



The *WeRise Quarterly*



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A lawyer's true eloquence lies in the influence their actions have on the pursuit of justice, ethics, and the betterment of the society as whole.

*Faith Odhiambo,
President of the Law Society
of Kenya (LSK)*



Making Road Construction Projects Safe for our Children



Mombasa Community Champion Edwin Shamir engaging learners at Shimo La Tewa Primary School as they share their issues on the ongoing road construction.

WeRise Africa has been at the forefront of championing for the rights of children against Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/ Harassment (SEA/H) and child labour along the ongoing Mombasa–Mtwapa–Kilifi (A7) Road Project. The road construction project has been funded by African Development Bank (AfDB) and African Development Fund (ADF), implemented by Kenya National Highway Authority (KeNHA) and has two phases; Nyali Bridge-Mtwapa Bridge Lot 1 and Mtwapa–Kwa Kadzengo–Kilifi Lot 2.

The organization has been supporting Community Champions both in Mombasa and Kilifi County in conducting feedback and learning sessions with the community to get their views on the road construction project. The champions have been instrumental in sensitizing the community on the effects of child SEA/H and child labour while advocating for children rights. Forms of child SEA/ H and child labour include online grooming, child trafficking, child pornography, sexual assault, sextortion,

child marriage, forced domestic services and hard labour with sexual exploitation among others. The champions always encourage the community to report any child SEA/H and child labour incidences occurring along the road so that the perpetrators can be brought to book.

The Community Champions have also been actively engaging learners in schools near the road to collect their views on how the ongoing road construction project is affecting them. On 21st May, 2024, Mombasa County Community Champions visited Shimo La Tewa Primary School and engaged with the learners to collect their concerns about the ongoing road construction which is part of Nyali Bridge-Mtwapa Bridge Lot 1. Some of the issues expressed included: heavy dust from the road construction which not only affects learning but also their health, lack of proper designated crossing areas for the children to navigate easily while crossing the road, noise pollution from the heavy construction machinery which affects their concentration in class, lack of a



Learners from Shimo La Tewa Primary School climbing on the road construction soil heaps by the road side as they leave school.



Road construction soil heap moved by KeNHA after Shimo La Tewa Primary School learners complained of lack of a designated and clear footpath to walk on.

pedestrian footpath which has been blocked by huge heaps of soil that the learners climb which can cause injury to them, inadequate road signs to guide road users among other issues. All the issues raised were taken into account and a letter was drafted to KeNHA through the Mombasa County Grievance Redress Committee (GRC).

On 21st June 2024, a follow-up and feedback meeting was organized at Shimo La Tewa Primary School to discuss the concerns that were previously raised. The meeting brought together representatives from KeNHA, SARI Contractor, Delta Health Consultants, teachers and learners from the Child Safety Club and Child Rights Club. The stakeholders present acknowledged the validity of these issues/ concerns and proposed actionable solutions like installing dust nets, additional flag marshals to help the learners navigate the road, work on the road signs indicating children crossing points, clear the soil heaps to pave way for footpath accessibility, and increase the frequency of watering the road to reduce dust pollution among others.

Through these efforts, WeRise Africa would like to thank KeNHA and the contractor for moving the heaps of soil as promised which has opened up the footpath for the learners. The move will also help reduce dust pollution in the school giving the learners some relief as they study. We are keen on ensuring that we make follow-ups on more recommendations to be executed, making our children feel safe as the road construction project continues.



African Development Bank Mission Meeting regarding Mombasa-Mtwapa-Kilifi Road Project



Representatives from the contractors, Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA), AfDB, Deputy County Commissioner, Resident Engineer, Community Champions from Mombasa and Kilifi County and Coast Land Non-State Actors (CLNSA) CSOs present during the two-day African Development Bank meeting.

WeRise Africa participated in a two-day African Development Bank Mission (AfDB) meeting for Mombasa and Kilifi County, convened by the Resident Engineer on 13th and 14th June 2024 to engage Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other key stakeholders with the African Development Bank (AfDB) mission, assessing the implementation of the Mombasa-Mtwapa-Kilifi Road Project. The primary objective of the meeting was for the AfDB mission to assess the implementation progress of the Mombasa-Mtwapa-Kilifi Road Project and to engage CSOs and other stakeholders to understand the challenges and concerns related to the project. The meeting brought together representatives from the contractors, Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA), AfDB, Deputy County Commissioner, Resident Engineer, Community Champions from Mombasa and Kilifi County and Coast Land Non-State Actors (CLNSA) CSOs.

During the meeting, it was highlighted that there was limited access to project documents by both project-affected persons and CSOs. Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) stated that they will review the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) / Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Action Plan and organize a meeting with Delta Health Consultant to identify gaps and propose recommendations.

It was proposed that banners should be installed cautioning against child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Harassment (SEA/H) and child labour at major construction sites. The meeting also underscored the importance of safeguarding children along the road addressing any instances of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and child abuse that may arise.

In conclusion, participants agreed that there is need to strengthen child SEA/H and GBV prevention measures, with ongoing collaboration between stakeholders and Delta Health Consultant. KeNHA on the hand assured their commitment in enhancing transparency and accessibility of project information to affected communities' persons and CSOs. In general, participants called for and encouraged continued collaboration and engagement with AfDB and other stakeholders to ensure effective project oversight and community involvement.

Femicide and Mental Health



According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Kenya has been ranked fifth among African countries with the highest number of depression cases with at least 25% of the population being affected. It further indicates that we are ranked 114 out of 175 countries with the highest suicide rates globally. A wave of femicide has been slowly but steadily sweeping across the country. Death has become more certain an option in situations where women and men disagree in relationships, with the former being at a huge risk of abuse or murder. A month cannot pass without the news headlining love turned fatal.

The saddest part of it all is the level at which victim blaming is pedalled at the expense of acquiring justice for the victims. Murder is murder and no reason whatsoever should give anyone a flicker of excuse to get away with it. This is reason enough that as a country, we need to take our mental health seriously and normalize seeking help. According to Africa Data Hub, 10 women were murdered in January 2024 with 2023 accounting for 152 women murdered; the highest number ever recorded in 5 years.

Mental health experts link this behaviour to poor upbringing the perpetrators might have had in their childhood. There is likelihood of a child becoming an abusive adult especially when they experienced abuse directly or indirectly. Children raised without proper moral upbringing can easily become violent.

Parents are advised to be very observant and monitor their children's habits, likes, dislikes, and reactions. Do not be conformable when you notice your child watching horror movies with ease, murder documentaries, and is unshaken when they see blood. Some of these patterns are synonymous with serial killers hence seek help from a mental health expert, preferably a child counsellor as soon as possible.

Raise children in social, spiritual, and moral principles so that they are aware of good and bad actions which have different consequences. Show and teach your sons empathy and compassion which will help reduce femicide cases. Let us teach our girls emotional intelligence and know when to leave an abuse relationship. The moment a man lay hands on her, there is high possibility that she will be frequently abused or worse. No woman gets a medal for persevering in abuse relationships neither does she get praised for going through abuse. Prioritise your mental health, physical health, and happiness in any relationship.

Most importantly, never agree meeting with strangers privately. If you must, then do it in public spaces like open restaurants. Do not agree whatsoever to have a private interaction with a stranger because you might be falling right into the hands of a serial killer.



REPORT ALL FORMS OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE TO:

Mombasa County GBV Helpline - 0800 720 587/ SMS - 21094

The National GBV Helpline - 1195

Police Helpline - 999/ 112

Childline Kenya Helpline - 116

UWIANO SMS Platform - 10

Kimbilio GBV Helpline - 1193

WeRise Africa Helpline - 0717 942 226

LVCT one 2 one Youth Helpline - 1190

FIDA SMS Platform - 21661.

The Time to Act against Child Labour is Now!



The Guest of Honor, Speaker of the Mombasa County Assembly Hon. Aharub Khatri engaging learners at the exhibition during the World Day against Child Labour celebrations at Mikindani Primary School.

WeRise Africa joined other Civil Society Organizations and stakeholders from both the National and County Government in commemorating World Day against Child Labour 2024 at Mikindani Primary School under the theme 'Kenya is Committed to End Child Labour: The time for Action is Now!'. The event was supported by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and graced by the Speaker of the Mombasa County Assembly Hon. Aharub Khatri. The celebrations commenced with a procession officially flagged off and led by the Mombasa County Assembly Committee on Labour Chairperson Hon. Jactone Madialo. At Mikindani Primary School, visitors were taken through exhibitions prepared by the learners showcasing their creativity, emphasizing the impact of education in their lives. Mikindani Primary School learners did not disappoint with moving songs and dances to spice up the day.

Mikindani Primary School President gave a moving speech highlighting poverty as the major cause of child labour in Mombasa County, with children coming from poor backgrounds at a higher risk. "I would like to urge the National and County Government to make job opportunities easily available to enable our parents pay our school fees comfortably," said the President. He also appealed to the Speaker of the Mombasa County Assembly Hon. Aharub Khatri and Members of the County Assembly present to ensure that they pass very tough laws against child labour offenders to curb and reduce the number of child labour cases.

The Guest of Honor, Speaker of the Mombasa County Assembly Hon. Aharub Khatri recognized the importance of children being in school. He also stated that there is need for the Mombasa County Government and other stakeholders to sensitize the Mombasa community on child labour and its impacts. "The County Assembly of Mombasa takes pride in being the only county to pass a motion to end child labour through the work of the Committee of Public Service and Labour," said the speaker. The speaker added that the County Assembly passed a motion to put-up childcare facilities in all the Mombasa County Markets. He also mentioned that the executive is currently drafting a policy to end child labour.

The Chief Officer Youth, Sports, Gender, and Social Services Mr. Khamis Kurichwa was also present. In his remarks, he pledged his department's full commitment in eliminating child labour in Mombasa County. Mr. Kurichwa however stated his concern at the alarming numbers of beggars in the streets with some places occupied by a lot of children. "My department is working hard to rescue the children and reunite them with their parents or guardians as they look for a better alternative to assist the ones with no traces of relatives," concluded Mr. Kurichwa.

As we celebrate the International Day against Child Labour, let us dedicate our efforts towards building our children, supporting their dreams, and sensitizing them about their rights.



0.41 tons
*CO₂ emissions per capita
for Kenya in 2021*

*Agricultural sector
accounts for the largest
carbon emission followed
by energy, industrial
processes, waste, and
land-use change and
forestry.*

Understanding Climate Change Issues from a Global Perspective Critical towards Climate Change Advocacy

Whenver discussions arise about mitigating the effects of climate change, tree planting is usually, if not one of main interventions, the only one talked about. During international days on environmental and ocean conservation, we often tend to do the same thing over and over which in most instances, yield very little impact. For instance, take an example of the World Ocean Day. Stakeholders come together to conduct beach clean-up exercises in different beaches of Mombasa County for a day and that's it, until the next year. Same to tree planting initiatives which have not been greatly implemented for sustainability purposes. Waste management has

also been a thorn in the flesh of the Mombasa County Government. Efforts to address poor waste disposal have been put in place but there is still a lot of work to be done.

The measures put in place to mitigate climate shocks which we know, in totality, are not effectively addressing the elephant in the room which is climate change crisis. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is largely reported as the most important anthropogenic greenhouse gas because it currently accounts for the greatest portion of global warming associated with human activities.



A Climate Change Officer from the Mombasa County Climate Change Department engaging different stakeholders from the Mombasa Civil Societies Organization Network on the Mombasa Climate Change Bill 2024 and the Climate Financing Bill 2024.

According to the World Data Atlas, CO₂ emissions per capita for Kenya in 2021 was 0.41 tons of CO₂ per capita. This might seem insignificantly small compared to carbon emissions from the global north countries but we are not safe from climate shocks resulting from our and their emissions. In Kenya, the agricultural sector accounts for the largest carbon emission followed by energy, industrial processes, waste, and land-use change and forestry. It is important to have this larger perspective in mind to help inform how our counties should address climate shocks affecting them.

As the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grows, the levels of carbon emission grows. By analyzing the GDP of Mombasa County, we can narrow down on the specific areas attributing to this growth, identifying their levels of emission and whether they are following the environmental safeguards and regulations put in place while carrying out their activities. We should be able to identify all the investments in Mombasa County and the kind of fuel they use to produce. This information should be regularly updated and made available through the Mombasa County Climate Change Department website.

Tree planting initiatives can only work best if we adopt acreages for rehabilitation because carbon sequestration needs tree plantations and not small spaces with scattered trees. Mombasa County through the Kenya Forest Services can identify designated areas where we need to plant mangrove trees and focus our energy there. This also applies to forest areas which have been degraded and need rehabilitation.



A section of the Mtopanga River which flows into the Indian Ocean at Pirates Beach heavily polluted attributed to human activities like poor waste disposal and management and releasing of raw sewerage into the river.

This way, we will be working towards addressing both local and global carbon emissions. Other initiatives include increasing the frequency of tree planting initiatives to at least once a month, monitoring and ensuring proper sewerage disposal by hotels and business owners, delocalization of information on climate change to remote areas of Mombasa County, meticulously work on environmentally friendly planning systems, and forming independent community oversight committees that will monitor all climate change initiatives for effective accountability.

Teach them Young; Early Child Leadership Development Key for Better and Accountable Leadership Tomorrow



Kiembeni Estates School learners follow through as the election results are being announced.



I urge the learners to own up the Students Governing Counsel so that they can have a high degree of discipline amongst themselves.-

Mr. Rodgers Mwakio, Kiembeni Estates School Head Teacher

The final day of voting had just been concluded with anxiety evident all over the faces of learners at Kiembeni Estates School as they waited for the election results to be announced. This was identical to the tension Kenyans usually have while waiting for the announcement of the presidential General Election results. Unlike the latter, this process was fluid, transparent and peaceful with all the contestants' agents satisfied with the election process and its outcome.

This activity was organized by Together 4 Society (T4S) in collaboration with WeRise Africa, Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD), and Muslim Women Advancement of Rights and Protection. Its main objective was sensitizing children to understand the importance of electing leaders of their choice in their school. This was an important step for the children to understand that they have a role to play not only now but also in future in shaping the leadership of this nation. The learners were given civic education on the importance of electing good leaders and holding them accountable to fulfil promises made during the campaign period. They were also enlightened about inclusivity and electing leaders based on merit, not by gender. The contestants on the other hand were sensitized on good leadership qualities which will be critical in their leadership journey.

Positions contested for were School Captain, Cabinet Secretary for Education, Cabinet

Secretary for Environment, Cabinet Secretary for Discipline, Cabinet Secretary for Gender & Justice, Cabinet Secretary for Sports & Welfare, and Class Representatives for Grade 8, 7, 6, 5 and 4. There was a great balance of gender with the girls coming out strongly in their campaigns as bold and articulate. The position for the School Captain was hotly contested with the school favourite Meshack Chengo emerging victorious at the end of the day. Loved for his charisma, his campaign and victory speech oozed pure bliss and leadership charm which enchanted his supporters to vote for him. Asia Ramadhan who was also selected as a School Captain promised to work with all the learners in the school to foster change and academic excellence.

Kiembeni Estates School Head Teacher Mr. Rodgers Mwakio lauded the efforts of the organizers saying that the elections strengthened friendship and togetherness in the school. "I urge the learners to own up the Students Governing Counsel so that they can have a high degree of discipline amongst themselves," he added. T4S Executive Director Edwin Shamir thanked the school for owning up the process and encouraged elected contestants to serve with dignity and purpose. CCGD Mombasa County Admin Helidah Rawago emphasized on the need to ensure that learners know their rights and advocate for gender equality in all spheres. WeRise Africa Programs Officer Kalicha Dullo called for continued support so that the learners can get refresher trainings on leadership development.



**DON'T
TAX,
MAKE
IT
FREE,
PERIOD!**



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE...

Spreading the Message of Child Road Safety through Radio Talk Shows



Community Champion Edwin Shamir and Mombasa County Administrator for Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) Helidah Akoth at Baraka FM Mombasa Studio during the safety of children during road construction radio talk show.

Through the support of WeRise Africa, Mombasa Community Champions held their first radio talk show on 11th June 2024 at Baraka FM to raise awareness about the ongoing road construction along the East Africa Coastal Road Corridor and its impact on child safety, child rights, and the prevention of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/ Harassment (SEA/H) and child labour.

During the show, listeners called to express their appreciation for the insightful information shared about preventing child SEA/H and child labour. WeRise Africa shared its helpline number among other important numbers that the community can report cases so that the perpetrators can be brought to book. The Champion also demonstrated clear referral pathways and reporting mechanisms for child SEA/H and child labour. The listeners made recommendations with many calling for more road signages, frequent sprinkling of water to reduce dust pollution around learning institutions, adding the number of road marshals to help children cross the road safely among others.

Education for all children in Africa; the Time is Now!



ACC Changamwe Nicholas Kiato officially flagging off the procession for the celebration of the Day of the African Child from Changamwe Social Hall to St. Lwanga Comprehensive School.

The Day of the African Child celebrations began with a procession which was officially flagged off by the ACC Changamwe Nicholas Kiato from Changamwe Social Hall to St. Lwanga Comprehensive School where the main event was held. Guided by the theme 'Education for all children in Africa; the Time is Now!', stakeholders present emphasized on the importance of the learners becoming community ambassadors and assist in addressing the issue of out-of-school children.

Attended by learners from the six sub counties of Mombasa County, WeRise Africa leveraged on the celebrations to sensitize the learners on child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/ Harassment (SEA/H) and child labour as well as GBV referral pathways. This was particularly in relation to the ongoing East African Coastal Road Corridor Project affecting schools along the Nyali Bridge-Mtwapa Bridge Lot 1 and Mtwapa-Kwa Kadzengo-Kilifi Lot 2.

Sub County Education Officer, Mr. Waithaka Wamburi, reinforced that education is a fundamental right, not a privilege. He acknowledged various initiatives by the Ministry of Education including mentorship programs to uphold children's educational rights and appealed to parents to prioritize their children's education despite economic hardships.

African Development Bank Annual Meeting with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)



WeRise Africa attended and participated in the African Development Bank Meeting with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) held in Nairobi from 26th to 28th May, whose objective was to build civil society capacity on AfDB policies and engage strategically with the AfDB board and management on issues such as accountability, the updated Integrated Safeguards Systems (ISS) and its implementation rollout, CSO engagement at the Annual Meetings, and inclusive consultations on the energy policy review.

Some of the recommendations made by the AfDB CSO Working Group for urgent prioritization by the AfDB include:

1. The AfDB should meaningfully engage with Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) throughout the project cycle so that their concerns and needs are fully integrated in project design, implementation, and monitoring.
2. Ensure the inclusion of civil society voices in the AfDB annual meetings, bringing back the CSO Forum while ensuring democratic, free and safe space participation.
3. Prioritize community-led development and human rights-based approaches, ensuring communities and human rights defenders can safely engage with the Bank and speak out without fearing threats or attacks.
4. The Directive on Identifying, Assessing, and Protecting Vulnerable People in the Context of Bank Operations, that is currently under drafting, should raise the standards and performance on

prevention, mitigation, and response to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and sexual Harassment (SEAH) and Gender Based Violence. (GBV) in AfDB projects.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum 2024



WeRise Africa Founder & Executive Director Harriet Ahalo representing the organization at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum 2024.

Represented by our Founder & Director Harriet Ahalo, WeRise Africa was thrilled to participate in the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum 2024 for three days from 16th to 18th April. This was an important event and opportunity for the youth across all divides, and globally to advance solutions to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Agenda 2030. This year's discussions were guided by the theme 'Reinforcing the 2030 agenda and eradicating poverty in multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions'.

As an organization, we take pride in being founded on the principles of community needs at a time of crises that includes the youth and community members as partners to address the community challenges.

GALLERY



WeRise Africa joined other stakeholders and learners from various schools in Mombasa County in commemorating the Day of the African Child at St. Lwaga Comprehensive School under the theme 'Education for all Children in Africa: the Time is Now!'



WeRise Africa participated in the first ever Mombasa County Action Plan Engagement Forum under the Ideological Pillar as members reflected on their achievements, constraints, lessons learnt and proposed plans for the year 2024 - 2025.



Participated in a governance meeting to discuss and understand UTU (humanity) as part of the #MulikaKE campaign.



Community Champions Feedback Sharing Meeting with the Kilifi Grievance Redress Committee to discuss the grievances raised by Project Affected Persons concerning the risks and prevention of Child SEA/H.



Participated in the Mombasa County Climate Change Bill, Climate Change Finance Bill, Mombasa County Climate Action Plan 2023 - 2050 sensitization meeting and understanding global climate change issues to inform our climate change advocacy.



Conducted a capacity building training for the Community Champions on the Community Activism in Infrastructural Development Projects focusing on the East Africa Coastal Development Project in Mombasa and Kilifi County. The aim of the training was to enhance the community champions' knowledge on Child Sexual Exploitation Abuse and Harassment, GBV Referral Pathways and Reporting Matrix on cases.



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