

NEWSLETTER

MAY - AUGUST 2025

MAY 2025

COUNTY BASED DIALOGUE FORUM ON DECREASING BARRIERS TO GIRLS' EDUCATION



May, 2025

In May 2025, the Coalition organised a follow-up forums in Wajir and Narok counties called for a multi-sectoral, community-driven approach to reduce gender barriers in education.



Wajir participants recommended expanding school mentorship to cover human trafficking, early marriage prevention, and digital literacy; providing government-supported learning devices; improving infrastructure such as water tanks and school feeding programs; promoting inclusivity for children with disabilities; and challenging harmful cultural norms, including unequal domestic chores and early marriages.

Wajir County Based Forum



Narok participants stressed the importance of engaging men in gender equality efforts, addressing socialization patterns that overburden women, and strengthening policy implementation. They also urged parental sensitization on safe internet use to protect children from harmful online content and warned against technology-facilitated GBV, such as AI-manipulated images targeting women. Both counties agreed that sustained advocacy, stronger policy enforcement, and active community engagement are critical to ensuring safe, inclusive, and equitable education for all.



Narok County Based Forum

MACHAKOS COUNTY POLICY FORUM ON EDUCATION

May, 2025



EYC National coordinator giving his remarks



Chief Officer for ECDE, Machakos County,

Ms. Bernice Kioko giving her remarks

The Coalition organised a key stakeholder forum to address the pressing issues facing Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Machakos County. The meeting brought together education sector actors, with the County Executive Committee (CEC) Member for Education and other County Government officials in attendance, underscoring the county's commitment to improving the learning environment for its youngest citizens.

The primary objective of the forum was to gain a deeper understanding of the current challenges affecting ECE across the county such as infrastructure gaps and teacher support to curriculum delivery and child welfare. Through open dialogue and experience-sharing, participants identified priority areas for intervention and laid the groundwork for evidence-based policy recommendations. These proposals will be formally presented to the County Government, paving the way for targeted actions that will ensure every child in Machakos has access to quality early learning opportunities.

GARISSA COUNTY BASED DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE CHANGE ON EDUCATION

May, 2025



Elimu Yetu Coalition brought together stakeholders in Garissa County to address how climate change impacts learning. The forum called for urgent action, policy implementation, and community-driven solutions. Key priorities included:

- Strong coordination and sensitization among stakeholders
- Collective child protection and climate responsibility
- More tree planting & climate change education
- Moving from talk to action by government & Civil Society Organizations

Together, participants pledged to protect both the environment and the future of education.

A JOINT MONITORING OF KENYA PRIMARY EDUCATION EQUITY AND LEARNING (KPEEL)

May, 2025



In May 2025, the coalition and its county Education Networks joined the Ministry of Education, county governments, development partners, and Civil Society Organizations for a joint monitoring of the Kenya Primary Education Equity and Learning (KPEEL) program. The exercise reviewed progress in promoting equity, strengthening systems, and ensuring social and environmental safeguards.

Key achievements noted included:

- ✓ Construction of modern, safe, disability-friendly classrooms reducing overcrowding.
- ✓ Sponsorships for vulnerable learners through the Equity Fund and Jomo Kenyatta Foundation.
- ✓ ICT integration in Teacher Training Colleges to build digital teaching skills.

Stakeholders also recognized community involvement, improved governance, and environmental measures like water harvesting, while calling for faster project completion.

JUNE 2025

9TH EAST AFRICA PHILANTHROPY CONFERENCE ON RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND FUNDRAISING



June, 2025

East Africa Philanthropy convened a forum in Kigali, Rwanda on 11th - 13th June, 2025 to explore resource mobilization and fundraising opportunities available to Civil Society Organization and non-state actors in light of the challenging funding environment. Participants emphasized the importance of strengthening local resource mobilization mechanisms to support project implementation and enhance sustainability. Elimu Yetu Coalition, Kenya was represented by the National Coordinator.

Left is Benson Rukabu (Rwanda NC) and Right Joseph Wasikhongo (Kenya NC) and On the left is Benson Rukabu (Rwanda NC) pictured at the EA Philanthropy Forum

COASTAL AND CENTRAL REGIONAL MEETING



Coastal regional forum



Central regional forum

June, 2025

Elimu Yetu Coalition convened two regional forums in June 2025 under the themes “Competency Based Education: Managing Effective Transition for a Transformative, Equitable, Inclusive and Quality Education in Kenya” and “Decreasing Gender-Based Barriers to Adolescent Girls’ Education and Skills.” Held in the Coast (17–18 June) and Central (24–25 June) regions, the meetings brought together education stakeholders, policymakers, civil society, youth, and grassroots actors.

Discussions centered on strengthening the roll-out of Competency Based Education and tackling gender barriers such as early pregnancies, harmful cultural practices, and inadequate school sanitation. The forums culminated in a development of two separate communiques; one outlining commitments to improve accountability in CBE and solutions for girls’ education, and how to foster stronger collaboration across government and civil society organisations

WORLD REFUGEE DAY



JUNE, 2025

On June 20, 2025, Elimu Yetu Coalition joined the global community in commemorating *World Refugee Day* under the theme “*Voices of Resilience: Celebrating Refugee Strength and Solidarity.*” Celebrations were held in Kakuma, Dadaab, and Nairobi counties honoring the courage and determination of refugees while spotlighting the urgent need for inclusive, safe, and quality education.

EYC reaffirmed its commitment to championing equitable access to education for all learners, ensuring that refugee children are supported to pursue their dreams despite adversity.

BREAKFAST MEETING ON DIGITAL LEARNING IN KENYA

July, 2025



On 1st July, 2025 Elimu Yetu Coalition (EYC), through its Generation Digital Project, in partnership with ChildFund - Elimu Kidijitali Project, convened a breakfast meeting to share progress and present key findings to the Ministry of Education. The key objective was to reflect share evidence-based findings, and engage government on policies that can accelerate digital transformation in education.

ChildFund Kenya presented milestones from the Elimu Kidijitali Project, demonstrating how digital resources are enhancing teaching and learning in schools. Successes included improved teacher capacity, wider access to digital tools, and innovative approaches to learner engagement.

EYC shared a summary of findings from its study on the school digital ecosystem. The research highlighted both opportunities and gaps—ranging from connectivity to teacher readiness and equitable access for learners in marginalized areas. The findings underscored the urgency of strengthening partnerships to bridge the digital divide.

Government Response

The Ministry of Education, represented by the Head of National ICT and the Directorate for Partnership and Policy, welcomed the findings and reaffirmed its commitment to advancing digital learning. The ministry emphasized the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration to align ICT integration with national education priorities.



EDUCATION OUT LOUD REVIEW FORUM

JULY, 2025



The Coalition successfully held Education Out Loud (EOL) Project Review Forum, on the 18th July, 2025. The forum brought together 25 members of Elimu Yetu Coalition County Education Networks from different counties to review the progress made under the EOL project, share impact stories, and assess how advocacy efforts have influenced policy and practice in Kenya's education sector. Key highlights included: a) Reflections on gains made through County Education Networks (CENs) grassroots mobilization b) Insights into what's working and where more effort is needed.

This forum reaffirmed the importance of amplifying County Education Network (grassroot) voices in education reform.

RIFT VALLEY AND NORTH EASTERN REGIONAL FORUM

JULY, 2025



Rift Valley Regional forum



North Eastern Regional forum

Elimu Yetu Coalition convened a three-day Regional Education Forum bringing together government representatives, civil society, refugee teachers, and County Education Networks from Rift Valley (9th - 11th) and Northeastern regions (29th - 31st July, 2025). The forum provided a platform to deliberate on education priorities and strengthen collaboration for inclusive and equitable learning in Kenya.

Day 1 focused on strengthening Competency Based Education (CBE), **Day 2** addressed gender-based barriers to girls' education, and **Day 3** emphasized teacher well-being in refugee and host communities.

Key recommendations included: recognition and accreditation of refugee teachers by TSC, equitable government support for refugee schools, and targeted capacity building aligned with CBE.

The forum reaffirmed stakeholders' commitment to advancing every child's right to quality education and ensuring no learner is left behind.

EDUCATION OUT LOUD SUPPORT VISIT

JULY, 2025

Elimu Yetu Coalition (EYC) was honored to host Mr. David Kobia, Regional Education Advisor at Oxfam–Horn, East and Southern Africa, during support visit under the Education Out Loud (EOL) program on 29th - 31st July, 2025



Mr Kobia got an opportunity to engage with the Secretariat, visited a CEN member organisation *Vine Africa* and met the Executive of the Board.

The visit reaffirmed EYC's commitment to strengthening accountability.

AUGUST 2025

THE NATIONAL BI-ANNUAL REVIEW FORUM

AUG, 2025



Teach well voices project which is a 5 years project focuses on Turkana and Garissa county, where refugee teachers face barriers to recognition, accreditation, and career growth. In its first year, EYC formed Refugee Communities of Practice in Kakuma and Dadaab, creating safe spaces for teachers.

EYC on 5th Aug, 2025 biannual review meeting in Nairobi that brought 16 refugee teachers into national-level dialogue. During the meeting, teachers shared tangible progress, such as increased awareness of their situation among policymakers. The forum also mapped out next steps for pushing the national agenda on refugee teacher accreditation and wellbeing.

GENDER THEMATIC MEETING



AUG, 2025

The Gender Technical Working held its quarterly meeting to review progress, share county experiences, and chart a way forward in addressing gender-based violence (GBV), harmful practices, and barriers to gender equality.

The meeting focused on four objectives: reflecting on the outcomes of Nancy Baraza’s recommendations, mapping opportunities to close gaps, highlighting wins from county engagements, and developing action points for future advocacy.

County Reflections

Reports from counties including Narok, Bungoma, Nyeri, Isiolo, Wajir, Tana River, Homabay, West Pokot, Nairobi, Nakuru, and Vihiga revealed persistent challenges across three thematic areas: **Sensitization:** Cultural resistance, low literacy, and limited male and youth engagement, **Social Accountability:** Weak community feedback systems, underfunded CSOs, and poor legal follow-up, **Safe Spaces:** Inaccessibility, underfunding, and inadequate resourcing of shelters and youth-friendly centers.

Despite these gaps, notable wins were reported, such as Narok County’s establishment of safe spaces and strengthened referral pathways, Vihiga’s use of budget forums to enhance survivor support, and Homabay’s creation of digital platforms to track cases.

Key Recommendations

Participants agreed on the need to:

- ✓ Enhance community-based awareness through local champions, radio, and drama.
- ✓ Strengthen social accountability structures such as gender desks and citizen scorecards.
- ✓ Build the capacity of local actors through training, resource allocation, and support networks.

THE ENGAGEMENT MEETING WITH REFUGEE TEACHERS- KAKUMA

AUG, 2025



On 19th–21st August 2025, Elimu Yetu Coalition held its fourth engagement meeting with refugee teachers was held in Kakuma under the Teach Well Voices Project, bringing together refugee teachers, the Ministry of Education, Teachers Service Commission (TSC), KEPSHA, LWF, VSO, Save the Children, and the Elimu Yetu Coalition (EYC).

The forum built on earlier discussions where teachers highlighted priority challenges: well-being, low pay, lack of recognition, inadequate training, limited resources, poor ICT integration, and weak parental support.

Teachers used the *Six Thinking Hats* approach to analyze their challenges and develop advocacy statements, culminating in the drafting of a draft memorandum from the Refugee Teachers Community of Practice.

THE ENGAGEMENT MEETING WITH REFUGEE TEACHERS- DADAAB

AUG, 2025



On 30th August 2025, Elimu Yetu Coalition, convened a meeting with refugee teachers in Dadaab. Members revisited previously identified challenges including; inadequate policies, lack of recognition, poor remuneration, limited training opportunities, and teacher upgrading needs. These were further analyzed using Edward De Bono's Six Thinking Hats to deepen understanding.

The meeting reaffirmed collective commitment to ensuring qualified teachers, improved welfare, and inclusive education for all refugee learners.

Key Outputs:

- ✓ Teachers' issues ranked and analyzed using Six Thinking Hats.
- ✓ Draft advocacy statements developed.
- ✓ Agreement to build capacity on memo development for stronger policy engagement.



FEATURE STORY: BREAKING SILENCE: WAJIR FORUM CONFRONTS HARMFUL TRADITIONS HOLDING GIRLS BACK

The air in the room grew still as Mr. Abdi Billow, representing the Wajir County Education Network, rose to speak during the plenary session of the Gender-Based Barriers on Girl Child Wajir County Dialogue Meeting held in May 2025 at Wajir County.

His words painted a haunting picture of the tragic story of Gaala, a 17-year-old girl whose life ended violently after resisting a forced marriage. Taken one night from Dagahaley Refugee Camp to Wajir, she was handed over to 55-year-old Mohamed Kassim. Gaala refused the marriage from the moment she arrived. For 27 days, she lived in fear and pain, sending her mother a desperate voice note describing the beatings she endured. On 22nd March, she called her mother and stepmother one last time, saying her phone was being taken away. She had been beaten again and stabbed. Hours later, she was passed on

Her story brought about an intense and sensitive discussion on the clash between legal and cultural definitions of maturity. Kenyan law sets the age of consent at 18, but in some interpretations of Islamic tradition, girls are considered mature at 15. After robust debate, participants agreed: while religion may permit marriage with a girl's informed consent, cultural practices that force minors into early marriages must be condemned without compromise.

The forum also addressed the need to expand school mentorship programs beyond Gender-Based Violence (GBV) awareness to include education on human trafficking, a growing threat to girls and women. Concerns were raised over the vulnerability of girls in urban boarding schools,

many living with relatives instead of parents, increasing the risk of teenage pregnancies. Participants recommended encouraging enrollment in nearby day schools to strengthen safety and family support.

On inclusivity, progress was noted in the documentation of children with disabilities, enabling better access to education and healthcare. However, cases of exclusion from school activities persist, prompting calls for teacher sensitization and more inclusive practices. Members also challenged harmful gender roles that overburden girls with domestic chores while exempting boys, agreeing that responsibilities should be shared equally.

Other barriers discussed included the digital divide, where some girls turn to men for access to smartphones needed for schoolwork, leading to exploitation. Participants urged the government to provide learning devices in schools. Climate change was also identified as a challenge, with prolonged drought forcing girls to fetch water over long distances, causing absenteeism and early dropouts. Installing water tanks in schools and communities was proposed as a solution.

In closing, participants called for multi-sectoral action to address these barriers, urging stakeholders to sustain advocacy, tackle harmful traditions, and invest in inclusive, equitable education. They agreed that forums like these were vital for protecting the gains made and ensuring every child had the opportunity to learn and thrive.



CONTACT

HILL SIDE APARTMENTS, 2ND FLR,
RAGATI ROAD, OFF HAILLE SELLASIE AVENUE,
P.O. BOX 24621-00100
NAIROBI, KENYA.
TEL: +254-020 2715072
CELL: +254-715 242 644; +254 0787 146120

