

# **Hidden Voices Kenya**

**(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation)**

**Trustees Annual Report 2026**

**for the period 1/07/2024 to 31/12/ 2025**

**A Charitable Incorporated Organisation Number: 1174076**

# Trustees' Annual Report

For the year ended: 2024/2025

Charity name: HIDDEN VOICES KENYA

Other names the charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any) 1174076

Charity's principal address

% 61 Third Avenue, WF15 8JS

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
Dr Christine Kahigi -Chair	Chair	2024-2025	Elected by Members
Peninah Wangari-Jones	Secretary	2024-2025	Elected by Members
Rahma Hassan	Treasurer	2024-2025	Elected by members members
Simon Kahigi Muigai	Board Member	2024-2025	Elected by members members
Dr. Jacinta N.Wachira	Board member	2024-2025	Elected by members members
Dr. Alice W.Gikandi	Board Member	2024-2025	Elected by members members

Governing document: Constitution

How the charity is constituted Trustee selection methods

Charitable Incorporated Organisation Appointed by members

## **Structure, governance and management**

HVK is governed by its trustees and a chairperson who is responsible for setting the strategic direction and policies of the charity. The trustees carry the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the charity and for ensuring that the charity satisfies its legal and contractual obligations. The trustees meet as often as they need to and delegate the day-to-day operations of the charity to the Chairperson.

## **Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document**

To promote and protect good mental health in Kenya in particular but not exclusively by:

- (a) Educating the public about mental health illnesses by raising awareness, and reducing stigma, fear, intolerance, and stereotyping by working directly with people in various settings and in culturally appropriate ways
- (b) Providing services and opportunities for people with mental illness, and their carers and families, by working in partnership with people in various settings and in culturally appropriate ways.
- (c) Advocating for better support and mental health services by working at the community level and with other service providers to increase the awareness of issues relating to mental illness, amongst politicians and government officials in an objective and persuasive way to help shape government policies and use of resources in the future.

## **Activity Report Overview**

Hidden Voices Kenya (HVK) has maintained consistent and growing activity throughout the reporting period, continuing to advance its core mission of raising mental health awareness, reducing stigma, and building community capacity across Kenya. Despite operating with significant resource constraints, the organisation has expanded its reach, deepened community relationships, developed internal capacity, and responded to an increasingly urgent demand for mental health support. The period has been one of both challenge and meaningful progress, and this report seeks to capture the full breadth of that work.

## **Context**

The reporting period has been marked by considerable social, economic, and environmental pressures that have had a direct and compounding effect on the mental health of Kenyan communities.

The persistently high cost of living has disproportionately impacted lower-income households, placing immense strain on individuals and families already operating with little financial resilience. Simultaneously, climate-related disasters, including severe drought and flooding, have caused widespread crop failure, loss of livestock, and the destruction of livelihoods, particularly among pastoral communities. These environmental shocks have in turn triggered displacement, resource-based conflict, and deepening poverty.

Forced displacement of poorer communities from their dwellings has fuelled ethnic tensions and prompted protests against the government. Political instability, sustained ethnic divisions inflamed during and after election campaigns, and the psychological toll of ongoing civic unrest have further destabilised communities. The burnout associated with political activism, amplified by the relentless pace of social media, has had a measurable and systemic effect on the mental wellbeing of a significant proportion of the population.

Against this backdrop, reported incidents of suicide, violent crime, alcohol and substance abuse, and poverty in the mainstream media have heightened public consciousness of the mental health crisis, and correspondingly increased demand for the kind of grassroots, accessible support that HVK provides. It is within this complex and challenging environment that HVK has continued to operate, adapt, and grow.

## **Activities Undertaken**

During the reporting period, HVK delivered a broad, expanding, and increasingly responsive programme of activities across multiple areas.

### **Community Engagement and Awareness**

Public talks and workshops on mental health issues and illnesses were held across multiple locations, including Githurai, Kiambu, and Nairobi, reaching diverse audiences and generating meaningful community dialogue. HVK also delivered dedicated public talks on the relationship between mental health, alcoholism, and substance abuse, a topic of particular relevance given the documented rise in substance misuse within affected communities.

Community walks were conducted in public spaces, including markets and bus shelters, as a deliberate strategy to take mental health conversations directly into everyday community life, removing the barriers of formal settings and making engagement as accessible as possible. The most recent walk received mainstream media coverage, significantly raising HVK's public profile and amplifying its message to a wider audience.

Monthly community meetings and gatherings have proven to be one of the most effective tools for listening, identifying emerging needs, and shaping the topics and approaches of future activities. Participants have consistently reported back on the practical value of these sessions, including how discussions have enabled more open conversations about mental health with their families and colleagues. This model of community-led engagement has been both actionable and affirming, demonstrating that the approach is working.

### **Schools and Young People**

In recognition of the significant need identified in previous years, HVK continued and deepened its focused programme of engagement with young people, delivering mental health workshops in high schools across the country. Engaging young people early remains a strategic priority for the organisation, grounded in the understanding that building awareness, reducing stigma, and developing emotional literacy at a formative stage has long-term benefits for individuals, families, and communities alike.

Therapy and pastoral support sessions have been offered to individuals who contacted the organisation through its social media platforms, X, Facebook, and Instagram. The growth of HVK's online presence has made the organisation more accessible to those who may be reluctant to seek support through formal channels. Recent members with professional backgrounds in social work, counselling, and mental health have meaningfully expanded HVK's capacity in this area, delivering support under the guidance of more experienced team members to ensure quality and consistency of care. In a number of cases, trustees with professional expertise have also assisted community members with legal, medical, and shelter needs, reflecting the holistic and responsive nature of HVK's approach.

### **Volunteer Recruitment, Training and Development**

Significant and sustained effort has been invested in recruiting, training, and embedding new volunteers as HVK ambassadors. These ambassadors have played a central role in developing and delivering mental health learning materials, both within the wider community and in schools. Their growing number has widened HVK's geographical reach and ensured that activities can be delivered consistently even when individual members are unavailable.

Team building activities, led by experienced members and freelance workers, have supported the integration of newer members and strengthened the overall cohesion and capacity of the organisation. Several HVK members also completed a ten-week mental health training course during this period, which was widely described as invaluable in deepening knowledge and improving what members are able to communicate effectively to the communities they serve. This investment in ongoing learning reflects HVK's commitment to quality and continuous improvement.

### **Communications and Digital Presence**

HVK has continued to generate and publish mental health content across its website, YouTube channel, and social media platforms. Two active members have taken lead responsibility for building and maintaining these platforms, producing thematic posters, recording sessions, and uploading content used across all channels. This consistent digital presence has been instrumental in raising HVK's profile, attracting new members, and ensuring that mental health information reaches audiences beyond those able to attend in-person events.

### **Signposting and Referral**

HVK has continued to signpost individuals to relevant services and professionals, playing an important connective role within the broader mental health ecosystem. Where individuals have presented with needs beyond the organisation's direct capacity, including legal, medical, or housing needs, professional trustees have stepped in to provide or facilitate appropriate support.

### **Office Space**

The acquisition of an office space in Kasarani, Nairobi has been one of the most significant organisational developments of the reporting period. Having a permanent base has transformed the organisation's ability to plan, coordinate, and deliver activities effectively. It has also provided a professional, private, and confidential environment for individuals seeking counselling or pastoral support, a critical requirement given the sensitivity of mental health work and the importance of maintaining trust with those who reach out for help. The office has already become a hub for team meetings, training sessions, and community engagement.

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising efforts were undertaken during the period to support emergency assistance for individuals severely impacted by mental health challenges following ongoing miscarriages of justice. Additional fundraising has continued to sustain volunteer engagement and meet the ongoing costs of community activities.

### **Challenges**

The most significant and persistent challenge facing HVK remains the lack of external funding and day-to-day resources. No external grants were received during the reporting period, and the organisation has been sustained almost entirely through the personal financial contributions of two donor trustees.

A Triodos Bank account holding £160, which had proven difficult to access and operate, was formally closed in December 2025 and the funds redirected to support HVK activities.

The reliance on a small number of individuals for both financial and operational sustainability represents a vulnerability that the organisation is acutely aware of. The breadth of need

within communities, combined with limited human and financial capacity, has required HVK to be highly strategic about how and where it deploys its resources. Decisions about priorities have not always been straightforward, and there are areas of need the organisation has been unable to respond to as fully as it would wish.

Looking ahead, the ongoing political awakening in Kenya and upcoming elections are anticipated to place further pressure on demand, particularly around burnout, trauma, and the psychological impact of witnessed or experienced violence on activists and their communities. HVK is committed to responding to this need but recognises that doing so sustainably will require additional resource.

It is important to acknowledge that the true value of what HVK delivers cannot be measured by its financial expenditure alone. The in-kind contributions of all those who volunteer their time, provide free therapy and counselling, offer transport, bring food to events, and lend their professional expertise are immeasurable. Were these contributions to be monetised, the actual value of HVK's annual output would far exceed what its financial records reflect.

## **Outcomes and Achievements**

Despite operating under considerable constraints, HVK has achieved significant and meaningful outcomes during the reporting period:

A growing number of volunteers have been recruited and trained as HVK ambassadors, substantially widening the organisation's reach and ensuring greater resilience in its capacity to deliver. The ambassador model has proven highly effective, enabling different members to step up for different activities based on availability and expertise, without compromising on delivery.

External demand for HVK's expertise has grown, with other organisations actively inviting members to deliver mental health talks, a clear indication of the organisation's growing reputation and the quality of its work. The number of individuals reaching out directly for support has also increased, reflecting both greater awareness of HVK and greater willingness within communities to seek help.

Monthly community meetings have proven to be a highly effective model of participatory engagement. Participants regularly report back on the practical value of awareness sessions in their personal and professional lives, and many have gone on to seek deeper knowledge or refer others to HVK, demonstrating a genuine multiplier effect.

Several HVK members completing the ten-week mental health training course has meaningfully strengthened the organisation's knowledge base and the quality of its community-facing work. This investment in learning will continue to benefit the communities HVK serves for years to come.

The establishment of a permanent office base in Kasarani represents a significant milestone in the organisation's development, enabling more consistent, professional, and confidential service delivery and providing a foundation from which HVK can continue to grow.

HVK's sustained and consistent grassroots activity, maintained by two dedicated workers focused respectively on community mobilisation and digital communications, has ensured continuity and momentum despite financial limitations. The mainstream media coverage received during the period is a further testament to the organisation's expanding public presence and the relevance of its work.

## **Financial Summary**

HVK's financial activity during the period has been modest but carefully managed. Income has consisted of monthly trustee donations. Their monthly donations have covered freelance worker payments, activity costs, refreshments, access needs for HVK ambassadors, security, internet costs, training, intervention sessions and office running costs. Bringing the direct costs to a total of Ksh. 942,133 or £5413 for the period of July 2024 and December 2025.

Whilst the organisation is currently surviving on a bare minimum of financial resource, it is committed to pursuing external funding opportunities and building the financial resilience necessary to meet the growing demand for its services.

## **Conclusion**

Hidden Voices Kenya continues to demonstrate remarkable commitment, creativity, and impact in the face of significant and sustained resource limitations. The growing demand for its services, expanding volunteer base, increasing community and media recognition, and the establishment of a permanent office base are all clear indicators of an organisation that is effective, trusted, and needed.

The mental health needs of Kenyan communities are profound and growing, shaped by a complex intersection of economic hardship, political instability, climate crisis, and social inequality. HVK is uniquely positioned, through its grassroots relationships, community-centred approach, and deeply committed team, to respond to those needs in a meaningful and lasting way.



Securing sustainable external funding remains the organisation's most urgent priority. With adequate resource, HVK's capacity to serve, support, and strengthen its communities would be transformative. The organisation looks to the future with ambition, determination, and a deep sense of purpose.

## **Financial Review**

### **Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements**

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ascertain the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees**

**Signature**



**Name** Dr. Christine Muthoni Kahigi

**Position** Chair

**Date** 29.04.2026