



Lessons in Hope

A New Era for Maasai Women in Tanzania

by Juliet Cutler



Non-Fiction - Cultural

248 Pages

Reviewed on 05/25/2025

Book Review

Reviewed by Jamie Michele for Readers' Favorite

Lessons in Hope by Juliet Cutler shows how education at the MaaSAE Girls Lutheran Secondary School (MGLSS) transforms Maasai women's lives by breaking cultural barriers like early marriage and limited opportunities. Through detailed stories of graduates—like Josephine Sambeke Laizer, who became an education officer; Dr. Theresia Mepukori Laizer, a pediatrician; and Martha Mereso Sengeruan, founder of a primary school—Cutler demonstrates that education empowers Maasai women to become leaders in health, education, and community development. The school's scholarships and supportive environment enabled these women to pursue higher education and professional careers. Their work improves healthcare access, promotes girls' education, and advances women's rights in Maasai communities. The core message is that quality education provides Maasai girls with the tools to overcome social challenges and create lasting change for themselves and their communities.

Lessons in Hope: A New Era for Maasai Women in Tanzania by Juliet Cutler is a powerful examination of how education is reshaping the lives of Maasai women. The writing is clear, engaging, and respectful, presenting the achievements of women like Paulina Mesarieki and Upendo Barnaba Letawo with power and dignity. Rather than portraying these women as recipients, Cutler's interviews highlight their active roles in transforming their communities through careers in education, health, and entrepreneurship. Cutler's attention to detail and ability to connect individual stories with wider social impact make the book a perfect pairing with regard to both informing and inspiring readers. The prose puts much of what is written in the words of the women who are speaking, supplemented sparingly by Cutler, allowing the women to stand on their own. Overall, Lessons in Hope is a deeply important contribution to understanding the role of education in advancing women's opportunities in Tanzania's Maasai communities. Very highly recommended.