

KAWAC + KENWA

# NEWS LETTER



*Empowering Communities.  
Transforming Lives.*



**A Year of Inclusion in Action**

## 2025 Impact Highlights

In 2025, KAWAC and KENWA continued their mission to empower marginalized communities. Behind every number is a human story - a mother returning to hope, a young person turning volunteer hours into enterprise, and a senior discovering that learning never retires.

**162** Women trained in trade skills and income pathways

**126** Young people supported with resume development

**890** Women supported through maternal care in Kenya

**10,000+** Clients reached through HIV testing services

### Youth Pathways to Dignity



KAWAC trained 162 women in trade skills and supported 126 young people with resume preparation, job readiness, and confidence building. By year's end, **16 had entered employment** and **21 had moved on to college**. By year's end, **16 youth entered employment** and **21 transitioned to college**.

**Meet Brian:** *Brian volunteers with KAWAC for at least six hours each week while running a mobile barbershop. He reminds us that cutting Black hair takes strategy, discipline, and no room for mistakes. His humor reflects something powerful: young people are not waiting to be rescued; they are building parallel hustles, serving the community, and shaping their own future.*

## Seniors Leading the Way

**Dreams Reconnected:** One women's group facilitator for our GBV program completed her Personal Support Worker training and is now studying nursing. She once thought her dreams were over, but now she has reconnected with them. Her journey reminds us that recovery is not only about surviving hardship—it's also about returning to the future you thought was lost.

*Community members building sustainable livelihoods through entrepreneurship*



*Brian, KAWAC volunteer and mobile barber entrepreneur*



**Meet Benson:** Benson runs small errands like repairs, volunteers with KAWAC helping seniors with yarn cutting, grass cutting, and weeding. He also works as an Uber driver and Eats delivery person. He supports KAWAC with several rides for immigrant appointments—showing how community leadership often grows through ordinary acts of reliability.



KAWAC seniors are not passive program participants; they are leaders, advisors, data collectors, and community builders. This year included **six cooking cycles** featuring Kiswahili chapo, Nigerian fufu, Cameroonian-inspired chicken stew, and the unforgettable mandazi.

**ICT & Social Inclusion Training:** Building on our expanded Computer Resource Hub, we delivered bi-monthly digital literacy workshops that engaged over 60 seniors throughout the year. By the end of 2024, 75% reported improved digital skills and increased online social interaction. The hub now accommodates 12 users simultaneously, providing seniors with tools to connect and engage in today's digital world.

We also introduced **virtual reality experiences** during meetings. For some seniors, this offered a moving opportunity to revisit the villages where they were born - a reminder that technology can be tender, not just technical.

*Seniors engaged in digital literacy training at KAWAC's Computer Resource Hub*



**Volunteer Engagement:** We recruited and oriented 50 new volunteers (25 seniors and 25 youth) with a 60% retention rate. These volunteers contributed thousands of hours to data collection, program support, and community building.

**Cooking Across Cultures:** We had six cooking cycles and cooked a lot of different foods that made everyone feel at home, including Kiswahili chapo and fufu from Nigeria with chicken stew made from Cameroon cooking style. The mandazi—the African donuts—sparked the best debate! Kneading is all in the head, and how do you measure the sugar? Well, you look and guess so that it is not too much and is not too little.

**The Lesson:** This is an area with a lot of inclusive gaps if sisters and brothers with visual impairment are to be included in our work and mission. Inclusion is not automatic. It must be planned, funded, and continually improved.

Our work with visually challenged participants deepened our understanding of inclusion. We learned the importance of not taking matters for granted—matters like the microwave. We all assume everyone can use a microwave until one of us cannot because she can't see. Hence, now we need to consider having talking microwaves and other adaptive technologies.

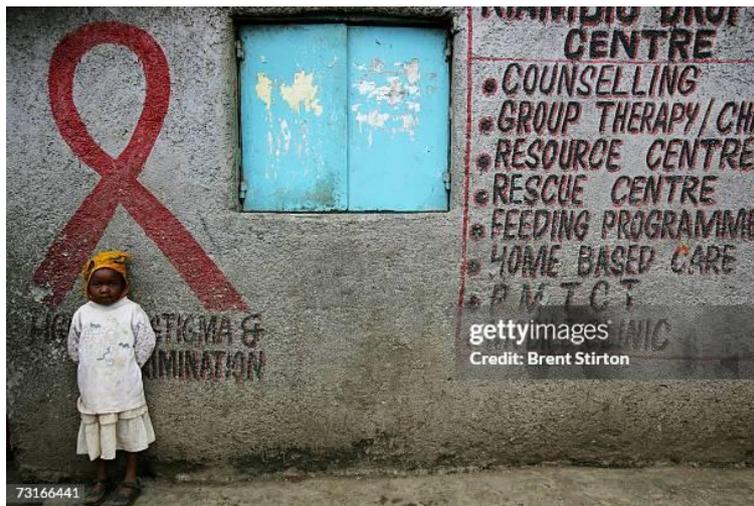
## Learning Inclusion from Visual Impairment

### Maternal Care: Restoring Dignity

Maternal care remains one of KAWAC's most cherished programs. In 2025, **890 women** received support connected to facilities such as Mama Lucy Hospital, Ruiru Hospital, and Mutuini. Many of these mothers had been detained for weeks or months because they could not settle hospital bills after childbirth.

**Lydia's Story:** *One of the most heartbreaking cases involved a young woman at Ruiru Hospital who spent 24 agonizing hours in cold, soggy bed sheets beside the body of her deceased baby because she could not afford the costs needed to leave. Through follow-up support and local partnership, Lydia is now preparing to return to school. Her story carries our message: hardship must not have the final word.*

### KENWA: HIV/AIDS Care Excellence



World AIDS Day commemoration in Kenya - KENWA community members



The Kenya Network of Women with AIDS (KENWA) has achieved remarkable milestones through the APHIA Plus KAMILI project:

- 98% of adults on care receiving ART treatment
- 90%+ viral suppression rate achieved
- 4,000+ OVC reached with nutrition and education support
- 61 support groups formed at village level

Our tagline, "We Repair Broken Hearts," reflects our commitment to holistic care that addresses not just medical needs, but emotional, social, and economic well-being.

*KENWA community meeting - building support networks across Kenya*



- **Zero Stigma & Discrimination** through support groups, education, and advocacy
- **Zero New Infections** through prevention, education, and community awareness

*KENWA health education and awareness session*



- **Zero Deaths** through improved access to ART and comprehensive care

**Getting to Zero Campaign:** KENWA's "Getting to Zero" campaign focuses on three critical goals:

- **Social Well-being:** 85% reported improved well-being and reduced isolation
- **Community Building:** Foster deeper connections across generations, cultures, and abilities
- **Digital Literacy Growth:** Expand computer hub and intergenerational tech workshops
- **Maternal Care Expansion:** Continue standing with mothers in Kenya during critical moments
- **Youth Transitions:** Strengthen pathways from education to employment with mentorship
- **Accessible Programming:** Implement talking microwaves and adaptive technologies for persons with disabilities
- **Trade Skills Pathways:** Deepen vocational training and expand income-generation opportunities

### **Our 2026 Priorities:**

- **Community Events:** Three intergenerational events with 150+ participants
- **Elder Abuse Awareness:** Four sessions reaching 80+ seniors
- **Digital Literacy:** 75% of seniors reported improved digital skills

- Volunteer Engagement: 50 new volunteers recruited with 60% retention

All activities funded under the New Horizons for Seniors Program were successfully fulfilled in 2024. Key achievements include:

## New Horizons for Seniors Program Success

## Looking Ahead to 2026

In the year ahead, KAWAC and KENWA aim to deepen trade skills pathways, expand accessible programming, strengthen youth transitions into education and employment, and continue standing with mothers and families in moments of crisis.

*We are grateful to volunteers, donors, facilitators, seniors, youth, women leaders, and community partners in Canada and Kenya who made this work possible. Thank you for believing that people deserve more than survival. They deserve a chance to thrive.*

## Connect With Us

**KAWAC (Canada)**

[www.kawac.ca](http://www.kawac.ca)

**KENWA (Kenya)**

[www.kenwakenya.org](http://www.kenwakenya.org)

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