions and institutional frameworks supporting women's representation. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women currently occupy approximately 23 percent of seats in

Kenya's National Assembly and Senate combined, reflecting gradual progress but also continued challenges in achieving gender parity in political leadership. Participants at the Luanda meeting underscored the need for sustained reforms and stronger institutional support to increase women's participation across political, economic and social sectors.

The discussions highlighted growing evidence that inclusive leadership contributes to stronger governance outcomes, improved accountability and more responsive public institutions.

Research by international development organisations continues to show that increased participation of women in leadership and decision-making is associated with improved social outcomes, broader policy perspectives and stronger focus on issues affecting families and communities. Participants noted that despite these gains, women across many African countries continue to face barriers including discriminatory norms, unequal access to economic resources, political violence and limited support systems.

The Luanda meeting also placed emphasis on women's socio-economic empowerment as a key pillar of sustainable development across Africa. Delegates discussed challenges affecting women's economic participation, including unequal access to finance, land ownership, markets, education and technology.

According to the African Development Bank, women account for a significant proportion of Africa's informal economy yet continue to face structural barriers limiting economic advancement and financial inclusion.

Stakeholders emphasised that advancing women's economic empowerment requires policies that support entrepreneurship, access to resources and equitable participation in labour markets. Participants at the meeting stressed the importance of cross-country collaboration in addressing shared challenges affecting women across Africa. The engagement provided a platform for African leaders to exchange experiences, strengthen partnerships and align advocacy efforts around gender equality and inclusion.

Delegates noted that regional cooperation remains critical in addressing issues such as gender-based violence, political exclusion, economic inequality and barriers to education and healthcare. The participation of Hon. Rehema Jaldesa reflects the National Gender and Equality Commission's ongoing commitment to advancing equality, inclusion and protection of rights both nationally and within broader regional engagements. The Commission continues to advocate for women's empowerment, inclusive governance and protection of vulnerable groups in line with Kenya's constitutional commitments and international obligations.

» CONTINUATION

A Country on Trial: Who Failed Kenya’s Children? Rising Defilement and Murders Expose Shocking Gaps in Protection Systems

A disturbing surge in defilement, abuse and killings of children across multiple counties exposes critical gaps in safeguarding systems, weak reporting mechanisms, and fragmented community protection structures, prompting urgent calls for national action.



Nyeri Deputy Governor H.E. Kinaniri Waroo and NGE Commission Dr Margaret Karungaru, MBS, in Witemere/Kiawara area of Nyeri following the killing of seven-year-old TBK.

A series of brutal cases involving the defilement and killing of children across Kenya between late 2025 and early 2026 has intensified national concern over the country’s child protection systems, with growing calls for urgent reforms, stronger accountability and coordinated prevention measures. From Kilifi and Nyandarua to Kisumu and Nyeri, recent incidents involving children assaulted and murdered near their homes have sparked outrage, protests and renewed scrutiny over whether existing institutions and community structures are adequately protecting children from violence and exploitation.

The latest incident involving the killing of seven-year-old BKM in Kilifi County has deepened fears over rising violence against children and renewed demands for justice and institutional accountability. The case follows several other highly publicised incidents reported across different counties involving defilement, sexual abuse and murder of minors.

In Nyandarua County, investigations were launched earlier this year after a Grade Two pupil was allegedly defiled and killed while walking home from school, an incident that shocked residents and prompted local leaders to condemn rising child abuse cases in the region. In Nyeri County, the murder of seven-year-old TBK triggered public anger and criticism of local community policing systems, with ~

mourners demanding investigations into failures within local security and protection structures. Kilifi County has also recorded multiple serious child sexual abuse cases in recent months, including convictions involving minors under the age of eleven. Child rights advocates and human rights defenders are increasingly warning that the country is facing a deepening child protection crisis.

The National Gender and Equality Commission has strongly condemned the killing of the seven-year-old child in Kilifi, describing the incident as a stark reminder of the urgent need to strengthen safeguarding systems, reporting mechanisms and community vigilance.

The Commission reiterated that every child has a constitutional right to dignity, safety, protection and life under Article 53 of the Constitution of Kenya and the Children Act, 2022. Recent national discussions have also drawn attention to the increasing frequency and brutality of crimes involving children, particularly sexual violence cases targeting minors.

In the Nyanza region alone, officials reported alarming numbers of child defilement cases, with authorities indicating that some months record up to 100 reported cases across the region. In Kisumu, government officials linked rising defilement cases to factors including child neglect, weak supervision and substance abuse within communities.

The Commission’s Malindi Regional Office has also raised concern over increasing cases of sexual violence against boys and other Special Interest Groups, warning that stigma and silence continue to hinder reporting and access to justice. Speaking through Radio Citizen FM, regional officials noted that boys are frequently excluded from mainstream discussions on sexual and gender-based violence despite evidence showing they are also vulnerable to abuse.

Experts say harmful social attitudes, stigma and fear of ridicule often discourage male survivors and families from reporting abuse, resulting in hidden trauma and delayed interventions. The discussions emphasised that protection systems must move beyond fragmented response approaches and instead adopt coordinated, prevention-focused frameworks that recognise all children as vulnerable to exploitation and violence regardless of gender.



Child Protection Centre

Stakeholders and child protection advocates continue to raise concerns over gaps in reporting systems, coordination failures and delayed institutional responses. The Commission stressed the importance of accessible, child-sensitive and trusted reporting pathways capable of enabling survivors and families to report abuse safely and without fear of blame or retaliation. Experts note that underreporting remains one of the biggest challenges in combating child sexual violence in Kenya, particularly in rural and low-income communities where stigma, fear and limited access to support services persist.

The engagement in Malindi further highlighted the need for stronger coordination among police, health institutions, child protection agencies, prosecutors, schools and community structures. According to stakeholders, effective child protection depends not only on the existence of institutions, but on how effectively those institutions work together from reporting to investigation, prosecution and recovery.

» CONTINUATION



Picture: AI-generated

Several recent cases have also raised questions about the effectiveness of local community protection systems.

In Nyeri, mourners questioned the role of local Nyumba Kumi structures following the murder of a child in an informal settlement area, accusing some local actors of failing to prevent or adequately respond to warning signs. Child protection experts argue that safeguarding failures often emerge where communities normalise silence, fail to report suspicious behaviour or lack awareness on early warning indicators of abuse.

The Commission has therefore called for stronger community awareness programmes aimed at dismantling stigma and normalising reporting of abuse cases, including those involving boys and vulnerable groups often ignored in public discourse. The Commission has also continued to emphasise the importance of safeguarding policies and practical protection frameworks within institutions and organisations working with children. Recent safeguarding discussions led in collaboration with partners highlighted the need for clear reporting pathways, prevention measures, accountability systems and mandatory reporting obligations. Experts argue that safeguarding policies are critical because they ensure institutions respond consistently to harm and create safer environments for children and programme participants.

The discussions further underscored that effective safeguarding must reflect real-life vulnerabilities linked to poverty, gender inequality, disability, social exclusion and power imbalances. Researchers and child rights organisations continue to point to broader social and economic pressures contributing to increased vulnerability among children. These include poverty, family instability, unemployment, substance abuse, weak supervision, online exploitation risks and social breakdown within some communities.

Authorities in Kisumu recently linked rising child abuse cases to alcoholism and parental neglect in vulnerable communities. Experts warn that where social protection systems are weak and families face economic distress, children often become more exposed to exploitation and abuse.



Source: BBC News

Human rights organisations, child protection actors and community leaders are increasingly calling for the crisis to be treated as a national emergency requiring coordinated action across sectors.

Stakeholders say addressing violence against children will require stronger prevention systems, faster investigations, survivor-centred services, strengthened prosecution of offenders and sustained public awareness campaigns. The Commission has reiterated the importance of strengthening institutional accountability, child-sensitive justice systems and community vigilance to ensure children are protected from violence and exploitation. The rising cases of defilement and child killings across Kenya have placed the country's child protection architecture under unprecedented scrutiny. Each life lost represents not only an individual tragedy, but a profound failure of systems, institutions, and collective vigilance meant to uphold the rights enshrined under Article 53 of the Constitution, which guarantees every child protection from all forms of violence, abuse and neglect.

As communities mourn and demand answers, the moment calls for more than sympathy and statements. It demands decisive, sustained and coordinated action that moves beyond reaction to prevention, beyond enforcement policy, and beyond isolated interventions to a fully integrated national child protection system. Kenya must now confront an uncomfortable truth: the measure of a society is not in how it responds to tragedy, but in how effectively it prevents it. The protection of every child must now become an urgent, non-negotiable national priority—backed by action, enforced by institutions, and owned by every level of society.

Workplace Safety and Accountability Take Centre Stage in NGECE Sensitisation on Sexual Harassment

Training for the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner highlights leadership responsibility, safe reporting systems and the need for respectful, harassment-free workplaces

Creating safe, respectful and accountable workplaces formed the focus of a comprehensive sensitisation session on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace conducted for the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner, bringing together staff and senior management through both physical and virtual engagements. The session examined workplace safeguarding, institutional accountability and the importance of effective reporting and response systems in addressing harassment and protecting employee dignity.

Additional findings from workplace studies in Kenya have shown that many survivors remain silent because they fear losing employment opportunities, being labelled negatively or facing retaliation from perpetrators, especially where power imbalances exist. The sensitisation session underscored the role of leadership and institutions in shaping workplace cultures grounded in professionalism, dignity and accountability. Participants examined the importance of clear safeguarding frameworks, confidential complaint-

establish policies addressing sexual harassment in the workplace. Participants discussed the importance of institutions moving beyond compliance to create environments where employees feel safe to report concerns without fear of intimidation or retaliation. The session further highlighted that safeguarding systems are most effective when supported by leadership commitment, employee awareness and transparent accountability mechanisms. The sensitisation acknowledged the broader impact of workplace harassment on mental health and employee morale.



NGECE and Office of the Data Protection Commissioner staff during a sensitisation session on sexual harassment in the workplace.

The engagement comes amid increasing national and global attention on workplace sexual harassment and the barriers that continue to prevent many victims from reporting abuse. Discussions during the session highlighted that sexual harassment remains a significant challenge affecting employee well-being, equality, mental health and workplace participation across different sectors. Research in Kenya continues to show high levels of underreporting due to fear of retaliation, stigma, abuse of authority and lack of confidence in institutional reporting systems.

A 2022 survey by Knightwise Human Capital found that 86 percent of respondents who experienced workplace sexual harassment did not report the incidents to their employers, with fear of victim-shaming identified as a major deterrent.

handling procedures and institutional systems capable of responding effectively to workplace harassment concerns. The discussions noted that safe workplaces are not only essential for protecting employees but are also critical for institutional trust, productivity and organisational integrity.

Research continues to indicate that weak reporting systems and poor enforcement mechanisms contribute significantly to continued workplace harassment across sectors.

The engagement also examined legal obligations under Kenya's Employment Act and broader constitutional protections related to dignity, equality and freedom from discrimination. Kenyan law prohibits workplace sexual harassment and requires employers with more than 20 employees to

Participants noted that unresolved harassment cases can contribute to stress, anxiety, reduced productivity and loss of confidence among affected employees. The discussions reinforced the importance of supportive reporting environments, psychosocial support and workplace cultures that prioritise dignity and protection of rights. The sensitisation forms part of broader efforts to strengthen awareness on workplace equality, dignity and protection from discrimination across institutions.

Through public education, policy advocacy and institutional engagement, the Commission continues to promote safe and inclusive environments that uphold constitutional values of equality and human dignity. The engagement with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner also reflected growing collaboration among public institutions in strengthening safeguarding and accountability systems.

Justice at the Centre: Kisumu Legal Aid Clinic Brings Services Closer to the People



NGEC's Anne Anyango at a legal aid clinic at Kondele Social Justice Centre in Kisumu.

Residents of Kisumu Central Sub-County accessed legal support, rights information and formal complaint mechanisms during a Legal Aid Clinic held at Kondele Social Justice Centre in Makogilo Area, where cases involving gender-based violence, child protection concerns and land disputes were reported, documented and referred for further action. The outreach provided a structured platform for communities to engage justice actors and seek redress on violations affecting vulnerable and marginalised groups.

The Legal Aid Clinic, conducted by the Commission's Kisumu Regional Office, brought together residents seeking assistance on a range of social justice issues affecting households and communities in the area. Members of the public used the forum to report cases of gender-based violence, including intimate partner violence, defilement and sexual abuse of children, alongside disputes related to land ownership and succession. The engagement provided immediate legal guidance, documentation of complaints and initiation of referral pathways to relevant justice and protection institutions for further support and follow-up. A significant number of concerns raised during the clinic were linked to gender-based violence and child protection violations.

The clinic also recognised the contribution of community volunteers in strengthening justice and protection systems at grassroots level. Participants included women groups, students, boda boda operators and Nyumba Kumi representatives who play a key role in community awareness, reporting and early response to incidents of violence and insecurity.

The Commission reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening collaboration with community justice structures and institutional partners to ensure that survivors and affected persons access protection and redress.



THE NATIONAL GENDER AND EQUALITY COMMISSION

JOB VACANCIES

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) is a Constitutional Commission established by the National Gender and Equality Commission Act No. 15 of 2011 pursuant to Article 59 (4) & (5) of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. The Commission's mandate is to promote gender equality and freedom from discrimination for all people in Kenya with a focus on special interest groups, which include women, children, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), older members of society, minorities, and marginalized groups.

The Commission is seeking to recruit a highly motivated, visionary, dynamic and results-oriented candidate to fill the following position:

S/N	Position	Job Ref	Grade	No. of Posts	Duty Station	Terms of Service
1.	Assistant Director, Finance, Planning and Accounts- Re-advertisement	NGEC/HR/5/3/2026	NGEC 3	1	HQ and Regional Offices	Permanent and Pensionable
2.	Assistant Director, HRM and Administration	NGEC/HR/6/3/2026	NGEC 3	1	HQ and Regional Offices	Permanent and Pensionable
3.	Records Management Assistant III	NGEC/HR/7/3/2026	NGEC 8	1	HQ and Regional Offices	Permanent and Pensionable
4.	Records Management Assistant II	NGEC/HR/8/3/2026	NGEC 7	1	HQ and Regional Offices	Permanent and Pensionable
5.	Drivers III	NGEC/HR/9/3/2026	NGEC 9	2	HQ and Regional Offices	Permanent and Pensionable
6.	Office Assistant III	NGEC/HR/10/3/2026	NGEC 10	3	HQ and Regional Offices	Permanent and Pensionable

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates who meet the minimum requirements should submit their applications together with;

1. **A detailed Curriculum Vitae;**
2. **A copy of the National Identity Card;**
3. **copies of Academic and Professional Certificates; and**
4. **Three (3) names of referees, their mobile telephone, and e-mail contacts.**

Please Note that:

1. The National Gender and Equality Commission is an equal-opportunity employer. Persons with Disability, Youth, Women and People from Minority and Marginalized communities are encouraged to apply.
2. The Commission does not ask for any money nor ask applicants to undergo any medical examination.
3. Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.
4. Shortlisted candidates shall be required to produce their original academic and professional certificates and other testimonials during the interview;
5. Only the successful candidate will be notified and will be required to provide clearance certificates from KRA, DCI (Police Clearance), EACC, HELB and CRB.
6. It is a criminal offence for any applicant to provide false information and documents in the job application.
7. Canvassing will lead to automatic disqualification.

All applications **MUST BE SUBMITTED IN HARD COPY ONLY**, addressed to:

**The Commission Secretary/CEO
The National Gender and Equality Commission
Solution Tech Place, Longonot Road, Upper Hill
P O Box 275 12-00506 NAIROBI**

Posted or Hand-delivered applications should reach the Commission Secretary/CEO on or before **Tuesday, 19th May 2026 before 5.00pm.**

A detailed job description is found on www.ngeckenya.org

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