

THE GENDER LENS

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Mr. Masheti Masinjila, the Executive Director of Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development.

From the Executive Director's Desk

The COVID-19 pandemic is the latest of challenges testing CSOs capacity to deliver on their mandates. CCGD implementation of the COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience Program (CRRP) in Kwale, Kajiado Busia and Mandera counties to cushion women and girls from adverse effects of SGBV resulting mainly from the containment measures put in place to curb the spread of the pandemic.

Through these partnerships with GROOTS Kenya and CREAM on the same program saw similar implementation efforts in Tana River, Kakamega, Kiambu, Kilifi, Nairobi and Mombasa. National level collaborative engagements and partnerships with State Department for Gender (SDfG) largely through the multi sectoral GBV working group and Ministry of EAC and regional Development and respective border county governments in partnership with Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and University of Nairobi Women Economic Empowerment (UONWEE) Hub augmented the initiatives undertaken under CRRP.

CCGD is also partnering with Nathan's Associates and the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) to undertake research on "increasing salience and strategic engagement for Women Economic Empowerment,

Women Economic Collectives, and Gender Integration" that focuses on initiatives implemented by national government sectors and county governments outside of the mother Ministry of Public Service and Gender. Research with the UON WEE Hub is focusing on gender responsive budgeting by analyzing the 2021/2022 budget and ongoing sector proposals for the 2022/2023 budget.

CCGD continues to engage in multi sector partnerships with government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), council of governors and respective county governments, develop and resource partners that include Mastercard Foundation, Embassy of Finland, TIDES/USAID, REINVENT, Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Nathan's and Associates.

Technical resource and evidence-based policy advocacy partnerships with UON WEE, Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and East African Civil Society Organizations Forum (EACSOF) and Uthabiti Africa among others. We extend our gratitude to all our partners for the support and look forward to increased collaborative initiatives next year.

Accelerating women's economic empowerment through childcare facility.

By Maurice Goga

Women's participation in economic development is impeded by their early childcare roles. However, child care facilities present an opportunity for redistribution of unpaid care work that is largely performed disproportionately by women. Generally, childcare provision in most urban informal settlements and rural settings are highly informal. In Kenya, little policy attention has been directed to unpaid care and domestic work and particularly childcare. Early childcare is an intense 24-hour activity that consumes the time of women thus reduces their mobility as well as time and freedom to engage in income generating and social activities.

Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) is partnering with the University of Nairobi WEE-Hub, Ministry of East Africa Community and Regional Development, Uthabiti Africa and East Africa Civil Society Organizations' Forum to initiate a child care program along the border counties – Kwale, Busia and Kajiado counties.

The programs' main objective is to; enable mothers/parents to access quality affordable childcare and free mothers to engage in income generation activities including trade, entrepreneurship and employment. The project is also intended to assist redistribute the burden of childcare from mostly mothers

Since its inception on 2nd August 2021, the Busia Childcare Centre has admitted a total 37 children; 20 boys and 17 girls,"said Agneta Okumu, the Busia Childcare Administrator. "The youngest is three-months old and eldest is three years and seven months old,"she added.



CCGD Childcare Program Assistant, Grace Kathau(standing) addressing members of Busia Women Cross Border Traders Association during an assessment of the Busia Childcare facility in Busia County on 2nd September 2021.



Members of Busia Women Cross Border Traders Association during an assessment of the Busia Childcare facility in Busia County on 2nd September 2021. The facility provide the women with a safe space where they can leave their children as they embark on their daily business.

The Centre has trained caregivers with capacity to handle children safely within the recommended COVID-19 guidelines. The staff at the Centre have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

Speaking during their engagement with CCGD, majority of women cross-border traders said that the creation of the facility is a relief to them and their businesses and that their profit margin has increased tremendously since the inception of the facility in August.

According to Veronica Makoha, a member of Busia Women Cross-border Association, the creation of the facility has provided her with sufficient time for her business.

“For now, I have all the time, all my concentration and focus will be on my business,” said Veronica.

Further, her business has grown since she has reduced spending while on the business as compared to when she used to carry her child to the business. “Initially, I used to save Ksh. 300 per day in the merry go round chama but at moment am doing Ksh. 500 per day,” she said.

The facility also offers space where the young mothers whose education has been affected by the burden of early childcare responsibilities. The daughter of Almerida Ayoko is one of the beneficiaries of the facility. Almerida says that the Centre has not only helped her but has also helped her daughter who was able to get back to school. “This Centre has been of great relief to me, since bringing Mary here I am able to do my business without any hindrance, her mother too has also gone back to school to continue with her studies,” said Almerida.

She urges the young mothers in Busia County to seize the opportunity and bring their children to the facility so that they can get back to school.

“I call upon the young mothers who have left their children with their parents at home to bring the children to Centre so that they can be relieved from the burden of childcare,”



Busia Childcare facility staff along with CCGD Childcare Program Assistant, Grace Kathau (siting front-right) during a training session on COVID-19. The training was organized by CCGD to capacity build the caregivers with knowledge on how handle children safely within the recommended COVID-19 guidelines.

The Youth Chapter Verbatim

By Maurice Goga



Aldrin Timo, the founder of Trail Foundation and GBV Youth Champion from Busia County.

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 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.

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.

For this issue, we had one-on-one discussion with Aldrin Timo, a male GBV Youth Champion from Busia County. Aldrin, the founder of Trail Foundation is a male champion who has made gender equality and women's empowerment his cause and mission.

Briefly explain to us who you are

My name is Aldrin Timo from Matayos in Busia County. I am the founder of Trail Foundation and also a GBV youth champion in Busia County.

Which organization do you represent or work for?

Currently, I am working at my foundation which is a youth led organization in Busia County. Our core mandate is to address the issue of single parenthood by directly engaging the affected youth.

Why did you start the organization?

The reason why I started this organization was to come to the aid of teenage mothers, I wanted to give them a mileage and make understand that being a teenage mother is not a crime.

Apart from encouraging the young mothers that being a young mother is not crime, how else do you engage them?

As a group, we have ventured in agri-business where we have incorporated the teenage mothers in small-scale farming which entails growing vegetables and onions. Our main aim is to empower them to be independent. Further, we are also helping them in marketing of the farm proceeds by identifying markets where they can sell the products.

How did you end up becoming a GBV Youth Champion?

When talking about issues of GBV and leaving men/boys out of the conversation yet they perceived to be the perpetrators of GBV cases will help in reducing the cases. I became a GBV champion so that I can bring the men/ boy in the GBV conversation. I needed a platform where I can talk to the boys and enlighten the girls too.

How do you handle societal perceptions which depict GBV to be a women's affair?

Indeed, many people view GBV campaign as women's affair, what they don't know is that both men and women can suffer from GBV.

Do you think men/boys experience GBV?

Yes, majority of men and boys are being sodomized others are being buttered by their spouse but suffer in silence because they have not embraced the art of speaking up. As a fellow man, I usually encourage them to come out and share their experiences.

As you have said that men/ boys don't have the courage of speaking up, what strategy are you using to make them open up?

I just bond with them, yes speak their language, in turn they see me as one of them thus the trust is built. I can say majority of them have been opening up.

Menstrual Hygiene is one of the topics men/boys' fears talking about, how do you deal with the issue?

It is true that men/boys fear talking about menstrual hygiene. Personally, I have been with knowledge on menstrual hygiene, right now I am able to attend public forums and demonstrate how sanitary towels are used. As a result, many boys have benefited from such demonstration and are now talking about menstrual hygiene openly.

Are there challenges you face as GBV Youth Champion?

At first it was not easy to stand up and openly speak about GBV issues also age was a challenge on its own. I was viewed as young boy hence delivering the message to the people was not easy. Thanks to CCGD for coming to the rescue through various capacity building and trainings I overcame the challenges.

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Declining civic space in East Africa

By Sharon Macharia

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Kenya attended a high breed meeting organized by the East Africa Civil Society Organizations' Forum (EACSOF) in partnership with Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD), to address the declining civic space in the region. The meeting's main objective was to discuss the Draft East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) CSO Bill that seeks to protect civic space in East African Community partner states. The meeting was attended by 67 members CSOs.

Speaking during the forum, David Sigano from East African Law Society noted that the bill has been facing numerous challenges with acceptance and passing as result of being a private member bill as compared to the executive bills. He urged the members to have an intensive public participation which will give the bill greater authority and bargaining power.

"If we can harmoniously speak with a single voice, then the chances for its success will increase and the bill will be forwarded to EALA for debate and passage," he said.

A screenshot of a Zoom meeting displaying a PowerPoint slide. The slide title is "CSO BILL CONSULTATIONS 2021 - PowerPoint". The slide content is a bulleted list of six items: "Censorship/Prior restraints", "Funding capping/access to funding opportunities", "Asset freezing", "Raids, unexplained break-ins and arrest of actors", "Threats of deregistration/intimidation", and "Murders and unexplained disappearance of actors". The Zoom interface at the top shows participants: Peter Kiama, David Sigano, hildah ENG, Charles, and Lanoi - ENAI Afr... The bottom of the screen shows Zoom controls: Unmute, Start Video, Participants (62), Chat, Share Screen, Record, Reactions, and Leave.

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.

The convener of CSRG, Suba Churchill, asserted that the bill would indeed be critical advocacy tool noting that Kenya civic space is considered the best in East and Central Africa because South Sudan and Burundi civic space is closed while Ethiopia, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda civic space is repressed. He urged member states to borrow best practices from open states such as Canada, Uruguay, Germany, Sweden, Norway and the Czech Republic as this will better place the CSOs to compete with the best CSOs around the world.

The forum was attended by The International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL), Civil Society Reference Group (CSRG), Independent Medical Legal Unit (IMLU), CUTS International, and Peace Initiative Miritini among other organizations.

Establishment of a child care centre in Namanga border

By Maurice Goga

Namanga women cross -border traders have called upon the Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) and its partners to assist them establish a child care Centre so as to enable them to focus on their work better.

Speaking during consultative meeting with officials from CCGD, the women said they are eagerly waiting for the establishment the child-care Centre adding that the move will emancipate them from the intense child care work which bar them from actively engaging in their business.

Namanga Women Cross-Border Traders Association Chairperson, Alice Lemomo who engages in the Ushanga(beads) business noted that women cross-border traders have been facing various challenges since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic owing to the measures the government has put in place to curb the spread of the pandemic. Further, Lemomo cited the burden of child care as another big challenge they are facing as women cross-border traders.

“Some of these women have young children and many of them cannot afford the services of house help hence they carry the children to their business. This in turn affect the business because they cannot actively attend to their business with children on their back,” she said.

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Chairperson of Namanga Women Cross-border Traders Association, Alice Lemomo during a consultative meeting with officials from CCGD at the Namanga border.

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The chairperson welcomed the plan by CCGD and its partners to assist them establish a childcare Centre in Namanga border saying their children will find a place where they can grow physically, spiritually and socially.

“The opening of the child care centre will be of great importance not only to us but also to our businesses. As traders, we will have enough time attended to our businesses resulting to increase in profit margins and general growth of our businesses,” she said.

She expressed her gratitude to CCGD for coming to the aid of women by easing the burden of childcare and thereby providing them an opportunity to actively engage in business. “We want to thank CCGD for coming up with an initiative to establish a child care centre for Namanga women cross-border traders. Women are really struggling to run their business while at the same time take care of children. Some of them cannot afford services of a day care or house help while others have children with disabilities therefor the centre will bring a relief to us,” she reiterated.

The consultative forum was attended by 45 women traders from Namanga border in Kajiado County.

Child care remains a major burden to women and girls as society pin them with the responsibility of early childcare. Women continue to experience the burden of unpaid care work disproportionately due to insufficient national and county policies and program to address unpaid care work in general.

Running business vs childcare duties

By Maurice Goga

They say men cannot multi-task while women can attend to various activities at the same time but when it comes to running of a business and taking care of a child concurrently the saying is tested to the limit as each of the activities requires undivided attention.

Rose Nyakio a trader who sells shoes along Amboseli Road in Namanga border is one of the many women who are grappling with the burden of childcare while at the same time running their business. Her situation is exacerbated by the fact that her business is located along the road. This



Rose Nyakio speaking to CCGD on the challenges she is facing while running her business and at the same time taking care of her son.

Rose says her business is facing by numerous challenges one of them being the burden of childcare, adding that her son occasionally goes about roaming forcing her to leave the business and look for him while leaving behind customers who in many cases do not wait for to come back and attended to them. She goes on to say that some customers are often irritated when the son cries as a result they leave and sometimes she has to breast feed the son in public which she says doesn't auger well with some customers especially the male ones.



Rose Nyakio carrying her son. She experiences the burden of taking care of her son while running her business.

“Some customers are often irritated when the son cries as a result they leave and sometimes she has to breast feed the son in public which she says doesn't auger well with some customers especially the male ones.”

During the interview, she called on Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) to come to her aid and that of many women who shares a similar predicament. She adds that with the childcare facility in place, she will be able to have more time for the business and child care duties will no longer be a hindrance to her business. CCGD aims to contribute to redistributing the burden of unpaid (child) care work borne by women cross border traders through its partnerships with Ministry of East African Community and Regional Development, University of Nairobi Women Economic Empowerment Hub (UON WEE-HUB), East Africa Civil Society Organization Forum and Uthabiti Africa.

Pictorials



CCGD Youth Coordinator, Audrey Adhiambo (far right) and the Youth Programs Assistant, Jecinter Kagai (far left) with a winner of the competition dubbed GBV and Artivism.



CCGD staff in a group photo during the staff retreat held between 15th and 18th September 2021 in Nairobi.



CCGD staff in a group photo with Kwale County GBV Youth Champions and Kwale Youth Assembly after holding a two day meeting at Red Cross Hotel in Kwale County.



CCGD staff led by Administration and Support Officer, Prudence Njambi (front row right), Busia County Administrator, Dorothy Mundanya (front row second-right), Childcare Program Assistant Grace Kathau (in purple) with members of Parents Caregivers Association Committee of Busia Childcare Centre.

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