

NAFISA JIDDAWI

WAJAMAMA

2023 Global Fellow



BIG BOLD IDEA

Make safe, dignified, and empowered pregnancy, labor, and birth experiences standard for all birthing people in Zanzibar by increasing access to quality holistic health services.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

WAJAMAMA breaks the cycle of disempowerment, substandard health care delivery, poverty, and disease in Zanzibar, which has implications for individual health, community wellbeing, and livelihood outcomes. WAJAMAMA makes holistic health care services accessible to women and girls of all socioeconomic backgrounds through a comprehensive model of reproductive and maternal health care, which includes high-quality preventive and maternal health care services, interactive learning, and community building in group settings. WAJAMAMA also equips nurses and midwives with knowledge and skills needed to deliver safe and respectful care to all.

PERSONAL BIO

Nafisa Jiddawi is the founder and chief executive officer of WAJAMAMA. She is also a family, women, and maternal health care provider. While growing up in Zanzibar with two of the ten medical doctors available in the archipelago in the 1990s, Nafisa's family home in Stone Town often turned into an urgent care center at any hour of the day and night. From a young age, she witnessed many people suffering from preventable illnesses and complications. This experience fuels her unwavering passion for preventive medicine. During holidays from university in the U.S., Nafisa returned to Zanzibar to volunteer for various health projects, where she assisted in the collection of Zanzibar's initial maternal mortality rate data. While going through maternal death books at delivery hospitals across Zanzibar, she documented the demographics and cause of death of each life lost and was appalled at the volume of unnecessary deaths. During this time, she also witnessed systemic abuse of birthing people and their babies. These experiences were the driving force behind founding WAJAMAMA.

Organization/Fellow LocationTanzania

Impact LocationTanzania

Organization StructureHybrid

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