



PORTLAND NewsDesk

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST AFRICAN PORTLAND CEMENT PLC

The Cement of Choice - Nairobi East Region Edition



Caroline Washuru of Dreamhouse Hardware (center) with Joy Cherotich, Area Sales Manager Nairobi East Region, and Leon Waiganjo, Marketing Officer

For over 90 years, East African Portland PLC has built more than structures we have built trust. And at the heart of that trust are our customers and trade partners who play a vital role in selling and marketing Blue Triangle Cement every single day.

Together with the Sales Team, we recently conducted a market visit across the Nairobi East region and the reception was nothing short of exceptional.

Our first stop was Semeka Hardware, where we engaged with a loyal distributor whose commitment to Blue Triangle Cement continues to stand out. We then visited Mazuri One Stop Shop, Dreamhouse General Hardware, and Msingi Hardware.

Shelves were well stocked, with our product prominently and strategically displayed. In a highly competitive cement market, our brand visibility was second to none a powerful attestation to both our brand strength and the solid trade partnerships we continue to nurture.

Hardware owners were highly receptive and expressed strong confidence in the product's performance and demand. Several shared that customers and fundis are specifically requesting Blue Triangle Cement by name a clear signal that our reputation for strength, durability, and reliability remains firmly cemented in the market.

While shelf checks were important, the true value of the visit was building and maintaining relationship. The team held meaningful discussions around Nairobi's competitive cement landscape, emerging market trends, and opportunities for shared growth. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, constructive, and encouraging.

The Nairobi East visit reaffirmed a key principle: our partnerships in the region are not just established they are growing stronger every day. Together, we are building a vibrant, long-lasting foundation for sustained growth.

By Leon Waiganjo - Marketing Officer

Money matters: Building a Culture of Financial Discipline



Ms. Elizabeth Kimani - Head of People & Culture, inspired confidence and collaboration as she facilitated the financial training sessions.

How well do you manage your finances? In today's dynamic economic environment, the ability to manage money wisely is not just a personal advantage it is an essential life skill. Recognizing this, EAPC PLC continues to invest in initiatives that empower employees beyond their daily responsibilities.

The People and Culture Department, led by the Head of People and Culture, Ms. Elizabeth Kimani, has been conducting a series of financial wellness training sessions aimed at equipping employees with practical personal financial management skills. The program focuses on empowering staff with the knowledge and tools needed to make informed financial

decisions, strengthen financial discipline, and plan for long-term financial stability.

Throughout the sessions, employees have engaged in key topics including budgeting, debt management, savings strategies, and long-term financial planning. The training provides practical guidance on managing income effectively, reducing financial stress, and building sustainable financial habits that can secure a more stable future.

In her address, Ms. Kimani placed special emphasis on young staff who have recently joined the organization. She encouraged them to cultivate a culture of saving and investing early

in their careers, noting that financial discipline established at the beginning of one's professional journey lays the foundation for long-term security. She highlighted the importance of preparing for retirement from the very start, so that when the time comes to leave active employment, one does so with fulfillment and confidence—knowing there are meaningful investments and savings to rely on.

She further underscored the opportunities presented by modern technology, encouraging employees to explore accessible investment options such as money market funds and treasury bonds. By leveraging digital platforms and financial tools available today, staff can make informed investment decisions and grow their wealth steadily over time.

At the same time, she cautioned employees against unnecessary borrowing and the use of informal lenders or “shylocks,” describing them as financial setbacks that can reverse progress and create long-term strain. Instead, she urged colleagues to practice responsible financial management and prioritize disciplined saving and smart investing.

Colleagues were also encouraged to reflect on their personal financial goals and develop practical strategies to achieve them. The sessions have been well received across departments, with employees appreciating the opportunity to gain valuable insights into financial planning and wealth creation.

Through financial wellness programs such as this, EAPC continues to invest in the long-term well-being, stability, and overall success of its people.

By Grace Muna - Public Relations Officer



Ms. Elizabeth Kimani - Head of People & Culture, during the financial training.

DISTRIBUTOR SPOTLIGHT

Voices from the Ground with Blue Triangle Cement.

In honor of International Women's Day, we celebrate women breaking barriers in male dominated industries. One such inspiring entrepreneur is Lucy Kamau, proprietor of Red Echo Hardware Limited, and a valued Blue Triangle Cement distributor based in Kawangware. With over 15 years of experience, Lucy has grown her business from a small shop into a thriving enterprise that serves her community. In this feature, she shares her journey, the challenges she has faced, and the lessons that have shaped her remarkable success.

Q: Please tell us your name and the name of your hardware business.

A: My name is Lucy Kamau, and I am the owner of Red Echo Hardware, also known as Red Echo Limited.

Q: What inspired you to venture into the hardware business?

A: I was looking for something that could provide daily income and help me support my family. At the time, my children were still very young, and I needed a reliable way to provide for them. That is what motivated me to start the hardware business.

Q: How did your journey in this industry begin?

A: My journey started very small. About 15 years ago, I began with a single small shop. Over time, through consistency and hard work, the business has grown and today we operate several stores.

Q: What were some of the early challenges you faced when starting out?

A: One of the main challenges was financing. Entering a market that I was not very familiar with was also difficult. I had to learn where to source materials and how the industry operates. Those were some of the challenges I faced in the early stages.

Q: Did you always see yourself working in the hardware and construction sector?

A: Interestingly, I never imagined I would end up in the hardware business selling construction materials. I always thought it was an industry mainly for men. However, here I am today, and I have no regrets.

Q: Hardware and construction are traditionally male-dominated sectors. What has your experience been as a woman in this space?

A: When I entered the industry, I did not focus on whether it was male-dominated or not. I had already decided that this is what I wanted to do. As long as it provided a livelihood for my family, I was ready to pursue it. I came into the industry determined and ready to compete just like anyone else.

Q: Have you encountered any bias or stereotypes as a woman in the industry? If so, how did you handle them?

A: Not significantly. However, when I was starting out, some people doubted whether I would succeed, especially because I was young and new to the industry. Over time, through persistence and commitment, I was able to prove that I could succeed in the business.

Q: What strategies have helped you build credibility and respect in the industry?

A: One key strategy is ensuring that we always meet our customers' needs by stocking the products they require. We also strive to remain competitive in the market. Customer service is very important to us. We treat our customers well and ensure our staff are trained to interact professionally and respectfully with clients.



Lucy Kamau- Red Echo Hardware Ltd.

DISTRIBUTOR SPOTLIGHT

Q: How do you balance running a business with family and personal commitments?

A: Balancing everything can be challenging, but as women we learn to plan and manage different responsibilities. We must be present for our families while also dedicating time to our businesses. In business, especially retail, personal involvement is important for success.

Q: How can industry stakeholders better support hardware businesses such as yours?

A: Partnerships are very important. When businesses work together as partners, there should be mutual benefit. Supporting each other allows both parties to grow. Believing in each other and building strong partnerships is key.

Q: Do you actively mentor or support other women?

A: Yes, I do. Some women who previously worked with me have gone on to start their own businesses. Others come to seek advice on how to begin, where to source materials, and how to run a hardware business. I am always happy to guide and encourage them.

Q: What does International Women's Day mean to you personally?

A: To me, it represents recognition. It shows that women have a place in society and that their contributions to building communities and economies are appreciated.

Q: What legacy do you hope to build through Red Echo Hardware?

A: The legacy I would like to leave is that even many years from now, people will remember Red Echo as a business that supported its community. I want it to be known for treating people well; our customers, our staff, and the society around us. I also hope that young people who passed through Red Echo will say they were mentored well and were able to grow because of the experience they gained with us.

Q: As we celebrate International Women's Day, what message would you share with young women considering entering this industry?

A: My message to young women is to believe in themselves. There is nothing you cannot do simply because you are a woman. Trust in your abilities and do not limit yourself when choosing a career or business. We started small, but through consistency and determination we have grown. Success is possible.

By Grace Muna - Public Relations Officer



Celebrating Women in the Cement Industry

This March, as we celebrate women in the cement industry, we engaged with our colleagues at East African Portland Cement PLC to hear their perspectives on working in this field. Here are some of the insights they shared:



Rose Njuguna – Customer Service Manager

My role as a Customer Service Manager at a cement manufacturing company has shown me that customer service is not only about resolving issues but also about building trust and ensuring customers feel valued and supported. As a woman in this industry, I am proud to contribute to strengthening customer relationships and improving service delivery.

To women aspiring to join the cement and manufacturing sector, my message is to believe in your abilities and not be discouraged by industry stereotypes. The sector offers many opportunities for growth, leadership, and impact.



Judy Mailu – Environment Coordinator

As a professional in the Environment section of our cement manufacturing company, my role carries added responsibility. It involves ensuring that as we produce cement, we also protect the environment, safeguard surrounding communities, and promote sustainable practices. However, my experience has shown that competence, professionalism, and dedication matter far more than gender.

Believe in your potential, equip yourself with knowledge, remain confident, and embrace opportunities that challenge you. The industry benefits greatly from diverse perspectives, strong analytical thinking, and resilient leadership qualities women bring in abundance.



Yasmin Hamdan – Senior Communication Officer

With my background in journalism, I have the unique opportunity to use storytelling to showcase the cement-making process and highlight the dedication, expertise, and teamwork behind every product we produce.

Through communication, I help bring visibility to the people, innovation, and effort that drive the industry forward. It is rewarding to translate complex processes into stories that inspire understanding and pride in what we build every day. The journey may not always be easy, but it is incredibly fulfilling. With passion, resilience, and determination, there is space for women to thrive and make meaningful contributions in the cement industry.



Irene Katambo – Customer Service Officer

My journey as a woman in the cement industry has been defined by growth, resilience, and the opportunity to contribute to building our communities. Through every negotiation, delivery, and partnership, I have learned that expertise, consistency, and integrity are what truly earn respect.

For women aspiring to join this field, there is room for you to grow and thrive. Recognize your value, challenge stereotypes, and remember that your presence helps shape the future of the industry.



Hildah Kulei – Brand Manager

The cement industry has been an incredible journey of discovery and growth for me as a woman. Many people picture construction sites, heavy machinery, and a male-dominated environment when they think of cement, but for me, it has been a chance to challenge those assumptions and show that diverse voices and perspectives are essential. Knowing that the work we do contributes to building communities gives my role deeper purpose and meaning.

For women aspiring to join manufacturing industry, don't be intimidated by the industry's reputation. There is space for your talent and leadership whether in engineering, marketing, operations, or communications. Always strive to make a real impact.



Anne Akoth Komira – Manager, Sales & Distribution

As a woman in the cement industry, I find my role deeply rewarding. With a background in finance and management, I lead teams, strengthen processes, and drive operational efficiency that leaves a lasting impact.

To women entering this field brand yourself and set high standards. Focus on delivering results, cultivating professionalism, and building a reputation for excellence. Know your purpose challenges will come, but clarity of vision and resilience will help you stand tall and thrive in any situation.

Celebrating Women in the Cement Industry

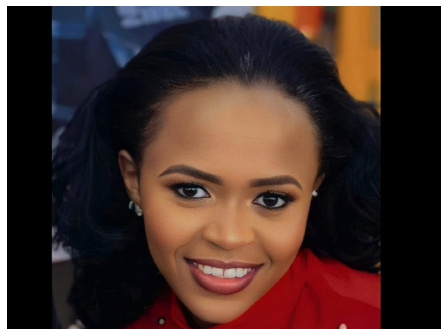
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Grace Muna – Public Relations Officer

Working in the cement industry as a Public Relations Officer, in my role I focus on communicating the impact of our work, strengthening relationships with our stakeholders, and highlighting the company’s sustainability efforts and community initiatives, ensuring that our company’s values, achievements, and stories are clearly and authentically shared with the public.

To aspiring women, stay curious, continue building your knowledge, and remain confident in your abilities. With dedication and a willingness to learn, you can succeed and make a lasting impact in the cement and manufacturing sector.



Nyambura Mwangi – Legal Assistant

Working as a woman and lawyer in the cement industry is a role I carry with great honour. Just as our product provides the strongest physical foundations of the modern Kenya and Africa at large, my role is to ensure the legal and ethical foundations of our business are just as firm. I am proud to work alongside so many talented women here as we build the future together.

My message to the women aspiring to join the field, is that it is vital to build a network of mentors and peers who support your growth and vision in your career journey. Happy international women’s day!



Nancy Bartilol – Production Secretary

My experience working closely with plant and engineering leadership in a male-dominated environment has shown me that with commitment, continuous learning, and teamwork, women can earn respect and contribute meaningfully to operations and communication within the organization.

There is space for women in technical, operational, and leadership roles, and your skills, perspective, and determination are valuable to the future of the industry.



Virginia Cherotich – Manager, Quality Assurance

I began my journey over 25 years ago when the industry was largely male-dominated. I was the first woman to be employed in the Quality Control section. The path was not always easy, and the challenges were greater than they are today. However, every stage of growth from learning the technical processes to taking on leadership responsibilities became an opportunity to demonstrate that skill, commitment, and passion define success, not gender.

To those aspiring to join the industry, always believe in your capabilities and do not let stereotypes limit your ambition.. Every woman who steps into this space helps pave the way for many more women to follow. Above all, always remember to put God first in everything.



Noreen Munene – Sales and Depot Accountant

Having started as an intern in 2020 and progressed to Sales and Depot Accountant at East African Portland Cement PLC, my journey has shown me that women can thrive and lead even in male-dominated spaces. I enjoy the problem-solving and analytical aspects of my role, but what stands out most is the pride of seeing our cement in the market and knowing I contribute to an industry that literally helps build our nation.

For women aspiring to join the field, don’t be discouraged by the perception that some industries are “not for women.” With passion, curiosity, and a willingness to learn, there is plenty of room to grow and excel. Embrace challenges, trust your abilities, and remember that every step forward helps open the door for more women to follow.



Janet Mbula – People Support Service Officer

Working in the cement industry as a woman means breaking barriers and contributing to an industry that builds our communities. As a People Support Service Officer, I’m proud to support people and help create a positive workplace.

When women trust their abilities and step confidently into male-dominated fields, they create space not only to grow but also to make a lasting impact.

IN PICTURES



Joyce Makubia (centre) of Msingi Hardware receives merchandise from the Eapc Marketing and Sales team.



Semaka Hardware - A proud distributor of Blue Triangle Cement



All smiles at Mazuri One stop hardware as Leon Waiganjo - Marketing Officer and Joy Cherotich - Area Sales Manager - Nairobi East Region issue branded merchandise



Blue Triangle Cement bags stacked and ready for delivery.



Boda bida rider delivering Blue Triangle Cement to a customer in Ruai.



Colleagues listen keenly during the financial management training session