

# PROGRESS REPORT

DECEMBER, 2024



In March, 2021, the Green String Network began piloting Kumekucha Quest with funding from Grand Challenges Canada. Kumekucha Quest is an innovative movement that adapts Green String Network's existing community-led social cohesion Programme, 'Kumekucha: It's a New Dawn', for children, teenagers, and young adults aged 10 to 24 years old in Kenya. The movement comprises three Programmes: Kumekucha Quest (for 18 to 24 year olds); Kumekucha Vijana (13 to 17 year olds); and Kumekucha Watoto (10 to 12 year olds).

## IMPACT

**68%** improvement in overall wellbeing based on the WHO Five Wellbeing Index

**58%** decrease in levels of post traumatic stress based on the HTQ

**100%** increase in knowledge and awareness on trauma and mental health

**100%** using emotional regulation tools by Programm end

See the **Kumekucha Quest Impact Report** for an in-depth reporting of findings.

## VISION

Kumekucha Quest is a uniquely designed initiative that engages and supports local youth volunteers to facilitate and sustain the change they wish to see in their communities. At its heart, it aims to build connections between community members, foster mentorship and learning within these new connections that promote hope and healing, and empower them to flourish without any formal framework. Kumekucha Quest is a social movement, not simply a collection of Programmes, and is designed to offer long-lasting healing and transformation to communities. We are working to transform communities—or, more specifically, to have transformed youth transforming their communities—and, with your help, we can reach those most in need of these Programmes.

# PROGRESS

We are pleased to share an update on our recent progress. We have successfully onboarded two new project partners based in Nairobi: Teen Seed and Breaking Margins Africa. Over the course of a 3-day refresher session, we engaged with their leadership teams to review our well-being and resilience framework (Web-R).

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We are excited to share that Kumekucha Quest (KQ) has made significant strides by hosting a collaborative encounter where our new partners, Teen Seed and Breaking Margins Africa, came together to learn and grow as a collective. This gathering fostered deeper connections and mutual learning, embodying the essence of our social healing movement—community at its core.

Key areas of focus included the use of healing-centered language in daily interactions and the implementation of harassment policies. These discussions sparked insightful conversations around the establishment, maintenance, and transformation of safe spaces, further enhancing our shared understanding of fostering supportive environments.

We look forward to continuing this journey with our partners as we strengthen our impact.

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The Kumekucha Quest program has officially begun implementing the Transition to Scale One (TTS1) activities. In November 2024, the program successfully implemented a two-week training for new Circle Keepers from our partner organizations.

This experience encouraged deep individual and societal reflections, supported by our wellbeing framework. Members took turns witnessing each other's stories and paused to navigate difficult emotions with empathy. A standout feature of the immersion was the creation of daily community art and the mutual support shared through well-being practices..

This was an empowering gathering of young people committed to fostering healing in their lives and communities. The Teen Seed group (L) especially enjoyed daily dance sessions and interacting with members from the BMA group (R) during breaks.. While BMA members enjoyed joking and laughing over lunch while interacting with members from Teen Seed. It was a powerful reminder that shared struggles can be transformed into sources of inspiration for change.

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# PROGRESS

**In terms of the understanding of trauma, most said that they want to be represented in Kumekucha Quest program artwork as thriving in their communities**

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Week 1 :

focused on well-being education, fostering a strong commitment to healing, both individually and as a community. It was inspiring to see young people come together, not only for their wellbeing but also for the collective healing of their communities. As the training concluded, our new circle keepers, confidently called for the representation of thriving in our program materials, declaring that healing and thriving have a rightful place within their communities.

Week 2

saw both teams come together for shared learning and to familiarize themselves with KQ's policies and guidelines on community engagement. The most significant outcome of the immersion was the collective decision by the young participants to bring the well-being resources they acquired back to their communities and families.

This was a proud moment for the KQ team, which had worked tirelessly with our network partners to implement such an impactful training and healing experience.



Figure 1. Kadzo Jolly, one of the facilitators on session during the WebR training for the kwale Sickle Cell Support group.

The five-day Web-R training brought together individuals living with sickle cell disease and their caregivers from the Kwale Sickle Cell Support Group. This group, comprised primarily of parents—especially women—facing social and familial challenges while caring for children with sickle cell disease, was established to create a safe space for mutual support and mobilization.

The training built on the resilience and strengths of this supportive community, further empowering them through Samba Sports' initiative. Many of these parents have struggled to find acceptance within society and their families, while also seeking medical care for their children.

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rough the Kumekucha Quest program, they now have a structured framework that enables them to support one another and find solutions to their ongoing challenges.

During these five days of coming together at the Samba Sports office for the training, here are some of the outcomes;

- Caregivers and the patients were able to find a space for sharing and holding each other's space.
- Caregivers and the patients were able to identify their triggers and false alarms that disturb them all the time.
- Caregivers realise that they need to hold what they can and let go of the things that are out of their control that end up draining them.
- Parents realized the traumas and stress difference and also agreed to use positive coping mechanisms.



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In November 2024, Ustawi was selected for the Paris Peace Forum 2025 Scale-Up Program. This incredible opportunity will help expand our social healing movement, enabling us to reach individuals who face barriers to attending our physical gatherings due to challenges in their environments.

What is Ustawi?

The Ustawi platform which means "to thrive" in Kiswahili provides culturally and contextually relevant, virtual, community-led holistic care for the well-being of individuals, families, communities, and institutions in challenging and fragile contexts.

Learn more about it here: <https://www.green-string.org/programs/ustawi-thrive>

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# MOTIVATION

## So why do we do what we do?

Youth in Kenya—representing upwards of 60% of the population—experience chronic stress and trauma as a result of high levels of poverty, unemployment, domestic violence, police harassment, and exposure to traumatic events such as violent crime, extra-judicial killings, and terrorism. There are also high levels of fear and stigma in Kenya when it comes to talking about mental health.

In response to this, we wanted to create a newly adapted version of our flagship Programme, Kumekucha: It's a New Dawn, that is specifically and contextually adapted for this group. The Kumekucha Quest movement, consequently, is informed by youth who come from the communities it operates in and was developed with their issues, voices, and recommendations in mind. We see this movement as something needed desperately by youth in Kenya and bridging a gap rarely touched on in community programming.

The extent to which young peoples' lives are being transformed by these Circles is humbling and almost unbelievable. The simple provision of safe spaces for these young people to learn about and grow their emotional well-being but, more importantly, to share on their experiences is boundless in the impacts it has already achieved and will continue to realise in the coming years, and we could not be more excited to watch it unfold!

# UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

As of January 2025, we have begun implementing our 12-week community-initiated care program in Nairobi. Our Nairobi-based network partners, along with the KQ team, are embarking on a shared journey of healing and learning.

If you have any fun well-being resources to share, we'd love to receive them—feel free to send them via email!

[info@green-string.org](mailto:info@green-string.org)

Our coastal partners, SambaSports and Akilimali, are spearheading vibrant community events that foster engagement and support across the region. Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to grow and thrive together!

# HOW CAN YOU HELP?

The Green String Network is dedicated to engaging 1,000 young Kenyans in well-being support.

With Giving Tuesday approaching, we invite you to share our link within your networks. Together, we can make a meaningful impact!

The Green String Network is now active on LinkedIn! We invite you to connect with us and stay updated on our latest initiatives.

We look forward to engaging with you!

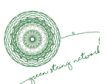


@green-string-network



# THANK YOU

to all our donors and volunteers for your continued support. Your contributions are truly helping to transform youths and, by extension, transform communities across Kenya.



THE GREEN STRING  
NETWORK

HEALING-CENTRED  
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