



# THE BADILI JOURNAL

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# FOREWORD

**Dear Badili friends and partners,**

I am filled with immense gratitude as I reflect on the transformative journey of Badili Africa as 2024 comes to a close. I would like us to take stock of The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as we work towards promoting gender equality and women's rights

As the clock ticks down to 2030, the deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Kenyan Vision 2030, Badili Africa has continued to be deliberate in continuing to deploy innovative strategies and investing in grassroots and young women's engagement in the struggle for women's participation in public affairs, re-distribution of domestic roles and ending all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls. We have celebrated fantastic milestones, announced new products, and premiered our Women King Makers Doc-film that informs a groundbreaking experience on women political mobilizers and the various forms of gender-based violence meted against them during this period.

Marginalized groups, such as grassroots women from informal settlements and rural communities, face significant barriers in influencing political and governance structures. Despite their vast community networks and their organization in merry-go-round chamas to address socio-economic needs, these women are often seen merely as beneficiaries rather than stakeholders who can contribute to local and national development plans and policies.

At Badili Africa, we are committed to innovative strategies that ensure no one is left behind in our struggle for gender equality. From political spas that merge beauty with civic dialogues to engage young women, to chama women acting as pressure groups demanding public accountability, and Make-Up Artivism exhibitions that use fashion, makeup, digital storytelling, and art to address the root causes of violence against women and girls—our initiatives are bold, transformative, and inclusive.

We believe in the power of collective action and accountability mechanisms to dismantle the barriers to meaningful engagement for women and girls in political and socio-economic processes. In 2025 we will seek to solidify our gains while charting new paths that will ensure effective representation and participation in decision-making processes allowing for the full spectrum of voices to be heard, experiences and values to be centered especially for marginalized and vulnerable grassroots women and young women.

**Thank you for your unwavering support and solidarity in 2024.**

**Bina Maseno, Executive Director, Badili Africa**



# ABOUT BADILI AFRICA

Badili Africa is a Pan-African women’s rights organization based in Kenya, dedicated to creating safe spaces where women and girls can flourish and harness their leadership capacities. We believe that amplifying women’s voices as change agents is the key to igniting transformation and social change across Africa.

## OUR MISSION AND VISION:



### Mission:

We harness and leverage the voice and power of Chama and young women in Africa through civic engagement, capacity building, and partnerships to influence inclusive and effective political leadership and governance.

### Vision:

An equitable society where grassroots and young women enjoy full social, economic, and political rights.



# How we work



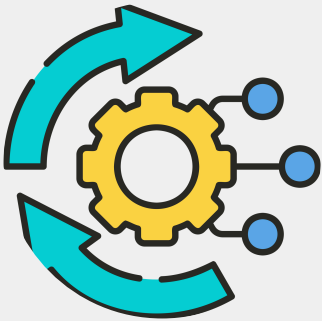
## Voice

By valuing and centering the perspectives, experiences, insights and contributions of Chama and Young women in decision making processes and investing in their agency and leadership



## Leadership

Strengthening and building capacities of chama and young women's active and meaningful participation in politics and governance, economic empowerment, ending gender-based violence and knowledge production



## Transform

A movement of chama and young women leaders as politicians, activists, policy makers, mentors and advocates for better public service delivery, meaningful inclusion in politics and governance and eradication of all forms of gender-based violence.





## Our Work

### INCREASE GRASSROOTS AND YOUNG WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS, LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING.



#### A. Chama Champions: Igniting Civic Engagement at the Grassroots

At Badili Africa, we are transforming traditional women's self-help groups (Chama) in informal urban settlements, into powerful agents of civic change. Our approach focuses on empowering grassroots Chama women in key urban settlements across Kenya specifically Nairobi (Kangemi, Mountain View, Mathare, Kayole), Nakuru, and Kisumu to become community leaders and accountability champions.

By providing targeted advocacy and leadership training, we are dismantling systemic barriers that have historically marginalized women from political spaces. Our work directly challenges the stark reality highlighted by the McKinsey Report: women occupy only 24.8% of legislative and senior management roles in Kenya. Through our program, Chama women are transforming from passive community members to active rights holders who confidently demand institutional accountability.

Our recent achievements speak volumes. In Mountain View and Kangemi, empowered Chama women have successfully advocated for critical community infrastructure, securing the reconstruction of a community dispensary's perimeter wall, addressing drainage issues, and pushing for the completion of the stalled Kangemi Flyover. These victories not only improve local infrastructure but also demonstrate the tangible power of women's collective action in governance. This achievement aligns with the goals of the project titled 'Enhancing Inclusive Governance, Empowerment, and Resilience of Communities Toward the Realization of Human Rights,' underscoring our commitment to inclusive governance.

Our ultimate vision is to cultivate a robust, ground-up approach to participatory democracy that centers women's leadership, challenges systemic inequalities, and paves the way for gender parity in political representation in Kenya.



## B. Redefining Civic Spaces using the Power of Makeup: Spotlight on Political Spa and Glam Session.

Badili Africa is reshaping the way young women engage in politics by breaking down traditional barriers to political conversation. Our Political Spas initiative uses beauty and wellness spaces as an entry point to create a friendly, stigma-free environment where young women can discuss important civic and political issue.

Picture this makeup brushes swirling, women chatting openly about the state of politics, campaign strategies, and how they can influence leadership in their communities all while enjoying a soothing glam session. This is the essence of our Political Spas a unique blend of beauty and political empowerment.



There is a significant gap in the representation of women in leadership positions in Kenya, and many young women often feel excluded from political discussions due to the formality and perceived elitism of these spaces. To bridge this gap, Badili Africa uses a model that integrates Civic engagement into the daily lives of young women, making it more accessible and relatable. The Political Spas challenge the notion that political conversations must be formal and allow women to discuss governance and leadership in a way that feels natural and empowering.

By combining beauty and civic engagement, we've created a unique space where women can develop political awareness, share experiences, and learn from each other. Through these sessions, they gain the confidence and tools to become active participants in leadership and decision-making, breaking barriers that have long excluded women from such spaces.

To date, we have held 13 successful spa sessions across various institutions, including Kabarak University (2), Kisumu Polytechnic (2), University of Nairobi (UON) (1), Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) (2), Riara University (1), and Technical University of Kenya (TUK) (1). Each session has engaged between 30-40 young women, providing a dynamic platform for these future leaders to explore their role in politics and governance in an empowering and inclusive environment. And 2 in Stakeholder engagements such as the international Women Day and The Annual Democracy Day. Additionally, we have political spas outside the student fraternity in various partner engagement during International Women's Day and the Annual Democracy and Human Rights Festival, further amplifying our outreach.

As we continue expanding this initiative, our goal is to foster a generation of politically active, confident young women ready to take on leadership roles and drive positive change in Kenya's political landscape.



### C. Influencers for change (#Influencers4changeke): Revolutionizing Civic Engagement

Badili Africa is transforming civic participation by creatively engaging young people through digital platforms they already dominate in harnessing the power of young social media influencers. Through our #Influencers4ChangeKE initiative, we have mapped influencers across various institutions of higher learning, including the University of Nairobi (UON), Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Kenyatta University (KU), and Technical University of Kenya (TUK), to encourage responsible and accountable digital advocacy.

These influencers play a crucial role in sparking meaningful civic and political conversations online. By educating their audiences, organizing discussions, and participating in civic dialogues, they are helping promote political tolerance, combat misinformation, and strengthen democratic values across digital spaces. Over the past three years, the combined reach of these influencers has grown to 1,866,785 young Kenyans. Through advocacy campaigns, they have worked to challenge stereotypes around young women in leadership and address the barriers they face in political and public life. As a result, these influencers have become important voices in the digital space, shaping public opinion and encouraging positive change.

Looking ahead, we are excited to expand this initiative, with a continued focus on critical issues such as gender-based violence, mental wellness, and good governance, leveraging digital skills for peacebuilding and countering misinformation. while empowering youth to play an active role in shaping Kenya’s future.



## D. Social Accountability Training



Badili Africa has been actively fostering accountability among students in higher learning institutions by empowering them with a deeper understanding of their rights, responsibilities, and the importance of holding leaders accountable. We engage students because student politics often mirrors national governance, making universities a key space for instilling values of transparency, accountability, and ethical leadership. Through our capacity-building workshops, we provide both knowledge and practical tools to help students engage effectively in governance processes, organize advocacy campaigns, and hold leaders accountable. A key Highlight of this initiative has been the creation of knowledge products such as the the Student Virtual Voice Hub, a platform designed to facilitate accountability through direct engagement between student leaders and their peers. As we expand our young peoples this initiative to more institutions, promoting value-based leadership and empowering students to champion transparency and good governance in their communities and beyond.





## E. Lights, Camera, Action: The Woman Kingmaker.

Badili Africa's original docufilm, *The Woman Kingmaker: Unseen Faces, Unheard Voices*, has ignited an inspiring movement among grassroots women political mobilizers, sparking deep conversations about the future of women's roles in political leadership.

The film, which showcases the struggles and triumphs of these often overlooked women, was screened at 4 major Screenings, with one of the most powerful moments unfolding during the grassroots screening.

In this intimate setting, the film moved many women sparking a renewed sense of empowerment and solidarity. For the first time, felt seen and heard. Inspired by the film, they committed to form a collective movement, united by the shared goal of negotiating better protection from political parties and election stakeholders. Their voices, once silenced by fear and marginalization, were now loud and clear: they were ready to step into leadership roles and demand the respect and protection they deserved.



At the official premiere, the conversation focused on policy reforms and advocacy. As political leaders, activists, and community members gathered, the discussion centered on how to combat the violence that women political mobilizers face and create frameworks to protect them. The film acted as a powerful catalyst, prompting calls for action to not only safeguard women in politics but to officially recognize them as key political actors. These conversations laid the groundwork for future policy reforms aimed at ensuring women mobilizers have the institutional support they need to thrive.

As part of the **16 Days of Activism** Against Gender-Based Violence, we organized a special screening to highlight Sexual and Gender Based Violence against women in politics. The screening explored the culture of violence, the masculinization of politics, and strategies for dismantling patriarchy. The screening discussion emphasized the challenges Kenyan female political mobilizers face, particularly during general elections. It also examined the structural and systemic inequalities that women encounter in political and economic spheres.

The emotional weight of the screenings underscored the urgency of *The Woman Kingmaker: Unseen Faces, Unheard Voices*'s mission: to spotlight the violence faced by women political mobilizers, harness the collective power of grassroots women, and shift the narrative from seeing women as mere brokers of power to recognizing their potential as political leaders. This docufilm is more than just a tool for political education it's a call to action, a beacon of hope for women who have long been at the margins of politics but are now boldly stepping into the spotlight, ready to lead and transform the political landscape for future generations.





## TACKLING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAWG).

At Badili Africa, we are committed to empowering communities in the fight against Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). Through art, community engagement, film, and advocacy campaigns, we equip individuals with the tools they need to challenge harmful norms and inspire change. Whether it's university students, Chama women, or male allies, we are creating a future where everyone has a voice in the movement against SGBV.

### A. SGBV Fashion Runway: A Bold Statement Through Art

On November 20th, over 444 Students 221 women and 233 men from JKUAT and neighboring campuses gathered for the impactful SGBV Fashion Runway Show. More than a display of creativity, this event was a call to action. Through the innovative “body as a canvas” concept, models transformed their bodies into powerful symbols of SGBV portraying its many forms: sexual, physical, emotional, and economic violence. Each design was a raw, visual reminder of the pervasive nature of SGBV, urging the audience to recognize its presence in their daily lives.

The event also featured a compelling panel discussion that tackled critical topics like consent, victim-blaming, and perpetrator accountability. This space provided students with the opportunity to engage in vital conversations and explore actionable solutions to combat violence. Special thanks to the Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF) for their invaluable support in making this event possible.



**SGBV KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT**



## B. Uzima: Healing Minds and Empowering Communities



The emotional, physical, and psychological scars left by gender-based violence, combined with societal pressures, often go unaddressed. Badili Africa's Uzima Mental Health Program was designed to fill this gap, helping communities recognize and heal from these hidden wounds. Through targeted sessions, we're integrating mental wellness into community structures, especially within Chama women's groups, where conversations about mental health are often overlooked. By embedding these discussions within Chama spaces, we are creating a culture of care, support, and healing that extends far beyond the individual.

Recognizing the importance of mental wellness for those on the front lines, we also provided staff mental debriefs. These sessions supported the well-being of our trainers, ensuring they remained resilient and equipped to guide others in the journey of healing and empowerment.

Uzima's reach extends into communities in Kayole, Soweto, and Dagoretti North, where women once overwhelmed by trauma are now leading support groups and advocating for mental wellness. The program also harnesses the power of digital platforms to offer accessible mental health resources and support to those affected by SGBV, ensuring that help is always within reach. By addressing both the mind and body, Uzima is not just empowering individuals it is transforming entire communities, one conversation at a time.



# STRENGTHENING CHAMA AND YOUNG WOMEN'S LIVELIHOODS BY IMPROVING THEIR DIGITAL LITERACY AND FINANCIAL SKILLS AND PROVIDING VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN MAKEUP ARTISTRY.

Badili Africa is committed to empowering women economically by providing them with the tools and skills to build resilient livelihoods. Our approach focuses on enhancing digital literacy, financial management, and training, ensuring that women can access new opportunities, expand their networks, and create sustainable businesses. By integrating these essential skills into community structures, we are transforming the way women interact with the economy, building a foundation for long-term growth and independence.

Badili Africa's approach to livelihood improvement integrates practical skills that women can immediately apply to their businesses. The Inua Chama Mama transformative workshop in Dandora for six Chama women's groups, each consisting of five women, focused on both digital literacy and financial skills, with sessions covering the use of smartphones and apps to market products via social media platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp and create networking opportunities for growth.

The training included essential financial management skills. The women learned strategies for rebuilding businesses post-disaster, including assessing losses and identifying potential growth opportunities. They gained practical knowledge of budgeting, cash flow tracking, and cost management. We emphasized the importance of saving, credit management, and planning for sustainability while also discussing how to avoid common financial pitfalls. The session highlighted available funding opportunities for women, ensuring they know where to access financial support for their businesses. The training concluded with a mental wellness session debriefing on the various mental effects of disaster and proper mental wellness care. With these new skills, the Chama women are now equipped to manage their finances, grow their businesses, and confidently navigate challenges, making lasting changes in their communities.



Through the Wajibu Wetu program, these Chama Women found their collective voice, engaging with duty bearers to rehabilitate their community Dispensary - from rebuilding its perimeter wall to fixing critical drainage issues.

[Kangemi Chama Women](#)



By nurturing the capabilities of Chama women like Milcah Wambui, we seek to facilitate the engagement of Chama women in urban informal settlements in preventing and mitigating violence, fostering social cohesion, and contributing to local governance and decision-making processes.

[Mathare Chama Women](#)



Through the Ecces Program, we have increased the participation and meaningful engagement of young women like Nellius in governance and democratic processes.

[Intergenerational Dialogue](#)

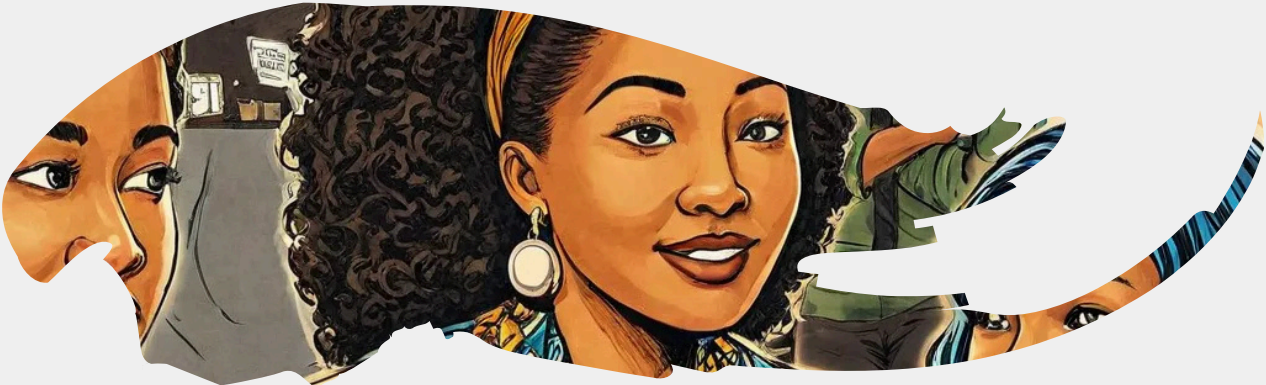


Joy's journey showcases how young women are finding their voices and stepping into leadership roles.

[Young Women in Leadership](#)

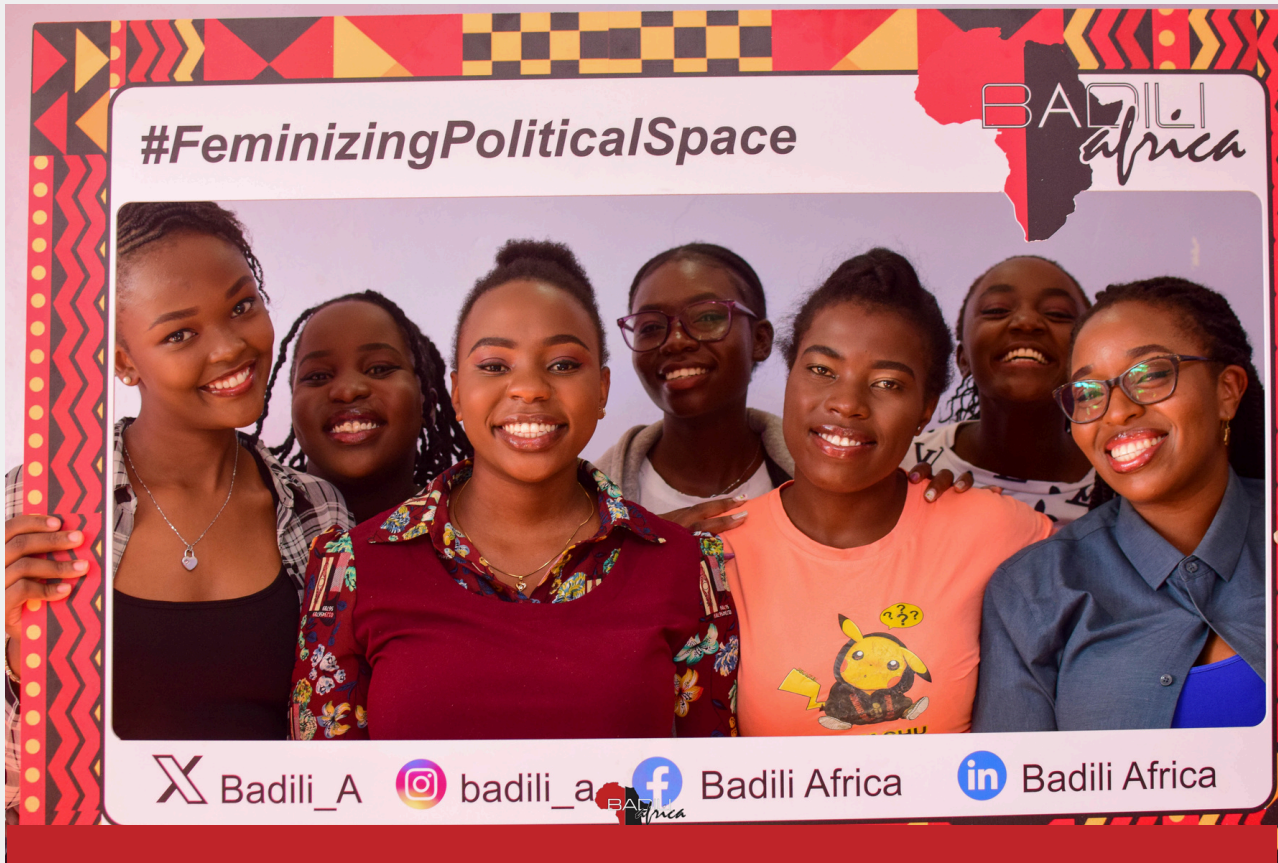


# Partner Acknowledgment



As we reflect on the transformative journey of 2024, we extend our deepest gratitude to our esteemed partners who have been instrumental in advancing our mission to amplify the voices of Chama and young women. Your unwavering support has enabled us to create meaningful impact in civic engagement, strengthen grassroots leadership, and work towards an equitable society where women's rights are not just protected but celebrated. As we look beyond 2024, we are inspired by your continued commitment to our vision. Together, we will continue to ensure that grassroots and young women fully realize their social, economic, and political rights.





## Invitation to join the movement

We invite you to become part of a movement that is reshaping the future of Africa's women. Your support not only helps us but also joins you to a community committed to gender justice and equality

## Get in Touch

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