



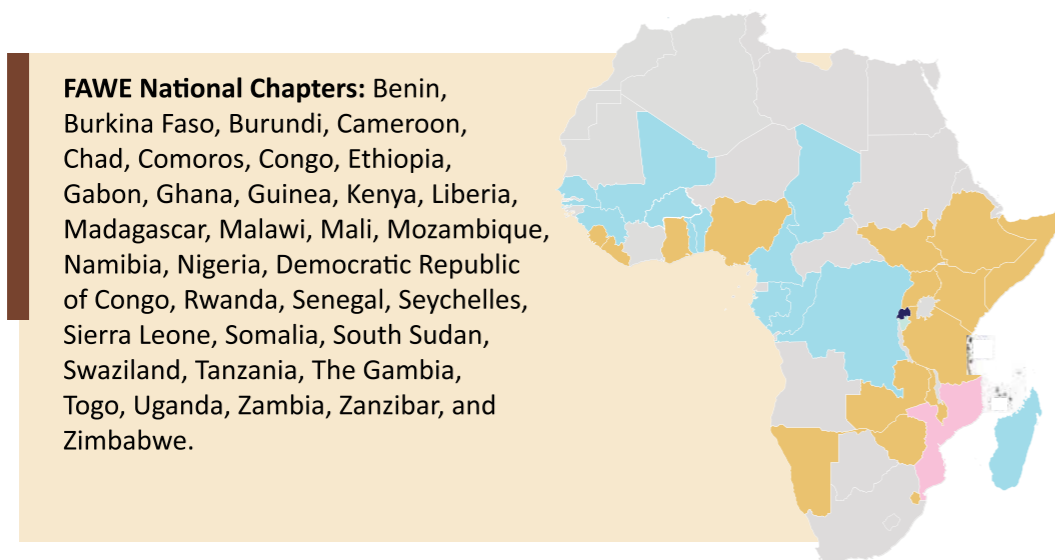
ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Redefining Access. Reshaping Systems.
Advancing Africa's Education Future.



FAWE
FORUM FOR AFRICAN WOMEN EDUCATIONALISTS
FORUM DES EDUCATRICES AFRICAINES

The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) is a membership-based pan-African Non-Governmental Organization that operates through 34 National Chapters in sub-Saharan Africa to promote girls’ and women’s education. FAWE’s vision, mission, and goal are all resolute on the well-being of girls’ education. FAWE’s Regional Secretariat is based in Nairobi, Kenya.



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Table of Contents

- Acronyms and Abbreviations.....5
- Executive Summary..... 7
- Acknowledgement.....8
- Preamble.....9
- Governance as a Lever for Systems Change 10
- Chapter 111
- Championing Integrity and Inclusion in African Higher Education: The Leadership of H.E. Professor Sarah Anyang Agbor 12
- Prof. Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang: A Lifelong FAWE Champion in African Education Leadership..... 13
- Community-Centred Leadership Earns National Recognition for Great Lakes University of Kisumu (GLUK) 14
- Chapter 2 15
- Policy Influence & Strategic Partnerships 19
- Influencing Education Reform: FAWE’s Policy Engagements with AU, Governments 19
- Advancing Girls’ Right to Education through Continental Accountability: FAWE at ACERWC.....20
- Trusted Partners in Policy: FAWE’s Strategic Collaboration with Ministries of Education Across Africa 21
- Chapter 3 22
- FAWE Advances Gender-Responsive Skills at Africa Skills Week 2025 23
- FAWE Champions Gender-Responsive Teacher Education at PACTED 202525
- Second Chance Pathways: Expanding Equitable Access to Tertiary Education26
- FAWE Expands Access to Education through the Extended Orientation Programme (EOP)..... 31
- Making University Possible: FAWE’s Push to Scale the Higher Education Access Certificate (HEAC) Across Africa..... 33
- From Opportunity to Impact: Peruth’s Pathway into Nursing.....34
- From Scholarship to Entrepreneurship: Alphonsine Muhimpundu’s Journey to Transforming Agriculture in Rwanda 37
- FAWE Rwanda 5th Annual Graduation Ceremony: Celebrating Achievement and Partnership.....39
- How a FAWE Alumni Weaved a New Narrative for Africa at the Baobab Summit with the Mastercard Foundation..... 41
- FAWE Africa Alumni Convening: A Milestone for Collective Impact.....42

Imarisha Msichana: Driving Change for Girls.....	43
Reducing School-Related Gender-Based Violence Through Data and Action.....	44
Advancing Girls' Education and SRHR: BF! Final Year Highlights.....	46
Empowering Girls, Transforming Communities: SHARE Programme Highlights.....	57
Ensuring Displacement Does Not End Education: FAWE's Work with Refugees and Internally Displaced Youth :	48
Keeping Girls in School: Mentorship, Dignity and Protection Initiatives Across the FAWE Network.....	50
FAWE Uganda Partners with Super Soul Sisters to Empower Girls Through Mentorship and Education.....	50
FAWE Zanzibar Partners with UN Women, Zanzibar Police, and Jumuiya ya Wanawake Wenye Ulemavu Zanzibar (JUWAUZA) to Combat Gender-Based Violence.....	52
Empowering Girls Through Menstrual Hygiene: FAWE Benin's Project "My #Menstruation, My Right, I Demand" Trains Seamstresses in Reusable Pad Production.....	54
FAWE Mali Conducts Awareness Session on Girls' Education and Child Protection in Sikasso.....	55
Keep Them Safe: Investing in Girls' Safety to Protect Education Gains.....	56
Chapter 4	57
Transforming Learning Through Proven FAWE Models:.....	58
Short Succinct Summaries of the FAWE Model for Infographics	59
Finding Her Voice Through Tuseme: Joy Kamathi's Journey Back to School.....	60
Gender-Responsive Pedagogy in Action: Transforming Classrooms Across Africa.....	61
FAWE Gabon Encourages Girls in STEM Through 'Sciences, Les Filles Nous Pouvons'	62
Chapter 5	63
Reclaiming Voice in Crisis: How GPE KIX is Shaping Inclusive Education in Displacement Contexts.....	64
Stories that shape policy: FAWE Evidence Through Documentary Storytelling.....	65
Knowledge Products for System Change: FAWE Policy Briefs, Learning Briefs and Research Papers (2025) Break Free Intergenerational Dialogue Study.....	66
End Term Evaluation – Make Way Programme.....	67
End Term Evaluation – Imarisha Msichana Programme.....	67
Elevating Africa's Voice on Girls' Education: FAWE's Continental and Global Advocacy in 2025.....	68
Driving the Beijing+30 Agenda Forward: FAWE at CSW69.....	62
From Local Classrooms to Global Commitments: FAWE Carries Africa's Girls to UNGA 80.....	69
Driving System Change for Girls' Education: FAWE Engages at AU CIEFFA.....	71

Education at the Heart of Reparative Justice: FAWE's Leadership at GIMAC 2025.....	72
FAWE Shapes Africa's Education Agenda at the ADEA Triennale in Ghana.....	73
FAWE Brings Gender-Responsive Innovation to the Global Stage at CIES 2025.....	74
Student Voice at the Centre: FAWE Advances Tuseme for Displaced Learners at AEAA 2025	75
Integrating Childcare and Education: FAWE at the Africa Conference on Childcare.....	76
Elevating Africa's Voice on Gender-Transformative Education at the G20.....	77
Chapter 6	78
A Stronger Identity for a Growing Movement: FAWE's New Brand	79
Strong Governance, Stronger Impact: How FAWE's Leadership Structures Power Change Across Africa....	80
Strengthening Capacity for Institutional Impact.....	82
Reflecting, Learning, and Planning Forward: FAWE's End-of-Year Review in Naivasha.....	83
From Compliance to Credibility: Strengthening FAWE's Financial and Operational Frameworks.....	84

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ACERWC	African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AEAA	Association for Educational Assessment in Africa
AfECN	The Africa Early Childhood Network
AGAS	Adolescent Girls Agency Survey
AGEF	African Girls Education Fund
AU	African Union
AU/CIEFFA	African Union International Centre for Girls' and Women's Education in Africa
AU-ESTI	African Union Commission – Education, Science, Technology and Innovation
AWDF	African Women's Development Fund
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa
CIES	Comparative and International Education Society
CoE	Centres of Excellence
CSW	Commission for the Status of Women
EdTECH	Educational Technology
EOP	Extended Orientation Programme
ETE	End-Term Evaluation
FEMNET4GTE	Network and the Feminist Network for Gender Transformative Education
FY	Financial Year
G20	Group of Twenty
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GIMAC	Gender is my Agenda Campaign
GLUK	Great Lakes University of Kenya
GPE KIX	Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange
GRP	Gender Responsive Pedagogy
HEAC	Higher Education Access Programme
HERS-EA	Higher Education Resource Services – East Africa
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative.
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IDRC	The International Development Research Centre
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
PACTED	Pan African Conference on Teacher Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy

SHARE	Sexual Health and Reproductive Education
SRGBV	School Related Gender Based Violence
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health Rights
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WASRO	West African Sub-Regional Office
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Dr. Martha Muhwezi,
Executive Director, FAWE Africa.

Across the continent, education systems continue to face mounting pressure, from climate shocks and economic strain to conflict, displacement, and widening inequality. Yet within these challenges lies an urgent imperative: to redesign systems so they are equitable, resilient, and responsive to Africa's demographic realities. Throughout the year, FAWE moved beyond programme implementation to deepen systems influence.

Under **Strategic Objective 1**, (To enhance provision and access to quality education and training opportunities for girls and women in Africa) FAWE expanded access to tertiary and skills pathways through the FAWE/Mastercard Foundation Phase II Programme, the Higher Education Access Certificate (HEAC), and structured bridging initiatives across multiple countries. National programme launches in Ghana, Zimbabwe, Senegal, and Liberia secured high-level political commitment and institutional alignment. Thousands of marginalized young women and men accessed bursaries, transition support, and credible routes into higher education, entrepreneurship, and employment. FAWE's core models, Gender-Responsive Pedagogy, Tuseme, Mothers' Clubs, and STEM interventions, continued to demonstrate measurable gains in retention, participation, and progression.

Under **Strategic Objective 2** (To enhance the generation and utilization of research evidence to inform education policy and practice), FAWE strengthened its continental advocacy leadership. Through the GPE KIX Tuseme programme in Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia, FAWE generated actionable evidence influencing inclusive education policy, including in refugee and IDP contexts. FAWE contributed to the drafting and operationalization of the African Union's CESA 2026–2035 framework,

elevated gender-transformative education within AU-ESTI processes, and positioned girls' education within global platforms linked to the G20 and United Nations dialogues.

Under **Strategic Objective 3** (To strengthen institutional capacity and enhance the operational effectiveness of the FAWE network), FAWE reinforced institutional resilience through strengthened governance, audit compliance, financial controls, and operational systems across the network.

As we look ahead, FAWE will intensify its focus on scaling second-chance pathways, embedding gender-responsive teacher development across national systems, strengthening higher education access reforms, and mobilizing strategic partnerships that match the scale of Africa's demographic transition.

Africa's future depends on whether its education systems can convert enrolment into completion, and aspiration into opportunity. FAWE remains committed to ensuring that education reform across the continent reflects justice, evidence, and political will. The work continues, with clarity, conviction, and collective responsibility.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

FAWE's progress in 2025 was made possible through the collective commitment of many partners and stakeholders who share our vision of equitable, inclusive, and gender-transformative education systems across Africa.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the African Union and its specialised institutions, regional economic communities, and continental accountability mechanisms for the policy spaces that enable sustained dialogue and reform. We are equally grateful to Ministries of Education and national governments across 33 African countries for their trust, collaboration, and leadership in embedding gender-responsive approaches within national systems.

We acknowledge the invaluable support of our development partners and donors namely: Mastercard Foundation, Global Affairs Canada, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Echidna Giving, The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Gates Foundation, and Wellspring Philanthropic Fund whose investments have strengthened scholarships, safeguarded girls'

learning environments, expanded STEM opportunities, and supported innovation across the FAWE network. Your confidence in FAWE's evidence-based models and advocacy leadership continues to drive sustainable impact.

Our gratitude also goes to civil society partners, research institutions, youth leaders, alumni, and community-based structures — including Mothers' Clubs and Tuseme platforms — who ensure that girls' voices remain central to reform efforts. The resilience and determination of the girls and young women we serve remain our greatest inspiration.

We deeply appreciate the FAWE Africa Board for its strategic guidance and oversight, and we recognize the dedication of our National Chapter leadership and Secretariat staff whose commitment translates FAWE's vision into measurable results.

Together, we are not only expanding access to education — we are transforming systems, restoring dignity, and shaping a more just and equitable future for African girls and young women.



Together, we are not only expanding access to education — we are transforming systems, restoring dignity, and shaping a more just and equitable future for African girls and young women.

FOREWORD



The year 2025 stands as a defining chapter in FAWE's continued pursuit of gender-transformative education across Africa. At a time when education systems face mounting pressures from climate shocks and displacement to fiscal constraints and digital disruption FAWE has remained steadfast in its conviction that investing in girls' education is not optional, but foundational to Africa's social and economic transformation.

Throughout the year, FAWE strengthened its dual role as both an advocacy leader and an implementation partner. From influencing continental frameworks such as CESA 2026–2035 and contributing to African Union policy processes, to deepening collaboration with Ministries of Education and scaling proven school- and community-based models, FAWE worked to ensure that gender equality in education moved from aspiration to action.

FAWE's engagement across global platforms including UNGA, CSW, G20 forums, and continental convenings such as GIMAC and ADEA reinforced a clear message: education is central to justice, dignity, and sustainable development. Whether advancing reparative justice through curriculum reform, strengthening accountability through ACERWC mechanisms, or positioning gender-responsive pedagogy at the heart of system reform, FAWE ensured that African girls' voices and realities shaped policy discourse.

At programme level, FAWE continued to scale evidence-based models that address structural barriers to girls' participation and success. Through Tuseme Clubs, Mothers' Clubs, scholarship programmes, STEM initiatives, and gender-responsive teacher

development, thousands of girls and young women gained not only access to education, but confidence, leadership, and pathways into higher education and skills training. Our work in refugee and displacement contexts further affirmed that education must remain accessible even in the most fragile settings.

Behind these milestones lies the strength of the FAWE network 33 National Chapters working collaboratively to translate continental commitments into local impact. Together with our partners, governments, donors, alumni, and communities, we continue to build education systems that are inclusive, accountable, and responsive to the realities of African girls.

This report captures not only achievements, but also momentum. It depicts an organisation that is evolving, influencing, and scaling impact grounded in evidence, driven by partnership, and guided by the belief that when Africa's girls learn, lead, and innovate, the continent moves forward with them.

Hon. Aïcha Bah Diallo
Chairperson, FAWE Africa Board



CHAPTER 1

Stewards of Progress: Celebrating Leadership, Legacy, and Impact

Governance as a Lever for Systems Change

Under Strategic Objective 3: Strengthening Institutional Capacity and Operational Effectiveness, FAWE’s 2025 achievements were anchored in disciplined governance, strategic oversight, and institutional accountability led by the FAWE Africa Board.

In line with FAWE’s constitutional provisions, the Board convened two statutory meetings during the year, providing high-level direction on programme scale, financial stewardship, risk management, and organizational positioning. Through sustained engagement with the Executive Director and Senior Management Team, the Board ensured that FAWE’s multi-country operations remained aligned with its Strategic Plan (2024–2028), while maintaining compliance with donor requirements and international governance standards.

The Board’s effectiveness was further reinforced through its specialized committees, Programme; Human Resources and Governance; Finance and Audit; Resource Mobilisation; and Research, which provided targeted oversight across core institutional functions. This structure strengthened accountability, improved decision-making, and ensured that programme expansion was matched with robust systems, controls, and evidence.

Board members also maintained a strong presence in FAWE’s strategic and country-level engagements. Participation in General Assemblies in Rwanda, Tanzania, and Liberia and other chapters reinforced governance alignment and institutional coherence across the network. The Board’s presence at the Phase II programme launches in Ghana, Zimbabwe, Senegal, and Liberia, as well as national strategic plan launches, signaled high-level political commitment to scaling second-chance pathways and strengthening country ownership.

Beyond internal oversight, the Board continues to play a critical role in positioning FAWE within continental and global education agendas, strengthening partnerships with governments, regional bodies, and development partners.

FAWE’s 2025 performance reflects more than programme delivery, it reflects an institution governed with intent, discipline, and strategic clarity. The Board remains central to safeguarding credibility, driving reform, and ensuring that FAWE operates at the level required to influence education systems across Africa.

Strong Governance, Stronger Impact: How FAWE’s Leadership Structures Power Change Across Africa



FAWE Africa Board Members cut a celebratory cake for the new brand

Behind every programme delivered and every girl supported across the FAWE network lies a foundation that often works quietly but is essential: strong governance. In 2025, FAWE demonstrated that sustainable impact is built not only through projects, but through resilient institutions, accountable leadership, and coordinated oversight at both national and continental levels.

Across the network, **General Assemblies were successfully held in Burundi, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, and Liberia**, marking significant moments of renewal and consolidation for FAWE chapters. These assemblies strengthened institutional legitimacy, enabled the induction of new Board Members, and reinforced governance frameworks that guide how chapters plan, manage resources, and deliver programmes.

General Assemblies serve as more than electoral events. They are strategic platforms where chapters review progress, align with FAWE Africa’s vision and standards, and recommit to transparency and accountability.

By reaffirming roles, responsibilities, and oversight mechanisms, chapters strengthened the separation between governance and management functions – a key principle that supports integrity, effective decision-making, and organisational stability.

The induction of new Board Members across these countries brought fresh expertise, expanded networks, and renewed energy into chapter leadership. These leaders step into their roles with a clear mandate: to steward FAWE’s mission, ensure responsible management of resources, and position their chapters to respond to national education priorities while advancing girls’ and women’s education.

At the continental level, governance coherence was further reinforced through **two FAWE Africa Board meetings** during the year. These meetings provided high-level oversight of the organisation’s strategic direction, performance, and risk management. They also strengthened alignment between the Regional Secretariat and national chapters, ensuring that FAWE operates as a unified network with shared standards, vision, and accountability.



PROF. SARAH ANYANG AGBOR
Board Vice-Chairperson, FAWE Africa

When we protect girls in digital spaces, we safeguard their power to innovate, connect, and shape their futures. Their safety is our collective duty.

#KeepThemSafe #EndDigitalViolence #16Days #Educate2Elevate



DR. EMEBET MULUGETA
Honorary Secretary, FAWE Africa Board

When women and girls feel safe online, they can learn, lead, and contribute without limits. Let us commit to ending digital violence now.

#KeepThemSafe #EndDigitalViolence #16Days #Educate2Elevate

Group photo featuring Dr. Martha Muhwezi (Executive Director, FAWE Africa), Catherine Asego (Senior Advocacy and Partnerships Officer, FAWE Africa), Joseph Kamara (Executive Director, FAWE Sierra Leone) with Hon. Conrad Sackey (Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education) and Hon. Emily Gogra (Deputy Minister), Freetown, Sierra Leone.



Strong governance directly translates into stronger programme delivery. Clear leadership structures improve financial stewardship, enhance credibility with governments and partners, and ensure that decisions are strategic, transparent, and aligned with FAWE's long-term goals. It is this institutional strength that allows FAWE to scale its work, manage complex partnerships, and sustain impact across diverse contexts.

As FAWE continues to expand opportunities for girls and young women across Africa, the governance milestones of 2025 serve as a reminder that transformative change depends on strong institutions as much as strong ideas. Governance is not an administrative necessity, it is the backbone that enables FAWE's mission to endure, grow, and deliver results with integrity.

Highlights of various FAWE Governance activities across Africa



Prof. Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang: A Lifelong FAWE Champion in African Education Leadership



H.E. Prof. Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang

Vice President Republic of Ghana / former Chairperson of FAWE Africa Board

Her Excellency **Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang**, Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, stands as one of FAWE's most distinguished champions of girls' education and women's leadership in Africa. A former Chairperson of the **FAWE Africa** Board, Prof. Opoku-Agyemang has been deeply engaged in shaping FAWE's vision, governance, and advocacy over the years, long before her ascension to the highest levels of national leadership.

An accomplished academic, former Minister of Education, and now Vice President, Prof. Opoku-Agyemang's journey reflects the very pathways FAWE seeks to expand for African girls: access to quality education, progression into leadership, and the opportunity to influence policy at scale. Her career embodies the belief that investing in girls' education strengthens institutions, governance, and national development.



FAWE Programme Officer Ms. Fatimata Kane (left) with H.E. Prof. Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang Vice President Republic of Ghana and former Chairperson of FAWE Africa Board during a courtesy call to her office in Accra, Ghana

Throughout FAWE's evolution as a continental network, Prof. Opoku-Agyemang has consistently championed gender-responsive education reforms, equitable access to learning, and the importance of women's leadership in decision-making spaces. Her leadership helped reinforce FAWE's credibility as a trusted partner to governments and regional bodies, and her example continues to inspire FAWE's work across its national chapters.



FAWE delegation led by Dr Martha with H.E. Prof. Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang in Accra

In November 2025, a FAWE delegation led by **Dr. Martha Muhwezi**, Executive Director of FAWE Africa, engaged with Her Excellency in Accra. The moment symbolized the enduring relationship between FAWE and leaders who have grown with the institution—leaders who understand FAWE not only as an advocacy organization, but as a movement grounded in evidence, partnership, and African leadership.



FAWE Ghana delegation led by Prof. Esi Sutherland-Addy during a visit to H.E. Prof. Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang in Accra

Prof. Opoku-Agyemang's continued commitment to education and gender equality affirms FAWE's conviction that systemic change is driven by leaders who carry shared values across academia, policy, and governance. FAWE remains proud of her legacy within the organization and of the pathways she continues to open for African women and girls at the highest levels of leadership.

A Stronger Identity for a Growing Movement: FAWE's New Brand



FAWE

FORUM FOR AFRICAN WOMEN EDUCATIONALISTS
FORUM DES ÉDUCATRICES AFRICAINES

In 2025, FAWE introduced a new brand identity that reflects not only how the organization looks, but how it leads. As FAWE's work expands across Africa, influencing policy, shaping systems, and transforming opportunities for girls and young women, the new brand signals a confident, unified voice for a network driving change at scale.

The refreshed identity strengthens consistency across FAWE's chapters, making its work more visible, recognizable, and impactful among governments, partners, and global audiences. It embodies FAWE's commitment to innovation, inclusion, and gender-responsive education, while honouring decades of advocacy and community-rooted action.

More than a design update, the brand represents a new chapter of growth and influence. It positions FAWE as a modern, dynamic leader in education reform, ready to engage in global conversations while staying grounded in African realities. The new FAWE brand tells a clear story: a strong network, a shared vision, and a future where every girl's potential is recognized and supported.



Unveiling of the FAWE New Brand during the launch of the FAWE/Mastercard Foundation Program in Ghana

Championing Integrity and Inclusion in African Higher Education: The Leadership of H.E. Professor Sarah Anyang Agbor



H.E. Professor Sarah Anyang Agbor
Vice-Chairperson –FAWE Africa Board

Africa's higher education sector stands at a critical juncture. With over 60% of its population under 25 and one in three young people globally projected to be African by 2050, the continent holds immense demographic potential. Yet this "youth bulge" is matched by persistent challenges: underfunded institutions, inequitable access, infrastructure and digital gaps, and curricula that often fail to align with labour market demands. Tertiary enrolment in Sub-Saharan Africa remains at just 9%, compared to a global average of 38%, underscoring the urgency for reform.

At this pivotal moment, H.E. Professor Sarah Anyang Agbor's leadership reflects both vision and accountability. Recently appointed Inspector of Services No. 2 at Cameroon's Ministry of Higher Education and serving as Vice Chair of FAWE Africa, she operates at the intersection of governance and advocacy. In her ministerial role, she oversees financial governance, ensuring transparency and effective resource management. She emphasizes that sound financial governance is foundational to trust, sustainability, and institutional credibility.

Professor Agbor's career spans academia, national administration, and continental leadership. From serving as Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Bamenda to Inspector of Academic Affairs, and later African Union Commissioner for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (2017–2021), she has championed youth empowerment,

research, and digital transformation under Agenda 2063. These experiences shape her current priorities: strengthening accountability, promoting quality assurance, advancing gender responsiveness, and fostering innovation.

As FAWE Vice Chair, she continues to advocate for women's leadership, scholarships, mentorship, and inclusive reforms. Her dual mandate ensures that higher education systems are not only well-governed but also accessible and equitable for young women.

Grounded in collaboration, evidence-based leadership, and resilience, Professor Agbor calls on Africa's youth to view education as a tool for purpose-driven service. Her leadership model demonstrates that with integrity in governance and equity in access, African universities can become engines of transformation for the continent's future.

Community-Centred Leadership Earns National Recognition for Great Lakes University of Kisumu (GLUK)



Prof. Hazel Miseda Mumbo, Vice Chancellor of GLUK and Honorary Treasurer of the FAWE Africa Board, receiving the award.

The national recognition of **Great Lakes University of Kisumu (GLUK)** as *Best University in Community Health and Development Education in Kenya* also shines a spotlight on the leadership of **Professor Hazel Miseda Mumbo**, Vice Chancellor of GLUK and Honorary Treasurer of the **FAWE Africa Board**. Her role within FAWE links this institutional achievement to a wider continental commitment to education that is relevant, inclusive, and transformative.

Under Professor Mumbo's leadership, GLUK has strengthened its focus on applied learning, community engagement, and public health education, preparing graduates to respond to real development challenges while contributing meaningfully to society. This approach reflects values long championed within FAWE: education that connects policy, practice, and people.

The award affirms GLUK's position as a national leader in socially responsive higher education and highlights Professor Mumbo as a role model for women's leadership in academia. It also reinforces FAWE's belief that strong governance and visionary leadership within universities are essential to advancing education systems that deliver impact beyond the classroom.

FAWE
FORWARD AFRICA WISELY EDUCATING FOR PROGRESS

“Every girl deserves to learn, dream, and lead without fear—online or offline. Ending digital violence is a responsibility we must all share.”

PROF. HAZEL MISED A MUMBO
Honorary Treasurer, FAWE Africa Board #KeepThemSafe #EndDigitalViolence #16Days #Educate2Elevate



FAWE Executive Director Dr. Martha Muhwezi, participating in a high-level policy dialogue, contributing to continental education reform discussions and partnerships

CHAPTER 2

Policy Influence & Strategic Partnerships

Influencing Education Reform: FAWE's Policy Engagements with AU and Governments

Driving Continental Education Reform: FAWE's Strategic Engagement with AU-ESTI

As Africa enters a decisive decade for education transformation, FAWE has deliberately chosen to engage where continental priorities are negotiated, contested, and agreed. Its partnership with the **African Union Commission – Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (AU-ESTI)** reflects a clear strategy: to ensure that gender equality, second-chance learning pathways, and inclusive education are embedded in Africa's policy frameworks from the outset, not retrofitted after decisions are made. Through sustained technical and political engagement, FAWE has contributed to shaping how education reform is conceptualised, operationalised, and owned across the continent.

FAWE served on the drafting committee of the **Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2026–2035 (CESA 26–35)** as lead of the Girls' and Women's Education Cluster. In this role, FAWE directly influenced the architecture of the strategy and its implementation actions, embedding gender equality, second-chance pathways, and inclusion into the core of Africa's education reform agenda. This contribution reflects FAWE's long-standing insistence that education transformation will fail if it does not confront structural exclusion head-on.

Beyond drafting, FAWE provided technical leadership by reviewing the Gender Equality Strategy for CESA 26–35, strengthening gender mainstreaming, accountability mechanisms, and coherence across all pillars of the framework. This work responded directly to lessons from CESA 16–25, where weak awareness and uneven ownership undermined implementation. In response, FAWE convened targeted awareness and sensitisation sessions with key stakeholders to accelerate country-level operationalisation

of CESA 26–35 and move the strategy from policy to practice.

FAWE's engagement with AU-ESTI has also been overtly advocacy-driven. As a member of the AU Teacher Development Cluster, FAWE co-led a high-level session with VVOB at the Pan-African Conference on Teacher Education, advancing gender-responsive pedagogy and teacher professional development as essential levers for system reform. In parallel, FAWE hosted the AU-ESTI Director, Professor Saidou Modogou, during the Ghana programme launch, reinforcing continental advocacy on TVET, second-chance pathways, and equitable access to tertiary education—priority commitments under CESA 26–35.

Through sustained engagement with AU-ESTI, FAWE continues to help shape the political and technical foundations of Africa's education agenda, ensuring that equity and inclusion are treated as central to reform, not peripheral concerns.



DR. JANVIÈRE NDIRAHISHA
Member, FAWE Africa Board

To empower girls, we must first protect them. Their safety—on every platform and in every space—is our responsibility.

#KeepThemSafe #EndDigitalViolence #16Days #Educate2Elevate

Advancing Girls' Right to Education through Continental Accountability: FAWE at ACERWC

FAWE's engagement with the **African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC)** is anchored in a rights-based commitment to dismantling harmful practices and advancing girls' education across Africa. As an organisation with observer status, FAWE actively participates in the Committee's ordinary sessions, using this continental accountability space to position education as a legally binding child rights obligation under the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Education in Africa.” Featured in the official commemoration booklet, the article positioned education as both a protective right and a transformative tool for challenging harmful practices that limit girls' agency and life chances.

As a member of the CSO Forum on the African Charter, FAWE further supported the drafting of the Forum's outcome statement and final recommendations presented during the **46th Ordinary Session in Maseru**, where



Delegates attending the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) pose for a group photo during the convening held in Maseru, Lesotho.

In 2025, FAWE worked with civil society organisations in Kenya to review the Government of Kenya's state report submitted to the Committee. This engagement resulted in a consolidated CSO report that highlighted structural barriers undermining girls' right to education, including harmful social norms, early pregnancy, poverty, safety risks, and unequal access to quality learning. Through this process, FAWE reinforced state accountability and ensured that girls' education remained central to the Committee's review.

FAWE also contributed to the Committee's **35th anniversary commemoration of the African Charter** through a published article titled **"FAWE's Approaches to Dismantling Harmful Practices and Advancing Girls'**

FAWE also delivered a formal statement to the Committee. In addition, FAWE contributed to the development of the ACERWC General Comment on Education and convened the FEMNET4GTE Africa Regional Workshop to support its dissemination and uptake.

Through sustained engagement with ACERWC, FAWE continues to use continental child rights mechanisms to drive accountability and advance girls' education as a non-negotiable right across Africa.

QR Code to FAWE Statement for the 46th ACERWC Ordinary Session and to Booklet on commemoration of 35th anniversary of ACERWC

Trusted Partners in Policy: FAWE’s Strategic Collaboration with Ministries of Education Across Africa

Lasting progress in girls’ education is achieved when evidence, practice, and political leadership move together. Across Africa, FAWE has built and sustained strong, trusted partnerships with Ministries of Education, working alongside governments to advance gender-responsive education reform grounded in national priorities and system realities.

FAWE’s engagement model is anchored in formal cooperation. Through Memoranda of Understanding with Ministries of Education across its network, FAWE supports policy dialogue, institutional strengthening, and the integration of proven models into national systems. These partnerships position FAWE not as an external actor, but as a technical and strategic ally, bringing field-level evidence, regional perspective, and implementation experience to policy tables.

In 2025, FAWE engaged directly with Ministers of Educations in **Zimbabwe, Liberia, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Mozambique, Mali, Sierra Leone**, and other countries across its network. These engagements focused on shared reform agendas, including girls’ retention and transition across education cycles, second-chance and bridging pathways into tertiary education, gender-responsive pedagogy, teacher professional development, and inclusive education for marginalized learners, including refugees and learners with disabilities.

What distinguishes FAWE’s collaboration with ministries is depth and continuity.

FAWE supports governments to move from policy intent to practical delivery, translating commitments on gender equality into classroom practice, institutional frameworks, and scalable programmes. In turn, ministries provide the regulatory leadership and system ownership required to embed these approaches nationally, ensuring sustainability beyond project cycles.

FAWE’s role as a convener further strengthens these partnerships. By connecting ministries to regional learning, peer exchange, and continental policy spaces, FAWE helps amplify national experiences while aligning them with broader African and global education frameworks. This two-way flow, local evidence informing policy, and policy shaping implementation, has been central to FAWE’s influence over the years.

At a time when education systems face mounting pressures, from financing constraints and climate shocks to displacement and youth unemployment, strong partnerships matter more than ever. FAWE’s collaboration with Ministries of Education reflects a shared commitment to reform that is equitable, credible, and responsive to context.

By standing shoulder to shoulder with governments, FAWE continues to shape education agendas that expand opportunity, strengthen systems, and ensure that gender equality remains central to Africa’s education future.



From left: Dr. Jarso Maley Jallah, Minister of Education Liberia, Ms. Oley Dibba-Wadda, Board Member FAWE Africa, Dr. Martha Muhwezi, ED FAWE Africa and Ms. Teresa Omond-Adeitan, DED and Head of Programmes FAWE Africa during a courtesy visit to the Ministry of Education Liberia



Dr. Martha Muhwezi, ED FAWE Africa during a courtesy visit to Hon. Claudette Irere, Minister of State for Education in Rwanda



CHAPTER 3

Enhancing Access to Quality Education & Training Opportunities for Girls and Women in Africa

FAWE Advances Gender-Responsive Skills at Africa Skills Week 2025



FAWE Advocacy Assistant Ms. Karen Ondwasi with FAWE alumni from Ethiopia at the Africa Skills Week 2025.

At Africa Skills Week 2025, held at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, FAWE amplified the call for **inclusive, gender-responsive skills development** as central to Africa’s industrial and economic transformation. Through active engagement in policy dialogues, technical sessions, and youth platforms, FAWE highlighted how young women must be intentionally supported to access Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), digital skills, and emerging opportunities in green and innovation-driven sectors.

Programme participants under FAWE’s *Second Chance Pathways* initiative took part in advocacy discussions, sharing lived experiences that demonstrated how mentorship, exposure, and targeted support strengthen girls’ leadership and employability. FAWE also emphasized the importance of private sector collaboration, market-aligned training, and youth-friendly policy frameworks to ensure skills systems respond to real labour market needs.



FAWE Advocacy Assistant Ms. Karen Ondwasi with FAWE alumni from Ethiopia at the Africa Skills Week 2025.

DR. KÉKÉLI JEANNINE AGOUNKE
Member, FAWE Africa Board

#KeepThemSafe #EndDigitalViolence #16Days #Educate2Elevate

Insights from sessions on digital inclusion, mobility schemes, and youth engagement in agriculture will inform FAWE’s upcoming Girls’ Conference and ongoing advocacy. FAWE’s participation reaffirmed its role as a continental voice ensuring Africa’s skills agenda works for girls, not around them.

Insights from sessions on digital inclusion, mobility schemes, and youth engagement in agriculture will inform FAWE’s upcoming Girls’ Conference and ongoing advocacy. FAWE’s participation reaffirmed its role as a continental voice ensuring Africa’s skills agenda works for girls, not around them.



Africa’s skills agenda must work for girls, not around them – with intentional support, inclusive systems, and real opportunities that unlock their leadership and economic potential.

Yordanos Zerihun
FAWE Ethiopia Chapter

#AfSkillsWeek25 #Agenda2063

FAWE Champions Gender-Responsive Teacher Education at PACTED 2025



Dr Martha Muhwezi ED FAWE Africa (third from left) and Ms. Catherine Asego, Senior Advocacy Officer FAWE Africa (first from the right) with partners during PACTED 2025

FAWE placed gender-responsive teacher education firmly on the continental agenda during the Pan African Conference on Teacher Education (PACTED 2025) at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa. The gathering marked a key milestone in advancing the AU Decade of Accelerated Action for the Transformation of Education and Skills Development (2025–2034), highlighting teachers as the drivers of inclusive, quality learning.

Speaking during the opening session, **Dr. Martha Muhwezi, FAWE Executive Director**, underscored the urgency of reform:



Education transformation will not happen unless we invest in teachers and make gender equality a central pillar of teacher development, policy, and practice. Teachers are the bridge between policy and real change for girls in classrooms.

that improve teaching practice, challenge harmful norms, and strengthen girls' learning outcomes.

The conference also celebrated excellence in the profession. Among the recipients of the **African Union Continental Best Teacher Award 2025** was **Dr. Peace Sule of Nigeria**, a FAWE member, whose recognition reflected the impact of educators championing inclusive, high-quality teaching. Through strategic engagement and partnerships, FAWE reinforced its leadership in shaping teacher systems that are equitable, professional, and transformative across Africa.



FAWE, alongside VVOB, led a high-level side event on **Gender-Responsive Pedagogy (GRP)** for Teacher Professional Development, sharing evidence on scalable approaches

Second Chance Pathways: Expanding Equitable Access to Tertiary Education



FAWE Alumni Ethiopia pose for a photo at the FAWE Ethiopia Alumni convening held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Across Africa, thousands of young people complete secondary school each year only to find the pathway to tertiary education closed, not because of lack of talent, but because of poverty, displacement, disability, or systemic barriers. The FAWE–Mastercard Foundation Programme, Second Chance Pathways for Marginalised Young Women and Men, was designed to change that reality by turning stalled aspirations into structured opportunities.

This seven-year initiative (2024–2030) is being implemented in Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia, Malawi, Ghana, Liberia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, and Senegal, with a target of supporting 10,550 young people aged 15–25 to transition into tertiary education and ultimately into employment or entrepreneurship. A defining feature of the programme is its strong inclusion focus: 10–15% of participants are young people with disabilities and refugees, ensuring that those most often left behind are intentionally reached.

What distinguishes this initiative is FAWE's approach. Rather than addressing access as a single barrier, the programme combines bursary support, structured bridging pathways, academic and psychosocial mentoring, and institutional strengthening. At the learner level, young women and men receive the preparation and support needed to succeed in universities and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions. At the systems level,

FAWE works with institutions and authorities to embed gender-responsive, learner-centred models that improve retention, performance, and successful transition.

In 2025, the programme moved from foundation to scale. Recruitment into tertiary and TVET pathways advanced across implementing countries, with strong participation of girls and young women from underserved districts. Demand for second-chance routes remained high, underlining the urgency of inclusive post-secondary pathways. In some contexts, progression from preparatory pathways into university degree programmes reached exceptionally high levels, demonstrating that structured support can effectively close long-standing transition gaps.



FAWE Deputy Executive Director and Head of Programmes Ms. Teresa Omond-Adeitan with students from FAWE Girls School, Gisozi, Kigali, Rwanda.



Representatives from FAWE WASRO office and FAWE Senegal together with stakeholders at the Ministry of Education Senegal.

Institutional partnerships also deepened. Ghana and Senegal formalised collaboration through MoUs with national education and TVET authorities, strengthening alignment with national systems and oversight mechanisms. Universities and technical institutions expanded engagement in hosting bridging cohorts, adapting FAWE models, and strengthening student support services. Tutors and facilitators received targeted training to deliver more inclusive and gender-transformative learning environments.

Community outreach and regional engagement helped extend the programme's reach into rural and marginalised settings, while deliberate inclusion strategies ensured

participation of refugees and young people with disabilities. For many participants, this support represents the difference between uncertain futures and a clear pathway toward a profession, income, and independence.

Beyond immediate access, the programme is contributing to longer-term systems change. Improved teaching practices, strengthened institutional partnerships, and growing policy engagement are helping to institutionalise inclusive approaches within tertiary education. The progress of 2025 signals not only programme growth, but a broader shift in how education systems approach equity, transition, and opportunity for Africa's marginalised youth.



FAWE/Mastercard foundation Phase two program participant Etsubdink Assecalhu Hawassa and her mother Erkensh Ketsela from Ethiopia

A Continental Movement Takes Shape: National Launches in Ghana, Zimbabwe, Senegal and Liberia of the FAWE/Mastercard Foundation Phase II Programme

Momentum for the Second Chance Pathways for Increased Access to Tertiary Education for Marginalised Young Women and Men programme gathered powerful national energy in 2025, as Ghana, Zimbabwe, Senegal, and Liberia each hosted landmark launches that brought governments, institutions, partners, and communities together around a shared commitment: ensuring young people, especially young women, can move from secondary school into tertiary education, skills training, and dignified work.

In Ghana, the launch signaled strong political backing, with Hon. Dr. Ofosu-Ampofo Samuel, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, representing Vice President Prof. Naana Jane Opoku Agyemang. The event underscored national resolve to expand inclusive tertiary pathways and strengthen opportunities for marginalised youth. FAWE Africa Board Members Mme Oley Dibba-Wadda and Dr. Jeanine Agounke joined the FAWE Ghana chapter, reinforcing continental solidarity and the network's governance support for national implementation.

In Zimbabwe, the programme was launched with Hon. Amb. Dr. Frederick Shava, Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development, as Chief Guest. His participation highlighted the central role of higher and technical education in national development and the importance of structured support systems that help students success-

fully transition into tertiary institutions. Queen Nozizwe Mulela, FAWE Africa Board Member, stood alongside the FAWE Zimbabwe chapter, demonstrating the Board's active engagement in advancing the programme at country level.



Mastercard Foundation representatives at the launch of the FAWE/Mastercard Foundation Phase II Program in Dakar, Senegal.

In Senegal, the launch reflected both national leadership and strong partnership alignment. Hon. Aïcha Bah, Chair of the FAWE Africa Board, participated alongside the FAWE Senegal chapter, symbolising the close connection between FAWE's continental leadership and national action. The event was further strengthened by Ms. Hajra Zahid, Program Manager and the Mastercard Foundation and Mr. Ahmed Ndoye, Director of Programs at the Mastercard Foundation Senegal/UEMOA, who reaffirmed the Foundation's steadfast partnership with FAWE and a shared ambition to ensure young women and men access dignified and fulfilling work by 2030.



A group photo of the Program launch attendees in Senegal

National launches of the FAWE/Mastercard Foundation Phase II Programme in Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Liberia brought together participants, governments, institutions, and partners.



Minister of Youth and Sport Liberia Hon. Cllr. Jeror Cole Bangalu (Left) and Minister of Education Liberia, Hon. Dr. Jarso Maley Jalah (right) during the launch of the FAWE/Mastercard Foundation Phase II in Monrovia.

In Liberia, the programme launch was marked by the presence of Hon. Dr. Jarso Maley Jalah, Minister of Education, and Hon. Cllr. Cole Bangalu, Minister of Youth and Sports, whose participation underscored government commitment to expanding second-chance opportunities and strengthening vocational and skills development for youth employment. Mme Oley Dibba-Wadda, FAWE Africa Board Member, joined the FAWE Liberia chapter at the event, highlighting continued governance support and regional solidarity.

Across all four countries, the launches showcased the programme's integrated approach, combining bursary support,

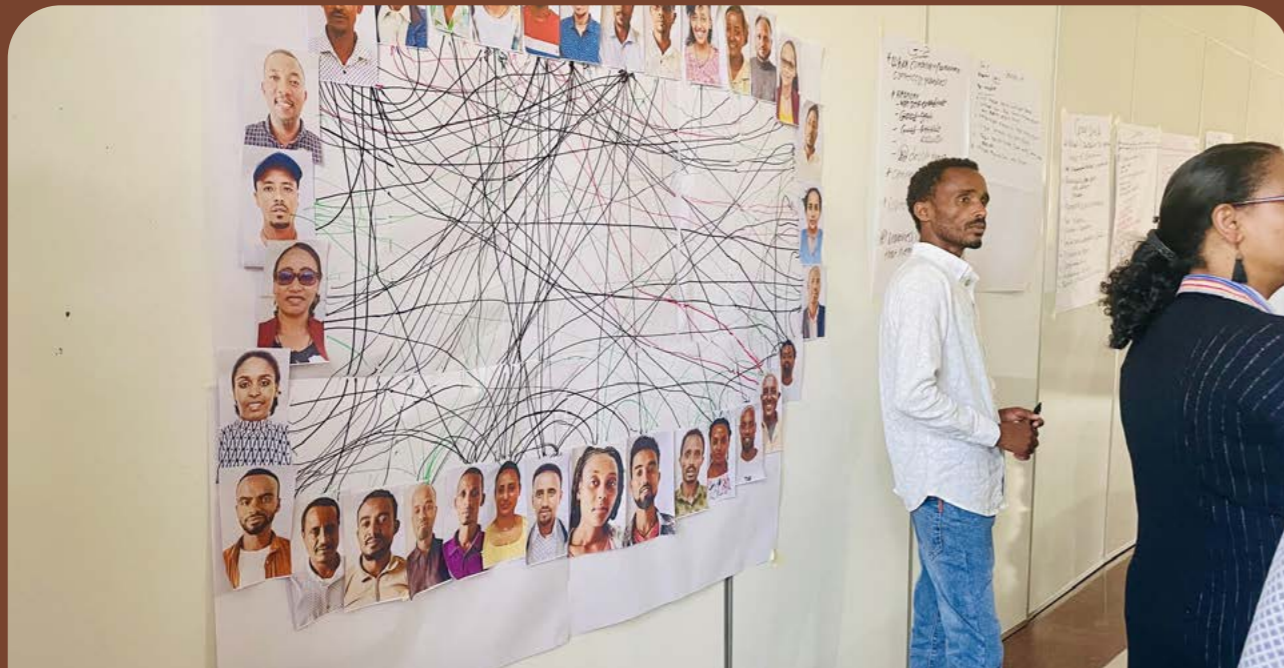
structured bridging pathways, institutional partnerships, and gender-responsive models to address both learner needs and systemic barriers. Commitments made during the events focused on inclusive recruitment, stronger collaboration with tertiary and TVET institutions, and sustained outreach to underserved communities.

Together, these launches signaled more than the start of implementation. They demonstrated a growing continental movement, led by governments, FAWE chapters, and partners, to ensure that opportunity in tertiary education is determined by potential, not circumstance.



Opportunity in tertiary education must be determined by potential, not circumstance – a commitment driving a growing continental movement for inclusion and equity.

FAWE Expands Access to Education through the Extended Orientation Programme (EOP)



A wall art piece at the FAWE Extended Orientation Programme (EOP) session in Ethiopia.

Have you been in a situation whereby you joined a new institution and didn't know what next? No one explains to you how to go about choosing your units, managing your time in a higher education institution, or how to navigate the delicate balance between freedom and responsibility.

Access to tertiary education is a critical pathway to social and economic transformation, yet many young people, particularly girls and young women continue to face barriers that limit their ability to access and succeed in higher education. Through its partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, FAWE addresses these challenges by supporting students' transition into universities and TVET institutions through the Extended Orientation Programme (EOP).

First introduced in Uganda in 2017, EOP provides holistic preparation that goes beyond academic readiness, equipping students with life skills, psychosocial support, leadership development, and

gender-responsive practices. The updated 2025 edition expands EOP across more FAWE chapters under the FAWE/Mastercard Foundation Phase II Programme, incorporating lessons from implementation and new modules on human rights, social justice, and sexual and reproductive health. Through EOP, FAWE continues to strengthen second-chance pathways and support young people to succeed in tertiary education and the world of work.

FAWE Africa, through its National Chapter in Uganda, marked the successful conclusion of the Extended Orientation Programme (EOP) with an official closing and awards ceremony officiated by Dr. Martha Muhwezi, Executive Director of FAWE Africa. The event underscored FAWE's regional commitment to advancing equitable access to education and supporting young people's transition into post-secondary learning.



FAWE alumni engage in a peer to peer session during the 2025 Alumni Convening in Rwanda

Under the programme, 700 young women and men were awarded bursaries, reducing financial barriers that often limit access to technical and vocational education. FAWE Africa's approach extends beyond financial assistance by promoting a holistic model of student support. Through the Extended Orientation Programme, beneficiaries receive psychosocial support and structured mentorship designed to strengthen academic readiness, personal resilience, and long-term career success.

The closing ceremonies were held simultaneously at Uganda

Technical College Elgon, UTC Lira, and UTC Kichambwa, reflecting the programme's broad reach and FAWE's commitment to inclusive, decentralized implementation across partner institutions.

Overall, the Extended Orientation Programme exemplifies FAWE Africa's belief in education as a transformative tool for individual empowerment and sustainable development, reinforcing its mission to build inclusive, gender-responsive education systems across the continent.



Education is not just access—it is support, resilience, and opportunity. By investing in young women and men holistically, we unlock not only their potential, but the future of our communities

Making University Possible: FAWE's Push to Scale the Higher Education Access Certificate (HEAC) Across Africa



A participant of the Higher Education Access Certificate (HEAC) engaged in a discussion during a community convening.



Students from a school in Zimbabwe pose for a photo together with their teachers, FAWE staff and other stakeholders.

It is estimated that across Sub-Saharan Africa, only 5% of students transition to higher education. Access to education narrows sharply as learners progress through the system. While primary school enrolment is high, exceeding 95 percent in many countries, participation declines significantly at secondary level and collapses at tertiary education. Gross enrolment in lower secondary education averages around 43 percent, while tertiary enrolment remains below 10 percent. This contrasts sharply with other regions: North America and Europe record tertiary enrolment rates above 70 percent, while East Asia and the Pacific average more than 55 percent.

This steep drop-off reveals a major retention and transition failure. Millions of young people complete primary education, far fewer complete secondary school, and only a small fraction progress to university. For girls, particularly those from rural, low-income, refugee-hosting, and marginalised communities, the barrier is rarely a lack of ambition or ability. Instead, it is an admissions bottleneck shaped by rigid entry requirements, missed grades, limited subject combinations, and structural disadvantage at the point of transition.

FAWE is addressing this challenge by advancing credible, quality-assured second-chance pathways into higher education, anchored by the Higher Education Access Certificate (HEAC). HEAC is designed to support capable learners who narrowly miss conventional university entry thresholds, providing them with structured academic preparation and progression into

diploma and degree programmes.

In Uganda, HEAC has moved from innovation to national reform. Accredited by the National Council for Higher Education and the Ministry of Education and Sports, it is now recognised as a fourth entry route to university education. Public and private universities have adopted the programme, validating HEAC within national quality assurance systems and demonstrating what is possible when equity-focused innovation is matched with regulatory approval and institutional buy-in.

Building on this success, FAWE is working to extend the HEAC logic across the continent. In Malawi and Liberia, engagements with national higher education authorities have focused on strengthening access while safeguarding quality. In Zambia and Zimbabwe, technical processes have advanced conversations on bridging curricula, particularly to support transition into STEM and technical programmes. Similar dialogues are underway in Ghana, reinforcing HEAC as part of broader tertiary access reforms.

HEAC represents more than a programme. It is a systems shift, normalising multiple legitimate pathways into higher education, aligned with national frameworks and designed with equity at the centre. By pairing evidence, policy engagement, and institutional partnerships, FAWE is helping countries convert early education gains into sustained participation, unlocking talent that would otherwise be lost at the point of transition.

From Opportunity to Impact: Peruth's Pathway into Nursing



Nandhego Peruth

Nandhego Peruth is pursuing a **Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Busitema University**, driven by a clear commitment to serve with compassion and dignity. She comes from Buyende District in eastern Uganda and grew up in a large family of peasant farmers. For Peruth, education was always seen as the pathway to a different future, but access remained a major hurdle.

After completing secondary school, her academic results did not allow for direct entry into a degree programme, and her family could not afford alternative routes. Her opportunity came through the **FAWE Uganda bursary programme**, which enabled her to enroll in the **Higher Education Access Certificate (HEAC)** in 2019. Through structured academic preparation and mentorship, HEAC provided Peruth with a credible second chance to qualify for university and transition into a nursing degree.

Beyond academic ambition, Peruth's motivation is deeply personal. She recalls accompanying her mother to a

hospital, where her mother was treated dismissively because of her appearance and poverty. **"That day, I decided I would become a nurse who treats every patient with dignity, no matter who they are or where they come from,"** Peruth says. That experience continues to shape her vision of the kind of healthcare professional she wants to become.

With continued mentorship and institutional support, Peruth has remained focused on completing her studies, even when challenges arose. Today, she is progressing toward graduation with a strong sense of purpose.

Peruth's story illustrates the power of **second-chance pathways, bursary support, and mentorship** in transforming access to higher education. Through FAWE's intervention, a determined young woman moved from exclusion to opportunity, and is now preparing to give back as a compassionate, skilled nurse committed to equitable care.

FAWE/Mastercard Foundation Bursary programme in Number

FAWE UGANDA

- EXPANDED BURSARY OUTREACH FROM 51 TO 63 DISTRICTS
- MORE THAN 200 COHORT 1 PARTICIPANTS COMPLETED FINAL-YEAR EXAMS AND PREPARING TO TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY
- 200 LEARNERS WERE SELECTED FOR COHORT 3 THROUGH DISTRICT-LEVEL SELECTIONS (MAY-JUNE)

FAWE MALAWI

- 200 STUDENTS (180 GIRLS AND 20 BOYS) JOINED SEVEN NATIONAL TECHNICAL COLLEGES

FAWE GHANA

- SIGNED 11 MOUS WITH TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES AND ONE MOU WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION; 16 UNIVERSITIES SENSITIZED ON BRIDGING PROGRAMME; THREE UNIVERSITIES ADAPTING EOP
- RECRUITED AN ADDITIONAL 200 SCHOLARS (161 GIRLS AND 39 BOYS), INCLUDING 8% STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

FAWE ETHIOPIA

- TRAINED EOP FACILITATORS AND CASCADED THE MCDL TO 25 TVET INSTITUTIONS
- RECEIVED 3,880 APPLICATIONS (2,263 FEMALE, 1,617 MALE); COMPLETED SHORTLISTING FOR 102 APPLICANTS (81% FEMALE, 11.7% WITH DISABILITIES, 22.5% INTERNALLY DISPLACED YOUTH)

HEAC PROGRAM

- TECHNICAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH 125 TVET INSTITUTIONS, REPRESENTING 22% OF OVERALL TARGET
- ACHIEVED A 98% TRANSITION RATE INTO DEGREE PROGRAMMES (GGANDA ALONE)
- UGANDA TRAINED 109 TUTORS AND 31 SUBJECT SPECIALISTS; ENGAGED 13 ACCREDITED UNIVERSITIES

FAWE SENEGAL

- REACHED ALL 14 IMPLEMENTING REGIONS AND 15 OF 16 ACADEMIC INSPECTIONS; RESULTING IN FORMAL MOU WITH MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT & TVET AND INDEPENDENT SELECTION COMMITTEES CHAIRED BY GOVERNORS

FAWE LIBERIA

- TRAINED 176 WOMEN, 123 MEN, AND 3 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACROSS REGIONAL & NATIONAL WORKSHOPS
- REACHED 299 COMMUNITY MEMBERS, INCLUDING 34 STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED THROUGH ROUNDTABLE

KEY STATS - PHASE II & PROGRAM

- 2,165 TVET PARTICIPANTS RECRUITED (21% OVERALL TARGET; 61% YEAR 1-2 TARGET); 134 PARTICIPANTS IN WORKPLACE ATTACHMENTS.
- REFUGEE ENROLMENT: 4%-9%.
- PWD ENROLMENT: 5%-8%.

Expanding Access and Opportunity Through Scholarships

FAWE continued to strengthen access to quality education for girls and young women across Africa in 2025 through targeted scholarship interventions that combine financial assistance with holistic support to address barriers to access, retention, and completion of education.

As part of efforts to expand sustainable scholarship financing, FAWE advanced preparations for the African Girls Education Fund (AGEF) by convening introductory meetings with six National Chapters—Togo, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Eswatini, and Senegal (WASRO). These engagements sensitized chapters on AGEF selection criteria, clarified roles and expectations, and mapped country-specific education calendars to inform the pilot phase. AGEF is scheduled to roll out from 2026 in Togo, Senegal, Burundi, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Eswatini.

Alongside AGEF preparations, FAWE implemented its Comprehensive Scholarships Model, integrating tuition support with mentorship, life skills development, and psychosocial care. FAWE Rwanda supported 24 Mastercard Foundation scholars, FAWE Ethiopia reached 192 learners with essential materials and conducted housing assessments for 36 students, while FAWE Uganda partnered with Busitema University, Gulu University, and Mbarara University of Science and Technology, with girls comprising 70 percent of beneficiaries.

At the national level, FAWE Kenya secured scholarships for 149 at-risk girls across 20 counties under the Imarisha Msichana Project.

FAWE Zambia supported 46 learners through the Zebra Trust Bursary Project, FAWE Namibia provided scholarships to 317 learners across 56 schools through the Standard Bank Blue Child Champion Project, and FAWE Zimbabwe covered examination registration fees for girls in Shamva District. FAWE Malawi strengthened bursary governance through committee formation and orientation and provided personal protective equipment to students at Salima Technical College.

At the postgraduate level, FAWE further expanded opportunities for women's leadership through its engagement with the Commonwealth Scholarship programme, where it serves as a nominating agency in Africa. Through this role, FAWE supports qualified women to access advanced education, contributing to a pipeline of skilled female leaders positioned to drive sustainable development, influence policy, and strengthen education systems across the continent.

Further expanding access to skills development, FAWE Mali sponsored 505 students with school kits through a partnership with the Orange Foundation, while FAWE Benin awarded 145 vocational training scholarships to young women and girls in nine municipalities.

Collectively, these interventions demonstrate FAWE's commitment to ensuring that financial constraints do not limit girls' educational pathways, while reinforcing holistic, context-responsive models that promote equity, retention, and long-term empowerment.

- FAWE KENYA**: IMARISHA MSICHANA PROJECT. SECURED SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 149 AT-RISK GIRLS ACROSS 20 COUNTIES.
- FAWE ZAMBIA**: ZEBRA TRUST BURSARY. ZEBRA TRUST BURSARY PROJECT SUPPORTED 46 LEARNERS.
- FAWE NAMIBIA**: STANDARD BANK BLUE CHILD CHAMPION PROJECT. PROVIDED SCHOLARSHIPS TO 317 LEARNERS ACROSS 56 SCHOOLS.
- FAWE ZIMBABWE**: EXAMINATION FEE SUPPORT. COVERED EXAMINATION SUPPORT. EXAMINATION REGISTRATION FEES FOR GIRLS IN SHAMVA DISTRICT.
- FAWE MALAWI**: BURSARY GOVERNANCE & PPE. STRENGTHENED BURSARY GOVERNANCE THROUGH COMMITTEE FORMATION. PROVIDED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) TO STUDENTS AT SALIMA TECHNICAL COLLEGE.

From Scholarship to Entrepreneurship: Alphonsine Muhimpundu's Journey to Transforming Agriculture in Rwanda



Alphonsine Muhimpundu, FAWE alumna and entrepreneur

At just 28 years old, Alphonsine Muhimpundu is building a thriving agribusiness in Nyaruguru District, Rwanda, addressing a challenge that affects thousands of smallholder farmers: soil acidity and low agricultural productivity. Her enterprise has become a trusted local solution, improving access to essential farm inputs while creating employment and economic opportunity.

Alphonsine's journey was shaped by early financial hardship. Despite being a strong student, inconsistent school fees often disrupted her education. Her academic promise earned her a fully funded secondary school scholarship from the nuns at Mère du Verbe Kibeho, where she completed her O'Level. At Senior Three, one of the sisters encouraged her to apply for the FAWE-Mastercard Foundation Scholarship. Receiving the scholarship was a turning point, as it covered her tuition, stipend, and learning materials, allowing her to focus fully on her

studies. She completed her A'Level at Groupe Scolaire Officiel de Butare and, in 2018, enrolled in Biomedical Laboratory Sciences at INES Ruhengeri.

While pursuing her degree, Alphonsine encountered another opportunity through the Students Entrepreneurship Fund (SEF) supported by FAWE and the Mastercard Foundation. In 2021, she successfully secured a grant of 4.3 million Rwandan Francs (USD 3,018). Guided by a strong understanding of her community's needs, she invested the grant in a fertilizer and lime retail business in her home area of Ndagó, Nyaruguru.

"I looked at the problems farmers face in my community and decided to turn them into a solution by bringing fertilizer and lime closer to them," Alphonsine explains.

What began in her parents' backyard has grown into a well-established enterprise. Alphonsine now supplies 1,500 tonnes of lime and 20 tonnes of fertilizer per peak season, employs two permanent staff and six casual workers. Her contribution to improving farm productivity has earned her recognition from local authorities, including access to a storage warehouse provided free of charge.

Despite challenges such as poor road infrastructure and fluctuating supply, Alphonsine has continued to grow. She has also diversified into a salon and cosmetics business in Huye town, employing 22 permanent staff, many of whom are young women who dropped out of school due to teenage pregnancy.

targeted scholarships, and entrepreneurship support can unlock leadership, drive inclusive economic growth, and enable young women to transform their communities from within. 'If I can, they can too!':

Jennifer's Journey to the Commonwealth Scholarship



Jennifer Sakiya, FAWE alumna and an awardee of the Commonwealth Scholarship. She is currently studying a Master's degree in Public Health at the University of Glasgow

At 29, Jennifer Sakiya from Ghana's Upper East Region is preparing to begin a **Master's degree in Public Health at the University of Glasgow** as a recipient of the prestigious **Commonwealth Scholarship**. Her journey reflects the power of determination, opportunity, and a deep commitment to service.

Jennifer's interest in public health, particularly epidemiology, is driven by a simple but powerful belief: "If you can identify the source of disease, you can protect communities before lives are lost." Growing up, she witnessed how preventable illnesses continued to affect underserved populations, shaping her resolve to pursue a career focused on prevention, evidence, and community health systems. Her academic path, however, was not without obstacles. Persistent financial challenges often placed her education at risk, with unpaid fees threatening to interrupt her studies. Yet Jennifer remained steadfast. "You have to be determined," she reflects, "because without persistence, you won't reach your dreams."

The Commonwealth Scholarship marks a defining milestone, not only

for Jennifer but also for the many girls she hopes to inspire. In her community, limited access to information means that international opportunities often feel out of reach. Jennifer is committed to changing that narrative. "If I can do it, they can too," she says, emphasizing her desire to mentor young women and encourage them to keep applying despite rejection.

Looking ahead, Jennifer plans to return to Ghana to work with communities affected by illegal mining, where exposure to mercury, cyanide, and environmental toxins poses serious health risks. She envisions combining public health education, advocacy, and community-based screenings to protect vulnerable populations. In the long term, she hopes to pursue a PhD in epidemiology and contribute to global health institutions such as the WHO or CDC.

Jennifer's story captures what FAWE's work as an agency to the commonwealth scholarship makes possible: talent unlocked, confidence built, and young African women positioned to lead change at local, national, and global levels.

FAWE Rwanda 5th Annual Graduation Ceremony: Celebrating Achievement and Partnership



FAWE Rwanda alumni during the 5th Annual Graduation Ceremony

On 12 August 2025, FAWE Rwanda proudly marked a major milestone with its 5th Annual Graduation Ceremony, held in Kigali, Rwanda, celebrating the academic success and resilience of FAWE-supported scholars. The ceremony brought together graduates, families, partners, and FAWE leadership to honour the culmination of years of dedication and perseverance.

The ceremony featured inspiring keynote remarks, heartfelt student testimonies, and moments of pride shared with families and partners. Beyond celebrating academic completion, the event underscored FAWE's holistic approach to education, which supports scholars not only financially but also through mentorship, leadership development, and psychosocial support.

A total of 117 students graduated, comprising 87 scholars supported through the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program and 30 scholars supported by Global Affairs Canada and Beautiful World Canada. The graduates completed their studies at FAWE Rwanda's partner institutions, INES Ruhengeri and the University of Rwanda, reflecting strong institutional collaboration in advancing inclusive access to higher education.

This graduation cohort represents more than individual achievement; it reflects the power of sustained partnerships in transforming girls' education outcomes. FAWE remains firmly committed to strengthening and upholding its collaborations with strategic partners to ensure that more girls and young women across Africa are able to access and complete higher education.



117
FAWE Rwanda Graduates

Total number of scholars who successfully completed their tertiary education studies.



87 + 30
Funding Partners

Collaborative support from the Mastercard Foundation (87 scholars) and Global Affairs Canada / Beautiful World Canada (30 scholars).



FAWE Rwanda alumni during the 5th Annual Graduation Ceremony

Delivering Results: The Scholars Program in Rwanda and Ethiopia



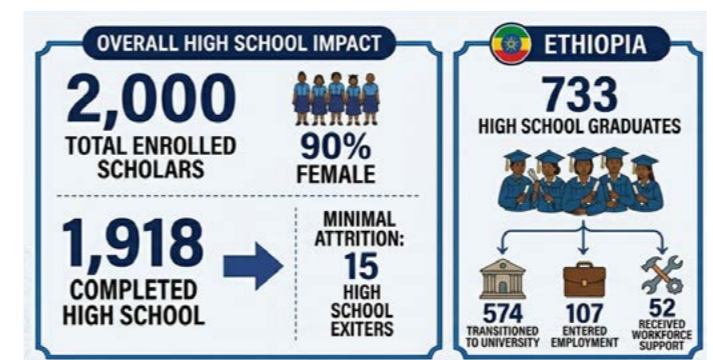
FAWE Rwanda Executive Director Ms. Alice Mutesi (second left) and FAWE Africa staff and graduates at the FAWE Rwanda 5th Annual Graduation Ceremony

The Scholars Program in Rwanda and Ethiopia continued to advance its mission of expanding access to education, improving retention, and strengthening academic performance among girls and young women. Of the 2,000 high school scholars enrolled across the two countries 90 percent of whom were female 1,918 successfully completed high school.

In Ethiopia, 733 scholars graduated from high school. Of these, 574 transitioned to university, 107 entered employment, and 52 received targeted support to facilitate their entry into the workforce.

school, and 23 discontinued their university studies. Additionally, 347 high school graduates did not meet the FAWE criteria for transition to tertiary education.

In 2025, FAWE Rwanda placed strong emphasis on strengthening governance and institutional capacity. The chapter filled two critical senior leadership positions that had been vacant at the start of the year—the National Coordinator and the Finance and Administration Manager—significantly enhancing leadership continuity and operational oversight. FAWE Rwanda also finalized two outstanding financial audit reports for 2023 and 2024, reinforcing accountability, compliance, and transparency. To align with recent legal reforms governing non-governmental organizations in Rwanda and harmonize with the FAWE Regional Secretariat Constitution, the chapter reviewed and updated its statutes. Institutional capacity was further strengthened through targeted staff trainings and retreats focused on team cohesion, resource mobilization, and strategic communication.



In Rwanda, the program supported 1,200 scholars, with 838 transitioning to university. By November 2025, 813 scholars had completed their university studies, while two are expected to graduate in November 2026. Among the graduates, 597 are currently employed, 80 are pursuing further studies, and 114 are benefiting from tailored career support services. Despite contextual challenges, attrition remained low: 15 scholars exited before completing high



FAWE Alumni Weaved a New Narrative for Africa at the Baobab Summit



Ms. Naomi Kamitha, Programme Officer FAWE Africa (Third from Left) with FAWE alumni at the Mastercard Foundation's Baobab Summit in Nairobi

If the baobab tree stands as a silent witness to generations, then the gathering beneath its symbolic branches here this week is the sound of a new generation speaking back. The 2025 Baobab Summit, with its theme “Baobab Rising: Nurturing the Future through Africa’s Youth,” was more than a conference; it was a living ecosystem of ambition. And moving through its currents was a distinct, potent strand: a delegation of FAWE scholars and alumni, not as attendees, but as architects.

They arrived from Rwanda, Uganda, and Ethiopia seven voices in a chorus of thousands, yet representing a legacy that has, for decades, systematically watered the roots of Africa’s girl child. They were not just participants; they were the embodiment of the summit’s theme. A dental surgeon like Bertine Mukamana from Rwanda and an architect like Hanna Belachew from Ethiopia were the tangible outcomes of FAWE’s mission, stepping onto a broader stage to help shape the continent’s very systems of education and work.

The power of their presence lies in their lived experience. They were the data points that transcended statistics, moving from accessing an education to now defining what that education can build. When the summit spoke of “resilience and promise,” it spoke of them.

Their key takeaways, shared amidst the vibrant exchange, cut to the heart of sustainable progress. For Mukamana, it was the pragmatic mechanics of collaboration: “Building trust, shared actions, collaboration, and accountability even if someone is new.” This is the operational blueprint for pan-African partnership, stated not in boardroom jargon, but in the clear language of a new leader.

Belachew, meanwhile, offered the powerful metaphor that truly defines the event. “We are the roots, branches, fruits, and flowers of Africa,” she stated, drawing a direct line from the summit’s namesake to the collective duty of her generation. “We must be united.” This was more than poetry; it was a political and social statement. It recognized that the strength of the towering baobab—its ability to weather centuries—lied entirely in the interconnectedness of its parts, from the deepest root to the highest flower.

The collective presence of FAWE alumni whispered the summit’s unspoken, most powerful theme: that the future of Africa is not a problem to be solved, but a force, already present, that needs only to be trusted, connected, and unleashed.

FAWE Africa Alumni Convening: A Milestone for Collective Impact



FAWE Alumni and FAWE staff at the first FAWE Africa Alumni Convening held in Rwanda

From 8–10 September, FAWE Africa convened alumni from across the continent in Kigali, Rwanda, for the first-ever FAWE Africa Alumni Convening. This landmark gathering brought together women and men whose lives and careers have been shaped by FAWE’s long-standing investment in girls’ education and leadership development.

The convening provided a strategic platform for reflection, networking, and renewed commitment to gender equality and social transformation. Alumni shared personal and professional journeys that underscored the far-reaching impact of FAWE’s interventions. Today, they serve as educators, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and development practitioners—living evidence of the transformative power of educating girls and the ripple effects across families, institutions, and communities.

Speaking during the closing ceremony, Hon. Claudette Irere, Rwanda’s Minister of State for Education and a FAWE alumna, reflected on this impact, noting that in her public service

role she strives to uphold the values instilled in her through FAWE by ensuring girls feel seen, valued, and empowered to thrive. Her testimony reinforced the enduring influence of FAWE’s model in shaping principled and purpose-driven leaders.

Beyond celebrating achievements, the convening demonstrated the alumni network’s commitment to collective action. In a powerful gesture of solidarity, alumni mobilized resources to pay school fees for two students at the FAWE Girls’ School in Gisozi. This initiative marked the beginning of a structured culture of giving back, mentorship, and sustained engagement to support the next generation of girls.

The success of the inaugural convening laid a strong foundation for a vibrant and organized FAWE Alumni Network—positioned to amplify FAWE’s mission, mobilize resources, and champion girls’ education and women’s leadership across Africa.



Highlights of the FAWE Alumni Convening in session



Highlights of the FAWE Alumni Convening in session

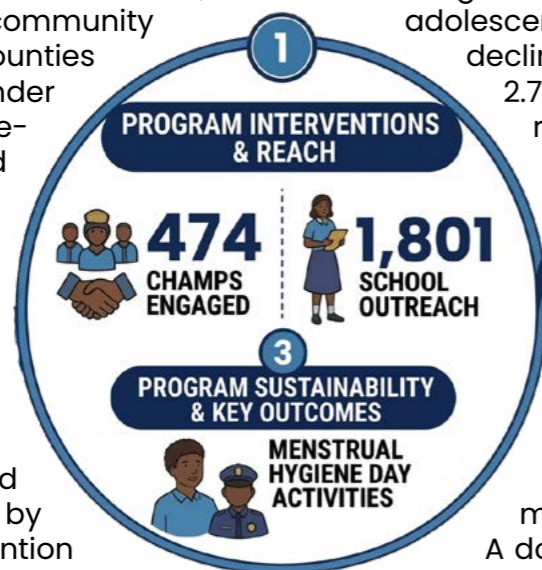
Imarisha Msichana: Driving Change for Girls



FAWE Kenya and Partners at the End term Evaluation Imarisha Msichana Program

Through the Imarisha Msichana Programme, FAWE strengthened girls' access, retention, and learning outcomes through community engagement, re-entry campaigns, and policy advocacy.

Using the Social Analysis for Action toolkit, the programme engaged 474 community champions across 14 counties to challenge harmful gender norms, while 70 justice-sector actors were trained to strengthen GBV referral pathways. The re-entry campaign supported 341 teenage mothers to return to school, bringing the cumulative total to 5,217 since 2022, and 153 girls received education scholarships this played a critical prevention role by supporting school retention among vulnerable girls. With poverty identified as the leading risk factor at 35.6%, the scholarship component addressed financial barriers to secondary education, reinforcing school retention as a key protective factor against early pregnancy. School-based outreach reached 1,801 girls in



Nairobi and Kiambu, while Menstrual Hygiene Day activities engaged men and boys in normalizing menstruation. The program's end term evaluation confirms the program delivered measurable, data driven impact in reducing teenage pregnancy and strengthening protective systems for adolescent girls. Teenage pregnancy declined from 19.9% at baseline to 2.75% at endline representing a reduction of over 17% during the implementation period.

At the regional and global levels, the programme amplified girls' voices at CSW 2025, the African Union Childcare Conference, and through a study tour to Malawi, generating insights to scale the mothers' club model across FAWE countries. A documentary was produced to support advocacy and replication.

The programme concluded with a 20-county end-term evaluation, dissemination, and stakeholder validation, capturing key lessons and sustainability pathways for continued impact.

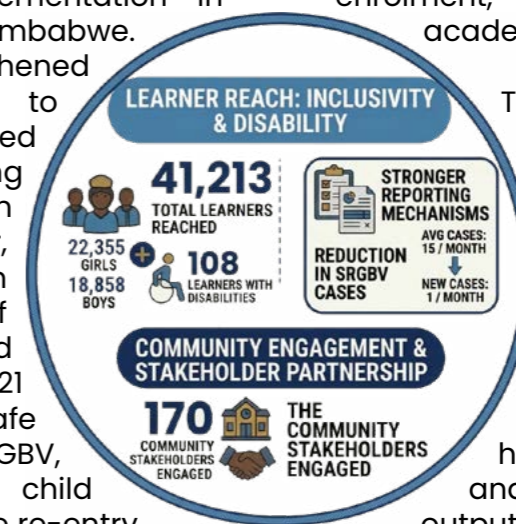
Reducing School-Related Gender-Based Violence Through Data and Action



Participants at Together for Girls Cross learning Workshop in Malawi

Data for Change – Together for Girls, a pilot initiative informed by the Violence Against Children report, concluded successfully in April 2025 after implementation in Malawi, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe. The programme strengthened awareness and response to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) by building the capacity of education stakeholders to identify, refer, and prevent cases. With support from Ministries of Education, FAWE established 33 *Tuseme* Clubs and 21 Mothers' Clubs, creating safe spaces that addressed SRGBV, teenage pregnancy, and child marriage, and supported the re-entry of 21 girls into school.

The programme reached 41,213 learners (22,355 girls and 18,858 boys), including 108 learners with disabilities, and engaged 170 community stakeholders, leading to stronger



reporting mechanisms and a reduction in SRGBV cases from an average of 15 to one per month. Schools also reported improved enrolment, 90% attendance, and better academic performance among girls.

To consolidate learning, a cross-country reflection workshop was held in Malawi, informing the development of a Status Report and Policy Brief that identified gaps in the implementation of violence-against-children guidelines and recommended strengthened accountability, harmonised legal frameworks, and increased financing. These outputs will guide FAWE's data-driven advocacy with the African Union and partners in 2026 to advance safe, inclusive, and gender-responsive education systems.

Make Way: Strengthening Adolescent-Responsive SRHR Across Five Countries

The Make Way project recorded strong progress across Zambia, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and Ethiopia by advancing inclusive, adolescent-responsive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) through coordinated advocacy, research, and youth engagement.

In Zambia, the project strengthened national and sub-national coordination through approved workplans, validated SRHR research findings, and joint engagements with government, civil society, and parliamentarians. These efforts improved accountability, informed national advocacy, strengthened Safe Spaces, and secured commitments to integrate SRHR priorities into district budgets. A high-level project close-out convened government leaders, Members of Parliament, youth, and civil society, highlighting outcome-level achievements and sustainability actions.

In Uganda, youth-led dialogues and national stakeholder forums enhanced awareness, accountability, and policy action for youth-

friendly SRHR services, including adolescents living with HIV. District-level commitments were secured to support uninterrupted access to medication and youth participation in health governance structures.

In Kenya, stakeholder engagement confirmed that FAWE's Adolescent Guide Booklet improved SRHR knowledge and facilitated open dialogue on teenage pregnancy and prevention. Rwanda's national dialogue and radio campaigns strengthened inclusive SRHR planning and reduced menstrual health stigma. In Ethiopia, a live panel elevated the SRHR needs of adolescents, including persons with disabilities, reinforcing equity in service access.

Collectively, the project strengthened access, retention, and performance outcomes for adolescent girls and young women by embedding youth voices in policy, practice, and service delivery across all implementing contexts.



Participant lead a dialogue on adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) under the Make Way project

Advancing Girls' Education and SRHR: Highlights of the BF! Final Year



FAWE staff with adolescent girls from Southern Province in Zambia. The girls are participants in the Break Free! Programme.

In its final year, the Break Free Alliance (BF!) Programme strengthened access, retention, and learning outcomes for girls and young women across nine countries. FAWE supported consortium partners to ensure a strong close-out by updating key programme and accountability tools and conducting joint monitoring and close-out missions in Ethiopia and Zambia. These efforts assessed performance against workplans and budgets, reinforced exit strategies, and strengthened systems for girls' school reintegration and delivery of SRHR and life-skills education.

The programme also prioritized learning, sustainability, and accountability. FAWE and

national chapters contributed to the Global Learning Workshop, informing the End-Term Evaluation (ETE) and future programming. The ETE was completed in all countries except Burkina Faso and Sudan, with validation workshops held in Kenya and Ethiopia. Close-out meetings and government engagement secured commitments to sustain programme gains, particularly in SRHR education and school reintegration. Annual reports for Kenya and Ethiopia were submitted, and FY24 reach and outcome data were published through IATI and AidStream.



FAWE staff and partners during a Break Free! Programme a joint monitoring and close-out workshop



FAWE representatives from the Regional office and FAWE Mali chapter on a courtesy visit to the director of Education for the Break Free Alliance (BF!) Programme in Mali

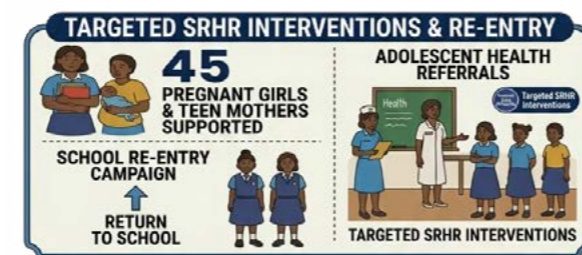
Empowering Girls, Transforming Communities: Highlights of the SHARE Programme



Community members from the Upper East Region in Ghana at an SRHR training session facilitated by the SHARE Programme.

The FAWE led Sexual Health and Reproductive Education Programme (SHARE) Programme delivered measurable gains in girls' education and empowerment in Uganda and Ghana. In Uganda, FAWE strengthened girls' leadership and inclusion through the establishment of 15 TUSEME clubs reaching 679 learners, including children with special needs. Community engagement contributed to the election of 432 women to Refugee Welfare Councils in Adjumani and the appointment of a female head prefect in Buyende for the first time in a decade. Targeted SRHR interventions supported adolescent health referrals, enabled 45 pregnant girls and teen mothers to return to school, and improved school sanitation infrastructure. District governments committed to sustaining SRHR initiatives through integration into 2025/2026 budgets and workplans.

In Ghana, SHARE advanced community-led SRHR awareness through dialogues, media engagement, and capacity building, reaching over 1,000 community members and stakeholders. The programme strengthened safeguarding practices, reduced stigma around adolescent SRHR, and expanded public education through multilingual radio programming. Across both countries, FAWE amplified visibility of its flagship models by presenting research at national and regional platforms and was recognized as a leading champion for girls' education in Uganda and across Africa.



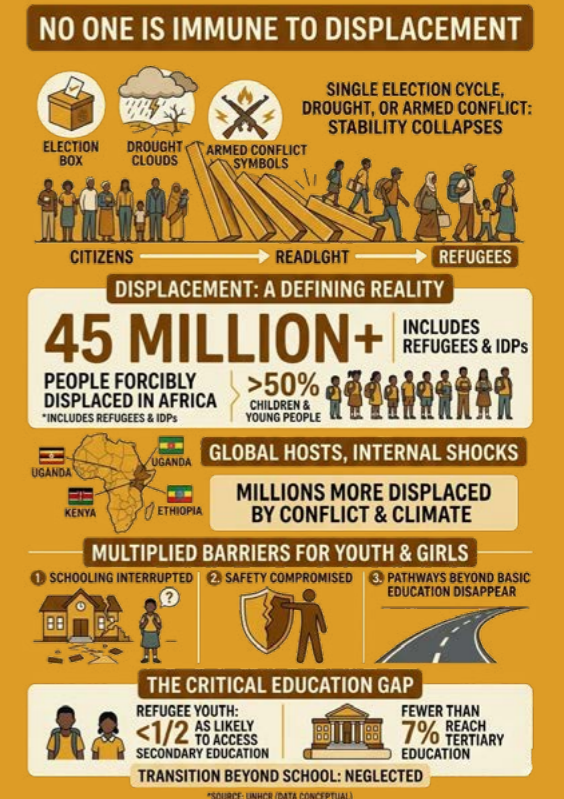
Displacement Does Not End Education: FAWE's Work with Refugees and Internally Displaced Youth



Refugee and internally displaced learners with FAWE staff and teachers after a Tuseme training held in Runyu Comprehensive School in Busia County, Kenya.

No one is immune to displacement. In a single election cycle, drought, or armed conflict, stability can collapse and transform citizens into refugees. Today, more than **45 million people are forcibly displaced in Africa**, including refugees and internally displaced persons—**over half of them children and young people** according to **UNHCR**. Displacement is no longer a marginal crisis; it is a defining reality of our time, and education systems are rarely prepared for its scale or speed.

Across Africa, countries such as Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia host some of the largest refugee populations on the continent, while millions more are internally displaced by conflict and climate shocks. For young people—especially girls—displacement multiplies barriers to education. Schooling is interrupted, safety is compromised, and pathways beyond basic education all but disappear. Globally, refugee youth are **less than half as likely to access secondary education**, and **fewer than 7% reach tertiary education**, making transition beyond school one of the most critical and neglected gaps.





Learners in a displacement-affected community (Rwamwanja - Uganda) take part in a Tuseme Club event during World Refugee Day

In 2025, FAWE's work in displacement-affected contexts reinforced a clear position: crisis must not permanently block access to learning, skills, and progression. Through the GPE KIX TUSEME initiative in Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia, FAWE strengthened evidence-based approaches that place learner voice, participation, and gender-responsive pedagogy at the centre of education responses in fragile settings.

By adapting empowerment models for refugee and internally displaced learners, FAWE supported safer, more inclusive school environments where marginalised learners, particularly girls, can remain engaged, express their concerns, and rebuild confidence. Evidence generated through this work is informing how education systems can respond more effectively to learners living in crisis.



Tuseme Club members during the workshop held in Ethiopia



A group photo of participants of a workshop session held in Ethiopia

At the post-secondary level, FAWE's Second Chance Pathways Programme deliberately extends outreach to refugee-hosting and displacement-affected communities. Recognising that transition to tertiary education is one of the most overlooked stages for displaced youth, FAWE's recruitment and community engagement processes are designed to identify learners who would otherwise be excluded by conventional selection systems. Inclusion targets are translated into real participation, including for refugees, internally displaced youth, and young people with disabilities.

FAWE's approach goes beyond access. Institutions are supported to strengthen gender-responsive and learner-centred practices, while faculty and facilitators are equipped to understand the realities of disrupted schooling. By linking evidence generation, learner empowerment, and structured tertiary transition pathways, FAWE is demonstrating that displacement does not have to define a young person's future—and that education remains one of the most powerful tools for restoring stability, dignity, and long-term resilience.

Empowering Girls Beyond the Classroom: FAWE Uganda's Mentorship Partnership



Jackline Auma (left), a FAWE Uganda Board Member and alumna, presents a bursary to Hellen Mbabazi (seated), winner of the 2024 Super Soul Sisters Pageant

academic journey. The award was presented by Jackline Auma, a FAWE Uganda Board Member and alumna, symbolizing the continuity of leadership and the power of investing in girls across generations.

The partnership between FAWE Uganda and Super Soul Sisters brings together complementary strengths. FAWE Uganda contributes its long-standing experience in promoting access, retention, and success for girls in education, while Super Soul Sisters offers structured mentorship that builds self-esteem, leadership, and life skills. Together, they are advancing a holistic model of empowerment that recognises education as both an academic and personal development journey.

Hellen's story illustrates the impact of this approach. Through mentorship and educational support, she represents what becomes possible when girls are given the opportunity to pursue their aspirations with confidence and support. Her achievement also reinforces the importance of role models, both peers and mentors, in shaping girls' educational and leadership trajectories.

Looking ahead, FAWE Uganda and Super Soul Sisters aim to deepen their collaboration, expanding mentorship opportunities and educational support for more girls across the country. The partnership underscores FAWE Uganda's belief that sustainable progress in girls' education requires collective action—linking schools, mentors, communities, and institutions to ensure girls are supported to realise their full potential.

FAWE Uganda has strengthened its commitment to girls' education and leadership through a new partnership with Super Soul Sisters, a mentorship platform dedicated to building confidence, life skills, and leadership among girls and young women. The collaboration reflects a shared vision: addressing educational barriers while nurturing the personal and social capabilities girls need to thrive beyond the classroom.

In December 2024, FAWE Uganda participated in the grand finale of the Super Soul Sisters Pageant, an event that brought together young women from diverse backgrounds to showcase leadership, creativity, and resilience. The pageant serves as more than a competition; it is a mentorship-driven platform that elevates girls' voices and recognizes their potential as change agents in their communities.

During the event, Hellen Mbabazi was crowned the overall winner of the 2024 Super Soul Sisters Pageant. In recognition of her achievement and commitment to education, FAWE Uganda awarded Hellen a bursary to support her ac-

“Empowering girls requires more than access to education—it demands mentorship, confidence, and a community that believes in their potential.”

Ending GBV Through Collective Action in Zanzibar

In a powerful collaboration aimed at creating a safer and more equitable society, FAWE Zanzibar has joined forces with UN Women, the Zanzibar Police, and JUWAUZA (Jumuiya ya Wanawake Wenye Ulemavu Zanzibar) to raise public awareness on stopping Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Sponsored by UN Women, this initiative underscores the collective commitment to ending violence against women and girls in Zanzibar.



Participants during the GBV campaign in Zanzibar



PROF. SUNUNGURAI DOMINICA CHINGARANDE
Member, FAWE Africa Board

#KeepThemSafe #EndDigitalViolence #16Days #Educate2Elevate

Digital violence is real violence. Let us unite to build online spaces where every woman and girl is respected, valued, and free.



PROF. AHIKIRE JOSEPHINE
Member, FAWE Africa Board

#KeepThemSafe #EndDigitalViolence #16Days #Educate2Elevate

Digital violence hurts all of us. Women have a right to thrive in a safe environment. Let us all unite for a safer world. End Digital violence. It downgrades us all.

A Unified Stand Against GBV

Gender-based violence remains a pervasive issue affecting countless women and girls across Zanzibar and beyond. Today's awareness campaign is a critical step in addressing this challenge, bringing together key stakeholders to educate the public, challenge harmful norms, and promote a culture of respect and equality.

The event features a series of activities, including community dialogues, street marches, and educational sessions, designed to engage individuals, families, and communities in the fight against GBV. By partnering with the Zanzibar Police and JUWAUZA, FAWE Zanzibar is ensuring that the message reaches a wide audience and that survivors of GBV are connected to the necessary support services.



Key Objectives of the GBV Campaign

Raise Awareness: Educate the public on the forms and consequences of GBV, emphasizing that violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights.

Promote Reporting: Encourage survivors and witnesses to report incidents of GBV to the authorities, ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable.

Strengthen Support Systems: Highlight the resources available to survivors, including legal aid, counselling, and medical care.

Challenge Harmful Norms: Address cultural and societal attitudes that perpetuate GBV, promoting gender equality and respect for all.

Foster Collaboration: Strengthen partnerships between civil society, law enforcement, and community organizations to create a coordinated response to GBV.

Why This Matters

Gender-based violence not only harms individuals but also undermines the social and economic fabric of communities. By addressing GBV, we are not only protecting the rights and dignity of women and girls but also paving the way for a more just and inclusive society.

FAWE Zanzibar's partnership with UN Women, the Zanzibar Police, and JUWAUZA is a testament to the power of collaboration in driving meaningful change. Together, we are sending a clear message: Gender-based violence has no place in our communities, and we all have a role to play in ending it.

FAWE Zanzibar remains committed to empowering women and girls through education and advocacy. By addressing GBV, we are not only protecting the rights of women and girls but also creating a foundation for a more equitable and prosperous society.

Empowering Girls Through Menstrual Hygiene: FAWE Benin's Project "My #Menstruation, My Right, I Demand"

From January 14 to 16, 2025, FAWE Benin took a decisive step to advance girls' rights and educational continuity through the project "My #Menstruation, My Right, I Demand." Supported by the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), the initiative focused on strengthening menstrual hygiene management by training local seamstresses in the production of reusable sanitary pads in the commune of Ifangni.

Menstrual hygiene remains a significant barrier to girls' education in many communities. Limited access to affordable menstrual products, combined with stigma and silence around menstruation, often results in school absenteeism and increased dropout rates among adolescent girls. FAWE Benin's intervention responds directly to this challenge by promoting sustainable, locally produced solutions that restore dignity and keep girls in school.

The three-day training equipped seamstresses with practical, hands-on skills to produce high-quality reusable sanitary pads. Participants were trained in pad pattern design, appropriate fabric selection and cutting, and hygienic manual assembly techniques. Beyond technical skills, the training emphasized

quality, durability, and comfort, ensuring the pads meet the needs of adolescent girls while remaining affordable and environmentally friendly.

The project is designed to create a multiplier effect. Trained seamstresses will now pass on their knowledge by training 30 schoolgirls in each of 10 secondary schools in Ifangni. This approach not only increases access to menstrual products but also empowers girls with practical skills, confidence, and agency over their own bodies.

More than a hygiene intervention, the project is a strategic investment in gender equality. By addressing menstruation as a rights issue, FAWE Benin is tackling one of the silent drivers of educational exclusion. The initiative challenges harmful norms, reduces stigma, and reinforces the message that menstruation should never be a reason for a girl to miss school or fall behind.

As the project progresses, FAWE Benin aims to inspire replication in other communities, demonstrating that locally driven, rights-based solutions can deliver lasting impact for girls' education and wellbeing.



A seamstress in Ifangni, Benin, participates in a training on reusable sanitary pad production under FAWE Benin's "My #Menstruation, My Right, I Demand" project

FAWE Mali Conducts Awareness Session on Girls' Education and Child Protection in Sikasso

FAWE Mali has recently organized a community awareness session in the Sikasso region to promote girls' education, respect for Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), and the fight against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and harmful cultural practices.

This initiative is part of the Child Rights Promotion Project to Enhance Participation and Self-Protection as Agents of Change, known as *Demisenw Ka Lakana Ko*. Implemented in collaboration with Coordination Nationale Mali Terre des Hommes Suisse, the project aims to strengthen community awareness of children's rights and foster a protective environment for them.

Through this session, FAWE Mali sought to challenge harmful societal norms, empower young girls to pursue education, and ensure safer spaces for children. By engaging with community members, the initiative promotes collective action to guarantee that all children, particularly girls, can fully exercise their rights and contribute to the development of their communities.

FAWE Mali remains dedicated to advocating for inclusive education and child protection policies. By working closely with local and international partners, the organization continues to pave the way for a society where every child, regardless of gender, has access to equal opportunities for learning and success.



FAWE Mali engages young people in Sikasso to raise awareness on girls' education, child protection, and the fight against harmful practices



Empowering girls begins with transforming communities – challenging harmful norms, protecting children's rights, and ensuring every child has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed.

Keep Them Safe: Investing in Girls' Safety to Protect Education Gains



During the **16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence**, FAWE implemented the **Keep Them Safe** campaign as a continent-wide advocacy initiative to protect girls and young women from violence, offline and online, across its **33 country chapters**. The campaign responded to growing evidence that gender-based violence, including digital abuse, remains one of the most significant barriers to girls' access, retention, and success in education.

Through coordinated digital advocacy, high-level dialogue, media engagement, and community-led actions, FAWE called on governments, education systems, and development partners to **invest in prevention, safeguarding, and accountability mechanisms** that protect girls in and beyond

school environments. Chapters amplified national realities, while FAWE's regional leadership reinforced the urgency of sustained financing for gender-responsive education and child protection systems.

The campaign positioned girls' safety as a **strategic investment**, not a peripheral concern. *"When girls are protected from violence, education investments deliver stronger learning outcomes, improved retention, and long-term social and economic returns."* Hon. Aicha Bah Diallo, FAWE Africa Board Chair

The **Keep Them Safe** campaign reaffirmed FAWE's commitment to working with donors and partners to scale proven approaches that safeguard girls' rights and well-being, because **education systems cannot succeed unless girls are safe to learn.**

HON. AICHA BAH DIALLO
Board Chairperson, FAWE Africa

"As we begin the 16 Days of Activism, let us reaffirm our collective duty to protect every woman and girl. Digital spaces must be places of safety, dignity, and opportunity—not harm. UNITE to End Digital Violence Against All Women and Girls. Their safety — online and offline — is our responsibility."

HON. SIMONE DE COMARMOND
Member and Immediate Former Chairperson, FAWE Africa Board

The internet is now one of the most powerful connectors in our world, especially for young people. FAWE remains committed to empowering Africa's youth to navigate online spaces safely and confidently, while tackling risks such as insecurity and gender-based violence.

HER MAJESTY QUEEN NOZIZWE KAMULELA-ZULU
Member, FAWE Africa Board

Digital spaces must uplift, not endanger our girls. Together, we can build a world where every click brings opportunity, not harm.

DR. MARTHA MUHWEZI
Executive Director, FAWE Africa

Across Africa, girls' voices, dreams, and futures are increasingly shaped online. We must ensure these digital spaces are secure, empowering, and free from violence. FAWE stands with partners and communities to UNITE and protect all women and girls. Their safety — online and offline — is our shared responsibility.



Joy Kamathi from Kenya actively participates in class. She is a member of Tuseme Club at her school.

CHAPTER 4

Transforming Learning Through Proven FAWE Models

Transforming Learning Through Proven FAWE Models

FAWE’s approach to transforming education across Africa is grounded in evidence-based models that address the systemic barriers limiting girls’ access to quality, inclusive learning. Through decades of practice and innovation, FAWE has developed and scaled proven interventions that not only improve learning outcomes, but also challenge harmful norms, strengthen school environments, and empower girls to thrive.

At the core of this work is the **Tuseme model**, implemented with the support of Ministries of Education, which creates safe spaces for girls to speak out and build leadership skills. During the reporting period, FAWE supported the formation of **33 Tuseme Clubs**, enabling girls to openly discuss challenges affecting their education, including gender-based violence, teenage pregnancy, and child marriage. Complementing these school-based efforts, FAWE in Malawi established **21 Mothers’ Clubs** as part of a broader community ecosystem. These clubs have played a critical role in

identifying community-led solutions and supporting the **re-entry of 21 girls back into school**.

These efforts are reinforced by FAWE’s investments in **STEM education** and **Gender-Responsive Pedagogy**, which equip educators and learners with the tools to create inclusive, safe, and equitable learning environments. Together, these integrated models demonstrate how school- and community-based approaches can sustainably transform education outcomes for girls.



An ongoing training session on STEM in Ethiopia. STEM is one FAWE's proven models



An ongoing training session on STEM in Ethiopia. STEM is one FAWE's proven models.

- Tuseme Model**
A youth empowerment approach that builds girls’ confidence, leadership, and life skills while engaging boys to support girls’ education and gender equality.
- Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP)**
A teacher training model that promotes gender-aware teaching practices, ensuring equal participation and a safe, inclusive learning environment for girls and boys.
- STEM Model**
An approach that increases girls’ access, interest, and performance in STEM through gender-responsive curricula, teaching methods, and learning materials.
- Centers of Excellence (CoEs)**
Flagship schools that demonstrate best practices in girls’ education, gender responsiveness, innovation, and academic excellence for replication and scaling.
- FAWE Comprehensive Packages**
Integrated scholarship and support packages that enable disadvantaged girls and women to enroll, complete education at all levels, and transition into tertiary education and livelihoods.

Tuseme is a Swahili word which translates to 'Let's Speak Out'

Finding Her Voice Through Tuseme: Joy Kamathi's Journey Back to School

Her Voice, Her Power: Joy Kamathi's Inspiring Return to School Through Tuseme



Joy Kamathi, a learner from Meru County, Kenya. Through her school's Tuseme Club

Joy Kamathi, a learner from Kiriani Primary School in Meru County, Kenya, is a powerful example of how education, when paired with awareness and support, can restore dignity, confidence, and opportunity.

Joy's education was interrupted when her parents stopped paying her school fees, forcing her to drop out of school. During this period, she experienced deep emotional distress and low self-esteem. Ashamed and uncertain, Joy would hide whenever she saw her classmates on their way to school, afraid of the questions she might be asked and the reminder of what she had lost.

Her turning point came through participation in the Tuseme Club at her school, where learners are empowered with knowledge about their rights and encouraged to speak up against injustices affecting their education and well-being. Through these sessions, Joy learned about child rights and began to understand that access to education is not a privilege, but a right.

With renewed confidence, Joy reported her situation to the local chief. The intervention led to a dialogue with her parents, who were guided on the importance of supporting their daughter's education. As a result, Joy was able to return to school, with her school fees now fully covered by her parents.

Today, Joy is back in class, learning alongside her peers with restored confidence and hope for the future. Her story highlights the transformative impact of rights-based education approaches like Tuseme, which equip girls with the voice, agency, and courage to challenge barriers and reclaim their education.



Link to Tuseme App for QR code:

Gender-Responsive Pedagogy in Action: Transforming Classrooms Across Africa



A class in session at Chifusa Secondary School in Southern Zambia

DR. MAGGIE MADIMBO
Member, FAWE Africa Board

Women and girls wear the face of Africa; they are the heartbeat of our continent. As Africa advances into a digital future, it is right and essential that their safety is protected online as much as offline. A digitizing Africa must also be a safe Africa for every woman and girl.

#KeepThemSafe #EndDigitalViolence #16Days #Educate2Elevate

Across Africa, classrooms are changing, not through new buildings or textbooks alone, but through a shift in how teaching and school leadership respond to the realities of girls and boys. FAWE's **Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP)** continues to move from theory into daily classroom practice, equipping school leaders and educators with practical tools to create learning environments where every learner can thrive.

In 2025, FAWE expanded GRP capacity-building efforts in Burkina Faso, Zambia, Mozambique, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Malawi, with a strong focus on school administrators. By targeting head teachers, deputies, and school managers, FAWE is ensuring that gender-responsive practices are embedded not only in teaching methods but also in school policies, management, and culture.

These trainings address critical issues that affect learning: classroom participation patterns, teacher-student interactions, prevention of school-related gender-based violence, menstrual hygiene support, safe reporting systems, and the removal of subtle biases that discourage girls' confidence and performance. Administrators are supported to review school rules, infrastructure planning, timetabling, and supervision practices through a gender lens, making inclusion part of institutional systems rather than individual effort.

The impact goes beyond the classroom. When school leaders champion GRP, teachers are better supported, learners feel safer and more confident, and parents and communities begin to see schools as spaces that value both girls and boys equally. GRP is also strengthening FAWE's broader work, informing digital learning, STEM participation, and leadership development by ensuring the foundation of teaching and school culture is equitable.

Through GRP, FAWE is not simply training individuals; it is reshaping how schools function. The result is classrooms where girls speak up, boys learn respect, and learning environments become catalysts for equality rather than reflections of existing inequalities.



Link to GRP platform for QR code

FAWE Gabon Encourages Girls in STEM Through 'Sciences: Girls, We Can'



Group Photo of FAWE Gabon staff, teachers and students of Lycee Ba Oumar at the launch of the "Sciences, Les Filles Nous Pouvons" (Science, Girls We Can) programme

FAWE Gabon marked a significant milestone in advancing gender equity in education with the launch of the **"Sciences, Les Filles Nous Pouvons"** (Science, Girls We Can) programme at **Lycée Bâ Oumar** in Libreville. The initiative is designed to support and guide **120 girls** from **eighth and tenth grade classes** across **three schools** in the northern educational district of Libreville, with a focus on increasing girls' participation and success in science-related fields traditionally dominated by men. The programme provides targeted academic reinforcement through structured tutoring and mentorship in science subjects, addressing both learning gaps and confidence barriers

that often limit girls' engagement in STEM. By combining academic support with positive role models and guidance, the initiative creates a safe and encouraging environment where girls can build competence, self-belief, and ambition in scientific disciplines.

This launch represents an important step toward dismantling gender stereotypes in education and expanding future career opportunities for girls in science and technology. Through "Sciences, Les Filles Nous Pouvons," FAWE Gabon reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that girls are not only included in STEM pathways, but are empowered to excel and lead within them.



CHAPTER 5

Evidence & Innovation (Research and Learning)

Reclaiming Voice in Crisis: How GPE KIX is Shaping Inclusive Education in Displacement Contexts



Rose Atieno, Programme Officer at FAWE Africa and participants engaged in GPE KIX programme activities

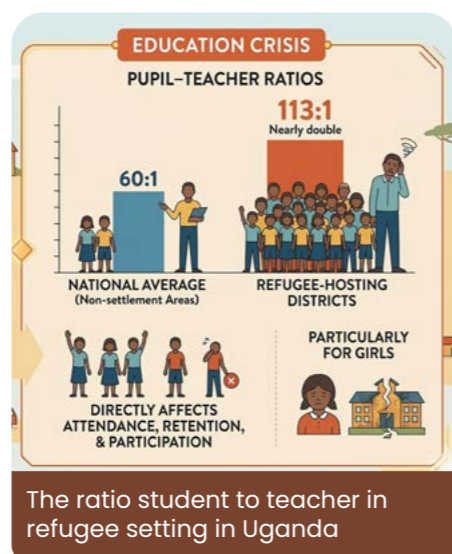
In refugee and displacement settings across East Africa, the challenge is not only access to school, but the quality, safety, and dignity of learning. Under the **Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX)**, FAWE is leading a bold effort to ensure that learners in crisis contexts are not invisible within national systems.

Implemented by **FAWE Uganda, FAWE Ethiopia, and FAWE Kenya**, in partnership with the **Higher Education Resource Services-East Africa (HERS-EA)** and the **Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)**, the project adapts and evaluates FAWE's Tuseme ("Let Us Speak Out") model in refugee and internally displaced settings.

The urgency is clear. Uganda hosts approximately **1.6 million refugees**, the largest population in Africa. In refugee-hosting districts, pupil-teacher ratios reach **113:1**, nearly double the national average in non-settlement areas. Poverty compounds the crisis, with **28% of refugee households surviving on one meal per day**. These realities directly affect attendance, retention, and participation—particularly for girls.

Across Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda, the study engaged **784 learners, teachers, and community stakeholders across 12 schools**

to assess how learner voice platforms can strengthen inclusion and protection in fragile environments. Evidence shows that structured dialogue spaces improve confidence, reduce school-related gender-based violence risks, and strengthen peer accountability. However, findings also highlight systemic gaps: overcrowded classrooms, limited teacher preparation for trauma-responsive and multilingual teaching, and inconsistent financing for refugee education.



The ratio student to teacher in refugee setting in Uganda

What emerges is a powerful policy message: empowerment models like Tuseme are not "add-ons." They are governance tools that help education systems respond to complexity. By embedding learner voice within national frameworks, aligned with sector plans in Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia, FAWE is advancing a model that connects equity, accountability, and system reform.

At a time when displacement is reshaping education across the continent, GPE KIX demonstrates that inclusion must be evidence-driven, policy-anchored, and learner-centred. This work was supported by the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange, a joint endeavour with the International Development Research Centre, Canada.

Storytelling for evidence building



Break time at Limete Technical and Scientific High School, DRC

At FAWE, evidence goes beyond data and reports—it is also found in lived experiences, voices, and journeys that reveal what works, what must change, and why investment in girls' education matters. Documentary storytelling has become a powerful tool for FAWE to translate research, programme outcomes, and community realities into compelling narratives that inform policy, influence practice, and inspire action.

Through film, FAWE captures the human impact of its interventions across diverse contexts, amplifying the voices of girls, educators, families, and partners whose experiences reflect both the challenges and possibilities within education systems. These stories bring visibility to systemic barriers such as poverty, gender-based violence, and exclusion, while also highlighting evidence-based solutions—from re-entry pathways and scholarships to gender-responsive pedagogy and community engagement.

The documentaries featured below present FAWE's evidence in action, offering policymakers, partners, and stakeholders an opportunity to engage with data through story, and to see how education transforms lives when systems work for girls.

The Imarisha Msichana Program that champions girls' education by creating safe spaces, providing mentorship, and combating gender-based violence, teenage pregnancies, and child marriage produced a documentary in 2025. This documentary from Kenya showcases real stories of resilience, community partnerships, and transformative impact.



Scan to view the **Imarisha Msichana Documentary**

The "Data for Change – Together for Girls (TFG)" pilot programme, informed by the Violence Against Children report, concluded successfully in Malawi, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe in April 2025. Aimed at raising awareness of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV), it engaged education stakeholders, built their capacity to identify, refer, and prevent cases, and established 33 Tuseme clubs as safe spaces for girls to address barriers like GBV, teenage pregnancies, and child marriage. With support from ministries of education, these efforts empowered communities and amplified girls' voices.

Discover the stories captured in three powerful documentaries produced in Nigeria, Malawi, and Zimbabwe:



Scan to view the **TFG Malawi Documentary**



Scan to view the **TFG Nigeria Documentary**



Scan to view the **TFG Zimbabwe Documentary**

Knowledge Products for System Change: Break Free Intergenerational Dialogue Study



Break Free! Intergenerational meeting at Mwansa Primary School in Southern Province, Zambia.

After five years of implementation, the Break Free Programme concluded in 2025 with a comprehensive final report documenting its impact on transforming harmful gender norms through intergenerational dialogue. The report highlights how structured conversations between adolescents, parents, community leaders, and service providers strengthened understanding, reduced resistance to change, and fostered collective accountability for

girls' and young women's rights. Across participating communities, the programme contributed to improved awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights, greater support for girls' education, and increased community action against harmful practices. The findings affirm that sustained, inclusive dialogue is a powerful catalyst for social norm change and a critical pathway to advancing gender equality and adolescent well-being.

Preventing and Responding to Teenage Pregnancy and Child Marriage



Stakeholders during Imarisha Msichana close out meeting in Kenya.

The Imarisha Msichana Programme (2022–2025) documented compelling evidence on how integrated, multi-sectoral approaches can prevent and respond to teenage pregnancy and child marriage in Kenya. Implemented across 20 counties, the programme combined scholarships, community engagement, SRHR education, policy advocacy, and media engagement to support girls' retention and

re-entry into school. The report highlights significant reductions in teenage pregnancy rates, strengthened community accountability, and improved coordination between education, health, and child protection systems. Overall, the findings underscore the power of evidence-informed, community-led interventions in safeguarding girls' rights to education and well-being.

Make way Programme: Assessing Impact and Learning



Girls from a school in Nairobi, Kenya, celebrate after receiving sanitary towels courtesy of the Make Way Programme.

The (ETE) of the five-year Make Way Programme (2021–2025) assessed the programme's relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and sustainability in advancing intersectional Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) for marginalized youth across Eastern and Southern Africa. Using a mixed-methods approach grounded in realist evaluation and contribution analysis, the evaluation found that Make Way made meaningful contributions to policy influence, youth leadership, and inclusive

advocacy spaces, particularly for adolescent girls, youth with disabilities, and other groups facing compounded vulnerabilities. The report highlights strong evidence of youth-led advocacy, gender-transformative approaches, and Southern-led collaboration, while also identifying lessons to strengthen sustainability, local ownership, and long-term impact beyond the programme cycle.

Imarisha Msichana Programme: Impact Beyond Numbers

The End Term Evaluation of the Imarisha Msichana Programme (2022–2025) provides a comprehensive assessment of the programme's contribution to reducing teenage pregnancy and advancing girls' education across 20 counties in Kenya. The report confirms that the programme's integrated, multi-sectoral approach, combining SRHR education, school- and community-based platforms such as Tuseme and Mothers' Clubs, media engagement, and male involvement, contributed to a significant decline in teenage pregnancy among participating adolescents. It documents strengthened community accountability, improved knowledge and decision-making among girls and young women, and increased public awareness through wide-reaching media campaigns. The evaluation also highlights promising practices, lessons learned, and sustainability considerations to inform future programming and policy advocacy aimed at safeguarding girls' rights and educational pathways.



"Lasting impact in girls' education and SRHR comes from centering youth voices, strengthening community ownership, and sustaining change beyond the life of a programme."

Elevating Africa's Voice on Girls' Education: FAWE's Continental and Global Advocacy in 2025

Driving the Beijing+30 Agenda Forward: FAWE at CSW69



FAWE Africa delegation with Dr. Ida Odinga (3rd from the left) during CSW69 in New York

At a defining global moment marking 30 years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, FAWE brought Africa's priorities for girls and young women to the centre of global dialogue at CSW69 (10–21 March 2025, United Nations Headquarters, New York). FAWE's presence reinforced a clear message: progress on gender equality must be accelerated through transformative investments in girls' education, leadership, safety, and economic participation.

FAWE was represented by a strong Regional Secretariat delegation: Teresa Omondi-Adeitan (Deputy Executive Director and Head of Programmes), Naomi Kamitha (Programme Officer), Fraciah Kagu (Advocacy and Partnerships Officer), Emily Gumba (Senior Programme Officer), Cynthia Barasa (Programme Assistant) and Kossi Tsenou (Senior Communication Officer), whose collective engagements positioned FAWE as a strong African voice within the global women's movement.

Throughout the session, FAWE advanced key themes central to its mission. In high-level

discussions on girls' and women's participation in STEM, FAWE highlighted the need to move beyond commitments toward system reforms, emphasising gender-responsive teaching, safe learning environments, and stronger pathways into tertiary education and TVET. Conversations on women's political participation and leadership reinforced the persistent barriers women face, including harmful social norms, violence, and economic exclusion, and underscored the relevance of FAWE's leadership and mentorship models.



Cynthia Barasa Programme assistant (sitting 2nd left) FAWE Africa during a panel at CSW 69 in New York

FAWE also engaged actively in youth-centred and intergenerational platforms, amplifying calls for the inclusion of young people with disabilities and those affected by crisis. These dialogues reaffirmed that young women must not only be represented but empowered to shape policies and solutions.

Evidence and learning remained central to FAWE's engagement. Discussions on tools such as the Adolescent Girls Agency Survey (AGAS) opened pathways for strengthening data-driven programming, while strategic meetings with partners, including the Global Fund, explored deeper linkages between education,

GBV prevention, SRHR, and health, recognising the interconnected realities shaping girls' lives. Across events and partnerships, FAWE carried a consistent call to action: accelerate the promises of Beijing by investing in safe schools, gender-transformative education, girls' STEM participation, youth leadership, and strong accountability systems that protect women and girls in both physical and digital spaces.

FAWE's participation at CSW69 was not symbolic, it was strategic. It strengthened alliances, elevated African perspectives, and reinforced a simple truth: girls' education is not peripheral to gender equality, it is the foundation for it.

Influencing Global Policy: FAWE at the 80th United Nations General Assembly



From the Left: Ms Catherine Asego, Senior Advocacy and Partnership Officer FAWE Africa, Dr. Martha Muhwezi, ED FAWE Africa, Ms. Eunice Musiime ED Akina Mama wa Africa and Ms. Emily Gumba, Senior Programmes Officer FAWE Africa at UNGA 80

When global leaders gathered at the **80th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**, FAWE ensured one message rang clearly across international platforms: **the future of sustainable development runs through the education of Africa's girls and young women.** At a time when the world is recalibrating efforts toward the 2030 Agenda, FAWE positioned gender-transformative education not as a sector issue, but as a driver of economic resilience, peace, innovation, and justice.

FAWE was represented by **Dr. Martha Muhwezi (Executive Director), Catherine Asego (Senior Advocacy and Partnerships Officer), and Emily Gumba (Senior Programs Officer)**, whose

engagements elevated African experiences, solutions, and priorities in high-level global discussions. Across side events, strategic forums, and bilateral meetings, the delegation advanced FAWE's mission to influence policy, build partnerships, and mobilize support for scaling impact under its 2024–2028 Strategic Plan.

A major focus of FAWE's presence was championing **gender-transformative education systems** that go beyond access to address safety, leadership, and meaningful participation. Through platforms such as the **UNGEI network and the Feminist Network for Gender Transformative Education**

(FemNet4GTE), FAWE contributed African perspectives on gender-responsive pedagogy, teacher development, and accountability frameworks needed to close persistent gender gaps in education. These engagements strengthened collective advocacy on what it will take to reach equality in and through education by 2030.

Financing and systems reform were also central. FAWE engaged with the **Global Partnership for Education (GPE)** and partners to underscore the importance of coordinated, country-led investments that strengthen national education systems and prioritize marginalized learners. FAWE's voice reinforced the call for sustainable financing models that integrate skills development, inclusion, and long-term institutional strengthening. Innovation featured strongly in FAWE's agenda. Conversations highlighted **African-led solutions, digital inclusion, and skills pathways** that prepare young women not only to access education,

but to lead in emerging sectors shaping the continent's future. FAWE emphasized that closing the gender digital divide and expanding opportunities in STEM are essential for Africa's economic transformation. Strategic relationship-building further strengthened FAWE's global footprint. Bilateral engagements with organizations such as **Echidna Giving** and **ADEA** advanced collaboration on governance strengthening, donor engagement, and continental education platforms, reinforcing FAWE's credibility as both an advocacy leader and an implementation partner.

FAWE's participation at UNGA 80 was more than representation, it was influence. By linking African realities with global policy spaces, FAWE helped ensure that education remains a central pillar of gender equality and sustainable development. As global agendas evolve, FAWE continues to stand firm in a simple, powerful truth: **when Africa's girls learn, lead, and innovate, the world moves forward with them.**



From left: Dr. Martha Muhwezi, Executive Director FAWE Africa Helen Dabu, Secretary General of ASPBAE Luyanda Mndzebele, GPE Youth Leader Catherine Asego, Senior Advocacy and Partnership officer FAWE Africa, Giovanna Mode, Policy and Advocacy Advisor at GCE

Driving System Change for Girls' Education: FAWE Engages with AU CIEFFA



Dr. Martha Muhwezi delivering remarks on FAWE's commitment to supporting the African Union's Decade of Education.

Closing gender gaps in education requires systemic change, not isolated interventions. This message shaped FAWE's engagement at the African Union International Centre for Girls' and Women's Education in Africa (AU CIEFFA) – the AU's specialized institution dedicated to promoting girls' and women's education through policy dialogue, research, and advocacy.

During the session on *Inclusion, Leadership, and Gender Equity*, FAWE highlighted practical models already influencing classrooms and communities across the continent. Through **Gender-Responsive Pedagogy (GRP)**, teachers are being equipped to foster inclusive learning environments and expand girls' participation in STEM and leadership. The **Tuseme ("Let Us Speak Out") programme** continues to strengthen girls' confidence, voice, and decision-making skills, while

intergenerational leadership approaches connect alumni and young learners, reinforcing mentorship and long-term aspiration.

As **Dr. Martha Muhwezi, FAWE Executive Director**, noted,



"Gender equity in education is not a side agenda, it is central to Africa's development. When we invest in teachers, align policies, and hold systems accountable, we change outcomes for girls."

The engagement reinforced the urgency of coordinated policy reform, sustained investment, and stronger accountability to ensure education systems deliver safety, dignity, and opportunity for every girl.

No Justice Without Education: FAWE at GIMAC 2025



A group photo of the FAWE delegation present at the 41st GIMAC Pre-Summit in Addis Ababa. The delegation consisted of colleagues from the regional office, FAWE Ethiopia, and FAWE Sierra Leone.

In 2025, FAWE reinforced its continental leadership on girls' education through strong participation in both the February GIMAC Pre-Summit in Addis Ababa and the July GIMAC/RECs and Partners Meeting in Malabo, ensuring education remained central to the African Union's theme on justice and reparations for Africans and people of African descent. Across both moments, FAWE positioned education not only as a development issue, but as a tool for justice, dignity, and structural transformation for African women and girls.

As a longstanding GIMAC member and **thematic lead on education**, FAWE brought together evidence, policy advocacy, and grassroots experience from across its network to influence continental conversations. In Addis Ababa, FAWE helped shape discussions on the **decolonisation of education**, calling

for curricula that centre African histories, languages, indigenous knowledge systems, and gender equality. FAWE emphasized that justice for African women and girls must include **safe, inclusive, and empowering education systems** that address historical exclusion, gender-based violence, and economic marginalisation.

FAWE also played a visible role in youth and civil society spaces. Through advocacy training sessions and education cluster coordination, FAWE strengthened young women's capacity to engage with African Union frameworks and positioned education as a pathway to leadership, voice, and agency. The organisation consistently linked education with broader reparative justice themes, including **ending harmful practices, strengthening STEM pathways, and supporting girls affected by poverty, conflict, and displacement**.



Part of the FAWE delegation present at the 13th GIMAC Youth Conference.



Executive Assistant to the Executive Director Naomi Susa speaking during the conference

In Malabo, FAWE deepened this agenda by advancing education as a pillar of the AU's justice and reparations framework. FAWE contributed to high-level policy discussions on the **Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2026–2035)** and the **AU Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls**, highlighting how gender-responsive education systems can repair historical and structural inequalities. FAWE further stressed the importance of **skills development, TVET, and alternative pathways** to equip young women with 21st-century competencies for economic participation and leadership.

Across both engagements, FAWE strengthened partnerships with AU organs, research institutions, and development partners, while

continuing to lead the GIMAC education cluster. The organisation ensured that discussions moved beyond rhetoric toward **actionable recommendations** on curriculum reform, investment in public education, community engagement, and accountability mechanisms for implementation.

FAWE's participation in GIMAC 2025 affirmed a powerful message: **reparative justice for African women and girls must include transforming education systems**, not only to expand access, but to restore identity, dignity, and opportunity. By anchoring education within continental justice frameworks, FAWE helped shift the narrative from policy aspiration to practical pathways for change.

FAWE Shapes Africa's Education Agenda at the ADEA Triennale in Ghana



FAWE Africa and Partners group photo during the ADEA Triennale 2025 in Ghana

Education leaders gathered in Ghana for the **ADEA Triennale** with a shared concern: African education systems must adapt faster to meet the realities of climate shocks, technological change, and a growing youth population. FAWE entered these high-level discussions with grounded evidence on what it takes for girls not only to stay in school, but to transition successfully into higher education and skills pathways.

Convened by the **Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA)**, the Triennale brought together governments, institutions, and partners to reflect on progress and define the next phase of continental education reform. FAWE contributed lessons from its programmes demonstrating how poverty, social norms, and environmental pressures continue to disrupt girls' learning trajectories, and what structured, gender-responsive responses can achieve.



FAWE Africa delegation at ADEA Triennale 2025 in Ghana

During a plenary session moderated by **Dr. Martha Muhwezi, FAWE Executive Director**, youth participants shared lived experiences of interrupted schooling, reinforcing the urgency of re-entry policies and structured second-chance pathways. FAWE also engaged in technical dialogues on financing, teacher development, digital inclusion, and higher education reform.

The convening deepened partnerships and strengthened policy dialogue, positioning FAWE as a key voice ensuring education reform responds to the real barriers African girls and young women face.

FAWE at CIES 2025



Dr. Martha Muhwezi, Executive Director FAWE Africa, presenting FAWE models during CIES 2025 in Chicago

At the **Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Conference 2025 in Chicago**, FAWE contributed an African perspective to global conversations on how technology is reshaping education systems. As debates intensify around digital transformation, equity, and ethics in education, FAWE highlighted the importance of ensuring that innovation does not widen existing gender and access gaps.

Drawing from its experience during the COVID-19 pandemic, FAWE shared how blended and low-tech digital learning approaches helped girls in Nigeria, Rwanda, and Kenya continue learning despite school closures. These solutions, ranging from offline content and community media to virtual platforms, demonstrated that effective EdTech must be adaptable to infrastructure realities while embedding

Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) and life skills development. Discussions generated interest in how FAWE's models strengthen not only access, but also participation, confidence, and learning outcomes for girls.

The conference also provided space to connect evidence with policy and practice. FAWE emphasized the need for governments to invest in inclusive digital infrastructure, teacher capacity, and gender-sensitive content development to ensure technology supports rather than excludes marginalized learners.

FAWE's engagement at CIES reinforced a key principle: digital advancement in education must be guided by equity, pedagogy, and human-centred approaches that ensure girls are not left navigating the future of learning alone.

Student Voice at the Centre: FAWE Advances Tuseme for Displaced Learners at AEAA 2025



A panel discussion during the roll-out of TUSEME Clubs in refugee and internally displaced (IDP) learner settings at the 41st Annual Conference of the Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

In August 2025, FAWE took a decisive step in promoting inclusive education by officially launching the roll-out of **Tuseme Clubs in refugee and internally displaced learner (IDP) settings** during the 41st Annual Conference of the **Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA)** in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The conference, which brought together over 500 education leaders, policymakers, and researchers, focused on transforming assessment to improve learning and informed decision-making. FAWE used this continental platform to demonstrate how **Tuseme, a participatory model that strengthens student voice, confidence, and life skills, enhances quality learning beyond traditional examinations**, particularly for learners affected by displacement.

Implemented in partnership with FAWE Ethiopia, FAWE Uganda, FAWE Kenya, HERS-EA, ACER-UK, and national education stakeholders, and supported by the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (GPE KIX), the adapted Tuseme model responds to the realities of refugee and IDP learners by promoting

participation, resilience, and inclusive school environments.

Through dialogue with learners, researchers, and education officials, FAWE highlighted growing evidence that gender-responsive and participatory approaches improve learning outcomes in fragile contexts. The message was clear: education systems must value not only academic performance, but also learners' confidence, agency, and inclusion, especially those furthest from opportunity.



From the left Kossi Tsenou Senior Communication Officer, Rose Atieno Programme Officer, Teresa Omondi - Adeitan DED and Head of programmes, Lawrence Amuani Finance Assistant and Andrew Odhiambo Student attache during the 41st AEAA Conference in Ethiopia.

Integrating Childcare and Education: FAWE at the Africa Conference on Childcare



Senior Programme Officer FAWE Africa, Emily Gumba, in a panel discussion during the Africa Conference on Childcare in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

From 18–20 June 2025, FAWE participated in the Africa Conference on Childcare in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, a continental convening co-hosted by the African Union Commission and the Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN) under the theme



Building Partnerships for Accelerating Action Towards Quality and Inclusive Childcare in Africa.

Representing FAWE, the Senior Programme Officer from the Regional Secretariat contributed to a panel on the intersection of education and childcare, highlighting FAWE’s

Mothers’ Club Model as a practical, scalable response to school dropout among adolescent mothers. Operating across several African countries, Mothers’ Clubs provide safe, school-based spaces where young mothers receive psychosocial support, parenting guidance, life skills training, and mentorship—while continuing their education.

The model has informed national policy frameworks, including Kenya’s School Re-entry Guidelines and child protection strategies in Malawi and The Gambia. Through such interventions, FAWE continues to demonstrate that integrating caregiving support within education systems is essential to sustaining girls’ participation and long-term socio-economic outcomes.

Elevating Africa’s Voice on Gender-Transformative Education at the G20



FAWE Africa Deputy Executive Director and Head of Programmes Teresa Omondi-Adeitan, makes a presentation at a high level side event held on the margins of the G20 Conference held in Durban, South Africa.

FAWE took part in the **Seminar on Education for Gender Equality and Peace: Advancing Gender-Transformative Education for All**, convened on 1 July 2025 in Durban, South Africa, as a side event of the G20. Organized by **UN Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI)**, **UNICEF**, the Ministry of Basic Education of South Africa, and the **Group of Twenty (G20)**, the gathering sought to galvanize global political will to make safe, inclusive, and equitable education a lived reality for every child.

Representing FAWE, the Deputy Executive Director and Head of Programmes contributed to a high-level panel on **ending gender stereotypes through education**. Drawing from FAWE’s evidence and programme experience across Africa, she underscored how entrenched gender norms, school-related gender-based violence, and structural bias continue to hinder girls’ full participation in education systems. She highlighted practical, scalable approaches—

such as gender-responsive pedagogy and community engagement models—that demonstrate how education systems can be reshaped to promote equality and dignity for all learners.

The seminar emphasized that gender-transformative education is not a peripheral issue but central to sustainable development, peace, and economic growth. Discussions reinforced the urgency of embedding accountability, financing, and policy reform within national systems to dismantle harmful stereotypes and ensure inclusive participation of girls and boys alike.

FAWE’s contribution strengthened its position as a continental thought leader, linking African programme evidence to global policy commitments and reinforcing the role of education as a driver of equality and social transformation.



FAWE Africa Staff group photo during planning meeting in Naivasha, Kenya

CHAPTER 6

Strengthening Institutional Capacity and Operational Effectiveness of the FAWE Network

Strengthening Capacity for Institutional Impact



FAWE Africa Programme Officer Martin Okhako, moderating a session during a staff capacity building workshop in Kenya

In 2025, FAWE strengthened its institutional capacity to advance girls' education through sharper advocacy, stronger accountability, and more strategic positioning across its network. These efforts equipped teams with the tools and policy understanding required to influence reform processes and sustain impact at national and continental levels.

A focused **debrief on the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls** deepened FAWE's engagement with emerging legal and policy frameworks addressing violence as a structural barrier to girls' education. This strengthened FAWE's ability to align education advocacy with continental accountability mechanisms and push for systemic responses that protect girls' safety and learning continuity.

Separately, capacity building on **reclaiming imagination for girls' education and Sexual**

and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) expanded FAWE's narrative and programmatic lens. This learning reinforced more transformative, rights-based approaches that place girls' safety, agency, and aspirations at the centre of education reform—moving beyond access to education to address power, choice, and wellbeing.

To reinforce institutional credibility, FAWE also strengthened competencies in **donor reporting, communication strategy and brand compliance, and resource mobilization**, ensuring consistent messaging, regulatory compliance, and stronger donor engagement. Together, these investments enhanced FAWE's ability to influence policy, mobilize resources, and deliver sustained change for girls and young women across Africa.

Reflecting, Learning, and Planning Forward: FAWE's End-of-Year Review in Naivasha



Gallery walk during the FAWE Regional Secretariat's End-of-Year Review in Naivasha, Kenya



FAWE Advocacy Assistant Karen Ondwasi (left) and Knowledge Management Officer Anne Motanya (right) have a mini-brainstorm during the End-of-Year Review meeting in Naivasha, Kenya

In December, FAWE brought together staff and leadership in Naivasha for its annual End-of-Year Review and Planning Meeting a critical moment to reflect on progress, consolidate learning, and sharpen priorities for the year ahead. The convening provided space to assess programme performance, operational effectiveness, and strategic alignment across the FAWE network.

Teams reviewed key achievements in advancing girls' access to education, strengthening gender-responsive models, and deepening advocacy at national and continental levels. Just as importantly, the meeting created room for honest reflection on challenges, emerging risks, and areas requiring stronger coordination, innovation, and resource mobilization.



Gallery walk during the FAWE Regional Secretariat's End-of-Year Review in Naivasha, Kenya



Looking ahead, the Naivasha meeting reaffirmed FAWE's shared commitment to scale evidence-based models, strengthen policy influence, and position the organization strategically within Africa's evolving education landscape. By grounding future plans in collective learning, FAWE enters the new year with clearer priorities, stronger alignment, and renewed momentum to advance education opportunities on the continent.

The review also focused on institutional strengthening, including communication coherence, partnership engagement, and financial and operational accountability, ensuring FAWE's systems continue to match its growing programmatic reach. Cross-team discussions reinforced the importance of collaboration between programmes, advocacy, finance, and communications in delivering holistic impact.

From Compliance to Credibility: Strengthening FAWE's Financial and Operational Frameworks



Mr. Richard Chelagat, FAWE Finance and Administration Director

In 2025, FAWE continued to uphold strong financial stewardship as we advanced our mission to promote gender-responsive education for girls and young women across Africa. Despite economic shifts, rising operational costs, and an increasingly competitive funding environment, we maintained disciplined financial management to ensure that resources were efficiently aligned with FAWE'S 2025-2028 Strategic Plan. Throughout the year, FAWE managed an expanded regional and national budget portfolio that supported key programmes, including gender-responsive pedagogy training, STEM interventions, the Tuseme empowerment model, scholarships, and policy advocacy. Effective budgeting, expenditure monitoring, and strengthened coordination with National Chapters enabled us to maximise impact across all programme areas.

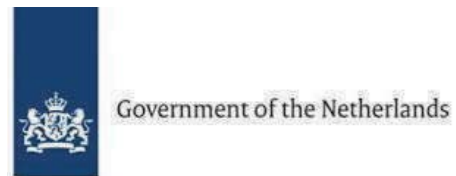
We invested significantly in financial governance and compliance. All National Chapters adopted enhanced financial reporting templates, strengthened internal controls, and participated in capacity-building sessions on grant management and donor compliance. Internal and external audits conducted in 2025 recorded no major findings, reinforcing our commitment to transparency, accountability, and adherence to international financial standards.

FAWE also intensified efforts to diversify funding sources. Strategic engagement with multilateral agencies, private foundations, and corporate partners helped broaden our resource base and secure more sustainable, multi-year funding streams for girls' education initiatives.

As we move into 2026, our priorities include deepening digital finance adoption, strengthening financial resilience across National Chapters, and enhancing compliance systems to meet evolving donor requirements. We remain fully committed to managing resources responsibly and ensuring that every investment contributes to lasting opportunities for girls and young women across Africa.

Even in a shifting economic landscape, our commitment remains steadfast: to steward every resource with integrity, maximize impact through disciplined financial management, and ensure that every investment creates lasting opportunities for girls and young women across Africa.

FAWE'S Partners





FAWE
FORUM FOR AFRICAN WOMEN EDUCATIONALISTS
FORUM DES ÉDUCATRICES AFRICAINES

SAVE THE DATE

4th FAWE Triennial International Conference on Girls' Education in Africa

Theme: Investing in Her Future:
Accelerating Gender-
Transformative Education for
African Girls through
Sustainable Financing and
Innovation

 17–18 November 2026

 Nairobi, Kenya



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