



SEMI - ANNUAL NEWSLETTER



2026

Greetings from TAMWA Zanzibar!

The first half of 2026 reflects TAMWA Zanzibar's continued commitment towards realizing our vision where women and girls enjoy equal rights, opportunities, and meaningful participation in decision-making.

Guided by our Strategic Plan and mission to advocate, empower, and create platforms for women and children, we have continued implementing interventions focused on women's empowerment, gender equality, child protection, climate change adaptation, media advocacy, and inclusive participation across Zanzibar.

Through collaboration with communities, partners, journalists, media actors, government, and other stakeholders, TAMWA Zanzibar has continued to amplify voices, strengthen advocacy, build capacity, and contribute to positive social change. Every initiative implemented represents a collective step towards creating a more equal, just, and inclusive society.

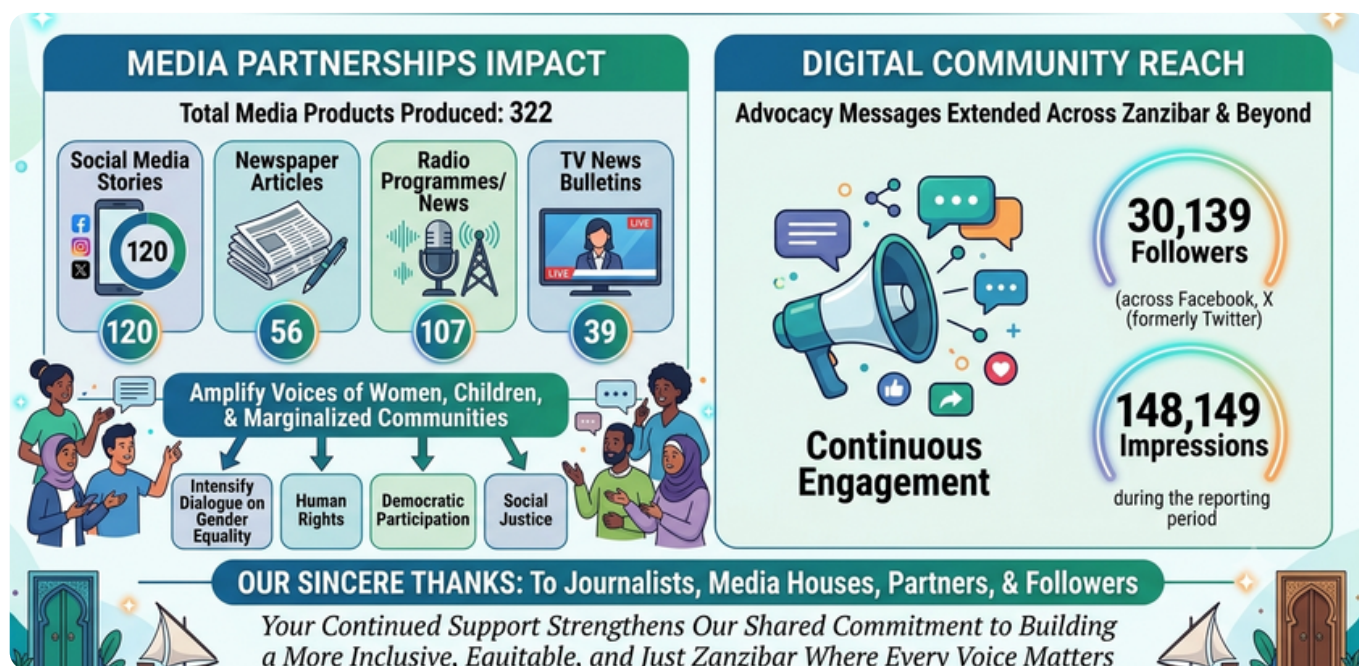
Thank you for being part of this journey and for your continued partnership and support.

*Warm regards,
Nairat A. Ali
Director*



Advocacy initiatives

● Message of Appreciation to Media Partners and Digital Community



Every story published and every programme aired has helped to amplify the voices of women, children, and marginalized communities while intensifying dialogue on issues of gender equality, human rights, democratic participation and social justice.

Your preferences, comments, shares, and interactions have in one way or another helped extend the reach of our advocacy messages to thousands of people across Zanzibar and beyond. We deeply appreciate.

Thank you to every journalist who reported our stories,

every media house that provided space and every follower who engaged with our contents, we say thank you for being part of our long journey to towards gender equality by doing advocacy for women and children's rights, legal and policy reforms, and empowerment of women economically and politically through media engagement as specified in our Vision and Mission.

Your continued and advice support strengthens our shared commitment to building a more inclusive, equitable, and just Zanzibar where every voice matters.

Media Stakeholders Renew Call for Urgent Tabling of Media Services Bill at the House of Representatives



ZAMECO members convened for the mid-year review meeting to assess progress, review achievements, and discuss key priorities.

Media stakeholders, including journalists, editors, the Zanzibar Media Committee (ZAMECO), and media influencers within the House of Representatives, have once again renewed their call for the urgent tabling of the long-awaited and promised Media Services Bill.

This follows its surprising omission from the 2026/2027 Budget Speech of the Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, which did not provide as earlier indicated clear timeline for its submission to the House of Representatives.

The Bill, which has remained pending for over a decade, continues to raise concern among media actors and stakeholders who have for nearly two decades been advocating for a modern legal framework that reflects digital transformation, strengthens press freedom, and safeguards the public's right to access information in Zanzibar.

The absence of clear progress in the current budget cycle has further intensified calls for transparency and accountability regarding its enactment.

In a press statement issued by the Zanzibar Media Committee (ZAMECO) under the title "Stakeholders emphasize the need for the Government to clearly communicate a concrete timeline for the submission of the Bill to the House of Representatives,"

stakeholders underscored the urgency of providing a definitive timetable for the Bill's presentation.

They noted that continued delays undermine efforts to strengthen media development, democratic participation, and the protection of journalists' rights in an evolving information landscape.

During the budget debate, Members of the House of Representatives also expressed

concern over the prolonged delay, urging the Government to clarify the status and timeline of the Bill.

"The media law has been promised for a long time, yet it has not been tabled. Citizens and stakeholders deserve clear answers instead of repeated promises," said Prof. Omar Fakihi, while Hon. Seif Hamad emphasized that the current legal framework is outdated and requires urgent reform to align with sectoral and technological changes.

Stakeholders further argue that existing media legislation grants extensive regulatory powers to government authorities, including broad ministerial discretion and involvement of security organs in media operations—raising ongoing concerns about press freedom, freedom of expression, and the public's right to information.

Veteran journalist Salim Said Salim noted that "these provisions are outdated and undermine media freedom and access to information," calling for a balanced legal framework that protects both regulation and fundamental rights.

Hope was renewed earlier in 2026 when the Minister for Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Dr. Riziki Pembe, repeatedly assured stakeholders that the Government intended to table the Bill by September 2026. However, the absence of a clear confirmation in the 2026/2027 budget has reignited uncertainty and concern over the fulfillment of this commitment.

ZAMECO has urged the Government to honor its pledge and ensure that the Bill is tabled during the September session of the House of Representatives, emphasizing that its enactment will strengthen media freedom, enhance transparency and accountability, and protect the public's right to information.

Award-Winning Journalism Amplifies SRHR Voices in Zanzibar



Najjat Omar, a winner during Safety Menstrual Hygiene Media Awards 2024-2025 and 2025-2026.

Quality journalism continues to play a transformative role in advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in Zanzibar.

This impact was recognized nationally when TAMWA Zanzibar-supported journalist Najjat Omar was named the Overall Winner in the Newspaper Category at the Safety Menstrual Hygiene Media Awards 2025-2026, marking her second consecutive national award.

Her winning story highlighted critical menstrual health issues, helping to raise public awareness and challenge stigma surrounding menstrual hygiene.

The recognition reflects the growing influence of rights-based journalism in shaping public understanding and promoting informed dialogue on issues affecting women and girls.

During the implementation period, TAMWA Zanzibar further strengthened this momentum by supporting journalists and media practitioners to produce 20 SRHR-related stories through radio, newspapers, digital platforms, and international media outlets.

Covering topics such as menstrual health, family planning, HIV prevention, nutrition, gender-based violence, and reproductive health for persons with disabilities, the stories not only made their way into the media but expanded access to reliable information and encouraged community conversations across Zanzibar.

The achievement demonstrates how sustained investment in media capacity is not only improving the quality of health reporting but also positioning journalists as influential advocates for women's health, rights, and social change.

Empowering Women and Persons with Disabilities through Inclusive Economic Opportunities



Zaina Mzee, Senior Program Officer at TAMWA-Zanzibar, presents a certificate to a KIJALUBA iSAVE Group member upon successful completion of the Tailoring and Batik Making Training at Motto Hand Crafts Showroom Workshop.

The Economic Empowerment Programme (EEP) conducted a needs assessment phase one with 24 Kijaluba iSAVE groups across six districts of Zanzibar, reaching 542 beneficiaries, including 221 persons with disabilities. The assessment helped identify community needs and guided the design of targeted economic empowerment activities.

A major achievement during the reporting period (January–March) was the completion of a 52-week savings cycle by nine iSAVE groups in South Unguja. Members shared TZS 52.7

in savings, which supported investments in small businesses, education, healthcare, and improved household livelihoods.

The program also strengthened entrepreneurship skills through practical training in batiki production, tailoring, baking, and cooking.

20 members from seven iSAVE groups completed batiki and tailoring training, gaining skills to support self-employment and income generation activities.

It was implemented under the Collective Actions for Disability Rights (CADiR) project, which promotes disability inclusion, economic empowerment, and equal participation in socio-economic development in partnership with Norwegian Association of Disabled (NAD) and local organizations including Shirikisho la Jumuiya za Watu Wenyeulemavu Zanzibar (SHIJUWAZA), ZANAB, and the National Council for People with Disabilities.



Some members of Mwanzo Mgumu Group who participated in practical beekeeping training at Vitongoji in the Chake Chake District, Pemba.

Strengthening Community Action to Prevent Gender-Based Violence

A total of 295 stakeholders were reached through TAMWA Zanzibar's Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response programme, this marking a key milestone in strengthening community systems to protect women and girls across Unguja and Pemba.

The intervention targeted community leaders, journalists, public transport operators, and informal sector workers, equipping them with knowledge and skills to prevent GBV, improve survivor-centred response, and promote safer, more inclusive communities.

Out of those reached, 120 key duty bearers, including Shehas, Women and children committee (WCC) members, paralegals, social welfare officers, police Gender and Children Desk officers, health providers, religious leaders, and GBV network members were trained to strengthen survivor-centred case management and referral pathways.

In addition, 40 journalists enhanced their capacity in gender-responsive reporting, resulting in 15 media stories that increased public awareness on violence against women and girls.

The program also engaged 75 public transport operators, who adopted a Code of Conduct to promote respectful behaviour and safer transport services.

Furthermore, 60 informal sector leaders and workers were trained on GBV prevention, women's rights, and reporting mechanisms, enabling them to contribute to safer workplaces and better support for survivors.

Overall, these interventions strengthened coordination among communities, service providers,



Asia Hakim, Programme Officer at TAMWA Zanzibar, explaining to journalists the objectives of the two-day training on gender-based violence reporting

the media, and government structures, leading to improved referral systems, better reporting, and enhanced protection for women and girls across Zanzibar.

The Tunaweza Pamoja Project is being implemented by TAMWA Zanzibar in collaboration with UN Women, with support from the Government of Norway under the United Nations Joint Program, which aims to strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment by enhancing local capacities to prevent and respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV), promote women's leadership, and improve access to social and economic opportunities and contributes to building inclusive communities where women and girls can safely and meaningfully participate in decision-making and development processes.



Empowering Women Leaders for Inclusive Governance

The Strengthening Women in Leadership Initiative (SWIL) continued to support women's participation and influence in leadership and decision-making across Zanzibar through capacity building and community engagement.

Through this initiative 25 District Statistical Officers from all 11 districts of Zanzibar were trained on data management, resulting in the establishment of district-level databases on women's leadership positions to support evidence-based planning and advocacy.

The program also strengthened the leadership capacity of 38 Women Councilors and Shehia Coordinators, who are committed to promoting women's leadership, democratic participation, and mentoring future women leaders within their communities.

Community awareness campaigns reached 1,594 people across 30 Shehias in Unguja and Pemba, increasing public support for women's leadership and gender equality.

The initiative also established Gender Desks at three higher learning institutions and strengthened the leadership skills of 25 female student leaders from secondary schools and universities in Pemba.

Additionally, 58 stakeholders validated the findings of the 2025 Policy and Legal Analysis on Women's Rights and Participation in Leadership and Democratic Processes, generating key recommendations to strengthen legal reforms and enhance women's participation ahead of the 2030 General Elections.

SWIL is implemented by the Tanzania Media Women's Association Zanzibar (TAMWA ZNZ) together with the Zanzibar Association of Women with Disabilities (JUWAUZA), the Zanzibar Female Lawyers Association (ZAFELA), and the Pemba Gender, Environment and Advocacy Organization (PEGAO), in collaboration with the Royal Norwegian Embassy.



● Empowering Women for Leadership and Inclusive Participation

TAMWA Zanzibar, in partnership with ZANAB, launched a groundbreaking leadership and empowerment initiative to strengthen the participation of women, young women, and women with disabilities in governance and decision-making processes across Zanzibar.

The initiative is designed as a strategic investment in building a new generation of confident, capable, and influential women leaders who can actively shape decisions within universities, civil society organizations (CSOs), political spaces, and wider community structures.

As part of its inaugural activities, the program trained 50 women from Unguja and Pemba including 10 women with different types of disabilities, from universities, CSOs, and political parties through four-day leadership training sessions in Unguja and four days in Pemba. (30 participants from Unguja and 20 from Pemba).

By bringing together women from diverse backgrounds, the training Program Manager strengthened the participants' leadership, advocacy, public speaking, negotiation, and communication skills, enabling them to contribute more effectively to inclusive and gender-responsive decision-making in the community,



Participants of the leadership training in Pemba engaging in group discussions, with a sign language interpreter ensuring the inclusion and active participation of a participant with a hearing impairment.



Leadership training participants engaging in a group work session.

district, and national levels.

Participants described the training as highly impactful, particularly in strengthening their public speaking, leadership, advocacy, and communication skills.

Aisha Ali Jumanne said, "Before attending this training, I found it difficult to stand before an audience and express my ideas.

"Today I feel confident to speak publicly and engage effectively with different audiences."

Overall, the program fostered strong networking, solidarity, and peer learning among women from different backgrounds, contributing to more inclusive leadership and sustainable community development across Zanzibar.

The W-LEAD project is being implemented by TAMWA Zanzibar in collaboration with the Zanzibar National Association of the Blind (ZANAB), the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), and Zanzibar University. It is funded by the European Union through the Women and Youth Democratic Engagement (WYDE) program.

Pictorial events



Mohamed Khatib Mohammed, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist at TAMWA Zanzibar, presenting the achievements attained under the SWIL Project during a meeting to share the programme implementation report for the past two years.



Community leaders and informal sector workers receive training at TAMWA Zanzibar offices on GBV prevention, reporting mechanisms, and access to justice and support services.



Thirty-three members of Kijaluba iSAVE Groups from Unguja and Pemba participating in tailoring and batik-making training to strengthen their vocational skills, promote self-employment, and increase their income.



Public Transport Drivers, Bajaj Operators, and Bodaboda Drivers in Northern Unguja Receive Training on Preventing Gender-Based Violence and Ensuring Safer Mobility for Women and Girls.



Ali Mohammed Haji, a member of the Tujikomboe Kijaluba iSAVE Group and beneficiary of the programme, proudly manages his poultry farming enterprise in Kibuteni Village, South District, Unguja an inspiring example of how economic empowerment is transforming livelihoods.



Community members from Tasani Village, Makunduchi, together with TAMWA Zanzibar staff, singing after a community awareness meeting on the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities and the prevention of gender-based violence.

Eight Journalists and Content Creators Honoured at the 2026 Data Journalism Awards



Government leaders, development partners, TAMWA Zanzibar representatives, and Data Journalism Awards winners pose for a group photo after the conclusion of the awards ceremony, celebrating excellence in data-driven journalism.

Outstanding journalism took centre stage as the Data Journalism Awards 2026 honoured eight journalists, content creators, and Citizen Brigade champions whose reporting and digital storytelling have amplified women's voices and advanced gender equality in Zanzibar.

More than a celebration of excellence, the awards recognize the growing influence of evidence-based journalism in shaping public dialogue, promoting women's leadership, and inspiring positive social change.

The awards were jointly organized by TAMWA Zanzibar, in collaboration with JUWAUZA, ZAFELA, PEGAO, and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training Zanzibar (WEMA) through support Women in Leadership Program (SWIL) supported by the Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE).

Winners were drawn from radio, newspapers, social media, and newly introduced categories for online content creators and Citizen Brigade.

Among the winners, Yusra Mohammed Suleiman from Zanzibar Broadcasting Corporation was named overall winner and also winner from the mainstream radio category and received a cheque of TZS 1,000,000, a laptop, a trophy, and a certificate, while Khadija Rashid Nassor from Mkoani Community Radio Pemba was the winner in the Community Radio category and was awarded a cheque of TZS 1,000,000, a trophy, and a certificate of recognition.

Other winners included Rahma Suleiman from Nipashe Newspaper, who was also the winner in the Print Media category and received a cheque TZS 1,000,000, a trophy, and a certificate of recognition.

In the Social Media category, Fatma Hamad Faki from Pemba ya Leo Blog emerged as the winner and received a cheque worth TZS 1,000,000, a trophy, and a certificate of recognition.

Zuhura Juma Said from Zanzibar Leo Newspaper won first place in the Women and Leadership in the Education Sector category, receiving a trophy and a certificate of recognition.

For the first time, the 2026 Data Journalism Awards introduced two new categories to recognize the outstanding contributions of Content Creators and Citizen Brigades in raising public awareness on women's leadership and gender equality issues.

In the Content Creator category, Suleiman Khamis Suleiman emerged as the overall winner and was awarded a symbolic cheque worth TZS 1,000,000, a trophy, and a certificate of recognition.

In the Citizen Brigade category, North 'B' District in Unguja and Wete District in Pemba were jointly recognized as the winners of the 2026 Awards. Each district received a cheque of TZS 1,500,000 and a certificate of recognition in appreciation of their outstanding efforts in promoting women's leadership and community engagement.

Women Leading Climate Action: From Local Voices to National Conversations



Huwaida Nassor of Asalaam Radio (right) receiving a certificate for the Overall Winner of amplifying Women's Voices in Climate Action awards

Climate change continues to threaten Zanzibar's environment, livelihoods, and food security, with women among the most affected due to their close dependence on natural resources for agriculture, water collection, and household wellbeing.

Yet women are not only experiencing the impacts of climate change, but are increasingly becoming leaders in building resilient communities and protecting the environment.

Recognizing the critical role of women in building climate-resilient communities, TAMWA Zanzibar strengthened women's leadership in climate communication and advocacy by training 58 women (29 from Unguja and 29 from Pemba) as Trainers of Trainers (TOTs).

The training equipped participants with practical skills in communication, advocacy, storytelling, and media engagement, enabling them to confidently raise awareness on climate change, share local adaptation experiences, and inspire community action.

The initiative has significantly increased the visibility of women's contributions to climate action.

Women who were once underrepresented in climate discussions have now produced and shared 33 climate posts through Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and other digital platforms, showcasing their leadership in tree planting and afforestation, agroforestry, sustainable farming practices, and community efforts to protect forest reserves by reporting and discouraging

illegal logging and environmental degradation.

Together with trained journalists, who produced 263 climate-related stories across print, broadcast, online, and social media, these efforts have amplified climate change as a national development issue while highlighting women as key drivers of environmental conservation and climate resilience in Zanzibar.

Recognizing outstanding efforts by the media industry, TAMWA, ZNZ and its allies; including Community Forest Pemba (CFP), Community Forest International (CFI) and the Government of Canada awarded five journalists including Huwaida Nassor of Asalaam Radio, Malik Said Shahrani (Television), Asya Hassan (Print Media), Abdalla Hemed Ali (Online Media), Zurima Ramadhan Maulid (Young Journalist), and the Zanzibar Government Newspaper Corporation, which received the Best Media Institution.



TOTs from Pemba participating in a media engagement training session to strengthen their climate communication and advocacy skills.



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