



KENYAN NETWORK OF CANCER ORGANIZATIONS (KENCO)

BI- ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

JAN-JUNE 2025

*HIGHLIGHT OF PROGRESS IN PROGRAMS &
PROJECTS*

Advocacy in Action: Championing the Rights of Cancer Patients



Empowering Media to Drive Cancer Policy and Prevention

Highlighting Gaps in Care and HPV Vaccine Awareness on World Cancer Day 2025.

On February 4, 2025, in commemoration of World Cancer Day, KENCO, together with various Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), hosted a high-impact media breakfast event at All Saints Cathedral, Nairobi.

The event brought together over 65 mainstream media representatives, bloggers, influencers, content creators, and cancer survivors, creating a dynamic platform to amplify critical issues in cancer care in Kenya.

Key Concerns Raised included:

- Limited access to essential cancer medications, including Herceptin.
- Uncertainty surrounding the transition to the new Social Health Insurance Fund (SHIF) under SHA.
- Delays in cancer diagnosis and treatment remain a critical challenge.
- Patient outcomes are significantly affected by systemic inefficiencies.

At the same event, a specialized sensitization session on HPV and cervical cancer was also held for journalists and media professionals to emphasize the importance of HPV vaccine uptake in the fight against cervical cancer. The training aimed to equip journalists and content creators with accurate information to enhance public awareness and drive behavioral change. 65 Journalists were reached

This event successfully:

1. Raised national awareness on the urgent need for cancer care reforms.
2. Built media capacity to report accurately on cervical cancer prevention through HPV Vaccination.
3. Mobilized media and public engagement, sparking critical conversations.
4. Laid the foundation for continued advocacy and multi-sectoral collaboration in addressing systemic gaps in cancer care.

1. <https://media.cdn.pagesuite.com/clipping/html5/ae61c885-17df-4492-979f-b36a2c48650c/6/20250205043430076/clipping.jpg>

2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gihcGHuAJ8>

The Cancer Education Materials for Patients and Caregivers (CEMPC) Program:

Dissemination of 3rd Edition of CEMPC: Building Capacity in Cancer Care Across 31 Counties Through Health Worker Training.

The Cancer Education Material for Patients and Caregivers (CEMPC) 3rd Edition material, a collaborative effort by KENCO and its key partners with support from the American Cancer Society, is revolutionizing cancer care throughout Kenya.

This vital initiative has had a significant impact, training 104 healthcare workers across 41 healthcare facilities in 31 counties.

By equipping healthcare professionals with enhanced skills in cancer detection, management, and patient support, CEMPC is actively strengthening healthcare systems.

This ensures the delivery of inclusive, life-saving care to communities nationwide, bringing us closer to a future where every Kenyan has access to the comprehensive cancer care they deserve.



Key highlights of CEMPC 3rd Edition materials

1. Culturally relevant, dual-language materials in English and Swahili.
- 2..Topics covered: Cancer prevention, early detection, treatment options, coping strategies, and caregiver support.
3. Standardized cancer education training for healthcare workers to promote early detection and improve patient communication.

Distribution of 3rd Edition materials

Following the training:

1. 11550 Booklets were distributed to trained facilities for onward distribution to newly diagnosed patients
2. 174 flipcharts for use by trained health workers distributed.



<https://kenconetwork.org/cempc/>

Building Hope, Breaking Barriers: KENCO Fundraising Dinner 2025



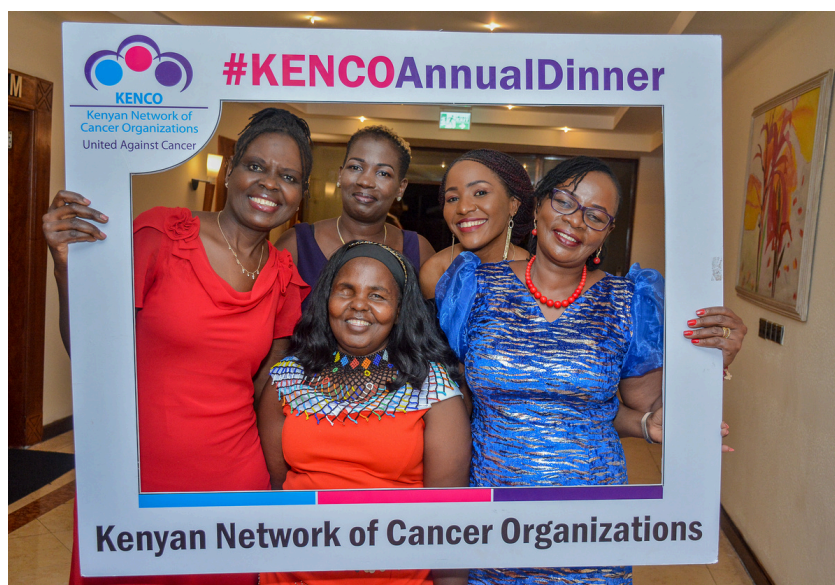
On March 7, 2025, KENCO held its Annual Fundraising Dinner at the Sarova Panafric Hotel, Nairobi, under the theme “***Building Hope, Breaking Access Barriers.***”

The event brought together healthcare professionals, policymakers, corporate representatives, and cancer survivors to discuss practical ways to improve access to cancer care in Kenya.

The evening provided a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and fundraising to support KENCO’s ongoing initiatives.

Objectives of the dinner included:

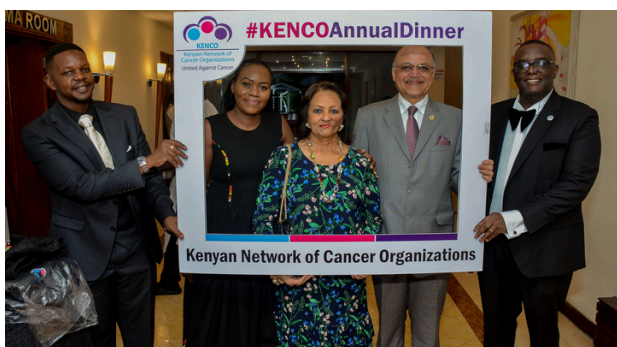
- Raising funds to support vulnerable cancer patients.
- Promoting financial access to care, facilitating hospital visits, and funding psychosocial support.
- Strengthening advocacy for policy reforms in cancer care financing.



Planned Impact Highlights:

- Health insurance coverage for 50 vulnerable patients for one year to ease the financial burden of treatment.
- Facilitation of 300 hospital visits to help patients from remote areas access care facilities.
- Support for 5 cancer support groups to conduct 4 psychosocial support sessions annually, providing structured support for patients and caregivers.
- Advocacy support aimed at integrating cancer care financing into Kenya’s national health policy to ensure long-term access and sustainability.

<https://youtu.be/w6R5-T9yq54?si=8QdGt-a7zBH1EEd0>



The UICC HPV Awareness Project

Driving Community Action for Cervical Cancer Prevention

A community-centered initiative to increase HPV vaccine uptake and cervical cancer screening in Nairobi's informal settlements



About the project:

This project is funded by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) to support community-led efforts aimed at increasing HPV vaccine uptake and cervical cancer screening in Nairobi's informal settlements.

Training has been conducted for 49 representatives from KENCO member organizations, 10 Community Health Assistants (CHAs), and 40 Community Health Promoters (CHPs) from informal settlements in Embakasi South and Embakasi North subcounties in Nairobi.

Project Goal:

Reduce the incidence of cervical cancer in Nairobi by enhancing awareness and increasing the uptake of the HPV vaccine from November 2024 to November 2025.



What the project is expected to achieve:

- Train 100 CHPs and KENCO representatives to promote cervical cancer awareness and the HPV vaccine.
- Reach over 100,000 parents and caregivers with accurate, evidence-based messages about HPV vaccination.
- Increase HPV vaccination and improve cervical cancer screening rates in targeted informal settlements.



The Kenya Tobacco and Nicotine Tax Consortium (KTNTC)

TAXING FOR HEALTH: STRENGTHENING TOBACCO CONTROL IN KENYA.

KENCO, alongside civil society partners, helps shape Kenya's tobacco control momentum through advocacy and stakeholder engagement



About the Project

With support from the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) and Cancer Research UK, the Kenya Tobacco and Nicotine Tax Coalition (KTNTC), a coalition of eight organizations, was established to build a strategic movement for stronger tobacco control through policy reform, civil society engagement, and digital advocacy. The coalition members are: the *Kenya Tobacco and Health Promotion Alliance (KETCA - Lead partner)*, *NCD Alliance of Kenya*, *Students Campaign Against Drugs (SCAD)*, *Den of Hope*, *National Taxpayers Association (NTA)*, *International Institute for Legislative Affairs (IILA)*, *Consumer Information Network (CIN)* and *KENCO*.

As an active coalition member, KENCO has played a key role in leading capacity-building training, stakeholder mapping, online campaigns, and equipping advocates to counter tobacco industry interference, with a strong focus on taxation policy.



KENCO's Activities under KTNTC –Status Report

1. Digital Advocacy

Between November 2024 and March 2025, KENCO led the coalition in developing and implementing a social media campaigns aimed at exposing the tobacco industry's influence on public health policy in Kenya. Central to the initiative was a digital advocacy toolkit designed to equip civil society, youth advocates, media, and health stakeholders with evidence-based messaging on issues such as tobacco taxation, youth marketing, and policy interference. The campaign sought to spark public dialogue and support stronger tobacco control measures nationwide.





World No Tobacco Day 2025

On May 31, 2025, the Kenyan Network of Cancer Organizations (KENCO) joined like-minded civil society partners, within and beyond the Kenya Tobacco and Nicotine Tax Coalition (KTNTC), to mark World No Tobacco Day, themed

“Unmasking the Appeal: Exposing Industry Tactics on Tobacco and Nicotine Products.”

The CSO-led event, held at Kaloleni Social Hall in Nairobi, featured a public procession and interfaith prayer aimed at raising awareness of how the tobacco and nicotine industry targets youth.

Joint call made for enforcement, tax reforms, and plain packaging to combat rising youth nicotine use.

The coalition spotlighted the aggressive marketing of flavoured products, digital advertising, and packaging strategies that appeal to young people, often in violation of existing health regulations. KENCO emphasized the long-term cancer risks of early tobacco use and its contribution to Kenya’s rising burden of non-communicable diseases.

Recent data shows over 650,000 adolescents (ages 10–17) have tried tobacco or nicotine products, with nearly 40% exposed to tobacco promotions through digital and broadcast media. Among university students, 8.6% have used e-cigarettes and 4.6% have tried nicotine pouches—yet only 1.2% of youth aged 15–24 attempted to quit in the past year.



In response, the coalition called on the government to:

- Ban nicotine pouches outright.
- Regulate e-cigarettes to prevent unregulated access and marketing.
- Restrict flavoured tobacco and nicotine products that appeal to youth.
- Mandate plain packaging with graphic health warnings on all tobacco and nicotine products.
- Enforce a comprehensive ban on digital advertising of tobacco and nicotine products.
- Increase tobacco excise taxes annually to reduce affordability.
- Fully implement the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).

1. <https://healthbusiness.co.ke/9099/kenya-csos-condemn-ministry-of-healths-alleged-partnership-with-british-american-tobacco-demand-immediate-action/>

2. <https://www.talkafrica.co.ke/kenyas-hidden-battle-against-big-tobacco/>

CAMPAIGN ANALYTICS REPORT: WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY 2025 (#WNTD2025KE)

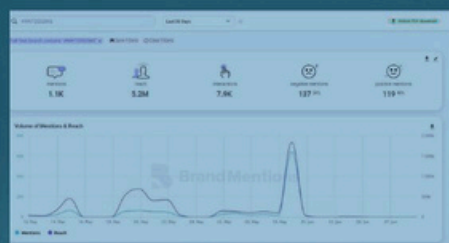
Prepared by International Institute for Legislative Affairs (IILA)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. REACH AND ENGAGEMENT

- Mentions: 1.1K
- Reach: 5.3 million
- Engagements/Interactions: 7.9K
- Top Performing Post: "@Tobacco Control and Health Promotion Alliance" achieved 3,000 reach with a 7/10 performance score
- Follower Growth: Notable growth observed with partners (+1,000 to +2,000 followers)

Overall, the #WNTD2025KE campaign performed strongly, generating over 5.2 million impressions and enabling high visibility for tobacco control messaging in Kenya



Full report available here
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eSTJywPXWH9IdQ7h1580R2UCN5fo1QJ7/view?usp=sharing>

The “MWANGA” Project – Supported by AFRON

"Strengthening Breast and Childhood Cancer Control in Kenya: A Collaborative Approach to Awareness, Early Detection, and Access to Care



About the project:

The Mwanga Project, a partnership between KENCO and AFRON Oncologia per l'Africa ETS, addresses breast and childhood cancer gaps in Kenya through a community-driven initiative.

Project Goal:

The project aims to make early detection and care a right for all, aligning national goals with grassroots efforts.



What the project is expected to achieve:

- Training 800 frontline health workers in early detection
- Reaching 200,000 community members with awareness
- Activating 50 grassroots advocates for local change
- Providing direct patient support, including SHA insurance and rehabilitative commodities
- Advocating for policy changes to enhance public funding and integrate cancer care into national insurance

Project Progress: Training of Cancer Advocates

The training of cancer advocates under the MWANGA Project was successfully conducted. 52 cancer advocates from KENCO membership were trained for 3 days at the RFH Cancer Centre. The members trained were equipped with knowledge and skills to help them in their community awareness and advocacy work. RFH Cancer Centre contributed to the training costs, which enabled the extension of the training by an extra day to 3 days, ensuring topics were covered comprehensively and additional topics included.

The Scars to Stars Breast Cancer Awareness Month commemoration event

This year, once again, KENCO is partnering with esteemed stakeholders to commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness Month 2025 with a high-impact event themed *“Bridging the Gap: Access to Breast Cancer Services and Support.”*

The program for the day will feature the second edition of the *Scars to Stars Beauty Pageant*, the Breast Cancer Care Awards, expert panel discussions, survivor performances, and keynote speeches. This inclusive event will raise awareness, celebrate survivors, and advocate for better access to care for all individuals affected by breast cancer, regardless of gender.

Partnering with KENCO offers sponsors a unique opportunity to support equitable, life-saving advocacy while gaining strong public visibility and aligning with a cause that drives real impact.

Join us for Season 2 of the Scars to Stars Breast Cancer Awareness Month commemoration event and make a difference!



SAVE THE DATE

17TH OCTOBER 2025



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“No one should face breast cancer alone”.

ABOUT KENYAN NETWORK OF CANCER ORGANIZATIONS

Kenyan Network of Cancer Organizations (KENCO) is the national umbrella body of cancer civil society organizations working in various aspects of cancer control such as prevention, screening, early diagnosis, treatment, palliative care and patient support.

How You Can Help:

To support our work

Donate through M-Pesa

Paybill Number: 779907

Your support will go a long way in raising awareness on cancer and advocating for better cancer diagnostic and treatment services in the country.



TO OUR ESTEEMED MEMBERS AND PARTNERS...



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