

UZIKWASA

Conscious Practice to Transformation

We work as a catalyst for gender and climate justice by facilitating **individuals, communities and systems** through self-reflective processes to transformation.



We are a rural civil society organization using reflective methodologies to center the voices of communities in addressing their own challenges. With strong roots in our home and learning laboratory, Tanzania's Pangani District, we are focused on going deep with a holistic intervention package grounded in our relationships with Pangani communities and our theory of change. We believe that structural interventions, like our reflective leadership trainings for village governments, and social (community-wide) interventions like our radio station, Pangani FM, can only effectively facilitate change if they foster deep reflection and change among individuals. And we can only achieve that as a true learning organization, practicing critical self-reflection within our organization as we facilitate the communities we serve.

Our Approach

The Pangani Model: Our holistic intervention program, which includes multimedia and reflective leadership interventions, is a product of 20 years of learning with and from Pangani communities. Multimedia campaigns engage the entire community in long-term reflective dialogue about gender and climate justice using communication materials and campaigns, village screenings of feature films produced by UZIKWASA, theater for development (TfD), and interactive community programs on our own radio station, Pangani FM. Our reflective leadership interventions facilitate structural change toward gender and climate justice by engaging a thoughtfully assembled group of key decision-makers to take action in concert. These include village, ward, district and national government officials in health, education, community development social welfare; community and religious leaders; school committees and the police.

Taken together, the multimedia campaigns and reflective leadership interventions maintain momentum for change by facilitating progress toward gender and climate justice at

both the structural (reflective leadership) and social (multimedia) levels. The Pangani Model, our home-grown approach to lasting social change, has become the learning laboratory for our Partnership Model as we strive to share reflective learning approaches beyond Pangani.

The Partnership Model: Being true to our Pangani roots meant scaling up our reflective learning approach and organizational culture, not the technical elements of our interventions. To guide our work on scaling up social norm change approaches we were influenced by the insights of the Community for Understanding Scaling Process (CUSP).¹ Since 2019, UZIKWASA has been supporting eight long-term partner organizations across Tanzania to apply reflective training in their programs and to develop an organizational learning culture. UZIKWASA also provides short-term technical assistance to partners implementing reflective approaches. A guidebook captures key elements of the training process and lessons, principles, and effective practices for cultivating effective change facilitators.² Partners are now applying reflective approaches to be

¹ A thought collective working globally on social norms change interventions to prevent violence against women and girls and improve sexual and reproductive health and rights.

² Joining Hands for Gender Justice: A guide for social change to help end violence against women and children based on the Pangani Intervention Model, UZIKWASA 2019.

facilitators of change in their own communities, and on their own issues.

The Issues

Gender Justice: Through our long-term engagement with the community and partnerships with social scientists, we understand the complex factors that make women and children vulnerable to violence and forms of social, political and economic exclusion and marginalization. Although much of our work was directly focused on violence against women (VAW) and intimate partner violence (IPV), the social drivers of gender violence led us and the Pangani communities we work with to address issues like violence against children (VAC) and feeding programs in schools, increasing the number of women in local government with coaching and mentoring support for women leaders, structural responses to violence cases with the police and courts, and working with influential religious leaders to adapt teaching and practice on healthy relationships. As we deepen our relationships with changing Pangani communities, we continue to change ourselves to facilitate progress toward gender justice. This includes investing in our

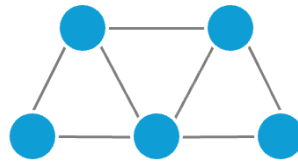
own learning through research partnerships to be effective facilitators of climate justice.

Climate Justice: Communities in Pangani are experiencing the effects of climate change, which have known disproportionate effects in the climate-sensitive sectors of agriculture, livestock, fishing and tourism. Gender inequalities and development gaps increase the impacts of environmental and climate change challenges for women and girls, who are also highly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. In our coastal home of Pangani, this is a serious concern. We saw the absence of collective responsibility for climate justice among Pangani leaders, similar to what we saw on gender justice over a decade ago. Our environment and climate program component includes environmental reflective trainings and village planning for climate action, school environment clubs, a multimedia campaign with village performances and dedicated programming on Pangani FM. Since we are still learning about climate justice ourselves, we have invested in partnerships to learn from climate experts and activists for our own internal capacity building.

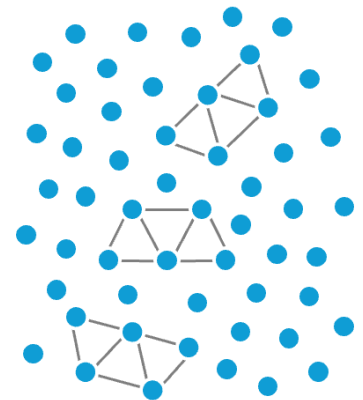
Change on Three Levels: UZIKWASA's Theory of Change



Individuals are always at the core of our thinking about how transformation for gender and climate justice works. With Individual reflection, learning, unlearning and change, we can achieve broader structural and social change toward gender & climate justice.



Structures are the centers of power and decision-making in our communities. Whether formal or informal, structures are key to changing the systems that govern our lives, starting with the people who inhabit them.



Social change reinforces individual and structural change. When our shared assumptions and convictions, the norms that govern our behavior, change toward justice, it maintains the momentum of more concentrated changes among individuals and groups.

UZIKWASA's Impact

- Community leaders actively prevent and respond to **gender violence and child abuse** by creating an environment conducive to girls' education, including a safe system for school children to report violence and sexual abuse. New leadership behavior has **strengthened institutional support to GBV survivors** and collaboration among local institutions and key

stakeholders has increased community trust in their leaders.

- Community-supported **school feeding programs**, initiated as an outcome of our reflective trainings on violence against children, now exist in all primary schools in Pangani District, and our schools have gone from lowest- to highest-ranking in Tanga Region.

- Bottom-up pressure from communities in the form of expectations for leaders to act on GBV cases has led to **increased reporting** and collaboration across justice system actors (police, courts, local government officials) to act on violence cases. Youth engagement has helped to push GBV cases to the justice system.
- Community members, especially women, are **more willing to speak out**, challenge leaders and demand transparency in public debates.
- All Pangani District **villages have action plans** for climate justice and implementing the *National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children*.
- Our own commitment to being a **learning organization** has helped us base our work in evidence and develop a theory of change to guide our practice toward gender and climate justice. Our reputation in Pangani and beyond as credible and trustworthy, based on our reflective approach, allows us to work with different structures from the village to national level.
- Our long-term partners report **cultural change toward reflective approaches** in their organizations and **increased resource mobilization** based on improved relationships and improved systems and compliance.
- With UZIKWASA's role as a facilitator, VMACs (Village Multisectoral AIDS Committees), initiated in Tanzania in national policy in the early 2000s, still lead **HIV**

prevention and treatment for people living with HIV in Pangani today.

UZIKWASA works with collaborative partners to help produce **research evidence** of the reflective approach on social norm changes within the Pangani community.

- Our community ethnography study³ found that social norms around early forced marriage (EFM) changed from pride to shame for perpetrators, and protective structural interventions prevented EFM.
- Our couple study documented changes between couples as a result of the reflective couples training in combination with the *Busati la Wenza* radio program. They include **improved family communication**, less conflict, mutual respect and trust and greater self-confidence among other changes.⁴
- Pangani FM radio programs increased political interest, political knowledge, and rejection of IPV and EM.⁵
- Our *Tamapendo* radio drama reduced acceptance of early forced marriage even one year after listening.⁶
- *Boda Bora* radio drama improved awareness, willingness to report and political prioritization of GBV, with a statistically significant effect even after one year.⁷
- UZIKWASA's program is gender transformative.⁸

I have realized that sometimes, in my leadership position, I think I'm helping, but I might be causing harm. It has emerged to me that leadership requires more listening, so we don't inflict pain on the community.

Participant from a Partner organization in a 2024 UZIKWASA Reflective Leadership workshop

³ As we Speak... Community Conversations as Evidence of Social Change in Pangani: Innovative Research for Tracking Behaviour Change in Action. UZIKWASA 2018.

⁴ UZIKWASA Couple intervention program: A qualitative study to explore the perspectives of family, friends, neighbours and other socially connected to participating couples. UZIKWASA 2022.

⁵ Green, D P, Groves, D, Manda, C. (2024) The Effects of Independent Local Radio on Tanzanian Public Opinion: Evidence from a Planned Natural Experiment. *The Journal of Politics* 86 (1). <https://doi.org/10.1086/726964>

⁶ Green, D P, Groves, D, Manda, C, Montano, B, Rahmani, B. (2023). A Radio Drama's Effects on Attitudes Toward Early and Forced Marriage:

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Results from a Field Experiment in Rural Tanzania. *Comparative Political Studies* 56(8). <https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140221139385>

⁷ Boda Bora Drama Evaluation (2023) IPA, Columbia University, UZIKWASA.

⁸ Lees, S., Marchant, M., & Desmond, N. (2021). Addressing Intimate Partner Violence Using Gender-Transformative Approaches at a Community Level in Rural Tanzania: The UZIKWASA program. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 36(13-14). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260519831373>