

ENA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2020 ISSUE

Youth Empowerment



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Word from the Group CEO The Future is Youth



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Group CEO, ENA

The youth are undeniably the future assets for building any society. They must hence be encouraged to harness and develop their inherent potential. Conversely, progress, peace and development will occur when courageous, skilful and selfless youth are given an opportunity to effect positive change.

Our mission at Echo Network Africa (ENA) is to be a catalyst that empowers, positions and advocates for women (Including young women, women with disabilities and women from marginalized communities) towards attainment of their full potential.

ENA also has two focus areas that deal specifically with the youth that is the Youth Empowerment and Advocacy focus areas.

It is imperative therefore for young people to learn how to lead from their formative years. A society that severs its youth from this opportunity plunges itself into self-destruction. Youth can enhance civil education, public participation and peace.

Recently, through my foundation, the Jennifer Riria Foundation, the Annual Youth Connect Forum was held virtually with the theme “Youth Agenda on Development for Prosperity and Growth”. The purpose of the forum was to provide an opportunity for the youth to engage closely and candidly.

The forum focused on issues related to their leadership, accountability and diligence to see how they can be positive change agents through their contribution to the society.

As a future leader, your will to win, your desire to succeed and your urge to reach your full potential are lifelong essentials and keys which can unlock doors to your education, moral and personal excellence. I urge the youth not to change our country but to be the change that our country needs.

“ The youth are undeniably the future assets for building any society. They must hence be encouraged to harness and develop their inherent potential ”

It's Time For Action

Advocacy

The Advocacy focus area seeks to prevent and reduce teenage pregnancies and enhance menstrual hygiene management. This is achieved through supplying girls with menstrual hygiene materials. The focus area aims to reduce the sex for pads menace, which leaves the girls exposed to diseases and deprives them of their innocence at a tender age. Menstrual Hygiene Management trainings and sessions are also carried out by the focus area to empower the girls.

On 28th August 2020, Echo Network Africa in collaboration with The Bold Phase Initiative, Nivalishe Pad Initiative, Youth For Health, Women For Women, Girls Health ED and Maisha Youth distributed 100 ENA dada packs to vulnerable girls. This activity was done in Kinayango, Eastleigh at California Hall and targeted 100 girls. The girls were also taken through sessions on menstrual education to enhance their menstrual hygiene management.

This deliberate process was informed hugely by the struggles the adolescent girls in the area are suffering especially now during this Covid period.

Echo Network Africa plans to scale up the initiative to other counties with support of like-minded partners both regionally, nationally, and internationally.



The girls at the menstrual hygiene management training are taken through how to properly use sanitary towels during their menstrual cycle.



Participants of the menstrual hygiene training are presented with ENA Dada Packs after the menstrual hygiene management session at California Hall in Eastleigh



It's time for action! Girls at the menstrual hygiene management training proudly displaying their ENA Dada packs that will aid them in their menstrual cycle.



A girl from the menstrual hygiene management training showing off contents of the ENA Dada packs that comprise of sanitary towels and under garments.

Equipping Women Financially

Women Empowerment (Revolving Loan Fund)

In Kenya, gender inequality continues to hinder women from achieving their development goals. In rural areas, majority of women are poor and have myriad of problems. Women bear the burden of childbearing while cultivating farm and house chores. In many households' women are tasked with the responsibility of playing the role of both the mother and father of their families.

Despite their significant contribution, women have no control over the resources in their homesteads and are therefore unable to make life changing decisions.

Women contribute significantly to the

Aquaculture Value chain. They are mainly traders particularly in processing and marketing. This makes them vulnerable to exploitation by the fishermen who have a higher bargaining power when it comes to wild capture fish production. This results in transactional sex commonly known as "Jaboya" which is "sex for fish".

The recent outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic has resulted in the deaths of 863,000 people (as of 3rd September, 2020) globally. This has led to the suspension of most economic activities thus devastating people's means of livelihood and survival.

This has also adversely affected the livelihoods of women in the aquaculture value chain, informal settlements and low-income households. Additionally, this situation has led to children engaging in income-generating activities to support their families' survival.

To enable women, achieve their full potential Echo Network Africa developed an innovative financing model (Revolving Loan Fund). The Revolving Loan Fund provides financial resources for women to improve their participation in the aquaculture value chain, to amplify their voices, to restore their dignity and to bridge the financial gaps that hinder them from achieving their development goals.

The revolving loan fund has enabled 100 women in the four beaches (Kaugege, Litare, Wakula and Mrongo) to acquire and stock up fingerlings in the high density polyethylene (HDPE) cages. The Fund serves as a resource channel for women to get quality inputs such as Fish feeds. Additionally, ENA has ensured the women get timely extension services from the Ministry of Fisheries for monitoring progress and technical advice.

Girls In STEM Stakeholder Engagements

Youth Empowerment

ENA'S Youth Empowerment Focus Area engaged like-minded partners to a partner's forum. This was to discuss various ways of progressing and shaping up the Girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Initiative during this Covid period. The partners in the forum were Africa Youth Trust, Kamae Borstal Girls Institution, Mwelu Foundation and Kangaroo Community Care Kenya.

The key insights picked from the engagements highlighted that there is a shift in focus on how gender based STEM education is promoted among girls and young women. It was also noted that innovation and science literacy depends on a solid knowledge base in STEM areas. STEM education creates critical thinkers, increases science literacy and enables the next generation of innovators.

The forum also highlighted that Innovation leads to new products and processes that sustain our economy. Currently, scientific and technological innovations have become increasingly important as we face the benefits and challenges of both globalization and a knowledge-based economy.

The engagements also focused on young women in rehabilitation centers and how best to create a feeling of belonging and acceptance to these women despite their past transgressions.

Echo Network Africa through the Girls in STEM initiative thrives to propel young women and girls into spaces of influence and leadership in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields to challenge the gender stereotypes in STEM. The initiative will also bring together a pool of mentors to encourage the girls on the need to amplify their desires for pursuing STEM as a career.

The program also seeks to collaborate with like-minded stakeholders to address the issue of continuous poor performance in Mathematics and Sciences among girls in schools by revamping and growing Hesabu Clubs in schools and rehabilitation centers.

Going forward, the focus area will leverage on innovation and technology to enhance improved scores and ensure uptake and retention of girls and young women in Science, technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields.

EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

1. ENA Annual General Meeting.
2. Women's Space in Resource Sharing and Budget Making Workshop

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