Spear of Integrity

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Graft in the Digital Era



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Data analytics, artificial intelligence and digital transaction trails can help identify suspicious patterns, detect corruption risks and strengthen investigations.



Editorial

Profit with integrity



By Stephen Karuga

In a highly competitive private sector, businesses are under pressure to win contracts, reduce costs and remain afloat. In such circumstances, they face a choice: compete fairly and follow the painstaking rules or take unethical shortcuts.

The temptation to secure short-term advantage at the expense of integrity can undermine the very success businesses seek to achieve. Too often in our society, the end is used to justify the means: profit takes precedence over ethical conduct, bribes are disguised as "facilitation," and conflicts of interest are normalised as "networks." Consequently, business success is sometimes celebrated without questioning the values underpinning it.

Yet the consequences extend far beyond individual businesses. Building a culture of integrity in the private sector is essential to the fight against corruption. From Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to large corporations and multinationals, the sector drives economic growth through investment, innovation, production and job creation. The choices businesses make shape not only their fortunes but also the ethical standards of entire industries. Corruption distorts fair competition, disadvantages honest enterprises and undermines public trust.

As business practices evolve, so too must the fight against corruption. The expansion into digital spaces presents new opportunities but also new risks, as corrupt practices adapt to emerging technologies. Data analytics, artificial intelligence and digital transaction trails can help identify suspicious patterns, detect corruption risks and strengthen investigations. However, technology alone is not enough; it must be underpinned by sound governance, accountability and a firm commitment to ethical conduct.

The real test, therefore, is whether businesses can pursue growth without compromising the principles that make their success legitimate. Through ethical leadership, transparent business practices and accountability, businesses can build trust, attract investment and sustain growth without compromising their values.

The choice is clear: short-term gains through corruption or lasting prosperity built on principle. By rejecting bribery, competing fairly and embracing responsible innovation, the private sector can protect livelihoods and contribute to a more equitable and prosperous society.

In the end, the true measure of business success is not simply how much is earned, but how it is earned.



TRUST



HONESTY



ETHICS



INTEGRITY

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NEWS

EACC CEO elected to AAACA Executive Committee

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Abdi Mohamud, was elected to the Executive Committee of the Association of African Anti-Corruption Authorities (AAACA) during the Association's 8th General Assembly held in Nairobi in June 2026.

Mr. Mohamud now represents the Eastern Africa Region on the continental body's Executive Committee, which serves a three-year term and comprises representatives from all five African regions. His election gives Kenya a direct voice in the Association's decision-making and strengthens EACC's participation in continental efforts to promote integrity, accountability, and good governance.

He serves alongside Abdulla M. A. Gadir Bo of Libya, representing Northern Africa; Gaoretelelwe Leonard Lekgetho of South Africa, Southern Africa; Cllr. Alexandra K. Zoe of Liberia, Western Africa; and Bénie-Laure Kamwiziku Kusanzakana of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central Africa.

The General Assembly also elected Dr Modibo Sacko of Mali's Central Office for the Repression of Illicit Enrichment (OCLEI) as president.



The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Abdi. Mohamud (R) and Executive Committee of the African Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities, which will serve a term of three years.

Hon. Michael Reza of the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission and Khaled Benguernane of Algeria's High Authority for Transparency, Prevention and Fight Against Corruption were elected First and Second Vice Presidents, respectively.

The Assembly selected Libya to host the 9th General Assembly.

Mr Mohamud's election gives EACC a direct voice in continental policy discussions on integrity and accountability and strengthens cooperation among African authorities working to promote good governance.

Continental centre for anti–corruption research launched in Nairobi

A new continental institution dedicated to the study of corruption was launched in Nairobi in June 2026, establishing a platform for research, policy development, capacity building and knowledge sharing on governance across Africa.

The Africa Anti-Corruption Studies and Research Centre (CEREAC) aims to generate evidence and insights to inform solutions grounded in the continent's realities. The Centre was launched during the 8th Annual General Assembly of the Association of African Anti-Corruption Authorities (AAACA).

Attorney General Dorcas Oduor, representing President William Ruto, presided over the launch. In a message delivered at the event, the President called for African-led, evidence-driven approaches to tackling corruption, noting that the challenge requires the contribution of researchers, economists, data scientists, governance experts, policy makers and academic institutions alongside investigators, prosecutors, auditors and judges.

EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde said CEREAC would help address knowledge gaps by studying the drivers and enablers of corruption and supporting interventions tailored to Africa's governance and development needs.



AAACA President General Hisham El-Rakaybi signs the visitors' book during the launch of the Africa Anti-Corruption Studies and Research Centre (CEREAC) in Nairobi. Looking on are EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde, Attorney General Dorcas Oduor, and EACC CEO Abdi Mohamud.

Providing further context on the Centre's mandate and evolution, EACC Chief Executive Officer Mr. Abdi Mohamud noted that CEREAC would serve as AAACA's research and analytical arm, with legal personality and administrative and financial autonomy. He traced its establishment to a decision adopted in Bujumbura in 2022, followed by its formal establishment in Johannesburg in 2023. Kenya was unanimously selected as host in January 2024, with the final launch resolution adopted in Algiers in July 2025.

The Assembly, which opened on June 16, brought together delegates from 45 anti-corruption institutions representing 43 African countries. It was the first time Kenya hosted the gathering since AAACA was founded. The meeting concluded with the election of new office bearers and adoption of resolutions to deepen continental cooperation.

Kes427 million in assets forfeited as anti-corruption push intensifies

A former Kilifi Principal Land Registrar, his wife and companies associated with him were ordered to forfeit assets worth Kes426.85 million in a major unexplained wealth case. In a judgment delivered on September 18, 2026, the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Court found that Felix Mecha Nyakundi and his wife, Stellah Nyaboke Otwori, had failed to satisfactorily explain the disparity between the assets they acquired and their known legitimate sources of income.

The forfeited assets include Kes233.58 million held in bank and M-Pesa accounts, properties valued at Kes177.11 million in Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kilifi, motor vehicles worth Kes11.9 million and Kes4.26 million in cash recovered during a search operation.

In Mombasa and Kwale, the EACC recovered public land worth about Kes100 million following two separate judgments delivered in July 2026.

On July 14, the Kwale Environment and Land Court ordered the cancellation of the title to a 0.253-acre property, LR Mombasa Municipality/Block XXVI/933, valued at about Kes55 million. Three days later, the court ordered the recovery of LR Kwale/Diani Beach Block/1072, a 1.14-acre public beach access corridor valued at approximately Kes45 million.



Part of the 7.6-acre parcel of public land belonging to the Kenya Prisons Service in Kisumu, which was allegedly illegally and irregularly allocated to private individuals.

The individuals involved were also ordered to pay a total of Kes20 million in general damages for trespass arising from unlawful interference with public property and access rights.

Speaking during a public handover ceremony of the Diani property, Kwale Governor Fatuma Achani described the repossession as a major step towards addressing land grabbing and restoring public property. She commended EACC for its efforts to protect public assets in the county.

EACC Chief Executive Officer Abdi Ahmed Mohamud thanked the Kwale County Government for its cooperation and said the Commission would continue pursuing illegally acquired public property.

EACC is also seeking to recover 7.6 acres of Kenya Prisons Service land in Kisumu city valued at Kes790 million. The land was allegedly subdivided into 92 parcels and transferred to private individuals. With developments included, its estimated value rises to about Kes4.3 billion. The Commission has filed a case at the Environment and Land Court and urged holders of titles to undeveloped portions of the land to voluntarily surrender them.

Mohamud also encouraged those who may have irregularly acquired public land to use Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to surrender the property rather than engage in prolonged court processes.

The recoveries reinforce EACC's efforts to protect public assets and reverse unlawful alienation of government property. In the past three years, the Commission has recovered public assets valued at more than Kes10.9 billion across the country.

EACC, ODPP strengthen partnership in fight against corruption

Closer collaboration between investigators and prosecutors is key to strengthening the fight against corruption and money laundering, the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) have affirmed.

The commitment was made during a meeting between the leadership of the two institutions at the Kenya School of Government in July 2026. The meeting reviewed progress in their ongoing collaboration and identified additional measures to enhance the investigation and prosecution of corruption cases.

EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde observed that corruption remains one of the greatest obstacles to Kenya's development, undermining public trust and compromising service delivery. He emphasised that closer cooperation between investigators and prosecutors is essential to ensuring thorough investigations and effective prosecution of corruption cases.

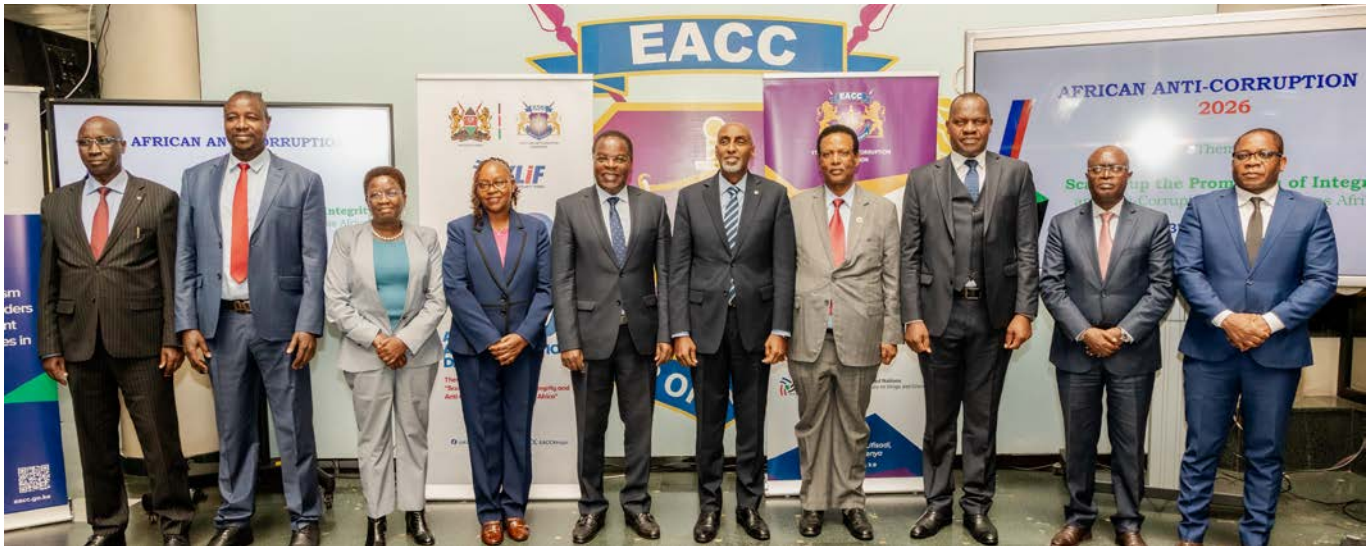


The Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr. Renson Ingonga; EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde (centre); Chief Executive Officer Mr. Abdi Mohamud; Vice Chairperson Dr. Monica Muiru; and Commissioners Dr. Cecilia Mutuku and Col. (Rtd.) Alfred Mshimba, alongside other officials from ODPP and EACC, pose for a group photo at the Kenya School of Government (KSG).

Highlighting the importance of inter-agency cooperation, EACC Chief Executive Officer Mr. Abdi Mohamud said the fight against corruption requires institutions across the justice sector to work together. He noted that although the two institutions have distinct constitutional mandates, they share a common responsibility to deliver justice through effective investigations, successful prosecutions and the recovery of assets acquired through corruption.

For his part, Director of Public Prosecutions Mr. Renson Ingonga said the meeting provided an opportunity to deepen cooperation and improve the quality of investigations and prosecutions. He noted that stronger collaboration would enable the institutions to better protect the public interest and uphold the rule of law. The meeting resulted in several agreed measures, including joint training for investigators and prosecutors, enhanced collaboration in case reviews, and increased focus on high-impact corruption and money laundering cases.

The commitment complemented ongoing efforts under the Anti-Corruption Strategic Guiding Framework for Kenya's Justice Sector, which brings together key justice sector institutions under a coordinated anti-corruption agenda.



The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, Commissioner Dr. Cecilia Mutuku, Vice Chairperson Dr. Monica Muiru, Chairperson Dr. David Oginde, Chief Executive Officer Mr. Abdi Mohamud, and Commissioner Col. (Rtd.) Alfred Mshimba, alongside Deputy Inspector General of the Administration Police Service Gilbert Masengeli and other Kenya Leadership Integrity Forum (KLIF) stakeholders, during this year's African Anti-Corruption Day celebrations.



EACC Vice Chairperson Dr. Monica Muiru, Chairperson Rev. Dr. David Oginde, Chief Executive Officer Mr. Abdi A. Mohamud, and Commissioner Col. (Rtd.) Alfred Mshimba share a hearty laugh during the African Anti-Corruption Day celebrations.



Deputy Inspector General of the Administration Police Service, Mr. Gilbert Masengeli, delivers his remarks during the African Anti-Corruption Day celebrations.

Stakeholders renew call for collective action against corruption

Stronger partnerships and collective action are critical to winning the fight against corruption, stakeholders affirmed during the commemoration of the 10th African Anti-Corruption Day at the Integrity Centre in Nairobi, in July 2026.

The event, led by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) under the Kenya Leadership and Integrity Forum (KLIF), was held under the theme "Scaling Up the Promotion of Integrity and Anti-Corruption Actions Across Africa." It brought together representatives from government institutions, constitutional commissions, professional bodies, county governments, development partners, civil society and the private sector to reaffirm their commitment to promoting integrity and combating corruption.

Emphasising the need for a whole-of-society approach, EACC Chief Executive Officer Abdi Mohamud noted that anti-corruption agencies could not win the fight against corruption single-handedly. He called on all sectors of society to take an active role in fostering ethical conduct, strengthening accountability and promoting a culture of integrity.

On the Commission's strategic direction, EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde highlighted a shift from a compliance-based approach towards a governance-focused strategy aimed at addressing systemic weaknesses that create opportunities for corruption. He noted that strengthening governance systems and institutions was essential to preventing corruption and promoting ethical leadership.

African Anti-Corruption Day is commemorated annually on 11 July to mark the adoption of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption. The day provides an opportunity for African countries and stakeholders to renew their commitment to integrity, accountability and good governance.

Kajiado pilots grassroots approach to corruption prevention



Kajiado Governor H.E. Joseph Ole Lenku and EACC Vice Chairperson Dr. Monica Muiru flag off EACC Mashinani Campaign caravan in Kajiado County

Kajiado County piloted a grassroots approach to corruption prevention in September 2026 with the launch of the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission's (EACC) Mashinani campaign, bringing together public officials, community leaders and residents to strengthen participation in preventing corruption.

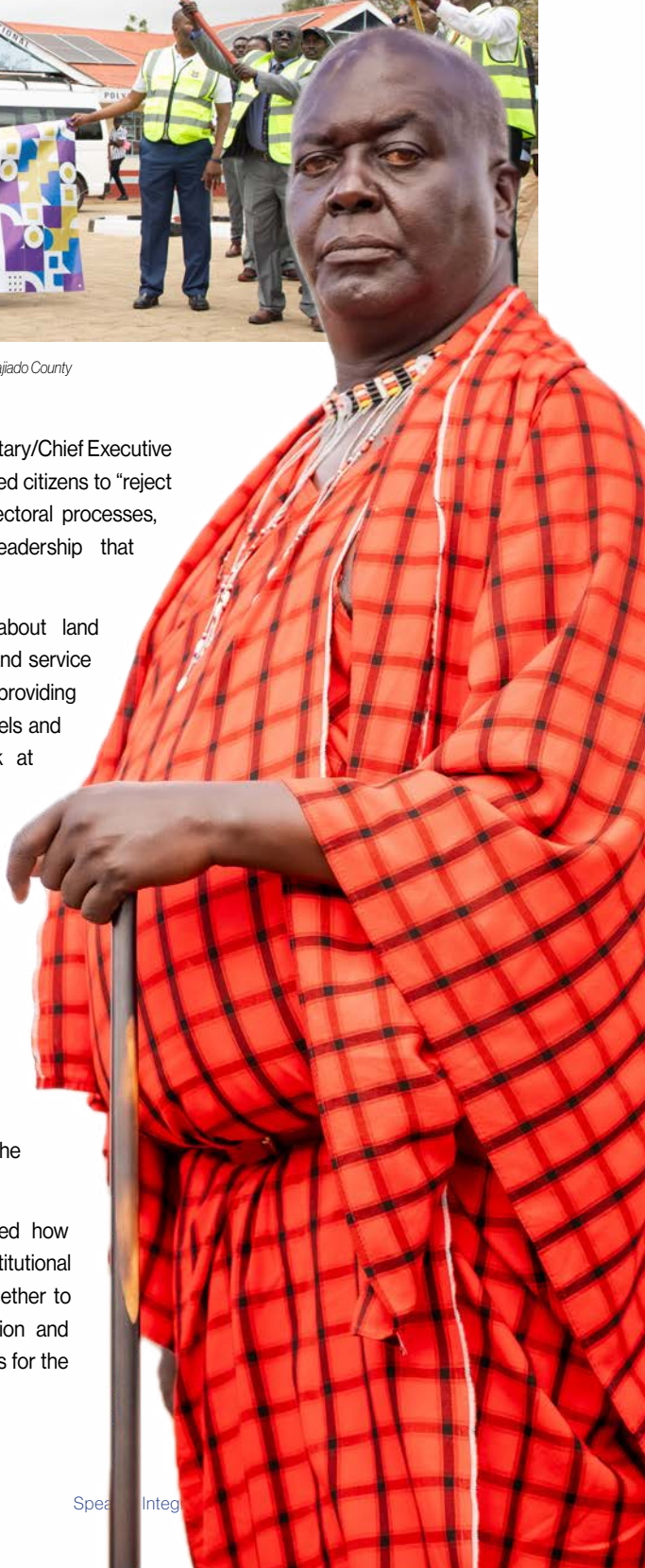
Held from September 21 to 25, the maiden initiative combined public outreach, stakeholder engagement, leadership sensitisation and community dialogue. Kajiado was the first county to host the campaign, which is set for rollout across the country.

The campaign was launched at Maasai National Polytechnic by Kajiado Governor H.E. Joseph Ole Lenku and EACC Vice-Chairperson Dr Monica Muiru. Activities included a countywide caravan outreach, youth engagements, follow-up on Corruption Risk Assessments, and a town hall meeting that brought together government officials, civil society, faith and community groups, and residents.

At the town hall, EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde called on public officers to "protect public resources and serve citizens in accordance with the law," while urging citizens to "reject and report corruption," which deprives communities of resources and essential services. EACC Secretary/Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Abdi Mohamud, urged citizens to "reject bribery," uphold integrity in electoral processes, and demand accountable leadership that safeguards public resources.

Residents raised concerns about land transactions, stalled projects, and service delivery. EACC responded by providing information on reporting channels and establishing a reporting desk at the forum. The initiative also strengthened institutional prevention, with County Executive Committee Members trained to identify systemic corruption risks, strengthen internal controls, and prevent financial mismanagement. Members of the County Assembly were sensitised on ethical leadership and their obligations under the Conflict-of-Interest Act, 2025.

The Kajiado pilot demonstrated how community engagement and institutional capacity-building can work together to strengthen corruption prevention and accountability, providing lessons for the initiative's national rollout.



Inside the Adili Online Version 3 Hackathon

What happens when public-sector challenges meet fresh technological thinking? At the United Nations Office at Nairobi in Gigiri, 31 participants set out to answer that question through a hackathon designed to explore how technology could improve integrity services.

A hackathon is an intensive, time-bound innovation exercise in which participants work in teams to develop technological solutions to specific problems. For the EACC, the approach offered an opportunity to bring fresh technical perspectives to the continued development of Adili Online Version 3 and explore ways to make its integrity services more efficient and responsive.

The two-day event, held on September 21–22, 2026, marked the opening phase of a 19-day innovation challenge organised by EACC in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Microsoft.

Adili Online is EACC's digital platform for accessing integrity-related services, including complaints and declarations of income, assets and liabilities. Participants tackled three challenge areas: conflict of interest, complaints and investigations; declarations of income, assets and liabilities (DIALs); and the Corruption Prevention Performance Contract Indicator.

Before coding began, EACC officers explained the processes and workflows behind the challenge areas. Microsoft facilitated sessions on Azure and GitHub, while the Commission's ICT team introduced the proposed technology stack. The sessions emphasised understanding users' needs, identifying pain points and examining existing processes before designing solutions.

Five multidisciplinary teams emerged: Team Hackie, Team HP2JS, Team Veritas, The A-Team and Team Shields. Each brought different skills and perspectives to the challenge.



The winning team of the Adili Online V3 hackathon, with representatives from EACC, Microsoft and UNODC pose for a photo after the successful completion of the 3 week innovation challenge.

At the final showcase on October 9, the A-Team emerged as the winner with a prototype for the DIALs module. The solution demonstrated opportunities to automate aspects of the declaration process using modern technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), potentially reducing reliance on manual procedures and improving processing efficiency.

Following the challenge, the A-Team was selected to undertake the development of Adili Online Version 3 across all three challenge areas, alongside enhancements to the existing Self Declarations and Bank Accounts Outside Kenya modules.

Beyond the competition, the hackathon provided an opportunity to explore practical technological solutions to institutional challenges. The next phase will build on this work, with the broader aim of strengthening EACC's digital integrity services.

Ultimately, the value of innovation lies not simply in developing new technology, but in applying it to address real institutional needs.

EACA sharpens skills to fight corruption

The Kenya Ethics and Anti-Corruption Academy (EACA) continues to strengthen national and regional capacity for corruption prevention, asset recovery, and ethical leadership through targeted training programmes.

The Academy, which is EACC's training arm, sensitised 60 Board Audit and Risk Committee members and secretariat officials from nine state agencies in Naivasha in May 2026. Under the theme "Detecting, Preventing and Responding to Corruption Risks in Public Sector Oversight," the training focused on internal controls, risk management and effective oversight.



Dr. Josephine Monyi, Head of The Kenya Ethics and Anti-Corruption Academy (EACA)



Commissioner Col. (Rtd) Alfred Mshimba emphasised collaboration to safeguard public resources, while Director of Preventive Services Vincent Okong'o urged proactive prevention.

Participants were challenged to scrutinize audit findings and ensure timely corrective action.

Extending its capacity-building efforts regionally, EACA trained 14 Ugandan MPs and two parliamentary staff in Nairobi in August and September 2026. The fourth cohort covered governance, ethics, integrity, conflicts of interest, public financial management and parliamentary oversight.

EACC Chairperson Dr. David Oginde urged courageous, principled leadership, while Uganda's Leader of the Opposition, Joel Ssenyonyi, welcomed the programme's contribution to legislation and oversight. EACC CEO Abdi Mohamud encouraged participants to champion accountability and public trust.

Meanwhile, with support from SecFin Africa, EACC launched a five-cohort programme targeting 125 investigators and legal officers to strengthen the tracing and forfeiture of unexplained assets. The first cohort trained in Kisumu in September 2026, drawing officers from four regional offices.

Focused on the new EACC Guidelines on Tracing and Forfeiture of Unexplained Assets, the programme will extend to headquarters and all regional offices, equipping officers to apply the guidelines from investigation and asset tracing through to forfeiture proceedings.

Forensic investigator wins Global Award

A commitment to integrity, accountability and professional excellence earned Ms Christine Ombaka, a forensic investigator at the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), the 2026 Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) Global Public Sector Advocacy Award. The award recognised her work in corruption investigations, forensic accounting, asset tracing and anti-corruption guidance, alongside her contribution to strengthening investigative systems and risk management in public institutions.

The ACCA judging panel also acknowledged her efforts to promote the accountancy profession, mentor emerging professionals and champion ethics, good governance and public accountability.

During the award presentation ceremony at Integrity Centre, EACC Chief Executive Officer Mr Abdi Mohamud, represented by the Director of Field Services, Mr Jackson Mue, congratulated Ms Ombaka on her achievement.

"The Commission is committed to supporting the professional development of its officers so that they can continue to excel in their areas of expertise and make a meaningful contribution to the fight against corruption. Christine's achievement reflects the professionalism and dedication that our officers continue to demonstrate in the execution of the Commission's mandate," he said.

ACCA Eastern Africa Chapter Head Mr George Njari described the achievement as a proud moment for the professional body, noting that Ms Ombaka's dedication set a positive example for her peers and the next generation of professionals.

In her acceptance remarks, Ms Ombaka thanked the Commission for supporting her professional growth and dedicated the award to EACC, describing it as recognition of the institution's collective efforts to advance integrity and combat corruption.





ACCA Eastern Africa Chapter Head, Mr. George Njari, presents the ACCA award to Ms. Christine Ombaka in recognition of her achievement.

Ms. Christine Ombaka celebrates her achievement following her recognition with the ACCA award.



Graft in the Digital Era

Business Unusual: Managing Integrity Risk in the Digital Era



By Nicholas Mulila

For a long time, corruption was easy to picture: a suspicious tender, a favour requested, resources diverted, or an envelope quietly changing hands. The actors were visible, the transaction was physical, and even when the trail was hidden, it could often be followed.

Today, an integrity breach can begin with a text message, a compromised device, a manipulated digital identity, or an employee using legitimate access for the wrong purpose. Money can move across accounts in seconds, cross borders without a physical footprint and even be converted into virtual assets before anyone asks the first question.

Money can move across accounts in seconds, cross borders without a physical footprint and even be converted into virtual assets before anyone asks the first question.

Digitisation has not made corruption disappear; it has made parts of it harder to see. A convincing message that appears to come from a bank, mobile money provider, or employer can expose credentials, authorise a payment and trigger a chain of transactions before the customer realises what has happened. No envelope changes hands, but trust is exploited and value moves.

Recent global evidence shows why institutions must treat this as a strategic business risk, not a narrow technology issue. The International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) 2026 working paper, The Rise of Cyber Events and Digital Fraud in the Financial Sector, notes that cybersecurity and digital fraud are now closely intertwined, with cyber-enabled fraud nearly tripling over the past decade.

Kenya faces the same pressure. The Communications Authority of Kenya recorded more than 2.3 billion cyber threat events between April and June 2026, signalling an integrity risk that is more digital, more distributed and harder to address through traditional controls alone.

The vulnerabilities of technology

Technology is both a vulnerability and defence. Digital transactions leave warning signs: unusual payment patterns, failed logins, suspicious device activity and abnormal access to sensitive systems. Data analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence can help institutions detect patterns that would be almost impossible to identify manually.

But technology is not the control; it is an instrument of control. An algorithm can flag an anomaly, but people must decide whether it represents fraud, corruption, or legitimate behaviour. Integrity remains a human and institutional responsibility.

Artificial intelligence sharpens this tension. Used responsibly, it can strengthen defence and improve response speed. In the wrong hands, it can also help malicious actors personalise attacks, automate reconnaissance and test controls at scale. The question is not whether to use advanced technology, but how to govern, assure and embed it within an ethical risk culture.

Risk as a shared duty

Virtual assets add complexity because value can move across jurisdictions and platforms at speed. The Financial Action Task Force reported that more than 250 stablecoins were in circulation by mid-2025, with market capitalisation exceeding US$300 billion. These assets support innovation, but they can also be misused through peer-to-peer transactions, unhosted wallets and offshore platforms outside traditional controls.

The starting point is not to treat virtual assets as inherently illicit, but to ask sharper questions: where does the organisation interact with them, what could be manipulated, which patterns should trigger scrutiny, who receives the signal and what happens next? That moves the conversation from compliance as a checklist to resilience as a business capability.

Digital financial crime also exposes a weakness in how institutions traditionally understand risk. No single organisation sees the entire transaction chain. A telecommunications company may see unusual digital activity, a bank may identify an abnormal payment pattern, a technology provider may detect malicious infrastructure, and law enforcement or anti-corruption agencies may connect the activity to people, public offices, procurement processes, or organised networks.

Each institution holds a piece of the picture. The advantage comes from connecting those pieces responsibly, lawfully and quickly. For agencies such as the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, this reinforces the importance of prevention, intelligence-sharing, and coordinated enforcement in an economy where corruption risks increasingly move through digital channels. Public-private collaboration is therefore an operational necessity, not a policy aspiration. The shorter the distance between detection, understanding and intervention, the greater the opportunity to prevent harm.

This is why integrity can no longer sit only within compliance teams. A cyber incident can become a fraud event, a fraud event can become a money laundering concern, and an insider risk can become a customer trust crisis. Boards and senior management must ask how quickly abnormal behaviour can be detected and how effectively the institution can work with partners when risk extends beyond its own systems.

Integrity risk now moves at the speed of the ecosystem, exploiting the seams between platforms, partners and people. Resilience demands that institutions treat integrity as a design principle, not a compliance afterthought, embedding fraud intelligence into products before launch and strengthening the human layer so ethical lapses are surfaced early.

Regulation is also moving in this direction. Kenya's evolving cybersecurity framework recognises that resilience depends on coordinated prevention, detection, response and recovery across government, regulators, industry, academia and international networks. For organisations, the bar is rising from preventing attacks to proving they can withstand disruption, recover critical services and learn from incidents.

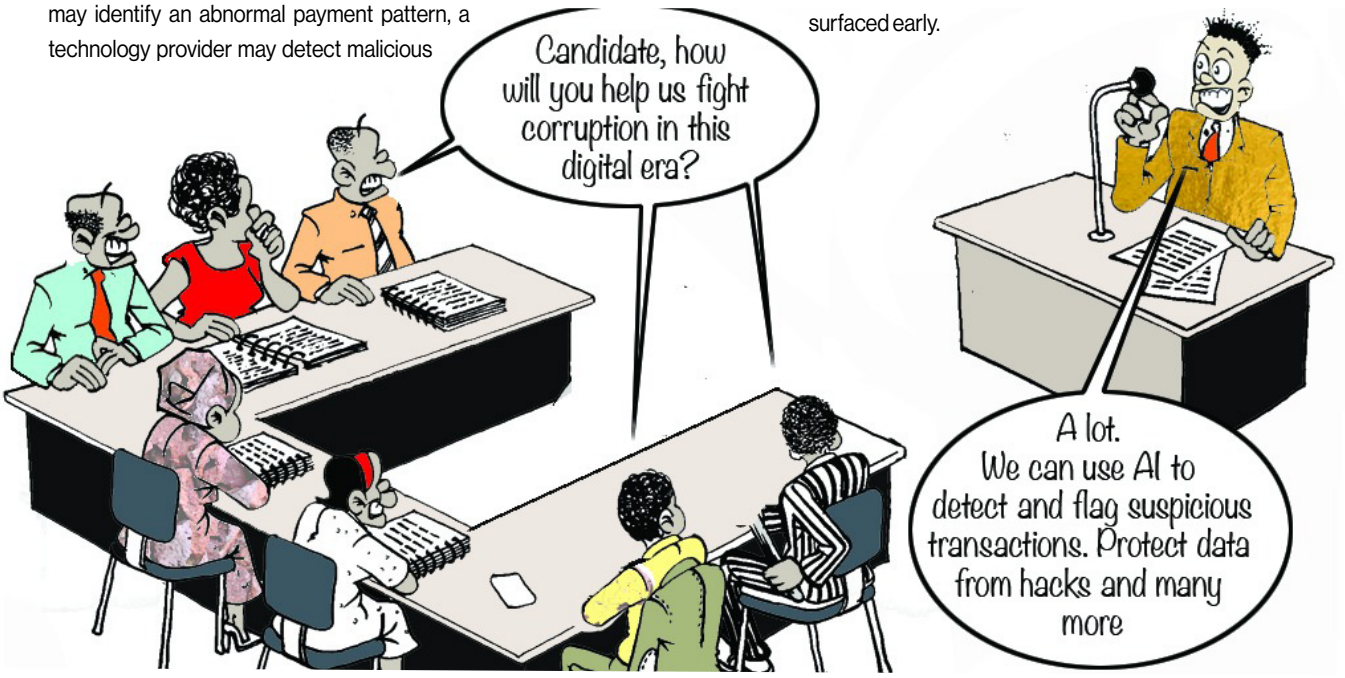
That shift requires discipline: strong authentication, tested recovery processes, secure configurations, timely updates and clear accountability. Secure-by-design thinking must also ensure products and platforms minimise exploitable flaws before they reach the market. Traditional controls remain necessary but no longer sufficient on their own.

Technology can help us see risk earlier, connect the dots faster and strengthen accountability. It cannot decide what an organisation is prepared to tolerate.

Business unusual means recognising that corruption has changed form. It can hide inside legitimate transactions, move at digital speed and exploit the trust that makes modern economies work. The response must be equally sophisticated: stronger intelligence, resilient systems, ethical technology, disciplined governance and deeper public-private collaboration.

Technology can help us see risk earlier, connect the dots faster and strengthen accountability. It cannot decide what an organisation is prepared to tolerate. That decision remains ours, and that is where the real fight for integrity begins.

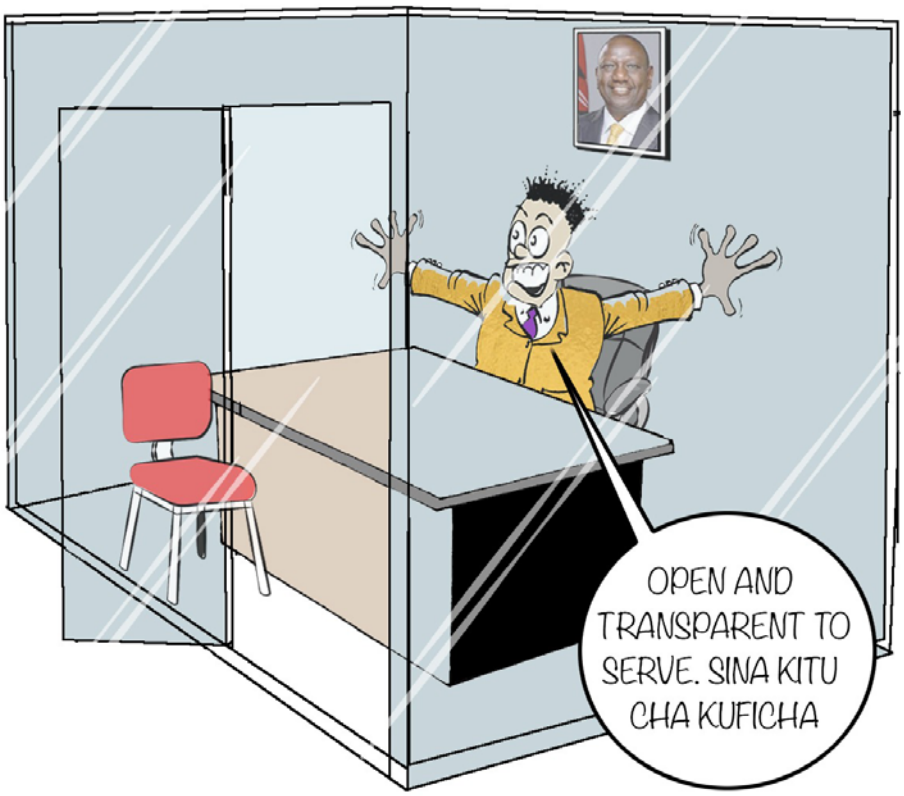
The Writer is the Group Chief Risk Officer, Safaricom PLC.



Role of Beneficial Ownership Transparency in combating illicit financial flows



By Carren Meli



When money disappears behind a company, a trust, or a complex chain of corporate entities, the most important question is often not which company received the money, but who ultimately owns, controls, or benefits from that company. This is the question that lies at the heart of Beneficial Ownership Transparency (BOT).

Whereas corporate structures are essential vehicles in the development and growth of any economy, they can also be misused to conceal and launder illegally acquired wealth. Where beneficial ownership information is obscured through complex and opaque corporate structures, investigations into illicit financial flows become extremely difficult.

Where beneficial ownership information is obscured through complex and opaque corporate structures, investigations into illicit financial flows become extremely difficult.

This is why BOT has become an increasingly important tool in the global effort to combat money laundering, corruption, terrorism financing, tax evasion, and other forms of illicit financial flows. At its simplest, BOT is about looking beyond the name appearing on a company's registration documents to identifying the natural person who ultimately owns, controls, or benefits from the company.

Section 3 of the Companies Act, Cap 486 defines a beneficial owner as the natural person who ultimately owns or controls a legal person or arrangements or the natural person on whose behalf a transaction is conducted, and includes those persons who exercise ultimate effective control over a legal person or arrangement.

For companies, beneficial ownership may arise in several ways. A natural person may, directly or indirectly own at least 10% of the issued shares; exercise at least 10% of the voting rights; have the power to appoint or remove a majority of the board of directors; have rights concerning the distribution of funds, assets or investment decisions in companies limited by guarantee; or exercise significant influence or significant control over the company.

The global movement towards greater BOT has been strongly shaped by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). FATF Recommendations 24 and 25 address transparency and beneficial ownership of legal persons and legal arrangements. In February 2023, FATF revised Recommendation 25 concerning beneficial ownership and transparency of legal arrangements and issued updated risk-based guidance to support implementation. These developments complement Recommendation 24.

Kenya has incorporated these international standards into its legal and institutional

framework through, among other measures, amendments to the Companies Act and the Companies (Beneficial Ownership Information) Regulations. The Business Registration Service (BRS) plays a central role in this framework. Companies are required to identify and disclose their beneficial ownership information, while the BRS is responsible for collecting, maintaining and managing that information.

The real test is, however, on whether the information provided is complete, accurate, current, verified and capable of being used effectively. Companies must first disclose their beneficial owners. Secondly, the information must be subjected to appropriate verification and thirdly, changes in ownership or control must be captured promptly. Additionally, the competent institutions must be able to access the information lawfully and efficiently, and lastly, the information must be capable of supporting investigations and compliance.

Disclosure should be accompanied by effective verification and regular updating to ensure that ownership records accurately reflect changes in control.

There has been measurable progress in Kenya. In financial year 2024/2025, the BRS reported that 65,570 private companies had declared and updated their beneficial ownership information. The reported compliance rate increased from 48.96% at the beginning of the financial year to 53.49% by end-year. Verification also increased from 46.84% to 49.92%, while development of the beneficial ownership master list reached 99% completion. These figures demonstrate institutional progress; however, a compliance rate of 53.49% reveals that a significant proportion of companies are not compliant. Similarly, with over 50% of unverified information, the actionable intelligence value of the declared information is minimal.

For law enforcement and other competent authorities, the real value of beneficial ownership information lies in connecting it with other information. When beneficial ownership information is linked appropriately with procurement, tax, financial, and property records, it can provide a much clearer picture of the movement and ownership of assets.

The BOT conversation should not stop with companies. Trusts and other legal arrangements can serve legitimate economic and social purposes; however, the nature of the relationship between settlors, enforcers, trustees, beneficiaries, and other persons exercising control can be less visible and can therefore present transparency challenges. The Trust Administration Act, 2026, establishes a more unified framework for the administration and regulation of trusts. Among other proposals, it provides for recognition of trust enforcers, licensing and qualification requirements for certain service providers, and beneficial ownership disclosure to the BRS.

The development of this framework is significant because effective BOT must extend beyond the widely known corporate entities. Otherwise, there is a risk that increased transparency in one area will encourage greater use of less transparent structures elsewhere.



The transnational nature of illicit financial flows also means that domestic beneficial ownership transparency must be supported by an effective international cooperation framework. An immediate shareholder may be identified locally; however, to establish who ultimately controls that shareholder, information from other jurisdictions may become necessary. Therefore, the effectiveness of BOT depends on the ability of competent institutions to obtain, exchange and verify information across jurisdictions.

Although BOT information is not generally available to the public, its disclosure raises legitimate concerns regarding privacy, confidentiality, and access to information. The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission and other authorized institutions may access such information where there is a lawful and legitimate need. However, appropriate safeguards must be established to protect the information disclosed and prevent its misuse. A system that fails to balance transparency with privacy and data protection may undermine public confidence and weaken the effectiveness of the BOT framework.

Kenya should strengthen compliance to ensure comprehensive reporting of beneficial ownership information across all the corporate entities. Disclosure should be accompanied by effective verification and regular updating to ensure that ownership records accurately reflect changes in control. Competent authorities should also be equipped to link beneficial ownership data with procurement, financial, tax, property and other relevant records.

Finally, stronger cooperation among competent authorities locally, regionally and internationally is essential for tracing complex financial flows and enhancing the effectiveness of beneficial ownership transparency.

The Writer is an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya and a Forensic Investigation Officer at EACC.

Building a culture of integrity in supply chain practice



By Kenneth Matiba

Public procurement often occupies the center stage in discussions on corruption, accountability and compliance. This is understandable: public procurement involves public resources and therefore attracts significant statutory regulation and public scrutiny. Yet one of the most important lessons in building a culture of integrity is that ethical and professional compliance cannot begin and end at the doors of government.

A supplies practitioner does not cease to be a professional simply because he or she works in the private sector. Kenya's Supplies Practitioners Management Act establishes the professional framework for supplies practitioners, while KISM's Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct applies to registered and licensed procurement and supply chain professionals and expressly links ethical conduct to the protection of the profession, stakeholders and public confidence.

The private sector is part of the integrity equation

Corruption in procurement rarely operates in isolation. Where there is an improper inducement, manipulated tender, undisclosed conflict of interest, collusive arrangement, fraudulent invoice, or deliberately inflated contract, there may be actors on more than one side of the transaction. Integrity must therefore include the private sector, not merely as a supplier to the government, but as a partner in preventing corruption.

The Anti-Bribery Act makes this point directly. It requires both public and private entities to put in place procedures appropriate to their size, scale and nature of operations for the prevention of bribery and corruption. It also creates liability where a private entity fails to prevent bribery by an associated person seeking to obtain or retain business or a business advantage. Compliance in the private sector is therefore not simply a matter of corporate preference; it is part of the national anti-corruption architecture.

At the Kenya Institute of Supplies Management (KISM), our starting point is the professional. Supply chain systems are operated by people. Professionals develop specifications, source markets, interact with suppliers, evaluate offers, manage contracts, certify performance, and advise organisations on expenditure. Their decisions can either strengthen or weaken institutional integrity.

Professional compliance is therefore critical for all of us without pointing fingers. Whether serving in the public or private sector, all players should demonstrate the same core values: integrity, competence, transparency, accountability, confidentiality, avoidance of conflicts of interest and fidelity to professional standards.

There is sometimes a misconception that compliance slows business down. Properly understood, the opposite is true. Strong compliance systems protect organisations from fraud, inflated costs, poor-quality supplies, unmanaged conflicts of interest, reputational damage, litigation and business disruption. They improve the quality of procurement decisions and create confidence among investors, customers, regulators and business partners.

Strong compliance systems protect organisations from fraud, inflated costs, poor-quality supplies, unmanaged conflicts of interest, reputational damage, litigation and business disruption.

Know who stands behind the supplier

Modern procurement integrity also requires organisations to ask a simple but important question: who are we really doing business with? Beneficial ownership transparency helps expose conflicts of interest, related-party transactions, hidden control and other integrity risks. In Kenya's public procurement system, beneficial ownership disclosure forms part of the standard tender documentation and is intended to strengthen transparency and accountability. Private organisations can apply the same principle through proportionate supplier due diligence, even where public procurement rules do not directly govern their purchasing.

Digital procurement can strengthen audit trails, approvals, supplier records and data analytics. But digitising procurement does not automatically create integrity. An unethical process can simply become an unethical digital process. Technology must therefore operate alongside professional competence, effective internal controls, ethical leadership and individual accountability.

Integrity is a shared responsibility

The ultimate objective should be to move organisations beyond a culture of "What must we do to comply?" towards one that asks, "What is the right thing to do?" That shift requires boards and senior management to treat supply chain governance as an enterprise-level responsibility. Similarly, a supplies practitioner must be capable of advising management that a proposed transaction is improper, declining instructions that violate professional standards and maintaining adequate records to demonstrate how decisions were reached.

Government cannot eliminate procurement corruption by regulating public entities alone. Everyone in the system has a part to play: regulators, procuring entities, businesses, professional bodies, and individual practitioners. Compliance should therefore not be feared, avoided, or treated as an inconvenience. When organisations choose integrity before enforcement compels them, when suppliers compete on value rather than influence, and when professionals recognise that their obligations do not change with their employer, we move beyond merely fighting corruption to building institutions where corruption has less room to thrive.

That is the culture of integrity Kenya requires, and supplies practitioners must help lead it.

The writer is the Secretary/Chief Executive Officer of the Kenya Institute of Supplies Management (KISM).

PICTORIALS



Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) Chairperson Dr. David Oginde delivers the opening remarks at the 8th General Assembly of the Association of African Anti-Corruption Authorities (AAACA), hosted in Nairobi in June 2026.



Attorney General Dorcas Oduor, cuts the ribbon during the launch of the Africa Anti-Corruption Studies and Research Centre (CEREAC) in Nairobi.





Residents of Kajiado County follow the discussions during the Town Hall Meeting.



Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) Chairperson Dr. David Oginde (Right) the Governor of Kajiado Joseph Ole Lenku (centre) and the EACC CEO, Mr. Abdi Mohamud (right) pose for a photograph outside the Governor's Office at the Kajiado County Government headquarters.



Dr. Susan Kinyeki, Head of the African Anti-Corruption Studies and Research Centre (CEREAC), addresses participants of the Move for Integrity 2026 Walk during their stop at Integrity Centre.



A case for reforms: the hits and misses of Chapter Six

By Prof. Githu Muigai

When Kenya promulgated the Constitution on 27 August 2010, Chapter Six carried the hope that public leadership would finally be separated from the country's long history of corruption, patronage and impunity. Its promise was that authority would be treated as a public trust, and those entrusted with it would demonstrate integrity, competence and suitability.

Sixteen years later, that promise remains only partly fulfilled. Chapter Six has changed the language of public accountability, strengthened scrutiny of those seeking office and supplied a constitutional basis for challenging abuse of power. Yet its effectiveness as a gatekeeping mechanism remains doubtful. Clearance often turns to self-declarations, procedural compliance, and the absence of a criminal conviction, while serious questions of suitability pass between institutions until an election or appointment has taken effect.

The difficulty lies in converting constitutional principle into a fair and enforceable standard. Reform must clarify which findings affect eligibility, assign responsibility for making those findings and ensure that disputes are resolved before public power is acquired.

A Constitution suspicious of power

Chapter Six begins from a deliberate distrust of public power. Article 73 declares that authority assigned to a State officer is a public trust, to be exercised in a manner that respects the people, brings dignity to public office and promotes confidence in its integrity. Leadership is measured by the responsibility it carries, not the status it confers.

Article 73(2) requires personal integrity, competence and suitability in selection to public office, together with objectivity, impartiality, selfless service and accountability. Articles 75 to 78 regulate conflicts of interest, financial probity, outside employment and citizenship. Article 80 directs Parliament to establish procedures, enforcement mechanisms and penalties through which these standards can be realised.

Read together, these provisions create an ethical threshold extending beyond criminal responsibility. Conduct may raise legitimate concerns about honesty, judgment or fidelity to public duty without producing a prosecution or conviction. Accusations, however, cannot become conclusive through repetition. Chapter Six requires a process that tests adverse information fairly and determines whether it bears upon suitability. In Mumo Matemu v Trusted Society of Human Rights Alliance, the Court of Appeal described this as an intensely fact-based inquiry supported by a strict evaluation of the evidence.

Integrity was therefore intended to operate as a continuing qualification for public trust, assessed through evidence and fair procedure before power is entrusted to an individual. That distinction proves that public office demands confidence as well as legality. Conduct may fall short of Article 73 even where criminal liability has not been established.



Integrity as constitutional practice

Chapter Six's clearest achievement is its conversion of integrity from a political expectation into a constitutional standard. Questions concerning honesty, conflicts of interest and use of public resources now engage constitutional compliance and are capable of institutional and judicial scrutiny.

The framework has also produced practical mechanisms for accountability. The Leadership and Integrity Act require State officers to observe a code of conduct, disclose specified interests and submit self-declaration forms when seeking office. The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) receives declarations, verifies integrity information and advises electoral and appointing bodies. In 2022, it vetted 21,863 aspirants. That scale shows that ethical suitability has entered the formal pathway to public office.

The courts have affirmed that Chapter Six is enforceable. In Mumo Matemu, the Court of Appeal confirmed that public appointments are subject to constitutional review, while requiring sufficient evidence and respect for the appointing institution's lawful mandate. Citizens and civil society may therefore challenge questionable appointments, although the evidential burden remains demanding.

Chapter Six also supports accountability after entry into office. In Sonko v County Assembly of Nairobi City, the Supreme Court called it "the soul of the Constitution of Kenya" and linked integrity to the proper exercise of state authority.

These gains matter. Ethical leadership has become visible, legally contestable and central to public debate. The constitutional vocabulary has also enabled citizens to question appointments and removals in terms that public institutions must answer. The remaining weakness is the failure to translate scrutiny into timely and consistent consequences.

When clearance replaces vetting

The principal failure lies in the distance between formal clearance and genuine assessment. A candidate may submit the required forms and certificates without any institution conclusively determining whether unresolved integrity concerns affect suitability. The 2022 process exposed this gap: EACC flagged 241 aspirants with outstanding integrity issues but reported that the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) barred fewer than five. The system verified paperwork more readily than the significance of the information collected.

Responsibility is divided among institutions with distinct mandates. Political parties nominate candidates, EACC verifies information, IEBC registers candidates, and courts review disputes. The Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) may separately investigate and prosecute criminal conduct. This fragmentation allows difficult eligibility questions to be passed from one body to another.

Okoiti v Attorney General illustrates the procedural problem. Petitioners sought clarification on the eligibility of persons facing criminal charges or previous removal from office. The High Court rejected the general questions as hypothetical, and held that candidate-specific disputes had to reach IEBC first. That approach respected institutional mandates but left the substantive threshold unresolved. Once a particular objection is filed, electoral timelines are already running and meaningful investigation becomes difficult.

The treatment of integrity as dependent upon criminal liability creates a further problem. Articles 99 and 193 recognise contravention of Chapter Six as a ground for disqualification, but postpone its effect until available appeals

or review have been exhausted. Courts have properly guarded against exclusion based on accusation alone. The law nevertheless provides no clear standard between an untested allegation and a final conviction. An adverse audit, disciplinary decision, impeachment, pending prosecution and conviction carry different evidential weight, yet clearance processes rarely explain how each affects suitability.

This uncertainty weakens accountability and fairness. Automatic disqualification upon accusation would invite political manipulation. Waiting for a final conviction narrows Chapter Six to criminal responsibility despite its broader concern with judgment, honesty and public confidence. A credible integrity decision requires verified facts, an opportunity to respond and reasons given under a defined civil or administrative standard.

Timing further compounds that problem. Transparency International Kenya's review of the 2022 electoral cycle identified inconsistent judicial approaches, unresolved disputes over authentication of credentials and electoral timelines that constrained effective vetting. Political parties, which encounter aspirants before IEBC does, have seldom acted as serious integrity gatekeepers. Their nomination choices often leave public bodies and litigants to confront concerns after party tickets have been issued.

Chapter Six consequently operates most forcefully after public power has been acquired, through prosecution, impeachment or removal. Accountability at that stage is slower, more politically charged and institutionally costly. The officeholder may already control public resources, influence investigations or mobilise electoral support against enforcement. A constitutional safeguard designed to govern entry then becomes a remedy for damage already done.

From clearance to a reasoned decision

Reform should replace administrative clearance with a reasoned determination on suitability. Article 80 already requires effective procedures and enforcement mechanisms. The Leadership and Integrity Act, 2012 should set the evidential threshold, identify the responsible decision-maker, and specify the consequences of an adverse finding.

The law should distinguish an allegation, investigation, criminal charge, adverse institutional finding and conviction. An allegation should trigger verification without creating a presumption of guilt, while a charge should not cause automatic exclusion. Greater weight should attach to substantiated findings reached through an audit, disciplinary process, impeachment or judicial proceeding in which the affected person was heard. The final determination should apply a civil standard of proof with evidence proportionate to the seriousness of the allegation.

An EACC-led mechanism should coordinate IEBC, DCI, ODPP, Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) and relevant professional regulators.

It would verify information and prepare an assessment for the constitutionally responsible decision-maker. IEBC would retain authority over electoral eligibility, while appointing and approving bodies would decide suitability for appointed office. Each body should disclose the material considered, hear the affected person and issue written reasons, consistent with fair administrative action.

Verification should begin before party nominations. Candidate-specific objections, responses and appeals should be concluded before ballot papers are prepared or appointments take effect. The Constitution and Elections Act already entrust IEBC with nomination disputes; reform should give it the time and verified information it needs to do so. Political parties that knowingly nominate candidates who concealed material information should face proportionate sanctions, and false declarations should attract enforceable consequences.

The Conflict-of-Interest Act, 2025 has strengthened the regulation of private interests, declarations and investigations involving serving public officers. Its detail shows that Parliament can translate ethical expectations into legal duties. Comparable precision is needed at the point of entry into office.

A credible system would protect political participation and give integrity practical force. Its legitimacy would rest on verified facts, fair procedure, transparent reasons and timely review, without allowing accusation alone to determine who may serve. Publishing the final decision, subject to lawful privacy limits, would also help citizens understand why a candidate was cleared or excluded and reduce the space for selective enforcement.

The work still ahead

Sixteen years on, Chapter Six remains one of the Constitution's clearest statements on the character of public leadership. It has given citizens language to demand accountability and a legal basis to scrutinise those entrusted with power. Its practical force remains constrained by fragmented mandates, procedural clearance and delayed enforcement.

The task ahead is to distinguish suspicion from proven misconduct while recognising that suitability extends beyond criminal guilt. Clear evidential thresholds, coordinated verification, reasoned decisions and timely review can protect public trust and due process. Chapter Six will fulfil its promise when integrity becomes a credible qualification for acquiring and retaining public power.



The writer is a Senior Counsel, former Attorney General of the Republic of Kenya and was a member of the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (2000-2005).

CASE REVIEW

When constitutional rights become a pre-trial battlefield



By Kevin Biwot

On August 27, Kenyans commemorated Katiba Day, 16 years since the promulgation of the Constitution, providing an opportunity to reflect on how far we have come. This Constitution came with so much to offer, almost like the mythical "Father Christmas" arriving with a sack full of goodies. We received expanded freedoms, guaranteed rights and stronger institutions. Thankfully, the Constitution has also given life to the justice we have long pleaded for in our national anthem, "Justice be our shield and defender."

The Constitution has undoubtedly transformed Kenya's criminal justice system, particularly when it comes to questioning the propriety of criminal charges before a trial begins. Recent developments, however, raise an interesting question: Have we, perhaps unintentionally, created a constitutional pre-trial chamber to determine whether criminal charges should proceed?

Traditionally, the criminal justice process followed a familiar path: investigation, charging, plea taking, hearing and, finally, judgment. Today, that process is increasingly interrupted by applications asking the courts to determine whether a person was properly investigated, charged, or prosecuted in the first place.

The emerging pattern is familiar. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) or a law enforcement agency such as the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) signals its intention to prosecute an individual. The individual then rushes to court seeking to stop or quash the intended charges, often relying on Articles 22, 23, 47 and 50 of the Constitution. These provisions protect fundamental rights, fair administrative action and the right to a fair hearing.

There is, of course, nothing new about seeking judicial protection before or during criminal proceedings. The celebrated Githunguri vs Republic case demonstrated this many years ago. The court intervened after the State had previously indicated that it would not prosecute Mr Stanley Githunguri on the charges in question. Chief Justice C.B. Madan famously granted the prohibition sought by Githunguri and reminded him that the Kenyan legal system protected his fundamental rights. The decision became an enduring statement that prosecutorial power, though important, is not beyond judicial scrutiny.

What may have been an exceptional intervention has, over time, become a more common first response whenever criminal proceedings are contemplated. The expanded constitutional protections have provided a firm foundation for such challenges.

The Benson Sande Ndeta vs Republic [2026] eKLR case illustrates the dilemma. In 2024, Mr Ndeta approached the High Court challenging criminal charges against him, arguing, among other things, that the underlying issues had already been dealt with in civil proceedings.

Mr Ndeta, a businessman and shareholder in companies including Savannah Cement, was accused of forging documents that enabled him to acquire additional shares in the company and subsequently facilitated its involvement in a USD35 million loan from Absa Bank. The transactions were alleged to involve fraud and forgery.

In December 2025, Justice Mwamuye declined to stop the prosecution at that stage. The court took the view that doing so would deny the complainant and the public an opportunity to have serious allegations tested through the ordinary criminal process. The judge considered stopping the prosecution an exceptional remedy and found that the interests of justice would be better served by allowing the trial to proceed so that the evidence could be tested and a determination made on guilt or innocence.

Criminal trials can be delayed for years while parties litigate whether the charges should have been brought in the first place.

Yet, on September 7, 2026, the High Court ultimately quashed the charges against Mr Ndeta on grounds relating to the very issues he had raised earlier. The court was persuaded that the criminal charges were founded on matters that had already been settled.

In 2025, Justice Mwamuye acknowledged authorities such as Kuria & 3 Others vs Attorney General [2002] 2 KLR 69, which established the High Court's role in stopping oppressive prosecutions or those driven by extraneous considerations. However, the court exercised restraint and allowed the criminal process to take its course.

Contrast this with Gideon Okungu & another vs Chief Magistrate's Court, Anti-Corruption Court at Nairobi & another, where the High Court readily intervened and quashed charges after finding elements of discrimination and irrationality. The court concluded that, in the circumstances, it was improper to prosecute the applicants as proposed.

Both approaches are legally defensible. The difference lies largely in the court's philosophical approach to the criminal process. One approach is willing to interrogate the propriety of charges at the outset. The other prefers to give the trial court room to test the evidence and determine the matter.

The trend raises an important policy question. It is foreseeable that more constitutional petitions and judicial review applications will be filed against actual or intended criminal charges, particularly in corruption and economic crime cases.

Would it therefore make sense to anticipate these challenges and create a structured pre-trial constitutional review mechanism? Such a mechanism could potentially save time and costs by dealing with fundamental constitutional objections before a full trial begins.

There would, however, be difficult questions to resolve, including the relationship between the lower courts where criminal charges are filed and the superior courts constitutionally mandated to interpret and enforce fundamental rights.

What is clear is that the current practice creates uncertainty. Criminal trials can be delayed for years while parties litigate whether the charges should have been brought in the first place.

The debate, therefore, needs to move beyond individual cases. Should Kenya formally recognise a pre-trial constitutional review of criminal charges, or should courts continue to treat such intervention as an exceptional remedy?

That conversation is overdue. It may be the best way of striking a fair balance between protecting constitutional rights and ensuring that the criminal justice system is not turned into a cycle of endless pre-trial litigation.

The writer is an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya

PICTORIALS



EACC Commissioner Col. (Rtd.) Alfred Mshimba interacts with the youth at Ngatataek Market during a stopover by the EACC Mashinani caravan as it traversed Kajiado County.



Commissioner Col. (Rtd.) Alfred Mshimba poses for a photo with youth at Ngatataek Market in Kajiado County.





EACC staff plant trees on a section of Karura forest land recovered through anti- corruption efforts.



Head of Corporate Communication Mr. Stephen Karuga and Communication Officer Faith Nyokabi participate in the tree planting drive.



EACC Vice- Chairperson Dr. Monica Muiru pictured with Senior Coordination Officer Farida Kokita at the newly launched CEREAC office.



Youth representative Ms. Linda Akitela delivers her remarks at the 2026 African Anti-Corruption Day commemoration.



Traditional dancers entertaining guests arriving for the launch of CEREAC



EACC Commissioner Col. (Rtd.) Alfred Mshimba (Centre) and Principal Secretary for the State Department for Co-operatives Mr.Patrick Kilemi (To his left) , pose for a group photo with officials from EACC and the State department of Co-operatives.



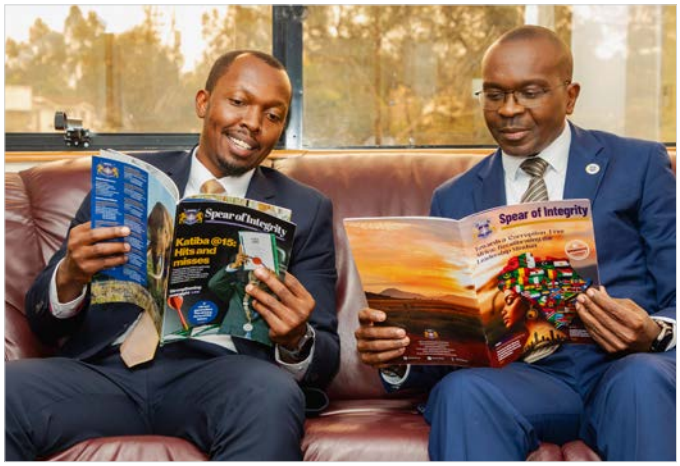
Officers from the EACC prevention department follow the presentation of the Systems Audit Report to the State Department of Co-operatives



FBI representatives Andreas Aguirre (L)and Samuel Newlin-Haus, accompanied by EACC–FBI Liaison Officer Mulki Umar, are received by EACC Central Regional Manager Grace Omweri during their visit to the Commission's regional office in Nyeri.



Delegates from Anti - Corruption institutions pose for a group photo with the Attorney General Dorcas Oduor following the launch of the Africa Anti-Corruption Studies and Research Centre (CEREAC) at the 8th Annual General Assembly of the Association of African Anti-Corruption Authorities (AAACA) held in Nairobi, Kenya.



EACC Head of Corporate Affairs and Communications, Stephen Karuga, and Deputy Director of Supply Chain Management, Eddie Odhiambo, appreciating past editions of the Spear of Integrity.



Seated from left: EACC CEO Abdi A. Mohamud, DPP Renson Ingonga, FRC Director General Naphtaly Kipchirchir Rono, and DCI Director General Mohamed Ibrahim Amin. Standing are representatives of other institutions including the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) and Asset Recovery Agency

OPINION

Culture shift as Kenya's strongest weapon against corruption



By Korir Gideon

Corruption in Kenya is deeply entrenched, but culture shift can be the most unprecedented anti-corruption force likely to complement the existing anti-corruption mechanisms and related initiatives by the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) and other stakeholders. Kenya has been listed by the European Commission as a high-risk jurisdiction for money laundering and terrorism financing, implying that stricter due diligence measures when engaging in financial transactions involving Kenya are in force and potentially affect the economy in an unsurmountable way.

This development followed a prior grey listing by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global standard-setting body for anti-money laundering (AML), countering the financing of terrorism (CFT), and countering proliferation financing (CPF), having identified Kenya among other jurisdictions that have significant shortcomings in their national frameworks for combating money laundering and terrorism financing.

While the EACC continues to relentlessly implement measures and strategies aimed at combating corruption in the country, a paradigm shift in perception, practice, and behaviour could be a game-changer and might make a real difference in the foreseeable future. To achieve this, there is a need to do the following:

We must vigorously support and defend Kenya by taking individual responsibility in fighting graft to change the country's narrative on corruption.

Redefining social norms around 'helping': Much of Kenya's corruption is normalized through the lens of communal obligation; for instance, giving a relative a government job, facilitating a bribe, or unethical practice is framed as "helping your people." A culture shift would mean citizens and communities redefining loyalty by building systems that work for everyone, not extracting favours. In this regard, new social scripts where people are praised for integrity, not for "connections," are needed in all spheres of life.

Making corruption socially expensive: Currently, the corrupt often enjoy high status, in which flashy wealth signals success and not shame. A cultural turning point would flip this practice where neighbours, family, friends, colleagues, and peers openly ostracize the corrupt rather than celebrate and adore them. Successes in countries like Botswana and some Scandinavian countries have been attributed to this approach where social stigma became a more powerful deterrent than legal punishment. This too can be applicable here in Kenya and be the change so much needed to paint our country in a positive light, from the grey list to the white list.

Youth socialization, education, training, and workshops: Values are mostly set in childhood. Embedding integrity, civic responsibility, and critical thinking into school curricula, not just as lessons but as practiced habits, can produce a generation with genuinely different expectations of public life. Youth movements like the Gen Z protests depicted a new set of generations that already hold a sharper anti-corruption consciousness and are demanding transparency, accountability, and good governance void of tribalism and other unethical considerations. Additionally, inclusion of such curricula into training manuals of security officers, private entities, and public institutions could build a new crop of individuals with a mind focused on the culture of integrity, transparency, and accountability in public and private service.

Collaboration between religious and community leaders: Kenya is deeply religious. When religious leaders, including pastors, imams, and elders, consistently and publicly condemn corruption from the pulpit rather than blessing corrupt politicians/individuals, it carries enormous moral weight. Cultural change accelerates when trusted voices align and political willingness will complement and cement this initiative.

Demanding accountability as a cultural expectation: A shift from "that's just how it is" fatalism to active civic expectation is transformative. Citizens beginning to routinely demand receipts, question tenders, report irregularities, and vote out corrupt officials, not as exceptional heroism but as normal behaviour, fundamentally changes what corrupt individuals can get away with.

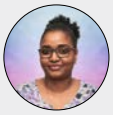
Whistle-blower culture: Kenyans who report corruption are often socially punished as traitors or troublemakers, and all the time their lives remain endangered. A culture that instead celebrates whistle-blowers as patriots, backed by legal protection and community support, would dramatically increase the risk of being caught engaging in corruption, bribery, or unethical practices.

The media and arts: Film, music, comedy, and social media shape what people see as normal or shameful faster than policy can. Kenyan artists and content creators who consistently satirize and humanize the costs of corruption rather than idealise hard work, honesty, integrity, and best practices can shift aspirations over time. The current technological advancement, including the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and related innovations, can amplify this initiative and would go a long way in ensuring the anti-corruption contents and scripts are shared faster and wider within seconds.

While culture shift is practically slow or rather takes time to produce results, it remains the most successful anti-corruption transformation. To put this into perspective, Georgia in the 2000s and Rwanda post-genocide combined both cultural messaging with swift, visible, and practical enforcement so that changed norms had real consequences behind them. Kenya too can borrow a leaf and change her anti-corruption story for generations.

The writer is a career investigator passionate about evidence-based policy research, ethics and integrity in public service.

Embracing patriotism in the face of corruption



By Lena Muye

Theodore Roosevelt Jr., the 26th President of the United States of America, was quoted as stating, "Patriotism means to stand by the country. It does not mean to stand by the President or any other public official save exactly to the degree in which he himself stands by the country."

Roosevelt Jr. suggests that patriotism is not merely loyalty to a country. It also involves acting in its best interests, including holding public officials and institutions to account when they fail in their duties.

Thus, in honest self-reflection, every Kenyan should ask themselves this very important question: what does patriotism require of us? What have you personally done for the greater good of Kenya? Do we speak up when we encounter corruption or remain silent? Do our own actions contribute to the problem?

These are questions worth reflecting on as Kenya continues to grapple with corruption.

Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2025 ranked Kenya 130th out of 181 countries, with a score of 30 out of 100. This was a decline from 121st position and a score of 32 in the 2024 CPI. In 2023, Kenya ranked 126th with a score of 31. Kenya's score has remained within a narrow range in recent years, pointing to a persistent challenge in addressing perceived public sector corruption. The 2025 score was also below the global average of 42.

The current technological advancement, including the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and related innovations, can amplify this initiative and would go a long way in ensuring the anti-corruption contents and scripts are shared faster and wider within seconds.

Some countries in the region performed better. Rwanda scored 58, Tanzania 40 and Ethiopia 38. These differences do not, by themselves, explain why countries perform differently, but they provide useful points of comparison for Kenya.

At independence, Kenya had ambitious development aspirations and was considered a promising economy. Comparisons are sometimes made with countries such as South Korea and Malaysia, which have since undergone significant economic transformation. While their circumstances differ from Kenya's, their experiences demonstrate the importance of strong institutions, accountability and effective public administration in national development.

In Kenya, despite the investment in efforts to fight corruption, as citizens, we have not owned the fight. Some of us participate directly in corrupt practices, while others remain silent or choose not to act when they encounter them. In doing so, we have been blind to the far-reaching impact of corruption as an existential threat.

Corruption affects virtually every sector of the economy and society. Yet, instead of condemning the vice, we sometimes appear to glorify it, even celebrating those who have acquired wealth through corrupt means. Some even argue that individuals whose sources of wealth are questionable have "properly planned for their future", and defend them when efforts are made to hold them to account.

We have failed to protect this country by either omission or commission. Unchecked, corruption will turn Kenya into a failed state where even the most basic social services cannot be provided. We need to ask ourselves if we are prepared to have this as the legacy we leave.

There have been efforts to promote greater accountability within institutions and communities. The Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB), for example, announced measures requiring disclosure and tracking of gifts exceeding Kes50,000 to the Church, accompanied by a cover letter, as part of efforts to strengthen transparency and guard against money laundering. During the 2025 Lenten Campaign, Archbishop Maurice Muhatia also urged Christians to begin with self-examination rather than simply pointing fingers at government.

Just as every new dawn provides us with an opportunity to be better, leaders at every level of government have an opportunity to rewrite Kenya's story by governing with integrity and saying no to corruption and unethical conduct. As individuals, we have the opportunity to exercise our sovereign authority and hold those we have put in power to account, a feat only possible if we personally commit to fight corruption. We must all examine our consciences and honestly ask ourselves whether our individual actions reflect patriotism and whether we would sacrifice everything for Kenya's sake.

We must vigorously support and defend Kenya by taking individual responsibility in fighting graft to change the country's narrative on corruption. Blow the whistle on the perpetrators of corruption and avoid, at all costs, participating in any act of corruption to give us a better chance of getting the Kenya we all want.

Then, and only then, can we stand tall and call ourselves true patriots. Only by taking the necessary actions can we secure the future of Kenya and preserve this cherished land for future generations. Always remember that fighting corruption starts with you and me. We must all be agents of change. As the late Mahatma Gandhi said, "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

The writer is a communications expert.



Internal audit beyond compliance



By Hassan Kidzuga

Internal audit is not about auditing people; it is about evaluating processes, strengthening controls, identifying gaps, and improving performance. Effective internal audit promotes accountability, reduces errors, and fosters continuous improvement.

Yet an important question arises: why does performance remain stagnant despite the annual implementation of audit recommendations? Reports may be timely, findings comprehensive, and action plans tracked, yet operational errors persist, customer complaints increase, and risks recur. The challenge, therefore, is not necessarily audit diligence, but impact.

This gap highlights a critical distinction: compliance does not always translate into improved performance. Audit findings may identify procedural gaps, documentation weaknesses, and policy non-compliance, while the underlying problems stem from strategic misalignment, unclear risk appetite, inappropriate incentives, a culture of workarounds, or weak operational decision-making. Unless these root causes are addressed, the same problems may recur despite the implementation of recommendations.

Consequently, internal audit must look beyond correcting control weaknesses to examining their underlying causes. Sections 68 and 73 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012, provide an important legislative context for the responsibilities of accounting officers and internal audit in public financial management. Internal audit should assess whether controls address material risks, support institutional objectives, and contribute to improved performance.

However, institutional risks do not exist in isolation. Pandemics, technological disruptions, and geopolitical tensions can threaten organisational objectives and require a broader perspective. Global Internal Audit Standards (GIAS) Standard 9.2 emphasises the need for an internal audit strategy that supports organisational objectives. This calls for an approach that considers emerging external threats alongside internal control weaknesses.

Beyond these visible risks, internal audit must also recognise the growing importance of intangible assets, data, technology, and institutional reputation. Traditional verification alone may be insufficient; anticipating emerging risks is as important as identifying existing weaknesses.

Ultimately, the value of internal audit extends beyond compliance to public trust. By strengthening institutional systems, supporting sound decisions, and promoting responsible stewardship of public resources, internal audit contributes to public confidence. GIAS Standard 11.1 highlights the importance of effective stakeholder relationships and communication in aligning expectations with the internal audit function's mandate.

Internal audit is not merely about identifying faults; it is about providing clarity, strengthening accountability, and improving outcomes. By addressing root causes, anticipating emerging risks, and aligning assurance with institutional objectives, internal audit can become a strategic partner in building public trust.

The writer is the Deputy Director, Internal Audit.

PICTORIALS



EACC Forensic Investigator Ms.Christine Ombaka flanked by Commission's top management displays her ACCA Global Public Sector Award at Integrity Centre.



Dr. David Oginde (Centre), stresses a point during a panel discussion on state accountability by constitutional and independent offices, held as part of the second commemoration of the constitution of Kenya. With him are Charles Orinda Dulo, Chairperson, Commission on Administrative Justice (Left) and Controller of Budget Dr. Nancy Gathungu (Right).



EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud with the Governor of Garissa County, H.E. Nathif Jama Adam. (centre) and the Law Society of Kenya President Mr. Charles Kanjama (right) at Katiba@16 celebrations in Nairobi.



EACC CEO Mr. Abdi Mohamud shares a light moment with the Director of Public Prosecutions Renson Igonga, and the Chief Registrar of the Judiciary Hon. Winfidah Mokaya during the 38th NCAJ Council meeting held in Mombasa, Kenya.



Chief Justice, and Chairperson of the National Council on Administration of Justice (NCAJ) Martha Koome and members of the NCAJ pose for a group photo during a council meeting held in Mombasa .



EACC Chairperson welcomes PS State Department for Youth Affairs and Creative Economy, Fikirini Jacobs for a Youth engagement at the Mount Kenya University.



Still in the Fight: PLO Lumumba on corruption, integrity and Kenya's future

Fifteen years after his abrupt departure from the helm of the Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission, Professor Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba remains an unyielding optimist in the fight against corruption. In this wide-ranging conversation with Spear of Integrity, he reflects on his KACC years, institutional independence, the failures of deterrence, the role of leadership, and why he still believes Kenya can win the war against graft.

By David Wanjala

To hear Professor P.L.O Lumumba speak is to encounter a distinctive blend of legal philosophy, historical memory and uncompromising rhetoric.

His 13-month tenure at the Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission (KACC) was brief but consequential. He became known for high-profile investigations, forceful public statements and his description of Kenya as a country "whose creed is greed." Then, through a legislative overhaul, KACC gave way to the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), bringing his tenure to an abrupt end.

Fifteen years later, the anti-corruption landscape has changed. White-collar networks have become more sophisticated, institutions have evolved and Kenya has accumulated a formidable body of legislation. Yet the fundamental question remains: why has corruption proved so difficult to defeat?

1. Mr. Wanjala: If you had to choose one song that captures your current state of mind, what would it be—and why?

Prof. PLO Lumumba: I would pick Mbaraka Mwinshehe's song, Chakula Bora. You know, Mbaraka Mwinshehe Mwaruka was an amazing person. Very early on, when people were listening to the beats, it is his lyrics that one ought to have listened to. And he says, "... mtu ni chakula." I found Chakula Bora one of the most amazing songs. Those who want to dance to the tune, it is danceable in the Benga-Rhumba style. But those who want to be educated, it is something that you get educated by.

Up-Close and Personal Background



2. Growing up, did carrying Patrice Lumumba's name feel like a burden, a prophecy, or a driving force in shaping your destiny?"

I had no such thoughts in my early days. Remember, in the 1950s and 1960s, parents who were politically conscious named their children after the heroes of Pan-Africanism, particularly those whose lives were cut short in the very terrible manner in which Patrice Emery Lumumba's life was cut short.

Over the years, of course, I do not think it is by design. I have conducted my affairs in a manner that has been consistent with the spirit of Pan-Africanism, and the net effect is that the children of Pan-Africanists have taken time to visit with me. As recently as December 2025, Roland-Gilbert Okito Lumumba, who unfortunately died at the

beginning of this year, in January 2026, visited with me here. He was a person who had, in his assessment, given prominence to his father's name.

So, if there has been a design to it, it has been a heavenly one rather than a deliberate attempt to copy my namesake.

3. What did academia teach you that life later challenged?

The academy teaches you that there are principles, that there is a right and a wrong, and that knowledge should guide action. But the real world is far more complicated, with competing interests and people who sometimes believe the end justifies the means.

Life taught me that people can know what is right and still choose what is wrong. So, knowledge alone is not enough. You must have the courage to stand by what you know to be right, even when it is inconvenient, unpopular or costly. That, for me, is where the real education of life begins.

Reflections on the KACC Era (2010–2011)

4. During your 13 months at KACC, what kept you grounded amid political pressure, and how did your family cope with the challenges?

We were at KACC during a difficult period, when Kenya was transitioning to a new constitutional order and a culture of impunity was deeply entrenched. I have always confronted things as I see them, so I did not allow the pressure to change my course.

My family simply said, "This is him." They knew I would follow what I believed was right and let the chips fall where they may. For me, it was never a popularity contest. The path of truth and justice can be lonely, but as long as I am at peace with my conscience, that is enough.

5. Did your "name and shame" approach strengthen KACC's fight against corruption or intensify resistance against the Commission?

I think it did both. It sent a clear message that there was a body willing to pursue those who broke the law. But it also prompted the political class to organise against the Commission and weaken the institutions that were meant to support it.

That strengthened our resolve, but it also made the fight lonely. The greatest frustration was the slow pace of justice. Some cases that were alive when I was director are still in court today, including the Okemo-Gichuru cases. When cases take years to conclude, deterrence is weakened and those fighting corruption become discouraged.

6. Looking back, do you see the transition from KACC to EACC as genuine reform or a move to end your tenure?

I believe it was both a legislative transition and a means of ending my tenure. I was in a meeting where politicians openly said, "We are getting you out, and luckily, the law has come."

What stood out was that officers in other institutions had their terms protected during the transition, while ours were truncated. Pravin Bowry (Assistant Director at the time) subsequently challenged this in court, and the court held that we should have been allowed to serve out our terms or be compensated.

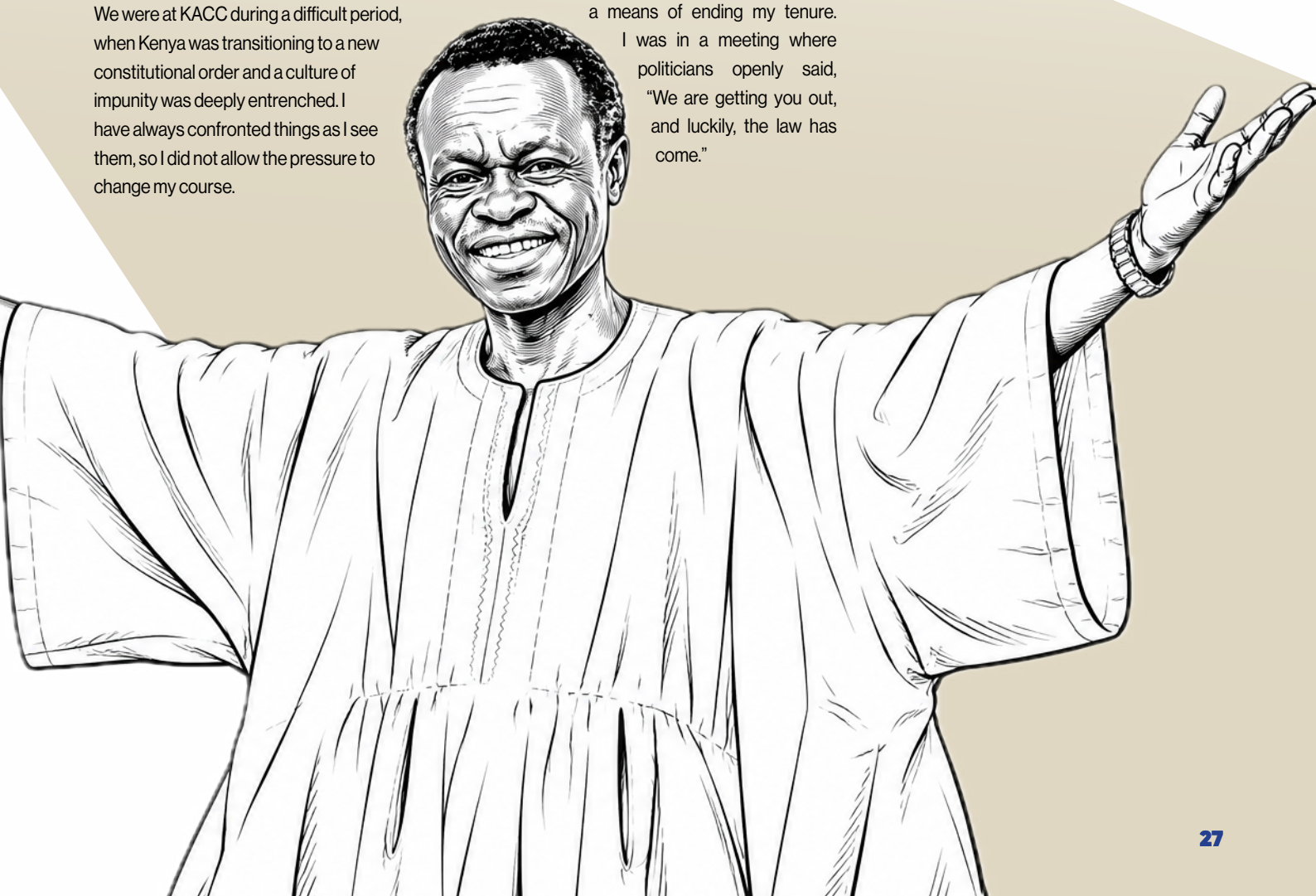
So, in my view, the political class used the legislative transition to bring my tenure to an end.

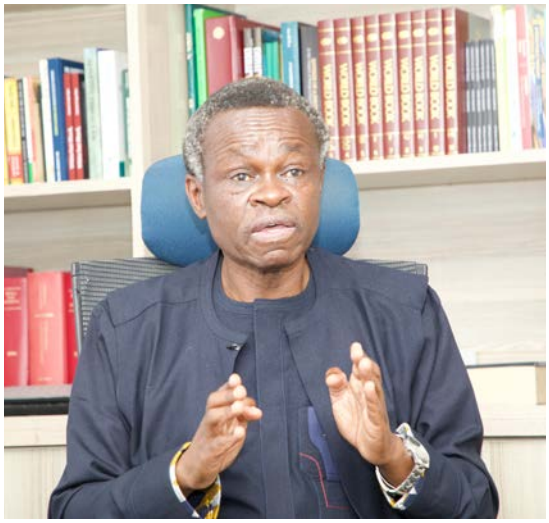
7. Should the EACC have independent prosecutorial powers to fight corruption more effectively?

I have no doubt that it should. In a society where corruption is endemic, the institution that investigates economic crimes should also have the power to prosecute them. It knows the case intimately and understands the evidence in a way that another institution may not.

At KACC, we would send files to the Attorney General, only for them to come back with demands for further investigation, sometimes over matters that could easily have been addressed during prosecution. Today, the EACC faces a similar limitation with the ODPP.

If we are serious about strengthening the fight against corruption, give the EACC the power to prosecute.





Prof. PLO Lumumba makes a point during an interview with the EACC team.



In a jovial mood, Prof. PLO Lumumba poses for a photograph with members of the EACC team after the interview. From left: John Machanje, Antony Kahiga and David Wanjala, standing immediately to the professor's left.



Prof. PLO Lumumba addresses a press conference during his tenure as Director of the Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission (KACC). Photo: Dennis Okeyo | Nation.

8. Looking back, has your greater impact come from serving inside government or from using your public voice outside it?

I see the two as a continuum. My work in public service, from the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (CKRC) to the KACC, and later Kenya School of Law laid the foundation for the voice I have today.

My crusade against corruption has grown from Kenya to East Africa and now across the continent. But you cannot separate that voice from the experiences that shaped it. I served with courage and dedication, and those experiences became the building blocks of my later work.

It is like a relay race. You cannot judge the race by looking at one runner; you must look at the totality of the runners to know whether the race has been run well.

The Trajectory of Anti-Corruption in Kenya

9. How do you assess the EACC's progress and independence compared with KACC?

In my honest assessment, the EACC is doing great work in the midst of great difficulties. Across education, prevention and asset recovery, there is evidence of progress. Anti-corruption agencies have also contributed to strengthening systems that reduce opportunities for graft, including cashless payment systems and the broader public financial management architecture involving IFMIS, eCitizen, the Controller of Budget and the Auditor-General.

On prosecution, I cannot judge the Commission harshly because it only recommends prosecution and does not control the process. That makes its work particularly difficult in a society where corruption has become almost expected.

Sometimes I ask myself: suppose there was no EACC? It would be worse. At least today, those who steal do so knowing they may be caught.

10. Has Kenya's expanding anti-corruption legislation closed the loopholes, or have we simply created a complex maze of laws that lacks the political will to enforce?

You know, if I am not wrong, Tacitus said, "The more corrupt the state, the more numerous the laws." I think that is what we have been doing, assuming that law after law will liberate us from corruption.

We have enacted laws on illicit financial flows, economic crimes and integrity, including Chapter Six of the Constitution. But our national ethic does not support those laws. We are generous in legislation, but poor in implementation.

Take wealth declarations. Some of the richest people accused of corruption declare themselves paupers because their wealth is hidden in the names of spouses, companies and others. The fundamental problem is that we do not punish corruption firmly, harshly and timeously. Those involved know they can tire the system out.

As Lee Kuan Yew demonstrated in Singapore, deterrence requires consequences. I look forward to the day when Kenya will enforce its laws without fear or favour. Until then, wealth declarations risk remaining a ritual that portrays people as angelic, while reality tells a very different story.

11. Where is the biggest obstacle to securing high-level corruption convictions; in investigations, prosecution or the courts?

Institutionally, it is very difficult to secure the conviction of someone who has acquired money illicitly because, in my view, such people can corrupt or frustrate the system. I say this from my experience at KACC and my understanding of how the EACC works, not as an evidence-based conclusion.

A recommendation for prosecution is not a joke. Considerable work goes into investigating sophisticated white-collar crime. Once the EACC completes its investigation and recommends prosecution, and the DPP concurs, I would say 80 per cent of the work has been done. It is the remaining 20 per cent that must be brought to conclusion.

Unfortunately, the law often appears to favour the rich and powerful. Until we learn to "hit the snake on the head," we will not achieve what we desire. Other countries have demonstrated that even high-profile individuals can face consequences for corruption. Kenya can do the same, but we have not yet demonstrated that resolve.

12. Why does the fight against corruption focus so heavily on those taking bribes while giving less attention to those who pay them?

You know, it takes two to tango. I had the privilege of serving as a mentee of the late Mwalimu Julius Kabarage Nyerere, who taught me that both the giver and receiver of a bribe must be punished, because without a giver there can be no receiver.

But we must recognise that the giver is sometimes a victim. When I applied for electricity at my rural home, I was asked for Kes1.3 million and later approached for a bribe. I refused, and ultimately paid only Kes34,000, but waited four years. People can similarly be forced to pay bribes for passports or other essential services. The solution is to reform systems by offering legitimate expedited services for an additional fee.

At the same time, we must examine the private sector. Some companies, anecdotally, treat bribes as a business expense and place people in critical government institutions. EACC and other bodies must identify such entities, because they undermine fair competition and make the business environment toxic for those who choose to operate lawfully.

13. You have spent years advocating for mindset shifts across Africa. Why does institutional and behavioural integrity still seem so difficult to institutionalize within public service?

The majority of public servants work hard and honestly, often under difficult circumstances. But there is also a parasitic group that exploits the system because they are not punished and have come to see corruption as a way of life.

The solution is, once again, tone from the top. Leadership must practise what it preaches. When I joined KACC, one of the first things I rejected was a motorcade. Every Friday, we brought everyone together, from the cleaner to myself, because I wanted us to see ourselves as one team and create an environment where people could speak freely.

I saw the same principle when I visited my late friend, President John Pombe Magufuli, in Tanzania. He invited me for 10 a.m., and at exactly 10 a.m. he was there. He then drove me around Dar es Salaam himself, with one security officer and one car, observing the traffic rules. He understood that his people had to see that what he said was what he did.

You cannot demand from people what you do not practise yourself. Power is a trusteeship. Kenya needs leadership that consistently demonstrates integrity.

Looking Ahead: The Next Frontier

14. If you were advising the EACC today, what three non-negotiable reforms would you recommend?

First, strengthen and formalise the inter-agency framework for economic crimes so that institutions work as a team rather than depending on the personalities of their leaders. Parliament's relevant committees should also maintain close oversight of anti-corruption measures such as wealth declarations and lifestyle audits.

Second, the time has come for the EACC to have prosecutorial powers. Parliament should make this possible, and in the interim, the ODPP could delegate some prosecutorial functions to the EACC. But this must be accompanied by adequate resources.

Third, the EACC should retain 10 per cent of recovered funds to strengthen its financial independence. Institutional independence is essential. When I served at the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission, our fund gave us financial flexibility while remaining subject to oversight by the Auditor-General and Controller of Budget.

Without institutional independence, you cannot have an effective fight against corruption.

15. What gives you hope that Kenya can eventually win the war against corruption, and what role must the youth play?

My optimism is informed by history. There have been countries where corruption was once rampant and people thought nothing could change, yet they eventually recognised that corruption, if allowed to become a way of life, destroys a nation.

Look at the United States during the era of the Mafia and Al Capone; Spain under Francisco Franco; Portugal under Marcelo Caetano before the Carnation Revolution; and Italy, Greece and Malaysia. They all demonstrated that corruption can be confronted. Conversely, look at the Democratic Republic of Congo, despite its vast resources, or Haiti after Papa Doc Duvalier and Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier. The choice is now ours.

The younger generation has a duty to reject a culture of instant gratification and embrace a society where hard work and integrity count for something. That is why initiatives such as the EACC's integrity clubs are important. They should work alongside scouting and Girl Guide clubs to sow the seeds of decency early.

When young people see corrupt individuals punished, they learn that integrity pays. Kenya has enormous public wealth wrongly held in private hands, and recovering it could transform our economic fortunes.

Ultimately, the fight against corruption is about reclaiming what belongs to the public and building a culture where integrity becomes the norm. I remain optimistic because history shows that change is possible.

The writer is a Communications Officer at EACC



When the feast of corruption ends



By Robert Kikenyi

There was a time when being called corrupt was an insult; today, in some corners, it almost sounds like a compliment. "That guy is sharp." "He knows how to eat." "He is connected." "He's an achiever!" Suddenly, the person suspected of stealing from the public is no longer a villain but a celebrity.

He appears across television and social media, celebrated in political gatherings and restaurants. His cars and lifestyle become objects of admiration. We have confused corruption with cleverness, and that is where the danger begins.

The rise of the "sharp guy"

Watch closely. A person enters a public office with an ordinary lifestyle, then something changes; overnight the vehicles become bigger, houses become grander, and land holdings multiply. Instead of asking, "Where did all this wealth come from?" some ask, "How did he manage it?"

Then there is politics. We have seen public figures whose wealth appears to grow dramatically after assuming office, aircraft, helicopters, large properties, and other symbols of extraordinary wealth. There is nothing wrong with legitimate success; the question is, how was the wealth acquired?

A politician lands in a helicopter, and the crowd erupts. A convoy sweeps in, cash and handouts are distributed, and applause follows almost instantly. What exactly are we celebrating? A few thousand shillings can buy applause at that moment, but at what cost? New roads, new hospitals, new classrooms, new industries, jobs, and opportunities for youth?

Young people struggling with unemployment can be mobilized for political interests, given money, transport, food, or promises, then placed at the front of confrontations. They shout, they intimidate, and violence follows.

Those who mobilized them remain safely behind the scenes while the youth risk injury, arrests, abductions, or death. That is not empowerment; that's exploitation. When society begins celebrating the proceeds of theft, corruption becomes normalized.

But every feast has an end

For a while, the powerful person appears untouchable. Investigations are dismissed, critics are labelled jealous, the media and social media celebrate.

Then one morning, everything changes; it may be 5 a.m., the neighborhood is quiet, and then comes the knock. When investigators arrive, lawful searches are conducted, documents and electronic devices may be examined, and questions begin. The celebrity is now the subject of investigation.

Illicit wealth moves. It can be stored under beds, transferred, converted into property, invested in businesses, or placed in the names of relatives and associates. A bank transaction leaves a record, property has an ownership trail, companies have beneficial owners, and procurement decisions leave paperwork everywhere.

From hero to headlines

And then comes the courtroom; the person who once occupied VIP sections may now be among accused persons, facing public ridicule. Friends become cautious; associates disappear. The family is dragged into the storm.

A corruption allegation may begin with one individual, but its consequences can spread; a spouse may face scrutiny, children may be mocked online or at school, parents may be questioned, and businesses may attract attention. The children did not sign the questionable document, yet the stigma can spread across the families. Then begins the long journey, one court date, then another, then another. Hearings are scheduled, lawyers appear, and documents are filed. Being charged is not being convicted; every accused person is entitled to due process and the presumption of innocence.

The person who thought illicit wealth bought freedom may discover it bought years of explanations.

The public pays the biggest price

The public may already have paid, a road remains unfinished, a hospital lacks equipment, a school waits for classrooms, a public project costs more than it should, a qualified young person misses an opportunity because connections matter more than merit, or a citizen pays a bribe for a service that should have been free. That is the real tragedy of corruption; the money stolen is only part of the loss; the greater loss is what that money could have achieved.

The hardest question is for all of us: why do we celebrate unexplained wealth? Why accept handouts without asking where the money comes from? We cannot condemn corruption while worshipping its proceeds or build integrity while making the corrupt our celebrities.

The day the music stops

The war against corruption may appear slow, but it is steady. Power is temporary, political influence changes, and crowds find new heroes. But decisions made in positions of trust leave a lasting trail, so before becoming the next "sharp guy," perhaps one should ask: Sharp at what? Sharp enough to steal? Sharp enough to hide money? Sharp enough to manipulate a system? Or sharp enough to understand that public office is a trust, and every shilling taken unlawfully belongs to someone?

Because there comes a day when the applause stops, the convoy disappears, the expensive lifestyle becomes evidence, and the doors that once opened easily become doors through which investigators walk.

The real price of corruption is never just money; it is lost peace, damaged reputation, recovered assets, an embarrassed family, wasted years, and a name forever linked to questionable choices.

When the feast is over and the crowd goes home, one question remains for the 'Sharp Guy': Was it really worth it?

Writer is a Cybersecurity Engineer at EACC



The mirror you avoid

By Martha Maina

The day begins quietly. The alarm sounds. You wake, but you do not rise immediately. Your eyes rest on the ceiling a little longer than necessary. For a few seconds, there is only stillness—no expectations, no voices, no demands.

In that quiet, there is clarity before the noise begins. Before roles are assumed. Before performance. Who are you in these first seconds when no one needs anything from you?

The question does not accuse. It waits.

Water runs, clothes are chosen, messages are skimmed, and responsibilities assemble themselves in your mind before you step outside. No one observes these small beginnings, no one evaluates them, yet they shape the tone of your day.

At work, the morning unfolds in familiar patterns. Emails. Requests. Deadlines. A colleague cuts a corner and shrugs. "It's not a big deal," they say. It would take extra effort to do it properly. Extra time. Extra care.

You say nothing.

Is silence agreement? Or simply fatigue?

By midday, you sit across from co-workers discussing someone who is not present. The story stretches as it is retold. Details sharpen. Motives are assigned. You know the person. You know parts of what is being said are unfair.

You could redirect the conversation. You could interrupt. Instead, you remain neutral.

Neutral feels safe.

But cultures in offices, in families, and in nations are shaped by what we excuse as much as by what we condemn.

When the break ends and you step back into the afternoon light, something near the curb catches your attention. A wallet lies close to the pavement, as though it slipped unnoticed from someone's pocket.

You pause.

You pick it up.

It is heavier than expected. Inside are identification cards, bank cards, and thick notes—not coins, not loose change, but real money. Enough to settle a bill. Enough to ease a pressure you have been quietly carrying. Enough to change someone's week.

You stand there longer than necessary.

You could remove the cash and discard the rest. You could walk away and pretend you never saw it. You could decide that life has taken enough from you and this is balance.

Instead, you search carefully through its contents. A folded receipt reveals a number scribbled on the back. You dial.

The voice that answers is tense, distracted then suddenly relieved. You agree to meet at a nearby supermarket entrance. When the owner arrives, they check the wallet quickly, then look up, stunned into gratitude.

You nod once and step away before gratitude turns into a ceremony.

Trust is built quietly and consistently, not through declarations, but through dependable character and the habits we upload even when no one is watching.

As you approach your gate later that evening, you notice your neighbour balancing grocery bags awkwardly against the fence. You are tired. You could pretend not to see. Instead, you step forward and take two of the bags inside.

A small exchange. A brief conversation. A simple act of presence.

Later, you set your bag by the door and loosen your shoes. Nothing extraordinary.

An expense claim still waits unfinished in your bag. The numbers are close enough. A small adjustment would go unnoticed. Everyone rounds up. Everyone does it. It is ordinary. You open the file.

Integrity is rarely loud. It is inconvenient. It asks for precision when approximation benefits you. It demands consistency when compromise is easier. It insists that governance, whether in a country, an institution, or a home, begins with personal discipline.

You correct the numbers.

No announcement. No reward. Just alignment.

Night settles.

You lie back and stare at the ceiling once more.

In that quiet, there is clarity again.

And a question remains steady, unembellished

When the noise fades, when the roles fall away, when nothing is required of you... who are you, really?

The mirror does not answer.

It waits.

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



Notes to my children



By Anna Leinte

My dearest children, life is beautiful, complicated, and sometimes difficult. One of the things I hope to accomplish while I am still in "good condition" is to write special notes to you, things I want you to remember and that may guide you along the path of life. A desiderata for you, a Latin word meaning "things desired"; signposts along the journey of life, little reminders of the values I hope will guide you, the lessons I have learned, and the things I most deeply desire for each of you.

Many of these lessons come through ordinary conversations, the things we see around us, the choices we make, and, hopefully, the example I set before you.

Recently, I heard someone say that Kenyans would not survive in Singapore because the norms and culture they are accustomed to are so different from what Singapore demands of its citizens. Whether or not that statement is fair, it made me think. What happens when a child grows up in an environment where dishonesty becomes so common that it begins to look normal? When cutting corners is praised as being clever? When doing the right thing can make you look foolish, while doing the wrong thing can sometimes seem the quickest way to get ahead?

What, then, do I tell you, my children? Do I simply say, "Be honest," and hope those words will be enough? Perhaps not.

In 1925, Canon Frederick Lewis Donaldson spoke of what he called the seven social sins, ways in which society can go wrong when important things are separated from the values that should guide them. The seven social sins were later popularized by Mahatma Gandhi in the same year. I want to turn these into conversations with you, little signposts for the journey of life.

Politics without principle: My children, politics is an important part of society. It affects how we are governed, how public resources are used, and the kind of future we build. If any of you ever enter politics, remember that leadership is a responsibility and a trust. Cultivate integrity, humility, justice, courage, and compassion, and never allow power or wealth to become your purpose.

If you do not enter politics, you still have a responsibility through your vote. Look at a leader's character, values, and record rather than being swayed simply by money or gifts.

Wealth without work: We were created to work and to serve. Work is not simply a way of making money; it gives us dignity and allows us to contribute to society. As the Desiderata by Max Ehrmann reminds us, "Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble."

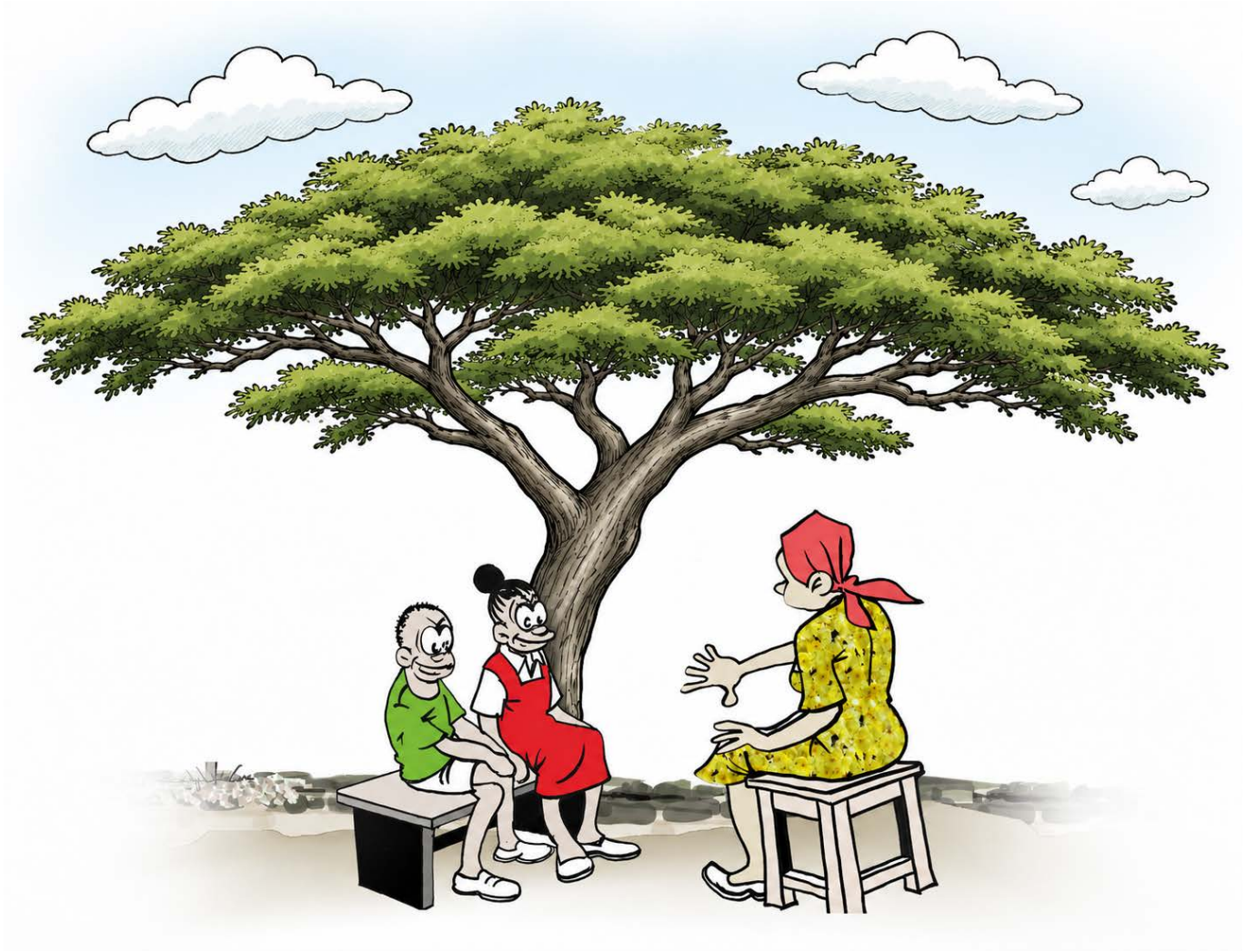
Never be ashamed of honest work. Whatever profession or trade you choose, take pride in it and give it your best. Be ambitious, but also learn contentment and gratitude for the honest fruits of your labour. Wealth without honest work can involve theft, bribery, fraud or embezzlement, and someone ultimately pays the price. Money may buy comfort, but it cannot buy a peaceful conscience.

Pleasure without conscience: My children, enjoy your lives. Laugh, celebrate, travel, rest and enjoy the beautiful things God has given you. There is nothing wrong with pleasure; the question is whether it is guided by conscience. Let your conscience be formed by truth, God's word, and love.

Do not only ask, "Can I do this?" Also ask yourself, "Is this the right thing to do?"

Knowledge without character: Never stop learning and developing yourselves. Knowledge is a great gift. Read, study, ask questions, acquire skills, and become good at whatever you choose to do. Education can open doors and enable you to make a difference in the world. But remember that knowledge without character can become dangerous.

What is the value of knowing the law if you are dishonest? What is the value of being a brilliant accountant if you steal? What is the value of being a doctor if you do not care for the person who is sick? Never confuse intelligence with wisdom.



Character is built gradually. Our thoughts influence our words; our words influence our actions; our repeated actions become habits; and our habits shape our character. Our character, in turn, determines our destiny. Pay attention to the small things. Keep your word. Tell the truth even when it is inconvenient. Admit when you are wrong. Treat people with respect. Return what is not yours. Do your work well even when nobody is watching.

Commerce and industry without morality: My children, whatever work you eventually do, remember that business is not only about making money. Every business involves people, customers, employees, suppliers and communities, and how you treat them matters.

Make your money honestly. Do not deceive a customer because you think you can get away with it. Do not exploit a worker because you have power over them. Do not offer or accept a bribe simply because "that is how things are done."

Science without humanity: Knowledge and discovery have tremendous power. Science can heal, improve lives, solve problems and open possibilities that previous generations could hardly imagine.

But remember that not everything we can do is necessarily something we should do. Knowledge must always be accompanied by responsibility and humanity. Behind every invention or technological achievement is a human being who can be helped or harmed by what we create.

Let your intelligence serve humanity. Never become so fascinated by what is possible that you forget what is right.

Worship without sacrifice: And finally, my children, there is worship. I want you to know God, to love God, to serve God, and to live with him for all eternity. But remember that faith is more than going to church, saying prayers, or knowing the right words.

If we truly love God, that love must find its way into how we live. It means forgiving when forgiveness is difficult, helping when it is inconvenient, giving when we would rather keep, telling the truth when a lie would benefit us, sacrificing comfort, money, or popularity, and standing for what is right even when it costs us dearly.

I do not expect you to be perfect. You will make mistakes, as I have made mistakes. When you do, have the humility to acknowledge them, make amends where you can, learn from them, and begin again.

And when life places choices before you, as it surely will, pause, listen to your conscience, pray, and remember that every choice shapes the person you are becoming.

I hope these little signposts will remain with you to guide you and steer you along the right path.

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

The hidden cost of corruption in our schools

Corruption in the education sector has numerous effects on learners and education institutions.

First, learners lack quality education and guidance. This happens when people who lack the necessary skills and qualifications are employed as teachers because of favouritism, by the government or by people in power. The harm extends beyond the classroom: patients fall ill or even die because of quack doctors who lack knowledge in their careers.

Secondly, learners are placed in fields they are not capable of pursuing because they were awarded grades above their true standard. As a result, many university students struggle to pursue certain careers, since they are studying courses beyond their ability. They end up dropping the course and switching to another, which forces them or their parents to spend more money than they had intended to invest in the learner's education.

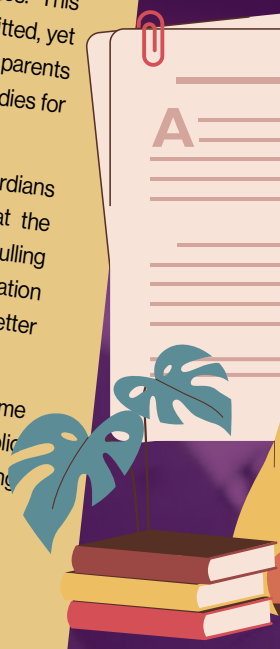
Underdevelopment of education institutions is another effect of corruption. Funds are allocated to schools that do not exist (ghost schools), as leaders use this method to embezzle public funds for personal gain. This leaves insufficient funds for real, registered institutions.

Neglect of some institutions because of their location is also an effect. Some of these institutions end up undeveloped or shut down because of unsafe conditions and poor facilities. This happens when large numbers of local students are admitted, yet they are unable or unwilling to fight for their rights, and their parents cannot pay school fees and depend on government subsidies for their children to attend school.

Erosion of trust is another consequence. Parents and guardians lose trust and confidence in their children, believing that the children cannot work hard without their stepping in and pulling strings. This comes about when parents pay bribes to education officials to have their children's poor grades changed to better ones.

Finally, corruption has social effects. Families or officials become known to the public for their corrupt dealings, which lowers public trust in them. This happens when officials are known for giving bribes or embezzling public funds.

Joseph Shalom,
St. Joseph's School, Rapogi.



Young voices against corruption

Corruption has become a major challenge in Kenya and many other countries. Many people, especially those in government, misuse power and money. This hinders development, wastes public resources and harms citizens who place their trust in their leaders. On the brighter side, the youth can help stop this menace.

Understanding what corruption is and knowing our rights should come first. Once we learn the law, how resources should be used and how the government works, it becomes easier to identify corruption.

This leads to speaking out, which is an impactful step for any young person. We can speak up among friends and classmates, and even online.

Moreover, forming clubs that support integrity can be of great help. If we, the youth, come together and speak in unity, we can make a great difference. This is a peaceful approach that does not harm the economy or violate human rights. Such clubs create awareness in schools and communities. They can present messages about integrity at school events, crusades and other public forums, which is an effective way to speak out.

We as youths should practise honesty in the smallest ways. This means doing the right thing even when no one is watching. Being honest in our interactions, treating others fairly, avoiding cheating in assessments and embracing equity are all crucial steps in fighting corruption.

Embracing digital literacy can also help curb corruption. Technology is a powerful tool that can create awareness when used responsibly. Through it, we can report wrongdoing and raise our voices for justice.

In conclusion, I encourage the youth to take part in civic activities. These include participating in debates, attending forums and, when we come of age, voting and encouraging others to vote. I leave you with a quote often attributed to Nelson Mandela: "The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow." If we choose honesty, our country's future will be in safe hands.

Jane Mbithi,
Grade Seven,
Kathonzweni HGM Comprehensive School with Special Unit



Choosing integrity, one decision at a time

Integrity is doing the right thing even when no one is watching. Spencer Johnson once said, "Integrity is telling myself the truth." Fellow Integrity Club members, why do you think schools use CCTVs? I think it's because integrity among the youth is below average. Think about it: stealing, cheating in assessments and other criminal acts have eroded integrity so much that it now has to be monitored on CCTV.

The saying "Do not judge a book by its cover" is true. Appearance and physical characteristics should not lead you to judge and conclude about a person. Two things reveal who someone really is: integrity and transparency. Once upon a time, a boy named Jonah was sent by his mother to buy some household items. On his way, Jonah caught the scent of fried chips by the roadside. He bought some using the money meant for the household items. A few minutes later, he had finished eating and continued his journey to the market.

Upon arriving, he bought the items and spent the balance playing video games on a PlayStation. When he got home, he could not explain how he had spent all the money. To add salt to the wound, he had used the balance on video games. He had ruined his reputation, lowered his self-esteem and broken his mother's trust. These are some of the consequences one faces when they betray their integrity in the blink of an eye. As the saying goes, "A stitch in time saves nine," but a stitch cannot undo what has already been done.

On the other hand, we can stop the sinking Titanic by creating awareness through public speaking that emphasises the need for integrity. We can also provide guidance and counselling to students whose integrity has been damaged.

Lastly, churches can run seminars and personal growth programmes to educate people on the importance of integrity. Institutions such as secondary schools and tertiary colleges should set aside time in their schedules for Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission personnel to teach, build and mentor students on matters of integrity. Professor Wangari Maathai said, "Be part of the solution rather than part of the problem."

In conclusion, integrity starts with me. Doing the right thing will increase my level of integrity. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "Be the change you wish to see." Some circumstances leave one puzzled, but remember to see, judge and then act, making the right choice. If we practise integrity, cheating in exams and many other acts against integrity will not happen. Winners never give up.

By Allan Kemboi,
Integrity Club,
Kanga High School.

Poetry

Kitu kidogo

In a small shop in Nairobi,
A mother worked to make ends meet.
She dreamt of growth and reaching far,
For her small business held a promising spark.
One day, a city council officer came
With a threat that filled her heart with fear:
"Your shop may close before the day is through
Unless you give us kitu kidogo to let you through."
She paused, thinking of the bills to pay
And the little profit she made each day.
But she shook her head and firmly said,
"My business will stand by the rules instead."
The kitu kidogo came again and again
From suppliers, officials and businessmen.
But she chose honest dealings, though profits were less,
For she knew that integrity was the right thing to do.
With time, her customers grew in number and trust;
Her small shop flourished because her dealings were just.
She learned that kitu kidogo may offer gains today,
But integrity builds a business that lasts all the way.

By Margilenzo Querita

Tuwajibike Maze!

Pesa ya umma si ya kujichotea,
Ni ya roads na schools kujengewa,
Si ya mtu kuweka kwa mfuko,
Halafu mtaa ibaki bila huduma, maze!
Mambo ikienda wrong, usikae tu,
Usiseme, "Si mimi," alafu uende tu,
Ask questions, fuatilia vile pesa inatumika,
Tukidai answers, transparency inahitajika!
Kiongozi, ukishika hiyo position,
Remember, ni trust, si personal mission,
Hiyo pesa si yako, usilete mchezo,
Serve wananchi, usiwageuze ATM ya kutoa!
Vijana, media na civil society,
Tukiwork pamoja, tunaleta accountability,
Serikali na citizens, tushikane mkono,
Tujenge Kenya yenye justice kwa kila mwananchi!
Usiseme, "Hiyo si kazi yangu,"
Uwajibikaji huanza na mimi na wewe, msee wangu,
Report corruption, usiogope kusimama,
Ukiona mali ya umma inaenda wrong, uliza!
Public money, public good!
Tuwajibike, that's how we should!
Tusikubali corruption ituharibie kesho,
Tukilinda mali ya umma, Kenya itasonga mbele!

Imechorwa na Nijo jamaa wa comms!

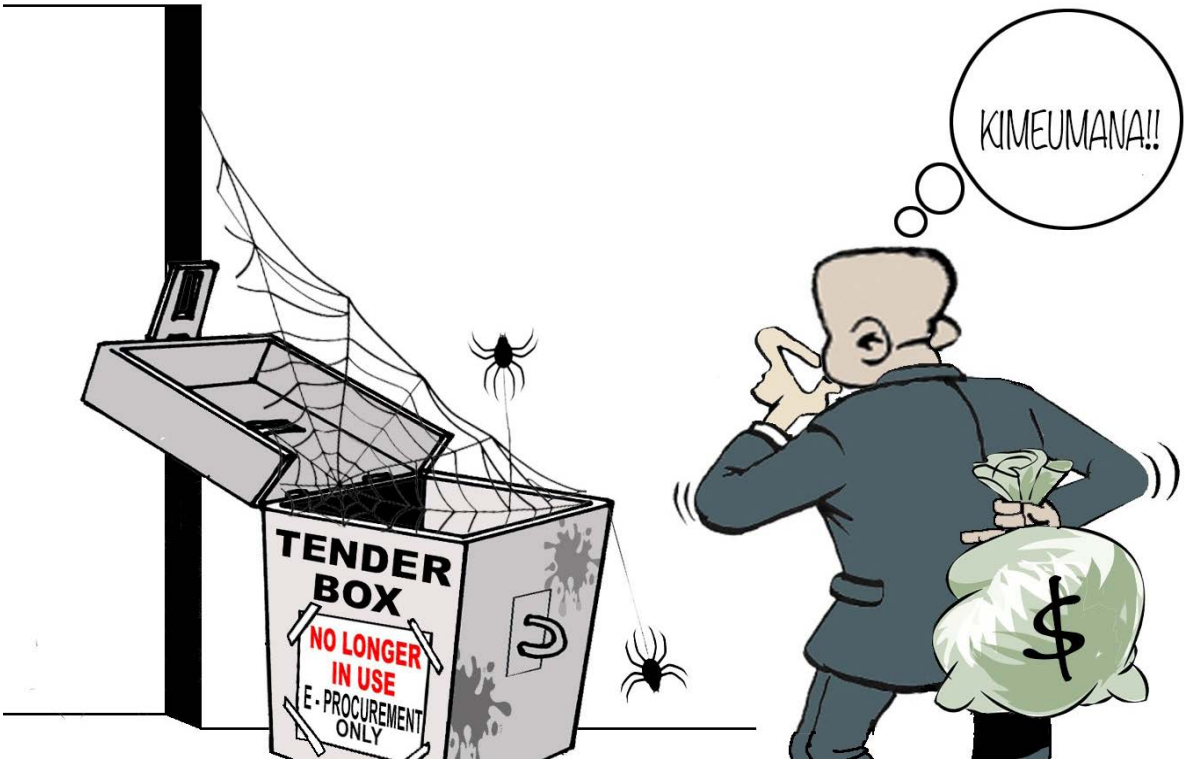
When darkness meets the light

Coins shift hands in shadowed rooms,
where promises are thinner than air.
A stamp falls heavy on receipts,
that no honest hand has signed.
Students outshine on borrowed truth,
their marks and grades fed by quiet deals.
Hands once raised to serve the people
now serve the weight of hidden seals.
A road is paved, but not for all;
it bends toward pockets lined with gold.
The school is built with hollow bricks,
its future quietly sold.

In crowded streets, the whispers grow:
"Who counts the cost? Who pays the fee?"
The answer lies in every office,
a cost glued to poise, driving some to flee.
Yet somewhere ink still dares to speak,
and voices gather, clear and bright.
For rot survives in silent dark
but falters when exposed to light.

Written by Edick Annan,
Form 4, St. Joseph's School, Rapogi.

LAST WORD



Fighting corruption in the digital era



By Ignatius Wekesa

For decades, corruption in Kenya was familiar: brown envelopes in dim offices, inflated tender documents, title deeds altered by hand. Today, it has migrated into the digital economy, bringing new threats as well as powerful new tools to fight back.

Kenya's rapid embrace of digital finance and e-government has been transformative. Mobile money, e-procurement portals, digital land registries and platforms such as eCitizen have removed many of the middlemen who once demanded bribes for routine services. Yet the same digitization that closes old loopholes has opened new ones. Corrupt actors have adapted quickly. Bribes once paid in cash now move through mobile money, are disguised as "consultancy fees" routed through shell companies, or are converted into cryptocurrency to obscure their origin. Officials have reportedly manipulated procurement systems, inserted backdoors into government databases, or colluded with IT vendors to rig processes designed to be tamper-proof. Even reporting channels are targets, as cybercriminals impersonate anti-corruption agencies to extort citizens or discredit genuine investigations.

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) has been explicit about this shift. Investigators now face suspects who use encrypted communication, cryptocurrency wallets, blockchain obfuscation tools and complex cross-border laundering schemes. Virtual assets are the most consequential change, since their speed and borderless nature make them attractive for layering illicit proceeds, moving stolen public funds offshore and settling bribes without a paper trail.

Kenya has responded with deliberate policy action. The Virtual Asset Service Providers Act, 2025, brought exchanges and digital asset custodians under a formal regulatory regime for the first time, and EACC has since completed several forensic investigation files involving money laundering through virtual assets. This work sits alongside the broader push to strengthen anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing systems, a priority sharpened by Kenya's efforts to exit the Financial Action Task Force grey list. The proposed Anti-Corruption Laws (Amendment) Bill would go further, widening investigators' access to mobile money records and non-bank financial institutions and closing gaps that corrupt networks have exploited by moving funds outside the banking system.

If technology has given corruption new hiding places, it has also given investigators new searchlights. Kenya's response rests on three pillars: artificial intelligence, data analytics and digital platforms. AI and analytics are changing how suspicious activity is detected. Rather than waiting for a whistleblower or a leaked document, systems can scan procurement records, payment patterns and asset declarations for anomalies, such as an official whose lifestyle outpaces their salary or a tender repeatedly awarded to a cluster of related companies. EACC's leadership has urged public institutions to embrace these tools as the biggest enabler of prevention, enforcement and transparency.



E-procurement and online government platforms also reduce the human contact points where bribery thrives. When a licence, tax clearance or tender moves through a transparent, auditable workflow, there are fewer chances for an official to demand a "facilitation fee." EACC's figures suggest the payoff. Over the past three financial years, the Commission has helped recover and protect more than Sh43 billion in public resources, including over Sh22 billion in suspected corrupt assets traced and Sh16.5 billion in losses averted in a single year.

Digital forensics, including cellular data analysis, blockchain tracing and cross-border financial intelligence sharing, are now core investigative skills. Because modern corruption networks are transnational by design, Kenya's cooperation with partners such as the FBI, including joint training, matters. That cooperation deepened on September 7, 2026, when EACC met the FBI, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Directorate of Criminal Investigations, the Asset Recovery Agency, the Kenya Revenue Authority and the Financial Reporting Centre to discuss intelligence sharing, joint investigations and asset recovery. Kenya is also investing in long-term solutions through the Centre for Anti-Corruption Studies and Research in Africa (CEREAC), hosted by EACC. CEREAC serves as a continental hub helping African agencies develop locally driven, technology-enabled solutions to fraud and graft.

Yet, technology alone will not defeat corruption, and the tools carry risks of their own. AI-driven surveillance must operate within the Data Protection Act, 2019, guard against bias and be open to independent oversight. Detection is not the only bottleneck, because cases flagged quickly but stalled for years in court, or ending without recovery, deliver little deterrence.

EACC has framed its strategy as a shift from a reactive, enforcement-heavy posture to one balanced across prevention, public education, investigations, asset recovery and partnerships. Digital tools are most powerful when embedded in that wider ecosystem of trained investigators, independent courts and a public service culture that treats integrity as non-negotiable.

Citizens have a part to play too. They can verify that a platform is genuinely official before sharing personal details or money, report through verified EACC channels, and use the Access to Information Act to demand procurement data. For their part, policymakers can make the greatest difference by funding digital forensics and cybersecurity capacity, requiring procurement and public contract data to be published in open, searchable formats, and fast-tracking the Anti-Corruption Laws (Amendment) Bill so that the law evolves as fast as the technologies it must regulate.

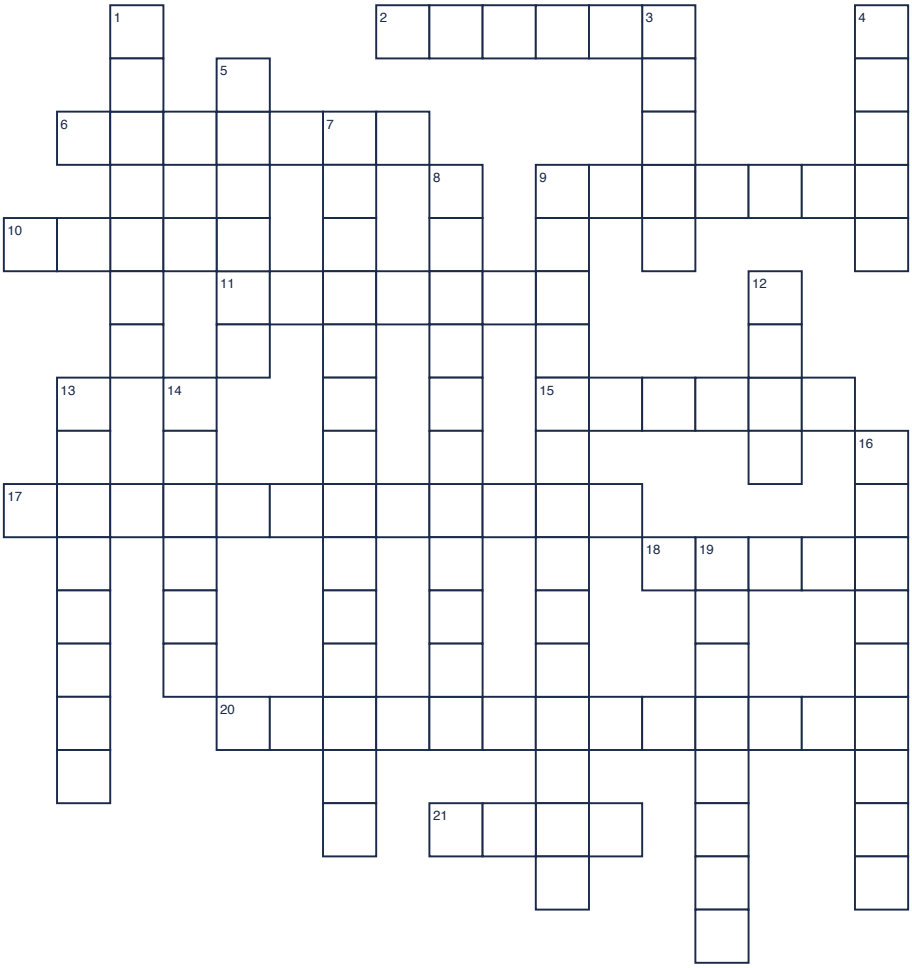
The digital economy did not create corruption, but it has changed its shape, speed and reach. Kenya's response must match that change by using AI and data analytics to see what human eyes alone cannot, regulating virtual assets before they become safe havens for stolen wealth, and building public services that leave no room for a bribe to hide.

The digital economy did not create corruption, but it has changed its shape, speed and reach.

Ultimately, this fight is about ensuring that technology serves the public good rather than a corrupt few. Kenya's institutions are increasingly equipped for it, but success will depend on sustained investment, vigilant citizens and the political will to let transparency, not convenience, define how our digital economy grows.

The writer is Deputy Director, Forensic Investigations, EACC

INTEGRITY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

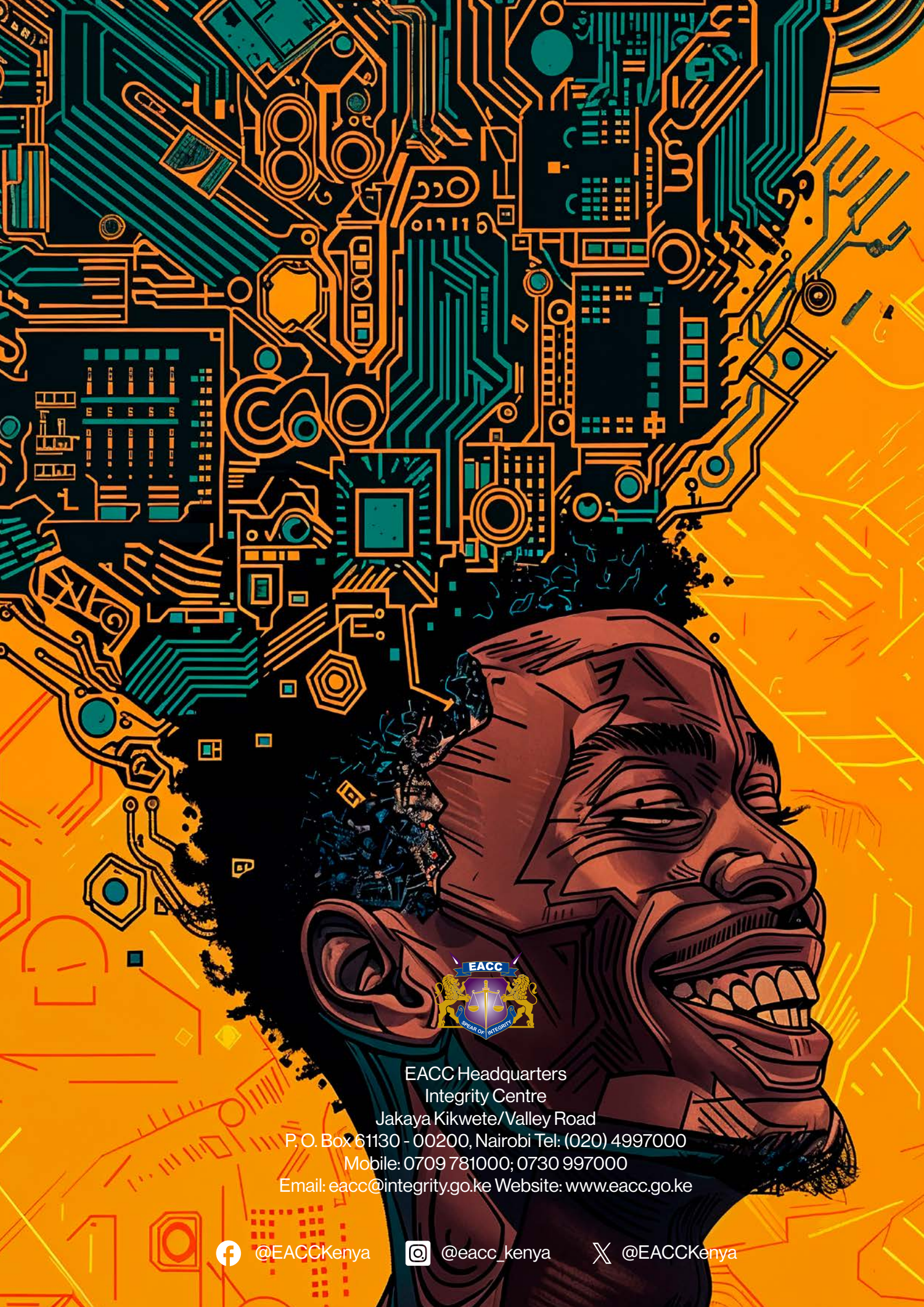
2. Moral principles guiding right and wrong conduct (6)
6. Type of era in which corruption has changed its shape and speed (7)
9. Shared values and habits; integrity must become one (7)
10. Deception for unlawful gain (5)
11. System of production and trade that graft damages (7)
15. Formal offer to supply goods or services, often rigged in corrupt deals (6)
17. Openness that lets the public see how decisions are made (12)
18. Corruption, especially in politics or public office (5)
20. Person who reports wrongdoing (13)
21. Kenya's Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission, in short (4)

DOWN

1. ___ sector: business community with a role in building integrity culture (7)
3. ___ company: empty firm used to disguise payments (5)
4. Property of value, recovered when illicitly acquired (5)
5. Firm competing for a tender (6)
7. Duty to answer for one's actions and use of resources (14)
8. Process by which public bodies buy goods and services (11)
9. Virtual money used to hide the origin of bribes (14)
12. ___ contracting: publishing procurement data for all to see (4)
13. Type of investigation using scientific methods to find evidence (8)
14. Seller who bids for a public contract (6)
16. Doing the right thing even when no one is watching (9)
19. Getting stolen public wealth back (8)

Scan me for Answers:

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