



**Guest of Honour Hon, Dr Damas Ndumbaro  
officiating Mwami NTARE exhibition**

## Stakeholders Celebrate Mwami Ntare HerStory

On April 13, 2024, Women Fund Tanzania, in collaboration with the HerStory Coalition, the family of Mwami Tereza, and the National Museum of Tanzania, organized an event to celebrate Mwami Tereza Ntare II, who was the first paramount female chief in the country. She became a leader at the age of 19, inheriting the chieftaincy due to her father's progressive decision which was not limited by the existing gender norms and traditions

The primary objective of the event was to recognize and honor the leadership and contributions of Chief Tereza Ntare II in advancing the agenda of women's leadership, welfare, and development in the country. The event also aimed to educate the public on the significance of acknowledging and highlighting the achievements of women in leadership roles and their contributions to national development. It also provided a platform for discussions and reflections on the involvement of government, institutions, stakeholders, and society as a whole in documenting women's Herstories.

The celebration of the achievements of Mwami Tereza Ntare II took place at the National Museum Center and convened representatives from various sectors including the government, the Mwami Ntare family, stakeholders in women's and girls' rights, students from primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions, members of the media, and other interested parties."

The celebration event comprised various sessions, including speeches, intergenerational dialogues, traditional dances from the Waha tribe, role-playing, panel discussions, documentary screening and exhibition.

During his speech, the guest of honor Hon Dr. Damas Ndumbaro-Minister of Culture, Art, and Sports, confirmed that the government has received a request for the construction of the Mwami Ntare Museum in Kigoma, as well as a special museum dedicated to honoring the contributions of women who participated in the liberation of Tanzania.

*"The National Museum is ready to collaborate with various stakeholders in conducting research and collecting artifacts that will facilitate the establishment of the Mwami Tereza Ntare Museum, ensuring the continuation of honoring its history for the benefit of society".explained Dr Ndumbaro*

Zitto Kabwe, former leader of ACT Wazalendo, who also participated in the event, remarked that the celebration of Mwami Ntare challenged patriarchal systems and broadened people's understanding of history.

*"We had a female ruler, a traditional chief, who received all the all the respect without a doubt. This means that there are numerous narratives of women whose contributions have shaped the nation's trajectory, yet much of their stories remain undocumented. commented Zitto*

Another stakeholder emphasized that preserving this Herstory is not merely a historical initiative but it is a crucial method of empowering future generations. Through making concerted efforts to research, document, and preserve the stories of Tanzanian women, we can ensure that their contributions are never forgotten.

The celebration and honoring of Mwami Tereza Ntare are strategically linked to a broader agenda of increasing women's political participation by 50% for the upcoming Tanzania local government elections this year. By highlighting Mwami Theresa's leadership, the coalition aims to inspire and mobilize women to actively engage in politics, emphasizing the importance of their voices in local

# Grantees Updates



## Making Schools Safe Spaces for Children

The Shinyanga Regional Government recent report indicates that 84 girls dropped out of school due to pregnancy, of which 27 were primary school pupils while the remaining 57 were in secondary school.

Even though women and children feel for more of the urgency change, the current structures of NPA-VAWC terms them as victims of violence rather than agents of change, something which calls for more action to focus on women's perceptions and addressing social norms

To help address this challenge, the Green Community Initiatives (GCI), through a project titled "ACHA UKATILI" funded by WFTT, is working to amplify women and children's voices by challenging traditions, norms and values that perpetuate violent practices that harm them, while at the same time promoting traditions, norms and values that support their well being

Some of the approaches that the project is using include empowering women and girls, child participation and promotion, community engagement, and implementing community prototypes.

As part of the implementation, the project recently conducted a training session to improve Village Junior Councils and Schools' gender desks with the aim to increase children's agency to demand for their rights including protection and safeguarding.

The training session involved 88 participants including 69 junior council members, teachers, school board committees, education officers, and community development. The session was also aimed at equipping members of school governance structures with the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill their roles effectively. Topics covered were around child violence, reporting, ways to reduce child violence, advantages of reporting child violence, child rights abuse, SRHR and ways that children may adopt for opportunities to reach their dreams.

Participants demonstrated keen interest in learning VAC prevention strategies and expressed a strong commitment to implementing these initiatives within their respective schools.

"The guidance provided by the Green Community Initiatives team has been invaluable in equipping us with the tools and knowledge needed to address gender-based violence effectively. I believe that by working together, we can create a school environment where all students feel respected and protected," Teacher from Luhumbo Primary School said.

Children who attended the event were thrilled by the knowledge gained and shared their feelings regarding this.

***"This training has opened my eyes on the importance of reporting incidents of violence promptly. Now, I feel empowered to advocate the safety and well-being of my peers, and I am committed to ensuring that our school remains a safe space for everyone."*** Zobogo Village Junior Council Chairperson said

## Journalists Reflect on Ending VAWC

The Shinyanga Press Club (SPC) recently organized a one-day meeting to discuss the sources and systems of violence that continue to affect women and children.

The session, that was held in Shinyanga, was aimed at providing room for stakeholders to understand the current status of gender issues in the country, as well as conceptualizing the Shinyanga context by exploring findings generated through various studies.

The meeting was also expected to deepen EAWC partners especially SPC members' understanding of the issues of violence against women and children to help them develop stories, articles and documentaries, and generate narratives and push agendas that help to end VAWC.

The meeting was conducted as part of activities implemented by SPC under a project known as "Wanajamii na vyombo vya Habari katika kutokomeza ukatili" funded by WFTT

The session brought together journalists from different media organisations, councilors, LGA officials, and representatives from Shinyanga Intersectional Feminist movement (SHY EAWC WG). The meeting delved into the Social Institution and Gender Index (SIGI) country Report 2021/22 by NBS under OECD Development Centre and WFTT study on "How communities resolve the Complex nature of VAWC, in Shinyanga DC."

The presentations were aimed at helping to improve strategies of ending violence used by stakeholders, tapping to the evidence-based findings informed by these studies. Through discussions, participants were able to reflect on the reality versus findings and came to validate that the findings were indeed providing the reality of the problem within Tanzania and specifically the Shinyanga context.

Shinyanga District Council represented by the Council Chairperson, Hon. Ngassa Mboje, committed to champion the end violence initiatives by ensuring council plans are in place to address women and children concerns relating to violence.

*"As a District Council, we have been capacitated by our partners to obtain a lot of evidence-based information regarding ending violence on women and children. It is high time we use this experience/information to help resolve the complex matter in our community and the councillors are going to champion this in their respective wards,"* said Hon Mboje.

Participants also took time to reflect upon their collective efforts and how they complement one another within the network and outside, to contribute towards ending violence. It was agreed that everyone has a role to play in creating a society that is free from any form of violence.



# Empowering Community Members to Protect Women and Children



Community discussions

Sauti ya Jamii Kipunguni has been a beneficiary of Women Fund Tanzania grants since 2018. And, the organization has made significant strides in addressing community issues, particularly those affecting women and children through projects related to combating sexual corruption, promoting leadership, and fostering an understanding of rights.

Among other activities and initiatives, Sauti ya Jamii Kipunguni has been conducting discussions against violence within the community, designing and implementing various community campaigns, encouraging women to participate in decision-making roles, promoting women's economic empowerment, and environmental protection.

The organization's major goal is to educate the community with the view to eradicate longstanding traditions and practices that contribute to violence, including marital conflicts, poverty-induced violence, and female genital mutilation.

## **Innovative Approaches to Community Education**

According to Sauti ya Jamii Kipunguni Director, Selemani Bishagazi, the organization has a unique approach to awareness raising through community engagement.

*"We engage the community through anti-violence clubs (Vikundi vya kupinga ukatili), open discussions at various celebrations, VICOBA groups, vegetable farms, youth football teams, markets areas, coffee places, social activities, houses of worship, and auction sites..*

*"What we do is to ensure that our sensitization sessions empower people to initiate discussions in every available opportunity like social events, such as kitchen parties, and community meetings hence leading to community engagement and contributions on these topics."* added Bishagazi

## **Mobilizing Women and Community for Collective efforts**

Sauti ya Jamii Kipunguni has also successfully mobilized women for collective local-level actions. This was done through establishment of anti-violence groups and small entrepreneur groups that are turned into major platforms for campaigns and training. In these platforms, women and girls, particularly single mothers, are taught how to boost their income through engaging in income-generating activities, which help reduce poverty-induced violence and improve the welfare of their children.

## **Community Meetings and Violence Prevention**

The organization holds community meetings to strategize on protecting children during holidays, a period when violence tends to increase. These meetings involve local and ward leaders, social groups, lodge owners, organizations, children, parents, youth, political parties, police, elders, bodaboda (motorcycle taxi) riders, and religious leaders. Community members are taught to detect signs of violence and report it to appropriate authorities.

## **Education and Advocacy**

Sauti ya Jamii Kipunguni also provides education on reproductive health, the effects of sexual corruption, understanding rights, and reporting violence. As local government elections are approaching, the organization is holding discussions to promote women participation in the polls and encourage them to vie for decision-making positions.

## **Impact and Future Goals**

Speaking about the organization's impact, Bishagazi said Sauti ya Jamii Kipunguni has reached 5,842 direct beneficiaries.

*"Our efforts have fostered a community that recognizes the shared responsibility of preventing violence. It has also led to the transformation of former perpetrators into ambassadors against violence. We wish to encourage other stakeholders to adopt these cost-effective approaches to help demonstrate that preventing violence against women and children is a collective responsibility hence promoting a safer and more inclusive community for all,"* concluded Bishagazi.







# Pictorial



Official launching of Mwami Tereza Ntare Exhibition at the National museum



Section of participants following the event,



Poem by students from Benjamin Mkapa High School



This is Mwami Ntare HerStory....



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