



# THE BALLOT

The Ballot Newsletter is a publication of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC)

**ISSUE 18**  
January - April 2025



## Youth

Youth demand for better governance provides sure bet to cohesive society

65% of the global population is under 35



1.8 billion young people worldwide 10 to 24

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## Budget

IEBC Budgets Ksh 61.7 Billion to Conduct The 2027 General Election, Funded in Three Fiscal Years

61.7B to Conduct The 2027 GE

Pending Bills 3.827 Billion

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*Thank You*



The Commission extends heartfelt gratitude to each one of you for your unwavering support during the funeral arrangements and burial of our fallen colleagues.

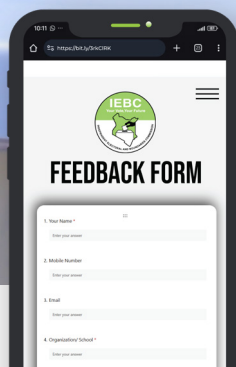
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#TalkWithIEBC

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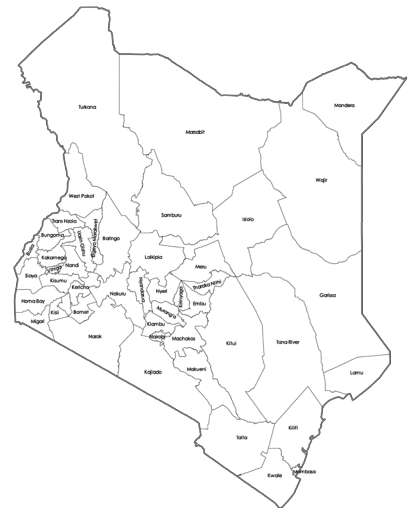
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## Word from the Commission Secretary/CEO

Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS

**The delay in constituting the Commission has impacted the implementation of crucial activities like completion of boundaries delimitation, conduct of by-elections, resumption of continuous voter registration, non-compliance with court orders (in respect of party lists), gazettment of persons nominated as Deputy Governors and approval of Commission policies and strategies.**

**A**s an independent constitutional Commission, IEBC optimal working has been hampered by the delayed recruitment of Chairperson and Members of the Commission. This team plays crucial roles in the Commission such as providing strategic direction, making policy decisions and providing oversight to the Secretariat. Though the constitution did not envisage a vacuum, the delay arose due to external factors, beyond the Secretariat.

The delay is due to many factors including the late enactment of the IEBC (Amendment) Act, 2023, which had vouched for a seven (7) member Selection Panel and later the National Dialogue Committee (NADCO), 2024 that sanctioned nine (9) members of the Selection Panel. There was also dispute over the Azimio Coalition Party nominee, where a petition was filed at the Political Parties Dispute Tribunal by Dr. Augustus Muli, Wiper Party petition in the High Court and after the matter was decided, there was an appeal in the Court of Appeal. Besides, another hurdle was the Constitutional petition in Kiambu High Court and an injunction stopping forwarding of the names of the Selection Panel to the President.

Indeed, this delay has impacted the implementation of crucial activities like completion of boundaries

delimitation, conduct of by-elections, resumption of continuous voter registration, non-compliance with court orders (in respect of party lists) and gazettment of persons nominated as Deputy Governors, approval of Commission policies and strategies, recruitment of staff, delayed procurement of goods and services among others.

This notwithstanding, at the Secretariat level, several activities have been undertaken including the drafting of Commission's Strategic Plan (2024 - 2029), preparation of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework covering the years 2025/26 – 2028, automation of Commission processes and reviews of the legal framework.

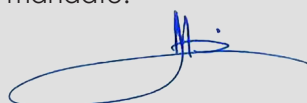
Additionally, the Secretariat has also reviewed election materials specifications/adaptations, election training curriculum and election logistical plan; reviewed and drafted policies and strategies for Commission's approval; carried out capacity building of staff in several areas such as Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE), artificial intelligence, monitoring and evaluation among others; participated in several election observation missions in, for example, USA, and South Africa; hosted and trained several delegations on electoral processes including election management bodies from Lesotho, South Sudan, Somaliland and Malawi and National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria among others.

The Secretariat has also undertaken other elections as prescribed by an Act of Parliament such as Law Society of Kenya and Tea Board of Kenya; visited several media houses; engaged Kenyans on live video and audio platforms for real-time engagement on social media platforms like X- Space (Twitter), Facebook and Instagram live; participated in various exhibitions and engaged members of the public in Nairobi International Trade Fairs; and undertaken several corporate social responsibility activities among others.

Despite these successes, the Commission has faced several challenges including pending bills and underfunding of its operations. However, development partners have come in and supported some of the activities. Indeed, without their support, the Commission would have been incapacitated.

I take this opportunity to appreciate the partners who have continued to support us in an effort to strengthen democracy and governance. Together, we will move Kenya towards a stronger democracy.

I welcome all stakeholders to read this 18th edition of the *Ballot Magazine* confident that they will find these articles inspirational, educational and knowledgeable to improve own understanding of the Commission's mandate.



**Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS**  
**Commission Secretary/CEO**

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**Welcome to the**

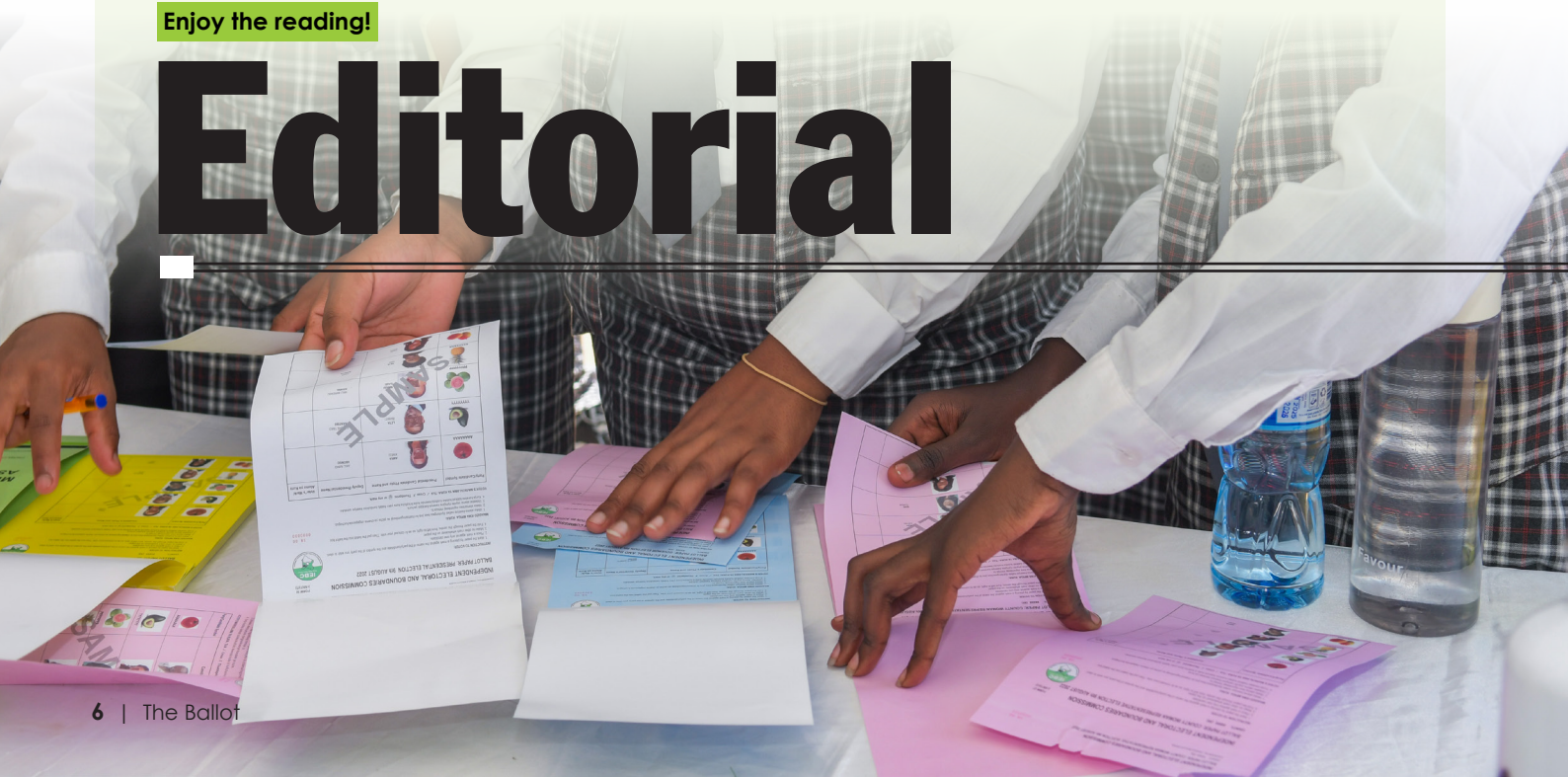
**C**olleagues, during this quarter, the Commission lost four of its own able staff that has left a big dent in its operations. First it was the immediate former Chairperson of the Commission, a member of the editorial team and two other members of staff. This Issue, therefore, is dedicated to our fallen heroes: Wafula Chebukati (Chairperson 2017 to 2023), Jacktone Nyonje (immediate former Manager Electoral Training), Mohammed Jabane (immediate former Manager Legal Services) and Aisha Akinyi Abubakar (immediate former Acting County Elections Manager – Kilifi). May the cherished memories with our colleagues bring us comfort; and may their souls rest in eternal peace.

Let us interact with this Issue, which highlights experiences during the election observation missions and lessons the Commission can draw from South Africa; and discusses topical issues on data protection, boundaries delimitation, plans for induction of Commissioners, climate change and environment and its impact on elections among others.

We appreciate you all for the contributions and constant feedback. Many thanks to the Editorial Team for overseeing the publishing of this Issue.

**Enjoy the reading!**

# Editorial



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Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission



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# IEBC prepares comprehensive induction plan for Commissioners



By Chrispine Owiye, OGW  
Director Legal Services



By Purity Njeru,  
Manager Communications  
and Corporate Affairs

## The training will empower the new Chairperson and Members of the Commission to make informed policies and operational decisions in line with their Constitutional mandate

**T**he Commission has initiated a comprehensive induction program aimed at seamlessly integrating the incoming Chairperson and members of the Commission (herein after members) into the institution.

This comes in response to a leadership vacuum that has persisted since January 2023, following the resignation of three in 2022, end of the term of the Chairperson and two members in January 2023 and removal of one from office in March 2023.

The absence of a functional Commission has significantly affected core operations, including the completion of constituencies and ward boundaries delimitation and conduct of by-elections.

Although the IEBC does not oversee the recruitment of the Chairperson and Members, it acknowledges that the success of the new leadership heavily depends on a well-structured induction process. The Commission believes that an effective onboarding plan will help the new team quickly adapt to its organisational culture, align with its mission and long-term strategic goals, and build productive relationships with management, staff, and external stakeholders.

Importantly, it will empower the new Chairperson and Members to make informed policies and operational decisions in line with their constitutional mandate.

To steer this process, IEBC Commission Secretary/ CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS has appointed an Induction Planning Committee. This committee is tasked with the design and implementation of a tailored and inclusive induction program that addresses the specific needs, backgrounds and potential challenges facing the new Commission. Key responsibilities of the Committee include organising a swearing-in luncheon, preparing operational tools and working environments, introducing the Chairperson and Members to staff and structures, planning training sessions on governance and electoral systems, and budgeting for all related activities.

The induction program has been broken down into several key phases, beginning with pre-induction activities. These include coordination meetings between the management and the induction committee to assess progress and finalise preparations. Additionally, the committee will oversee the procurement of essential working tools and facilities for the new commission. They will also brief support personnel, such as administrative staff, drivers, and security officers, to ensure everyone involved understands their roles and expectations.

Immediately following the swearing-in ceremony, a reception luncheon will be held. This event is intended to promote early integration by allowing the Chairperson and members to interact informally with senior IEBC officials, management, and key stakeholders in the electoral space. The goal is to



begin cultivating trust and collegiality among the Commission's leadership and its extended network.

Another key element of the induction is a tour of the Commission's headquarters. During this visit, the new commission will be formally introduced to IEBC staff, allocated office spaces, assigned vehicles, and provided with other necessary operational tools. The tour also includes orientation sessions aimed at helping them understand the Commission's organisational layout and internal workflows.

A subsequent management meeting will serve to further acquaint the new leadership with IEBC's governance architecture. The Members will engage with Directorates, internal Committees, and the Plenary to better understand the structures they are expected to oversee. These interactions will help reinforce their strategic role and enhance alignment between management and policy oversight.

A centerpiece of the induction program is a planned retreat, designed as an intensive onboarding experience. The retreat will unpack the Commission's mandate, operational priorities, and electoral management responsibilities. It will feature thematic training sessions, presentations by directorate heads, and structured discussions to provide strategic insights and foster collaborative planning for the Commission's future direction.

Further extending the scope of engagement, the induction program includes cluster meetings with IEBC staff deployed in the field. These meetings aim to foster open communication, deepen understanding of field operations, and expose Commissioners to staff dynamics, concerns, and institutional culture. Such engagements are vital in building the rapport and collaboration required for effective service delivery.

Stakeholder engagement forums are also part of the induction blueprint. These meetings are designed to ensure the incoming leadership understand the expectations, interests, and concerns of the broader electoral ecosystem. Stakeholders, including political parties, civil society, media, and development partners, will provide insights and practical advice. These interactions are expected to enhance transparency, trust and overall credibility in electoral processes.

### Best practice

Another innovative aspect of the induction plan is peer learning with internationally recognised Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs). Through exposure to global best practices and lessons from experienced counterparts, the Chairperson and Members will gain valuable insights into managing elections effectively and avoiding common pitfalls. Such engagements will also open avenues for international networking and knowledge-sharing

that may prove critical throughout their tenure.

In addition to peer learning, the program includes specialised training under the Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) framework. This internationally acclaimed curriculum aims to strengthen the Commissioners' understanding of electoral processes, governance, legal frameworks, and crisis management. BRIDGE training also covers decision-making, innovations in electoral practice, and communication strategies - all essential for building a confident and competent Commission.

The Commission has expressed hope that adequate resources will be secured to fully implement the proposed induction plan. It believes that successful

**Adequate resources will be secured to fully implement the proposed induction plan. The Commission believes that successful execution will result in a well-informed, confident, and cohesive leadership**

execution will result in a well-informed, confident, and cohesive leadership ready to drive IEBC forward. Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that the incoming Chairperson and Members are not only operationally prepared but also strategically positioned to uphold the institution's credibility and constitutional responsibilities.

Through this comprehensive induction process, the IEBC aims to turn a leadership transition challenge into an opportunity for renewal and institutional strengthening. The Commission is optimistic that the structured onboarding will foster effective leadership, promote internal cohesion, and enhance public trust as it embarks on the next phase of electoral reforms and service delivery.

# Youth demand for better governance provides sure bet to cohesive society

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), Kenya's population reached 52.4 million by mid-2024. Notably, 40 million (over 75% of the total) are youth (youth or persons?) under 35 years - a demographic threshold established by the Constitution."



**1.8**  
billion young people  
worldwide  
**10 to 24** years



**65%** of the  
global population  
is under  
**35** years

**90%**  
**YOUTH**  
LIVE IN  
DEVELOPING  
COUNTRIES



By Ann Ndirangu Nderitu (Dr.), CBS,  
Registrar of Political Parties

**Going by recent civic agitation efforts by the youth in the country, one should easily acknowledge the diverse potential of our youth. Similarly, there are clear dangers if these youth fail to display clear and well-shaped ethos that are sustainable and progressive in line with Kenya's economic, social and political aspirations underpinned in her various blueprints.**

**T**hese statistics point to the fact that the youth is the 'make or break' segment for the country's current and future prosperity. This said, youth deserve the attention and support of all, especially those in leadership. The youth too have a larger responsibility of having a meaningful and informed contribution to the country by utilizing their inherent future-oriented and global-demanded skills. Such contribution should be within the confines of values and principles of good governance and national good.

Going by recent youth civic agitation through public demonstrations, protests and campaigns aimed at influencing public policy and holding those in power accountable, it is clear that their awakening has manifested. These efforts by the youth in the country tells their diverse potential in the growth of our democracy.

Similarly, there are clear dangers if the youth do not have clear and well-shaped ethos that are sustainable and progressive in line with Kenya's economic, social and political aspirations

underpinned in her various blueprints.

Progress has been made out of this involvement of the youth. Largely, on awareness creation of youth opportunities and igniting interest of the youngsters to the affairs of their immediate communities and the country.

"Nevertheless, significant gaps remain—particularly in cultivating governance and leadership values among the youth. This foundational training should begin early, shaping them into responsible and engaged citizens equipped to contribute meaningfully to Kenya's future."

For instance, in the 2022 General Election, only 261 youth were elected from the 1882 elective positions out of a total of 16,100 candidates presented for the election by political parties and as independent candidates.

It follows then that institutions, parents/guardians, and leaders must take a lead in shaping the youth to the country's development and overall wellness. The empowerment of the young people should

be through cross-sharing of rights and current information about governance and political participation. The youth involvement, including political participation, should be grounded on a concrete understanding of the applicable legal framework, documented procedures and best practices while agitating for their rights, grievances and demands. By properly packaging their messages, the youth will have a communication 'power kit' that is devoid of disrespect and abuse. This strategy would in turn silence the "noise" that is usually present in civic movements and have their voice pronounced and heard by the targeted duty bearers.

Critically, a mind shift must be ingrained in the

youth folks. So much so that it is not just about their numbers but also the interests of the nation. It should be acknowledged that the Kenyan youth lead the way for their continental peers in progressing their agenda. These appreciable efforts that have been illustrated in their multi-media creative manifestations in memes, songs, dance, fine art, and many more forms of expressions should inspire us more to have a vibrant and value-based youth. They should therefore, advance the agitation not on the basis of self-aggrandizement but for the good of all.

In its pursuit towards promoting a well-informed and meaningfully engaged youth in governance matters, the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties

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**By properly packaging their messages, the youth will have a communication 'power kit' that is devoid of disrespect and abuse. This strategy would in turn silence the "noise" that is usually present in civic movements and have their voice pronounced and heard by the targeted duty bearers.**

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(ORPP) designed a youth engagement programme through the universities and tertiary institutions. Through this initiative, ORPP targets higher institutions students (specifically the student leaders) and engages them on one-one through live sessions, public lectures, and sharing with them information on governance, political processes and democracy. This initiative is also aimed at proactively providing a preparatory mechanism for transitioning these young leaders into work and other societal responsibilities including leadership.

I also acknowledge and commend other progressive efforts by other public entities and ORPP partners involved in promoting pro-youth activities at national and grassroots level.

Such is the recent sponsorship by public entities at the 97<sup>th</sup> Kenya Music and Cultural Festivals held in December last year where schools staged creative masterpieces of diverse genres to promote values in the society. At primary and secondary schools, efforts to promote pupils' clubs to nurture aspects such as leadership, peace, environmental protection and conversation, care for the needy are some of other milestones being taken up by the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

Being a youth is only transient therefore, youth must be conscious about the temporariness of the period. Youth actions at this productive phase of life is a key determinant to the person's overall life future disposition.

My urge to the youth this new year and years to come, is for them to use their energies for the good of not just themselves but for all in the society. It is in such singular and collective efforts that we shall inspire the youth to start perceiving themselves as leaders and yearn for a better country and the entire generation.

Going by the youth numbers, the country is more for the youth that it is for the older folks. Let's collaborate in our differentiated abilities to make Kenya a global citadel. Won't we?



Photo:

Allan Kisosofi

## #YourVoteYourFuture



# Data Protection



## Legal Right, Obligation for Data Controllers and Data Processors



By Agatha Wahome,

Ag. DREB&RM / Data Protection Officer (DPO)

**The Data Protection Act, Cap 411C provides for: registration of data controllers and data processors with the regulator; the principles and obligations of personal data protection; grounds for processing of sensitive personal data; transfer of personal data outside Kenya; exemptions from the provisions of the Act; and enforcement of the Act, including penalties and breaches.**

The Constitution of Kenya provides for certain rights and obligations to individuals and organisations with regard to managing of personal data. The following Articles are examples:

### Article 28

Right to have human dignity respected and protected.

### Article 31

Right to privacy  
(person/home/property; information relating to family or private affairs)

### Article 35

Right to access of information  
(including right to correction or deletion of untrue or misleading information that affects that person).

The Data Protection Act, Cap 411C (the DPA) which came into force on 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2019 established the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner (ODPC) with the aim of regulating the processing of personal data provided for the rights of data subjects and obligations of data controllers and processors. It also provides for: registration of data controllers and data processors with the regulator; the principles and obligations of personal data protection; grounds for processing of sensitive personal data; transfer of personal data outside Kenya; exemptions from the provisions of the Act; and enforcement of the Act, including penalties and breaches.

Consequently, various regulations have been developed to guide the application and enforcement of the Act. These include: Data Protection (General) Regulations, 2021; Data Protection (Registration of Data Controllers and Data Processors) Regulations, 2021; Data Protection (Complaints Handling and Enforcement Procedures) Regulations, 2021; Registration Regulations, 2020; and Registration of Persons (National Integrated Identity Management System) Rules, 2020. Several guidelines have also been developed to guide engagement and communication with data subjects, including 'Guidance Notes for Electoral Purposes'.

The Commission has developed a draft policy framework for data privacy and protection whose objective is to provide a guideline on collection, processing, storage, usage, security and disposal of personal data that is collected and controlled or processed by the Commission. In addition, the Commission has registered with the ODPC as both a data controller and data processor in compliance with the DPA.

Data is the lifeblood of every organisation. As the data becomes more accessible and efficient through various innovations, this progress comes at the cost of increased vulnerability to personal data. The risks of data privacy rights are significant and the consequences can be severe. Therefore, the urgency to protect personal data has never been greater. Existing laws have established stringent standards for handling personal data. As a Commission, we must cultivate a robust data protection culture to ensure long-term compliance and security of the vast amounts of personal data under our control.

Send your comments to [editorial@iebc.or.ke](mailto:editorial@iebc.or.ke)



# Panel discusses inclusive electoral reforms at People Dialogue festival

The festival is an initiative by the Center for Multiparty Democracy (CMD)-Kenya which plays a crucial role in fostering democratic dialogue and empowering citizens to shape Kenya's political future."



By Alicia Kioni

Intern Communications and Corporate Affairs



Deputy Commission Secretary (DCS) for Operations Ruth Kulundu (left) during this year's People Dialogue Festival (PDF) held from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at Uhuru Park, Nairobi. The DCS reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to transparent, inclusive elections and robust voter education initiatives in Kenya. **(Photo: Daniel Mathenge)**

During this year's People Dialogue Festival (PDF) held from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at Uhuru Park, Nairobi, the Commission actively participated in panel discussions across various thematic "Villages."

The Commission also set up an exhibition stand that was primarily visited by our young team members throughout the event.

Under the leadership of the Deputy Commission Secretary for Operations (DSC-O) Ruth Kulundu, the IEBC reaffirmed its commitment to transparent, inclusive elections and robust voter education initiatives in Kenya.

The festival is an initiative by the Centre for Multiparty Democracy (CMD)-Kenya which plays a crucial role in fostering democratic dialogue and empowering citizens to shape

Kenya's political future.

The DCS-O joined a panel discussion at the Political Dialogue Village, alongside representatives from the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP), the Electoral Law and Governance Institute for Africa (ELGIA), and the Promoting Inclusive Electoral Reforms in Kenya (PIER-K) Consortium. The session focused on strategies to advance inclusive electoral reforms in the country."

Additionally, Edgar Aswani the Acting Senior Communication and Media Liaison Officer, joined a panel discussion at the Youth Village to address barriers to accessing electoral services and the need for increased youth participation in the electoral process.

Under the theme 'Building a Collaborative



Democracy for Kenya's Sustainable Future,' this annual forum convened leaders, public representatives, government agencies, civil society organisations, and private sector stakeholders. Participants engaged in dialogue on critical societal issues, promoted civic engagement, and developed collaborative solutions for Kenya's sustainable development.

Many young attendees, actively engaged with the IEBC team, seeking clarification and answers to key electoral matters including the commencement date of voter registration, the appointment of new IEBC commissioners, the timelines for boundary delimitation, the process for recalling Members of Parliament and the scheduling of pending by-elections.

Beyond answering questions, the IEBC team also conducted voter education, emphasising the importance of democracy and the Commission's role in safeguarding electoral integrity in Kenya. The stand was managed by Benjamin Kimwei, Voter Education Coordinator; Edgar Aswani, Ag. Senior Communication and Media Liaison Officer; Margaret Muinde, Assistant Elections Officer for Dagoreti North Constituency; Alicia Kioni, an intern in the Department of Communication and Corporate Affairs; and Website and Content Management officer Daniel Mathenge. Their collective effort helped inform and engage citizens on democratic responsibilities.

**The attendees sought clarification and answers to key electoral matters including the commencement date of voter registration, the appointment of new IEBC commissioners, the timelines for boundary delimitation, the process for recalling Members of Parliament and the scheduling of pending by-elections.**



**TOP:** Stakeholders during this year's People Dialogue Festival (PDF) held at Uhuru Park, Nairobi. **LEFT:** The DCS-O Ruth Kulundu takes part in the debate. **CENTRE:** Attendees visit the IEBC stand to learn more on the electoral process. **RIGHT:** Voter Education Coordinator Benjamin Kimwei attends to a visitor at the IEBC stand. (Photos: Daniel Mathenge)

## IEBC benchmarks on

# South Africa's National, Provincial and local government level elections

The IEBC led by Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS observe the National, Provincial and local government level elections in South Africa from 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2024. Each level serves different responsibilities as well as constituencies.



By Michael Ouma, HSC

Director ICT

Kenya's electoral management architecture leads in the region. This has fostered sound leadership that enables its citizens to have a say, not only on how they should be governed but also in electing their leaders in a democratic space that is religiously protected by the Constitution.

The Country's EMB's central role in sound leadership, therefore, has to uphold sacrificial values and virtues such as transparency, integrity and rule of law to make each vote count. This

efficiency can be better achieved through benchmarks with African peers and even larger democracies around the world. The IEBC has exemplified peer review.

In 2024, the Commission sent out seven delegations to different countries to exchange ideas with other Election Management Bodies' (EMB) experiences in conferences and Election Observation Missions who stand out as the fulcrum to enhance operations in efficient election management.

**South Africa's parliamentary election system is based on a mixed-member proportional (MMP) representation system. Members of the National Assembly are elected through proportional representation system. Voters cast their ballots for political parties rather than individual candidates. Each party submits a list of candidates, ranked in order of preference, to the IEC**

The Commission was invited and sent a delegation to observe the National and Provincial Elections in South Africa from 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2024. Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS (Commission Secretary/CEO) led the delegation including Moses Ledama Sunkuli, OGW (Director Electoral Operations), Michael Ouma, HSC (Director Information and Communication Technology), Nelly Ilongo County Election Manager, Machakos and Aisha Akinyi Abubakar, Senior Election Officer, Magarini Constituency.

In its report, the delegation observed that South Africa's elections are held by the Independent Election Commission (IEC) at three levels - national, provincial and local government. IEC conducts national and provincial elections simultaneously, followed by municipal elections two years later. Each level serves different responsibilities as well as constituencies.

In South Africa, allocation of seats at the National Assembly are allocated to political parties based on the proportion of votes they receive in the election. This is determined using a formula known as the "largest remainder method."

In addition to the proportional representation seats, the National Assembly also includes 200 constituency seats filled by candidates who win in specific geographic constituencies through a first-past-the-post voting system.

Overall, South Africa's parliamentary election system aims to ensure proportional representation of political parties while also providing for direct representation of specific geographic constituencies. This system promotes inclusivity, fairness, and accountability in the legislative process.

Observer missions usually point out election stakeholder rights and freedoms, malpractices such as system gaps in voter registration, candidate registration, training, voter bribery, voter intimidation and voting day challenges. In reporting this, EMBs are able to identify areas of improvement and provide recommendations for electoral reforms.

### Lessons Learnt

South Africa's IEC conducted an efficient, transparent, free and fair election on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024 and the IEBC delegation learned many lessons that can enhance the current processes including:

- Adequate funding
- Timely reforms and planning
- Simple and efficient ICT architecture
- Electoral cycle full functionality

South Africa and IEC have come far in its 30 years of existence, smarting from a violent and divisive past (apartheid). Their resilience in nurturing robust and steady legislative and judicial institutions offer critical support base to their EMB. The organisation, implementation and management of the Results Operation Center (ROC) was very productive and well structured. The structure is mainly a pre-fab, temporary but an excellent facility. The lesson here is that with changing times, it may no

**The seats at the National Assembly are allocated to political parties based on the proportion of votes they receive in the election. This is determined using a formula known as the "largest remainder method". In addition to the proportional representation seats, the National Assembly also includes 200 constituency seats filled by candidates who win in specific geographic constituencies through a first-past-the-post voting system.**

longer be necessary for EMBs to try and fit their General Elections operations to an existing building but to design a space that is flexible to their current needs, allowing for flexibility in addressing emerging issues.

### Recommendations to Kenya and IEBC

Based on the experience from the South Africa, The IEBC Observation team recommended that:

- Special Interest Groups compliant polling stations,
- Strong stakeholder engagements for civic and voter education on independent candidates,
- Encourage women who do not wish to contest in political parties to participate as independent candidates, encourage independent candidate to remain visible throughout the electoral cycle
- ICT leverage on modern (Artificial Intelligence) and manual architecture and

Spacious National Results Operation Center  
Conclusively, the 2024 South Africa's elections witnessed commendable efforts towards growing democracy on the continent. The electoral processes demonstrated transparency and inclusivity, especially with



special voting, early voting and house visits.

Further, the IEC engaged stakeholders bringing together partners especially media, political parties and candidates raising the bar on the transparency of the electoral process.

Peace prevailed throughout the electioneering period.

**The South Africa IEC engaged stakeholders bringing together partners especially the media, political parties and candidates raising the bar on the transparency of the electoral process.**

# We'd Love to Hear Your Feedback!



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Please give your comments/ feedback.

Your Vote Your Future

# IEBC submits before Senate's

## Finance and Budget Committee



By Faith Njeri,  
Social Media Officer

The Commission on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025 appeared before the Finance and Budget Committee of the Senate to submit views on the 2025 Budget Policy Statement outlining the Commission's key priority areas and budgetary needs for three fiscal years from the Financial Years (FY) 2025/2026 to 2027/2028.

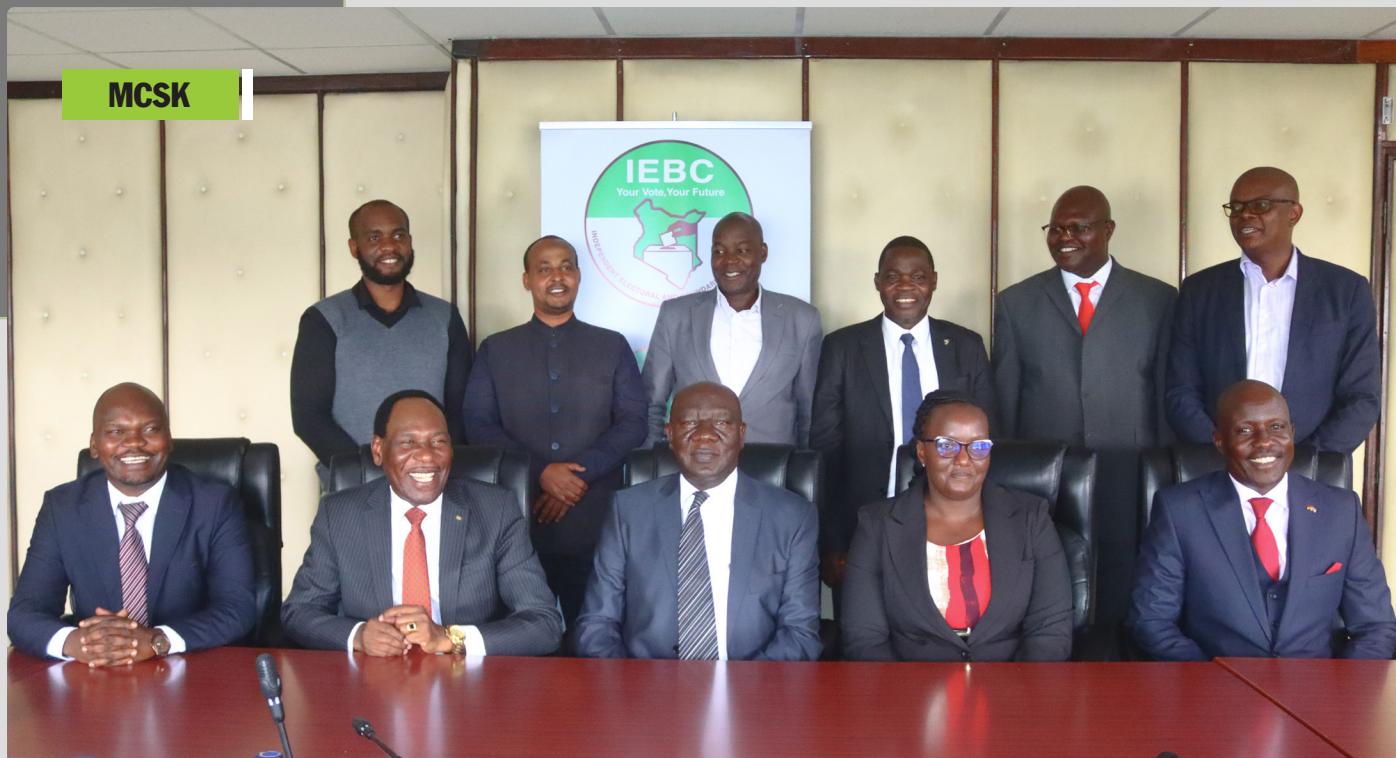
Commission Secretary/CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS while addressing the Committee members emphasised the need for adequate funding of the Commission to enable it deliver on its mandate. Marjan highlighted the importance of funding key electoral activities such as conduct of the General Election, election technology, voter registration, voter education, boundary delimitation, by-elections, pending bills and legal reforms among others.

**There is need to fund key electoral activities such as conduct of the General Election, election technology, voter registration, voter education, boundary delimitation, by-elections and legal reforms.**



Commission Secretary/CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS together with other Senior Management staff of the Commission when they appeared before the the Finance and Budget Committee of the Senate. (Photo: Faith Njeri)

MCSK



Officials from the Music Copyright Society of Kenya Limited (MCSK) led by Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Ezekiel Mutua, MBS (Second left) when they paid a courtesy call on the Commission. MCSK intends to conduct elections of its directors to fill vacancies in the regions of Rift Valley (one) and Nairobi. (Photo: Chris Musumba)

# MCSK



By Chris Musumba,

Ag. Senior Public Relations and Events Officer

**The reason for our visit to IEBC is to request the Commission to assist MCSK in the conduct of these elections by providing materials and technical staff to oversee the polls.**

## invites IEBC to oversee elections of Directors

**M**usic Copyright Society of Kenya Limited (MCSK) in 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 paid a courtesy call on the Commission and discussed areas of mutual interest and collaboration.

Led by MCSK Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Ezekiel Mutua, MBS, the team was welcomed by Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS who pledged to work closely with the Society.

MCSK Governing Council intended to conduct elections of its directors to fill vacancies in the regions being Rift Valley (one) and Nairobi.

"The reason for our visit to IEBC is to request the Commission to assist MCSK in the conduct of these elections by providing materials and technical staff to oversee the polls," said Mutua.

The Society had a total membership of 15,728 spread across eight regions in the country — Nairobi, Central, Eastern, Northeastern, Coast, Nyanza, Western and Rift Valley.

Director Electoral Operations (DEO) Moses Sunkuli, OGW, in response, said the Commission demanded that MCSK comply with IEBC regulations for conducting external election by submitting MCSK constitution and regulations on their election and provide number of elective positions being contested, MCSK Code of Conduct, if any, and the Register of Voters eligible to participate in the election and Governing Council resolution sanctioning the election, and appoints IEBC to preside their elections.



# Young Parliamentarians

## tour IEBC, discuss ways to boost youth engagement in elections



By Chris Musumba

Ag. Senior Public Relations and Events Officer



Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS when he hosted officials from the Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA) on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025. KYPA paid a courtesy call to the Commission to discuss the IEBC mandate, achievements, partnerships and areas of mutual interest. (Photo: Chris Musumba)

A delegation from the Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA) on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025 paid a courtesy call to the Commission to discuss the IEBC mandate, achievements, partnerships and areas of mutual interest.

The KYPA delegation led Chairperson Hon Gitonga Mukunji, MP Manyatta Constituency, was welcomed by Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS.

The Young Parliamentarians inquired about the Commission's efforts to boost youth involvement in elections. They focused on strategies aimed at improving voter turnout, increasing youth registration as voters, and identifying legal reforms needed to enhance youth participation in the electoral process.

The Commission Secretary/CEO acknowledged the important role the youth play in strengthening Kenya's democracy noting that the Register of Voters in the 2022 General Election had over 40% youth.

**The discussion focused on IEBC strategies aimed at improving voter turnout, increasing youth registration as voters, and identifying legal reforms needed to enhance youth participation in the electoral process.**

"The Commission, ahead of the 2022 General Election, engaged the Youth Coordinating Committee (YCC), a conglomeration of youth-led and youth-serving organisations that worked with the Commission in voter education and mobilisation. The support from YCC assisted the Commission in mobilising youth to register as voters in colleges and universities, and trained voter educators in 49 universities countrywide," said Marjan.

The Commission also implemented deliberate strategies to reach out to the youth by partnering with social media corporations like Meta (Facebook) and X (Twitter) to tackle misinformation and disinformation, and directed online traffic to its website for information. The Commission is also actively engaging the youth on online social media platforms like X\_Space (formerly Twitter Space) to inform and educate them on various issues in the electoral process.

Marjan urged the youth to come out and register as voters once the Commission opens the Continuous Voter Registration exercise.

Hon. Gitonga Mukunji, stated that the group will adopt a multi-sectoral approach to boost youth voter registration. This includes collaborating with the Ministry of Interior and National Administration (@InteriorKE) to ensure young Kenyans receive national IDs upon turning 18, enabling them to register as voters.

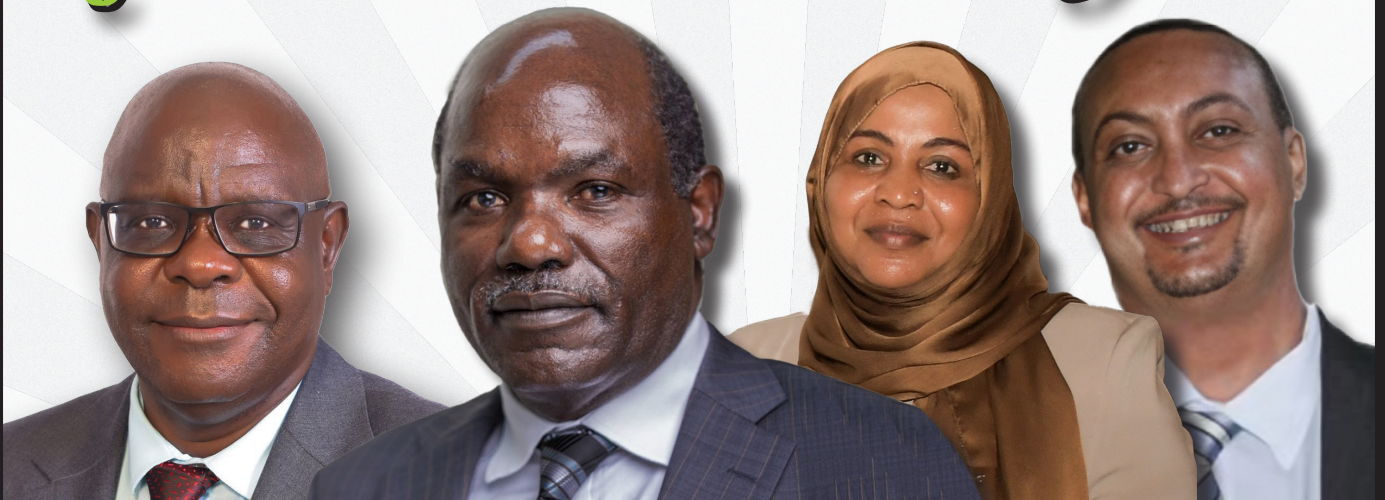
"Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association will also onboard young leadership in Parliament in voter education to enable them know the electoral process and push to have the Commission funded in time to conduct its activities throughout the election cycle. KYPA targets to increase the voter turnout at the 2027 General Election from 64% attained in 2022GE to over 80% because young people's voice counts," said Mukunji.



**TOP:** Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS during a meeting with Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA). **ABOVE: Left to Right** - Deputy Commission Secretary (DCS) Ruth Kulundu, Hon. Gitonga Mukunji leader of KYPA, Marjan Hussein Marjan, and KYPA CEO Anthony Buluma. **(Photo: Chris Musumba)**



# Thank You



**Dear IEBC Family,**

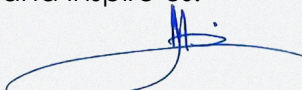
The Commission extends heartfelt gratitude to each one of you for your unwavering support during the funeral arrangements and burial of our immediate Chairperson, Wafula Chebukati – EGH, Jacktone Nyonje, Manager Electoral Training, Mohammed Jabane, Manager Legal Services and Aisha Abubakar, Ag. County Election Manager (CEM), Kilifi.

By uniting to support the families of these outstanding colleagues in their most difficult time, you demonstrated a collegial, compassion and support that goes beyond the call of duty.

Their families have expressed earnest appreciation to the staff of the Commission for the support and solace offered to them during these very challenging periods.

Your prayers, visits, generous contributions, thoughtful messages of condolence, and attendance at the funerals provided them with strength and hope during the incredibly difficult time.

Thank you for standing together as one. The Commission truly appreciates your kindness and solidarity. May their legacies live on and inspire us.

  
**Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS**  
**Commission Secretary/CEO**





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# 61.7

**Ksh**

## billions to conduct 2027 General Election

### IEBC to get funds in three fiscal years

2025/26

2026/27

2027/28

**By Chris Musumba**

Ag. Senior Public Relations and Events Officer

The Commission, on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2025, led by Deputy Commission Secretary - Support Services Obadiah Keitany, MBS, who represented the Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS appeared before the National Assembly's Justice and Legal Affairs Departmental Committee (JLAC) to consider the 2025 Budget Policy Statement.

The budget plan, which is worth Ksh 55 billion

and funded by the National Treasury, serves as a baseline assumption to be used in the preparation of the 2027 General Election. The budget also shows that the Commission has an overall deficit of Ksh 6.7 billion, with pending bills standing at Ksh 3.827 billion.

"The Commission would like the General Election to be funded over the three Financial Years starting with the 2025/2026 to cater for pre-election

Pending Bills

## 3.827

**Billion****General Election Budget**

2025/2026

**15.3**  
**Billion**

2026/2027

**25.4**  
**Billion**

2027/2028

**61.74**  
**Billion**

activities worth Ksh15.3 billion. In the 2026/27 year, the Commission has budgeted for Ksh 25.4 billion, while in the 2027/28 it has Ksh 21 billion. The total budget stands at Ksh61.74 billion," said Keitany.

The Commission projects to register an additional 5.7 million new voters, a majority being youth who have attained the age of majority.

In preparation for the 2027 General Election, the Commission projects to gazette 55,393 polling stations, up from 46,229 in 2022, and procure Kenya Integrated Election Management System (KIEMS) kits worth Ksh7 billion to replace the 45,352 currently in use that were bought in 2017. Due to technological advancement, the Commission will only retain 14,000 KIEMS kits that were previously purchased in 2022.

"The KIEMS have been used for 10 years and can be formatted and donated to another government institution for use. Technology has changed fast, and we cannot rely on them now," Keitany told the Committee.

Keitany noted that the Commission would like the General Election budget to be funded over the three Financial Years starting from 2025/26 to cater for pre-election activities like voter registration and

## **The Commission would like the General Election budget to be funded over three Financial Years from 2025/26 to cater for pre-election activities like voter registration and acquisition of the election technology software.**

acquisition of the election technology software and hardware.

The DCS also informed the Committee that the Commission is expected to conduct by-elections upon the reconstitution of the Commission and will request separately for resources to conduct the exercise.

Currently, there are 14 vacant elective positions; Senator (1), Member of National Assembly (4) and Member of County Assembly Ward (9).



Deputy Commission Secretary - Support Services Obadiah Keitany, MBS representing the Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS when he led the IEBC team that appeared before the National Assembly's Justice and Legal Affairs Departmental Committee (JLAC) to consider the 2025 Budget Policy Statement. (Photo: Chris Musumba)



# Strengthening Democracy:

## Trust, technology and the path to inclusive elections



By Linda Mworira  
Customer Care Officer

### STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY

Trust, technology and the path to inclusive elections



**We learnt from our peers and it has enriched our view as we continue with electoral reforms and implementing the Post-Election Evaluation Report**

Kenya's democracy stands at a pivotal juncture. With the 2022 General Election behind us and the 2027 polls approaching, the IEBC's mandate transcends mere election administration—it demands fostering trust, amplifying inclusivity, and leveraging innovation to empower every Kenyan voter.

## Rebuilding Trust: From Feedback to Action

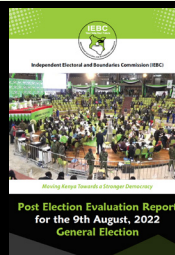
Trust remains the bedrock of credible elections. Lessons from Kenya's past—the 2007 post-election crisis and the 2017 annulment—underscore the fragility of public confidence. To rebuild trust, the IEBC should pioneer nationwide stakeholder forums and real-time feedback mechanisms. Drawing inspiration from South Africa's town halls and Canada's legislated public consultations, the Commission can launch "Voice of the Voter" campaigns. These will include SMS surveys, social media polls, and community dialogues to directly engage citizens—not just political elites—in shaping electoral reforms.

## Decoding Voter Behaviour

### The Rise of Issue-Based Politics

The 2022 election saw a 64.77% turnout, a decline from 2017's 78%. Yet, a new trend has emerged: urban youth and Gen Z voters have increasingly prioritised economic reforms over ethnic allegiances. This mirrors Nigeria's 2023 election, where youth rallied behind reformist candidates. The IEBC can leverage voter data analytics to tailor outreach, ensuring marginalised groups—from pastoralist communities to Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)—are not left behind in electoral activities.

**We learnt from our peers and it has enriched our view as we continue with electoral reforms and implementing the Post-Election Evaluation Report**



## Harnessing Technology:

### AI, Social Media, and the Fight Against Misinformation

Social media's dual role in 2022—as a tool for both disinformation and voter education—reveals its power. To combat fake news, the IEBC is piloting an AI-powered "Truth Squad" in partnership with local tech innovators. This initiative, inspired by Ghana's rapid rumor-debunking strategies, will flag deepfakes and hate speech in real time. Additionally, AI-driven tools like voice-activated voter apps and braille-compatible interfaces aim to revolutionize accessibility for PWDs, aligning with global benchmarks from South Africa and Australia.

## A Call to Excellence

The IEBC's legacy hinges on transparency, innovation, and inclusivity. By adopting global best practices — such as the Commission from Sweden's civic education models to Rwanda's digitized voter rolls can aim to make 2027 a benchmark for African democracy.

# Connect with IEBC on LinkedIn

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SCAN ME



# IEBC seeks to build consensus on Election Campaign Financing Law

## A leap toward accountability



By Ruth Makuthu

Ag. Manager, Legal Reforms Political Parties Liaison and Campaign financing



The Commission during a multisectoral workshop with the Electoral Law and Governance Institute of Africa (ELGIA) attended by Parliament, the EACC, KRA, academia, and civil society. (Photo: Chris Musumba)

In a landmark step toward curbing electoral malpractice, the IEBC convened a multisectoral workshop with the Electoral Law and Governance Institute of Africa (ELGIA) to overhaul Kenya's campaign financing laws. Attended by Parliament, the EACC, KRA, academia, and civil society, the forum tackled systemic gaps in enforcement and transparency.

### Key Outcomes:

#### Revised Legislation:

The Commission unveiled the Election Campaign Financing (Amendment) Bill, 2024, addressing loopholes in contribution limits and expenditure tracking.

#### Stakeholder Collaboration:

Enhanced coordination with the Financial Reporting Centre and DCI to monitor illicit fund flows.

#### Global Insights:

Comparative analyses highlighted successful models, such as Germany's stringent donation caps and India's real-time expenditure disclosures.

**IEBC convened a multisectoral workshop where CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan emphasised that without political goodwill, even the best laws remain ink on paper. This is a constitutional imperative—not an option.**

CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan emphasized urgency: "Without political goodwill, even the best laws remain ink on paper. This is a constitutional imperative—not an option."

### Next Phase:

**A consultant-led report will guide final reforms, ensuring Kenya's elections are powered by policies, not pockets.**



# Electoral Follow-Up Mission lauds IEBC progress, recommends technology upgrades



A team of officials from the European Union Electoral Follow-Up Mission when they paid a courtesy call on the Commission and were received by the CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS. The EU called for accelerated adoption of blockchain for results transmission and AI for voter roll audits. **(Photo: Linda Mworia)**



**By Linda Mworia**  
Customer Care Officer

The IEBC welcomed the European Union's Electoral Follow-Up Mission, led by Dimitra Loannou, to assess progress on the 2022 General Election and EU observer recommendations.

**The European Union Electoral Follow-Up Mission was in the country to assess progress made in implementation of the 2022 General Election and EU Observer Mission recommendations.**





## Highlights:

### Gender Equality:

The Commission showcased strides in implementing the two-thirds gender rule, with 35% female candidacy in 2022—up from 27% in 2017.

### Tech Advancements:

The EU urged accelerated adoption of blockchain for results transmission and AI for voter roll audits.

### Funding Advocacy:

The delegation stressed the need for timely budgetary allocations to sustain voter education.

CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan affirmed: “These partnerships are not just about scrutiny—they're about growth. Every recommendation is a stepping stone to excellence.”



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# IEBC submits proposal to JLAC to refine four critical funds



By **Daniel Mathenge**

Website & Content Management officer

On January 22, 2025, the IEBC presented bold proposals to the National Assembly's Justice and Legal Affairs Committee (JLAC) to refine four critical funds:

**1**

National Government  
Constituencies  
Decentralised Fund  
(NGCDF)

**2**

Senate  
Oversight  
Fund

**3**

National  
Government  
Affirmative Action  
Fund

**4**

Economic Stimulus  
and Empowerment  
Fund



Commission's Director Legal Services Chrsipine Owiye (first left) submits before the National Assembly's Justice and Legal Affairs Committee (JLAC) to refine four critical funds. (Photo: Daniel Mathenge)

## Key Concerns:

### Constitutional Integrity:

The Commission cautioned against entrenching funds that risk blurring devolved governance.

### Administrative Efficiency:

Existing mechanisms, operational for over a decade, require legislative refinement—not constitutional amendments.

Director of Legal Services Chrsipine Owiye, OGW, emphasized: "Service delivery must never compromise constitutional principles. We advocate for smart reforms, not shortcuts."

## Next Phase:

**JLAC will review the IEBC's matrix, ensuring amendments align with Kenya's governance vision.**





# Electoral Technology

A poll official uses the Kenya Intergrated Elections Management System (KIEMS) kit to identify a voter's biometrics during the 2022 General Elections at Imani Marianist Chaminade Polling station.  
(Photo: Edgar Aswani)



# Demystifying Boundaries:

# The language of lines in maps

**H**ave you ever wondered why boundary lines on a map are rarely straight? If a boundary is straight, what does it mean? Once, I asked several individuals about this and many did not know. One amusing response was that the mapmakers did

not know how to draw straight lines. Boundaries are crucial as they establish and define limits of jurisdiction, sovereignty and ownership. They are fundamental for governance and maintaining territorial integrity. The features used as a boundary (line) can be

**Surveyed:**

Cutline Boundary

These are usually straight, well-defined cleared physical paths.

**Geographical features:**  
*Valleys, ridges & rivers*

Along the Turkana border, the boundary is the valley.

In Trans-Nzoia & Bungoma, the boundary, which is half of Mt. Elgon, is on the Kenyan side, which is further shared by the two counties.

In Busia the boundary adopts a river, then a road, and finally a river into Lake Victoria.

**Surveyed:**

Lake boundary

The beacons are GPS coordinates located in the lakes, i.e., at Lake Victoria between Uganda and Kenya, and Tanzania.

**Cultural:**

Note the 'star-like feature' between Meru, Tharaka-Nithi, Embu, Kirinyago, and Nyeri Counties. The boundaries of the respective counties join at the tip/peak of Mount Kenya, which is historically and culturally important to the communities around the mountain.

**Surveyed:**

Cutline Boundary

This is a straight, well-defined cleared physical path.

NB. The bend at Taita Taveta County is the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro.

**Geographical features:**

Mountain ranges

Mountain ranges form this part of the Kenya-Ethiopia boundary.

**Geographical features:**

River

River Dawa forms part of the border between Kenya & Ethiopia.

**Surveyed:**

## Lake boundary

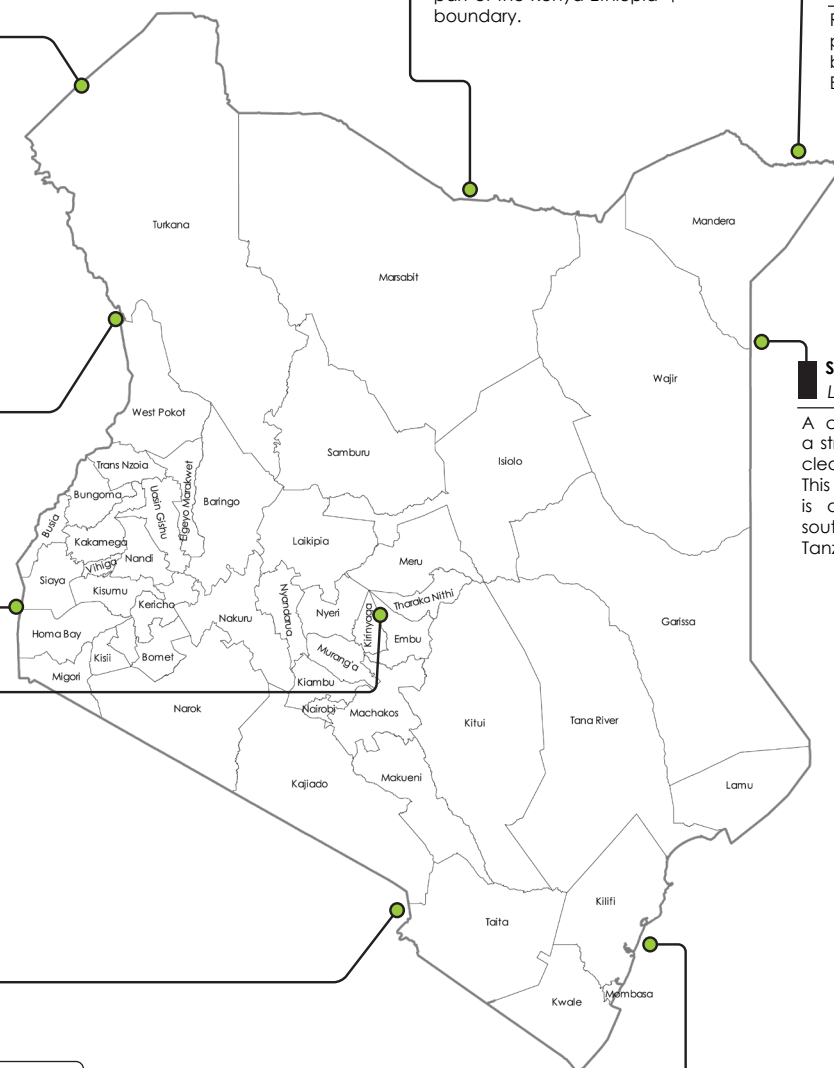
A cutline boundary is a straight, well-defined cleared physical path. This type of boundary is also found in the southern border with Tanzania.

**Geographical features:**

## Coastline

The coastline along the Indian Ocean forms the boundary.

**NB.** A straight line along Lamu and Kwale counties indicates the sea boundary.



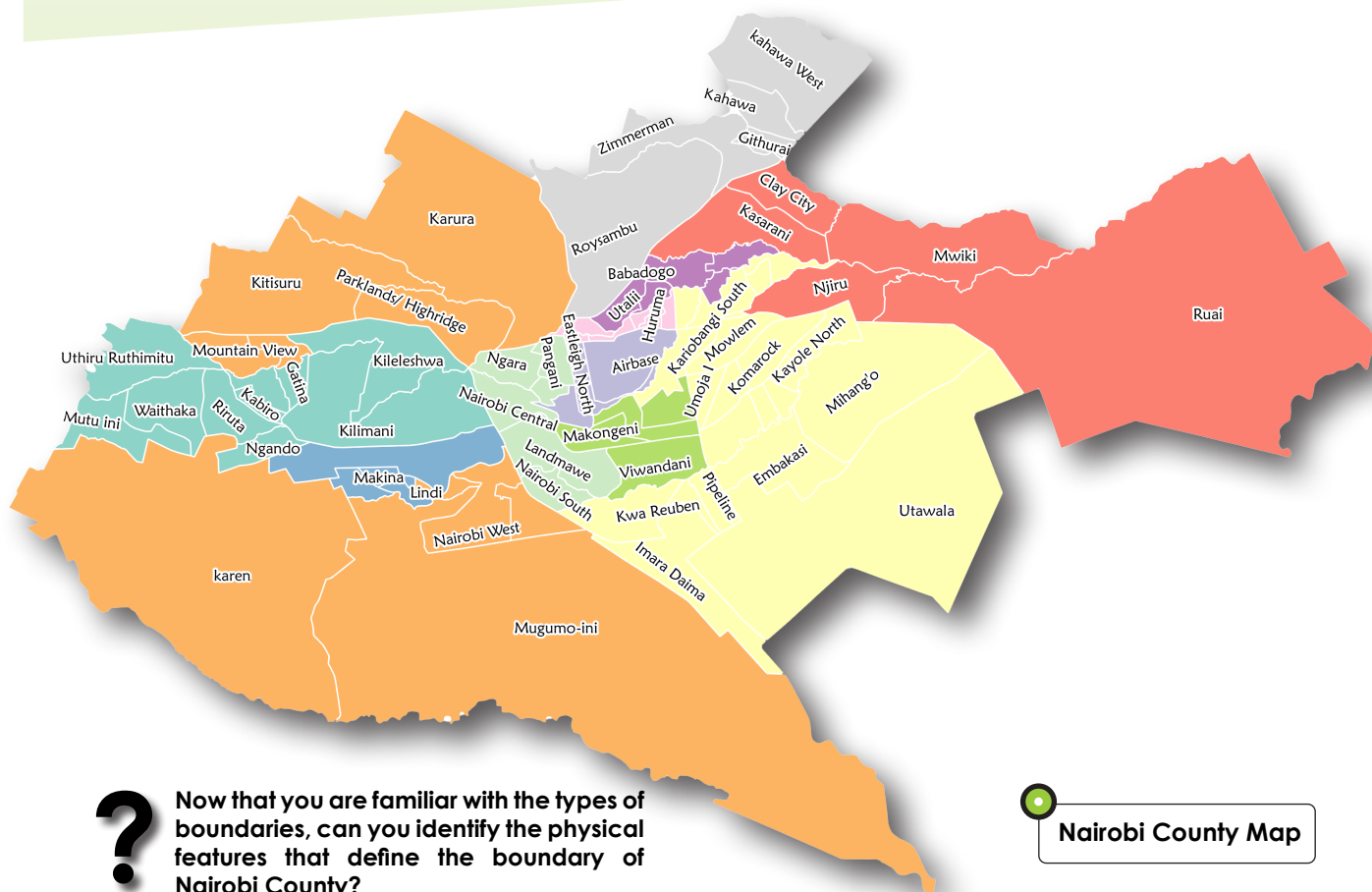
- Have you ever wondered why boundary lines on a map are rarely straight? If a boundary is straight, what does it mean? I was amused by the response that the mapmakers didn't know how to draw straight lines**

A circular portrait of a Black man with short hair and a mustache, wearing a colorful patterned shirt. The portrait is set against a light green background.

## Geographical Information Systems



### Aq. Manager Boundaries



## Nairobi County Map

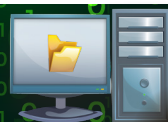
# DATA

## How Commission controls, processes citizens personal data



**By Agatha Wahome**

Ag. Director Audit Risk and Compliance  
Data Protection Officer



**A**ll institutions that control and/or process personal data are required to register with the ODPC. Data controllers determine the purpose and means of processing personal data. On the other hand, data processors perform operations on personal data to achieve a desired outcome. It is imperative to note that IEBC is both a data controller and data processor.

Personal data refers to any information relating to a natural person. It includes identifiers such as a name, identification number, location, specimen signatures or other factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of a person.

The IEBC controls and processes various personal data elements of more than 22 million voters. Besides the voters, the IEBC also controls the personal data of aspirants/candidates, temporary election officials, employees, litigants, observers, tenderers, political party agents, among others. Facial images and voices are other personal data elements that the IEBC collects and processes. The data owners (data subjects) have a right for their data handled in a way that guarantees privacy.

Some personal data is sensitive and must be handled with particular care. This includes data that reveals the person's race, health status, ethnic social origin, conscience, belief, genetic data, biometric data, property details, marital

status, and family details including names of the person's children, parents, spouse, sex or sexual orientation. The IEBC handles sensitive data about its stakeholders, and therefore, the requisite safeguards must be implemented to secure it. A pertinent question to consider is what sensitive data elements does the Commission control and or process?

Processing of personal data encompasses all operations performed on all or part of personal data or sets of personal data. These operations include collection, recording, organising, structuring, storing, adapting, altering, retrieving, consulting, using, disclosing, transmitting, disseminating, making available, aligning, combining, restricting, erasing, disposing and destroying. Essentially any operation performed on the data falls under processing. A critical question to ask is, what processes does the Commission perform on the personal data in its custody?





**Personal data refers to any information relating to a natural person including identifiers like name, identification number, location, specimen signatures, physiological, genetic, mental or social identity.**



A Poll officer displays a sample ballot paper used during the General Election for simulation purposes.  
(Photo: Daniel Mathenge)



# Management reviews draft Strategic Plan

## 2024 - 2029



Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS together with Deputy Commission Secretary Operations Ruth Kulundu during a Workshop for Senior Management to review the draft IEBC Strategic Plan 2024-2029. (Photo: Chris Musumba)



**By Chris Musumba**

Ag. Senior Public Relations and Events Officer

The Commission, with support from the Electoral Law and Governance Institute for Africa (ELGIA), held a workshop for Senior Management to review the draft IEBC Strategic Plan 2024 -2029 on March 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

The Commission Secretary/CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS, noted that the previous plan (2020-2024) enabled the Commission to conduct a successful 2022 General Election.

"The Commission operates in a polarised political environment and we should be responsive to

**We are here as a team to learn from the past and address the future. The Commission needs to continuously strengthen itself and respond to the gaps identified in its operations.**

the emerging issues. The Commission's Strategic Plan must be dynamic and respond to environmental and technological changes. We are here as a team to learn from the past and address the future. The Commission needs to continuously strengthen itself and respond to the gaps identified in its operations," said Marjan.

Marjan thanked ELGIA and IFES together with other development partners including the European Union, UKAid, USAID and UNDP for supporting the development of the draft plan.

Bon Makolwal, ELGIA's Governance Specialist who represented ELGIA Executive Director Felix Odhiambo, noted that the Strategic Plan will inform areas of strategic support and collaboration with the Commission. This is a step in the right direction as incoming Commissioners will find a draft ready for their review.

Deputy Commission Secretary Operations (DCS-O)- Ruth Kulundu noted that the draft strategic plan is a result of extensive work done by the Technical Working Group and aligns with the Commission's goals.

"As Management, I call upon each one of us to analyse their areas to ensure that every aspect of the election cycle is captured as we head towards the conduct of the 2027 General Election. It is important to note that from this Strategic Plan the Commission will develop the Elections Operation Plan (EOP) for the 2027 General Election.





# Ballots and the

# PLANET



## Why IEBC should go green during elections to mitigate climate change



By CPA Victoria Chege  
Senior Accountant

**A**s climate change continues to redefine the future of governance and global cooperation, even election management bodies are being called to act. In Kenya, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) sits at a pivotal intersection to choose between democratic responsibility and environmental sustainability.

With the clock ticking towards the country's ambitious commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 32 percent by 2030, the Commission must rise to meet a new challenge: ensuring elections do not undermine the climate goals they indirectly support.

The global journey toward climate responsibility formally took root on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1997 in Kyoto, Japan, with the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Though not enforceable until 16<sup>th</sup> February 2005, it became the first international treaty to impose binding emission reduction targets on developed countries. This milestone laid the groundwork for a broader, more inclusive climate agenda.

On 12<sup>th</sup> December 2015, in Paris, France, 196 nations advanced that agenda by signing the Paris Agreement. Legally binding and ambitious in scope, the treaty sought to cap the rise in global temperatures to below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. To achieve this, countries were required to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), tailored climate action plans aimed at progressively cutting emissions and adapting to climate risks. Each NDC was expected to grow in ambition over time, with wealthier nations pledging support—financial, technical and logistical—to less developed counterparts.

Kenya's own NDC, submitted in 2020, outlines a clear goal: reduce emissions by nearly a third by 2030. To realise this, the country estimates it needs USD 62 billion to fund mitigation and adaptation strategies across sectors. One sector, however, that has drawn renewed attention for its often-overlooked environmental

impact is electoral administration.

While the IEBC is tasked primarily with delivering credible, free and fair elections, it is also an institutional consumer of energy, paper, fuel and other natural resources. At the 2024 Nairobi International Trade Fair, the Commission unveiled its set of climate-smart interventions—small but promising signs of a greening institution. These included the replacement of printed voter rolls with the Kenya Integrated Election Management System (KIEMS), which minimises paper use during voter identification; of biodegradable materials such as sisal twine and khaki envelopes; solar lighting at polling stations; reusable ballot boxes and booths; and environmentally conscious disposal of election materials.

These measures, though commendable, only scratch the surface of the Commission's potential contribution to climate action. The IEBC's relevance to climate change goes far beyond the deployment of eco-friendly materials. Like every other public institution, it operates within a fragile ecosystem—and its staff, systems and processes are just as vulnerable to the ravages of climate change. From rising temperatures and drought to floods, food insecurity, disease outbreaks and economic inequalities, the cascading effects of climate instability could directly affect voter turnout, logistics, election credibility and institutional resilience.

Moreover, elections themselves leave an environmental footprint. Thousands of vehicles mobilised for electoral logistics run on fossil fuels, emitting carbon dioxide. Millions of printed ballots translate into thousands of felled trees. Campaign posters clutter cities and towns, adding to visual pollution, while loudspeaker rallies and celebratory processions contribute to noise pollution. In short, elections are far from neutral actors in the fight against climate change.

The IEBC must, therefore, shift its focus from one-off environmental gestures to a structured, systemic engagement with sustainability. It can start by developing frameworks to regulate

## While the Commission is tasked primarily with delivering credible, free and fair elections, it is also an institutional consumer of energy, paper, fuel and other natural resources.

“electoral pollution”—a term that encompasses paper waste, noise and carbon emissions generated during election periods. This would not only improve environmental accountability but also set a precedent for other public institutions.

To go further, the Commission must actively pursue ways to tap into the global pool of climate financing. This requires measuring and documenting its carbon footprint, particularly during election years, and committing to transparent emissions reduction targets. It also calls for internal capacity building—training staff on environmental management, empowering them with data analytics tools, and fostering a culture of sustainability in procurement and operations.

Collaborations will be key. Partnerships with institutions like the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) can bolster research capacity and help the IEBC analyse trends and impacts using scientific tools. Advanced forecasting, powered by generative AI, could also support climate-informed planning for elections—anticipating extreme weather patterns, preparing for disruptions, and even choosing optimal election dates to maximise turnout and safety.

One symbolic yet impactful initiative would be for the IEBC to quantify how many trees are used for each election cycle's printing needs and commit to planting an equivalent number before the next polls. Such a program not only offsets environmental damage, but reinforces the principle of regeneration—a fitting metaphor for a Commission tasked with renewing the country's democratic contract every five years.

Beyond Kenya's borders, global best practices provide a useful blueprint. The Electoral Commission of India, for instance,



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**The future of elections is green. IEBC has the moral obligation and opportunity to embed sustainability into every phase of the electoral cycle from voter registration to ballot printing, registration, polling and results transmission.**

has made impressive strides towards “green elections,” banning plastics at polling stations, promoting electronic communication, and raising awareness among voters and political parties. If the IEBC follows suit, it could position Kenya as a regional leader in sustainable democratic governance.

The Commission has already embarked on quality assurance by pursuing the ISO 9000 series, which focuses on quality management. It should now consider adopting the ISO 14000 family of standards, which specifically addresses environmental management. Making environmental certifications a mandatory requirement for procurement contracts could ensure that vendors and suppliers also meet sustainability benchmarks.

Such measures would not only make the Commission

compliant with international frameworks such as IFRS S2—climate-related disclosures—but also prepare it for the upcoming International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) on sustainability reporting. Early adoption of these standards would make the IEBC a model public agency, reinforcing transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of public resources.

What is at stake is more than just climate neutrality. It is about institutional foresight, long-term planning, and the ability to future-proof Kenya's democratic processes. The environmental costs of elections have long been treated as collateral, but that mindset must shift. Climate change is no longer a distant or abstract threat—it is here, now, affecting the lives and livelihoods of millions of Kenyans. Institutions like the IEBC must help lead the change, not lag behind.

The future of elections is green. As stewards of democratic expression, the IEBC has both the moral obligation and strategic opportunity to embed sustainability into every phase of the electoral cycle—from voter registration to ballot printing, logistics, polling, and results transmission. Climate change is no respecter of mandates, and no institution is too siloed to be exempt from climate responsibility.

If Kenya is to meet its 2030 climate targets and leave a habitable planet for future generations, every sector must contribute. The IEBC can—and should—become a pioneer of climate-smart democracy, proving that environmental sustainability and electoral integrity are not mutually exclusive, but mutually reinforcing.



# IEBC honoured for championing inclusivity in Kenya's electoral process

**This recognition is rooted in concrete action. During the 2022 General Election, the Commission rolled out a raft of inclusive policies and programs designed to engage marginalized groups.**



**By Daniel Mathenge**

Website & Content Management officer



The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) received top honours at the 7<sup>th</sup> National Diversity and Inclusion Awards & Recognition (DIAR) gala, in what was a resounding endorsement of its efforts to entrench inclusivity and fairness within Kenya's electoral processes.

The prestigious ceremony, held on Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2025, at the Sarit Expo Centre in Nairobi, recognised the IEBC as the Best Constitutional Commission and Independent Office in Ethnic Representation—marking a significant achievement in its mandate to promote equity and diversity.

The IEBC was also named runner-up in three additional key categories: representation of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs); equitable allocation of opportunities and resources; and in fostering good governance, transparency, and accountability. These accolades collectively underscore the Commission's multifaceted approach to inclusion, reflecting its drive to ensure marginalised communities are not left behind in Kenya's democratic journey. Receiving the awards

on behalf of the Commission was acting Director of Voter Education and Partnerships, Amina Soud, HSC.

The DIAR Awards, organised by Daima Trust—a social enterprise committed to advancing diversity, equity and sustainability—celebrate individuals and institutions that champion inclusive governance and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) values. Themed "Awarding Investors in People, Planet Guardians and Champions of Prosperity for Posterity," this year's gala spotlighted those working to build a more equitable and sustainable future.

For the IEBC, this recognition is rooted in concrete action. In the lead-up to and during the 2022 General Elections, the Commission rolled out a range of inclusive policies and programs designed to engage marginalised groups—including women, youth, PWDs, the elderly, street families, prisoners, students and diaspora Kenyans. Guided by Article 100 of the Constitution, which mandates Parliament to enact laws promoting the representation of underrepresented groups, the IEBC went further by expanding its own definition of marginalisation to



Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan (second right) displays the awards IEBC was honoured during the 7<sup>th</sup> National Diversity and Inclusion Awards & Recognition (DIAR) gala. With him are Directors Amina Soud (DVEPC), Moses Sunkuli (DVREO) and Chrispine Owiye (Legal Services). (Photo: Edgar Aswani)

include often-overlooked constituencies.

Inclusivity at the Commission is embedded across all stages of the electoral cycle. In the pre-election phase, it promotes gender-responsive budgeting, targeted voter registration drives, and advocacy for adherence to the constitutional two-thirds gender principle. During elections, the IEBC facilitates participation by offering reduced nomination fees for youth, women, and persons with disabilities, launching peace campaigns, and adopting inclusive voting technologies and practices. Post-election, the Commission reviews participation metrics, conducts legal reforms advocacy, and refines its voter education approaches to ensure greater accessibility and relevance.

Central to this framework is the IEBC's Gender and Social Inclusion Policy (GSIP) 2019, which sets out key principles such as non-discrimination, transparency, human rights, and gender equality. It requires the Commission to reserve at least 30% of procurement opportunities for women, youth, and PWDs, ensure election venues and offices are accessible, and deliver voter education in formats that accommodate PWDs, including braille, audio materials and sign language interpretation.

In a move to institutionalise these commitments, the Commission has established specialised coordinating committees for women, youth, and disability inclusion across all 47 counties. It has also accredited organisations that represent special interest groups to act as election observers and

voter education providers. These partnerships help the IEBC broaden its reach while ensuring marginalised voices are at the center of electoral processes.

The use of inclusive technologies has also been a game-changer. The deployment of Kenyan Sign Language interpreters at IEBC events and the use of the Assist All App in collaboration with Signs Media have expanded access to electoral information for deaf voters. The Commission has conducted accessibility audits of polling stations to ensure physical environments do not hinder participation and established communication centers in every constituency to engage women and youth in political discourse.

Additionally, the IEBC has worked closely with key institutions such as the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) and the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) to safeguard electoral integrity, reduce violence, and enforce codes of conduct—particularly during campaigns and sensitive post-election periods.

Yet, despite these strides, challenges remain. Budget constraints limit the Commission's ability to carry out widespread outreach, especially in remote or underserved regions. Political resistance continues to stall the full implementation of the two-thirds gender rule, while deeply entrenched cultural attitudes in some communities deter active participation by women, youth and PWDs. Voter apathy, particularly among younger populations



and marginalized communities, further complicate the quest for inclusive electoral engagement.

Nonetheless, the recognition by DIAR serves as both a validation of the IEBC's progress and a call to action. To deliver on the promise of inclusive democracy, Kenya must address these structural and societal hurdles. A fully inclusive electoral process will require not only institutional but sustained support from government, civil society and political actors.

In a country where democracy is still maturing, the IEBC's proactive stance on inclusion offers a powerful template for public institutions. Its efforts affirm that free and fair elections must also be equitable and accessible to all—regardless of physical ability, economic status, gender, age or geography. As Kenya continues to evolve politically, the Commission's work is pivotal in ensuring that no voice is left unheard and no vote is left behind.



Commission staff during the gala. IEBC won the Best Constitutional Commission and Independent Office in Ethnic Representation. (Photos: Daniel Mathenge)



# Commission holds workshop to streamline election timelines in preparations for 2027 polls



By Daniel Mathenge

Website & Content Management officer

**The Commission has been at the forefront of driving legislative changes to enhance electoral processes. This forms part of the ongoing legal reforms efforts following the 2022 General Election.**



Commission staff during the the workshop aimed at streamlining election timelines. The workshop was convened by the Commission's Legal Technical Committee with support from ELGIA. (Photo: Daniel Mathenge)

**T**he Commission has taken a significant step in refining Kenya's electoral framework by hosting a two-day workshop aimed at streamlining election timelines.

Held from 3<sup>rd</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> March, 2025, in Upper hill, Nairobi, the workshop was convened by the Commission's Legal Technical Committee



with support from ELGIA. This forms part of the IEBC's ongoing legal reform efforts, following the 2022 General Election.

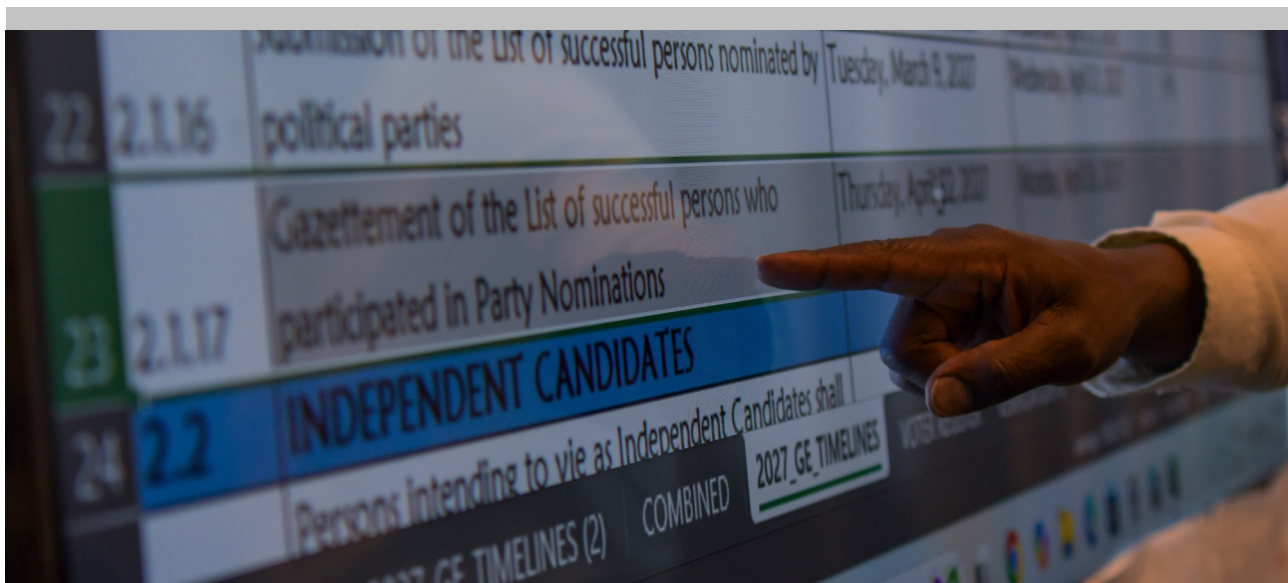
Guided by recommendations from its post-election evaluation report released in January 2023, the IEBC has been at the forefront of driving legislative changes to enhance electoral processes. Among the

key developments is the Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2024, which was adopted by the Senate on 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2024, and later transmitted to the National Assembly in February 2025. The Bill is currently under review by the Justice and Legal Affairs Committee (JLAC), which called for public submissions by 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2025.

In response, the IEBC is conducting a detailed review of the proposed amendments to assess their implications on election operations and timelines. This includes analysing the conduct of the 2022 General Election to identify areas that

require adjustment in preparation for the 2027 polls. The insights from the workshop will inform a comprehensive memorandum the IEBC plans to submit to Parliament.

Through its proactive engagement in the legislative process, the IEBC aims to ensure electoral laws are responsive, practical and aligned with international best practices. These reforms are crucial to reinforcing the Commission's mandate to deliver free, fair and transparent elections, strengthening public confidence in Kenya's democratic institutions.



Participants make their contributions during the workshop that targets to refine Kenya's electoral framework. (Photo: Daniel Mathenge)



# IEBC

## engages UK delegation on development partners support ahead of 2027 GE



By Linda Mworia  
Customer Care Officer

The Commission on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2025, held a high-level meeting with officials from the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)-Kenya to outline its priority areas for donor support and ongoing preparations for the 2027 General Election.

During the meeting, IEBC Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS, briefed the delegation on key activities the secretariat had undertaken in readiness for the next electoral cycle including the preparation of the Commission's draft Strategic Plan for 2024–2029 and the development of several internal management papers. The papers aim at enhancing service delivery and improving the voter experience in the upcoming election.

Marjan highlighted that while the secretariat

is driving preliminary planning, most of the proposals await formal policy direction from the Commission Chairperson and Commissioners, who are yet to be appointed.

Their leadership will be critical in refining and approving the Commission's strategic and operational priorities.

Despite acknowledging a global decline in donor funding, the FCDO delegation reaffirmed the UK government's commitment to partnering with the IEBC, particularly in areas of public outreach and institutional capacity building.

The engagement underscored the importance of continued international collaboration in supporting transparent, credible and inclusive



Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan when he hosted officials from the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)-Kenya. The meeting outlined its priority areas for donor support and ongoing preparations for the 2027 General Election. (Photo: Linda Mworia)





**The United Kingdom government is commitment to partnering with the IEBC in areas of public outreach and institutional capacity building.**

electoral processes in Kenya.

As the country moves closer to the 2027 polls, the IEBC is ramping up its groundwork to ensure timely and efficient delivery of its mandate, with a focus on strengthening electoral systems and fostering public trust through enhanced preparedness and stakeholder engagements.





# Budget constraints

## push IEBC to seek urgent financial support



By Daniel Mathenge

Website & Content Management officer

**Without urgent financial intervention, the Commission's operations including voter registration, by-elections and voter education would be severely compromised.**

The Commission appeared before the National Assembly's Justice and Legal Affairs Committee (JLAC) to present its Supplementary Budget Estimates No. 2 for the 2024/2025 financial year, citing dire financial constraints that threaten its ability to execute its mandate.

In its submission, the IEBC outlined a critical funding shortfall after its initial allocation of Kshs. 3.82 billion under the recurrent vote was slashed by Kshs. 120 million. The cut, which affected planned staff recruitment and by-elections, came despite the Commission having no allocation for development projects. The revised estimates follow National Treasury Circular No. 14/2024, which provides guidelines for preparing supplementary budgets.

The Commission currently faces outstanding bills amounting to Kshs. 3.85 billion. A significant portion of this is attributed to legal fees arising from the 2022 General Election petitions, including Kshs. 502 million tied to the presidential petition alone. Additionally, the IEBC owes Kshs. 399 million to the Postal Corporation of Kenya for election-related logistics services. Overall, pending legal fees stand at Kshs. 2.66 billion, while outstanding payments for goods and services from previous financial years totals to Kshs. 1.01 billion. Another Kshs. 173 million is owed for the current financial year.

Compounding these challenges, court-awarded costs of Kshs. 441 million remain unpaid, leading to the Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS, being cited for contempt of court orders. The risk of civil jail and possible

**Kshs. 3.85 billion in verified pending bills from the 2022 General Elections**

**Pending legal fees stand at Kshs. 2.66 billion**

Kshs. 502 million tied to the presidential petition

**Kshs. 399 million to the Postal Corporation of Kenya for election-related logistics services**

auctioning of Commission assets now looms.

In his presentation, Marjan warned that without urgent financial intervention, the Commission's operations - including voter registration, by-elections and voter education - would be severely compromised. He specifically called on JLAC to allocate Kshs. 50 million for ICT licenses critical for maintaining the Kenya Integrated Election Management System (KIEMS) and Kshs. 486 million to facilitate voter registration.

He also appealed for the full settlement of the Kshs. 3.85 billion in verified pending bills from the 2022 General Election. As a fallback, the Commission

requested a minimum of Kshs. 1 billion to cover immediate legal and court-related obligations.

The IEBC also submitted a status report on pending bills as of 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2025, an update on KIEMS kits including a case for their disposal upgrade and a report on the Continuous Voter Registration exercise.

Marjan was accompanied by Deputy Commission Secretaries, Ruth Kulundu and Obadiah Keitany, MBS along with key directors including Michael Ouma, HSC, Chrispine Owiye, OGW, Moses Sunkuli, OGW and Osman Ibrahim, OGW.

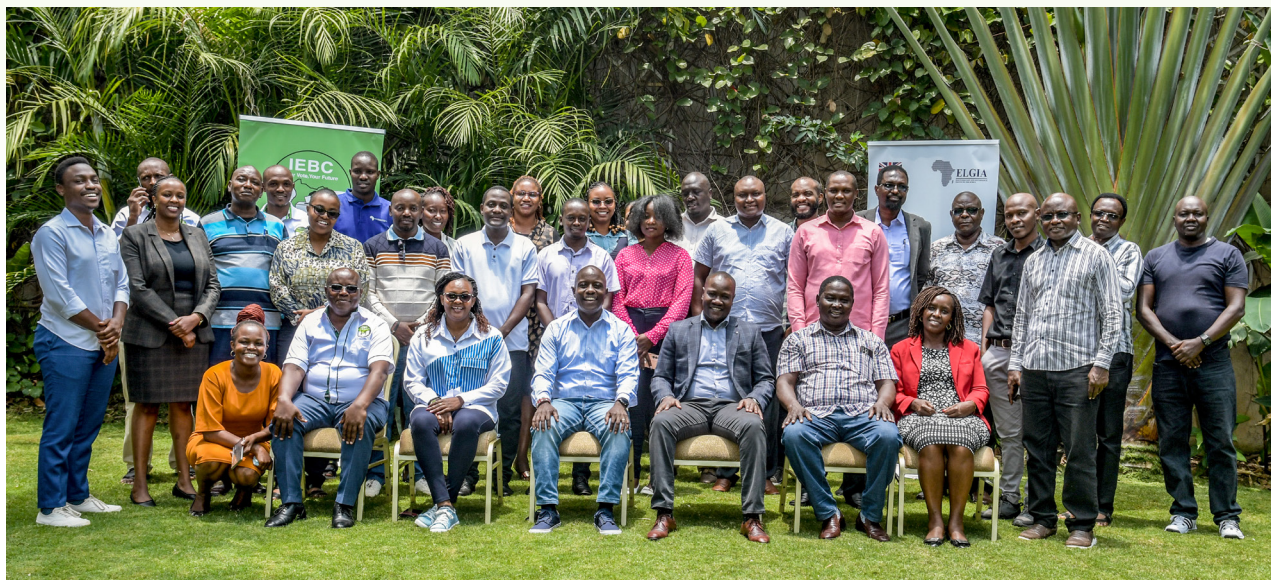


Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan accompanied by Deputy Commission Secretary (DCS) Operations Ruth Kulundu and Obadiah Keitany (DCS) Support Services and Directors after they appeared before the National Assembly's Justice and Legal Affairs Committee (JLAC). BELOW: The CEO and DCS making their presentation before the JLAC. (Photos: Daniel Mathenge)





# Commission revises training guide, content and timelines to be used during the pending by-elections



Commission staff who participated in a workshop to develop training content, methodology and by-election timelines. (Photo: Linda Mworira)



**By Linda Mworira**  
Customer Care Officer

**T**he Commission has tailored special training content for the newly appointed Commission and set the groundwork for upcoming by-elections following vacancies in 18 electoral areas as at March 2025.

In collaboration with the Electoral Law and Governance Institute for Africa (ELGIA), the Commission in 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 conducted a four-day workshop focused on the development of training content, methodology, and by-election timelines. This move comes in response to challenges stemming from the 2022 General Election, where petitions, resignations, and the passing on of elected leaders created the need for replacements.

To address these gaps, the IEBC has drafted a By-Election Operational Plan aimed at guiding the timely and effective conduct of by-elections. Some of the electoral vacancies have already

exceeded the 90-day constitutional limit due to the absence of members of the Commission.

Speaking at the workshop's opening, the Director Electoral Operations, Moses Sunkuli, OGW underscored the importance of comprehensive training for the new Commission. "We are moving beyond basic orientation to comprehensive training that equips Commissioners with a strong understanding of electoral processes, ensuring they lead with confidence and competence," he said.

The training program is designed to prepare Commissioners for key roles in policy formulation, strategic planning, and institutional oversight. It also includes continuous emerging topical trends for Commission staff to keep pace with evolving global electoral best practices.

The Program Manager for ELGIA, Boniface Mc Olwal, who represented Executive

Director, Felix Odhiambo, stressed the need for IEBC to take full ownership of the induction process. "This workshop is crucial in developing a structured curriculum that will equip the new Commission to oversee elections effectively, especially with pending by-elections," he noted.

The reforms signal IEBC's renewed commitment to institutional strengthening and the delivery of credible elections in Kenya.

**The workshop is crucial in developing a structured curriculum that will equip the new Commission with knowledge to oversee elections effectively, especially with pending by-elections**

**Join**

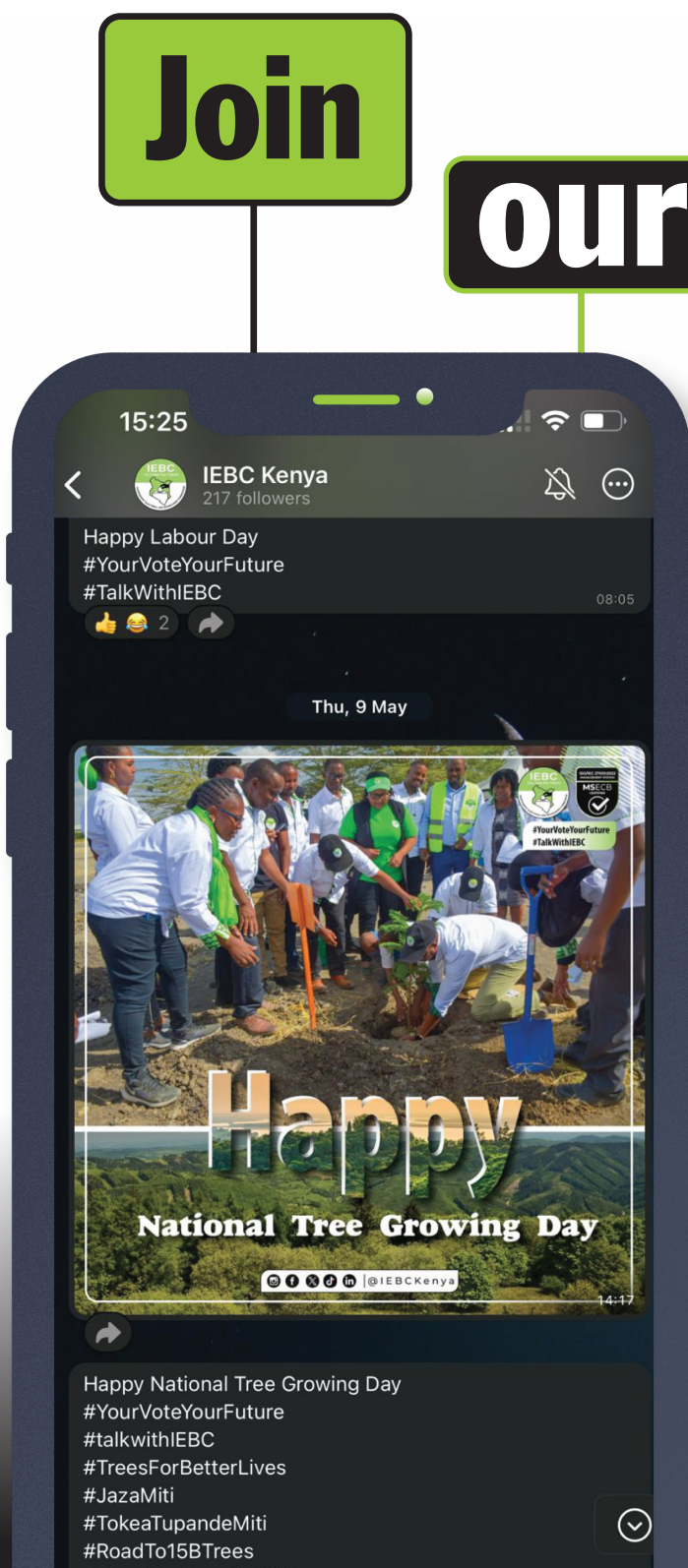
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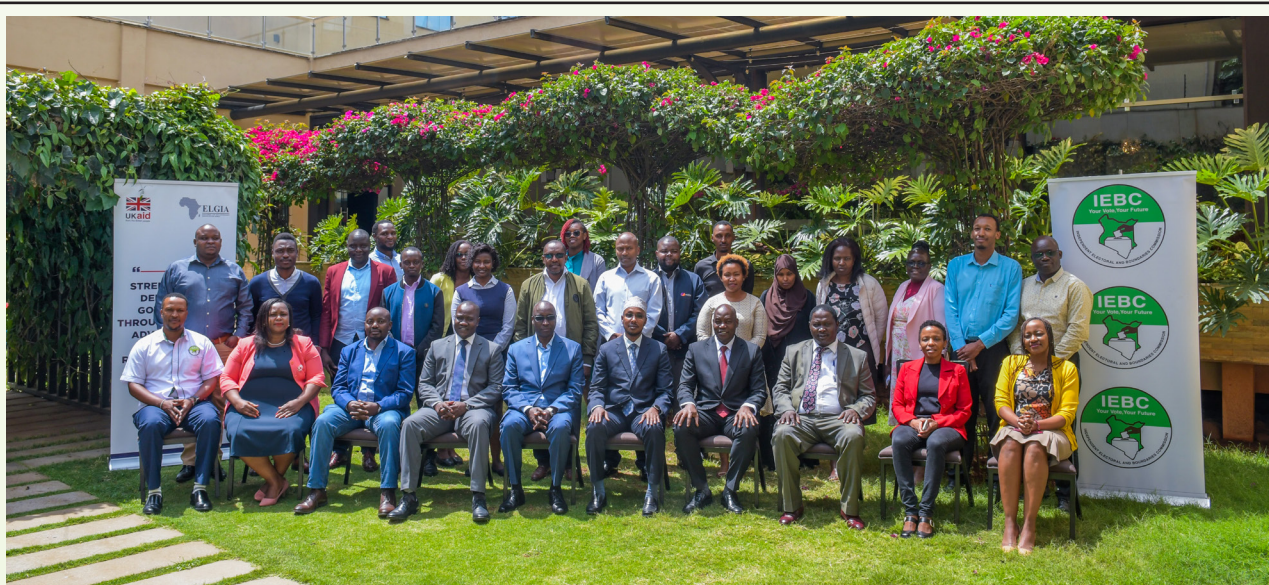


# IEBC develops electoral technology roadmap to support conduct of polls 2027 General Election



By Daniel Mathenge

Website & Content Management officer



The Commission, led by CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS, during the official launch of a five-day workshop in Nairobi to develop a technology roadmap in preparation for the 2027 General Election. (Photo: Daniel Mathenge)

**T**he Commission, in collaboration with ELGIA, convened a five-day workshop in Nairobi to develop a technology roadmap in preparation for the 2027 General Election.

The workshop focused on assessing the effectiveness of current electoral technologies and identifying improvements based on lessons learned from previous elections. Observations from election audits and recommendations

from observer reports were key inputs in shaping strategies to enhance efficiency, security and transparency in future electoral processes.

The Director of Information and Communication Technology at IEBC, Michael Ouma, HSC emphasised the need for the roadmap to align with the Commission's Strategic Plan. He noted the growing influence of AI and new media, pointing out both the opportunities

they offer and the risks they pose. "We must adapt to these rapid changes and implement secure and efficient solutions to strengthen our electoral systems," he said.

The Deputy Commission Secretary for Support Services, CPA Obadiah Keitany, MBS stressed the importance of continuous innovation and integration of new technologies. "The Commission has made significant strides in integrating technology, particularly in results transmission during the 2022 General Election. However, we must now refine these systems to serve Kenyans even better in 2027," he stated.

Representing ELGIA's Executive Director, Program Manager Boniface McOlwal, reaffirmed ELGIA's commitment to supporting electoral reforms. He emphasised the need for clarity in the role of election technology—not just as a tool but also as a trust-building mechanism. "The roadmap must answer whether technology is merely an enabler of trust or equates to trust itself," he noted.

IEBC Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS commended staff for their role in the successful 2022 General Election and urged them to remain innovative and adaptive. Citing Section 44 of the Elections Act, 2011, he reiterated that election technology must be simple, verifiable, secure, accountable, and transparent, which are key principles enshrined in the Kenya Integrated Election Management System (KIEMS).

As IEBC looks ahead to 2027, the workshop marked a key step in a broader and inclusive dialogue on the use of technology to uphold democratic values and ensure credible elections.

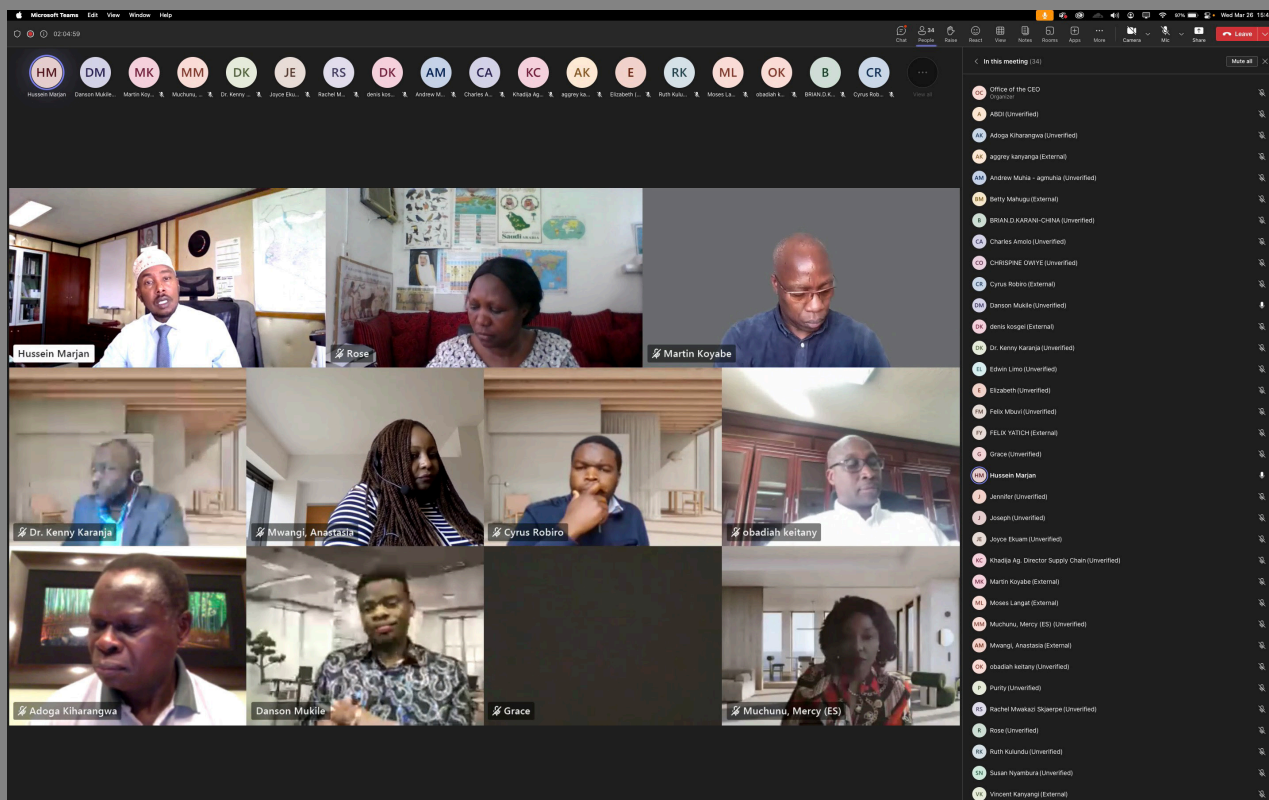
**Election technology must be simple, verifiable, secure, accountable, and transparent. These are the key principles enshrined in the Kenya Integrated Election Management System (KIEMS).**



**Photos:** Eddah Karingi, Alicia Kioni and Daniel Mathenge



## Stakeholders



# IEBC engages Diaspora Technical Working Group, explores plans to enhance participation in 2027 GE



**By Daniel Mathenge**

Website & Content Management officer

**The group is committed to expand democratic inclusion for Kenyans living abroad and had representation from six continents, including members in China, UK, France, Australia, UAE and America**

**T**he Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) held a virtual consultative meeting with the Diaspora Technical Working Group (DTWG) to explore strategies for enhancing diaspora participation in the 2027 General Election. Led by Commission Secretary/CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS, the session focused on addressing the legal, logistical and financial barriers that have historically limited diaspora voter

engagement.

The DTWG, a global, volunteer-driven initiative, plays a central role in advocating for the electoral rights of Kenyans abroad. Comprising professionals from diverse sectors—law, education, technology, business and civil society—the group is committed to expanding democratic inclusion for Kenyans living outside the country. With representation from six

continents, including members in China, the UK, France, Australia, the UAE and Americas, the DTWG forged for inclusion and participation of the marginalised groups especially those from traditionally underrepresented groups such as youth, women, and persons with disabilities.

The DTWG Chairperson, Martin Koyabe led the call for reforms, pointing to low diaspora turnouts in past elections. He attributed this to limited polling stations (restricted to embassies), restrictive registration criteria, and high costs of travel and participation. To address this, he proposed a series of reforms: expanding polling locations beyond embassies, deploying biometric registration systems abroad, intensifying civic education, and leveraging technology to reduce costs.

Dr. Kenny Karanja, another DTWG member, highlighted geographical barriers for diaspora voters in countries like the United States and

Canada. He proposed adding polling stations in strategic locations based on diaspora population density and convenience, with further expansions in countries such as Brazil.

In response, Marjan acknowledged the group's concerns and outlined the constraints IEBC faces. Chief among them is the legal framework, which currently restricts polling to embassies and high commissions. He noted that any expansion beyond this would require legislative amendments. Additionally, time zone differences—particularly in regions like Oceania—pose scheduling challenges that must be factored into any planning.

Marjan also addressed the need for accurate data on diaspora populations to guide resource allocation and polling station planning. He pointed out that while rough estimates exist, precise numbers are lacking and hinder strategic decision-making. Financial limitations, he said,

**The Commission outlined the constraints it faces chief among them being the legal framework, which currently restricts polling to Kenyan embassies and High Commissions**





remain a key challenge, especially in light of Kenya's broader fiscal constraints. "We need cost-effective solutions that align with national budget realities," he stated.

Despite the challenges, Marjan expressed optimism about the potential for progress through partnership. He emphasised that electoral processes should be seen as long-term investment in Kenya's democratic development. He welcomed DTWG's continued input and stressed the importance of a unified, collaborative approach in finding practical solutions. "This is not just about the Commission or the diaspora - it's about the country's future," he said.

Technology emerged as a critical enabler in the discussions. Marjan acknowledged its role in expanding access to voter registration and civic education but reminded attendees that biometric data collection is a legal requirement under Kenyan law—further complicating remote registration efforts.

In conclusion, Marjan underscored the importance of data-driven planning, strategic budgeting, and legal reforms to make diaspora voting viable in 2027. He urged the DTWG to develop clear legislative proposals and to continue engaging the Commission constructively. "Success will depend on partnerships, innovation, and the shared will to make inclusive democracy a reality," he said.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to deepening dialogue and collaboration.

The session marked a significant step in the ongoing effort to enfranchise Kenyans living abroad, as both IEBC and the DTWG reaffirmed their dedication to shaping an inclusive and efficient diaspora voting process for the 2027 General Election.

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## **The Commission underscored the importance of data-driven planning, strategic budgeting and legal reforms to make diaspora voting viable in 2027**



Irene Kyatu, the Acting Manager for Boundaries, conducts voter education to the Arusha Diaspora Community in Arusha, Tanzania, on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2022. Tanzania is one of the 12 countries where the IEBC conducts diaspora elections. (Photo: Daniel Mathenge)



## Electoral Follow-Up Mission join forces to refine electoral framework



By Faith Njeri,  
Social Media Officer

In a significant stride toward electoral excellence, the Commission joined forces with the European Union's Electoral Follow-Up Mission for a dynamic roundtable discussion at Nairobi's Sankara Hotel. Led by Deputy Commission Secretary – Operations, Ruth Kulundu, the forum united diverse stakeholders to refine Kenya's electoral framework ahead of the 2027 General Election.



Deputy Commission Secretary (DCS) Operations Ruth Kulundu when she met with European Union's Electoral Follow-Up Mission team for a dynamic roundtable discussion at Nairobi's Sankara Hotel. The meeting with stakeholders focused on how to refine Kenya's electoral framework ahead of the 2027 General Election. **(Photo: Faith Wanjiku)**



### A Platform for Progress

The EU-led dialogue focused on actionable strategies to enhance **accessibility, transparency, and fairness** in elections. "Collaboration is the cornerstone of credible elections. These insights will shape a more inclusive process for all Kenyans," affirmed DCS Kulundu, underscoring IEBC's openness to innovation.

### EU's Strategic Role

The EU delegation highlighted Kenya as a regional democracy beacon, citing past support in voter tech upgrades and observer missions. "Kenya's 2022 polls set a benchmark. Our mission now is to future-proof these gains through inclusive reforms," noted an EU representative.

### The forum featured impassioned contributions from:

The forum featured impassioned contributions from:

- **Persons with Disabilities (PWDs):** Advocates called for AI-powered voter guides and expanded assistive technologies at polling stations.
- **Youth & Women's Groups:** Leaders pushed for TikTok-driven voter education and gender-responsive candidate nomination policies.
- **Media Council of Kenya:** Emphasized fact-checking partnerships to combat election misinformation.
- **National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC):** Proposed conflict-mitigation training for election officials in hotspot regions.
- **Faith Leaders:** Urged IEBC to leverage places of worship for civic education.

### EU's Strategic Role

As IEBC prepares to integrate these recommendations, DCS Kulundu reiterated: "Every voice heard today strengthens our collective resolve. Together, we will deliver elections that mirror Kenya's aspirations."



Photos: Faith Wanjiku

# Commission hosts Controller of Budget for IPSAS benchmarking

On 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024, the IEBC opened its doors to the Office of the Controller of Budget (OCOB) for a groundbreaking benchmarking exercise on the implementation of **International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) Accrual Basis**—a transformative framework reshaping Kenya's public financial management.



By Faith Njeri,  
Social Media Officer

## Why IPSAS Matters

IPSAS Accrual accounting transcends traditional cash-based reporting by recognising revenues and expenses when they are incurred, not just when money changes hands. This approach, adopted globally, enhances transparency, improves asset management, and strengthens fiscal accountability. Since 2011/2012, the IEBC has been a trailblazer in Kenya's public sector, fully implementing IPSAS Accrual and emerging as a **national reference point** for excellence.

## Inside the Benchmarking Session

Led by CPA Pamela Okatch, OCOB's Chief Manager of Finance and Accounts, the delegation engaged in immersive discussions with IEBC's financial experts, including:

- **CPA Obadiah Keitany** (Deputy Commission Secretary – Support Services), who underscored IEBC's commitment to knowledge-sharing.
- **CPA Osman Ibrahim** (Director of Finance), who detailed the Commission's 13-year IPSAS journey, from initial adoption to full compliance.
- **CPA Patrick Nyakira** and **CPA Clifford Rono**, who showcased IEBC's innovative tools for tracking contingent liabilities, gratuities, and inventory.

## Key Focus Areas:

1. **Asset & Liability Management:** Streamlining reporting on current assets, liabilities and inventories.
2. **Revenue Recognition:** Accruing revenues and expenditures to reflect real-time financial health.
3. **Policy Alignment:** Adapting accounting policies to meet IPSAS's rigorous demands.





Deputy Commission Secretary (DCS) Support Services Obadiah Keitany (center) and Director Finance Osman (center left) when they met officers from the Office of the Controller of Budget (OCOB), who were on a benchmarking tour to learn more on the implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) Accrual Basis. **(Photo: Faith Njeri)**

### Milestones & Lessons: IEBC's Success Blueprint

The IEBC team shared hard-earned insights from their IPSAS journey:

- **Digital Transformation:** Leveraging advanced accounting software to automate compliance.
- **Capacity Building:** Training over 200 staff on IPSAS protocols, ensuring institutional buy-in.
- **Risk Mitigation:** Establishing safeguards for contingent liabilities, such as pending litigation or warranty claims.

### Challenges Turned Opportunities

The session also addressed hurdles faced during implementation:

- **Cultural Resistance:** Shifting from cash-based mindsets required phased training and stakeholder engagement.
- **Data Migration:** Converting decades of financial records into IPSAS-compliant formats demanded meticulous auditing.



**Photos: Faith Wanjiku**

# South Sudan's

## electoral body taps into Kenya's experience in strategic benchmark visit to the Commission



By Edgar Aswani

Ag. Senior Communication  
and Media Liaison Officer

**The initiative is “an exciting opportunity for mutual learning and collaboration between two sister nations. It cements the urgency for electoral bodies across Africa to adapt to the fast-evolving political and technological dynamics shaping modern democracies**

In a testament to regional collaboration and the strengthening of democratic institutions in East Africa, the South Sudan National Elections Commission (NEC) undertook a week-long benchmarking and peer exchange mission with IEBC. Held from 17<sup>th</sup> February to 21<sup>st</sup> February 2025, at the Kenya School of Government, Lower Kabete Campus, the visit marked a significant milestone in fostering south-south cooperation in electoral governance.

### Forging Regional Bonds through Peer Learning

The benchmarking tour was inaugurated with powerful remarks from Felix Koskei, EGH, Chief of Staff and Head of the Public Service, who described the initiative as “an exciting opportunity for mutual learning and collaboration between two sister nations.” He emphasized the urgency for electoral bodies across Africa to adapt to the fast-evolving political and technological dynamics shaping modern democracies.

He applauded IEBC's commitment to transparency, innovation, and institutional memory, which continues to inspire emerging electoral commissions across the continent.

### A Cordial Welcome by IEBC Leadership

While officially welcoming the South Sudanese delegation, IEBC Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS reiterated the Commission's dedication to regional knowledge exchange. He noted with pride that the NEC of South Sudan was the first Electoral Management Body (EMB) hosted by IEBC in 2025, underscoring the importance of peer learning in strengthening electoral integrity and operational excellence.

Marjan assured the delegation that the week's program had been deliberately curated to provide practical insights, strategic tools and institutional frameworks drawn from Kenya's own electoral journey. “Each session is grounded in real-life experience—lessons forged through challenge, reform and innovation,” he noted.

### Learning from Kenya's Electoral Evolution

Prof. Abednego Akok Kacuol, Chairperson of South Sudan's NEC, extended his heartfelt appreciation to the Government of Kenya, the Kenya School of Government, and the IEBC for their hospitality and openness. He urged his delegation to fully immerse themselves in the learning process, noting





Felix Koskei, EGH, Chief of Staff and Head of the Public Service (center seated) with Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS when they opened the benchmarking tour of the South Sudan National Election Commission at the Kenya School of Government, Lower Kabete Campus. (Photo: Edgar Aswani)

that the takeaways from the visit would shape South Sudan's path toward credible, inclusive and peaceful elections.

Over the course of five dynamic days, the delegation engaged with IEBC officials and technical experts on a wide range of critical themes, including:

- **The Electoral Legal Framework:** Understanding how Kenya's laws, regulations, and judicial precedents have shaped electoral processes and dispute resolution mechanisms.
- **Evolution of Voter Registration:** Tracing Kenya's transition from manual voter rolls to biometric voter registration (BVR), and the layered safeguards ensuring voter authenticity.
- **Election Technology Innovations:** Exploring Kenya's use of technology in voter identification, candidate registration, election results transmission, and stakeholder accreditation—anchored in a firm understanding that technology must be backed by precise specifications, extensive training, and robust stakeholder engagement.
- **Institutional Devolution and Infrastructure:** Gaining firsthand exposure to Kenya's decentralized electoral framework by touring the IEBC Headquarters, National Warehouse, and Kiambu County IEBC Office to observe how electoral operations are managed across multiple administrative levels.

## The delegation commended Kenya's electoral infrastructure for its professionalism, logistical sophistication and emphasis on operational transparency







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### Shared Vision

As the visit drew to a close, the South Sudanese delegation expressed optimism and renewed commitment to adapting best practices from Kenya's experience into their national context. Participants received certificates of participation, signifying not just the end of a learning tour, but the beginning of an enduring collaboration.

This historic exchange reinforces the IEBC's growing reputation as a continental leader in electoral innovation and capacity building. More importantly, it demonstrates the power of solidarity among African electoral institutions to collectively elevate the standard of elections across the region.







# Vision

**A credible electoral management body that meets the democratic aspirations of the people of Kenya.**

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# Mission

**To conduct transparent, efficient, and impartial elections; and undertake boundary delimitation for equitable representation and sustainable democracy.**

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# Core Values

**Adherence to the rule of law**

**Inclusivity**

**Integrity**

**Accountability**

**Teamwork**

**Innovativeness**

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