

ENA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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SAY NO TO FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

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

On 6th February, 2021 we joined the world in celebrating the International day of Zero tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

FGM directly affects the health, education and economic advancements of girls and women in the society.

This is a dangerous practice that must be stopped to safeguard our future generations.

To promote the elimination of female genital mutilation, coordinated and systematic efforts are needed, and they must engage whole communities and focus on human rights, gender equality, sexual education and attention to the needs of women and girls who suffer from its consequences.

ENA's Girls Excel Initiative focuses on eradicating FGM, period poverty, teenage pregnancies and early marriages and promotes the learning of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects as an alternative rites of passage. This is because STEM fields in Kenya and the world over offer greater pay and job stability hence empowering girls and women.

It is in this regard that Echo Network Africa entered into a partnership agreement with Maasai Mara University to establish a framework for collaboration between the two institutions.

This was to mainstream sustainable women empowerment systems for a more equitable society. The key stakeholders for this initiative will be girls and women, students, parents, teachers, Maasai Mara University, school alumnus, local administration and the community at large.

“FGM directly affects the health, education and economic advancements of girls and women in the society.”

On Our Marks: Women Start Preparations for the 2022 General Elections

Positioning

Over Forty women from more than Twenty Counties attended a three days training on successful campaigning in readiness for participation in the 2022 General elections.

The Training themed, ***Running to Win Women's Pathways to Successful Campaigning*** was hosted jointly by the State Department for Gender and Echo Network Africa (ENA) with support from the UNWomen.

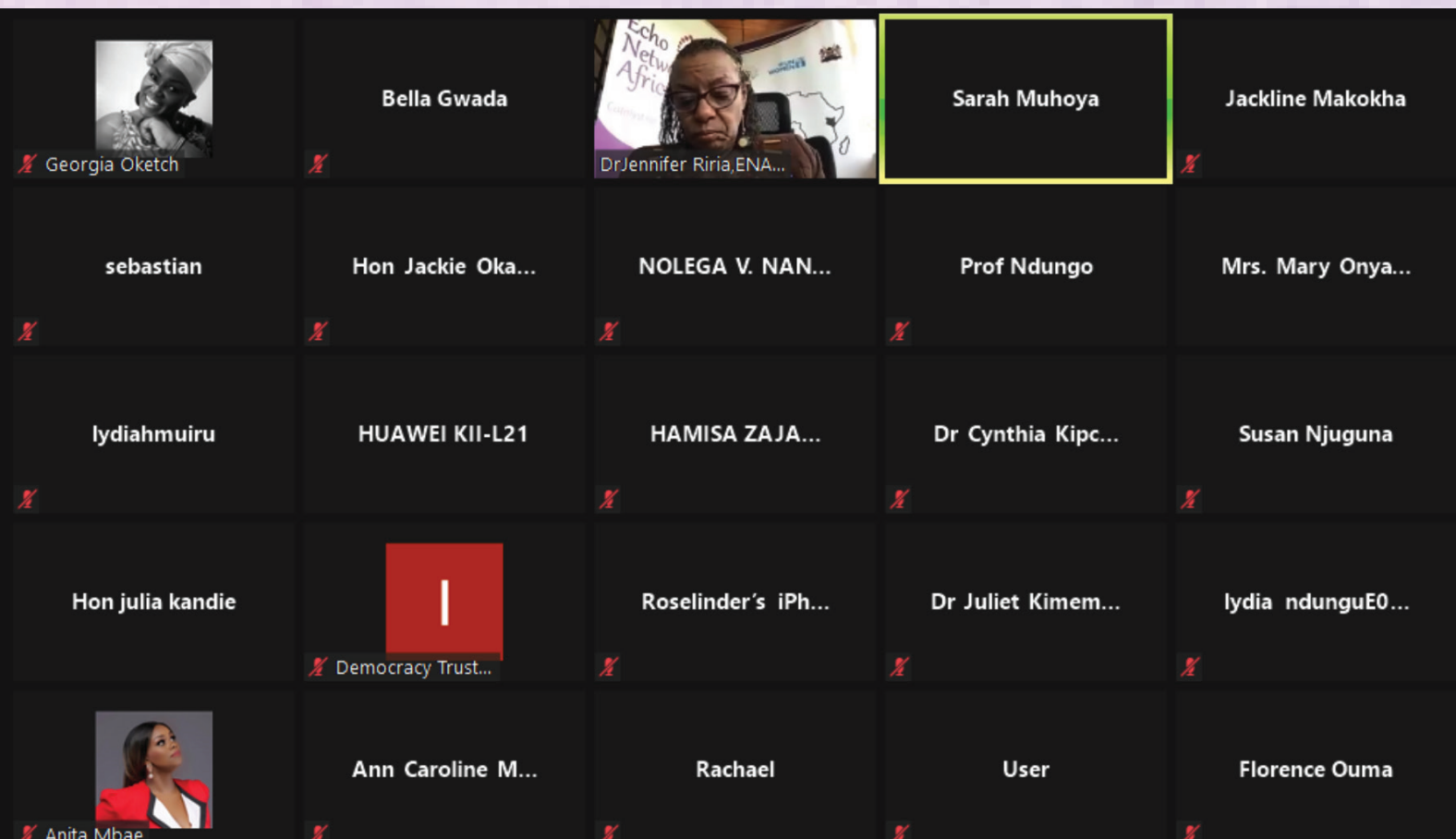
The Twenty Counties represented in the training included: Marsabit, Baringo, Siaya, Kakamega, Nyeri, Kiambu, Tharaka Nithi, Kisumu, Kilifi, Mombasa, Murang'a and Samburu among others.

In her Key note address, Dr. Jennifer Riria, urged the participants to embrace sisterhood in its global sense and to stand and be counted.

Dr. Riria further encouraged the participants to be resilient and to take advantage of the knowledge provided in the Running to win - Women's Pathways to successful campaigning program to edify and position them into political spaces.

The Training program aims at enhancing the capacities of women to participate in competitive politics especially in the 2022 General Elections in order to increase the number of women at all levels of political leadership.

A graduation ceremony is planned to take place during the International Women's Day (IWD) scheduled for 8th March 2021. Over 100 women trained in the Program are expected to graduate and enlist as aspirants for the forthcoming General Elections.



Running to win : Participants of the Women in Leadership Training program listening keenly during the Campaign and Execution Planning Session.

It's time for Action

Girls Excel Initiative

Kenya has had its share of retrogressive cultural beliefs that have promoted gender based violence against women. Some of the impunitive practices include Female Genital Mutilation, Early Child Marriages, violence and bullying just to mention but a few.

The promotion of STEM subjects through Hesabu clubs is one of the approaches that Echo Network Africa uses to achieve its mission under the Girls Excel Focus Area whose main goal is: To contribute towards the eradication of Female Genital Mutilation, Period Poverty, Teenage Pregnancies, Early marriages, and Accelerate the uptake of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) by girls in Kenya.

ENA is currently implementing a project funded by Aids Health Care Foundation in Homa Bay county. The project has so far impacted 492 adolescent teenage girls, 65 teenage and expectant mothers, and 110 parents/guardians in the community.

The project targets adolescent teenage mothers, adolescent teenage girls, parents' guardians in the four identified beaches in Homa Bay county namely Mrongo, Kaugege, Wakula, and Litare. The aim of the project is to create awareness of preventive measures on teenage pregnancies, self-esteem issues while exploring possibilities of accelerating school re-entry in teenage and expectant teenage mothers.



Empowering the Girl Child : Adolescent girls in Mrongo, Homa Bay county are taken through a mentorship class during a recent Girls Excel Mentorship session.

ENA's catalytic role is amplified by working with Local Implementing Partners (LIPs) on the ground. Currently, there are two LIPs in Homa Bay county implementing the planned activities i.e. Gembe Retired Teachers Association and Mfangano Paralegal Community-based Association.

Eradicating the Jaboya Practice

Women Empowerment

The first phase of the Aquaculture cluster model ended in February 2021. Echo Network Africa successfully implemented the project in Homa Bay County with support from Open Society Foundation.

To achieve this, ENA leveraged on its past experience in aquaculture by enhancing sustainable livelihoods and increasing meaningful participation of women in the aquaculture value chain.

ENA then developed Gender responsive charters at the Beach Management Units and conducted community dialogues to help reduce human rights violations along the aquaculture value chain.

The initiative has helped over 100 women who are engaged mainly as traders along the aquaculture value chain. This has aided in cushioning the women from exploitation by fishermen who have a higher bargaining power when it comes to wild capture fish production.

ENA uses Anchor Cluster Model, where women already practicing cage fish farming are empowered as champions to mentor other women engaging in the fishing activity.

The project targeted four clusters comprising of 25 women each in Litare, Wakula, Kaugege and Mrongo beaches in Homa Bay County.

The women were trained on aquaculture cage farming in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries. They were also trained on Entrepreneurship and Financial literacy to help them engage in aquaculture as a business enterprise that will generate income for their families.

Through this Initiative, ENA envisions to move the women from not only being traders of fish but producers of fish along the aquaculture value chain. The women will also be empowered economically to support their families through the livelihood income that will cater for their needs. The second phase of the initiative is set to commence in March.

ACTIVITIES IN MARCH

1. International Womens Day

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Help prevent the spread of coronavirus

 1 Clean your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol based hand rub	 2 Cough or sneeze in your flexed elbow	 3 Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
 4 Avoid crowded spaces and limit social gatherings	 5 Always wear a face mask when you leave the house	 6 If you are unwell or showing signs of COVID-19 infection, visit your nearest hospital

#ENAcared #flattenthecurve