



We are pleased to present Volume 1, Issue 2 of The Eastern Africa Journal of Policy and Strategy. Building on our inaugural issue's foundation, this edition advances our mission to foster evidence-based policymaking and strategic discourse across Eastern Africa and beyond. Through rigorous inquiry and multidisciplinary collaboration, we bridge the gap between research, practice, and governance in the region's complex policy landscape.

Eastern Africa's policy environment is shaped by interconnected financial, security, and governance dynamics that demand innovative and context-specific solutions. The contributions in this issue exemplify our core focus areas, examining the interplay between financial systems and national security, contemporary threats to peace, and governance mechanisms in an interconnected world. These studies not only diagnose pressing challenges but also propose evidence-based, actionable solutions.

Security, Peace, and Extremism

The opening section addresses Kenya's evolving security landscape amid local and transnational challenges. Noordin M. Haji's paper, *Kenya's Evolving National Security Landscape: Threats and Opportunities (1998–2024)*, provides a comprehensive analysis of Kenya's security transformation, advocating for a shift from state-centric to human-centric intelligence paradigms rooted in ethical governance and African philosophical traditions.

The second paper, *Religious Sectarian Extremism in Kenya: An Assessment of Kilifi County*, by Michael Mkoji, Mumo Nzau, and Rosalind Nyawira Macharia places the Shakahola tragedy within a broader continuum of religious extremism and underscores the need for regulatory literacy and community resilience.

The third paper, titled *Navigating Fragile Peace: A Critical Analysis of the Challenges Local Peace Committees Face in Combating Cattle Rustling in Tiaty East, Kenya*, is by JaneJean Jebiwot Too, Samwel Mwiti Njagi, and John Wakhungu Masinde. It reveals how political interference, resource constraints, and cultural entrenchment undermine community peace building mechanisms.

The section concludes with Agnes Wangare Kimani, Rosalind Nyawira Macharia, and Samuel C. Kamau's *Unmasking the Dark Art: An Analysis of Daesh's Communication Approaches*, which dissects Daesh's sophisticated digital propaganda ecosystem and its manipulation of language, imagery, and networked technologies. The study calls for a recalibration of counter-narrative strategies grounded in credible, community-based communication.



Governance, Policy, and International Implications

The second section explores the interplay between law, oversight, and diplomacy in contemporary policy practice. A study by Wamuyu Ndururi, Caroline Kathure Gatobu, and Mumo Nzau titled *Stakeholder Participation Mechanisms in Foreign Policy Decision-Making: Lessons from Kenya's EACRF Deployment* explores democratic dimensions of foreign policy processes, calling for enhanced stakeholder consultation, institutional capacity building, and the balance between national security imperatives and participatory governance.

To conclude the section, Joel Chacha Kerata, Nicholas Ondoro, and Simon Nyambura's paper, *Judicial Intelligence Oversight in Kenya: Prospects and Challenges*, examines mechanisms of judicial accountability within the intelligence community. While Kenya possesses robust legal frameworks, practical implementation remains constrained by secrecy, limited awareness, and political context.

Financial Security and Regulatory Frameworks

The third section examines the growing intersection of technology and finance, two spheres increasingly critical to modern economic resilience. Dorrington Omondi Ochieng', Stephen Olala, and Kenedy Asembo's paper, *The Application of Artificial Intelligence in Detecting Money Laundering in Kenyan Commercial Banks*, provides a data-driven exploration of how emerging technologies are reshaping anti-money laundering frameworks. Their findings reveal both the promise and uneven adoption of AI within Kenya's financial sector, highlighting the need for regulatory harmonization and institutional knowledge exchange.

Mohamed Abdul M'maka, John Kisilu, and Charles Okongo Imbiakha complement this analysis with *Beneficial Ownership Transparency and Economic Security in Kenya: Bridging Regulatory Gaps to Counter Financial Crimes*. Their study exposes vulnerabilities in beneficial ownership transparency and demonstrates how enforcement gaps facilitate illicit financial flows. Grounded in institutional theory and regulatory reform, their recommendations offer a roadmap for enhancing transparency and economic resilience.

Conclusion

The breadth and depth of these studies underscore a central tenet of this journal: effective policy and strategy must be anticipatory, adaptive, and deeply contextual. The challenges of financial crime, evolving security threats, and complex governance require innovative thinking and collaborative, evidence-based approaches. Together, these contributions affirm that the pursuit of effective policy in Eastern Africa must be grounded in critical inquiry, ethical integrity, and interdisciplinary engagement.



The editorial board extends its gratitude to the contributors, reviewers, and institutional partners whose dedication made this issue possible. We particularly acknowledge the steadfast support of The Global Centre for Policy and Strategy (GLOCEPS), whose vision and resources sustain this scholarly platform.

As we continue our journey, we reaffirm our commitment to catalyzing transformative change. We invite researchers across disciplines to contribute their work, challenge conventions, and join us in forging a path where strategic thinking is informed by rigorous research and a profound understanding of our region's unique dynamics. Together, we build a legacy of knowledge that empowers decision-makers and contributes to a more prosperous, secure, and sustainable future for Eastern Africa.

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