

A Celebration of Life



MARREN AKATSA-BUKACHI

22 October 1958 - 1 October 2017

Programme For The Funeral Service And Vigil
5Th October 2017
For The Late Marren Akatsa Bukachi

Time	Activity	Responsible
1:00 - 2:00 pm	Arrival and signing of the condolence book	EASSI secretariat
2:00 - 3:00 pm	Memorial service	Church
3:00 - 3:20 pm	Photographic Tribute	EASSI secretariat
3:20 – 4:20 pm	<u>Speeches:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Friend- Ms. Joyce Tamale 2. EASSI secretariat 3. Representative of the Uganda Women's movement 4. EAWiBP Representative 5. EASSI Board. Hon. Tezira Jamwa and Ms. Lillian Liundi - TGNP Tanzania 6. Family Representative– Ms. Mary Mbeo and Daughter Vera 	EASSI secretariat
4:20 – 5:00pm	<u>Laying of the Wreaths:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family 2. EASSI Board 3. EASSI Secretariate 4. Friends 	EASSI secretariat
5:00 – 6:00 pm	Diner / Refreshments	EASSI secretariat
6:00 – On wards	Vigil	

Celebrating the Life of

Marren Akatsa-Bukachi

Biography

Marren Akatsa-Bukachi, 58, passed away on October 1st 2017 in Nairobi Kenya. A funeral service will be held at EASSI Secretariat on Thursday 5th October at 2.00PM and there after a vigil starting at 5.00PM.

Marren Akatsa-Bukachi was born to the late Senator Shelemiah Mbeo Onyango of Mfangano Island, and the late Councillor Loise Auma Mbeo of Oyugis, on 22 October 1958 in Kisii, Kenya.

Marren had a Master's Degree in Public Health Leadership from the Uganda Christian University (2009), a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from the University of Delhi India (1979), a Certificate in International Policy Advocacy from the School of International Training, Washington DC - USA (2010), and a Certificate in Project Administration and Development from the Kenya Institute of Administration, Nairobi Kenya (2008).

Marren was an acclaimed Feminist, Gender, Peace and Security, Trade and Development specialist with an extensive background in Gender and Social Development and Public Health Leadership of more than 20 years' experience working at local, national and regional level for government, development partners and civil society.



GIVING HER ALL TO SERVE HUMANITY:

MARREN'S CAREER JOURNEY AND ACHIEVEMENTS



Marren during the Civil Society Lobby Meeting with the EAC Secretary General Dr. Richard Sezibera on the EAC Gender Equality and Development Bill in 2012.

From 15th June 2004 until her passing, Marren was the Executive Director of the Eastern African Sub-regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI). During her 13 years at EASSI, Marren was a dedicated champion of women's rights and gender equality in the Eastern and Horn of Africa.



She is credited for leading EASSI and other women's rights organizations in the EAC Partner States in a campaign for an EAC Gender Equality and Development Bill. The Bill was finally passed by the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) on March 8th 2017, after 10 years of campaigning.

She then spearheaded research and compilation of the first EAC Gender Barometer (2016). The Barometer is a participatory people centered research report from the 5 partner states of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi that contains information and statistical data from the different areas that need to be gender responsive.



Marren (Holding the microphone) during the launch of the EAC Pilot Gender Barometer in May 2017.

The construction of EASSI House and Training Centre is a landmark achievement for Marren's 13 year tenure at the regional organization.



Marren served in various regional, international and global initiatives such as the International Action Network on Small Arms, where she sat on the Advisory Committee and the Women's Network, Vice Chairperson of the United Nations Commission on the status of Women in Africa, (NGO/CSW/Africa) Spokesperson for CSO members of the Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring, and co-Vice chair of the East African Women in Business Platform (EAWiBP). She was an active member of Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR), a Pan African women's rights coalition advocating for the ratification and implementation of the Maputo Protocol by African Union Member States.

Besides EASSI, Marren's work experience included:

- ✓ 2000-2004: National Programmes Officer at the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Nairobi Kenya.
- ✓ 1995-2000: Programmes Officer at the Institute for Education in Democracy (IED) - Kenya.
- ✓ 1990-1995: National Programmes Secretary at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) -Kenya
- ✓ 1987-1990: Deputy Principal Rehabilitation Officer at the Ministry of Culture and Social Services Kenya. She also served at this ministry in various capacities from 1980-1987.

KIND AND WARM PERSONALITY

Marren positively influenced so many different people throughout her life with her charisma, elegance, kindness, compassion, grace and belief in people's potential, regardless of one's background.



Marren extreme left, hands over donation to Uganda Women's Cancer Support Organisation (UWOCASO) administrators at their offices in Ntinda in 2016.



Networking in New York

STRONG FAITH IN GOD

Her life long faith in God and her positive outlook remained strong even as she was diagnosed with cancer in 2013, right through to the difficult final months. She was surrounded by loved ones during the last months and she encouraged everybody to be strong up until the end.

FAMILY

She is survived by four daughters Vera Gahuya, Louisa Taini, Abigail Camilla and Jedi Azania. Loving grandmother to Tjano and Nailo Marcozzi.



Celebrating Marren's Life

Funeral service: 5th October 2017, 02.00-04.00 PM

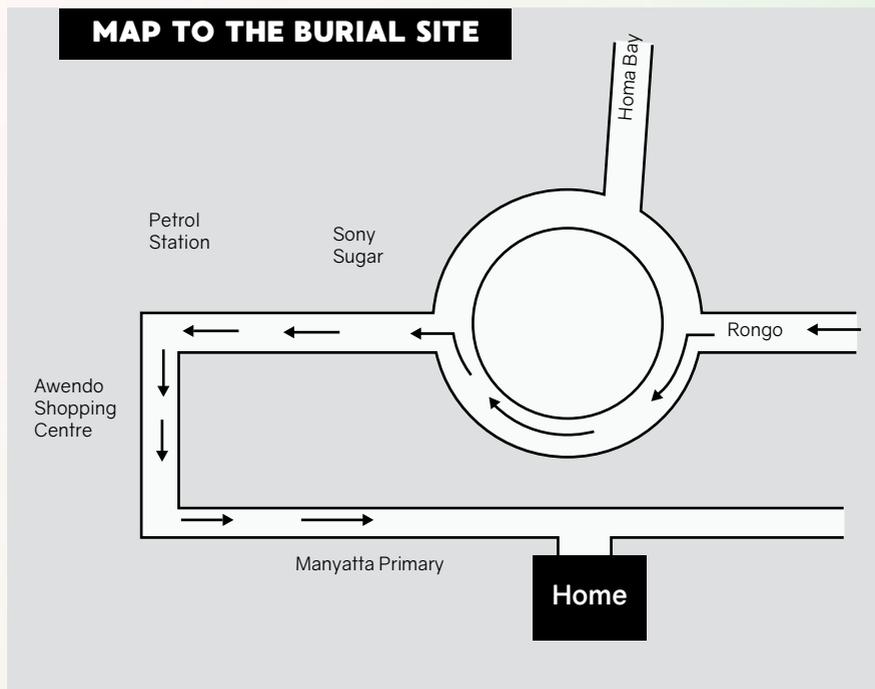
Venue: EASSI Secretariat Kampala, Uganda

Vigil: 5th October 2017, 05:00 PM-09.00PM

Burial: Awendo, South Nyanza, Kenya.

Date: 22 October 2017

If driving: Kampala – Jinja – Busia – Mumias – Yala – Kisumu –
Ahero – Kendu Bay – Homa Bay



Eulogizing Marren—Tributes from Family, Friends and Partners

EASSI BOARD



Hon. Tezira Jamwa- EASSI Board: On behalf of the Board of Directors of EASSI and on my own behalf, we join the family, children, the Civil Society in Uganda, East Africa and the region in mourning the passing of Marren Akatsa-Bukachi. We mourn because we have lost her and the wealth of all the attributes that being human had bestowed on her. We mourn because we know for sure there can never be a replacement for an icon like Marren.

However, because she lived a purposeful life and deeply touched whoever she came in contact with, we shall not dwell on mourning her passing but celebrate the gift of her life – and how this gift impacted others. She gave her all to serving humanity. The passion with which she executed her duty is second to none. She was a true perfectionist and never tolerated mediocrity.

This trait inspired everybody around her to be the very best that they could be- and we celebrate that!

She was a trend- setter not only in her sense of fashion/ style but also the programs she initiated at EASSI. She initiated the women cross-border trade program in the East Africa region which has not been rivaled. For that, we celebrate!

She was an extremely smart, intelligent and hard working person. As a board we are greatly indebted to Marren for having steered the organization for thirteen years and we will forever be grateful for the heights she has taken EASSI to. We are grateful for the growth that she has nurtured EASSI to. She propelled the board to build a permanent home for EASSI- which we are all proud of. And for that, we celebrate!

She was a go-getter, a fighter who never allowed to be cowed down by challenges and this is the spirit she instilled in whoever she worked with. Even when she was visibly weak, the spirit remained strong. She continued to work at a point when many would have asked for leave- because she believed there was still a lot of unfinished work to do. She gave almost all her entire work life to EASSI. Such a committed and hard working person is hard to come by – and for that we celebrate the gift that Marren has been to us!

We shall remember Marren as a great mother, a nurturer, a mentor and a great counsellor. The Lord gave us Marren and the same Lord has taken her. May we be comforted with the fact that to Him we shall all return.

REST IN PEACE MARREN

Dr. Christine Mbonyingo-Chairperson, EASSI Board of Directors

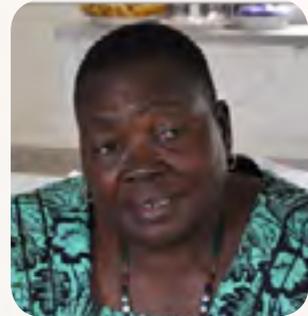


Dear sisters, stay strong! Our Marren will surely continue to live in us. She has fought with courage. She kept smiling to help us keep hoping for victory. I kept hoping. I kept praying God asking him to reward courage and faith. I am sad and in shock. But, I know, that for sure, death cannot have the last word. Sister Mary Mbeo please keep this in mind, please accept our sincere condolences and pass

them to Marren's children and your entire family. REST IN PEACE
MARREN

Hon. Tezira Jamwa - UWONET:

Marren you were a great woman activist and a strong champion of gender equality! It is sad you passed on at the prime of your life and when the women movement badly needed your passion and guidance as a great woman leader. Rest In Peace sister.



I have fought the
good fight,

I have finished
the race,

I have kept
the faith

2 Timothy 4:7





Lilian Liundi, Executive Director TGNP and Board Member of EASSI

Everyone at TGNP has received with great shock and sorrow, the news of the tragic death of Dada Marren Akatsa-Bukachi on 1st October 2017.

We mourn the passing of our role model, a longtime fighter and heroine for women's rights and social justice. Her outstanding contribution will forever be remembered, celebrated and honored. Dada Marren was a distinguished woman, courageous and an outspoken leader who could not be silenced or side-lined. She dedicated all her life in advancing women's right particularly in the areas of gender equality and women empowerment through her gender, trade, development and entrepreneurship expertise.

TGNP Mtandao as a Women's rights Organisation in the East Africa and member of EASSI, we are proud of Dada Marren's initiatives in leading her resource team in developing the East African Gender Equality and Development bill and promoting the Economic Empowerment and livelihoods of women in East Africa through participation in the regional Cross Border Trade and fight for recognition by governments in the EAC and several other initiatives to advance women through Cross Border Trading. Her passion and commitment to the fight for Women Economic Empowerment in East Africa region is worth recognition. Dada Marren has been a model for humanity and a teacher of all of us in this respect. She has been strongly working towards inclusivity and in supportive of the diversity within population

On behalf of TGNP Members, Board of Directors, Secretariat and networks, we would like to convey our deepest sympathy to Marren's family, EASSI team, Sisters, colleagues, friends and all transformative revolutionaries in Africa and the Diaspora who now have to bear with this difficult reality. EASSI and EAC at large has just lost one of the biggest resources.

Dada Marren, will continue living amongst us, we will continue with the marathon race she started in advancing gender equality and women empowerment. May our dear sister's soul rest in peace



**Ms. Edda Sanga – Board Member
– EASSI**

It is with deep shock that I received the sad news of our Executive Director Marren! There are no words good enough to describe the gap left at EASSI without her. Suffice it to say, we ask God to let her soul rest in peace. For sure we should all emulate her courage, resilience and love for EASSI in order to honor her passion and what she stood for. My profound condolences to the Acting ED, chairperson, all members of EASSI Board of directors as well as members of the secretariat. We are in this together.



**Ms. Christine Nankubuge Ndawula –
EASSI Acting ED**

Marren, little did I know that the journey we started in 2004 would end like this and on that fateful day 1st October 2017. Throughout our journey, you loved, cared, mentored, guided and supported me. You taught me how to be smart and to speak in public – I will never forget our mission to Addis during the Beijing +10 Africa regional Conference – it was a turning point for me.

Even when I left EASSI in 2005, I returned to EASSI family in 2011 mainly because I enjoyed working with you. Marren, you have mothered me, and sometimes I wondered where you got the time and energy to listen and advise accordingly. Thank God for your BIG heart.

Marren, you will always be an Icon in my life. Your legacy will live on ever.



Ms. Assumpta Muweera - Finance and Administration Manager

Marren remains a hero, a mentor, a mother, a counsellor, a great leader and most of all a friend in my life. I cherish the nine years I have known Marren and I must thank God for putting Marren in my life. It's the best thing that has ever happened to me. I was with Marren a few days before her death and the message she asked me to pass on to Eassi fraternity, friends and partners was to 'love one another'. I believe if we do everything with love, she will be at peace in the loving arms of God. My prayer is for us to celebrate her life by putting up a monument for her in remembrance of her love for EASSI. Marren rest in peace.

Mary Mbeo - Former Board Member EASSI and Marren's Sister

This is my message to my beloved sister Marren. I will miss my loving and always smiling sister. Who has a passion for her work. Who loves to give everyone a chance in life. Who sees potential in each and every one of us. Who is happy when ones potential is discovered. Who shares more than her portion. Ready to give without hoping to receive back. Yes, this was Marren, my sister, my friend and my confidant. Gone now but not in our minds as your spirit will continue to guide the lives of your children who are so much like you. Your legacy will live forever because of your vision for a world free of weapons and small arms used against women, a world full of economic empowerment for women and a world free of sexual and gender based violence. May EASSI continue to live this legacy that you so much wanted to fulfill. May you rest in peace my sister love.



Louisa Taini- Marren's Daughter

It has taken me a day to be able to absorb and to be able to react to the fact that I will not be able to hold mummy in my arms as I had desperately been wishing to do for the past weeks. I could hardly wait for schools to close on Friday 29th of September so that I could safely hand over my children to be cared for during the school break so as to come and spend time with mummy in her bed. To stroke her, massage her as I loved to do, to comfort her, to tell her nice things and just be in bed with her and show her the love that so powerfully overflows from my heart for her.



After changing my flight ticket back and fourth between Saturday and Sunday. I finally settled on Sunday so as to properly organise the Children and prepare them mentally for what may have been about to happen. My children love their Nonna dearly and had trouble coping with her illness not simply going away for so long. I stayed till Sunday and prayed to God that mum would wait for me.

As I was finally sitting in the aeroplane right before takeoff on Sunday to arrive Monday early morning (2nd October), Kiddo calls me and tells me the most heartbreaking news anyone has ever told me before.

At first I felt disappointment and regret, that I was too late and that I should indeed have just travelled earlier. My heart was crushed and it bled. But after I was all cried out sitting in that plane feeling empty and late for a meeting that i 'should have planned better'. I realized that I was wrong and selfish to think

that she should have waited for me. I realized that finally Mummy can sit on her throne as our Queen.

A title that she has deserved for a very long time. I realized that she has finally been freed from her body which couldn't fight any longer. Freed from her pain and her suffering. Mummy our warrior has gracefully fought this battle. A battle that her body should have lost long ago but it just did not. Mummy's fighter spirit and utmost strength was like no other I know. Even the doctors admitted that the fact that mum continued to live on was pure will power, inner strength, might and endurance.

Immediately I touched down in JKIA on Monday morning, my loving friends kindly received me and took me to my sisters Kiddo and Abbi who were waiting for me at the Lee funeral home. Laying there looking so relaxed, so peaceful, so beautiful with that silky skin of hers was my mother, Marren AuworAkatsaBukachi. How Angelic did she look.

I knew at that moment that she was in a good place, that I can let her go. That I should accept the fact that mum would have done for us what I did for my children and that she continues to live in us, with us and above us.

I know no one stronger and I can say with certainty that she is an extra ordinary woman. Who did all that she did with passion and finesse. With elegance and with kindness, with compassion and grace. Positively influencing several people's lives with her presence, with her words and with her actions. She has left behind a legacy that we as her children wish to carry on to the best of our ability.

Let's celebrate her life and give her a farewell that she herself would plan if she was to be given the duty of planning her own funeral.

Farewell mummy, you are my best person and I'm so grateful that I was lucky enough to be raised by you to be loved by you selflessly and to be taught by you.



Sheila Kawamara Mishambi (Hon)

Tears are flowing as I read this most heart breaking Eulogy from a daughter to a mother and woman that was such a sweet friend. Having met her in Washington in 1997, during an international policy advocacy course, for over 20 years we continued to remind each other of the fun, a Ugandan and Kenyan could have if they decided to lock everyone out and shortwave in Kiswahili. Marren rest in Peace. It is so difficult to imagine you

are gone, but thanks to God you are now free of any pain. Louisa and Marren's sweet girls take heart because your Mummy loved you so dearly. She lived for you. You are now big girls, whom she has groomed so well to face the world. Marren you are irreplaceable in all ways. For those of us who worked with you, we admired your professionalism, determination and ability to do so much within such a short time. You have left behind a void that cannot be filled. Let God grant you eternal rest, and let perpetual light shine upon you, now and forever Amen.

Mariam Yassin-Former Member, EASSI Board

Oh my God. This is the saddest day. I am so sorry. To God belong to God and to Him we shall return. May her soul rest in peace. Please pass my heartfelt condolences to the her daughters and family.

Mette Moberg, Head of Administration- Forum for Women and Democracy (FOKUS)

It is so sad to hear about the loss of Marren. She was a wonderful person and an extraordinary leader. Her life was dedicated to the realization of women's rights and she was a great inspiration for us. We in FOKUS are sending you our deepest condolences.

Sandra Kirenga- Trade Mark East Africa

What a tragedy. Indeed, very shocking to hear about the death of Marren. The Late Marren Bukachi was highly respected and valued by TradeMark East Africa. We wish to extend our condolences to the entire staff of EASSI, her family and colleagues at this difficult time.

May her Soul Rest in Eternal Peace.

FIDA Uganda



We are so saddened to learn about the passing of our sister and colleague Marren AkatsaBakatchi, the Executive director of EASSI one of our consortium partners.

On behalf of the partnership and our individual organizations, we would like to extend our deepest sympathies to the EASSI team, her family and friends. We are standing with you in prayer during this difficult time

Marren was a valuable and highly respected member of our consortium, the effects of her loss will be felt by most of us who had the honor and pleasure of working with her.

As a consortium, we shall render whatever kind of support we can towards her burial arrangements; NAWOU has already offered to coordinate the women's movement and FIDA Uganda will liaise with them should there be any additional support required.

May Marren's soul rest in eternal peace

Daisy N. Owomugasho, Country Director The Hunger Project Uganda

Dear Colleagues,

At The Hunger Project Uganda we are truly sorry to hear of the passing of Marren. Please accept our condolences and May the Lord comfort the family and EASSI members and the whole Civil society fraternity in this time of grief.

Dr. Annet Muyimba-Match Consults Ltd

We are so sorry to hear about Marren's passing. She was so passionate about women's empowerment, cheerful, positive and full of life. We pray to the lord to strengthen her family and EASSI community to cope with the loss. Farewell and rest in peace Marren.



Marren was an artist who found time through her busy schedule to do what she was passionate about: making beautiful jewelry.

She moved countless people and touched thousands of lives through relentless advocacy for women: turning their stories into actions, to stand up for ourselves and for one another, and facilitated the transfer of knowledge and skill through organizing, investing in, and fighting for a better world for all women.

Read more: <http://akinamamawaafrika.org/index.php/news/198-marren-akatsa-bukachi-celebrating-a-trailblazer>



With deep sorrow I convey my condolences to the family of Marren and EASSI fraternity. I am deeply saddened by the loss of my friend mother mentor, she will be truly missed and I will include her in my daily prayers. Rest In Peace .

(Mariam and James Uganda limited).

EASSI STAFF TRIBUTES

Ainebyona Deborah; Dear Marren, You were a great inspiration to me, I admired everything you did and I was always very proud of you. I admired the unity you brought in EASSI family, I loved you feminism advocacy and concern for human rights, your concern and love for EASSI and staff was always overwhelming. Though I never shared with you but I learnt a lot from you and I will never be the same again. Marren you will always remain in my heart as a hero and a mentor. So sad that I will never let you know physically.

Rosette Namuteesa; Dear Marren, I have been deeply sorrowed by the loss of my boss. You were great to us. You fought a good fight. You have been a wonderful mother to EASSI family. We have run short of words. We shall miss you and we treasure the moments we had with you. We love you Marren.

Nuliat Nambaziira; A good heart has stopped beating, a good soul ascended to heaven. We part with our beloved Marren in pain but we celebrate her life with fond memories. To us at EASSI, you have been more than a boss but a mentor, a friend, an inspiration and the best leader I have ever met. Despite the pain, you were always strong and hopeful, giving us strength and hope that you are still around. You have fought a good fight, rest with the angels, till we meet again.

Joseph Kinene; I am deeply pained and words are of no help in expressing the sorrow I feel at this moment. Nobody can understand how hard a separation is, than when our dear ones leave us, I am searching for you, but I cannot find you, I have waited to see if you are coming but all in vain. It remains only the eternal memory in my heart. Your words: my children will always be together, will never leave my mind. Let the love and mercy of our Lord be bestowed upon EASSI family during this unfortunate time. May your soul rest in eternal peace.

Manisurah Aheebwa; Dear Marren, you may not be here in body but your spirit surely lives on through everyone you have touched with your gentility, generosity, wit, tenacity and courage. You have inspired many to believe in themselves and to soar the heights. You were indeed a phenomenal woman. May you rest well,.. till we meet!!

Ruth Warutere; Dear Marren, the pain, the grief and the sorrow is unexplainable. You have been a mother to me, a mentor, a friend, my source of comfort in troubled times. You have molded me into who I have become professionally. You gave me a chance when no one else could. You opened up your doors to accommodate whatever I brought your way. My biggest regret is that I never got to say the simple word “thank you” but I do know that somehow somehow, you know. Marren, no words can express what you mean to me. You have been my inspiration and my to- go- to person. I do pray that you are in peace and looking down on us, smiling with the angels and continuing to guide and watch over us. I will continue to follow the values and principles you have instilled in me and always strive to make you proud. Rest with the angels Marren knowing that you have left a great legacy. I will always love and treasure you my dear mother. Fare thee well till we meet again. Always treasured,

Fred Begumisa; I have been deeply sorrowed by the loss of mu boss, friend, mother. I will never forget the time of seven years I have been with you. You have really transformed my life. I will never forget you. May your soul rest in eternal peace.

Florence Nambajja; This is unbelievable and heart breaking. Marren we shall always miss you and you will always remain in our hearts. Rest in Peace our lovely Mum.

Aknowledgment

EASSI and the family Of the late Marren Akatsa-Bukachi would like to offer our thanks to the many people who showed great kindness and support during Marren's illness and in the time since she left us on 1st October 2017.

We most sincerely thank Partners, Women's Rights Organisations, colleagues, family and friends for the kind messages of sympathy, and generous contributions to funeral and burial arrangements of Marren.

We are sorry that we did not get the chance to speak with everyone or include their condolence messages in the memorial book.

Life is but a Stopping Place

Life is but a stopping place,
A pause in what's to be,
A resting place along the road,
to sweet eternity.
We all have different journeys,
Different paths along the way,
We all were meant to learn some things,
but never meant to stay...
Our destination is a place,
Far greater than we know.
For some the journey's quicker,
For some the journey's slow.
And when the journey finally ends,
We'll claim a great reward,
And find an everlasting peace,
Together with the lord

Author:Unknown

MARREN AKATSA-BUKACHI

22 October 1958 - 1 October 2017



I have fought the **good fight**, I have finished **the race**,
I have kept **the faith** 2 Timothy 4:7