



NEWSLETTER

1st Quarter of 2026 Edition



OUR VISION

A just society where women and girls realize, embrace and enjoy their full rights and dignity.

OUR MISSION

Actualize and advance women's and girls' social economic, legal and civil rights

OUR MOTTO

We educate women because it is smart. We empower women because it changes the world.

2026

*Produced by the Communications
Department*

Our Thematic Pillars

- Women Peace and Security
- Women Participation in Leadership and Governance
- Sexual and Gender Based Violence Against Women and Girls
- Institutional Strengthening and Growth

Message from the Executive Director

“Dear Partners, Friends, and Supporters,

As we conclude the first quarter of 2026, we reflect with gratitude on a period marked by growth, collaboration, and meaningful impact at the Muslim Women Advancement of Rights and Protection (MWARP). The strides we have made together reaffirm our shared commitment to building inclusive, just, and resilient communities.

It is with great pride and gratitude that I reflect on the successful completion of the Kujenga Amani Project, a transformative peacebuilding initiative implemented by the Muslim Women Advancement of Rights and Protection (MWARP) across Mombasa and Kwale Counties. Funded by the European Union through CEFA in Kenya and Somalia, this project has stood as a powerful testament to what can be achieved when communities unite around a shared vision of peace. By bringing young people and members of the security apparatus together, we created inclusive spaces for dialogue, trust-building, and collaboration, laying the foundation for stronger, safer communities. Among the key highlights of the project were the Peace Caravans, which served as vibrant platforms for community engagement and awareness, and the Peace Clubs, a school-based initiative that actively engaged students across Kwale and Mombasa. Through these clubs, young people were nurtured into ambassadors of peace, equipped with the knowledge, values, and skills to promote tolerance, coexistence, and non-violence within their schools and communities.

Through a series of engagements and capacity-building forums, young people have been empowered to take an active role in peacebuilding processes, while security actors have gained a deeper understanding of the communities they serve. This collaboration has not only bridged gaps but has also strengthened mutual respect and accountability.

The success of the Kujenga Amani Project reminds us that peace is not a one-time achievement, but a continuous and collective responsibility. As MWARP, we remain committed to sustaining these gains and amplifying youth voices in shaping a peaceful and inclusive society.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the European Union and CEFA for their invaluable support, as well as to all our partners, stakeholders, facilitators, and participants who made this journey impactful and meaningful.

The Muslim Women Advancement of Rights and Protection (MWARP), in collaboration with Agency for Peacebuilding (AP) and Horn Center for Democracy (HCD), convened a transformative two-day training in Mombasa, bringing together women mediators and peacebuilders from across the Horn of Africa.

The training provided a dynamic platform for women who have actively participated in mediation processes at various Track levels to come together, share experiences, and reflect on their journeys. Through rich discussions, participants highlighted the realities of navigating peace processes, shared practical strategies they have employed in conflict resolution, and exchanged valuable lessons drawn from their work on the ground. These conversations underscored the critical role women continue to play in shaping inclusive and sustainable peace.

A key highlight of the convening was the collective reflection on the future of the Horn of Africa Women Mediators Platform, which was established in April 2025. Participants engaged in forward-looking discussions aimed at strengthening the platform's impact, identifying strategic spaces of influence, and exploring effective approaches to engagement within formal and informal peace processes. There was a shared commitment to ensuring that women's voices are not only heard but actively shape decision-making spaces.

MWARP joined fellow Kujenga Amani partners from Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique for a vibrant regional Peace Club event that brought together learners who have spent the last three years turning ideas of peace into real action. These weren't just students, they were changemakers, storytellers, and bridge-builders from across the East African coastline.

From the moment the event kicked off, it was clear this wasn't your typical gathering. Laughter, cultural exchange, and powerful conversations filled the space as young people connected over a shared mission: building communities where dialogue replaces division, and understanding overcomes conflict. But the real highlight? The voices of the learners: Standing confidently, they delivered a united and powerful call to action, peace clubs are not just important, they are essential. In their eyes, these clubs are safe spaces where young people learn to resolve conflicts, challenge harmful narratives, and promote coexistence before tensions escalate. Simply put, they are the front line of prevention.

Throughout this quarter, our work under the COSME Project has continued to strengthen community-led solutions. The Peer-to-Peer Learning Sessions held across Kilifi County created powerful spaces for young women and men to exchange knowledge, challenge social norms, and take collective action in advancing gender equality and environmental sustainability. These engagements continue to demonstrate that lasting change is most impactful when it is driven by the communities themselves.

We are also encouraged by progress in advancing access to justice. The re-establishment of a court in Lamu East marks a significant milestone, bringing justice services closer to communities that have long faced barriers—especially women and vulnerable groups. This achievement reflects the power of sustained advocacy and collaboration, and reinforces our belief that justice is a fundamental pillar of dignity and accountability.

Our commitment to preventing Gender-Based Violence remains steadfast. Through targeted capacity-building initiatives, including social media trainings for local influencers, we have amplified ethical, survivor-centered storytelling and strengthened digital advocacy for SGBV prevention. It is inspiring to see these efforts translating into increased awareness, community dialogue, and the elevation of voices of Adolescent Girls and Young Women.

In parallel, we have deepened our focus on climate justice by equipping community actors with evidence-based approaches to advocacy and ecosystem restoration. By integrating data, research, and lived experiences, we are ensuring that climate solutions are not only effective but also equitable and inclusive.

Regionally, our participation in peacebuilding initiatives under the Kujenga Amani Project has highlighted the transformative role of young people in fostering coexistence and stability. Engaging with partners across East Africa continues to strengthen our collective efforts in promoting peace and security within our communities.

As we look ahead, we remain inspired by the resilience of the communities we serve and the strength of our partnerships. Each milestone achieved this quarter is a testament to what we can accomplish together. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all our partners, supporters, and community champions for your unwavering commitment to advancing gender justice, climate action, peacebuilding, and access to justice.

Together, we will continue to build a future where women and girls thrive with dignity, equality, and opportunity.”

Rahma Gulamu, Shujaa 2025

Executive Director

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Moments That Mattered

In this quarter, MWARP's programs demonstrated sustained impact and growth across Lamu, Kilifi, Garissa, and Kwale Counties. Building on the momentum from February, we expanded our reach through integrated initiatives that combined skills development, financial literacy, advocacy, and community dialogues. These efforts provided women, caregivers, and youth with practical tools, critical knowledge, and safe platforms to express their perspectives and influence change. Across all engagements, we strengthened community networks, fostered collaboration, and deepened local ownership of development processes. This quarter reaffirmed our commitment to advancing gender equality, promoting climate resilience, and enhancing civic participation, as communities continue to take active roles in shaping inclusive and sustainable futures.

- **10 Social Media Influencers** trained in Kilifi County under the TIMIZA Project, this resulted to **over 90,000 indirect participants** empowered by their content online
- **317 direct program beneficiaries** across Lamu and Garissa Counties under the RITAI Project
- **578 direct beneficiaries** reached in Kilifi County under the COSME and TIMIZA Project
- **167 direct beneficiaries** empowered through the Amkeni Wakenya programme in Kwale County
- In total, MWARP reached **1,062 direct program beneficiaries** most of them being women.
- **187, 522 beneficiaries** were reached online in this quarter (direct and indirect participants)
- **A total of 68, 354 indirect participants** on different social media platforms were reached: **55, 554** on Facebook, **11, 633** on X, and **1, 167** on YouTube.
- **Young Women taking the floor:** 4 memorandums from Dabaso, Jilore, Adu, and Gongoni Wards submitted at the County Assembly of Kilifi during the Engagement Advocacy Forum

THEMATIC PILLAR 1: WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY

Building Peace from the Ground Up in Kwale County

In the vibrant communities of Kwale County, a powerful movement for peace is taking shape, driven by collaboration, courage, and the voices of young people.

Through the Kujenga Amani Project, MWARP is bringing together key actors to reimagine what sustainable peace looks like. In Lungalunga Sub County, MWARP facilitated a transformative 2-day Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) training, uniting officers from the National Police Service and the Kwale County Inspectorate. The goal was simple but impactful: to strengthen peace efforts by placing human rights at the center of security and community engagement. But the story doesn't stop there.

In a bold and inspiring move, MWARP stood alongside passionate youth from Kwale County in a high-level policy dialogue with Members of the County Assembly (MCAs). Convened by WeWorld and co-funded by the European Union in Kenya, this platform amplified youth voices where it matters most, at the decision-making table.

Armed with a powerful Policy Brief, the youth fearlessly tackled some of the region's most pressing conflict triggers: land disputes, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), youth crime and substance abuse, intergenerational exclusion, and tribal and religious tensions. Their message was clear, peace is possible when young people are heard, included, and empowered.

This is what peacebuilding looks like: bridging institutions and communities, elevating youth leadership, and turning dialogue into action.



From Borders to Brotherhood: How Lamu's Youth & Leaders Are Rewriting the Peace Narrative

This quarter, MWARP turned strategy into action in Kiunga by operationalizing the Kiunga-Ras Kiamboni Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) Protocol. Through hands-on simulations, security officers and community leaders strengthened coordination, communication, and rapid response, marking a shift toward proactive, community-led security.

Under the Amani Mpakani initiative, MWARP brought together religious leaders, administrators, and security actors from Faza, Kizingitini, Mnyabogi, Tchundwa, and Mbwajumali for open dialogue on peacebuilding, social cohesion, and reducing religious profiling, strengthening trust between communities and security actors.

At Lamu Fort, faith leaders further engaged on social protection, gender-responsive approaches, and inclusive peacebuilding, while also committing to a joint memorandum on the Religious Organizations Bill (2024).

not only as spiritual guides but also as advocates for policy change.

From Classrooms to Coastlines: Youth Leading the Peace Movement in East Africa

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From Inclusion to Influence: Women Mediators Taking Their Power Back

The room was filled with quiet strength as women mediators from across the Horn of Africa came together, not to be included, but to take their place. Among them was MWARP, standing alongside other partners in amplifying the voices and leadership of women in peace processes.

They shared experiences of leading peace efforts in their communities, often unseen, yet deeply impactful—proving that their capability has never been in question. What stood out was a shared resolve to break barriers that have long limited their access and recognition, and to confidently navigate spaces not originally built for them.



THEMATIC PILLAR 2: WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Shaping Governance and Driving Change in Garissa

Between January and March, the Muslim Women Advancement of Rights and Protection (MWARP), under the RITAI Project, created impactful spaces where youth and stakeholders came together to talk governance, leadership, and the future they envision.

At the heart of these engagements was a dynamic youth forum that brought together young people and key institutions, including the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP Kenya) and the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). The conversations were real and eye-opening. Youth engaged directly with these institutions on the role of political parties, voter registration, and the importance of their participation in democratic processes. While the sessions sparked inspiration, they also highlighted challenges, limited access to information and low representation in leadership spaces remain key barriers for many young people.

Beyond this, MWARP actively participated in the County-Level Engagement Forum for the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Targeted Review on Youth Issues, held at the County Commissioner's Office in Garissa. The forum brought together a diverse group, youth leaders, civil society, and government stakeholders, creating a platform for honest conversations and meaningful contributions. The insights shared will play a crucial role in shaping Kenya's national report on youth issues, ensuring that young people's realities and recommendations are reflected at a national level.

Taking it a step further, MWARP, in collaboration with the County Gender Department, hosted a powerful 3-day Community Engagement and Policy Dialogue in Garissa Township. Youth and community members from Township, Waberi, Galbet, and Ifin wards came together to unpack critical issues affecting their daily lives. From access to information and strengthening communication between citizens and duty bearers, to advancing social accountability and addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), the dialogue created a safe and inclusive space for voices that often go unheard.



How Kwale Youth and Women Are Owning the Tax and Governance Space

Across Kwale County, a quiet but powerful shift is taking place, young people, women, and persons with disabilities are stepping up, getting informed, and taking charge of their economic and governance future. Between January and March, Muslim Women Advancement of Rights and Protection (MWARP), under the Equanomics Project, rolled out a series of impactful engagements that are changing how communities understand taxes, opportunities, and public participation.

It started at the Bongwe Ward Administrator's Office in Msambweni Sub-County, where women and youth gathered not just to listen, but to learn, question, and grow. The sessions broke down complex tax concepts into practical knowledge, covering obligations, penalties, and the importance of KRA PIN registration. With guidance on systems like e-TIMS and insights into financing opportunities such as Biashara Fund, Youth Fund, Women Enterprise Fund (WEF), and Uwezo Fund, participants began to see taxation not as a burden, but as a gateway to opportunity and growth.

Momentum continued in Lungalunga Sub-County, where similar outreaches in Kinondo and Vanga Wards brought women and persons with disabilities into the conversation. Here, the focus expanded to include tax exemptions for PWDs, group and business registration, and access to government empowerment funds. The energy in these sessions was undeniable, participants left equipped, confident, and ready to formalize their hustles and tap into available resources.

But MWARP didn't stop at economic empowerment. Recognizing that real change also requires a voice in governance, the organization convened dynamic Pre-Public Participation forums with Civil Society Organizations across Pongwe Kikoneni, Vanga, Dzombo, and Mwereni Wards. These dialogues unpacked the County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSP), creating space for CSOs to critically analyse county planning and budgeting processes.

The conversations were bold and honest. Participants pointed out inconsistencies in the CFSP, unrealistic revenue projections, and the heavy reliance on national government funding. They also highlighted how complex technical language often locks out ordinary citizens from meaningful participation. But beyond critique, solutions emerged—ranging from simplifying budget documents to adopting digital revenue collection methods like EPR receipts, and exploring innovative financing through partnerships and development assistance.

In collaboration with the Kwale County Community of Practice (KCOP), MWARP amplified these voices, ensuring that community perspectives are not just heard, but considered in shaping county priorities. The forums created a bridge between citizens and governance processes—turning passive observers into active contributors.



Airwaves & Action: Garissa Youth Driving Bold Conversations and Real Change

This quarter, MWARP turned up the volume on youth voices, bold conversations, and community impact. From hosting two powerful Twitter Spaces, "The Surge in Divorce Rates in Garissa County: What It Means for Families" and "Politically Awake or Politically Used? The Reality of Northern Youth," young people engaged in honest, thought-provoking discussions on real issues shaping their lives.

MWARP also premiered two inspiring documentaries spotlighting Mr. Kipera and Lulu Salim, young changemakers leading from the front in community engagement and driving the development agenda forward.

Under the RITAI Project, MWARP lit up the airwaves on Risala FM with a dynamic radio talk show centered on advocacy, access to education, and informed career pathways, empowering youth and the wider community with knowledge that matters.

Shaping the Future of Governance

This quarter in Lamu County, something powerful unfolded not just meetings, but movements. Muslim Women Advancement of Rights and Protection (MWARP) stepped into spaces where decisions are made and ensured that community voices were not only heard, but felt. From governance to budgeting, the energy was bold, youthful, and solution-driven.

During the Public Participation Forum on the 10-Point Agenda by the National Dialogue Committee, MWARP joined diverse stakeholders in shaping conversations that matter. This was more than a formal engagement, it became a platform for fresh perspectives, where participants openly shared ideas, raised critical concerns, and offered practical recommendations to strengthen the implementation of the report. The room was alive with purpose, driven by a shared vision for accountability and inclusive governance.

Momentum carried forward into a vibrant community-led process in Faza. Following a dynamic budget engagement forum convened by MWARP on 26th January 2026, community champions took a bold step on 27th January 2026 by officially submitting the 2026/2027 County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSP) Memorandum. This was a defining moment, turning dialogue into action, and participation into influence.

The Budget Engagement Forum itself brought together a powerful mix of community members, women leaders, youth, civil society actors, and sector stakeholders. Through interactive discussions, participants deepened their understanding of the CFSP and gained the confidence to actively engage in county budgeting processes. It was a space where knowledge met action, and where every voice counted.



THEMATIC PILLAR 3: SEXUAL & GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Voices That Matter: Lamu's Young Changemakers Take the Lead

MWARP proudly joined stakeholders, community members, and most importantly, children, for the Lamu County Child Welfare Fund Public Participation Forum. But this wasn't just another meeting, it was a vibrant, youth-driven space where children stepped forward, spoke up, and made their voices count. With confidence and honesty, young participants shared their thoughts on the proposed Child Welfare Fund regulations, offering real insights into what support truly means to them. From access to basic needs to protection and opportunities for growth, their ideas painted a clear picture: policies work best when they are shaped by the very people they are meant to serve.



Building Sustainable Futures for Women and Youth

In a significant step toward strengthening community impact and long-term sustainability, the Muslim Women Advancement of Rights and Protection (MWARP) took part in a two-day Annual Workplan Planning Meeting organized by Plan International Kenya under the COSME Project. The engagement was held at PridelInn Paradise Beach Resort, bringing together a diverse network of women's rights organizations, youth-led groups, government representatives, and technical partners from Kilifi County and Kwale County. Set against the theme "Sustainability," the meeting provided a dynamic platform for reflection and forward planning. Participants collectively reviewed the progress made so far under the COSME Project, celebrating milestones achieved in advancing the rights and empowerment of women, girls, and youth. At the same time, the forum created space for honest conversations around challenges encountered during implementation, allowing partners to share lessons and identify practical solutions.

Girls Leading Change: Young Voices Take the Floor in Kilifi

During this quarter, MWARP, under the TIMIZA Project, convened a powerful Engagement Advocacy Forum with the Committee on Gender Equality at the County Assembly of Kilifi, chaired by Tatu Salim. The forum created a vital platform where community voices could directly influence policy and decision-making processes. Adolescent girls and young women from Dabaso, Jilore, Gongoni, and Adu Wards stepped forward with confidence and purpose, representing the lived realities of their peers. With clarity and courage, they presented memorandums highlighting the key challenges affecting girls and young women in their communities, ranging from limited access to opportunities to issues of protection and well-being. Beyond raising concerns, they demonstrated leadership by putting forward practical and sustainable solutions aimed at driving meaningful change.

A key highlight of the meeting was the collaborative development of the 2026 Annual Workplan, marking the final year of the project. Through interactive sessions, stakeholders aligned their priorities and co-created strategies aimed at ensuring that the project's impact extends beyond its lifecycle. The emphasis on sustainability encouraged organizations to think beyond short-term interventions and focus on building resilient, community-driven initiatives. Technical insights from partners such as the Kenya Forest Association and the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) enriched the discussions, particularly on integrating environmental sustainability into community programming. Their contributions underscored the importance of strong partnerships and locally rooted solutions in achieving lasting development outcomes.



Strengthening Women's Economic Power in Kilifi!

MWARP participated in a two-day workshop at Kilifi Bay alongside members of the County Gender Sector Working Group, convened by the State Department for Gender, UN Women, and the University of Nairobi Women Economic Empowerment Hub. The engagement, graced by CECM for Gender Dr. Ruth Masha, emphasized the need for stronger collaboration among stakeholders to advance women's economic empowerment at the county level. Discussions focused on strengthening policy ownership and leadership commitment toward implementing the National Policy on Women's Economic Empowerment and the National Care Policy, with participants exploring practical ways to translate these frameworks into impact for women at the grassroots.

The engagement marked a significant moment of dialogue between young community members and policymakers. In response, the Committee on Gender Equality reaffirmed its commitment to action, pledging to collaborate with other sector committees and relevant county departments. This collective effort aims to strengthen systems and interventions that safeguard the rights, dignity, and future of the girl child across Kilifi County.



THEMATIC PILLAR 3: SEXUAL & GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Care Work Can't Stay Invisible: MWARP Amplifies Youth Voices at Coast Forum

At Ronald Ngala Primary School Social Hall in Mombasa, energy filled the room as partners, stakeholders, and members of the public gathered for the Regional (Coast) Public Participation Forum on the Social Protection General Regulations 2025. The forum, hosted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection through the State Department for Social Protection and Senior Citizen Affairs, created a powerful space for real conversations about policies that directly impact everyday lives.

MWARP showed up not just to listen, but to speak truth to policy. Drawing from lessons under the Duty of Care project in Lamu County, implemented in partnership with Aga Khan University, the team raised a bold and necessary concern – the draft regulations remain largely silent on unpaid care work. This is the invisible labour that keeps households afloat, yet it continues to go unrecognized and unsupported.

From caring for children to supporting persons with disabilities and the elderly, unpaid care work is overwhelmingly carried by women and girls. These caregivers are the backbone of vulnerable families, yet policy frameworks often overlook their contribution. MWARP highlighted how this gap not only deepens inequality but also limits opportunities for economic empowerment and social protection for those doing the work.

With a strong, youth-driven voice, MWARP called on the Ministry to do better. The message was clear: the final regulations must reflect the lived realities of caregivers. This includes establishing dedicated benefits for unpaid caregivers, formally recognizing them within the Social Protection Registry, and collecting gender-disaggregated data to ensure policies are inclusive, fair, and impactful.



Stronger Together: GJJ Groups Driving Forest and Gender Change in Kilifi

Across Takaungu, Chonyi, and Dzikunze, men and women from Gender Justice Journey (GJJ) groups came together through peer-to-peer learning sessions under the COSME Project—and the impact was real. The sessions created a powerful space where both men and women openly shared experiences, strengthening trust, teamwork, and a shared vision for change in their communities.

One of the biggest outcomes was improved collaboration within and across groups. Participants left with practical approaches to forest restoration and clearer ways to work together more effectively. By learning directly from each other's successes and challenges, the groups built confidence and sharpened their strategies for community-led conservation.

The sessions also deepened understanding of gender equality as a collective responsibility. Men and women reflected on their roles and committed to supporting each other as equal partners in both conservation and community leadership. This shift is already fostering more inclusive decision-making and stronger, more balanced group dynamics.



Digital Voices Activated: Kilifi Creators Ready to Lead the Change

MWARP hosted the Kilifi County Social Media Influencers Training under the TIMIZA Project, bringing together local digital creators for a transformative two-day experience. What began as a skills-building session quickly evolved into a deeper journey of purpose, as participants moved beyond basic content creation to explore storytelling that inspires change.

Throughout the training, influencers learned how to responsibly and creatively highlight the lived experiences of adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), while amplifying key messages on preventing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The sessions emphasized crafting authentic narratives, building meaningful audience connections, and using digital platforms to spark important community conversations.

By the end of the training, participants emerged with a renewed sense of responsibility and direction. No longer just content creators, they became storytellers with a mission—equipped with practical skills in audience engagement, platform strategies, and data-driven storytelling. As they return to their communities, these influencers carry the power to amplify unheard voices, fostering awareness, resilience, and lasting impact far beyond Malindi.



From Learning to Earning: Women Transforming Livelihoods.

At the bustling Lamu Waterfront, MWARP's Skills Development Training under the Scaling Care Innovation Project came alive with energy and ambition. Women and caregivers gathered, eager to enhance their livelihoods, immersing themselves in practical lessons on basic entrepreneurship, value addition, and hands-on livelihood skills. The atmosphere was electric as participants not only learned new techniques but also exchanged experiences, creating a sense of solidarity and shared purpose among small business owners.

By the end of the session, participants were walking away with more than just knowledge, they gained actionable strategies to improve their businesses, from refining products to managing resources effectively. The training sparked meaningful conversations about the day-to-day challenges of running small enterprises, and together, the women explored solutions that could turn obstacles into opportunities. Many left inspired, confident, and ready to implement their new skills to grow their businesses and strengthen their economic independence.



Catalyzing Change: Youth Leading Gender and Climate Action

Over three dynamic days, MWARP brought together dedicated changemakers from Kilifi and Kwale Counties for the Evidence-Based Advocacy for Gender and Climate Leadership Training under the COSME Project. The training created a vibrant space where participants connected, exchanged ideas, and forged lasting networks with other organizations committed to gender equality and climate justice. Through collaborative sessions, they explored practical strategies for advocacy, strengthened their climate leadership skills, and learned how to engage communities using evidence-driven approaches.

By the end of the training, participants were empowered with the tools to influence policies and lead inclusive climate initiatives in their communities. Many left with actionable plans to implement advocacy campaigns, drive local climate solutions, and amplify the voices of women and youth in decision-making spaces. The workshop didn't just build knowledge, it nurtured a movement of informed, confident leaders ready to turn gender and climate goals into tangible community impact.

THEMATIC AREA 4: INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND GROWTH

Reflecting on Impact: Voices from the Amkeni Wakenya Project

In a spirited gathering in Kwale County, MWARP convened a Focus Group Discussion to evaluate the journey of the Amkeni Wakenya Project, funded by UNDP Kenya. The room buzzed with energy as Members of the County Assembly, project beneficiaries, and county budget stakeholders came together to share their experiences. Stories flowed of real change, community members spoke of improved access to services, stronger civic engagement, and tangible progress in local initiatives. The dialogue highlighted the successes of the project, revealing how inclusive participation and targeted interventions had created meaningful impact across the county.

The discussion also served as a critical mirror, helping participants assess areas needing improvement. Stakeholders identified gaps in implementation, challenges faced by beneficiaries, and opportunities to strengthen collaboration in future projects. From these reflections, practical recommendations emerged, aimed at shaping more effective programming and influencing policy engagement. By the end of the session, it was clear that the Amkeni Wakenya Project had not only delivered results but had also sparked a culture of learning, accountability, and continuous improvement among all involved.



Bringing Justice Closer to Lamu East

MWARP accompanied the Registrar of the Magistrates' Court and her team on an impactful visit to Faza, where they engaged directly with members of the Lamu East Court Users Committee. The focus of the dialogue was clear: the re-establishment of a Kadhis Court in Lamu East. For community members, accessing justice often meant long journeys, high costs, and delayed hearings. This initiative, championed by the Court Users Committee with MWARP's active involvement, promises to transform that reality.

By restoring the Kadhis Court locally, residents of Lamu East will now have justice within reach. Cases can be heard faster, travel costs will be reduced, and the overall efficiency of legal processes will improve. Beyond convenience, this move empowers the community, ensuring that legal services are more accessible, affordable, and responsive to the needs of the people, reinforcing the principle that justice should truly be close to home.



Building Peace Together: Kujenga Amani Partners Set the Stage for a Transformative Final Year

The Kujenga Amani Project consortium partners, MWARP and CEFA – Kenya & Somalia, came together at the Mombasa head office for a strategic planning meeting that marked an important milestone in their journey. The gathering provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on a highly impactful 2025, a year defined by meaningful interventions, strengthened partnerships, and tangible progress in advancing peacebuilding efforts across the Swahili Coast. The meeting created space for honest reflection on key achievements, lessons learned, and the collective growth experienced throughout the project's implementation. Partners celebrated the strides made in engaging communities, amplifying youth voices, and fostering collaboration between state and non-state actors. These successes have laid a strong foundation for sustainable peace initiatives driven by inclusivity and shared responsibility.

As the project transitions into its third and final year, the focus is firmly set on deepening existing synergies and scaling impact. With renewed energy and a shared vision, MWARP and CEFA are committed to strengthening partnerships and enhancing community-driven approaches that place young people at the center of peacebuilding processes.



INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATIONS

World Water Day

MWARP commemorated World Water Day through a series of impactful social media posts aimed at shedding light on the often overlooked burden women and girls face in the search for water.

Through these posts, MWARP amplified real-life experiences from communities, highlighting how water scarcity continues to disproportionately affect women and girls. The content drew attention to the long distances they walk daily, the hours lost in search of water, and how this unpaid care work limits their access to education, economic opportunities, and leadership spaces.

The campaign intentionally connected water access to broader gender equality issues, showing that beyond being a basic need, water is deeply linked to dignity, opportunity, and empowerment. By sharing relatable stories and strong messaging, MWARP created awareness and sparked conversations around the hidden costs of water scarcity.

This online commemoration served as a powerful reminder that behind every drop of water fetched, there is time, energy, and potential that could be invested elsewhere. It also reinforced the urgent need for sustainable solutions and shared responsibility to ensure that women and girls are no longer disproportionately burdened.

International Day of Forests

MWARP marked the International Day of Forests by recognizing and celebrating the vital role women play in forest conservation and environmental sustainability.

Across communities, women stand at the forefront of protecting and restoring forests, planting trees, nurturing seedlings, and championing sustainable practices that safeguard natural resources for future generations. Their efforts not only contribute to environmental conservation but also strengthen livelihoods and community resilience.

Despite their critical role, women's contributions in forest conservation often go unrecognized and unsupported. Through this commemoration, MWARP highlighted the need to amplify women's voices, support their initiatives, and ensure they are included in decision-making spaces on climate and environmental issues.

Hope Beyond the Walls: Empowering Women, Inspiring Change

(MWARP) spent time with women inmates in a heartfelt engagement centered on restoring hope, dignity, and the possibility of transformation. The visit created a safe and compassionate space where the women could reflect, share, and reconnect with their sense of self-worth beyond their current circumstances.

During the session, a MWARP representative delivered a powerful motivational message, reminding the women that their past does not define who they are or who they can become. They were encouraged to embrace hope, uplift one another, and view their time as an opportunity for personal growth and learning. The message resonated deeply, sparking renewed courage and a sense of purpose among the inmates.

Through open conversations and encouragement, the engagement highlighted the importance of second chances and the strength found in community. It served as a reminder that with support, resilience, and determination, every woman has the potential to rebuild her life and reintegrate into society with dignity and confidence.



Women Rising, Voices Strong

At Karisa Maitha Grounds, the atmosphere was alive with color, energy, and purpose as MWARP joined the Kilifi County Government and other partners to commemorate International Women's Day. Women from different walks of life gathered not just to celebrate, but to reflect on a shared journey marked by strength, resilience, and unwavering determination. It was a moment to honor the milestones achieved and to recognize the everyday efforts that often go unseen yet continue to shape society.

The celebration served as a powerful reminder that International Women's Day is more than a date on the calendar. It is a call to acknowledge the vital roles women play in every space they occupy. From homes to boardrooms, from community spaces to leadership platforms, women continue to rise, balancing responsibilities while driving meaningful change. Their contributions ripple across generations, building stronger families, inclusive workplaces, and empowered communities.

As voices were raised in unity and stories were shared, one message stood clear—women are not just participants in development; they are at the heart of it. The day reaffirmed the need to continue creating spaces where women can thrive, lead, and be celebrated not only today, but every day.



STORIES OF CHANGE

Empowering Young Peacebuilders Across East Africa

MWARP, alongside Kujenga Amani partners from Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique, joined a regional Peace Club event in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The gathering brought together learners who have been active members of peace clubs supported under the Kujenga Amani Project for the past three years. It was inspiring to see young people confidently step forward as champions of peacebuilding and coexistence along the East African coastline.

During the event, participants shared their experiences, challenges, and successes in promoting harmony within their schools and communities. Their stories highlighted how peace clubs create safe spaces for dialogue, teach conflict resolution skills, and nurture a culture of understanding among learners from diverse backgrounds.

The highlight of the event was a powerful collective call to action from the learners themselves. They emphasized the importance of establishing peace clubs in learning institutions across the African continent, noting that these clubs serve as an early deterrent to conflict and violence. Their message underscored the role of youth in bridging critical gaps in peacebuilding efforts and inspiring resilience in their communities.



Restoring Access to Justice in Lamu East

In a significant milestone for the people of Lamu County, the long-awaited re-establishment of a court in Lamu East is now underway. This achievement follows dedicated advocacy efforts by the Lamu East Court Users Committee, of which the Muslim Women Advancement of Rights and Protection (MWARP) is a committed and active member.

For years, residents of Lamu East, especially women and vulnerable groups—have faced immense challenges in accessing legal services. Long distances, financial constraints, and procedural barriers often denied many the opportunity to seek justice. The absence of a local court not only delayed case resolution but also discouraged survivors of gender-based violence and other injustices from pursuing legal redress.

The re-establishment of the court marks a transformative step toward bringing justice closer to the people. It signals renewed hope for timely case handling, improved protection mechanisms, and strengthened accountability systems within the community. For women and marginalized groups, this development means safer reporting spaces, reduced logistical burdens, and a stronger assurance that their voices will be heard.

This milestone affirms a powerful truth: access to justice is not merely a service, it is a foundation for dignity, protection, and equality. As the court becomes operational, it stands as a testament to what collaborative advocacy and community commitment can achieve.

Communities Leading Change Through Peer-to-Peer Learning

Under the COSME Project, a powerful wave of transformation swept through Takaungu, Chonyi, and Dzikuze in Kilifi County. In partnership with Plan International Kenya and Nawiri Africa, we successfully conducted Peer-to-Peer Learning Sessions that brought together community members, especially young women and men participating in the Gender Justice Journey and ecosystem restoration initiatives.

What began as structured learning sessions quickly evolved into vibrant spaces of reflection, dialogue, and inspiration. Participants openly exchanged experiences, challenged harmful social norms, and shared practical strategies for promoting gender equality while protecting their environment. Young people who once saw themselves as beneficiaries began embracing their roles as change-makers and community leaders.

Through these engagements, conservation efforts became more inclusive, and conversations around gender justice grew stronger and more practical. Participants demonstrated increased confidence in advocating for equitable roles at home and within community restoration initiatives. The sessions strengthened collaboration among local groups, reinforcing the understanding that environmental sustainability and gender equality are interconnected.

Most importantly, the communities took ownership of the process. By learning from one another, they built solutions grounded in local realities and shared experiences. This reaffirmed a powerful truth: sustainable development is most impactful when it is locally driven, community-led, and rooted in collective leadership.

Girls Leading Change: Young Voices Take the Floor in Kilifi

MWARP under the TIMIZA Project marked a powerful step forward in amplifying the voices of adolescent girls and young women in Kilifi County. Held in collaboration with the Committee on Gender Equality at the County Assembly of Kilifi, the forum created a rare and impactful platform where young women could directly engage with decision-makers and influence policies that affect their lives.

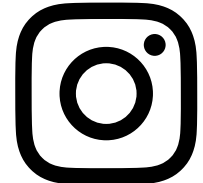
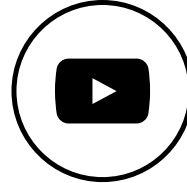
Representatives from Dabaso, Jilore, Gongoni, and Adu Wards demonstrated remarkable confidence and leadership as they stepped forward to present memorandums highlighting the real challenges facing girls and young women in their communities. From barriers to education and economic opportunities to issues of protection and well-being, their presentations were not only insightful but also solution-oriented, offering practical and sustainable recommendations.

The response from the Committee on Gender Equality, chaired by Tatu Salim, signaled a meaningful commitment to action. By pledging to collaborate with other sector committees and relevant county departments, the Committee reinforced its dedication to strengthening systems that protect and empower the girl child. This engagement stands as a success story of youth-led advocacy translating into institutional commitment, demonstrating that when young voices are given space, they can drive real and lasting change.



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