

THE STATUS OF YOUTH INCLUSION IN POLITICAL PARTIES

A Research Report
on Youth Political
Accountability In Kenya



2025





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Acronyms

TOC	The Oslo Center
UN	United Nations
AU	African Union
KLCR	Kenya Law: Constitution of Kenya Review
IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
LNU	Norwegian Children and Youth Council (Landsorganisasjonen for Næringslivet i Norge in Norwegian, referred to as the Norwegian Children and Youth Council in the report)
EYF	European Youth Forum
NCPD	National Council for Population and Development
MPs	Members of Parliament
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
NEC	National Executive Committee
SIGs	Special Interest Groups
IDRC	Internal Dispute Resolution Committee
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
KANU	Kenya African National Union
YK92	Youth for KANU 92
UDA	United Democratic Alliance
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
WDM	Wiper Democratic Movement
Ford-Kenya	Forum for Restoration of Democracy in Kenya
UDM	United Democratic Movement
DAP-K	Democratic Action Party of Kenya
PNU	Party of National Unity
NARC-Kenya	National Rainbow Coalition of Kenya

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We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of county coordinators, research assistants, and digital platforms that facilitated nationwide data collection. Special thanks to the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties, civil society organizations, and academic experts who provided critical feedback during the report's development. Finally, we recognize the support of our partners and donors, whose belief in youth-driven democracy continues to inspire transformative change.

Foreword

The Kenya's youth are not merely a demographic statistic but the architects of the country's democratic future. Their energy, innovation, and unwavering demand for accountability have begun to redefine political engagement, challenging entrenched norms and breathing new life into governance. Yet, despite their numerical dominance and growing influence, systemic barriers persist, relegating many young Kenyans to the periphery of decision-making processes.

This report, ***The status of youth inclusion in political parties: A Research Report on Youth Political Accountability in Kenya***, reflects the current realities of exclusion while charting a course toward equitable participation.

The Oslo Center, grounded in its mission to strengthen democratic governance, embarked on this study to uncover the gaps and opportunities for youth engagement within political parties. By collaborating directly with youth leagues from ten political parties and leveraging mixed-method research approach, this report combined surveys of 428 youth respondents and in-depth analysis of party constitutions, policies, and electoral practices, illuminating both progress and stagnation.

The findings reveal a paradox. On one hand, Kenya's youth are reimagining political participation: digital activism, exemplified by Gen Z's leaderless movements, has forced national reckonings on issues like economic justice and corruption. On the other hand, structural inequities endure. Prohibitive campaign costs, opaque nomination processes, and patronage networks favor established elites, leaving many youth aspirants marginalized. Tokenistic youth leagues, often reduced to mobilization tools rather than leadership pipelines, underscore the gap between rhetoric and reality.

This report is a call to conscience for Kenya's political class. The 2010 Constitution laid a foundation for inclusivity, yet implementation remains fragmented. Meanwhile, the digital divide risks excluding rural and economically disadvantaged youth from emerging participatory platforms. These challenges demand systemic transformation.

To political leaders, civil society, and youth advocates: let this report galvanize action. The recommendations herein – from enforcing legal quotas to revitalizing youth leagues with resources and autonomy – are challenging political parties to move beyond symbolic gestures and embrace youth as partners in governance. By integrating young voices into NECs and prioritizing financial transparency, Kenya can unlock the transformative potential of its youth bulge.

The stakes could not be higher. As one respondent poignantly noted, "If we actively participate, we can hold parties accountable and push for real commitments." Together, we can secure a legacy of accountable, inclusive governance for generations to come.

This research report, *The Status of Youth Inclusion in Political Parties: A Study on Youth Political Accountability in Kenya*, conducted by The Oslo Center in collaboration with youth leagues from ten Kenyan political parties, provides a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and opportunities for meaningful youth participation in Kenya's political processes. Through a mixed-method approach – combining quantitative surveys of 428 youth respondents and qualitative analysis of party constitutions, policies, and internal documents – the study reveals systemic barriers to youth inclusion while highlighting pathways for reform.

The findings underscore a significant ideological disconnect between youth and political parties, with over 36% of respondents demonstrating limited understanding of their party's core values. Many youth perceive party ideologies as fluid, shaped more by political convenience than principled commitments, leading to skepticism about their relevance to contemporary issues like unemployment and governance. Structural barriers further exacerbate this divide, including prohibitive costs of political participation, entrenched patronage networks, and leadership structures dominated by older elites. Only 13.6% of youth affirmed balanced representation in key party organs, reflecting systemic exclusion from decision-making roles.

Despite constitutional mandates, such as Article 100's requirement for marginalized group representation, compliance remains inconsistent. Reserved seats for youth are often occupied by non-youth, and financial transparency is notably lacking, with only 17.6% of respondents confirming access to party financial reports. The digital divide also limits inclusivity: while digital registration boosted membership by 78.5%, rural and marginalized youth without internet access remain underrepresented, risking further alienation.

Youth leagues, though semi-autonomous and active in mobilization and advocacy, face challenges such as inadequate funding, limited influence in senior party structures, and reliance on symbolic roles rather than substantive leadership pipelines. Their potential to drive change is evident in grassroots activism and digital campaigns, but systemic reforms are needed to transform them into genuine platforms for youth empowerment.

The report calls for urgent action to align political institutions with Kenya's youthful demographic. Key recommendations include enforcing legal frameworks for gender, youth, and disability quotas; revitalizing youth leagues through resource allocation and leadership autonomy; leveraging technology to expand civic education and transparent feedback mechanisms; and launching nationwide political literacy campaigns to deepen youth engagement with party ideologies. Financial reforms, such as capping nomination fees and establishing youth campaign funds, are critical to lowering barriers to entry.

By prioritizing transparency, equitable representation, and youth-centric policies, Kenya can harness the energy of its largest demographic to build a resilient democracy rooted in accountability and trust.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

The Oslo Center (TOC) was established in 2006 to help those in need. Over the years, the Center has advocated human rights, peace, and democracy across the world. To harness its expertise, reinforce its impact, and further support local sustainability, this strategy aims to bring new focus by narrowing down the scope of engagement. This will allow the foundation to go deeper and provide a richer understanding and programmatic impact in our work. Similarly, our geographical area will also be streamlined to allow for a more consistent presence and long-term impact.

The Oslo Center under its Youth Political Accountability project sought to enhance the youth leagues' capacity to promote accountability and the inclusion and participation of youth in political processes. The project sought to promote the responsiveness of political institutions to accountability issues thus creating trust and legitimacy among the citizens. Through the implementation of the project, a research study was undertaken to analyze the levels, barriers and opportunities for youth inclusion in political processes. The study was spearheaded by youth leagues from ten political parties in Kenya who jointly developed the questionnaire, undertook the data collection and supported in the generation of the research report.

Prior to the commissioning of the study, a political accountability handbook was developed that serves as a practical tool that can be used by different actors to conduct a political audit to assess the accountability, transparency, inclusion, and responsiveness levels of political parties. The political accountability handbook presents a matrix with key indicators that can be applied to measure accountability levels according to the political leaders and members of political parties thus creating constructive criticisms that ultimately improve the management of political parties.

1.2 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to assess accountability, transparency, inclusion, and responsiveness levels of political parties to youth in Kenya.

The primary objective of this research study was to assess the level of political accountability within political parties in Kenya. By examining key political documents such as party constitutions, membership registers, internal election guidelines, and dispute resolution policies, and through data collected from the youth the study aimed to identify gaps and strengths in the inclusion levels among political parties in Kenya. A critical focus was placed on understanding the representation of special interest groups (SIGs), including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, and the legal and structural mechanisms in place to

ensure inclusivity, transparency, and fairness in party operations. The study also sought to explore the accessibility of key party policies and documents to members and the public, evaluating how this impacts trust and accountability.

Another objective was to generate actionable recommendations that youth leagues and the political parties can adopt to enhance their accountability frameworks and organizational practices. By analyzing responses on capacity-building efforts, engagement mechanisms, and financial transparency, the study aimed to provide a roadmap for fostering greater inclusivity and democratic practices within political parties. Additionally, the research sought to identify the effectiveness of current affirmative actions, technological advancements, and internal election processes in promoting youth participation and leadership. Ultimately, the findings will contribute to strengthening the role of youth leagues in driving political accountability and reform.

1.3 Methodology

The study employed a mixed research methodology, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of political accountability within political parties. Quantitative data was collected from a sample of 470 youths across the country, ensuring representation from diverse geographical, demographic, and socio-political contexts. A structured questionnaire was used to gather data on key aspects such as accessibility of party documents, youth engagement in decision-making processes, and the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms. This approach enabled the collection of measurable data to assess patterns, trends, and perceptions related to youth inclusion and political accountability.

Qualitative data was gathered through an in-depth examination of key party documents, including constitutions, manifestos, membership registers, internal election guidelines, and dispute resolution frameworks. This document analysis provided insights into the policies, structures, and mechanisms that govern youth engagement and accountability within political parties. By triangulating findings from both quantitative surveys and qualitative document reviews, the study ensured a nuanced understanding of the strengths and gaps in political accountability. This mixed-method approach allowed the research to capture both the statistical trends and the contextual intricacies of youth participation in political parties.

1.4 Sampling

The sampling of the data was primarily through random selection of youth in the party registers of nine political parties. The political parties included the United Democratic Alliance (UDA), Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), Wiper Democratic Movement (WDM), Forum for Restoration of Democracy in Kenya (Ford-Kenya), Kenya National African Union (KANU), United Democratic Movement (UDM), Democratic Action Party of Kenya (DAP-K), Party of National Unity (PNU), and the National Rainbow Coalition of Kenya (NARC-Kenya).

To ensure representation, the study targeted ten youth from each of the 47 counties, however only 428 participated in the study representing a 91% response rate. The table below presents the distribution of the participants across the counties.

County	Number of participants
Baringo	10
Bomet	7
Bungoma	28
Busia	7
Elgeyo marakwet	4
Embu	5
Garissa	5
Homa bay	10
Isiolo	4
Kajiado	23
Kakamega	6
Kericho	7
Kiambu	19
Kilifi	2
Kirinyaga	4
Kisii	7
Kisumu	11
Kitui	9
Kwale	4
Laikipia	3
Lamu	2
Machakos	12
Makueni	7
Mandera	1

County	Number of participants
Marsabit	9
Meru	4
Migori	6
Mombasa	4
Muranga	3
Nairobi	75
Nakuru	10
Nandi	2
Narok	8
Nyamira	7
Nyandarua	2
Nyeri	2
Siaya	15
Taita Taveta	4
Tana River	4
Tharaka Nithi	5
Trans Nzoia	43
Turkana	2
Uasin Gishu	8
Vihiga	9
West pokot	2
Samburu	4
Wajir	3
Total Participants	428

1.5 Data collection

Data collection for the study utilized crowdsourcing technology to engage youth across the country, enabling a broad and inclusive reach. This approach leveraged digital platforms and mobile applications to distribute the questionnaire and collect responses efficiently from diverse geographic and socio-economic backgrounds. Through targeted online campaigns and network mobilization, the study reached out to 470 youths, inviting them to share their perspectives on political accountability and youth inclusion in party structures. Out of these, 428 youths actively participated, providing valuable insights into the study's focus areas. The use of crowdsourcing not only facilitated wider participation but also ensured timely data collection while minimizing logistical challenges often associated with large-scale surveys.

The data collection of secondary data was done by the youth leagues of the ten political parties by examining their party constitutions, manifestos, party registers, internal party policies, nomination rules and regulations, internal election policies, dispute and conflict resolution policies as well as other relevant party documents.

1.6 Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected from the 428 youth respondents was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The data, initially entered into Excel, was cleaned and formatted before being imported into SPSS for detailed statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, and means, were used to summarize key variables like accessibility of party documents, youth participation in decision-making, and satisfaction with accountability mechanisms. This analysis provided a clear, data-driven understanding of the patterns and perceptions surrounding youth inclusion and accountability in political parties.

For the qualitative data, thematic content analysis was employed to extract meaningful insights from the examination of party documents, such as constitutions, membership registers, and internal election guidelines. This involved coding the data to identify recurring themes, patterns, and discrepancies in how accountability frameworks and inclusion mechanisms are structured and implemented. Key themes, such as the representation of special interest groups, the alignment of party policies with youth needs, and the transparency of internal processes, were identified and analyzed in depth. The integration of these findings with the quantitative results allowed for a nuanced interpretation of the study's focus, highlighting both statistical trends and contextual factors influencing youth participation and political accountability.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The study faced several limitations that could influence the generalizability of its findings. One significant limitation was the exclusion of youth without access to digital tools, such as internet-enabled mobile phones, which restricted participation to those with adequate digital connectivity. This may have overlooked the perspectives of marginalized or rural youth who often face barriers to accessing such technology. Additionally, the study was constrained by time limitations, which affected the depth of engagement and the ability to explore certain themes comprehensively. Limited resources also hindered the ability to achieve a wider reach, reducing the scope of participation from certain regions or demographics that could have enriched the data. These constraints highlight the need for future studies to adopt hybrid methods that incorporate offline data collection and allocate more time and resources to ensure broader inclusivity.

1.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were integral to the study to ensure respect, transparency, and integrity throughout the research process. Written consent was obtained from political parties to access their internal documents, ensuring adherence to confidentiality and respect for organizational boundaries.

Additionally, informed consent was sought from all youth participants, emphasizing voluntary participation and their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. The participants were fully briefed on the purpose of the study, the type of data collected, and its intended use, ensuring they could make an informed decision about their involvement. Measures were taken to protect the anonymity of respondents and the confidentiality of sensitive information, fostering trust and compliance with ethical research standards.



2

**Youth inclusion
in political
and electoral
processes.**

Chapter 2.0 Youth inclusion in political and electoral processes.

2.1 The Role of Youth in Democratic Development and Governance

The United Nations (UN) defines youth as individuals aged between 15 and 24 years (UN, 2025). This definition, approved by the General Assembly, is widely used for policy and statistical purposes by UN agencies such as the World Bank, UNDP, and UNESCO. Nonetheless, there is consensus among top UN officials that there is no universal definition of the youth, and different countries may adopt broader definitions based on their local contexts. For example, in Africa, the 2006 African Youth Charter by the African Union considers youth as individuals aged between 15 and 35 years (AU, 2025).

In Kenya, the progressive 2010 constitution defines youth as ‘The collectivity of all individuals in the Republic who have attained the age of 18 years but have not attained the age of 35 years (KLCR, 2010).’ The Kenya’s definition of youth is broader since the constitution recognizes the importance of inclusion in governance and democracy. The National Youth Council Act is a legal framework that establishes the National Youth Council to enhance youth empowerment. The Council implements policies that enhance the role of youth in decision-making (Kenya Law, 2009).

The youth play a pivotal role in shaping Kenya’s political landscape, given their population and high literacy rates that support their political awareness. Initially not represented in political leadership, recent developments- such as the rise of Gen Z online activism, the election of young politicians, and increased youth candidacy in general elections- demonstrate their potential to play an active role in democratic development and governance (Youth Democracy Cohort, 2025).

The 2019 Census proved Kenya’s youth numerical strength; 75% of the country’s population is under 35 years old. Out of this number, the youth (18-34) make up about 29% of the total population (NCPD, 2021). Even though the youths comprise a large portion of the country’s population, they remain underrepresented in top leadership. In the 13th parliament, only 31 out of the 349 MPs were under 35 years (Parliament of Kenya, 2022). Youth presence is even lower in the Senate. This data highlights the potential of young people in political leadership, but they still face barriers to accessing leadership roles.

There are various avenues through which youths could engage themselves in politics. They could be voters; they form the majority of eligible voters. Nearly 40% of registered voters in the 2022 General Elections were under 35 (The Youth Cafe, 2024). However, voter apathy remains a challenge among youths due to a lack of faith in leadership and long-rooted anger with the political class (Mutuku & Owuoche, 2023).

Youth-driven movements, such as the Gen Z online community engaging in digital activism, demonstrate a shift toward direct political engagement apart from just voting. Youths can also engage in politics as candidates.

A growing number of Kenyan youths have contested and won elective seats. In 2017, Kenya witnessed its youngest MP in history when John Paul Mwirigi, then 23, was elected as representative for Igembe South Constituency in the August House. The election of Stephen Sang as Nandi County at 32 years symbolized youth ascending to significant and top leadership (Njeru & Kahongeh, 2020).

Youths can also engage in politics as activists and policy influencers. The Gen-Z-led protests (2023-24) against economic mismanagement, high taxation, and government policies highlight the potential role of youths as policy influencers. A notable consequence of the protests was the dissolution of the cabinet in an attempt by the president to address youth concerns (Al Jazeera, 2024). Youths continue to influence national conversations through grassroots movements and social media, pressuring policymakers to be more responsive to needs affecting the nation (Njeru & Kahongeh, 2020).

2.1 Youth Inclusion-Kenya’s Political Context

Kenya’s youth have historically been marginalized in politics despite their numerical strength. This marginalization is a consequence of the way Kenya’s political system has been designed to support the status quo, resulting in political dynasties, older leaders, and deep-rooted patronage networks (Dyzenhaus, 2021). The marginalization was rampant during the Moi era (1978-2002); youths who challenged the government were often imprisoned, exiled, persecuted, imprisoned, or exiled. For instance, Koigi wa Wamwere, a fiery government critic and youth leader in the 1980s and 1990s was jailed multiple times for his opposition to one-party rule and dictatorship. Other young activists such as Miguna Miguna and Titus Adungosi who were student leaders suffered state repression, with Miguna being exiled in Uganda while Adungosi died in prison (Amutabi, 2002).

For many years, youth were used as mobilizers of political support but were rarely given influential leadership positions. The Youth for KANU 92 (YK92) movement was created to rally young people behind the KANU regime- but ended up being a tool for supporting the status quo among the political elites. Even after the end of one-party rule after the repeal of the constitution in 1992 to introduce multiparty, youth remained at the periphery of leadership- even though some of its leaders, including William Ruto and

Cyrus Jirongo, navigated the barriers to hold influential government positions. In recent years, more youths have contested and won elective seats. Examples include Ndidi Nyoro and Babu Owino who were both elected in their early 30s (Njeru & Kahongeh, 2020).

Political parties with the desire to win more support among the youth have implemented measures to ensure successful youth engagement. Even though structural barriers remain, many young leaders are navigating party politics, earning influence as activists, legislators, and party officials. For example, in 2023, KANU National Chairman Gideon Moi appointed 27-year-old Manasse Nyainda as the party's Director of Communication (Omondi, 2023). This strategic move was seen as an attempt to revitalize KANU's youth appeal and digitize the party's communication strategy. His roles include crafting youth-friendly political leadership, digital mobilization, and engaging young voters.

In the ruling UDA party, Dennis Itumbi, played a pivotal role in digital campaigns, taking advantage of creative social media posts with the hashtag *#SystemYaFacts* to connect with young voters (Githae, 2020). Itumbi was instrumental in designing the 'Hustler Nation' narrative to resonate with young, unemployed Kenyans. In ODM, the party elected Edwin Sifuna as the Secretary-General and senator at 36. His presence in ODM has provided a strong voice for young leaders in party politics. He mentors young politicians within ODM and works in the Senate to pass legislation that favors youth inclusion. For example, Sifuna is a mover of a bill that seeks to establish a County Sports Association Fund to enhance youth participation in sports development (Makori, 2025).

Moreover, Gen Z is rejecting conventional party politics, thereby redefining political engagement. The movement embraces decentralized, leaderless activism (Al Jazeera, 2024). This redefinition of Kenya's political landscape is a direct response to the failure of the political parties to address age-old problems facing the youth, such as economic hardships, unemployment, and corruption in leadership. Unlike the past generation, which demanded inclusion within party structures, Gen Z rejects alienation with party structures and seeks issue-based mobilization (Al Jazeera, 2024).

While political parties in Kenya maintain youth leagues, these structures are usually designed as symbolic spaces to portray a party as youth-friendly. These leagues rarely serve as genuine leadership pipelines. Many youth leagues serve as mobilization tools for grassroots campaigns rather than platforms that offer youths a chance to be influential politically. Access to the top decision-makers of the party remains limited, with positions awarded to loyalty to senior politicians, financial power, and patronage. Only a few exceptions, like Dennis Itumbi's and Manasse Nyainda's appointments as heads of their party's communication units. However, such cases remain anomalies instead of systemic change. Revamping youth leagues is the only way to ensure authentic youth inclusion.

2.2. Youth Representation in the Elections

Youth have a critical role in Kenyan elections, both as voters and as candidates. Youth, especially those aged between 18 and 35, represent the largest demographic in Kenya. Regardless, data from the IEBC indicate that the number of youths registered to vote in 2022 stands at 39.84% (Africanews, 2022). The dismal number of registered youth voters reflects the way young people show little appetite for elections, disillusioned by the political class viewed as corrupt and inept. Youth can also be candidates in elections, but they are not well represented in party leadership patronage politics that favor older adults, and financial constraints make it difficult to run for office (Kanyinga & Mboya, 2021).

It is worth noting that the 2010 Constitution of Kenya introduced several reforms aimed at promoting youth participation in political leadership. The youth quota is a central aspect of Kenya's political landscape, especially in nominated positions. Article 100 of the constitution mandates political parties to nominate at least one-third of their candidates from marginalized groups, including youth, women, and persons with disabilities (KLCR, 2010). This article has resulted in the establishment of nominated seats for youth in the National Assembly and county assemblies.

There are also other provisions in the constitution that promote youth representation. Article 55 of the Constitution mandates the state to implement policies that ensure the youth participate in the political, economic, and social life of the country (KLCR, 2010). The provision encouraged parliament to enact the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, part of the measure to promote the political and socioeconomic status of the youth by 2030. The provision also encourages the IEBC to ensure youth inclusion in the electoral process. IEBC supports voter education programs to ensure the youth understand voter registration and voting procedures. The agency also implements youth-friendly electoral reforms such as online registration platforms that make it easier for young people to register to vote.

2.3. Inclusive Politics: Global Imperatives and Prerequisites

Several international frameworks provide guidelines and standards for youth inclusion in politics. These frameworks recognize the importance of youths and seek to ensure young people have a voice in governance and political decision making. The UN Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) is an international framework that emphasizes the need for inclusive decision-making processes that empower youth (UN, 2025(b)). This SDG Goal directly highlights the idea that youth should be engaged in political and legal reform to build inclusive institutions. For Kenya, the SDG Goal could be implemented by enacting youth-focused policies that encourage young people to engage in civic processes and public administration actively.

The African Union’s Agenda 2063 is another international framework that outlines the vision for Africa’s development. The agenda encourages member states to empower youths, and include them in governance and leadership. Agenda 2063 Goals relevant to youth inclusion are defined in Table 2 below:

TABLE 2: AGENDA 2063 GOALS	
Goal 3	Youth engagement in social, economic, and political development.
Goal 6	Promote youth-friendly policies to increase youth participation in democratic processes.
Goal 7	Supporting youth leadership in spheres of development from corporate boards to political offices.

Kenya, as a member of the AU, has committed to include youth quotas in the constitution and promote youth leadership. The African Youth Charter (2006) is a legal framework that stipulates youth rights and the need for the African governments to ensure youth participate in all aspects of life, especially political leadership and governance—article 11 of the youth charter advocates for youth participation in political leadership and democratic processes. Article 13 calls for youth to be given platforms for political discourse and encourages the creation of youth councils. The charter also mentions across many of its articles the need to provide youth training and education, empowering them to engage in political processes. Kenya can implement this charter by investing more in youth political education. The national and county governments should also support the creation of youth forums or councils.

Several countries have adopted best practices to empower youth participation in political life. Norway, the Norwegian Children and Youth Council (LNU) is an umbrella youth organization representing 100 youth organizations. These organizations encourage youth participation in national and local politics. They ensure political parties field young candidates and encourage the involvement of youth in major political decisions (EYF, 2025). South Korea has enacted an age-reduction policy, which lowers the age limit for seeking public office and voting. The age-reduction policy aims to allow young South Koreans to participate in politics (Cho, 2021). Canada has youth advisory councils at the provincial and federal levels, where young individuals engage in discussions and advise public policy (Government of Canada, 2025). Kenya could adopt similar youth advisory councils, which would allow young people to debate key issues, gain experience in political processes, and propose legislation that can be adopted in the national assembly. Also, Kenya could lower the age requirement for holding public office, especially in county governments.

2.4. Past challenges with inclusiveness in Political parties

Social, economic, and political barriers inhibit the inclusivity of young people in political parties. Cultural norms and perceptions of political leadership are notable social barriers. In many Kenyan communities, the elders are respected and are often holding leadership positions. The concept that ‘leadership comes with age’ discourages young people from seeking political office (Kanyinga & Mboya, 2021). Political veterans with years of accumulated experience are seen as wise and credible, while young office seekers are seen as impulsive and inexperienced.

Internal party dynamics are another social barrier that youths face. Political parties in Kenya have traditionally been controlled by patronage networks where the electorate demonstrates loyalty to senior politicians compared to youthful potential. Youth leagues such as the ODM youth league are often sidelined from key decision-making processes.

The high costs of politics in Kenya are an economic barrier that prevents the active participation of youths in party politics. Research suggests that those seeking to be members of parliament spend an average of Ksh. 18.2 million while Ksh. 3.2 million for the Member of County Assembly seat (Kanyinga & Mboya, 2021). These funds cover the ‘handouts culture’, campaigning, and party nomination fees. These financial demands can be challenging for young leaders- as many are struggling economically due to limited opportunities.

The lack of legal and policy interventions is a political barrier that inhibits youth representation in politics. Prior to the 2010 constitution, there were no reserved seats for young people. Political parties were not legally required to include youth in leadership structures. Youth participation was primarily in grassroots campaigns rather than decision-making (Amutabi, 2002). The 2010 constitution attempts to correct this imbalance by introducing provisions for youth representation. However, implementation has been slow, and people who do not fit the definition of ‘youth’ are often assigned reserved seats for young people. Political parties are dominated by elites who often favor well-connected candidates. Many young aspirants who deserve to be assigned political seats are pressured to step down for established candidates (The Youth Cafe, 2024).



3

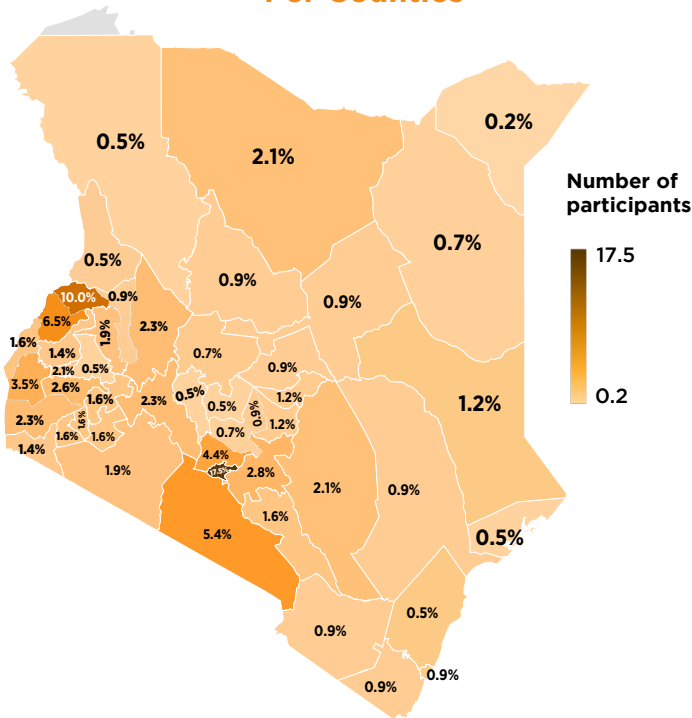
Research
Findings

Chapter 3.0 Research Findings

3.1 Background Information

3.1.1 Geographical Scope

Respondent Distribution Per Counties

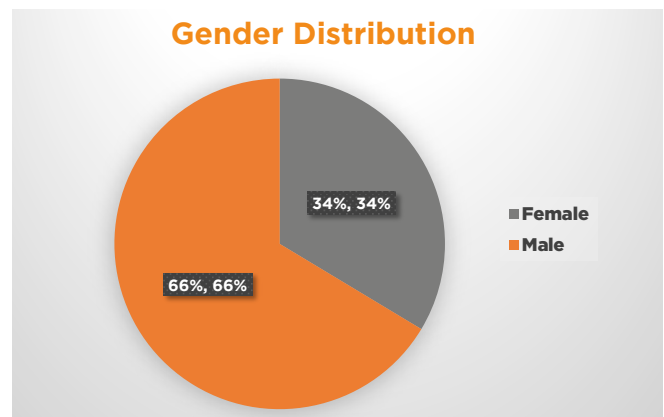


The distribution of respondents in the youth inclusion study shows a significant concentration in Nairobi (17.5%), followed by Trans Nzoia (10.0%) and Bungoma (6.5%). These three counties together account for over a third of all participants, indicating a higher level of youth engagement or accessibility in these regions. Other notable counties with relatively higher participation include Kajiado (5.4%), Kiambu (4.4%), and Siaya (3.5%). The presence of urban centers like Nairobi and Kiambu in the top ranks suggests that youth inclusion efforts might be more effective in metropolitan and peri-urban areas, where resources and opportunities for engagement are more readily available.

On the other hand, counties such as Mandera (0.2%), Turkana (0.5%), and West Pokot (0.5%) have the lowest representation, pointing to potential challenges in youth participation, such as geographical barriers, limited access to technology, or socio-economic constraints. Several other counties, including Lamu, Nandi, and Nyeri, also have minimal representation (0.5% each), indicating possible disparities in outreach efforts. The data suggests a need for more targeted initiatives in underrepresented counties to ensure a more balanced and inclusive participation of youth across the country.

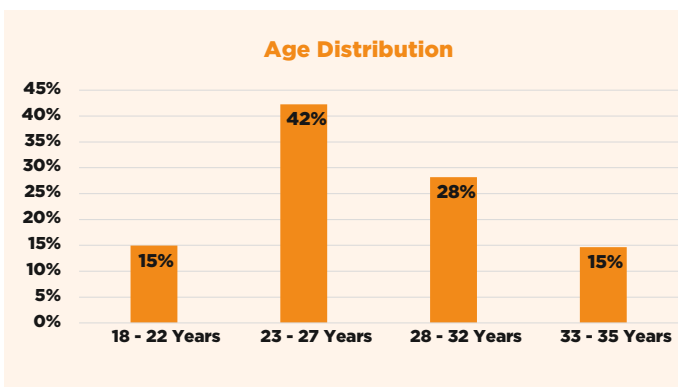
3.1.2 Gender

The findings on gender distribution reveal a significant disparity between male and female participants, with males comprising 66% of the respondents and females accounting for 34%. This indicates that male youth were more represented in the study compared to their female counterparts. The imbalance may reflect broader societal trends, such as gender disparities in participation in political activities, or engagement in youth initiatives.



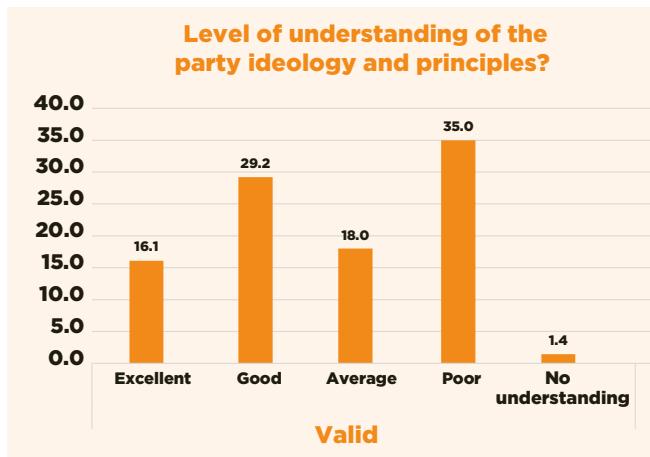
3.1.3 Age

The findings on age distribution among youth in political parties who participated in the study indicate that the majority of respondents (42%) were in the 23-27 years age group, suggesting that this demographic is particularly active or accessible in political engagement initiatives. The 28-32 years age group followed with 28%, reflecting a significant level of involvement among slightly older youth. Participants in the youngest (18-22 years) and oldest (33-35 years) age brackets each accounted for 15% of the respondents, highlighting a relatively balanced representation at the extremes of the youth age spectrum. These results suggest that political parties and youth outreach efforts may be most effective in engaging individuals in their mid-20s, while additional strategies may be needed to better involve younger and older segments of the youth population.



3.2 Youth’s understanding of Party Origin and identity.

3.2a. Youth understanding on party ideology



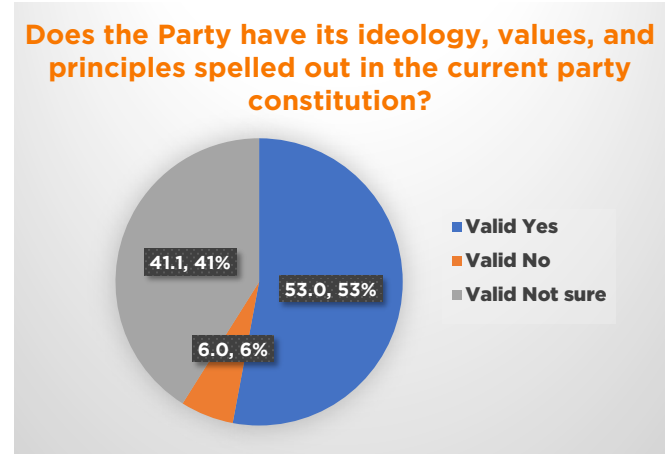
The survey results indicate that a significant proportion of youth (36.4%) have a poor or no understanding of their party’s ideology and principles, highlighting a potential gap in political education and internal communication. While 45.3% of respondents rate their understanding as good or excellent, suggesting a strong foundation among youth members, a notable 18.0% remain at an average level. The high percentage of those with poor understanding (35.0%) raises concerns about ideological alignment and effective participation within the party. Addressing these gaps through targeted training and awareness programs could enhance internal cohesion and informed decision-making.

The findings from the youth reveal a varied understanding of party ideologies, with many perceiving them as fluid and often dictated by political convenience rather than principle. A significant portion of the respondents expressed skepticism, noting that political parties in Kenya rarely adhere to a consistent ideology. As one youth put it, “Parties claim to have ideologies, but in reality, they change based on who is in power.” Others emphasized that party ideologies are only highlighted during elections but are quickly abandoned afterward. This reflects a broader concern that party’s function more as vehicles for personal ambition rather than as institutions guided by clear ideological values.

Despite this skepticism, some youth acknowledged the importance of ideology in shaping political discourse and policy direction. A few participants stressed that if young people became more engaged in party structures, they could demand stronger adherence to ideology-driven politics. One respondent argued, “If we actively participate, we can hold parties accountable and push for real ideological commitments rather than empty slogans.”

This suggests that while disillusionment exists, there is also an opportunity for youth to influence political parties and advocate for ideology-based decision-making.

3.2b. Party ideologies

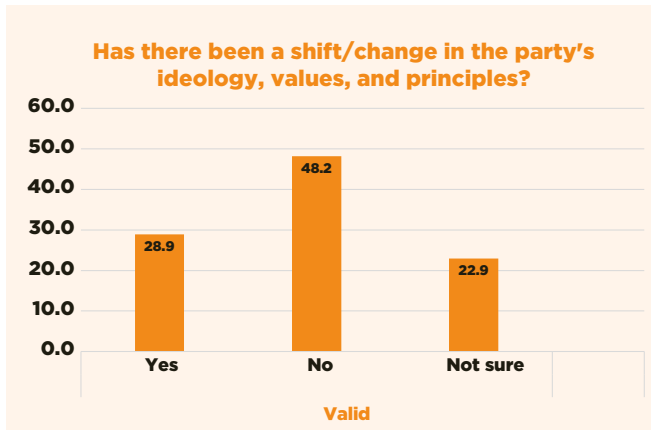


The data indicates that a majority (53%) of the youth respondents believe that the party has its ideology, values, and principles clearly outlined in the current party constitution. However, a significant proportion (41.1%) are unsure, suggesting either a lack of awareness or inadequate dissemination of this information. A small percentage (6%) explicitly stated that the party does not have its ideology and principles clearly spelled out.

These findings highlight a gap in political education and communication within the party. While the constitution may define the party’s ideological stance, the fact that nearly half of the respondents are uncertain suggests that this information is not effectively reaching party members, particularly the youth. This lack of clarity could contribute to the perception that party ideologies are not strictly followed or are subject to change based on political dynamics. Strengthening internal communication and civic education within the party could help bridge this knowledge gap and enhance ideological alignment among young members.

The findings reveal a mixed understanding among youth regarding their party’s ideology, values, and principles. While a majority (53%) affirm that these are spelled out in the party constitution, a significant 41% are unsure, indicating a gap in awareness or engagement with party documents. One respondent noted, “Being a party member, there are a lot of changes we are seeing in terms of values and principles,” suggesting that ideological shifts are more perceptible to active members. Regarding changes in party ideology, 48.2% believe there has been no shift, while 28.9% acknowledge changes, citing factors such as governance transitions, leadership changes, and policy shifts. Some youth linked the evolution to economic pragmatism, with one stating, “As the ruling party, UDA’s approach has evolved to prioritize economic pragmatism, large-scale projects, and international relations over earlier anti-establishment rhetoric.”

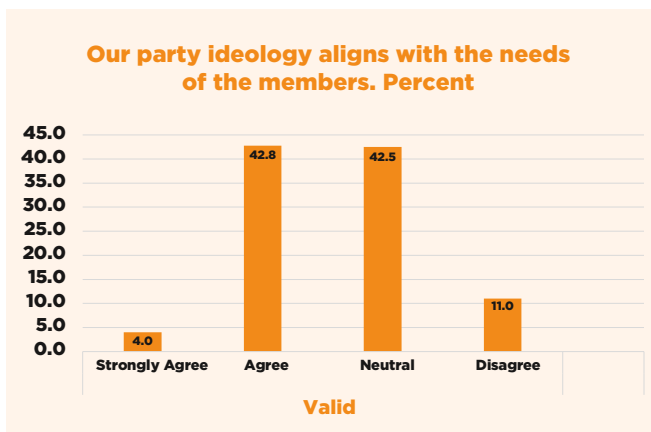
3.2c. Shifts in Political party ideologies



Those who observed a shift identified key drivers, including governance priorities, political alliances, and changing societal needs. One respondent emphasized, “The party has moved from being solely populist to focusing more on governance issues, like public sector reform, infrastructure, and economic policies.” Others highlighted coalition politics, with another noting, “Shift from opposition to cooperation—historically a strong opposition party, ODM changed its stance after the 2018 handshake.”

However, the 22.9% uncertainty rate suggests that a considerable number of youths feel disconnected from or uninformed about ideological developments. This underscores the need for better communication and engagement strategies to ensure young members understand and contribute to the party’s ideological evolution.

3.2d. Responsiveness of party ideologies to the needs of the citizens.



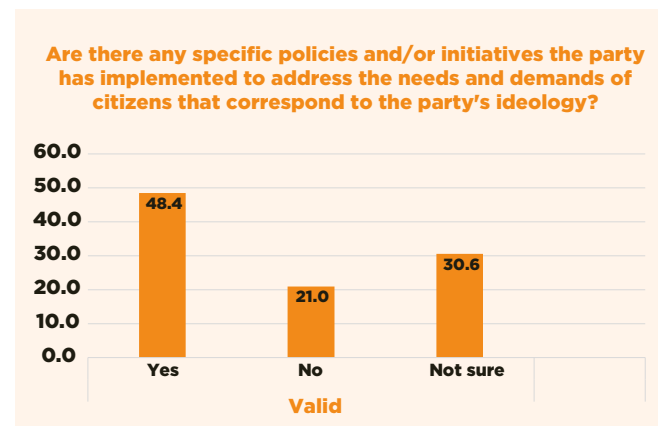
The survey findings indicate that while a significant proportion of respondents (42.8%) agree that their party’s ideology aligns with members’ needs, a nearly equal percentage (42.5%) remain neutral. This suggests that while the party’s policies resonate with many, some members feel there is room for improvement or greater clarity in alignment.

A youth member commented, “KANU strives to align with the needs of its members by adapting its policies and priorities to reflect the aspirations of a changing society.” However, others voiced concerns about

inclusivity, with one respondent stating, “At times, non-members have gained more than real members.” This reflects the mixed perceptions regarding how well the party meets its members’ expectations.

Additionally, youth engagement appears to be a key factor influencing perceptions of ideological alignment. Some members praised the party for providing a platform for youth and marginalized groups, as one stated, “It is the only party engaging young people through numerous town halls.” However, there were also concerns about the actual implementation of youth-focused policies, with one respondent noting, “Sometimes it gives room for youths but does not necessarily implement the ideas.” These responses suggest that while youth participation is encouraged, there may be gaps between policy promises and execution. Overall, the findings highlight a need for political parties to not only align ideologies with member needs but also actively demonstrate this alignment through consistent and inclusive policy implementation.

3.2e. Political party’s policies that are responsive to the needs of the citizens.



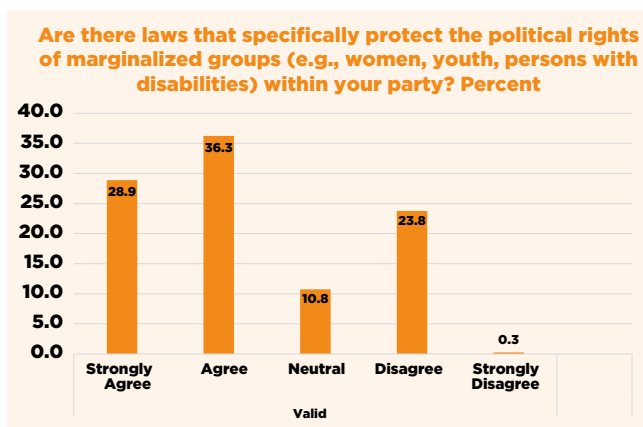
The data reveals that nearly half (48.4%) of respondents believe their political party has implemented policies and initiatives addressing citizens’ needs in line with its ideology. However, a significant portion (30.6%) is uncertain, while 21% outrightly state that no such policies exist. This indicates a gap in awareness or communication regarding party initiatives.

Key examples cited include the *Hustler Fund*, *affordable housing*, *universal health coverage*, and *youth and women empowerment programs*. A respondent emphasized, “The party has supported initiatives to create jobs and opportunities for youth and women, in line with its commitment to inclusivity.” Another noted, “UDA’s affordable housing program aims to address Kenya’s housing crisis by constructing low-cost housing units for low- and middle-income earners.” These responses suggest that while youth party members recognize the impact of policies, others remain unaware or unconvinced of their effectiveness.

Youth respondents particularly highlighted economic empowerment and governance-related initiatives, showing a strong interest in policies that create opportunities and enhance accountability. One respondent acknowledged, *“The party is in the forefront in lowering the cost of living and dealing with the economy,”* while another emphasized, *“DAP-K promotes initiatives aimed at creating job opportunities and supporting entrepreneurship among the youth, recognizing their role in national development.”* However, some remained skeptical, with a few stating, *“Not sure on that,”* and *“Trying to be opposition with no results.”* This mixed perception indicates that while some youths see tangible benefits from party-led initiatives, others either do not experience direct impact or lack sufficient information to evaluate them.

3.3 Legal Frameworks - Political party's compliance to legal framework on inclusion and representations.

3.3a. Policies that protect the political rights of marginalized groups.



The survey findings indicate that a majority of youth respondents within political parties acknowledge the presence of laws protecting marginalized groups, with 65.2% either agreeing or strongly agreeing. These laws focus on gender representation, youth empowerment, and inclusivity for persons with disabilities (PWDs).

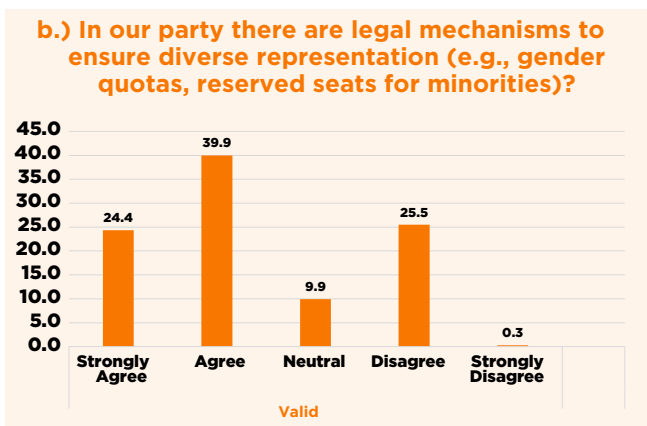
Many respondents highlighted specific measures, such as the “two-thirds gender rule” and “reserved seats for youth and PWDs in county assemblies and Parliament.” Others noted that their party constitutions explicitly outline these protections, with one respondent stating, “Our party has implemented specific laws and policies that safeguard the political rights of marginalized groups, such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities.” Additionally, some parties actively promote gender representation, exemplified by statements like, “The Secretary General of the party is a woman,” and “Wiper actively supports the two-thirds gender rule, ensuring women have equal opportunities for representation in leadership roles.”

Despite the positive feedback, a significant portion of respondents (23.8%) disagreed, indicating gaps in the

implementation of these policies. Several respondents expressed uncertainty, with 10.8% remaining neutral and some stating, “I cannot state the exact ones, but they are there” or “Not sure about any laws.” This suggests that while political parties may have frameworks in place, awareness and enforcement remain inconsistent. Furthermore, some youth pointed out that while their parties support marginalized groups in theory, more needs to be done in practice.

One respondent remarked, “The laws are there but not fully utilized,” while another noted, “There has been some improvement in recognition of women, but a lot needs to be done for youth, especially Gen Z, in party leadership.” These responses highlight the need for stronger implementation, better communication of existing policies, and continuous efforts to ensure meaningful inclusion within party structures.

3.3b. Legal mechanisms to ensure diverse representation.



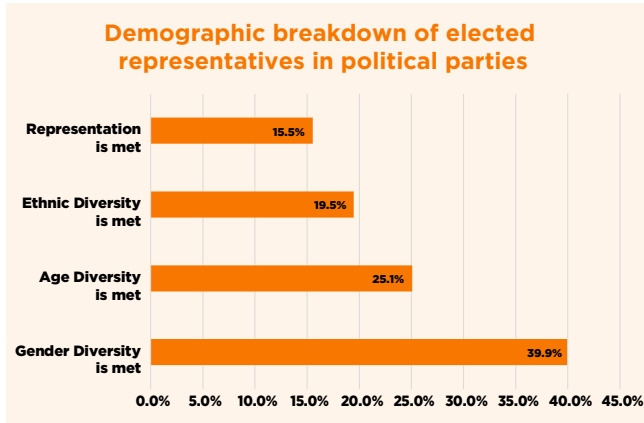
The data reveals a mixed perception among youth regarding the presence of legal mechanisms ensuring diverse representation in political parties. A significant portion of respondents, 39.9%, agreed that such mechanisms exist, while 24.4% strongly agreed. This suggests that many youths recognize efforts to implement gender quotas, reserved seats, or other diverse policies.

However, a considerable proportion remains skeptical, with 25.5% disagreeing and 0.3% strongly disagreeing, indicating that some may feel these mechanisms are either insufficient or ineffective in practice. The 9.9% who remained neutral highlight a level of uncertainty or lack of awareness regarding these policies within their respective parties.

3.3c. Demographic breakdown of elected members.

The demographic breakdown of elected representatives further supports the perception of uneven representation. While gender diversity appears to be the most recognized, with 39.9% affirming its achievement, age diversity follows at 25.1%, suggesting some level of youth inclusion. However, ethnic diversity (19.5%) and disability representation (15.5%)

lag behind, highlighting gaps in broader inclusivity. These findings suggest that while political parties may have legal frameworks in place for representation, their effectiveness varies, particularly in ensuring equitable participation across all demographic groups. Addressing these disparities may require stronger enforcement of existing policies or the introduction of more targeted inclusion efforts.



3.3e. Approaches to Developing Inclusive Policies

The party employs a variety of approaches to ensure inclusive policy development, with a notable preference for both bottom-up and top-down methods. The survey responses reveal that 32.3% of respondents believe the party uses a bottom-up approach, while 30.3% feel the party uses a top-down approach. Additionally, 28.3% identify a hybrid approach that combines both methods. These results suggest that the party seeks a balanced approach to policy development, incorporating input from both leadership and grassroots members. The use of different approaches may enable the party to draw on diverse perspectives, enhancing the inclusivity of its policies. However, 9.1% of respondents were unsure about the party’s approach, indicating some level of ambiguity in how policy development processes are communicated.

3.3f. Effectiveness of Policy Approaches

When asked about the effectiveness of these approaches in reflecting the views of all members, the majority (47.3%) of respondents consider them “very effective.” Additionally, 34.6% of respondents find these approaches “moderately effective.” This suggests that the party’s methods are generally viewed as successful in incorporating the perspectives of its members. However, there is a small group of respondents (1.1%) who feel that these approaches are “not effective at all,” and 7.1% who are unsure, signaling potential areas for improvement in making the process more transparent or inclusive. The results indicate that while the approaches are broadly effective, there remains a need for continual evaluation to ensure all voices are equally represented.

3.3g. Opportunities for Member Participation

The data reveals that the majority of respondents believe there are opportunities for members to participate in policy development, with 45.3% saying they are always given the chance, and 39.1% stating they have occasional opportunities. This highlights that the party is committed to engaging its members in the policy-making process. However, a small minority (9.1%) feel that opportunities for participation are rare, and 0.6% indicate that they are never offered a chance to participate. These results suggest that while most members feel involved, there is still room for improvement, especially in ensuring that all members, regardless of their role or experience, can contribute to the development of policies.

3.3h. Feedback Collection and Diversity

The party has established regular feedback mechanisms, with 43.9% of respondents reporting that feedback is collected “regularly,” and 44.5% stating that it is done “occasionally.” This indicates that the party values member and public input, which is essential for shaping policies that represent diverse perspectives. In terms of the diversity of feedback, 42.5% of respondents find the feedback collected to be “very diverse,” while 41.4% consider it “somewhat diverse.” This shows that the feedback collection process is generally viewed as inclusive. However, 9.6% of respondents feel that the feedback is not very diverse, which suggests that there may be certain groups whose voices are underrepresented. The party might consider further diversifying the methods and channels through which feedback is gathered to ensure even broader inclusivity.

3.3i. Validation of Proposed Policies

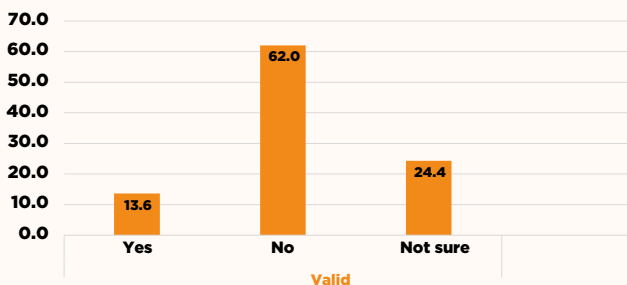
The majority of respondents (44.5%) reported that members frequently have opportunities to validate and provide feedback on proposed policies, while 41.6% said these opportunities are offered occasionally. This reflects a strong commitment to involving members in refining policy proposals. When asked about the effectiveness of this validation process, 48.2% of respondents found it “very effective,” while 37.1% considered it “moderately effective.” These results suggest that the feedback provided during the validation process significantly improves the quality of the policies, with few respondents (1.1%) believing the process to be ineffective. This indicates that the party’s emphasis on member involvement in policy development is seen as a crucial factor in enhancing the relevance and quality of its policies.

3.4 Youth representation and participation in Party structures.

3.4a. Youth, Gender and Diversity representation in Political parties.

The findings indicate that a majority of youth perceive their political parties as failing to achieve balanced representation in key leadership structures. When asked whether their party reflects youth, gender, and regional balance in the appointment and election of members to main organs such as the National Executive Committee (NEC), Central Committees, Elections Board, and Internal Dispute Resolution Committee, 62% responded negatively, while only 13.6% agreed. Additionally, 24.4% were uncertain, suggesting a lack of transparency or awareness about internal party structures. This highlights a significant gap in inclusivity, potentially discouraging youth engagement in party leadership and decision-making processes.

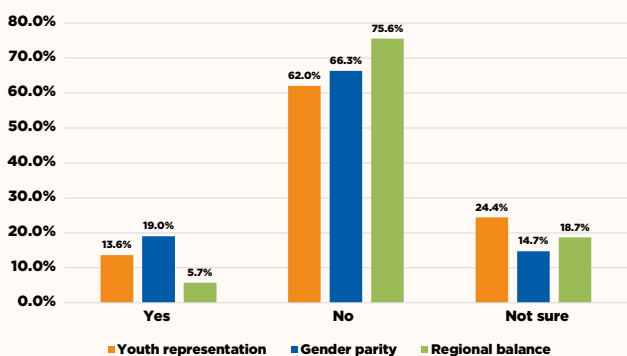
Does your party reflect youth, gender, and regional balance in the appointment and election of members of the main organs of the party such as the NEC, Central Committees, Elections Board, and Internal Dispute Resolution Committee?



Similarly, gender and regional representation appear to be areas of concern. While 19% of respondents acknowledged gender parity in party appointments, a striking 66.3% disagreed, indicating that most parties still struggle with equitable gender inclusion.

The regional balance was even more poorly rated, with only 5.7% affirming its presence, while 75.6% stated otherwise. The high percentage of uncertainty (18.7%) further suggests that party structures may lack clarity or accessibility in their selection processes. These findings reinforce the need for political parties to implement more transparent and inclusive policies to ensure broader representation and build trust among youth and marginalized groups.

Appointment in the political party's main organs



3.4b Youth representation and participation in Party memberships.

Political party membership in Kenya reflects a wide range of engagement practices and challenges within political organizations. The data suggests that the majority of political parties in the sample have at least one thousand members in each of the 24 counties, with 77.1% of respondents affirming this widespread membership distribution. This indicates a substantial national presence, essential for building grassroots support and maintaining a strong political influence across the country. However, a small percentage (3.7%) of respondents mentioned that their parties do not meet this criterion, highlighting potential gaps in the party's outreach or the challenges of mobilizing members in some regions.

In terms of the accessibility and usability of membership registers, significant concern arises. While 27.4% of respondents agree that their party's membership register is in a format that is easily accessible and understandable, the majority (44%) feel that it is not. This disparity reflects challenges in administrative transparency and efficiency, which could hinder potential members from joining or fully engaging with the party. Additionally, 9.3% of respondents were unsure about the format's accessibility, which suggests a need for better communication or clarity on the issue.

The issue of gender inclusion is also a critical area of focus for political parties. The data shows that 72.2% of respondents reported that their party's membership complies with the two-thirds gender principle, indicating progress in gender equality within political structures. However, 7.9% of respondents noted that their party does not comply, and 19.5% were unsure. This highlights that while most parties are striving to include more women in their ranks, there is still significant room for improvement, and many members may not fully understand or recognize the measures being taken.

To build capacity and align members with the party's ideologies, the majority of parties seem to rely on regular training sessions and workshops. Nearly half of the respondents (49%) indicated that their party provides regular training sessions, while 45% reported the use of workshops and seminars to communicate the party's vision and ideologies. These efforts reflect the importance of education and political development for members to ensure that they not only understand the party's platform but also become effective advocates for it. Despite this, 5.7% of respondents reported that no such capacity-building efforts were undertaken, which points to a potential area of concern in party leadership and member engagement.

Finally, the financial aspect of political party membership is crucial in understanding member involvement.

The data shows that a majority of members (68.3%) pay fees to register with their party, with the majority (86.4%) of those members finding these fees affordable. This suggests that the fee structure is not a significant barrier to entry for most potential members. However, 13.3% who find the fees unaffordable may point to socioeconomic factors that restrict certain groups from joining or fully participating in party activities. This financial element could be a factor to consider for political parties seeking to broaden their appeal and inclusivity.

In conclusion, the data highlights both strengths and challenges in political party membership in Kenya. While many parties enjoy widespread representation across counties and engage in capacity-building efforts, there are significant challenges in accessibility, gender equity, and financial inclusivity that need to be addressed. These findings suggest that for parties to effectively mobilize and retain members, they must ensure transparent membership management, inclusive practices, and affordable pathways to participate.

The contributions to a political party's resource base go beyond financial donations, with many members actively engaging in volunteer efforts and providing technical expertise. According to the data, 73.7% of respondents contribute through volunteering, which emphasizes the importance of community involvement and dedication to party activities without necessarily being compensated.

Additionally, 20.1% of members contribute technical expertise, showcasing the diverse skill set within the party that helps in organizing events, developing policy strategies, and ensuring effective party operations. These contributions play a crucial role in sustaining party activities, especially in non-financial ways. Other members offer feedback, ideas, or engage in advocacy and representation, indicating a more intellectual or advisory form of involvement that can influence the direction and public image of the party.

Regarding the nomination process, a significant majority of political parties (77.1%) utilize their membership register to conduct nominations, ensuring that only registered members are eligible to participate. This practice helps maintain transparency and accountability within the party's decision-making processes. It also ensures that leadership and candidate selections are grounded in a clear and verified base of party supporters. However, some respondents (17%) expressed uncertainty about the process, and 5.7% noted that their party does not use the membership register for nominations. This variance suggests that while many parties adhere to this process, others may face challenges in maintaining an updated or accessible register or may opt for other methods during nominations.

The transparency of the nomination process is further emphasized by the comments provided by some respondents. Many noted that the register is publicly available during elections, allowing for greater scrutiny

and participation by party members. This open approach to nominations fosters a sense of fairness, with some members highlighting that only registered members are eligible to vote, ensuring a democratic selection process. Others pointed out that during party primaries, the register is made available at polling centers, further supporting transparency. Nevertheless, some individuals expressed dissatisfaction with the process, claiming that some nominations have been flawed or biased. This disparity reflects the ongoing challenges parties may face in fully ensuring free and fair internal elections.

To attract new members, political parties are employing various strategies, with social media campaigns leading the way. A large portion of respondents (37.6%) indicated that social media campaigns are a primary tool for reaching potential members, leveraging platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to communicate the party's message, policies, and values. In addition to digital strategies, face-to-face outreach activities are another effective method, reported by 27.9% of respondents, highlighting the importance of personal engagement and community-based efforts in building trust and support. Policy articulation also plays a key role, with 33.5% of members recognizing it as an approach used by their party to attract new recruits, underscoring the importance of clearly communicating the party's values and positions on key issues.

Despite these efforts, attracting and retaining members requires continuous engagement and adaptation. While the use of social media and face-to-face interactions remains a priority for many parties, some members have noted that the party's success in attracting new members often depends on the quality of its leadership and the perceived authenticity of its efforts. As political parties evolve, their ability to balance traditional methods of outreach with innovative digital strategies will be crucial in growing their support base and sustaining their presence on the national stage.

3.4c. Digital Membership

The data findings reveal that digital membership registration has had a significant impact on increasing the party's membership. A dominant majority of respondents (78.5%) affirm that the introduction of digital registration has led to more individuals joining the party. This trend suggests that the ease and accessibility of digital platforms have made it simpler for potential members to enroll, which is crucial in today's digital age. However, a small portion (4.0%) disagrees with this claim, and 11.6% remain uncertain, indicating that while digital registration has been effective for most, there are still varying opinions regarding its overall success.

When it comes to research informing the party's recruitment process, the results show a favorable outlook. Over 65% of respondents acknowledge that research plays a crucial role in shaping the recruitment strategy, helping the party identify key demographics and understand community needs. This data-driven

approach allows the party to tailor its efforts and target the right audience for membership growth. On the other hand, 5.4% of respondents do not believe research is used effectively in recruitment, while nearly 23% express uncertainty about its influence, suggesting that the integration of research into the recruitment process may not be universally perceived as strong.

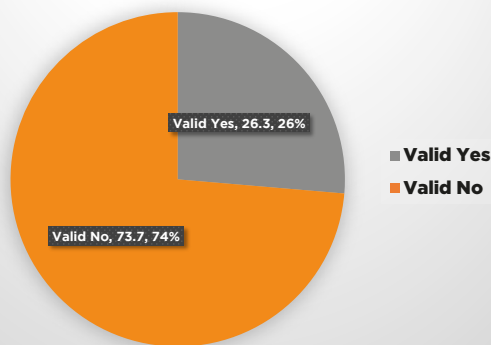
The open-ended comments regarding the research process provide further context and insight. Many respondents confirm that research is vital in pinpointing areas where the party can focus its recruitment efforts, such as targeting specific demographic groups or addressing regional disparities. Several mention that research helps in understanding voter behavior and informs the party about potential areas of growth. However, some respondents also highlight that the implementation of research findings can be inconsistent, with certain parties expressing doubt about whether the research is genuinely utilized or communicated effectively within the organization.

In summary, the data findings reflect a strong correlation between digital membership registration and increased party membership, as well as an understanding of the value research brings to the recruitment process. While there is broad support for both digital registration and the use of research, the mixed responses suggest there may be room for improvement in how research is implemented and leveraged for recruitment. The party could benefit from further refining its research processes and ensuring that insights gathered through research are fully integrated into recruitment strategies for maximum effectiveness.

3.5 Youth participation in internal political processes.

3.5a. Internal party elections

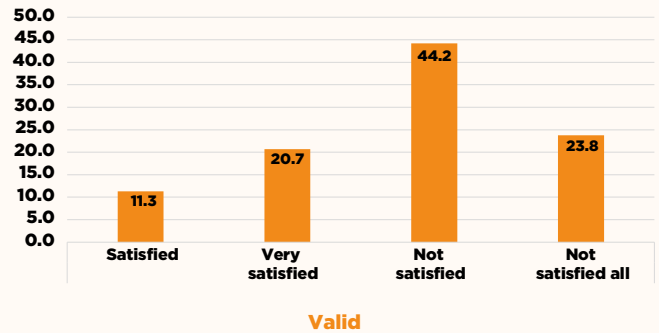
Has your political party conducted internal elections in the last five years? Percent



The findings suggest that internal democracy within political parties is limited, with a majority of respondents (73.7%) indicating that their party has not conducted internal elections in the past five years. This raises concerns about the transparency and legitimacy of leadership selection processes within these parties.

The lack of regular internal elections may contribute to power centralization, limiting opportunities for young people and marginalized groups to participate in party leadership. Without consistent electoral processes, parties risk eroding democratic values and fostering internal dissatisfaction among members.

How satisfied were you with the elections meeting the threshold of free and fair?



Furthermore, among those whose parties conducted internal elections, satisfaction with the fairness of these elections was generally low. While 32% of respondents expressed satisfaction or high satisfaction with the elections, a significant 68% were either not satisfied (44.2%) or not satisfied at all (23.8%). This indicates widespread concerns about electoral integrity, suggesting that even when internal elections occur, they may not be perceived as free and fair. These findings emphasize the need for political parties to strengthen their internal democratic processes, enhance transparency, and build trust among members to foster greater engagement and legitimacy.

3.5b. Frequency and Adequacy of Internal Elections

The majority of respondents indicated that internal elections within the party are held every five years (50.7%). A smaller proportion believes elections occur more frequently, with 23.5% citing an annual cycle and 8.8% citing a biennial cycle. However, there is a significant portion of respondents who remain uncertain about the frequency of elections (11%) or find them irregular (5.9%). When asked about the adequacy of this frequency for maintaining democratic processes within the party, the responses were split. While 42.8% agreed that the frequency is adequate, 44.8% felt it is not enough to ensure democratic processes. This suggests that while some members view the current system as sufficient, there is a notable concern about the frequency of internal elections.

3.5c. Electoral Guidelines and Accessibility

A large majority (83.9%) of respondents confirmed that the party has clearly defined electoral guidelines for internal elections. These guidelines are generally regarded as comprehensive, with 52.1% finding them “very comprehensive” and 31.4% considering them “moderately comprehensive.”

This high level of clarity and detail is seen as a positive aspect of the party’s electoral structure. Furthermore, 73.4% of respondents stated that these guidelines are easily accessible both online and in print, ensuring that all members can refer to them. However, 6.2% of respondents felt that accessing these guidelines is difficult, suggesting that there may be occasional barriers to full accessibility.

3.5d. Transparency and Fairness of Elections

Most members perceive the party’s internal elections as transparent and fair, with 56.4% believing they are “widely considered” transparent, credible, free, and fair. However, 34.8% felt that elections are only “somewhat considered” fair, and a small percentage (2.8%) believed they are “never considered so.” These results highlight that while the majority view the elections as fair, there is a segment of the party that remains skeptical about the transparency and credibility of the process. When asked what could be improved to enhance fairness, 42.8% of respondents emphasized the need for better communication of the electoral process, followed by 28.6% who called for stronger oversight. These insights suggest that enhancing communication and oversight could significantly improve the perception of fairness.

3.5e. Affirmative Action for Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

The party has implemented several affirmative actions to support the participation of special interest groups (SIGs) such as women, youth, and people with disabilities (PWDs). These include reserved seats (50.1%), reduced nomination fees (34.6%), and mentorship programs (12.5%). A significant number of respondents (59.5%) believe these actions are “very effective” in promoting SIG participation, while 33.4% view them as “moderately effective.” Furthermore, 59.8% of respondents agreed that affirmative actions have led to significant improvements in SIG participation, suggesting that the measures are having a positive impact. However, there is still room for improvement, with a small percentage (3.1%) feeling that the impact has been minimal.

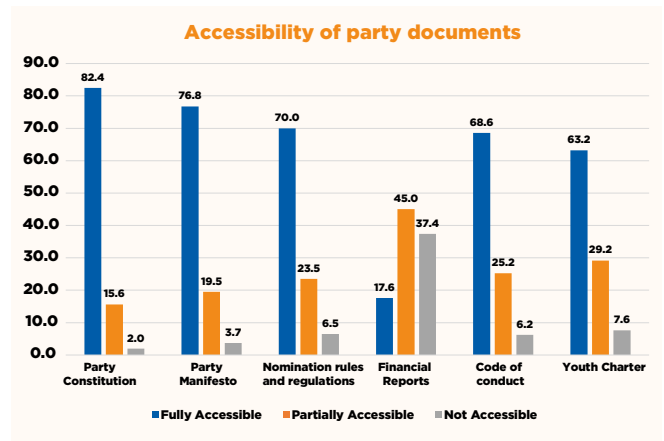
3.5f. Support and Dispute Resolution for SIGs

The party provides various forms of support to SIGs during election periods, including training, capacity building (47%), and financial support (30.9%). Despite this support, 39.4% of respondents felt that it was “slightly effective” in improving election outcomes, and only 2% found it “very effective.” Interestingly, 50.7% believed the support had led to a significant increase in the number of SIGs winning elections. Additionally, the party has established a mechanism for resolving electoral disputes, with 81.6% confirming its existence. The dispute resolution process is considered transparent by 54.1% of respondents, and 43.6% are “very satisfied” with its transparency. This suggests that while the mechanisms for resolving disputes are widely

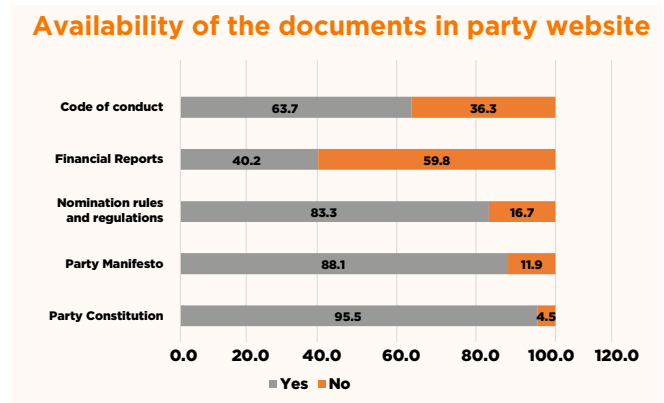
recognized, there are areas where the effectiveness and satisfaction of SIGs could be further enhanced.

These findings indicate that while the party’s internal elections and mechanisms for supporting SIGs are generally well-regarded, there are areas where improvements can be made—particularly in terms of increasing the frequency of elections, enhancing transparency, and strengthening support for SIGs to improve their electoral outcomes. Regular evaluation and improvements in these areas could lead to more inclusive and fair electoral processes.

3.5g. Access to party information



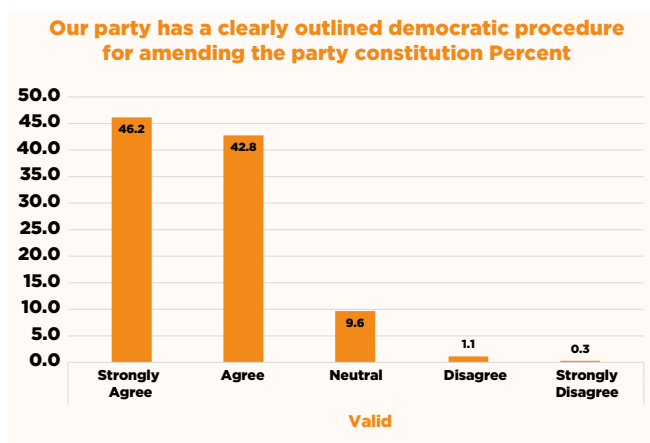
The findings indicate that political parties have made progress in ensuring the accessibility of key documents, but gaps remain in financial transparency. A significant majority of respondents reported that documents such as the party constitution (82.4%), manifesto (76.8%), nomination rules (70.0%), and youth charter (63.2%) are fully accessible to the public. Furthermore, most of these documents are available on party websites, with the party constitution (95.5%) and manifesto (88.1%) being the most accessible online. This suggests a commitment to transparency in areas concerning party structure, policies, and electoral processes. However, while accessibility is generally high, there is room for improvement in making all critical documents more readily available to party members and the public.



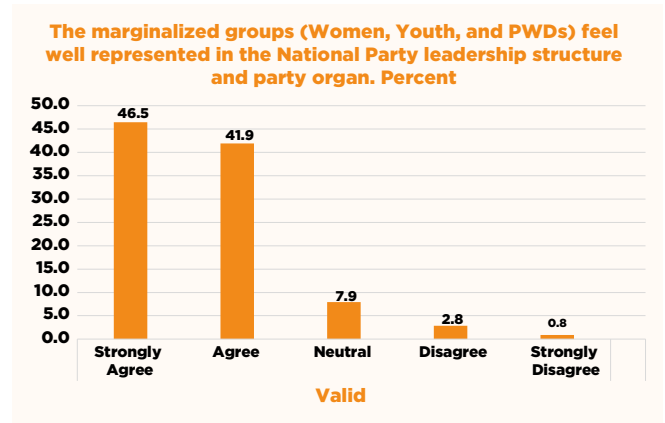
A major concern emerging from the data is the lack of transparency in financial matters. Only 17.6% of respondents reported that financial reports are fully accessible, and 37.4% indicated they are not accessible at all. Additionally, 59.8% of respondents stated that financial reports are not available on the party’s website, making them the least transparent document. This lack of financial openness raises questions about accountability, particularly regarding party funding and expenditure. Transparency in financial matters is crucial for fostering trust among party members, ensuring ethical financial practices, and preventing corruption. Political parties should prioritize making financial records more accessible to enhance credibility and public confidence.

3.5h. Democratic procedures for amending party constitutions.

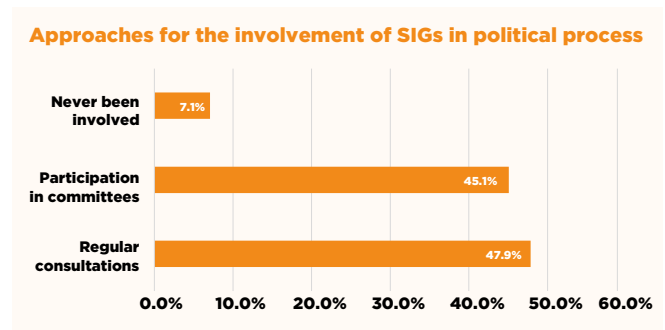
Despite the shortcomings in financial transparency, the data suggests that parties have established democratic structures for governance. A combined 89% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their party has a clearly outlined democratic procedure for amending the party constitution. This indicates that most parties have mechanisms in place to facilitate internal reforms, ensuring adaptability to changing political dynamics. However, for democracy within parties to be fully effective, accessibility to all key documents—including financial records—must be improved. Strengthening transparency, particularly in financial disclosures, will contribute to the overall legitimacy and accountability of political parties.



3.5i SIG Inclusion in political party processes.

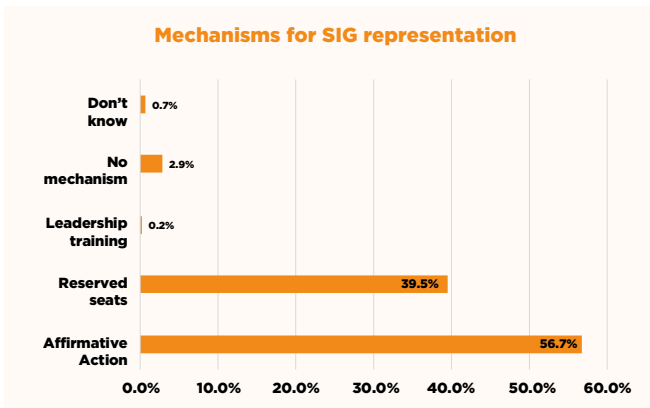


The findings reveal that a majority of respondents believe marginalized groups—women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWDs)—are well represented in national party leadership structures and organs, with 88.4% either strongly agreeing or agreeing. This suggests that political parties have made efforts to include these groups in decision-making processes. Special Interest Group (SIG) leagues also play an active role in shaping party policies, with 47.9% participating through regular consultations and 45.1% through committee engagements. However, a small percentage (7.1%) reported never being involved, indicating that some marginalized voices may still be left out of key discussions.



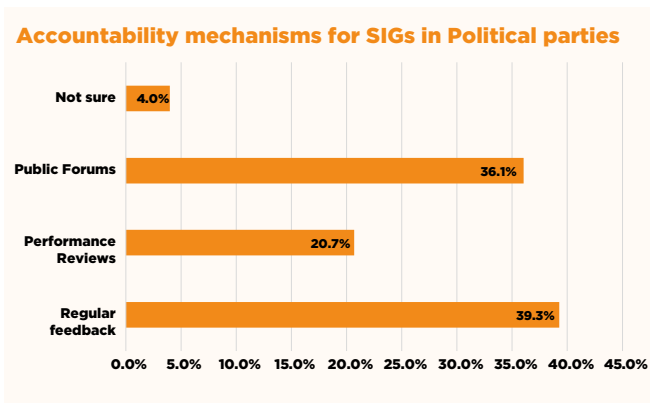
3.5j Mechanisms for SIG representation

To ensure the representation of SIGs, parties have adopted various mechanisms, with affirmative action (56.7%) and quotas or reserved seats (39.5%) being the most common. Leadership training, however, is nearly non-existent (0.2%), highlighting a gap in developing future leaders from these groups. Despite this, parties have invested in capacity-building programs, with leadership training (40.7%), political education (31.1%), and advocacy (25.0%) being the primary offerings. Most of these programs are held quarterly (53.0%), and 75.1% of respondents reported participating, demonstrating an effort to equip marginalized groups with the skills needed for effective political engagement.



3.5k Accountability mechanisms for SIGs.

Accountability within SIGs is another area of focus, with 78.5% of respondents stating that measures exist to hold party officials accountable. These measures include regular feedback sessions (39.3%), public forums (36.1%), and performance reviews (20.7%). However, 14.2% of respondents were unsure about accountability structures, suggesting a need for better communication on these processes. Overall, while progress has been made in integrating marginalized groups into party structures, enhancing leadership training, ensuring full inclusion, and strengthening accountability mechanisms will further improve representation and participation.



3.6 Youth League

3.6a. Youth League structure.

The data indicates that a significant portion of respondents (50.4%) either strongly agree or agree that the Youth League of the party is fully structured as per the party constitution. This reflects a generally positive assessment of the organizational structure and its alignment with the party's guiding principles. However, a relatively small number (2.3%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, suggesting some potential concerns regarding the league's functionality or adherence to the constitutional guidelines. Notably, 39.1% of respondents did not provide any response, which could indicate a lack of awareness or understanding of the Youth League's structure or operations.

Further elaboration from respondents reveals a variety of perspectives on the Youth League's structure and its operations. Many individuals emphasized that the Youth League has a clear leadership hierarchy, with some noting the full integration of youth representation at various levels, from grassroots to national leadership. Several responses highlighted that the Youth League is inclusive, adheres to gender and regional balance, and provides a platform for young people to air their views. Others mentioned that while the structure exists, there may be challenges, such as a lack of sufficient funding or a need for more active engagement from the party's higher levels to fully operationalize the league's activities.

A few respondents expressed uncertainty about the Youth League's structure or voiced concerns over its effectiveness, mentioning the absence of clear communication or awareness about the league's existence and processes. Despite these few negative responses, the overall sentiment suggests that the Youth League is well-established within the party, though there are areas that could benefit from greater focus, including consistent funding, clearer visibility of its activities, and better communication about its role and operationalization within the party's broader framework.

3.6b. Vibrancy of Youth League

The responses reflect a diverse range of opinions on how vibrant the Youth League is in representing the youth, with 56.4% of respondents indicating that the Youth League is either "somewhat vibrant" or "very vibrant." The percentage of individuals who feel the league is "not vibrant" is relatively small (2.8%), indicating that most respondents view it as having some level of activity or impact. However, there is still a notable portion (40.8%) who did not provide responses, which may signal a lack of awareness or engagement with the league's activities.

In the elaboration section, many respondents pointed to specific activities that contribute to the league's vibrancy, such as its active participation in political and social issues, involvement in organizing events, and advocacy for youth rights. Respondents also mentioned that the Youth League plays an important role in keeping the youth engaged, especially through online platforms, social media, and organizing forums for youth empowerment. Some comments reflected that the league works well in organizing youth around party activities, offering leadership opportunities, and creating forums for youth to express their concerns and opinions.

However, there were some criticisms as well. A few individuals pointed out challenges like the lack of clear structures or budgetary allocations that affect the league's effectiveness and vibrancy. Others noted that while the Youth League is visible and active, it could improve in terms of on-the-ground presence and more

regular grassroots mobilization. A recurring point was the need for the Youth League to focus more on direct engagement and activities that are closer to the local community to improve its visibility and impact.

In summary, the Youth League is generally seen as a vibrant entity, especially in terms of its participation in party events and its advocacy for youth issues. Still, there are areas that need improvement, particularly in terms of structural development, funding, and ground-level engagement. The league's vibrancy is largely driven by its leadership, communication efforts, and involvement in both online and offline youth activities, but greater focus on real-world outreach and consistent operations would further enhance its influence.

3.6c. The process of electing Youth Leaders.

The responses to the question regarding the process for electing Youth League leadership show a clear preference for direct involvement by the youth in the election process. A large majority (84.7%) of respondents indicated that the Youth League leadership is chosen through direct elections by the youth, highlighting a democratic approach to leadership selection.

In contrast, 14.2% of respondents believe leadership is appointed by senior leadership positions, which suggests that some members perceive a more top-down approach to leadership selection. A very small percentage (1.1%) were unsure about the process, indicating that there is some uncertainty or lack of awareness among a few individuals regarding how the leadership is selected. This data suggests that most respondents favor direct participation in the election of Youth League leaders, with a smaller segment seeing leadership appointments by senior officials.

3.6d. Satisfaction with the semi-autonomous nature of Youth Leagues.

The level of satisfaction with the semi-autonomous nature of the youth league to undertake its mandate in Kenya reflects a generally positive outlook. A significant majority, 52.4%, of respondents expressed being satisfied with the league's ability to carry out its responsibilities, while 34.8% were very satisfied, indicating strong approval. This suggests that most individuals recognize the importance of youth leagues operating with a degree of independence, allowing them the flexibility and freedom to pursue their goals without excessive interference.

However, there is still a portion of the population that is not fully satisfied with the league's autonomy. About 11% of respondents were not satisfied, and 1.7% expressed complete dissatisfaction, suggesting that there are challenges or limitations that may hinder the youth league from functioning at its optimal capacity.

Despite these concerns, the overall sentiment towards the semi-autonomous nature of the youth league is largely favorable, with most recognizing its vital role in promoting youth participation in politics and leadership.

3.6e. Role of the Youth Leagues.

Youth leagues in Kenya play a pivotal role in shaping the political landscape and advancing the interests of young people within the nation's political framework. Among the core activities they actively undertake are advocacy and representation (23.3%), leadership development (19.7%), and political education (19.1%). These activities help ensure that the voices of young people are heard in decision-making processes and that they are equipped with the necessary skills to take on leadership roles. The advocacy role primarily focuses on pushing for policies that benefit the youth while the leadership development initiatives aim to groom future leaders from within the ranks of the youth leagues, fostering a politically aware and active generation.

In addition to these, youth leagues in Kenya are also heavily involved in mobilization and engagement (18.1%), which ensures that young people are actively participating in the political process and national discourse. The involvement in policy development (11.1%) shows that the youth leagues are not only participants but also contributors to shaping policies that affect them. While some youth leagues also play a role in holding their leadership accountable (8.0%), it is evident that the main thrust of their activities revolves around fostering a more politically informed, engaged, and active youth population. Despite challenges, the youth leagues remain an essential force in Kenya's political ecosystem, pushing for a better future for young people through direct involvement and advocacy.

3.6f. Youth engagement processes.

Youth leagues in Kenya engage with the broader youth community through various channels and activities aimed at fostering involvement and participation. The most common methods include community outreach programs and social media engagements, each capturing 31.2% of the responses, reflecting their significant role in connecting with young people on the ground and in digital spaces. Workshops and seminars, alongside youth forums and town hall meetings, are also vital tools for engagement, with 18.8% and 18.0% of respondents indicating their importance, respectively. These activities help to create opportunities for dialogue, skill-building, and information sharing, ensuring the youth league remains connected with the concerns and aspirations of young people. Despite these efforts, a small percentage of respondents indicated either no engagement or uncertainty about the league's outreach efforts.

Regarding the frequency of these engagements, most youth leagues seem to operate on a quarterly basis, as reflected by 45.9% of responses. Monthly engagements follow, with 27.8% indicating regular involvement, while annual events are also common, capturing 18.7% of the responses. However, 5.1% of respondents noted that there is no engagement at all, and 1.1% were unsure about the frequency of interactions. These findings highlight that while many youth leagues are active in engaging their members, there is still room for improvement in terms of frequency and consistency.

To ensure transparency in decision-making, youth leagues utilize a variety of mechanisms. The most prevalent method is publishing minutes and reports, with 30.6% of respondents highlighting its importance. Open meetings and discussions are also a crucial part of the transparency process, cited by 29.7%, while 26.3% of members appreciate regular updates. Independent audits are another transparency measure, though less common, at 10.5%. These practices collectively help to foster trust and accountability within the youth league, though a small percentage (2.9%) indicated that there is no clear approach to ensuring transparency in decision-making.

3.6g. Challenges faced by Youth Leagues.

The Youth League in Kenya faces several challenges that hinder its effectiveness in mobilizing and empowering young people. One of the most significant challenges is inadequate training and capacity building, which affects 22.5% of the respondents. This challenge is compounded by the lack of engagement from the youth themselves, reported by 27.1% of respondents, as many young

people may not feel sufficiently connected or motivated to participate actively. Another major obstacle is limited resources and funding, as indicated by 39.2% of respondents, which often hampers the ability to run programs and initiatives aimed at youth empowerment. Additionally, some youth leagues experience resistance from senior party officials (11.0%), which can create tensions and hinder their efforts to gain independence and influence within the political structure.

In response to these challenges, the party has taken various measures to support the Youth League. Many respondents (16.1%) indicated that the party has provided some level of support, though responses varied in terms of effectiveness. Some of the notable efforts include the allocation of financial resources for key initiatives, such as funding for training and capacity-building seminars. In addition, the party has been involved in organizing forums and workshops, offering financial support for community outreach programs, and engaging in partnerships with external organizations to provide resources and training opportunities. However, a number of respondents noted that while these efforts exist, the support has been inconsistent or insufficient, highlighting that more needs to be done to fully address the challenges faced by the Youth League. The effectiveness of these actions is often constrained by party bureaucracy and limited financial capacity, as well as a lack of clear, sustained commitment to the empowerment of youth within the party structure.





4

Discussion,
Recommendations
and Conclusion

Chapter 4.0 Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusion

4.1 Youth's Understanding of Party Ideology and Identity

It is through understanding the Political Party's ideology and identity among the Youth that will help them to clearly shape the political arena and landscape. Deep, concise and impactful understanding and awareness of party values, principles and ideologies is directly influenced by: Education, Social Networks and Media and Information flow and consumption. Today, more youths are able to relate their life experiences and values like social justice, economic status and opportunities, equity, social justice and good governance to party policies, principles and ideology.

4.1a Awareness and Alignment with Party Values

The research shows there exists notable gaps in the awareness and alignment of the Youth and Youth Agenda with the existing party ideologies. The Youth are increasing getting uncomfortable with the traditional parties, and feel they are not in touch with their realities. This is likely to cause political apathy, pushing the youth demography to pursue other tenable options, and approach that offers a more relatable vision for their needs, future and ambitions.

4.1b Shifts in Ideology: Causes and Implications

The evident shift in political ideology among the youth is as a result of change and consciousness in socio-economic factors, technological influence and changing global trends. The advent of social media, creating a unique and timely flow of information has pushed the youth to challenge the traditional narratives, bringing about a sense of real time participation and engagement. This has resulted in fragmentation within the party hierarchies, and a withering sense of party loyalty. This has birthed new political movements which are not aligned to the traditional party loyalty.

4.1c Assessment of Initiatives and Policies

Party policies crafted for the Youth should always resonate with the agenda of Youth Empowerment and Inclusion. They should be relatable to the Youth demographic. Failure to do this, they end up struggling to resonate with the Youth as they appear not to have genuine engagement in their development. There should always be a transparent assessment to determine the efficiency, and effectiveness of the policies, and their alignment with the young people.

4.1d Compliance with Legal Frameworks

The law requires that political parties create a space and opportunity for Youth participation in the decision-making process, as well as party activities.

This include and is not limited to establishment of Youth Wings, Nomination of Youths, and promotion of activities that are aligned with the Youth Agenda.

Compliance by the parties, and strengthening of youth movements is one way of ensuring the youth feel well represented, and that their ideas are incorporated in the formulation of party ideologies.

4.2 Political rights protection for marginalized groups (youth, women, PWDs).

Discussion

The Kenyan Constitution has created a framework that ensures inclusiveness in the political activities in the Country. This is passed down to the political parties that are supposed to ensure inclusion of Women, Youth and the People Living with Disabilities. The research shows that despite the existence of the law and framework, the intended inclusion has not been achieved.

4.2a Mechanisms for Diverse Representation and Inclusive Policy Development

Legal Framework Enforcement

There is a great and urgent need of stronger enforcement of the established law to ensure full inclusion is achieved. This will see inclusion of minority and marginalized groups in both the decision making and political processes at all levels. These include the two thirds gender rule, rules dictating nomination of the youth by political parties (Article 55 of the 2010 Constitution) among other legal requirements that ensure inclusivity. This must be extended to the Quotas and Affirmative Action.

Engagement Platforms

The Government and Political Parties must create platforms and spaces for dialogue and consultations. This will create space for the marginalized people to share their views, opinions and to ask legitimate and pertinent questions. This should be done in Town Halls, Forums, Open Workshops and even online spaces.

Capacity Building

Capacity building enhances ability to participate in decision making, to participate in various political activities among the marginalized groups. This is possible through training and resources allocation.

4.2b Effectiveness of Member Feedback Collection and Validation Processes

Community Surveys and Feedback Mechanisms

Regular surveys, establishing focus groups and organizing participatory workshops helps in building of effective and robust system of collecting feedback. This allows the marginalized groups to have platforms to express themselves, and, to take part in decision making process.

The feedback collected should be processed in an open and transparent manner so as to help build trust among participants. There should be a system to ensure accountability in the process.

Use of Technology

The use of technology ensures a wide reach, easy and timely feedback, and an open uncensored platform for self-expression. Use of Mobile Applications, social media and internet based platforms ensures wide capture of the youth population.

4.2c Youth Representation in Party Structures and Membership

Youth Wings in Political Parties

Political parties should establish youth wings, led by youths, and decisions made by youths. This will ensure the youth feel represented, and have a channel of expressing themselves. The leaders of the youth wings should be members of the highest decision making organs.

Mentorship Programs

Experienced politician and technocrats should take the role of mentors to the youth and the upcoming young leaders. They should guide them on decision making, leadership, public relations and running of political parties.

4.3 Diversity in leadership and party organs (gender, age, ethnicity, disability).

Discussion

In the Kenyan set up, the inclusion of the Youth in diverse programs, decision making and contribution mechanism is vital for uniform and sustainable development. Research shows that the traditional registration methods have so many gaps that cause exclusion of marginalized groups. This is because of reduced access to information, slow uptake of technology and shallow understanding of the entire process involved.

4.3a Limitations to Inclusivity

Among the things limiting inclusivity are low penetration of internet in the rural areas, lack of the right information and awareness and cultural and social factors that limit participation of youth, women and people with disabilities.

4.3b Digital Registration and Recruitment Strategies

The gradual shift towards digital platforms for registration and recruitment by the political parties has shown a growth in inclusivity, and breaking of some of the barriers. This can be improved through opening up of more online platforms, use of friendlier user interface in registration and creating of more awareness campaigns. Political parties and stakeholders should also offer more incentives to encourage more registration and participation. This can be through shared opportunities, training and allocation of more resources.

4.4 Youth Participation in Internal Party Processes

4.4a Transparency and Fairness in Internal Elections

The transparency and integrity of internal party elections is critical in encouraging youth participation, and building of the democratic process. The elections should be free from bribery, favoritism and external manipulation to help build trust among the members, especially the youth and other minority groups. Political parties should formulate tough, strict and legally accepted guidelines for the parties' internal processes. They should also utilize technology to facilitate accountability, and auditing, as well as help bring more youths on board.

4.4b Accessibility of Key Party Documents

The youth must have access to essential documents like the Party Constitution and manifestos. They must also be in easy and user-friendly formats for easy understanding and interpretation. They must also capture the youth ideas, ambitions and input, either given directly or through their representatives. Political parties must actively train and educate its members, including the youth on the contents of the documents, and the party processes.

4.4c Representation and Inclusion of Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Inclusion of diverse voices, ideologies and opinions especially from the Special Interest Groups ensures the decisions made resonate with everyone. The political parties should also ensure they formulate policies, and push for the same, that resonate and cater for marginalized groups and communities. This should be done with full participation of the special interest groups.

To ensure that party platforms resonate with the youth, it is vital to include diverse voices, particularly from Special Interest Groups (SIGs) such as women, persons with disabilities, and minority communities. Implementing policies that encourage representation of these groups within party structures can lead to more inclusive decision-making. Parties should actively seek input from SIGs to ensure that their perspectives are considered in policy formulation.

4.4d Role and Impact of the Youth League

The Kenyan Youth League has played a big role, both in building and strengthening of political parties, and development of the democratic and governance process in the Country. These roles include mobilization of the youth population to take part in the political parties' affairs, elections and even calling for accountable and transparent leadership and governance through political advocacy. This has extended to advocating for youth related issues, calling for formulation of public friendly policies and shaping the political decision-making process.

The Youth league has also pushed for capacity building and empowerment of the youth and other marginalized groups. This has ensured inclusion of the marginalized groups develop leadership skills, take part in the decision making process, and take up more significant roles in leadership, both within the political parties and their communities.

Through carrying out Civic Education, the youth league has helped raise awareness matters elections, citizen rights and transparent and accountable leadership. This has helped the youth and the community challenge the traditional political norms and reduce marginalization of various groups and communities. This has created an atmosphere of more inclusive political environment.

The Youth League has also proved, over time to be a key force during elections. This has been through ability to mobilize youthful voters, and agitating for a transparent and fair process. This has helped improve and build the political and democratic space.

4.5 Recommendations

Improved and Increased Political and Civic Education

Political Parties should increase on Civic and Political Education to the communities, and mostly the marginalized groups which include the Youth, Women and PWDS. The manuals for this education should be built around political parties, their ideology and its relation and relevance in the democratic and governance process. The parties should use both the traditional and modern approach and platforms to ensure maximum impact and outcome. They should ride on the digital space and technology to ensure they reach the youth who are the target demographic.

Inclusive and Effective Policy Development

Political Parties should build more avenues to ensure active involvement of the youth and other marginalized groups in the decision-making process, including policy formulation. This will ensure the policies and decisions made align to their needs, and that their contribution in the governance process is visible.

Utilizing Technology

Political parties should leverage on technology and the digital space to reach the young voters in different social classes, age and affiliations. These will allow for more engagement, timely feedback and uncensored political discourse.

Monitoring and Evaluation

There is a great need to establish monitoring and evaluation framework to assess and measure the impact of policies and decisions made by the political parties and governance organs on the youth and the larger community. It will also help ensure that the decision, policies are aligned to the needs of the Youth, and encourage more participation and feedback.

Strengthening Legal Compliance

Political Parties, political organs like the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties, IEBC and Office of the Attorney General should ensure strict enforcement of laws promoting gender balance, inclusivity, accountability and, free, fair and transparent elections and democratic process. This is possible through strengthening of the legal framework, building of legally compliant party constitutions and manifestos, and ensuring balanced representation at all levels.

Enhance Feedback Mechanisms

Political parties should develop comprehensive and effective ways of collecting feedback from various groups, and ensuring the concerns raised are addressed and resolutions implemented.

Collaborate with Civil Society

The Civil Society, NGOs, CBOs and Community Based Activists are always advocating for the rights and representation of the marginalized groups. They interact with the communities directly, carry out research and provide intervention in various instances. This makes them more informed, and are the best to shape the decision making process, give feedback and implement resolution. Political Parties should collaborate with these groups to ensure and help make informed decisions, policies and provide relevant solutions.

4.6 Conclusion

The Kenyan Youth are largely informed and continue to get more exposure in areas of governance, decision making, policy formulation and leadership. They have also developed a complex relationship with the political parties' ideology. These spells a clear need for political parties to adapt the ever evolving political and governance landscape, and engage all groups, including the youth with a more open and authentic mind. There is a huge need to build and enhance an environment and atmosphere of inclusivity, transparency, open and active participation as well constructive feedback.

Political parties have a duty to make friendly, relevant and resonating policies, decisions and processes. This can only be done if all stakeholders and players are involved, and their views put into focus. The ideologies and decisions must align to the aspirations and ambitions of the youth. This is the only way to fostering a vibrant democracy, transparent leadership and free and fair elections process and outcome.

The Youth are out and willing to engage in the political and democratic process. They are willing to take up leadership positions, both at the community level, within the political parties and at the National level. This is well observed in the feedback given through technological platforms like social media, and also through traditional and conventional platforms like political workshops, training sessions and open forums.



5

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5.0 Annex 1: References

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