

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Greetings from Kampala, Uganda,

This month, CHARM continued to champion collaboration, creativity, and capacity-building across the continent and beyond. In Lusaka, Zambia, we convened passionate human rights defenders, journalists, and civic leaders for the Changemakers Meeting, a dynamic space for reflection, solidarity, and strategic action. Through DefendDefenders and AfricanDefenders, with support from CHARM partners: the Wits Centre for Journalism, Fojo Media Institute, and Magamba Network, the gathering brought together human rights defenders, journalists, and civic leaders from across Africa.

This space fostered reflection, solidarity, and strategic collaboration, as participants exchanged ideas, strengthened networks, and co-created pathways toward a more just and open society.

We also caught up with Adelaide Dachi, a beneficiary of the Green Media Accelerator program held in Nairobi, Kenya, in March 2025. Thanks to a CHARM grant, Adelaide has been continuing her impactful work in Bangata district, Tanzania, where she is sparking vital conversations on climate change through storytelling and animation.

Enjoy reading more about these and other exciting updates in the pages that follow.

The CHARM Coordination Team



Some of the Participants of the Changemakers Meeting held in Lusaka, Zambia from the 2- 6 June 2025. The training sought to empower journalists, Civic actors, artists and human rights defenders with digital skills and emotional wellbeing tips. it was organized by CHARM partners Magamba Network, DefendDefenders, Fojo Media Insitute and Wits Centre for Journalism.



Defenders unite in Lusaka to tackle digital threats and burnout

Human rights defenders from across Sub-Saharan Africa gathered in Lusaka, Zambia, from 2- 6 June, 2025, for a week-long training camp aimed at strengthening their digital safety, mental resilience, and storytelling capabilities in the face of mounting threats to civic space.

As part of its core mandate to protect and empower human rights defenders in Africa, DefendDefenders and AfricanDefenders place strong emphasis on equipping HRDs with skills in digital safety, security, and mental wellness. This meeting hence held key sessions to strengthen the capacity and resilience of HRDs working in increasingly challenging environments.

It was strengthened by three other CHARM partners: Magamba Network, Fojo Media Institute, and the Wits Centre for Journalism and brought together 16 participants from countries including Kenya, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Zambia, and South Africa who are active in the digital activism space.

it was also designed as both a learning platform and a space for solidarity and healing. The program began with two days dedicated to digital security training, including sessions on device hygiene, secure communications, password managers, and defending against spyware and phishing. Facilitator Emma Nabwire guided participants through practical exercises on metadata protection, mobile app safety, and two-factor authentication. The importance of this was highlighted in DefendDefenders Executive Director Hassan Shire opening speech, where he pointed out the significance of technology empowered activism.

“Digital platforms have become the new public square, the frontline of accountability,” Hassan Shire, Executive Director, DefendDefenders, noted, citing the role of citizen-led campaigns like Kenya’s #GenZ protests in challenging state power through online tools.



Lineo Leteba from Wits Centre for Journalism takes participants through a social media training in Lusaka, Zambia

Your safety is a strategy. Your wellbeing is a form of resistance.

Justice will not win if its defenders are broken. And freedom cannot flourish if its champions are afraid.”

Hassan Shire, Executive Director, DefendDefenders.

Defenders unite in Lusaka to tackle digital threats and burnout

Hassan Shire, Executive Director for DD, shared that as activists become more visible online, so do their risks. Across the region, he added, governments are increasingly resorting to surveillance technology, online disinformation, and psychological intimidation to stifle dissent.

“To every participant here: know that you are not just learning for yourself, you are learning for your movement, your community, your country. Your presence here is courageous. You represent a growing generation of defenders who are not only resisting injustice but also reshaping how we fight, how we heal, and how we survive. Let it be a reminder that your safety is non-negotiable. Let it be one where we remind ourselves that your safety is a strategy. Your wellbeing is a form of resistance. And your voice is your power — but only if we keep it protected,” Said Hassan Shire, Executive Director, DefendDefenders.

The third day of the training turned attention to social media—both as an advocacy tool and a source of vulnerability. Through hands-on exercises, participants explored ethical storytelling, content creation, and digital boundaries. An interactive social media challenge helped them craft messages for campaigns rooted in lived experience. In the afternoon, discussions shifted toward digital wellbeing. Participants reflected on burnout, isolation, and how to build supportive cultures within activist communities.

— “ This CHARM Changemakers meeting unlocked a new level of creativity in me. I’ve realized I have so much more to offer as an artist WHRD, I just needed the right keys. The session on mental well-being was a gentle mirror, prompting a long-overdue introspection that reminded me that healing is part of the work too,” said Sharon, a participant from Zimbabwe ” —



Vera Chisvo from Magamba Network leads the team on a session on story telling at the Changemakers meeting in Lusaka, Zambia.

Day four focused on storytelling for advocacy. Participants took part in creative exercises that asked them to reflect on their personal journeys and reframe them as powerful narratives for public engagement. Through a “fishbowl” session, participants shared deeply personal experiences of resistance and survival.

The meeting concluded with a day centered entirely on wellness. Participants engaged in grounding exercises and discussed strategies for stress management, self-care, and collective resilience.

“Let this week be a space for learning and for unlearning. Let it remind us that while we carry heavy responsibilities, we do not carry them alone.” Said Hassan Shire, Executive Director, DefendDefenders.

“This is not just about digital tools or training modules. It’s about ensuring that the people who protect rights also have the right to be protected.” Said a facilitator.

Adelaide Dachi Champions Community Climate Storytelling After Green Media Accelerator Training

Adelaide Dachi, the CEO of Waves of Change and a beneficiary of the Green Media Accelerator (GMA) training held in March in Nairobi, is putting her skills to work by amplifying community voices in the fight against climate change.

The passionate storyteller, based in Tanzania, teamed up with We Thrive Initiative, a local Non Governmental Organisation (NGO), to lead two powerful story-harvesting sessions in Arusha. The first took place on 4 July in Bangata village with members of the rural community, and the second on 5, July at Institute of Accountancy, Arusha (IAA) with youthful participants. Both sessions used the climate storytelling toolkit introduced during the GMA training to help participants identify climate-related challenges and co-create locally relevant solutions.



Some of the participants at the training at Bangata Village in Tanzania. The training was borne out of the Green Media Accelerator training in Nairobi in March this year.

The sessions revealed how deeply the climate crisis is affecting local livelihoods in Bangata village, especially farming. Participants spoke of unpredictable rains, poor harvests, and the loss of traditional planting seasons. Yet, what emerged most strongly was not despair but a hunger for empowerment.

The community cited the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) as a positive example of support that has helped them over the years. Still, there was a clear call for more targeted training on climate literacy, as well as practical mitigation and adaptation strategies tailored to their local environment.

One participant, Mama Asnath, captured the transformation sparked by the session: “I didn’t know that climate change was part of the reason our farms are struggling. Now I want to be part of the solution.”

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“People in Bangata aren’t just asking for money, they want knowledge. They want tools and skills that can help them farm better, adapt to the changes they’re facing, and plan for a more sustainable future.” Said Dachi, CEO, Waves of Change.

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Adelaide Dachi Champions Community Climate Storytelling After Green Media Accelerator Training



The session with the youth at IAA University uncovered another layer of urgency. While students showed enthusiasm and creativity, Adelaide Dachi, the CEO of Waves of Change, noted a surprising knowledge gap: “It was shocking to realize that even the youth don’t understand the connection between gender-based violence (GBV) and climate change. This calls for more awareness and education on how these issues intersect.”

Both groups also watched the first episode of Dachi’s animated climate storytelling series. The response was overwhelmingly positive.

With these community insights in hand, Dachi is now gearing up for the next phase: production of the second episode. She plans to collaborate with scriptwriters, voice-over artists, and animators to bring new stories—rooted in real experiences—to life.

Her project is a living testament to the GMA’s mission: equipping young African creatives with tools to tell climate stories that matter, using media as a vehicle for advocacy, education, and action.



As Dachi continues her work, the voices of Bangata’s farmers and Arusha’s youth will remain at the heart of her storytelling—reminding audiences that local knowledge, when amplified and respected, can spark solutions that are both sustainable and just.

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“They loved it. It helped them connect emotionally with the topic and see that climate storytelling can be a powerful way to learn and inspire change.”

Adelaide Dachi, CEO, Waves of Change

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About CHARM

CONSORTIUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND MEDIA IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (CHARM) aims to promote and protect human rights, civic space and media freedoms in Sub-Saharan Africa.

CHARM is a partnership of CIVICUS, Civil Rights Defenders, DefendDefenders, Fojo Media Institute, The Wits Centre for Journalism, Réseau des Femmes Leaders pour le Développement, and Magamba Network.

The partnership acknowledges the role that a free and active media and civil society have in the protection of robust democracies and the promotion of national development.

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