



African Philanthropy Network
THE VOICE AND ACTION FOR AFRICAN PHILANTHROPY

20

NARRATIVE REPORT

25

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i. Acronyms and Abbreviations

APN	African Philanthropy Network
CAPSI	Centre for African Philanthropy and Social Investment
CtGA	Change the Game Academy
CSAs	Civil Society Actors
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EAPN	East Africa Philanthropy Network
GfC	Giving for Change program
IJR	Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
IFIP	International Funders for Indigenous Peoples
LLLI	Local Leadership Lab Initiative
MINDS	Mandela Institute for Development Studies
P-Hub	Philanthropy Observatory and Innovation Hub
PSA	Philanthropy Support Actors
SAYoF	Southern African Youth Forum
TRA	Tanzania Revenue Authority
UNNGOF	Uganda National NGO Forum
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ZimRights	Zimbabwe Human Rights Association

ii. Who we are

At its core, APN seeks to position African philanthropy as a fundamental expression of civic participation and solidarity for the purpose of building equitable and just societies in Africa.

Our Vision

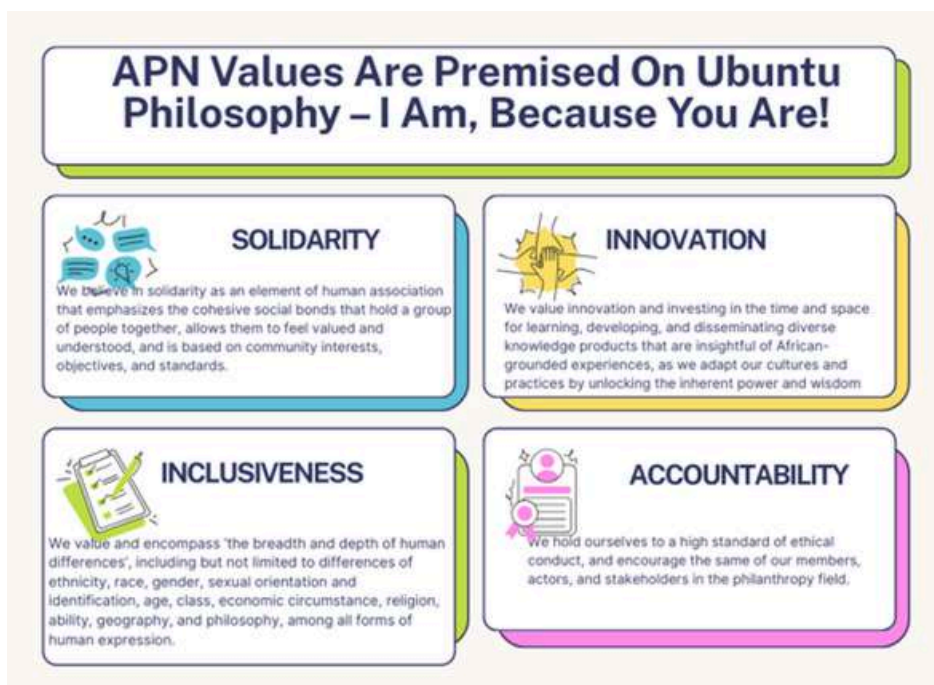
A relevant, effective, and responsive philanthropy for building equitable and just societies in Africa.

Our Mission

APN’s mission is to elevate the power of philanthropic giving practices that are inclusive and beneficial to the communities across the continent. In the absence of a strong enough infrastructure that can bring actors in the African philanthropy field together to articulate a common voice, APN serves as a home to philanthropy actors in Africa – nurturing a pragmatic and democratic learning community, a safe space, and a trusted source of collective intelligence on African philanthropies.

Our Values

APN believes in African agency -Africans should be at the center of the response to their challenges, have control over their actions, and be more responsible for the consequences on their own lives and communities. As such, we will aspire to live the values of ‘UBUNTU’ grounded in the spirit of Solidarity, Inclusiveness, Innovation, and Accountability.



1 Introduction

The African Philanthropy Network (APN) is the only continent-wide member network that convenes African-established and Africa-led organizations to promote voice and action for African philanthropy. APN believes that African philanthropy is a durable strategy for systemic and transformative change in the development of people and their communities.

With so much in flux, and multi-layered power dynamics on the continent, actors are seeking alternative ways of doing and deciding. Leaders are asking how philanthropy achieves impact not just as a source of funding, but through non-financial resources. APN's 2024 – 2028 Strategic Framework was developed in response to this surge of interest. During the 2nd year of Strategy implementation, APN continues to nurture the infrastructure for philanthropy in Africa, bring actors together and articulate a common voice to help drive solutions for Africa. We strive to work as one African family, to strengthen national and regional networks, and further enhance the effectiveness of philanthropy practice and policy. We are also committed to improving the capacity and resilience of the secretariat.

We prioritize broadening our membership, strengthen our linkages with African youth, pan-African institutions, social movements, civil society, and with African Governments, as well as global philanthropy development support entities.

This narrative report presents the progress in implementing APN's Strategic Framework (2024–2028). It provides highlights of achievements and challenges, lessons learned from the collective effort of the secretariat in collaboration with the network's members, our partners/funders, and philanthropic

communities committed to promote the voice and action for African philanthropy over the year from 1st January to 31st December 2025. It also highlights key opportunities ahead of 2026 for our work.

Context

Over the years, the APN has become an important continent-wide network of African organizations and communities promoting voice and action for African philanthropy. This is also highlighted in the [15 Years of APN documentary](#).

- Across the world, philanthropy is undergoing rapid transformation that brings about both exciting opportunities and complex challenges. As a more unified global culture around giving emerges, so do new players, approaches, and renewed and projected optimism and commitment. Yet, shifting attitudes toward people-led philanthropy, intense debates about power, effectiveness and the difficulty of operating amidst certain policy environments require philanthropists and social investors to demonstrate their value for a diversification of stakeholders.
- The African philanthropy landscape and its ecosystems continues to evolve in line with global trends and internal continental dynamics. A shift toward community-driven approaches, increased demand for flexible and long-term funding, and the push for donor localization underscore the urgency and relevance of APN's mission. And yet, despite the progress, civic space restrictions, inconsistent and irresponsive regulatory environments, over dependency on foreign funding, limited domestic resource mobilization, and persistent asymmetric power dynamics remain significant barriers to

to building resilient, community centered philanthropy ecosystem.

Year 2025 was a difficult one for our members and most civil society actors (CSAs) on the continent. The space for civil society continues to close, the regulatory environment for CSOs became even more restrictive, and the operating environment toughened in many countries. Civil society actors in many countries are subjected to unusual policy and state security bullying. Moreover, donors who supported many CSOs have closed their offices or are uncertain about their future support. The global changes have negatively impacted CSAs across the continent.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was shut down, and other donors have scaled down or ended long-standing partnerships across the continent. This has led to increased competition of limited resources as well as reduced community engagement. These shifts reflect a combination of new domestic political pressures, policy realignments (both domestic and foreign), and an emphasis on self-reliance narratives. Nonetheless, these dynamics are creating an opportunity for a reimagining of how African philanthropy can fill the gap, support communities and their movements, and reimagine a new system and structure for civil society to navigate change towards what people really want.

- There is a strong giving culture in African societies that thrives through socio-cultural engagements and in support of specific events and emergencies but it has not yet been tapped into as a deliberate strategy for resourcing communities' own development. The idea of "alternative" funding strategies tends

to be understood as shifting from one kind of international donor or investor to another, with local funding rarely considered as an option. This is compounded by a generally weak infrastructure for promoting alternative resourcing strategies.

APN continue to track and monitor these shifts across sub-Saharan Africa nations, as they pose an existential threat to sustainability and resilience of our own mission and our membership at large.

2 Key Achievements

In 2025, our priorities aligned with the five year (2024-2028) Strategic Framework. They were as follows:

1. Nurture spaces for collective voice and networking;
2. Influence recognition of philanthropic practices and advocate for an enabling policy environment
3. Strengthen APN's capacity and resilience

At the heart of our work is a commitment to advancing an African-led philanthropy rooted in community agency, responsive systems and justice.

3.1 Nurture spaces for collective voice and networking

The objective was implemented through organized online and in-person peer learning and training sessions for members including youth, focused on themes including community philanthropy through fundraising and domestic resource mobilization and leadership, just to mention a few.

3.1.1 Peer Learning and Training

APN organized several learning platforms designed to strengthen capacities, promote member connections, and drive thought leadership across the continent.

On-Line Peer Learning

Four webinars were organized in 2025:

- The first one was held on 12 March 2025 bringing together 39 member organizations. It focused on the review of 2024 APN Assembly outcomes and key recommendations, while exploring strategies for advancing 2025 priorities with regard to movement building, policy and practice, and knowledge production.
- The second roundtable, convened on 22 May 2025, reflected on the constitutional gaps and proposed amendments. A total of 31 member organizations attended.
- On 4th September 2025, a regional webinar was convened titled “Advancing Locally-Led Development in Southeast Africa: Insights from the Local Leadership Lab (LLL) Initiative.” This was co-created in collaboration with Thubutu Africa Initiative (Tanzania), CAPAIDS Uganda, and FEMME FORTE Uganda. The webinar brought together 42-member organization and partners representing 11 countries: Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Zimbabwe.
- Another webinar took place on the 4th December 2025. This one was titled “Advancing Peace Through African Philanthropy.” Our members, Amani Communities Africa, Amalna South Sudan, FAPROS (South Kivu, DRC), and the Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights) shared their experiences, recent study findings and effective tools in this response. The webinar attracted about 35 members and partner organizations.

In-Person Peer Learning

- A members' training workshop on alternative sources of funding and fundraising was held from 1st to 3rd July 2025 at Kibo Palace Hotel in Arusha, Tanzania. The training had a purpose of equipping members with new knowledge in alternative sources of funding and fundraising strategies, and help to align their mission to potential donors within their countries. A total of 54 leaders from 26-member organizations attended the 3-days training that was delivered by international trainers from the Change the Game Academy (CtGA). More information about the training can be found on this [report](#).



- APN in collaboration with the Giving for Change (GfC) program convened a workshop for CSOs in Arusha, Tanzania on September 15, 2025. The purpose of this workshop was to “Reimagine CSOs Resourcing Through Community and Domestic Philanthropy”. More than 90 participants (44 men and 46 women) attended, 36 of which were from across Tanzanian regions representing Regional Administration, Local Governments, and CSOs. The remaining attendants were GfC program partners. This [report](#) provides more information on the workshop.
- Another training on Advancing Fundraising Strategies took place on December 2025. The training's purpose was to strengthen organizational capacity of 18 fundraising staff from 10 members organizations in Tanzania, to equip them with a positive mindset and appreciation for community and domestic mobilized resources in supporting institutional sustainability and resilience. The training led to mentorship support in developing fundraising plans, that can potentially receive match funding through the partnership between APN and Change the Game Academy (CtGA). The [training report](#) provides more information.

Youth Participation

In 2025, two webinars and a training on leadership were organized to ensure meaningful participation of youth voice and action in African philanthropy and continental development.

- On May 7 2025, 12 youth leaders from various African countries, primarily Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, who had completed training in African philanthropy leadership in 2024 convened. The purpose was to assess the impact of the previous years' training and identify potential opportunities for future engagement. The responses through a live poll conducted indicated about 83% of trainees found the training to have added value into their professional works. They mentioned themes like social impact entrepreneurship and emotional intelligence were particularly useful. APN encouraged youth leaders to engage more effectively by sharing their experiences through storytelling and article production and submissions to APN *Simulizi* blog. The Blog collects commissioned stories & articles from youth leaders across the continent.

- In October 15, 2025 a webinar was organized around a discussion on “Igniting Youth-Led Philanthropy through Partnerships,” attracting 45 participants (15 men and 30 women) from across the continent and the diaspora. Young leaders discussed strategies for leveraging technology and partnerships in community-driven initiatives and innovative fundraising. Key challenges to meaningful participation of young leaders were noted to include limited internet access, fragmentation, digital illiteracy and insufficient youth narratives in philanthropy. It was also revealed that there are opportunities that can help in elevating the current situation, which include: storytelling for social impact, mobilization of local resources, and engagement through social media and crowdfunding.
- In 2025, as in previous years, APN continued to collaborate with the Pan-Africa Leadership Institute (PALI) to deliver a training on **Leadership in African Philanthropy**. This year the training took place in September from which twenty (20) youth leaders from ten countries were recruited to attend and receive certificates of recognition. This training covered topics such as *Introduction to African Philanthropy, Leadership 101: What Every Leader Must Know about Leadership, Social Impact and Entrepreneurial mindset, Tools for Developing Entrepreneurial Capacity, and Emotional Intelligence*.

3.1.2 Spaces for Collective Voice and Networking

Establishment of the Philanthropy Observatory and Innovation Hub

APN sets a bold mission to elevate the power and recognition of African philanthropy (financial and non-financial resources and assets). One of the ways this is achieved is through increasing ownership, unlocking agency and strengthening communities’ ability to tackle barriers preventing actors and key stakeholders from adopting and delivering on commitments that recognize, enable and resource diverse community groups as key development actors in their own rights.

APN has therefore established a Philanthropy Observatory and Innovation Hub (P-Hub) in Tanzania with the direct award from WINGS through Lift Up Philanthropy (LUP) Fund. P-Hub is co-created by 14 members who seek to address systemic challenges facing the country’s philanthropy ecosystem by creating sustained, safe, and inclusive spaces for dialogue, reflection, and co-creation. Its core aim is to align policies, practices, and support structures with the lived experiences, aspirations, and needs of diverse actors within Tanzania’s civil society and philanthropic communities.

The P-Hub in collaboration with APN as a regional connector for Local Leadership Lab Initiative (LLLLI) and the global CIVICUS Campaign organized a workshop to reflect on homegrown solutions towards ensuring civil society actors (CSAs) have access to Charitable Status as a strategy to unlock domestic philanthropy in the country. This workshop fostered dialogue between CSOs and the Tanzania Revenue



Authority (TRA) in July 2025. The dialogue was also attended by legal professionals and the media. Read the full article [here](#).

Local Leadership Lab Initiative (LLLI)

APN is partnering with CIVICUS Global Alliance as a Regional Convening Partner for the Local Leadership Lab (LLL), an experimental campaign initiative. The campaign is aimed at addressing the barriers (political, technical, and behavioral) that hinder governments, donors, and other stakeholders from recognizing, enabling, and resourcing diverse local civil society groups as key development actors. The LLLI supports inclusive spaces where civil society groups can collaborate with other key actors and decision-makers to develop context-appropriate policies and solutions. Under this initiative we worked with in-country members of Uganda (with FEMME Forte and CAPAIDS) and Tanzania.

- APN collaborated with CAPAIDS Uganda to launch its position paper that was generated from the “The status of Locally Led Development in Uganda: Voices of local and National Actors study.” This study revealed that local actors remain sidelined as "subcontractors" rather than co-creators, while restrictive funding and burdensome compliance requirements stifle their ownership of development processes. It concludes by raising demands of radical shifts: donors must establish pooled funding, simplify reporting requirements, and prioritize core-support for organizational sustainability.
- In August, the APN, FEMME Forte and CAPAIDS African attended the training of trainers on Knowledge Management in Kampala Uganda, which was convened by CIVICUS. The training focused on practical knowledge required to build a state of art knowledge infrastructure, including how to capture, organize, and use existing information to enhance learning, accountability, and collective action.
- APN participated in the International Civil Society Week (ICSW) held from November 1–5 in Bangkok, Thailand, co-organised by CIVICUS and the Asia Democracy Network, contributing to the session “From Process to Practice: What It Takes to Enable Local Leadership”. APN’s contribution focused on sharing key learnings, co-created prototypes, and lessons from its LLLI experience- positioning African philanthropy perspectives within global civil society dialogue.

National and Regional Philanthropy Fora

APN actively co-created, co-convened, and participated in national philanthropy fora organized by our members and partners at the national and regional levels. These fora aim to strengthen our shared identity and showcase the impact of community and domestic philanthropy, share new research, influence and advocate for policy and systems changes, and many other things required to unlock the potential for African philanthropy. During the year, we co-created and participated in the following gatherings:

- In Burkina Faso, the Burkinabe Association of Fundraising (ABF) convened the National Philanthropy Forum in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on March 20, 2025, under the theme “*Inclusive Community Development: Strategies to Strengthen Local Actors and Optimize Resource Mobilization for Resilience.*” The forum brought together high-level national stakeholders, including government authorities, traditional and religious leaders, and the

Ambassador of the Netherlands to Burkina Faso. In addition to providing support, the APN helped position community philanthropy as a viable and sustainable catalyst for inclusive local development, while reinforcing the importance of strengthening local actors, mobilizing domestic resources, and fostering cross-sector collaboration to enhance community resilience.

- In Tanzania, CSO Week 2025 was held in Arusha from June 2–6 2025 under the theme “Pathways to Progress,” convening civil society leaders, development partners, policymakers, and practitioners to reflect on the future of civic space and sustainable development in Africa. The APN was actively represented throughout the week, resulting in philanthropic perspectives of key discussions on enabling policy environments, locally led development, and the role of African resources in advancing inclusive progress. Through its engagement, APN’s participation reinforced its commitment to building solidarity, collective voice and action across the civil society ecosystem, while positioning African philanthropy as a strategic partner in shaping practical and sustainable pathways to progress.
- In Ghana, the STAR-Ghana Foundation convened a broad range of stakeholders including community-based organizations, think tanks, international NGOs, development partners, and senior government officials at the Ghana Civil Society Forum held from June 25–26 in Accra, Ghana. The theme was “*Reimagining Development Financing and Civic Action: Challenges, Opportunities, and the Way Forward.*” The African Philanthropy Network (APN) was represented at the forum, contributing perspectives on strengthening African philanthropy, sustainable financing for civil society, and enabling environments for civic action. The forum was co-created with partnership with other national-level CSOs, and officially opened by the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, Hon. Prof. Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang. The Vice President opening remarks underscored the need to rethink national approaches to development financing and civic participation.



- In Uganda, APN joined over 450 delegates at the inaugural Annual Philanthropy Symposium, held from August 4–6 2025 in Kampala, Uganda, under the theme “Celebrating and Reclaiming Giving: Centering Local Philanthropy in Uganda.” The symposium opened with

reflections from the conveners, Dr. Moses Isooba, Executive Director of the Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF), who drew on traditions such as bulungi bwa nsi (the common good of the community) and the proverb kamu kamu gwe muganda (little by little makes a bundle) to illustrate that generosity is deeply embedded in Uganda's cultural DNA. Representing APN, Dr. Tenga delivered a compelling presentation based on a comparative study of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and across the continent. She challenged participants to rethink CSR as more than a corporate checkbox, emphasizing the need for philanthropy rooted in African heritage and collective responsibility. "Our collective freedom will only come from collective struggles. From today, let's focus our efforts to mobilize CSR resources towards addressing social justice issues," she urged.



- At the regional level the EAPN held the 9th East Africa Philanthropy Conference, from June 11-13, 2025 in Kigali, Rwanda. The conference was attended by over 550 delegates from 32 countries in Africa and beyond. The gathering assembled a diverse array of participants, including representatives from philanthropic organizations, government entities, private sector innovators, civil society leaders, academics, and media professionals to critically examine, deconstruct and reimagine the structure of development and giving in East Africa and beyond. "We must create new tables where our voices are heard, and our practices are honored." This powerful statement by Dr. Stigmata Tenga, Executive Director of the APN captured the essence of a plenary discussion titled "Capital Reimagined: Why the Financing of Change Must Change". The panel examined the systemic barriers that confine capital to outdated models and explored how financing mechanisms can evolve to foster long term support, trust and resilience in development. Other speakers in this session included Henrietta Bankole-Olusina of the Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, Samuel Mugacha of Imaginable Futures and Richard Johnson of Healthy Brains Global Initiative. Dr.Tenga emphasized the importance of African philanthropy as a critical strategy to national development, stating, "Philanthropy is not merely an act of giving, it is an act of power."



- At the regional level the EAPN held the 9th East Africa Philanthropy Conference, from June 11 to 13, 2025 in Kigali Rwanda. The conference was attended by over 550 delegates from 32 countries in Africa and beyond. The gathering assembled a diverse array of participants, including representatives from philanthropic organizations, government entities, private sector innovators, civil society leaders, academics, and media professionals to critically examine, deconstruct and reimagine the structure of development and giving in East Africa and beyond.

3.1.3 Showcase African Philanthropy Globally

All these convening spaces are instrumental in promoting and amplifying the voice and action for African philanthropy by showcasing practices through the work of our members. The goal was to promote community and domestic philanthropy as a durable strategy for community sustainability and national development.

- In January, APN participated in the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP) Global Conference in Naivasha, Kenya, which aimed at strengthening the visibility of African philanthropic perspectives within global funding dialogues. Through targeted engagement with funders, Indigenous leaders, and civil society actors, APN advanced discussions on locally rooted philanthropy, equitable financing, and power-shifting to Indigenous communities. The engagement contributed to deepened relationships with global funding actors and reinforced APN’s role in promoting partnerships that support Indigenous- and community-led initiatives, and as a credible voice in shaping inclusive funding practices.
- In March, the APN collaborated with UNNGOF to co-convene a webinar titled “Philanthropic Trends to Look Out for Africa and Asia,” bringing together practitioners and thought leaders to reflect on the evolving dynamics shaping philanthropy across the two regions. The discussion highlighted key emerging trends, including the shift toward locally led and community-driven development, diversification of funding sources, increased emphasis on trust-based philanthropy, and the growing role of data and knowledge in decision-making. Speakers



underscored how both Africa and Asia are navigating increasingly complex and constrained funding landscapes, while deliberately asserting approaches rooted in local context, solidarity, and long-term impact rather than externally driven models. The webinar provided a valuable platform for cross-regional learning, reinforcing APN's role in fostering dialogue that amplifies southern perspectives and supports more equitable, resilient, and locally grounded philanthropic ecosystems.



- The 6th African Philanthropy Conference (6APC), held from July 27–31 2025 at the American University in Cairo (AUC), under the theme “Sustainable Financing for Development in the Majority World.” Once again, the 6APC was organized in partnership between the APN, TrustAfrica, the Centre on African Philanthropy and Social Investment (CAPSI), the Southern Africa Trust, the African Philanthropy Forum (APF), and the East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN). The conference brought together leaders, scholars, and practitioners to reflect on how Africa can build resilient, inclusive, and a locally grounded financing system.

- The 2025 Giving for Change (GfC) programme convened a *Learning and Reflection Meeting*, hosted by the APN from September 15–19 2025 at Masailand Safari and Lodge in Arusha, Tanzania. The meeting brought together 90 participants, including representatives from Tanzanian CSOs (who attended a dedicated CSO workshop on 15 September) and GfC Alliance national anchor partner organizations from six African countries; Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, and Uganda, as well as partners from Brazil and Palestine. The meeting was held under the theme: *Community-Led Development through Community Philanthropy: What's Now? What's Next?* The GfC Program has been implemented since 2021, the meeting provided a platform to take stock of progress, evaluate the programme's theory of change through the external evaluation, and identify areas for future work to strengthen community-led development through community and domestic philanthropy.



3.2 Nurture spaces for collective voice and networking

This objective was achieved to a great extent through conducting and finalizing studies to generate data, information, new knowledge and narrative building as well as strategic communications.

3.2.1 Data, Information and Knowledge Management

One study was finalized and three other conducted successfully, as summarized below:

Synthesis of Women and Philanthropy Study

During the year, APN synthesized the findings of the six country (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, and Uganda) studies on Women and Philanthropy in Africa into a report. [The Synthesis Report](#) highlights that women's philanthropic giving across all study countries is vibrant but largely informal, and deeply rooted in cultural, religious and community-based practices. Drawing on insights from 199 respondents, the study shows that women give primarily through direct support, volunteering, mentorship and community solidarity, often prioritizing vulnerable and marginalized individuals. However, their contributions are constrained by structural barriers including limited financial resources, patriarchal control of assets, weak institutional infrastructure, low awareness of enabling tax and policy incentives and restrictive regulatory environments.

Despite these challenges, the report identifies strong opportunities to strengthen women's philanthropy through financial inclusion, women's cooperatives, positive masculinity, youth engagement and improved policy frameworks. It concludes with a clear call to enhance visibility, build sustainable giving infrastructure and foster responsive legislation to unlock the full potential of African women as philanthropic leaders and change-makers.

Corporate Social Investment (CSI) Studies

Findings from CSI studies conducted in six countries- Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana, Kenya, and Cameroon- indicate that while legal frameworks and regulations exist to guide corporate social investments, enforcement remains weak or inconsistent. In sectors such as mining, oil, and gas, CSI tends to be implemented primarily as an environmental mitigation measure. However, there is often a lack of clarity on the percentage of profits that companies are required to allocate for CSI activities. Most CSAs interviewed reported that they have never accessed CSI resources, despite being aware of legal provisions. This disconnect is attributed to weak or non-existent relationships with corporations and limited capacity among CSAs to engage or advocate effectively for strategic partnerships to unlock CSR. Also, there is an absence of effective in-country mechanisms for CSOs to access the CSR resources. Country studies are being finalized, and the report summarizing key findings and proposed response mechanisms will be release in 2026.

Tracking Philanthropy Policy Changes

One of APN's commitments is to advocate for an enabling environment for philanthropy in the

continent. To enable this, we have employed the policy tracker, an [online system](#) used as a tool for assessing and monitoring philanthropy policy changes. The policy tracking system was adopted in collecting policy changes in five countries: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda, to start with. The main focus is five areas of concern: registration, tax and tax incentives, resources mobilization, government oversight and policy engagement, as highlighted in the APN Legal Assessment Report 2022. The findings will inform the in-county advocacy framework for responsive policies. These country reports are being synthesized into one report that will be released in 2026.

Social Justice Grantmaking Survey

This survey was conducted by member organizations to better understand the funding landscape across the continent, to generate fresh insights and evidence to strengthen advocacy and encourage funders to commit to multi-year, flexible financial support for advancing social justice. The analysis of the findings reveal that African social justice organizations remain heavily dependent on short-term, donor-driven funding, with foreign foundations providing the largest share of resources. While some diversification is taking place through income-generating activities and fundraising campaigns, local philanthropy including African private foundations, corporations, and high-net-worth individuals remains underdeveloped. This imbalance highlights both the vulnerability of over-reliance on international donors and the untapped potential of strengthening African-led resource mobilization and ownership. More information on this can be found [here](#).

Mapping of PSAs for Tanzania

During the year, APN conducted research for the Mapping of Philanthropy Support Actors (PSAs) in Tanzania to strengthen understanding of the local philanthropy ecosystem and inform strategies for sustainable resource mobilization. The exercise applied a mixed-methods approach, combining desk review, virtual key informant interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions. In total, 420 PSAs were identified with 42 actors systematically engaged in a survey through primary data collection across civil society, government, private sector, faith-based institutions, media, academia, and development partners. The mapping revealed a diverse but fragmented ecosystem, with civil society organizations promoting giving accounting for 62.9% of identified PSAs, followed by international NGOs and funders (13.1%), and other institutional actors including government, media, religious institutions, academia, parliamentary committees, and the private sector. Findings highlighted strong traditions of community and faith-based giving, alongside challenges related to coordination, regulatory compliance, and over-reliance on external funding. The results provide APN and its members with actionable evidence to guide programming, strengthen partnerships, and advance advocacy for more enabling environments for community and domestic philanthropy. More information can be found in the [Mapping of PSAs report](#).

3.2.2 Knowledge and Narrative Generation

The focus on knowledge production and narrative building aims to shift the simplistic narrative about Africa as a poor continent by showcasing the value and impact of philanthropic practices in community-led and national development. How much do indigenous insights and wisdoms contribute to our research, methods of analysis, decision making and action? We also examine the

use of language, both our native tongues as well as rhetoric, in furthering or hindering meaningful participation of community as rightful investors in their development. We also continue the work of exploring how we can build solidarity towards narratives that showcase African philanthropy as a relevant driver of community-led transformation.

State of Philanthropy Booklet

During the reporting period, APN compiled and conducted a preliminary thematic analysis of 20 submissions of articles by members in Sub-Saharan Africa to showcase and celebrate what has worked well into the 2024 State of Philanthropy Booklet. Emerging themes highlight women's empowerment through entrepreneurship and advocacy; community-led efforts to establish essential infrastructure such as schools, clinics, and roads; strategic advocacy for systemic policy change and environmental justice; and innovative models of domestic philanthropy that are reshaping funding ecosystems towards local ownership and sustainability. These articles are found in [2024 State of Philanthropy Booklet](#).

Stories and Publications on Philanthropic Practices

APN has extended its reach and expanded its knowledge library. We have:

- produced and published more than 39 blogs/stories, 14 from 2024 and 25 in 2025. All are found on the website on [Simulizi Blog](#).
- 7 newsletters and a number of key advocacy messages were disseminated through social media platforms.
- translated stories and other advocacy products were into at least two languages French and English. We also use gender sensitive and non-discriminatory language (going away from the language of the colonizers). This has resulted into greater engagement within Francophone countries in sub-Saharan Africa, as reflected in an increasing number of received membership applications.
- developed a bilingual “lexicon” on commonly used terminology in African philanthropic giving, which is under finalization. It will be disseminated and receive inputs from about fifteen known translators in the continent, who are working with our members in different countries.

Tools for Philanthropy Policy Advocacy Campaign

During the implementation period we were able to develop tools for guiding our members' policy advocacy and campaigns for the recognition of philanthropy. Two sets of tools have been uploaded on website, and shared with members.

1. For Advocacy campaigns: two modules were developed on (i) Advocacy 101: The Basics of Advocacy for African Philanthropy, and (ii) Building an Advocacy Campaign to Promote African Philanthropy.
2. Policy Advocacy: five modules are available: (i) Policy & Policy Development, (ii) Policy Advocacy, (iii) Evidence Based Research in Policy Advocacy, (iv) Advocacy Planning Framework (APF), and (v) Good Practices in Policy Advocacy.

Expanding Access to Information

This has been done through strategic communications and digital engagement through social

platforms.

- APN recorded strong growth across digital platforms, demonstrating increased visibility and brand recognition. During the reporting period we have reached 3,300 active users; 97% new visitors; 18,000+ impressions through the website; 46,858 impressions and 10,389 followers, largely senior-level professionals on LinkedIn; strong performance from visual content on Facebook; and continued to produce newsletters. This presents a digital performance reflected in not only audience growth but also strategic visibility, strengthened community engagement, and clarity of our identity.
- With 6,300 active users on the APN website, the home-page and membership-page attracted the highest traffic, providing a platform for sector-wide knowledge exchange. Increased visibility on LinkedIn, where APN generated 143,116 impressions and reached 11,271 followers, reflects the Network's growing recognition as a thought leader in African philanthropy. This visibility strengthens APN's positioning and enhanced engagement with new partners and members.
- APN's communication efforts did more than attract audiences, they promoted interaction and dialogue. High LinkedIn engagement, particularly from non-profit organizations, and Facebook's 2,796 engagements, driven by visual storytelling, show that practitioners are actively responding to APN's content. The steady growth on X to 7,400 followers and Instagram's 32,568 impressions indicate stronger resonance with younger and more diverse audiences. Engagement across these platforms demonstrates that APN's voice is increasingly sparking conversation and strengthening connections within the philanthropy sector.
- Through the production of 6 newsletters aligned with the monthly advocacy themes, APN communicated with 6,847 end users. On YouTube 9,465 impressions reflect growing interest in APN's visual knowledge content, including events coverage and thought leadership interviews.
- The APN #GivingAndPower WhatsApp group, currently comprising 139 participants, continues to serve as an active space for engagement. Members use the group to share events, insights, and connect with one another, fostering a sense of community and collaboration around African philanthropy. It remains an important platform for networking, knowledge exchange, and sustaining ongoing conversations within the APN membership.

3.3 Strengthening APN's capacity and Resilience

Institutional strengthening was achieved through enhancing leadership and good governance, improving systems effectiveness and efficiency, and the learning for accountability.

3.3.1 Leadership and Governance

Board and Member Meetings

- Three board meetings were successfully organized: two ordinary and one, extraordinary, to advise in the election of the new board members.
- The Extraordinary Board Meeting held on 3rd July 2025, in person and virtually, was duly convened in Arusha Tanzania in July 3, 2025. This meeting, among other things, reviewed the nomination list, shortlisted and recommended a list of 13 organizations to form the new APN

board. The outgoing board had served two terms of 3 years each.

- On the 4th of July 2025 we held a Meeting of Members, also known as Annual General Meeting for the purpose of a board election.

- We have a new APN Board, comprised of 13 representatives of member organizations. STAR-Ghana Foundation is the new Board Chair, African Women’s Development Fund as Deputy Chair, and East Africa Philanthropy Network as Board Treasurer. All members of the Board with names and profiles can be found on our [website](#).



Secretariat

- The secretariat continued to implement members and board recommendations towards ensuring the realization of APN’s mission and sustaining organizational health.
- Staff, both full-time and short-term, were recruited, maintained and provided with capacity development opportunities throughout the year.

Membership recruitment

- A total of 32 new member organizations were recruited during the year, which is higher than the 27 recruited in 2024. All new recruited members have been officially invited to the network. All none recruited applicants were linked with national networks. At the APN, we have included all these in a mailing list for future engagement, information sharing and potential re-consideration.
- APN currently has active membership in 38 countries. The goal is to have members in all sub-Saharan Africa nations by December 2028. Also, to increase the diversity in membership underscoring APN’s goal to increase visibility, credibility, and relevance within the African philanthropy landscape and its ecosystems. Further, to strengthen regional representation and amplify our collective voice as a truly pan-African network
- In the future, we aim to expand our membership base by recruiting individual members to join the Network, and to review our membership strategy as a tool for further mobilization.

3.3.1 Institutional Systems Effectiveness and Efficiency

Communications for Advocacy Strategy

The communication strategy and systems are continuously improved to enhance the efficiency channels adopted including social media platforms.

- APN developed a new [website](#), in July 2025, which will continue to be updated ensuring that it remains a valuable resource APN for members and stakeholders. Since the launch of the new

website, it has recorded a total of 1,700 visitors and generated an impressive 18,000 impressions. These metrics indicate a healthy level of engagement with the site's content, reflecting the interest of our audience.

- APN website was improved by enhancing navigation, updating content more regularly, and ensuring easier access to resources, reports, and learning materials, making it more user-friendly for members and partners. The website on Assemblies was added on as a reoccurring activity.
- Branding assets including updated logos, social media templates, presentation designs, event banners, and publication layouts. These assets ensure consistent and professional representation of APN across all communication channels.
- An events calendar added value by providing a centralized, real-time platform for members to track APN activities, regional dialogues, training sessions, and key sector events. This improved coordination, reduced communication gaps and helped members plan their engagements more effectively.
- Digital storytelling initiatives, which go beyond written stories by using videos, audio narratives, infographics and other visual features to capture and amplify community voices.
- Staff contributions to Google Drive archives improved APN's internal organization of knowledge and reduced duplication of work, whilst making documents easier to retrieve. It also strengthened institutional memory by ensuring important resources, reports, and visual assets are safely stored and accessible across teams.
- APN continues to prioritize strengthening its knowledge management system and repository. To achieve this, APN has been developing tools and resources that support the systematic collection of knowledge from diverse sources, including staff, members, partners, service providers, and other stakeholders. Knowledge is captured through weekly program and staff meetings, member events such as roundtable discussions, board meetings, and conferences, emails, WhatsApp, letters as well as through proposals, inception reports, and activity reports submitted by commissioned writers and consultants.

Financial Management

In 2025, our primary objective was to modernize our financial operations by moving away from ZOHO Books accounting package (clouded) towards a robust, server-controlled data solution. The activities undertaken after a decision to procure the QuickBooks Online System that was made in 2024, included its purchase, installation and configuration, data migration and in-house orientation on the use. We have successfully set up APN financial processes within the system, allowing for more granular tracking of project costs etc. The system performs all core accounting functions (GL, AP, AR, Banking, Projects records) efficiently. We are able to save time on reconciliation and reporting, and we have noted improvements in accuracy as the implementation of checks and balances is done within the system. In the future, APN will organize more trainings to ensure staff proficiency in more applications as well as conduct a quarterly review of the chart of accounts.

- **Philanthropy Policy Tracking**

APN successfully developed an online system, Hostinger Cloud, to track changes in policies that are affecting the philanthropic landscape and capacity. The system is currently functioning and is

fit-for-purpose. The training of two system administrators was timely conducted; they can now develop tailor made reports for various surveys as and when need arises. At least four surveys can be conducted at the same time. In future, APN will continue managing the system and ensure further upgrades to address the emerging needs. Data generated from the system informs decisions and generates evidence information for future programming and advocacy for responsive philanthropy policy, and fostering an enabling environment for actors to operate in.

3.3.1 Learning for Accountability

Learning for Accountability (LA) is informed by the context within which APN operates where internal and external accountability is necessary. The LA framework is being designed to respond to questions such as: What do we want to measure? Why are we measuring this? How should we measure quality and quantity variables? Who is involved in data and information collection and decision making? How is the analysis done? On internal accountability, we will be accountable to our commitment, be true to our values and to fulfil our promises – coming from the inside out to create credibility that others trust and respect. On external accountability, we are accountable to others and create an environment (a set of social norms and standards) that partners feel compelled to follow.

In this regard, we will observe, both horizontal and vertical accountability.

- Coordination and engagement with our members is strengthening how we coordinate and engage. Increasingly, members participate on aggregation of existing data, generation of new evidence to inform our advocacy narratives towards recognition of African philanthropic practices in community and national development.
- APN is adopting outcome investor approach, while improving our practice in monitoring and measuring changes in philanthropy policy and systems.
- APN is applying an integrated review, planning and reporting of quality and quantity process and results of our annual planned activities under each objective, and making informed adjustments on plans.
- Reporting is done and all required reports by donors and statutory reports were produced and submitted in time. Internal reports are also produced by responsible staff, however in this there is a room for improvement.
- The process of financial Management and reports has been made efficient with the availability of QuickBooks. Bookkeeping and financial reporting is not only more efficient but also better in terms of quality. The timeliness of monthly, quarterly and annual reports have also improved.
- Our resource mobilization efforts made towards fundraising and asset building have been successful. We have mobilised funds from both donors and member subscription fees. CS Mott foundation, Open Society Foundation (OSF), Hewlett Foundation, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and about 39 member organizations. In addition, we have implemented campaigns in collaboration with INGOs, including CIVICUS, WINGS, and AWDF who is our anchor member.
- It is good to note that we are witnessing a decline in income. We received \$1,253,900.62 in 2024, and \$1,183,174.76 in 2025. In 2026, we have recorded donor commitment amounting to

\$861,395, which is less compared to the previous years.

- Membership subscriptions are dwindling and fewer organizations are able to contribute, with increased number of member organizations requesting a waiver due to lack of funds. A total of \$29,008 was collected in 2025 compared to \$32,050 in 2024.
- An annual financial audit is conducted, and we received an unqualified audit in 2024. The audit for 2025 financial is underway.

4 Key Challenges and Opportunities

Despite good progress made during the implementation, there are a number of challenges faced. We see potential opportunities for the growth of the African philanthropy, both financial and non-financial resources and assets. These are summarized below.

For over 15 years, APN made specific commitments toward reclaiming and elevating the power of African philanthropic practices. This has been done through nurturing a continent-wide solidarity movement and fostering spaces for networking, promoting philanthropic practices and advocating for an enabling environment, all whilst strengthening its institutional capacity and resilience. In implementing all these ambitions, the network continues to depend on foreign and often short-term funding. And yet, based on its mission, APN is addressing deep rooted and complex structural and systemic issues, which required longer term and collective efforts to be realized. The African philanthropy field faces some important challenges that must be dealt with:

- Many African philanthropic institutions including network members still work in silos and fund projects-based initiatives. Over dependence on external funding, with low recognition of the potential for community and domestic philanthropic resources as a durable strategy for community-led and sustainable national development, remains a challenge;
- Spaces for philanthropic leaders to reflect and connect practices with knowledge generation are limited, and the field is losing strong leaders to INGOs and Northern intermediaries, while it has not yet developed a strong cadre of 2nd tier leaders;
- The task of fostering an enabling environment for African philanthropy requires attention. Very few countries have progressive tax legislation. Moreover, much of the philanthropic giving is done by those who are not part of the tax system- yet there is not enough scholarship to understand what an enabling environment means in such contexts and how best to respond to it beyond progressive tax frameworks.
- The African philanthropy field does not have a strong enough infrastructure that can bring it together and articulate a common voice. APN is working towards repositioning itself as a solidarity movement that can bring the diverse ecosystems together and co-create home grown solutions in responding to the continent's development challenges.

5 Proposed Way Forward

APN will continue to implement its Strategic Framework for the 3rd year and the three strategic objectives in view of responding to development problems using philanthropy as a strategy across Africa. The global dynamics of 2025 have subjected many of the field's prevailing assumptions to questioning, and put our strategic priorities into a cross road. We have made a decision to start the year 2026, with a mid-term evaluation of our strategy.

We will continue with active research and generation of new knowledge and narrative building and peer learning and capacity building mainly focusing on leadership and local resource mobilization including skills for fundraising and mobilizing support. Also, institutional strengthening by not only recruiting more members, but also nurturing spaces for networking at the national and regional levels.

As we prioritize what to do in 2026, APN's work will gear towards shaping the narrative around African philanthropy and leading conversations around democracy and accountability, promoting in-country governments' recognition of community and domestic philanthropy, and donor (both institutions and individuals) awareness on the need to fund through CSOs and their movements, so as to increase support in addressing social justice issues, with a particular focus on gender equality. The need to shift the power to the people, interrogate power dynamics that shape how transformative resource mobilization, allocation and utilization is. and shift in mindset towards recognizing African philanthropy as a collective responsibility, cannot be over emphasised.



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