



EQUALITY BULLETIN

NGEC POWERS EQUALITY DRIVE

Kindiki Backs Mandate

At a time when Kenya continues to grapple with persistent inequalities, rising cases of gender-based violence and growing demands for more inclusive governance, the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) has sought to place equality and social justice firmly at the centre of the national agenda. During a high-level courtesy call led by NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa at Harambee House Annex, H.E. Hon. Prof. Kithure Kindiki, EGH, Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya, reaffirmed the Government's commitment to ensuring that constitutional guarantees of equality translate into meaningful change in the daily lives of all Kenyans.

The meeting brought together the country's second-highest office and the constitutional commission mandated to promote equality and freedom from discrimination, creating an opportunity to assess progress made, confront persistent barriers and identify practical pathways for strengthening protection and inclusion for women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, older members of society, minorities and marginalised communities.

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Ready or Not: Women Demand Early 2027 Poll Planning

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A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

This edition captures a defining conversation at the heart of Kenya’s development journey: how to ensure that constitutional guarantees of equality and freedom from discrimination translate into meaningful opportunities and protections for every Kenyan. The high-level engagement between the Commission and H.E. the Deputy President reaffirmed a shared commitment to advancing inclusion, strengthening protection for vulnerable groups, and accelerating the realization of the constitutional promise that no one should be left behind.

The stories featured in this edition demonstrate that the pursuit of equality is both broad and deeply practical. From expanding access to public services, strengthening electoral accountability ahead of the 2027 General Election, and advancing women’s political participation, to promoting disability inclusion, protecting older persons, supporting pastoralist communities, and ensuring that local communities have a voice in decisions affecting their resources, the common thread is the need for institutions that are responsive, inclusive, and accountable.

These engagements reinforce a simple but powerful truth: equality is not an abstract ideal. It is reflected in whether citizens can access services, participate in decision-making, live free from discrimination, and realise their full potential regardless of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, or social status.

The Commission remains steadfast in advancing this vision—working with government, communities, development partners, and other stakeholders to build a Kenya where dignity, inclusion, and equal opportunity are realities for all.

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



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NGEC, JICA and Community Stakeholders Examine Links Between Climate Shocks and Gender-Based Violence in Baringo

Consultative Forum in Mogotio Highlights Need for Community-Led Protection and Resilience Measures

BARINGO COUNTY, Kenya — The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), through the NGEC–JICA Gender-Based Violence Prevention Project, held a consultative engagement with Keergaa Indigenous Community Organization (KICO) in Mogotio, Baringo County, to examine the growing intersection between climate-related shocks, community vulnerabilities, and the risk of Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

The engagement brought together project stakeholders and community representatives to discuss how prolonged drought, economic hardship, and resource scarcity are affecting households and increasing vulnerabilities among women, girls, and other at-risk populations in arid and semi-arid areas. Participants noted that recurring droughts continue to undermine livelihoods across many parts of Baringo County, reducing household incomes, increasing food insecurity, and placing additional pressure on families and communities. According to stakeholders, these conditions can contribute to heightened risks of Gender-Based Violence, child marriage, and other harmful practices, particularly among households facing economic distress.

The discussions focused on identifying practical interventions that strengthen both community protection mechanisms and resilience-building efforts.



GEC–JICA GBV Prevention Project team with KICO in Baringo County.

Participants explored strategies to improve referral pathways for survivors of violence, enhance access to support services, and strengthen community-based systems that protect women and girls from abuse and exploitation. Particular attention was given to initiatives aimed at safeguarding girls at risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and child marriage. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of safe spaces, community awareness programmes, and coordinated responses involving local leaders, government agencies, and civil society organizations.

Of significant concern during the discussions was the continued prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation in parts of Kisanana Ward. Community representatives observed that social and cultural pressures surrounding the practice remain a challenge despite ongoing awareness and prevention efforts.

Participants called for sustained community engagement, strengthened local leadership, and increased support for grassroots organizations working to eliminate harmful practices and protect the rights of women and girls. The engagement also underscored the importance of integrating protection concerns into broader development and climate resilience initiatives.

Stakeholders noted that addressing Gender-Based Violence requires not only responsive support services but also interventions that tackle underlying drivers of vulnerability, including poverty, exclusion, and limited access to economic opportunities.

NGEC reaffirmed its commitment to promoting equality, protecting vulnerable populations, and supporting collaborative approaches that address discrimination and violence in all its forms.

Through partnerships with development organizations and community-based groups, the Commission continues to advocate for interventions that strengthen both protection systems and community resilience.

The outcomes of the Mogotio consultation highlight the growing recognition that climate resilience, economic empowerment, and protection from violence are interconnected development priorities.

NGEC Chairperson Takes Gender Agenda to TikTok

Hon. Rehema Jaldesa joins online influencer Gaadisa Abba Roobaa to discuss political representation, GBV, femicide, and patriarchal barriers to women's leadership

National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) Chairperson, Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, has taken the gender equality conversation to TikTok, engaging in a candid discussion with online influencer Gaadisa Abba Roobaa on pressing issues shaping Kenya's equality agenda.

The conversation explored women's political representation, the fight against Gender-Based Violence and femicide, patriarchal barriers to leadership, and systemic obstacles limiting women's participation in decision-making.

Hon. Jaldesa's appearance on the popular digital platform signals a deliberate shift in the Commission's engagement strategy, recognising that traditional forums alone cannot reach the diverse demographics necessary to drive meaningful cultural and policy change.

The discussion comes at a critical juncture for Kenya, which has witnessed a troubling surge in femicide cases and GBV incidents in recent years.

She reiterated the Commission's commitment to holding duty-bearers accountable and ensuring survivors have access to justice and support.

She noted that while Kenya has made constitutional progress—including the two-thirds gender principle—implementation remains a challenge.

The TikTok engagement generated significant online traction.



Hon. Rehema Jaldesa and online influencer Gaadisa Abba Roobaa during a live TikTok session

Designing Inclusion: Why Accessibility Must Move From the Margins to the Mainstream

NGEC and U.S. Access Board explore a transformative partnership to strengthen accessibility, inclusive governance, digital equity and universal design in Kenya's development agenda.

NAIROBI, Kenya — The true measure of a society is not how many people can access its services, buildings and opportunities, but how it treats those who cannot. For millions of persons with disabilities around the world, exclusion often begins long before they arrive at a government office, board a bus, visit a hospital, access a website or seek public services. It begins in the design of systems that were never built with them in mind.

As Kenya accelerates infrastructure development, embraces digital transformation and expands public services, accessibility is emerging as one of the defining governance and human rights questions of the modern era. Who benefits from development? Who is left behind? And how can governments ensure that progress is genuinely inclusive?

These questions formed the centrepiece of a high-level engagement between the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) and a delegation from the United States Access Board led by Executive Director Dr. Sachin Dev Pavithran. The courtesy visit brought together two institutions united by a common goal: advancing accessibility as a cornerstone of equality, inclusion and effective governance.

Far from being a routine diplomatic engagement, the discussions reflected a growing global recognition that accessibility is no longer a specialised issue affecting a small segment of society. It is increasingly viewed as a fundamental development priority that influences education, employment, healthcare, mobility, political participation and economic growth.

During the engagement, NGEC presented its constitutional mandate of promoting equality and freedom from discrimination while protecting the rights and interests of Special Interest Groups.

The Commission highlighted its ongoing efforts to strengthen inclusive governance through gender mainstreaming, policy advisory services, monitoring compliance with equality standards and generating evidence to support decision-making across public institutions.

The meeting took place against a backdrop of growing international awareness that inaccessible environments continue to lock millions of people out of opportunities that many citizens take for granted.

According to global disability rights advocates, accessibility barriers remain among the most significant obstacles to social and economic participation. These barriers are often hidden in plain sight—stairs without ramps, websites incompatible with assistive technologies, public transport systems that cannot accommodate wheelchair users, information published without accessible formats, and public facilities designed without considering diverse user needs.

For persons with disabilities, such barriers can mean exclusion from education, limited employment opportunities, reduced access to healthcare and diminished participation in public life. The discussions therefore focused on practical solutions aimed at embedding accessibility into the heart of governance and development planning.

One of the strongest themes to emerge was the importance of accessible information and communication systems. In an era where governments increasingly rely on digital platforms to deliver services, accessibility is rapidly becoming a prerequisite for equal citizenship. Whether applying for services, accessing public information, participating in consultations or engaging with institutions, citizens increasingly depend on technology to interact with government.

The two institutions explored opportunities to strengthen accessible communication systems and promote digital platforms that ~



NGEC team with the United States Access Board Executive Director Dr. Sachin Dev Pavithran during a courtesy visit.

can be used effectively by all citizens, including persons with visual, hearing and cognitive disabilities. The discussions recognised that digital exclusion risks becoming the new frontier of inequality if accessibility considerations are not integrated from the outset.

Physical accessibility and universal design also featured prominently in the deliberations. Universal design promotes the creation of environments that can be accessed and used by the widest possible range of people without requiring special adaptation. It shifts the conversation from accommodating disability after construction to designing inclusively from the beginning.

Stakeholders noted that inclusive infrastructure benefits not only persons with disabilities but also older persons, pregnant women, parents with young children and individuals facing temporary mobility challenges.

Both institutions acknowledged that achieving meaningful accessibility requires more than legislation. It demands expertise, innovation and continuous learning among policymakers, planners, architects, engineers, service providers and public administrators. The two institutions explored opportunities to collaborate in developing and piloting accessibility tools and solutions that could support inclusive service delivery across public institutions.

The engagement also examined the potential establishment of communities of practice to facilitate ongoing knowledge exchange among accessibility experts, practitioners and policymakers.

Women Leaders Call for Early Electoral Preparedness as Kenya Eyes 2027 Polls

Kisumu Forum Highlights Persistent Barriers to Women's Political Participation and Representation



Kisumu Regional Head Mr. Davis Okeyo with participants for a group photo during the Women's Electoral Preparedness Forum.

KISUMU, Kenya — Women leaders, aspiring candidates, civil society organizations, and governance stakeholders have called for sustained investment in women's political empowerment ahead of the 2027 General Elections, citing persistent structural barriers that continue to limit women's participation and representation in elective leadership.

The concerns emerged during the Women's Electoral Preparedness Forum held in Kisumu County, where participants examined the progress made toward gender equality in political representation and assessed the challenges that continue to impede the realization of constitutional commitments on inclusion and equal participation in governance.

The forum brought together stakeholders from across the political and governance sectors to discuss strategies for strengthening women's preparedness for elective leadership and enhancing their participation in political processes long before the official campaign period begins.

At the centre of the discussions were barriers that have consistently affected women's political participation in Kenya. Participants identified unequal access to campaign financing, gender stereotypes, violence against

women in politics, online harassment, technology-facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV), unpaid care responsibilities, and limited influence within political party leadership structures as some of the major obstacles facing women seeking elective office. Stakeholders noted that these challenges continue to undermine efforts to achieve equitable representation despite constitutional and legislative provisions designed to promote gender equality and inclusion.

The forum also revisited Kenya's ongoing efforts to implement the two-thirds gender principle, a constitutional requirement intended to ensure that no more than two-thirds of members of elective or appointive bodies are of the same gender. More than a decade after the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, the country continues to face challenges in fully realizing this provision, particularly in elective positions.

Participants emphasized that increasing women's representation requires interventions that extend beyond election cycles. They underscored the importance of continuous leadership development programmes, mentorship initiatives, political networking opportunities, digital literacy and safety training, strategic communication skills, ~

resource mobilization, and active participation within political party structures. The discussions further highlighted the growing impact of digital platforms on political engagement. While technology has expanded opportunities for political participation and voter outreach, participants noted that online abuse and technology-facilitated violence have emerged as significant threats that disproportionately affect women leaders and aspiring candidates.

According to governance and gender experts at the forum, creating a supportive political environment requires coordinated efforts by government institutions, political parties, civil society organizations, development partners, and communities. They observed that addressing barriers to women's political participation is essential for strengthening democratic governance and ensuring that leadership structures reflect the diversity of Kenya's population. The National Gender and Equality Commission committed to continue supporting efforts aimed at strengthening inclusive electoral processes, enhancing accountability on gender equality obligations, and monitoring progress toward the realization of equitable political representation across all levels of governance.

The engagement also underscored the role of institutions mandated to promote equality and freedom from discrimination in supporting inclusive electoral processes and monitoring progress toward gender-responsive governance. As preparations for the 2027 General Elections gather momentum, stakeholders at the Kisumu forum called for sustained action to dismantle barriers that limit women's access to leadership opportunities.

They urged policymakers, political parties, and electoral stakeholders to strengthen mechanisms that enable women to participate effectively, compete fairly, and contribute meaningfully to decision-making processes. The outcomes of the forum reflect a broader national conversation on inclusive governance and the need to translate constitutional guarantees on equality into measurable gains in political representation.

NGEC, Huduma Kenya Seek Stronger Partnership to Expand Inclusive Access to Public Services

Strategic Talks Focus on Removing Barriers Facing Women, Persons with Disabilities, Older Persons and Marginalised Communities

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) and the Huduma Kenya Secretariat have initiated discussions aimed at strengthening institutional collaboration to improve access to public services for vulnerable and underserved populations across the country.

The discussions took place during a meeting between NGEC Commission Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Purity Ngina, and Huduma Kenya Secretariat Chief Executive Officer, CPA Benjamin Kai Chilumo. The engagement focused on identifying areas of cooperation that can enhance equitable, citizen-centred service delivery and ensure that government services effectively reach all segments of society, particularly Special Interest Groups.

The meeting comes at a time when Kenya continues to pursue reforms aimed at improving public service efficiency, accessibility and responsiveness through integrated service delivery platforms. As government institutions increasingly embrace digital transformation and one-stop service centres, stakeholders have emphasized the need to ensure that no population group is excluded from accessing essential services.

During the discussions, the two institutions explored strategies for promoting equitable access to government services for women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, minorities and marginalized communities.

These groups often encounter unique challenges that can limit their ability to obtain critical services, including documentation, social protection programmes, healthcare registration, business permits, educational support services and other government interventions.

The two noted that while significant progress has been made in bringing services closer to citizens through the Huduma Kenya model, disparities in access persist in some parts of the country.

Geographic distance, physical inaccessibility, digital exclusion, language barriers, lack of awareness and socio-economic challenges continue to affect the ability of some citizens to fully benefit from available government services.



NGEC CEO Dr Purity Ngina and Huduma Kenya CEO CPA Benjamin Kai Chilumo

The engagement underscored the importance of designing public service systems that respond to the realities of diverse population groups. Both emphasized that accessibility should extend beyond physical infrastructure to include communication, information dissemination, customer service approaches and service delivery mechanisms that accommodate varying needs and circumstances.

The discussions also examined opportunities for enhanced stakeholder engagement and collaborative interventions that can strengthen inclusion within public service delivery systems. Both institutions acknowledged the importance of evidence-based approaches in identifying service delivery gaps and informing policy and administrative reforms.

The meeting further highlighted the role of public institutions in advancing Kenya's constitutional commitments on equality, human dignity, social justice and inclusive development. The meeting underscored a shared commitment to deepening collaboration in advancing equitable access to public services and strengthening citizen-centred governance. The two emphasised the need for sustained engagement, coordinated action, and innovative approaches to ensure all Kenyans can access essential services regardless of age, gender, disability status, geographic location, or socio-economic background.

NGEC, Kitui County Launch Assistive Devices Drive

Three-day outreach delivers wheelchairs, registration, and support to persons with disabilities



NGEC Kitui Regional Head Dr. Moses Saranta during an outreach programme.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), in partnership with the County Government of Kitui and Hope Mobility Kenya, has launched a three-day outreach programme at the Kitui Agricultural Training Centre to expand access to wheelchairs and essential assistive devices for persons with disabilities.

The initiative was officially launched by Hon. Phoebe Mutemi, CECM for Culture, Gender, Youth, ICT, Sports and Social Services, alongside Mr Michael Panther, Founder and CEO of Hope Mobility Kenya. The programme combines assistive device provision, government registration, and psychosocial support. According to the World Health Organization, fewer than 10 per cent of persons with disabilities in Kenya have access to assistive devices they need. The programme responds to documented rights violations across Kitui County, where persons with disabilities face barriers to healthcare, education, and employment.

NGEC is conducting rights awareness sessions on the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2025. The county also announced plans to establish a disability fund to sustain the initiative.

"The journey to full inclusion is long, but today, in Kitui, we have shown that when government, civil society, and communities come together, lives can be transformed," said Dr. Moses Saranta NGEC Kitui regional head.

Land, Mining and Inclusion: NGEC Pushes for Greater Community Voice in Kenya's Expanding Extractive Sector

Women Leaders from Western Kenya Call for Stronger Participation, Transparency and Protection of Community Rights in Natural Resource Governance

KISUMU, Kenya –

More than 40 women leaders, community representatives and human rights defenders from Kakamega, Vihiga and Siaya counties have called for stronger public participation, greater transparency in mining activities, and enhanced protection of community rights as Kenya continues to expand investment in its extractive sector.

The concerns emerged during a capacity-building forum convened by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), which brought together participants from communities affected by or likely to be impacted by mineral exploration and extraction activities. The session focused on strengthening awareness of the Mining Act, 2016 and the Community Land Act, while equipping participants with knowledge on their rights, responsibilities and opportunities for engagement in natural resource governance.

Facilitated by Ms Anne Anyango of the Commission's Kisumu Regional Office, the engagement examined how constitutional guarantees on equality, participation, non-discrimination and community rights can be translated into meaningful involvement of women, youth and marginalized groups in decisions concerning land, mining and resource development. The discussions come at a time when Kenya is increasingly positioning the extractive sector as a contributor to economic growth, employment creation and revenue generation. Across several counties, communities are witnessing increased exploration activities, growing investor interest, and expanded use of technologies for geological surveys and resource mapping.

While these developments present opportunities for local development, stakeholders at the forum noted that they also raise important questions regarding community participation, land rights, benefit sharing and accountability.



NGEC Kisumu Regional Office's Ms. Anne Anyango speaking at a capacity-building forum.

The forum highlighted the importance of the Mining Act, 2016, which provides mechanisms for community engagement and benefit-sharing, and the Community Land Act, which seeks to protect community land rights and provide procedures for the recognition, registration and management of community land. Participants observed that despite the existence of these legal safeguards, implementation challenges continue to limit the full realization of rights guaranteed under the law.

Among the key concerns raised was the limited access to land ownership and registration documentation, particularly among women and vulnerable households. Participants noted that inadequate documentation can weaken communities' ability to engage effectively in negotiations and decision-making processes related to land use and natural resource projects.

Women leaders attending the forum emphasized that access to information remains a significant challenge in many areas. They reported that communities are often informed about projects after key decisions have already been made, reducing opportunities for meaningful participation. Participants stressed that public engagement should begin at the earliest stages of project planning and continue throughout the lifecycle of mining and exploration activities.

The discussions also examined barriers that affect the participation of women, youth and marginalized groups in governance processes.

Participants noted that although public participation forums are routinely held, representation does not always translate into meaningful influence over outcomes. Some observed that women and young people are frequently underrepresented in community decision-making structures despite being directly affected by land and resource management decisions.

Stakeholders further raised concerns regarding the growing use of drones, satellite imagery and geospatial mapping technologies during exploration activities. While acknowledging the value of technology in supporting resource assessment and planning, participants noted that inadequate public awareness and sensitisation regarding these processes have, in some communities, generated uncertainty and mistrust.

The Commission emphasized that effective governance of natural resources requires inclusive consultation processes that recognize and protect the rights of all community members.

Particular attention was given to ensuring that women, youth, persons with disabilities, minorities and marginalized groups are not excluded from discussions that influence the management and utilization of community resources. Stakeholders noted that as Kenya continues to pursue economic opportunities within the extractive sector, there is an increasing need to strengthen civic education and public awareness on land and mining laws.

NGEC, UN Women and OHCHR Deepen Partnership to Strengthen Electoral Accountability Ahead of 2027 Polls

Stakeholders Focus on Inclusive Elections, Gender Equality and Protection of Civic Space as Kenya Prepares for Next General Election



NGEC leadership with UN Women and OHCHR Kenya Country Representatives during a strategic engagement

NAIROBI, Kenya — The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) has intensified efforts to strengthen electoral accountability and inclusive governance ahead of the 2027 General Elections following a high-level engagement with representatives of UN Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

The Commission hosted a courtesy visit by the Kenya Country Representative of UN Women, Ms. Antonia N'Gabala-Sodonon, and the Kenya Country Representative of OHCHR, Mr. Charles Kwemoi, to explore areas of collaboration aimed at promoting equality, protecting human rights and supporting democratic governance during the electoral cycle. Both officials currently lead their respective United Nations agencies in Kenya. The meeting comes at a time when attention is increasingly turning towards preparations for the 2027 General Elections, with institutions, development partners and civil society organizations emphasizing the importance of early interventions to safeguard electoral integrity, inclusion and participation.

During the discussions, NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa reaffirmed the Commission's constitutional mandate to promote equality and freedom from ~

discrimination and to ensure that governance systems remain responsive to the needs of all Kenyans, particularly Special Interest Groups. The Commission highlighted its ongoing work in monitoring compliance with the constitutional two-thirds gender principle, engaging political parties on inclusive nomination processes, and advocating for the removal of barriers that continue to limit the participation of women, youth, persons with disabilities, minorities and marginalized communities in political leadership and decision-making.

Participants observed that while Kenya has made progress in strengthening democratic institutions and expanding political participation, significant gaps remain in achieving equitable representation in elective and appointive positions.

The implementation of the two-thirds gender principle remains one of the country's longstanding governance challenges, with women continuing to be underrepresented in many leadership structures despite constitutional guarantees on equality and inclusion.

The meeting also explored opportunities for enhanced collaboration on electoral monitoring and evidence-based reporting.

Stakeholders noted that credible data and timely analysis play a critical role in identifying emerging challenges, informing policy interventions and strengthening accountability during electoral processes.

A key area of discussion was the need to expand civic and voter education initiatives, particularly among groups that have historically faced barriers to participation. The engagement further highlighted the importance of protecting civic space before, during and after elections. Participants acknowledged that open civic engagement, freedom of expression, public participation and respect for human rights are essential components of a democratic electoral environment. They emphasized the need for sustained efforts to ensure that all citizens can participate in public affairs without discrimination, intimidation or exclusion.

The courtesy visit reaffirmed the shared commitment of NGEC, UN Women and OHCHR to promoting democratic governance founded on human rights, equality and accountability.

The institutions committed to strengthening collaboration on programmes and initiatives aimed at enhancing electoral inclusion, protecting civic freedoms and supporting evidence-driven approaches to governance.

Inclusive Harvest: NGEC Pushes Equality Agenda at Africa's Agritech Transformation Forum

At KICC conference, Commission underscores need to centre women, youth and persons with disabilities in Africa's fast-evolving food systems and agricultural innovation agenda

NAIROBI, Kenya — As Africa accelerates efforts to modernise its agricultural systems through technology, climate-smart innovation and expanded value chains, questions around inclusion and equity are gaining renewed urgency.

These issues came into sharp focus during the 12th edition of the Agritech Expo and Conference held at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC), where the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) joined policymakers, researchers, development partners, private sector actors, innovators and farmer organisations from across Africa to deliberate on the future of food systems transformation.

Representing the Commission, Mr Paul Kuria, Director of Programmes and Research, participated in the high-level engagements and served as a panellist in a thematic discussion on inclusive agricultural transformation. His intervention centred on the need to deliberately integrate equality and social inclusion considerations into agricultural policies, programmes and investment frameworks.

He underscored that while agritech innovation and climate-smart agriculture are reshaping food production systems across the continent, the benefits of these advancements risk remaining unevenly distributed unless inclusion is embedded at the core of policy design and implementation.

In particular, Mr Kuria emphasised the importance of ensuring that women and persons with disabilities are not treated as peripheral beneficiaries but as central actors in agricultural transformation.

His remarks reflected a growing body of evidence indicating that agricultural productivity and food security outcomes improve significantly when women farmers, smallholder producers and marginalised groups have equal access to resources, training, finance and markets. Across Africa, women make up a substantial proportion of the agricultural workforce, particularly in rural

areas, yet continue to face structural barriers including limited access to land ownership, credit, agricultural inputs, mechanisation and extension services. Persons with disabilities, meanwhile, often encounter physical, informational and systemic barriers that limit participation in agribusiness value chains.

The Agritech Expo, which coincided with the commemoration of International Rural Women's Day, placed a spotlight on these realities, recognising the critical role rural women play in food production, household nutrition and local economies. Participants noted that despite their central contribution, rural women often remain concentrated in low-value segments of agricultural production, with limited opportunities to transition into commercially viable and resilient agribusiness enterprises.

The conference therefore explored pathways for strengthening innovation ecosystems that support rural women and marginalised groups to move up the agricultural value chain through access to technology, finance,

Stakeholders observed that agriculture across the continent is undergoing rapid transformation driven by population growth, climate change, shifting market demands and technological advancement.

However, experts cautioned that without deliberate policy interventions, these transformations could deepen existing inequalities rather than reduce them.

NGEC's participation aligned with its constitutional mandate to promote equality and freedom from discrimination, particularly through mainstreaming inclusion across sectors and ensuring that development frameworks respond to the needs of Special Interest Groups. Mr Kuria reiterated that inclusive agricultural transformation requires more than technological adoption. It requires intentional policy choices that address structural barriers and ensure equitable participation in economic opportunities.

He further highlighted that equality considerations must be embedded in agricultural planning, research, financing systems and innovation ecosystems to ensure



NGEC Mr Paul Kuria, Director of Programmes and Research

training and markets. Discussions at the forum focused on key themes shaping the future of agriculture in Africa, including agritech innovation, climate-smart agriculture, digital solutions for farming systems, access to finance, and value chain development.

that no group is left behind in the sector's modernization agenda.

Participants noted that young people are increasingly becoming key drivers of innovation in agriculture, particularly through digital platforms, data-driven farming solutions and agri-entrepreneurship ventures.

NGEC, Police Forge Stronger Alliance to Tackle Missing Children Crisis, GBV in Rift Valley

High-level consultation with Regional Deputy Police Commander signals renewed commitment to survivor-centred justice and coordinated protection for Special Interest Groups

NAKURU, Kenya — Against the backdrop of a national child protection crisis that has seen an average of 23 children disappear daily over the past 15 months, the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) and the National Police Service have moved to deepen their collaborative framework, vowing to transform fragmented responses into a cohesive, survivor-centred system of protection and accountability.

The Nakuru Regional Office, represented by Mr Lewis Mwaniki and Ms Nancy Mwangi, held a high-level consultative engagement with Rift Valley Regional Deputy Police Commander Mr Michael Diang'a, aimed at strengthening inter-agency collaboration in the protection and promotion of the rights of Special Interest Groups (SIGs), and enhancing coordinated responses to emerging equality and human rights concerns across the region.

At the centre of the discussions was the alarming and persistent rise in reported cases of missing children—an issue that continues to pose a grave threat to child safety, protection, and overall well-being.

According to data from Kenya's Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS), between January 2025 and March 2026, Kenya recorded 10,581 child protection cases, including 1,636 cases of missing children, 1,952 abductions, 6,820 abandonment cases and 173 trafficking incidents. Over 2,300 children remain unaccounted for.

The meeting also interrogated the urgent need to reinforce prevention, reporting, and management systems for Gender-Based Violence (GBV), with a shared emphasis on survivor-centred response mechanisms and faster, more coordinated institutional action.

The Rift Valley, Eastern and Western regions have recorded the highest number of femicide deaths nationally. Kenya has now lost a total of 579 women to femicide.



Nakuru Regional Office officers Lewis Mwaniki and Nancy Mwangi, alongside Deputy Police Commander Michael Diang'a, during a high-level consultative engagement

Both institutions underscored the indispensable role of multi-agency partnerships in advancing justice, particularly in improving access to timely redress for survivors, strengthening response frameworks, and deepening public awareness on child protection, personal safety, and the critical importance of prompt reporting of incidents. Mr Diang'a reaffirmed the National Police Service's commitment to protecting vulnerable populations while stressing the need for sustained public sensitisation on evidence preservation as a cornerstone of effective prosecution and accountability.

"Too many cases collapse before they reach court because crucial evidence is not preserved or because survivors are not supported through the process," Mr Diang'a emphasised. "We are talking about forensic evidence, medical reports, digital footprints, and witness testimony. If we do not handle these with the utmost professionalism, perpetrators walk free, and the cycle of violence continues. That is a failure of the entire system, not just the police."

The meeting identified several critical gaps in the current response architecture. First, the lack of standardised protocols for handling missing children cases has led to inconsistent reporting, delayed investigations, and missed opportunities for rescue. Second, the absence of dedicated, trauma-trained investigators at many police stations means that child survivors of violence often face re-traumatisation during the reporting and documentation process. Third, weak inter-agency information-sharing between the police,

the Department of Children's Services, health facilities, and civil society organisations has hampered coordinated search and rescue operations.

To address these gaps, the engagement identified concrete opportunities for strengthened collaboration, including targeted capacity-building initiatives to deepen understanding of the Commission's mandate and to reinforce referral pathways and response systems for complaints affecting Special Interest Groups.

The meeting also explored the potential for establishing dedicated child protection desks at all police stations in the region, equipped with trained personnel and resources to handle missing children cases with the urgency they demand. Currently, while some stations—particularly in Nakuru and Eldoret—have functional desks, coverage remains uneven, and many officers lack specialised training in handling cases involving minors.

Mr Mwaniki further stressed that GBV response must be survivor-centred—an approach that places the dignity, safety, and agency of the survivor at the core of every intervention.

This includes ensuring that survivors have access to immediate medical care, psychosocial support, legal aid, and safe shelter, and that they are not subjected to secondary victimisation through insensitive questioning, long waits, or bureaucratic hurdles.

NGEC pledged to provide technical support to the police in developing standard operating procedures for missing children cases, to facilitate community dialogues aimed at breaking the silence around GBV and child abuse, and to monitor the implementation of agreed-upon actions through its regional oversight mechanism.

Both parties agreed to convene quarterly review meetings to track progress, address emerging challenges, and adapt strategies based on evolving trends.

» CONTINUATION

Beyond Constitutional Promises: NGEC and Deputy President Seek to Accelerate Kenya's Equality Agenda

High-level meeting at Harambee House Annex focuses on the two-thirds gender principle, rising gender-based violence, protection of vulnerable groups and strengthening institutional collaboration to ensure no Kenyan is left behind.

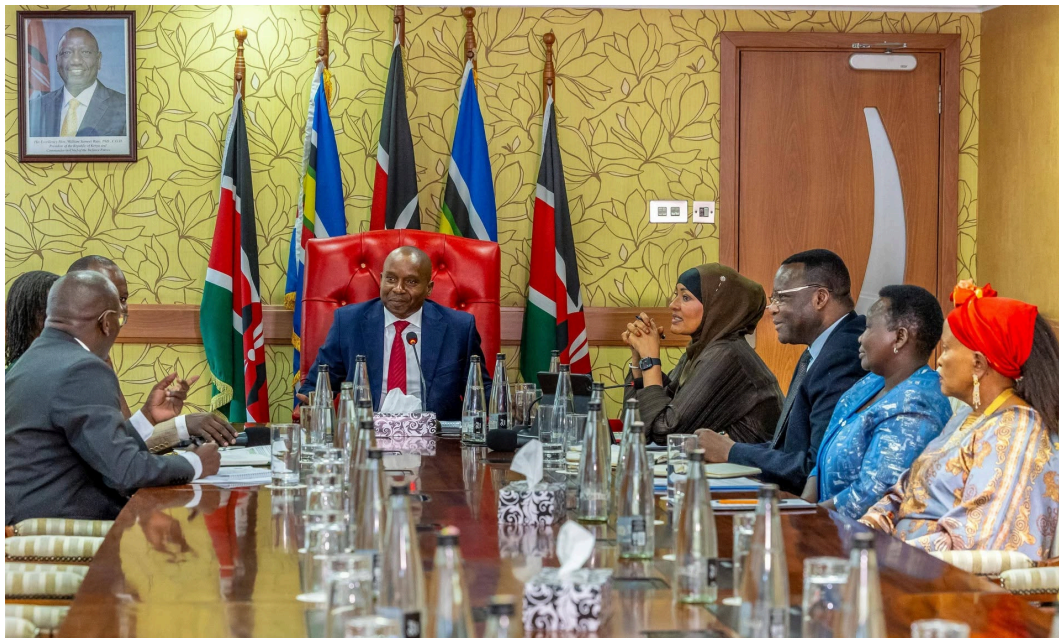
At a time when Kenya continues to grapple with persistent inequalities, rising cases of gender-based violence and growing demands for more inclusive governance, the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) has sought to place equality and social justice firmly at the centre of the national agenda.

During a high-level courtesy call led by NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa at Harambee House Annex, H.E. Hon. Prof. Kithure Kindiki, EGH, Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya, reaffirmed the Government's commitment to ensuring that constitutional guarantees of equality translate into meaningful change in the daily lives of all Kenyans.

The meeting brought together the country's second-highest office and the constitutional commission mandated to promote equality and freedom from discrimination, creating an opportunity to assess progress made, confront persistent barriers and identify practical pathways for strengthening protection and inclusion for women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, older members of society, minorities and marginalised communities.

The engagement provided a platform to reflect on the milestones achieved in advancing equality and inclusion, while candidly examining the challenges that continue to hinder the full realisation of constitutional rights for Special Interest Groups.

Discussions acknowledged that despite notable gains in legal and policy reforms, many Kenyans still experience discrimination, exclusion and unequal access to opportunities and services. Women continue to face barriers to leadership and economic participation. Persons with disabilities encounter challenges in accessing services and infrastructure.



Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki with NGEC leadership during a courtesy call at Harambee House Annex

Minority and marginalised communities remain vulnerable to historical exclusion, while children, older persons and young people continue to face unique protection concerns. The Commission highlighted the importance of sustaining momentum towards substantive equality, noting that constitutional commitments must ultimately be reflected in improved outcomes and lived experiences.



Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki with NGEC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa during a courtesy call.

Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki reaffirmed that equality and social inclusion remain central aspirations of Kenya's development agenda. He called for deliberate and sustained efforts to ensure that no Kenyan is left behind, underscoring the need to move beyond policy intentions towards tangible outcomes that improve people's lives.

The Deputy President emphasised that responsive public policies, inclusive governance systems and stronger protection mechanisms are essential to safeguarding vulnerable populations and promoting national cohesion.

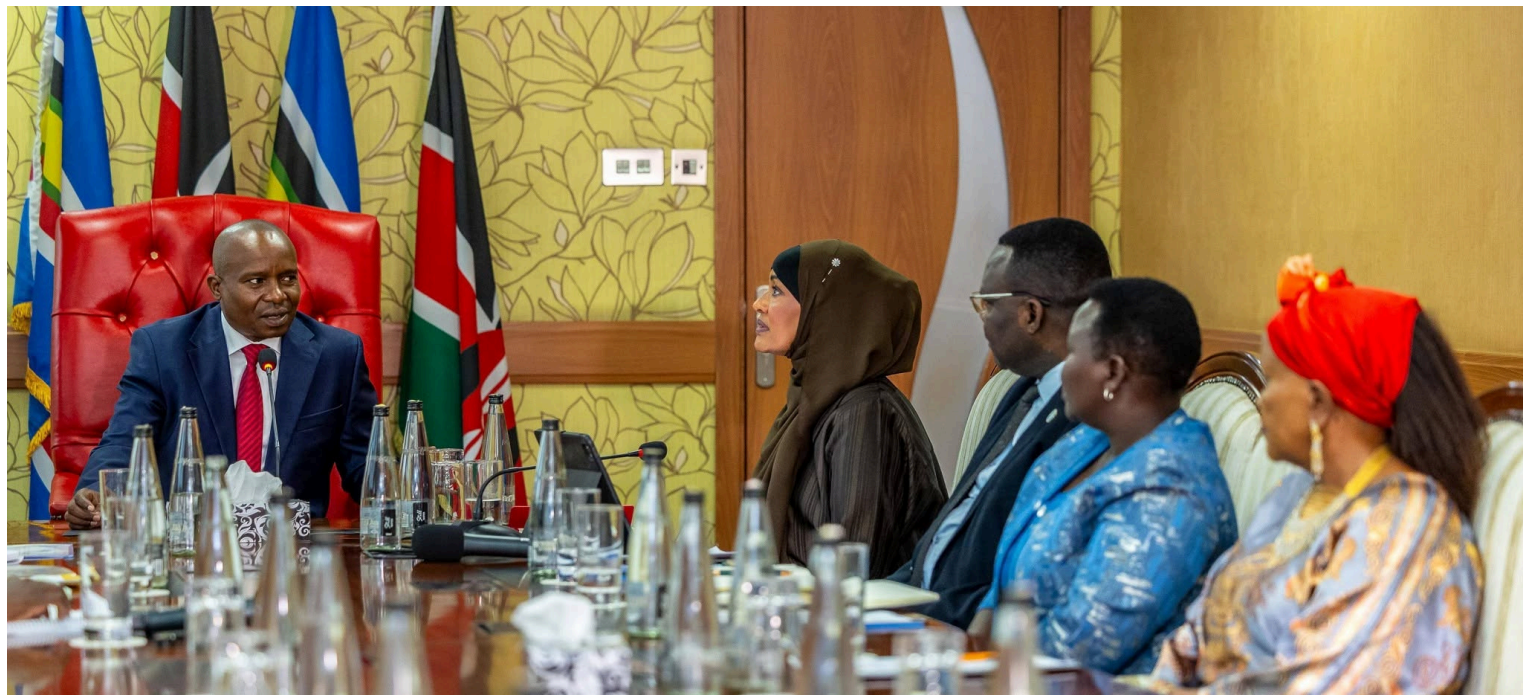
Among the key areas of engagement was a renewed commitment to marshal collective national efforts towards the implementation of the constitutional two-thirds gender principle. More than a decade after the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, the principle remains one of the country's most significant unfinished constitutional obligations.



Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki with NGEC leadership during a courtesy call at Harambee House Annex

The discussions recognised that achieving equitable representation requires political goodwill, legislative action and sustained advocacy across all sectors of society. For NGEC, the realisation of the two-thirds gender principle remains fundamental to ensuring that women participate meaningfully in decision-making processes and that leadership structures reflect the diversity of the Kenyan population.

» CONTINUATION



H.E. Prof. Kithure Kindiki, Deputy President, with NGEN Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, Vice Chairperson Thomas Koyier, Commissioners Caroline N. Lentupuru and Dr Margaret Karungaru.

The meeting also addressed the urgent need to intensify efforts to combat gender-based violence, including the growing crisis of femicide. Recent months have seen increasing public concern over violence against women and girls, prompting renewed calls for stronger prevention measures, survivor-centred responses and institutional accountability. The Deputy President underscored the importance of coordinated national interventions to strengthen protection systems and improve outcomes for survivors.

The Commission reiterated that violence undermines equality, dignity and development, and called for sustained collaboration among government institutions, communities and other stakeholders to address both the immediate manifestations and root causes of violence. The engagement further highlighted the importance of strengthening interventions aimed at protecting minorities and marginalised groups from exclusion and discrimination.

The Leaders acknowledged that historical inequities continue to affect many communities and emphasised the need for targeted measures that promote inclusion, equal opportunities and meaningful participation in national life. The Commission reaffirmed that addressing structural inequalities remains central to its constitutional mandate.

Deputy President Kindiki also reaffirmed the Government's commitment to closer collaboration between the Commission and State departments. He noted that stronger coordination would improve efficiency in service delivery, enhance the impact of interventions and eliminate duplication of mandates across institutions.

The discussions reflected a shared understanding that achieving equality outcomes requires a whole-of-government approach, with institutions working in complementarity rather than isolation. The Deputy President underscored the indispensable role of independent constitutional commissions in strengthening accountability, constitutionalism and inclusive governance. He emphasised the importance of safeguarding NGEN's autonomy as it executes its mandate to promote equality and protect vulnerable groups. The recognition of independent oversight institutions was viewed as critical to ensuring public trust, transparency and the effective protection of rights.

Speaking after the engagement, NGEN Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa expressed appreciation for the Deputy President's support towards advancing the equality and inclusion agenda. "Our diversity is one of Kenya's greatest strengths. No one should be excluded because of their gender, age, disability, ethnicity or social status.

Inclusive development is both a constitutional obligation and a prerequisite for sustainable national progress," Hon. Jaldesa stated.

The courtesy call between NGEN and the Deputy President's Office therefore represented more than an exchange of goodwill. It reflected an acknowledgement that the work of building an inclusive Kenya remains unfinished.



Deputy President Prof. Kithure Kindiki with NGEN leadership during a courtesy call at Harambee House Annex.

As the country continues to navigate economic pressures, shifting social dynamics and emerging inequalities, the challenge before leaders and institutions is clear: to ensure that the constitutional promise of equality and freedom from discrimination is not reserved for a few but becomes an enduring reality for every Kenyan. The message emerging from Harambee House Annex was unequivocal. Kenya's development journey can only be complete when every person—regardless of gender, age, disability, ethnicity or background—can live with dignity, access equal opportunities and participate fully in the life of the nation.

Dignity and Justice in Focus as NGEC Marks World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Kilifi

Listening session, tree planting underscore collective responsibility for older persons' rights and inclusive communities

At the heart of Kilifi County, a quiet but powerful affirmation of the rights of older persons unfolded as the National Gender and Equality Commission's (NGEC) Malindi Regional Office commemorated World Elder Abuse Awareness Day through a series of engagements blending direct citizen feedback with symbolic action for community sustainability.

The day began with a listening session at the Commission's offices, where staff received a formal complaint from an elderly individual detailing concerns around dignity, protection and access to justice. The interaction offered a stark reminder of the

component of inclusive community development. The exercise brought together High Court Judge Lady Justice Mugure Thande, Kilifi County Chief Officer for Gender Dr. Ruth Dama Masha, alongside other justice officials, county administrators and community representatives.

Speaking during the engagements, NGEC officials emphasised that the protection of older persons' rights cannot be pursued in isolation from broader societal issues such as environmental sustainability, economic inclusion and access to justice. They noted that a comprehensive approach—one that~

For NGEC, the commemoration served as both a reminder and a call to action: while legal and policy frameworks exist to safeguard older persons, implementation gaps persist. The Commission reiterated its mandate under the Constitution to promote equality and freedom from discrimination, and to monitor progress towards the full realisation of rights for all Special Interest Groups, including older persons.

As Kenya and the broader region contend with demographic shifts and an ageing population, the need for responsive, resourced and rights-based systems grows more urgent. The Malindi observances offered a modest yet significant step



NGEC Malindi Regional Office staff.



lived realities confronting older persons, many of whom face neglect, financial exploitation, physical abuse and systemic barriers to legal redress.

For NGEC, the complaint was not merely a procedural matter but a critical entry point for assessing the responsiveness of institutional frameworks and community support systems.

The engagement underscored the urgency of strengthening reporting mechanisms, enhancing awareness of rights, and ensuring that older persons can access timely, sensitive and effective interventions at both local and national levels. Later in the day, the Regional Office joined key stakeholders in Ganze for a tree planting exercise, an activity designed to reinforce environmental stewardship as an integral

addresses the social, legal and ecological dimensions of well-being—is essential to building communities where every individual, regardless of age or ability, can live with dignity.

The twin engagements reflected a shared commitment among the judiciary, county government and civil society to advance the protection of older persons while strengthening multi-sectoral partnerships. Lady Justice Mugure

Thande reaffirmed the judiciary's role in upholding the rights of older persons, particularly in cases involving succession, guardianship and protection orders, while Dr. Dama Masha highlighted the county's ongoing efforts to integrate older persons into development planning and social protection programmes.

in that direction—rooting advocacy in real experiences, forging cross-institutional alliances, and grounding the pursuit of dignity in tangible acts of care and collective responsibility. In the words echoed throughout the day's engagements, the dignity and rights of older persons are not a matter of charity but of justice—demanding sustained commitment, coordinated action and unwavering accountability from all duty-bearers.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, observed annually on 15 June, serves as a global call to action against the abuse and neglect of older persons—an issue that remains largely underreported across Kenya and the broader African region. According to the World Health Organization, approximately one in six people aged 60 years and older experience some form of abuse in community settings each year, with rates likely higher in institutional settings and during humanitarian emergencies.

NGEC-Led Community Dialogue in Isiolo Confronts Rising Child Marriage, GBV and Insecurity in Pastoralist Heartland

Commission partners with civil society and Kenya Wildlife Service to address compounding vulnerabilities, linking human-wildlife conflict to social protection gaps in Northern Kenya

ISIOLO, Kenya — In the vast, sun-scorched expanses of Atan Location, Ngaremara Ward, where pastoralism has sustained generations and livestock remains the currency of survival, a quiet but determined conversation is taking root—one that seeks to dismantle the deep-seated inequalities and systemic protection failures threatening the region's most vulnerable.

The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), in collaboration with Inform Action Organisation and the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), recently convened a landmark community dialogue forum in this remote part of Isiolo County, bringing together women community champions, elders, local administrators, and security officials to confront a cluster of interlinked crises: surging teenage pregnancies, spiraling gender-based violence (GBV), child marriage, and escalating insecurity linked to banditry—issues that have long festered beneath the surface of policy discourse but are now demanding urgent, coordinated action.

For the women and children of Atan Location, the forum was more than a routine government engagement; it was a rare opportunity to voice frustrations, demand accountability, and reclaim a sense of agency in communities where patriarchal norms, economic marginalisation, and geographic isolation have historically silenced dissent.

"Every day, we watch our daughters drop out of school to become child brides. We watch our sisters endure violence that goes unreported. And we watch our livestock—our only source of livelihood—get driven away by bandits or killed by wildlife, with no one held accountable," said one of the women community champions who participated in the dialogue, capturing the

despair that pervades many pastoralist households. "Today, for the first time, we felt someone was listening." Her testimony underscores a grim reality: Isiolo County consistently ranks among Kenya's most disadvantaged regions in terms of education completion rates, maternal health outcomes, and access to justice. According to recent data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, the county has a teenage pregnancy rate exceeding 30 per cent, well above the national average, with many of these pregnancies resulting from sexual violence, coerced early marriage, or transactional sex driven by poverty.

The consequences are immediate and intergenerational. Girls who fall pregnant are frequently expelled from school or drop out voluntarily, perpetuating a cycle of illiteracy, economic dependency, and early motherhood that condemns them—and their children—to entrenched poverty. For boys and young men, the lack of economic opportunities and the allure of cattle rustling often draw them into banditry networks, fueling a cycle of violence that destabilises entire communities.

Against this backdrop, the NGEC's engagement focused on strengthening community-driven prevention mechanisms, with a particular emphasis on equipping women champions—often the first responders to incidents of abuse in remote settlements—with the constitutional literacy and advocacy skills needed to navigate complex reporting and referral pathways.

"Many women know their rights are being violated, but they do not know where to go, whom to trust, or what to expect when they do report," explained a representative from Inform Action Organisation, a local civil society organisation dedicated to advancing the rights of marginalised communities in ~

the arid and semi-arid lands. "Our role is to bridge that gap—to translate constitutional guarantees into practical, actionable knowledge that communities can use to hold duty-bearers accountable."



NGEC Isiolo Regional Head Mr. Lotaruk with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) officials during a community dialogue forum.

The Commission's team delved into the constitutional and legal framework governing the protection of Special Interest Groups (SIGs), including women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities. Particular attention was paid to the Children Act, 2022, which criminalises child marriage and mandates compulsory education, as well as the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act and the Sexual Offences Act, whose enforcement remains patchy in remote pastoralist areas.

The dialogue also confronted the contentious issue of human-wildlife conflict—a factor rarely included in conversations about GBV and child protection, but one that KWS officials argued is inextricably linked to household vulnerability. The forum ended with a series of concrete commitments from all stakeholders. NGEC pledged to escalate the documented concerns from Atan Location to the Isiolo County Government and the National Police Service, advocating for intensified security patrols in banditry-prone areas, the establishment of a functional GBV one-stop centre in Ngaremara Ward, and the expedited processing of pending compensation claims for victims of human-wildlife conflict.

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