

ECHO NETWORK AFRICA NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2024



GUIDE

Pg 1-8.....Highlights

Pg 9.....The Jennifer Riria Hub

— HIGHLIGHTS —

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ZERO TOLERANCE FOR FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION A Journey of Redemption: Vionah Koyiaso's story of Overcoming Adversity

Girls Excel Initiative



Vionah Koyiaso, a Kenyatta University student at ENA offices on 25th January during the recording day of a feature story which reflected her experiences from obnoxious cultural practices such as FGM.

On International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, which is marked globally on 6th February annually, Echo Network Africa in collaboration with Nation Media Group hosted a gender feature, shedding light on a narrative of redemption amidst adversity. The feature captured the journey of Vionah Koyiaso, a young woman from Oloshaiki, Narok County, whose resilience and determination triumphed over the shadows of her past.

Vionah's story began in the intricate folds of a polygamous family where her father Suru Shani, faced with difficult choices, accepted a marriage proposal for his teenage daughter; intended to replace her deceased sister.

With the unwavering support of her mother, Vionah embarked on a courageous journey to escape this fate, seeking refuge in a distant village.

Despite the challenges she faced, including her father's persistent attempts to thwart her education and force her into marriage as well as undergo Female Genital Mutilation, Vionah found solace in her mother's steadfastness and the protection of her aunt. The feature vividly depicted the turmoil within the family, exacerbated by societal pressures and entrenched cultural norms.

Amidst the discord and strife however, a glimmer of hope emerged as Vionah's father, confronted with the consequences of his actions, embarked on a journey of reconciliation. Recognizing the importance of education and the empowerment of his daughter, he eventually supported her academic pursuits, albeit after years of resistance.

Vionah's perseverance bore fruit as she excelled in her studies, culminating in her admission to Kenyatta University, a milestone not only for her but for her entire family. Her forgiveness towards her father symbolized a poignant reconciliation, underscoring the transformative power of compassion and understanding.

Vionah's journey serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration, illuminating the path towards gender equality and the eradication of harmful practices such as FGM. Her resilience, coupled with her father's eventual support, exemplifies the potential for positive change within communities.

As the world marked the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, Vionah's story resonated as a testament to the triumph of the human spirit over adversity, offering a ray of hope for a future free from gender-based violence and discrimination.

ENA leads Ntulele Narok East as it commemorates International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM with an Urgent Call to Action



Community dialogue in Ntulele, Narok East. The event was graced by officials from County Government (the Ministry of Health, OCS, Police Officer in-charge of the Gender desk, Chief and local religious leaders) who emphasized the need to eradicate FGM, teenage pregnancy, early and forced marriages.

Still on the matters of FGM, there was a communal and powerful display of solidarity and commitment to end harmful practices against women and girls in Ntulele, Narok East on 6th February 2024.

The community dialogue, hosted at a local venue, was graced by officials from the County Government, including representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Officer Commanding Station (OCS), the Police Officer in charge of the Gender Desk, the Chief as well as local religious leaders. Their united front emphasized the urgency of eradicating FGM alongside teenage pregnancies and early forced marriages, which continue to plague communities.

Speakers underscored the importance of collective action and community-led initiatives in addressing these deeply-ingrained issues.

The event provided a platform for open dialogue and discussion, allowing community members to share their perspectives and experiences. Participants engaged in constructive conversations about the root causes of FGM and the societal norms that perpetuate its continuation.

Local religious leaders also played a crucial role in advocating for change, emphasizing the importance of promoting values of equality, respect and dignity within their congregations.

In addition to raising awareness, the dialogue focused on practical solutions and interventions to address the underlying factors contributing to FGM, teenage pregnancy and early marriages. Participants discussed the importance of education, access to healthcare, and economic empowerment for women and girls to assert their rights and make informed choices about their bodies and futures.

As the event concluded, there was a resounding call to action for continued collaboration and commitment from all sectors of society to bring about meaningful change.

The community dialogue served as a poignant reminder of the power of unity and shared purpose in driving positive social change, in addition to commitment towards building a safer, more equitable future for all.

ENA Foundation President/CEO Dr. Jennifer Riria and ABSA Sarit Centre team extend support to Kavoo Primary School in Kitui West

Benevolence



Dr. Jennifer Riria, the Patron of Jennifer Foundation and President/CEO ENA Foundation and 12 team members of ABSA Sarit Centre headed by the Branch Manager - Catherine Odawa at Kavoo Primary School in Kitui West.

In a heartwarming display of community engagement and generosity, Dr. Jennifer Riria, the Patron of Jennifer Foundation and President/CEO of Echo Network Africa Foundation, joined forces with a team of twelve members from ABSA Sarit Centre, led by Branch Manager Catherine Odawa, to make a meaningful impact at Kavoo Primary School in Kitui West.

The day-long initiative saw the collective efforts of the Jennifer Foundation and ABSA Sarit Centre team as they provided support to the students of Kavoo Primary School. Alongside offering counseling sessions, the team distributed essential food items and treated the students to snacks, brightening their day and lifting their spirits.

Moreover, the Jennifer Foundation in collaboration with other well-wishers pledged to address a crucial need: access to clean water. Driven by their commitment to making a lasting difference, plans were set in motion to sink a borehole that would not only benefit the school but also the wider community, ensuring access to safe and clean water for all.

Recognizing the unique challenges faced by young girls, the Foundation also took a proactive step by providing girls at Kavoo Primary School with Dignity Packs, designed to meet their feminine hygiene needs throughout the year; empowering them to stay in school and pursue their education with confidence.

Dr. Jennifer Riria expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of the students and community members.

Branch Manager Catherine Odawa echoed Dr. Riria's sentiments, emphasizing the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility and community involvement.

As the day came to a close, the atmosphere at Kavoo Primary School was filled with gratitude and hope for a brighter future. The collaboration between the Jennifer Foundation and ABSA Sarit Centre exemplified the power of collective action and underscored the importance of coming together to support those in need to leave a lasting legacy.

Future Hope Africa explores partnership with ENA Foundation for regional growth

Peace and Conflict Resolution



A team from Future Hope Africa led by the Founder and Executive Director Nabintu Mujambere paid a courtesy call to ENA office. Future Hope Africa is a Christian-based charity organization based in Bukavu, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In a bid to foster collaboration and expand their humanitarian efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Future Hope Africa a Christian-based charity organization led by its Founder and Executive Director Nabintu Mujambere, on 8th February 2024 engaged in discussions with the the Kenya Country Director Mrs Lizzie Chongoti and Judy Munene the Programme Manager, Peace and Conflict Resolution..

The meeting which was held at the ENA offices, aimed to explore potential avenues of partnership as both organizations share a common goal of uplifting communities through education, entrepreneurship and environmental stewardship.

Future Hope Africa that's headquartered in Bukavu, has been actively involved in various initiatives including: free after-school tutoring, providing scholarships from grade school to college, nurturing faith and character development among students and supporting young entrepreneurs through business training and microloan financing.

Mr Mujambere highlighted the organization's commitment to empowering the youth and foster sustainable development in the region.

The ENA Foundation which has been known for its philanthropic endeavors in the region, expressed keen interest in collaborating with Future Hope Africa to leverage their combined resources and expertise for greater impact.

As part of the discussion, both parties explored potential areas of cooperation including: joint educational programmes, mentorship initiatives for young entrepreneurs, and environmental conservation projects.

With Future Hope Africa already registered as a charity organization in the USA, the partnership with ENA Foundation signifies a strategic move towards broader outreach and collaborative action in addressing the socio-economic challenges facing the region.

As they chart a path forward, both organizations remain optimistic about the positive impact they can collectively achieve in the DRC, Africa and beyond.

Echo Network Africa's AquaCulture Initiative radiates at HOBIIIC Conference

Financial Inclusion/Community Resilience & Livelihoods



Echo Network Africa was privileged to host Hon. Gladys Wanga - Governor of Homa Bay County, accompanied by Governor Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o and Hon. Kenneth Lusaka at the ENA exhibition booth, on the third and final day of Homa Bay International Investment Conference (HOBIIIC).

On-screen Exhibition

Echo Network Africa showcased her innovative AquaCulture Initiative at the Homa Bay International Investment Conference (HOBIIIC) whose theme was "Unlocking the Bay of Endless Potential." The event which was held at Tom Mboya University brought together various national, regional and international stakeholders, provided a platform to highlight the organization's efforts in promoting sustainable aquaculture systems in Homa Bay County.

Echo Network Africa's exhibition booth that was strategically positioned right after the HOBIIIC Secretariat stand had a high foot traffic that allowed for extensive engagement with attendees who were eager to learn about the organization's initiatives.

In addition to showcasing the different Programme Centers, Echo Network Africa featured on-screen mini-documentaries, providing insights into its aquaculture projects. Live demonstrations were also a highlight of the exhibition, with Rose and Nancy from

Mrongo Women Group on Mfangano Island showcasing fish end-products. Ms. Akongo Ongaro from the Kaugege Women Group and Ms. Esther Auma Otieno from Litare Women Group both from Rusinga Island also demonstrated their expertise in aquaculture techniques.

The demonstrations not only provided practical insights, but also served as a testament to the impact of Echo Network Africa's initiatives in empowering local communities; particularly women's groups to actively participate in aquaculture ventures.

The presence of Echo Network Africa at HOBIIIC underscored the organization's commitment to harnessing the vast potential of Aquaculture to drive economic growth and promote sustainable development in Homa Bay County. As stakeholders explored opportunities for investment and collaboration, Echo Network Africa stood out as an exemplary example of innovation and empowerment in the region.

Kenya takes a massive stride towards Gender Equality

Democracy Trust Fund



CS Aisha Jumwa in receipt of the report of the Multisectoral Working Group on the realization of the two thirds gender rule

On 23rd February 2024, Hon. Aisha Jumwa Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Culture, the Arts and Heritage presided over a significant milestone in Kenya's journey towards gender parity. Report of the Multisectoral Working Group (MSWG) on the realization of the two-thirds gender rule appointed on 15th August 2023, was presented.

The MSWG after extensive deliberations, put forth a groundbreaking proposal: lifting of Article 177b to align the Country with Constitutional Provisions on Gender Representation. Additionally, the team recommended a series of constitutional and legislative amendments to the Constitution of Kenya 2010 to ensure full compliance with its gender-related mandates.

This marks the 15th concerted effort to address the crucial issue of the two-thirds gender rule, underscoring the nation's commitment to upholding constitutional imperatives.

The appointment of the MSWG was spurred by a memorandum from The President of the Republic of Kenya H.E. Dr. William Ruto, urging the 13th Parliament to expedite the implementation of gender equality measures.

The Report will now be forwarded to Parliament for decisive action, in accordance with recommendations from the National Authority for the Advancement of Gender Equality (NADCO). Notably, Echo Network Africa played a pivotal role in the MSWG process, with Ms. Sarah Muhoya representing the organization in this historic endeavor through the Democracy Trust Fund.

Kenya stands at a crucial juncture, poised to make significant strides towards gender equality and representation; with the potential to set a powerful example for the region and beyond. Well in!

Ms. Selina Kandie Farewell party



ENA Board of Directors and Senior Management staff members at the farewell party of Ms. Selina Kandie.

Left to right: Ms. Verity Nyagah, Ms. Ursula Sore-Bahati, Dr. Nyambura Koigi, Ms. Selina Kandie, Dr. Jennifer Riria, Ms. Jennifer Kamande, Mrs. Lizzie Chongoti, and Ms. Elina Mutuku



Ms Selina Kandie
Outgoing Board Member



Dr. Nyambura Koigi
Chair-ENA Board of Directors.



Dr. Jennifer Riria
President & CEO, ENA Foundation



21st February 2024 - Wellness Check for ENA staff by Avenue Junction, facilitated by Talent Development and Administration Anchor Centre Team.



TO LET



The Jennifer Riria Hub is an ultra-modern, state of the art facility developed by Echo Network Africa. Its design is inspired by the strength, character and gait of the African Woman. The JR Hub is located in the heart of Nakuru City at the junction of Tom Mboya and Kipchoge Keino roads. It is strategically positioned to provide a serene environment for its clientele.

The JR Hub is the perfect and hustle free place for shopping, business, dining, banking and hosting indoor and outdoor events. Key features include good access roads, 24 hour CCTV surveillance, ample parking space, sufficient water supply, lift access to all floors, easy access and exit to the mall and ample clean sanitary facilities.

We are currently looking for an Anchor Tenant. Other spaces available *To Let* include: food court spaces, banking hall and speciality stores. Don't be left out!

To Book a Space Call: +254 722 546 124