



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



**GENERATION EQUALITY FORUM:  
KENYA'S ROADMAP FOR ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY AND ENDING  
ALL FORMS OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMALE GENITAL  
MUTILATION BY 2026**





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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Generation Equality is an international platform that seeks to accelerate the implementation of the gender equality commitments in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995 to achieve transformative change. Generation Equality Forum (GEF) is convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the governments of Mexico and France. As part of the GEF process, Kenya is co-leading the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Action Coalition, one of the GEF's six Action Coalitions (ACs). The other Actions Coalitions include economic justice and rights, bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), feminist action for climate justice, technology and innovation for gender equality, and feminist movements and leadership.

Aligned with international conventions, grounded in Kenya's national law and policies, guided by research and data, and cognizant of best practices in advancing gender equality, women and girl's empowerment, this policy brief outlines the challenges on the road to achieving gender equality and elimination of all forms Gender-Based Violence and postulates a way forward. The policy brief also describes Kenya's current national and social-economic status regarding the advancement of gender equality, women, and girl's empowerment.

The brief specifically outlines Kenya's GEF commitment framework encompassed by **12 concrete actions** on ending all forms of GBV and FGM by 2026. The actions are underpinned across the following pillars outlined by the GEF GBV Action Coalition:

- **FINANCING:** Increase financing and budgetary allocation for gender-based violence prevention and response, including reform and implementation of laws, policies, and multi-sectoral national action plans in domestic resources across sectors. **Kenya commits to increasing resource allocation, sustaining the current allocation in FY2020/2021**, and setting up co-financing models to create a pathway towards gender-responsive and establish a survivors' fund and research fund for GBV prevention and response.
- **LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY:** By strengthening accountability on enforcement and implementation of Kenya's laws, policies, and other commitments on advancing Gender equality and ending all forms of Gender-Based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation. **Kenya commits to developing an accountability framework for tracking expenditure on the allocated resources for ending all forms of GBV and FGM, and an indicator in the government Performance contracting framework** to track duty-bearers accountability on enforcement and implementation of GBV laws and policies by 2022.

- **LAWS AND POLICIES:** By ratification and implementation of laws and conventions. **Kenya commits to ratifying and implementing the ILO Convention 190** on elimination of Gender-Based Violence and Harassment in the world of work by 2026, in close partnership with the private sector.
- **DATA:** By strengthening the utilization of gender statistics in informing the design, scale-up, and evaluation of FGM and GBV programming. **Kenya commits to introducing a module on GBV in the 2022 Kenya Demographic Health Survey and developing a GBV management and information system by 2022.**
- **SERVICE DELIVERY:** Kenya commits to incorporating GBV prevention and response service provision in the essential minimum package of the Universal Health Coverage UHC by 2022 and **scaling up the national police service integrated response to GBV** ("Policare"<sup>1</sup>). In addition, **Kenya commits to** establishing Gender-Based Violence Recovery Centers and shelters in all 47 counties by 2026.

Kenya recognizes that the realization of GEF commitments requires the contribution of a wide range of stakeholders. Therefore, Kenya welcomes the contributions of partners through the global GEF Commitment-Makers model.

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<sup>1</sup>POLICARE is a National Police Service (NPS) integrated response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in Kenya. It is designed as a multi- agency victim centered "ONE STOP CENTER" service provider. The service providers will include and not limited to Police, Forensic investigators, Health providers, Psychologists, DPP representative, a Magistrate on call, Medical-legal, Gender experts, Correctional personnel among others under all under one roof.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF BRIEF

Generation Equality is an international platform that seeks to accelerate the implementation of the gender equality commitments in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995 to achieve transformative change. Convened by UN Women (the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women) and co-hosted by Mexico and France, the Generation Equality forum has identified six thematic areas and created Action Coalitions to that regard. These steps are integral for progress and transformative change on gender equality at all levels. The six Action Coalitions (ACs) include: Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Economic justice and rights, Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), Feminist action for climate justice, Technology and innovation for Gender Equality, and Feminist movements and leadership.

Kenya is co-leading the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Action Coalition alongside the U.K., Uruguay, and Iceland as member states; the European Union; Ford Foundation, civil society, and private sector partners. The GBV Action Coalition has developed a global roadmap identifying **four (4) sub-themes** that are considered instrumental to achieving the overall goal of ending all forms of GBV by 2026. The sub-themes are:

- 1 Creating enabling environments for the elimination of GBV.
- 2 Scaling up evidence-driven prevention programming.
- 3 Scaling up comprehensive, accessible services for survivors.
- 4 Increasing accountability, participation, and support to autonomous girl-led, women's rights organizations (WRO), women's rights activists (WRA), and women human rights defenders (WHRD) working to address GBV (including female genital mutilation (FGM) and child early and forced marriage/early unions.

## 3.0 KENYA'S NATIONAL CONTEXT

Kenya's leadership in the Generation Equality GBV Action coalition is guided by His Excellency (H.E) President **Uhuru Kenyatta's** commitment to end Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) by 2022. The commitment was made on the 4th of June 2019, in Vancouver, Canada, and reiterated at the Nairobi Summit on ICPD+25 in November 2019. A roadmap to support the implementation of the Presidential commitment is guided by a Presidential Acceleration Plan.

This brief provides **an overview of Kenya's policies and strategies to advance gender equality and eliminate all forms of GBV**. This includes harmful practices such as Female Genital Mutilation and child, early and forced marriages within the context of the Gender-Based Violence Action Coalition's sub-themes. The policy brief considers **the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic** on the lives of women and girls in all their diversity and further highlights critical opportunities for strategic engagement. Finally, the brief **outlines practical policy actions and commitments that can be implemented by Kenya under their co-leadership in the GEF Action Coalition on GBV**.

### 3.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Since the global adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Kenya has recorded substantial progress in advancing gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. These advancements include the adoption of policy and legal measures related to Gender-Based Violence (GBV); Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), gender parity in school enrollment at the primary school level, progress on women's representation in leadership and decision making, the right to matrimonial property, and the right to citizenship. Despite this progress, women, and girls continue to face discrimination, exclusion, and inequality across economic, social, and political fronts.

**Demographics:** According to the 2019 census, the population of Kenya is 47,564,296. Of these, 23,548,056 (49.51%) are male, 24,014,716 (50.49%) are female, and 1,524 are intersex. Women and girls making up over 50% of Kenya's (and the global) population bolsters the rights-based argument for gender equality, women and girl's empowerment.

**Vulnerabilities:** Kenya has high-income inequality. Fifty-three percent (53%)<sup>1</sup> of the Kenyan population is considered poor by international standards, the most significant percentage being rural dwellers and women. The country has registered near-gender parity in the enrolment of girls and boys at the primary school level on indicators related to education. Fertility rates have dropped from 4.9 births per woman in 2003 to 3.9<sup>2</sup> births per woman in 2014. However, the lived reality for women and girls is markedly different, particularly in terms of the statistics based on age, education, and geographical location. For example, 23% of girls in Kenya are married off before the age of 18, placing them at a high risk of maternal mortality, which according to the World Health Organization (WHO), is highest for adolescent girls under 15 years old. Higher-income losses among women due to the ongoing COVID pandemic are likely to increase their vulnerability to GBV. According to a COVID-19 Gender Assessment conducted by UN Women<sup>3</sup> in Kenya in 2020, 20% of women compared to 12% of men reported a loss of income at the time of the survey.

In terms of crisis situations, from an average of 5.6 million people in need, at least 1.4 million women and girls have limited access to reproductive health care, and 280,000 females face protection risks and gender-based violence.

#### 4.0 GBV IN KENYA: SITUATION ANALYSIS

GBV occurs in private and public spheres and is one of the most pervasive forms of human rights abuse. It is often used as a tool to maintain and reinforce gender power imbalance. There are various forms of GBV, such as intimate partner violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), child, early and forced marriages, rape, defilement, and other forms of sexual violence and abuse. Across the world, a complex set of social and structural factors drive GBV. Harmful gender norms, which rigidly define and enforce gender roles, and support the right of men over women's bodies and sexuality, perpetuate GBV.<sup>4</sup> Also, a culture of silence around violence against women and girls and acceptance of violence to discipline women and children and settle interpersonal disputes increase the risks of violence and harassment and contribute to a low level or lack of GBV reporting. Further, intersecting axes of inequality—gender, class, age, ethnicity, disability, and others—heightens the risk of GBV for marginalized and vulnerable groups.

According to the Kenya Demographic Health Survey<sup>5</sup> of 2014, 47% of women aged 15 to 49 years reported having experienced either sexual or physical IPV at some point in their lives, with 25.5% in the last 12 months. In Kenya, the prevalence of FGM is 21%, with significant variation ranging between 1 percent to 98 percent across the country. Like other forms of GBV, FGM<sup>6</sup> has social sanctions linked with women's social status or marriageability, religious identity, and family honor.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the likelihood of GBV. Like other countries worldwide, Kenya has seen a spike in cases of Gender-Based Violence, specifically domestic violence and sexual offenses. Statistically, most perpetrators are close relatives, guardians, and/or persons living with the survivors from the recorded cases. In a survey<sup>7</sup> undertaken by the National Crime Research Centre on the prevalence of GBV during the pandemic, the number of GBV cases recorded between January and June 2020 had shot up by 92.2% compared with those between January and December the previous year. According to the Chief Justice's report in April 2020, sexual offenses constituted 35.8% of reported cases handled within the judiciary. Globally and in Kenya, some of the containment measures to mitigate the impact of COVID-19—such as national curfews, lockdowns, and school closures—were shown to expose girls to FGM and discriminatory and harmful practices, including early and forced child marriages. **The above context and evidence base provides the basis for the need and urgency to address GBV.**

Prevention and Response to GBV require holistic and systemic approaches with robust legal and policy frameworks, resource commitments, and programs to support prevention along with care and support for survivors to seek justice, recover and rebuild their lives. Meaningful implementation of this goal requires enhanced accountability measures, enforcement of laws, rigorous implementation of policies, and coordinated multi-sector GBV prevention and response efforts towards improving access and quality of essential GBV services and addressing the social and cultural norms that promote and normalize GBV.

## 5.0 KENYA'S COMMITMENT ON ENDING ALL FORMS OF GBV

Kenya made commitments related to ending GBV during the Nairobi Summit on 25th Anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD+25) in 2019 during the Nairobi Summit. The commitments, which were aimed at accelerating momentum on the 1994 ICPD Plan of Action, are:

- To end Female Genital Mutilation by strengthening coordination on legislation and policy framework; communication and advocacy; evidence generation, and support of cross-border collaboration on elimination of FGM by 2022.
- To eliminate, by 2030, all forms of gender-based violence – including child and forced marriages - by addressing social and cultural norms that propagate the vice while providing support to women and girls who have been affected.
- To ensure universal access to quality reproductive health services, including prevention and management of GBV, in humanitarian and fragile contexts by 2030.

In addition to the ICPD+25 commitments, the Government of Kenya committed an **allocation for FY2020/2021 of USD 2.79 million towards elimination of GBV and FGM**. This initial resource allocation is critical to implementing already existing policy commitments on ending GBV and FGM and to providing a frame and baseline evidence for a gender responsive budgeting on GBV and FGM. The Government has also launched guidelines for the management of County Gender Based Violence Recovery Centers which are critical for ensuring that survivors have access to quality essential services.

As part of Kenya's leadership in the Gender Based Violence Action Coalition in the Generation Equality process, the country seeks to build on these commitments by expanding the scope where applicable, increasing the level of ambition and accelerating the momentum towards the advancement of gender equality as well as the empowerment of women and girls in their diversity.

## 6.0 OPPORTUNITIES

- **National leadership:** In Kenya, GEF is a Presidential initiative, with His Excellency the President's personal commitment bringing much needed visibility to the Forum. **The Office of the President** is providing both capacity and technical support to follow up and sustain momentum before and after the Generation Equality Forum at all levels. This includes the adoption of a robust **GEF Leadership structure** at the national level comprising of the GEF National Advisory Committee, the National Steering Committee, County GBV/FGM Committees with diverse members from government ministries, CSO, UN entities set-up to advise government, fast track and serve as a coordination mechanism for GBV prevention and response.
- **In the last 10 years, several legislations and policies have been enacted. These include:**
  - The Protection Against Domestic Violence Act 2014,<sup>8</sup>
  - Prohibition Against Female Genital Mutilation Act 2011,<sup>9</sup>
  - National Policy for the Eradication of Female Genital Mutilation (2019),<sup>10</sup>
  - National Policy on Gender and Development, 2019,<sup>11</sup>
  - National Policy for Prevention and Response to Gender Based Violence (2014) currently under review.<sup>12</sup>

Other policy frameworks include the National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework towards the Prevention of and Response to Sexual and Gender Based Violence, 2014 and multi-sectoral Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) for Sexual Violence Prevention and Response (2013). In addition, Kenya operates toll-free help lines such as 1195 and Policare. as well as

- **Multi-sectoral approach to prevention and response to GBV:** The government has set-up an inter-agency programme. The programme includes several ministries, such as Interior and Coordination of National Government, Health, Education, Public Service and Gender, Treasury and Planning, and others, in line with their mandates to prevent and/or respond to GBV. This inter-agency programme is expected to enhance multi-sectoral coordination and effective implementation of GBV prevention and response programs. The State Department for Gender, alongside civil society actors coordinates the GBV Task Force under the Gender Sector Working Group.
- **Inter-governmental framework on the coordination of gender:** The framework offers the opportunity to improve response by outlining responsibilities among various government levels and clear engagement spaces at national and county levels. The main structures include the **GBV Sector working group** under the National Gender Sector Working Group (GSWG), county based GBV sector working groups as well as anti-FGM coordination groups. All these provide an institutional framework for follow-up, review, and implementation of Kenya's GEF commitments.

- Kenya has also formulated a **national response plan on gender-based violence and harmful practices in the context of COVID-19. Research conducted by the Office of the President on the impact of COVID-19 on girls and young women** provides data analysis on GBV and offers an opportunity to guide evidence-based GEF policy and program commitments that can respond to issues that were not identified prior to the pandemic or have been exacerbated since.
- **Kenya's report on the 25-year review on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action** provides a framework and insight on areas that require greater focus in accelerating the elimination of Gender Based Violence and other harmful practices such as FGM and stock-taking of all the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
- **The development of Kenya's Investment Case for ending GBV and FGM for Transformative Results. The investment cases** being developed as an accountability framework for implementation of ICPD+25 commitments present an opportunity to focus on the unfinished business of the ICPD Agenda in Kenya, by defining the scale and scope of investments needed to prioritize proven, high-impact and cost-effective interventions that are required to accelerate progress towards achievement of the transformative results committed to by the government and key partners.

## 7.0 FRAMEWORK FOR KENYA'S GEF COMMITMENTS

The Generation Equality Forum provides a platform and opportunity to demonstrate Kenya's commitment to achieve gender equality and end gender-based violence at the domestic and global level. As a leader in the GBV Action Coalition of the Generation Equality process, Kenya's aim is to:

1. **Build on significant progress made in Kenya after the adoption of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action.** This includes the adoption of policy and the legal measures related to Gender-Based Violence (GBV); Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), gender parity in school enrollment at the primary school level, progress on women's representation in leadership and decision making, the right to matrimonial property, and the right to citizenship. Despite this progress, women and girls continue to face discrimination, exclusion, and inequality across economic, social, and political fronts.
2. **Align with Kenya's commitments made during the 25th Anniversary conference on the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD+25) Nairobi Summit.** These are:
  - To end Female Genital Mutilation by strengthening coordination on legislation and policy framework; communication and advocacy; evidence generation, and support of cross-border collaboration on elimination of FGM by 2022.

- To eliminate, by 2030, all forms of gender-based violence – including child and forced marriages - by addressing social and cultural norms that propagate the vice while providing support to women and girls who have been affected.
- To ensure universal access to quality reproductive health services, including prevention and management of GBV, in humanitarian and fragile contexts by 2030.

### 3. Domesticate the global GEF GBV Action Coalition Blueprint priorities, which are:



#### ACTION 1

**More states and regional actors to ratify international and regional conventions. Public and private sector institutions strengthen, implement, and finance evidence-driven laws, policies and action plans to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity.** This will enable 550 million more women and girls will live in countries with laws and policies prohibiting all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls by 2026.



#### ACTION 2

**Scale up implementation and financing of evidence-driven prevention strategies by public and private sector institutions and women's rights organizations to drive down prevalence of gender-based violence against women in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings.** In so doing, increase by 50% the number of countries that include one or more evidence-driven prevention strategies on gender-based violence against women and girls in national policies by 2026.



#### ACTION 3

**Scale up implementation and financing of coordinated survivor-centered, comprehensive, quality, accessible and affordable services for survivors of gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings.** This will vastly increase the number of women and girls living in countries that enshrine multi-sectoral action plans on GBV which include provision of police, justice, health and social sector services by 2026.



#### ACTION 4

**Enhance support and increase accountability and quality, flexible funding from states, private sector, foundations, and other donors to autonomous girl-led & women's rights organizations** working to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity. This will progressively improve and increase international funding by 50% to Women's rights organizations, activists and movements including those working to address gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity by 2026.

## 7.1 THE COMMITMENTS

Based on the above actions, the Government of Kenya under the global GEF GBV Action Coalition is committing to the following concrete actions on ending all forms of GBV and FGM by 2026.

### ACTION 1

More states and regional actors to ratify international and regional conventions. Public and private sector institutions strengthen, implement, and finance evidence-driven laws, policies, and action plans to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity. This will protect 550 million more women and girls who live in countries with laws and policies prohibiting all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls by 2026.

1. **Commit to the full implementation of GBV laws and policies** by adopting a GBV indicator in the government Performance contracting framework to track duty-bearers accountability on enforcement and implementation of GBV laws and policies by 2022.
2. **Commit to investing USD 23million for GBV prevention and response by 2022** and increase the resource allocation up to USD 50million by 2026 through a co-financing model. Specifically, the Government of Kenya, commits to **sustain the allocation for FY2020/2021 of USD 2.79 million to GBV and FGM and incrementally work towards a minimum budget allocation of USD 5million for subsequent financial years.** In addition, we commit to institute an accountability framework for tracking expenditure.
3. **Commit to ratify and implement the ILO Convention 190** on eliminating Gender-Based Violence and Harassment in the world of work by 2026 in close partnership with the private sector.

### ACTION 2

Scale up implementation and financing of evidence-driven prevention strategies by public and private sector institutions and women's rights organizations to drive down prevalence of gender-based violence against women in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings. In so doing, increase by 50% the number of countries that include one or more evidence-driven prevention strategies on gender-based violence against women and girls in national policies by 2026.

4. **Commit to introducing a module on GBV in the 2022 Kenya Demographic Health Survey** to strengthen the utilization of gender statistics in informing the design, scale-up and evaluation of FGM and GBV programming.
5. **Commit to develop a GBV management and information system by 2022** to strengthen GBV prevention and response programming.
6. **Commit to invest USD 1 million annually for GBV research, and innovation** to boost evidence-based programming by 2026.

ACTION  
3

Scale up implementation and financing of coordinated survivor-centered, comprehensive, quality, accessible and affordable services for survivors of gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity including in humanitarian settings. This will result in more nations establishing multi-sectoral action plans on GBV which include provision of police, justice, health, and social sector services by 2026.

7. **Commit to integrating GBV services-** medical, legal, and psychological support services into the essential minimum package of the Universal Health Coverage UHC by 2022.
8. **Commit to scaling up the national police service integrated response to GBV'** (Policare)' and establishing Gender-Based Violence Recovery Centers and shelters in all 47 counties by 2026.
9. **Commit to establishing a GBV survivors fund** through a co-financing model in partnership with private sector, civil society, and other stakeholders for economic empowerment of GBV survivors.
10. **Commit to GBV prevention and response in crisis situations** such as COVID-19 pandemic response, humanitarian contexts and electoral related GBV.

ACTION  
4

Enhance support and increase accountability and quality, flexible funding from states, private sector, foundations, and other donors to autonomous girl-led & women's rights organizations working to end gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity. This will progressively improve and increase international funding by 50% to Women's rights organizations, activists and movements including those working to address gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity by 2026

11. **Commit to strengthen collaboration with non-state actors** including girl-led, women's rights organizations, male champions, and private sector through coordination structures such as the Gender Sector working groups at the national and county level.
12. **Commit to adopting and institutionalizing the multi-sectoral GEF Leadership structure** comprising the National Advisory Committee, the National Steering Committee, and the county leadership structure to guide the implementation of Kenya's GEF Commitments in the GBV Action Coalition up to 2026.

By making the above commitments, the Government of Kenya aims to increase the global momentum towards ending all forms of GBV and FGM by 2026.

## 8.0 COMMITMENT-MAKERS MODEL

In addition to the commitments by the Government of Kenya as an Action Coalition leader in the GBV Action Coalition, the Commitment-Makers Model provides an opportunity for other stakeholders in Kenya, working towards ending all forms of GBV to make commitments. The Commitment Makers Model provides an avenue for stakeholders who may be drawn from a governments, women's rights and feminist organizations, grassroots movements, civil society actors, youth-led organizations, private sector entities, UN agencies, and other international or regional organizations to join the coalition and make a minimum of one-year commitments.<sup>13</sup>

## 9.0 CONCLUSION

This policy brief and commitments framework is underpinned by the need for continued multilateral efforts in advancing gender equality and ending Gender-Based Violence. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated gender inequalities and manifested the depth and breadth of various forms of Gender-Based Violence. The pandemic has demonstrated the need to foreground political will, resources, and policy commitments in localized responses aligned with global standards. Generation Equality Forum and the Beijing+25/26 review process provide an opportunity for a renewed commitment to advance gender equality and women's human rights.



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