2025

KENYA CIVIL SOCIETY POSITION PAPER FOR NINTH TOKYO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

"Reimagining Kenya-Japan Cooperation for Inclusive Growth and Community-Driven Development"

SDGs KENYA FORUM
Coalition for Sustainable Development

Acknowledgement

The SDGs Kenya Forum acknowledges the invaluable contributions of its member organizations and other stakeholders who provided insights that enriched this position paper.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
AUC	African Union Commission
BETA	Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
FBOs	Faith-Based Organizations
GoK	Government of Kenya
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KEMRI	Kenya Medical Research Institute
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTP	Medium Term Plan
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDEP	State Department for Economic Planning
TICAD	Tokyo International Conference on African Development
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank

Executive Summary

The Ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9) presents an integrated platform for advancing Kenya-Japan cooperation in alignment with national development priorities under the Kenya Vision 2030, the Fourth Medium-Term Plan (MTP IV), the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), African Union Agenda 2063, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This position paper was developed by the SDGs Kenya Forum in collaboration with its members organizations. It articulates Kenya's civil society priorities within TICAD 9's thematic pillars: Society, Economy, and Peace and Stability, alongside key cross-cutting issues such as climate action, governance, gender equality, and digital transformation. The paper underscores the vital role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as catalysts for inclusive, community-driven, and evidence-based approaches that ensure TICAD outcomes are impactful and equitable at national and sub-national levels.

Kenyan CSOs have demonstrated innovative solutions across sectors - ranging from community-led renewable energy models, women economic empowerment initiatives, and youth digital innovation hubs, to peacebuilding networks that have mitigated inter-communal conflicts. However, their participation in TICAD processes is hindered by structural barriers including limited access to official dialogue platforms, inadequate funding, weak grassroots inclusion, and fragmented engagement at regional and continental TICAD forums. The position paper identifies actionable opportunities such as institutionalizing CSO participation in national coordination frameworks, strengthening county-level monitoring of TICAD projects, and leveraging South-South and triangular cooperation for knowledge exchange and replication of innovations.

The recommendations presented in this paper call on the Government of Kenya to enact legal and institutional reforms to safeguard civic space, integrate CSOs into TICAD implementation and monitoring structures, and enhance resource allocation for community-led initiatives. TICAD co-hosts and development partners are urged to provide predictable and accessible funding for CSO programmes, promote inclusive policy dialogues, and foster cross-border learning with Japanese and African CSOs. The private sector is encouraged to invest in local innovations, form public-private-civil society partnerships, and co-create scalable solutions for inclusive growth. CSO networks are urged to strengthen coordination, enhance evidence-based advocacy, and expand grassroots representation in national, regional, continental, and global TICAD processes.

This position paper affirms SDGs Kenya Forum's commitment to co-creating sustainable solutions through active engagement in TICAD processes, continuous follow-up on implementation outcomes, and fostering multi-level partnerships. The evidence informed asks to the Government of Kenya, TICAD co-hosts, development partners, and private sector actors reflect a unified civil society voice determined to ensure that Kenya's approach to the implementation of TICAD 9 commitments translates into tangible socio-economic transformation for communities across the country.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About Tokyo International Conference on African Development

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) is a high-level multilateral forum launched in 1993 by the Government of Japan to promote peace, stability, and sustainable development on the African continent. It is co-organized by the Government of Japan, the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (UN-OSAA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank and African Union Commission (AUC). TICAD aims at promoting high-level policy dialogue between African leaders and development partners, and mobilizing support for African-owned development initiatives and international partnership. Now in its ninth conference, TICAD has evolved from a donor-recipient framework to a platform for co-creating context-specific, resilient, and people-centered development solutions.

Over the years, TICAD has become a key pillar of Africa-Japan cooperation, providing a structured avenue for aligning Japanese foreign assistance with continental and national development priorities, including the African Union Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Each TICAD summit and its preparatory processes - ministerial meetings, thematic events, and partner consultations - culminate in inclusive and high impact commitments, and action plans that prioritize economic transformation, human dignity, peacebuilding, social inclusion, and climate resilience. Previous TICAD conferences have mobilized significant financial and technical cooperation, catalyzed investment in priority sectors such as health, infrastructure, education, and agriculture, and strengthened policy dialogue between African governments and Japan.

TICAD is also notable for its inclusive design that recognizes the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), research institutions, and grassroots actors as co-implementers and knowledge partners. The process fosters multi-stakeholder participation and encourages the representation of African voices at all levels - national, regional, and continental. For Kenyan civil society, TICAD presents an opportunity not only to influence bilateral and multilateral cooperation but also to highlight locally led solutions that advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As TICAD 9 approaches under the theme *"Co-create Innovative Solutions with Africa"*, it offers a timely platform for civil society to reaffirm its role in building resilient, human rights-based, and sustainable communities in Kenya and across Africa.

1.2 SDGs Kenya Forum

The SDGs Kenya Forum is an inclusive membership platform bringing together over 350 diverse CSOs working across the 17 SDGs. The Forum is a voluntary membership entity open to CSOs, academia, media and the private sector who subscribe to the value of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and its 17 SDGs, and their realization in Kenya. Its mandate is to influence multi-stakeholder policies and actions for sustainable development, working closely with national and county governments through formal mechanisms such as the Inter-Agency Technical Working Committee on SDGs - a body it co-chairs - while ensuring marginalized voices are integrated into SDGs planning, budgeting, and accountability processes.

With citizens at the centre, the Forum engages all stakeholders to implement, monitor and report on the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and its 17 SDGs. Anchored in its core pillars - *Data and Research, Localization, Accountability, Gender and Women Empowerment, and Global Advocacy*, the Forum plays a central role in mainstreaming civil society perspectives into Kenya's SDG tracking and reporting frameworks.

With a strong focus on localization and community engagement, the Forum supports Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and biennial SDGs status reports by coordinating CSO inputs and participatory consultations in counties across the Country. It has raised awareness through community dialogues in counties and facilitated goal-specific working groups - such as SDG 16 cluster to ensure systematic CSO input on governance, justice, human rights and civic engagement. Through its data partnerships (including an MoU with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics), the Forum enhances evidence-use and promotes citizen-generated data to track progress, support policy advocacy, and reinforce the principles of inclusivity and transparency in implementation of SDGs in Kenya.

1.3 Rationale

TICAD has evolved into a pivotal platform for shaping Africa-Japan cooperation, offering African countries an opportunity to engage development partners on shared priorities of peace, prosperity, and people-centered transformation. For the TICAD 9, there is need for a coordinated, evidence-informed, and inclusive civil society voice. This position paper ensures that the perspectives,

innovations, and development realities of Kenyan citizens - especially those often left behind - are reflected in national and continental policy dialogues. It provides a structured avenue for CSOs to contribute to bilateral and multilateral commitments, financing priorities, and implementation frameworks in ways that are grounded in the lived experiences and transformative potential of communities across Kenya.

Kenya's national development trajectory, anchored in the Kenya Vision 2030 and its Fourth Medium-Term Plan (MTP IV) 2023-2027, and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) 2022 - 2027, emphasizes inclusive growth, grassroots-driven development, and enhanced citizen engagement. These principles resonate with both the SDGs and the seven (7) aspiration of the African Union Agenda 2063. This position paper serves as a tool for aligning Kenya's TICAD 9 engagements with these frameworks, ensuring policy coherence and reinforcing the principle of *'leaving no one behind'*. In addition, the paper consolidates civil society recommendations and lessons learnt from implementation, monitoring, and advocacy efforts at national and county levels.

1.4 Objectives and Scope

Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to present a unified and evidence-based civil society position that informs Kenya's engagement in TICAD 9 and contributes to more inclusive, accountable, and people-centered Africa-Japan cooperation. Specifically, the position paper aims to:

i. Highlight civil society priorities, innovations, and solutions that align with the TICAD 9 theme *"Co-create Innovative Solutions with Africa."*;
ii. Assess Kenya's progress in implementing past TICAD commitments from a grassroots and civil society perspective;
iii. Provide practical policy recommendations for the Government of Kenya, development partners, and TICAD stakeholders to strengthen inclusive development, peace, and economic transformation; and
iv. Position Kenya's civil society experience within broader African and global policy dialogues on TICAD, African Union Agenda 2063, and the SDGs.

Scope

The position paper draws from national and sub-national experiences across Kenya's 47 counties, reflecting the voices of civil society, communities, and local innovators. It incorporates sectoral and regional insights, linking Kenya's experience to broader African development priorities. The paper is intended for policymakers, CSOs, development partners, foreign missions, the private

sector, and TICAD co-organizers. It contributes to national, regional, and global policy dialogues on sustainable development and Africa-Japan cooperation.

1.5 Methodology

The position paper was developed through a participatory and evidence-informed process led by the SDGs Kenya Forum, drawing on both primary and secondary sources. It is grounded in the outcomes of continuous consultative engagements with the Forum's goal group members and civil society stakeholders across Kenya. The paper draws from official government documents, TICAD outcome reports, regional and global policy frameworks, and analytical literature from various institutions, including the Government of Kenya, African Union Commission, United Nations Agencies, and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). A thematic analysis approach was applied to synthesize stakeholder perspectives, community experiences, and policy priorities. The paper integrates insights from national, county, and sectoral civil society actors, ensuring that the recommendations reflect diverse realities across Kenya's development landscape.

2. OVERVIEW OF CSOS PARTICIPATION IN TICAD IMPLEMENTATION IN KENYA

2.1 Kenya's Participation and Evolving Role in the TICAD Process

Kenya has participated in all TICAD Summits represented by the Head of State and Ministerial meetings represented by the Cabinet Secretary responsible for Economic Planning since inception in 1993. Kenya's participation became particularly significant during TICAD VI, held in Nairobi in August 2016 - *the first time the conference was hosted in Africa,* symbolizing a milestone in African ownership of the process and aligning closely with the African Union Agenda 2063. The former Kenyan President H.E Uhuru Kenyatta, co-chaired the summit alongside Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, former Chairperson of the African Union. This affirms Kenya's commitment to sustaining Africa-Japan cooperation under the principles of African ownership and mutual partnership. TICAD VI - emphasized Kenya's leadership role in advancing regional development dialogues and policy coordination with Japan.

In subsequent conferences - TICAD VII (Yokohama, 2019) and TICAD VIII (Tunis, 2022) - Kenya continued to send high-level multi-sector delegations comprising government officials, research institutions, youth groups, CSOs, and private sector representatives. This reflects the nation's deepening commitment to shaping agenda-setting dialogues on governance, investment, resilience, and regional cooperation. The nature of Kenya's participation has evolved to become more inclusive over successive TICAD conferences. From early government-centered delegations, recent conferences have incorporated civil society, academic, youth, and private sector representatives in thematic panels and side events. Kenya co-hosted a TICAD VII side event on

"Transformative Actions for Blue Economy," organized alongside UNDP. Kenya has also benefited from TICAD-linked investments, educational partnerships, and support for community health, infrastructure, and youth-led innovation programs derived from Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) and collaboration with the private-sector.

A leading example of Kenya-Japan cooperation is the longstanding collaboration between Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) and Japanese institutions supported by JICA. This partnership has enhanced JKUAT's research and innovation capacity, promoting joint efforts under programmes such as Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS), and Sakura Science. During COVID-19, this collaboration produced low-cost ventilator prototypes led by Kenyan engineers trained through Japanese-funded programmes. The partnership exemplifies the African Institute for Capacity Development (AICAD) initiative, fostering Africa-Japan research hubs and knowledge exchange, benefiting Kenyan academia and local communities. Kenya continues to benefit from TICAD-linked cooperation, including Japanese support for infrastructure projects, community health systems, and educational collaborations.

2.2 Kenyan CSO Engagement in TICAD Process

From TICAD VI in Nairobi (2016) onwards, Kenyan CSOs, led by the SDGs Kenya Forum, have significantly heightened their engagement in shaping TICAD processes. As co-convenors of national preparatory dialogues, they mobilized wide participation from grassroots actors, youth movements, women's associations, academic institutions, and policy think tanks. Their input secured CSOs representation in official delegations and thematic side events focused on health, infrastructure, and youth empowerment. This advanced the inclusion commitments of the Nairobi Declaration (TICAD VI) that called for enhanced civil society participation in Agenda-setting forums. Kenyan CSOs consistently contributed to Africa-Japan dialogues via regional platforms, co-authoring advocacy briefs and engaging in multi-sector panels at TICAD VII and TICAD VIII. This positioned CSOs as key actors in influencing continental policy framing on social resilience, green growth, and inclusive innovation.

At the regional level, Kenyan CSOs also amplified their influence through collaboration with continental networks and alternative TICAD fora. For instance, SDGs Kenya Forum contributed to Civil Society Advisory Groups convened by the Africa-Japan Forum (AJF) and the African Union ensuring Kenyan perspectives informed wider civil society policy submissions to TICAD stakeholders. Through structured engagement, CSOs from Kenya contributed in shaping thematic priorities under TICAD VIII's emphasis on climate resilience, regional economic integration, and youth innovation. Their collective efforts have established a tradition of CSO participation that is

both consultative and co-creative - moving beyond mere attendance to strategic agenda setting across national and continental dimensions.

2.3 Contribution of CSOs in Advancing TICAD Priorities in Kenya

Over successive TICAD cycles, Kenyan CSOs have progressively evolved into strategic partners in implementing continental commitments. CSOs have been instrumental in delivering grassroots-led initiatives aligned with TICAD's thematic priorities - especially in climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods. Through the SDGs Kenya Forum, CSOs led national and county consultative dialogues and prepared Kenya's civil society Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) in 2017, 2020 and 2024. This ensured SDGs indicators and TICAD priorities are grounded in citizen realities and local innovations. In the climate and resilience space - aligned with TICAD VIII's focus on sustainable green growth - grassroots actors like Green Generation Initiative, mobilized youth in tree planting and climate education, impacting over 30,000 trees planted since 2016 and contributing to the national effort of localizing climate action.

GROOTS Kenya, in partnership with community networks, implemented the REBUILD Climate Resilience Project in Tana River County, enhancing drought resilience among pastoral and farming communities - directly supporting TICAD commitments on adaptation in ASALs. In addition, GROOTS Kenya implemented its Participatory Rangeland Management (PRM) initiative in Tana River County, reclaiming 407 hectares of degraded land for drought-tolerant pasture and forage. The programme provided training to 670 households on bush thinning, reseeding, and fencing, significantly boosting climate resilience among pastoralist communities. Building on this success, GROOTS is now preparing to scale the PRM approach across other ASAL counties and advocate for integrating decentralized climate adaptation planning in county development frameworks.

CSOs have also contributed in WASH, youth innovation, and community health**,** consistent with TICAD's multi-sector design. For example, Kenya Water and Sanitation CSO Network (KEWASNET) and its partners mobilized youth to support integrated water resource management and improve rural sanitation access, especially in underserved rural areas aligned to SDG target 6.5 on integrated water resources management and TICAD water resilience goals. In addition, KEWASNET is implementing the Accountability for Water (AfW) programme. The programme is strengthening civic oversight in water utilities, sanitation services, and water resource management (WRM) governance. Under this initiative, CSOs engage policymakers and local stakeholders to improve transparency and participation in WASH services, and mobilize communities in decision-making platforms. This aligns with TICAD's cross-cutting emphasis on good governance and citizen-driven service delivery. KEWASNET's next phase includes expanding oversight into rural counties and co-developing participatory policy models for equitable water access.

In Nairobi's informal settlements (Kibera and Mathare), Shining Hope for Communities (SHOFCO) has installed community-managed water kiosks, improved sanitation facilities, and established governance structures that support clean water access for over 350,000 residents. Through youth and women's leadership platforms, SHOFCO has led hygiene education and WASH system oversight - contributing to TICAD's objectives on inclusive water access and resilient urban health systems. SHOFCO plans further urban WASH hubs and coordination with county health departments to improve WASH governance in collaboration with community stakeholders.

The Youth Cafe - a youth-focused organization headquartered in Nairobi, has empowered young leaders through innovation labs, youth manifestos, and entrepreneurship training - linking to TICAD's pillar on youth-led economic transformation. Across health, climate change, and economic sectors, CSOs under the SDGs Kenya Forum have ensured community participation**,** beneficiary accountability, and feedback loops into implementation of projects initiated in line with TICAD commitments. This shaped transformation of government-led initiatives into locally owned and people-centered outcomes.

Youth-led innovation and digital entrepreneurship have been advanced by organizations such as the Tunapanda Institute, which runs the Mobile LEAP programme - training over 1,000 youth from Kibera and urban areas in mobile-first digital design, coding, and business skills. Their graduates have launched tech-for-good ventures that support community health, education, and financial inclusion. Moving forward, Tunapanda Institute aims to establish satellite training hubs in underserved counties and foster Kenya-Japan youth exchange partnerships under TICAD's digital innovation and youth economic empowerment agenda.

In addition, several CSOs have been active in projects aligned with TICAD themes, demonstrating the value of civil society as implementation partners. For example, SDGs Kenya Forum member organizations like the Kenyan AIDS NGOs Consortium (KANCO) and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) have led community-level interventions in HIV/AIDS and maternal health, leveraging Global Fund grants to strengthen Kenya's health systems in line with TICAD's commitments in the health pillar. These CSO-led initiatives have provided essential services, increased awareness, and reinforced Kenya's progress toward Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as envisioned in TICAD support frameworks.

In the education sector, Uwezo Kenya and Elimu Yetu Coalition have driven advocacy for inclusive basic education, learning assessments, and policy dialogue on foundational literacy and numeracy. Their grassroots data collection and evidence briefs have informed national strategies such as the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) rollout - contributing to TICAD's education and human capital agenda. In higher education, CSOs like the Africa Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) have partnered with institutions such as JKUAT to strengthen policy-

relevant research in public health and STEM, fostering innovation through evidence and academic networks.

In governance and accountability, CSOs such as Inuka Kenya Ni Sisi!, Katiba Institute, and International Budget Partnership Kenya (IBPK) have championed civic engagement, transparency budget preparation and execution processes, and constitutionalism. Their county-level citizen scorecards and open government partnerships have strengthened public participation and policy responsiveness - mirroring TICAD's support for democratic governance and institutional integrity. In addition, youth-focused CSOs such as the Youth Empowerment Programme Initiative (YEPI) have supported incubation, access to finance, and market linkages for youth- and women-owned enterprises in counties such as Kiambu, Kisumu, and Mombasa. These interventions are aligned with TICAD's emphasis on inclusive and innovation-driven economic transformation.

2.4 Barriers and Opportunities for CSOs Participation in Implementation of TICAD Priorities

Despite notable progress in civil society engagement within the TICAD process, Kenyan CSOs continue to face both structural and systemic challenges that limit their effective participation and influence. As implementers, watchdogs, and advocates, CSOs bring grassroots perspectives into Kenya-Japan development cooperation. However, disparities in access, coordination, and recognition have constrained their strategic engagement. Addressing these challenges while harnessing emerging opportunities is key to enhancing CSO contributions to the planning, implementation, and monitoring of TICAD commitments at local, national, regional, and continental levels.

Key Barriers to Effective CSO Engagement in TICAD Processes

i. *Limited Access to Official Dialogue Platforms:* Many CSOs are excluded from formal government-led TICAD preparatory and review processes, resulting in limited participation in agenda-setting, priority framing, and national representation during TICAD summits. This exclusion reduces the diversity and comprehensiveness of perspectives that could strengthen TICAD's responsiveness to community needs.
ii. *Inadequate Information Flow and Coordination Mechanisms:* There is limited real-time access to TICAD implementation frameworks, reporting tools, and progress updates, constraining CSO capacity to monitor, generate evidence, and provide timely feedback on implementation of TICAD commitments.
iii. *Insufficient and Unpredictable Funding:* The absence of sustainable and predictable financing for CSO-led programmes, research, and policy advocacy linked to TICAD commitments limits the ability of CSOs to sustain long-term engagement or scale up successful community-driven models.

iv. *Weak Inclusion of County and Grassroots CSOs:* Engagement of CSOs in TICAD processes remains Nairobi-centric, often sidelining sub-national CSOs and community-based organizations whose proximity to communities offers unique insights for implementation, monitoring, social accountability, and impact analysis.

v. *Disjointed CSO Participation at Regional and Continental TICAD Platforms:* Without structured coordination frameworks, Kenyan CSOs face challenges in participating in Africa-wide civil society TICAD processes, which weakens their visibility, negotiation power, and collective influence in international arenas.

vi. *Limited Technical Capacity for TICAD-Specific Policy Engagement:* Many CSOs, especially at the grassroots level, lack specialized skills in policy analysis, results-based monitoring, and international development frameworks, which are essential for influencing TICAD policy discussions and effectiveness in tracking outcomes.

Opportunities for Enhanced CSO Contribution and Participation in TICAD Processes

i. *Leveraging the SDGs Kenya Forum as a Coordination Platform:* The Forum can consolidate CSO inputs, coordinate joint advocacy, and facilitate structured engagement with the Government of Kenya, JICA, and other stakeholders on TICAD follow-up actions. This will anchor civil society in the policy dialogue processes.

ii. *Institutionalizing CSO Participation in TICAD Implementation Mechanisms:* Embedding CSOs roles in national TICAD coordination units and sector working groups would formalize their input in agenda-setting, resource tracking, and implementation oversight.

iii. *Mobilizing South-South and Triangular Cooperation with Japan and African CSOs:* Kenyan CSOs can strengthen peer learning and influence by partnering with African and Japanese civil society on cross-country initiatives, joint research, and technology/innovation sharing aligned with TICAD pillars.

iv. *Expanding County-Level Engagement and Monitoring:* Devolving TICAD implementation tracking to the counties and involving local CSOs in impact assessments, citizen feedback, and project follow-up will foster inclusive accountability and ensure regional equity in benefits sharing. This can be realized through support to CSOs in being the mechanism of reviewing or monitoring performance and compliance of TICAD at the national and county level.

v. *Leveraging Digital Platforms and Citizen-Generated Data for Evidence-Based Advocacy:* CSOs can adopt mobile, GIS, and open-data tools to monitor TICAD programmes and projects, highlight underfunded priorities, and amplify community voices in national and regional policy dialogues.

vi. *Strengthening Private Sector-CSO Partnerships:* Collaborating with private sector actors, particularly in sectors like renewable energy, agribusiness, and ICT, can create blended

financing models for scaling up community innovations aligned with TICAD's development priorities.

vii. *Building a National CSO Knowledge Hub on TICAD:* Establishing a centralized repository of data, case studies, and lessons learned from TICAD programmes and projects in Kenya will enhance institutional memory, support continuous learning, and position CSOs as credible knowledge partners in national, regional, continental, and global processes.

3. THEMATIC ANALYSIS: KENYA'S PRIORITY AREAS FOR TICAD 9

According to TICAD Ministerial Declaration (August 2024), TICAD 9 is organized around three (3) core pillars: *Society, Economy, and Peace and Stability*, with cross-cutting themes such as *climate action, digital transformation, gender equality, governance, and health resilience*. These pillars provide a framework through which Kenya can deepen its cooperation with Japan and other TICAD partners. From a civil society perspective, these pillars present important entry points for advancing inclusive development, localizing global commitments, and amplifying community voices in policy formulation and implementation processes.

3.1 Society Pillar

The Society Pillar of TICAD 9 resonates with Kenya's civil society priorities, as it speaks to the fundamentals of community well-being and inclusive development. This pillar encompasses key sectors such as universal health coverage, quality education, WASH, food and nutrition security, climate resilience, and social inclusion - areas where Kenyan CSOs have historically played a catalytic role. CSOs in Kenya implement people-centered and rights-based interventions that prioritize the most vulnerable populations, especially women, youth, PWDs, and communities in ASALs. CSOs champion community health delivery through mobile clinics and health education, promote localized climate adaptation practices, expand access to WASH in informal settlements, and work with grassroots educators to bridge educational gaps. These efforts complement national development frameworks such as the Kenya Vision 2030, and the BETA by fostering accountability, innovation, and inclusivity. Through their proximity to communities, CSOs serve as key partners in actualizing the Society Pillar's objectives ensuring no one is left behind in the implementation of TICAD commitments.

Opportunities for CSOs

i. *Expanding Community-Based Climate Adaptation Programmes:* With Kenya's increasing vulnerability to climate shocks - particularly in ASAL counties - there is growing demand for locally led climate solutions. CSOs such as GROOTS Kenya and African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) have demonstrated effective models in community-driven rangeland management, rainwater harvesting, and resilient livelihoods. TICAD 9 presents

an opportunity to scale-up these efforts through resource partnerships, research uptake, and participation in climate policy dialogue platforms at county and national levels.

ii. *Bridging Service Delivery Gaps in Health and WASH:* Many informal settlements and remote rural areas still face limited access to health and sanitation services. Organizations like SHOFCO and Amref Health Africa - Kenya have shown that CSOs can fill these gaps through mobile clinics, solar-powered water kiosks, and civic education on sanitation. Under the Society Pillar, there is potential for CSOs to formalize partnerships with national government agencies and counties to expand provision of these services by leveraging TICAD-aligned funding and technical assistance.

iii. *Supporting Inclusive Education and Skills Development:* TICAD's emphasis on equitable education aligns with CSO interventions in digital literacy, school retention for girls, and youth skills development. For example, Tunapanda Institute in Kibera offers youth digital training linked to employment opportunities. Such models can be replicated and mainstreamed through partnerships with the Ministry of Education and private sector actors engaging under the TICAD digital innovation agenda.

iv. *Advancing Gender Equality and Youth Empowerment:* Kenya's CSO ecosystem includes robust women-led and youth-led organizations that champion participation in governance, access to finance, and protection from gender-based violence. Organizations like Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) Kenya**,** Uraia Trust, and Youth Alive Kenya provide leadership training and civic education tailored to local realities. TICAD 9 offers a space for scaling these efforts through cross-learning platforms, funding pipelines, and multi-stakeholder networks.

v. *Policy Advocacy and Accountability Mechanisms*: CSOs have an important role in ensuring that public services are delivered effectively and equitably. Organizations such as Institute of Public Finance Kenya (IPFK) and International Budget Partnership Kenya (IBPK) support communities to track budgets, monitor service delivery, and engage in public participation forums. Through TICAD 9, CSOs can advocate for strong data systems, social accountability frameworks, and inclusive monitoring mechanisms tied to implementation of TICAD commitments.

Challenges

i. *Inadequate and Unpredictable Funding for Grassroots Programming*: Many CBOs operate on short-term, project-based funding cycles that limit continuity and scalability. For example, rural health outreach programs initiated by local NGOs in Turkana and Tana River often collapse once donor grants end. The absence of long-term financing mechanisms tied to national or sub-national development plans prevents CSOs from institutionalizing high-impact, locally validated solutions in areas like WASH, nutrition, and maternal health.

ii. *Limited Involvement in Formal Policy and Budgetary Processes*: While national frameworks recognize public participation, CSOs particularly grassroots and county-level actors often lack structured and meaningful engagement in health, education, and climate budgeting processes. For instance, in several counties, climate budget tagging and Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) processes rarely incorporate civil society input despite their programmatic presence. This disconnect reduces the policy relevance and visibility of CSO-led initiatives.

iii. *Bureaucratic and Regulatory Barriers*: The regulatory environment governing non-state actors continues to pose hurdles to effective operations. Delays in Public Benefic Organizations (PBOs) registration, compliance burdens from multiple oversight agencies, and restrictive laws on public gatherings and advocacy weaken the institutional space for CSOs.

iv. *Data Access and Integration Limitations*: CSOs working in health, education, and environment struggle with limited access to official data and lack of interoperability between government and CSO monitoring systems. For instance, community health data collected by local PBOs in informal settlements is often not recognized within the Kenya Health Information System (DHIS2), leading to duplication and gaps in service coordination.

v. *Fragmentation and Weak Coordination Among CSOs:* Although platforms like the SDGs Kenya Forum have improved cohesion, many CSOs still operate in silos, which undermines collective impact and reduces the potential for TICAD-aligned advocacy. In sectors such as education and gender, overlapping projects with minimal knowledge exchange led to inefficient use of limited resources and missed opportunities for joint programming.

Best Practices

Kenyan CSOs have developed innovative, community-driven models that demonstrate the value of locally led solutions in achieving the objectives of the Society Pillar. These best practices offer practical pathways for implementation, replication, and scale-up by state and non-state actors, particularly in underserved and vulnerable regions. These models demonstrate that when empowered with resources, Kenyan CSOs can deliver transformative solutions aligned with TICAD 9's Society Pillar. Scaling and institutionalizing these practices through partnerships, policy support, and resource mobilization will be key in deepening their impact. GROOTS Kenya's women-led climate adaptation model has proven successful in arid and semi-arid counties such as Kajiado and Laikipia. In organizing women into Community Resilience Circles (CRCs), GROOTS empowers women to implement sustainable land-use practices, including rotational grazing, water harvesting, and drought-tolerant farming. These CRCs are also trained in disaster risk reduction and link with local governments through ward climate change planning committees.

This approach has increased household food security and strengthened women's voice in climate governance - positioning the model as a viable blueprint for county-level climate action.

Uraia Trust facilitates structured civic education and social accountability programming across various counties. Their approach trains citizens, especially women and youth, to engage in public participation processes, monitor county budgets, and advocate for improved service delivery in health, education, and WASH. For instance, in Kisumu and Makueni, Uraia-supported citizen panels have successfully lobbied for the inclusion of maternal health facilities and school sanitation projects in county development plans. This model promotes participatory governance and complements efforts to localize the SDGs.

Hifadhi Africa's Edu-Relief Programme supports nomadic communities is Isiolo and Marsabit through mobile schooling, school feeding, and sanitary pad distribution to increase girl-child retention. The organization works closely with village elders, school boards, and parents' associations to ensure cultural appropriateness and sustainability. Their model has led to increase in school attendance and reduced dropout rates, particularly among girls, making it a replicable solution for other ASAL counties with low education outcomes.

Recommendations

i. *Institutionalize Civil Society Representation in TICAD National Committees*: The Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, and the State Department for Economic Planning should formally include civil society representation in the national TICAD Steering Committee and relevant sectoral coordination forums. This will ensure that CSOs are not only present at implementation stages but also contribute to decision-making, planning, and monitoring of TICAD 9 commitments. Such institutionalization of CSO engagement will elevate community voices and ground national TICAD plans in actual needs and evidence from the grassroots.

ii. *Establish a TICAD-CSO Engagement Fund*: The Government of Kenya in partnership with JICA Kenya, UNDP, and other development partners should establish a dedicated annual fund - targeting at least Ksh. 100 million - to support community-based and CSO-led initiatives that directly contribute to TICAD commitments. This fund should offer flexible financing for climate action, health, WASH, and education initiatives by grassroots organizations, especially those operating in informal settlements and ASAL counties. This will address the unpredictability of civil society funding and enable CSOs to plan, scale, and sustain impactful programmes aligned with TICAD outcomes.

iii. *Develop a National CSO-TICAD Implementation Framework:* There is need to co-create a national framework - led by the SDGs Kenya Forum in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, the State Department for Economic Planning, and JICA Kenya - that articulates the specific roles of CSOs, coordination mechanisms, capacity

development support, and accountability systems in relation to implementation of TICAD 9 commitments. This framework will enhance policy coherence, promote inclusion, and facilitate transparent collaboration between civil society and government in the execution of the Society Pillar priorities.

iv. *Integrate CSO Innovations into MTPs, CIDPs, and ADPs:* The State Department for Devolution and the Council of Governors should work with counties and civil society partners to mainstream proven CSO-led innovations - such as mobile health outreach, school feeding programmes, and youth skilling centers – into MTPs, CIDPs, and CDPs. This integration will support the upscaling of community-validated interventions through public planning and financing systems, thereby institutionalizing successful grassroots solutions and improving service delivery.

v. *Strengthen CSO Monitoring and Evidence Systems for TICAD Tracking*: To enhance accountability and evidence-based advocacy, establish a joint TICAD Monitoring and Accountability Platform, co-led by the SDGs Kenya Forum and relevant government agencies. This platform will enable civil society actors to systematically track progress, generate disaggregated data from the community level, and contribute to national and TICAD-wide reporting. It will also ensure that CSO perspectives and evidence are reflected in the formulation, review, and public dissemination of TICAD scorecards and impact assessments.

vi. *Strengthen Annual Multi-Stakeholder TICAD-CSO Dialogues*: The Government of Kenya and its TICAD partners should support the convening of annual national and regional-level CSO dialogues to review TICAD progress, share experiences, and co-design implementation roadmaps. These forums will foster mutual accountability, promote horizontal learning among CSOs, and strengthen synergies between civil society, government, and development partners working under the Society Pillar.

3.2 Economy Pillar

The Economic Pillar of TICAD 9 aligns with national aspirations for inclusive growth, job creation, industrialization, and digital innovation, as espoused in the Kenya Vision 2030 and BETA. This pillar focuses on enhancing productive sectors - such as agriculture, MSME development, manufacturing, and ICT - while leveraging trade and investment partnerships to unlock economic potential across counties. From a civil society perspective, Kenyan CSOs play a vital role in ensuring that economic growth strategies are inclusive, equitable, and community-responsive. CSOs actively support smallholder farmers with climate-smart agribusiness skills, promote youth entrepreneurship through digital skilling programmes, and advocate for fair trade policies that benefit informal traders, women, and marginalized groups. In addition, CSOs facilitate access to financial literacy and linkages to micro-credit among underserved populations, ensuring that the promise of economic transformation under TICAD reaches grassroots

communities. Proximity to vulnerable populations allows CSOs to champion local economic empowerment models that complement national efforts while safeguarding socio-economic rights.

Opportunities for CSOs

i. *Supporting MSME Growth and Inclusion*: CSOs have an opportunity to facilitate the growth of MSMEs, particularly those led by women, youth, and PWDs. Organizations such as Hand in Hand Eastern Africa and Youth Enterprise Support Organization (YES) provide business mentorship, access to microcredit, and market linkages, enabling marginalized entrepreneurs to expand their enterprises and participate more competitively in the economy.

ii. *Expanding Digital Skills and Innovation for Youth Employment*: There is a growing space for CSOs to equip young people with relevant digital competencies that match evolving labor market demands. This will help bridge the digital divide and integrate youth into Kenya's rapidly expanding digital economy.

iii. *Promoting Climate-Smart and Inclusive Agricultural Value Chains*: CSOs can enhance agri-enterprise development by supporting smallholder farmers with climate-resilient practices, value addition, and market access. Slow Food Kenya, for instance, promotes indigenous farming systems. The systems offer sustainable approaches to food security and rural economic transformation.

iv. *Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment in Informal and Cross-Border Trade*: Kenyan CSOs such as Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI), and Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute (SEATINI) Kenya are already working with women traders in border counties like Busia and Namanga to promote safe and fair-trading environments. These initiatives offer training on trade regulations, rights awareness, and policy advocacy, positioning CSOs as key actors in advancing gender-responsive trade under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and TICAD 9 economic commitments.

v. *Fostering Economic Accountability and Public Participation*: CSOs have an opportunity to monitor and influence public investment decisions at both county and national levels. Organizations like Institute of Social Accountability (TISA) and Uraia Trust implement public expenditure tracking and citizen budget forums that empower communities to advocate for equitable distribution of economic resources. This enhances transparency and ensures that economic programmes benefit marginalized populations.

vi. *Bridging Financing and Investment Gaps for Grassroots Innovation*: Many grassroots innovators and social enterprises lack access to financing and technical support. CSOs can serve as intermediaries linking these actors with incubators, grant facilities, and public-private partnerships. For example, SHOFCO has successfully mobilized resources for

women-led social enterprises in Kibera, demonstrating scalable models of inclusive economic development.

Challenges

i. *Inadequate and Unpredictable Financing for Economic Empowerment Initiatives*: Many CSOs - especially at the grassroots- struggle with limited, short-term, and donor-dependent funding that restricts their ability to implement and scale up sustainable economic empowerment programs. This is particularly evident in youth skilling, MSME incubation, and agri-value chain support projects, where continuity is essential for long-term impact. Lack of access to flexible financing mechanisms, such as innovation grants or blended financing, limits experimentation and innovation in inclusive economic models.

ii. *Weak Integration of CSOs in National and County Economic Planning Processes*: CSOs are often excluded or inadequately engaged in national economic policy and planning frameworks, including MTPs, CIDPs, and ADPs. This limits the ability of CSOs to align their work with public investments or influence priority-setting in key areas such as local enterprise development, digital transformation, and informal sector support.

iii. *Barriers to Accessing Trade and Investment Opportunities for Marginalized Groups:* Grassroots CSOs working with informal traders and rural entrepreneurs report that bureaucratic trade regimes, complex licensing procedures, and lack of inclusive investment platforms lock out small economic actors from mainstream opportunities. These constraints disproportionately affect women traders, youth-led enterprises, and informal MSMEs. For example, cross-border women traders in Busia often face harassment and lack access to reliable trade information systems.

iv. *Limited Technical Capacity and Digital Infrastructure*: While CSOs are increasingly involved in promoting digital entrepreneurship and e-commerce, many CSOs - particularly in rural counties - face challenges related to limited digital literacy, lack of internet connectivity, and inadequate technical skills. This hampers their ability to deliver robust digital skilling programmes, support e-trade readiness, and leverage technology for market access and financial inclusion.

Best Practices

CSOs have developed and implemented a range of innovative and community-rooted economic empowerment models that align with the objectives of the TICAD 9 Economic Pillar. These best practices demonstrate how locally led interventions can generate sustainable livelihoods, improve access to markets, expand digital and financial inclusion, and empower marginalized groups. The following are notable success models and practices that offer lessons for replication and scaling:

Slow Food Kenya's Agroecology and Local Market Empowerment in Tharaka Nithi and Meru: Slow Food Kenya works with smallholder farmers to revive indigenous farming practices, promote agroecological models, and connect farmers to local organic markets. In organizing farmers into networks, supporting climate-resilient crops, and facilitating access to urban buyers, the organization has strengthened food security and increased rural incomes. This initiative showcases the effectiveness of community-driven agricultural models that balance sustainability, health, and local economic development.

I Choose Life - Africa's University-Based Youth Innovation Incubators: Operating in partnership with select universities such as Kenyatta University and Moi University, I Choose Life – Africa (ICL) runs youth innovation hubs that support students and recent graduates to incubate business ideas, access start-up capital, and receive entrepreneurship mentorship. The initiative links youth to government procurement opportunities and digital markets. This CSO-led model integrates academic, private sector, and policy partnerships to nurture job creators rather than job seekers.

Recommendations

i. *Institutionalize CSO Participation in National and County Economic Planning and Policy Dialogues*: The Government of Kenya, through the State Department for Economic Planning and county planning departments, should establish structured and inclusive platforms that formally integrate CSOs into the formulation and monitoring of economic policies and trade frameworks. This includes involving CSOs in MTP IV implementation reviews, county budget preparation forums, and public-private investment roundtables. A formalized engagement mechanism-such as an annual TICAD-CSO Economic Dialogue - should be initiated to ensure continuous participation and feedback.

ii. *Expand Access to Flexible and Sustainable Funding Mechanisms for Grassroots Economic Initiatives*: Development partners and the Government should create or scale up funding windows accessible to CSOs supporting economic inclusion initiatives, particularly in underserved regions. For instance, establishing a CSO-led MSME Catalyst Fund with clear eligibility for youth and women-focused organizations can enhance local innovation and business resilience. The Fund should be operationalized with at least 30 percent of disbursements directed to CBOs.

iii. *Strengthen CSO Capacity in Digital Trade, Market Access, and Financial Systems:* National institutions such as the Ministry of Information, Communications and The Digital Economy, and the Kenya Trade Network Agency (KenTrade), in partnership with CSO platforms, should support targeted capacity-building programmes on e-commerce, digital marketing, and inclusive finance. This includes digital literacy training for CSOs, resource centers in counties, and partnerships with fintech companies. A national digital skilling initiative for CSOs should be established with clear targets on participation and certification of grassroots organizations.

iv. *Support the Establishment of a National CSO Economic Empowerment Platform:* A multi-stakeholder CSO platform dedicated to economic empowerment should be established to foster collaboration, policy engagement, and learning across sectors. This platform will act as a unified voice during engagement in the TICAD process, sharing success models, and tracking CSO contributions to Kenya's economic transformation. The platform should be supported through joint resourcing between development partners and civil society umbrella organizations.

v. *Promote Research, Data Generation, and Impact Documentation of CSO Economic Interventions:* CSOs, academic and research institutions, and government agencies should collaborate to document and disseminate the socio-economic impacts of CSO interventions under TICAD 9. This includes community scorecards, case studies, participatory economic assessments, and digital dashboards.

3.3 Peace and Stability Pillar

The Peace and Stability Pillar of TICAD 9 is relevant to Kenya's development trajectory, especially in promoting inclusive governance, human rights, social cohesion, and conflict prevention. CSOs have played a central role in advancing these priorities by building community resilience, promoting access to justice, and fostering peaceful co-existence among diverse communities. From informal settlements in Nairobi to cross-border pastoral regions in Turkana and West Pokot, CSOs work to mediate local conflicts, advocate for equitable resource sharing, and respond to emerging human security risks, including gender-based violence, election-related tensions, and climate-induced displacement. CSOs also engage in civic education, trauma healing, and capacity building for local peace committees - often bridging the gap between state institutions and marginalized groups. Through a rights-based and locally driven approach, Kenyan CSOs have emerged as trusted agents in sustaining peace and upholding human dignity towards realization of stable, just, and secure societies.

Opportunities for CSOs

i. *Expanding Community-Based Peacebuilding and Mediation Programmes:* There is a strong opportunity for CSOs to scale grassroots peacebuilding initiatives in counties experiencing resource-based, political, and intercommunal conflicts such as Marsabit, Samburu, Turkana, West Pokot, Baringo, Garissa, and Kisumu. Organizations like PeaceNet Kenya, Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT), and Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) have demonstrated success in strengthening community peace committees, facilitating inter-ethnic dialogues, and supporting cross-border peace accords. These models can be expanded with increased technical and financial support to cover more hotspots.

ii. *Enhancing Access to Justice through Legal Aid and Human Rights Advocacy:* CSOs such as Kituo cha Sheria, International Justice Mission Kenya (IJM), and Muslim for Human Rights (MUHURI) are actively engaged in providing pro bono legal aid, paralegal training, and legal awareness among informal and marginalized communities. There are opportunities to deepen this work by embedding paralegal units in community structures and expanding outreach to refugees, PWDs, and women affected by GBV in counties like Nairobi, Samburu, Marsabit, and Kwale.

iii. *Promoting Youth-Led Peace and Preventing Violent Extremism:* Youths in urban informal settlements and border counties remain vulnerable to radicalization and political manipulation. CSOs like Haki Africa, Soweto Youth Initiative, and Green String Network have successfully implemented youth mentorship programmes, alternative livelihoods training, and Preventing Violent Extremism awareness campaigns. Strengthening youth innovation hubs and community radio platforms provides an effective entry point for countering violence narratives and promoting civic responsibility.

iv. *Supporting Inclusive Governance and Civic Engagement:* CSOs have an opportunity to further strengthen civic education and democratic participation, particularly ahead of elections and during devolved government processes. Organizations such as Uraia Trust, and Constitution and Reform Education Consortium (CRECO) have used participatory theatre, town hall meetings, and digital platforms to educate citizens on constitutional rights, budget processes, and public service accountability. These approaches offer a scalable model for deepening social cohesion and political stability.

v. *Integrating Psychosocial Support in Peace and Recovery Efforts:* Communities affected by recurrent violence, displacement, and trauma often lack access to healing and psychosocial support services. CSOs like Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO) Kenya, and Refugee Support, Housing, and Education (RefuSHE) have pioneered trauma-informed programming that supports survivors of conflict and GBV. Expanding such services to conflict-prone areas like Isiolo and Lamu offers a significant opportunity to build social resilience and restore dignity.

vi. *Mainstreaming Climate-Security Nexus in Peace Interventions:* The increasing impact of climate change on pastoralist migration, resource-based conflict, and displacement opens space for CSOs to integrate climate adaptation into peace programming. Initiatives such as PACIDA's water and pasture-sharing frameworks in Marsabit County demonstrate how local agreements, supported by CSOs, can prevent violence and enhance community cooperation in fragile ecosystems.

Challenges

i. *Inadequate and Unpredictable Funding for Peacebuilding Activities:* Most CSOs working in conflict-affected and marginalized areas operate on short-term, and donor-dependent

funding cycles that limit long-term planning and sustainability of peacebuilding programmes. For example, some CBOs in Samburu and West Pokot reports that their peace initiatives collapse once project grants end, leaving a vacuum that is often filled by resurgent conflict.

ii. *Limited Involvement in National Peace and Security Frameworks:* Although CSOs are instrumental in grassroots peace efforts, they remain underrepresented in formal national coordination platforms such as the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (NSCPCM). Many local organizations, particularly those in ASAL counties, are excluded from security planning and decision-making forums, limiting their influence on early warning, response, and policy implementation.

iii. *Shrinking Civic Space and Political Intimidation:* In some regions, CSOs operating in sensitive governance or human rights areas face restrictions, harassment, and threats from various actors. This is especially true for organizations monitoring electoral violence, land injustice, or counter-terrorism responses. Such intimidation discourages open engagement and limits civic expression.

iv. *Weak Documentation and Visibility of Peacebuilding Impact:* Many CBOs lack the capacity, tools, or resources to systematically document their success stories, generate robust data, or communicate outcomes to stakeholders. This has led to under-recognition of the impact CSOs have had in preventing or resolving conflict. As a result, opportunities for funding, replication, and policy influence are often missed.

v. *Capacity Gaps in Emerging Peace and Security Dimensions:* New dimensions of insecurity such as cyberbullying, climate-induced migration, and cross-border trafficking - require specialized technical knowledge and adaptive programming. Many grassroots CSOs are still building their capacity to understand and address these emerging threats, especially in regions like the North Rift and Coast, where insecurity is evolving rapidly.

vi. *Duplication of Efforts:* The absence of strong coordination mechanisms among CSOs working in peace and stability often leads to duplication, uncoordinated interventions, and resource inefficiencies. Overlapping initiatives by PBOs, faith-based organizations, and CBOs sometimes confuse communities and weaken trust in the peacebuilding process.

Best Practices

CSOs have demonstrated innovative, people-centered, and effective models for advancing peace, justice, and stability across diverse contexts. These best practices reflect community ownership, sustainability, and alignment with both national peace frameworks and TICAD 9 aspirations.

Community-Led Peace Committees and Dialogue Forums: PeaceNet Kenya, a national peacebuilding CSO and umbrella network of peace actors, has successfully supported the establishment and institutionalization of community peace committees in conflict-prone counties including Marsabit, Tana River, and Baringo. These committees bring together elders, women,

youth, religious leaders, and local administrators to resolve inter-communal disputes and prevent the escalation of violence. In Marsabit, for example, PeaceNet facilitated a cross-ethnic peace accord between the Borana and Gabra communities in 2022, which significantly reduced retaliatory attacks and cattle rustling. The model emphasizes community mediation, early warning systems, and localized peace protocols, making it adaptable to other hotspot counties.

Trauma-Informed Healing and Social Reintegration: Green String Network (GSN) integrates Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) into peacebuilding programmes in areas affected by violent extremism and conflict. In Lamu and Kwale counties, GSN has implemented trauma healing circles and community storytelling initiatives that address intergenerational trauma, promote reconciliation, and build emotional resilience. Their approach combines local cultural practices with clinical therapy methods and has been credited with reducing stigmatization of returnees and survivors of violence. The model demonstrates the importance of linking peacebuilding with psychosocial wellbeing.

Youth-Led Countering Violent Extremism: In the coastal region, Haki Africa runs a youth-centered Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) initiative that empowers young people to become peace ambassadors through civic education, sports, and economic empowerment. The programme is active in Mombasa, Kilifi, and Taita Taveta, and it combines grassroots organizing with digital advocacy and policy dialogue with security actors. As a result, several at-risk youths have transitioned from criminal networks to community development roles. Haki Africa's programme has gained recognition from the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) as a model for inclusive CVE programming.

Paralegal and Legal Empowerment Networks: Kituo cha Sheria's network of community-based paralegals in informal settlements and refugee communities provides access to justice for vulnerable populations facing evictions, police brutality, and domestic violence. The organization has trained over 400 paralegals in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kakuma, enabling them to provide legal aid, mediate local disputes, and support litigation efforts. This model has proven effective in addressing everyday justice issues and reinforcing human rights as a foundation for peace.

Cross-Border Peace and Livelihood Initiatives: PACIDA, based in Marsabit, has pioneered cross-border peacebuilding programmes that integrate resource-sharing, joint livestock vaccination campaigns, and inter-clan trade facilitation across the Kenya-Ethiopia border. These initiatives have not only reduced cross-border clashes but also enhanced economic cooperation among pastoralist groups. Supported by IGAD and other development partners, the programme demonstrates how peace can be sustained through livelihood cooperation and regional integration.

Recommendations

i. *Institutionalize CSO Participation in National and Sub-National Peace and Security Mechanisms:* The Government of Kenya, in collaboration with development partners, should formally recognize and integrate CSOs into the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management and related county-level peace platforms. This includes developing clear terms of reference, representation frameworks, and resourcing modalities for CSO engagement. This will ensure that grassroots voices, early warning data, and peacebuilding innovations inform national strategies and cross-border peace initiatives.

ii. *Build CSO Capacity in Emerging Peace and Human Security Issues:* Development partners and the government should invest in strengthening CSO technical capacity in areas such as the climate-conflict nexus, digital peacebuilding, and transnational organized crime. This can be done through national-level training programmes, South-South knowledge exchange, and collaborations between CSOs and academia. Enhanced technical know-how will enable CSOs to engage more effectively in complex and evolving peace and security domains.

iii. *Strengthen Documentation, Learning, and Visibility of CSO Peace Actions:* There is need to develop a national CSO peacebuilding dashboard and knowledge hub that captures evidence, case studies, success stories, and lessons from CSO-led interventions across the country. This platform can be managed by a civil society consortium such as PeaceNet Kenya and the SDGs Kenya Forum, in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and National Administration. This will enhance policy influence, promote coordination, and elevate the visibility of community innovations at TICAD and other global platforms.

iv. *Expand Multistakeholder Dialogue Platforms Linking CSOs, Government and Development Partners:* Regularly convened forums for experience and knowledge sharing between CSOs, national government agencies, county peace directorates, and development partners should be institutionalized under the TICAD implementation framework. These platforms should be used to co-create policies, align programmes, track progress, and resolve tensions. Such inclusive approaches will improve trust, avoid duplication, and promote joint accountability in delivering peace initiatives to communities.

3.4 Cross-Cutting Issues

Cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, climate change, digital transformation, governance and accountability, youth inclusion, and human rights underpin the success of all TICAD 9 pillars and should be mainstreamed across interventions. From a CSO perspective, these issues are not auxiliary but foundational to achieving sustainable peace, inclusive economic growth, and resilient societies. Civil society actors across the country have championed gender-responsive budgeting, climate-resilient livelihoods, digital literacy for youth and women, and civic empowerment in

counties like Turkana, Makueni, Kisumu, and Garissa. CSOs such as Akili Dada, Uraia Trust, and Oxfam Kenya have demonstrated how targeted programmes can address intersectional vulnerabilities while amplifying marginalized voices. Recognizing the structural barriers that limit participation such as patriarchy, digital divides, and systemic exclusion, Kenyan CSOs continue to design holistic interventions that ensure no one is left behind.

Opportunities for CSOs

i. *Advancing Gender Equality and Women Empowerment:* CSOs have the opportunity to mainstream gender-responsive approaches across peacebuilding, economic development, and governance programmes. Organizations such as Federation of Women Lawyers - Kenya Chapter and Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW) are already working with local women groups in counties like Kisii and Kilifi to enhance access to justice, leadership, and economic inclusion. Expansion of these models can promote gender parity and strengthen implementation of Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2019 on National Policy on Gender and Development, and the two-thirds gender rule.

ii. *Promoting Climate Resilience and Environmental Justice:* Grassroots CSOs can scale-up nature-based solutions, climate adaptation programmes, and community-led environmental governance. Groups like Daima Initiatives for Peace and Development (DIPaD) and Pan African Climate Justice Alliance - Kenya Chapter (PACJA Kenya) are implementing successful climate-smart agriculture and water resource conservation projects in arid counties such as Kitui and Isiolo. These initiatives align with Kenya's Climate Change (Amendment) Act, 2023 and Kenya National Adaptation Plan (2015 - 2030) and can be integrated into TICAD-supported interventions.

iii. *Strengthening Youth Empowerment and Innovation:* With over 75 percent of Kenya's population under 35, CSOs have an opportunity to leverage youth as agents of change through innovation hubs, digital skilling, and civic engagement. Youth-serving organizations like Youth Agenda, Pawa Initiative 254 (PAWA254), and Emerging Leaders Foundation have pioneered programmes in Nairobi, Eldoret, and Kakamega that combine technology, creative arts, and leadership development to enhance participation and employment. These models present scalable pathways for inclusive digital transformation.

iv. *Enhancing Digital Inclusion and ICT for Development:* CSOs can bridge the digital divide by promoting access to technology in underserved areas and advocating for digital rights and inclusion. Initiatives by organizations like Tunapanda Institute in Kibera, and Action for Social Inclusion and Education Transformation (ASIET) in rural Turkana have improved digital literacy among marginalized youth and women. Expanding such initiatives contributes directly to digital transformation under TICAD 9 and the Government Digital Economy Blueprint.

v. *Promoting Accountability, Civic Engagement, and Access to Justice:* CSOs are well-positioned to advance social accountability, participatory governance, and legal empowerment, particularly at county level. Uraia Trust, Katiba Institute, and MUHURI have supported citizens in budget tracking, public participation, and human rights monitoring. These initiatives strengthen democratic institutions and provide civic space for inclusive policy-making aligned with the Constitution of Kenya and African Union Agenda 2063's governance aspirations.

vi. *Fostering Inclusion of PWDs and Other Marginalized Groups:* CSOs such as United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK) and Action Network for the Disabled (ANDY) have championed inclusive education, economic empowerment, and barrier-free infrastructure for PWDs. These efforts create opportunities for scaling inclusive programming in alignment with the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2025, Kenya Vision 2030, and SDG 10 on reduced inequalities.

Challenges

i. *Inadequate and Unpredictable Funding for Cross-Sectoral Programming:* Most CSOs operate under short-term project funding cycles that limit the ability to invest in long-term, integrated approaches to cross-cutting issues. Organizations promoting gender-climate linkages or disability-inclusive digital transformation often struggle to access funding streams that recognize their multi-sectoral work. Grassroots actors, lack the financial and technical capacity to compete for or manage large grants - constraining scale and sustainability.

ii. *Limited Recognition and Integration into Formal Policy Processes:* Despite their contributions, many CSOs are not formally included in sectoral policy-making spaces, including county development planning forums and national inter-agency working groups. This exclusion diminishes their influence in shaping policies on environmental governance, digital economy, gender inclusion, or youth development. CSO representatives working on disability rights report tokenistic engagement in the national budgeting process, with limited follow-through on their recommendations.

iii. *Siloed Approaches to Cross-Cutting Issues:* CSOs working on interconnected challenges often encounter programmatic silos imposed by donors, implementing partners, or government agencies. This limits holistic responses that reflect community needs. A CSO working on youth economic empowerment may be discouraged from integrating climate resilience or digital innovation due to donor-imposed thematic restrictions.

iv. *Digital and Technological Gaps:* A significant number of grassroots CSOs face challenges in accessing reliable internet, digital tools, and skills needed for effective programming, monitoring, and advocacy. The digital divide disproportionately affects rural-based organizations and those led by women, youth, or PWDs. This limits their participation in

digital policy dialogues and hinders the use of technology to document and scale community innovations.

v. *Shrinking Civic Space and Regulatory Constraints: CSOs* operating in politically sensitive areas, such as governance, anti-corruption, and human rights, report increased surveillance, complex registration processes, and restrictions on public gatherings and expression. These constraints undermine CSO independence and deter meaningful participation in platforms like TICAD that require open policy dialogue and reflection.

vi. *Capacity Limitations in Data, Monitoring, and Policy Influence:* Many local CSOs lack adequate skills in data collection, impact measurement, and policy engagement, particularly on emerging issues such as digital governance or climate finance. This reduces their visibility and credibility in national and global forums, including TICAD-related processes. Without robust evidence and engagement strategies, CSO advocacy is often overshadowed by more resourced actors.

Best Practices

CSOs have demonstrated innovation, inclusivity, and resilience in addressing the complex and interconnected nature of cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, climate action, digital inclusion, youth empowerment, disability inclusion, and governance. These best practices not only illustrate the transformative power of community-rooted civil society but also offer practical models for replication by county governments, development partners, and regional coalitions.

Gender-Responsive Budgeting and Leadership Promotion: CREAW has pioneered gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) training and participatory policy dialogues in Nairobi, Meru, and Kisumu counties. Through community scorecards, policy briefs, and training of women leaders, CREAW has improved local government responsiveness to gender needs. The programme led to increased budget allocations for women economic empowerment and maternal health. Its participatory and evidence-based methodology is scalable and directly aligns with TICAD's emphasis on inclusive governance. In addition, SDGs Kenya Forum conducts GRB research at both national and county levels.

Youth Digital Innovation for Economic Inclusion: PAWA254, a youth-led creative hub in Nairobi, and Tunapanda Institute in Kibera have built integrated digital innovation programmes for youth that combine creative arts, coding, civic engagement, and entrepreneurship. These platforms provide access to digital tools, mentorship, and income-generating opportunities. The Tunapanda model, has enabled a number youth in Kibera to launch social enterprises and secure employment in Kenya's digital economy. These approaches are replicable in other urban informal settlements and rural towns across Africa.

Climate-Smart Agriculture and Women's Empowerment: Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN) supports women farmers in Kitui and Laikipia with climate-smart agricultural technologies, information-sharing platforms, and digital weather forecasting. The Maarifa Centres developed by ALIN serve as rural knowledge hubs where women access training on drought-resistant crops, organic farming, and cooperative marketing. The initiative has improved food security and income resilience among over 3,000 households, showcasing a replicable community-driven approach to climate adaptation.

Promoting Civic Engagement and Accountability: Uraia Trust, in partnership with Siasa Place, has developed civic education toolkits and mobile-based platforms for youth and women to engage in governance processes. These platforms have enabled citizens to track county budgets, monitor service delivery, and influence policy decisions through structured barazas and digital feedback mechanisms. In counties like Makueni and Busia, these efforts have led to increased citizen participation in CIDPs processes and improved budget transparency.

Inclusion of PWDs in Policy and Service Delivery: UDPK and AndY have collaborated with county governments to promote disability inclusion in public transport, education, and employment. In Kisumu, their advocacy led to the development of disability-friendly infrastructure in public markets and county offices. Their joint disability audits, accessible communication tools, and mentorship programmes for PWDs offer a model for rights-based and inclusive development.

Climate and Environmental Justice Advocacy: PACJA Kenya has led grassroots climate justice campaigns and policy engagement platforms that integrate indigenous knowledge, rights of women and youth, and environmental stewardship. PACJA's regional dialogues and national climate hearings have informed implementation of Kenya's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and influenced global climate negotiations. Their model of amplifying local voices in international processes aligns strongly with TICAD's co-creation ethos.

Recommendations

i. *Promote Legal and Institutional Reforms to Expand Civic Space and Protect Human Rights Defenders:* The Government of Kenya should fast-track full implementation of the Public Benefits Organizations Act, No. 18 of 2013 and undertake a targeted review of existing legal and administrative provisions that constrain CSO operations. Informed by lessons from successful civic space reforms in countries like South Africa and Ghana, Kenya should institutionalize a structured CSO-Government Dialogue Forum to address emerging policy bottlenecks and safeguard the rights of human rights defenders, particularly those advocating on politically sensitive issues such as governance, anti-corruption, and gender-based violence.

ii. *Facilitate Knowledge Exchange and Replication of Best Practices Across Counties and Regions:* Leveraging Kenya's devolution framework, county governments, CSO networks, and regional economic blocs should co-create thematic learning hubs that document and scale grassroots solutions proven to work in areas such as climate adaptation in Kitui, digital inclusion in Nakuru, and youth-led agribusiness innovation in Bungoma. These hubs should be supported by a national CSO Innovations Repository to capture and showcase replicable models, with policy fairs and county exchange visits to accelerate adoption and adaptation.

iii. *Establish a National CSO Data and Accountability Platform Linked to TICAD Commitments:* To address gaps in monitoring and evaluation, CSOs through the SDGs Kenya Forum should lead the creation of a centralized, open-access platform capturing real-time and disaggregated data on cross-cutting issues linked to TICAD projects. This platform should integrate citizen-generated data, geospatial mapping of interventions, and results-tracking dashboards accessible to government, development partners, and the public. The system will close the feedback loop between communities and policymakers while building trust and transparency.

iv. *Operationalize a Multi-Stakeholder Funding Mechanism for Cross-Cutting Priorities:* Building on global best practices such as the Global Fund's country-coordinating mechanism, Kenya should establish co-financing models by the Government of Kenya, TICAD co-hosts, development partners, and private investors. This pooled mechanism should prioritize multi-year grants for grassroots CSO initiatives addressing climate resilience, governance reforms, gender equality, and youth innovation. Funding criteria should reward projects with strong community ownership, proven scalability, and measurable socio-economic impacts. This will ensure sustainability and equitable access.

4. MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND CSO ENGAGEMENT MECHANISMS

4.1 Coordination and Multi-Level Engagement

Achieving the ambitious commitments of TICAD 9 in Kenya requires the establishment of robust, inclusive, and multi-level coordination mechanisms that bring together government institutions, CSOs, private sector actors, and development partners. CSOs, especially those working at the grassroots and county levels - play a key role in bridging the gap between policy and people by translating global frameworks into local action. To institutionalize this role, the Government of Kenya, through the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, the State Department for Economic Planning, and the Council of Governors, should establish a national TICAD CSO Engagement Platform. This platform should link sub-national priorities to national, regional and continental TICAD strategies, and ensure that CSOs are involved in priority-setting, planning,

implementation, and post-TICAD evaluation. In addition, CSO representatives should be formally included in national steering committees and sector working groups managing TICAD commitments, with clear terms of reference for engagement, co-leadership, and mutual accountability. These structures should also align with existing SDGs, African Union Agenda 2063, and Kenya Vision 2030 implementation platforms for synergy.

To enhance coherence and impact, there is need for development of a Joint TICAD Implementation and Monitoring Framework that integrates CSO-led data, community scorecards, and participatory monitoring tools. Under the framework, CSOs can support evidence generation, community reporting, and feedback loops in health, education, agriculture, peace, climate change, and innovation sectors. Development partners such as JICA, UNDP, and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) should facilitate technical support, capacity strengthening, and resource mobilization for CSOs to undertake these roles. Further, mechanisms such as County CSO Reference Groups, National Civil Society Dialogues before and after TICAD Summits, and dedicated TICAD CSO Focal Points at the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs should be established to guarantee consistent representation and communication. These modalities will not only ensure that Kenyan CSOs are actively participating in shaping and delivering TICAD outcomes but also institutionalize their role in monitoring, learning, and adaptive implementation. This will strengthen accountability, citizen ownership, and sustainability of TICAD investments in Kenya.

4.2 Resource Mobilization

Kenyan CSOs can play a transformative role in mobilizing and managing resources for the implementation of TICAD 9 commitments by tapping into diverse financing models, forging strategic partnerships, and advocating for increased domestic and international investment in community-driven development. To this end, CSOs should actively position themselves as credible implementation partners by aligning their programming with the TICAD 9 pillars and cross-cutting issues. This will enhance eligibility for funding from bilateral donors such as JICA, multilateral agencies including UNDP and AfDB, and philanthropic institutions supporting Africa-Japan cooperation. Innovative financing models - such as results-based financing, pooled donor funds, blended finance, and impact investment mechanisms - offer opportunities for CSOs to co-finance programmes with the private sector while delivering measurable development results.

In addition, CSOs should strengthen their engagement with devolved units by leveraging CIDPs and public participation platforms to advocate for county budget allocations towards TICAD-aligned initiatives, particularly in health, education, climate, youth, and livelihoods. The Government of Kenya, through the State Department for Economic Planning and the National Treasury, should also institutionalize financing windows for CSO participation in TICAD

implementation under development cooperation frameworks. The SDGs Kenya Forum can coordinate efforts to establish a national TICAD Civil Society Fund, supported by development partners, to finance grassroots innovation, capacity building, and policy advocacy. In embracing these approaches, Kenyan CSOs can not only secure sustainable financing but also ensure that TICAD-linked resources are equitably and efficiently deployed to benefit marginalized communities.

4.3 Priority Issues for Advocacy

Kenyan CSOs, through coordinated platforms such as the SDGs Kenya Forum, should advocate for a people-centered, inclusive, and accountable implementation of TICAD 9 commitments that respond to national and grassroots realities. Before subsequent TICAD sessions, CSOs should prioritize influencing the agenda-setting process to ensure alignment with Kenya's development frameworks - including the Kenya Vision 2030, MTP IV, and the BETA. This will be achieved through advocating for greater civic space, climate financing, youth innovation, gender-responsive programming, and county-level investments. During TICAD sessions, CSOs will advocate for stronger provisions on multi-stakeholder implementation, funding predictability, and community feedback mechanisms. Post-TICAD, CSOs should focus their advocacy on the domestication and operationalization of TICAD commitments within national and county development plans. This will enhance localized tracking indicators, open government partnerships, and accountability frameworks that reflect the lived experiences of marginalized groups. CSOs will also engage development partners, particularly JICA and UNDP, to co-create inclusive programming and jointly review progress on commitments related to peace, prosperity, and sustainability.

4.4 Capacity building

To ensure effective civil society engagement and delivery of results under TICAD 9, there is an urgent need to invest in structured and sustained capacity building for Kenyan CSOs. The main focus should be on CSOs working at the grassroots and county levels. Key areas for capacity strengthening include data literacy and evidence use - empowering CSOs to generate, analyze, and communicate data to influence policy and track TICAD commitments at local and national levels. In addition, CSOs require enhanced capabilities in project design, budgeting, and results-based management to align proposals with TICAD frameworks and access diverse funding opportunities. Policy advocacy and communication remain key drivers, especially in equipping CSOs to engage effectively in high-level dialogues, represent marginalized voices, and contribute to national, regional, continental, and global TICAD processes.

Further, technical support is needed in the development of TICAD tracking tools and localization frameworks, including training in monitoring and evaluation, participatory assessments, and the use of digital platforms for real-time reporting. These capacity-building efforts should be

coordinated through multi-stakeholder partnerships involving the SDGs Kenya Forum, development partners such as JICA and UNDP, and government institutions like the State Department for Economic Planning. Establishing peer-learning platforms, communities of practice, and mentorship programmes will also promote institutional resilience, knowledge transfer, and sustainable CSO participation in TICAD implementation across Kenya.

4.5 Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning

For Kenyan CSOs to play a meaningful role in the implementation and accountability of TICAD 9 commitments, robust data systems and an adaptive Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning (MERL) frameworks are essential. CSOs, particularly at the grassroots level, are well positioned to generate community-level data and qualitative insights that complement official statistics. However, the current MERL ecosystem is fragmented, with limited integration of CSO-generated data into national TICAD tracking systems. To address this gap, it is imperative to institutionalize CSO participation in joint government - CSO MERL frameworks and to co-develop localized indicators that reflect both community priorities and TICAD thematic focus areas - including peace, health, education, digital transformation, and climate resilience.

Capacity building in citizen-generated data, geo-referenced tracking, and digital reporting platforms (e.g., dashboards or mobile tools) will enable CSOs to contribute real-time evidence for adaptive programming and policy reviews. Further, participatory MERL practices - such as community scorecards, feedback forums, and social audits - should be mainstreamed across all TICAD-related interventions to ensure that accountability is inclusive and people-driven. The SDGs Kenya Forum and sector-based CSO networks can serve as key conveners for periodic learning reviews, data-sharing workshops, and joint reflection sessions with government and development partners. These collaborative mechanisms will not only strengthen transparency and mutual accountability but also enhance continuous learning, scaling of best practices, and course correction throughout the TICAD implementation cycle.

5. CONCLUSION AND KEY NEXT STEPS

5.1 Conclusion

Kenyan CSOs, under the coordination of the SDGs Kenya Forum, have played a key role in advancing TICAD commitments through community-driven initiatives in health, education, climate resilience, governance, and inclusive economic growth. This underscores the importance of structured CSO inclusion in national, regional, continental and global TICAD processes, backed by sustainable financing, robust data systems, and legal reforms in expanding the civic space. Kenya’s progress post-TICAD 8 highlights opportunities for deeper partnerships with the Government of Kenya, TICAD co-hosts, development partners, and the private sector to accelerate

achievement of shared goals. The Forum calls on the Government to formally embed CSO participation in TICAD delegations, implementation, and monitoring frameworks. Development partners and the private sector are urged to channel targeted resources into scalable, community-led innovations that address local priorities while aligning with TICAD 9's pillars and the SDGs. The SDGs Kenya Forum reaffirms its commitment to sustained engagement, advocacy, and follow-up on TICAD 9 outcomes to ensure Kenya-Japan cooperation delivers inclusive, sustainable, and measurable impact for all Kenyans.

5.2 Key Next Steps

In ensuring effective realization of TICAD 9 commitments in Kenya, there is need for an inclusive implementation approach which will bring together both state and non-state actors. The following are recommendations to the Government of Kenya, TICAD Co-hosts, Development Partners, Private Sector, and CSO Networks**.**

a) Government of Kenya

National Government

i. *Mainstream TICAD Priorities into National Development Frameworks:* Embed TICAD-aligned priorities in the Kenya Vision 2030 and its MTP IV, and BETA implementation frameworks. In addition, there is need to ensure CSOs have structured input in national policy reviews.
ii. *Develop a National TICAD-CSO Engagement Framework:* Co-create with CSOs a formal engagement framework that defines participation modalities, timelines, and feedback loops for CSO contributions to TICAD agenda-setting, programme design, and follow-up.
iii. *Strengthen Transparency in TICAD Financing:* Introduce quarterly public disclosure reports, detailing TICAD project budgets, disbursements, and performance against indicators, with adequate CSO participation in validation processes to enhance trust and accountability.
iv. *Enhance Inclusion of Grassroots CSOs in TICAD Programmes:* Establish a national support facility to strengthen the participation of county and community-based CSOs in TICAD initiatives through capacity building, simplified grant application processes, and mentorship.
v. *Facilitate National-Level Multi-Stakeholder TICAD Review Forums:* Convene annual national review meetings, co-chaired by government and civil society, to assess progress on TICAD commitments, and share evidences from the grassroots.
vi. *Promote Local-International Knowledge Linkages:* Institutionalize exchange programmes between Kenyan CSOs and Japanese/African counterparts to transfer tested innovations in climate adaptation, youth skilling, health systems, and inclusive education.

County Governments

i. *Localize TICAD Priorities in County Policies and Plans:* The 47 County Governments should integrate TICAD focus areas into their CIDPs and ADPs, including measurable targets and partnerships with local CSOs.
ii. *Institutionalize County TICAD Monitoring Committees:* Create standing committees that bring together county departments, CSOs, and community representatives to monitor progress on TICAD-funded or -aligned programmes and projects.
iii. *Promote Participatory Budgeting for TICAD Projects:* Adopt participatory budgeting models that allow CSOs and citizens to propose, debate, and prioritize projects aligned with TICAD commitments.
iv. *Support County-Level Knowledge Sharing Platforms:* Facilitate annual county innovation fairs where CSOs, private sector actors, and development partners showcase TICAD-linked grassroots innovations for scaling across counties.
v. *Integrate Community-Generated Data into County Reporting:* Partner with local CSOs to collect, validate, and use citizen-generated data in monitoring TICAD-linked indicators, feeding into both county and national reporting systems.

b) TICAD Co-hosts and Development Partners

i. *Establish Dedicated Funding Windows for Community-Led Initiatives:* Set up and operationalize small-grants funding windows specifically for grassroots CSOs in Kenya to pilot and scale TICAD-aligned innovations in health, education, climate resilience, gender equality, and youth skilling.
ii. *Integrate CSOs into TICAD Follow-Up Mechanisms:* Ensure Kenyan CSOs have formal seats in all TICAD joint monitoring committees and thematic working groups with travel and participation support to attend both in-country and regional review forums.
iii. *Support Capacity Strengthening in Evidence-Based Advocacy and Data Systems:* Invest in joint training programmes with Kenyan CSOs on data collection, results-based management, policy advocacy, and impact evaluation to improve the quality and credibility of TICAD progress reporting from the CSOs.
iv. *Enhance South-South and Triangular Cooperation Initiatives:* Facilitate exchange visits, peer learning, and joint projects between Kenyan CSOs, other African countries, and Japanese civil society to share scalable models in climate-smart agriculture, SME development, and digital inclusion.
v. *Prioritize Funding for Under-Resourced TICAD Pillar Areas:* Commit targeted financial and technical resources to underfunded priority areas in Kenya such as local governance, peacebuilding, and inclusive education.
vi. *Promote Joint Visibility and Knowledge Sharing Platforms:* Co-host annual knowledge fairs in Kenya with SDGs Kenya Forum and the Government of Kenya, where CSOs and

partners showcase TICAD-linked projects, share lessons, and negotiate on new partnerships for replication.

vii. *Adopt Flexible Funding and Reporting Modalities:* Simplify grant application and reporting processes for grassroots CSOs to reduce administrative barriers and allow more time for actual programme implementation and community engagement.

c) Private Sector

i. *Invest in Scalable Community-Led Innovations:* Private sector actors should establish financing windows to support tested grassroots innovations in areas such as renewable energy, WASH, and climate-smart agriculture. These investments should target scaling successful CSO-led pilot projects that align with TICAD 9 pillars. This will ensure commercial viability and measurable socio-economic impact.

ii. *Forge Inclusive Public-Private-Civil Society Partnerships:* Develop formal partnership frameworks with Kenyan CSOs and local governments to co-design and implement projects that address TICAD 9 priorities, including digital transformation, youth employment, and gender equality. Such partnerships should include clear roles, shared investment responsibilities, and joint monitoring mechanisms.

iii. *Support Skills Transfer and Enterprise Development:* Implement targeted capacity-building initiatives in collaboration with CSOs to transfer technical, managerial, and entrepreneurial skills to youth, women, and marginalized groups. This should include apprenticeships, mentorship programmes, and access to start-up capital for small-scale enterprises linked to TICAD-related sectors.

iv. *Champion Green and Climate-Resilient Business Models:* Integrate climate adaptation and mitigation practices into supply chains and corporate investment portfolios. Partner with CSOs to pilot and expand initiatives such as sustainable water harvesting, renewable energy integration, and circular economy models in Kenyan counties vulnerable to climate change.

v. *Provide Market Access for CSO-Driven Products and Services:* Facilitate access to domestic, regional, and international markets for products and services generated through CSO-led initiatives. This can be achieved by creating supply chain agreements, participating in trade fairs, and leveraging e-commerce platforms to promote Kenyan community-based products in TICAD partner countries.

d) CSO Networks

i. *Strengthen Internal Coordination and Policy Coherence:* CSO networks, led by the SDGs Kenya Forum, should establish structured coordination mechanisms that ensure harmonized messaging, joint advocacy, and alignment of CSO priorities with TICAD 9 commitments. This can be achieved through regular policy roundtables, shared advocacy

calendars, and a centralized knowledge management system to support evidence-based decision making.

ii. *Enhance Grassroots-CSO Linkages for Inclusive Representation:* CSO networks should adopt deliberate strategies to ensure inclusion of county-based and grassroots CSOs in TICAD follow-up actions. This could include rotational hosting of TICAD preparatory forums across counties, provision of travel grants, and creation of digital participation channels to bridge geographic barriers.

iii. *Develop and maintain a CSO TICAD Monitoring and Accountability Framework:* CSO networks should design and operationalize a monitoring tool that tracks implementation of TICAD commitments at both national and county levels. This tool should integrate citizen-generated data, community scorecards, and sector-specific progress trackers to strengthen accountability and advocacy impact.

iv. *Invest in Thematic Capacity Building Across TICAD Pillars:* CSO networks should coordinate joint training programmes for member organizations focusing on TICAD priority areas such as climate resilience, trade and investment, peacebuilding, governance, and digital transformation. This will enhance technical competence and position CSOs as credible policy actors in TICAD processes.

v. *Leverage Strategic Partnerships for Resource Mobilization:* CSO networks should pool capacities to engage in collective resource mobilization targeting both domestic and international funding sources. This could involve joint funding proposals to TICAD co-hosts, bilateral donors, and philanthropic organizations to support collaborative, multi-CSO projects aligned with TICAD priorities.

vi. *Create a Digital Advocacy and Storytelling Hub:* Establish an online platform to document, showcase, and amplify CSO-led innovations, success stories, and lessons learned from TICAD-related interventions. This Hub will serve as a repository of evidence for advocacy, peer learning, and engagement with both local and global stakeholders.

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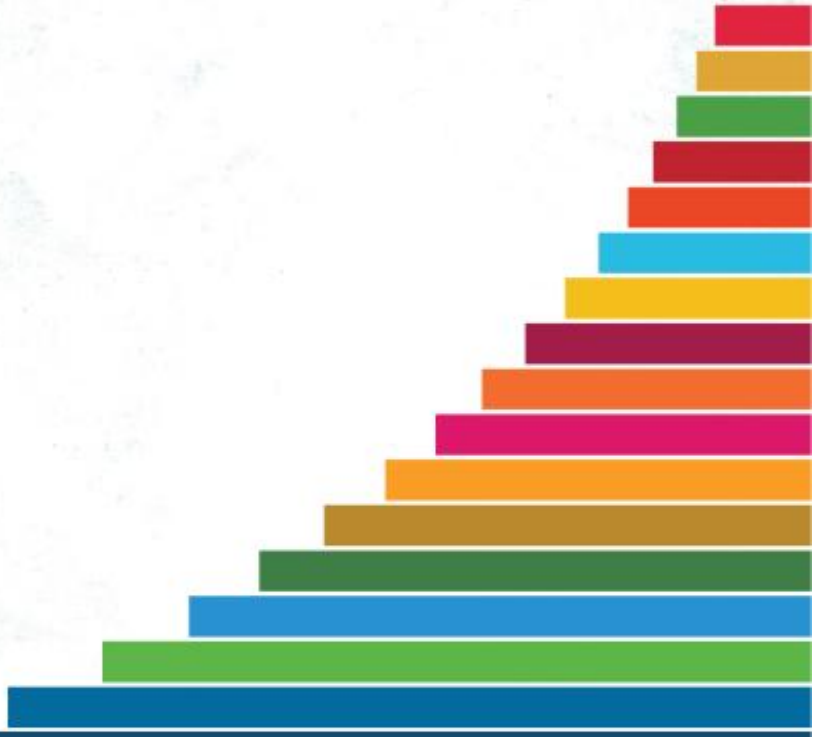

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