



TICAH

Trust for Indigenous
Culture and Health

Annual Report 2024



**WE BELIEVE THAT AS LONG
AS WE ASK THE RIGHT
QUESTIONS, THE RIGHT
ANSWERS WILL COME.**

**IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WE SEEK TO
ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS, WORK MORE
DEEPLY WITH OUR COMMUNITIES TO
SEEK ANSWERS AND TO AMPLIFY THE
COMMUNITY ACTIONS TO INFLUENCE THE
PRACTICES, LAWS AND POLICIES THAT
GOVERN OUR COLLECTIVE COMMUNITIES.**

Jedidah Maina
Executive Director

TICAH IN 2024: GROWING TOGETHER IN HEALTH, CULTURE, AND ART

We believe that real change starts with listening with open hearts, tuning in to the voices, stories, and dreams of the communities we hold dear. Since 2003, we have been weaving together our programs in holistic health, gender justice, and cultural heritage, guided by the belief that well-being and tradition are deeply connected. At TICAH, we walk alongside our communities, letting their hopes and challenges shape our journey.

In 2024, we poured our energy into enhancing sexual and reproductive health rights, lifted art to heal, and embraced herbs, nutrition, and traditional wisdom to nurture stronger lives. Through our four heartfelt programs, Art with Heart, Healthy Households, Indigenous Knowledge & Culture, and Our Bodies, Our Choices, we opened doors for honest conversations, shared learning, and steps forward together.

This annual report is our chance to look back with gratitude on what we have achieved, where we have stumbled, and the moments that moved us in 2024. It is a story of coming together and building something real, one connection at a time. As we look to tomorrow, we're committed to creating spaces where healing happens, voices rise for justice, and health blooms holistically.

Shukran.



TICAH'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR 2025

As we reach the midpoint of our 2022-2026 strategic plan, 2024 marks a pivotal moment for reflection and acceleration. Our goal is to empower 500,000 individuals with the knowledge and agency to lead change, ensuring access to holistic health, fundamental rights, and cultural equity by 2026. So far, we have reached 200,000 people, 40% of our target. In 2025, we are committed to scaling our impact by deepening community engagement and refining our models for sustainable change.

THE RESULTS OF TICAH WILL IMPACT FOUR KEY AREAS IN 2025:

ADVANCING HOLISTIC HEALTH FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV. ENSURING ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL CARE, NUTRITION, AND WELL-BEING.

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF ART AND ARTISTS AS CATALYSTS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE. EXPANDING THE INFLUENCE OF OUR CULTURE-ART-HEALTH FRAMEWORK.

AMPLIFYING THE POWER OF CULTURE AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE. DEMONSTRATING THEIR ROLE IN ACHIEVING HOLISTIC HEALTH, EQUITY, AND CLIMATE JUSTICE.

ENSURING WOMEN AND GIRLS, IN ALL THEIR DIVERSITY, HAVE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS.

A CALL TO ACTION

The challenges ahead require bold, collective action. We are facing attacks on individual rights, threats to self-determination, democratic rollbacks, and the growing impact of climate change on vulnerable communities. Now more than ever, we need our collaborators, donors, allies, and communities to stand together. Join us as we push forward, because justice, health, and dignity must never be compromised.

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MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER:

When we started TICAHA in 2003, we knew we wanted to understand healing and do health work through the lens of culture. We realized “culture” not as a historical relic, but as a living and changing collection of shared practices and beliefs that shape our world and the way we understand it.

In 2024, the year of this annual report, we still want to do these things. This report describes our efforts 21 years since those beginnings. It demonstrates how much we have learned about what “health” means and how to achieve it. All healing happens in community. Change starts with local wisdom. The way we treat young people, the way we love, eat, celebrate, share, doctor ourselves when we are sick, all of this is shaped by culture. How we establish policies, provide care or schooling, govern ourselves, this, too, is shaped by culture and by the values that are defined and reinforced by cultural practice.

To many of us, this is obvious. But what does this recognition of the centrality of culture mean? How does it affect our work to heal, to create a just world, to be happy, to nourish ourselves, our relationships, our communities?

The pages of this annual report provide some answers. Whether we are bringing new voices into discussions about a sexuality bill, answering the phone to help a frightened young woman pregnant from a rape, creating a chatbot version of our board game, Adventures of Fatuma, hosting our monthly Drum Circle, painting a mural at a bus stop, teaching government workers how to put into practice the truth that “food is medicine,” protecting a sacred forest at the Coast, sharing the medicinal uses of guava leaves, helping young mothers find their ways and college students negotiate safer sex, creating a contraceptive guide in braille, all of our work has always and still does begin with listening. All of it is linked by the vision of creating conditions where we can change our world through questioning, organizing, building alliances, reimagining a healthier world and acting together to create that world in ways that stay true to our values, ways that create beauty along the way.

You will read in this annual report that TICAHA “stood by” or “stood with” people engaged in self-determined work to challenge a status quo that does not serve them. From the Gen Z



demonstrators to the adolescents wanting more voice in policies that affect them, to artists drawing our attention to importance of water in our cities and in our lives, TICAHA has created spaces where unprecedented conversations take place and creativity is unleashed, where new voices are heard. Then we work together to create change from those deliberations, to move from silence to power.

You will also see in the annual report the many networks that we have started or are a part of. TICAHA works well with others. Our relationships are the bedrock of all that we do. We know that there is strength in unity, and we are a willing fiscal host for donor resources that support other organizations to do their good work. The Braid Fund provided grants to 17 artists and arts collectives in the region. We share. We hold responsibility. We know that relationships matter. Always.

I can boast about TICAHA like this now because I am no longer the one running TICAHA or our programs. Since I stepped up to the Board from being the Executive Director of TICAHA in 2019, our team has grown in every way and our work has become stronger, more creative, clearer in our mission and our goals, more confident in our practice. Every activity in this report insists on the importance of linking justice to culture, art to healing, food to well-being, policy to practice. All our work aims to cultivate a listening heart and to energize collective action that grows from that heart.

As you look through this report, please join me in celebrating these accomplishments, congratulating Jedidah Maina and the team, and thanking everyone who has helped to make all of this happen. We are acutely aware of what we are up against. These are challenging times, but we are clear about our dreams and whole-hearted in our efforts to realize them. Together.

Mary Ann Burris
Founding Director
Chair, TICAHA Board of Trustees

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

To our TICAHA family,

2024 tested us, it stretched us, and it reminded us again and again why we do this work.

We witnessed both crisis and courage. The devastating floods that swept through Kenya displaced families, destroyed livelihoods, and deepened existing inequalities. The communities we work with felt the impact firsthand, facing loss and uncertainty. But even in the hardest moments, people showed up for each other. Neighbours shared food, opened their homes, and held onto hope. Together, with your support, we were able to respond, providing relief while continuing to push for long-term solutions that protect the most vulnerable.

Last year, young people showed up and made their voices impossible to ignore. The Gen Z-led protests took over streets and social media, demanding accountability, better leadership, and a system that actually works for the people. It was not just about one issue, it was about frustration that had been building for years, and the refusal to accept the same old excuses. Their courage, energy, and boldness were a wake-up call to the country.

At TICAHA, we stand with them. We believe in young people leading change, pushing boundaries, and speaking truth to power. **We saw, too, the power of art as a force for expression and social justice, a way to articulate even the most controversial, silent, and urgent issues with clarity and courage.**

They have made it clear: the future is not something they are waiting for, it is something they are creating, right now.

We also saw moments of incredible power, what the agency looks like up closely. At the Adolescent Girls and Young Women Symposium, girls and young women stood up and demanded their rights, fearless, determined, and refusing to be ignored. It was something very special for us to witness. Their voices rang clear in calls for better education, healthcare, and protection from gender-based violence. This is the future we are fighting for, one where young people are the leaders, advocate, and shape the policies that affect their lives.



Our Healthy Households program continued to make a difference, working with households, schools and government bodies to create impact at scale by contributing to National Nutritional training guidelines, ensuring families had access to nutritious food, and the knowledge to make informed choices. Through education, care, and community driven solutions, we strengthened the foundation of well-being for so many.

At our Inaugural Climate Justice Conference, we brought together grassroots activists, policymakers, and advocates to push for urgent climate action, centering indigenous voices and experiences. For us, climate justice is not an abstract issue, but about survival, dignity, and the right of communities to define their own futures. The conference reinforced our commitment to amplifying the voices of those most affected, ensuring they lead the way in shaping solutions.

And through it all, art remained at the heart of our work. Our Art with Heart Program continued to raise the bar, hosting two residences throughout the year and keeping the spirit of creative expression alive through our monthly drum circles and the Braid Fund, Art is how we tell our stories, hold onto our culture, and imagine a better world.

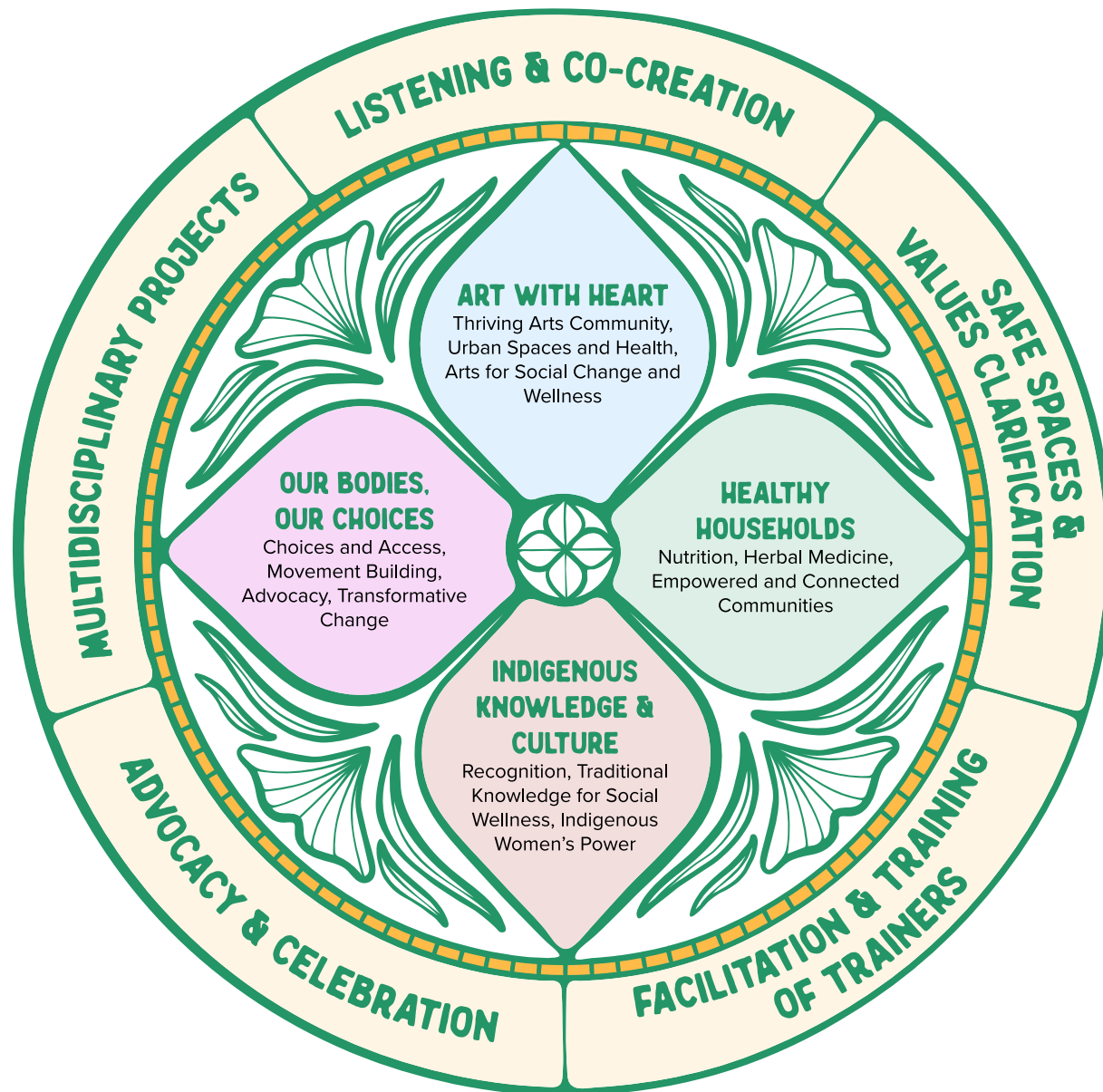
None of this would have been possible without you. Your support, whether through funding, partnership, or standing in solidarity.

Thank you for believing in TICAHA, for walking this journey with us, and for standing with the communities we serve.

With deep appreciation,
Jedidah Maina
Executive Director -TICAHA



HOW WE WORK



“JUSTICE IS WHAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE IN PUBLIC!”

- CORNEL WEST

WHO ARE WE:

At TICAH, we see health and culture as deeply connected. Culture shapes who we are, how we relate to each other, and what makes a community strong. To us, being healthy isn't just about the body, it is about the mind, spirit, and the relationships that support us. When culture thrives, so do people, and that is what drives everything we do.



OUR VISION

A safe and just world where rights are realized, culture and diversity are celebrated, and holistic health is embraced by all.

OUR MISSION

We amplify community action to unlock the transformative power of culture in advancing fundamental rights, holistic health, and social well-being.



OUR VALUES

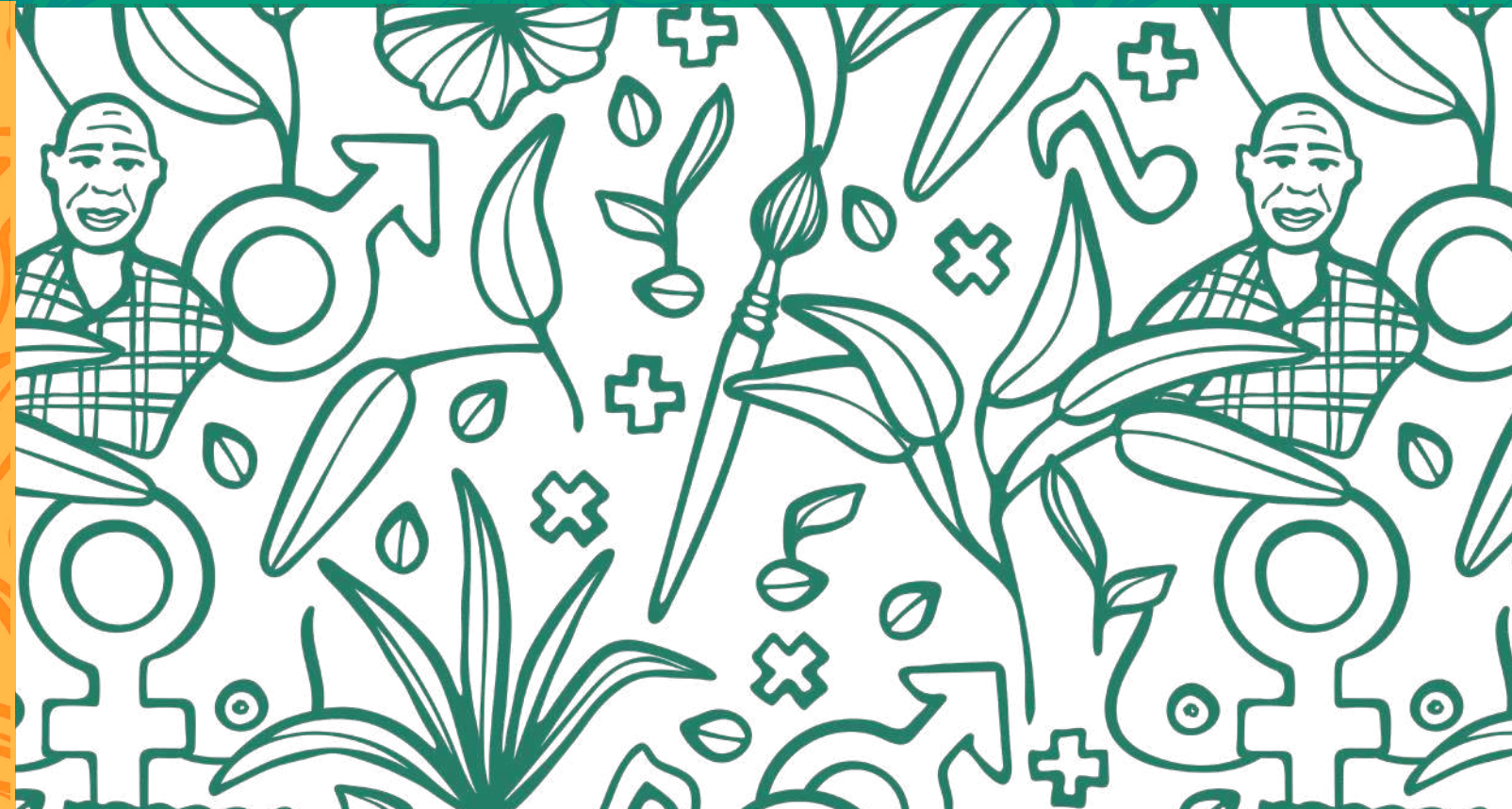

We believe that true health and well-being, of individuals, families, communities, and even TICAHA itself, comes from living by these core values:

1. RESPECT Respect for us means respectfully listening to the wisdom of others and co-creating solutions with our communities. We respect the agency and choices of everyone, knowing that they are the experts of their own lived realities.

2. JUSTICE At TICAHA, we prioritize inclusivity, equity, and non-discrimination, ensuring that the most affected people are at the center of conversations and empowered to access their rights. By challenging biases and using resources justly, we amplify diverse voices and promote fairness across our communities and workplace.

3. TRUST We believe that change moves at the Speed of Trust. Trust is central to nurturing meaningful relationships, as we believe our communities are the experts and should lead.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY Accountability is a collective practice rooted in integrity and shared responsibility. We walk our Talk. We create systems that promote transparency and inclusivity, ensuring accountability for ourselves, our team and stakeholders, especially the communities we serve.



THE POWER OF LISTENING

From the beginning, TICAHA has worked to bridge the connection between health and culture, ensuring communities have the knowledge and resources to make informed choices for their well-being. True health extends beyond the physical body, it is rooted in safe homes, respected rights, strong communities, emotional well-being, and connection to our cultures. Yet, culture is often misunderstood, seen as a barrier rather than a source of healing and resilience. Traditional foods, herbal medicine, and community-centered practices have long supported health, but too few programs recognize their value or truly listen to community needs.

At the heart of TICAHA is the belief that change starts with understanding, centering, and amplifying local wisdom. Through art, storytelling, and self-expression, we create spaces for healing, advocacy, and reimagining harmful norms. Our work in gender justice, climate justice, and holistic health is deeply connected to how culture shapes behaviors, policies, and perceptions, making it a crucial driver of social change. Moving forward, we are committed to strengthening program integration, deepening advocacy, amplifying local voices, enhancing learning and reflection, and expanding partnerships for greater impact. Above all, we will continue listening, (un)learning, and co-creating change with the communities we serve.



A plant talks session every Tuesday and Thursday at the National Museum of Kenya.

This past year, we pushed ourselves to think bigger, holding space for artistic practice and reflecting on its role in our future. Through visioning exercises and conversations with leadership, artists, and key thinkers, we explored the foundational role of art, beauty, and voice within TICAHA. While we have outlined an initial way forward, we remain open to refining our approach to align with our broader vision. Artist gatherings continue to be a vital space for collaboration, with 69 artists participating in recent sessions. These meetups not only inform programming but also foster connections, discussions on artist remuneration, and opportunities to reimagine the future of the sector together. The value of these spaces lies in more than just the art, it's in the conversations, the community, and the transformation they inspire.

In 2023, we took a fresh look at our programs supporting adolescents and young people's health and rights. Our communities expressed the need for more dialogue around sexuality education, and highlighted key gaps to address—including online harassment, substance abuse, and the impact of climate change on their well-being. To make sure these topics were addressed, we created a new facilitator's handbook, which we started using in 2024. Another key takeaway was the importance of involving young people in shaping the programs that affect them. This led to their direct participation in program review meetings, advocacy events like the Girl Summit, and girl-led initiatives, including a campaign for International Day of the Girl.

In Kakuma, we worked closely with the community to understand what young people needed most. They identified better access to health services as a priority, which has helped shape our work this year. A big focus has been on making sure gender-based violence is included in our training, especially because it's a serious issue in humanitarian settings. This approach, listening to young people and adapting our programs based on their realities, has made a big difference in how we support them in 2024.

We began by listening, by engaging directly with communities, hearing their stories, and assessing their needs. In Kilifi, this approach



Our OBOC Senior Manager Sheila Waridi engaging with young girls from the Wattha community, listening, learning, and building trust.

helped us tailor our support. We strengthened indigenous plant nurseries and medicinal gardens. By supporting access to water for irrigation, we enabled the community to take a leading role in managing these projects. Based on community input, we explored income-generating initiatives, supported traditional costume production, increased the visibility of Rabai's cultural festival through media outreach, and strengthened a community-led nursery project. While some initiatives were not pursued due to feasibility concerns, the impact has been significant: higher festival attendance, increased youth participation, and strengthened community-led economic activities. This shift has also reduced overreliance on trees for charcoal production, helping conserve forests, particularly indigenous trees with medicinal value and contributing meaningfully to climate resilience.

Listening has remained at the core of our programming. When we launched our child protection work in schools, our goal was to build children's awareness of their rights. But what we heard and saw shifted the conversation: children were navigating violence at home and in their communities. This called for more than awareness, it demanded protection, healing, and structural change. We expanded the program, partnering with schools and county systems to strengthen referral pathways and address the root causes of violence through parenting sessions and a whole-school approach.

Our child nutrition work also evolved through community insights. During early 2024 consultations, County Health officials and teachers posed a pivotal question: "Where are

the men?" Male caregivers, especially within different households, held influence over nutrition practices but were often excluded. We responded with a male engagement strategy that reshaped household dynamics, improved child nutrition, and built stronger community ownership.

Listening to our Miales, the trusted community champions from our HIV program, surfaced a crucial gap: the link between HIV, GBV, and mental health was rarely discussed, and this hindered treatment and care. In response, we co-created solutions. A refresher training and toolkit revision are now helping our champions lead deeper, more holistic conversations with their communities.

Through each of these efforts, we continue to see the power of culture, art, and community leadership in driving meaningful change. As we move forward, we remain committed to deepening this work, ensuring that every step we take is shaped by those we serve.

Healthy Households Program Associate Carol Ngala leads an interactive session on nutrition with the Wattha community on children nutrition.



OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

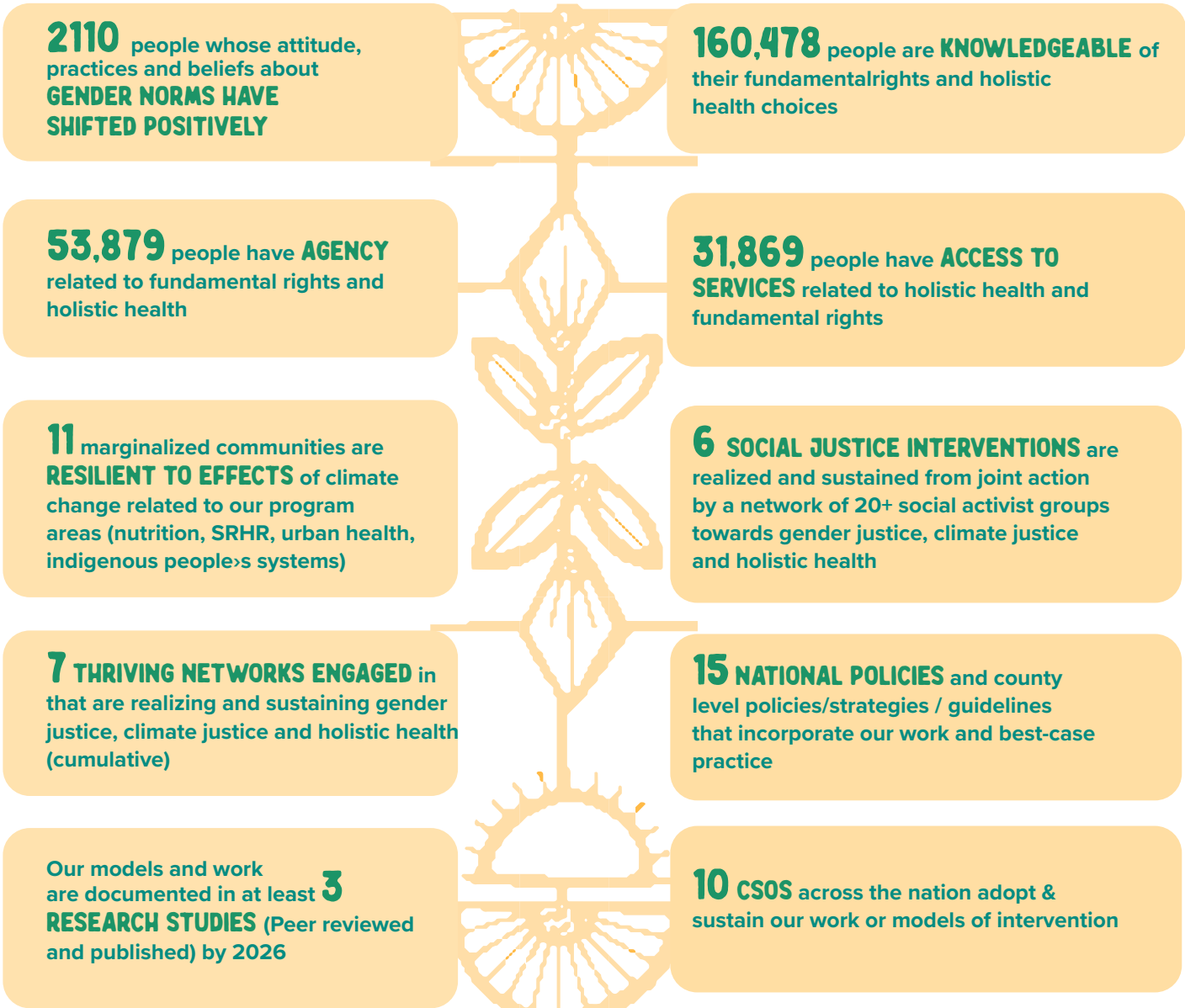
NAVIGATING THROUGH OUR 2022-2026 STRATEGIC JOURNEY

TICAH continued to work towards achieving the three goals as informed by 2022-2026 strategic plan. Below are some of the achievements we accomplished in 2024 in alignment with the strategic plan.

2024 CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS IMPACT

GOAL 1:

Cultural and social barriers to equitable health and social outcomes are removed, especially for marginalized populations



GOAL 2:

Transformative change for social justice is realized through a greater and diverse network of cultural, artistic, and social activists and actors

Five (5) thriving networks involved in that are realizing and sustaining gender justice, climate justice and holistic health (cumulative)

TICAH is part of an 11-member collective known as the **KENYA LOCAL COALITION ACCELERATOR (K-LCA)**. This coalition harnesses our collective expertise to enhance the efforts of national organizations in various areas, including health programming, sustainable livelihoods, community and public education, research, outreach, and advocacy. The K-LCA collaborates with other Local Coalitions in countries such as Uganda, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Nigeria through the Transboundary Coalition. This coalition meets annually to promote cross-border collaboration, providing a platform for participants to share experiences, address challenges, and strategize on empowering local actors.

ADOLESCENT GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN RIGHTS (AGYWR) NETWORK: TICAH is a convener of the AGYWR network, which works to create a community where AGYW, in their diversity, have agency to make informed decisions about their well-being. TICAH is supporting the newly selected network chairs in taking on leadership, starting with the planning and execution of the AGYW Symposium that happened during this term.

COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE (CASV): TICAH is a member of the Coalition Against Sexual Violence, which aims to consolidate efforts from its 14 members drawn from rights-based organizations that address sexual violence in Kenya.

MAKE WAY is a network that allows TICAH to amplify its opposition work through other partners implementing sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) programming while applying intersectional lenses.

Now in its third year, we have dedicated **DRUM CIRCLE** enthusiasts who attend nearly every session. They stay connected through a WhatsApp group where they share feedback, exchange insights from each drum circle, and discuss upcoming gigs in which they can participate.

GOAL 3:

Our work is adopted and sustained by many diverse allies and partners

39 CSOs across the nation adopt & sustain our work or models of intervention



Resilience Action International, a non-governmental organization in the Kakuma refugee camp, **ADOPTED HOTLINES** in humanitarian settings.



TICAH child safeguarding policy, **TRAINING GUIDE, ARE ADOPTED BY 3 COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS** for Child Protection Programs



DRUM CIRCLE has been adopted by Woodland Star School in Tigoni,



5 Community Based Organizations adopt TICAH's **'FOOD AS MEDICINE'** approach.



Akili Dada is developing a **COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION CHATBOT**, and they have expressed interest in online versions of Fatuma's adventures.

The use of disability-friendly SRHR materials, in this case, the **CONTRACEPTION GUIDE TRANSLATED INTO BRAILLE**, is in collaboration with Women Spaces Africa, an organization that works towards the advancement of women with disabilities.

Political Landscape & External Events

WHEN THE WATERS CAME, WE STOOD UP



Carol Ngala and Catherine Wanjiku at the back while Corazon Omemu in front. Distribute food and clothes to our communities affected by the floods in Kenya.

Kenya faced its worst flooding in over a decade in 2024 April. Heavy rains in April caused rivers to overflow, sweeping through homes, schools, and entire neighborhoods. Over 380,000 people were affected, roads became impassable, and schools shut down. Families lost everything overnight.

Among our communities:

1,708 FAMILIES from our communities were displaced.



1 LIFE lost among our program participants.



36 FACILITATORS lost their homes.



2 CASES of sexual violence reported and referred.



26 PARTNER SCHOOLS and centers suffered flood damage.



80% of school kitchen gardens were destroyed.



With many seeking shelter in overcrowded camps, the risks of disease and gender-based violence grew. In response, we launched a community-led donation drive, collecting and distributing food, bedding, and clothing. We provided psychosocial support to our affected young mothers and provided referrals for cases of GBV.

These floods were a painful reminder of the urgent need for climate justice, and how climate shocks exacerbate existing vulnerabilities among our community. Beyond emergency relief, we remain committed to long-term solutions, ensuring that those most affected by climate change have a voice in shaping a safer, more just future.

VOICES OF CHANGE



“JOINING THE PROTESTS WASN’T JUST ABOUT REJECTING A LAW, IT WAS ABOUT STANDING UP FOR MY FUTURE AND FOR KENYA’S YOUTH. I COULDN’T STAY SILENT WHILE DECISIONS BURDENED ORDINARY CITIZENS WITHOUT THEIR VOICE. THE UNITY, ENERGY, AND COURAGE I SAW GAVE ME HOPE, HOPE IN A GENERATION THAT’S AWAKE, BOLD, AND READY TO DEMAND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR A BETTER KENYA.”

- Corazon Omemu

In 2024, Kenya witnessed a powerful movement. Across the country, young people led by Generation Z (GenZ) gathered to express their frustration with government policies and actions that deepened inequality.

Demonstrators stood firm against water cannons, and some shared creative ways online to disable them, envisioning a shift from conflict to calm. Social media buzzed with posters, tips, and plans for safe participation whether from home or in the streets. Though unpredictable, the atmosphere carried a sense of unity and possibility.

This energy reached our programs. Through Art with Heart, we provided spaces for people to capture their feelings, hope and frustration alike in art and discussion. Our Bodies, Our Choices program intensified its focus on justice and safety, responding to the challenges that surfaced.

In 2024, we found ourselves moving with the current, strengthened by the collective spirit of those around us.

Ground Up: Gender Justice, Climate Justice, and Holistic Health

OUR WORK ON GENDER JUSTICE

At TICAH, gender justice is not a standalone issue; it’s deeply interwoven with our cultural roots, the way we listen, and how we engage with communities. It means affirming dignity, honoring Indigenous knowledge, challenging harmful systems, and ensuring that every voice, especially those of women, girls, and gender-diverse people, is heard and acted upon.

In Siaya County, this commitment came to life through our Advocacy in Practice (AIP) teams, who played a vital role in passing the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (RMNCH) Act. This achievement wasn’t just about enacting a new law, it was about amplifying women’s voices in policy spaces and ensuring that reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health services are accessible, dignified, and culturally relevant.

Recognizing that shaping understandings of gender justice starts early, we collaborated with youth across Kenya to strengthen confidence and bodily autonomy. Through comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) and creative tools like the *Adventures of Fatuma* card game, young people engaged in conversations about consent, choice, and identity in ways that felt fun, safe, and empowering.

Inclusion was a top priority. We partnered with Women Spaces Africa to develop a contraception guide, with a Braille version



TICAH celebrated International World Condom Day at Pwani University

for women with disabilities, ensuring no one is left out of critical information. In Kajiado, we stood alongside the Olamal women’s movement, where Maasai women continued to organize across regions to advocate for land rights and equality. Our Monitoring and Evaluation team is now exploring how this movement is deepening women’s leadership and decision-making power at the community level.

Child protection remained central to our approach. We launched a Child Rights Toolkit and strengthened our TICAH Safeguarding Policy, rooting both in the cultural context of the communities we work with. *Msanii’s Second Page*, a powerful film created in collaboration with local filmmakers, sparked deep conversations on children’s vulnerability and the healing power of art, reaching over 600 viewers and leaving a lasting impact.

In Bungoma, we held cultural dialogues across five sub-counties, Bumula, Webuye East, Mt. Elgon, Kanduyi, and Kimaeti, where more than 2,000 people came together to address gender-based violence. These weren’t just events; they were moments of deep collective reflection, where communities began to shift the conversation, and in doing so, shift the culture.

Because to us, gender justice is not just about changing policies, it’s about changing hearts, minds, and relationships. It’s about rewriting the script together.

A performance at the Kiwaka Festival, a vibrant celebration of our Constitution and its role in advancing social justice and human rights.



OUR WORK ON CLIMATE JUSTICE



A Nyatiti player captivates the audience with soulful melodies during TICAH's inaugural Climate Justice Conference in October 2024, blending culture, rhythm, and resistance in one unforgettable moment.

At TICAH, climate justice is about centering Indigenous knowledge and community voices in the fight against environmental degradation. We recognize that those most affected by climate change are often those least responsible for it, and we strive to amplify their perspectives and solutions.

In Voi, Samburu, and Kajiado, we engaged with 218 individuals, including 115 women from the Waatha community, to discuss climate injustices and co-create strategies for resilience. These dialogues emphasized the importance of traditional ecological knowledge in addressing contemporary environmental challenges.

Our efforts extended to the global stage as we participated in COP29, ensuring that the experiences and insights of Kenyan communities were represented in international climate discussions. We hosted our first-ever Climate Justice Conference, a powerful gathering of activists, community leaders, policymakers, and cultural practitioners united by one goal: championing climate solutions rooted in community wisdom. The energy was electric, the conversations bold, and the ideas transformative. This was more than a conference, it was the beginning of a movement.

Through these initiatives, we aim to build a movement that not only addresses the symptoms of climate change but also tackles its root causes, fostering a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

OUR WORK ON HOLISTIC HEALTH

TICAH's approach to health transcends the absence of illness; it encompasses the physical, emotional, spiritual, and cultural well-being of individuals and communities. We believe that holistic health is achieved through the integration of traditional knowledge, community engagement, and access to comprehensive health services.

In 2024, our "Food as Medicine" philosophy was embraced by five community groups, who incorporated nutrition into their health practices. Through Plant Talks, over 41,426 individuals deepened their understanding of plant-based medicine, highlighting the role of indigenous knowledge in promoting wellness.

School gardens flourished, providing nutritious meals to children and reinforcing the connection between diet and health. In crisis-affected areas like Kakuma, we expanded reproductive health services, supporting hotlines and ensuring access to SRHR services.

We also contributed to the development of the Traditional Medicine Policy and played a role in shaping the Kajiado County Nutrition Action Plan and Bill, addressing the root causes of malnutrition.

Through these efforts, we continue to champion a holistic approach to health that honors cultural practices, empowers communities, and ensures that everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



“BRAID FUNDING IS WHAT HAS HELPED US TO GROW AND GET THE NECESSARY NETWORK LIKE THE ONE WE HAVE WITH ALLIANCE FRANCAISE. THE SEEDS THAT WE PLANTED [WITH BRAID] STRENGTHENING THE INTERNATIONAL CONNECTION HAS CONTINUED TO GROW AND GROW. RIGHT FROM THE TRIP TO FRANCE AND BELGIUM TO THE FESTIVAL THAT WE WERE PART OF IN MARCH, TO THE ANTHOLOGY AND TO THERE SEVERAL PARTNERSHIPS THAT ARE IN THE WORKS.”

- Braid Fund Grantee

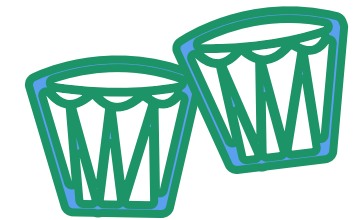
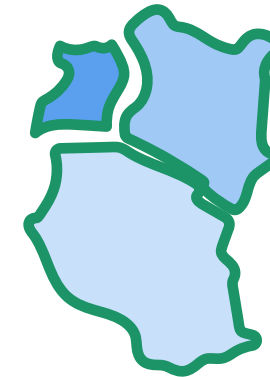
Art for Connection and Healing **ART WITH HEART IN 2025**

130+ ARTISTS

reached through murals, residencies, performances & wellness spaces.



3 COUNTRIES (Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania) engaged through the Braid Fund.



Drum Circle expanded to **2 PUBLIC SPACES**, including Jevanjee Gardens

Program Description:

From the beginning, TICA H has recognized the importance of creativity in community building and for our well-being. We work with artists to ensure that the sector thrives and that art is valued for its ability to elevate marginalized voices and ideas, support

healing from trauma and advocate for change. Through this, we amplify community action through art and enhance the power of art in healing, the power of art in breaking down barriers and the power of art to bring us all together.



A vibrant mural created during our Placemaking Week in Nairobi's Central Business District, bringing colour, culture, and community to public spaces.

Creating Our Future: The Power of Art and Culture

Art tells stories that history books leave out. It reminds us of who we are, connects us to each other, and shapes the future in ways words alone cannot. Through our Art with Heart Program, including the Braid Arts & Culture Fund. We continued to support artists and cultural practitioners across Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, people using creativity to honour traditions, challenge norms, and spark change.

This year, we supported 12 artists and collectives, each bringing something powerful to the table. Ugandan poets wove the voices of women into an anthology, capturing stories that might have otherwise been lost. A Tanzanian chef created a cultural cookbook, tracing the flavours of Swahili food from farm to table. Each project carried something deeper than art, it carried identity, memory, and resistance.

In March, we gathered our Braid Fund grantees for the first time. It wasn't just a meeting; it was a moment. A space where artists from across East Africa shared their work, their struggles, and their hopes. That evening, we took the celebration public, with music, dance, and film that made it impossible to ignore the impact of creative expression.

Beyond the grants, Art with Heart reached 130 artists through hands-on projects, murals, drum circles, dance performances, and residencies. Every month, the Nairobi Drum Circle gave people more than just a rhythm to move to, it became a space for mental wellness and connection. In nine schools, students picked up paintbrushes and turned blank walls into statements on safety and rights, proving that even the youngest voices deserve to be seen. The Dance Life Festival created space for artists to collaborate and dream up new projects together.

Some moments made us pause, like the Rika Residency on Water. Artists and cultural leaders gathered to explore water's role in climate justice, economies, and everyday life. Water, often taken for granted, became the center of deep conversations about fairness, scarcity, and survival.

Through murals, music, and stories, we are shaping a world where culture and cultural expression is not just celebrated, it is used as a tool for justice, healing, and connection. And as we look ahead, we remain committed to ensuring that the artists and storytellers shaping our world have the space and support to keep going.

"WHEN I LOOK AT THE DRUM CIRCLE, WE HAVE MANAGED TO CREATE A PLACE OUT OF A SPACE THAT PEOPLE WANT TO BELONG TO. LIKE TRANSFORMING THE JOBLESS CORNER. THE HILTON SQUARE THROUGH THE MONTHLY DRUM CIRCLE HAS ALLOWED THE PLACE TO HIRE PEOPLE WHO KEEP IT CLEAN AND WATCH OVER IT. THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT HAS CLEANED UP THE DRAINAGE, AND NOW OTHER PEOPLE ARE HOLDING ARTISTIC EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES LIKE THE AFRICA CLIMATE SUMMIT. THROUGH TICAHA WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BRING LIFE TO CERTAIN PARTS OF THE CITY. IT HAS BEEN ABLE TO BRING LIFE TO THE CITY."

- Braid Fund Grantee

AMANI NA KUHISI VYEMA

TICAH's Rika Residency is an artist-led residency program where artists of different age sets, genders and practices come together to create and discuss topics important to their community. The purpose is to build community, opportunities for mentorship, and collaborative relationships toward new work and mutual support. In 2024, we supported a Rika Residency with LGBTQ+ artists, GALCK+ and the Goethe Institute with the theme "Feeling Good." For one week, 18 artists explored all aspects of 'Feeling Good,' unapologetically and wholly embracing pleasure (sexual and non-sexual), inner peace, and holistic healing. The week culminated into a final festive celebration at the end. For one artist, who we will call "Amani," the residency was both a space for embracing who they are and the topics of their artistic practice that they have wanted to explore:

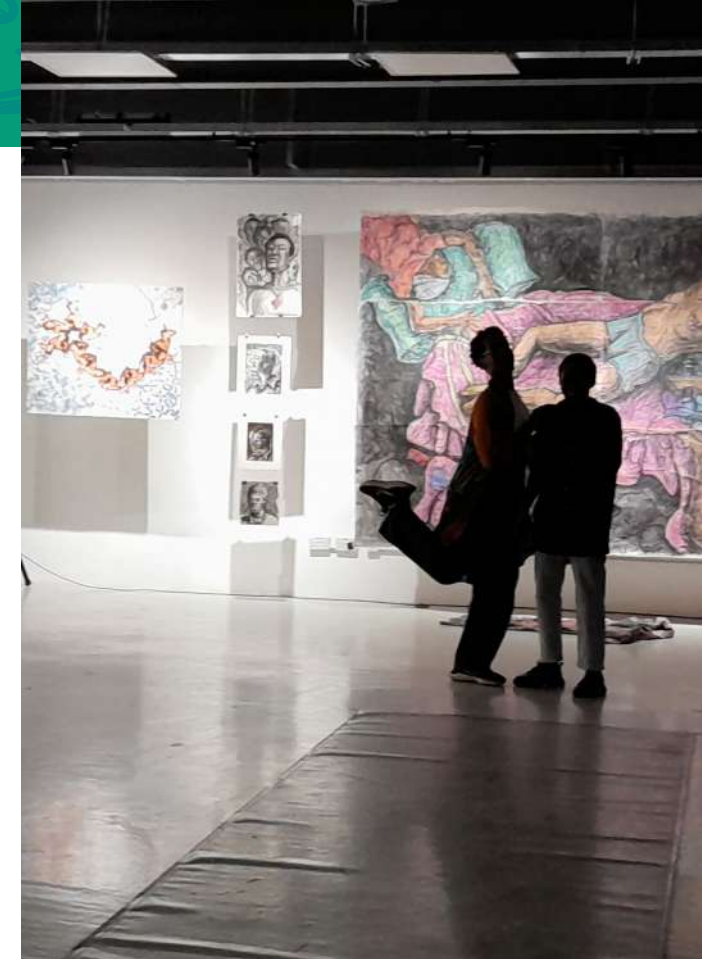
"MEETING AND SPENDING TIME WITH QUEER FOLKS MADE ME FEEL FREE AND SUPPORTED TO EXPRESS MYSELF IN MY ARTWORKS WHICH WERE FEATURED IN AN EXHIBITION (I HELD LATER IN THE YEAR). FOR ME, TACKLING CONCEPTS LIKE FEMICIDE AND WOMEN RIGHTS WERE DIFFICULT TOPICS. BUT THE 'FEELING GOOD' RESIDENCY HELPED ME FACE MY FEARS AND REALLY MAKE GOOD AND HONEST ART.

BEFORE THE RESIDENCY I WAS ASHAMED OF BEING TAGGED WITH DIFFERENT TITLES TO REPRESENT ME. BUT NOW I AM BRAVE ENOUGH TO DRAW ANYTHING OR ADDRESS ANY TOPIC. IN MY FEMININE BODY OF WORK, I FELT SO REPRESENTED AND ALSO FELT I WAS PART OF THE WORK BECAUSE MOST OF MY LIFE I HAVE HAD TO SUPPRESS MY FEMINEITY AND MAKE SURE IT'S NEVER SEEN BY ANYONE AT ANY TIME. THIS BODY OF WORK MADE MY EXPERIENCES VALID.

AS A VICTIM OF TOXIC PATRIARCHY AND TOXIC MASCULINITY MYSELF, I REALLY FELT THE NEED TO CONNECT ALL THIS TO ME AS A PERSON AND TO SHOW HOW MUCH EFFECT IT CAN HAVE NOT ONLY TO FEMINITY BUT ALSO TO MASCULINITY... I NOW UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUALITY. SO NOW I AM AT A BETTER PLACE TO KNOW WHERE I AM AS A NON-BINARY PERSON. NOW I AM ON THE JOURNEY OF FIGURING THINGS OUT WHILE TRYING TO UNDERSTAND WHO I REALLY AM. THIS IS BECAUSE EVERY DAY I GET NEW VERSIONS OF WHO I AM TURNING TO OR BECOMING."

- Rika Residency Participant

TICAH continues to offer residencies and creative experiences to cultural practitioners and communities that build agency, confidence, connections and more towards a more integrated and inclusive sector.



Artists sharing powerful pieces and stories during the Rika Residency showcase.



MAJI, WATER, PI, KIWO, WABA...

Seventeen artists of different practices, ages and genders also came together in 2025 to explore water. The selected topic was not random, nor frivolous, but represented a host of issues (both positive and negative) that all Kenyans face. Just weeks before the start of this artistic conversation, over 200 people died in floods that took over many communities in Kenya. Hundreds more lost their homes and were displaced by either the water or the demolitions that followed the rains. And yet, just as the clouds parted, and the rains eased, it seemed the rage and accountability towards leadership, the ones who should've and could've done more to protect our communities from potential flooding, also eased.

The exhibition that resulted from a week of exploration on water was deeply moving and understandably political. A mixed media piece showing figures standing in flood waters surrounded by jerry cans illustrated the recent paradox we faced of having floods but still needing to buy water. The conversation around this piece brought up the bylaw in Nairobi that makes it illegal to harvest rainwater. A set of prints directly across the space showed a person sitting in bed with water all around him, a real situation one of the artists experienced in the past few months. In sharing his story, the

artist, Sammy Mutinda, said that ironically, just before the floods. He had joined a team to seek out the source of the Nairobi River, tracing it up and out of the city, only for the "river to come to us" weeks later.

Art enthusiast and urban planner working on Nairobi's water issues, Dr. Mark Ojal, attended the exhibition and artist talk event. He had this to say about this experience., "The role of art in society is surfacing the often-invisible narratives, passing on knowledges (whether indigenous or local) about relationships with nature and with people, and adding nuance and richness to the gaps that science and data create. As a practitioner working on urban water issues, the installations inspired me to see water in ways that I hadn't seen before. It inspired me to take this to the scale, and outdoors to other people and decision makers. It's made me feel so proud of our collective intelligence on water and challenged me to how easily the arts can enable effective communication."

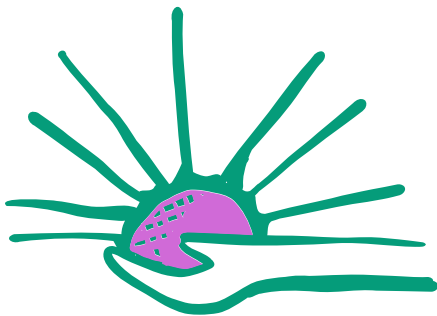
At TICAH, we know that art and other creative expressions have the power to provoke change and push conversations important for fundamental rights to be realized.

"AT BOTH THE COMMUNITY AND COUNTY LEVELS, THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF YOUNG MOTHERS ACCESSING SERVICES. THIS GROWTH IS REFLECTED IN COUNTY RECORDS, WHICH SHOW A REDUCTION IN COMMUNITY TEEN PREGNANCIES. THE PROCESS OF ACCESSING SERVICES HAS HIGHLIGHTED VARIOUS STORIES AND CASE STUDIES THAT CHALLENGE MYTHS AND DEMONSTRATE PROGRESS."

- Feedback from our community

SEXUAL, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

Our Bodies, Our Choices



ACCESS EXPANDED
4,106 individuals accessed essential services through targeted outreach, especially in underserved communities.



INCLUSION PRIORITIZED

We reached:

- Adolescents
- Sex workers
- Persons with Disabilities (PWD)
- People Living with HIV (PLWHIV)
- Gender-diverse communities

KNOWLEDGE REACHED

23,956 people gained vital knowledge on health, rights, and advocacy.

Program Description:

This program champions sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) by creating spaces and tools that empower individuals to make informed, autonomous choices about their bodies and lives.

We work with adolescents, youth, and university students to build SRHR knowledge, support

healthy relationships, and increase access to accurate information and services.

Beyond learning, our work is about agency. We connect communities to SRHR resources, service providers, and our toll-free hotline. We gather stories, share lived realities and use them to influence policy change, ensuring that SRHR is rooted in the voices and needs of the people.

A YEAR OF BOLD CONVERSATIONS AND BIGGER DREAMS



Young mothers from Korogocho, Kibra and Kawangware participating in a panel discussion during a meeting by MOH aimed at reviewing access to healthcare services for adolescent children (10-17) in need of care and protection on 9th August at Fairview Hotel in Nairobi

Change is not just about numbers, it is about the real shifts we see in communities, in conversations, and in lives. This year, we saw young mothers stepping forward, seeking support, and finding spaces where they are heard. We saw fewer teen pregnancies, a shift backed by county records, but felt most deeply in the futures being reclaimed.

At the heart of this movement is a push to break harmful myths and open up real conversations around SRHR. Through **Adolescent and Youth SRHR (AYSRRH)** initiatives, we connected with over 12,000 people, most of them young women and girls. From campus changemakers and fresher programs to school clubs and peer mentors, the message was clear: access to knowledge is power.

We sat down with communities, holding open dialogues on contraception, reproductive rights, and access to safe services. These weren't just discussions; they were about trust,

understanding, and making sure no one feels alone in making these choices.

On the advocacy front, we kept the pressure on, helping shape policies that reflect real needs. From reviewing the **Adolescent SRHR policy** to tracking critical frameworks like the **Big 5 Clinical Outreach Handbook**, our networks of youth advocates and reproductive justice groups made sure the right voices were heard.

We also widened the conversation. **More men joined in, more media picked up SRHR stories**, and grassroots journalists started amplifying issues in ways that resonated with their communities. Every call, every campaign, every new ally brought us closer to a future where young people, especially young mothers, have the support and freedom to shape their own paths.

And we are not stopping here.

“NO WAY, THIS CANNOT BE!” – A STORY OF POWER, POLICY, AND YOUNG WOMEN’S VOICES



Adolescent girls took center stage at the 1st Joint AGYW Symposium in Nairobi this August, sharing their experiences, leading conversations, and making their voices count in shaping the future

In 2024, something powerful happened. In a small, buzzing hall filled with energy and anticipation, 35 young girls from five counties came together, not just to attend another meeting, but to speak truth to power.

They had journeyed through TICAH’s work on sexuality education, agency, and advocacy. They had sat in circles, asked hard questions, built confidence, and pushed back against silence. Now, they were at the *AGYW Symposium*, convened through the AGYW-Rights Network, ready to meet the people who make decisions that shape their lives: the Director General of Health, key representatives from the Ministries of Education, Gender, Labour, and Interior.

These were not just conversations, they were confrontations with a system that had often excluded them.

One of the biggest moments? A communique. Thoughtfully written, collectively voiced. The young women challenged the newly proposed policy, calling for its recall and review. Why?

Because it had been written *without them*, without the very voices it claimed to protect. It also included harmful, outdated provisions that turned back the clock on their rights.

The Director General listened. And for once, they were heard.

A commitment was made to recall, restructure, and meaningfully involve youth in the policy-making process. That process is now underway and will conclude in 2025.

But the room didn’t stay quiet for long.

When a senior government official attempted to shame teen mothers during the symposium, blaming them for having sex when they should have been focused on their education, the reaction from the audience was electric.

“Hapana bwana, haiwezi kani!” — “No way, this cannot be!” a young mother fired back.

Murmurs turned to rumbles. A wave of disagreement swept across the room. Then, another young woman rose, calm, clear, and resolute.

“We don’t need judgment,” she said. “We need support. We need access to reproductive health information and services. We need policies that see us, not shame us.”

Thunderous applause followed. These weren’t just participants, they were advocates. They were changemakers.

The girls rightly called out the senior government official for victim-blaming. These young mothers had shown immense courage in sharing their lived experiences, many marked by exploitation and systemic failure. They spoke of how the education and health systems had let them down, by denying them comprehensive sex education, by failing to protect them from sexual violence and exploitation, and by withholding access to essential sexual and reproductive health services.

Despite having listened to these powerful testimonies, the official failed to honour the bravery of the girls or to recognize the safe space they believed they had found to speak their truth. Instead, she resorted to archaic, patriarchal thinking that blames the victim, excuses the perpetrator, and disregards the agency and realities of young people. Her response reflected a deeper generational disconnect, revealing how some in the older generation, lacking a nuanced understanding of the issues, continue to fail the youth by offering judgment instead of the structural solutions needed to address rising rates of teen

pregnancies, HIV infections, and gender-based violence.

Through TICAH’s work, young women like *Pendo* and *Tata* are stepping into their power. They’re not just speaking; they’re shaping. They are challenging the systems that failed them and calling in a future that listens. One where a young mother isn’t punished for her circumstances but supported in her healing and rebuilding journey. One where policies are written with—not just about girls and young women.

“No girl wakes up wanting to get pregnant,” Pendo had said earlier.

“Most of us wanted to stay in school. But life happens. We shouldn’t be faulted for seeking help.”

Her words cut through the noise. So did Tata’s:

“We want to go back to school. But the current policies don’t support us.”

These voices, backed by years of careful community engagement, represent more than soundbites. They represent movement. Confidence. Agency. A ripple that has become a wave.

And that’s the real story of 2024, not just that a policy was challenged, but that girls and young women demanded better. And that they were heard.



**“SISI KAMA WATU WA WAATHA TULIKUWA
WA KWANZA KUFIKA HUKU KENYA LAKINI
SIKUHZI: HATA SERIKALI YETU HAITUSKIZI NA
INATUANGAMIZA.”**

**“WE, THE WAATHA PEOPLE, WERE AMONG
THE FIRST TO SETTLE IN KENYA, BUT THESE
DAYS, EVEN OUR OWN GOVERNMENT DOES
NOT LISTEN TO US—IT IS DESTROYING US.”**

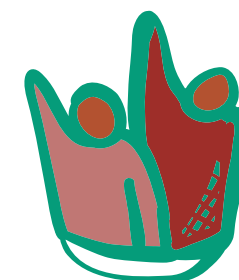
- Anononymous

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURE Medicine Wheel



KNOWLEDGE SHARED

220+ participants learned how to use medicinal plants for illness management and holistic health.



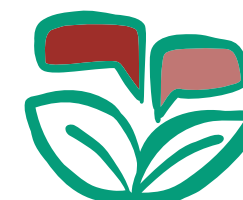
YOUTH EMPOWERED

70 university students trained on traditional medicine, reporting increased knowledge and appreciation for indigenous health systems.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AT NATIONAL MUSEUM OF KENYA

17,255 visitors explored our plant garden at the National Museums of Kenya



**1ST TICAH CLIMATE
JUSTICE CONFERENCE** held, bringing together grassroots activists, policymakers, and cultural leaders to advance community-driven climate solutions.

Program Description:

At TICAH, we believe in recognizing and amplifying the significance of Indigenous Knowledge and Culture (IKC) to promote holistic health and address community issues. We are proud to integrate indigenous practices into every aspect of our work, but in this program area, we take it a step further. By collaborating

with herbalists, engaging with Traditional Elders, supporting indigenous women's movements, and creating safe spaces for intergenerational dialogues, we are committed to promoting traditional knowledge and preserving indigenous culture. Join us in our efforts to honor and celebrate indigenous knowledge and culture!

A YEAR OF CULTURAL COURAGE

The Waatha are an Indigenous hunter-gatherer community with deep historical roots in Kenya. Over time, they have experienced increasing marginalization, including the loss of access to their ancestral lands and erosion of their cultural recognition. In 2024, TICAH supported four representatives from the Waatha community to participate in a national forum hosted by the Kenya Human Rights Commission. There, they submitted a petition demanding formal recognition and protection of their rights, a significant milestone in their ongoing pursuit of justice and visibility.

TICAH also stood in solidarity with 105 traditional herbalists during African Traditional Medicine Day, recognizing their role as custodians of Indigenous health knowledge. Together, we co-developed a toolkit to help document, refine, and protect their practices—an important step toward safeguarding traditional healing methods.

As part of our broader work to preserve Indigenous knowledge, we continued to build an online knowledge hub, an evolving database that allows communities to document and share cultural wisdom across generations. On the ground, We worked with the Kaya Elders

to create more spaces for intergenerational dialogues with the intention of involving more young people in the conservation of the sacred Kaya forests.

In Voi, Samburu, and Kajiado, we facilitated climate justice and gender-based violence dialogues, reaching 2,052 individuals. These conversations provided space for collective reflection and local action, strengthening community leadership on interconnected social and environmental challenges.

Our commitment to cultural preservation extends to the documentation of traditional clothing and oral histories, reclaiming and reframing narratives for contemporary relevance. In parallel, we are contributing to the development of Kenya's Traditional Medicine Policy, advocating for the formal recognition of Indigenous health systems.

From petitions and partnerships to data platforms and documentation, we are committed to safeguarding culture and amplifying community wisdom, ensuring that it is not only preserved but continues to grow, evolve, and thrive.

A traditional Waatha dance welcoming guests during our community dialogue session.



Participants take part in a peace walk at the National Museum of Kenya following a Plant Talk session.

HEALING AND HERITAGE

In 2024, we took bold strides in protecting and promoting Indigenous healing practices, carrying forward centuries of wisdom into modern spaces of policy, health, and public discourse. What began as conversations in community gardens and quiet exchanges between elders and herbalists grew into something louder, more visible, and undeniably powerful.

We are at the tail end of publishing our Herbalist Handbook, a collaborative effort between TICAH and the Ministry of Health. More than just a manual, the handbook became a living bridge between traditional healers and formal health systems, a reference that brought clarity, structure, and legitimacy to knowledge long held in oral tradition. For herbalists, it offered a practical guide grounded in safety and standardization. For policymakers, it laid the groundwork for a more inclusive and regulated approach to Indigenous medicine.

But knowledge needs celebration too, and that's exactly what happened when we hosted the very first **African Traditional Medicine Day (ATM)** at the National Museum of Kenya. For a few magical hours, the museum grounds turned into a vibrant mosaic of herbalists, elders, youth, plant lovers, and curious members of the public. They gathered not just to mark a day, but to honor a legacy. There were stories, songs, exhibitions, and above all, a shared sense of pride in Indigenous health practices.

At the heart of the celebration were the participants of IKC's weekly *Plant Talks*, held every Thursday at the Medicine Shield Garden, who were recognized for their dedication to learning and preserving plant knowledge. Their presence symbolized a growing movement rooted in community, care, and curiosity.

The event resonated far beyond the garden paths and museum walls. With national and international media, like BBC and CGTN, covering the day, IKC's voice echoed across borders, putting Indigenous medicine in the spotlight. These stories brought attention to both the richness and the urgency of safeguarding these practices.

Importantly, ATM Day also created space for deep policy dialogue. Around the table sat herbalists, government officials, and researchers, candidly discussing the roadblocks still in the way: fragmented documentation, inadequate infrastructure, and the pressing need to involve young people to carry the torch forward.

Looking ahead, IKC envisions ATM Day as an annual tradition, one that continues to inspire, educate, and influence. It's all part of a larger mission: to document and protect Indigenous knowledge, foster intergenerational learning, and ensure that traditional healing doesn't just survive, but evolves and thrives in a fast-changing world.

Voices of Change: A JOURNEY TOWARD HEALING



Facilitators leading GBV awareness seminars with local communities, empowering and educating for a safer future.

In 2024, we continued our work to address gender-based violence (GBV) in Bungoma County through a series of healing conversations and learning sessions held across Mt. Elgon, Webuye East, Kanduyi, Bumula, and Kimaeti. The initiative focused on creating safe spaces, within marketplaces, schools, churches, and community halls, where people could come together to speak, listen, and learn.

Community dialogues, led by trained facilitators, created opportunities for survivors and families to share lived experiences of violence, as well as their hopes for change. These spaces allowed for open and empathetic conversations that shifted norms around silence and stigma. In each setting, from bustling market squares to quiet classrooms, participants reflected on how violence had shaped their lives, and how knowledge and collective action could reshape their future.

In schools, the sessions empowered young people with information about their rights and encouraged critical thinking around gender and respect. Teachers and community leaders helped bridge traditional practices with contemporary understandings, guiding youth toward more equitable values. In churches,

faith-based dialogues helped congregants connect spiritual teachings to the need for safety and accountability in their homes and communities.

What emerged was not just greater awareness, but a growing movement of local champions committed to change, students becoming peer educators, parents initiating conversations at home, and local leaders acting.

This work is part of our broader approach to healing justice: weaving together Indigenous wisdom, community dialogue, and systemic awareness to respond to GBV in ways that are locally grounded and transformative. The sessions prioritized deep listening, emotional safety, and practical learning, with the goal of fostering a long-term cultural shift.

By the end of the year, our community sessions had reached hundreds of participants across Bungoma, each one playing a part in building safer, more connected communities. While the work continues, 2024 marked a turning point, where voices once silenced began shaping a future rooted in dignity, safety, and collective healing.

“ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY THROUGH THIS PROGRAM HAS BEEN EYE-OPENING. MANY PEOPLE ARE DISCOVERING THAT COMMON PLANTS LIKE GUAVA AND MANGO LEAVES—OFTEN OVERLOOKED—HAVE REAL MEDICINAL VALUE. IN MY VILLAGE, GUAVAS WERE SEEN AS BIRD FOOD, SO LEARNING ABOUT THEIR HEALTH BENEFITS WAS POWERFUL. THESE SMALL REVELATIONS ARE PERSONAL, BUT THE WIDER IMPACT IS EVEN BIGGER.”

- Community Member

HIV MANAGEMENT, NUTRITION AND HERBS

Healthy Households

**PREVENTING
AND ADDRESSING
CHILDHOOD
MALNUTRITION**

10,115 children in 60
ECD centers reached with
nutritional assessments



**HIV AND NUTRITION
PROGRAMS**

**350 PEOPLE
LIVING WITH
HIV** reached,

with **70% ADOPTION**
of healthier choices,
medication adherence,
and herbal remedies.

91% of participants successfully
completed our Miale program.



**DIETARY AND
HYGIENE CHANGES**

Improved child health
outcomes due to
**BETTER DIETARY &
HYGIENE PRACTICES**
in households

Program Description:

We understand that health is shaped by cultural, social, economic, physical, and emotional factors. The Healthy Households program is a holistic initiative that empowers families to make informed health choices while addressing root causes of malnutrition and violence against children.

Our HIV program focuses on the role of nutrition in HIV care, teaching people living with HIV how to use food to manage side effects, prevent infections, and strengthen immunity. Community leaders known as Miale ya Jamii and local CBOs are trained to spread this knowledge widely.

The Child Nutrition Project supports children under five at risk of malnutrition. In partnership with ECD centers, we train teachers and caregivers, support referrals through local health systems, and promote the use of indigenous, nutrient-rich foods through school gardens.

Beyond direct support, we engage the public, schools, and policymakers in conversations about food systems, nutrition, and health. We also run child protection initiatives that build children's agency and strengthen community-based protection structures.



ADVANCING NUTRITION THROUGH LOCAL WISDOM, POLICY, AND PRACTICE

In 2024, we deepened our work in community health and nutrition by centering on local knowledge and practical solutions. Across ten communities, we held dialogues with more than 500 community members: young mothers, people living with HIV, and caregivers talking through the realities of putting nutritious meals on the table. Together, we explored ways to diversify diets using what is locally available, plan better with limited resources, and make nutrition work in everyday life. These were not theoretical sessions; they were grounded in the challenges people face and focused on tools they can actually use.

This year, 7,609 children accessed nutrition services, and early interventions have already started shifting outcomes for those at risk of malnutrition. In schools, we supported the establishment of kitchen gardens filled with indigenous vegetables, feeding 800 children while also teaching them how food grows, what it means, and why it matters. With Early Childhood Development teachers leading the way, conversations around child nutrition are becoming a regular part of school life, not just an additional activity.

While this day-to-day work continues, we have also maintained a strong focus on policy. In Kajiado, we helped move the County Nutrition Bill toward a more community-led approach, ensuring that the voices of those directly impacted by nutrition policies helped shape them. At the national level, we have advocated for stronger integration of nutrition across key documents, including the Kajiado County Nutrition Action Plan, the Nutritional Management and Reference Charts Protocol, and the Comprehensive School Health Program Training Manual. We are also contributing to the finalization of the National Childcare Facility Bill. These frameworks have the potential to influence how nutrition is addressed at every level, especially for women, caregivers, and children who are often excluded from decision-making processes.

Alongside this policy work, we began laying the groundwork for new research that recognizes the connection between indigenous foods and the health of people living with HIV. In collaboration with the National AIDS and STI Control Programme (NASCO), we are shifting the narrative, asking not just what

scientific research says, but what communities already know. Despite the wealth of traditional knowledge on food and wellness, there has been little formal research on how indigenous diets support people living with HIV. That is beginning to change. This new research partnership is a small but critical step toward validating local knowledge as a core part of healthcare.

From policy development to school gardens, national research to community dialogues, we are making the case that nutrition cannot be an afterthought. It must be lived, shared, legislated, and learned. And most importantly, it must reflect the voices and wisdom of the communities we serve.



I HOPE THIS WORK CONTINUES, ESPECIALLY IN AREAS WHERE PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV LACK SUPPORT BEYOND THEIR MEDICATION. THERE IS STILL SO MUCH TO DO, AND EVEN MORE PEOPLE TO REACH

- Feedback from community member.

HOW NUTRITION EDUCATION IS CHANGING MY COMMUNITY

By Alfred Simanka Siokino

In August 2024, after nutrition training with TICAH, something clicked for me. I began to really see what was going on in my community, so many children and families were struggling with their health. But it was not because food was completely unavailable. It was the lack of knowledge, the habits we had picked up, and some of the taboos that stopped us from eating what is good for us.

I decided to do something about it. I started holding small gatherings with parents and caregivers to talk about nutrition. We shared ideas, swapped stories, and slowly, things began to change. At school, we started a kitchen garden where the children could grow their own vegetables and learn about the power of fresh, local food. I also joined the 4K Club (4-K stands for Kuungana, Kufanya, Kusaidia Kenya which is loosely translated as coming together, to act, to help Kenya.) and began mentoring students on how food and health go hand in hand.

Cooking demonstrations became part of our weekly routine, showing caregivers how to make the most of what they had. I even went house to house, not just to talk about meals, but to see how families prepared their food, how they stored it, and how they could do better with just a few small changes. Teachers joined in too, making sure the snacks kids brought to school were healthier and encouraging good eating habits.

It was not always easy. Climate change has made things harder, rain doesn't come when it used to, and droughts last longer than they should. That meant families already struggling with poverty had an even harder time keeping up a balanced diet. In some cases, I had to walk with the children to the health center myself, just to make sure they were checked and cared for. I remember one mother clearly, her child had been very sick from malnutrition, but she took every bit of advice seriously. She changed how she cooked, started planting vegetables from the school garden at home, and never missed a cooking class again.

With the help of the Ministry of Health and local leaders, we also made sure kids got vitamin supplements, deworming, and regular health checks. All of this added up. Malnutrition cases dropped dramatically, from 68 to just 10 moderate ones. Children who had been severely undernourished began to bounce back. Teachers became nutrition champions. Parents became more confident. And most importantly, families started seeing food differently, not just as something to fill the stomach, but as something that could heal, grow, and empower.

This journey is still ongoing, but already, it feels like a new chapter has begun. One where knowledge, care, and community are leading the way toward healthier, happier lives.

Partnerships and Collaborations

PARTNER / INSTITUTION	AREA OF COLLABORATION
Ministry of Health & Department of Culture	Strategic planning
British Council	Braid Fund
AiPs (Adolescents in Practice)	County-level SRHR advocacy
Ministry of Health – DRMNCAH	Maternal, neonatal, child & adolescent health
SRHR Advocacy Consortium	National RH Bill advocacy
AGYWR Network	Adolescent girls & young women advocacy
Make Way Consortium	Inclusive SRHR systems
RHMC-K	Reproductive, maternal, and child health
Center for Transformative Narratives	Narrative change
Kaleidoscope	Health Systems strengthening
Coalition Against Sexual Violence	Joint advocacy
NASCOP	Nutrition guide development
KICA	Second Page of Msanii film in Kibera
Climate Change Working Group	Climate action
National Museums of Kenya	Host of weekly Plant Talks
Herbalist Society of Kenya	Traditional medicine
Goethe-Institut (Kenya & TZ)	Cultural partnership
GoDown Arts Centre	Artistic collaboration
Safer Nairobi Initiative	Urban safety and placemaking
Placemaking Network	Public space engagement
UN-Habitat	Urban development

EVENTS HOSTED OR CO-HOSTED

- Kiwake Festival
- RIKA Residencies
- Climate Conference
- Girl Summit
- Nairobi Drum Circle
- Charting New Paths: Side Event during CSW69

CONFERENCES ATTENDED

- ARJC Conference
- International AIDS Conference
- COP 29
- World Urban Forum
- Africa Media Festival
- Klaarts Festival
- CSW69
- UNGA79
- AWID
- SVRI conference



2024 Finance and Operations Report

70% of the income was spent on programs, 5% on program subgrants, 21% spent on staff cost while 5% was spent on administrative including asset cost. The table below shows the expenditure split in these categories.

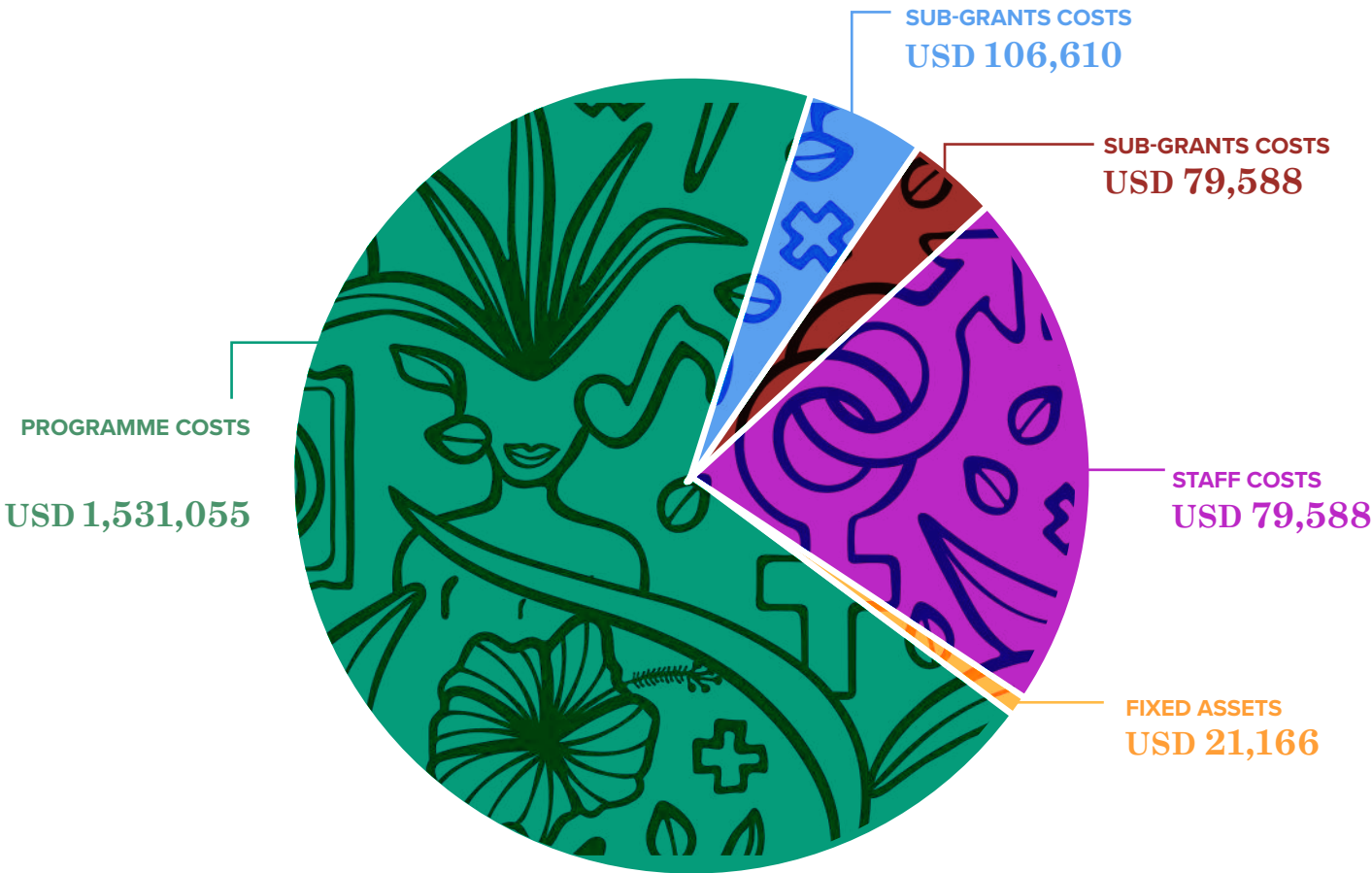
TICAH EXPENDITURE SPLIT 2024

TICAH INCOME IN 2024

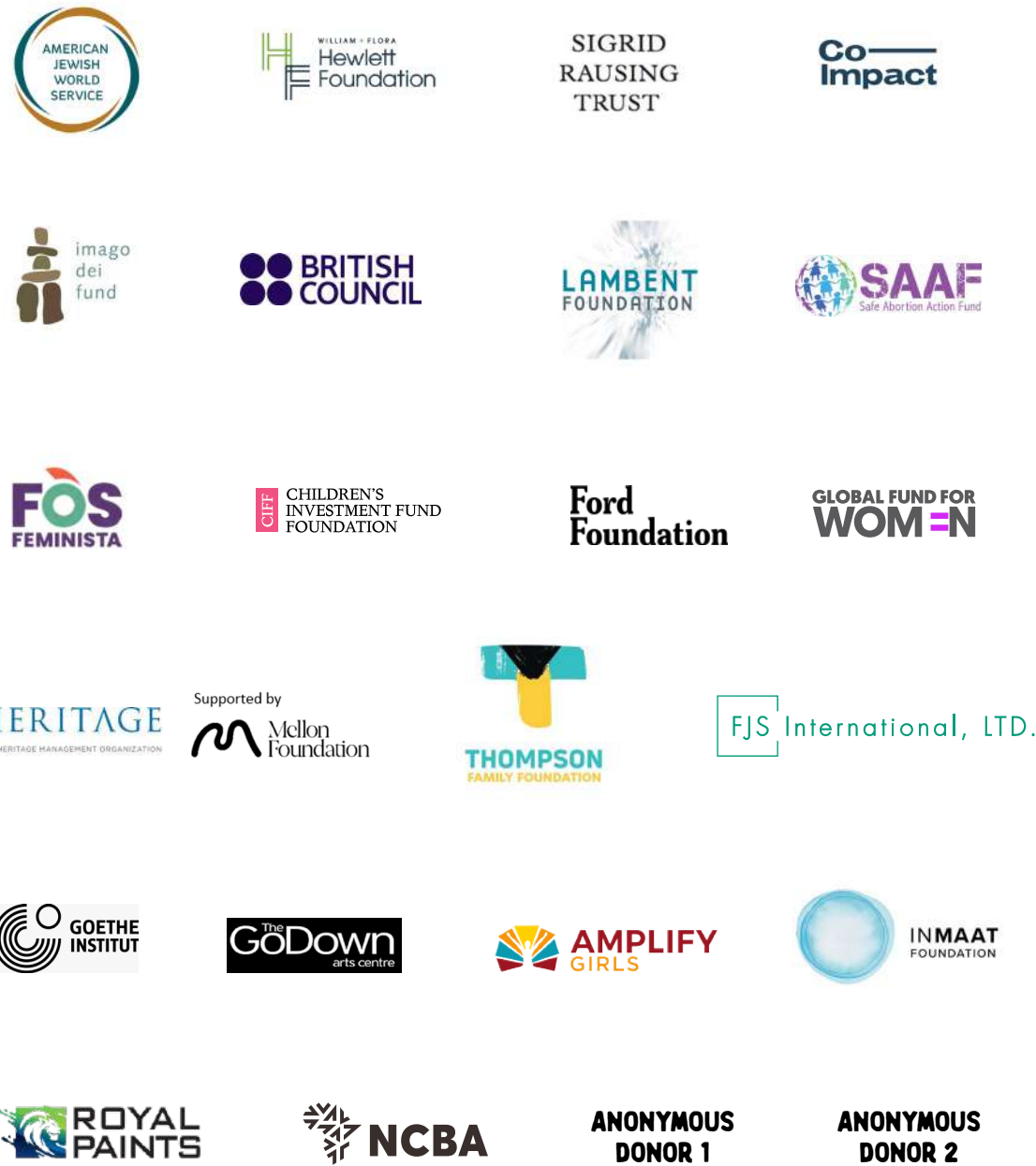


Income

2024	2,188,923
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Thank you to our partners



Back row from the left : Gordon Ochieng, Dishon Esalimba, Nick Otengo, Raisa Ismaily, Nashon Omondi, Martin Odhiambo, Moses Dupas Lolodobir, Fanis Kuya Inganga, Mordecai Odera, Suzanne Mieke Thomson, Fredrick Omutiti, Mickreen Onywero, Jeremiah Musyoka.

Front row from the left : Limya Yassin, Celia Breuer, Tracy Nyenze, Vitalice Fredrick Ochieng, Mary Akoth Elias, Jedidah Muthoni Maina, Corazon Ayoma, Catherine Wanjiku, Mercy Oluoch, Maureen Wambui Chege, Sheila Warindi Maina, Catherine Wangui Wagitie, James Munyoki Kakumbu

Our Team

In 2024, TICAH’s team experienced both growth and loss. We welcomed new members who brought fresh energy, bold ideas, and deep community commitment. At the same time, we bid farewell to colleagues who moved on to new chapters of their lives, and with heavy hearts, we mourned the loss of those who passed away. Each person left a mark, through their contributions, their dedication, and the care they brought to this work. Their impact remains with us as we carry on.

very communities we serve, carrying forward the knowledge, passion, and spirit of those who came before us. As we reflect on the past year, we honor those we have lost, celebrate the bonds we have built, and look ahead with determination, ready to expand our reach, deepen our impact, and continue the work that connects and uplifts us all.

One of those we lost was Lynette, a dear colleague in our arts department. Lynette was more than a team member; she was part of our TICAH family. She brought a quiet strength and a deep sense of creativity to everything she did. Whether helping shape exhibitions, contributing to community workshops, or simply being a kind, supportive presence in the office, she carried herself with humility, curiosity, and heart. Her passion for using art as a voice for justice and healing inspired those around her, and even in her short time with us, she made a lasting impression. Her passing left an ache in our hearts, but also a reminder to cherish one another and to keep making space for joy, for expression, and for care in all we do. We carry her memory forward, in brushstrokes, in stories, and in the spirit of the community she helped nurture. We miss you Lynette, forever in our hearts.

Through these changes, our commitment remains steadfast. We continue to believe that culture is a powerful force for health and social transformation, and many of us come from the



To learn more and get involved

To learn more about TICA H and our upcoming work, please contact us at listening@ticahealth.org. We value listening and partnerships and would love to hear from you on your ideas and thoughts for improving the health and culture of Kenya and beyond.

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Our work wouldn't be possible without all of you. Thank you for being part of our community and for continuing to prioritise culture and health. Please consider making a donation today. Asanteni sana.

To donate via MPESA: Paybill: 994347 Account: Donations

TICA H is proud to be fiscally sponsored by Myriad USA, allowing us to receive tax-deductible donations from the United States.

