GenDAR
Generation for Development Arts and Representation

Generation for Development, Arts and Representation (GenDAR)

ORGANISATION'S PROFILE



gendarhub

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Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



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Background

In 2018, a gender minority college student was denied access to a creative studio in Dar es Salaam simply because, according to the studio owners, “he looked different.” This exclusion was not an isolated experience. Creative spaces, workshops, and festivals repeatedly left the student off their lists. “This is not the space for you,” they said.

For a young person seeking a place to express themselves, create, and belong, these experiences revealed a painful reality: creative spaces, which should nurture imagination and celebrate human expression, could also become sites of exclusion. Yet what began as an experience of deep vulnerability gradually became the foundation of a powerful commitment to activism, representation, and the right to create.

In 2021, the student enrolled at university to pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Records, Archives and Information Management. Beyond the academic pursuit was a personal mission: to document, preserve, and archive the stories of gender minority communities whose experiences are too often excluded from official records, cultural histories, and public narratives. It was also a step towards reclaiming the space that these communities had so often been denied.

Three years later, in 2024, a small movement was born in Dar es Salaam: GenDAR, informally understood as Gen Z in Dar. What began as a grassroots initiative grew into a formally registered non-profit organisation, Generation for Development, Arts and Representation (GenDAR). The name embodies a vision of a new generation using creativity, collective action, and inclusive representation to challenge inequalities and shape a more equitable society.



Today, GenDAR is a youth-led, feminist organisation and creative hub and studio led by womxn and young people from communities experiencing systemic exclusion. Rooted in the belief that creativity is both a fundamental form of expression and a powerful tool for social change, GenDAR works to transform the very spaces that once shut people out. Through arts, ethical journalism, advocacy, and community-led initiatives, we create opportunities for people to express themselves, tell their stories, preserve their histories, and participate in shaping the cultural and social narratives of their communities.

Our work centres on amplifying the voices, experiences, and leadership of womxn and gender minority youth, with particular attention to people living with HIV (PLHIV), sex workers (SW), and people who use drugs (PUD). We recognise that exclusion is rarely experienced in isolation. For many, barriers to creative participation intersect with stigma, discrimination, economic insecurity, and limited access to opportunities. Our work therefore goes beyond creating platforms for visibility; it seeks to strengthen agency, nurture leadership, and expand the possibilities available to communities too often pushed to the margins.

At its heart, GenDAR is a story of transformation: from exclusion to expression, from silencing to storytelling, and from being denied access to building spaces of our own. What began with one person's experience has grown into a collective commitment to ensure that others do not have to face the same barriers alone.

We are building the spaces we were once denied. We are preserving the stories that history risks forgetting. And we are creating a future in which womxn and young people, in all their diversity, can freely create, express themselves, and thrive.

This is GenDAR: Generation for Development, Arts and Representation. A movement born from exclusion, growing through creativity, and driven by the conviction that everyone deserves a place in the story



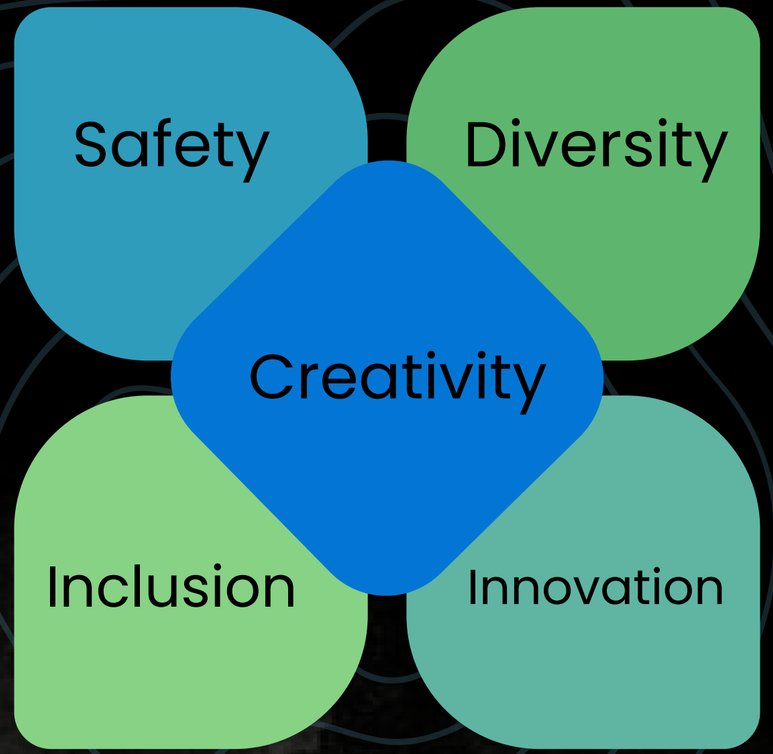
Our Mission

To advance gender equality, equity, and human rights in and through the creative sector.

Our Vision

A society where women and young people, in all their diversity, can freely create, express themselves, and thrive in the creative sector.

Our Values



Objectives

1. To utilize arts and media as a strategic tool for promoting social awareness on gender equality, equity, and human rights.

2. To strengthen the capacity of womxn and gender diverse youth through tailored programs that enable meaningful participation in leadership, policy dialogues, economic development, and social transformation.

3. To undertake and promote community-based innovations and research that advances gender equality and fosters knowledge acquisition as a foundation for informed advocacy, policy influence, and sustainable development.

What We Do



Our work focuses on five interconnected 5 areas.

Our approach is rooted in community leadership, feminist principles, creative practice, and the belief that representation is a fundamental part of social change.

We do not see art merely as a product or performance. We recognise it as a space for resistance, healing, memory, dialogue, imagination, and collective transformation.

Through our work, GenDAR seeks to move beyond the question of who is allowed into creative spaces to ask a more fundamental question: who gets to shape those spaces, whose stories are preserved, and whose voices are recognised as part of our collective future?

Our Target Group

- Womxn
- Youth from sexual and gender minorities
- PLHIV, PUD, sexworkers, and other marginalised groups



Our Main Programs

House of GenDAR

THE UBUNIFU ACADEMY

NENO HURU
A Pan-African Feminist Language Movement and Digital Infrastructure for Gender Justice

KWETU PUBLISHERS
Branding • Books • Gifts

ACTS OF KINDNESS PROGRAM

MAMA EARTH

UNMUTE RADIO

And More

Flagship Events

1. UNMUTE POETRY CLUB
2. UNMUTE ARTS FESTIVAL
3. NENO HURU CONVENINGS
4. CITY PRIDE COMMUNITY GATHERINGS


CREATIVE WRITERS INITIATIVE















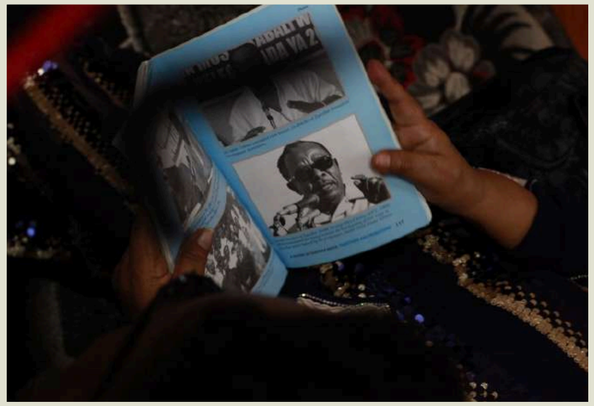



BEIJING MARATHO

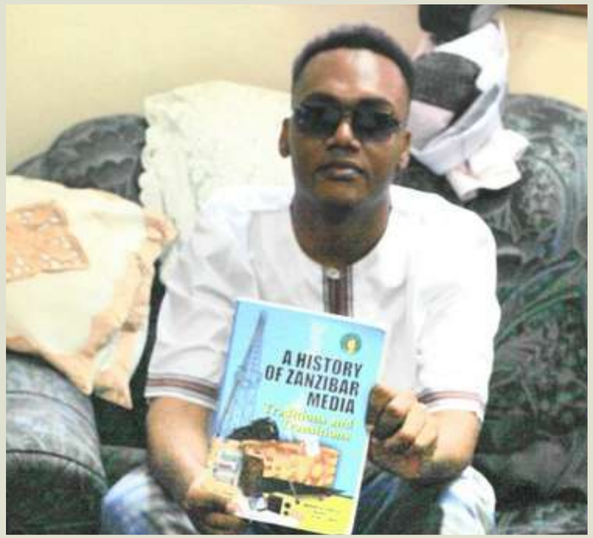



LET'S GO GIRLS








A HISTORY
OF ZANZIBAR
MEDIA













Did You Know?

“We’re Not Criminals”

A project by our founder - Omary Baajun was **the first Tanzanian poetry short film trilogy** to speak out loud for the rights of the marginalised, premiered at the first season of **UNMUTE Arts Festival 2025** as organised annually by GenDAR? The trilogy won the Best Short Film Series Award 2025 by Our Pride Short Films Festival, USA.

About the Unmute Arts Festival:

Every June, GenDAR organises UNMUTE Arts Festival (UnmuteFest) to promote the voices and talents of marginalised communities in Tanzania.

GenDAR uses arts, media, and ethical journalism to challenge silence, misinformation, and sensitise social understanding.









Achievements

Some of the awards we have received:

Global Humanitarian Award

By World Association of Women Warriors (WAOW)



International Ambassador of Peace & Human Rights Award

By World Literary Forum for Peace and Human Rights (WLFPH)



Kwanzaa Award Umoja Category

By Kinara Park Kids and Black for Charities



Mashariki Expo Literary Award

By Culture and Development East Africa (CDEA)



Organisation Structure

BOARD



Omary Baajun
They/them
Founder & Executive Director



Ebrahem Coyote
He/him
Head of Finance



Diana Laizer
She/her
Executive Secretary



Maria Sulah
She/her
M&E Director



Paschazia Pastory
She/her
Outreach & Advocacy Director



Issa Mosigisi
He/him
Artistic Director



Sekela Peter
She/her
Production Manager

General Assembly

GenDAR
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THANK YOU

WE CAN'T WAIT TO WORK WITH YOU.

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Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

