



## **REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

### **MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND GENDER**

**SPEECH BY PROF. MARGARET KOBIA, Ph.D, MGH, CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND GENDER DURING THE LAUNCH OF BAK WOMEN CHAPTER 2020 ON 26TH OCTOBER 2020 AT PRIDE INN AZURE HOTEL, NAIROBI**

#### **SALUTATIONS**

**Dr. Fred Matiang'i, E.G.H, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Interior and Co-ordination of National Government**

**Mr. Joe W. Mucheru, E.G.H, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs**

**Dr. Ademola Olajide, Country Representative, UNFPA**

**Eng. Mike Mutungi, Chief Executive Officer, ICL Africa**

**Ms. Eva Maina, Chief Executive Officer, Taxiye**

**Mr. Kevin Mubadi, Chairperson, BAK**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

It is an honor and privilege for me to join you at the National Launch of the Boda Boda Safety Association Kenya Women Chapter. The goal of the Association is to improve the welfare of boda boda women entrepreneurs through training on road safety, social economic empowerment and security.

I congratulate women in boda boda business for taking a bold step to transform your lives for better by exploiting motorcycle business opportunities facilitated by government. As the Ministry in-charge of gender affairs that advocates for equal opportunities for both men and women, I am pleased to see the inclusion of women in this growing sector. I commend, the collaboration between the Association, Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs, UNFPA and I choose Life Africa on this initiative.

### **Why does it matter to empower a woman?**

As a government we now know better empowering women in leadership and decision making and in social economic spheres is the basis for building stable families and stable families make a strong nation. Today, we celebrate hard working women who have proved themselves that they can work and excel in a male dominated field. It is my hope that BAK will provide a structured framework for sustained motorcycle business for the women in the nation, inculcate a saving culture, provide financial literacy that is a prerequisite for any business to grow and take out women from poverty as envisaged in vision 2030. I see BAK providing business development services to the members as well as addressing other capacity needs for the women members.

This sector is vibrant and contributes to the national economy in addition to providing quick transport option in the industry. I am informed women riders are preferred due to their hygiene standards, cautious driving technique and caring interpersonal skills. I note with appreciation that women in motorcycle business are appreciated and more women are likely to join the sector and create jobs and wealth. I call upon the BAK women chapter to go an extra mile and create a sisterhood to enable you face challenges that comes with a business venture. Quitting is no option, be focused and your business will grow from one level to the next one.

The government commends the efforts made by the organization in ensuring there is order and accountability in the sector and importantly making women part of it. Congratulations.

## **EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN THE TRANSPORT SECTOR**

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Covid 19 pandemic presents the greatest health, and social economic set back globally Kenya included. Therefore the government support expanding business opportunities for women in transport sector. We need to ask ourselves, are there different needs for women and men in boda boda business? How do we know?

Traditionally, sectors that are male dominated have several barriers and stereotypes that women have to face, for example the social perception is that this is a male job. However, we see gender conditions within the younger population challenging these stereotypes.

Institutionally, it is important that gender perspective are integrated in planning and programming to ensure full inclusion of all members of the society. I therefore want to point out that the steps being undertaken by the BAK be given greater voice and socio economic equipment to women is the smart action to take.

In particular BAK's efforts in mapping of female riders across the country's 47 Counties is an important source of data to inform engendered policies and we look forward to greater collaboration in this role.

## **ISSUES OF WOMEN'S PEACE, SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The issue of women's safety and Gender Based Violence (GBV) is given its salient policy position by the Government especially given the high prevalence of GBV.

As a Government, in partnership with agencies such as UNFPA, UNICEF among others, we are working hard to ensure issues of GBV and general safety of women are given prominence at global level. Kenya is demonstrating significant leadership and commitment to prevention and response to GBV through the Generation Equality Action Coalition on GBV. The Government has prioritized prevention and response to GBV under the MTP III and more recently having noted the escalation of GBV cases during COVID-19, Cabinet approved the Inter-agency Programme on GBV.

### **YOUR ROLE AS CHANGE MAKERS**

Women in motorcycle business have the power to change the way boda boda business is characterized by chaos, indiscipline and lack of regulations. Stand up and voice what is wrong, avoid shortcuts, practice high level integrity as you provide leadership at all levels. You will be the mentor, counsellor, comforter, advisor, to others since you are a great source of social, political and economic information. You will be a pillar of strength and change maker you want to see.

I wish to highlight some of the areas that you can support the government as you go about your business in your communities:

- (i) Gender Based Violence
- (ii) Teenage pregnancies
- (iii) Eradication of FGM in those areas identified as hotspots
- (iv) Prevention of COVID-19

(v) Opportunities that are available for socio-economic empowerment – AGPO, Affirmative Funds and some of the Government Measures.

**Women Enterprise Fund commits to give you loans to expand your business if you organize yourselves into groups.**

Also of great significance, is the release of the BBI Report which is being unveiled today. The BBI initiative seeks to promote greater inclusivity, cohesion and shared prosperity to all Kenyans. His Excellency the President, has guided that all Kenyans should take time to review and understand the contents of the Report and be able to meaningfully engage as you make individual decisions.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion I wish to reaffirm my Ministry's commitment to support the Chapter and continue to work together to explore areas of common interest. I also look forward to following the progress of the Chapter across the Country and its impact to members and their respective communities.

**I Thank You.**