



KEPSA CONTRIBUTION TO ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY AND MAINSTREAMING

The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) is the apex body of the private sector in Kenya that brings together local and foreign business associations, chambers of commerce, professional bodies, corporates as multinational companies, medium corporates, SMEs, and start-ups from all sectors of the economy, representing over 1 million businesses under one umbrella to enable them to speak with one voice when engaging Government, development partners and other stakeholders on cross-cutting policy issues affecting private sector development and implements programs that ensure the growth of business and social-economic development of the country.

KEPSA started gender mainstreaming in the private sector by initiating a program that ensures that women are included in KEPSA leadership and was instrumental in the push for a Gender ministry in Government. Today, the leadership of KEPSA as a whole meets the 2/3 gender rule and working with partners like Women on Boards has continued to ensure first the private sector organizations adopt the rule. This has been successful in the boardroom today, gender diversity stands at 36% in comparison to the global average of women holding board positions which stands at 23.3% according to the Board Diversity and Inclusion report 2021 done by KEPSA together with the Kenya Institute of Management (KIM), Nairobi Securities (NSE) and New Faces New Voices (NFNV). Additionally, KEPSA lobbied for women to be included in the country's leadership and Government boards which both have been successful.

KEPSA established a Gender Sector Board to add to its economic sector boards with the mandate to spearhead, coordinate and champion private sector diversity and inclusion

advocacy and initiatives to enhance gender responsiveness and advance the SDG goal of gender equality.

Some of the interventions that KEPSA has undertaken include;

1. **Better Business Practices for Children (BBPC)** is a UNICEF-funded project that aims at improving maternal and infant nutrition by making the working environments conducive to supporting new mothers. The initiative began in September 2010, when KEPSA signed a statement of commitment on behalf of businesses to promote work policies that create a conducive environment for breastfeeding employees.



KEPSA Led the Private Sector to Celebrate the World Breastfeeding week in 2018

The partnership has implemented 3 phases of the of the project. To institutionalize the initiative, KEPSA was instrumental in the enactment of the Breast Milk Substitutes (Regulations and Control) Act, 2012, and the Health Act, 2017 which guides on workplace support for breastfeeding and ran a public campaign to promote

breastfeeding.



The latter phase aimed at incorporating MIYCN in the agenda of women chama programs, lobbying and sensitizing the Agro- processors to ensure that the foods they value add is nutritious and appropriate for the children and entire families.



BBPC Booklet on Business Case Studies on Workplace Support here - <http://bit.ly/3pbRFiY>

BBPC Policy on Workplace Support here - <http://bit.ly/3p8ysrL>

BBPC documentary here: <https://youtu.be/sV4VJO4ATmo>

2. In 2012, we brought together the women of KEPSA to run a campaign on **women and peace** during the elections.





3. In partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Government of Kenya held an **international forum on Women in Business (WIB)** in 2015 along the sidelines of the 10th World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference in Nairobi.



4. In 2015, through a partnership with the government and development agencies, KEPSA responded to the **Global call to Action** to take 1 million women to regional and global markets by 2020. KEPSA committed to promote the inculcation of sustainable inclusive business practice.



5. In partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Government of Kenya held an **international forum on Women in Business (WIB)** in 2015 along the sidelines of the 10th World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference in Nairobi.



6. In collaboration with the government developed a **joint strategy of safeguarding the increasing uptake of Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO)** by women enterprises in both public and corporate bodies.



7. Building the capacity of women in business associations on non-tariff barriers including the formation of sector-based Women In Business (WIB) associations
8. Together with the Australian Government, KEPSA and ITC embarked on a program to build the capacity of women in the service industries to join global markets.
9. Launched the ShetradesKE initiative in 2016 towards ensuring 10,000 local women entrepreneurs got equipped with new skills and connected to international trade opportunities.



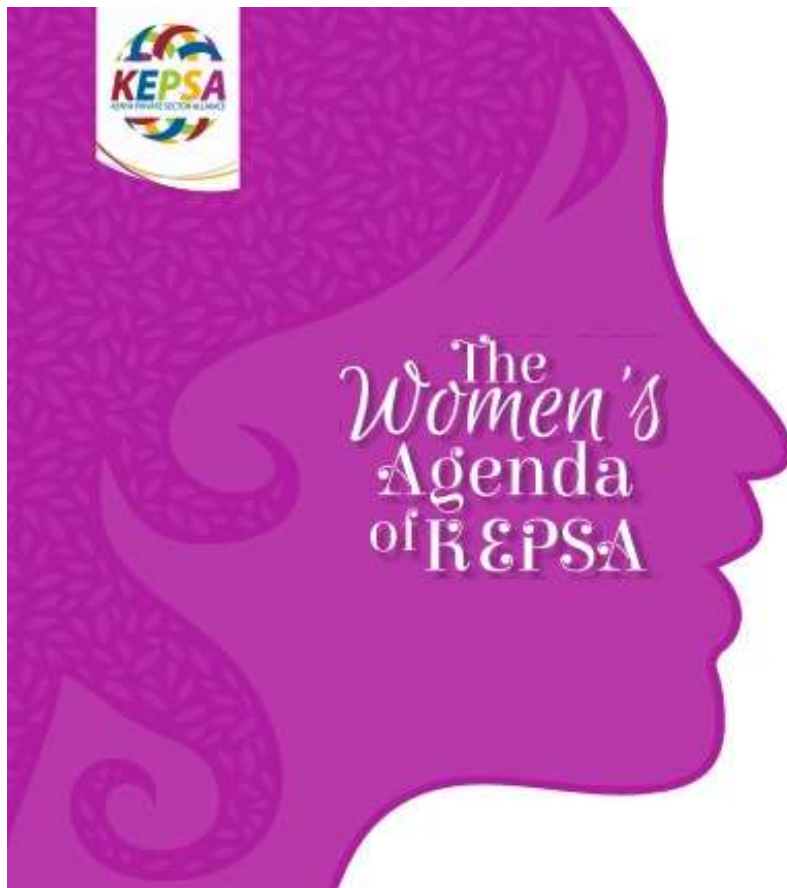
10. Gender Sector Board held a Ministerial Stakeholder Forum with the Ministry of Public Service, Gender and Youth Affairs in 2016



11. In October 2016 collaborated with Professional Women Empowered (PROWE) for an event in honor of the Cabinet Secretary Amb. Amina Mohamed following her nomination as the African Union Commission Chairperson candidature.



12. KEPSA through the [Women's Agenda of KEPSA](#) Publication documented the voices of the Private Sector Champions



13. KEPSA held a celebration of Private Sector '*He for She*' champions in 2018





14.KEPSA held an engagement with the **National Gender Equality Commission (NGEC)** in 2018 to identify areas of collaboration in championing and promoting gender inclusion



15. KEPSA and **The Embassy of Finland** - Nairobi in 2018 signed a Memorandum of Understanding to help enhance trade relations between Kenya and Finland, especially for women trade.



16. In 2019, KEPSA organized the **1st North meets East, Women in Business Forum** bringing together leading businesswomen from the North and East of Africa to network, share experiences and best practices, build new partnerships and collaborations, explore opportunities and address existing barriers to trade across the regions.



17. KEPSA held the inaugural Supplier Diversity Summit in 2019, which brought together public and private sector organizations in discussions that lead to the activation and sharing of best practices on diversity and inclusion of women, youth, and Persons with Disabilities in the supply chain



18. KEPSA in partnership with the **Irish Embassy** co-hosted a **mentorship session** in 2019 seeking to empower Women in Business with a focus on SMEs and start-ups. The partnership also donated PPEs and facilitated training, mentorship and coaching to build the capacity of Women SMEs with skills and knowledge to enable them to navigate the negative impact of Covid 19.





19. In 2019, KEPSA co-hosted a brief session with the State Department for Gender for the annual Kenya delegation to the **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)** session with the objective of showcasing private sector's contribution to promoting women's right, gender equality and the empowerment of women.

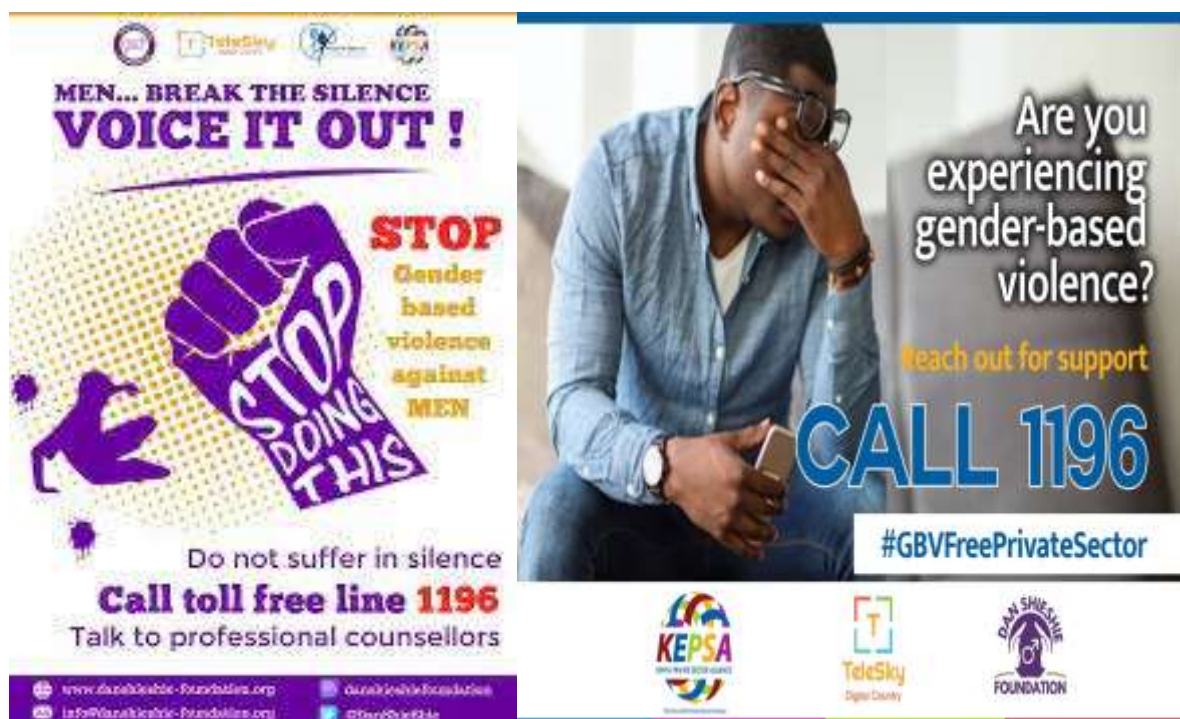




20.KEPSA launched the **“Wheels for Life Initiative”** in 2020 through its Health Sector Board, the Kenya Healthcare Federation (KHF), and other partners to respond to pregnancy-related medical emergencies experienced at night during the Covid-19 related curfew hours that served over 8,710 women in 5 regions.



21. In 2020, KEPSA in partnership with Danshieshie Foundation and Telesky launched the 'Men in Silence' initiative.



22. In 2021, KEPSA launched a **Private Sector Gender-Based Violence (GBV) advocacy program** in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to create an enabling environment to eliminate GBV, scale-up evidence-driven prevention programs, and enhance access to services for survivors through the private sector intervention.



23. KEPSA partnered with the **Irish Embassy** in 2020 with an aim to impart skills through **training, and mentorship and donation of PPEs** to women led/owned SMEs to mitigate the negative effects of Covid 19. Through this program, KEPSA trained a total of 10,000 women and youth where 70% were women.



24. **Covid-19 Recovery and Resilience Program** in partnership with **Mastercard Foundation** implemented in 2020/2021, where 106 (100 Micro and 6 SMEs) businesses benefited from the short-term loan financing without interest and no required collateral, amounting to about KES 42 million. Out of these, 78% of loan beneficiaries were female and 22% were male under the youth bracket.



25. Launch of Board Diversity Study report in partnership with Kenya Institute of Management (KIM), Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), and New Faces New Voices (NFNV) in 2021.



26. Entered into an **agreement with Xetova Limited** in 2021 to cooperate in supply-chain transformation and implementation of the WeDeliver Agenda Africa, which is an end-to-end technology driven initiative that is designed to support Africa's large buying organizations include more women-owned businesses to access procurement opportunities and succeed in this marketplace.



27. In 2020, KEPSA Foundation partnered with the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA), Common Women Agenda (COWA), Echo Network Africa (ENA), and Kenya Pipeline Company in a workshop on **“The Space for Women in National Resource Sharing and Budget Making Processes”** that sought to enhance the capacity of women Members of Parliament at the National level to enhance their representation, participation and inclusion of women in resource allocation.





28. In 2021, KEPSA Foundation hosted **Dialogue Meetings of Women Leaders** that discussed the Two-Thirds Gender Rule and the proposed Biashara Fund. The events were co-hosted by Common Women Agenda (COWA) and Echo Network Africa (ENA).





29. Partnered with the Ministry of Health on the **vaccination initiative** where one of the target groups was safe to trade especially truck drivers and women in cross-border trade and worked with Trademark East Africa (TMEA) on ensuring access to vaccines when they were scarce in 2021.



30. In June 2021, KEPSA and State Department for Gender co-hosted a luncheon in honour of the Chief Justice and President of the Supreme Court of Kenya, Hon. Justice Martha Koome at Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi.



31. In September 2021, held a roundtable in support of the Cabinet Secretary Amb. Dr. Monica Juma's nomination for the position of the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth,



32. In September 2021, KEPSA in partnership with the **French Embassy** conducted **training** of 100 women and youth on the development of business plans adopting the **waste to value concept**



33. In October 2021, KEPSA launched the **Board Diversity and Inclusion study report 2021** undertaken in partnership with Kenya Institute of Management (KIM), Nairobi Securities (NSE) and New Faces New Voices (NFNV).



34. KEPSA women in partnership with **Chandaria Foundation** launched an initiative towards establishing income-generating activities, and strengthening the entrepreneurship and vocational training in **Langata Women's Prison** for women in prisons in 2022.



35. Launch of the inaugural **Private Sector Gender Mainstreaming Policy** in 2022 that aims to provide practical guidelines for the adoption and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the private sector.



36. Women professionals in business engaged with Hon. Martha Karua on 3rd June 2022 through KEPSA Foundation following her appointment as the Deputy Presidential candidate of one of the main Political Alliances.



37. On 14th June 2022, H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta received the African Gender Award 2022 for championing gender equality and development in the country. The award serves as a mechanism to monitor and reward an African Head of State or Government who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in promoting gender equality and development within the thematic areas of the African Union's Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality. The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa was adopted by the Assembly of the Heads of State and Governments of the African Union (AU) in 2004.



KEPSA was awarded the Private Sector Africa Gender Award, alongside the Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW) who were awarded the CSO Africa Gender Award by the 'Gender is My Agenda Campaign' (GIMAC).



38. KEPSA partnered with Women on Boards Network (WOBN) and other partners in the 2nd WOBN Annual Awards to celebrate and honor champions of diversity and inclusion on boards on 25th November 2022.



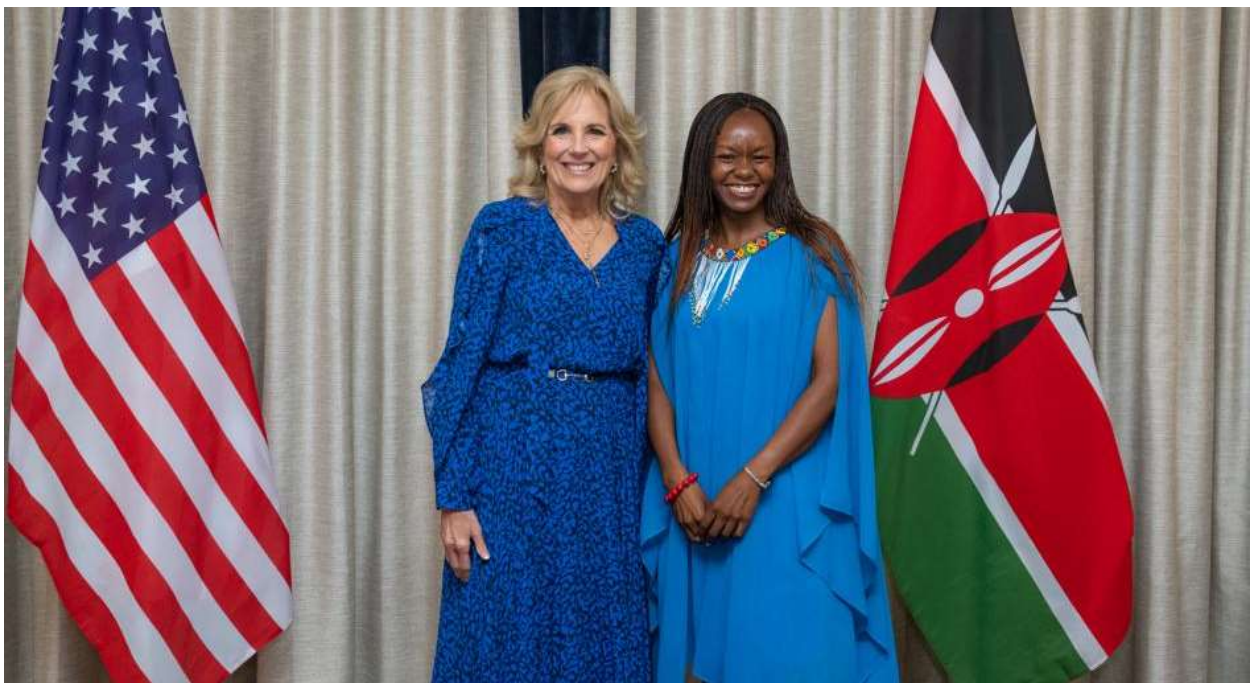
A KEPSA inaugural award category of 'KEPSA Gender Mainstreaming award 2022' to organization registered under KEPSA that has optimized gender equality and women empowerment initiatives through a KEPSA seven-point gender mainstreaming agenda of the recently launched Private Sector Gender Mainstreaming policy was launched.



39. KEPSA hosted an appreciation breakfast for Prof. Margaret Kobia, former Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Public Service, Gender, Senior Citizens Affairs & Special Programs at a Nairobi hotel on 3rd August 2022. This was in recognition of the support and collaboration her office has given to the private sector in efforts that have seen the achievement of numerous milestones on matters of gender diversity and inclusion, during her tenure in the ministry.



40. KEPSA CEO Ms Carole Kariuki joined a few women leaders from Government, political class, Business, Civil Society and NGOs in a reception hosted in honour of H.E First Lady of the United States of America, Dr Jill Biden on 25th February 2023 in Nairobi. The visit was a follow-up of the U.S. - Africa Leaders' Summit held in 2022 where KEPSA CEO participated. During the summit, Dr Biden had also hosted a two-day program for Africa's First Ladies present including the First Lady of the Republic of Kenya H.E Rachel Ruto.



41. KEPSA participated in the National celebrations of the International Women's Day 2023 that was spearheaded by the Ministry of Public Service, Gender and Affirmative Action at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC), Nairobi that was

graced by His Excellency Willam S. Ruto, PHD., CGH the President of the Republic of Kenya. The theme for this event was, 'DigitAll: Information, and Technology for Gender Equality'.





Finally, these interventions, among others, demonstrate that KEPSA remains committed to advancing and championing gender equality and women empowerment in the private sector in addition to its paramount contribution to the growth of the economy and optimization of a conducive business environment.