

COUNTRY ACTION PLAN

Localizing the Roadmap for **Youth** In Politics
2026 - 2030



IMPLEMENTED BY:

Netherlands Institute for
Multiparty Democracy



WFD



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Netherlands Institute for
Multiparty Democracy

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The Kenya Country Action Plan (CAP) on Youth Political Participation (2025–2030) operationalizes the East Africa Regional Roadmap on Youth Political Participation by translating regional commitments into concrete, context-specific actions that address Kenya's political, legal and socio-economic realities. Developed by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), the Country Action Plan provides a structured framework to strengthen meaningful, inclusive and sustained youth participation in governance processes at the national, county and community levels.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAP	–	Country Action Plan
CASU	–	Communications and Advocacy Support Unit
MoU	–	Memorandum of Understanding
NIMD	–	Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy
NYC	–	National Youth Council
NWGs	–	National Working Groups
PWDs	–	Persons with Disabilities
RSC	–	Regional Steering Committee
URAIA	–	Organization/Partner
Bunge Mashinani	–	Local youth/political organization
IPYF	–	Inter Party Youth Forum
UCSPAK	–	Universities and Colleges Students' Peace Association of Kenya.





THE FRAMEWORK

The Kenya Country Action Plan (CAP) on Youth Political Participation (2025–2030) operationalizes the East Africa Regional Roadmap on Youth Political Participation by translating regional commitments into concrete, context-specific actions that address Kenya's political, legal and socio-economic realities. Developed by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), the Country Action Plan provides a structured framework to strengthen meaningful, inclusive and sustained youth participation in governance processes at the national, county and community levels.

In August, the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD) hosted a three-day conference with participants from East Africa, mainly from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Somaliland, to co-create a roadmap for youth in politics. From August 4 to 6, 2025, the Women and Youth in Democracy (WYDE) East Africa Regional Conference was held in Malindi, Kenya. The Malindi Conference revealed the untapped energy, creativity, innovation and determination among youth. A generation ready to transform politics into a space of inclusivity, accountability and progress. The conference demonstrated that when young people are given the right platform, they not only participate but also lead, inspire and redefine what leadership can look like. Evidently, youth are interested in running for office to provide alternative leadership and advance the interests and development of their local communities.

Notably, the youth bring fresh thinking, energy and creativity to the political process and these are factors beneficial to society. Marginalization and exclusion of youth in the decision-making process are detrimental to society.

Youth described numerous challenges that exist when they vie for office. Barriers to participation include limited information and awareness, limited financial resources, inadequate support from political parties, violence and social and cultural impediments. Participants also developed strategies to ensure meaningful youth participation and representation in politics and the creation of inclusive political activities that empower all young people.

This roadmap is not just a technical document embodying a set of proposals. It is a collective vision, an action plan and above all a call to service. The roadmap provides a structured pathway for enhancing youth civic empowerment, for nurturing leadership skills, driving legal and policy reforms and embracing digital innovation as a tool for accountability and mobilization. To continue efforts initiated at the regional levels and captured in the regional roadmap, to enhance youth political participation, a country action plan, in this case, for Kenya, has been developed.

The five-year action plan details concrete initiatives that can contribute to effective youth political participation in Kenya. The action plan aligns with the roadmap for youth political participation in the East Africa region. The commitments include promotion and enforcement of youth-inclusive legal frameworks, support of alternative forms of engagement through digital innovation and expansion of mentorship and leadership development spaces. Other commitments in the country action plan include investment in intersectional inclusion and cross-generational and fostering cross-generational platforms for political dialogue and coalition building.



The purpose of the Country Action Plan is to enhance youth political participation in Kenya by bridging gaps between activism and formal political engagement. It aims to:



The primary target groups are young women and men in Kenya, with deliberate focus on young women, persons with disabilities, rural youth and other marginalized groups. Secondary targets include youth-led organizations, political parties and their youth wings, government institutions, the National Youth Council, civil society organizations, media actors and development partners, all of whom play a critical role in shaping youth participation.

Through this Action Plan, youth are positioned not merely as participants but as active agents of democratic change, contributing to a more inclusive, accountable and future-oriented political system in Kenya.





HISTORY OF YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LESSONS LEARNED IN KENYA

Youth political participation in Kenya has a long, complex and evolving history, shaped by struggles for freedom, democratic reforms, socio-economic pressures and generational shifts in political consciousness. From the colonial era to the digital age, young people have consistently been at the forefront of political change and sometimes as organized reformers, sometimes as instruments of violence and increasingly as issue-based civic actors.

(1920s–1960s)

Colonial Era and Liberation Struggle

During the colonial period, Kenyan youth played a pivotal role in resistance against British rule. Young people were active in early nationalist movements such as the Kenya African Youth League and later became the backbone of the Mau Mau uprising of the 1950s. Youth served as fighters, messengers, organizers and mobilizers, driven by grievances over land dispossession, forced labor, racial discrimination and political exclusion.

(1990s–Early 2000s)

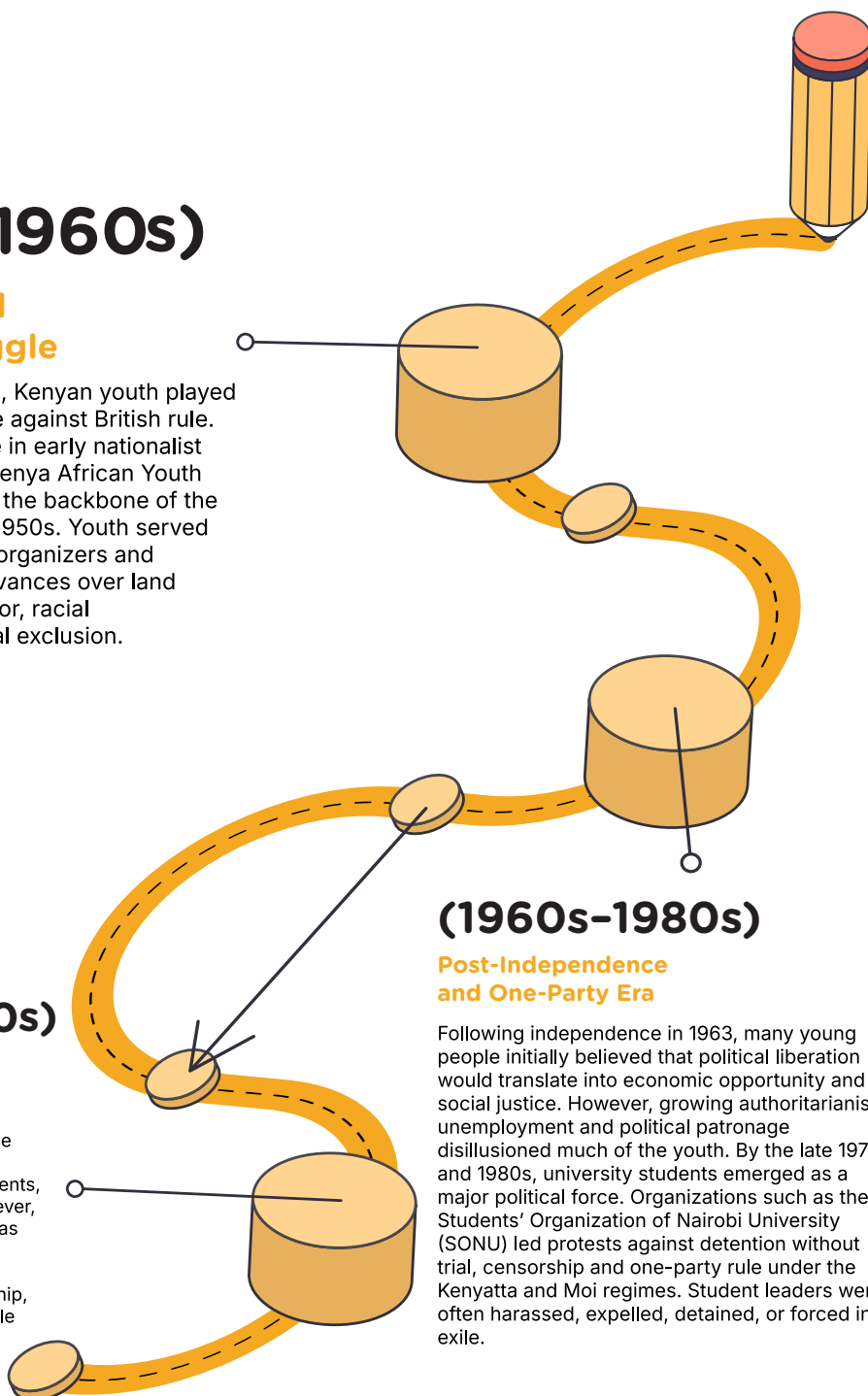
Multiparty Reforms and Political Liberalization

The reintroduction of multiparty politics in the early 1990s opened new political space and youth were active in pro-democracy movements, civic education and voter mobilization. However, political parties often co-opted youth wings as tools for mobilization rather than meaningful participation. Ethnic politics and patronage networks limited independent youth leadership, while high unemployment made young people vulnerable to political manipulation.

(1960s–1980s)

Post-Independence and One-Party Era

Following independence in 1963, many young people initially believed that political liberation would translate into economic opportunity and social justice. However, growing authoritarianism, unemployment and political patronage disillusioned much of the youth. By the late 1970s and 1980s, university students emerged as a major political force. Organizations such as the Students' Organization of Nairobi University (SONU) led protests against detention without trial, censorship and one-party rule under the Kenyatta and Moi regimes. Student leaders were often harassed, expelled, detained, or forced into exile.



2007/08

Post-Election Violence

The 2007/08 post-election violence marked a critical turning point. Youth were disproportionately involved both as perpetrators of violence and as its primary victims. Many were mobilized along ethnic lines by political elites, while others participated out of frustration, unemployment and social marginalization. The violence exposed the dangers of politicizing youth grievances without addressing their root causes.

2013–2022

Digital Activism and Issue-Based Engagement

The rise of social media transformed youth political participation. Platforms such as Twitter (X), Facebook and TikTok enabled young people to engage in political debate, expose corruption, mobilize campaigns and challenge state narratives. Movements like #MyDressMyChoice, #JusticeForKianjokoma and anti-corruption campaigns demonstrated growing issue-based activism beyond electoral politics.

2010

Constitutional Reform Process

The constitutional reform process that culminated in the promulgation of the 2010 Constitution saw renewed youth engagement through civil society, faith-based organizations and grassroots movements. Young people advocated for devolution, expanded rights, checks and balances and inclusion. The Constitution introduced progressive provisions on youth representation, public participation and leadership integrity.

2024–2025

Gen Z Protests

The Gen Z-led protests of 2024–2025 marked a significant generational shift. Unlike previous movements aligned with political parties or ethnic blocs, these protests were largely decentralized, non-partisan and driven by economic justice, anti-corruption demands, cost-of-living pressures and opposition to tokenistic youth inclusion. Mobilized primarily through digital platforms, Gen Z activists rejected traditional political leadership and demanded accountability, transparency and structural reforms.



2.1 LESSONS LEARNED FOR REGIONAL REPLICATION.

Youth in Kenya have historically been key drivers of political change from anti-colonial struggles and pro-democracy movements to digital and issue-based activism today. Their engagement demonstrates both the transformative potential of youth participation and the risks posed by exclusion, manipulation and socio-economic marginalization.

Key Lessons for Regional Replication:

1 **INSTITUTIONALIZE YOUTH PARTICIPATION:** Youth engagement is most effective when supported by robust legal, policy and institutional frameworks that provide clear leadership pathways, decision-making influence and accountability mechanisms.

2 **LINK POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION:** Genuine political participation requires addressing economic barriers, access to resources and structural inequalities that otherwise make youth vulnerable to co-optation or radicalization.

3 **HARNESS DIGITAL AND ISSUE-BASED PLATFORMS:** Digital tools expand civic participation, advocacy and accountability, but require safeguards such as digital rights protections, media literacy and resilience against misinformation.

4 **PROMOTE VALUES-DRIVEN ENGAGEMENT:** Contemporary youth prioritize accountability, transparency and policy outcomes over partisan loyalty, signaling a generational shift that governance systems must recognize and integrate.

5 **STRENGTHEN COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS:** Cross-sectoral collaboration among youth networks, government, civil society, political parties and development partners enhances collective impact and sustainability.

6 **INVEST IN CAPACITY AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:** Civic education, mentorship, leadership development and systematic documentation of best practices are critical to transforming episodic participation into sustained influence.





COUNTRY CONTEXT AND SITUATION ANALYSIS

1. NATIONAL BACKGROUND: ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

Kenya is a youthful nation, with nearly 80 per cent of the population aged 35 years and below. This demographic reality presents both an opportunity and a challenge for the country's democratic governance and socio-economic development. Youth unemployment, underemployment and economic precarity remain persistent challenges, limiting young people's ability to engage meaningfully in political life and compete for leadership positions.

Socially, Kenyan youth are increasingly educated, digitally connected and politically aware. They are actively shaping public discourse through social media, civic movements and issue-based advocacy. However, structural inequalities particularly affecting young women, rural youth and persons with disabilities continue to limit equitable access to political spaces.

Politically, Kenya operates under a devolved system of governance established by the 2010 Constitution, which opened new spaces for citizen participation, accountability and representation. Despite this progressive framework, youth participation in formal political institutions remains limited, with young people often engaged as voters or mobilizers rather than decision-makers.

2. RELEVANT POLICIES, STRATEGIES, AND COMMITMENTS

Kenya has made significant progress in establishing a legal and policy frameworks for youth participation in politics. Key instruments include:

- ❖ The Constitution of Kenya (2010), particularly:
 - ❖ **Article 55**, which mandates affirmative action to ensure youth participation in political, social and economic life;
 - ❖ **Articles 97 and 98**, which provide for youth representation in Parliament and the Senate.
- ❖ The National Youth Development Policy (2019), which provides a comprehensive framework for youth empowerment and participation aligned with national and international development goals.
- ❖ The National Youth Council Act (2009), which establishes the National Youth Council (NYC) as a formal mechanism for youth representation and engagement in governance.

These frameworks collectively signal a strong national commitment to youth inclusion. However, gaps remain in translating policy intent into practice, particularly through legislation, institutional coordination and resource allocation.

3. KEY CHALLENGES AND GAPS

Despite progressive policies, several challenges undermine effective youth political participation in Kenya:

- ❖ Weak enforcement and implementation of youth-related constitutional and policy provisions.
- ❖ Political co-optation of youth, particularly during electoral cycles, without sustained inclusion in decision-making.
- ❖ Limited institutional capacity, including the delayed establishment of key coordination structures such as the National Steering Inter-Agency Committee for the Youth Policy.
- ❖ High cost of political participation, limiting youth access to competitive political spaces.
- ❖ Inadequate civic education and leadership preparation, especially at the grassroots and county levels.
- ❖ Safety concerns and political violence, which disproportionately affect young people, particularly young women.

As a result, youth participation remains largely informal and episodic, expressed through protests, digital activism and creative resistance rather than structured political leadership.





STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Youth political participation in Kenya involves multiple stakeholders with varying roles and levels of influence:

- ❖ Youth and youth-led organizations are primary drivers of political mobilization, advocacy and innovation but often lack resources and institutional access.
- ❖ Government institutions at national and county levels hold the mandate to implement youth policies but face coordination and capacity challenges.
- ❖ Political parties play a critical gatekeeping role in candidate selection and leadership inclusion, yet youth wings often have limited influence.
- ❖ The National Youth Council (NYC) serves as a statutory platform for youth representation but requires strengthening to fully deliver on its mandate.
- ❖ Civil society organizations and INGOs, including NIMD, provide capacity-building, advocacy and convening support.
- ❖ Media, digital influencers and educational institutions shape public narratives and civic awareness among youth.
- ❖ Development partners support financing, technical assistance and regional alignment.
- ❖ Effective youth political participation requires improved coordination, clearer roles and stronger partnerships among these stakeholders.

VISION, OVERALL GOAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES



1. STRENGTHEN YOUTH REPRESENTATION AND INFLUENCE

Increase the meaningful participation and representation of youth in political and democratic processes at national, county and community levels, including within political parties, elected bodies and governance institutions by 2030.



2. ENHANCE CIVIC KNOWLEDGE AND LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

Improve civic awareness, democratic values and political leadership skills among young people, especially young women, persons with disabilities (PWDs), rural youth and other marginalized groups through structured civic education, mentorship and leadership development programmes by 2028.



3. PROMOTE YOUTH-INCLUSIVE LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Advocate for, strengthen and support the implementation and enforcement of constitutional, legal and policy provisions that promote youth participation in politics, including reforms within political parties and strengthened youth governance institutions by 2030.



4. IMPROVE ECONOMIC ACCESS AND POLITICAL FINANCING FOR YOUTH

Reduce economic and financial barriers to youth political participation by promoting equitable political financing mechanisms, lowering campaign costs and strengthening youth access to resources and fundraising opportunities by 2029.



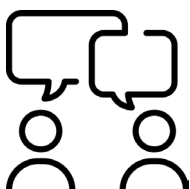
5. FOSTER SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND NON-VIOLENT POLITICAL SPACES

Promote peaceful political engagement and protect young people, particularly young women and marginalized youth, from political violence, intimidation, harassment and exploitation through preventive, protective and accountability mechanisms by 2030.



6. LEVERAGE DIGITAL INNOVATION FOR DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

Expand the use of digital technologies and platforms to enhance youth civic engagement, political mobilization, advocacy, transparency and accountability, while strengthening digital safety, resilience and media literacy among youth by 2027.



7. STRENGTHEN YOUTH NETWORKS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE

Build strong, coordinated youth networks and partnerships across political parties, government institutions, civil society, media and development partners and promote sustained intergenerational dialogue to support collective action and long-term youth political inclusion by 2030.





MAIN INTERVENTION AREAS

To operationalize the Kenya Country Action Plan and contribute to the outcomes of the East Africa Regional Roadmap, seven interrelated intervention areas will guide implementation during the 2025–2030 period.

1. PROMOTE THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS

Targeted awareness and public engagement initiatives will be implemented to underscore the value of youth participation in democratic governance and leadership. These initiatives will aim to challenge negative stereotypes, address social and structural barriers to youth political aspirations and promote leadership that reflects Kenya's demographic realities. Emphasis will be placed on advancing meaningful youth representation across national, county and community levels of governance.

2. STIMULATE YOUTH INTEREST AND ENTRY INTO POLITICAL LIFE

Efforts will be made to increase youth interest in politics by improving access to timely, accurate and youth-friendly information on political processes, leadership pathways and opportunities for engagement. Digital and traditional media platforms will be leveraged to highlight positive youth leadership stories, role models and entry points into political participation, particularly for young women and marginalized groups.

3. BUILD YOUTH CAPACITY AND READINESS FOR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Youth with an interest in political participation will be identified and supported through structured capacity-building programmes, mentorship, peer learning and leadership development initiatives. These interventions will strengthen skills in governance, public policy, campaigning, negotiation and ethical leadership. Technology will be used to expand reach, facilitate learning, and support sustained youth engagement beyond electoral cycles.

4. STRENGTHEN CIVIC EDUCATION AND POLITICAL LITERACY

Comprehensive civic education programmes will be delivered at community, campus and online levels to enhance youth understanding of democratic values, constitutional rights and governance systems. Special attention will be given to reaching young people at formative stages and in underserved areas. Partnerships with media houses, educational institutions and digital influencers will be strengthened to amplify youth-centered governance narratives and counter misinformation.

5. ADVANCE YOUTH-INCLUSIVE LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

The CAP will support the formulation, strengthening and effective implementation of laws, policies and institutional reforms that promote youth participation in politics. Advocacy efforts will focus on enforcing existing constitutional provisions, improving youth-friendly policies and addressing legal and procedural barriers that limit youth access to political leadership and decision-making spaces.

6. IMPROVE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO POLITICAL FINANCING AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES

Recognizing that financial constraints remain a major barrier to youth participation in politics, the CAP will promote equitable political financing measures for young candidates and youth-led initiatives. Engagement with government institutions, political parties and regulatory bodies will seek to reduce campaign cost barriers, promote transparent financing mechanisms and strengthen youth capacity in resource mobilization and fundraising.

7. ENHANCE YOUTH PARTICIPATION WITHIN POLITICAL PARTIES AND LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

Political parties will be supported to strengthen youth wings, leagues and internal governance structures to enable meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes. Deliberate efforts will be encouraged to promote youth-friendly nomination procedures, leadership pipelines and policy influence mechanisms. Particular emphasis will be placed on supporting capable, ethical and visionary young leaders to contest for elective and appointive positions.





PRIORITY ACTIONS

1. CIVIC AWARENESS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- ❖ Conduct nationwide and county-level awareness campaigns on the importance of youth participation in politics.
- ❖ Promote positive youth leadership narratives through traditional and digital media.
- ❖ Support youth-led advocacy initiatives and public dialogues.

2. CIVIC EDUCATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ Implement targeted civic education programmes in communities, campuses and online platforms.
- ❖ Develop leadership, governance and political skills training for youth aspiring to public office.
- ❖ Establish mentorship programmes linking youth with experienced political leaders and reform champions.

3. LEGAL AND POLICY REFORM

- ❖ Advocate for the enforcement and implementation of youth-related constitutional provisions and policies.
- ❖ Support reforms within political parties to enhance youth inclusion in leadership and candidate selection processes.
- ❖ Strengthen the role and effectiveness of the National Youth Council and other youth governance institutions.

4. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN POLITICAL PARTIES

- ❖ Support political parties to strengthen youth wings and leagues.
- ❖ Encourage parties to adopt youth-friendly nomination processes and internal democracy reforms.
- ❖ Promote meaningful participation of youth in party decision-making structures.

5. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND POLITICAL FINANCING

- ❖ Advocate for equitable political financing mechanisms for young candidates.
- ❖ Engage government, political parties and regulatory bodies to reduce campaign cost barriers.
- ❖ Support resource mobilization and fundraising capacity for youth-led political initiatives.

6. DIGITAL DEMOCRACY AND INNOVATION

- ❖ Leverage digital platforms for civic education, political mobilization and issue-based advocacy.
- ❖ Support youth-led digital campaigns, data-driven activism and accountability initiatives.
- ❖ Build digital safety and resilience skills to counter online harassment and misinformation.

7. SAFETY, INCLUSION, AND NON-VIOLENCE

- ❖ Promote peaceful political participation and address political violence targeting youth.
- ❖ Support initiatives addressing gender-based violence and harassment in political spaces.
- ❖ Strengthen protection mechanisms for young women and marginalized youth in politics.

8. PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

- ❖ Strengthen collaboration among youth organizations, government institutions, political parties, civil society and development partners.
- ❖ Support National Working Groups (NWGs) and alignment with the Regional Steering Committee (RSC).
- ❖ Facilitate regular consultations and learning exchanges at national and county levels.





PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND ACTIONS

PRIORITY AREA	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY	TIMELINE	EXPECTED OUTPUT
1. CIVIC AWARENESS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	Conduct national and county-level youth civic awareness campaigns using town halls, social media and community dialogues	NIMD	Jan 2026 – Dec 2027	Increased youth awareness on political participation rights and opportunities across counties
2. CIVIC EDUCATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	Implement structured civic education and leadership training for youth leaders, students and grassroots activists	NIMD	Jul 2025 – Jun 2029	Improved civic knowledge, leadership skills and political readiness among diverse youth groups
3. LEGAL AND POLICY REFORM	Advocate for the enforcement of youth-related constitutional provisions and strengthen youth-inclusive political party reforms	NIMD	Jan 2026 – Dec 2030	Strengthened implementation of youth-inclusive laws, policies and party regulations
4. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN POLITICAL PARTIES	Support inter-party youth platforms and promote youth participation in party decision-making and nominations	NIMD	Mar 2026 – Dec 2028	Increased meaningful youth representation within political party leadership structures
5. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND POLITICAL FINANCING	Promote equitable political financing mechanisms and build fundraising capacity for young political aspirants	NIMD	Jan 2027 – Dec 2029	Reduced financial barriers and improved access to political resources for youth candidates
6. DIGITAL DEMOCRACY AND INNOVATION	Support youth-led digital civic engagement, advocacy campaigns and digital safety training	NIMD	Sep 2025 – Dec 2027	Enhanced digital civic participation, safer online engagement and issue-based youth activism
7. SAFETY, INCLUSION AND NON-VIOLENCE	Promote peaceful political participation and protection mechanisms for young women and marginalized youth	NIMD	Jan 2026 – Dec 2030	Safer, more inclusive political spaces with reduced youth-targeted violence
8. PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION	Strengthen national and county-level coordination through youth networks, National Working Group (NWGs) and regional learning exchanges	NIMD	Nov 2025 – Dec 2030	Stronger partnerships, coordination and alignment with the Regional Roadmap





EXPECTED OUTCOMES



Increased and sustained youth participation in political processes beyond electoral cycles, including decision-making, policy influence and leadership roles.



Improved civic knowledge and leadership capacity among young people, enabling them to effectively engage in democratic governance.



Stronger implementation of youth-inclusive laws and policies, resulting in reduced structural barriers to youth participation.



Enhanced representation of youth, particularly young women, PWDs, and rural youth in elected and appointed political positions.



More youth-responsive political parties, with inclusive structures, transparent nomination processes and meaningful youth leadership roles.



Expanded use of digital tools for youth political engagement, accountability, advocacy and mobilization.



Safer and more inclusive political spaces, with reduced violence, intimidation and exclusion of young people.



Stronger coordination and partnerships among stakeholders, contributing to sustainable and localized implementation of the East Africa Regional Roadmap on Youth Political Participation.





PROPOSED COUNTRY ACTION PLAN

The Kenya Country Action Plan (CAP) operationalizes the East Africa Regional Roadmap on Youth Political Participation by translating regional commitments into context-specific, implementable and measurable actions that respond to Kenya's political, legal and socio-economic realities.

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE COUNTRY ACTION PLAN

The CAP is designed to contribute directly to priority outcomes identified in the East Africa Regional Roadmap, with a focus on:

- ❖ Enhancing youth civic knowledge, leadership capacity and political readiness;
- ❖ Strengthening youth-inclusive legal, policy and institutional frameworks;
- ❖ Improving economic access and political financing opportunities for youth in politics.

In addition, the CAP addresses cross-cutting priorities including the promotion of safe and non-violent political participation, inclusive governance and intergenerational dialogue, responsible use of digital technology for democratic engagement and the strengthening of youth networks and collective action platforms.

II. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT AND COHERENCE

The CAP is strategically aligned with both the Regional Roadmap and Kenya's national development and governance frameworks. Specifically, it aligns with:

- ❖ The Constitution of Kenya (2010);
- ❖ The National Youth Development Policy (2019);
- ❖ Kenya Vision 2030;
- ❖ The Political Parties Act;
- ❖ Regional and international instruments, including the African Youth Charter and the World Programme of Action for Youth.

This alignment ensures policy coherence, avoids duplication of efforts, strengthens institutional ownership and enhances the sustainability of interventions aimed at advancing youth political participation.

III. PROJECT SELECTION, PRIORITIZATION, AND APPROVAL MECHANISMS

The CAP incorporates a portfolio of priority projects identified under the East Africa Regional Roadmap for the period 2025–2030. At the same time, it remains flexible and adaptive, allowing for the inclusion of new initiatives proposed by youth, civil society, political parties and other stakeholders during the implementation period.

All proposed initiatives will be:

- ❖ Assessed against agreed eligibility and quality criteria;
- ❖ Reviewed and endorsed through established governance structures, including the Regional Steering Committee (RSC), National Working Groups (NWGs) and the Communications and Advocacy Support Unit (CASU);
- ❖ Selected based on their relevance, feasibility, contribution to roadmap outcomes and potential for impact.



Regular consultative forums will be convened to ensure continuous stakeholder engagement, transparency in decision-making and alignment with evolving political and social dynamics.

IV. LOCALIZATION AND DEMAND-DRIVEN IMPLEMENTATION

Beyond national-level actions, the CAP emphasizes localization through the development of complementary action plans at county and community levels. These localized plans will be co-created with youth and key partners to address context-specific barriers and opportunities for youth political participation.

The CAP adopts a demand-driven approach, offering a flexible menu of support options to local partners. Interventions will be tailored to strengthen:

- ❖ Civic awareness and political literacy;
- ❖ Youth-inclusive legal and policy environments;
- ❖ Economic empowerment and access to political resources;
- ❖ Safe, inclusive, and participatory political spaces.

This approach ensures responsiveness to youth priorities while maintaining alignment with regional and national objectives.

V. PARTNERSHIPS, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Implementation of the CAP will be anchored in strong multi-stakeholder partnerships involving:

- ❖ Youth and youth-led organizations;
- ❖ National and county governments;
- ❖ Political parties and youth leagues;
- ❖ The National Youth Council;
- ❖ Civil society and international organizations, including NIMD, URAIA, Bunge Mashinani, IPYF, and UCSPAK;
- ❖ Media, digital influencers, educational institutions and electoral management bodies.

Technical assistance will be provided primarily through NIMD Kenya, supported by regional expertise and emerging partnerships. Core funding will be drawn from NIMD resources, complemented by additional funding mobilized from development partners and aligned financing mechanisms.

VI. INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

The CAP provides a structured framework for translating the East Africa Regional Roadmap into tangible and sustainable results in Kenya. It seeks to institutionalize youth political participation by embedding youth-inclusive practices within government systems, political parties and civic institutions.

By promoting youth-led initiatives, strengthening coordination among stakeholders and fostering accountability, the CAP ensures that young women and men are not only engaged as participants but recognized as active agents of democratic change at national, county, and community levels.





Partnerships are central to the successful implementation of the Country Action Plan (CAP) and the achievement of the intended outcomes of the East Africa Regional Roadmap on Youth Political Participation. Given the multi-dimensional nature of youth political participation, no single actor can deliver a sustainable impact in isolation. The Country Action Plan (CAP) therefore adopts a collaborative and multi-stakeholder partnership approach that promotes shared responsibility, mutual accountability and collective action.

Strategic partnerships will enhance coordination, reduce duplication of efforts and create synergies across initiatives aimed at strengthening youth participation in political and democratic processes. Through structured collaboration, partners will contribute to joint planning, implementation, monitoring and learning, while sharing information, expertise and best practices. This approach will also facilitate the identification of complementary and innovative programming that responds to evolving political contexts and youth priorities.

Partnerships will further serve as key mechanisms for mobilizing financial, technical and institutional resources necessary for the effective implementation of the Country Action Plan (CAP). Engagement with development partners will support resource mobilization, technical assistance and alignment with regional and international commitments. At the same time, collaboration with national and county government institutions will strengthen policy ownership, institutional integration and sustainability of youth participation initiatives.

The Country Action Plan (CAP) will actively promote inclusive partnerships involving youth and youth-led organizations, government institutions, political parties, the National Youth Council, civil society organizations, academia, media actors, digital platforms and the private sector. Particular emphasis will be placed on ensuring meaningful participation of young women, persons with disabilities and marginalized youth groups within partnership structures and decision-making processes.

To operationalize the partnership strategy, formal and informal coordination mechanisms, including Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), joint workplans, thematic working groups and regular consultation forums will be established or strengthened. These mechanisms will facilitate continuous dialogue, accountability, learning and adaptation throughout the Country Action Plan (CAP) implementation period.

Through strong, inclusive and well-coordinated partnerships, the Country Action Plan (CAP) seeks to foster a supportive ecosystem that enables young women and men to move from symbolic participation to substantive influence in Kenya's political and governance processes.





The implementation of the Country Action Plan (CAP) will be hosted and coordinated by the Netherlands Institute of Multiparty Democracy (NIMD). In this role, NIMD will provide overall technical coordination, administrative oversight and programmatic support to ensure coherent and effective delivery of CAP interventions.

CAP management will be undertaken in close consultation with the Regional Steering Committee (RSC), National Working Groups (NWGs) and the Communications and Advocacy Support Unit (CASU). These coordination structures will provide strategic guidance, oversight and technical input, ensuring alignment with the East Africa Regional Roadmap, national priorities and agreed implementation standards.

The management approach will emphasize inclusivity, transparency and shared ownership among stakeholders. Regular coordination meetings, progress reviews and consultative forums will be convened to facilitate information sharing, joint decision-making and adaptive management. This collaborative governance structure will enable timely identification of challenges, integration of lessons learned and continuous improvement throughout the CAP implementation period.

Through this coordinated management framework, the CAP aims to strengthen accountability, enhance stakeholder participation and ensure that planned interventions contribute meaningfully to advancing youth political participation in Kenya.





MONITORING & EVALUATION (M&E) MATRIX

RESULTS LEVEL	KEY RESULTS	CORE INDICATORS (KPIs)	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	RESPONSIBILITY
IMPACT	Meaningful, inclusive and sustained youth political participation in Kenya	❖ Increased youth representation in elected, nominated and appointed positions ❖ Improved youth influence in policy and decision-making	❖ Electoral, Nominated and appointment records ❖ Policy and institutional reports and Bills ❖ End-line evaluation	NIMD
OUTCOME 1	Improved civic knowledge and leadership capacity among youth	❖ % of youth demonstrating improved civic and leadership skills ❖ Number of trained youths engaged in governance processes	❖ Pre/post training assessments ❖ Participation records	NIMD
OUTCOME 2	Stronger youth-inclusive legal, policy and institutional frameworks	❖ Youth-inclusive reforms influenced or implemented ❖ Improved enforcement of youth-related constitutional provisions	❖ Policy briefs ❖ Legal and institutional review reports	NIMD
OUTCOME 3	Reduced economic barriers to youth political participation	❖ Number of youth aspirants accessing fundraising and financing support ❖ Reported reduction in cost-related barriers	❖ Training reports ❖ Youth feedback surveys	NIMD
OUTCOME 4	Safer and more inclusive political spaces for youth	❖ Reduced incidents of youth-targeted political violence and harassment ❖ Increased perception of safety among youth	❖ Incident tracking reports ❖ Participant surveys	NIMD
OUTCOME 5	Strengthened youth networks, partnerships and coordination	❖ Functional National Working Groups (NWGs) ❖ Active multi-stakeholder platforms and dialogues	❖ Meeting minutes ❖ Coordination reports	NIMD
OUTPUTS	Civic education, digital engagement, advocacy, party reform support and coordination activities delivered	❖ Activities implemented as planned across counties ❖ Youth reached and engaged (disaggregated)	❖ Activity reports ❖ Digital analytics	NIMD
KEY ASSUMPTIONS	Civic space remains open; youth remain engaged beyond protests; political actors are open to dialogue		❖ Context analysis and risk monitoring	NIMD





CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Kenyan youth are not peripheral to the country's political life; they are actively shaping its democratic trajectory, often through innovative, non-traditional and issue-based forms of engagement. From digital activism and civic movements to community organizing and electoral participation, young people continue to demonstrate agency, leadership and a strong commitment to accountability and social justice. However, their ability to translate this energy into sustained political influence remains constrained by structural, institutional, economic and socio-cultural barriers, as well as limited access to formal decision-making spaces.

This Country Action Plan responds to these challenges by providing a structured and coordinated framework to advance meaningful, inclusive and sustained youth political participation in Kenya. Its successful implementation will require deliberate action, long-term commitment and collective responsibility from government institutions, political parties, civil society, development partners and youth themselves.

To ensure that youth political participation becomes more impactful, institutionalized and enduring, the following recommendations are proposed:

- ❖ **Strengthen enforcement of youth-inclusive legal and policy frameworks**, including constitutional provisions and sectoral policies, to move from formal recognition of youth rights to practical and measurable outcomes.
- ❖ **Support and legitimize alternative and emerging forms of political engagement**, particularly through digital innovation, issue-based advocacy and civic technology, while safeguarding digital rights and freedom of expression.
- ❖ **Expand mentorship, leadership development and political skills-building initiatives**, with clear pathways linking capacity development to opportunities for participation, representation and leadership.
- ❖ **Invest in intersectional inclusion**, with targeted support for young women, persons with disabilities (PWDs), rural youth and other marginalized groups, to address unequal access to political spaces and resources.
- ❖ **Promote structured cross-generational dialogue and coalition-building platforms**, fostering mutual learning, trust and collaboration between youth and established political actors to strengthen democratic continuity and reform.

Ultimately, Kenya's democratic resilience and governance renewal will depend not only on the numerical presence of young people in political processes, but on their ability to meaningfully influence policy, institutions and political culture on their own terms. By embedding youth participation within systems of accountability, inclusion and shared leadership, this Country Action Plan seeks to contribute to a more responsive, representative and future-oriented democracy.



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