

*The kiln in operation after replacement of the 16 meters portion that was dilapidated.*

# PORTLAND NEWS DESK



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## FROM THE EDITOR

It's a pleasure to welcome you to read our 6<sup>th</sup> Issue of Portland Newsdesk and to appreciate everyone who has contributed towards the success of this publication in one way or another. Having completed the Kiln Shell Replacement Project, part of this edition focuses on what this exactly means to stakeholders.

Enjoy your read and remember that this is your publication, therefore contributions, comments and feedback is most welcome through [kelvin.gitonga@eapcc.co.ke](mailto:kelvin.gitonga@eapcc.co.ke) by email or by calling extensions 5542 or 5142.



East African Portland Cement PLC

*Holding Life Together*

## JUBILATION AS KILN IS FIRED AND CLINKERING RESUMES

### A WAVE OF JOY AND POSITIVITY IS SPREADING

among colleagues after clinkering resumed on Wednesday 21st September 2022 at 2.00 pm. This followed firing of the Kiln 36 hours earlier after the conclusion of a 45 day maintenance shutdown of the Kiln that saw 16 meters of its Shell that has been dilapidated for years replaced with a new one.

Colleagues interviewed by **Newsdesk** expressed excitement with the completion of this long awaited project. Most of them noted that replacement of that part of the Kiln Shell was the only sure way to stabilize the production to ensure consistent product availability and put the company back firmly on a profitability path. "I am very excited that we have successfully completed this project and I want to thank everyone who played a role during this exercise. I am confident that we will now be able to produce enough cement for all our customers and take back our rightful position in the industry. From the Mobile Plant is a promise for logistical support to all as we work towards a greater Portland", said Mobile Plant Officer Mr. Jimmy Tonkei who was among the colleagues interviewed.

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# Joy as Clinkering Resumes on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022

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In an earlier interview, Managing Director Eng. Oliver Kirubai could not hide his excitement because the completion of the Kiln Replacement Project was coinciding with his first year anniversary at EAPC-PLC noting that it is a major milestone to the company. He added that it is very critical for a Cement Firm to be able to manufacture its own clinker because using purchased clinker really eats up to the company's margins. "We

have already resumed full operations after an upgrade of our Kiln. With this, we expect improved plant reliability and an output increase of almost 50%. Blue Triangle Cement will be produced in plenty and availed across the Country", said Mr. Kirubai. "The upgrade and optimal running of the plant will also lead to efficient energy consumption. This means that we will be able to produce our products at a cost that will allow us to avail Blue Triangle Cement to our

customers at friendlier prices", he added. Head of Plant Operations Eng. Stanley Irungu has expressed optimism that the replaced part of the Kiln Shell will ensure constant running leading increased clinker production. He says that with optimal running, the Company will be able to produce enough quality clinker to grind cement that will satisfy our market.

**- By Kelvin Gitonga, Corporate Communications Officer**

**"WE HAVE ALREADY RESUMED FULL OPERATIONS AFTER AN UPGRADE OF OUR KILN. WITH THIS, WE EXPECT IMPROVED PLANT RELIABILITY AND AN OUTPUT INCREASE OF ALMOST 50%."** - Eng. Oliver Kirubai - M.D.



**Eng. Oliver Kirubai - Managing Director**

## Managing Your Anxiety in Times of Adversity

### **ANXIETY CAN MAKE NORMAL**

hiccups in life seem larger than they are. Even though fear of the future and the unknown is universal, not having healthy coping mechanisms can chip away at our feelings of self. With time, anxiety-driven thought patterns can overwhelm us, damage our potential to take on opportunities in life, and hinder our judgment in situations that call for self-awareness and confidence.

It's idealistic to imagine that we all view issues the same way. The truth is, we all have different life experiences that inform our responses. No place have more clearly exhibited these differences than the work-place. Culturally, Kenyans view leaving the nest and striking out on their own as a rite of passage.

Having a stable form of employment or income is an achievement held in high regard. Despite the precedence placed on this fete, the country experiences high rates of unemployment. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

2020 report, over 1.7 million people lost their jobs between April and June 2020. This was primarily due to the Covid-19 pandemic; which only added to the mental health challenges for many Kenyans. Statistics released by InfoTrak in the same year noted that 52 percent of the population felt helpless and 81 percent of the country was experiencing feelings of anxiety during this time.

Despite these startling figures, Kenyans are very unlikely to seek treatment. Even if people wanted to seek the help they need, the mental health infrastructure in the country is lagging; a 2019 article by Kenya Aids NGOs Consortium (KANCO) stated that there are only 100 psychiatrists for a population of 45 million (1: 450,000).

Toxic, non-supportive work environments can exacerbate mental health conditions for many of us. Adding to this, are the social pressures in the age of stigmatizing views toward mental health care. These can all contribute to a warlike

climate indifferent to wellbeing and mental health. Creating healthy coping mechanisms to manage and mitigate anxiety can therefore be a strategic approach to self-preservation. Taking time to meditate and reflect, being optimistic, passionate, driven, and having a healthy outlook toward failure are things we can all do to manage anxiety and stress.

While demonstrating reliability, trust, and integrity, there will be obstacles that will challenge our ability to deliver on a task or to garner support for our plans or tasks. Your outlook in times like these must be optimistic and positive.

Instilling a winning attitude from the onset of our professional development will allow you to apply experiences effectively as lessons, focus on goals, and move forward with self-confidence.

We hear it all the time, purposeful living will reap a passionate commitment to your work. It's cliché but it's true. Passion can counter anxiety.

# Pictorial



Kiln operators in a busy Central Control Room soon after the recommissioning of the kiln.



From Left: Head of Plant Operations Eng. Stanley Irungu, Managing Director Eng. Oliver Kirubai and Head of Corporate Affairs Mr. Gordon Mutugi after a plant tour following the recommissioning of the kiln.



Managing Director Eng. Oliver Kirubai plants a tree to mark World Peace Day outside the Security Office.



Head of Corporate Affairs and Strategy Mr. Gordon Mutugi waters a tree after planting it. Looking on is Mr. Paul Bartich from the Safety Section.



Mr. Paul Bartich (Left) and Ms. Pamela Muthui during the tree planting exercise.



Managing Director Eng. Oliver Kirubai (2nd Right) addresses colleagues after a tree planting exercise to mark World Peace Day.



Colleagues pose for a group photo after the tree planting exercise.



Colleagues during a clean up exercise of Kitengela. From Left: Mr. Mike Surumpen, Ms. Hilda Kulei, Ms. Irene Sanaiyan, Ms. Pamela Muthui and Mr. Laudislas Mukangi with Kajiado County Director of Environment Mr. James Larmoi (3rd Left).

**ANN GITONGA IS ONE OF THE** ladies who work in the Production Department, a department that many view as a male dominated one.

She has had stints in other departments but after our interview, we realized that Production is really the department she is meant to be. She was kind enough to serve our writer a cup of tea as she answered a few questions about her life in EAPC-PLC.

**Who is Ann Gitonga?**

Ann is an employee in the Production Operations Department who values honesty and hard work in all endeavors and also believes in transparency in everything.

**When did you join EAPC-PLC?**

I joined EAPC PLC in 2005, I started at the Portland Sports Club where I worked for eight years before being transferred to the Data Office as a Data Clerk.

**Tell us your working progress since you joined the company?**

After joining the Data Office in 2011 where I worked for about six years, I moved briefly to the Company's Reception Area as a Switchboard Operator and Receptionist. Duties there involved receiving and appropriately directing internal and external phone calls. It also entailed welcoming visitors and directing them to various offices.

# Ann Gitonga: Administrative Secretary, At The **Head of Plant Operations Office**

After two years, I was transferred back to Production where I am currently based at the Head of Plant Operations' office as an Administrative Secretary.

**What does your job entail?**

On a typical day, I receive internal and external customers and handle their requests. I see that there is smooth running of the Head of Plant Operations' office and ensure that the HPO's diary is well organized and followed. I also coordinate and facilitate the HPO's meetings and assist in the preparations of production reports.

**How has the production department been over the years?**

The Production Department has been great and has been a good working environment over time, but for the past few years, the kiln has been facing challenges, but with the completion of the shut-down and replacement of the dilapidated part of the Kiln Shell, the constant breakdown of the kiln will sure be a thing of the past.

I see a brighter future for our organization.

**What challenges do you face while executing your duties?**

There is no any specific challenge, but whenever there is any, I am always prepared to deal with anything as one should always be ready to face challenges.

The support from my peers and teamwork within the department makes it easier to go through any day that might pose a challenge.

**Family life**

I am a mother of two girls.

- *By Pamela Muthui, Public Relations Officer*

**“THE SUPPORT FROM MY PEERS AND TEAMWORK WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT MAKES IT EASIER TO GO THROUGH ANY DAY THAT MIGHT POSE A CHALLENGE.”**

- *Ann Gitonga, Administrative Secretary*



*Ann Gitonga- Administrative Secretary at the Head of Plant Operations Office.*