



# Spear of Integrity

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## The fight against county corruption: Reflections from an EACC insider

*A frontline perspective on the governance failures, corruption risks, and integrity reforms defining Kenya's devolution journey.*



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– By David Kaboro



## Devolution at crossroads: Has Kenya decentralized power or corruption?



By: Stephen Karuga

Sixteen years ago, Kenyans ushered in a radical restructuring of state power, one that would not only bring government closer to the people but also end regional marginalization and ensure the equitable sharing of both national and local resources.

This vision found expression in devolution. It was conceived as a strategic response to decades of inequality and corruption. Through decentralization of power and the establishment of 47 county governments, the 2010 Constitution sought to bring government closer to the people, ensure equitable sharing of national resources, and enhance government accountability.

Thirteen years into devolution, Kenya stands at a defining moment. In this edition of *The Spear of Integrity*, we turn our focus to one of the most consequential questions of our time: what has devolution meant for the fight against corruption?

The picture that emerges is one of notable gains alongside troubling contradictions. Systems designed to dismantle centralized graft are now facing their greatest test. Has devolution curbed corruption or merely decentralized it? Has bringing government closer to the people strengthened accountability, or has it created 47 new centers of patronage? Are oversight institutions sufficiently robust to confront localized graft, or have they been captured by the very interests they were meant to restrain? Ultimately, is devolution winning the war on corruption, or is corruption steadily undermining devolution itself?

There is little doubt that devolving power holds immense promise. By distributing authority across different levels of government, devolution can promote good governance, strengthen the separation of powers, enhance checks and balances, and foster transparency and accountability.

Yet, the impact of devolution on corruption has been mixed. On the one hand, corruption has been decentralized and exposed, drawn closer to the public eye. Scandals once confined to national ministries now surface at the county level in the form of ghost projects, inflated procurement contracts, and everyday bribery. While disheartening, this visibility has made corruption a problem that citizens can see, question, and confront more directly.

On the other hand, devolution has struggled to establish strong, effective systems to combat corruption. In many respects, it has multiplied the points at which corruption can occur and, at times, enabled impunity rather than accountability. This reality, however, should not condemn devolution itself. The extent to which devolution succeeds in limiting abuse of power and advancing a corruption-free society depends largely on its design, implementation, and oversight. We must move beyond merely celebrating the existence of counties and commit ourselves to actively building and safeguarding their integrity.

The future of devolution will not be determined by its structure alone, but by the integrity of those who steward it, and the vigilance of citizens who demand accountability.

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CS for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, Hon. Salim Mvurya, EGH, delivers the keynote address during the International Anti-Corruption Day commemoration at KICC.

## Youth take centre stage as Kenya marks anti – corruption day

**K**enya joined the global community on December 9, 2025, in commemorating International Anti-Corruption Day with a national event that placed young people at the heart of the country's integrity agenda.

The commemoration, led by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) in partnership with the Kenya Leadership Integrity Forum (KLIF), was held at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) under the theme **“Uniting with Youth Against Corruption – Shaping Tomorrow’s Integrity.”**

Cabinet Secretary for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports Hon. Salim Mvurya presided over the event, alongside EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde and CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud.

Speakers emphasized that with nearly 75 percent of Kenya's population comprising youth, the fight against corruption cannot succeed without their active involvement. The programme blended policy discussions with youth-led artistic performances, including spoken word, drama and interactive dialogue sessions.

In his address, Mr. Mohamud outlined progress made in enforcement and asset recovery, revealing that in the 2024/2025 Financial Year, the Commission filed 79 new asset recovery cases targeting Kes4.8 billion and recovered Kes3.4 billion in corruptly acquired assets. However, he warned that corruption continues to disproportionately affect young people, citing the 2024 National Ethics and Corruption Survey, which found high exposure to bribery in education and employment services.

“Youth are not the problem, they are the solution,” he said, urging them to lead a cultural shift toward integrity.

Dr. Oginde echoed the call, describing young people as “the engine of national transformation” and advocating a whole-of-society approach to accountability.

Hon. Mvurya reaffirmed the government's commitment to youth empowerment and transparent governance, challenging young Kenyans to move from being victims of corruption to drivers of change.

The event concluded with an integrity pledge, reinforcing a shared message: Kenya's anti-corruption future rests in the hands of its youth.



EACC Chairperson, Dr David Oginde, CEO, Mr. Abdi Mohammud, Commissioners, and Inspector General Douglas Kanja, and senior leadership of the National Police Service display copies of the newly launched National Police Service Systems Review Report during a ceremony held at the National Police Leadership Academy.



EACC Chairperson, Dr David Oginde, CEO, Mr. Abdi Mohammud, Commissioners, and Inspector General Douglas Kanja, and senior leadership of the National Police Service arrive at the National Police Leadership Academy for the launch of the National Police Service Systems Review Report.

## National Police Service systems examined

In a landmark initiative to strengthen integrity within law enforcement, the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) presented its systems examination report on the National Police Service at the National Police Leadership Academy on November 14, 2025.

The event brought together senior officials from both institutions, including EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde, CEO Mr. Adbi Mohamud, Inspector General of Police Mr. Douglas Kanja, and his two Deputy Inspector Generals.

The review, conducted under EACC's corruption prevention mandate, examined the NPS's systems, policies, procedures, and practices to identify gaps that create opportunities for corruption. Supported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the European Union, the study provides recommendations aimed at enhancing transparency, accountability, and operational efficiency across the service. Dr. Oginde commended the IG for inviting the Commission to conduct the assessment, calling it a sign of leadership's commitment to institutional reform.

"The examination has highlighted systemic gaps requiring urgent action, but it also presents an opportune moment for transformative change within the Service," he noted, reaffirming EACC's support in implementing the recommended reforms.

IG Kanja described the collaborative exercise as a milestone in promoting integrity within the Police Service and expressed confidence that the report would serve as a cornerstone for ongoing reforms.

EACC CEO Mr. Mohamud emphasized that the review was not a fault-finding mission but a proactive effort to strengthen governance. He called on the Service to establish a corruption prevention framework to ensure sustainability of the reforms.

The report underscores the critical role of institutional reforms in creating a professional, accountable, and corruption-resistant police service, a key pillar for building public trust and effective law enforcement in Kenya.



**Panel Discussion (From left):** The Moderator, Nimrod Taabu; Youth Empowerment Program Initiative Executive Director Amani Katani; EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud; Principal Secretary for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, Fikirini Jacobs; UNODC Crime Prevention Officer Asmert Tesfai; and former Makeni Governor Prof. Kivutha Kibwana.



*A participant engages the panelists during the dialogue.*

# EACC champions youth integrity dialogue

**T**he Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has called on young Kenyans to stand firm against corruption and play a central role in shaping an ethical future.

Speaking at a Youth Integrity Dialogue held at the Technical University of Mombasa on November 26, 2025, CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud urged the youth to resist manipulation by leaders seeking to derail anti-corruption efforts.

The event, organized in partnership with the European Union and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), convened young people, governance experts, and government officials under the theme *“Ethical Leadership for the Kenya We Want!”*

Distinguished participants included Principal Secretary Fikirini Jacobs, former Makeni Governor Prof. Kivutha Kibwana, UNODC

Crime Prevention Officer Asmert Tesfai, and Youth Empowerment Program Initiative Executive Director Amani Katani.

Panel discussions highlighted the pivotal role of youth in promoting integrity and ethical leadership, stressing that collective action and collaboration with institutions are critical in the fight against corruption.

“The chain of corruption affects those in the moment and the people in years to come,” PS Jacobs noted, urging young people to act as ambassadors of ethics and integrity.

The dialogue forms part of EACC’s ongoing initiatives to empower youth nationwide, reinforcing the message that a corruption-free Kenya is achievable when young citizens actively participate in governance and uphold ethical standards.

# Kenya intensifies regional unity and global cooperation against corruption



**EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud amongst other participants during the 11th Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in Doha, Qatar.**



**EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud during a high-level panel at the 11th Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in Doha, Qatar.**



**ICPC Chairperson, Mr. Musa Adamu Aliyu, receives a plaque from EACC Vice Chairperson, Dr. Monica Muiru at the Integrity Centre.**

**K**enya has intensified its fight against corruption both regionally and globally, with the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) strengthening partnerships aimed at curbing graft and recovering stolen public assets.

In a significant step toward regional collaboration, EACC hosted a high-level delegation from Nigeria's Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) for a benchmarking visit at the Integrity Centre on November 5, 2025. The Nigerian team, led by ICPC Chairperson Mr. Musa Adamu Aliyu, was received by EACC Vice-Chairperson Monica Muiru and senior officials.

The Vice-Chairperson outlined EACC's mandate, achievements, and ongoing initiatives designed to strengthen transparency, accountability, and integrity within Kenya's public institutions. EACC Chief Executive Officer Mr. Abdi Mohamud described the engagement as a valuable platform for mutual learning, noting that shared experiences and coordinated strategies are critical in addressing corruption, which increasingly transcends borders.

Mr. Aliyu emphasized that Africa's development depends on strong partnerships among anti-graft agencies, underscoring that the fight against corruption cannot be won in isolation. The ICPC delegation

also held discussions with key Kenyan institutions, including the National Assembly, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Division of the High Court.

Beyond regional cooperation, Kenya is also amplifying its voice on the global stage. Speaking in Doha, Qatar, during the 11th Conference of State Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, EACC CEO Mr. Mohamud called for deeper international collaboration in asset recovery efforts.

He highlighted that stolen public funds are often hidden within complex financial systems across multiple jurisdictions, making cross-border cooperation indispensable. He also cited Kenya's collaboration with the International Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre and the Basel Institute on Governance as instrumental in facilitating successful asset recovery in concluded cases.

He further advocated for stronger beneficial ownership registries, enhanced verification systems, and better-resourced Central Authorities to manage complex recovery processes. Through regional partnerships and active participation in global forums, Kenya continues to demonstrate its commitment to combating corruption and ensuring stolen public resources are traced, recovered, and restored for the benefit of its citizens.



H.E. President William Ruto presents an award to EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud during the Kenya Revenue Authority's 30th anniversary celebrations held at State House Nairobi



CPA Joel Mukumu, Director, Finance and Planning, led the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission team in receiving the Financial Reporting (FiRe) Award at Safari Park Hotel

# EACC feted for tax enforcement and financial transparency

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has received national recognition for its outstanding contributions to public accountability, revenue protection, and financial transparency, underscoring its growing impact in safeguarding public resources.

On 19 November 2025, the Commission was honoured during the Kenya Revenue Authority's 30th anniversary celebrations held at State House Nairobi, where it was awarded Most Facilitative Agency in Tax Enforcement. The award was presented by H.E. President William Ruto and received on behalf of the Commission by Chief Executive Officer Mr. Abdi Mohamud.

The recognition acknowledged EACC's critical support in strengthening tax enforcement through enhanced collaboration with KRA. Through joint investigations, intelligence sharing, and technical capacity-building initiatives, the Commission has helped avert substantial financial losses and strengthened national anti-corruption efforts.

This partnership supports EACC's core mandate of asset tracing, recovery of proceeds of crime, and forfeiture of unexplained wealth. By ensuring that recovered assets include cumulative unpaid taxes, the collaboration enhances revenue collection while protecting the public interest.

Over the past five years, the Commission has recovered corruptly acquired and unexplained assets valued at approximately Kes28 billion and is actively pursuing the forfeiture of additional assets estimated at Kes50 billion. These efforts reinforce the principle that revenue protection involves not only collecting taxes but also safeguarding public resources already due to the nation.

Just weeks later, on 5 December 2025, EACC was honoured with a prestigious Financial Reporting (FiRe) Award at a ceremony held in Nairobi. The award, presented in the Commissions and Independent Offices – International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) Accrual category, was received by Director of Finance and Planning, CPA Joel Mukumu.

This accolade follows the Commission's receipt of an unmodified (clean) audit opinion from the Office of the Auditor-General for the 2024/2025 Financial Year. Organised by the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK) in partnership with the Capital Markets Authority (CMA), Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), and Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (PSASB), the FiRe Awards are among the most respected in East and Central Africa. They promote excellence in financial reporting, corporate governance, and transparency across public and private sectors.

The 2025 ceremony, themed "Fostering Compliance to International Standards to Enhance Transparency, Comparability & Accountability," convened leaders from finance, governance, and regulation. Attendees were urged to prioritise integrity, accountability, and good governance to build and sustain public trust in institutions.

These back-to-back recognitions affirm EACC's unwavering dedication to high professional standards, prudent management of public resources, and collaborative anti-corruption initiatives. By excelling in both operational partnerships and internal accountability, the Commission continues to play a vital role in advancing transparency, restoring public funds, and strengthening Kenya's governance framework for the benefit of all citizens.



EACC CEO, Mr. Abdi Mohamud (Right), and John Lolkoloi - Director, Ethics and Leadership (Now, Director - Investigations), arrive at the sensitization workshop on the implementation of the Conflict of Interest Act at Sarova Panafric Hotel Nairobi.



Director John Lolkoloi delivers remarks to key justice sector actors during the Annual Human Rights Summit 2025 at EKA Hotel, Nairobi.



EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud (Front Centre) pose for a group photo with FBI facilitators, and participants of a specialized investigations training programme

# New era of accountability driven by stronger laws and technology

**K**enya's anti-corruption framework is entering a transformative phase as the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) advances reforms anchored in legislation, regional cooperation, and modern investigative tools.

The enactment of the Conflict-of-Interest Act marks a significant milestone in promoting ethical governance. Speaking during a sensitization workshop in Nairobi, EACC Chief Executive Officer Mr. Abdi Mohamud emphasized that most corruption cases arise from conflicts between public duty and private interest. The new law provides a clear framework to ensure public officers act objectively, transparently, and free from undue influence.

Convened by the Commission's Ethics and Leadership Directorate, the forum brought together representatives from national and county governments, constitutional commissions, and independent offices to clarify obligations and strengthen institutional readiness. In collaboration with the Office of the Attorney General, the Commission will develop regulations to guide implementation and support public participation.

Regionally, Kenya continues to position itself as a leader in financial integrity. In partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the East African Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities, EACC hosted a high-level workshop bringing together investigators, prosecutors, and regulators from Eastern and Southern Africa. The forum focused on strengthening collaboration in tracing, freezing, and recovering stolen assets, while aligning reforms with global standards such as the United Nations Convention Against Corruption and the Financial Action Task Force recommendations.

At the operational level, the Commission has enhanced its technological capacity through a partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). A specialized training programme launched in November 2025 equips investigators to tackle encrypted communications, cryptocurrency transactions, and complex transnational corruption schemes.

Through strengthened laws, regional solidarity, and technology-driven investigations, EACC is reinforcing accountability and ensuring Kenya remains at the forefront of the fight against corruption.

# MoUs to strengthen fight against corruption



Zubeidah Kananu (second left) the President of the Kenya Editors' Guild (KEG), Linda Bach (left) the CEO KEG, Mr. Abdi Mohamud, EACC CEO and EACC's Director Legal Services and Asset Recovery David Too (Right), sign an MOU to strengthen the fight against corruption.



EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud, signs an MoU with South Africa's Special Investigating Unit (SIU) Advocate, Andy Mothibi, on the sidelines of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA) Annual Conference and 15th General Meeting in Doha.

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has taken significant steps to reinforce its anti-corruption architecture through two strategic partnerships that underscore the importance of collaboration, both across borders and within Kenya.

The Commission, through its CEO, Mr. Abdi Mohamud, has signed two separate Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with South Africa's Special Investigating Unit (SIU) and the Kenya Editors' Guild (KEG), reflecting a comprehensive approach to combating corruption.

The international partnership with South Africa was formalized on the sidelines of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA) Annual Conference and 15<sup>th</sup> General Meeting in Doha. The MoU establishes a structured framework for cooperation between the two agencies.

Key areas of collaboration include technical assistance, intelligence and information sharing, joint research, training, and staff exchange programs. By pooling expertise and sharing best practices, the partnership aims to strengthen the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of corruption-related offences in both countries, recognizing that corruption is increasingly complex and often transcends national borders.

While at the conference, Mr. Mohamud emphasized the critical role of public participation in sustaining anti-corruption efforts. Drawing from Kenya's experience, he cited platforms such as the Kenya Leadership Integrity Forum and the National Anti-Corruption Steering Committee as mechanisms that have enhanced public awareness, strengthened inter-agency coordination, and encouraged collective action. The conference was convened by IAACA, an independent global body that promotes the implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

At the national level, EACC has also deepened its collaboration with the media by signing an MoU with the KEG on November 28, 2025, during the Guild's annual convention in Kilifi. The agreement formalizes ongoing cooperation aimed at enhancing transparency, accountability, and public awareness.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Mohamud described the media as both a powerful ally and a vigilant watchdog, noting that structured engagements, training, and capacity-building programmes would strengthen investigative reporting and public confidence.

The media partnership builds on earlier initiatives, including Press Clubs jointly organized by EACC and the Guild to demystify the Commission's work. To date, five capacity-building workshops for journalists have been held in Nyeri, Machakos, Nakuru, Kisumu, and Mombasa.

# Pictorial



EACC CEO, Mr. Abdi Mohamud having a chat with the FBI officials on the sidelines of the specialised investigations training programme.



EACC CEO, Mr. Abdi Mohamud, and The United States Embassy Chargé d'Affaires, Mrs. Susan Burns, and other dignitaries inspect the new interview rooms constructed in partnership with the FBI.



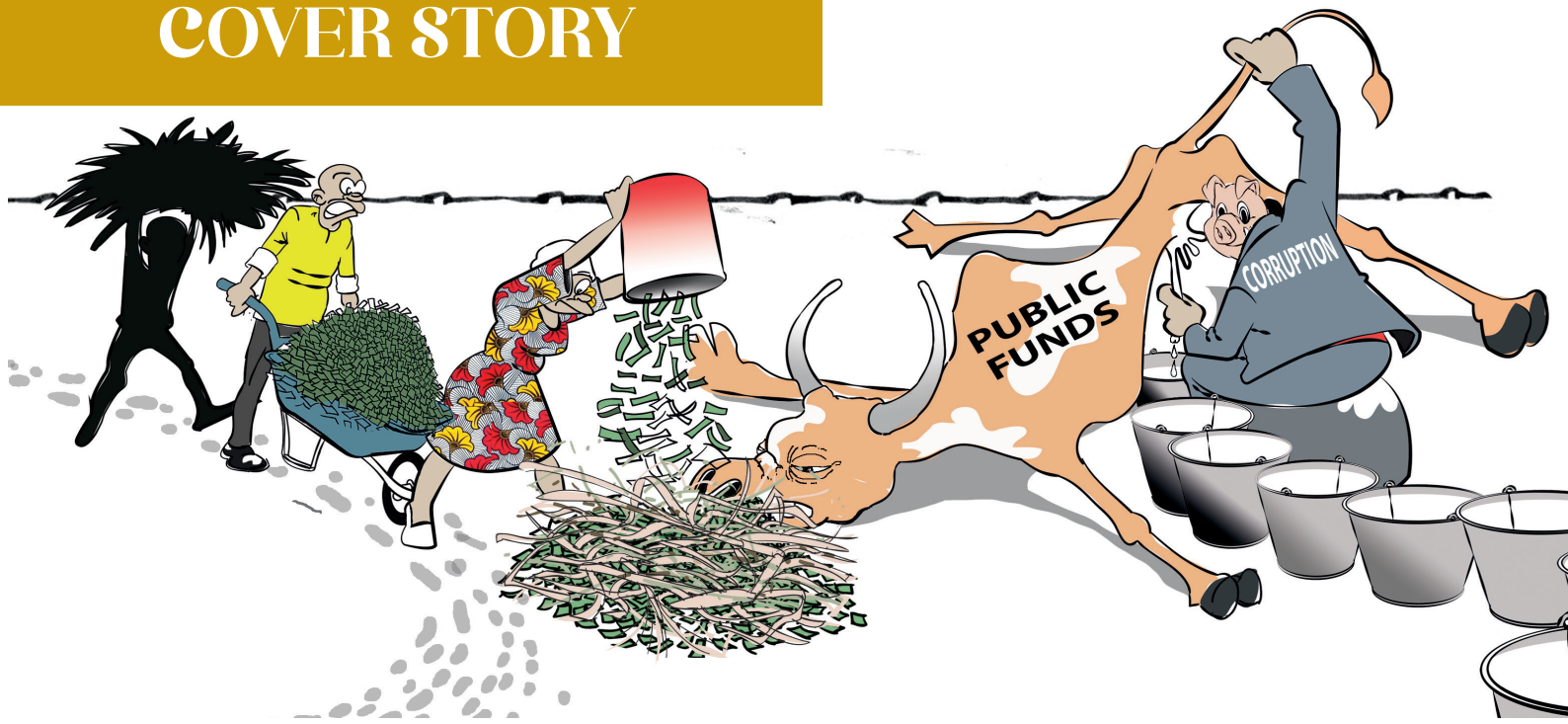
EACC CEO Abdi Mohamud (Front Centre), alongside EACC directors, staff officials, and media practitioners from the Coast region, pose for a group photo after a media sensitization workshop held in Mombasa in November 2025.



EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud receives Mark Kirwa and a team of young people, at the Integrity Centre, after they walked 350km from Eldoret to Nairobi to raise awareness on the negative impact of corruption.



Commissioner Colonel (Rtd) Alfred Mshimba, GIZ's Team Lead of Good Governance Programme, Ms. Judy Oduma, EACC Director of Preventive Services Vincent Okong'o, and officials of the Makeni County Government, greet a mother and her newborn at the Mother and Child Wing of Makeni County Referral Hospital.



## The fight against county corruption: Reflections from an EACC insider



By Vincent Okong'o


**T**hirteen years into Kenya's devolution journey, one truth has become painfully clear: corruption continues to undermine the promise of devolved governance. The framers of the 2010 Constitution rightly envisioned counties as engines of local development, bringing services closer to the people, promoting equity, and empowering citizens. Yet, even the most well-designed frameworks cannot fully insulate governance from entrenched corruption and impunity. Over time, these vices have found their way into the heart of county governments, often perpetuated by insiders entrusted with public resources and decision-making authority.

The consequences of this corruption are not abstract. They are measurable in human lives, in stalled projects, underfunded services, and in millions of citizens who remain trapped in poverty. According to the Kenya Poverty Report 2022, over 20 million Kenyans live below the absolute poverty line, while extreme poverty affects more than 3.6 million people. Inequality persists across counties, with the Gini Index at 38.4, dangerously close to tipping into a higher-inequality category. Despite this grim socio-economic backdrop, county governments have collectively received over Kes3.6 trillion since 2013, including equitable shares, conditional allocations, and targeted grants. These resources, if well-managed, could transform local economies, fund health and education services, and improve livelihoods.

### Systemic corruption

The persistence of corruption in the counties is systemic. Weak governance structures, inadequate human resource management, poor financial controls, and deficient monitoring of projects create fertile ground for malpractice. Financial management, for example, continues to be the most vulnerable area, despite the existence of Public Financial Management laws. Loopholes such as unsupported payments, poorly maintained imprest registers, and weak budgetary controls leave counties exposed to embezzlement and fraud. Own-source revenue collection, intended to strengthen fiscal independence, often becomes a source of illicit gains for unscrupulous officials.

Similarly, supply chain management remains a critical vulnerability. Procurement irregularities and conflicts of interest are widespread, with county officials sometimes secretly influencing the award of contracts to companies they control directly or through proxies. Human resource management also suffers from weak oversight. Many counties operate without approved staffing structures or clear career progression guidelines, leaving room for political patronage and the appointment of unqualified personnel to key technical and managerial positions. These weaknesses are compounded by deficient record-keeping and inadequate ICT systems, which create opportunities for manipulation, destruction of evidence, and mismanagement of critical county data.



Project management is another area of concern. Many county projects are initiated without proper needs assessments or meaningful public engagement. The result is often a mismatch between project outputs and actual community needs. Weak monitoring and evaluation frameworks exacerbate these challenges, leading to delayed project execution, inefficient use of resources, and the failure to identify and resolve problems in time.

These systemic challenges have been repeatedly highlighted in the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) Systems Review reports, Auditor-General and Controller of Budget reports, yet they remain largely unaddressed.

### **EACC's preventive approach**

At EACC, we are at the forefront in addressing these vulnerabilities. Our approach is anchored in the belief that corruption prevention must be systematic, sustained, and embedded in institutions. This involves not just identifying risks but empowering county institutions and citizens to act with integrity. Over the years, the Commission has implemented a series of strategic interventions designed to strengthen county systems, build institutional capacity, and foster a culture of integrity.

A cornerstone of our approach is the County-focused Corruption Risk Assessment (CRA) program, initiated in 2014. CRAs are rapid diagnostic assessments that examine county systems, policies, procedures, and practices to identify corruption risks and recommend mitigation measures. Over 28 County Executives and 26 County Assemblies have participated in these assessments, with follow-up evaluations to track progress and address emerging challenges. Our experience shows that where counties embrace these recommendations, significant improvements are possible. However, implementation has been uneven. Many counties struggle to operationalize CRA recommendations, often due to leadership transitions, inadequate dissemination of reports, and resistance from vested interests.

Capacity building forms another critical pillar of our anti-corruption strategy. By equipping county officials with the knowledge, skills, and ethical frameworks required for sound decision-making, we aim to enhance institutional effectiveness. Similarly, the establishment of County Corruption Prevention Committees has been instrumental in sustaining local anti-corruption initiatives. These committees are tasked with monitoring county operations, promoting transparency, and spearheading efforts to embed integrity in governance practices.

Public education and awareness campaigns are equally essential. Corruption cannot be addressed solely within institutions; citizens must also be empowered to demand accountability. Over the years, the Commission has engaged communities, youth groups, and civic organizations through schools, marketplaces, radio, and social media platforms. These initiatives aim to demystify anti-corruption processes, educate citizens on their rights and responsibilities, and foster a culture of integrity at the grassroots level. By giving young people a voice and platform to participate in governance, we nurture a generation of citizens equipped to hold leaders accountable.

### **Way forward**

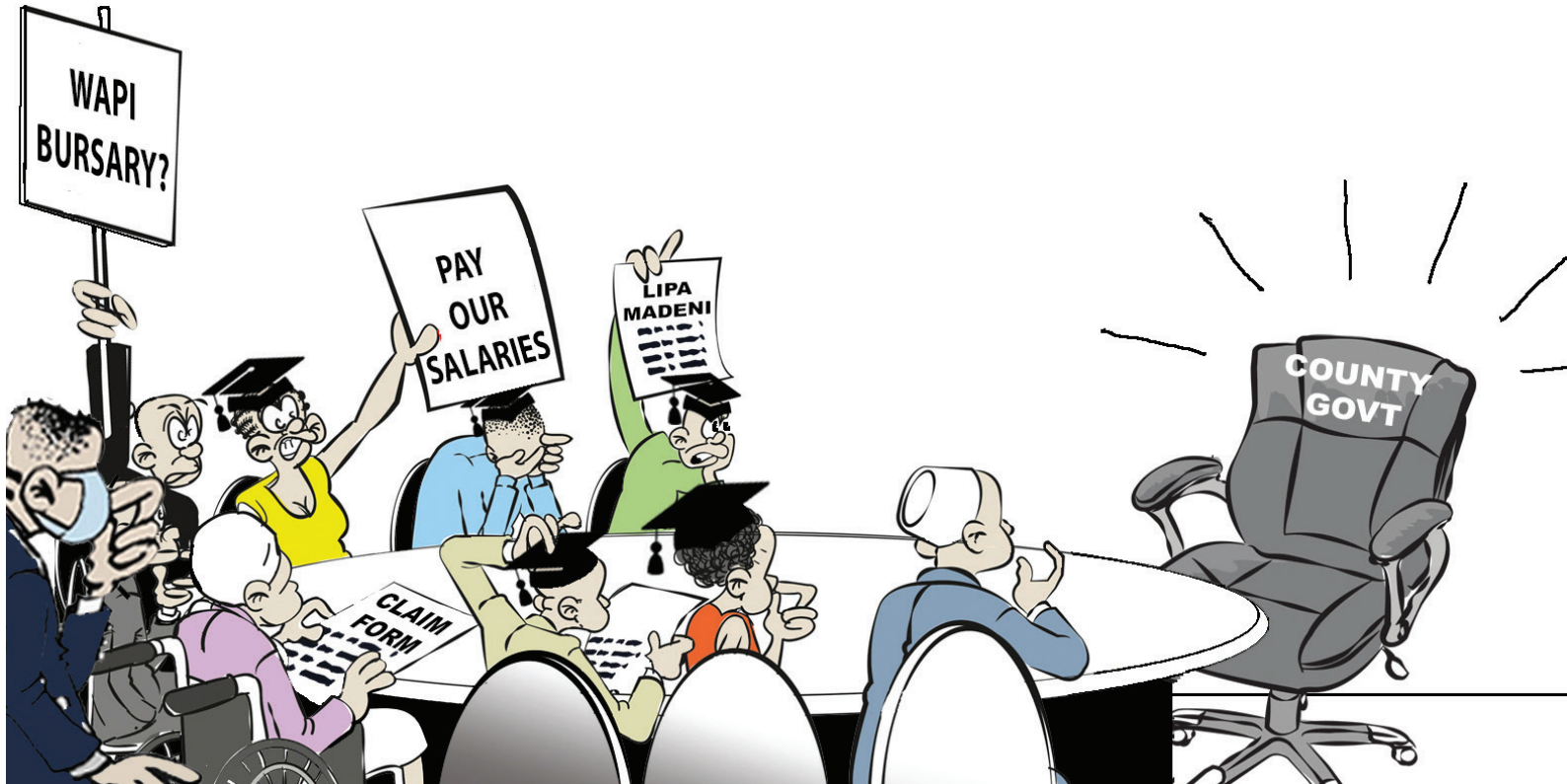
Looking ahead, addressing county-level corruption demands a coordinated and multi-stakeholder approach. First, county leaders must demonstrate an unwavering commitment to integrity. The "tone at the top" is critical in embedding accountability and fostering a culture of ethical governance. Second, CRA recommendations and other advisory measures must be institutionalized, with clear mechanisms for follow-up, reporting, and accountability.

Third, public participation must be strengthened through civic education, engagement forums, and transparency initiatives, enabling citizens to monitor public resources and influence decision-making. Fourth, Parliament must legislate to enforce EACC's recommendations, ensuring that accountability is not optional. Finally, civil society, professional bodies, faith-based institutions, youth organizations, and the wider public must collectively protect public resources and uphold the promise of devolution.

The fight against corruption is not an abstract policy debate. It determines whether devolution will deliver equitable growth, effective public services, and strengthened democracy. Yet, the experience of the past decade also demonstrates that change is possible. Where leadership is committed, citizens are engaged, and systems are strengthened, corruption can be contained, governance improved, and the promise of devolution realized.

The EACC remains committed to supporting counties in this journey through preventive interventions, capacity building, research, and public engagement, while advocating for legal and institutional reforms that reinforce ethical governance.

***Writer is the Director, Preventive Services at EACC***



# Struggle for accountability in Kenya's devolved system



By Ignatius Wekesa

**W**hen Kenya adopted a devolved system of governance under the 2010 Constitution, it marked one of the most ambitious political reforms since independence. Power, resources, and decision-making were transferred from the national government to 47 county governments with the promise of bringing services closer to citizens, correcting historical inequalities, and improving development outcomes. More than a decade later, devolution has reshaped governance across the country. However, it has also exposed deep challenges, particularly in the area of accountability.

To safeguard public resources and ensure responsible leadership at the county level, the Constitution established and empowered several oversight institutions, among them being the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), the Controller of Budget (CoB), the Senate, the County Assemblies, and the citizens. Together, these bodies are meant to form a system of checks and balances capable of preventing misuse of funds and abuse of power. Yet despite their presence, corruption scandals, audit queries, and service delivery failures continue to dominate headlines from county governments.

EACC occupies a central position in the fight against corruption. With the transfer of substantial public resources to counties, corruption has increasingly shifted from the national to the local level. Procurement irregularities, inflated contracts, embezzlement, favouritism, ghost workers, conflict of interest, and misuse of development funds have become common features of county politics.

While Kenya has enacted strong anti-corruption laws and created independent institutions, the impact of these measures at the county

level has been uneven. Investigations are often slow, prosecutions rare, and convictions even rarer. Political interference, limited resources, public apathy, and weak cooperation between investigative and prosecutorial agencies have further reduced effectiveness. As a result, corruption continues to undermine service delivery in sectors such as health, roads, education, and water, which directly affect the quality of life for ordinary citizens.

The EACC's current strategic focus on capital-intensive projects, bribery at service delivery points, unexplained wealth, proceeds of crime, conflict of interest, and asset recovery has at least set the pace in the fight against corruption and unethical conduct. If this is sustained with zeal and focus in the long term, the devolved units will have no option but to ensure accountability and transparency in their work.

Financial accountability is primarily the responsibility of the OAG. It audits county governments' accounts and submits its findings to Parliament. Since counties began operating in 2013, audit reports have consistently highlighted weak financial management systems. Many counties fail to keep complete and accurate financial records, while others cannot adequately explain how public funds were spent.

These audit reports provide valuable information about mismanagement and waste. However, their influence depends largely on what happens after publication. In many cases, audit findings are debated in legislative chambers but rarely followed by decisive action. Enforcement of recommendations is weak, and political leaders often treat them as routine rather than as serious warnings.

The CoB plays a different but equally important role. Before any money is withdrawn from county revenue funds, the CoB must approve the request. This gives the office a powerful tool to ensure spending



complies with approved budgets and public finance management rules. In principle, this function should promote discipline and efficiency. In practice, however, budget execution remains one of the weakest links in county governance. Delayed disbursements, poor planning, and weak monitoring systems often disrupt service delivery.

In sectors such as health, these weaknesses translate into medicine shortages, stalled projects, and demoralized staff. Additionally, when ghost projects are covertly added to public expenditure plans, budgeted corruption flourishes, and documentation becomes an avenue for private benefit. These false allocations increase public mistrust of leadership and deplete funds intended for actual development. Studies have shown that inefficient budget execution significantly reduces county government performance, underscoring the crucial role of financial accountability in county operations.

The Senate was created to represent county interests at the national level and to protect devolution from encroachment by the national government. Its powers include determining the basis for sharing national revenue among counties, approving county-related legislation, and participating in the impeachment of governors. In theory, the Senate is a crucial defender of county autonomy and accountability. In practice, however, its role has been contested. Critics argue that the Senate lacks sufficient legislative power and is frequently overshadowed by the National Assembly. Political rivalries and party loyalties often weaken its oversight function. While impeachment proceedings against governors demonstrate that the institution can exercise authority, such actions are sometimes seen as politically motivated rather than as genuine efforts to enforce accountability. Strengthening the Senate's institutional independence and authority remains essential if it is to fully serve as the guardian of devolution.

Beyond individual institutions, accountability at the county level is complicated by structural and political realities. Legislative oversight suffers from unstable alliances between county assemblies and executives, a weak understanding of oversight roles, and limited responsiveness to citizens. Many county legislators prioritize personal or local interests over institutional responsibilities, undermining collective action against wrongdoing. For instance, county payrolls are increasingly crowded with 'ghost workers' and redundant positions created for political convenience rather than public need. This manipulation of employment systems diverts funds from essential services to private pockets.

County officials also operate under multiple and sometimes conflicting accountability demands. They must answer to national ministries, professional bodies, courts, political leaders, and the public. This complex web of responsibilities can blur lines of authority and reduce clarity about who is ultimately responsible for failures in service delivery. In such an environment, accountability mechanisms exist in theory but often struggle in practice.

Citizen participation is another cornerstone of Kenya's devolved governance. The Constitution requires public involvement in county planning and budgeting processes. Public forums, budget hearings, and development committees are intended to give citizens a voice in how resources are allocated. However, participation has often been symbolic rather than substantive, limited access to information, weak civil society structures, and a legacy of centralized rule have reduced citizens' ability to influence decisions. Surveys show that many people feel their views are rarely reflected in final budgets, revealing a gap between formal procedures and real impact.

Kenya's experience with devolution demonstrates both the promise and the peril of decentralizing power. Oversight institutions have been established, laws enacted, and procedures defined. Yet the effectiveness of these arrangements is constrained by political interference, capacity limitations, delayed reporting, overlapping responsibilities, and weak enforcement of decisions.

For devolution to fulfill its original vision, accountability must be more than a constitutional principle; it must be a lived reality. Strengthening oversight institutions, empowering citizens, professionalizing public administration, and ensuring punitive consequences for misuse of power are all essential steps. Without these reforms, devolution risks reproducing at the county level the very governance failures it was meant to correct.

The struggle for accountability in Kenya's counties is therefore not merely an administrative challenge. It is a test of whether devolution can truly transform governance or simply redistribute power without restraining its abuse. The answer will shape not only the future of county governments but the credibility of Kenya's democratic experiment itself.

**Writer is the Deputy Director,  
Forensic Investigations at EACC**



# The personal struggle for virtue in a corruption-tolerant society

*True national renewal begins in the quiet, individual decision to live righteously.*



By Anna Leinte

**A**t the heart of every fight against corruption lies a deeply personal battle: the struggle for virtue within a person. Before corruption becomes institutional, systemic, or normalized, it begins quietly in the interior life of individuals, the inner world of a human being, our conscience, thoughts, values, motivations, and the silent choices we make long before our actions are visible to others. It is the space where integrity is either formed or deformed. It is here that a person decides whether to do what is right or what is convenient. Scriptures remind us in Proverbs 4:23 that “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”

Human beings possess free will. Even without formal moral instruction, we have a natural inclination toward honesty, fairness, justice, and compassion. Virtue is not an artificial construct imposed by religion or law; it is deeply human. We experience inner peace when we act rightly and inner unrest when we do not. That moral compass can be nurtured or gradually silenced.

The Qur’an presents virtue as living in awareness of God and acting justly toward others, even when it is difficult. The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines virtue as “a habitual disposition to the good.” Merriam-Webster describes it as “conformity to a standard of right or morality.”

Virtue, then, is the consistent inner disposition to choose what is good in thought, word, and action. Integrity is the visible expression of that virtue; honesty, transparency, and accountability, especially when no one is watching and when it is costly. Virtue is the foundation; integrity is the fruit.

Allow me to use the Catholic moral tradition teachings to expound on virtues. Its theological virtues are faith, hope, and charity, while the cardinal virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. Together, they form the architecture of a mature interior life.

Faith anchors the conscience in truth beyond public opinion. Hope sustains moral courage when integrity appears unrewarded. Charity directs us toward genuine concern for others. Prudence guides sound judgment in concrete situations. Justice ensures we give each person what is due. Fortitude gives courage to do what is right despite pressure. Temperance restrains excess and disciplines desire. When these virtues weaken, ethical compromise becomes easier to justify.

As an ethics and integrity facilitator, I often speak to audiences about governance, accountability, and the fight against corruption: Policies, laws, and enforcement matters. Yet I repeatedly return to values and virtues. Without a value-driven citizenry, regulatory frameworks are insufficient.

Participants listen attentively. They nod. They ask thoughtful questions. Yet sometimes I leave with quiet concern: did the message touch their conscience, or merely their ears? Almost immediately after sessions, one may overhear casual admiration for leaders facing corruption allegations, or conversations about “opportunities” for unethical gain. When corruption becomes normalized or trivialized, it signals something deeper than weak enforcement. It signals neglect of the interior life.

There is a story often told, whether factual or apocryphal, I cannot confirm, but its moral force is unmistakable. A young doctor opened a small clinic along Waiyaki Way, near Uthiru. He worked diligently to build his practice and support his family, who lived just across the Nairobi–Nakuru highway. His young daughter attended a nearby kindergarten and was always escorted home by her nanny because crossing the highway was dangerous.

One afternoon, the nanny was delayed. The child attempted to cross alone. A speeding matatu struck her. She was critically injured but still alive. Women from the nearby market rushed to her aid and carried her to the nearest clinic, the doctor’s clinic. They pleaded for immediate help. The nurse informed the doctor that a young girl was losing blood. He responded calmly: “You know the rules. Confirm they have paid the consultation fee first.”

The women did not have enough money. They begged. They promised to pay later. Some ran back to the market to collect contributions. Time passed. The doctor continued attending to patients who had cash in hand. Eventually, the required amount was gathered. The child, now faint from blood loss, was taken into the consultation room. With one glance, the doctor recognized her. It was his daughter. She died in his hands.

This story is a parable of virtue delayed. Prudence would have discerned that emergency care cannot wait for administrative compliance.

Justice would have recognized that a dying child is owed immediate attention.

Charity would have seen intrinsic human dignity before calculating payment.

Fortitude would have risked financial loss to preserve life.

Temperance would have restrained excessive attachment to money.

Faith would have recognized the sacredness of the life before him.

Hope would have trusted that doing right, even at cost, aligns with a greater good.

The tragedy was not only the loss of a child. The deeper tragedy was moral blindness, the inability to see humanity because procedure had replaced virtue.

When corruption is trivialized, laughed about, or accepted as “how things work,” it signals a deeper crisis, the neglect of the interior life. Wrong becomes rationalized. Integrity is dismissed as impractical. Over time, conscience grows dull, and what should disturb us begins to feel normal.

This is why the national conversation on integrity must go beyond compliance. Kenya’s constitutional framework is clear. Article 10 of the Constitution outlines national values and principles of governance, including integrity, transparency, accountability, and good governance. Chapter Six further sets out principles of leadership and integrity, affirming that authority assigned to a State officer is a public trust. These provisions are not mere legal statements; they are moral commitments that require interior conviction.

For public officers, the call to virtue is not optional. It is embedded in their oath and in the trust placed upon them. Yet national renewal cannot rest solely on those in public office. Citizens, too, must reclaim their ethical consciousness. We cannot condemn corruption publicly while enabling it privately.

The pursuit of virtue is demanding. It requires self-examination, humility, and sometimes the courage to stand alone. Yet it is precisely because it is demanding that it is transformative. Strong institutions are built by strong character. Sustainable reform flows from consistent moral choices made quietly and persistently.

The transformation Kenya seeks will not come only through investigations, prosecutions, or policy reforms, important as they are. It will also come through individuals who choose, daily, to align their interior lives with the values they publicly affirm. Perhaps true national renewal begins there: in the quiet, personal decision to live virtuously.

**Writer is an Education Officer at EACC, South Rift Regional Office, Nakuru**





## Exiting grey-list requires concerted effort in strengthening financial integrity



By Macharia Paul

Illicit financial flows (IFFs) continue to pose a serious challenge to Kenya's economic stability, public service delivery, and governance systems. As confirmed by Kenya's National Risk Assessment (NRA) 2023, these flows are driven largely by fraud, corruption, and economic crimes, tax-related offences, bribery, and environmental crimes. They drain public resources and steadily erode trust in public institutions. At the centre of this is money laundering (ML), the process by which illicit funds are hidden, moved, and ultimately integrated into the formal economy.

In Kenya, money laundering is complex and involves a wide range of actors and methods. Proceeds from corruption, fraud, and other predicate crimes are commonly channeled through company structures, cash-intensive businesses, real estate investments, and trade transactions. These arrangements are often deliberately designed to obscure beneficial ownership and transactional trails, making investigations more difficult and weakening efforts to trace and recover stolen assets.

Since its entry on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list in February 2024, Kenya has worked closely with FATF to address identified strategic deficiencies in money laundering, terrorism financing, and proliferation financing. FATF's recent progress reports indicate that Kenya has taken steps towards improving its Anti-Money Laundering/Combating Terrorism Financing (AML/CFT).

These include updating national AML/CFT strategies to reflect identified money laundering and terrorism financing risks, conducting sensitisation activities and issuing guidance informed by national risk assessments; increasing the number of financial intelligence disseminations by the Financial Reporting Centre, and strengthening inter-agency cooperation on terrorism financing investigations, particularly at border points. Furthermore, AML/CFT supervisors

and law enforcement agencies have been observed enhancing both technical and human capacity, including ongoing recruitment efforts by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC).

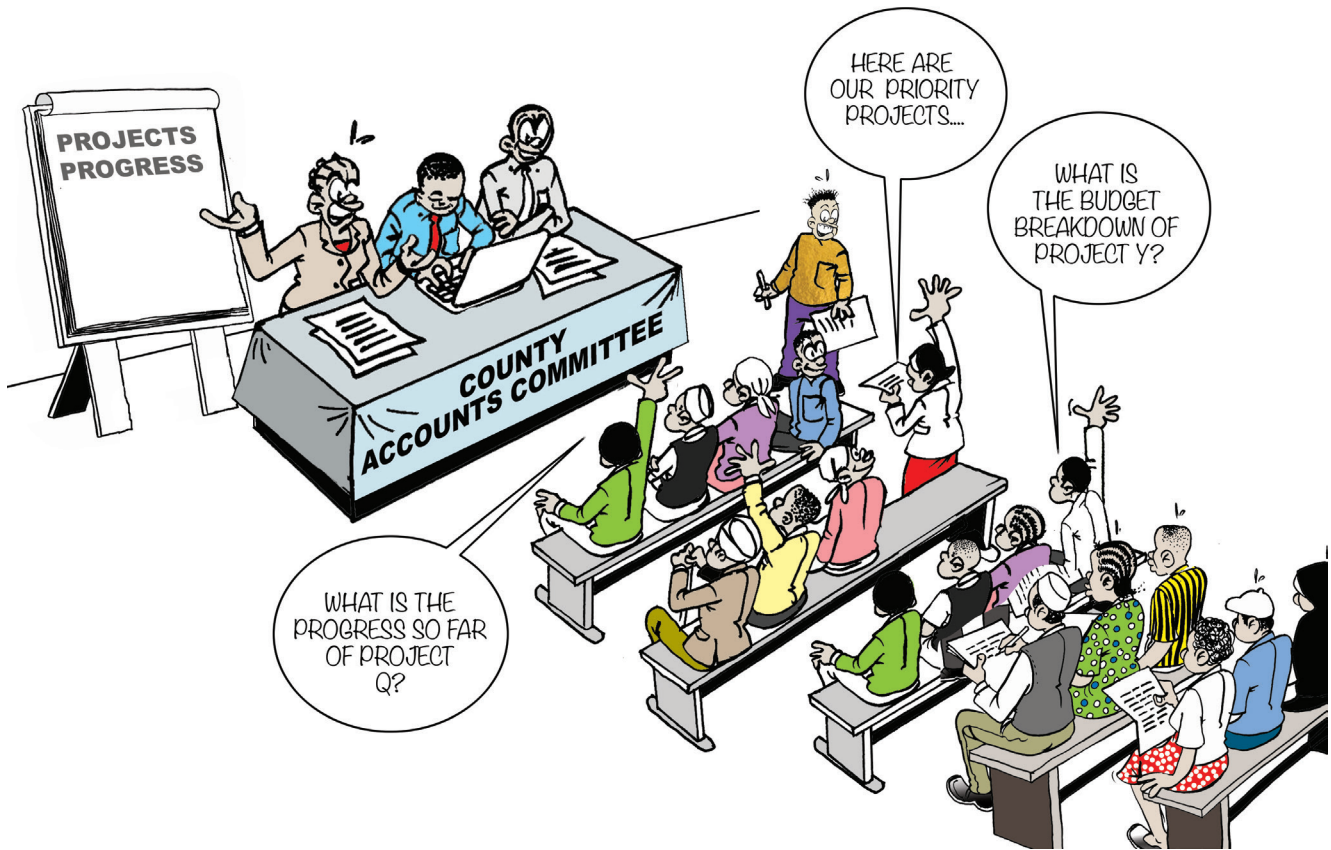
These developments mark a meaningful shift towards a risk-based and intelligence-led approach to tackling money laundering and IFFs. However, translating financial intelligence into consistent investigative and asset recovery outcomes remains a challenge. In many corruption cases, financial investigations are not fully embedded from the outset, leading to the conclusion of cases without adequately tracing, freezing, and confiscating illicit proceeds. There is a global call to require countries to make asset recovery a policy and operational priority to safeguard the integrity of the global financial system and improve outcomes for victims and communities.

Emerging risks also require focused attention. Kenya's grey-list action plan highlighted regulatory gaps relating to virtual assets. The enactment of the Virtual Asset Service Providers (VASP) Act, 2025, is a critical step in addressing risks associated with anonymity, cross-border value transfers, and regulatory arbitrage.

Strengthening financial integrity, therefore, requires consolidating and building on progress already made. Financial investigations should proceed alongside corruption investigations as a matter of course, supported by joint investigation teams, timely intelligence sharing, and clear operational coordination.

By consolidating gains made under the grey-list action plan, strengthening financial investigations, and closing emerging risk gaps, Kenya can meaningfully disrupt illicit financial flows and reinforce the integrity of its financial system.

**Writer is a Financial Crimes, AML/CFT Compliance Specialist**



# Amplifying citizen voices in decision – making in the counties



By Dr. Elijah Ambasa

**D**evolution has transformed governance by bringing decision-making closer to the people. It promised enhanced service delivery, increased accountability, and equitable resource distribution. However, the success of this constitutional shift hinges not only on structures and policies but equally on active public participation and community oversight. Citizens are not passive beneficiaries of devolution; they are indispensable guardians of integrity, transparency, and efficiency in the use of public resources.

Public participation is both a right and a duty for every Kenyan. It enables citizens to influence decisions that affect their lives, particularly in planning and budgeting processes at the county level. When communities engage meaningfully, they ensure that county plans reflect local priorities and that allocated resources address their rightful needs.

Although Kenya does not have a standalone national law on public participation, the Constitution of Kenya and various legislations require counties to involve citizens in developing county plans and budgets. Courts have also defined the threshold for meaningful engagement. Effective participation fosters ownership, reduces opportunities for misallocation of funds, and strengthens the social contract between government and the citizens. It goes beyond attending meetings; it requires informed citizens, accessible information, and opportunities to directly contribute to decisions that affect them.

## Citizens as watchdogs of public resources

Continuous citizen monitoring of government performance, budgets, and service delivery helps ensure that plans made on paper translate into tangible results on the ground. Through active oversight, communities are able to demand accountability, track project progress, and flag mismanagement or corruption.

When citizens keep watch over public works such as roads, health facilities, water projects, and school infrastructure, they help curb leakages, prevent ghost projects, and ensure value for money. Civil society organizations have played a key role in empowering communities on the use of accountability tools such as public scorecards, budget tracking, and social audits to hold their leaders accountable.

Complementing community oversight in Kenya are Corruption Prevention Committees (CPCs). The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), with support from the GIZ Strengthening Good Governance Programme (GOGO), has established and trained CPCs in several counties. CPCs create structured avenues for engagement with civil society, professional groups, and community representatives, amplifying citizen voices in monitoring service delivery and flagging integrity concerns. This linkage builds public trust, enhances participation, and complements formal oversight institutions, reinforcing bottom-up accountability.



### Citizen participation in action

Across Kenya, there are inspiring examples of how public participation and community oversight have improved county governance and outcomes:

In Kilifi County, planning documents recognize community health committees and units as integral components of the health governance system, embedding them within the county's monitoring, supervision, and accountability frameworks. As a result, these committees have played a key role in monitoring the performance of health facilities. Through regular facility visits and engagement with county health officials, communities have helped improve the availability of essential medicines, reduce patient waiting times, and enhance accountability for health resources. By publicly sharing monitoring reports, citizens have strengthened trust and ensured better follow-through on commitments made by county leadership.

Kisumu County has formally adopted a Public Participation Policy, committing to inclusive forums and ensuring the active involvement of vulnerable groups, including youth, women, and persons with disabilities, in county decision-making processes. The county has institutionalized public forums that bring together county officials and residents to deliberate on budget proposals. These forums are widely publicized and seek input from diverse community groups. As a result, budget allocations have become more responsive to local needs, such as increased funding for clean water projects and support for grassroots economic activities, while reducing instances of misaligned priorities.

Makueni County has been recognized for actively integrating citizens into planning processes through ward development committees and citizen forums. Residents provide input on priority projects, resource allocation, and service delivery, contributing to improved infrastructure planning, timely project implementation, and enhanced transparency in county spending.

These successes illustrate that when communities are informed, organized, and engaged, they become powerful agents of accountability and integrity.

### Technology and open data enhance citizen oversight

Technology is reshaping how citizens interact with government. Digital platforms and open data initiatives have become critical tools for enhancing transparency, enabling real-time access to information, and facilitating citizen oversight.

To enhance transparency and accountability, counties are required to publish budgets, procurement plans, contracts, and development projects on open data portals or websites. For example, the Public Procurement Information Portal (PPIP), managed by the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) with the support of GIZ, requires all procurement entities, including counties, to publish tenders and contract awards. While uptake has been uneven, proper utilization of the portal can enhance oversight by civil society, media, businesses, and citizens, allowing analysis of procurement patterns and identification of irregularities.

Mobile platforms and social media also expand access to information. They provide updates on tenders, participation schedules, and audit reports, as well as spaces for citizens to share feedback, photos, or complaints. Digital reporting tools enable documentation and reporting of corruption or service delivery gaps directly to oversight bodies, with geotagged photos and messages breaking barriers for marginalized communities.

Investments in geospatial data, such as Vihiga County's GIS laboratory, support spatial planning and analysis, enhancing citizen participation and transparency. Similarly, interactive budget dashboards allow users to visualize fund allocation and spending, making complex financial data accessible and actionable for civic engagement.

Technology and open data are only as effective as the digital literacy of citizens. Investments in civic education and digital skills are therefore critical to maximize the impact of these tools.

Public participation and community oversight are not optional add-ons to devolution; they are fundamental pillars of ethical governance. Active citizens, monitoring public spending and leveraging technology to demand transparency, safeguard resources, and strengthen democracy.

**Writer is Technical Advisor, Anti-Corruption GIZ, Strengthening Good Governance Programme**



# Supreme Court clarifies when a prosecution witness may be charged



By Timothy Wahome

**O**n a road trip, it is not only the destination that matters, but also the stops along the way that shape the overall experience. The same can be said of a criminal trial. Long before judgment is delivered, a case is punctuated by numerous interlocutory rulings. These rulings often provide a fertile ground for investigators and prosecutors to learn from emerging jurisprudence.

A good illustration is *Anti-Corruption Case No. 1 of 2017 before the Bungoma Law Courts (Republic v Godfrey Sifuna Wanyonyi & 7 Others)*. In this matter, seven suspects were charged on January 20, 2017, with various corruption and economic crime offences, including wilful failure to comply with laws relating to the management of public funds, fraudulent acquisition of public property, and making documents without authority.

As the case progressed, investigators gathered additional evidence and recommended to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) that an additional suspect, Benson Wafula, be charged.

The matter arose from allegations that officials of Nzoia Sugar Company had embezzled company funds through fictitious payments purportedly made for entertaining company guests at local hotels. EACC conducted investigations, culminating in a recommendation to charge seven officers, including the Managing Director, the Finance Manager, and officers in the Examination and Cash Office.

Subsequently, the investigation team discovered that crucial evidence, specifically the cheques used to make the payments and the corresponding bank statements, had not initially been obtained. Further scrutiny revealed that the Company Secretary, Benson Wafula, was one of the signatories to the cheques.

At that time, Mr. Wafula had been listed as a prosecution witness. His statement had been recorded, supplied to the accused persons, and he had been bonded to testify.

However, in light of the new evidence, EACC recommended that Mr. Wafula be charged alongside the other officials and be joined as an accused. The ODPP concurred with this recommendation, and Mr. Wafula was charged on January 18, 2018.

Aggrieved by this decision, Mr. Wafula challenged his transposition from witness to accused person in the High Court. The matter ultimately escalated to the Court of Appeal and eventually to the Supreme Court via *Petition No. E045 of 2024*. The Supreme Court bench comprised Chief Justice Martha Koome and Justices Wanjala, Njoki Ndungu, Lenaola, and William Ouko.

In its determination, the Supreme Court upheld the decision of the Court of Appeal in *Civil Appeal No. 264 of 2018*, delivered on November

22, 2024, by Justices Gatembu Kairu, Tuiyott, and Ngenye-Macharia, which had in turn affirmed the High Court's decision allowing the transposition of Mr. Wafula from a prosecution witness to an accused person.

### What was Mr. Wafula's case?

The Supreme Court framed four issues for determination, key among them whether the ODPP has the mandate to review its decisions, including transposing a prosecution witness into an accused person, and whether Mr. Wafula's constitutional rights were violated in the process.

In its judgment delivered on July 11, 2025, the Supreme Court held that a prosecution witness may become an accused person in several circumstances, including where new evidence emerges implicating the witness, or where the witness's own testimony reveals participation in the offence. Such a shift may arise through ongoing investigations, fresh evidence, or a change in investigative focus.

The Court relied on Clause 6.3 of the ODPP Guidelines on the Decision to Charge (2019), which allows for review of charging decisions based on the progress of investigations and the emergence of additional information.

However, the Court emphasized that such a review must be grounded in credible and admissible evidence, undertaken in good faith, and guided by public interest, while fully respecting constitutional and procedural safeguards, including the right to a fair trial.

On the alleged violation of Mr. Wafula's rights, the Supreme Court found that he had been afforded sufficient time and opportunity to prepare his defence. The Court further held that there was no procedural unfairness, malice, or arbitrariness on the part of the ODPP. Importantly, the timing of the transposition was not prejudicial, as the main trial had not yet commenced.

The Court also observed that both prosecutors and courts must carefully consider the stage of proceedings at which such a transposition is sought, particularly where a witness has already testified or produced documentary evidence, and the implications this may have on the integrity of the trial.

Ultimately, the Supreme Court upheld the decision allowing Mr. Wafula to be prosecuted.

This decision provides important guidance to investigators and prosecutors when confronted with situations where a person initially treated as a witness may, upon the emergence of new evidence, be charged as an accused person.

**Writer is a Prevention Officer at EACC, Integrity Centre**

# Pictorial



Kilifi County Governor, H.E. Hon. Gideon Maita Mung'aro, holds a brief discussion with EACC Vice-Chairperson, Dr. Monica Muiru, and Kilifi County Deputy Governor, H.E. Flora Mbetsa Chibule. The discussion followed the successful conclusion of a Corruption Prevention Committee (CPCs) meeting held on October 3, 2025.

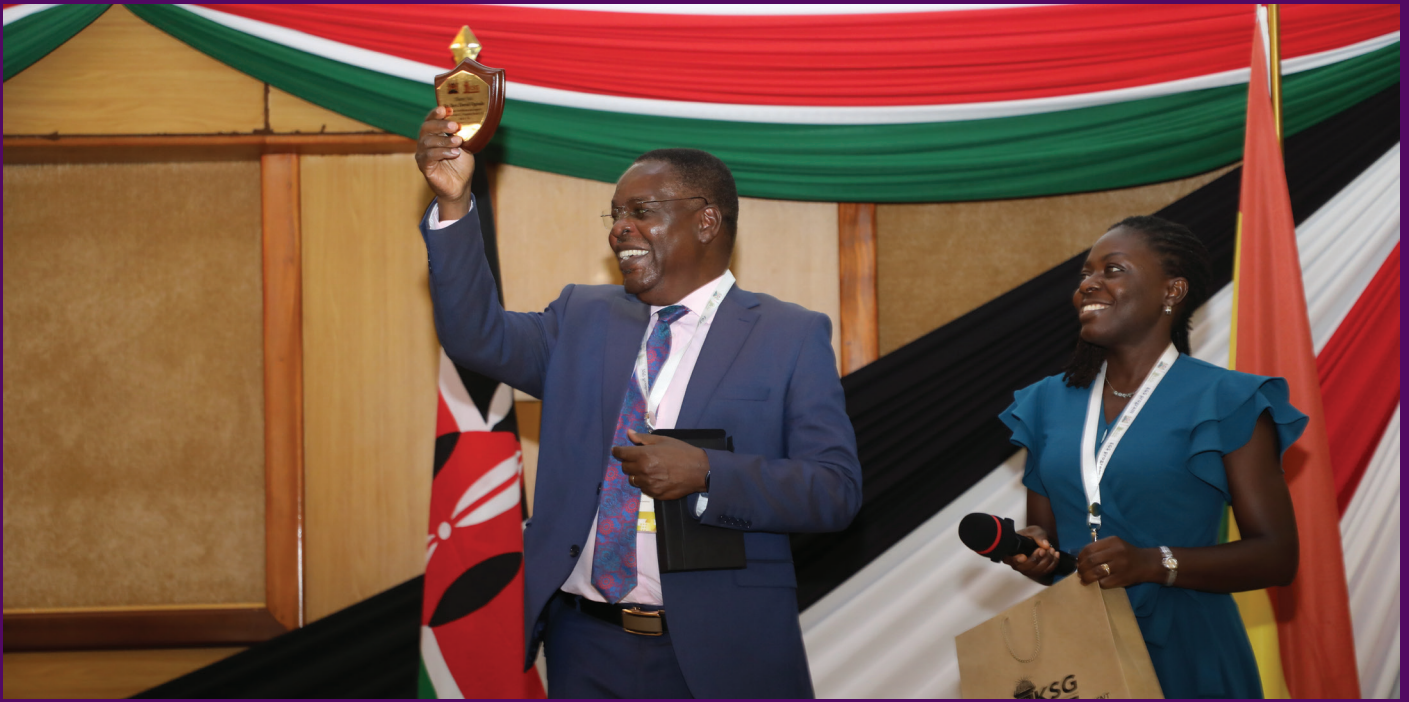


On September 29, 2025, EACC Commissioner Colonel (Rtd.) Alfred Mshimba officially handing over the Guidelines for the Establishment and Operationalisation of CPCs to Tana River County Governor, H.E. Hon. Maj. (Rtd) Dr. Dhadho Gaddae Godhana.

On August 19, 2025, EACC Commissioner Colonel (Rtd.) Alfred Mshimba (Second from left) and Director Preventive Services, Vincent Okong'o (far left), handing over the Guidelines for the Establishment and Operationalisation of CPCs to Makueni Governor, H.E. Hon. Mutula Kilonzo Junior.



CS for Information, Hon. William Kabogo, in a cap, engages with Shallet Walongo and Ilhaam Feisal during the KEG 8th Annual Convention, where the EACC signed a partnership MoU with the Kenya Editors Guild in November 2025.



27 October 2025: EACC Chairperson Dr David Oginde displays a plaque during a capacity building programme for senior government officials from Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa held at the Kenya School of Government (KSG).



EACC CEO, Mr. Abdi Mohamud, engages in a cordial discussion with the German delegation led by Mr. Yannick Kiewitt, Country Officer for Kenya at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The delegation included officials from the German Embassy in Nairobi and the GIZ Kenya Office.



EACC Chairperson, Dr. David Oginde, addresses the media during a conference on the implementation of the Kenya Integrity Plan 2023–2028 at Kenya School of Government.



EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde presents the Corruption Risk Assessment and Management Guidelines to participants during its official launch at Villa Rosa Kempinski on May 23, 2025



EACC Chairperson, Dr. David Oginde (left), alongside EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud, review the newly unveiled EACC 2024/2025 Annual Report during its official launch Monday, December 8, 2025



# How EACC can secure accountability in low-cost, high-impact county projects



By David Kaboro

**D**evolution was implemented after the 2013 General Election, when the 47 county governments established by the Constitution came into operation. Since then, the devolved units have continuously implemented various projects under the devolved functions, including health, education, agriculture, infrastructure and transport, and water and sanitation, among others. Undoubtedly, the positive impact of devolution has been felt across the country.

However, the picture is not very rosy in terms of how such projects are implemented. One glaring problem is the lack of standards and quality on some of the projects. It is now common to encounter roads that have been 'upgraded' or 'renovated' using public funds, but are quite shoddy. *Bodaboda* sheds, a pet project especially at the ward level, are put up so poorly and using low-quality materials that they hardly stand after completion. Completed medical facilities, such as dispensaries, dot the landscape but have no medicine or personnel. Bridges that collapse soon after being commissioned in pomp and colour. The list is endless, and every county has its sorry stories to tell and exhibits to show.

Another problem that is not as obvious to the casual observer, but is easily established when a comparative analysis is undertaken, is the disparity in costs incurred for similar or comparable projects across the country. A standard classroom may cost about Kes1 million in one county, Kes2 million in another county, while a third county may put up ten such classrooms at an average of Kes500,000 per class or less. We are alive to the case of one county that managed to put up and fully equip a 200-bed capacity hospital with just Kes135 million, yet some counties undertaking similar projects have inexplicably gobbled up billions but are still stuck with unfinished "ghost" structures.

The country needs a practical solution for this mess. We cannot continue to be held hostage by successive regimes in county governments that regard devolution as a source of limitless, unaccounted-for wealth. Kenyans cannot and should not continue decrying that the dream of devolution has been taken hostage by the corrupt. It is time to take innovative and proactive preventive approaches that will minimise or eliminate the need for post-mortem investigations when the horse has already bolted.

To begin with, we should ensure that such projects satisfy three basic criteria. First, is the issue of justification. Here, the question to answer is whether the project is necessary to avoid duplication of projects that end up helping no one. Second, there is the issue of procedural propriety. Here, the main question is whether all relevant processes have been followed, from project initiation through procurement, to implementation. Lastly, is the value for money consideration. The question is whether the project is worth the investment.

To ensure that many of these low-value devolution projects satisfy this criterion, a strategy that we can explore is to develop a standards and quality checklist, and also ensure standardization of similar projects across the country. This should then be coupled with a rigorous inspection at various stages of implementation to ensure adherence to the set standards.

Who should ensure this? The answer lies in the numerous regulatory authorities that have been established by law, as well as the professional associations whose membership comprises persons with relevant expertise and knowledge on such matters. For example, the State Department for Public Works, which is charged with the responsibility of planning, designing, constructing, and maintaining government infrastructure, can develop standard design templates and estimate bills of quantities for projects such as dispensaries, classrooms, and market stalls. The State Department for Roads can likewise develop standards and requirements for development, improvement, or repairs for all classes of roads. Professional associations such as the Institution of Engineers of Kenya can then be deployed to monitor implementation by undertaking inspection and quality checks at various stages of implementation.

This is where the EACC comes into the picture. The Commission has a unique mandate, firmly grounded in the Constitution and the statutes under which it operates. This mandate ensures the Commission can guarantee that devolution projects are undertaken in a manner that specifically addresses the three general criteria articulated above.

The Commission can act to stop or veto unplanned projects or projects that amount to duplication, hence addressing the issue of necessity. It can delve into the procedural aspects of project implementation at all stages, right from initiation, procurement, and payment. Lastly, the Commission is mandated to probe into the value for money aspects, and may take action against wasteful expenditure, payment for projects not delivered or partially delivered, and can also institute recovery action against perpetrators.

Coincidentally, the Commission is currently implementing a strategic focus on enhancing collaboration with regulatory bodies and professional associations. In addition, it is also focusing on monitoring capital-intensive projects. This strategic focus provides a foundation where a framework can be laid to anchor monitoring of low-cost devolution projects. This ensures that the projects are necessary or justified and implemented in a manner that observes all the relevant procedural requirements, which guarantee value for money. The low-value projects may not, when looked at individually, be termed as capital-intensive, but when implemented by the devolved units across the country, would be cumulatively capital-intensive. Relevant investigative and regulatory bodies and professional associations should collaborate to prevent this from happening.

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



# Why automation defies graft

**ERPs, document management systems, biometric attendance, and digital approval workflows neither play favorites nor accept tokens of appreciation**



**By Robert Kikenyi**

**A**s an ICT officer, I do not interact with systems the way an ordinary user does, but as a mechanic, with an engine bonnet open, tools ready, and a very good idea of what's supposed to be humming and what is about to explode.

While some people click buttons, I trace processes, inspect logs, and listen for strange system noises that usually mean something is being bypassed.

Working at the EACC has given me a unique pair of glasses. I see corruption from all angles, in version histories, audit trails, and 'creative workflows' that somehow existed outside the system. From experience, I have learned that corruption, much like a faulty system, leaves patterns. And when you understand how systems are built, you quickly learn where they are most likely to be abused.

Here are my two cents, told not as an investigator but as a systems mechanic who knows that most corruption problems are not necessarily moral failures but design flaws waiting to be fixed.

I have learnt one key thing: corruption is brave until the system logs in. The moment automation shows up, corruption suddenly develops network issues. Most people know EACC for investigations, and yes, that work continues. However, what many do not know is that we also do prevention work. And in today's world, prevention speaks fluent ICT.

Under the Preventive Services Directorate sits a powerful but often underrated Prevention Department. This team moves from organization to organization quietly, professionally, and with 'admin' rights, reviewing internal systems, processes, and controls. Our goal is simple: identify loopholes before they become headlines and recommend automation where manual processes are still giving corruption too much freedom.

Let us be honest; manual systems have been corruption's favorite playground. Files get 'misplaced', approvals depend on who you know, and payments require follow-ups that mysteriously involve lunch. Automation flips that script. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, document management systems, biometric attendance, and digital approval workflows do not get tired, play favorites, or accept tokens of appreciation. They just work.

Government digitization has amplified this impact. Platforms like eCitizen, iTax, NTSA TIMS, ardhisasa have drastically reduced physical queues and unnecessary human contact. Today, services are accessed online, payments are made digitally, and receipts arrive instantly. No whispers. No negotiations. Just systems doing what systems do best - enforce rules equally.

A major game-changer recently has been the Central Bank of Kenya's push towards enhanced online banking for government operations. Funds disbursement across ministries, departments, and county governments is now faster, more efficient, and far more transparent. When money moves digitally, it leaves footprints everywhere. Delays, diversions, and 'lost funds' now have uncomfortable explanations if any at all.

And then there is procurement, the long-time heavyweight champion of corruption scandals. Enter the e-Government Procurement system (eGP). From tender advertisement to bid submission, evaluation, and award, everything is automated, logged, and time-stamped. No last-minute bid swapping. No surprise winners. No midnight miracles. The system does not know anyone personally, and that is exactly why it works.

What makes automation such a powerful anti-corruption tool is that it does not accuse, it exposes. It creates audit trails that never forget, standardizes processes across the board, and reduces human

discretion where abuse once thrived. You can argue with a person, but you cannot negotiate with a database.

EACC is not just a watchdog; we are also a partner, and any public organization can reach out to EACC for advisory support. If you want to strengthen your systems, automate your processes, and close corruption loopholes before they open, we are ready to help.

Corruption hates system automation, and as ICT professionals, we are proudly switching it on, a system at a time.

Behind the scenes, another quiet revolution is happening: The Government Common Core Network (GCCN). This government backbone connectivity is interlinking systems across ministries, departments, and agencies, breaking long-standing data silos that corruption once hid behind. When systems talk to each other, inconsistencies surface quickly, duplicate records get exposed, and creative accounting suddenly becomes very difficult. Data sharing improves, visibility increases, and oversight stops relying on guesswork but on evidence.

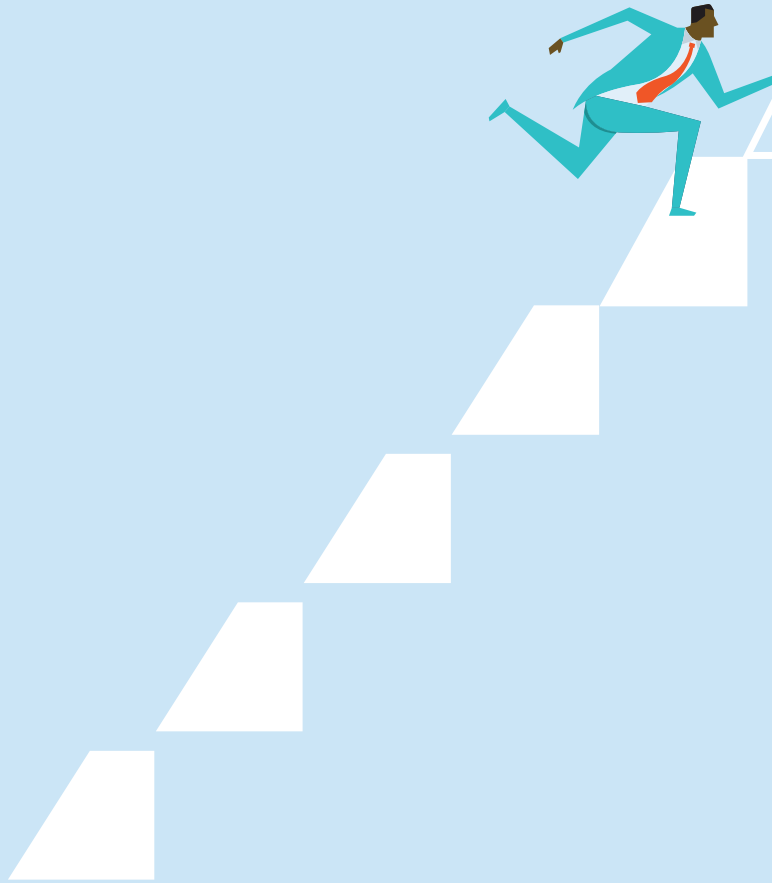
Complementing this is the government's plan to establish Cloud Infrastructure, a move that is set to fundamentally transform the digital space. Centralized, secure, and scalable government cloud services will standardize how systems are built, hosted, and monitored. This means stronger security, reduced costs, faster service rollout, and uniform controls across institutions. This move ensures that government data lives in an environment designed for transparency and accountability, not convenience for abuse.

Together, GCCN and the Government Cloud are doing something powerful: turning scattered systems into a single digital ecosystem. When government operates as one connected system, corruption finds fewer blind spots and far fewer places to hide.

The drive towards digital government is not merely about convenience; it is about strengthening accountability, enhancing transparency, and restoring trust between citizens and public institutions. The tone at the top is critical in this process. When clear direction is set at the highest levels, it creates momentum for meaningful reform across the entire system with minimal resistance.

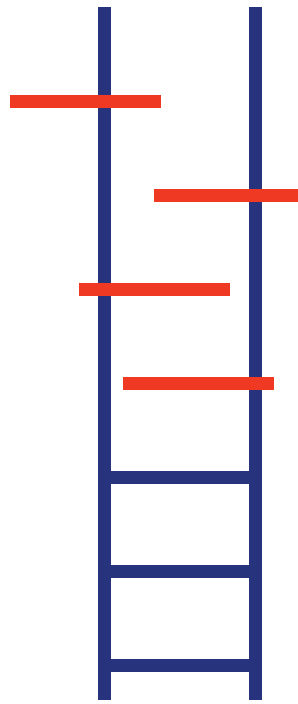
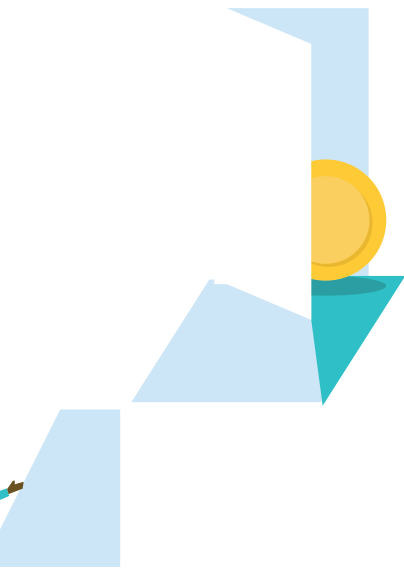
To every ICT professional reading this, whether you are in a ministry, a county, a parastatal, a private organization, or a small office with a stubborn printer, start where you are. Automate that one process you can. Digitize that one service. Improve that one system. Small efforts, when multiplied across institutions, create a massive impact. After all, even the biggest systems are built from smaller ones working together.

The future is digital. And if we get it right, it will also be transparent, efficient, and refreshingly corruption-free.



**Writer is a member of the ICT crew  
at EACC, Integrity Centre**





# Accountability from the ground up

**When neighbours unite to demand transparency and leaders know they are being watched, integrity shifts from a personal choice to a shared public value.**



By Wairimu Kiigi

**D**evolution has transformed governance in Kenya in many visible ways. Devolved governance has brought decision-making closer to the people, expanded development in rural areas, and given communities a stronger voice in the use of public resources. New roads, health facilities, and local projects now seem more attainable than ever before.

As power and resources move closer to the common *mwananchi*, so do opportunities for corruption. With multiple layers of government and complex accountability systems, it becomes easier for funds to slip through the cracks. Without proper oversight, what was meant to empower citizens can also create new spaces for the misuse of public resources.

Corruption in Kenya is often described as a virus, and for good reason. It spreads quietly but widely, affecting people at every level of society. For some, it shows up as small but painful bribes demanded in order to access basic services. For others, it takes the form of large-scale embezzlement and mismanagement of public funds meant for development projects.

The National Ethics and Corruption Survey (2024) cited bribery as the most prevalent form of corruption in public institutions, with 30.5% of respondents admitting to encountering bribery while accessing government services. The so-called “facilitation fees” are often expected to speed up government services that should be provided fairly and efficiently. This raises a critical question: How can ordinary citizens fight corruption in their own communities?

For years, anti-corruption efforts focused mainly on laws, policies, and enforcement agencies. While these remain essential, there is growing recognition that real and lasting change cannot happen without the active involvement of citizens.

Community engagement is increasingly recognized as essential to effective anti-corruption efforts, based on the idea that those most affected by corruption should help address it. This approach is considered effective for three key reasons. First, involving communities reduces dependence on potentially compromised officials by allowing citizens to monitor projects and participate in decision-making, making it more difficult for individuals to secretly manipulate systems.

Second, people who directly experience the effects of corruption are often the most motivated to challenge it. When communities are empowered to speak up, report wrongdoing, and demand explanations, corruption loses one of its greatest allies, silence.

Third, community engagement builds trust. When citizens feel included in governance processes, from planning to oversight, they are more likely to believe that public systems can work for them. That trust is crucial for encouraging cooperation, reporting of misconduct, and collective responsibility.

For a long time, citizens have felt powerless against corruption because government processes are distant, complex, and opaque. Community engagement changes that dynamic by turning citizens from passive observers into active watchdogs. One practical way

this happens is through public participation in budgeting and project planning. When communities are informed of the amount of funding allocated to a local project, such as a health center, road, or water system, they are better positioned to ask the right questions. Is the project being implemented as planned? Are materials of the expected quality being used? Is the contractor delivering value for money? When residents track projects on the ground and compare what they see with what was promised, corruption becomes harder to hide.

Across Kenya, community involvement is proving powerful as citizens actively participate in forums, public meetings, and local groups to monitor and improve development projects.

The recent launch of County Anti-Corruption Civilian Oversight Committees (CACCOCs) in all 47 counties is a key step toward promoting transparency and accountability at the grassroots level by directly involving citizens in oversight. CACCOCs conduct social audits of public projects to help communities verify that funds are properly used. They also raise awareness of corruption, educate citizens about their rights, and encourage them to report suspicious activity. By bringing oversight closer to the people, these committees help bridge the gap between citizens and formal anti-corruption institutions.

Community engagement is not a magic solution, and it comes with challenges. In some areas, citizens may fear retaliation for speaking out. In other cases, a lack of access to information makes it difficult to determine what to monitor. Technical details in budgets and contracts can also be difficult for the average person to interpret. Without proper support, even the most willing communities may struggle to participate effectively.

That is why support structures matter. Civil society organizations, the media, and oversight bodies play a crucial role in training communities, simplifying information, and creating safe channels for reporting corruption. When citizens are protected and well-informed, they are far more likely to engage in meaningful oversight.

Ultimately, fighting corruption is not just about catching offenders. It is about building a culture where corruption is not tolerated. Community engagement helps shape that culture. When children see their parents question how public money is used, when neighbors come together to demand transparency, and when local leaders know they are being watched, integrity becomes a shared value rather than a personal choice.

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





# Restoring trust and stability: Eliud Wabukala reflects on leading the EACC

*Six years at the helm of Kenya's Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission gave His Grace Dr. Eliud Wabukala a front-row seat to reform, leadership, and the challenges of public service. In this forthright Q&A, he shares the faith, integrity, and commitment that guided him every step of the way.*

By David Wanjala

## 1. Mr. Wanjala – How did you get to join the EACC?

**Archbishop (Emeritus) Wabukala:** I often say that my journey to the Commission was, in many ways, accidental. I had spent many years serving within the Church and the education sector, and although I had interacted with public institutions over time, I had never imagined that I would one day find myself at the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission.

I retired as Archbishop in 2016 and entered a fulfilling season of retirement—a time for family, reflection, and pursuits I had previously had little time for, including the early stages of writing memoirs. I also continued professionally, maintaining my directorship at the Anglican Leadership Institute in Massachusetts, USA. In retirement, I came to appreciate that it can be both meaningful and rewarding.

During this period, I followed media reports on the leadership challenges facing the Commission. When the position of Chairperson was advertised, I learned that the initial process had not yielded a suitable outcome. A few confidants independently encouraged me to consider offering my time to the Commission after the resignation of the then-Chairperson.

I reflected on my earlier work with the National Anti-Corruption Campaign Steering Committee, which took me across the country. I had also contributed to the 2010 Constitution.

For us, Chapter Six on Leadership and Integrity was like engine oil: without it, the system would fail. With these experiences in mind, I chose to serve despite my family's reservations, trusting that God, who had guided me before, would do so again. That is how I found myself at the Commission.

## 2. What was the state of the Commission when you joined in 2017?

At the time I was interviewed and vetted, the Commission was, in many respects, in crisis. Its recent history had been marked by frequent turnover of Chairpersons and Commissioners, which had severely affected operations and damaged credibility. For many, the Commission had become a place where careers were more likely to be ruined than built.

This perception weighed heavily on my family, who feared what such an environment might mean for me. Similar concerns were expressed during my vetting by Members of Parliament. One Member candidly remarked, "If you go to the EACC and fail, we will have tried somebody nearer to God, and then we shall disband it."

That comment, partly in jest, reflected the depth of the crisis of confidence surrounding the Commission.

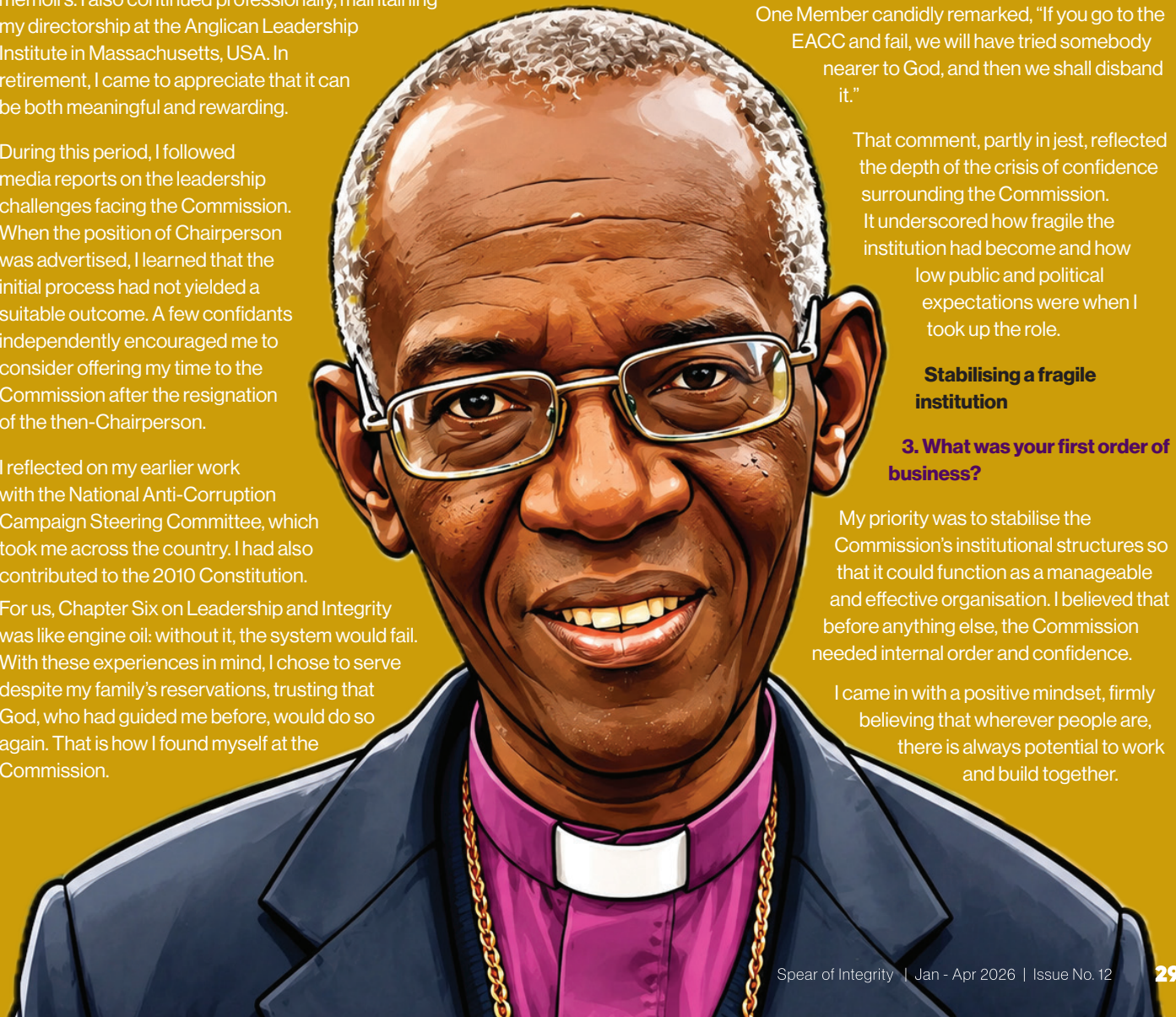
It underscored how fragile the institution had become and how low public and political expectations were when I took up the role.

### Stabilising a fragile institution

## 3. What was your first order of business?

My priority was to stabilise the Commission's institutional structures so that it could function as a manageable and effective organisation. I believed that before anything else, the Commission needed internal order and confidence.

I came in with a positive mindset, firmly believing that wherever people are, there is always potential to work and build together.



I began with the senior management team, bringing them together, listening to their concerns, and allowing them to openly share challenges and fears. From the outset, I made it clear: "I am here for you."

One guiding principle I embraced as Chairperson was to genuinely care for and support the staff. I viewed the people of the Commission as its greatest asset. My approach was simple: if you take care of your people, they will, in turn, take care of the institution and its mandate.

#### 4. How did you restore effectiveness and trust?

When I joined the EACC, the institution faced widespread negative perceptions. My first approach was to communicate a different story. I began by engaging the religious sector, inviting faith leaders to my first public engagement and assuring them, "I am here with you. The people I found here are committed to integrity. Let us work together to fight the true enemy—corruption." We also established partnerships with civic and professional groups to broaden public confidence.

We then recalibrated our operational focus, shifting attention to issues of high public interest and high-value financial misconduct. This included strengthening asset recovery and lifestyle audits to reduce opportunities for corruption.

Internally, stabilising the Commission required careful management of leadership transitions. I oversaw strategic changes at the Deputy CEO level and later the CEO's office. A key insight was that all Commissioners had joined at the same time, which risked a simultaneous exit and a governance vacuum. Through dialogue and mutual commitment, Commissioners agreed to stagger their departures. Two would exit at a time to ensure continuity, institutional memory, and quorum. This careful succession planning contributed to the Commission's stability and ongoing effectiveness.

Ultimately, our strategy combined communication, operational focus, and internal stability—anchored in leadership that trusted its staff and invested in continuity.

#### 5. How did you approach staff welfare?

From the beginning, I believed that the people of the Commission were its greatest asset. My priority was to foster a strong sense of teamwork and shared purpose across the institution.

Early on, it became clear that staff were concerned about long periods without salary reviews. This was challenging, particularly within the framework of the Salaries and Remuneration Commission. Rather than ignore these concerns, we undertook a comprehensive review of manpower needs and staff positions across all levels.

Where employees had remained in the same roles for extended periods, we implemented promotions and repositioning to recognise experience and restore morale. While we could not resolve every issue affecting all 800 members of staff, we made deliberate efforts to ensure that individuals felt seen, heard, and supported.

I remain convinced that when an institution demonstrates care for its workforce, commitment and professionalism follow naturally. A culture of teamwork, mutual respect, and recognition is not an added benefit; it is foundational to effectiveness and integrity.

*"If you take care of your people, they will take care of the institution and its mandate."*

#### 6. You were the first Chairperson to serve a full term. What contributed to your success?

First, I give thanks to God. Beyond faith, the key to serving a full tenure lies in absolute transparency and integrity. Anyone who joins the Commission must examine themselves and ensure they have no "skeletons" in their closets. Even minor associations with impropriety can be exploited to destabilise the institution.



## ARCHBISHOP (EMERITUS) ELIUD WABUKALA A JOURNEY OF FAITH, INTEGRITY & SERVICE AT THE EACC

From the Church to the Commission: Strengthening Ethics, Restoring Trust, Serving Kenya



*"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."  
Micah 6:8*

<p><b>1. HOW I JOINED THE EACC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I retired as Archbishop in 2016 and was enjoying retirement and writing memoirs.</li> <li>I followed media reports on leadership challenges at the EACC.</li> <li>When the Chairperson position was advertised, friends encouraged me to offer my time.</li> <li>I had experience with the Anti-Corruption Campaign and contributed to the 2010 Constitution (Chapter Six on Leadership and Integrity is like engine oil).</li> </ul> <p><i>With my family's reservations, I chose to serve, trusting God who had guided me before.</i></p>	<p><b>2. THE STATE OF THE COMMISSION IN 2017</b></p> <p><b>CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Commission had frequent turnover of leaders.</li> <li>Operations were affected and credibility damaged.</li> <li>Seen as a place where careers were more likely to be ruined than built.</li> <li>Expectations were very low.</li> </ul> <p><i>A Member of Parliament said, "If you go to the EACC and fail, we will have tried somebody nearer to God, and then we shall disband it."</i></p> <p><i>The institution was fragile when I took up the role.</i></p>	<p><b>3. FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS: STABILISE THE INSTITUTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brought the senior management team together and listened to their concerns.</li> <li>Made it clear: "I am here for you."</li> <li>People are the Commission's greatest asset.</li> <li>Took care of the people; they took care of the mandates.</li> </ul> <p><i>Before anything else, the Commission needed internal order and confidence.</i></p>	<p><b>4. HOW WE RESTORED EFFECTIVENESS &amp; TRUST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaged the religious sector and civic/professional groups.</li> <li>Focused on high public interest &amp; high-value misconduct.</li> <li>Strengthened asset recovery &amp; lifestyle audits.</li> <li>Managed leadership transitions; staggered exits of Commissioners to ensure continuity and quorum.</li> <li>Communication, operational focus and internal stability restored credibility and effectiveness.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5. STAFF WELFARE: OUR GREATEST ASSET</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed manpower needs and all staff positions.</li> <li>Implemented promotions and repositioning.</li> <li>Ensured staff felt seen, heard and supported.</li> </ul> <p><i>A culture of teamwork, mutual respect and recognition is foundational to effectiveness.</i></p>	<p><b>6. FIRST CHAIRPERSON TO SERVE A FULL TERM</b></p> <p>Thanks to God, transparency and integrity.</p> <p>Clarity of mandate respected the role of Chairperson and the Secretariat.</p> <p>Managed the "mud", empowered staff to do their work.</p> <p>Familiarity with laws, strategic plan and regulations enabled effective leadership.</p> <p><i>Integrity, clarity of roles, strategic oversight and trust in God enabled me to serve six years without a major crisis.</i></p>	<p><b>7. GREATEST CHALLENGES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing transitions (especially CEO appointment).</li> <li>Changing public perception and earning trust.</li> <li>Resolving the Integrity Centre ownership confusion in my first week—tenure had expired, ownership was unclear.</li> </ul> <p><i>Studied the history and navigated legal issues.</i></p> <p><i>Through Commission resolutions, the National Lands Commission and the Treasury facilitated the acquisition.</i></p> <p><i>Today, the EACC holds the title.</i></p> <p><i>Strategic oversight, decisive action and care for people strengthened the institution.</i></p>	<p><b>8. FROM THE CHURCH TO PUBLIC SERVICE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entering public service was unusual for a Bishop, but part of the Church's calling to engage, correct and serve.</li> <li>When I left in Jan 2023, over 80 people applied to replace me—only 5 had applied when I joined. Credibility had been restored.</li> </ul> <p><i>Maintain "creative tension": close enough to influence positively, yet distant enough to remain independent and faithful to the Church's values.</i></p>	<p><b>9. GRATITUDE, NOT PRIDE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grateful to God for calling me to be a Bishop and Archbishop.</li> <li>That journey opened doors to serve beyond the Church.</li> <li>Grateful for the trust, the opportunity to serve both God and country, and to contribute to leadership, integrity and the public good.</li> </ul>
<p><b>10. SHAPED BY UPBRINGING &amp; FAITH</b></p> <p>We owned very little. My grandfather had many cows; after his death, all were taken except one. My father taught me stewardship and trust.</p> <p>As the firstborn, I delayed my university studies to help my siblings and cousins go to school. It taught me responsibility, patience and service.</p> <p>My mother's family were early Christians (Malakisi, 1916). She nurtured us in prayer, hymns and trust in God.</p> <p><i>Faith, discipline and service were the foundation that guided me through every stage of life.</i></p>	<p><b>11. STRENGTH DRAWN FROM MICAH 6:8</b></p> <p>My strength comes from Micah 6:8.</p> <p><b>ACT JUSTLY</b> Give your best effort to treat everyone fairly.</p> <p><b>LOVE MERCY</b> Show compassion in a world that often lacks it.</p> <p><b>WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD</b> Remain grounded and faithful to God in all you do.</p> <p><i>Justice, mercy and humility have guided my decisions and sustained me through every challenge.</i></p>	<p><b>12. LIFE AFTER EACC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farming—grounding and refreshing.</li> <li>Serve with NEPAD/APRM as Chair of the Panel of Eminent Persons; peer reviews of counties.</li> <li>Occasional work with the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACCC).</li> <li>Support church activities in Kenya when invited.</li> </ul> <p><i>A balanced life of rest, service and meaningful engagement.</i></p>	<p><b>13. THE STATE OF CORRUPTION IN KENYA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corruption is deeply entrenched, especially at community level.</li> <li>Wananchi are weary and have normalized it—dangerous!</li> <li>Tackling it requires a cultural shift and more than legal enforcement.</li> <li>Young people can bring energy, use technology and lead the way.</li> </ul> <p><i>Young people must actively join the fight for an ethical and accountable Kenya.</i></p>	<p><b>14. LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I would place even greater emphasis on education and value based formation.</li> <li>Enforcement is necessary, but lasting change comes from a culture of integrity.</li> </ul> <p><i>With the right people and enough effort, we can nurture a generation that rejects corruption and strengthens our institutions.</i></p>

Clarity of mandate is equally important. I distinguished carefully between the role of the Chairperson and the functions of the Secretariat. Understanding boundaries, points of interaction, and areas of divergence allows the Secretariat to perform its duties effectively while the Chairperson exercises oversight. Respecting this balance builds credibility and ensures smooth operations.

As Chair, much of the work is behind the scenes, managing the “mud” sometimes directed at the Commission, while empowering staff to do their work professionally. I reminded my team to perform their duties diligently, knowing that a strong Secretariat strengthens the Chairperson’s position.

Finally, familiarity with government regulations, the Commission’s strategic plan, enabling Acts of Parliament, and the job description is crucial. When these elements are well understood and respected, responsibilities can be discharged with freedom, confidence, and joy.

Serving six years without a major crisis is the result of integrity, clarity of roles, strategic oversight, and trust in God, all working together to stabilise and strengthen the institution.

### **Navigating pressure, transitions, and risk**

#### **7. What were your greatest challenges?**

Several challenges marked my tenure. First, managing transitions, particularly the CEO appointment, was delicate. Changing the public perception of the Commission to earn trust was also a continuous effort.

One critical early challenge I inherited in my first week involved confusion over ownership of the Integrity Centre. Its occupation was legally and operationally complex. The tenure had expired; some argued it belonged to the Government, others claimed it was private property. Staff needed clarity and security, and without swift intervention, the issue could have derailed the Commission entirely. I had to study the history, navigate legal ambiguities, and coordinate resolutions.

Ultimately, the matter was settled through Commission resolutions, and the National Lands Commission and the Treasury facilitated the acquisition of the property. Today, the EACC holds the title.

In retrospect, these challenges were significant, but they reinforced the importance of strategic oversight, decisive action, and care for people. Each hurdle strengthened the institution and highlighted that integrity and diligence must guide leadership at every level.

#### **8. How does Church culture compare to public service, and how did you navigate it?**

Many Kenyans expect a Bishop to remain within a “saintly” or holy sphere. Stepping into public service was a pioneering move, entering a space many consider unholy. Yet, I viewed this as part of the Church’s calling. Just as Jesus left His divinity to enter human experience, the Church must occasionally engage public life to understand, correct, and serve where needed.

Bringing this perspective to the EACC, I sought to restore confidence in the institution. When I left in January 2023, over 80 people applied to replace me, a stark contrast to the mere five applicants when I joined. This indicated that the Commission had regained credibility and was once again seen as a place where principled professionals could work.

At the same time, I maintained what I call a “creative tension” between the Church and public service: close enough to influence positively, yet distant enough to remain independent and faithful to the Church’s values. A Bishop or Priest entering public life must remember they are a witness of Christ: engage to serve, correct, and guide, but do not be absorbed by the expectations or compromises of public office.

God helped me maintain this balance, allowing me to bring moral authority and integrity to the EACC while preserving my vocation and personal witness.

**“Chapter Six on Leadership and Integrity is like engine oil: without it, the system will fail.”**



*Former EACC Chairperson Archbishop (Rtd.) Eliud Wabukala during a one-on-one interview with the writer, Mr. David Wanjala, for this feature.*

## Gratitude, formation, and personal values

### 9. What are you most proud of in your life?

I prefer to speak of gratitude rather than pride. There are many moments for which I thank God. One of the most significant was being called to serve as a Bishop and later an Archbishop in His Church. To move from an ordinary teacher through the ranks to the highest pastoral office is, to me, a miracle.

I also recognize that my experience as Archbishop opened doors for service beyond the Church. The EACC, for instance, would not have welcomed me in the same way had I not served in that role. I remain deeply grateful for these opportunities: for the trust placed in me, for the chance to serve both God and country, and for the path that allowed me to contribute to leadership, integrity, and the public good.

### 10. How did your upbringing shape you?

My childhood was simple and marked by material scarcity, but I never saw it as a disadvantage. I came from a family that owned very little. My father worked in Uganda for extended periods to earn a modest income, leaving me to grow up mostly under my grandparents' care. I vividly remember my grandfather, who had many cows. On the third day after his death, everyone came to collect their cattle. Only one cow remained. My father explained that the animals had never truly belonged to us; they were entrusted to my grandfather because people respected and trusted him. That early lesson in stewardship and trust left a deep impression on me.

I was the firstborn, and my father asked me to delay my university studies so I could help my siblings and cousins through school first. That responsibility taught me patience, discipline, and the importance of service.

On my mother's side, faith played a central role. Her father was the first to receive the Anglican Gospel in Western Kenya at Malakisi in 1916, and she grew up under the influence of missionaries. Despite losing her own mother early, she nurtured our family in a life of prayer, hymns, and trust in God. Every evening we sang hymns and prayed together, shaping the foundation of my life and instilling values of faith, discipline, and service that have guided me through every stage, from teaching and Church leadership to public service at the EACC.

### 11. Where do you draw your greatest strengths?

My guiding strength comes from Micah 6:8: "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."

To act justly means giving your best effort to treat everyone fairly. Love mercy calls for compassion in a world that often lacks it. And to walk humbly with God is to remain grounded, faithful, and dependent on divine guidance in all you do.

These three pillars, justice, mercy, and humility, have been my constant companions, guiding my decisions, shaping my interactions, and sustaining me through every challenge, from the Church to public service at the Commission. With God's grace, they have empowered me to lead with integrity, courage, and care for those I serve.

### 12. Since retiring, how have you spent your time?

Retirement has been a season of rest, reflection, and purposeful engagement, and I have taken to farming, which is both grounding and refreshing.

I remain involved in civic and church work. I serve with the New Partnership for Africa's Development/African Peer Review Mechanism (NEPAD/APRM) as Chair of the Panel of Eminent Persons, participating in peer reviews of county governments. Occasionally, I also engage with the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and support church activities in Kenya when invited. It is a time of balance, combining rest, service, and meaningful activity.

## The road ahead for Kenya's integrity agenda

### 13. How do you read the current state of corruption in Kenya?

Corruption remains a serious and deeply entrenched challenge, particularly at the community level. Wananchi appear weary and resigned, quietly accepting wrongdoing as a normal part of daily life, on roads, in government offices, and in routine interactions.



23 January 2017: Archbishop (Rtd.) Eliud Wabukala is sworn into office as Chairperson of the EACC at the Supreme Court in Nairobi. Administering the oath of office is the then Chief Registrar of the Judiciary, Anne Amadi.



Archbishop (Rtd.) Eliud Wabukala poses for a photo at the Supreme Court after his swearing-in ceremony as EACC Chairperson. To his immediate left is the then Chief Justice David Maraga. Also present are the then Attorney General Prof. Githu Muigai, the then Chief Registrar of the Judiciary Anne Amadi, the then EACC CEO Halake Wako, and EACC Commissioners.



Mark Kirwa and a team of young people arrive at the Integrity Centre after they walked 350km from Eldoret to Nairobi to raise awareness on the negative impact of corruption.

This normalization is dangerous, as it erodes accountability and public trust. Tackling corruption requires more than legal enforcement; it demands a cultural shift that makes ethical behaviour the expected norm.

Young people can bring energy, idealism, and fresh perspectives essential for change. Being technologically savvy, they can leverage digital tools to expose corruption, mobilize communities, and promote transparency.

By actively participating in anti-corruption initiatives, including those led by the EACC, young people can shape a more ethical and accountable Kenya.

#### Looking back to look forward

#### 14. Any reflections on what you might have done differently at the Commission?

If I were to do anything differently, I would place even greater emphasis on education alongside legal enforcement.

*“Young people can bring energy, idealism, and fresh perspectives essential for change.”*

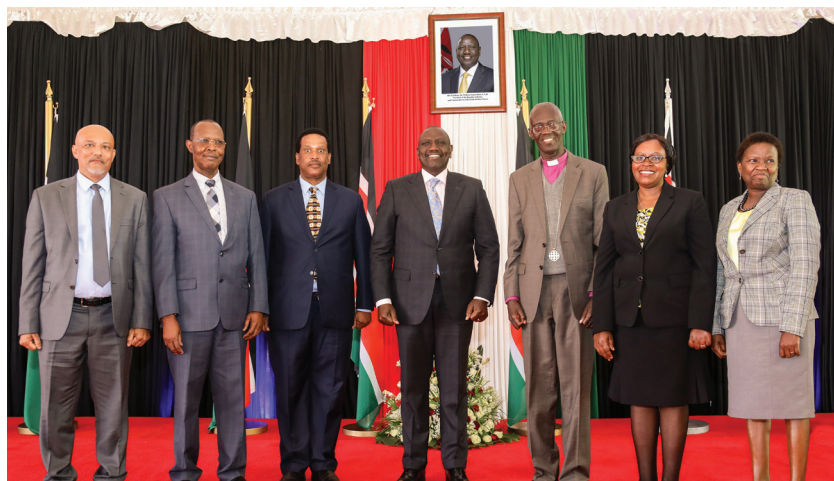
Enforcement is necessary, but lasting change comes from cultivating a culture of integrity.

I envision a value-based initiative that equips citizens, especially the youth, with ethical principles and a deep understanding of why corruption must be rejected.

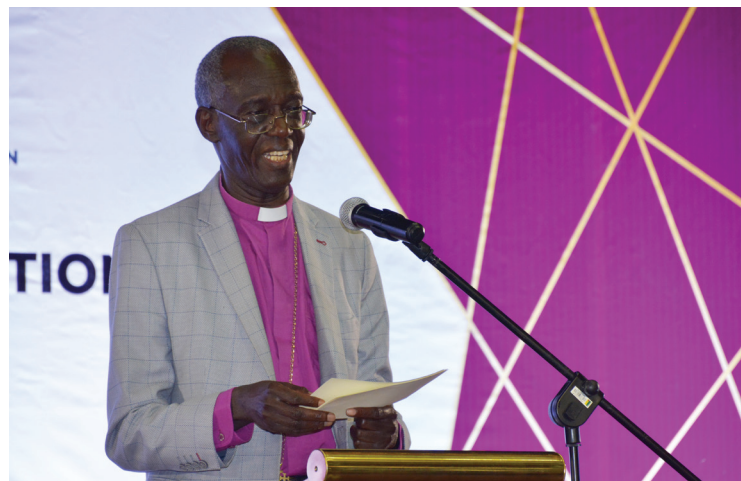
Such a long-term approach requires committed, principled people in government and leadership positions to support and sustain it.

With the right people and sufficient effort, we can nurture a generation that naturally resists corruption and strengthens institutions.

If I had the opportunity to devote more energy to this, I believe it could help secure a brighter, corruption-resistant future for Kenya, complementing the legal and institutional measures already in place.



Former EACC Chairperson Archbishop (Rtd.) Eliud Wabukala poses for a photo with the President of the Republic of Kenya, H.E. Dr William Samoei Ruto, to his right, Vice Chairperson Dr Monica Muiru to his left, and Commissioner Dr Cecilia Mutuku during the handover of recovered assets worth Kes5.5 billion to the Government at State House. Also present are former EACC CEO Mr Twalib Mbarak, Commissioners CPA John Ogallo and Col. (Rtd.) Alfred Mshimba.



Former EACC Chairperson Archbishop (Rtd.) Eliud Wabukala, during an official engagement as part of his day-to-day functions at the Commission.



# The ripple of a thousand

*Sometimes integrity appears as a refusal so small it almost goes unnoticed, yet powerful enough to preserve dignity and build trust. In a world accustomed to shortcuts, these ordinary choices quietly shape the society we become*



By Martha Maina

**B**y the time the clerk finally looked up from her desk, the queue had settled into a quiet understanding of patience and fatigue. Files were stacked neatly, though none seemed eager to move. Someone near the window cleared his throat, another checked her phone, then her watch, then the door. No one complained. They rarely did. The office felt ordinary: paper, pens, and the low hum of waiting until a small amount was mentioned, almost as an aside. A thousand shillings did not sound like much, but it had a way of changing the temperature of a room.

People waited quietly, shifting from foot to foot. A mother clutched her bag full of forms and hope, wondering about the bus back home. A young man tapped the edge of his file, calculating the hours he would lose at work, the meal he might skip, the small errands he would postpone. Every rustle of paper, every slow glance at the clock became a reminder that even minor delays carried a cost. Yet no one spoke. Not because they approved, but because experience had taught them that some struggles were best endured in silence. Patience, after all, had become an unofficial requirement of service.

That single thousand shillings hovered like a question mark in the room, small, almost trivial, yet capable of tipping the balance. For the person seeking the service, it could mean catching the last bus home or returning another day, submitting school paperwork on time, or postponing a term, buying supper, or stretching an already-thin budget. For the officer behind the desk, it presented a quieter dilemma: a little extra for transport, a small reward for effort that often went unseen, and an easy solution to a long day. Accept it, and the system bent slightly, almost imperceptibly. Refuse it, and patience would be tested on both sides. The weight of the choice rested not in the amount itself but in what it represented.

The clerk glanced at the small note again, then at the line of faces waiting patiently. She could have slipped it into her pocket, and no one would have noticed. Instead, she leaned forward, straightened a stack of papers, and spoke in a calm, measured voice. "Let's go step by step. I'll help you complete everything today," she explained, slowly pointing to where to sign, where to wait, and where to return. A small sigh of relief moved through the room. No one applauded, no one marked the moment as extraordinary. Yet, by refusing convenience in favour of principle, she altered the rhythm of the office. What could have been a routine compromise became a quiet lesson in diligence and respect.

Outside the office, the city moved on in its usual rhythm: *matatus* honked, market sellers called out their prices, and students hurried along narrow streets with books in hand. Yet the tiny choices inside that quiet office echoed further than anyone might imagine. A citizen who left with forms completed could pay school fees on time or meet a client without delay, a clerk who upheld principles influenced colleagues in ways unseen, subtly raising the bar.

In offices, homes, and streets alike, small gestures of honesty accumulate like droplets in a river, shaping the flow of everyday life. It was easy to overlook, easy to dismiss as "just another day." And yet it mattered.

The story of a thousand shillings became less about money and more about how small, quiet acts can ripple outward, influencing the people, the community, and the shared belief that even in ordinary moments, integrity still counts.

The clerk reflected quietly on the day. She thought about the countless small decisions she had made, often unnoticed, that shaped the lives of people who would never know her name. She realized that the office was a microcosm of the society outside; small acts of diligence, honesty, and patience had the power to shift expectations, instil trust, and create ripples that extended far beyond the walls of the room. A thousand shillings might have changed her day, or theirs, in ways both tangible and invisible. But choosing the right path consistently, quietly, was a contribution to a larger vision of society, one in which integrity mattered.

As the line thinned and the afternoon wore on, the office returned to its familiar pace. Papers were stamped, files moved forward, and chairs scraped softly against the floor. Still, something lingered, an unspoken recognition that small choices mattered, and in its place was a different kind of exchange trust. For the citizens, the day moved forward with dignity intact. For the officer, the reward was less visible but steadier, the calm that comes from knowing the system had not been bent even slightly.

In the end, the story of a thousand shillings is never really about money; it is about people, choices, and the quiet power of doing what is right.

**Writer is a Communication Officer at EACC,  
Lower Eastern Regional Office, Machakos**



# Why citizen vigilance is critical for accountability



By Abel Tunga Marevu

Devolution has brought governance closer to the people. County governments now manage substantial public resources and make decisions that directly affect citizens' livelihoods, from land administration to infrastructure development. However, as governance has moved closer to citizens, so too has the responsibility to safeguard integrity.

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) recognizes that the fight against corruption cannot be won by institutions alone. Empowered communities are indispensable partners in promoting transparency and accountability. Recent developments in Kilifi and Nairobi Counties serve as case studies of how citizen-led action can yield tangible results.

In early 2026, residents of Mwanda and Ramisi villages in Kayafungo Ward, Kaloleni Sub-County, Kilifi County, faced imminent eviction despite holding Government-issued title deeds to their land. The affected families alleged irregularities and possible collusion by public officials in the land administration process.

The affected residents organized themselves, consolidated ownership documents, and formally petitioned relevant authorities. They engaged their elected representatives, sought media attention to amplify their concerns, and pursued legal avenues to halt the evictions. Their coordinated and lawful action led to the suspension of eviction measures pending review, and compelled scrutiny of land records and administrative procedures. The case illustrated how vigilant communities can detect governance failures early and deter abuse of office.

In Mariakani, Kilifi County, residents raised concerns about their exclusion from planning processes for the Jomvu–Mariakani road project under the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA). Rather than opposing development, they demanded inclusion and transparency, invoking their constitutional right to public participation.

Following sustained community advocacy, KeNHA convened a public participation forum to engage residents, provide project details, and receive feedback. The outcome reinforced a fundamental principle: public participation is not a procedural formality but a constitutional obligation. Citizens' insistence on consultation strengthened transparency in infrastructure planning and demonstrated how engagement can prompt institutional responsiveness.

In January 2026, residents of Mukuru kwa Njenga in Nairobi halted demolitions linked to the Catherine Ndereba road expansion project. The community argued that demolitions were being conducted without adequate consultation and safeguards.

Public protests drew significant attention, prompting intervention by the Nairobi Governor, who suspended the demolitions, which were deemed irregular, and called for structured engagement with residents. The case demonstrated that citizen vigilance can compel administrative review and reinforce procedural fairness in urban development.

These experiences affirm that community-led approaches are not merely idealistic but practical tools for combating corruption and promoting transparency.

Devolution has placed power closer to the people. With that proximity comes shared responsibility. Institutions provide oversight, enforcement, and policy direction. Communities provide vigilance, early detection, and social accountability.

The war against corruption cannot be won by institutions alone. As a civic duty, it requires an informed, engaged, and courageous citizenry committed to upholding transparency and accountability at every level of governance.

**Writer is a Forensic Investigator at EACC, Upper Eastern Regional Office, Isiolo**



## Building a corruption – free Kenya begins in our schools

**C**orruption is one of the most serious challenges facing our nation and Africa as a whole. It has numerous negative effects on the education sector, affecting learners as well as both teaching and non-teaching staff in various ways.

First, before students are admitted to schools to begin or continue their education, some corrupt principals and headteachers demand bribes from parents in exchange for admission. As a result, deserving students may lose valuable educational opportunities. The same problem applies to government and non-governmental scholarship programs, where corruption denies support to those who truly need and deserve it.

Secondly, examination malpractice in many corrupt schools is another major problem that leads to poor-quality education. In our country, numerous cases of examination irregularities have been reported. As a result, learners may obtain academic certificates without possessing the necessary skills. Such graduates pose a serious danger to society when they enter professional fields for which they are unqualified.

It is often said that future leaders are nurtured in schools. Many individuals discover their leadership abilities and talents at a young age while still in school. However, when corruption and impunity are practiced in these institutions, the outcome is worrying. What kind of leaders will emerge from

such environments? Instead of eliminating political instability, corruption fuels it, leading to increased suffering among citizens as accountability is ignored.

In some schools, teachers distribute resources unfairly among students. They may favour some learners based on academic performance, family background, or other biased reasons. This unequal treatment makes some students feel neglected, lowering their self-esteem and contributing to poor academic performance.

Finally, corruption in schools promotes a corrupt culture in the nation. Students exposed to dishonest practices may grow up viewing corruption as normal. As adults, they carry these habits into society, leading to widespread immoral behavior that becomes difficult to eliminate.

Imagine a Kenya without corruption. What a great nation it would be! This vision can only be achieved if corruption in schools is eradicated. This is not an individual responsibility but a collective one involving students, teachers, parents, and the government. Together, we can eliminate corruption by starting with our schools.

**By Elvis Munene, 3 Red  
KANYAKINE HIGH SCHOOL**

# Corruption in schools: A barrier to quality education

**C**orruption refers to dishonest or illegal behavior, especially by individuals in positions of authority. Among the many sectors in our country, the education sector is one of the most affected by corruption. Its effects are widely felt in schools and often extend to parents and the surrounding community.

One major effect of corruption is the reduction or mismanagement of government capitation funds. Capitation helps lower the cost of education for parents by supporting school operations. When these funds are misused or delayed due to corruption, schools are forced to charge extra fees to continue running normally. As a result, parents, especially those from low-income backgrounds, are burdened with additional costs to cover basic needs such as food, books, and learning materials.

Corruption also leads to the use of poor and inadequate facilities in schools, particularly in practical subjects and co-curricular activities such as games. Government funding is intended to help schools upgrade facilities and improve academic outcomes. However, when funds are misappropriated, schools are left with faulty or outdated facilities, leading to poor performance in internal and external examinations, including the KCSE.

Another effect of corruption is the shortage of essential facilities. Schools with insufficient resources are often forced to borrow equipment from neighboring schools, which is inefficient since the facilities may already be in use. This results in the postponement of practical lessons, negatively affecting effective learning. In some schools, where parents are unable to pay fees, students may even

face hunger due to lack of funds to purchase food. Schools are then forced to rely on suppliers to provide food on credit, hoping that outstanding fees will eventually be paid.

Corrupt school principals also play a significant role in the decline of education standards. Some principals limit or cancel educational outings such as academic contests, sports, and benchmarking trips in order to divert funds for personal gain. These activities are dismissed as unnecessary, and schools are run with the belief that only classroom learning matters.

This leads to boredom, monotony, and low student motivation.

Corruption within the school environment also occurs among non-teaching staff, particularly in areas such as the kitchen. Some staff steal food items like sugar and flour for personal use and later claim that supplies are insufficient. This forces the school to release additional funds for food, funds that could have been used for other important development projects.

Students themselves can also engage in corrupt practices. This happens when they smuggle drugs into school or arrange for outsiders to supply them. Drug abuse causes learners to become inattentive in class, leading to poor academic performance and negatively affecting the school as a whole.

Lastly, corruption among essential support staff further worsens the situation. Some staff members collude with students to sneak prohibited items into the school in exchange for money. This creates an environment where discipline is undermined and corruption is normalized within the institution.

## How corruption undermines education

Corruption is the act of engaging in illegal or unethical behavior by abandoning moral standards. Education, on the other hand, is the process of teaching, training, and learning that equips individuals with knowledge, skills, and values needed for a better future. When corruption infiltrates the education sector, especially in secondary schools, it undermines the purpose of education and negatively affects learners and institutions.

One major effect of corruption in the education sector is that it hinders the achievement of educational goals. Corruption encourages unethical thinking and poor decision-making, which distracts students, teachers, and administrators from their core responsibilities. Instead of focusing on learning and personal

development, individuals become driven by selfish interests, leading to unfair practices such as favoritism, cheating, and misuse of resources.

Corruption also acts as a serious distraction. It diverts attention from meaningful academic work and weakens discipline and integrity within schools. As a result, students may lose motivation, teachers may fail to uphold professional standards, and the overall quality of education declines. This ultimately prevents learners from reaching their full potential.

Corruption in education can be avoided by promoting strong moral values among students. Schools should engage learners in ethical and positive activities such as Bible study, physical activities, and participation

in clubs and societies. In addition, training students on good morals and ethics helps them develop integrity and make responsible decisions that support ethical behavior.

Education in secondary schools is very important because it helps students achieve their goals, expand their knowledge, and develop essential skills for working with others. In today's modern world, education has become compulsory and plays a key role in shaping a successful and responsible future. Therefore, eliminating corruption in the education sector is essential for the growth of individuals and the development of society as a whole.

**Oddson Kamweru**  
10P – 10026

# Poetry

## Corruption Corruption!

My heart's awakening cries,  
When evil thoughts molest.  
My silent spirit sighs  
With this I shield my breast  
Corruption, corruption, corruption

Leaders become heartless,  
The power of darkness fear,  
Children become hopeless  
When this bad chant they hear,  
Corruption, corruption, corruption

The harmful sins that made them grow,  
Are still our souls oppressing  
Learners tears from their eyes did flow  
Their shame confessing  
Corruption, corruption, corruption

The tears flow down their cheeks  
unbidden  
Do they fear the gathering clouds of  
sorrow?  
While making crimes hidden  
Are they anxious what shall be tomorrow?  
Corruption, corruption, corruption

Justice like mountain  
To both great and small  
The cloud which are fountains  
For they are equal all  
Corruption, corruption, corruption

*Written By: Collins Arunga*

## Uongozi Adilifu, Kenya Tunayoitaka

Kenya Tunayoitaka,  
Si Ndoto Iliyo Mbali,  
Ni Mwanga Unaowashwa,  
Na Mioyo Ilo Radhi  
Kusema Kweli Daima,  
Na Ya Kuthamini Utu,  
Uongozi Adilifu,  
Kenya Tunayoitaka

Uongozi Ulo Bora,  
Hujikita Sheriyani  
Wadhifa Sio Dhuluma,  
Siku Zote Tutambue  
Ni Amana Yao Umma,  
Jamani Tusaliti  
Uongozi Adilifu,  
Kenya Tunayoitaka

Mamlaka Ni Huduma,  
Sio Watu Kuwahini  
Demokrasia Imara,  
Watu Kuwashirikisha  
Na Kusimamia Haki,  
Hata Kuwe Na Utupu.  
Uongozi Adilifu,  
Kenya Tunayoitaka

Rushwa Ni Donda Suguu,  
Huangamiza Taifa  
Ipenyapo Pana Pengo,  
Huduma Huathirika  
Tukomeshe Kwa Vitendo,  
Vituoni Mwa Huduma  
Uongozi Adilifu,  
Kenya Tunayoitaka

Vijana Tuamkeni,  
Sikubali Kupotezwa,  
Kwa Tamaa Za Dakika,  
Misingi Kuharibiwa.  
Sisi Ni Mbegu Za Kesho,  
Kuliotesha Taifa,  
Uongozi Adilifu,  
Kenya Tunayoitaka

Hebu Tuongoze Njia,  
Na Tuchanje Mwendu Mwema  
Na Pia Tuwe Shujaa,  
Maadili Yasivunjwe  
Tuwe Nuru Ya Jamii,  
Tusisukwe Na Mawimbi  
Uongozi Adilifu,  
Kenya Tunayoitaka

Historia Kiandikwa,  
Tukumbukwe Kwa Fahari,  
Kwamba Kizazi Cha Leo,  
Kilikuwa Na Ujasiri.  
Kuchagua Maadili,  
Na Kukataa Tamaa,  
Uongozi Adilifu,  
Kenya Tunayoitaka

Tamati Nimeshafika,  
Ukumbini Naondoka  
Hamasa Nimewapeni,  
Kuhusu Letu Jukumu

Tena Nawahimizeni,  
Maadili Tusipuzeni,  
Uongozi Adilifu,  
Kenya Tunayoitaka

*Composed By Zuhura Mzee and  
Shallet Walongo - Education  
Officers, EACC.*



# Barabara Iliishia Kwa Mto

Walifika na promises kibao, wakasema maendeleo  
iko njiani,

Ati roads zitaunganisha mtaa bila break,  
Maji itatoka kwa tap kila siku bila noma,  
Dispensary itakata safari ndefu za mateso,  
Mitambo ikaingia ground, hope ikapanda kama  
vumbi ya grader,

**Barabara Iliyoishia kwa mto, itaendelea?**

Classrooms zikachipuka, soko ikawekewa mabati  
fresh,

Watu wakasema sasa life itabamba vinoma  
Lakini tender ilipopenya, dooh ikaanza kuyeyuka  
kimya,

Cement ikawa nyepesi kama uji ya mtoi,  
Chuma ikaonekana ikijenga maboma za wazito,  
**Barabara Iliyoishia kwa mto, itaendelea?**

Mama Achieng bado anapiga dusty road polepole,

Mgonjwa mgongoni, safari bado ndefu,  
Borehole inapuliza hewa badala ya maji safi,  
Dispensary inapendeza kwa rangi mpya tu,  
Hakuna nurse, hakuna dawa kwa shelf,  
Barabara iliyoishia kwa mto, itaendelea?

Usiku maprado mpya zinapita mdogo mdogo,  
Headlights zinakata giza ya mtaa vinoma,  
Ambapo stima haijawai fika hata leo,

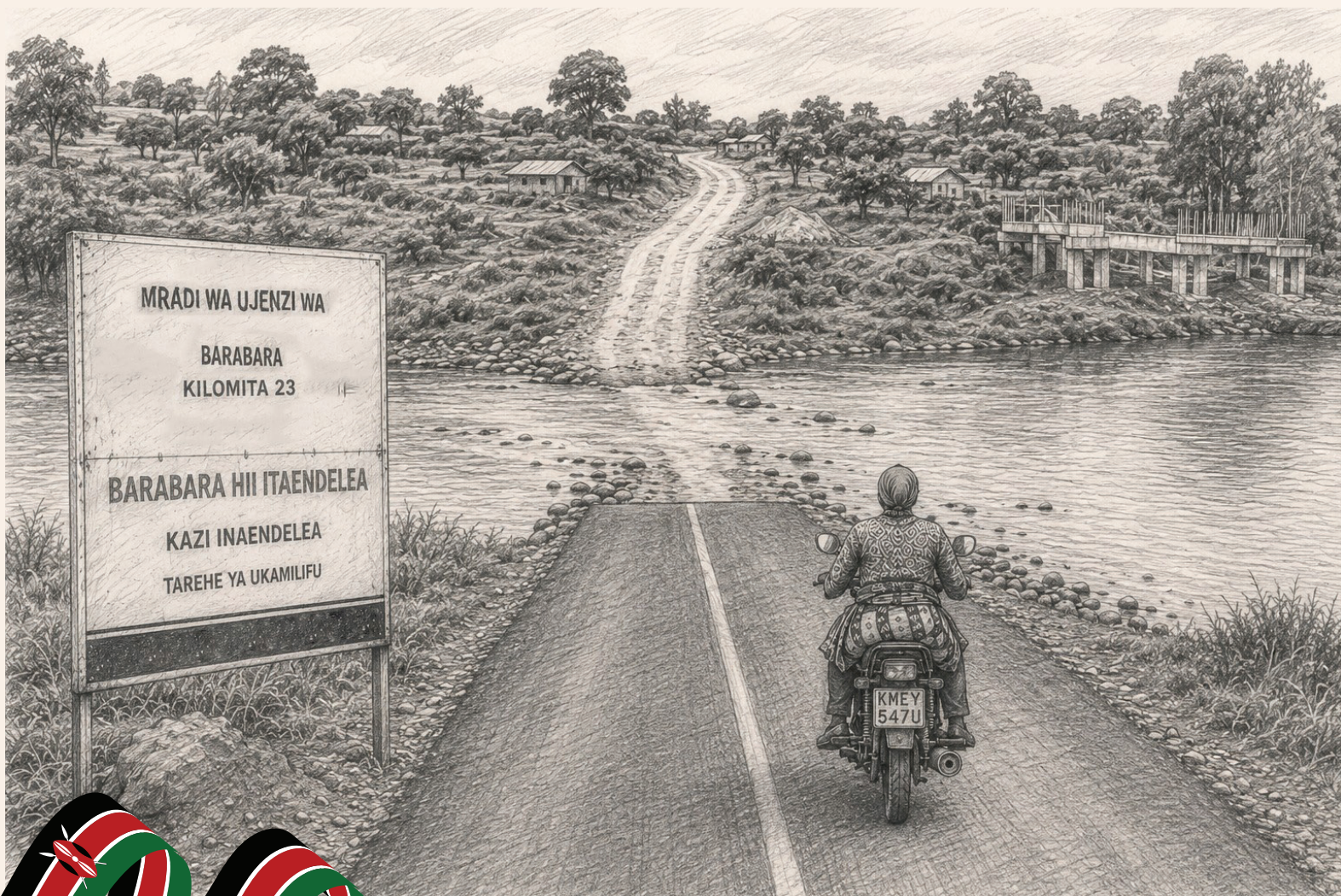
Kwa base sauti zinabaki chini chini,  
**Barabara Iliyoishia kwa mto, itaendelea?**

Lakini asubuhi huingia bila permit wala notice  
Boda guy anakataa kutoa kakitu kwa uthabiti

Wazee wanadai majibu kwa baraza,  
Uwoga inaanza kuyeyuka polepole,

Ukweli unapata nguvu mpya kila siku, lakini maze..  
**Barabara Iliyoishia kwa mto, itaendelea?**

*Composed by Pablo, Jama wa Comms*





# Let the county trillions deliver measurable results

*The next decade of devolution must shift from resource transfer to results-based governance to fulfil the constitutional promise of equity, accountability, and inclusive development*



By Commissioner CPA John Ogallo

**W**hen Kenya adopted the 2010 Constitution, devolution was envisioned as a bold correction to decades of centralized governance. It promised to disperse power, resources, and opportunity, ensuring development would no longer depend on proximity to the capital but on constitutional entitlement.

More than a decade later, the fiscal commitment to that vision is unmistakable. Since FY2013/14, cumulative transfers to counties have reached approximately Kes3.6 trillion. Annual allocations have grown from about Kes190 billion in the first year to more than Kes355 billion in FY2023/24, excluding additional grants. The National Government has broadly honoured its obligation to fund devolved units.

Yet the defining question today is not whether counties receive money. It is whether that money is delivering measurable transformation.

Reports from the Office of the Auditor-General and the Controller of Budget consistently reveal deep governance weaknesses. Counties are repeatedly flagged for irregular and unsupported expenditures, unverified pending bills, and weak internal controls. Audit queries recur year after year, pointing to systemic deficiencies rather than isolated mistakes.

Breaches of the Public Finance Management Act remain common. Some counties operate unauthorized bank accounts. Others exceed the statutory 35 percent ceiling on personnel emoluments, devoting disproportionate resources to salaries and allowances. Development budgets, meanwhile, record chronically low absorption rates, in some cases below 10 percent.

This imbalance between recurrent and development spending strikes at the heart of devolution's purpose. Counties were established to accelerate grassroots development: build health facilities, upgrade roads, expand water access, and stimulate local economies. Instead, stalled infrastructure projects, incomplete public works, and ballooning pending bills have become recurring features in audit reports.

The human cost is real: suppliers go unpaid, communities wait years for promised projects, and citizens lose confidence in institutions. Alongside these challenges, counties continue to grapple with accountability and governance drawbacks requiring restitutive interventions by oversight institutions. Between FY2016/17 and FY2025/26, officials across governors' offices, county executives, and assemblies had assets worth approximately Kes5.24 billion recovered. Notably, FY2024/25 alone saw over Kes1.53 billion recovered from county executives, and FY2025/26 resulted in Kes1.94 billion forfeited in a governor-related unexplained wealth case. Proactive oversight interventions also averted an estimated Kes5.6 billion in potential losses during the same period, highlighting both persistent risks and the effectiveness of enforcement mechanisms.

High-profile corruption cases have further complicated the picture. Several governors, both serving and former, have faced charges ranging from conflict of interest and procurement irregularities to abuse of office and money laundering. The conviction of former Samburu Governor Moses Kasaine Lenolkul marked a historic accountability milestone. The sentencing of former Kiambu Governor Ferdinand Ndung'u Waititu reinforced the message that holding office does not guarantee immunity.

County executives, chief officers, and assembly officials have also been arraigned over irregular tenders and fraudulent payments. These cases expose persistent vulnerabilities in procurement systems, internal control functions, and financial oversight.

Yet amid these challenges, there are signs of institutional maturation. The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, alongside the Auditor-General and Controller of Budget, has intensified scrutiny. Public reporting is more detailed. Asset recovery efforts are increasingly visible. Citizens are more informed and assertive in demanding transparency. The very fact that wrongdoing is exposed and prosecuted reflects a governance system that, while strained, is not dormant.

Still, exposure is not reform. Structural weaknesses remain entrenched. Counties routinely underperform in own-source revenue collection, constraining fiscal autonomy. Budget preparation delays disrupt implementation. Manual or poorly integrated financial systems leave room for inefficiency and manipulation. Legal and operational bottlenecks periodically paralyze funding flows.

If devolution is to fulfil its constitutional promise, the next phase must focus on results, not just resource flows. Financial management must be professionalized. County treasuries require qualified personnel, strict adherence to accounting standards, and full automation of exchequer and procurement processes. Financial controls must function in practice, not merely on paper.

Enforcement must be credible. Audit recommendations cannot remain annual formalities. Clear compliance timelines, coupled with meaningful sanctions for persistent violations, would shift incentives.

Personal accountability for unauthorized expenditures would deter risk-taking with public funds.

The recurrent-development imbalance must be corrected. Counties should strictly observe the wage bill ceiling and prioritize capital investment with visible public impact. Linking a portion of transfers to performance indicators, such as development absorption rates or project completion benchmarks, could reinforce fiscal discipline.

Own-source revenue systems need modernization. Digitized collection platforms, transparent reporting, and elimination of informal revenue channels would reduce leakages and strengthen county autonomy.

Transparency must become proactive. Counties should publish project costs, contractors, timelines, and implementation

updates in accessible formats. Public participation in budgeting must evolve from procedural compliance to informed engagement.

Above all, ethical leadership must anchor the next chapter of devolution. Devolution was never merely about transferring trillions of shillings from the National Treasury to counties. It was about transforming governance: correcting historical inequities, empowering communities, and making the state more responsive.

The fiscal foundation has been laid. Oversight institutions are active and increasingly effective. High-level prosecutions demonstrate that impunity is no longer absolute. Civic awareness has grown. But citizens will ultimately judge devolution not by allocations or audit reports, but by lived

experience, including reliable healthcare, functional infrastructure, accessible water, and meaningful economic opportunity.

Kenya stands at a pivotal moment. The first decade of devolution established structures and funding streams. The next must deliver measurable outcomes. Moving from resource transfer to results-based governance is essential to preserving public trust and realizing the constitutional promise of equity, accountability, and inclusive development.

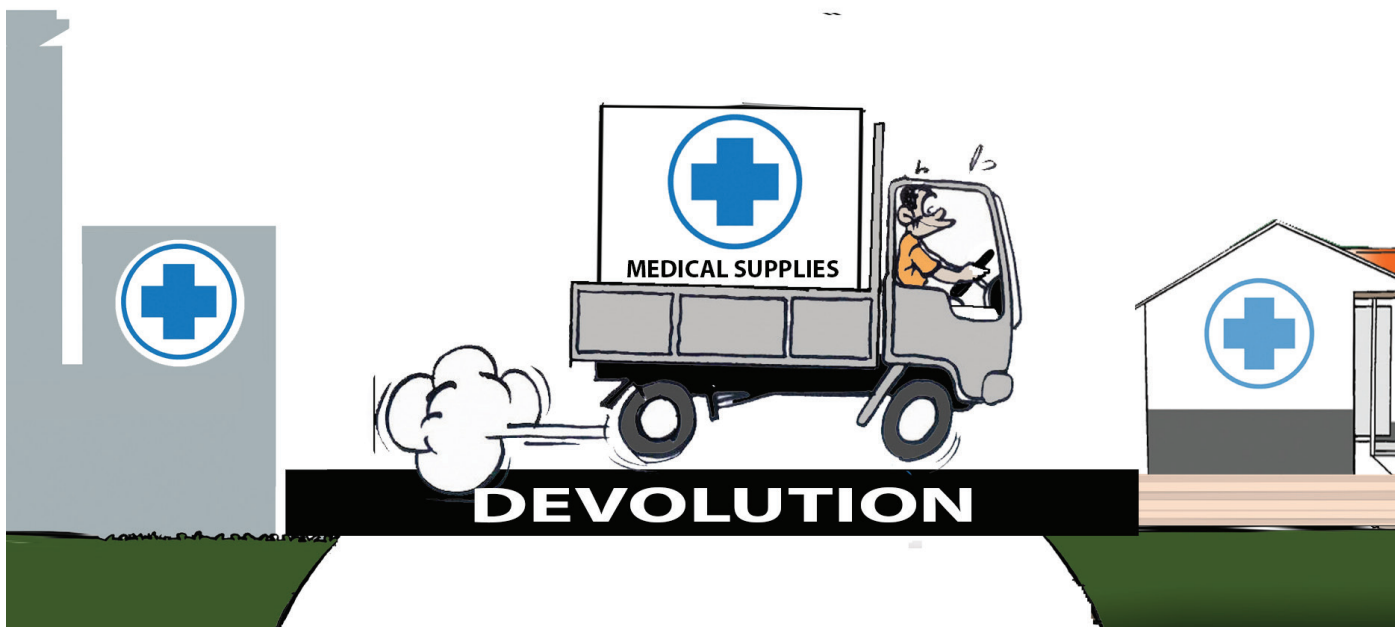
Devolution can still succeed, but only if integrity, discipline, and political will match the scale of resources already committed.

**Writer is a Public Financial Management (PFM) expert and serves as a Commissioner at the EACC**

## BEFORE DEVOLUTION....

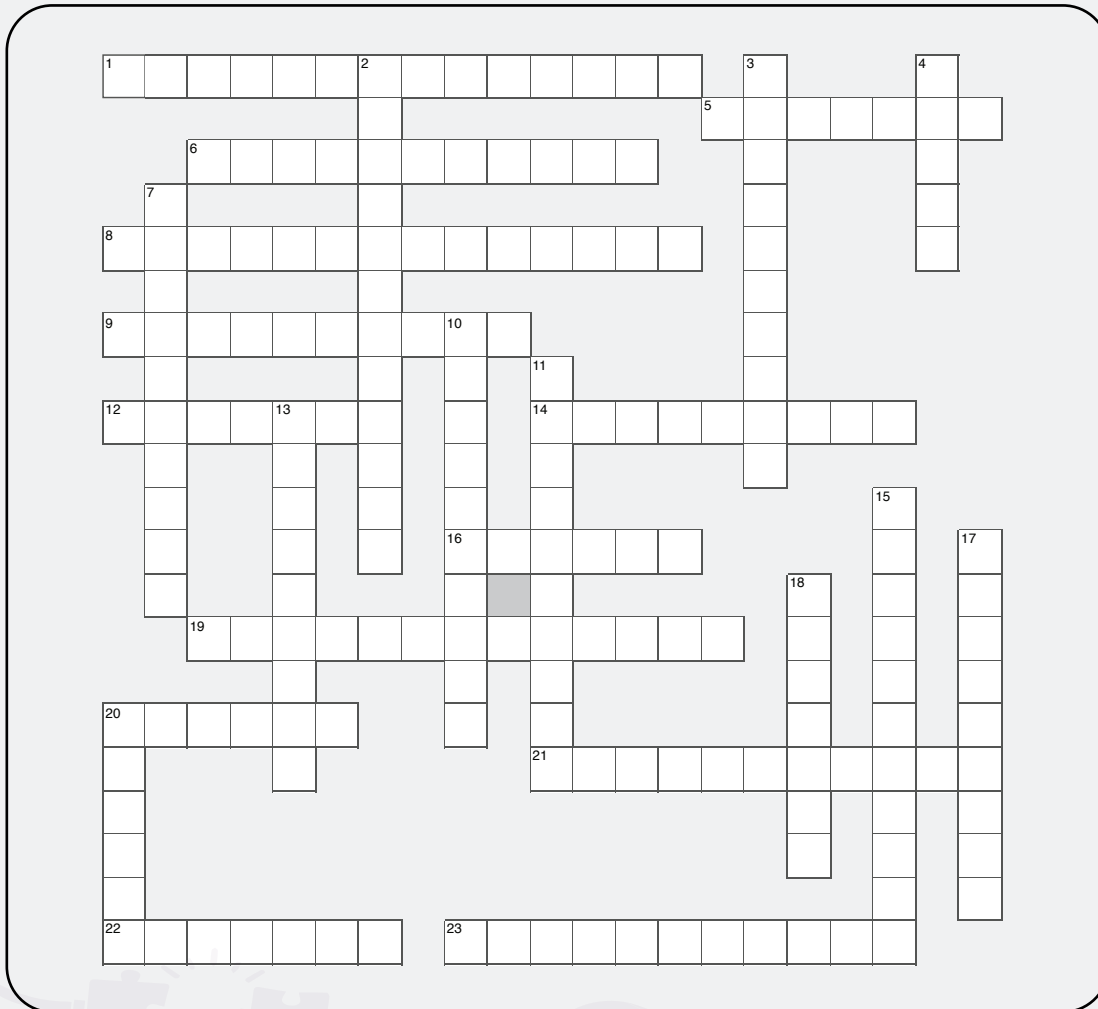


## AFTER DEVOLUTION.....



# Integrity and devolution

By John Machanje



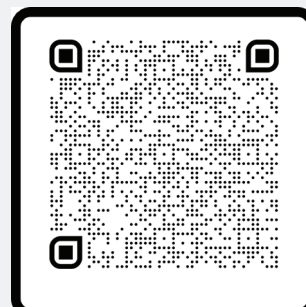
## ACROSS

- 1 Being answerable for actions and the use of public resources
- 5 Income collected by the government, such as taxes and fees
- 6 Responsible management of public resources
- 8 Duty to deal with something or take care of someone or something
- 9 The system of managing public affairs and institutions
- 12 Fair treatment under the law
- 14 Monitoring activities to ensure proper conduct
- 16 A course of action adopted by the government or institutions
- 19 Involvement of citizens in decision-making processes
- 20 Fairness and justice in the distribution of resources
- 21 Giving people authority or power to make decisions
- 22 Assistance or benefits provided to the public by the government

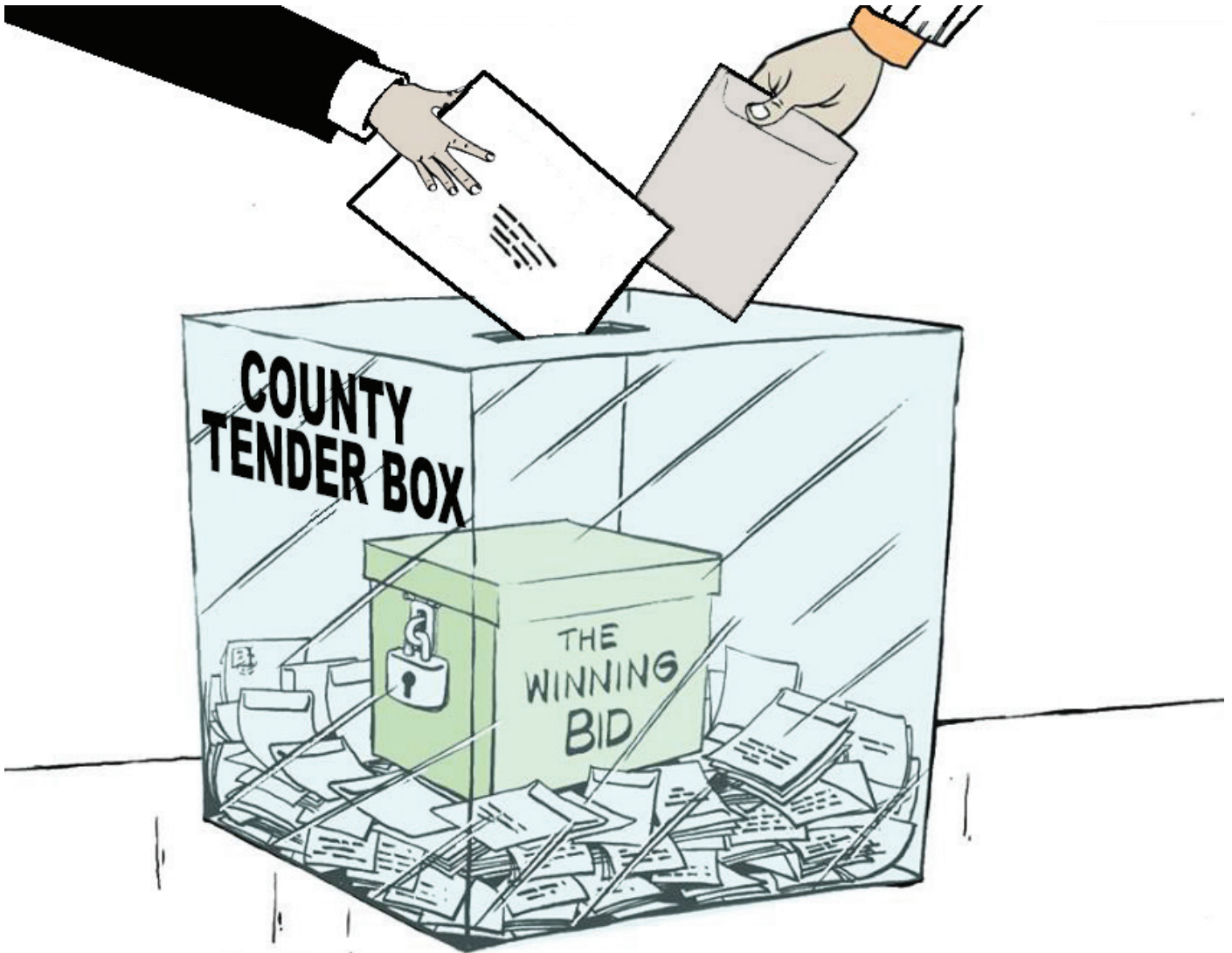
## DOWN

- 23 Improvement in economic and social well-being
- 2 Openness in decision-making and public processes
- 3 Guiding and influencing others toward a common goal

- 4 Official inspection of accounts and activities
- 7 Transfer of power and resources from the national government to the counties
- 10 Abuse of entrusted power for private gain
- 11 Following laws, rules, and regulations
- 13 Adherence to moral and ethical principles
- 15 The process of acquiring goods and services for the government
- 17 Planning how public funds will be spent
- 18 Making improvements or changes to systems
- 20 Moral principles that govern behaviour



Scan me for answers!





***“The future is digital. And if we get it right, it will also be transparent, efficient, and refreshingly corruption-free.”***



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