

PROJECT SUMMARY: Promoting Good Governance in Bungoma and Kisumu Counties

The WHY:

Kenya has recently witnessed a surge in youth-led political activism driven by frustrations over corruption, unemployment, exclusion from decision-making, and poor governance. Social media has become a powerful tool for mobilization, enabling young people to demand accountability and achieve major milestones, such as the withdrawal of the Finance Bill 2024 and the restructuring of state offices. Yet, these efforts were sometimes undermined by violence and fragmentation among youth groups, underscoring the need for more organized and peaceful approaches to advocacy.

In response, Pamoja designed the project to pioneer non-violent, community-owned advocacy strategies that not only amplify youth voices but also embed accountability and peacebuilding within the broader community. By anchoring these approaches in Bungoma and Kisumu, the project sought to transform activism into a coordinated, inclusive, and sustainable movement that advances good governance through peaceful engagement with both formal and informal structures.

The OBJECTIVES:

1. To enhance youth engagement in governance processes in order to promote accountable and responsive service delivery.
2. To strengthen peace and governance structures to effectively advocate for and address community peace needs.
3. To build Pamoja's institutional capacity to deliver conflict transformation

interventions more effectively and sustainably.

Key ACTIVITIES:

1. Capacity Building

- 40 youth were trained on governance and non-violent advocacy, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and Psychosocial First Aid (PFA).
- Sensitization forums for providing continuous support to the Peace and Governance Advocates.

2. Non-violent Advocacy

- Peace and Governance Advocates produced and submitted 11 formal written non-violent advocacy strategies, including letters of inquiry, memorandums and petitions.
- Issues addressed included insecurity, access to healthcare, road infrastructure, waste management, and youth access to vocational education, among others

3. Service Delivery Dialogues

- Service delivery dialogues that enabled follow up on earlier advocacy actions and presentation of new service delivery concerns to duty bearers.
- Social media dialogues between the citizens and duty bearers enabled further conversations to address service delivery, peace and security concerns.

4. Peace Dialogues and Policy Engagement

- The project supported dialogues between adversarial groups to enhance peace within communities, and between the citizens and duty bearers.

- Multi-stakeholder forums on Peace Policy processes were also held.
- Sponsorship and participation in International Youth Day celebrations in Kibra, Bungoma and Kisumu, where Peace and Governance Advocates participated as facilitators and speakers.

5. Media and Public Outreach

- Radio talk shows focusing on youth policy implementation, youth participation in leadership and service delivery.
- Distribution of IEC materials with peace and civic messages during International Youth Day.

Key RESULTS:

1. Improved Service Delivery

Through the advocacy actions (dialogues, letters, memorandums, petitions and regular follow ups) taken by the Peace and Governance Advocates, the following was achieved:

- Maintenance of streetlights and floodlights in Kisumu, thus improving the security.
- Improved medicine supply at Nyalenda Health Center (Kisumu).
- Expansion of garbage collection services in Kisumu estates.
- Reduction of killings related to cattle theft in Sondu through enhanced security measures.
- Gravelling of Bumula–Myanga road in Bumula Sub-County.
- Construction of a public toilet at Kapsokwony market in Mt. Elgon Sub-County.
- Budgeting for an ambulance for Siboti Health Center, Siboti Ward.

- Timely capitation disbursement to Vocational Training Centres in Bungoma.

2. Improved Relationship and Receptiveness of Youths

Adoption of non-violent advocacy enhanced trust and collaboration between the youth and duty bearers. Youth were viewed as constructive partners rather than confrontational actors, resulting in more openness and receptiveness from authorities.

3. Improved Capacity and Networks for Advocacy

Trainings on governance, non-violent advocacy, MHPSS, and peacebuilding strengthened youth advocates' skills. The youth built collaborative networks that created stronger collective voices for accountability and peace.

4. Improved Reach and Awareness on Peace and Non-Violent Advocacy

Awareness on non-violent advocacy was expanded through social media dialogues, IEC materials, radio talks shows and participation in International Youth Day.

5. Contributions to Policies

The multi-stakeholder forums contributed to the review of county peace policies, while the advocates' participation in International Youth Day created momentum for strengthening Youth Policy implementation.