

THE BALLOT

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2024 - 2029

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seek to
strengthen inclusivity
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marginalised groups
in the electoral process

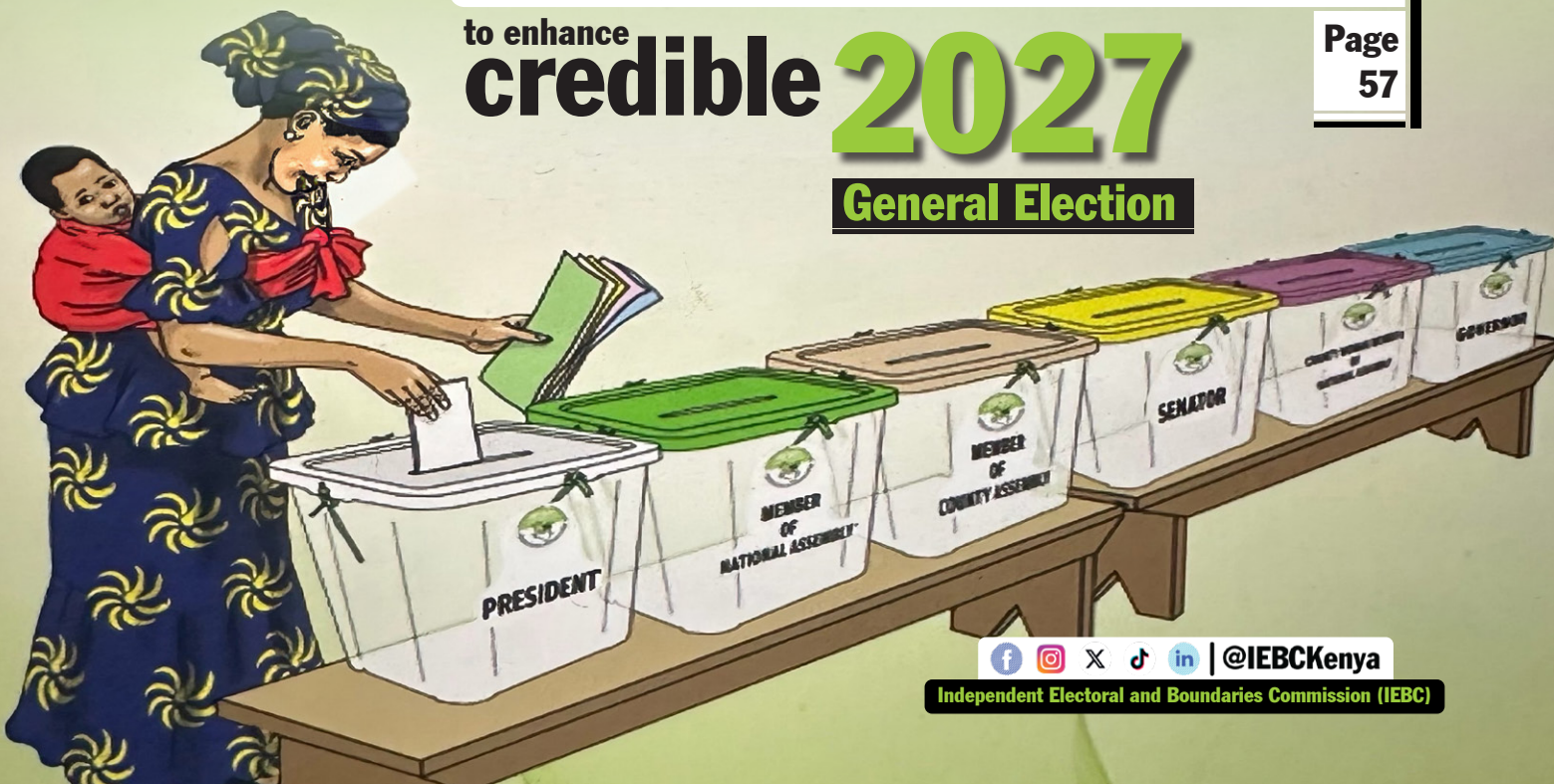


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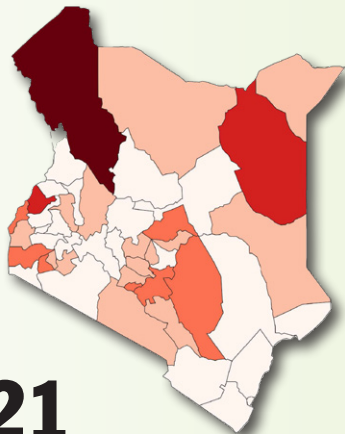
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Word from the Commission Secretary/CEO



The Commission developed proposals for review of the electoral laws and after a series of consultative meetings, the same were reduced into draft amendments submitted to Parliament for consideration.

The Commission conducted the 2022 Post Election Evaluation exercise which drew lessons from the challenges and experiences of the 2022 general election process. Through this exercise, the Commission ascertained what worked well and what did not work well. This aimed to inform electoral legal reforms which will identify all electoral and legal gaps experienced before, during and after the elections.

Following this and in consultation with the Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Committee of the Senate, and the Justice and Legal Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, the Commission developed proposals for review of the electoral laws and after a series of consultative meetings, the same were reduced into draft amendments submitted to both Parliament and the National Dialogue Committee (NADCO) for consideration. These amendments informed the drafting of the NADCO Bills.

The electoral legal reforms proposals are themed as follows:

- a. IEBC Act, 2011 with particular focus on the policy, administration structure and operations of the Commission;
- b. Elections generally, with a focus on voter eligibility and registration, and candidate eligibility and nomination;
- c. Political party regulation with a focus on campaign finance, party primaries and party lists;
- d. Public/Stakeholder participation with respect to voter education, media, observers, monitors and agents;
- e. Conduct of election with a focus on polling, counting and management of results;
- f. Election Dispute Resolution including voter registration challenges, candidate nomination complaints, Peace Committees, IEBC Dispute Resolution Committee, Political Parties Dispute Tribunal, Electoral Code of Conduct Enforcement Committee, High Court and the Supreme Court; and
- g. Technology in elections with regard to registration and identification of voters, development and deployment of nomination software (CRMS) and transmission of election results.



A Technical Working Group was appointed to spearhead the reform agenda on electoral legal reforms, which has led to the development of several draft Bills and amendments to the election Regulations.

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The Commission has since submitted before Parliament the following Bills for consideration and enactment:

- a. The Draft Referendum Bill, 2024;
- b. The Election Campaign Financing (Amendment) Bill, 2024;
- c. IEBC (Amendment) Bill 2024;
- d. Rules of Procedure on Delimitation of Boundaries;
- e. The Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2024; and
- f. The Draft amendments to all election related Regulations which are;
 - i. The draft Elections (General) (Amendment) Regulations, 2024;
 - ii. The draft Elections (Voter Education) (Amendment) Regulations, 2024;
 - iii. The draft Elections (Technology) (Amendment) Regulations, 2024;
 - iv. The draft Elections (Registration of Voters) (Amendment) Regulations, 2024;
 - v. The draft Elections (Party Primaries and Party Lists) (Amendment)

Regulations, 2024;

- vi. Draft Referendum Regulations, 2024; and
- vii. Draft Election Campaign Financing Regulations, 2024.

Out of these Bills, only the IEBC (Amendment) Act, 2024 was enacted into law on 15th July 2024. The amendments reviewed the legal provisions relating to Boundary Delimitation and provide the Procedures for Delimitation of constituencies and wards under the Fifth Schedule of the Act. The Act also provides the framework for recruitment of a Commission Chairperson and members of the Commission.

Following the enactment of the IEBC (Amendment) Act, 2024; the Commission engaged Senate Committee on 22nd & 29th July 2024 and 22nd August 2024 to deliberate and give its views on the County Governments Election Laws (Amendment) Bill,

2024 (Senate Bill No. 2 of 2024); The Political Parties (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2024 (Senate Bill No. 26 of 2024); The Election Offences (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2024 (Senate Bill No. 28 of 2024); and The Elections (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill, 2024 (Senate Bill No. 29 of 2024).

To date, the said Bills are still pending at the Committee stage in Senate following the public participation forums held in July and August and it is expected that subsequently, the Bills will be transmitted to the National Assembly for consideration.

The Commission spearheads these legal reforms with an aim to identify and propose areas for review towards enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in the management of future elections.

Moreover, the Commission is committed to execute its primary role in planning and putting in place measures and mechanisms to ensure simple, accurate, verifiable, secure, accountable, impartial, efficient, credible and transparent elections.

I recognise the effort made in the preparation of the above-mentioned Bills considering the budgetary constraints the Commission is experiencing. Further, the delay faced in the enactment of the Bills is a matter of concern given that this is a priority activity of the post-election phase that drives the larger electoral legal reforms agenda ahead of the 2027 General Election.

As I conclude, I welcome you to read this 16th edition of the Ballot Magazine, which is one of the strategies the Commission reaches out to its audiences to inform and create awareness on electoral processes as we strive to strengthen Kenya's democracy.

Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS
Commission Secretary/CEO



Editorial

Welcome to the 16th Issue of The Ballot Magazine!

As always, the Ballot presents an opportunity for us to unpack the role of the Commission, draw lessons and appreciate the work done during the quarter.

Enhancing democracy is a collective responsibility. On its part, the Commission, this quarter undertook various activities, in particular engaging various stakeholders on electoral legal reforms. As you are aware, the conduct of elections is guided by a legal framework, and the Commission takes a lead role in legal reforms in an effort to enhance election management in Kenya and facilitate a free, fair and credible election.

In this Issue, we not only highlight the Commission's efforts toward legal reforms, why the youth should vote, unpack boundaries

delimitation process, discuss opportunities and challenges in artificial intelligence; but also get insights from one of our own after serving in the public service for 39 years. Further, this Issue encourages us to maintain a work life balance with some of our colleagues sharing some activities we can explore.

We thank the contributors of this Issue, the very dedicated Editorial Team and all staff for the continued support. Let's keep sharing information!

Enjoy the reading and we look forward to your feedback.



In this issue, we get insights from one of our own who has worked in the public service for 39 years. Further, this issue encourages us to maintain a work-life balance with some of our colleagues sharing some activities we can explore.

Strategic Plan

By William Kahindi, Ag. Senior Research Officer

Commission launches process to develop Strategic Plan 2024-2029

The Commission, like any other corporate organisation, works within a well-defined environment with a specified Strategic Plan (SP) that best illustrates and aligns its operations, mission and vision. While organisations must operate within the country's legal framework, they must be rife to their internal and external environment and also foresee the risks that are inherent, hence propose mitigation measures.

Strategic Planning process is a significant component of the result-based framework that ensures public institutions make a deliberate effort to define their strategic direction, thus making informed decisions regarding resource allocation towards implementing its policies, programmes and activities.

Though strategic planning is a purview of the Commission members, the Secretariat with the guidance from the Commission Secretary/CEO has developed a draft SP that is due to be subjected to the Management Committee for approval, and ultimately await approval by the members of the Commission once in office.

The Commission Secretary/CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS while gracing the inaugural meeting of the technical working group in Machakos observed



The IEBC Strategic Plan 2024-2029 heavily borrows from the achievements and lessons learnt from the 2015-2020 and 2020-2024 plans.



Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS (centre) with members of the Strategic Plan Technical Working Group in Machakos

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The implementation of the Strategic Plan is not a straight line journey. It has to go through ups and downs and must be prepared with an understanding of the past and current challenges and how to chart the path for the future.

that it was important to have a SP that serves as a roadmap to guide the Commission accomplish its desired goals. He noted that the SP is pegged on the Vision 2030, Mid-Term Expenditure Framework Plans, current government policy that is the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda, and local, regional and international instruments that perpetuate the democratic and political rights of citizens. These include United Nations Convention on Civil and Political Rights (UNCCPR), African Charter on Democracy, Election and Governance (ACDEG), African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, African Union Agenda 2063 and East Africa Community Vision 2050.

"The implementation of the Strategic Plan is not a straight line journey. It has to go through ups and downs and must be prepared with an understanding of the past and current challenges and how to chart the path for the future. This should be done with an understanding of the internal and external environmental risks, some of which the Commission cannot control but affect performance, like the absence of Commissioners who formulate policy and oversight," said Marjan.

The Commission's Strategic Plan 2020-2024 was spent in June 2024, thus necessitating a review and development of the IEBC 2024-2029 Strategic Plan. The implementation of the 2020-2024 responded to judicial decisions on election

management, non-operationalisation of the IEBC Fund, amendment of laws too close to the election date, suspension on implementation of Election Campaign Financing Act 2013, late appointment of Commissioners, non-staggered term of commissioners, over-legislation of electoral processes, protracted electoral process litigation, as well as Covid-19 global pandemic which arose just during the initial implementation of the SP. Amidst that, the Commission was resilient and triumphed despite the challenges it confronted. The ultimate test was the 2022 General Election, which tested the institution to new legal realms on election results management. The innovation and increased transparency in availing of election results almost real-time leading to over 380 million hits on the election results public portal raised the bar for other African electoral authorities.

The IEBC Strategic Plan 2024-2029 heavily borrows from the achievements and lessons learnt from the 2015-2020 and 2020-2024 plans. It can be cited as the fourth successive strategy roadmap of the Commission towards upholding the essential elements of representative democracy of Kenya's electoral system under Article 81 which advocates for free and fair elections, freedom of citizens to exercise their political rights, the two-thirds gender principle and fair representation.

Marjan noted that the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan should enable the Commission to invest in a resilient culture in a polarised political environment by cultivating trust among various stakeholders through public participation, ease of access to information and enhanced participation in the boundaries and election processes. The SP is aligned with the 'Guidelines for Preparation of Fifth Generation Strategic Plans for Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Counties as well as Constitutional Commissions and Independent Offices.

The Strategic Plan 2024-2029 upon approval shall guide the Commission's operations for a period of five years (2024 to 2029). It proposes a reduction of the key result areas from six to four as a notable recommendation from the 'Assessment of the Performance of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan' by The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the Post-Election Evaluation and situational analysis. The four proposed KRAs are management of elections, equitable representation, institutional resilience and citizen engagement and participation.

The proposed SP has strategic objectives,

strategies, activities, output and outcome indicators, planned targets and costing. The strategic issues, goals and key result areas will be instrumental in enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and integrity of the electoral process.

The Commission's external environment aims at addressing both the macro and micro environment.

The macro environment is affected by its external factors that may negatively affect the strategic operations of the Commission such as delay in filling of vacancies of Commissioners; non-commitment of the political class in consolidating democratic gains; heightened demand among the citizenry in the implementation of legal reforms; shifting of political alliances, non-adherence to political party constitutions and rules; polarised political mobilisation and campaigns along ethnic lines; the proliferation of fake news; misinformation, disinformation and propaganda in the election process; unresolved County, Constituency and Ward boundary disputes; economic factors,

including austerity measures, high cost of living, unemployment and competition for resources, which affect the Commission's operations.

On the other hand, the micro environment are internal factors that may affect the Commission's operations. The Commission's strengths include: institutional stability, a permanent and professional secretariat, an approved organisational structure, and guiding policies and procedures.

Inadequate financial resources, gaps in staff establishment, insufficient Commission-owned premises, and lack of a scheme of service are some of the weaknesses that affect Commission operations. The Commission has an elaborate legal framework governing elections, expanded ICT infrastructure, and strengthened collaboration with stakeholders and partners.

The analysis categorises the emergent opportunities and threats into political, economic, social, technological, legal and ecological factors. The Commission in terms



The Strategic Plan is aligned with the 'Guidelines for Preparation of Fifth Generation Strategic Plans for Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Counties (MDCAs)' as well as Constitutional Commissions and Independent Offices.



Strategic Plan Technical Working Group members in Machakos during the development of the draft

of ecological factors may leverage global engagements and adaptation of green initiatives in election management, use of digital alternatives to disseminate information, deployment of online electoral services and leveraging climate financing in electoral activities.

In the implementation of the SP, the Commission will fulfil its mandate through continuous voter registration, voter education, and electoral boundaries delimitation, among others, and the budget allocation will peak during FY 2026/27 and 2027/2028 due to pre-election and election activities. The major project in the implementation of the SP will be the voter registration, election technology, boundary delimitation and a possible referendum.

The Commission in the implementation of this SP will require financial resources to fulfil its mandate (to conduct elections, by-elections and referendum (if any)) which might widen the resource gap. The Commission intends to put in place new strategies towards increased GoK funding, engagement of development partners and collaborating with key stakeholders in implementing some activities such as information dissemination,

appropriation in aid from sale of electoral maps and register of voters, candidate registration fees, disposal of obsolete assets and lease of election materials.

In the proposed SP, the Commission will put in place measures towards management of the scarce resources such as activity-based costing where resource requirements will be accurately costed using the most plausible calculation based on quantity multiplied by price and trend, continuous capacity building for staff, automation and greening of Commission processes, recycling and re-use of election materials, joint forums, periodic monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes, incorporation of feedback to improve processes, strengthen management and administrative policies, and incorporation of internal audit and risk assessments in all processes to achieve value for money.

This SP is being implemented with an aim of leveraging the Commission's strengths and, in liaison with electoral stakeholders, address its perceived weaknesses. The SP foresees risks in strategic, legal, political, financial, technological, operational and reputational categories. The Commission in its risk management framework has weighed the risks in terms of likelihood and severity and proposed mitigation measures and the assigned risk owners.

To emphasise importance of implementation of the SP, a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework has been proposed. There are also performance measures, evaluation of the plan, and the appropriate tools to be applied in the (MEL) and reporting framework, and feedback mechanism.



The Commission intends to put in place new strategies towards increased GoK funding, engagement of development partners and collaborating with key stakeholders in implementing some activities.

Inclusion

By Agnes Muchiri, Intern Department of Communication and Public Affairs

Vote or be voiceless: Youth's big role in shaping Kenya's tomorrow

Kenya, like many African states, is a country of youth at 75% of its population. This is according to the 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census Report (2015) showing 35 years and below made up three quarters of the 47.6 million population in Kenya. Of the 75% youth, the census report further estimated the eligible voting youth of ages 18-34 years at 13,777,600 (29% of the 75%).

However, youth have either been or self-disengaged in both civic and electoral process as a cardinal duty. In the 2022 Post Election Evaluation (PEE) Report, an impressive



Despite the relatively high youth population (18-35) in Kenya, there was low youth registration in the 2022 General Election.

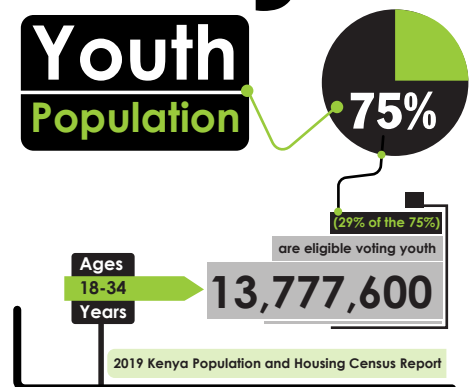
8,811,691 youth registered as voters representing 40% of the 22,120,458 registered voters for the 2022 General Elections in Kenya. According to Africa Union election observer mission, despite the relatively high youth population (18-35) in Kenya, there was low youth registration in the 2022 General Election representing 39.84% (8,812,790) of the total registered voters, which was a decline of 5.17% from the 2017 figures. This was attributed to the general perception that the votes did not count in elections, lack of trust and confidence in the political system, and the youth's unemployment and poverty.

Majority of Kenyan youth felt exploited by the elite leaders to advance their political advancement, a challenge for future elections according to the Joint National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI) International Election Observation Mission Report 2022. Stakeholders noted that registration outreach and tactics neither adequately, nor directly targeted young people and did not attempt to utilise digital platforms.

It was observed that there was a decline in voter turnout from 77% in 2017 to 65% on the election day of the 2022 General Election. The NDI report observed that there was youth apathy in the electoral process attributed to lack of mobilisation and interest in the elections arising from unmet

Kenyan


Youth Population



Registered Voters 2022GE

22,120,458





**Youth and women
had the numbers
but were not
cognizant of
their numerical
advantage to use
it to promote and
support their own
candidates.**

A young voter casts a vote during the 2022 General Election. There was 5.17% decline in youth registration compared to 2017 General Election.

expectations and high unemployment levels among the demography.

With their massive numbers, youth can drive both social and political change. However, the channel through which they could enhance this, was not in the lists of their interests, and that was on the ballot.

The youth did not believe that their waking up early and queuing to vote mattered. They lost trust in their leaders. Most leaders misused the youth and the masses as stepping stones to occupy leadership positions. Once elected, the promises made during campaigns were and are never fulfilled.

Today, Kenyan youth are complaining about hard economic times and unaffordable living standards. In June 2024, after the passing of the defunct Finance Bill 2024 by parliament, the young generation - Gen Zs protested against the high taxation proposals. From the protests, one of the democratically accepted strategies to voice over the universal concern, a number of young people were shot dead and others abducted extra judicially, never to be found.

According to Amnesty International, 136 extrajudicial executions during the protests were realized. Most of the victims died while in police custody or had last been seen in police

custody. Only 28 cases, including from previous years, were subjected to judicial proceedings. All said and done, this eroded the youth belief in the democratic systems in the country and fanned the notion that the more things change at the ballot, the more they would remain the same.

Generally, several factors contribute to the youth's averseness to participation in electoral processes. According to the Electoral Knowledge Network (<https://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/KE>), these include but not limited to youth involvement, public confidence and trust in the Electoral Management Body – EMB.

The voting process has been perceivably (from political party shambolic nominations), thus for many, ultimate election results had been easily predictable based on candidates' financial prowess, party affiliation and ethnicity. This was a consequence of a court ruling that declined the Election Campaign Financial Regulation 2021 that sought to provide level ground for all political candidates and curb election malpractices like voter bribery.

Former IEBC Chairman, Wafula Chebukati, during his speech at the launch of the Post-Election Evaluation (PEE) report observed that youth and women had the numbers but were

not cognizant of their numerical advantage to use it to promote and support their own candidates.

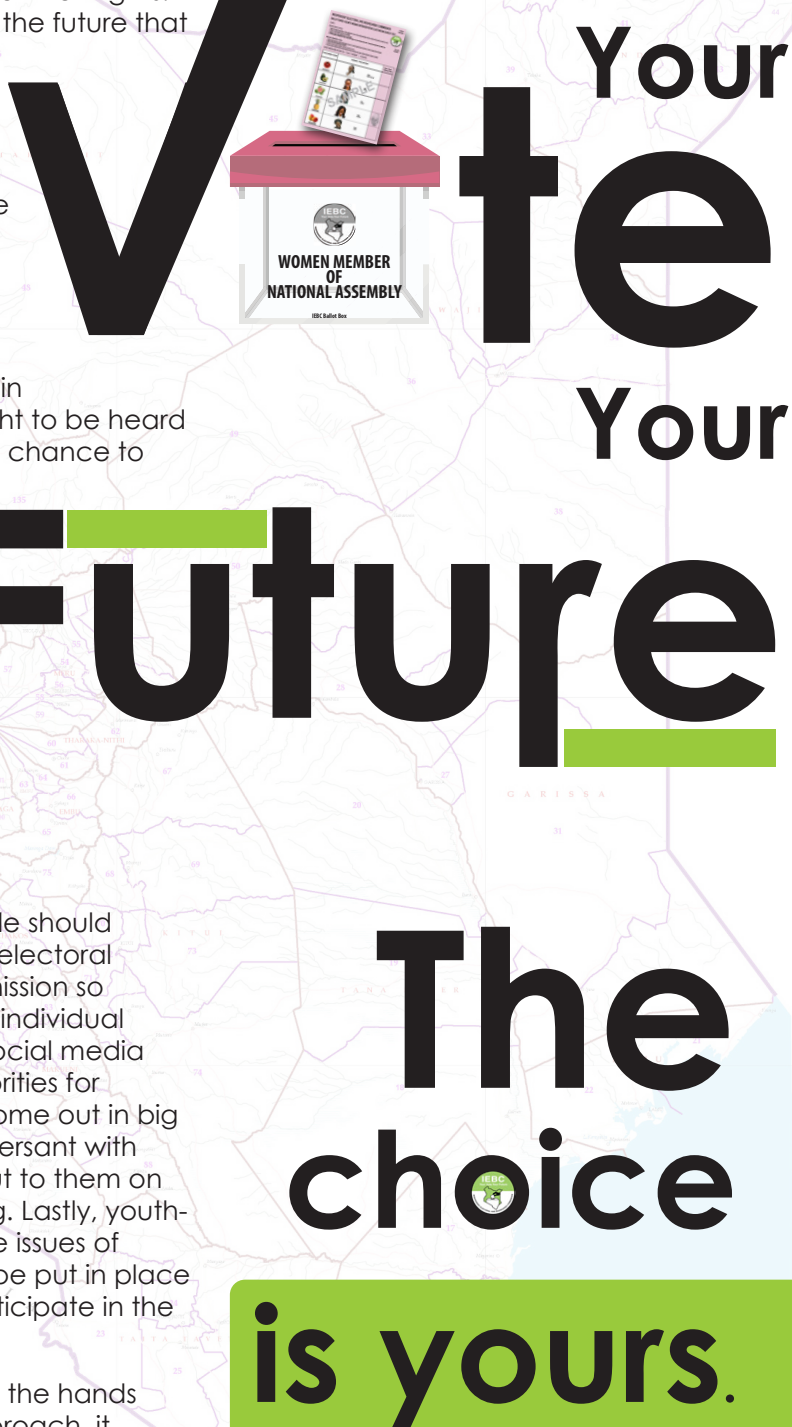
"Sadly, the participation of women and youth in the nomination is still a matter of concern. Political Parties should do more to increase the interest of women and youth to participate in the election. Both women and youth should not fear but enlist with any party and fight for equal representation and champion for their rights. Their votes can play a big role in shaping the future that they want," said Chebukati.

The Commission should invigorate incorporation of modern and evolving technologies and launch special and early voting or e-voting to accommodate the youth's instantaneous contemporary Modus Oparandi.

The consequences of the youth disengagement from electoral processes cannot be gainsaid. By underperforming in the political process, youth forfeit their right to be heard in a democracy. They deny themselves a chance to influence decisions that directly affect their lives such as job creation, affordable healthcare, climate change initiatives, digital innovations and a better government for the people and by the people.

Ideally, youth mobilization could be done by addressing socio-economic barriers, for example, ensuring increased access to voter registration and polling stations especially in marginalized areas and continuous civic education. Young people should be educated on the election processes, electoral laws and also the mandate of the Commission so as to understand the importance of their individual and collective votes. Role modelling or social media influencers, activists, musicians and celebrities for example should urge young people to come out in big numbers and vote. Most youths are conversant with the online (new) media, thus reaching out to them on these platforms would be more engaging. Lastly, youth-centric policies which directly address the issues of young people such as joblessness could be put in place as a motivation for qualified youth to participate in the political process.

The future of Kenya and any nation lies in the hands of its youth. As 2027 General Election approach, it is time Kenya's youth broke the cycle of political disengagement and recognised the power they hold at the ballot box. Kenya's progress, prosperity and peace depend on the active participation of youth in shaping Kenya's tomorrow. The message is clear: vote or be voiceless. **The choice is yours.**



Senate

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

Commission proposes election law amendments to Senate's Justice, Legal Affairs Committee

The Commission engaged the Senate Parliamentary Committee on JLHARC and made submissions on its proposals for amendments on election related laws on 22 August 2024 in Nairobi.

The meeting deliberated on the Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2024, the County Governments Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024 and the Elections Offences (Amendment) Bill, 2024. Speaking during the engagement, Obadiah Keitany, the Deputy Commission Secretary (DCS) - Support Services noted that it was critical and timely for the Commission to conduct stakeholder engagement on electoral legal reforms as they were at the tail end of concluding all election related draft Bills and Regulations. This would afford the Commission's voice in the Bills before Parliament.

The Commission Secretary/CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS appreciated the Electoral Law and Governance Institute for Africa (ELGIA) for hosting the workshop and their continued support to the Commission's electoral legal reform agenda. He said the Commission faced challenges in its pursuit for electoral legal reform mainly due to lack of adequate funds. He requested Parliament to consider allocating sufficient resources through the IEBC Fund in order to strengthen its processes in the entire electoral cycle. The IEBC's engagement with JLHARC represents a pivotal moment in Kenya's electoral history. By advocating for amendments that strengthen the legal framework governing elections, the Commission is taking decisive steps to enhance transparency, accountability, and fairness in the democratic process.

As Kenya prepares for future elections, these reforms—if enacted—will not only bolster the integrity of the electoral system, but also reaffirm the nation's commitment to democratic governance. Honorable Hillary Sigei, the Chairperson of JLHARC, appreciated the Commission for its submissions and committed that the Committee will consider its proposals.

The meeting was moderated by the Director, Legal Services Chripine Owiye and Ag. Manager Legal Reforms, Political Parties Liaison and Campaign Financing Ruth Makuthu.



Collaboration

Faith Wanjiku, Website Administrator

IRI and CMD seek to strengthen inclusivity of marginalised groups in Kenya's electoral process

The International Republican Institute (IRI) and the Centre for Multiparty Democracy (CMD) on 16 September 2024 paid a courtesy call to the Commission to strengthen the inclusion of the marginalised groups in Kenya's political process. The meeting also marked an important step towards building a more inclusive and equitable political future for all and emphasized the need for continued collaboration, identifying and supporting Commission strategies to promote marginalised groups to make meaningful participation in Kenya's electoral processes.

Specifically, the meeting highlighted the importance of addressing challenges in political party nomination lists, which were left at the discretion of political parties, as well as the issue of underrepresentation of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in county governments. Other issues that were discussed included how to simplify the voting process, access to polling stations for PWDs, and provision and use of braille ballot papers.



Commission staff meet with officials from the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the Centre for Multiparty Democracy (CMD).

IRI and CMD outlined strategies to enhance political participation and representation of marginalised groups to ensure there was adequate representation in party nomination processes. The two organisations committed to work closely with political parties, Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP) and IEBC stakeholders to create frameworks that addressed the unique challenges faced by these groups.

IRI and CMD had conducted a series of strategic sessions on empowering members

of marginalised groups, particularly women, youth, and PWDs, within the country's major political parties. The political parties included: United Democratic Alliance (UDA), Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), Wiper, FORD Kenya and Amani National Congress (ANC).

During these multi-party strategy sessions, participants from the five political parties discussed the challenges faced by marginalised groups to have inclusion in party nomination lists. They called for the Commission to eliminate the barriers that hindered equal representation

to ensure the marginalised groups were represented and heard in decision-making fora.

The Commission expressed its support for the initiative, lauding IRI and CMD's efforts

to champion inclusivity and calling for the continued engagement of political parties to strengthen democratic processes in Kenya. The Commission was presented by Director Legal Services, Chrispine Owiye, and Manager Partnership, Joyce Ekuam.



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Communication department interns Agnes Muchiri and Ian Malenya at the Commission's exhibition stand at the Nairobi International Trade fair.

Mentorship

By Agnes Muchiri, Intern Communication and Public Affairs Department

Internship experience at IEBC

I always dreamt of pursuing a career in Communication in an area that would allow me excel as a communicator, thus the decision to enrol for a Bachelor's degree in Mass Communication at Kabarak University.

After three years of study, it was a mandatory requirement for every student to proceed on industrial attachment in a media station or corporate organization of their choice to have practical and hands on experience on the skills learnt.

This was one thing that gave me goose bumps whenever I thought about securing a spot for my industrial attachment. It always felt like looking for a job and thinking that I really have to know quite a lot of things in order to secure a place for attachment. I began to look for attachment in May 2024, and after a long running from one organisation to another, I

was lucky to secure a place at the IEBC, where I am now attached to the Communication Department.

It was a mixed feeling of happiness getting the attachment and anxiety not knowing what awaited. A lot had been said about harassment and being overworked as an attach  , all that I dreaded. However, I gathered courage and conquered my fears and took on the challenge at IEBC.

I had high expectations and hopes. I got my hands dirty just to get the feeling and experience of being a corporate communicator. Two months on, I have learnt quite a number of things.

For example, working with different software such as in-design, adobe illustrator, adobe photoshop and adobe audition. In addition,

I have improved my photography, videography and writing skills.

Standing out was that the Commission staff engaged interns with understanding and professionalism. I have further improved my communication skills.

The 2024 Nairobi International Trade Fair was another huge platform for me to learn hands on deck given that the Commission mandate through Voter Education is best articulated at such fora. Meeting the CEO, Mr. Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS was one of the 'feel best moments' of a lifetime crowned by his cake on my lips while appreciating the team's effort for successfully undertaking the 2024 trade fair, media orientation visits and the blood donation drive.

My attachment at the Commission has crystalised a belief in me that never judge a book by its cover. I have been modelled into a better Kenyan by mentors in the Commission. Professionalism, accountability and transparency are virtuous attributes that I will be carrying home as a budding journalist.

Thank you the IEBC.

Catch

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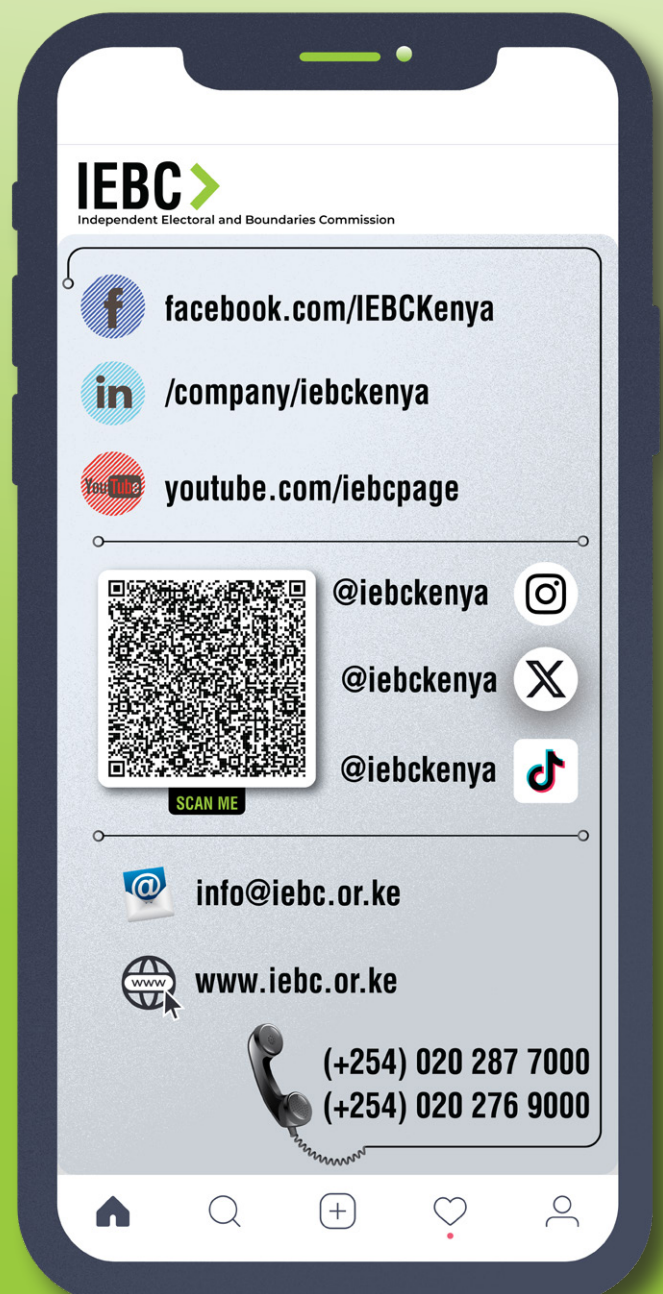
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Electoral Boundaries

By Ramathan Ali, GIS Analyst

Voice of the people: Analysis of petitions on electoral boundaries

The IEBC plays a vital role in ensuring fair and representative elections. A key aspect of this responsibility is the delimitation of electoral boundaries. To better understand public concerns and priorities regarding this process, the IEBC actively encourages citizens to submit petitions and memoranda. This article explores an analysis of these submissions, shedding light on the key issues raised by the public.

Administrative: Issues related to administrative units and their boundaries.

Inter-County: Concerns over boundaries between different counties.

Clarification: Requests for clarification on existing electoral boundaries.

Methodology

To effectively manage and analyse this feedback, the Commission has implemented a digital logging system. Between July 2019 and April 2021, the IEBC received approximately 110 petitions related to electoral units and boundaries. These petitions were meticulously logged and analysed, capturing data such as the origin of the letter (county, constituency, ward, or polling station), sender information and key dates. Content analysis was employed to identify recurring themes and understand the concerns driving these petitions.

Geographic distribution of petitions

Analysis revealed that Turkana County accounted for the largest share of petitions (44%), followed by Wajir (11%) and Bungoma (6%). To ensure a balanced perspective and avoid over-representing the concerns of a single county, Turkana's data was analysed separately.

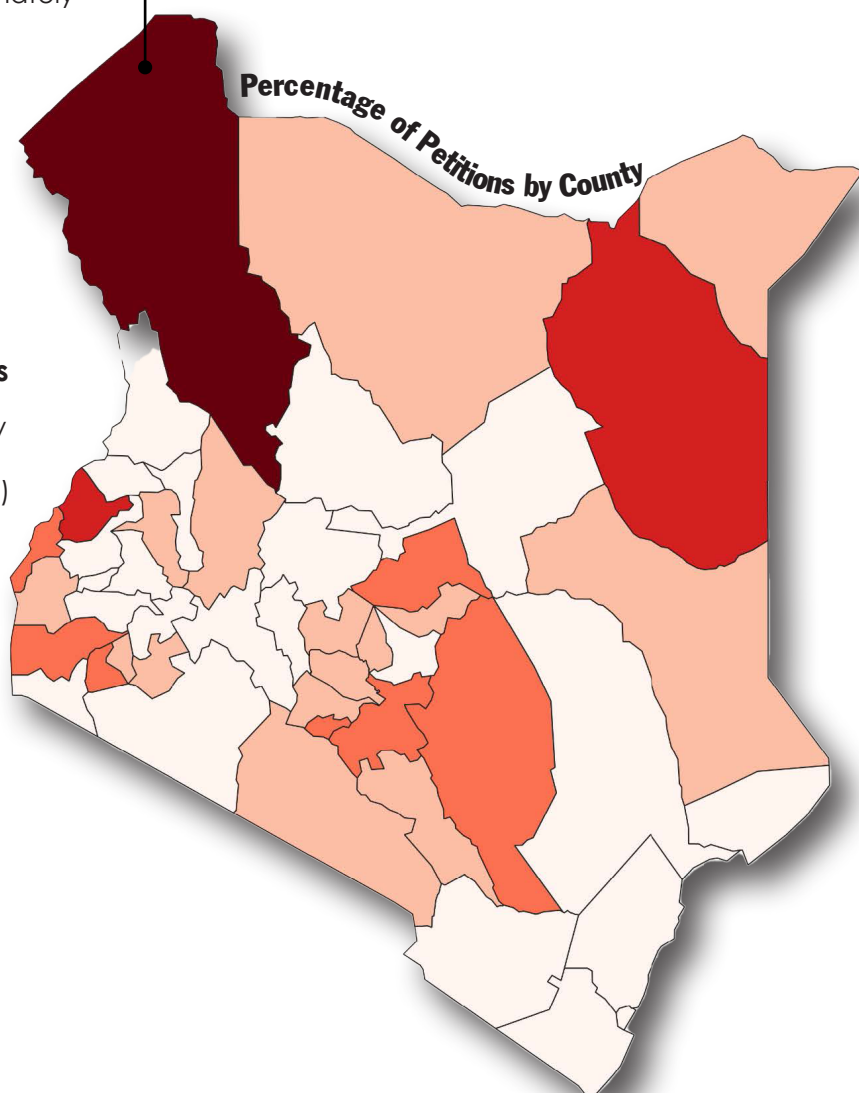
Key themes and issues

The petitions were categorised into five main themes:

Requests: These included demands for new constituencies, wards or polling stations.

Disputes: Petitions highlighting disagreements over existing electoral unit boundaries.

Figure 1. The map of Kenya showing percentage of petitions received by county



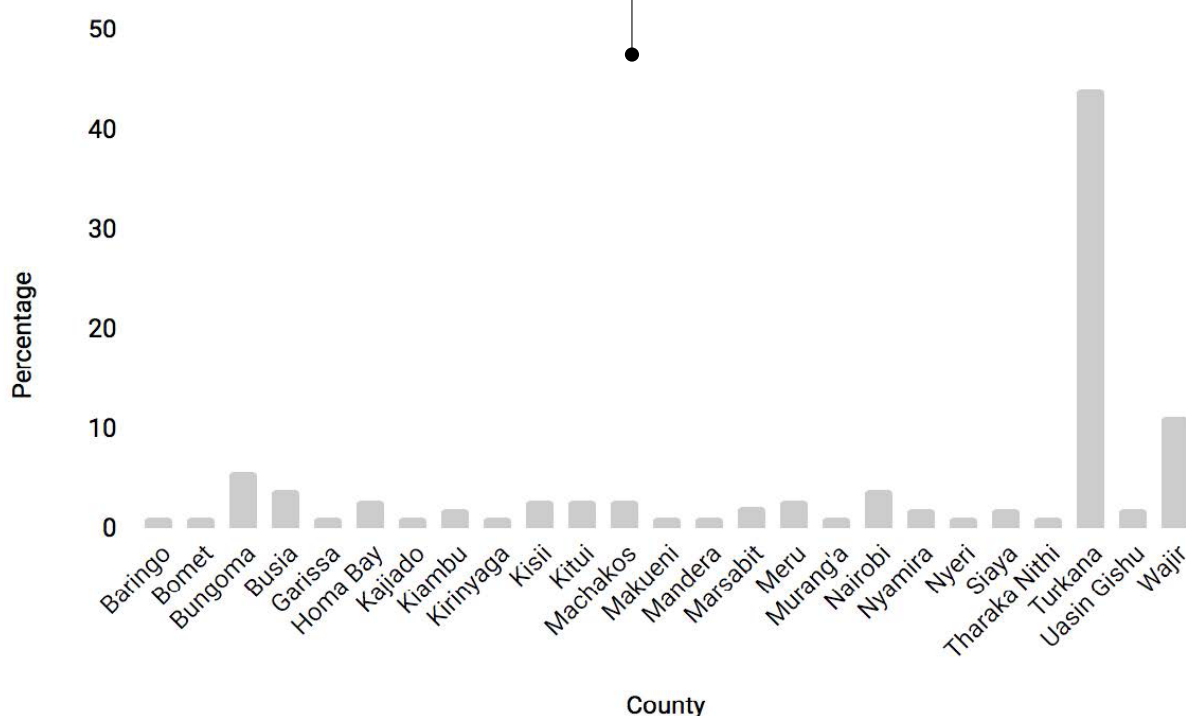
Dispute resolution and requests for new units

Disputes constituted the most frequent type of petition (26%), with a significant portion originating from Wajir County. Requests for new wards (24%), polling stations (18%), and constituencies (15%) were also prominent. Interestingly, the analysis revealed some public misunderstanding regarding the IEBC's mandate, as some petitions addressed administrative units and inter-county boundary issues, which fall outside the Commission's purview.



The analysis revealed that Turkana County accounted for the highest number of petitions at 44%, followed by Wajir (11%) and Bungoma (6%).

Figure 2. Bar graph showing percentage of petitions received by county



Overall overview of received petitions

Administrative Clarification Constituency Dispute
InterCounty PollingStn Ward

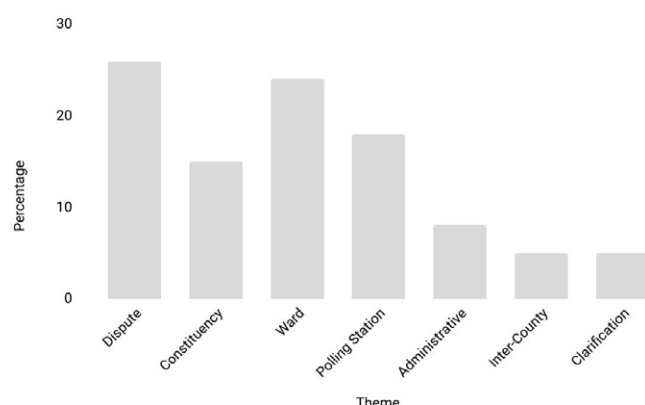
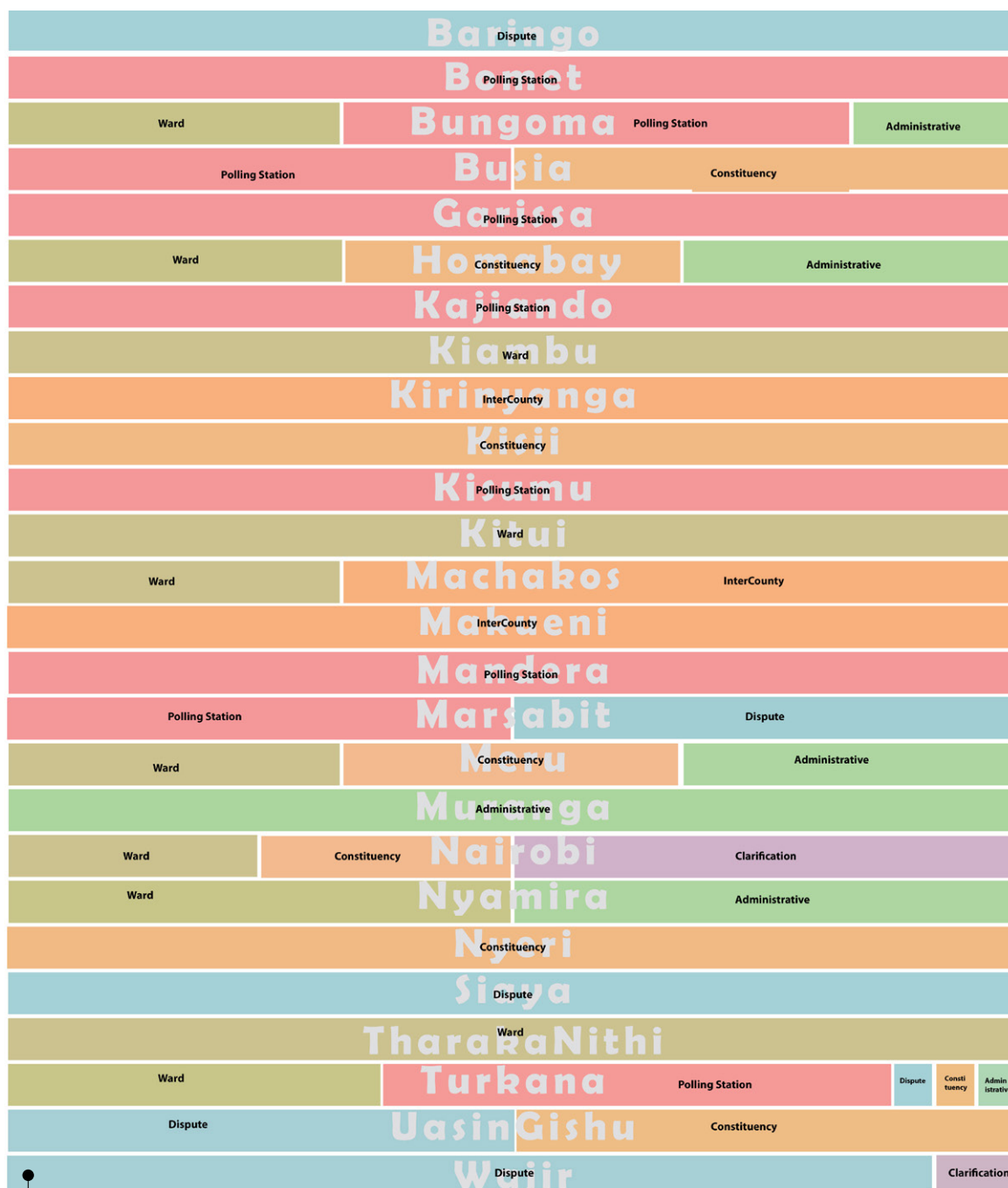


Figure 4. A word cloud (uses size and colour: the bigger and darker the colour the higher the word frequency) and bar graph showing percentage of petition type received by the Commission

Figure 3. Dispute (26%) topped the numbers of petitions received by the Commission.

Petitions by county

Exploring the type of petition by counties is shown in Figure 3. This graphic enables us to detect themes (types) of petitions (e.g dispute, ward, constituency, polling station) and estimate the total sum of petitions by county. For example, petitions from Wajir county are of two types many are disputes and a request to clarify boundary issues. Turkana county is the only county that has issues related to 5 themes (ward, polling stations, disputes, constituency and administrative) with most of its issues related to polling stations. Counties of Baringo, Bomet, Garissa, Kajiado, Kiambu, Kirinyaga, Kissi, Kitui, Machakos, Makueni, Mandera, Muranga, Nyeri, Siaya and Tharaka Nithi had only one type of theme each; while Busia, Machakos, Marsabit, Nyamira Uasin-Gishu and Wajir each had two types of themes. Counties of Bungoma, Homa Bay, Meru and Nairobi each had three types of petitions.



● Figure 5.

The graphic shows counties arranged alphabetically from top (Baringo) to Bottom (Wajir). Within a county, the themes (petition type) are arranged from left to right and symbolized using different colours e.g. Dispute: Blue, Constituency: Brown, Polling Station: Pink, Administrative: Green, Inter-County: Orange etc.

Reasons behind the petitions

The analysis further delved into the reasons cited by petitioners to justify their requests. The most common justifications included:

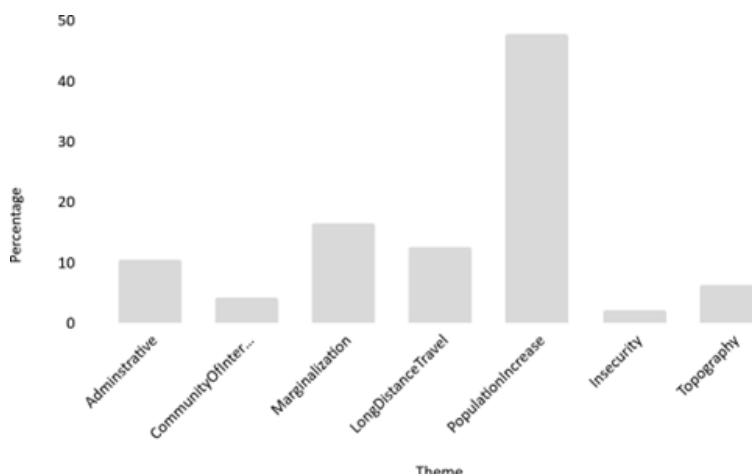
- **Population increase:** This was the most cited reason (48%), with communities requesting new electoral units or polling stations to accommodate population growth.
- **Marginalisation:** Petitioners (17%) often argued that new constituencies or wards were necessary to address perceived marginalisation within existing electoral units.
- **Distance and accessibility:** Concerns regarding long travel distances to polling stations (13%) and inaccessible terrain (affecting access to political services) were frequently raised.
- **Insecurity:** A small percentage (2%) of petitioners cited insecurity as a reason for requesting new electoral units or polling stations.

Overall overview of reasons cited as justification for petitions

- **Figure 6.** A word cloud (uses Size and Colour: the bigger and darker colour, higher the word frequency) and bar graph showing the percentage of reasons justifying petitions.



- **Figure 7.** Shows the petitioners justified additional constituency, ward or polling station because of an increase in population at 48%, followed by marginalisation at 17%. Requests for polling stations were also related to long distance travel at 13%. This is also related to inaccessible topography/terrain where communities have to walk for long distances to access political service. Two percent of case petitioners cited need for electoral service due to insecurity.



Conclusion

The analysis of petitions and memoranda provide valuable insights into public perceptions and concerns regarding electoral boundaries in Kenya. By understanding the geographic distribution of concerns, the types of issues raised, and the reasons behind these concerns, the IEBC can better prepare for future boundary delimitation exercises. This commitment to public engagement ensures a more inclusive and responsive electoral process, ultimately strengthening Kenya's democracy.



Mortgage and Car loan scheme committee members led by Deputy Commission Secretary - Support Services Obadiah Keitany during a recent seating.

Welfare

By Elizabeth Omolo, Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

The success story of IEBC staff mortgage and car loan scheme

The IEBC is committed to improving the welfare of its staff. One way it does this is through the Staff Mortgage and Car Loan Scheme. This scheme was established in March 2017 to provide staff with access to affordable housing and transportation aimed at boosting morale and productivity.

How the scheme works

The scheme is overseen by the Mortgage and Car Loan Advisory Committee. This committee reviews staff applications and forwards successful ones to financial service providers for funding. Currently, the scheme partners with Housing Finance Corporation of Kenya and Kenya Commercial Bank to offer a range of products that meet the diverse needs of IEBC staff.

Key features

Affordable interest rates: The scheme offers loans at a competitive 3% interest rate for both mortgages and car loans. **Flexible repayment terms:** Mortgage loans are repayable over 20 years, while car loans have a 5-year repayment period.

Variety of loan purposes: Mortgages can be used to purchase, build, or improve residential property. Car loans can be used to purchase new or used vehicles or refinance existing car loans.

Risk management: To protect both the staff and the scheme, borrowers are required to have valid group life insurance and property insurance.

Impact and achievements

Since its inception, the scheme has facilitated 145 members of staff, with 99 benefiting from mortgages and 46 from car loans. This has had a significant positive impact on staff welfare, creating an enabling environment for optimal productivity.

Financial highlights

The scheme is wholly owned by the IEBC and has received Kshs. 818,057,741 from the National Treasury since its inception. As of June 30, 2024, the scheme's value stood at an impressive Kshs. 943.506 million.

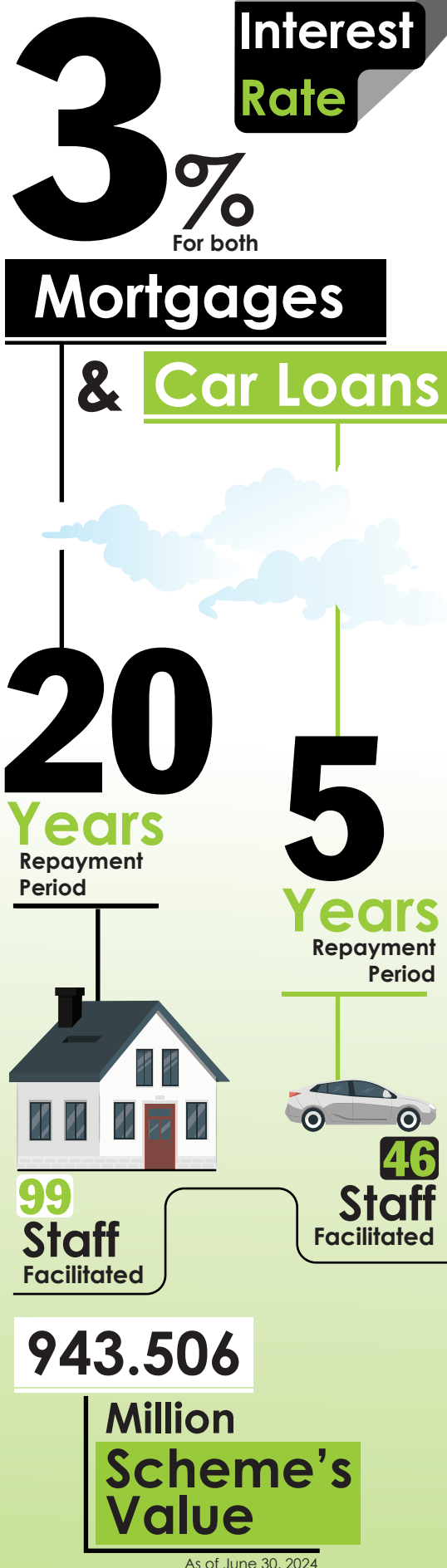
Looking ahead

The IEBC encourages all eligible staff to utilise this valuable facility to improve their welfare and achieve their dreams of homeownership and personal mobility. The scheme remains committed to providing affordable and accessible financing options for all staff.

Noteworthy event:

The Mortgage and Car Loan Advisory Committee recently convened a meeting on 3 September 2024, to approve pending staff applications. The committee also met with representatives from KCB to discuss the performance of the scheme. The meeting was chaired by CPA Obadiah K. Keitany, MBS, Deputy Commission Secretary – Support Services and Chairperson of the IEBC Mortgage and Car Loan Scheme.

The members are Michael Ouma, Pauline Njambi, Zipporah Ndirangu, Nancy Koros, Peter Mulele, Abdallah Hassan, Clifford Rono, Elizabeth Omolo, Mary Waruiru, Beatrice Muli and Albert Gogo. Secretariate has Mulele and Njambi while liaison office is made up of Omolo, Waruiru and Rono.

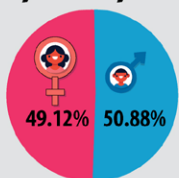


2022 General Election in Perspective

Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC)

Registered voters:

22,120,458



Male:	11,254,039
Female:	10,866,419
Youth:	9,027,518 40.81 %
PWDs:	151,613 0.69%

▲ **19,611,423 in 2017 GE**

64.77%
Voter Turn Out

▼ **78% in 2017 GE**

Registered Candidates
16,105

Men: 14,148 | Youth: 4,350
Women: 1,957 | PWD: 270

Men: 87.85%

Women: 12.15%

Polling Stations
46,229

▲ **40,883 in 2017 GE**

700 voters per polling station

Election Officials

510,770

▲ **445,471 in 2017 GE**

Accreditation

120,731

Observer/ Monitors
108% 58,000 in 2017 GE

5,978
Journalists

▲ **49%**

Diaspora **12**
10,443 Countries

Registered Voters

▲ **4,224 in 2017 GE**

▲ **5 in 2017 GE**

27,397

Registration Centers

▲ **24,613 in 2017GE**

IEBC appears before Parliamentary Accounts Committee to respond to audit queries on outstanding debts

The IEBC has been active on several fronts recently, demonstrating its commitment to both accountability and professional development of its staff.

On 26 August 2024, led by IEBC Commission Secretary/ CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS appeared before the Parliamentary Accounts Committee (PAC) to address audit queries raised by the Office of the Auditor General. These queries stemmed from the Auditor General's examination of the National Government's accounts for the fiscal year ending 30 June 2022.

The PAC, chaired by Butere Constituency legislator Tindi Mwale, focused on several key issues, including the IEBC's efforts to recover outstanding debts from court awards. Mr. Marjan assured the committee that the Commission would engage registered auctioneers to expedite the debt recovery process.

Another point of contention involved the number of Kenya Integrated Elections Management System (KIEMS) kits reported as "lost" in the audit. The CEO clarified that the Auditor General's report referenced an internal IEBC document assessing the usability and obsolescence of the kits. To ensure accuracy and transparency, the committee granted the IEBC a one-month timeframe to reconcile their KIEMS kit inventory with the Office of the Auditor General.



The Committee granted the IEBC a one-month timeframe to reconcile their KIEMS kit inventory with the Office of the Auditor General.



Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS and Commission Management when they appeared before the Parliamentary Accounts Committee (PAC) to address audit queries.

Celebrating Staff Graduates

In other news, the IEBC celebrates the academic achievements of three of its dedicated staff members:



Agatha Wahome, Manager, Risk & Compliance,

graduated from Strathmore University Business School with a Master of Management in Agribusiness on 28 June 2024.

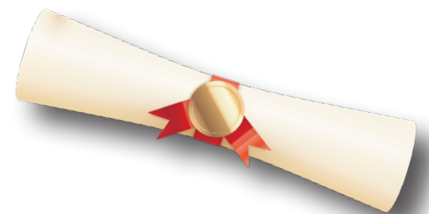


Hellen Sidi, Manager of Human Resource Development,

earned her Certified Human Resource Professional (CHRP) designation from the College of Human Resource Management (CHRM) on 6 September 2024.

Mercy Chege, Senior Office Administrator,

also graduated from CHRM on 6 September 2024, with a Higher Diploma in Human Resource Management (KNEC).



The IEBC recognises the importance of employees' professional growth. These accomplishments exemplify the dedication and commitment of staff to enhance their skills and knowledge for the benefit of the Commission and the electoral process.

The Commission remains committed to transparency and accountability in its operations while fostering a culture of continuous learning and development among its staff.

Collaboration

By Eddah Karingi, Customer Care Assistant

USAID team pays courtesy call to IEBC, discusses areas of interest to strengthen electoral process

The Commission hosted officials from USAID Kenya and East Africa's Democratic Governance Peace and Security Office to discuss enhancing electoral processes in preparation for the 2027 General Election. The meeting aimed reflecting on lessons learnt from the 2022 General Election and identifying areas of priority in the current electoral cycle.

The team, which was hosted by Commission Secretary/CEO Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS provided a platform for USAID officials to gain insights from the IEBC and other key electoral stakeholders. Marjan welcomed the delegation and acknowledged USAID's critical support during the 2022 General Election, delivered through partnerships with organisations such as IFES, UNDP, ELGIA and URAIA Trust.

Highlighting the Commission's achievements, Marjan noted improvements in training programmes, risk management and public outreach initiatives, attributing these successes to collaborative efforts. However, he also pointed out areas requiring additional support as the Commission prepares for the 2027 elections.

Senior IEBC representatives, including Deputy Commission Secretary for Operations, Ruth

Kulundu and Heads of Directorates shared their experiences from the 2022 elections. They outlined both achievements and challenges, providing valuable input for shaping future electoral strategies.

Leading the USAID delegation was Project Management Specialist for Democracy and Elections, Elizabeth Kilema, who commended the IEBC for its pivotal role in governance and democracy. She reaffirmed USAID's commitment to continued support, emphasising the importance of more direct and structured collaborations.

"We aim to better understand the Commission's needs to provide tailored support and strengthen the partnership further," Kilema noted.

The meeting underscored USAID's interest in engaging more deeply with the IEBC to ensure impactful programme for the upcoming elections. Both parties expressed optimism about fostering closer collaboration to enhance Kenya's democratic processes.

The discussions marked a significant step towards preparing a more robust electoral system, with shared goals of transparency, inclusivity and efficiency in the 2027 General Election.



Commission Secretary/CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS hosts officials from USAID Kenya and East Africa's Democratic Governance Peace and Security Office

External polls

By Bernard Kimani, Senior Elections Officer, Roysambu

IEBC oversees conduct of student council elections at Mountain View School in Roysambu

The IEBC recently facilitated the Student Council elections at Mountain View School in Roysambu, Nairobi County, on 19 July 2024. This initiative aimed to instill democratic values among students and encourage future civic participation.

Mountain View School, situated near landmarks such as Safari Park Hotel and United States International University (USIU), serves approximately 1,535 students across Lower Primary, Upper Primary, and Junior Secondary School divisions. The institution's commitment to fostering democratic principles led to collaboration with the IEBC for conducting the student elections.

Prior to the election, the school's election committee and the Roysambu Constituency IEBC office held several planning meetings. These discussions covered candidate nominations, voter education, logistics for election materials and the voting process. It was agreed that the school committee would handle candidate nominations and campaigns, while the IEBC would provide voter education, election materials and oversee the electoral process.

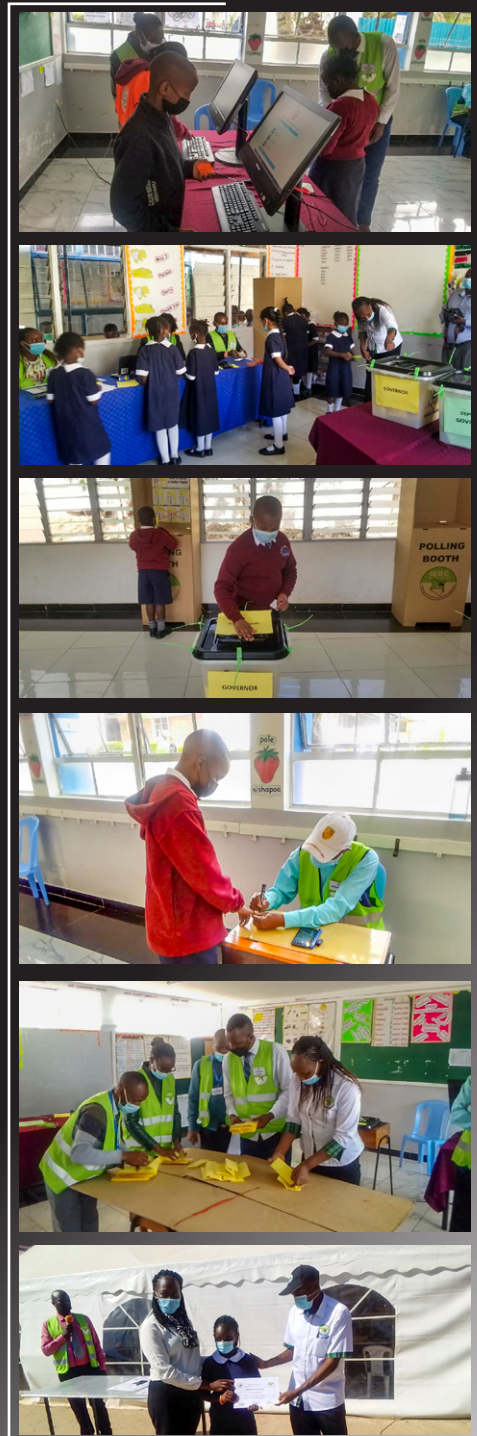
The elections featured seven key categories, including Presidents and their deputies, Dining Hall Captains, Environmental Captains, Sports Captains, Young Catholics, Christian Union representatives, and Class Secretaries.

While elections for Governors and Class Secretaries were conducted manually, the remaining positions utilised electronic voting through tablets supplied by the school.

The IEBC appointed Bernard Kimani, the Senior Election Officer from Roysambu Constituency as the Returning Officer, assisted by Racheal Mariga, the Assistant Election Officer. Each polling station was staffed with a Presiding Officer, a deputy, three student clerks, one agent per candidate, and media and observers from the parents' body.

The election, held between 9:00am and 2:00pm, achieved an impressive 99.9% voter turnout, reflecting the students' strong engagement and interest in their school's leadership and activities.

This initiative underscores the IEBC's commitment to promote democratic values and civic responsibility among young Kenyans, preparing them for active participation in future electoral processes.





You're somebody's type donate today!

Together, let's save lives



DONATE BLOOD

By Chris Musumba Ag. Senior Public Relations and Events Officer

IEBC partners with Kenya Tissue and Transplant Authority in blood donation drive



Kenya Tissue And
Transplant Authority





Commission staff joined members of the public to donate blood in an initiative conducted at the IEBC Headquarters in Nairobi with support from the Kenya Tissue and Transplant Authority (KTTA).

The IEBC joined forces with the Kenya Tissue and Transplant Authority (KTTA) in a blood donation drive held on 11th, September, 2024 at Anniversary Towers, Nairobi. The initiative, aimed at saving lives, was part of the Commission's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme.

Led by Commission Secretary/CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS and KTTA Acting Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Maurice Wakwabubi, the drive

This is part of our CSR, and IEBC recognises the vital role that blood donations play in saving lives. Together, we will make a difference.

attracted enthusiastic participation from IEBC staff and volunteers. A total of 47 pints of blood were collected during the event, contributing to the nationwide effort to improve healthcare outcomes and save lives. This was an increase compared to the 2023 event that received 42 pints.

"This is part of our CSR, and the IEBC recognises the vital role that blood donations play in saving lives. One pint of blood can save up to three lives. Be a hero today and join us in this noble cause. Together,





we will make a difference," said Marjan.

Dr. Wakwabubi echoed these sentiments, emphasising the profound impact of blood donations on society.

"Blood donations unite caring individuals in the belief that every drop has the power to save a life. This activity allows us to engage our stakeholders and demonstrate our commitment to community welfare," he stated.

The event was conducted two months after the World Blood Donor Day, observed annually on 14 June, underscoring its importance.

Beyond saving lives in emergencies and medical treatments, blood donation also offers benefits to donors such as free health screenings, reduced iron levels, and a sense of fulfillment from contributing to society.

The IEBC noted the importance of participating

in such community-driven initiatives to foster unity and solidarity. By stepping beyond its electoral mandate, the Commission aims to strengthen its connection with the public and promote a culture of giving.

"This is about shedding our electoral official tag and joining hands with fellow Kenyans. A healthy population is more likely to engage positively in the democratic process, and we are proud to support this cause," Marjan added.

The drive highlighted the Commission's commitment to building community bonds and supporting health initiatives, reinforcing the message that compassion and civic duty go hand in hand.



Blood donations unite caring individuals in the belief that every drop has the power to save a life. This activity allows us to engage our stakeholders and demonstrate our commitment to community welfare.

hike

Towards

Happiness



HIKE

By George Chege, Senior Elections Officer, Baringo South

Scaling Ole Satima peak: IEBC staff shade off fear factor, commit to “hike towards their happiness”

In a spirited display of determination and camaraderie, the Commission's fitness team embarked on their second adventure to scale the summit of Ole Satima, the highest peak in the Aberdare Ranges. This remarkable feat, undertaken on 17 August 2017, reinforced the timeless adage: “Energy and persistence conquer all things.”

Standing at an impressive 4,001 metres above sea level, Ole Satima is Kenya's second-highest peak after Mount Kenya. Situated near Shamata in Nyandarua County, the 17.2-kilometer out-and-back trail offers a unique challenge for hiking enthusiasts. Renowned for its exceptional landscapes, the trail is a haven for adventurers, particularly those captivated by the iconic Dragon's Teeth rock formations that dot the route.

The hike itself was not for the faint-hearted. Participants braved muddy terrain, relentless rain and biting cold, transforming the journey into a true test of resilience and teamwork. Yet, these challenging conditions only heightened the sense of accomplishment and adventure, underscoring the therapeutic and invigorating nature of outdoor activities.

Hiking is widely celebrated as one of the most effective forms of exercise, engaging the entire body in a workout that benefits physical, mental and emotional well-being. From the rhythmic pace that calms the mind to the physical endurance required to conquer steep inclines, hiking offers a holistic path to fitness. For the IEBC team, the hike was more than an exercise—it was a journey towards happiness, as aptly captured by their initiative's slogan: “Hike Towards Happiness.”

The trek to Ole Satima's summit was as much about personal fulfillment as it was about collective achievement. The breathtaking views, coupled with the sense of unity among team members, served as a reminder of the boundless potential of teamwork and perseverance.

Through endeavours like these, the IEBC not only

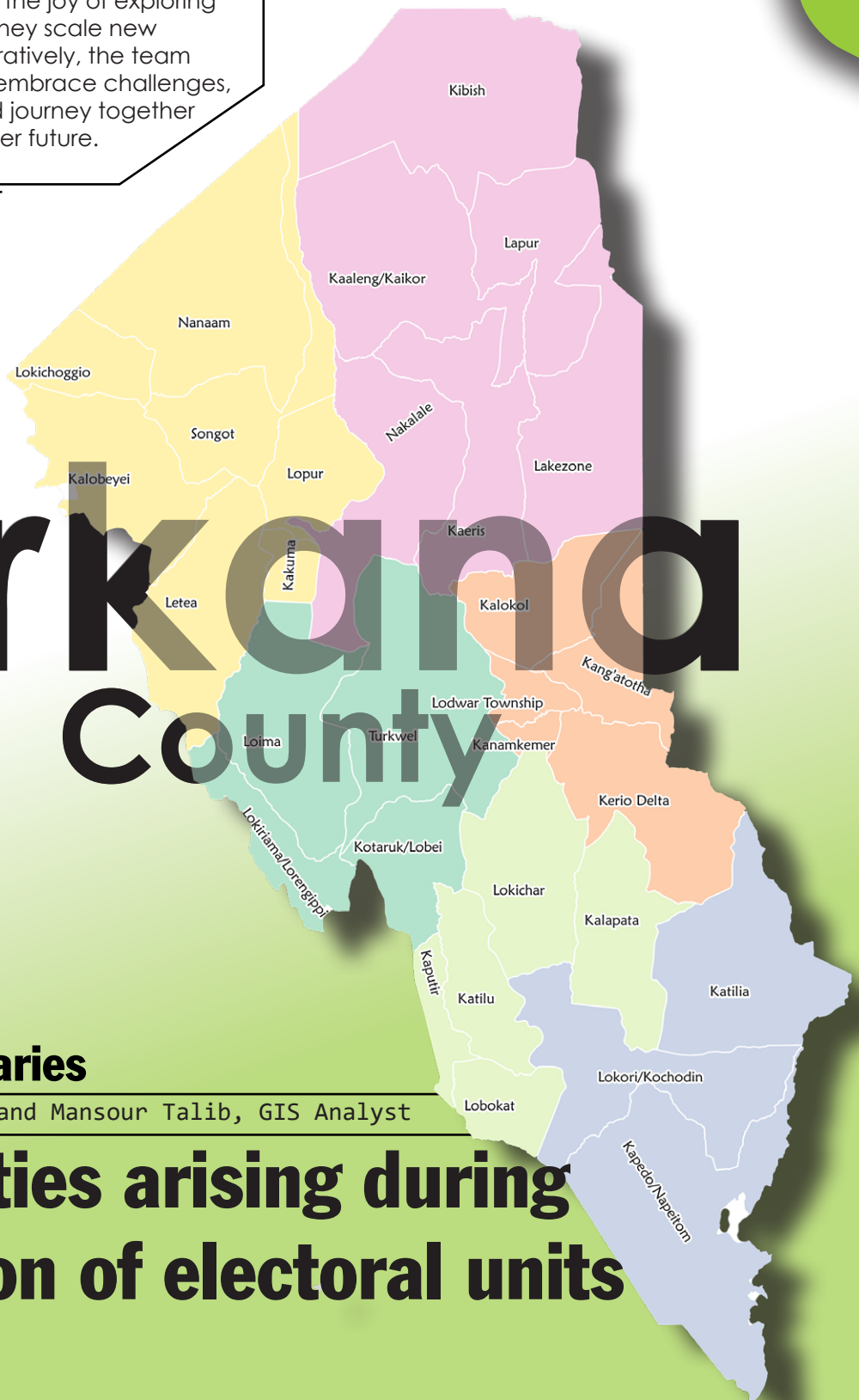
Energy and persistence conquer all things



promotes fitness but also fosters a culture of resilience and mutual support among its members. As the team reached the summit, they not only conquered the peak but also exemplified the rewards of determination, preparation and shared goals.

The IEBC's hike to Ole Satima is a testament to the power of persistence and the joy of exploring Kenya's natural wonders. As they scale new heights, both literally and figuratively, the team continues to inspire others to embrace challenges, celebrate achievements, and journey together toward a happier and healthier future.

Turkana County



Electoral Boundaries

By Paul Yego, Surveyor and Mansour Talib, GIS Analyst

Key activities arising during delimitation of electoral units

Background

The delimitation of electoral units is a fundamental process in Kenya's democracy and is crucial for ensuring equitable representation across the country. In conducting the review of electoral units, the Commission ensures that the process reflects changes in population and demographics in the respective Constituencies and county assembly wards. For the general public, understanding how this process works is key to appreciating its impact on political representation and resource allocation.

The role of the IEBC in delimitation of electoral units

Article 89(3) and (8) of the Constitution of Kenya mandates the IEBC to review the names and boundaries of constituencies, and the number, names and boundaries of county assembly wards. It is noteworthy that the Commission has no mandate to review the number of Constituencies as the same is already capped by the Constitution at two hundred and ninety (290).

The Constitution also requires the IEBC to conduct public participation through public hearings and stakeholder engagements. Further, the IEBC is tasked with ensuring that the delimitation of electoral units is conducted in a manner that is in accordance with the Constitution, the IEBC Act and any other related law of the land.

The IEBC uses a phased approach on the delimitation exercise which is as follows;

Phase I: Pre-Delimitation

Preparatory activities such as planning, development of documents, legal framework, capacity building, collection of geo-data and validation.

Phase II: Delimitation

Gazettement of intent to conduct delimitation, conduct of stakeholder engagements and education, collection and analysis of memoranda, public hearings, gazettement of descriptions of new electoral units and generation of new electoral maps.

Phase III: Post-Delimitation

Post-delimitation report, petitions and implementation of High Court decisions.

Each step is designed to ensure that the process is not only legally sound, but also reflective of the needs and concerns of the Kenyan people.

Once the Commission has finalised the preparatory activities during the pre-delimitation phase, it embarks on the delimitation phase which is conducted as follows:

a) Public hearings and stakeholder engagement

Public participation is critical in the delimitation process.

Phases of Boundaries Delimitation

1

Phase I: Pre-Delimitation

Preparatory activities such as planning, development of documents, legal framework, capacity building, collection of geo-data and validation.

2

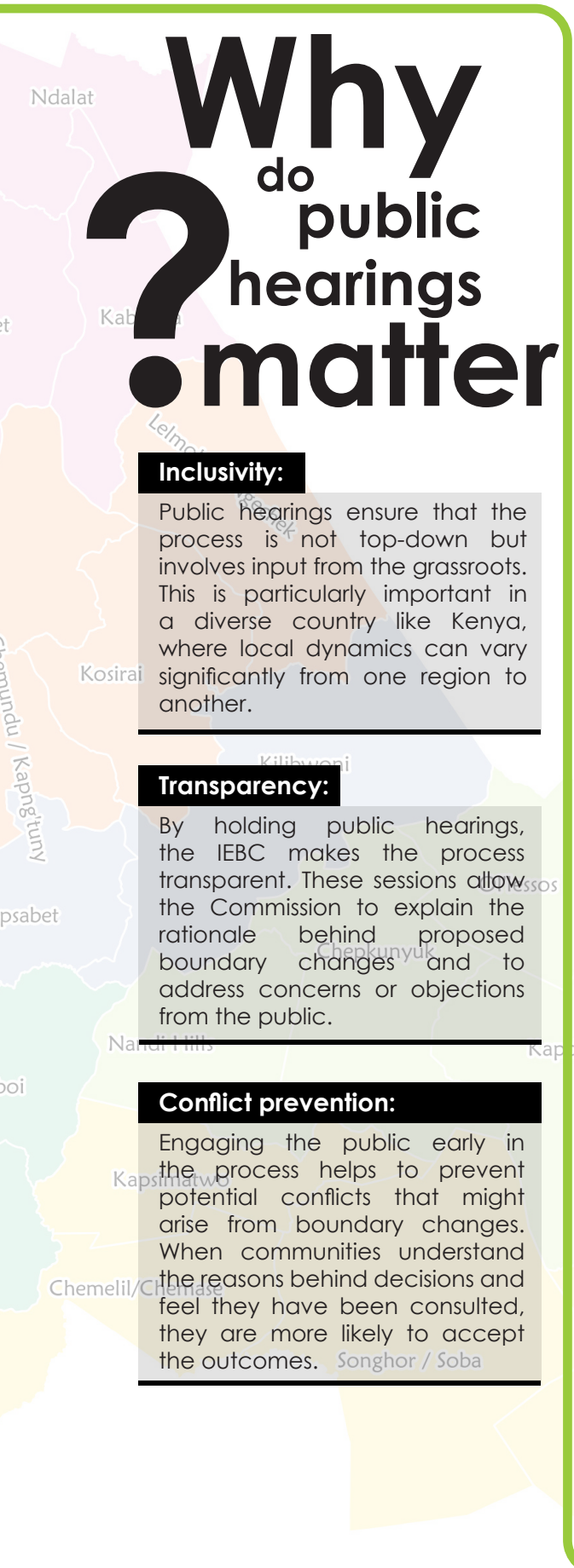
Phase II: Delimitation

Gazettement of intent to conduct delimitation, conduct of stakeholder engagements and education, collection and analysis of memoranda, public hearings, gazettement of descriptions of new electoral units and generation of new electoral maps.

3

Phase III: Post-Delimitation

Post-delimitation report, petitions and implementation of High Court decisions.



Why do public hearings matter?

Inclusivity:

Public hearings ensure that the process is not top-down but involves input from the grassroots. This is particularly important in a diverse country like Kenya, where local dynamics can vary significantly from one region to another.

Transparency:

By holding public hearings, the IEBC makes the process transparent. These sessions allow the Commission to explain the rationale behind proposed boundary changes and to address concerns or objections from the public.

Conflict prevention:

Engaging the public early in the process helps to prevent potential conflicts that might arise from boundary changes. When communities understand the reasons behind decisions and feel they have been consulted, they are more likely to accept the outcomes.

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The IEBC conducts public hearings across the country to collect views from citizens and various stakeholders, including political parties, civil society organisations, community leaders, state and non-state actors. These hearings are crucial for ensuring that the process is inclusive and that the voices of all affected parties are heard.

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In conducting public hearings, the IEBC ensures the following:

The Commission undertakes a campaign to raise awareness about the delimitation process at national and local levels.

The public is invited to submit memoranda outlining their views on the delimitation.

The Commission holds public hearings at county and constituency levels to gather oral and written submissions of memoranda.

The Commission analyses all submissions and reviews electoral boundaries based on set criteria in the Constitution and the enabling statutes.

After considering the inputs from public hearings and stakeholder engagements, the IEBC prepares and publishes a preliminary report outlining the proposed boundary changes for presentation to the public and all stakeholders. This report includes detailed descriptions of the new boundaries, the criteria used to draw them and maps.

c) Review and presentation of revised preliminary report

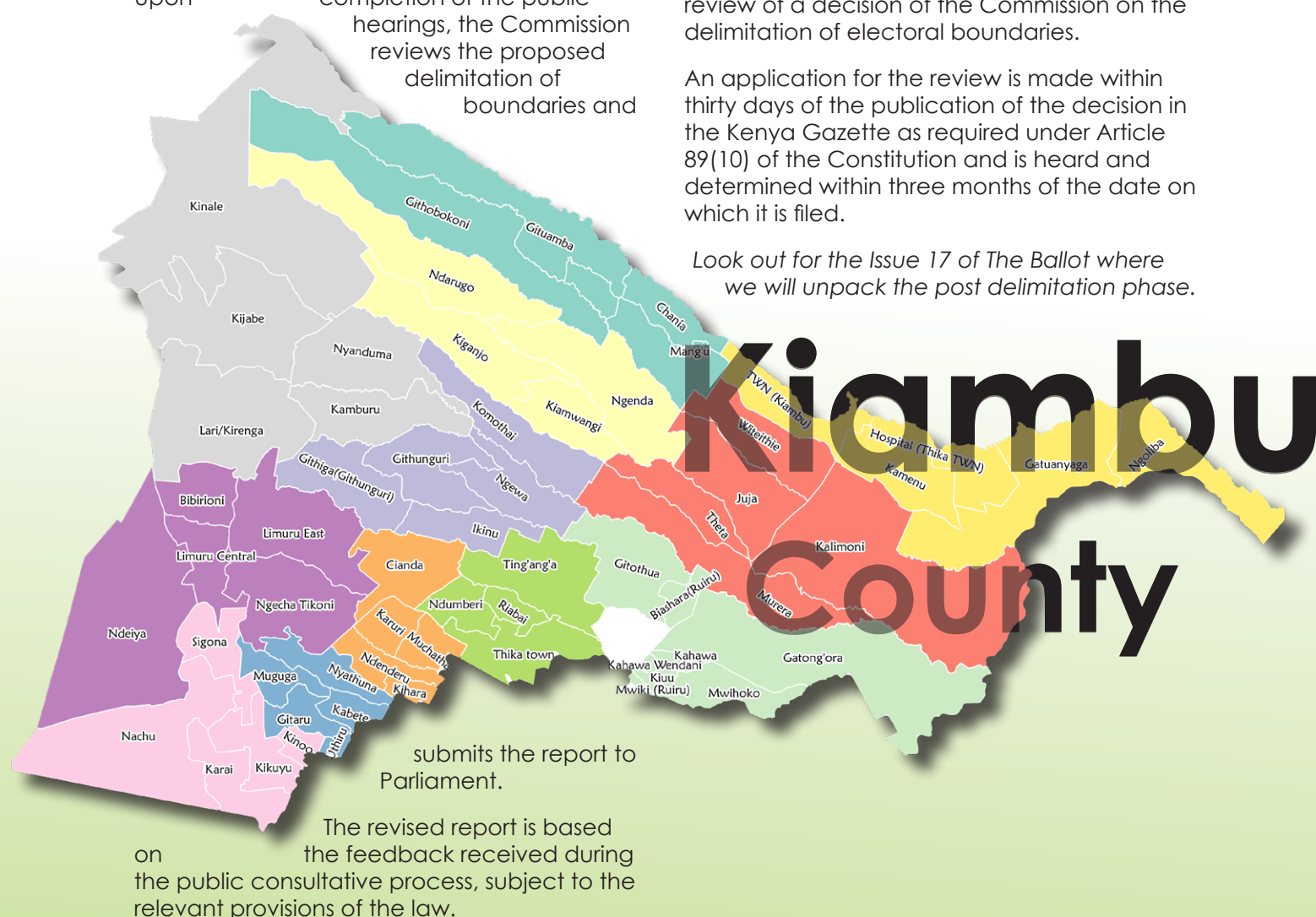
Upon completion of the public hearings, the Commission reviews the proposed delimitation of boundaries and

The publication of the final maps and descriptions allows the public to see exactly how their constituencies or county assembly wards have been reviewed. These maps are essential for the public, candidates, voters, state and non-state actors, media, civil society and electoral officials as they prepare for upcoming elections.

Following publication, aggrieved parties are allowed pursuant to Article 89(10) of the Constitution, apply to the High Court for review of a decision of the Commission on the delimitation of electoral boundaries.

An application for the review is made within thirty days of the publication of the decision in the Kenya Gazette as required under Article 89(10) of the Constitution and is heard and determined within three months of the date on which it is filed.

Look out for the Issue 17 of The Ballot where we will unpack the post delimitation phase.



After receiving feedback from Parliament, the final boundaries report which includes reviewed boundaries descriptions of Constituencies and county assembly wards and maps, the IEBC publishes the same in

Risk

By Linus Onyango, Senior Electoral Risk Management Officer

IEBC engages Africa EMBs in electoral risk management workshop held in Addis Ababa

The Commission took part in the regional Electoral Risk Management workshop for Electoral Management Bodies in Africa, that was hosted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 26 and 27 August 2024.

The Commission was represented by Mr. Linus Onyango, IEBC Senior Electoral Risk Management Officer. The two-day workshop aimed to promote awareness on Election Risk Management (ERM) framework for promoting electoral integrity. The workshop organised by International IDEA, was funded by the European Union through the Strengthening Pan-African Capacities for Electoral



The workshop provided a platform for comparative learning on electoral risk management to guide EMBs in conduct of their elections.

Observation and Assistance (SPEC) Project.

The ERM framework is a set of components that provide the foundations and arrangements for designing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing and continually improving risk management throughout the organisation.

The workshop provided a platform where the delegates sought to create awareness on risk management in electoral processes, and afford guidance to EMBs on methodologies for establishing context appropriate methodologies for risk identification and management. In addition, the meeting provided a platform for peer learning on



Linus Onyango makes presentation in a workshop on Election Risk Management (ERM) framework for promoting electoral integrity.

electoral risk management among EMBs in Africa.

Participants at the workshop generated a roadmap aimed at establishing a RMF within participating EMBs and a community of practice around ERM electoral processes in Africa.

It was noted that the focus within Africa had shifted from the predictability of holding elections to probing the democratic quality of electoral processes.

"Over the past decade, there have been increased calls to reinforce the integrity of electoral processes on the continent. The year 2024 is described as the biggest elections cycle year, with a significant segment of the global population going to the polls. In Africa, there are 20 scheduled elections. The next two years (2025 and 2026) will be busy for the continent, with critical elections scheduled to be held in Cameroon, Ethiopia and Malawi," said Onyango.

International IDEA pointed out that it has developed an Electoral Risk Management Framework geared towards supporting EMBs who seek to adopt or improve their risk management processes to enable them work effectively within their structures, with other public institutions and electoral stakeholders.

Onyango said the Commission had incorporated the ERM framework, which encourages proactive management, increases likelihood of achieving objectives and improves awareness of need to identify and treat risk throughout the organisation. Furthermore, it has improved the identification of opportunities and threats, improved mandatory and voluntary reporting and helped comply with legal and regulatory requirement and international norms.

Benchmarking

By Linda Mworira, Ag. Public Relations and Customer Care Officer

IEBC media orientation team visits, engages media firms to learn latest tech operation trends

The Commission's Media Orientation and Tour Team visited and engaged eight media organisations with the objective to understand the technological change in their operations and specifically receive feedback on the conduct of the 2022 General Election.

The team, which was appointed by Commission Secretary/CEO, Mr. Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS draws its membership from all the nine directorates plus the County Elections Manager, Nairobi City County, who represents the regional offices.

With these visits, the Commission targets to build trust, enhance media relations, strengthen strategic communications, understand the changing media landscape and receive

feedback to inform its policy on how to engage media progressively.

The eight media outlets visited included Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), Royal Media Services (RMS), Cape Media Ltd (formerly TV47), Nation Media Group (NMG), Radio Africa Group, Mediamax Network Ltd, Signs Media Kenya Ltd and The Standard Group.

The team also held a meeting with representatives from the Foreign Press Association- Africa (FPAA), which was attended by the IEBC CEO.

"The Team will undertake courtesy calls as well as orientation visits to various media outlets to enhance media relations and strategic communications, understand the changing

media landscape and specifically get feedback with regards to the August 2022, General Election,” Marjan said in the appointment of the Team.

The appointment was informed by the recommendations from the Post-Election Evaluation report of the 2022 General Election (GE), which sought for continuous media engagement, and the need for the Commission to embrace trends in the industry.

In the run up to the 2022 GE, the Commission partnered with the Kenya Media Sector Working Group (KMSWG). This collaboration was formalized with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in March 2022, establishing a strategic framework to form a collaborative, structured approach to media engagements.

Through the KMSWG, approximately 400 journalists were trained on electoral procedures, which played a crucial role in preparing the media for factual election coverage. In addition, a media center was established at the National Tallying Centre by the Commission to enable on-location reporting and provide journalists and media outlets with a live media link on election day; and the Commission engaged the media through press briefings, media interviews among others



The Commission targets to build trust, enhance relations, understand the changing media landscape and receive feedback to inform policy on future media engagements.



IEBC Media Orientation and Tour Team during a visit to Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC).



IEBC Media Orientation and Tour Team during a visit to Royal Media Services (RMS), who are the proprietors of Citizen TV and radio.



IEBC Media Orientation and Tour Team during a visit to Nation Media Group (NMG).



IEBC Media Orientation and Tour Team during a visit to Sign TV.

Poll official empties a ballot box to start the counting process of votes during a past election. Over the past decade, the Commission has always delivered on its mandate to give Kenyans free, fair, verifiable and credible election.

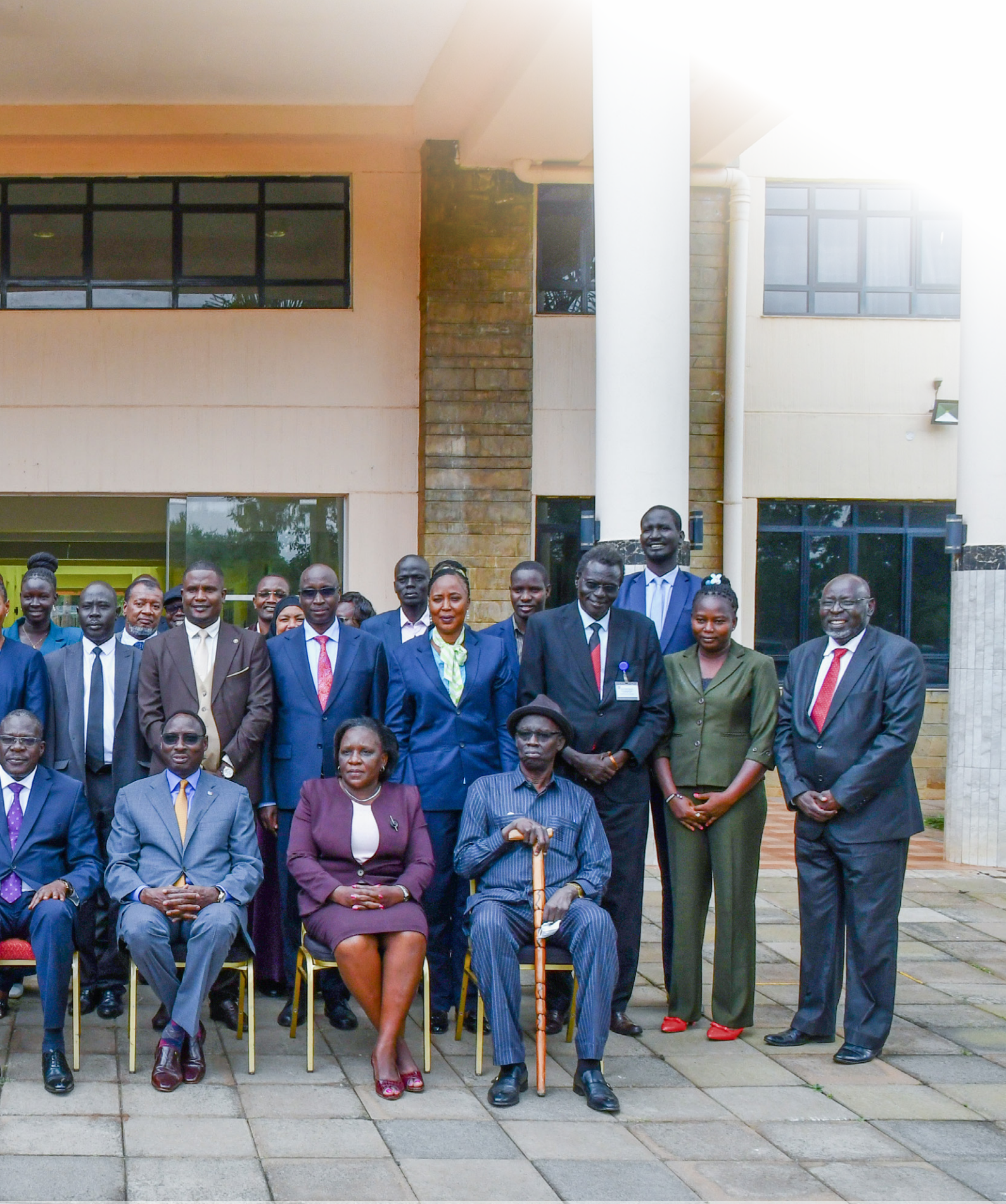




Collaboration

By Chris Musumba Ag. Senior Public Relation and Events Officer

South Sudan National Election Commission process in preparation for the country's



**on tours IEBC to benchmark on electoral
first ever democratic polls**

The Commission hosted members of the South Sudan National Election Commission (NEC) who were in the country for a one-week benchmarking tour and peer exchange programme as part of their preparations for their first ever elections.

South Sudan, which visited the Commission from 19 to 24 August 2024, attained its independence from Sudan in 2011 and had planned to host their first ever democratic elections on 22 December 2024, following a peace agreement signed in 2018 to end civil war. However, this has since been pushed forward to 2026.

The forum was opened by Mr. Arthur Osiya, EBS, the Principal Administrative Secretary in the Executive Office of the President on behalf of Mr. Felix Koskei, the Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service. Mr. Osiya underlined that an election is a matter of life and death, and

therefore, Election Management Bodies (EMBs) should know that in delivering their mandate, they carry people's ambitions, careers and lives. It is important for NEC to undertake its mandate and make South Sudan better after elections.

"Election officials from South Sudan should stick together by unity of purpose and have commitment to their country and not candidates. The weight you carry on your shoulders is enormous. Be firm and fair to ensure continuity of South Sudan," said Osiya.

The Commission Secretary/CEO, Mr. Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS indicated that the country continues to receive delegations from across the world, which is an endorsement of Kenya's free, fair and transparent electoral processes.

IEBC has since received delegations on benchmarking tours from South Africa, Tanzania, Malawi, Botswana, Somalia, Lesotho,



This is meant to promote learning between Kenya and South Sudan EMBs. By the end of the exercise South Sudan will carry plates full of lessons for adoption and implementation.



Members of South Sudan National Election Commission (NEC) when they visited Machakos County IEBC Offices.

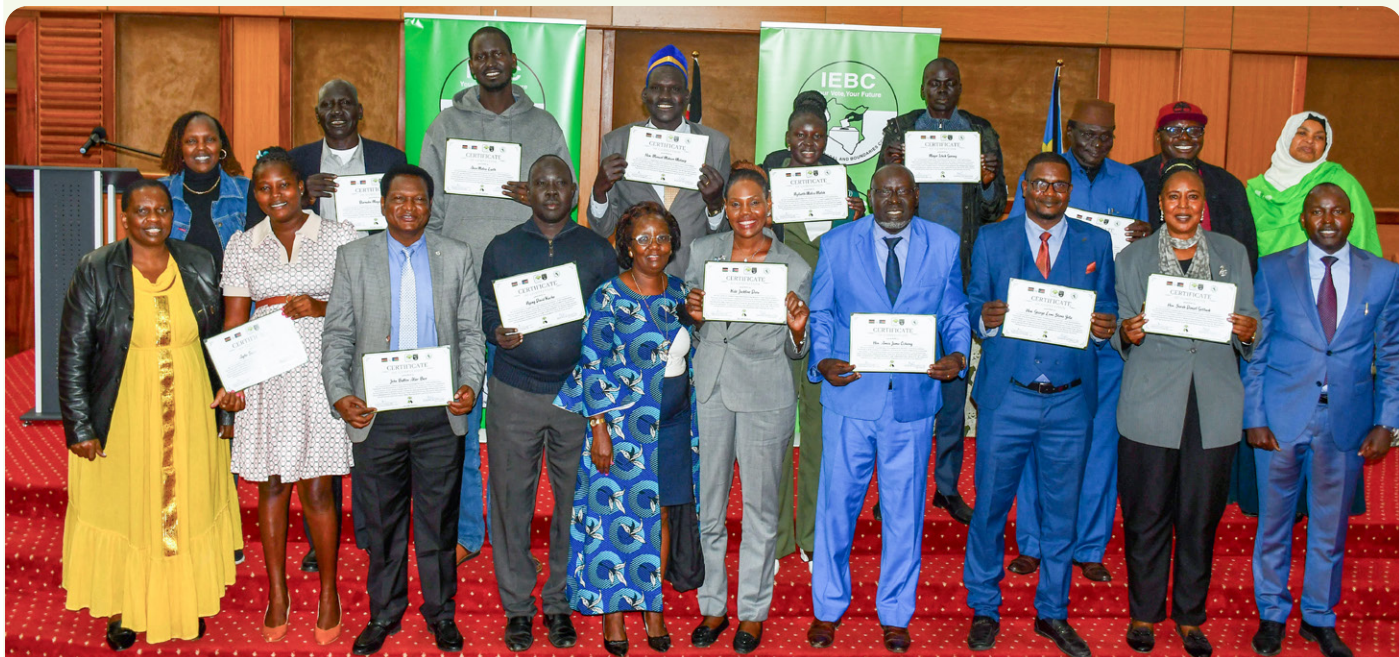
Ethiopia and United States of America, who purposed to learn from Kenya's 2022 experiences. Similarly, Kenya has also sent delegations to Zambia, Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Mauritius, Rwanda, United Kingdom, Venezuela, United States of America among others to learn on other experiences in conferences and election observation missions.

"This peer exchange is meant to promote learning between Kenya and South Sudan EMBs. By the end of the exercise, both of us, Kenya and South Sudan EMBs, will carry plates full of lessons back to our offices for adoption and implementation. Therefore, consider this exercise to be a very insightful one and make use of every opportunity," said Marjan.

The CS/CEO observed that every successful venture must start with a well thought out plan. Elections planning in young democracies,



We do not take for granted the hospitality and agreement by IEBC to meet and train our team. Our NEC team took oath of office in January 2024 and training is our top priority.



Deputy Commission Secretary - Operations Ruth Kulundu (left) joins South Sudan National Election Commission (NEC) officials at closure of their one-week benchmarking tour and peer exchange programme.

especially in Africa, is a logistical nightmare. "We must plan. Invest in the planning process every step of the upcoming election for great wood harvesters invest some good time sharpening the axe," said Marjan.

South Sudan Chief Electoral Officer, Mac Maika Deng, expressed his gratitude to the Commission, Kenya School of Government (KSG) and Government of Kenya for hosting the delegation.

"We do not take for granted the hospitality and

agreement by IEBC to meet and train our team on conducting elections successfully. Our NEC team was reconstituted in November 2023 and took oath of office in January 2024. Training is our top priority," said Deng.

The two EMBs used the forum to learn new approaches to elections management and share experiences from Kenya's perspective.

The meeting was also attended by Felix Owuor, the Electoral Law and Governance Institute for Africa (ELGIA) Executive Director, who

expressed interest to work with the South Sudan National Election Commission to strengthen their electoral legal framework.

“Our organisation is focused on election support. The Kenya Foreign Affairs office requested ELGIA to provide technical assistance to the mediation process in South Sudan. We intend to engage the South Sudan NEC and hope to work together. If South Sudan succeeds, Kenya succeeds too. So whatever challenges you may face in conduct of your election in December, we wish you well and pray that you may overcome the hurdles,” said Owuor.

The delegation was privileged to visit IEBC Machakos County Office, specifically being the county that birthed the peace accord in July 2002. The team also visited the Commission Election Technology Centre in Nairobi’s Industrial Area where they witnessed and learned more on how the Commission stores and maintains its KIEMS kits.

The tour was organised by the Kenya - South Sudan Liaison Office (KESSULO) to promote learning between the two Election Management Bodies (EMBs).



The delegation visited IEBC Machakos County Office, specifically being the county that birthed South Sudan peace accord in July 2002. The team also visited the Commission Election Technology Centre in Nairobi’s industrial area.

Your Vote, Your Future





AUDIT

By Fred Muthinji, Ag. Manager Information Systems,
and Sauda Nasser, Audit Assistant

Demystifying IEBC internal audit

Internal audits are essential for any successful organisation's strategy. They provide a critical look into the organisation's processes to not only ensure financial transparency, but also enhance compliance and accountability. They are a valuable resource to the governing bodies and senior management. Internal audits are usually received with apprehension and misconceptions. This can lead to misunderstanding about the audit process.

Within the Commission, the internal audit function which is under the aegis of Audit and Risk Committee, provides assurance to management on the effectiveness and adequacy of internal controls and financial reporting. The internal audit function of the Commission resides in the Directorate of Internal Audit and Compliance.

For clarity, internal audit is different from Risk and Compliance. While the latter is a management function responsible for coordination of risk management process,

Internal audit provides an independent evaluation post activity.

The role of Internal Audit is espoused under Section 160 of the Public Finance Management (National Government) Regulations, 2015. As such, internal auditors are obligated to comply with the International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF) by conducting audits in accordance with policies and guidelines issued by the Public Sector Accounting Standards Board for uniformity and consistency, as well as maintain professional independence. These tenets inform the manner in which internal audit is conducted within the Commission.

Audit may be external or internal depending on the parties performing the exercise. For better understanding of internal audit, it is necessary to bring forth the reporting structures through the Audit and Risk Committee as well as an end – to – end audit process.

Audit and risk committee

The Audit and Risk Committee is established under the guidelines in Gazette Notice No. 2691 carried in Vol. CXVIII—No. 40 published on 15 April 2016. The Gazette Notice provides for the composition of the committee, roles and responsibilities and frequency of meetings, among other things. Currently, the Committee is composed of four members (including one member from the National Treasury). Ideally, it should also comprise one Commissioner.

Internal audit prepares reports and position papers that are subjected for consideration and discussion before the management committee that informs resolutions and policy at the Commission.

Guiding documents

The Audit and Risk Committee and the Directorate have their own retinue of policy and procedure manuals. It is guided by the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, while the Directorate is guided by the Internal Audit Charter and the Internal Audit Policies and Procedures.

Consequently, for the Commission to be certified under the ISO/IEC 27001:2022, the Directorate maintains two other documents, namely, Information Security Management System (ISMS) and Internal Audit Programme Non – Conformity and Corrective Action Procedure.

The Directorate and other relevant parties are required to comply with these policy documents and

Internal audit provides assurance to management on the effectiveness and adequacy of internal controls and financial reporting.

compliance levels subjected to external assessment from time to time, including by the Office of the Auditor General.

Audit planning

At the beginning of every financial year, the internal audit prepares an annual audit work plan that encapsulates all the planned audits for a given financial year. In the process, areas to be audited are identified from the audit universe (all auditable areas in the Commission). While it may not be feasible to audit all areas in the Commission due to time and resource constraints, selection of auditable areas is arrived at based on a risk assessment process to inform areas of focus. This could be due to recurring audit issues, regulations or request by Management. For implementation of the work plan, it must be approved by the Audit and Risk Committee.

Audit scope

Internal audit scope is a term mostly used by auditors. It refers to the extent of the audit activity or period which the audit will cover. In other instances, auditors may refer to limitations of scope. This refers to a situation where an auditor is unable to complete his audit activity due to various reasons, for instance unavailable information. It is advisable to avoid any instance of limitation of scope.

Notification

Audit notifications are communications sent out in advance to the audit client on the intention to conduct the audit. This communicate provides information on the audit objectives,



AUDIT REPORT

Your Vote, Your Future

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P.O. Box 45371-00100, Nairobi
Tel: 020 287 7000 / 020 276 9000

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Instagram: @iebcKenya / YouTube.com/iebcpage / LinkedIn: company/iebcKenya

Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC)

date of the entry meeting, duration of the audit activity, scope and information required for the audit, among other things. Mostly, this is sent to the Commission Secretary/CEO, Directors or County Election Managers and other relevant officers.

Entry meeting

The Internal Auditors are required to hold an entry meeting prior to commencement of an audit exercise. This is important for both the audit client and auditors to discuss the contents of the audit notification and achieve consensus. At this moment, the audit client may recommend other areas that need to be audited.

Audit queries and communication

This is the evidence collection stage. During this period, an auditor scrutinizes the requested documents and makes observations as part of collecting evidence to support his/her findings. It is important for the audit client to be available during the audit and provide prompt explanations when need arises.

Draft audit report and exit meeting

At this point, an auditor prepares a draft report on any issues noted during review of documents or processes. The findings ought to be supported by evidential documentation and devoid of subjectivity. An audit client provides a response to each finding, indicating the root cause of the finding, responsible person and timeline to address a query. Conversely, if an audit client challenges any audit finding, an exit meeting becomes the last opportunity to engage the auditor and address the findings.

Final audit report

The final audit report is prepared and shared with the audit client, as well as the Commission Secretary/CEO and the Audit and Risk Committee. Audit findings result in recommendations that inform policy and administrative actions by management once the resolutions are tabled at the Commission Plenary.

Follow – up on implementation of recommendations

An audit process provides for follow – up of the audit findings and implementation of recommendations made. Occasionally, an auditor will follow up on previous recommendations to assess progress. It is advisable to progressively address audit findings to aid in improvement of the internal controls.

Conclusion

For a very long time, internal audit functions have appeared to be introverted and, in the process, created tension with the audit client, perhaps due to misconception on its role. Over time, internal audit process has morphed. This evolution has compelled internal auditors to change their strategies on how they interact with audit clients to enhance a sense of responsibility on the part of the process owners. This article is just one of the great strides that the Directorate of Internal Audit and Compliance is making to illuminate the role of audit, consequently demystify the internal audit domain.

In conclusion, the collegiality between the audit client and auditor is a critical success factor for better risk management practices and improvement of internal controls. As Henry Ford said, “Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” It is important to note that audits help provide insights that lead to growth, risk management, and improved financial health of the Commission.



This article is just one of the great strides that the Directorate of Internal Audit and Compliance is making to illuminate the role of audit, consequently demystify the internal audit domain.



Pushing ourselves to the limit and achieving our personal best.

FITNESS

By Peter Muigai, Senior Elections Officer O Gilgil

Commission fitness team conquers city marathon

On 8 September 2024, the Commission's Fitness Team embraced a new challenge, participating in the City Marathon held in Nairobi. Led by Nairobi County Elections Manager, Albert Gogo, the team included Senior Elections Officers Peters Muigai (Gilgil), George Chege (Baringo South), and John Taiswa. Their goal was not just to compete but also to overcome personal limits, conquer fears, and carve a unique niche for themselves in the marathon community.

Under the theme "Pushing Ourselves to the Limit and Achieving Our Personal Best," the team set ambitious targets. Muigai tackled the grueling 42 kilometer full marathon, which began at 6:45a.m. Chege, Taiswa and Gogo participated in the half marathon, which started at 7:30a.m. The event also featured an 18 kilometer run along the Nairobi Expressway, a 10 kilometer race and a 6 kilometer family fun run. These diverse categories offered participants a unique opportunity to enjoy the city's beauty and serenity, while testing their endurance.

The organisers ensured a comfortable experience by setting up water and refreshment points every 5 kilometers. Every participant received a t-shirt, bag and medal at the finish line, with certificates awarded to all finishers.

Beyond the thrill of competition, the marathon highlighted the numerous benefits of running, including improved mental health, enhanced self-confidence, healthy aging and better quality of life. It also serves as an excellent way to manage body weight and reduce cholesterol and blood pressure.

The Commission Fitness Team left the marathon not only with medals and certificates but also with a renewed sense of purpose and camaraderie, proving that stepping out of one's comfort zone is always worth the effort.

42km

**Full marathon
distance**

10km

Road race

6km

**Family fun
run**

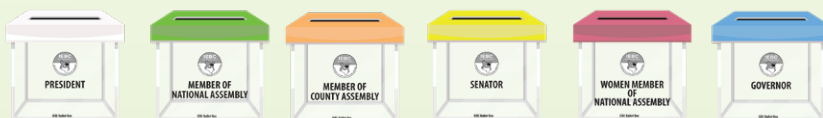
Your Vote, Your Future

Election cycle

By Edgar Aswani, Ag. Senior Communication Liasion Officer

Stakeholders call for timely electoral reforms to enhance credible

2027 General Election



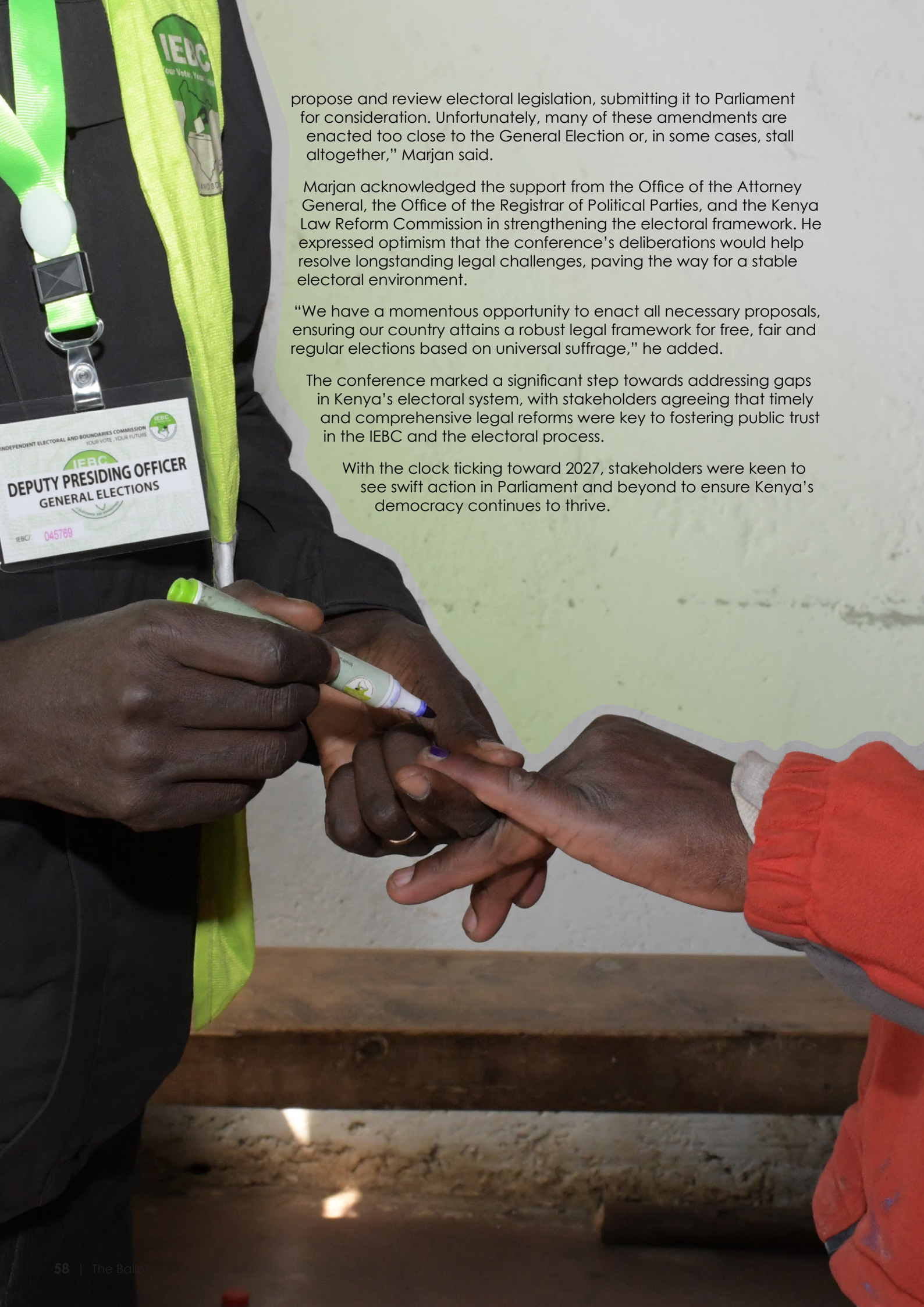
Electoral stakeholders have called for urgent and comprehensive reforms to Kenya's electoral laws to guarantee a free, fair and credible General Election in 2027. This call was made during the National Conference on 'Finalizing Electoral Reforms', held on 17-18 September 2024, in Nairobi.

Organised by the Electoral Law and Governance Institute for Africa (ELGIA), the two-day forum brought together key players, including the IEBC, legal experts, civil society organisations and government agencies. The participants emphasised that an efficient legal framework, a robust and independent EMB,

and political goodwill are crucial for credible elections.

In his address, IEBC Commissions Secretary/ CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS underscored the Commission's commitment to electoral reforms, noting that most of the proposed amendments had been finalised. He revealed that these amendments, along with updates to accompanying regulations, would soon undergo public participation and stakeholder engagement.

However, he raised concerns over delays in enacting electoral amendments. "The Commission has made deliberate efforts to



propose and review electoral legislation, submitting it to Parliament for consideration. Unfortunately, many of these amendments are enacted too close to the General Election or, in some cases, stall altogether," Marjan said.

Marjan acknowledged the support from the Office of the Attorney General, the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties, and the Kenya Law Reform Commission in strengthening the electoral framework. He expressed optimism that the conference's deliberations would help resolve longstanding legal challenges, paving the way for a stable electoral environment.

"We have a momentous opportunity to enact all necessary proposals, ensuring our country attains a robust legal framework for free, fair and regular elections based on universal suffrage," he added.

The conference marked a significant step towards addressing gaps in Kenya's electoral system, with stakeholders agreeing that timely and comprehensive legal reforms were key to fostering public trust in the IEBC and the electoral process.

With the clock ticking toward 2027, stakeholders were keen to see swift action in Parliament and beyond to ensure Kenya's democracy continues to thrive.



Election stakeholders during the National Conference on 'Finalizing Electoral Reform



Mentorship

By Ian Malenya, Intern Communication and Public Affairs Department

Behind the lens: My eye-opening journey as an intern at IEBC

My name is Ian Maleya, a third-year Mass Communication student at Kabarak University. From a young age, I was enthralled by the power of media to capture moments and tell compelling stories. Whether it was marveling at the artistry of film, flipping through vibrant magazines, or holding a camera to freeze moments in time, I knew I wanted to be part of this world. This fascination laid the foundation for my dream of becoming a communicator.

Fast forward to university, where the reality of academia intertwined with my passion. As part of my degree, a three-month industrial attachment in corporate communication, media, or public relations was mandatory. The clock was ticking—just a week before the semester ended, I hadn't received confirmation from any of the places I had applied to. The anxiety was palpable.

Then, a phone buzzed, and a voice came on the other end.

My supervisor introduced me as a member of the staff.

miracle. My buzzed, voice other end

introduced as a member



“

My attachment at IEBC wasn't just an academic requirement; it was a transformative journey. It deepened my appreciation for Kenya's democratic systems and the critical role communication plays in fostering trust.

from the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). “Congratulations,” she said, “your application has been successful.” I could barely contain my excitement as I shared the news with my parents”.

On 15 September 2024, I walked into the IEBC Communication and Public Affairs Department, heart racing with anticipation. I was greeted by the affable Manager of Communication and Public Affairs, Purity Njeru, who introduced me to my supervisor, Mr. Daniel Mathenge. The warm smiles and easy camaraderie among the staff made me feel at home immediately.

After a thorough orientation, I immersed myself in the world of corporate communication at the Commission. Each day revealed new layers of the institution's operations, reinforcing the magnitude of its mandate.

One of the highlights of my attachment was the blood donation drive hosted at Anniversary Towers in collaboration with the KTTA. Armed with my camera, I captured images of donors queuing selflessly to give the gift of life. It was a simple yet profound act of humanity, led by the IEBC Commission Secretary/CEO, Marjan Hussein Marjan, MBS. The event struck a chord with me — it was a reminder that impactful initiatives do not always require large budgets, just genuine commitment to the community.

Another memorable experience was the 2024 Nairobi International Trade Fair, where the IEBC scooped the prestigious Best Commission Stand award. Our mission was clear: engage the public, educate them about the Commission's processes and gather feedback. Standing amidst the vibrancy of the fair, interacting with Kenyans from all walks of life, I saw firsthand the importance of transparent communication in building public trust.

Before joining the IEBC, I carried preconceived notions fueled by societal chatter and media

narratives. The whispers of election rigging had painted a murky picture of the institution. But my time at the IEBC shattered those illusions. I discovered an organisation deeply committed to transparency, fairness and adherence to the law. Its processes and policies are meticulously crafted to ensure the credibility of elections—a fact often overshadowed by unfounded rumours.

My attachment at the IEBC wasn't just an academic requirement; it was a transformative journey. It deepened my appreciation for Kenya's democratic systems and the critical role communication plays in fostering trust.

As I leave the Commission, I carry with me not just memories but a renewed sense of purpose. I have seen the IEBC through a lens few get to experience, and I can confidently say that it is an institution dedicated to upholding the integrity of Kenya's democracy.



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SCAN ME



**Your Vote,
Your Future**



YEARS of Service

Tour of duty

By Linda Mworja, Ag. Public Relations and Customer Care Officer and
Faith Wanjiku, Website Administrator

Reflections, lessons and new beginnings for Linda Omino

In this world, the two hardest things to say in life are hello for the first time and goodbye for the last. And so it was that some staff found it hard to see one of their own, someone they had been accustomed to, take a final walk out of the Commission offices for the very last time as a member of staff.

After 39 years to public service, Linda Omino, Former Senior Officer Administrator attached to the office of the Commission Secretary/CEO prepares to embrace retirement filled with gratitude, humility and excitement for the journey ahead.

Her career spans over three decades, but it was on 15 November 2015, that she joined IEBC and embarked on the final nine (9) years

of her professional journey. The other 30 years, Linda worked with various ministries within the national government. In her own words, "these years have been characterised by resilience, faith and a genuine appreciation for the paths taken."

A heartfelt farewell

"I'm deeply grateful to God for the opportunity to serve at IEBC. Every day in this office has been a blessing, and I truly value the years I've spent here," she began with a warm smile.

Expressing appreciation for the organisation, especially for the CS/CEO's office where she was attached, she acknowledged the great support and collaboration extended by



I'm deeply grateful to God for the opportunity to serve at IEBC. Every day in this office has been a blessing, and I truly value the years I've spent here.

colleagues over the years.

"The work was often demanding, and in the line of duty, I might have unintentionally wronged a few colleagues," she confessed with humility. "To anyone I may have impacted in this way, I sincerely ask for forgiveness. Working in a sensitive office meant making tough calls, and I'm thankful for the understanding and support I received."

Lessons from a lifetime in service

Reflecting on her 39 years in public service, Linda shared powerful lessons that have guided both her career and life:

- **The power of documentation:** "Keeping records meticulously saved me more times than I can count. Documentation is a professional lifeline; it preserves the integrity of the work and makes referencing possible in future," she said. She added that documentation also helps with preserving the institutional memory.
- **Acknowledge what you know and do not know:** "Humility is essential. It's important to embrace learning and seek help when needed. Knowing your limits is just as valuable as showcasing your skills."
- **Prioritise work-life-balance:** "Health is the foundation of any successful career. Take that leave, get your rest, and balance work with life. You cannot pour from an empty cup."

Highs and lows of service

Like any career, there were both fulfilling moments and challenges. Linda was quick to highlight the rewarding aspects of working at the Commission, describing it as a supportive and fair employer, especially in terms of compensation and growth opportunities.

"It was an honour to work during elections, to see the Commission empowering every employee, regardless of their title, to serve as an election official. It taught us that each role, no matter how modest, contributes to the bigger picture."

But the journey also had its lows.

"Security was a constant concern for staff working in sensitive offices, especially during election periods. I would love to see more protective measures in place for those in such roles. Additionally, colleagues working directly under the CEO and Commissioners often go beyond regular hours. A system to recognise and reward their efforts would be an excellent step in motivating them."

Areas of improvement: Recommendations for the future

From her vantage point, Linda offered insightful recommendations for strengthening the organisation's internal framework:

- **Rotational deployment for administrative staff:** "A rotation policy, every 3-4 years, would broaden staff experience and understanding across various departments, creating a more cohesive and knowledgeable team."
- **Induction programmes for new staff:** "Thorough onboarding ensures that everyone starts with a solid foundation. There is need for new staff to understand the specific roles, responsibilities and the sensitivity of the Commission's role to ensure effectiveness and efficiency."
- **Refresher courses on government processes:** "Regular training keeps skills sharp and aligned with the latest practices and policies, especially those important in public service."
- **Retirement preparation framework:** "Entering retirement is a significant life change. A training programme designed 3-5 years before retirement would better equip employees to transition and thrive in life after work."



It was an honour to work during elections, to see the Commission empowering every employee, regardless of their title, to serve as an election official. It taught us that each role, no matter how modest, contributes to the bigger picture.



Moving forward with confidence

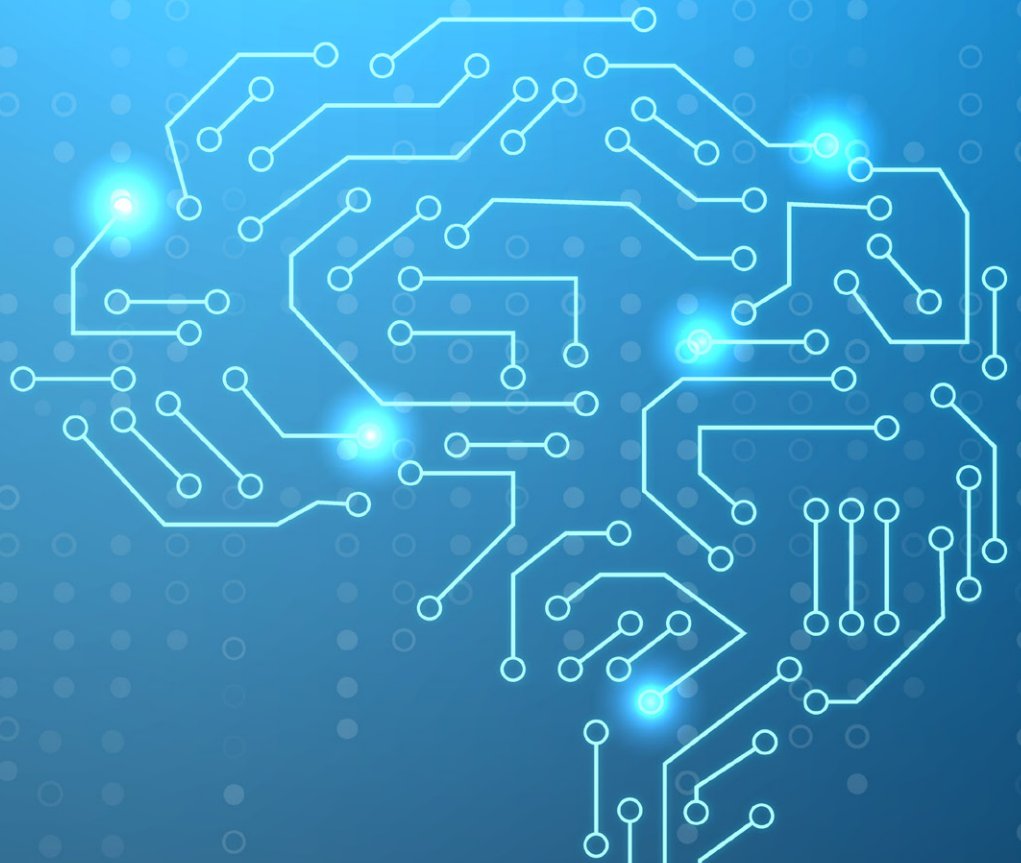
Linda closed our conversation with words of encouragement and gratitude.

"Patience, resilience and confidence have been my most valuable tools, and I'm excited to take them with me into this new season of life," she said with optimism.

"I thank each colleague and every member of staff for their support. To those still on the journey, embrace your work with purpose, stay open to growth and remember to extend kindness."

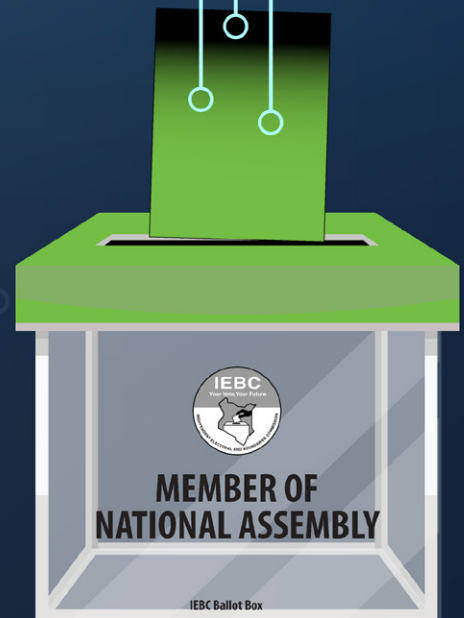
As she leaves the Commission after nine years of dedicated service, Linda steps into retirement with a heart full of gratitude, inspired by the experiences, friendships and opportunity to serve. Her legacy will surely continue to inspire, and we wish her all the best in this new chapter.





Opportunities and challenges of ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE in elections

By Silas Njeru, Manager Service Delivery





AI-powered chat-bots can provide real-time baseline data about polling stations for budgeting and logistics planning, candidate campaign monitoring and voter education, thereby improving accessibility and transparency.

Technology has been a part of elections for years; however, recent advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly generative AI models like OpenAI's Chat-GPT, Microsoft's Copilot and google DeepMind have introduced new dynamics that could fundamentally reshape how elections are conducted and perceived.

Tech companies are in an arms race competing to create intelligent robots designed to assist with performing everyday life tasks like self-driven cars, cooking, cleaning, washing, or supporting education and child development.

Google DeepMind, has made advanced research in AI gaming programmes that can defeat the world's best players using reinforcement learning, an approach where AI systems learn through trial and error to maximise rewards. These applications go far beyond gaming and can be applied to solving complex problems in areas like logistics, climate modeling and beyond.

In Healthcare, AI has been used to make significant advances particularly in performing delicate surgeries as well as cancer detection and drug discovery, by analysing medical data to detect diseases earlier and develop better treatments. Research in this domain has led to breakthroughs of predicting the risk of cancer years before it develops and discovering new antibiotics to combat resistant bacteria.

AI in elections management

AI technologies can offer significant benefits for enhancing electoral processes by making elections more efficient and accurate through automation of the data management processes, ensuring secure and transparent voting and personalising voter engagement through targeted communication. AI-powered chat-bots, for example, can provide real-time baseline data about polling stations for budgeting and logistics planning, candidate campaign monitoring and voter education, thereby improving



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

accessibility and transparency.

Moreover, AI powered systems can be deployed to detect voter registration anomalies and fraudulent activities, thus helping to safeguard the integrity of elections. It has the ability to manage large datasets quickly and accurately hence reducing human error, leading to more reliable election outcomes.

Machine learning algorithms can use predictive analysis of voting patterns, security hotspots and monitor hate speech in real time to detect irregularities or attempts at fraud, thereby ensuring the integrity of the electoral process. Bhuman¹, a New York company founded in 2020 uses AI to create videos of cloned faces and voices of candidates pitching political campaigns. These AI tools can be made to generate campaign emails, social media messages or make robotic calls to greet constituent voters virtually².

Natural language processing (NLP) algorithms, can analyse social media, news articles and other digital content to gauge public opinion on political issues or candidates, providing more accurate and real-time insights than traditional polling methods. During the US 2024 election campaigns³, AI chatbots were recruiting voters from WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger using NLP to record voter interactions and identify shared concerns. These bots interacted with voters on their mobile phones or tablets and turned these interactions into data using NLP. This way, the bots quickly summarised voter priorities and figured out if the voter was speaking about the economy, reproductive rights or climate change.

AI predictive modeling can help create models that predict election outcomes based on various data points, including demographic information, past voting behaviour, and real-time social media analysis. AI can be used in social media engagements and targeted campaigns to analyse vast amounts of data to help political parties and candidates understand voter preferences and concerns, enabling them to tailor their messages and policies to address the needs of different voter segments.

Further, AI tools can be deployed to identify and flag misinformation or fake news on social media platforms, helping to maintain a factual basis for public discourse and debate.

While the potential benefits are significant, there are critical challenges and ethical considerations that must be addressed. Care must be taken to ensure that AI systems do not perpetuate existing biases, unfairness or introduce new ones particularly in regions with diverse populations and complex socio-political dynamics.

Using AI in elections, polling and social media engagements offers many opportunities to enhance democratic processes. However, it is crucial to approach its implementation with a focus on ethical considerations, transparency and inclusivity to ensure that the benefits of AI are realized in a manner that strengthens democracy and public trust.

¹ <https://www.bhuman.ai/>

² <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/21/technology/ai-election-campaigns.html>

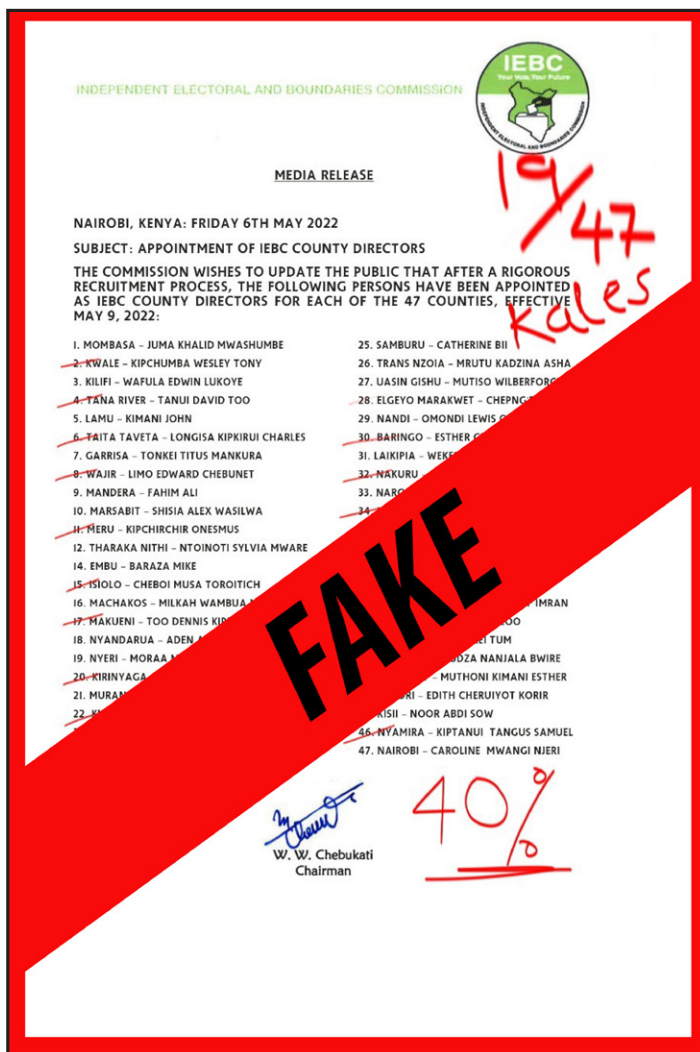
³ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/article/2024/aug/21/democrats-ai-black-latino-voters>

manipulation

erosion privacy data synthetic public
polarization deepfakes campaigns theft fraud breaches
bots social narratives bias voter lack transparency
electoral narratives microtargeting interference tampering
threats algorithmic cybersecurity automated media chambers
opinion propaganda malicious news false political fake
videos identity meddling disinformation suppression surveillance
shadow trust hacking digital ai-powered echo ballot
deepfake



RISKS of AI misuse in elections



AI's growing influence in elections is not without significant risks. One of the concerns is the potential spread of disinformation through AI-generated content.

The ability of AI to create highly realistic yet fake audio, video and images—known as deep-fakes—poses a threat to public trust and the integrity of the electoral process. These deep-fakes can mislead voters and undermine confidence in democratic institutions by making it appear as though individuals have said or done things they never did.

Additionally, AI's capacity for data analysis and manipulation raises privacy concerns. The extensive collection and analysis of personal data by AI systems could lead to unauthorised use of voter information, necessitating robust data protection measures to maintain public trust and comply with privacy laws, for example world coin privacy concerns.

The ethical implications of AI in elections are also significant. There are concerns about potential biases in AI algorithms that could influence election outcomes unfairly. AI systems trained on biased



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data or designed with biased algorithms could reinforce discrimination and prejudice, ultimately compromising the fairness of elections.

Global efforts to regulate AI in elections

To address these challenges, international organisations and governments are taking steps to regulate the use of AI in elections. The United Nations (UN) has been advocating for a collaborative approach to AI governance, focusing on establishing global standards and ethical guidelines.

The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution promoting "safe, secure and trustworthy" AI systems that align with human rights and sustainable development goals⁴. This resolution calls for stakeholders to avoid using AI in ways that violate human rights and emphasises the need to bridge the digital divide.

In Europe, the Council of the European Union approved the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act⁵, which categorises AI systems based on risk and imposes strict requirements on high-risk systems while banning extreme practices such as cognitive behavioural manipulation. This legislation is part of a broader strategy to ensure that AI technologies are developed and used responsibly.

Looking ahead

As AI continues to evolve, its impact on elections will likely grow. While AI offers opportunities to improve electoral efficiency and security, the risks associated with its misuse must be carefully managed. Safeguarding the integrity of information and ensuring the transparency of elections are crucial for maintaining public trust and promoting democratic participation.

Election Management Bodies (EMBs) must work collaboratively with technology providers and industry players to ensure that AI technologies reinforce rather than undermine democratic values, supporting active citizen participation and respecting freedom of opinion and expression.

As we move into this new era of AI-driven elections, thoughtful regulation and ethical oversight will be key to harnessing the benefits of AI while mitigating its risks.

By harnessing the power of AI, EMBs can improve the efficiency, transparency and inclusivity of electoral processes, ultimately strengthening democratic governance and public trust in the electoral system.



⁴<https://www.state.gov/united-nations-general-assembly-adopts-by-consensus-u-s-led-resolution-on-seizing-the-opportunities-of-safe-secure-and-trustworthy-artificial-intelligence-systems-for-sustainable-development/>

⁵<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/en/article/20230601STO93804/eu-ai-act-first-regulation-on-artificial-intelligence>



Our Vision

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

Our Mission

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

Core Values

Adherence to the rule of law	We conduct our businesses within the law.
Inclusivity	We respect gender, race, class and disability in the conduct of electoral activities.
Integrity	We conduct our affairs with utmost honesty.
Accountability	We endeavor to be responsible for our actions.
Teamwork	We work collaboratively as colleagues to achieve Commission goals.
Innovativeness	We transform the electoral process by exceeding the expectations of Kenyans.

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