



# Spear of Integrity

A PUBLICATION OF THE ETHICS AND ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

Issue No. 10

## Katiba @15: Hits and misses

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# Editor's Note

The Spear of Integrity // Issue No. 10

Fifteen years ago, Kenya marked a major milestone. We gave ourselves a Constitution that has been hailed worldwide as one of the most progressive governance contracts between the people and their leaders.

As we commemorate #Katiba@15, we pause to reflect. There have been gains and gaps, especially in the implementation of Chapter Six on leadership and integrity. This 10th Edition of The Spear of Integrity shines the spotlight on ethical leadership, accountability, and the growing voice of Gen Z in reshaping our governance story.

In this issue, we bring you a powerful cover story by Prof. Kivutha Kibwana, one of the pioneer governors under the 2010 Constitution, as he takes stock of Chapter Six, its successes, failures, and the road ahead.

Our commentary section brings fresh perspectives. We look at the new Conflict of Interest Act, 2025, question the cost of fake credentials in leadership, as we highlight the bold role of young people in pushing the integrity agenda.

The features show how stolen wealth, once recovered, can be turned into community projects that restore trust. Youth voices come alive in essays, poems, and pictorials, stories from schools and communities

where integrity is becoming a way of life.

We also highlight the Commission's half-year milestone of recovering Kes800 million, a key achievement in holding the corrupt to account. Our opinion pieces explore how culture can promote integrity, why young people are central to economic development, and how we must move from good intentions to real action.

Elsewhere in our special segment of The Inside Take, Dr. Cecilia Mutuku explores Kenya's path to effective governance and accountability by strengthening institutional oversight.

To round off the edition, we share highlights of your feedback from the Commission's social media platforms, with gratitude for your continued support and engagement.

Enjoy the read!

**Stephen Karuga**  
– Editor in Chief



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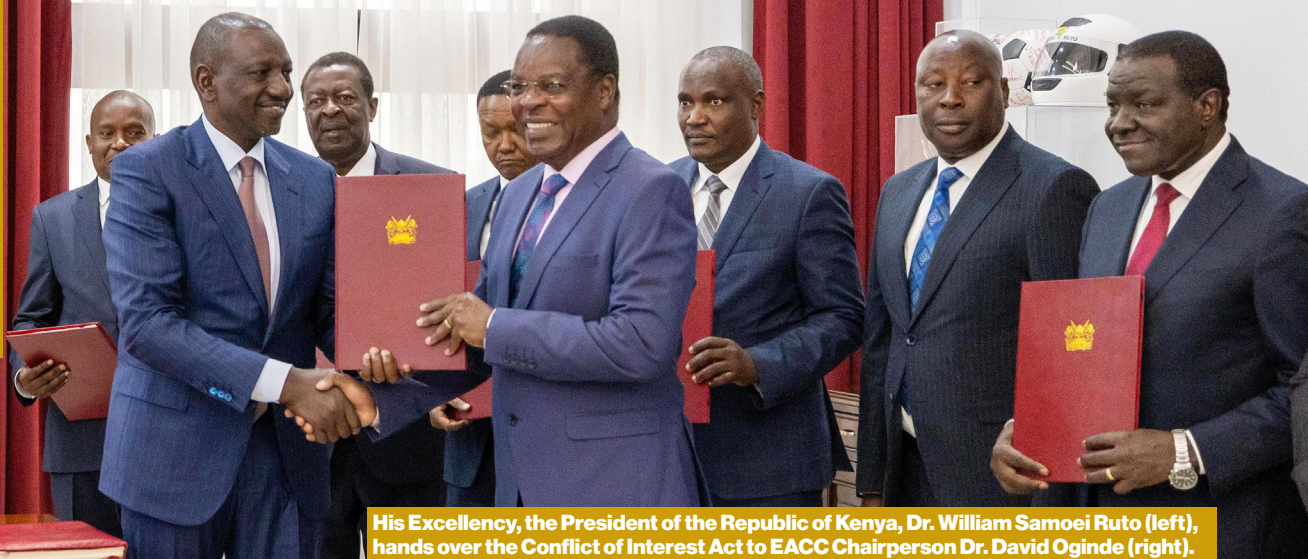
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His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Kenya, Dr. William Samoei Ruto (left), hands over the Conflict of Interest Act to EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde (right).

## Conflict of Interest Bill signed into law

**“This is a very consequential moment in Kenya. We are making it much more difficult for people to take advantage of the offices they occupy**

**- President William Ruto**

In a landmark move to strengthen the country's anti-corruption framework, President William Ruto has signed the long-awaited Conflict of Interest Bill into law at State House, Nairobi.

The new legislation is expected to significantly curb the abuse of power and misuse of public resources by public officers.

Speaking last week during the signing ceremony, the President described the moment as “consequential” for Kenya, noting that the law sets clear standards to ensure public officials uphold integrity, transparency, and accountability in the discharge of their duties.

“This is a very consequential moment in Kenya. We are making it much more difficult for people to take advantage of the offices they occupy,” the President said.

He emphasized that the new law empowers citizens to hold public officers accountable and enhances oversight by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), which will supervise the law's implementation. The EACC's oversight will now extend beyond the Executive to include the

Legislature and Judiciary, particularly on matters of wealth declaration.

“To the EACC, you now have levers to make sure that you protect the resources of the Republic of Kenya and hold every officer to account,” President Ruto stated.

The principal objective of the Conflict of Interest Act is to consolidate all legislation related to conflict of interest, repealing the Public Officer Ethics Act. It establishes a comprehensive framework for identifying and managing conflicts in public service under EACC's general supervision.

The law prohibits preferential treatment, restricts undue external influence in public contracts, and limits secondary employment that may undermine official responsibilities or create a conflict of interest.

President Ruto had earlier referred the Bill back to Parliament with reservations in April 2025. Both the National Assembly and the Senate later adopted the President's proposals, passing the Bill on June 3 and July 23, 2025, respectively.

The signing ceremony was attended by top government officials, including EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde, CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud, National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula, Senate Speaker Amason Kingi, Attorney-General Dorcas Oduor, and Labour and Social Protection Cabinet Secretary Alfred Mutua, among other senior state officers.

# EACC scores big as half-year recoveries hit 800 million mark

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has maintained momentum in a string of high-profile recoveries, clawing back nearly Kes800 million in grabbed land and misappropriated funds in a decisive push against corruption in the last six months.

Central to this renewed drive is the Commission's strategy of intensifying investigations into unexplained wealth and the acquisition of public assets, anchored on lifestyle audits and profiling of public officers. By targeting ill-gotten gains, the Commission aims to strip perpetrators of the benefits of corruption and ensure stolen resources are restored to the public.

That approach is already paying off with Kes3.4 billion having been recovered through court proceedings and out-of-court settlements in 2024/25 Financial Year. At the heart of the recent victories is the recovery of the Kes400 million Loresho Water Reservoir land in Nairobi, illegally hived off nearly three decades ago. The win was mirrored at the

Coast, where the Commission reclaimed two prime parcels, Kes50 million Kenya Railways land at Kizingo and Kes104 million Kenya Airports Authority land near Moi International Airport, both fraudulently acquired by private developers.





In Trans Nzoia County, the Commission struck a double, reclaiming government housing land valued at Kes65 million while also securing a court order for the refund of Kes25.3 million lost in the fraudulent Kenyatta stadium renovation project in Kitale.

The National Treasury also came under sharp focus, with courts directing officials to repay more than Kes174 million in fraudulent allowances, including Kes67 million pocketed by a single officer. In Homa Bay, EACC recovered Kes5.8 million in salaries from a county doctor illegally holding dual jobs.







The recoveries, hailed as a turning point in the Commission's war on graft, bring the total to Kes800 million in just a few months, with multi-billion-shilling suits still pending in court.

## Summary of files forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

- 1  **30** Files forwarded to DPP
- 2  **25** Files recommended for prosecution
- 3  **1** File recommended for administrative or other action
- 4  **4** Files recommended for closure



- 1  **7** Files where recommendation to prosecute accepted
- 2  **1** File where recommendation to prosecute not accepted
- 3  **2** Files where recommendation for closure accepted
- 4  **1** File where recommendation for administrative or other action accepted
- 5  **8** Files returned for further investigation
- 6  **11** Files awaiting DPP advice

Source: [www.eacc.go.ke](http://www.eacc.go.ke)

# The 2024 NECS findings call for preventive measures

The Commission has released the 2024 edition of the National Ethics and Corruption Survey (NECS), providing a comprehensive analysis of corruption and unethical practices in the country.

Conducted across all 47 counties between November and December 2024, the survey engaged 5,960 adults, capturing both their actual experiences and perceptions of corruption in public institutions and service delivery.

According to the Report, which was launched on Tuesday at the Integrity Centre, bribery remains the most common form of unethical behaviour in Kenya.

Over half of the respondents (52.1%) reported witnessing bribery in public offices, while 30.5% admitted encountering bribery situations. Other unethical practices cited include favoritism, abuse of office, tribalism, nepotism, and embezzlement of public funds.

Unemployment, corruption, poverty, and high cost of living were identified as the most pressing national issues, with unemployment topping the list at 49.1%. Institutions such as the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, and the Kenya Wildlife Service were found to have high instances of bribery. At the county level, Kwale, Kilifi, and Wajir were among the most bribery-prone areas.



Alarmingly, the prevalence of bribery reached 100% in counties such as Elgeyo-Marakwet, Marsabit, and Wajir among those who sought services. The average bribe in 2024 rose to Kes4, 878 from Kes3, 694 in 2023. The highest bribes were linked to employment in the county executive (Kes243, 651), national tenders (Kes100, 000), and TSC placements (Kes72, 665). Despite these statistics, 97.2% of bribery incidents

**EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde, 2nd from left, speaking during the launch of the National Ethics and Corruption Survey 2024.**



**Chairperson, Dr. David Oginde, third from left, flanked by Commissioner Mshimba, Director, Ethics and Leadership, FCPA Lolkoloi to his right, and Vice Chairperson Dr. Muiru, and Commissioners Dr. Mutuku, and Mr. Ogallo, respectively**

went unreported due to fear of retaliation and lack of confidence in the reporting systems. The employment sector in county governments accounted for the largest share of national bribe amounts, with Uasin Gishu, Baringo, and Embu counties contributing significantly.

Launching the Report, Chairperson Dr. David Oginde noted that the Commission is already undertaking interventions in some of the ministries and departments adversely mentioned, including systems reviews and corruption risk assessments aimed at identifying loopholes and recommending corrective measures.

Representing the CEO, FCPA John Lolkoloi, Director, Ethics and Leadership, emphasized the urgency of addressing corruption. He urged accounting officers to treat the findings as a call to implement preventive measures in their institutions.

## Four-year jail term for Ex- REREC boss for forging certificate

A Nairobi Anti-Corruption Court has sentenced former Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation (REREC) General Manager for Finance and ICT to pay fines totalling more than Kes3 million or serve four years in prison after being found guilty of using a forged degree to secure employment.

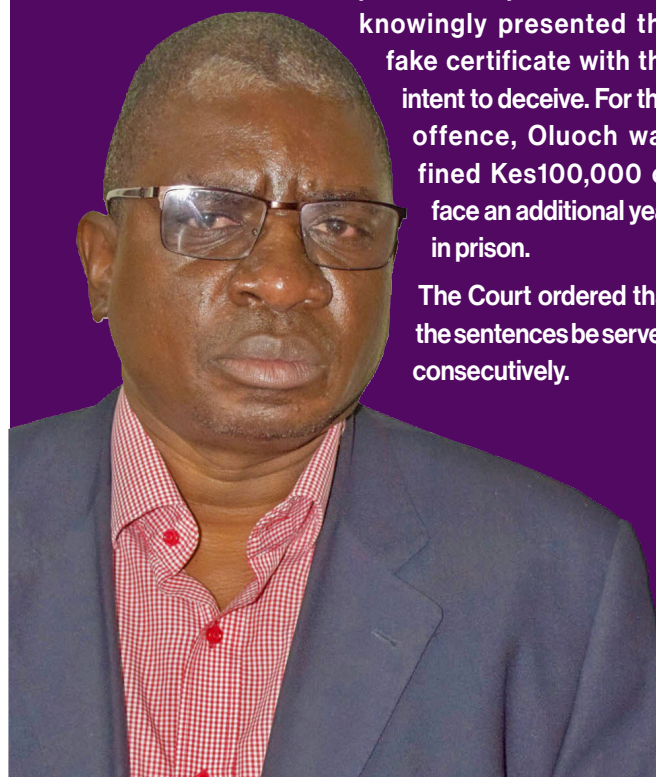
Noah Oketch Oluoch was convicted of fraudulently acquiring public funds amounting to Kes1,455,066.05 in salary and allowances between April 1 and August 31, 2022.


On this charge, Senior Principal Magistrate Celesa Okore sentenced him to a fine of Kes100,000, or one year in prison in default, plus a mandatory fine of Kes2,910,131.10 — double the amount defrauded — or two years in default.

The court also found him guilty of uttering a false document after presenting a forged Master of Business Administration degree certificate allegedly from the University of Nairobi to REREC Chief Executive Officer Peter Mbugua on March 23, 2021.

The prosecution proved that he knowingly presented the fake certificate with the intent to deceive. For this offence, Oluoch was fined Kes100,000 or face an additional year in prison.

The Court ordered that the sentences be served consecutively.



A photograph of Professor Githu Muigai, a man with glasses, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and a green patterned tie. He is standing at a wooden podium, looking down and speaking into a microphone. The background is dark and out of focus.

# EACC leads 2025 African Anti- Corruption Day Commemoration at KICC

Former Attorney General of the Republic of Kenya, Professor Githu Muigai, who was the Chief Guest, delivering his speech during the commemoration ceremony at KICC.

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), through the Kenya Leadership Integrity Forum (KLIF), led the national commemoration of the 9th Edition of the African Anti-Corruption Day at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC).

The event brought together stakeholders from across the public, private, and civil society sectors to raise awareness on the fight against corruption under the theme: “Promoting Human Dignity in the Fight Against Corruption.”

The African Anti-Corruption Day, marked annually on July 11, was established by the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC) to provide a platform for stakeholders to reflect on anti-corruption efforts and galvanize action across the continent. This year’s theme highlights the critical link between corruption and human rights, emphasizing how corrupt practices erode public service delivery and compromise the dignity and well-being of citizens.

Speaking during the event, EACC Chief Executive Officer Mr. Abdi A. Mohamud described corruption as a “crime against humanity,” citing its devastating effect on governance, service delivery, and public trust. “Corruption continues to stifle the economy, deny citizens access to basic rights such as healthcare, safe environments, and essential government services. But most critically, it undermines human dignity,” said Mr. Mohamud.

He reported that the Commission had recovered assets worth approximately Kes28 billion in the last six years



through proactive investigations and averted potential losses estimated at Kes42 billion. Ongoing asset recovery efforts target a further Kes50 billion suspected to have been illicitly acquired.

Mr. Mohamud emphasized that recovered assets are being repurposed to restore public welfare and uphold human dignity. A key example being the recovery of a 60-acre parcel of land initially grabbed, and have it utilized for the provision of affordable and dignified housing for residents of informal settlements.

EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde underscored the importance of anti-corruption efforts in protecting national resources that contribute to equitable development. “We aim at protecting resources that will in turn ensure that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential, that every family has access to basic necessities, and that every citizen is treated with fairness and respect,” he said.

Dr. Oginde also called for comprehensive legal and institutional reforms to strengthen the fight against corruption. He stressed the need for independent justice sector actors and an empowered, vigilant citizenry capable of holding leaders and institutions accountable. He commended the youth across Africa for their growing demand for ethical governance and integrity-driven leadership.

Addressing the forum, the Chief Guest, the former Attorney General Prof. Githu Muigai said, “At its core, corruption is a direct assault on human dignity. It erodes the value, rights,

**“Corruption is not just the theft of money; it is the theft of hope, the denial of dignity, and the erosion of citizenship. It tells people that who you know matters more than what you need. It says access to justice, jobs, or medical care depends on a bribe, not a right”.**

and worth of individuals, especially the most vulnerable in our society.”

“Corruption is not just the theft of money; it is the theft of hope, the denial of dignity, and the erosion of citizenship. It tells people that who you know matters more than what you need. It says access to justice, jobs, or medical care depends on a bribe, not a right”. He added.

Prof. Muigai, in acknowledging the role of stakeholders in the fight against corruption, recognized that institutions alone are not enough and that society must rise, citizens are not mere spectators, they are sovereigns in our democracy. The private sector will have a role, because corruption does not happen in a vacuum. Every corrupt public official has a willing private accomplice.

KLIF, which coordinated the event, is a multi-sectoral platform composed of 20 sectors with EACC serving as the Secretariat. Members include the Executive, Judiciary, Legislature, County Governments, Anti-Corruption and Enforcement Agencies, Constitutional Commissions, Civil Society, Private Sector, Media, Professional Bodies, Labour Unions, Education Sector, Religious Organizations, Financial Services, Regulatory Boards, Watchdog Institutions, Development Partners, and Regional and Sub-Regional Bodies.

As African nations mark the 2025 African Anti-Corruption Day, the call remains clear: citizens must play a central role in identifying, disrupting, and reporting corruption to preserve national integrity and promote dignity for all.



Participants at the General Assembly of Anti-Corruption Agencies in Africa, Algiers, Algeria.

# AAACA to launch Pan-African Anti-Corruption Research Centre



**Kenya has now been given the green light to begin laying the necessary institutional and operational frameworks for the Centre"**

**– Jackson Mue, Director, Field Services & Coordination, EACC.**

Kenya has been selected to host the 8th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association of African Anti-Corruption Authorities (AAACA) in 2026, a landmark event that will also see the official launch of the Centre for Research and Anti-Corruption Studies in Africa (CEREAC).

The decision was made during the 7th AAACA AGM and Executive Committee Meeting, held from 20th to 22nd July 2025 in Algiers, Algeria. Representing Kenya at the meeting was Mr. Jackson Mue, Director of Field Services and Coordination at the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), who attended on behalf of the Commission Secretary/CEO.

The General Assembly of Heads of Anti-Corruption Agencies in Africa focused heavily on the operationalization of CEREAC, unanimously adopting the proposed steps for its establishment in Kenya. The Centre is expected to serve as a continental hub for policy research, knowledge sharing, and training in anti-corruption strategies.

The creation of CEREAC was initially approved at the 6th AAACA AGM, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 31st July to 1st August 2023, where the proposal received overwhelming support from member states. Following a competitive bid process, Kenya was selected as the host country for

CEREAC on 10th January 2024, outbidding Egypt.

During his address to the Assembly, Mr. Mue successfully pitched Kenya's bid to host the 2026 Executive Committee Meeting and AGM, which will coincide with the Centre's formal launch. Kenya won the hosting rights by a landslide, securing strong backing from the continent's anti-corruption leadership.

Kenya has now been given the green light to begin laying the necessary institutional and operational frameworks for the Centre. Discussions on funding mechanisms for CEREAC were also held, with final modalities expected to be communicated by the AAACA Executive Committee in due course.

Founded in 2009, AAACA serves as a pan-African platform bringing together anti-corruption agencies to collaborate, share best practices, and promote the effective implementation of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Corruption, both of which Kenya is a signatory to.

The hosting of the 2026 AGM and the launch of CEREAC mark a significant milestone in Kenya's growing leadership in anti-corruption efforts across the continent.



# Hits and misses on Chapter Six of the 2010 Constitution – 15 years later

By Prof. Kivutha Kibwana

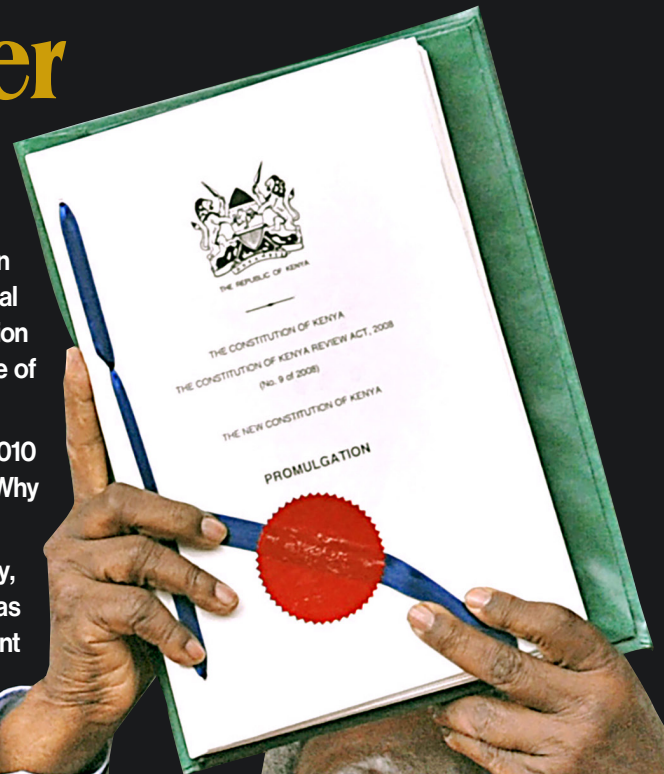
In 1981, J.K. Mbugua essayed a paper titled *The Prevention of Corruption Act: A Horse Without a Rider*. His central thesis was that the inaugural 1956 Kenyan anti-corruption law (as amended) was largely a paper tiger incapable of combating the malaise.

Is then the leadership and integrity Chapter Six of the 2010 Constitution similarly a solitary horse without a jockey? Why is it a herculean charge to battle corruption in Kenya?

From its Kitu Kidogo moniker portrayed as petty, run-of-the mill, hand-outs corruption, the cancer has illustratively metastasized into grand National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NG-CDF) and neighbourhood funds flagrant thievery, public procurement embezzlement, sleaze built-in budgets, devolved pilferage, graft as politically engineered ethnicity, voter purchase, corruption infested public service, culminating into state capture.

No wonder the Kenya Kwanza Plan: The Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda 2022-2027 manifesto promised ... “(e) establishing within 30 days a quasi-judicial public inquiry to establish the extent of cronyism and state capture in the nation and make recommendations,” as well as, “granting independence to institutions involved in the fight against corruption.”

Former President Uhuru Kenyatta famously divulged the country squandered Kes2 billion daily through plunder and wastage. On March 6th 2015, he declared corruption a national security threat. The African Development Bank (AfDB) has estimated the looting hemorrhage at Kes608 billion per annum. In 2022, 2023 and 2024, Kenya has sequentially



# Hits and Misses on Chapter Six of the 2010 Constitution – 15 years later

been ranked numbers 123, 126 and 121 in the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index out of 180 countries. Close to his retirement, Auditor General Edward Ouko approximated Kenya was ceding one third of its budget to sleaze.

No wonder in 2016 President Kenyatta while lamenting on the country's runaway corruption rot rhetorically posed: "What do you want me to do? Last August, President William Ruto lambasted legislators for converting Parliament into 'a marketplace for extortion'. Corruption, then, has indubitably become an existential threat to the Kenyan nation.

In 2003, Kenya scored globally by being the first country to ratify the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC). The 2010 Constitution has dedicated Chapter 6 to the leadership and integrity question. The National Ethics and Anti-Corruption Policy itemizes 26 laws devoted to fighting corruption, a recent addition to the legal armoury being the Conflict of Interest Act, 2025. In the same anti-corruption policy, 26 institutions and responsible Commissions under the Public Officer Ethics Act, 2003 are enumerated.

Up to 1992, investigations and prosecutions for corruption offences were undertaken by the Commissioner of Police and the Attorney General's office, respectively. In 1992 an Anti-Corruption Squad was created within the Kenya Police to deal with corruption offences. In 1997 the Kenya Anti-Corruption Authority (KACA) was created vested with both investigatory and prosecutorial powers over corruption cases. However, in 2000, the Stephen Mwai Gachiego case, KACA was declared unconstitutional for usurping the Attorney General's prosecutorial mandate under the 1963 Constitution. Once more investigatory powers were vested in the Commissioner of Police through the Anti-Corruption Police Unit in 2001 until 2003 when the Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission (KACC) was established. EACC was inaugurated subsequent the 2010 Constitution.

Notably, unlike in other East Africa Community countries, only between 1997 and 2000 did Kenya's anti-corruption body enjoy prosecutorial powers. Further, courtesy of 'big fish' subterfuge, all overseers of anti-corruption entities from John Harun Mwau, Aaron Ringera, P.L.O. Lumumba, Mumo Matemu, Philip Kinisu to Archbishop (Rtd) Eliud Wabukala, only the prelate served a full term.

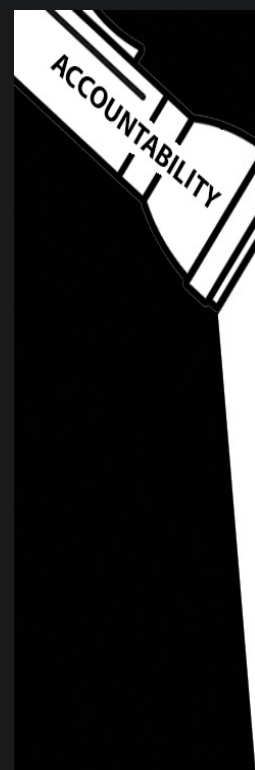
Kenyans dissatisfied with EACC's performance have expressed certain reservations. These include the view that prosecutions rarely touch the big fish, that oversight institutions' reports are not consistently acted upon, and that the Commission sometimes appears constrained in exercising its Chapter 15 independence. Others believe that the anti-corruption agenda is occasionally politicized, and that EACC is at times slow in executing its mandate.

These perceptions and the resulting skepticism can be mitigated through the establishment of a transparent and accessible internal mechanism for Kenyans to voice their concerns. In addition, sustained public engagement is necessary to clarify EACC's mandate and enhance understanding of the services it provides.

The EACC, unlike previous epochs, simply investigates corruption cases and passes the baton to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP). The Commission therefore lacks prosecutorial powers, even though it has the mandate to combat corruption and economic crimes through investigations, prevention measures, public education, and promotion of ethical standards. It will require a constitutional amendment of Article 157 to give EACC prosecutorial powers. In the meantime, a window can be opened by ODPP appointing the prosecutors for corruption cases solely from qualified EACC officers.

Periodically, Kenyans have queried the criteria used by ODPP not to prosecute some cases forwarded to it or to withdraw a suit it has conveyed to court especially cases of politically connected individuals.

The anti-corruption system is often compromised by duplication of roles. Both EACC and the Directorate





Whereas legal changes are necessary to saddle the metaphorical horse for the duel against corruption, the current law must be strictly enforced

of Criminal Investigations (DCI) have investigatory powers over integrity cases. Again, EACC and the Asset Recovery Agency (ARA) share the legal mandate to recover illegally obtained assets. Such replication erodes efficiency.

The prevalent delays in adjudication of cases, also partly fueled by advocates, can be resolved, as in presidential petitions, by setting a time limit within which to conclude a case. A six months' period has been proposed except for transnational corruption cases requiring the co-operation of foreign jurisdictions.

EACC integrity verification reports to recruiting institutions or appointing authorities and even to the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) have been ignored ostensibly for lack of legal enforcement mechanism despite the existence of Chapter 6 provisions.

Although Section 62 of the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act (ACECA) provides for the suspension of a Public or State Officer charged with corruption or economic crime, Section 62(6) of ACECA excludes officers whose removal procedures are constitutionally provided for or circumstances in which an office must be vacated. Such officers have relied on the above proviso to resist stepping aside or suspension. To effectively tackle corruption, Section 62(6) ACECA should be appropriately amended.

The law does not allow public officers' wealth declarations to be publicized. However, during interviews for senior public positions, an individual's wealth declaration form is made public. In my opinion, open wealth declarations as well as lifestyle audits will go a long way towards curbing corruption.

Given that pillage is incubated within the public procurement system, the country should consider adopting the open contracting model except for any vital security sector procurement. Also, a strong legal framework for laying bare beneficial ownership in companies and declaration of funds banked abroad and investments by Kenyans will strengthen the graft combat.

EACC has received from the exchequer a budgetary allocation from FY 2021/22 to 2025/2026 ranging between 54% and 72% of its needs. Two consequences of such revenue shortfall are that since its inception, EACC has been under-budgeted and understaffed. Despite the fact that from 2020-2024, EACC has recovered about Kes13.9 billion from 229 illegally obtained assets, the law does not permit a percentage of such recovery to supplement to its budget.

Ultimately, as argued above, EACC's performance is best evaluated when one examines the entire anti-corruption ecosystem. Whereas the new Multi-Agency Team may provide a concerted onslaught against corruption, the EACC and ODPP are constitutionally the foremost agencies in the anti-corruption crusade. Above all, the political will to rid Kenya of corruption must be invigorated by all the three arms of government, the constitutional commissions and independent offices with the executive and citizens taking a lead role.

We must remind ourselves that in 2003 citizens did arrest bribe-taking police officers. Many Kenyans - especially the Gen Z youth - are more vigilant than ever before. Time to enforce Chapter Six is now. Anti-corruption prosecutions and especially the grand graft scandals - indeed all unethical infractions - must tally. In conclusion, whereas legal changes are necessary to saddle the metaphorical horse for the duel against corruption, the current law must be strictly enforced.

As was held in the Trusted Society of Human Rights Alliance case, "Chapter Six and its provisions are not merely suggestions, superfluous, ornamental or lofty aspirations. Therefore, they should have substantive bite."

**Writer is Professor of Law, Daystar University & former Governor, Makeni County, 2013-2022**

## The Conflict of Interest Act, 2025: Kenya's bold strike against rent-seeking

**By Purissima Wambugu**

Kenya has entered a new phase in the fight against corruption. With the signing of the Conflict of Interest Act, 2025, the country now holds a powerful legal tool aimed squarely at one of the most corrosive but less visible forms of corruption: rent-seeking.

For decades, individuals and networks have exploited gaps in governance to turn public office into private opportunity, inflating project costs, distorting policies, and enriching elites at the expense of citizens. The new Act promises to close many of those loopholes.

Rent seeking occurs when individuals or groups manipulate laws, policies, or public processes to secure private benefits without creating new value for society. Unlike entrepreneurship, which generates wealth by producing goods and services, rent-seeking extracts wealth by exploiting influence. It rewards connections over competence, entrenches inequality, and diverts scarce resources from classrooms, hospitals, and industries that could drive Kenya's transformation. By introducing tougher disclosure rules, tighter restrictions on private interests, and stiffer penalties, the Conflict of Interest Act offers Kenya its strongest chance yet to dismantle this culture of privilege.

Rent-seeking takes forms that are painfully familiar. In procurement, contracts often go to politically connected companies rather than those best equipped to deliver. The Office of the Auditor-General has repeatedly flagged inflated project costs and undelivered services in its audits, pointing to entrenched procurement fraud. Monopolistic firms also push for regulatory protections that shield them from competition while inflating consumer costs. In other cases, powerful interest groups influence budgetary allocations or laws to serve narrow objectives rather than the public good.

The consequences are visible everywhere. Roads are built at double their true cost and collapse within years. Hospitals remain unfinished despite fully allocated budgets. Education funds are siphoned before

reaching classrooms. In every case, Kenyans pay more while receiving less.

### **The cost of rent-seeking to growth and welfare**

The economic burden of rent-seeking is immense. According to the World Bank, corruption inflates the cost of public procurement globally by 10% to 25%, with infrastructure projects being particularly vulnerable. The African Development Bank (AfDB) has reported that corruption and procurement fraud increase project costs in Africa by 20% to 30%. For Kenya, this translates into billions of shillings wasted each year. These funds that could otherwise finance affordable housing, expand healthcare access, or create jobs for the youth.

Rent-seeking also fuels inequality. Data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) shows that income disparities remain entrenched, partly because opportunities are captured by politically connected elites. Instead of rewarding innovation and enterprise, the system incentivizes businesses to pursue influence. This undermines competition, slows productivity, and weakens Kenya's competitiveness.

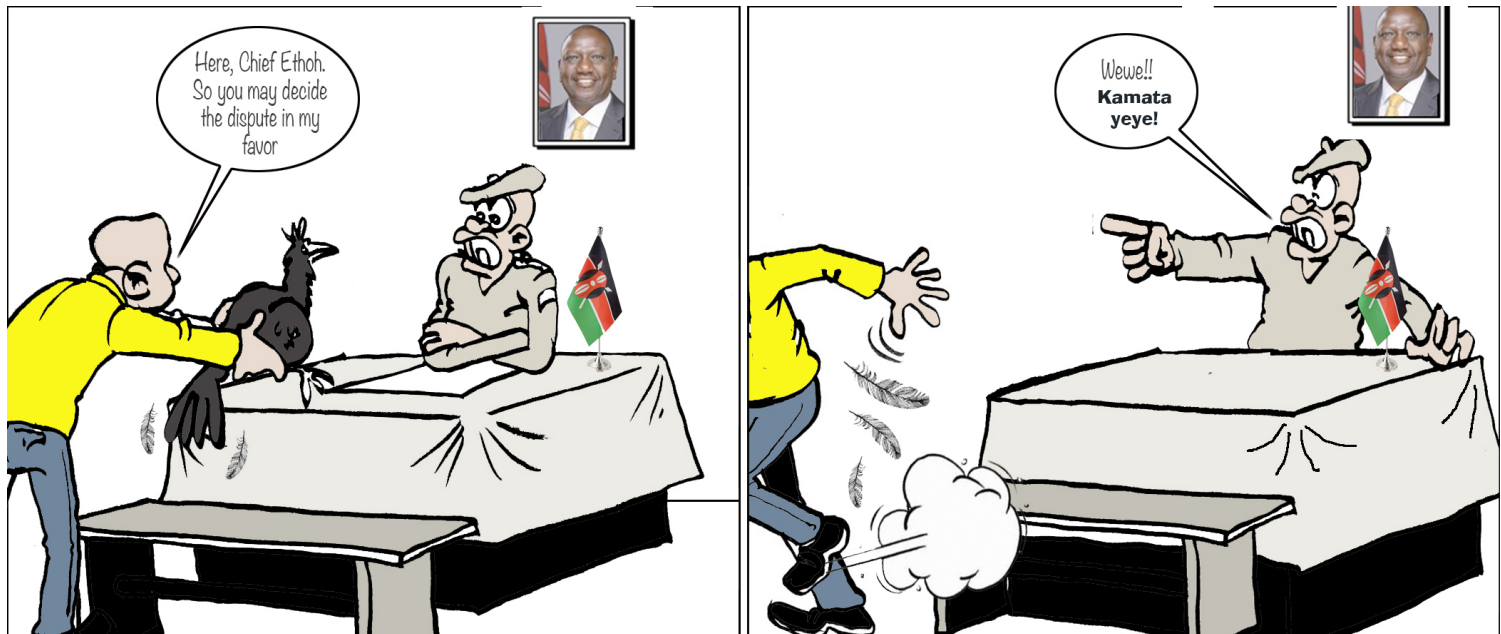
The costs extend beyond economics. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index consistently places Kenya among the more corruption-prone countries worldwide. This erodes public trust. When citizens watch leaders accumulate wealth while public services deteriorate, confidence in governance collapses. Disillusionment takes root, and democracy itself is weakened. Rent-seeking is not just an economic tax, it is a social toxin.

### **A turning point**

For decades, weak and fragmented rules on conflicts of interest have allowed rent-seeking to thrive. The enactment of the Conflict of Interest Act, 2025 marks a decisive shift. The new law consolidates outdated provisions into a single, comprehensive framework that applies across all arms of government.



**Rent-seeking is not just an economic tax, it is a social toxin.**



The Act defines conflicts broadly, covering not only public officers' financial interests but also those of their spouses, dependents, and close associates. It bars officers from holding stakes in companies contracting with their agencies and requires them to recuse themselves whenever conflicts arise. It mandates detailed declarations of income, assets, and liabilities and requires disclosure of gifts, hospitality, or employment offers within strict timelines, often within 48 hours.

Enforcement has also been strengthened. The law empowers the EACC to monitor compliance, investigate violations, and recommend sanctions. Penalties are tough: individuals face fines of up to Kes4 million, imprisonment of up to 10 years, or both. Corporations found guilty may be compelled to pay double the benefit gained or the loss suffered by the State. Every public body must also maintain a conflict-of-interest register, open to public scrutiny, ensuring that transparency is mandatory.

These reforms align Kenya with best international practices. The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has long stressed that strong conflict of interest frameworks are essential to prevent policy capture and promote fair governance. Kenya now has one of the most robust systems in the region.

The Conflict of Interest Act is arguably Kenya's best legal weapon yet against rent-seeking. But laws alone cannot change culture. Their effectiveness depends

on how leaders choose to enforce them. Compliance must be embraced not as a technicality, but as a duty owed to citizens. Transparency must be the default, with registers and disclosures accessible to the public. Where violations occur, swift and visible action is vital to demonstrate that no one is above the law.

Most importantly, integrity must begin at the top. Senior leaders must model compliance with the Act, showing that it applies equally to all, regardless of status or influence. Without this example, the culture of privilege will persist.

### The way forward

Rent-seeking may not grab headlines like grand corruption scandals, but it silently drains Kenya's economy and corrodes its governance. It steals from schools, hospitals, and farmers. It discourages investment, stifles innovation, and erodes public trust. Left unchecked, it threatens to derail Kenya's Vision 2030 and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

The Conflict of Interest Act, 2025 is a watershed moment. By mandating transparency, closing loopholes, and strengthening enforcement, it strikes at the very heart of rent-seeking. If implemented boldly, it can help Kenya move from a governance culture that rewards privilege to one that values fairness, accountability, and merit. The law is in place. The opportunity is clear. What remains is the leadership and political will to act decisively.

**Writer is a Legal Officer, based at Integrity Centre**



# Empowering the youth to lead the integrity agenda



**Corruption will end not by fear of punishment, but by the pride of doing what is right**

**By Elizabeth Gicheru**

Fifteen years since the enactment of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, institutions like the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) are embracing new approaches to leadership accountability by investing in the youth.

From Integrity Clubs in schools to strategic partnerships with national youth agencies, a culture of ethics is taking root, not just at the top, but from the ground up.

This shift comes at a crucial moment in Kenya's democratic journey. While laws, institutions, and enforcement mechanisms have been established under the 2010 Constitution, the long-term battle against corruption depends on values that must be taught, nurtured, and lived by a generation that sees

integrity not just as a slogan, but as a civic duty.

Kenya's population is predominantly young. According to the 2019 Census, over 75% of the population is under the age of 35. This demographic majority holds immense potential to shape the country's leadership culture. However, for years, young people have been sidelined from decision-making and often viewed merely as beneficiaries of development, not active participants in governance.

EACC has recognized that changing this narrative is not optional; it is essential. By engaging youth through education, civic participation, and partnership, the Commission is laying the foundation for long-term transformation in public accountability.

One of the most visible and impactful initiatives is the establishment of Integrity Clubs in primary and



secondary schools across the country. These clubs are not just co-curricular groups, they are living laboratories of ethical leadership. Students explore real-life issues around honesty, responsibility, and public service through debates, role plays, and community engagement.

In 2024 alone, the Commission trained more than 105 Integrity Club Patrons—teachers tasked with guiding and mentoring students in values-based learning. These patrons serve as role models and facilitators, helping learners connect ethical behavior with national development goals. Early feedback from participating schools shows that students involved in Integrity Clubs are more confident, informed, and motivated to stand against corruption.

The Commission's engagement with the youth has also expanded to institutions of higher learning, technical training colleges, and community networks. Through forums, campus dialogues, and innovation challenges, young people are being encouraged to think critically about leadership, public service, and civic duty.

In June 2025, EACC formalized its collaboration with the National Youth Council (NYC) through a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at expanding outreach to youth-led groups and institutions. This MoU provides a framework for training, mentorship, digital advocacy, and joint campaigns. The collaboration also seeks to elevate youth voices in governance and ensure that national policies reflect the aspirations of the young generation.

Speaking at the MoU signing, EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde noted, "Young people must be co-creators of the integrity agenda—not just observers. Corruption will end not by fear of punishment, but by the pride of doing what is right."

In counties such as Kisumu, Nyeri, and Trans Nzoia, youth-focused anti-corruption forums have become powerful platforms for mobilizing collective action. Localized initiatives have emerged where youth groups are monitoring public projects, holding county officials accountable, and even launching awareness drives using theatre, poetry, and social media.

These stories underscore the reality that the fight against corruption is not solely about punishment, but also about restoring trust, building ethical

reflexes, and giving citizens the tools to demand integrity.

A youth participant at a 2025 integrity summit in Kakamega summed it up: "We can't sit back and complain. If our generation doesn't make integrity normal, then who will?"

EACC's youth engagement efforts are not happening in isolation. They align with broader national frameworks such as Kenya Vision 2030, the National Ethics and Anti-Corruption Policy 2018, and the Constitution's promise under Chapter Six to hold public officers to the highest standards of integrity.

More importantly, these efforts offer a hopeful counter-narrative to the often-discouraging headlines of graft. They show that integrity is not a myth, but a lived experience that can be cultivated through deliberate investment in people, especially the youth.

As Kenya moves deeper into its second decade under the Constitution, the question is no longer whether laws and institutions exist, but whether they are supported by a citizenry that believes in and upholds them. For EACC, empowering young people is both a strategic and moral imperative. It is about creating an ecosystem where ethical behaviour is not the exception but the norm.

In the years to come, EACC aims to expand Integrity Clubs to every sub-county, deepen digital engagement through online integrity hubs, and establish a national youth integrity network. These are not just projects; they are pillars of a new leadership culture.

Fifteen years on, the spirit of the Constitution of Kenya is being renewed, not just in courtrooms or boardrooms, but in school halls, campus auditoriums, and village youth centers. EACC's commitment to nurturing youth as custodians of integrity signals a new chapter in governance; one led by conviction, not coercion.

If this generation can internalize the values of the Constitution and live them out in everyday decisions, then Kenya's future is not just secure, it is inspiring. Quoting Nelson Mandela, "History will judge us by the difference we make in the everyday lives of children".

**Writer is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya**



Forgery is not a clerical mistake. It is a deliberate act of deception. When individuals lie about their qualifications to gain public office, they fundamentally breach the public trust.

# Beyond the lie: How fake credentials erode trust and sabotage ethical leadership

**By Mercy Kanyaru**

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010, was a bold attempt to dismantle a culture of impunity and replace it with one rooted in accountability, transparency, and ethical leadership. Fifteen years later, Kenyans continue to grapple with a critical question: Has the country realized the vision outlined in Chapter Six on Leadership and Integrity?

The reality is complex. While institutions like the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) and the Office of the Director of Public Institutions (ODPP) have made progress in investigating and prosecuting unethical conduct, especially cases involving forgery and falsification of academic credentials, these cases reveal persistent integrity gaps among public and state officials.

Chapter Six of the Constitution emphasizes that leadership is a public trust, and state and public officers must exhibit honesty, transparency, and moral uprightness. Article 73(1)(a) states clearly that the authority assigned to a state officer is to be exercised in a manner that “brings honor to the nation and dignity to the office.”

Integrity is not optional. It is a constitutional requirement. Yet, one of the most disturbing patterns since 2010 has been the rise in cases involving forgery of academic documents, identity fraud, and misrepresentation of qualifications by individuals seeking or holding public office.

Over the years, EACC has uncovered a troubling trend: public officials forging certificates, degrees, and professional qualifications to gain employment or promotions in government institutions.

Peninah Wambui Karomoh, a former Senior Environmental Scientist at the Rural Electrification Authority (currently Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation) was recently convicted and sentenced to pay a total fine of

Kes390,000. She was also ordered to refund a total sum of Kes12,811,368 earned out of employment using forged academic certificates.

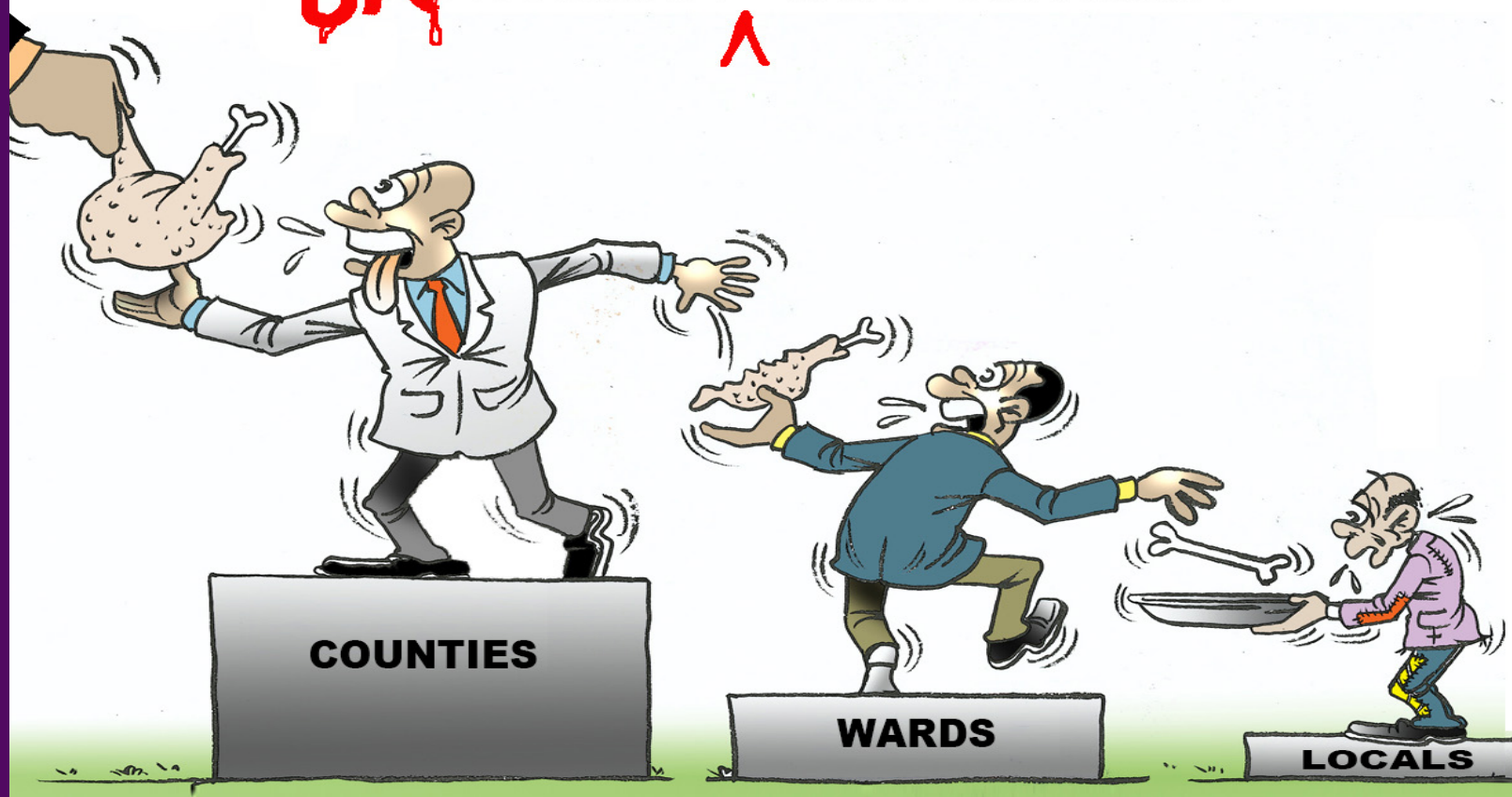
Zinje Jumaa Mwadama, a former Assistant Plant Inspector at the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services (KEPHIS), was charged with 12 counts of various forgery related offenses before the Anti-Corruption Court in Milimani on May 25, 2023. The Court recently convicted him in six counts and fined him an accumulated amount of Kes5.3 million or 11 years in prison in default.

Former IEBC Manager for Boundaries and Delimitation was, for instance, arraigned in 2024 on forgery of academic certificates. Investigations established that Caroline Sabiri Manyange forged a Master of Arts (Population Studies) degree certificate purporting it to be a genuine certificate awarded by the University of Nairobi on 9th May 2004 and subsequently used the same to obtain a promotion at IEBC thereby earning a cumulative salary and benefits amounting to over Kes37 million, which constitutes fraudulent acquisition of public property.

Forgery is not a clerical mistake. It is a deliberate act of deception. When individuals lie about their qualifications to gain public office, they fundamentally breach the public trust. This conduct directly violates Article 73(2)(b) of the Constitution, which calls for “honesty in the execution of public duties.”

Forged qualifications raise several ethical and practical concerns, including incompetence. Unqualified individuals often lack the skills necessary to perform effectively, leading to poor service delivery and mismanagement. It also leads to unfair hiring where genuine and qualified applicants are locked out of opportunities, eroding meritocracy and fairness in public service. Lastly, it normalizes corruption as it reflects and reinforces a

# UNETHICAL DEVOLVED GOVERNANCE



broader culture where dishonesty is tolerated or rewarded. Despite EACC's efforts, several challenges hinder effective enforcement. These include political interference where some suspects enjoy political patronage, which delays or frustrates investigations and prosecutions, and limited vetting mechanisms where many agencies do not rigorously verify documents, allowing fraudulent individuals to slip through.

Nonetheless, the increased visibility of forgery-related prosecutions shows a shift towards greater enforcement of Chapter Six. Public pressure, media scrutiny, and civil society activism have made it harder for forgers to operate in silence.

Institutions are also becoming more vigilant, with greater collaboration among the EACC, DCI, and academic bodies such as the Commission for University Education (CUE) and Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC). The judiciary has also enhanced the fast-tracking of corruption and forgery cases through special anti-corruption courts with defined timeframes.

To address the persistent problem of forgery and lack

of integrity in public service, Kenya must enforce strict verification of all academic and professional qualifications for job applicants and political aspirants. It must establish a centralized credentials database, linked with KNEC and CUE, accessible to government HR departments.

The country must also disqualify and ban convicted forgers from holding public office, as provided for under Chapter Six and the Leadership and Integrity Act, and strengthen whistleblower protections to encourage reporting of forgery and document fraud in government offices.

Fifteen years after the Constitution of Kenya 2010 came into force, the vision of ethical leadership remains under threat from systemic deceit and document forgery. The EACC's pursuit of such cases provides a window into the broader ethical crisis in Kenya's public service.

However, with the right reforms, strong public demand for accountability, and unwavering commitment to constitutional values, the tide can turn. Chapter Six was not designed to be a ceremonial promise—it was crafted to be a transformative force.

**The writer is an Ethics Officer at the EACC**



## Payments made pursuant to

**By Calystus Juma Kisaka**

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) instituted HC ACEC No. 26 of 2018: EACC v Joseph Muindi Tevulo & 2 Others for recovery of Kes25,334,525.50 paid out for two tenders for renovation of Kenyatta Municipal Stadium, Kitale, and construction of sheds at the same stadium, on account of violation of procurement processes and law. The EACC sued Joseph Muindi Tevulo, Benjamin Ruto Timitim and Robert Simiyu Wambulwa, trading as Koyi Building Contractors, as the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd defendants respectively.

### Background

Mr. Tevulo was the Head of Supply Chain Management and the Secretary of the Tender Committee at the County Government of Trans Nzoia. Mr. Timitim was the County Architect, who passed away during the pendency of the

proceedings. Mr. Simiyu was the 'successful bidder' who was awarded the contract to carry out the works relating to the two tenders and was paid the contract sum.

The suit was anchored on EACC's investigations which established that the contracts were executed based on County Tender Committee Minutes that were forged by Mr. Tevulo. Additionally, the contract documents were not properly executed by the Accounting Officer of the County Government of Trans Nzoia.

The investigations also established that there was bid rigging where different companies owned by the same person bade for the same tender. The chairperson of the Tender Evaluation Committee, who testified in court, disowned the minutes provided as evidence of the tender evaluation, which were alleged to bear her signature. The



# an illegal contract are recoverable



Where a procurement process is tainted, the contractor and the employees of the procuring entity are liable

Contracts were signed by the Mr. Tevulo instead of the Accounting Officer.

Despite the defendants having filed their defence, they did not participate in the proceedings. Consequently, the Court disregarded their pleadings since they did not substantiate their defence. EACC's claim, therefore, stood uncontroverted.

The court also observed that it should be mandatory for a public servant such as the Mr. Tevulo to attend court in such a matter of public interest involving public funds.

## Judgement

In a judgment delivered on April 30th, 2025, by Justice Professor Sifuna, the Court found that the Commission had discharged the evidentiary burden and met the standard of proof. Evidence adduced by the EACC revealed irregularities and illegalities in the tendering process and payments made to Mr. Simiyu Wambulwa, trading as Koyi Building Contractors.

The Court found that since the tendering process was irregular and illegal, anything stemming from it including the contract to Mr. Simiyu, were null and void.

The defendants were all found to be liable as they were partners in the illegality and fraud. Further, the Court held that where a procurement process is tainted, the contractor and the employees of the procuring entity are liable, notwithstanding that there is no evidence of financial benefit accruing to them. This is based on the principle that no reward should flow to a perpetrator of an illegality. Accordingly, any reward or payment arising from an illegality is for surrender or refund.

The Court, therefore directed the payment of Kes25,334,525.50 to the Kenya Government being the entire sum that the County Government of Trans Nzoia paid pursuant to the illegal contracts.

## Analysis

This judgment upholds the public policy considerations which underpin public procurement laws. The public procurement laws are rooted in the principles of fairness, equity, transparency, competitiveness and cost-effectiveness set out in

Article 227(1) of the Constitution. A procurement process which violates any of these principles without a good cause stands to be declared null and void as it impedes and defeats the achievement of fair participation of the people in the economy.

The judgment further cements the principal role of the contractor in observance of procurement law. The supplier or contractor has the obligation to ensure that the procuring entity complies with procurement law in its bid to supply goods or services.

Similarly, the courts have on a number of occasions placed loss at the contractor's doorstep where the contract was found to be illegal. In one instance, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission procured the services of Royal Media Services to promote voter registration in 2012. This was done through direct procurement. Royal Media Services sued for Kshs. 182 million for non-payment of services rendered. The High Court in *Royal Media Services v Independent Electoral & Boundaries Commission & 3 others* [2019] eKLR dismissed the suit as no circumstances were demonstrated to justify direct procurement. Direct competition violated all the principles in Article 227(1) of the constitution including fairness and competitiveness.

The foregoing decision demonstrate how courts have previously enforced the procurement law. The Courts have emphasized that a supplier who fails to ensure that the contracts they enter into with procurement entities will have themselves to blame.

## Conclusion

Public procurement is one area that is laden with corruption. The strict application of procurement laws is a crucial instrument in the fight corruption and particularly upholding the principle that a contract based on an illegal procurement process is illegal and no benefit accrues to the contractor therefrom. The judgment in *EACC v Joseph Muindi Tevulo & 2 Others* is a great leap forward in combating corruption in public procurement. We look forward to more of such progressive judgment from our courts.

**Writer is an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya**

# Pictorial



EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde addressing the media at Integrity Centre.

L-R: Commissioners Dr. Cecilia Mutuku, Colonel (Rtd) Alfred Mshimba, Hon. John Mbadi CS for The National Treasury and Economic Planning, EACC's Commissioner CPA John Ogallo, EACC CEO Mr. Abdi A. Mohamud and Vice Chairperson EACC Dr. Monica Wanjiru Muiru.



Uniting for integrity, Participants of Youth Integrity Cup 2025 at Kenya School of Government. Fourth left: Ms. Gloria Wawira, the Ag. CEO of the National Youth Council, EACC Director Preventive Services Mr. Vincent Okongo and Ms. Charity Kagwi, Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and Anti-Corruption, Head of Programme, Eastern Africa third right among other officials Ahead of African Anti-Corruption Day.



**EACC Chairperson, Dr. David Oginde (right), presents a trophy to Deep Sea F.C., the overall winners of the Integrity Cup football tournament, during the African Anti-Corruption Day commemoration held at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) in Nairobi.**

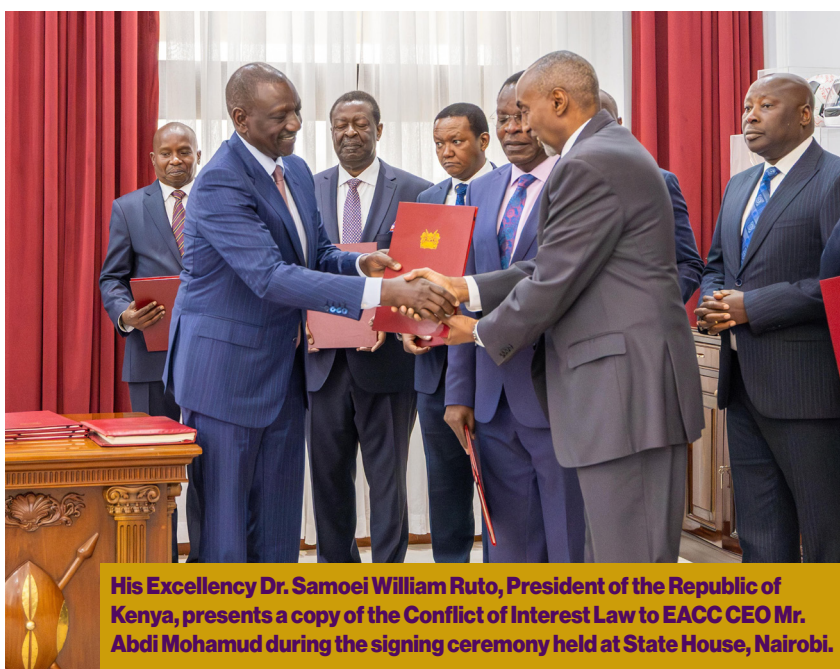


**Part of the action of the inaugural Youth Integrity Cup 2025, Ahead of African Anti-Corruption Day.**





Group photo of EACC Chairperson, Commissioners, Management and Officials at English Point Mombasa.



**His Excellency Dr. Samoei William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya, presents a copy of the Conflict of Interest Law to EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud during the signing ceremony held at State House, Nairobi.**



**Ms. Gloria Wawira, the Ag. CEO of the National Youth Council, Carol Warui National Youth Council Advisory Board Member, PS for the State Department for Youth Affairs and the Creative Economy, Mr. Fikirini Jacobs, EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde and EACC CEO, Mr. Abdi A. Mohamud.**



**Teachers Service Commission (TSC) Choir, performing during the commemoration of African Anti-Corruption Day held at Kenyatta International Convention Centre, Nairobi.**



**From left to right: EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde, consultant Kingston Ogango, and EACC CEO Mr. Abdi A. Mohamud at English Point Hotel, Mombasa, during the NIAca Executive Training.**





## A vibrant generation: The driving force of the future

**By Ignatius Wekesa**

In a country where over 70% of the population is under the age of 35, Kenya's youth are emerging not just as a demographic majority, but as a transformative force in governance. Recent years have witnessed an assertive and inspiring surge in youth engagement, one that is challenging traditional political structures and redefining leadership as we know it.

Gone are the days when young people were passive observers in politics. Today, they are leading the charge for a more transparent, accountable, and people-centered government. Fueled by digital innovation, civic awareness, and a refusal to settle for the status quo, Kenya's youth, especially the Gen Z, are demanding their rightful place at the leadership table.

Digital platforms like X, TikTok, and Instagram have become powerful tools of political engagement. Movements such as #RejectFinanceBill2024 and #OccupyParliament have mobilized thousands across both digital and physical spaces, transforming online trends into real-world action. These movements represent more than just hashtags; they reflect the collective resistance to economic injustice, poor governance, and corruption.

Armed with smartphones and an internet connection, young Kenyans are acting as citizen journalists, reporting live from protests, community forums, and legislative sessions. This has disrupted mainstream media's traditional gatekeeping role, allowing unfiltered stories to reach the public in real time.



**Increasingly, the Kenyan youth are reading the Constitution, following parliamentary debates, and interrogating public policy with a level of insight that was uncommon a decade ago**

Political awareness among young people is deepening. Increasingly, the youth are reading the Constitution, following parliamentary debates, and interrogating public policy with a level of insight that was uncommon a decade ago. Civic knowledge is no longer confined to the classroom; rather, it's embedded in music, art, online debates, and even street fashion.

While voter turnout among youth has historically been low, there is a visible shift. First-time voters are now approaching elections with a focus on policy, integrity, and service delivery over tribal or party loyalty. This signals a gradual but vital movement from identity politics to issue-based engagement.

Young Kenyans are boldly naming and shaming corrupt officials, exposing nepotism, and holding leaders responsible for betrayal of public trust. Whistleblowing is on the rise, often led by youth with access to sensitive information within institutions. This wave of activism is driven by courage and a strong moral compass.

Beyond resistance, the youth are now shaping public policy. Many are actively participating in budget hearings, submitting memoranda to Parliament, and proposing legislative alternatives. This demonstrates a maturity that goes beyond opposition to include solution-driven engagement.

In the tech space, young developers are creating apps that track county budgets, monitor election promises, and report poor service delivery. These innovations enhance transparency, expand access to information, and bridge the gap between citizens and their leaders.

The traditional culture of political patronage is slowly eroding. Increasingly, the youth are turning to entrepreneurship, defining empowerment not as handouts but as economic independence grounded in creativity and hard work. They are supporting candidates with integrity regardless of tribe or party and rejecting leaders who do not deliver.

Young women, in particular, are rising boldly. They are challenging gender stereotypes, demanding space at leadership tables, and actively participating in civic and political processes. Their voices are becoming impossible to ignore.

Civic education, once the domain of schools and NGOs, is now being championed by youth

themselves. Through school clubs, grassroots organizations, and digital platforms, they are educating their peers and communities on the Constitution, public finance, and citizen rights. This peer-to-peer model is creating informed, engaged, and empowered communities.

Art, music, and satire have become unexpected but powerful channels of civic engagement. Musicians, spoken-word poets, and comedians are using their platforms to educate and critique, turning performances into spaces of resistance and reflection. Satire and memes have become tools of political commentary, especially among Gen Zs, making complex issues easier to grasp.

Youth in the diaspora have not been left behind either. They are also contributing meaningfully. They are raising international awareness, offering technical expertise, and supporting homegrown movements through remittances and advocacy. Their influence stretches across borders but remains rooted in Kenya's democratic aspirations.

Perhaps the most defining trait of today's youth is their refusal to be co-opted or silenced. Unlike in the past, where youthful energy was often neutralized through token appointments or patronage, today's youth understand that lasting change requires independence and resilience. They are willing to speak truth to power and pay the price for it.

They are not just demanding younger leaders, but principled leaders; those who value humility, emotional intelligence, and public service. The youth are not waiting for permission to lead; they are actively reshaping leadership to reflect the values and visions of a new Kenya.

Kenya's youth are not the leaders of tomorrow; they are the reformers of today. They are rewriting the script of governance one protest, innovation, policy proposal, and vote at a time. As their momentum grows, they deserve more than applause; they deserve space at the decision-making table.

The future of Kenya's democracy depends not on preserving outdated systems, but on embracing the energy, intellect, and integrity of a new generation determined to make things better. A generation that refuses to settle!

**Writer is a career detective**

# Promoting integrity through African cultural values

By Ian Kiplagat

The fight against corruption faces many challenges, some resulting from the changing culture of the society. Even with the evolving ways in which things are done, one thing remains the same, loss of funds, which deeply affects lives of citizens.

This undermines economic growth, hinders development, and affects delivery of essential services. The public expects their leaders to develop policies that will improve their lives through action. These expectations, however, are frequently met with disappointments, lowering their hope and trust as a result of broken socio-economic and political systems.

Nevertheless, there is an underutilized strength in the rich and diverse African cultural heritage. Traditionally, African communities have promoted values such as honesty, respect for elders, social harmony and peaceful coexistence, attributes that align with the principles of integrity and human dignity. Integrating these values into our modern society will influence and strengthen moral dimensions in both individuals and institutions.

Integrity is about trust, responsibility, transparency, and accountability. It carries a sequence of outcomes starting from individual, spreading to institutions and nations. Just as the African traditions emphasize respect for elders and their wisdom, modern systems should reflect the same values. Leaders should lead by example, upholding integrity because their choices and actions affect lives.

In practice, cultural values can be institutionalized into governance and service delivery. This means developing policies guided



**Our heritage is not only a reminder of the past, but also a present resource to build a just, ethical, and dignified future**



by traditional principles of transparency, fairness and mutual respect. These values can influence and shape ethical codes of conduct in government institutions, workplaces and schools making integrity a norm rather than the exception.

Moreover, these ideals can shape the internal culture of organizations. When trust, transparency, and respect are rooted in an organizational environment, ethical conducts thrive. Leaders must lead by example through

**The richness of the African culture and heritage should not be used only as a symbol, but as part of a structured approach to national development.**

a demonstrated ethical conduct. They should resist temptations of corruption and set high standards. Integrity should guide both daily decisions and long-term plans.

Anti-corruption efforts can be sustainably effective if the local realities are incorporated. Other than adopting foreign models, much can be drawn from the traditional African values that the people understand and relate with. Once people relate integrity to their cultural identity, chances are that they will embrace and practice it. These traditions carry strong ethical values desired in a morally upright society.

The richness of the African culture and heritage should not be used only as a symbol, but as part of a structured approach to national development. The best of these traditions can be embraced as the retrogressive practices are discarded. By promoting cultural values, we create a path towards ethical citizens and accountable institutions.

As we strive to create an integrity-driven society, we must recognize and leverage the moral wealth within our cultures. These social ethos support laws and institutions in the fight against corruption. They should not only appear in policies but also be lived out in everyday behavior.

Ultimately, the question remains: How do we effectively harness our cultural assets in the fight against corruption? Should our laws be adjusted to reflect our traditional moral codes? What can the communities do for a better accountability of their leaders? Whatever the approach, one thing is certain—our cultural heritage is not only a reminder of the past, but also a present resource to build a just, ethical, and dignified future.

To address this issue, we must recognize the importance of the African cultural practices in supporting the ethical standards promoted by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC).

**Writer is an investigator with EACC**



# Youth as a catalyst of transformative leadership



**By failing to properly address corruption, humanity joins a narrow list of species on the planet that steals from its young.**

**By Misheck Waweru**

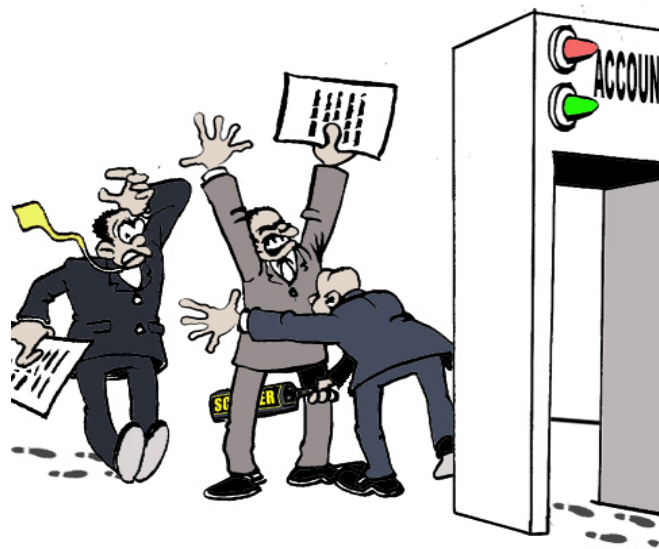
The power of the youth has received a new awakening in the last two decades owing to the their increasing numbers as a proportion of the Global population. This indicate that young people, being the majority, need to be at the center of shaping Kenya's social, political, and economic affairs.

To onboard the youth at the center-stage of shaping the Governance agenda, Article 55 of the Constitution of Kenya guarantees equal access to education, employment opportunities, representation in social, political, and economic spheres, and protection from harmful cultural practices and exploitation to the youth. These irreducible minimums have only been met partly.

Although the demographic dividends seem promising, the real actualization depends on the active participation and involvement of the young people in Leadership so that they can chat and implement policies that will address their existential challenges. It is clear that when young people are given the opportunity, they push agendas that are sustainable and economically sound.

The Eleventh Parliament (2013-2017 legislative session), for instance, had 57 out of 417, 37 in the National Assembly, and 14 in the Senate. Although 14% of representation is still low, the young legislators were able to sponsor 29 private Bills, 21 motions, 34 Statements, and 20 petitions that were sponsored by the youthful legislators, according to the Mzalendo Watch (2017).

If we increase safe spaces for youth participation in

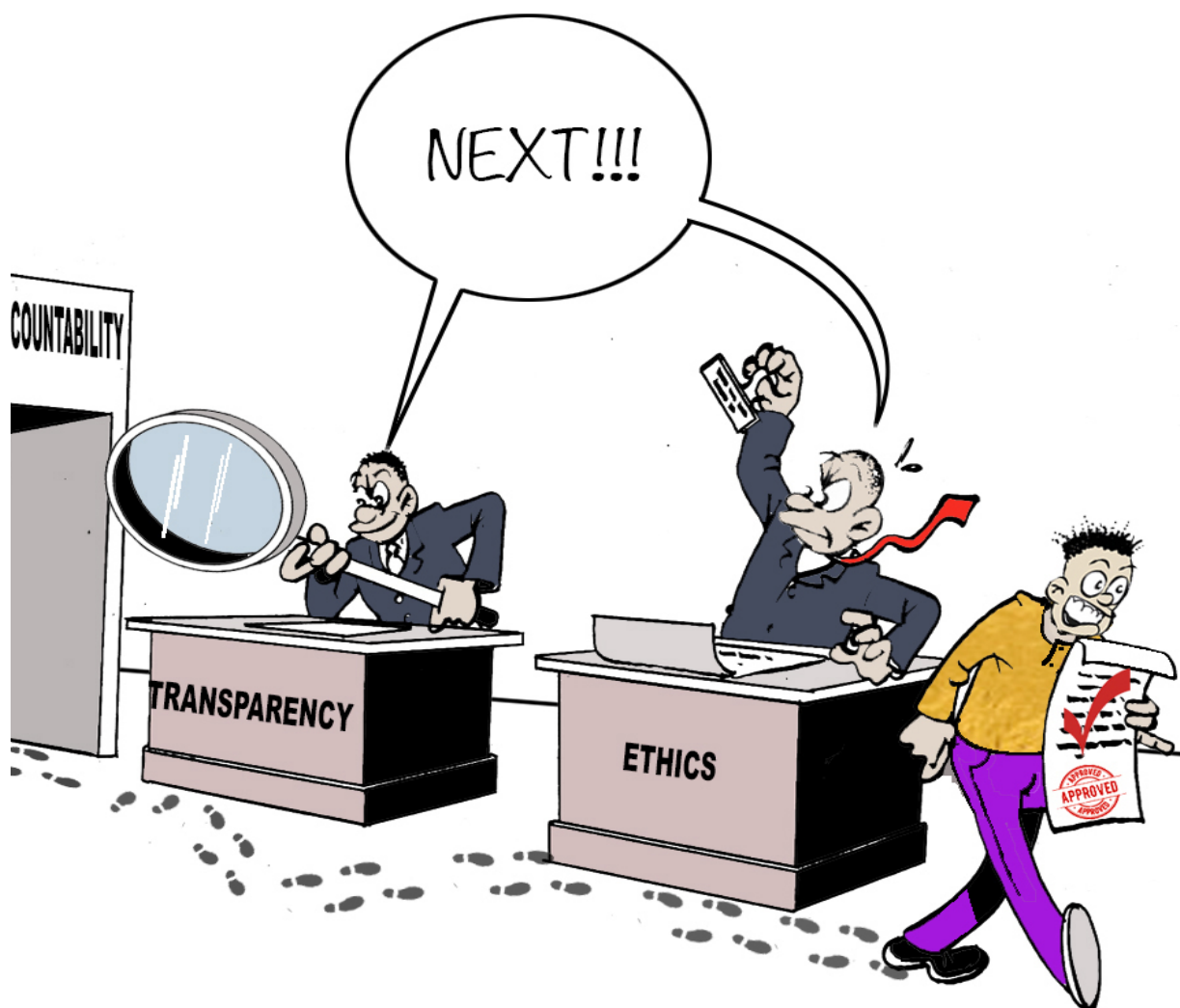


the political process, we could increase the number from 14% in the 11th Parliament to at least 50% in the 14th Parliament in 2027. This then means that, the Political Parties Act Section 26(a) on funding of the youth, for instance, should be more purposed.

Conversely, the youth must also make a decisive and deliberate action to immerse themselves into well-modelled vehicles that will align with the aspirations of the people and demonstrate alternative social, economic and governance solutions. This strategy is not an easy path as it is expected to face resistance from the status quo.

In that case, useful cross-references such as that of Bobby Wine in Uganda, Julius Malema of South Africa, Ibrahim Traore of Burkina Faso, Mahamat Deby, Chad, Assimi Goita, Mali, and Andry Rajoelina, Madagascar, among others, are a living testament of youth-led initiatives to contribute to societal transformation.

These are young African leaders who have chosen not to sit on the fence, and in relegation zones, but



they are quintessential to a deliberate action in chatting success stories to drive good governance and socioeconomic empowerment of the societies they serve.

It must be noted that for these revolutions to take shape, emancipation from bondages of unemployment, corruption, health, housing, and access to credible information amidst information overload must be dealt with. We are glad for the many initiatives that the youth have taken up, especially in the digital space to mobilize and influence changes in social structures, climate change actions such as the Youth Green Alliance Network that is supporting sustainable communities and cities.

The youth needs to take critical roles by acquiring new skills from programmes such as Ajira Digital, Kenya Youth Employment Opportunities Programmes and National Youth Opportunity Towards Advancement, to anchor and ground them economically and set out to challenge the status quo. It is simple commitments like these that will become a precursor to culture change even among the compact populace who

must have a 360-degree turn from leadership given under tokenism to issue-based, nondiscriminatory, and transparent democratic process.

The awakening of the youth, therefore, is paramount but must be exercised with caution to ensure that energies are directed to the right strategies, steps, and activities that will realize the overall goal of entrenching ethical, responsive, accountable leadership as envisaged under Chapter Six of the Constitution.

It is, therefore, clear now, more than ever, that the place of the youth in defining and redefining governance culture and structure is already cut out. The missing link is the young people themselves to reconfigure, re-orientate, re-organize and cooperate as one formidable force that will redesign leadership, social norms, political space, and economic transformation, which we all yearn to feel and taste its liberative fruits.

**Writer is an economist, serving as Budget and Planning Officer at Integrity Centre**

# Moving from intention to implementation



**“Wealth means little without serving society.”**  
- Anonymous

By Judy Njino

In boardrooms, procurement committees, and government offices across Kenya, tensions persist — between what is convenient and what is right. In this grey zone, where corruption is often tolerated as a cost of doing business, ethical actors are being sidelined, public trust is eroding, and our systems continue to fail.

Despite institutional reforms, corruption remains deeply embedded in the structures that govern both public and private sectors. For many businesses, opaque procurement systems, informal networks, and unpredictable enforcement have become normalized. Integrity, though valued in principle, is still perceived as impractical in daily operations.

Kenya has indeed embraced the language of integrity. Codes have been signed, forums convened, and frameworks developed. Progress has, however, often been fragmented and performative. Companies act alone. Institutions operate in silos. And the systems that enable ethical conduct to thrive remain underdeveloped or disconnected.

In a landscape where doing the right thing can be costly and isolating, the private sector needs a collective approach: shared platforms, coordinated standards, and practical mechanisms that embed integrity into the way business is done.

## Collective Action

Global Compact Network Kenya, as the Country Network of the United Nations Global Compact, has responded to this call by mobilizing the private sector to embrace a principles-based approach to responsible business conduct.

Grounded in the Tenth Principle of the UN Global Compact, we emphasize the importance of ethical conduct and integrity in business operations by



advocating for the elimination of corrupt practices. Through this principle, we call on businesses to work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

We believe that the next phase of progress must be built on collective action—not just as a concept, but as an operating model.

It's how we can move from intention to impact, and from isolated effort to systemic change.

Collective action offers a pathway to scale and sustainability. It allows businesses to coordinate efforts, reinforce standards across supply chains, and establish credible, transparent norms that extend beyond individual firms. And when aligned with public institutions, it strengthens the integrity system as a whole.

Collective action becomes transformative when it results in shared platforms and practical tools such as sector-level corruption risk frameworks and model procedures for ethical procurement; whistleblower protection schemes that are embedded within and across industry associations; shared tools for due diligence, reporting, and peer learning; and integrity pacts or public-private commitments anchored in enforcement and transparency.

These tools reduce duplication, build confidence, and allow businesses to thrive ethically — not despite of the system, but because of it.



At the heart of our efforts to advance good governance and accountability in Kenya lies a deep and growing partnership with the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC). Rooted in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 on Partnerships for the Goals, this collaboration is a powerful example of what's possible when public and private sectors unite with a shared purpose.

This partnership has delivered tangible, systemic results for collective action: from contributing to the drafting of the Anti-Bribery Act, 2016, to the development of Model Procedures, and advancing Corruption Risk Assessment and Management Guidelines through multi-stakeholder engagement.

### Let Us Build Together

This approach complements the broader ambitions of Kenya's anti-corruption framework—including the Leadership and Integrity Act, the Anti-Bribery Act, and the Kenya Integrity Plan. Collective action does not replace regulation; it operationalizes it. It translates policy into business practice and bridges the gap between intention and implementation.

This collaboration reflects the essence of SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). It is a public-private alliance built on trust, transparency, and shared responsibility. More than checking compliance boxes, this partnership is about rewriting the rules of

engagement and elevating ethics as a strategic asset, not a regulatory burden.

The momentum is growing. Public expectation for transparency is rising. Reforms in procurement, digital governance, and corporate disclosures are gaining ground. This creates a window for Kenya to embed institutional integrity through partnership—and the private sector must play its part.

Now is the time to connect efforts across industries, sectors, and regions. To move from codes to coordination. From individual compliance to collective responsibility.

We are not merely stakeholders in this journey. We are co-creators of systems change.

If integrity is to be institutionalized across Kenya's economy, it must be supported by courageous and strategic partnerships that are deliberate, cross-sectoral, and principled.

At Global Compact Network Kenya, we remain unwavering in our belief that integrity is non-negotiable, and governance reform will only succeed when the private sector actively participates in shaping it.

The tools exist. The willingness is there. Now, we must work together to build the infrastructure that makes ethical business not just possible—but standard.

**Writer is Executive Director, Global Compact Network Kenya**

# From theft to trust: how recovered assets can rebuild communities

By Anna Leinte

While corruption continues to cost Kenya an estimated Kes194 billion annually, according to African Development Bank Report, African Economic Outlook, 2025, it is important to pause and reflect on the tremendous work the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has undertaken in response.

Over the past five years, EACC has recovered assets worth Kes28 billion and is currently pursuing an additional Kes50 billion suspected to have been acquired through corrupt means.

This disparity between the amounts recovered and those lost underscores the magnitude and persistence of corruption in our country. It highlights the serious challenges we face in safeguarding public resources and delivering essential services.

These figures call for a more robust and coordinated approach to the fight against corruption, one that combines strong political will from the highest levels, enhanced investigative capacity, meaningful legal reforms, and preventive measures. It also requires institutional accountability, active public engagement, strong partnerships, and what I call “the I factor”, my personal responsibility and role in this fight.

Without such measures, the political, economic, and social consequences of corruption will continue to undermine national development, weaken institutions, and diminish public confidence in governance. Worse still, the ordinary citizen will be left underdeveloped, their potential stifled and their dignity trampled on.

To some, the Kes28 billion already recovered may appear modest compared to the overwhelming sums lost each year. However, this view overlooks the substantial legal, investigative, and institutional efforts required to trace, freeze, and ultimately recover assets stolen from the public. More importantly, it fails to consider what that amount could do for the ordinary Kenyan.

But I want to tell you a story, not of billions, but of one woman. Her name is Nkasupat. Nkasupat is a mother of five, living in a rural village in Samburu. She is illiterate but wise in the ways of survival. Every morning, she walks several kilometers to fetch water from a seasonal river. Two of her children attend a nearby school, if it can be called that, with no desks, no toilets, and some days, no lunch. One child tends to their five goats, while the other two herd livestock for relatives in exchange for a meal. Nkasupat sells milk and firewood where she can, walking from homestead to homestead in the scorching sun, hoping for buyers. Her beadwork, beautiful and time-consuming, brings in a little money, but never enough.

Her children suffer from malnutrition, and she from what I call “the sickness of the poor and defeated”, a condition where pain is frequent, and the only affordable remedy is Mara Moja (the common painkiller).

She pays taxes, though she may not call them that, on soap, salt and sugar. She votes faithfully, always with hope. And yet, year after year, public services remain painfully out of reach. Her life is a reflection of countless others in forgotten corners of this country, defined by missing services and broken promises.

Nkasupat's story brings to mind Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Psychologist Abraham Maslow developed a pyramid illustrating a hierarchy of human needs, beginning with physiological needs; food, water, shelter, clothing, and sleep. The second tier includes safety and security; health, employment, property, family, and social stability. The third is love and belonging, followed by self-esteem, and, finally, self-actualization.

The most basic human need is physical survival. Maslow emphasized that physiological needs are the most important, until they are met, all other needs remain secondary. Where then do we place Nkasupat and her like?



**President Ruto hands over 1,080 affordable homes in Mukuru kwa Njenga, built on 50 acres of land recovered by EACC — now transformed for the public good.**

**If you give  
bad food  
to your  
stomach, it  
will drum  
for you to  
dance**

**– African  
Proverb**

A 2011 study by Williams and Cremeans-Smith, which applied Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to the Kenyan population, found that when basic needs such as food, water, and shelter are unmet, individuals are more likely to experience poor physical health, heightened anxiety, and emotional exhaustion. Simply put, when development fails to meet basic needs, it harms not only the economy, but also undermines human dignity, damages mental well-being, and drains hope. It keeps communities trapped in survival mode, unable to dream, innovate, or thrive.

Addressing these unmet needs requires more than awareness. It demands deliberate action at the heart of governance. And that action begins with how we plan, allocate, and use public money. So, when people ask, "What can Kes28 billion really do?" I think of Nkasupat.

That amount could build thousands of kilometers of passable rural roads, connecting her home to health centers, schools, and markets. It could fund dispensaries stocked with medicine, ambulances, and trained staff, so she wouldn't have to walk for hours in emergencies or suffer preventable losses. It could construct classrooms with desks and toilets, and support school meal programs that keep her children learning. It could drill boreholes across dry lands like Samburu, sparing women and girls the daily burden of fetching water. It could support marketplaces with

security, giving women like Nkasupat safer spaces to sell their goods and earn a decent income.

What is the potential of Kes28 billion. It is the kind of money that can change the story of entire communities. That is what corruption robs us of, not just resources, but possibilities. And that is why every shilling recovered matters.

When EACC recovers stolen public assets, it is more than a legal process. It is the restoration of public trust. It is a declaration that the poor are not invisible. It is a quiet but powerful message that the state still has a duty to serve its people.

But even as we commend the recovery of these billions, a pressing and sobering question remains: Will this money find its way back to the people who need it most, or will it quietly slip back into the hands of new gatekeepers, lost again in the very corruption it was rescued from?

Let recovered assets not become statistics buried in government reports. Let them become testimonies of justice served, visible, tangible, and transformative. Let every recovered shilling be tracked, accounted for, and directed to real development that uplifts the lives of ordinary Kenyans. The real victory against corruption is not in the courtroom, but in the lives it restores.

**The writer is an Education Officer with the EACC**

## How the youth can fight corruption and promote integrity



**By Christine Achieng**

Corruption is a worldwide problem that slows down progress, weakens institutions, and makes people less trusting of their leaders in many places. Vitta, who wrote *Fathers of Nations*, also says that corruption is a big problem in Africa. The vice has terrible effects on the economies of the continent. It also hurts the bonds between people and the social contracts that are important for building nations.

One of the most powerful things young people can do is teach and raise awareness among their peers and communities. They can talk about the bad effects of corruption and the importance of acting ethically by holding seminars, debates, and awareness campaigns. Social media sites are a great way to quickly and widely spread messages. When young people use these tools wisely, they can get a lot of people to stand up against corruption and support transparency.

Young people can show integrity in their daily lives, whether they are at school, college, work, or online. They set an example for others by not cheating in tests, bribing officials, or doing business in an unfair way. Being honest is contagious. When young people always do the right thing, they encourage others to do the same.

It is important to encourage young people to get involved in their communities. They can join community groups, youth councils, and student governments that encourage honesty and responsibility. Young people can help make leadership and decision-making processes cleaner by voting responsibly, speaking out for good government, and holding public officials responsible.

In the digital age, youth can create Apps, websites, and tool that monitor public expenditures, expose corruption, and teach moral behaviour. One illustration is the Samaritan App, which was developed by Alvita and Montano in John Lara's *Play The Samaritan*. A mobile application, the App allows users to upload or share whatever information they may have about how our nation's affairs are being conducted.

The information can be distributed as a photo, video, file, or text. The App's goal is to advance the general welfare by bringing corruption and other vices to light in our nation and pushing for the prosecution of those responsible. It's true that technical advancements can be effective instruments for integrity and transparency if used properly.

Young people can push for anti-corruption education to be taught in schools. From a young age, ethics, civic duty, and leadership lessons should be instilled. Set books including *Fathers of Nations*, *The Samaritan*, *Parliament of Owls*, and the Kiswahili set book *Nguu za Jadi* highlight the issue of corruption and steps that can be taken to stop it, just as is currently done in secondary schools.

This will contribute to the development of a generation that is capable of opposing and challenging corruption in addition to understanding its perils. It is not simply the leaders' obligation to combat corruption and uphold honesty; everyone must do their part. The young people are in a unique position to lead the group because of their enthusiasm, bravery, and inventiveness.

**Writer is a form 3 student at Kereri Girls High School**



# The youth should be ambassadors of integrity

**By Gaudencia Kerubo Nyatome**

Integrity is adherence to moral and ethical principles. It is a powerful tool for young people in the fight against corruption. By embracing integrity, young people can foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and ethical decision-making.

Ultimately, this contributes to a more just and equitable society. Integrity is about acting in accordance with moral principles, even when faced with difficult choices. It encompasses honesty, fairness, and a commitment to doing what is right, even when no one is watching.

In the context of corruption, integrity acts as a powerful antidote, discouraging unethical behaviour, while promoting transparency and accountability. Young people, with their idealism and fresh perspectives, can be powerful agents of change in this fight.

They are uniquely positioned to drive positive change due to their energy, idealism, and willingness to challenge the status quo. They can use social media and other platforms to raise awareness of corruption.

They can organise meetings or even competitions where they may come up with ideas to prevent corruption in society. By doing this, each young person will be given a task: to tell a friend, who will then tell another friend, and so on, until the message has reached everyone and they adhere to it.

They can organize movements for transparency and accountability and hold those in power responsible. Moreover, their innovative thinking can lead to new solutions for preventing and combating corruption.

They can start movements to make things clear and fair, and make sure that those in charge are doing the right thing. Also, because they have new ideas, they can find ways to stop corruption and deal with it.

Some politicians are very corrupt. When they are campaigning, they make lots of promises they don't keep. But when they get into power, they forget all that and start encouraging corruption. For example, a politician might be chosen to be a senator in a particular county.

They will start hiring people they know, like family and friends, and anyone who helped them during the campaign. This is always really bad and needs to be reported by young people.

In short, we should always try to do the right thing, even when nobody is watching. If you do bad things to other people, they will probably do bad things to you. You look down on people and don't think it's fair. One day, you'll need help and the person you look down on will be the one to help you. What will you do then? Let's all be honest and fair. Let's always do the right thing.

**Nyatome is a Form 3 student at Kereri Girls School- Kisii**

# The Integrity Club in My School: A Success Story

**By Daniel Bravin Werre**

Integrity is not just a word. It is the light that guides us when no one is watching. In Nakuru High school, that light shines brightest in the Integrity Club—a movement that has changed the way we think, act, and lead.

When the club began in 2019, there were just a small group of students with a simple dream: to make honesty the heartbeat of our school being headed by our patron madam Waithaka. They organised debates, held open forums, and encouraged every student to speak out against cheating, bribery, and favouritism. One of our boldest moves was creating an anonymous reporting system, allowing students to report malpractice without fear. The results were remarkable—cases of exam cheating dropped, favouritism in sports reduced, and teachers began to trust us with bigger responsibilities. When I joined earlier last year I quickly enrolled in integrity club where I spearheaded the fight against graft.

## How the Youth Can Fight Corruption

Corruption is like a disease, it grows when ignored. Who knows better ways of fighting it than the youth? We are the generation with energy, creativity, and a hunger for change. The fight starts with the small things: refusing to copy during exams, declining favours that undermine fairness, and speaking the truth even when it costs us.

We can also use our voices to promote transparency. Whether it's demanding fair selection in school teams or calling for equal treatment in student activities, we must stand firm. Social media can be our ally—

not for gossip, but for exposing injustice, celebrating integrity, and spreading awareness. And above all, we must resist peer pressure, because corruption often survives through silence and acceptance.

If I were elected as the sports captain, I would see myself not just as a leader, but as a servant of the team. My first rule: fairness above all. Team selection would be based on talent, effort, and dedication—never on friendship or influence. Trials would be open and transparent, with every player receiving honest feedback.

I would lead by example: punctual at training, respectful to referees, and gracious in both victory and defeat. I would ensure that all players—from the star striker to the newest recruit—have equal access to equipment and training. Disputes would be handled with impartiality, listening to every side before deciding.

Above all, I would instil a code of conduct where sportsmanship is not an option, but a requirement. Because true leadership is not about power—it is about responsibility.

In conclusion, the story of the Integrity Club proves that when we choose honesty, we choose progress. The youth have the power to change the culture of corruption into a culture of truth. And whether in the sports field, in the classroom, or in everyday life, integrity must be our constant companion. Because when integrity becomes our habit, corruption will have no place to hide.

**Daniel Bravin is a student at Nakuru High School**



# Young People, the Fight against Corruption is Ours

**By Joe Gori Obech**

Corruption is like a virus that infects progress – silently but dangerously, feeding on dreams and devouring futures. It creeps into systems, kills dreams and robs people of opportunities. Corruption may be old and powerful, but even the darkest shadow fears the rising sun – and the sun is us, the youth. So how exactly can we – students with pens, voices and vision – defeat a giant so powerful?

First, by choosing to live with integrity. Integrity means doing the right thing – not sometimes, but all the time. It means saying “no” to exam cheating, refusing to pay bribes and avoiding shortcuts. If you want to change the world, start by making your bed. The moment we normalize honesty, we start a silent revolution.

Secondly, we must speak out fearlessly.

Our generation was born with a voice. Let's use platforms not just for trends, but for the truth. Let us turn tweets into truth, hash tags into healing and conversations into courage. After all, how can corruption hide if everyone's watching?

Thirdly, we must lead by example. Title does not make leaders but character does. Whether you are a youthful leader, club leader or even just a team captain, how you lead matters. Show transparency, treat everyone fairly, refuse to be bribed by popularity. Be the kind of leader who inspires trust, a leader whose footsteps leave behind inspiration.

Fourthly, let us team up and ignite integrity clubs in schools. Integrity is louder in groups. Don't just attend meetings, organize anti-corruption debates. Turn creativity into a weapon against corruption. Show the world that fighting corruption doesn't have to be boring, let us march against corruption not with fists but with ideas.

Most importantly, we need to demand accountability from those in power. If funds go missing, stand firm and challenge the task. Corruption survives on fear and silence. The moment we defeat corruption we will have a better country. Now ask yourself: if not me, who? If not now, when?

In conclusion, we are not too young to fight corruption. We are the storm before the calm, the ink that will rewrite history with truth as our weapon and courage as our shield, we can build a Kenya where integrity is not rare but regular. The fight is ours!

**A student at St. Joseph School, Rapogi**





# Poetry

## Corruption

Corruption , Corruption  
Corruption indeed has led to deep pain  
in many people, You find yourself alone  
in a field, filled with thorns from crops  
that you planted Spiking through your  
flesh with no mercy

Corruption , Corruption  
Surely it has become a profession  
Though we try to raise our voice  
against it, but there never <sup>been</sup> heard.  
When will this disease be found  
a cure

Corruption, Corruption  
It stops today and ends with us  
Together we battle this cancer  
with all ethical weapons. Let us  
stand together and say no to  
corruption

# Flames in the night

A tapestry woven, of strength and of might,  
Against the dark shadows, consuming the light.  
A partnership forged, in the crucible's fire,  
To vanquish corruption, and set souls entire.

With voices united, a chorus so clear,  
Each individual, a seed, banished fear.  
From whispers of malice, to actions so bold,  
A fortress of virtue, a story unfolds.

The jurist's sharp mind, the investigator's keen eye,  
The citizen's courage, beneath a clear sky.  
A symphony played, in the halls of the state,  
Where justice prevails, and corruption abate.

The politician's resolve, the scholar's deep grace,  
A bond unbreakable, in this sacred embrace.  
For in unity's strength, a powerful decree,  
Corruption's dark reign, shall surely flee.

The journalist's pen, a weapon so true,  
Exposing the wrongs, for all the world to view.  
The activist's fervor, a flame in the night,  
Igniting the spirit, with pure, radiant light.

From humble beginnings, to triumphs untold,  
A partnership's essence, a story unfolds.  
In every endeavor, a beacon so bright,  
Against the encroaching darkness, a shining, clear light.

For in shared purpose, where spirits align,  
The fight against evil, will conquer and shine.  
A testament etched, in history's grand page,  
The power of partnership, in this noble engage.

—By Allennita Gakii Gitonga

# Integrity ndio form

Integrity ni key, Kenya's future is bright.  
Kwa future ya mimi na we.  
No shortcut, no lie, Integrity ni nguzo ya maisha,  
Truth will always fly high. Beyond pesa, beyond cheo.  
Tukiishi na ukweli,  
Uadilifu ni power, Taifa letu litasimama imara leo.  
It shines kila hour.

— By John Machanje

# Njia Ya Uadilifu

Katika ulimwengu ambao kuna utando wa kusuka,  
Njia ya uadilifu huchaguliwa na wachache,  
Huletea moyo na akili amani,  
Ambapo mwanga wa ukweli hudumu daima.

Kwa kila hatua ya dhati,  
Nafsi hutembea kwa uwazi,  
Katika ulimwengu uliojaa tofauti,  
Uaminifu ni sadaka yao.

Chagua ukweli katika kila tendo,  
Nauishi maisha ya uadilifu,  
Nuru kwa wale wanaohitaji,  
Katika imani yao ya uaminifu.

Ni kufanya lililo sahihi hata wakati hakuna aonae,  
Kuishi kwa uaminifu, kwa ujasiri, na kwa uhuru.  
Mbegu ya imani, nguvu ya taifa,  
Uadilifu huangaza mustakabali wa keshoye

— By John Machanje



# Back to the roots

By Faith Kiptoo

Our caregivers set us on the right path,  
guiding with wisdom, shielding from wrath.  
They taught us values, firm like rule,  
a foundation strong, in all we do.

As we grew, our palms uncured,  
The lessons faded, flags unfurled.  
The bug of rationalize walked in bold,

The laws of the land, we had to uphold.

Work called us forth, but we were adrift,  
Professionalism our grounding gift.  
Yet we strayed from our true north  
Needing a nudge to set us forth.

Now it is time to rise and breathe,  
To reclaim our roots we must retrieve.

In courage, teamwork, and innovative pace,  
We return to base, to our rightful place.

Embodying values, steadfast as root,  
From seeds of integrity, we sprout and  
shoot.

Back to the foundation where we began,  
Rooted in truth, with integrity we stand!

Writer is a Human Resource Officer

## Simple Integrity Puzzle

### Down

- Confidence in someone or something
- The quality of being truthful and sincere
- Obtaining something from someone by threat
- The act of coming together for common good
- Principles and standards that guide human behavior
- A person who accepts bribes
- A dishonest scheme

### Across

- A solemn promise required of state officers before assuming office
- Stealing of national resources
- Engaging in a corrupt or dishonest business
- Immoral or wicked behavior
- Intentional inducement for a favor
- Good mannerisms





## Strengthening oversight: Kenya's path to effective governance and accountability

By Dr. Cecilia Mutuku

As Kenya sets her sights on Vision 2030, the journey towards good governance and accountability has never been more crucial. A key component of this mission is the role of the country's regulatory and oversight bodies, which serve as the guardians of public trust and transparency.

These institutions are not merely bureaucratic entities; they are the bedrock upon which the country's democratic future rests. From the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), Office of the Auditor-General, Office of the Controller of Budget (OCOB), the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) to the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), these watchdogs enforce laws, hold leaders accountable, and safeguard public resources.

They work across sectors to ensure that public funds are used wisely and that government actions are transparent. Their mandates encompass a range of responsibilities, including investigating corruption, auditing public finances and promoting judicial integrity.

The Auditor-General's reports often reveal systemic misuse of funds. In December 2024, for example, the Auditor-General reported widespread irregularities in the National Government Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF) by Members of Parliament in nearly all the 290 constituencies. In one Constituency, for instance, out of the Kes58 million billed for bursaries, only Kes38 million was

accounted for, while in another, Kes2.5 million was spent on a non-existent laboratory.

The OCOB's Quarterly Budget Implementation Review Reports, on the other hand, have always shown that counties allocate a disproportionately small share of their budgets toward development. The first quarter of FY 2023/24 (July–September) report indicates, for example, that 10 counties spent 0% on development, while 11 more spent less than 1%, contrary to the Public Finance Management (PFM) Act's guideline of allocating at least 35% to development. Such reports prompt parliamentary investigations and policy adjustments.

The KRA, through its revenue collection efforts, not only brings in essential national income but also educates the public on the importance of tax compliance in national development.

The regulatory and oversight bodies do more than ensure legal adherence; they embody the ethical governance that is crucial for Kenya's democratic health. They are also platforms for public engagement. According to the 2010 Constitution, which emphasizes transparency and citizen participation, oversight bodies have created avenues for citizens to influence policy, report corruption, and track government spending. Online portals, social media platforms, and community forums enable real-time tracking of public funds and offer citizens a direct line to public

**“As we march towards Vision 2030, let’s remember that good governance isn’t just a policy, it’s a democratic imperative”.**

institutions, promoting transparency and accountability.

Yet, as these institutions strive to fulfil their mandates, they are hindered by significant challenges that threaten their effectiveness and, by extension, Kenya’s development.

### **Challenges to effectiveness**

Despite their critical roles, Kenya’s oversight bodies face a myriad of challenges that threaten to undermine their efficacy.

**Weak enforcement:** Even when violations are identified, enforcement mechanisms often fall short. Legal loopholes result in weak penalties for misconduct, leaving many wrongdoers unaccountable for their actions. This lack of deterrence perpetuates the cycle of impunity.

**Political interference:** Political interference, whether subtle or overt, erodes the credibility and independence of oversight bodies. This can undermine their ability to act impartially. It also instills a sense of distrust among the public.

**Resource constraints:** Inadequate funding, understaffing, and outdated infrastructure pose significant barriers to effective oversight. Some institutions struggle to carry out comprehensive investigations or audits due to these limitations. EACC, for example, operates with 790 staff out of the approved establishment of 1,506, while the Malaysian Anti-corruption Commission (MACC) has 2906 staff in a country with a population of 36 million. Without adequate resources, these bodies cannot fully realise their potential.

**Public disengagement:** Despite the constitutional guarantees for public participation, many citizens remain unaware of their rights to engage with oversight bodies. Public engagement is critical in maintaining a check on governance, but the lack of education and awareness on how to use these channels remains a significant hurdle.

### **A Call for reform**

To strengthen Kenya’s oversight institutions and improve governance, immediate and decisive action is required, including:

**Legislative reforms:** There is a pressing need to review Kenya’s legal frameworks. Laws must be reformed to clarify mandates and strengthen oversight powers. Parliament must prioritize these reforms to close existing loopholes and ensure swift, effective action against misconduct.

**Constitutional safeguards:** The independence of bodies such as the EACC must be fortified by being entrenched in the Constitution. The institutional autonomy of these bodies must be legally protected to prevent undue influence.

**Adequate Resourcing:** A robust oversight system demands that these institutions are adequately resourced. This includes not only financial resources but also the human capital and infrastructure necessary for investigations, audits, and public outreach. Additionally, partnerships with universities and international donors can help build technical capacity and provide much-needed expertise.

**Transparency and real-time data:** To further enhance public trust, oversight bodies must mandate the real-time publication of audit reports, procurement records, and service delivery metrics. Creating user-friendly dashboards and platforms would allow citizens to easily track their performance and spending, enabling them to hold public institutions accountable at all times.

**Civic education and public engagement:** Public awareness campaigns are essential for bridging the gap between citizens and oversight bodies. These initiatives must be designed to educate the public on their rights to participate in governance, how to report misconduct, and the importance of transparency. Leveraging mobile apps, radio, and social media—especially in rural areas—can help reach marginalised communities and ensure that everyone has a voice in the democratic process.

**Internal integrity:** Oversight bodies must also ensure their internal governance structures are above reproach. Reinforcing internal audits, ethics training, and whistleblower protection are key to maintaining public confidence.

### **The road ahead**

Kenya’s oversight bodies are a vital part of the country’s journey towards Vision 2030, but they cannot fulfil their potential without meaningful reforms and widespread public engagement. The current challenges, as enumerated afore, are not insurmountable. They, however, require a commitment from all the stakeholders, including the Government and the public, to ensure that these institutions are empowered, protected, and supported in their work.

The country’s future as a democratic, accountable, and transparent nation depends on the strength and integrity of its oversight mechanisms. Only by strengthening these institutions will we ensure that public resources are used for the benefit of all, paving the way for a prosperous and just society.

As we march towards Vision 2030, let’s remember that good governance isn’t just a policy, it’s a democratic imperative.

**Writer is a Human Resource and Governance expert and a Commissioner at EACC**

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## EACC Regional Offices

### Lower Coast Regional Office

Covering Mombasa, Taita Taveta and Kwale Counties  
3rd Floor, ACK Mombasa Memorial Cathedral Complex, Nkrumah Road  
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