



UON WEE HUB NEWSLETTER



MOTTO: Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment through African Women Centered Research, policy change and collaboration with women's organizations, policy makers and other stakeholders.

INITIATIVES FOR WHAT WORKS FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (IWWEE)

MESSAGE FROM THE UON WEE HUB LEADER



Greetings from the University of Nairobi Women's Economic Empowerment Hub.

Welcome to Volume 1, Issue 3 of the UoN WEE Hub Newsletter.

The WEE Hub is committed, through research on entrepreneurship and employment to generate data that supports continuous evidence-based development of knowledge in the area of employment creation that informs policy decisions by policy makers and interventions by stakeholders. To this end, the African Women Studies Centre (AWSC) UoN WEE Hub has published two reports in this area. The first one being *Women in the Labour Force in Kenya: A Focus on Employment and Entrepreneurship* and the second one which was done in collaboration with the Kenya National Treasury was *Assessing what Works for Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) in the Implementation of Kenya's Credit Guarantee Scheme* <http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/handle/11295/163759>

On the other hand, the impact of our Incubation Project continues to grow as we carry on with data collection and analysis as part of the project

monitoring process. The research evidence illuminates what works for women's economic empowerment and is utilized by policy makers and other stakeholders in decision making and project interventions. Our African Women's Incubation model continues to shed light on the challenges women in Micro, Small and Medium

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According to the Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA), MSMEs contribute to over 90% of the total labour force in Kenya, thus contributing to the reduction of poverty and positively influencing economic growth.



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As we embark on a new financial year beginning in September, we are geared towards contributing to transformational efforts by creating and supporting meaningful and rigorous research that supports women's economic empowerment.

Enterprises (MSMEs) face as individual women entrepreneurs as well as for women's collectives business. Many actors have ventured into this sector because of the recognition by the Government and other stakeholders that growing the sector offers a solution to mitigating unemployment and poverty as well as growing the economy. According to the Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA), MSMEs contribute to over 90% of the total labour force in Kenya, thus contributing to the reduction of poverty and positively influencing economic growth. The Report indicates that the MSMEs employ over 14.9 million Kenyans in various sectors of the economy, hence the need to rethink the concept of employment.

Access to the Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) which is a key government program with great potential for women's economic empowerment, needs to be unlocked. AGPO is one of the most creative programs initiated by president Kibaki in 2011 through a presidential directive and whose guiding regulations were launched in 2013. This program has the potential to revolutionize the

WEE sector, thus the WEE Hub, in collaboration with the National Treasury and the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) are conducting high-level consultations aimed at finding solutions to unlocking this potential. The AGPO study by the Hub targets to establish how the program's aims of increasing employment, promoting local industries and use of technology can deliver for women, the youth and persons living with disability.

As we focus on specific areas on WEE, the WEE Hub of the African Women Studies Centre (AWSC) continues its Policy Advocacy program through rapid response and public participation on areas critical to women's empowerment. So far, we have developed and submitted memoranda on policies related to the following:

- i. Climate Change (Amendment) Bill (2023)
- ii. Public Finance Management Bill (2023)
- iii. Community Health Workers Bill (2022)
- iv. Finance Bill (2023)
- v. Assisted Reproductive Technology Bill (2022)
- vi. Community Health Services Bill (2023)
- vii. Supplementary Budget (2022/2023)
- viii. Learners with Disabilities Bill (2023)
- ix. Busia County 2023/2024 Budget Estimates and Mid-Term Expenditures for Financial Year 2023/2024.

As we embark on a new financial year beginning in September, we are geared towards contributing to transformational efforts by creating and supporting meaningful and rigorous research that supports women's economic empowerment. The African Women Studies Centre had the opportunity to engage with different partners to strengthen our newly launched program on Climate Action, Environment and Biodiversity.

We invite you to continue supporting our quest to accentuate women's economic empowerment and to contribute to our discourse and gender equality as we continue to monitor the impact of our childcare project in Busia and complete the AGPO study.

Prof Wanjiku Mukabi Kabira,
University of Nairobi WEE Hub Leader and
Director, African Women Studies Centre



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH

In this issue of the Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Hub Newsletter, I reflect on the role of partnerships in the sustainability of women's economic empowerment projects and the attainment of gender equality in Kenya and beyond.

The WEE Hub has played a central role in initiating partnerships and leveraging our multi-disciplinary approach for improved outcomes and impact of WEE related interventions. Our four-pronged approach encompasses evaluating what works to promote WEE, disseminating generated evidence while advocating for evidence uptake, supporting existing institutions in the evidence ecosystem, and providing technical assistance to build capacity for evidence generation and use.

Partnerships have been critical in widening our scope of interventions in the reach and diversity of those who access and utilize the research evidence we generate. In the implementation of Women in Business Incubation Project, partnership with the private sector, civil society and government has helped to catalyse resources in the adoption of technology training for value addition of products. The collaborations provide an opportunity for transformational, responsible, inclusive, and sustainable change which leads to learning and accountability by government, civil society, and business enterprises.

In the fourth year of the implementation of our program beginning in September, our focus shall tilt to intensive monitoring of the projects initiated since the inception of the program in 2020. We will be testing, monitoring, and evaluating evidence produced through research while utilizing innovative ways of promoting women's economic empowerment and gender equality in Kenya. These evaluations will aid in the measurement of achievement of our results, project outcomes and impacts.

Enhanced dissemination is also a critical area of focus in the New Year. We shall enhance knowledge

sharing to promote the uptake of research evidence for informed interventions and policy development. We have been doing this through partnership with relevant government departments, civil society, the women's movement, researchers, and academics working on WEE around the four program areas. Through the Networking and Alliance Building for Women's Economic Empowerment (NABWEE): <https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/affirmative-action-funds-and-entrepreneurship> we have facilitated the development of critical discourse on WEE by establishing and utilizing the data generated by the Hub and other partners.

Our research findings are available through the University of Nairobi digital repository (<http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/handle/11295/155053>) WEE Hub website publications (<https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/publications>), policy briefs (<https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/policy-briefs>) and also through thematic areas as follows:

i. Affirmative Action Funds and Entrepreneurship <https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/affirmative-action-funds-and-entrepreneurship>

ii. Women in Formal and Informal Business: <https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/women-formal-and-informal-employment>

iii. Care Economy and Women's Economic Empowerment: <https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/care-economy-and-womens-economic-empowerment>, and

iv. Women's Movement and Policy Advocacy for WEE: <https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/womens-movement-and-policy-advocacy-womens-economic-empowerment-wee>

I encourage you to access these reports and utilize the findings to inform advocacy and WEE related interventions as we identify gaps that undermine the acceleration of scaling of initiatives for WEE.

Dr. Mary Mbithi

Director of Research UoN WEE Hub



MESSAGE FROM THE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION COORDINATOR

Welcome to the Women's Economic Empowerment Hub third issue 2023 Newsletter, where we present another compilation of

interconnected brushstrokes on our ever-evolving tapestry of empowerment.

We meet again to embark on this reading journey, where each article stands as a thread in the fabric of our growth story.

We open with stories of collaboration, deepened understanding, and reshaped narratives, such as the one of our studies in collaboration with the AGPO Secretariat team intended to answer questions around the underwhelming uptake of the program and hoping to come up with solutions and strategies to improve the uptake. Moreover, we make use of Feminist Epistemologies to develop our own framework for Feminist Epistemology for women's economic empowerment in a concerted effort to reshape women's narratives through the AWSC's collaboration with Vital Voices Engage through a recently held forum at the University of Nairobi.

Next, we delve into discussions between the AWSC and the Commonwealth Secretariat, where a shared goal propels collaboration: the need for both entities to contribute to discourse on women's participation in climate action initiatives. This is followed by a brief on the WEE Hub's transformative Women in Business (WBI) project which is incubating 320 individual enterprises and seventeen women's collectives.

Recognizing the pivotal role of technology training in the empowerment process, we share insights into a series of value addition training programs initiated by the WEE Hub, such as the fish value addition training program in Kisumu County, honey and cassava value addition training with women's groups at the Coast and banana value addition training in Tharaka Nithi and Meru counties.

Further we take great pride in sharing the WEE Hub's engagement in the 7th edition of the University of Nairobi Innovation Week. A central moment during this event was the courtesy call extended by the UoN Vice Chancellor Prof. Stephen Kiama. In his words, he described the WEE Hub as 'The Epitome of UoN' and commended its leadership for the unwavering commitment to innovation of strategies for economic empowerment of women.

We conclude with statistics from the 'Status of Women in Agrifood Systems' report released by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The WEE Hub leader Prof Wanjiku Kabira commended the Organization for the rich data provided in the Report, which she said, will play a critical role in guiding the African Women's Studies Centre in policy advocacy and other interventions.

Dr. Dorothy Njiraine

Knowledge Management and Communication Coordinator,
UON WEEHUB and
Chairperson and Senior Lecturer
Dept. of Library and Information Science

...we present another compilation of interconnected brushstrokes on our ever-evolving tapestry of empowerment.

MAKING AGPO WORK FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

By Emily Owiti, August 22, 2023



AGPO study leaders from left, Prof Kobia, Prof Kabira and Prof. Kiriti confer during the study review

Realization of the 30% reservation on all contracts for uptake by women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWD) has been elusive. The University of Nairobi Women's Economic Empowerment Hub, in collaboration with the Access to Government Procurement Opportunities Program (AGPO) Secretariat and the Public Procurement and Regulatory Authority (PPRA) is currently undertaking

a study to establish how the uptake of the program can be enhanced to impact women as envisioned.

Since its inception in 2013, the AGPO Program has profoundly empowered the target groups. However, the 30% reservation target as well as the aim of creating employment, transfer of technology and promoting industry have barely been met. A previous



A team of researchers from the UoN WEE Hub, Public Procurement Regulatory Authority and the National Treasury discuss the study findings

review by the Hub indicated that the uptake by women in the AGPO program has remained low, both in value and volume of procurement opportunities. Over the last five financial years the percentage of tenders awarded to women alone by public procurement implementing agencies has remained below 9% and for the financial year 2020/2021, the value of tenders issued by public procurement entities was reported as KES217billion. AGPO utilization accounted for about 17%, amounting to about thirty-seven billion out of which 8.8% was utilized by women, 7% youth and 1.2% by PWDs, way below the 30% reservation.

In recognition of the findings from previous studies that document existing challenges and gaps in implementation and reporting, this study shifts focus from these challenges to solutions and strategies to improve the uptake program. This study aims to identify solutions and strategies that will ensure the



Ruth Wamuyu a Researcher at the WEE Hub captures some key findings of the study on AGPO during the review



Dr. Agnes Meroka of UoN WEE Hub contributes during the presentation of the AGPO preliminary study findings



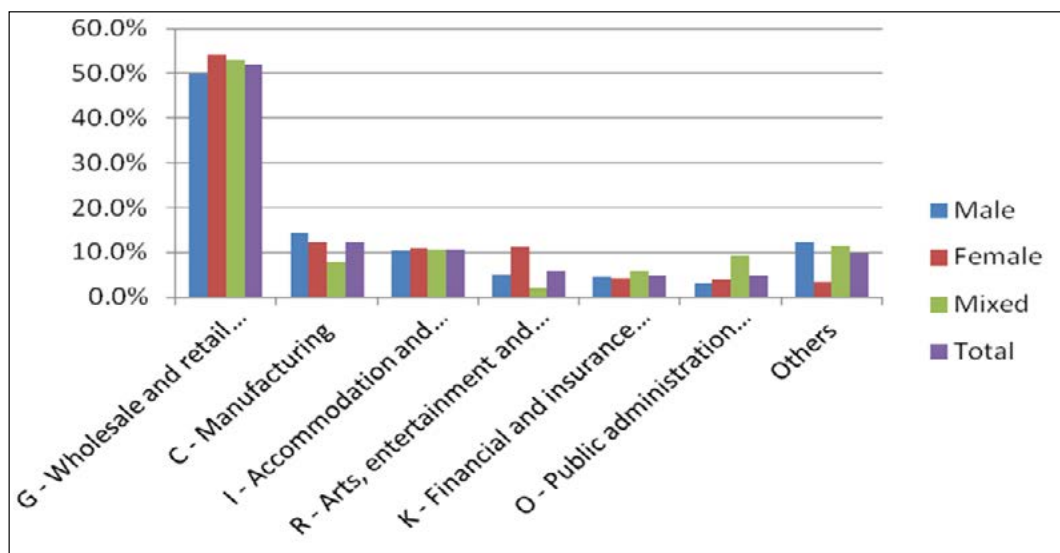
Catherine Muoki of the National Treasury makes a point during a review of the preliminary findings of the AGPO study

“
AGPO utilization accounted for about 17%, amounting to about thirty-seven billion out of which 8.8% was utilized by women, 7% youth and 1.2% by PWDs, way below the 30% reservation.
”

aims of AGPO are met. These aims include promotion of local, national, and regional industry, and supporting socio-economic development. It will also document best practices in the implementation of the program for replication.

The Report from the formative study by the UoN WEE Hub indicates that Kenyan women are primarily engaged in industries that are in line with their gender roles, yet sector choice is one of the largest determinants of firm performance. This large female presence in low-value sectors generates market saturation and crowd's outgrowth possibilities. To gain access to higher-value markets, women must break down barriers and venture into male-dominated sectors. Other studies and analyses by research scholars and organizations have recommended that the program incorporates a monitoring and reporting system that will collect information on AGPO based on disaggregated data that can be used to further streamline the procurement and contracting processes. The figure below shows the sectors where women are involved which affects the value of the procurement opportunities that they can access.

Distribution of type of enterprise



Source: KNBS 2016

The government institutions interviewed include state corporations, state departments, and county governments, among others. These institutions have provided the necessary information and also expressed optimism about the program's progress in achieving the 30% reservation for the targeted groups. Based on research findings, the Hub believes that full implementation of the AGPO program shall elevate the entrepreneurship capacity of women in MSMEs making them contributors to the growth of the economy. The first wave of data collection will be completed by the end of August 2023.

“
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 ”

AFRICAN FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGY FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

By Emilyly Owiti August 7th, 2023



The book Writers' in a celebratory mood at the end of the two-day writers' workshop

The African Women Studies Centre, Women's Economic Empowerment Hub of the University of Nairobi hosted a Writer's Workshop that brought together scholars from Kenya, Mozambique, and Malawi to discuss the African Feminist Epistemology for Women's Empowerment at the Dimesse Sisters Retreat Centre on August 3rd and 4th, 2023.

The two-day workshop was organized as part of the WEE Hub's technical development process for the publication of the book ***African Feminist Epistemology for Women's Economic Empowerment***. The workshop aimed at deepening the appreciation of Feminist Epistemologies, theories, and approaches as applicable to the writer's book chapters and to design a framework for African Feminist Epistemology for Women's Empowerment. Prof. Margaret Kobia, former Cabinet Secretary and now an Adjunct Professor at the University of Nairobi who presided over the workshop said that this initiative was timely and that "this workshop will enable the writers to confer and enrich the book." She acknowledged the struggle that many researchers experience in qualitative research and emphasized the evolving nature of knowledge.



Rayma Rajá of St. Thomas University, Mozambique and Ruth Mchizi, University of Malawi keenly follow a session at the workshop

During the workshop, participants defined feminist epistemology in the context of their book chapters and linked feminist research methods to data analysis. The writers also discussed principles and approaches in qualitative data analysis tools and frameworks used in African Feminist Research; some of the data analyses tools and methods discussed include Nvivo, and narratological methodologies which take into consideration women's experiences as shared by the women themselves. "Stories are repositories of our own experiences, narratology focuses on knowledge generation from the perspectives of the narrators" June Ombara, a PhD student at the AWSC and one of the writers, opined.

The writers interacted in smaller groups to unpack feminist epistemological concepts and apply the frameworks for qualitative data analysis, using case studies prepared by the WEE Hub researchers. These case studies enabled the researchers to reflect on the frameworks and their applicability to their individual chapters while also noting the points of convergence of the feminist methodologies, frameworks, and philosophical principles. Traditional ways of conducting research are male-centred and the language used is "Colonizing" hence the need to design and apply African Feminist epistemology in research. Some of the critical approaches discussed include feminist empirical approach which addresses partiality against women in research; feminist standpoint theory which argues that knowledge stems from social positions and that conventional research has ignored and marginalized women and feminist thinking; and feminist post modernism which seeks to destabilize the patriarchal norms entrenched in society that have led to gender inequality.

From the engagement, the workshop also proposed ten tenets for African Feminist Epistemology to guide the data gathering and analysis for the writers. The tenets include: (i) unpacking knowledge, (ii) demystifying power, (ii) womanizing narration, (iv) experiential knowledge, (v) systematization of experiences/propositional knowledge, (vi) reclaiming lost/forgotten histories, (vii) breaking down boundaries/changing the mainstream, (viii) empowerment, (ix) womanizing technology, and (x) language.



Prof. Filomena Mwaura with Dr. Rayma Rajá from Mozambique and Dr. Jones Mawerenga from Malawi during the workshop

Parameters for measuring empowerment differ from one woman to another and may be based on a myriad reasons. A key consideration is the divergent women's perceptions about their empowerment. For instance, some women feel empowered when they access their rights. It is, therefore, important to design approaches that consider the women's circumstances. "To design approaches that are responsive to African Women's realities, we must change the mainstream thinking about women," Dr. Nkatha Kabira said, adding that feminist approaches to knowledge generation fill gaps created by the dominant narratives towards the development of women's economic empowerment policies.

The workshop concluded, drawing a sharp focus on deconstructing western epistemology when conducting literature review, cognisant that existing literature is generated from conventional research approaches that are male-centred. Validation of knowledge generated, packaging and ensuring global access to research from the African Feminist standpoint stood out as critical actions needed to mainstream African Feminist epistemologies. The book is scheduled to be launched in March 2024.



June Ombara and Prof. Ondicho, Chapter writer's of the book review their progress during the workshop

AFRICAN WOMEN STUDIES CENTRE AND VITAL VOICES ENGAGE IN A FELLOWSHIP FORUM

By Maryanne Mbogo



Professor Kabira exchanges views with the Vital Voices Engage VP Issue Advocacy Manira Alva and former President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė

The African Women's Studies Centre convened a discussion forum in collaboration with the Vital Voices Engage (VV Engage) fellowship, on the evening of 25th July 2023 at the University of Nairobi Main Campus.

VV Engage stands as the flagship fellowship program by Vital Voices, extending its support to exceptional women political leaders who shape and impact policies worldwide. This fully funded fellowship aims

to strengthen the capacity, decision-making power and overall effectiveness of women engaged in politics and governance in their respective countries.

It has its focus on reshaping the narrative around women's public leadership to propel the journey towards achieving global parity in public representation. It is hoped that through these and other similar efforts, women leaders will eventually usher in an era of equal voices and equal influence.



Panelists engage with the audience during the Vital Voices Engage Public Forum Held at the University of Nairobi

The forum themed ‘*Women Using their Power to Empower*’ brought together select fellows of the Vital Voices Engage Fellowship, as well as leaders from within our borders, to share insights and experiences in their individual leadership journeys.

Distinguished panellists included Beatriz Merino, the former Prime Minister of Peru, Dr. Nancy Baraza, the former Deputy Chief Justice of Kenya, Dr. Dalia Grybauskaitė, former President of Lithuania, Prof Margaret Kobia, former Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Youth, and Gender Affairs in Kenya, the Special Representative on Sexual Orientation in Argentina Alba Rueda, and Nurhayati Ali Assegaf, President of Nuraa Women’s Institute in Indonesia.

Dr. Grybauskaitė recounted her journey in liberating her country from the grip of Russian gas dependency. With unyielding perseverance and resolute determination, she coordinated a novel transformation, which propelled her small nation into energy security. Her success effectively ended the reliance on neighbouring Russia for gas supplies; an accomplishment that not only solidified Lithuania’s autonomy, but also earned the admiration of numerous European Union countries.

Alyse Nelson, the President and CEO of Vital Voices Global Partnerships dissected what she termed as a prevalent myth that women are inherently risk averse. She challenged this notion saying that women often take substantial risks, especially when venturing into positions of political leadership. The key difference lies in the intention behind it. Rather than pursue personal gain, women leaders often embark on these journeys with collective or community good at heart.

Alba Rueda, the Special Representative on Sexual Orientation in Argentina, underscored the significance of women’s alliances, cutting across national borders to unite women on a global scale.

This will go a long way in strengthening the global women’s movement and raise the global momentum for change. Such alliances act as powerful catalysts incorporating diverse voices, experiences, and perspectives. They hold the potential to drive women-centred policy changes that span continents and reflect a shared commitment to a more inclusive, equitable world.

Throughout the panel discussions, a recurring question took centre stage. How can women leaders



UoN WEE Hub Leader Prof. Wanjiku Kabira delivers her opening remarks during the Vital Voices Engage Public Forum

and advocacy groups garner the much-needed support, especially from governments, to drive the cause of women’s empowerment?

In response, a crucial answer came into focus: through the power of solid data and information. This highlighted the pivotal role that accurate, substantiated information plays in galvanizing support for women’s empowerment initiatives.

Participants agreed that utilizing robust data and information to propel change is not merely theoretical, it is a cornerstone of action. This idea aligns with the mission of the Women’s Economic Empowerment Hub which continues to stand as a beacon of research excellence, dedicated to producing cutting-edge, rigorous, and accessible evidence that fuels the engine of policy formulation, implementation, and up-scaling.

By providing empirical insights into the state of women in communities, the WEE Hub bridges the gap between academia and practical action, propelling the cause of women’s empowerment forward.

Conclusion

The collaboration between the African Women’s Studies Centre and the Vital Voices Engage fellowship demonstrated the extraordinary power of unity and purpose. Dr. Dalia Grybauskaitė’s journey stands as a testament that unwavering determination does yield transformation. Her success in liberating her country is proof that when determination meets action, remarkable change becomes a reality.

It further echoed a global call to action clarifying that alliances among women’s groups are more than collaborations, but also serve to reinforce collective resilience and sustain the momentum for transformation.

THE AFRICAN WOMEN STUDIES CENTRE AND THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT ON CLIMATE ACTION TALKS

By Emilyy Owiti

According to a report by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), 80% of people displaced by climate change are women. The negative impacts of climate change affect women disproportionately, particularly in the global south. In view of these grave statistics, the African Women Studies Centre held talks at the University's main campus on June 9th, 2023, with the Commonwealth Secretariat representative Dr. Ruth Kattamuri to forge collaboration on climate action. The Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Hub was represented by the Director of Research, Dr. Mary Mbithi, the Knowledge Management Coordinator, Dr. Dorothy Njiraine and other environmental scientists and researchers from the Centre.



The UoN WEE Hub team led by Prof. Kobina 4th left pose for a photo with Dr. Kattamuri of the Commonwealth Secretariat after the consultative meeting held at the University of Nairobi



According to a report by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), **80%** of people displaced by climate change are women.

The discourse was necessitated by the desire of the African Women Studies Centre (AWSC)/ University of Nairobi's Women's Economic Empowerment Hub (UoN WEE Hub) and the Commonwealth Secretariat to contribute to the global action on climate financing and investment, care labour, and tracking the progress of women participation in climate action initiatives. Dr. Kattamuri, Senior Director of the Economic, Youth and Sustainable Development Directorate at the Commonwealth Secretariat expressed optimism in working with the AWSC because of its multidisciplinary approach in research which enhances knowledge sharing and a wider scope, and depth of learning. The two entities believe that climate resilient solutions are inherent in women and thus women are better equipped



Dr. Kattamuri from the Commonwealth Secretariat during the consultative meeting on climate action at the UoN

to come up with solutions that would mitigate the challenges they face as a result of increased climate shocks and natural hazards.

The joint participation in the Africa Climate Summit and the CoP 28, provides the AWSC and the Commonwealth Secretariat with the opportunity to make impactful contributions on evidence-based gender mainstreaming and monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs on climate change and biodiversity. Former Cabinet Secretary Prof. Margaret Kobia, who is also an Adjunct Professor at the University of Nairobi and Program Lead Climate Action, Environment and Biodiversity at the AWSC, reiterated the need for the academia to contribute to climate governance through research evidence. According to a recent report by UN Women, decline in biodiversity has disproportionate impact primarily on poor people in developing countries, particularly women. In some cultures, women are responsible for collecting traditional fuels which consumes more time because of the decline hence have less time to take up gainful employment or entrepreneurship which further increases their vulnerabilities.

The African Women's Studies Centre (AWSC) champions the inclusion of the experiences of African women in the mainstream knowledge development. Often women have not been a source of public and legitimate knowledge even about themselves. The Centre recognizes that gender relations are contextual and African women's experiences, like other experiences, are unique. Despite this fact, scholarship on women has based its arguments mainly on experiences of women in the West, while African Women's experiences remain invisible, even in Africa. The AWSC seeks to make visible the African women's perspectives and integrate them

into the general worldview by documenting women's experiences, struggles, and contributions in all spheres of development in Kenya and Africa and incorporating them in academic and policy debates at national and regional levels. The AWSC is a multi-disciplinary Centre that promotes intellectual inquiry and is the home to the Women's Economic Empowerment Hub.

The Directorate of Economic, Youth and Sustainable Development at the Commonwealth Secretariat, under the leadership of Dr. Kattamuri, works across Climate Change, Economic Development and Policy, involving Finance Ministers, Debt Sustainability, Health, Education, Gender, and Youth. It has previously provided technical cooperation/support to programs in Health, Gender, Environment and Education in Kenya charting the way forward for development. The Directorate currently supports program implementation in Kenya in Food security, Economic and sustainable development, Youth and Gender Mainstreaming, Building resilience of the urban poor and Affordable Housing. Dr. Kattamuri observed that lived experiences are useful in making development policies. "Citizens have the solutions to the majority of the problems they face, all they need is support," she reiterated.

Other areas of possible research and program development include the design of a gender-responsive economic model; Economic Vulnerability Index that could incorporate economic, environmental, social, and political contexts that enable young people to achieve their potential and locally made climate solutions.



Prof. Kobia presents Dr. Kattamuri with an information pack on the work of the UoN AWSC WEE Hub

WOMEN IN THE BUSINESS INCUBATION PROJECT

By Emily Owiti and Catherine Wangechi

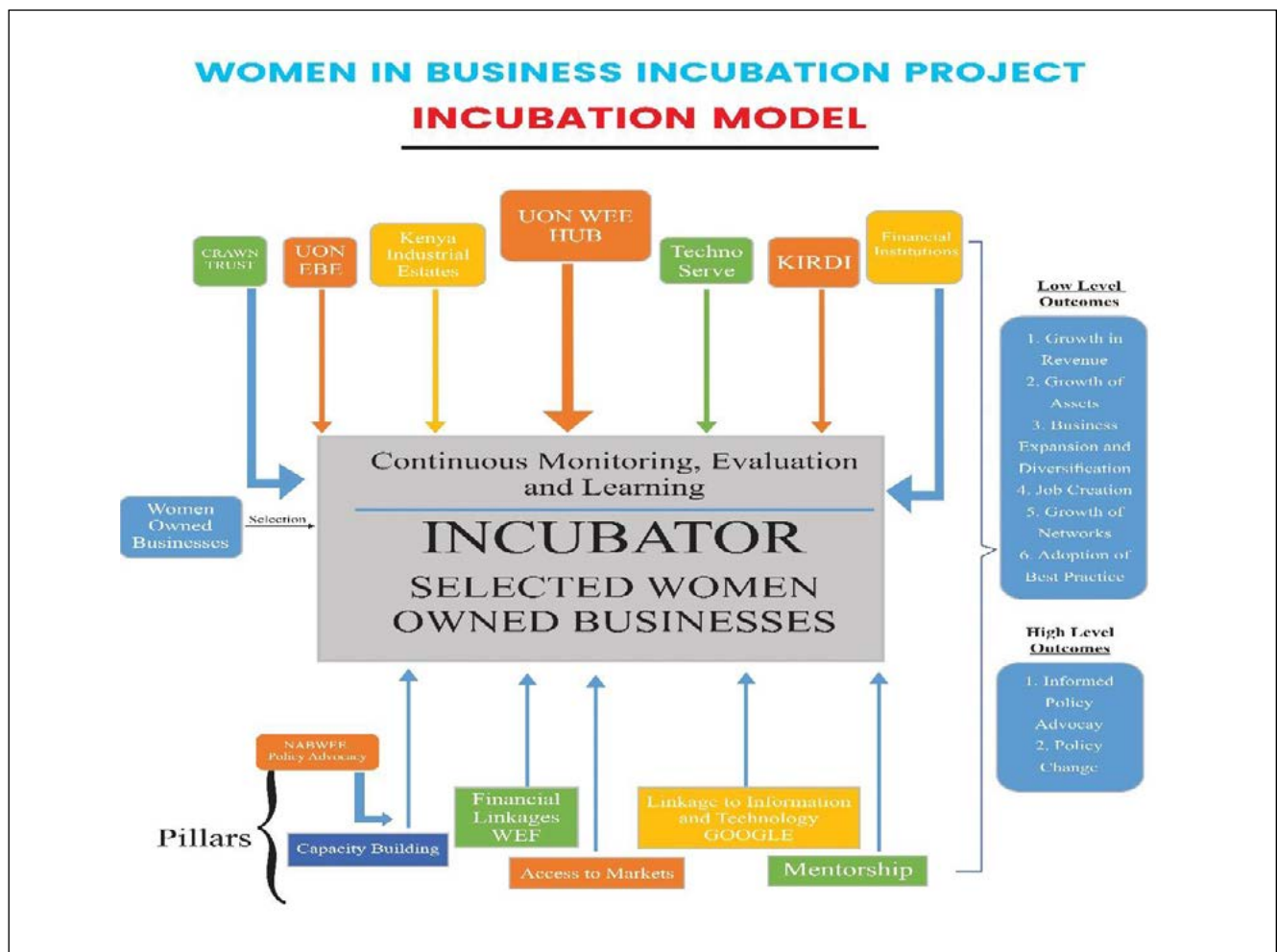
The Women-focused Business Incubation (WBI) Project was initiated by the UoN WEE Hub in March 2022 to evaluate the effectiveness

of business incubation on women’s enterprises for replication. The three-year project aims to assess what works in growing women’s businesses/enterprises from informal to formal through incubation and the extent to which women-focused incubation models contribute to the growth of businesses/enterprises in Kenya.

The WBI project is incubating 320 selected individual women-owned enterprises and seventeen women’s collectives for at least 2% replication in sixteen

counties by 2025. The women enterprises enlisted for incubation include the agro processing/ agribusiness in

Nairobi County, posho mill and poultry farming in Turkana, beekeeping and poultry in Kitui, cassava and cashew nuts processing in Kilifi and Kwale, cross border grains traders in Busia, banana farming and production in Meru, fish in Kisumu and potatoes farming in Nyandarua. The UoN WEE Hub takes a lead role in research which includes monitoring the growth of the women’s businesses every six months. Other implementing partners are Technoserve, CRAWN Trust, Financial Institutions, and women’s organizations.





Access to finance has unlocked doors previously thought unattainable. As of the last monitoring cycle, a staggering 31% of participants accessed finance amounting to KES10,840,100 (\$76,338), with an average of KES100,371 (\$706) per participant..

Empowering Women Entrepreneurs across Kenya: A Journey of Growth and Collaboration

Imagine a journey that brings together the power of academia, the innovation of a leading NGO, and the sheer determination of women entrepreneurs. Picture the tapestry of Kenya's diverse landscape, where 320 women across sixteen counties are not just forging businesses, but creating opportunities, strengthening communities, and driving lasting change. This journey is the heart of the Women Business Incubation Project, a remarkable collaboration between the University of Nairobi Women's Economic Empowerment Hub (UoN WEE Hub) and TechnoServe, aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs and redefining the narrative of economic growth.

Harnessing Dreams, Nurturing Ambitions

The Women Business Incubation Project is more than a program; it is a movement that seeks to uplift, empower, and reshape possibilities. Rooted in the vision of women's economic empowerment, the project has been a beacon of hope for women entrepreneurs across Kenya. Over the past two

years, it has evolved from a shared dream to a dynamic force that propels businesses forward, guided by the constructive collaboration of two distinct, yet complementary partners – the WEE Hub and TechnoServe.

Fusing Academia with Action

At its core, this initiative is a celebration of collaboration. The merging of academia with the expertise of an international non-profit organization has created a unique ecosystem that thrives on knowledge and action. The WEE Hub, with its academic prowess, and TechnoServe, with its proven methodologies, have come together to craft a journey that empowers women through informed insights, strategic interventions, and the unwavering spirit of entrepreneurship.

A Digital Revolution Unleashed

In an era where digital technology is reshaping possibilities, the project has harnessed this wave of innovation to create ripples of empowerment. Through platforms such as WhatsApp, TalentLMS, SMS, and Zoom, the project has transcended geographical boundaries, creating a virtual bridge that connects women from Busia to Lamu. The digital approach has not only overcome challenges but has empowered women with unprecedented access to learning, networking, and growth.

Fuelling Financial Independence

The journey toward empowerment is reflected in the numbers. Access to finance has unlocked doors previously thought unattainable. As of the last monitoring cycle, a staggering 31% of participants accessed finance amounting to KES10,840,100 (\$76,338), with an average of KES100,371 (\$706) per participant. This injection of capital has not only bolstered existing businesses but has also catalysed the birth of new ventures, propelling the entrepreneurial spirit forward.

Crafting Opportunities through Employment and Diversification

Job creation, another cornerstone of the project, has been a resounding success. Forty-five new jobs have been reported so far with over 90% of them having

been created in the Micro and Small Segment. These jobs have been very critical in job creation, contributing to over 60% of the new jobs reported this far. This employment surge is a testament to the resilience and growth potential of the women-led businesses, each one contributing to the economic fabric of their communities.

Sixty-one of the participants have diversified their businesses by introducing other product lines into their businesses. For example, some have added grocery stores, mobile money, and other lines which add a new customer base. This is a measure critical to ensuring the survival of businesses during harsh economic times.

Building Dreams, Asset by Asset

Asset acquisition is the tangible proof of progress and an essential requirement in accessing finance for women. As per the last monitoring cycle, 25% of the participants acquired new assets, an inspiring transformation that translates into enhanced

productivity and business stability. Within this segment, micro enterprises took a prominent lead, underscoring the project’s commitment to uplifting businesses across all scales.

A Glimpse into the Future

As we step into the Project’s final year, our resolve remains unshaken. The project’s vision extends to Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) counties, as it seeks to create a lasting legacy of empowerment. The journey ahead is marked by innovation, collaboration, and the shared dream of economic growth that leaves no one behind.

Honouring Collaboration, Fostering Progress

Our heartfelt gratitude extends to the resilient women entrepreneurs who are at the heart of this transformation. Together, we have embarked on a journey of empowerment that echoes beyond the present, leaving an indelible mark on Kenya’s entrepreneurial landscape.

Indicator	Count of Participants	Insights
Access to finance	75 Value of finance accessed: KES 10,840,100	Over 70% of the women retailers accessed finance either ROSCAs (Chamas) or through government affirmative funds (WEF) Chamas provide an alternative way of savings and access to finance due to friendly loaning terms. The program has been offering financial management training working with financial partners in the program.
New Businesses Started	45 Micro & Small - 42 Medium - 3	Expanded businesses, new businesses started resulting in increased incomes and creation of opportunities for the community.
Job Creation	43 Jobs reported so far	Over 90% Micro & Small segments.
Assets	58-reported the purchase of new assets 53 - micro & small 5 - medium	58 women retailers reported acquisition of new assets, most of the assets being machinery for increased operational efficiency and productivity.

About TechnoServe

TechnoServe provides solutions for poverty by harnessing the power of the private sector and provides opportunities to hardworking women and men in low-income communities for the development of skills, confidence, and connections to build competitive farms, businesses, and industries. By linking people to information, capital, and markets TechnoServe has helped millions to create lasting prosperity for their families and communities.

Experiences of Women entrepreneurs from the Women in Business Incubation Project

By Emily Owiti



“Before the UoN WEE Hub trained us on value addition and preservation of omena, we used to incur losses and throw away the food. Now we preserve and package omena and sell for longer, the Hub also linked us to the County Government of Kisumu and we are working together with the county.”

Belinda Odera, small fish processing-New Kisumu Small Fish Patel's Women Group, Kisumu County.



“After the value addition training by UoN WEE Hub And KIRDI, I and my group now make cashew nut butter, honey glazed cashew nuts and many products that we now package and sell. At the expo I have sold my products, met new people from South Africa, Egypt and America with whom we have made good connections. I have a potential customer who will help me gain entry into the South African market”

Zipporah Wanjiru Kamau-Cashew nuts processing-Lunga Lunga Cross-border Women Traders, Kwale County.



“UoN WEE Hub linked us with KIE and CRAWN trust that trained us on value addition, now we can make banana crisps, fertilizer, banana fiber and animal feeds and no part of our produce will be wasted. The Hub has also sponsored us to exhibit at the Kenyan Food Event in Nairobi where we marketed our products, sold and networked with international and local exhibitors”

Charity Mutwiri, banana processing: Ntharene Highway Market Women Group, Tharaka-Nithi County.

FISHING FOR GROWTH: THE WEE HUB LAUNCHES FISH VALUE ADDITION TRAINING PROGRAM IN KISUMU COUNTY

Maryanne Mbogo



Hon. Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o, Governor County Government of Kisumu launches the fish value addition training in Kisumu County. Looking on are Prof Kabira, UoN WEE Hub leader (left) Dr. Onyango of DG KIRDI (second right) and Dr. Mbithi, UoN WEE Hub extreme right

Mention the lakeside city of Kisumu and fish is probably the first thing that comes to mind, whether it is the bustling streets dotted with traders selling various kinds of this high protein staple, or that tantalizingly steaming plate of crisp tilapia you will indulge in at the end of the day.

What many of us do not know is the many difficulties businesspeople face in the course of this trade. These challenges can now be resolved through the recently completed Fish Value Addition Training Program conducted by the WEE Hub in collaboration with KIRDI (Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute).

The training program focused on two women's groups: the New Small Fish Patel's Women's Group and the Firequeens Women's Group, each

specializing in different segments of the fish market. The former deals in the small fish popularly known as 'omena' while the latter are traders of big fish such as tilapia and Nile perch.

Belinda Odera, who chairs the small fish traders' group, lamented that she and fellow traders lack a structured market and have been operating their businesses under a tree, which poses potential health hazards due to poor hygiene standards.

Traders typically start their operations by purchasing freshly caught fish, which they then preserve by drying it under the sun before selling it. However, this method of preservation is not only unsustainable, but also unprofitable, especially to the small-scale traders who have limited resources and are not able to break even or make profits. In Belinda's words:

“Our livelihoods are at the mercy of unpredictable weather... it can be very frustrating”.

Through this training, participants have acquired skills in canning omena, providing them with the flexibility to sell their caned product in various forms such as dried, fried, or flavoured with garlic or ginger.

For big fish such as Nile Perch and tilapia, previously there were only two options before the sale. The fish could either be dried under the scorching sun or immersed into a bath of hot oil. However, with the introduction of new value addition techniques, more options are now available.

Fish can now be packed in vacuum packages designed to maintain freshness, flavour and also extend shelf life from one month to about a year. *“Gone are the days of wrapping fish in old newspapers”* says Catherine Odongo, the Chairlady of Firequeens Women’s Group.

Also, on their list of value-added products is a highly nutritious composite flour made from ground omena, maize, millet, sorghum, and sweet potatoes. This can be used for porridge or serve as an alternative to maize flour for ugali.

Trainees return to their businesses with newly acquired skills, most of which they can put to practice within their business premises. However, for processes requiring specialized equipment such as professional vacuum packaging, they will have access to equipment at the KIRDI training centre in Kisumu, as part of the institution’s mandate to support and promote small enterprises.

The WEE Hub leader, Professor Wanjiku Kabira, said value addition is critical to improving women enterprises, especially considering findings from a FAO study indicating that Kenya continues to waste at least 20 percent of its agricultural production to post-harvest losses. Training programs such as this not only improve food security but also empower women economically for improved livelihoods.

“We are excited that KIRDI has committed to assist us to acquire our KEBS (Kenya Bureau of Standards)



Belinda Odera explains the canning process to Kisumu County Governor Prof. Anyang Nyong’o

certificate, which is sometimes difficult to get as an individual” Belinda says. With KEBS certification, the trainees say the sky is the limit for them. They intend to explore not just local markets through supermarkets in Kisumu and around the country but international markets as well, through export trade. *“You can imagine how excited Kenyans in the Diaspora will be to get their hands on fresh fish from Lake Victoria.”*

The Kisumu County Governor Professor Anyang’ Nyong’o who spoke at the launch event, applauded the groups adding that enterprise development is a continuous process. *“It is all right to start small, but you must open your minds for bigger opportunities. You have the potential to become a multinational organization”* were his heartfelt words of encouragement.



Professors Nyong’o and Kabira taken through the fish preservation process by the women entrepreneurs after their successful training

VALUE ADDITION TO HONEY, CASSAVA AND CASHEW NUTS

By Emily Owiti



The women entrepreneurs extract cassava flour from the mill in readiness for packaging

Fifteen women leaders from Kitui, Kwale and Kilifi have completed training on how to apply technology to add value to cassava, honey, and cashew nuts. The five days technology training organized by the University of Nairobi Women's Economic Empowerment Hub (UoN WEE HUB) and delivered by the Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute (KIRDI) at their headquarters in Nairobi ended on Friday, June 9, 2023.

Training and linkages to technology and information is one of the five pillars of the Women's Business Incubation Project (WBI), a three-year project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and implemented by the UoN WEE Hub. The project seeks to assess what works in growing women's businesses/enterprises from informal to formal through incubation and the extent to which incubation models contribute to the growth of

businesses/enterprises in Kenya. The other four pillars of the project are Capacity Building, Access to Credit, Access to Markets and Mentorship which the Hub implements in collaboration with partners.

Women leaders representing collectives in Kwale, Kilifi and Kitui counties were hosted in Nairobi by the WEE Hub to undertake the five-days training. They are among seventeen collectives drawn from sixteen counties sampled to be incubated under the WBI Project. During the training, the women learnt skills on the production of cassava bread; lemon and ginger infused honey; cashew nuts butter flavoured with honey; cassava cake, and nutritious children's flour. "The cassava flour, combined with two other cereals makes nutritious porridge that can supplement children's diet," said Kadogo from Kilifi.

In addition, the women also learnt skills on nutrition profiling, record keeping, marketing and

small business management, occupational safety, standardization and certification, mandatory labelling information, design and production of stick-on labels, acquisition of simple prototype, packaging, and costing and pricing. The women in Kitui engage in bee keeping and honey processing, while those in Kilifi and Kwale trade in and make products from cashew nuts and cassava respectively.

The women were trained to be able to pass on the skills to other women members of their group. "When I return home to Kilifi, I will train women in my group and ensure that they do not use cassava only for cooking ugali, we can now bake cake and bread" Zipporah said.

Patricia Ngatia from the BadaPlus Women Group, Lunga in Kwale County had this to say about the

training, "I have been taught how to make healthy flour from cassava. I will also teach the women from Lunga how to grind the cassava into flour to make cassava cakes, scones, bread, chapatis and this will help me to grow as a woman and raise the standards of living of women in Lunga village".

The UoN WEE Hub will monitor growth indicators such as growth in revenue, growth of assets, business expansion and diversification, job creation, growth of networks and adoption of best practice. At the end of the project period the WBI Project targets to contribute to policy development for the women's economic empowerment related sectors.



Prof. Kobia of the UoN presents a completion certificate to a trainee at the end of the training as Dr. Polong from KIRDI looks on



The women display their certificates of completion issued at the end of the value addition training



Women from Kilifi and Kwale Counties display the bread made from Cassava flour after the training at KIRDI



The WEE Hub researchers pose for a photograph with the deputy Director-Technology Transfers at KIRDI

THARAKA NITHI AND MERU WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS TRAINED ON BANANA VALUE ADDITION

By Emily Owiti, April 21, 2023

Tharaka-Nithi and Meru women entrepreneurs will access more markets and grow their businesses when they expand their banana product variants. This has been made possible after the launch of technology training on banana value addition by the University of Nairobi Women's Economic Empowerment (UoN-WEE) Hub in partnership with the Kenya Industrial Estates. This training was launched at Ntharene market in Meru County and Mbogori primary school in Tharaka-Nithi counties on April 19th and 20th.

Keega and Ntharene Market Self Help Groups are the pilot groups to receive the training that shall benefit more than eighteen groups in the two counties. The training will ensure that no part of the banana product goes to waste "we shall make sure that each and every part of the banana is utilized" the Meru County Woman Representative Mrs. Kailema said as she launched the project. Currently, the annual income from sale of bananas received by the women is estimated to be Kenya shillings six million, however this figure can be tripled through value addition," she added. In agreement, the UoN WEE Hub Leader Prof. Wanjiku Kabira, supported the fact that mechanization of agriculture and value addition would produce more yields and allow wider market access for the women. "The University of Nairobi is committed to this process because we know that when we mechanize agriculture and bring in value addition to the banana production, women's incomes shall increase," she reiterated.



Prof. Kabira (left) listens to the host MCA at Ntharene market where she met the Market women collectives

The women have perennially complained of low product prices in an industry that is dominated by brokers who buy the produce at low prices leading to losses by banana farmers and traders "sometimes we get offers below the production cost and are forced to consume the products or sell at a loss," the Chairperson of Keega Women Group said. The women demonstrated how brokers exploit them through well delivered skits during the launch.



In agreement, the UoN WEE Hub Leader Prof. Wanjiku Kabira, supported the fact that mechanization of agriculture and value addition would produce more yields and allow wider market access for the women.



Meru County Woman Representative Hon. Kailemi launches the technology training on banana value addition by WEE Hub and KIE at Ntharene Market

The training is part of the larger Women-focused Business Incubation (WBI) project, which is a three-year project initiated by the UoN WEE Hub in March 2022 to evaluate the effectiveness of business incubation on women's enterprises for replication and document best practices in the incubation program. The Hub conducted a baseline survey to establish the status of women's businesses and shall monitor the indicators every six months of the project's life cycle. Additionally, the women shall go through capacity development, access financial services and markets and receive mentorship.

The launch was also attended by the WEE Hub Director of Research Dr. Mary Mbithi, the former Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Public Service, Gender, Senior Citizen's Affairs

and Special Programs, Prof. Margaret Kobia, area leaders, Women Enterprise Fund Regional Leader, the National Government Affirmative Action Fund Chair, and Micro and Small Enterprise Authority representatives among other government entities. The government is keen on funding and growing businesses and the support through incubation shall go a long way in preparing women's enterprises to access the funds. The WEE Hub advocates for policy development to support the growth of women's enterprises.

“WEE HUB: THE EPITOME OF UON” – VICE CHANCELLOR PROFESSOR STEPHEN KIAMA

By Mayanne Mbogo



Prof. Mary Kinoti explains products of Incubation training to UoN VC Prof. Stephen Kiama

The WEE Hub's participation in this year's edition of the Nairobi Innovation Week was a resounding success. It provided an opportunity to showcase products and interact with participants who were keen to learn more about the Hub's work and its impact on women in various parts of the country. This was the seventh edition of the annual event, and this year the theme was *Innovation and Commercialization for Sustainable Development*.

A key highlight of the three-day event came when Professor Stephen Kiama, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Nairobi graced the WEE Hub exhibition stand. With resounding commendation, he hailed the Hub as the 'The Epitome of the University of Nairobi' recognizing its unwavering commitment to

innovative strategies for economic empowerment of women, with tangible impact.

Products Showcased

Among the array of products highlighted were a range of potato-based creations presented by representatives of the Moano Mothers Women's Group in Kinangop, Nyandarua County. They undertook WEE Hub's potato value addition training last year and now proudly showcased their expertly packed and branded French fries and potato crisps.

In addition to these, there was a unique culinary creation: potato chapati, made using potato flour which is an innovative twist to the conventional favourite.

"These chapos are a more nutritious alternative to wheat-based ones," says Naomi Kabacho, a representative of the Maono Mothers Women's Group. "They are also ideal for people who are gluten intolerant".

Also on display was the pride of the Lobur Women's Group from Turkana County: a professionally packed and branded packet of maize flour produced at their very own posho mill. This fete was made possible after representatives of the group attended the WEE Hub training program on *Best Practices in Grain Processing* in November held last year. Armed with their newfound expertise, the group swiftly embarked on the establishment of a posho mill in their home community, effectively revolutionizing grain processing in the area. Prior to that, women would typically obtain flour through stone grinding, a traditional process where dried grain is manually ground on the surface of a flat rock. This advancement liberates the women from the laborious and time-consuming task as they no longer need to spend hours, rock in hand grinding maize, to serve a meal of ugali at the end of the day. Moreover, the maize flour is now ground in a hygienic environment, therefore, promising a clean and safe meal.

Several visitors to the WEE Hub corner admitted that it was the fish that lured them to the stand. Also on display were vacuum-sealed packages of tilapia and Nile perch, along with canned silver cyprinid fish (commonly known as omena), products developed by the two women's groups who undertook the fish

value addition training conducted by the WEE Hub in collaboration with KIRDI (Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute) in Kisumu County.

Summit Representation

The Hub got a valuable opportunity to contribute to the overall event through a presentation in one of the event's summit sessions titled 'Research to Innovation'. Dr. Agnes Meroka represented the Hub and delivered an insightful presentation that shed light on various ongoing projects, highlighting the positive impact that this work continues to have on beneficiaries and their communities.

Panellists in the summit session emphasized the crucial role of research in the innovation process as it serves as the bedrock for the generation of new knowledge and is the backbone of evidence-based decision making.

Final Thought

The Nairobi Innovation Week 2023 serves as a great platform for the WEE Hub to showcase its innovative products and engage with enthusiastic participants.

The encouraging words of esteemed guests such as the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Stephen Kiama, underscore the profound impact of the Hub's work in empowering women and driving positive change.

A diverse range of showcased products, including potato-based creations, revolutionized grain processing, and value-added fish exemplified the immense potential of women as drivers of innovation and commercialization.



Emily Owiti and Brenda Akoth of UoN WEE Hub share one of the Hub's Publications with a visitor during the Innovations Week.

STATUS OF WOMEN IN AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS

By Emilyy Owiti, June 27, 2023



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS
Nairobi, Kenya | 26 June 2023

Women's working conditions in agrifood systems are not equal

- Despite the importance of agrifood systems for women's livelihoods and welfare of their families, women's roles tend to be marginalized and their working conditions worse than men's

- ▶ **IRREGULAR**
- ▶ **LOW-SKILLED**
- ▶ **INFORMAL**
- ▶ **LABOR-INTENSIVE**
- ▶ **PART-TIME**
- ▶ **VULNERABLE**



A section of the key findings of the report

Women's roles tend to be marginalized and their working conditions in the Agrifood Systems are worse than men's. This was revealed by a report on the Status of Women in Agrifood Systems released by FAO on June 26, 2023, at a Nairobi hotel.

Despite the importance of Agrifood Systems (AFS) for women's livelihoods and the welfare of their families, this study found that the working conditions of women are irregular, informal, part time in nature, labour intensive, low-skilled, and vulnerable. This reality is catalysed by some cultural beliefs that hinder women from pursuing their rights to access to factors of production, especially land. While women's land ownership is still frowned upon in some cultures, in contrast, men have greater land ownership or secure tenure rights in twenty-six out of thirty-one countries in Africa at slightly below 60% according to the report. When women do not own the

land, they live and work on, they become trapped in systems that reinforce gender inequalities that limit their economic progress.

Kenya has a host of laws and policies on women's rights, which includes non-gender-based discrimination in relation to ownership and land use as specified in Article 60 (1) (f); elimination of gender discrimination in law, customs and practices related to land and property in land. Despite the existence and preservation of these rights in the Kenyan Constitution, the implementation is still a far cry from the expectation. Of the policy documents analysed by the Study, 75% recognize women's challenges, yet only 19% consider them as policy goals.

Prof. Kabira, Director of the African Women Studies Centre commended FAO for the richness of data in the report which she said "was important for the



WEE Hub Leader, Prof. Kabira makes her presentation on the Gender analysis of the report

AWSC in influencing policies and interventions aimed at improving not only the lives of women but also of African nations” Prof. Kabira noted that “evidence generation of women and men’s experiences with agriculture and Agrifood Systems within a globalized and digital economy in a complex environmental context of climate change, disasters and conflict is critical for impactful interventions.” In Kenya only 86% of rural women own a mobile phone, compared to 92% of men, according to a Global System for Mobile Communications Association-GSMA, 2022, FAO.

A Mobile Internet Usage Report (2021) indicates that 30% of Kenyan women use mobile internet compared to 55% of men with a gender gap of 46%. These technological challenges, coupled with discriminatory social norms are slow to change, yet they affect women and girls and are at the heart of gender inequality. The report recommends policy engagements and advocacy, noting that gender transformative approaches are cost-effective and can change discriminatory norms at local levels. Closing gaps in land tenure, for instance, has benefits on employment, investment, natural resource management, access to services, resilience, food security and GBV.

The AWSC conducted a gender analysis of the FAO report and proposes group-based solutions

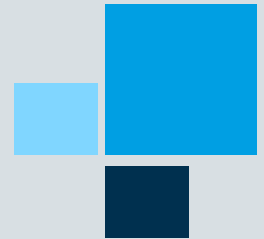
and social protection programs to increase women empowerment and employment to enhance resilience. The Centre also observes that access to formal childcare has a positive impact on mothers’ employment and returns in Agrifood systems and calls on all actors led by the government to take steps to narrow gender gaps in agriculture and Agrifood Systems by adopting agricultural policy and programmatic measures that address gender norms that limit women’s productivity and further gender inequalities in order to promote women’s empowerment and advance gender equality. “This Report is useful in advocating for policy development on gender sensitive agricultural and Agrifood policies and budgets as a pressing priority,” Dr. Mbithi, UoN WEE Hub Director of research said.

The AWSC promotes cutting-edge intellectual inquiry by and on African women through teaching, research, policy advocacy and outreach, and to engage with policy makers, women’s, and civil society organizations, in order to bring African women’s perspectives and experiences into development processes. The Centre recommends partnerships with women’s networks and organizations as drivers of change through policy advocacy and policy reforms for Agrifood systems



UPCOMING EVENTS REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- ii Evaluating what Works in Networking and Alliance Building for Women's Economic Empowerment: Utilizing Best Practices for Women's Self – mobilization in Influencing Policies, Programs and Regulations for WEE
- iii Making Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) Work for Women'; Views and Analysis from implementers
- iiii Assessing What Works for Implementation of AGPO: Making AGPO Program Work for Kenyan Women
- iv Evaluating the implementation of the Employment Act 2007 and the sessional paper No. 4 of 2013 on Employment in promoting women's economic empowerment in formal and informal employment.
- iv Book: Conversations with Selected Women Leaders on WEE: A Historical Perspective
- ivi Book: African Feminist Epistemology for Women's Economic Empowerment
- ivii Research dissemination insights
- iviii Publication: Social Legal Gender Analysis
- ix Pathways to African Feminism and Development: A Journal of the African Women Studies Centre, University of Nairobi.
- ix Financial Inclusion Sensitization meeting Women entrepreneurs in the Women in Business Incubation Project in collaboration with Equity Bank/ Foundation.
- ixi Capacity building forum for women's collectives by UoN WEE Hub and partners; Equity Bank/Foundation, Micro and Small Enterprises Authority (MSEA) and TechnoServe.



We hope that you enjoyed reading the third issue of our Newsletter on women economic empowerment and that you found it interesting and informative. We would be happy if you would share your thoughts and suggestions with us. If you or your organisation have done some research on women economic empowerment, please let us have the link so that we can publicise it through this Newsletter. Please, contact us through: weehub@uonbi.ac.ke

Here are a few links to the recent publication by the University of Nairobi Women's Economic Empowerment Hub (UoN WEE Hub)

1. Making Women's Participation Count in Innovative and Resourced Climate Action - AWSC paper for the Africa Climate Summit 2023.- <https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/uon-awcs-and-partners-africa-climate-week-sept-4th-2023>
2. Technical Report Cluster 4 Project 1:-Examining Strategies Women's movement used to realize gains in Kenya Constitution 2010 - <https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/examining-strategies-womens-movement-used-realize-gains-kenya-constitution-2010-2023>

3. Technical report Cluster 4 Project 2: Assessing the contributions of women's movement and women's self-mobilization to women's economic empowerment in Kenya between 1963 and 2010 - <https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/assessing-contributions-womens-movements-and-womens-self-mobilization-womens-economic-empowerment>
4. Evaluating the impact of affirmative action funds on women's economic empowerment; Lessons learnt from Credit Guarantee Scheme. - <https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/evaluating-impact-affirmative-action-funds-womens-economic-empowerment-lessons-learnt-these-funds>
5. Social Protection for Women's Economic Empowerment: Lessons from Kazi Mtaani and Inua Jamii - <https://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke/node/346>



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