Men in Kenya Now Take Lead in Fighting Gender-Based Violence

This year the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) kicked off on a different note in Kenya as men took a more prominent role in fighting the vice through the One Million Fathers campaign.

The national social movement through which men sign up to reject all forms of gender-based violence, is making inroads in rural Kenya where the vice is rife. According to the latest Kenya Demographic Health Survey, between 39 and 47 percent of women in the country experience some form of GBV in their lifetime.

The men have embarked on an aggressive recruitment drive, from the national level to the counties, to mobilize and recruit one million men to stand in solidarity with women to end all forms of GBV, including rape, defilement, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, and child marriage, among others.

The team travelled to Nakuru County on 29 November 2013 for a recruitment drive that saw up to 20,000 men sign up on the first day. Popular youthful musician Eko Dydda was at hand to spice up the recruitment drive with his gospel hits. He personally helped recruit a horde of youths who are his ardent fans to the

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campaign.

To officially open the event was Nakuru County’s Chief Officer in charge of Education Mr. Joseph Tonui who was representing the County Governor. He too joined the campaign and committed to make Nakuru violence-free. After a long day of recruitment on the streets, in the suburbs and slums of Nakuru, the men committed to help end the vice.

The campaign targets men from all walks of life and is fronted by the Gender Violence Recovery Centre with support from UN Women. It is in line with Africa UNiTE, the regional component of the UN Secretary General’s UNiTE to End Violence Against Women Campaign.

WFP Goes ‘cash-lite’ in Kenya’s arid lands, Giving People More Choice and Boosting Businesses

In a remote village in Kenya’s arid lands, Sororo Galgalo walks into a shop and greets the shopkeeper in her native Borana language. Galgalo checks under her buibui (robe) and removes a bank card bearing the logos of Equity Bank and MasterCard. The shopkeeper swipes the card on a handheld device and passes it to Galgalo, who inserts her pin number. Together they confirm that her bank account has been credited with money from the World Food Programme (WFP). She is now ready to shop.

In Merti, a village about 500km north of Nairobi, Galgalo is among 1,000 people who receive WFP food assistance through a pilot cash transfer project, dubbed ‘cash-lite’. WFP implements the project with Kenya’s Equity Bank and MasterCard.

Using special bank cards, Galgalo and others in her community are able to buy food directly from local shops. As well as being able to choose what to feed their families, they do not have to queue at the bank to withdraw physical cash, making cash-lite more convenient and more secure. Before this, these food-insecure people received food rations from WFP.

“The card gives me the freedom to decide which food I will buy for my family, unlike when we were getting actual food from WFP. Now my family can enjoy a variety of food,” says Galgalo.

WFP is constantly innovating to reach those in need of food assistance in the most effective and efficient way. The cash-lite pilot is part of this push for quality, and WFP hopes to extend the scheme to more people in the future.

Each month WFP sends money to the bank accounts of food-insecure people in Merti. The amount received depends on the size of each individual family. The cardholder can then go to an appointed retailer to do his or her shopping.

“This is really good for us traders because we now have more people buying from us. When the people were getting food, they didn’t have to buy foodstuffs and they also didn’t have the money to do it,” said Abdulrashid Mohamed, one of the appointed shopkeepers.

As well as traders, Mohamed said local transporters were also enjoying more business: because of increased local demand, shopkeepers were having to bring more goods from the main trading hub, Isiolo town, which lies about 200 km from Merti.

“When WFP was distributing food, they brought it in trucks from (the port of) Mombasa, but now we are able to give local transport owners business to collect our stocks from Isiolo,” he

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UNHCR Signs Pact for Return of Somali Refugees

T
e the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) signed a three-year agreement with the governments of Kenya and Somalia on 10 November 2013 for the voluntary repatriation of close to half a million Somali refugees in Kenya. The tripartite agreement establishes a legal framework for the safe and dignified return of Somali refugees from Kenya and support for their reintegration in Somalia.

“Repatriation will be voluntary and refugees should not be pushed out,” said Raouf Mazou, UNHCR Representative to Kenya. “While return movements take place, the needs of refugees remaining in exile should not be forgotten,” Mazou added.

According to the agreement, the Government of Kenya will support the voluntary repatriation process while continuing to protect those who have not yet found a durable solution. The Government of Somalia will ensure the security and access to basic services of all those who will opt to return. The UNHCR role is to mobilize and allocate resources for the implementation of the agreement.

“We are the happiest people today as the people of Kenya, as we participate in this exercise that will see the biggest ever refugee camp in the whole world – Dadaab, begin the process of orderly, voluntary repatriation of citizens to their homeland,” said the Deputy President of Kenya, William Ruto, during his keynote address.

The Somalia Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Fawzia Adam assured UNHCR and the Government of Kenya that the situation in Somalia had improved significantly for safe return of refugees. “The Somali Government will put in place administrative, judicial and security measures to ensure a conducive environment for return and re-integration of refugees,” he stressed.

UNHCR appealed to donors for more resources to invest in education and health facilities in Somalia where the refugees will return to so that repatriation can be durable and sustainable. “Our role as UNHCR will be to support both Governments and lead the way in resource mobilization,” the UNHCR Representative to Kenya said. “We are in the process of mobilizing resources to start assistance to spontaneous refugees on a pilot basis in the days to come”, he added.

There are more than 388,000 Somali refugees in Dadaab refugee camp complex in northeastern Kenya, close to 54,000 Somali refugees in Kakuma refugee camp in north-western Kenya and more than 32,000 living in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. Kenya hosts close to 475,000 Somali refugees.
Initiative to Reduce Preventable Child Deaths in Homa Bay County Launched

The County Government of Homa Bay, in collaboration with UNICEF Kenya and other development partners, has launched a community led initiative that will drastically reduce child deaths in the County.

The Wadagi Initiative, which translates to ‘say no to preventable maternal and infant deaths’ in the Luo language, was launched at Kakrigu village in Rusinga Island by the Homa Bay Governor, Mr. Cyprian Awiti, and the UNICEF Country Representative, Mr. Kanyankore Marcel Rudashingwa.

Speaking at the function, Mr Rudasingwa said that the Wadagi Initiative was a unique opportunity to end preventable child deaths and improve the general well-being in Homa Bay County. “This initiative will certainly give direction especially at a time when the world is looking towards governments to realize their commitments to achieving the Millennium Development Goals,” he added.

The Wadagi Initiative, worth over USD 1 million and funded by the Canadian Government, is a partnership between the Government of Homa Bay, UNICEF and Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI). This innovative initiative will reduce deaths resulting from diarrhoea, pneumonia, malaria and HIV within the next two years.

Within the project period, over 2,000 trained community volunteers working with local health workers, will visit on a regular basis the homes with children under five years old and check for the diseases and treat them or refer them to a health facility. In addition the community volunteers will administer vitamin supplements and vaccinations. UNICEF has already availed a year’s supply of vitamin supplements and the drugs. The affected children will be monitored in real-time using a text-messaging programme which will communicate life-saving information to remote areas.

Speaking at the event, Mr Awiti noted that more than half of the health facilities in the County lacked supplies and thanked UNICEF for the support. “Almost one in every 7 children born in Homa Bay dies before the age of five. HIV and AIDS prevalence is 27 percent, whereas the national average rate is between 5.6 to 6.2 percent, a serious difference which needs to be addressed by Wadagi,” he stressed.

Homa Bay County has the second highest under-five mortality in the country after neighbouring Siaya. Of the 24,000 children born in Homa Bay every year, 450 do not survive the first month of life and about 2,000 die before their fifth birthday.
**UNIC Nairobi Wins Prestigious Award for Promoting Peaceful Elections**

On 7 November 2013, UNIC Nairobi won the Special Jury Prize from the Peace and Sport organization based in Monaco for its **Sport4 Peaceful Elections campaign.** The prize was presented by Princess Charlene of Monaco on behalf of L’Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport. UNIC dedicated the prize to the youth of Kenya who listened to the voice and call for peace through the country’s sports heroes during, before and after the national elections.

The campaign was conceived as Kenya began preparing for national elections in March. It focused on devising a narrative that offered Kenya’s young population an alternative and promoted an overarching Kenyan national identity – and proposed the message to be delivered by players whose teams help build Kenyan unity: “You Deserve Peace; We Deserve Peace; Kenya Deserves Peace.” The rallying call nationwide was **Shabikia Amani na Kura Yako:** Support Peace With Your Vote.

UNIC carried out the campaign together with UNDP and other partners, namely, Kenya Premier League, Football Kenya Federation, Kenya Rugby Union, Google Kenya and Media Edge.

The Peace and Sport Awards were created in 2008 to recognize organizations and individuals that have made an outstanding contribution to peace, dialogue and social stability in the world through sport.

**IFAD’s New Projects in East and Southern Africa to be Gender Responsive**

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)’s regional **Knowledge Management and Capacity Building Forum** has embarked on an innovative initiative of bringing the thematic areas of gender, land tenure and climate change together during project design, implementation and technical support, towards further contributing to lifting poor rural farmers out of poverty.

This is under the Adaptation for **Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP)** which is aimed at the integration of climate change related aspects in both design and implementation of IFAD supported projects in the East and Southern Africa region. To kick-start this initiative, the first ever regional workshop on linking the three thematic areas, was planned and executed as a knowledge sharing event among IFAD staff and partners such as ICRAF, FAO, WFP, UN-Habitat, UNEP and CGIAR, in October 2013 in Nairobi.

Climate Change experts shared prevailing facts, with a specific focus on the East and Southern Africa (ESA) region. According to a study by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), in low-income countries, under an optimistic scenario, climate change could increase the number of malnourished children by 9.8 per cent by 2050. Climate change impacts, induced by a general rise in temperatures,
include an increased incidence of droughts and floods, land degradation, water scarcity and biodiversity loss. In East and Southern Africa, the effects of climate change will be compounded by the region’s high poverty levels, weak infrastructure, poor natural resources management and dependence on rainfed agriculture.

A key highlight of the workshop was the participation by all in the “River Climate Game” developed by the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre. In a fun but serious way, participants were able to unpack the complexities and uncertainties of climate change, especially when linked to land and gender issues.

As the IFAD regional director Perin Saint-Ange said: “We have to reshape our agendas to be able to address the various cross-cutting issues of land, climate change and gender.”

It is important to mind the gender gap in dealing with climate change and land related issues in projects, and to recognize that men and women farmers have different abilities to adapt to and mitigate climate change.

“Climate change adaptation strategies for women and men may be different due to the gender differentiated access to resources; unequal voice in decision making as well as gender-based division of labour. The workshop took these issues into consideration to ensure that the design of new ASAP projects in ESA will be gender-responsive. It is also important to make agriculture attractive to the youth given their large numbers and the potential they hold for the future,” said Elizabeth Nyambura Ssendiwala, the Gender & Youth Coordinator in the IFAD Regional Office in Nairobi.

Additionally, land tenure security, especially women’s land rights, decentralized land administration, and equitable access to irrigation and watershed management, will also have to be integrated in projects and programmes for sustainable development.

Workshop participants playing ‘the River Climate Game’ © IFAD, 2013

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“Omena”- a Side Dish for Poverty Eradication and Food Security

The public will soon be buying ready to eat Omena snacks as a side dish for poverty eradication and ensuring food security. Ms. Rachel M’Migangao Omollo, a nominated Busia County representative and Coordinator of Poverty Eradication for Development, a local NGO, says they have a programme to promote the snacks.

Ms. Omollo said this during a matchmaking platform organized in Nairobi by the Agribusiness Support to Smallholders (AbSS), a project implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MoAFL). The platform was aimed at creating linkages between Small and Medium Agro-enterprises (SMAEs) and their stakeholders. It also introduced them to suitable markets available and service providers in the industry. In addition, this would create sustainable businesses, boost profits, increase income and ensure food security.

Popularly found in Lake Victoria, Omena, a 3 inch long silvery sardine-like fish rich in calcium and small enough to eat in its entirety, affords the same nutritious advantages as ordinary fish.

According to Ms. Omollo, Omena plays a significant role in boosting the local and regional economies by providing employment. In Busia County, dried Omena has various advantages over other fish species because of its long shelf life, divisibility into smaller portions making it affordable, and its high nutritious value.

“I decided to enlighten the women in Sio Port, Busia County, to prepare and sell ready to eat Omena so that consumers do not worry about its preparation. We not only plan to package a whole bag of Omena enough for a meal, but also as snacks to nibble in between meals that will sell for Ksh. 60,” noted Ms. Omollo. “We envision delivering this to schools and hospitals to be served as a side dish,” she added.

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The third annual student volunteer symposium took place on 21 November 2013 at the United States International University. Last year the event was hosted by the University of Nairobi. The event brings together student volunteers and leaders, as well as volunteer managers to highlight the efforts of university students towards volunteerism and volunteer activities.

This year’s event attracted participation and presentations from the University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta University, Technical University of Kenya, South Eastern University of Kenya, Mount Kenya University (Thika and Nairobi campuses) and the hosts, United States International University. There were also participants from Change Mind Change future and objectives of poverty eradication.

Mr. David Tim Richiu, an Agricultural Economist and the Chief Executive Officer of Farm Concern International, who was the guest of honour at the matchmaking platform, recognized the seriousness of enterprises in Kenya and hoped that through this platform the participants will learn from each other. “I want to remind you that the hopes and aspirations of Kenyan people will never be realized unless we embrace agribusiness,” he stated.

Mr. Franc De Ferriere, AbSS Advisor reiterated that agribusiness networking was essential in building platforms and that AbSS is leading efforts to support SMAEs to develop commercially viable and mutually beneficial business models that link producers to markets.

Mr Charles Vuta from Uchumi Supermarket one of the retailers in Kenya, highlighted the sensitivity they consider while supporting producers as they encourage consistent deliveries of products with required quality standards and hygiene. Before products can be supplied to supermarkets in Kenya, one needs to get certification from the Kenya Bureau of Standards and a barcode.

“For you to become a supplier with Uchumi Supermarket, your products need to meet the customers demand as we encourage suppliers to be responsible in delivering their orders,” Mr. Vuta elaborated.

Through the matchmaking platform, women like Ms. Omollo are exposed and linked to suitable markets where they can sell their produce.
Youth TV Kenya.

While addressing the students, the volunteer managers emphasized on the need for youth to embrace volunteerism in order to harness youth energy and potential to meaningful development.

“Many youths ask me how and where to get experience. I laugh at them and ask them a few questions. How many slums do you see in this city? How many public schools do you see on your way to college? How many churches or hospitals do you know that lack capacities to offer service to people? You will agree with me that opportunities to volunteer are too many, you can get serious and valid experience through VOLUNTEERISM,” stressed Mr. Mark Rachuonyo, Dean of Students at Mount Kenya University.

During the symposium, the UNDP Country Director, Ms. Maria-Threase Keating launched the new UNV Kenya E-recruitment system. Applicants will be expected to roster and apply via the following link http://recruit.unvke.org.

Ms. Keating appreciated the leadership of universities for supporting student volunteer programmes. She also encouraged students to continue volunteering to offer services and solutions to communities while gaining experiences in preparation to join the highly competitive job market.

UN4U Leaves a Mark on Students in Nairobi

This year’s UN4U programme was held outside the UN complex at a university in Nairobi.

Students drawn from various universities were treated to an informative and educative forum when the United Nations took the UN4U programme to the Kenya Technical University in Nairobi. Among other universities that turned up for the programme were Kenyatta, Nairobi, Mount Kenya and the host, School of Information and Communication Technology at the Kenya Technical University.

The programme organized and coordinated by the United Nations Information Centre Nairobi, began with Professor Maringa, the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Built Enhancement, welcoming all participants.

The UN Visitors Service Information Assistant, Rebecca Gakonyo, was the first to address the students and brought to light facts about the United Nations,
especially the six main organs. She also explained the difference between the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC).

A video about the UN entitled “UN: It’s Your World” and another of American singer Beyonce ‘I was there and left a mark’ were screened for the students.

Ms. Mwendwa Kiogora, from the UN Development Programme, showcased a programme that promotes the use of ethanol stoves and saves energy.

The UN Volunteer’s representative and a Partnership & Communications Specialist, Mr. Kelvin Keya, challenged the students to take up volunteer opportunities and make a difference within their capacities. He urged them to “always give their best in doing community service work and expect nothing or even less compensation in terms of payment.”

In conclusion, UNIC Nairobi’s National Information Officer, Mrs. Irene Mwakesi opened the floor to presentations by the students. The UNIC, UNV and UNDP, in collaboration with Faces of Peace Kenya, a youth NGO dealing with issues of peace affecting young people, presented students with reading materials.

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the United Nations works to tackle global challenges and:

1. Provides food to 90 million people in 73 countries
2. Vaccinates 58 per cent of the world’s children, saving 2.5 million lives a year
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4. Combats climate change; heads a campaign to end leaded fuel use in over 100 nations
5. Keeps peace with 120,000 peacekeepers in 16 operations on 4 continents
6. Fights poverty, helping 370 million rural poor achieve better lives in the last 30 years
7. Protects and promotes human rights on site and through some 80 treaties/declarations
8. Mobilizes US$12.4 billion in humanitarian aid to help people affected by emergencies
9. Advances democracy, assisting some 30 countries a year with their elections
10. Promotes maternal health, saving the lives of 30 million women a year

For more information please visit: www.un.org
UNON Director-General Sahle-Work Zewde (centre) met with United Nations tour guides, “ambassadors to the public,” on 14 October 2013. From Germany and Kenya, the tour guides conduct tours in English, French, German and Kiswahili. They are the visitors’ most direct contact with the UN and play an important role in informing the public about the role and activities of the United Nations and help demystify the Organization. The Visitors’ Service is managed by Marian Aggrey (far left) and the tour guides are Devina Seipp (2nd from left), Rebecca Gakonyo (2nd from right) and Winnie Mokaya (far right).