

# CHOICE DISSEMINATION WORKSHOP REPORT

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025

Venue: Movenpick Hotel, Westlands -Nairobi.

## Executive Summary

The CHOICE Dissemination Workshop took place on 1 September 2025 at the Movenpick Hotel in Nairobi. It brought together government officials, academic leaders, civil society organizations, and development partners to review progress and agree on next steps for advancing Health and Health-related Sustainable Development Goals (HHSDGs) in Kenya. The Department of Population Health at Aga Khan University convened the meeting to share evidence from the CHOICE project, present policy briefs, and generate practical recommendations. Discussions focused on four priority areas: Mental Health, Gender equality, Climate Action, and SDG Data Systems.

### Objectives and Participation

The workshop sought to disseminate key findings from CHOICE project, encourage dialogue across sectors, identify opportunities for policy influence, programming, and co-create actionable solutions, strengthen commitment to localized, inclusive, and climate-resilient strategies, and discuss sustainable policy engagement pathways beyond the project cycle. High-level speakers included representatives from KNBS, UN Women, NGEC, Government Ministries, KEMRI, academia, civil society, and Private sector. A consistent theme was the need for stronger data systems, better financing, and community-driven solutions to ensure no one is left behind.

### Major Findings

1. **Data and SDG Monitoring:** Kenya has made progress in reporting on some goals, but gaps remain, especially in health and mental health indicators. Existing data are underutilized, systems are not well integrated, financing is inconsistent, and disaggregation is weak. Priorities include strengthening national data architecture, improving system interoperability, and introducing clear quality assurance frameworks.
2. **Mental Health:** Between five and ten million Kenyans are estimated to be affected at any given time. Despite this, mental health receives a very small share of the health budget. Key challenges include stigma, limited workforce capacity, weak surveillance, and programs that fail to address gender dynamics.
3. **Climate and Health Nexus:** Rising temperatures, changing humidity, and more frequent disasters are having a direct effect on child nutrition and broader public health. Participants highlighted the need for county-level adaptation strategies, investment in early warning systems, and recognition of indigenous knowledge in planning.

4. **Gender Equality:** Gender-based violence, the burden of unpaid care, and low levels of political representation remain major barriers to SDG progress. Participants called for more gender-responsive policy and stronger civic participation.

## **Recommendations**

- Establish and finance a centralized, interoperable SDG data platform, led by KNBS, with governance and legal mechanisms for data sharing and quality control.
- Increase domestic financing for health, with a specific allocation for mental health and data systems. Options include ring-fenced budgets and public–private partnerships.
- Integrate mental health into primary health care, expand community-based services, train more health workers, and sustain anti-stigma campaigns through mass and youth-friendly media.
- Scale up community-led climate adaptation initiatives, supported by gender-responsive planning and more equitable distribution of climate finance at county level.
- Formalize the CHOICE think tank as a permanent forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue, fundraising, and knowledge exchange, to sustain progress beyond 2030.

## **Way Forward**

Stakeholders committed to embedding CHOICE recommendations into national and county plans, strengthening cross-sector partnerships, and using data to drive accountability. Immediate next steps include signing data-sharing agreements, piloting integrated mental health services in selected counties, and mobilizing resources for national data infrastructure, including citizen-generated data.

