



**Sawa**

# Quarter 1, 2026 Impact Report



## The Problem:

In rural Kenya, persistent poverty, limited access to quality education, and systemic barriers disproportionately affect children, youths (especially girls and young women) and families. This results in stagnant literacy and numeracy outcomes, high school dropout rates – especially among girls due to early marriages, pregnancy, and menstruation challenges, and widespread youth unemployment. 35% of young people are unable to secure jobs despite completing basic schooling.

**Sawa Africa works in Western Kenya to provide resources and skills for families to thrive in education and economic development.**

## Our Solution

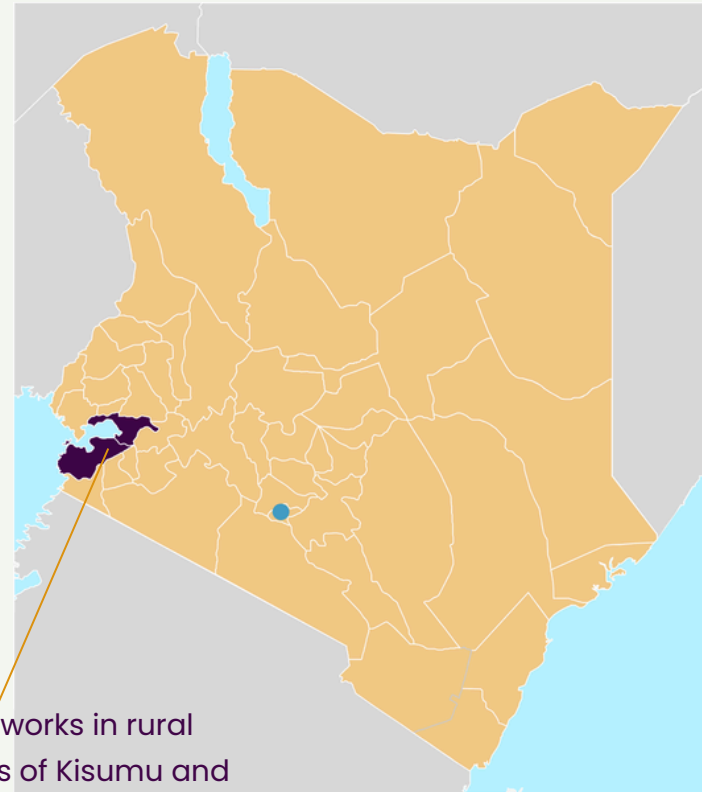
Sawa's approach to the communities we serve is through two core program areas:



**Education**



**Economic Development**



Sawa Africa works in rural communities of Kisumu and HomaBay County.

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*"Train up a child in the way they should go, and when they are old, they will not depart from it." – Proverbs 22:6*

At Sawa Africa, this truth continues to guide and anchor our work as we invest intentionally in building strong foundations for lifelong learning, character, and purpose among the children and communities we serve. We believe that early childhood is not just a stage of learning, but a critical window for shaping values, identity, and future potential.

As we close the first quarter of the year, we reflect with gratitude on a season marked by growth, learning, and deepened collaboration. Our participation in the CLI Convening provided an opportunity to learn, share, and strengthen our approach alongside like-minded organizations.

Internally, we were excited to welcome new team members into the roles of Programs Coordinator and MEL Lead, strengthening our capacity to deliver quality programs and measure meaningful impact.

A significant milestone this quarter was the expansion of our work into 16 new ECD centres, extending our reach to more young learners at a foundational stage of their development.

Equally important was our first stakeholder engagement with the County Education Office, where we had the privilege of meeting with the County Education Director. This moment marked the beginning of a collaborative journey—one grounded in shared vision, mutual learning, and a commitment to strengthening early childhood education systems.

Together, with our partners and stakeholders, we are not only expanding access to education but also nurturing the character, confidence, and values that will shape a generation. We remain committed to walking this journey with intention, faith, and collaboration, as we work toward giving every child the strong start they deserve for lifelong learning and growth.



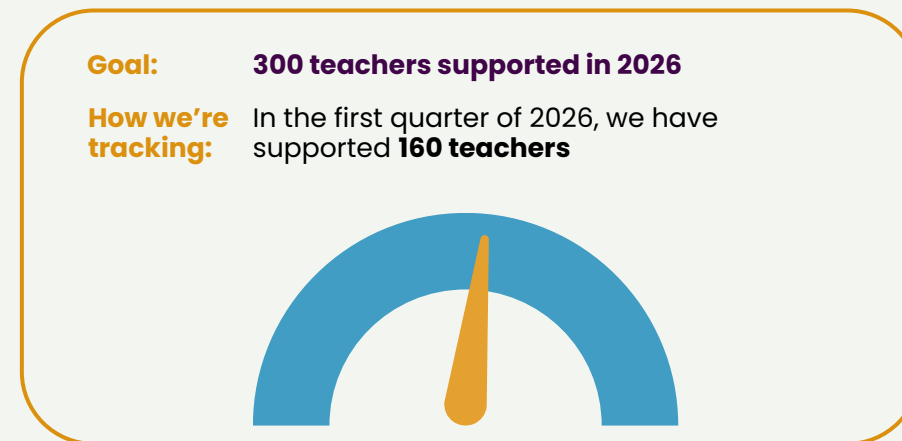
**Dorothy Dulo**  
**Founder &**  
**Executive Director**



# EDUCATION – SOMASAWA

SomaSawa means learn/educate well to thrive. That is the mission of the program, to ensure that learners receive the support they need to thrive in their education journey. We do this by up-skilling teachers using evidence based innovative interventions.

Indicator	Q1 2026
Total Number of ECD Learners served	1937
Total Number of Grade 1 and 2 learners served	1518
Total Number of Primary School (Grades 4-6) learners served	722
ECDE learners numeracy and literacy gain	18%
Grade 1 and 2 learners numeracy and literacy gain	33%
Primary schools numeracy and literacy gains	24%
Number of lessons taught in Term 1, 2026	248,880





## PROGRAM UPDATE: EDUCATION – SOMASAWA

The SomaSawa program **supports 40 schools in Kisumu East and Kisumu West sub-counties in Kisumu County**. SomaSawa added **16 new schools to the program in 2026**.

In December 2025, the program trained **17 new ECD schools** and **90 teachers in Grades 1 and 2**. In January 2026, an additional 42 teachers were trained in phonics and 21 in the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach.

Currently, 160 teachers are implementing SomaSawa across 40 schools:

- ECD - 86 teachers
- Grade 1 & 2- 48 teachers
- Primary - 26 teachers

This reflects both increased program reach and sustained investment in teacher capacity to improve early grade literacy and numeracy outcomes.



Blessing, a PPI learner at Tido School, demonstrating the 'd' sound to both the teacher and fellow learners during the literacy session.



## STORIES FROM SOMASAWA

At SomaSawa **program site at Usoma ECD Centre**, **meaningful change is unfolding** in early grade classrooms.

Grade 1 teacher Beline has **adopted a structured, activity-based approach** that is helping learners progress from basic letter and number recognition to word formation and early literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, learners are not only demonstrating stronger foundational skills but are also **showing increased confidence and active participation during lessons**.

The **Head Teacher commended the focused, learner-centered instruction** in Grades 1 and 2, noting that the **approach is positively influencing both teaching practices and attitudes toward learning** within the school. This **transformation is also visible beyond the classroom**. Learners now arrive early and stay motivated in school until the end of the day. **Learners are showing a new genuine enthusiasm for learning. Parents have also shared encouraging feedback, highlighting their children's excitement about school, especially the daily action songs that make learning joyful while helping improve attendance and engagement.**



Learners using picture cards to create stories



# SOMASAWA – LESSONS LEARNT AND ADAPTIVE RESPONSES

- **Heavy rainfall and flooding caused temporary school closures, disrupting program continuity.** Classrooms floors were wet and at times flooded, hindering floor-based activities. SomaSawa mentors assisted teachers in rescheduling their lessons to later in the term after the rains subsided.
- **Teacher transfer disrupting consistency in implementation.** This is a continuous discussion and advocacy with County leadership to consider less transfers for SomaSawa trained teachers.
- **Teachers at both the ECD level and in Grades 1 and 2 are mastering the SomaSawa intervention** and appreciating the structured implementation hence increased program outcomes.
- **Providing soft touch points with teachers through phone messaging** and giving sample lesson plans weekly ensured program fidelity. Teachers requested for this support to continue.
- **Providing teachers with instructional materials,** particularly phonics cards, enhanced learner engagement and stimulated much higher active participation.



Madam Jane facilitating the letter 's' using flashcards during the teachers training session.



## YOUTH HUB – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE



During the first quarter, the Sawa Youth Hub team took intentional time to reflect, learn, and strengthen our approach to youth empowerment.

Recognizing the evolving needs of the young people, girls, and women we serve, we focused on revising our program strategy to ensure it remains relevant, responsive, and impactful. This process involved reviewing lessons from past activities, engaging with staff and community stakeholders, and identifying opportunities to better support participants through skills development, mentorship, and pathways to economic empowerment.

By refining the Youth Hub strategy, we are positioning the program to more effectively equip young people—especially girls and young women with the tools, confidence, and opportunities they need to build sustainable livelihoods and become leaders in their communities.

# SAWA UPDATES

## KISUMU COUNTY STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

During the first quarter, Sawa Africa convened a **key stakeholder meeting** with the County Education Office **to share progress and strengthen collaboration** around the SomaSawa program. The meeting was attended by the County Director of Education and all the Sub-County Education Coordinators.

The County Director expressed **strong appreciation for the program and its contribution to improving early learning outcomes**. Sub-County Coordinators from areas where SomaSawa is currently implemented shared encouraging feedback, highlighting the remarkable progress they have observed among both learners and teachers. They noted **improvements in foundational literacy skills as well as increased confidence and engagement in classrooms**.

Notably, education leaders from sub-counties where the program has not yet been implemented expressed strong interest in the initiative and requested that SomaSawa be considered for expansion into their regions as soon as possible. This response **reflects growing recognition of the program's impact and the increasing demand for evidence-based approaches to strengthening early childhood education across the county**.



COUNTY EDUCATION STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

# SAWA UPDATES

## 2026 CLI CONVENING IN NAIVASHA, KENYA



Gathering with other leaders in the Issroff Family Foundation Network

Our Director, Dorothy Dulo, had the opportunity to attend the 2026 CLI Convening in Naivasha, Kenya. This was a gathering of about 100 leaders from 6 African countries. The convening happens every 3 years and is a gathering of grassroots organization in the Issroff Family Foundation (IFF) Network.

During this convening, Dorothy was able to:

- Network and learn from other like minded leaders in the education and social change space.
- Learn from experts on different topics that included fundraising and strategic planning.
- Form new friendship.

We are very grateful and appreciate the support of **Partners For Equity, Australia and IFF**, who made it possible for our Director to attend the Convening.

# SAWA UPDATES

## SAWA HAS A NEW OFFICE!

Sawa Africa transitioned to a new office location, marking an important step in the organization's continued growth. The new space provides a more conducive environment for collaboration, planning, and hosting partners and community stakeholders.

As our programs expand, this move allows our team to work more effectively while creating a welcoming space where partners, educators, and supporters can connect with our mission.

We are thankful for God's provision through our partners who have made this possible. We are grateful for the journey that has brought us to this point and look forward to using this new space to strengthen our work and deepen our impact in the communities we serve.



Part of Sawa team in the new office after a long day of moving.

## FROM THE LEAD TRAINER & QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICER

The first quarter of the year has been marked by **strong momentum, intentional growth, and meaningful progress in our program delivery.**

In my role as Quality Assurance Lead and Trainer, we successfully added implementation to 16 additional schools across ECD and Grade 2, an important step in expanding access to quality learning. More importantly, this growth was anchored in strengthening practice. **Through targeted training, we reinforced the core principles of the SomaSawa intervention, ensuring that the integrity of the content is consistently translated into impactful classroom experiences for the learners we serve.**

A key highlight this quarter was the **soft touch points** using SMS and WhatsApp to teachers across ECD, Grade 1, and Grade 2—**building a strong instructional bridge that supports continuity in learning.** The ongoing mentorship and classroom support have been equally rewarding, with **teachers demonstrating increased confidence, clarity, and ownership in implementation.**

There has been a **significant shift in how learner progression within groups is being understood and applied**—an area that previously lacked clarity but is now emerging as a strength in program delivery.

As we move into quarter two, our **focus remains on deepening quality, strengthening teacher confidence, ensuring fidelity of implementation, and generating evidence-based data that reflects the true impact of our work.**

With a strong foundation in place, we know that **our work will forever give these learners the life long skills they need to thrive.**



**Joyce Wambare,  
Quality Assurance & Lead Trainer**

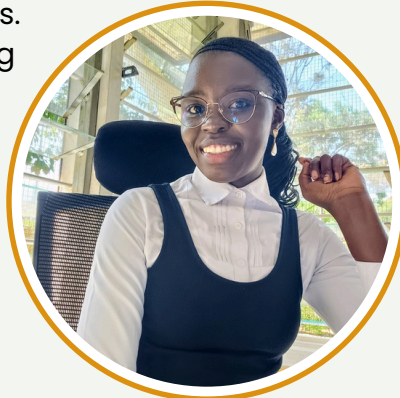
# WELCOME NEW STAFF

## Jenipher Ochieng, Programs Coordinator

Jenipher recently joined Sawa Africa and brings with her experience as a social worker and project coordinator, where she worked on programs supporting adolescent girls and young women through education, health, and social protection initiatives. Through this work, she saw firsthand the challenges many young people face in accessing quality education and consistent support. These experiences inspired her to join Sawa Africa, whose commitment to improving foundational learning and empowering young people strongly resonates with her.

At Sawa Africa, Jenipher is excited to contribute to the SomaSawa program by working closely with schools, mentors, and community partners to support strong program implementation and help improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for learners. She is especially motivated by seeing young people grow academically and personally, and by the moment when a learner begins to believe in their own potential.

In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends and engaging in activities that support her well-being, reflection, and personal growth.



## Joshua Makau, Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

Joshua recently joined Sawa Africa as the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Lead for the SomaSawa and Youth Hub programs. A graduate of Moi University, he supports the team by helping collect and use data to understand what is working well and how the programs can continue improving their impact for children and young people.



Joshua's passion for this work is personal. Growing up in Kibera, he was once a beneficiary of community empowerment programs himself. Because of this experience, he understands how the right support at the right time can change a young person's life.

At Sawa Africa, he is excited to help the team learn from the work happening in schools and communities so that programs continue to grow stronger. Outside of work, Joshua enjoys spending time in the community and staying curious through reading and learning about global issues.

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

“

At home, I use mind map activities to help me learn new words. I practice creating words using sounds. Using mind map has helped me a lot in learning how to form words. It is an enjoyable way to learn and helps me remember words better. SomaSawa has really helped me improve in my studies.

”

Terry Ann, Learner at Otera Bahati Primary school



“

SomaSawa interventions have helped my learners improve their reading and number recognition skills. Play-based activities have also increased their confidence and encouraged greater participation in the classroom.

”

Teacher Lenzer at Otera Bahati Primary



“

The implementation of SomaSawa interventions has led to a notable improvement in learner confidence within the classroom. Consequently, learners demonstrate increased active participation, especially through effective peer-to-peer learning strategies.

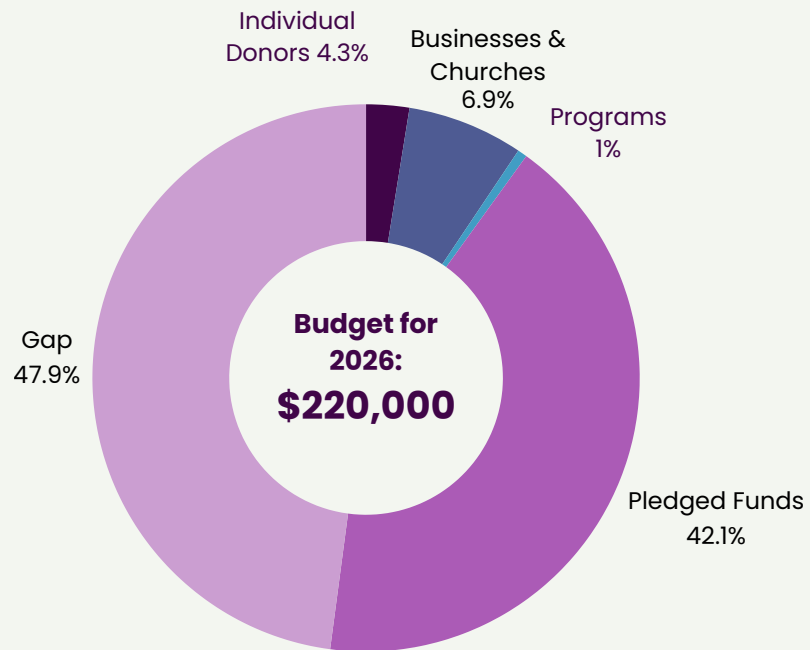
”

In-school mentor Angela, Ragumo Primary School



# FINANCIAL UPDATE

**Income Year to Date: \$16,721**



**Expenses - \$23,505**

Expenses Year to Date

SomaSawa Program	\$17,986
Economic Development - Youth Hub	\$2,596
<b>Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$20,582</b>
Administrative Expenses	\$6,162
Fundraising	\$199
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$26,943</b>

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Donate to **support our teacher training cost** of \$85,000 in 2026.
- We'd love for you to **share this report** with your networks - it helps raise our profile and grow our organization.

## GET IN TOUCH



[www.sawaafrika.org](http://www.sawaafrika.org)



<https://www.instagram.com/sawa.africa/>



<https://www.facebook.com/SawaAfric/>



[dorothy@sawaafrika.org](mailto:dorothy@sawaafrika.org)



Tom Mboya, Kisumu  
Kenya

