

Women's Centers International

Annual Report
2022



WOMEN'S CENTERS
— INTERNATIONAL —



From the Executive Director

The COVID pandemic profoundly and adversely affected women everywhere. The fallout continues for many in less perceptible ways: deepened poverty, lost livelihoods, increased domestic violence, inadequate health services, and interrupted education.

A Women's Center delivers a holistic, trauma-informed response to these ongoing urgent needs. Though cultural context varies, a Center fosters women's authority as the best source of knowledge and talent to assist a community. Innumerable benefits flow when women have the tools they need to thrive again – or for the first time.

WCI continues delivering guidance and tools to small community-based organizations. We are building a global movement one Women's Center at time.

Susan Burgess-Leat

Vision and Mission

WCI's vision is that every woman has access to education, training and support to generate sustainable income for herself and her family, ending cycles of poverty and stabilizing families, communities, and societies.

WCI mission is to connect and equip communities to build and sustain safe Centers for women affected by oppression, war and poverty, delivering the resources they need to prosper.

2022 Highlights

- **REVENUES:** WCI rebounded from a pandemic funding doldrum with donations increasing 43% over FY 2021.
- **PUBLICATION:** WCI published *The Women's Centers Guide: Best Practices for Creating and Sustaining a Women's Resource Center* – step-by-step recommendations for organizational capacity building. WCI also created an online Master Class based on *The Guide* to further disseminate this critical knowledge.
- **PROFESSIONAL ALLIES** Dechert, LLP has created, pro bono, the legal framework and Associate Agreement for the Women's Centers Network.
- **COMMUNITY ALLIES:** The Executive Director deepened ongoing connections with community-based organizations in Africa and the Middle East, facilitating the opening of four new Centers in the last months of 2022.
- **REBIRTH:** Following a four-year hiatus, Oakland Women's Center reopened with a new Director.
- **RURAL EXPANSION:** WCI provided support for Baraka Center's expansion in rural Laikipia County to bring livelihoods development training to Maasai women.

WCI is a 501(c)3 Public Benefit Corporation

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The Women's Centers Network

WCI's vision is a global network of Women's Centers. Currently the Network is comprised of eight Centers: six in Africa, one in the Middle East, and one in the US.

	Center Location	Established	Center Name	Members	Population served
1	Nairobi KENYA 'The Mothership'	Oct 2012	Baraka Women's Center (BWC)	1,242	Urban poor
2	Rumuruti, KENYA a satellite of Baraka Nairobi	Sept 2021	Baraka 2	250	Rural poor – Maasai
3	Thika, KENYA a satellite of Baraka Center	Jan 2021	Retail store and training facility	NA	Urban poor
4	Goma, DR CONGO	July 2022	Umoja Women's Center (UWC)	75	Displaced war survivors
5	Kakuma Refugee Camp, Northwest KENYA	Nov 2022	Women's Power Center in N. Kenya	150	Displaced East Africans
6	Deir ez-Zor SYRIA	Dec 2022	AL Furat Women Center	25	Widows and single mothers
7	Oakland, CA, USA	Dec 2022 (reopening)	Oakland Women's Center (OWC)	From 2015-2018, OWC served 240+ women	Urban women of color
8	Mukono, UGANDA	Jan 2023	Dreams Destined Women's Center (DDWC)	50	Teens and young mothers

2022 Center Achievements

Baraka Women's Center (BWC)

Registered Members; 1,242

Livelihoods Program

- *Vocational Training* programs in tailoring, beadwork, and salon skills graduated 43 women in 2022.
- *Entrepreneur and Leadership Training* and Mentoring serves 383 business women.
- 709 individuals participate in 21 Table Banking groups with year-end assets of nearly \$18,000. Their savings enable round-robin loans for members' business start-ups and expansion 14 members also received training and loan from Stanbic and Equity Banks.

BWC is NITA*certified training facility.

Many of the training graduates have started business or obtained employment. Planned enhancements to data systems will track long-term progress.

*National Industrial Training Authority



Program Director Wanjiru Ngigi (right) with members of Baraka Women table banking group

COVID Response

The Center served over 4,600 individuals through monthly COVID prevention education sessions and distribution of face masks produced by trainees.

Concurrently, BWC provided donated clothing (photo right) and staple foods to 700 individuals hard hit by the country's post-COVID recession.

The staff also counseled individuals and groups to help manage stress, trauma, and loss.

Expansion

BWC opened a satellite center in August in Rumuruti, rural Laikipia County.

250 Maasai women are registered for livelihoods training and table banking groups. Future outreach will advocate for and assist women in ending the practices of early marriage and Female Genital Cutting.

Baraka Mtido Fashion Accessories (BMFA)

Baraka Center's business venture, established in March 2022, sells products crafted by members through a retail store in Thika and at exhibitions sponsored by trade organizations and government agencies.



Center Director Teresia Njora (right) with Maasai women in Rumuruti



Products displayed at BMFA's Thika store



Nairobi Governor Johnson Sakaja (left) visits BMFA's kiosk at a September exhibition

In October, BWC celebrated its TENTH anniversary of service to Nairobi's women.

New Women's Centers



Umoja Women's Center

Opened in August 2022 in Goma, DR Congo with a focus on sewing and computer training. A year-end initiative provided food for an influx of war-displaced women and children. Registered members: 75; Food program: 30 families

Women's Power Center in Northern Kenya

Opened in December 2022 in Kakuma refugee camp. WCI is collaborating with Rescue Wing, an aid organization working in the camp. Planning is ongoing for an agricultural livelihoods training program. Registered members: 150

Al Furat Women Center

Deir ez-Zor Syria began as a collaboration with Development Without Borders, a local Syrian aid organization. Plans have been developed for a training program in professional sewing to begin in Spring 2023. A pilot series of workshop on women's rights begins in February 2023. Registered members: 32



Oakland Women's Center

Oakland, California USA opened in December 2022 and has begun virtual assistance and referral services as it seeks a permanent home.

Dreams Destined Women's Center

Mukono, Uganda has developed a livelihood support pilot program to begin in February 2023.

Each Center integrates trauma-informed psychological support for members.

*I'll help my sisters.
I'll help other women ignite their fires,
blaze their paths through life,
and leave embers to warm those who will
come after them.*

BISI ADJEPO, THE TELLER OF SECRETS



Financials 2022

Revenue Sources

Total	Source	Pct
\$98,201	Individuals	97%
\$2,827	Businesses	3%

Income and Expenses by Location

Revenue	WCI - HQ	Nairobi	Oakland	Congo	Total
Total Donations	\$84,900	\$8,709	\$7,500	0	\$101,109
Expenses					
Salaries / Contractors	\$19,356	\$25,752	\$1,596	0	\$46,704
Program Supplies	0	\$3,337	0	\$900	\$4,237
Overhead	\$2,359	\$13,602	\$222	\$300	\$16,483
Total Expenses	\$21,715	\$42,691	\$1,818	\$1,200	\$67,424

Outlook for 2023

The closing months of 2022 produced extraordinary interest from community-based organization to establish Women’s Centers. Each of five new associate organizations is devoting sustained efforts to planning and budgeting for programs in 2023.

WCI’s guidance is ongoing but we must also provide capital sufficient for at least the first year of operation. WCI’s fundraising strategy focuses on engaging major donors while mobilizing committed affinity groups.

We work toward wider adoption of the Women’s Centers Model within the international development community. We plan for The Guide to be translated into Arabic and Swahili, with other languages added as new Centers join.

WCI’s Founder and Executive Director will identify and train her successor, handing over the organization to a new leader by mid-2023.

The pandemic exacerbated the needs of women everywhere, highlighting the urgency of advancing the capabilities of women as agents of community change. WCI anticipates a year of sustained growth and new inroads to achieving women’s equality through the innovative work of Women’s Centers.

