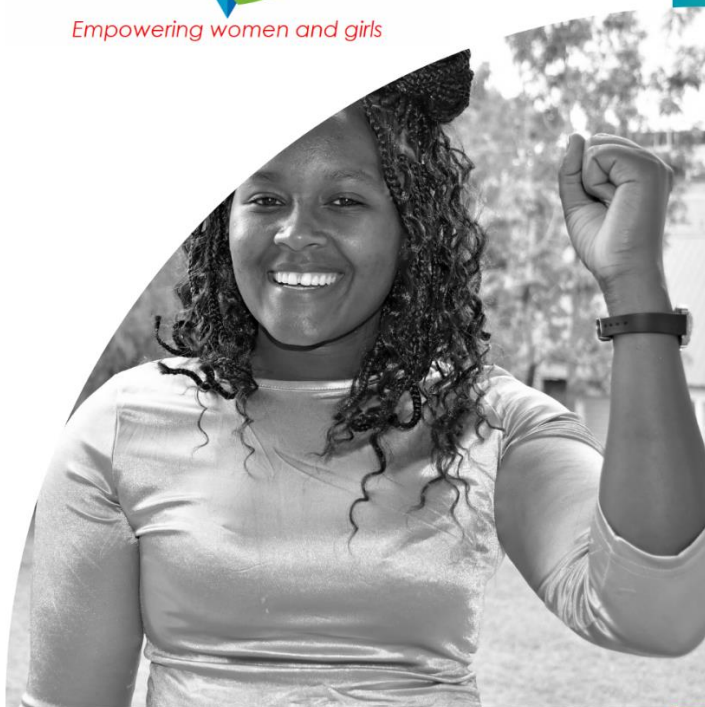


Young Women's Christian Association of Kenya



Empowering women and girls



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ANNUAL REPORT

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FORWARD FROM THE NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY



The year 2023 marked a significant milestone for the YWCA of Kenya as we reflected on our achievements, limitations, and lessons learned while implementing the ambitious five-year strategy (2019-2023) known as "The Turn-Around Strategy." This strategy was built on key pillars including Programs, Advocacy, Communication and Marketing, Resource Mobilization, and

Institutional Strengthening and Change Management. With an average implementation level of about 80%, our assessment provided valuable insights into strategy effectiveness, program impact, and alignment with organizational goals, laying the groundwork for a robust and responsive strategy for the upcoming years 2024–2027.

Amidst multifaceted challenges hindering the progress of girls' and women's rights in Kenya, YWCA Kenya led the development of comprehensive plans aimed at safeguarding women and girls' rights at both the National and County levels. These plans addressed the intricate interplay of sociocultural, political, and economic factors shaping the status of women and girls. Through adaptive and responsive programming, we worked towards eradicating Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, addressing Climate Change, promoting young women's leadership, ensuring access to sexual-reproductive health and rights, and

"In 2023, we took bold steps to champion women's and girls' rights, combat gender-based violence, and mobilize stakeholders to drive policy changes. By empowering young women to lead, we've ignited a movement for lasting change."

fostering peace by preventing youth radicalization and involvement in acts of violent extremism.

Our membership continued to grow, with more young women assuming leadership roles and participating in global forums such as the Women Deliver 2023 Conference (WD2023) in Kigali, Rwanda, where collective action was catalyzed to advance Gender Equality and hold leaders accountable. Additionally, our involvement in events like the Africa Climate Summit (ACS23) in Nairobi and COP28 in Dubai allowed YWCA young women from marginalized communities to join diverse African youth voices in demanding sustainable change against Climate Change and participating in global environmental policy-making processes.

As a Christian Organization, we actively engaged in inter-religious forums, including a global convening of Faith Leaders in South Africa where we led discussions with the World YWCA on the intersection of faith and feminism, themed "Harmonizing Faith and Feminism." Our outreach programs, led by Christian Emphasis, continue to make a societal impact by bringing together religious actors and institutions to transform the lives of vulnerable youth.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to driving positive change, sustaining partnerships with local and global allies, ensuring compliance with donor requirements, investing in innovation, and catalyzing the YWCA movement by fostering relationships with the global umbrella of YWCA's worldwide, leveraging our strength as a global movement.

In conclusion, I extend my gratitude to our members, donors, partners, staff, and all stakeholders who contribute to our vision and mission, ensuring that the YWCA continues to make a lasting impact on the lives of women and girls.

Deborah Olwal

National General Secretary

Human Resources

The Human Resources department plays a critical role in Institutional Strengthening and Change Management to ensure YWCA has the requisite institutional capacity to undertake its core mandate of empowering girls and women in an effectively and efficiently manner.



CULTIVATE A DIVERSE, TALENTED AND RESILIENT WORKFORCE.



ATTRACT TALENTED POOL OF CANDIDATES.



RELATIONSHIP BUILDING.



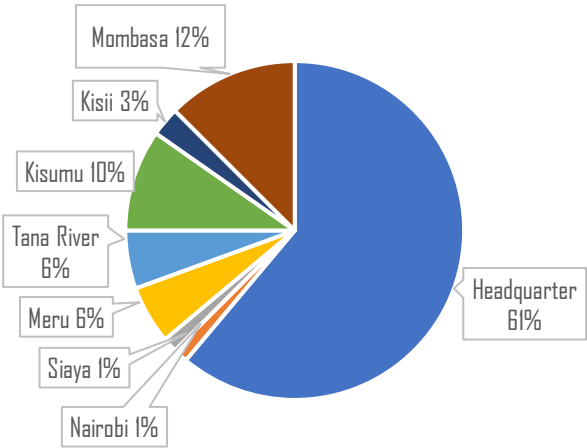
SERVE AND SUPPORT ALL STAFF.



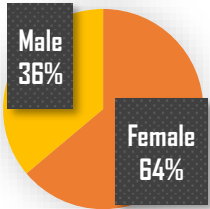
LEVERAGE ON TECHNOLOGY.

Using collaborative teamwork, we lift each other up, step in when a region needed support and work together as one organization.

Staff Regional Distribution



Staffing by Gender



Programmes

A. CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT



Title: Integrated approach to reduce inequalities for an inclusive climate resilience society in Kenya.

Implementation Locations: Kisumu, Nairobi, and Mombasa.

Objective: Building the capacity of youth and persons with disabilities (PWDs) to become self-reliant with **climate-resilient skills**.

Project Outcomes:

- ◆ Youth Engagement in Policy Advocacy and Decision Making
- ◆ Youth as Agents of Change in Local Communities
- ◆ Youth Coping Mechanisms for Individual and Societal Challenges



Key Achievements/Results:

1. Policy Advocacy and Legislations:

- ✓ PWD access to the County Assembly of Mombasa and Free medical assessment for PWDs in public health facilities in Mombasa County.
- ✓ Development of Ward Climate Change Adaptation plans & Scorecard in Kisumu County.
- ✓ Launch of Mombasa County Climate Change action plan (2023-2027).
- ✓ Representation in National & County Climate Change platforms.

2. Youth Participation in Policy and Legislative Processes:

- ✓ Engagement in the review of various policies and legislations related to climate change.

3. Participation in Key Conferences and Forums:

- ✓ COP 28, Africa Climate Summit 2023, Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) Kenya, and International Youth Forum on Green Skills opportunities.

4. Capacity Building of Youths Savings and Investments Groups (SIG Groups):

- ✓ Recruitment of new SIG groups.
- ✓ Trainings on savings, investments, entrepreneurship, and peer-to-peer learning.

5. Campaigns & Youth-led Initiatives:

- ✓ Implementation of online and offline campaigns on various environmental and social issues.

6. Trainings for Youths:

- ✓ Capacity building on intellectual property, advocacy, leadership, financing, and adaptation planning.

7. Promoting Establishment of Urban Farming:

- ✓ Training on sustainable urban farming technology and establishment of urban farms in Nairobi.

Summary: *The Climate Change Project has empowered youth and marginalized communities to address climate change and social inequalities through advocacy, policy engagement, and grassroots initiatives.*



Caption: YWCA takes the lead in mangrove restoration efforts during World Wetlands Day 2023.

B. P/CVE PROJECT (STRENGTHENING YOUTH RESILIENCE TO VIOLENT EXTREMISM: AN INTERFAITH APPROACH TO PEACE AND JUSTICE IN KENYA)



Project Overview:

Implementation Regions: Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kilifi

Objective: To strengthen youth resilience to violent extremism through an interfaith approach to peace and justice, addressing underlying factors fostering extremism in religious education, with consideration of gendered differences.

Program Components:

◆ **Interfaith Dialogue and Campaigns:**

- ✓ Capacity building of youth to effectively engage in interfaith dialogues and campaigns to counter religious extremism.

◆ **Platform Establishment for Interfaith Dialogue:**

- ✓ Creation and institutionalization of a platform for interfaith dialogue and sharing of common values among youth and religious institutions.

◆ **Livelihood Improvement for Youth:**

- ✓ Provision of opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship to prevent youth involvement in interfaith conflict.



Key Achievements/Results:

1. Capacity Building:

Training sessions conducted to enhance youth skills in interfaith dialogue and conflict resolution.

2. Establishment of Dialogue Platforms:

Creation of forums for interfaith dialogue and collaboration between youth and religious institutions.

3. Livelihood Improvement Initiatives:

Implementation of mentorship programs and support for youth entrepreneurship and self-employment ventures.

4. Community Engagement:

Participation in community campaigns and events to promote peace and prevent violent extremism.

5. Research and Analysis:

Conducting studies to identify root causes of violent extremism and inform program strategies.

6. Partnerships and Collaborations:

Collaboration with local organizations, religious leaders, and government agencies to enhance program impact.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- ✓ Regular monitoring and evaluation of program activities to assess effectiveness and make necessary adjustments.

Summary: The PCVE project has made significant progress in empowering youth and promoting interfaith dialogue to counter violent extremism, with tangible results in capacity building, dialogue establishment, and livelihood improvement.



Caption: Student leaders from various universities in Nairobi County after a capacity building session on communications and advocacy facilitated by YWCA Kenya.

C. YW4A PROJECT

YWCA Kenya, in collaboration with Equality Now and the Faith to Action Network, has undertaken a transformative project across three regions in Kenya: Meru, Migori, and Kisii. Funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs through World YWCA in Geneva, this initiative is implemented through Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) and has achieved remarkable milestones in various domains.



Policy & Legislation Advocacy and Campaigns:

- ◆ **Policy & Legislation Advocacy and Campaigns:** Young women have been educated on the YW4A SEAH policy, highlighting a commitment to combatting Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH).
- ◆ **Technical and Financial Support:** Notable efforts include technical and financial support towards the formulation of the Kisii Gender Policy and supporting the drafting of the Migori SGBV Bill, currently pending enactment.

Advocacy & Campaigns:

- ◆ **Establishment of SGBV Court:** Advocacy efforts have led to the establishment of an SGBV Court in Meru, backed by data collected by YW4A lead trainers.
- ◆ **Youth Participation:** Young women actively participated in TV and radio talk shows to address SGBV issues, published policy briefs, and conducted online campaigns via platforms like change.org and social media.
- ◆ **Policy Development:** The project has organized webinars, panel discussions, and offline activities to advocate for SGBV policy development and implementation.

Capacity Building of WROs/FBOs:

- ◆ **Training Initiatives:** Six WROs and three FBOs received extensive training on media advocacy, M&E, coalition building, social accountability, and positive masculinities.
- ◆ **Financial Support:** The project facilitated organizational capacity strengthening, financial audits, and provided financial support for advocacy initiatives.
- ◆ **Partnership Building:** Partnerships and coalition building efforts have led to the formulation and establishment of SGBV CSOs networks in Kisii, Meru, and Migori.

Advocacy on Social Norms Transformation through Positive Masculinities Model:

- ◆ **Capacity Building:** Capacity building sessions and peer-to-peer discussions on positive masculinities have been conducted to transform social norms.

- ◆ **Community Engagement:** Dialogues on positive communities and faith champions' engagement aim to create lasting change in community attitudes towards gender norms.

Leadership Transformative Trainings & FEM Spaces Dialogues:

- ◆ **Youth Empowerment:** A significant milestone was achieved with the training of 2959 young women leaders on the FEMSpace Model, Rise Up Model, Cascade Model, and life skills.
- ◆ **Establishment of FEMSpaces:** The establishment of 60 FEMSpaces across schools, churches, and communities has provided safe platforms for leadership training and dialogue on SEAH sensitization.

Participation in Key Conferences and Forums:

- ◆ **Global Engagement:** Facilitating young women participation in national and regional advocacy platforms such as Women Deliver Conference in Kigali and the 77th Ordinary session on the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Arusha.
- ◆ **Global Events:** Notable participation includes events like the Goalkeepers Event in New York and the National Girl Summit event in Nairobi.

Membership in Key National and County Committees:

- ◆ **Policy Influence:** YWCA's active membership in key national committees such as the National Court Users Committee, National Gender Sector Working Group, and National Generation Equality Forum has provided a platform to influence policies and decisions.
- ◆ **Stakeholder Engagement:** Participation in events like the National Gender Sector Working Group and Court Users Committee meetings has facilitated dialogue with decision-

makers and stakeholders towards policy change and implementation.

Summary: *Through strategic partnerships, capacity building, and bold advocacy efforts, the YW4A programme is supporting young women leaders to break barriers and rise up against sexual and gender-based violence, driving transformative change and advancing gender equality across the Counties of implementation.*

D. SRHR / NOREC EXCHANGE PROJECT

YWCA Kenya stands at the forefront of this project funded by NOREC through Y-Global, with the aim of empowering young people through awareness on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). This transformative project, spanning three counties in Kenya - Meru, Mombasa, and Kisumu has been instrumental in raising awareness and building capacity of partner organizations and local communities to not only create pathways to vital life skills-based SRHR education for the youth but also foster sustainable partnerships that amplify youth access and engagement.



Key Achievements:

- ◆ **Recruitment and Training of Champions:** Over 100 local community champions have been recruited and trained in mental health, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and SRHR, spearheading advocacy efforts and providing vital referrals.

- ◆ **Web Design Workshop:** A hands-on web design workshop equipped 5 participants with coding and design skills to enhance the visibility of their web pages that amplify SRHR messages.
- ◆ **Life Skills Training:** Mentorship sessions on life skills-based SRHR and mental health were conducted in various YWCA branches in Kenya and partner countries, empowering youth across the continent with practical skills.
- ◆ **In and Out of School Mentorship:** Mentorship sessions were conducted in various institutions, totalling to 34 sessions, fostering holistic development among youths.
- ◆ **Participation in Girl Summit 2023:** YWCA Young women, alongside exchange participants, convened at the University of Nairobi to commemorate World Mental Health Day and the International Day of the Girl Child, fostering dialogue and awareness on pertinent issues affecting them.
- ◆ **Advocacy Efforts:** Advocacy initiatives included participation in global conventions such as the Women Deliver convention in Kigali, Rwanda, as well as continuous advocacy through radio stations and online platforms on SRHR and the meaningful involvement of young people, particularly Persons With Disabilities (PWDs). Additionally, champions engaged in meetings with duty bearers to advocate for the proper implementation of SGBV policies and the operationalization of GBV Rescue centers.
- ◆ **Development of Resource Materials:** Participants developed and shared resource materials on life skills-based SRHR, including GBV and counseling fact sheets, SRHR articles, and menstrual health handbooks, facilitating knowledge dissemination and community empowerment.

- ◆ **Celebration of International Days:** The exchange participants engaged in the celebration of various international days, such as International Youth Day, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, World Mental Health Day, and the International Day of the Girl Child, sharing their unique contributions based on their skills and understanding of critical issues.

Summary: *Through this project, YWCA Kenya is not only providing vital training and mentorship but also creating a platform for meaningful advocacy and resource development. Together with partners, they're making real strides in nurturing a generation of empowered youths, ensuring they have the*



Caption: NOREC Exchange participants during the orientation meeting at YWCA Kenya Headquarter before being posted to various regions.

Success Story

Exchange visit provides an opportunity to Impact in the fight against gender-based violence.



Erika Jacob, Norec exchange participant from Norway, teamed up with YWCA Kisumu branch where she was attached under the program, to conduct a community needs assessment and initiate data collection in Kisumu County, uncovering a distressing reality —high rates of violence against women and girls with very few cases being reported to the

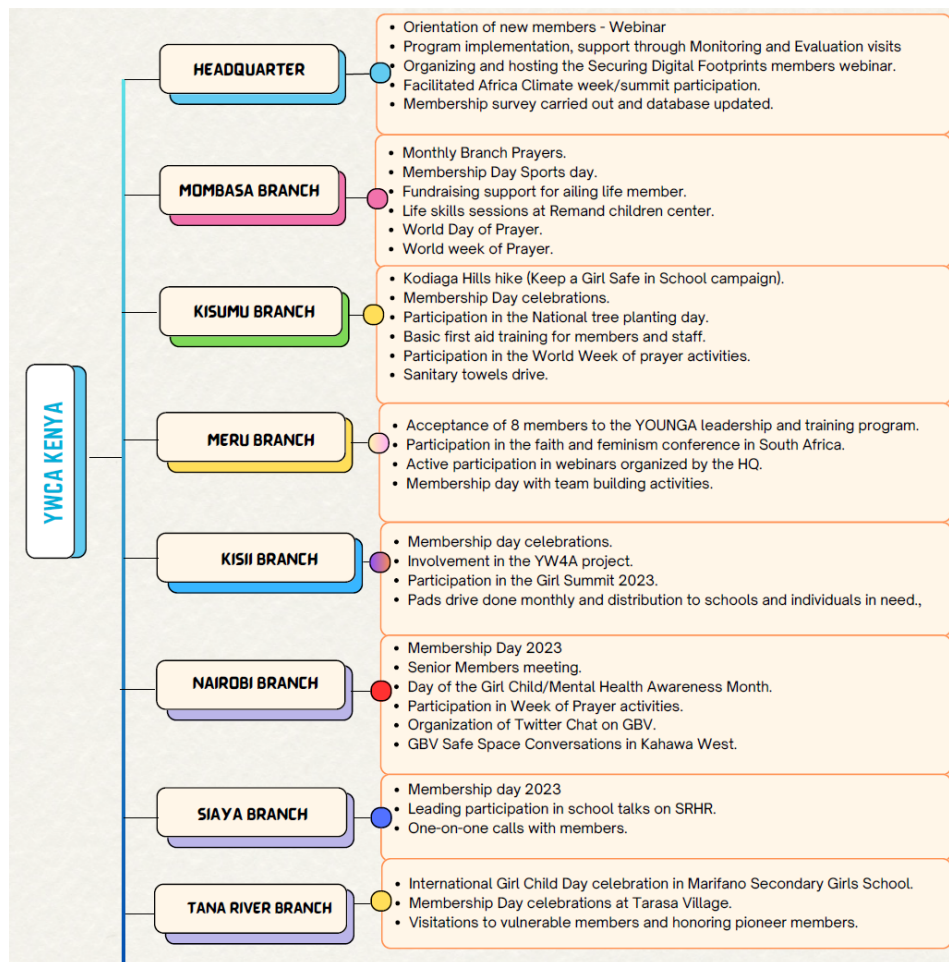
know-how about reporting channels, and the social stigma associated with reporting to police

Erika organized webinars and initiated the formation of a technical working group to create tools for data collection and report cases of GBV. In doing so, she aimed not just to collect data, but to effectively make a positive impact in the community, breaking the silence surrounding GBV.

Erika labelled her exchange visit as a transformative journey of adaptation and learning. Beyond adapting to new culture, she emerged as a catalyst for change, challenging misconceptions and addressing a critical issue that had long plagued Kisumu County. Her dedication to empowering those affected by GBV and crafting practical tools for change marked the most significant change in her remarkable journey.

Erika Jacob
Norec Exchange Participant, 2023

YWCA REGIONAL ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS



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