



2021 ANNUAL WOMEN'S CONVENTION

KENYAN WOMEN RISING



BACKGROUND

The promulgation of the Constitution on August 27th, 2010, ushered in a new beginning for Kenya as it addressed several issues that afflicted Kenyans but above all it secured the right of the participation of women in democratic governance. The Constitution further accords women equal opportunity and equal status as her male counterparts and has addressed discrimination against women in the social, economic and political spheres of life.

Following the first general elections under the new Constitution in 2013, we saw for the first time in independent Kenya the highest number of women ever ascend to leadership and decision making at both the national and county levels as well as in the respective executives. This was as a result of the constitutional provisions that require not more than two-thirds of the same gender in every elective and appointive offices enshrined in Articles 27 (8), 81 (b) and 177 (b). Despite this seemingly successful happening, there has been resistance from the male political elite as they have been feeling threatened by the inclusion of women and worked to short circuit the intent of the constitutional provisions which envision equality and equal representation of men and women in all spheres especially the political sphere. The male political elite have exercised veto power over the Constitution and essentially refused to implement the gender provisions to the letter so as to ensure that women enjoy the full rights accorded to them therein.

Kenyan women come from diverse backgrounds including ethnic, political affiliation and economic statuses. There are also many challenges facing women such as GBV, margin-

alization and discrimination in decision-making institutions, among others. The different women's organizations address one or more of these challenges. The Annual Women's Rights Convention will be seeking to set a common agenda and amplify and unify

the voice of the women's movement in Kenya to enable them to forge common ground. As we draw closer to the 2022 General Election, the political front will remain paramount so as to ensure women politicians will support women's agenda in the leadership spaces they occupy in the different political parties and coalitions. The women's rights movement and the women in leadership will be sensitized to work together in their respective areas of operation.

As we approach the forthcoming general elections in August of 2022, it is imperative that women come together to understand that we are stronger together and we must forge a common front to safeguard the existing leadership and decision-making spaces while seeking to have more women, especially young women enter into those spaces. Additionally, we will discuss the economic situation of women and how to ensure women's economic concerns are addressed in the post COVID world. This we must do united as a women's movement in Kenya or face the probability of making significant losses as the women continue to fall into poverty due to their loose connection to labour markets that have been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic and general economic downturn and political losses as the two-thirds gender principle remains in abeyance and continues being seen as a women's issue rather than a constitutional and rights issue.

REGISTER TODAY<https://crawntrust.org/awroc/>**THEME:****Kenyan
Women
Rising**

ANNUAL WOMEN RIGHTS CONVENTION

11 -12 AUGUST 2021



Nerima Wako-Ojiwa
Executive Director
Siasa Place



Prof. Wanjiku Kabira
Director
African Women Study Center UoN



Hon. David Ochieng
MP, Ugenya Constituency
Party Leader, MDG Party



Hon. Edwin Sifuna
Secretary General
ODM Party



Wafula Chebukati
IEBC Chairperson



H.E. Dr. Joyce Banda
Former President of Malawi



Dr. John Kitui
Country Director
OXFAM in Kenya



Prof. Julija Andrius
EBU University



Prof. Margaret Kobia
Cabinet Secretary, Public
Service and Gender



Amb. Dr. Mary Mbiro
Khimulu, Mbs
Chairperson, Board of
Trustees of the Water Sector
Trust Fund (WaterFund)



Daisy Amdany
Executive Director,
Crawn Trust Kenya



Hamisa Zaja
Executive Director,
Coast Association of Persons
with Disabilities



Raphael Tuju
Cabinet Secretary



Janine Cocker
Head of Cooperation
Canadian High
Commission in Kenya



Elizabeth Adongo
Senior Policy Advisor
Office of the Cabinet Secretary
Ministry of Public Service & Gender



Bina Maseno
Executive Director,
Badili Africa



David Sa Silva
Ag. High Commissioner
High Commission of
Canada in Kenya



Jackie Malomba
Founder and Principal
Partner, Afriwomen Connect
and Entrepreneur



Margaret Kimani
Head, Women & Youth
Banking SBM Bank
Ltd(Kenya)



Bishop Dr. Warari Wakabu
Secretary General
Inarela



Judie Kaberia
Executive Director,
AMWIK



Wendy Aura
Executive Director,
Young Women Leaders



Eunice Oyule
Country Coordinator
The Emerging Leaders
Foundation Alumni Network



Dr. Maureen Miruka
Country Director, CARE
International in Kenya



Ann Kutswa
Charlady of Ghana
(Table Banking)



Editor Adhiambo
Founder,
Feminist for Peace
Rights & Justice Center



Memory Kachambwa
Executive Director,
FEMNET



Lilian Museka
Programmes Officer
AMWIK



Hon. Beatrice Elachi
CAS, Gender
Ministry of Public Service and Gender

**Canada****CRAWN TRUST**
Gender Advocacy and Awareness Trust**The African Women's
Development and
Communication Network****CARE****OXFAM****AMWIK**
Association of Women in Kenya**DIGITAL
OASIS
LIMITED****WOMEN'S VOICE
&
LEADERSHIP**

THE EVENT

The Annual Women's Rights Convention 2021 on the theme "Kenyan Women Rising" was a two-day event where discussions on the dynamics of power and how it determines the way men and women are treated by institutions, policies, and laws took centre stage.

The way people are treated forms an integral part of what it means to be socially, economically and politically included. The conference discussed gendered hierarchies and how this fuels discrimination and exclusion and why it is important for women to understand these dynamics especially as they ascend into male dominated spaces of leadership and decision making. Additionally, there were discussions on what women's voice really is beyond just speaking and why it is crucial to maintain and sustain the spirit of solidarity and sisterhood with the women's rights networks from both the national and grassroots levels that have worked to open up male dominated spaces and to keep those spaces open so as to deliver better outcomes for women. There were reflections on the importance of women learning to work together across the

generations and separately in their respective areas of engagement to safeguard women's hard won celebrated constitutional gains and appreciating every aspect of the struggle and why it is important for all women.

There were discussions on women's challenges, resilience; celebration of the victories; and engaging conversations and stories around gender and other social justice issues including women's political engagement, economic empowerment and gender-based violence. The two-day event discussed strategies of how women can be at the forefront of promoting inclusivity, diversity and equity.

The convention took an intergenerational approach by having young women playing key roles and carrying out interviews streamed live on social media platforms. The interviews added a platform for more views on the theme and increased participation of stakeholders especially the younger women. It also sparked debates on current issues and bring more life to the convention.

Above:
The Annual
Womens Rights
Convention
event poster

Goal

The main goal of the Annual Women's Rights Convention is to contribute to equitable and transformative leadership in Kenya.

Objectives

- Re-energize the women's movement in building an intergenerational solidarity of sisterhood by agreeing on a shared frontier.
- Shape a clear engagement framework for women's political and economic emancipation.
- Harness the different women's voices within the political, social and economic spheres.
- Co-develop a 2021-2032 women's action plan.

Overall Objective

The emergence of a transformative women's leadership movement.

Impact

As a successful outcome, it is anticipated that the impact will be immense as the women in their different spheres of engagements move to secure the women's gains in the Constitution 2010 as well as position themselves for leadership and decision-making in the forthcoming general elections in 2022 and beyond. In the immediate term, we expect to see vibrant engagements with women on the post COVID-19 economic strategies as they advocate for policies and programs that will deliver dignified economic recovery to women and women groups around the country.

Target Participants

- Women leaders from civil society
- Women leaders from the parliament and county assemblies
- Women business leaders (Captains of Industry)

Development partners

- High level speaker(s), expert speakers from the continent who are accomplished women leaders
- Grassroots Women leaders
- Women from the religious sector
- Women Market Traders
- Women in academia, university, tertiary, schools and research
- Women in media
- Women in Manufacturing
- Women leading key government institutions
- Women from Executive
- Political Party Leaders

Conference Hosting

The conference was a [virtual Event](#) featuring virtual attendance streamed live from the CIO studios and hosted on <https://crawntrust.org/awroc/>

Support Team

- Conference moderator: Ms. Verah Okeyo
- Sign language interpreters: Ms. Nancy Chege & Ms. Tracy Wairimu
- Rapporteurs: Ms. Anne Waruguru Kiai & Ms. Idah Knowles
- Event coordinator: Ms. Noelina Adagala
- Technical support: Digital Oasis



DAY 1

Day 1: 11, August 2021 Proceedings

The convention kicked off with the Kenyan national anthem and the East African Federation anthem followed by a word of prayer led by Ms. Verah Okeyo.

Session 1:

Opening session-opening remarks

Opening Remarks and Context Setting



Ms. Daisy Amdany,
Executive Director, CRAWN Trust

Ms. Amdany began by noting that the annual women's rights convention-AWRC was happening at an opportune time; exactly one year to the general elections. Ms. Amdany noted that the convention was therefore relevant in interrogating Kenya women's journey against the 2010 progressive constitution which recognized women as critical change agents. In particular, she singled out the continued struggle to achieve minimum representation of women through the two-thirds gender rule and projected a grim reality where women would be facing a third election without concrete political and legal mechanism engagement support.

Ms. Amdany further appreciated the support received through Global Affairs Canada in hosting the Women's Voice and Leadership Program (WVL) and partner coordination namely; CRAWN Trust, Uraia Trust, Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW) and Urgent Action Fund-Africa in implementing the program which aims to enhance women's capacities and gender equality in Kenya. Ms. Amdany pointed out that the AWRC was

a collaborative event in collaboration with FEMNET, Oxfam, Badili Africa, in WEE Hub, Coast, Association for Persons with Disability and several other organizations.

"We will discuss how we're going to work together to build a solidarity of sisterhood. We keep saying women are the majority, we have to make those numbers count to ensure that we have maximum women elected in 2022, and that women are also economically empowered because we cannot discuss politics and not discuss the economy for the feminization of poverty must end" Ms. Amdany Stated.

Ms. Amdany went further to stress that we could not discuss politics and exclude the economy. Further, she added that feminization of poverty must end and that women must be centered in post COVID economic strategies. Ms. Amdany then went ahead and invited the participants to engage in vibrant conversations on how Kenyan women are rising and to look forward to the unveiling of the inclusion charter and the women agenda strategy 2021 -2032.



Ms. Hamisa Zaja,
Founder, Coast Association for
Persons Living with Disabilities

Ms. Hamisa Zaja noted delightfully that the convention was a stark departure from the silo approach to women conversations and that the convention was an opportunity to unite and share new working strategies. She delightfully invited the delegates to pursue inclusive approaches in support of marginalized group's participation in issues of development, politics and inclusivity and further encouraged women to actively participate so as to amplify the voices of all Kenyan women.

Speaking in Kiswahili, Ms. Hamisa concluded by stating "Kongamano hili limewekwa ndo kila sauti ya mwanamke popote alipo aweze kuhesabiwa kama anaweza kuchangia katika maamuzi makuu katika nchi ya Kenya."

Translation; "This convention is taking place to ensure that the voices of all women everywhere, can then contribute towards the key decisions affecting our Country, Kenya" She concluded.



Ms. Bina Maseno,
Executive Director, Badili Africa

Ms. Bina Maseno stated that we lived in a society where patriarchy decided the kind of justice women deserve; for being murdered, abused and for being excluded in social, economic, and political processes. She expressed that being a Kenyan is to be in constant rage because of the inequalities that one sees.

She sadly narrated: "Just the other day, I saw a story of a woman who could not access the community toilet past curfew hours for the person who manned the facility had to leave early to comply with the curfew enforcement regulations. We live in a society where even a basic need and rights remains a luxury escalating cases of assault and rape in such vulnerable environments"

Ms. Maseno laid bare the conditions of young women leaders noting that they remained excluded from political processes accounting for less than 3% in political leadership sphere.

"When we gather here, it is to affirm the fact that individualism is not going to take us far, we need to organize" Ms. Maseno rallied.

Ms. Maseno concluded by inviting the participants to draw inspiration from women who have gone before them and also invited the female participants to organize in a bid to occupy leadership spaces.

**Ms. Editar Ochieng**

Founder, Feminists for Peace Rights and Justice Centre.

Ms. Editar Ochieng begun her remarks by acknowledging women as a key factor in achieving equitable and transformative leadership in Kenya. She called upon the feminist movement to demand the full implementation of laws and policies through collective action and women's active political participation and promotion of accountability in all spheres of influence.

Ms. Editar Ochieng decried the under representation of women in Government and political processes terming it 'alarming' and an indicator of the continued violation of women rights. Noting that the active participation of women on equal terms with men at all levels of development is an essential to achieve equality, peace and democracy, she stated that;

"We need to implement our constitutional mandate to guarantee women full participation in politics is a matter of human rights, inclusive growth and sustainable development".

Ms. Editar Ochieng called upon the participants to appreciate and recognize that women are not a homogenous group and that their lived experiences, priorities and needs are different and shaped by our levels of education, education, age, and residence.

"Women leadership is a hope of prosperity and development, both locally and globally, we need to demand for effective women representation from young women, women with disability and also senior women" She stated.

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Feminism is not about making women strong – women are already strong; it is about challenging the way society perceives this strength.

Spoken Word by Shikkey

Listen to the poem by [clicking here](#)

Session 2:

Solidarity Messages



Amb. Mrs. Mary Khimulu

Pan African Women's Organisation (PAWO),
vice president for East Africa, chairperson -
board of trustees water sector trust fund

Amb. Khimulu explained vision behind Pan African Women Organization (PAWO) founded in 1962, with recent celebration of 59 years since inception.

PAWO was among the first women's organizations to gather women under one single platform to share good practices, promote human rights, with a view to eliminating any form of discrimination against women and to support African liberation and integration of African women economic, social and political development on the continent. PAWO is a non-profit making entity that has observer status in the economic commission for Africa; has specialized agents in the African Union and is a member of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Amb. Khimulu recognized East African women who have been part of PAWO and have left a very strong impact invested in Africa. She further explained that PAWO is aligned with the program's being driven by women's voice and leadership to drive the transformation of women leadership for equality.

Amb. Khimulu appreciated women's awareness of their responsibilities to the diverse and common problems faced by the continent and urged African women of all political alliances to combine their efforts to fight against gender related obstacles in efforts raise the standards of living of the population and to make Africa a continent of prosperity, equality, freedom, democracy, peace, justice, and inclusivity.

Amb. Khimulu reiterated PAWO's commitment in joining the women of Kenya in their aspiration to achieve the AU agenda 2063- for the improvement of affirmative action groups living conditions.

"We can succeed though; we must always be aware that male is also half of the population. We must therefore consider them and work with them to achieve that goal of development, social and female inclusion. Let us all be people who make things happen, not the ones who watch things happen or wonder what happened" She concluded.



Dr. Rukaya Mohammed

Deputy Director, UN women Kenya

Dr. Rukaya Mohammed congratulated the women of Kenya and the government for progress made in achieving an increase in women's participation in decision making positions. She singled out the appointment of Kenya's first female chief justice and first female auditor general, cabinet secretaries, parastatal and departmental heads, chairs of private sector boards and professional associations, terming the same as a great day for women of Kenya to celebrate their victories, achievements, and have conversations on how to keep rising and shining, "We cannot drop the ball" She echoed.

pushing for special measures to correct historical imbalance. Further, she reiterated that the UN Women remains committed to advance human rights and women's rights, specifically supporting women's movement and strengthening women's voices and agents.

Dr. Rukaya referenced existing opportunities like Africa women voice network, CEDAW, Beijing platform for action and common women agenda as platforms that unites women across all divides to lobby and advocate for gender parity in Kenya and across the globe.

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When Women are free from all forms of violence, they participate better and contribute to the development agenda more productively”

In admission Dr. Rukaya noted that closing the gender gap to advance women leadership and participation in decision making required a multi-faceted approach to remove all legal and structural barriers, implementation of supportive normative and legal frameworks, including the two-thirds gender rule, promotion of women's leadership, and creation of an enabling environment for a positive shift in societal gender norms and stereotypes. Dr. Rukaya called upon the women movement and gender equality advocates to continue

Dr. Rukaya reiterated UN Women committed in supporting interventions and efforts to increase women leadership in decision making through elimination of Violence against women and girls, including violence against women, promoting women's economic empowerment and the safety of women and girls, promoting women leadership in peace and security, as key to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

Dr. Rukaya noted that on the political front, woman's representation was below the Constitution, and further below the UN Sustainable Development Goals target of 50%, observing that women account for 22.8% of legislators in the National Assembly translating to 9.2% of all 1085 elected individuals in 2017, a marginal increase from 7.7% in 2013.

Dr. Rukaya pointed out that the equation is even more alarming for young women. According to the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission statistics, only 1.5% of the female youth participated as candidates compared to 22.1% of their male youth counterparts. She stated that lack of a critical mass of representation in political institutions is a setback to female politicians to effectively contribute to politics, public policy and resource allocation for increased gender equality.

Dr. Rukaya further explained that barriers such as uncondusive environment, inadequate capacity and skills to mobilize financial resources for campaigns, biased gender roles, patriarchal attitudes, structural barriers and violence meted against women in politics, whether as both candidates or electoral officials, will often inform public perceptions on women's leadership, compounded by negative media publicity-financial storytelling as the inability of women to lead.

As part of the UN Women commitment to ensure increased participation, representation of women in political leadership in Kenya, Dr. Rukaya stated that the UN Women; would

continue to enhance capacity of targeted women to participate in important decision-making processes, strengthen capacity of women rights organization and key institutions to prevent violence against women in politics, work to reduce negative social norms that exclude women from political participation and in decision-making and enhance women's economic capacity to mobilize resources and finance their campaign with other stakeholders.

As part of the movement building across the world, Dr. Rukaya described that the Generation equality Forum is an opportunity to make gender equality a reality and to address the rising gender inequality underscored by COVID-19 and embed gender equality as a vital component of building back a better agenda.

Dr. Rukaya commended the government of Kenya for the bold commitment in regard to the prevention and response to gender based violence (GBV).

In reflection, Dr. Rukaya noted that both advanced and developing countries tend to gain more when women participate in leadership and decision-making spaces at the same rate as men. That closing the gender gap in the workforce globally could add a staggering 28 trillion to the global GDP, with a 12% projected increase by 2025.

Ms. Rukaya concluded by noting that Women leadership is critical in public service delivery and administration of public resources in all spheres of life.

Session 3:

Keynote Addresses



Dr. John Kitui
Oxfam Country Director, Kenya

Dr. Kitui opened his address by noting that the pushback against gender inequality had come a long way in Kenya with notable success. He stated that even as we celebrate these milestones, there's still a very long way to go.

"Maybe we should not be excited by the few women at the top and be distracted by that, I think we all acknowledge this glitch of residual barriers to women's rights and gender justice" he added.

Dr. Kitui pointed out that there were plenty of barriers such as unpaid care work by women, patriarchal structuring of society and work place structures that barred women from being able to exploit economic and political opportunities and that these barriers required collective action.

"I think the question that comes to mind is, what are we willing to sacrifice to support making the world, a just place for women. At the end of the day it's a very personal question. What am I willing to sacrifice to make sure that women around me realize their full potential?" He added.

Dr. Kitui also raised an important point on the necessity of recalibration of the struggle. He

noted that for a long time, the calibration has been a fight between men and women and that we're seeing the composition shifting to see that actually this is a conversation against patriarchy and promotion of a more feminists' way of living and working in interaction. He went ahead to invite thought alignment towards recalibration of the women movement struggle through across board collaboration, networks, 'use of new lines to assign friends and enemies' to further deny patriarchy lifeline.

Dr. Kitui invited the participants to humanize the women movement struggle deeply rooted in gender, ethnic, economic, racial divides and emerging threats such as climate change that continue to disenfranchise women and lead them to a life of poverty.

Dr. Kitui concluded his remarks by stating that;

"If fundamentally the fight for gender justice is for the fight for women's rights, we have to be grounded in both the injection of humanity to starting with ourselves and those around us".



Dr. Maureen Miruka
CARE Kenya, Country Director

In introduction, Dr. Miruka remarked that the convention would offer rich discussion on the role of women in Kenyan leadership, their political participation and ignite collective reflection on the importance of intergenerational learning and engagement.

Dr. Miruka noted that in promoting equal access to food, in a country whose 17% of the population are starving, just food systems have to be inclusive and women's voice must be heard within the discussion on the dynamics of power and how it determines the way men and women are treated by institutions by policies by laws, in communities and within their households.

Dr Miruka explained that it was still not clear to all of us that women's leadership has a multiplier effect on

the socio-economic and political fabric of our society. Further, she noted that the meta-analysis that CARE International conducted in 2006 proves there's unequal conditions for women and girls caused poverty, and that we cannot fight poverty without fighting for gender equality.

"We also see around the world, the countries where women have the fewest freedoms are also the poorest and most conflict ridden. it is for us to recognize that women's representation and partnership in governance in Kenya remains insufficient and in complete" she added.

Dr. Miruka further noted that it was still a sad reality that Kenyan women hold fewer leadership positions as committee chairs and speaker



positions in the Senate and the National Assembly, and that they have been unable to break through into significant committee assignments and other influential positions.

In addition, Dr. Miruka stated that the COVID 19 pandemic had set back gender equality by at least 25 years with increased loss of jobs, income, access to healthcare services as well as the lack of women participation in post COVID recovery strategies.

Dr. Miruka hoped that moving forward, there would be serious conversations around women engaging in the post COVID-19 economic and governance strategies to deliver dignified economic and governance, political recap of our country, and positioning for the 2022 general elections.

“Now is the right time for Kenyans and all of us here in this convention to reflect, reimagine and reset priorities, how we can reposition women and the role that they play during these uncertain times, and the upcoming political and governance processes, and to tackle the normalized discrimination against women, especially in governance and leadership” She stated.

As a determinant, Dr. Miruka noted that success of the program would depend on stakeholders leveraged the digital innovations and access to technology to network women governance political and leadership in the current millennium.

Dr. Miruka reiterated CARE global commitment in placing resources closer to impact and working in solidarity and partnership to influence at scale, citing the women’s voice and leadership program working to support about over 120 women’s rights organizations and networks across Kenya to advocate for women’s and girls, human rights, including governance, leadership, political and political and economic empowerment and equality.

“This program aims to improve the management, programming, and sustainability of local women’s rights organizations, and to enhance their ability to deliver quality services and increase effectiveness of Kenya women rights platform” She added.

Dr. Miruka acknowledged the Canadian government as a generous financial support system in line with feminist international assistance policy to support local organizations that had passed women’s rights and development, delivering SDG’s, increasing resilience to climate change as well as economic empowerment.

Dr. Miruka concluded by stating that ‘Gender equality and justice is at the center of their work’ and that deliberations over the next two days would be fruitful, with the successful outcomes paving the way for improved leadership and governance and participation of women in the Kenyan space’.





Mr. David Da Silva

Ag. Canadian High Commissioner to Kenya

Terming the convening as perfect, Mr. David Da Silva began by noting that the need for transformative women leadership as we approach the general elections has never been greater.

"We all know that there's a very good reason why when women's voices are heard and I mean truly heard, better decisions are made for everyone. Women's voices can't be heard, unless women are at the decision-making table. This is at the local level, at the community level, at the county level at the regional level at the national level and on a global scale" He stated.

Citing the Canada sponsored Miss. President reality show, Mr. David Da Silva noted that "they continue to be inspirational, they continue to be energetic, fierce, each in their own unique way, but also helping each other, they build each other up, they support women leadership in general, they network" just as the audience and convening guest list.

Reflecting on the 2013 general elections in Kenya held under the guidance of the revised constitution Mr. David Da Silva noted that there was record breaking bump in women representation at the county a national level which ought to be celebrated. He however encouraged 'much, much, much more' election of women not as spouses of powerful people or seat warmers in a party list, BUT as equal partners, leaders speaking their truth and representing their communities.

Mr. David Da Silva noted despite being far off from the two thirds gender rules specified in the Kenyan constitution there was progress and momentum because of their advocacy.

Mr. David Da Silva reiterated Canada's agenda in placing women and girls at the heart of all their interventions, be it foreign policy, trade, international cooperation, and more. "Canada is dedicated to helping boost collective action for women, and by women, just like the women's voice and Leadership Program" he noted.

Further, Mr. David Da Silva echoed his country's commitment towards continued partnership with local organization in Kenya in the areas of technical and vocational education, health, Gender based violence and ending FGM.

Mr. David Da Silva concluded by acknowledging the role of the Kenyan Government in working towards making women and girls safer, smarter, wealthier and more empowered in all decision-making processes affecting their lives. Further, he congratulated all the implementing partners for hosting an exciting and informative forum.

"Be inspirational! Be energetic! Be fierce! because when women's voices are heard and I mean truly heard, better decisions are made for everyone" He stated.



Cabinet Secretary, Prof. Margaret Kobia
Ministry of Public Service and Gender

Prof. Kobia began by extending a hand of sisterhood by noting that CRAWN Trust supported the 'Common Women Agenda' domiciled in the Ministry of Gender. Further, Prof. Kobia posed a challenge to the participants by asking; "What does it take to have a woman appointed as a CJ"

Prof. Kobia highlighted her ministry's role in the areas of policy coordination and promotion of gender equality by addressing the socio-economic empowerment for women, peace and security. Further, she highlighted the ministry's achievement in the development and implementation of family and property laws that allow women to own and inherit property, development of gender policies to guide National and County Government in gender sensitive program design and implementation. She however noted that a host of laws required amendments to ensure that women rights are fully protected.

Prof. Kobia also commended the government of Kenya for having appointed women to the positions of the Judiciary and the Auditor General adding that gender equality is not

just about women but rather the promotion of equal participation for more men and women both politically, socially, economically and culturally.

"I don't want to forget to mention the role the Constitution 2010 has given us in terms of the opportunity to claim women's rights as human rights. Therefore, when it comes to women in leadership, we must ask where we are now, and how we want to move fast as we are looking at the road ahead when it comes to women leadership and adding women" She added.

Prof. Kobia noted that COVID-19 had enabled increased cases of gender-based violence adding that we must find how we are going to support and advocate against gender-based violence, and especially female genital mutilation quoting that "We need everybody's hands on deck"

Prof. Kobia concluded her keynote speech by guiding several reflections; That we should recognize Constitution of Kenya 2010 as a change agent to engender gender equality.

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Gender equality is about how we can empower a critical mass of women who can champion for equal treatment and change the status quo

Prof Kobia added that the women's movement that delivered the Constitution of Kenya were no longer active and invited participants to learn from them. Prof. Kobia stated that women needed to run for elective positions because budgetary decisions are made in parliament and that gender equality is about how we can empower a critical mass of women who can champion for equal treatment and change the status quo and that will be influencing decisions; influencing communities and our society to change these traditions.

Prof. Kobia invited participants to subscribe to the objects of the Common Women Agenda which welcomes and celebrates women contributions without consideration to religion, political orientation, socio economic status and seniority of the women. She committed to implementing the recommendation of the Annual Women Rights Convention as they aim to harness the strengths of women in developing relationships.



Session 4:

Health Break & Power Talk

HEALTH BREAK

With Wendy Aura- YWLC
Conference Conversations



Ms. Aura, the Executive Director of Young Women Leaders Connect facilitated a panel of two young women with main focus on the 'Young women in politics and the Internet'.

There was need to build the capacities of women interested in political leadership in leveraging productive and responsible use of information and technology tools such as social media to pushback against cyberbullying, sexual harassment and body shaming.

Women in leadership continue to contend with societal pressures and expectations which have no bearing on their capacity to serve as leaders. "Women should be allowed to lead without being subjected to societal pressures" one panelist noted.

Strict online protection measures should be enforced to curtail rising cases of child grooming, sextortion, and cyber bullying meted on young women leaders.

POWER TALK

With Ms. Margaret Kimani Head of
youth and women banking- State
Bank of Mauritius- SBM bank



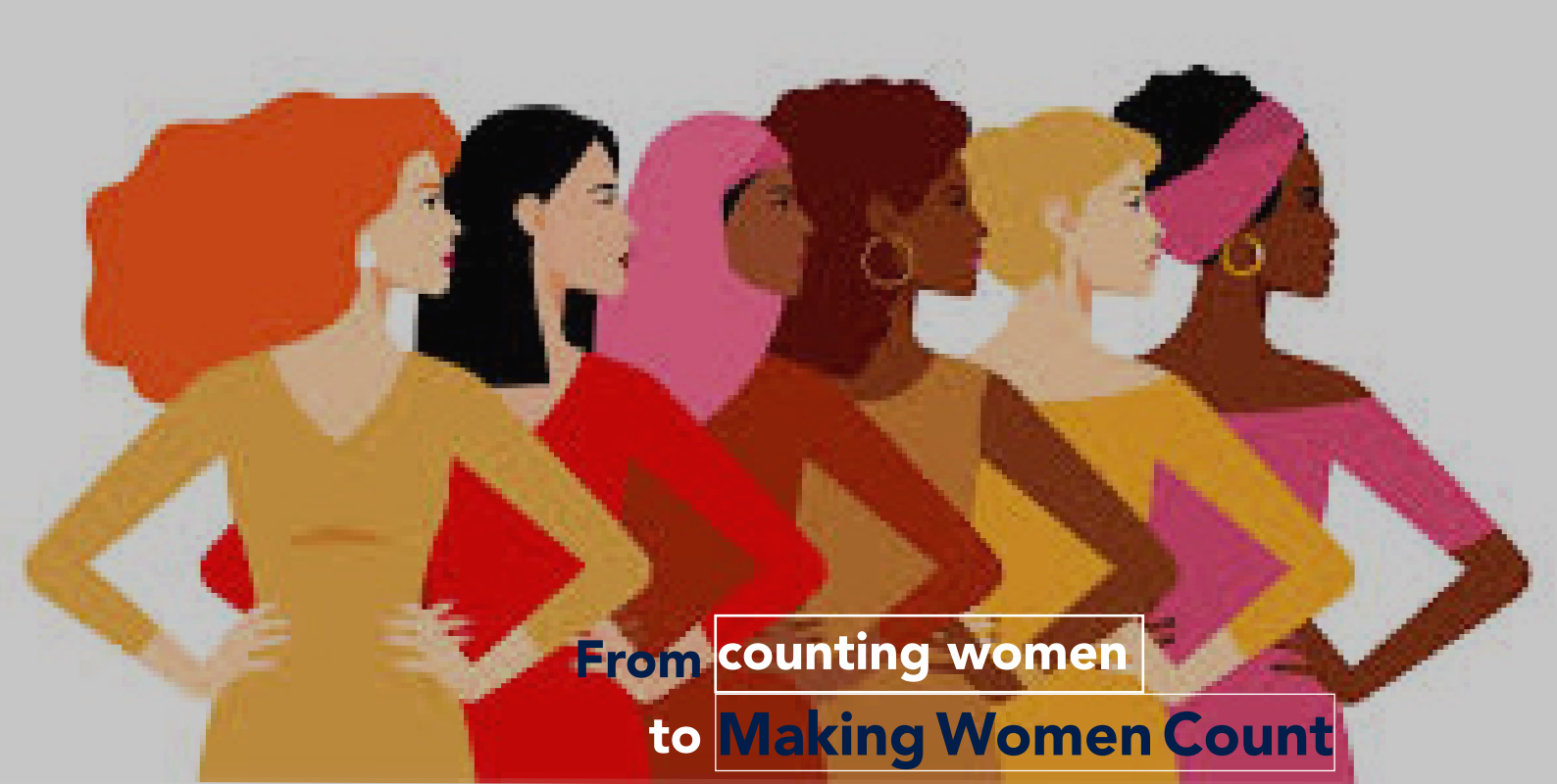
Ms. Margaret Kimani begun by noting that with the expansion of the financial market, there lay a wide variety of financial investment options for women to tap into. She emphasized on the importance of increased financial information, linkages to opportunities as a critical element in amplifying the voice of women and accelerating women economic growth.

Ms. Kimani urged for increased inclusion of women in both private and public sector working as a means of securing women visibility and inclusion. As a rallying call, she encouraged women to lift each up in all spheres of influence. On the need to invest in women financial literacy she encouraged women to tap into the re- working of the fourth industrial revolution, stating that;

"If we do not invest in women now, When shall we? If ourselves, the women in leadership do not actually facilitate this to happen now, then when? and if we don't, who will? The more women take up these leadership positions, the better for Kenya"

Ms. Kimani concluded by stating the need for the women to learn from each other and make Kenya greater for the Kenyan women.

"When you empower one woman, you will for the world. After all, when you empower women, the economic impact is actually not only for the women but benefits the society. Let women voices be heard and let's keep impacting women because it's the right thing to do" She stated.



Session 5:

Panel Discussions

Session Moderator: Ms. Ruth Oloo-Women's Rights Strategist, Kenya Programme -OXFAM

- Ms. Patience Nyange-Media, Communications and Advocacy expert
- Ms. Dorothy Aseyo-CARE International Kenya
- Ms. Lilian Museka Program Manager-AMWIK

Areas of Discussion

- Going from counting women to making women count, women's voices in leadership

Questions to the Panelists

- What does women's voice in leadership look like?
- What seems to be the real hindrances for the uptake of women's resolutions and issuing of commitments by duty bearers.
- What best practices can women apply in seeking commitments in claiming their rights?

Key highlights discussed

There is need to interrogate the status of women representation in both private and public sector in furtherance of making the woman count.

With the recent high-profile appointments in public service, Kenya is on the right path in terms of women leadership and strategically poised to compete regionally and on a global context as far as gender parity is concerned.

To succeed, women voice and leadership must be anchored in collective action from a household level, politics, business, informal sector and all spheres of influence to facilitate inclusion in decision making processes.

Amplifying the voices of women in the era of COVID - 19 is critical in informing and shaping resilience and recovery strategies because women have the power to lead and make decisions on issues that affect them.

The continued lack of political and executive good will in respecting the rule of law as far as the two third gender rules are concerned paints a grim projection of the fair participation and representation of women Kenya's upcoming political processes.

Lack of clear financial, institutional support and follow-up to enforce Kenya international and regional women's rights instruments, including the convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Maputo protocol continue to enable gender discrimination.

Unfortunately, our African cultures continue to condemn women empowerment initiatives encouraging laxity and stereotype thinking from duty bearers. Traditional practices and even the customary laws contribute to the hindrance of the uptake of women representation.

Resource mobilization, capacity mapping, strategic action and building coalitions are critical ingredients in re-building women's voices, visibility and their sustained participation in all spheres of influence.

In appreciating that women are not a homogenous group, there is need to be cognizant of context specific interventions that will secure participation of diverse voices of women.

Parting Shots; We need to continue investing in women rights organizations, women's movements, women's coalition, and the women's agenda in totality through funding and political goodwill; We need to continue being deliberate in amplifying women's voices as it is important in looking for a future where there'll be no female leaders, but just leaders.

Session 6:

Power Talk & Health Break



POWER TALK

With Zuhara Ogada Odhiambo

Ms. Ogada began by noting that women made up over 50 percent representation in the country as per the population therefore wondering why women did not feature prominently in leadership spaces despite leading for years from a family to the National level in areas of education, healthcare and even child care work.

Ms. Ogada challenged women to stop talking against each other and talk for each other in a bid to amplify the collective voice of women as that of reason and sisterhood. She applauded

the president efforts in leading anti FGM and GBV efforts under the generation equality forum.

Ms. Ogada hoped to see more women occupy decision making tables right from the grassroots to the executive levels of government.

"You will all be amazed, we don't wait for the government to do things for us because we've been gifted, we have it. We are natural leaders, that's how we were born, and God knew it. And indeed, it's time for us to rise" she stated.



Session 7:

Panel Discussions

Panel 1

Understanding Power and its Dynamics

Session Moderator: Ms. Memory Kachambwa - Executive Director FEMNET

Speakers

- Ms. Caroline Gaita-Executive Director Mzalendo
- Prof. Maria Nzomo-Director, Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies, University of Nairobi
- Hon. Beatrice Elachi-Cabinet Administrative Secretary, Ministry of Public Service and Gender

Areas of Discussion

The dynamics of power and how it determines the way men and women are treated by institutions, policies, and laws.

Questions to the Panelists

- Just how far are we from having a united and transformative women leadership in Kenya?
- Taking stock of women's leadership post 2010. successes, failure, opportunities-an honest look inward.
- How organized are women in relation to the upcoming general elections?

Key highlights discussed

Women have made great strides in terms of forming networks that have powered a breed of bold women leaders despite the power dynamics and structural challenges.

In reflection, Kenyan women have made great progress in taking up leadership positions in both the private and public sector, great improvements from decades ago.

Leveraging power dynamics, women need to steer conversations from just affirmative action 'numbers' to interrogating quality leadership that has potential to sustain the gender agenda moving forward.

Women parliamentarians need capacity building to enable them effect motions and bills that will address gender issues affecting the larger critical mass. In Hon. Elachi's own words, "Even as we bring in the numbers, if we do not come back and have a robust movement, Parliament is going to find itself in a situation where you have the numbers, but you are not achieving much on women issues, you will not achieve two-thirds gender rule"

Women in leadership must invest in networks and circles that will help them navigate rough political terrains, finance their campaigns,

help in formulating strategies without which, 2022 will present serious hurdles for female candidates.

Women must navigate past social patriarchal contexts that continue to condition women to remain as citizens with little or no engagement in leadership.

Developing and sustaining a critical mass of women leaders is crucial in building collective strategies, co-creating successful initiatives as well as securing women visibility in different leadership positions.

Women need to intercept and strategically position themselves in political processes as opposed to being beneficiaries of such processes where representation and participation is not guaranteed.

In securing the 'Kenyan woman success story' a movement shift from silo working to the creation of a diverse, across board multi sectoral support network is crucial in amplifying the successes of women in different fields and fueling the staying power of women across the leadership pipeline.

Navigating the 2022 elections require early preparedness of women candidates by le-

veraging on technology, capacity building and drawing from lessons learnt in the women leadership movement. There is likely to be an increase in the number of women because there is a lot of work which has already been done since 2017.

Deep rooted institutional cultures continue to rob women off political presence and representation in parliament.

"And until we change the institutional political culture, women will continue bouncing back, because culture is not friendly for women.

It is anti-women who are always being treated as a strangers" Ms. Gaita noted.

Political Parties must be compelled to comply with election laws that calls for representation of marginalized groups in nomination lists and internal positions within the party.

Women in leadership need to demonstrate solidarity leadership that supports all women regardless of political barriers in furtherance of the women agenda as practiced by women trailblazers in previous years.

"Women have to show up, strategize, speak up, organize themselves and create movements that speak for our critical mass"





Panel 2

What Role does Religion/Faith play in advancing women's political emancipation

Session Moderator: Ms. Winnie Njenga - Executive Director AFCCA

Speakers

- Ms. Fatuma Ali Saman- Educator and women's rights campaigner
- Bishop John Warari- Grace Tabernacle International Ministries
- Pastor Jackie Othoro- Purpose Center Church
- Rev. Father Dr. Evangelos Thianis- African Orthodox Church of Kenya

Areas of Discussion

Religion's influence in promoting women's rights in Kenya.

Questions to the Panelists

- What is the role of religion in sifting through the discriminatory cultural norms couched in negating the democratic rights of women?
- What is the role of the church in mitigating violence against women e.g., VAW, GBV?
- What commitments can religious leaders make towards pushing for women's political emancipation?

Key highlights discussed

On the role of religion in countering negative narratives when it comes to women the starting point is in the book of Genesis, chapter one, and verse 26, or 27 that clearly reveals that a man and woman, male and female, were created equal at the beginning, and they were assigned an equal duty, as such, the dynamics of power in the beginning were equal. There was a shared responsibility between the male and the female to do a particular task on the planet.

"In Genesis chapter 3, most theologians will call the fall, she is the mother of all, who was deceived by the enemy, by Satan, by the devil, and what happened here was to change the dynamics of power, from equality to inequality, to where they have been at the beginning, created as one to one responsibility. This equality lost its balance, inequality came into the relationship between a man and a woman, and unfortunately, that inequality has expanded over the millennia. It has become violence,

judgment has come in upon the woman, she has not been given the rightful place; she has not been allowed to take her place alongside the man in leadership. And many times, it is this chapter in the scriptures that is used to negate the role of leadership of the woman, because it is said if she could have been deceived by the deceiver, then there is no way that she can become a ruler. So, what happens when religion steps into this situation? Does it actually enforce the discriminatory actions against women and men in leadership? Rev. Father explained

The church has the opportunity to change cultural laws that subject women to discrimination. Society should know that the women are our own local and global leaders. The quality of modern-day society will be realized then we have women in leadership.

"We have faith in our women, we believe in them. And when we see our women occupying high offices. The church is obligated to preach more ethical messages as we have seen the shameful ashes of dehumanizing our women. Now, like the eagle or the Phoenix, women are rising from the ashes. We have isolated our weaknesses, and we have sought forgiveness of all injustices in oppression, and atrocities against our women. So in the church, we are cheerleaders, we are telling our women, we are behind you, we will pray for you. And we will stand with you." Affirms Bishop Warari

Religion has a bearing on women actions, perceptions and attitudes. Muslim leaders are expected to lead through consultation and

negotiations, unfortunately Muslim women continue to be left out of those processes.

The conspiracy of silence and obedience enables and legitimizes violence against women and low participation in leadership circles. Capacity building and information sharing on empowering religious concepts is vital in pushing back against gender-based violence and stereotype norms against women leadership. On mitigating violence against women, the role of the church is to speak up and stand for women who have suffered endlessly.

"We see our women, our sisters and religious leaders must know that their prophetic mandate includes standing for those who are weak and disadvantaged. And so, we have come up with safe spaces for this so that our sisters who are abused; who are weak, have got rescue centers" Bishop Stated

The church should put up grassroots structures to support women seeking political offices and to speak out against violence in any form. The church has opportunity to redefine 2022 political leadership by offering support and protection for female candidates.

Islam in its purest form provides a safe space for women and this supports women in the process of leadership, and provides them with guidance; Muslims can come up with a leadership institute that will provide guidance and help support such leaders, because that's one area that is usually neglected.



DAY 2



Session 1: Panel Discussions

Panel 1

The Role of Grassroot Women in championing gender equity, agency & economic emancipation

Session Moderator: Ms. Jackie Malomba

Speakers

- Hon. Nereah Amondi Oketch - MCA, Homabay County Assembly
- Ms. Ann Kutswa - Chama Leader
- Mr. Leo Kemboi- Economist, Institute of Economic Affairs-IEA

Areas of Discussion

- Harnessing Women's potential for building agency in Leadership from the grassroots.
- The effects of COVID-19 on grassroots Women.
- Inadequate gender response policies to address the economic needs of Women such as Access to Credit, Access lo-

cal & International markets, Access to Procurement opportunities for Women.

Questions to the Panelists

- What challenges are women at the grassroots most dealing with?
- What would you say are the major effects that women at the grassroots are having to deal with due to COVID-19 & what has been done to resolve some of the challenges women are facing? Including any COVID-19 adaptive measures you are currently applying
- How can women better organize at the grassroots in order to create a formidable

Key highlights

Intergenerational support and mentorship from senior women leaders is critical in bridging knowledge and information gaps in political leadership spaces if women are to navigate the current politically charged environment.

Women need to stop working in silos and engage in co-creation and support of the women agenda across political, religious and

ethnic divides to enhance women's access and participation in politics and the economy.

The private sector needs to re-work their financial literacy training and engagement from focusing on attracting female clients to their products and services to practically empowering the grassroots women with skills and information relevant to their needs.

The development partners were urged to ensure ease of access to grant compliance regulations to upscale grant intake by grassroots women as well as leveraging on table banking groups as units of training to enhance financial literacy and focal points in program design and implementation.

On the effectiveness of the credit Guarantee Schemes;

The main objective of the scheme is to promote enterprise development through access to quality and affordable credit to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Targeted credit support to MSMEs will lead to growth in output with the potential to uplift the lives of many Kenyans through job creation.

The program also seeks to alleviate the challenges faced by MSMEs seeking credit by offsetting situations in which borrowers with an equal probability of default have an unequal probability of obtaining credit due to insufficient collateral.

The panel however cited scope of coverage and amount as a deterrent to the schemes overall effectiveness. They opined that the Kenya shillings five billion allocation was inadequate to satisfy the demand, with a majority of the beneficiaries stemming from urban areas and relatively big firms.

There is need to employ a multidimensional approach while implementing the scheme to enhance broader response of the economy to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grassroots women need to be strategically positioned and engaged in post COVID-19 business recovery decision making tables from a household level.

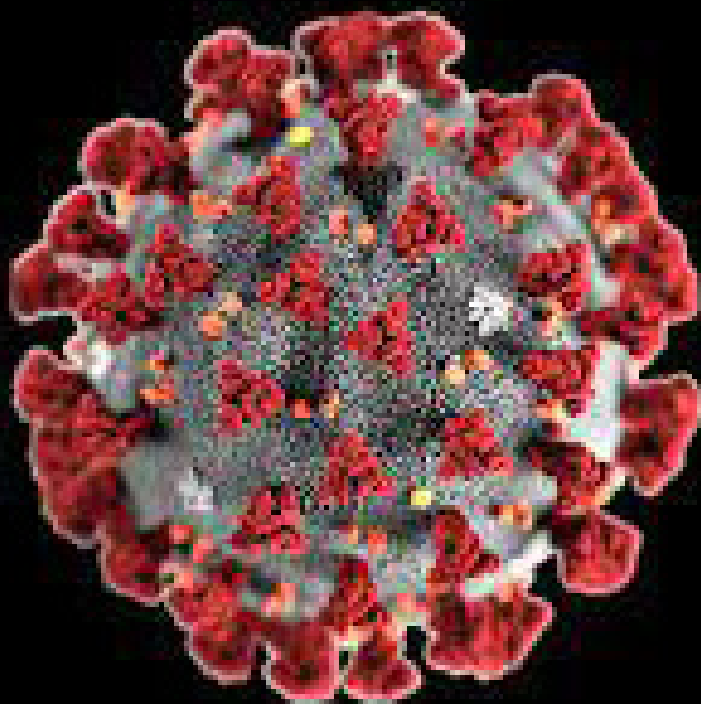
In the face of the pandemic, women have been disproportionately affected, with research pointing to increased loss of business and income, loss of gainful employment by their spouses and children further compounding their burden of care duties in the home and society.

Urgent county specific interventions are needed to recover and rebuild women-owned businesses and initiatives with particular focus on implantation of flexible payment schedules of rates, business permits, licences and economic stimulus incentives.

At the very heart of donor engagement with grassroots women, emphasis should be placed on bringing resources closer to the people by reducing administrative cost which reduces the amount reaching the ground and bureaucracies in the application and approval processes.

The impact of training and access to government affirmative action opportunities cannot be denied. As such, larger table banking pools offer opportunity for improved fiscal planning and design of grassroots oriented programs and activities.

“Forget about the boardrooms, come back to the village, we have a critical mass of women that we need to raise up” Hon. Nereah Amondi Oketch stated.



Post COVID-19 Strategies & Implementation

of progressive economic policy for women's economic emancipation

Session Moderator: Dr. Colins Odote | PhD University of Nairobi

Speakers

- Ms. Zuhura Ogada-CEO New Revenue Solutions Africa (NRSA)
- Ms. Elizabeth Adongo - Ministry of Public Service and Gender
- Mr. Leo Kemboi-Economist, Institute of Economic Affairs-IEA

Areas of Discussion

- COVID-19 strategies & resourcing for building back better
- Access to credit from mainstream banks as a major impediment for women. Challenges include high interest rates, requests for collateral, bank charges among others.
- Roadmap for implementation of progressive economic policy that engenders women's economic growth.
- Favorable policies cushioning access to education against the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls' education or education in general e.g., the effect of changes to the

academic calendar causing financial constraints.[en](#)

Questions to the Panelists

- How has COVID-19 reshaped government's approach to policy and program interventions & what lessons are emerging from the pandemic in regards to vulnerability, equity gaps, skills gap, knowledge gaps and how do we close these gaps?
- What progressive economic policies and commitments are currently being rolled out for promoting women's economic growth?
- What specific policies and progressive strategies have been put in place to ensure attainment of girls' education following the effects of COVID-19 including any specific policies and progressive strategies that have been put in place to cushion parents amidst financial constraints brought about by the COVID-19 Pandemic?
- How can women better organize at the grassroots in order to create a formidable transformative women's movement?

Key highlights from the session

COVID-19 has evolved from being a purely health crisis to affecting all spheres, including the economy. The crisis has elucidated government's ability to marshal internal funding options re-grounding the country's fiscal stability to a domestic level.

The crisis has necessitated the re-allocation of funds to priority areas in healthcare, stimulus packages, water, education and agriculture. This has precipitated fiscal space shrinkage calling for closer attention to the country's borrowing and spending culture with keen focus on resource mapping, tracking, accountability and efficient public service delivery.

However, these government financial trade-offs to COVID-19 priority areas have the potential to create and escalate other vulnerabilities and a neglect of global commitments if unchecked.

There is need for robust private sector coordination and partnership to support government service delivery in training, financial knowledge and information sharing to improve the economic fortunes of women across the country.

The pandemic has ignited much improved government work force capacity, research and development and coordination in government agencies.

Enhanced vaccine importation, COVID-19 containment measures and fiscal re-organization indicate the government's commitment to economic recovery.

On the downside, corruption continues to hinder service delivery and rob women opportunities to lawfully engage and benefit with government institutions.

Limited access to information continues to negatively impact on the ability of women, youth and persons with disability to access, apply and benefit under the various affirmative action funds set up by government and other regional value chain-oriented linkages such as the The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Kenya's digital economy has the potential for employment and economic growth, Unfortunately the introduced digital taxes without training and support by Government will deter sector exploitation.

The citizens and especially the women should keep an eye on what is being spent on particularly in terms of the budget and taxes; They have to ensure the resources are sufficient to avoid extreme borrowing that then increases the public debt; from a policy perspective, it is best to look at all available fiscal instruments to help make resources sufficient.

“

“It is important to make COVID-19 responses more transparent... This will also enable many people get vaccinated...”

To the government and even the public space, resource mapping should be conducted so as to track the resource module expenditure.

The issues that arose during this COVID-19 Pandemic are; education and access to online learning; rising cases of teenage pregnancies and the importance of creating resilient systems and structures particularly on health.

There is need to ensure that the workforce is capacitated for research, development and even on coordination of different levels of government across sectors.

Moving forward, Kenya should focus on delivering the SDGs, Agenda 2030 and the African Union Agenda 2063 on 'The Africa we want'.

Kenyans need to understand is that COVID-19 is going to be endemic, because we are putting in sub-optimal responses.

It is important to make COVID-19 responses more transparent i.e. decentralize more of information to the sub county level. This will also enable many people get vaccinated, aiding in containment of the pandemic.

We need to engage and ease ways of doing business from grassroots all the way up to ensure an enabling business environment for women. We need to revive businesses and ensure that the economy is running to allow room for marketing opportunities for businesses.

Session 2:

Health Break



LUNCH HOUR

With Wendy Aura

YWLC Conference Conversations

“

Solidarity and sisterhood is important in ending individualism and promoting collective action of the women agenda and making every voice count.

Key highlights from the session

Growing youth unemployment, food demands by growing urban population means engaging youths in agriculture should be top priority in ensuring economic growth. Farming is rarely portrayed as a young person's game. Mainstream and social media can be used to enhance agriculture which has in the past been portrayed as outdated, unprofitable and a labour burden.

Solidarity and sisterhood is important in ending individualism and promoting collective action of the women agenda and making every voice count.

Session 3:

Brief on Women Leadership Program



Professor Julija Andric
EBU Professor - Live from Luxembourg

Professor Julija began by informing participants about the European Business University-EBU and its scholarship program followed by personal recounts on the different cultures and approaches towards women. In a nutshell she noted;

".... to all the young women out there, you can be a small wheel first. If you stick together, you can make the change and the impact. Unfortunately, I had the experience of trying to be a big wheel, and it's very hard, it is difficult especially in the political world"

On the background of the European Business University, she explained that EBU Scholarship is a program that provided quality education to vulnerable individuals. In her words, she remarked;

"Let me tell you one thing. If someone would ask me- what is the most powerful tool a woman or any woman, young, old can have, I would immediately say knowledge, because knowledge is the only thing no one can take away from you.

Whatever happens, it's a tool that no one can take away from you. So, investing in your knowledge and in education is absolutely crucial at some point in making a change"

Prof. Julija invited everyone to be part of the scholarship program under European Business University, noting that the leadership and business certificate programs were exclusively designed for young people coming from developing countries. She noted that the European Business University's guarantees quality education for an affordable price. For instance, one certificate course usually costs 750 Euros per course per student.

"And so, what we are able to do is, we're able to offer the same scholarship certificate course for only 10 euros per course. So, paying this commitment registration fee, you're earning yourself a certificate that will help you get knowledge because unfortunately in today's world, not all education is giving us the necessary uplifting confidence that we need, especially young women in today's world" She added.

Prof. Julija stated that EBU had issued 500 scholarships for the women in leadership course that will last 13 weeks, delivered in webinar format, supported by competent staff, forums, quizzes and different engagements. She explained that the scholarship certificate program has different courses like marketing management and business management, courses that are complementary to those coming from an entrepreneurial background to learn more about opening business, creating a financial plan and how to market a company.

Prof. Julija additionally shared that currently, the scholarship program has 1600 Students enrolled, The students are from developing countries from all over the world such as Central America, South America, Asia and most of the African countries as well, especially Kenya.

Prof. Julija stated that the EBU has been running the program for almost two years now. She also pointed out that once a certificate course is completed, the students have an opportunity to become ambassadors and enroll more students coming from similar backgrounds. She also mentioned that this is an ongoing program that will not change due to the pandemic.

Prof. Julija also pointed out that the Academic Dean, Dr. James Smalley, a co-founder of the university is originally from Kenya, therefore EBU has a lot of organizations in Kenya that it works with. She also noted that most of the EBU students are from Africa. She said that recently, the EBU has opened a Spanish campus for Spanish courses, and that this campus has most students coming from Africa and especially Kenya.



WOMEN LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

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Session 4:

Panel Discussions

Panel 1

Commitments from Development Partners

Session Moderator: Dr. Maureen Miruka | CARE - Kenya

Speakers

- Ms. Janine Cocker | Head of Cooperation Canadian High Commission

Areas of Discussion

Commitment to supporting the Women's Agenda 2021-2032.

Questions to the Panelists

- What are the high level policies that the development partners are currently giving in Kenya?

- What strategies and resourcing plans are the development partners currently rolling out to support Women's Agenda in Kenya including post-COVID recovery?
- Greatest challenges and opportunities being faced while supporting the work in enhancing women's agenda in Kenya?

Key highlights

Ms. Cocker stated that the Canadian government country interventions were aligned to vision 2030 and their feminist empowerment policy that informs advocacy and support to Kenya's gender equity programs and interventions. The coordination of the common women agenda is impressive and aligns with the Canadian feminist policy.

The Global Affairs Canada-GAC funds states to amplify the women voices and the registry of women organizations to mobilize, share and impact communities. Further, they work with organizations to reduce GBV, supporting women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics-STEM, investing in women business owners left out in business cycles through projects such as Trademark East Africa which works to reduce harassment of women

at the border.

CARE Kenya supports women in politics through capacity and advocacy programs as well as pushing for the implementation of the not more than two-third gender principle in all levels of government.

Of concern is the continued lack of implementation of the constitution and policies and the provisions supporting gender equality which translates to low representation of women at decision making tables. Women in Kenya need to sustain the women agenda momentum by continuously building alliances and partnerships.

CARE is committed to working with organizations to trickle resources closer to impact to satisfy tailor made local agendas in furtherance of Kenya's vision and aspirations.

Commitments from Political Parties

Panel 2

Session Moderator: Ms. Winnie Maru

Speakers

- Hon Beth Syengo | ODM Women's League
- Ms. Anika Jane - Steering Board Member - Political Parties Liason Committee
- Hon. Agostinho Neto - United Green Movement Party

Areas of Discussion

Frameworks and guarantees for women's political inclusion including guarantee for compliance to the 2/3rds gender principle.

Questions to the Panelists

- What measures are put in place to make sure women are included in the party structures and not using women as place holders?
- What commitments are there in ensuring the senate bill on the floor of the Senate on the 2/3rds gender rule is passed?

Key highlights

The United Green Movement Party prides itself to be Kenya's equality party that has implemented total inclusivity and shared leadership in all its organs. Further, the party believes that marginalized communities are a mirror of this country, that is the persons with disabilities, old and young.

The ODM Party runs women activities and also has structures from the board level all the way to the national level and also trains women candidates for the next general elections in all the 47 counties.

Green Congress Kenya has been at the forefront in agitating for the amendment of the Political Parties' Act with the restructuring of Campaign Financing to benefit both small and big parties. Further, the party includes women in all their leadership structures as well as supporting a vibrant women caucus.

In agreement, political parties in parliament have to expedite the implementation of

gender bills currently in parliament. ODM Women League Chair stated that, 'I'm going to go and speak to Baba(the party leader) to rally his troops to ensure that the two thirds agenda is passed'.

Women leaders and women rights movements must work together in a manner that ensures that men and women are represented with equality.

Political parties should identify male champions who support women leadership, ensure inclusion of marginalized groups and consider granting party tickets to women in areas where the party is strong.

As a condition for peace and sustaining democracy, political parties must ensure proportional representation of women in parliament to effect inclusive representation and participation.

Panel 3

Commitments from Institutions

Session Moderator: Ms. Eunice Oyule- Founder Hifadhi Hub

Speakers

- Ms. Joyce Ekuam - Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, IEBC
- Ms. Judy Gathoni - Office of the Registrar of Political Parties, ORPP
- Hon David Ochieng Mp Ugenya, Party Leader-MDG Party

Areas of Discussion

Frameworks and guarantees for women's po-

litical inclusion.

Questions to the Panelists

- IEBC has been issued with a court order to reject any party list that is not 2/3rd gender principle compliant. What commitments does the commission make in making sure every political party list are not more than 2/3rds of the same gender?

Key highlights

The current structure of political parties' financing in Kenya benefits larger parties, with little benefit accruing to small parties that are unable to expand their operations.

Further, reports from the Auditor-General indicate that funds released to political parties are employed in administrative costs as opposed to expanding democracy in the country.

The high costs affiliated to running campaigns in Kenya perpetuates the exclusion of women who still contend with lack of access to funding and support from their political parties.

In furtherance of inclusion and equal representation, ORPP is committed to legal reforms that will streamline enhanced participation including the regulation of political party primaries through the amendment of the Political Parties Act.

Further, ORPP together with civil society is committed to training women candidates on political and electoral processes as a catalyst for informed decision making.

IEBC will establish situation rooms at the County and National level to interrogate and curb election malpractices and violence meted against women and other marginalized groups.

IEBC will also accredit women election observers to monitor election cycle processes as well developing education infomercials to encourage women to participate in politics.

IEBC is committed to complying with court orders advancing gender representation by ensuring that political parties lists comply with the two-thirds gender rule and supervising party primaries. IEBC is committed to carrying out capacity building initiatives to enhance the capacity of special interest groups, women, persons with disability and youths.

IEBC is in the process of developing programs that are geared towards engaging women aspirants on political timelines and activities within the election calendar.

Unveiling of the Charter of Inclusion



By Ms. Daisy Amdany
Executive Director, CRAWN Trust

Ms Amdany mentioned that the charter is the women rights organizations-WROs commitment in seeking to ensure that the general elections will enshrine the inclusivity principles.

The constitution demands that the election processes must be inclusive. There have been two general elections since the promulgation of the constitution of Kenya 2010, that have not fostered the inclusion of women, youth and persons living with disabilities.

As part of civil society's 2022 general elections commitments, WROs that are part of this AWRC together with stakeholders and collaborators have decided to pursue inclusion as a critical part of the credibility, fairness of the 2022 general elections. The elections will not be considered as free and fair if they are not inclusive.

Ms. Amdany went on to present the charter of inclusion as captured below;

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS TO THE CHARTER OF INCLUSION IN THE POLITICAL SPHERE FOR WOMEN, YOUTH AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FOR 2022 AND BEYOND

The Charter of Inclusion in the political sphere, reaffirms the determination of women's rights organizations, youth organizations and organizations working with persons living with disabilities, led by CRAWN Trust, CARE-K, FEMNET, OXFAM, AMWIK, Badili Africa, Young Women Leaders Connect, UoN WEE Hub, Feminist for Peace Rights and Justice Centre, and the Coast Association for Persons Living with Disabilities together with likeminded collaborators to ensure that political engagement and actions in the electoral process in the run up to the 2022 general elections and beyond, are inclusive of women, youth and persons with disabilities.

Towards this end, they commit to taking all steps to promote their equal participation, safety and dignity in all processes relating to the electoral process to ensure the enjoyment and exercise of their constitutionally guaranteed rights as citizens, voters, aspirants and candidates are secured.

The Charter of Inclusion which expresses their common political intention and intended course of action, to establish legally binding obligations to state agencies, political parties and independent institutions, to enforce the provisions of inclusivity and equality as enshrined in the Constitution of Kenya 2010 and all other applicable domestic and international laws to which Kenya is a signatory to, pertaining to inclusion and participation in the electoral process.

To the specific institutions:

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission-IEBC

That the IEBC will exercise its independence and apply constitutional requirements of party lists to adhere to Articles 81 (b) and (c) on the not more than two thirds gender principle and fair representation of persons with disabilities in elective public offices respectively, as well as enforce election laws and administrative rules impartially.

That the IEBC will sensitize political parties and citizens on compliance with the constitutional requirements and will review the voter education curriculum to sensitize voters on inclusivity, equality and the full participation of women, youth and persons with disability in the electoral process.

That the IEBC will regulate the money spent by candidates in elections as prescribed by Article 88 (4)(i) of the constitution.

That the IEBC will strictly enforce the electoral code of conduct including meting out the penalties on political parties, aspirants or candidates that violate them including punishing zoning of areas for specific political parties or political players and violence by political parties, party supporters or supporters of specific aspirants or candidates to the exclusion of others.

That the IEBC will put in place the necessary measures to prevent, eliminate and respond to all forms of electoral violence especially against women, youth and persons with disabilities in the public and private spaces including ending impunity of perpetrators.

The Office of the Registrar of Political Parties-ORPP

That the ORPP will exercise its shared mandate to amplify the work of the IEBC and work together with the political parties and key stakeholders including civil society organizations to ensure compliance with the constitution and electoral laws by all political players.

That the ORPP will work with political parties to promote internal party democracy through exercising stronger enforcement of the constitutional requirements of inclusion of women, youth and persons with disabilities.

With regards to candidate nominations and representation of women, youth and persons with disability who are constitutionally recognized marginalized groups; guide political parties on the enactment of internal nomination rules to ensure the principles of inclusivity are adhered to.

That the ORPP will work with stakeholders to enact regulations for nominations to ensure that party leagues of women, youth and persons with disability have mechanisms where they can elect or choose those who will represent their interests and put in place the necessary mechanisms to ensure that party nominations are fair processes, free from violence and that political parties adhere to their own rules.

That the ORPP will publicly report on political party compliance with gender requirements and on the application of penalties. In addition, establish requirements for parties to increase the proportion of youth and persons with disabilities in party leadership positions and running as candidates, and to publicly report on this and on their policies for inclusion.

That the ORPP will build the capacity of political parties to ensure fair, expedient and timely internal dispute resolution mechanisms

The Media

That print and broadcast media will represent a wide range of political perspectives and coverage including that of women, youth and persons with disabilities.

That the print and electronic media will not exercise bias against women, youth and persons with disabilities including those from lesser known political parties, independent candidates and opposition parties or candidates.

That the media council will ensure that journalists, publishers or broadcasters do not solicit or accept payments in exchange for airing, altering or blocking news coverage of aspirants or candidates especially women, youth and persons with disabilities.

The Kenya National Human Rights Commission-KNHCR and the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission-EACC

The KNHCR and EACC will monitor the use of public resources by public servants for political gain including misappropriation of public funds and other state resources, including vehicles and public office for personal political mileage and take necessary action.

That the KNHCR and EACC will monitor members of the executive at both the national and county levels (the head of state, the head of government and Cabinet Secretaries, Cabinet Administrative Secretaries, Provincial Administration, Governors, County Executive Committee members) or their agents steal, embezzle or misappropriate public funds or other state resources for personal or family use for political gain and unfair advantage.

That the KNHCR and the EACC will monitor members of the executive (the head of state, the head of government and cabinet secretaries, CAS, Governors, CEC's) to avoid them or their agents from granting favours in exchange for bribes, kickbacks or other material inducements for political advantage.

The Inspector General of Police-IGP

That the IGP will ensure the right to safety and security of women, youth and persons with disabilities in the pursuit of their political aspirations and specifically ensure protection of their right to campaign free from violence and intimidation by other political players and by security agents.

That the IGP will exercise impartiality in the delivery of security services including timely response to the security needs of women, youth and persons with disability in the pursuit of their political aspirations.

That the IGP will ensure that women, youth and persons with disabilities are able to exercise their freedom of assembly and association, and able to gather freely and carry out peaceful campaigns free from harassment and intimidation, including by security services, as well as to join, form and participate with other persons in political parties, without being subject to actual limitations or restrictions.

That the IGP will deal swiftly to address political violence and terror meted out on women, youth and persons with disabilities in the pursuit of their political aspirations.

That the IGP will work collaboratively with women, youth and persons with disabilities to secure their safety and security in the electoral process.

Vote of thanks



By Ms. Judy Kaberia

**Executive Director, Association of
Media Women in Kenya - AMWIK**

Ms. Kaberia opened by stating that the commitment and discussions of the convention have contributed positively in inspiring other women and that despite the challenges, women are able to make decisions in the ministry, judiciary, academia, politics and country. Ms. Kaberia stated that;

“As a journalist, the footprints of professional, bold and committed women are visible from the community to a global level. Our impact speaks for itself”.

Ms Kaberia stated that as these milestones are celebrated, women cannot take a back seat yet they have not occupied their positions in their rightful numbers. Research shows women only make up 30% of news voices. Women must be considered as important voices in every discussion in the country.

In the coming election, the voices of women as candidates, voters, officials must be amplified and be heard very clearly and correctly. The strategy to continue the spirit of working together, by giving women platforms and highlighting successes and challenges that women face.

Association of Media Women in Kenya-AMWIK has trained journalists to recognize the important role of women in politics and all spheres of life. They should hold the duty bearers to account. The media should report

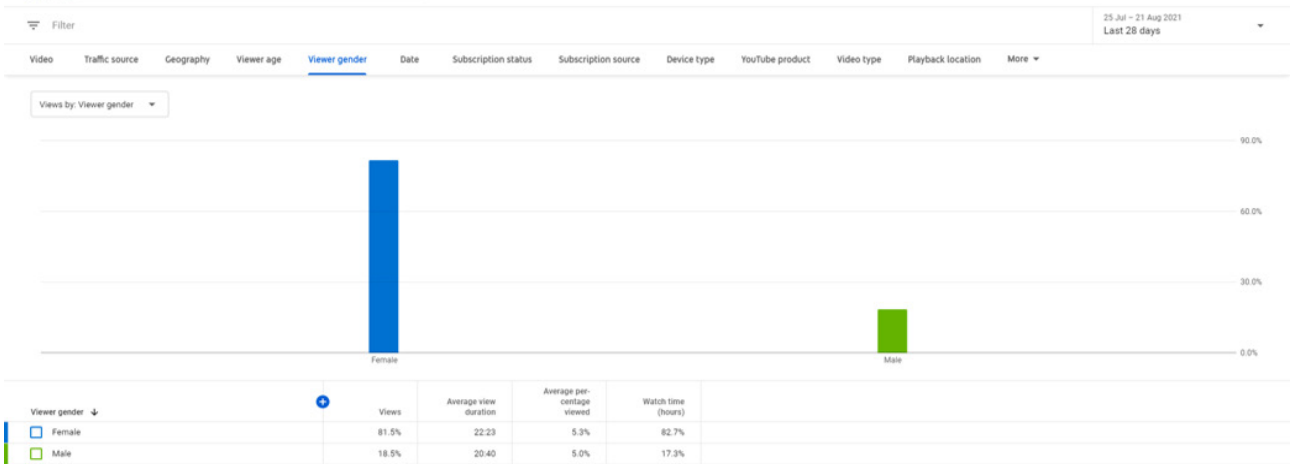
and apply pressure on duty bearers.

Ms Kaberia extended gratitude to CRAWN Trust for taking time to put this event together while reiterating CRAWN Trust's role in the consortium implementing the Women's Voice and Leadership - WVLP project and the WVLP goal which is to support the capacity and activities of local and national women's organizations and movements seeking to empower women and girls, advance the protection of women and girls rights and achieve gender equality with the ultimate outcome being the increased enjoyment of women and girls, and the enjoyment of gender equality in Kenya. She also mentioned the other principal partners of the project. .

Ms Kaberia expressed her regards to the Canadian High Commission, the Ministry of Public Service and Gender, and the Government of Kenya as well for supporting this initiative. In her closing remarks, Ms Kaberia appreciated FEMNET, OXFAM, Badili Africa, Young Women Leaders Connect, the University of Nairobi WEE Hub, Feminist For Peace Rights Justice Center, Coast Association for Persons Living With Disabilities and AMWIK for their contribution and partnership in making the convention a success.

Convention's Statistics

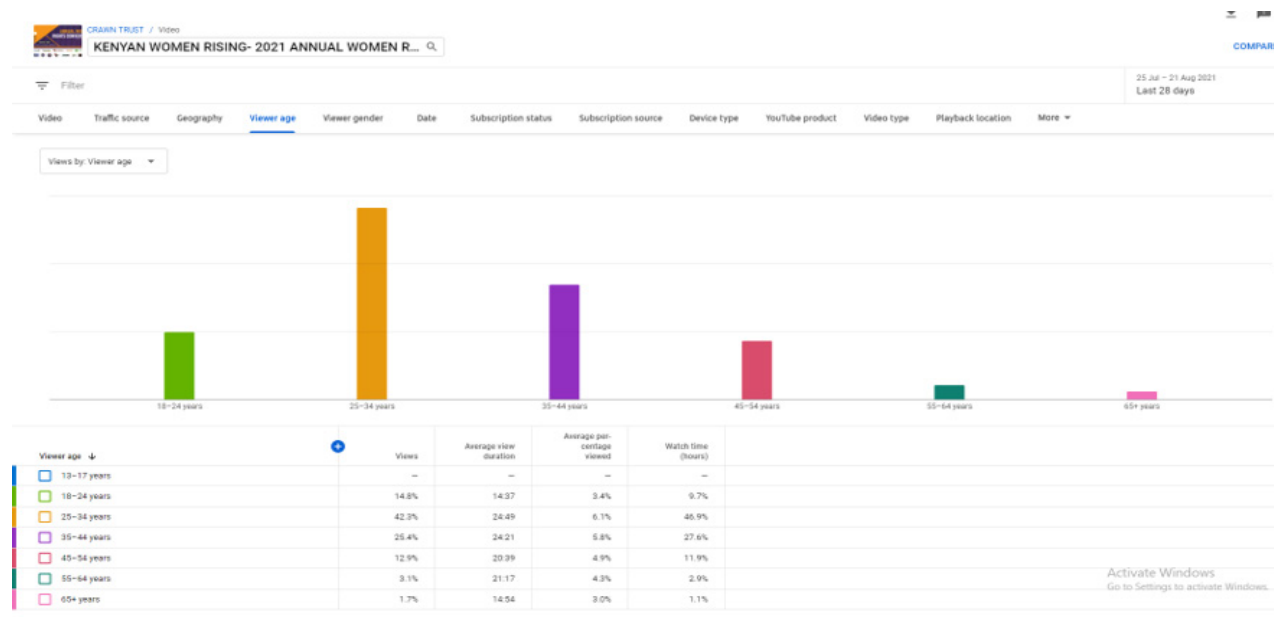
Disaggregated data on gender



Activate Windows
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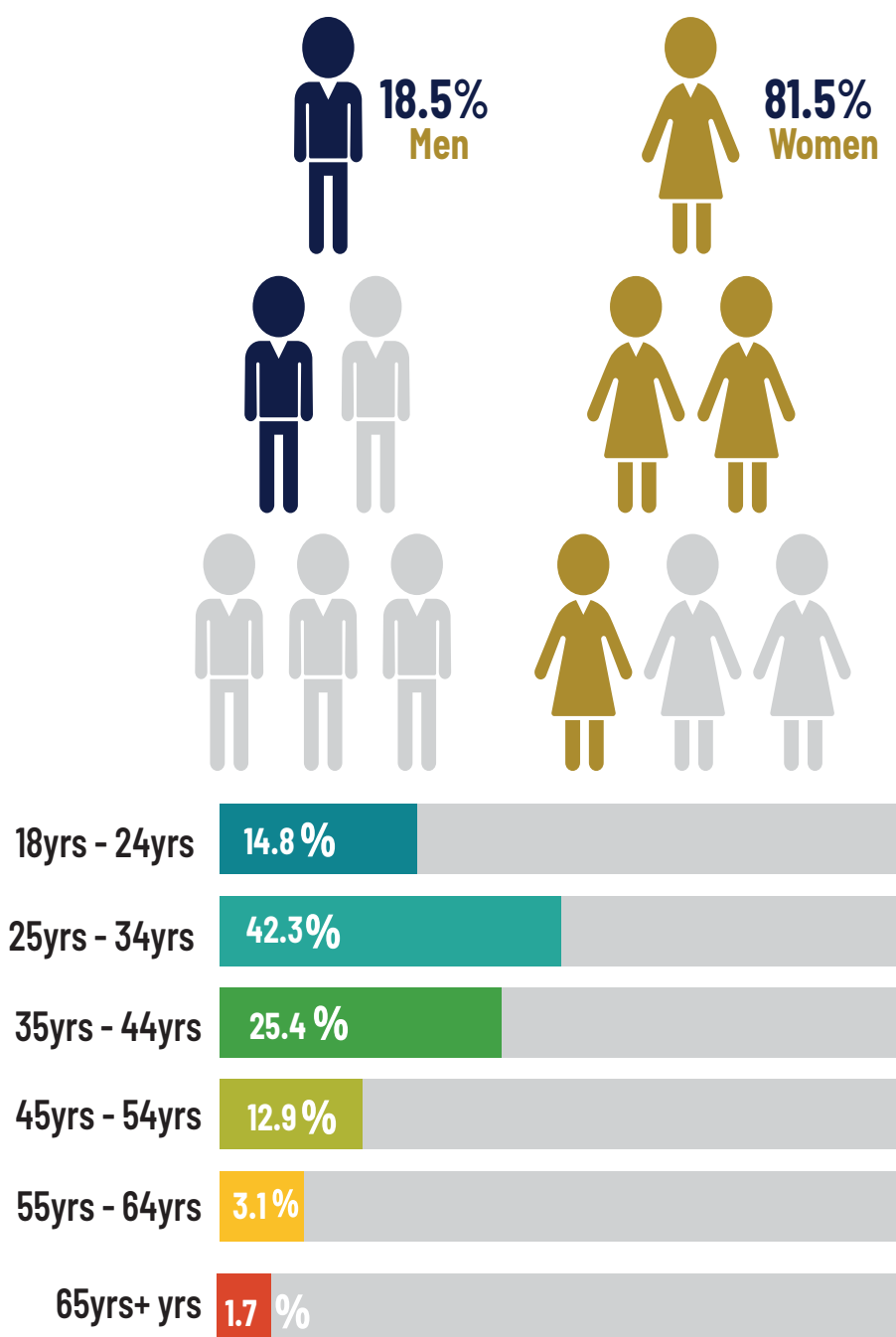
Convention's Statistics

Disaggregated data based on age



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Gender & Age Demographic



Viewership by Country



References

Youtube Live Links

Kenyan women rising- 2021 annual women rights convention

- Day1: https://youtu.be/_EB1qw4vNuY
- Day2: https://youtu.be/a782v-_Uki4

Social Media Comments on [Twitter](#):



Ms. Judie Kaberia giving a [Vote of thanks](#)



CARE-Kenya's [Tweet](#) during the convention



Canadian High Commission in Kenya's [twitter](#) engagement during the convention



Ministry of Gender and public service's [twitter](#) engagement at the convention.

Ag. Canadian High Commissioner

David Da Silva [twitter](#) reaction to the convention



FEMNET [twitter](#) engagement at the women convention



Mzalendo Watch [twitter](#) engagement



