



Working Paper

# Navigating the politics of backlash: LGBTQ+ rights and the Family Protection Bill in Kenya



ODI Global



Evie Browne<sup>ID</sup>

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**Abstract** .....

In April 2023, Kenya made international headlines with a proposed Family Protection Bill, seeking to increase penalties against homosexuality, drafted by MP George Peter Kaluma. The bill was written in identical terms to Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Act 2023, which at the time had been passed by Parliament but not signed into law by President Yoweri Museveni. Kenya’s anti-LGBTQ+ bill was never formally tabled in Parliament as it was prevented from progressing by civil society action and behind-the-scenes opposition from political influencers.

This working paper analyses the events and stakeholder motivations and influences that led to the presentation of the bill. It is written with a view to analysing early warning signs and contributing to timely recognition of future similar occurrences – in Kenya and elsewhere – and to identify opportunities for progressive actors to influence. ODI Global has conducted this analysis to support international development actors in developing a politically informed analysis of sexual and reproductive health and rights policy initiatives that may enhance the effectiveness of their assistance.

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ODI Global, 4 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA, United Kingdom

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## **About the author**

**Evie Browne** is a Research Fellow in the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion programme at ODI Global.

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# Abbreviations and acronyms

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<b>AHA</b>	Anti-Homosexuality Act (Uganda)
<b>FPB</b>	Family Protection Bill (Kenya)
<b>FWI</b>	Family Watch International
<b>GALCK+</b>	Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya
<b>KCPF</b>	Kenya Christian Professionals Forum
<b>KSh</b>	Kenyan shilling
<b>LGBTQ+</b>	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer. The plus sign represents people who identify using other terms.
<b>MP</b>	Member of Parliament
<b>NGLHRC</b>	National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (Kenya)
<b>NGO</b>	non-governmental organisation
<b>ODM</b>	Orange Democratic Movement (Kenya)
<b>SOGI</b>	sexual orientation and gender identity
<b>SRHR</b>	sexual and reproductive health and rights
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>US</b>	United States

**Note on terminology:** This working paper usually uses ‘LGBTQ+’ to describe the social movement and rights for sexual and gender minorities. It excludes intersex (denoted by ‘I’ in LGBTQI+) as Kenya has treated intersex rights as a separate issue, providing protections for intersex children in The Children Act 2022; there is also an upcoming Intersex Persons Bill. Where intersex issues are included, the working paper uses ‘LGBTQI+’. The Q stands for ‘queer’, an umbrella term for gender and sexual identities that are not cisgender and/or heterosexual.

**Content warning:** There are some quotations of hate speech against LGBTQ+ people and descriptions of violence in the first half of the working paper.

# Executive summary

## Overview

In April 2023, Kenya made international headlines with its proposed Family Protection Bill (FPB), drafted by MP George Peter Kaluma. The bill sought to increase Kenya's already harsh punishments for same-sex sexual acts, impose new restrictions on teaching sexuality education, and limit freedom of expression. It was triggered by the February 2023 decision in the Supreme Court case that allowed the National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission to legally register as a non-governmental organisation with 'gay' and 'lesbian' in its title.

Widely viewed as a backlash against this ruling (Amnesty International, 2024), the FPB mirrored Uganda's 2023 Anti-Homosexuality Act (AHA), which at that time had been passed by Parliament but not yet signed into law. The FPB signalled Kenya's alignment with regional anti-LGBTQ+ narratives of 'defending African values', and the global trend of anti-rights politics (ibid.). However, the bill was ultimately blocked by civil society resistance and quiet opposition from political insiders, and it was never formally tabled in Parliament.

This working paper analyses the events and stakeholder motivations and influences that led to the presentation of the bill and subsequent events. It is written with a view to analysing early warning signs and contributing to timely recognition of future similar occurrences – in Kenya and elsewhere – and to identify opportunities for progressive actors to influence. The review employs a political economy analysis, which enables understanding of the contextual specificities of Kenya while identifying how transnational forces have shaped processes (Thoreson, 2014). The following analysis is based on a review of secondary scholarly and grey literature and draws on some media sources when referring to recent events. The research benefited from seven key informant interviews with civil society and academic stakeholders in Kenya.

## Background

Kenya is a hostile environment for queer people, with opinion surveys consistently showing strong dislike for sexual and gender minorities over several decades. Kenyans are highly religious, and some denominations preach strongly against homosexuality. Kenya has been a hotspot for the 'African values' debate around LGBTQ+ rights for at least two decades (Thoreson, 2014). Political and religious leaders in Kenya and across the continent have successfully framed homosexuality as 'un-African' and LGBTQ+ rights as western neocolonialism that aims to destroy African nations, families and individuals (Otieno and Makabira, 2024). Regionally, Kenya is allied with its neighbour Uganda, a similar hotspot for debates on 'African family values'. Uganda has led the way for Kenya, Ghana and other countries to consider legislating harsher punishments for queer people.

Recently, scholarship and media coverage have highlighted the influence of international actors with restrictive views on SRHR engaging in these debates in Africa (Global Philanthropy Project, 2020; Denkovski et al., 2021; Kojoué, 2022; McEwen, 2023). While scholarship is fairly recent, these actors, especially US Christian evangelicals, have promoted an anti-homosexuality agenda in East Africa for decades (Thoreson, 2014; Osogo Ambani, 2020). Some influence appears to come from Russia as well as the US (Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024).

In support of LGBTQ+ rights, the Kenyan courts have often (but not always) ruled in favour of rights, where they are judged in line with the 2010 Constitution. The independence of the judiciary from political interference is important for human rights issues, as courts can then take risks where needed to uphold the rule of law without fear of repercussions (Gerzso, 2023). Kenyan courts appear to be more supportive of LGBTQ+ rights than public opinion, and willing to consider pro-rights challenges on both procedural and substantive grounds. LGBTQ+ Kenyans are therefore sandwiched between a Constitution and legal system that sometimes supports LGBTQ+ rights, and social norms and institutions that do not (Mutua-Mambo, 2020).

## Stakeholders and motivations

The primary stakeholders in the FPB are politicians, followed by religious leaders, civil society that supports LGBTQ+ rights, civil society that opposes LGBTQ+ rights, bilateral and multilateral donors, and the legal system.

Against LGBTQ+ rights, the two most prominent MPs, Peter Kaluma and Mohamed Ali, appear to be in competition with each other to be recognised internationally as the defender of family values in Kenya, for their own gain rather than ideological conviction. Interviewees felt that LGBTQ+ rights were a political football that figures used to gain power, a strategy also commonly observed in other contexts. Kenyans perceive politicians as corrupt, abusing office for personal gain and accepting money (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024). Interviewees reflected that politicians can be swayed to an agenda by receiving funding, especially from foreign donors.

International anti-rights movements have exerted a strong influence in Kenya (Amnesty International, 2024). United States based organisations Family Watch International and the Political Network for Values are known to have funded Kenyan politicians directly by supporting their travel to international conferences and meetings (Judge, 2024). The 2023 'African Inter-Parliamentary Forum on Family Values and Sovereignty' conference in Entebbe, Uganda, revealed the transnational support for anti-homosexuality legislation. Interviewees and researchers maintain that Family Watch International and other organisations like it have had some influence on anti-homosexuality legislation in African countries, although they operate under a principle of plausible deniability (Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024; Titeca, 2024).

In support of LGBTQ+ rights, Kenya has a mature civil society rights movement, with well-networked community organisations lobbying, raising awareness and bringing strategic litigation cases. Local

civil society was very active in preventing the FPB from moving forward. Kenya's political system is marked by clientelism, nepotism and self-serving corruption (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024). Because of this, behind-the-scenes engagement with government officials is a mainstay of diplomatic and civil society activity, across all sectors. For LGBTQ+ rights, as with other issues, advocates leverage personal networks and informal channels to raise their concerns. Interviews revealed that there is discreet political activity by influential supporters, working hard with different methods to prevent regression on LGBTQ+ rights.

Loss of bilateral and multilateral grants, loans, and investments are important deterrents to passing anti-homosexuality legislation. After Uganda passed its Anti-Homosexuality Acts, the World Bank froze new loans in both 2014 and 2023 (World Bank, 2023). The cost of such donor sanctions is high, especially for Kenya, which is highly indebted, mainly to China (Kell, 2023). A report on the potential costs for Kenya of passing the FPB received quite wide news coverage in 2023, highlighting the costs of international sanctions, loss of worker productivity and brain drain from people leaving the country (Joseph, 2023; Ogola, 2023).

Beyond considering or threatening financial sanctions, bilateral and multilateral donors are not currently taking a publicly supportive stance on LGBTQ+ rights in Kenya, partly because rights are seen as political dynamite and partly because they are afraid of pushing an agenda that feeds into anti-rights narratives around neocolonialism, and which might create even worse conditions for local queer people and organisations.

## **Current political considerations**

While the FPB 2023 was unsuccessful, it is by no means gone. The FPB was part of a wider global backlash against LGBTQI+ rights and gender equality, funded by well-organised and coordinated transnational groups with a restrictive view on SRHR. In early 2025, US President Donald Trump's first few weeks in power signalled a complete shakeup in the international development sector, with gender and sexuality positioned prominently as key battlegrounds. The global anti-rights politics of 2025 have prompted Kaluma to revise the bill and re-circulate it, while Ali sponsored a petition to Parliament in February 2024, pressing to fast-track the FPB and to investigate claims of LGBTQ+ content in school curricula. President William Ruto is seeking re-election in 2027 and may use political homophobia and an alliance with the US to increase his popularity. Regionally, anti-homosexuality bills are being discussed in Kenya, Ghana, Tanzania and other countries. If one country signs, others are likely to follow suit.

In May 2025, the third iteration of the Entebbe conference was held: the 'Third African Regional Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Family Values and Sovereignty', co-sponsored by Family Watch Africa and featuring Sharon Slater, the President of Family Watch International (Cullinan, 2025). It was followed immediately by the 'Second Pan-African Conference on Family Values' in Nairobi, hosted by Charles Kanjama and the Kenya Christian Professionals Forum, and co-sponsored by CitizenGo. The conferences pushed a strongly anti-LGBTQ+ agenda and promoted a draft

document called the 'African Charter on Family, Sovereignty and Values'. It defends national sovereignty, objects to international human rights agreements on women's rights and sexual and reproductive health and rights, objects to comprehensive sexuality education, and recommends legal protections for nuclear family structures. The charter is intended to be introduced to the African Union.

## Conclusion

The review of events leading up to the FPB 2023, the people involved, their motivations and influences, and the wider discourses surrounding anti-homosexuality legislation in Africa shows that Kenya's FPB was just one of many moves in a wider effort to reject LGBTQ+ rights. The bill was reactionary, capitalising on Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Act and the Kenyan legal decision allowing LGBTQ+ rights organisations to formally register. The bill also leverages long histories of homophobic social norms and the specific political moment that framed homosexuality as 'un-African'. Peter Kaluma emerges as a figurehead for anti-homosexuality legislation in Kenya, but one lacking substance or ideological commitment and instead motivated by personal political gain and direct sponsorship from powerful organisations.

The working paper identifies that protecting LGBTQI+ rights in Kenya relies on the strong rights-based Constitution and the ability of courts to rule in favour of rights. As such, upholding the rule of law and supporting an independent judiciary are vital strategies over the next few years. It also identifies the central role played by foreign and local allies in behind-the-scenes diplomacy, where public support for rights is politically risky. Known allies need to be connected to each other and able to exert diplomatic pressure in personal relationships. Finally, Kenyan civil society is highly active in these areas and able to work directly with powerholders and allies, as well as conduct effective media campaigns. Civil society must be financially supported to continue this work.

# 1 Introduction

In April 2023, Kenya made international headlines with its proposed Family Protection Bill (FPB), drafted by Member of Parliament (MP) George Peter Kaluma. The bill sought to increase Kenya's already harsh punishments for same-sex sexual acts, impose new restrictions on teaching sexuality education, and limit freedom of expression. It was triggered by the February 2023 decision in the high-profile Supreme Court case that allowed the National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (NGLHRC) to legally register as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) with 'gay' and 'lesbian' in its title. This decision was the culmination of a 10-year legal battle by the organisation for recognition of all citizens' rights to freedom of association and democratic participation.

Widely viewed as a backlash against this ruling (Amnesty International, 2024), the FPB mirrored Uganda's 2023 Anti-Homosexuality Act (AHA), which at that time had been passed by Parliament but not yet signed into law. It signalled Kenya's alignment with regional anti-LGBTQ+ narratives of 'defending African values' (ibid.). However, the bill was ultimately blocked by civil society resistance and quiet opposition from political insiders, and it was never formally tabled in Parliament.

Despite its political failure, the bill prompted a large amount of local debate, international attention and media coverage, and catapulted Kaluma into the spotlight as the face of anti-homosexuality in Kenya. But this is not just the story of one man's power grab; Kenya's moves to further criminalise queer lives are part of a wave of regressive legislation and public disavowal of LGBTQ+ rights in East Africa and more widely, fuelled by foreign ideological movements.

This working paper analyses the events and stakeholder motivations and influences that led to the presentation of the bill and subsequent events. It is written with a view to analysing early warning signs and contributing to timely recognition of future similar occurrences – in Kenya and elsewhere – and to identify opportunities for progressive influence. Where are the fissures that might present an opening to protect marginalised communities? What are the motivations of stakeholders in these high-profile political debates? Who are the allies? The review employs a political economy analysis to answer these questions, which enables an understanding of the contextual specificities of Kenya while identifying how transnational forces have shaped processes (Thoreson, 2014).

This analysis is motivated by the growing global backlash against gender equality, now reinforced by the new United States (US) Government led by President Donald Trump (The White House, 2025a; UNFPA, 2025). This backlash is fuelled by actors, working inside and outside their governments, who fund initiatives to roll back gender equality policies and programmes around the world, often using religion to justify their approach (Flood et al., 2018; Corredor, 2019; Shameem, 2021). Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are a common target for

these actors, both in western contexts (Datta, 2021) and across the African continent (Okech, 2023; Judge, 2024; Otieno and Makabira, 2024). These global developments considerably enhance the political risks for governments who wish to advance progressive policy initiatives domestically.

Related to these developments, the rollback of multilateral and bilateral international funds for SRHR deepens the vulnerability of communities in need of services reliant on outside funds (NL Times, 2025; The White House, 2025b; UNFPA, 2025). The shrinking pool of overseas development aid (ODA) from bilateral and multilateral donors places further strain on actors committed to supporting SRHR and gender equality, pushing them to consider how to enhance the effectiveness of their support and the level of commitment to shared goals among recipient governments and civil society organisations.

ODI Global has conducted the following research to support international development actors in developing a politically informed analysis of three SRHR policy initiatives that will have critical consequences for gender equality across the African continent: abortion rights in Sierra Leone; female genital mutilation/cutting in The Gambia; and LGBTQ+ rights in Kenya.

The following analysis is based on a review of secondary scholarly and grey literature, and draws on some media sources when referring to recent events. The research benefited from seven key informant interviews with civil society and academic stakeholders in Kenya. They were selected because they have a broad overview of the Kenyan context, as recommended for the methodology of a light-touch political economy analysis (DFID, 2009; Menochal et al., 2018). The interviewees were asked about the incentives and motivations of stakeholders related to the FPB and current contestations related to the policy process. Their insights were used to triangulate the findings from the literature and media sources, and the interviews were not intended to represent all stakeholder categories. Due to the sensitive topic, interviewees have been fully anonymised, not even identified by organisation or social position.

The working paper proceeds with an overview of events in Chapter 2 and a timeline in Chapter 3. This is followed by a discussion of the context in Kenya, including on social norms, the 'African values' debate and the influence of foreign anti-rights actors in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 provides the legal and policy context. Chapter 6 analyses the key stakeholders and their motivations, divided into progressive and regressive themes. Finally, Chapter 7 discusses the situation in 2025 and identifies local, regional and global implications of the FPB debate. Annex 1 provides a full timeline of events in Kenya, with reference to important regional events as well.

## 2 Overview

### Box 1 What is in the Ugandan, Ghanaian and Kenyan bills?

In 2023, Uganda passed the Anti-Homosexuality Act, imposing life imprisonment for homosexuality and the death penalty for ‘aggravated’ cases – such as those involving minors or HIV transmission. The law also criminalises the ‘promotion of homosexuality’ with up to 20 years in prison and includes a mandatory duty to report suspected violations.

Kenya’s proposed Family Protection Bill 2023, initially closely modelled on Uganda’s law, sought to increase penalties for same-sex acts (up to 10 years in prison or death for aggravated cases), penalise property owners of premises used for such acts, and deny asylum to or expel LGBTQ+ refugees. It explicitly framed homosexuality as a threat to the family and justified limiting constitutional rights to protect ‘the individual, the family, and the nation’.

In Ghana, MPs unanimously passed amendments in 2024 under the Promotion of Proper Human Sexual Rights and Ghanaian ‘Family Values’ Bill (referred to as the Family Values Bill). It criminalises LGBTQ+ identity (three years in prison) and advocacy (five years), targeting housing, healthcare and expressions of support. The bill awaits presidential assent.

In Kenya, it is already illegal to participate in adult and consensual sexual acts between people of the same sex. The FPB 2023 proposed increased penalties, including 10 years in jail for sexual acts with a person of the same sex and the death penalty for ‘aggravated homosexuality’; a large fine or seven years in jail for property owners of premises that are used for same-sex relations; and the denial of asylum or expulsion of LGBTQ+ refugees based on their sexuality or sexual orientation, among other provisions. It largely follows the text of Uganda’s 2023 AHA (see Box 1). It conflates homosexuality with the destruction of the family and makes a strong appeal to the nuclear family unit as the basis of society.

The bill was first proposed in April 2023 by MP George Peter Kaluma, from the opposition party Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). He represents the rural constituency of Homa Bay Town on Lake Victoria, in the west of the country.

The circulation of the FPB was a reaction to political events in the country and the region, capitalising on public anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment. In February 2023, Kenya’s Supreme Court ruled that the National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (NGLHRC) could register as a formal NGO, based on freedom of association protections in the Constitution. This decision prompted an immediate backlash against LGBTQ+ rights. President William Ruto criticised the ruling and said that he did not want it to lead to same-sex marriage (Mersie and Hlatshwayo, 2023).

National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetangula also criticised the ruling (Otieno and Makabira, 2024). MP Kaluma immediately submitted an application to the court seeking a review of the decision, which the court dismissed (Amnesty International, 2024). MP Mohamed Ali submitted a successful motion in Parliament in March 2023 to enforce a ban on ‘public discussion, reporting and distribution’ of LGBTQ+ content (Kisika, 2023b). These individual responses were accompanied by incitement to violence and public protests against queer people, particularly in Mombasa and along the coast. The protests were led by Christian and Islamic religious leaders and joined by MP Mohamed Ali (Bwana, 2023; Walimbwa et al., 2023). The protests were filled with violence and hatred, so much so that NGOs have brought a hate speech case against MP Ali, the decision on which is still pending in 2025.

Anti-LGBTQI+ sentiment rose across the region in the same period. In March 2023, an influential conference was held in Entebbe, Uganda: ‘The African Inter-Parliamentary Forum on Family Values and Sovereignty’. It focused on sexuality and gender issues, framing them as a western agenda that contravenes ‘African values’, and established shared goals on regional approaches to SRHR, including outlawing homosexuality (Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024). Despite its regional approach, the conference was co-sponsored by US organisation Family Watch International (FWI), headed by Sharon Slater, and widely regarded as an example of foreign anti-rights influence (ibid.). Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and First Lady Janet Museveni hosted around 80 lawmakers from 20 countries. Attendees from Kenya included Peter Kaluma and Charles Kanjama, the head of the anti-LGBTQI+ lobbying group Kenya Christian Professional Forum (KCPF) (see Figure 1) (Ipas and Empower, 2023a).

**Figure 1** Attendees at the 2023 Entebbe conference



Attendees at the March 2023 anti-rights Entebbe conference including Kenyan MP George Peter Kaluma (front row in a dark blue suit). Source: gpdkaluma on X.com.

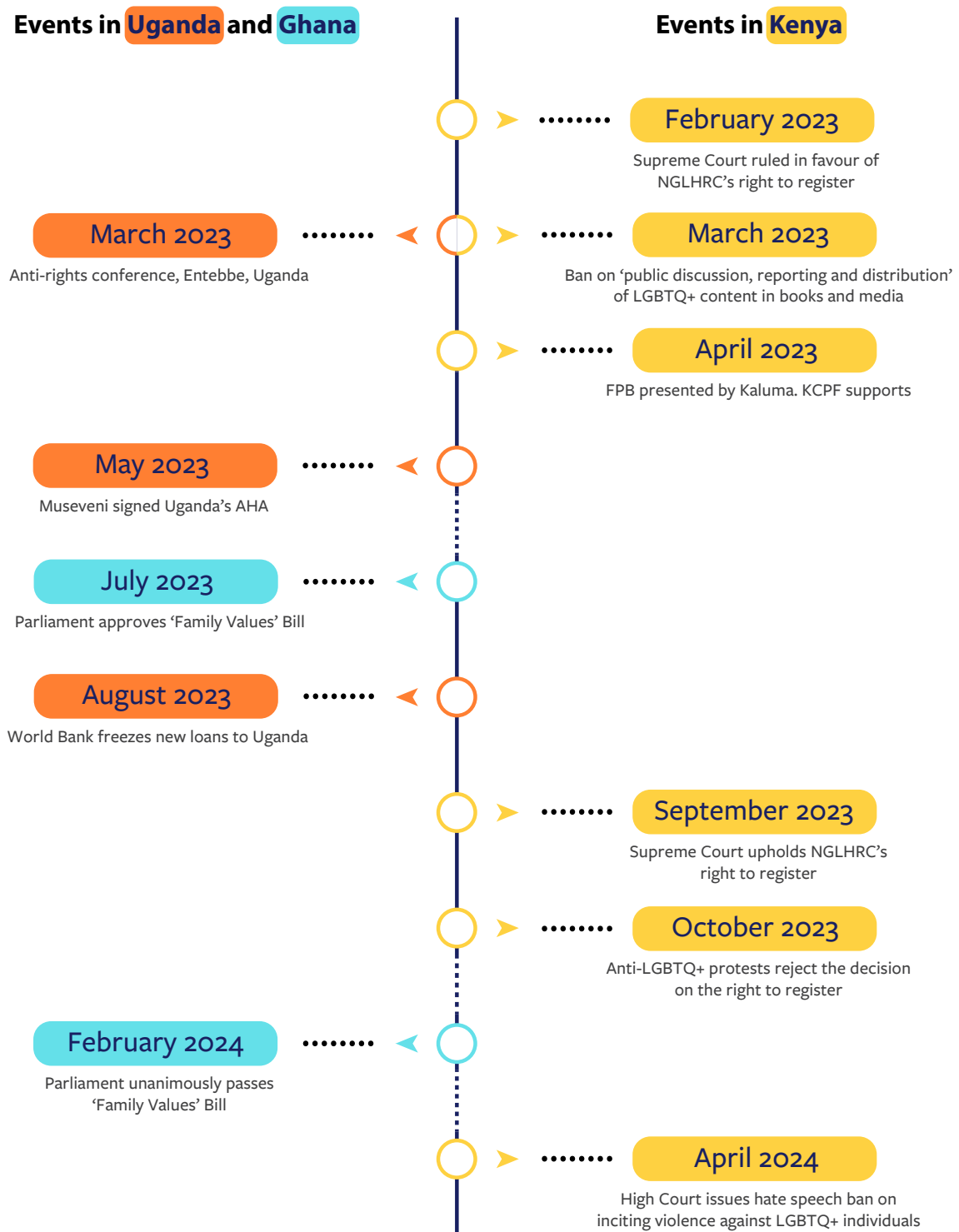
The 2023 Entebbe conference is frequently referenced in sources that monitor anti-rights movements (for example, Titeca, 2024), and is regarded as a pivotal moment when international actors networked and agreed on ways forward. Uganda's AHA had been passed 10 days earlier and during the conference, Kenyans promised that they would follow suit (ibid.). Kaluma has said that the Entebbe conference directly influenced his bill and that he proposed it in part to show solidarity with Uganda's approach (Mersie and Hlatshwayo, 2023). He drafted his bill for Kenya, a copy of Uganda's AHA, shortly after the conference. The Ghanaian Family Values Bill was also proposed by people who were at the Entebbe conference (Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024).

Kenya's FPB never made it to a formal reading in Parliament, as it was stopped by a combination of civil society action, campaigns against Kaluma himself, and behind-the-scenes political advocacy from allies.

### 3 Timeline

Figure 2 outlines some of the key events leading up to and following the FPB. It includes the similar bills passed in Uganda and Ghana, as it is important to understand the regional dynamics, to see how countries and politicians are networked and emboldened by each other.

Figure 2 Timeline of events

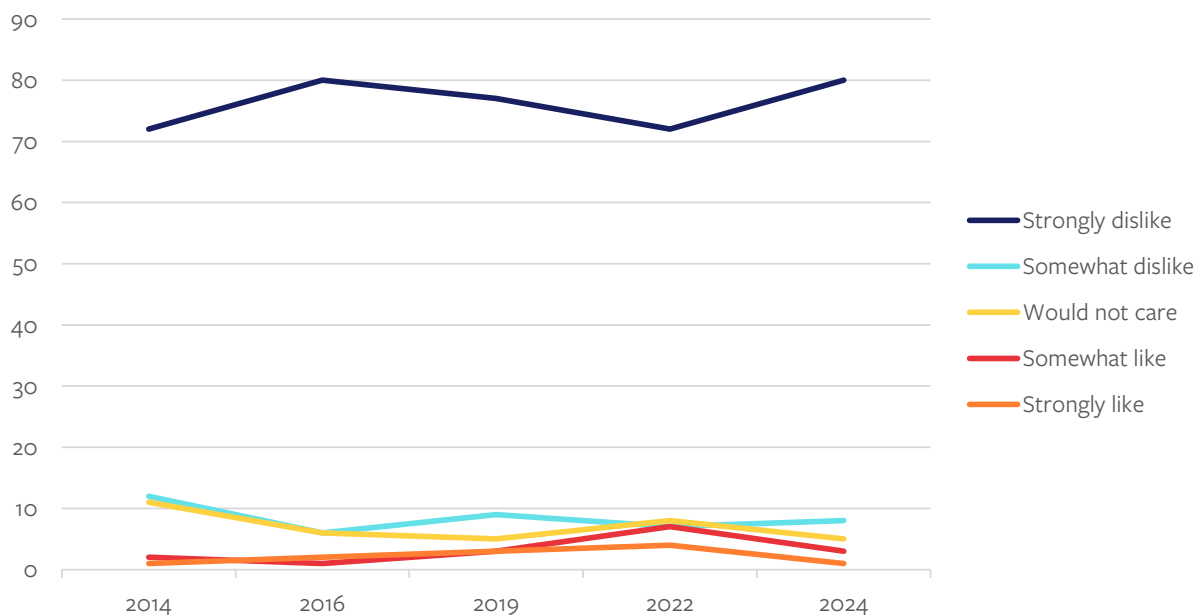


## 4 Background and context

### 4.1 Social norms and religiosity

Opinion surveys show most Kenyans ‘report a strong dislike of sexual and gender minorities’. The Afrobarometer proxy question, ‘having homosexuals as neighbours’, shows little variation over the last 10 years in the number of people who would ‘strongly dislike’ this (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3** Afrobarometer survey data: opinions on ‘having homosexuals as neighbours’, 2014–2024



Source: Afrobarometer (n.d.).

Younger people are slightly more tolerant than older people: in the 2024 Afrobarometer survey, 74% of 18–24-year-olds responded ‘strongly dislike’, as opposed to 88% of those 56 years and above.

Religiosity plays a strong role in why Kenyans dislike LGBTQ+ people. Catholic, Anglican and Pentecostal faiths dominate the country (85%), with a large minority of Islamic denominations (11%) and a smaller minority of Hindus (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024). The Bible and Qur’an are often cited by anti-homosexuality actors as the basis for criminalisation (Osogo Ambani, 2020). Authors say that some religious leaders preach vehemently against homosexuality, painting it as ‘ungodly’ and as a threat to family life, and often equating same-sex relations with sexual abuse, paedophilia and bestiality (Thirikwa, 2018). Most anti-homosexuality preaching focuses on sexual acts between men and not women.

Our interviews reflected that both Christian and Muslim religious leaders preach that homosexuality is against their faith, alongside adultery and promiscuity, though same-sex sexual acts are not always framed in heated terms. During the October 2023 Mombasa protests against the decision on the right to register, Sheikh Mohammed Khalifa of the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya said:

‘Kenya is a religious country, guided by God. The judges have gone against God’s will in their decisions by following Western beliefs and all Kenyans of good moral standing must renounce the ruling.’ (Otieno and Makabira, 2024: 122)

When the United Kingdom (UK) Anglican Church ordained a gay bishop in 2003, the Kenyan Anglican Church strongly opposed, signalling a deep commitment to an anti-homosexuality stance (BBC, 2007). This is an issue which continues to cause friction between the UK and Kenyan branches (Martin, 2023). Beyond individual faith, organised religion also plays a strong role in politics and governance. President Ruto has re-centred the Christian Church in governance, directly calling on churches to guide governmental decisions (Otieno and Makabira, 2024). Faith leaders can provide political support by mobilising voter blocs, and faith groups also act as legitimisers of the political class. Religion is so deeply embedded in the country that one interviewee said that Christian values are conflated with Kenyan values.

## 4.2 ‘African values’

Kenya has been a hotspot for the contemporary ‘African values’ debate around LGBTQ+ rights for at least two decades (Thoreson, 2014), drawing on long histories that have often framed homosexuality as a foreign import, including blaming Arab Muslims as well as westerners at times (Osogo Ambani, 2020). Political and religious leaders in Kenya and across the continent have successfully framed homosexuality as ‘un-African’ and LGBTQ+ rights as western neocolonialism that aims to destroy African nations, families and individuals (Otieno and Makabira, 2024). In a parliamentary debate on the LGBTQ+ community on 1 March 2023, an MP said ‘you cannot force down the throats of Kenyans cultures that are alien to our nationality and Africanness’ (Judge, 2024: 15). In MP Ali’s motion to ban discussion, publication and dissemination of LGBTQ+ issues, he said (Kihiu, 2023):

‘These are not human rights. Those are demonic behaviour and we cannot allow such behaviours in our country. We will not allow unions or any NGO associations for those kinds of people... The Qur’an is clear about gays and lesbians. The Bible is also clear about LGBTQ, we will therefore not try to accept anything that seeks to protect them. The Constitution is unambiguous on this matter. Let us not allow western people to compromise our African traditions, values, norms and customs.’ (MP Mohamed Ali)

Academic research has uncovered how the discourse of ‘Africanness’ is entangled with sexuality and gender, and how politicians mobilise it to whip up moral and existential panics based on fear of queer people as a threat to the nation (Martínez et al., 2021; McEwen, 2021; Nabaneh et al., 2022; Judge, 2024). In this discourse, resistance to queerness is not just fear of ‘the Other’ but fear of ‘pedophilia, recruitment, HIV/ AIDS, denigration, pollution, and the fate of the nation’ (Thoreson, 2014: 26). Panic is then used as a tool to rally support, cultivate moral leadership and make it impossible to state alternative opinions. Conflating heterosexuality with sovereignty as an anti-colonial stance has been an effective strategy for politicians to gain and hold power.

Countering the myth that ‘homosexuality is un-African’, a wealth of academic and activist literature shows that pre-colonial African societies did not prohibit same-sex sexual conduct (Thoreson, 2014; Mutua-Mambo, 2020; Osogo Ambani, 2020). Rather, societies may have maintained cultures of silence and permissiveness. Further, the discourse of ‘the natural family’ overlooks the historical diversity of African family structures, including extended, matriarchal and polygamous families (Nabaneh et al., 2022). Colonisers did not bring queerness in itself to Kenya, but rather introduced criminalisation and intolerance of homosexual identity, which are now fiercely protected as home-grown ‘African values’ (Dlamini, cited in Osogo Ambani, 2020).

### 4.3 Regional domino effect

Regionally, Kenya is allied with its neighbour Uganda, a similar hotspot for debates on ‘African family values’. Uganda has led the way for Kenya, Ghana and other countries to consider legislating harsher punishments for queer people. In 2014, during the intense debate around a previous version of Uganda’s AHA (it passed but was overturned shortly afterward by the courts), a fringe political party presented the first anti-homosexuality bill in Kenya (Thirikwa, 2018). It did not reach Parliament, but it signalled the direction of debate and showed allegiance with regressive actors in Uganda.

Uganda’s AHA, finally passed in May 2023, was greeted in Kenya by religious, cultural and political leaders as a success of preserving the ‘African family’ and ‘African moral code’ (Otieno and Makabira, 2024). There are some media reports that both Tanzania and South Sudan are moving towards similar bills (Mersie and Hlatshwayo, 2023), while Mali in 2024 and Burkina Faso in 2025 chose to criminalise homosexuality for the first time, both countries under unstable military rule (Ewokor, 2025). Tanzania’s current law carries up to 30 years in prison for sexual acts between men. Despite this being one of the harshest penalties in the world, there is a growing wave of pressure to increase punishment, including the death penalty (Amnesty International, 2024).

### 4.4 International anti-rights influence

Recently, scholarship and media coverage have highlighted the influence of international actors with a restrictive view of gender and sexuality engaging in these debates in Africa (Global Philanthropy Project, 2020; Denkovski et al., 2021; Kojoué, 2022; McEwen, 2023).

While scholarship is fairly recent, these actors, especially US Christian evangelicals, have promoted an anti-homosexuality agenda in East Africa for decades (Thoreson, 2014; Osogo Ambani, 2020).

An openDemocracy investigation found that, between 2007 and 2020, 20 US Christian groups known for fighting against LGBTQ+ rights and access to safe abortion, contraceptives and comprehensive sexuality education had spent at least \$54 million in Africa, \$20 million of which went from the Fellowship Foundation to Uganda (Namubiru and Khatondi Wepukhulu, 2020). Scott Lively, a US Christian proselytiser, is well-recognised as having a hand in Uganda's 2009 'Kill the Gays' Bill, which was the precursor to the 2023 version (Titeca, 2024). This foreign backing is not construed as neocolonialism, but as bolstering African cultural values and independence from the 'western LGBTQ+ rights agenda', in contrast with progressive foreign actors, who are perceived as interfering in African affairs.

Family Watch International (FWI), headed by Sharon Slater, is a well-known US group campaigning against homosexuality, abortion, contraception, and comprehensive sexuality education, with a longstanding influence in Kenya. FWI actively campaigns against LGBTQ+ rights and promotes conservative family values. In 2002, Slater came to speak in Kenya and helped coordinate a 'pro-family' conference in Nairobi (Thirikwa, 2018). FWI supported the Kenya Christian Professionals Forum in organising the 'National Family Conference' in May 2015, where Slater was one of the main speakers (*ibid.*). FWI hosts an annual training for African diplomats at its base in Arizona, US, the 'Global Family Policy Forum', where it coaches participants on how to negotiate at the United Nations (UN) against comprehensive sexuality education and LGBTQ+ rights (Cullinan et al., 2020). FWI is run by followers of the Latter-Day Saint movement (Mormonism) but does not take a fundamentalist religious approach. Instead, it partners with other religious and secular organisations that agree on 'family values' across denominations and cultures (Titeca, 2024).

Some influence appears to come from Russia as well as the US. FWI and the 'World Congress of Families' have close connections to Russian actors with a restrictive view of gender and sexuality, especially Konstantin Malofeev and Vladimir Yakunin (Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024). A Wall Street Journal article suggests that Russian thinking on queerness has influenced Sharon Slater and others in how they discuss the issues (*ibid.*). Russia has long framed European tolerance towards LGBTQI+ people as a collapse of civilisation and moral decay of the decadent west (Edenborg, 2023), a framework which has seemingly travelled into African anti-homosexuality discourse, directly from Russia and indirectly through US organisations. Russia has one of the most notorious 'anti-gay' laws, passed in 2013, which acts as a model for others. The Russian embassy in Kenya tweeted congratulations when Uganda's AHA 2023 was signed (Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024). After the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent sanctions against Russia, Russia scaled up its promotion of anti-LGBTQ+ activities in Africa as a means to gain allies (*ibid.*). Despite the obvious neocolonial and missionary overtones of Russians and US Christians funding 'family values' in Africa, local actors either fail to recognise or are willing to accept the colonial logics in support of their aims (Gathara, 2025).

## 5 Legal and policy framework

Same-sex sexual acts are illegal in Kenya, but LGBTQI+ identity is not illegal. The Penal Code outlaws same-sex relations with a jail term of 14 years for ‘carnal knowledge against the order of nature’ under Section 162. Section 165 prescribes a five-year prison term for ‘indecent practices between males’. These prohibitions are British colonial-era laws (Osogo Ambani, 2020). Although the law is not always enforced, in 2019, the High Court upheld these provisions in response to a court case brought by LGBTQ+ rights activists, declaring them in agreement with the 2010 Constitution (Amnesty International, 2024).

The 2010 Constitution, the first significant revision since the Independence Constitution of 1963 and its slightly revised successor in 1969, is symbolically important as a marker of Kenya’s modern democracy, and is thus fiercely protected by the courts. It is broadly rights-based, affirming:

‘The national values and principles of governance include... human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non-discrimination and protection of the marginalized.’  
(Mutua-Mambo, 2020: 127)

However, the Constitution does not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, nor does it mention sexual orientation or gender identity in the list of protected characteristics. Many of the court cases revolve around the interpretation of whether the principles of equality and non-discrimination include LGBTQ+ people. In the Universal Periodic Review process of the UN Human Rights Council, Kenya has often been asked to enact a comprehensive anti-discrimination law, which has been rejected on the grounds that the Constitution provides sufficient protections (interview).

Table 1 shows some World Bank indicators on governance. While all scores are below ideal, Kenya is assessed as relatively good on freedom of elections and freedom of expression (voice and accountability); effectiveness of the police and courts (rule of law); and civil service independence, policy formulation processes and public services (government effectiveness).

**Table 1** Worldwide governance indicators for Kenya 2023

Indicator	Score*
Voice and accountability	-0.1
Rule of law	-0.3
Regulatory quality	-0.4
Political stability and absence of violence	-0.9
Government effectiveness	-0.3
Control of corruption	-0.8

\*Distribution ranges from -2.5 to 2.5. Higher values correspond to better governance.  
Source: World Bank Group (n.d).

The courts have often (but not always) ruled in favour of LGBTQ+ rights, where they are judged in line with the Constitution. The 2010 Constitution instituted separation of powers, keeping the judiciary (courts), executive (President) and legislature (Parliament) as separate and equal branches of government (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024). The independence of the judiciary from political interference is significant and important for human rights issues, as the courts can then take risks where needed to uphold the rule of law without fear of repercussions (Gerzso, 2023). Kenyan courts now have power over the executive branch and have held Parliament to account on many issues, beyond rights (interview). Similarly, in Uganda, during the repeated efforts by Parliament to bring anti-homosexuality legislation, the courts have remained open to challenges to such legislation, including overturning the 2014 bill.

Kenya is often seen as a relatively safe haven by LGBTQI+ asylum seekers from neighbouring countries, as one of the only countries in the region that will allow them entry. However, Kenya hardly provides security: LGBTQI+ refugees and asylum seekers experience extreme discrimination and danger in the camps and wider society, with increased attacks documented recently (Samuels et al., 2021; NGLHRC and Amnesty International, 2023; Amnesty International, 2024). As yet, LGBTQI+ refugees have not been subject to a strong public debate, although there is increasing attention on their status (interview). The FPB contains provisions on refusing and removing LGBTQ+ refugees, mobilising existing provisions in the Refugees Act (19(2)) for removal on the grounds of breaching ‘public morality’. Their presence may become a flashpoint for further anti-homosexuality politics.

Although Kenya is hostile towards sexual and gender diversity, the Children Act of 2022 protects intersex children, allowing them to be documented as a third sex and preventing – in most cases – genital surgery (Baird, 2024). This is hailed as a progressive step for intersex rights, although it leaves intersex adults without protections. The success was achieved mostly by parent litigants of intersex children, and the intersex rights movement is slightly separate from the LGBTQ+ rights movement (interview). Intersex is more palatable to policy-makers, who perceive it as an issue of bodily integrity, rather than the perceived ‘choice’ of LGBTQ+ identities (interview). There is a

Taskforce on Intersex Rights working with the government to progress laws and policies<sup>1</sup> and an Intersex Persons Bill, providing legal protections for intersex children and adults, was introduced in Parliament in 2023.

Kenya is signatory to most international human rights and women's rights conventions, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024). But since there is no binding international treaty on LGBTQI+ rights, there is little recourse to regional or international bodies on such matters.

Kenya holds an important role in the region as a constructive leader on trade, peace and international negotiations, with Nairobi as a crucial hub for international organisations, including businesses and international NGOs (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024; Open for Business, 2025).

The courts appear to be more supportive of LGBTQ+ rights than public opinion, and willing to consider pro-rights challenges on both procedural and substantive grounds. LGBTQ+ Kenyans are therefore sandwiched between a Constitution and legal system that sometimes supports LGBTQ+ rights, and social norms and institutions that do not (Mutua-Mambo, 2020).

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1 Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (n.d.), 'Intersex Persons In Kenya' ([www.knchr.org/our-work/special-interest-groups/intersex-persons-in-kenya](http://www.knchr.org/our-work/special-interest-groups/intersex-persons-in-kenya)).

## 6 Key stakeholders and motivations

The primary stakeholders in the FPB are politicians, followed by religious leaders, civil society that supports LGBTQ+ rights, civil society that opposes LGBTQ+ rights, bilateral and multilateral donors, and the legal system.

### 6.1 Against LGBTQ+ rights

The primary stakeholders standing against LGBTQ+ rights in Kenya are politicians, followed by religious leaders, and local and international civil society (see Table 2).

**Table 2** Stakeholders against LGBTQ+ rights

Name	Activity
<b>Local actors</b>	
George Peter Kaluma	MP for Homa Bay Town, opposition party Orange Democratic Movement. Sponsor of the Family Protection Bill.
Mohamed Ali	MP for Nyali, United Democratic Alliance. Sponsor of the ban on LGBTQ+ content bill and 2024 petition to Parliament to fast-track the FPB.
William Ruto	President of Kenya, United Democratic Alliance. Has spoken against same-sex marriage and is perceived as anti-LGBTQ+.
Raila Odinga	Leader of the opposition, ODM. Perceived as slightly more progressive than Ruto and slightly more supportive of LGBTQ+ people.
Rachel Ruto	First Lady. She has led national prayers against homosexuality and led on family protection bills. She is perceived as a conduit between religious leaders and the President.
Charles Kanjama	Heads the Kenya Christian Professional Forum, the leading regressive group. KCPF has direct influence on government, holds conferences, lobbies for changes to laws and engages in legal cases. Hosted the 2025 Second Pan-African Conference on Family Values in Nairobi.
Religious leaders	Some Christian and Islamic leaders preach against homosexuality and have incited anti-queer riots. Faith groups are important voting blocs for politicians to win support.
<b>International actors</b>	
Family Watch International	Finances KCPF, funds and supports Kaluma, and provides training/travel opportunities for others aligned with its views. Organised Entebbe conferences.
Political Network for Values	Kaluma has attended one of its meetings, and MP Chrisantus Wamalwa (Forum for the Restoration of Democracy–Kenya party) is on the board of PNV (Ipas and Empower, 2023b).
CitizenGo	Has an office in Nairobi, supported the FPB with a petition and organised protests against the ‘right to register’ ruling. Co-sponsor of the 2025 second Pan-African Conference on Family Values in Nairobi.

## Domestic political power

The two most prominent MPs, Kaluma and Ali, appear to be in competition with each other to be recognised internationally as the defender of family values in Kenya. In the current context of anti-rights and anti-gender politics, taking an anti-LGBTQ+ stance is a populist position that wins support in Kenya. The anti-homosexuality bills in Uganda, Ghana and Kenya were introduced by opposition parties, turning them into tools for political positioning and power as much as the issues themselves. Governments are forced to either defend LGBTQ+ rights or concede to a bill that counts as a win for the opposition. Our interviews revealed a strong sense that politicians are driven by self-serving motives (focused on courting voters, seeking re-election and taking up issues that will give them political mileage), rather than by an ideological commitment against LGBTQ+ rights. Interviewees felt that LGBTQ+ rights were a ‘political football’ that figures used to gain power, a strategy also commonly observed in other contexts.

Scapegoating queer people and homosexuality as ‘western ills’ that morally corrupt African nations is a long-standing strategy used by political figures to bolster their leadership and deflect from their failings (Nabaneh et al., 2022), described as both a moral panic (Martínez et al., 2021) and an existential panic (Judge, 2024). The Ugandan AHA was in process for a long time, but gained momentum amid a media-fuelled moral panic, including allegations of abuse by gay teachers (the King’s College Budo sex abuse scandal) (Khatondi Wepukhulu, 2023). Ugandan President Museveni’s decision to sign the Act into law may have been strategic, to gain popular support and distract from other failings. At least one analyst suggests it was a calculated move to win over younger voters ahead of the 2026 election (Peel, 2023), while activists suggest he never intended to enforce the law but yielded to political pressure (interview). Kenya’s President Ruto has been under pressure for some time over his economic policies and a cost of living crisis, so his use of political homophobia is a useful distraction tactic (Walimbwa et al., 2023).

## Financial influence on policy-making

There is a widespread perception by Kenyans that their politicians are corrupt, abusing office for personal gain and/or accepting money (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024). Interviewees identified money as a motivating factor for regressive actors. They reflected that politicians can be swayed towards an agenda by funding, especially from foreign donors. FWI and the Political Network for Values have funded Kenyan politicians directly by supporting their travel to international conferences and meetings (Judge, 2024). The discussion in Section 4.4 shows their long-term investments into Kenya. Interviewees were very clear that they saw politicians, especially Peter Kaluma, as a mouthpiece for his substantial donor, FWI, without significant concern for the issues at hand, but doing as his backer requires.

## International influence

Some in Kenya believe that foreign actors have artificially ignited the anti-homosexuality debate, which is otherwise not a home-grown concern (interview). Whether or not the debate would exist without foreign influence is impossible to determine, but it is certain that international anti-rights movements have exerted a strong influence in Kenya (Amnesty International, 2024). The 2023 ‘African Inter-Parliamentary Forum on Family Values and Sovereignty’ conference in Entebbe revealed the transnational support for anti-homosexuality legislation. It was hosted by the Uganda Women Parliamentary Group and co-organised by the Nigerian Foundation for African Cultural Heritage (Titeca, 2024). FWI was involved in organising the conference, although it was not formally affiliated. In September 2024, the Wall Street Journal revealed that the Russian embassy in Uganda contributed \$300,000 to the costs of the conference, a disclosure that shocked Kenyan civil society (Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024).

Interviewees and researchers maintain that FWI and other organisations like it have had some influence on anti-homosexuality legislation in African countries, although they operate with a principle of plausible deniability (Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024; Titeca, 2024). Fox Odoi-Oywelowo, the Ugandan MP who has consistently stood against the anti-homosexuality bills, said in an interview that radical Pentecostal groups from the US were responsible for pushing and funding the bills and providing training and support to Ugandans (Khatondi Wepukhulu, 2023). Activists in Ghana claim that the anti-rights presence in the country increased after the 2019 ‘World Congress of Families’ conference was held there, at which Sharon Slater, President of FWI, spoke (Nabaneh et al., 2022; Titeca, 2024). They directly attribute the emergence of the Ghanaian Family Values Bill in 2021 to the increased funding and organisation provided by US evangelical groups, which crystallised existing anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment into concrete, well-resourced actions (Amnesty International, 2024). Interviewees talking to Amnesty International also identified the origins of the Kenyan FPB as directly or indirectly fuelled by anti-rights movements’ influence in Kenya (ibid.). CitizenGo, a well-known international ultra-Catholic and far-right group with a regional office in Nairobi, started a petition in support of the FPB, which stood at 4,000 international signatures in March 2025 but has since been removed from the website. Our interviewees all suggested that Kenyan politicians received funding from FWI, although Kaluma publicly denies that FWI had any direct involvement in the bill (Byaruhanga, 2023; McKenzie and Dean, 2023).

Slater carefully words her responses to enquiries about her influence, saying publicly that FWI ‘has never supported anti-LGBTQ legislation in African countries’ and that it was not ‘responsible for the treatment of homosexuals under African laws’ (Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024). Her denial of influence is sometimes read as fear of international negative attention and being linked to draconian anti-homosexuality legislation (Titeca, 2024), but it may also be part of the strategy for African leaders to claim such laws as authentically African. While she may not be directly

responsible for such legislation, her behind-the-scenes influence is consistently referenced and acknowledged by academics, activists and investigative journalists (McKenzie and Dean, 2023; Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024; Titeca, 2024).

## 6.2 Support for LGBTQ+ rights

The main stakeholders supporting LGBTQ+ rights are local NGOs, individuals, the courts and international agencies (see Table 3).

**Table 3** Stakeholders that support LGBTQ+ rights

Local actors	
NGLHRC (National Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission)	Led the ‘right to register’ case successfully.
GALCK+ (Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya)	Leading equality organisation; strong lobby group; coalition.
Centre for Minority Rights and Strategic Litigation	Strategic litigation centre; brought the hate speech case against Ali as it is based in the same region.
Kenya Human Rights Commission	Human rights lobbying group, co-founded by Makau Mutua.
Makau Mutua	Spokesperson for Raila Odinga’s 2022 presidential campaign; has expressed support for LGBTQ+ rights.
Courts	The High Court, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court have all passed judgments protecting LGBTQ+ rights.
International actors	
World Bank	Froze new loans to Uganda after it passed the AHA – an important deterrent to other leaders.
Bilateral donors	Most European donors support LGBTQ+ rights but rarely speak out publicly on the issues in Kenya.

### Rights-based local civil society

Despite only recently being allowed to officially register as NGOs, there is a mature LGBTQI+ rights movement, with well-networked community organisations lobbying, raising awareness and bringing strategic litigation cases. GALCK+ (the Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya) is an umbrella organisation for smaller groups that helps coordinate a national agenda, while NGLHRC is the high-profile advocacy organisation that won the right to register for LGBTQ+ NGOs. Other advocates are nested within human rights organisations and government agencies, particularly those tasked with promoting human rights. The LGBTQI+ movement organises around several issues: violence; discrimination and exclusion; healthcare; and supporting queer refugees. It has had success in mobilising around HIV prevention and treatment for men who have sex with men (Mutua-Mambo, 2020), and freedom of association.

The LGBTQ+ rights movement in Kenya has few allies, even among other social justice actors. The women's movement and wider SRHR movement have historically been unwilling to take up the cause of LGBTQ+ rights in Kenya, being occupied with other fights (interviews). Potential allies often view LGBTQ+ rights as 'poison' that might undermine or delegitimise their position on other issues (interview). Under these circumstances, interviewees reported that it is considered 'political suicide' for Kenyan politicians and public figures to openly support LGBTQ+ rights. They would not receive support from their voters or funders if they expressed supportive views.

Despite this difficult working environment, civil society was very active in preventing the FPB from moving forward. The movement uses a number of strategies to promote LGBTQ+ rights, including:

- Strategic litigation: Kenya has a strong culture of strategic litigation, and LGBTQ+ organisations have frequently used this method (interview). It has been effective to leverage legal methods because the executive is unable to change LGBTQ+ policy alone, and the legislature is unwilling to do so (interview).
- Documentation and monitoring of LGBTQ+ rights abuses.
- Advocacy and lobbying in international and diplomatic human rights fora.
- Linking LGBTQ+ rights to economic development, including loss of bilateral and multilateral funding, tourism and foreign companies in Nairobi.
- Monitoring international conservative activity in Kenya and the region.
- Networking and alliance-building.
- Capacity-building and movement-building.

## Domestic political allies behind the scenes

Some individual politicians and public figures are sympathetic to LGBTQ+ rights and were active behind the scenes to prevent the FPB. ODM's leader, Raila Odinga, is considered liberal in comparison with other politicians, while Martha Karua, Odinga's running mate in the 2022 election, is well-known for campaigning for women's rights, including safe abortion (interview).

Makau Mutua, a political adviser, is a well-known ally for LGBTQ+ rights, having spoken out in support, and a founding member of the Kenya Human Rights Commission NGO. For example, on 31 May 2023, following the FPB, Mutua tweeted:

'I am IMMUNE to the rants and attacks of homophones [sic] and those with little, or zero, education and understanding of human sexuality. I will forever defend the rights of gays and lesbians in popular speech and in my scholarship. So, don't waste your breath thinking I will

quit, or change my belief that all human beings, no matter who, or how, they love deserve to be treated with dignity and without discrimination. If you are so upset with me, please go jump into a lake!' (Makau Mutua, @makaumutua, X, 2023)

Mutua, formerly the spokesperson for Odinga's 2022 presidential campaign, is now – somewhat unexpectedly – advising President Ruto. However, there is no indication that his support for LGBTQ+ rights has changed.

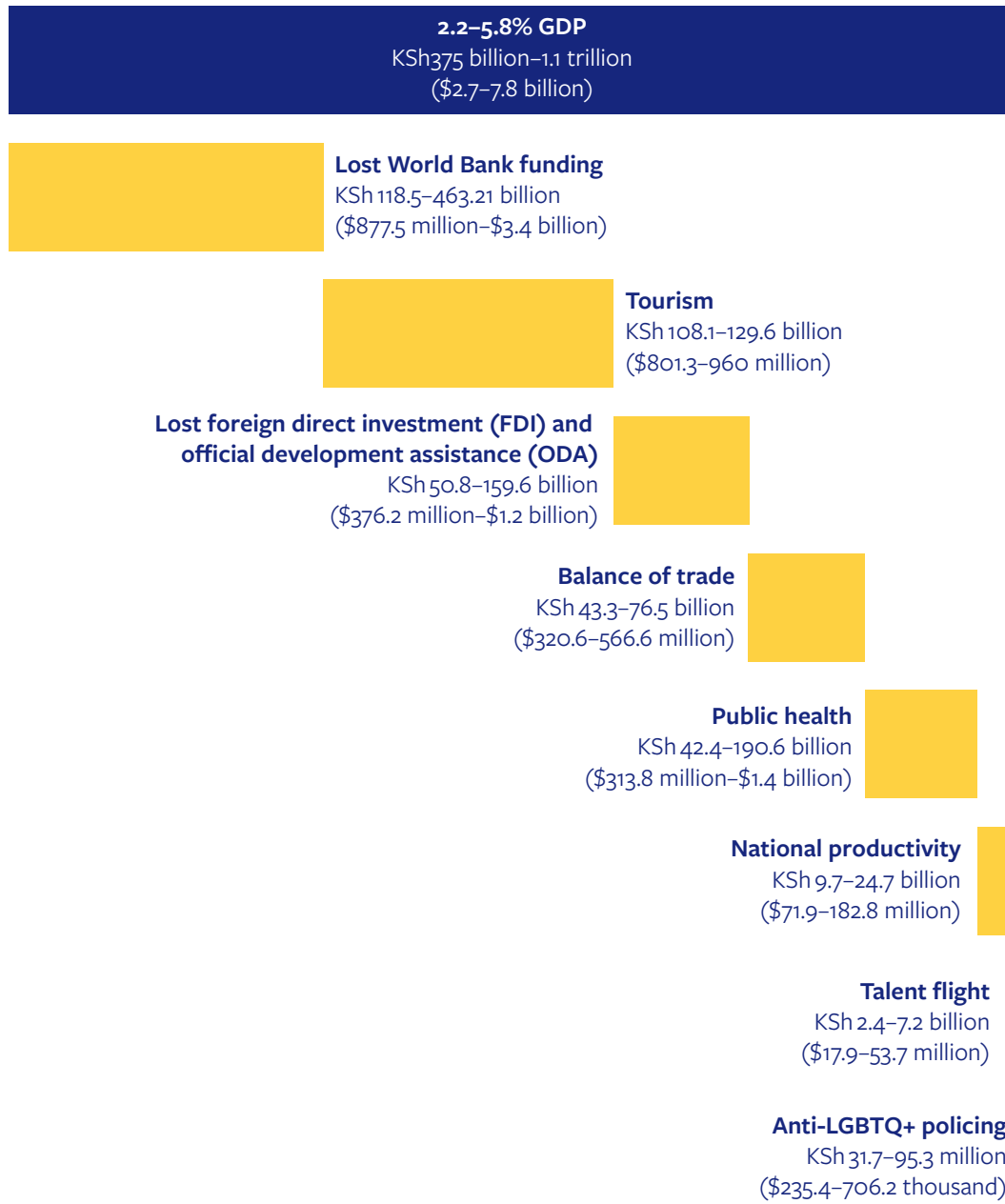
Political supporters of LGBTQ+ rights are mostly unable to express support publicly, for fear of backlash, loss of power or damage to valuable relationships. However, interviews revealed that there is discreet political activity by supporters, who are working hard with different methods to prevent regression on rights.

## The economic cost of punitive laws

Passing anti-homosexuality laws has a national economic cost. Such laws damage the country's reputation to foreign investors and prevent businesses from hiring the best employees (Perlov et al., 2025). Loss of bilateral and multilateral grants, loans, and investments are important deterrents. After Uganda passed its Anti-Homosexuality Acts, the World Bank froze new loans in both 2014 and 2023 (World Bank, 2023). The cost of such donor sanctions is high, especially for Kenya, which is highly indebted, mainly to China (Kell, 2023). Kenya potentially cannot afford to set itself against its major donors (interview). A report on the potential costs for Kenya of passing the FPB received quite wide news coverage in 2023, highlighting the costs of international sanctions, loss of worker productivity and brain drain from people leaving the country (Joseph, 2023; Ogola, 2023). The headline statistic was a loss of 4.186 trillion Kenyan shillings (KSh) (approximately \$32.39 billion) (Ogola, 2023). The Open for Business organisation estimated the potential cost lower, at KSh1.1 trillion (\$7.8 billion) and a loss of 5.8% gross domestic product (GDP) (see Figure 4) (Perlov et al., 2025).

Immediately after the Family Values Bill passed, Ghana's Ministry of Finance warned it could lose \$3.8 billion in World Bank funding if the bill became law (Judge, 2024). The possibility of donor withdrawal is perceived to be part of the reason why Ghana's previous President Nana Akufo Addo was reluctant to sign the bill, and even Museveni was slow to sign in Uganda because of the threat of sanctions (interview). Economic and international political costs are significant for understanding why presidents do or do not follow the lead of their parliaments. The World Bank lifted its freeze on Uganda in spring 2025, after two years, claiming that acceptable mitigation measures are now in place (AfricaNews, 2025). This move has been criticised by activists as a tacit acceptance of the AHA, and it opens a much wider discussion about the effectiveness of sanctions if they are perceived as toothless (The Voice of Africa, 2025) and the limits of donor leverage over national laws (interview). In the current context of wholesale US withdrawal from multilateral institutions and bilateral funding, it is hard to parse which economic motivations might tip the balance.

**Figure 4** Estimate of potential costs of passing the FPB



Source: based on Perlov et al. (2025: 32).

### International pressure

Beyond sanctions, bilateral and multilateral donors are not currently taking a publicly supportive stance on LGBTQ+ rights in Kenya, partly because rights are seen as ‘political dynamite’ and partly because they are afraid of pushing an agenda that feeds into anti-rights narratives, and which might create backlash against local queer people and organisations. For example, in Zambia in May 2022, the Swedish and Finnish embassies flew the rainbow Pride flag to show support for

LGBTQI+ communities. While intended to foster acceptance and inclusivity, this act provoked animosity and a backlash against a perceived ‘western agenda’ (Amnesty International, 2024). There is some donor retreat from LGBTQI+ rights because of the ferocity and amplified nature of the discourse, and fear of creating even worse conditions for the LGBTQI+ community.

Interviewees reported that bilateral and multilateral donors have funded both progressive and regressive organisations, with the assumption that they did not necessarily intend to fund regressive rhetoric. It is possible interviewees remember this in Uganda also (Provost, 2023), where some HIV and AIDS care in hospitals, funded by USAID, also included staff referring patients to conversion ‘therapy’ (Khatondi Wepukhulu, 2021). International donors therefore are viewed with suspicion by both sides and have a complex landscape to navigate.

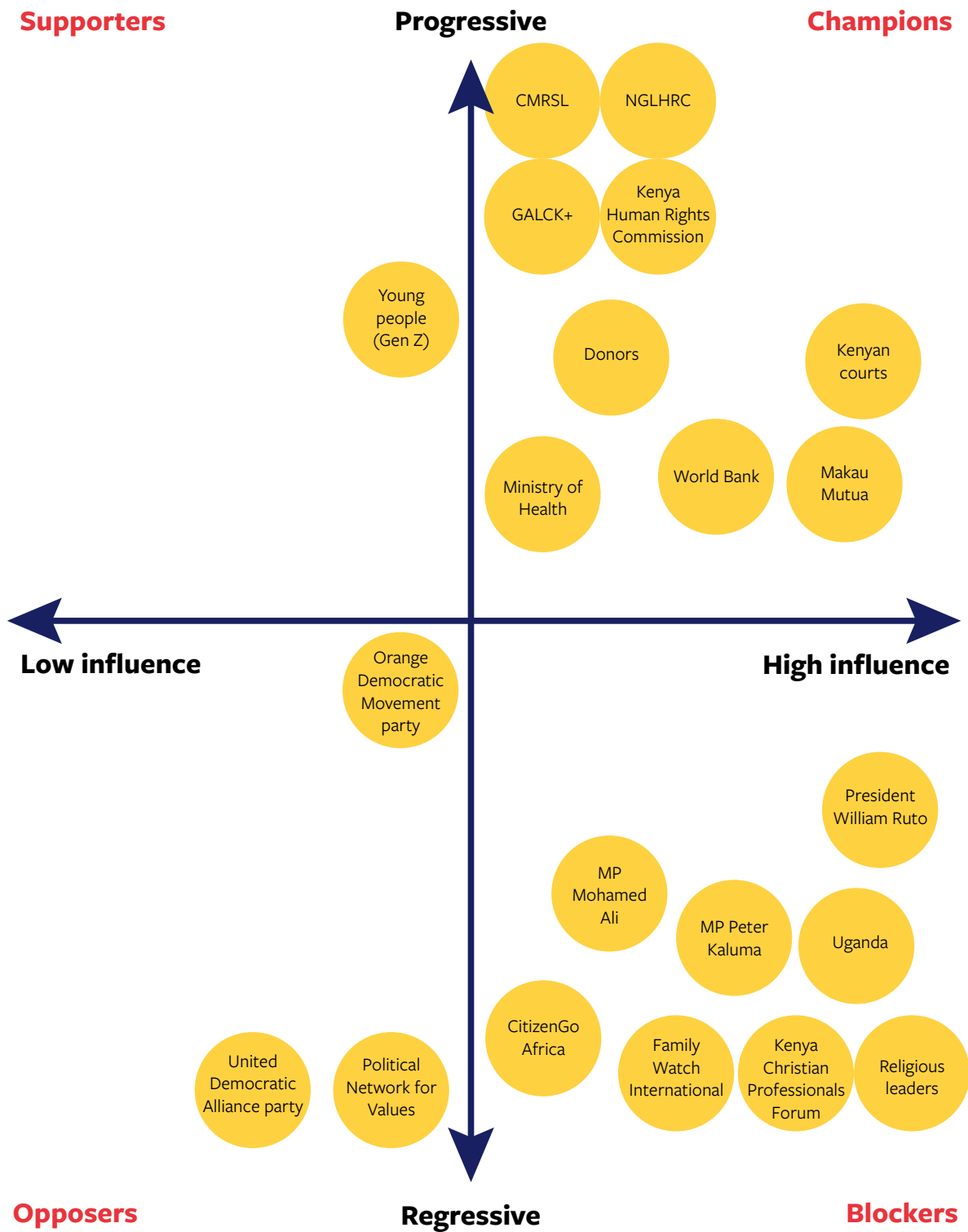
### Quiet diplomatic influence

Kenya’s political system is marked by clientelism, nepotism and self-serving corruption (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024). Because of this, behind-the-scenes engagement with government officials is a mainstay of diplomatic and civil society activity, across all sectors. For LGBTQI+ rights, as with other issues, advocates leverage personal networks and informal channels to raise their concerns. For example, former US President Joe Biden’s ambassador in Kenya, Meg Whitman, was known to speak directly to President Ruto against the FPB (interviews). This quiet pro-rights influence is part of the reason why Kaluma’s FPB was never formally tabled or debated in Parliament, but it does perhaps play into the narrative of foreign interference. A survey of LGBTQI+ communities in Kenya during March and April 2023 showed that ‘silent advocacy’ is perceived as shutting out rights-holders from discussions and that queer Kenyans do not necessarily trust what powerful donor advocates say behind closed doors, preferring them to express public support (Walimbwa et al., 2023).

Ultimately, the FPB was stopped by a combination of civil society advocacy and behind-the-scenes diplomacy. This was a delicate operation with necessarily confidential strategies; one activist interviewed asked not to share those strategies publicly so that they would be able to use them again later, without the opposition being able to prepare.

Figure 5 maps the key stakeholders discussed against their support for rights and their level of influence over the debate surrounding the bill. The figure shows that the strongest champions of rights are the courts, an individual figure who is known to work for rights and international donor influence, such as the freeze on new loans exerted by the World Bank on Uganda. The strongest blockers of rights are a mix of politicians and religious influencers.

Figure 5 Stakeholder mapping



Source: Authors' analysis based on interviews.

## 7 Current political considerations

### 7.1 Domestic implications

While the FPB 2023 was unsuccessful, it is by no means gone. Civil society interviewees expressed fears the bill will come around again and, this time, will be taken more seriously. Kaluma revised the bill in 2025 and started to circulate it (see Section 7.2), while MP Ali also sponsored a petition to Parliament in February 2024, pressing to fast-track the FPB and to investigate claims of LGBTQ+ content in school curricula. The high-profile coverage in 2023 has set the terms of the debate and laid out the fault lines, meaning that a second attempt is likely to be more attuned to success. If such a bill passes, it would undermine the rights-based Constitution and pave the way for other rights to be removed.

President Ruto, elected in 2022, is seeking a second term in 2027, meaning that he will be on the campaign trail in the coming years. He is grappling with large-scale protests against his government on issues including government corruption, high taxes and lack of jobs, meaning that any decisions he takes will be motivated by a need to regain popularity. Progressive interviewees feared that Ruto's weak hold on power might cause him to target LGBTQI+ people as scapegoats. He may also quash LGBTQ+ rights to position himself as a moral authority, upholding Christianity (interview).

Changes to the law on LGBTQ+ rights would likely require a Constitutional revision, which is complex to achieve. Local regressive group KCPF have developed a proposed constitutional amendment bill that they are lobbying to bring to Parliament (Kanjama, 2023). They have explicitly said they would take constitutional revision on any topic as an opportunity to insert new morality clauses and restrictive definitions of sex and gender (interview). At the Mombasa protests, the 'Anti-LGBTQ movement' chairman Salim Karama said they wanted a referendum on banning LGBTQ+ rights in the Constitution as a way to stop the courts ruling in favour of these rights (Bwana, 2023). President Ruto attempted a constitutional amendment to extend the term in office for politicians in October 2024, but this was met with significant pushback from the public (Muia and Zane, 2024). He may not push for constitutional amendments or the referendum banning LGBTQ+ rights would require, as it would deepen his unpopularity if he lost (interview). Further, any constitutional changes would likely be countered with court cases from the LGBTQ+ rights movement.

An important pending case is against MP Ali, which should have a decision in 2025. After the anti-queer protests in October 2023, the Centre for Minority Rights and Strategic Litigation brought a court case against him for hate speech and inciting violence. In April 2024, an interim ruling ordered oppositional groups to refrain from inciting violence against LGBTQI+ people. If this ruling becomes permanent, it will set an important precedent about how queer people are protected from violence and referred to in public discussion. The Court of Appeal may also soon decide on a decriminalisation appeal that has been in progress since 2019.

Finally, a positive example recently occurred, further demonstrating the significance of the courts. Here, a case regarding a trans woman ended with the judge ruling that trans people's rights must be respected under the rights-based Constitution, and recommending that the government enact a Transgender Protection Rights Act (Kisika, 2025). This is a significant milestone for Kenya and the region and may further progress the discussion on LGBTQ+ rights.

It is important that the legal system remains independent to produce such rulings. Broadly, the anti-homosexuality push comes from parliamentarians, with progressive support coming from civil society and the legal system. So far, the rule of law has held sway, but if legislators begin to see the courts as a threat to their power or interests, they might back an anti-homosexuality bill as a way to overturn court rulings and assert power (interview). Human rights defenders currently fear that the judiciary may be weakened by appointments of regressive advocates, or that it will be co-opted by the executive branch (interviews). Progressive legislators have been targeted by regressive groups and the government has been petitioned to remove them (interview).

## 7.2 Regional implications

The year 2023 is noted as a particularly bad year for LGBTQ+ rights in Africa, with a regional domino effect (Amnesty International, 2024; Judge, 2024). The shift in the landscape is seen in some continental bodies; the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (an independent expert body on human rights within the African Union framework) used sexual or gender identity as the reason to reject applications from three NGOs in 2023, citing that 'sexual orientation is not an expressly recognized right or freedom under the African Charter' and is 'contrary to the virtues of African values' (Viljoen, 2023). In Tanzania, harsh punishments against homosexuality were not often enforced, but a significant shift appears to have taken place around 2023, although this had been building for some years (Amnesty International, 2024). Uganda's AHA is a high-profile signal of the political direction. The outpouring of anti-LGBTQ+ discourse in Kenya is part of a wider pattern of a decline in protections and attitudes towards queer people across the continent, framed as protection of 'African values'.

Regional geopolitics may raise the issue of LGBTQ+ rights again. Interviewees flagged the 2025 elections in Tanzania and Burundi, and the 2026 election in Uganda, where they anticipate the stirring of anti-LGBTQ+ feeling as an election strategy, which may reignite the issue in Kenya too. Ghana's anti-homosexuality bill is waiting to be signed into law by the new President John Mahama, who may feel emboldened by US President Trump's politics to sign where the previous president delayed. If Ghana signs an anti-homosexuality bill, Kenya and other countries may follow suit.

In May 2025, the third iteration of the Entebbe conference was held: the 'Third African Regional Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Family Values and Sovereignty', this time unambiguously co-sponsored by Family Watch Africa, the regional branch of FWI, and featuring Sharon Slater (Cullinan, 2025). It was followed immediately by the 'Second Pan-African Conference on Family Values' in Nairobi, hosted by Charles Kanjama and KCPF, and co-sponsored by CitizenGo.

The conferences hosted several of the same high-level attendees, with the inter-parliamentary conference mostly attended by government officials, and the KCPF one open to the public. The Nairobi conference came under heavy fire from a civil society campaign pointing out its colonial overtones, symbolised by its speaker lineup of predominately foreign white men (Gathara, 2025). It also highlighted how humanitarian organisations can be (sometimes unwittingly) complicit with regressive actors – the Boma Hotel which hosted the Nairobi conference has the Kenya Red Cross Society as a primary shareholder. A petition with 12,000 signatories, asking the Red Cross to refuse to host the conference, was unsuccessful (Cullinan, 2025).

The conferences pushed a strongly anti-LGBTQ+ agenda and promoted a draft document called the ‘African Charter on Family, Sovereignty and Values’. It defends national sovereignty, objects to international human rights agreements on women’s rights and SRHR, objects to comprehensive sexuality education, and recommends legal protections for nuclear family structures. The charter is meant to be introduced to the African Union. Confidential conference reports indicate that anti-homosexuality laws were framed as expressions of national sovereignty and resistance to foreign influence. Sharon Slater also made use of her time on the continent to speak at Sierra Leone’s ‘Strengthening Families Conference’ (2025),<sup>2</sup> positioned prominently at the time Parliament discussed the Safe Motherhood Bill that would allow abortion. These conferences were widely commented on in progressive activist circles, and signal gathering momentum and consolidation of anti-LGBTQ+ forces in East Africa, framed as promoting family values.

Following these conferences, Peter Kaluma revised and re-circulated his FPB, which no longer follows the Ugandan text. It revises the penalties for same-sex sexual acts away from the death penalty towards imprisonment and places a new emphasis on sex segregation in sports and prisons, and on refusing to recognise chosen pronouns. This discursive change apparently echoes the vocal culture wars in the US and Europe around issues of gender identity. Its language also moves away from moralistic tones to legalistic ones, focusing on protecting the family unit (interview).

At the same time, it is also hopeful to note that some countries in Africa are moving towards protecting LGBTQI+ rights. Decriminalisation has occurred in Namibia (2024), Angola (2021), Gabon (2020), Botswana (2019) and Mozambique (2015), while same-sex marriage was legalised in South Africa two decades ago in 2006. Same-sex sexual acts have never been criminalised in Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Congo, Madagascar or Benin (although public attitudes are not supportive).<sup>3</sup> French ex-colonies did not inherit criminalisation, giving them a different trajectory whether they currently, independently choose to criminalise (Osogo Ambani, 2020), which Mali in 2024 and Burkina Faso in 2025 have done (Ewokor, 2025). As Melanie Judge notes, Africa stands caught in the middle of two opposing trends: some permissiveness and hardening repression (Judge, 2024).

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2 Strengthening Families Conference (2025) ‘Invited Keynote Speakers and Special Guest for SFC 2025’ (<https://strengthenfamily.org/2025-speakers>).

3 Data from ILGA World database (n.d.a), correct as of February 2025.

### 7.3 Global implications

The presentation of the FPB was part of a wider global backlash against LGBTQI+ rights and gender equality, funded by well-organised and coordinated transnational anti-rights groups. In early 2025, US President Trump's first few weeks in power signalled a complete shakeup in the international development sector, with gender and sexuality positioned prominently as key battlegrounds. His excoriation of LGBTQI+ rights from US programmes means that funding is disappearing and a normative shift is occurring. Through 2025, other governments and multilateral bodies have cut funding to gender equality and LGBTQI+ rights, endangering the progress made to date. The moment might now be opportune for regressive actors to put forward further repressive legislation.

It is likely that President Ruto will ally himself with the US administration's direction to seek favour and funding from the US government and other US organisations. An interviewee said that Ruto is keen to be taken seriously on the world stage and to be friendly with western powers. While Biden was in power, Kenya was at odds with Washington on human rights (Bariyo and Steinhauser, 2024), but now they may be able to forge a deeper alliance. In January 2025, Ruto immediately praised Trump's direction in general, and specifically his executive order recognising only two sexes (Khakayi, 2025). Kaluma responded to Ruto's speech with a tweet signalling that it is time to resurrect the FPB now the political climate is supportive (see Figure 6).

**Figure 6** MP Kaluma's tweet revitalising the FPB



Source: Khakayi (2025).

Against this backdrop, it is surprising that Kenya voted 'yes' at the Human Rights Council in July 2025 to renew the mandate of the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI). The mandate is framed as working against discrimination and violence, which are less politicised and more commonly agreed with than LGBTQI+ rights per se (interview). But the 'yes' vote signals a support for LGBTQI+ people, in which Kenya broke from all other African countries on the Human Rights Council except for South Africa (see Figure 7).

**Table 4** 2025 voting results on the renewal of the UN Independent Expert on SOGI mandate

Country	Vote	Country	Vote	Country	Vote
Albania	YES	Czechia	YES	Maldives	NO
Algeria	NO	Democratic Republic of the Congo	NO	Marshall Islands	YES
Bangladesh	NO	Dominican Republic	YES	Mexico	YES
Belgium	YES	Ethiopia	NO	Morocco	NO
Benin	ABST	France	YES	Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	YES
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	YES	Gambia	NO	North Macedonia	YES
Brazil	YES	Georgia	YES	Qatar	NO
Bulgaria	YES	Germany	YES	Republic of Korea	YES
Burundi	NO	Ghana	ABST	Romania	YES
Chile	YES	Iceland	YES	South Africa	YES
China	NO	Indonesia	NO	Spain	YES
Colombia	YES	Japan	YES	Sudan	NO
Costa Rica	YES	Kenya	YES	Switzerland	YES
Côte d'Ivoire	NO	Kuwait	NO	Thailand	YES
Cuba	YES	Kyrgyzstan	ABST	Viet Nam	YES
Cyprus	YES	Malawi	NO		
<b>Yes</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>15</b>

Source: Extracted from ILGA World (2025).

The campaign to renew the mandate had strong support from LGBTQI+ rights civil society around the world, and the vote was received jubilantly by LGBTQI+ rights organisations in Kenya, and outrage from Peter Kaluma and others (Oduor, 2025). As yet, little is known about why Kenya voted 'yes'.

Finally, the younger generation is seen as a hope for the future. The August 2024 wave of protests against economic policies and corrupt elitism, known as 'Gen Z protests', showed that young people have political power and the potential to change the current dynamics. They are seen as more accepting of queerness and more likely to be intersectional and inclusive (interview) and, as such, are a potential source of power for the LGBTQI+ rights movement.

## 8 Conclusion

The review of events leading up to Kenya's Family Protection Bill 2023, the people involved, their motivations and influences, and the wider discourses surrounding anti-homosexuality legislation in Africa, shows that Kenya's FPB was just one of many moves in a wider effort to reject LGBTQI+ rights. The bill was reactionary, capitalising on Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Act and the Kenyan legal case ruling in favour of LGBTQI+ rights organisations to formally register as NGOs. The bill leverages long histories of homophobic social norms and the specific political moment that framed homosexuality as 'un-African'. Peter Kaluma emerges as a figurehead for anti-homosexuality legislation in Kenya, but one lacking substance or ideological commitment and instead motivated by personal political gain and direct sponsorship by powerful organisations.

MP Kaluma's willingness to take the spotlight – and the backlash – is convenient for the network of US, Russian, African, Christian and Islamic anti-rights actors who are quietly funding and influencing Kenyan politics and law. Foreign anti-rights actors can hide in the shadows behind local politicians, under the guise of empowering African leadership to take control of their own countries. In a clever sleight of hand, progressive actors are framed as western interference, while the influence from anti-rights foreign powers has been rearticulated as supporting 'African values', an ironic appropriation of decolonial rhetoric. LGBTQI+ activist interviews identified Kaluma's bill as an effort to raise his own profile and gain power, drawing attention away from other, more more subtly regressive moves, like changing the Constitution, rewording laws, tightening restrictions and increasing religious influence. Attention must be given to the slow erosion of rights and freedoms as well as to the high-profile events.

This working paper identifies that protecting LGBTQI+ rights in Kenya relies on the strong rights-based Constitution and the ability of courts to rule in favour of rights. As such, upholding the rule of law and supporting an independent judiciary are vital strategies over the next few years. It also identifies the central role played by foreign and local allies in behind-the-scenes diplomacy, where public support for rights is politically risky. Known allies need to be connected to each other and able to exert diplomatic pressure in personal relationships. Finally, Kenyan civil society is highly active in these areas and able to work directly with powerholders and allies, as well as conduct effective media campaigns. Civil society must be financially supported to continue this work.

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# Annex

## Annex 1 Full timeline of events (highlights indicate key events)

Events in Africa	Events in Kenya
<b>2013:</b> Uganda passes the first Anti-Homosexuality Act.	
<b>2014:</b> Uganda's AHA revoked by the Constitutional Court on procedural grounds.	
<b>2018:</b> The African Commission revokes observer status for the Coalition of African Lesbians, under pressure from the African Union's executive council (Viljoen, 2023).	<b>2018:</b> The Kenyan film <i>Rafiki</i> is banned in Kenya because of its positive portrayal of a lesbian relationship.
	<b>2018:</b> World Congress of Families annual conference held in Nairobi (Norris and Khatondi Wepukhulu, 2024).
<b>2019:</b> World Congress of Families annual conference held in Accra, Ghana.	<b>2019:</b> A case challenging the criminalisation of homosexuality fails. The High Court finds the relevant sections of the Penal Code to be consistent with the Constitution (Amnesty International, 2024).
	<b>March 2019:</b> The Court of Appeal of Kenya orders the NGOs Coordination Board to register NGLHRC as an NGO.
	The Registration of Persons (Amendment) Bill is introduced to allow for legal gender recognition only for intersex people. In 2019, for the first time, the government also recognises intersex persons in the national population census. <sup>4</sup>
<b>2021:</b> Uganda's Parliament passes the Sexual Offences Bill, which criminalises same-sex acts with up to 10 years in prison.	
Museveni refuses to sign the Sexual Offences Bill.	
<b>August 2021:</b> Ghana tables the 'Ghanaian Family Values' Bill, supported by the two main political parties (Fallon, 2024).	

4 ILGA database, Kenya (<https://database.ilga.org/kenya-lgbti>).

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**July 2022:** Law comes into effect to protect intersex children's rights, recognising intersex people as a third gender ('I' on identity documents) (Kisika, 2022).

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**September 2022:** The acting CEO of the Kenya Film Classification Board reiterates that screenings of all films with LGBTQ+ content are illegal in Kenya.<sup>5</sup>

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**November 2022:** The African Commission uses sexual or gender identity as the reason to reject applications for observer status from three NGOs (Viljoen, 2023).

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**February 2023:** Tanzania bans a British children's book and a sex education book, citing violation of cultural norms (Amnesty International, 2024).

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**February 2023:**

- Text Book Centre bookstore in Nairobi ordered to remove a British book for teenagers that normalises same-sex desire, following a statement from Christian, Muslim and Hindu clerics (Kisika, 2023a).
  - Supreme Court of Kenya rules in favour of NGLHRC's right to register.
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**March 2023:**

- Uganda's AHA passed by Parliament. It was introduced by Asuman Basalirwa (head of a small opposition party called the Justice Forum (known as JEEMA)).
  - African Inter-Parliamentary Forum on Family Values and Sovereignty held in Uganda, known as the 'Entebbe conference'.
  - African Commission passes Resolution 552 concerning the rights of persons with intersex variations in Africa.
  - Head of the women's wing of the Tanzanian ruling party, Mary Chatanda, calls for castration of gay men.
  - Ghana's Constitutional Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee releases its report on the Family Values Bill.
  - Tanzanian religious leaders organise a public workshop aimed at strategising against homosexuality in Tanzania.
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**March 2023:**

- Kaluma files a request with the Supreme Court to overturn its 'right to register' decision. It is dismissed.
  - The government declares its intention to seek a review of the court's ruling that allowed the registration of NGLHRC as an NGO.<sup>6</sup>
  - United Democratic Alliance Senator asks Education Cabinet Secretary what he plans to do about the 'LGBTQ agenda' in schools. He responds that he has formed the Chaplains Committee with the church. His plan is to install chaplaincies in all schools, to prevent 'LGBTQ education'.
  - Motion submitted by Mohamed Ali to enforce a ban on 'public discussion, reporting and distribution' of LGBTQ content in books and media (Kisika, 2023b). Parliament agrees to the motion. Nobody speaks in support of LGBTI+ rights (Mersie and Hlatshwayo, 2023).
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**April 2023:** Tanzanian Parliament calls for harsher punishments for queer people during a debate. MP Abubakar Assenga advocates for the death penalty for same-sex sexual acts. Muharami Hassan Nayonga is convicted for 30 years, the first time that someone has been prosecuted for some years.

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**April 2023:** MP George Peter Kaluma introduces the FPB, directly after the 'right to register' case. KCPF supports the bill.

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5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

**May 2023:** Museveni signs Uganda's AHA and the law comes into effect immediately. Earlier in the month, Museveni tried a presidential veto on the bill.

**May 2023:** The first Regional Family Conference of the African Christian Professionals Forum held in Nairobi. Peter Kaluma gives a keynote address (Christian Council International, 2023).

**June 2023:** Regional case filed against Uganda's AHA at the East African Court of Justice (*Mabirizi Kiwanuka v Attorney General of the Republic of Uganda*).

**June 2023:** The Intersex Persons Implementation Coordination Committee presents the draft Intersex Persons Bill.

**July 2023:**

- Ghana's Parliament unanimously approves the Family Values Bill (Cohen and Maunganidze, 2023).
- Dr Amanda Odoi responds with a lawsuit against the Speaker of Parliament and Attorney General in the Supreme Court, on the grounds of insufficient analysis of the bill's implications for public funds. On 19 July, Ghana's Supreme Court refuses to grant the orders sought in the application (Amnesty International, 2024).
- Activists file a regional case against Uganda's AHA to the East African Court of Justice (*Muhumuza and ORS v AG Uganda*) (Amnesty International, 2024).

**August 2023:** World Bank freezes new loans to Uganda.

**September 2023:** The Supreme Court upholds the right of NGLHRC to register and operate as an NGO, even if explicitly related to the representation of lesbian and gay people. MP Kaluma vows to appeal the decision again.<sup>7</sup>

**October 2023:**

- Anti-LGBTQ+ protests led by Mohamed Ali, rejecting the 'right to register' decision (EFE, 2023).
- Parliament launches an investigation into alleged claims of 'promotion of homosexuality' in the Kakuma refugee camp, prompted by reports of support for LGBTQ+ advocacy.<sup>8</sup>
- The National Policy on Family Promotion and Protection, 'Happy and Stable Families for a Strong Society', is approved by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.

**December 2023:** Ugandan activists file a petition to the domestic Constitutional Court to challenge the constitutionality of the AHA (Amnesty International, 2024a).

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

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**February 2024:** Ghana's Parliament unanimously passes the Promotion of Proper Human Sexual Rights and Ghanaian Family Values Bill.

**February 2024:** MP Mohamed Ali introduces a petition to Parliament seeking the enhanced enforcement of existing anti-homosexuality laws, investigation into whether current approved school curricula includes any LGBTQ+ content, and to fast-track the tabling and approval of the FPB.

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**March 2024:** Religious leaders send a letter to Parliament asking for an anti-homosexuality law (Fallon, 2024).

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**April 2024:** Constitutional Court of Uganda rejects the nullification of the AHA in its entirety, scrapping just two sections and two subsections and declaring the rest of the law constitutional (Fallon, 2024).

**April 2024:** The High Court in Mombasa issues a landmark interim ruling, ordering anti-rights groups and individuals to refrain from inciting violence against LGBTQ+ individuals in Kenya. This interim order is in response to a petition by the Centre for Minority Rights and Strategic Litigation seeking protection for the LGBTQ+ community. The ruling is temporary, pending a final decision.<sup>9</sup>

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**July 2024:** A legal challenge to Ghana's existing criminalisation law is defeated. The ruling upholds the existing legislation, while the Family Values Bill awaits the President's signature (Human Rights Watch, 2024).

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**August 2024:** Protests against President Ruto's economic policies and cost of living.

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**May 2025:** Third African Regional Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Family Values and Sovereignty held in Entebbe, Uganda.

**May 2025:** Second Pan-African Conference on Family Values held in Nairobi, hosted by Charles Kanjama and KCPF.

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**July 2025:** Kenya votes 'yes' to renew the mandate of the UN Independent Expert on SOGI.

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**ODI Global**

4 Millbank  
London SW1P 3JA, UK

+44 (0)20 7922 0300  
info@odi.org

odi.org  
[www.linkedin.com/company/odi/](http://www.linkedin.com/company/odi/)  
[bsky.app/profile/odi.global](https://bsky.app/profile/odi.global)

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