

# Mahek Shah Champions Wings For Women Project

BY JAVED KANA

Fifteen year old Mahek Shah, a student of the Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa is on a quest to spread awareness about the piloting career to teenage girls in Kenya. The CEO and Founder of Wings for Women (WFM), is participating in a Global Social Leaders - Sustainable Development Goals Competition, after completing the project for her International Baccalaureate MYP program.

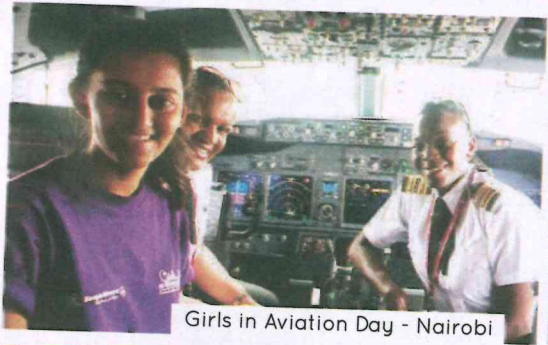
"WFM is an initiative to spread awareness about the pilot career to teenage girls in Kenya. In the process of completing my project (during the period the school gave us), I have successfully completed educational sessions in Mombasa and Nairobi with nine girls. I am working on the Global Social Leaders- Sustainable Developments Goals Competition. I'm the youngest member of

Women in Aviation International and a part of the Kenya Chapter. Last year, in September I attended the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) and Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO) gala dinner where I got to know more people. I have met over 50 aviation professionals based around the World and I am an aspiring pilot. I hope to continue Wings for Women for the coming years, and contribute to changing the fact that the pilot career is male-dominated," states Shah.

According to Shah, the project has snowballed into a greater mission beyond a school project. "At the very beginning, it was to meet the IB MYP's requirements but halfway through the project, I realised I was passionate about this and I decided to continue it and hope to make a change in the world," she says.

Mahek is a one-woman army on the

project, although she has had the guidance of teachers. "When meeting the school's requirements, I had a supervisor who would help me when needed; specifically, teacher Esther Nondi. However, for the international competition which started in January, I have a friend and my sister who offered to help me take this project further, and a supervisor to guide us along the way for the competition. For this competition, we will work with girls from private schools aged 15-18 for a duration of four weeks," explains Shah. Mahek draws inspiration from female pilot Captain Koki with whom she has interacted through the project. "She guided me in the very beginning with this project which is why it has reached such heights. She told me to always work hard, never give up and to always follow my dreams," concludes Shah.



Girls in Aviation Day - Nairobi



Mahek Shah with captains



During a workshop session