

# ENA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MAY 2021 ISSUE

## ADVOCATING FOR GENDER INCLUSIVITY



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### Word from the Group CEO

#### ENA Engages Male Champions In Advocating For Women's Rights Issues



Dr. Jennifer N. Riria  
PhD, EBS, MBS, HRH/  
Goodwill Ambassador,  
ICON/HP, Chairperson  
AWLN committee.

Group CEO, ENA

This month Echo Network Africa feted Hon. Raphael Tuju, Jubilee party Secretary General with the Gender Warrior award in Serena Hotel on Thursday 6th May 2021.

The award recognizes men who champion the rights of women in society and come on board over issues regarding gender rights.

Hon. Raphael Tuju bagged the gender rights champion award because of his outstanding credentials as a consistent advocate for gender equality dating back to three decades. His work of art was fighting against violence and violation of women's rights and dishonoring of women's bodies.



**HONGERA!** Hon. Raphael Tuju (2nd Left) receives a Gender Warrior Award as ( L-R) Hon. Beatrice Elachi (Chief Administrative Secretary , Ministry of Public Service and Gender); Dr Jennifer Riria ( Group CEO ENA); Phyllis Obonyo ( Chief of Party SADES-K) and Elizabeth Odongo look on.

The Gender Rights Award and Certificate of Recognition presented to Hon. Raphael Tuju by Echo Network Africa for fighting against violence and violation of women's rights.



The award was conferred to Hon. Raphael Tuju by Echo Network Africa in collaboration with Safeguarding Democratic Space in Kenya. ENA recognizes that it is very vital for men to come on board and advocate for women's right issues. The time is now for men to become allies to women and engage in gender inclusive programs.

Gender balance can only be achieved if men work side by side with women to share the responsibility in breaking harmful cultural norms and practices such as female genital mutilation, as well as the institutional,

structural and legal barriers that hinder women's equal participation in the society.

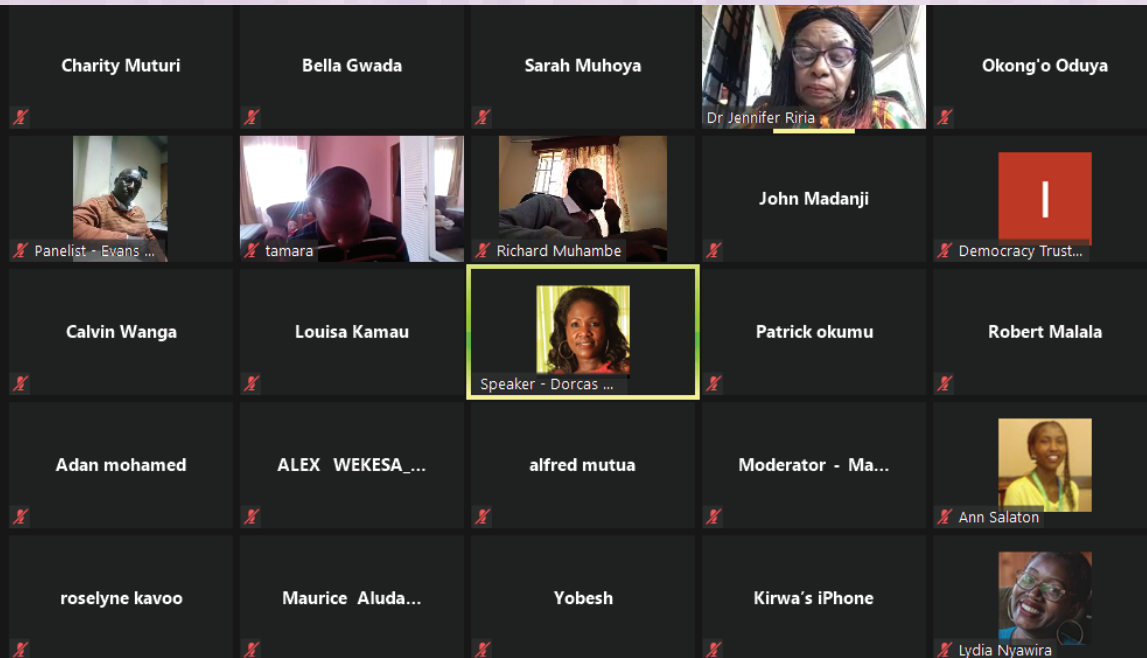
Proactive work by male champions, in partnership with women, is necessary to establish an environment that empowers women's participation at all levels of decision-making.

**“ENA recognizes that it is very vital for men to come on board and advocate for women's right issues. The time is now for men to become allies to women and engage in gender inclusive programs.”**



# Deepen Reporting on Gender Issues Challenging the World, Media Practitioners Urged By ENA!

Members of the fourth estate were encouraged to deepen reporting on gender issues challenging the world on Thursday May 27th, 2021. The call was made during a virtual journalists' forum convened by Echo Network Africa in collaboration with Safeguarding Democratic Space in Kenya. Over 60 Journalists from different media houses in the country were present in the forum including the Nation Media Group Gender editor, Dorcas Muga and the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation Managing Editor Graham Kirwa.



ENA educates over 60 journalists on deepening reporting on gender issues challenging the world on 27th May 2021

‘We draw a lot of strength from your writing and reporting. Report from a gender lens,’ said ENA Group CEO Dr. Jennifer Riria. She urged the members of the fourth estate to be mindful, sensitive and intentional in what they report to the public. Dr. Riria reminded the journalists that their responsibility as gate keepers is to inform, educate and entertain.

Nation Media Group Gender editor, Dorcas Muga encouraged the journalists to champion for representative coverage of women issues and push for gender balance in the news bylines.

She also reiterated on the importance of identifying blind spots in gender stories. ‘Let us take advantage of the online media and change the narrative of gender reporting,’ said Dorcas. She challenged participants of the forum to champion for fair reporting and identify diverse story angles featuring women.

Also present at the forum was the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation Managing Editor, Graham Kirwa. He promised to champion for objective reporting especially on the women’s agenda. He also added that fair gender portrayal in news items is something that he will push for in his media house. Graham also reminded the journalists that their aim when reporting should be to impact the society positively.

The journalists also added that some of the challenges that they encountered while reporting included customary laws, censorship and lack of political goodwill.

It was noted that in order to bridge the gap in gender reporting; editors must have a good understanding that gender issues require more prominence, there should be balanced representation of both men and women in news items and that women should be reported in the male dominant fields.

# ENA Empowers Women in Samburu and Marsabit Counties!

ENA's Women Empowerment focus area is a catalyst for development that propels the empowerment agenda by collaborating with Local Implementing Partners (LIPs) to develop and innovate viable initiatives that enable women to advance their security and prosperity.

The focus area's goal is to enhance sustainable livelihoods and empowerment of rural women and their families. Majority of the poor in society are women due to cultural norms and values, gendered division of assets and power dynamics between men and women. Indeed, women and girls bear an unequal burden of unpaid domestic responsibilities and are overrepresented in informal and precarious jobs.

Women also possess inherent agency and knowledge that is overlooked by policy-makers as they form and implement poverty reduction plans. Development interventions continue to be based on the idea that men are breadwinners and women are dependents. We also see that women in marginalized communities are more disadvantaged than women in urban communities.

This is due to lack of education, access to information and financial resources to necessitate them to compete competitively. It is in this regard that ENA through the Women Empowerment focus area has reached out to empower women in the marginalized communities in Wamba in Samburu County and Kalacha and Maikona in Marsabit County. Most of the women in these two counties lack access to finance facilities and have to travel long distances to access these facilities.

This month ENA trained 30 women groups on business management and empowered them with idea generation on income. This was to help the women improve their livelihoods and enhance meaningful participation of women in wealth creation. ENA also brought together financial institutions such Kenya Women Micro Finance Bank, Solutions Sacco and Transnational Sacco to deliberate on possible financial solutions for the women. Echo Network Africa will continue collaborating with likeminded partners to improve access to finance and empower the women in the hard to reach communities.

**“The focus area's goal is to enhance sustainable livelihoods and empowerment of rural women and their families.”**



**Women Empowerment :** Women in Marsabit County are trained on Business Management by Echo Network Africa to help them acquire financial independence





A cohort of 30 trained women pose for a group photo in Marsabit County after completion of their Business management training facilitated by Echo Network Africa.

## ENA Supports School Retention of Expectant and Lactating Teenage Girls in Kithangari Girls Secondary School.

In 2018, ENA through the Girls Excel initiative set out to address the twin problems of teenage pregnancies and poor performance in Mathematics and Sciences subjects among girls in schools.

Through a rapid survey to establish the status of uptake, retention and performance in STEM subjects as well as the rate of teenage pregnancies, the initiative identified Kithangari Girls Secondary School as the pilot for the initiative.

Hesabu club was also launched in the school to help address the poor performance of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects.

The initiative has evolved over the years to be ENA's second incubation: To catalyze acceptance and commitment by communities in the target areas towards the eradication of

Female Genital Mutilation, Period Poverty, Teenage Pregnancies and Early Marriages through accelerating the performance and uptake of STEM subjects among girls.

This month, ENA held a virtual meeting with the leadership of Kithangari girls secondary school to review the 2020 STEM performance, discuss the impact and emerging issues/challenges of the established Hesabu club and to discuss the status of the prevalence of teenage pregnancies, early marriages, period poverty and school reintegration of teen mothers.

‘These girls require hope and continuous hand holding through mentorship, that is the only way we can increase performance and build lasting legacies. ENA has been a crucial enabler in creating these legacies,’ said Mrs. Lucy Gitau, Principal Githangari Girls secondary school.

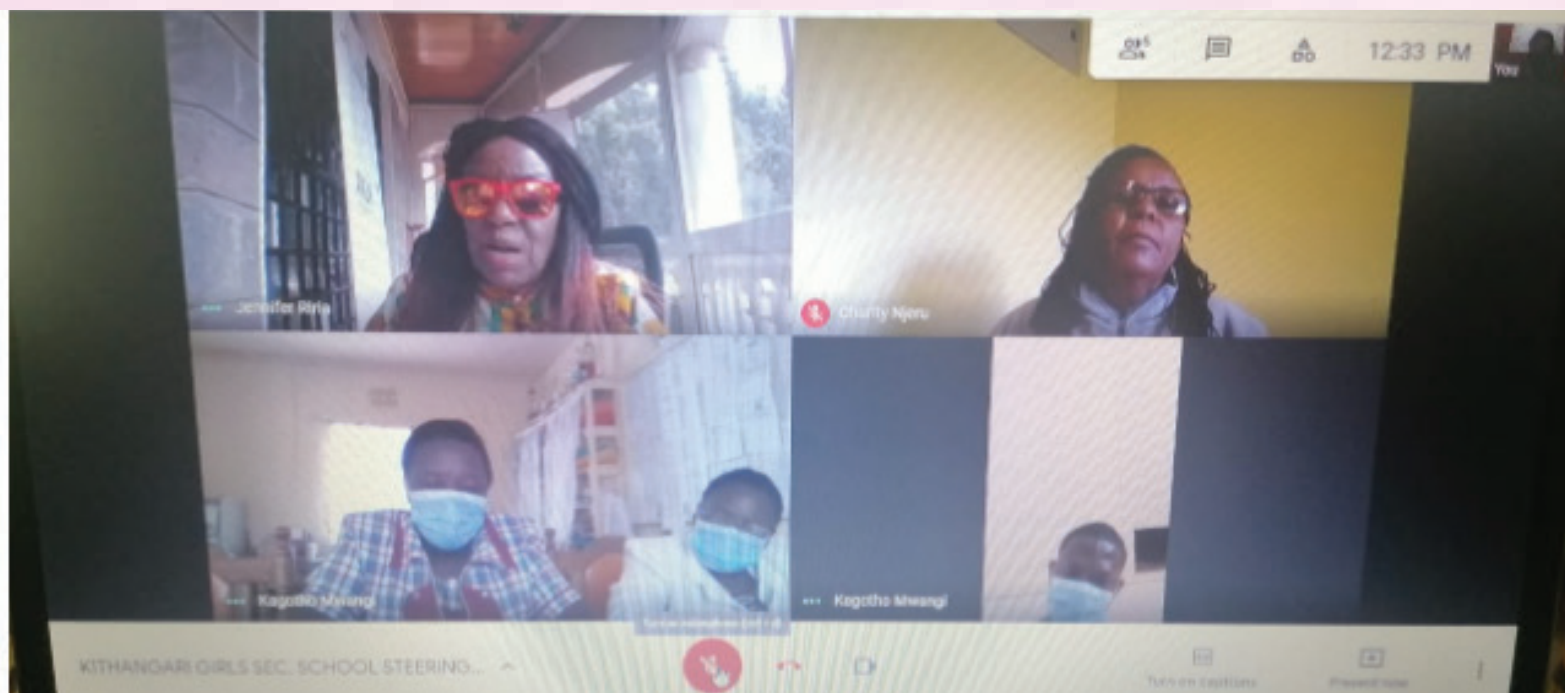
It was noted that ENA was a crucial catalyst for development and aided the girls in improving their performance and attitudes towards STEM subjects. It was also observed that the girls who participated in the Hesabu clubs performed better than those who weren't members of the club.

Kithangari Girls Secondary School is a centre for excellence in supporting school integration for adolescent teenage mothers. During the recently ended 2020 KCSE examinations, one pregnant teen girl gave birth during the examination period. The school supported the girl's delivery and post-natal processes.

The school matron hosted the girl, her new born baby and her caretaker during the exam period. It was agreed that moving forward the school should leverage on technological advancements for continued mentorship and Hesabu club activities, engage high profile women to provide mentorship to girls and that ENA would support the school to come up with an innovative model of assisting breastfeeding girls to attend school such as establishing a crèche.

'This is an uncomfortable task but it has to be done if we want to see girls take up positions of leadership and influence in the society, I believe we are planting small seeds now that will produce great harvest in future,' said Dr. Jennifer Riria, ENA Group CEO.

“These girls require hope and continuous hand holding through mentorship, that is the only way we can increase performance and build lasting legacies. ENA has been a crucial enabler in creating these legacies.”



Echo Network Africa and Kithangari Girls Secondary school hold a virtual meeting to discuss the 2020 STEM Performance.



# Involving CSOs in Gender Policy Development!



A total of 22 participants representing 18 local organizations were trained by Echo Network Africa on gender Mainstreaming and integrating gender perspectives into county policies in Samburu County.

*'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together' - Traditional Africa Proverb*

Echo Network Africa (ENA) with support from European Commission through AMREF embarked on building the capacity of the CSOs to ensure that they can effectively advocate for gender equality policies and gender mainstreaming in all governance systems and practices in the Counties of Samburu and Marsabit.

Samburu and Marsabit record 0.66 and 0.69 respectively, representing relevant gaps in relation to health, education, economics and politics whereas the Kenyan national equality index stands at 0.55. This has been attributed to the fact that Samburu and Marsabit communities are patriarchal as women and girls are not involved in decision making process. It is for this reason that the two counties commissioned for the development of the County Gender Policy.

The County Gender Policies will provide a foundation and guidelines to promote the principle of non-discrimination as provided by the constitution. This will ensure representation, participation and inclusivity of all regardless of sex, race, language, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status in the management of County affairs. ENA is keen to ensure that the Gender Policies for the two counties are passed and enacted to pave way for the implementation. Majority of the Counties in Kenya have not been able to achieve full inclusion as envisaged in the Constitution.

Many counties are still unable to provide equal opportunities for the Special Interest Groups. Gender responsiveness within the counties still remains a challenge due to patriarchal and persistent gender norms. Issues such as FGM, SGBV, Early Child Marriages and Forced Marriages are still high in the Counties affecting women and girls adversely.

To address these gaps and provide policy actions, County are required to develop County Gender policies to set up structures and processes that will ensure issues affecting marginalised and vulnerable groups are addressed and implementation of the constitutional provisions are done at County level. Article 27 (4) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010, spells out the rights and protections of all people; women, children, persons with disabilities, youth, minority and the marginalized groups and older members of the society.

This month, Echo Network Africa also trained local CSOs in Samburu and Marsabit counties on gender mainstreaming and integrating gender perspectives into policies. This is in a bid to ensure that their capacity is enhanced to effectively engage with the County Governments on county policies to ensure they are gender responsive.

The collective action of the CSOs is to ensure that the county policies are not gender blind while ensuring that the bill of rights is upheld by the County Governments including economic and social rights.





The Jennifer Riria Hub is an ultra-modern, state of the art facility developed by Echo Network Africa (ENA). Located at the junction of Tom Mboya and Kipchoge Keino road in Nakuru County. The Hub has 400 shops and 210 parking slots (187 internal parking slots and 23 external parking slots) making it the perfect and hustle free place for shopping, business, indoor and outdoor events.

### ANCHOR TENANT SPACE AVAILABLE

15,700.05 Sqft (GROUND FLOOR)  
&  
7,640.29 Sqft (Upper GROUND FLOOR)

### OTHER SPACES AVAILABLE

Offices, Banking Hall,  
Food Court- Restaurants,  
Speciality Stores, etc.

### KEY FEATURES

24 hrs CCTV security system, Ample parking, Standby generator, Sufficient water supply, Lift access to all floors, Easy access & exit Ample toilet facilities, Good access roads

**Book Now**

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