



ADVANCING EVIDENCE- INFORMED POLICY AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

ABOUT PASGR

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) is an international non-governmental organization that works to enhance research excellence and high-quality training for public policy and social transformation in Africa.



MISSION

To advance research excellence and capacity-strengthening to influence evidence-informed decision-making across the African continent.



VISION

A vibrant African social science community contributing to public policy and social transformation.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms and Abbreviations 5

Message From Board Chair 6

Message from the Executive Director 7

2025 At a Glance 8

Building Research Capacity for Policy Impact Across Africa 10

Building graduate research capacity 11

In Focus : PASGR has shaped my career - Dr Martin Kizito 14

Case Study: Working with the Kenya Government to Reimagine University Financing 15

Research & Policy Programme 16

Project Highlights 2025 18

 Utafiti Sera: Strengthening Evidence-Informed Policymaking Across Africa 18

 ACRC: Building More Equitable Cities, One Insight at a Time 19

 IGNITE: Putting Girls’ Realities at the Centre of Education Policy 19

 EGAP: Closing Out with Impact 20

 AYPRoS: Advancing Youth Resilience and Systems Change Across Africa 20

 Accountability for Water: Driving Meaningful Change in the Water Sector 21

Case Study: From Evidence to Action: How Nairobi Created a Policy for Urban Farming 22

Communication and Knowledge Management 23

Improving Operational Efficiency and Institutional Governance 25

HR update: Fostering a positive work culture and excellence in a transition 27

Financial Performance in 2025 28

Our People 29

Partners and Collaborators 30





ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAP	Alliance for African Partnership
ACBF	African Capacity Building Foundation
ACRC	African Cities Research Consortium
AfW	Accountability for Water
ARUA	African Research Universities Alliance
ATTP	Africa Think Tank Platform
AYPReS	African Youth Pathways to Resilience and Systems Change
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service
DPP	Doctoral in Public Policy
EGAP	Evidence in Governance and Politics
ICED	International Centre for Evaluation and Development
KeNHA	Kenya National Highways Authority
KeRRA	Kenya Rural Roads Authority
KEWASNET	Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network
KURA	Kenya Urban Roads Authority
MRPP	Master of Research in Public Policy
PASGR	Partnership for African Social and Governance Research
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
USD	United States Dollar

Message From Board Chair



On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR), I am pleased to present our 2025 Annual Report. This report documents a year that was, in many ways, a turning point, not only for PASGR as an institution, but also for the role that African-led research and evidence can play in shaping the continent's future.

The launch of our 2024–2028 Strategic Plan marked the beginning of a deliberate and

ambitious new chapter with a clear vision - to become the go-to pan-African institution that connects research, policy, and capacity strengthening to address Africa's development challenges. The Board is fully committed to this vision and to the governance frameworks needed to realise it. In this spirit, the Board was pleased to welcome the arrival of Prof. Fadel Ndiame as Executive Director in mid-2025, bringing renewed energy to the organisation.

PASGR took action in 2025 to strengthen its governance structures, the human resource and financial systems, and put in place more rigorous performance and accountability frameworks. Apart from establishing a dedicated Human Resources function, the organisation introduced new initiatives to align financial planning directly with our strategic objectives. These are not merely administrative changes, but rather, the building blocks of a more resilient, transparent, and high-performing institution.

The Board is particularly encouraged by the strides made in financial sustainability

in 2025. The injection of core support funds from the Hewlett Foundation is a strong signal of confidence in PASGR's direction and leadership. Additional support from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation (formerly Carnegie Corporation of New York), and the activation of new strategic partnerships further strengthened our resource base and our relevance as a continental partner of choice.

PASGR also continued to deliver real impact through its programmes, from influencing water governance reforms across East Africa, to contributing evidence to shape Kenya's university financing model, to placing the voices of young Africans at the heart of research on creating employment for young people. These achievements reflect both the quality of PASGR's work and the strength of its partnerships across the continent.

We recognise the dedication and service of three members who completed their terms of office during the year: Prof. Narciso Matos (former Board Chair), Prof. Karuti Kanyinga, and Prof. Lise Rakner. We are forever grateful

for their contribution and guidance. A new board was fully installed into office in October 2025.

On behalf of the Board, I extend appreciation to all PASGR staff for their commitment and resilience through a year of change, and to our partners for once again standing with us as we seek to influence a better future for our continent. We look forward to the work ahead and continued collaboration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerald Ouma'.

Prof Gerald Ouma,
Chair, PASGR Board of Directors

“

The launch of the 2024–2028 Strategic Plan marked the beginning of a deliberate and ambitious new chapter with a clear vision

Message from the Executive Director



Our 2025 Annual Report presents highlights from a defining year in PASGR's journey. With the launch of our 2024–2028 Strategic Plan, we embarked on a journey to transform PASGR into a stronger pan-African institution and a trusted partner in evidence-informed decision making. The plan reflects our belief that Africa's socio-economic and political growth must be driven by evidence to be effective.

Across Africa, governments continue to navigate overlapping crises, including the lingering effects of COVID-19 and climate change. In 2025, many countries were also dealing with food insecurity, debt crises, rapid urbanization, and the increasingly urgent need to address high

levels of youth unemployment, among other issues. Yet the continent is also experiencing remarkable innovation, resilience, and a growing determination to shape its own future.

These realities demand evidence-based policies and programs that go beyond generating ideas to delivering real change. Research evidence must therefore be linked more directly with policies, programs and investments that improve lives.

This is the role PASGR seeks to play, connecting evidence to policy action, for the benefit of African communities. Our strategic plan articulates an ambitious vision of positioning PASGR as a trusted partner for governments, development agencies, universities, and regional institutions seeking to use evidence to address Africa's most pressing governance and development challenges.

In pursuit of these ambitions, we've commenced on an institutional transformation journey built around two pillars:



Team building - to strengthen accountability, performance culture, and strategic alignment;



Friends raising - to build and deepen strategic partnerships beyond fundraising.

In 2025, we reworked our systems to ensure all work aligns with institutional strategy.

We cascaded institutional priorities across the organization to ensure staff performance aligned with our strategic objectives. We strengthened internal communication, including monthly letters from my office to the board and staff, to build a corporate culture of collaboration, learning, and results.

Building on our "friends raising" philosophy, in 2025 PASGR became more deliberate in its partnership strategy. We mapped existing and potential partners across the continent to identify synergies and deepen collaboration for longer-term, greater impact. This shift is already opening new opportunities for strategic engagement.

PASGR also continued to affirm its pan-African identity. While headquartered in Kenya, our mission and aspirations are continental in scope. During 2025, we strengthened our visibility at major African policy platforms on a range of issues, including food systems, governance, evidence use, and institutional capacity, thus reinforcing our role as a convener of policy dialogue and a broker of knowledge across the continent.

The year was not without challenges, but we move forward with renewed purpose.

Our ambition remains clear: to become a go-to African institution for evidence, learning, and transformation. An African proverb reminds us that *"a caravan always moves at the speed of the slowest camel."* Africa's transformation will not be achieved through competition or fragmentation, but through cooperation, shared learning, and collective action. That is PASGR's guiding philosophy as we forge forward.

We are grateful to our partners, funders, governments, and the networks we work with for their trust, commitment, and collaboration. We are grateful to our Board for its continued oversight and strategic guidance. Together, we can build a stronger culture of evidence-informed decision-making in Africa, to deliver meaningful transformation for current and future generations.

Prof Fadel Ndiamé,

Executive Director



"PASGR is repositioning itself as a more strategic, visible, outcome-oriented, Pan-African institution that connects research and policy to real transformation on the continent."

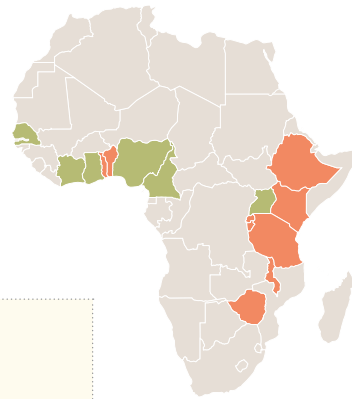
2025 At a Glance

In 2025, PASGR stepped into a new chapter, working to align its mission with continental reach and policy relevance, connecting research and policy in ways that matter to Africa's development. Work advanced across **at least 14 African countries** through capacity development and training, research and policy engagement in youth employment, water accountability, urban development and health. PASGR also forged new partnerships to reinforce its role as a convener of research, learning, and policy dialogue, and extend its global footprint. The key highlights of the year are summarised in this graphic and reported in deeper details in the rest of the report.

CONTINENTAL REACH

Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, Uganda, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, Botswana

Participation in continental platforms and high level conferences to strengthen external profile and contribute to continental issues



PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

Strategic Partnerships Expanded

New affiliation with the Africa Think Tank Platform.

New collaboration MoUs signed with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and McGill University; International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED); African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA); University of Nairobi (Library and Digital Services); African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)

STRATEGY & INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH



2024–2028 **Strategic Plan** launched



Stakeholder mapping across continent completed



New Performance & Implementation **Framework** adopted



Institutional knowledge repository **launched**



New **Executive Leadership** under Prof Ndiame



Established **new senior roles** to support strategy implementation



ERP system enhanced, internal audit functions revamped, results-based planning adopted

FINANCIAL GROWTH



Total income rose to **USD 3.23 million**



Managed **12** active grants & secured **4** grant renewals



Secured core funding and additional **project support**

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING & TRAINING PROGRAMME



32 Journal Articles
Published



49 doctoral and masters students
received financial support



520 Water and Sanitation stakeholders took
part in a Water Governance course



Contributed research evidence on the
implementation of the new University Funding
Model in Kenya



Joint Annual Academic Seminar for 60 PhD
students and supervisors;



Launched the Young Researchers Network to
advance knowledge generation for policies on
youth employment in Africa



African Young Graduates Scholars pre-conference
training on research policy engagement



12 Doctoral in Public Policy
students graduated in

South
Africa



&

Nigeria



RESEARCH & POLICY: EVIDENCE UPTAKE & POLICY WINS



10

10-Country AYPReS programme launched to advance dignified and fulfilling work for
young people [Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal,
Togo, and Uganda]

Policy to revive urban agriculture revised for adoption in Nairobi County, Kenya; 100%+ Budgetary Increase for
Nairobi Urban Agriculture, from KES 189 million (FY 2024/2025) to KES 388 million (FY 2025/2026)



UHC gaps raised
in Parliament in
Zambia



Urban governance and
reform contributions in
Malawi, Zimbabwe, Nigeria,
Kenya and Ghana



Knowledge Sharing
Platform on water and
sanitation launched in
Kenya



National Policy Influence
and Equity Reporting through
Shahidi wa Maji, Tanzania

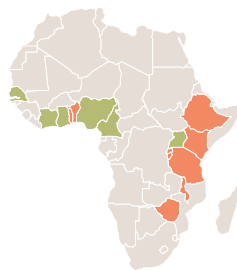


Over **60** CSOs engaged in
Research-to-Action dialogues in
Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Cameroon



More than **140**
stakeholders engaged in
advocacy for improved
wastewater governance
in Ethiopia

Capacity Building for
35 Youth MSMEs
and **10** Value
Chain Champions





**STRENGTHENING CAPACITY FOR
RESEARCH EXCELLENCE ACROSS AFRICA**

Building Research Capacity for Policy Impact Across Africa

Africa is increasingly finding the relevance of informing policy with the evidence that is produced by researchers. But these researchers need to be equipped with the skills to engage policy actors,” Dr Pauline Ngimwa.

Africa’s development challenges increasingly demand evidence that is locally grounded, policy-relevant and capable of shaping real decisions. Yet many researchers across the continent still face barriers that limit the influence of their work, which include limited training in policy engagement, inadequate funding and few structured opportunities to connect evidence with decision-making. For

Dr Ngimwa, the Head of the Capacity Development and Training Programme, this challenge informs the work she spearheads across the continent to strengthen capacity for world class policy-relevant research.

In 2025, the programme deepened its role in strengthening Africa’s research ecosystem, aligning closely with the institution’s 2024–2028 strategic plan. The strategic plan merged the former Higher Education and Professional Development and Training programmes to form the Capacity Development and Training Programme. This shift, according to Dr

Ngimwa, reflects PASGR’s growing conviction that research excellence cannot be separated from policy relevance, and that researchers increasingly should provide quality evidence and advice to inform policies, programmes and projects.

“There is no way you can enhance research excellence without strengthening the capacities of researchers to generate evidence that would inform policy and decision-making,” she explains.

The new programme aims to strengthen the abilities of early and mid-career researchers already working within universities and

research institutions while also focusing on students to equip them with skills to produce policy-relevant evidence and to engage effectively with the policy-making process.

“Researchers increasingly should provide quality evidence and advice to inform policies, programmes and projects.”

Dr Pauline Ngimwa

Building graduate research capacity

One of the programme’s most significant activities in 2025 was the continued strengthening of the Master of Research in Public Policy (MRPP) programme and a collaborative Doctoral in Public Policy (DPP) programme targeting students who want to specialise in Public Policy research. PASGR had earlier developed the two graduate programmes in collaboration with 13 African universities. While the MRPP is delivered across the 13 universities, the Doctoral programme is currently being delivered in three regional hubs. The hub centres are University of Ibadan (covering West Africa), University of Nairobi (Eastern Africa) and University of Pretoria (Southern Africa). These hubs are poised to produce highly skilled African researchers equipped to tackle public policy challenges.

The collaborative network approach also allows the universities to learn from one another and share supervision expertise, teaching resources and best practices across borders. Faculty members co-supervise students from different universities, while the students participate in joint learning and mentorship activities designed to strengthen both academic and policy engagement skills.



Participants at the 2025 Joint Annual Academic Seminar (JAAS) in Limuru, Kenya

Strengthening peer learning, supervision and collaboration

Alongside formal graduate training, PASGR also invested in peer learning, supervision support and research communication. In July 2025, PASGR held the Joint Annual Academic Seminar (JAAS), which brought together 34 doctoral students and 27 supervisors from the three hub universities for intensive peer learning, mentorship and research dissemination training. Students received training in conference poster presentation, academic publishing and emerging areas such as artificial intelligence for research and academic writing in the digital era. Faculty members also held peer learning sessions on doctoral supervision and strategies for improving completion rates.

Beyond technical skills, PASGR continued fostering networks to support Pan-African partnerships and collaboration as a strategy for research excellence. In 2025, faculty exchange visits between DPP partner universities created opportunities for collaborative research, joint writing and cross-border mentorship. Teams from University of Nairobi visited University of Ibadan and University of Pretoria, while supervisors travelled across institutions to support students and share expertise.

IN 2025

In 2025, PASGR supported postgraduate completion by linking students to scholarships and grants.



31

doctoral students received Carnegie scholarships



10

students received partial research grants



8

master’s students received DAAD scholarships

PASGR held the Joint Annual Academic Seminar (JAAS), bringing together



34

doctoral students



27

supervisors



3

hub universities

for intensive peer learning, mentorship and research dissemination training.

PASGR also co-hosted the 2025 African Young Graduates and Scholars (AYGS) Conference held at the University of Mpumalanga, South Africa. The conference was organised jointly with the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) of South Africa. PASGR facilitated a pre-conference workshop on policy-engaged research and moderated a high-level panel discussion. Three students from the doctoral programme and two MRPP students presented their research findings at the conference. PASGR also used the conference to expand our networks in South Africa with the University of Mpumalanga, National Research Foundation and the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation.

Supporting completion through funding and mentorship

To address one of the biggest barriers to postgraduate completion, PASGR continued supporting master's and doctoral students through linking them to funding opportunities with the Andrew Carnegie Foundation and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). These opportunities helped students overcome lack of financial support, one of the most persistent challenges facing postgraduate study in Africa.

In 2025, 31 DPP students distributed across the partnership received scholarships from the Carnegie Corporation, which covered tuition and stipends for one academic year. A further 10 students received partial research grants (half the total amount) to support their studies. Eight Masters students received scholarships from DAAD.

The impact of these investments is becoming increasingly visible. In 2025, 47 students remained on the doctoral programme across the different universities, and 30 supervisors took part in the regional capacity strengthening and networking activities. PASGR also celebrated multiple PhD graduations, including nine from University of Ibadan and three from University of Pretoria. Thirty two journal articles were published in reputable journals under the programme.

“

“We realized that the biggest problem PhDs in Africa face is completion. And why they don't complete most often is because they don't have funding.”

Dr Ngimwa



Jim Kaketch, PASGR, at the 2025 Utafiti Sera Inter-House convening in Mombasa

Connecting research to policy through Utafiti Sera

PASGR's capacity-strengthening work goes beyond academia. In 2025, the programme also helped ensure that research shaped public policy and programmes through PASGR's signature Utafiti Sera model. This approach brings policymakers, researchers and other stakeholders together to identify policy problems, co-create evidence and influence decision-making. One of the clearest examples was PASGR's work on Kenya's university funding reforms, explored in the case study below (see page 15).

Expanded training and mentorship

PASGR also expanded its influence through online professional training initiatives. In 2025, the organisation developed and delivered a fully online programme on water governance and WASH policy for the Accountability for Water project. The training attracted 520 participants from across and beyond Africa, with 235 completing the class, reflecting the growing demand for policy-oriented research training.

The organisation also continued efforts to build the capacity of young African scholars through mentorship and structured support systems. In 2025, through the Mastercard Foundation-funded African Youth Pathways to Resilience and Systems Change (AYPRoS), PASGR launched a new network for young researchers working in youth employment research. The programme targets researchers aged 35 and below, who receive mentorship from seasoned researchers (principal investigators), tailored research methods training and experiential learning as they conduct research studies. A total of 21 young scholars were enrolled in the Youth Researchers programme over three years of the AYPRoS project.

Learning from challenges

Despite these achievements, PASGR faced significant challenges in 2025. Shifting global donor priorities, shrinking development funding and geopolitical crises continue to place pressure on research capacity initiatives across Africa. The organisation also encountered uneven doctoral completion rates across universities, with some institutions struggling more than others to graduate students on time.

PASGR is transforming these setbacks into opportunities for further research and institutional learning. In 2025, the organisation secured funding for a continent-wide study examining successful doctoral training models across seven African countries, including Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, South Africa, Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria. The project seeks to identify best practices that can strengthen doctoral education systems and improve PhD completion rates across Africa.

The Capacity Development and Training Programme continues to play a much-needed role in Africa. Without such programmes, Africa risks producing research that remains disconnected from policy and development priorities. Researchers may generate evidence, but without the skills to engage decision-makers, much of that knowledge may never influence public programmes or improve people's lives. As African governments confront complex social, economic and governance challenges, PASGR's work in improving research capacity helps to build a foundation for better policy, stronger institutions and more responsive development.



Sally Miruri and Irene Kinoti from Pamoja Trust during the 2025 Utafiti Sera Inter-House Convening in Mombasa



Dr Martin Kizito

I joined PASGR in 2013 as a young academic in Uganda, teaching in the Masters of Research and Public Policy program. I became a regular participant in review workshops, meeting lecturers and academics from different universities to share innovations for teaching and learning of public policy applicable to the 21st century. This exposure led me to mentors and experts who inspired me to start my academic journey.

In 2018, I participated in the Pedagogical Leadership in Africa program, intended to catalyze systemic change in higher education on the continent. But my journey really took off in 2020, when I was selected for a PASGR-funded PhD in public policy at the University of Pretoria — the first program of its kind on the continent. Earning this doctorate through PASGR prepared me to contribute to the governance solutions to African governance challenges.

“I wanted to be part of a program that would help me answer bigger questions: how can African scholars generate evidence that informs public policies capable of helping the continent solve its perennial development challenges?”

My PhD focused on developing a framework for transformation in governance and public policy assessment. I produced the first framework from the continent tied to the African Union's Agenda 2063 and its call for homegrown solutions to Africa's challenges, because I believe that African researchers can

make a real contribution not just by copying external ideas, but by developing contextually relevant solutions.

The PhD journey tested me academically, professionally, and socially. Three months in, COVID-19 hit, and South Africa became the first country to declare a nationwide lockdown. I was new to a foreign country, suddenly in lockdown, with winter setting in and a great deal of uncertainty. There was an abrupt shift to online learning — a completely different experience at the doctoral level.

Thankfully, PASGR had prepared us through the pedagogical leadership training, where we'd had the chance to explore technology-enhanced teaching and learning. Balancing family responsibility, research demands, and emotional pressure was extremely difficult. What carried me through was the strength of the support system around me, including my supervisors, the PASGR team led by Dr Pauline Ngimwa, and my doctoral cohort.

The PhD journey helped me cultivate skills that have since shaped my academic leadership:

patience, courage, and discipline. Beyond the program itself, I continued to have access to opportunities and networks, consulting for the African Peer Review Mechanism under the African Union, and serving on the technical team developing the African Governance Index. After completing my program, I was appointed to head grants and partnerships at my university, and was later promoted to dean of the school of social sciences, a journey that involved deep engagement in governance and policy discussions. Today, I'm considered one of the academic leaders and policy champions in my country because of the mentorship that built and sustained my confidence throughout this process.

“A PhD takes a village; behind every successful scholar is an ecosystem.” - Dr Martin Kizito

A PhD is leadership preparation. It is a passport to influence; the beginning of a calling to change one's community and continent. For anyone starting this journey, my advice is simple: trust the process. Embrace discomfort, because that is where growth happens.

CASE STUDY

Working with the Kenya Government to Reimagine University Financing



Re-imagining University Funding report launch

Higher education in Kenya has in recent years faced funding challenges, even as the country struggles to expand access to tertiary education. On the recommendations of a Presidential working group on education reforms, in 2022, the government introduced a new funding model which shifted away from the traditional uniform state support model to one that directs resources to individual students through scholarships and loans, based on their financial vulnerability. The model used a Means Testing Instrument (MTI) to assess financial need. The New Funding Model (NFM) was rolled out in the 2023/24 academic year. In 2024, PASGR conducted a two-year study to help identify how to improve the model. “We said we would co-create research evidence with the Government and other key

stakeholders that would help with the policies around this new funding model,” says Dr Pauline Ngimwa, PASGR’s Capacity Development and Training lead. Earlier in 2023, PASGR had started discussions with stakeholders on the progress and the challenges experienced in implementing the model. The process utilised the Utafiti Sera framework and brought together representatives from Higher Education Loans Board, Universities Fund, Commission for University Education, Vice Chancellors Forum and university administrators and researchers. These discussions helped to frame the focus of the research study. The research itself, dubbed Re-imagining University Financing in Kenya, was rigorous and wide-ranging. The survey covered 1,068 undergraduate students from 34 universities across Kenya, while more qualitative data was collected from policymakers, university administrators, parents, and representatives of civil society and faith-based organisations.

The findings showed that while the new model had great potential to promote equitable access to quality higher education, the rollout had gaps that could create misunderstanding. For instance, stakeholders, including students, parents, and even university administrators had different understanding of how the model worked. The new model also still relied heavily on government budget allocations, undermining its sustainability.

As momentous as the findings were, PASGR understood that to get any traction in policy, much more needed to be done. In 2025, PASGR convened Utafiti Sera events where the participants critically interrogated the findings, provided constructive feedback, and helped refine the final recommendations in a

co-creation process. The meetings included a wide range of stakeholders in higher education, including parents, policymakers, students and university administration. The findings of a similar study conducted by a different organization were also included in the discussions. The synthesised recommendations from the stakeholders at these forums were compelling enough to get the government to put the funding model on hold while it worked to improve it.

The process culminated in a regional dissemination conference that drew participation from local and regional stakeholders in university financing to compare notes and strengthen recommendations.

PASGR’s experience illustrates what it means to translate research into policy, not just by delivering findings to the government, but by co-generating the evidence together. The lessons learnt in the process can be applied elsewhere in Africa as university financing is a continent-wide challenge.

The Recommendations:

1. The government should define whether university education remains a public good or is a shared responsibility. Financing and policy frameworks should be aligned with the clarified status, to ensure coherence.
2. The various funding streams should be streamlined and consolidated into a single unified system, specifying the roles of the various stakeholders. The funding report should be published annually for transparency.
3. The government and stakeholders should adopt an inclusive and transparent national communication strategy, to build common understanding and trust and deliver a consistent message.

RESEARCH & POLICY PROGRAMME

From Evidence to Impact: Redefining What Research Success Means

Across Africa, availability of good research evidence has rarely been the problem. Rather, the challenge has always been getting evidence into decision-making processes and into policies that shape people's lives. In 2025, the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) embarked on a bold new direction, to shift its Research and Policy Programme to ensuring evidence makes a difference in policies for the public good.

This shift was informed in part by the emphasis in the new strategic plan to contribute more to evidence-informed governance, and also by the pressing need for African-led knowledge and solutions to address challenges on the continent. While PASGR had generated a significant body of research over the years, its influence on policy and programmes could not be clearly demonstrated.

In addition, experience elsewhere has shown that, however strong, research evidence alone rarely drives policy change, and in many cases, policy is shaped by a mix of political priorities and the agenda of the government of the day.

In response, PASGR redefined its approach and focus, and 2025 became a major reset year for the Research and Policy Programme. The major shift was in the way the organization designs research studies, bringing more focus on the longer term anticipated impact.

"[Now], before we can even start an activity, we start with a concept, a concept note that will tell us why are we doing it? Who is going to benefit? [...] We are clear that quality research and excellence must include redefining success and what needs to change", says Dr Samwel Oando, Manager, Research & Policy Uptake at PASGR.

This has meant increased focus on the policy objective of every research initiative. While the terms of the funding contracts still drive the research agenda, in 2025 PASGR

ramped up its efforts to anchor activities within an institutional results-based framework, based on the objectives of the 2024-2028 strategic plan. Concept notes required teams to articulate in advance who would benefit from the research, what change was intended, and how the evidence would reach decision-makers.

PASGR also embraced a sharper focus on how research evidence is communicated. A review of a stakeholder mapping activity and political economy studies conducted earlier suggested that to remain relevant, the organization





PASGR and McGill University team during a field visit in Senegal

needed to change the way it communicates its research and to use approaches that position the evidence where it could have the greatest policy traction. This requires reading the political context and sometimes reframing the message, utilising the Utafiti Sera approach, which provides platforms for knowledge sharing and engagement between key stakeholders including researchers, academics, community actors, and policymakers on policy issues.

A significant achievement in 2025, and a clear reflection of PASGR's evolving strategic thinking, was its support for the revision of Nairobi County's urban agriculture policy, which is pending adoption. Using the Utafiti Sera model, PASGR helped convene an evidence-generation process to strengthen efforts to build more equitable, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable food systems in Kenya's capital. The process enhanced the capacity for policy engagement and evidence uptake among strategic stakeholders interested in having a transformative policy that supports food production, processing, and waste management in the county, with explicit roles for smallholder farmers, women, and young people (see separate story, page 23). PASGR presented this experience at the 2025 African Food Systems Forum in Dakar, where it sparked new partnerships and conversations about replicating the model elsewhere on the continent.

PASGR also made progress in 2025 in solidifying its position as a Pan-African research and policy

organization. In June, it launched the African Youth Pathways to Resilience and Systems Change (AYPRoS) programme, funded by the Mastercard Foundation and spanning ten countries across West and East Africa to generate evidence on youth employment. PASGR also became a member of the Africa Think Tank Platform (ATTP), a continental body affiliated with the African Union and signed a letter of intent to collaborate with the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). Both affiliations extended PASGR's reach into government networks and development partnerships across the continent.

PASGR also signed letters of intent to collaborate with the FCI Network and McGill University on food systems research; with the International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED) to strengthen monitoring and impact reporting; and with Tanager to embed gender transformation into PASGR's programmes. These partnership extended PASGR's reach on the continent and indicate that the organization is increasingly recognised as a dependable partner in African research and governance.

New partnerships also enabled PASGR to strengthen its internal systems. A new knowledge management platform was launched with the support of the University of Nairobi, making the organisation's research outputs searchable and publicly accessible. Partnership with ICED enabled PASGR to embed results-based planning and performance evaluation across all programmes, aligning project-level activities more closely with its strategic objectives. To help close the gap between evidence and decisions, PASGR adopted more deliberate research dissemination, with findings shared directly with relevant government teams, and their feedback incorporated into subsequent iterations of research products.

2025 was indeed a pivotal year for the Research and Policy Programme. Besides the significant gains recorded, the renewed commitment to go beyond research, to embrace more closely partnerships and collaborations, built a foundation for future progress towards greater impact.

“

How do we move research into the policy ecosystem? How do we get involved or influence the process? This became the big picture for us in research in 2025.”

Dr Samwel Oando

Project Highlights 2025



UTAFITI SERA: STRENGTHENING EVIDENCE-INFORMED POLICYMAKING ACROSS AFRICA

In 2025, PASGR's Utafiti Sera Houses continued to show how evidence, dialogue and trusted relationships can influence public policy. Across Kenya, Zambia and the wider region, the Houses connected researchers, policymakers, practitioners, civil society and communities to turn evidence into practical policy options.

Transforming city infrastructure policy in Kenya: The Utafiti Sera House on Urban Governance and City Transformation, implemented with Pamoja Trust, convened policy engagements on social safeguards in infrastructure planning. Engineers from the Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA), Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA) and Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KeRRA) explored how socio-economic safeguards can improve project design while protecting affected communities. The discussions reframed infrastructure as both a technical and governance issue, linking engineering decisions to rights, participation, dignity and inclusive urban development.

The House also helped shift conversations from evictions and relocation toward approaches that expand human freedoms. Some engineers have begun incorporating basic social diagnostics in early project stages, while members are advocating more case-based urban planning curricula that prepare planners to humanise future cities.

Strengthening UHC accountability in

Zambia: The Utafiti Sera House on Universal Health Coverage, implemented with the Centre for Reproductive Health and Education, recorded early policy gains. Its evidence on financing gaps, accountability weaknesses, workforce distribution and commodity stock-outs was integrated into parliamentary deliberations on health financing and UHC, signalling growing political will for evidence-informed policy action.

Creating opportunities for young

entrepreneurs in Kenya: The Youth Employment Creation House, implemented with the Centre for African Bio-Entrepreneurship, generated evidence on the potential of mango, potato and avocado value chains to create jobs. It also strengthened 35 youth-led MSMEs and 10 Youth Value Chain Champions through training

in leadership, financial literacy, market access and digital marketing.

National and county forums brought together government, researchers, private sector actors, academia, NGOs and youth agripreneurs to co-create solutions. These engagements encouraged commitments to include youth voices in policy design and address barriers such as finance, land and markets.

Understanding the culture of policymaking:

PASGR also commissioned a policy cultures study in Kenya, Rwanda and Nigeria to examine how norms, histories, institutional habits and political realities shape the use of evidence. The study shows that evidence gains influence when it is framed, communicated and aligned with decision-makers' incentives and language.

Learning across Houses: In September 2025, PASGR convened an Inter-House Learning and Sharing Convening in Mombasa. Participants reflected on what counts as evidence, how it is packaged and why some evidence influences policy while other evidence remains underused. The discussions reinforced a central lesson: evidence-informed policymaking requires rigorous research, trusted platforms, political awareness, strategic communication and sustained engagement with those who can act.

The Utafiti Sera model utilizes the concept of a "House" to denote a space, forum and vehicle for shared knowledge and experiences, through research evidence and uptake that is mediated and enhanced by stakeholders. Its composition includes motivated and influential actors who have a pertinent policy issue in common that they seek to address. The interactions within the Houses are guided by political settlement, a theoretical framework which assumes that continuous interactions on a national policy issue always yields a better understanding and outcome.

ACRC: BUILDING MORE EQUITABLE CITIES, ONE INSIGHT AT A TIME

PASGR coordinates implementation of research uptake across the African Cities Research Consortium (ACRC). In 2025, the consortium continued to generate fresh insights and practical approaches for tackling complex urban challenges across Africa's rapidly changing cities. Working across projects in twelve African cities, ACRC advanced research and action in service delivery, waste management, youth livelihoods, land, and security of tenure, helping to bridge service gaps and strengthen evidence-informed decision-making. PASGR is one of the core partners in the consortium, focusing on translating research and engagement into changes in urban policy, practice and programs.

The year saw meaningful shifts in behaviour of boundary partners, institutional practice, and government action. In several cities, ACRC helped secure stronger elite commitment, mobilise resources, and open space for reform. In Maiduguri, Nigeria, partners achieved a waiver on title processing fees, making land documentation more accessible to women. In Harare, the project helped to revive the city's slum upgrading platform through reactivated Project Management Committee (PMC) meetings with the City Council of Harare. In Lagos, alliances with landowners supported efforts to secure land for water infrastructure, while in Nairobi, the programme contributed to county water and sanitation policy guidelines and supported the launch of a refugee integration strategy with

Nairobi City County Government.

ACRC also contributed to six policy processes and one major launch, including Malawi's slum upgrading strategy, Zimbabwe's climate and environment policy review, and several important reform processes in Ghana, such as the review of the decentralisation policy, the national urban strategy, and Accra Metropolitan Assembly's Medium-Term Development Plan. These achievements were made possible through collaboration with residents of informal settlements, internally displaced communities, city authorities, and government agencies across the participating cities.

As the programme transitions into 2026, the focus will be on implementing pilot action research projects as proof of concept for broader urban reforms, deepening strategic engagement with government, strengthening learning and collaboration across ACRC cities, sharpening research uptake and extending selected projects to consolidate reform gains. Despite challenges such as funding uncertainty, leadership transitions, and the slow pace of reform, 2025 demonstrated the value of collective responsibility, timely dissemination, and agile engagement in translating research into real urban change.

IGNITE: PUTTING GIRLS' REALITIES AT THE CENTRE OF EDUCATION POLICY

For many girls, the barriers to education extend far beyond classrooms, school fees, or distance from home. They are rooted in expectations about who girls should become, how families make decisions, and whose voices shape policy. In 2025, the Inspiring Girls and Grassroots Networks for Inclusive and Transformative Education (IGNITE) programme worked across Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Cameroon to surface these realities and support more gender-transformative education systems.

Through research-to-action dialogues, more than 60 civil society organisations shifted from being users of research to co-creators of evidence. Their community knowledge illuminated the social norms, household responsibilities, and power dynamics that shape girls'



IGNITE Programme team during Inception Workshop in Abuja, Nigeria

learning. Working with six in-country research teams, the project produced three country-specific policy briefs and three synthesis reports that identified structural drivers of girls' exclusion from education.

Using the Utafiti Sera approach, IGNITE supported the formation of a strong Community of Practice on girls' education and the social norms that shape learning outcomes. In this space, researchers, civil society organisations, and policy actors could jointly interpret evidence, identify community priorities, and translate learning into policy-relevant action.

By connecting African researchers, civil society organisations, and education stakeholders around the realities of girls' lives in Africa, IGNITE advanced a more grounded and inclusive approach to transforming the social norms that keep girls from fully participating in education.

EGAP: CLOSING OUT WITH IMPACT

The Mercury Project: Health Ambassadors in sub-Saharan Africa is a research collaboration between Evidence in Governance and Politics (EGAP), at the University of California, Berkeley, PASGR, and Centre de Recherche et d'Action pour la Paix (CERAP) in Abidjan. The EGAP project closed in 2025 after supporting a randomised controlled trial on the use of Health Ambassadors to promote vaccine uptake in four sub-Saharan African countries. PASGR managed grants for Anglophone research in Malawi and Zimbabwe and contributed to the design of both the intervention and the research.

In 2025, evidence from the project contributed to one policy review process and informed changes in practice in two instances. In Zimbabwe, it informed a climate and environment policy review and supported reforms to remunerate community health workers, helping improve access to health services. In Malawi, evidence from the health assessment informed a review of the curriculum for training community health promoters, including the AIMS (Announce Inquire Mirror Secure) approach.

The project also strengthened strategic partnerships with Centre for Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Research (CeSHHAR), Kamuzu University, and Ministry of Health Departments in Harare, Bulawayo, Blantyre, and Lilongwe. These partnerships supported implementation and broadened opportunities for evidence uptake at both institutional and policy levels.

Despite delays in implementation, the project generated important lessons on stronger partnership management and more effective collaboration with university partners. The project was successfully closed out, and subgrantees received resources to support continued uptake of the findings beyond the grant period.

AYPReS: ADVANCING YOUTH RESILIENCE AND SYSTEMS CHANGE ACROSS AFRICA



The African Youth Pathways to Resilience and Systems Change (AYPReS) programme, kicked off in January 2025 before it was launched in June 2025, and began laying the foundations for evidence, partnerships, and capacity for inclusive youth employment across ten countries in West and East Africa (Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Benin, Togo, and Côte d'Ivoire). Implemented with support from the Mastercard Foundation, AYPReS is generating policy-relevant evidence to advance dignified and fulfilling work for young people.

By the end of the year, the programme had established a 35-member multi-country research team, including 10 Principal Investigators and 21 Research Associates at country level. The programme delivered five capacity-strengthening sessions to improve research quality, consistency, ethical practice, and gender equality and social inclusion standards.

AYPReS convened 12 stakeholder engagement meetings with 580 participants, building government buy-in and creating spaces for policymakers, researchers, and young people to shape a shared agenda for inclusive economic transformation. By the end of the year, the programme had produced 33 knowledge products to support evidence-informed policy action and long-term systems change. The project also established a multi-country research structure, and launched the Young Researchers Network to sustain mentorship, research capacity strengthening and peer learning. Young people, including persons with disabilities, refugees and displaced persons, and youth in informal economies, contributed to programme design, inception workshops and advisory processes, helping ensure the work is grounded in lived experience.

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“As a member of Ethiopia’s youth, I envision a brighter future shaped by the evidence generated from the AYPReS programme. I dream of a country where young people are seen as assets, not burdens, where our voices are not silenced but actively shape the policies that govern us.”

(Young person with disability, Ethiopia and AYPReS participant)

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR WATER: DRIVING MEANINGFUL CHANGE IN THE WATER SECTOR

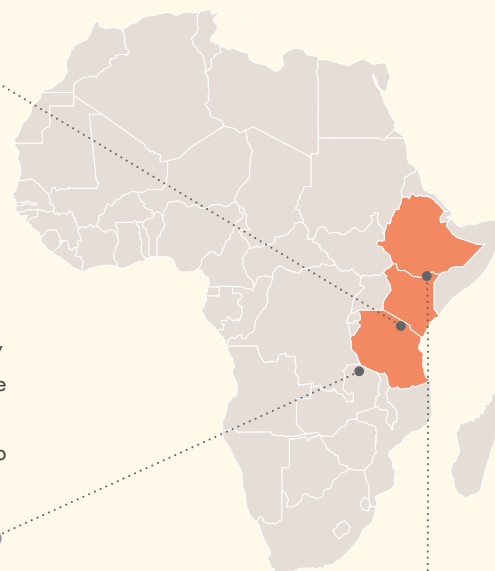
In 2025, the Accountability for Water (AfW) programme made significant progress in translating research evidence into practical policy influence, citizen action, and long-term institutional capacity across Africa.

Kenya: The Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network (KEWASNET) strengthened evidence-informed advocacy by finalising and disseminating four policy briefs and launching a Knowledge Sharing Platform now serving as a central hub for water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) evidence. Its 10th edition of The Voice Report, developed with input from 183 civil society organisations, captured key accountability gaps and sector trends. New initiatives on open data, integrity, and youth-led social accountability expanded participation in water governance.

Tanzania: Shahidi wa Maji amplified AfW's influence through national policy dialogues, the Maji International Scientific Conference, and contributions to the Joint Water Sector Review, including the 2024 Equity Report. Its Uhakika wa Maji model¹ enabled communities in Dar es Salaam and Morogoro to develop accountability action plans that led to regulatory inspections and commitments to install new water kiosks, with potential benefits for 66,000 residents. The Uhakika wa Maji model empowers change agents in local communities to advocate for better water resource management in Tanzania.

The Uhakika wa Maji model is a social accountability strategy, which enables communities to contribute to the implementation of water resource management policies and safeguard their rights. The model fosters dialogue and transparency between citizens and the leaders responsible for managing these resources.

Ethiopia: Water Witness Ethiopia converted rural and urban research findings into policy recommendations and convened advocacy workshops in Addis Ababa, Adama, Dire Dawa, and Hawassa, engaging more than 140 stakeholders. Its work in Modjo strengthened wastewater governance by equipping regulators and industries to apply circular economy principles and develop compliance action plans.



Regional and global reach:

PASGR presented AfW research at Africa Water Week, generating recommendations on inclusive decision-making, participatory monitoring, and multi-sector collaboration. Water Witness International extended the programme's legacy through technical guidance, practical accountability tools, and the Fair Water Action Fund, which supported projects reaching more than 274,800 people across five countries. Legacy efforts also included reforms advocacy in Zimbabwe, improved services for 65,000 people in South Africa, and a Master Class that trained 235 participants from government, civil society, academia, and the private sector. The first bulletin of a four-part "How to Guide" series was also published, providing practical guidance to civil society on budget tracking to promote transparency and accountability in water governance.

These achievements demonstrate AfW's contribution to stronger accountability ecosystems linking evidence, community action, and institutional learning to improve equitable and responsive water governance.

CASE STUDY

From Evidence to Action: How Nairobi Created a Policy for Urban Farming

In Nairobi County, food security depends on systems that are often overlooked, which include informal markets, kitchen gardens, small livestock units, and small urban farms that keep food moving through a fast-growing city. Yet the county government lacked a framework to guide, promote, and regulate urban agriculture. Implementation of a policy drafted in 2015 had stalled, leaving farmers, traders, county officials, and communities without a shared roadmap. The department responsible for agriculture was also under-resourced and lacked a dedicated budget.

PASGR's Food Systems Transformation (FST) project stepped into this gap, to help the Nairobi City County Government to come up with an evidence-informed, inclusive, and implementable Urban Agriculture Policy. Over 30 months until October 2025, PASGR worked with the county government and diverse stakeholders to update the draft policy, strengthen ownership of the process, and anchor implementation within county systems.

Using the Utafiti Sera approach, PASGR convened wide consultations with stakeholders to review and update the policy. In July and August 2025, PASGR and the County Department of Agriculture convened forums with various stakeholders to review proposals against practical realities and make recommendations on how to make the policy more responsive and actionable. The meetings brought together groups that rarely sit together, who included farmers, market traders, youth in agribusiness, and officials from the county and national governments and parastatals, as well as civil society organizations and private sector actors. PASGR and

the county government established a joint steering committee to coordinate agriculture subsectors and the teams responsible for implementation.

By the end of the process, the revised policy had been renamed the Urban Agriculture Policy, validated by stakeholders, and tabled for Cabinet discussion and adoption before submission to the County Assembly. In addition, the Nairobi County Government increased the budget allocation to the Department of Agriculture, Livestock Development, Fisheries and Forestry from about KES 189 million in FY 2024/2025 to approximately KES 388 million in FY 2025/2026. Of this, an estimated KES 71 million was allocated specifically to Urban Agriculture Promotion and Regulation, a clear signal of the county government's commitment to the sector.

For PASGR, this experience demonstrated the effectiveness of the Utafiti Sera approach in a complex policy context but also showed that research can be designed not just to describe a problem, but to establish a solution. The coordination framework created and the relationships built through this process can continue to serve Nairobi County in other areas and can be replicated in other counties in Kenya and cities across the continent.

"The Utafiti Sera model enabled us to establish a robust platform for collective decision-making and co-creation, enabling diverse stakeholders to engage meaningfully in the process.... We accomplished [the policy review] in a fraction of the time, demonstrating the efficiency of this collaborative approach." Nairobi County Government official.



"The revised policy integrates FST issues that were previously missing, ensuring alignment with current realities and future needs." Gladwell Cheruiyot, County Chief Officer, Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Nairobi County, speaking at a Stakeholders Convening, Nairobi, in August 2025

The Food Systems Transformation (FST) was an IDRC funded project that run for 30 months and ended in October 2025. Through the project, PASGR helped turn a long-stalled policy process into a practical pathway for strengthening food security in Nairobi County.

Communication and Knowledge Management

In 2025, PASGR continued implementing communication and visibility efforts, including deliberately cultivating increase in digital audiences and reviving the organisation's quarterly e-newsletter. It also began developing its first institutional repository to strengthen knowledge management and preserve institutional memory and support broader dissemination of information.

Building Institutional Memory Through Digital Innovation:

Every organisation carries knowledge, but knowledge that is not captured, organised, and shared is easily lost. For PASGR, this was a lived reality - before the Knowledge Management unit existed, information flowed primarily through email, and during staff transitions, institutional memory would often fragment or disappear entirely.



Addressing this became a strategic priority in 2025, with the establishment of a dedicated Knowledge Management unit mandated to ensure that PASGR's knowledge is captured, organised, and remains accessible regardless of staff changes.

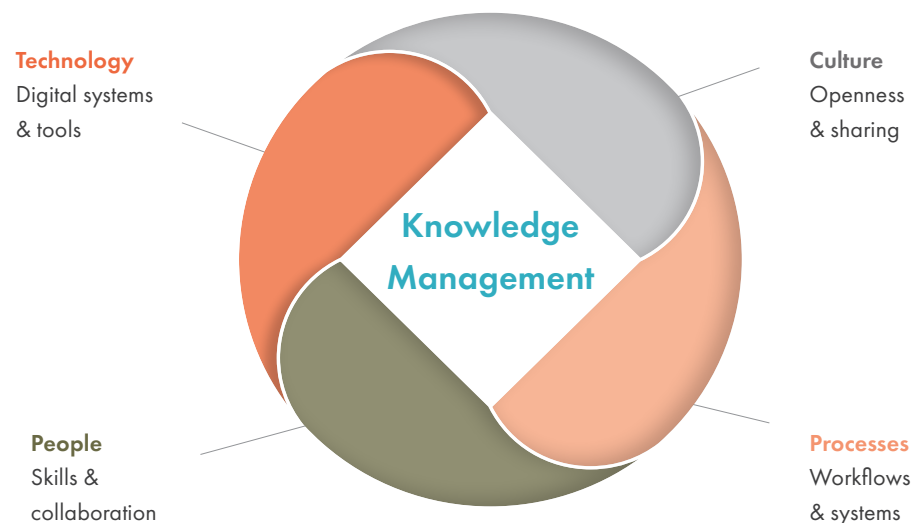
Towards the end of the year, this work produced the PASGR Knowledge Repository. Built using DSpace, it is a structured digital system that is searchable, accessible, and updated in real time. It allows for ongoing projects to be tracked, past knowledge outputs to be found and reused, and lessons learned documented for those who come after. The repository has helped to break down silos, enabling staff to access each other's work without fragmented communication.

The system also automates routine tasks, supports collaborative working, and blends documented knowledge with tacit knowledge. Lessons learned are recorded and knowledge-sharing forums are being institutionalised. Future plans include integrating the repository with PASGR's financial, M&E, and HR systems to create a truly comprehensive knowledge ecosystem.

"With fragmented information, it is hard to demonstrate impact to development partners." - Elijah Kabari, Knowledge Management Officer

Beyond internal benefits, the system supports joint research and gives external researchers easier access to PASGR's body of work, advancing

Knowledge management at PASGR integrates technology, people, culture and processes



"Knowledge is local; it is not always out there in the distance. Solutions are within your reach, so use what you have." - Elijah Kabari, Knowledge Management Officer

The goal is for PASGR to be the go-to source for open access information on governance and public policy across the continent, sitting at the centre of evidence-informed decision-making. PASGR's Knowledge Repository is a significant step towards that future.

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"Knowledge is local; it is not always out there in the distance. Solutions are within your reach, so use what you have."

Elijah Kabari, Knowledge Management Officer

the organisation's vision of becoming the go-to source for open access information on governance and public policy in Africa.

Despite early technical constraints around storage and bandwidth, the new system has been well received and fully adopted by staff. A robust cloud infrastructure and support by senior management have helped to embed it into daily operations.

In the future, the Knowledge Management system plans to integrate AI tools to enhance the repository's intelligence, establish new communities of practice, and launch a mobile application to expand access. Integration with PASGR's financial, M&E, and HR systems is also on the horizon.



BUILDING A STRONGER INSTITUTION: HOW PASGR'S FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION STRENGTHENED STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY IN 2025

Improving Operational Efficiency and Institutional Governance

For PASGR's Finance and Operations, 2025 was a year marked by strategic alignment, strengthening of the financial systems, improving operational efficiency, resource mobilization, and gains in institutional resilience and stability. The Finance and Administration team played a critical role in ensuring that the organization's resources, systems and processes were aligned with its long-term vision as articulated in Strategic Plan.

Constance Mwahunga, the Head of Finance and Administration, notes that one of the most significant shifts in

2025 was the deliberate alignment of financial planning and reporting with the organization's four strategic objectives outlined in the strategic plan. "Previously, we would do the annual planning and budgeting without taking into consideration strategic objectives, but largely by programme or project cashflows. Now, we are intentionally aligning our budgeting and expenditure tracking to the strategic objectives of the organization," she explains.

This change in approach has meant linking financial resources directly to the institutional strategic priorities, monitoring how

the various projects contribute to organisational goals, and making more informed decisions about resource allocation. It helps to identify the strategic objective that may be underfunded and areas that have no funds but are crucial to the organisation's success, such as communication and outreach.

Optimised internal systems: To support this shift, PASGR enhanced its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system by introducing new reporting dimensions that allow expenditures to be tracked against the respective strategic objectives. This enables management to compare planned budgets with actual

spending and assess progress toward these goals in real time. The system was also further optimized through new modules and improvements to create a more integrated platform that also covers human resources and project monitoring and reporting.

Beginning January 2025, the PASGR Board took measures to revamp the Internal Audit function, under the oversight of the Finance and Audit Committee (FAC), to improve risk management, control, and governance processes. The process included an evaluation and revision of PASGR's Risk Management Framework to address risks and embed risk-informed decision-making across all functions. The revised framework has enhanced the organization's ability to anticipate, mitigate, and respond to risks while safeguarding its assets, reputation, stakeholders, and long-term sustainability.

Strengthening support to field operations: To strengthen operational effectiveness, during the year, the Finance and administration team adopted a more hands-on approach by joining the programme team during the activities implementation and engaging directly with partners in the field. This enabled the finance team to better understand operational realities. *"Sometimes it's not enough to say I needed a receipt here and not just a signature. What was the circumstance, the context, to the extent that the staff member could not get an actual receipt?"* says Constance.

These field trips offered the finance and operations' team the opportunity to interact more with the implementing partners and, in some cases, to provide hands-on coaching and training on strategic financial management and compliance. This also provided an avenue to resolve budgeting and reporting challenges before they became compliance issues. *"Rather than only seeing the [field financial reports], we wanted to feel and understand is the actual activities behind the numbers,"* says Constance. *"Being on the ground helped us understand the context in which our partners operate and support them more effectively."*

Taking steps towards sustainability: PASGR also secured some significant gains towards financial sustainability in 2025. During the year, 12 grants were active. The AYPReS programme supported by a grant from the Mastercard Foundation commenced in 2025, injecting a major boost to the programme portfolio and activity. PASGR also secured four grant renewals from longstanding partners during the year.

2025 also marked a notable evolution of support from the Hewlett Foundation, one of the longest partners for PASGR. Following years of successful collaboration through project-

based funding, the Foundation transitioned its support to core funding. For many nonprofit organizations, securing core funding represents a critical milestone and is a significant vote of confidence by the funding partner. Unlike project-specific grants, core funding provides greater flexibility for organizations to invest in strategic priorities, strengthen institutional systems, and respond to emerging opportunities.

"This type of funding supports the strategic plan rather than a single project," Constance explains. *"It gives the organization greater flexibility to determine effective distribution of the resources among the strategic objectives."*

The organization also expanded its partnership with the Andrew Carnegie Foundation through an additional grant to cover research on doctoral practices and procedures in African universities. This reflects growing confidence among funders in PASGR's vision, mission, leadership and institutional capacity to deliver.

As PASGR looks toward 2026 and beyond, the foundations laid during 2025 position the organization strongly for the next phase of its strategic journey. The arrival of a substantive Executive Director in mid-2025 helped to reassure funders and partners after an extended leadership transition, while creating fresh momentum for resource mobilization and institutional growth. *"We have seen renewed confidence from partners and funders,"* Constance notes. *"There is a new sense of optimism about where the organization is headed."*

Through stronger systems and improving financial sustainability, PASGR is building the institutional strength needed to advance its mandate across Africa.

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"We have seen renewed confidence from partners and funders. There is a new sense of optimism about where the organization is headed."

Constance Mwachunga, Head of Finance and Administration

HR UPDATE: FOSTERING A POSITIVE WORK CULTURE AND EXCELLENCE IN A TRANSITION



Staff appreciation: PASGR celebrates its staff in many ways, including observing their birthdays

Building a team is essential for success, and over the past year, PASGR doubled down on strengthening its human resource capacity. The arrival of the new Executive Director brought with it a meaningful shift in leadership philosophy, strategy, and organisational direction. One of the most visible expressions of this has been deliberate investment in building the team. The organization started the journey towards creating new senior roles to strengthen its structure and to empower staff to drive its goals. Notably, a HR Officer was appointed, and two new critical roles created: Knowledge Management Officer and Programme Officer, Partnerships and Operations. Both roles were filled with internal appointments. Previously, the HR function was part of Finance and Administration, and while this did not hinder its performance, the new set up gives it more autonomy and reflects the organization's commitment to her core and valued resource, the staff. The new role is domiciled under the Executive Director's office, signifying its critical role.

Strengthening a Positive Work Culture: PASGR's progress on strengthening an organizational culture in 2025 was gradual but intentional. The organization embraced

cross-functional working, bringing together staff from different units to foster collaboration and strengthen relationships and produce better results through collective input. This work approach also helps to build familiarity and trust that underpins a healthy work environment.

Alongside the cultural work, PASGR also reviewed its internal processes to create an environment in which staff can do their best work. Quarterly review meetings were introduced, giving the team regular touchpoints to assess how their project activities align with the organisation's strategic objectives. The organisation also started a calendar-driven management system that includes annual planning retreats, monthly staff meetings, and regular leadership engagements with individual staff. PASGR also prioritised capacity-building and expanded staff training opportunities and put in place a structured induction process for incoming board members.

A Pan-African Outlook: PASGR is committed to maintaining its identity as a Pan-African organisation, which values diversity in its ranks. This was affirmed in 2025, with the current Executive Director coming from Senegal, and the board composition reflecting a variety of national and professional backgrounds from across the continent. Future recruitment, at both senior and junior levels, will continue to be guided by a commitment to ensuring that the team reflects the diversity of Africa.

Lunch & Learn — Making Space for Connection

The Lunch & Learn initiative started as a simple idea but has borne real results and quiet impact at PASGR offices. Once a week, a team member takes a slot to present something they are personally passionate about or interested in. It is informal by design, held over lunch, and entirely open in topic. The result is that colleagues get to know one another beyond their job titles. They learn about each other's curiosities, experiences, and perspectives in a way that the everyday rhythm of work rarely allows.

The response has been warmly positive. Team members actively look forward to the sessions. It is a small investment with a big return: a team that feels more connected, more at ease, and ultimately more willing to collaborate.

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“Lunch and learn is an informal way for us to learn from each other and get to know each other better.”

Monica Kitivo, Executive Assistant & HR Officer

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE IN 2025

2025 Financial Report

PASGR recorded a strong financial position during the year 2025. Total income rose to USD 3.2 million, from USD 2.35 million in 2024, marking an increase of approximately 37%. This growth was driven primarily by an expansion in grant income, reflecting the organisation’s continued success in securing donor funding. Total expenditure for the year amounted to approximately USD 3 million, resulting in a surplus of USD 231,454 after tax, a significant improvement from USD 14,144 recorded in 2024.

Statement of Income and Expenditure

For the year ended 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
	USD	USD
INCOME		
Grant income	3,189,833	2,341,207
Other income	42,779	14,143
TOTAL INCOME	3,232,612	2,355,350
EXPENDITURE		
Research programme	2,101,551	1,534,673
Capacity Development and Training	667,970	511,220
Core administration	227,899	295,313
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,997,420	2,341,206
Surplus before tax	235,192	14,144
Tax expense	3,738	–
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	231,454	14,144

Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
	USD	USD
FUND BALANCES		
Capital fund	51,705	40,400
Reserve fund	248,765	17,311
Total Fund Balances	300,470	57,711
REPRESENTED BY:		
Non-current assets		
Property and equipment	45,206	36,699
Intangible assets	6,499	3,701
Total Non-current Assets	51,705	40,400
Current assets		
Accounts receivable	160,598	409,579
Cash and cash equivalents	2,424,924	2,649,714
Total Current Assets	2,585,522	3,059,293
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	28,950	13,334
Unexpended grants payable	2,307,807	3,028,648
Total Current Liabilities	2,336,757	3,041,982
Net Current Assets	248,765	17,311
TOTAL ASSETS	300,470	57,711

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Our People

PASGR is governed by a Board currently chaired by Prof. Gerald Ouma, Professor of Higher Education and Senior Director of Institutional Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. The members (below) are eminent personalities reflecting global leadership as well as regional and international credibility in African policymaking, research, and higher education. The Directors are responsible for the overall strategic direction and management of the business and affairs of PASGR, and may exercise all the related powers.

Members of the Board, 2025



**Prof Gerald Ouma,
Board Chair**

Prof. of Higher Education and the Senior Director of Institutional Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation at the University of Pretoria



Prof. Ama de-Graft Aikins, Member

Prof. of Social Psychology and a British Academy Global Professor at the Institute of Advanced Studies, University College London



Ms Kananu Mutea, Member

Founding Partner of KM Associates and Course Correct Consulting, Kenya



Dr Kathryn Nwajaku-Dahou, Member

Director of Politics and Governance programme, ODI Global



Dr José Jackson-Malete, Member

Co-Director of the Alliance for African Partnership (AAP) at Michigan State University (MSU), USA

Senior Management



**Prof Fadel Ndiame,
Executive Director**



**Dr Pauline Ngimwa,
Head, Capacity Development and Training**



**Dr Samwel Oando,
Programme Manager,
Research & Policy**



**Ms Constance Mwahunga,
Head, Finance & Administration**

PASGR Staff in 2025

The people behind the work shaping Africa’s development agenda in 2025:

Prof. Fadel Ndiame	Executive Director (July 2025)
Constance Mwachunga	Head of Finance and Administration
Dr Pauline Ngimwa	Programme Manager and Head Capacity Development
Dr Samwel Oando	Programme Manager, Research and Policy Uptake
Stephen Kiruki	Senior Finance Officer
Charles Nyaga	Senior Finance Officer
Martin Kapchanga	Programme Officer, Research and Policy Uptake
Mary Anne Aluoch	Programme Officer, Research and Policy Uptake
Susan Gichuna	Programme Officer, Capacity Development
Elijah Kabari	Technology Assistant
Mercy Limiri	Programme Assistant, Research and Policy Uptake
Jim Kaketch	Programme Officer, Research and Policy Uptake
Rose Njage	Programme Officer, Research and Policy Uptake
Rosebella Apollo	Programme Officer, Research and Policy Uptake
Monicah Kitivo	Executive Assistant and Human Resource Officer (October 2025)
Martha Ngáru, Executive Assistant (upto April 2025)	

Partners and Collaborators

In 2025, PASGR had 12 active grants to support its work. We gratefully acknowledge the support of our funders in the year:



PASGR also signed collaboration MOUs with the following agencies in 2025 to extend our thematic focus and global footprint:

- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and McGill University
- International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED)
- African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA)
- University of Nairobi (Library and Digital Services)

PASGR also collaborated with the following agencies to implement activities.

- Pamoja Trust
- Centre for Reproductive Health and Education
- Kenya Water and Sanitation Civil Society Network
- Shahidi wa Maji
- Water Witness International
- Centre for African Bio-Entrepreneurship
- African Cities Research Consortium
- Human Science Research Council
- University of Ibadan
- University of Nairobi
- University of Pretoria





Partnership for African Social & Governance Research (PASGR)

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