



## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE NETWORK FOR WOMEN IN DATA, STATISTICS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

### **Background and Rationale**

Data, statistics, artificial intelligence and geospatial information are increasingly shaping public policy, service delivery, innovation, accountability, investment decisions and the future of work. As Kenya strengthens its National Statistical System and broader data ecosystem, there is need to deliberately position women not only as subjects of data, but also as professionals, leaders, innovators, mentors and decision-makers across the data value chain.

The idea of establishing a network for women in data and statistics was first discussed during a meeting held in Nairobi on 15th April 2024, where participants proposed the formation of a structured platform to connect, empower and give visibility to women working in data-related fields. A follow-up engagement held in 2025 further affirmed the need for a formal network to promote mentorship, leadership, collaboration, professional growth and stronger representation of women in the data ecosystem. The 2026 activation is therefore intended to move the network from consultation to implementation by mobilizing members, supporters, sponsors and partners, and by establishing initial coordination arrangements.

The Network for Women in Data, Statistics and AI is envisioned as a vibrant, inclusive and action-oriented platform bringing together women professionals, researchers, innovators, policymakers, students, young practitioners, institutional champions and partners working in statistics, data science, artificial intelligence, geospatial data, research, monitoring and evaluation, technology, policy and innovation.

### **Purpose of the Network**

The purpose of the Network is to provide a structured platform through which women in data, statistics, AI and geospatial information can connect, collaborate, mentor, lead and influence the future of Kenya's data ecosystem. The Network will support women's professional growth, leadership, visibility, policy influence, innovation and participation in decision-making spaces across the National Statistical System and the wider data ecosystem.

### **Objectives of the Network**

The overall objective of the network is to advance the participation, leadership, collaboration and visibility of women and girls within the data and technology ecosystem through inclusive, gender-responsive and sustainable approaches.

The specific objectives are to:

- Promote inclusive and gender-responsive data systems that accurately represent the realities and contributions of women and girls.

- Strengthen women’s leadership, participation and influence in data, statistics, AI and geospatial fields.
- Enhance mentorship, peer learning and career development opportunities for women and girls in data-related professions.
- Foster collaboration, institutional support and strategic partnerships that advance women’s participation and sustainability in the data ecosystem.

### **Thematic Tracks**

The work of the Network shall be organized around three main tracks:

- **Data and Statistics** - This track will strengthen women’s role in official statistics, data governance, data quality, data analysis, data communication, citizen-generated data, administrative data and evidence-informed decision-making.
- **Geospatial Data** - This track will promote women’s participation in geospatial information, earth observation, mapping, spatial analysis, location intelligence and the use of geospatial data for planning, climate resilience, service delivery and inclusive development.
- **Artificial Intelligence** - This track will promote women’s participation and leadership in AI, data science, responsible AI, ethical innovation, algorithmic accountability and the application of AI for development.

### **Guiding Principles**

1. **Inclusivity:** Ensure all voices are welcomed and heard in data work by designing processes, communication, and decision-making that remove barriers and solicit input from varied roles and levels.
2. **Diversity:** Build teams with varied backgrounds, experiences, and skills to reduce bias, enhance creativity, and improve dataset and product robustness through intentional hiring and development practices.
3. **Collaboration:** Foster equitable, cross-functional partnerships with clear roles, shared ownership, and regular feedback loops so contributions are visible, reproducible, and drive collective impact.

### **Patronage, Transitional Leadership and Governance**

The Director General, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, shall serve as the Patron of the Network. The Patron shall provide high-level institutional guidance, champion the Network’s visibility, support strategic partnerships and promote the Network’s alignment with national priorities on statistics, data governance, innovation and inclusive development.

During the transition period, the Network shall have a transitional leadership structure as follows:

- i. Chairperson - Rosemary Bowen, Director, Population and Social Statistics, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

- ii. Network Secretariat: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics - Women, SDG Kenya Forum, Open Institute

The transitional leadership shall guide the formal activation and initial operationalization of the Network. It shall coordinate membership registration, partner engagement, communication, documentation, resource mobilization, website activation and preparations for the first annual meeting.

A substantive leadership structure shall be elected during the first annual meeting. The first annual meeting shall also adopt the Network's governance structure, appoint a Treasurer to guide financial administration and accountability, and approve the annual workplan. Registration shall be free during the transition period until substantive leadership is elected.

### **Membership**

Membership shall be open to women professionals, researchers, innovators, policymakers, statisticians, data scientists, AI practitioners, geospatial experts, students, young practitioners and other actors working in or aspiring to join the data ecosystem. The Network shall also welcome institutional champions, supporters, sponsors, development partners, civil society organizations, academia, private sector actors, research institutions, innovation hubs, youth and student communities, women-led professional networks and allies committed to advancing women's participation and leadership in data, statistics and AI.

For registration, eligible members and supporters will be required to provide basic identity information, including full name, institution or organization affiliation, designation, area of professional interest, email address and telephone contact. This information will support membership verification, communication, thematic grouping and follow-up on Network activities.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Patron shall provide high-level guidance, visibility and strategic support to the Network.
- The Chairperson shall provide leadership during the transition period, convene meetings, guide implementation of agreed priorities, represent the Network in strategic engagements and support partnership mobilization.
- The Secretariat shall coordinate the day-to-day operations of the Network, maintain membership records, support communication, manage the registration platform, prepare meeting documents, document decisions and follow up on agreed actions.
- Members shall actively participate in Network activities, contribute to mentorship and peer learning, share knowledge and opportunities, support thematic tracks and promote the objectives of the Network.
- Partners and sponsors shall provide technical, financial, logistical, institutional or strategic support to advance the work of the Network in line with its priorities.

### **Reporting, Sustainability and Review**

The Secretariat shall prepare meeting records, activity reports and periodic progress updates for consideration by the Patron, Chairperson, transitional leadership and members. The

Network shall pursue sustainability through institutional support, partnerships, sponsorships, member engagement, collaborative programmes and alignment with national, regional and global initiatives on data, gender equality, technology and sustainable development.

These Terms of Reference shall guide the activation and initial operations of the Network. They may be reviewed and updated during the first annual meeting or any duly convened forum of the Network.