

Profile of Implementing Organization: Beyond Woodwork And Craft PBO



Restoring Ecosystems and Unlocking Green Livelihoods for Vulnerable Communities.

Legal Status: Community-Led Nonprofit (Public Benefit Organization).

Established: 2025

Location: Nairobi, Kenya (*with project operations in West Ugenya*).

Who We Are

Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO is a community-rooted nonprofit organization dedicated to enabling vulnerable youth, women, smallholder farmers, and persons with disabilities to access dignified, sustainable livelihoods through green enterprise, vocational skills, and inclusive community development. Established in 2025, the organization was initially founded to respond to high youth unemployment and social vulnerability in coastal Kenya. It has since evolved into a broader social empowerment platform that also supports rural communities in other regions of Kenya—such as Siaya County in the Lake Victoria Basin—to address intertwined challenges of environmental degradation, climate vulnerability, and shrinking livelihood options. Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO operates as the social impact and community development arm of a local enterprise ecosystem (including Relim Services and related ventures), which provides technical expertise, infrastructure, and enterprise-linked sustainability models. Our core values are equity, dignity, creativity, environmental stewardship, and inclusion.

Our Delivery Ecosystem

Our programmes are delivered through an ecosystem that blends community infrastructure, technical training, enterprise incubation, and environmental action. This ecosystem includes:

- **Technical & Vocational Training Platforms:** - Workshops and training spaces (e.g., Relim Furniture & Décor Workshop in Mtwapa) that provide hands-on skills in woodworking, eco-furniture, basic construction, and green product development.
- **Community-Based Enterprise Models:** - Youth and women-led microenterprises that convert local resources—such as wood offcuts, agricultural by-products, and now papyrus biomass—into income-generating products (furniture, crafts, briquettes, etc.), creating market-linked livelihood pathways.
- **Environmental & Climate Action Initiatives:** - Emerging programmes in wetland restoration, nature-based solutions, and circular economy models, such as the Manga–Karadolo Community Papyrus Management & Livelihood Programme in Siaya County, where papyrus is repositioned from a destructive “weed” into a renewable green resource.

This integrated model allows Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO to collaborate with communities not only to build skills and enterprises, but also to restore ecosystems, reduce climate risks, and strengthen local resilience.

What We Do

Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO addresses multi-dimensional livelihood and resilience challenges through four main programmatic pillars:

- *Green Enterprise & Vocational Skills Development*: - Training youth and women in trades such as woodworking, furniture making, basic construction, and now venturing into eco-product manufacturing (e.g., papyrus crafts, briquettes, panels, and other green innovations), linked to real market demand.
- *Environmental Restoration & Nature-Based Solutions*: - Supporting communities to design and implement projects that restore degraded landscapes and wetlands—such as controlled papyrus harvesting, hydrological restoration, and agricultural land rehabilitation—while generating economic opportunities from sustainable resource use.
- *Entrepreneurship, Financial Literacy & Cooperative Development*: - Providing business skills training, savings group strengthening, cooperative formation support, and market linkages to help participants transition from training to viable micro and small enterprises.
- *Social Inclusion, Safeguarding & Community Empowerment*: - Integrating gender equity, disability inclusion, youth leadership, and psychosocial support into all programming, with a strong focus on safe spaces, community ownership, and accountable local governance structures (e.g., Wetland Stewardship Committees).

Across all pillars, our work is grounded in practical pathways to dignified work, not just training for its own sake.

Our Flagship and Anchor Initiatives

Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO's experience is anchored in two complementary flagship initiatives:

1. *Mtwapa Youth Empowerment Programme (Coastal Region)*: - A holistic youth programme in Mtwapa, Kilifi County, that combines sports, cognitive skills (chess), vocational woodworking, and entrepreneurship to create work pathways for youth in informal settlements.
2. *Manga-Karadolo Community Papyrus Management & Livelihood Programme (Lake Victoria Basin)*: - A rural livelihoods and climate resilience initiative focused on communities in Manga Village, Karadolo Sub-Location, West Ugenya, Siaya County. This programme is intended to:
 - Empower 5,000+ households to sustainably manage papyrus wetlands,
 - Reclaim farmland lost to papyrus encroachment,
 - Reduce flood and climate risks, and
 - Create papyrus-based green enterprises for youth and women (crafts, eco-briquettes, simple construction materials, and climate-smart agriculture).

Through these initiatives, Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO has built a replicable model that can operate in both coastal urban/peri-urban contexts and rural agro-ecological settings such as the Lake Victoria Basin.

Strategic Alignment with Donor & Development Priorities

The Manga-Karadolo papyrus programme, implemented by Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO, is strongly aligned with:

- *Climate Resilience & Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)*: Restoring wetlands, improving hydrological balance, and reducing flood risks through community-led, nature-based approaches.

- **Green & Circular Economy:** Transforming papyrus from an uncontrolled wetland plant into a renewable raw material for crafts, briquettes, and other products, thus supporting circular production systems and low-carbon livelihoods.
- **Youth & Women Economic Empowerment:** Creating structured, skill-based pathways into dignified green jobs and microenterprises for young people and women, with deliberate inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable groups.
- **Food Security & Climate-Smart Agriculture:** Rehabilitating farmland, promoting climate-smart crops, and enhancing household food production in communities affected by wetland over-expansion and climate variability.
- **Community Governance & Local Systems Strengthening:** Establishing and supporting local structures such as Wetland Stewardship Committees, community by-laws, and multi-stakeholder platforms that integrate county government, NEMA, and community organizations.
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** Particularly SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 6 (Clean Water), 8 (Decent Work), 13 (Climate Action), 15 (Life on Land/Water).

This alignment makes Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO a suitable implementing partner for donors and foundations focused on climate resilience, green jobs, nature-based solutions, and inclusive rural development.

Why Partner With Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO?

- **Community-Rooted, Enterprise-Anchored Model:** We combine community mobilization, local leadership, and practical enterprise models to ensure interventions are not only locally owned but also have built-in economic sustainability.
- **Technical Experience in Green Products & Craftsmanship:** Our background in woodworking, eco-design, and product development translates directly into the design of papyrus-based value chains (crafts, briquettes, panels, furniture components, paper, etc.).
- **Proven Ability to Blend Social and Environmental Outcomes:** We design programmes that simultaneously address livelihoods, youth and women empowerment, and ecosystem restoration, ensuring donors' climate and social impact objectives are integrated rather than siloed.
- **Strong Partnerships and Local Networks:** We work through existing youth groups, women groups, CBOs, and local leadership structures, and are able to engage county governments, NEMA, and technical agencies (e.g., KEFRI) as part of a coherent implementation and governance framework.
- **Scalable and Replicable Models:** Our approach in Manga–Karadolo is designed as a demonstration model that can be replicated in other papyrus-affected areas along the Lake Victoria Basin and in other Kenyan wetlands facing similar pressures.
- **Commitment to Accountability and Learning:** We integrate data collection, monitoring, participatory learning, and transparent reporting into programme design, enabling partners to track results, generate evidence, and tell powerful impact stories.

1.1. Current Programme Being Run by the Implementing Agency

Demonstrated Developmental Impact: Mtwapa Youth Empowerment Programme (MYEP)

- **Programme Period:** - April 2023 – Present (Operational)
- **Geographic Focus:** - Mtwapa, Kilifi County (Mtomondoni, Mikanjuni, Mzambarauni, Mwavitzwa informal settlements)
- **Programme Focus:** - Youth engagement through sports (soccer & basketball) anchored on community infrastructure.

A. Narrative Impact Summary

Since April 2023, Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO has been implementing the Mtwapa Youth Empowerment Programme (MYEP), a community-anchored initiative designed to transition vulnerable youth from informal settlements into sports and dignified work pathways. The programme integrates structured sports training, life skills, entrepreneurship, and intended vocational furniture production, leveraging permanent community assets such as a football pitch, basketball court, and woodworking workshop.

Over the past three years, MYEP has demonstrated measurable social, economic, and community-level impact, including youth employment outcomes, crime risk reduction, enterprise creation, and neighborhood revitalization. The programme has created a safe, productive youth engagement ecosystem while generating income through furniture production, facility hire, and coaching services—providing a strong operational and financial foundation for scaling similar livelihood-linked environmental programmes such as MK-WRePS.

B. Developmental Impact Summary Table (MYEP)

Table X: Developmental Impact of the Mtwapa Youth Empowerment Programme (April 2023 – Present)

Impact Area	Indicator	Results Achieved	Development Significance
Youth Reach & Inclusion	Youth directly engaged annually through soccer, basketball and furniture production	300+ youth per year (ages 15–30)	Expands access to structured skills and work pathways for vulnerable urban youth
Sports-for-Development Outcomes	Organized sports teams (both soccer and basketball)	20+ teams formed	Builds discipline, teamwork, leadership, and psychosocial resilience
	Community tournaments & showcases	6+ events annually	Strengthens community cohesion and positive youth visibility

Crime & Social Risk Reduction	Youth engagement during high-risk hours	Structured evening and weekend activities	Contributes to reduced idleness, substance abuse, and petty crime (as reported by community leaders and former District Commissioner (DC) of Kilifi.
Local Economic Spillovers	SMEs and informal businesses around facilities	Food vendors (5 over the period), sports gear sellers, transport services (over 50 boda boda riders)	Enhances local micro-economy and neighborhood vibrancy
Urban Environment & Public Space	Improvement in estate appeal (KMA area)	Cleaner, active, well-used public space	Demonstrates place-based regeneration through social infrastructure
Institutional Capacity	Permanent infrastructure developed	Sports facilities + woodworking hub	Confirms Beyond's ability to manage capital assets responsibly
Direct Employment Creation	Full-time and part-time jobs created	20+ direct jobs (coaches, artisans, facility staff, administrators)	Confirms job creation beyond training; aligns with "jobs-first" donor metrics
	Youth employment retention	Multi-year employment for core staff	Indicates job sustainability, not short-term placements
Enterprise & Income Generation	Annual revenue generated	KES 3+ million annually (sports facilities, furniture, services)	Demonstrates commercial viability and financial sustainability
	Revenue reinvestment	Programme operations, youth stipends, maintenance	Reduces donor dependency and supports long-term continuity
Capital Investment & Infrastructure Development	Promoter capital deployed	KES 20+ million invested	Signals strong local commitment and risk-sharing
	Community assets created	Soccer pitch, basketball court, furniture workshop & showroom, carwash, salon	Demonstrates permanent, productive infrastructure

Vocational Production Outputs &	Furniture and wood products produced	100+ units annually	Evidence of productive vocational skills application
	Market engagement	Local household, institutional, and SME buyers	Validates market responsiveness
Institutional Systems Capacity &	Permanent operational systems	Staffing, governance, financial management	Confirms readiness to manage larger donor-funded programmes

C. Lessons Learned Relevant to MK-WRePS

The MYEP experience has generated direct lessons that inform and de-risk the Papyrus Reeds Programme, including:

- Community-anchored infrastructure works when linked to livelihoods and governance.
- Youth and women respond strongly when programmes combine income, skills, and dignity.
- Enterprise-linked models (e.g. furniture production) improve sustainability beyond grants.
- Cash-for-work + skills pathways accelerate uptake and community trust.
- Strong MEL systems enable outcome tracking and adaptive management.

D. Strategic Relevance to the Papyrus Wetland Programme (MK-WRePS)

The successful ongoing implementation of MYEP demonstrates Beyond Woodwork & Craft PBO's proven ability to:

- Manage multi-component livelihood programmes.
- Coordinate youth, women, enterprises, and community assets.
- Deliver measurable employment and income outcomes.
- Sustain operations through enterprise-based revenue models
- Scale pilots into structured, donor-compliant programmes.

This track record provides strong assurance that MK-WRePS will be implemented with the same discipline, community ownership, and impact orientation—while extending Beyond's proven model from urban youth livelihoods to rural wetland-based green livelihoods.

Pictures:









