



NAIROBI EASTERN & CENTRAL
REGIONAL BUDGET HUB



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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LEADING THE JOURNEY

Message from the Coordinator



"Great change begins with people who refuse to believe that budgets are just numbers. Every member of the NEC Hub is proving that informed citizens can influence public decisions and improve lives. I am proud to work alongside such an exceptional team of Budget Advocates."

"As you produce this e-magazine, remember that you are not just telling our story, you are inspiring the next generation of citizens to believe that governance works best when people participate."



**– Nelson Maina , Coordinator
NEC Regional Budget Hub**



**– Regina Wambui , Director
Justice and Advocacy
Empowerment Center (JAEC)**

"Citizen participation in budgeting is essential for accountable governance and sustainable development. The NEC Budget Hub, continues to promote inclusive public engagement that ensures community voices shape development priorities, public resources are allocated transparently, and every shilling delivers meaningful value to citizens."

"This report highlights the Hub's commitment to strengthening participation, accountability, and collaboration in advancing equitable and responsive development across the region."

ABOUT NEC HUB

The NEC Regional Budget Hub is a collaborative platform that operates in the Nairobi-Eastern-Central (NEC) regions of Kenya. It encompasses 14 counties: Machakos, Makueni, Kitui, Kajiado, Nairobi, Kiambu, Murang'a, Nyandarua, Kirinyaga, Nyeri, Laikipia, Meru, Tharaka Nithi, and Embu.

The hub is part of a broader network of budget hubs across Kenya, established to promote budget advocacy, transparency and citizen engagement in public financial management (PFM).

14 Counties | 1 Regional Hub | Shared Impact

WHAT WE DO

The NEC Hub serves as a focal point for citizen-led budget advocacy in the region, leveraging regional and county-specific insights to influence policy and budgetary decisions that support equitable development across Kenya's counties.

OUR VISION

To be a catalyst for sustainable development and empowerment in the region, where equitable resource allocation and inclusive participation in budgeting processes enhance the well-being of all communities, including persons with disabilities:

OUR MISSION

To unite advocates for public finance management across 14 Kenyan counties, championing transparency and accountability in budgeting to ensure inclusivity and equity in funding for social protection, health, and education, while empowering Persons with Disabilities to drive inclusive budgeting and advocate for essential legislative amendments.



Thematic areas

Collective Research; research driving better decisions Evidence that shapes policy

NEC Hub conducted research studies in 4 counties in education and Health.

Nairobi and Murang'a County -VTC financing

Nyeri and Machakos handled primary healthcare financing.

These studies were undertaken to generate credible evidence that can strengthen county planning, budgeting, and policy discussions.

NEC Hub continues to strengthen a culture of data-driven advocacy where evidence informs dialogue, citizen voices shape public finance decisions, and county governments are supported to deliver more responsive and inclusive services.

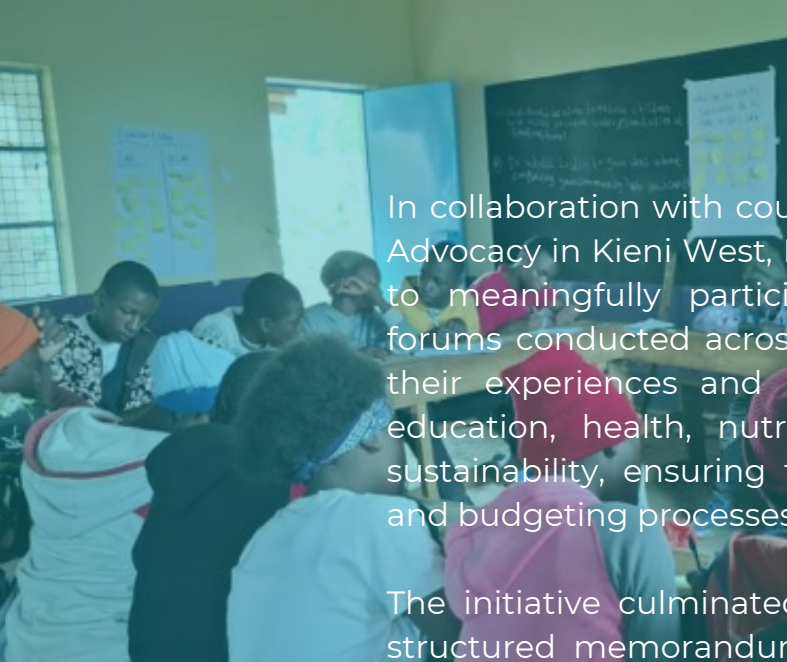
Collaboration that brings change Roundtables : "Dialogue remains the foundation of accountable governance."

Five roundtable meetings were held in Kirinyaga County, Embu County, Makueni County, Machakos County and Nairobi County. The meetings brought together key county government officials, budget facilitators and budget champions to discuss and strengthen their understanding of county planning and budgeting processes while also enhancing collaboration around transparency and accountability initiatives.

Budget Cells: Strengthening County Budget Advocacy From Learning to local action

Budget Cells served as collaborative platforms where Budget Champions, citizens, and county stakeholders identified local development priorities and transformed them into coordinated advocacy actions. In Kiambu and Machakos Counties, the engagements focused on disability inclusion, health service delivery, and review of key county planning and budgeting documents, resulting in clear advocacy priorities and action plans for engagement with county governments.

Beyond the formal Budget Cells, Murang'a, Nyeri, and Nairobi Counties advanced community-led advocacy through research follow-up meetings and county dialogues. These engagements strengthened collaboration with county officials, promoted evidence-based advocacy, and reinforced citizen participation in planning and budgeting, contributing to more transparent, accountable, and responsive governance.

A group of children are gathered around a table in a meeting room, looking at papers and discussing them. A blackboard with writing is visible in the background.

Child-led Budget Advocacy: Amplifying Young Voices

In collaboration with county partners, championed Child-Led Budget Advocacy in Kieni West, Nyeri County, creating a platform for children to meaningfully participate in public decision-making. Through forums conducted across 13 clusters, more than 150 children shared their experiences and priorities on early childhood development, education, health, nutrition, safety, inclusion, and environmental sustainability, ensuring that their voices informed county planning and budgeting processes.

The initiative culminated in the development and submission of a structured memorandum to the Nyeri County Assembly, providing child-informed recommendations for the Nyeri County CFSP 2025 and the Early Childhood Development and Pre-Primary Education Bill, 2025. By placing children at the centre of governance conversations, the initiative strengthened child participation in public finance, promoted inclusive policy development, and reinforced the importance of investing in quality early childhood services.

A woman is speaking into a microphone at a podium. A man in a red jacket is seated in the foreground, looking towards her.

Championing Inclusion: Capacity building of Persons with Disability

Virtual sessions to over 80+ participants across the 14 counties were held to enhance understanding of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2025, which protects the rights of persons with disabilities, including the rights to education, health, employment and accessibility. The sessions aimed at building the capacity of participants to understand the provisions of the Act and promote its implementation within county planning and budgeting processes as a major role out takes place at the counties.

A large group of people, including men and women of various ages, are posing for a group photo outdoors. Some are standing and some are sitting in the front row. A banner for 'The Oslo Center' is visible in the background.

Capacity Building of media personalities

Media representatives were actively engaged through virtual meetings, with each county ensuring the participation of at least one media personality per session. These media representatives played a crucial role in supporting the preparation of media briefs, particularly during key engagements such as the Public Participation in Budgeting (PPB) sessions. This collaboration enhanced the quality and consistency of budget-related reporting across the counties.

“A year of strengthening budget advocacy, transparency and citizen participation across 14 counties.”

Spotlight Program

Building the Next Generation of Budget Champions

The Budget Champion Graduation Program marked a significant milestone in NEC Hub's commitment to strengthening citizen-led budget advocacy and public finance accountability.

Through a comprehensive learning programme comprising 8 virtual training sessions, over 500+ participants from across the region enhanced their knowledge of public finance management, budget analysis, social accountability, public participation, and evidence-based advocacy.

The programme equipped aspiring Budget Champions with practical skills to engage meaningfully in county planning and budgeting processes, while fostering a growing network of informed citizen advocates committed to transparent and accountable governance.

The programme culminated in the graduation of 127 certified Budget Champions, representing diverse counties across the Nairobi, Eastern and Central region. These graduates are now part of an expanding community of practice, ready to champion budget transparency, strengthen citizen participation, and support evidence-based advocacy within their counties.



Cohort V Budget Facilitators

NEC Hub proudly recognises the invaluable contribution of the Cohort V Budget Facilitators in making the programme a success and in laying a strong foundation for future cohorts of Budget Champions.

County Engagement and advocacy

NEC Hub, working through its network of Budget Facilitators, Budget Champions, and county partners, strengthened citizen participation in the County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSP) 2025/26 process by mobilising communities, demystifying budget documents, and supporting meaningful engagement in public participation forums. Through webinars, X Spaces, social media campaigns, and county dialogues, citizens were empowered to understand county budgets, develop evidence-based memoranda, and confidently engage with county decision-makers.

The collaborative efforts resulted in increased public participation across the region, stronger peer-to-peer learning among counties, and the submission of advocacy memoranda addressing county-specific development priorities. The engagements demonstrated the growing capacity of citizens to influence county planning and budgeting while reinforcing NEC Hub's commitment to transparent, inclusive, and accountable public finance.



Kajiado County

- Advocated for the rehabilitation of Nakeel Stadium and the decentralisation of public participation to ward and village levels

Kiambu County

Conducted a pre-CFSP webinar to simplify the budget process for citizens.

Submitted memoranda advocating for climate-smart agriculture and improved fund absorption.



Kitui County

Mobilised over 2,000 citizens to participate in the CFSP public participation process.

Submitted recommendations on youth empowerment, digital public participation, health financing, revenue automation, and access to county budget information.



Murang'a County

Presented memoranda on Vocational Training Centre (VTC) financing, gender-responsive budgeting, and disability inclusion to the Budget and Appropriations Committee.



Laikipia County

Convened an X Space to discuss the CFSP 2025/26, Debt Management Strategy Paper, and Supplementary Budget 2024/25, promoting public awareness and engagement.

Nyeri County

Hosted an X Space with the Governor to discuss the Supplementary Budget 2024/25, CFSP 2025, and the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, expanding public dialogue on county budgeting.



Tharaka Nithi County

Mobilised stakeholders to participate in the CFSP public participation process, contributing citizen perspectives to county planning and budgeting

At the national Level:

NEC Hub participated in submission of memorandum to: The National Assembly on the Budget Policy statement 2025 in February 25th.

The national Treasury and Economic Planning on the Budget Policy Statement 2025 in January 21st

OTHER KEY EVENTS 2025

Learning Exchange Program 2024

NEC Hub hosted the 2024 Learning Exchange Programme in Nyeri County, bringing together Bajeti Hub and regional hubs from Nairobi, Eastern & Central, Coastal, Lake Region, and Rift Valley to strengthen collaboration, share best practices, and enhance capacity in budget advocacy and citizen engagement.

The exchange provided a valuable platform for peer learning, enabling each regional hub to showcase innovative approaches, reflect on implementation experiences, and explore strategies for strengthening public finance accountability. A key milestone for NEC Hub was the launch of the NEC Regional Hub website, further enhancing knowledge sharing and visibility across the region.

The programme also featured field learning visits, where participants engaged with county officials, community members, and beneficiaries of government and donor-funded initiatives.

These interactions highlighted the impact of citizen-led advocacy, strengthened understanding of effective service delivery, and reinforced the importance of



collaboration between government, civil society, and communities in advancing transparent, inclusive, and responsive governance.

The People Dialogue Festival 2025



NEC Hub participated in the 7th People Dialogue Festival (PDF) 2025, held under the theme "Building a Collaborative Democracy for Kenya's Sustainable Future." Through a collaborative exhibition at the Bajeti Hub booth, the Hub showcased its achievements in county-level budget advocacy, community empowerment, collaborative research, and the work of Budget Facilitators.

The exhibition highlighted how citizen-led initiatives are strengthening participatory governance and promoting transparent, accountable public finance management across the region.

As a key contributor to the Public Finance Management (PFM) Village, themed "From Public Budgets to Public Benefits," NEC Hub facilitated discussions on health reforms, healthcare financing, and service delivery. The sessions provided a platform to share practical experiences from county engagements, foster dialogue among governance stakeholders, and reinforce the importance of inclusive budgeting and citizen participation in improving public service delivery.



Sustaining the momentum



Strengthen County Partnerships and advocacy

Deepen collaboration with county governments and stakeholders to advance accountable governance and citizen-centred budgeting.



Deepen inclusive citizen participation

Ensure women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities have meaningful opportunities to shape public decisions.



Promote evidence based budgeting and research

Promote research and data-driven approaches to strengthen policy dialogue and budget decision-making.



Strengthen media engagement & public awareness

Leverage strategic communication and media partnerships to increase public awareness and civic participation.



Expand the Champion network to enhance accountability and budget transparency

Equip and mentor more citizens with the knowledge and skills to influence public finance and governance

As NEC Hub looks to the future, we remain committed to strengthening citizen-led budget advocacy by expanding the network of Budget Champions, deepening partnerships with county governments, and advancing evidence-based public participation. Building on the momentum of 2025, the Hub will continue to empower citizens with the knowledge and skills needed to meaningfully influence planning, budgeting, and public finance processes.

In the coming year, NEC Hub will focus on strengthening county advocacy initiatives, supporting collaborative research, promoting inclusive participation for women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities, and enhancing strategic engagement with the media and other accountability actors.

Our Partners:



Our Team



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NEC Hub Coordinator



Regina Wambui
JAEC Executive Director

NEC Regional Budget Hub Budget Faciliators Team



Faith Kiema
Kitui County



ANita Nkirote
Tharaka Nithi County



Violet Mbiti
Machakos County



DanPaul Andengah
Nairobi County



Sospeter Gitonga
Embu County



Juliet Nthenya
Nairobi County



Rahab Wambui
Kiambu County



Isaiah Onyango
Kiambu County



Mary Mureithi
Laikipia County



Christopher Kuria
Nyandarua County



Kendi Muthomi
Meru County



Sosthen Eugene Simiyu
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