



SDGs KENYA FORUM

Coalition for Sustainable Development

SPOTLIGHT

Q3

NEWSLETTER

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



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Introduction:

The third quarter of 2025 marked a season of action, collaboration, and visible progress for the SDGs Kenya Forum and its partners as we continued to champion the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at national, regional, and global levels. With just five years remaining to achieve the 2030 Agenda, our focus this quarter remained steadfast — strengthening accountability, amplifying voices, and driving inclusive action to ensure that no one is left behind.

One of the major highlights of the quarter was our participation at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York, where the Forum joined global leaders, civil society actors, and youth representatives to reflect on the progress, challenges, and transformative pathways toward achieving the SDGs. The Forum's contribution reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to inclusive development and underscored the importance of civil society in driving accountability and localized solutions.

Back home, we made significant strides in strengthening gender equality. Through a series of County Gender Trainings held across Makueni, Homabay, Laikipia and Uasin Gishu, we empowered local actors, media representatives, and community champions to understand and advocate for gender-responsive planning and budgeting. These sessions also provided a platform to unpack the National Care Policy, emphasizing the recognition and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work as a critical component of achieving SDG 5 – Gender Equality.

In line with our Civic Engagement and Accountability Strategy, the Forum also played a central role in finalizing the Public Participation Forums on the Draft PBO Regulations 2025 in Nairobi County. Through robust media engagement, capacity-building sessions, and inclusive dialogue, the Forum helped amplify civil society voices in shaping a more enabling environment for public benefit organizations.

Beyond these milestones, Q3 also witnessed continued investment in partnerships, communication, and capacity strengthening. From supporting youth-focused dialogues to enhancing visibility through strategic media engagement, every initiative reflected our belief that collective action accelerates progress.

As we close this quarter, we celebrate not only the achievements but also the partnerships that made them possible. The Forum remains committed to driving momentum in the #RaceTo203 — inspiring collaboration, deepening impact, and ensuring that the vision of a sustainable, inclusive Kenya becomes a lived reality for all.

Executive Summary

As we draw the curtain on the third quarter of 2025, I am immensely proud to reflect on the progress we have made, the partnerships we have strengthened, and the voices we have amplified in our shared journey toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This quarter has been a defining moment in our collective effort to accelerate action, enhance accountability, and deepen civic engagement — all while keeping the promise of the 2030 Agenda alive and attainable.

Throughout Q3, the SDGs Kenya Forum continued to lead and convene diverse stakeholders — from government institutions and civil society organizations to youth, academia, and the media — to ensure that sustainable development remains an inclusive and people-driven process. Our engagement at the **High-Level Political**

Forum (HLPF) in New York reaffirmed Kenya's leadership in multistakeholder partnerships and our firm commitment to the principles of transparency, inclusivity, and shared accountability. Through this global platform, we not only amplified Kenya's civil society voice but also highlighted the critical importance of localizing the SDGs and investing in community-driven solutions.

At the national level, our focus on **gender-responsive programming** took center stage through the **County Gender Trainings**. These engagements provided practical spaces for local actors, policymakers, and community representatives to interrogate gender frameworks, unpack the National Care Policy, and identify actionable pathways for achieving **SDG 5 – Gender Equality**. The Forum also strengthened partnerships with the media to amplify the discourse around unpaid care work, gender equality, and women's economic empowerment — key enablers for sustainable and inclusive development.

In parallel, the Forum actively supported **public participation on the Draft Public Benefit Organizations (PBO) Regulations 2025**, ensuring that civil society voices were effectively represented in shaping the policy and regulatory environment. By facilitating media coverage, coordinating dialogue sessions, and hosting virtual discussions, we enhanced civic awareness and promoted accountability in governance processes.

The quarter also saw the successful **pre-launch of the Race to 2030 campaign** during the **SDGs Flag Day Celebration**, marking a decade since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. The campaign seeks to rally collective momentum in the final stretch — reminding all actors that while time is running out, the window for action remains open. This initiative has already begun mobilizing partners and youth networks toward renewed collaboration and measurable impact in the remaining five years.

As we move into the final quarter of the year, our attention now turns to one of our flagship convenings — the **Annual National Multi-Stakeholders Conference**. This platform remains a cornerstone of our work, bringing together diverse actors to reflect, evaluate, and reimagine Kenya's SDG implementation roadmap. We look forward to using this year's conference as an opportunity to strengthen partnerships, celebrate progress, and inspire the bold actions required in #RaceTo2030.

The achievements of this quarter are a testament to the resilience and dedication of our members, partners, and team. On behalf of the SDGs Kenya Forum, I extend my sincere gratitude to all who continue to walk this journey with us — proving, time and again, that progress is possible when we move together.

Florence Syevuo
Executive Director

Key Highlights:

GENDER:

Validation of the Gender Sector Statistical Plan (GSSP)

As part of our ongoing commitment to advancing gender-responsive data systems and evidence-based policymaking, the SDGs Kenya Forum, in partnership with UN Women and the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), co-convened a Validation Workshop for the finalization of the Gender Sector Statistical Plan (GSSP).

The workshop marked a significant milestone in Kenya's efforts to strengthen the generation, coordination, and use of gender statistics — a critical component for measuring progress towards SDG 5: Gender Equality and other cross-cutting development priorities.

The GSSP serves as a strategic framework to guide the collection, analysis, and dissemination of gender statistics across sectors. It articulates a clear vision, mission, and set of core values, alongside guiding principles that emphasize inclusivity, collaboration, and accountability. The plan also outlines key strategic goals that will shape data production and utilization during the planning period, ensuring that gender statistics are not only accurate but also accessible and actionable.

During the validation session, participants reviewed the strategic model, assessed priority indicators, and shared insights on aligning

the plan with national development frameworks such as Vision 2030, the Medium-Term Plan IV (MTP IV), and the Kenya National Policy on Gender and Development. The discussions underscored the need for harmonized data systems, inter-agency collaboration, and increased capacity at both national and county levels to generate reliable gender data.

The Forum reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the institutionalization of gender statistics through advocacy, coordination, and multi-stakeholder engagement. By strengthening data ecosystems and ensuring that gender perspectives are mainstreamed into all levels of planning and reporting, the GSSP will play a pivotal role in enhancing accountability and tracking Kenya's progress toward gender equality and women's empowerment.

Ultimately, the validation of the Gender Sector Statistical Plan is more than a procedural milestone — it is a bold step toward ensuring that every policy, program, and investment decision is backed by credible data that reflects the realities of all Kenyans, especially women and girls.

Development of Guidelines for State and Non-State Actors on Statistical Action Plans

As part of Kenya's continued efforts to strengthen data governance and ensure coordinated production, management, and use of statistics across all sectors, the SDGs Kenya Forum participated in a critical multi-stakeholder workshop to develop guidelines for the implementation of the Second Kenya Strategy for the Development of Statistics (KSDS II).



The workshop, convened by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), brought together a diverse mix of stakeholders — including representatives from civil society organizations (CSOs), research institutions, academia, county and national government departments, and KNBS technical teams. The collaboration underscored Kenya’s commitment to a whole-of-society approach to strengthening the

national statistical system and ensuring that data remains a driver of evidence-based policy and inclusive development.

The guidelines, currently in the draft stage, are being developed to provide a standardized framework that will guide both state and non-state actors in developing Statistical Action Plans (SAPs) aligned with the KSDS II. These plans will enable ministries, departments, agencies (MDAs), and county governments — as well as non-state actors such as CSOs and research institutions — to produce and use quality data that meets the growing demand for evidence to inform policy and decision-making.



Once finalized, the guidelines will help ensure that all stakeholders adopt a coordinated, inclusive, and gender-responsive approach to data generation and use. They will promote data harmonization, standardization, and integration, which are critical for ensuring comparability and consistency across sectors and levels of governance.

The SDGs Kenya Forum is playing a key facilitative role in this process, particularly in ensuring that civil society organizations and community-level actors are not left behind. To this end, the Forum will partner with the Open Institute and GROOTS Kenya to convene broader CSO engagements aimed at sensitizing organizations on the adoption and practical application of the guidelines. These sessions will help CSOs plan effectively for citizen-generated data (CGD) collection and use, while also strengthening their capacity to leverage existing gender data for advocacy and policy influence.

The Forum recognizes that reliable and disaggregated data is the foundation of accountability and inclusive development. Through this initiative, civil society actors will be better positioned to complement official statistics, fill existing data gaps, and ensure that local realities — particularly those of marginalized communities — are reflected in Kenya's national development frameworks and reporting processes.

Ultimately, the development of these guidelines marks a significant milestone in operationalizing Kenya's data revolution, ensuring that both state and non-state actors work collaboratively to produce, share, and use high-quality data that drives transformative action toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Kenya Vision 2030.

Gender Budget Analysis: Strengthening Accountability and Equity in County Planning

During Quarter 3, the SDGs Kenya Forum made significant progress in advancing gender-responsive budgeting and accountability through the Gender Budget Analysis (GBA) exercise. The initiative, implemented in collaboration with county governments and supported by technical consultants, focused on assessing how public resources are planned, allocated, and utilized to address gender inequalities and promote inclusive development across counties.

The Gender Budget Analysis was successfully conducted in eight (8) counties, representing diverse regions and socio-economic contexts. The exercise sought to evaluate the extent to which county budgets integrate gender perspectives, respond to community

needs, and align with both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5 – Gender Equality) and Kenya's National Policy on Gender and Development.

Through a rigorous, data-driven process, the consultant finalized county-specific gender budget analysis reports, which were subsequently validated by senior government officials, including county economists and planners, to ensure accuracy, consistency, and credibility of the findings. The validation sessions also provided an important platform for dialogue between the Forum, technical officers, and policy actors on how gender-responsive planning can be institutionalized within county budgeting frameworks.

The outcome of this process is a comprehensive package of knowledge products — nine (9) gender policy briefs (covering eight counties and one consolidated synthesis brief) and one national report that collectively provide actionable insights and policy recommendations. These documents outline key trends, highlight existing gender gaps in budget implementation, and propose practical strategies for ensuring that county fiscal policies effectively contribute to gender equality, social inclusion, and sustainable development.

Looking ahead, the final products will be disseminated through a series of County

Social Accountability Dialogues and showcased at the upcoming Annual Multi-Stakeholders' Conference, where policymakers, civil society, and development partners will reflect on progress and commit to further advancing gender-responsive budgeting.

Convene Gender Statistics Technical Working Group: Strengthening Evidence and Visibility for Gender Data

In Quarter 3, the SDGs Kenya Forum continued to strengthen its collaboration with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and UN Women through active participation in the Gender Statistics Technical Working Group (TWG). As part of these efforts, the Forum supported a high-level workshop on the development of a dissemination strategy and materials for the Household Satellite Account (HSA) Report for Kenya — a groundbreaking report that quantifies the economic value of unpaid domestic and care work.

The Forum's involvement in this process reaffirmed its role as a critical partner in gender data advocacy, particularly in ensuring that data is not only collected and analyzed but also communicated effectively to inform policy planning, budgeting, and decision-making. The workshop brought together technical experts, policymakers, statisticians, communications practitioners, researchers, and gender advocates to co-create a strategic approach for disseminating the HSA findings across different audiences.

Keynote speakers from UN Women and KNBS commended the SDGs Kenya Forum for its consistent partnership and leadership in promoting inclusive, data-driven approaches to achieving gender equality. They acknowledged that this collaboration exemplifies the spirit of partnership envisioned under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development—"walking the journey together" to ensure that women's unpaid contributions are recognized, valued, and integrated into national economic planning.

The objectives of the workshop were clear and far-reaching:

- *To develop a comprehensive dissemination strategy and materials that guide public communication on the HSA report, ensuring accuracy, accessibility, and clarity while preventing unintended negative perceptions.*
- *To strengthen advocacy efforts by ensuring that the dissemination of the HSA report highlights the economic and social importance of unpaid domestic and care work. The report's findings are expected to shape Kenya's policy journey, recognizing care work as a critical pillar of inclusive and sustainable development.*
- *To plan for the national launch and dissemination of the HSA report, reviewing draft communication tools and ensuring alignment in messaging and visual presentation.*
- *To guarantee consistency, credibility, and impact in how HSA findings are shared across diverse audiences — including policymakers, the media, researchers, advocacy groups, and the public — so that data leads to action.*
- *To build consensus on key messages to prevent misinterpretation, foster positive framing, and reinforce the significance of valuing unpaid care work in policy development, budget allocation, and national statistics.*
- *To consolidate design and presentation inputs for the final dissemination materials to ensure they are visually engaging and data-driven.*

The discussions underscored the importance of translating data into clear, compelling, and actionable narratives that highlight the central role of women's unpaid labor in sustaining households and driving economies. Participants emphasized that communication around the HSA must balance technical accuracy with empathy, ensuring that the message promotes recognition rather than reinforcing stereotypes or misconceptions.

Through this engagement, the SDGs Kenya Forum reaffirmed its commitment to advancing gender data systems that support accountability and inclusivity. By co-creating a dissemination strategy for the HSA, the Forum and its partners are ensuring that the value of care work is visible, appreciated, and embedded in Kenya's development agenda — a vital step toward achieving SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and ensuring that no one is left behind.

COUNTY LEVEL UPDATES:

Strengthening County Data Systems: Partnership with Homa Bay County on Statistical Abstracts and Gender Data Dissemination

In line with its mission to promote data-driven decision-making and evidence-based policy formulation, the SDGs Kenya Forum continued its strategic engagement with county governments to enhance the use of

statistics in local planning and accountability. During the third quarter, the Forum successfully supported Homa Bay County in the design and printing of the County Statistical Abstract and Analytical Reports, marking a significant milestone in advancing county-level data systems.

The Homa Bay County Statistical Abstract is a critical resource that consolidates key data across sectors such as health, education, agriculture, environment, infrastructure, and gender. It provides policymakers, researchers, civil society, and development partners with a reliable foundation for planning, budgeting, and monitoring progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By supporting the production of these reports, the SDGs Kenya Forum continues to strengthen the bridge between data and decision-making, ensuring that development planning is grounded in credible evidence.

To sustain and institutionalize this progress, Homa Bay County Government took an important step by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the SDGs Kenya Forum. This partnership represents a long-term commitment to collaboration on the development of the 2025 County Statistical Abstract and the dissemination of existing gender data products. The MOU sets the foundation for a structured engagement framework, through which the Forum will provide technical, analytical, and communications support to the county's departments—particularly in ensuring that data is effectively translated into actionable insights that influence public policy.



This collaboration further aligns with Kenya's National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), which emphasizes the need for both state and non-state actors to work together in strengthening data ecosystems. Through this partnership, the Forum and Homa Bay County aim to enhance data accessibility, utilization, and visibility, while fostering public awareness on the importance of statistics in local governance.

The next phase of the partnership will focus on three key areas:

- *Supporting the development of the 2025 County Statistical Abstract with stronger integration of gender and SDG indicators;*
- *Building the capacity of county officials and local stakeholders on data use for planning, monitoring, and reporting; and*
- *Disseminating gender statistics and analytical products to ensure that data is not only collected but also used to influence gender-responsive and inclusive policy decisions.*

The Homa Bay County–SDGs Kenya Forum partnership is a model of how collaboration between government and civil society can accelerate progress toward the SDGs at the subnational level. By prioritizing the use of data and evidence in governance, Homa Bay County continues to lead by example in translating global commitments into local realities.

As we move toward 2025, the Forum remains committed to strengthening county data ecosystems, enhancing gender data visibility, and supporting the localization of the SDGs — ensuring that development decisions are informed by facts, inclusive of all voices, and leave no one behind.

Empowering Civil Society to Drive Gender Equality: Training on the National Care Policy, Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE), and Women in Leadership (WIL) Principles

In the spirit of advancing gender equality, inclusive development, and social justice, the SDGs Kenya Forum rolled out a series of transformative two-day capacity-building trainings across Makueni, Homa Bay, Laikipia, and Uasin Gishu Counties. The sessions brought together a diverse mix of civil society organizations (CSOs), grassroots movements, youth groups, women's organizations, persons with disabilities (PWDs), media practitioners, and representatives of indigenous communities to deepen their understanding and engagement on the National Care Policy, Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE), and Women in Leadership (WIL) principles.

The overarching goal of these trainings was to strengthen the capacity of community actors to champion gender-responsive and inclusive development at both county and national levels. Participants were equipped with tools to interpret and apply care economy frameworks, advocate for gender-responsive budgets, and amplify women's leadership within governance and decision-making spaces. Through interactive discussions, practical exercises, and peer learning sessions, participants explored the interconnections between unpaid care work, economic empowerment, and women's participation in leadership—a linkage central to achieving SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

The National Care Policy, adopted by the Government of Kenya, recognizes the pivotal role of unpaid care and domestic work in sustaining families, communities, and economies. However, these contributions—mostly carried out by women and girls—often remain undervalued and unsupported. Through this training, participants unpacked the policy's key components, including its focus on reducing, redistributing, and recognizing unpaid care work while ensuring that

national and county development plans integrate care policies into mainstream economic planning.



In addition to the National Care Policy, the sessions delved into Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) strategies, highlighting the structural and societal barriers that continue to limit women's participation in economic activities. Participants explored approaches to promote equitable access to resources, finance, markets, and decent work opportunities—critical enablers of inclusive growth. The Women in Leadership (WIL) segment further reinforced the importance of women's participation in political, corporate, and community decision-making, emphasizing the need for mentorship, representation, and gender-sensitive institutional reforms.

Beyond building individual capacities, the trainings served as a platform for strengthening networks and alliances among CSOs, community-based organizations, and local media actors. Participants identified shared advocacy priorities and mapped out opportunities for collective action, particularly in driving policy implementation, influencing county gender policies, and mainstreaming gender equality within local governance processes.



The sessions also created space for documenting lived experiences and community stories, capturing the realities of care work, women's entrepreneurship, and leadership journeys from the ground. These narratives are now being curated for use in advocacy campaigns and media storytelling, ensuring that the voices of women and marginalized groups inform ongoing policy dialogues at both county and national levels.



Participants expressed appreciation for the practical, participatory nature of the training, which not only deepened their technical understanding but also strengthened their resolve to advocate for inclusive gender policies and accountability frameworks. The cross-learning among counties provided valuable insights into regional variations and opportunities for collaboration, setting the stage for a national coalition on care, empowerment, and leadership advocacy. Moving forward, the Forum, through its gender and communications

programs, will continue supporting the trained CSOs and networks to monitor implementation of the National Care Policy, track gender-responsive budgeting, and document impact stories that showcase the transformative power of equitable care systems and women's leadership.

By building this movement from the ground up, the SDGs Kenya Forum is not only promoting awareness but also catalyzing action—turning gender equality from a policy commitment into a lived reality for all.

Empowering Local Media to Champion SDGs and Gender Equality:

In line with the Forum's commitment to advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through inclusive communication and community-driven advocacy, the SDGs Kenya Forum, with support from the Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK), conducted a series of transformative two-day training workshops and community dialogues targeting 20 local media practitioners in Makueni, Homa Bay, Laikipia and Uasin Gishu Counties.



The trainings were grounded in the belief that media is not just a conveyor of information, but a catalyst for social transformation. By equipping journalists and media professionals with the right knowledge, tools, and storytelling approaches, the workshops sought to amplify the voices of local communities, promote gender equality, and increase visibility of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the county level.

Objectives of the Trainings

The sessions were guided by three primary objectives:

- *Enhancing storytelling and advocacy skills – to enable participants to use media strategically for influencing public discourse and promoting accountability.*
- *Building media capacity for policy engagement – to help journalists understand how to utilize media platforms as tools for policy advocacy, social accountability, and civic engagement.*
- *Strengthening gender-sensitive reporting – to improve the quality and consistency of reporting on gender equality, with a focus on Kenya’s National Care Policy, Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE), and Women in Leadership (WIL).*

Training Content and Approach

The interactive sessions combined presentations, practical exercises, and dialogue-based discussions that encouraged participants to connect policy frameworks to real-life community stories. The training introduced participants to gender-responsive reporting frameworks and explored the interlinkages between care work, women’s economic participation, and leadership opportunities.

Journalists engaged in hands-on exercises on story development,

data use, framing, and contextualizing gender narratives in ways that challenge stereotypes and foster public understanding. The Forum’s facilitators emphasized the need for localized storytelling, urging participants to frame SDG-related issues through the lens of local realities — from unpaid care work in households to the economic contributions of women in informal sectors.



The sessions also featured guided reflections on how the media can serve as a bridge between citizens and policymakers, particularly in monitoring the implementation of gender and development policies at the county level. Participants examined how media coverage can make invisible issues — such as unpaid care work — more visible in the national discourse and push for stronger institutional responses.

Impact and Next Steps

Participants expressed deep appreciation for the opportunity to enhance their skills in gender-sensitive journalism and SDG storytelling. Many pledged to use their platforms to educate communities, spotlight marginalized voices, and promote inclusive narratives that reflect Kenya's progress toward the SDGs.

The Forum, in collaboration with AMWIK and other partners, plans to sustain this momentum through mentorship and continuous engagement, supporting trained journalists to publish feature stories and host local radio discussions focused on gender equality, unpaid care work, and sustainable development.

By empowering local media, these trainings have demonstrated that sustainable development begins with informed storytelling. When journalists tell stories that connect people, policies, and purpose — communities listen, act, and transform.

Every headline can spark change. Every story can build equity. Every voice can drive the #RaceTo2030.

Community Dialogues on SDG 5 Commitments, the National Care Policy, Women's Economic Empowerment, and Affirmative Action

In continued efforts to advance gender equality and social inclusion at the grassroots level, the SDGs Kenya Forum, in collaboration with local civil society partners and county governments, successfully convened a series of community dialogues in Makueni, Homa Bay, Laikipia and Uasin Gishu Counties. These dialogues sought to bridge the gap between national policies and community understanding by localizing SDG 5 — Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls, and promoting awareness around the National Care Policy, Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE), and Affirmative Action Policies.



The sessions were designed to serve as inclusive platforms for citizens, county officials, women's groups, youth representatives, persons with disabilities (PWDs), community leaders, and local media practitioners to engage in open discussions about gender equality, care work, and inclusive development. The goal was to demystify key national commitments under SDG 5 and to ensure that citizens — especially at the grassroots — are not only informed but also empowered to demand accountability and contribute to policy implementation.



Bringing SDG 5 Closer to the People

Through interactive presentations, storytelling, and group discussions, participants explored what gender equality truly means in their daily lives — from access to education and healthcare to participation in leadership and decision-making. The facilitators unpacked SDG 5 commitments in simple, relatable terms, helping participants connect global development goals to their local realities.

The dialogues highlighted the cross-cutting nature of SDG 5, emphasizing that gender equality is not an isolated goal but a key enabler of progress across all 17 SDGs. When women and girls thrive, communities prosper — economically, socially, and politically.

Participants reflected on how persistent gender inequalities continue to shape access to opportunities and resources, and how local governments, in partnership with communities, can adopt gender-responsive approaches to bridge these gaps.

Unpacking the 5Rs of the National Care Policy

A major focus of the dialogues was to deepen community understanding of the National Care Policy, a groundbreaking framework that seeks to recognize and support the unpaid care and domestic work carried out predominantly by women and girls. The Forum's facilitators introduced participants to the 5Rs of Care — Recognize, Reduce, Redistribute, Reward, and Representation — explaining how each principle plays a crucial role in transforming care work from an invisible burden into a visible, valued, and shared responsibility.

Participants were encouraged to reflect on how care responsibilities affect their economic and social well-being, and how communities can collectively push for local government policies that invest in care infrastructure, such as child care centers, community water systems, and health facilities.



The discussions also examined how the National Care Policy aligns with broader Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) initiatives, enabling women to fully participate in the workforce and public life without being overburdened by unpaid care duties.

Media's Role in Storytelling and Advocacy

The community dialogues also emphasized the critical role of the media in promoting gender equality and amplifying stories that challenge stereotypes, expose inequalities, and celebrate progress. Local journalists, many of whom had participated in earlier media trainings facilitated by the Forum, shared their insights on how community-driven storytelling can transform public perceptions and inspire change.

Participants discussed how radio, social media, and community storytelling platforms can serve as powerful tools for advocacy — raising awareness of gender issues, highlighting success stories, and ensuring that the voices of women, youth, and marginalized groups are heard in county decision-making processes.



Community Reflections and Way Forward

The dialogues were characterized by vibrant discussions and personal testimonies, as participants shared experiences on gender discrimination, access to economic opportunities, and their roles in advancing gender equality within their communities. Many expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage in such open, informed conversations, noting that understanding the SDGs and care policy empowers them to take action.

County representatives reaffirmed their commitment to implementing gender-responsive programs and ensuring that development plans reflect the lived realities of women and girls. The sessions also provided valuable feedback for ongoing advocacy around affirmative action, particularly regarding women's leadership and participation in decision-making spaces.

In all the four counties, participants left the dialogues with renewed awareness and practical knowledge of how they can use their voices, networks, and local platforms to champion gender equality. The Forum committed to continuing its engagement with county partners and grassroots organizations to support sustained dialogue, community follow-up, and policy advocacy.

A Step Towards Localized Gender Accountability

These community dialogues reinforced one powerful message — that gender equality begins at the community level, where people live, work, and care for their families. By creating spaces for conversation, learning, and collective reflection, the SDGs Kenya Forum and its partners are not only popularizing national gender policies but also building a movement of informed citizens who can drive accountability from the ground up.

As the journey toward 2030 continues, these engagements serve as reminders that the SDGs are only achievable when local voices are at the center — and when care work, women's economic empowerment, and inclusive storytelling are recognized as pillars of sustainable development.

“When we recognize care, we recognize value. When we amplify local voices, we accelerate equality.”

META PROJECT:

Public Benefit Organisation (PBO) Public Participation Forum

In the third quarter, the SDGs Kenya Forum actively participated in the Public Benefit Organisations (PBO) Public Participation Forum held in Nairobi. The engagement provided an important platform for civil society organizations, networks, and stakeholders to contribute their voices to the ongoing discussions around the operationalisation of the PBO Act and its accompanying regulations.

The session opened with an insightful overview of the Public Benefit Organizations (PBO) Act, tracing its enactment journey, milestones, and progress toward full operationalisation. Participants were taken through the key provisions of the Act, the recently gazetted regulations, and the significant differences between the old legal framework and the current Act. The facilitators emphasized how the Act is designed to strengthen accountability, transparency, and coordination within the civil society sector while providing a clear legal framework that enables effective service delivery and citizen participation.



The public participation process was structured through a moderated plenary session, ensuring that all voices were heard and recorded. Participants began by submitting written petitions and memoranda to the PBO Regulatory Authority, clearly identifying their organizations and the counties they represented — including participants from neighbouring counties such as Kiambu, Machakos, and Kajiado. These submissions captured diverse perspectives, reflecting the collective aspirations and challenges of organizations operating across Kenya.

Following the written submissions, the forum transitioned to oral presentations, where representatives engaged the Regulatory Authority on specific clauses within the proposed PBO Regulations. Speakers highlighted key areas of concern, provided context-based recommendations, and proposed amendments aimed at ensuring the regulations are practical, inclusive, and reflective of the operating realities of civil society organizations.

Throughout the discussions, participants underscored the importance of a conducive regulatory environment that enables PBOs to operate independently while promoting transparency, good governance, and mutual accountability. The deliberations also emphasized the need for continuous engagement between the Regulatory Authority and PBOs to enhance policy ownership and compliance.

The forum concluded with remarks from the PBO Regulatory Authority, who appreciated the depth of feedback and reaffirmed their commitment to an open and participatory policy process. They also reminded participants of the deadline for submitting written comments and memoranda, encouraging continued engagement as the regulations are finalized.

Overall, the PBO Public Participation Forum provided a meaningful opportunity for the SDGs Kenya Forum and other civil society actors to contribute to shaping the regulatory framework that governs the sector. Such participatory processes not only strengthen democratic governance but also reaffirm the critical role of civil society in advancing Kenya's sustainable development and inclusive growth agenda.

Enhancing Public Participation in the PBO Regulatory Process Through Digital Advocacy

In a bid to strengthen public participation and ensure inclusive engagement during the Public Benefit Organizations (PBO) regulatory processes, the SDGs Kenya Forum undertook a dynamic digital advocacy campaign to promote awareness and participation at the county level. Recognizing the importance of citizen voices in shaping governance and accountability frameworks, the Forum designed and disseminated a series of customized digital posters tailored for various counties across Kenya.



These visually engaging materials were strategically crafted to simplify key messages about the PBO Act, its regulatory framework, and opportunities for civic input. Each poster highlighted county-specific consultation details — including dates, venues, and thematic focus areas — encouraging local organizations, community-based groups, and citizens to participate actively in the public forums.

To maximize reach and inclusivity, the campaign was complemented by event calendars, WhatsApp alerts, and virtual access links, enabling both physical and online participation. This approach not only broadened access for stakeholders unable to attend in person but also facilitated real-time information sharing and dialogue across networks.

Through these efforts, the Forum amplified awareness of the PBO regulatory review and strengthened civic engagement in the policymaking process. The initiative reaffirmed the Forum's commitment to inclusive governance, transparency, and participatory development, ensuring that citizens and civil society organizations remain at the heart of Kenya's democratic and sustainable development agenda.

Domestic Advisory Group Meeting on the EU–Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement

- Hosted by the State Department for Trade

The SDGs Kenya Forum participated in the first inaugural meeting of the Domestic Advisory Group (DAG) on the EU–Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), convened by the State Department for Trade on 23rd July 2025. The Forum serves as a member of this advisory group, which brings together representatives from civil society, the private sector, and other non-state actors to provide advice and oversight on issues covered under the EPA, particularly those related to trade and sustainable development.

The Domestic Advisory Group (DAG) serves as an essential platform for structured dialogue between the Government of Kenya, the European Union, and stakeholders on the implementation of the Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) Chapter of the Agreement. This Chapter underscores the importance of integrating sustainability principles into trade relations — including commitments to labour rights, environmental protection, climate action, and inclusive economic growth. It also explicitly encourages the participation of civil society in monitoring and reviewing the progress of the Agreement, ensuring transparency, accountability, and mutual benefit for both parties.

During the inaugural meeting, participants were taken through an in-depth overview of the EU–Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement, its objectives, structure, and operational mechanisms. Presentations highlighted the potential benefits of the Agreement for Kenya, including improved market access to the EU, promotion of sustainable trade practices, and opportunities for private sector growth, particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The discussions also explored the governance framework for the DAG, its terms of reference, and the modalities of engagement between stakeholders and government institutions.

A significant outcome of the meeting was the agreement to organize a joint capacity-building session for DAG members, to be conducted in collaboration with the State Department for Trade and the European Union Delegation to Kenya. This upcoming training aims to enhance the group's understanding of the EPA's provisions, strengthen their technical capacity to engage in policy dialogue, and establish a common framework for collaboration and reporting.

The meeting reaffirmed the Government of Kenya's commitment to ensuring that the EPA is implemented in a way that advances sustainable and inclusive development, aligning with Kenya's national priorities and the broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda. For the SDGs Kenya Forum,

participation in the DAG represents a strategic opportunity to contribute to shaping trade policies that are equitable, environmentally conscious, and socially inclusive — ensuring that no one is left behind in Kenya’s economic transformation.

The Forum looks forward to continued engagement in the DAG process, working alongside other stakeholders to ensure that the EU–Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement delivers tangible and sustainable benefits for all.

Gender Budget Analysis under the META Project

In the third quarter, the SDGs Kenya Forum made significant progress under the META Project (Multistakeholder Engagement for Transparency and Accountability) by commissioning a comprehensive Gender Budget Analysis. This initiative is part of the Forum’s broader effort to strengthen gender-responsive budgeting and ensure that national and county-level development policies and resources are equitably aligned with the needs of women, men, girls, and boys across Kenya.

The Gender Budget Analysis seeks to assess the extent to which public budgets at both levels of government integrate gender perspectives and respond to the differentiated needs of diverse population groups. Specifically, the analysis focuses

on three priority thematic areas that align with Kenya’s sustainable development agenda — Digitalisation, Governance, Peace and Security, and the Green Transition. These areas were identified as pivotal to accelerating inclusive economic growth and ensuring that women and marginalized groups are not left behind in emerging sectors.

To carry out the assignment, the Forum onboarded a team of experienced consultants with expertise in public finance, gender policy, and development economics. The consultants presented an inception report outlining the study’s scope, methodology, key indicators, and analytical framework. The approach integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods, including desk reviews, data analysis, and stakeholder consultations at the county and national levels.

It was collectively agreed that the analysis would focus on 12 counties, carefully selected to represent Kenya’s regional economic blocs — ensuring that the findings reflect diverse socio-economic and geographic realities. These counties provide an important lens for understanding how gender-responsive budgeting is being implemented within different governance contexts and how local-level priorities align with national commitments to gender equality and sustainable development.

The Gender Budget Analysis aims to:

- *Examine the allocation and utilization of public resources across the three thematic areas to determine how gender considerations are reflected in budgetary planning and implementation.*
- *Identify gaps, challenges, and opportunities in existing policies and practices related to gender-responsive budgeting.*
- *Provide evidence-based recommendations for improving gender mainstreaming within the budgeting cycle at both the national and county levels.*
- *Strengthen the capacity of government institutions, civil society, and other stakeholders to advocate for more equitable and inclusive budgetary processes.*

The Forum's participation in this process underscores its commitment to promoting accountability, inclusivity, and gender equality in public finance management. Through the META Project, the Forum continues to amplify civil society's role in shaping transparent and participatory governance frameworks that leave no one behind.

Once completed, the Gender Budget Analysis will not only inform

policy advocacy and decision-making but also serve as a critical tool for monitoring progress towards achieving SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). The findings are expected to contribute to national dialogue on how Kenya can better integrate gender responsiveness into its fiscal and development planning — ensuring that public resources work for everyone, equitably and effectively.

GLOBAL ADVOCACY IN ACTION:

Building Momentum Towards HLPF 2025: Amplifying Civil Society Voices and Visibility

In the lead-up to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2025, the SDGs Kenya Forum undertook deliberate and strategic efforts to strengthen visibility, coordination, and civil society engagement in both national and global SDG processes. July 2025 marked a key milestone in this journey, with the successful hosting of an insightful and high-impact webinar titled “VNR Voices: Reflections and Insights Ahead of HLPF 2025.”



The virtual convening brought together a diverse range of stakeholders — including civil society organizations, youth representatives, government actors, development partners, and regional influencers — to reflect on Kenya's readiness and regional priorities ahead of the global review platform. The discussions revisited key learnings from past Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), explored the role of CSOs in driving accountability and data-driven advocacy, and identified opportunities to strengthen civil society's voice within the HLPF 2025 agenda.

The Forum's communication and visibility efforts were integral to the success of this initiative. A vibrant and visually compelling digital campaign was launched across the Forum's social media platforms, using infographics, posters, and live updates to stimulate participation and raise awareness of the event. Messaging focused on rallying stakeholders to engage with the [2025 CSOs Position Paper](#), contribute to national reflections and align their advocacy with global priorities under the theme of "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Eradicating Poverty."

Beyond the webinar, the Forum curated and disseminated a comprehensive HLPF 2025 Content Calendar, which detailed key sessions, side events, VNR Labs, and global advocacy opportunities for civil society participation. The calendar was widely circulated across the Forum's digital mailing lists, WhatsApp groups, and social media channels, enabling members and partners to track developments in real time, follow key policy dialogues, and engage meaningfully in the ongoing SDG conversations.



This proactive approach not only improved the accessibility of HLPF processes for civil society but also enhanced Kenya's visibility in global policy spaces. By equipping stakeholders with the tools, timelines, and knowledge to engage, the Forum ensured that Kenyan civil society voices were both present and influential in shaping narratives and accountability frameworks around the SDGs.

Through these efforts, the SDGs Kenya Forum reaffirmed its commitment to fostering inclusive participation, strategic communication, and evidence-based advocacy — ensuring that civil society remains a central actor in accelerating the 2030 Agenda during the final stretch to its realization.

9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9)

The SDGs Kenya Forum actively participated in the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9) — a premier global platform co-hosted by the Government of Japan, the United Nations, UNDP, the World Bank, and the African Union Commission. The conference, which convened high-level government officials, development partners, civil society, and private sector representatives, centered on promoting African-led development through partnerships that advance sustainable growth, peace, and stability.

TICAD 9 placed strong emphasis on co-creating innovative and inclusive solutions that leverage public-private collaboration to accelerate Africa's development. Discussions spanned key thematic areas including economic transformation, social resilience, and peacebuilding, with a particular focus on ensuring that development cooperation between Africa and Japan remains equitable, transparent, and people-centered.



As part of its advocacy and policy engagement, the SDGs Kenya Forum played a pivotal role in amplifying civil society perspectives by developing a Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Position Paper on TICAD 9. The paper aimed to present a unified and evidence-based civil society standpoint to guide Kenya's participation in TICAD 9 and shape broader continental engagement. It articulated actionable recommendations on inclusive governance, sustainable financing, gender equality, and climate resilience — aligning with the priorities of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

Through this contribution, the Forum sought to ensure that civil society voices remain central to policy dialogue and implementation frameworks within Africa-Japan cooperation. The initiative underscored the importance of accountability, equity, and local ownership in international partnerships and reaffirmed the Forum's commitment to advancing people-driven and sustainable development diplomacy.

By participating in TICAD 9, the SDGs Kenya Forum strengthened its global advocacy footprint and demonstrated how strategic civil society engagement can shape policy outcomes that reflect the realities, aspirations, and priorities of African communities.

PARTNER ENGAGEMENTS:

SDGs CHOICE Research Final Reports Dissemination Workshop

In the third quarter, the SDGs Kenya Forum participated in the SDGs CHOICE Research Final Reports Dissemination Workshop, hosted under the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Forum and Aga Khan University. Through this partnership, the Forum served as a key member of the SDGs CHOICE Think Tank, contributing to the development, review, and dissemination of the national research findings and policy briefs.



The SDGs CHOICE (Catalyzing Holistic Outcomes through Inclusive and Collaborative Evidence) initiative focuses on generating actionable evidence to inform policy and practice across critical areas such as climate change, mental health, and SDGs data systems, with gender equality serving as a cross-cutting theme throughout the research process. The Forum's participation in the Think Tank was instrumental in ensuring that the research outputs reflect civil society perspectives and align with national priorities for sustainable development.

The dissemination workshop brought together key stakeholders from government ministries, academia, civil society organizations, development partners, and the private sector, fostering an inclusive space for dialogue and knowledge exchange. The event provided an opportunity to share key findings from the research, highlight emerging trends, and explore policy implications that can accelerate Kenya's progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Discussions during the workshop underscored the interconnectedness between climate change, mental health, and gender equality, emphasizing the need for integrated approaches that address environmental, social, and health dimensions simultaneously. Stakeholders also highlighted the importance of strengthening data-driven decision-making and ensuring that gender-sensitive data informs national policies and development planning processes.

The Forum contributed to the development and presentation of policy briefs that translate research insights into actionable recommendations for policymakers and practitioners. These briefs aim to guide evidence-based interventions, promote collaboration across sectors, and advocate for inclusive, sustainable solutions that leave no one behind.

The SDGs Kenya Forum's involvement in the SDGs CHOICE initiative reflects its continued commitment to fostering partnerships that bridge research, policy, and practice. By engaging in multi-stakeholder research platforms, the Forum continues to amplify the role of civil society in advancing data-informed and gender-responsive sustainable development in Kenya.

Overall, the dissemination workshop reinforced the value of collaboration between academia, civil society, and government in shaping policies that are not only grounded in evidence but also responsive to the real needs and aspirations of communities.

Peer Learning Exchange: “Make Inclusive Data the Norm” Initiative

The SDGs Kenya Forum participated in a multi-country peer learning exchange under the theme “Make Inclusive Data the Norm,” bringing together representatives from Ghana, Kenya, and Colombia to share

insights, best practices, and challenges in advancing inclusive and gender-responsive data systems. The session was organized and hosted by the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) as part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen national and cross-country collaboration in the data ecosystem.

The peer exchange served as a collaborative learning platform, fostering dialogue among National Statistical Offices (NSOs), state departments and ministries responsible for gender, United Nations agencies, and civil society organizations (CSOs). Discussions centered on how to enhance data inclusivity — particularly in capturing the experiences of marginalized groups, women, and youth — to ensure that national development priorities and SDG targets are informed by evidence that truly represents all populations.

The SDGs Kenya Forum contributed its experiences from Kenya’s ongoing initiatives in data democratization, citizen-generated data (CGD), and multi-stakeholder data partnerships, highlighting how civil society can complement official data systems to close data gaps. The Forum also shared lessons from its role in convening cross-sector collaborations that link policy processes with grassroots realities, reinforcing the critical role of data in driving equitable and accountable development outcomes.

The exchange provided valuable opportunities for mutual learning and reflection, with participating countries sharing innovative practices for integrating inclusivity into national data frameworks. Key takeaways included the need to strengthen data governance structures, invest in capacity building for local actors, and promote sustainable partnerships between government, civil society, and the private sector.

By engaging in this peer learning platform, the SDGs Kenya Forum reaffirmed its commitment to advancing the global movement to “Make Inclusive Data the Norm.” The experience enriched the Forum’s advocacy and technical knowledge base, enabling it to further contribute to Kenya’s national data ecosystem and to regional and international data-driven policy conversations.

Stakeholders’ Engagement Session on the Preparation of the Financial Year 2026/27 and the Medium-Term Budget

Hosted by the State Department for Gender Affairs and Affirmative Action

In the third quarter, the SDGs Kenya Forum participated in a stakeholders’ engagement session organized by the State Department for Gender Affairs and Affirmative Action on 25th September 2025 at Machakos Teachers Training College. The session was part of the ongoing participatory process in the preparation of the Financial Year 2026/27 Budget and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) 2026/27–2028/29, which aims to align national priorities with Kenya’s gender equality and social inclusion commitments.

The session brought together representatives from government institutions, civil society organizations, academia, development partners, and private sector stakeholders, fostering a collaborative space for dialogue on policy priorities, budget planning, and program implementation. The engagement underscored the critical role of multi-stakeholder input in shaping a gender-responsive budgeting process that advances both national and global commitments under SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

During the session, the State Department presented a comprehensive summary of the Gender Sub-Sector Report for the upcoming MTEF period. The presentation reviewed the Department’s achievements over the 2022/23–2024/25 cycle, highlighting significant progress in the implementation of

affirmative action initiatives, gender mainstreaming across sectors, prevention of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and the development of national policies on care work and women's economic empowerment.

The Department also shared an overview of budget absorption and expenditure trends over the past three fiscal years, linking performance to planned outputs and outcomes. Projections for the 2026/27–2028/29 period were outlined, with a focus on strengthening Gender Sector Working Groups, advancing GBV and FGM prevention efforts, enhancing capacity-building on gender-responsive governance, and operationalizing the newly developed National Care Policy and Women's Economic Empowerment Policy.

A key highlight of the engagement was the call for strengthened collaboration between the State Department and the SDGs Kenya Forum, particularly in promoting public participation and civil society engagement in the development and review of key gender-related normative frameworks. These include the Affirmative Action Policy, the review of the National Policy on

Gender and Development (NPGAD), and the Gender Bill — all of which are central to achieving Kenya's gender equality and inclusion agenda.

The Forum, through its extensive membership network and ongoing advocacy work, reaffirmed its commitment to supporting these processes by facilitating civil society consultations, amplifying grassroots voices, and contributing to policy dialogues that ensure inclusivity and accountability in gender programming and budgeting.

The engagement session served as an important step toward deepening intersectoral collaboration in gender-responsive planning and budgeting. It reinforced the government's commitment to working hand in hand with civil society and development partners to ensure that resource allocation and policy implementation reflect the lived realities of women, girls, and marginalized communities across Kenya.

Through continued participation in such forums, the SDGs Kenya Forum remains dedicated to advancing inclusive governance, transparency, and gender equality, ensuring that Kenya's budgetary frameworks translate into tangible progress for all.

Multi-Stakeholder Forum to Review the Nairobi County Civic Education Bill 2025

The SDGs Kenya Forum actively participated in a multi-stakeholder forum convened to review and provide input on the Nairobi County Civic Education Bill 2025. The session, organized by the Nairobi City County Assembly's Sectoral Committee on Culture and Community Services, brought together civil society organizations, community representatives, governance experts, and county officials to critically examine the draft Bill and propose actionable recommendations to enhance its inclusivity, implementation, and alignment with participatory governance principles.

The Nairobi County Civic Education Bill 2025 seeks to institutionalize civic education as a core pillar of governance — ensuring that citizens are informed, empowered, and actively involved in county decision-making. The Bill emphasizes the importance of sustained public awareness, knowledge sharing, and civic engagement in advancing accountability, transparency, and social cohesion across communities.

During the discussions, stakeholders underscored that civic education is the heartbeat of democracy, as it equips citizens with the understanding and tools they need to meaningfully engage in governance processes, from public participation and budget hearings to policy formulation and monitoring.

Participants highlighted the importance of adopting inclusive and accessible civic education approaches that reflect the needs of marginalized groups, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

The SDGs Kenya Forum contributed substantively to the review process, proposing amendments to several clauses within the draft Bill to strengthen its provisions on inclusivity, data-driven monitoring, and the integration of sustainable development principles. The Forum also facilitated broader consultation by circulating the draft Bill among its member organizations, encouraging them to share feedback and contribute additional perspectives drawn from grassroots experiences.

By engaging in this legislative review process, the SDGs Kenya Forum reaffirmed its commitment to promoting citizen-centered governance and participatory democracy in Kenya. The Forum continues to advocate for frameworks that prioritize civic education as a vehicle for active citizenship, accountability, and inclusive policy development.

This engagement also strengthened partnerships between the civil society sector and the Nairobi County Assembly, demonstrating the value of collaborative governance where institutions and citizens work together to shape equitable and effective public policies. Through this process, the Forum helped ensure that the Civic Education Bill 2025 reflects the voices and aspirations of the people it seeks to serve — fostering a more informed, engaged, and empowered Nairobi citizenry.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENTS:

1. International Youth Day 2025 Webinar — Celebrating Local Youth Action for the SDGs

On 12th August 2025, the SDGs Kenya Forum proudly joined the global community in celebrating International Youth Day (IYD) by hosting a vibrant and interactive webinar themed “Local Youth Actions for the SDGs and Beyond.” The event brought together a diverse group of young leaders, civil society actors, development partners, and innovators to reflect on how grassroots youth-led initiatives are accelerating progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The webinar served as a dynamic platform for knowledge exchange and inspiration, spotlighting youth-driven solutions addressing key challenges such as climate resilience, education, digital inclusion, peacebuilding, and economic empowerment. Speakers and participants shared practical insights on how young people are transforming their communities through creativity, advocacy, and collaboration — reinforcing the message that youth are not just beneficiaries of development but key drivers of change.

From a communications perspective, the Forum ensured strong visibility and engagement throughout the campaign. The communications team designed captivating digital posters and coordinated a comprehensive social media outreach strategy, sharing content across Twitter (X), Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and partner platforms. The campaign strategically leveraged hashtags including #YouthForSDGs, extending the conversation to national, regional, and global audiences.



Real-time social media coverage amplified key messages, highlights, and quotes from speakers, ensuring that the discussions resonated beyond the virtual event. The storytelling approach focused on celebrating youth impact stories, promoting intergenerational collaboration, and linking local youth actions to the broader global development agenda.

By curating this interactive experience, the Forum reaffirmed its commitment to amplifying youth voices and creating meaningful spaces for participation within the SDG ecosystem. The International Youth Day 2025 webinar not only celebrated the energy and innovation of Kenya's youth but also strengthened partnerships that will drive the country's #RaceTo2030 forward with purpose, inclusion, and collective action.

2. Summer School for Young Diplomats Fellowship

In the third quarter, the SDGs Kenya Forum partnered with the [International Relations Society of Kenya \(IRSK\)](#) and [Konrad Adenauer Stiftung \(KAS\)](#) to co-host the Young Diplomats Fellowship Summer School 2025, held on 15th and 16th September 2025 in Nairobi. The two-day immersive fellowship brought together 20 exceptional young leaders from diverse backgrounds for an intensive learning experience designed to equip them with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to navigate the world of diplomacy, international relations, and global governance.

Held under the theme “Empowering Kenyan Youth for a Sustainable Future,” the program sought to nurture a new generation of ethical, informed, and visionary young diplomats who can serve as catalysts for sustainable development and social transformation. The fellowship emphasized the evolving nature of diplomacy—beyond traditional statecraft—to encompass multilateral collaboration, digital diplomacy, climate advocacy, peacebuilding, and civic engagement.

Participants were introduced to a wide range of career pathways beyond conventional roles in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or foreign missions, including opportunities within academia, international media, business, development cooperation, multilateral institutions, and civil society organizations. This broadened perspective allowed participants to reimagine diplomacy as a vehicle for impact, innovation, and inclusivity, particularly in addressing global challenges such as climate change, inequality, and technological disruption.

The program also reflected the shifting youth political consciousness in Kenya, shaped by growing civic awareness, digital activism, and increased electoral participation witnessed in 2024 and 2025. Discussions acknowledged how economic inequality, unemployment, and environmental degradation have deepened youth advocacy around governance, policy influence, and social justice — areas where the next generation of diplomats must be active contributors and change-makers.

As part of the fellowship, two representatives from the SDGs Kenya Forum participated in a panel discussion on “Diplomacy and Sustainability,” exploring how the global Pact for the Future aligns with Kenya’s youth-led development priorities. The session contextualized the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within Kenya’s social and political landscape, highlighting the role of young people in driving national and global progress.

In recognition of the International Day of Democracy (15 September 2025), the panel also focused on Chapter Four of the [Pact for the Future](#), which addresses Youth and Future Generations. The dialogue unpacked the following key action areas from the Pact:

- **Action 35:** *Promote, protect, and respect the human rights of all young people while fostering social inclusion and integration.*
- **Action 36:** *Strengthen meaningful youth participation at the national level.*
- **Action 37:** *Strengthen meaningful youth participation at the international level.*

The session concluded with an interactive peer-learning exercise, where fellows collaborated in small groups to design youth-led SDG interventions, present innovative solutions, and share ideas on advancing youth participation in governance, environmental action, and policy spaces.

The Summer School for Young Diplomats Fellowship not only served as a learning platform but also as a network-building opportunity, connecting emerging leaders with experienced diplomats, scholars, and practitioners in international relations. Participants left inspired and equipped with practical strategies to apply diplomacy as a force for sustainability, peace, and inclusive development.

Through such partnerships, the SDGs Kenya Forum continues to champion youth empowerment, capacity building, and leadership development as key pillars of its engagement strategy. The Forum remains committed to ensuring that young people are not just beneficiaries but active architects of Kenya’s sustainable future, shaping policies and global conversations that leave no one behind.

DAY 1



DAY 2



TEAM BUILDING



3. SDGs Flag Day and Pre-Launch of the #RaceTo2030 Campaign

Marking 10 Years of Action and Renewed Commitment to the 2030 Agenda

On 25th September 2025, the SDGs Kenya Forum joined partners, youth networks, and development stakeholders across the country to commemorate SDGs Flag Day, a global milestone marking 10 years since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The event served not only as a celebration of progress made but also as a moment of reflection and renewed determination, as the world enters the final five-year stretch to deliver on the SDGs.

This year's celebration took on special significance as it also doubled as the **pre-launch of the “Race to 2030” campaign** — a nationwide call to action to accelerate progress on the SDGs through collaboration, innovation, and citizen-driven accountability. The campaign seeks to inspire collective momentum across civil society, government, private sector, academia, and youth actors to bridge the gaps in implementation and ensure that no one is left behind.

The event brought together a vibrant mix of young changemakers, policy advocates, development practitioners, and community representatives, creating a platform for dialogue on Kenya's progress toward the SDGs and the urgent need to localize global commitments at the county level. The discussions echoed key themes from the UN Pact for the Future, including intergenerational equity, meaningful youth participation, and transformative action for people and the planet.

As part of its communications support, the Forum played a central role in amplifying visibility and engagement around the event through:

- **Creative design and branding:** Development of branded event posters, social media cards, and digital artwork to strengthen event identity and online reach.
- **Real-time social media coverage:** Coordinating live updates and participant engagements that contributed to trending conversations under **#RaceTo2030** and **#SDGsFlagDay**.
- **Post-event storytelling:** Crafting post-event highlights and digital recaps that sustained dialogue on the **Pact for the Future** and the **localization of the SDGs** within Kenyan communities.

The SDGs Flag Day served as both a reminder of the progress achieved and a rallying cry for collective acceleration. As the Race to 2030 campaign gains momentum, the SDGs Kenya Forum remains committed to mobilizing its network, fostering inclusive participation, and championing evidence-driven advocacy to ensure that Kenya — and the world — crosses the 2030 finish line with measurable impact and transformative change.

SDGs FLAG DAY - GALLERY





LOOKING AHEAD

As we move into the next quarter, the SDGs Kenya Forum remains steadfast in its mission to amplify civil society voices, foster inclusive participation, and accelerate Kenya's progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Building on the strong momentum and partnerships established during Quarter 3, the Forum is set to deepen engagement, strengthen collaboration, and sustain advocacy efforts across multiple platforms.

The coming months promise to be both strategic and action-driven, with a rich line-up of activities aimed at strengthening multi-stakeholder dialogue, promoting accountability, and advancing the localization of the SDGs. Among the key highlights on the horizon include:

- **The SDGs Annual Multi-Stakeholder Conference** — A flagship convening that brings together government, civil society, development partners, academia, private sector, and youth to reflect on progress, share innovations, and co-create solutions to accelerate the 2030 Agenda. This year's conference will serve as a powerful platform for collective reflection, knowledge exchange, and the celebration of transformative partnerships driving change at all levels.

- **The EU–Kenya High-Level Meeting** — The Forum will participate in high-level policy dialogues aimed at strengthening Kenya–EU cooperation frameworks, with particular focus on sustainable development, trade, climate resilience, and human rights. The engagement will also provide an opportunity for civil society to contribute perspectives on equitable partnerships and inclusive governance.

- **Peer-to-Peer Learning and Knowledge Exchange** — The Forum will continue facilitating learning spaces among youth from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, fostering cross-sector collaboration and sharing of best practices in SDG implementation. These exchanges will enhance collective capacity, deepen partnerships, and inspire new models of collaboration for greater impact.

As we look ahead, the Forum remains guided by its commitment to **“leaving no one behind”** — ensuring that civil society continues to shape Kenya's sustainable development journey through evidence-based advocacy, inclusive dialogue, and collective action.

Together, we will continue to build on the progress achieved, amplify the momentum of our shared #RaceTo2030, and advance a future that is **equitable, sustainable, and driven by the power of partnerships.**

Stay updated via

[@SDGsKenyaForum on Twitter/X](https://twitter.com/SDGsKenyaForum), visit sdgkenyaforum.org, and follow our platforms for real-time updates.

Together, let's drive action, accountability, and equity towards 2030.

#RaceTo2030
#DecadeOfAction
#TwendeKaziNaSDGs
#LeaveNoOneBehind



SPOTLIGHT

Q3 NEWSLETTER

JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2025 HIGHLIGHTS





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