

ABILITY MAGAZINE

24 WOMEN LIVING WITH DISABILITIES MAKE A MILESTONE



(in white) Halima Sheriff -WHAD chair lady exhibiting the first maize flour weaned from the poshomill

November
Issue



AFRICAN WOMEN'S
DEVELOPMENT FUND



Hope Foundation For African Women
Eliminating Gender Disparities to Create Strong Communities



About This Issue

The second edition of the Ability Magazine 2020 focuses on the second phase of Women of Hope Abled Differently (WHAD) journey to financial freedom/independence. In this issue, the reader will be inspired by the resilience of the 24 women, who, against all odds, launched a posho mill business as a group. The issues provide individual testimonials from the group members on the wins and lessons of empowering women living with disabilities.

The Sustainable Development Goals are anchored on equality for all. To live up to to the dream, there is an urgent need to ensure that women/girls living with disabilities participate in development and decision-making. Ability Magazine showcases the power of believing that every person can make a positive change in the community. This project has been a success with special support from the African Women Development (AWDF).

WHAD member, jubilant at their success in launching posho-mill



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Dr. Grace (center in a white) with some of the WHAD members scouting for business premise



The Long Road to Poshomill Launch

Right after attending the 3-day conference on financial literacy and business management and leadership literacy training, WHAD embarked on brainstorming on business ideas and successful how-to launch.

It is important to note that the monthly meetings played an important role in ensuring the formulated business idea is implemented since the government of Kenya had put regulations restricting movement and gatherings in a bid to control the spread of Covid-19.

Additionally, the financial literacy expert and consultant on the issues of People Living with Disabilities helped in mentoring the women as they sought to start a business. They build consensus from several ideas such as water selling, wholesale egg business, soap and sanitizers etc. Having finally decided to launch a posho mill, agreed on the budget of starting such a business, gone through the process of appraisal, and successfully applied for the loan from HFAW kit, it was time to get the business premises and set the ball rolling. This is where the WHAD experienced challenges.

‘Getting a business premise has proved to be difficult. There are instances we would finally breath a sigh of relief that we had found a premise only for the landlord to call back saying that the house is no longer available,’ said Halima, the leader of WHAD.

‘At some point I felt so discouraged in getting a business premise. There were lots of reasons given for us not being allowed to rent a premise for our business. I could not help that maybe that the process had become this difficult because we are physically disabled. Just maybe the owners of the premises, just like some members of the society did not believe that women living with disabilities could successfully run a business. Just maybe,’ said Faith.

After all the hussle and bustle of finding a business premise, the WHAD finally found a strategically located spot near the Rongai stage, Kajiado County. Although adjustments were made, including changing the power connection to a 3-phase from the 2-phase,to ensure enough electricity voltage, the time had finally come to get the business running.



WHAD members displaying first product of the mill, weaned maize

Beyond Misconception: 24 Women Living with Disabilities Launch their own Business

The 24 Women of Hope Abled Differently have beaten all odds to launch their own business despite the global pandemic, thanks to AWDF who gave financial support for their training and Hope Foundation for African Women (HFAW) (www.hopefaw.org), who guided the project implementation granted a loan. And on this 27th day of October 2020, WWD are celebrating the launch of their own group business; a posho-mill to grind their cereals, maize, millet, sorghum and sell all kinds of flour for the public. Indeed this is the heart of this project. Said HFAW CEO, Grace Bonareri Mose (PhD). To see a vibrant income generating activity aspired and launched by WWD is just inspiring. It is why we do this work.

When we went through the training, we had much hope to do something for ourselves. I even recall how I appealed to all of us WWD. “My fellow women, I remember when we attended the training where we were shown women group that had constructed rentals. Just the other day, I attended an event of boda boda riders launching their group projects. Now that we are here, I do not know what is stopping us. Let us wake up, the time to excel is now; no any other time.” Recalled Halima who is the group chairperson. What else can be considered self-driven if not this one.

The 24 WWD showed remarkable teamwork when after their finance and business literacy training, they successfully found consensus on a business idea, successfully applied for the loan from HFAW Hope fund Kit, met the minimum requirements for the loan, scouted for the location of the business, purchased the mill and paid deposit for the business. Each woman deposited \$10 into their account as a stake contribution from the start. This contribution showed that each one of them was an owner to the business and this has contributed to them all literary owning the business. Indeed disability is not inability.

Testimonials From WHAD on The Business Launch



‘I am proud of us all. We have finally launched the business. Indeed, disability is not inability. I want to encourage us all, do not lock yourself in the house. Get out, do something. We can do it!’, said Halima, the group leader meaning that now is time to put forth more strength so that they can nurture this new venture to success.



Since we started this program, I saw God being faithful. It is because I was not aware of my rights as a PWD. However, now I know them and I will not continue to feel sorry for myself. I do not know how to thank the person who started this initiative. I do not know. Because of it I have friends; I have people who I can confide in. I am very grateful to HFAW and AWDF for sponsoring the training. When we come together, I believe we will progress. I am hopeful that our posho mill will be successful. Some people will wonder whether it is us who own this project. Women Living with Disabilities are not beggars, we can make it in life



Picture of WHAD members being entertained during the launch of the poshomill



have faith that this is the day that God made for us. As we launch, I find myself reflecting on where we came from. From attending the training when we were still not aware of things like business management and being our own leader. I remember how it has even been difficult to get a business premise. But finally, we are here. This is the Day the Lord has made. Now it is our time to continue working even harder. This project is ours and we will succeed. Let us hope that the project that we will be successful. I believe God planned it



I remember how encouraged we were at Beacon of Hope during the training on financial literacy. I know God is taking us far. People who did not believe we could be financially stable. I remember there was a time in life when I was not even invited to social events. I did not understand the reasons until a late friend of mine confided in me that people believed that there was something wrong with me. I felt hurt by thoughts that people around me considered me an outcast. However, my friend encouraged me that a time will come when I would be seen as equally a human being. I have seen a lot change in my life just by believing that I am a capable person. Being part of this initiative is a further proof of what we are capable of achieving if women living with disabilities believe in themselves. I know God will take us far. People who did not consider us abled will understand that we can.

WHAD Radio Outreach

To mainstream the lessons and successes of financial literacy and business management training, and the journey of launching the Posho mill, the WHAD visited radio taifa- a Swahili radio attached to the Kenya National Broadcaster. They spoke about how fundamental such programs are to the people living with disabilities and plans to continue mentoring others PWDs facing the same challenges. The audio to the radio interview can be accessed at: www.hopefaw.org



Thematic Messages during the Outreach



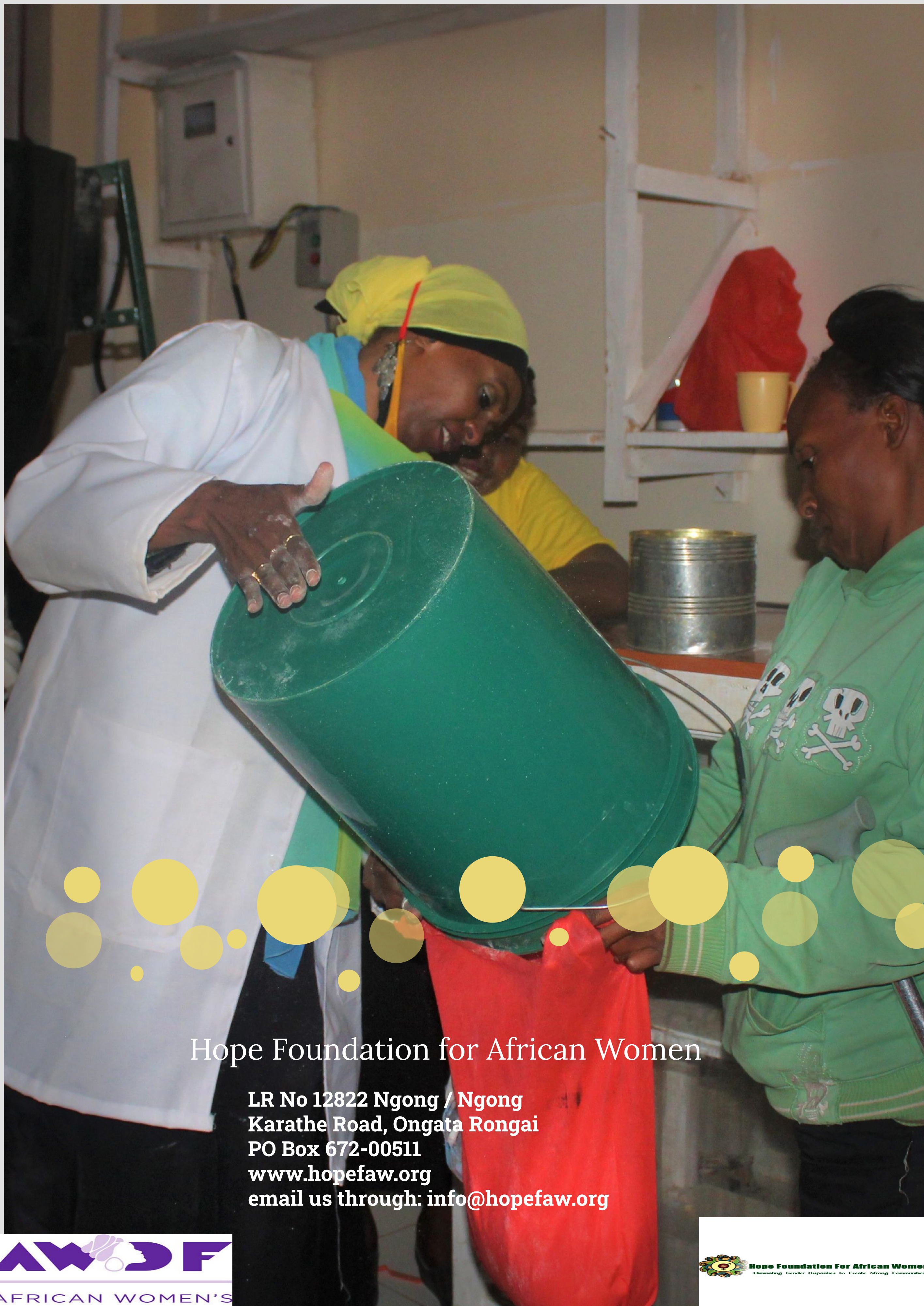
*The goal of empowerment is to educate and enlighten with the goal of increasing the self-confidence and sense of independence of a woman; it is not a competition.***Lancer Wao-HFAW**



*Through a loan received from HFAW, we launched a business . The project is progressing well and we are grateful to have been selected to participate in this initiative that supports the independence of women living with disabilities-***Halima Sheriff**



*As much as we are making progress in empowerment, there are rights that women are still denied like the right to inherit property from their fathers. This issue should be looked into further moving into future.-***Hoka, Radio Taifa presenter**



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