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Chama

Women Profile 2025

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Silent Advocates to Bold Leaders:

The Story of Women with Power

The members of women with power chama were initially a group of 15 women from Dagoretti North Constituency who wanted to help each other out financially. Their role was simple; they would do merry go rounds and table ban king to support each other. But even as they did this, they had started their own form of silent advocacy.

The Transformation

In 2022, they began a catering service. As customers sought their services, they would create awareness about pressing issues in their community, “You know, women gossip and we would talk about the issues in our community – Gender Based Violence, Environmental Issues” Salma Twalib, Chairlady of Women with Power recalls.

Slowly through this form of productive gossip they became more and more community conscience. They began to realize their power. “We started going for chief’s barazas together, introducing ourselves, saying what we do. Community members even began coming to us to solve their problems,” Zuhura Njuguna recounts.

What began as a small self-help group started to slowly transform into a formidable advocacy group. They then changed their criteria for joining the chama. Besides joining for savings and loans, members could choose to join to do community advocacy work. Their membership grew to 31 members.

Community Perception

Despite this positive transformation, they still faced challenges of community acceptance. As Salma recalls because of the culture in their community, they were viewed as nosey, proud and carefree women. “Motivation to do this work did not come easy,” Salma Recalls. They had to search deep within for the power to press on. “We couldn’t just sit and watch our community suffer,” Zuhura affirms.

The Charge for Change Program

The beginning of their journey with Badili was an interesting one. Salma had been hired by Badili to offer catering services at a Human Rights Training Badili was hosting in Kawangware. “I looked around the room and I didn’t see any Muslims or youth and I offered to bring some of my chama members to the meeting,” Salma recalls. From this simple interaction, Badili witnessed Salma’s incredible community mobilizing skills and dedication to the cause of human rights advocacy. “Since then, we became Badili women, and we’re Badili women to this day,” Salma continues.

The Charge for Change Program

Their induction to the charge for change program was a pivotal moment for the women with power. Badili trained them on human rights and research giving them the necessary skills and knowledge to advocate for their rights. “Charge for Change showed us that we have the power to go to the ward admin (for instance) and speak up. We the power to write petitions and submit them. Before, we were just doing things, we didn’t have any plan,” Salma confidently states.

Community Change

It didn’t take long for results to be seen. The women were able to speak up against a dump site in their area bringing pollution and disease. They organized protests to stop the dumping in their neighborhood. We said from now, no more garbage will be dumped here,” Salma states. Their protest gained a significant amount of attention and support online. Because of their advocacy the dump site was halted and no further dumping has been done in the area since.

These women were able to build a solid partnership with their Area MP, Assistant County Commissioner other key duty bearers who began to recognize them not just as a chama group, but as an organized collective of women leaders. Their ability to mobilize, document issues, and engage officials with evidence earned them new respect in spaces where they were previously dismissed.

Charging Forward

For Women with Power, Charge for Change was not just a training; it was a shift in identity. And their vision continues to grow. Women with Power remain committed to expanding their advocacy, mentoring other chama groups, and ensuring that the gains they have made become lasting structures of community empowerment.



Women For Purpose: From Sisterhood to Political Action

As chairlady of Women for Purpose, Risper recalls their simple start: Buying household items like flour and sugar to share among members. The Chama's purpose was simple and wholesome; rooted in sisterhood and the desire to be each other's keeper.

But as Risper recounts, the aim of the group began to evolve. As time went by, it was more than just about supporting each other; it was also about helping their community through what they called community awareness.

The Awakening Journey

The shift marked a powerful transformation. From being a small self-help group, Women for Purpose became a collective of advocates. They began speaking out on issues that affected their neighborhood: insecurity, lack of streetlights, drainage problems, and gender-based violence. What had once been a private space of sharing and solidarity turned into a public platform for action.

This growth was amplified when they met Badili Africa. Through training sessions focused on human rights, research, and advocacy, the women learned how to effectively channel their concerns into formal petitions, engage with decision-makers, and hold those in power accountable. Risper reflects on how, through Badili, they were able to learn how to face stakeholders, how to present a petition, and how to ensure their voices are heard. "Now it is like a walk in the park, we can engage any stakeholder, and action is taken."

Story of Change

For these women, the chama has transformed into something much more significant. It is a sisterhood, a source of strength and unity. Members now mentor others in the community, creating a ripple effect in their neighborhood. As Pauline Muchemi explains, "Through this chama, other women in the community became empowered."

Their ambition continues to grow. The women are now rallying behind one of their own to run for MCA, convinced that women's leadership brings integrity, empathy, and accountability.

Charging Forward

Despite challenges, such as lack of safe houses for GBV survivors and limited resources, their determination remains unshaken. Women for Purpose is proof of what happens when women come together in solidarity: they create change, demand justice, and redefine leadership in their community.

Women for Purpose stands today not only as a chama, but as a movement. A testament to feminist sisterhood, resilience, and the power of women's collective voice.



Shukran Self-Help Group:

From Savings to Sisterhood in Action

When eighteen women from Kangemi Ward came together in July 2023, their focus was simple: pooling resources to support each other through tough times.

Dorcas Mwikali, the Chairlady of the group, shared how they offered interest-free emergency funds as a practical safety net for women running small businesses.

Yet Dorcas sensed untapped potential. Even though they seemed to be doing advocacy work, they did not fully believe in their power and voice. Their main concentration was on savings and table banking.

The Awakening

In January 2025, a stroke of luck changed everything. A Badili-trained chama group introduced them to Badili Africa. And through the human rights and advocacy training Badili offered, the tide turned for the Women of Shukran Self Help Group.

"We were lagging behind as chama women, we did not know much. But through Badili, we have changed a lot," Sarah Hayanje, a member of the group, reflects.

The training revealed their agency beyond financial matters. After the training, this chama group realized they actually have a voice.

Taking Action

The transformation was immediate and bold. These women, who had never engaged with leaders before, found the courage to address their MP, directly, about youth unemployment. As Dorcas notes, "he is actively trying to provide employment opportunities to the youth."

When a fellow member faced domestic violence, the chama rallied with both emotional and legal support. Sarah explains how, through the human rights trainings, they realized that, in fact, there is a law that protects them against human rights violations.

Community Impact

The ripple effects are visible throughout their neighborhood. Sarah observes that GBV cases have declined within their community. The Chama women can now come together and unite to ensure their voices are heard.

Sisterhood in Action

What was once defined purely by financial solidarity has become a collective of confident advocates. Shukran Self-Help Group proves that when women organize, support one another, and raise their voices together, they transform not only their own lives but their entire community's future.



Muongano Ndio Nguvu: From Isolation to Community Leadership

Founded in 2016, Muungano Ndio Nguvu emerged from the frustrations of women in Mathare who felt isolated and disempowered. Sharon Nafulla led the formation of this group with a clear purpose: To support each other as women and also find ways to provide for their families.

The chama grew from table banking into a powerful support system for 25 women and 13 men. Sharon explains how this transformed family dynamics. Through the chama, women can buy food, pay school fees, and even support their neighbors. It has reduced quarrels in homes because women are no longer as helpless.

The Awakening Journey

Badili Africa's training in 2025 became their turning point. The human rights education Badili offered them helped members reframe their daily experiences. Harassment and discrimination that they once accepted and normalized became violations they could challenge.

The women realized they could do more than just support themselves. They could also help their community. Sharon recounts how this awareness gave them the courage to speak up, organize collectively, and become community educators.



Community Champions

The members now describe themselves as both entrepreneurs and advocates. They organize regular community clean-ups in Mathare 4B and use their collective voice to challenge harmful practices.

Sharon describes her personal transformation: "I never thought I could teach, but after the training, I found myself explaining human rights to others in the community. Women now come to me for guidance."

Moving Forward

Despite working with their local chief on initiatives, Sharon acknowledges that elected leaders have provided limited support, with many promises remaining unfulfilled. The group continues advocating for stronger partnerships and sustained engagement from organizations like Badili.

Muongano Ndio Nguvu proves that when women unite, they transform both their own lives and their communities. From addressing household conflicts to leading community education, these women demonstrate the power of collective action in creating lasting change.

Go Getters: From Financial Goals to Community Advocacy

Dorothy Mukami's vision for Go Getters began in her friend's salon in Kawangware. She did not just want to start a Chama group for a merry-go-round; she wanted something more, a Chama where they could invest in things like land, so that the women could have something substantial.

Starting with just two women in November 2022, the group eventually expanded to eleven active members, focusing on table banking and financial empowerment. Dorothy describes their impact: "Since we started our chama, there are people who have made progress. Some have been able to pay school fees, some have been able to buy land."

The Awakening

The Chama's connection to Badili Africa came through their local area chief, who included them in advocacy trainings. Before this, Dorothy admits of their lack of involvement in matters of advocacy. She explains that, initially, their Chama meetings only focused on financial empowerment and occasional conversations on domestic issues facing the Chama women.

The human rights trainings transformed their approach. "We were taught about human rights by Badili. Mostly issues of Gender Based Violence and where to report in such cases," Dorothy explains.

Community Education

Jane Muthoni, another member of the chama group, describes how she shares knowledge in her daily interactions: "As a Badili woman, and a business-woman, in the community, I meet with people, customers come. And the knowledge I got from Badili, I share with them."

She educates community members about various rights—from employment protection to demanding clean water and reporting insecurity.

Dorothy recounts addressing child abuse in the community. Following the BBC Africa Eye documentary that exposed illegal sex trade involving young teenage girls in Mai Mahiu, Go Getters organized a pad drive and human rights training session for adolescent girls in the Congo area of Kawangware, demonstrating their proactive response to emerging community vulnerabilities.

The Power of Unity

Dorothy emphasizes their collective strength: "The power that we have as a Chama is that we are many. So even when we go to a duty bearer with an issue when we are 20 women, it will be handled differently as opposed to just one person. Unity is power."



Go Getters Chama group demonstrates how women's groups can evolve beyond financial goals to become powerful advocates for community rights. From a salon conversation to systematic advocacy, these women prove that when equipped with knowledge and united in purpose, they can drive meaningful change in their community.



Empowered Westlands Chama Group: From Financial Dreams to Community Champions

In June 2024, nineteen women from Kangemi ward came together with one purpose: "women supporting women to build better futures."

"We saw that we could start contributing a little money so that we could build ourselves up," Christine Nyamu recalls. What began as weekly contributions for household items evolved into a table banking system, with their ultimate goal being land ownership for financial security.

The Awakening

Before February 2025, these women followed a familiar pattern of many grassroots groups: focused on economic goals while disconnected from broader advocacy. Though issues such as gender-based violence, poor service delivery, and infrastructure challenges affected their daily lives, they remained largely silent.

"I could say, first, we as a Chama, I think we were asleep. They say knowledge is power, and we did not have that," Leah reflects.

The turning point came when they connected with Badili Africa's 'Charge for Change' project. "We came to know of Badili through another Chama this year in February," Vivian Muhonja explains. "We were able to learn about human rights, advocacy, research, things like that."

The training did not just provide new skills, it revealed their existing power to demand accountability from duty bearers. "Badili has given us confidence," as Leah emphasizes.

Community Impact

This transformation yielded immediate results. These women were able to work with their constituency's Member of Parliament to address security concerns in their community, petition their local chief to tackle waste disposal problems, and mobilize residents to report human rights violations in their area such as child abuse as Eucabeth Mogaka notes.

The women have built strategic partnerships with their duty bearers, such as the MCA, police OCS, and are pursuing collaboration with health facilities within their community. More importantly, they have created internal systems to sustain their advocacy work beyond formal project periods.

"We have attracted attention from other groups; we can say we are somehow different," Leah notes.

The Ripple Effect

From nineteen women focused solely on financial goals, Empowered Westlands Chama has become a model for how existing women's networks can drive meaningful community change. Their story demonstrates that transformation happens when those closest to community challenges are equipped with tools, confidence, and systematic approaches to advocacy.

They have proven that meaningful social change begins with empowering those who understand the problems firsthand.



Mathare Gitathuru River CBO: From Environmental Action to Rights Advocacy

In the heart of Mathare sub-county, just by the Gitathuru River, 185 community members came together with the sole purpose of cleaning up their environment. The group of volunteers who were brought together by President William Ruto's call to Kenyans to plant trees in their localities in 2024 was spurred into action as they began planting trees, cleaning the Gitathuru River, and reviving spaces that had long been associated with danger and neglect.

What began as a simple community-driven initiative soon started to bear fruit. Moureen Wedaba, the group Chairlady, recounts how, before their intervention, the area around the Gitathuru River was impassable. She narrates how there were many cases of rape, and children were being thrown in the river by perpetrators. "After cleaning the area, residents are now able to pass, people are going there to do their work and even rest," Moureen Shares.



The Awakening Journey

While their environmental work succeeded, the CBO members hadn't recognized their full organizing potential. Moureen explains they lacked exposure to human rights or formal advocacy until their local chief introduced them to Badili Africa.

Story of Change

The human rights and research trainings by Badili transformed how members of Mathare Gitathuru River CBO viewed their role. They evolved from just environmental caretakers to rights defenders who address broader community issues.

As Moureen reflects, they are currently engaging different duty bearers and demanding that security lights be put up in the area to ensure security is guaranteed for everyone, including women and girls who are more vulnerable to attacks, and prevent any instances of gender based violence. She reflects on the improvements made as cases of gender based violence are reducing as a result of their united voice.

Government officials now recognize them as reliable community partners. "Right now, if the chief has a message to the community members, they normally see it fit to reach out to groups like ours. Active groups," Moureen emphasizes.

Charging Forward

Presently the members of Gitathuru River CBO view their chama in an entirely different light, not just as a group united by environmental action, but as a collective of community advocates who know how to claim their rights and hold duty bearers accountable. Their story is proof that when women-led groups are empowered with knowledge of rights and advocacy, they become powerful agents of change.



Hosanna: Fifteen Years of Sisterhood and Community Growth



Margaret Muthoni founded Hosanna in 2009 with ten women who wanted to help each other through table banking, merry-go-round, and welfare support. "We came up with a way of helping each other," Margaret explains. The group registered officially in 2013 and has since supported members' children through education and families through crises.

"We are proud of the years we've had because a lot of children have been educated, even finishing form 4 and going to college through the help of Hosanna," Margaret shares, "Some members have prospered so much they've bought plots and built homes, though distance means they can no longer participate actively."

After rebuilding their membership this year, Hosanna now has 30 members— merry-go-round contributions ranging from 2,000 to 4,000 shillings monthly.

Beyond Finance

The group has ventured into collective business, learning soap-making from one member and previously running an egg-selling enterprise. "We saw it was good if we all make the soap. You take your ten liters, sell it and come back with the money to the chama," Margaret describes.

The Rights Awakening

Hosanna's connection with Badili Africa began when Margaret received a phone call from their area chief who had forwarded the chama's name to the organization. Before this, Margaret admits, "We weren't involving ourselves in issues of human rights and advocacy. If someone was involving themselves in it, they were doing it on their own."

Badili's training transformed their perspective. Naomi explains what they learned: "We began to understand that everyone has rights: the right to live, children have the right to be in school at an appropriate time. We have the right to receive medical attention—when you go to the hospital, you're supposed to be given medical attention."

A Foundation for Change

Hosanna's fifteen-year journey demonstrates how established women's groups can evolve from purely economic focus to rights awareness. With their strong foundation of mutual support and proven track record of transforming members' lives, they now possess the knowledge to address broader community issues.

From supporting children's education to understanding fundamental rights, Hosanna continues expanding their impact—proving that long-standing solidarity networks can embrace new dimensions of empowerment while maintaining their core mission of women helping women.