



Equality Bulletin



NGEC, JICA Champion Safer Schools in Fight Against GBV

Machakos County played host to a landmark workshop aimed at combating Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in schools, as the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), convened a high-impact event at Machakos Teachers Training College. The workshop, which attracted over 200 stakeholders, including educators, government officials, and gender advocates, underscored the urgent need for proactive interventions to eliminate GBV in learning institutions.

The event, held against the backdrop of rising concerns over school-related GBV, sought to drive tangible action towards creating safer learning spaces.

In her keynote address, NGEK Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa emphasised the pivotal role of education in dismantling harmful stereotypes, fostering equality, and equipping learners with the necessary tools to resist violence. She stressed that schools must not only serve as centres of academic excellence but also as sanctuaries of safety and inclusivity.

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A Message from the Chief Executive Officer

I am honoured to introduce the 11th edition of the Equality Bulletin, a platform that continues to amplify the voices of the vulnerable and demand accountability for justice. This edition comes at a critical time when gender-based violence, particularly against women, is spiraling at an alarming rate across the country.

The National Gender and Equality Commission stands firm in calling for urgent, decisive action to end this crisis. We reaffirm our commitment to advocating for policy reforms, strengthening response mechanisms, and holding duty bearers accountable. Violence in any form is unacceptable, and we will not relent until every woman and girl can live free from fear.

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



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NGEC and JICA Champion Education Against GBV at Machakos Workshop

Machakos County— A groundbreaking initiative aimed at tackling Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in schools took centre stage at Machakos Teachers Training College, where over 200 stakeholders, including educators, government officials, and gender advocates, convened for a high-impact workshop. Organised by the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) in collaboration with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the event underscored the urgent need for proactive measures in preventing and addressing GBV within educational institutions.



One of the key highlights of the workshop was the official launch of the School Policy on Prevention & Response to GBV by NGENC. This comprehensive policy framework is set to guide schools in Machakos County and beyond in identifying, preventing, and responding to cases of GBV. The policy aims to bridge existing gaps in protection mechanisms, ensuring that learners have access to a supportive environment where they can report cases without fear of victimisation.

In her keynote address, NGENC Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa stressed the fundamental role of education in challenging societal norms that perpetuate GBV. She underscored the need for schools to be more than centres of academic learning, advocating for environments that nurture respect, equality, and safety for all learners. “Schools must be spaces where students are not only educated but also protected from harm. The role of teachers, parents, and the community in safeguarding our children cannot be overstated,” Jaldesa remarked.

JICA’s representatives reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the resilience of learners and educators against GBV through various initiatives. Among the notable interventions is the Karate Program for GBV Awareness and Self-Defence, an initiative designed to empower students with self-protection skills while fostering awareness about GBV. Additionally, targeted training sessions have been introduced for teachers and school administrators, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to prevent and manage GBV cases effectively.

Stakeholders at the workshop lauded the initiative, recognising the pressing need for concerted efforts in tackling

GBV within the education sector. “Education is a powerful tool in breaking the cycle of violence. With this policy in place, schools will become bastions of safety where learners, particularly girls, can pursue their studies without fear,” stated a gender advocate present at the event.

Despite progressive policy developments, challenges remain in addressing GBV in schools, with inadequate reporting structures and societal stigma often hindering victims from seeking justice. To counter these barriers, the NGENC-JICA partnership is championing enhanced case reporting and referral mechanisms to ensure survivors receive timely support and intervention.

The workshop concluded with a strong call to action for all stakeholders to prioritise the implementation of the School Policy on Prevention & Response to GBV. Educators were urged to take an active role in enforcing preventative measures, while policymakers were encouraged to allocate resources towards strengthening GBV response systems in schools.

As the fight against GBV in learning institutions gains momentum, the NGENC and JICA partnership stands as a beacon of hope, advocating for a future where no student suffers in silence. Through sustained collaboration and commitment, learning institutions can be transformed into champions in the fight against GBV, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive in an environment free from fear and discrimination.

Strengthening Child Protection: NGENC Nakuru Engages County Children Services

Nakuru, Kenya –In a move aimed at fortifying partnerships to safeguard children's rights, the Nakuru Regional Office of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) paid a courtesy visit to Nakuru County Coordinator for Children Services, Mr. Pilot Khaemba. The engagement underscored the vital role of inter-agency collaboration in advancing child protection, equality, and dignity across the region.



Nakuru Regional Team with Nakuru County Coordinator for Children Services, Mr Pilot Khaemba

The meeting, held at the Department of Children Services office in Nakuru, revolved around strategic areas of partnership that can amplify efforts to support vulnerable children.

Both teams explored opportunities in resource sharing, peer learning, and joint

rapid response initiatives to enhance service delivery. Additionally, discussions emphasised the need for increased stakeholder engagement and joint participation in commemorating international days dedicated to children’s welfare.

The engagement comes at a crucial time when children in Kenya continue to face various forms of vulnerability, including neglect, abuse, and economic hardship.

The NGENC and the Department of Children Services pledged to work together to address these challenges by advocating for policy reforms, increasing public awareness, and providing holistic support to affected children.

Hunter-Gatherers Push for Official Recognition Through Tribal Code Petition



Chairperson Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, Vice Chairperson Thomas Koyier, Commissioner Caroline N. Lentupuru, and Commission Secretary/CEO Dr. Purity Ngina engage with the Hunter Gatherer Forum Kenya (HUGAFO-K), led by Chairperson Mr. Paul Lekapana, during a petition presentation advocating for an official tribal code.

NAIROBI – In a historic move, the Hunter Gatherer Forum Kenya (HUGAFO-K), led by Chairperson Mr. Paul Lekapana, presented a petition advocating for an official tribal code—a critical milestone in securing the recognition, cultural heritage, and rightful inclusion of Hunter-Gatherer communities in Kenya’s national framework.

The petition, formally submitted at the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) headquarters, underscores a long-standing struggle by indigenous communities, including the Ogiek, Sengwer, Yaaku, Aweer, and Sanye, who have for decades sought government recognition to secure their rights, preserve their ancestral lands, and participate in national development programs.

Kenya’s 2019 national census did not explicitly categorise Hunter-Gatherer communities, effectively rendering them invisible in government databases. Without an official tribal code, these communities remain excluded from crucial socio-economic development policies, resource allocation, and affirmative action programs.

“The lack of official recognition denies us access to key government services, funding, and legal protections,” Mr. Lekapana stated. “By securing a tribal code, we are not only affirming our identity but also ensuring that our voices are heard in national decision-making.”

This recognition is not just symbolic; it carries profound socio-economic implications. Data plays a pivotal role in shaping government policies, influencing budgetary allocations, and ensuring equitable distribution of resources. Without accurate statistics, these communities face systemic marginalisation, limiting their access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities.

NGEC Chairperson, Hon. Rehema Jaldesa, acknowledged the urgency of data-driven solutions to safeguard the rights of historically marginalised communities. “We cannot effectively address inequality without accurate data,” she remarked. “Recognising Hunter-Gatherer communities through a tribal code is a necessary step towards ensuring they receive their fair share of national resources and development initiatives.”

The push for an official tribal code aligns with Kenya’s constitutional commitment to recognizing and protecting the rights of indigenous communities. The 2010 Constitution explicitly acknowledges the rights of marginalized groups, emphasizing the need for inclusivity and equal opportunities for all citizens.

The petition presented by HUGAFO-K marks a pivotal moment in the quest for recognition and inclusion of hunter-gatherer communities in Kenya. As the NGEC reviews the petition, there is a collective hope among these communities that their cultural heritage will be honored, their identities affirmed, and their rightful place within the nation’s socio-economic and political landscape secured.



The Hunter Gatherer Forum Kenya (HUGAFO-K), under the leadership of Chairperson Mr. Paul Lekapana.

The petition has ignited national conversations on indigenous rights, social justice, and inclusive governance. As Kenya continues to strive for equitable development, recognising the Hunter-Gatherer communities is an essential step towards rectifying historical injustices and fostering national cohesion.

Commissioner Mbithuka: Time for Gender Parity in County Governance

Nairobi — Commissioner Nzomo Mbithuka of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) delivered a compelling address at the County Assemblies Forum (CAF) Women Pre-Summit on Gender Equity in County Governance, held in Nairobi. His remarks set the foundation for critical discussions that shaped the core of the summit's final communique.

The pre-summit, convened ahead of the main CAF conference, brought together female county assembly members, policymakers, gender advocates, and development partners to deliberate on strategies to enhance women's participation in devolved governance structures.

With gender representation remaining a contentious issue in Kenya's political landscape, the forum aimed to craft actionable recommendations that promote gender-inclusive governance.

According to the Commission on Revenue Allocation (CRA), women constitute only 34% of members across the 47 county assemblies, despite constitutional provisions mandating gender balance in elective and appointive positions. The NGEC has persistently advocated for greater inclusivity, highlighting the systemic barriers that hinder women's leadership in county governance, including cultural biases, financial constraints, and political marginalisation.

Commissioner Mbithuka underscored these challenges, emphasising the urgent need for legislative reforms and institutional support mechanisms to bridge the gender gap.

"The journey towards gender-equitable county governance requires deliberate action, including sustained advocacy, policy interventions, and capacity-building initiatives for women leaders," he stated.



Commissioner Nzomo Mbithuka at the County Assemblies Forum (CAF) Women Pre-Summit

Discussions at the pre-summit centred on legal and policy frameworks, leadership capacity-building, and strategies to dismantle socio-cultural barriers impeding women's political participation. Among the key recommendations was the urgent need to implement the two-thirds gender rule at the county level, a constitutional requirement that remains unfulfilled more than a decade after the adoption of Kenya's 2010 Constitution.

Additionally, the forum advocated for the establishment of gender-responsive budgeting in county governments to ensure adequate allocation of resources towards women's economic empowerment and leadership training programmes.

As the CAF summit progresses, the NGEC remains steadfast in its mandate to advocate for gender equity at all levels of governance. The Commission reaffirmed its commitment to working with county assemblies, civil society organisations, and development partners to translate policy discussions into concrete actions that ensure equal opportunities for women in leadership.

"The momentum generated at this pre-summit must not be lost," Commissioner Mbithuka urged. "We must continue pushing for institutional reforms that guarantee gender parity in county governance."

With Kenya's next general elections on the horizon, gender advocates are intensifying efforts to ensure that legislative and policy commitments to women's leadership are upheld, reinforcing the country's commitment to inclusive governance.

Bridging Borders: NGEC and Uganda's EOC Champion Inclusive Healthcare Employment



Vice Chairperson Thomas Koyier, Commissioner Caroline N. Lentupuru, and a delegation from Uganda's Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) pose for a group photo

Nairobi— The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) of Kenya hosted a delegation from Uganda's Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) for a benchmarking visit aimed at strengthening inclusive employment policies in the health sector. The engagement, held in Nairobi, served as a platform for exchanging best practices and fostering regional collaboration on fairness, diversity, and equal opportunities in healthcare employment.

The visit, which brought together policymakers, researchers, and health sector stakeholders from both nations, focused on strategies to enhance employment equity within medical institutions. Discussions covered policy frameworks, recruitment processes, workplace accessibility, and measures to address gender disparities in the healthcare workforce.

NGEC Vice Chairperson, Thomas Koyier, underscored the importance of regional cooperation in tackling employment inequalities in the medical field. "Inclusive employment policies are crucial in ensuring that all qualified professionals, regardless of gender, disability, or other socio-economic barriers, have equal access to opportunities in the healthcare sector. By learning from each other's successes and challenges, we can drive impactful policy changes," he stated.

The benchmarking visit reinforced the commitment of both commissions to strengthening inclusive employment policies and fostering equitable work environments in the health sector.

InnovateHER Initiative Launched to Empower Girls in STEM Through TVE



NGEC Commission Secretary/CEO, Dr. Purity Ngina, MBS, delivers remarks at the launch of InnovateHER

In a landmark effort to bridge the gender gap in STEM and technical education, key stakeholders gathered at the Kenya School of TVET for the launch of InnovateHER: Empowering Girls in STEM through TVET.

The initiative, spearheaded by EdSource Africa in partnership with CAP Youth Empowerment Institute (CAPYEI) and the State Department for TVET, marks a significant step toward fostering inclusivity and equal opportunities for young women in traditionally male-dominated fields.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), women remain underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), particularly in Africa. Despite making up nearly half of the global population, women constitute only 28% of those in STEM careers worldwide.

In Kenya, gender disparities persist in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes, limiting opportunities for young women to enter high-demand technical fields.

InnovateHER seeks to address these disparities by equipping young women with the skills and training necessary to excel in STEM-related careers. The programme aims to increase female enrolment in TVET institutions, provide mentorship

opportunities, and foster a gender-responsive learning environment that accommodates the unique needs of female students.

Speaking at the launch event, Dr. Purity Ngina, Commission Secretary/CEO of the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), underscored the critical role of gender-responsive policies in fostering inclusive development.

“Empowering young women through STEM and TVET is not just about education—it is about economic transformation. Gender-responsive policies ensure that female learners have equal access to opportunities, financial support, and a conducive environment to thrive in technical fields,” Dr. Ngina stated.

She further emphasized NGEC’s dedication to advocating for policies and programmes that create pathways for young women to excel in industries historically dominated by men.

InnovateHER is the result of a multi-sectoral approach that brings together the government, non-profit organisations, and private sector partners. EdSource Africa and CAPYEI, in collaboration with the State Department for TVET, have committed to implementing strategies that make TVET institutions more accessible to women.

The launch of InnovateHER aligns with Kenya’s Vision 2030 and the African Union’s Agenda 2063, both of which prioritise gender equality and inclusive economic development. By increasing female participation in TVET, the initiative aims to boost the number of women in STEM careers, thereby driving national and regional economic growth.

Bridging Policy and Action: Chiefs Equipped to Combat SGBV in Kilifi

MALINDI, Kenya – The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) Malindi Regional Office, in collaboration with the Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAWKenya), conducted an intensive sensitisation training on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) case management for chiefs drawn from Ganze, Magarini, and Malindi sub-counties. The training, held at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Social Hall, aimed to equip local administrators with the knowledge and skills necessary to respond effectively to SGBV cases within their jurisdictions.

The two-day workshop, which brought together over 50 chiefs and assistant chiefs, sought to enhance their capacity in handling SGBV cases, reinforcing their role as first responders in the justice system. The training covered key aspects of case management, including legal frameworks, survivor-centred approaches, and referral pathways to ensure access to justice and protection for survivors.



Chiefs from Ganze, Magarini, and Malindi sub-counties participate in a two-day training workshop

The chiefs pledged to champion SGBV awareness campaigns, collaborate with law enforcement agencies, and establish community watch groups to prevent and respond to cases effectively. They also committed to advocating for behavioural change and addressing deeply rooted social norms that perpetuate violence.

NGEC and CREAW-Kenya reiterated their commitment to continuous engagement with chiefs and other community leaders in the fight against gender-based violence. Plans are underway to roll out additional capacity-building initiatives, including mentorship programmes and legal aid clinics, to ensure sustained impact.

As gender-based violence continues to pose a serious threat to the well-being of communities in Kilifi County, empowering chiefs with the right tools and knowledge marks a significant step towards achieving justice and protection for survivors.

The success of this initiative will largely depend on the commitment of all stakeholders in ensuring that policies are translated into tangible actions that safeguard the rights and dignity of all individuals.

NGEC Calls for Collective Action in Gender Equality at Nawiri Project Dissemination



Winfred Wambua, Deputy Director for Programs, addresses participants at the Nawiri Project Dissemination Forum

Nairobi—Winfred Wambua, Deputy Director for Programs at the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), underscored the power of collaboration in advancing gender equality and ensuring oversight in policy implementation during the Nawiri Project Dissemination forum by the Population Council.

The event, held in Nairobi, brought together key stakeholders, researchers, and policymakers to discuss the project's findings and their implications for gender-responsive policies in Kenya.

Speaking at the forum, Wambua stressed that the fight for gender equality is a shared responsibility that extends beyond women's advocacy. "Gender equality is not just a women's issue; men must be part of the conversation, the advocacy, and the solutions," she stated. She emphasised the critical role of men as allies in dismantling barriers to equal rights and opportunities, advocating for inclusive approaches in policy formulation and execution.

The Nawiri Project, a research initiative led by the Population Council, aims to address systemic gender disparities and empower vulnerable groups by promoting evidence-based policy interventions.

The dissemination event provided a platform for experts to analyse the findings and discuss actionable strategies for translating research into meaningful reforms.

Wambua highlighted the importance of institutional oversight, stressing the need for accountability in enforcing gender policies. "Achieving gender equality requires collective action. By working together—women, men, and institutions—we can hold stakeholders accountable and push for policies that truly empower everyone," she noted.

Experts at the forum presented key findings, including gaps in gender-responsive programming, persistent economic inequalities, and the social barriers hindering women's empowerment. The discussion also underscored the intersectionality of gender issues, highlighting how factors such as age, disability, and socio-economic status compound challenges faced by marginalised groups.

Stakeholders at the forum called for strengthened collaboration among governmental and non-governmental bodies to enhance the effectiveness of gender policies. The discussions concluded with a collective commitment to integrating the Nawiri Project's findings into policy frameworks to ensure more inclusive and equitable development outcomes.

As Kenya continues to push for gender equality, events such as the Nawiri Project Dissemination highlight the importance of research-driven policymaking and the role of multi-sectoral partnerships in effecting meaningful change.

NGEC, CAB International Partner to Advance Gender-Responsive Policies



Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru, Commission Secretary/CEO Dr Purity Ngina, and CAB International's Senior Regional Director for Africa, Dr Morris Akiri, pose for a photo

In a strategic move to advance gender equality and inclusivity, the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), led by Commissioner Caroline Lentupuru, MBS, HSC, paid a courtesy visit to CAB International's Senior Regional Director for Africa, Dr Morris Akiri. The visit, which took place at CAB International's regional headquarters, explored collaborative opportunities to enhance research, stakeholder engagement, and evidence-based policymaking to benefit special interest groups—including women, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), older persons, minorities, and marginalised communities.

Policymaking that is informed by research and data remains a critical component in addressing inequalities across various demographics. Recognising this, NGEC and CAB International discussed potential joint research initiatives aimed at closing existing knowledge gaps in gender and equality issues. By leveraging CAB International's extensive expertise in research and development, the Commission seeks to ensure that policies designed for special interest groups are grounded in robust, evidence-based insights.

"Evidence-based policymaking is a game-changer. When data drives decisions, we can create interventions that truly reflect the needs and realities of the most vulnerable populations," said Commissioner Lentupuru. "Our engagement with CAB International marks a significant step towards ensuring that no one—women, youth, PWDs, or marginalised groups—is left behind."

The discussion also centred on capacity building, with a focus on equipping decision-makers with the tools and knowledge needed to integrate gender perspectives into national policies and development plans.

Brutality and Tradition: The Fight Against Gender Violence in Kenya

In recent weeks, Kenya has been shaken by two harrowing incidents that have ignited national outrage and underscored the urgent need to confront and eradicate harmful cultural practices and gender-based violence (GBV).

The brutal murder of 17-year-old Gaala Aden Abdi in Wajir County and the violent assault of a grieving widow in Nyabisimba village, Nyamira County, have brought to the forefront the pervasive violations of women's and children's rights within certain cultural contexts.

Gaala Aden Abdi, a 17-year-old refugee from the Dadaab Refugee Camp, met a horrific fate after being forcibly married to 55-year-old Mohamed Kassim Tifow.

On February 23, 2025, under the cover of darkness, Gaala was taken from her home in Dagahley camp and transported approximately 150 kilometers to the remote village of Wara Ademasajida in Habaswein, Wajir County, where she met her husband for the first time. Her resistance to the marriage led to relentless beatings and, ultimately, her death after 27 days of captivity.

In a desperate voice recording sent to her mother before her demise, Gaala detailed the abuse she endured. On the night of March 22, 2025, Gaala made a final, frantic call to her family, expressing fear for her life.

Hours later, her body was discovered outside a rental house, burned beyond recognition. A post-mortem examination revealed she had sustained 100-degree burns from an open flame, along with spinal injuries



In a separate incident on March 21, 2025, a widow in Nyabisimba village, Nyamira County, was subjected to a violent assault during her estranged husband's burial.

A disturbing video circulating on social media depicts the woman being physically attacked by several men attempting to force her to perform a customary burial ritual, which involves throwing a handful of soil into the grave as a final farewell. Her refusal led to public humiliation and physical abuse.

The widow, who had been separated from her husband, returned to her matrimonial home to allow her children to bury their father.

However, tensions escalated when she declined to participate in the ritual, resulting in the assault captured on video. Three suspects have since been arrested in connection with the incident and are awaiting arraignment.

These incidents have sparked widespread condemnation from various organizations and leaders. The National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) expressed outrage over Gaala's murder, emphasizing that it represents a severe violation of the rights of women, children, and refugees. NGEC Chairperson Rehema Jaldesa stated:

"The brutal murder of Gaala Aden Abdi represents a horrific violation of the rights of women, children, and refugees. We demand a thorough and swift investigation into this crime, with those responsible being held accountable to the fullest extent of the law."

Addressing GBV and dismantling harmful cultural practices require a multifaceted approach that includes legal enforcement, public education, and community engagement. Empowering communities to challenge and abandon retrogressive customs is crucial. Educational campaigns can raise awareness about the detrimental effects of such practices and promote gender equality.

Moreover, providing support services for victims, including counseling and legal aid, can encourage reporting and assist in the healing process. Collaboration between government agencies, civil society organizations, and community leaders is essential to create an environment where the rights and dignity of all individuals are upheld.

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