

WYDE

Civic Engagement

A ROADMAP FOR YOUTH IN POLITICS

Enhancing **Youth** Political
Participation in East Africa

IMPLEMENTED BY:

Netherlands Institute for
Multiparty Democracy



WFD



DEMO
FINLAND

POWERED BY:



European
Partnership for
Democracy

Netherlands Institute for
Multiparty Democracy

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The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy works to promote peaceful, just and inclusive politics worldwide. NIMD's approach is characterized by dialogue, which it facilitates for actors across the political spectrum at the local, national and regional level.



**THIS ROADMAP WAS DEVELOPED BY
YOUTH AMBASSADORS:**
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, BY YOUNG PEOPLE.



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AU	-	African Union
CASU	-	Communications & Advocacy Support Unit
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
EAC	-	East African Community
EU	-	European Union
FGD	-	Focus Group Discussion
IEBC	-	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
KPI	-	Key Performance Indicator
KIIs	-	Key Informant Interviews
M&E	-	Monitoring & Evaluation
MEL	-	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MoV	-	Means of Verification
NIMD	-	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
NWGs	-	National Working Groups
ORPP	-	Office of the Registrar of Political Parties
RSC	-	Regional Steering Committee
UN	-	United Nations
WFD	-	Westminster Foundation for Democracy
WYDE	-	Women and Youth in Democratic Engagement





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EAST AFRICA YOUTH IN POLITICS ROADMAP (2026–2030)

The East Africa Youth in Politics Roadmap (2026–2030) is a strategic, action-oriented framework designed to transform meaningful youth participation in political leadership and decision-making across Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Somaliland.

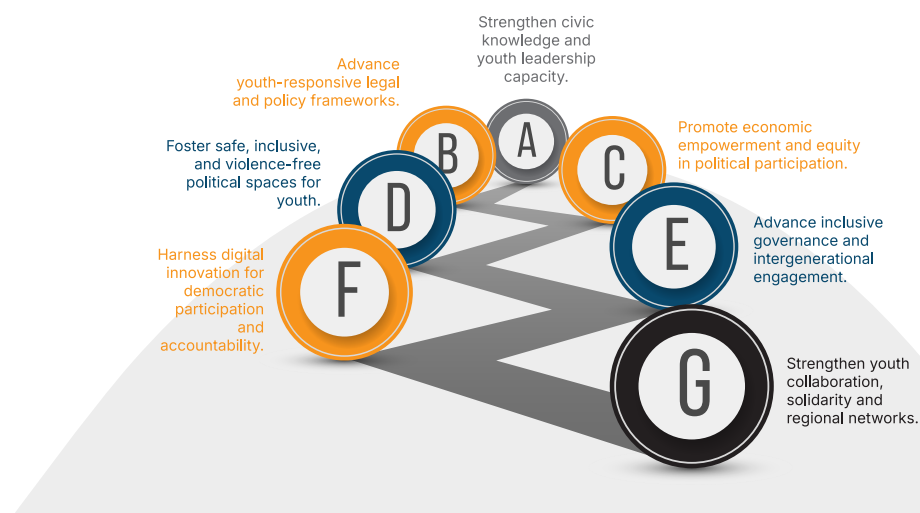
EAST AFRICA FACES A DEFINING DEMOGRAPHIC REALITY: The region has one of the world's youngest populations, with youth (typically defined as aged 15–35) comprising a substantial majority in many contexts. For example, Uganda ranks among the youngest nations globally, with over 70% of its population under 30 and nearly 77% under 25 years. Across the region, including Kenya (where around 80% are under 35), Ethiopia and Somaliland, young people represent the greatest potential for democratic renewal, innovation and sustainable development. Yet, this demographic strength is undermined by systemic exclusion from political power. Young people remain significantly underrepresented in governance, parliaments and decision-making bodies due to entrenched barriers.

Despite their numbers and growing political consciousness, youth face persistent challenges such as high campaign financing costs, patronage-based political systems, tokenistic inclusion, weak enforcement of youth-friendly policies, political violence, gender discrimination, limited civic education, resource constraints and shrinking civic spaces in some areas.

At the same time, the region is experiencing a surge in youth-led activism, digital mobilization and civic innovation. Movements, democracy schools, regional networks and technology-driven advocacy, highlighted powerfully by the Malindi Conference, demonstrate that young people are not apathetic; they demand a more inclusive, accountable and responsive political system. This momentum underscores the urgency of action: with youth forming such a dominant share of the population (often exceeding 60–80% under 35 across these contexts), their systematic marginalization risks instability, stalled development and missed opportunities for democratic deepening.

The roadmap's overarching vision is: A safe, inclusive, and democratic East Africa where young people are meaningfully empowered and actively lead in political and decision-making processes at all levels.

To achieve this, the roadmap outlines **SEVEN STRATEGIC GOALS:**



Implementation follows a **five-year phased approach (2026–2030)**:



A coordinated governance structure led by a Regional Steering Committee (RSC), National Working Groups (NWGs) and a Communications & Advocacy Support Unit (CASU) will drive delivery in partnership with governments, political parties, civil society, electoral bodies, media, development partners and the private sector.

A comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework, supported by clear indicators and targets, will track progress in leadership development, policy reform, safety, digital engagement and network growth. A proactive Risk Management Plan addresses political, financial, security, social and operational challenges.

This Roadmap transcends a mere policy document; It is a collective **call to action**. It urges governments to move beyond symbolic inclusion, political parties to democratize structures and invest in young leaders, development partners to fund long-term youth-led transformation, civil society and media to amplify youth voices and the private sector to support sustainable financing and innovation.

Young people are not passive beneficiaries of democracy; rather, they are its future custodians. The democratic stability, inclusive governance and sustainable development of East Africa hinge on empowering this generation boldly and authentically. The era of tokenism and fragmented efforts must end. This unified, credible and actionable Roadmap charts the path to make youth leadership the norm, securing a vibrant democratic future for the region's next generation.



INTRODUCTION AND AND BACKGROUND



East Africa stands at a decisive moment in its democratic journey. The region boasts one of the world's youngest populations, with youth (typically defined as those aged 15–35) comprising a significant majority, often over 60% in many countries and children under 15 making up around 40–43% of the population in the East African Community (EAC) as of recent estimates. This youth bulge represents the region's greatest potential force for democratic renewal, innovation and leadership in countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Somaliland.

Yet, despite this demographic advantage, youth remain significantly underrepresented in political leadership, decision-making institutions and formal governance processes. Historical patterns of exclusion have persisted, rooted in patriarchal and elite-dominated political systems, economic barriers, weak implementation of youth-inclusive laws and socio-cultural norms that undervalue youth leadership. For decades, young people have been framed primarily as a risk to stability, often linked to unemployment, political violence, or unrest, rather than recognized as a strategic asset for democracy and development. This narrative has fostered tokenistic inclusion, limited political influence and the continued marginalization of youth voices, particularly for young women and other marginalized groups; Such exclusion undermines inclusive institutions, directly conflicting with global commitments like Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), which calls for responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

This challenge is addressed by key regional frameworks that affirm youth as essential partners in governance. The African Youth Charter (adopted in 2006 by the African Union) serves as a landmark political and legal instrument, emphasizing youth rights to participation in political and decision-making processes, including guarantees for youth representation in parliaments and national bodies, as well as the establishment of platforms for meaningful engagement at national, regional and continental levels. Complementing this, the East African Community Youth Policy provides a harmonized regional framework to guide the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of programs addressing youth issues, promoting their holistic empowerment and participation in socio-economic and political spheres to advance sustainable development and regional integration.

The prevailing exclusionary dynamics, exacerbated by shrinking civic space, political violence, corruption and entrenched patronage networks, have historically discouraged meaningful youth engagement. However, this reality is rapidly changing. Across East Africa, young people are increasingly organized, politically conscious and determined to shape the future of their societies. Youth-led movements, civic campaigns, digital activism and democracy education initiatives are redefining political participation and challenging exclusionary systems. These efforts demonstrate that young people are not disengaged from politics; rather, they are demanding politics that are more inclusive, accountable, ethical and responsive to their lived realities.



The Malindi Conference (held in August 2025 under the Women and Youth in Democracy initiative) marked a pivotal milestone in this shift. It brought together politically engaged young leaders from across the region, including alumni from democracy academies in Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Somalia and clearly demonstrated that when youth are provided with platforms, skills, trust and networks, they do more than participate; they lead. The conference revealed a generation ready to assume responsibility, articulate shared regional priorities and work collectively across borders to strengthen democratic governance in East Africa.

The East Africa Youth in Politics Roadmap emerges from this momentum. It is not merely a technical or aspirational document. It is a shared regional framework and a practical action plan designed to address the structural barriers facing youth in politics while harnessing emerging opportunities for leadership, innovation and collaboration. The roadmap outlines clear strategic goals, concrete interventions and measurable actions to strengthen civic education, advance youth-responsive legal and policy reforms, promote economic equity in political participation, safeguard youth from political violence and leverage digital technologies for democratic engagement and accountability.

At its core, the roadmap repositions young people as active architects of democracy rather than passive observers of political processes. Meaningful youth participation is not optional or symbolic but essential to the legitimacy, resilience and sustainability of political systems in the region. By investing in youth leadership today, East Africa can promote democratic governance, foster peace and stability and drive inclusive economic growth, aligning with both continental aspirations and global sustainable development priorities. The future that young people aspire to cannot be postponed. It must be shaped now through deliberate investment in youth leadership, institutional reforms and inclusive governance structures.



This Roadmap therefore serves as a unifying call to action for governments, political parties, civil society organizations, development partners, media and the private sector. It invites all stakeholders to move beyond rhetoric and commit to concrete, coordinated efforts that elevate youth into positions of influence and decision-making. The long-term democratic stability and development of East Africa will be determined by how effectively young people are empowered today to lead tomorrow.



CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The political landscape for young people in East Africa, including Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Somaliland, is multifaceted, shaped by persistent structural barriers alongside emerging opportunities for meaningful participation. Demographic realities underscore the centrality of youth to the region's political future, but systemic, institutional and socio-economic constraints continue to limit their full and effective engagement in governance and decision-making processes.

Current State Assessment: Youth (typically defined as 18–35 years in many national contexts, or 15–35/15–30 years in others) constitute a demographic majority. In Kenya, approximately 75–80% of the population is under 35, with those aged 18–35 comprising about 36% of the total population. Similar youth bulges exist in Uganda, Ethiopia and Somaliland, positioning young people as a major political and civic force.

However, formal political participation rates remain low. Across Africa, youth aged 18–35 years lag behind older generations in key areas according to Afrobarometer data: voting (–18 percentage points), attending community meetings (–12 percentage points), contacting local government councilors (–10 percentage points), feeling close to a political party (–percentage points) and joining others to raise issues (–8 percentage points). Kenya shows a notable gap (–16 percentage points) in contacting local officials. Youth are more likely than elders to participate in protests in several countries.

Youth representation in national parliaments is minimal (globally, under-30s hold only about 2% of seats; rates are similarly low in East Africa despite quotas or reserved seats in Kenya and Uganda). Tokenism persists, with young representatives often lacking real power.

3.1 KEY BARRIERS IDENTIFIED



ECONOMIC BARRIERS: High costs of campaigns, nomination fees and patronage exclude many youths, especially from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Surveys highlight lack of access to capital (cited by ~52% in recent African Youth Surveys) and wealth disparities as major obstacles.



CAPACITY AND INFORMATION GAPS: Limited civic education, leadership skills and awareness, particularly in rural/marginalized areas, hinder effective engagement.



STRUCTURAL AND SYSTEMIC BARRIERS: Patronage, corruption, nepotism, vote-buying and gatekeeping limit access. Tokenistic inclusion meets quotas without granting influence.



LEGAL AND POLICY LIMITATIONS: Affirmative measures (e.g., youth seats in Kenya/Uganda) suffer from weak implementation and manipulation.



SOCIO-CULTURAL AND IDENTITY BARRIERS: Norms valuing elder deference, ethnic/tribal/religious polarization and compounded gender-age discrimination marginalize young women (including gender-based violence in politics).



SECURITY RISKS AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE: Threats, intimidation and election-period violence disproportionately affect youth challengers, especially young women.



3.2 REGIONAL VARIATIONS

Participation and barriers show significant urban-rural and country-specific differences. Urban youth in Kenya demonstrate higher engagement through protests (recent Gen Z-led movements), social media mobilization and digital advocacy, benefiting from better internet access and networks. Rural areas face acute challenges: limited education, infrastructure, information, and financial resources.

In Uganda and Ethiopia, rural youth encounter greater patronage control, ethnic tensions and lower formal participation rates. Somaliland's post-conflict context exacerbates rural isolation, with very limited youth representation in parliament and heightened security risks. Urban centers across the region generally show higher protest/digital activity, while rural participation remains lower in formal processes and civic engagement.

3.3 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS AND EVIDENCE

Youth forums (e.g., Carter Center youth consultations in Kenya, IGAD Youth Dialogues, NIMD/WFD/Demo Finland-supported democracy schools and peer networks) and surveys (Afrobarometer, Ichikowitz Family Foundation African Youth Survey series) ground these findings in direct evidence. These consistently identify gaps in skills, resources, trust in institutions and pathways to influence, while revealing strong interest in change, frustration with corruption and preference for alternative mobilization forms (protests, digital platforms).

3.4 SWOT ANALYSIS



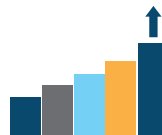
STRENGTHS

Demographic weight, energy/innovation, growing digital literacy, demonstrated mobilization capacity (e.g., protests, campaigns) and emerging youth networks.



WEAKNESSES

Economic exclusion, low formal participation rates, capacity/skill gaps, tokenism, vulnerability to violence/intimidation and rural-urban disparities.



OPPORTUNITIES

Expanding digital platforms and social media for advocacy/mobilization; capacity-building programs (NIMD, WFD, Demo Finland, regional youth parliaments); affirmative policies/quotas; growing recognition of intergenerational collaboration and potential for mentorship/policy influence.



THREATS

Entrenched patronage/corruption, political violence and security risks, ethnic polarization, economic inequality/unemployment, manipulation of processes and climate/economic shocks exacerbating marginalization.

3.5 REGIONAL CONTEXT & OPPORTUNITIES

Despite challenges, youth-led movements have mobilized effectively, as seen in peaceful protests and campaigns in Kenya and elsewhere, reflecting rising political consciousness. Increasing mobile/internet access expands online civic participation, advocacy and organizing, particularly (but not exclusively) in urban areas. Regional and international partnerships continue to support leadership development, cross-party dialogue and peer learning. There is also growing acceptance among some leaders of constructive intergenerational engagement, creating openings for mentorship and increased youth presence in governance.

This enriched analysis identifies persistent gaps between demographic potential and actual influence, highlighting the need for targeted interventions in financing, capacity building, safety, implementation of policies and bridging urban-rural divides to enable more equitable and effective youth political participation.





VISION STATEMENT



Our collective vision is:

A safe, inclusive, and democratic East African region where young people are meaningfully empowered and actively participate as equal leaders in political and decision-making processes at all levels, driving sustainable development, peace and intergenerational harmony.

MISSION STATEMENT



To build capacities, remove structural and institutional barriers, foster equitable partnerships and promote enabling environments that empower young people, particularly young women and marginalized groups, to engage meaningfully in political processes, governance and regional integration across East Africa.



STRATEGIC GOALS & OBJECTIVES



To achieve this vision, the roadmap will pursue the following strategic goals:

Strengthen Civic Knowledge and Youth Leadership Capacity:

To equip young people with the civic knowledge, leadership competencies and ethical grounding necessary for informed political participation, constructive engagement and effective leadership at local, national and regional levels.

Promote Economic Empowerment and Equity in Political Participation:

To reduce financial barriers to political engagement by expanding access to economic opportunities, resources and financing mechanisms that enable youth from diverse socio-economic backgrounds to participate in politics on an equitable basis.

Advance Inclusive Governance and Intergenerational Engagement:

To strengthen institutional mechanisms that enable meaningful youth representation within governance and political structures, while promoting constructive, respectful intergenerational dialogue that fosters mutual understanding, collaboration and shared leadership.

Strengthen Youth Collaboration, Solidarity, and Regional Networks:

To support the development of cohesive, values-driven and cross-border youth networks that promote democratic norms, facilitate peer learning and enable collective action on shared political priorities across East Africa.

Advance Youth-Responsive Legal and Policy Frameworks: To promote the development, implementation and enforcement of inclusive legal and policy frameworks that remove structural barriers and institutionalize meaningful youth participation in political and governance processes.

Foster Safe, Inclusive and Violence-Free Political Spaces for Youth: To support the creation of secure political environments in which young people, particularly young women and marginalized groups, can participate freely and safely, without fear of physical, psychological, sexual, economic, or digital violence, harassment, or intimidation.

Harness Digital Innovation for Democratic Participation and Accountability: To responsibly leverage digital technologies and platforms to expand civic education, facilitate political participation and advocacy, enhance transparency and strengthen accountability between citizens and leaders.





KEY AREAS OF INTERVENTION/ STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLAN

Based on the barriers and opportunities identified, the following interventions are critical. It has been aligned with a clear set of 5 Core Strategic Pillars (thematic areas). These pillars serve as the overarching framework to guide meaningful youth political participation and empowerment.

1. POLICY AND LEGAL REFORMS

This pillar focuses on systemic changes to create an enabling legal and institutional environment that removes structural barriers and guarantees youth representation in political processes.

Key interventions include:

- Advocating for measures that reduce financial and procedural barriers for young candidates, such as campaign finance limits, streamlined nomination requirements and incentives from electoral bodies and political parties.
- Strengthening the enforcement of existing youth inclusion laws and quotas, while promoting reforms in electoral and political party legislation to enhance inclusivity for youth, women, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups.
- Establishing and enforcing legal protections against political violence, harassment, intimidation, and gender-based violence targeting youth participants in both physical and digital spaces.
- Supporting the adoption and implementation of regional and international frameworks that safeguard digital activism, political rights and protections for young human rights defenders.

2. CAPACITY BUILDING AND CIVIC EDUCATION

This pillar emphasizes equipping youth with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to engage effectively in political leadership and decision-making.

Key interventions include:

- Integrating practical civic and political education into school curricula, youth programs, and community initiatives to build a foundational understanding of governance, rights and democratic processes.
- Expanding mentorship programs, role-model initiatives, peer-learning networks and democracy schools/training platforms to develop essential skills in leadership, advocacy, negotiation, public engagement, campaign planning, resource mobilization and critical thinking.
- Providing targeted support for young candidates, particularly young women, youth with disabilities and those from rural areas, through specialized training on effective political participation, media literacy, personal development and resistance to manipulation.
- Promoting broader personal empowerment to enable youth to lead authentically and sustainably in political spaces.



3. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND RESOURCE ACCESS

This pillar addresses financial barriers as a major obstacle to youth political engagement, linking economic independence with political inclusion.

Key interventions include:

- Developing targeted funding mechanisms, grants and financial support programs specifically for young political aspirants to lower entry costs.
- Advocating for incentives and subsidies from electoral management bodies, political parties and development partners to reduce economic hurdles for youth candidates.
- Supporting entrepreneurship, skills development, and broader economic empowerment initiatives that enhance youth financial independence, sustainability and long-term ability to participate in politics without economic exclusion.

4. ENHANCING SAFETY, SECURITY AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

This pillar combines protection mechanisms with institutional reforms to foster safe, transparent, and intergenerational political spaces.

Key interventions include:

- Establishing protection frameworks, rapid-response mechanisms, and collaboration with human rights organizations, CSOs and security agencies to safeguard youth from threats in physical and digital environments, including from state and non-state actors.
- Advocating for policies that promote transparent and democratic processes within political parties, including youth quotas, internal youth caucuses and expanded leadership opportunities.
- Institutionalizing formal youth advisory boards, intergenerational dialogue forums, and structured platforms for youth input into policy and decision-making to encourage collaboration, mentorship and shared goals.

5. AWARENESS, MOBILIZATION, DIGITAL ACTIVISM AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

This pillar leverages communication, technology and multi-stakeholder collaboration to amplify youth voices, build movements and drive collective action.

Key interventions include:

- Launching large-scale awareness and mobilization campaigns through social media, radio, community events and digital platforms to educate on civic rights, build political presence, and rally support for youth-led initiatives.
- Expanding digital literacy and access programs, especially for marginalized and rural youth, while promoting the development and enforcement of information and cyber laws for a safer, more accountable digital advocacy space.
- Fostering strategic partnerships and collaborations with governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), political parties, international bodies and youth-led networks to co-create opportunities, share resources and amplify impact.
- Using digital tools for ongoing mobilization, peer networking and amplifying marginalized voices to sustain momentum beyond individual campaigns.





KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Achieving the objectives of this Roadmap requires a multi-stakeholder approach involving diverse actors with complementary roles.

This approach emphasizes collaboration across diverse actors to overcome barriers like high nomination costs, limited party democracy, economic challenges and tokenistic inclusion, while promoting youth quotas, capacity building and inclusive governance.

PRIMARY ACTORS (MAIN DRIVERS)

These groups lead implementation, advocacy and on-the-ground action:

- **YOUTH:** Including activists, student unions, youth-led civil society organizations (CSOs), and youth wings of political parties. They serve as the core force pushing for change, mobilizing peers and holding others accountable. In Kenya, youth (aged 18-35) make up a massive demographic majority but hold under 7-10% of elective positions nationally, making their active role essential for shifting norms.
- **GOVERNMENT/STATE:** National and county governments, parliaments, and ministries (e.g., Youth Affairs and Creative Economy, Education, Gender) handle policy creation, enforcement of youth-inclusive laws (like constitutional provisions and the Kenya Youth Development Policy 2019), resource allocation and enabling environments. Recent efforts include strategic plans and coordination through bodies like the National Youth Council.

SECONDARY ACTORS (SUPPORTIVE PARTNERS)

These entities provide complementary expertise, resources, oversight and amplification:

- **POLITICAL PARTIES:** Vital for internal reforms, such as establishing youth leagues, reducing barriers to candidacy, and ensuring inclusive leadership. Programs like the Kenya Inclusive Political Parties (KIPP) initiative (supported by WFD and Demo Finland) have helped parties build structures for greater youth involvement.
- **ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BODIES:** Such as the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), which ensures transparent, accessible elections, including youth voter registration drives and fair processes.
- **Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) & NGOs:** Key for advocacy, training, monitoring compliance, and technical support. Groups like The Youth Cafe, Youth Agenda, Siasa Place, and others lead manifestos, consultations and capacity-building for youth aspirants.
- **INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS:** Organizations like the EU, NIMD (Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy), WFD (Westminster Foundation for Democracy), and Demo Finland provide funding, global best practices, and programs (e.g., Democracy Schools/Academies) to strengthen youth inclusion in parties and governance.
- **MEDIA:** Plays a crucial role in amplifying youth voices, shaping narratives around youth leadership, and promoting accountability through coverage of issues like protests and reforms.
- **EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL, AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS:** Essential for instilling civic education, values, and community support. Colleges and universities build leadership skills through student bodies, while faith-based groups help with grassroots mobilization.
- **THE PUBLIC:** Engaged through awareness campaigns to challenge social norms, build broad acceptance of young leaders and foster intergenerational dialogue.
- **SECURITY SERVICES:** Critical for protecting young political actors from violence, intimidation, or threats during campaigns and tense periods, ensuring safe participation.

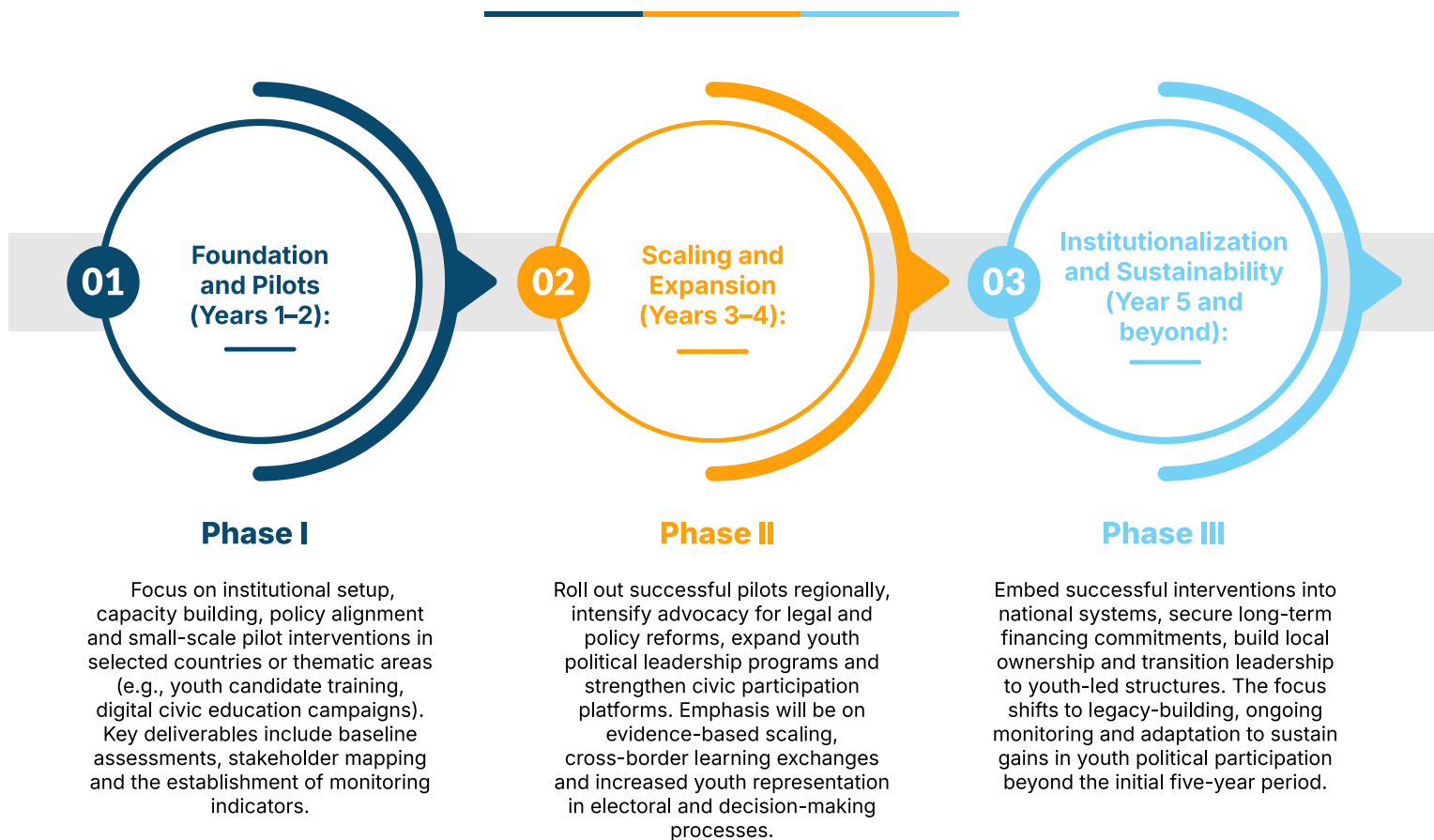


IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK



This Implementation Framework serves as the operational blueprint for transforming the vision and strategic goals of the East Africa Youth Political Participation Roadmap into concrete, measurable actions across the region. It adopts a structured, phased five-year approach (2026–2030) to ensure realistic pacing, progressive impact and enduring results. The framework guides and coordinates the efforts of the Regional Steering Committee (RSC), the primary coordinating body, together with National Working Groups (NWGs) in each Partner State and the Communications & Advocacy Support Unit (CASU).

Phased Approach The framework is structured in three progressive phases, each building on the previous one to balance ambition with feasibility and promote accountability at every step:



This phased structure ensures early wins for momentum, mid-term scaling for broader impact, and end-term sustainability for lasting change, while allowing regular course corrections.

Recognizing the dynamic political, social and technological landscape of East Africa, this framework is designed as a living document. The RSC will conduct annual reviews (with input from NWGs, youth representatives, and independent evaluators) to incorporate emerging trends, address new challenges (digital disinformation, climate-related migration affecting youth mobility) and seize emerging opportunities in youth political participation.

This robust yet flexible approach positions the roadmap for accountable, inclusive and transformative progress in empowering young people as active political actors across the East African region.



9.1 PHASE I: FOUNDATION & MOBILIZATION (YEAR 1)

Objective:

To establish the operational framework, strengthen the core regional and national networks, conduct foundational research, and achieve initial, high-impact results to generate momentum for sustained youth political participation.

Table 1. Foundation and Mobilization

STRATEGIC GOAL	KEY ACTIVITIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)	LEAD BODY
1. STRENGTHEN NETWORKS	1.1 Establish formal governance structures through the election of RSC and NWG leadership. 1.2 Develop and adopt core governance instruments (Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct). 1.3 Implement a structured membership drive to expand participation beyond initial convenings.	- All leadership positions filled within three months. - Core governance documents adopted by Q2. - At least a 50% increase in active membership by year-end.	RSC & NWGs
2. LEGAL & POLICY	1.4 Conduct baseline legal and political economy analyses and stakeholder mapping in each country to identify priority laws, institutions, and advocacy entry points.	Four country-level baseline and stakeholder mapping reports completed by Q3.	NWGs
3. CIVIC EDUCATION & CAPACITY	1.5 Undertake a training needs assessment among members to identify priority capacity gaps. 1.6 Develop a standardized foundational training curriculum (e.g., advocacy, civic engagement, digital safety).	- Training needs assessment completed by Q2. - Foundational curriculum finalized by Q4.	NWGs
4. LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY	1.7 Establish official regional and national digital platforms and social media channels. 1.8 Develop a shared brand identity and communications toolkit.	- Active and branded digital presence on at least two platforms per country. - Communications toolkit disseminated to members by Q2.	CASU



STRATEGIC GOAL	KEY ACTIVITIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)	LEAD BODY
5. SAFETY & SECURITY	1.9 Develop a regional rapid-response protocol for addressing threats and incidents affecting youth political actors. 1.10 Map and formalize partnerships with national human rights organizations and legal aid providers.	- Rapid response protocol finalized and shared by Q3. - A directory of at least three support partners established per country.	NWGs & RSC
6. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT	1.11 Conduct regional research on youth political financing models and their effectiveness.	Regional research report with policy recommendations published by Q4.	RSC
7. INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE	1.12 Convene one pilot intergenerational dialogue forum per country to build trust and test engagement approaches.	- At least one dialogue convened per country. - Lessons learned, documented and shared.	NWGs

9.2 PHASE II: ACCELERATION AND ADVOCACY (YEARS 2–3)

Objective:

To implement targeted, evidence-informed advocacy initiatives, expand and deepen capacity-building programs and elevate the visibility and public understanding of youth political participation across the region.

Table 2. Acceleration and Advocacy

STRATEGIC GOAL	KEY ACTIVITIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)	LEAD BODY
1. LEGAL & POLICY	2.1 Implement targeted national advocacy campaigns on one to two priority policy issues per country (e.g., campaign finance reform, youth quota enforcement). 2.2 Develop and submit policy briefs and legislative proposals to relevant parliamentary and regulatory bodies.	- At least one national advocacy campaign implemented per country per year. - A minimum of five policy briefs submitted region-wide annually.	NWGs





STRATEGIC GOAL	KEY ACTIVITIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)	LEAD BODY
2. CIVIC EDUCATION & CAPACITY	2.3 Roll out structured capacity-building programs informed by the Phase I needs assessment, including mentorship initiatives. 2.4 Convene national-level democracy schools or bootcamps for aspiring young leaders and candidates.	- At least 200 youth trained across East African regional countries. - A minimum of 50 formal mentorship pairings established amongst the East African countries. - At least one democracy school or bootcamp convened per country.	NWGs
3. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT	2.5 Advocate for the adoption of recommendations from Phase I research, including youth financing mechanisms and cost-reduction measures.	Formal proposals on youth political financing submitted to governments or electoral bodies in at least two countries.	NWGs
4. SAFETY & SECURITY	2.6 Deliver security and digital safety training for network members. 2.7 Implement a regional public advocacy campaign promoting peaceful and violence-free political participation.	- At least 100 youth trained in physical and digital security. - Regional campaign reaches a minimum of one million people through digital and media platforms.	NWGs & CASU
5. INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE	2.8 Advocate for the formal establishment of youth advisory mechanisms within selected government ministries or parliamentary structures. 2.9 Institutionalize intergenerational dialogue forums as annual national engagements.	- Formal proposals for youth advisory mechanisms submitted in at least two countries. - Annual intergenerational dialogue forums are convened in all participating countries.	NWGs
6. STRENGTHEN NETWORKS	2.10 Convene the Annual Regional Youth in Politics Summit to share experiences, align strategies, and strengthen cross-border collaboration.	Annual regional summit successfully convened with representation from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Somaliland, alongside relevant regional and international stakeholders.	RSC



9.3 PHASE III: CONSOLIDATION AND SUSTAINABILITY (YEARS 4–5)

Objective:

To consolidate and institutionalize achieved gains, strengthen the long-term sustainability of the network and its initiatives, and progressively transition from direct implementation to strategic monitoring, learning, and oversight roles.

Table 3. Consolidation & Sustainability

STRATEGIC GOAL	KEY ACTIVITIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)	LEAD BODY
1. LEGAL & POLICY	3.1 Transition from active advocacy to monitoring and tracking the implementation of adopted youth-related laws and policies. 3.2 Develop and publish annual Youth Political Participation Scorecards assessing government and political party performance.	- Annual scorecards produced and disseminated in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Somaliland. - Findings referenced in public dialogue, media, or policy forums.	NWGs & CASU
2. CIVIC EDUCATION & CAPACITY	3.3 Design and roll out a Train-the-Trainer programme to build a sustainable pool of local facilitators. 3.4 Establish partnerships with academic institutions to integrate civic and political participation modules into formal programmes.	- At least 20 certified trainers have been developed across the region. - A minimum of one formal partnership established with an academic institution.	RSC & NWGs
ALL GOALS	3.5 Develop and begin implementation of a long-term sustainability strategy focusing on diversified funding, local ownership, and institutional resilience.	- A five-year sustainability plan formally adopted by the RSC. - At least one additional, non-core funding stream secured.	RSC
3. STRENGTHEN NETWORKS	3.6 Assess and where appropriate, formalize the regional network's legal status to enhance credibility and resource mobilization. 3.7 Develop and adopt a structured leadership succession and renewal plan.	- Feasibility assessment on legal registration completed and a decision reached. - Leadership succession plan approved and operationalized.	RSC





STRATEGIC GOAL	KEY ACTIVITIES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)	LEAD BODY
4. MONITORING & EVALUATION	3.8 Conduct comprehensive mid-term and end-of-cycle evaluations to assess impact, lessons learned and future directions of the Roadmap.	- Mid-term and final evaluation reports completed and shared with stakeholders. - Key recommendations integrated into future programming.	RSC

Table 4: Visual Implementation Timeline (Gantt Chart Summary)

STRATEGIC AREA	YEAR 1 – FOUNDATION & MOBILIZATION	YEARS 2–3 – ACCELERATION & ADVOCACY	YEARS 4–5 – CONSOLIDATION & SUSTAINABILITY
GOVERNANCE & NETWORKS	Establish governance structures and grow membership.	Host annual regional summits to strengthen collaboration.	Develop sustainability strategies and leadership succession plans.
POLICY & ADVOCACY	Conduct baseline research, mapping and stakeholder analysis.	Launch targeted advocacy campaigns and submit policy briefs.	Monitor implementation of laws/policies and publish Youth Participation Scorecards.
CAPACITY BUILDING	Conduct needs assessment and develops standardized training curriculum.	Deliver large-scale training programs, bootcamps, and mentorship initiatives.	Institutionalize training through Train-the-Trainer programs and academic partnerships.
SECURITY & PROTECTION	Establish rapid-response protocols and formalize partnerships.	Conduct security workshops and launch public campaigns on safe political participation.	Integrate security considerations into all network programs and standard operating procedures.
COMMUNICATIONS & DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT	Build brand identity and establish official digital channels.	Amplify advocacy campaigns and online engagement.	Showcase impact, disseminate success stories, and highlight lessons learned.



MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (MEL) PLAN.



INTRODUCTION

The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan forms a foundational element of the East Africa Youth Political Participation Roadmap. It provides a systematic, evidence-driven mechanism to track implementation progress, measure achievement of intended outcomes, ensure accountability to all stakeholders (including youth networks, partners and donors) and foster continuous learning for adaptive management in a dynamic political environment.

More than a compliance or reporting tool, the MEL Plan functions as a strategic instrument that empowers the Regional Steering Committee (RSC), National Working Groups (NWGs), youth-led organizations and other partners to make informed, evidence-based decisions. By capturing both successes and challenges, it enables timely refinements to interventions, strengthens the overall effectiveness of efforts to enhance youth political engagement and clearly demonstrates the roadmap's regional impact on inclusive governance, democratic participation and youth empowerment across East Africa.

10.1 MONITORING, EVALUATION & LEARNING (MEL) APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK

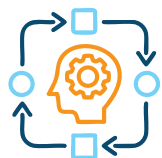
The MEL approach is anchored in three interconnected core principles that reflect best practices for youth-centered and politically sensitive programs:



RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT: Emphasis is placed on achieving meaningful, measurable outcomes and long-term impact rather than solely completing activities. Clear, relevant indicators track progress toward the roadmap's strategic goals, ensuring accountability, transparency and value for all stakeholders while focusing on sustainable changes in youth political participation.



PARTICIPATORY AND YOUTH-CENTERED PROCESS: Youth network members, young leaders and community representatives are actively involved at every stage, from designing indicators and collecting data to analyzing findings and reflecting on lessons learned. This inclusive approach builds ownership, empowers youth as co-creators of change, enhances the relevance and credibility of data and ensures the MEL system reflects the lived realities and priorities of young people across diverse contexts in East Africa.



ADAPTIVE LEARNING AND AGILITY: Insights generated through regular monitoring, periodic evaluations and reflective processes are systematically used to review performance, celebrate successes, diagnose bottlenecks and adjust strategies in real time. This principle supports responsiveness to evolving political landscapes, emerging opportunities (e.g., electoral cycles or policy shifts) and unforeseen challenges, thereby maximizing impact and relevance over the five-year roadmap period.

10.2 MONITORING, EVALUATION & LEARNING (MEL) FRAMEWORK

The MEL framework aligns directly with the roadmap's seven strategic goals, providing a structured, results-oriented structure for tracking progress. For each goal, the framework defines Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that capture both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of change.



Key components specified for each KPI include:

- **MEANS OF VERIFICATION:** Reliable methods and sources for collecting credible data (e.g., official election records, youth-led surveys, consultation attendance logs, case studies, stakeholder interviews and digital participation platforms).
- **BASELINE:** Initial data established in Year 1 (through rapid assessments, existing records, or baseline studies) to serve as the reference point for measuring change.
- **TARGETS:** Realistic, ambitious yet achievable goals set for the full five-year duration, with intermediate milestones where relevant to enable ongoing tracking and course correction.

This rigorous yet flexible framework ensures that progress remains measurable, lessons are systematically captured and shared and interventions stay responsive to the complex and evolving political, social and institutional dynamics in East Africa.

By integrating strong participatory elements, a focus on outcomes, and mechanisms for real-time adaptation, the MEL Plan not only documents achievements but actively contributes to strengthening youth political agency, fostering inclusive democratic processes and building a legacy of evidence-informed youth engagement across the region. Regular reviews (e.g., annual progress reports, mid-term evaluation and youth-led reflection sessions) will ensure the framework evolves alongside the roadmap's implementation.

Table 5: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Performance Matrix

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)		BASELINE (END OF YEAR 1)	5-YEAR TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)	FREQUENCY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)
1. ENHANCE CIVIC KNOWLEDGE AND LEADERSHIP CAPACITY	1.1 1.2 1.3	Number of youth (disaggregated by gender/identity) trained in core political skills. % of trainees reported significant improvement in confidence and skills (pre/post-training surveys). Number of active mentorship pairings established and maintained.	TBD	• 500+ youth trained • 80% report improved skills/confidence • 100+ active mentorship pairings	Attendance sheets, training reports, survey data, mentorship database	Quarterly / Annually
2. STRENGTHEN YOUTH-FRIENDLY LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS	2.1 2.2 2.3	Number of policy briefs or legislative proposals submitted. Number of advocacy meetings held with policymakers/influencers. Number of youth-centric laws, policies, or amendments passed or significantly influenced.	TBD	• 20+ policy briefs submitted • 50+ strategic meetings held • 3–5 policies influenced	Submitted briefs, meeting minutes, official records (Hansard), media reports	Annually



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)	BASELINE (END OF YEAR 1)	5-YEAR TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)	FREQUENCY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)
3. SECURE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR YOUTH IN POLITICS	3.1 Number of advocacy initiatives targeting the reduction of financial barriers for youth candidates. 3.2 Number of political parties adopting financial support or incentive mechanisms for youth candidates.	TBD	4 national advocacy campaigns 5+ political parties adopt youth-support policies	Campaign reports, party policy documents, official party statements	Annually
4. ENSURE SAFETY, SECURITY, AND AN END TO POLITICAL VIOLENCE	4.1 % of network members are trained in digital and physical security protocols. 4.2 Number of reported security incidents formally documented and addressed. 4.3 Reach and engagement of campaigns condemning political violence.	TBD	75% of active members trained 90% of reported incidents addressed 2M+ people reached	Training records, incident database, social media analytics, campaign reports	Quarterly / Annually
5. PROMOTE INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE AND INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE	5.1 Number of structured intergenerational dialogues held nationally/regionally. 5.2 Number of formal Youth Advisory Boards or consultative bodies established. 5.3 Change in senior politicians' perceptions of youth leadership (qualitative).	TBD	15+ dialogues held 2 advisory boards established - Positive perception trends reported	Event reports, photos/videos, official gazettes, key informant interviews	Annually

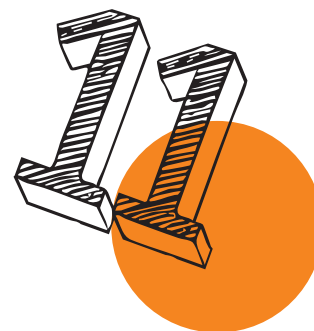


KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)	BASELINE (END OF YEAR 1)	5-YEAR TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION (MOV)	FREQUENCY	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS)
6. LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY FOR DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION	6.1 Growth in online community size and engagement. 6.2 Number of youths trained in digital literacy and online advocacy. 6.3 Number of digital campaigns launched and their reach/impact.	TBD	200% follower growth 250+ youth trained 10+ major campaigns launched	Social media analytics, training reports, campaign analytics	Quarterly
7. STRENGTHEN YOUTH COLLABORATION AND NETWORKS	7.1 % increase in active, registered network members. 7.2 Number of cross-border collaborative initiatives undertaken. 7.3 Attendee satisfaction rate and number of action points from Annual Regional Summit.	TBD	300% membership growth 5+ cross-border initiatives 85% participant satisfaction	Membership database, project reports, summit evaluation reports	Annually





DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND TOOLS



The mixed-methods approach is well-balanced and practical for capturing both measurable progress and nuanced insights into youth empowerment, political engagement and program impact.

QUANTITATIVE METHODS: These focus on trackable metrics for scale and trends:

- **SURVEYS:** pre-and post-training evaluations, annual membership surveys and program-specific assessments provide baseline and endline data on knowledge gains, attitude shifts, and satisfaction. Tools like Google Forms (free and easy for quick deployment), SurveyMonkey (robust analytics) and Kobo Toolbox (ideal for offline data collection in low-connectivity areas common in African contexts) are appropriate choices.
- **ACTIVITY TRACKING:** Monitors core implementation elements such as attendance, mentorship pairings, meetings and security incidents (important for safety in politically sensitive youth work). Tools include Excel/Google Sheets (widely accessible) and Airtable (more advanced database-like features for relational tracking).
- **DIGITAL ANALYTICS:** Measures online reach and engagement, crucial for youth-led campaigns in the digital age. Platforms like Twitter/X Analytics, Meta Insights (Facebook/Instagram), LinkedIn Analytics and YouTube Studio align well with how African youth consume and share political content.

QUALITATIVE METHODS: These add depth, context and human stories:

- **KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KIIS):** Target high-level stakeholders (policymakers, leaders, partners, youth reps) for strategic insights on barriers and enablers to youth political inclusion.
- **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDS):** Directly involve youth network members for grassroots feedback on program relevance and effectiveness.
- **Success Stories and Case Studies:** Powerful for advocacy, illustrating real-world impact (e.g., a young person influencing policy or overcoming barriers to participation).
- **MEDIA MONITORING:** Tracks public narratives, sentiment and visibility of youth political issues across traditional and digital media, helping assess broader societal shifts.

This combination ensures comprehensive evidence: numbers for donors/partners, stories for inspiration and insights for improvement.

11.1 ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND REPORTING FLOW

The governance integration is strong, creating clear accountability loops and promoting learning:

1. **NATIONAL WORKING GROUPS (NWGS):** Serve as the operational backbone, handling primary data collection with standardized tools. They submit quarterly reports to the regional level, ensuring country-specific contexts are captured while maintaining consistency.
2. **COMMUNICATIONS & ADVOCACY SUPPORT UNIT (CASU):** Specializes in communications KPIs (e.g., social media reach, campaign performance, public engagement). Quarterly updates to the RSC support advocacy efforts and visibility of youth voices.
3. **REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE (RSC):** Central hub for aggregation, analysis and decision-making.
 - Produces Quarterly Progress Reports for internal adaptive management.
 - Develops Annual Performance and Impact Reports shared with all stakeholders (youth, partners, agencies).
 - Hosts an Annual Review and Planning Workshop to translate MEL findings into strategic adjustments, excellent for continuous improvement.
4. **Development Partners:** Receive annual reports and join the annual workshop, providing external expertise, funding alignment and scaling support.





RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The effective implementation of the East Africa Youth Political Participation Roadmap hinges on robust planning, coordinated execution and proactive risk management. This Risk Management Plan establishes a clear, systematic framework for anticipating, assessing, prioritizing and responding to uncertainties that could undermine the roadmap's core objectives: meaningful youth political inclusion, leadership development and sustainable regional networks.

This document is a dynamic, living tool, regularly reviewed and updated by the roadmap's governance structures (including youth representatives), to foster resilience, adaptability and long-term impact. By embedding risk awareness across all levels, the plan safeguards youth agency, protects network credibility, preserves participant safety and ensures the roadmap remains responsive to East Africa's evolving socio-political landscape.

RISK CATEGORIES

Drawing from extensive stakeholder consultations, regional political-economy analysis and lessons from youth empowerment and political participation programs across Africa, risks are classified into five interconnected categories:

- 01** **POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL RISKS:** Shifts in government priorities, electoral cycles leading to policy reversals, political instability, elite capture, interference in youth-led processes, or inconsistent enforcement of legal frameworks for youth inclusion (e.g., constitutional quotas or youth councils).
- 02** **FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE RISKS:** Insufficient or unpredictable funding, donor fatigue, delays in disbursements, over-reliance on a narrow donor base, currency fluctuations, or competing regional priorities diverting resources.
- 03** **SECURITY AND PERSONAL SAFETY RISKS:** Physical threats, intimidation, harassment, gender-based violence, digital attacks (cyber-harassment, doxxing, surveillance), or reprisals against youth leaders, activists and network members, particularly in politically volatile contexts or during election periods.
- 04** **SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RISKS:** Deep-seated resistance to youth leadership, pervasive ageism, sexism, tribal/ethnic divisions, patriarchal norms, stigma against young women or marginalized youth, or cultural attitudes that undermine inclusive participation.
- 05** **OPERATIONAL AND INTERNAL RISKS:** Weak internal governance, poor coordination among regional/national networks, limited organizational capacity, leadership turnover, inadequate monitoring systems, or internal conflicts that erode trust and efficiency.



12.1 RISK ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Risks are evaluated using a standardized likelihood × impact matrix to determine overall risk levels and guide response priorities. This ensures resources are allocated effectively and responses are proportionate. Likelihood & Impact Scale

- **HIGH:** Very likely to occur (or almost certain in the current context) and/or causes major disruption to roadmap objectives, timelines, or stakeholder trust.
- **MEDIUM:** Reasonably possible under prevailing conditions and/or results in moderate setbacks requiring additional effort/resources.
- **LOW:** Unlikely in the foreseeable future and/or produces minimal or easily manageable effects.

Risk Level & Recommended Management Approach

- **CRITICAL:** High likelihood + High impact → Immediate attention: mandatory proactive mitigation, dedicated resources, regular high-level oversight, and robust contingency plans.
- **HIGH:** High likelihood + Medium impact OR Medium likelihood + High impact → Proactive management: targeted mitigation actions, ongoing monitoring, early-warning indicators, and tested contingency measures.
- **MEDIUM:** Medium likelihood + Medium impact OR Low likelihood + High impact → Regular monitoring: periodic review, contingency planning, and awareness-building among responsible parties.
- **LOW:** Low likelihood + Low/Medium impact → Routine awareness: minimal active intervention, periodic check-ins, and documentation for future reference.

For every identified risk, the roadmap governance team will document:

- **PROACTIVE MITIGATION MEASURES:** Preventive actions to reduce likelihood and/or severity (e.g., diversified partnerships, capacity-building, early engagement with duty-bearers, digital security protocols).
- **CONTINGENCY PLANS:** Trigger-based response actions to contain impact if the risk materializes (e.g., rapid reallocation of funds, alternative safe venues, crisis communication protocols, or temporary suspension/adaptation of activities).
- **RESPONSIBLE PARTIES & TIMELINES:** Clear accountability, including youth-led monitoring where appropriate.
- **MONITORING INDICATORS:** Early-warning signs and review frequency to enable adaptive management.

This enhanced framework promotes a culture of anticipation and shared responsibility, ensuring risks are not merely acknowledged but actively managed in ways that protect and empower youth as central agents of political change across East Africa. Regular updates (at least biannually or after major political events) will keep the plan relevant and effective.



Table 6: Risk Management Matrix

RISK CATEGORY	SPECIFIC RISK DESCRIPTION	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	RISK LEVEL	MITIGATION STRATEGIES (PROACTIVE)	CONTINGENCY PLAN (REACTIVE)	RESPONSIBLE BODY
POLITICAL & INSTITUTIONAL	Resistance or obstruction from established political elites who perceive youth empowerment as a threat.	High	High	Critical	Build alliances with reform-minded leaders; conduct evidence-based advocacy; use intergenerational dialogues to foster trust.	Launch coordinated public advocacy and media campaigns; pursue legal action if needed; mobilize grassroots and digital movements.	RSC & NWGs
	Tokenistic inclusion of youth without meaningful influence undermines the goal of genuine participation.	High	Medium	High	Define and promote clear metrics for meaningful participation; focus capacity-building on strategic influence; amplify examples of real youth impact.	Publish Political Party Scorecards; publicly highlight instances of tokenism through media and advocacy.	NWGs & CASU
	Co-optation of youth leaders or networks by corrupt systems, patronage networks, or state capture.	Medium	High	High	Enforce strict Code of Conduct; ensure transparent funding and decision-making; train youth to resist manipulation.	Activate ethics committee; disassociate from co-opted actors; seek support from independent anti-corruption bodies.	RSC
FINANCIAL & RESOURCE	Insufficient or inconsistent funding threatens the implementation and sustainability of the roadmap.	High	High	Critical	Diversify funding sources (donors, crowdfunding, private sector, membership dues); build transparent relationships with partners; tier activities by available resources.	Implement low-cost/no-cost plans; prioritize essential activities; launch emergency fundraising appeals.	RSC & NWGs
	Mismanagement or misappropriation of funds causes reputational damage.	Low	High	Medium	Implement robust financial controls (dual signatories, regular audits); provide transparent reports; train staff in financial compliance.	Commission independent audits; take swift corrective action; communicate openly with partners.	RSC



RISK CATEGORY	SPECIFIC RISK DESCRIPTION	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT	RISK LEVEL	MITIGATION STRATEGIES (PROACTIVE)	CONTINGENCY PLAN (REACTIVE)	RESPONSIBLE BODY
SECURITY & PERSONAL	Youth leaders, especially young women, face physical, digital, or legal threats.	High	High	Critical	Provide security training (digital/physical); establish a rapid-response system; partner with human rights and legal organizations.	Activate a rapid-response network for legal, medical, or relocation support; public advocacy against violence; document incidents for legal action.	NWGs
SOCIAL & CULTURAL	Public backlash, apathy, or negative stereotypes undermine youth participation.	Medium	High	High	Implement strategic communications highlighting the benefits of youth participation; showcase success stories; engage cultural and religious leaders as champions.	Deploy rapid-rebuttal teams to counter misinformation; organize town halls and community engagement forums.	CASU & NWGs
OPERATIONAL & INTERNAL	Internal disagreements, factionalism, or power struggles weaken the network.	Medium	High	High	Uphold governance structures with clear roles, a formal conflict resolution mechanism and foster collaboration through team-building.	Engage neutral third-party mediator; reiterate commitment to shared vision and Code of Conduct.	RSC
POLITICAL & INSTITUTIONAL	Volunteer burnout from the demanding nature of political advocacy.	High	Medium	High	Distribute workload effectively; promote peer support and mental well-being; celebrate achievements; develop succession plans.	Temporarily rotate duties; conduct workload reassessment; recruit additional members to expand the volunteer base.	NWGs



CONCLUSION & CALL TO ACTION



The responsibility before us is both profound and urgent. It is our duty to ensure that young people are no longer sidelined, overlooked, or marginalized, but instead are positioned at the very heart of political transformation in East Africa.

The East Africa Youth in Politics Roadmap is not merely a set of recommendations or aspirations. It is our collective commitment and our solemn promise that we will not rest until our societies fully embrace and institutionalize youth participation as a cornerstone of democracy, justice, and sustainable development.

This roadmap aligns seamlessly with the African Union's Agenda 2063, the continent's blueprint for an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa driven by its own citizens. In particular, it supports Aspiration 3 — an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law — and Aspiration 6 — a people-driven development agenda that harnesses the full potential of women and youth as the driving force behind the continent's political transformation. By prioritizing meaningful youth engagement in political processes, leadership and decision-making, this roadmap contributes directly to realizing the vision of an empowered, innovative and inclusive Africa where youth are not just participants but central architects of progress.

We therefore call upon Governments, Political Parties, Parliaments, Electoral Bodies, Civil Society, International Partners, Donors and the Private Sector to join hands with young people in driving this change.

- Governments must enact and enforce policies that guarantee youth quotas, lower barriers to political entry and create dedicated spaces for youth representation in decision-making bodies.
- Youth themselves must seize this moment — organize, educate, lead and hold leaders accountable while actively participating in civic and electoral processes.
- Donors and international partners are urged to prioritize funding and technical support for youth-led initiatives, capacity-building programs and reforms that institutionalize inclusive governance.

Together, we can and must build a region where the energy, creativity and leadership of our youth fuel inclusive governance, equitable policies and lasting peace.

We must make it clear that youth are not just beneficiaries of democracy but are custodians of it and that their voices must not only be heard but also acted upon and respected in every decision-making process. We must create systems and spaces where young people are not tokens but stakeholders, not afterthoughts but leaders in their own right.

The time for hesitation has passed. The time for empty promises without action has expired. The time for bold, decisive and united action is now. With unity of purpose, unwavering resolve and the courage to chart a new path, the East Africa Youth in Politics Roadmap will not remain idle words on paper. It will become a living, breathing and transformative force for change, one that reshapes the political destiny of our region, advances the aspirations of Agenda 2063 and secures a vibrant, democratic future for generations to come.

Let us act today — for the East Africa we want, and the Africa we deserve. Stand with us. Commit to implementation. Lead the transformation. The future is ours to shape.



NOTES



IMPLEMENTED BY:

Netherlands Institute for
Multiparty Democracy



WFD



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