



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT HUB

**REPORT ON GENDERED IMPACT OF COVID-19
STAKEHOLDERS' WEBINAR HELD ON TUESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 7, 2021.**

PROJECT TITLE

**GENDERED IMPACT OF TRAVEL RESTRICTION'S
GOVERNMENT POLICY RESPONSE TO COVID-19 ON
TOURISM INDUSTRY IN KENYA**

Table of Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	3
1.2 THE WEBINAR PRESENTATIONS.....	3
1.3 PRESENTATIONS FROM THE STAKEHOLDERS.....	4
1.3.1 Presentation from Dr Keziah Odemba, Director of Tourism - Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife.....	4
1.3.2 Presentation by Mr Robert Kamiti, Assistant Director of Tourism; State Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism ..	6
1.3.3 Presentation by Philomena Wairimu Kamau, Deputy Director, Youth Development (Gender desk)	6
1.3.4 Presentation by Ms Agnes Mucuha- CEO, Kenya Association of Travel Agents	7
1.3.5 Presentation by Mr. Felix Migoya – East Africa Association of Tour Guides and Drivers	8
1.3.6 Presentation by Ms Nyandia Nyamu-Lenehan; Kenya Association of Women in Tourism	8
1.3.7 Conclusion	9
1.3.8 Way forward.....	9

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Kenyatta University received a grant from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (B&MGF) to implement a five (5) year project on “*The Initiative for What Works for Women’s Economic Empowerment (IWWWEE)*”. The Project was established September 2020 and launched in January 2021 by Prof Margret Kobia, the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Public Service and Gender. The Project comprises of thirteen (13) specific projects. The aim of Project is to build a strong programme and policy evidence research on what works to advance Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) in Kenya. The Kenyatta University Women Economic Empowerment (KU-WEE) Hub, runs the project.

Among the 13 projects is the *Gendered Impact of Travel Restriction’s Government Policy Response to COVID 19 on Tourism Industry in Kenya* project. COVID 19 pandemic has created unprecedented and unforeseen circumstances world-wide. The disastrous health, education and socio-economic effects of the disease have been felt in poor and rich countries in equal measure. In Kenya, the COVID-19 pandemic’s negative effects on the people’s employment, incomes/revenue and remittances to the government and counties were enormous particularly in tourism industry. The project entails evaluation of the devastating impact of travel restrictions during and after COVID-19 on Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) programmes in Kenya through engagement of relevant stakeholders for evidence-based policy uptake.

The Webinar was organized for the tourism partners to:

- (I) Bring them on board and create awareness of the Gendered project;
- (II) Avail the stakeholders an opportunity to inform the project what they do and their expectations of the project;
- (III) To discuss what they would wish to gain from our project and the gaps they anticipate the project would address. The Webinar was also meant for the Hub and Gendered Impact Team to meet and know the partners the project was going to collaborate with and their needs.

Stakeholders who participated in the Webinar include Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife (MoTW), Council of Governors – the officer coordinating tourism sector, Kenya Association of Women in Tourism (KAWT), Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA), East Africa Guides and Drivers Association (EAGDA), Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre – East Africa-(GTRCMC-EA), Association of Women in Tourism (AWT), Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) and KU-WEE Hub Team.

1.2 THE WEBINAR PRESENTATIONS

The 2-hour stakeholders Webinar started with a prayer and welcome remarks from Dr Esther Munyiri who welcomed the participants to the forum. She introduced the Team from the tourism industry, their designations/positions and the organizations they represented. In her introductory remarks on the Gendered Impact project, she informed that the ultimate goal of the project is to ensure generation of clear policy guidelines and mechanisms to protect women in crisis and disasters like the COVID-19 pandemic. She said that the project was an evaluative

study that will look at the impacts of the policies /directives that were put in place in response to COVID-19 pandemic, key amongst them, the travel restrictions. The project will answer the question, *how did travel restrictions affect employment, incomes, access to credit and remittances to government at the national and county level in Kenya?* Equipped with robust scientific evidence from the research, the MoTW will review such policies as labour and financial policies to make them favourable to support women and other members of society in times of crisis and disasters.

Dr Munyiri's introductory remarks were followed by the KU-WEE Hub Leader, Prof Judith Waudo who introduced the participants from the KU-WEE Hub and highlighted the mandate of the Hub. In her remarks Prof Waudo informed that the purpose of the Project is to build a strong programme and policy evidence research on what works to advance Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) in Kenya. This was going to be achieved through strong partnerships with the stakeholders in all the areas that the 13 projects aim to work on hence the purpose of the Webinar. She reiterated that the Project's mandate was to carry out evaluative research to generate gender data from the study and actively engage in mapping policy uptake and Knowledge sharing.

In regard to the Hub, Prof Waudo informed the participants that the Hub has developed several policies to help manage the Project and formed two Committees and an Advisory Board which comprises of several representatives from relevant ministries and other organizations. She went further to inform that the Hub has been able to formalize the memorandum of understanding between partners; established a functional website and brochure; worked on all the 13 projects with some already in the filed for piloting

On the way forward, Prof. Waudo reported that the Hub will complete the pilot studies, analyse the findings and share the same with the stakeholders. She promised to continually engage with the stakeholders on what is being done especially from field work, as well as share the data generated towards informing policies. She reiterated the critical role the stakeholders are going to play in making the Project a success.

1.3 PRESENTATIONS FROM THE STAKEHOLDERS

After the preliminaries and address from the Hub Leader, Dr Munyiri proceeded to invite the various presenters from different organizations to give brief remarks.

1.3.1 Presentation from Dr Keziah Odemba, Director of Tourism - Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife

In her presentation, Dr Keziah reported that COVID-19 has had a disastrous effect on the tourism industry globally and has witnessed the great setbacks in every aspect. She emphasized that the effects had been felt much more by women, who, comprised of 54% of the labour force in the industry according to the United Nations Women in Tourism (UNWTO, 2020). In addition, in developing countries, women were the bulk of the labour force making up to 69% ((UNWTO, 2020)). Majority of the women worked at lower levels and therefore bore the brunt of COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr Odemba reiterated that the aim of KATA was to mainstreaming gender equality considerations across tourism policies, strategies and plans. There is therefore need for accurate information especially on women-run organizations in the sector. She posed the following questions: do we know the hotels, restaurants, taxis, tour firms and other establishments run by women? This information is needed to help guide the policies and strategies. She held that there are around 500,000 people employed in the tourism sector in Kenya, but how many of these employees are women? There is need for an audit of the number of women working in the sector as well as categorize them according to where they work i.e food industry, fashion, crafts and other areas in the sector. The numbers will help in planning and formulation of appropriate policies.

Dr Odemba reiterated that there is also need for an audit of women in leadership and decision-making positions in the tourism industry. She asked the following questions:-

- How many are they?
- which are the organizations they work for?
- what is the women's role in those organizations when it comes to decision making?
- Are these women able to champion the cause of women in the meetings?
- How can women in high level leadership be supported?

Dr Odemba informed that formulating policies is not just enough, there is need to get women who are passionate on matters women and are able to champion issues women when it comes to policies. There is need for good policies to help women thrive at home and in the society (shield them from cultural norms).

In her presentation, Dr Odemba identified the following gaps:

- **The area of entrepreneurship.** Women who are entrepreneurs face the challenge of getting mentors.
 - How can we work towards ensuring these women who are gifted and hardworking are empowered?
- **Employment issues.** Skilled employment. How can women be trained and skilled to have confidence to get professional jobs to enable them climb the ladder?
 - What is the pay?
 - The women in the informal sector, do they have access to training?
- **Financing issue.** Women in tourism businesses and funding opportunities.
 - The tourism sector needs to develop policies that caters for funding issues especially for women owned businesses in the industry.
 - Financing and funding will empower women in the tourism sector to do their businesses with confidence.
- **Education and training.** There is need to create trainings that are flexible and interesting for women practitioners/employees in the tourism industry. Good education and training will empower women to sail through crisis situations.
- **Information, communication and technology (ICT) issues.** Tourism policies should look for ways and means on how to enhance digital training for women in the industry.

This will make it easy for them to get information on who and where to market their products and how to access funding and other opportunities in the industry.

1.3.2 Presentation by Mr Robert Kamiti, Assistant Director of Tourism; State Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism

Mr Kamiti reported that the MoTW had established a National Crisis Steering Committee whose membership cut across all sections in the Ministry. The role of the Committee was to mitigate crisis that affect the Tourism industry. He informed that research was one of the roles of the committee and as such the Gendered Impact of COVID-19 has come in at the right time and the Ministry is **ready to work, support and engage with the project to the end in terms of information and resources if need be**. He said that he was happy that the issues of women were at the centre of the project.

On the expectations of the Ministry of Tourism, Mr. Kamiti reported:

- The MoTW expects that by the end of the five years, the project will come up with good policies which will contribute to the narrowing of the gender inequality gap.
- That the project will have long-term policies that will address the post pandemic recessions.
- That the project will come up with measures to avoid future crisis.

1.3.3 Presentation by Philomena Wairimu Kamau, Deputy Director, Youth Development (Gender desk)

In her very first remarks, Ms Wairimu asserted that the Gendered Impact Project would not have come at a better time, when women and girls' jobs as casuals at hotels have been in a major crisis. In addition, women and girls earn very little, save very little and they tend to hold most insecure jobs especially in the tourism industry. She held that one cannot mention COVID-19 without mentioning GBV has witnessed and upsurge during the lockdowns.

Ms Wairimu informed that the MoTW has a **Gender mainstreaming Committee** whose mandate is to achieve equality between men and women, which involves bringing in a gender perspective into preparation, design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects and programs in every aspect. The committee works to access government procurement opportunities, where a certain percentage goes to women, youths and persons with disabilities. In the procurement, the Committee advocates for more women-run firms be given a chance to do business with the government. There is a proposal to come up with **Policies to create onsite day-care facilities** which the Committee is hoping to work on together with the State department for tourism.

She reported that the MoTW has put in place a Gender mainstreaming workplace policy and GBV workplace policy. She advised that the Gender Impact of COVID-19 project be inclusive especially as regards persons living with disability. She reiterated that with the lockdown and the effects of the pandemic, there were no travels and the enterprises mostly dominated by women experiences major setbacks. The extent of the impact on women needs to be assessed

and addressed. Another area of empowerment She considered important is women funding. *Her last shot was as much as we wanted to empower women- include men as gender champions.*

1.3.4 Presentation by Ms Agnes Mucuha- CEO, Kenya Association of Travel Agents

In her presentation, Ms Mucuha informed that it was important to recognize that the travel agent associations employ both young men and women. She also informed that 80% of travel agencies are women owned. In addition, the Association supports a lot of agriculture as food for the hotels that work with travel agents is from agriculture. Therefore, when travel restrictions were imposed, the agricultural industry was also majorly affected. Ms Mucuha went further to highlight the different types of restrictions as follows:

Primary restrictions in mobility in the hospitality and tourism industry during COVID-19

- Route restrictions- from one country to another. Some routes were suspended hindering international travel as some were put in place without notice.
- Nationality restrictions- where certain passport holders being denied access to certain destinations. This limited the number of travellers moving from one place to another. Some Kenyans were denied visas to UAE.
- The health requirements. For example, the UK mandates quarantine and the traveller bears the cost thus limits travel. Further, the requirement for COVID-19 certificates reducing demand to certain destinations.
- The health screen on arrival. i.e., certain countries are manding the rapid antigen test for passengers during arrivals, this causes anxiety among travellers and increases costs. This also limits travel
- The changes in visa regulations and requirements, this is changing the number of travellers to various destinations. This has a direct impact on travel industry and hence bringing the industry to a standstill.

Ms Mucuha informed that KATA will be able to share data and industry information that will help the project to have a scientific approach in terms of accessing and measuring the number of women in the sector, the volume of business that they were transacting pre-covid and tracking progressive recovery post-covid.

She reiterated that the Gendered Impact project has come in at the right time and will be helpful to the Association particularly in assessing the impact of restriction and suspension of airline services both international and domestic air services. The restrictions limited the recovery of businesses that are mostly owned by the women.

She suggested the type of information that will be useful to the Association. The question to ask:

- ❖ When the industry shut down, what did these women diversify into?
- ❖ How did they continue surviving under those difficult circumstances where they could not trade?

- ❖ KATA has some feasibility on some of the diversified businesses that the travel agents shifted their focus into. She promised to share the information with the Project.
- ❖ KATA is also keen on ensuring resilience is built and that the industry is becoming agile and that it's adapting positively to the shocks of COVID-19.
- ❖ Identify means and ways of mitigating the next big crisis that will happen.

Measure the adoption of digital platforms by women in their businesses.

- ❖ Do they have e-commerce stores that give them access and reach to their customers during the restriction periods?
- ❖ Did they have alternatives channels that enabled them to continue to trade and do business as well as to remain connected and engaged to the customers that they have been serving?

1.3.5 Presentation by Mr. Felix Migoya – East Africa Association of Tour Guides and Drivers

The Association was represented by Felix Migoya who informed that women were highly underrepresented and would want to see this change in the near future. He shared that there are less than 1% female in the Association. That out of 8,000 tour guides and drivers, only four (4) women are registered by the MoTW and only three (3) are currently active in tour guiding and are based in the Maasai Mara game Reserve. He emphasized that tour guiding offers great promise as it is the fast-growing areas particularly with the aggressive marketing of local tourism. He reported that female graduate from tertiary colleges join tour guiding but leave for other jobs as soon as they get one. He reiterated that the Association would like to see more women join and is going out of its way to recruit, train and mentor them. To achieve this the Association is going to organize awareness drives to get more women to join the tour guiding profession.

1.3.6 Presentation by Ms Nyandia Nyamu-Lenehan; Kenya Association of Women in Tourism

Ms Nyandia reported that Kenya Association of Women in Tourism (KAWT) in a non-profit organization whose mandate is to empower women so that their voice is heard in tourism. She informed that the voice of women in tourism is not heard and therefore the Association is pushing for them to actively participate in the industry. She informed the team that the core values of the Association are collaboration and teamwork, among others, and that the Association is building IT skills to open avenues for members to take advantage of digital marketing. She also said that women need to be in top leadership and in this regard, the Association is pushing women to participate in top management. The Association is carrying our research to get information of where women are in tourism. In this regard, she welcomes the Gendered Impact project to work with the Association to build evidence of where women are and what needs to be done to bring them to benefit from the industry.

1.3.7 Conclusion

The ideas emanating from the stakeholders were in tandem with the proposal. The Webinar was very informative in guiding the research team into the gaps that are important to the government and the industry, both at the national and regional level. Areas of interest by the stakeholder will guide the research team on the areas of specialization for each participant. The stakeholders will be very instrumental in reaching the respondents from across the target areas.

1.3.8 Way forward

The stakeholders pledged their support to the project. Therefore, moving forward, the research team will share responsibilities with the partners. The partners will then assist in shaping the research proposal, including the research instruments. They will then assist the research team in collecting quality data, analysing, reporting and advocating for policy formulation and implementation.

Appendix 1. COVID-19 WEBINAR SCREENSHOTS

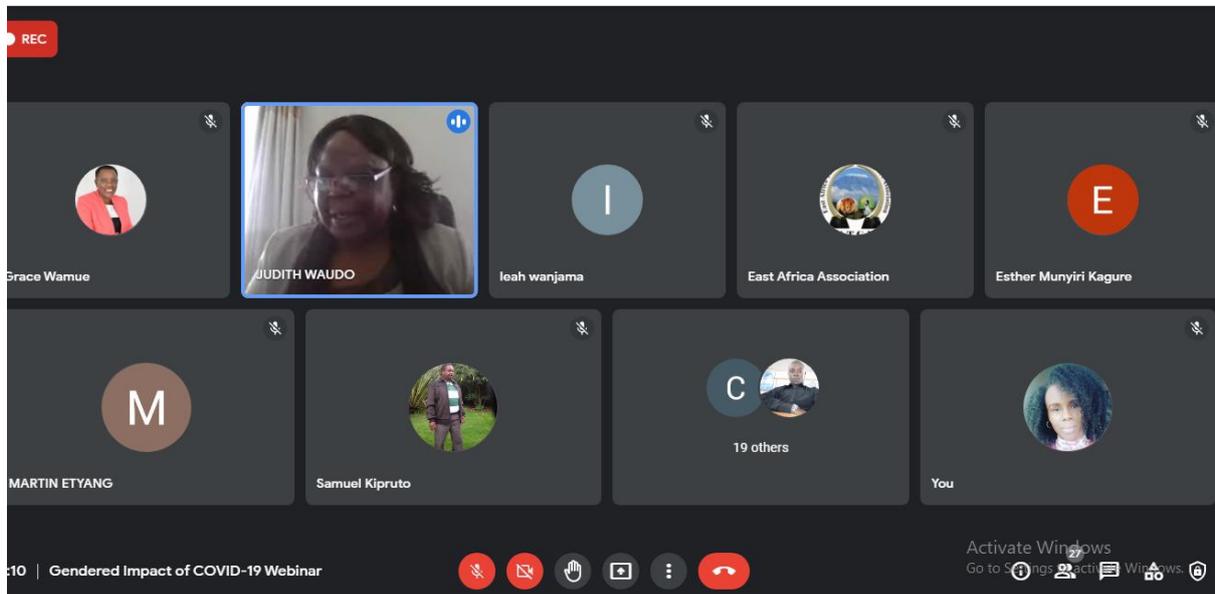


Photo 1: Hub Leader, Prof. Judith Waudo makes introductory remarks

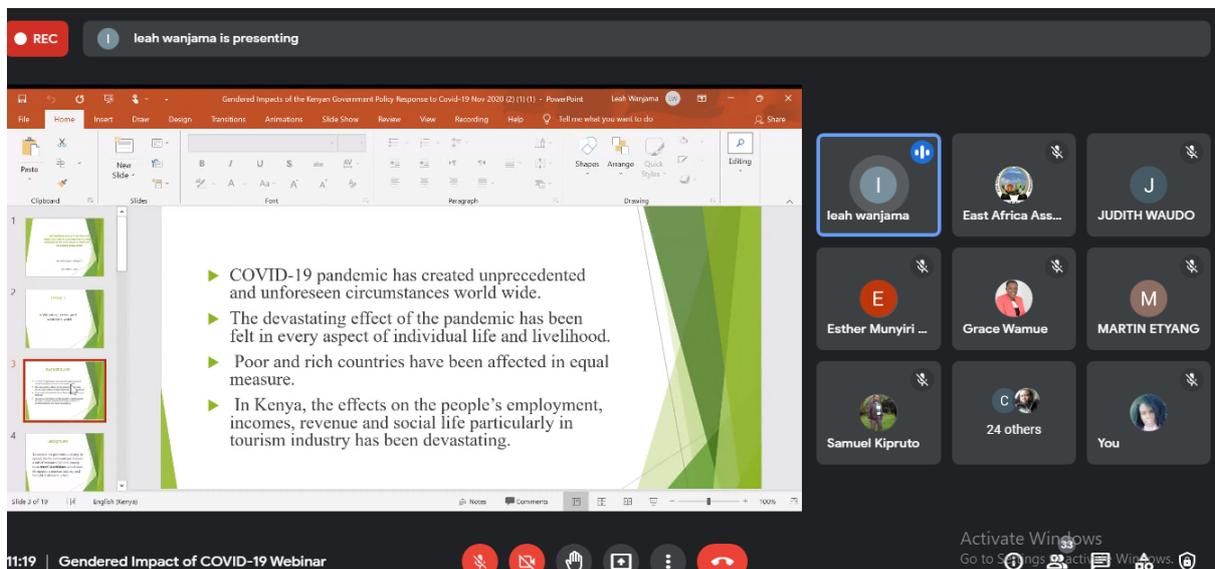


Photo 2: Dr. Leah Wanjama presents an overview of the study

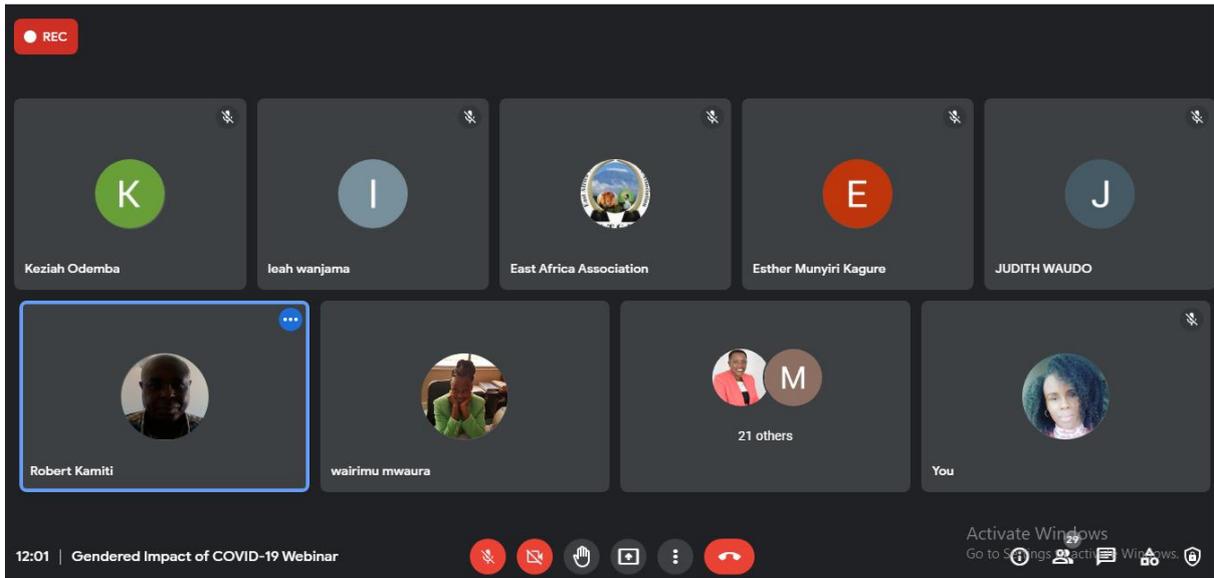


Photo 3: Assistant Director of Tourism, State Department of Tourism-Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, Mr. Robert Kamiti gives his remarks

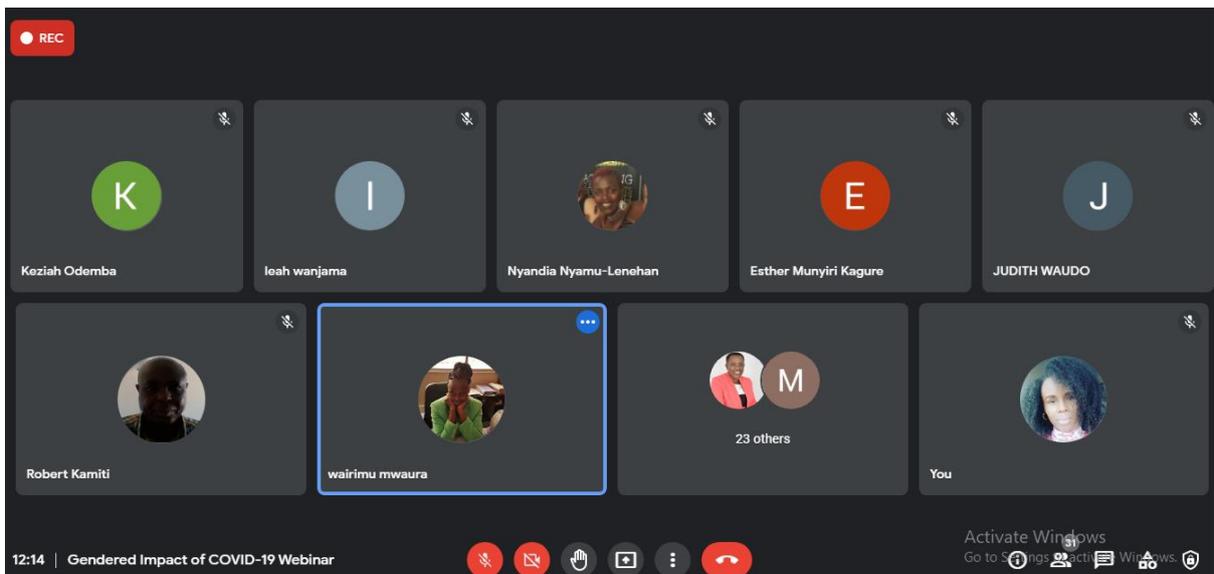


Photo 4: Deputy Director, Youth Development (Gender Desk) Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, Ms. Philomena Wairimu presents

Appendix 2 **WORKSHOP PROGRAMME**

**GENDERED IMPACT OF TRAVEL RESTRICTION'S
GOVERNMENT POLICY RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC
ON THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN KENYA**

Webinar

7th September 2021; 1100 to 1300 EAT

TIME	EVENT	FACILITATOR
11:00 – 11:05am	Introduction and Setting the Agenda	Dr. Esther Munyiri Co-Principal Investigator
11:05-11:10am	Opening Remarks Hub Leader	Prof. Judith Waudo
11:10-11:15am	About the WEE Hub	Prof. Nelson Wawire
11:15-11:30am	Presentation: Gendered Impact of Travel Restriction's Government Policy Response to Covid-19 Pandemic on the Tourism Industry	Dr. Leah Wanjama Principal Investigator
11:30-11:40am	Remarks: Director of Tourism Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife	Dr. Keziah Odemba
11:40-11:50am	Remarks: Assistant Director of Tourism State Department of Tourism Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife Chairperson, Secretariat: National Tourism Crisis Steering Committee	Mr. Robert Kamiti
11:50-12:00noon	Remarks: Deputy Director, Youth Development (Gender Desk) Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife	Ms. Philomena Wairimu Kamau

12:00 – 12:10pm	Remarks: The Tourism Officer, Tourism Committee, Council of Governors	Mr. Tawari Koncella
12:10 – 12:20pm	Remarks: CEO, Kenya Association of Travel Agents	Ms. Agnes Mucuha
12:20 – 12:30pm	Remarks: CEO, East Africa Guides and Drivers Association	Mr. Kennedy Kaunda
12:30 – 12:40pm	Remarks: Ag. CEO, Kenya Association of Women in Tourism (KAWT)	Ms. Nyandia Nyamu- Lenehan
12:40 – 12:50pm	Remarks: Chairperson, Training and Capacity Building, Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre - Eastern Africa Kenyatta University	Dr. Moses Miricho
1250 – 1300	Wrap-up, Way Forward, and Vote of Thanks	Prof Martin Etyang

Meeting Link:

meet.google.com/hqz-kwzc-ocb