



YWCA Kenya
Empowering women and girls.

2024 ANNUAL REPORT





This annual report provides an overview of YWCA Kenya from January 2024 to December 2024.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AOCA	Advocacy and Organizational Capacity	PFA	Psychological First Aid
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	PoW	Power of Women
CSO	Civil Society Organizations	PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
COP	Conference of the Parties	SBCC	Social and Behavioural Change Communications
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women	SCS	Strengthening Civil Society
CUC	Court User Committees	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
FBO	Faith-Based Organization	SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
FEMSpace	Feminist Empowerment Movement Space	SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation	SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
GBV	Gender-Based Violence	TWG	Technical Working Group
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands	UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization	WROs	Women's Rights Organizations
NOREC	Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation	YW4A	Young Women for Awareness, Agency, Accountability and Advocacy
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation	YWRG	Young Women Reference Group

Message from the National General Secretary

Dear partners, friends, and colleagues,

The past year was one of resilience, growth, and renewed purpose for YWCA Kenya. Across our branches and networks, we continued to champion young women's leadership, promote climate justice, advance sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), foster disability inclusion, and deepen interfaith and governance dialogues.

In our counties of operation, young women stepped boldly into advocacy spaces — leading grassroots initiatives on issues such as sexual and gender-based violence, SRHR, and environmental justice. Through the NOREC exchange, they gained new knowledge and built solidarity with peers across borders, strengthening their capacity to act locally while remaining connected to global movements for justice and equality.

A defining highlight of 2024 was our engagement with COP29. Through pre- and post-COP dialogues, we brought together young women, indigenous groups, and faith leaders to surface local priorities and translate international outcomes into county-level action. These efforts affirmed our conviction that global climate policy must reflect the lived realities of women and young people in Kenya.

YWCA Kenya also stood in solidarity with national feminist movements. Early in the year, we joined the [#TotalShutDownKe](#) campaign to demand justice and accountability on femicide and gender-based violence. Our voice has also remained visible through traditional and digital media.

Furthermore, as a Christian organization we centre Christ in all that we do through our Christian Emphasis approach integrated into our programming, we implement innovative approaches related to girls, youth and women's empowerment, local partnerships, climate change and environmental conservation, gender equality and social inclusion — ensuring no one is left behind.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of our staff, branch leaders, and the trust of our partners — women's rights organisations, faith-based organisations, donors, and most importantly, the young women whose leadership gives meaning to our mission.

As we look ahead, our commitment remains unwavering:

“Our conviction is clear: whether in climate justice, SRHR, ending harmful cultural practices, peace, or governance, young women’s voices must shape the policies and practices that define tomorrow.”

With gratitude and determination,

Deborah Olwal

National General Secretary

Introduction

YWCA Kenya, established in 1912, has grown into a multi-thematic women's rights organisation with a rich legacy of advancing gender equality. Our primary goal is the full emancipation of women and girls — socially, economically, politically, and culturally. At the heart of our work is nurturing the leadership, agency, and voice of girls and young women across Kenya, ensuring they have the power to influence the decisions that shape their lives and communities.

In 2024, Kenya experienced a decisive wave of youth activism. Gen Z transformed digital organising into real-world mobilisation — pushing back on policy decisions, demanding accountability, and insisting on the inclusion of youth voices. These shifts showed that young people were not passive beneficiaries but powerful drivers of the agenda.

Overview

YWCA Kenya programme portfolio in 2024 focused on implementing the following programmes where youth shaped the agenda:

Strengthening Partnerships for Youth Access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) - NOREC SRHR Exchange

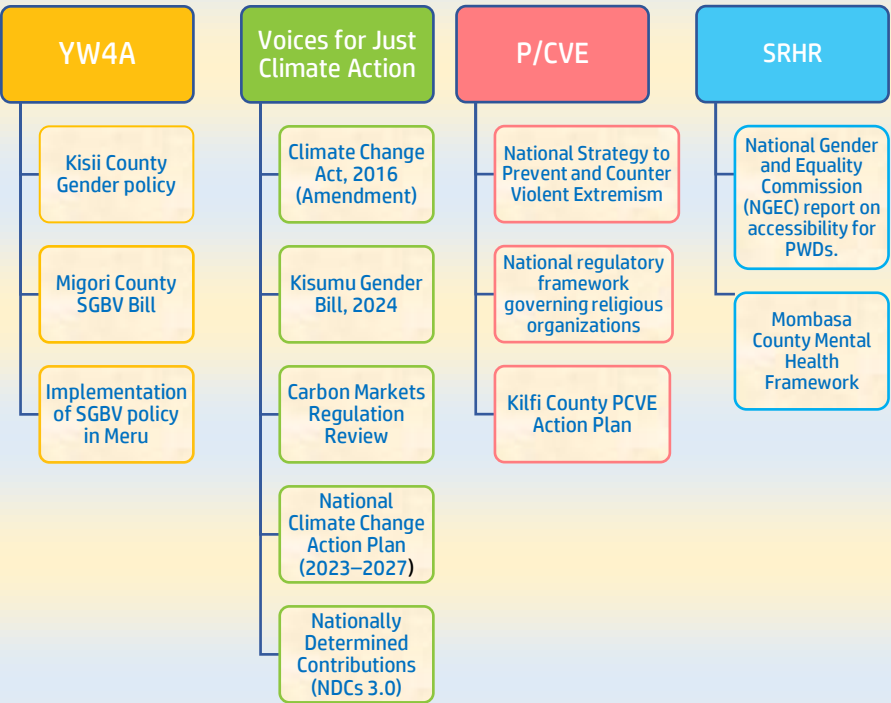
Young Women for Awareness, Agency, Advocacy and Accountability (YW4A)

Interfaith Engagement of Youth for Peace and Justice in Kenya (P/CVE)

Voices for Just Climate Action (VCA)
Deepening African Youth, Women and Indigenous People's Engagement in Post Paris Climate Dialogue Processes.

Policies and laws changed/improved

YWCA advocacy footprint extended to influencing policies at the national and county level.



Notably, our climate justice work in 2024 served as a bridge between local and global. As COP29 convened in Azerbaijan, YWCA Kenya anchored Kenyan youth and community voices in global climate policy engagement—ensuring that needsof marginalized communities were front and center. We integrated the COP29 outcome into our post-COP dialogues, supporting counties to track climate commitments and plan for accountability.

We address SDGs:



Programme Implementation Context

National & Sector Trends

Kenya in 2024 faced a confluence of pressures: inflation, constrained public budgets, and increasing expectations on devolution. Young people bore the brunt, with high unemployment and limited economic opportunities. For organisations like ours, sustaining engagement required programmatic agility.

At the same time, youth activism shifted tactics: Gen Z turned rapid digital organising into real-world mobilisation, translating hashtags and short videos into nationwide demonstrations. These actions led to a wave of protests that would turn violent and lead sadly to loss of life. This push would however increase pressure on decision-makers, raise the visibility of youth demands for accountability and inclusion, and re-position young people in Kenya as drivers of the agenda rather than passive beneficiaries.

Climate variability such as unpredictable rains and flooding in some counties also disrupted or delayed implementation of planned activities.

The gender equality field saw both momentum and backlash: while some counties advanced gender mainstreaming in budgets, in others attempts at regressive legislation required vigilant advocacy.



Institutional Positioning & Strategic Leverage

YWCA Kenya's strengths include national brand recognition, branch infrastructure, and relationships with various actors. Through programmes such as the YW4A initiative where we serve as country lead, we act as hub for local learning, content adaptation, WRO and young women capacity building. We also leaned more into digital platforms (X, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn) to share youth stories and engage youth in advocacy messaging—evident through our presence in the digital space.



Reflection on Risks & Mitigation Measures



External Risks

- **Regulatory changes & NGO scrutiny:** Advocacy programming with Youth-involvement can sometimes be misinterpreted as political. YWCA Kenya pre-empted this by framing our work around human rights and service outcomes, maintaining open communication with county governments, and affiliating with umbrella bodies to protect civic space.
- **Economic shocks:** Rising costs reduced participation in some counties. Mitigations: decentralise delivery (closer to communities), introduce transport subsidies, and use blended (in-person + virtual) formats.
- **Climate disruption:** Some counties experienced flooding or drought mid-activity, forcing reschedules or venue changes. We built buffer days into workplans and plans for make-up sessions.

Institutional Risks

- **Funding delays & cash flow constraints:** We engaged proactively with donors, maintained closer financial tracking, and built a small internal reserve to cover short-term gaps. YWCA Kenya also uses its facilities as safe space for young women, where they can convene and use the facilities at no-cost, saving cost of hall hire when meeting physically.
- **Data security & quality:** With multiple branches, standardising data systems was critical. We adopted encrypted digital tools, regular backups, and conducted monthly system audits.

Programmatic Risks

- **Drop-out or low retention in multi-session courses:** Some participants (mostly youth) dropped out of continuing programmes due to competing demands. We mitigated by adding peer mentors, flexible schedules, and follow-up reminders.
- **Misalignment with partners:** With many partners engaging with YWCA Kenya, inconsistencies in partner messaging risked brand dilution. We introduced formal MOUs, joint review sessions, and co-branded materials to ensure the reputation of YWCA is upheld.

Institutional Performance Dashboard

Indicator	Target	Achieved	% - Notes
Counties reached through online and offline campaigns	47	36	77%
Young women trained in leadership	5,000	4,600	92%
Youth-led initiatives supported	350	280	93%
Policies and laws changed/improved	15	13	Strong advocacy presence across programming
Media & social reach (impressions)	300,000	340,000	Exceeded target
Programme budget utilisation	95%	92%	Within variance
Participant retention	—	85%	Consistently high

Narrative Summary:

YWCA Kenya delivered strong results across multiple indicators. Notably, social media reach exceeded the target, fueled by high-engagement content and media content during International Days. Training coverage remained close to target despite logistical pressures affected by violent protests which was addressed by the organization's ability to use virtual meeting and collaboration platforms such as zoom.

2024 Programme Strategies & Activities

Reflection on Programme Strategies vs Annual Targets

Our programme strategy hinged on three pillars:

1. **Youth-led leadership & advocacy:** Equip young women with knowledge, mentorship, and seed grants to lead campaigns.
2. **Faith & normative engagement:** Activate faith leaders as allies in shifting norms around gender, SRHR, and inclusion.
3. **Localization & partnerships:** Strengthen branch capacities and collaborate with local WROs and FBOs to scale.

We achieved most strategic deliverables in the year with notable impact in the following;

- **Climate Dialogues:** Creating a platform for women, youth and persons from marginalized communities to engage in Climate Change discussions, contribute to position papers and gain knowledge on how to access funds for their climate-smart initiatives through the Government of Kenya initiative, Financing Locally-Led Climate Action (FLLoCA).
- **SRHR dialogues:** In collaboration with county health departments, youth dialogues improved awareness on adolescent SRH services; some counties agreed to set youth-friendly centres.
- **Faith leader engagements:** Workshops with pastors, imams, and church youth ministries introduced gender-justice oriented sermon guides.
- **Youth Day & World YWCA Day campaigns:** Digital storytelling through webinars and x-chats that attracted strong youth participation.

Key highlights from Activities at the YWCA Branches:

- Kisumu Branch:** Convened the Ward Climate Change Planning Committee (WCCPC) to draft a petition advocating for the inclusion of women, youth, and marginalized groups in the Kisumu County Climate Change Act 2020 and, presented a formal memorandum on the Kisumu County Gender & Equality Bill 2024 to the C.E.C.M of Sports, Culture, Gender & Youth Affairs on behalf of CSOs.



- Meru Branch:** Young women led dialogues on SGBV, showcasing the YWCA FEMspaces as an avenue to become educators & leaders in their communities.



Kisii Branch: In Kisii County, YWCA young women leaders in the YW4A programme joined forces with lobby and civil society groups to take to the streets, blocking major roads and chanting anti-femicide slogans in an effort to raise public awareness about the vice and establish ways to reduce sexual and gender-based violence in the county.



Tana River Branch: Conducted several outreach events in the County to sensitize the community on inclusion and importance of educating the girl child and ending harmful cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).



Siaya Branch: The branch members came together in celebration of the achievements of the branch and to appreciate the unwavering strength and support of its membership.



Mombasa Branch: Led several dialogues and engaged key stakeholders in the County, calling for equal representation of PWDs on boards and the establishment of disability resource centres in every sub-county. The branch is further addressing these inequities by providing capacity-building programs to enhance their economic empowerment through initiatives like table banking.



Nairobi Branch: In an effort to promote intergenerational leadership, the branch brought together great women who have played remarkable roles in the fight for gender equality since the 80s, to celebrate them and inspire young women as they amplify their voices for change.



Media Engagement

In 2024, YWCA Kenya amplified its voice through bold and creative media engagement. Across radio, television, print, and digital platforms, we positioned young women as credible voices on climate justice, peacebuilding, SRHR and End SGBV advocates.

Our stories reached national and county audiences through interviews, features, and opinion pieces in traditional outlets, while our social media platforms sparked vibrant conversations under hashtags such as [#YW4A](#), [#Inclusion4ClimateJustice](#), [#SRHRRights](#), and [#MyFaithStands4Peace](#). Campaigns combined compelling visuals, lived experiences, and real-time advocacy moments, allowing us not only to inform but also to mobilise.

By pairing traditional credibility with digital immediacy, YWCA Kenya kept young women's priorities visible in national discourse.

INTERVIEW
09.12.2024
8AM-9AM

MORNING FIX



DEBORAH OLWAL
(NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY,
YOUNG WOMEN CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION KENYA(YWCA))

**16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM:
ACT NOW TO END FEMICIDE
AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.**

NATIONFM 96.3
WHERE GOOD MUSIC LIVES

HOSTS: MARIAM & ASELI
#MorningFix #NFM

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY 2024

YW4A X SPACE

Theme: Empowering Clicks: Leveraging Technology to Tackle SGBV

Where: X - @KenyaYwca
Date & Time: August 12, 2024, 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM EAT

OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ To discuss the role of digitalization in empowering young women for leadership and how digital platforms can be leveraged to end SGBV
- ✓ To create an avenue for young women to articulate challenges & their observations on policy gaps.
- ✓ To share success stories and best practices from young women leaders who have effectively used digital tools
- ✓ Generate tangible outcomes through the engagement that can be used for learning.

Speakers (Experts): Legal, Gender, Activate



#YW4A #YouthDay2024 #EndSGBV

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Climate action: Kenya's young voices on COP29

As COP29 begins on Monday, young change makers across Kenya are mobilising their communities and amplifying grassroots solutions to address the climate crisis.

Read more on nation.africa

YWCA Kenya Joins #TotalShutDownKe as Feminist Movements March for Legislative Reforms Against Femicide

admin February 9, 2024 1:49 pm

YWCA Kenya joined other feminist movements in Kenya to advocate for legislative reforms aimed at combating Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) in the country. The escalating number of killings and abuses against women and young women in Kenya has prompted feminists and women's rights organisations to unite in solidarity, advocacy, and action. They called for legislative reforms and demanded that the Government unequivocally recognise femicide as a crime, urging for heavier penalties for perpetrators.



End Femicide in Kenya

SPACES **YWCA Kenya**
Empowering women and girls

Mary Budo, Chairperson, YWCA Women's Network
Jacobi Mwasi, Psychologist

Devi Mwasi, Lawyer
Moderator: Maureen Ngũgũ, YWCA Kenya

MONDAY
29TH JAN 2024 7PM - 8PM EAT | **@KenyaYwca**

JOIN @KenyaYwca #XChat on:

YOUNG WOMEN LEADERSHIP AND THE ISSUES THEY ENCOUNTER

Join us as we shed light on how transformative leadership can foster supportive environments for young women to enter leadership, amplify their voices, address underlying inequalities, and challenge systemic barriers.

Friday, 14 June 2024 **TIME: 2:00PM**

#YW4A #EndSGBV #YoungWomenLead

Partnerships

Partnerships with CBOs, WROs & FBOs

Recognizing that local organisations know local realities best, we deepened collaboration:

- Co-designed training curricula and co-facilitated sessions
- Shared data and referral linkages
- Joint advocacy with county-level coalitions
- Capacity building: CBOs, WROs and FBO leaders benefitted from training on M&E, digital communications, safeguarding, sustainability and financial management which YWCA Kenya designed to support their sustainability and resource mobilization initiatives.



Partnership with Young Women

YWCA views young women as co-creators, not beneficiaries:

- We have created mentorship and leadership pipelines for youth to co-design and co-facilitate such as intergenerational mentorship program where young women are incorporated into the Board.

- All YWCA projects have an element of supporting youth to initiate or get involved in youth-led projects and peer networks.
- Recognised emerging youth leaders publicly in regional, national, branch events and social media.



This shift in power dynamics has improved ownership and sustainability of advocacy efforts, increased young women confidence and enabled them sustain YWCA Kenya's grassroots efforts creating lasting impact.

Working in Partnerships

Local & National Partnerships

YWCA Kenya worked with county governments, women's commissions, education departments, health departments, youth offices, and NGOs to align activities, leverage resources, share referrals and integrate advocacy outputs into county plans.



Partnership with Donors

We cultivated trust and alignment with donors (MoFA, NOREC, NORAD, USAID, HIVOS) by ensuring transparent reporting, joint reviews, learning workshops, and co-design of extension phases.



YWCA Kenya SRHR Advisor shares lessons learned from the project during the Midterm Review Meeting in Tanzania with NOREC & implementing partners from Youth Peace Makers Tanzania, YMCA Ethiopia, YGlobal South Sudan and KFUK-KFUM Global.

Consortiums

YWCA Kenya recognises that the scale and complexity of the challenges facing young women cannot be addressed by one organisation alone.

In 2024, YWCA Kenya played a key role as Country lead in the **Young Women for Awareness, Agency, Advocacy and Accountability (YW4A) consortium**, which unites partners in Egypt, Kenya, Palestine, and South Sudan to collectively advance gender-just laws and policies, while building young women's leadership and agency to influence decision-making at all levels.

We also engaged in the **USAID Elevate Voice Yake programme consortium**, which focused on addressing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) among adolescent girls in Kenya. Through this collaboration, YWCA Kenya contributed to strengthening prevention and response mechanisms, supporting survivors, and elevating adolescent girls' voices in policy spaces.

YWCA Kenya's Learning Agenda

The 2024 experience through implemented programmes posits that;

- Youth dialogues led to follow-up commitments in counties (e.g. health departments pledging youth clinics in Jomvu Sub-County, Mombasa)
- Small grants enabled youth involvement in local initiatives e.g. SIG (Savings and Investments) Groups
- Combining in-person and digital modalities improves participation i.e. blended delivery
- Faith leaders serve as local anchors for shifting harmful norms.
- Youth ownership from design to evaluation: embedding young women in every stage increases relevance and retention.
- Joint learning forums in YWCA branches and between WROs improved alignment and prevented duplication.

But we also learned that accountability mechanisms (e.g. tracking commitments, follow-through) require deliberate systems, not just participation.



Spotlight on YWCA Young Women

Gloria Kawira (Meru)

A 27-year-old young woman from YWCA Meru branch, serving as a young woman representative on the YWCA National Board through the intergenerational mentorship program. Gloria is also a lead TOT (Trainer of Trainers) under the YW4A programme.



Maureen Wesonga (Nairobi)

"It was a great honor for me to present my work and experiences to the Norwegian Ambassador, the NOREC training team, and fellow exchange participants," said Maureen, an exchange participant, as she reflected on her 10-month exchange experience in Tanzania during a homecoming session hosted by NOREC for returning participants in South Africa.



2024 Photo Gallery



YWCA Mombasa Branch during a community clean-up activity during World Environment Day



YWCA Kisumu Branch during its annual Membership Day event



YWCA Young Women during a gala dinner hosted by Nation Media Group to mark International Women's Day



YWCA Meru Branch using Taekwondo self-defence as an avenue to protect girls and young women against bodily harm and SGBV.



Round 4 NOREC Exchange Participants during the induction meeting at YWCA Kenya.



YWCA Climate Champion taking part in an engaging session at the COP29 Azerbaijan, East Africa pavilion.



YWCA Siaya Branch joined CSOs in the County championing for inclusion to mark International Day for Persons with Disabilities.



Young women in the YW4A programme during a FEMspace reflection meeting at the YWCA Meru Branch.



SRHR champions and NOREC Exchange participants from YWCA Meru and Mombasa branches at the 1st Adolescent Mental Health Summit held in Nairobi, Kenya.



Marginalized communities had an opportunity to be heard during the pre-COP29 dialogues at the YWCA.



YWCA Peace Catalysts from Nairobi's informal settlements came together to formulate strategies to keep youth away from drugs, crime and plan for peace initiatives in the communities.



YWCA National Chairperson, Ms. Eunice Mungatana (left) presents a gift to the YWCA Kisumu Branch Chairperson during the YWCA National Council.



YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

Empowering women and girls

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