



Hundreds attend the commemoration of the UN Day at UNON where the Vice President honoured the winner of the annual UN award

The United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), on 24 October 2011, marked the 66th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

The anniversary was attended by over 500 guests, among them Kenya's vice President Hon. Kalonzo Musyoka who graced the occasion and acknowledged the role the United Nations continues to play in addressing global challenges such



Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka presenting the UN Award to Pamela Achieng' Sombe while the UNON Director General is looking on. © UNEP, 2011

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as gender equality, combating injustice, man-made and natural calamities, and averting climate change. He referred to the upcoming 17th Conference of the Parties (COP 17) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be held in Durban from 28 November to 9 December 2011, and called on the UN system to take the lead in promoting environmental sustainability. In this regard, Vice President Musyoka applauded the opening this year, of the new energy and

carbon neutral UNEP and UN-HABITAT Offices situated at UNON, as a show-case of a sustainable future.

Turning to the security situation in the sub-region, the Vice President noted how the state of affairs in Somalia posed a major challenge to international peace and security, as well as to the credibility of the United Nations. He emphasized how the dramatic developments in Somalia in the last few weeks had "opened a window of opportunity for the United Nations to be more seized with returning to normalcy to

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Upcoming Events

25th November	: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
25th Nov - 10th Dec	: 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence
29th - 30th November	: UN activity at UNON to highlight 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence
1st December	: World AIDS Day
2nd December	: International Day of Disabled Persons
5th December	: International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development
7th December	: International Civil Aviation Day
9th December	: International Anti-Corruption Day
10th December	: Human Rights Day
18th December	: International Migrants Day



Part of the invited guests during the UN Day commemoration © UN, 2011

this African country that has not known any peace for the past 21 years”.

The Director General of UNON, Ms Sahle-Work Zewde delivered the Secretary General’s message which traced the remarkable progress the world had made since the founding of the UN, although the progress was under threat from a number of obstacles such as the economic crisis, rising joblessness and inequality, as well as climate change.

The UN Day event reached its climax when the Vice President honoured the winner of the 2011 UN Award, Ms. Pamela Achieng’ Sombe for her exemplary performance as a nurse in a remote dispensary in Nyanza province. Her work demands that she goes beyond the call of duty to ensure safe deliveries for women from her neighbourhood.

In her speech, Ms. Sombe gave an account of her work and the challenges she encounters on a daily basis, one being working with only basic equipment and

supplies. Ms Sombe has assisted several women who come to the dispensary with advanced labour to deliver safely. Without her help, these women and their children would probably be part of the statistics of those dying while delivering at home.

Nduru kadero in Nyanza Province in Kenya, where Ms.Sombe has worked since 2006, is a dispensary right at the bottom of the ranking of government health facilities in the country. The dispensary has no delivery ward or a labour room but rather a small bed shielded from view by a cardboard wall. In her own small way, Nurse Pamela Achieng’ Sombe is making a contribution towards the Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 (Reducing child mortality and Improving maternal health). While accepting her award, Ms. Sombe dedicated it to all the nurses in Kenya who work tirelessly to save human lives.

The runner-up for the award was 36 year old Leah Mwangi who was recognized

for her outstanding volunteer work in forest conservation and poverty alleviation. Her efforts have seen over 37,000 hectares of forest conserved and the community empowered to make their livelihoods through agro-forestry. Ms Mwangi works with the Kijabe Environment Volunteers (KENVO), a local youth group involved in environmental conservation and specifically forest conservation in Kenya.

Prior to the main event, a week long exhibition, by various UN agencies was mounted at UNON, focusing on the progress of the attainment of the MDGs in the country. In addition, United Nations Agencies displayed their information materials and posters to explain their work. Information materials were also distributed to the visitors.

The commemoration was attended by Mr. Clos Joan, the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT, Mr. Aeneas Chuma, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, as well as various heads of UN agencies and UN staff. Others included the media, Government Officials, members of the Diplomatic corps, civil society organizations and educational institutions. Entertainment was provided by Green Garden Primary School, Burundian traditional dancers and a local poet, who recited a poem, entitled “From My Window” citing the progress of the eight MDGs.

As part of the activities to commemorate the day, UNIC organized an educational outreach to universities, a college, primary and secondary schools in and around Nairobi under the theme “Ways the UN makes a difference in our everyday lives”. Various UN agencies addressed the students on their work and a DVD entitled “The UN- it’s your world” was screened. The session concluded with a question and answer segment as well as distribution of UN information materials.

IYV+10: Volunteer honored at UN Day celebrations

In an apparent nod to volunteerism and its importance in development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) the UN System in Kenya recognized a volunteer this year in naming Leah

Mwangi the Runner-up to the UN Award of the Year. Nominated by UNV for her exemplary work on MDGs 1 and 7 (poverty reduction and environmental sustainability), Leah’s award was presented to her on UN Day by the

UNON Director General Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde.

Thirty-six year-old Leah has had an interest in environmental conservation and community livelihood since a young age, particularly because she had grown

up observing how the local population destroyed the forest by charcoaling and timber logging to put food on the table due to the high level of poverty in the semi-arid Kieni region in the now Nyeri County.

Starting off as a teacher in a Secondary School in Lari, Kiambu County, one of her students introduced her to Kijabe Environment Volunteers (KENVO) a local youth group that is involved in environmental conservation and specifically forest conservation. She joined the organization in August 2001 and by 2002 became a part-time volunteer project officer assisting in developing a School based Environmental Education Programme which has today grown to be one of the strongest in the country. She quit teaching in August 2005 to pursue her life interest as a full time volunteer at KENVO.

Leah headed the implementation of an integrated conservation and community development project to link forest conservation to community livelihood. She steadily rose from the rank of a project officer handling a single project to a Programme Coordinator in 2007 overseeing the day-to-day running of KENVO as well as supervising other volunteers, leading in the implementation of all projects, mobilizing and training community members in the realization of the Forest Act that gives an opportunity for any community living around a forest to be involved in its management.

Over this period KENVO has grown from a small youth group that local people identified with bird-watching to a force that has managed to stop the destruction of the local forest, educate the community and work with the Government for a common goal, conserving forests and improving

livelihoods. In addition the organization has initiated nature based enterprises that provide alternative income to the local community. The initiative covers the whole of Lari District, part of Limuru and Naivasha Districts and covering a forest area of about 37,000 hectares.

A programme of which Leah is particularly proud of is the **Greening Keraita** initiative which is aimed

at restoring the forest through forest rehabilitation and promoting responsible community behavior, including involving the community in conservation efforts. The project's key partner, UNEP, supports one seedling for every one ream of paper consumed at a rate of USD1 per seedling. From giving \$2,000 in 2001, the donation stood at \$15,800 in 2010.

Since 2001, the project has seen the planting of 120,000 indigenous seedlings in the forest and 200,000 agro forestry ones distributed to farmers to promote farm forestry and reduce pressure on the forest. Partners have increased from just UNEP in 2001 to over 10 corporate bodies. The project has also seen community members



Leah Mwangi and her daughter at the UN Day celebrations at UNON in Gigiri © UNV, 2011

including schools trained in tree nursery management and supported with materials to establish commercial tree nurseries as a source of income. Leah has been able to oversee the project as well as mobilize community participation, raise awareness, support establishment of environmental clubs in schools as well as build the capacity of volunteers to support management of the tree nurseries on a daily basis.

As we celebrate this year of volunteers, we congratulate Leah and many more like her who are selflessly serving to better the lives of their communities.

UNEP and the Kenya Defense Forces step up efforts to address REDD +

Senior military personnel from the Kenya Defense Forces met at the UNEP Headquarters in Gigiri, Nairobi for a REDD + meeting on 27 October, 2011. The meeting, organized

by UNEP in collaboration with the Kenya Forest Service, was aimed at creating awareness and sensitizing the personnel on the UN REDD Programme - the United Nations Collaborative

Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in developing countries.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

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Delegates at the REDD + meeting at the UNEP Headquarters Gigiri, Nairobi
© UNEP, 2011

(REDD) is an effort to create financial value for the carbon stored in forests, offering incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands and invest in low-carbon paths to sustainable development. “REDD+” goes beyond deforestation and forest degradation, and includes the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

Whereas the military’s sole responsibility is protection of national borders against external aggression, it is becoming increasingly clear that environmental degradation is the main enemy from within Kenya: forest cover of 12% at independence in 1963 has decimated to less than 2% in four decades; bountiful terrestrial wildlife and aquatic ecosystems teeming with

fish have been depleted and many species gone extinct. Such scenarios of rapid loss of biodiversity become a national security threat once communities start to compete for diminishing resources to support their livelihoods for survival.

Following this ecological degradation, an Environmental Soldier Programme (ESP) was introduced by the Kenya Defense Forces in 2003 aimed at recognizing historical military support to civilian programmes. More than 10 million seedlings have been planted since 2003, and 75% have survived. Community participation has been central to guarantee ownership and ‘aftercare’ to improve survival rates. The guiding principle for ESP is to promote environmental conservation through national defense partnership.

Through ESP, the military is able

to address REDD+ by increasing the forest area through afforestation and reforestation; enhancing carbon stocks using longer forest rotations, enrichment planting, fire management, protection against biodiversity and enhancing product substitution using forest-derived biomass from a sustainable source to substitute products with high fossil fuel requirements.

Focusing on how REDD+ is aimed to create financial value for the carbon stored in forests, the military was encouraged to embrace the idea of taking transformative leadership in the use of renewable energy considering that the Kenya Defence Forces are a major consumer of energy (fossil and electricity) and natural resources. The military has recognized the need to conserve energy by identifying clean energy projects (i.e solar thermo, solar photovoltaic, wind energy and biogas generation) and opportunities for generating carbon finance. It was also encouraged to embrace enforcement of existing policies and measures to protect and improve remaining forest resources in ways that improve local livelihoods and conserve biodiversity.

UNEP Kenya Country Programme Coordinator Henry Ndede, applauded the ESP as a great environmental strategy towards addressing REDD+.

Other guests who attended the meeting included Mr. Alfred Gichu from the Kenya Forest Service and Mr. Richard Kagwamba, as well as UNEP staff, Ms. Wahida Shah, Mr. Moses Mbege and Ms. Emah Madegwa.

Prime Minister commits to the goal of eliminating new HIV infections in children by 2015

In a meeting with Honourable Prime Minister Raila Odinga recently, UNAIDS Executive Director, Michel Sidibé commended the Government of Kenya on progress in the country’s HIV response, including the significant scale-up in treatment access and expansion of services to prevent new HIV infections among children.

Over the past decade, Kenya has

stabilized its rate of new HIV infections. National adult coverage of antiretroviral therapy has expanded from an estimated 4% in 2004 to 72% in 2010. About 78% of pregnant women living with HIV are now receiving antiretroviral treatment to prevent new HIV infections in their children, compared to 21% in 2006.

“Building on the momentum of this year’s High Level Meeting on

AIDS, we are seeing unprecedented support for our vision of zero new HIV infections among children and keeping their mothers alive,” said Mr Sidibé, while meeting with the Prime Minister in Nairobi. “I congratulate the Government of Kenya for translating this goal into action on the ground.”

Prime Minister Odinga said that the Government will pursue the initiation

of a national declaration calling for the elimination of new HIV infections among children by the year 2015. "I will lead all line ministries to support this critical goal," he emphasized.

The Prime Minister underscored that Kenya's new constitution, adopted in August 2010, was a model for equity and social inclusion. "This is a great opportunity for us to lead on HIV and human rights for the people of Kenya who need access to services and justice," he said. Greater financial contributions from national sources will be critical to ensure the long-term sustainability of the country's response to AIDS, he added.

The UNAIDS Executive Director commended the Government for establishing the Kenya HIV/AIDS Tribunal under the Kenya HIV Prevention and Control Act—one of the first tribunals in the world aimed at increasing access to justice for people affected by HIV and addressing HIV-related stigma and discrimination.

Mr Sidibé was on a two-day official



Kenya Prime Minister Raila Odinga (left) shakes hands with UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé following a meeting at the Prime Minister's office in Nairobi © UNAIDS, 2011

UNAIDS mission to Kenya in which he was expected to also meet the Ministers of Special Programmes, Public Health and Sanitation; and Medical Services.

He also delivered opening remarks at a consultation for Global Fund Implementers in Nairobi.

Kenya Open Day 2011-Partnership for peace: women's perspective on conflict resolution, peace making and peace-building

UN Women Kenya recently organized the Kenya Open Day 2011 on women's perspectives on conflict resolution, peacemaking and peace-building. This high level meeting aimed at providing space to the women of Kenya to highlight the importance of their participation, representation in conflict resolution, peace negotiation and peace-building.

The participants included twenty women and two men representing the various regions of the country (Isiolo, Meru, Samburu, Maasai, Marsabit, Lakipia, Rift Valley, Mt Elgon, Pokot and Turkana, Nairobi, North Eastern). They had the opportunity to share and articulate their views, concerns, recommendations, experiences and expectations of representation, partnership and inclusion in conflict prevention, protection, peace negotiation, reconstruction and peace-building in Kenya.



UNON Director General, Sahle-Work Zewde, presents her opening remarks at the Kenya 2011 Open Day on Women, Peace and Security held in Nairobi, Kenya. © UN WOMEN, 2011

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The Open Day encounter served as an excellent opportunity to take stock of the progress that has been achieved since 2010 in Kenya and ensure that the Open Debate of the UN Security Council held in October 2011 was adequately informed and influenced by the voices of women of Kenya.

Some of the issues raised by the women of Kenya during the Open forum

included the need to simplify and create ownership of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, build the capacity of women leaders, enhance protection of women as well as the level of representation at national level, the inclusion of youth and the importance of information-sharing. The participants shared some of their experiences in relation to the four pillars of the Security Council Resolution

1325 namely participation, promotion, protection and prevention, and produced a number of recommendations to be included in the Global Report.

The UN delegation was led by the Director General of the UN Office at Nairobi, Ms. Sahle-Work Zewde.

UNFPA launches World Population Report as the planet marks the day of 7 billion people



Dr. Edward Sambili, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of State for Planning, National Development and Vision 2030 and the UNFPA Representative, Zama Chi launching the State of the World Population Report 2011 © UNFPA, 2011

On 31 October 2011, UNFPA Kenya Country Office, Government and partners launched the State of the World Population Report 2011 while marking the Day of 7 billion people.

The Report was officially launched in Kenya by Dr. Edward Sambili, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of State for Planning, National Development and Vision 2030. The event was attended by among others, Mr. Aeneas Chuma, the Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator and Mr. Fidelis Zama Chi, the UNFPA Representative.

The Report comes amidst concerns that the country's initiatives to root for smaller families need concerted rejuvenation. This year's report is titled

"People and possibilities in a World of 7 billion". The report explores some of the paradoxes from the perspective of individuals and describes the obstacles they confront-and overcome-in trying to build better lives for themselves, their families, communities and nations. (The report can be accessed through www.unfpa.org)

"Kenya is one of the countries where population growth has in many years outpaced economic growth, yet for sustainable economic development, the economic growth rate must be three times the population growth rate. This can be realized through provision of quality reproductive health services, especially family planning", said Dr. Sambili.

Women are currently on average having fewer children than they were a decade ago, but populations continue to rise. This is due to a youth population which has an inbuilt momentum for growth. In many developing countries, high fertility rates slow down development and perpetuate poverty. In contrast, the rich countries are worried that they have too few people entering the job market while there are too many elderly ones requiring social security. Despite efforts to reduce extreme poverty, gaps between the rich and poor are widening almost everywhere.

While the figure of 7 billion sounds awesome, this year's report challenges nations to see population trends such as urbanization, longer life expectancies and rapidly expanding working age populations not only as obstacles but also as having enormous opportunities for development.

"With planning and the right investments in people to empower them to make choices that are not only good for themselves but for humanity, our world of 7 billion can have thriving, sustainable cities, productive labour forces that can fuel economic growth, and youthful populations that contribute to the well-being of economies and societies," said Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, UNFPA Executive Director, in a statement presented by Mr. Zama Chi.

Kenya's population of about 41 million is currently growing by about a million people every year, with nearly half of that number living in poverty. With only 10 percent of the population earning 43 percent of the country's income, Kenya is one of the countries

with unequal economic distribution in the world.

The country's youth, who make up over half of the population, are the worst hit by poverty. They are a group that has formidable challenges. Every year, 500,000 enter the shrinking job market; they are just at the beginning of childbearing age; they usually have to reside in urban slums, where infrastructure and services are virtually

non-existent.

Another development indicator where Kenya is performing poorly is infant and child mortality, factors that indicate a country's development status. For every 14 children born in Kenya, one will die before reaching their fifth birthday. Further, about 7,500 Kenyan women die annually due to pregnancy related conditions.

Experts have remained unanimous

that progress in managing population challenges will be achieved through empowering women and girls to participate in societies on equal footing with men and boys.

"We need to empower women to make fundamental decisions about their lives, including decisions related to the timing and spacing of pregnancies and births," stressed Dr. Sambili.

Women Parliamentarians lead the way in the 2012 general elections

As part of the UN Women Kenya office leadership programme, twelve women parliamentarians and 35 of their mentees were recently trained in Mombasa, Kenya from 22 to 25 October 2011. The training empowered the politicians to explore and appreciate what it means to be a woman and a leader within the public and private spheres.

The leadership training was conducted by renowned trainer Barbro Dahlbom-Hall. It provided an opportunity for the female parliamentarians to share experiences with their mentees. It also created a platform for a feedback session following the impact of the first training held earlier this year in May in Sweden.

Supported by the Swedish Embassy in partnership with UN Women Kenya Office, the training comes on the heels of the new constitution that has entrenched the affirmative action principle of not more than two-thirds of the same gender in elective positions as stipulated in Article 97 (a) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010.

For UN Women, the leadership training enhances its focus on public accountability to gender equality and women's human rights. Under its 2011-2013 Strategic Plan, UN Women supports women's leadership in democratic governance and peace-building, and also promotes the transformation of policy processes to reduce women's poverty.

According to Barbro, the women of Africa are the strongest in the world and,



Leadership training for Kenyan women Members of Parliament in Mombasa, Kenya © UN WOMEN, 2011

therefore, there is need for them to learn how to lead in a management position. Commenting on how the training has transformed her life, Honourable Lina Kilimo, who is the Assistant Minister of Cooperatives and also Chairperson of Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA) said: "The training has taught me how to be a leader as a woman and it has made me see the alternative ways of leadership".

For nominated Member of Parliament Millie Odhiambo the training was a life changing experience. Speaking during the leadership feedback session after they had attended the Barbro

Dahlbom-Hall Leadership Training in Sweden, Odhiambo said there was need to transfer the skills they learnt to other women. "The 2012 general elections give us an opportunity to work with other women so that we can realise the two thirds gender principle to avoid being pushed to women's seats." Professor Margaret Kamar said the training in Sweden was empowering and a wake-up call in that it helped the women leaders to evaluate themselves. They were also able to develop different skills and add value to the leadership training.

IOM's mobile medical rapid response teams go to hard-to-reach migrant communities in Turkana



In partnership with Kenya's Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, IOM's mobile medical rapid response teams are reaching vulnerable pastoralists in Turkana who are experiencing the worst drought in 60 years, with little or no access to basic health care. © IOM 2011 (Photo: Esmeralda Da Conceicao)

It is hard living in Turkana. In addition to endemic poverty, recurrent droughts and floods, a poor state of infrastructure and limited access to basic health care, the region is being ravaged by the worst drought in 60 years.

Nomad Turkana, nestled in north-west Kenya, has been hit hard by the drought. Two years of scarce rains have resulted in the driest season since 1950 and effects of the drought look set to continue into 2012. Loss of pasture and water has led to the death of thousands of cattle, a main source of livelihood for pastoralist communities, severely affected by the drought.

"I lost half my herd of goats this season; I have been here 55 years and lived through many droughts, but I have never seen anything this bad," says Ereng Nangiuro, one of the 12 million people affected.

Sprawling empty arid land stretches for miles. The nearest health centre is kilometres away, leaving pastoralist communities in remote areas of Turkana vulnerable. With limited access to safe drinking water and basic health care, waterborne and water-related diseases

such as diarrhoea and cholera are ongoing challenges.

Worldwide, around 1.1 billion people lack access to safe water sources and 2.4 billion have no basic sanitation. Waterborne diseases are a leading cause of preventable deaths around the world, and are among the five major causes of death in children under the age of five. Such diseases can be successfully treated with oral rehydration solution and antibiotics, but in regions like Turkana, health centres are rare, and those in existence lack basic supplies and trained human resources for provision of treatment and care.

"My nine children are consistently suffering from akirem (diarrhoea)," says Ereng.

Ereng and his children are one of many families who have received treatment for diarrhoeal diseases from the International Organization for Migration (IOM). In partnership with Kenya's Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, IOM's mobile medical rapid response teams go to hard-to-reach mobile communities in Turkana. Equipped with re-hydration sachets, chlorine water purification tablets,

de-worming tablets, and essential medications for treatment of common medical conditions, the teams distribute much-needed medication and conduct mass de-worming campaigns.

Small changes can have a big impact, which has been proven by health and hygiene promotion talks that IOM runs during the mobile team visits to hard-to-reach communities. Sensitive to sustainability and cultural practices, IOM's health promotion campaign complements local knowledge with indigenous solutions. For example, communities are encouraged to wash their hands with ash, a local disinfectant that is free and easily accessible. 55,000 vulnerable members of the community are being targeted with IOM's outreach programme.

In 2009 and 2010, IOM dispatched four teams on similar missions to crisis-affected communities in Kenya's Rift Valley, Western, and Nyanza provinces that were struggling to prevent and fight against waterborne diseases. Over 492,000 people benefited.

According to Grace Khaguli, Field Coordinator for IOM's emergency project in Turkana: "Due to the scale of the drought, water is scarce. This makes people more inclined to drink dirty, unsafe water. The situation is now more critical than ever. The worry is residents use contaminated water, and the area has very few toilets, which contributes to improper waste disposal. Lack of safe water is the main driver of epidemic waterborne diseases."

Senior elder Echepan Ngelecha, a community leader in Nadapal Village, northern Turkana, says: "In our culture, we divide illnesses into those caused by God and those caused by Ngidekesiney ka ekapilan (witchcraft). Thanks to IOM, we are now aware that we can do certain things to prevent illnesses. This partnership needs to be continuous because it takes time to change behaviour, like remembering to use ash when we wash our hands in order to prevent the spread of diseases."
