

Kenya's 'Making Every Woman and Girl Count' campaign

Kenya's government has pledged to support the newly established public-private partnership to support UN Women's 'Making Every Woman and Girl Count' campaign.



Uganda President Yoweri Museveni, Janet Museveni and Sicily Kariuki of Kenya.

Speaking at the UN General Assembly, Kenya's cabinet secretary for public service, youth and gender affairs, Sicily Kariuki, said that Kenya's government was firmly committed to the program. "Kenya's Vision 2030 which is the country's long term economic development blueprint is aligned with principles of the Sustainable Development Goals. Particularly, the vision' flagship project on gender, youth and vulnerable groups, mirrors the gender objectives in the SDGs.

"Kenya fully recognises that quality disaggregated data is vital in shaping policy that ensure that every woman and every child count in our quest for lasting sustainable development for all."

Speaking at the same event, Melinda Gates, co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, said that decisions and progress on gender matters would have to be data driven.

"Collecting data is an immediate priority, because if we are going to act, we actually have to have good baseline data on where we are," she said. "A lot of reasons we don't have good data particularly around the gender goals is because we haven't collected it."

The 'Make Every Woman and Girl Count' programme seeks to address the urgent need to increase availability of accurate information on gender equality and women's rights in order to inform policy and decision making. Currently, there is a huge data gap—from the complete lack of statistics on how many women and girls live in poverty; to inaccurate measures of women's engagement in economic activities, based on sexist assumptions.

Kenya has been selected as one of the 12 pathfinder countries where this initiative will be implemented and Kariuki assured the gathering that Kenya was fully committed in moving this initiative forward.

"Where available, data has continuously informed some interventions in Kenya, and helped to track the transformation in areas such as: free and compulsory primary school in education that has boosted enrolment of girls and boys since 2003 to enable Kenya to achieve near gender parity; affirmative action rooted in the constitution has seen the rise of women in decision making both in the public and political spheres; free maternity health services in public health facilities that has drastically increased the number of deliveries within hospitals and reduction in maternal deaths; as well as transformative socio-economic programmes through access to catalytic funds and cash transfers.

"I wish to appreciate and commend the Secretary General of the UN, for his exemplary leadership in translating Every Women and Every Child into a global movement that has elicited action by international entities, private sector as well as Governments to address challenges facing women and girls, a constituency that is a core priority of the 2030 sustainable agenda," Kariuki added.

Uganda President Yoweri Museveni and Janet Museveni, Senegal President Macky Sall, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Melinda Gates also attended the launch.

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