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ABOUT CCGD

Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) is a Non-Governmental Organization that does policy advocacy for gender equality. The organization was founded in 1996 by a small group of academics, researchers, and development experts to build capacity in gender-responsive planning, advocacy, and programming. The organization has grown into staunch and dependable policy research and advocacy resource center with programs present at the county

What we do

The Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) is a gender equality and non-discrimination policy advocacy organization. CCGD has a long history of conducting research, policy/legal advocacy and practical engagement in policy and law analysis, advocacy and formulation processes. It contributes to supporting processes that lead to the enactment of laws and policies that promote gender equality and non-discrimination.

CCGD contributes to supporting Sectoral and Multi-sectoral Committees, Working Groups and Task Forces that work collaboratively with government departments to coordinate policy review and implementation. In this capacity, CCGD Co-chairs the Gender GBV sub-Sector Working Group as well as being a member of the umbrella Gender Sector Working Group that is convened by the Ministry of Public Service and Gender.

CCGD also works with selected county and national government ministries, departments and agencies to support the implementation of core policies and laws that contribute significantly towards reducing the gender gap. Recognizing that public accountability to the achievement of gender equality is critical to closing the gender gap, CCGD engages in strategic partnerships and collaboration with the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) to contribute towards evidence-based advocacy that promotes collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data and utilization of findings to inform advocacy.

Further, CCGD supports coalition-building among CSOs on national and regional platforms that collectively push advocacy agenda among others rights, equality, participation and protection of civic space. In this regard, CCGD currently hosts the Kenya Gender Budget Network (KGBN), East African Civil Society Organizations Forum (EACSOF) and Innovations for Change (14C), Africa Hub.

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Addressing Barriers to trade in EAC

By Maurice Goga

Women constitute to over 80% of small-scale cross-border traders in East Africa. The breakout of COVID-19 early last year had a major impact on their businesses, this follows the shutting down of key borders points and putting up new restrictions by the East African countries in a bid to contain the spread of COVID-19. The new restrictions only allowed the heavy commercial vehicles with the driver and assistant to cross the border and required them to have a COVID-19 jab test. This meant that the women traders who cross the border on foot, or on a motorcycle were typically pushed out of the business.

Speaking during a TV interview dubbed BizCheck, Masheti Masinjila, Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development, Executive Director noted that the cross-border trade was adversely affected following the outbreak of COVID-19. However, the situation was getting better after the protocols of crossing the borders were eased following talks between Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania governments. He added that during the pandemic, the majority of small-scale traders were worst hit by the effects of the pandemic. “The informal traders who are the small-scale cross-border traders were the worst hit by the effects of COVID-19 as they were not able to cross the borders physically,” he said, adding that even after the situation changed and the cross-border traders were given a leeway of doing business but still they remained affected.

He called for full implementation of common market protocols which calls for having one common market among the six East African Community countries. A move he said will allow the small-scale cross-border traders to trade freely and also address the challenges



Betty Kiptum with Masheti Masinjila, the Executive Director Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development during Bizcheck program on KBC TV.

the cross-border traders are experiencing while doing their businesses.

He added that with the full implementation of the protocol, a trader moving from Kenya to Uganda, or Tanzania to conduct business just need to prove that they are East African citizens and if the goods they are going to trade in are not prohibited by any law under the East African Community then they are supposed to move freely because they treaty provides for free movement of people and goods.

Constraints in regional trade

The ED cited non-tariffs barriers are the major hindrance to cross-border trade, saying that on certain occasions, the EAC countries may fail to recognize the way of standardization of goods in a particular country.

Besides the non-tariff barriers, he also decried of the high cost of production of Kenyan goods, including agricultural goods. Adding that the cost of manufacturing goods in Kenya is still high as compared to the other EAC countries. He pinned the high cost of manufacturing to the high cost of electricity. All these factors he said make it unfavorable for the Kenyan small-scale cross-border traders as goods from the bordering countries become a threat to the Kenyan goods.

On gender parity, the ED said Kenya has been a high number of Kenyan women who are employed in the EAC countries owing to the gender parity in education.

However, women still face various forms of discrimination in acquiring employment opportunities. “There are gender-related problems in terms of movement of labour. It is much easier for a Kenyan to be hired within EAC countries as compared to women,” he said.

Women in cross border trade

The ED stated that there are many women involved in the cross-border trade because of traditional trading practices where women were majorly involved in trade and also lack of opportunities. Adding that women make better traders as they can understand people’s needs and wants.

He lauded the policies within the EAC which he termed to be very supportive in supporting women in cross-border trade.

“The East African Community treaty mentions that these women must have their capacity built, the government must invest in the business of these women and also come up with feasible plans to bridge them from informal to a formal business,” added Masheti.

The Simplified Trade Regime, he said, provides that the small-scale traders are not required to register as they are allowed to cross the borders at the main crossing points including the One-Stop Border Posts. Further, they should not pay any customs fees for goods worth 3000 dollars as long the goods are not illegal.

In empowering the cross-border women, the ED noted that there are plans by civil society organizations including Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and the county governments to train the women on how to engage in legal trade.



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Masheti Masinjila,
*Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development
Executive Director*

Numerous challenges hinder smooth trade along the Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania borders

By Maurice Goga



Group photo of cross-border traders women leaders from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania with Busia District MP, Hon. Hellen Auma Wandera from Uganda (in black and yellow attire) and team from East Africa Civil Society Organizations' Forum-Kenya, Ministry of East African Community and Regional Development, Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development and Kenya Private Sector Alliance during the Regional Dialogue Forum Between and Among Cross Border Traders Women Leaders Along Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania Borders held on 6th and 7th October 2021 in Kisumu County.

Cross-border traders' women leaders have cited numerous challenges that hinder smooth trade along the key border points of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Speaking during a two-day regional dialogue forum for cross-border traders' women leaders along the Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania borders pointed out that lack of market, limited capital, gender-based violence (FGM, child marriage and teen pregnancy) unharmonized EAC legal and policies framework, COVID-19 challenge, language barriers, lack of women desk at the border points, corruption and cultural norms.

While addressing the women leaders, Busia District MP, Hon. Hellen Auma Wandera acknowledged that indeed women cross-border traders face a number of challenges that should that be addressed by government by each country. Hon. Wandera specifically cited corruption network at the boarder points as the key hindrance to smooth cross-border trade along the border points of the three countries.

“It is sad that 81% of women cross border traders reported that they face corruption at the borders,” said Hon. Wandera.

She added; “Women are targeted more than men, report shows that women face corruption than men because they are less literate and knowledgeable on the existing legal trade regimes with EAC borders.”

The Busia District promised to help the women cross-border traders in addressing the challenges they are facing and

also support them

The Executive Director for Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development, Masheti Masinjila said that the aim of the two-day meeting was to ensure that women leaders have a structured dialogue which will culminate in development of trading protocol that can be signed and presented to the national, county and local government of each country. He added that

However, Masheti urged the women traders to address their internal problems avoid fighting among themselves and they should not let interference by other parties affect their trade negatively.

Director Regional Liaison and Integration, Ministry of East African Community and Regional Development, Dr. Wakhungu Juma called on the women to develop resolutions for the challenges they cited and ensure that three government implement the suggested resolutions.

The Public Private Dialogue Specialist at Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), Patrick Maingi noted that the KEPSA has worked with various stakeholders including Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development, East Africa Civil Society Organizations' Forum, East Africa Business Council and private sector associations among others to address the challenges such as non-barrier tariffs to ensure women experience smooth trade along the EAC border points.

The forum was attended by at least 30 cross-border traders' women leader from the border points of Busia, Namanga, Malaba and Isebania.



Women and youth cross-border trader leaders from the Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda borders during the Regional Dialogue Forum among the cross-border traders women leaders along Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda borders held on 6th and 7th in Kisumu County.

The youth verbatim

By Getrude Angela



Nelly Opollo, the founder of Atekere Elegance and a youth GBV champion in Busia County.

The youth chapter is a segment that highlights the profiles of the GBV youth champions who are amplifying the voices of women and girls by addressing GBV issues within their respective communities.

On this issue, we had a one-on-one discussion with Nelly Asero Opollo, GBV Youth Champion in Busia County. Asero, is the Founder of Atekere Elegance which runs a CSR activity known as Tabasamu Initiative.

Briefly explain to us who you are?

My name is Nelly Asero Opollo, I am one of the CCGD Youth champions advocating and fighting against issues of GBV in Busia County. I am also an entrepreneur and CEO of Atekere Elegance where we engage in a CSR through an initiative known as Tabasamu Initiative, which mainly aims at giving back to the community. At Tabasamu Initiative, we believe that at the end of the day what really matters is the smiles we put on people's or children's faces once we have impacted or changed their lives.

Youth have a great role to play in preventing gender-based violence (GBV); by creating awareness through various innovative ways such as the use of social media, peer to peer engagement, edutainment, and activism. Through these platforms, the youth can cultivate attitudes that do not condone any form of GBV in the society. CCGD is has brought on board 20 youth across four counties- Kwale, Kajiado, Busia, and Mandera to use their prowess in addressing GBV issues in their counties.

Which organization do you represent or work for?

Currently, I do mentorship programs in schools and at community level. I also partner with various institutions and organizations among them being the Anglican Church of Kenya where I get a larger platform to reach out to schools. As a youth, one of the major challenges we have is financial constraints. However, with organizations partnership that is factored out.

What motivated you to start advocating against GBV?

First, I am not a survivor of GBV but I have seen people close to me being victims and survivors of GBV and it occurred to me that maybe today it was them and tomorrow it might be me or someone else I care about. This challenged me to start advocating against GBV and to ensure that no one should go through the pain that I have seen other people go through.

Are there challenges you face as GBV Youth Champion?

Yes, I face several challenges. At the beginning, I had a difficult time taking to the older people because of my age then and my body size as I was actually skinnier than I am now. The reception was negative as most of the people I approached thought that I was too young and did not know a lot about life and therefore I could not start questioning older people about their actions. Other people dismissed me because I was not

How do you overcome these challenges?

I began by building my capacity as a GBV Activist, and got to know, learn and understand several aspects of GBV. I also worked to improve my confidence and anytime and to date, any time I get a chance to speak, the older generation get to see who I am, beyond my age and my physical appearance and that I speak from a point of knowledge and understanding what GBV really entails. This has really helped a lot especially during this month as that I have been championing against GBV.

How did you end up becoming a GBV Youth Champion?

I saw an advertisement in one of the WhatsApp groups that I was in, looking for GBV Community Champions and the requirements were that one had to be a youth and be doing something to make a difference in the community. I made the application and that was how I ended up being among the 20 youths that got interviewed as community champions and the 12 champions that were selected from Busia County. I was trained on organizational and personal skills and which skills I adopted to make my role as a Youth Champion more professional and successful and that is how I came to know about the CGD. At first, I volunteered with the Champions. I was not one of the initial champions, but I used to volunteer with them as I loved what they did and was motivated on advocating against GBV and when one of them dropped out, I had the chance to also be a part of the five Youth Champions in Busia County.

What message would you send out to stakeholders?

I would love to encourage the Stakeholders to keep supporting the youth on the ground doing a lot of good things through capacity building and trainings, to increase their knowledge in the various aspects on Gender Based Violence. This is in addition to giving the youths a platform to actually come out and show what they can do and an opportunity to sit at the table and negotiate the issues affecting them and the challenges they are facing and also participate in the making of decisions that concern and affect them.

I believe that supporting the youth will greatly contribute to the success of the programs undertaken by them. We have seen the youths fail in some the programs and this does not mean that they were bad programs. There are good programs but probably they were not tailored for the youth because the youth were not involved in the decision-making.

What message would you give to the youth championing against Gender Based Violence?

My message to my fellow Youth Champions advocating against GBV is that they should keep reading and know what they talking about. Because when you're out there and you give the wrong message, you're just telling everyone that they are right about how they think about the youth. But when you show up prepared, at least you give another youth a chance to be given the same opportunity that you've had. So, let them focus on building their capacity so that they are able to give the right information.

What is your Message to CCGD?

I would like to honestly thank CCGD as it is among the first Organizations that trusted the youth with a huge role, and we have been able to go out there and show the world that the youth can also make a positive impact and bring a change to the community. Additionally, because of CCGD, other organizations in Busia County are currently willing to work with the youth. I am really grateful to CCGD and encourage them to keep supporting and empowering the youth in the various counties, and to create awareness to the public on the role of CCGD and issues on GBV.



Because of CCGD, other organizations in Busia County are currently willing to work with the youth. I am really grateful to CCGD and encourage them to keep supporting and empowering the youth in the various counties, and to create awareness to the public on the role of CCGD and issues on GBV.

Nelly Opollo, Founder of Atekere Elegance

GBV and Artivism

By Sharon Macharia



CCGD Youth Coordinator, Audrey Adhiambo (far right), CCGD Youth Program Assistant, Jecinter Kagai in company of GBV and Artivism winners, Vincent Ochieng (second left) Dennis Isogol (centre) and Russell Obwaka (third-left) and other youth from The Border Hub during the GBV and Artivism in Busia County on 29th September 2021

Globally, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) has aggravated during the COVID-19 pandemic, following the same pattern as previous pandemics and emergencies. There has been an increase to reported cases in intimate partner violence (physical, verbal, economic, and psychological); digital harm, including online and offline sexual harassment and gender-based bullying and abuse; sexual exploitation and abuse, especially among young women and girls. Several factors triggered the increase during the current pandemic such as the curtailed movements from home because of stay-at-home measures and/or social isolation.

During the spike of COVID-19, Busia County were among the counties that recorded high cases of COVID-19. This resulted in increase of GBV cases in the county owing to measures that were put in place by the government to curb the spread of the virus. Cases such as defilement, teenage pregnancies, rape, intimate partner violence among others increased drastically.



Winners of GBV and Artivism drawing category, Vincent Ochieng (left), Dennis Isogol (centre) and Russel Obwaka.

While there have been great efforts to address increase gender-based violence among communities in Busia County, we recognize the continued need to involve young people and leverage on their creativity to sustain the efforts on prevention and management of GBV at the county level.

With the continued evolution of the digital space and COVID-19 limiting public gathering to sensitize communities on prevention and management of GBV, there has been a call to civil society organizations to leverage on the power of art and technology in bringing youth at the center of programming against GBV.

CCGD in partnership with the Border Hub – a youth led initiative in Busia County jointly initiated the GBV and activism activity. The initiative under the Mastercard Foundation Recovery and Resilience Program aimed at using talent and technology to foster public awareness on prevention, management, and reporting pathways for GBV. The implementing partners launched a call for application for artwork competition calling on youth artists in Busia, Butula, Nambale, Funyula and Malaba towns to submit creative digital content (short videos and animations) and drawing content (drawings, murals, and paintings) expressions creating awareness on GBV.

The competition call attracted 12 entries ranging from drawings, paintings, photography art, short videos and animations; most participants being male. The winners in the different categories were awarded during Art Creatives GBV Sensitization Training on 28 and 29 September 2021. The training brought together 20 youth artists from Busia who participated in the artwork competition.

For the drawing/painting category the winner was Vincent Ochieng Were while the 1st and 2nd runners up were Dennis Isogol and Russell Wanjiru Obwaku respectively.

In the short video and animation category the winner was Allan Noel Sikuku and 1st runners up was Lesline Agneta Ayienga while Dante the Poet of World Modeling Agency scooped the prize for the Spoken Word/Poetry category.



Vincent Ochieng, the winner of GBV and Artivism drawing category displays the artwork after receiving the winners award from CCGD Youth Program Assistant, Jecinter Kagai.



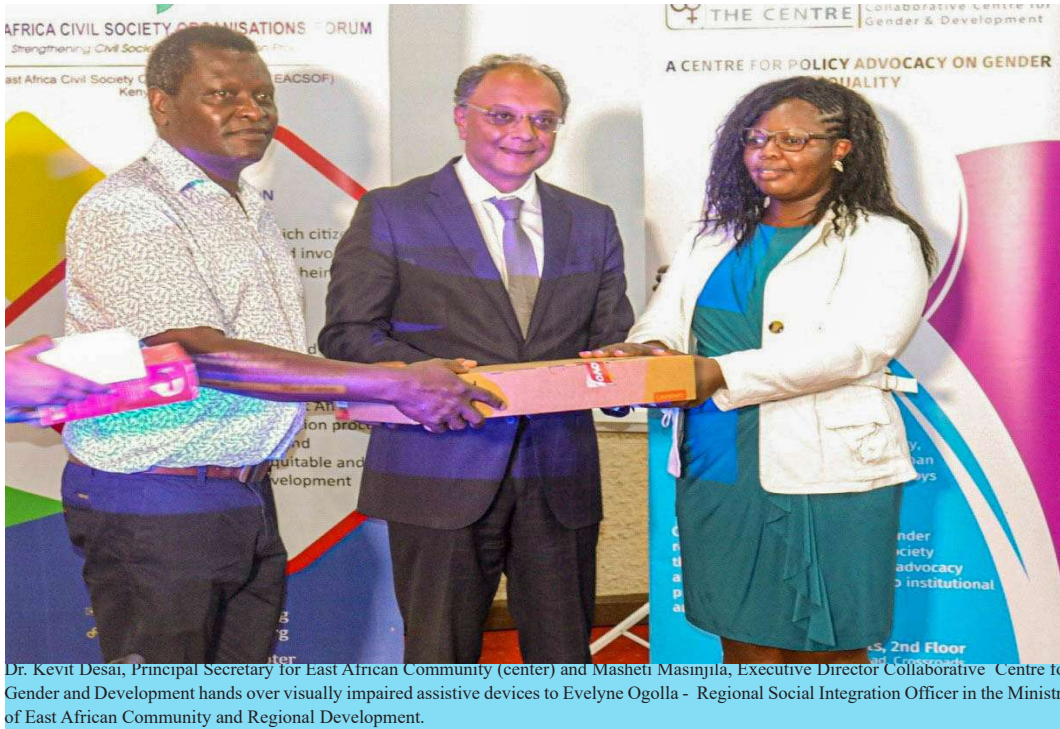
Alian Noel, the winner of GBV and Artivism short videos/animation category receives the winners award from CCGD Youth Coordinator, Audrey Adhiambo.



The winner of GBV and Artivism spoken word category, Dante the poet receives the winners award from Busia County Administrator, Dorothy Mudanya..

CCGD aids Evenly Ogola with assistive devices

By Maurice Goga



Dr. Kevit Desai, Principal Secretary for East African Community (center) and Masheti Masinjila, Executive Director Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development hands over visually impaired assistive devices to Evelyne Ogolla - Regional Social Integration Officer in the Ministry of East African Community and Regional Development.

“

When we talk about gender, the word women in general will be used but we forget about women with disabilities who are very important stakeholders when it comes to women empowerment.

Evelyne Ogolla

**Regional Social Integration
Officer**

*Ministry of East African Community
and Regional Development*

Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development on 19th October 2021 aided Evelyne Ogolla, with assistive devices for the visually impaired person. The assistive devices which included a laptop fitted jaws- a screen reader that enables persons with visual impairment to carry out their office duties normally and also the Digital Accessible Player Information System (DAISY) a talking book for the visual impaired persons.

While receiving the devices, Evelyn Ogolla thanked Mr. Masheti Masinjila, the Executive Director for Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development and the State Department for East African Community for putting a smile on her face and she will be able to work effectively to share the smile on the face of other PWDs in the best way possible

Evelyne said she has been experiencing challenges in handling her task due to lack of assistive devices. “Imagine you are sitting with colleagues, they are going about with their work, reading something on their laptops or even working on a letter or maybe you are in a meeting and

they are reviewing a document but you, are there following. Imagine that kind of world,” she posed.

She took the opportunity to call for inclusivity of persons with disability in the cross-border trader saying that she has been involved in the activities along the Isebania and Busia borders where women cross-border traders with disabilities were not invited for those activities.

She called on the event organizers to always include women with disabilities when they are planning for such activities. “When we talk about gender, the word women in general will be used but we forget about women with disabilities who are very important stakeholders when it comes to women empowerment,” she said.

Evelyne is a Regional Social Integration Officer at Ministry of East African Community and Regional Development who lost her sight six years ago.

New strategic partnership to improve cross border trade

By Sharon Macharia and Maurice Goga

Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development in partnership with East African Civil Society Organizations' Forum (EACSOFF), the Ministry of East African Community and Regional Development have been supporting women small-scale informal cross border traders through trainings to enhance their capacity to negotiate and advocate for full realization of their rights that include freedom to trade as provided for in the East African Community (EAC) treaty and protocols, the right to free movement across borders including for purposes of trade, the right to security and life free of harassment from state agents across the border points and the right to access development resources to secure their livelihoods. Informal women cross border traders in particular need to organize to be recognized and protected from physical violence including sexual harassment.

Speaking during the Strategic Partnership Breakfast meeting between Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD), East African Civil Society Organizations' Forum (EACSOFF) and University of Nairobi African Women Research and Studies Centre- Women Economic Empowerment Hub (WEE-Hub), Principal Secretary (PS), State Department for East African Community, Dr Kevit Desai said that there are collaborative opportunities that will deliberate women from poverty. He called for empowerment of women cross border traders on use of E- platforms and ICT development which he said presents a great opportunity the women in terms of increased volumes and values in trade transactions.

“Many cross-border women lag behind in the use of E-platforms as seen in the small numbers engaged on the 50 Million African Women Speak Platform,” he said.



Dr. Kevit Desai, Principal Secretary for East African Community (right) Director University of Nairobi Women Economic Empowerment Hub (UON-WEE HUB) Prof. Wanjiku Kabira and Masheti Masinjila, Executive Director Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development during the collaboration breakfast meeting held on 18th October 2021.

He added that the women cross border traders need to be empowered on importance of value addition since majority of the women are engaging agricultural produce saying this will help in addressing the prevalent post-harvest problems and losses thereby increasing returns and investments for the women cross border traders.

Further, the PS also called on the partners to conduct more sensitization for the cross-border traders on the Simplified Trade Regime as way of formalizing the cross-border trade. He urged the partners to organize bench marking activities with other cross border traders both within the country and within the region.

Dr Desai noted that the State Department for EAC has designed gender responsive cross border trade projects along the EAC transit corridors and One Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) steps he said will result in upgrading of infrastructure and capacity development of traders so as to enhance market access for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) involved in informal cross border trade in Namanga Busia, Isebania, Taita Taveta Lunga-lunga and Malaba OSBPs.

The PS specifically thanked Mr. Masheti Masinjila and the Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development who he said have been Ministry's development partners since 2012 when the EAC Council of Ministers approved the Consultative Dialogue Framework for Private Sector, Civil Society and Other Interest Groups which opened the doors for Non-State Actors to contribute to the EAC integration policy development and project implementation as provided in Article 127 of the Treaty. "I note with appreciation the good working relations between the State Department for EAC and your organization which have seen the implementation of several joint women and youth empowerment projects at the OSBPs," said the PS.

The PS continued to shower praises to CCGD thanking them for the support they have extending to Ministry. It is through your support that today we have the opportunity to present to one of our officers Evelyn Ogola, from Social Affairs Directorate, with assistive devices that will go a long way to ensuring both efficiency and effective service delivery and personal fulfillment and growth on the part of the officer.

Dr. Desai noted that the entry of University of Nairobi African Women Research Studies Centre-Economic Empowerment Hub will enhance the policy development process through evidenced-based decision-making process.

The Executive Director of Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development, Masheti Masinjila called for long term partnership among the three organizations and work with the available resources to make the best out of the opportunity.

The ED went to say that with support from the Ministry of East African Community and Regional Development and the University of Nairobi Women Economic Empowerment Hub and Busia County they have been able to establish a childcare facility in Busia County.

He added," The aim for the establishment the centre was to ensure that many children from 0-3 years go to the care centre to allow their mothers to use their entrepreneurial skills to do other things with that time while their children are well taken care of."

Masheti noted that they are looking forward towards the expansion of the childcare centre as the project will not only provide an opportunity to deal with issues of sexual gender-based violence but also deal with issues of proper childcare, economic empowerment of women in terms of time and welfare of the children.

In her remarks, the Director University of Nairobi Women Economic Empowerment Hub (WEE-HUB), Prof. Wanjiku Kabira said the entry of UON WEE-Hub in the partnership will greatly contribute to evidence-based decision making and implementation of policies and programmes informed by what works for WEE in Kenya. She pointed out that the Hub aims to use data to enhance women's economic empowerment in Kenya where its research revolves around; Affirmative Action Funds and Entrepreneurship, Credit Guarantee Scheme, Childcare and women's work and women in formal and informal sectors.

The partnership will result in generation of a joint plan of action with key performance on the agreed areas of collaboration among the three organizations

“Many cross-border women lag behind in the use of E-platforms as seen in the small numbers engaged on the 50 Million African Women Speak Platform.

Dr. Kevit Desai

PS, State Department for East Africa Community

CCGD establishes a child witness box at newly built Kajiado Law Court

By Sharon Macharia and Stephanie Marigu



The child witness box structure at the Kajiado Law Court.

Empirical evidence shows that Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) affects millions of children and adolescent worldwide. SGBV perpetrated on children not only violate a wide range of children's rights but also impedes the progress that have been made since the adoption of UN convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989.

According to report by Kenya Violence Against Children 49% of girls and 48% of boys aged 13-17 years had experienced physical violence and 11% of girls and 4% of boys had experienced sexual violence. The consequences and impact of SGBV to children are traumatizing thus addressing and redressing a minor's SGBV case is often not easy for the courts, as a result, the perpetrators may feel immune.

As a signatory to the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN General Assembly 1989), the government of Kenya has put in place several legislative and policy measures geared towards child protection. Further, many courts in the country with the backing of the Children's Act (2001, revised in 2012) and The Sexual Offence Act No.3 of 2006 have since established children's courts with a special mandate and unique features to hear all proceedings pertaining to children. The judicial officers assigned to them are further equipped with immense and appropriate child sensitivity training to ensure that children's matters are dealt with effectively. Safeguards in place to protect children in the justice system whether as offenders, victims or witnesses are many and can only be enhanced to suit the society's advancements. To this end, there are provisions for safe spaces within the Children's court to enable them to give their witness testimony either directly or through a guardian – Children's witness boxes. The installation of children's witness boxes is a statutory provision under The Sexual Offence Act No.3 of 2006 which ought to be a measure to enhance access of justice particularly to minor survivors of SGBV. The presence of functional witness boxes in Children's courts has been limited with many adopting a closet-like approach to the structure, and failing to take into consideration multiple prevailing factors key among them, the psycho-social state of the child.

CCGD through the Recovery and Resilience Program worked to install a Children's witness box at the newly built Kajiado Law Courts building, having done immense research on the facilities required to ensure effective witness testimony by a child and has become the pace setter for the same. Some of the features of the Children's Witness box include:

- i. A spacious glass and tinted aluminum enclosure with one side completely open – despite the paradox of the name, the child ought not to feel like they have been put in a box as that will play against the psychosocial wellbeing of the child, to this end, the witness box measures 3 feet by 1.5 feet fitted with one-way glass that allows for the child to be visible to the court. Further to this, it remains fully uncovered on one end – that allows the child to establish the rapport with the person leading witness examination.
- ii. It is equipped with a wide and long cushioned bench that can comfortably fit a child and their guardian where necessary toward creation of a space that feels comfortable and safe enough for them to effectively engage the court.
- iii. A goose-neck microphone with a wireless speaker is fitted to assist in amplifying the child’s voice during production of evidence and prevent re-victimization or “harassment” of the child by demanding that they speak audibly as would ordinarily be required of any witness.
- iv. A children’s play mat, cartoon stickers, toys and story books in the witness box are some of the additional features that will be useful in creating a child-friendly space; as a distraction from the intimidating set up of the court as they wait for their moment to begin production of witness testimony.

Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) in partnership with GROOTS Kenya, Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAWKenya) and funded by MasterCard Foundation has been implementing a program on Recovery and Resilience for Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) during the COVID-19 Pandemic as a rapid response for the spike in SGBV cases in Kajiado, Kwale, Busia and Mandera counties. Pro-bono legal support and has been a key pillar of the program toward supporting Survivors of SGBV to access justice. This took on a multi-sectoral approach to engage various stakeholders in the justice system, to include the Judiciary, Court Users’ Committees, Office of the Directorate of Prosecutions, duty bearers such as elders’ councils, school heads and medical practitioners and a wider angle of community awareness on rights and referral pathways.

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