

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

The official newsletter of Gena Consulting



Advancing Market Access, Strengthening Capacity, and Promoting People-Centred Development

April was a defining month for Gena Consulting marked by purposeful field engagement, strategic partnerships, and thought leadership aimed at strengthening agricultural systems, trade ecosystems, and workplace wellbeing. From the farms of Wote, Makueni County, to high-level discussions at the TradeMark Africa Trade and Transport Study Validation Workshop and a field visit to the Port of Mombasa, our work reflected a holistic approach to development one that connects people, markets, infrastructure, and innovation.

Throughout the month, engagements focused on understanding the realities shaping digital adoption, trade efficiency, and organizational wellbeing. Whether through documenting the impact of Digital Ambassadors at the last mile, exploring opportunities for more seamless trade facilitation, or championing conversations around mental health in the workplace, each initiative contributed toward building systems that are more inclusive, resilient, and responsive to the needs of communities and businesses alike.



April saw the Gena team on the ground in Wote, Makueni County, undertaking a comprehensive documentation exercise under the BEEEP programme. Across Kalamba and Itangini, the team engaged directly with farmers capturing not just data, but lived experiences that reflect the evolving agricultural landscape.

Through conversations with farmers already onboarded onto the iSOKO platform, we gained valuable insights into early outcomes, challenges, and opportunities within digital market systems.

This exercise went beyond documentation; it was about capturing and documenting digital adoption at the last mile, highlighting how digital transformation is being experienced, understood, and implemented within communities on the ground

BRIDGING STORIES AND SYSTEMS: FIELD DOCUMENTATION IN WOTE, MAKUENI





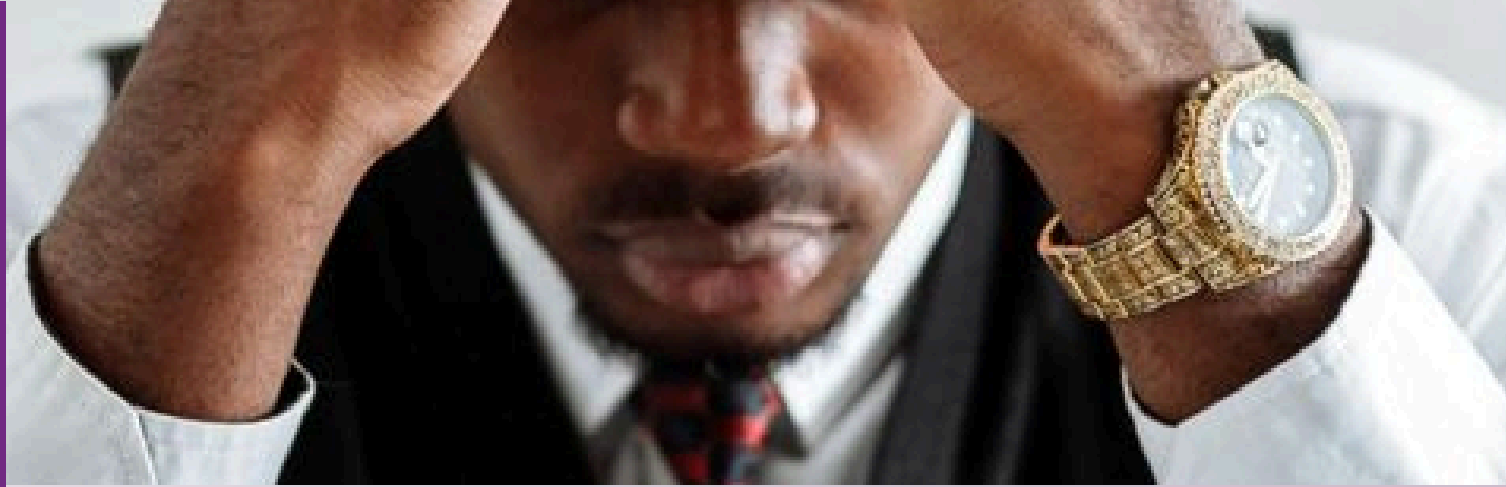
Digital Ambassadors at the Forefront: Enabling Last-Mile Digital Inclusion

April's documentation exercise in Makueni also brought into focus the pivotal role of Digital Ambassadors in translating digital solutions into real, everyday value for farmers. Positioned at the intersection of technology and community, these ambassadors are driving adoption by offering hands-on support from onboarding farmers onto the iSOKO platform to guiding them on how to navigate digital market systems effectively. Field engagements highlighted how their presence strengthens trust, improves understanding, and encourages consistent use of digital tools

Beyond facilitation, Digital Ambassadors serve as knowledge brokers simplifying digital systems, addressing challenges in real time, and ensuring farmers are not left behind in the shift toward digital trade. Their work continues to strengthen last-mile delivery by making digital ecosystems more accessible, practical, and inclusive. Despite the mango value chain traditionally being male-dominated, the onboarding exercises achieved an average women inclusion rate of approximately 42% between February and April, reflecting encouraging progress toward more inclusive participation in digital agriculture.

"At the very heart of digital transformation are the Digital Ambassadors, whose dedication ensures that innovation is not just introduced, but truly understood, adopted, and used to create meaningful impact within communities."

~Rachel Wangeci~



Beyond Productivity: Championing Mental Health in the Workplace

Recognizing that sustainable impact is driven by people, Gena Consulting led a powerful thought leadership series on mental health in the workplace throughout April.

Through engaging content and reflective narratives, the campaign challenged organizations to rethink workplace culture, not as a passive environment, but as a strategic driver of motivation, productivity, and overall performance. The message was clear: when employees feel heard, supported, and valued, organizations thrive. This initiative positioned mental health not as an afterthought, but as a critical component of leadership and organizational success in today's evolving work landscape.

MENTAL HEALTH





Strengthening the Last Mile: Engaging Extension Service Providers

In a strategic engagement held in Makueni County, Gena consulting joined Extension Service Providers and Partners to address one of agriculture's most persistent challenges, bridging the gap between production and market access.

The session expanded beyond agronomy, focusing on post-harvest management, pricing dynamics, quality standards, and the growing relevance of digital trade platforms such as Kilimo Soko. With post-harvest losses contributing up to 30–40%, the discussions emphasized practical, scalable solutions that extension officers can relay directly to farmers.

By equipping these frontline actors with knowledge and tools, in digital trade and the role of the Afcta in providing alternative markets.

Mapping Trade Realities to Digital Solutions: Trade & Transport Study Validation

In April, the team participated in the TradeMark Africa Trade and Transport Study Validation Workshop, which unpacked the real costs, delays, and inefficiencies shaping trade across the Northern and Central Corridors. The findings highlighted persistent structural bottlenecks ranging from border clearance delays and fragmented documentation to limited cargo visibility and inconsistent data flows across logistics systems.

This engagement was critical in grounding digital innovation within real trade environments. By aligning these insights with the digital ecosystem being developed, the focus shifts toward deploying solutions where they are most needed leveraging automation, data integration, and platform-based systems to reduce friction, improve transparency, and enhance efficiency. Ultimately, this approach supports more inclusive trade, particularly for women-led MSMEs who are disproportionately affected by systemic inefficiencies.



Following the validation workshop, the team participated in a field visit to the Port of Mombasa translating study findings into real-world context at one of the region's most critical trade gateways. Observing cargo handling processes, engaging with on-ground personnel, and examining existing systems provided a clearer understanding of how infrastructure, operations, and policy intersect to shape trade efficiency.

This experience reinforced a key insight: while digital solutions can address gaps in visibility, coordination, and data flow, their effectiveness depends on how well they are aligned with the physical and operational realities of trade. By grounding digital innovation in these lived systems, the focus sharpens on deploying solutions that are not only technically sound, but also practical, scalable, and responsive to the complexities of trade facilitation.

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