

BREATHE NAIROBI MEDIA CAMPAIGN REPORT

April - June 2025

Quarterly communication campaign report that will detail the implementation and outcomes of the radio, social media and SMS campaigns

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Breathe Nairobi Initiative launched a strategic multi-platform media campaign to raise public awareness on air pollution in Nairobi, with a particular focus on informal settlements, areas most burdened by poor air quality. The campaign employed a two-tier media engagement strategy: grassroots activation through community radio stations and broader policy-oriented discourse via national broadcast platforms.

At the local level, partnerships were established with four leading community radio stations; Ghetto FM (Majengo), Ruben FM (Mukuru), Koch FM (Mathare/Korogocho), and Pamoja FM (Kibera) to disseminate tailored messages and engage residents through interactive talk shows. Nationally, KBC Radio and KBC TV were engaged to facilitate discussions with transport stakeholders and government actors, highlighting the urgent issue of vehicular emissions and regulatory responsibility.

Over the campaign period, more than 400 radio spots were aired, and four broadcast interviews conducted. These efforts were complemented by a consistent social media presence, with posts published every Tuesday and Thursday to reinforce key messages and drive digital engagement.

An estimated 1.05 million people were reached through combined community and national radio and TV platforms, based on adjusted listener/viewer estimates and campaign exposure frequency. This reach primarily encompassed residents of Nairobi's informal settlements, members of the transport sector, and the broader Nairobi Metropolitan public.

2 CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

2.1 Background and Objectives

The Breathe Nairobi Initiative was designed to:

- Raise awareness about the causes and consequences of air pollution.
- Empower informal settlement communities with practical knowledge and agency to reduce pollution.
- Influence public discourse and institutional accountability around transport-related emissions.
- Foster cross-sector dialogue on solutions through traditional and community media platforms.

Air pollution in Nairobi stems from both household practices (such as open burning of waste) and systemic issues like unregulated emissions from aging vehicles. The campaign therefore strategically targeted:

- Residents in informal settlements, to address behaviour-driven sources of pollution.
- National-level audiences, to spark sectoral accountability and policy discourse.

3 MEDIA ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

3.1 Grassroots Radio Campaign (Community-Level)

To penetrate Nairobi's informal settlements, where exposure to air pollution is most acute, the campaign collaborated with four community-based radio stations:

1. Ghetto FM (Majengo);
2. Ruben FM (Mukuru);
3. Koch FM (Mathare/Korogocho) and;
4. Pamoja FM (Kibera).

These stations were selected for their hyperlocal reach, cultural fluency, and ability to shape public discourse in communities often overlooked by mainstream media.

The campaign design prioritised consistency, repetition, and authenticity to maximise audience impact. Presenter mentions were integrated into daily programming, delivering relatable and urgent messages about common sources of pollution. These were further reinforced by dramatized radio spots, aired from 24th April to 2nd May 2025, which were broadcasted five times a day on each community radio station, and at varying times in the morning, afternoon and evening. Both the mentions and the radio spots were carefully crafted to resonate emotionally and linguistically with local audiences.

The weekly live call-ins took place on the same day as each radio interview, which were conducted on the 3rd, 10th, 14th, and 17th of April. Each interview received an average of five live calls, all occurring between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. The designated interview time slot. This approach helped transform passive listening into active community engagement. Each morning interview was estimated to reach approximately between 10,000- 20,000 listeners per radio station.

3.1.1 Target Audience:

Residents living in Nairobi's informal settlements, including parents, youth, informal workers, and local leaders.

3.1.2 Key Components:

3.1.2.1 Presenter Mentions

The presenter mentions aired daily from 31st March to 2nd May 2025, with each message broadcast five times a day across three key time slots: 8:00–10:00 a.m., 12:00–3:00 p.m., and 4:00–6:00 p.m. Over this 30-day period, short and impactful scripts focused on key issues such as common sources of air pollution (e.g., burning plastics), associated health risks, particularly for children, and practical community-level actions like tree planting, cleaner cooking methods, and proper waste segregation. The frequency and timing of the broadcasts ensured broad coverage, with each time slot attracting unique audiences. The estimated cumulative reach during this period exceeded 50,000 listeners.

3.1.2.2 Radio Spots

Dramatized audio spots were aired five times daily from 31st March to 2nd May 2025, strategically scheduled across three key time slots: morning (8:00–10:00 a.m.), afternoon (12:00–3:00 p.m.), and evening (4:00–6:00 p.m.). These spots reinforced core campaign messages throughout the day and were voiced in local dialects to enhance relatability and improve retention. The use of familiar language and storytelling formats ensured the messages resonated deeply with listeners, strengthening awareness around air pollution, its health impacts, and the importance of community action.

3.1.2.3 Interactive Talk Shows

In April, each community radio station hosted a weekly live call-in show between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., featuring community environmental activists, health workers, and affected residents. These sessions created a platform for sharing lived experiences, airing grievances, and highlighting local solutions to air pollution challenges—particularly those linked to waste burning. The interviews were held on 3rd April at Ruben FM, 10th April at Pamoja FM, 17th April at Koch FM, and 24th April at Mtaani Radio, and primarily targeted audiences from informal settlements, who are disproportionately affected by poor air quality.

3.1.2.4 Notable Engagement:

A caller from Mukuru recounted: *“Kila jioni tunalazimika kufunga madirisha kwa sababu ya moshi ya takataka inayochomwa karibu na nyumba yetu.”* - which translates to “Every evening we have to close the windows because of the smoke from burning garbage near our home”.

Youth groups from Kibera actively engaged with the call-in segments, with several callers expressing how the broadcasts were motivating them to initiate local clean-up drives. One caller remarked, *“Hii maneno ya waste burning kwa radio imetufungua macho – lazima tuanze kuchukua hatua yetu. Tunaanza anzisha cleanup kwa mtaa kabla mambo ziharibike more,”* which translates to *“This waste burning issue on the radio has opened our eyes – we have to start taking action ourselves. We can organise a clean-up in the neighbourhood before things get worse.”*

These reflected a growing sense of ownership and urgency among the youth. These responses demonstrated the campaign’s ability to not only inform but also inspire grassroots action.

The media relations efforts resulted to the following coverage:

- [Pamoja FM](#)
- [Ghetto FM](#)
- [Koch FM](#)
- [Ruben FM](#)

3.2 National Broadcast (Policy-Level)

3.2.1 KBC Radio Interview

In May, the campaign expanded to national platforms, featuring two high-level radio interviews that focused on transport-related air pollution. On 12th May, Angela Njagi, Lead for Corporate Communications and Marketing at NAPTA, and Maurice Oduori, Secretary General of the Matatu Workers Union, were hosted by Nick Ndeda on the KBC English service (Breakfast Club) from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. The conversation centred on the role of the public transport sector in reducing vehicular emissions and the need for behavioural and policy shifts. On 14th May, John Paul, Lead Operations Manager at NAPTA, and Alex Kulema, Chairman of the Kenya Boda Boda Welfare Association, appeared on KBC Radio Taifa (Zinga la Asubuhi) from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. hosted by Dorah Manyia. They discussed sector-specific air quality challenges and the importance of empowering riders and drivers to adopt cleaner practices. These national broadcasts brought together key voices from the transport sector to spotlight regulatory gaps and explore practical, people-driven solutions for cleaner air in Nairobi.

3.2.1.1 Focus:

- Vehicular emissions from poorly maintained public transport vehicles.
- Health risks linked to particulate matter.
- The urgent need for stricter emission standards, routine vehicle inspections, and investment in low-emission transit.

3.2.1.2 Impact:

The interviews brought credibility to the campaign by placing it within a national regulatory context and framing community struggles as symptoms of broader systemic failures. The 12th May feature on KBC English Service's Breakfast Club, which attracts approximately 250,000 listeners daily, enabled the campaign to reach an urban, policy-aware demographic. Meanwhile, the 14th May interview aired on KBC Radio Taifa's Zinga la Asubuhi, tapping into a larger, predominantly Swahili-speaking audience of around 275,000 listeners across Kenya. Together, these appearances significantly expanded the campaign's reach and impact beyond informal settlements to national audiences engaged in civic and public discourse.

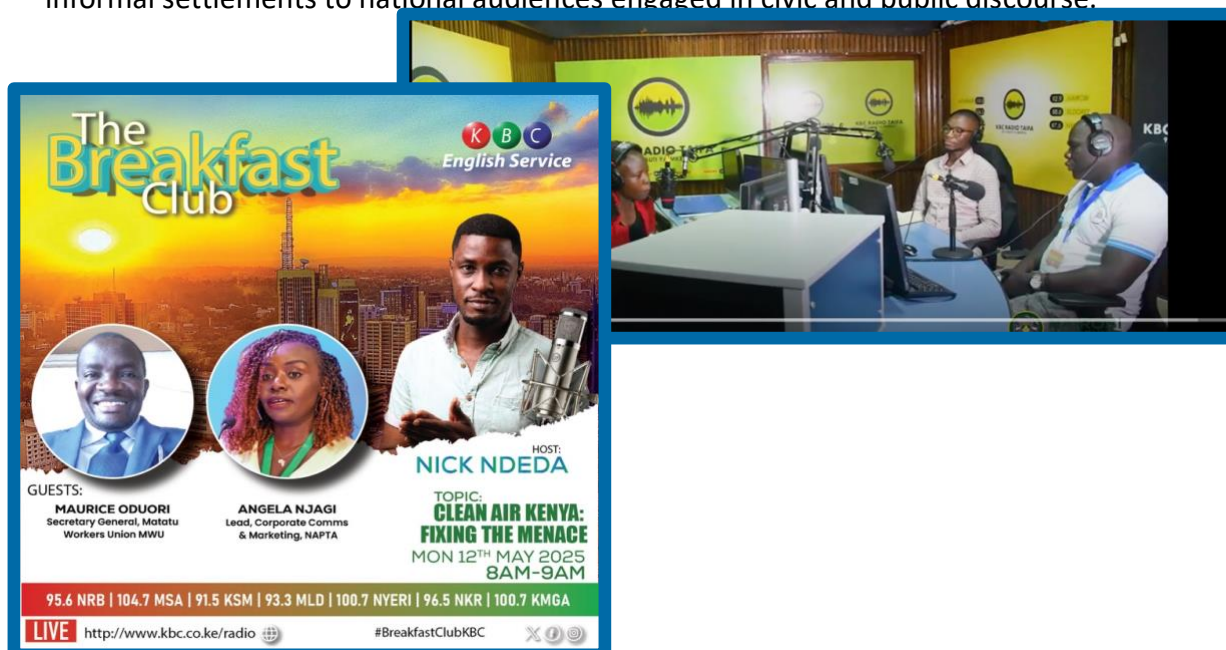


Figure 1: KBC radio interviews on both the the English Service and Radio Taifa

3.2.2 KBC TV Interview

On 14th May 2025, Charles Aholi, Executive Director of NAPTA, and Jonathan Daniel Onura, Director at Pullman Transit, appeared on KBC's Good Morning Kenya show hosted by Mike Migwi to discuss Nairobi's escalating air pollution crisis. The conversation explored three key themes: a comparative analysis of air quality across Nairobi's urban zones, the persistent lack of enforcement of traffic-related environmental policies, and the vital role of youth-led advocacy in shaping greener, more liveable cities.

This national broadcast served as a critical bridge between policy-level discourse and grassroots concerns, reinforcing the issues raised during community radio engagements. By featuring on a widely respected platform such as Good Morning Kenya, which reaches an estimated audience of 100,000 viewers, the campaign secured further visibility and credibility, amplifying community voices to a broader, more policy-attuned national audience.

The media relations efforts resulted to the following coverage:

1. KBC Tv GMK show on 14th May 2025 at 8:30am (Estimated reach 60,000-130,000 viewers): <https://youtu.be/SQGC88bdZ-o?si=25AOggLZpzd92khk>

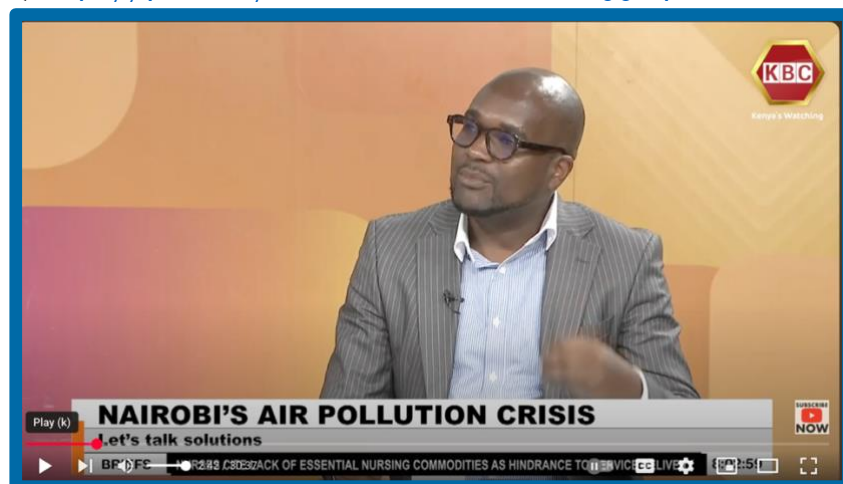


Figure 2: KBC Tv GMK show on 14th May 2025 at 8:30am

2. KBC Radio Taifa Interview (Zinga la Asubuhi) on 14th May 2025 at 8a.m. Estimated reach (250,000-400,000) listeners.: [Full Interview 14th May.mp4](#)



Figure 3: KBC Radio Taifa Interview (Zinga la Asubuhi) on 14th May 2025 at 8a.m.

3. KBC English Service (Breakfast Club) on 12th May 2025 from 9.00 am to 10.00 am. (Estimated reach 180,000-300,000 listeners.): [Radio Interview highlight - Napta & Matatu Sacco.mp4](#)



Figure 4: KBC English Service (Breakfast Club) on 12th May 2025 from 9.00 am to 10.00 am.

4 SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

1. Platform: Facebook (via radio station pages and campaign partners)
2. Frequency: Biweekly (Tuesdays and Thursdays)
3. Total Posts: 32 original content posts including quotes from radio callers, infographic tips on air pollution, and community event invitations.
4. Reach: Youth engagement was notably strong. Posts prompted debate threads, pledges to avoid plastic burning, and user-generated suggestions for neighbourhood solutions.



5 ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

5.1 High Volume of Direct Participation

1. Each station averaged 20+ SMS/call-ins per talk show.
2. Participants included parents, informal workers, schoolchildren, and boda boda operators.
3. Community members shared vivid accounts of nighttime burning, coughing fits in children, and blocked nostrils in the morning.

5.2 Engagement Metrics

The radio campaign accounted for the largest share of reach garnered under the Breathe Nairobi campaign, with each station averaging daily listenership between 100,000 and 250,000. Multiple daily slots and varied airing times were used to maximise audience exposure and a 1.5 multiplier was applied to account for weekly cumulative reach rather than repeated exposure to the same listeners.

Table 1: Campaign Reach Estimation (Year 1 – June 2025)

Channel / Activity	Details	Estimated Reach	Notes
Radio Campaigns	Ghetto FM (250,000), Pamoja FM (200,000), Koch FM (100,000), Ruben FM (150,000) daily listeners × 1.5 weekly multiplier, over 5-day campaigns with PSA rotations and talk shows.	~1,050,000	Listener estimates vary by station size and influence; a 1.5 multiplier reflects weekly cumulative exposure across multiple time slots. Daily reach reflects cumulative, not simultaneous, listenership.
TV Segments	Estimated viewers from KBC broadcast segment	~75,000	Conservative estimate based on assumed national reach during non-prime airtime.

5.3 Key Concerns Raised

1. Garbage Burning: A chronic issue driven by lack of waste collection services.
2. Matatu Emissions: Identified as a major source of smog in high-traffic areas like Mathare and Kibera.
3. Health Impact on Children: Widespread anxiety about chronic respiratory illnesses, often requiring repeated visits to local clinics.

6 COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS PROPOSED

Listeners across stations did not merely highlight problems; they demonstrated willingness to act:

Suggested Solution	Source
Organising community clean-ups	Youth groups in Mathare & Kibera
School tree planting initiatives	Teachers in Mukuru & Majengo
"Clean Air Tips" radio segment	Parent caller from Ghetto FM
Use of alternative cooking fuels	Facebook commenter, Korogocho
Engagement with local chiefs to report waste burners	Callers across all stations

A standout quote came from a youth caller in Korogocho:

"Tunaweza badilisha hali ikiwa kila mtu ataamua kuchukua hatua ndogo kama kutokuchoma plastiki au kupanda miti." – which translates to "We can change the situation if everyone decides to take small actions like not burning plastic or planting trees."

7 CAMPAIGN OUTCOMES

7.1 Increased Public Awareness

1. As a result of the coordinated media engagement, an estimated 1,050,000 people were reached through interviews, presenter mentions, and radio spots aired across community radio stations and national television-amplifying campaign messages to both local and national audiences
2. Repetitive exposure through presenter mentions and radio spots created a ripple effect. Listeners were able to recall messages days later during talk shows or on social media.
3. Parents began linking their children's breathing difficulties to home and neighbourhood air quality.

7.2 Strengthened Public Dialogue

1. Community members expressed a sense of inclusion and ownership over the issue.
2. National-level platforms acknowledged the community perspective, closing the feedback loop.

7.3 Early Behaviour Change Signals

1. Callers pledged to stop burning plastics and instead dig compost pits.
2. Radio presenters reported that some residents began lobbying their local chief for improved waste collection.

8 KEY INSIGHTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. Layered media strategies work best: combining grassroots mobilisation with national platform advocacy enhances legitimacy and reach.
2. Air pollution is both a behavioural and structural issue: while community actions matter, enforcement and regulation are necessary.
3. Residents of informal settlements are ready for change: given the right platforms and partners, they will mobilise, educate, and lead.

9 CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

The Breathe Nairobi Initiative successfully ignited a citywide conversation on air pollution by bringing together community voices, national actors, and cross-platform media to deliver a unified message: clean air is a right, and collective responsibility.

9.1 Next Steps:

1. Expand campaign reach by engaging schools and health clinics.
2. Sustain momentum with monthly radio segments and seasonal clean-up events.
3. Facilitate policy dialogue with NEMA, Nairobi County Government, and Matatu Owners Association.
4. The groundwork has been laid. Nairobi is listening. And the communities are ready to breathe again.

10 APPENDIX

10.1 Log sheets

[Log sheets - Radio spots](#)

10.2 Overall campaign reach estimates

From Year 1 through June 2025, the Breathe Nairobi Initiative has reached an estimated 1.44 million people through a multi-platform strategy that combined radio, social media, in-person engagements and grassroots mobilisation. The radio campaign comprising one-hour talk shows and repeated PSAs aired across four community stations (Ruben FM, Ghetto FM, Koch FM, and Pamoja FM) accounted for the largest share of this reach, with each station averaging averaging daily listenership between 100,000 and 250,000. Multiple daily slots and varied airing times were used to maximise audience exposure and a 1.5 multiplier was applied to account for weekly cumulative reach rather than repeated exposure to the same listeners. Additional touchpoints included over 284,000 people reached via social media, strategic newspaper coverage, direct workshop participation and targeted WhatsApp-based poster dissemination. A conservative estimate of 75,000 viewers has also been included for the KBC television segment, with additional reach recorded through uploaded YouTube content.

Table 2: Overall campaign

Channel / Activity	Details	Estimated Reach				Notes
		Y1 Q4	Y2 Q1	Y2 Q2	Total	
Radio Campaigns	Ghetto FM (250,000), Pamoja FM (200,000), Koch FM (100,000), Ruben FM (150,000)	-	-	1,050,000	1,050,000	Listener estimates vary by station size and influence; a 1.5 multiplier reflects weekly cumulative exposure across multiple time slots.
TV Segments	Estimated viewers from KBC broadcast segment	-	-	75,000	75,000	Conservative estimate based on assumed national reach during non-prime airtime.
Social Media (All Platforms)	Facebook, X, Instagram, TikTok cumulative Q1–Q2 reach	-	91,526	192,503	284,029	Based on verified analytics from grantee and sub-grantee platforms
Community Workshops	GROOTS, SDI, NAPTA in Mathare, Korogocho, Kibra, Mukuru	-	39	209	248	Registered in-person attendees
YouTube	Views of uploaded KBC segment	-	-	131	131	From analytics
Print / Newspaper Exposure	Estimated readership from coverage in Nation, The Star	10,000	15,000	5,000	30,000	Conservative estimate of audience reach per article
WhatsApp groups & Posters	Distributed campaign material via groups	-	-	500	500	Youth, environmental and CBO WhatsApp groups (5 groups × ~100)
Overall		10,000	106,565	1,323,343	1,439,908	