



Women on Environment Mission (WEM) is a women - led non- profit organization dedicated to empowering communities, promoting environmental conservation, and advocating for the protection of human rights

Our Mission:

To advance women's empowerment and end the climate crisis, poverty and food insecurity.

Our Vision:

A world in which women rights and integrity of the environment is protected.

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WOMEN ON ENVIRONMENT MISSION (WEM)

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

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ABOUT WOMEN ON ENVIRONMENT MISSION

Women on Environment Mission is a female led organization dedicated to women empowerment in environment conservation, gender equality and women rights. WEM is a non-profit company limited by guarantee that was registered with Uganda Registration Service Bureau in 2023.

Our Mission

To advance women's empowerment and end the climate crisis, poverty and food insecurity.

Our Vision

A world in which women rights and integrity of the environment is protected.

Our Goals

- Educate and empower women to address and develop strategies for the protection of our environment
- Recognize, support, and promote environmentally lifestyles, economic livelihoods, and to build healthy sustaining Indigenous communities
- Commitment to influence energy policies that affect women on a local, regional, national and international level
- Environmental policies, plans and practices are gender-responsive and implemented effectively at all levels of engagements

Our programmes

- Economic Empowerment: The objective of this programme is to build the capacity of low income women in income generating activities so that they are able to participate and make decisions at the household levels and the community at large.
- Environment Conservation: The objective of this programme is to increase effective participation of women in decision making over management of environment and natural resources by promoting their access, ownership and utilization of such resource.
- Climate Change: The objective of this programme is to increase awareness and utilization of renewable energy solutions among community members and to build women's capacity to engage national and local governments to integrate gender focused climate change measures into policies, strategies and plans.

WEM STRATEGY



VISION

A world in which women rights and integrity of the environment is protected.



MISSION

To advance women's empowerment and end the climate crisis, poverty and food insecurity.

CORE VALUES

Integrity / Honesty

Being straightforward; saying what we mean and meaning what we say; living honestly; demonstrating that everything we do can be trusted, and living up to the trust that others have placed in us.

Responsible action

Acknowledging our duty and responsibility to make the world a better place. We seek to embody integrity, transparency, and accountability.

Education

Believing that our actions and decisions must be based in knowledge and research, and that we have an obligation to educate ourselves and others for the betterment of the world

Connection to the environment

Seeing the world as one living system, and showing respect for the spirit residing in everything and everyone.

Fairness / Equity / Justice

Treating all people fairly, equally, and with kindness and tolerance.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON

Thank you for taking the time to read WEM's 2025 Annual Report. This report presents an overview of the work undertaken across the organization's three core programmes and highlights the key milestones achieved during the year.

In 2025, WEM implemented strategic interventions under its programmes. Through these programmes, the organization advanced cross-border advocacy initiatives, promoted green economic alternatives, strengthened institutional capacity, and championed equitable access to clean energy.

Throughout the year, we mobilized communities, women, youth, civil society organizations (CSOs), and other stakeholders to disseminate lobbying and advocacy materials. These efforts were directed toward influencing the development and enactment of critical policies and laws, including:

- The Consumer Protection and Management Bill
- A Gender and Climate Action Plan
- A Solar Energy Policy
- The Land Acquisition, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy (LARRP)

Through these engagements, WEM contributed to advancing human rights, environmental conservation, and clean energy access in alignment with national priorities and global sustainability commitments.

Community empowerment remains at the heart of our work. In 2025, WEM organized meetings, radio talk shows, exchange learning visits, and press engagements. These platforms enabled oil-affected and forest-host communities to articulate their concerns, share experiences, and collectively pursue solutions to the challenges they face.

While we celebrate the progress made, we acknowledge that significant challenges persist. We remain committed to addressing these in 2026 and beyond through sustained advocacy, partnership, and community engagement.

On behalf of the Board, I extend my sincere appreciation to the WEM Secretariat for their dedication and professionalism. I also thank our donors and partners for their continued trust and support, which make this work possible.

Margret Kwijuka
Board Chairperson



ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

2.1. Influencing key policies and laws for the common good

In 2025, WEM intensified efforts to influence critical policies aimed at strengthening consumer protection, climate governance, clean energy access, and land rights.

Uganda's market remains flooded with counterfeit goods, including solar energy products. In 2021, the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) reported that approximately 70% of solar products on the market were substandard. This challenge persists due to weak regulatory enforcement and the absence of comprehensive consumer protection legislation. To address this gap, WEM mobilised partners to engage the Ministry of Trade to finalise and table the Consumer Protection and Management Bill before Parliament. In August 2025, WEM engaged the Speaker of Parliament urging expedited debate and enactment of the Bill. Women and youth advocates were also supported to publish opinion articles in mainstream media calling for its passage. Despite these efforts, the Bill had not been debated or enacted by the end of the year.

WEM also supported advocacy for a Gender and Climate Change Action Plan. Recognising that women, youth, and other marginalised groups are disproportionately affected by climate change, we supported women and youth leaders to use media platforms to call on the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to institutionalize a gender-responsive climate framework.



2.2. Community empowerment/organising

Empowering communities to lead in promoting human rights, environmental conservation, climate action, and clean energy access remains central to WEM's work. In 2025, we strengthened grassroots organising among oil-affected communities to enhance their collective advocacy and resilience. In Buliisa district, where the Tilenga oil project is being developed, communities face land displacement, environmental degradation, and livelihood disruptions. To strengthen solidarity and advocacy skills among Kingfisher oil project-affected communities in Kikuube district, WEM organised an exchange learning visit in 2025. The engagement brought together communities affected by the Kingfisher, Tilenga, and oil refinery projects, enabling peer learning and strengthening strategies for engaging duty bearers, including project operators.



2.3. Empowering women and youth

Women and youth constitute the majority population in Uganda, with available information showing that while there were 21,566,736 males as at May 2024, there were 24,338,681 females.

In addition, 50.5% of Uganda's population is between the ages of 0 and 17 while 22.7% of the population is aged 18 to 30 years. The latter is considered the youth population in Uganda. Overall, the country's population is young.

It therefore follows that oil projects that have displaced people in Uganda have affected more women and youth, than they have affected men. Indeed, available information shows that the number of women displaced for oil projects including the oil refinery, Tilenga and EACOP in Uganda is over 35,079. Women also often bear disproportionate impacts arising from payment of delayed, inadequate and unfair compensation to oil project-affected persons (PAPs).

To empower women and youth to address the oil sector impacts that they are facing, while also preparing them to address the challenges that could arise from other extractive projects including mining of critical raw materials, WEM did the following in 2025:

Supporting women and youth advocacy platforms: WEM mobilised women and youth affected by the Tilenga oil project to discuss challenges and solutions. Meetings in January and October 2025 led to the creation of advocacy platforms to defend their rights amid project activities.

Women-centered radio talkshows: WEM organised radio talkshows on Buddu FM (Greater Masaka) and Biiso FM (Buliisa) to raise public awareness about the challenges faced by oil-affected women, aiming to generate public pressure for action.

Amplifying women's voices via social media: With traditional media space in Uganda increasingly constrained, WEM supported the production of short videos featuring oil-affected women, the elderly, and other vulnerable persons. The videos, published on social media highlighted challenges and recommendations.



2.4. Forest conservation efforts

Forests provide critical benefits such as climate regulation, biodiversity conservation, and water and food provisioning, making their protection essential. Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) are key stewards in these efforts. In 2025, WEM supported IPLCs to conserve forests like Bugoma, Budongo, and Murchison Falls National Park. Supporting community planning: WEM organised planning meetings with Bugoma forest host communities from 21 villages in Kikuube district to guide joint advocacy against threats from oil, land grabbing, and sugarcane expansion.

Demanding the Bugoma boundary report: Following the agreed strategy, WEM and Save Bugoma Forest Campaign partners engaged the Ministry of Lands and NFA to release the forest boundary opening report.



2.5. Promoting clean energy access

Clean energy access in Uganda remains low, with only ~20% grid access and 15% clean cooking access, forcing reliance on harmful fuels. In 2025, WEM worked to improve access and promote a Just Energy Transition (JET). Empowering women in clean energy: WEM organised women's clean energy trainings. Participants discussed clean cooking, women's empowerment in energy entrepreneurship, and fossil fuel impacts, culminating in a communiqué urging government action. The training equipped participants with practical, hands-on skills to produce clean energy-saving cookstoves and briquettes, empowering them to promote sustainable cooking practices while contributing to natural resource conservation and environmental protection. Advocating against high electricity tariffs: WEM supported youth champions to lobby for reduced tariffs, but electricity costs for low-income households remain high.



2.6 Waste management

As part of its WEM activities, WE supported communities to improve waste management practices by promoting waste segregation, recycling, and safe disposal. The initiative aimed to reduce environmental pollution, protect water sources, and create opportunities for energy recovery from organic waste. Through community engagement and awareness campaigns, households and local leaders were empowered to adopt sustainable waste management practices that contribute to cleaner, healthier, and more resilient communities.



2.7 Participation in Climate negotiations

COP30 in Brazil ended with disappointment for the Global South, including Uganda. While global concern over climate change was reaffirmed, the conference fell short on climate finance and fossil fuel phase-out. Progress on fossil fuel transition was limited, delaying emissions reductions and worsening impacts on vulnerable communities. Fossil fuel interests, with over 1,700 lobbyists, dominated negotiations, undermining equity and allowing weak carbon credit mechanisms that risk greenwashing. COP30 highlighted the importance of reforming multilateral climate negotiations. Key proposals include reducing fossil fuel lobbyist influence, strengthening binding commitments, ensuring fair representation for vulnerable nations, expanding participation of Indigenous peoples and grassroots movements, and raising ambition in national climate plans for finance, adaptation, and a just energy transition.



2.8 Participation in High level Oil watch Africa AGM,

Between 25–26 August 2025, Oil Watch Africa (OWA) held its continental conference and AGM at Esella Country Hotel in Kampala, Uganda, bringing together civil society actors, grassroots movements, environmental defenders, and community representatives from across Africa, including Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria, Kenya, Namibia, South Sudan, South Africa, DRC, Togo, Mozambique, Ghana, and Mali. The conference provided a platform to reflect on struggles against fossil fuel extraction, address emerging threats from the energy transition and critical minerals, and consolidate strategies to protect Africa's environment, communities, and sovereignty, while reaffirming unity against extractivism, neo-colonial exploitation, and shrinking civic space.



2.9 Participation in high level FishNet Alliance General Assembly

FishNet Alliance held its General Assembly in Uganda, with participation from WEM and artisanal fishers and allies from 20 African countries. The conference highlighted threats from offshore extractive projects, industrial fishing, and climate-driven coastal erosion, which are displacing fishing communities and harming livelihoods. WEM and the Alliance condemned green hydrogen projects that perpetuate extractive practices and emphasized the importance of mangrove forests in sustaining fisheries and local economies.



2.10 Media engagement

Media engagements conducted: WEM worked to strengthen media coverage on the extractives sector and amplify community voices. WEM partnered with media institutions to support reporting on oil impacts and anti-exploitation perspectives. In March, field visits were organized for journalists to oil-affected communities. We have also participated in various media interviews aimed at amplifying the voices of young women and girls who have been impacted by the oil projects.



KEY CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

This section highlights our challenges faced in 2025, as well as key priorities for 2026.

3.1. Challenges in 2025

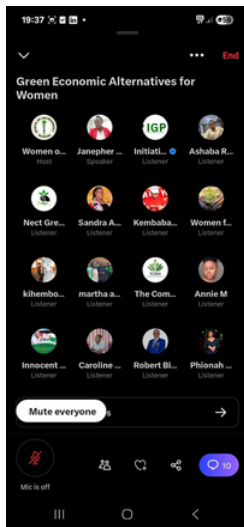
With success comes challenges. Below are the challenges we faced in 2025. In 2025, oil-affected communities in Uganda continued to face human rights abuses despite engaging government and companies for redress. Key policies, including the Solar Energy Policy, Consumer Protection Law, and Land Acquisition, Resettlement, and Rehabilitation Policy, were not enacted. The government's ETP, listing coal, oil, and gas as transition fuels, risks worsening the climate crisis. Oil activities persisted in ecologically sensitive areas like Murchison Falls National Park, forests, rivers, and wetlands, increasing human-wildlife conflicts and threatening biodiversity. Forests such as Bugoma faced destruction from sugarcane farming and oil exploitation, with land grabbing claims being legitimised through government reports. Civic space remained restricted, limiting environmental and human rights advocacy, with over 92 youth and community activists arrested.

3.2. Key priorities in 2026

In light of the above challenges, WEM will prioritise the following in 2026:

- Continue to empower oil-affected communities to defend their human and environmental rights amidst ongoing oil and gas developments;
- Support advocacy for the enactment of policies and laws that promote good energy governance and clean energy access;
- Engage in efforts to promote reforms to Uganda's Energy Transition Plan;
- Mobilise various stakeholders to campaign against oil activities in forest landscapes and in the African Great Lakes region;
- Continue to work with forest host communities to stop destruction of Bugoma forest;
- Continue to provide support to oil-affected households that are defending their compensation rights amidst the oil refinery, Tilenga and EACOP oil projects;
- Continue to use various tools to enhance clean energy awareness and uptake; and
- Work with partners to improve the operational civic space in Uganda.

PICTORIAL





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