



Turning Tables Around Lake Victoria

MASABA THEATRE HALL





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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As we conclude the year 2025, I reflect with deep gratitude, humility, and renewed conviction on the journey WA-WA Kenya has walked with fisherfolk women, youth, and children across Homa Bay County. This year was not merely defined by activities implemented or targets achieved, but by stories of resilience restored, dignity reclaimed, and hope reignited within communities that have for far too long borne the weight of inequality and exclusion.

At the heart of our work remains a simple yet powerful belief: when women are equipped with skills, knowledge, and confidence, entire communities are transformed. In 2025, we proudly witnessed **117 women graduate** from our economic empowerment and skills development programs. These women represent more than numbers—they embody courage, perseverance, and the determination to rewrite their stories. Through vocational training, mentorship, psychosocial support, and market linkages, they have transitioned from vulnerability to agency, from survival to sustainability.

This year also marked an important phase of organizational maturity for WA-WA. We intentionally invested in strengthening our internal systems, expanding our technical capacity, and nurturing a committed team that is deeply rooted in the communities we serve. By recruiting additional staff and enhancing staff competencies, we ensured that our programs were delivered with professionalism, accountability, and compassion—qualities our beneficiaries deserve.

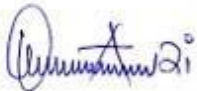
Our engagement with young people remained a cornerstone of our approach. Through advocacy platforms, school-based engagements, and youth-led accountability initiatives, we supported adolescents and young people to raise their voices, demand responsive services, and actively participate in governance processes that shape their futures. These efforts are already yielding tangible results, from improved awareness of sexual and reproductive health rights to increased youth participation in county planning spaces.

Despite persistent challenges—financial constraints, adverse weather patterns, staff turnover, and gaps in community awareness—we remained steadfast. These realities sharpened our innovation, deepened partnerships, and reinforced the importance of community-driven solutions. Each challenge became an opportunity to learn, adapt, and strengthen our resolve.

I extend my sincere appreciation to our donors, partners, staff, volunteers, and the resilient communities we serve. Your trust, generosity, and collaboration continue to fuel our mission. As we look ahead, WA-WA Kenya remains committed to scaling impact, strengthening sustainability, and ensuring that no woman or young person is left behind.

Together, we are not only turning tables—we are transforming lives and shaping a more just and equitable future.

Cavin Odera



Executive Director/ Founder

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1 | BACKGROUND

WA-WA Kenya is a community-based organization founded in 2019 and headquartered in Homa Bay County, Kenya. The organization was established in response to deep-rooted socio-economic injustices affecting fisherfolk women, youth, and children living around Lake Victoria. These injustices—particularly exploitative practices such as sex-for-fish—are driven by poverty, gender inequality, and limited access to sustainable livelihoods.

WA-WA, an abbreviation of *Wanawake Wavuvi* (Fisherfolk Women), works to dismantle these structural barriers through integrated approaches that combine economic empowerment, advocacy, psychosocial support, and community engagement. By placing women at the center of development, WA-WA seeks to create lasting change that extends beyond individual beneficiaries to families and entire communities.

Vision: Every woman participating in the development process as an influential partner.

Mission: To support fisherfolk women to achieve their full potential through provision of appropriate skills that enable them to work their way out of poverty and strengthen their communities.



2 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: 2025 IN BRIEF

The year 2025 marked a period of consolidation, scale, and deepened impact for WA-WA Kenya. Guided by our community-centered and results-oriented approach, the organization strengthened institutional systems, expanded sustainable livelihood pathways, and amplified the voices of women and youth across Homa Bay County. Our integrated interventions contributed directly to improved household incomes, strengthened social accountability, enhanced youth participation in governance, and increased resilience among fisherfolk communities.

Empowerment Through Skills Development: The Hop, Step & Jump Model

WA-WA Kenya continues to implement a skills-based empowerment curriculum guided by the Hop, Step and Jump model, ensuring that beneficiaries are supported progressively based on their readiness, confidence, and capacity.

Hop:

At this entry stage, beneficiaries—often facing deep vulnerability—are supported to build confidence, self-awareness, and foundational skills. In 2025, women and youth at this stage received training in teamwork, confidence building, communication skills, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), basic computer literacy, table banking, problem-solving, and financial awareness.

Step:

As beneficiaries gained confidence, they transitioned into market-responsive vocational skills based on interest and local demand. Participants enrolled in poultry farming, fish farming, beauty and hairdressing, tailoring, soap and detergent making, kitchen gardening, and agribusiness.

Jump:

The final stage focused on sustainability and independence through entrepreneurship, business management, record keeping, licensing, savings, and market linkages. By the end of the cycle, 117 women successfully graduated, demonstrating improved income stability and household resilience.



3 | INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2025, WA-WA Kenya continued to strengthen its organizational systems and practices to ensure efficiency, accountability, and sustainability, drawing from established institutional frameworks.

Key initiatives included implementation of the 2025–2027 Strategic Plan, brand communication strengthening, cyber security training, county budget process capacity building, SDGs mentorship, Organizational Capacity Assessment follow-up actions, and human resource strengthening.

Additional staff were recruited in Programs Management, Farm Operations, and Computer Training, significantly enhancing coordination, technical delivery, and beneficiary follow-up.



A section of our staff at Kaugege

4 | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Community engagement remained a defining pillar of WA-WA's approach in 2025. Through sustained outreach, dialogue forums, advocacy initiatives, and school-based engagements, WA-WA strengthened trust, visibility, and ownership of programs within target communities. These engagements fostered open conversations around gender equality, youth participation, sexual and reproductive health, and economic justice.



Students from Kirindo primary exploring our center at Kaugege

5 | COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT

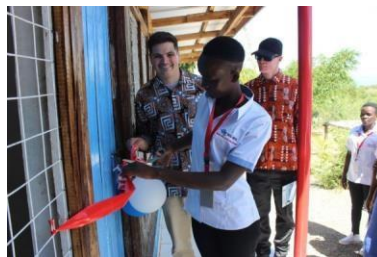
WA-WA made significant investments in community infrastructure to create safe, dignified, and enabling environments for learning and empowerment. On **27th November 2025**, new classrooms at the WA-WA Economic Empowerment Centre were officially launched, providing modern and well-equipped training spaces for women and youth.

Additionally, the beauty parlour underwent expansion, and an **additional poultry house** was established—both initiatives strengthening WA-WA’s sustainability model and providing practical learning platforms for beneficiaries.

WA-WA is also currently renting a salon at kaugege centre which was renovated and set up in September.



Cavin Odera, Manuela and Stephan Pastore unveiling new classrooms



7 | PROGRAMS

Power to Youth (PtY)

The Power to Youth Project concluded successfully in **July 2025**, marking the end of a transformative initiative that significantly advanced youth empowerment, accountability, and advocacy in Homa Bay County. Throughout its implementation, the project addressed Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), unintended pregnancies, and limited youth participation in governance.



Capacity Building for AGYW Champions:

Through structured, participatory trainings—including role plays, case studies, and survivor-centered approaches—AGYW champions strengthened their capacity to identify, report, and refer SGBV and unintended pregnancy cases. These champions now serve as trusted first responders within their communities, bridging gaps between survivors and service providers.

Elimu Talk Sessions:

School-based Elimu Talk Sessions engaged students, teachers, and parents in open, factual, and transformative discussions on teenage pregnancy, life skills, and reproductive health. These sessions contributed to increased awareness, improved school retention, and establishment of supportive referral mechanisms within schools.



Youth-Led Social Audits:

Youth conducted social audits focusing on health and SRHR projects, assessing service delivery, budget utilization, and meaningful youth participation. Findings informed public dialogues and strengthened accountability between duty bearers and communities.

Budget Analysis and Advocacy:

Youth advocates analyzed county planning and budget documents, developed memoranda, and submitted petitions advocating for increased investment in youth-responsive programs. These efforts elevated youth voices in policy spaces and promoted transparent governance.

Community Advocacy, Capacity Building & Engagement

WA-WA continued to champion community advocacy through sustained sensitization forums, policy dialogues, and partnerships with local stakeholders. These efforts strengthened community ownership, enhanced awareness of rights and services, and fostered collective action toward social justice.



Youth from the locality welcomed to our center for capacity building

Kuku Street Business

In 2025, WA-WA implemented the **Kuku Street Business** initiative, supplying women traders in **Sori, Ndhiwa, Karachuonyo West, Homa Bay, and Mbita** with chickens and fryers. This intervention rapidly transformed informal street businesses, significantly increasing daily incomes, enhancing food security, and restoring dignity among women entrepreneurs.

Omena for Skills

The Omena for Skills initiative continued in **Kaugege**, enabling women to access vocational training in exchange for omena. This innovative, context-driven model eliminated financial barriers, expanded access to skills training, and empowered women to diversify livelihoods beyond fishing.

VEGEMI PROJECT – Early Childhood Nutrition and Learning Support

Under the **Vegemi Project**, WA-WA Kenya supported a local **Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) school** by providing essential learning and creative materials, including storybooks, readers, pencils, crayons, and watercolors. This intervention aimed to strengthen early learning outcomes while addressing broader developmental challenges.

Promoting Nutrition Awareness Through Learning

The storybooks supplied under the Vegemi Project deliberately focused on **nutrition education**, responding to a critical challenge in the lake region where diets are heavily dependent on fish and limited in diversity. Through age-appropriate stories and illustrations, children were introduced to balanced diets, healthy eating habits, and the importance of consuming a variety of foods for growth and wellbeing.

Building Foundations for Lifelong Learning

By combining literacy, creativity, and nutrition education, the Vegemi Project contributed to improved classroom engagement, enhanced cognitive development, and early awareness of healthy lifestyles. The initiative also supported teachers by providing resources that enrich lesson delivery and foster interactive learning environments.



Women's Health and Kuku (WOHK) Project

The **Women's Health and Kuku (WOHK) Project**, initiated in 2023, represents WA-WA Kenya's commitment to addressing critical health challenges facing fisherfolk women alongside economic empowerment. The project focused on **cancer awareness, prevention, and cervical cancer screening**, recognizing that health is foundational to productivity, dignity, and sustainable livelihoods.

Cancer Awareness and Community Sensitization

Through community forums, barazas, and women-led dialogue sessions, WA-WA disseminated vital information on cervical cancer risk factors, early warning signs, prevention, and the importance of regular screening. These sessions helped demystify cancer, reduce stigma, and encouraged women to seek timely medical attention—an essential step in communities where health-seeking behavior is often delayed due to fear, cost, or misinformation.

Cervical Cancer Screening and Referral

As part of the WOHK Project, women were supported to access cervical cancer screening services. Through this process, **five women were diagnosed with cervical cancer**. WA-WA Kenya mobilized resources, provided psychosocial support, facilitated referrals, and contributed toward treatment costs in collaboration with families and health facilities.

Loss, Resilience, and Continued Commitment

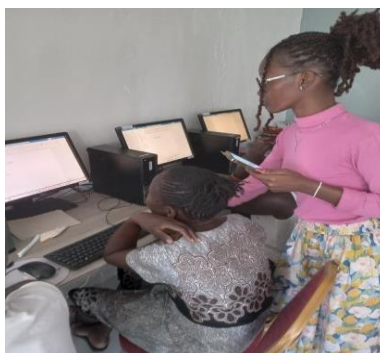
Tragically, **four of the five women passed away in 2025**, underscoring the harsh realities of

late diagnosis, limited access to specialized care, and systemic health inequities affecting rural women. One woman continues to receive support and treatment. These losses deeply impacted the WA-WA community and reinforced the urgency of sustained investment in preventive health, early screening, and accessible care.

WA-WA remains committed to honoring the lives lost by strengthening health advocacy, expanding early screening efforts, and integrating health education into all economic empowerment initiatives.

Computer Packages Training

Digital inclusion remained a priority area. In 2025, **30 adults** and **21 preschool children** were trained in computer packages. Awareness posters were also developed and shared within surrounding communities to promote digital literacy. The program aims to bridge the digital divide and prepare communities for a technology-driven future.



WA-WA Fish Cage Project

In 2025, WA-WA Kenya launched the WA-WA Fish Cage Project to support 20 fisherfolk women through sustainable aquaculture. Implemented in partnership with Rio Fish Farms, the project combines technical expertise with women-led enterprise development.

Women beneficiaries actively participate in feeding, monitoring, and daily management of the fish cages, building hands-on skills in aquaculture, cost control, and production planning. The

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project is expected to achieve an 80% harvest by mid-January 2026, generating income, strengthening food security, and reducing reliance on exploitative livelihoods.



*Transferring
fingerlings to the main
cage*



Checking the fish cages at lake Victoria. This project is by our partners Rio Fish

WA-WA Barber & Beauty Parlour

The WA-WA Barber Shop and Beauty Parlour operates as both a skills application hub and an income-generating enterprise. Following expansion in September 2025, monthly revenues ranged between KES 140,000–170,000.

The beauty salon set up at kaugege generates a monthly revenue ranging from 4000 to 8000 shillings

The enterprise employs seven staff, most of whom are program graduates, providing stable income, mentorship, and real-world business exposure while strengthening WA-WA's sustainability model.



WA-WA Kenya barber & beauty palour

Poultry Farming

Poultry farming remained a key livelihood and sustainability intervention in 2025. The first batch of birds introduced on 14th January 2025 is producing at a 93% egg-laying rate, while the second batch introduced on 18th April 2025 is producing at 95%.

The enterprise generates steady income, provides hands-on agribusiness training, improves food security, and enables women to replicate poultry farming at household level, contributing to long-term economic resilience.



One of our chicken coups located at Kaugege

15 | CHALLENGES

- Inadequate community awareness in some target areas
- Financial constraints limiting program scale
- Adverse weather patterns affecting infrastructure and livelihoods
- Staff turnover

15 | KEY LESSONS LEARNT

- Conducting market surveys before determining annual skills offerings enhances relevance
- Engaging beneficiaries in program design addresses root causes of vulnerability
- Continuous sensitization strengthens community ownership and behavior change
- On-the-job training and continuous staff capacity building strengthen organizational impact

16 | LOGFRAME INDICATORS ALIGNMENT (2025)

Overall Goal / Impact

Improved economic resilience, dignity, and reduced vulnerability to exploitative practices among fisherfolk women and youth around Lake Victoria.

Outcomes

- Increased and diversified income sources among women beneficiaries
- Improved youth participation in governance, accountability, and decision-making processes
- Enhanced household food security and livelihood sustainability

Outputs (2025)

- 117 women completed vocational and entrepreneurship training
- 20 women actively engaged in fish cage aquaculture (feeding, monitoring, harvesting)
- 40 women supported through poultry farming value chains
- 7 women employed through WA-WA barber and beauty social enterprise
- 30 adults and 21 preschool children gained basic digital literacy skills
- Youth-led social audits, petitions, and advocacy forums conducted across Homa Bay County

Key Performance Indicators

- 85% of women graduates reporting increased income within six months of graduation
- 70% of trained women operating at least one income-generating activity
- Increased allocation and responsiveness to youth and SRHR priorities in county planning documents

17 | EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Who We Are

WA-WA Kenya is a women-led, community-based organization working along Lake Victoria to address gender inequality, poverty, and systemic exclusion affecting fisherfolk communities. Our integrated model combines economic empowerment, youth leadership, advocacy, and institutional strengthening to deliver sustainable, community-owned impact.

2025 At a Glance

In 2025, WA-WA Kenya directly reached women, youth, and children across Homa Bay County through skills development, youth advocacy, and enterprise-led livelihood interventions. A total of 117 women graduated from vocational programs, while women-led enterprises in poultry farming, aquaculture, and beauty services generated stable income and employment.

Why the WA-WA Model Works

WA-WA's Hop, Step & Jump model ensures that beneficiaries are supported progressively based on readiness and capacity. This approach minimizes dropouts, strengthens confidence, and ensures sustainable transitions into income generation. Combined with community ownership and social enterprise models, WA-WA delivers measurable outcomes aligned with donor priorities.

Sustainability & Value for Partnership

WA-WA's social enterprises—including poultry farming, fish cage aquaculture, and the barber and beauty parlour—generate internal revenue while serving as practical training platforms. These initiatives reduce donor dependency and enhance long-term sustainability.

Looking Ahead

WA-WA seeks strategic donor partnerships to scale climate-smart livelihoods, deepen youth leadership and governance engagement, and expand women-led enterprises across Lake Victoria communities.

18 | IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

2025 Key Results

- 117 women empowered with market-responsive vocational skills
- 20 women engaged in sustainable fish cage aquaculture

- 40 women supported through poultry farming value chains
- 7 women employed through WA-WA barber and beauty enterprise
- 30 adults and 21 children equipped with digital skills

Economic Impact

- Poultry enterprise achieving up to 95% egg production rate
- Beauty & Barber enterprise generating KES 140,000–170,000 monthly
- Fish cage project projected to generate over KES 200,000 per harvest cycle

Social Impact

- Increased household income stability and food security
- Reduced vulnerability to exploitative practices
- Strengthened youth participation in governance and accountability

Visual Impact Summary

Distribution of Women Benefiting from Key Livelihood Interventions (2025)

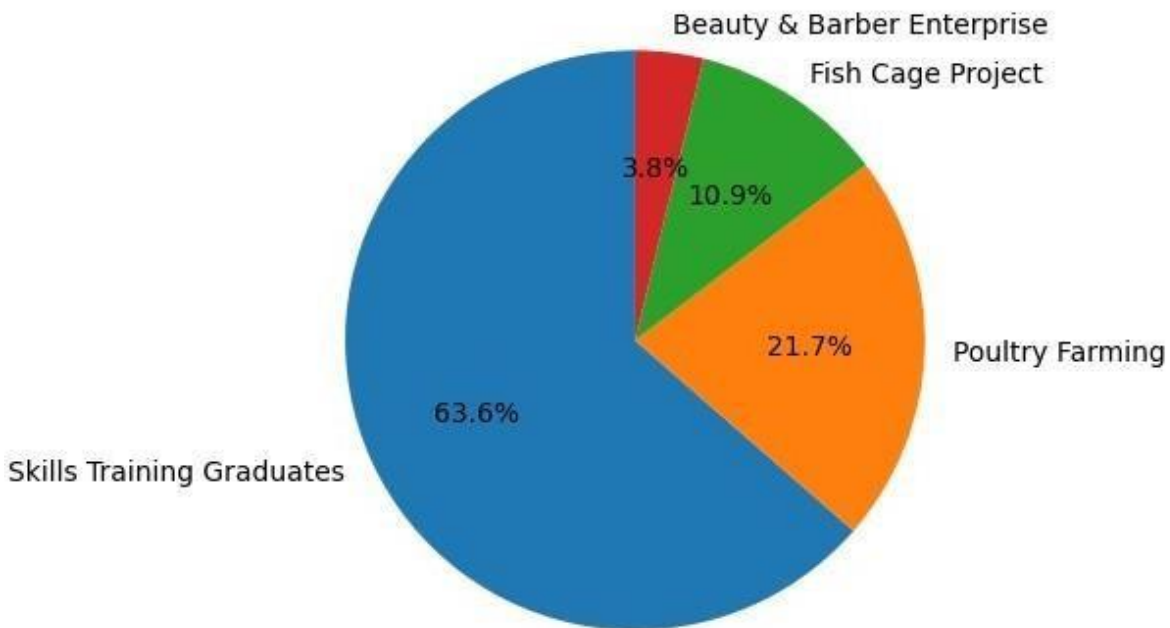
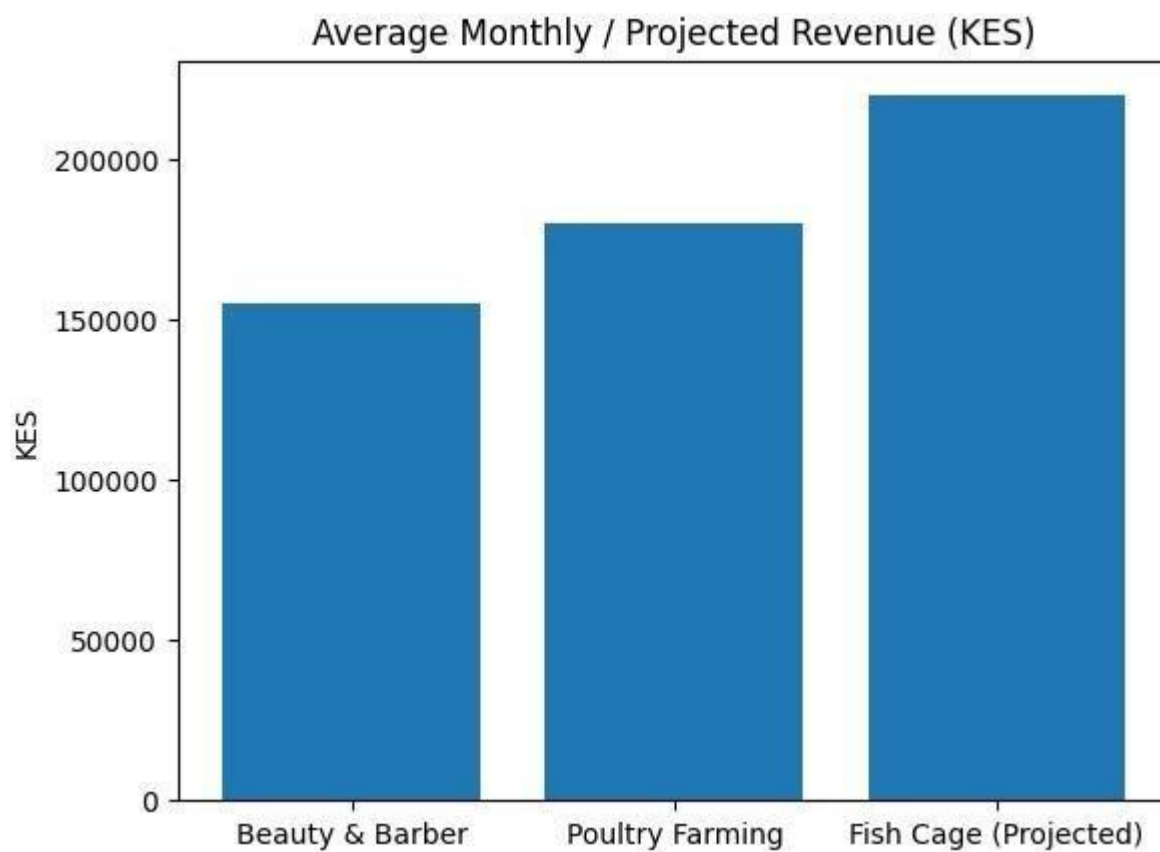


Figure 2: Average monthly and projected revenue from WA-WA social enterprises



End of Report