



In partnership with
ACTION LIFE KENYA
Transforming Lives, Creating Impact

**MWANAMKE
IMARA**

Newsletter Issue 1

“Mwanamke Imara is a commitment to dignity, justice, and resilience—strengthening systems of care, amplifying voices, and building pathways where women and communities are protected, heard, and empowered to shape a safer, more inclusive future.”

PREPARED & DESIGNED BY
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Message from the Executive Director – Mr. Noor Dahir

The Mwanamke Imara Program stands as a bold and transformative commitment to strengthening justice, peace, and social cohesion by placing women at the center of community resilience and institutional reform. Implemented by Action Life Kenya in partnership with Search for Common Ground Kenya and supported by the Canadian Embassy, the program responds to the interconnected challenges of gender-based violence, psychosocial trauma, limited access to justice, and weak community-institution trust—particularly in fragile and underserved contexts.

At its core, Mwanamke Imara recognizes that women—especially those serving in justice, security, and community leadership roles—are both frontline protectors and silent carriers of emotional and psychological burdens. The program therefore adopts a holistic, survivor-centered, and rights-based approach that integrates psychosocial support, dialogue, capacity strengthening, and systems engagement to ensure that women are not only protected, but empowered to lead with resilience, empathy, and confidence.

Through structured psychosocial support sessions, community and institutional dialogues, prison outreach initiatives, and stakeholder engagements, the program has created safe and inclusive spaces for healing, reflection, and accountability. These interventions have enabled participants to openly share experiences of stress, burnout, trauma, and systemic barriers, while gaining practical tools for mental wellness, stress management, and peer support. Importantly, Mwanamke Imara bridges community voices with duty bearers, strengthening referral mechanisms, feedback loops, and responsiveness within justice and security institutions.

The program's impact is evident in strengthened trust between communities and institutions, improved understanding of legal and probation processes, and enhanced collaboration among civil society, government actors, and faith-based leaders. By engaging prisons, probation services, judiciary-linked actors, and community stakeholders, Mwanamke Imara contributes to more humane, transparent, and accessible justice systems that prioritize rehabilitation, dignity, and social reintegration.

As we look ahead, Action Life Kenya remains committed to deepening and sustaining the gains achieved under Mwanamke Imara. Our focus will be on institutionalizing psychosocial support within justice and security frameworks, expanding regular outreach and dialogue platforms, and strengthening coordination across sectors to ensure lasting change. We are guided by the conviction that emotionally supported women build stronger institutions, and that just, compassionate systems are the foundation of peaceful and resilient communities.

On behalf of Action Life Kenya, I extend sincere appreciation to our partners, supporters, and all stakeholders who continue to walk this journey with us. Together, through Mwanamke Imara, we are shaping a future where women are protected, voices are heard, and justice is both accessible and humane.

A portrait of Mr. Noor Dahir, the Executive Director of Action Life Kenya. He is a man with short dark hair and a beard, wearing a white traditional Kenyan garment (kumasi). He is standing with his hands clasped in front of him.

Mr. Noor Dahir

Executive Director, Action Life



Message from the Development & Programs Manager – Mr. Mathenge Ndung'u

The Mwanamke Imara Program is a strategic and transformative initiative designed to strengthen women's resilience, leadership, and access to justice by addressing the psychosocial, structural, and institutional challenges that undermine peace and social cohesion. Implemented by Action Life Kenya in partnership with Search for Common Ground Kenya and with the support of the Canadian Embassy, the program is grounded in the understanding that sustainable peace and justice cannot be achieved without investing in the well-being, capacity, and agency of women at both community and institutional levels.

From a programming and development perspective, Mwanamke Imara is intentionally designed as a multi-layered intervention that combines psychosocial support, capacity building, community dialogue, and systems strengthening. The program responds to the realities faced by women working and living at the frontline of justice and security—where exposure to trauma, high workloads, gendered barriers, and limited support structures often compromise both personal well-being and institutional effectiveness. By integrating mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) with peacebuilding and justice processes, the program fills a critical gap in conventional governance and protection interventions.

Key programmatic achievements include the establishment of safe and trusted spaces for women to share lived experiences, process trauma, and rebuild confidence; strengthened technical capacities in mediation, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), and community-based conflict management; and improved coordination between community actors, justice institutions, and civil society. Through targeted mentorship sessions, prison outreach initiatives, and multi-agency engagements, Mwanamke Imara has enhanced referral pathways, clarified justice and probation processes, and promoted a survivor-centered and dignity-based approach to service delivery.

Equally important is the program's emphasis on collaboration and local ownership. Mwanamke Imara aligns its interventions with existing frameworks such as Court Users Committees (CUCs), County Engagement Forums (CEFs), and County Action Plans (CAPs), ensuring that gains are embedded within local systems and are scalable beyond the project lifecycle. Women participants are not only beneficiaries but active change agents—leading mediation panels, supporting peer networks, and championing accountability and prevention within their institutions and communities.

As the program continues to evolve, our focus remains on consolidating impact through sustained engagement, evidence-based learning, and adaptive programming. Priority areas moving forward include deepening psychosocial support integration within justice and security institutions, expanding mentorship and leadership pipelines for women, and strengthening data-driven advocacy to inform policy and budgetary commitments for gender-responsive justice and protection systems.

Mwanamke Imara demonstrates that when women are supported emotionally, equipped professionally, and connected institutionally, they become powerful drivers of peace, justice, and social transformation. Action Life Kenya remains committed to scaling this model and working with partners to ensure that no woman carries the burden of justice alone, and no community is left without pathways to healing, accountability, and hope.

A portrait of Mr. Mathenge Ndung'u, a man with short dark hair and glasses, wearing a light-colored patterned short-sleeved shirt. He is standing with his hands clasped in front of him.

Mr. Mathenge Ndung'u

Development & Programs Manager, Action Life





MWANAMKE IMARA PROGRAM LAUNCH | HOLA, TANA RIVER COUNTY

Hola, Tana River County marked a significant milestone in Kenya's peacebuilding and security landscape with the official launch of the Mwanamke Imara Program, a transformative 24-month initiative aimed at strengthening women's leadership in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) across Lamu and Tana River Counties.

The program was formally launched by Hon. Kiprono Arap Too, Senior Magistrate at Hola Law Courts, whose leadership underscored the judiciary's commitment to inclusive, community-centered approaches to peace, justice, and security.

A Strategic, Multi-Stakeholder Forum

The launch convened a broad and diverse group of stakeholders, reflecting the program's collaborative ethos. Participants included representatives from:

- National and county administration
- Security sector agencies
- Judiciary and probation services
- County government departments
- Civil society organizations (CSOs) operating in Tana River County

This convergence created a vital platform for dialogue, coordination, and shared ownership—recognizing that sustainable peace requires collective action across institutions and communities.

About the Mwanamke Imara Program

The Mwanamke Imara Program is spearheaded by Search for Common Ground Kenya, in partnership with Action Life Kenya, with generous support from Global Affairs Canada.

At its core, the program seeks to:

- Strengthen women's leadership within state security and justice institutions
- Enhance women's participation in P/CVE strategies at community and institutional levels
- Promote inclusive governance within justice and security sectors
- Build resilient communities capable of preventing and responding to violent extremism

By centering women as agents of change, Mwanamke Imara challenges traditional exclusion and elevates women's lived experiences, networks, and leadership as essential assets in peacebuilding.

Why Women's Leadership Matters in P/CVE

Women often serve as first responders to early warning signs of radicalization within families and communities. Their roles as caregivers, community leaders, professionals, and public servants uniquely position them to:

- Identify and address drivers of violent extremism
- Foster trust between communities and state institutions
- Champion justice, accountability, and human-centered security responses

Mwanamke Imara leverages this potential—bridging community insight with institutional influence to deliver durable peace outcomes along Kenya's Coast.

Over the next two years, the program will roll out targeted interventions across Lamu and Tana River Counties, strengthening capacities, nurturing leadership, and embedding gender-responsive approaches within P/CVE frameworks. Through sustained engagement with state and non-state actors, Mwanamke Imara aims to leave behind stronger institutions, safer communities, and empowered women leaders.



GENDER TRAINING



Addressing Institutional Gaps & Strengthening Response Systems

A key highlight of the session was the candid discussion on institutional gaps that often hinder effective GBV prevention and response. Stakeholders critically examined:

- Existing referral pathways and feedback mechanisms
- Barriers survivors face when seeking justice and support
- The need for survivor-centered, confidential, and dignified approaches

Together, participants identified opportunities to strengthen coordination between state institutions, civil society, and community structures—ensuring survivors receive timely, compassionate, and effective support.

From Awareness to Action

This training went beyond information-sharing. It served as a catalyst for:

- Igniting awareness and challenging deeply rooted mindsets
- Reshaping attitudes that normalize silence or stigma around GBV
- Empowering participants to become proactive agents of change within their institutions and communities

By emphasizing accountability, dignity, and inclusivity, the session reinforced the importance of creating safe spaces where women and girls can thrive without fear.

The Mwanamke Imara Program continues to make meaningful strides in advancing gender justice and inclusive peacebuilding through a powerful and interactive Gender Training session, bringing together key stakeholders committed to ending Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and strengthening community resilience.

The session was expertly facilitated by Mr. Mambo, who guided participants through an engaging, reflective, and action-oriented learning process. His facilitation created a safe space for honest dialogue, shared learning, and collective responsibility around gender equality and the prevention of GBV.

Deepening Understanding of Gender-Based Violence

At the heart of the training was a focused exploration of Gender-Based Violence, examining:

- The root causes of GBV, including harmful social norms, power imbalances, and structural inequalities
- The real-life experiences of survivors and communities affected by GBV
- The impact of GBV on women, girls, families, and overall community stability

Participants openly reflected on how GBV manifests within their own contexts and institutions, fostering empathy and a shared sense of urgency to act.



LEADERSHIP TRAINING

A pivotal milestone in advancing women's leadership in Peace, Security, and Preventing & Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) across Kenya's Coast region, with the official launch of the Mwanamke Imara Program—a bold and transformative initiative designed to reposition women at the center of peace and security decision-making.

Amplifying Women's Voice in Peace & Security Institutions

The Mwanamke Imara Program seeks to amplify the voice, agency, and leadership of women across critical institutions, including:

- State Security agencies
- The Judiciary
- National and County Administration
- Probation Services
- Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

By intentionally engaging women within these spaces, the program acknowledges their unique insights, frontline experiences, and transformative role in building safer, more resilient, and inclusive communities—particularly in contexts affected by violent extremism.

Judicial Leadership Championing Gender Equity

The launch was officially graced and officiated by Hon. Njambi Wasike, Senior Magistrate at Garsen Law Courts. Her presence and leadership sent a powerful signal of the judiciary's commitment to gender equity, inclusive justice, and women's leadership within the security and justice sectors. Her remarks reinforced the critical link between justice, gender equality, and sustainable peace—affirming the judiciary's role as a key ally in advancing women-led peacebuilding initiatives.

Women's Leadership Training in Hola

Following the launch, the program transitioned into a dynamic leadership training currently underway in Hola, bringing together women leaders from diverse sectors and institutions. The training provides a safe and empowering space for:

- Candid dialogue on women's roles in the peace and security ecosystem
- Cross-sector learning and collaboration
- Reflection on institutional challenges and opportunities for reform
- Strengthening leadership, confidence, and collective action

Participants are engaging in honest conversations that bridge policy and practice—laying the foundation for coordinated, women-led approaches to P/CVE and community peacebuilding across the Coast region.

***"When women lead, communities thrive.
When women are empowered, peace endures."***





STRENGTHENING SAFEGUARDING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Safeguarding as the Foundation of Trust

Madam Becky emphasized that safeguarding is a core pillar of effective peacebuilding and P/CVE programming, not an optional add-on. Her session unpacked the importance of establishing safe, inclusive, and confidential channels through which individuals and communities can:

- Raise concerns without fear of retaliation
- Report misconduct and abuse of power
- Share feedback that strengthens institutional accountability

These mechanisms are especially critical in contexts involving women, children, and other vulnerable groups, who often face heightened risks and systemic barriers to justice.

Beyond Protection: Dignity, Justice, and Responsibility

A key message from the session was the reframing of safeguarding—not merely as protection, but as a commitment to dignity, justice, and responsibility. Participants were reminded that safeguarding systems must:

- Be survivor-centered and confidential
- Respond promptly and transparently
- Hold institutions and leaders accountable
- Promote ethical conduct at all levels

Through real-life reflections and open dialogue, the session highlighted how weak feedback and response systems can erode trust, while strong mechanisms can rebuild confidence between communities and institutions.

Women Leaders Rising in the P/CVE Space

As women leaders from the judiciary, administration, security agencies, probation services, and civil society organizations continue to rise within the P/CVE space, the need for robust, ethical, and gender-responsive systems has never been more urgent.

The discussion reinforced that empowering women in peace and security must go hand in hand with systems that protect them, listen to them, and respond with integrity. Leadership without safeguarding is incomplete—and sustainable peace cannot exist without accountability.

A Collective Responsibility

The session concluded with a powerful call to action, underscoring that safeguarding is a shared responsibility across institutions and individuals:

“Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. Listening, responding, and acting with integrity must be embedded in all we do.”

— **Madam Becky Galana**



MENTAL RESILIENCE & WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP



The Mwanamke Imara Leadership Training was powerfully enriched by an insightful and deeply reflective session led by Madam Naseerin Hassan, the program's in-house Psychologist. Her engagement provided a critical psychological lens to women's leadership in Peace, Security, and Preventing & Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE)—an area where emotional strength, self-awareness, and resilience are as vital as technical skills.

Unpacking Gender-Specific Barriers to Leadership

Madam Naseerin guided participants through an honest exploration of the gender-specific barriers that often hinder women's leadership journeys. These included:

- Internalized self-doubt shaped by societal expectations
- Psychological fatigue and burnout from navigating male-dominated institutions
- Trauma exposure within peace and security contexts
- Limited psychosocial support for women in high-pressure leadership roles

By naming and validating these challenges, the session created a safe space for women leaders to reflect, heal, and reframe their leadership identities.



Self-Awareness, Mental Resilience & Vision-Setting

A central focus of the session was the importance of self-awareness and mental resilience as foundations for effective leadership in P/CVE spaces. Participants engaged in practical reflections on:

- Understanding personal triggers, strengths, and leadership styles
- Building emotional resilience in the face of conflict, resistance, and institutional barriers
- Setting clear, values-driven visions for leadership and impact

Madam Naseerin emphasized that resilient leaders are not those who suppress vulnerability—but those who understand, manage, and transform it into purpose-driven action.

Psychological Safety as a Tool for Peacebuilding

The session highlighted the critical role of psychological support and gender-sensitive approaches in empowering women leaders to:

- Lead boldly and confidently within security and justice institutions
- Challenge harmful norms and power imbalances
- Engage communities with empathy, credibility, and emotional intelligence

Participants explored how psychologically informed leadership strengthens trust, improves decision-making, and enhances women's effectiveness as peacebuilders and change agents.

Shaping Inclusive Leadership in P/CVE

Madam Naseerin's insights reinforced a powerful truth: sustainable peace cannot be built without mentally supported and emotionally resilient leaders. Her contribution underscored the need to intentionally integrate psychosocial wellbeing into leadership development—especially for women operating in complex, high-risk P/CVE environments.



WANAMKE IMARA PROGRAM LAUNCH | LAMU COUNTY

Lamu County marked a historic milestone in advancing inclusive peace and security with the official launch of the Mwanamke Imara Program, a bold 24-month initiative aimed at amplifying women's leadership in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) across Lamu and Tana River Counties.

The program was officially launched by the Lamu County Commissioner, signaling strong national government commitment to embedding gender-inclusive approaches within state security and justice institutions—where women's voices have too often been underrepresented, yet are critically needed.

. This achievement is not just about infrastructure; it's a testament to the power of collaboration and community spirit. Together, we've overcome obstacles, turning challenges into opportunities for growth and prosperity.

The launch convened a dynamic and diverse group of stakeholders, reflecting the collaborative spirit required to confront violent extremism and insecurity. Participants included:

- National government representatives
- Security and justice sector actors
- The judiciary and probation services
- County government officials
- Civil society organizations (CSOs)

Together, these actors reaffirmed a shared mission: to build resilient, peaceful, and inclusive communities by recognizing and strengthening women's leadership at both institutional and community levels.

Across Lamu and Tana River Counties, women play critical roles as community leaders, professionals, caregivers, and first responders to early signs of radicalization. Mwanamke Imara builds on this reality by:

- Enhancing women's leadership and decision-making in P/CVE spaces
- Promoting gender-responsive policies and institutional practices
- Strengthening collaboration between state and non-state actors
- Supporting women-led approaches to community resilience and peacebuilding

This approach ensures that security solutions are not only effective—but human-centered, inclusive, and sustainable.





SAFEGUARDING & ACCOUNTABILITY IN PEACEBUILDING

A critical pillar of sustainable peacebuilding took center stage as Madam Becky Galana of Search for Common Ground Kenya passionately guided participants through a vital discourse on **Safeguarding, Monitoring, and Feedback Response Mechanisms** under the **Mwanamke Imara Program**.

This powerful session anchored the conversation on integrity, protection, and accountability—key principles that must underpin peace and security efforts, particularly within Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) frameworks.

Safeguarding as a Commitment to Human Dignity

Madam Becky emphasized that safeguarding is not merely a policy requirement, but a profound commitment to human dignity, justice, and responsible leadership. She challenged participants to view safeguarding as a living practice that protects people, strengthens trust, and reinforces ethical conduct within institutions.

Her insights highlighted the urgent need to move beyond compliance toward values-driven leadership, where safeguarding mechanisms are designed to serve people—especially women and vulnerable communities—with respect, confidentiality, and care.

Building Ethical & Responsive Systems

The session underscored the importance of establishing ethical, responsive, and confidential structures that enable:

- Safe and fear-free reporting of misconduct
- Accessible and survivor-centered feedback mechanisms
- Transparent institutional responses
- Accountability at all levels of leadership

Participants reflected on how effective safeguarding systems foster trust between communities and institutions, while weak or absent mechanisms risk silencing voices and undermining peacebuilding efforts.





GENDER TRAINING – LAMU COUNTY

Lamu County witnessed a deeply engaging and transformative Gender Training session under the Mwanamke Imara Program, as stakeholders from across sectors came together to confront the realities of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and reaffirm their collective responsibility to protect the dignity and rights of women and girls.

The session was powerfully facilitated by Mr. Mambo, whose participatory approach fostered open dialogue, critical reflection, and shared learning among participants drawn from the judiciary, administration, security agencies, civil society organizations, and county structures.

Confronting the Root Causes of GBV

At the core of the training was an honest examination of the root causes of Gender-Based Violence, including:

- Harmful gender norms and unequal power relations
- Cultural silence and stigma surrounding GBV
- Institutional gaps that hinder prevention, reporting, and justice

Participants were encouraged to interrogate how these factors intersect within their own institutions and communities—and how they can either perpetuate harm or become drivers of change.

From Awareness to Accountability

The session emphasized that addressing GBV requires more than awareness. Mr. Mambo guided stakeholders through discussions on:

- Responsive feedback and referral mechanisms that prioritize survivor safety and dignity
- The importance of confidential, survivor-centered reporting systems
- Institutional responsibility in ensuring access to justice and psychosocial support

These conversations reinforced the need for systems that not only receive complaints—but respond effectively, ethically, and without discrimination.

Breaking Silence, Reshaping Perceptions

Participants reflected on the role of leadership in challenging silence and reshaping perceptions around GBV. The training underscored that real change begins when leaders:

- Speak openly and act decisively against GBV
- Create safe spaces for survivors to be heard
- Promote equality and accountability within their institutions





ADVANCING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN PEACEBUILDING AND P/CVE

The County Government of Lamu has officially launched the Mwanamke Imara Program, a bold and transformative 24-month initiative designed to strengthen women's leadership in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE). The program was officially presided over by Hon. Tashrifa Abubakar, C.E.C.M. for Lands, Physical Planning, Urban Development, Energy, Water and Natural Resources, Infrastructure and Public Works. In her keynote address, Hon. Tashrifa emphasized that sustainable peace cannot be achieved without women at the center of security, justice, and governance processes. She underscored the importance of gender-responsive policies and institutional reforms that recognize women not merely as beneficiaries, but as critical agents of peace, resilience, and community transformation.

A United Front for Inclusive Peace

The launch convened a powerful and diverse coalition of stakeholders, reflecting the program's whole-of-society approach. Among those present were Hon. Aisha Miraj, representatives from Probation Services, the Children's Office, Prison Services, County Administration, Peace Committees, civil society actors, and grassroots community members from across Lamu County.

This multi-sectoral participation demonstrated a shared commitment to integrating gender-inclusive strategies within security and justice institutions, ensuring that women's lived experiences and leadership inform policy, prevention frameworks, and community-based responses to violent extremism.

What Mwanamke Imara Seeks to Achieve

Over the next two years, the Mwanamke Imara Program will:

- Strengthen women's leadership and participation in P/CVE decision-making spaces
- Embed gender-responsive approaches within security, justice, and governance institutions
- Build institutional accountability and coordination between state and non-state actors
- Support grassroots peacebuilding initiatives led by women and community leaders
- Amplify women's voices in shaping inclusive, locally grounded security solutions

By bridging policy, practice, and community engagement, the program aims to transform how peace and security are understood and delivered in the coastal region.



STRENGTHENING COORDINATION FOR PREVENTION: PCVE TRAINING CONVENED IN HOLA, TANA RIVER COUNTY

Action Life Kenya has successfully convened a specialized Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) training in Hola, bringing together state security agencies, justice institutions, and civil society organizations under one roof.

This strategic engagement goes beyond dialogue. It represents a deliberate effort to build trust, strengthen collaboration, and enhance information-sharing mechanisms among institutions that play a critical role in safeguarding communities. At the heart of the training is a shared commitment to establishing a coordinated early warning and early response system—one that detects risks early, responds swiftly, and prevents violence before it takes root.

Learning from the Past, Acting for the Future

Participants reflected on hard lessons from previous experiences where weak coordination led to delayed responses, fragmented interventions, rising radicalization, and vulnerable groups—particularly youth and women—being left exposed to the drivers of violent extremism.

This training marks a bold shift from reactive to preventive action. By investing in joint capacity building, stakeholders are strengthening institutional partnerships and equipping themselves with practical tools for risk analysis, early detection, referral pathways, and community-centered responses.

Building a United Front Against Violent Extremism

Through open dialogue, scenario-based learning, and collaborative planning, participants reinforced the understanding that no single institution can prevent violent extremism alone. Sustainable peace requires coordinated action between security actors, justice systems, civil society, and community structures working in trust and synergy.



The engagement also emphasized:

- Strengthening multi-agency coordination
- Improving real-time information sharing
- Enhancing community trust and participation
- Protecting at-risk groups through inclusive and rights-based approaches

A Commitment to Safer Communities in Tana River

By convening this training in Tana River County, Action Life Kenya has reaffirmed its commitment to locally driven, collaborative solutions that address the root causes of violent extremism while strengthening community resilience.

As stakeholders move forward with renewed partnerships and shared responsibility, Tana River County takes an important step toward a future where prevention is proactive, responses are coordinated, and communities are protected before violence strikes.



“ WOMEN AT THE FRONTLINES OF PEACE: STRENGTHENING PCVE

Women leaders, state actors, and civil society stakeholders recently came together for deep, solution-driven conversations aimed at addressing the unique and evolving challenges fueling Violent Extremism (VE) in the Coastal region. The engagement underscored a shared understanding: effective prevention begins with inclusive dialogue, local knowledge, and coordinated action.

The discussions centered on critical priority areas shaping today's security landscape:

- ◆ Detecting and disrupting digital violent extremism, including online recruitment and harmful narratives
- ◆ Building digital media literacy and critical thinking, especially among youth and women
- ◆ Strengthening community reporting workflows to ensure timely, trusted, and safe information sharing
- ◆ Identifying context-specific drivers of radicalization and co-creating locally grounded solutions

Women as the First Line of Defense

Women play a transformational role in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE). As mothers, sisters, educators, mentors, and community leaders, they are often the first to notice early warning signs, shifts in behavior, and emerging risks within families and neighborhoods. Their influence shapes narratives of peace, resilience, and responsibility—helping ensure that youth do not fall prey to extremist recruitment. Far from being passive stakeholders, women are active protectors of social cohesion, bridging generational gaps and reinforcing values that counter violence and division.

Mwanamke Imara: From Participation to Leadership

Through the Mwanamke Imara Program, women are not merely participants in peace and security processes—they are frontline peacebuilders. The program positions women as trusted connectors, strengthening relationships between communities, state security agencies, and justice institutions while promoting accountability, early warning, and prevention.

By amplifying women's leadership, vigilance, and lived experience, Mwanamke Imara is helping to build trust where it matters most and to transform PCVE responses from reactive to preventive.



WOMEN LEADING THE FRONTLINES OF PEACE:

PCVE Forum in Lamu

Women leaders, state actors, and non-state stakeholders convened under the Mwanamke Imara Program for a powerful, solution-driven forum facilitated by National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) Kenya. The engagement brought together diverse voices united by a shared goal: strengthening community resilience and preventing violent extremism before it takes root.

The forum created a safe and strategic space for honest dialogue, collective learning, and practical problem-solving—grounded in local realities from Lamu County and the wider Coastal region.



Key Focus Areas of the Dialogue

Participants engaged in in-depth discussions on critical PCVE priorities, including:

- ◆ Detecting and disrupting digital violent extremism, especially online recruitment and harmful narratives
- ◆ Building digital media literacy and critical thinking to counter misinformation and manipulation
- ◆ Strengthening community reporting workflows for timely, trusted early warning and referrals
- ◆ Identifying local drivers of radicalization and co-creating context-specific, community-led solutions

These conversations emphasized that prevention is most effective when local knowledge, institutional coordination, and gender-responsive approaches work together.

Women: The First Line of Defense

Women remain at the heart of Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE). As mothers, sisters, educators, mentors, and community leaders, they are often the first to spot early warning signs, changes in behavior, and emerging risks within families and neighborhoods. Their influence shapes narratives of peace and resilience, helping ensure that youth are shielded from extremist recruitment.

Their leadership is not symbolic—it is practical, protective, and transformative.

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF WOMEN LEADERS



A dynamic Leadership Training Session brought together emerging women leaders for an inspiring day of learning, reflection, and action, reaffirming the power of values-driven leadership in shaping stronger, more resilient communities. The session focused on cultivating core leadership values—integrity, vision, accountability, and teamwork—equipping participants with practical skills and mindsets to confidently lead change at the community level. Through guided reflections and interactive discussions, participants explored how effective leadership begins with character, responsibility, and service to others.

Leadership Beyond Titles

Participants were introduced to the principles of servant leadership, emphasizing that true leadership is not defined by positions or titles, but by influence, empathy, and purpose. Hands-on group discussions created space for shared experiences, peer learning, and collective problem-solving—allowing women to reflect on their roles as change agents and community champions.

The session reinforced the idea that leadership is about:

- Leading with integrity and accountability
- Inspiring others through vision and example
- Working collaboratively to achieve shared goals
- Listening deeply and responding with empathy

As part of ongoing youth and women capacity-building efforts, this training represents a deliberate investment in nurturing confident, ethical, and visionary leaders. By strengthening leadership skills at the grassroots level, we are laying the foundation for sustainable transformation—driven by women who are ready to lead with courage and purpose.





Mentorship Session: Women Strengthening Justice, Peace, and Community Resilience in Holo

At the heart of Holo, women drawn from across Tana River County's justice and security sectors came together for a transformative mentorship session themed Mwanamke Imara—a powerful space dedicated to strengthening women's leadership, resilience, and voice in peacebuilding.

The session created a rare and impactful platform where women working from the courtroom to the community could reflect, learn, and reimagine their role in building safer, more just societies.

Women at the Nexus of Justice and Peace

The day's discussions were led by Hon. Wasige, who delivered a compelling reflection on the critical role women play in justice delivery and peacebuilding. Her session unpacked how women leaders bridge vital gaps between security, ethics, inter-agency collaboration, and emotional wellness—often serving as the moral and social anchors within institutions and communities alike.

Her insights reaffirmed that justice is not only about law and procedure, but also about human dignity, empathy, and trust.

A Diverse Sisterhood of Peacebuilders

Participants included members of Court Users Committees, probation officers, police officers, prison wardens, chiefs, administrators, and grassroots peace champions. Together, they explored:

- Inclusive and values-based leadership
- Gender-sensitive mediation and conflict resolution
- Psychosocial wellbeing for women in high-pressure justice and security roles
- Ethical leadership and accountability in public service

The conversations highlighted a shared reality: strong institutions depend on emotionally grounded, ethically guided, and well-supported women leaders.

From Dialogue to Action

Through interactive sessions, storytelling, and shared lived experiences, participants identified practical and actionable pathways for:

- Strengthening mentorship networks across institutions
- Enhancing inter-agency cooperation and trust
- Driving cultural transformation within justice and security systems
- Ensuring leadership translates into real impact in everyday community life

The session reinforced that leadership is not defined by rank or title, but by presence, influence, and commitment to service.



When women rise in justice, the whole community stands taller.



Empowering Women Leaders for Peace: Leadership Training on PCVE

A dynamic Leadership Training Session brought together emerging women leaders for an inspiring journey of learning, reflection, and action, with a shared focus on strengthening leadership and collaboration in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE).

Through interactive discussions and hands-on practical exercises, participants explored the core values of effective leadership—integrity, vision, accountability, and teamwork—while embracing the true spirit of servant leadership. The session reinforced a powerful message: leadership is not defined by titles or positions, but by influence, empathy, and purpose.

Participants reflected on their roles as community influencers and peace champions, gaining practical tools to:

- Lead with ethical clarity and accountability
- Inspire others through vision and example
- Work collaboratively across differences
- Respond to community challenges with empathy and courage

By equipping young women with the knowledge, confidence, and skills to lead positive change, this training is helping shape a new generation of visionary leaders—women ready to transform their communities, counter the drivers of extremism, and build a more peaceful, inclusive, and resilient society.

When women are empowered to lead, prevention is stronger, communities are safer, and peace has a future.





Mwanamke Imara Mentorship Program: Women Transforming Peace and Justice in Lamu County

In Lamu County, women from across the justice and security sectors gathered under one roof—united by purpose, courage, and the spirit of transformation. The Mwanamke Imara Mentorship Program is more than a dialogue; it is a movement committed to strengthening women's leadership, emotional resilience, and influence in peace and justice systems.

The session was led by Hon. Wasige, whose facilitation grounded the discussions in lived experience from the courtroom to the community. Participants—including probation officers, police officers, chiefs, administrators, and peace champions—were empowered to embrace inclusive leadership, gender-responsive mediation, and wellness-centered approaches to peacebuilding.

Throughout the day, shared stories and reflective conversations underscored a powerful truth: justice and security thrive when empathy, integrity, and collaboration are prioritized. By centering psychosocial wellbeing alongside ethics and accountability, the mentorship reinforced that sustainable peace depends not only on systems and laws, but on human connection and trust.

Every reflection became a reminder that when women rise with empathy and integrity, they don't just change institutions—they transform entire communities. Through Mwanamke Imara, women in Lamu are stepping forward as mentors, bridge-builders, and frontline peacebuilders—shaping a more resilient, inclusive, and just future for all.





CENTERING WELLNESS IN PEACEBUILDING: PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT UNDER MWANAMKE IMARA

Through the Mwanamke Imara Initiative, Action Life Kenya continues to stand firmly with women serving in the justice and security sectors—women who protect our communities daily, often while carrying unseen emotional, psychological, and professional burdens.

In the latest psychosocial support session, women from justice and security institutions gathered in a safe, affirming space designed to prioritize healing, reflection, and emotional resilience. The session recognized a critical reality: while these women are frontline protectors of peace and justice, their own wellbeing is frequently overlooked.

Healing Through Shared Experience

Participants engaged in open conversations, sharing personal reflections and lived experiences that highlighted the emotional toll of working in high-pressure environments. Through guided dialogue and peer support, the session created room for collective healing, reminding participants that they are not alone in their struggles.

Women explored practical tools to manage:

- Burnout and work-related stress
- Secondary trauma and emotional fatigue
- Mental health challenges linked to justice and security work

By normalizing conversations around mental wellness, the session helped break long-standing silence and stigma—transforming vulnerability into strength.

Redefining Leadership Through Wellness

A central theme of the session was the redefinition of leadership. Participants reflected on how empathy, resilience, and emotional awareness are not weaknesses, but essential leadership strengths—especially in peace and justice spaces.



Through Mwanamke Imara, women are being supported to lead with:

- Emotional intelligence and compassion
- Resilience under pressure
- Healthy coping mechanisms
- A deeper sense of purpose and self-awareness

This wellness-centered approach ensures that leadership is not only effective, but also humane, ethical, and sustainable.

Why Psychosocial Support Matters

The session reinforced a powerful truth: strong institutions depend on emotionally supported leaders. When women in justice and security are mentally and emotionally well, they are better equipped to:

- Serve communities with fairness and clarity
- Make sound, ethical decisions
- Support vulnerable populations with empathy
- Build trust within institutions and communities

In investing in women's mental wellbeing, Action Life Kenya and the Mwanamke Imara Initiative are strengthening the very foundations of peace and justice.





EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE IN TANA RIVER COUNTY

Under the theme “Mediation, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), and Community Peacebuilding Skills,” women leaders from the justice and security sectors came together in Hola for a transformative mentorship and capacity-building session aimed at strengthening grassroots peace and justice systems.

The one-day training brought together Chiefs, Police Officers, Probation Officers, and Peace Committee members, united by a shared commitment to inclusive leadership and sustainable conflict resolution. The session was led by Rebecca Baya, whose facilitation grounded discussions in practical experience from courts and communities alike.

Building Practical Skills for Community Peace

Facilitated by Action Life Kenya, the training focused on enhancing women’s capacity in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and community peacebuilding—critical tools for addressing conflicts early and preventing escalation into violence.

Through:

- Real-life case studies drawn from Tana River County and Lamu County
- Role-plays and scenario-based learning
- Interactive group discussions and peer exchange

participants explored practical pathways for resolving disputes, promoting dialogue, restoring trust, and strengthening justice delivery at the grassroots level.

The discussions emphasized that ADR is not just a legal mechanism, but a community-centered approach that values dialogue, cultural context, and restorative solutions.

Women Leading Inclusive Peace

A key outcome of the session was the formation of women-led mediation panels—a powerful milestone toward institutionalizing women’s leadership in peace processes. These panels will serve as trusted community platforms for resolving disputes, supporting reconciliation, and fostering peaceful coexistence.

The training reaffirmed that women leaders bring unique strengths to mediation, including:

- Empathy and emotional intelligence
- Deep community trust
- Inclusive and ethical decision-making
- A focus on long-term social harmony

A Step Toward Sustainable Coexistence

By investing in women’s skills and leadership in ADR and peacebuilding, this mentorship session marked a significant step toward inclusive justice, community resilience, and sustainable peace in Tana River County and the wider coastal region. As one powerful reflection echoed throughout the session:

“When women lead in peacebuilding, communities heal faster.”

Through continued mentorship, collaboration, and women-led action, peace is no longer just an aspiration—it is becoming a lived reality within our communities.

As the day concluded, one message resonated clearly across the hall: Peace is not merely the absence of conflict—it is the presence of trust, inclusion, and shared responsibility.

STANDING FOR EVERY CHILD: CHILDREN SERVICE MONTH LAUNCHED AT HOLA LAW COURTS

Action Life Kenya stood in solidarity with partners during the official Launch of the Children Service Month at Hola Law Courts—a powerful moment anchored under the theme:

“Securing Justice for Every Child: Enhancing Multi-Agency Collaboration and Increasing Budgetary Allocation to Combat Child Abuse.”

In a world where too many children suffer in silence, the gathering served as a strong reminder that justice is not a privilege—it is a fundamental right for every child.

A United Front for Child Protection

The event convened key champions for child protection and justice, including the CECM for Finance, the Judiciary, Probation Officers, Security Actors, the Children’s Office, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Together, they reaffirmed a shared commitment to safeguarding the dignity, safety, and future of children across Tana River County.

Through dialogue and reflection, stakeholders emphasized that protecting children requires strong coordination, adequate resources, and collective accountability across institutions and communities.



Why This Month Matters

As Children Service Month is marked, several truths were powerfully underscored:

- ✓ Every case of abuse left unreported is a cry unheard.
- ✓ Every child rescued is a future restored.
- ✓ Every act of collaboration brings us closer to a society where children live free from fear and exploitation.

These reflections highlighted the urgency of strengthening reporting mechanisms, survivor-centered justice processes, and preventive community action.

Our Commitment as Action Life Kenya

Action Life Kenya reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to walk hand in hand with partners to:

- ✓ Strengthen community awareness and prevention of child abuse
 - ✓ Advocate for stronger child protection frameworks and sustainable budgetary support
 - ✓ Provide pro bono legal aid and psychosocial support for children in need
- By centering collaboration and child-sensitive approaches, the organization continues to work toward systems that listen to children, protect them, and restore their dignity.

Because Every Child Matters

The launch concluded with a shared resolve to ensure that no child is left behind, unheard, or unprotected. Protecting children is not the responsibility of one institution alone—it is a collective duty.

Because every child deserves a voice.
Every child deserves a chance.
Every child deserves justice.

Together, we can build a future where children grow in safety, dignity, and



WOMEN AT THE FRONTLINE OF PEACE & JUSTICE IN LAMU COUNTY



Mentorship Program brought together courageous and committed women from across Lamu County's security and justice sectors—chiefs, assistant chiefs, police officers, probation officers, prison officers, county enforcement officers, and peace committee members—for a full-day deep dive into mediation, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), and community peacebuilding skills.

Hosted at Royal Park Hotel, the session was facilitated by Rehema Mgiriama, whose guidance blended technical expertise with community-centered practice. The mentorship created a safe, empowering space for women to sharpen their skills, share experiences, and reaffirm their role as frontline peacebuilders.

Strengthening Women-Led Conflict Resolution

The training focused on equipping participants with practical, applicable tools to enhance women's leadership in conflict resolution and justice delivery. Key areas of engagement included:

- Understanding ADR within the Court Users Committee (CUC) framework
- Analyzing real conflict cases from Lamu County
- Hands-on mediation simulations and role plays
- Community-centered and women-led peacebuilding approaches

These sessions emphasized that effective peacebuilding is rooted in local context, dialogue, ethics, and trust, and that women are uniquely positioned to lead these processes.

From Skills to Action

By the end of the day, participants had:

- Formed women-led mediation panels
- Strengthened their technical mediation and ADR skills
- Committed to a coordinated action plan aligned with CAP/CEF mechanisms

Mwanamke Imara in Action

The mentorship session powerfully reinforced the vision of Mwanamke Imara—women who are informed, empowered, and leading transformative peace efforts in their communities. It affirmed that women in Lamu are not passive actors within the justice system, but pillars of stability, dialogue, and hope.

As the day concluded, one message stood clear: Building peace begins with building capacity.

Today, Lamu women proved once again that they are not just participants in the justice system—they are its backbone and its future.



PRISON OUTREACH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AT HINDI PRISON | CHRISTMAS 2025



On 25th December 2025, a meaningful Prison Outreach and Engagement Activity was held at Hindi Prison, bringing hope, compassion, and dialogue to incarcerated individuals during the Christmas season. The outreach was conducted under the Mwanamke Imara Program, implemented by Search for Common Ground Kenya in partnership with Action Life Kenya, with support from the Canadian Embassy.

The initiative aimed to provide psychosocial support, share goodwill, and create a safe space for prisoners to openly voice their needs, concerns, and grievances to relevant stakeholders—affirming that rehabilitation, dignity, and justice remain central to peacebuilding.

A Message of Hope and Human Dignity

The outreach was graced by Mr. Noor Dahir, alongside Rehema, Abdallah Awadh, and a female pastor who offered spiritual encouragement and reflection. Small Christmas gifts were presented to inmates as a gesture of solidarity—symbolizing compassion and reminding them that their current circumstances do not define their future. Messages of hope, resilience, discipline, and positive transformation resonated deeply throughout the session, fostering a sense of belonging and renewed purpose.

Listening to Prisoner Voices

A dedicated dialogue and engagement session enabled prisoners to openly raise critical issues affecting their welfare, including:

- ✓ Concerns around legal processes and probation procedures
- ✓ Delays and misunderstandings in case handling
- ✓ The need for recreational and informational resources (such as a television) to support mental wellbeing
- ✓ Requests for clearer guidance, regular engagement, and improved access to education and rehabilitation opportunities

This open forum strengthened trust and demonstrated the value of dialogue in promoting access to justice and humane treatment within correctional facilities.

Institutional Response and Commitments

Responding to the concerns raised, Rehema (PACS–D.O.I) provided clarity on probation and case management procedures, emphasizing fairness, due process, and established assessment frameworks, while encouraging prisoners to follow appropriate legal and administrative channels. In a strong show of continued commitment, Abdallah Awadh reaffirmed his support—highlighting past contributions such as the provision of a water tank—and pledged to support the provision of a television by early January, enhancing access to information and recreation for inmates. The pastoral session further uplifted spirits through messages of faith, reflection, and renewal, reinforcing the belief that hope can thrive even in challenging circumstances.





"It is a great honour to be part of this Mwanamke Imara forum – never before have I been in a room with so many passionate women from Tana River County. I applaud Search for Common Ground and Action Life Kenya for creating this platform. As women, we are natural nurturers – and this quality makes us exceptional leaders. When given a chance, we don't just lead – we thrive. I urge all women to be active in this 24-month journey of implementation. Let us rise, let us participate, and let us leave a mark. More so, I urge every parent, especially mothers, to prioritize education for our children. The rising cases of defilement in Tana River are heartbreaking, and school dropout rates continue to grow. Education is our strongest weapon against such ills. Women must take the lead in changing this narrative – for the sake of our daughters, our sons, and the generations to come."

Hon. Njambi Wasige
Senior Magistrate, Garsen Law Courts



"We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Action Life Kenya and Search for Common Ground for their visionary partnership in launching the Mwanamke Imara Program. By deliberately involving women working in the security sector—including in prisons—this initiative recognizes their critical role as peacebuilders and changemakers. Women are not just beneficiaries of peace; they are essential stakeholders in shaping and sustaining it. Their inclusion strengthens our collective capacity to build safer, more just, and resilient communities."

Mr. Amir Kubai
Deputy Officer in Charge – Hola
Prison



"We deeply appreciate the unwavering efforts of both men and women in advancing peace and security in our communities. Now more than ever, we must foster strong partnerships and unite across diverse platforms to confront the interconnected challenges of gender, human rights, and security. Only through inclusive dialogue, shared responsibility, and mutual respect can we build resilient societies where everyone feels safe, heard, and valued."

Mr. Timothy Jillo
Assistant County Commissioner



"While Mwanamke Imara is centered on empowering women, we as men have a profound responsibility and a vital role to play in its successful implementation. True peace and security in Lamu and Tana River can only be achieved through collective effort. Every stakeholder—men, women, state and non-state actors—has a crucial part in building safer, more inclusive communities. This program is not just for women; it's for all of us."

Mr. Noor Dahir
Executive Director, Action Life
Kenya





"As we deepen our understanding of ADR mechanisms, the Mwanamke Imara Program must equip us with professional mediation training and certified qualifications. Becoming certified mediators will strengthen our role as women in peacebuilding—allowing us to resolve conflicts with skill, integrity, and compassion. When women are empowered to mediate, communities become safer, dialogue becomes stronger, and sustainable peace becomes possible."

Madam Virginia



"Mwanamke Imara is more than a program – it is a movement building courageous women and empowered youth at the frontline of peace. Through exchange programs, peer learning, and deeper training on PCVE and POTA Law, we are shaping a generation rooted in resilience, justice, and responsibility. By intentionally including the boy child and establishing Peace Clubs in our schools, we create a united network where every young person becomes a champion of peace, security, and social transformation."

Firdaus Loo



"Social media has become the loudest voice in our generation – a space where our youth find identity, connection, and influence. Yet, it is also where many fall prey to misinformation and recruitment into violent extremism. As a community, we must not silence our youths, but guide them – helping them use these platforms responsibly, creatively, and safely. When we mentor our online youth, we protect their minds, shape their purpose, and secure a peaceful future for all."

Jilo Buya
Religious / Community Leader –
Tana River County



"The Mwanamke Imara Program is more than just dialogue – it's a movement that empowers communities from the grassroots up. By sensitizing families on peacebuilding, countering violent extremism, and fighting drug abuse, we safeguard the future of our youth. When we advocate for inclusive policies and invest in education as the greatest equalizer, we give every young person the power to rise above circumstance and become a beacon of change in their own community."

Steven Buya
President, Tana River Youth
Assembly





"Cultural barriers and the diminishing value placed on education have created a painful gap in Tana River County – a gap that fuels poverty and limits opportunity. When education loses its worth, our youth lose their future. The rising use of substances like mugooka is tearing families apart and weakening the very fabric of our community. It's time we return to the grassroots – to talk, to listen, and to act. Through continuous sensitization, community dialogue, and collective responsibility, we can rebuild values, restore hope, and secure a brighter, drug-free, and educated future for Tana River County."

Fatuma Kitole
Community Leader – Tana
River County



"The youth are not just the leaders of tomorrow – they are the leaders of today. Through our engagements, we have seen that the power to solve our community's challenges lies within us. It's time for our young people to rise, take initiative, and use the opportunities before them – including government grants and youth funds – to build sustainable businesses and secure their livelihoods. Sadly, we continue to witness many of our children in conflict with the law, a clear call for deeper community sensitization. Let us come together – parents, leaders, and youth – to guide, mentor, and empower the next generation to choose productivity over crime, and purpose over despair."

Monica
Prison Officer – Tana River County



"Having worked closely with Search for Common Ground as a facilitator, I remain deeply committed to addressing the pressing challenges facing our community. The launch of Mwanamke Imara comes at a critical time when cases of GBV are on the rise. I pledge my full support whenever called upon, because I know full well that security challenges affect Lamu County as a whole. Without security, there can be no meaningful development, no economic growth, and no employment opportunities for our youth – leaving them vulnerable to radicalization. Ensuring peace and safety is not just a duty; it is the foundation upon which we can build a prosperous, inclusive, and resilient Lamu."

Hon. Tashrif Abubakar
CECM, Department of Lands, Physical Planning,
Urban Development, Energy, Water and Natural
Resources



"Lamu County holds immense promise—not just as a tourist gem but as a hub for investment, stability, and sustainable development. However, no single entity, including government, can achieve this alone. We must forge strong partnerships with civil society, community groups, and the private sector to address the interconnected challenges we face—be it drugs, insecurity, or lack of education. Solving one uplifts the other. As we shape the future of this county, we must ensure peace and inclusivity are at the core of every effort. Women, as the backbone of our communities, must be fully engaged—because without them, peacebuilding and the prevention of violent extremism will remain incomplete. Today is not just about investment; it's about shaping a united, resilient, and prosperous Lamu."

Mr. Wesley Koech
County Commissioner, Lamu County





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