

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2029



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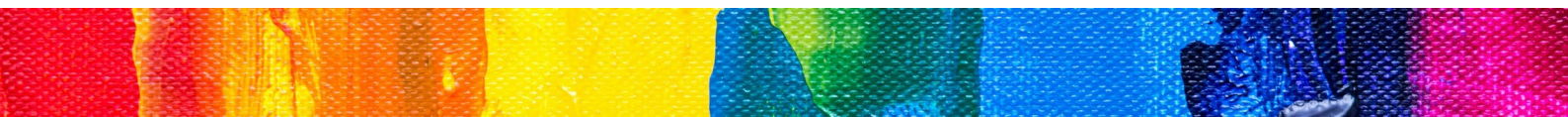


Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	i
Executive Summary	ii
Background	iii
Introduction	1
Organization Structure	2
SWOT Analysis	4
PESTLE Analysis of VOWWEK's Operating Context	7
Key Priority Areas	9
Implementation Framework	17

Acknowledgement

As the acting Director of Voices of Women in Western Kenya (VOWWEK), I am honored to introduce our Strategic Plan for 2025-2029. This plan represents the culmination of collective efforts from our board, staff, members, partners, and stakeholders, who have all played pivotal roles in shaping the future direction of our organization. It is a roadmap that reflects our commitment to advancing the health, rights, and dignity of the Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer (LBQ) communities we serve, especially in these evolving times.

The development of this plan comes at a critical moment. Over the last few years, we have witnessed significant shifts in both the socio-political and economic landscapes. These changes have brought new challenges and opportunities for the LBQ movement, especially in Western Kenya. To remain resilient and responsive to these dynamics, our strategic vision emphasizes innovation, collaboration, and sustainability. We have outlined key areas of focus that will guide us as we seek to strengthen our impact, amplify our advocacy, and build the capacity of our community.

At the heart of our strategic approach is our unwavering belief in the power of partnerships. We understand that advancing human rights and creating sustainable change requires the concerted efforts of diverse allies across sectors. Through deeper engagement with our partners—whether they are community-based organizations, funding agencies, or governmental entities—we will work to build a more inclusive society where all individuals, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation, can live free from discrimination and harm.

This plan also reflects our commitment to accountability and transparency. We have set measurable goals and developed monitoring frameworks that will ensure we remain accountable to our mission, our supporters, and, most importantly, the communities we serve. We understand that sustainable progress is only possible when our programs are adaptive, data-driven, and responsive to the needs of our stakeholders.

As we embark on this strategic journey, we remain optimistic and grounded in our core values of equality, justice, and inclusivity. We know that the road ahead will not always be easy, but with the continued support of our partners, staff, and community, we are confident that together we can drive the transformative change necessary to achieve a more just and equitable future for all.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to this plan's development. Your insights, expertise, and commitment have been invaluable, and they serve as a reminder of the power of collective action.

We look forward to the next chapter of VOWWEK and the continued impact we will have in advancing the rights and wellbeing of our community.



Laurine Adhiambo
Ag. Executive Director
VOWWEK

Executive Summary

The strategic plan of Voices of Women in Western Kenya (VOWWEK) serves as a comprehensive framework aimed at advocating for the rights and wellbeing of rural LBQ (lesbian, bisexual, and queer) women. Operating within a challenging socio-political environment, VOWWEK recognizes the severe marginalization and systemic discrimination faced by this group, particularly in rural communities where patriarchal and heteronormative systems prevail. Despite global advancements in LGBTQ+ rights, rural LBQ women in Kenya remain disproportionately underserved, facing significant barriers in accessing healthcare, legal protection, and social support.

This strategic plan is aligned with both national frameworks and global imperatives, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and is designed to create lasting change by promoting equity, inclusion, and justice. VOWWEK's mission is to confront systemic barriers head-on, addressing not only the lack of service delivery but also the cultural and social norms that reinforce exclusion and discrimination.

Key priority areas identified in the strategic plan include equity and inclusion, access to justice, movement building, and organizational development and sustainability. VOWWEK aims to implement intergenerational programs that create mentorship and leadership among LBQ members, ensuring the continuity and sustainability of the movement. By forming strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations and stakeholders, VOWWEK seeks to amplify advocacy efforts, leverage resources, and increase collective impact in promoting and protecting the rights of LBQ women.

Organizational development is a critical focus, emphasizing the need to strengthen VOWWEK's structure and systems to effectively meet its objectives. This includes enhancing the well-being of personnel, developing favorable policies, and creating a supportive environment for impactful program delivery. Sustainability is also a key consideration, with plans for resource mobilization that adapt to changing environments and donor landscapes.

Through tailored capacity-building initiatives, VOWWEK aims to enhance the knowledge, confidence, and leadership skills of LBQ women, empowering them to take active roles in promoting social change. The strategic plan outlines specific objectives, activities, and indicators to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of progress.

In summary, VOWWEK's strategic plan is a bold commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable society for rural LBQ women in Western Kenya. By addressing systemic barriers, creating collaboration, and investing in organizational sustainability, VOWWEK is poised to make a significant impact in the lives of those it serves, ultimately contributing to a broader movement for social justice and human rights.

Background

Voices of Women in Western Kenya (VOWWEK) is an organization deeply committed to advocating for the rights and wellbeing of rural LBQ (lesbian, bisexual, and queer) women. Operating in a challenging socio-political environment, VOWWEK addresses the severe marginalization and systemic discrimination faced by this group. The strategic plan aligns with both national frameworks and global frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with an aim to create lasting change by promoting equity, inclusion, and justice.

Despite notable global advancements in LGBTQ+ rights, rural LBQ women in Kenya remain disproportionately underserved. Patriarchal and heteronormative systems continue to dominate, particularly in rural communities, restricting access to healthcare, legal protection, and social support. VOWWEK's focus is to confront these systemic barriers by addressing not only the lack of service delivery but also the cultural and social norms that reinforce exclusion and discrimination.

Kenya's Constitution guarantees the right to life, equality, and the highest attainable standard of health for all, including marginalized groups. However, LBQ women continue to face extreme challenges in accessing healthcare, legal services, and economic opportunities due to social stigma and limited legal protections. Kenya's Health Policy (2014-2030) emphasizes equity and peoplecentered care, but its implementation has been lacking when it comes to addressing the specific needs of sexual minorities, particularly in rural areas. VOWWEK's strategic plan seeks to bridge these gaps by advocating for inclusive, rights-based policies and delivering community-driven programs to support LBQ women.

The gains made in the LGBTQ+ sector in Kenya are evident in the increased visibility of the community and the legal progress achieved, such as constitutional protection of basic rights. However, there remains a significant gap between these legal advancements and their practical application, especially in rural areas where traditional beliefs and stigma persist. The work of organizations like VOWWEK is critical in pushing the agenda forward and ensuring that legal progress translates into tangible improvements in the lives of rural LBQ women.

Introduction

This strategic plan is rooted in a vision of an inclusive society where rural LBQ women can access equal opportunities, enjoy their fundamental rights, and live free from violence and discrimination. VOWWEK recognizes that achieving this vision requires a multifaceted approach, one that addresses the structural, cultural, and social barriers faced by LBQ women. Through advocacy, capacity building, and partnership development, the organization aims to create systemic change and create a supportive environment for LBQ women.

VOWWEK's mission is to empower rural LBQ women by advocating for their rights, expanding access to socio-economic opportunities, and improving healthcare services that cater to their specific needs. The organization operates from the belief that health is not merely the absence of disease, but a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing, as defined by the World Health Organization. To achieve this, VOWWEK takes a holistic approach, integrating healthcare advocacy with legal and economic empowerment initiatives. Below are the vision and mission statements with the core values:



Vision

A society where all women can access equal opportunities without discrimination



Mission

To empower rural LBQ women to access equal opportunities by promoting responsive health services, expanding socio-economic development opportunities and enhancing capacity to shape governance and leadership landscape in Western Kenya



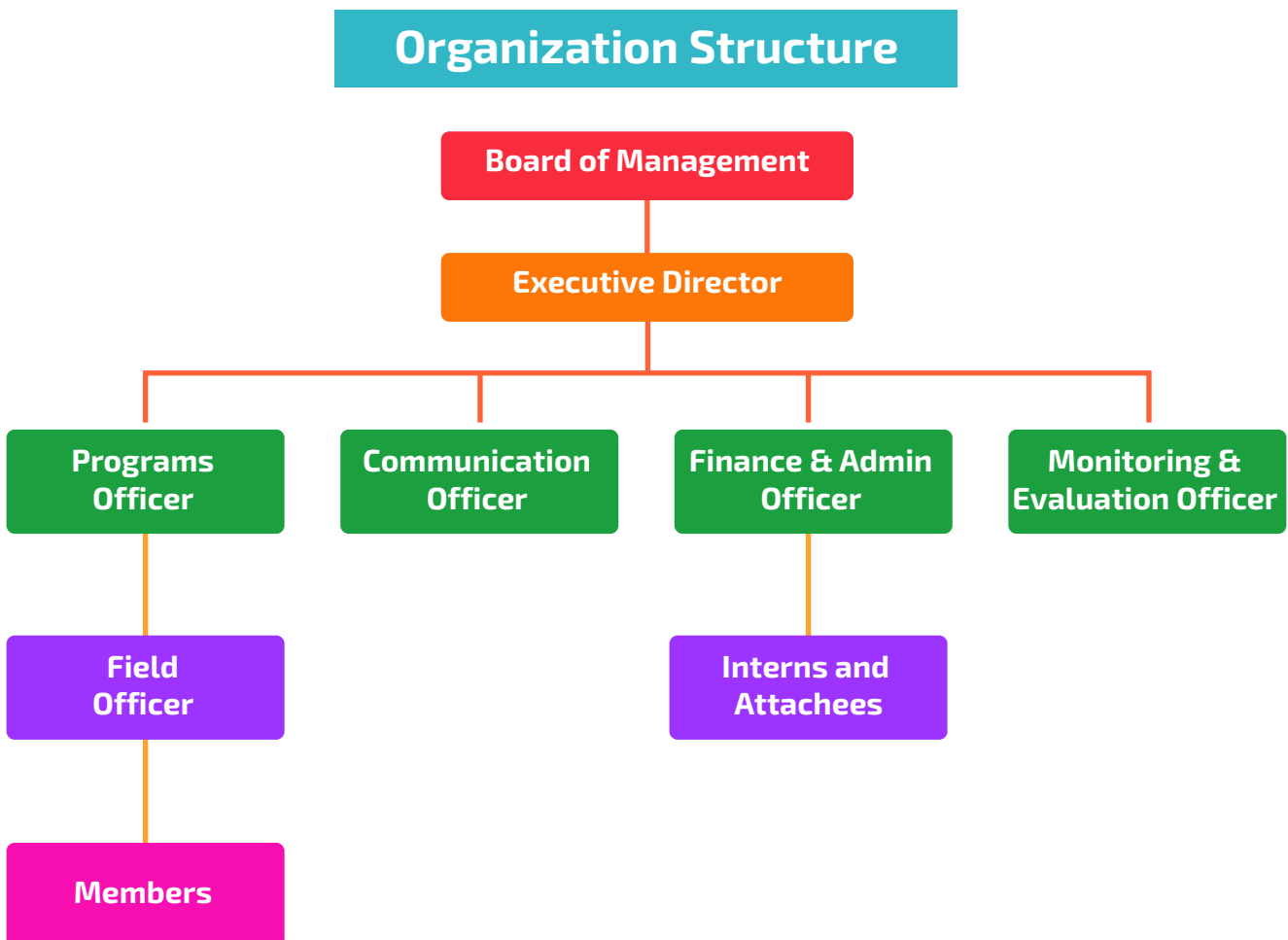
Values

- Respect
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Tolerance
- Good governance,
- Inclusion

The context within which VOWWEK operates is complex and multifaceted. On one hand, there have been gains in the recognition of LGBTQ+ rights in Kenya, including growing visibility and support from various human rights organizations and allies. However, rural LBQ women continue to face significant repression. The political climate, marked by both progress and backlash, has seen a rise in anti-LGBTQ+ sentiments, particularly in rural areas where cultural and religious beliefs remain deeply conservative. VOWWEK's work is thus critical in navigating this difficult terrain, ensuring that the voices of rural LBQ women are amplified and their rights are protected.

In terms of governance and service delivery, VOWWEK prioritizes transparency, inclusivity, and community participation. The organization has established a robust governance structure that includes a dedicated board, trained staff, and volunteers, all committed to advancing the rights

of rural LBQ women. VOWWEK's governance model is participatory, ensuring that the voices of LBQ women are represented at every level of decision-making. Service delivery is community-centered, with programs designed to meet the specific needs of rural LBQ women through direct engagement and consultation.



VOWWEK's strategic plan emphasizes the importance of partnership building and stakeholder engagement. Over time, the organization has cultivated strong relationships with healthcare providers, legal experts, government bodies, and civil society organizations. These partnerships are essential in driving forward the organization's agenda, ensuring that LBQ women can access healthcare, legal aid, and social support. Additionally, VOWWEK actively engages with local communities to raise awareness, challenge harmful norms, and create a culture of inclusion and respect for diversity.

The organization has made significant gains over the years. VOWWEK has successfully raised awareness about the rights of LBQ women, facilitated access to healthcare, and provided legal support to those facing discrimination and violence. The establishment of safe spaces and community support groups has empowered many LBQ women, offering them refuge and solidarity in environments that are often hostile. Additionally, VOWWEK has played a critical role in policy advocacy, pushing for legal reforms that protect the rights of LBQ women and promote gender equality.

However, challenges remain. The current situation for LBQ women in rural Kenya is precarious, with increasing threats from antiLGBTQ+ movements and a shrinking civic space that limits the operations of organizations like VOWWEK. Despite the gains made, discrimination and violence against LBQ women persist, particularly in regions where traditional beliefs are strongly held. The strategic plan recognizes these challenges and outlines strategies to counter them, focusing on movement building, advocacy, and creating safe, inclusive spaces for LBQ women. One of the key strategies outlined in the plan is to strengthen community engagement and support systems. VOWWEK understands that sustainable change requires the involvement of the community at all levels, from local leaders to grassroots organizations. The plan includes initiatives to train community leaders on LGBTQ+ issues, promote dialogue, and encourage the development of culturally sensitive solutions that address the needs of rural LBQ women.

In terms of the way forward, VOWWEK's strategic plan emphasizes the need for continued advocacy and policy reform. Legal recognition of LBQ rights must be accompanied by efforts to ensure that these rights are enforced and respected at the community level. VOWWEK will continue to push for the full implementation of anti-discrimination laws, while also advocating for the legal recognition of same-sex relationships and the protection of sexual minorities from violence and persecution. Additionally, VOWWEK is focused on ensuring its long-term sustainability and impact. The organization is investing in capacity building for its staff and volunteers, enhancing its governance structures, and diversifying its funding sources. VOWWEK is also committed to developing robust monitoring and evaluation systems to track the impact of its programs and make necessary adjustments to ensure that they remain effective and responsive to the needs of rural LBQ women.

VOWWEK's strategic approach is centered on empowering grassroots movements, recognizing that sustainable change must originate from within communities. To achieve this, VOWWEK prioritizes capacity building for community leaders, facilitating the formation of support groups, and creating collaboration among LGBTQ+ organizations. By strengthening these grassroots initiatives, VOWWEK aims to create a robust network that amplifies the voices of LGBTQ+ individuals, ensuring that their rights and needs are effectively represented and addressed.

In tandem with grassroots empowerment, VOWWEK intensifies its advocacy for policy change, focusing on the implementation of existing progressive laws, particularly in rural areas where gaps remain significant. The organization actively engages with policymakers and conducts legal awareness campaigns to educate communities about their rights. By challenging discriminatory practices and advocating for effective policy enforcement, VOWWEK strives to create a more equitable environment for LGBTQ+ individuals, ensuring that protective measures translate into real-world improvements.

Addressing the complex realities faced by LBQ women, VOWWEK adopts an intersectional approach that recognizes how discrimination can be compounded by factors such as poverty, ethnicity, and disability. This strategy informs the organization's programming, ensuring that interventions are tailored to the unique needs of those who experience multiple forms of marginalization. Additionally, prioritizing safety and security, VOWWEK implements measures such as establishing safe spaces, providing security training, and building strong partnerships

with local authorities. By focusing on both immediate safety and long-term organizational resilience, VOWWEK is committed to creating a supportive and secure environment for the LGBTQ+ community in Kenya.

Over all, VOWWEK's strategic plan represents a bold vision for the future of rural LBQ women in Kenya. Through its focus on health equity, legal advocacy, economic empowerment, and community transformation, VOWWEK seeks to create a society where LBQ women can thrive. By continuing to engage with stakeholders, build partnerships, and advocate for policy reform, VOWWEK is well-positioned to drive lasting change and improve the lives of rural LBQ women.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

VOWWEK's strengths form a solid foundation for its impactful work in advocating for LBQ rights and supporting the LGBTQ+ community. One of the organization's most significant assets is its **strong network of allies**. This network includes supportive government officials, other non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and influential community leaders. Such collaborations facilitate joint advocacy efforts, resource sharing, and a broader reach within communities. The synergy created by these partnerships enhances VOWWEK's visibility and effectiveness in addressing issues faced by the LBQ community.

Another crucial strength is VOWWEK's **experienced and dedicated team**. The staff members bring a wealth of knowledge about LGBTQ+ issues, coupled with diverse skills that enable them to implement programs effectively. This expertise not only contributes to the success of current initiatives but also strengthens the organization's capacity to innovate and adapt in a rapidly changing environment. Complementing this is VOWWEK's **strong track record and brand recognition**. The organization has established itself as a model for advocating LBQ rights, having documented successes in areas such as healthcare access, financial empowerment training, and community engagement. This positive reputation enhances VOWWEK's credibility with donors and partners, further solidifying its position in the sector.

VOWWEK also benefits from **effective resource management and financial stability**. The organization is known for its transparent financial practices, which have led to an increase in donor funding. This financial stability is essential for sustaining programs and ensuring long-term success, as it allows VOWWEK to allocate resources strategically to meet the needs of the community.

Weaknesses

Despite its strengths, VOWWEK faces several weaknesses that could impede its progress. One notable challenge is the **gaps in policy implementation and monitoring & evaluation**. While the organization has established strategic plans and policies, it recognizes shortcomings in their execution and in the robustness of its evaluation processes. These gaps limit VOWWEK's ability to demonstrate impact, track progress, and maintain accountability to stakeholders, which are critical for securing ongoing support and funding.

Additionally, VOWWEK grapples with **limited staff and resources**. This constraint can lead to staff burnout and hinder the organization's capacity to scale its programs effectively. The need for strategic recruitment and capacity building is evident to ensure that VOWWEK can meet its ambitious goals without overextending its current personnel. Moreover, there is a **lack of follow-up and value addition** in VOWWEK's interventions, highlighting a need for more consistent engagement with beneficiaries and stakeholders. Strengthening feedback mechanisms and developing strategies for continuous engagement would maximize the impact of training and programs.

Opportunities

VOWWEK is well-positioned to seize several opportunities that can enhance its effectiveness and reach. One significant opportunity lies **in expanding community outreach and partnerships**. There is potential to raise awareness and promote acceptance of LBQ individuals through targeted awareness campaigns. Engaging religious leaders and creating dialogue at the community level can create a more inclusive environment for LBQ rights, enhancing social acceptance and understanding.

Furthermore, VOWWEK can capitalize on **its existing relationships to strengthen policy advocacy and engagement**. By actively participating in policy development processes and advocating for inclusive policies that protect LBQ rights, VOWWEK can help create a more equitable legal landscape. This proactive approach could influence the creation of policies that better serve the needs of the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally, **leveraging technology and customized communication** strategies presents another opportunity. Utilizing social media platforms and developing online resources can enhance VOWWEK's ability to connect with specific demographics, making their messaging more impactful and accessible.

Threats

While there are ample opportunities for growth, VOWWEK must navigate significant threats in its operating environment. A primary concern is the **external stigma and discrimination** that LBQ individuals face, driven by cultural and religious beliefs. This pervasive stigma creates barriers to acceptance and can undermine the effectiveness of advocacy efforts, necessitating ongoing initiatives to promote understanding and reduce discrimination.

Additionally, VOWWEK is increasingly aware of the **shrinking civic space and changing donor funding trends**. These shifts pose risks to its operational capacity and highlight the importance of diversifying funding sources to ensure sustainability. The organization must be adaptable and proactive in securing resources to continue its vital work. Lastly, VOWWEK acknowledges the safety and security risks that threaten both its staff and community members. Reports of violence, harassment, and legal persecution necessitate the implementation of robust security measures and the development of emergency response protocols. Advocating for legal protections is essential to ensure a safe environment for all involved.

Below is the summary of the SWOT.

SWOT Analysis Summary

STRENGTHS

- Strong commitment to empowering LBQ women and advocating for their rights
- Dedicated team and network of allies provide a solid foundation for our work
- Focus on movement building and access to justice positions us as a key player in advancing LBQ rights in Kenya

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increasing recognition of LBQ rights in Kenya allows us to collaborate with government agencies and other organizations to advocate for policy changes benefiting rural LBQ women
- Engaging in partnership with local communities, businesses and donors can open avenues for resource mobilization and program expansion



WEAKNESSES

- Limited resources, both in terms of funding and capacity, may hinder our ability to reach all rural women in need of support
- Organizational structure and processes may require strengthening to ensure efficient delivery of services and programs

THREATS

- Societal stigma and discrimination against LBQ individuals, particularly in rural areas pose a significant challenge to our efforts.
- Legal and policy barriers may impede advocacy work and limit the rights of LBQ Women.
- The family protection Bill 2023 (Kaluma Bill) presents a direct threat to LBQ rights and community acceptance, potentially undermining our advocacy efforts and the well being of LBQ women in rural areas.

PESTLE Analysis of VOWWEK's Operating Context

VOWWEK operates within a complex landscape shaped by various political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors. This PESTLE analysis highlights the challenges and opportunities that impact the organization's efforts to advocate for LBQ rights in Kenya.

Political Factors

The political environment for LGBTQ+ rights in Kenya is increasingly hostile, marked by significant threats such as the **Kaluma bill**, which represents a broader trend of diminishing support for LGBTQ+ issues. This bill, alongside the trend of **shrinking civic space**, poses substantial risks to VOWWEK's advocacy efforts. The rise of anti-choice movements with political backing creates a climate that is not only unwelcoming but actively detrimental to the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals. However, VOWWEK recognizes the presence of **limited but potentially influential political allies**. By cultivating relationships with supportive political figures, the organization can leverage these connections to promote policy changes beneficial to the LBQ community. This strategic approach enables VOWWEK to navigate the challenging political landscape while advocating for necessary reforms.

Additionally, VOWWEK's status as an NGO operating under government oversight adds a layer of vulnerability. The organization must carefully navigate its relationship with government entities, especially regarding funding and program implementation. This dynamic reflects a broader challenge faced by NGOs advocating for marginalized groups in environments where government support is limited or conditional.

Economic Factors

Economically, VOWWEK faces significant **funding challenges and dependence on external support**. This reliance on fluctuating donor priorities can restrict the organization's ability to implement its strategic plan fully. As a result, VOWWEK is compelled to develop a robust resource mobilization strategy to enhance its financial resilience. The **economic disparities** in the community

further exacerbate the challenges faced by LBQ individuals, many of whom lack the financial means to access legal representation or essential services. This economic marginalization highlights the urgent need for VOWWEK's socio-economic empowerment programs, which aim to address these disparities and support vulnerable populations.

Social Factors

Socially, VOWWEK contends with deeply ingrained **cultural beliefs and traditional practices** that present formidable barriers to its mission. Expectations for heterosexual marriage and childbearing, along with restrictions on inheritance for LBQ individuals, create a climate of intolerance. These cultural norms, often reinforced by religious beliefs, contribute to widespread **stigma and discrimination** against LBQ individuals. Instances of LBQ women being denied medical care or mistreated after disclosing their sexual orientation underscore

the pressing need for awareness campaigns and sensitivity training, particularly within healthcare settings.

Moreover, VOWWEK identifies **gatekeepers** within communities as obstacles to open identification and support for LBQ individuals. These influential figures perpetuate stigma and can hinder outreach efforts. Addressing these challenges necessitates culturally sensitive approaches to community engagement, focusing on building trust and understanding at the grassroots level.

Technological Factors

In response to the challenges posed by a **shrinking civic space**, VOWWEK recognizes the importance of **harnessing technology for communication and outreach**. Digital platforms and social media offer powerful tools for reaching target demographics and amplifying the organization's message. Customized communication strategies that leverage technology can engage rural LBQ women effectively, creating connections that might otherwise be difficult to achieve in isolated environments.

Additionally, the potential of **online platforms for movement building** is significant. These digital spaces can create a sense of community among LBQ individuals, particularly in rural areas where physical isolation poses major challenges. By facilitating

information sharing and mobilization for advocacy efforts, VOWWEK can use technology to bridge generational gaps within the LBQ community, creating mentorship and leadership development through intergenerational programs.

Legal Factors

The **legal landscape** in Kenya presents serious challenges for LBQ individuals. The current legal frameworks inadequately protect their rights, leaving them vulnerable to discrimination, violence, and denial of basic rights. The lack of legal recognition for same-sex relationships exacerbates these vulnerabilities, making it essential for VOWWEK to engage in strategic advocacy efforts aimed at pushing for legal reforms.

Furthermore, **barriers to justice and equitable legal representation** complicate the situation. LBQ individuals often face bias within the legal system, resulting in inadequate representation and limited access to legal aid. To address these disparities, VOWWEK aims to provide legal aid clinics and capacity-building workshops that empower individuals to navigate legal systems more effectively. Advocating for inclusive policies that ensure equal access to justice is a critical component of VOWWEK's mission.

Environmental Factors

While specific information regarding environmental factors directly impacting VOWWEK's operational context is limited, it is important to recognize that broader environmental issues—such as climate change, resource scarcity, and public health crises—can indirectly affect the organization's work. Understanding and addressing these factors may be necessary as VOWWEK continues to advocate for LBQ rights within a dynamic and multifaceted context.

Key Priority Areas

Equity and Inclusion

As structural barriers against and exclusion of women are major and systemic drivers of underdevelopment and inequitable outcomes, we seek to understand the ways in which gender discrimination is baked into the system. As all inequality is not created equal and as these gendered systems intersect with other forms of discrimination. We will work with our partners to address how these overlapping elements compound to curtail opportunities for rural LBQ women. In the problem analysis, this includes a deeper, context-based understanding of specific manifestations of the problem, as well as the root causes of why the problems exist and persist. This includes who gets to define agendas, determine priorities, set norms, and enforce actions.

Achieving equity and inclusion for rural LBQ women involves addressing systemic marginalization and creating an environment where all individuals are valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Rural communities can be conservative, posing challenges for LBQ individuals. However, there is a growing recognition of the importance of diversity within these communities, leading to initiatives that promote acceptance and celebration of differences. It's our intention that we build on these gains.

In Kenya just like other parts of the world, achieving equity and inclusion for women and girls involves addressing deep-rooted patriarchal norms and structural inequalities. While progress has been made in areas such as education and political representation, disparities still exist, particularly for women in rural and marginalized communities. Discrimination, harmful cultural practices, and limited access to resources continue to hinder full gender equality.

Equity and inclusion are fundamental pillars of our strategic plan for working with rural LBQ women in Western Kenya. In terms of policy, we are committed to advocating for inclusive policies that protect the rights and interests of LBQ women, ensuring that they are not discriminated against based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. By engaging with policymakers and stakeholders, we aim to influence policy development and implementation to create a more equitable and inclusive environment for LBQ women in the region.

In the area of service delivery, our focus is on ensuring that LBQ women have equal access to essential services, including healthcare, education, and social support. We will work to address barriers that prevent LBQ women from accessing these services, such as stigma and discrimination, by collaborating with service providers to promote inclusive practices and sensitivity training. Additionally, we will advocate for the integration of LBQ-specific needs and concerns into service delivery frameworks to ensure that the unique challenges faced by this community are recognized and addressed effectively.

To further build in ensure inclusion for all women VOWWEK within this strategic plan will prioritize work on the following areas

Policy Advocacy

The organization's strategic plan includes a dedicated focus on policy advocacy for rural LBQ women in Western Kenya. This involves actively engaging with policymakers at the national and county levels to push for inclusive policies that protect the rights of LBQ individuals. Specifically, the organization will advocate for the development and implementation of anti-discrimination policies that address the unique challenges faced by rural LBQ women. This includes advocating for laws that protect against discrimination in employment, healthcare, and access to public services. Additionally, the organization will work towards policies that recognize and support same-sex relationships, ensuring that rural LBQ women have legal recognition and protection.

Capacity Building

To strengthen the impact of policy advocacy efforts, the organization will focus on capacity building within its network and among local LBQ communities. This includes training sessions and workshops to educate community members on their rights and how to engage with policymakers effectively. By empowering rural LBQ women with knowledge of their rights and advocacy skills, the organization aims to create a grassroots movement that can drive policy change from the ground up. Capacity building efforts will also extend to supporting LBQ-led organizations in developing policy briefs, conducting research, and engaging in policy dialogues to influence decision-makers.

Responsive Healthcare Services

This strategic plan will focus on improving healthcare service delivery for rural LBQ women in Kenya. This will involve working with healthcare providers to create LBQ-friendly spaces that are free from discrimination and stigma. The organization will advocate for healthcare facilities to provide culturally sensitive and inclusive services, including access to sexual and reproductive health services tailored to the needs of LBQ individuals. Training programs for healthcare providers will also be implemented to enhance their understanding of LBQ-specific health issues and best practices for care.

Legal Aid and Support Services

In addressing the unique legal challenges faced by rural LBQ women, the organization's strategic plan includes the establishment of legal aid and support services. This involves setting up legal clinics in rural areas where LBQ individuals can receive free legal assistance, particularly in cases of discrimination, gender-based violence, and property rights violations. The organization will collaborate with legal experts and community paralegals to provide

representation and advocacy for rural LBQ women navigating the legal system. Additionally, the plan includes the development of referral networks to connect LBQ individuals with other support services, such as counseling and shelter, in cases of emergency.

Representation in Decision-Making

Recognizing the significance of representation, the strategic plan will build on efforts to increase the participation of rural LBQ women in decision-making processes at local and national levels. The organization will advocate for the inclusion of LBQ voices in community forums, policy discussions, and governance structures. This includes supporting rural LBQ women to run for local leadership positions, join community boards, and engage in advocacy campaigns. By promoting active participation and representation, the organization seeks to ensure that the perspectives and needs of rural LBQ women are heard and considered in all levels of decision-making.

Access to Justice

Access to justice for women and girls in Kenya involves navigating a landscape informed by legal, cultural, and economic factors. Despite progressive laws and policies, implementation gaps persist, especially in rural areas where legal resources are limited. Women and girls continue to face challenges such as gender-based violence, property rights violations, and inadequate representation in the justice system.

This priority area will involve addressing systemic barriers that hinder their ability to seek legal recourse and protection. Discrimination, lack of legal recognition of same-sex relationships, and inadequate representation in legal systems are among the challenges. Moreover, rural areas often have limited legal resources, exacerbating these issues. However, recent legal advancements and advocacy efforts have begun to pave the way for greater inclusivity and protection of LBQ rights.

Access to Justice for rural LBQ women is a critical aspect of our strategic plan. To ensure their protection and security, we will implement measures such as establishing safe spaces, providing security training, and creating networks with local authorities for immediate response to threats. Safeguarding mechanisms will be put in place to prevent and address any

forms of violence or discrimination faced by LBQ women, including developing comprehensive policies and protocols for reporting incidents and seeking support.

Capacity-building initiatives will focus on empowering LBQ women with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the legal system effectively. This includes training on their rights, legal procedures, and available support services. Additionally, we will enhance legal awareness within the community through outreach programs, workshops, and information sessions to ensure that LBQ

women are informed about their rights and how to access justice. Socio-economic empowerment programs will also be integrated to address the economic barriers that LBQ women may face in seeking justice, such as providing financial assistance for legal representation and advocating for inclusive economic policies that benefit marginalized communities.

To ensure access to justice, VOWWEK will work to address issues around protection, security, safeguarding, capacity building, legal awareness, socio-economic empowerment for rural women. Specifically attention will be on the following specific areas:

Safeguarding and capacity building

Legal Aid Clinics: To address legal challenges faced by rural LBQ women, the organization's strategic plan involves setting up legal aid clinics in Western Kenya. These clinics will offer free legal services, including assistance with cases of discrimination, gender-based violence, and property rights violations. Expert lawyers and community paralegals will provide representation and guidance, ensuring that LBQ women have access to justice regardless of their financial situation. Through these clinics, the organization seeks to safeguard the rights of LBQ women and empower them to seek legal recourse when needed.

Training Workshops: Capacity building is a key component of the strategic plan, focusing on equipping rural LBQ women with the knowledge and skills to navigate the legal system. The organization will conduct regular training workshops in Western Kenya on topics such as legal rights, self-advocacy, and understanding the judicial process. These workshops will also cover practical skills such as how to document incidents of discrimination or violence effectively. By empowering LBQ women with legal awareness and advocacy skills, the organization aims to strengthen their ability to protect themselves and demand justice.

Legal awareness and social economic empowerment

Legal Literacy Campaigns: VOWWEK will focus on comprehensive legal awareness campaigns that are responsive to the unique needs of rural LBQ women in Western Kenya. This campaign will utilize various mediums such as community workshops, radio programs, and informational materials in local languages. The focus will be on educating LBQ women

about their legal rights, available support services, and steps to take when faced with discrimination or violence. By increasing legal literacy, the organization aims to empower LBQ women to recognize and assert their rights within their communities.

Income-Generating Programs: Socio-economic empowerment is vital for enhancing the overall well-being and independence of rural LBQ women. The strategic plan includes initiatives to support income-generating activities such as small-scale farming, crafts-making, and entrepreneurship. By providing training, resources, and access to markets, the organization aims to improve the economic stability of LBQ women in Western Kenya. Economic empowerment not only enhances financial security but also strengthens their ability to access justice by reducing dependency on others.

Protection and security

Safe Spaces: In Western Kenya, the organization's strategic plan prioritizes creating safe spaces for rural LBQ women where they can seek refuge and support. This involves establishing safe houses and community centers that are specifically designed to be welcoming and secure for LBQ individuals facing threats or violence. These safe spaces offer a haven where women can access counseling, legal assistance, and basic needs such as shelter and food. By providing a safe environment, the organization aims to protect LBQ women from discrimination, harassment, and abuse.

Emergency Response: Recognizing the urgent need for swift action in times of crisis, the strategic plan includes the development of an emergency response system. This system will enable rural LBQ women to quickly reach out for help through hotlines or mobile applications. Trained responders will be on standby to provide immediate assistance, whether it's relocation to a safe house, legal advice, or connecting them with medical services. By establishing this emergency response mechanism, the organization aims to enhance the safety and security of LBQ women in Western Kenya.

Movement Building

Women and girls' rights movement building in Kenya has a rich history rooted in the struggle for gender equality and empowerment. Over the years, grassroots organizations, NGOs, and women-led movements have been pivotal in advocating for legislative reforms, social change, and challenging harmful cultural norms. The movement has seen successes in areas such as reproductive rights, education access, and political representation. However, challenges persist, including persistent gender-based violence, limited economic opportunities, and barriers to healthcare, particularly in rural areas.

Movement building is a crucial aspect of our strategic plan for empowering rural LBQ women. We aim to strengthen community support groups in rural areas, creating a network of solidarity and empowerment among LBQ individuals. By building a sense of belonging and

unity within the community, we can amplify the voices of LBQ women and advocate for their rights and inclusion in society. Through community engagement activities, awareness campaigns, and capacity-building initiatives, we seek to build a strong and resilient movement that champions the rights and well-being of LBQ women in Western Kenya.

Movement building within the context of rural LBQ (Lesbian, Bisexual, and Queer) women is crucial for amplifying their voices and advocating for their rights. Historically, rural LBQ women have faced unique challenges due to their intersectional identities, often leading to isolation and limited visibility. However, recent years have seen a growing momentum in grassroots organizing, facilitated by digital platforms and social media, enabling connections and solidarity across vast geographic distances. This movement is not just about advocacy but also about creating safe spaces for expression, mutual support, and empowerment.

Intergenerational programs will be implemented to bridge the gap between older and younger LBQ members, providing mentorship opportunities and support for the next generation of leaders. By nurturing leadership skills and creating connections across different age groups, we can ensure the continuity and sustainability of the movement. Additionally, partnerships with allied organizations and stakeholders will be established to leverage resources, expertise, and support for our movement-building efforts. Together, we can create a powerful force for positive change and social justice for rural LBQ women in Western Kenya.

VOWWEK aims to collaborate with like-minded organizations, allies, and stakeholders to create a strong network of support for LBQ women in rural areas. By forming partnerships and alliances, we can amplify our advocacy efforts, leverage resources, and increase our collective impact in promoting and protecting the rights of LBQ women. Through strategic collaborations, we can work together to address systemic barriers, advocate for policy changes, and create a more inclusive and supportive environment for LBQ women in Western Kenya.

Organizational Development and Sustainability

Organizational development and sustainability are crucial aspects of our strategic plan for working with rural LBQ women. In this context, organizational development refers to strengthening our structure and systems to effectively meet our objectives and serve the community better. We aim to enhance the well-being of our organization's personnel and allies, ensuring their protection and safety. By investing in our team and developing favorable policies, we can create a supportive environment that enables us to deliver impactful programs and initiatives to empower LBQ women in rural areas.

Sustainability is another key focus area, emphasizing the long-term viability and impact of our organization's work. We are committed to developing resource mobilization plans that are adaptable to changing environments and donor funding landscapes. By establishing effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks, we can track our performance and ensure that we are meeting our goals effectively. Regular board meetings and succession plans are also essential for governance and leadership continuity, ensuring that our organization remains strong and resilient in the face of challenges.

In the context of emerging trends, we recognize the importance of communication strategies

tailored to specific target demographics. By customizing our communication approaches, we can effectively engage with rural LBQ women and ensure that our messages resonate with their needs and priorities. Additionally, the trend towards increased collaboration and partnerships with other organizations and allies is essential for amplifying our impact and reaching a wider audience. By working together with like-minded partners, we can leverage resources, expertise, and networks to create a more sustainable and inclusive environment for LBQ women in Western Kenya.

Leadership for sustainability

Women's leadership in Kenya has made significant strides, with women holding key positions in government, civil society, and business. However, women and girls in rural areas still face barriers to leadership, including limited access to education and traditional gender roles. Recognizing the importance of diverse leadership, efforts are underway to support and empower women and girls to take on leadership roles in their communities.

Patriarchal, racial, and other discriminatory norms and structures squeeze out talented people from leadership and decision-making. We therefore pay close attention to representation, leadership, and power as well as active and meaningful participation of women and other underrepresented constituencies at all levels in initiatives, partnerships, and institutions. This is particularly relevant to the senior management teams and governance positions of the organizations we support, in the choice of experts we consult, public meetings we convene, research and evidence we share and in how we communicate about our work.

Leadership development for rural LBQ women is crucial for creating sustainable change within communities. Historically, LBQ individuals have been underrepresented in leadership roles, facing barriers such as discrimination and lack of visibility. However, there is a growing recognition of the importance of diverse leadership, leading to initiatives that empower and support rural LBQ women in taking on leadership positions.

Our approach to leadership also involves promoting participatory decision-making processes and creating a culture of collaboration and teamwork. We believe in the importance of inclusive leadership that values diverse perspectives and experiences, ensuring that the voices of all LBQ women are heard and respected. By empowering LBQ women to lead and engage in decision-making processes, we can create a more democratic and representative environment where their needs and priorities are prioritized. Through effective leadership development initiatives, we aim to build a strong foundation for sustainable change and empower LBQ women to become agents of progress and transformation in their communities.

Member capacity building is a key priority for our organization. We are dedicated to providing training, skills development, and resources to empower LBQ women to advocate for themselves and their communities effectively. By investing in the capacity building of our members, we can enhance their knowledge, confidence, and leadership skills, enabling them to take on active roles in promoting social change and advancing the rights of LBQ

individuals. Through tailored capacity building initiatives, we aim to equip LBQ women with the tools and resources they need to navigate challenges, engage in advocacy efforts, and contribute to building a more inclusive and equitable society.

Organizational development is about making our organization have the capacity and more effective in responding to the unique needs of rural LBQ women. This means we are looking at how we can improve the way we work and grow as a team. We want to build a solid foundation for our organization so we can better work with LBQ women in realizing fundamental rights of all women.

VOWWEK Strategic Framework Summary

**A society where all women can access equal opportunities
without discrimination**

Justice and Accountability

- **Strategies:** Policy advocacy, access to justice initiatives, partnership with legal entities, and documentation & research
- **Key Result:** Improved legal protection and rights for LBQ women

Equity & Inclusion

- **Strategies:** Fairness in service delivery, narrative change, awareness campaigns, training for community leaders and policy development
- **Key Result:** Attitude transformation towards LBQ women in rural areas

Organizational Development and Sustainability

- **Strategies:** Well-being of personnel, resource mobilization plan, monitoring and evaluation framework, succession planning and communication strategy.
- **Key Result:** Enhanced organizational capacity and sustainability

Movement Building

- **Strategies:** Solidarity building, community engagement, awareness campaign and partnership with other organization
- **Key Result:** Strengthened LBQ community support and visibility

Implementation Framework

Goal 1: Strengthening Equity and Inclusion of LBQ Persons in Decision-Making

Goals/Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Risks	Means of Verification	Indicators	Assumptions
Goal: Strengthening equity and inclusion of LBQ persons in decision-making.						
Objective 1.1: Monitor implementation of policies and laws.	Conduct audits of existing policies; engage with policymakers.	Policy audit reports; stakeholder engagement summaries.	Resistance from policymakers; lack of engagement.	Policy audit documentation; meeting minutes.	% of policies monitored; feedback from LBQ community	Stakeholders are willing to engage.
Objective 1.2: Implement comprehensive training programs targeting stakeholders.	Develop training materials; conduct workshops and seminars	Trained stakeholders demonstrating improved knowledge	Low attendance; insufficient stakeholder interest.	Training attendance records; pre- and post-training assessments.	% increase in stakeholder knowledge; positive feedback.	Stakeholders value the training.
Objective 1.3: Establish feedback mechanisms.	Create feedback forms; organize focus group discussions.	Collected feedback reports on inclusivity initiatives.	Low response rates; misinterpretation of feedback.	Feedback analysis reports; focus group summaries.	% of participants providing feedback; actionable insights derived.	LBQ persons feel safe giving feedback.
Objective 1.4: Document, research, and manage data to inform work	Conduct research studies; establish a data management system.	Comprehensive data reports and research findings	Incomplete data collection; concerns over data privacy.	Research study reports; data management records.	# of studies conducted; data accessibility for decision-making.	Data can be collected without compromising safety.

Goal 2: Enhance Justice and Accountability for Survivors of Violence and LBQ Community

Goals/Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Risks	Means of Verification	Indicators	Assumptions
Goal: Enhance justice and accountability for survivors of violence and LBQ community.						
Objective 2.1: Strengthen access to justice and accountability.	Provide legal aid services; hold legal literacy workshops.	Increased access to legal support for LBQ individuals	Stigma around seeking legal aid; lack of resources.	Case management reports; participant surveys.	% of individuals accessing legal aid; case success rates.	Survivors are willing to seek legal assistance.
Objective 2.2: Provide support for rural LBQ persons.	Establish mobile legal clinics; conduct outreach campaigns.	Mobile clinics providing legal support to rural LBQ individuals.	Logistical challenges; community resistance.	Outreach activity reports; clinic attendance records.	# of rural individuals reached; cases reported.	Rural LBQ individuals know about available services.
Objective 2.3: Create a safe space for LBQ persons.	Set up community safe spaces; organize support group meetings.	Safe spaces for LBQ individuals to share experiences.	Safety risks in communities; funding shortages.	Safe space usage reports; participant feedback.	# of safe space sessions held; participant satisfaction levels.	Communities support safe spaces for LBQ individuals.
Objective 2.4: Strengthen collaborative partnerships with justice actors.	Conduct joint training sessions; establish MOUs with justice actors.	Stronger partnerships for facilitating access to justice.	Lack of engagement from justice actors; bureaucratic hurdles.	Partnership agreements; joint initiative reports.	# of partnerships formed; positive case outcomes.	Justice actors are committed to supporting LBQ rights.

Goal 3: Strengthening LBQ Movements for Collective Action

Goals/Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Risks	Means of Verification	Indicators	Assumptions
Goal: Strengthening LBQ movements for collective action for social change and protection of LBQ rights.						
Objective 3.1: Establish transformative change from grassroots level to global spaces.	Mobilize grassroots organizations; develop advocacy training programs.	Enhanced capacity of grassroots movements.	Resistance from established organizations; funding issues.	Reports on grassroots engagement; training evaluations.	# of grassroots movements engaged; advocacy changes noted.	Grassroots organizations participate actively.
Objective 3.2: create memberships and participation in national activities.	Organize events; facilitate participation in national forums.	Increased LBQ representation in national spaces.	Low turnout; competing priorities for LBQ individuals.	Participation records; feedback from events.	% increase in LBQ participation in national activities.	LBQ individuals see the value of participation.
Objective 3.3: Develop early warning and early response mechanisms.	Create monitoring systems; train community members on responses.	Effective early warning systems for LBQ issues.	Lack of community engagement; insufficient training.	Monitoring reports; response documentation.	# of incidents reported and responded to; community readiness levels.	Communities proactively address LBQ issues.
Objective 3.4: Provide psychosocial support.	Organize support groups; offer counseling services.	Increased mental health support for LBQ individuals.	Stigma around mental health; resource limitations.	Counseling records; participant satisfaction surveys	# of individuals receiving support; mental health improvement noted.	LBQ individuals seek and receive support safely.

Goal 4: Organizational Development and Sustainability

Goals/Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Risks	Means of Verification	Indicators	Assumptions
Goal: Development of systems and procedures for sustainability.						
Objective 4.1: Develop policies and M&E systems.	Review and update existing policies; create M&E framework	Updated policies and comprehensive M&E reports.	Resistance to change; lack of stakeholder engagement.	Policy documents; M&E reports.	# of policies updated; compliance with M&E framework.	Staff support policy changes.
Objective 4.2: Training and capacity building for board and staff.	Conduct workshops; develop training resources.	Enhanced skills among board and staff members.	Low participation; lack of resources for training.	Training attendance records; feedback forms.	% of participants reporting improved skills; training completion rates.	Participants are motivated to improve capacities.
Objective 4.3: Develop sustainability strategies.	Conduct assessments; create resource mobilization plans.	Comprehensive sustainability plan in place.	Economic fluctuations; uncertain funding sources.	Sustainability reports; funding proposal evaluations.	# of new funding sources identified; plan implementation success rate	Stakeholders commit to sustainability efforts.

Goals/Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Risks	Means of Verification	Indicators	Assumptions
Objective 4.4: Enhance communication and visibility.	Create social media strategies; produce IEC materials.	Increased visibility and awareness of VOWWEK's work.	Negative public perception; resource constraints.	Social media metrics; distribution records.	% increase in engagement; outreach effectiveness.	Communication strategies resonate with target audiences.
Objective 4.5: Strengthen governance structures.	Facilitate governance training; establish partnership frameworks.	Improved governance practices and stronger partnerships.	Conflicts of interest; governance challenges.	Governance records; partnership agreements.	# of governance improvements; stakeholder satisfaction.	Board members engage actively in governance processes.

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2029

