



PRESS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health to train 3,500 healthcare workers on SGBV case management in the next six months - CAS Dr. Mercy Mwangangi

Lockdown and Isolation measures exacerbated SGBV among girls and women

Nairobi, 4 March 2022 – The Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS) in the ministry of health, Dr. Mercy Mwangangi has said that the ministry of health will train about 3500 healthcare workers on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) case management in the next six months. Speaking during a webinar organised by the **Kenyatta University Women's Economic Empowerment (KU-WEE) Hub** to mark the CWS66 and International Women's Day, Dr. Mwangangi reiterated the critical role of gender-responsive interventions in managing crises, including Covid-19. She spoke on ***Breaking the Bias in SGBV during Covid-19.***

“As a ministry, we have been able to integrate gender norms in our interventions, including the training of over 600 healthcare workers in the last two years to manage SGBV cases”, said the CAS in her address, adding that available data indicated a marked increase in violence against children and especially young girls, that led to early teenage pregnancies and Female Genital Mutilation during the pandemic-induced isolation. She said that the gender sensitive pillar within the health ministry has been instrumental in combating Covid-19.

The webinar brought together stakeholders from private and public institutions to deliberate on, among others, The Role of Women's Voice and Leadership in Gender Transformative Climate Action in Kenya and Challenges Faced by Women due to Deforestation in Kenya. These are key issues as the world marks the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of women (CSW66), under the theme ***Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of all Women and Girls in the Context of Climate Change, Environmental and Disaster Risk Reduction Policies and Programmes.***

Speakers agreed that women are disproportionately affected by crises such as climate change. Women are also powerful response agents who need to be represented in decision making processes in mainstreaming gender within the forest policy and programs and within the value chain of the natural products. Speakers also highlighted the importance of women's agency, the

unravelling of gender power relations at the household level and the inclusion of gender leadership on matters climate change.

‘Women are the main users of biodiversity and possess rich indigenous knowledge. We need to empower them to leverage their skills as educators to pass down conservation knowledge across generations’, said Dr. Jane Njuguna, Deputy Director, Kenya Forestry Research Institute.

KU-WEE Hub Leader Prof. Judith Waudu as well as the Project Leader, Dr. Regina Mwatha, reiterated the Hub’s commitment to work closely with stakeholders to advance gender sensitive interventions across private and public sectors, in line with this year’s International Women’s Day theme: **Gender Equality today, for a sustainable tomorrow.**

KU-WEE Hub looks forward to partnerships that will help bridge the weak nexus between gender data and Women’s Economic Empowerment policies and programmes.

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