

# Azadi Kenya February 2023 Newsletter



Hello friends,  
Seeing as we are already two months into the year and it is probably a bit late to wish you a happy new year, we hope you are having a great start to the year. As we switch from holiday mode to work mode, we are ready and excited to take on the year and we would love to keep you in the know for what we have been doing. Before the end of last year, we decided to review our policies. The aim was to make them more survivor centred, with this in mind, some of our members were invited to take part in the process. We divided ourselves into groups and worked collaboratively towards our goal. We are happy to inform you that it was a success! On the 13th of February, each group took us through their assigned policy, the changes that were made and received feedback from the rest of the team.

Last year, in the month of November, we wrapped up the Valkyrie pilot project in a two day close out meeting. It was a bittersweet experience for us.

We had the opportunity to look back at all the work we have done together with Maisha and Okoa sasa. We looked at our achievements and areas that would require improvement in future. We also got a chance to learn about beginnings and endings, which always go hand in hand. As a result we were able to connect with each other, appreciate the time we spent together and the work we have done. We hope that we will get a chance to continue with this project in the future.

In addition to that, we resumed some of our wellbeing activities for this year, yoga and art therapy. We were very happy with the turnout and the energy that was brought to these activities by the survivor leaders and staff members. We posted a video of our yoga session on our social media accounts if you would like to take a look.

## News

### & Upcoming projects

Preparations for Azadi's second ethical storytelling project have begun and we are beyond excited. We will be offering 4 survivor leaders the opportunity to take part in the project this year and two fellows who will be joining us from the US. We have been having meetings with the two fellows from the US to help them with travel preparations. Additionally, the 4 survivor leaders who will be taking part in this have already been identified and we are ready to hit the ground running.

We are also excited to be sponsoring 5 survivor leaders who are undertaking courses offered by University of Washington. The survivors will be taking up different courses. Three of them will be studying a course in Fundamentals in Global Health Research while the other two will be undertaking a leadership course. The enrollment type is site based and the survivor leaders will be studying from Kisumu. The courses are self paced, they begin on the 10th of April, 2023 and end in June, 2023. After successful completion of the courses, the survivor leaders will each be awarded a certificate.

We started carrying out activities under our survivor leadership and advocacy program. We hosted a group of girls from Maisha Girls Safe House and Cana Girls Rescue Home. We hosted them for the first time for orientation on the 11th of February at our resource center. We had a chance to get to know them and they familiarised themselves with us too. They were very cooperative and ready to learn, we learned from them just as much as they learned from us. The whole team is looking forward to having more sessions with the girls and to experience the wonderful and lively energy they brought to our resource centre.



### Reflection on our data and record-keeping

Late January, the team took a team building trip to Malindi for a week. We all met at the Nairobi SGR terminus and travelled overnight. By early morning, we had arrived at Peponi Villas, the beautiful villas we were staying in. From the moment we arrived, our chef kept us well fed with different varieties of Swahili and Italian cuisine. Not to forget the tamarind and watermelon juice that was available in plenty.

We started the week off by having a pool party on a gorgeous Sunday afternoon. The trip had a balance of work and play. Throughout the week we worked from morning to midday, we covered different things like the Azadi project cycle, training on participatory methods and approaches and development of concept notes for programs. These were quite helpful because they helped us to refresh our knowledge and be prepared for future situations that would require the above mentioned skills. At Azadi we have cultivated a work culture that is special to us. We value and encourage continuous learning and development. We aim to ensure that everyone from our different departments is involved in our various organisational processes. This allows us all to know the ins and outs of what each of us does. Our intent is to have processes that are ethical, streamlined and fit within our values. To help us in doing this, we are constantly reviewing and updating our policies and processes as a team.

We visited different sites in Malindi such as the beach, a local restaurant and the market where we got the opportunity to acquire a few souvenirs to bring back home, including achari, a popular Kenyan candy and snack that is basically made from dried mango strips. We even had an all white photoshoot by the beach, one of our photos is attached below.

The team also took part in multiple team building activities such as playing board games, wellbeing sessions that allowed us to connect with each other at a deeper level and even teaching each other new skills such as how to swim. Towards the end of our trip, we had a beautiful dinner, we dressed up, the chef created a beautiful set up for us and we enjoyed a buffet dinner of different types of cuisines that the chef made upon our request. The whole team is extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to unwind and connect with each other. We learned how to accommodate and hold space for ourselves and for each other. Our wellbeing sessions taught us how to build, maintain and exist in a community. As a result we are able to see each other as more than just colleagues, we now see each other as family.



Thank you for reading this newest newsletter. We'll keep you updated on our efforts and you will hear from us again in a few months with the next newsletter.

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