

# ANNUAL REPORT



# 2013

**Working To Give Each Woman  
A Chance to Thrive!**



Women's  
Empowerment  
Link (WEL)  
12/31/2013

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# REFLECTIONS

*Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors, Mrs. Faith Makome*

"The task of leadership is not to put greatness into humanity, but to elicit it, for the greatness is already there."

— John Buchan

*Message from the Organizational Director, Mrs. Grace Mbugua*

I am elated to present the 2013 annual report which gives a picture of Women's Empowerment Link's work and results throughout the year. Being an election year, WEL maintained the momentum of safeguarding rights of women as voters and aspiring leaders.

Through the Mama Kenya Campaign that was launched in February 2013, WEL advocated for a peaceful electoral process, calling on all Kenyan voters and leaders to observe peaceful resolutions to any dispute that may arise. Moreover, through street level activism, WEL in collaboration with women from beneficiary communities depicted to Kenyans the forms of violation women endure during conflict. Through this, we urged them to protect Mama Kenya, the mother of all 42 tribes in Kenya.

# INTRODUCTION

## *Who We Are*

**W**omen's Empowerment Link (WEL) is a non-profit, non-governmental, non-partisan organization supports and equips women and the girl child to realize their potential, worth and strength politically, socially and economically, through advocating for opportunities that explore their imminent inner strength.

## Regional Reach

Our head office is based in Nairobi, serving 6 communities drawn from Kibra, Dagoretti, Kangemi, Makadara, Kamukunji and Kasarani.

WEL has 2 field offices in Naivasha and Mombasa, with a reach in Baringo, Nakuru, Taita Taveta and Lamu respectively.

## *Our Vision*

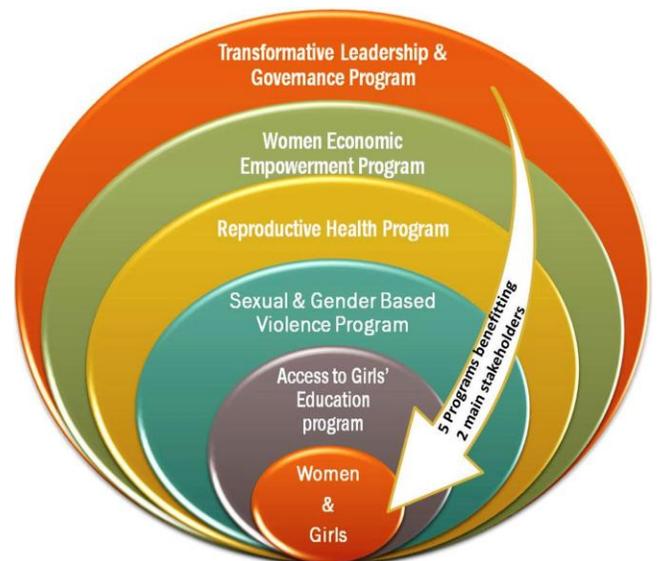
**WEL's Mission:** To empower women to realize, exercise their rights and freedoms, and access opportunities and privileges towards gender equality.

**WEL's Vision:** A just and gender sensitive society where women and men have equal rights and opportunities.

## *What We Do*

WEL has identified five purposeful thematic areas of operation that benefit our key stakeholder, who are women and girls.

- ❖ Women Economic Empowerment
- ❖ Girl Child Education
- ❖ Reproductive Health
- ❖ Sexual & Gender Based Violence & HIV/AIDS
- ❖ Transformative Leadership & Governance



## ***How We Do It***

We utilize the following strategies to realize results when implementing WEL initiatives:

- ✚ **Advocacy:** WEL represents unheard voices of women and girls through partnership building with government entities and likeminded partners;
- ✚ **Capacity building:** training leaders who in turn transfer the knowledge to their communities thereby spread awareness through a multiplier effect. We also mentor women leaders and girls to realize their full potential;
- ✚ **Skills development:** to improve on sustainable livelihoods for vulnerable women and girls
- ✚ **Community mobilization:** educating communities as own resource persons;
- ✚ **Men as partners:** WEL engages men of all ages as male champions and change agents in ending all forms of violence and discrimination against women;
- ✚ **Consultative processes:** to increase inclusivity, partnership and community ownership of projects
- ✚ **Psycho-legal support systems** - WEL adopts a multi-sectoral response to Sexual and Gender Based Violence and HIV/AIDS. As such, establishment of psychosocial & legal response mechanisms for women and girls survivors alongside health, and security responses.
- ✚ **Research for policy influence:** to inform the interventions and strategic policy related initiatives.
- ✚ **Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials:** are users friendly and on all the specific programs for use in various community settings.

## ***MILESTONES ACHIEVED IN 2013***

1. Training grassroots women leaders and facilitating formation of County Women Actions groups in 12 counties to advocate for establishment of gender committee to safeguard realization of women's constitutional rights.
2. Launched the Mama Kenya campaign that sensitized Kenyans to the horrors women confront in the form of sexual and physical violence, hunger and poverty during times of violence and encouraged Kenyans to protect the integrity and dignity of women and uphold peaceful electoral processes.
3. 7 articles of the KENYA WOMEN'S NATIONAL CHARTER informed the Jubilee Government Manifesto on women empowerment.
4. 41 Political Parties adopted aspects of the Women's Charter.
5. Establishment of 6 working groups comprising 50 women members of national assembly and members from 31 Civil Society Organizations, to pursue legislation of 6 proposed policies to secure the rights of women and girls.

6. Development of **6 policy briefs** drawn from the charter on:
- Women and Girls Protection
  - Sustainable Development and Women Economic Empowerment
  - Women in Leadership and Governance
  - Maternal Health
  - Sustainable Peace & Security
  - Media engagement, education and training
7. WEL has developed a National Action Plan (NAP), a logical framework with timelines for the realization of the Kenya Women's National Charter demands, with support from Ford Foundation. The NAP will also promote the implementation of article 27, 29 and 38 of the constitution as well as the prioritization of gender issues in the County Integrated Plans countrywide.
8. Through an annual symposium, WEL convened various actors preventing and responding to sexual and gender based violence in Nairobi to take stock of the reality of gender based violence in the county as well as award exemplary champions serving survivors from the hospitals, police stations, rescue shelters as well as from the communities.
9. Construction of the Mama Kenya Empowerment Center, a rescue center for survivors of sexual and gender based violence in Naivasha with support from French Embassy. The center will empower women to be productive members of the society and effectively contribute to sustainable development upon reintegration to society.
10. 27 out of 500 trained women under the Women Leadership academy were elected and nominated to National and County Assemblies. An additional 5 women serve in various county and constituency committees such as the CDF Board.
11. WEL established a branch office in Mombasa, late in 2012. It tremendously grown over the months, reaching over 5,000 women and girls in the past one year through the various community engagement activities. Currently, the office is actively carrying out activities in Mombasa region, Taita-Taveta area, Voi, Lamu and Tana-River.
12. WEL in collaborated with CREA to host the first ever Kenya Open Forum, a mentorship platform whereby senior women leaders passed over the leadership mantle to young women leaders.
13. 20 women survivors of violence were equipped with jewelry, folders and mat making skills to improve their livelihoods, through the women economic empowerment program. WEL has so far helped brand and market their products

through the Mama Kenya Empowerment Center. An online shop is set to be launched during first quarter of 2014.

14. 30 survivors of violence have begun their own income generating businesses, following business start up trainings held from Decemeber 2012 and September 2013. Over 60 women survivors of violence benefitted from the training.
15. Establishment of a technical working group towards prevention and response to gender based violence and female genital mutilation or cutting, in Embu County. This was with support from Norwegian Church Aid (NCA).
16. Launched and shared the Kenyan experience in the development of the Kenya National Women's Charter as an innovative leadership strategy of inspiring other African women to adopt similar initiatives to secure their rights in their respective countries. 250 women from different African countries attended international forum during the Women Steering Leadership in Africa Conference held in Malawi.

## THEMATIC PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### 1. Transformative Leadership and Governance Program

This program has propelled WEL into great heights at local, national, regional and international levels. This is a program that has given the local woman a voice and platform to realize her leadership dream! Evaluation that was undertaken revealed that women have been able to come out and speak unlike before. Similarly there was significantly less violence mitted on women during the 2013 election period.

Outstanding is the fact that women are integrated into positions that were predominantly male like heads of school boards and county committees. This can be attributed to the constitutional requirement as well as the vigorous campaigns that were undertaken by WEL and other like minded CSOs.

#### 1.1 Mama Kenya Campaign

**M**ama Kenya Campaign seeks to consolidate efforts to further the Country's gender equality agenda and to form a women's block to strengthen women's participation in various social, political and economic realms at the county and national levels.

It was designed with the objective of promoting peaceful elections in Kenya. The campaign achieved this by increasing knowledge on violence against women as leaders and voters and increasing civic participation during the March 2013 elections and at the same time provided a platform to popularize peaceful elections and advocate for fair access to opportunities of political leadership for women.



### **Interactive Platforms for Campaign Advocacy**

The campaign employed a variety of innovative strategies namely:

No.	Strategy	Impact: No. of people reached	Objective
1.	Voter Education Booths, In Collaboration With IEBC	6,932 in Nairobi County, 1,000 in Nakuru County 2,000 in Mombasa County	Avail information available and accessible to all members of the community to improve their understanding of the voting procedures and requirements, and increase their ability to participate in the electoral process.
2.	Street Campaigns: Theatre/ Word On The Street and activism	50, 000 and 20,000 respectively	Sensitized voters on the importance of peace and protecting women from violence and encouraged civic participation during the March 4 <sup>th</sup> general elections.
3.	Positive Graffiti	10,000	Popularized the 'Mama Kenya' sentiment that Mama Kenya represents all Kenyan women whose dignity and integrity need to be preserved and protected,
4.	Mama Kenya song and video were hosted on YouTube by Juliani	12,683 online audience who are fans of the musician	Popularized the campaign and united the country, while at the same time appealed to the youth, radio and TV viewers on the importance of protecting Mama Kenya and observing peaceful elections.
5.	Mama Kenya Rally held in Uhuru park	over 10,000 Kenyans	United Kenyans to protect and support women leaders and gave aspiring leaders from Nairobi county a platform to reach the electorate.

6.	Mama Kenya Documentary	500	Increased voter understanding of the importance of women in leadership in various political, social, and economic settings especially to uphold peace, realize gender equality, and propel Kenya's democratic identity.
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### 1.2 National Action Plan

The Kenya Women's National Charter embodies priority areas with regard to women rights in Kenya and complements the Constitution by giving clarity and timeline demands on the realization of women's rights by various duty bearers and institutions and is therefore an effort geared towards ensuring the implementation of the constitution.



The Chief Justice, Dr. Willy Mutunga, signed his commitment to the charter during the government consultation meeting, on the National Action Plan

There was therefore the need to develop a National Action Plan that would:

- Fast track the implementation of the gender gains in the constitution, in relation to the charter priorities;
- Promote the accountability of duty bearers, leaders and other actors' efforts in protecting women's human rights;
- Develop timeframes on the implementation of the National Charter priorities; and
- Provide indicators for government agencies and civil society while aligning with other national plans.

Towards this, consultative meetings with various stakeholders including government representatives and CSO leaders were held during the months of September and October, namely CREAM, UNDP, GROOTS Kenya, UPRK, and Maendeleo ya Wanawake Amkeni Wakenya/UNDP, Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) Kenya, Women Enterprise Fund (W.E.F), Vision 2030 Secretariat and the Gender Directorate. Others were government representatives namely The Chief Justice Dr. Willy Mutunga, Cabinet Secretary for Interior and Coordination of National Government, Cabinet Secretary for Education, Teachers Service Commission, and National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR), Ministry of Labour and Social Services, Ministry of East Africa Community and Tourism, and the Commission on the Implementation of the Constitution (CIC).



**In addition, the National Action Plan will also promote the implementation of constitutional provisions namely article 27, 29 and 38 as well as the prioritization of gender issues in the County Integrated plans countrywide.**



These engagements sought to establish the nature of actions that would propel the implementation of the women’s charter and so each stakeholder interviewed provided unique ideas aligned to their mandate. A total of 42 representatives were involved in the consultative process for the development of the National Action Plan.

### 1.3 The Women’s Leadership Academy Trainings

As Kenya prepared for the general election in March 2013, Kenyan women have been prepared and equipped with critical governance skills to help them contest for elective positions, through the Women leadership Academy facilitated by WEL with support from Amkeni Wakenya. The training was also geared at increasing the numbers of women who contested for the 1, 882 available positions across all 4 counties and 1, 450 wards in Kenya (President, Governors, Senators, Members of Parliament-MPs, Women Representatives and County Assembly Ward representatives).

Lessons on manifesto development, engaging the electorate and the media, campaign strategy and resource mobilization played a crucial role for the aspiring women leaders, especially since they utilized these new skills during campaigns.

Women Leadership Academy Trainings	
<b>Nakuru County</b>	45 women aspirants from Nakuru and Narok counties
<b>Uasin Gishu County</b>	45 women aspirants from West Pokot, Elgeyo Marakwet, Uasin Gishu and Kericho counties
<b>Kakamega County</b>	27 women aspirants from within the county
<b>Kajiado County</b>	23 women aspirants from within the county
<b>Murang’a County</b>	35 women aspirants from within the county
<b>Nairobi County</b>	35 women aspirants from the above counties converged for the <i>Inuka Ongoza Training</i> at Milele Hotel in November 2012

More women from Baringo, Siaya, Taita Taveta, Embu and Mombasa were trained on the Kenya Women’s National Charter with the aim of boosting their knowledge of the women rights agenda and enriching their manifestos and a transformative leadership agenda to undertake upon election or nominations to various leadership capacities in the national and county assemblies.

#### **Training Results**

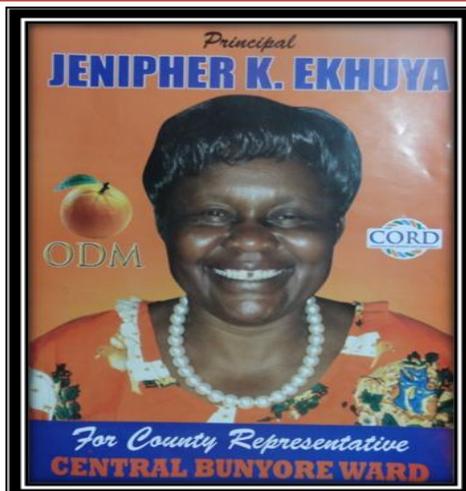
While few women garnered enough support from the electorate to their desired positions, some were in second and third place. They are however grateful for the numerous lessons they have learnt in the nominations and election race. Majority lauded

efforts by WEL and Amkeni to prepare them for the real world of politics and is certain lessons learnt will boost their performance in the next general elections.

WEL is proud to announce that **27 out of 500 trained women under the Women Leadership Academy and county charter dissemination forums were elected and nominated to National and County Assemblies. An additional 5 women serve in various county committees**

Prior to the elections, 27 of the trained women aspirants made it to the primaries. 13 of them proceeded to elections, 5 got direct nominations from their parties. 6 women emerged winners, while 1 was nominated to the senate, 2 to Kisumu and Nakuru County Assembly respectively.

### Elected Women Leadership Academy Beneficiaries



Former Principle Jenipher was touched that WEL and Amkeni Wakenya came all the way from Nairobi to encourage the women and values their efforts. In turn, the grassroots women went out armed and ready to encourage members of their community to vote for women. The women from Central Bunyore supported her by “selling” her name and her leadership agenda.

Hon. Jenipher Khasayi Ekhuya is now the Central Bunyore Ward Representative.



Hon. Regina Nyeris successfully vied for the West Pokot Women representative seat in the fourth general elections. She has benefited from 2 of the Women Leadership Academy trainings. Her manifesto was enriched by the training as she maintained few objectives which she can deliver within her first term in leadership.

She hopes to step up the campaign against FGM in the county and is committed to lobbying and advocating in parliament and to NGOs for increased civic education especially in communities that value the tradition.

Hon. Amina Zuberi was nominated by ODM party to the Mombasa County Assembly. Having been trained on the Kenya Women's National Charter, legal framework governing elections in Kenya and the devolved government, she is grateful for the exposure which resulted in her gaining knowledge and confidence when speaking before people. "I feel outspoken, informed...it has done a lot of good. I can be outstanding. I have a good relationship with the electorate and my colleagues."



Ms. Caroline Chege was elected as a Kajiado North Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Board member. She is also the youngest board member and also serves as the vice chair of the Roads Board.

She says these opportunities are great platforms to lead and serve, especially without the political agenda and Caroline has ensured she has sensitized women and youth on the available funds for economic empowerment through the meetings organized by CDF and Roads Board.

#### 1.4 Women Rights Advocacy at County Level

Efforts to increase the impact of advocacy at county level saw WEL with support from Action Aid Kenya (AAK) build the capacity of 4 of AAK county partners. During the 2 day Training of Trainers (TOT), partners were enlightened on: the importance of women rights; how to analyze county bills and policies on gender; community mobilization for advocacy on women rights; the National Women Rights Charter as an advocacy tool and gender responsive budgeting.



AAK County partners engage during a group discussion at the partners training forum in Ngong, Kajiado County

## 1.5 Inspired to Aspire! Equipping a Fresh Generation of Leaders

Young women in Kenya are at a great risk of missing out on opportunities, as they fall in two of the formerly marginalized groups, youth and women. Subsequently they need constant engagement to ensure they fully realize and exercise their constitutional rights in every sphere of society.

With support from CREA, a feminist human rights organisation, based in New Delhi, India, conducted 5-day training with 17 young women leaders from 13 counties, who demonstrated leadership interests even in elective political posts as well as other leadership and governance positions. The goal of this training was to increase awareness and capacity of these emerging young women leaders at all levels in advocacy, leadership and women's rights so as to become champions and advocates of women rights.

In addition to learning from experiences of women leaders serving in the current government, they given skills in leadership, networking, planning and development of leadership goals; the legal framework (national and international), advocacy, leadership and governance devolution and opportunities for civic engagement as young women.

These young women leaders have been actively implementing their work plans at community levels. They also participated in the Kenya Open forum, a unique forum whereby senior women leaders passed the mantle to younger women leaders, challenging them to take up leader



Young women leaders from 13 counties in Kenya who participated in the “Inspired to Aspire: Young Women in Leadership and Governance Training” facilitated by WEL.

## 1.5 Women Leaders’ Movement Building Training

It is often said that when you educate a woman, you educate the whole community. It is with the same belief that NCA supported WEL to empower women Members of County Assemblies (MCAs) drawn from Lamu, Nakuru, Machakos, and Kajiado

Counties. This was designed to equip them to advocate for the implementation of women rights in the county governments' processes through establishment of a vibrant women movement.”

The training strengthened their work on women issues specifically with regard to engaging with the devolution process, budgeting process and prioritization of women and girls issues.

Through the women movement building session, the MCAs were enlightened on the history and components of the women movement, community mobilization and participation in devolved government for advocacy, and the National Women Rights Charter as an advocacy tool.

One of the greatest achievements of the training was the establishment of a women's committee that will look into the issues of gender based violence and other issues affecting women in Lamu County.



County M.P. Shakila Abdalla during a group discussion at the Training forum for Lamu women Members of County Assembly

## 1.7 Strategically Advancing Women Rights in Kenya

**A** Women Leaders' block was established by WEL in May of 2013 that united women members of National and Senate Assembly in pursuing the taking up of 6 policies drawn from the charter.

The 2-day consultative forum at the Safari Park Hotel, fostered solidarity and networking for women leaders at various levels, where they learnt from each other and together began to strategize by interrogating the question of access by women to socio economic status and leadership. It brought together 63 Women Members of Parliament (MPs) and nominated Senators; 135 Women leaders and Non State Actors.

As a result of the consultative forum, the women leaders established 6 thematic working groups which would enable further the implementation of the National women's charter;

1. Media education and training;
2. Sustainable development and women economic empowerment;

3. Sustainable peace and security;
4. Women leadership and governance;
5. Women and girls protection;
6. Maternal health;

In addition, the leaders issued a communiqué during a press briefing, expressing their wish that the government honors its commitment to promote women issues. As such they tasked the government to establish a Ministry led by a Cabinet Secretary in the Office of the President to oversee the funds of three key departments: Department on Women Affairs; the Department on Youth Affairs; the Department on Persons with Disability and Vulnerable groups.

**T**his has so far been honored through the establishment of a Gender Directorate within the Ministry of Devolution and Planning.



**Women members of the Kenya National Assembly, Senate and Mwamko Mpya Uongozi Bora partners led by the Deputy Speaker of National Assembly, Hon. Dr. Joyce Laboso hold a press conference seeking government’s commitment to a gender ministry to safe guard the realization of Constitutional rights of Kenyan women.**

### 1.8 Pursuing Establishment of County Gender Committees

**A**head of the 2013 general elections, WEL with support from UN Women identified and trained vibrant grassroots women leaders from 7 counties, who organized themselves into the County Women Actions Groups.

The seven groups from Nyeri, Embu, Kakamega, Kirinyaga, Narok, Vihiga, and Nakuru put to task aspiring men and women leaders to show their commitment to addressing women



**Murang’a County aspirants speak about their leadership agenda during the County Women Actions Groups leaders Charter signing ceremony**

rights matters upon election through signing the charter in a public community forum. Since its launch in 2012, the charter has received commitment from over 9,000 stakeholders.

Following the elections, they have been engaged with their respective county governments in advocating for the establishment of Gender Committees as well as work with existing gender committees for the purpose of promoting women rights at the county level.



Charter signing ceremony in Kakamega County

A ninth action group was established in Taita Taveta County following a training conducted by WEL's Mombasa office branch. The group, which was comprised of women leaders who majorly addressed issues of gender based violence in the county now, have a new lease in engaging the county government in all matters pertaining to women rights.

## 2. Sexual and Gender Based Violence

**A**s one of the core programs run by WEL, the program has been on the forefront advocating for the safety of women and girls. In this last year, the Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response working groups previously operational in Nairobi and Naivasha were retained with regions like Embu County requesting through the County Government for the establishment of such. This reflected the recognition of WEL's work. WEL also efficiently established a response team in Mombasa and Malindi as well as worked hand in hand with selected shelters and was able to respond and rescue women experiencing GBV. Through the activities undertaken through this program, **over 14,000 women, men, boys and girls were reached.**

### 2.1 Strengthening Mechanisms

**T**he GBV network has brought together stakeholders from the community based organizations; faith based institutions; self help groups; community networks and government agencies including the police, administration police, judiciary, health, gender, children & social services.

To address changing dynamics of abuse within communities, WEL has been conducting continuous refresher courses to the working groups to strengthen the existing structures and adopt new strategies in the response of related abuses.

### 2.1.1 Annual Symposium

Another step towards reinforcing the positive strategies implemented by various actors in responding to SGBV is in the recognition of institutions and networks, who have been actively offering support and services to women and girls survivors of violence; giving them care and support needed to start healing and in accessing justice.

During WEL's Annual Symposium dubbed "Beyond the Glass Ceiling", Kabete Police Station was awarded the best police station that has the best Gender Desk, and works with the community and referral networks to ensure survivors access all necessary services for their well being. MSF France based in Kamukunji constituency emerged the best hospital offering medical support and care for survivors of violence towards their full recovery.

Zainabu Abdulrahman Shelter in Kibra, Josephine Nekesa in Kangemi, MaryFaith Children Center in Dagoretti, Pastor Margaret Odunde in Makadara, and Mama Fatuma Shelter in Kamukunji recognized for their exceptional services to SGBV survivors. Kangemi-Westlands GBV working group was recognized as the best organized team in prevention, response and referral of SGBV survivors to various service providers. This working group is known to be very committed, vibrant, organized, up to date with documentation and reporting, collaboration with other organizations, having a strong linkage with the police station, good team work and for community education on SGBV. Each of the other 4 working groups as well as the members received certificates in recognition of their unique strengths in responding to SGBV.



Left, Zainabu Abdulkarim receives an award for the best shelter in Kibra constituency. Middle, Kabete Police Station OCS receives an award for being the best in responding to SGBV cases in Kangemi. Left, MSF France representative receives an award for best Hospital responding to SGBV survivors.

## 2.2 Mama Kenya Empowerment Centers

**W**EL has undertaken a courageous step in establishing a rescue center (pictured below) in Naivasha to reduce the gap experienced by the response teams when seeking safe havens for rescued survivors of violence. Construction of this model shelter has been made possible with support from the French Embassy, and is expected to be operational in April 2014.



Construction of the Mama Kenya Empowerment Center in progress in Maraigushu area in Naivasha

Shelters and safe spaces are instrumental in ensuring comfort for the survivor. From this place of safety the survivors undergo medical care and legal follow up, as they await the determination of their cases in court. They receive psychosocial support to provide healing from the trauma and to enable them make a decision of whether to permanently leave the situation of abuse due to the change of environment or to mediate and reconcile.

Mama Kenya Empowerment center envisions a holistic approach in restoring the lives of women and girls. Through carefully tailor made programs, the center will empower women and girls to be productive members of the society and effectively contribute to sustainable development.

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## 2.3 Kicking GBV out of Naivasha

**K**enya has been celebrating the 16 days of activism for 10 years now. Over the years, WEL has come to appreciate the value of one on one engagement with members of the community in advocating for positive behavior change. This underscores the nature of activities



Ladies from Shalimar Flowers Football Club celebrate their victory

conducted that will ensure full community participation and education.

The Mama Kenya Street Activism was carried out with the aim of sensitizing the larger public on the dangers of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) and appealed to the larger Naivasha community. Over **10,000** people on the streets of Naivasha town were reached through the street drama communicating various themes to discourage SGBV.

A Women's Peace Football match held over two days offered a bigger platform to further educate the community on GBV. The match incorporated 8 teams from flower farms within Naivasha town and attracted more than 1,000 members of the community. Shalimar Flowers football team emerged the winners of the match and was awarded a trophy.

Running concurrent to the matches were other services such as psycho-legal and VCT counseling sessions. A total of 248 people underwent voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) which surpassed the expected turnout of 200.

These activities culminated on December 10, with a peace procession to commemorate the International Human Rights Day and creating awareness on the same in the market place. It was a huge success as after the event all the members present were asked to sign a pledge urging them to help end all forms of sexual and gender based violence.

## 2.4 Speaking up for the Afflicted in Mombasa

**W**EL established a 35 member response team that handles SGBV cases at the grass root level. As a result, cases have ceased to disappear and are now appropriately dealt with, to the joy of the survivors.

WEL Mombasa Office has also taken the opportunity to engage with school children, like during the Day of the African Child. With support from the school administration, WEL officers and response team



One of the Mombasa Response team members interacts with Maweni primary School Children during the day of the African Child celebrations

members commemorated the day at Maweni Primary School, under theme: *Eliminating harmful social and cultural practises affecting our children*. The 700 students from class

four to class eight were enlightened on gender based violence, human reproductive health as well as on the Children Act.

As a result, the school took the initiative to see to it that there was the establishment of a health club that would act as an advocacy platform for the children in the school. It also offered a great opportunity to bridge the gap between the teachers and the students, all who were present at the forum. The reception of this forum was greatly welcomed and other schools have requested for similar engagements in their schools.

WEL in collaboration with the Mombasa response team also identified a need to empower women and girls from Maweni in Nyali constituency, on their rights. Majority of women became active ambassadors of change and are now on the forefront to eradicate violence in the area. Another achievement was that after the training



WEL's Mombasa office Program Officer engages the women leaders from Jomvu constituency during a community forum

some of the women got loans from the Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) to start their own small scale businesses. A similar forum was held in Jomvu, giving the women a great platform to discuss issues that affect them and come up with a possible solution.

WEL also conducted training with women leaders from the constituency on the Kenya Women's National Charter and the legal frameworks addressing GBV. After the meeting, the women leaders came up with a way forward. This training was facilitated by the area member of parliament, member of the county assembly of the area for the area and members of the county executive committees from the area.

## 2.4 The way forward

Despite the challenges faced by the working groups they have made some commendable steps towards growth and we look forward to achievement of greater heights. Training and capacity building of the GBV working groups and shelters is of utmost importance in enhancing sustainability of prevention and response strategies.

- Build the capacity of working groups to fundraise to support their community initiatives;

- Continue empowering women survivors of violence economically having identified the lack financial freedom as the major root cause keeping women in abusive relationships;
- There is a need for functional literacy and life skills training programs for GBV survivors as part of their rehabilitation and reintegration since most of them come from simple family background and cannot depend on themselves and that is why most of them opt to stay in the shelter for a long time making it difficult for the owners to sustain them;
- The duty bearers – the police, Local councils and health workers need to constantly play their part of ensuring that survivors who experience GBV are treated and evidence collected and preserved properly to help survivors access justice;
- Security actors must receive training on prevention of and response to GBV, including the guiding principles; human rights and women’s rights; and codes of conduct (prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse. It is important that security actors understand that many survivors/victims of GBV do not want intervention from security actors. It is also important, however, that security actors maintain awareness of security issues in the setting.

### 3. Reproductive Health Program

**W**EL continues to be committed to facilitating increased access to information on reproductive health and rights. In 2013, WEL sought commitment to advancing women rights in Kenya from women members of National and Senate assembly and from civil society organization. This was through the establishment of working groups to pursue six policies. Key among them is the Maternal Health Thematic working group which will pursue the implementation of the reproductive health priorities of women expressed in the Kenya Women’s National Charter.

This came at an opportune time, especially following the presidential directive on Madaraka day of free maternal care for women in Kenya. The working group will agitate for a maternal health policy that will make implementation of the directive achievable and beneficial to women.

In addition, this working group will benchmark progress of the implementation of the national and county governments of the promises made in the Jubilee Government’s manifesto. Below is a table comparing the charter priorities and the manifesto promises:

## LINKAGE OF THE CHARTER & JUBILEE GOVERNMENT MANIFESTO

### The Kenya Women's National Charter

### Jubilee Government Manifesto

#### Article 12: Reproductive and Health Care Rights

- Calls for policy and legislation to affirm issues of fertility, number and spacing of children, contraception, protection from STDs including HIV/AIDS, family planning education
- Free medical treatment in cases of sexual violence, reproductive health needs and no detention of women in hospitals relating to maternity, after birth services, rape and incest
- Provide information on reproductive health

1. The Coalition Government will: Achieve free primary healthcare for all Kenyans, starting with women, expectant and breast-feeding mothers and persons with disabilities by increasing health financing from **6% -15%**.
2. Increase the number of physical facilities at community level and increasing mobile health clinics services.
3. Guarantee that every family has access to a fully equipped health centre within 5 miles of their home, with a national network of local community health workers promoting preventive health based at the centers.

### 3.1 Women Wellness day

**W**ellness days are a strategy employed by WEL in ensuring reproductive health care services are brought to the doorsteps of community women.

WEL-Mombasa office broke new ground in Jomvu constituency, through a women wellness day on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2013, in collaboration with Family Health Options and Human Rights Agenda (HURIA). It was aimed at providing free medical care for the women and children in the area.

The children benefitted from free mobile clinics, while their mother benefitted from cancer screenings and HIV testing and



Women from Jomvu Constituency going for cancer screening services provided by FHOK during the community outreach forum

counseling services. In addition, they were educated on the sexual and gender based violence and the legal provisions in the Sexual offences Act and the Children Act for the protection of women and girls.

### 3.1.1 Why Jomvu?

**J**omvu constituency was target due to the increase in cases of gender based violence attributed to the fact that majority of the people living in Jomvu do not have the facts on how to respond to gender based violence as well as the high level s of ignorance likely to result from low literacy levels. According to trained response team members who are on the ground, most of the cases go unreported for there is a rich culture of silence engraved in the minds of the people.

The constituency lacks an effective mechanism for the community owned

prevention strategy against gender based violence. This is a strategy whereby the community members can educate their own on the various methods through which Gender based violence can be litigated at the community level. This can be through the initiation of groups such as a sub-response team in Jomvu area and the male champions against gender based violence as male involvement is vital in the eradication of GBV .By practicing positive masculinity, this can be a great avenue for the men at the community level to actually play a major role in the eradication of Gender Based Violence.

## 4. Promoting Access to Girl's Education

### Program Objectives

**A**dvocating for alternative rights of passage has contributed to safeguarding the girl child, sparing them from the life altering cultural practice, giving them a new lease in life to pursue education, like their male counterparts.

Through Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) prevention and response campaigns, participants of community education and school forums have been enlightened on the Prohibition of FGM Act 2011, leading to change of attitudes and restoration of female survivors.

We hope that the journey will lead communities that still practice FGM and Early and forced marriages will lead a



Girls from Dagoretti working group perform a dance during a Survivor's Awareness Day forum

united resolve in abandoning the practice, through making a public declaration. 2 Kenyan communities the Pokot and the Ilchamus, already made the declarations on 15th June 2011 and 24th June 2012 respectively, amidst representatives from Ministry of Gender Children and Social Development, provincial administration and key development partners.

The program has been building the capacity of community own resource persons (teachers, parents, community legal facilitators and psychosocial facilitators), men, women, boys and girls

alike on the dynamic of FGM and Early Forced Marriages and work with them through the FGM/C working groups to prevent and respond to these incidences.

Through referral networks, communities are able to report perpetrators to the police while survivors are referred for medical, legal and psychosocial services.

In promoting girl child access to education, the Program is also keen on mentoring adolescent girls; by helping to empower girls, we equip the next generation of women leaders by averting them from violence whilst building a focused future.

## Narrow Escape

### *A 15 year old girl is rescued from Forced Marriage*

**A** fifteen year old orphaned girl was rescued from Maai Mahiu where she had been married off to an old man by her uncles. WEL Naivasha office received a call from the OCS in Maai Mahiu informing us about a young girl who had reported her misfortune to them after running away from the home where she had been married off.

WEL took up the case and ensured that the girl was safe. She was immediately taken to a shelter in Naivasha where she lived until we identified another shelter in Nairobi, where she would be in safe custody while pursuing her education without interruption from her uncles. She is currently living in that shelter and is set to begin her basic education in January 2014 for the very first time since her family had never taken her to school.

Such rescues have been largely successful through the interaction of the working group members. This is a response team that was created and trained by WEL to aid in responding to cases of sexual and gender based violence. It involves stakeholders from within Naivasha town who are involved in responding to cases of sexual and gender based violence and offering both legal and psychosocial support.

## 5. Women's Economic Empowerment Program

### 5.1 Why We Empower Women Economically

Since 2008, WEL has been implementing the Sexual and Gender Based (SGBV) and HIV/AIDS program by working with 14 Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response working groups in the informal settlement (slums) of Nairobi, Naivasha and Mombasa.

Through them we have established that most violence towards women is committed by an intimate partner, as 90% off reported perpetrators are men. This is attributed to women economic dependence on men which underscores the reason why women choose to remain in abusive relationships, environment and often fear to report the horrors they go through.

### 5.2 Our work

We believe that the strength of a woman is the strength of Africa. Economic empowerment of women is a means to reduce sexual and gender based violence as well as poverty among women hence better health, girl child education and nutrition for children and families. Ultimately it will promote gender equality, reduced violence and create self sufficiency. WEL targets is to make sure over 100 young women have sustainable income through entrepreneurial activities by 2014 and ensure they start IGAs as they rise from small scale to medium entrepreneurs.



Survivors learn how to make mats/ wall hangings



A survivor learns how to make jewelry

Women Economic Empowerment program brings survivors into formal organized group set-up and provides entrepreneurial and finance management trainings, handicraft skill and start-up capital through a revolving fund, monitoring and mentorship of business as well as branding and marketing of handicrafts.

WEL builds capacity and informs of opportunities for income generation, which is particularly important since majority of GBV survivors in informal settlements are either illiterate or semi illiterate making them unable to be employed.

The goal of this program is to build economic capacity with the aim of creating self employment, help generate income to access basic needs of women and their

dependants, including medication and education to their children. This in the long run has reduced financial dependence to perpetrators and has enabled young mothers to say no to violence, leave abusive relationships and even seek justice on the long term.

The economic empowerment project now has two wings; the first is group's savings and loans concept, finance and business training skills to those who are capable to start individual IGAs and additional skills training for those who have skills and talents to make unique products that are sold in Mama Kenya shop. The ultimate goal is to make sure all survivors become economic self sufficient by having sustainable sources of income.

### 5.3 Our Impact

The ultimate achievement for the project was transformation of at least 30 survivors through skills acquired and income they now make as a result of these skills. A practical model now exists on what can be done with improvements from experience and lessons learned as far as enlarging the skills training project is concerned.

- From our business start up training in December 2012, 30 of the 60 trained are successfully running their income generating activities like selling second hand clothes and shoes, selling fish, running fruits and vegetables groceries and salons.
- 9 Shelters owners and 30 SGBV Survivors have undergone creative tailoring, jewelry and mats making skill trainings;

- Some of the products made by trainees include assorted mkeka and fabric folders; laptop holders, clutch bags, African design necklaces, earrings, bracelets, customized mats/wall hangings for sale. Some of the trainees have successfully perfected on the skill and have become TOT to GBV survivors.



- The trained survivors, 15 on mats weaving skills and another 15 on jewelry making have earned income from products they developed;
- As a result Mama Kenya Empowerment Center shop was established and stocked as an opportunity to market the products made by the survivors in order to generate income;
- WEL also provides a marketing platform in various platforms like an exhibition at the US Embassy, partnership with International School of Kenya (ISK), forums by partner organizations and during workshops;

- The livelihoods of the beneficiaries are slowly improving. Children of the first 30 women are no longer malnourished. They are able to pay house rent, school fees, purchase household utensils and their lives have become better and are gradually becoming less vulnerable to Sexual and Gender Based Violence.

#### 5.4 WEL's Vision for Women Economic Empowerment

**W**EL is in the process of setting up a revolving fund, from which we will give women survivors of violence capital in form of raw materials and tools, to kick off their very own income generating businesses.

WEL is also undertaking a long term project through the construction the Mama Kenya Empowerment Center a model shelter offering safety and psychosocial support to survivors of violence. In addition, the center hopes to equip women and girls to creatively, innovatively engage in sustainable livelihood ventures, upon reintegration to society.



“I t was amazing to discover the potential that lies within me. I now can see what I can do to earn a living and how to do it. My eyes have been opened!

Through the economic empowerment training practical examples on how to start a business, I have seen that with determination, it is easy to budget, develop a small scale business plan and come out of poverty!”

*Jenifer, 24 years, Runs her own Grocery Stall in Toi Market, Kibra constituency*

This it hopes to achieve through increasing access to economic opportunities for women and girls, providing psycho-legal support for women and girls to effectively engage in socioeconomic activities and to provide a learning platform for women and girls through capacity building trainings, networking, skills development, micro lending, export marketing and group saving loans.

#### 5.5 Testimonies from our beneficiaries

“I have progressed as an individual ever since I began engaging with WEL. God’s hand has been in this! Not only have I been empowered but I have the knowhow to empower others from my community. Following the folders training by WEL, I have been buying local materials and making other folders, which I carry to meetings and sell.

Currently am teaching 3 women and 1 of them has mastered this art. Am now trying to set up a structure where I can train standard eight girls on how to make folders and bags from recycled polythene bags, during the holidays.

So proud of myself, I can now make 2 to 3 folders in a day from scratch AND now I pay my rent without much problem; my children have at least two meals a day. I buy clothes for them and we are slowly becoming a happy family!”

*Beatrice, 52 years, Makadara Constituency*

# WEL ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT

*Women's Empowerment*

*Link*

*Financial statements*

*For the year ended 31 December*

*2013*

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## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2013

	2013	2012
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
Operating surplus/(deficit) for the year	=====	=====

# PICTORIAL



WEL, members of the GBV Prevention and Response working groups and CSOs during the Mama Kenya Peace Walk to Uhuru Park from the Railway station



Mama Kenya Street Activism draws the attention of Nairobians to the horrors women go through during times of conflict



Enlightening Kenyans on their voter rights and on the electoral process ahead of the March general elections



A mentorship session between senior women in leadership positions and young women leaders from across Africa during the Kenya Open Forum seeking to inspire young women to seize leadership opportunities in the economic, social and political spheres in their nations.



Government officials and Civil Society Partners who participated in the National Action Plan consultative forum



NCA Baseline survey in Kajiado County on the status of women in counties in light of the provisions of the Kenya Women's National Charter



Enlightening women leaders from the African Brotherhood Church on Charter



Women County M.P.s dance to Mama Kenya song during Safari Park Forum

## WEL STAFF PROFILES



**Virginia Nduta –  
Programs  
Manager**



**Loise Wairimu –  
Administration &  
Finance Officer**



**Purity Wanjiru –  
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Mombasa**



**Miaron Parsanka  
– Programs  
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**Rose Moenga –  
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**Jyothi Padma –  
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**Beatrice Mumbi –  
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