

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Kenyan wins global business prize

By LUCAS NGASIKE

A Kenyan woman has bagged the Oslo Business for Peace award, 2016.

Jennifer Riria was among the top three global businesswomen who were honoured for their role in changing the lives of small-scale businesspeople in the world.

The Kenya Women Finance Trust (KWFT) chief executive officer has for the last two decades played a key role in financially supporting women in the micro-enterprise sector in the country.

Riria was honoured for helping women access capital for business and contributing towards building peace in times of conflicts.

"In their own very special way, each of the honoree has made significant contributions to their societies.

"In their field of extraordinary leaders, their vision and passion stands out.

"They deserve recognition, admiration and respect, and more than that, our gratitude," said Michael



Spences of the independent committee of Nobel laureates.

Under her tenure, KWFT has granted loans to 1.5 million marginalised women and their families.

United Nations Development Programme administrator Helen Clark announced the three winners of this year's award yesterday in Norway.

The other two nominees are Sarah Beydoun (Lebanon) and Tore Laerdal of Norway.

"This year's winners are exceptional role models who exemplify how ethical and responsible actions drive positive societal change," she said.

The award ceremony will take place in Oslo on May 3.



National Assembly Speaker Justin Muturi receives a cap from Gender Affairs Cabinet Secretary Sicily Kariuki during the International Women's Day celebrations at Uhuru Park yesterday. [PHOTO: EDWARD KIPLIMO/STANDARD]

Female board members less corrupt than men

But the average woman on a board has to give up something to be there with many either single or divorced

By ROSE KWAMBOKA

Women need to judge themselves less harshly and become better negotiators in order to earn their place in the board room.

"If you're going to break the proverbial glass ceiling, you have to earn your place," says Kellen Kariuki, chief executive officer of Unclaimed Assets Financial Services.

With projections that it will take until 2133 (117 years) to achieve global gender parity, it is becoming clearer that women must take every opportunity to rise on their own initiative, even as efforts are made to level the playing field.

"Don't just sit on boards as the

token female appointment. It's not just a matter of fulfilling the minimum one-third rule. It's about having your voice heard in the board room and representing the voices of other women," says Celestine Munda, the only black woman who sits on the Ernst & Young (EY) board.

She is also a partner responsible for advisory services.

At a round table discussion hosted by the Institute of Directors (Kenya), Chairman Duncan Watta called for the enhancement of policies that improve the inclusion of women in positions of leadership, something that would contribute significantly to global gender parity.

"Boards with women have demonstrated 20 per cent higher per-

formance than boards with a lower degree of gender diversity. This could be attributed to several factors including women's ingenuity, creativity, intuitiveness and natural flair," he said.

His sentiments were echoed by the institute's senior manager, Meshack Joram, who said that attitude change, mentorship and succession planning is essential if women are to take up more leadership roles.

"There is still much more mentoring of men to take up board positions than women. This calls for culture change if we want to see more women in leadership positions," he said.

While men have the advantage, Corporate Governance Consultant Madren Olunya encouraged women to rise above gender stereotypes and pay the price for success.

"It is said that the average accomplished woman on a board has had to give up something to be there. Most women are either single or divorced," she said.

A recent report launched by the Institute of Directors shows that women are particularly effective in promoting transparent governance.

“Women who sit on boards both in the public and private sector are particularly effective in promoting transparent governance - IODK report

QuickReads

Court orders MP to remain on disputed land

A Nyeri court has ruled that Laikipia East MP Anthony Mutahi remains on land being claimed by a prominent farmer in Nanyuki. The court also ruled that the farmer, Stuart Cunningham, continues occupying the remaining portion of the land located along Nanyuki-Doldol road. Environment and Lands judge Justice Lucy Waithaka ruled that orders issued by Justice

Jairus Ngaah on October 7 last year remain in force pending the mention of Cunningham's case on June 7. The orders restrained the MP, his agents, servants or assignee from constructing any structure on the land, pending the inter partes hearing on October 21. On October 12, 2015 Cunningham filed contempt proceedings against the MP. And on March 4, he filed another application for contempt before Justice Isaac Lenaola. Lenaola had on February 12 issued interim orders restraining Mutahi from entering and occupying the suit property. — Nderitu Gichure



Women challenged to go for elective positions

Women in Kenya have been challenged to seek more elective posts in the next General Election. Beatrice Wache Mwazighe, a leader in Jomvu constituency said apart from former Cabinet ministers Martha Karua and Charity Ngilu, women have always shied away from contesting for higher elective posts. "We should support one of our very own since we have the numbers. Time has come for women to aspire for higher elective posts.

They should go for the presidency, senatorial and even gubernatorial seats," she said. Ms Mwazighe was part of a delegation of women leaders from Mombasa County who had converged at the Mombasa County Assembly Hall grounds for a street procession to mark the International Women's Day. Mombasa Youth, Sports and Gender Executive Mohamed Abbas flagged off the procession, which marched through the streets of Mombasa up to Tononoka grounds where they had a series of events to mark the day.

— Philip Mwakio