



THE SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT OF KENYA (SOWOMO)

Origins, Political Project, and Revolutionary Vision

Introduction

The Socialist Workers Movement of Kenya (SOWOMO) is an emerging revolutionary political movement formed in response to the deepening social, economic, and political crises facing Kenyan society. Although not yet registered as a political party, SOWOMO is actively organising, educating, and mobilising working people, youth, peasants, students, and progressive forces across the country.

The Movement arises from the lived realities of poverty, unemployment, land dispossession, collapsing public services, and the systematic marginalisation of the working masses under Kenya's neo-liberal capitalist order. SOWOMO exists to challenge the idea that these conditions are inevitable or accidental. Instead, it asserts that they are the direct outcome of an exploitative class structure and Kenya's subordinate position within global capitalism and imperialism.

Anchored on the principles of scientific socialism and international solidarity, SOWOMO seeks to contribute to the socialist transformation of Kenyan society through political education, disciplined organisation, and mass participation.

Political Origins: From Disillusionment to Reorganisation

SOWOMO emerged from a period of political disengagement and reflection among a group of young activists previously involved in the Communist Party of Kenya (CPK). For much of the past decade, the CPK positioned itself as a key vehicle for radical politics, attracting a new generation of youth committed to anti-capitalist struggle. These young organisers were instrumental in expanding political education, labour engagement, student organising, community struggles, and international solidarity work.

However, from around 2020, internal contradictions within the party intensified. Strategic disagreements, particularly over electoral participation and alliances with mainstream political forces, escalated into a prolonged leadership crisis. Over time, internal debate gave way to factionalism, disciplinary measures, legal disputes, and competing claims to organisational legitimacy.

By 2024, this crisis resulted in a formal split. One faction continued under the Communist Party of Kenya name and aligned itself with the Kenya Kwanza political coalition. Another regrouped as the Communist Party Marxist–Kenya (CPM–K), presenting itself as the revolutionary continuation of the party. Rather than resolving internal contradictions, the split deepened fragmentation and disillusionment, particularly among younger members.



SOWOMO as an Emerging Political Movement

The Socialist Workers Movement of Kenya (SOWOMO), positions itself as an emerging political movement, with the long-term goal of registering as a political party. Its foundation is firmly rooted in scientific socialism, drawing from Marxist–Leninist and Maoist traditions, while consistently grounding its analysis and practice in the concrete material conditions of Kenyan society. SOWOMO’s approach is informed by decades of struggle against poverty, inequality, and exploitation under Kenya’s neoliberal capitalist system.

SOWOMO emerged in response to the crisis of Kenya’s organised left, particularly the collapse and fragmentation of the Communist Party of Kenya (CPK). The Movement argues that this crisis is not a failure of democratic centralism as a principle, but rather the result of its distortion through factionalism, bureaucratisation, personalised leadership, and the suppression of meaningful internal debate. In other words, the problem was not the idea of collective democratic decision-making, but the way internal democracy was undermined by self-interest, elite capture, and the erosion of accountability.

To address these challenges, SOWOMO has sought to reassert democratic centralism in practice. Within the Movement, this principle is understood as:

- Open and structured internal discussion, where members, cadres, and supporters are encouraged to engage critically, question assumptions, and debate strategy in a disciplined manner;
- Collective decision-making, ensuring that policies and strategies emerge from shared analysis and consensus rather than from the dictates of a few individuals or informal cliques;
- Unity in action once decisions have been democratically adopted, enabling the Movement to act coherently and effectively while maintaining internal discipline and accountability.

SOWOMO’s interpretation of democratic centralism is therefore practical and participatory rather than merely formalistic. It balances the need for robust internal debate with the imperative of coordinated collective action, seeking to avoid the pitfalls of factionalism, indiscipline, and elite domination that have historically undermined Kenya’s leftist movements.

In its early stages, SOWOMO has prioritised political education, grassroots organisation, and ideological clarity over rapid institutionalisation or immediate electoral participation. The Movement produces analyses on class relations, labour struggles, youth precarity, and global political developments, encouraging members to engage critically with these issues. By doing so, it aims to cultivate a politically conscious, disciplined, and active base capable of sustaining long-term struggle for socialist transformation.

Through this approach, SOWOMO seeks not only to organise the working masses and oppressed groups, but also to redefine political engagement for Kenya’s left, demonstrating



that a movement can remain relevant and transformative without relying on elite alliances, short-term electoral gains, or personalist leadership. It represents a generational experiment in socialist politics; one that prioritises collective education, accountability, and principled struggle as the foundations of lasting social change.

SOWOMO's Ideological Foundation

SOWOMO is grounded in a scientifically informed socialist worldview, drawing on the revolutionary traditions of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. These frameworks provide both theoretical clarity and practical guidance for understanding the roots of exploitation, inequality, and oppression under Kenya's capitalist system, as well as strategies for building a society based on justice, equity, and collective well-being.

Commitment to Democratic Centralism

At the core of SOWOMO's organisational approach is democratic centralism. This principle combines open and structured internal debate with disciplined collective action. Members are encouraged to critically analyse social, economic, and political issues, engage in rigorous internal discussion, and contribute to decision-making processes. Once decisions are democratically adopted, the entire Movement unites in action to implement them effectively, balancing internal democracy with organisational cohesion. By doing so, SOWOMO seeks to avoid factionalism and individualism that have historically weakened Kenya's leftist movements.

Organic Connection to the Working Class

SOWOMO emphasises an organic, inseparable connection with the working class and oppressed groups. The Movement recognises that its interests are identical to those of the masses it represents; it does not pursue elite agendas or personal gain. Cadres of the Movement are expected to live by socialist principles, prioritising collective interests over individual ambitions, and maintaining constant engagement with the struggles, aspirations, and needs of ordinary people across workplaces, communities, and rural areas.

Inspiration from Global and Kenyan Revolutionary Traditions

SOWOMO draws inspiration from a rich lineage of global revolutionary thought and practice, including Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, V.I. Lenin, Mao Tse-tung, Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Kwame Nkrumah, Frantz Fanon, and Ho Chi Minh. At the same time, the Movement situates itself within Kenya's revolutionary history, inheriting the struggles of anti-slavery campaigns, anti-colonial resistance, and the sacrifices of freedom fighters that fought for political independence. This dual inspiration (global and local) grounds SOWOMO in a historical consciousness that links past struggles with contemporary challenges and future socialist transformation.

Guiding Principle



THE SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT OF KENYA

• P.O. Box 7629-00200, Nairobi, Kenya
☎ +254748049922, ✉ contact@sowomo.co.ke

Through this ideological foundation, SOWOMO seeks to develop political consciousness, cultivate disciplined organisation, and mobilise collective action among the working class and oppressed groups. It positions itself not merely as a political formation, but as a movement capable of fostering revolutionary change, challenging capitalist exploitation, and building a society that prioritises human needs, equity, and justice.

Vision and Mission

Vision

SOWOMO envisions a Kenya transformed from a capitalist system of exploitation and inequality into a socialist society founded on justice, equity, and peace. In this society, the economy and political institutions are organised to meet the needs of the people, rather than the profit-driven interests of a few elites. Human dignity, collective well-being, and equitable access to resources become the guiding principles of social, economic, and political life.

Mission

To realise this vision, SOWOMO is committed to:

- Transforming Kenya's socio-economic system by replacing capitalist exploitation with a socialist framework rooted in collective ownership, democratic planning, and the prioritisation of human needs.
- Promoting justice, equity, and peace across all sectors of society, addressing historical inequalities, dismantling oppressive structures, and fostering harmonious social relations.
- Prioritising human needs over private profit, ensuring that access to education, healthcare, food, and basic services is universal, affordable, and socially planned.
- Building a disciplined, principled, and participatory movement, grounded in democratic centralism, collective responsibility, and mass engagement. SOWOMO aims to cultivate cadres and members who are politically conscious, accountable, and deeply connected to the struggles of the working class and oppressed groups.

Through this vision and mission, SOWOMO positions itself not only as a political organisation, but as a vehicle for transformative social change, seeking to empower the people of Kenya to take control of their lives, assert their collective rights, and build a society based on fairness, solidarity, and sustainable development.

Core Values and Guiding Principles

- Equity, honesty, humility, international solidarity.
- Self-emancipation by the oppressed.
- Socialist democracy rooted in mass participation.
- Revolutionary transformation beyond limited reforms.
- Patriotic and internationalist orientation.



SOWOMO as a Political Project

SOWOMO is a political movement in formation, not yet registered as a political party, but actively preparing to build a disciplined organisation grounded in scientific socialism. Its focus is on creating a movement that is both ideologically coherent and practically capable of leading the Kenyan working class and oppressed groups toward systemic transformation.

Rejecting the mistakes of previous leftist formations, SOWOMO deliberately distances itself from factionalism, opportunistic elite alliances, and personalist politics. The Movement views such tendencies as major causes of fragmentation, inefficiency, and the erosion of socialist principles within Kenya's organised left. By avoiding these pitfalls, SOWOMO aims to establish a principled and sustainable approach to revolutionary organisation.

Central to SOWOMO's work is political education, ideological clarity, and collective discipline. The Movement invests in developing members' understanding of capitalism, class relations, global imperialism, and socialist alternatives, ensuring that its cadre and supporters are both politically conscious and capable of contributing to organised struggle.

SOWOMO operationalises democratic centralism as the combination of:

- Open internal debate, where ideas, strategies, and critiques are discussed in a structured and transparent manner;
- Collective decision-making, ensuring that policies emerge from consensus rather than from individual authority;
- Unity in action, whereby once a decision is democratically agreed upon, the entire Movement acts in coordination, maintaining organisational discipline and effectiveness.

Through this approach, SOWOMO seeks to create a political project that is participatory, principled, and capable of mass mobilisation, offering a clear alternative to the opportunism, personalism, and bureaucratic stagnation that have historically undermined Kenya's leftist movements. The Movement prioritises long-term ideological and organisational development over short-term electoral gains, viewing sustained political consciousness and disciplined collective action as the foundation for genuine socialist transformation.

Generational and Political Significance

SOWOMO represents a new generational approach to leftist politics in Kenya, emerging directly from the frustrations and disillusionment of young activists with both elite-dominated politics and ideologically rigid formations. Many of these youth had previously engaged with the Communist Party of Kenya (CPK) but became disenchanted by factionalism, opportunism, and the prioritisation of personal power over collective struggle. SOWOMO responds to this discontent by offering a space where political commitment is grounded in principles rather than loyalty to factions or individuals.



THE SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT OF KENYA

• P.O. Box 7629-00200, Nairobi, Kenya
☎ +254748049922, ✉ contact@sowomo.co.ke

The Movement emphasises decentralised activism and independent critique, encouraging members, supporters, and sympathisers to engage with social and political issues through grassroots organising, community action, and informed discussion. By valuing ideas and action over hierarchy and formal titles, SOWOMO fosters a culture of political innovation, accountability, and responsiveness to the lived realities of the working class, peasant farmers, and other oppressed groups.

Importantly, SOWOMO engages critically with all political actors without being bound by factional loyalties. It positions itself beyond the divisions that have historically fractured Kenya's left, assessing alliances, policies, and strategies on the basis of principle rather than expediency. This approach allows SOWOMO to maintain ideological clarity while remaining adaptable to changing social and political conditions, ensuring that the Movement remains relevant, independent, and focused on advancing the interests of the majority rather than a select elite.

Through this generational and political stance, SOWOMO signals a shift in how leftist movements in Kenya are imagined and practised: prioritising youth leadership, collective education, grassroots engagement, and principled critique as essential tools for building a sustained and transformative socialist movement.

Call to Action

SOWOMO issues a call to the people of Kenya (workers, peasants, students, academics, and all progressive forces) to unite in the struggle against exploitation, inequality, and oppression. The Movement recognises that the challenges facing Kenyan society, from poverty and unemployment to land dispossession and deteriorating public services, cannot be addressed by fragmented individual efforts or by relying on elite-dominated political formations.

The path forward lies in collective organisation and mass participation. SOWOMO emphasises that only through disciplined, principled, and sustained struggle can the working class and oppressed communities assert their rights, defend their interests, and reshape society in a way that meets human needs rather than elite profit.

Socialism, as envisioned by SOWOMO, is not a distant utopia but a practical, democratic, and transformative alternative. It offers a society where access to education, healthcare, and food is universal, where workers and peasants have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives, and where the economy and political institutions are organised to serve the majority rather than a small, privileged few.

SOWOMO calls on all who are committed to justice, equity, and human dignity to join the Movement: to participate in political education, to organise in workplaces, communities, and campuses, and to engage in collective action that challenges the structures of exploitation and builds the foundations of a socialist Kenya. Together, the people of Kenya can reclaim their power, assert their collective rights, and transform the country into a society that embodies fairness, solidarity, and sustainable prosperity.



THE SOCIALIST WORKERS MOVEMENT OF KENYA

• P.O. Box 7629-00200, Nairobi, Kenya
☎ +254748049922, ✉ contact@sowomo.co.ke

Our Pledge

As a member or supporter of the Socialist Workers Movement of Kenya (SOWOMO), I solemnly commit to the aims, principles, and objectives of the Movement. I dedicate myself to the pursuit of socialist ideals, recognising that the emancipation of the working class and oppressed communities is central to transforming Kenya into a just, equitable, and peaceful society.

I pledge to place collective interests above personal ambition, striving to serve the Movement, the working class, peasant farmers, students, and all oppressed people of Kenya with humility, discipline, and unwavering dedication. I accept the responsibility to uphold the values of justice, equity, solidarity, and democratic participation, and to contribute actively to the organisation's work in education, mobilisation, and struggle.

Through this pledge, I affirm that my commitment is not to personal gain or prestige, but to the collective liberation of the people and the building of a society that prioritises human needs, social justice, and the common good. I shall work tirelessly to ensure that SOWOMO remains a principled, disciplined, and effective movement capable of delivering real transformation for the Kenyan working masses.

Issued by the Socialist Workers Movement of Kenya (SOWOMO)

Adopted by the Movement, 2026