The Gender Lens
Making Gender Count on Economic and Political Governance

Volume 7 Issue No. 1 August 2009

Professor Wanjiku Kabira hands over the button

Professor Wanjiku Kabira who has been the CCGD Executive Director handed over to Masheti Masinjila in the first quarter of the year.

Having been a founder member of CCGD Prof Kabira has provided up to 14 years of dedicated service to the organization that has seen it gain prominence as a leader in gender related policy research, advocacy, sensitization and training in Kenya and within the region.

In her quest towards a just and equitable society at local and regional levels the CCGD, under Prof. Kabira's leadership of core member consultants and staff, has conducted surveys in Kenya and various African countries in an effort to ensure gender equitable development programs, implementation processes and proportionate benefit from opportunities presented by the respective governments.

Some of these countries include Somalia, Northern Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Southern Sudan.

Research findings have been used to develop various frameworks, policies, laws, tools, influencing policies and laws and for capacity building.

Notable examples include CCGD’s work in mainstreaming gender in Somali Joint Needs Assessment and Reconstruction and Development Program for Somalia, under the auspices of UNDP, UNIFEM and UNPA in 2006/7. CCGD conducted research in two regions Somaliland and Puntland.

The research generated information and data that informed the development of a national Gender Policy Framework for each of the two regions in Somalia. It also doubled up as capacity assessment exercise for the ministry officials on gender mainstreaming within the ministries, which led into a two days training workshop for the ministry officials on gender mainstreaming.

For the South Central region consultations on the same were done in Nairobi. A validation workshop was held in Uganda where representatives from the three regions strengthened and validated the various issues that were to be incorporated into the Gender Policy Frameworks.

As the gender expert in charge of gender mainstreaming in the UN peace and reconciliation process for Somalia Prof. Kabira coordinated collection of views from Somali women that were documented in a publication entitled, ‘Heeding Women’s Voices’.

(VIEW PICTURE ON PAGE 4)

IGAD Womens’ Desk

The CCGD, through Prof Wanjiku Kabira, was instrumental in the establishment of the IGAD Women’s Desk, an organ within IGAD that is responsible for gender mainstreaming activities for all IGAD initiatives.

The CCGD spearheaded research in the seven IGAD member states namely Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Eritrea, on the institutional framework and operational modalities for the establishment and support of a department that deals with gender issues within IGAD.

The research also sought support from the IGAD member states for collective lobbying for the establishment of the IGAD Women’s Desk.

(View Picture on Page 8)

Based on the research and collective lobbying the IGAD Women’s Desk was set up and which is currently the IGAD Gender Department. The research also involved capacity needs assessment for gender mainstreaming in various government ministries in IGAD countries related to the three areas of focus namely food security, peace and reconstruction and this resulted in the development of a 5 year plan, tools for monitoring, IGAD Gender Policy and later the IGAD Peer Review Framework.

Gender Mainstreaming in Government Ministries of Rwanda

The CCGD was the lead consulting agency during the research to come up with capacity needs for gender mainstreaming in various ministries, departments and relevant NGOs in Rwanda. The participatory research led to the development of a Gender Trainers of Trainers (TOT) Manuals that were submitted to the Rwandese ministries.

The manuals were used for capacity building of the ministries on gender mainstreaming. The current CCGD team is set to built on what has been achieved in the past with a strong emphasis on institutional capacity building to take on new challenges in national and regional policy research, advocacy and implementation of gender based programs.

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EDITORIAL

This issue of the newsletter comes during challenging political and socio-economic times for CCGD alongside other members of civil society organizations. Historically the trend has been to question the validity of pursuing “the gender agenda” when other issues such as political instability, drought and attendant food, water and power shortages are crying out for attention. Yet it may not take a genius to decipher the masculine face of impunity that underlies most of possible man-made causes of the current environment and human disasters. CCGD endeavors to contribute gender responsive solutions to the prevailing crisis through her current strategic plan that pursues her mission; to serve as a resource base for programmes that focus on mainstreaming gender in the development processes as well as contribute to gender responsive transformations of society to uphold equity in terms of practical measures that may be made from national policy implementation (such as on devolved funds utilization) through enforcing equitable participation principle and (at least 30%) women participation in all fund committees. Capacity of community organizations to understand and ensure gender responsive budgeting becomes a reality at local levels in the utilization of devolved funds will also be enhanced. This will be in addition to enabling communities in respective districts and women in particular to take an active role in the ongoing reform process in the country.

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An Overview of the Publication “Best Practices in “CDF”

The Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) recently completed the research project on the ‘Best Practices’ in the Management, Structures and Processes of CDF in an effort to establish what constituencies had done differently by identifying ‘Best Practices’ in CDF implementation that could be replicated in other constituencies.

The research was carried out in 10 constituencies namely: Butula, South Imenti, Kitui Central, Kabete, Bahari, Dagoretti, Mbita, Kajiado South, Samburu West and Rongai. Various ‘Best Practices’ were identified from the visited constituencies and documented in the newly released book “Best Practices in the Constituency Development Fund (CDF)”.

The documented “Best Practices” have been classified under the broad thematic areas of the study, namely: management of CDF, information dissemination on CDF, processes in CDF implementation and structures.

The publication presents project case studies that had been implemented in a manner to achieve CDF objectives.

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The book also presents recommendations generated from the research exercise and implementation of the project for strengthening the CDF.

Though community members from the various constituencies were happy with the various aspects of the CDF they felt that CDF can be further strengthened through reviewing the CDF Act and putting in place mechanisms for implementation of affirmative action for marginalized and vulnerable groups, separation of powers, civic education on CDF matters, increasing CDF allocation, enhancing transparency and accountability and participatory monitoring and evaluation of CDF activities. Efficiency in releasing of CDF disbursements and proper coordination and management of all the devolved funds to avoid duplication of projects and double claiming was also emphasized.

The publication provides valuable lessons about ‘strategies that work’ in the implementation of CDF and which can also apply for the other decentralized funds initiatives.
The Gender Lens

Gender and governance initiatives in 3 districts

Introduction

CCGD will be implementing (as from September 2009) a project on "Enhancing women’s participation in governance and decision making processes in Kenya" in an effort to consolidate the gains made over the years in transforming the governance landscape. Relatively limited gains such as increasing the proportion of women in governance structures need to be ventilated to reflect the concerns and experiences/realities of in particular women in resource poor environments as they strive to secure their rights and security in governance structures. The project is set to provide opportunities to build the capacities of women and women leaders to effectively participate in realizing the vision of equal participation and transforming governance for the overall development of Kenya. The project will be implemented in three rural districts in Kenya, namely; Samburu Central, Laikipia North, and Marigat.

The broad objective of the project is to enhance women’s capacities to effectively participate in governance and decision making processes at all levels. More specifically the project aims to; enhance women’s awareness and participation in community and national budgeting processes, develop women’s leadership and organizing capacities towards influencing and participation for gender equality and women’s empowerment and enhance communities’ perception on women’s leadership at both national and community levels.

CCGD will conduct needs assessment on women’s capacities to participate in leadership, development information and communication materials on women and leadership, conduct capacity building workshops for women leaders and train district based government officers on gender equality and women’s leadership. Research will also be conducted to compile public perception index on the implementation of the affirmative action principle in the 3 districts and the information used in the advocacy and training and organization capacity building. This project fall under the UNIFEM managed Gender and Governance Programme (GGP) – Phase three public’s perception index on the implementation of the affirmative action.

HEEDING WOMEN’S VOICES

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Efficiency in releasing of CDF disbursements and proper coordination and management of all the devolved funds to avoid duplication of projects and double claiming was also emphasized.

The publication provides valuable lessons about ‘strategies that work’ in the implementation of CDF and which can also apply for the other decentralized funds initiatives.
The Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) recognized the need to document women's experiences and contributions in constitution making as witnessed in the culmination of the "Bomas draft". To this end CCGD has carried out further research and documentation of information women and constitution making in Kenya and is set to publish a book entitled "Watering The Seeds of Liberation; Women And Constitutional Making In Kenya". That is put together by Prof Wanjiku Mukabi Kabira. Apart from being the immediate past Executive Director of CCGD Prof. Kabira has been a Co-chair of Association of African Women in Research and Development (AAWORD), Chair of Kenya Oral Literature Association, Chair of Women Political Alliance-Kenya (WPA-K), Gender Advisor for IGAD and levels.

Former Vice-Chairperson Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (CKRC), among other positions. She has been in the women's movement and written widely on gender and women's issues.

The book traces the path of the women's struggle from 1992 to 2007 – a period of intense efforts by many Kenyan women. It takes us through defining the kind of representation women have been looking for, to various efforts to table the Affirmative Action bill for women's representation, through parliament, the constitutional review process, the 2005 referendum and after. She traces the path where there have been great companions (women's organization and individuals) who have taken responsibility, on a steep journey, to lobby for women's interests to be taken on board at all levels of development. The book illustrates the tense moments women have undergone; moments where one has gone home in pain - pain in the chest, in the head, in the heart, on the back, everywhere. It describes the women's moments of extreme anxiety, waiting for decisions to be made by those who have authority and power. It presents the occasional moments of relief, few and far apart but which women have never the less appreciated.

Moments that have been shocking to the women and the women's movement; moments where resistance to proposals particularly in parliament came from most unexpected quarters and women wondered whether they were naive, stupid or they have just come from another planet. The book does not forget to resent tragicomic moments that women have gone through in their journey; how and when women in this country have laughed together, cried together, negotiated together, strategized together and sometimes just shared their thoughts, hopes and aspirations. This book offers an opportunity for all to reflect, analyze, take courage to chase our dreams, give us wisdom to choose our path and continue watering the seeds of freedom.

The book is now under review and shall be published by the end of the year.
Project Overview:

“Promoting Democratic Economic Governance through Mainstreaming Gender in National Policies for Women’s Empowerment”

Introduction

In an effort to address the issue of policy environment that excludes women and other marginalized groups the CCGD implemented a one and a half year project on "Promoting Democratic Economic Governance through Mainstreaming Gender in National Policies for Women’s Empowerment" with support from USAID through Pact – Kenya’s Kenya Civil Society Strengthening Programme (KCSSP). The project commenced on May 2007 and ended in October 2008. The CCGD has been focusing on three key policies. These are the Community and Social Enterprise (CSE) Bill, the Women’s Carework Bill and Engendering the National Budget all that falls under the CCGD’s Gender and Economic Governance Programme. However the Women’s Carework Bill was dropped following a project realignment to focus more on the CSE Bill after it lapsed after the dissolution of parliament in readiness for the 2007 General Elections.

Activities Implemented

Various activities have been implemented under the two policy areas of focus. On engendering the budgeting the main activities implemented include the following:

- Tabling the gender recommendations to the Sector Working Groups and Public Sector Hearings
- Auditing of the FY 2008/9 budget to track the recommendations proposed
- Raising gender issues in the FY 2008/9 during parliamentary debates on the budget

On the CSE Bill the following KEY activities have been implemented:

- Drafting the motion and the CSE Bill
- Tabling the motion and the Bill in parliament
- Awareness creation on the Bill
- Lobbying members of parliament to support the Bill

Challenges Encountered

Some of the challenges encountered during project implementation include:

- Unpredictable parliamentary calendar which hampers progress of a legislative advocacy agenda
- Parliamentary committees are sometimes slow in scrutinizing the bills
- Low capacity of government officials in gender mainstreaming

Key Project Achievement

Some of the achievements include the following:

- Passing of the motion of the Community and Social Enterprise Bill
- Drafting the CSE bill and having the bill printed by the government printers at government’s cost
Addressing the challenges

The following were carried out counter/address the challenges encountered:

- Re-introducing the CSE Bill in the tenth Parliament
- Undertaking an advocacy risk analysis and establishing the best time to table a motion or a Bill
- Positioning a gender expert at the Sector Working Group level to monitor and ensure that the gender recommendations were adopted and integrated into the sector reports for resource bidding from the treasury Presenting the same recommendations during the public sector hearings and following up with various sectors to ensure that the recommendations are not lost at any point.

Lessons Learnt

Some of the lessons learnt include:

- It’s crucial to understand government process and legislative processes for effective advocacy
- It’s important to create good rapport with government officials while focusing on government policies and processes
- It’s important to have reliable contact persons in government and parliament to keep you updated on what’s happening.
- It’s important to build the capacity of government officials on gender so that they can mainstream gender in their activities

Conclusion and Way forward

For policy/legislative related work it’s imperative to come up with longer time Programmes of 3-5 years to conclusively complete policy/legislative work. For instance though most of the work on the CSE Bill has been done, we have not finalized the activity since the Bill has not yet been tabled. In addition, passing and assenting to the Bill into an Act is not enough; more work has to be done to put pressure on the government, through the relevant ministry, to implement the Act.

Also though most of our gender recommendations were adopted and allocated resources it’s important to develop a programme to monitor the implementation of the recommendations by the line ministries. Since the constitutional review is underway it would be important to entrench equity principles in the constitution. Most of the issues we are trying to grapple with, in terms of gender equity in resource allocation, can be conveniently addressed by the constitution. Participation by advocacy agents in review process is fundamental.
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